

City of Whitehorse

Downtown Plan: Phase 1 Background Report Background Research and Conceptual Planning Framework

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Framework**

Downtown Whitehorse Waterfront

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this Background Report is to provide a summary of the planning process undertaken as Phase 1 in the preparation of a Downtown Plan for the City of Whitehorse. As such, this background report establishes the conceptual planning framework for the development of the Downtown Plan. The Downtown Plan will be developed in Phase 2. The intent of the document is to provide the Planning Committee of Council a summary of the work undertaken in the Downtown planning process and an outline of the framework for Plan development.

The following information is provided in this Background Report:

- Summary of Downtown Planning process
- Description of Planning Context
- Summary of background research and implications
- An overview of current Downtown conditions
- Summary of public consultation process and results
- Summary of Downtown assets and challenges
- Vision Statement for Downtown and Guiding Principles
- Preliminary design and plan ideas for the short, medium and longer term including such issues as:
 1. Height, form and massing of buildings
 2. Land use and area design transition
 3. High potential redevelopment site
 4. Streetscape and landscape improvements
 5. Traffic calming measures
 6. On and off-street parking area
 7. Functional and visual focal points

2.0 Summary of Downtown Planning Process

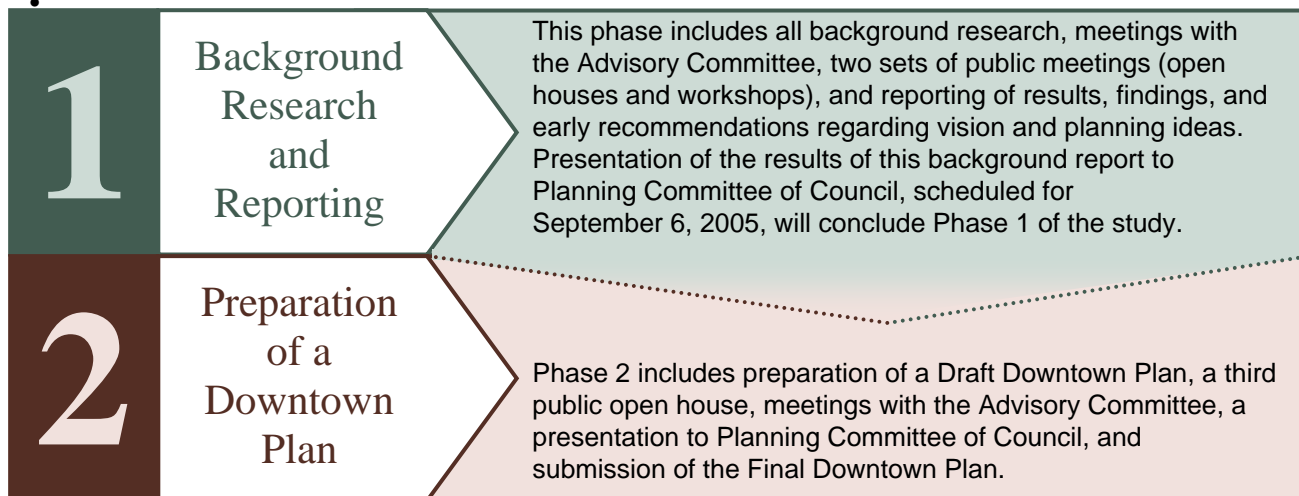
The Downtown Plan consultant team from UMA is made up of:

- Damon Oriente – Project Principal, Landscape Architect
- Kathleen Callow – Senior Planner
- David Bell – Economic Development Specialist

This process is being guided by Zoë Morrison, Planner for the City of Whitehorse and Downtown Plan project manager, and Lesley Cabott, Manager of Planning and Development Services, who is overseeing the entire process.

The Downtown Planning process is broadly divided into two phases, as shown in Figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1: Phases of Downtown Planning Process



The Advisory Committee, assembled for the Downtown Planning process by City staff, includes the following members:

Table 2.1: Advisory Committee Members

Name	Title	Organization
Chris Sorg	President	Main Street Yukon Society
Rick Karp	President	Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce
Rick Lemaire	Director Cultural Services	Tourism & Culture
M.J. Warshawski	President	Artspace North
John Pattimore	Lands Management Branch Coordinator	Ta'an Kwach'an Council

Name	Title	Organization
Brooke Alsbury	Coordinator	Outreach Van
Diane Brent	President	Downtown Residents Association
Nelson Turnbull		Yukon Real Estate Association
Rebecca Jensen	Executive Director	Yukon Historical and Museums Association
Doug Graham	City Councillor	Whitehorse City Council
Dennis Zimmermann	Senior Business Development Advisor - Tourism & Culture	YTG – Dept. of Economic Development
Doug Hnatiuk	Parks & Recreation	City of Whitehorse
Sheila Dodd	Tourism & Economic Development	City of Whitehorse

Other involved stakeholders, though not officially part of the Advisory Committee, are:

Table 2.2: Other Stakeholders

Name	Title	Organization
Kevin Benson		The Hougen Group
Gillian McKee(Observer Status)	Land Use Planner	Kwanlin Dun First Nation

The Phase 1 process to date has included the following:

- 4 Advisory Committee meetings
- Meeting Series 1: Exploring and Visioning (Public Open House/Workshop #1)
- Meeting Series 2: Objectives and Priorities (Public Open House/Workshop #2)

The summaries of Downtown strengths and weaknesses, visions and preliminary planning ideas presented in this report are derived in part from the above process.

2.1 Description of Planning Context

The Whitehorse Downtown Plan study area is bounded by Robert Service Way to the south, the Marwell Industrial Area to the north, the escarpment to the west and the Yukon River to the east. It includes the following downtown land use designations, as identified in the City of Whitehorse OCP (Map 14):

- Commercial – Service
Encompasses the Argus development property at the north end of the study area, as well as the primarily auto/highway-oriented commercial uses located north of Ogilvie Street and Qwanlin Mall
- Residential – Downtown
Established single-family-oriented neighbourhood known locally as Old Town, Whitehorse’s oldest residential area

- **Mixed-Use – Residential/Commercial (north of Core)**
Area bounded by Steele Street to the south and Ogilvie Street to the north, including Black Street leading to the Motorways development site
- **Commercial – Downtown**
The downtown core area of Whitehorse, centered on Main Street and bounded by Sixth Avenue and 1st Avenue from west to east, and from Lambert Street to Jarvis Street from south to north
- **Mixed-Use – Residential/Commercial (south of Core)**
Area bounded by Robert Service Way to the south and the Commercial – Downtown (Downtown Core) area to the north
- **Mixed-Use – Riverfront**
Area along the Yukon River which essentially stretches the length of the study area; land use plan as outlined in Map 9 of the Downtown Riverfront Plan

2.2 Summary of Background Documents and Implications

Over the past number of years, the City has commissioned various studies to update its information base and has adopted resolutions or bylaws that provide direction for the future development of the City of Whitehorse. While all of these documents have some relevance to the Downtown Plan process, the findings of many of the studies and policies were woven into either the 2002 Official Community Plan (OCP) or the 2004 City-Wide Transportation Plan. More recent initiatives, such as Yukon’s Cultural Labour Force, February 2004, and On the Waterfront, Artspace north, July 2004 provide additional information.

An overview of the OCP and Transportation Plan is provided below.

- **City of Whitehorse, Official Community Plan, 2002**
The OCP defines a vision, growth management policies and an implementation plan to guide land use decisions for the City over the next twenty years (2026). Chapter 9 of the Plan provides policy direction specifically for the Downtown. Generally, the Plan supports the following policies for Downtown:
 - respect for heritage buildings
 - consideration of the establishment of a Wood Street Heritage District
 - existing open spaces and safe, accessible pedestrian linkages, including a pedestrian and cycling network plan
 - a distinct commercial core with the allocation of retail, office, restaurant uses and the like, including major government offices and cultural facilities
 - the Downtown Riverfront Plan for the riverfront, involving a mix of land uses, several distinct precincts, anchoring parks, and a continuous walkway
 - single family character for the Old Town neighbourhood
 - residential or commercial structures or combined uses north and south of the commercial core

Significance to Downtown Plan: The City's adopted OCP provides the basis to build the Downtown Plan. The OCP establishes a policy framework that reflects existing land use patterns and supports a community goal to maintain and enhance a vibrant Downtown Commercial Core with linkages to other parts of Downtown.

- City of Whitehorse, City-Wide Transportation Study, July 2004

This transportation study identifies issues and goals and includes sections on road network and traffic operations, transportation safety, alternative modes and Downtown parking. This study complements the 2002 OCP, taking the OCP's goals into consideration; short and long term (20 years) improvements are recommended.

Specific to the Downtown, the Transportation Study recommends implementation of a number of improvements, including signalization, road markings etc. and, in addition:

- the "Preferred Road Diet Concept" for Fourth Avenue" and a portion of Second Avenue to balance mobility needs for motorized vehicles and non-motorized users, improve business access, and improve street ambience
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Plan with continuous cycle lanes and pedestrian movements
- Parking Management Plan for downtown core to maximize efficient use of downtown core stalls

Significance to Downtown Plan: While the Study is City-Wide, there is considerable focus on resolving Downtown issues and recommendations aim to increase accessibility for business uses, including addressing concerns related to parking, improved safety, and encouraging non-motorized modes of travel. A number of the recommendations from the Transportation Study are in the process of being implemented, including the road dieting initiatives associated with Fourth Avenue and the introduction of the Road and Trail Network Plan. Since many of the issues identified in the Transportation Study continue to be issues for the Downtown, the Downtown Plan should re-enforce and build upon the recommendations contained in the Transportation Study. Two-way traffic flows and angle parking, for example, offer tremendous benefits for the continued viability of Downtown businesses and should continue to be supported in the OCP.

3.0 Overview of Current Downtown Conditions

3.1 Population and Employment

Statistics Canada Census data indicates that Whitehorse had a regional population of 21,400 and a metro population of 19,058 in 2001. According to population data available by traffic zones (used in the City's traffic model), the population Downtown is estimated at about 3,300 people in 2001. The breakdown of population by downtown sub areas is described in the table below.

Table 3.1: Downtown Population and Employment

Traffic Zone	Area	2001 Population	2001 Employment
1	Downtown Residential (north of Lambert, west of Fourth Avenue to the escarpment)	2,215	10
2	Qwanlin Mall area (north of Ogilvie)	0	2,050
3	Central Downtown (Fourth Ave. to the river, Lambert to Ogilvie)	277	1,514
4	South Downtown (south of Lambert, east of Ogilvie)	831	1,446
Downtown Whitehorse Total		3,323	5,020
Regional Total		21,502	9,500
Downtown as a % of total		15%	53%

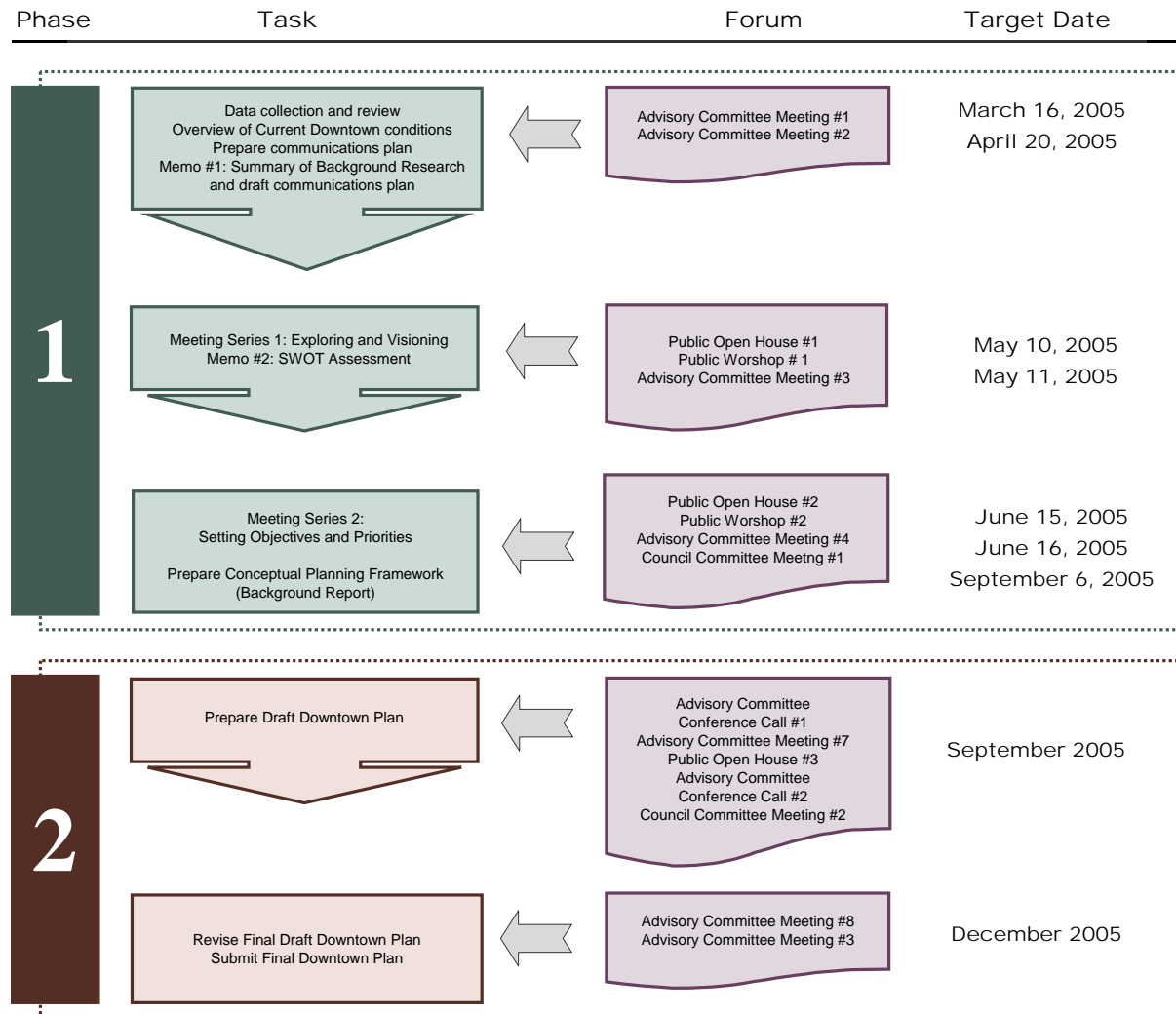
A comparison of the Downtown population and employment to the regional totals, expressed as a percentage, confirms what can be derived from aerial photos - that the population of Whitehorse is fairly dispersed, with only 15% concentrated downtown. It is also very important to note that over half (53%) of the region's employment occurs in downtown Whitehorse, which has positive implications for further development of downtown retail, services, entertainment, and cultural activity.

3.2 Future Downtown Population

The City's OCP provides a low, medium and high population forecast of 21,589, 25,680 and 31,267 for 2002, respectively. If a medium forecast is assumed, the population of Downtown Whitehorse is anticipated to grow over the next 20 years to 4,100 – an increase of 23% over the current population or close to 800 additional residents. On the basis of an assumed average household size of 2.7 persons per household, about 290 new households can be expected Downtown over the next 20 years, representing about an average of about 14 new households per year.

3.3 Summary of Public Consultation Process and Results

Figure 3.1: Whitehorse Plan Planning Process



Phase 1 public consultation included Meeting Series 1 (Exploring and Visioning) and Meeting Series 2 (Setting Priorities and Objectives), both of which involved a Public Open House and Public Workshop. Meeting Series 1 (Exploring and Visioning) took place on May 10th and 11th and Meeting Series 2 took place on June 15th.

Generally speaking, Open House and Workshop participants for the two Meeting Series were interested in seeing more vitality and active uses in the Downtown area, particularly along the Riverfront. Improved landscaping (including public art) throughout Downtown was also seen as a priority. Open House and Workshop participants also indicated considerable interest in seeing more living options generated throughout Downtown, particularly mixed-use residential over commercial uses and seniors housing options. The majority of participants also supported continued restriction of Downtown building heights to four storeys.

More detailed results of these two Meeting Series are presented on the following page.

3.3.1 Meeting Series 1 Results

Meeting Series 1 included Public Open House #1, Public Workshop #1, and a meeting with the Advisory Committee.

Public Open House #1

Introduction

A Public Open House was held at the MacBride Museum at the corner of 1st Avenue and Wood Street between 5:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 10th, 2005. In attendance were Zoë Morrison, Mike Ellis, and Dennis Shewfelt of the City of Whitehorse, as well as Damon Oriente and David Bell of the UMA planning team.

166 names were recorded on the Open House sign-up sheet, which indicated a considerable turnout.

Presentation materials included:

- Downtown (hereafter DT) Land Use Map (existing OCP)
- Downtown Whitehorse Existing Conditions – Assets Map with flip chart for comments
- Downtown Whitehorse – Existing Conditions – Challenges Map with flip chart
- Downtown Whitehorse Vision Statement with flip chart
- Downtown Photographers’ Initiative – Display of Photos by Category

Informal discussions were generated among residents, City staff, and the consultant planning team. Feedback to the event was very positive, with the photographers’ display proving to be a particularly popular attraction and source of discussion.

Flip-Chart Comments

Flip-charts were provided for public comment on the Assets and Challenges maps, as well the Downtown Whitehorse Vision Statement. Resulting comments are summarized as follows: (For more detailed results, see attachments.)

Flip-Chart Comments - Assets

Cited assets were limited to 8 entries and included:

- Functional grid street pattern
- Relatively low noise levels
- Dedicated core of residents who use alternative means of transportation, including public transit, bicycles, walking, etc.
- Panoramic views and spectacular natural surroundings
- Accessibility to the waterfront and to the clay cliffs
- Green/open spaces in the urban core
- Variety of housing and building types
- “Walkability”

Flipchart Comments - Challenges

Comments related to perceived challenges for Downtown Whitehorse were far more numerous and are summarized as follows:

- Trail system along the clay cliffs needs to be extended/continuous
- Insufficient bicycle storage/racks
- More designated monthly pass parking areas, mainly for employees
- Main Street as pedestrian-only area for festivals/events more often during the summer months
- Homeless residents of DT Whitehorse need to be accommodated with dignity, not treated as a problem
- Protecting ecology of the riparian area, natural ecosystem
- City needs to consider incentives to redevelopment/building restoration; clean up dilapidated buildings
- Unfinished infrastructure (i.e. unpaved roads in Old Town, elsewhere)
- Need for proper design guidelines, architectural standards
- Need for superior maintenance/cleanliness program downtown
- Second Avenue dangerous for pedestrians
- Plan and design for winter climate – 8 months of the year with snow/cold
- Multi-purpose community facility

Flipchart Comments – Downtown Vision Statement

Public response to the posted Downtown Vision Statement is summarized below:

- Maintain height restriction for Downtown buildings, four storeys maximum
- Eliminate height restriction for Downtown buildings; taller buildings indicate progress, modernity
- Foster individuality and character; do not sell out to chain stores
- Need for better quality and mix of housing options, particularly mixed-use residential over commercial
- Need for more attractions in the Downtown core
- Design guidelines – create architectural standard

Feedback Form Results

A summary of comments provided by the public on the Feedback Forms provided at Public Open House #1 on May 10th, 2005, are summarized below. These comments represent an important step in the development of an effective SWOT assessment for Downtown Whitehorse, which summarizes the area's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A more detailed summary of feedback form results is provided as an appendix to this report.

Public Response - Downtown Strengths

The most oft-cited strengths cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Table 3.2: Suggested Downtown Strengths

Greatest Strengths	# Responses
Walkability, pedestrian mobility, accessibility, centrality	14
Beauty of landscape, natural geography, river and mountain views	11
Area's rich history, cultural heritage, heritage buildings/assets	7
Riverfront access/open areas – well used by tourists and locals	7
Strong/vibrant/attractive Downtown Commercial Core/Main Street	7
Diversity – residents representing a broad spectrum of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds	6
Old Town community/neighbourhood with single-family focus	5

Other less frequently heard responses included:

- Current building height restriction which protects views, light exposure
- Number and quality of existing parks and open spaces
- Affordable housing options/new housing options emerging
- Healthy balance between commerce and culture

Public Response - Downtown Challenges

The most oft-cited challenges for Downtown cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Table 3.3: Suggested Downtown Challenges

Greatest Challenges	# Responses
Dominance of vehicular traffic – congestion, pedestrian safety	10
Maintaining Whitehorse's character and sense of history/setting in the face of commercial progress, particularly chain stores	6
Need for more Downtown population, lack of current housing options, particularly affordable new multi-family	5
Lack of infrastructure in existing residential areas (e.g. Old Town)	5
Financing infrastructure upgrades – Local Improvement Charge Policy needs revising	4
Maintaining Main Street vibrancy as North End Service Commercial (i.e. Wal-Mart, etc.) develops further	4
Criminal activity, including drug use, vandalism, graffiti, etc.	4

Other, less often heard challenges for downtown included:

- Parking, need for street parking, need for lane access, dedicated garage needed
- Building height restrictions, which limit growth, affordability, hinder development
- Poor state of existing housing stock and lack of incentives for reinvestment
- Pedestrian and cyclist accessibility during the long winter season

Public Response – Other Comments

The most oft-cited additional comments cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Table 3.4: Additional Comments

Other Comments	# Responses
Encourage more green space, urban parks, landscaping	9
Appreciate that people/residents are being involved early in the Downtown planning process – public consultation appreciated	8
Maintain the four storey height restriction	4
Create pedestrian-only environments on Main St. during the summer, parts of the summer, more often – for events	4
Make sure groups with lower access to public consultation are also involved in the Downtown planning process	3
Eliminate the four storey building height restriction	3
Maintain existing character of Old Town	3

Other, less frequently observed comments included the following:

- Density of 150 units per hectare shown on Downtown land use map too high
- Need for more police presence/patrols Downtown
- Need for more nightlife – extend life of Downtown past working day
- Need to address drug abuse, vandalism, criminal activity (i.e. escarpment area)

The 30 respondents answered the place of work/place of residence questions as follows:

Table 3.4: Place of Residence or Place of Work

Question	Yes	No
Live within the Downtown Plan study area?	57%	43%
Work within the Downtown Plan study area?	67%	33%

Public Workshop #1

Introduction

A Public Workshop was held at the Westmark Hotel between 7:00 P.M. and 9:00 P.M. on Wednesday, May 11th, 2005. In attendance, as discussion table facilitators, were Zoë Morrison, Mike Ellis, and Wayne Tuck of the City of Whitehorse, as well as Damon Oriente and David Bell of the consultant planning team from UMA.

Target participation for the workshop was set at between 30 and 36 participants and through Zoe Morrison and a sign up sheet provided at the Public Open House on May 10th, 33 residents of Whitehorse participated in the workshop.

Workshop participants sat at themed roundtable discussion groups based on an assigned nametag number. The five themed tables and facilitators were as follows:

Table 3.5: Workshop #1 Tables

Table	Subject Matter	Host
1	Land Use, Tenant Mix, & Interconnectivity	David Bell
2	Urban Design, Streetscaping, & Heritage Restoration	Damon Oriente
3	Arts & Culture, Parks & Recreation	Zoë Morrison
4	Parking and Transportation	Wayne Tuck
5	Social, Community, & Environmental Issues	Mike Ellis

Workshop groups rotated through these five table discussion groups at roughly 20 to 25 minute intervals.

Workshop Table Discussion Results

Table facilitators initiated open ended discussion based on lead questions as shown on the attached comment sheets. Participants were encouraged to record their thoughts on comment forms, which were then compiled and submitted by each of the five groups at each of the themed discussion group tables.

As with Open House #1 feedback forms, comments were grouped and tallied by number of responses and % of total responses. The top ten comments received at each table were then summarized in order to identify the most prominent issues according to workshop participants.

Results for each of the five discussion group tables are provided below. Although the lead questions and themes were designed so as to differentiate as much as possible between various categories of issues, there was naturally considerable overlap in terms of group discussions. This is to be expected given the functional connections between land uses, the nature and quality of specific establishments, the transportation network, landscaping/open space, and social/event programming, among other areas of interest.

Table 1: Land Use, Tenant Mix, and Interconnectivity

Comments from workshop participants at Table 1 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: David Bell

Table 3.6: Top 10 Comments from Table 1

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More nightlife Downtown; allow for bistros, pubs, cabarets, tapas bars, not just hotel bars – liquor laws need revising	10
Affordable seniors housing needed Downtown – no segregation	9
More mixed-use residential above commercial needed	8
More affordable housing options in general needed Downtown – good example being the Kobayashi-Zedda projects	7
Keep theatres near Downtown core, add theatres to core/Main, existing theatres need improving	6
Create space/access for boats – docks, wharf, pier, tie-ups	5
Main Street area vs. North end commercial: maintain character of Main Street/Core by encouraging independent owner-operated store development; both centres are supportable but different; seek means of encouraging referral business between the two centres	5
Eliminate height restriction; consider relaxed restrictions; allow for market-driven progress; higher buildings in certain areas	4
Initiate design guidelines/architectural controls that allow for a wide range of styles but ensure certain minimum standards – seek public input in this process	4
More active uses along the riverfront, including brewpubs, restaurants with patios, after-hours uses	4
Maintain height restriction of 4 storeys (ensure adequate light, views, etc.)	4

In terms of land use, there was widespread support among workshop participants, most of whom are Downtown residents, for introducing a wider mix of housing options into Downtown Whitehorse. There was particularly strong support for mixed-use development, including residential condominium over commercial at grade.

Downtown housing options for seniors was cited often as being in need, given most seniors desire to remain active, and close to amenities, rather than feeling segregated to more suburban locations.

The need for liquor law revision, increased nightlife (particularly within the Downtown core and along the riverfront), an improved mix of higher quality restaurants and entertainment venues was also often mentioned. More active riverfront uses were also a priority with workshop participants, many of whom specified a public wharf/pier/boat dock with limited tourist commercial/food establishments as an important potential addition to this area.

There was also fairly strong support for the initiation of design guidelines/architectural standards for Downtown buildings.

Table 2: Urban Design, Streetscaping, and Heritage Restoration

Comments from workshop participants at Table 2 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Damon Oriente

Table 3.7: Top 10 Comments from Table 2

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More Downtown trees and greenery, planters, preferably indigenous plants	10
Design guidelines, architectural standards – flexible, authentic – not “Disneyland” effect; diversity in building styles but authentic materials, historically appropriate	6
Downtown trees need protection, better maintenance and care, registry	6
More public seating areas, benches, ledges made for sitting, etc. – natural/wood rather than steel along riverfront and in core	6
Need better downtown signage to orient people, esp. tourists/visitors	6
Finish paving roads Downtown (i.e. Old Town) – tires on gravel = noise and dust pollution; roads should have been completed years ago	5
Improve snow removal, priority for seniors, the physically challenged	5
Inefficient processes for clearing garbage, emptying bins; needs to be monitored – litter created by the existing process	5
Better/wider walking areas (i.e. Whitehorse Elementary school)	5
Need for better maintenance, standards, too much litter on Downtown streets	5

The overall need for increased Downtown greenery, including trees, planters, and useable public open spaces appeared to be a top priority for workshop participants at Table 2.

Again, and as mentioned as well at Table 1, there is a perceived need for the introduction of design guidelines/architectural standards that would serve as a “floor” in terms of building design. It was also strongly indicated that such guidelines should be flexible enough to encourage some diversity in terms of building aesthetics, and that a homogenized, “Disneyland” effect of sameness is to be avoided.

Improved Downtown signage that would help to better orient tourists and visitors as to the location of various Downtown attractions, merchants, and service providers, was also viewed as an important need for Downtown Whitehorse.

Also, as mentioned at Table 1, workshop participants indicated a need to finish paving the roads of Old Town (and other areas) so as to provide a more continuous quality road network and stimulate reinvestment/renovation.

Improved maintenance and cleanliness initiatives were also noted as a priority issue for the Downtown area.

Table 3: Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation

Comments from workshop participants at Table 3 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Zoë Morrison

Table 3.7: Top 10 Comments from Table 3

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More public art is needed on downtown streets, in public buildings, in open spaces; public input is desired (unwanted public art is distressing); artist-designed infrastructure/furniture desired; designate certain areas for public art (e.g. roundabouts)	14
Need more open spaces, small parks, trees and greenery throughout downtown – needs to be better connected, continuous, extend landscaping/planters to connect open spaces visually; landscape ugly parking lots	10
City should consider live-work options for artists, other groups – through zoning policies	8
Escarpment area needs more natural landscaping, maintenance and cleanliness, stairs as well (e.g. end of Main St.) – escarpment is an underdeveloped park	8
Pedestrian-only environments for festivals and events are great – should be done more often (e.g. summer, weekends) to develop community spirit/pride, increase tourism	7
Boat launch/marina/wharf/tie-ups needed along the riverfront	6
Maintenance, cleanliness of parks, open space, playground equipment, etc. needs to be improved	6
Murals are great to see – need to be maintained, improved	6
Need for more cafes, restaurants, brewpubs with outdoor patios/access	6
Trails, new stairway at Puckett's Gulch Trail are excellent - need more of this, more continuous trail system	6

The workshop group was overwhelmingly in favour of introducing more public art into the downtown area, so long as public input was included as part of the process. The Downtown core and riverfront areas were cited as particularly attractive locations for such work, although Downtown entryways and roundabouts were also mentioned as potentially desirable locations.

As noted in the Table 2 discussions, workshop participants at Table 3 often cited a need for an improved landscaping and open space design program for the Downtown area. Lepage Park was cited as a good example of a small but well-used urban park. The escarpment area was often mentioned as an underdeveloped urban park and an undervalued resource for downtown communities in need of better maintenance and regulation. Litter, parking, and undesirable activities were listed as impediments to use.

Workshop participants generally favoured regulations that would allow for the development of live-work forms of housing, which might typically attract residents in creative lines of work, but which would also double as affordable housing options.

Table 4: Parking and Transportation

Comments from workshop participants at Table 4 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Wayne Tuck

Table 3.8: Top 10 Comments from Table 4

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
Second Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians – need for more visible crosswalks	15
Additional bicycle storage/racks/lockers needed downtown	12
Multi-level parking structures/garages need consideration	9
Pedestrian safety is compromised on many through avenues and cross streets – more four-way stops on key east/west streets	8
Improve transit service Downtown; transit loop needed; better evening/weekend service; go back to “mini-buses”	7
Sixth Avenue is becoming a problem for pedestrians and needs to be reviewed for potential improvements	6
Parking along the riverfront should be maintained but monitored	6
Dedicated bicycle lanes would be a good idea Downtown	5
Downtown parking should be free – parking meters are restricting use (annoyance vs. cost issue)	5
Too much parking along the riverfront – not an appropriate use of this area – need more useable public space, bistros, restaurants, etc.	5

Workshop participants, most of whom reside downtown, often cited automotive dependence and the dominance of the automobile as being impediments to pedestrian enjoyment, mobility, and safety. Second Avenue was most often mentioned as failing to address the needs of pedestrians moving east-west along cross streets.

Sixth Avenue was also mentioned by a significant number of participants, who view it as being an alternative vehicular-oriented alternative to Fourth Avenue, which is undergoing significant “traffic diet” measures intended to improve pedestrian and cyclist mobility and safety while maintaining sufficient vehicular flow.

Regarding transportation, the top issues included:

- **Parking**
Consider multi-level parking, free Downtown parking, dedicated employee parking zones; decrease parking along the riverfront but improve configuration
- **Bicycle use**
Increase number of bicycle racks/storage options and consider dedicated bike lanes wherever possible
- **Transit service**
Use smaller “mini-buses” to increase efficiency/decrease costs; add Downtown transit loop

Table 5: Social, Community, and Environmental Issues

Comments from workshop participants at Table 5 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Mike Ellis

Table 3.9: Top 10 Comments from Table 5

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
Need for more social housing, co-op projects, affordable housing	9
Excess capacity in existing buildings (i.e. churches, schools), should be made available for community use wherever possible; develop guidelines for use; manage list of spaces for community	8
More RCMP patrols – bike and foot patrols to monitor problem areas	8
Community centre Downtown is desirable – seniors/youth friendly	6
Do not segregate social housing, shelters – integrate with other mixed uses, incomes	5
Existing RCMP patrolling is sufficient; RCMP have enough to do	5
Need a dedicated youth centre in an appropriate, accessible location	5
Dedicated skateboard area(s) Downtown, indoor/outdoor	4
Increase by-law enforcement to reduce loitering, littering, vandalism	4
Need for work, social, drug addiction programs/resources for residents in need	4

There was general consensus among workshop participants that Downtown Whitehorse suffers from a shortage of affordable housing options for seniors, lower income residents, and residents with special needs.

There is also concern about the possibility of redevelopment leading to segregation of such uses to other, more outlying areas.

Residents at the workshop indicated a desire to find better ways of using existing Downtown buildings to accommodate community activities accessible to a wide range of age and income groups.

The need for a Downtown community centre with programs and amenities for all age groups was also mentioned as a priority.

Many residents noted a desire for increased RCMP presence Downtown in order to better monitor certain areas of the Downtown, while some responded that the RCMP presence was sufficient.

Development of better youth-oriented resources was also often mentioned as a more positive means of decreasing problems related to loitering, littering, vandalism, and the like.

Improved social programs are also desired as a means of reaching residents in need.

More detailed results for Public Open House #1 and Public Workshop #1 are provided as an appendix to this report.

3.3.2 Meeting Series 2 Results

Meeting Series 2 included Public Open House #2, Public Workshop #2, and a meeting with the Advisory Committee.

Public Open House #2

Introduction

Public Open House #2 for the Downtown Whitehorse Plan project was held at the High Country Inn between 5:00 P.M. and 7:15 P.M. on Wednesday, June 15, 2005. In attendance from the City of Whitehorse were Zoë Morrison, Mike Ellis, Mike Gau, Chris Wolfe, Lesley Cabott, Wayne Tuck, and Dennis Shewfelt, as well as Damon Oriente, David Bell, and Kathleen of the UMA planning team.

In total, 26 names were recorded on the Open House sign-up sheet. The low turn out rate is likely reflective of the significant hail/rain storm that began at about 4:30 and lasted until about 6:30 P.M. – several streets in Downtown Whitehorse were closed due to flooding.

Presentation materials included display panels for six sub areas of Downtown (Downtown South, North End Service Commercial, Downtown North, Old Town, Downtown Commercial Core, Downtown Riverfront) which highlighted the geographic location of the sub-area together with a draft vision statement and preliminary plan ideas. Also on display was a panel summarizing comments received at the first public open house in May. In addition, two flip charts asking for “your comments please” were available for public comment.

Newsletter #2 and Comment Feedback Form #2 were distributed to public open house participants.

Informal discussions were generated among participants, City staff, and the consultant planning team. Feedback was generally positive, although several attendees commented that the weather was likely discouraging turn out.

Flip-Chart Comments

Given the turn out, limited comments were received on the flip-charts. Comments received included:

- Increase density all over downtown
- Affordable housing
- Riverfront dock/wharf
- Parking/transit stop (i.e. park and ride) which encourages walking to and from shopping and services
- Ski Trail connections from residential areas to downtown
- Extend trolley northwards
- Allow over four storey development in downtown north and north end area
- Create, around the WPYR train depot, displays reflecting the train and riverboat era with artefacts and displays, include reconstruction of some of the old river warehouses and ship docks
- Move YTG maintenance shops (at 2 Mile Hill) to a more appropriate location
- Move City Municipal Building
- Incorporate design/aesthetic (sic) guidelines into Big Box (or small box?) commercial buildings
- Make all projects subject to new environmental impact assessment process

Feedback Form Results

A Feedback Form was distributed at the public open house. The deadline for submission of the form was June 30, 2005. (Note: The feedback form was available on the City's website following the public open house.) As of June 30, only 8 feedback forms were received. The results indicate support for most of the preliminary plan ideas listed in the feedback form, including the development of a landscaping program, extension of Third Avenue streetscape improvements, a strategy for infrastructure upgrades,

Downtown design guidelines, wayfinding signage, a continuous trail along the escarpment and integrating more active uses into the riverfront. There was mixed support for multi-family with an 8 storey potential. However, due to the limited number of completed feedback forms it would be inappropriate to suggest that the responses are indicative of general public opinion. Comments included the importance of infrastructure improvements in Old Town, the need to simplify Downtown zoning, and concerns over the lifting of height restrictions.

Public Workshop #2

Introduction

A Public Workshop was held at High Country Inn between 7:30 P.M. and 9:30 P.M. on Wednesday, June 15th, 2005. In attendance, as discussion table facilitators, were Zoë Morrison (City of Whitehorse) and David Bell (UMA) at Table 1 and Damon Oriente (UMA) and Kathleen Callow (UMA) at Table 2.

Target participation for the workshop was set at between 30 and 36 participants and through previous advertising, as well as a sign up sheet at the Public Open House #2 immediately prior to the workshop - 15 Whitehorse residents participated in the workshop.

Beginning at 7:30 pm, workshop participants were grouped at two tables and each table followed a discussion format based on the six sub-areas of downtown, with the detailed listing of each vision and preliminary plan ideas for the sub-areas as the focus of the discussion.

Workshop Table Discussion Results

Table facilitators initiated open ended discussion based on the preliminary plan ideas for each of the six sub-areas. Participants were also encouraged to record their thoughts on the Public Workshop Forms, which listed all preliminary plan ideas for each of the sub-areas. Sixteen sets of forms were received.

Although the workshop was intended to focus on the six sub-areas of downtown, there was considerable overlap in terms of group discussions and, at both tables, a recognition that there are many issues which overlap geographic boundaries and are issues that face the entire downtown.

Table 1: Summary of Discussion

Concern was raised that increased density appears to be supported in many of the preliminary plan ideas. The issue of higher density as a goal was discussed. Many supported the continuation of low density residential within single family neighbourhoods. There was some support for higher density but concerns over how these would actually look and relate to surrounding immediate area. Issues of aesthetics and impacts on neighbouring properties would have to be addressed, including shadows, sunlight exposure, and view corridors.

Assets that anchor Downtown should include schools offering K – 12 grades, as well as a trail system from the escarpment to the riverfront.

The Walkable Communities Strategy was an important exercise undertaken by the City within the last few years and it was stressed that the value of that work should not be misplaced. It was suggested that much of that work was incorporated into the City's Transportation Plan.

Changes to Fourth Avenue generally supported. Road diet is supported, but would also like to see parking diets – general agreement that the City has a number of large parking lots that only serve as parking deserts and are not helpful in creating a walkable city. In addition, concerns over pedestrian safety and limited transit service were expressed. Also, concerns were expressed that Sixth Avenue has been getting busier since Fourth Avenue Improvements have been implemented.

It was suggested that Youth groups be used to help maintain areas, such as parks and that partnerships be formed. This might encourage a sense of ownership over an area.

The group suggested that there is a need to define the span of building storeys (12 feet or 8 feet), as that would determine the ultimate height of buildings. Some suggested that the height of the High Country Inn was reasonable, but nothing higher than this should be considered due to concerns over the “wind tunnel” or “canyon” effect, as well as light issues, view corridors, and overall liveability.

There was general confirmation that Downtown South is both an area of commercial and low cost residential.

The need for design guidelines was discussed, especially the need to consider the building's design-relationship to the street and the ultimate skyline profile of the City.

It was generally supported that basic infrastructure is missing in many parts of Downtown, particularly Downtown South. It was suggested that the burden of upgrading should not be solely placed on property owners in the area. It was asked whether or not a plan is in place for infrastructure upgrades.

It was suggested that affordable housing needs to be mixed into neighbourhoods and should not be constructed as isolated, stand-alone buildings.

Wood Street Annex should be viewed as a significant asset and expanded upon. The need for a Downtown located auditorium, community centre, and arts centre was emphasized.

Questions were raised about a tax surcharge assessed some years ago to improve infrastructure – where are the funds and what have they been used for?

It was suggested that a transit loop from Wal-Mart along Fourth, to the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre, along Second and back to Wal-Mart should be implemented. General concerns were raised that transit service is not adequate.

The need for an East/West urban trail connector from the escarpment (by community gardens) to the riverfront was suggested.

Suggestion that the North End Service Commercial should be made more pedestrian friendly. This includes the design/execution of the large parking lot feeding Wal-Mart.

Concerns that Qwanlin Mall “dead zone” exists between Wal-Mart and Main Street. Suggestion that new commercial areas should be limited in order to promote the re-use of existing areas.

Concerns over safety raised with issue of drinking parties along the Downtown Riverfront. Suggestion that security may be improved with development. General concern raised that the location of the trainshed blocks the view of the riverfront.

It was noted that the Kwanlin-Dun Cultural Centre is to be located on the Riverfront and that a health centre would also be a good idea.

The fact that the Trolley cuts through land parcels and walkway was noted.

The group indicated support for the Legion's senior housing proposal along the riverfront and improvement of public space along the riverfront. Many would also like to see additional cultural space for social activity, youth activity, daycare, elders and the Yukon College. In addition, residential development along the riverfront was supported.

There was support for establishment of a Performing Arts Centre and continuous trail system. There was mixed support for the closure of 1st Avenue.

Table 2: Summary of Discussion

The Table 2 discussion flowed from Downtown sub-area to sub-area, as noted below.

- Downtown South
 - Concern was raised over the possible loss of the “Riverside” grocery in the face of development pressures for higher end condominiums. The higher end condos are supported as a new and needed housing form but maintenance of the convenience grocery as an important resource for both residents and tourists alike is viewed as crucial. The grocery is very well-liked and used and an important means of encouraging more walking in the downtown.
 - Building along the open escarpment areas not really seen as a viable option given the lack of light in this area – more of a “who would want to live there?” rather than a “no building here please” issue – re: light – one block away from the escarpment makes a huge difference.
 - Need to expand on tourism potential – Downtown South has a lot of tourist attractions but insufficiently tapped accommodations potential (i.e. quality bed and breakfast).
 - Winter maintenance/snow removal needs to be improved – much of this area is not properly walkable during much of the year (what good are new sidewalks if you can’t walk on them eight months of the year?)
 - Re: “Downtown South” gateway – concern over too much signage, quality of signage – gateway elements should be more related to landscaping, public art – quality landscaping items that announce entry to downtown.

- Downtown North
 - Re: area vision statement: may be inappropriate to single out Black Street in the vision statement
 - Need at Black Street and Third Avenue for a four-way stop is in question – problem is not lack of a four-way stop, but lack of sidewalks and drop-off/pick-up area for Whitehorse Elementary; this is a major safety concern for children and their parents/guardians.
 - Strong support for keeping Whitehorse Elementary as a school in its present location – how can we attract families downtown without a proper school?
 - Strong support for redevelopment of Qwanlin Mall and/or surrounding site – mall is an embarrassment in its present state and acts as a wall along Third Avenue.
 - Strong support for extending Third Avenue streetscape improvements further north.

- Support for more building murals – consider this for proposed design guidelines.
- Support for Yukon College and/or arts centre presence (i.e. classrooms, gallery) Downtown.
- Canadian Freightways: wrong use for the area; should be relocated to the north end service commercial area or perhaps elsewhere.

- Old Town
 - There is already some multi-family residential and office uses between Fifth and Sixth Avenues; not much room for more development, though redevelopment is welcomed.
 - The recycling centre and tow-truck company operations create noise issues for surrounding residents (i.e. “crushing glass at 8 A.M.”).
 - Strong support for only residential uses west of Sixth Avenue.
 - Support for alternative engineering/design standards for Old Town – the cookie cutter “one size fits all” approach does not work – this all or nothing standard creates an affordability issue and is aesthetically unappealing to most Old Town residents (according to those present at Table 2).
 - Walkability in winter is hampered by lack of proper maintenance/snow removal.
 - Find a way to finish paving the roads; this has been dragging on for too long.

- Downtown Commercial Core
 - Instituting design guidelines/architectural standards: do not want to see another Dawson emerge; guidelines should allow for diversity in building styles (no Whitehorse standard). DAB added that the purpose of proper guidelines is simply to ensure a certain minimum quality in terms of materials or design characteristics. ZM added that, for example, building guidelines for the core area might ensure adequate interaction with the street (no “great wall” effects typical of institutional uses).
 - Wayfinding signage supported, but only at key focal points/intersections – do not want signage overkill (Fourth Avenue was cited as an example of what not to do re: signage).
 - Interpretive signage – was mentioned that a historical photo of the SS Klondike being moved to its present location would be an ideal addition to the downtown core as a piece of public art/photographic history.
 - Strong support for maintaining the Yukon Cinema building, either as an independent cinema or venue for live theatre/performance.
 - Strong support for improved maintenance/cleanliness task force.
 - General support for residential mixed-use development.
 - Strong support for more arts-related activities – street festivals, block parties, street performers in summer months.

- Riverfront
 - General consensus that there is too much parking along the riverfront and that this is a waste of an important resource.
 - Riverfront needs more active uses – cultural venues, restaurants, bistros: some limited elements evocative of Vancouver’s Granville Island may work over time if appropriately scaled; DAB added that development of the Motorways site is one of the keys for the evolution of the riverfront, and that residential on the riverfront will be needed to generate sufficient support for retail/entertainment commercial development.
 - Safety is an issue – area needs to be better monitored so that more Whitehorse residents and families want to make regular use of the riverfront.

- North End Service Commercial
 - Consensus that YTG’s maintenance equipment yard is an eyesore and occupying an important piece of property near the entrance to Whitehorse’s downtown – too important and strategic a site for this type of use. High visibility sites with significant exposure to vehicular traffic, particularly those near Downtown “gateway” locations, should not accommodate such inappropriate uses.
 - Something should be done about the lack of landscaping in vast parking areas – too barren, no aesthetic qualities whatsoever. If such desired can be accommodated by major retailers in other municipalities and locations, is it too much to ask to make a similar effort in Whitehorse? If the public had been properly consulted in the first place, this area of Downtown might look substantially better today.

Summary of Public Workshop Comment Sheets

Summaries of the results of the Workshop #2 are as follows. Complete results are attached to this report.

Strong Support

The Workshop #2 group results showed strong support for the following preliminary planning issues:

- Downtown South
 - Encourage development of high quality, multi-family housing (use design guidelines, target sites with view potential).
 - Improve infrastructure including road paving and sidewalks.
 - Encourage limited convenience-oriented commercial uses to service the day-to-day needs of local residents.
 - Maintain area along escarpment as a quality urban park and valued community resource.
- Downtown North
 - Extend Third Avenue streetscape improvements in order to improve function and appearance as an important pedestrian corridor.
 - Encourage "live-work development" as catalysts for under-developed properties, adaptive re-use projects, etc.
 - Establish transit loop in order to improve pedestrian mobility throughout Downtown Whitehorse
 - Initiate landscaping program for parking lots.
 - Maintain Whitehorse Elementary School as a community resource and to attract/retain families Downtown.
 - Require significant public input into any potential redevelopment of important sites such as Qwanlin Mall, Yukon Centre, etc. to ensure that redevelopment enhances the Downtown.
- Old Town
 - Develop strategy for completing infrastructure upgrades (including appropriate reviews of municipal funding mechanisms).
 - Maintain single-family character; allow for low-density infill only (e.g. small-lot single-family, duplexes).
 - Encourage high quality, lower density housing between Fifth and Sixth Avenue.
 - Promote heritage restoration (with tax-based incentives or other initiatives).

- Upgrade area along escarpment as a high quality, urban park system and continuous trail system.
- Consider adopting alternative infrastructure design standards for Old Town in partnership with local area residents.
- Consider traffic calming measures for 6th Avenue to improve pedestrian safety and mobility.

- **Downtown Commercial Core**
 - Develop design guidelines for new construction/renovation that encourage quality development standard, street level vibrancy, and diversity of architectural styles. There is a strong desire to avoid prescribing a "Whitehorse-only style", which is viewed as overly artificial and restrictive.
 - Develop landscaping program (including tree planting, street furniture, lighting, and attractive garbage bins; and initiate strategy for landscape maintenance.
 - Create "cleanliness and maintenance" task force (Downtown merchants and City staff) to foster an attractive commercial core.
 - Highlight heritage/history with interpretive displays, and potentially integrate with wayfinding (signage) system.
 - Encourage development of mixed-use residential/commercial uses (through tax-based incentives, fast-tracked development proposals, etc.).
 - Maintain and restore theatre on Wood Street as an important urban cinema and community resource.

- **Downtown Riverfront**
 - Improve the Riverfront Trail north of Main Street.
 - Protect views (e.g. no buildings at ends of east-west streets).
 - Encourage mixed-use residential/commercial development along First Avenue.
 - Integrate more active uses (such as limited commercial services) into the White Pass Depot and Old Firehall buildings to increase public access.
 - Develop public wharf, docks, with boat tie-ups and limited tourist-commercial uses.

- **North End Service Commercial**
 - Create attractive north "gateway" entry through public art feature, landscaping treatment, directional signage.
 - Develop landscaping standards (i.e. parking areas and frontages along important arterials to be landscaped).
 - Consider alternate uses of vast parking areas (e.g. opportunity for park and ride transit facility, temporary/periodic farmers' market, etc.)
 - Integrate area east of Quartz Road and northern riverfront with pedestrian linkages; orient new buildings toward the riverfront; allow for pedestrian access from the River.

Do Not Support

The Workshop #2 group results showed very little support for the following preliminary planning issues:

- Relaxation of height restriction
- Adding a four-way stop to Black Street and Third Avenue

- Develop, with public input, identity for “Downtown South”, to foster community cohesion/spirit and spur reinvestment. (This was viewed by the group as being unnecessary – what is needed are simply more uses that fit with the existing character – including superior forms of residential building and tourist accommodations)

Requiring Further Clarification/Exploration

Planning ideas which require further clarification or discussion include the following:

- Create "Downtown South" gateway to announce entry to Downtown Whitehorse with signage, public art and landscaping
- Pursue alternative means of providing Black Street improvements (through a more City-initiated process, revisions of Local Improvement Bylaw, etc.)
- Discourage stand-alone commercial uses (such as restaurants) except in Wood Street "Heritage District". Encourage home-based businesses while maintaining the residential character of Old Town
- Develop "wayfinding" signage system to orient visitors to various downtown sites of interest, services, etc.
- Support expanded scope of existing Main Street Yukon Society (to operate as a Business Improvement Area (BIA)) with better presence (i.e. website, event programming, etc.) and a budget
- Support existing Riverfront Design Guidelines
- Discourage office-type development (offices should be encouraged in the Downtown Commercial area)
- Discourage development of small retail commercial units (less than 10,000 sq.ft.)

4.0 Summary of Downtown Assets and Challenges

Based on a review of documents, discussions with City staff and the Advisory Committee, and the project team’s initial observations, an identification of Downtown Whitehorse assets and challenges has been compiled and illustrated on Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

Current downtown conditions, addressing important assets and challenges, are described below and form a starting point for the Downtown Plan process:

4.1 Downtown Assets

Downtown Whitehorse can boast a number of significant assets including:

- Existing residential uses (neighbourhoods such as Old Town and scattered multi-family buildings) within proximity of primary shopping district
- Spectacular natural landscape features, specifically the escarpment and the Yukon River
- Riverfront improvements; between the White Pass and Yukon Route Depot and the Yukon Territorial Government building, trail improvements, upgrades to First Avenue, and the plaza development at the Visitors Reception Centre have all improved the aesthetic quality and pedestrian feel of the riverfront area
- Public open spaces and dedicated park space – particularly important “signature” urban riverfront parks such as Shipyards Park and Rotary Peace Park, which are key activity centres for the riverfront and for downtown as a whole; these parks serve as important social building blocks and will, over time, help to link various downtown sub-areas; smaller pocket parks such as LePage Park on Wood Street are indicative of the importance of pedestrian-oriented green environments in urban settings as they provide a social gathering place and respite for pedestrians moving through the downtown



- Significant management and retention of heritage resources, including the City of Whitehorse Heritage Building Registry, a listing of 172 building sites (plus a cemetery) which has helped to spur actions to protect heritage structures within city limits; these heritage structures are important assets as they serve to distinguish Whitehorse from other centres and to create more interesting and pedestrian-friendly environments. Current management techniques are deemed an asset, although



- the marketing of such resources could be made more effective via an “Historic Downtown Whitehorse” walking tour brochure, which would provide a photo, a brief history, and a location/context map
- Vibrant retail commercial core centered along Main Street, which is aesthetically attractive, pedestrian-oriented, and highly accessible – Main Street is the heart of this area, with very low vacancy (roughly 1% for grade and second floor units based on a field survey completed in April, 2005) and a good mix of retail, food/restaurant, and service uses

- Two-way vehicular traffic and provision of significant angle parking capacity is deemed a major asset for the purposes of stimulating Downtown business activity as they reinforce the role of Downtown Whitehorse as a destination. As the Downtown area is intended to accommodate pedestrian, cyclist, and other movement/circulation in addition to vehicular traffic, and given retailers' need for adequate visibility and access, the existing pattern must be considered an important asset which should be maintained
- New regional-serving retail uses such as box retailers Real Canadian Superstore and the Argus development site's Wal-Mart (along with a range of auto-oriented highway commercial uses along Second Avenue north of Ogilvie Street; must be considered an important regional traffic-generating asset given the much inferior prospect of having such uses locate well outside the downtown core in a more typical highway location (as has been the case in many municipalities throughout North America); retailers of this scale will draw shoppers from a wide geographic trade area



- Number of major public and private employers, including most government offices, accounting for a high proportion of the local and regional employment base; roughly 53% of the region's 9,500 jobs are located in downtown Whitehorse
- Significant development opportunities along the riverfront, including the Motorways site, for which early planning is underway, the Kwanlin-Dun property, which is to accommodate (among other uses) a new cultural centre
- Implementation of transportation network improvements based on current Transportation Plan, whose policies will assist in strengthening downtown
- Location of significant tourist attractions and facilities downtown, including the SS Klondike, the Whitehorse Visitor Reception Centre, the MacBride Museum, the Riverfront itself, and the seasonal riverfront trolley
- Number of popular major festivals and events that draw residents and tourists visitors at various points throughout the year; winter festivals include the Frostbite Music Festival, Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race, Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous, and the "Burning Away the Winter Blues" event. Popular summer events include the Yukon International Story Telling Festival, the Klondike Harvest Fair, the Longest Days Street Fair (July), Yukon River Quest, and the Whitehorse Rodeo. Downtown Whitehorse thus has a significant socio-cultural base on which to build further interest and activity
- Fourth Avenue streetscape improvement program, which has improved mobility for cyclists and pedestrians
- Third Avenue upgrades – new planters, paving, and site furnishings have raised the level of quality as a pedestrian environment for three blocks north of Main Street; these improvements also strengthen the pedestrian link to Lepage Park as a summer activity and lounging area
- Significant funding for important downtown development projects (i.e. \$2.25 million for the development of the Motorways property)
- Yukon Main Street Society, which offers many of the benefits of a full fledged Business Improvement Area (or District), providing identity and shared assistance in upgrading and promoting business interests in Downtown Whitehorse



- Increasing average household spending in the Yukon (from \$50,000 to roughly \$60,000 over the 1997 to 2003 period, which has very positive implications for Downtown Whitehorse; Yukon household retail spending is among the highest in Canada, particularly in the categories of food (Third), household operation (Second), household furnishings and equipment (Fourth), recreation (Third), and reading materials/other printed matter (First)
- The VRC connection to the riverfront, the riverfront trail, and the trolley line is very effective and is aided by the termination of First Avenue at Lambert Street
- Landscape and streetscape improvement efforts within the Downtown Commercial Core, particularly along Main Street, create a more visually appealing pedestrian environment – street trees and raised planters have also proven to generate economic benefit for retailers and service providers

4.2 Downtown Challenges

In spite of Downtown Whitehorse’s many assets, challenges to the overall health of the Downtown remain. Some of these challenges include:

- Ill-defined mix of land uses, lack of character or identity for mixed-commercial areas both north and south of the Downtown Core Commercial area
- A lack of identifying features or focal points defining the core commercial area – currently only the Main Street streetscape and features situate residents and visitors in a truly pedestrian-oriented core commercial environment



- Underdeveloped sites within the Downtown Commercial Core area, containing gaps in the streetscape, lack of activity generators, limited streetscape improvements resulting in an environment less pedestrian-oriented than Main Street
- Insufficient mix of: specialty retail, clothing and accessories, specialty food, restaurants and bistros, and household furnishings shops; comparatively high proportion of government, institutional, or heritage uses as shown in the results of an April 2005 field survey of the Downtown Commercial Core area:

Table 4.1: Downtown Whitehorse Commercial Core – Retail Inventory

Category	# Units	% Total	DT Core Rating	Target %	# Units with 7% growth	Target Change in #Units
Services	85	36%	Sufficient	34%	87	2
Specialty Retail	34	14%	Low	16%	41	7
Clothing/Accessories	9	4%	Low	7%	18	9
Retail Food/Restaurant	34	14%	Low	16%	41	7
Drug Store/Pharmacy	2	1%	Sufficient	1%	3	1
Household Furnishings	2	1%	Very Low	3%	8	6
Automotive/Parts Sales	2	1%	Inappropriate	0%	0	-2
Government, Heritage, Institutional, Community	63	26%	High	22%	56	-7
Vacant	7	3%	Healthy	1%	3	-4
Totals	238				255	17

Based on experience of healthy downtown commercial cores throughout Canada and beyond, a “Downtown Core Rating” has been provided, along with a target % for each of the identified categories. Assuming commercial retail unit growth of 7% and the target % figures offers some indication as to what types of individual retail/commercial uses should be targeted for this important area of Downtown. While the vacancy rate is fairly low and the range of service-oriented establishments more than sufficient for a downtown core area, the Whitehorse Downtown Commercial Core is deemed to be deficient in the following retail categories:

- **Specialty Retail**
Independently owned and operated stores specializing in a fairly limited range product lines but offering significant breadth within these product lines (i.e. cycling, racquet sports, running, eyewear, etc.)
- **Clothing & Accessories**
Need for more retailers with a focus on important sub-markets such as women’s, men’s, and children’s clothing



- **Retail Food & Restaurants**
The core commercial area is lacking sufficient retail food outlets (particularly specialty food and health food) as well as restaurants and bistros. A mix of relatively small-scale, licensed establishments (which would require changes to local liquor laws), with extended hours, and display space for local artists, would improve Downtown Commercial Core activity and nightlife.
- **Household Furniture/Furnishings**
Downtown Core representation in this category is unnecessarily low. Custom home furnishings and furniture stores will effectively serve both tourists/visitors and local residents. Stores specializing in certain product lines, such as cabinets, kitchen and bath, lighting, world/ethnic pieces, would be particularly good additions to the core retail commercial mix.

The field survey likewise indicated an overabundance of uses which tend to either draw employees only, or are one-time stops for tourists and visitors. Many of these uses, in particular government buildings such as the Law Courts, tend to be large and imposing, with insufficient thought given to interaction with, and stimulation of, street level activity.

- Limited linkages between various parts of Downtown, including pedestrian barriers created by major transportation corridors (Second Avenue and Fourth Avenue at certain points) and very limited transit service – lack of a transit loop in such a large downtown area is a problem that needs to be addressed
- Climate – the winter climate in particular with its north-south winds, serves as a barrier to pedestrian movement through the Downtown; lack of weather protective elements along routes such as Second, Third, and Fourth Avenues discourage north-south pedestrian movement Downtown
- Lack of clustering of like uses Downtown – a wide variety of uses are present but are scattered throughout the Downtown, making it difficult for shoppers to complete their preferred “shopping circuit”; clustering like uses (i.e. “outdoor clothing and recreation cluster”, “arts and culture district”) creates increased presence for individual retailers and service providers and increases shopper/visitor awareness and orientation

- Lack of effective signage in the Downtown Commercial Core (and elsewhere), which makes it difficult for tourists and visitors to find what they are looking for – basic questions such as: “Where can I get a good map/lunch/outdoor coat/book?” should ideally not need to be asked, or at least should be made more intuitive for visitors through effective clustering of like uses
- Many areas that lack basic infrastructure (e.g. paved roads) or require significant improvements, including the Old Town neighbourhood
- Underutilization of the Downtown Riverfront for active, public use – too many one-time tourist-oriented or inactive heritage-related uses as well as parking areas, which result in the Riverfront becoming an unnecessary “dead zone” during many much of the day and year; also, few First Avenue buildings exhibit any design characteristics that take advantage of the river views, which may in part be due to the largely industrial rail use of the riverfront lands until approximately 1986
- Geotechnical limitations to development posed by the stability of the escarpment
- Lack of downtown presence for important local institutions such as Yukon College and the Yukon Arts Centre, both of which are located well outside the downtown area – this poses a challenge in establishing an arts and cultural or entertainment district downtown
- Distance from core to Argus development site, in particular Wal-Mart (roughly 18 blocks’ distance from Main Street), discourages walking and encourages even local residents to drive; this is exacerbated by the extent of free parking available on the Wal-Mart site and the presence of metered pay parking in the downtown commercial core
- Presence of smaller commercial Commercial Retail Unit (CRU) tenants at the Argus site is not ideal, as more localized, neighbourhood-serving uses such as the Starbucks coffee shop are best suited to more pedestrian environments; such uses do tend to be developed as “feeders” in the power mall context, and will benefit from proximity to major traffic-generating tenants such as big box stores; however this tends to exert competitive pressure on existing street retail districts such as the commercial core/Main Street district
- Very real possibility that the existing theatres in downtown Whitehorse will be relocated to a larger six-plex facility located on the Argus development site; while a positive overall for drawing movie-goers to Whitehorse, the resulting lack of theatre presence closer to the core or public-access riverfront will make it more difficult to establish a healthy and more pedestrian-oriented entertainment cluster or district for downtown Whitehorse
- Streetscape improvement programs, such as that proposed for Black Street, tend to be voted down on the basis of the resulting increase in associated improvement fees; need to find a way to encourage “buy in” or possibly revise policies to streamline the voting process and more accurately reflect invested interests
- Poor state of downtown Whitehorse’s major enclosed shopping centre, Qwanlin Mall – while the Staples office supplies store and the Shoppers Drug Mart seem to operate fairly effectively, both the Extra Foods and the remaining CRU space is ailing, with many former tenants having relocated elsewhere downtown (typically either in the core or closer to the Argus property). Extra Foods’ volume has seen a marked decrease as the Real Canadian Superstore has gained market share. Given the awkward and size-constrained CRU area configuration, Qwanlin Mall represents a major redevelopment challenge and one which should consider non-retail uses



- Insufficient “gateways” to the downtown area – the two downtown major access points to the south and north should serve as major identifying features, proudly announcing entry into Downtown Whitehorse; these access points currently contribute little to downtown identity
- Social/safety issues are a concern downtown, with increasing numbers of break-ins, drug-use, loitering, etc. – addressing such concerns will be a challenge not only from a social programs/economic standpoint, but also from the perspective of effective land use and site (development and redevelopment or infill) planning
- Second Avenue corridor almost exclusively auto-oriented, with little to accommodate pedestrians, even during the summer months
- Areas peripheral to Main Street tend to lose urban street character, with a notable lack of features, both in terms of landscaping, public art, and street furniture, which tend to create a more human scaled environment
- Inconsistent paving surfaces and maintenance of street furniture and landscaping degrades other strengths of Main Street
- Maintenance and cleanliness – there appears to be an issue with regard to vandalism, graffiti, damage to street trees and furnishings, and cleanliness (mainly dust and debris) on downtown streets beyond Main Street

5.0 A Vision Statement for Downtown

A Vision Statement for Downtown Whitehorse, based on the stakeholder and public process to date, was developed in order to guide Phase 2 Plan development. This included an overall vision for the downtown as a whole as well as vision statements for each of the defined downtown sub-areas.

5.1 Vision For Downtown Whitehorse

Downtown Whitehorse is the heart of the city: a dynamic, safe, and attractive centre that strives to:

- be the region’s primary shopping, arts and culture, entertainment, service, and business resource base
- evolve as a more complete community, where Whitehorse residents of all income levels can choose to work, live, and socialize
- develop as a major year-round destination for business or pleasure, offering increasing volumes of tourists and visitors a range of high quality accommodations, meeting facilities, and services with attractions that will honour and highlight the city’s rich heritage
- appreciate its history while making use of its wealth of natural, cultural, and commercial resources to attract and retain people and activities that will ensure its long term vibrancy
- encompass a number of distinct, identifiable sub-areas which contribute in complementary ways to the quality of life and economic and social health of both downtown and the City of Whitehorse as a whole

5.2 Vision For The Downtown Commercial Core

Main Street will continue to be the social and commercial focus of the downtown core, offering tourists, visitors, and residents a dynamic range of high quality specialty shops, restaurants, and personalized services in an attractive and pedestrian-oriented setting. A more mature overall downtown commercial core will be apparent when the following conditions apply:

- Main Street businesses will continue to thrive, with increased sales volume, low vacancies, and increasing second floor retailing and service opportunities
- The vibrancy of Main Street will have encouraged further compatible development in other emerging core areas, including both east/west and north/south streets
- Additional core area streetscape improvements such as lighting and landscaping beyond Main Street will provide improved comfort and safety for pedestrians
- Façade and other building improvements and restoration will have continued to materialize, contributing to a unique, safe, and comfortable streetscape experience
- Additional infill development and re-use of existing structures will have generated new businesses, including restaurants and specialty shops to the downtown core
- Tourists, visitors, and residents alike will find it easy to find what they are looking for, including numerous on and off-street parking options for both cars and bicycles
- Pedestrian movement from the core area to other parts of the downtown will be facilitated with appropriately located signage, lighting, traffic calming mechanisms, and pedestrian crossings

5.3 Vision For Downtown Whitehorse Riverfront

The Downtown Whitehorse Riverfront offers a wide range of social, cultural, entertainment, shopping, and recreation opportunities that are enjoyed year-round. Heritage resources are maintained to a high standard and enhanced with appropriately scaled commercial uses which encourage active use and enjoyment by residents as well as tourists and visitors. This more evolved use of the downtown riverfront area will be evident once the following can be observed:

- During the summer months, the Whitehorse Trolley allows residents and visitors to travel along the riverfront from Rotary Peace Park at the south end to the Argus lands at the north end of downtown
- Major public access points are provided and highlighted at the foot of Ogilvie, Main, and Hanson Streets, which encourage pedestrian movement east and west between the riverfront and other downtown areas of interest
- Shipyards Park has become a well-used public open space throughout the year and periodically hosts live arts, music, and cultural events
- The former Motorways site has been redeveloped and includes a quality hotel and convention centre as well as a mix of residential and commercial land uses which serve to create an important new activity node which ties into the downtown via effective pedestrian linkages
- The Kwanlin-Dun Cultural Centre is an important addition to the City's heritage/cultural precinct while the MacBride Museum has expanded to accommodate more collections and visitors
- The visitor/reception area provides information/orientation on Whitehorse area attractions and history as well as venues for active social gathering
- Rotary Peace Park attracts a wide range of family activities throughout the seasons
- The riverfront has evolved into an active and cherished community resource which attracts locals and visitors on a daily basis for a wide variety of activities (including outdoor dining during the summer months) and serves as a functional link to the other sub-areas of Downtown Whitehorse

5.4 Vision For Old Town Neighbourhood

Old Town, Whitehorse's oldest established residential area, will have properly evolved when we can observe that:

- The neighbourhood has maintained its low density, single family character and quiet, peaceful and non commercial environment
- Considerable upgrades in infrastructure have been implemented, including roadway, sidewalk, and lighting improvements that offer local residents increased pride of place and a heightened level of safety and comfort
- Infrastructure improvements have encouraged significant improvements to existing single family homes
- Neighbourhood improvements have generated investment in redevelopment opportunities for newer forms of single family and semi-detached housing types
- Access to parks, downtown schools, and other downtown amenities has been dramatically improved with upgrades to Fourth Avenue, including road diet provisions and dedicated pedestrian crossings which serve to slow vehicular traffic and increase pedestrian safety

5.5 Vision For North End Service Commercial Area

In order to fulfill a healthy and sustainable role in the local setting and economy, the following conditions will need to be observed in Downtown's North End Service Commercial Area:

- The area of downtown north of Ogilvie Street and east of Fourth Avenue has continued to evolve as a destination retail, service commercial, and light industrial area catering primarily to automotive traffic
- The area draws shoppers from a wide geographic region as well as providing increasing employment opportunities
- In addition to a wide range of fast food outlets and anchor box-format retailers Real Canadian Superstore, Canadian Tire, and Wal-Mart, the area now includes a major home improvement centre, a destination theatre complex, and a mix of complementary national chain retailers, pad restaurants, and service establishments
- Rather than competing with the downtown core, the north end commercial area complements these establishments by catering primarily to more price sensitive, convenience-oriented shoppers, many of whom drive great distances to visit their stores of choice
- A significant proportion of visiting north end service commercial area shoppers also visit other areas of downtown Whitehorse for more specialized goods, unique restaurants and attractions, and personalized service, thus generating direct economic benefit for local and independent operators throughout the downtown

5.6 Vision For “Downtown North” (Central Transition Area)

This mixed-use residential/commercial area north of the downtown core currently will evolve into an effective central transition area, providing linkages between the Downtown Commercial Core and the North End Service Commercial Area, and between the Old Town area the Downtown Riverfront. This evolution will be evidenced by such factors as:

- Redevelopment of important sites such as Qwanlin Mall, Canadian Tire, and the SuperValu strip commercial project
- Significant increase in mixed-use development (residential over commercial)
- Extension of Third Ave. as a pedestrian corridor linking the Downtown Commercial Core with the Qwanlin Mall area
- Adaptive re-use of older, currently underutilized buildings for a variety of commercial, institutional, or residential uses
- Relaxation of conventional development standards (i.e. parking, setbacks)
- Improved pedestrian mobility, particularly on east-west streets – providing safe and easy access to both Old Town and the Riverfront area

5.7 Vision For “Downtown South” (Southern Gateway Area)

This mixed-use residential commercial area south of the Downtown Commercial Core currently includes a number of hotels, a convention/meeting complex, some office and institutional uses (Sport Yukon and the RCMP), as well as some new residential infill development, and older, higher density residential (frame apartments) uses. The area will have evolved into a richer and more colourful area and improved southern gateway for downtown when the following can be observed:

- Expanded tourism infrastructure – more diverse, high quality bed and breakfast options
- Higher quality forms of multiple family residential – apartments, condominiums
- Diverse range of architectural styles
- Maintained local-serving convenience retail (i.e. Riverside Grocery)
- Enhanced escarpment area as an important public park (maintenance, continuous trail)
- Continued integration of supportive housing and seniors'-oriented housing forms
- Southern “gateway” features/focal points highlighting public art and special landscaping treatments

6.0 Guiding Principles, Areas of Focus, and Draft Planning Ideas

On the basis of input from the Advisory Committee, other stakeholders, and the public, a series of planning principles and draft plan ideas have been established. These will serve as an framework for development of the Draft Downtown Plan in Phase 2.

6.1 Guiding Principles and Areas of Focus for Downtown as a Whole

The following have been identified by the consultant team as important planning principles and areas of focus for Downtown Whitehorse as a whole.

6.1.1 Height, Form and Massing of Buildings

Building heights in the downtown area should remain within the current four-storey height limit. There appears to be little demand for additional height at this time, and so maintaining this limit will be recommended. We anticipate that in some specific locations higher buildings may be desirable and appropriate; approval would be on a site-by-site basis. Because of the latitude of the Yukon, structures tend to have increased shadow impact on adjacent areas and buildings relative to towns and cities further south. Sun and shadow studies should be required as part of building applications where appropriate.

In an effort to improve the overall visual quality of Whitehorse, a design review system should be established to encourage an improvement in building design and material quality. This could encourage a move away from purely utilitarian buildings and promote building design with more pedestrian-friendly ground floor facades. Design guidelines would vary from sub area to sub area, and should be created to promote or enhance neighbourhood character where appropriate.

The Klondike building theme is not meant to become the standard design palette for all of Whitehorse. Heritage styles for Main Street may be logical, while the riverfront area would follow a more historic-industrial or hand-crafted form, as recommended in the Riverfront Design Guidelines (Charles McLaren, Architect Ltd. and UMA, Feb. 2000). Development of design guidelines is a future project, not part of the Downtown Plan.

6.1.2 Land Use and Area Design Transitions

Several areas of the downtown are deemed to be transition zones between areas of more consistent land use or character. Examples of transition areas include the area between Fourth Avenue and 6th Avenue in the neighbourhood of the Alpine Bakery, or the area generally between the downtown core and the Black Street area between First and Fourth Avenues. These areas may be suitable for a less restricted range of uses, including senior's housing, adaptive reuse of older buildings for retail and commercial activity, or residential units above ground level businesses. Relaxation of parking or setbacks may be desirable, as well as increased landscape and green areas in exchange for improved street character or other building and site work.

The area adjacent to Old Town, between Fifth and 6th Avenues is more likely to be restricted in both use and development form, with home-based businesses allowed but no new stand-alone buildings or employee parking areas created.

As supported in the existing OCP, land uses of a cultural, tourist accommodation, entertainment, or specialty retail orientation should be relegated to a location within Downtown Whitehorse. Allowing such uses to be developed elsewhere within the City will not serve to foster the desired Downtown evolution and may in fact create unnecessary obstacles to achieving the vision for Downtown as a whole and for the various Downtown sub-areas.

6.1.3 High Potential Redevelopment Sites

Phase 1 field work and discussions with City staff, the Advisory Committee, other stakeholders, and the public, have resulted in the identification of a number of important downtown redevelopment site opportunities for the immediate/short and medium terms. These include:

- Qwanlin Mall

Whitehorse’s primary enclosed shopping centre, owned by Retrocom REIT, is an underperforming community shopping complex that would benefit from a comprehensive redevelopment plan. A marginally well-performing Extra Foods supermarket, and a box-format Staples office supply store are the centre’s primary anchors, with Shoppers Drug Mart serving as a secondary anchor.



- Canadian Tire site

The likely move of Canadian Tire to a significantly larger site at the Argus property in the North End Service Commercial area, (which is in keeping with this chain’s national expansion strategy), will leave a significant redevelopment site immediately adjacent to the Qwanlin Mall site.

- Yukon Centre

This strip-format shopping complex, located along Second Avenue between Wheeler Street and Ogilvie Street is likely to be a prime redevelopment opportunity within the next two years. The existing SuperValu supermarket, formerly a Food Fair catering generally to



less price conscious buyers, is small by modern supermarket standards, and is suffering from an overly competitive environment.

With Extra Foods, Real Canadian Superstore, and even Wal-Mart offering significant competitive food departments in proximity, SuperValu is not likely to survive. The liquor store remains a strong target tenant in any future shopping centre redevelopment plan.



- Motorways property

Considerable thought should be given to the appropriate scale and mix of uses for this very important piece of the downtown puzzle. It will be important, for example, to include sufficient residential uses before the introduction of significant retail-commercial uses (there is a need to create more of a captive downtown market prior to major expansion of the retail-commercial base).



- Underdeveloped blocks (various)

A good example of this is the Jamieson half-block, which is located along the south side of Alexander Street between Fourth and Fifth Avenues. This area is significantly underdeveloped and currently houses uses which encourage undesirable activity.

- Canadian Freightways and Toyota dealership sites

These are two prominent examples of current uses (in Downtown North and Downtown Commercial Core, respectively) which should be relocated to more appropriate locations in Whitehorse. Canadian Freightways would ideally be located in



the industrial area on a site with sufficient access. The former boys and girls club building located on Third Avenue just north of Black Street



might be a strong candidate for redevelopment along with the Canadian Freightways site. The existing Toyota dealership, located just west of the Downtown Commercial Core, may be best served by a location within the North End Service Commercial Area or within a future mini auto-mall.

6.1.4 Streetscape and Landscaping Improvements

Quality of the streets for efficient vehicular movement and comfortable pedestrian space is highly valued. Concerns over the lack of sidewalks in some residential areas, such as in parts of the Old Town residential areas are expressed at the same time as the Main Street pedestrian experience is praised. The recent improvements to Third Avenue are well regarded, and are an example of well considered and implemented streetscape work.

Recommendations for the Downtown will include extension of the Third Avenue street works, and maintenance upgrades of the Main Street sidewalks. Connections to Old Town, especially for access to Whitehorse Elementary School, and to the riverfront will be priorities.

Landscaping and planting in the urban area is also valued by the Downtown Plan participants. Enhancing the green character of the downtown will be considered to promote the following character ideas:

- urban, ordered planting of trees and shrub areas, such as along Main Street
- wilder, more natural character areas in pockets of downtown, and along the riverfront
- greening of vague areas between the edge of paving and the road right-of-way
- provision of landscaped edges to existing parking lots
- re-establishment of tree planting in large scale commercial areas, including the Wal-Mart parking lot

These goals may be achieved through street tree and landscape planting programs, enhanced or customized maintenance programs, and implementation of landscape maintenance bylaws as part of development agreements to avoid neglect or removal of planting on commercial properties.

6.1.5 Transportation and Parking

Traffic issues and parking are perennial topics of discussion in Whitehorse, and the Downtown Plan public and Advisory Committee meetings followed the trend in this regard. Some specific points did receive more attention than others; priority topics included crossings of Second and Fourth Avenues, continuation of trails and cycle routes to create circular routes that connect the riverfront with the bluffs to the west, and enhancement of the east west link, along Black Street in particular.

Employee parking is an issue that many residents and merchants would like to see addressed directly; this is a topic that will likely involve contributions from the City as well as Downtown property owners and merchants.

Traffic speeds, especially on the major routes such as Second and Fourth Avenues continues to be of concern, and Sixth Avenue has also been raised as a street that is experiencing increased rapid traffic. Discussion of a one-way road system was instigated at the second workshop, and this was seen to be working against urban and transportation planning goals; we will advise against the introduction of one way roads in Whitehorse.

The road diet work on Fourth Avenue was also praised, with hope that more of that work will be carried out. Concern was expressed at the reversal of some road diet work; we expect to encourage full implementation of the Transportation Study directives.

Two-way vehicular traffic and provision of significant angle parking capacity is deemed a major asset for the purposes of stimulating Downtown business activity as they reinforce the role of Downtown Whitehorse as a destination. As the Downtown area is intended to accommodate pedestrian, cyclist, and other movement/circulation in addition to vehicular traffic, and given retailers' need for adequate visibility and access, the existing pattern must be considered an important asset which should be maintained.

6.1.6 Functional and Visual Focal Points

The Downtown area would benefit from a more coordinated approach to entry feature or urban design treatment. Arrival to the Downtown would be made more definite, and landscape quality issues would be addressed; this is especially important along the Two Mile Hill corridor.

Within the Downtown several issues remain of interest to residents and the advisory committee. Careful treatment of views to the river and surrounding natural landscape should be included in Downtown redevelopment. The WP&YR Depot and the relocated trail shed may become the exceptions in that they

are located at road ends; however they also form the limits of a more concentrated heritage and cultural area anticipated for the riverfront. Elsewhere, street ends along the river may be directed to remain open.

Public art is appreciated, and current programs to integrate art with street furniture will be expected to continue. Examples of integrated streetscape improvements, landscape areas, and public art are found in Whitehorse, and these efforts should be recognized and continued.

6.2 Draft Plan Ideas By Downtown Sub-Area

Based in large part on the results of Meeting Series 2 as outlined in section 3.3.2, the consultant team has compiled planning ideas for each of the identified planning sub-areas of Downtown Whitehorse. These include all preliminary planning ideas for which there was strong support, as well as those that have been deemed important by the consultant team but which required further clarification based on responses from both the Advisory Committee and the public.

Figure 6.1: Downtown Sub-Areas



6.2.1 Downtown South

- Encourage development of high quality, multi-family housing (use design guidelines, target sites with view potential)
- Integrate social, affordable, and market housing forms (including apartment condominiums and townhomes)
- Improve infrastructure including road paving and sidewalks
- Encourage limited convenience-oriented commercial uses to service the day-to-day needs of local residents

- Support higher quality multi-family development, taking advantage of views wherever possible, but respecting preservation of views and natural light for existing structures
- Support increased integration of tourist accommodation infrastructure, in particular bed & breakfast uses
- Improve and maintain area along escarpment as a quality urban park and valued community resource (e.g. enforce bylaws, improve maintenance, develop more seating, better lighting, etc.)
- Create “gateway” feature to announce entry to Downtown Whitehorse with incorporation of public art and landscaping

6.2.2 Downtown Commercial Core

- Develop design guidelines for new construction/renovation that encourage quality development standard, street level activity, and diversity of architectural styles (no prescribed “Whitehorse only style”)
- Develop landscaping program (including tree planting, street furniture, lighting, and (more attractive) garbage bins; and initiate maintenance strategy for landscape maintenance)
- Create “cleanliness and maintenance” task force (Downtown merchants and City staff) to foster an attractive commercial core
- Develop “wayfinding” signage system to orient visitors to various Downtown sites of interest, services, etc.
- Highlight heritage/history with interpretive displays, and potentially integrate with wayfinding (signage) system
- Develop better system/dedicated areas for employee parking (to alleviate parking issues for visitors and area residents)
- Support expanded scope of existing Main Street Yukon Society (to operate as a Business Improvement Area (BIA)) with better presence (i.e. website, event programming, etc.) and a budget
- Encourage development of mixed-use residential over commercial uses (through tax-based incentives, fast-track development proposals, etc.)
- Maintain and restore theatre on Wood Street as an important urban cinema and community resource

6.2.3 Downtown North

- Extend Third Avenue streetscape improvements in order to improve functionality and appearance as an important pedestrian corridor
- Provide drop-off/pick-up zone and sidewalk to increase safety for Whitehorse Elementary School traffic
- Pursue alternative means of providing Black Street improvements (through a more City-initiated process, revisions of Local Improvement Bylaw etc.)
- Encourage “live-work development” as catalysts for under-developed properties, adaptive re-use projects, etc.
- Establish transit loop in order to improve pedestrian mobility throughout Downtown Whitehorse
- Initiate landscaping program for parking lots
- Maintain Whitehorse Elementary School as a community resource and as an attraction to families

- Encourage satellite presence for Yukon College (e.g. expansion programs, adult-education, entrepreneurship programmes)
- Require significant public input into any potential redevelopment of important sites such as Qwanlin Mall, Super-Valu, etc. to ensure that redevelopment enhances the Downtown
- Encourage development of niche retailing clusters which build on existing merchants and service providers
- Encourage higher quality, multi-family residential development immediately east of Old Town and west of Fifth Avenue.

6.2.4 Old Town

- Develop strategy for completing infrastructure upgrades, (including appropriate reviews of municipal funding mechanisms)
- Maintain single-family character; allow for low-density infill (e.g. small-lot single-family, duplexes) only
- Discourage stand-alone commercial uses (such as restaurants) but encourage home-based businesses which maintain the residential character of Old Town
- Promote heritage restoration (with tax-based incentives or other initiatives)
- Upgrade area along escarpment as a high quality, urban park system and continuous trail system
- Consider adopting alternative infrastructure design standards for Old Town in partnership with local area residents
- Consider traffic calming measures, perhaps only pedestrian crossings, for Sixth Avenue to improve pedestrian safety and mobility
- Include the Wood Street “heritage district” in the Old Town sub-area, as this important Downtown asset provides effective ties to the community’s name and history

6.2.5 Downtown Whitehorse Riverfront

- Improve the riverfront trail north of Main Street
- Protect views (e.g. no buildings at ends of east-west streets)
- Encourage mixed-use (two or three storey residential over commercial at-grade) development along First Avenue
- Support existing Riverfront Design Guidelines
- Integrate more active uses (such as limited commercial services) into the Whitepass Depot and Old Firehall buildings to increase public access
- Make multi-family residential a priority in the Motorways redevelopment to ensure adequate market for future retail-commercial uses
- Develop public wharf, docks, with boat tie-ups and limited tourist-commercial uses
- Encourage multi-family residential at the north end of the riverfront in proximity to the Argus area; consider relaxation of building height restrictions to allow for future construction of buildings greater than four storeys so long as these do not negatively impact enjoyment of surrounding property users

6.2.6 North End Service Commercial

- Create attractive north “gateway” entry through public art feature, landscaping treatment, directional signage
- Develop landscaping standards (i.e. parking areas and frontages along important arterials to be landscaped)
- Consider use of vast parking areas (e.g. opportunity for park and ride transit facility, expanded farmers’ market activity such as the Fireweed Market, etc.)
- Discourage office-type development (offices should be encouraged in the Downtown Commercial area)
- Integrate area east of Quartz Road and northern riverfront with pedestrian linkages; orient new buildings toward the riverfront; allow for pedestrian access from the east

Appendix A
Public Open House and Workshop #1
Detailed Results

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Memorandum

Date: June 1, 2005 2501-032-00-01
To: Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
From: David Bell, UMA Engineering Ltd.
Subject: City of Whitehorse Downtown Plan
Public Open House #1 Results

Introduction

A Public Open House was held at the McBride Museum at the corner of First Avenue and Wood Street between 5:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 10th, 2005. In attendance were Zoë Morrison and Mike Ellis, Planners for the City of Whitehorse, as well as Damon Oriente and David Bell of the UMA planning team.

166 names were recorded on the Open House sign-up sheet, which indicated a considerable turnout.

Presentation materials included:

- Downtown (hereafter DT) Land Use Map (existing OCP)
- DT Whitehorse Existing Conditions – Assets Map with flip chart for comments
- DT Whitehorse – Existing Conditions – Challenges Map with flip chart
- Downtown Whitehorse Vision Statement with flip chart
- Downtown Photographers' Initiative – Display of Photos by Category

Informal discussions were generated among residents, City staff, and the consultant planning team. Feedback to the event was very positive, with the photographers' display proving to be a particularly popular attraction and source of discussion.

Flipchart Comments

Flipcharts were provided for public comment on the Assets and Challenges maps, as well the Downtown Whitehorse Vision Statement. Resulting comments are summarized as follows: (For more detailed results, see attachments.)

Flipchart Comments - Assets

Cited assets were limited to 8 entries and included:

- Functional grid street pattern
- Relatively low noise levels
- Dedicated core of residents who use alternative means of transportation, including public transit, bicycles, walking, etc.
- Panoramic views and spectacular natural surroundings

Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
 June 1, 2005
 Page 2

- Accessibility to the waterfront and to the clay cliffs
- Green/open spaces in the urban core
- Variety of housing and building types
- “Walkability”

Flipchart Comments - Challenges

Comments related to perceived challenges for Downtown Whitehorse were far more numerous and are summarized as follows:

- Trail system along the clay cliffs needs to be extended/continuous
- Insufficient bicycle storage/racks
- More designated monthly pass parking areas, mainly for employees
- Main Street as pedestrian-only area for festivals/events more often during the summer months
- Homeless residents of DT Whitehorse need to be accommodated with dignity, not treated as a problem
- Protecting ecology of the riparian area, natural ecosystem
- City needs to consider incentives to redevelopment/building restoration; clean up dilapidated buildings
- Unfinished infrastructure (i.e. unpaved roads in Old Town, elsewhere)
- Need for proper design guidelines, architectural standards
- Need for superior maintenance/cleanliness program downtown
- Second Avenue dangerous for pedestrians
- Plan and design for winter climate – 8 months of the year with snow/cold
- Multi-purpose community facility

Flipchart Comments – Downtown Vision Statement

Public response to the posted Downtown Vision Statement is summarized below:

- Maintain height restriction for downtown buildings, five storeys maximum
- Eliminate height restriction for downtown buildings; taller buildings indicate progress, modernity
- Foster individuality and character; do not sell out to chain stores
- Need for better quality and mix of housing options, particularly mixed-use residential over commercial
- Need for more attractions in the downtown core
- Design guidelines – create architectural standard

Feedback Form Results

A summary of comments provided by the public on the Feedback Forms provided at Public Open House #1 on May 10th, 2005, are summarized below. These comments represent an important step in the development of an effective SWOT assessment for Downtown Whitehorse, which summarizes the area’s greatest strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A more detailed summary of feedback form results is provided as an appendix to this report.

Public Response - Downtown Strengths

The seven most oft-cited strengths cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Greatest Strengths	# Responses
1. Walkability, pedestrian mobility, accessibility, centrality	14
2. Beauty of landscape, natural geography, river and mountain views	11
3. Area’s rich history, cultural heritage, heritage buildings/assets	7
4. Riverfront access/open areas – well used by tourists and locals	7
5. Strong/vibrant/attractive downtown core/Main Street	7
6. Diversity – residents representing a broad spectrum of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds	6
7. “Old Town” community/neighbourhood with single-family focus	5

Other less frequently heard responses included:

- Current building height restriction which protects views, light exposure
- Number and quality of existing parks and open spaces
- Affordable housing options/new housing options emerging
- Healthy balance between commerce and culture

Public Response - Downtown Challenges

The seven most oft-cited challenges for downtown cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Greatest Challenges	# Responses
1. Dominance of vehicular traffic – congestion, pedestrian safety	10
2. Maintaining Whitehorse’s character and sense of history/setting in the face of commercial progress, particularly chain stores	6
3. Need for more downtown population, lack of current housing options, particularly affordable new multi-family	5
4. Lack of infrastructure in existing residential areas (e.g. Old Town)	5
5. Financing infrastructure upgrades – LIC system needs revising	4
6. Maintaining Main Street vibrancy as north end commercial (i.e. Wal-Mart, etc.) develops further	4
7. Criminal activity, including drug use, vandalism, graffiti, etc.	4

Other, less often heard challenges for downtown included:

- Parking, need for street parking, need for lane access, dedicated garage needed
- Building height restrictions, which limit growth, affordability, hinder development
- Poor state of existing housing stock and lack of incentives for reinvestment
- Pedestrian and cyclist accessibility during the long winter season

Public Response – Other Comments

The seven most oft-cited additional comments cited by the public on the Open House feedback forms are as follows:

Other Comments	# Responses
1. Encourage more green space, urban parks, landscaping	9
2. Appreciate that people/residents are being involved early in the downtown planning process – public consultation appreciated	8
3. Maintain the four storey height restriction	4
4. Create pedestrian –only environments on Main St. during the summer, parts of the summer, more often – for events	4
5. Make sure groups with lower access to public consultation are also involved in the downtown planning process	3
6. Eliminate the four storey building height restriction	3
7. Maintain existing character of Old Town	3

Other, less often written, comments included the following:

- Density of 150 units per hectare shown on Downtown land use map too high
- Need for more police presence/patrols downtown
- Need for more nightlife – extend life of downtown past working day
- Need to address drug abuse, vandalism, criminal activity (i.e. escarpment area)

The 30 respondents answered the place of work/place of residence questions as follows:

Question	Yes	No
Live within the Downtown Plan study area?	57%	43%
Work within the Downtown Plan study area?	67%	33%

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1**Feedback and Comment Form Results - Strengths**

Results Grouped by Concept	# Responses	% of Total per Question
a) What are the greatest strengths of Downtown Whitehorse?		
Walkability, pedestrian mobility, accessibility to pedestrians and cyclists, centrality	14	18%
Beauty, landscape, natural geography, river, mountain views, etc.	11	14%
Area's rich history, cultural heritage, heritage buildings/assets, local working artists	7	9%
Riverfront access/open areas - well used by tourists, locals, recreation enthusiasts (i.e. Kanoe People)	7	9%
Main Street / Downtown Core is strong, vibrant, looking better, good to see private sector investment	7	9%
Diversity - residents representing wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, sense of community, mix of tourists and visitors	6	8%
Old Town residential community/neighbourhood - maintaining single family focus, neighbourhood balances busier commercial core	5	6%
Building height restriction/low, compact buildings - protects views, ensures sufficient exposure to light	4	5%
Parks, useable open space for gathering, events	3	4%
Affordable housing, variety of housing, new housing types emerging	3	4%
Healthy balance between commerce and culture - retail, service, entertainment, culture mix	3	4%
City size, compact area -- manageable, uncrowded, just large enough to offer desired lifestyle and amenities	2	3%
Beautiful/functional in summer	2	3%
Good mix of restaurants, eateries	1	1%
Downtown a very healthy place for seniors	1	1%
Development potential (i.e. Motorways)	1	1%
Unique character - not like other cities' downtown areas	1	1%

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1

Feedback and Comment Form Results - Challenges

Results Grouped by Concept	# Responses	% of Total per Question
b) What are the most significant challenges facing Downtown, now and in the future?		
Vehicular traffic dominates - traffic congestion - unsafe to walk in some areas (e.g. Quartz Road, Sixth Avenue, Second Avenue, etc.) - need for more pedestrian infrastructure, dedicated pedestrian areas, public transit	10	13%
Maintaining Whitehorse's character / honouring historical roots in the face of growth in chain/box stores, "anywhere North America", not to be a carbon copy of "southern" cities	6	8%
Need more population downtown, lack of quality affordable new housing options including multi-family	5	6%
Lack of infrastructure in existing residential areas (i.e. Old Town) relative to new suburbs	5	6%
Find a more balanced way to provide needed infrastructure upgrades; should not be prevented on the basis of economic considerations, affordability, LIC's, absentee property owners - property owners should not bear all costs as everyone benefits from these	4	5%
Keeping Main Street/Core vibrant as Wal-Mart/Argus area increases business attraction	4	5%
Criminal activity including drug use, vandalism, graffiti, theft, etc. - needs to be addressed	4	5%
Parking - street parking, need for lane access, dedicated parking garage needed	4	5%
Height restrictions restrict growth, limit affordability, hinder development	3	4%
Poor state of existing housing, need for reinvestment in existing building stock - incentives?	3	4%
Small size of downtown - constraints on expansion, lack of space, growth pressure	3	4%
Use of public property for private purpose (e.g. parking), need to consider bylaw, parking enforcement	3	4%
Pedestrian and cyclist accessibility during the long winter season	3	4%
Need for overall beautification, streetscape improvements, landscaping	2	3%
Too many ugly buildings in serious need of repair, demolition, replacement, etc.	2	3%
Need to develop more mixed income residential areas, not just low income/social housing	2	3%
To get original, creative thinkers involved in the process	2	3%
Improve area around Whitehorse Elementary School	2	3%
Not enough dedicated youth activity centres/areas, which encourages loitering, contributes to crime	2	3%
Wal-Mart/Argus lands and big boxes' emphasis on auto travel, encouraging auto dependency	2	3%
Developing the riverfront in the best interests of the general public	1	1%
Important uses for downtown activity now elsewhere (arts centre, pool, curling, hockey rink, etc.)	1	1%
Too much reliance on government as primary employer	1	1%
To retain natural beauty, ecology, biodiversity in the face of increased built environment	1	1%
Cleanliness, the dusty nature of Whitehorse with clay cliffs and winds	1	1%
Suburban sprawl encroaching on natural landscape	1	1%
"NIMBYism" - a challenge re: densifying, infill	1	1%
To listen to Whitehorse residents and act in their interests	1	1%
Specific concern about area near cliffs between Jarvis and Strickland - parking		

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1

Feedback and Comment Form Results - Other Comments

Results Grouped by Concept	# Responses	% of Total per Question
c) Do you have any other comments on the Downtown Plan project?		
Encourage more green space/urban parks, trees, landscaping, flower baskets and planters	9	15%
Appreciate that people/residents are being heard, involved early in process - i.e. early public consultation and downtown photographers' initiative are good ideas	8	13%
Maintain the four storey height restriction	4	6%
Architectural controls / design guidelines should be implemented - aesthetic standards, break up blank facades (i.e. big box stores) with windows, murals, landscaping	4	6%
Make Main Street a pedestrian-only environment during the summer, parts of the summer, for events, consider public square b/w 1st and 2nd, b/w 3rd and 4th Streets	4	6%
Make sure groups with lower access to public consultation are heard -- seniors, youth, low income, the disabled, etc.	3	5%
Eliminate the four storey height restriction	3	5%
Maintain character of Old Town - don't allow "progress" to subvert uniqueness of this neighbourhood, designate "Old Town" in new zoning bylaw	3	5%
Density of 150 units/hectare within north end too high, no need for such high density	2	3%
Need for more downtown police patrolling/presence -- unsafe in some areas (i.e. Shipyards area)	2	3%
Need more establishments open late - nightlife, social gathering (e.g. Mac's Fireweed Books)	2	3%
Too many plans, not enough action -- will this be any different?	2	3%
Crack down on drug abuse, vandalism, criminal activity (e.g. area along escarpment)	2	3%
Approve of the roundabouts - they work	1	2%
Mixed-use residential over commercial needed, feasible	1	2%
Improve quality of downtown buildings - more historic/heritage styles	1	2%
Dedicated multi-use space for cultural/community events	1	2%
Integrate art/culture with purely functional elements -- i.e. Northern Artist designed manhole covers	1	2%
Too much money being spent on unnecessary street furniture, street lights	1	2%
Large signage advertising Downtown Plan at North and South access points	1	2%
Site specific development restrictions hinder growth, progress	1	2%
Too many residential zones downtown - should be one zoning designation	1	2%
Preserve view corridors, views of river	1	2%
Maintain open space along the riverfront - do not build too close to the water, protect riparian area	1	2%
Too much talk and planning, not enough action - start implementing	1	2%
Allow skateboarding downtown - it is a form of pedestrian mobility	1	2%
Plan for residents and tourists will enjoy as well.	1	2%
Place of Residence / Place of Work (Total of 30 responses)		
	Yes	No
Do you live within the Downtown Plan study area?	57%	43%
Do you work within the Downtown Plan study area?	67%	33%

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1
Flip Chart Comments

ASSETS

Functional grid street pattern + relatively low noise levels
A dedicated core of public transit users + cyclists + walkers who work/live downtown
Wonderful panoramic views
accessibility to the waterfront + clay cliffs
green spaces interspersed with other uses
variety of housing/buildings, etc. - it isn't boring
the walkability of downtown
continued unimpeded view of the valley to the north - esp. east of First Avenue

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1

Flip Chart Comments

CHALLENGES

Upgrade the trails along the clay cliffs.
Area between Hawkins + Hoge, 5th and 6th is underutilized
a continuous trail along the clay cliffs along the Yukon River and back up the cliff so you can walk the whole perimeter.
Motorways needs to maintain the space designated for the community center facility!
Parking along 4th Ave. between Main and Strickland-ish -- should be monthly pass parking (there are never very many cars parked at meters there)
ESB & other govt office workers would pay \$30 - \$40 (or more?) for a pass
Too much 2 hour limit parking
Turn Main, btw 1st and 2nd Ave into a pedestrian street during the summer.
More bike racks
Over-built arterials like 2nd Avenue form moats that divide the community + cow cyclists and pedestrians
Lack of snow-clearing standards make winter biking + walking difficult
Pedestrian overpasses or better crosswalks on 2nd & 4th Aves.
Parking on 6th etc. - visibility difficult when crossing on Wood St. etc.
Parking on 6th etc. is free - that is a subsidy to drivers yet there seems to be resistance to getting a good transit system that meets people's needs
Never ever permit a parkade/parking garage to be built
Traffic noise for residents
I notice that trees have been cut down along the waterfront. Protecting the ecology of the Riparian area is important for a multitude of reasons. Ask your Env. Coordinator: Erosion, Water filtration, temperature + water regulation, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, cover for fish, etc.
A comment on D/T life says "Squatters are a problem" -- squatters are people too and they are a part of our community. Some may have problems but cutting trees + forcing them further to the fringe isn't the answer. Can we not provide help to the root of the problem instead of NIMBY (not in my back yard)?
The City needs to create incentives to building owners to upgrade the look of their bldg's. Lower my property taxes for a period of 5 years and I'll do it!
very poor infrastructure - the whole city uses downtown streets and they're a mess - embarrassment to all of us!
Dangerous! Ugly!
pot holes
dangerous for kids walking to school
don't place buildings at the end of streets & block views of the river - eg. Roundhouse & Wood St.
Unightly commercial garbage bins in alley ways + residential streets causing a huge litter problem when wind blows while being dumped into trucks.
Unkept grassy boulevards + green space that lack the infrastructure to be serviced by local community/neighbourhoods.
Residential streets/neighbourhoods are not pedestrian-friendly. There are no sidewalks on 5th Ave.
If you can walk along the river near Argus, there is no way to cross Quartz to get over there to shop - or the other way around. All the tourists in RV's (Wal-Mart) are unable to walk down to the river . This is not pedestrian-friendly.
people should be able to walk "two by two" down the sidewalks, not single file. - example: new sidewalk on 3rd Ave. by the seniors residence and Old Log Church have the parking meters in the middle of the sidewalk so you have to walk single file, can't pass a wheelchair, etc.
To keep out square block soviet style developments
Keep the bylaw so that they limit the height of buildings
Where is the large gathering facility that people have wanted for so long?
Winter is 8 months - need to plan "landscaping" with ice & snow in mind. Too many \$ spent on 2 months of summer.
A pedestrian bridge across the river linking the "wilderness" side of the river to the "commercial" side of the river. People could then walk to the hospital if the bridge were in the vicinity of Closeleigh Manor.
Keep 4 storey cap on building height.
Make 3rd Avenue a pedestrian street starting at the train track, through Lowe Street right up to the Qwanlin Mall back wall.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1
Flip Chart Comments

VISION STATEMENT

Don't build higher than 5 storeys (don't block the sun)
Recreate White Pass Wharf and have floating docks for boats and river use. It will make the river and waterfront alive again.
Taller buildings/modern architecture
Add to 2nd point [above]: "Without excessive car dependence"
No tall buildings, we need to keep the beauty in the Yukon.
We need more tall buildings - progress!
pedestrian mall on Main St! - yes x 2
Modern architecture only if it keeps Modern "Heritage" look.
Increase # of people living downtown by encouraging more walkups (2 or 3 storey bldgs) and townhouses. Businesses should be on the ground floor, residences on 2nd and 3rd floors - yes x 2
No more chain stores. Yes x 3
Chain stores ruin the unique character of Whitehorse
Join up all the downtown parks - under the clay cliffs & along the waterfront - bring people into those areas by joining them & keeping them maintained - this will discourage the present abuse of some of these areas.
I would keep the low-rise regulations. No taller buildings, please.
Yet I'm concerned about urban sprawl - prefer denser communities.
I totally agree - limit the height period!!!
We need better housing downtown - higher density, but well planned.
I liked the idea for a senior multi residential on Jarvis which would have cleaned up that area and brought good residents into area - as long as in keeping with density of Downtown Plan.
Re: Point 1 -- arts and culture... Where is the Arts & Culture?
Too wordy, motherhood statement
How do we use the river?
People want to see more attractions in the downtown core
Need lots of mixed activity

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Memorandum

Date: June 1, 2005 2501-032-00-01
To: Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
From: David Bell, UMA Engineering Ltd.
Subject: City of Whitehorse Downtown Plan
 Public Workshop #1 Results

Introduction

A Public Workshop was held at the Westmark Hotel between 7:00 P.M. and 9:00 P.M. on Wednesday, May 11th, 2005. In attendance, as discussion table facilitators, were Zoë Morrison, Mike Ellis, and Wayne Tuck of the City of Whitehorse, as well as Damon Oriente and David Bell of the consultant planning team from UMA.

Target participation for the workshop was set at between 30 and 36 participants and through Zoe Morrison and a sign up sheet provided at the Public Open House on May 10th, 33 residents of Whitehorse participated in the workshop.

Beginning at 7:00 o'clock, workshop participants sat at themed roundtable discussion groups based on an assigned nametag number. The five themed tables and facilitators were as follows:

Table	Subject Matter	Host
1	Land Use, Tenant Mix, & Interconnectivity	David Bell
2	Urban Design, Streetscaping, & Heritage Restoration	Damon Oriente
3	Arts & Culture, Parks & Recreation	Zoë Morrison
4	Parking and Transportation (W. Tuck)	Wayne Tuck
5	Social, Community, & Environmental Issues (M. Ellis)	Mike Ellis

Workshop groups rotated through these five table discussion groups at roughly 20 to 25 minute intervals.

Workshop Table Discussion Results

Table facilitators initiated open ended discussion based on lead questions as shown on the attached comment sheets. Participants were encouraged to record their thoughts on comment forms, which were then completed and submitted by each of the five groups of workshop participants at each of the five themed discussion group tables.

As with Open House #1 feedback forms, comments were grouped and tallied by number of responses and % of total responses. The top ten comments received at each table were then summarized in order to identify the most prominent issues according to workshop participants.

Results for each of the five discussion group tables is provided below. Although the lead questions and themes were designed so as to differentiate as much as possible between various categories of issues, there was naturally considerable overlap in terms of group discussions. This is to be expected given the functional connections between land uses, the nature and quality of specific establishments, the transportation network, landscaping/open space, and social/event programming, among other areas of interest.

Table 1: Land Use, Tenant Mix, and Interconnectivity

Comments from workshop participants at Table 1 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: David Bell

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More nightlife downtown; allow for bistros, pubs, cabarets, tapas bars, not just hotel bars – liquor laws need revising	10
Affordable seniors housing needed downtown – no segregation	9
More mixed-use residential above commercial needed	8
More affordable housing options in general needed downtown – good example being the Kobayashi-Zedda projects	7
Keep theatres near downtown core, add theatres to core/Main, existing theatres need improving	6
Create space/access for boats – docks, wharf, pier, tie-ups	5
Main Street area vs. North end commercial: maintain character of Main Street/Core by encouraging independent owner-operated store development; both centres are supportable but different; seek means of encouraging referral business between the two centres	5
Eliminate height restriction; consider relaxed restrictions; allow for market-driven progress; higher buildings in certain areas	4
Initiate design guidelines/architectural controls that allow for a wide range of styles but ensure certain minimum standards – seek public input in this process	4
More active uses along the riverfront, including brewpubs, restaurants with patios, after-hours uses	4
Maintain height restriction of 4 storeys (ensure adequate light, views, etc.)	4

In terms of land use, there was widespread support among workshop participants, most of whom are downtown residents, for introducing a wider mix of housing options into Downtown Whitehorse. There was particularly strong support for mixed-use development, including residential condominium over commercial at grade.

Downtown housing options for seniors was cited often as being in need, given most seniors desire to remain active, and close to amenities, rather than feeling segregated to more suburban locations.

The need for liquor law revision, increased nightlife (particularly within the downtown core and along the riverfront), an improved mix of higher quality restaurants and entertainment venues was also often mentioned. More active riverfront uses were also a priority with workshop participants, many of whom specified a public

wharf/pier/boat dock with limited tourist commercial/food establishments as an important potential addition to this area.

There was also fairly strong support for the initiation of design guidelines/architectural standards for downtown buildings.

Table 2: Urban Design, Streetscaping, and Heritage Restoration

Comments from workshop participants at Table 2 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Damon Oriente

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More downtown trees and greenery, planters, preferably indigenous plants	10
Design guidelines, architectural standards – flexible, authentic – not “Disneyland” effect; diversity in building styles but authentic materials, historically appropriate	6
Downtown trees need protection, better maintenance and care, registry	6
More public seating areas, benches, ledges made for sitting, etc. – natural/wood rather than steel along riverfront and in core	6
Need better downtown signage to orient people, esp. tourists/visitors	6
Finish paving roads downtown (i.e. Old Town) – tires on gravel = noise and dust pollution; roads should have been completed years ago	5
Improve snow removal, priority for seniors, the physically challenged	5
Inefficient processes for clearing garbage, emptying bins; needs to be monitored – litter created by the existing process	5
Better/wider walking areas (i.e. Whitehorse Elementary school)	5
Need for better maintenance, standards, too much litter on downtown streets	5

The overall need for increased downtown greenery, including trees, planters, and useable public open spaces appeared to be a top priority for workshop participants at Table 2.

Again, and as mentioned as well at Table 1, there is a perceived need for the introduction of design guidelines/architectural standards that would serve as a “floor” in terms of building design. It was also strongly indicated that such guidelines should be flexible enough to encourage some diversity in terms of building aesthetics, and that a homogenized, “Disneyland” effect of sameness is to be avoided.

Improved downtown signage that would help to better orient tourists and visitors as to the location of various downtown attractions, merchants, and service providers, was also viewed as an important need for Downtown Whitehorse.

Also, as mentioned at Table 1, workshop participants indicated a need to finish paving the roads of Old Town (and other areas) so as to provide a more continuous quality road network and stimulate reinvestment/renovation.

Improved maintenance and cleanliness initiatives were also noted as a priority issue for the downtown area.

Table 3: Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation

Comments from workshop participants at Table 3 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Zoë Morrison

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
More public art is needed on downtown streets, in public buildings, in open spaces; public input is desired (unwanted public art is distressing); artist-designed infrastructure/furniture desired; designate certain areas for public art (e.g. roundabouts)	14
Need more open spaces, small parks, trees and greenery throughout downtown – needs to be better connected, continuous, extend landscaping/planters to connect open spaces visually; landscape ugly parking lots	10
City should consider live-work options for artists, other groups – through zoning policies	8
Escarpment area needs more natural landscaping, maintenance and cleanliness, stairs as well (e.g. end of Main St.) – escarpment is an underdeveloped park	8
Pedestrian-only environments for festivals and events are great – should be done more often (e.g. summer, weekends) to develop community spirit/pride, increase tourism	7
Boat launch/marina/wharf/tie-ups needed along the riverfront	6
Maintenance, cleanliness of parks, open space, playground equipment, etc. needs to be improved	6
Murals are great to see – need to be maintained, improved	6
Need for more cafes, restaurants, brewpubs with outdoor patios/access	6
Trails, new stairway at Puckett's Gulch Trail are excellent - need more of this, more continuous trail system	6

The workshop group was overwhelmingly in favour of introducing more public art into the downtown area, so long as public input was included as part of the process. The downtown core and riverfront areas were cited as particularly attractive locations for such work, although downtown entryways and roundabouts were also mentioned as potentially desirable locations.

As noted in the Table 2 discussions, workshop participants at Table 3 often cited a need for an improved landscaping and open space design program for the downtown area. Lepage Park was cited as a good example of a small but well-used urban park. The escarpment area was often mentioned as an underdeveloped urban park and an undervalued resource for downtown communities in need of better maintenance and regulation. Litter, parking, and undesirable activities were listed as impediments to use.

Workshop participants generally favoured regulations that would allow for the development of live-work forms of housing, which might typically attract residents in creative lines of work, but which would also double as affordable housing options.

Table 4: Parking and Transportation

Comments from workshop participants at Table 4 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Wayne Tuck

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
Second Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians – need for more visible crosswalks	15
Additional bicycle storage/racks/lockers needed downtown	12
Multi-level parking structures/garages need consideration	9
Pedestrian safety is compromised on many through avenues and cross streets – more four-way stops on key east/west streets	8
Improve transit service downtown; transit loop needed; better evening/weekend service; go back to “mini-buses”	7
Sixth Avenue is becoming a problem for pedestrians and needs to be reviewed for potential improvements	6
Parking along the riverfront should be maintained but monitored	6
Dedicated bicycle lanes would be a good idea downtown	5
Downtown parking should be free – parking meters are restricting use (annoyance vs. cost issue)	5
Too much parking along the riverfront – not an appropriate use of this area – need more useable public space, bistros, restaurants, etc.	5

Workshop participants, most of whom reside downtown, often cited automotive dependence and the dominance of the automobile as being impediments to pedestrian enjoyment, mobility, and safety. Second Avenue was most often mentioned as failing to address the needs of pedestrians moving east-west along cross streets.

Sixth Avenue was also mentioned by a significant number of participants, who view it as being an alternative vehicular-oriented alternative to Fourth Avenue, which is undergoing significant “traffic diet” measures intended

Regarding transportation, the top issues included:

- Parking
 Consider multi-level parking, free downtown parking, dedicated employee parking zones; decrease parking along the riverfront but improve configuration
- Bicycle use
 Increase number of bicycle racks/storage options and consider dedicated bike lanes wherever possible
- Transit service
 Use smaller “mini-buses” to increase efficiency/decrease costs; add downtown transit loop

Table 5: Social, Community, and Environmental Issues

Comments from workshop participants at Table 5 are summarized below:

Table Facilitator: Mike Ellis

Top Ten Comments	# Responses
Need for more social housing, co-op projects, affordable housing	9
Excess capacity in existing buildings (i.e. churches, schools), should be made available for community use wherever possible; develop guidelines for use; manage list of spaces for community	8
More RCMP patrols – bike and foot patrols to monitor problem areas	8
Community centre downtown is desirable – seniors/youth friendly	6
Do not segregate social housing, shelters – integrate with other mixed uses, incomes	5
Existing RCMP patrolling is sufficient; RCMP have enough to do	5
Need a dedicated youth centre in an appropriate, accessible location	5
Dedicated skateboard area(s) downtown, indoor/outdoor	4
Increase by-law enforcement to reduce loitering, littering, vandalism	4
Need for work, social, drug addiction programs/resources for residents in need	4

There was general consensus among workshop participants that Downtown Whitehorse suffers from a shortage of affordable housing options for seniors, lower income residents, and residents with special needs.

There is also concern about the possibility of redevelopment leading to segregation of such uses to other, more outlying areas.

Residents at the workshop indicated a desire to find better ways of using existing downtown buildings to accommodate community activities accessible to a wide range of age and income groups.

The need for a downtown community centre with programs and amenities for all age groups was also mentioned as a priority.

Many residents noted a desire for increased RCMP presence downtown in order to better monitor certain areas of the downtown, while some responded that the RCMP presence was sufficient.

Development of better youth-oriented resources was also often mentioned as a more positive means of decreasing problems related to loitering, littering, vandalism, and the like.

Improved social programs are also desired as a means of reaching residents in need.

Please see a breakdown and summary of results attached.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 1: Land Use, Tenant Mix, and Interconnectivity**

COMMENTS (TOP TEN COMMENTS)	# RESPONSES
More nightlife; allow for bistros, pubs, cabarets, tapas bars, not just "hotel bars" (liquor laws need revising) downtown, particularly downtown core area	10
Affordable seniors housing needed	9
More mixed-use residential above retail (or service, office, etc.) needed	8
More affordable housing and housing options in general needed downtown (e.g. "New Cambodia")	7
Keep theatres near downtown core, add theatre to core/Main, existing theatres need improving	6
Create space/access for boats -- docks, wharf, pier, tie-ups	5
Main Street area vs. North end commercial: maintain uniqueness of Main Street/Core by encouraging independent owner-operated store development; both cores are supportable, just different; build on existing character and themes along Main Street, consider ways to encourage referral business	5
Eliminate height restriction; consider relaxed restrictions, allow for market-driven progress, allow for some higher buildings in certain areas of downtown	4
Initiate design guidelines/architectural controls that allow for a wide range of styles but ensure certain minimum standards -- seek public input in this process	4
Maintain height restriction of 4 storeys (ensure adequate light, views, etc.)	4
More active uses along riverfront - including: pubs, brewpubs, restaurants, after-hours uses	4

Source: UMA.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 2: Urban Design, Streetscaping, and Heritage Restoration**

COMMENTS (TOP TEN COMMENTS)	# RESPONSES
More downtown trees and greenery, planters, preferably indigenous plants	10
Design guidelines, architectural standards - flexible, authentic - not "Disneyland"; Diversity in building styles but authentic materials, historically appropriate	6
Downtown trees need protection, better maintenance and care, registry	6
More public seating areas, benches, ledges made for sitting, etc. - natural/wood rather than steel along riverfront (3rd Ave. steel not as appealing as wood)	6
Need better downtown signage to orient people, esp. tourists/visitors	6
Finish paving roads downtown (i.e. Old Town) - tires on gravel = noise pollution, should have been completed years ago	5
Improve snow removal, priority for seniors, physically challenged residents	5
Inefficient processes for clearing garbage, emptying bins, needs to be monitored - litter created	5
More sidewalks, better/wider walking areas (i.e. WH Elementary area)	5
Need for better maintenance, standards, too much litter on downtown streets,	5

Source: UMA.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 3: Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation**

COMMENTS (TOP TEN COMMENTS)	# RESPONSES
More public art is needed, on downtown streets, public buildings, in open spaces; public input is desired (unwanted public art is distressing), artist-designed infrastructure such as manhole covers, painted garbage bins; have set areas for public art - i.e. roundabouts	14
Need more open spaces, small parks, trees and greenery throughout downtown - needs to be better connected, continuous, extend landscaping/planters to connect open spaces visually, landscape ugly parking lots	10
City should consider live-work options for artists, other groups - through zoning policies (allow these uses) - see example in Juneau re: living spaces	8
Escarpment area needs more natural landscaping, maintenance and cleanliness, stairs as well (e.g. end of Main) - escarpment is an underdeveloped park	8
Pedestrian-only environments for festivals, events are great, should be done more often (e.g. weekends) to develop community feel/pride, increase tourism	7
Boat launch/marina/wharf/tie-ups needed along the riverfront	6
Maintenance, cleanliness of parks, open space, playground equipment, etc. needs to be improved	6
Murals are great to see - need to be maintained, improved, multiplied (may be painted over, defaced)	6
Need for more cafes, restaurants, brewpubs, with outdoor patios/access - active year-round uses	6
Trails, new stairway at Puckett's Gulch Trail are excellent - need more of this, more continuous trail system	6

Source: UMA.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 4: Parking and Transportation**

COMMENTS (TOP TEN COMMENTS)	# RESPONSES
Second Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians; need for more visible crosswalks; particularly in vicinity of Real Cdn. Superstore/Shipyards, YTG	15
Bicycle storage downtown needed - racks, lockers -- make accessible for strollers, tricycles, etc.; mandate all businesses/projects include bike racks	12
Downtown parking garages/multi-level parking structures need to be considered (i.e. two level parking on Steele St.); landscaped multi-level parking	9
Pedestrian safety is compromised on many through avenues and streets; vehicles dominate downtown generally; need for more four-way stops east-west	8
Improve transit service downtown; transit loop needed; better evening/weekend service; go back to "mini-buses" as current vehicles too large	7
Sixth Avenue is becoming more of a problem for pedestrians - need crossings, possibly lights at Black and Sixth, finished sidewalks; consider angle parking?	6
Parking along the riverfront should be maintained, but better monitored/configured	6
Dedicated bike lanes would be a good idea	5
Downtown parking should be free - parking meters are restricting use - an annoyance rather than a major expense, particularly given free parking at Wal-Mart	5
Riverfront - too much parking; not an appropriate use - need more open/public space, bistros, restaurants with decks, etc.	5

Source: UMA.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 5: Social, Community and Environmental Issues**

COMMENTS (TOP TEN COMMENTS)	# RESPONSES
Need for more social housing, co-op projects, shelters, affordable units (including two bedroom units) downtown	9
Excess capacity in existing buildings (i.e. churches, schools) should be made available for community use wherever possible; develop guidelines for use; manage list of such spaces for community use	8
More RCMP patrols - bike patrols, foot patrols to keep an eye on problem areas	8
Community centre downtown is desirable - seniors and youth friendly (inclusive)	6
Do not segregate social housing, shelters - integrate with other mixed uses, incomes	5
Existing RCMP patrolling is sufficient, RCMP have enough to do	5
Need a dedicated youth centre in an appropriate, accessible location	5
Dedicated skateboard (and other sports) areas downtown, indoor/outdoor	4
Increase by-law enforcement to reduce loitering, littering, vandalism - enforce rules	4
Need for work, social, drug addiction programs/resources for people in need	4

Source: UMA.

Comments by Descriptive Category	# Responses	% of Total
<u>Residential Uses / Housing Options</u>		
Affordable seniors housing needed	9	6%
More mixed-use residential above retail (or service, office, etc.) needed	8	6%
More affordable housing and housing options in general needed downtown (e.g. "New Cambodia")	7	5%
Maintain single-family, some duplex character for Old Town area	5	3%
Integrate mix of age and income groups - more diversity (no segregation, ghettos)	4	3%
Townhouses with garden space, balconies, outdoor living area	2	1%
Too many zoning regulations for residential areas	1	1%
Increase overall residential/population density downtown	1	1%
<u>Retail, Restaurant, Entertainment, and Tourism Uses</u>		
More nightlife; allow for bistros, pubs, cabarets, tapas bars, not just "hotel bars" (liquor laws need revising) downtown, particularly downtown core area	10	7%
Keep theatres near downtown core, add theatre to core/Main, existing theatres need improving	6	4%
<u>Main Street area vs. North end commercial</u> : maintain uniqueness of Main Street/Core by encouraging independent owner-operated store development; both cores are supportable, just different; build on existing character and themes along Main Street, consider ways to encourage referral business	5	3%
Reduce, eliminate off-sales of liquor	3	2%
Too many bars downtown, decrease hours of operation	2	1%
Quality indoor shopping mall needed, possibly with below-grade space	2	1%
More boutique and specialty retail	2	1%
Main Street/Downtown Core has enough gift shops for tourists	2	1%
Wal-Mart/Argus development destroyed watershed, portion of wetlands -- need to protect wildlife habitats, ecology, natural surroundings should not be ignored	2	1%
Consider closing off one or more blocks of Main St. to vehicular traffic more often during the summer for community events, celebrations, gathering space	2	1%
Wal-Mart/Argus development is good for downtown; would be much worse if located further out	2	1%
Sufficient entertainment, nightlife downtown	1	1%
<u>Public / Community Uses</u>		
Need for a downtown community centre	2	1%
Parkade, concentrated parking capacity needed	2	1%
Free parking downtown	2	1%
Whitehorse Elementary area - needs day care service	1	1%
<u>Access to Riverfront / Natural Features</u>		
Create space/access for boats -- docks, wharf, pier, tie-ups	5	3%
More active uses along riverfront - including: pubs, brewpubs, restaurants, after-hours uses	4	3%
More arts and culture along the riverfront, in Rotary/Shipyards Parks (e.g. public art, events)	3	2%
Re: Kwanlin-Dun cultural centre: encourage other cultural/community representation, retail/café	3	2%
Increase public access to restored heritage buildings along riverfront - e.g. White Pass Depot (sell tickets to trolley, historical theme)	2	1%
More access from cliffs to river	1	1%
Increase use of escarpment, continuous trail system	1	1%
<u>Downtown Areas With Considerable (Re-)Development Potential</u>		
Area south of Hawkins, Hawkins and Hanson area - build on this (Scott House, Deli, etc.)	3	2%
<u>Design/Quality of Downtown Buildings, Infrastructure</u>		
Initiate design guidelines/architectural controls that allow for a wide range of styles but ensure certain minimum standards -- seek public input in this process	4	3%
Maintain height restriction of 4 storeys (ensure adequate light, views, etc.)	4	3%
Eliminate height restriction; consider relaxed restrictions, allow for market-driven progress, allow for some higher buildings in certain areas of downtown	4	3%
Need more flexible design standards for upgrading existing DT residential areas -- not all or nothing -- seek public input on desired standard for Old Town	3	2%
Expand street landscaping, trees	1	1%
<u>Interconnectivity, Walkability, Orientation, Pedestrian Movement / Mobility</u>		
More sidewalks need to be built	3	2%
Traffic lights on Two Mile Hill serving Wal-Mart project are a nuisance	3	2%
Second Avenue difficult to cross; consider photo radar, lighted crosswalks	3	2%
Increase areas devoted to pedestrians	2	1%
Better accommodate alternate transport (bicycles, buggies, walkers, skateboards, etc.)	1	1%
Traffic lights at 3rd and Main Street	1	1%
Need better signage, orientation maps, interpretive signage	1	1%
Businesses are not too scattered, only need better aesthetic/design/pedestrian connections	1	1%
Second Avenue is a necessary four-lane arterial	1	1%
Need more clustering of similar uses, establishments, create identifiable districts	1	1%
<u>Financial and Economic Considerations</u>		
Offer tax breaks to encourage resident/business owner reinvestment in property, building upgrades	2	1%
Revise tax laws such that taxes are based more on land values - encourage redevelopment	1	1%
Systemic barrier to infrastructure upgrades in existing downtown residential areas: low financial incentive relative to new subdivisions, since costs generated from general revenue coffers	1	1%
Local Improvement Charge needs revision -- too much for many residents, absentee property owners vote proposed projects down	2	1%
Encourage more conference business	1	1%

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

Table 2: Urban Design, Streetscaping, and Heritage Restoration

Comments by Descriptive Category	# Responses	% of Total
<u>Landscaping, Greenery, Street Furniture, Lighting</u>		
More downtown trees and greenery, planters, preferably indigenous plants	10	7%
Downtown trees need protection, better maintenance and care, registry	6	4%
Rooftop gardens for downtown buildings (office buildings, future residential?)	4	3%
More public seating areas, benches, ledges made for sitting, etc. - natural/wood rather than steel along riverfront (3rd Ave. steel not as appealing as wood)	6	4%
Need tax incentives, equipment, for residents and businesses to encourage greenery	4	3%
Appreciate what's been done on 3rd Avenue to date - should continue this	2	1%
Overall need for better, appropriately scaled lighting downtown (night, winter, better quality - heritage)	4	3%
Downtown lighting is sufficient	2	1%
Greening downtown difficult in a winter climate - consider winter-oriented design	2	1%
Parking lots need to be landscaped - Argus is example of what not to do	4	3%
Qwanlin Mall bus depot needs landscaping - barren	2	1%
Make effort to landscape bare areas not likely to be developed, eyesores such as fast food signs near Shipyard Park	2	1%
Community gardens and garden boxes - add life, support NGOs	1	1%
Extend Main Street design/pedestrian orientation to 1st Avenue.	1	1%
Lewes Blvd. centre landscaping is attractive and low maintenance - a good example of what can be done elsewhere	1	1%
<u>Weather Protection, Winter Initiatives, Maintenance/Cleanliness</u>		
Need for better maintenance, standards, too much litter on downtown streets,	5	4%
Improve snow removal, priority for seniors, physically challenged residents	5	4%
Inefficient processes for clearing garbage, emptying bins, needs to be monitored - litter created	5	4%
Consider implementing dumping fees -- clean up brush	2	1%
Insufficient number of garbage bins	2	1%
Insufficient snow removal - don't wait for complaint	3	2%
Need additional weather protective elements (mitigate wind, cold, dust, etc.)	2	1%
Re: maintenance/cleanliness: hire community groups (NGOs), youth	2	1%
Would accept higher taxes for improved maintenance/cleanliness, increased budget	2	1%
Consolidated parking with connections to indoor malls	1	1%
Indoor mall somewhere, possibly at Motorways site, Qwanlin Mall improvement	1	1%
Cut down on winter use of sand - more pure salt	1	1%
Ensure that Motorways does not develop as Argus has - without the pedestrian in mind	1	1%
Airport drainage -- impacts some houses along Black Street	1	1%
More trees and greenery (e.g. along riverfront) will help re: weather protection, wind breaks	1	1%
<u>Tourist/Visitor Orientation, Pedestrian Mobility, Roadways, Infrastructure</u>		
More sidewalks, better/wider walking areas (i.e. WH Elementary area)	5	4%
Finish paving roads downtown (i.e. Old Town) - tires on gravel = noise pollution, should have been completed years ago	5	4%
Main bus stop on Ogilvie St./Qwanlin Mall poorly located - too far from both Wal-Mart and Main Street	3	2%
Need signage bylaw/regulation - i.e. non homogenous, quality maintenance	3	2%
Need better downtown signage to orient people, esp. tourists/visitors	6	4%
Roads are too wide, too auto-oriented - more traffic calming (beyond 4th Ave.)	3	2%
More pedestrian only environments	2	1%
No sidewalks, curbs, and gutters in Old Town - flexible design standards	2	1%
More sensitivity required in design of sidewalks, curbs -- wheelchair accessibility	2	1%
Parking lot at the end of Main Street	1	1%
Sixth Avenue will be busy due to 4th Avenue traffic calming	1	1%
<u>Heritage Restoration/Building Design</u>		
Design guidelines, architectural standards - flexible, authentic - not "Disneyland";		
Diversity in building styles but authentic materials, historically appropriate	6	4%
Encourage heritage restoration with enabling legislation, tax breaks, etc.	3	2%
Good to see, but too scattered, needs to be concentrated wherever possible	2	1%
Maintain Wood Street heritage district/character	1	1%
New construction adjacent to heritage uses should be subject to special height restrictions	1	1%
<u>Other Comments</u>		
Design guidelines need to be applied for all downtown, not just core area	1	1%
Distinctive street sign for "Old Town" area - highlight this resource	1	1%
Memorial for the Caska and Whitehorse riverboats	1	1%
Noise bylaw for vehicles	1	1%
Noise pollution is a problem	1	1%
Maintain sight lines, visibility, particularly at corners	1	1%
Surtax on country residential was to pay for downtown core infrastructure - where is that \$ being used?	1	1%

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 3: Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation**

Comments by Descriptive Category	# Responses	% of Total
Arts and Culture, Festivals		
More public art is needed, on downtown streets, public buildings, in open spaces; public input is desired (unwanted public art is distressing), artist-designed infrastructure such as manhole covers, painted garbage bins; have set areas for public art - i.e. roundabouts	14	9%
City should consider live-work options for artists, other groups - through zoning policies (allow these uses) - see example in Juneau re: living spaces	8	5%
Pedestrian-only environments for festivals, events are great, should be done more often (e.g. weekends) to develop community feel/pride, increase tourism	7	4%
Murals are great to see - need to be maintained, improved, multiplied (may be painted over, defaced)	6	4%
More live art and music should be encouraged downtown - on streets, in venues, outdoor bandstand, etc.	4	3%
City should support arts and culture, but not before essentials (i.e. unfinished infrastructure)	3	2%
Consider plaques with heritage/historic photos downtown	3	2%
Consider creating dedicated area for graffiti artists, public art spaces	3	2%
Most festivals are downtown which is where they should be	3	2%
Not enough festivals and events during summer season	2	1%
Frostbite event should/could be downtown	2	1%
Need more kiosks, food vendors on downtown streets in summer - parks as well	2	1%
Need more buskers, street entertainment during summer - on streets, in parks	2	1%
Support/work with Artspace North	2	1%
Pursue art, recreation, cultural initiatives in relation to downtown merchants, business - integrate art, performances with street retail areas (Main St.)	2	1%
Artist cooperative in McCrae a good example of what artists can and should do	1	1%
Not enough major winter festivals	1	1%
What's Up Yukon? A great addition to local event calendar	1	1%
Two arts centres are not supportable	1	1%
Trolley doesn't really fit	1	1%
Public Access to the Riverfront		
Need for more cafes, restaurants, brewpubs, with outdoor patios/access - active year-round uses	6	4%
Boat launch/marina/wharf/tie-ups needed along the riverfront	6	4%
Need to maintain some parking, parking along the riverfront is necessary	5	3%
Buildings should not be built at ends of streets - blocks river views, limits accessibility - clear access at the end of each street if possible	4	3%
Second Avenue a barrier to the waterfront due to its auto focus, need more crosswalks	3	2%
Public access to the riverfront is sufficient, more than adequate	2	1%
Riverfront needs an art gallery, multi-use space, community centre	2	1%
Need more benches, seating areas, attractive garbage bins	2	1%
Maintain strict height restrictions along the riverfront	2	1%
Parking along clay cliffs, escarpment is helpful	1	1%
Taylor building should be accessible to the public	1	1%
Riverfront area remains unfinished	1	1%
Not enough heritage along the riverfront	1	1%
Consider closing First Avenue for certain periods, expand pedestrian environment	1	1%
Parks and Recreation		
Need more open spaces, small parks, trees and greenery throughout downtown - needs to be better connected, continuous, extend landscaping/planters to connect open spaces visually, landscape ugly parking lots	10	6%
Escarpment area needs more natural landscaping, maintenance and cleanliness, stairs as well (e.g. end of Main) - escarpment is an underdeveloped park	8	5%
Maintenance, cleanliness of parks, open space, playground equipment, etc. needs to be improved	6	4%
Trails, new stairway at Puckett's Gulch Trail are excellent - need more of this, more continuous trail system	6	4%
Rooftop gardens, rooftop micro/urban parks	5	3%
Drinking, drug use, needles in public parks is a problem - precludes more public use of the spaces	4	3%
More playgrounds/play areas needed	3	2%
There are enough parks downtown	3	2%
Lepage park a good example of a well-used urban (micro) park	2	1%
Youth need a skateboard facility - indoor/outdoor	2	1%
Consider public market at Shipyards Park	1	1%
Bags and drops for dogs	1	1%
Rotary Park is well used, effective	1	1%
Community gardens are not sufficiently accessible	1	1%
Other Comments		
Number of children, youth seems to be declining	1	1%
Some sidewalks should be widened to allow for walking plus other activities	1	1%

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

Table 4: Parking and Transportation

Comments by Descriptive Category	# Responses	% of Total
<u>Pedestrian Safety, Mobility, Traffic Calming</u>		
Second Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians; need for more visible crosswalks; particularly in vicinity of Real Cdn. Superstore/Shipyards, YTG	15	10%
Pedestrian safety is compromised on many through avenues and streets; vehicles dominate downtown generally; need for more four-way stops east-west	8	5%
Improve transit service downtown; transit loop needed; better evening/weekend service; go back to "mini-buses" as current vehicles too large	7	5%
Sixth Avenue is becoming more of a problem for pedestrians - need crossings, possibly lights at Black and Sixth, finished sidewalks; consider angle parking?	6	4%
Cyclists and skateboarders are a problem for pedestrians; need to enforcing bylaws regulating bicycle and skateboard use or problem persists	3	2%
Improved driver training/retraining - better understanding of pedestrians, cyclists	3	2%
Riverfront trolley is a great addition to Downtown Whitehorse - extend route and improve service/speed/quality of ride	3	2%
Sidewalks are too narrow, need to be widened, difficult for many to use (seniors with walkers, pedestrians with parcels, etc.); landscaping should not narrow sidewalks	3	2%
Too many "jaywalkers" - pedestrians should also follow rules of road	3	2%
Extend trail system to provide continuous pathways for pedestrians	2	1%
Fourth Avenue is no longer a barrier for pedestrians; traffic calming will work	2	1%
Improve maintenance program for walkways, paths, trails, existing infrastructure	2	1%
Increase pedestrian-only environments downtown; make Main Street a ped. Mall more often during the summer months	2	1%
Better snow removal in winter, maintenance and cleanliness	1	1%
Consider covered walkways downtown	1	1%
Downtown Whitehorse is walkable/safe/accessible for pedestrians - not a problem	1	1%
Extend Black Street across the River to Long Lake Road	1	1%
More roundabouts - they seem to work	1	1%
Riverfront walkway is great during summer, but needs to be better maintained, cleared of snow and ice during the winter	1	1%
<u>Alternative Modes of Transportation, Use</u>		
Bicycle storage downtown needed - racks, lockers -- make accessible for strollers, tricycles, etc.; mandate all businesses/projects include bike racks	12	8%
Dedicated bike lanes would be a good idea	5	3%
Bicycle rider training needed - too much flouting of bylaws, regulations (i.e. riding on sidewalks)	4	3%
Provide incentives for alternative modes of transport, transit use, especially for government workers	4	3%
Bicycles are properly accommodated downtown; no need for improvements	2	1%
Allow skateboarding but monitor use, revisit bylaw with public input	1	1%
Create more boat tie-ups, dock, wharf	1	1%
Cyclist visibility a problem during dark, fog conditions	1	1%
On Sixth Avenue, consider pedestrians one side, cyclists on the other	1	1%
<u>Parking</u>		
Downtown parking garages/multi-level parking structures need to be considered (i.e. two level parking on Steele St.); landscaped multi-level parking	9	6%
Parking along the riverfront should be maintained, but better monitored/configured	6	4%
Downtown parking should be free - parking meters are restricting use - an annoyance rather than a major expense, particularly given free parking at Wal-Mart	5	3%
Riverfront - too much parking: not an appropriate use - need more open/public space, bistros, restaurants with decks, etc.	5	3%
Need for downtown all-day parking options; monthly parking pass (i.e. 4th Ave. from Main to Strickland); two hours is not enough	4	3%
Designated RV parking - not ad hoc Wal-Mart parking situation	3	2%
Downtown parking garages are not desired - ugly	3	2%
Increase parking rates; help fund public transit	3	2%
More and better monitored/enforced handicapped parking spots	3	2%
Reserve more parking specifically for tourists and visitors; government employees -- free up parking for shoppers; better parking configuration	3	2%
There is no parking problem downtown, only a "parking attitude" problem - many underutilized parking areas	3	2%
More overall parking spaces needed	2	1%
Solar powered parking meters	1	1%
Underground parking attached to residential projects should be considered	1	1%
<u>Pollution</u>		
Increase fines for idling	1	1%
Continue green house gas initiative	1	1%
<u>Other Comments</u>		
More residential units downtown near shopping and places of work	2	1%
Need advance left turn signal at the corner of Second and Main	1	1%
Old Town roads in poor repair -- need to be finished (safety, noise, cleanliness, etc.)	1	1%
Shape designated signal lights - i.e. red square, yellow circle, etc.	1	1%

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1**Table 5: Social, Community and Environmental Issues**

Comments by Descriptive Category	# Responses	% of Total
<u>Community Spaces, Youth Activities and Resources</u>		
Excess capacity in existing buildings (i.e. churches, schools) should be made available for community use wherever possible; develop guidelines for use; manage list of such spaces for community use	8	8%
Community centre downtown is desirable - seniors and youth friendly (inclusive)	6	6%
Need a dedicated youth centre in an appropriate, accessible location	5	5%
Dedicated skateboard (and other sports) areas downtown, indoor/outdoor	4	4%
Do not need a community centre downtown, not essential - need is in subdivisions	3	3%
Need more coherent youth strategy, resources, incl. programs for "high risk" youth	3	3%
Downtown churches are an effective way to bring people downtown	2	2%
Encourage/allow block parties, pedestrian-only areas, grassroots community events	2	2%
Incorporate community space in Qwanlin mall, Horwood's, other underused buildings	2	2%
Increase funding for neighbourhood/community improvement projects, including tree planting, Wood St. school, BYTE, community gardens, etc.	2	2%
More cultural events oriented toward/highlighting youth, ethnic groups	2	2%
Create mountain biking trail on mountain-side/cliffs	1	1%
Develop a youth forum and provide space for meeting	1	1%
Provide transportation alternative to multiplex recreation centre	1	1%
<u>Safety/Security Issues, Criminal Activity, Vandalism, Drug Use</u>		
More RCMP patrols - bike patrols, foot patrols to keep an eye on problem areas	8	8%
Existing RCMP patrolling is sufficient, RCMP have enough to do	5	5%
Increase by-law enforcement to reduce loitering, littering, vandalism - enforce rules	4	4%
Increase downtown residential - more activity after hours	2	2%
Public access to the riverfront is compromised by drug and alcohol use	2	2%
Improved street lighting needed in some downtown areas	1	1%
Neighbourhood watch program/patrol	1	1%
<u>Excess Capacity in Existing Buildings</u>		
Use for other than existing purpose not desirable	1	1%
Schools do not belong downtown - land too valuable	1	1%
<u>Social Housing</u>		
Need for more social housing, co-op projects, shelters, affordable units (including two bedroom units) downtown	9	9%
Do not segregate social housing, shelters - integrate with other mixed uses, incomes	5	5%
Need for work, social, drug addiction programs/resources for people in need	4	4%
Different levels of government should develop a strategy to provide low-cost housing downtown	2	2%
Current zoning bylaws preclude development of social housing/shelters by the private sector	1	1%
Integration a great ideal but difficult to achieve	1	1%
<u>Other Comments</u>		
Clay cliffs need to be preserved, not developed - environmental resource; use cliffs to produce parkettes, no need to create more new spaces	2	2%
Need better recycling program, blue box pick-up downtown	2	2%
Burning garbage - should be better enforced - a form of pollution	1	1%
Downtown is also a neighbourhood	1	1%
Need more garbage bins downtown	1	1%
Reduce noise pollution (e.g. dirt bikes along the clay cliffs) -- put up barriers for motorbikes, but allow non-motorized transport	1	1%
Support the community associations	1	1%

Appendix B
Public Open House and Workshop #2
Detailed Results

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Memorandum

Date: July 5, 2005 2501-032-00-01
To: Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
From: Kathleen Callow, UMA Engineering Ltd.
Subject: City of Whitehorse Downtown Plan
Notes of Public Open House #2 (Results)

Introduction

Public Open House No. 2 for the Downtown Whitehorse Plan project was held at the High Country Inn between 5:00 P.M. and 7:15 P.M. on Wednesday, June 15, 2005. In attendance from the City of Whitehorse were Zoë Morrison, Mike Ellis, Mike Gau, Chris Wolfe, Lesley Cabott, Wayne Tuck, and Dennis Shewfelt, as well as Damon Oriente, David Bell, and Kathleen of the UMA planning team.

In total, 26 names were recorded on the Open House sign-up sheet. The low turn out rate is likely reflective of the significant hail/rain storm that began at about 4:30 and lasted until about 6:30 pm – several streets in Downtown Whitehorse were closed due to flooding.

Presentation materials included display panels for six sub areas of Downtown (Downtown South, Downtown North, Old Town, Downtown Commercial Core, Riverfront) which highlighted the geographic location of the sub-area together with a draft vision statement and preliminary plan ideas. Also on display was a panel summarizing comments received at the first public open house in May. In addition, two flip charts asking for “your comments please” were available for public comment.

Newsletter No. 2 and Comment Feedback form no. 2 were distributed to public open house participants.

Informal discussions were generated among participants, City staff, and the consultant planning team. Feedback was generally positive, although several attendees commented that the weather was likely discouraging turn out.

Flipchart Comments

Given the turn out, limited comments were received on the flipcharts. Comments received included:

- Increase density all over downtown
- Affordable housing
- Riverfront dock/wharf
- Parking/transit stop (i.e. park and ride) which encourages walking to and from shopping and services
- Ski Trail connections from residential areas to downtown
- Extend trolley northwards
- Allow over four storey development in downtown north and northend area

Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
June 5, 2005
Page 2

- Create, around the WPYR train depot, displays reflecting the train and riverboat era with artifacts and displays, include reconstruction of some of the old river warehouses and ship docks
- Move YTG maint.(sic) shops (at 2 mile Hill) somewhere else
- Move City Municipal Building
- Incorporate design/esthetic (sic) guidelines into Big Box (or small box?) commercial buildings
- Make all projects subject to new environmental impact assessment process

Feedback Form Results

A Feedback Form was distributed at the public open house. The deadline for submission of the form was June 30, 2005. (Note: The feedback form was available on the City's website following the public open house.) As of June 30, only 8 feedback forms have been received. The results indicate support for most of the preliminary plan ideas listed in the feedback form, including the development of a landscaping program, extension of Third Avenue streetscape improvements, a strategy of infrastructure upgrades, Downtown design guidelines, wayfinding signage, a continuous trail along the escarpment and integrating more active uses into the riverfront. There was mixed support for multi-family with an 8 storey potential. However, due to the limited number of completed feedback forms it would be inappropriate to suggest that the responses are indicative of general public opinion. Comments included the importance of infrastructure improvements in Old Town, the need to simplify downtown zoning, and concerns over the lifting of height restrictions.

Submitted by:

UMA ENGINEERING LTD.



Kathleen Callow, MA (Planning), MCIP
Senior Planner

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Memorandum

Date: July 5, 2005 2501-032-00-01
To: Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
From: Kathleen Callow, UMA Engineering Ltd.
Subject: City of Whitehorse Downtown Plan
 Notes of Public Workshop No. 2 (Results) – Wednesday, June 29, 2005

Introduction

A Public Workshop was held at High Country Inn between 7:30 P.M. and 9:30 P.M. on Wednesday, June 15th, 2005. In attendance, as discussion table facilitators, were Zoë Morrison (City of Whitehorse) and David Bell (UMA) at Table 1 and Damon Oriente (UMA) and Kathleen Callow (UMA) at Table 2.

Target participation for the workshop was set at between 30 and 36 participants through previous advertising as well as a sign up sheet at the Public Open House No. 2 immediately prior to the workshop. On June 15, 15 residents of Whitehorse participated in the workshop.

Beginning at 7:30 pm, workshop participants were grouped at two tables and each table followed a discussion format based on the six sub-areas of downtown, with the detailed listing of each vision and preliminary plan ideas for the sub-areas at the focus of the discussion. Notes from each of the workshop tables are provided below.

Workshop Table Discussion Results

Table facilitators initiated open ended discussion based on the preliminary plan ideas for each of the six sub-areas. Participants were also encouraged to record their thoughts on the Public Workshop Forms, which listed all preliminary plan ideas for each of the sub-areas. Sixteen sets of forms were received.

Although the workshop was intended to focus on the six sub-areas of downtown, there was considerable overlap in terms of group discussions and, at both tables, a recognition that there are many issues which overlap geographic boundaries and are issues that face the entire downtown.

Table 1 Summary of Discussion

Concern was raised that increased density appears to be supported in many of the preliminary plan ideas. The issue of higher density as a goal was discussed. Many supported the continuation of low density residential within single family neighbourhoods. There was some support for higher density but concerns over how these would actually look and relate to surrounding immediate area. Issues of aesthetics and impacts on neighbouring properties would have to be addressed, including shadows, sunlight exposure, and view corridors.

Assets that anchor downtown should include schools offering K – 12 grades, as well as a trail system from the escarpment to the riverfront.

Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
July 5, 2005
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Walkable Communities Strategy was an importance exercise undertaken by the City within the last few years and it was stressed that the value of that work should not be misplaced. It was suggested that much of that work was incorporated into the City's Transportation Plan.

Changes to 4th Avenue generally supported. Road diet is supported, but would also like to see parking diets – general agreement that the City has a number of large parking lots that only serve as parking deserts and is not helpful in creating a walkable city. In addition, concerns over pedestrian safety and limited transit service were expressed. Also, concerns expressed that 6th Avenue getting busier (since 4th Improvements)

Suggestion that Youth groups be used to help maintain areas, such as parks and that partnerships be formed. This might encourage a sense of ownership over an area.

Suggestion that there is a need to define size of storeys (12' or 8') because that would determine the ultimate height of buildings. Some suggested that the height of the High Country Inn was okay, but nothing higher citing concerns over wind tunnels (canyon effect) and light issues/livability and viewscales.

There was general confirmation that Downtown South is both an area of commercial and low cost residential.

The need for design guidelines was discussed, especially the need to consider the building's design-relationship to the street and the ultimate skyline profile of the City.

It was generally supported that basic infrastructure is missing in many parts of Downtown, particularly Downtown South. It was suggested that the burden of upgrading should not be solely placed on property owners in the area. It was queried as to whether there is a plan in place for infrastructure upgrades.

It was suggested that affordable housing needs to be mixed into neighbourhoods and not be isolated, stand-alone buildings.

Wood Street Annex should be viewed as an asset and expanded upon. The need for a downtown located auditorium, community centre, and arts centre was emphasized.

Questions were raised about a tax surcharge assessed some years ago to improve infrastructure – where are the funds/what have they been used for?

Suggestion that a transit loop from Wal-Mart along 4th, to Yukon Visitor Reception Centre, along 2nd and back to Wal-Mart should be implemented. General concerns were raised that transit service is not adequate.

The need for an East/West urban trail connector from the escarpment (by community gardens) to the riverfront was suggested.

Suggestion that the north end service commercial should be made more pedestrian friendly. This includes the design/execution of the large parking lot feeding Wal-Mart.

Concerns that Qwanlin Mall "dead zone" exists between Wal-Mart and Main Street. Suggestion that new commercial areas should be limited in order to promote the re-use of existing areas.

Concerns over Riverfront safety raised with issue of drinking parties along the riverfront. Suggestion that security may be improved with development. General concern raised that the location of the train shed blocks the view of the riverfront.

It was noted that the Kwanlin-Dun Cultural Centre is to be located on riverfront and that a health centre would be a good idea too.

Trolley cuts through land parcels and walkway.

Support for Legion's senior housing proposal along the riverfront and improvement of public space along the riverfront. Many would also like to see additional cultural space for social activity, youth activity, daycare, elders and the Yukon College. In addition, residential along the riverfront was supported.

There was support for establishment of a Performing Arts Centre and continuous trail system. There was mixed support for the closure of 1st Avenue.

Table 2 Summary of Discussion:

Downtown South

- Concern raised over possible loss of "Riverside" grocery in the face of development pressures for higher end condominiums. The higher end condos are supported as a new and needed housing form but maintenance of the convenience grocery as an important resource for both residents and tourists alike. The grocery is well-liked and used and an important means of encouraging more walking in the downtown.
- Building along the open escarpment areas not really seen as a viable option given the lack of light in this area – more of a "who would want to live there?" rather than a "no building here please" issue – re: light – one block away from the escarpment makes a huge difference.
- Need to expand on tourism potential – Downtown South has a lot of tourist attractions but insufficiently tapped accommodations potential (i.e. quality bed and breakfast).
- Winter maintenance/snow removal needs to be improved – much of this area is not properly walkable during much of the year (what good are new sidewalks if you can't walk on them eight months of the year?)
- Re: "Downtown South" gateway – concern over too much signage, quality of signage – gateway elements should be more related to landscaping, public art – quality landscaping items that announce entry to downtown.

Downtown North

- Re: area vision statement: may be inappropriate to single out Black Street in the vision statement
- Need at Black Street and 3rd Avenue for a four-way stop is in question – problem is not lack of a four-way stop, but lack of sidewalks and drop-off/pick-up area for Whitehorse Elementary; this is a major safety concern for children and their parents/guardians.
- Strong support for keeping Whitehorse Elementary as a school in its present location – how can we attract families downtown without a proper school?
- Strong support for redevelopment of Qwanlin Mall and/or surrounding site – mall is an embarrassment in its present state and acts as a wall along 3rd Avenue.
- Strong support for extending 3rd Avenue streetscape improvements further north.
- Support for more building murals – consider this for proposed design guidelines.

- Support for Yukon College and/or arts centre presence downtown.
- Canadian Freightways: wrong use for the area; should be relocated to the north end service commercial area or perhaps elsewhere.

Old Town

- There is already some multi-family residential and office uses between 5th and 6th Avenues; not much room for more development, though redevelopment is welcomed.
- The recycling centre and tow-truck company operations create noise issues for surrounding residents (i.e. “crushing glass at 8 A.M.”).
- Strong support for residential only uses west of 6th Avenue.
- Support for alternative engineering/design standards for Old Town – the cookie cutter “one size fits all” approach does not work – this all or nothing standard creates an affordability issue and is aesthetically unappealing to most Old Town residents (according to those present at Table 2).
- Walkability in winter is hampered by lack of proper maintenance/snow removal.
- Find a way to finish paving the roads; this has been dragging on for too long.

Downtown Commercial Core

- Re: instituting design guidelines/architectural standards: do not want to see another Dawson emerge; guidelines should allow for diversity in building styles (no Whitehorse standard). DAB added that the purpose of proper guidelines is simply to ensure a certain minimum quality in terms of materials or design characteristics. ZM added that, for example, building guidelines for the core area might ensure adequate interaction with the street (no “great wall” effects typical of institutional uses).
- Wayfinding signage supported, but only at key focal points/intersections – do not want signage overkill (4th Avenue was cited as an example of what not to do re: signage).
- Re: interpretive signage – was mentioned that a historical photo of the SS Klondike being moved to its present location would be an ideal addition to the downtown core as a piece of public art/photographic history.
- Strong support for maintaining the Yukon Cinema building, either as an independent cinema or venue for live theatre/performance.
- Strong support for improved maintenance/cleanliness task force.
- General support for residential mixed-use development.
- Strong support for more arts-related activities – street festivals, block parties, street performers in summer months.

Riverfront

- General consensus that there is too much parking capacity along the riverfront and that this is a waste of an important resource.
- Riverfront needs more active uses – cultural venues, restaurants, bistros: some limited elements evocative of Vancouver’s Granville Island may work over time if appropriately scaled; DAB added that development of the Motorways site is one of the keys for the evolution of the riverfront, and that residential on the riverfront will be needed to generate sufficient support for retail/entertainment commercial development.
- Safety is an issue – area needs to be better monitored so that more Whitehorse residents and families want to make regular use of the riverfront.

North End Service Commercial

- Consensus that YTG's maintenance equipment yard is an eyesore and occupying an important piece of property near the entrance to Whitehorse's downtown.
- Something should be done about lack of landscaping in vast parking areas – too barren, no aesthetic qualities whatsoever – if it can be accommodated elsewhere, why not make an effort in Whitehorse?

Summary of Public Workshop Comment Sheets

Summaries of the results of the Workshop No. 2 are as follows. Complete results are attached to this memo.

Strong Support

The Workshop No. 2 group results showed strong support for the following preliminary planning issues:

Downtown South

- Encourage development of high quality, multi-family housing (use design guidelines, target sites with view potential).
- Improve infrastructure including road paving and sidewalks.
- Encourage limited convenience-oriented commercial uses to service the day-to-day needs of local residents.
- Maintain area along escarpment as a quality urban park and valued community resource.

Downtown North

- Extend 3rd Avenue streetscape improvements in order to improve function and appearance as an important pedestrian corridor.
- Encourage "live-work development" as catalysts for under-developed properties, adaptive re-use projects, etc.
- Establish transit loop in order to improve pedestrian mobility throughout Downtown Whitehorse
- Initiate landscaping program for parking lots.
- Maintain Whitehorse Elementary School as a community resource and to attract/retain families Downtown.
- Require significant public input into any potential redevelopment of important sites such as Qwanlin Mall, Yukon Centre, etc. to ensure that redevelopment enhances the Downtown.

Old Town

- Develop strategy for completing infrastructure upgrades (including appropriate reviews of municipal funding mechanisms).
- Maintain single-family character; allow for low-density infill only (e.g. small-lot single-family, duplexes).
- Encourage high quality, lower density housing between 5th and 6th Avenue.
- Promote heritage restoration (with tax-based incentives or other initiatives).
- Upgrade area along escarpment as a high quality, urban park system and continuous trail system.
- Consider adopting alternative infrastructure design standards for Old Town in partnership with local area residents.
- Consider traffic calming measures for 6th Avenue to improve pedestrian safety and mobility.

Downtown Commercial Core

- Develop design guidelines for new construction/renovation that encourage quality development standard, street level activity, and diversity of architectural styles (no prescribed "Whitehorse only style").
- Develop landscaping program (including tree planting, street furniture, lighting, and attractive garbage bins; and initiate strategy for landscape maintenance.
- Create "cleanliness and maintenance" task force (Downtown merchants and City staff) to foster an attractive commercial core.
- Highlight heritage/history with interpretive displays, and potentially integrate with wayfinding (signage) system.
- Encourage development of mixed-use residential/commercial uses (through tax-based incentives, fast-tracked development proposals, etc.).
- Maintain and restore theatre on Wood Street as an important urban cinema and community resource.

Riverfront

- Improve the Riverfront Trail north of Main Street.
- Protect views (e.g. no buildings at ends of east-west streets).
- Encourage mixed-use residential/commercial development along 1st Avenue.
- Integrate more active uses (such as limited commercial services) into the White Pass Depot and Old Firehall buildings to increase public access.
- Develop public wharf, docks, with boat tie-ups and limited tourist-commercial uses.

North End Service Commercial

- Create attractive north "gateway" entry through public art feature, landscaping treatment, directional signage.
- Develop landscaping standards (i.e. parking areas and frontages along important arterials to be landscaped).
- Consider alternate uses of vast parking areas (e.g. opportunity for park and ride transit facility, farmers' market, etc.)
- Integrate area east of Quartz Road and northern riverfront with pedestrian linkages; orient new buildings toward the riverfront; allow for pedestrian access from the River.

Do Not Support

The Workshop No. 2 group results showed scarce support for the following preliminary planning issues:

- Relaxation of height restriction.
- Adding a four-way stop to Black Street and 3rd Avenue.

More Information

Planning ideas which require further clarification or discussion include the following:

- Develop, with public input, identity for "Downtown South", to foster community cohesion/spirit and spur reinvestment.

Zoë Morrison, City of Whitehorse
July 5, 2005
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- Create "Downtown South" gateway to announce entry to Downtown Whitehorse with signage, public art and landscaping.
- Pursue alternative means of providing Black Street improvements (through a more City-initiated process, revisions of Local Improvement Bylaw, etc.).
- Discourage stand-alone commercial uses (such as restaurants) except in Wood Street "Heritage District". Encourage home-based businesses while maintaining the residential character of Old Town.
- Develop, with public input, identity for Old Town, to foster community cohesion/spirit.
- Develop "wayfinding" signage system to orient visitors to various downtown sites of interest, services, etc.
- Support expanded scope of existing Main Street Yukon Society (to operate as a Business Improvement Area (BIA)) with better presence (i.e. website, event programming, etc.) and a budget.
- Support existing Riverfront Design Guidelines.
- Discourage office-type development (offices should be encouraged in the Downtown Commercial area).
- Discourage development of small retail commercial units (less than 10,000 ft²).



Downtown South

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Encourage development of high quality, multi-family housing (use design guidelines, target sites with view potential)	11	3	3	0	17
Integrate social, affordable, and market housing forms	9	4	2	1	16
Develop, with public input, identity for "Downtown South", to foster community cohesion/spirit and spur reinvestment	7	5	1	3	16
Improve infrastructure including road paving and sidewalks	12	3	1	0	16
Encourage limited convenience-oriented commercial uses to service the day-to-day needs of local residents	12	2	1	0	15
Support multi-family development/redevelopment (up to 8 storeys?) on certain sites along the escarpment, subject to preservation of views and natural lighting	0	3	14	0	17
Maintain area along escarpment as a quality urban park and valued community resource	16	1	0	0	17
Create "Downtown South" gateway to announce entry to Downtown Whitehorse with signage, public art and landscaping	8	6	2	0	16



Downtown North

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Extend Third Avenue streetscape improvements in order to improve function and appearance as an important pedestrian corridor	13	1	3	0	17
Add a four-way stop at Black Street/3rd Avenue to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility, particularly for Whitehorse Elementary School traffic	5	4	7	1	17
Pursue alternative means of providing Black Street improvements (through a more City-initiated process, revisions of Local Improvement Bylaw, etc.)	8	4	0	5	17
Encourage "live-work development" as catalysts for under-developed properties, adaptive re-use projects, etc.	12	4	0	1	17
Establish transit loop in order to improve pedestrian mobility throughout Downtown Whitehorse	12	3	2	0	17
Initiate landscaping program for parking lots	10	4	1	0	15
Maintain Whitehorse Elementary School as a community resource and to attract/retain to families Downtown	12	3	2	0	17
Encourage satellite presence for Yukon College (e.g. expansion programs, adult-education, entrepreneurship program, etc.) (Or in another area of Downtown?)	8	6	0	0	14
Require significant public input into any potential redevelopment of important sites such as Qwanlin Mall, Yukon Centre, etc. to ensure that redevelopment enhances the Downtown	11	1	2	0	14
Encourage development of niche retailing clusters which build on existing merchants and service providers	9	5	0	0	14



Old Town

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Develop strategy for completing infrastructure upgrades (including appropriate reviews of municipal funding mechanisms)	12	3	1	1	17
Maintain single-family character; allow for low-density infill only (e.g. small-lot single-family, duplexes)	12	1	2	0	15
Encourage high quality, lower density housing between 5th and 6th Avenue	12	4	0	0	16
Discourage stand-alone commercial uses (such as restaurants) except in Wood Street "Heritage District". Encourage home-based businesses while maintaining the residential character of Old Town	8	5	1	1	15
Promote heritage restoration (with tax-based incentives or other initiatives)	13	2	1	0	16
Upgrade area along escarpment as a high quality, urban park system and continuous trail system	14	1	1	0	16
Consider adopting alternative infrastructure design standards for Old Town in partnership with local area residents	13	2	0	2	17
Consider traffic calming measures for Sixth Avenue to improve pedestrian safety and mobility	10	4	2	1	17
Develop, with public input, identity for Old Town, to foster community cohesion/spirit	7	6	2	2	17



Downtown Commercial Core

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Develop design guidelines for new construction/renovation that encourage quality development standard, street level activity, and diversity of architectural styles (no prescribed "Whitehorse only style")	15	1	1	0	17
Develop landscaping program (including tree planting, street furniture, lighting, and attractive garbage bins; and initiate strategy for landscape maintenance	14	1	1	0	16
Create "cleanliness and maintenance" task force (Downtown merchants and City staff) to foster an attractive commercial core	15	0	1	0	16
Develop "wayfinding" signage system to orient visitors to various downtown sites of interest, services, etc.	6	7	3	0	16
Highlight heritage/history with interpretive displays, and potentially integrate with wayfinding (signage) system	11	4	1	0	16
Develop better system/dedicated areas for employee parking (to alleviate parking issues for visitors and area residents)	6	3	4	1	14
Support expanded scope of existing Main Street Yukon Society (to operate as a Business Improvement Area (BIA)) with better presence (i.e. website, event programming, etc.) and a budget	5	4	2	4	15
Encourage development of mixed-use residential/commercial uses (through tax-based incentives, fast-tracked development proposals, etc.)	11	0	3	1	15
Maintain and restore theatre on Wood Street as an important urban cinema and community resource	13	1	2	1	17



Riverfront

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Improve the riverfront trail north of Main Street	14	0	0	0	14
Protect views (e.g. no buildings at ends of east-west streets)	12	3	0	0	15
Encourage mixed-use residential/commercial development along First Avenue	13	1	0	0	14
Support existing Riverfront Design Guidelines	1	6	2	4	13
Integrate more active uses (such as limited commercial services) into the White Pass Depot and Old Firehall buildings to increase public access	10	2	1	1	14
Make multi-family residential a priority in the Motorways redevelopment	8	3	0	3	14
Develop public wharf, docks, with boat tie-ups and limited tourist-commercial uses	11	2	0	0	13
Encourage multi-family residential at the north end of the riverfront; consider relaxation of building height restrictions (up to 8 storeys?)	4	1	9	0	14



North End Service Commercial

Public Workshop No. 2
June 15, 2005

What is your opinion of the idea to...	Support	Neutral	Do Not Support	No Comment / Don't Know	TOTAL
Create attractive north "gateway" entry through public art feature, landscaping treatment, directional signage	11	3	1	0	15
Develop landscaping standards (i.e. parking areas and frontages along important arterials to be landscaped)	13	1	1	0	15
Consider alternate uses of vast parking areas (e.g. opportunity for park and ride transit facility, farmers' market, etc.)	12	0	4	0	16
Discourage office-type development (offices should be encouraged in the Downtown Commercial area)	6	4	3	2	15
Integrate area east of Quartz Road and northern riverfront with pedestrian linkages; orient new buildings toward the riverfront; allow for pedestrian access from the River	13	2	0	0	15
Discourage development of small retail commercial units (less than 10,000 ft ²)	6	2	5	2	15