



downtown

RIVERFRONT PLAN

City of Whitehorse

October 1998

uma

DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN

CITY OF WHITEHORSE

Prepared by:

UMA Engineering Ltd.
3030 Gilmore Diversion
Burnaby, BC V5G 3B4

October 1998

uma

CITY OF WHITEHORSE

DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN

Table of Contents

	Page No.
1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE.....	1
1.1 Project Purpose.....	1
1.2 Location.....	1
1.3 Planning Process.....	1
1.4 Relation to City Plans.....	2
2 EXISTING LAND USE AND TENURE	4
2.1 Land Tenure.....	4
2.2 Current Land Use.....	4
3 AREA ANALYSIS	8
3.1 Area Attributes	8
3.2 Market Forces and Land Use.....	9
4 LAND USE OPTIONS	12
4.1 Consistent Land Use Elements	12
4.2 Objectives for Options.....	15
4.3 Option Features Summary	15
4.4 Summary of Economic/Financial Evaluation of Options.....	19
4.5 Public Comments on Options	20
5 LAND USE PLAN.....	25
5.1 Objectives	25
5.2 Policies.....	25
5.3 Revenue Potential	33
6 IMPLEMENTATION	35

CITY OF WHITEHORSE

DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN

Table of Contents

Page No.

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1	Land Tenure	6
Map 2	Current Land Use	7
Map 3	Concept A	22
Map 4	Concept B	23
Map 5	Concept C	24
Map 6	Land Use Plan	37

LIST OF SKETCHES

Sketch A	Cross Section Showing Walkway	13
Sketch B	Cross Section at Expanded MacBride Museum	14
Sketch C	White Pass Deport	28
Sketch D	Building Clusters and Pedestrian Links	30
Sketch E	Hotel Concept	31
Sketch F	Parking Configuration	34

APPENDIX A

Tabulation Results, Questionnaire - June 18, 1998

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 PROJECT PURPOSE

The Riverfront Plan is a result of an overall strategic initiative of the City to reaffirm its links with the historic waterfront of the Yukon River. This Riverfront Plan is intended to establish broad land use policies for the area, and is intended as a guide to implementation of other development initiatives by both the public and private sectors.

The focus on river front planning is part of a larger City program related to establishing policies on land use along the Yukon River corridor. To facilitate public discussion and participation the City also prepared a scale model of the riverfront area in the downtown region, has held a number of public events, carried out more detailed environmental and historic assessments of the area, and also commissioned a broad land use planning study for the entire Yukon River corridor. This Plan focuses specifically on the core downtown portion of the river.

With a variety of development initiatives under discussion by the City, this land use plan is intended to identify the general approach to area land use, but also considers, where appropriate, general design considerations.

1.2 LOCATION

The riverfront area for purposes of this Plan was identified as including both shorelines of the Yukon River in and near the downtown region, extending from the SS Klondike site in the south to Kishwoot Island in the north. The west boundary includes parcels of land fronting First Avenue, and extends further to the east side of Second Avenue from Black Street to where Second Avenue curves to the west.

On the east bank of the Yukon River the study area includes the hospital site and adjacent institutional uses, and part of the escarpment. Each of the maps in this document provide an indication of the study area boundaries.

1.3 PLANNING PROCESS

Throughout completion of the Plan liaison was maintained with the Riverfront Advisory Committee comprising members of various local stakeholder groups, City Council and technical agencies. Meetings with the Advisory Committee were supplemented by a very well attended public open house on June 18, 1998, and a workshop for interested citizens on June 19, 1998. (Maps and related material also continued to be on display for some weeks afterwards at City Hall.) The open house, conducted in a tent at the SS Klondike site, was arranged by the City and allowed members of the public to acquaint themselves with the various land use options considered for the study area and also permitted viewing of a scale model of the area, environmental, historic, and land use information. At the open house the consultants made available

a questionnaire to solicit comments on each of three land use options including various land use elements and design considerations. A synopsis of questionnaire results was prepared by the City. A special workshop with the Riverfront Advisory Committee on land uses to be included in the draft Plan was held on August 6, 1998. It offered an opportunity to review public input and to synthesize those aspects that merited inclusion in the Riverfront Plan. A further Advisory Committee and a public meeting on the draft plan was held September 22, 1998.

1.4 RELATION TO CITY PLANS

The Riverfront Plan builds on two other key documents affecting land use in the area. An initial Downtown Plan was prepared in early 1994. Key components of this Plan were later incorporated in the more global City Official Community Plan, adopted as bylaw 94-30 in August 1994. The Official Community Plan sets out general policy guidelines for growth and development of Whitehorse. It offers the foundation for land use decisions which affect land use throughout the city. With reference to the Yukon River waterfront the Community Plan notes:

- that a maximum height of two stories be maintained along First Avenue (2.3.4.16)
- the importance of public access to the Yukon River waterfront Downtown, and linkage provisions to commercial areas, and passive recreation activities along the waterfront (adapted from 2.3.9.11)

- the Community Plan contains a special section (Part Four), which deals specifically with the downtown. It reflects policies and land use recommendations embodied in the Downtown Plan adopted earlier as bylaw 94-05, which amended the 1987 Official Community Plan. Components relative to the riverfront as noted in the current Official Community Plan include:

- integration and linkages to and along the Escarpment and Waterfront in a manner that recognizes each feature's natural amenities and allows development in a beneficial and safe manner (4.4.4.1)
- the waterfront shall be developed as a link between people and places of activity in the Downtown (4.4.2.2)
- development of the waterfront area shall provide opportunities for a year round mix of commercial, residential, recreational, historical and interpretative activities development (4.4.2.3)

The Community Plan document stresses the opportunity for public private partnerships to develop buildings and linkages along pedestrian routes, and encourages incorporation of historic features.

Land uses for the riverfront as noted in the Community Plan includes the designation Waterfront, extending for the entire study area along First Avenue. The emphasis here is on development of linkages to the downtown. At the north end of the Riverfront on either side of Second Avenue, the land use

classification is Commercial Residential Mix, and the area at Strickland and Alexander along Second Avenue is also proposed as a Commercial/Residential mix zone. The actual density per hectare is not defined in the Community Plan.

The overall policies of the Community Plan as it reflects the Riverfront area were given consideration in preparation of the current document.

2 EXISTING LAND USE AND TENURE

A review of current land use and tenure for the study area was completed by Gartner Lee in May 1998. A summary of this information is provided below.

2.1 LAND TENURE

Lots along the Yukon River titled after 1950 have retained a 30 metre (100 ft.) reserve along the river. Many of the other lots along the river are titled, but 13 untenured residences or squatters are found along the waterfront, mainly in the area known as sleepy hollow, but some squatters also reside east of the river. Lewes Boulevard, Hospital Road, and Wickstrom Road are untitled and Commissioners land. The City owns two large tracts of land (consisting of several parcels) known as the Taga Ku site, and the Motorways site. The White Pass and Yukon Route retains title to some rail right of way near the bridge. Other right of way has been transferred to the Government of Yukon. Several land uses are based on leasehold occupation. Notable leases include the Yukon Electrical Substation which is on a lease which expires in 2004. The Kanoe People occupy a lease in the 30 metre reserve, renewable on an annual basis. Kishwoot Island is a settled land claim owned by the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation and is leased to the city (expires in year 2021). The White Pass depot is owned by the Yukon government with office space leased. Details on land tenure can be found on Map 1.

2.2 CURRENT LAND USE

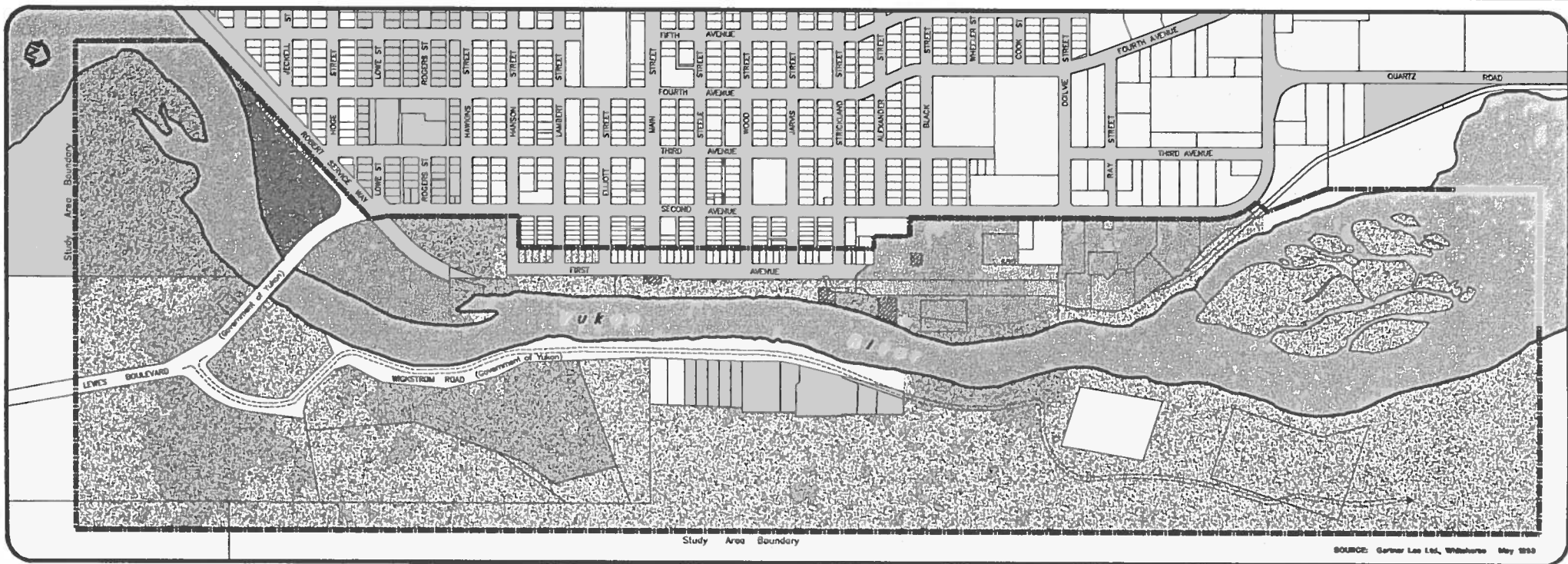
Land use in the riverfront area consists of both permanent and temporary or seasonal uses, with the seasonal uses largely occurring on leased properties.

Principal current land uses within the downtown portion of the study area include:

- the SS Klondike sternwheeler historic site south of the bridge
- Rotary Peace Park
- Yukon Territorial Government Building and the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre
- the Closeleigh Manor apartment building west of First Avenue between Lambert and Elliott Streets
- commercial retail, restaurant and hotel uses on the west side of First Avenue
- the MacBride Museum at the foot of Main and Steele Street
- the old Motorways building (much of the surrounding property is vacant)
- several buildings from the operational history of the Yukon White Pass Route railway, including the train depot at the foot of Main Street, two old crew quarter buildings, and the train shed building (roundhouse)
- the Northwest store, a fast food restaurant, and bus depot on the east side of Second Avenue at Ogilvie Street

- several utility buildings, and the Yukon Electrical Company substation along the river near Alexander
- Kishwoot Island park area
- a number of squatter residences along the river shore in proximity to Kishwoot Island

On the east bank of the Yukon River, the buildings are largely institutional in nature, and the area is dominated by the Whitehorse General Hospital. Other buildings on the east side include several country residential properties, a church, educational building, and an extended care home complex, as well as a First Nations cemetery. Land use is illustrated on Map 2.



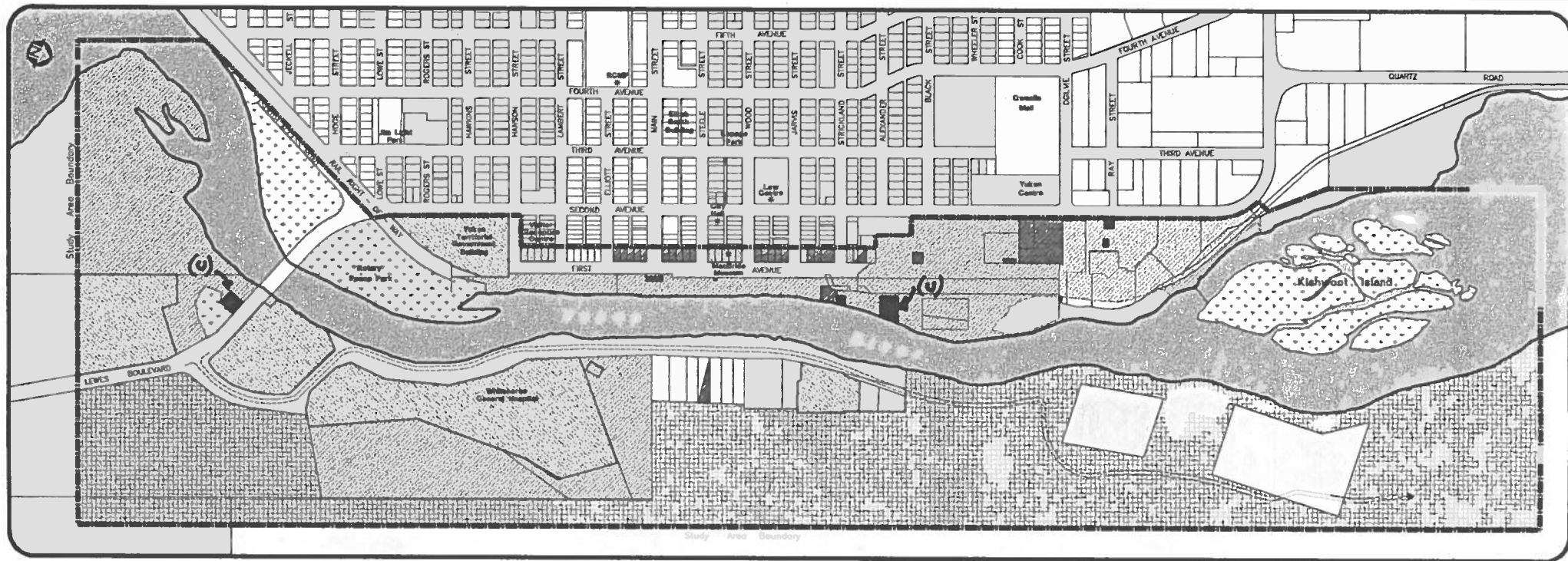
City of Whitehorse DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN LAND TENURE

- GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
- GOVERNMENT OF YUKON
- CITY OF WHITEHORSE
- PRIVATE
- LEASED



July 1998 Project 2501-004-00-01

Map
1
UING



City of Whitehorse DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN CURRENT LAND USE



3 AREA ANALYSIS

3.1 AREA ATTRIBUTES

The preparation of the land use concepts for the study area was preceded by an analysis of some of the key features and opportunities. The principal features considered in development of several land use options are categorized as follows:

a) consideration of historic attributes of the area

- the White Pass Yukon Route narrow gauge railway, which has the potential of being reactivated to the City; White Pass and Yukon Railway depot built in 1900, rebuilt after a fire in 1905. This building provides a strong structural element in the downtown core at the foot of Main Street.
- the First Nation heritage features; for example the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation had an old indian village site and graveyard across the river at about Jarvis Street, the area also was a fishing spot; the present SS Klondike site was a Kwanlin Dun fish camp, where nets were set into the river
- many grave sites are believed to exist on the hill on the east side of Yukon River
- the gold rush association of sternwheelers transporting people and freight on the Yukon River. Remnants

include the "butter boards" greased boards used to facilitate haulage of ships onto land for storage during winter months

- the White Pass train shed (round house) constructed in 1954 to replace an earlier 1943 building. Old crew quarters also remain at First Avenue near the Visitor Reception Centre.
- an 800 feet dock used to exist along the river, including tracks for freight transfer to steamers. Piling remnants of the old dock remain.
- Sleepy Hollow squatter settlement near Kishwoot Islands
- the old fire hall, built in 1901, situated south of the White Pass depot

b) the outdoor recreational and interpretative potential associated with the riverfront

Some of the main elements include

- the small observation platforms along the Yukon River near the White Pass depot
- the partial established trails along the Yukon River, and a good walkway from the SS Klondike site south along the shoreline
- recreation and park areas, notably Rotary Park which hosts numerous events during the summer months

- Kishwoot Island nature area, connected by a pedestrian bridge adjacent to the Taga Ku site

c) the visual characteristics of the area

- the notably striking views to the escarpment from the downtown area of the riverfront overlooking the east shore
- the constantly changing views along the shore line of the river from the SS Klondike site to the Kishwoot Island area
- the spectacular views associated with the downtown as seen from the higher points on the east bank, particularly along the upper reaches of Wickstrom Road
- more urban characteristics, some existing (e.g. the Visitor Reception Centre and YTG building), others with potential (areas now vacant), along First Avenue
- the dominance of the hospital building, more of a negative rather than positive visual element

d) the proximity of the riverfront area to the downtown core of Whitehorse

- the direct connection to Main Street, the main shopping artery in the City which is a vibrant street, with interesting small shops, restaurants, and several hotels

- easy access to important government buildings including the Yukon Territorial Government Building, Whitehorse City Hall, the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre
- the central location of MacBride Museum adjacent to City Hall and at the foot of Steele and Wood Streets
- the Hospital site on the east bank of the River which is a potential marshalling location for long term recreation/interpretative areas on the east bank

In developing land use concepts for the study area, retention or reflection of these elements can offer an important role in defining long term land use.

3.2 MARKET FORCES AND LAND USE

In establishing land use options consideration is also required about market forces that may shape the potential for the area. An overview level of market analysis was undertaken to examine initial opportunities, and to also assist in defining options.

Much of the vacant land within the study area is currently City owned. As part of the process the consulting team considered preliminary economic and financial implications of alternative concepts, particularly as it relates to the value of this vacant land. For proposed commercial and residential elements, potential site locations consider not only design and land use issues but also considerations of concern to investors. For example if housing is to be successful, then waterfront views

are an important consideration - this is the feature that would distinguish it from housing sites available elsewhere in the city. Similarly a hotel with riverfront views again allows a distinction from other city sites, and potentially could take advantage of a proposed adjacent community/cultural centre for some convention space. Similarly, commercial land uses need to be planned to take advantage of good road access, and proximity to other commercial sites in order to derive a benefit from proximity to traffic and other commercial uses. From a revenue perspective, commercial and residential uses which optimize land values are financially advantageous over alternative uses.

Market influences on land use are discussed in the following section, and relate to land use opportunities in general, with more specific information on options examined in Section 4.4.

The principal findings of the market overview are:

1. The riverfront study area does not have any significant office development potential during the next ten years.
2. The lack of department store competition suggests that some retail dollars are flowing out of Whitehorse to larger markets down south (Vancouver and Edmonton in particular). As a result, it may be possible to convince one of the national chains to open a department store in Whitehorse during the next five years. The best prospect is a discount department store (e.g. Zellers or Walmart) in the 90,000-100,000 square foot range. Opportunities may exist to allow for incorporation of a department store within a commercial designated site in the study area.
3. Attracting such as major anchor tenant to the study area would have a very significant impact on the marketability of adjoining commercial designated land. With a department store, ancillary retail/service commercial development could easily amount to between 50,000-60,000 square feet in as little as three years. Without the drawing power of a department store, a realistic building program would be 40,000-50,000 square feet of retail/service commercial space development over a ten year time frame.
4. Proper marketing of existing and new attractions in the Whitehorse area should enable the demand for overnight accommodation to grow at between 2-3% per annum during the next 5-10 years. Given this increase in demand and the quality of a portion of the existing competition, the Whitehorse market should be able to support a new hotel ranging from 100-120 rooms within the next five years. From a marketing perspective, a location on the riverfront side of the study area would be ideal.
5. With population expected to grow by 1% per annum during the 1998-2003 period and by 2% per annum during the 2003-2008 period, the Whitehorse area will not generate very much demand for new residential housing during the next ten years. Given the ample supply of single family lots in suburban neighbourhoods such as Copper Ridge, the riverfront area should focus on the low rise multi-family segment of the housing market.

6. Assuming that the housing product can be developed at a competitive price, the absorption rate of multi-family housing on the subject site could be as high as 10-15 units in the first year, dropping back to between 5-10 units per annum during the remainder of the 1998-2003 period and picking up again to between 10-15 units per annum after 2003.

4 LAND USE OPTIONS

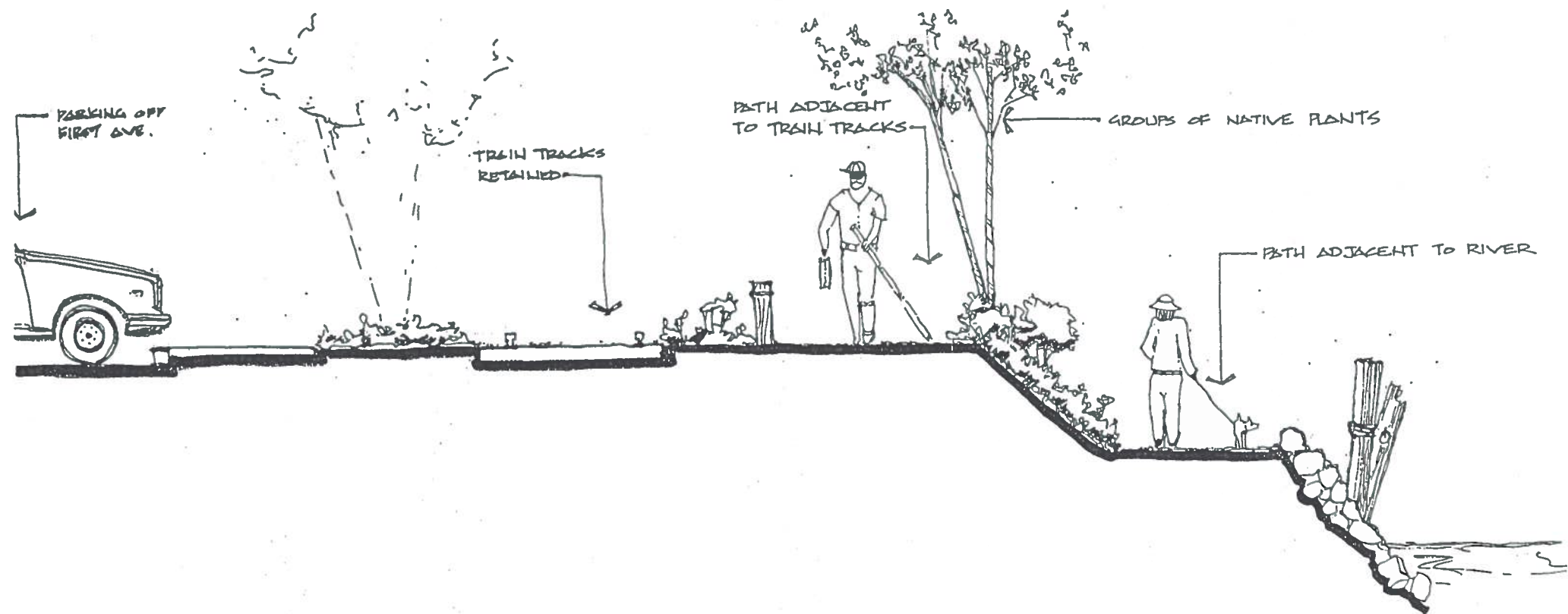
4.1 CONSISTENT LAND USE ELEMENTS

From the site analysis, land tenure and current land use review it was possible to establish several distinct planning options. These options were submitted for public review prior to preparation of the final land use plan. While there are notable differences, each option does however include several important common elements.

The features common to all of the options are summarized as follows:

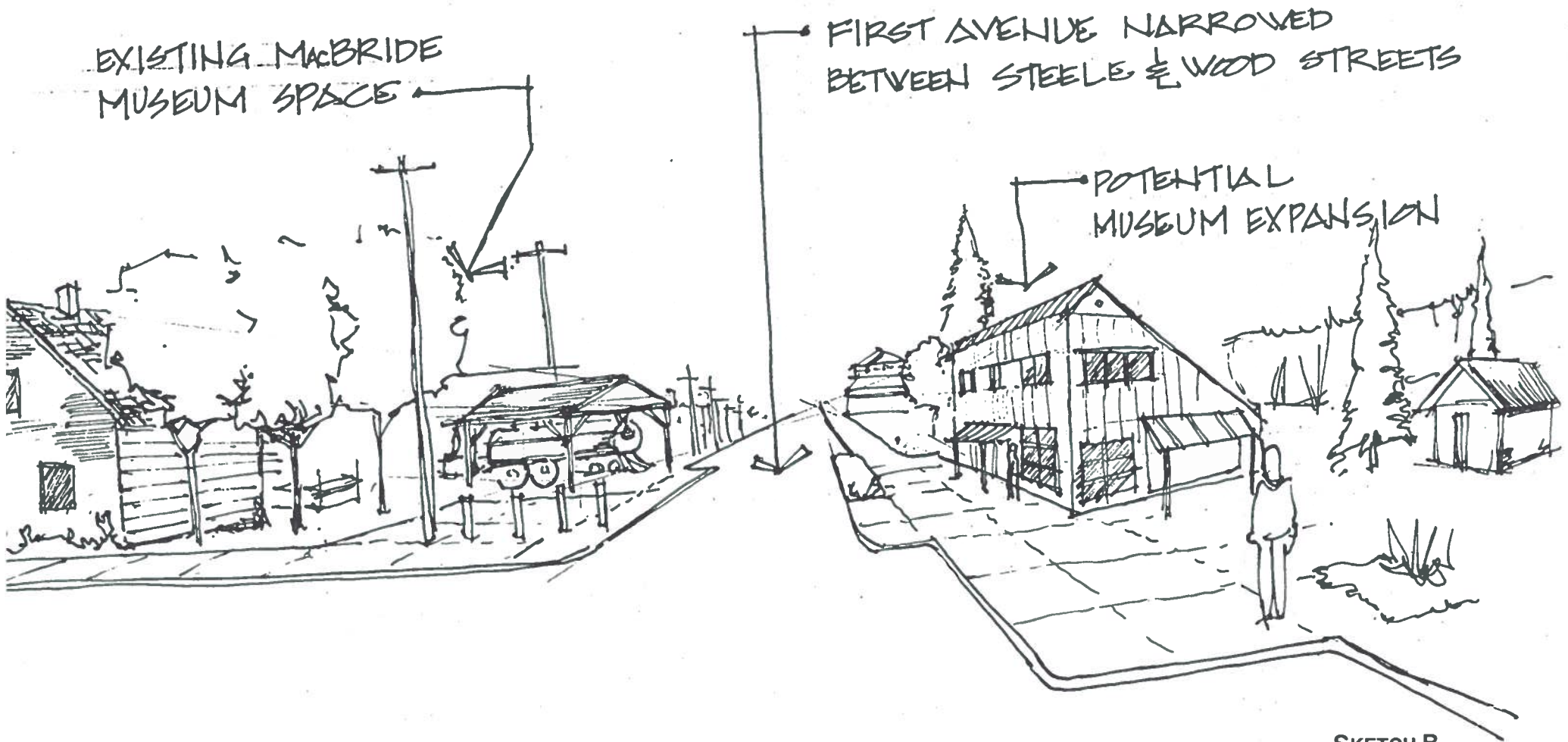
Key Common Elements

- A continuous riverfront heritage walkway with selected nodes of heritage structures featured along the walkway (some of which exist, and others that could be relocated within, or adjacent to, the riverfront walkway area). A setback from river (no major building area) generally maintained at around 30m (see Sketch A).
- The walkway would extend the entire length of the riverfront and continue through SS Klondike site to connect to the established walkway.
- Proposed seasonal commercial uses including boat rentals to be encouraged in proximity to walkway.
- Incorporation of a look-out structure, to be erected near the Kishwoot Island foot bridge to provide an observation/view area, and to offer a visual focal point at the north end of the walkway.
- Provision for expansion of the White Pass depot building to include sidewalk patios (both to west and east), and perhaps an east side upper deck to permit public views over the river. Encourage potential restaurant and/or pub activities. All concept options retain the depot building in its current location since it provides a major anchor for Main Street.
- Expansion of the MacBride museum site across 1st Avenue to permit larger display area, and to augment the focus of heritage/public activities near the foot of Main Street (the foot of Main/Steele/Wood is intended to form the downtown focus of the riverfront walkway - see Sketch B).
- Land area east of Yukon River, within the study area is proposed to remain at low intensity in order to maintain scenic attributes. Long term provision is suggested for view areas along Wickstrom Road and on the escarpment (subject to review with First Nation and other interests). A walkway loop and bridge access across the Yukon River is rejected due to negative visual impact. It is recommended that other than paving of Wickstrom, retention of relatively low key land uses is preferred east of river.



SKETCH A

CROSS SECTION SHOWING WALKWAY (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)



SKETCH B

CROSS SECTION EXPANDED MACBRIDE MUSEUM (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)



- First Avenue waterfront parking to be retained, but reduced in area, and use of landscaping, and surface improvements proposed to enhance appearance. Metered parking suggested during summer months to encourage turn over and maximize access to waterfront by visitors.
- Incorporate washroom facility, and lookout platform along White Pass right of way (with its higher elevation) at Rotary Peace Park, perhaps as a caboose on a separate siding adjacent to main track with provision made to continue the tracks to the Depot.
- Sternwheeler butterboard launching area to be upgraded as heritage site along waterfront walkway. Other interpretative features and signage to be included in strategic locations in the riverfront walkway area.

4.2 OBJECTIVES FOR OPTIONS

The three concepts developed as part of the planning process also respond to different objectives, in particular as it relates to the north end (Motorways/Taga Ku) portion of the study area. The distinction between plans is largely related to the intensity of use. One concept (Concept A) responds to a desire to retain the area largely as public open space, with the other two concepts (B and C) providing a greater range of uses, and also a more significant intensity of development.

Concept A acknowledges the desire by some to retain most of the riverfront area in open space, perhaps by including some active recreational activities. Thus most of the northern portion of the site is devoted to park and potentially sports and play

fields. Concept B has as its objective the creation of more active facilities, and incorporation of a mix of land use activities. A notable objective of this concept is the potential inclusion of all or part of a proposed multiplex recreation centre providing indoor recreation space and up to two ice sheets. Concept C also has as its objective the retention of active community space, as well as more commercial land uses including a possible waterfront hotel. This concept however excludes the recreation centre.

It is recognized, and was explained to the public that land use elements could be interchanged between concepts, with the main purpose of the initial three options being the generation of public debate about “what is possible.” In each of the concepts, proposed public uses are planned to take advantage of proximity to the downtown, and include consideration of connections to the riverfront walkway. All of the concepts attempt to reintroduce some vitality to the riverfront, while building on the established assets of the downtown.

4.3 OPTION FEATURES SUMMARY

The information which follows consists of a series of tables with two sections. The first column summarizes the main elements which are incorporated in the concept, the second column provides a summary of the secondary elements of each Concept. Maps (Maps 3, 4, and 5) at the end of this section offer an illustration of the principal land use elements incorporated in each option.

Concept A	
MAJOR LAND USE ELEMENTS	SECONDARY LAND USE ELEMENTS
<p><i>This concept offers an emphasis on public space and on open space.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant public park and sportsfield areas provided for. Consider possible adaptive use of train shed as a recreation field house. • site provided for community cultural facility at 20/20 site, assumes incorporation of train shed either as part of community cultural facility or as potential field house • commercial land use retained along south side of 2nd Avenue • provides for a possible riverfront wharf from rail depot to museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • central parking area provided at east end of Ogilvie Street (to cater to sportsfields, Kishwoot Island, Riverfront walkway area, and boat launch) • 1st Avenue closed at Steele & Wood to permit museum expansion (may require utility relocation); 1st Avenue also extended at north end to continue to Alexander Street • substation location to remain as is • lots west of 1st Avenue to remain commercial, except for established housing at Lambert/Elliott • rail tracks could be maintained to train shed by appropriate design of small scale cultural centre adjacent to train shed • fire hall retained at present location • provides for additional boat launch at Ogilvie Street

Concept B

MAJOR LAND USE ELEMENTS

This concept includes a land area for an active indoor/outdoor recreation facility and provides for residential use.

- major community recreation facility provided for at north end of site (Taga Ku) along 2nd Avenue (approx. 3.7 hectares (9 ac.) allocated). Facility proposed to contain all elements of multiplex proposal, or alternatively deletion of ice sheet component, to be replaced with cultural centre.
- incorporate parking component at foot of Ogilvie, to support recreation centre, the north entrance to walkway, as well as Kishwoot Island
- incorporates residential node (roughly 50 semi-detached homes or townhouses), clustered around lagoon (for conversion to outdoor skating area in winter), and river. Introduces some year round activity to waterfront, and breaks linear route. Lagoon/park area to be a municipal facility.
- extension to Visitor Centre area proposed by closing of 1st Avenue, to provide greater proximity to waterfront and crew quarter buildings (emergency access to be retained)
- 1st Avenue is proposed to extend slightly further north to provide access to the residential node
- provides for a possible riverfront wharf from rail depot to museum

SECONDARY LAND USE ELEMENTS

- suggest retention of some of heritage cabins in Sleepy Hollow squatter area near Kishwoot Island, to be incorporated in community recreation facility site as a riverfront walkway element
- does not accommodate retention of White Pass train shed due to conflict with proposed housing location in suggested residential area
- provides for several small park clusters, one at north end, one near electric substation
- fire hall retained at current site
- commercial along east side of 2nd continues only to Ogilvie Street, remaining frontage to north devoted to recreation/community building
- walkway area setback reduced for residential area to improve proximity to waterfront
- makes provision for a boat launch near foot of Ogilvie

Concept C	
MAJOR LAND USE ELEMENTS	SECONDARY LAND USE ELEMENTS
<p><i>This concept emphasizes future retail use, adds a hotel site and includes a riverfront residential strip.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides focus on commercial development of vacant city owned property near Ogilvie (Motorways site); major development in this area effectively provides for significant downtown retail expansion • provision made for Residential area to east of commercial centre, and north of Ogilvie to Kishwoot Island bridge, in Sleepy Hollow area. Provides for semi-detached homes, (development would be single loaded, with all homes having river views) • makes provision for waterfront hotel site at foot of Strickland Street (north), with direct river views • community cultural centre incorporated along river between the hotel and residential area • provides for opportunity to use hotel and adjacent cultural centre for small convention space - through appropriate design • a smaller park area retained near Kishwoot Island • fire hall relocated to MacBride Museum area, to strengthen this site as a heritage node 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Pass train shed cannot readily be retained due to conflict with land use and traffic circulation patterns • boat launch optional at north end of site, depending on capability to accommodate adequate parking • to allow adequate site for waterfront hotel, it is desirable to relocate the substation 100 metres west, incorporating it within the commercial area • will require careful treatment of commercial uses north of Ogilvie to ensure design compatibility with proposed residences • suggest reallocation of current fire hall space to commercial/festive food hall/artisan space (new building required) • walkway/setback area reduced at hotel and residential areas to allow buildings to be closer to water and views • 1st Avenue closed at Visitor Reception Centre and at museum to bring public closer to water front

4.4 SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

An earlier section reviewed land uses in a general context, including the potential for commercial use (office, retail, and accommodation), and residential use. This section incorporates a summary of additional elements considered within the options such as institutional uses, and also considers the overall financial implications to the City relative to revenues different uses may contribute for City owned properties. This is reflected in the relative value of the land based on potential alternative uses accommodated in each of the three main concepts.

Based on discussions with the City and meetings with local area interest groups, three potential institutional uses have been identified for the study area. These are an expansion of the MacBride Museum, a community cultural centre and a recreation/sports complex (the multiplex).

All three options are feasible from a market standpoint.

	<u>Option A</u>	<u>Option B</u>	<u>Option C</u>
MacBride Museum expansion	yes	yes	yes
community cultural centre	yes	no	yes
recreation/sports complex	no	yes	no
office	no	no	no
department store	no	no	yes
retail/service (land area, approx.)	225,000 SF	105,000 SF	470,000 SF
hotel	no	no	100 rooms
residential (approx. units)	no	60 units	30 units

The revenues that the City of Whitehorse will receive from selling or leasing portions of the property will vary significantly from one concept plan to the next. Revenues from land sales are based on the following prices for fully serviced sites¹:

- \$5 per square foot for department store land (option C);
- \$12 per square foot for other retail/service commercial land (options A and B);
- \$15 per square foot for other retail/service commercial land (option C);
- \$25,000 per residential unit;
- \$12,000 per hotel room.

¹ A more detailed analysis is contained in "Development Potential Review," a Supplement to Downtown Riverfront Plan, August, 1998

Since the MacBride Museum, the community cultural centre and the recreation/sports complex are non profit operations, they are not expected to contribute any monies towards land costs. Accordingly, the City of Whitehorse is not expected to receive any revenue from the "sale" or lease of portions of City owned lands to these organizations.

Based on the building programs and unit land values cited above, gross revenues from land sales for the three alternative concept plans and the time frame for development is estimated and summarized as follows:

	<u>Option A</u>	<u>Option B</u>	<u>Option C</u>
land sale revenues	\$2.7 million	\$2.8 million	\$5.9 million
build out period	> 10 years	5-10 years	3-5 years

The results of this analysis indicate that, Option C generates the most potential revenue.

4.5 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON OPTIONS

The consultants made available a questionnaire at the public open house in June 1998 to solicit public comments on the land use alternatives. Tabulation of the responses was completed by the City, and reflected information compiled from 139 completed questionnaires. A detailed analysis of the public responses was compiled by the City. A summary of key responses follows.

The public was requested to indicate agreement or disagreement with several of the major elements of each option. Overall response choices included *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree*, and *no opinion or neutral*. The summary of responses below aggregates the strongly agree and agree responses, as well as the disagree and strongly disagree responses.

- Concept A proposes significant public open space and park (sportsfields etc. at the north end of the riverfront (Taga Ku and Motorways area)

Agree 91 Disagree 37

- Concept B proposes a major community recreation facility (multiplex) for the north end of the riverfront (Taga Ku site)

Agree 39 Disagree 87

- Concept C proposes a mix of commercial, park and riverfront residential for the north end of the riverfront (Taga Ku site)

Agree 47 Disagree 79

- Concept A proposes a community cultural facility at the 20/20 site, at the end of 1st Ave. near Alexander

Agree 71 Disagree 40

- A residential node centred around a lagoon is proposed in Concept B

Agree 57 Disagree 72

- Concept C proposes a waterfront hotel at First Avenue near Alexander Street.

Agree 33 Disagree 89

Aspects the public agreed represented important plan elements included:

- public wharf along Yukon River
- cultural centre near the riverfront
- seasonal commercial uses near the riverfront walkway
- retention of the train shed (or railway roundhouse)
- the need to consider potential revenues from City owned lands

Aspects or plan elements generally deemed unimportant included:

- pedestrian crossing to east side of Yukon River
- retaining the fire hall in its current location
- residential use along the riverfront
- having a recreation/arena complex near the riverfront

Issues where opinions were generally close (slim majority's) included:

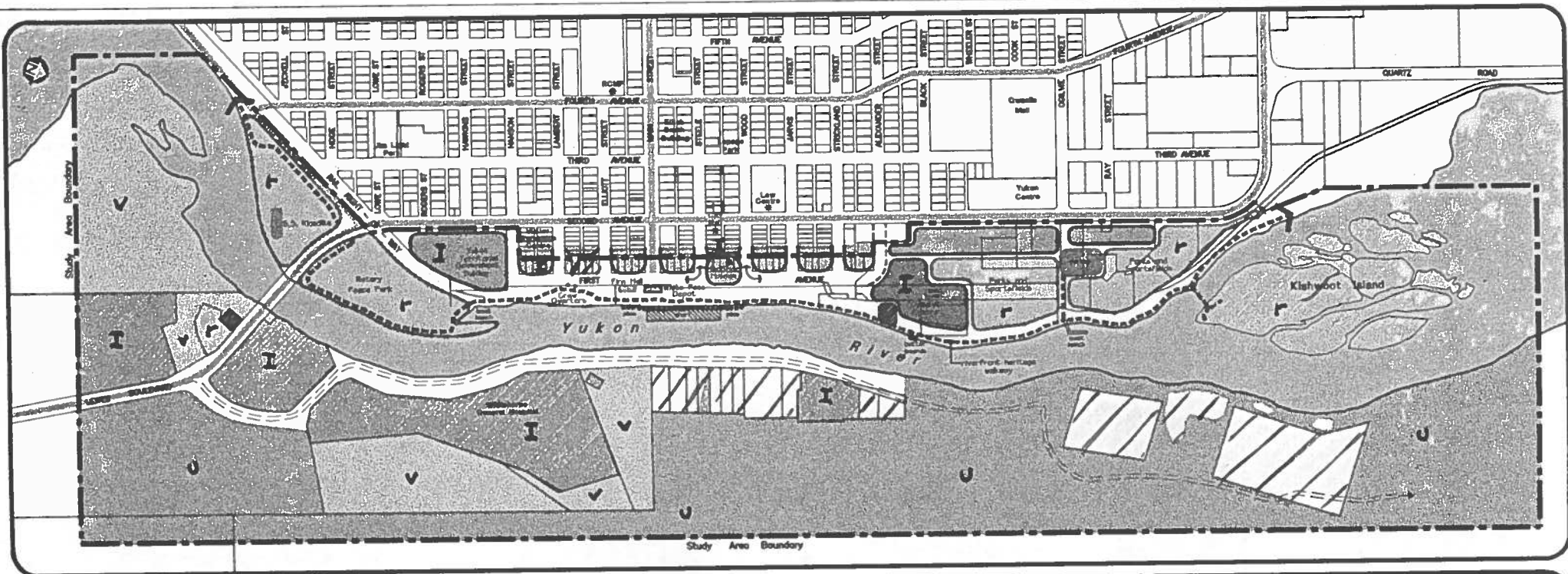
- retention of parking areas along the riverside of First Avenue (a small majority deemed this important)

- relocation of additional heritage structures to the riverfront area (a small majority felt this was important)

Respondents generally favoured Option A (47 of the 82, i.e. 57% who offered a definite opinion), but no clear consensus existed, with the majority of people having no opinion (57 responses), given that elements of each option were either liked or disliked.

A large number of respondents added additional comments to the questionnaire for consideration in development of the Plan.

The maps (Maps 3, 4, and 5) providing a synopsis of the options are included on the following pages.



City of Whitehorse DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN

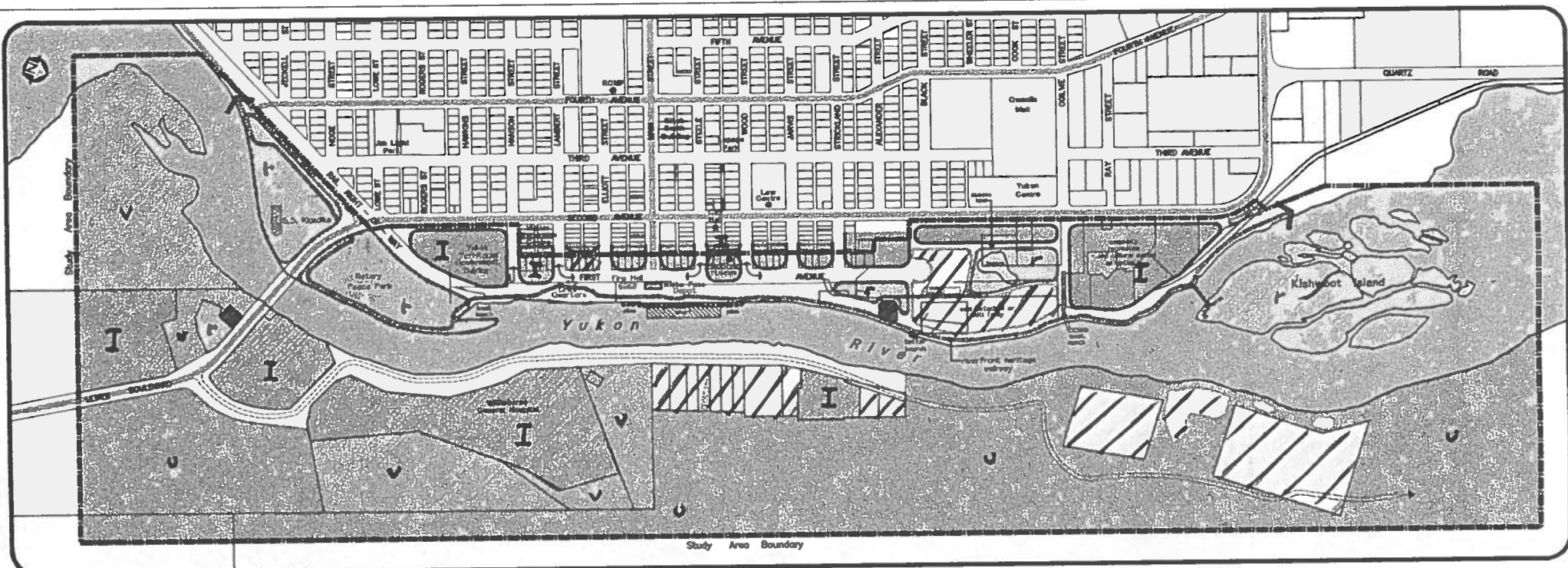


- | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|---------------|
| | RESIDENTIAL | | HERITAGE BLDG |
| | COMMERCIAL | | VACANT |
| | INSTITUTIONAL | | UNDEVELOPED |
| | RECREATION | | |
| | UTILITY | | |

CONCEPT A

0 50 100 150 200 300 400 500m

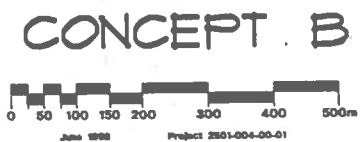
June 2000 Project 2001-004-00-01

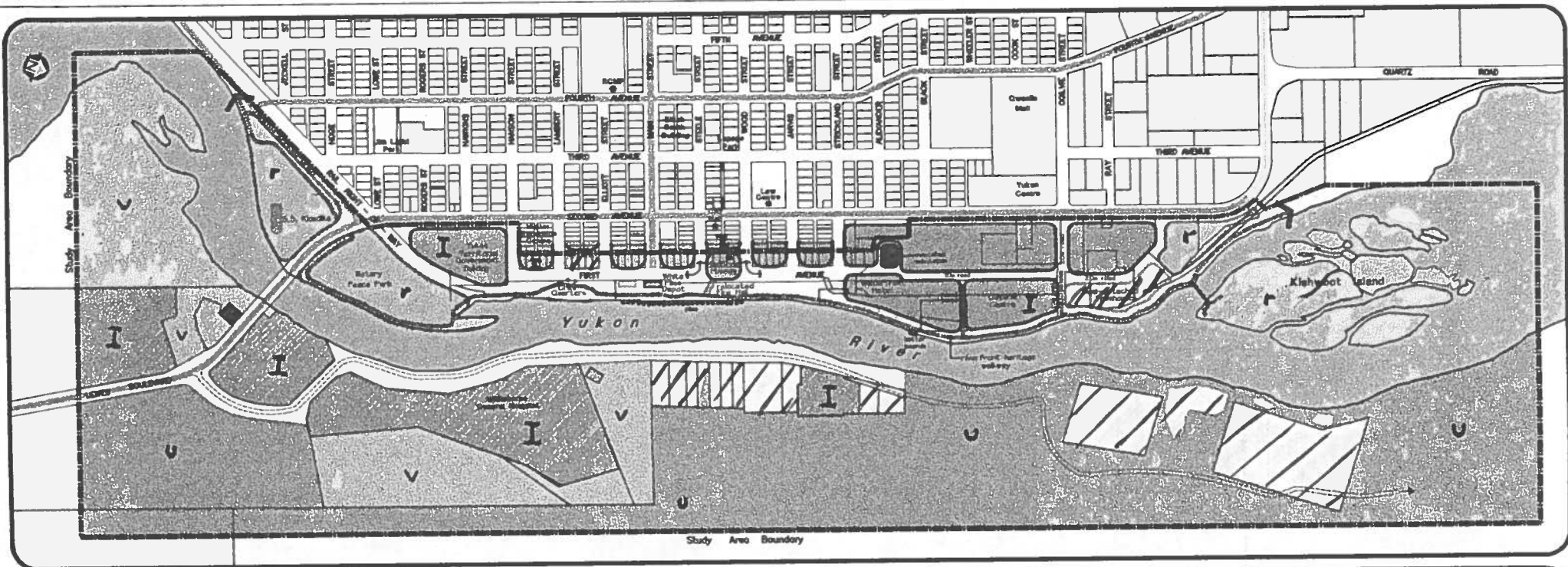


City of Whitehorse DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN



- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| RESIDENTIAL | HERITAGE BLDG |
| COMMERCIAL | VACANT |
| INSTITUTIONAL | UNDEVELOPED |
| RECREATION | |
| UTILITY | |

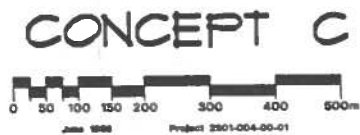




City of Whitehorse DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PLAN



	RESIDENTIAL		HERITAGE BLDG
	COMMERCIAL		VACANT
	INSTITUTIONAL		UNDEVELOPED
	RECREATION		
	UTILITY		



5 LAND USE PLAN

The sections which follow provide the overall framework for the Riverfront Land Use Plan. Map designations referred to in the text correspond to *Map 6*, the Land Use Plan map, which is included at the end of this section.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

The policies for this plan are derived from the following objectives:

1. The riverfront area along the Yukon River shoreline shall continue to be maintained as accessible public open space.
2. The focus of the riverfront area will be the creation of a series of nodes designed to accommodate year round people oriented activity.
3. Vitality for the downtown riverfront is to be fostered through encouragement of a range of land use activities.
4. A greater intensity of development in the riverfront region is to be encouraged in a manner which does not impede broad public access.
5. New development in the downtown riverfront is to be aesthetically pleasing, and is to be cognisant of the historic character and importance of the area.

5.2 POLICIES

The following are a series of general policies applicable to the downtown riverfront.

A. RIVERFRONT WALKWAY

The riverfront walkway area represents that portion of the downtown Yukon River corridor paralleling the westerly riverbank and extending a minimum of 30 metres inland. The following policies apply in this area.

1. A continuous riverfront walkway shall be designed and developed to meander through the 30 metre setback zone along the river. Details on width and surface treatment of walkway(s) are to be established through further technical design analysis.
2. Major new buildings (those with a “footprint” exceeding 65m²) are to be discouraged from locating within the 30 m setback zone. Museum expansion, as well as relocated and existing heritage structures are exempted from this policy.
3. In conjunction with the above, a 30 metre building setback shall be observed for major new buildings along the riverfront area. This setback may be modified on the basis of detailed design and where building space is designed to accommodate public activity and does not interfere with the walkway link.

4. Public access to the riverfront walkway shall be provided at three key focal points:
 - in the vicinity of Ogilvie Street, in proximity to the river
 - at a downtown node in the vicinity of Main Street and the MacBride Museum
 - in the vicinity of the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre
5. Within the riverfront walkway corridor, permanent buildings shall be small scale, have a small footprint , and will preferably be of a heritage nature, which may incorporate commercial usage.
6. To respect the heritage quality of the riverfront walkway, preservation and restoration of several important heritage features are recommended. These include:
 - the White Pass crew quarters north of the Reception Centre
 - retention of the old fire hall building in its current location
 - retention of the White Pass and Yukon Route depot in its current location at the foot of Main Street
 - recognition of the location (e.g. interpretative signage) and perhaps restoration of some of the riverboat “butterboards” along the river which were used to haul the sternwheelers from the river
 - restoration and perhaps relocation within the riverfront corridor of some of the historic squatter buildings occupying riverfront lands
7. Provision is made for one more significant riverfront area structure. This shall be a public wharf roughly extending along the river from Main Street to the MacBride Museum. This wharf may incorporate permanent structures which reintroduce some of the historic warehousing, office, (and perhaps new retail features) to recall the past warehousing and freight function of the river wharf in this area.
8. In consideration of wharf design, adequate engineering attention is to be given to river bed foundations, erosion, fisheries, and ice conditions. Given these constraints, construction of a wharf structure cantilevered from the shoreline or built immediately adjacent to the riverbank may represent a preferred option. Removal of existing piles from the riverbank may disturb soils in this area and contribute to sloughage.
9. Riverfront view areas shall be developed and constructed at strategic locations along the downtown riverfront. Where practical such view areas should include interpretative signage exploring the past role of the river in context to First Nation activities and settlement, as well as the role of the river in Yukon transportation particularly during the gold rush era.
10. It is proposed that a well marked and safe downtown view point for motorists be developed on the escarpment along Wickstrom Road on the east side of the Yukon River. An approximate location is shown on Map 6.

11. In developing permanent or seasonal buildings within the river corridor area, particular consideration is to be given to establishing activity nodes which act as focal points for public interest. This may include clusters of heritage buildings, interpretative features, and seasonal food service and retail kiosks augmenting year-round facilities.
12. It is proposed that the historic firehall situated south of the White Pass depot be retained at its current site, and adapted to a general interpretative or retail festive space in order to generate year round public activity in this area, and to complement the adjacent White Pass depot.
13. Every effort shall be made to maintain the historic attraction and public space attributes of the White Pass depot building, including reintroduction of its railway function, and consideration of restaurant/pub services, with an emphasis on outdoor public patios and balconies overlooking both the city and the riverfront (see Sketch C).
14. Boat launch facilities are proposed to be upgraded at the north portion of Rotary Peace Park, by developing improved access from the Visitor Reception building area. Similarly it is proposed that a new boat launch facility, and breakwater be constructed at the foot of Ogilvie Street.
15. It is proposed that a public washroom facility be constructed at the approximate location of the White Pass Right of Way property immediately west of Rotary Peace Park. Innovative design which complements the walkway theme is suggested.

B. COMMUNITY, AND PARK AND OPEN SPACE

Public meetings during the study of the riverfront area resulted in an expression of strong interest in maintaining a significant amount of land in public park and open space. Appropriate areas for open space and leisure activities are illustrated on Map 6 as Recreation areas (in addition to the public Riverfront heritage walkway zone). The following policies apply:

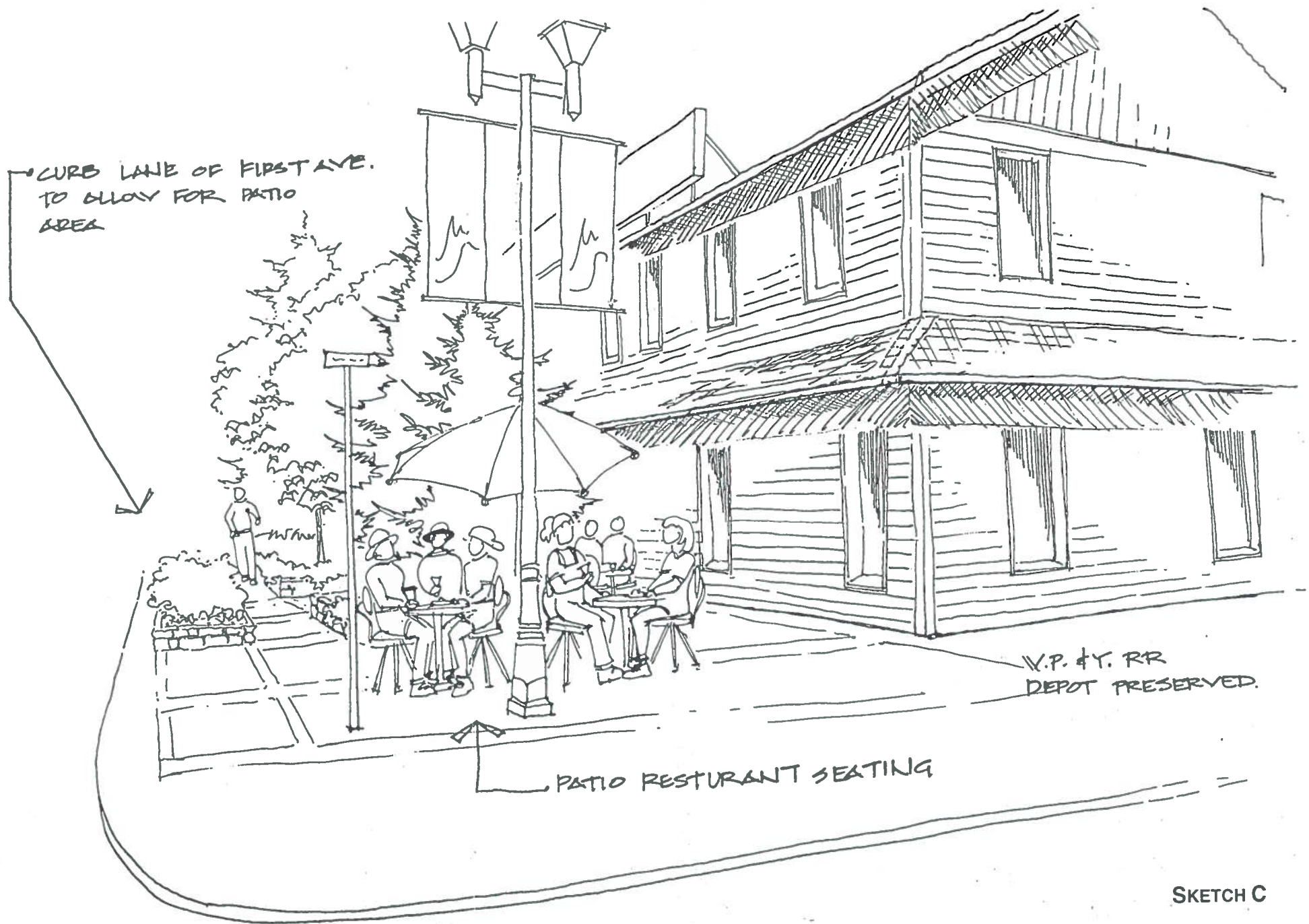
1. The principal area of public recreation space is to be maintained north of Ogilvie Street between 2nd Avenue and the Yukon River. Retention of this area as park space provides an attractive entrance to the riverfront area from Second Avenue, and blocks extension of the commercial strip east of Second Avenue.
2. The recreation area shall incorporate opportunities for both passive recreation, and active recreation. It is proposed that opportunities be included for:

active recreation

- sports field, including soccer and baseball fields
- tennis courts
- fitness circuit
- parking and marshalling area for boaters, and for riverfront walkway

passive recreation

- nature trails
- picnic areas
- lookout over Kishwoot Islands
- interpretative signage and kiosks



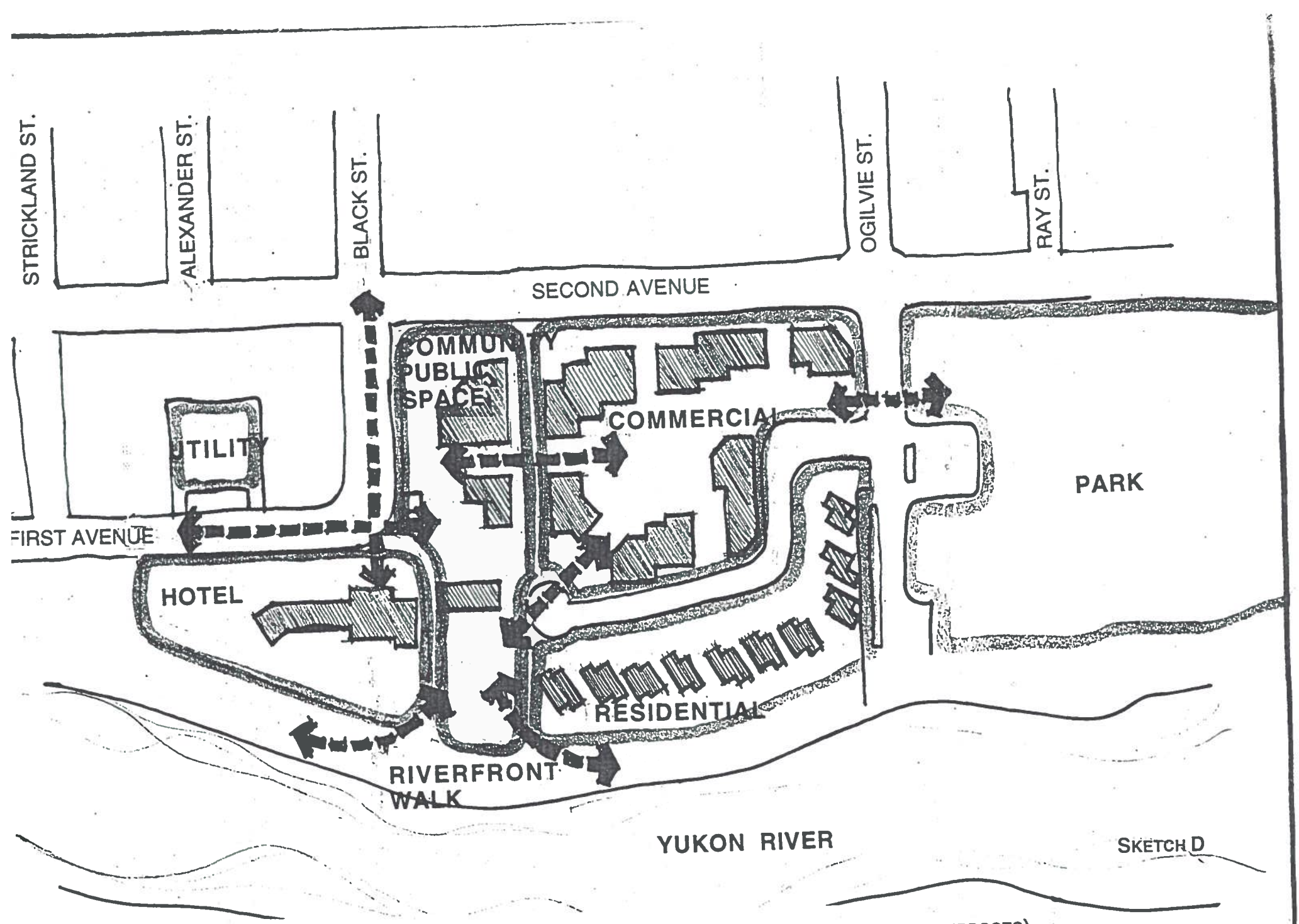
WHITE PASS DEPOT (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)

3. An area shown on Map 6 as Institutional is to be reserved for public meeting, convention, arts, culture and administrative facilities. Buildings in this area may be situated along the riverfront, provided public areas along the river remain unimpeded. Where public buildings extend to the riverfront walkway designation, every effort is to be made to incorporate as part of the building design, public viewing space over the waterfront. Construction in this area is preferably limited to several smaller buildings, rather than one large building.
4. Public and institutional buildings may have one access point to Second Avenue, but are proposed to have their primary access to the suggested extension of Black Street.
5. The area designated as Institutional includes provision for retention of the train shed building. This building may either be restored to its original purpose as a heritage interpretative building associated with the White Pass and Yukon Route, or may be adapted to another public or institutional use.

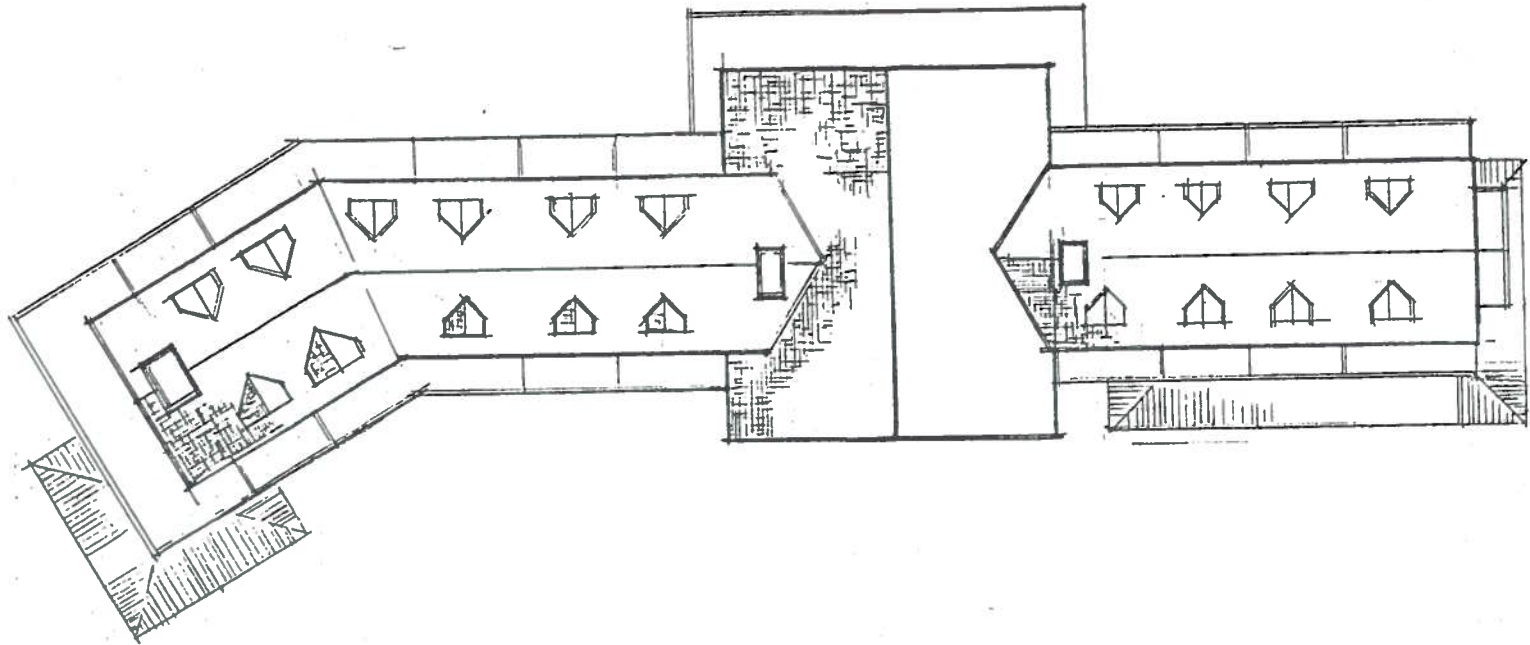
C. COMMERCIAL

In order to facilitate year round activity, and bearing in mind climatic conditions, the Plan provides for additional retail and tourist accommodation uses near the Riverfront. These commercial opportunities are designed to also take advantage of both riverfront views and of the proximity of the area to established retail facilities in the downtown core of Whitehorse as well as the Qwanlin Mall. Commercial activities are designed to also take advantage of ready access and exposure to Second Avenue, a major arterial in the city.

1. The current commercial land use pattern along the west side of First Avenue is to be largely retained, with favourable consideration to be given to either total commercial use or mixed commercial use, allowing residential activity above a main floor retail area.
2. Commercial use of the White Pass depot building is encouraged, but is to be devoted primarily to activities which provide maximum opportunities for public access, such as food and beverage service rather than office use.
3. A general retail area is proposed west of Second Avenue between Ogilvie Street and the Wheeler Street alignment. While some auto oriented retailing along Second Avenue is acceptable, strong encouragement is to be given to development of several building clusters with retail access primarily from an extended Ogilvie Street and a new road to approximately parallel the river, serving both residential and commercial land uses (see the Map 6 land use designations). Smaller building clusters with pedestrian links, plazas and landscape features are preferred over traditional strip commercial development and shopping centres (see Sketch D).
4. Provision is to be made for a hotel site along First Avenue (between Strickland and Black Street) and the riverfront area. This site is to be approximately 8000m² with a suggested building height limit of four storeys (see Sketch E). Public access must be retained along the Yukon River. River facing public spaces such as outdoor food service patios for guests are strongly supported.



BUILDING CLUSTERS AND PEDESTRIAN LINKS (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)



CONCEPTUAL PLAN VIEW



CONCEPTUAL RIVERSIDE ELEVATION

TOP FLOOR
ROOMS IN ROOF SPACE

ROOMS

ROOMS

RESTAURANT/LOUNGE

2ND & 3RD FLOORS
SET BACK

SKETCH E

HOTEL CONCEPT (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)



D. RESIDENTIAL

Proposed residential uses along the downtown riverfront are very limited. However, there is an advantage in re-establishing at least part of the traditional residential focus in the area, in the location illustrated on Map 6. This residential area has the advantage of providing for riverfront views for most potential housing units, permits year round use of the riverfront area, and offers access to adjacent park and recreation space as well as commercial and public use buildings. The following policies apply:

1. The proposed Residential area is designed to allow for lower profile residential units suggested to comprise primarily semi detached units.
2. The height limitation for housing in this area shall be 2 storeys.
3. A building setback from the river shall be maintained that retains full use of the riverfront walkway while accommodating river views from home sites.
4. No parking or storage areas shall face the riverfront area, with the area between residential buildings and the riverfront walkway to be landscaped.
5. Care shall be taken to ensure adequate screening and an attractive appearance of residential buildings facing the street.

E. ROADS AND UTILITIES

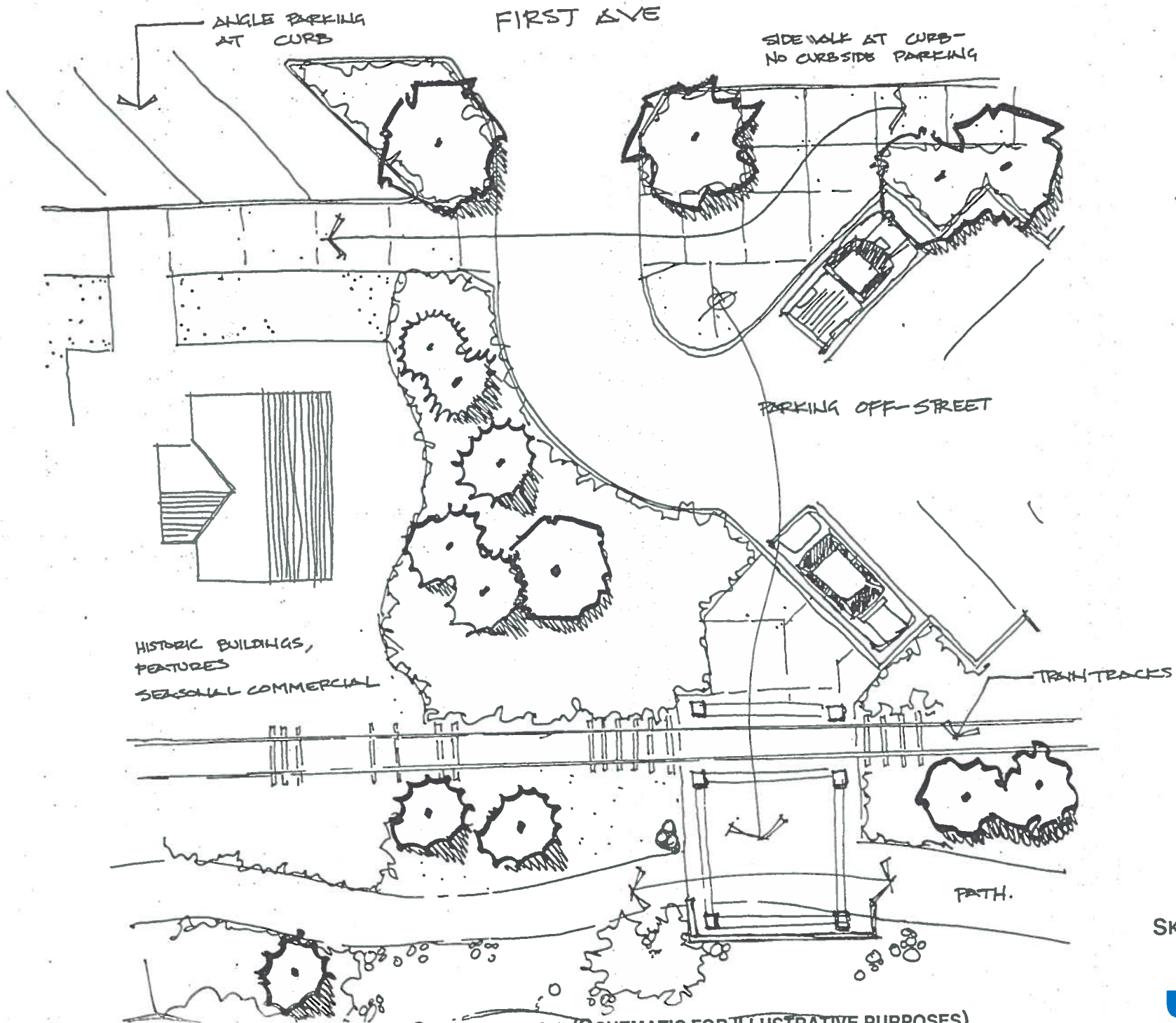
In order to achieve the land use proposals of the Plan several changes will be required to road patterns and utilities. Key aspects are noted in the policies below.

1. It is proposed that First Avenue be designed to encourage a more pedestrian friendly environment. It is critical to enhance the pedestrian quality of the riverfront area, and to allow for the extension of several public buildings/uses along the riverfront. The following is recommended:
 - closure of First Avenue between Hanson Street and Lambert Street to permit expansion of the Visitor Reception building/space at the south end of First Avenue, primarily to provide easy access to the riverfront heritage walkway for tourists utilizing the Reception Centre
 - implementation of traffic calming between Steele Street and Wood Street, through reducing the paved road width to allow for expansion of the MacBride Museum, including enhanced museum display opportunities (see also Sketch B)
2. The current electric utility substation situated at the riverfront near Alexander Street is proposed to be relocated to the vicinity of First Avenue and Alexander to permit unimpeded public walkway access along the riverfront. It will likely be feasible to relocate powerlines to traverse the proposed hotel parking lot.

3. Provision is required to relocate several utilities currently located within the First Avenue right of way.
4. It is recommended that First Avenue be connected north to Black Street. This also facilitates access for the suggested downtown hotel, and the community and public assembly area. Sidewalk improvements are required to Black Street to provide better connections to Second and Fourth Avenues.
5. There is an expectation that the White Pass and Yukon Route railway from Skagway to Whitehorse will be re-established in future. To allow possible reactivation of the depot building, consideration should be given to maintaining space for two tracks north of the depot building to approximately the proposed hotel site, and subject to detailed design, perhaps as far as the existing train shed building.
6. Parking areas along First Avenue may be retained but are to be redeveloped in strict accord with design guidelines which reinforce earlier city efforts to provide for more attractive landscaped parking along this road (see Sketch F). In more detailed programming and design, special consideration is also to be given to both temporary RV/Camper parking and to short term parking for tour buses.
7. As part of more detailed analysis consideration will have to be given to potential soil remediation since some soil contamination and underground storage tanks may be present.

5.3 REVENUE POTENTIAL

Using similar financial criteria as examined in Section 4.4 of this document, an estimate has been prepared of potential revenues. Revenues to the city will depend on applicable market conditions as well as on whether lands are leased or sold. Based on possible revenue generating land uses as illustrated on the Land Use Map, it is estimated that potential land sale revenues will be in the order of \$4 million.



PARKING CONFIGURATION (SCHEMATIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES)

SKETCH F

6 IMPLEMENTATION

Many of the land use and infrastructure policies incorporated in this document depend on more detailed design to confirm the final land use and servicing configurations. For this reason this Plan functions as a policy guide with specific uses and land use boundaries to be confirmed in pre-design and design phases. Further design analysis, from an architectural perspective, and in relation to engineering ramifications (with regard to road alignments, utility services, and river geotechnical and hydraulic issues) is required to confirm the ultimate “boundaries.”

In order to provide firm direction, both from an administrative and community perspective, it is recommended that this Plan be adopted as a bylaw of Council.

Further review of policies and land use designations may be desirable when the City embarks on a comprehensive review of its Official Community Plan (OCP). At that time any results from programming and pre-design studies can also be incorporated.

In proceeding with this document as a formal bylaw, several amendments are desirable to the current Downtown Plan. In addition, some further implementation measures related to design activities are recommended.

Downtown Plan (Bylaw 94-05)

Many of the goals and policies incorporated in the Downtown Plan remain valid and are echoed in the Downtown Riverfront Plan. A few minor changes are recommended and are noted below.

1. It is recommended that the map associated with the Downtown Plan be amended to have the land use designations be compatible for the area encompassed by this Plan document. However, to facilitate the amendment process it is preferred to include a global statement in the Downtown Plan that for areas covered by the Downtown Riverfront Plan, this Downtown Riverfront Plan map and policies will take precedence.
2. The text policy to extend First Avenue to Ray Street should be amended to read First Avenue to Black Street.

Official Community Plan (Bylaw 94-30)

The current Official Community Plan contains an entire section, Part Four, on the Downtown, including a small section on Waterfront Policies. The basic policies in the Official Community Plan are reflected in this Riverfront Plan and are in full compliance. However, as noted, the City intends to complete a comprehensive review of the Official Community Plan in the near future. It is suggested that at this time, consideration be given to adopting this Plan as a supplement to the Official Community Plan, with maps and policies included in this Downtown Riverfront plan to be applicable to all of the study area as defined by Map 6.

No other amendments to the City's OCP are recommended at this time.

Other

There are several additional implementation actions that should be considered by the City and other government authorities. These include:

1. It is important that more detailed programming be carried out for the riverfront area. It should lead to the definition of the specific type and location of proposed uses, including preparation of schematic concepts to be followed in actual development, (e.g. surface treatment of the riverfront walkway, parking layout, type of lighting fixtures, specific building nodes).
2. It is imperative that some design standards be established for proposed buildings and structures in the riverfront area. It is suggested that these design standards emphasize a visual attractive building quality, including associated landscape features, rather than placing undue emphasis on theme related design.
3. The City has the ability to derive revenue from City owned lands that are designated for commercial and residential type uses. The option exists to both sell and lease lands. Long term leases have the advantage of retaining ultimate control over the lands with the City, at the expense perhaps of lower revenues. Potential lease holders benefit from requiring a lower capital investment. It is suggested that both sale and lease options be considered in relation to implementing this Plan.
4. In examining leases for current buildings and structures in the riverfront area, it is proposed that, pending more detailed design, that leases be kept short term, and furthermore that the use of buildings be compatible with the land use policies included in this document.
5. In considering the lease of seasonal buildings in the riverfront area, the City should establish a policy that allows local merchants and business people the opportunity to submit a first 'bid' for buildings and operations in the area. Where bids are deemed unsatisfactory, then a broader range of entrepreneurs could be considered.
6. In reviewing the upgrade of services and utilities, including road and parking improvements within the area governed by this Plan, care must be taken that expansion or upgrading of services be compatible with proposals in this Plan. Consultation with affected property owners and businesses should be carried out as part of any detailed design process. Based on this consultation, it may be necessary to consider some modification to the land use patterns proposed in this Plan.

APPENDIX A

Tabulation Results

Questionnaire - June 18, 1998

Tabulation Results

Questionnaire - June 18, 1998

Questionnaire - Section 1

Q1A Concept A proposes significant public open space and park (sports fields, etc.) at the north end of the riverfront (the Taga Ku/Motorways area)

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion, or Neutral

53 45 18 19 14

Q1B Concept B proposes a major community recreation facility (Multi-plex) for the north end of the riverfront (the Taga Ku site)

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion, or Neutral

16 28 35 56 14

Q1C Concept C proposes a mix of commercial, park, and riverfront residential for the north end of the riverfront (the Taga Ku site)

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion, or Neutral

18 29 23 62 17

Q1D Concept A proposes a community cultural facility at the 20/20 site, at the end of 1st near Alexander

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion, or Neutral

28 48 19 22 32

Q1E A residential node centered around a lagoon (skating area in the winter) is proposed in Concept B

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion, or Neutral

19 41 26 52 11

Q1F Concept C proposes a waterfront hotel at First Avenue near Alexander Street (relocating the substation)

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>No Opinion, or Neutral</i>
11	24	27	68	19

Q1G All concepts propose closure of 1st Avenue immediately adjacent to the MacBride Museum, to allow museum expansion

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>No Opinion, or Neutral</i>
52	48	10	22	17

Questionnaire- Section 2

Q2A A public wharf should be built along the Yukon River.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
120	20	9

Q2B A pedestrian crossing should be provided to the east side of the Yukon River.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
64	83	2

Q2C The old fire hall south of the White Pass depot should remain in its current location.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
54	86	9

Q2D Residential use should be provided for along part of the riverfront.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
46	98	5

Q2E A cultural center is proposed near the riverfront.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
84	63	2

Q2F A recreation/arena complex is proposed near the riverfront (Tagu Ku area).

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
45	100	4

Q2G Seasonal commercial uses should be promoted near the riverfront walkway area.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
112	34	3

Q2H Some parking areas should be retained along the riverside of First Avenue.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
73	71	5

Q2I The railway round house should be retained.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
84	45	20

Q2J The City needs to consider potential revenues that may be realized from lands it owns at the riverfront.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
84	57	8

Q2K Consideration should be given to potential relocation of additional heritage structures to the riverfront area.

<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
77	63	9

Questionnaire - Section 3

Q3 Of the concepts displayed, my overall preference is for Option ____.

<i>A</i>	<i>A or B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B or C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
51	2	15	3	18	60