



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

DOWNTOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Draft | April 2023



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With gratitude, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo acknowledges this land is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and the unceded territory of the Métis people.

DENE

The Regional Municipality of Buffalo holyé, beta aderihchahele, nederi ni ké yaghé, honodanowaltł', eghadaleda, senahdé, Treaty 8 holyé bénék'e, Ená, Dene, Beghak'ásé yonizhoch'ł derinué k'e hotsł dialł, t'a hotiyı danoholta ʔąť'e sł,

CREE

mistahî ētiyîtamok

oma

treaty 8 askîy

eta

kawîkitwâw,

ka kiskinahâmatwâw,

katoskîtwaw,

ekwa

kamîtaŵîtwâw

nihîyawâk, denesoline ekwa mētis

otaskîwâw

CONTENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....i

1 INTRODUCTION.....1

1.1 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN.....	1
1.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT.....	5
1.3 DOWNTOWN FORT MCMURRAY	6
1.4 PLAN AREA.....	8
1.5 DOWNTOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN	14
1.6 GUIDING VALUES.....	16

2 BACKGROUND & PLANNING CONTEXT.....21

2.1 POPULATION	22
2.2 ECONOMY	26
2.3 INFRASTRUCTURE.....	28
2.4 FLOOD MITIGATION.....	30
2.5 LAND USE.....	32
2.6 BUILT FORM.....	36
2.7 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE	40
2.8 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY	46
2.9 HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART	53

3 VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES 58

3.1 VISION.....	58
3.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	58

4 OVERARCHING POLICIES.....65

4.1 LAND USE	66
4.2 BUILT FORM.....	72
4.3 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE.....	77
4.4 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY	82
4.5 HERITAGE, CULTURE, AND PUBLIC ART.....	90

5 AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES.....98

5.1 BUSINESS AND CIVIC AREA	100
5.2 ENTERTAINMENT/LARGE FORMAT AREA	110
5.3 HOSPITAL/MEDICAL AREA	118
5.4 KING/EDUCATION AREA.....	124
5.5 WATERFRONT AREA	132
5.6 MACDONALD ISLAND PARK AREA	140
5.7 BOREALIS AREA	146
5.8 SNYE AREA	150
5.9 BIGGS AREA.....	154

6 IMPLEMENTATION..... 161

7 GLOSSARY OF TERMS 165





1 Introduction

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

1.1.1 THE STRUCTURE OF THE ARP

The ARP sets out how the revitalization of the *Downtown* is to be achieved over the next 10 years. The plan has been organized into six sections (see **Figure 1**). Each section includes diagrams to identify locations, precedent images to demonstrate recommendations or potential outcomes, strategies to achieve the ARP's goals, and objectives and policies to guide implementation.

SECTION 1 | INTRODUCTION

The first part of this section is “How to Use this Plan” which sets out its structure and key policy terminology to guide interpretation. The next part introduces the Downtown, its regional context and establishes the planning area for the ARP. This section briefly describes the legislative framework, the directions and guiding principles that inform the ARP.

SECTION 2 | BACKGROUND + PLANNING CONTEXT

Summarizes the factors and existing conditions that have helped inform and shape the ARP's goals, objectives and policies.

SECTION 3 | VISION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

Provides the foundational statements for what the *Downtown* will be in the future. The vision reflects the community's aspirations for the Downtown, and the goals, supported by objectives, provide the framework and direction for the ARP's policies.

SECTION 4 | OVERARCHING DOWNTOWN ARP + POLICIES

Outlines policies that are broadly applicable to all areas of the *Downtown*. The policies are organized into broad categories that emerged during the ARP engagements, including Land Use, Built Form, Parks and Open Space, Transportation and Mobility, and Heritage, *Culture*, and Public Art.

SECTION 5 | DOWNTOWN ARP AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

Organizes the *Downtown* into smaller geographic Areas based on site features, neighbourhood characteristics and future plans. Policies in this section are only applicable to the specific Areas addressed and are organized in categories.

SECTION 6 | IMPLEMENTATION

Outlines the actions to undertake in order to implement the ARP and advance the ARP's vision, goals, and objectives.

Figure 1: Plan Structure



1.1.2 ARP POLICIES

It is recommended that the ARP policies should be read as a whole, beginning with the overarching policies in Section 4, and then the Area Specific policies in Section 5. It is important not to rely only on the Area Specific policies for the area of interest.

1.1.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Although this plan incorporates community, stakeholder, and Indigenous partner feedback, it has been prepared by the Municipality. Unless stated otherwise, the Municipality is responsible for the delivery and implementation of the ARP’s policies.

1.1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE ARP

The ARP provides the *policy* framework to guide future development in the *Downtown*. As set out in the Municipal Government Act, it is a plan that focuses on the proposed use of land. This means that although it may identify land for a particular use or purpose, for example, a community *park*, it cannot propose or require the types of activities, programs and events that will take place there or when. These are the roles and responsibilities of other municipal departments, community organizations, the private sector and individuals.

1.1.5 TERMS USED IN THE ARP

Terms shown in *italics* can be found in the Glossary.

The Municipality: Refers to the local government, the municipal corporation in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

RWMB or “the Region”: Refers to the geographic jurisdiction of the Municipality.

POLICY TERMS

Policies set out how the ARP’s objectives are to achieve the goals and the vision. They are high-level statements of intent. Each *policy* in section 4 and section 5 is structured to include the action needed to deliver the *policy* (i.e., what must or should be done).

Table 1: Policy Terms

Policy Terms	
Require	Is a compulsory obligation.
Encourage	Provides direction for what is expected.
Consider	Provides criteria for when actions may be suitable.



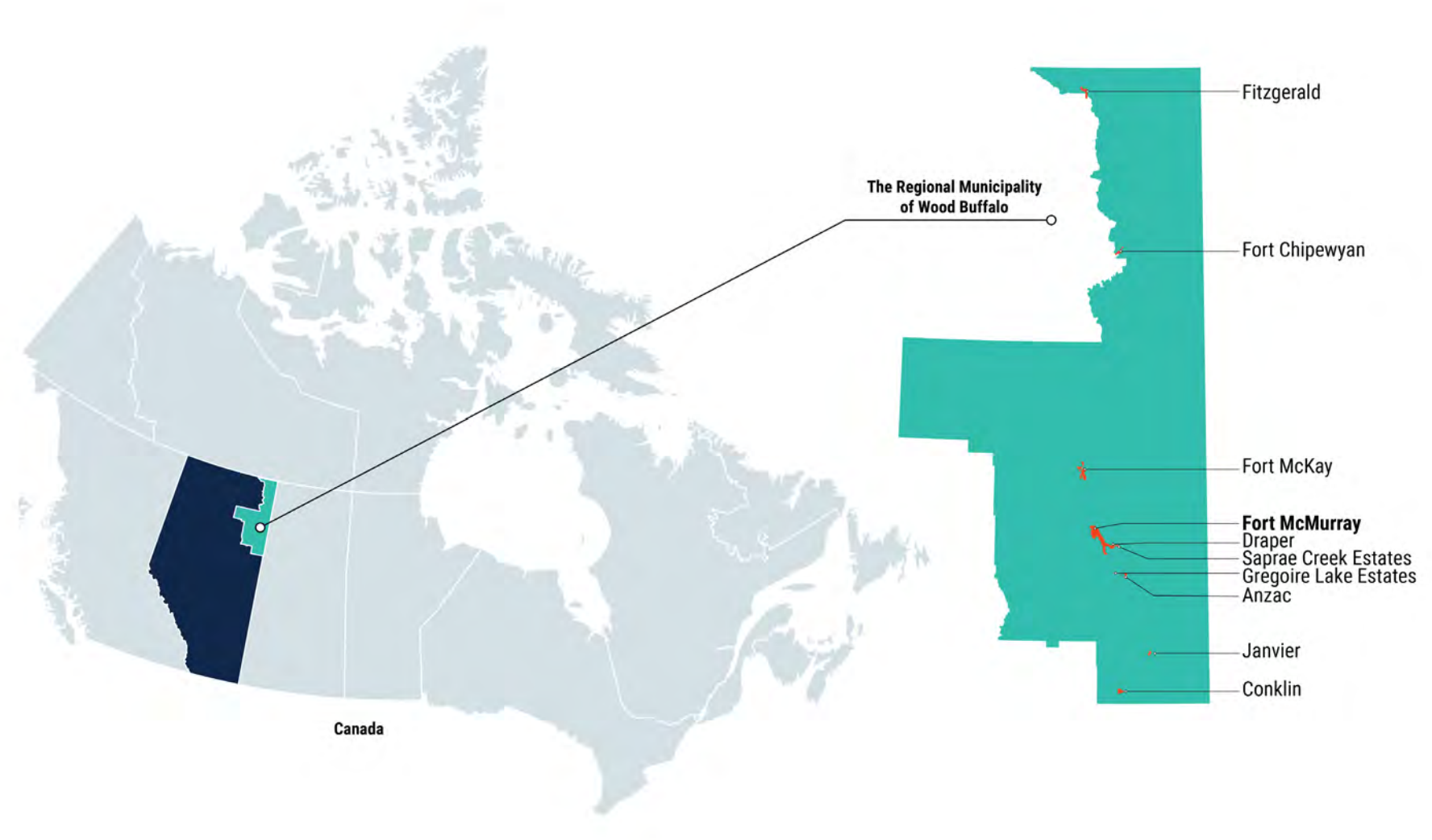
1.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB or the Region, **Map 1**) is located within Treaty 8 Territory and unceded Métis homelands, and is home to six First Nations and six Métis Communities. Fort McMurray (**Map 2**) is the urban centre of the RMWB. It is designated as the RMWB's "*Urban Service Area*" and functions as its administrative and business centre, serving nine rural communities.

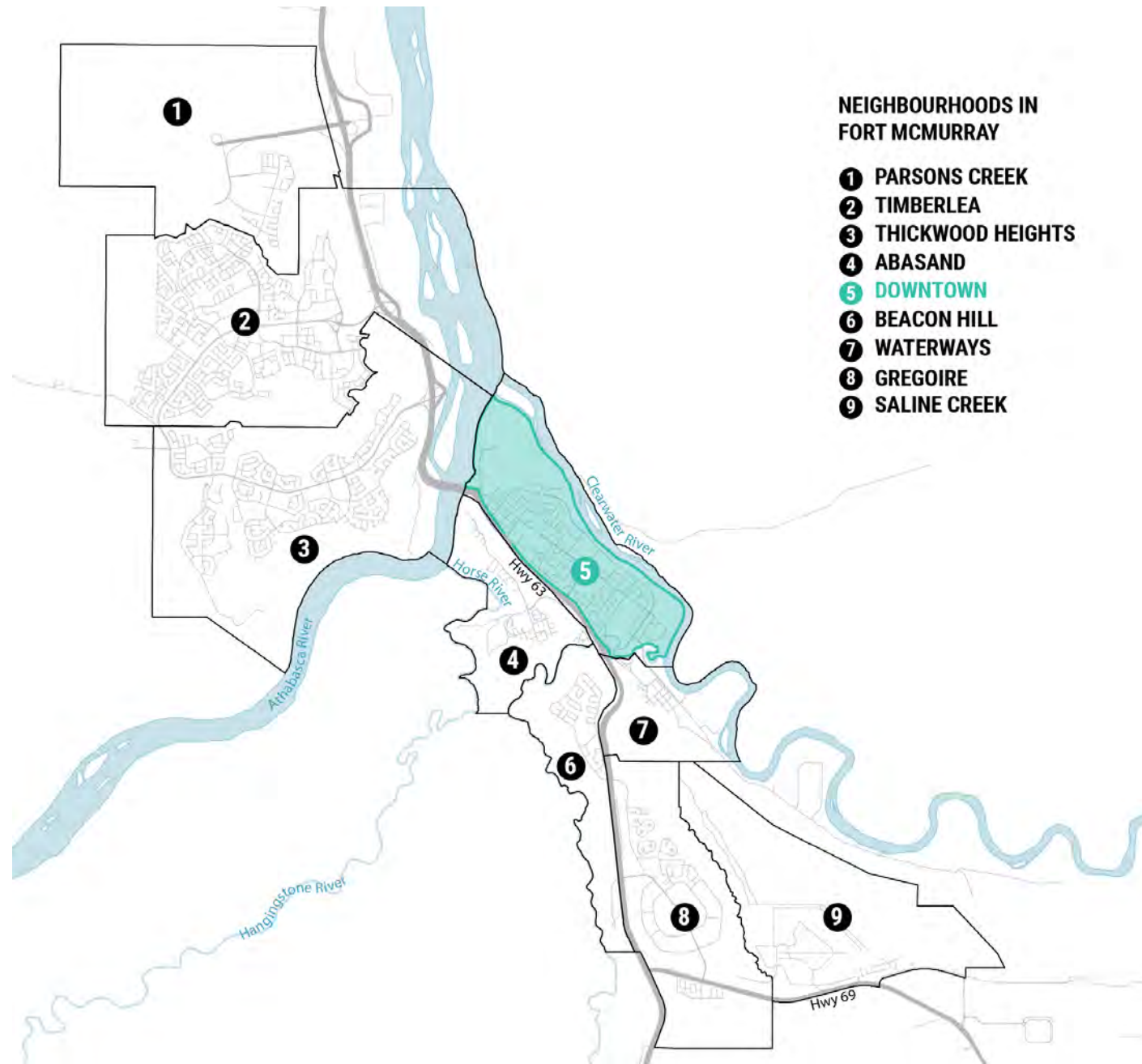
The RMWB is located in northeastern Alberta. It covers an area of over 60,000 square kilometres, stretching eastward from north central Alberta to Saskatchewan and northward to the Northwest Territories. It is a relatively remote region; the distance from Fort McMurray to other service centres ranges from around 300 kilometres (Athabasca and Lac La Biche) to over 400 kilometres to Cold Lake and Edmonton.

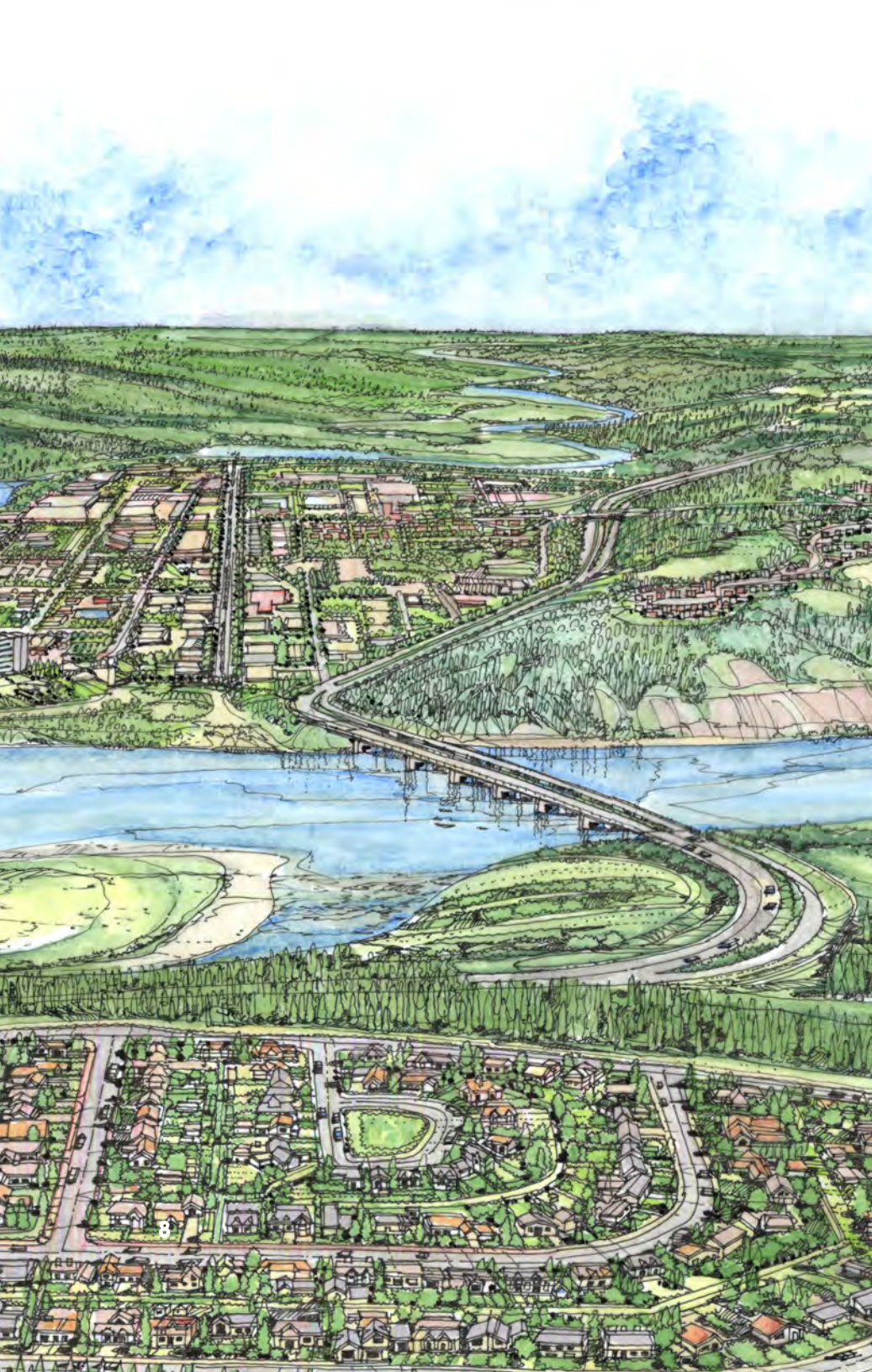


Map 1. Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo



Map 2. Fort McMurray Showing Location of the Downtown





Outside of the *Urban Service Area*, the majority (99.6%) of the RMWB's land is Crown Land. Much of the land consists of wilderness areas, provincial parks, protected areas, waterways, and water bodies, including Lake Athabasca, the eight largest lake in Canada. The RMWB is also adjacent to Wood Buffalo National Park which is Canada's largest national park.

A significant characteristic of the Region is the abundance of oil sands resources. The Region includes a substantial portion of the Athabasca Oil Sands deposits, an economic driver in Canada's energy sector. The oil sands industry has shaped the development of the Region and that of Fort McMurray in particular. It is a key determinate of the economy, infrastructure, and population and characteristics.

1.3 DOWNTOWN FORT MCMURRAY

Fort McMurray is the largest population centre in the RMWB. As of the 2021 Municipal Census, the Urban Service Area's population was 76,006, compared to 75,615 in 2018.¹

The *Downtown* is situated within a unique municipal and geographic context. The boundary of the *Downtown* is formed by Highway 63, and the Athabasca, Clearwater, and Hangingstone rivers. This creates a rectangular shaped area that covers some six square kilometres of low-lying land.

Most of the *Downtown* lies within a flood plain and has experienced several severe flooding events, the most recent occurring in April 2020. While permanent mitigation efforts are under construction, temporary mitigation are in place.

The *Downtown* is an important centre for federal, provincial, and municipal government. It also contains education and medical services, and acts as a hub for the social profit sector.

There is also a concentration of recreational, cultural, retail, and commercial facilities. As such, the *Downtown* also serves all the

communities within the Region. However, the *Downtown* does not have a readily defined centre or 'main street'. Rather, it is a series of commercial areas, interspersed with residential neighbourhoods, a medical hub, and the Keyano Clearwater Campus.

The 2020 flood, COVID 19, the global fall in oil process and its impact on the economy in general, have each presented a setback to the *Downtown's* recovery and revitalization. In addition to these external factors, commercial and residential development has taken place, and continues to look to the city's outlying newer neighbourhoods and commercial sites as the location for new construction.

As well as a regional centre, the *Downtown* is, importantly, home to 10,638 people (2021 Municipal Census), making it the third largest community within Fort McMurray. It is also one of the city's most culturally diverse communities, including First Nation and Métis communities drawn from the Region and across the country, along with a large proportion of visible minorities and newcomers to Canada.

¹ Municipal Census Report: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 2021



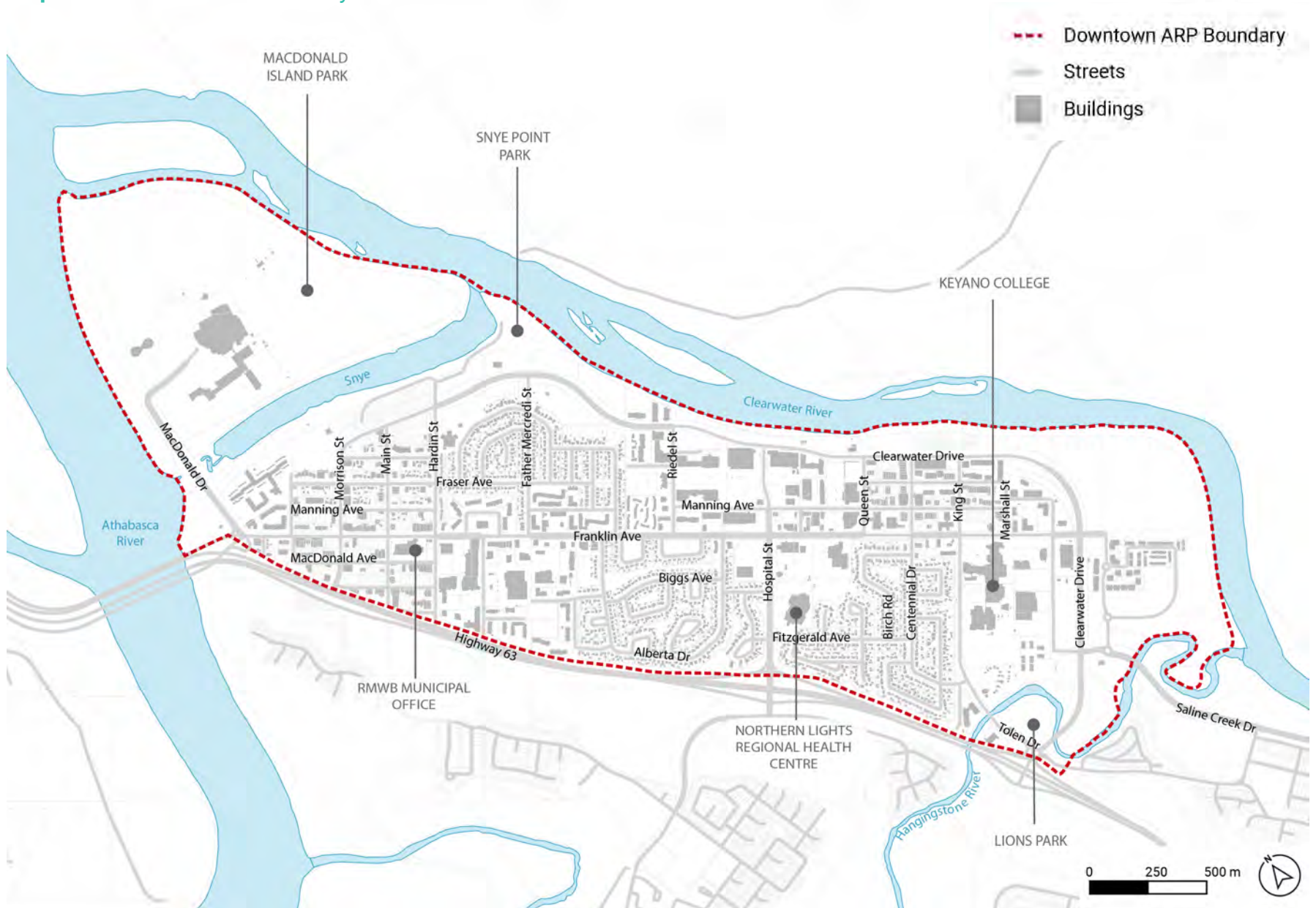
1.4 PLAN AREA

The plan area covers two areas commonly referred to as MacDonald Island and the Lower Townsite.

The plan area, illustrated in **Map 3**, is bounded by the:

- Athabasca River,
- Clearwater River,
- Hangingstone River, and
- Highway 63.

Map 3. Downtown ARP Boundary



1.5 DOWNTOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP) provides the regulatory framework to guide development in the *Downtown* over the next 10 years. This section outlines the purpose of an ARP, the planning legislation and hierarchy, and Council's strategic priorities. In addition, the direction of the ARP is informed by guiding values. The guiding values for this ARP were developed through what the Municipality heard during public engagement with residents, stakeholders, and Indigenous partners.

1.5.1 WHAT IS AN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN?

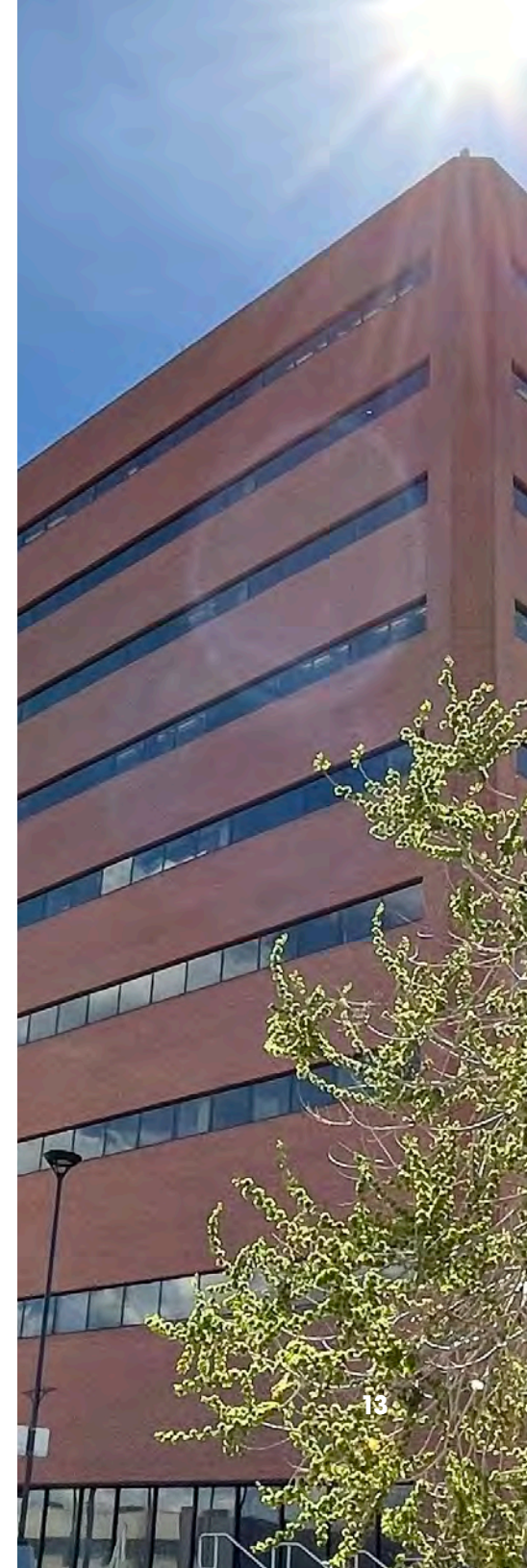
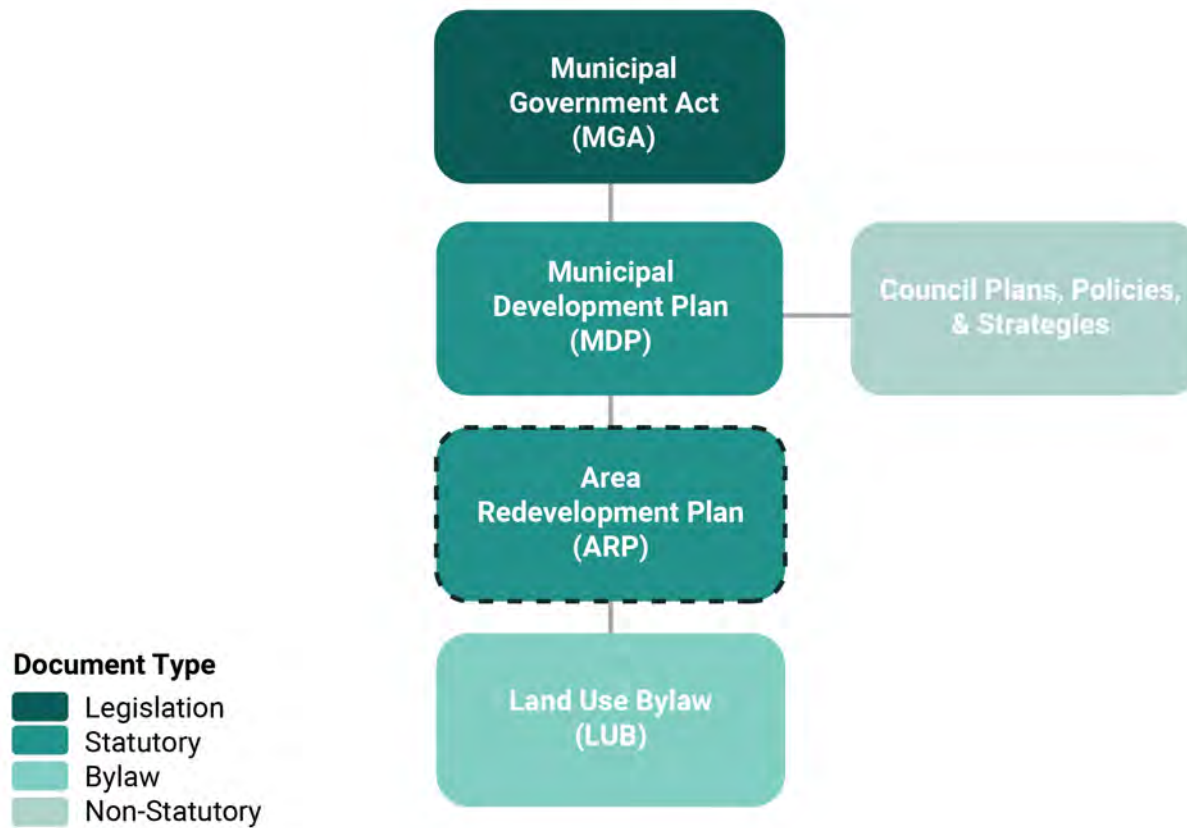
An *Area Redevelopment Plan* (ARP) is a statutory plan that guides land uses and development decisions within an area designated by a Municipality.

In this case, the ARP is the primary planning document for the *Downtown*. Its purpose is to provide the policy framework to guide future development in response to changing social, economic, and cultural dynamics and help achieve the future-state vision for the *Downtown*.

1.5.2 ENABLING LEGISLATION

An *Area Redevelopment Plan* sits within a hierarchy of provincial and local legislation, regulations, policies, strategies, and bylaws. **Figure 2** illustrates where the ARP fits within this hierarchy.

Figure 2: Planning Policy Hierarchy in Alberta



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides the legislative framework under which all municipalities in Alberta must operate. The MGA enables the Municipality to create Municipal Development Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans and Area Structure Plans.

These are statutory plans, meaning they are legal documents that must go through three readings and a public hearing before being adopted by a municipal Council. Once adopted, there is a legal obligation on the part of both the municipality and the residents to adhere to the plan.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A Municipal Development Plan (MDP) guides planning for an entire municipality with the purpose of communicating the long-term land use and providing high-level direction for how a community is expected to change over time.

The Municipality's draft MDP, which is anticipated to be approved by Council in 2023, has a vision to create "A flourishing region and community of choice with a strong sense of identity, history, and optimism, to call home, today and tomorrow."

The MGA requires a municipality's area redevelopment plan to be consistent with its municipal development plan. The *Downtown* ARP aligns with the MDP strategic goals of Home & Belonging, Economic Growth & Innovation, Reconciliation, Celebrating Community & Culture, Connecting to Nature, and Responsible Development.

AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Municipal Government Act enables municipalities to adopt an ARP to outline proposals for addressing planning issues when revitalizing an existing developed area. These proposals may include preserving or improving land and buildings, roads, public utilities, or other services, replacing buildings and facilitating any other development in the area.

1.5.3 DIRECTIONS FOR THE ARP

In addition to the draft Municipal Development Plan, the ARP takes its direction from Council's Strategic Plan (2022 – 2025), community engagement and Council approved plans and policies.

COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN (2022 - 2025)

The Council's Strategic Plan (2022 – 2025) articulates the Council's vision, mission, values, and priority milestones and actions for the Region. Council's values include:

- Fiscal Management
- Building Partnerships
- Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- Local Economy
- *Downtown Visualization*

The Strategic Plan's value "*Downtown Visualization*" provides guidance to:

- Support the creation of a strategy for the *Downtown* that identifies and coordinates municipal investment and improvements.
- Ensure a review and update of the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* is completed.
- Support the creation of detailed land map for future *Downtown* planning that guides the public and businesses on the vision for the *Downtown*.
- Approve, enhance, and enforce bylaws and beautification standards.
- Incentivize private investment in the *Downtown*.
- Conclude flood mitigation infrastructure investments.
- Complete waterfront beautification.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Feedback and direction from the community is the foundation of the ARP. Engagement on this ARP began in 2019 when residents from across the Region were asked what a revitalized *Downtown* would look like to them. The engagement was carried out between May and September 2019 and was extensive. In addition to one-on-one sessions and public meetings, some 1,200 people took part in a questionnaire survey intended to inform the ARP's vision and guide recommendations for the next steps and long-term planning.

The top recurring survey themes that emerged from the 2019 engagement included:

- Create a strong sense of place that feels welcoming, safe and attracts people *Downtown*.
- Enhance beautification and community cleanliness.
- Establish the waterfront as a focal point.
- Maintain public and private buildings, *landscapes* and open spaces in ways that reflect pride of ownership.

- Attract new businesses and identify strategies to retain existing ones.
- Identify strategies to address vacant buildings and vacant storefronts.
- Update the look, feel and character of *Downtown* buildings on main streets.
- Identify a uniform design theme for *streetscape*, *wayfinding* signage, banners, seasonal decorations and public art on main streets.
- Create an attractive, and well-connected pedestrian friendly *Downtown* supported by convenient parking and access to an increased density of new businesses.

Feedback has informed this draft ARP, which was the subject of a further round of community engagement in 2020. Virtual open houses, public presentations, stakeholder interviews, and workshops with Municipal Administration were held throughout 2020 to validate the vision for the ARP, which is set out at the beginning of this document, and to identify *policy* priorities.



1.6 GUIDING VALUES

This APR is built on five guiding values:

1

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Truth and Reconciliation is an important part of creating any plan and is a key component of the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* for Fort McMurray. It allows for a collaborative process between all stakeholders and Indigenous partners to create a plan rooted in respect and understanding. This collaborative process helps facilitate collective healing, build trust, and create an environment with respect to Indigenous *culture* and *heritage*.

2

BUILDING ON MUNICIPAL PLANS AND POLICIES

To provide continuity, the content of the ARP builds on historic *Downtown* plans, on-going waterfront planning, and flood mitigation efforts. It is also informed by other municipal plans and policies and aims to develop land-based policies that will support their goals and objectives and contribute to their implementation.

3

IMPLEMENTATION

The ARP's policies outlined in this plan are intended to be realistic, grounded in best practice and relevant to the *Downtown* and Fort McMurray. Policies aim to focus on areas and actions that can be delivered by the Municipality, partnership working and individuals, and that will have the most impact, create vibrancy in the short term and lasting change over time.

4

RESPONSIVE TO CHANGE

The momentum towards positive change in the *Downtown* will be influenced and challenged by a variety of factors. Recent environmental and economic challenges have shown how quickly the Region can be impacted by external forces.

The ARP is intended to provide a flexible policy framework that is able to respond to unpredictable variables without losing sight of the vision and goals for the *Downtown*.

To ensure the ARP's ongoing relevance the entire plan will be reviewed regularly, identifying progress, and allowing for refinement to respond to information and updates available at the time.

5

COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The ARP has been informed by community, stakeholder, and Indigenous partner engagement, and reflects the comments and aspirations shared with the Municipality.

The work completed to-date has been collaborative with the community contributing their time and the Municipality investing in projects, programs, services, and initiatives to create a vibrant and inviting Downtown.

Community stakeholder and Indigenous partner feedback will be an integral part of the ARP's monitoring and review process. Collaboration and partnership working will be an essential component of implementing and delivering the plan.

2 Background & Planning Context

2 BACKGROUND & PLANNING CONTEXT

This section summarizes the factors that have helped shape the ARP's direction and informed the development of the goals and objectives and policies found in Sections 3, 4 and 5.

Population, economy, infrastructure, and flood mitigation are key factors in shaping the scale and location of future growth and development in the *Downtown*. They inform the Plan's overall *policy* direction.

The existing conditions in the *Downtown*, feedback from the community, and challenges and opportunities are described in five categories: Land Use, Built Form, *Parks* and Open Space, Transportation and Mobility, and Heritage Culture and Public Art.





2.1 POPULATION

The *Downtown* is the oldest settled part of Fort McMurray. It has long been a visiting stop and gathering place for the First Peoples (First Nations and Métis) that lived, hunted, trapped, and travelled through the Region. It emerged in the 19th century as a fur-trading post, attracting Métis families and developed as a Métis town.

The commercial value of the oil sands was not fully realized and exploited until the 1960s. Fort McMurray then grew from a small town of 1,100 people, living mainly in the *Downtown* area and Waterways, into a rapidly growing city of approximately 25,000 by the early 1980s. The growth of the oil sands industry attracted workers from all over Canada, and further afield.

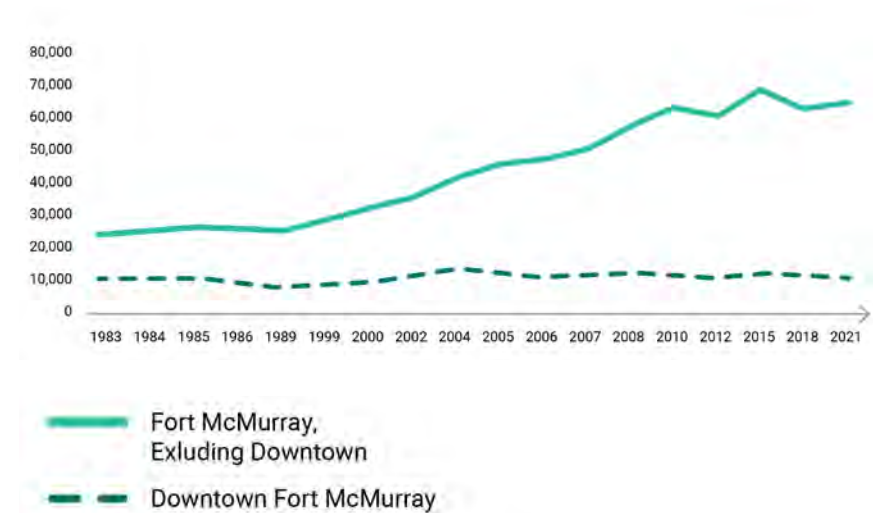
To accommodate the population expansion of workers and their families, residential neighbourhoods were built on land outside of the *Downtown*. Between the mid 1990s and 2015, neighbourhoods, such as Timberlea, experienced rapid growth. At the same time, the *Downtown* saw an increase in the number of apartment buildings and town houses, designed to attract one and two person households. Although there were some fluctuations in numbers, *Downtown's* population has remained relatively stable, at around 10,000 people.

Figure 3 compares historic population totals in *Downtown* to the rest of Fort McMurray. From 2000 to 2021, Fort McMurray (excluding the *Downtown*) grew at a rate of approximately 3.15 percent annually from 32,595 to 64,548. During the same timeframe, the population of *Downtown* Fort McMurray grew at an annual rate of approximately 0.49%, from 9,561 to 10,638, peaking at 11,703 in 2015.

Differences in long-term population growth of the *Downtown* can be attributed to several factors including housing availability and affordability, provision of amenities and services, and perceptions of *safety*. Employment opportunities are a key influence on decisions about where to live, and even whether to stay within an area. This is especially the case in a remote, resource-based community such as Fort McMurray.

Figure 3: Historic Population Change

(Source: RMWB Municipal Census, 1983, 1999, 2010, 2015, 2018, 2021)



2.1.1 POPULATION PROFILE

The current population (2021 Municipal Census) in the *Downtown* of 10,638 people is characterized by its diversity. There is a large proportion of visible minorities and newcomers to Canada. As shown in Figure 4, 65% of the *Downtown* residents identified themselves as visible minorities compared to 28% for the rest of Fort McMurray.

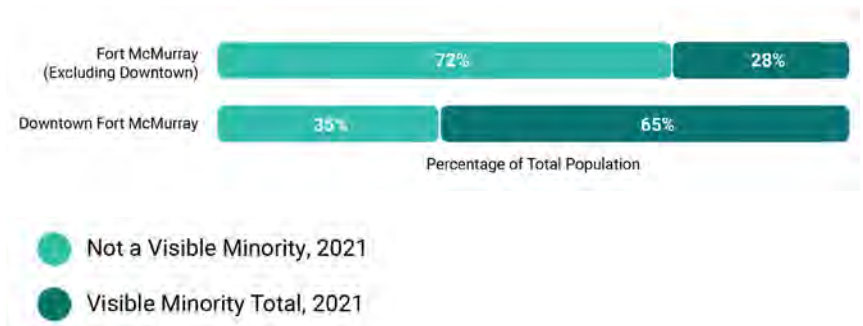
The *Downtown* has a slightly older population profile when compared with the rest of Fort McMurray. According to the 2021 Municipal Census, 51% of the Downtown population was aged between 35-64. There were fewer children aged 0-19 (23.3% compared to 28.3% for the rest of Fort McMurray) and more seniors aged 65+ (8.4% compared to 4.3% for the rest of Fort McMurray).

2.1.2 HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND OWNERSHIP

Older and smaller sized households, of one and two persons, may favour apartment living for reasons of either affordability, convenience or both. The average household size of Fort McMurray is 3.0 people per dwelling unit. *Downtown* has the lowest average household size at 2.6 people per dwelling unit compared to other neighbourhoods in Fort McMurray. Fort McMurray has a larger proportion (63.1%) of occupied dwelling units that are owner-occupied. However, *Downtown* has the lowest homeownership rate at 30.7%.²

Figure 4: Visible Minority Status, 2021

(Source: Environics Analytics)



² Municipal Census 2018

2.1.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household income in the *Downtown* compares unfavourably with the rest of Fort McMurray. The *Downtown* has twice as many low-income households; 8.3%, make between \$40,000 to \$59,000, compared with 3.5%, for the rest of Fort McMurray, and approximately 65% of *Downtown* household made \$100,000 or more compared with 81.4% of households outside of the *Downtown*.

Currently *Downtown* has a higher percentage of its residents working in retail sales, accommodation, food, and other service occupations, than the rest of Fort McMurray. Jobs in these sectors are associated with lower pay levels.



2.2 ECONOMY

The economy of Fort McMurray and the Region is dominated by the natural resource sector: namely, the oil sands and oil sands related activities. The Downtown's growth and prosperity are influenced by the oil sands industry; its businesses and services developing to meet industry's needs, as well as those of the Region's communities. The Downtown's businesses and services provide employment opportunities for residents which contribute to Fort McMurray's and the Region's economy.

Since 2016 the *Downtown* has faced a number of significant challenges. These have included the fall in the price of oil due to the downturn of the global economy, the social and economic impact of the May 2016 Horse River Wildfire, the April 2020 flood, and the COVID 19 pandemic. All these challenges have implications for the Downtown's future development, which will inform the ARP's direction and policies.

2.2.1 DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

In 2021, approximately 444³ businesses were located in *Downtown*. Retailing accounted for the highest number of businesses (31%), followed by other services (except public administration) ⁴ (18%), accommodation and food services (16%), healthcare and social services (12%), and professional, scientific and technical services (9%).

The *Downtown's* share of Retail Trade increased from 17% to 31% between 1984 to 2021 reflecting its role as a regional centre for retail space. However, ongoing growth outside of the Downtown has resulted in the development of competitive retail centres in Timberlea, making it essential to identify and consider retail and other non-residential development opportunities where the *Downtown* has a locational advantage.

³ The data is from a municipal survey done in September 2021

⁴ According to North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), activities of the sector "other services (except public administration)" are providing services not elsewhere specified, including repairs, religious activities, advocacy, laundry, personal care, death care, and other personal services.

In addition to competition from within Fort McMurray, the Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Commercial & Retail Attraction Plan (2021), calculated that more than \$706 million is currently outflowing via online purchases or in-person purchases outside of Fort McMurray. This level of market leakage would suggest that the Region could potentially support 3 to 4 additional major mixed-use projects with commercial/retail components in the range of 275,000 square feet. *Downtown* has the potential to fill the gap for market leakage.

2.2.2 HOTELS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATION

Downtown is also a hub for accommodations with a higher percentage of hotel inventory compared to the rest of Fort McMurray. The combination of these business types contributes to the Downtown's role as a destination for residents and visitors alike.

2.2.3 OFFICE SPACE

The Commercial and Industrial Land Use Study (2018) identified the demand for office space in Fort McMurray may only be 532,625 to 547,125 square feet, which is below the current office inventory of 621,047 square feet meaning that the *Downtown* Area has the capacity to support new businesses moving in over the next 10 years.



2.3 INFRASTRUCTURE

Downtown's municipal infrastructure, which includes water, stormwater, and wastewater servicing, is essential for the health and well-being of *Downtown* residents and visitors as well as businesses and the Municipality's operations.

The 2015 Water Master Plan indicates that the water supply system provides sufficient capacity for the Fort McMurray Urban Service Area, including the Downtown. The water supply for the Downtown comes from a reservoir on the south side of Highway 63. This reservoir has the capacity to store and provide water to the Waterways, Abasand and Draper areas as well as the Downtown.

The Downtown's storm water catchment area is approximately 830 acres (335 hectares). The stormwater network for this catchment area drains through storm sewer outfalls into the surrounding rivers. In its current state the stormwater network has sufficient capacity to accommodate minor to moderate storm events. This means the drainage systems (underground pipes, manholes, and outfalls) are designed for storms that occur in a 1-in-5-year period (minor) and 1-in-10-years (moderate).

The Municipality's Water Master Plan (2015) and Wastewater Master Plan (2014) provide additional details on the *Downtown's* existing water, stormwater, and wastewater systems as well as recommendations on upgrades.



2.4 FLOOD MITIGATION

The RMWB, and Fort McMurray in particular, has had a long history of devastating floods caused by ice jams, with records dating back as far as 1835. Most recently, the April 2020 ice jam flood caused more than \$500 million in insured damages to property in the *Downtown*, *Waterways*, *Draper* and the *Taiga Nova Eco-Industrial Park*, and displaced thousands of residents from their homes.

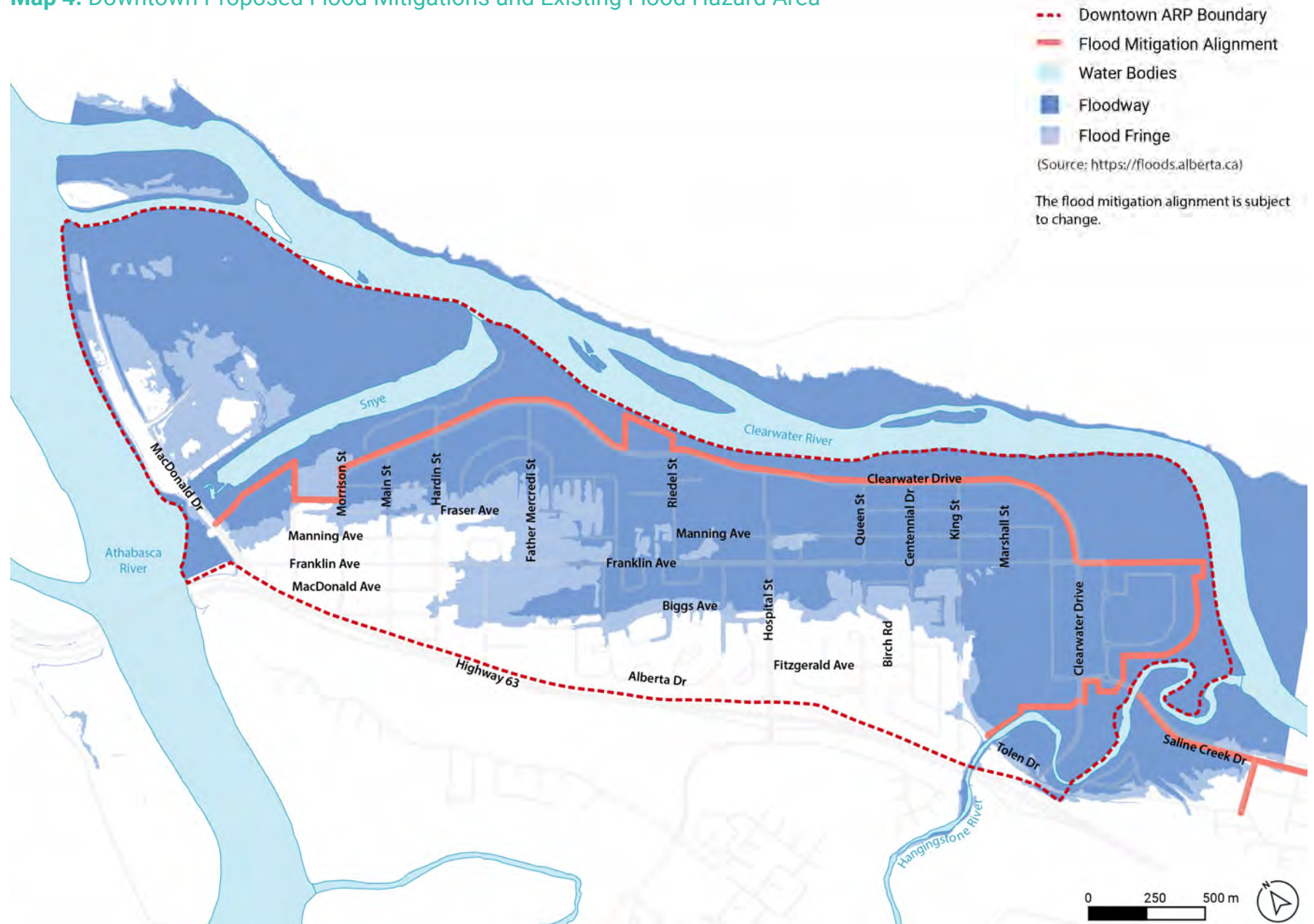
In the *Downtown*, homes and businesses faced significant damage in the midst of the already significant challenge of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Municipality began implementing a Flood Mitigation Program in 2014 which included permanent structural mitigations (i.e., berms and retaining walls) at the 1:100-year elevation (250.0 metres above sea level). Following the 2020 flood, planned flood mitigation efforts continued while designs were revised to:

- Complete structural mitigations to the 1:200-year elevation (250.4 metres above sea level).
- Limit development below 250.9 metres.
- Prepare and implement temporary mitigation measures to provide protection until the permanent measures are completed.

Map 4 identifies the extent of proposed flood mitigation in the *Downtown* as well as the existing *Flood Hazard Area* identified by Government of Alberta.

Map 4. Downtown Proposed Flood Mitigations and Existing Flood Hazard Area





2.5 LAND USE

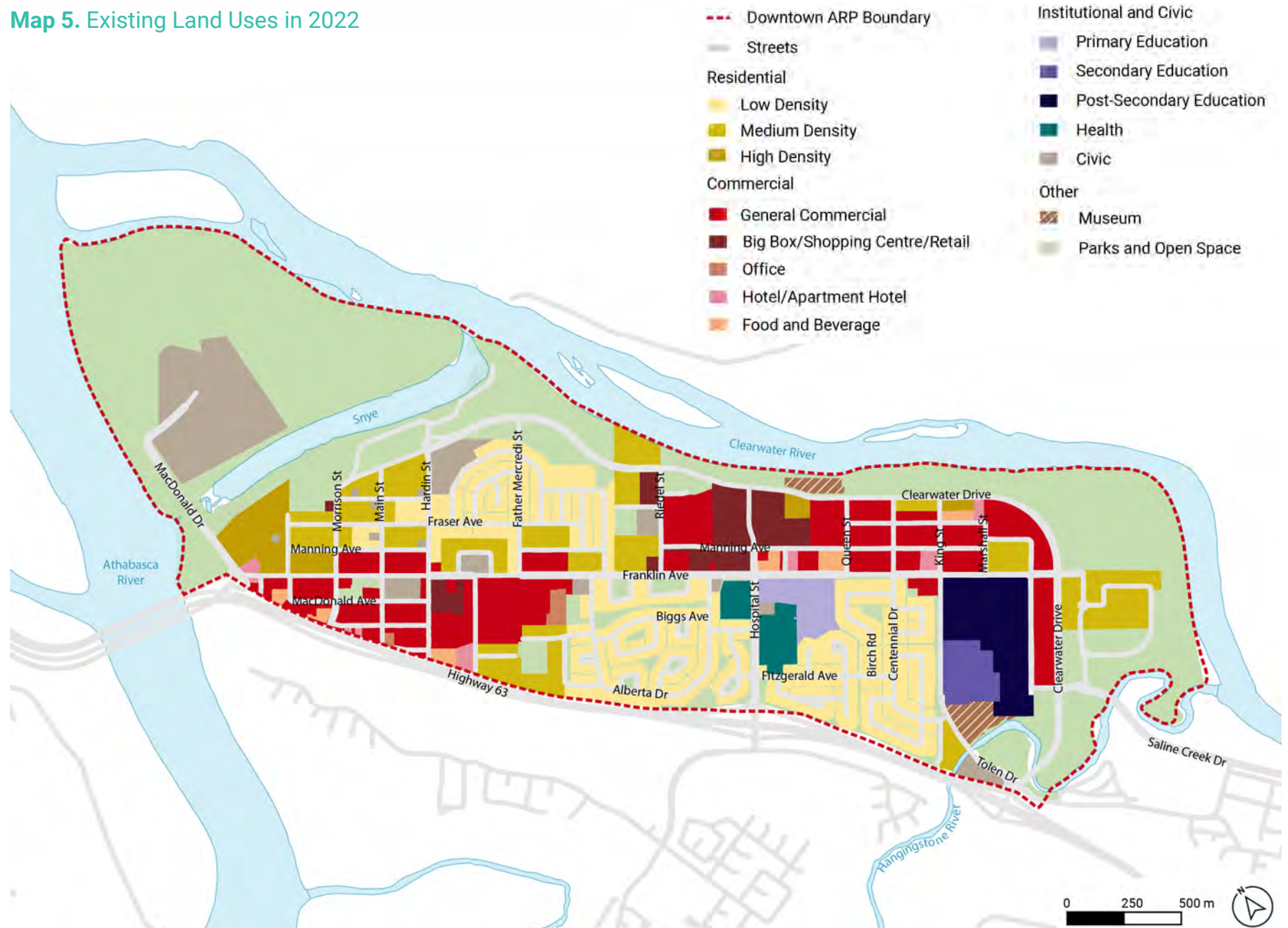
The *Downtown* is a series of commercial areas interspersed with residential neighbourhoods, a medical hub and the Keyano Clearwater Campus. MacDonald Island Park, located at the northwestern end of the *Downtown*, and the Waterfront area, which runs along its northern boundary of the Clearwater River are two significant areas of green space (Map 5).

Within the predominately commercial areas the Downtown contains a range of land uses including retailing and personal services, commercial and government offices, community and social services, cultural and recreational facilities and amenities, and parks and open spaces. The Municipality also has many land holdings in the *Downtown* which are depicted in **Map 6**.

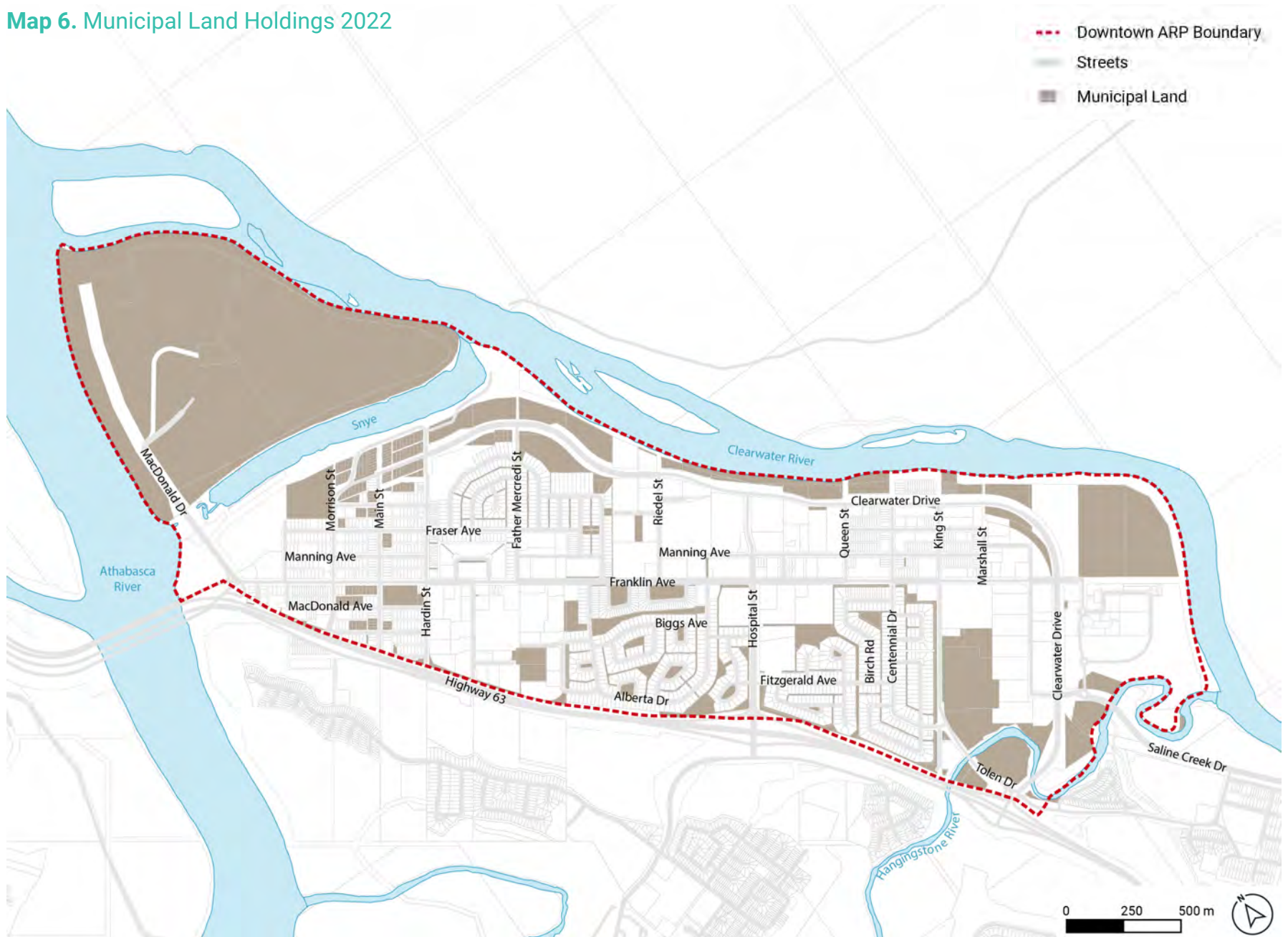
Of the various activities and services, it offers, the main reasons for visiting the Downtown (2019 Survey), were:

- Recreation and entertainment;
- Shopping;
- Work and business reasons;
- Healthcare; and
- Education.

Map 5. Existing Land Uses in 2022



Map 6. Municipal Land Holdings 2022



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the feedback from community, stakeholder and Indigenous partner engagement, the main challenges and opportunities in terms of land use in the *Downtown* include:

CHALLENGES

- Lack of cohesiveness: land uses and amenities are not organised or integrated.
- Maintaining the existing resident population numbers.
- Securing the Downtown's overall competitiveness with the surrounding suburban neighbourhoods.
- Housing to meet all ages and incomes.
- High vacancy rates in commercial and residential areas.
- Flood risk and the impact on homes and businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The re-use and *redevelopment* potential of vacant buildings and land.
- Focus on areas where there is a key use or concentration of uses that can act as a catalyst and attract investment in similar or complementary uses.
- Need for permanent and temporary small scale, commercial development opportunities, such as markets, pop-ups, and sidewalk patios.
- Allowing for a greater mix of residential and commercial uses.



2.6 BUILT FORM

“Built Form” is the term used to describe the look and feel of the *Downtown*. It is what makes a place inviting and attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors.

Built form includes the layout of the streets and the shape, scale, and height of buildings. It also determines the relationship of streets to open spaces and buildings. Built form supports having a high quality *public realm*, including the type of street furniture that exists such as lighting and benches and the use of interesting construction materials for building and sidewalks.

The origins of the *Downtown’s* present-day built form date back to the 1980s and 1990s, when Fort McMurray began to experience rapid growth as a resource town for the oil sands industry.

Residential buildings range from low density single detached housing (1980s and 90s) to high-density high-rise apartments (2000s), which account for more than 70% of residential units in the *Downtown*.

Commercial developments include pedestrian-scale buildings (remnants of the pre-1980s main street), strip malls separated from pedestrian paths by front yard parking, (1980's and 90s), and large-format retail (i.e., the big box stores of the 1990s and 2000s). With the exception of hotels, most commercial buildings are one or two storeys high.

From around 2005 onwards, the *Downtown* has seen the construction of more mixed-use developments (i.e., ground-floor commercial with apartments on the upper floors), which tend to be between 3 and 5 storeys.

Although more recent residential and mixed-use structures provide underground parkades, earlier developments resulted in large expanses of surface car parking. Together with vacant and underutilized parcels, and buildings with lengthy blank walls (solid walls with no windows or design elements), the impression is of a *Downtown* with underutilized, inactive, and uncomfortable spaces.

While there is very little remaining of a pedestrian-scale, traditional main street, the *Downtown* has a number of assets, which add interest and character. This allows for the potential to help the *Downtown* become inviting and attractive.

Assets include purpose-built buildings such as the Provincial and Municipal office buildings, Keyano Clearwater Campus, schools, religious assemblies, hotels, medical facilities (hospital and Willow Square continuing care centre), and seniors' housing such as the Rotary House Seniors Lodge. Recreation centres such as MacDonald Island Park, and public spaces and *parks* such as Jubilee Plaza and Kiyām Park, and the Waterfront are important assets, unique to the *Downtown*.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Public engagement feedback highlighted the following challenges and opportunities:

CHALLENGES

The community's perception is of a *Downtown* that is:

- Visually unappealing – it looks dated and does not feel safe.
- Not physically cohesive and does not reflect Fort McMurray's northern geography, history, or cultural traditions.
- Poorly maintained public and private buildings and lands that do not reflect pride of ownership.
- Lacking community cleanliness and beautification.
- Lacking character and vibrancy.
- Not pedestrian friendly. There are no connected and accessible pathways, no directional signs, and no amenities such as benches or sheltered seating areas.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Promote and enhance existing assets, such as the Waterfront.
- Emphasize the uniqueness and character of the different areas of the Downtown.
- Develop design guidelines that provide direction for *public realm* improvements including lighting, landscaping, and use of colour to create year-round vibrancy.
- Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in improving Downtown areas.
- Encourage mixed use development in existing buildings.





2.7 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks, open spaces, trails and trees are important in urban areas and together they form the Downtown's "green infrastructure". This enhances the Downtown's attractiveness, contributes to the community's physical and mental health, and benefits the environment.

*Parks, and open spaces provide Downtown residents, workers, and visitors opportunities to enjoy the natural amenities and facilities that the Municipality has to offer. People use parks, and open spaces to relax, exercise, and play. They are also valued gathering areas for socializing, holding events and celebrations, all of which help build a sense of community. The Downtown's existing parks, open spaces and trails are illustrated on **Map 7**.*

Well managed parks and open spaces help protect the environment. They can improve air quality, moderate temperatures, lower noise levels, and help reduce stormwater management costs by capturing and absorbing rain and snow. Trees and shrubs provide a habitat for wildlife and encourage ecological diversity.

Map 7. Existing Parks and Open Space



REGIONAL PARKS

Municipal *Park* facilities in *Downtown* include two regional facilities: MacDonald Island Park and Snye Point Park.

MacDonald Island Park is operated by the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo, a Not-for-Profit organization, in collaboration with the Municipality. Amenities include indoor facilities (such as pools, indoor rinks, and a fitness center), and outdoor facilities (such as an outdoor stadium and golf course) and trails.

Snye Point Park is owned and operated by the Municipality. Amenities include seating and play areas and proposed beach volleyball and boat launch. The park is integral to the further development of the Waterfront as an outdoor recreation destination of the Downtown.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks have amenities such as playgrounds, trails, picnic and BBQ areas, sports fields and courts. There are four community parks in *Downtown*, including Lions Park, Heritage Park (Heritage Village), Borealis Park, and Kiyām Park.

OTHER PARKS, CEMETERY, AND SCHOOL GROUND SITES

Neighbourhood parks are natural grassed areas that have a minimum of facilities. Neighbourhood parks in *Downtown* include Biggs Avenue Park, Clearwater Soccer Park, Pond Crescent Park, Poplar Crescent Park, Birch Road Park, and the parkland near Boys and Girls Club. Doug McRae Park, owned by Keyano College, is a green space that forms part of the Keyano Clearwater main campus. Downtown also has three school ground sites, which include baseball diamonds and soccer field, running track, play and picnic areas. The Pioneer Cemetery (formerly known as Fort McMurray Cemetery) is located on Biggs Avenue, and is the oldest cemetery in Fort McMurray.

OPEN SPACE

Open spaces describe grassed areas that may also contain trees and shrubs. Some areas are maintained, and others are left in their natural state. Open spaces may be owned by the Municipality or by private landowners.

Open spaces are somewhat unevenly distributed in the developed areas of the *Downtown*. Maintained open spaces are largely concentrated in the south and central areas and primarily located within the residential neighbourhoods. Well maintained open spaces can enhance the attractiveness of a street or an area.

Natural areas can be found along the waterfronts of the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers, within MacDonald Island Park and the Waterfront. These natural areas contribute to ecological diversity by providing habitats for wildlife, which benefits the environment.

TRAILS

Trails provide opportunities for exercising, socializing and for getting from one area of the *Downtown* to another area. The existing trails in the Downtown are largely contained within MacDonald Island Park, and along the Snye, connecting south of the Snye to Snye Point Park. Other short segments are scattered through the *Downtown* and connect to sidewalks. The *Downtown* currently lacks a comprehensive network of trails and sidewalks connecting the parks and open spaces. A safe, well connected trails network is an essential component of the *Downtown*.

TREES

Trees are important in urban areas. As well as being visually pleasing, they benefit the environment by reducing the *heat island effect*, contributing to cleaner air, and helping water retention and reducing runoff.

The tree cover in the *Downtown* is patchy; trees can be found in municipal parks and open spaces, and in privately owned gardens and commercial spaces. There are some stretches of road which are tree-lined, the Municipality having taken the opportunity to plant them when carrying out its sidewalk renewal program.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During engagement, when people were asked where revitalization would have the most impact in the *Downtown*, “parks and open spaces” received the second most responses. They are important to people’s experiences and impressions of the *Downtown* and were frequently identified as one of its key assets.

CHALLENGES

- Improving *safety* and making parks accessible to all.
- All season access and use of parks and trails.
- Parks and open spaces are underutilized in the winter months.
- Need for new parks and open spaces.
- From the analysis in the 2019 RMWB Parks Master Plan, Downtown is underserved, with only 3.3 hectares of parkland (parks, open spaces, and trails) per 1,000 residents, while The Canadian Standard for the provision of parkland (parks, open spaces, and trails) is 7.6 hectares per 1,000 residents.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand trail network to create interconnected parks and open space network.
- Use of underutilized and vacant sites to create new parks.
- Increase year-round use of parks and trails.
- Use of parks for programmed events such as festivals, sports competitions, community celebrations.
- Plant trees on key street and transport corridors.
- Maintaining the existing tree cover by replacing trees that are removed.





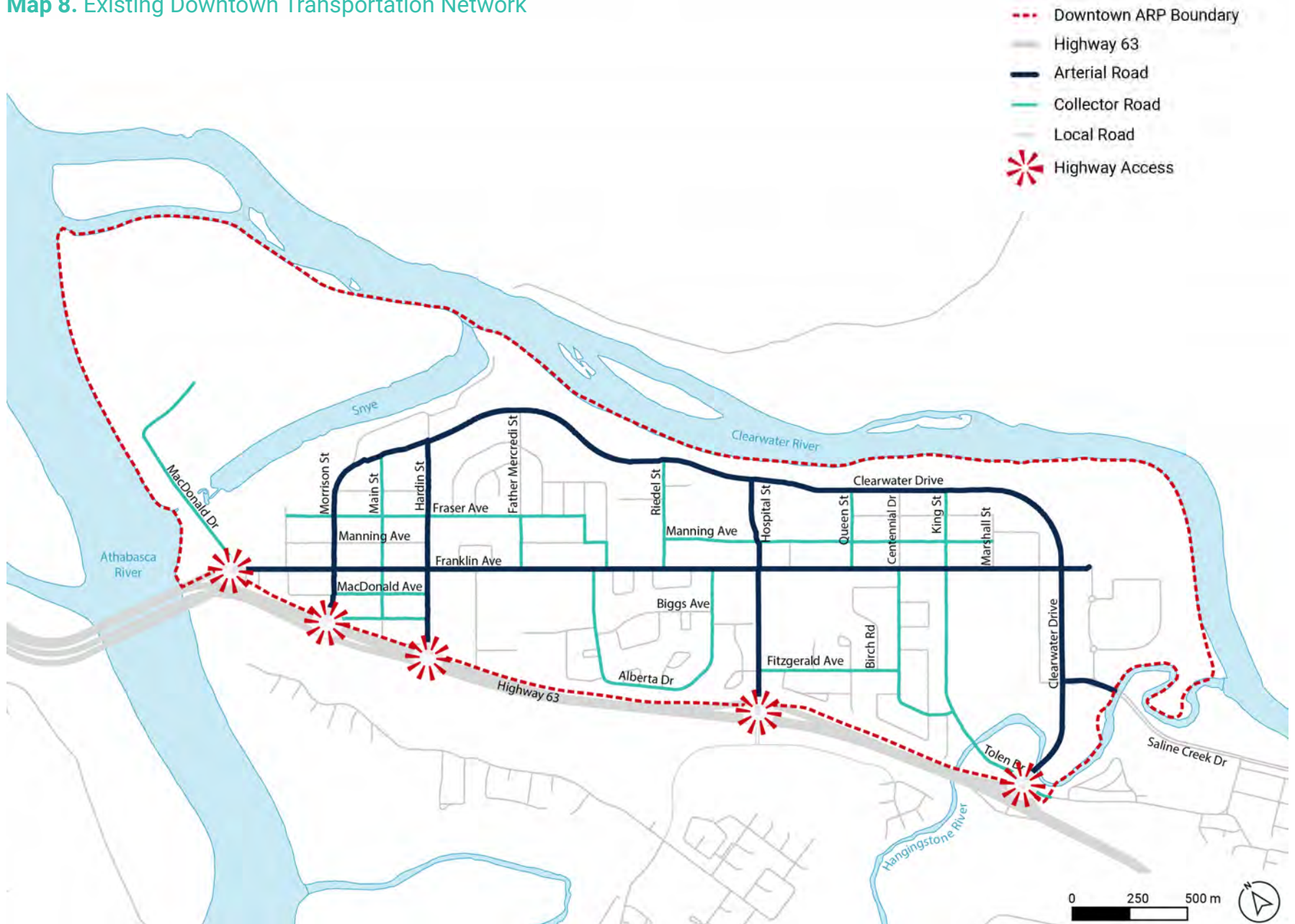
2.8 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

A well connected, *multi-modal* transportation and mobility network ensures the *Downtown* is connected to surrounding areas in Fort McMurray and the Region and ensures that people can access amenities and destinations in *Downtown* using their preferred mode of travel. *Downtown's* transportation and mobility networks allows residents, workers, students, and visitors to travel to and through the *Downtown* and the destinations within it.

ROADS AND STREETS

The *transportation* network is *Downtown's* structure of roads and streets that enable the movement of vehicles including public transit. The *Downtown* is primarily accessed from the Highway 63, via five arterial roads namely: Franklin Avenue, Morrison Street, Hardin Street, Hospital Street, and Clearwater Drive. The hierarchy of roads that makes up the *Downtown's* transportation network is shown in **Map 8**.

Map 8. Existing Downtown Transportation Network



PUBLIC TRANSIT

The Municipality provides multiple forms of public transit within its *Downtown* core including regular bus service to all its major neighbourhoods with *connections* to public service, retail, and other areas of interest. The existing services include conventional buses, rural buses, and specialized *transportation* for individuals with disabilities (SMART Bus). **Map 9** highlights the existing *Downtown* routes, bus stops, and transit terminal.

The main routes travelling in and around the *Downtown* connect the Main Street Terminal to Abasand Heights, Beacon Hill Drive, Gregoire and Prairie Creek, Fort McMurray Airport, Longboat Landing, Syncrude Sport and Wellness respectively.

The *Downtown* is currently served with 70 bus stops that are well-maintained equipped with benches and shelters at many stops. The majority of bus shelters include heaters, first introduced in 2015.

Engagement revealed that public transit is an important option for people travelling to and from the *Downtown*. The Main Street Terminal is the only terminal in the *Downtown*. Creating a covered terminal with facilities for both staff and transit users, was the top response to improving transit services.

MOBILITY NETWORK

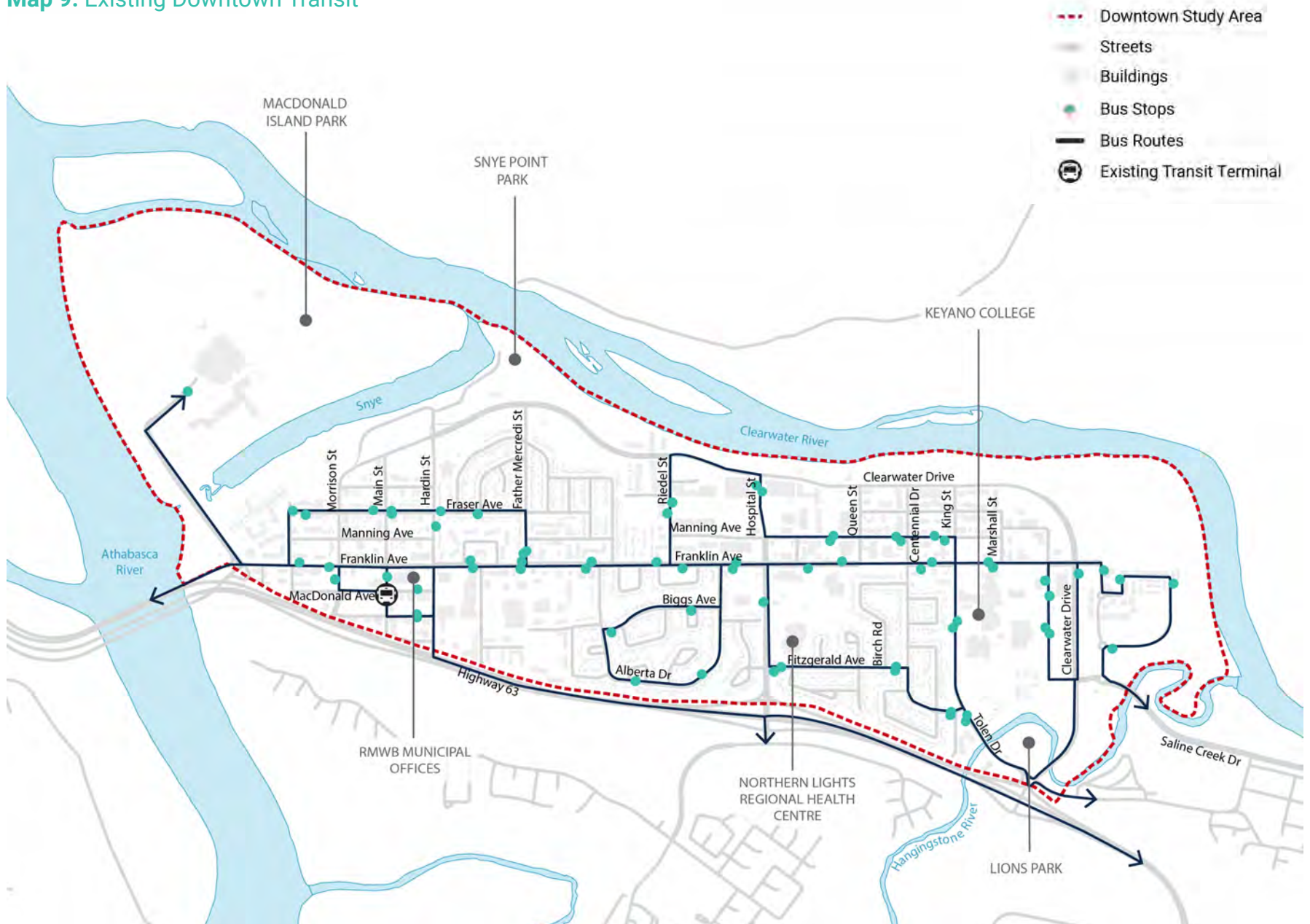
The *mobility* network includes *active transportation* facilities such as sidewalks, trails, and paths that allow people to walk, wheel, and bike in the *Downtown*.

The existing mobility network consists of sidewalks and trails on both sides of streets except in some areas where sidewalks are available on one side only.

Trails and paths provide *active transportation* connections within parks and open spaces. Some sidewalks are narrow in width and do not provide a buffer from vehicle travel lanes and the trail network is currently disconnected in some locations with little *wayfinding* signage to help people navigate the *Downtown*. The *Downtown* Wayfinding Plan will support park and trail sign identification and directions.

Currently, there are no bicycle lanes or marked bicycle routes in the *Downtown*.

Map 9. Existing Downtown Transit





PARKING

The Mobility and Parking Study (2023) found that the *Downtown* has sufficient parking to meet the current and future demands with 13,534 parking stalls located on public and private property throughout the *Downtown*. Based on the Land Use Bylaw 99/059 there are 9,731 parking stalls that are required for all existing developments, and currently there are 11, 248 parking stalls that are available. In addition, there are 1,090 on-street parking stalls available, with a further estimated 1,000 parking stalls present at MacDonald Island Park.

Based on parking occupancy studies carried out in 2016 and 2017, the on-street parking utilization rate was approximately 45% at the time. A follow-up study was conducted in 2021 during the summer and winter, which indicated that on-street and off-street parking was significantly under-utilized with less than 30% of parking being utilized for retail, business, hospitality and accommodation, and educational uses. The impacts of Covid-19 public health restrictions were taken into consideration when conducting the study in 2021. While the public health restrictions may have been influential in the utilization estimates, based on historical trends the general conclusion of parking being under-utilized in the *Downtown* stays unchanged. For this reason, the ARP does not call for additional parking within the *Downtown*.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

One of the top recurring themes that emerged from the 2019 engagement was the need to create an attractive, and well-connected pedestrian friendly *Downtown*, supported by convenient parking.

CHALLENGES

- Vehicular-focused network.
- Only one bus terminal.
- Inadequate transit services for getting around in the *Downtown*.
- Limited pedestrian environment that is not accessible to all.
- Disconnect between trails, paths, and sidewalks.
- Poor *accessibility* in winter.
- Lack of bicycle routes and facilities.
- Uneven distribution and use of parking spaces.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Introduce pedestrian-friendly measures.
- Incorporate *accessibility* improvements.
- Improve and upgrade the existing bus terminal.
- Develop a second bus terminal.
- Use *wayfinding* signs to improve connectivity between paths, trails and sidewalks.
- Introduce cycle routes.
- Develop management strategies to make better use of existing parking.



2.9 HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

Fort McMurray's modern-day town centre lies between the confluence of the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers, and the confluence of the Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers. The *Downtown* Area is located on the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and unceded territory of the Métis people.

First Nations and the Métis' knowledge and history predate the settlement that became known as Fort McMurray. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the development of the fur trade, and what is now the area of *Downtown* Fort McMurray became an important junction on the fur trade route from eastern Canada. By 1870, it had become an established Hudson's Bay fur trading post. It continued to operate as an important river and rail-based freight transportation hub until the early 1950s.

Fort McMurray has since gained prominence for its oil industry. With the development of the industry in the in the 20th century, the town has become the centre of Alberta's oil sands industry.

The development of the oil sands and its supporting industries in the latter half of the 20th century created the need for more workers, and Fort McMurray is now home to a large and culturally diverse population.

The new construction needed to accommodate the growing population was initially concentrated in the *Downtown*. The development of apartment buildings, town houses, and retail malls replaced earlier buildings and the area of the *Downtown* expanded. This was not without controversy; in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the residents of the predominately Métis settlement of Moccasin Flats, were evicted to make way for an apartment building. The Municipality acknowledged what took place and, as part of several actions to advance reconciliation of the events at Moccasin Flats, Concil approved funding for a memorial, and updated the Community Identification *Policy's* objective to include honouring Indigenous place names and history in recognizing the history of the Region.

PRESERVING AND RECORDING HISTORY

The *Downtown* is an important location in the preservation and recording of Fort McMurray's and the Region's history. It is home to the Fort McMurray Heritage Village and the Heritage Shipyard. the Fort McMurray Heritage Society created the Heritage Village on land donated by the Municipality in 1964, and in 2014 opened the Heritage Shipyard. The 6.6-acre Heritage Village contains numerous historic buildings and a collection of large artifacts, and the Shipyard showcases six historic vessels, two train cars and a collection of artifacts.

The Municipality's Heritage Resources Management Plan (2023) helps ensure the future of the Regions historic places. A Heritage Inventory lists significant sites eligible to be designated Municipal Historic Resources (MHR), meaning they are designated by municipal bylaws and are legally protected heritage sites. The inventory is kept up to date by working with communities and Indigenous partners to designate important historical places and *landscapes* that meet specific criteria.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS

The Municipality recognises the value of encouraging and supporting cultural traditions through education, community development and the arts (which encompasses a whole range of activities such as the spoken word, literature, film, theatre. music, dance, painting, and sculpture).

The RMWB is a culturally diverse region. First Nations and Métis are the First Peoples of Fort McMurray. Their cultures embrace a strong sense of family and community that are celebrated through ceremony, dance, music, games, story telling, nature foraging, and traditional dress. It is important that the *culture* and traditions of the First Nations and Métis people are respected and embraced as a key part of the Downtown's cultural identity.

DOWNTOWN DIVERSITY AND CULTURE

The rich history of Indigenous Peoples is complemented by diverse and dynamic cultural traditions inspired by people from across Canada and around the world who have settled in the Region. Supporting the Region's cultural development will enhance quality of life for all, provide opportunities for the economy, and help attract and retain newcomers to this Region.

DOWNTOWN VENUES

Residents and visitors can experience arts and cultural performances at the Keyano Theatre and Arts Centre, which includes two theatres, music and visual arts classrooms.

MacDonald Island contains a number of venues and facilities:

- Shell Place which hosts a variety of live entertainment events.
- Suncor Community Leisure Centre is home to the Kirschner Family Community Art Gallery.
- Wood Buffalo Public Library contains a visual arts studio, Aboriginal Interpretive Trail.
- MacDonald Island will also be the home of the McMurray Métis Cultural Center, which is currently under construction.

PUBLIC ART

Parks, open spaces, trails and the *public realm* play a significant locational role in the expression of Fort McMurray's *culture*, *heritage*, and the arts. They provide opportunities for the installation of permanent and temporary public art as well as acting as venues for festivals and events.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Public engagement identified a need to increase the amount of cultural and recreation festivals, events and programs in the *Downtown*. These types of events were identified as infusing energy and adding vibrancy to the *Downtown*.

Importantly they provide opportunities for people to get together and create a sense of community and contribute to the quality of life.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of visibility of the Downtown's history, heritage and cultural traditions.
- Need for a more cohesive and coordinated approach to organizing celebrations and events.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Maximize use of existing facilities for festivals, ceremonies, story telling, other community events, and public art displays.
- Studio and makerspaces to support the arts in the *Downtown* and the Region.
- Temporary use of under-used and vacant land and buildings.
- Incorporate art into trails and the *public realm*.
- Use public buildings to display murals and lighting installations.
- Collaboration with First Peoples to highlight their history and heritage in the Downtown.
- Research and update the Heritage Inventory of the Heritage Resources Management Plan for Downtown sites and building.

3 **Vision, Goals & Objectives**

3 VISION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

3.1 VISION

The vision for the *Downtown* sets out what is intended to be achieved by the ARP's policies and guidelines. The vision reflects the 2019 engagement, when participants were asked what *Downtown* revitalization meant to them. The vision was also validated during engagement in 2020.

3.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals for the ARP have been crafted from the vision for *Downtown* and have been separated into the five categories of **Land Use; Built Form; Parks and Open Space; Transportation and Mobility; and Heritage, Culture, and Public Art**. Each goal is an aspirational statement for the future of the *Downtown*. Goals are supported by a series of objectives. Objectives are more specific and provide a framework and direction for the policies of this ARP.

Goals and Objectives, shown below, are addressed through the overarching or *Downtown*-wide policies in Section 4 and the Area Specific Policies in Section 5.





VISION

The *Downtown* is an all-seasons, accessible destination that showcases our people, our businesses, our services, and our amenities. Vibrant spaces, inviting storefronts, an accessible waterfront and unique experiences will welcome residents and visitors to the *Downtown* in a safe and memorable environment.

LAND USE

Downtown is an important civic and economic hub in the RMWB. It is where people come to do business with the Municipality and other partners, and a place of learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship. It is also home to a diverse population, who require a range of housing types and access to local facilities and amenities is important.

GOAL

To encourage, support, and foster economic activity and become a regional economic leader, as well as a destination for goods, services, knowledge-building, and supporting local business. The *Downtown* will meet the needs of residents by providing a range of housing types, employment opportunities and places to visit.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Promote the *Downtown* as a centre for public administration, social sector, recreation, education, and healthcare in the RMWB.
- b. Identify areas that will act as catalysts and attract investment in similar or complementary uses.
- c. Support retail development and attract diverse businesses.
- d. Encourage new development within the *Downtown* while supporting existing businesses, services, social sector and amenities.
- e. Allow for the development of a diverse range of housing types that will attract new residents and enable existing residents to remain in the *Downtown* at all life stages.
- f. Support the development of local (neighbourhood-level) facilities and amenities to meet the needs of *Downtown* residents.
- g. Seek and encourage creative solutions to make use of vacant and underutilized land and buildings.
- h. Advocate and partner with all levels of government and stakeholders to deliver consistent and accessible services.

BUILT FORM

Downtown's built form contributes to its vibrancy and attractiveness year-round. It is what makes the *Downtown* inviting and a place where people feel welcomed and safe.

GOAL

To become a hub for residents and tourists, the *Downtown* must be an engaging, memorable, and a vibrant area, where people feel safe, comfortable, and welcomed. It should also be an exciting destination where people can celebrate, shop, visit, and participate in activities.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Foster a sense of place through architectural design, and the use of colours, lighting, and other materials.
- b. Develop safe, accessible, inclusive, welcoming, public spaces.
- c. Create a pedestrian-focused *Downtown* through the design and siting of buildings, the *public realm*, and amenities.
- d. Improve *Downtown* visualization through the creation of a strategy that identifies and coordinates municipal investment and enhances beautification standards.
- e. Make winter a positive part of a four-season lifestyle through enhancing livability and reducing human discomfort.





PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks, open spaces, trails, and trees benefit not only the community's health and wellbeing but also the environment. They provide unique opportunities for recreation and connection to nature in an urban environment.

GOAL

While respecting Indigenous ways of knowing and connection to the land, the Municipality will enhance the *Downtown's* open space, *parks*, and natural areas to provide opportunities for connection, relaxation, and recreation, as well as help reduce the impacts of climate change.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Protect and strengthen the *Downtown's* natural environment for the ecological, climate, and quality of life benefits they bring.
- b. Increase the *safety*, usability and *accessibility* of parks and trails for year-round use.
- c. Enhance Community Parks and provide more opportunities for community events, gatherings and activities.
- d. Create an interconnected network of pedestrian trails and bicycle paths linking *parks* and open spaces throughout the *Downtown*.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Well connected *transportation* and mobility networks are vital for the *Downtown's* future development and prosperity. Providing a range of *transportation* choices enables all ages and abilities to travel to and within the *Downtown*.

GOAL

Downtown will be a well-connected and accessible area through the creation of *transportation* and *mobility* networks that are safe, comfortable, and accessible to all users year-round.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Provide a range of *transportation* and *mobility* options to travel to and throughout the *Downtown*.
- b. Improve the *safety* and *accessibility* of transportation and mobility networks.
- c. Improve transit services within the *Downtown*. Develop a connected network of trails, sidewalks and bicycle paths throughout the *Downtown*.
- d. Provide sufficient and well managed parking spaces to residents and businesses.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

Downtown is the historical and cultural centre of Fort McMurray. Rich in diversity, the *Downtown* will be a place where visual storytelling is shared, the past is honoured and celebrated, and the *culture* and traditions of the First Nations and Metis are respected.

GOALS

Commemorate and celebrate the history of the *Downtown*, the people and their cultural traditions.

Honour the *culture* and traditions of Indigenous Peoples through relationship building and authentic acts of truth and reconciliation.

OBJECTIVES

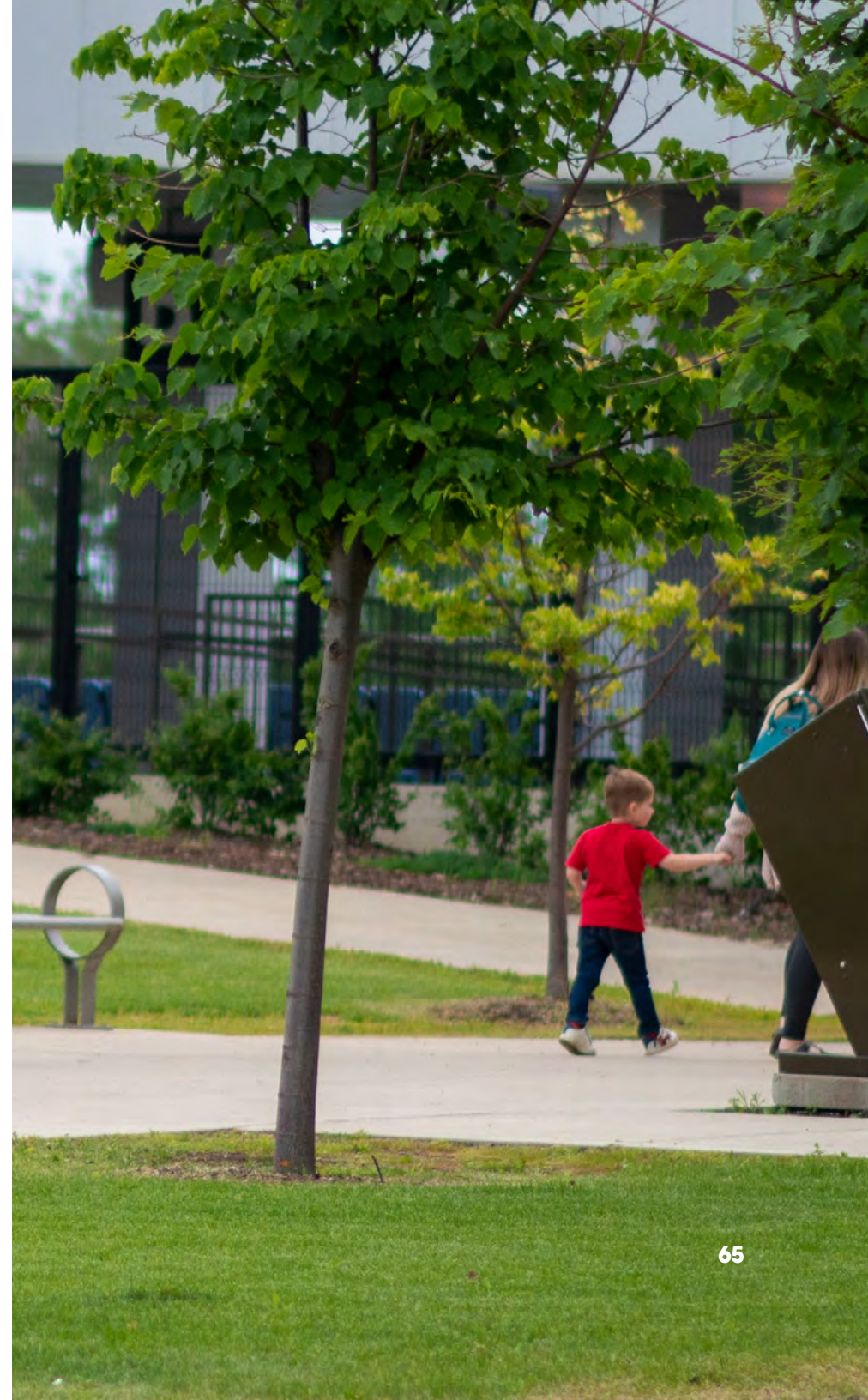
- a. Recognize, protect and conserve historic buildings and sites.
- b. Support opportunities to connect, and celebrate the history and diversity of people, cultures, and traditions that make the *Downtown* and the Region unique.
- c. Acknowledge and support Indigenous heritage and *culture*.
- d. Amplify the cultural expression of *Downtown* through the arts, including public art.

4 **Downtown ARP Overarching Policies**

4 DOWNTOWN ARP OVERARCHING POLICIES

The policies in Section 4.0 are broadly applicable to all areas of the ARP. Over-arching policies set out how the objectives are to be achieved in broad terms and meet the goals. These policies are categorized as follows:

- Land Use
- Built Form
- Parks and Open Space
- Transportation and Mobility
- Heritage, Culture, and Public Art



4.1 LAND USE

Land use policies cover the following:

- *Development Nodes*
- Commercial Uses including Retail and Offices
- Entertainment and Recreation
- Community Services and Institutional Uses
- Housing
- Vacant Lots and Buildings

To support the *Downtown* as a regional centre '*Development Nodes*' have been identified for specific areas. These are areas where there is a concentration of uses such as commercial or civic buildings, or a mix of both, which are connected to each other and to their surrounding neighbourhoods by important *transportation* corridors. The *Development Nodes* will act as catalysts and leverage the concentration of people, businesses, services, and amenities needed to revitalize the *Downtown*.

The policies for commercial uses, entertainment and recreation, and community services support the *Downtown* as the economic and civic centre of the Region and enhance its role as a centre for learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship. They are intended to help attract people, organizations, and businesses offering goods, services, and employment.

Housing policies encourage and support a range of housing types that will help retain the existing and diverse population and attract new residents.

Vacant lots and buildings policies identify potential opportunities for re-use and *redevelopment* to create new and innovative spaces.

Public and private investments and initiatives are vital to the *Downtown's* sustained revitalization and development. Therefore, collaboration and working with all stakeholders and Indigenous partners is important for successful policy delivery and implementation.

DEVELOPMENT NODES

- 4.1.1** Identify and support the creation of development nodes (see **Map 10**) focused on key locations in the:
- a. Business and Civic Area;
 - b. Entertainment/Large Format Area;
 - c. Hospital/Medical Area; and
 - d. King/Educational Area.
- 4.1.2** Allow for specific and complementary businesses, services, and other uses, to locate within the *Development Nodes* by:
- a. use of municipal incentives; and
 - b. partnering with Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism to market the *Development Nodes*
- 4.1.3** Promote *Development Nodes* as concentrated activity areas, by encouraging *infill development* and *redevelopment*.

OFFICES, RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL

- 4.1.4** Encourage the social sector, and public and private administration functions to locate in existing vacant office spaces.
- 4.1.5** Support the development of a variety of innovative spaces, sizes, and formats for commercial and retail projects. These may include:
- a. urban markets
 - b. pop-ups;
 - c. studio and workshop spaces; and
 - d. urban reserves.
- 4.1.6** Allow for the development of a variety of business types and scales in order to create a diversified local economy, and fill the gap of current market spending leakage by:
- a. re-use and reconfiguration of existing commercial spaces;
 - b. introducing programs and incentives to support small- to medium- sized commercial activity.

OFFICES, RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL (CONTINUED)

- 4.1.7** Encourage partnerships between local business groups, property owners, institutions, and Indigenous partners to:
- a. promote Indigenous entrepreneurship and commercial activity, innovation, and knowledge-sharing.
 - b. create opportunities for a variety of permanent and temporary retail spaces that showcase “local” goods and services.
- 4.1.8** Encourage collaboration with industry and academic institutions through funding opportunities and incentives to promote synergies, support new ideas and innovation, and support the testing of new ideas and emerging industries.

ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATIONAL

- 4.1.9** Support and improve access to Downtown’s existing public and private recreation and entertainment amenities through enhancing transit and active transportation connections.
- 4.1.10** Encourage large-format entertainment, and indoor-recreational uses to be located within the Downtown through supportive municipal regulations, public and private partnerships, and other initiatives.

COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

- 4.1.11** Continue to support the development of new and existing new assisted living and group accommodations in areas that are well-connected to transit and active transportation paths.
- 4.1.12** Encourage partnerships and initiatives with stakeholders and Indigenous partners, including the Government of Alberta, for expansion of educational and healthcare activities.

HOUSING

- 4.1.13** Explore opportunities to attract new residents into the *Downtown* through a more diverse housing stock focusing on families and age-friendly options.
- 4.1.14** Encourage residential developments that provide a diverse range of housing stock and meet the needs of all income levels by partnering with stakeholders and developers.
- 4.1.15** Allow for the development of commercial and retail businesses within residential neighbourhoods to meet residents' daily basic needs and encourage a more walkable *Downtown*.

VACANT LOTS AND BUILDINGS

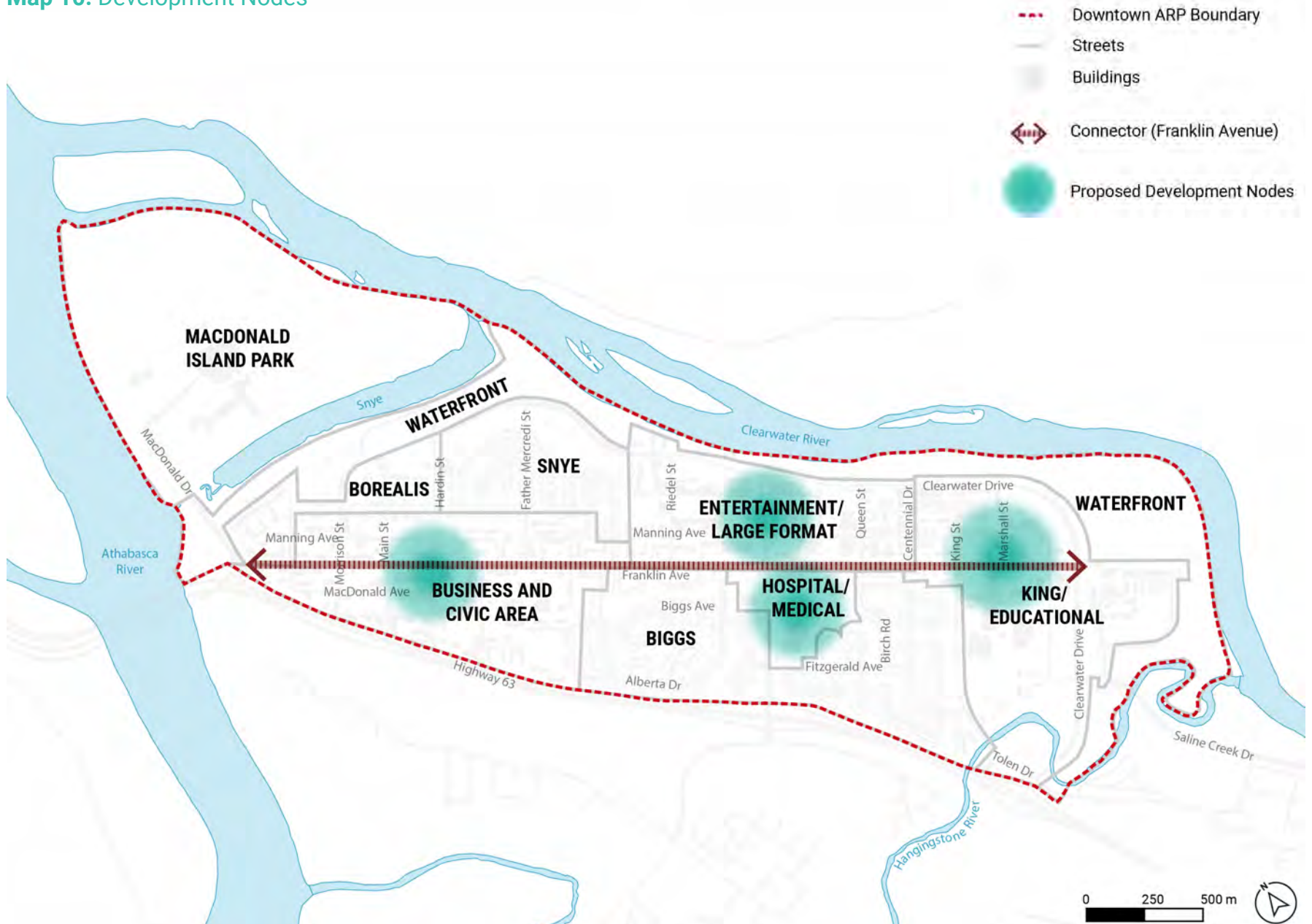
- 4.1.16** Encourage *infill development* of parking lots for larger retail centres to promote street-oriented development along Franklin Avenue.

- 4.1.17** Encourage higher intensity residential, commercial, and mixed-use development on underutilized or vacant lots that are easily accessed by transit and pedestrian paths to ensure convenient access for people with a range of mobility levels.

- 4.1.18** Address the commercial vacancy rates by working with private landowners, businesses, and other stakeholders to:
 - a.** develop target strategies; and
 - b.** promote programs and initiatives that provide opportunities to temporarily or permanently adapt, reuse, or redevelop underutilized existing buildings.



Map 10. Development Nodes





4.2 BUILT FORM

The *Downtown's* built form is about the shape, scale, and height of its buildings, the layout of the streets, and the quality of the public realm (such as lighting and benches). They determine whether people find it attractive and inviting, whether they feel safe, and how well they can move around in all weathers and seasons regardless of age or ability.

Feedback from the public engagements revealed that the community has a poor impression of the Downtown. They see it as generally unattractive, outdated, lacking cohesion and not pedestrian-friendly. Importantly, they perceive it to be unsafe.

To address the community's concerns, built form policies focus on:

- Design Guidelines
- Building Form and Design
- *Public Realm*
- Access and Design
- Safety
- Year-Round Design and Maintenance

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 4.2.1** Promote a high standard of architecture and design in new buildings, renovations to existing buildings, public realm upgrades, and safety and year-round use of the *Downtown* by:
- a. preparing Urban Design Guidelines; and
 - b. updating the Land Use Bylaw to require developers to adhere to the Urban Design Guidelines.

BUILDING FORM AND DESIGN

- 4.2.2** Require transitions in development intensity between higher intensity residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments and lower intensity residential developments such as single detached housing to ensure compatibility between developments.
- 4.2.3** Encourage parking for commercial, medium-density residential, and mixed-use developments to be located to the rear of buildings or internal to the sites and screened from public streets to promote the creation of a more inviting pedestrian-oriented street.

- 4.2.4** To ensure a human scaled street corridor and wind protection for pedestrians along Franklin Avenue, require:
- a. new buildings to step back upper storeys above the third floor; and
 - b. the stepping back of any new additions to buildings which are located above the third storey.

- 4.2.5** In new development, require transparency of ground floor commercial, office and retail façades to ensure permeability of building frontages and blending of private and public space to create a safer pedestrian environment.

- 4.2.6** Require new buildings and encourage existing buildings along Franklin Avenue to have active ground floor uses and primary building accesses that front onto Franklin Avenue to ensure activation of the street.

- 4.2.7** Adjacent to arterial roadways, drive-thru facilities should be located at the side or rear of the building and not between the building and the street. On non-arterial roadways, drive-thru facilities are encouraged to be located at the side or rear of the building. Where a drive-thru can only be accommodated between the building and the street, additional landscaping and screening will be required.

4.2.8 Continue to support the development of improvement programs and initiatives to provide municipal grants to property and business owners to improve the aesthetic appeal of buildings in the *Downtown*.

PUBLIC REALM

4.2.9 Prioritize *streetscape* improvements to Franklin Avenue Hardin Street, Hospital Street, and King Street, and the Waterfront Area. Improvements may include integrating elements not limited to: pedestrian paths; landscaping and street trees; and exploring options for cycling infrastructure.

4.2.10 Encourage a high standard of architecture and urban design in all major new buildings to promote a distinctive *public realm* with streets and sidewalks that are well-lit and landscaped.

4.2.11 Encourage new developments along Franklin Avenue to frame the edge of the street to ensure that built form and public spaces are coordinated to promote a cohesive public realm.

4.2.12 Promote Kiyām Community Park and Snye Waterfront Area as regional destinations for community events and gatherings to enhance the *Downtown's public realm*.

ACCESS AND DESIGN

4.2.13 For new developments and renovations of existing medium and high-density buildings, encourage the preparation of an *accessibility* assessment during concept design that identifies potential barriers to *accessibility* and proposed mitigations to ensure every individual can access developments regardless of age or ability.

4.2.14 Incorporate *universal design* principals in public and private development, including but not limited to pedestrian paths, building entrances, *parks*, and other open spaces.

SAFETY

4.2.15 Encourage development to implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to make the *Downtown* safe and inviting for residents and visitors by including but not limited to:

- a. using landscaping, including fencing and shrubbery, and change in texture and design, to convey a sense of ownership;
- b. properly placing windows and transparent building material to allow for natural surveillance all year; and
- c. providing adequate lighting both outside and in buildings in order to promote a safe nighttime environment.

4.2.16 Require commercial, medium- and high-density residential, and mixed-use developments to provide *active frontages* with main doors and windows oriented to the street to make the area attractive, safer, and accessible for pedestrians.

4.2.17 Investigate “dark areas” in the *Downtown* and prioritizing street light installation in these areas and encourage private land and building owners to enhance building facades with decorative lighting.

YEAR-ROUND DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

4.2.18 Prepare a Winter City Strategy to guide the design and maintenance of public and private development and spaces in the *Downtown* to create comfortable and livable spaces for residents and visitors year-round.



4.2.19 Encourage incorporation of winter city design in public and private development and spaces through broad principles such as:

- a. use of colour and lighting that creates vibrancy and a safer and inviting *public realm*;
- b. explore opportunities for snow removal and storage;
- c. weather and wind protection elements incorporated into new and existing building design, public amenities, and transit stops; and
- d. create spaces that encourage social gathering and interaction on public and private lands.

4.3 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Fort McMurray residents value being outside and enjoying green areas. The *Downtown's* green infrastructure of *parks*, open spaces, trails and trees plays an important role in fostering a healthy community and lifestyle and contributing to the quality of the environment.

In response to community feedback, the overarching policies for *parks* and open spaces are intended to enhance the recreational and social opportunities for *Downtown's* residents as well as those of the rest of Fort McMurray and the Region.

Safe and year-round access to *parks* and open spaces was an important concern raised during community engagement. Policies therefore support the development of a trail network connecting *parks* and open spaces that are accessible and activated in all four seasons, and ensure they are accessible to all ages and abilities.

In urban areas, trees are not only visually attractive, but play a significant environmental role in terms of air quality, providing shade, and reducing water run-off. Therefore, policies have been developed to protect, preserve, and identify opportunities to increase the number of natural areas and to improve the tree canopy which will contribute to the quality of the *Downtown's* environment.

See **Map 11** for proposed open space.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

4.3.1 Promote year-round use of *parks* by site design to provide comfort in all-seasons, including the use of quality and durable materials and use of lighting to create visual appeal.

4.3.2 Encourage *parks* and open spaces in the *Downtown* that provide active and *passive recreation* opportunities by integrating elements including but not limited to:

- a. *plazas* and hardscaping;
- b. trees, native plants, landscaping, and *Low Impact Development*;
- c. public art, interpretive features, landmarks, or water features;
- d. open turf or programmed areas to accommodate formal or informal sport and *active recreation* such as soccer, hockey, tennis, basketball, baseball, or cricket;

e. playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment;

f. urban and street furniture, picnic areas, gazebos, and lighting;

g. trails or sidewalks that connect to the surrounding *active transportation* network;

h. designated off-leash dog areas; and/or

i. small scale and/or temporary commercial development.

4.3.3 Support social programs, events, community gatherings developed by the Municipality and community-based groups in *parks*, throughout the year that cater to the diverse interests of people in the Region and visitors.

4.3.4 To increase *safety*, useability and *accessibility*, all new *parks*, and where feasible improvements to existing *parks*, should be designed with at least one public street frontage and take into consideration *universal design* and CPTED principles.

4.3.5 Require design of open spaces to complement adjacent land uses, including commercial and residential areas, through elements such as landscaping and street furniture to ensure interaction of spaces between private and public lands.

4.3.6 Consider investing in interim open space solutions for vacant or underutilized spaces within the *Downtown* to enhance open space options for users.

TRAIL NETWORK

4.3.7 Create a trail network using *universal design* principles that identify the key access points, and active mobility *connections* that provide access to the *Downtown* and other areas in Fort McMurray.

4.3.8 Identify and prioritize improvements to existing parklands in alignment with the RMWB Parks Master Plan.

TREES

4.3.9 Protect existing vegetation, trees, and woodlots during development of new and existing buildings as well as public infrastructure such as sidewalks and roads.

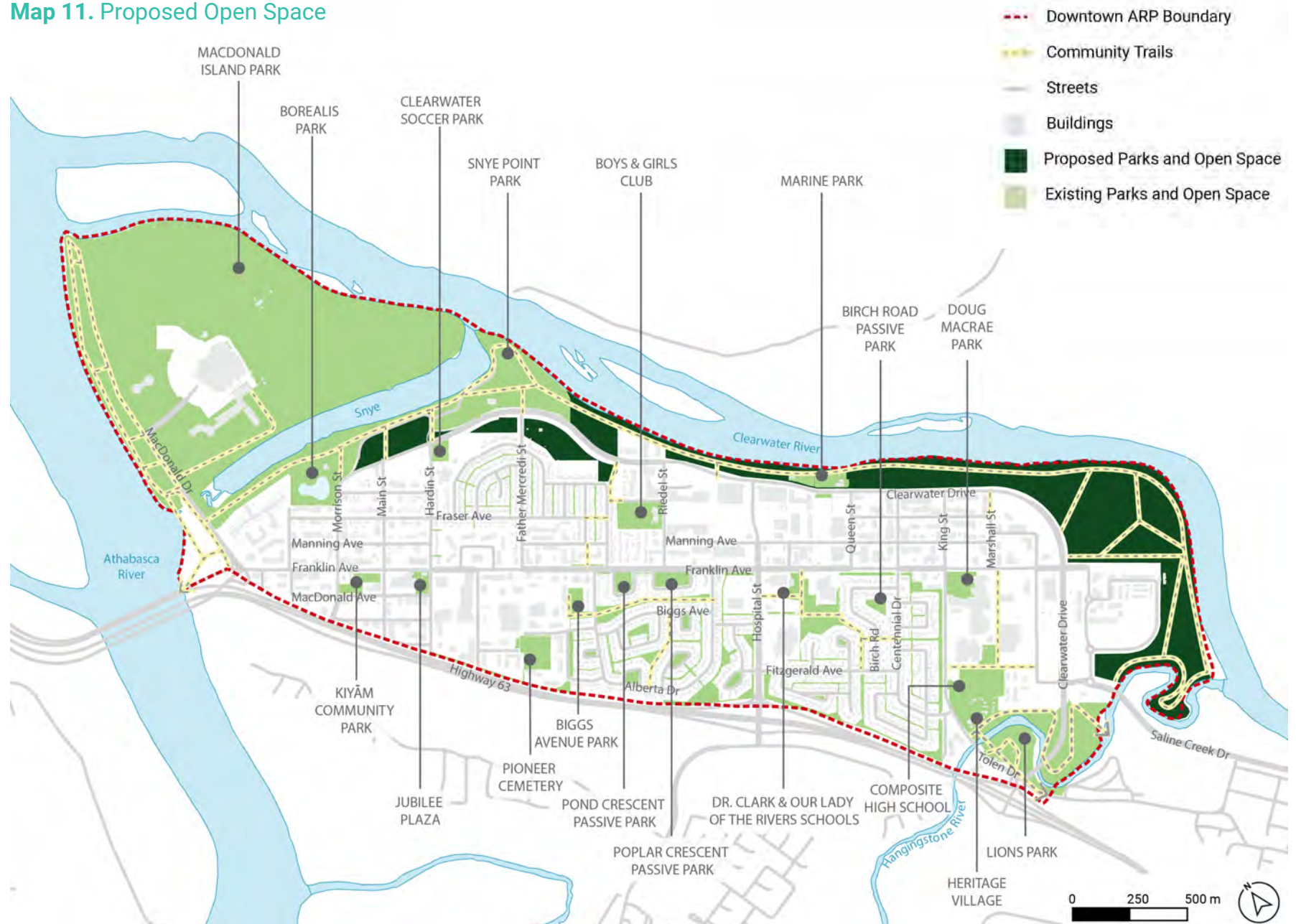
4.3.10 On public and private lands, require the replacement of trees that are removed for any reason (i.e., tree health, public *safety*, construction, etc.) to maintain the urban tree canopy.

4.3.11 Consider establishing a tree planting or tree canopy target for the *Downtown* to support enhancing the urban tree canopy and visual appeal of the *public realm* and promote reduction of the urban *heat island effect*.

4.3.12 Plant trees on key streets and transport corridors, including Franklin Avenue, Morrison Street, Hardin Street, Hospital Street, and Clearwater Drive.



Map 11. Proposed Open Space



4.4 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

The *Downtown's transportation and mobility* network allows residents, workers, students, and visitors to travel to and through the Downtown and the destinations within it. A well connected, *multi-modal* network ensures the *Downtown* is connected to surrounding areas in Fort McMurray and the Region and ensures that people can access the *Downtown* using their preferred mode of travel. The *transportation and mobility* network are essential to a thriving *Downtown* as it provides access to businesses and services and gives residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the *Downtown* and choices in how they move about.

The proposed *Downtown* Transportation Network and proposed Active Transportation Network is show in **Map 12** and **Map 13**, respectively.

The Transportation Network proposes three active street typologies within the ARP area: Street with Active Transportation Trails, Enhanced Streets, and Festival / Curbless Street.

The **Street with Active Transportation Trail** is designed to provide safe and efficient environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. It features upgraded bike infrastructure, pedestrian infrastructure, and sidewalks with separation to allow for convenient and safe access for every mode of transport.

Enhanced Streets focus mainly on improvements (i.e., street furniture, lighting, *landscape*, and sidewalks) to prioritize the *safety* and needs of pedestrians.

Festival / Curbless Street are streets with curbless sidewalks and limited vehicle traffic. This type of street is intended to create a shared space for pedestrians, motor vehicles, and street vendors with a focus on outdoor activities, entertainment, and celebration.

The street typologies are further defined through the Urban Design Guidelines.

ROAD SYSTEM

- 4.4.1** Support prioritizing street improvements, *active transportation* path enhancements, and transit routes based on the proposed hierarchy in the *Downtown* as noted in **Map 12**.
- 4.4.2** Investigate the feasibility of an extension of Fraser Avenue from MacIver Street to Riedel Street, including potential realignment to Gordon White Avenue.



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

4.4.3 Require the assessment condition of existing pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure and develop a strategy for active transportation path replacement focusing on prioritizing the most deteriorated infrastructure that does not meet universal design principles, or where there are apparent gaps in connectivity.

4.4.4 Prioritize improvements to *active transportation* paths:

- a. which connect through the neighbouring areas from Fort McMurray
- b. from north-south corridors that connected the Downtown to the Waterfront
- c. at arterial intersections connecting Franklin Avenue to Clearwater Drive.

4.4.5 Improvements to *active transportation* paths may include:

- a. textured road materials;
- b. wider and bumped out curbs at key intersections;
- c. wider sidewalks;

d. wayfinding signage;

e. introducing landscaping and other amenities such as street furniture and lighting; and

f. identifying cycle paths through road markings.

4.4.6 Explore opportunities to undertake pilot projects that would eventually lead to permanent measures to increase pedestrian and cyclist *safety*, such as exploring options to separate vehicles from *active transportation* paths.

4.4.7 Prioritize improvements to *active transportation* trails and enhanced streets that are the main connections between the *Downtown* and the Waterfront areas as identified in **Map 13**.

4.4.8 Explore options for multi-use paths during road renewal projects in the *Downtown*.

4.4.9 Support *wayfinding* in the *Downtown* through municipal led initiatives, such as the Downtown Fort McMurray Wayfinding Plan, to help residents and visitors navigate throughout the *Downtown*, highlight important locales, and provide a cohesive identity for the *Downtown*.

TRANSIT

- 4.4.10** Explore enhancements to the existing transit terminal and the potential need for additional *Downtown* terminal locations.
- 4.4.11** Explore the feasibility of a high frequency or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along Franklin Avenue as a connector to link the key *development nodes* in the *Downtown*.
- 4.4.12** Encourage transit stops to be located at activity nodes of retail, civic, employment centres and social service facilities to ensure public transit as a convenient *transportation* option.
- 4.4.13** Identify key areas within the *Downtown* to provide transit supportive amenities at bus stops including pedestrian path *connections*, lighting, benches, and shelters to promote public transit as a safe, comfortable, and convenient *transportation* option.



PARKING

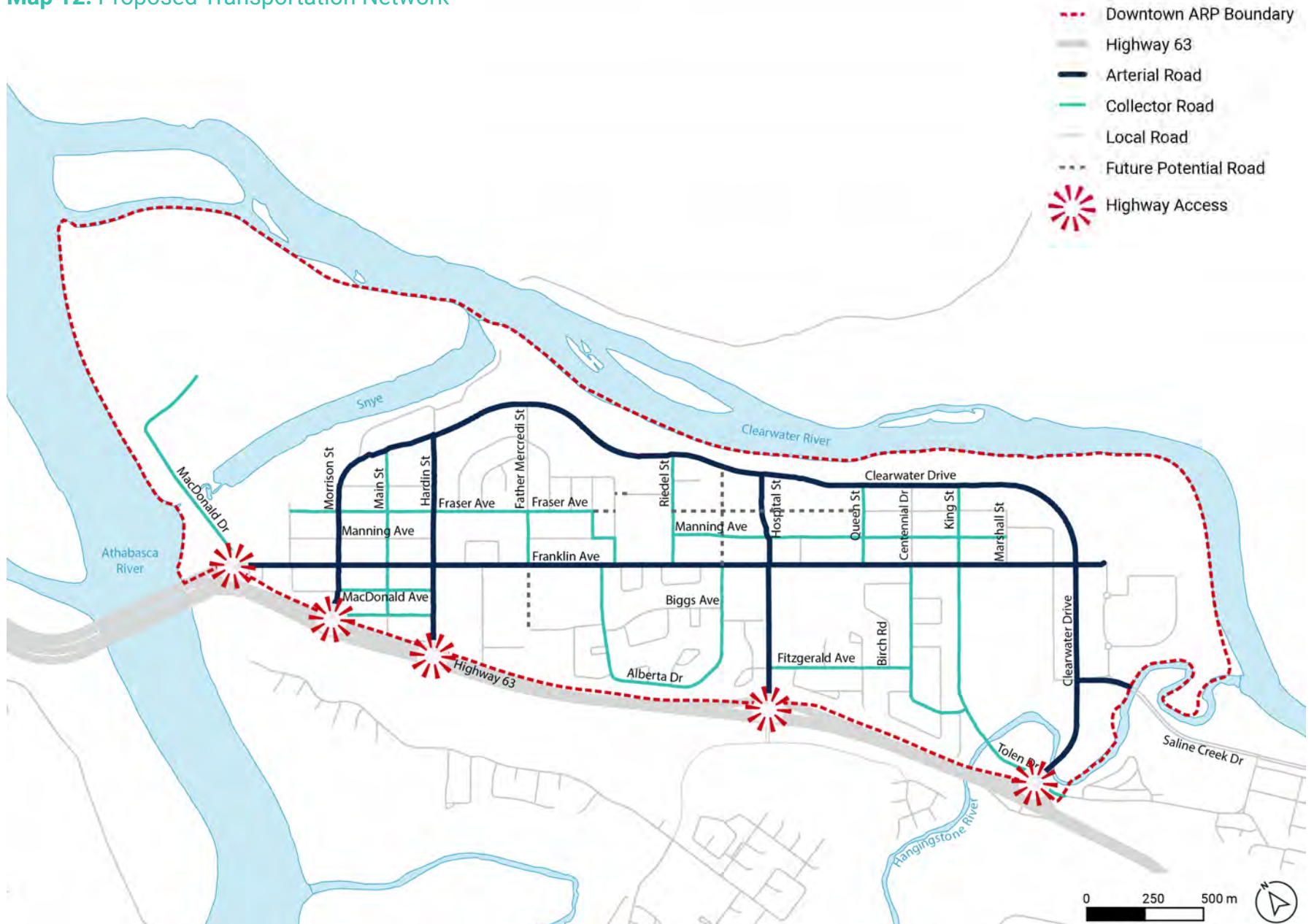
- 4.4.14** Investigate the impact of replacing angle parking with parallel on-street parking and widened sidewalks and pathways along Franklin Avenue to promote business access, traffic calming, and an enhanced *public realm*.
- 4.4.15** Investigate shared parking / parking management in business and commercial areas to let people adequately access the *Downtown's* business services by car.
- 4.4.16** Encourage vehicular access to parking facilities be provided from side streets where land uses are adjacent to Franklin Avenue to minimize impacts on pedestrians.
- 4.4.17** Facilitate construction of multi-level parking facilities with *connections* to public transit in strategic locations to limit the amount of land area devoted to surface parking and provide easy access to services and amenities in the *Downtown*.

ACCESSIBILITY

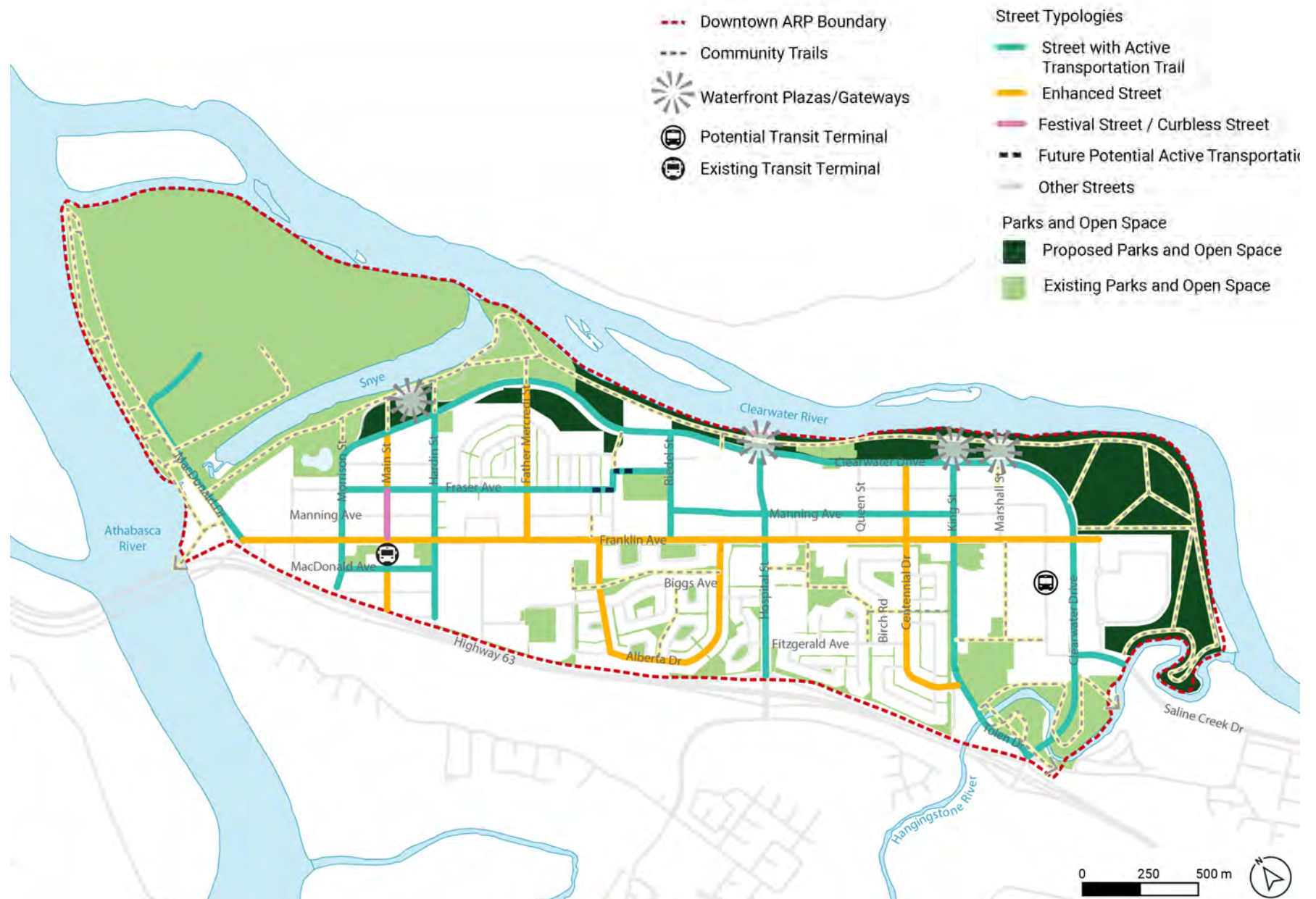
- 4.4.18** Prioritize *accessibility* improvements of municipal infrastructure in the *Downtown*, such as tactile domes, accessible audible signals, curb let-downs, sidewalk widening, and dedicated loading zones for *accessibility* support vehicles, to create a *Downtown* that is safe and welcoming for everybody.
- 4.4.19** Provide pedestrian scale lighting along sidewalks throughout the *Downtown* and pathways along the Waterfront to improve pedestrian and cycling *accessibility* and *safety*.
- 4.4.20** The Municipality shall require regular cleaning and snow clearing of transit stops, sidewalks, crosswalks, and paths to ensure year-round *accessibility* for pedestrians. Priority will be given to heavy traffic areas, such as the area around Jubilee Plaza and Keyano Clearwater Campus.



Map 12. Proposed Transportation Network



Map 13. Proposed Active Transportation Network



4.5 HERITAGE, CULTURE, AND PUBLIC ART

An authentic *Downtown* tells the history of not only *Downtown* but also of the wider region and people. The *Downtown* has the ability to showcase how the story of the Region is tied to the economy, location, rivers, traditional uses, historic residents, and a diverse population.

Existing *heritage*, *culture*, and public art sites as well as future opportunities are shown in **Map 14**. Proposed sites and opportunities will be addressed in the specific Downtown Area in which it is located in **Section 5.0**.



HERITAGE

- 4.5.1** Acknowledge and promote Indigenous *heritage* and *culture* through measures such as but not limited to incorporation of Indigenous place names, provision of cultural space, and integration of interpretive elements within the *Downtown* to ensure cultural understanding, learning, and truth and reconciliation.
- 4.5.2** Implement the Heritage Resource Management Plan (HRMP) to encourage the conservation, retention, and recognition of all *heritage* properties and sites in the *Downtown*. Support new development that is compatible with historic sites to promote the protection of *Downtown's* built *heritage* and historic landscapes.
- 4.5.3** Continue the implementation of the Plaques Program by displaying relevant information to describe the History of *Downtown* on Historic significant sites.

CULTURE

- 4.5.4** Work with Indigenous partners, to promote the Regions rich Indigenous *heritage* and *culture* and to recognize the importance of the *Downtown*, including the Waterfront, for local Indigenous Peoples through the creation of memorials, public art and gardens.
- 4.5.5** Encourage gateways to the *Downtown* to incorporate prominent signage, *landscape* elements, and lighting to promote visibility and *wayfinding* for travellers into the *Downtown* and to support creation of focal points that provides a sense of identity for the area.
- 4.5.6** In collaboration with community partners, the Municipality will encourage public activities and events in the *Downtown* throughout the year by providing a variety of places and spaces that can support gatherings of a variety of types and sizes to promote a vibrant and active *Downtown*.
- 4.5.7** Encourage participation in diverse arts, festivals, and cultural activities to celebrate the unique cultures within the Region, provide educational and growth opportunities, and enhance quality of life for all.
- 4.5.8** Prioritize Jubilee Plaza and Kiyām *Park* for promoting different community programs and celebrating Wood Buffalo's multiculturalism and diversity.
- 4.5.9** Support the development of public and private arts facilities (such as arts centres and incubators) that help create a vibrant arts community in the Region.

PUBLIC ART

- 4.5.10** Encourage public art in different site locations. The sites include *parks*, trails, greenspaces, infrastructure projects, gateways and corridors, *streetscapes*, transit, community facilities, and urban *redevelopment*.
- 4.5.11** Thoughtfully consider the incorporation of public art into regional *public realm* and larger scale municipal capital projects located within the *Downtown*, with priority given to the Waterfront area.
- 4.5.12** Encourage private developers to incorporate art, where possible within new developments in the *Downtown*. Art included on private land should promote the aesthetic improvement of buildings with blank walls, street corners, and underdeveloped areas to create visual interest and foster a sense of place in the *Downtown*.
- 4.5.13** Encourage and support the continued growth of visual and performing arts in the *Downtown* in collaboration with community partners, by:
- a. supporting the development of programs and facilities which support local visual artists and performance groups; and
 - b. identifying and leveraging provincial investments and grants.



Map 14. Heritage, Culture, & Public Art Sites and Opportunities



--- Downtown ARP Boundary

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites

- 1 Suncor Community Leisure Centre (Visual Arts Studio and Suncor Energy Centre for the Performing Arts) and Library
- 2 Shell Place
- 3 Aboriginal Interpretive Trail
- 4 Kiyām Community Park
- 5 Jubilee Plaza
- 6 Heritage Shipyard
- 7 Keyano Theatre and Arts Centre
- 8 Heritage Village
- 9 Boys and Girls Club
- 10 Mitchell's Cafe

Existing Religious Assemblies

- 11 St John the Baptist Catholic Parish
- 12 Jesus the Anointed One Church
- 13 Native Christian Fellowship
- 14 Markaz ul Islam (Mosque)
- 15 United Church of Canada
- 16 McMurray Gospel Assembly
- 17 All Saints Anglican Church of Canada
- 18 NorthLife Fellowship Baptist Church
- 19 The Lord's Heritage - RCCG

Proposed Sites and Opportunities

- 20 Art Incubator
- 21 Fort McMurray Fire Hall #1 (heritage site)
- 22 McMurray Métis Cultural Centre
- 23 Waterfront Park Welcome Circles
- 24 Moccasin Flats Memorial
- 25 Waterfront Park Urban Plazas
- 26 Public Art Opportunity: Transit Hubs
- 27 Public Art Opportunity: Franklin Avenue Public Art Walk
- 28 Heritage and Culture Opportunity: Integrate Heritage Village and Lions Park
- 29 Public Art Opportunity: Downtown Gateways



5 **Downtown ARP Area Specific Policies**

5 DOWNTOWN ARP AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES

This Plan divides the *Downtown* into smaller, geographic Areas based on their existing land uses and role within the *Downtown*, future plans, and opportunities for change and development to facilitate revitalization.

For convenience, the Area boundaries follow road lines. However, it should be noted that these are not hard or fixed boundaries. There is fluidity between the Areas and the boundaries mark likely areas of transition between an Area's future uses and functions, with that of the adjoining Area.

The Business and Civic Area is the heart of the Region's public administration, office, and retail. The Entertainment/Large Format Area is where we find many of the big box stores and entertainment uses within the *Downtown*. The Hospital/Medical Area is where we find the Northern Lights Regional Health Center and the aging-in-place facility. The Keyano Clearwater Campus is the focus of the King/Educational Area. The Waterfront Area provides direct access to the waterfront that many in the Region consider a key asset for Fort McMurray and the *Downtown*. The MacDonald Island Park Area features the Region's largest indoor recreation facility. The Biggs, Borealis and Snye Areas are predominately residential neighbourhoods.

While the policies provided in Section 4 apply broadly to the entire *Downtown*, including these Areas, the policies in Section 5 apply only to the Area specified.

The Downtown Areas are shown in **Map 15**. They fall into 3 groups:

Commercial and Community Services Areas

- Business and Civic Area
- Entertainment / Large Format Area
- Hospital / Medical Area
- King / Educational Area

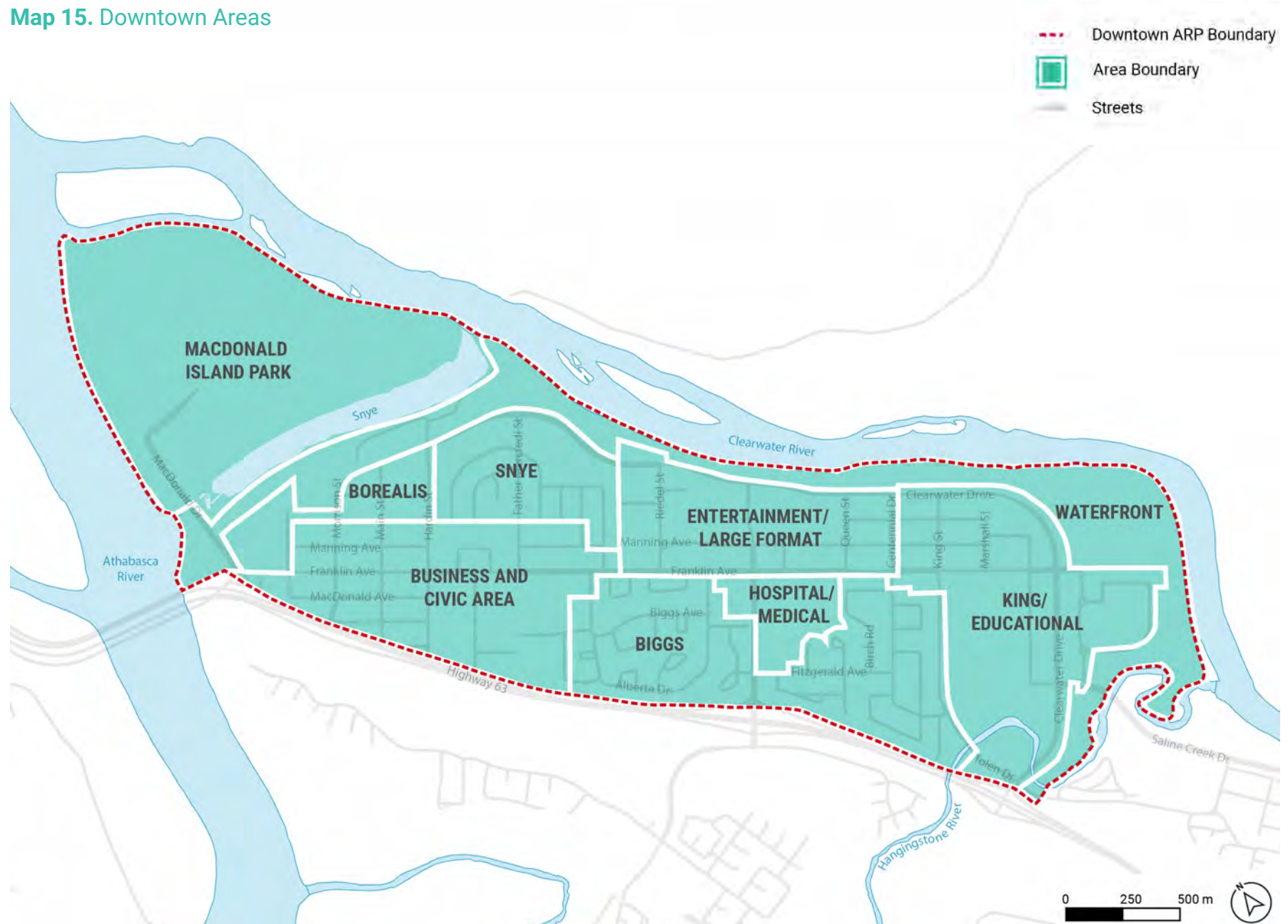
Green Space and Recreational Areas

- Waterfront Area
- MacDonald Island Park Area

Residential Neighbourhoods

- Borealis Area
- Snye Area
- Biggs Area

Map 15. Downtown Areas





5.1 BUSINESS AND CIVIC AREA

The Business and Civic Area is where there is a concentration of a range of uses, found in the centre of most towns and cities across Canada. It consists of a mix of uses, including offices, retailing, hotels, public open spaces, and residential developments.

EXISTING USES AND FEATURES

The most notable uses of this Area are the municipal and provincial government offices (Jubilee and Provincial Buildings); the Provincial Courthouse, Peter Pond Mall, Rivers Casino, Jubilee Plaza, and Kiyām Park. Main Street between MacDonald and Franklin Avenue serves as the transit hub for connection to and from Fort McMurray's residential areas and within the *Downtown*.

Most of the hotels within the *Downtown* are also concentrated in this Area, creating a demand for restaurants and cafes, supporting goods and services.

Residential development is mainly in the form of higher density apartment blocks. Lower density single family homes can be found along Fraser and Manning Avenues, in the area between Main Street and Father Mercredi Street.

The Area serves as a gateway to the *Downtown*, with three links from the Highway 63 (Hardin Street, Morrison Street and Franklin Avenue).

Retailing is also a key feature of the Business and Civic Area. In addition to Peter Pond Mall, there are two supermarkets, and a variety of smaller and locally owned outlets. Most retail development is in the form of strip malls and large format box stores with front yard parking. Car parks that are poorly maintained, with poor lighting, little or no landscaping and pedestrian pathways, create a poor impression of the *Downtown*.

However, as one of the Downtown's older areas, the two blocks between Hardin Street and Morrison Street, on the north side of Franklin Avenue have the look of the more traditional main street with building frontages coming up to the property line and the sidewalk.

The Business and Civic Area has several vacant and underutilized lands. The majority of sites are used as unpaved parking lots and are located to the rear of the properties on the south side of MacDonald Avenue. Feedback from the 2019 and 2020 public

engagement expressed concern about the length of time these lots had been undeveloped, since they were in a prominent location in the *Downtown*.

Public engagement also identified the need to improve the Main Street transit hub. A weather protected transit hub was seen as a way to make the *Downtown* more desirable and accessible.

Accessibility and connectivity of this area needs to be improved by providing connected sidewalks, trails and bike stops to ensure that no matter the mode of *transportation*, everyone will have sufficient access and *mobility* throughout and to key destinations such as Borealis Park and the Waterfront Area.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The Business and Civic Area has been identified as the location for one on the **Downtown Development Nodes**. This will be mainly focused on the area surrounding the Jubilee and Provincial Buildings, where professional and government services are concentrated. These are intended to act as a catalyst, attracting similar, and supporting business, and services and amenities such as restaurants. The transit hub is a key feature of the *Development Node*.

This will be jump-started by the Municipality's proposed consolidation of services within the Jubilee Building, and the refurbishment of the former Landmark cinema building on Manning Avenue, into an arts facility being developed by a local non-profit arts organization. This will bring additional workers into the area, to support existing businesses and services and create a demand for new ones.

The completion of Kiyām Park has added to the open space in the Business and Civic Area, and complements the existing Jubilee Plaza. Identifying "festival streets" for occasional use for events increases the variety and number of spaces for gatherings, events, and attractions.

The following policies apply to the Business and Civic Area as shown on **Map 16**, in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.1.1** Encourage commercial and professional offices, and accommodation services (i.e., hotel, motel, etc.) to locate in the *Development Node* to promote the continued importance of the area as Fort McMurray's main business district.
- 5.1.2** Support a variety of uses that generate activity in the Business Civic Area year-round and throughout the day and evening.
- 5.1.3** Encourage amenities and services needed for daytime employees, such as restaurants, coffee shops, and street vendors.
- 5.1.4** Encourage medium density mixed-uses in the area with commercial, office and retail located at grade and residential located above to provide a more friendly pedestrian environment and activation throughout the day and evening.
- 5.1.5** Encourage more intensive developments in the Area, especially west of Hardin Street, through *infill development* of vacant lots to promote intensification.
- 5.1.6** Encourage the development of small to medium scale retail and commercial uses to the west of Hardin Street to meet the daily needs of the surrounding residential areas.
- 5.1.7** Continue to support the upgrades of Peter Pond Mall to accommodate potential expansion of commercial and retail services that benefit residents of the Region.
- 5.1.8** The Municipality will support the development of an arts incubator on Manning Avenue and Morrison Avenue.
- 5.1.9** Along Manning Avenue, between Morrison Avenue and Main Street, develop public amenities to improve the public realm in the area around the arts incubator.

BUILT FORM

- 5.1.10** Encourage a high standard of architecture and urban design in all major new buildings.
- 5.1.11** Develop selected streets with specialized and different functions and characters.
- 5.1.12** Encourage the development of public amenities surrounding the Art Incubator to enhance the *public realm* and activation of these spaces.

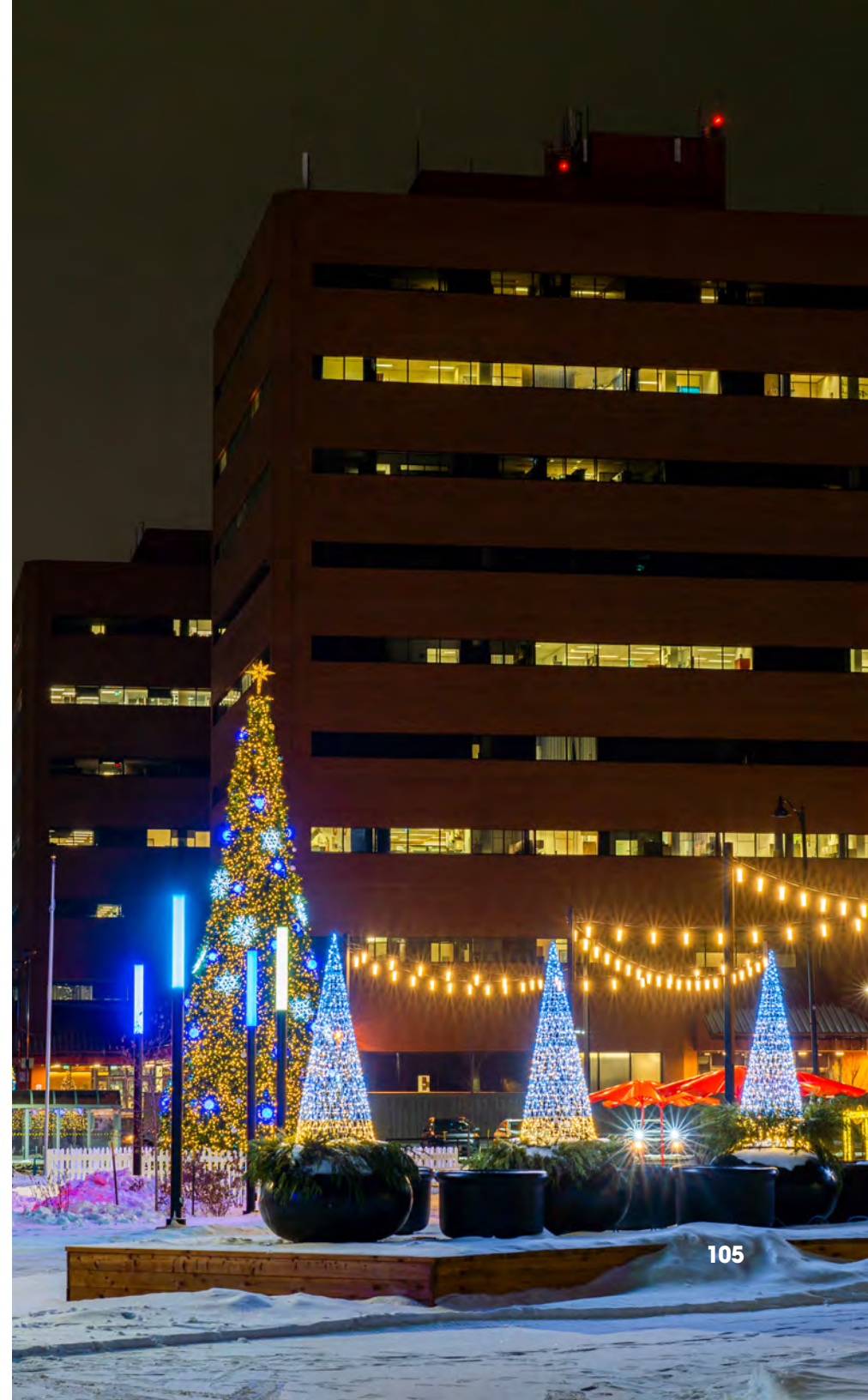
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.1.13** Partner with private property owners to encourage the creation of new *parks*, *plazas*, and open spaces within new and existing developments for residents, workers, and visitors.
- 5.1.14** Encourage active edges where buildings abut Kiyām park, new *parks*, and other open spaces to promote overlook into *parks* and open spaces and year-round active use.

TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY

- 5.1.15** Require the development of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, as well as safe and convenient bicycle parking to ensure sufficient access to the Waterfront, arts and culture facilities, and *parks* through *active transportation*.
- 5.1.16** Encourage construction of multi-level and/or underground parking facilities in the Business Civic Area to limit the amount of land area devoted to surface parking.
- 5.1.17** Encourage the development of cycling infrastructure along Morrison Street, Hardin Street, Fraser Avenue and MacDonald Avenue to promote *active transportation* in the Area.
- 5.1.18** Encourage, through Downtown Design Guidelines, replacement of angle parking with parallel parking and widened *public realm* within the Area to promote activation of the Area through widened sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture.

- 5.1.19** Support the enhancement of the existing transit terminal by improving the connectivity with *active transportation* paths, increased heated shelter, and/or potential development of public washrooms.

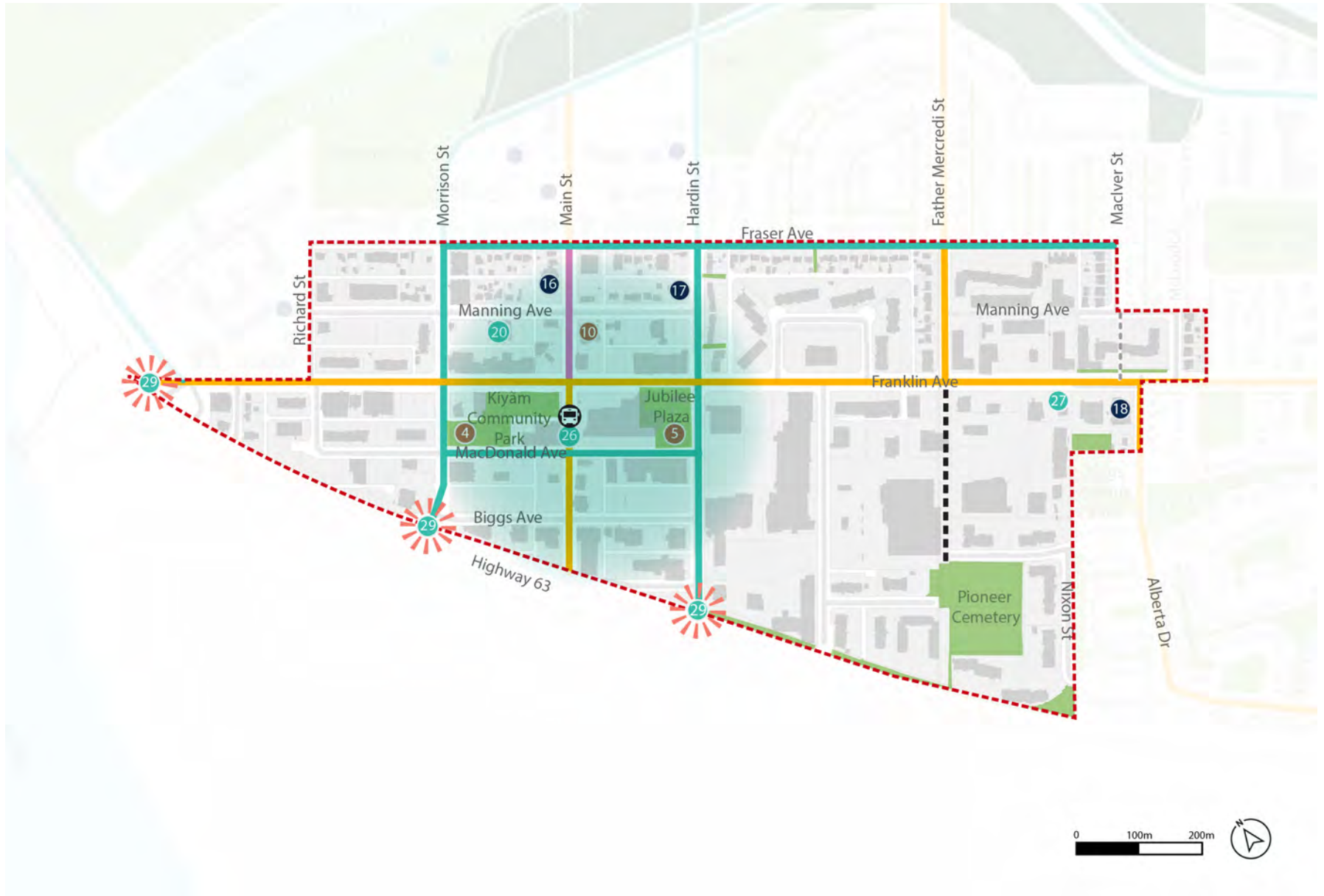


HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.1.20** Encourage and support events and festivals to occur along Main Street or MacDonald Avenue to activate the streetscape around Kiyām Park and Jubilee Plaza and promote awareness of the RMWB’s growing cultural diversity.
- 5.1.21** Encourage regular programming, including farmer’s markets, street parties, dining patios, and other events, within the Business Civic Node to celebrate the Area as the civic heart of the Downtown and Fort McMurray.
- 5.1.22** Encourage the installation of a gateway feature to promote Downtown visibility and identity at:
 - a.** the intersection of Highway 63 and Franklin Avenue/Morrison Street/Hardin Street.
- 5.1.23** Prioritize Jubilee Plaza for promoting different community programs and celebrating the RMWB’s multiculturalism and diversity.
- 5.1.24** Encourage the incorporation of public art at various sites including transit hubs, Franklin Avenue Public Art Walk, and *Downtown* Gateways to promote an engaging and vibrant *Downtown*.



Map 16. Business and Civic Area



--- Business and Civic Area Boundary



Existing Transit Terminal



Downtown Gateway



Proposed Development Node

Street Typologies



Streets with Active
Transportation Trail



Enhanced Streets



Festival Street / Curbless Street



Proposed Roads



Other Streets



Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets



Buildings



Parcels (lots)

Parks and Open Space



Existing Parks and Open Space

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites



Kiyām Community Park



Jubilee Plaza



Mitchell's Cafe

Existing Religious Assemblies



McMurray Gospel Assembly



All Saints Anglican Church of Canada



NorthLife Fellowship Baptist Church

Proposed Cultural Sites and Opportunities



Art Incubator



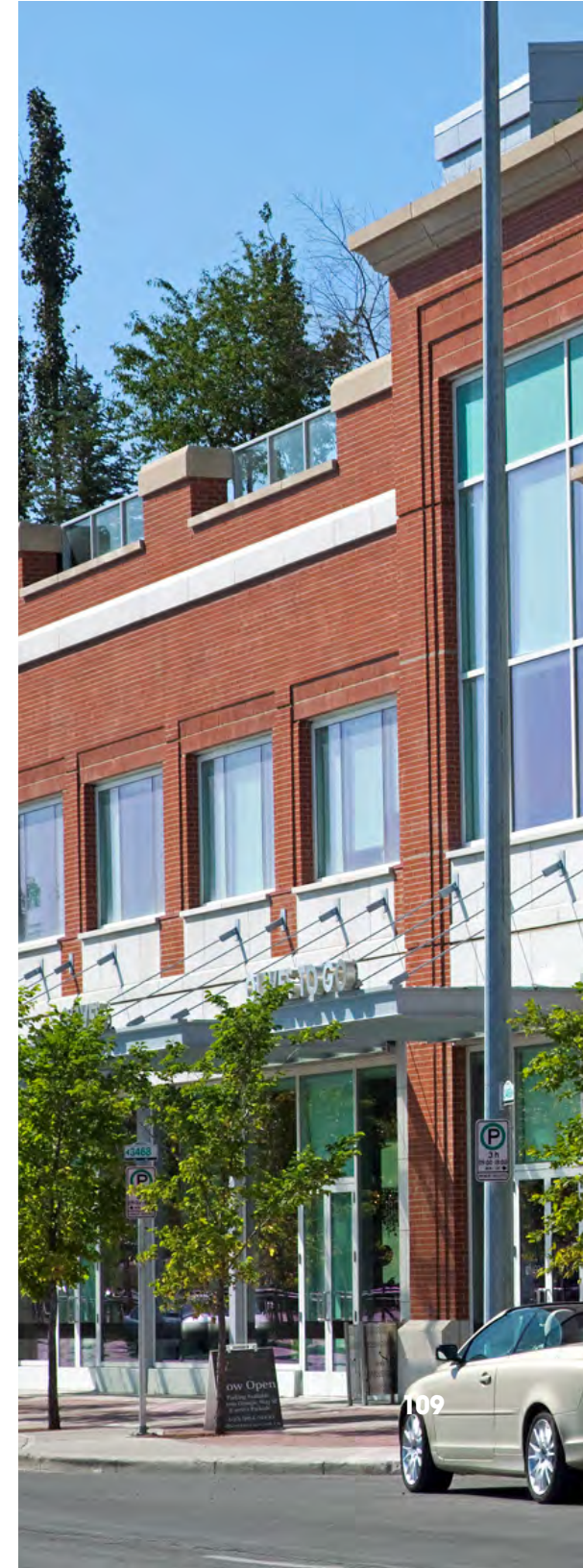
Public Art Opportunity: Transit Hubs



Public Art Opportunity: Franklin Avenue Public Art Walk



Public Art Opportunity: Downtown Gateways





5.2 ENTERTAINMENT/LARGE FORMAT AREA

The Entertainment/Large Format Area is the hub for entertainment and large format commercial uses in the Downtown. The Area includes a variety of uses including entertainment, commercial (retail, services and offices), residential and light industrial uses.

EXISTING USES AND FEATURES

Large format commercial uses dominate the Area. They include major brands of grocery stores and other various retail brands. Large car parking areas are associated with these uses. In addition, there are two malls and a number of smaller strip malls, which accommodate local independent businesses.

Entertainment is a developing use in the Area and includes a bowling alley. The Area is also well served by a variety of restaurants. The adjoining King/Education Area has seen the development of commercial and community recreational uses including gymnastics, weight training and martial arts and children's indoor play area.

Apartment and mixed-use buildings (ground floor commercial and residential above) are the main type of residential uses in the Area. Keyano College owns residential units in the form of some 82 row houses and two, three-storey apartment buildings. The majority of the row houses are vacant and there is potential for *redevelopment*.

The Area has only one community park, located adjacent to a social-profit that serves the region's youth on Riedel Street, and a small strip of open space alongside Clearwater Drive opposite the Heritage Shipyard.

A key feature of this Area is that many of the buildings experienced damage caused by the April 2020 ice jam flood. Since then, nearly all buildings have undergone remediation work. The flood resulted in some of the smaller independent businesses closing down or moving out of the area permanently. However, new businesses are gradually moving into the Area and the vacated buildings.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The Entertainment/Large Format Area has been identified as the location of a *Development Node*. Existing large format retail/commercial will continue to be supported with opportunities for finer-grained commercial frontages. The Area's entertainment assets provide an opportunity to act as a potential hub for entertainment activities such as shopping, dining, and indoor recreation.

The Area's proximity to the Waterfront Area and the Fort McMurray Heritage Shipyard provides an opportunity to revitalize the Area by encouraging commercial and entertainment uses compatible with the Waterfront. For example, there are development opportunities for the privately-owned lots located on Clearwater Drive.

The development of Queen, Riedel, and Hospital Streets and Alberta Drive as key connectors to the Waterfront, will help promote the Area.

The following policies apply to the Entertainment/Large Format Area as shown in **Map 17** in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.2.1** Encourage new entertainment and indoor recreation/entertainment facilities to locate in the *Development Node* to promote this Area as the key destination for entertainment in the Downtown.
- 5.2.2** Require new retail and commercial developments and indoor recreation facilities to be pedestrian oriented, through high quality design, to ensure improved comfort and *safety*.
- 5.2.3** Encourage the intensification of existing large format commercial and retail to support a pedestrian friendly environment where commercial and retail services can be easily accessed by walking and other modes of *active transportation* by people of all ages and abilities.
- 5.2.4** Encourage student housing and higher intensity mix-use development on the corner near Franklin Avenue and Riedel Street and promote transit and *active transportation* access to this location.

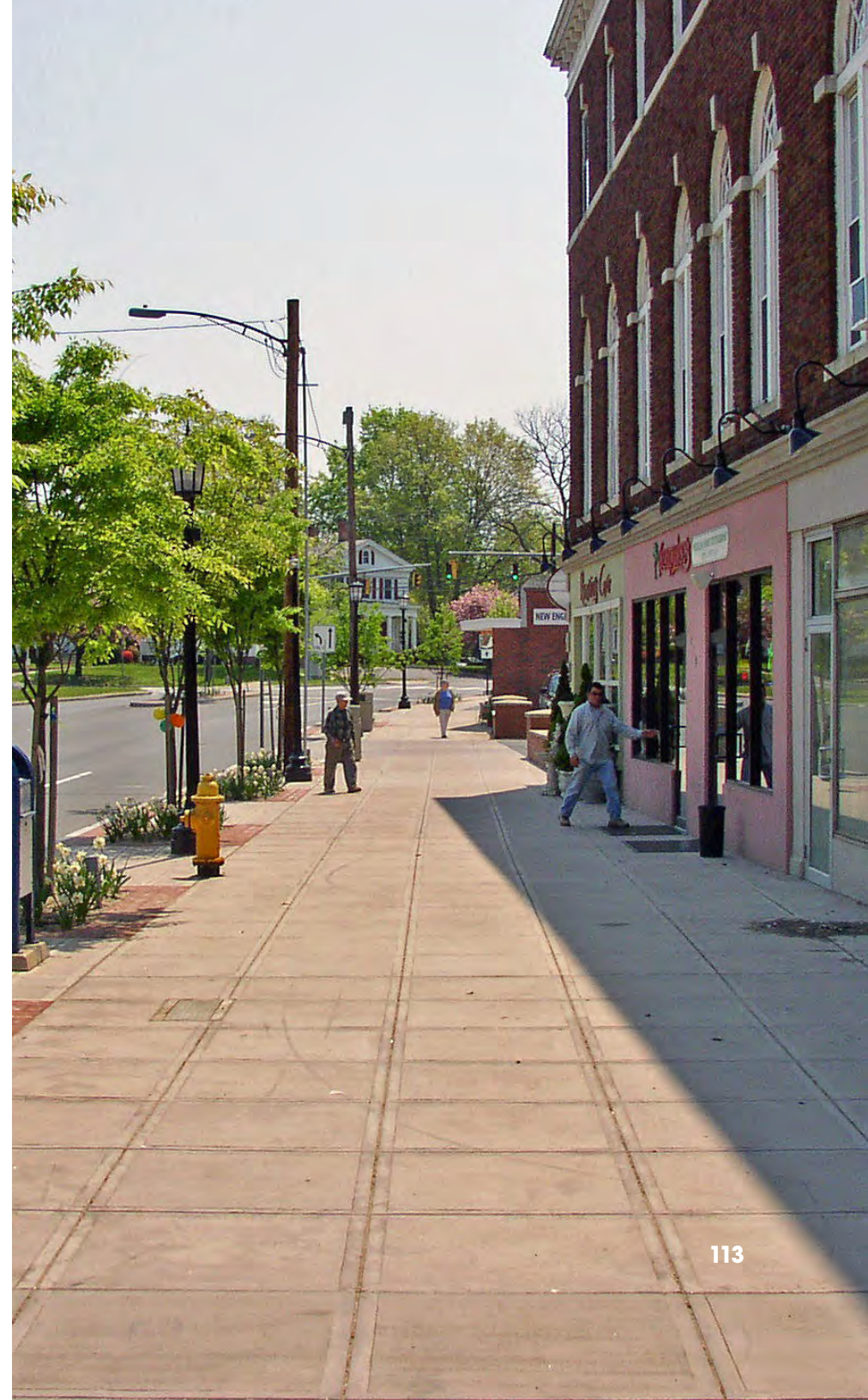
- 5.2.5** Encourage temporary structures (i.e., food trucks, outdoor markets, pop-up retail, etc.) in parking areas to accommodate events and programming, and other initiatives to support increased utilization of these spaces.

BUILT FORM

- 5.2.6** Encourage re-development along Fraser Avenue to front onto the street with *active frontages* and primary access on the main street to support *active frontages*.
- 5.2.7** Encourage large format commercial and retail to minimize their building footprint by distributing floor area over multiple floors to promote intensification and finer-grained development at the ground level.
- 5.2.8** Encourage existing multi-dwelling residential and commercial development to beautify frontages and create primary access on the main street where feasible through available incentive and grant programs to support an engaging and safe *public realm*.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.2.9** Require new development and the re-development of existing large format retail and commercial uses to front onto Clearwater Drive and provide high quality façade design and landscaping to ensure a safe and aesthetically pleasing connection to the waterfront.
- 5.2.10** Encourage private property owners to develop new *parks* and *plazas* within large-scale projects to promote access to open space.
- 5.2.11** Enhance the *connections* from the Waterfront to streets in the Entertainment/Large Format Area prioritizing Riedel Street, Hospital Street and Queen Street.



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

5.2.12 Explore the development of a potential continuous pedestrian and bicycle pathways through pilot projects to ensure safe access for *active transportation* options through the Area and to the waterfront along:

- a. Fraser Avenue and Manning Avenue;
- b. Hospital Street from Franklin Avenue to Clearwater Drive; and
- c. Manning Avenue between Riedel Street and Hospital Street.

5.2.13 Require *redevelopments* to examine the technical feasibility of extending vehicular and pedestrian routes, to allow for improved connectivity within and through the Area and to provide frontage to smaller development blocks, along:

- a. Alberta Drive north towards Clearwater Drive; and
- b. Fraser Avenue between Riedel Street and Queen Street.

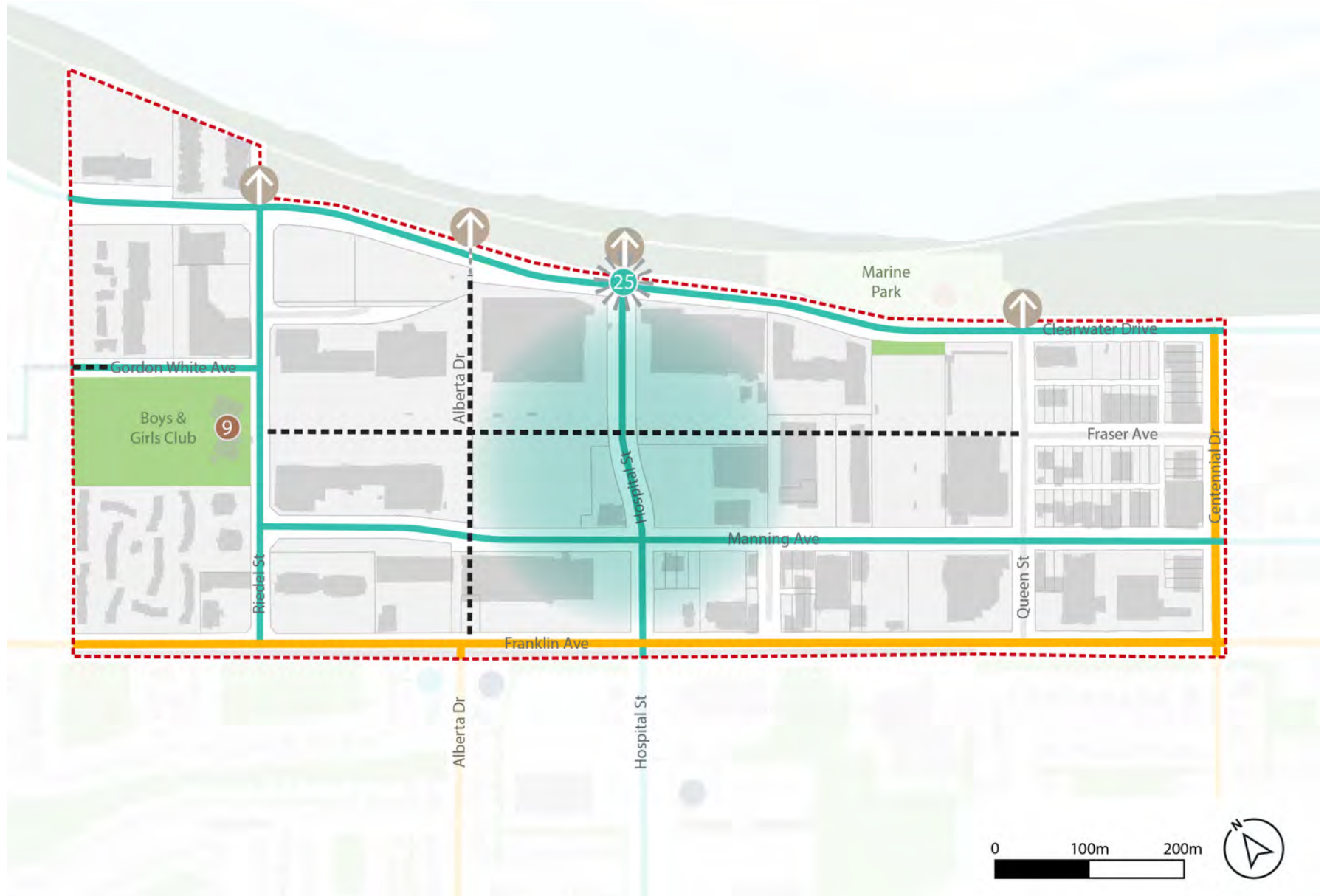
HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

5.2.14 Encourage enhancements at the intersection of Hospital Street and Clearwater Drive to expand and compliment the adjacent Waterfront Plaza to promote integration of the *Downtown public realm* with the Waterfront.

5.2.15 Encourage the provision of public art and other *public realm* enhancements at the Waterfront Park Urban Plaza to promote vibrant and active *Downtown*.



Map 17. Entertainment/Large Format Area



--- Entertainment/Large Format Area Boundary

 Waterfront Gateway

 Waterfront Connection

 Proposed Development Node

Street Typologies

 Streets with Active Transportation Trail

 Enhanced Streets

 Proposed Streets

 Other Streets

 Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

 Buildings

 Parcels (lots)

Parks and Open Space

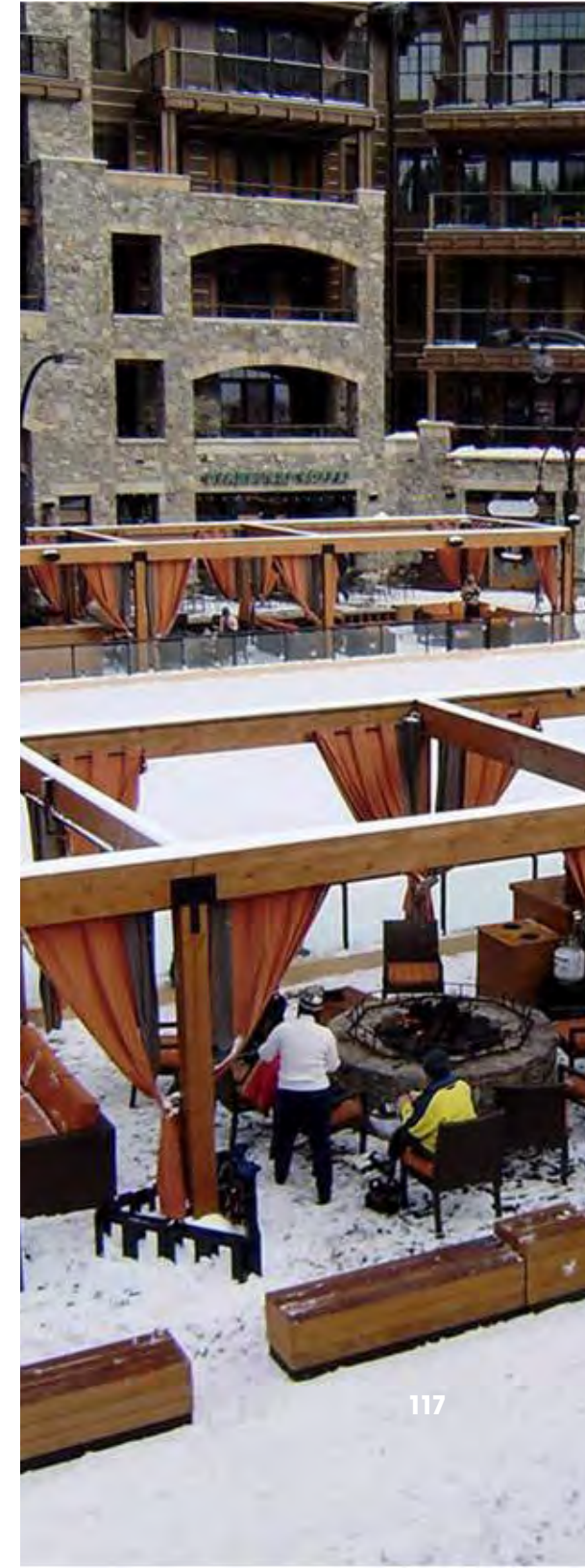
 Existing Parks and Open Space

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites

 Boys and Girls Club

Proposed Cultural Sites and Opportunities

 Waterfront Park Urban Plazas





5.3 HOSPITAL/MEDICAL AREA

The Hospital/Medical Area contains a concentration of medical and care uses. These include the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre, a continuing care facility, and other medical facilities.

EXISTING USES AND FEATURES

In addition to the medical and care facilities, a public school, a catholic school, their respective playing fields, and a faith centre are also located in the Area.

The Biggs Area residential neighbourhood surrounds the Hospital Medical Area on three sides, with Franklin Avenue forming the boundary with the Entertainment/Large Format Area forming the fourth side.

A key feature of the Area is Hospital Street which is one of the five arterial roads connecting the *Downtown* with Highway 63. Hospital Street runs through the Area from its junction with Highway 63 to the south of the Area, to Franklin Avenue and continues across to Clearwater Drive and the Waterfront Area.

FUTURE DIRECTION

This Area has been identified as a *Development Node* for medical, educational, and *institutional* uses.

The main development opportunity in the Area is that of the privately owned lot located to the north of the continuing care centre and which fronts onto Franklin Avenue.

As an arterial road and a gateway into the *Downtown*, improvements to Hospital Street and its intersection with Franklin Avenue, will contribute to *Downtown* revitalization.

The following policies apply to Hospital/Medical Area as shown in **Map 18**, in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.



LAND USE

- 5.3.1** Encourage medical services and complimentary uses to locate in the Hospital/Medical Node to promote this Area as a healthcare centre.
- 5.3.2** Encourage development which supports health, wellness and education including but not limited to medical centers, paramedical services, and alternative therapy clinics to promote complementary uses in this Area.

BUILT FORM

- 5.3.3** Require new buildings on the site between the continuing care centre and Franklin Avenue to be no higher than the main floor of the care centre.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.3.4** Encourage the development of pedestrian routes across municipal land to provide pedestrian *connections* to Hospital Street and Franklin Avenue from the Biggs Area (Fitzgerald Avenue) to promote *accessibility* and connectivity to uses in other Areas.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.3.5** Explore the feasibility of developing cycling paths along Hospital Street, Fitzgerald Avenue and Biggs Avenue to ensure *active transportation* opportunities.
- 5.3.6** Prioritize *streetscape* improvements to Hospital Street as it is a primary *multi-modal* gateway to the *Downtown* and the Waterfront Area, by integrating elements including but not limited to:
 - a.** extended pedestrian paths;
 - b.** opportunities for landscaping;
 - c.** enhanced lighting; and
 - d.** potential cycling paths.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.3.7** Incorporate public art at the intersection of Hospital Street and Franklin Avenue.



arriva

100 WINES

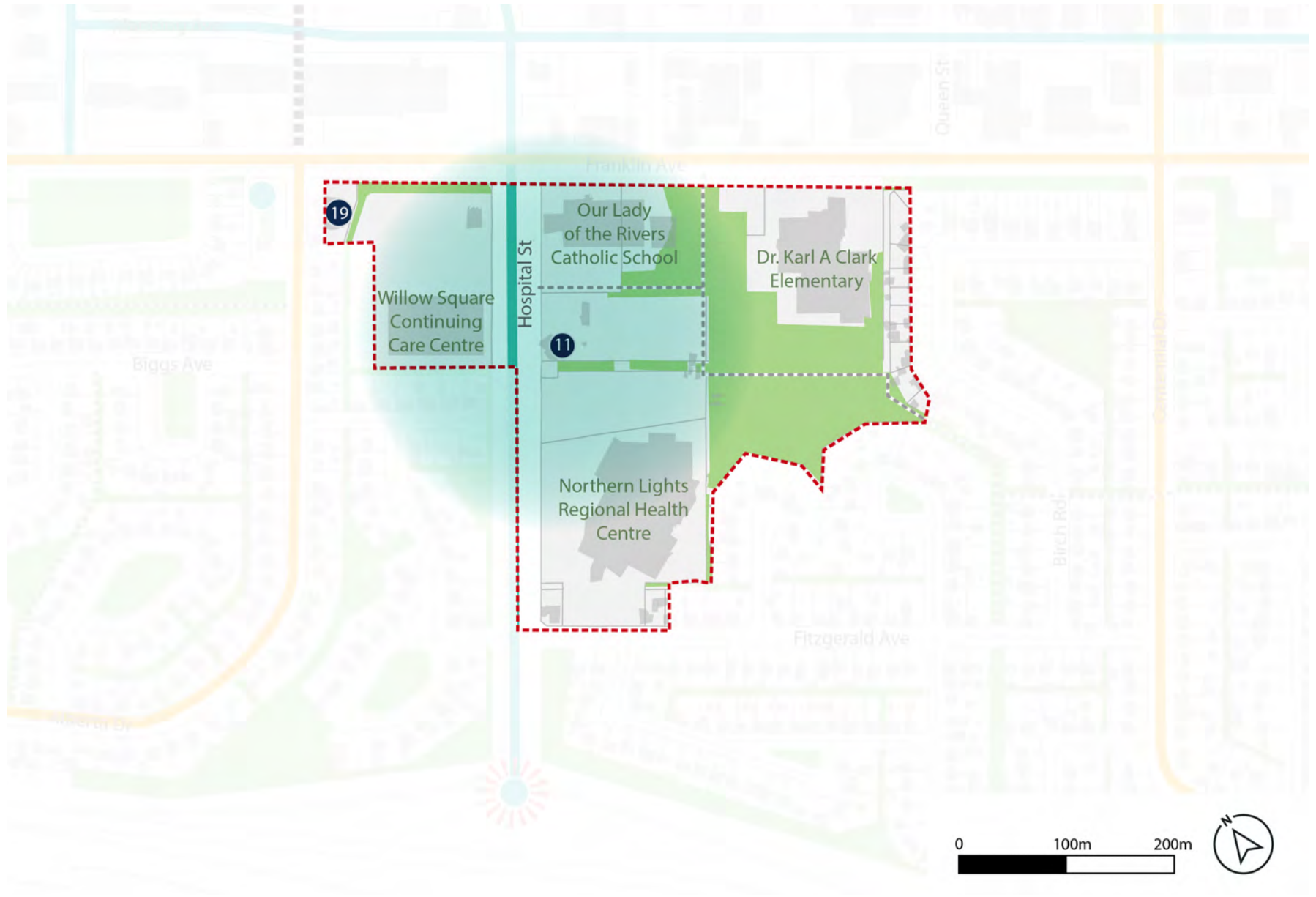
100 WINES

Now Open

121



Map 18. Hospital/Medical Area



--- Hospital/Medical Area Boundary

Proposed Development Node

Street Typologies

Streets with Active
Transportation Trail

Other Streets

Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

Buildings

Parcels (lots)

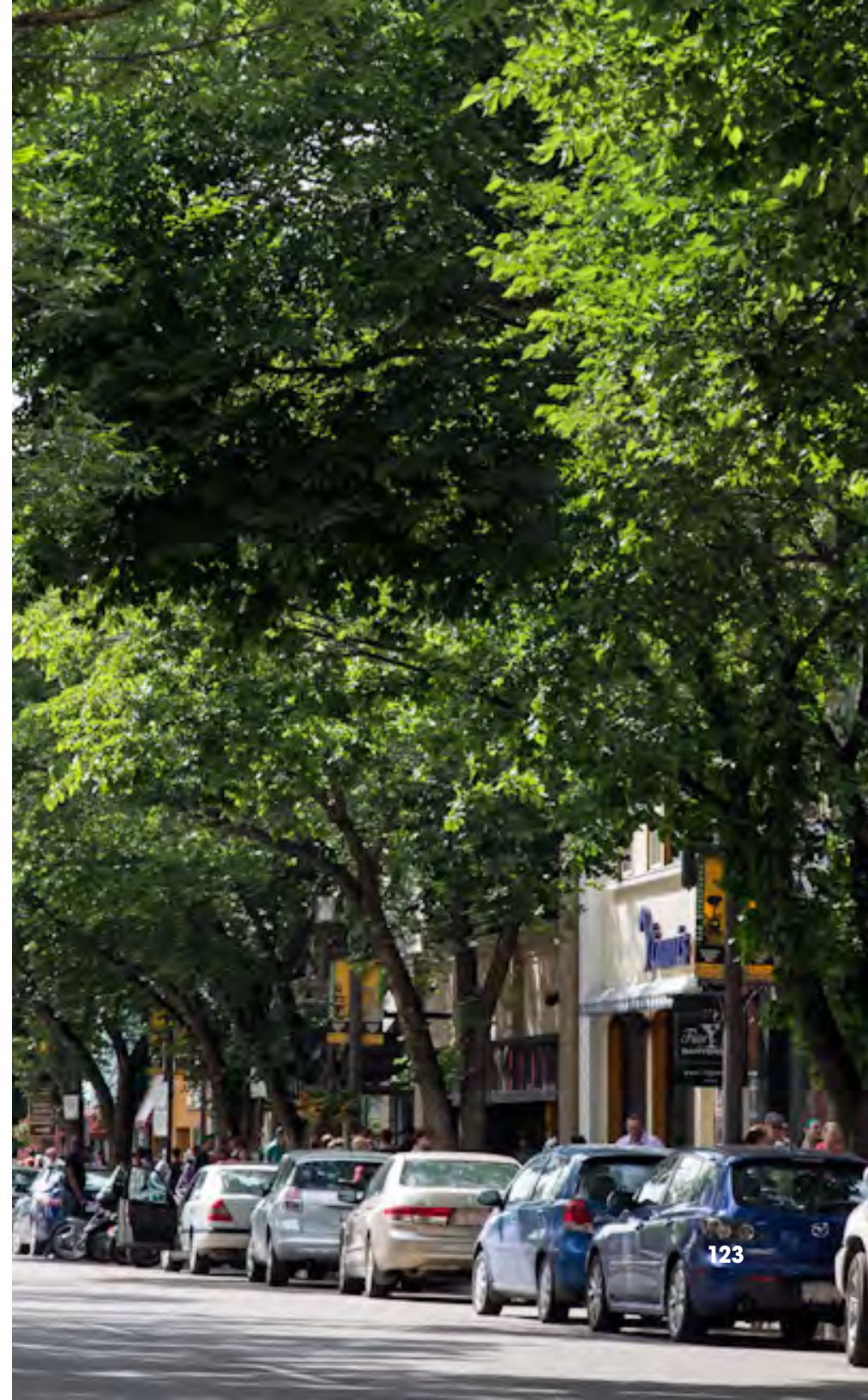
Parks and Open Space

Existing Parks and Open Space

Existing Religious Assemblies

11 St John the Baptist Catholic Parish

19 The Lord's Heritage - RCCG





5.4 KING/EDUCATION AREA

The King/Education Area is an area with an eclectic mix of uses which focus on the educational opportunities of Keyano Clearwater Campus and the potential to build on the unique entrepreneurial and innovative spirit that characterizes the area to the north of Franklin Avenue.

EXISTING USES AND FEATURES

The Area's educational uses are located to the south of Franklin Avenue and consist of the Keyano Clearwater Campus, and Fort McMurray Composite High School. Other uses in the area include a sports and fitness centre, a hardware store, a strip mall and gas bar, Fire Hall 1, and the Fort McMurray Heritage Village. The area also includes the Lions Community Park and the school fields of Composite High.

There are two residential areas; one off Penhorwood Street, to the west of Clearwater Drive, and the second, known as Longboat Landing which is situated to the east of Clearwater Drive. Properties off Penhorwood Street consist of row houses which provide accommodation for college staff and students with families. Longboat Landing is a mix of apartment buildings and town houses providing some 360 homes.

The area to the north of Franklin Avenue is a light industrial area which attracted *redevelopment* and new uses at a time when the Region's economy was strong (2006 to 2015). These included the mixed-use buildings of the River Station and Waters Edge. Non-residential uses include retail, personal services, and food and beverage and an apartment hotel.

Although many of the building in this area north of Franklin were badly affected by the flood, remediation work has been a spur to upgrade interiors and accommodate new businesses. The area has attracted a range of uses, including light industries, retail, and entertainment providers.

Areas of vacant and under-used land are situated along Clearwater Drive and include the site of the Penhorwood Street Condo. There are also vacant sites and land used for storage fronting onto Franklin Avenue which create a poor impression of the area.

Key features of the King/Education Area include the Keyano Clearwater Campus, the Area's proximity to the Waterfront Area, the Hangingstone River which flows between the Heritage Village and Lions Park. The Area is a gateway into the *Downtown* from Highway 63, and Saline Creek Drive.

The area to the north of Franklin Avenue is characterised by its grid-iron streets and blending of newer mixed-use buildings and older industrial buildings. The older industrial buildings offer a variety of different sized workspaces, often at a lower rent, which makes them attractive to smaller independent businesses. The existing street pattern contributes to the pedestrian scale of the area.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The King/Education Area has been identified as a *Development Node* for education and entrepreneurship. The area south of Franklin Avenue, which includes the Keyano Clearwater Campus, the high school, and the Heritage Village will be a focus for education within the *Downtown* for students as well as residents and tourists who visit Heritage Village. The area north of Franklin Avenue is intended to support entrepreneurs and innovation by providing for local manufacturing, collaborative workspaces, and small businesses.

Residential development will continue to be supported at Longboat Landing and at Penhorwood Street to provide student family housing.

There are opportunities to improve access to the Waterfront via Marshall Street and King Street and connectivity within and from the Area will be prioritized with enhancements to existing pedestrian paths and creating new pedestrian and cycling paths.

Transit is an important mode of travel for students and there is an opportunity to explore a location for a second *Downtown* transit hub in the Area. This would help support additional transit services for the Area's residents and businesses and their employees.

The following policies apply to the King/Education Area as shown in **Map 19**, in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.4.1** Support the *redevelopment* or the reconfiguration of existing buildings to provide light industrial collaborative workspaces, in the area north of Franklin Avenue, promote local business, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
- 5.4.2** Encourage *institutional* and smaller-scale independent retail, entertainment, and recreation uses at and around Keyano Clearwater Campus to promote the development of an interconnected campus community.
- 5.4.3** Require new developments along the Hangingstone River to undertake environmental impact studies and actively protect the environmental quality and character of the riverfront to ensure environmental impacts are mitigated.
- 5.4.4** Encourage and support the development of student housing to accommodate students attending Keyano Clearwater Campus.

BUILT FORM

- 5.4.5** Require all *redevelopments* and new developments along Franklin Avenue and Clearwater Drive to:
 - a.** have the minimum property line setback;
 - b.** face these streets to promote a welcoming and inviting space for pedestrians;
 - c.** provide parking and deliveries at the rear of the property.
- 5.4.6** Retain the grid-iron street pattern in the area north of Franklin Avenue.
- 5.4.7** Require outdoor storage to be limited and screened, especially along Clearwater Drive, King Street, Marshall Street and Franklin Avenue, to ensure an improved aesthetic character and pedestrian experience.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.4.8** Explore how Heritage Village and Lions Park can be integrated with the Waterfront through pedestrian and *active transportation* paths, *wayfinding*, or other measures to support a connected open space network.
- 5.4.9** Explore a partnership to manage Lions Park with the goal of expanding the Park's potential use, revenue generation and programming opportunities for the Fort McMurray Historical Society.
- 5.4.10** Prioritize connecting high quality and accessible *active transportation* paths from the Waterfront to streets in the King/Education Area including King Street, Clearwater Drive, and Franklin Avenue.
- 5.4.11** Encourage private property owners to provide more public amenity, such as seating areas.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.4.12** Investigate the development of cycling infrastructure along King Street and Clearwater Drive to ensure *active transportation* opportunities.
- 5.4.13** Explore the potential of developing a transit hub in proximity to Keyano Clearwater Campus to promote transit ridership.
- 5.4.14** Encourage the widening of *active transportation* paths between Keyano Clearwater Campus, the elementary and high schools and transit stops for easy and safe access to transit.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.4.15** Encourage the installation of a *gateway feature* to promote *Downtown* visibility and identity with a focus on historical themes at:
- a. the intersection of Highway 63 and King Street / Clearwater Drive; and
 - b. the intersection of Clearwater Drive and Saline Creek Drive.
- 5.4.16** Encourage the planning and design of a future transit hub within the King/Education Area to incorporate public art into the design of the new transit facility to promote arts and culture.
- 5.4.17** Consider establishing partnerships through programs between local educational institutions, vendors, and development partners to support knowledge transfer and training to a new generation of entrepreneurs, creatives, and students.
- 5.4.18** Encourage the incorporation of public art at various sites including transit hubs and *Downtown* Gateways to promote an engaging and vibrant *Downtown*.
- 5.4.19** Encourage enhancements at the intersections of King Street and Marshall Street with Clearwater Drive to expand and compliment the adjacent Waterfront Park Urban *Plaza* to promote integration of the *public realm* with the Waterfront Gateways.

Map 19. King/Education Area



--- King/Education Area Boundary

Waterfront Gateway

Highway Gateway

Waterfront Connection

Proposed Transit Terminal

Proposed Development Node

Street Typologies

Streets with Active Transportation Trail

Enhanced Streets

Other Streets

Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

Buildings

Parcels (lots)

Parks and Open Space

Existing Parks and Open Space

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites

7 Keyano Theatre and Arts Centre

8 Heritage Village

Proposed Cultural Sites and Opportunities

27 Fort McMurray Fire Hall #1 (heritage site)

25 Waterfront Park Urban Plazas

26 Public Art Opportunity:
Transit Hubs

28 Heritage and Culture Opportunity:
Integrate Heritage Village and
Lions Park

29 Public Art Opportunity:
Downtown Gateways





5.5 WATERFRONT AREA

The Waterfront Area is an important *Downtown* destination for outdoor recreation. Establishing the Waterfront as a focal point of the *Downtown* was one of the reoccurring themes of community engagement.

EXISTING USES AND FEATURES

The Waterfront Area is a long and, in places narrow, area that runs the whole length of the *Downtown*. Starting at MacDonald Drive, its boundary follows the Snye, the Clearwater and Hangingstone Rivers, and Clearwater Drive (**Map 20**).

Snye Point Park and Borealis Park are situated within the Area, along with two natural open space areas, owned by the Municipality and located at the eastern end of the *Downtown*. One area lies between the Clearwater River and Longboat Landing residential area, the second between the Hangingstone River and Clearwater Drive.

Most of the remaining Waterfront Area is undeveloped and consists of areas of open space and underused and vacant land, most of which is municipal land. However, there are some developments which include the Heritage Shipyard/Marine Park, three apartment buildings, and a restaurant.

The Waterfront Area is integral to the Downtown's flood mitigation program and the use of the Area for recreation supports mitigation measures.

The existing *parks*, the Snye and the Clearwater are used for a variety of community gatherings and events such as music festivals, the WinterPLAY Shootout on the Snye, recreational activities including canoeing/kayaking, rowing events, and fishing.

One of the attractions of the Waterfront Area is being able to walk or cycle alongside the water. Community engagement supported creating and maintaining an accessible and safe waterfront trail system that is fully connected from MacDonald Island Park, and throughout the *Downtown*.

A key feature of the Waterfront Area is its *heritage* and history, and in particular the history of the First Peoples (First Nations and Métis). Lands along the Snye and the rivers were home to Indigenous people before living memory. The area includes Moccasin Flats, which in the early 1900s, became a permanent community of mostly Métis people. In the 1970s and 80s families living in Moccasin Flats were evicted by the then New Town of Fort McMurray to make way for apartment buildings to accommodate the town's growing population. Acknowledging and commemorating this event will be part of the Waterfront's development.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The Waterfront is a key asset of the *Downtown*. It has the potential to become a focal point of the *Downtown* and a key destination for both residents and visitors during all seasons. To ensure the Waterfront benefits both those living in the *Downtown* and those visiting, it is important to ensure that it has distinctive areas and is also connected in an integrated and accessible manner.

Since this area is within the flood mitigation area, future development will be limited to *parks*, open space, and trails. However, to support the Waterfront as the *Downtown's* premier recreation area, seasonal and/or temporary small-scale commercial developments will be allowed. These include markets, pop-ups, food trucks, and events and festivals.

Creating distinctive areas along the Waterfront provides opportunities to provide for more *active recreational* activities such as volleyball, mini golf, and play areas. It also create areas for more passive activities such as socializing, and walking. In addition it provides to opportunity to identify staging areas for canoeing and kayaking, and protect and preserve natural areas.

To make the most of the Waterfront Area good, equal access to the Area, by all means of *transportation* (*active transportation*, transit, and vehicle) is necessary. A number of key routes connecting the Waterfront from other areas of the Downtown have been identified. *Wayfinding* will provide directions to the Waterfront.

Access within the Waterfront Area that meets the needs of all ages and abilities will ensure residents and visitors will be able to visit the Area and use its amenities.

The flood mitigation measures provide an opportunity to consider the development of a trail and/or boardwalk along the top of the berm, complete with *wayfinding* and boards depicting the waterfront's history, seating areas, and viewing platforms.

The Waterfront Area has an important role in acknowledging, preserving, and recording the history of Fort McMurray. The history, culture and traditions of the First Peoples is integral to the Area. This should be reflected in the way the Waterfront is promoted as a destination for leisure and recreation. Historic and cultural markers (such as plaques), display boards and public art provides an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the Area's *heritage*.

LAND USE

- 5.5.1** Consider proposals in partnership with stakeholders to activate the Waterfront Area with markets, pop-ups, and events to promote year-round use of the Waterfront Area.
- 5.5.2** Encourage recreational opportunities such as areas for community and *active recreation* programming, passive use and leisure, and other initiatives to promote the livability of the Waterfront Area.
- 5.5.3** Support development such as food vendors and pop-up storefronts for the sales of goods and services, such as rental of watersports in the summer and snowshoeing in the winter, to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to utilize the Waterfront all year long.
- 5.5.4** Require all developments below the 250.9-meter contour level be restricted to *parks*, open spaces, low-impact outdoor recreational uses, small-scale community spaces and commercial uses, temporary developments, and essential utilities to ensure future flood risks are mitigated.

- 5.5.5** Consider small-scale community spaces and commercial developments above the 250.9-meter contour-level to support appropriate development that mitigates future flood risk.

BUILT FORM

- 5.5.6** Encourage including Indigenous design elements in seasonal retail pavilions, marker poles, welcome circles, signage, and *wayfinding*.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.5.7** Require universally accessible trails and facilities to ensure the area is accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
- 5.5.8** Encourage the enhancements to the Waterfront Area including but not limited to improved pedestrian and *active transportation* connections, urban *plazas*, marker poles, welcome circles, signage and *wayfinding*, lighting, seating areas, landscaping, and lookout areas to promote year-round use of the Waterfront Area by both residents and visitors.
- 5.5.9** Encourage the use of environmentally sustainable materials for lighting, street furniture, erosion control, trails, promenades, boat launches, and buildings to promote environmental stewardship and the longevity of development.
- 5.5.10** Encourage opportunities to re-establish a healthy environment for both aquatic and terrestrial habitat using primarily native planting material including grass, shrubs, and trees to promote mitigation of the environmental impacts of past development.

- 5.5.11** Require preservation of natural areas to support the provision of natural amenities, prioritizing riparian areas to ensure protection of water quality and waterways.

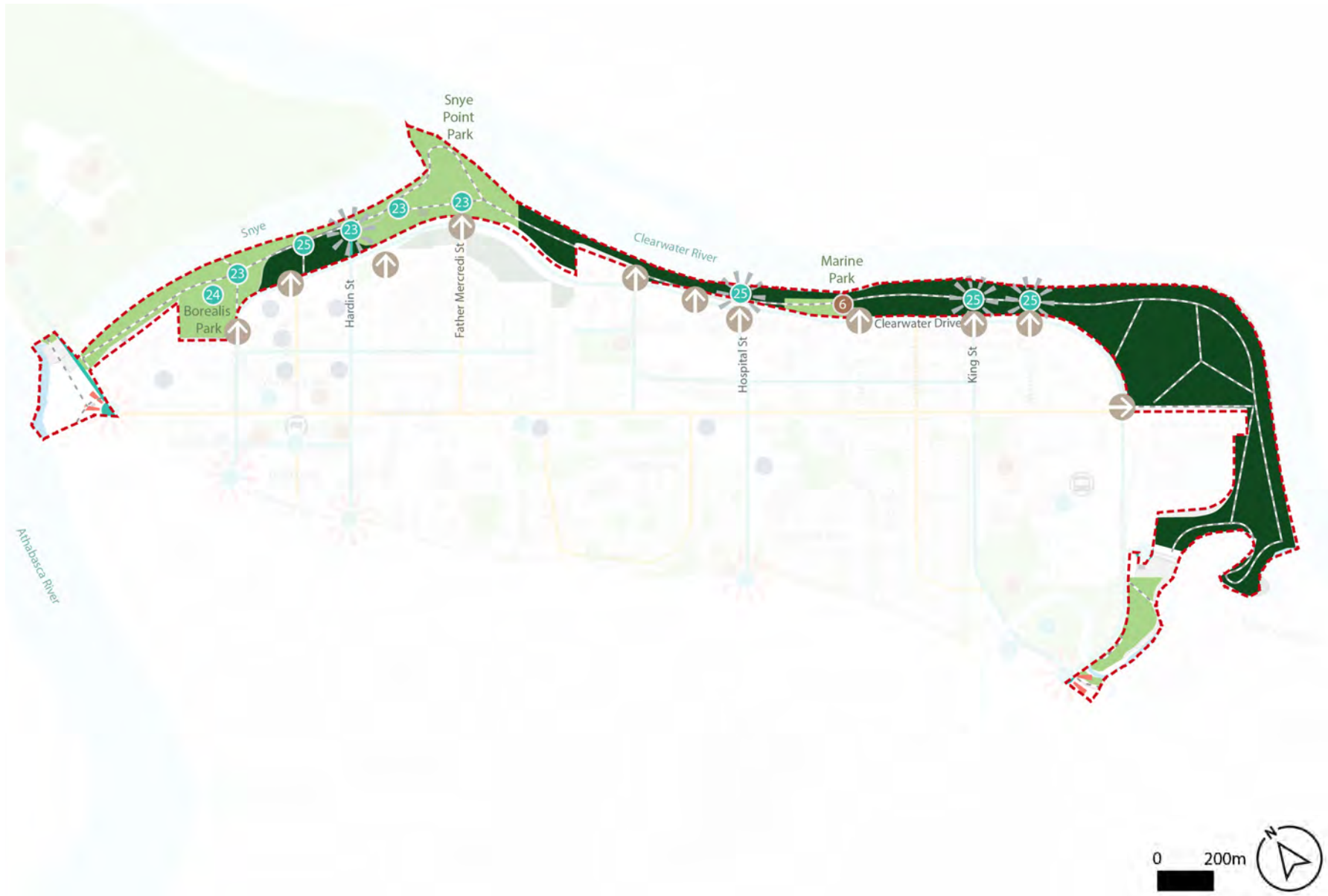
TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.5.12** Require safe, direct, and highly visible pedestrian crossings across Clearwater Drive to the Waterfront Trail network through enhanced crosswalks, which could include lighting elements, raised walkways, and/or paint to delineate crossings at Father Mercredi Street, Hardin Street, Hospital Street and King Street.
- 5.5.13** Encourage the development of Clearwater Drive as a pedestrian and cyclist friendly corridor along the northern edge of the *Downtown* through pilot projects to ensure *active transportation* opportunities.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.5.14** Encourage historical and cultural markers (such as plaques) and parks in the Waterfront Area to promote learning, dialogue, understanding, inclusiveness, and creation of *Downtown* identity.
- 5.5.15** Encourage Indigenous art in the Waterfront Area, especially in Waterfront Park Urban Plazas, to promote and celebrate the rich heritage and true history of Indigenous Peoples and the land.
- 5.5.16** Encourage promotion of the Waterfront as a recreation and tourist destination in collaboration with local Indigenous Peoples and through partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, local, regional and provincial tourism agencies and community organizations to promote the *Downtown* as a regional destination.
- 5.5.17** Encourage the development of Waterfront Park Welcome Circles to promote integration of Indigenous culture and histories.
- 5.5.18** Encourage the Moccasin Flats Memorial to integrate with the adjacent trail network to promote increased visibility and access.
- 5.5.19** Encourage Waterfront Park Urban Plazas to include access to the water, seating, and passive and active recreation areas to promote the Waterfront as a place of gathering.

Map 20. Waterfront Area



--- Waterfront Area Boundary

✱ Waterfront Gateway

↑ Waterfront Connection

Street Typologies

— Streets with Active Transportation Trail

--- Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

■ Buildings

Parks and Open Space

■ Existing Parks and Open Space

■ Proposed Parks and Open Space

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites

6 Boys and Girls Club

Proposed Cultural Sites and Opportunities

23 Waterfront Park Welcome Circles

24 Moccasin Flats Memorial

25 Waterfront Park Urban Plazas





5.6 MACDONALD ISLAND PARK AREA

MacDonald Island Park is located north of Snye and had its beginnings as a park in the 1970s, including development of the Miskanaw Golf Club. With major expansions and development of new multi-purpose recreation facilities including the Suncor Community Leisure Centre (2010) and Shell Place (2015), MacDonald Island Park is an important regional destination for sports, leisure, recreation, and celebration. In addition, a new cultural centre (McMurray Métis Cultural Centre) is currently under development on the west side of MacDonald Island.

The MacDonald Island Park Area will continue to support the recreational and cultural activities of residents and visitors alike.

The following policies apply to the MacDonald Island Park Area as shown in **Map 21** in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.6.1** Encourage continued opportunities for recreation such as areas for community and *active recreation* programming, passive use and leisure, and other initiatives to promote this Area as the premier recreation district.
- 5.6.2** Support ancillary retail and dining uses in active recreational facilities and limited commercial uses in *park* areas provided they are related to, and compatible with, recreational activities to support primary uses in the Area and provide complementary development.
- 5.6.3** Encourage incorporation of flood mitigation measures including but not limited to *Low Impact Development* strategies in this area to promote the long-term viability of this Area.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.6.4** Encourage the continued use of MacDonald Island Park as a significant gathering place for sports, art, culture, and recreational facilities to promote community celebration, gathering, traditional practices and learning, and recreation.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.6.5** Through partnership with the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo and *transportation* initiatives, encourage improvements to pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicular access to and from MacDonald Island to ensure people can access the Area by their preferred mode of *transportation* including but not limited:
 - a.** enhanced and regular transit to MacDonald Island;
 - b.** consideration for the construction of a pedestrian bridge to connect the Waterfront Area to MacDonald Island Park; and
 - c.** potential examination of options for improving connectivity between MacDonald Island and Roche Island.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.6.6** Through partnership with the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo and other community organizations, encourage the inclusion of elements of interest along the perimeter promenade and trail system such as public art and other historical elements to promote RMWB's history, Indigenous *heritage*, and cultural diversity.
- 5.6.7** Encourage improvement of the Snye waterfront, taking into account its relationship with development on its south side, to promote this Area as an iconic *park* destination in the *Downtown*.
- 5.6.8** Encourage promotion of Macdonald Island Park as a recreation and tourist destination and a conference centre in partnership with local, regional, and provincial tourism agencies and community organizations to promote this Area as a regional destination.
- 5.6.9** Require collaboration with Indigenous Peoples to ensure the true history of the RMWB is reflected in any promotion of MacDonald Island.
- 5.6.10** Encourage the development of the Fort McMurray Metis Cultural Centre within MacDonald Island Park to promote the RMWB's history, *heritage* and culture.



Map 21. MacDonald Island Park Area



--- MacDonald Island Park Area Boundary

Built Form/Other Assets

■ Buildings

■ Parking Lot

Street Typologies

— Streets with Active
Transportation Trail

--- Community Trails

Parks and Open Space

■ Existing Parks and Open Space

Existing Cultural and Heritage Sites

1 Suncor Community Leisure
Centre (Visual Arts Studio and
Suncor Energy Centre for the
Performing Arts) and Library

2 Shell Place

3 Aboriginal Interpretive Trail

Proposed Cultural Sites and Opportunities

22 McMurray Métis Cultural Centre





5.7 BOREALIS AREA

The Borealis Area is located between the Snye Area and the Business Civic Area, in proximity to the waterfront and with convenient access to Highway 63. With an existing concentration of higher-density residential development, the Borealis Area will be one of the highest-density neighbourhoods in the *Downtown*, transitioning to medium-density residential located in the Snye Area to the east. While this is primarily a multi-family residential area, the Area also includes two places of worship, senior independent and assisted-living accommodations, and two hotels.

This Area will focus on medium density residential infill development on underutilized lots and improving connections to the Waterfront Area.

The following policies apply to the Borealis Area as shown in **Map 22**, in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.7.1** Encourage mixed-use development by considering small-scale commercial and retail uses at grade along Hardin, Main and Morrison Streets.
- 5.7.2** Encourage *infill development* and promote medium and high-density development on vacant lots along Main Street and Clearwater Drive.
- 5.7.3** Encourage developments in the Area to contain a variety of housing types such as row housing, low and medium rise apartment, and other forms of medium-density housing to promote alternative housing options and meet the needs of various lifestyles and incomes.
- 5.7.4** Encourage development adjacent to Clearwater Drive to provide public spaces and amenities, *parks* and open space.

BUILT FORM

- 5.7.5** Encourage existing buildings along the riverfront to re-façade to enhance visual appearance through partnership with private property owners.
- 5.7.6** Ensure development fronting the Snye to enhance the connection to the waterfront and have high-quality design treatment.
- 5.7.7** Require a smooth transition in height in the Borealis Area with increasing height towards the Business Civic Area and decreasing towards the Snye Area.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.7.8** Require *multi-modal connections* from the Waterfront Trail network to Morrison Street, Main Street, and Hardin Street. Emphasis would be placed on greening these streets and providing attractive night lighting.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

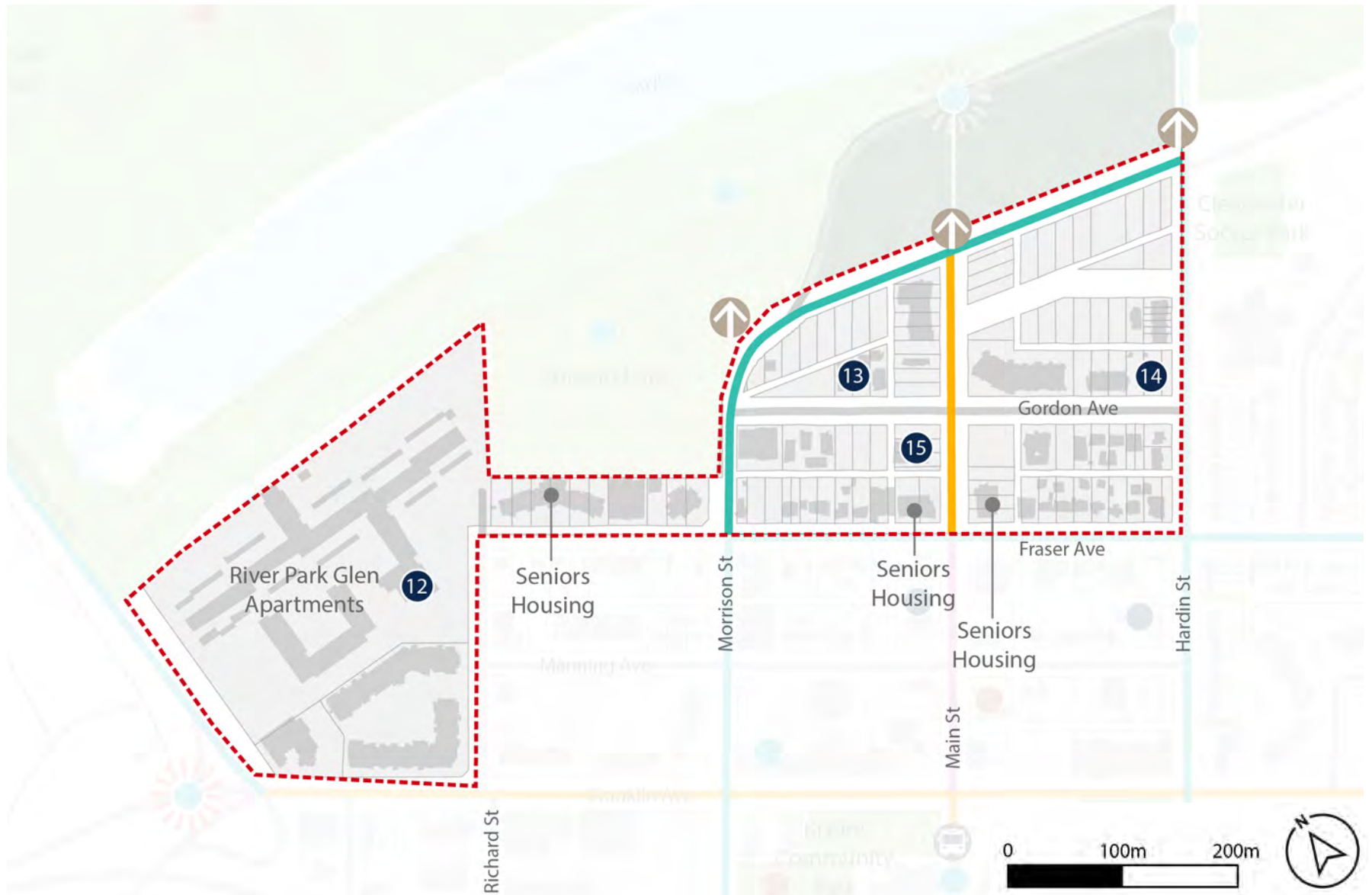
- 5.7.9** Require the enhancement of pedestrian *connections* and establish Main Street and Hardin Street as pedestrian corridors by providing broad tree-lined streets with sidewalks.
- 5.7.10** Require age-friendly and *universal design* for new and improvements to existing development and prioritize these practices in the areas close to senior housing.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.7.11** Support the development of a *gateway feature* that celebrates the *Downtown* at the entrances of Franklin Avenue and McDonald Drive.

-  Borealis Area Boundary
- Street Typologies
-  Streets with Active Transportation Trail
 -  Enhanced Streets
 -  Other Streets
 -  Community Trails
- Built Form/Other Assets
-  Buildings
 -  Parcels (Lots)
 -  Waterfront Connection
- Existing Religious Assembly
-  12 Jesus the Anointed One Church
 -  13 Native Christian Fellowship
 -  14 Markzak ul Islam (Mosque)
 -  15 United Church of Canada

Map 22. MacDonald Island Park Area





5.8 SNYE AREA

The Snye Area will continue to support the low-density residential character and function which exists today.

Medium-density residential uses may be supported in the Area's boundary regions, especially along Hardin Street. These uses should be orientated towards and have a high-quality design treatment fronting these roadways.

The following policies apply to the Snye Area as shown in **Map 23** in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.8.1** Encourage low density residential development as the primary form of development within the Syne Area.
- 5.8.2** Consider medium density residential uses in the Area's boundary regions along Hardin Street and Waterfront to support development of various housing types.

BUILT FORM

- 5.8.3** Encourage medium density developments in the Area to contain a variety of built forms such as row housing, low and medium rise apartment, and other forms of medium density housing to promote alternative housing options.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 5.8.4** Encourage limiting development on lands owned by the Municipality adjacent to Clearwater Drive to ensure these lands are maintained for parks, open space, and public infrastructure.
- 5.8.5** Through the Waterfront project, require *connections* from the Waterfront Trail network to streets in the Syne Area including Father Mercredi Street and Hardin Street.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.8.6** Require a continuous pedestrian and bicycle network including the creation of cycling infrastructure along Fraser Avenue and Hardin Street to ensure improved *connections* within and through the Area.
- 5.8.7** Examine the technical feasibility of extending Fraser Avenue east to Riedel Street and onto Queen Street to allow for improved *transportation* access within and through the Area.

Map 23. Snye Area



--- Snye Area Boundary

Street Typologies

Streets with Active
Transportation Trail

Enhanced Streets

Other Streets

Proposed Streets

Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

Buildings

Parcels (lots)

Waterfront Connection

Parks and Open Space

Proposed Parks and Open Space

Existing Parks and Open Space





5.9 BIGGS AREA

The Biggs Area represents the largest residential area in *Downtown*. The Area is primarily low-density residential and is not anticipated to undergo significant change.

This Area is envisioned to provide increased connectivity to adjacent areas, improved park spaces and trail systems, and tree preservation on municipal lands.

The following policies apply to the Biggs Area as shown in **Map 24**, in addition to the Overarching Policies in Section 4.

LAND USE

- 5.9.1** Encourage *infill development* such as secondary suites where appropriate while retaining the low-density residential character of the Area to support sensitive intensification and diverse housing choices.
- 5.9.2** Consider a mix of residential uses including single-detached, semi-detached, duplexes, row housing, and small apartment buildings to support diverse housing choices.
- 5.9.3** Consider commercial development on corner lots along Franklin Avenue to support neighbourhood commercial development to serve the residents.

BUILT FORM

- 5.9.4** Support the development of a design criterion to be established to ensure *infill development* retains the character of the Area.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

5.9.5 Encourage development of trails in existing *parks* and Municipal right-of-way and utility lots through *park* enhancement or trail extension initiatives, including:

- a. north of Biggs Avenue;
- b. within the Alberta Drive crescent; and
- c. connecting from the Hospital/Medical Area to Centennial Drive and Fitzgerald Avenue.

5.9.6 Encourage improvements to Pond Crescent Passive Park and Poplar Crescent Passive Park through *park* enhancement initiatives to improve their interface with Franklin Avenue and to make them more useable and attractive for year-round use. Improvements may include but are not limited to:

- a. hard surface areas or *plazas*, seating areas, and utility connections to support community gathering and events;
- b. low-level landscaping and flowerbeds to complement the large coniferous trees;

- c. incorporation of public arts or monuments commemorating the history of Fort McMurray; and
- d. addition of lighting to improve *safety* and visual interest.

5.9.7 Encourage improvements to Biggs Avenue Park through *park* enhancement initiatives to improve *safety* and to make it more useable and attractive for year-round use. Improvements may include but are not limited to:

- a. hard surface areas or *plazas*, seating areas, and utility connections to support community gathering and events;
- b. low-level landscaping and flowerbeds to complement the large deciduous trees;
- c. playgrounds and recreation fixtures such as basketball courts, badminton or volleyball nets, and outdoor fitness equipment;
- d. pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Business and Civic Area; and
- e. addition of lighting to improve *safety* and visual interest.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

- 5.9.8** Require a connected network of sidewalks, bike routes, trails, and open spaces to ensure safe and convenient access within and through the Area to *parks* and the Waterfront Area, as well as provide recreation and *active transportation* opportunities.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

- 5.9.9** Encourage a *gateway feature* at the entrance to the *Downtown* on Hospital Street to promote *Downtown* visibility and identity.



Map 24. Biggs Area



--- Biggs Area Boundary

Street Typologies

Streets with Active
Transportation Trail

Enhanced Streets

Other Streets

Community Trails

Built Form/Other Assets

Buildings

Parcels (lots)

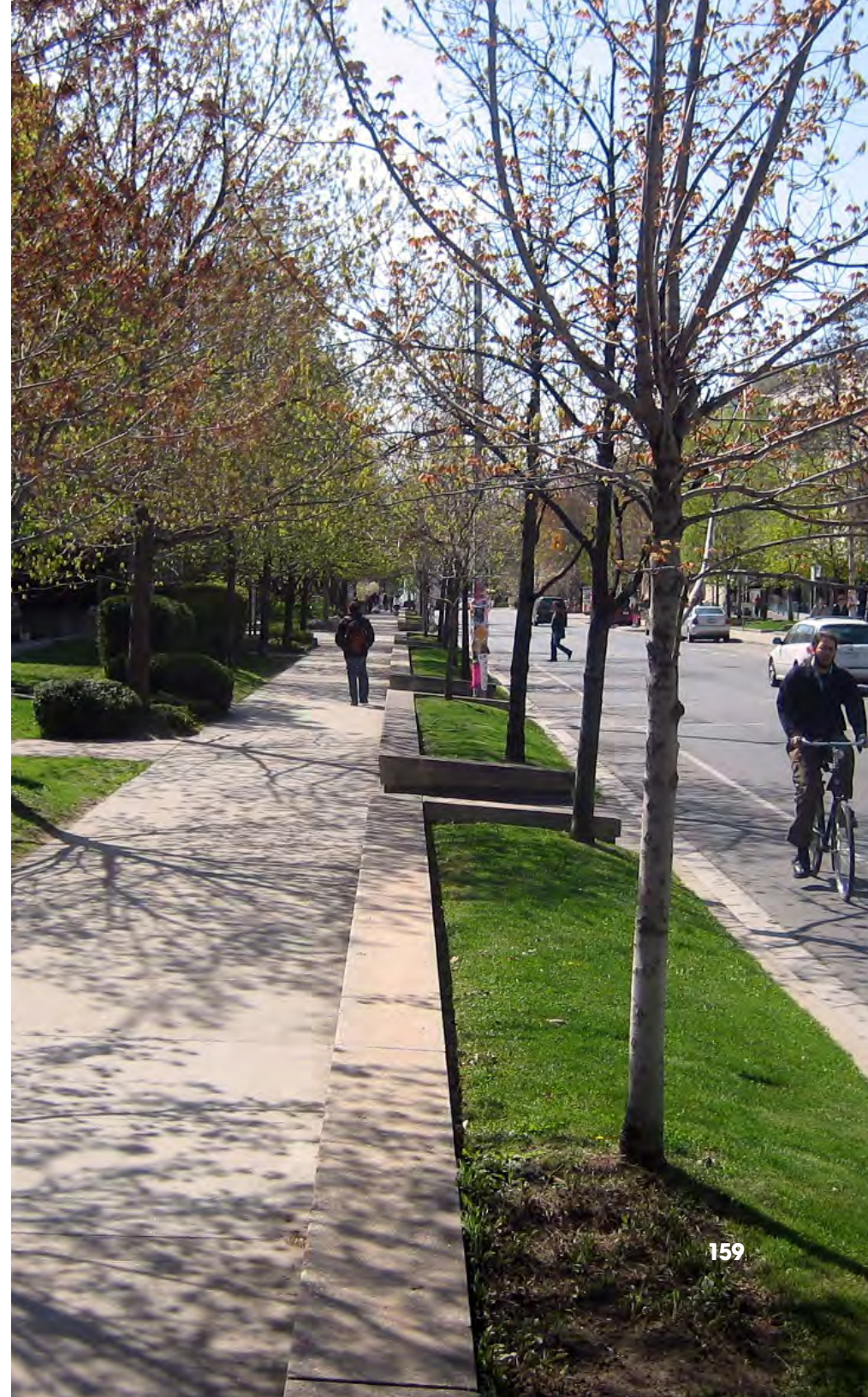
Downtown Gateway

Proposed Sites and Opportunities

Public Art Opportunity:
Downtown Gateway

Parks and Open Spaces

Existing Parks and Open Spaces



6 Implementation

6 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this ARP will require a collaborative and coordinated effort by the Municipality, stakeholders and other community partners. For successful implementation, it will be imperative to leverage synergies between private and public efforts to ensure the most efficient use of resources throughout the lifespan of the plan and to have a significant impact on revitalization efforts in the *Downtown*. An important tool to achieve this is the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* Action Plan (“Action Plan”). The Action Plan is a companion document to this ARP.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan identifies short-, medium- and long-term actions that will support realizing the vision for a revitalized *Downtown* as presented in the ARP. The Municipality will work internally to align these short-, medium-, and long-term actions to operational budgets which will then be brought forth to Council for approval. The Action Plan will also identify external partners and stakeholders who will also play an important role in supporting the implementation of the ARP.

TECHNICAL STUDIES

In support of the preparation of the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan*, the following technical studies have been reviewed and/or completed:

- **Transportation Master Plan**
- **Public Art Plan**
- **Land Use Bylaw**
- **Socio Economic Study**
- **Transit Master Plan**

The technical studies provide a high-level overview for the *Downtown*. Further work or additional studies may be required with each development permit.

AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

Any changes to the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* must be consistent with the Municipal Government Act and the Municipal Development Plan. Applicants applying to amend the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* shall provide supporting information, analysis, and technical data at the request of the Municipality in order for the merits and impacts of the proposed changes to be properly determined and evaluated. Given the integration of the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* with the supporting technical studies listed above, any amendment to the *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* may require updates to these studies.

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN REVIEW

The *Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan* may be reviewed:

- 1 At the request of Council;
- 2 Upon amendment of the Municipal Development Plan to ensure consistency; or
- 3 After a period of five years to ensure that the policies remain applicable, that no new technology is available that may change the direction of the policies, and that the overall environment and market remain the same.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Through the Action Plan, the Municipality will be able to monitor and evaluate the progress of implementing the ARP. Since Action Plan items that require financial resources will be required to come before Council, the Municipality will be able to track which Action Plan items have been accomplished and which items are still requiring implementation. The Action Plan will also be reviewed yearly, to ensure that proposed action items are still relevant or if new ones are required to be included based on Council and community priorities. This will provide for a transparent and accountable process where Council, residents, and stakeholders and Indigenous partners can track progress along side the Municipality as we all work together towards a revitalized *Downtown*.



7 Glossary of Terms

7 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCESSIBILITY	The degree to which people of all ages and abilities are able to move about within an area's built environment. Best practices in accessible design are often referred to as "barrier-free design" or "universal accessibility."
ACTIVE FRONTAGES	The front of a building facing towards the road that is designed to provide access and interaction between the private building and public space or for the display of the actual goods and services for sale within the building.
ACTIVE RECREATION	Outdoor recreational activities, such as organized sports and playground activities.
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION	Any form of human powered transportation, such as walking, biking, wheeling, skating, and cross-country skiing.
AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP)	A statutory plan recognized as such in the Alberta Municipal Government Act that applies to existing built up or developed areas in a municipality. Through an ARP, Council may designate an area for the purpose of preservation or improving buildings, rehabilitating of buildings, removal of buildings, or constructing or replacing buildings.
CONNECTIONS	Roads, trails, and corridors which provide safe, accessible, and efficient movement into and out of the Downtown area.
CULTURE	Source: Wood Buffalo Culture Plan (rmwb.ca) Encompasses: ■ distinctive spiritual, materialistic, intellectual, and emotional features that characterize a society or group; includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 1982) ■ that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society." (UNESCO, 2001) ■ the glue that connects us as individuals to our communities, fostering unity, civility and a sense of belonging, pride and caring for our fellow citizens (Alberta government) ■ creative artistic activity and the goods and services produced by it, and the preservation of <i>heritage</i> (Canadian federal government)

DEVELOPMENT NODE	Points of dense land use connected to each other and to surrounding residential neighbourhoods by important transportation corridors.
DOWNTOWN	The Downtown of Fort McMurray, the heart of the Urban Service Area and all of the RMWB. Because of its regional significance, Downtown is a priority area for investment, development, and improved connectivity throughout the MDP. The boundaries of the Downtown are identified in Map 3: Downtown ARP Boundary .
FLOOD FRINGE	The portion of the flood hazard area outside of the floodway. Water in the flood fringe is generally shallower and flows more slowly than in the floodway. New development in the flood fringe may be permitted in some communities and should be flood-proofed.
FLOOD HAZARD AREA	The flood hazard area is the area of the land that will be flooded during the 1:100 design flood. The flood hazard area is typically divided into two zones, the floodway and the flood fringe.
FLOODWAY	The portion of the flood hazard area where flows are deepest, fastest and most destructive. The floodway typically includes the main channel of a stream and a portion of the adjacent overbank area. New development is typically discouraged in the floodway.
GATEWAY FEATURE	A feature such as a sign or public art that is usually placed at the main entry points in cities, districts, or neighbourhoods. They welcome people into the area and help communicate a unique identity.

HERITAGE

Source: Wood Buffalo Culture Plan

A legacy inherited from the past, valued in the present – which it helps interpret – and safeguarded for the future – which it helps shape (Cole & Dubinsky, Ottawa Heritage Plan), including:

- built heritage: buildings, structures, and sites
- natural heritage: elements of biodiversity including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures
- cultural landscapes: significant historic landscapes which are meaningful to particular groups, cultures or populations
- cultural heritage: an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including both intangible and tangible cultural heritage
- documentary heritage: documents, records, artifacts, and images
- intangible heritage: traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as beliefs, languages and attitudes, oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts (UNESCO)

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

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

INSTITUTIONAL

A building developed to serve a community's social, educational, health, cultural, faith and recreational needs.

LANDSCAPE

Parks, open spaces, and other natural features which provide passive and active recreational options.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID)	A land development approach of using various planning and design techniques that minimize the effect that development will have on the quality of the surrounding environment. This includes conserving and protecting natural resource systems and reducing infrastructure costs. This allows land to still be developed in a cost-effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts.
MOBILITY	See Active Transportation
MULTI-MODAL	Transportation systems that account for various means of transportation such as public transit, walking, biking, and personal vehicles. This includes planning for the connections and synergies among various modes that play a role in the overall transportation system.
PARK	A publicly owned greenspace used for recreation.
PASSIVE RECREATION	Outdoor recreational activities that involve a lower level of activity such as walking, running, cycling, nature observation and picnicking.
PLAZA	A predominantly hard-surfaced public gathering space.
POLICY	Sets out the approach the Municipality will generally apply in its decision-making to achieve an objective, goal, strategy, or intent.
PUBLIC REALM	Publicly owned streets, sidewalks, pathways, rights-of-way, parks, and open spaces primarily designed for use by pedestrians in getting around the Downtown or spending time at, or gathering in.
REDEVELOPMENT	New construction or repurposing of existing structures on previously developed land, including significant changes to the adjacent public realm.

SAFETY	Aspects of an area that contribute to or detract from people's sense of safety.
STREETSCAPE	The combination of physical elements that give character to a street, including the roadway, streetlights, street trees, street furnishings, sidewalks, and building façade treatments.
TRANSPORTATION	Downtown's network of streets that enable the movement of vehicles including public transit.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	The design of buildings, products, or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability, or other factors.
URBAN SERVICE AREA	Fort McMurray, located within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Fort McMurray is recognized as equivalent to a city by the Government of Alberta for the purposes of program delivery and grant eligibility.
WAYFINDING	Wayfinding is a series of visual cues to help a visitor understand where they are and where they are going. Wayfinding enhances sense of place and creates a shared regional identity with colour, graphics, designs, and public celebration of culture and history.



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**