WHITEHORSE
RIVERFRONT
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Riverfront Design Guidelines

Prepared by:

Charles A. McLaren
ARCHITECT LTD.

February 2000

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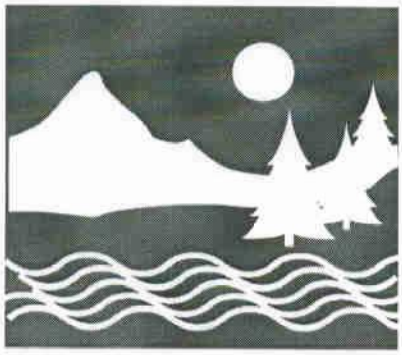

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City of Whitehorse

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Prepared by:

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1.0 INTENT

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide direction over the physical features that may be developed in the downtown riverfront area. This area encompasses lands between First Avenue and the Yukon River and extends to include the 'Motorways' site to Second Avenue. The guidelines shall apply also to the east façade of buildings located on the west side of First Avenue from Rotary Park to Black Street. The guidelines are designed to aid in the implementation of the overall Riverfront Design Concept, prepared separately. The Design Concept relates to land use and landscape details which are intended to be complemented by these Design Guidelines.

These guidelines are intended to provide some coherency and consistency to the style of public and private developments on the Whitehorse riverfront. By doing so, a sense of place reminiscent of the riverfront's historic past will be created, resulting in positive benefits for public and commercial uses through the creation of an identity, a destination and a sense of uniqueness that will attract people to use and enjoy the riverfront.

The environment resulting from the thoughtful application of these guidelines should be pedestrian-friendly; extend the seasonal usage; suit the general character of Whitehorse; recall and enhance a sense of the riverfront's historic use; and bring a sense of connection or continuity to the narrow, linear strip that comprises the riverfront development.

Guidelines are intended as a model, not as a rigid style book. The innovation and diversity that has characterized the growth of Whitehorse is valued, although development should respect the intent and general character that these guidelines are trying to create, and maintain a high standard of quality in design and construction. Guidelines are presented as a range of acceptable recommendations in order to allow intelligent adaptation and flexibility in design. A few specific prohibitions are noted for elements or materials that would contradict the intended character of the riverfront.

2.0 APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to public and private development on the riverfront and are to be considered and incorporated in the design of infrastructure, structures, and buildings. Their use should be consistent throughout the riverfront, without spot exemptions.

The inclusion of guideline elements on adjacent sites is encouraged, in order to visually tie the riverfront to downtown.

Given the range of possible development, it is anticipated that small scale development will include only those guidelines pertaining to character, while larger projects will be responsible for a greater number of infrastructure and general guidelines.

3.0 ASSUMPTIONS

These guidelines are based on the following assumptions.

- The level of maintenance for public properties will be low.
- The inclusion of guideline elements and appropriate character will be confirmed during Development Review for permits.
- Guidelines are to act in concert with zoning regulations, and both documents are to be considered in design.
- In some cases, a "hard" edge to development may be desirable; in others, a "soft" edge between public and private property may be desirable such as for sidewalk cafés or vending stalls. Use of the public domain for private or commercial purposes will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In either case, design guidelines should be observed.

4.0 FORMAT

Design guidelines are presented in four subsequent sections.

- ***General*** guidelines cover large scale issues or elements that are common and to be included in all development.
- ***Site Features and Infrastructure*** guidelines cover site development on both public and private property, and include small shelters and structures, but not buildings.
- ***Building*** guidelines deal with buildings or structures intended for use or occupancy on public or private property.
- ***Hotel/Community Precinct*** guidelines note provisions for the more intensely developed area between the Black Street to First Avenue extension and Ogilvie Street.

Individual guidelines have been developed using a standard format, although self-evident elements have not been explicitly stated.

For each guideline, consideration has been given to:

- Purpose of the element (often self-evident)
- Character of the element, and whether attributes are recommended, discouraged or prohibited.
- Material/construction of the element, and recommendations, discouragement or prohibition noted.

5.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

General guidelines are to be used in conjunction with specific guidelines, and deal with larger scale or universal conditions and recommendations that should be kept in mind as guiding principles.

5.1 Sun Access

Sun access is important in the North, both for site uses and buildings, and is a treasure that Yukoners value.

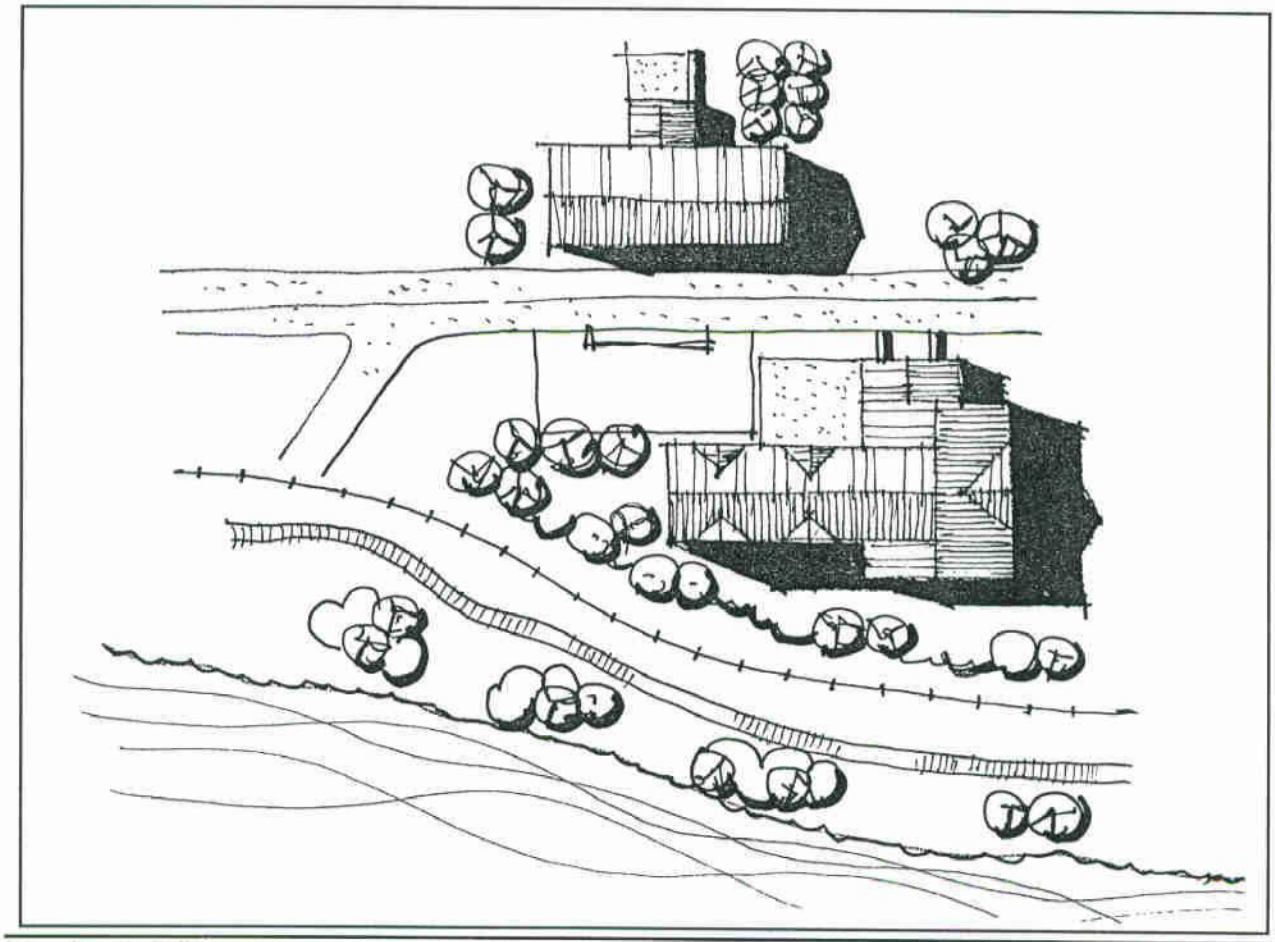
.1 The massing and location of developments should maximize direct sun penetrations to the site.

.2 Winter sun angles are very low, implying that major building masses should be aligned on a north/south axis.

.3 The creation of microclimates to extend outdoor spring and fall use should be considered. These sheltered pockets should face south through west.

.4 At high summer sun angles, some shading may be advisable for outdoor areas.

.5 With the range of sun angles encountered throughout the year, the necessity or effectiveness of conventional shading techniques for buildings is dubious, and designers should carefully consider what measures they wish to incorporate.



.6 Daylighting for buildings should be included, using measures in keeping with the riverfront's character. This implies careful window sizing and placement, rather than reflective devices.

5.2 Wind

Wind is a constant element on the riverfront and a cold north wind is a predominant winter feature that limits outdoor activity.

.1 Wind breaks aligned on an east/west axis should be included at any outdoor activity area.

.2 The placement of site features and structures should consider snow drifting.

.3 Building entries should be out of the prevailing winter wind, or well sheltered.

5.3 Temperature

Whitehorse has cold winters and mild summers. In order to extend seasonal use and attract people to the riverfront, measures should be considered to mitigate fall, winter and spring temperatures.

.1 Providing microclimates as noted in 5.1 and 5.2 would alleviate temperatures and should be considered for site uses and buildings.

.2 Provision for outdoor "barrel" stoves at specific controlled, special event, and seasonal activity areas should be considered, perhaps on a "bring your own wood" basis for private usage of public facilities.

5.4 Views

Views should be used to provide focal points, and connect the site.

.1 View corridors should be preserved from the downtown to the riverfront, and across to the clay cliffs on the east bank of the Yukon River. Enough infringement should be permitted on street end views to entice people to riverfront activities, but views should not be completely blocked.

.2 Riverfront development should allow visual connections along the north/south extent of the site. These glimpses or vistas of further riverfront activity will encourage exploration of the site. This implies that large, continuous, or repetitive building masses are undesirable.

.3 Viewing locations should be developed, perhaps in combination with other site features, as part of a pedestrian-friendly series of events or activity centres.

5.5 Character

The general character of the riverfront should remain in keeping with its historic roots.

.1 Developments should be, or appear to be, small scale and relate to a pedestrian level.

.2 Forms should be reasonably simple for small buildings, with articulation of the building mass increasing with size.

.3 Materials should be natural and somewhat rustic.

.4 Detailing should not be too "precious" or extravagant, especially on smaller buildings.

.5 For any one development, the character should remain consistent, and be equally detailed, on all sides of a building.

.6 For any one development, sitework should remain consistent and in keeping with the building.

.7 The character of site development should have some consistency throughout the riverfront area, including developments on private property.

.8 It should be kept in mind that the riverfront has had a wide variety of uses including: residential; rail, water and air transport; industrial; shipyards; and others. As such, a great diversity of historical referents may be appropriate, and be used according to the suitability of application to a new use.

5.6 Public Safety and Access

The riverfront should be a "safe and secure feeling" area, and be accessible to all.

.1 All areas should be reasonably observable with a minimum number of dark, hidden or dead-end locations.

.2 Wind breaks, landscape or other features do not have to be solid barriers to be effective for their purpose. Enough visual openness should be maintained so people can see and be seen.

.3 Building entries, lighting of parking areas and entry locations, and overlooking windows should relate to site features such as parking to provide a sense of observability and stewardship for the surroundings.

.4 Ambient lighting for winter use should be located at all points people will congregate, and along pathways.

.5 Lighting from buildings should cover loading, refuse, or other screened areas adjacent to a structure.

.6 Guards, rails or other protection should be used at drops, and should be designed to discourage climbing in locations where a fall might cause injury.

.7 Barrier-free access should be provided to most locations. Where it is impractical to provide barrier-free access, an alternate experience should be allowed for nearby.

5.7 Servicing

.1 All servicing should be underground.

.2 An allowance should be made for services at public focus points, which may be used by temporary events, displays, or commercial activities.

5.8 Parking

Whitehorse is, and will continue to be, a vehicular city. If the riverfront is to be enjoyed by all, parking must be provided.

.1 Parking lots should be in reasonably small pockets that relate to specific uses or activity points. Large "wasteland" parking lots should be avoided.

.2 If large parking lots are required for major buildings, the parking should be distributed about the building rather than grouped all on one side.

.3 Parking lots should have readily accessible entries and simple circulation routes to facilitate use and snow removal.

.4 Parking lots are to be landscaped, but extensive screening from the surrounding area is not required.

.5 Signage for parking lots should conform to site graphic standards.

.6 Bus and RV parking should be separated from normal passenger vehicles.

.7 Parking lot lighting should conform to site standards for height, size and colour rendition of fixtures. This implies that a greater number of lower, more costly fixtures will be required.

6.0 SITE FEATURES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Guidelines for site features and infrastructure provide a model for recommended site development on both public and private property throughout the riverfront.

6.1 Gateways

Gateways should be located at a few prominent places where people are most likely to cross to the riverfront lands, perhaps at street ends. In this context, a gateway means a site feature that is an obvious invitation to come to the river.

.1 Gateways should be visually prominent so that they serve as an attraction, aid in route finding, and the like. Banner poles or other means to add colour, movement and appeal could be used.

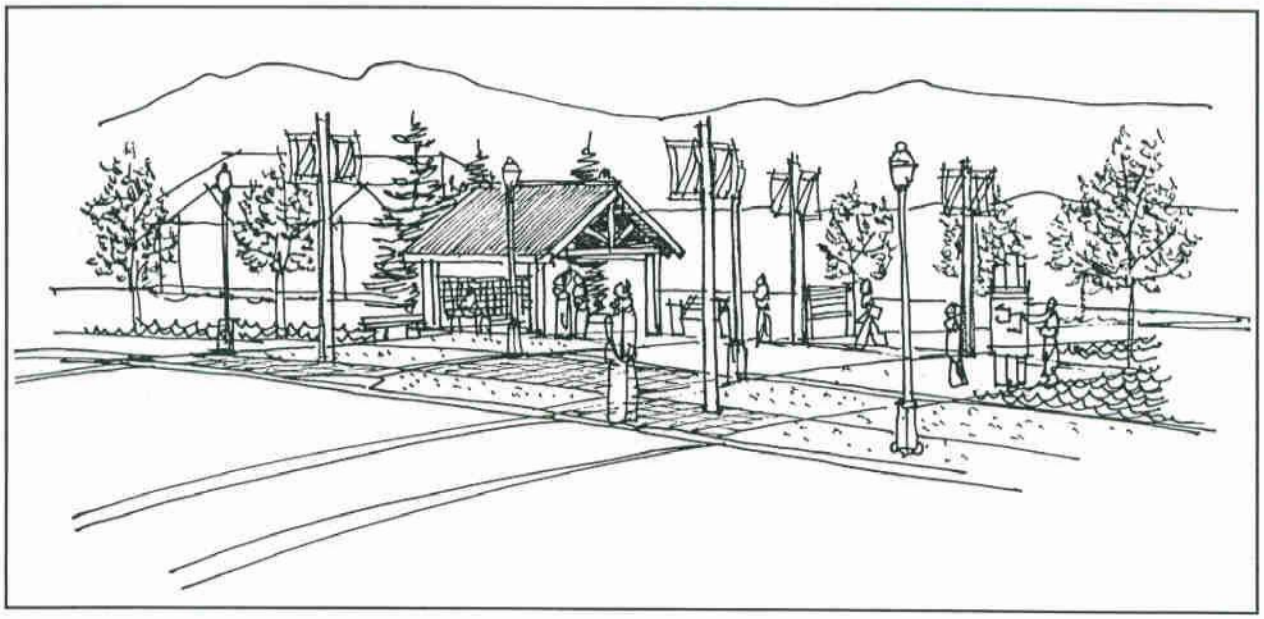
.2 Gateways should be useful, so that people will value them. This might include information signage on site orientation, attractions, or current events; seating arranged as meeting areas; information on the history of the immediate locale, with photos; artwork display; or other possibilities that inform, entertain or are useful.

.3 Gateways should be placed at logical site entries such as the north and south ends of the site, near the foot of Main Street, and other likely locations.

.4 Relating gateways to transit stops for bus and potential rail service would enhance their use.

.5 A hierarchy of major and minor gateways should be established with the number of uses and features dependent on the prominence and location of the gate.

.6 Other site focal nodes should relate to the gateways.



6.2 Roads

Roadworks would include paving, curbs, inserts and other features.

.1 The standard of design and detail set by Main Street and Third Avenue should be emulated on the riverfront. The work is of good quality, and visual consistency should be maintained with the downtown. Walkways should be of ample width to accommodate several activities.

6.3 Focal Nodes

Focal nodes would be any use or feature such as information/art kiosks, shelters, seating, windbreaks, heaters, view platforms, play areas or other use or form that encourages or facilitates people congregating. This section gives general recommendations for nodes, while the attributes of individual elements are in subsequent sections.

.1 Nodes should be part of an overall plan to encourage pedestrian exploration and use of the site, and, as such, should relate to the gateways and other events on site.

.2 If nodes are to promote interaction and use, they should have a reason to exist at a particular location, and not be artificially created. Uses might include a view; a skating rink; a trolley car stop; or other.

.3 Once a node is located to serve a use, it should be reinforced with other features. As an example, a skating rink might have a windbreak, roof, seating, a stove, information or art displays, and other features. The intent is to have a few strong, concentrated focal points rather than a multitude of weak ones. This does not imply a reduction in the provision of single elements, such as seating, in convenient spots.

6.4 Information / Art / Historic Kiosks

Construction for these uses would be similar.

.1 Information kiosks would feature permanent site orientation data and temporary event posters.

.2 Permanent information, such as a site map, should be on a photo-engraved metal sign, protected by a stand-off lexan cover. Temporary information could be stapled to poles or bulletin boards as done on Main Street.

.3 Art installations should be in well secured or protected cases, using lexan, steel screens or other measures.

.4 Historic information should be on protected metal signage as noted in 6.4.2.

.5 This use should be combined with at least a roof and seating.

.6 Construction should be of rough-sawn square or rectangular heavy timber with galvanized connections.

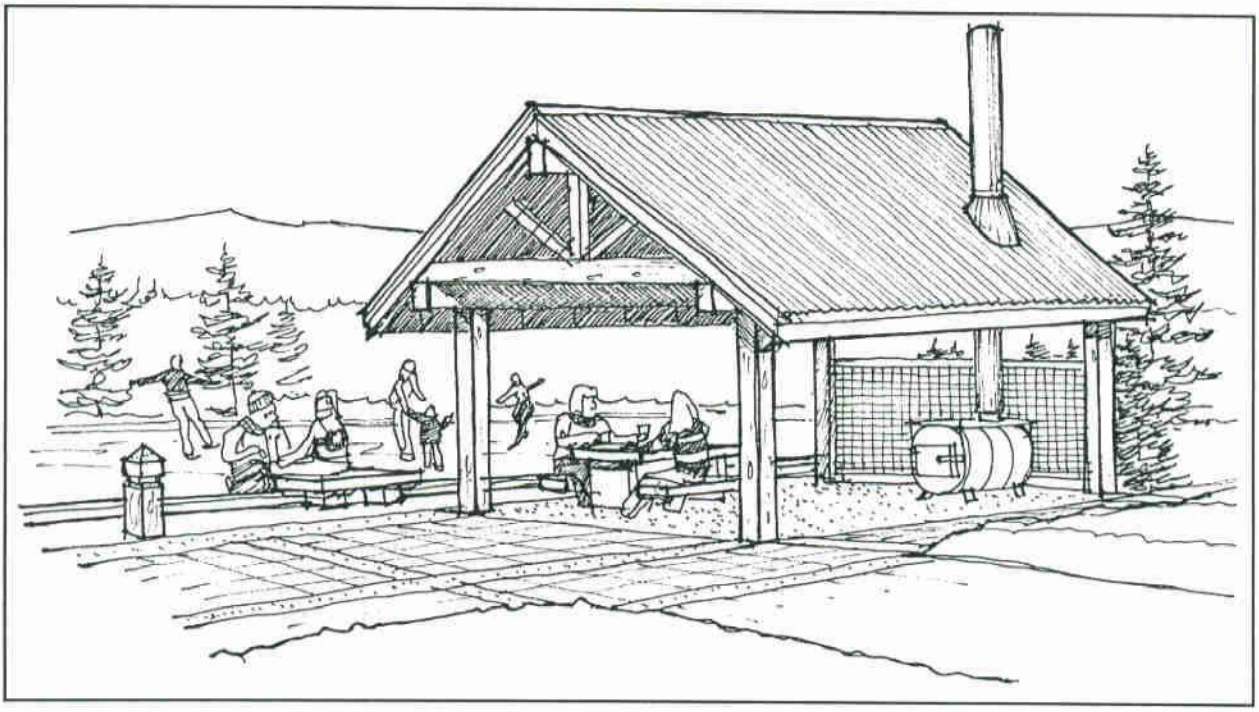
6.5 Shelters and Windbreaks

.1 These elements should be small scale, simple forms with gable or hipped roofs.

.2 Windbreaks do not have to be solid walls to be effective. A 50% open lattice with some landscaping serves well. Windbreaks might be more open with increasing height, and should not exceed 2.0 m high.

.3 It is recommended that roofs be galvanized, corrugated sheet metal over solid 19 mm decking on open rafters. Alternately, for seasonal, temporary and special uses, a heavy canvas "tent" roof tied to an open timber frame may be considered.

.4 Framing should be rough sawn square or rectangular heavy timber post and beam frames with galvanized connections.



6.6 Platforms

Elevated platforms, whether over the river or land, entice people and make good viewing locations.

.1 Essential platform construction should be heavy timber as 6.5, with or without a roof.

.2 Decking should be PWF planking with grade stamps removed.

.3 Rails or guards should be as noted below.

.4 Steps may be heavy timbers with gravel fill if at grade, and PWF plank treads and visually open risers, if elevated.

.5 For low platforms, accessible ramps should be provided.

6.7 Heaters

Heaters should be provided to extend seasonal usage as noted in 5.3.2. Several Nordic countries provide public heaters to good effect.

.1 Wood heaters will be infrequently used, and could be to the standard found in territorial campground shelters.

.2 Flat tops are recommended for warming comestibles.

.3 Heavy timber wood bins should be located nearby.

6.8 Seating

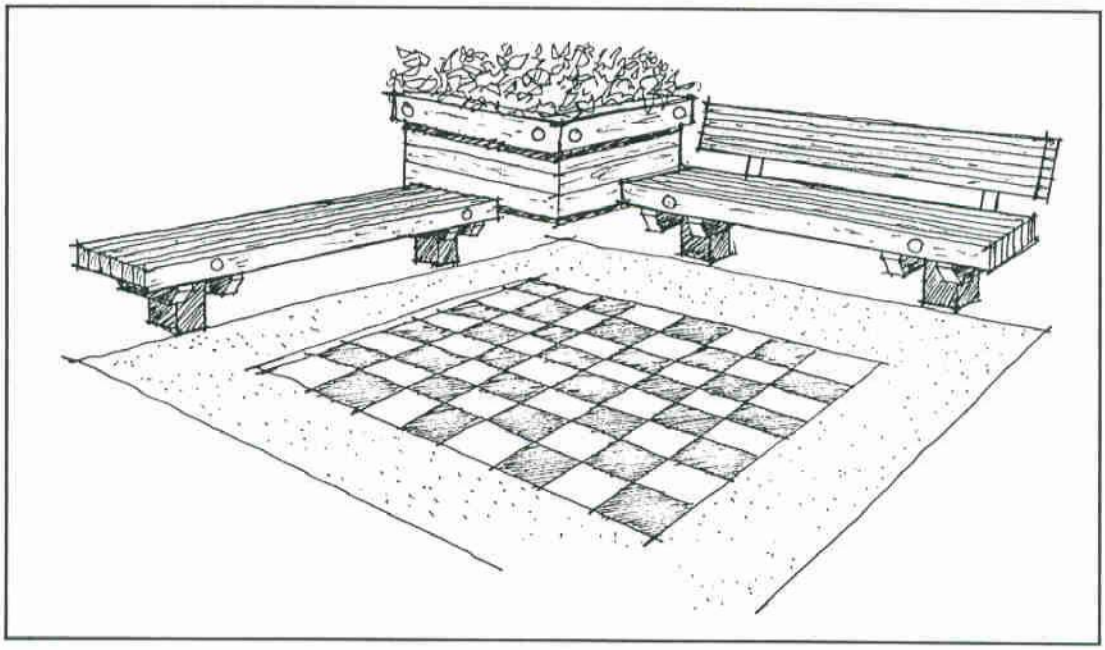
Seating may be distributed throughout the site and should be reasonably impervious to weather and vandalism. The ability to source and construct with local materials and labour is to be given priority.

.1 Heavy timber benches and bases with galvanized connections as located on the Riverfront walkway and the walkway to Robert Service Park are recommended. Backs may be added in some locations.

.2 An alternate of related character would be a galvanized, perforated metal bench seat and/or back on a galvanized metal frame.

.3 Dimension lumber benches are discouraged, and plastic benches are prohibited.

.4 Seating should be placed so that both solitary and group experiences can be enjoyed.



6.9 Landscape

This section deals only with landscape, with built elements being outlined or inferred from other site features.

.1 Plant material should be local, or hardy in the Whitehorse climatic zone.

.2 Colour should be used to reinforce other site features. This might imply heavy timber planters or grade level flower beds at nodes.

.3 Planting should be used to softly demarcate boundaries without obstructing natural paths.

.4 Planting should be well distributed throughout the riverfront to give the overall impression of a "green" space, with concentrations to reinforce other features.

.5 Planting should be the feature in one or two locations, with demonstration gardens of local foliage and traditional medicinal plants. These gardens should relate to sheltered seating areas to facilitate demonstrations and interpretation. Raised beds might be used for traditional smaller plants to facilitate viewing by the elderly.

.6 Planting should not obstruct reasonable visual observability around the site.

.7 Planting should take place on a variety of land forms such as slopes and terraces in addition to flat ground.

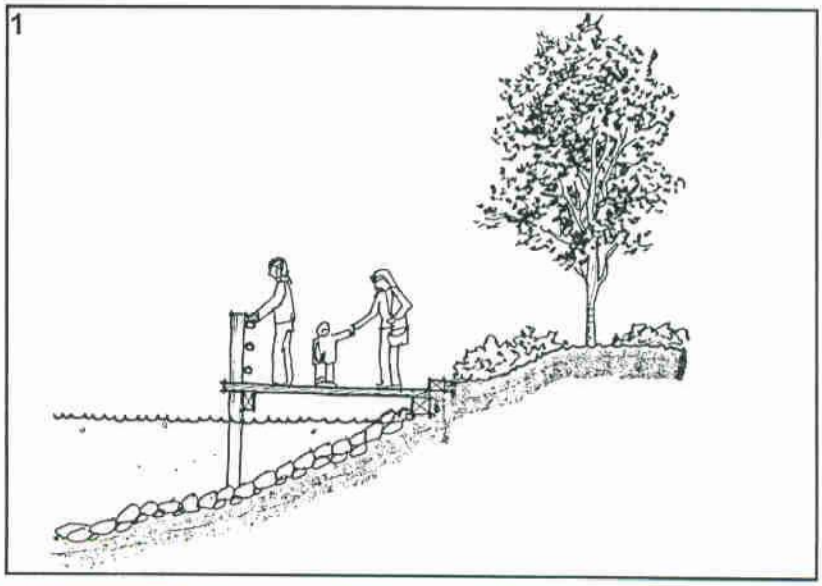
.8 In addition to planting, other landscape material should be incorporated in design. As an example, a literal "rock garden" would highlight the diversity and importance of Yukon geology to the Territory and the historical development of the riverfront.

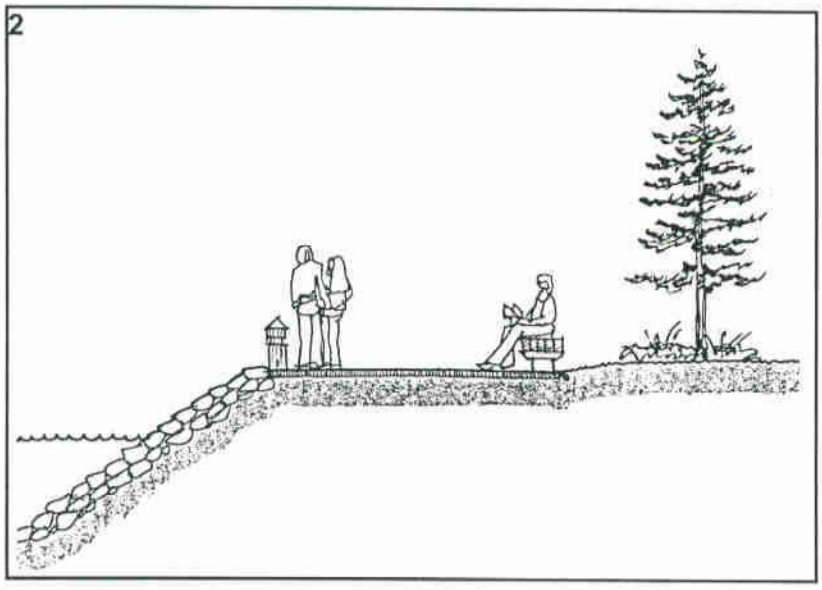
.9 Landscaping might also provide play opportunities. These might be formal, such as a giant checkers grid and pieces; or informal, such as stepping stones, posts, or walking a section of train rail. Play might include the provision of special equipment such as a giant wind harp people can play at tuning; or simply the provision of appropriate open spaces for ice carving, kite flying or other activities.

6.10 River Edge Conditions

A variety of ways to experience and approach the river should be provided.

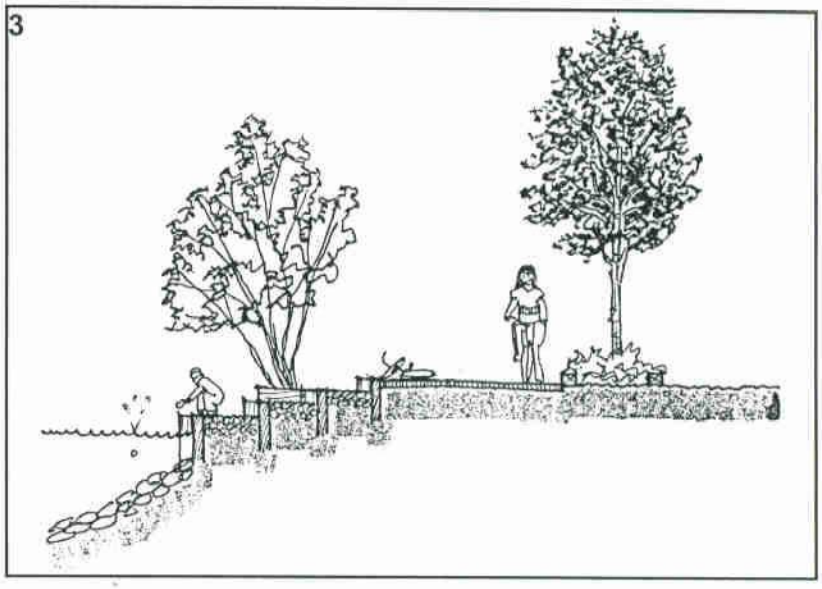
.1 Platforms on piling or cribbing should be built over the river edge, constructed of heavy timber and galvanized connections. Concealed areas below should be securely screened with galvanized metal mesh. (1)





.2 A rubble edge, such as the path to Robert Service Park, could be used in places. (2)

.3 Gently sloping banks should be left in places for people to approach and dabble in the water. Ideally, these should be located at eddies. (3)



6.11 Lighting

While lighting is irrelevant in the summer, it becomes vitally important in the winter.

.1 A good level of ambient light should be provided at pathways, parking and focal nodes.

.2 Light should be used as a feature to delineate and accent gateways, entrances and other important areas.

.3 Lighting should generally be at a pedestrian level, with a pole and fixture height between 2.7 and 4.2 m. This is high enough to deter casual vandalism and cast illumination over a reasonable area, and low enough to be at a pedestrian scale.

.4 Colour rendition should be as natural as possible. HPS industrial fixtures are discouraged.

.5 Special lighting for ice rinks or other particular uses should be allowed, but used only as necessary.

.6 Fixtures similar to those installed on the Riverfront walkway and Third Avenue are considered appropriate for free-standing general pole lighting.

.7 Building-mounted lights should be of a style to complement the rustic and historic character of the area. This might include goosenecks with hoods, glass "jars" in a wire cage, or the like.

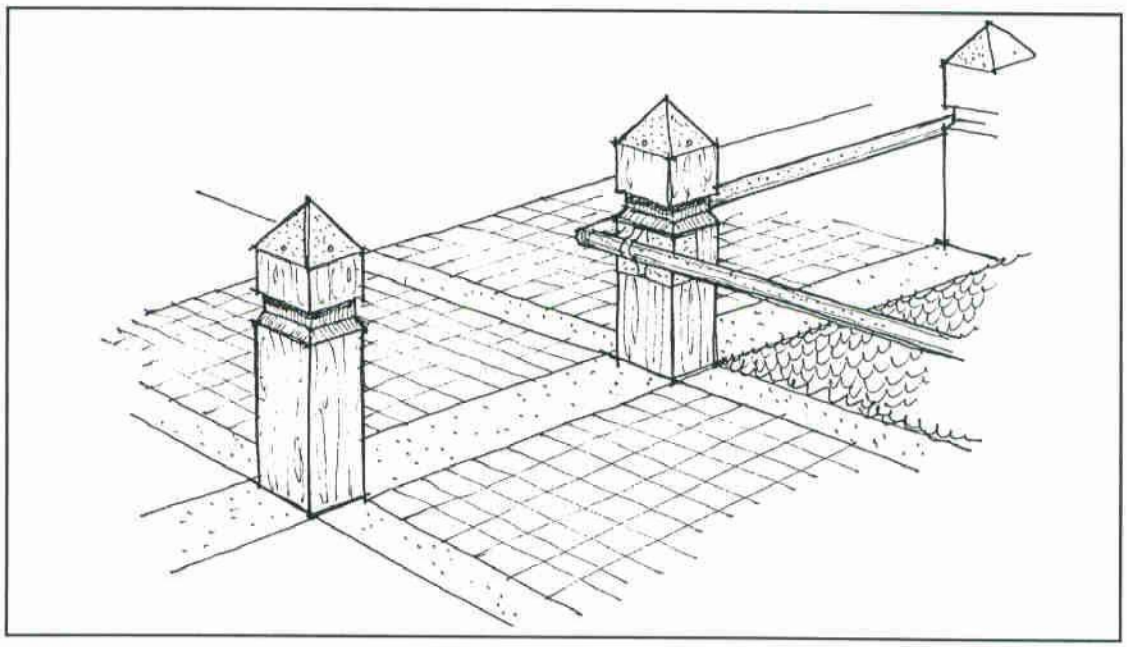
.8 Light bollards may be utilized to supply ground lighting.

6.12 Bollards and Bumpers

Bollards, bumper rails and other elements may be used to block vehicular traffic, define an edge condition or protect other elements.

.1 Bollards are recommended to be a minimum of 200 x 200 mm square heavy timber or 200 mm round posts with a height above grade of 812 to 914 mm. They may be capped or routed, and have galvanized metal attachments as desired. Bollard shapes should be uniform on public property.

.2 Bollards may be turned into protective rails with the addition of a 76 to 100 mm diameter galvanized pipe(s) connecting them.



6.13 Rails and Miscellaneous Site Furniture

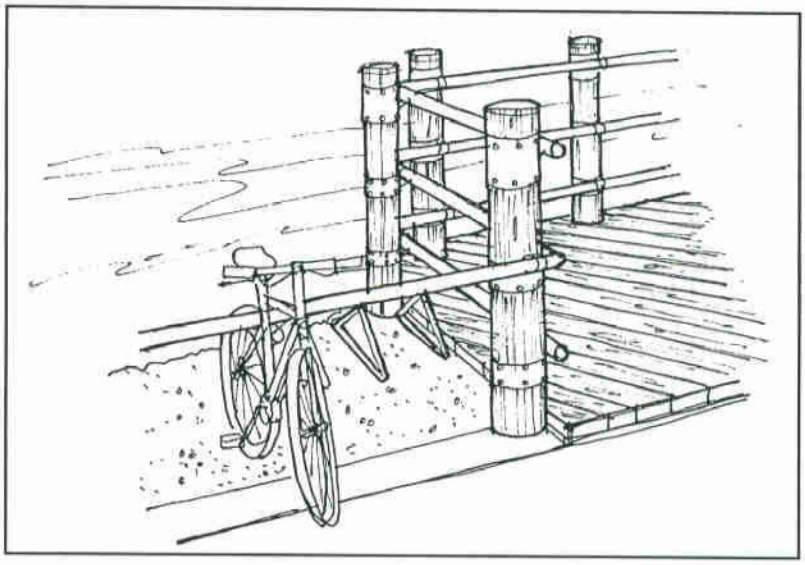
Works of this nature should carry on the theme initiated on the walkway to Robert Service Park, although they do not have to be identical.

.1 Posts for guards and rails should be 200 x 200 heavy timber with bolted-on galvanized rails and uprights. Square timbers are recommended over round due to the ease of fitting other pieces, but 200 diameter round posts are acceptable.

.2 Guards and rails should be to the heights recommended in the National Building Code of Canada.

.3 Miscellaneous site furniture such as bicycle racks should combine heavy timber and galvanized round tubing in construction.

.4 Connections should be bolted to ease maintenance and replacement of individual pieces. Design should allow for the removal of an intermediate piece without "unzipping" from one end.



6.14 Refuse Containers

.1 Standard refuse containers may be to the City standard with a paint colour in keeping with riverfront standards.

.2 Refuse areas for buildings should be screened from view using materials similar to those recommended in these guidelines.

6.15 Vending

Vending provides a public service, a commercial opportunity, and can enliven the site.

.1 Space should be allowed for vending at gateways, nodes or other special areas.

.2 Provisions should be made for vending that might include electrical power, potable water and an area drain.

.3 Allowed vending or sales uses should complement the riverfront activities and might include food and crafts, and will be subject to City vendor policies and bylaws.

6.16 Graphics

Site graphics would include permanent and temporary signage, banners and the like.

.1 Much directional information can be conveyed with visual or tactile cues that are as effective but more subtle and attractive than signs. An example is the tactile strip at the edge of Third Avenue curbs. A sign jungle is unnecessary and should be avoided.

.2 Permanent signage should be simple, subdued, and durable.

.3 Standard directional signage may be painted aluminum plates.

.4 Informational or historic signage would be as recommended in 6.4.

.5 Temporary signage or graphics should be colourful and high-impact. For elevated signage, poles such as on the Robert Service Park walk are recommended.

.6 Signage should be maintained so it offers current information. Bulletin boards should be cleaned off on a regular schedule.

.7 Signs should not be internally illuminated. Where ambient lighting is not sufficient, signs should be front-lit with an appropriate, or concealed, fixture.

.8 Signs should be mounted to walls, poles, vending carts, etc. Sandwich board types of signs are discouraged.

6.17 Arts and Crafts

The creation and display of public arts and crafts should be encouraged, and are fostered by the City's public arts policies.

.1 Opportunities should be provided for the creation of arts and crafts on site. Special facilities are probably not required, as shelters could be used, or open areas for large scale projects such as ice carving.

.2 Displays, which should be regularly rotated, might be exhibited as 6.4.

.3 Consideration might be given to renting display space to local artists as an advertising mechanism.

.4 Arts or crafts should be of a reasonable quality and, other than for rental space as .3 above, works should be reviewed by a jury prior to free display.

.5 Permanent artwork, such as large sculptural pieces, might be best commissioned through a formal competition process.

.6 Wall murals are not considered historically suitable for the riverfront and are strongly discouraged.

6.18 Materials and Finishes

This section gives general guidance for construction, in addition to specifics noted in preceding sections.

.1 Materials should be rustic in character and have some historic influence in form.

.2 Natural materials, or processed materials that strongly represent a natural finish or have historic validity, are preferred. This would include wood, concrete, pavers, gravel surfaces, steel, canvas or a suitable synthetic, and the like. Materials can be used singly or in combination.

.3 Materials should be large scale and massive in appearance. Vertical timbers should be a minimum of 200 mm square or round, with horizontal timbers a minimum of 150 mm. Steel pipe should be between 76 and 100 mm in diameter, and larger for special features.

.4 Shapes should be simple, with clean and elegant detailing. Historic siteworks were often cleanly functional and did not include "gingerbread".

.5 Textures should be rough, except where physical contact will occur such as handrails and benches. Rough textures are in keeping with the character, discourage graffiti, and are more readily maintained. Texture examples include rough-sawn timber, stone, and split-face concrete block.

.6 Attachments and connections should typically be by exposed, bolted connections and plates. This gives a historic appearance and facilitates maintenance.

.7 Design should tend towards clean and uniform surfaces. As an example, roof decking on open rafters should be 19 mm or 38 mm tongue-and-groove solid wood, as: it provides a cleaner appearance than strapping and a better finish than sheet material; it provides a better backing for roofing than strapping, reducing denting and maintenance; it is more readily refinished than other materials; and the uniform plain provides fewer nesting opportunities.

.8 Small siteworks such as rails and bollards should be assembled from individual pieces that can be readily replaced without disturbing the whole. This works in conjunction with .6 above, bolted connections.

.9 Wood finishes should be preservative-treated material where in contact with or near the ground. Other wood should be a natural oiled finish. If a light stain is used, the colour should be consistent for all public sitework.

.10 It is recommended that steel be galvanized for uniformity of appearance, durability, and reduced maintenance.

.11 Colours for the majority of heavy timber work or large surface areas should be a natural finish, or a subtle earth tone. Small trim elements may be a bright, contrasting colour.

.12 Materials or finishes considered unsuitable for the riverfront site features include: plastics; stucco; composites such as fibreglass; large expanses of solid body paint; large expanses of high gloss finishes; manufactured wood products such as plywood or oriented strandboard (OSB), except in concealed applications; and other materials that appear modern or highly processed. A measure of a suitable material or finish is to consider what its appearance would be if left exposed and unmaintained for twenty years. Heavy timber would pass this test, while plywood or OSB delaminates and looks very tired.

7.0 BUILDINGS

This section of guidelines provides recommendations for buildings and larger structures. While site features are intended to be a reasonably uniform and consistent element throughout the riverfront, buildings will vary more due to the different uses, sizes and opportunities encountered.

A great variety of historical precedent is available for buildings on the riverfront, as noted in 5.5.8, so considerable latitude is available for building forms and detailing. Appropriate antecedents should be used for current uses, so that the form acts as an identification for the building.

A difficulty that will be encountered is the larger size of current buildings. Many smaller residential buildings of the paddlewheeler era would be considered only large enough for a snack stand today. This poses challenges for maintaining a pedestrian scale and providing valid historical allusions. Designers should review not only these guidelines, but also the extensive archival material available before commencing work.

7.1 Consistency

Riverfront buildings will have four prominent facades rather than the one or two of most downtown buildings.

.1 The quality of design must be carried around all sides of a building.

.2 The form, character and materials used should be consistent on all sides.

.3 The quality of design and materials should extend to the adjacent siteworks for a "complete look" for any one project.

7.2 Character

Buildings should be designed to have a character appropriate to the Whitehorse riverfront.

.1 Buildings should be reminiscent of historic structures on the waterfront, but do not have to be re-creations. The intent is for building design to evoke a historic character through the use of form and detailing, without replicating the past.

.2 A variety of historic precedents exist to draw imagery from, and the imagery used should relate to the current use proposed. For example, commercial buildings should be evocative of historic commercial structures, not residences. Some historic uses for which imagery exists are noted in 5.5.8.

.3 Riverfront buildings of all types were often fairly simple, functional structures without excessive ornamentation. Modern buildings should follow suit, and evoke an image through scale, form, and material without relying on a "gingerbread factor" which was uncharacteristic of historic Whitehorse.

.4 Building design that attempts to copy a "Klondike Style" more representative of Dawson City is specifically discouraged.

7.3 Setbacks

.1 If a row of buildings is to be developed along a street, the setbacks from a property line should be reasonably similar, to encourage a street setting. Some organization is seen as valuable as opposed to random placement.

7.4 Orientation

General guidelines dealt with orientation for site conditions. Please refer to Section 5.0, GENERAL GUIDELINES, for sun, wind, temperature and view considerations.

7.5 Building Mass

The arrangement of building mass should accommodate a pedestrian scale, and maintain the riverfront character.

.1 Buildings should generally be restricted to 1½ to 2 storeys in height to a maximum of 8.0 metres. Taller buildings should only be allowed after special review, and only for projects on properties in excess of 1 hectare. Other provisions are noted in Section 8.0, HOTEL/COMMUNITY PRECINCT.

.2 Buildings should accommodate a pedestrian scale by including low-scale elements such as canopies, or be terraced down at pedestrian ways.

.3 Buildings should not obstruct sun penetration at low-sun angles. In addition to a north/south axis for the main building mass, buildings should step down at a 30° angle from the horizontal on their north faces.

.4 Buildings should not create a visual wall between downtown and the Yukon River. Full building height should not be continuous for more than 35 lineal metres of facade, at which point the height should be broken to 50% of the average for at least 12 metres.

.5 Buildings, or rows of buildings, should not create a barrier to physical access to the river. Pedestrian ways should be allowed at a maximum horizontal distance of 45 metres. On sites larger than 1 hectare, this requirement should be reviewed and suitable pedestrian access encouraged.

7.6 Articulation

While recognizing that historic buildings were often simple forms, the larger size of modern buildings might make this style too imposing. For this reason, some articulation of the building mass is encouraged.

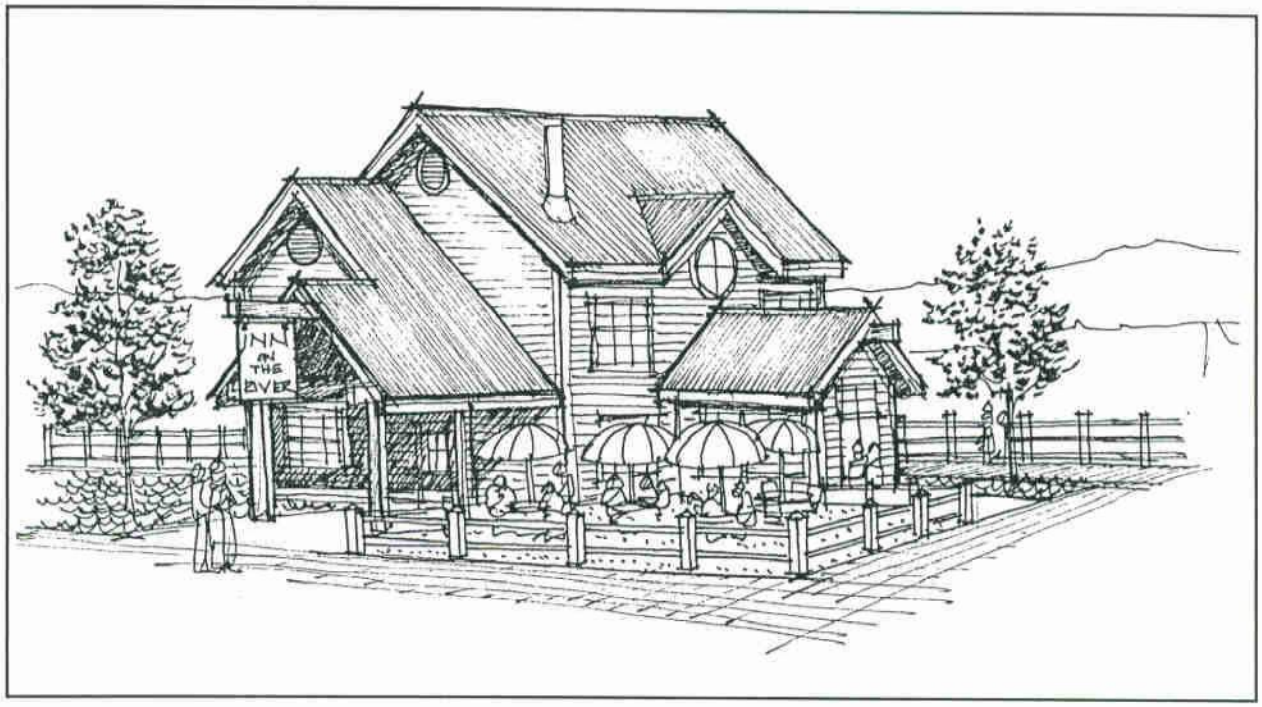
.1 Small buildings with a building area of 180 m² or less are encouraged to be fairly simple forms.

.2 Buildings above this size should have increasing articulation as area and height increases.

.3 Articulation may include variations in height, facade setback, the repetition of elements at smaller scales, and the inclusion of elements such as bays, bows, other projections, recesses, canopies, and the like.

.4 Some articulation may be gained by the extension of the building character to adjacent siteworks.

.5 Artificial articulation such as attempting to make one building look like several through the use of different finishes or paint is prohibited, as it has typically proven to be unconvincing.



7.7 Roofs

Recognizing the variety of building uses and sizes that may be constructed on the riverfront, a variety of roof forms is recommended.

.1 Sloped gable roofs are preferred for smaller buildings, with pitches starting at a minimum of 5 in 12. Steeper pitches are encouraged. The recommended roofing is galvanized metal.

.2 Roof forms recommended are gables, hipped roofs, and other simple forms used singly or in an intersecting fashion. Dormers, roof vents and other features in historic character are encouraged.

.3 False-front buildings with a mono-pitch or flat roof are recommended. If the roofing material is not visible, the type is open to choice.

.4 Gambrel, mansard, or other roof forms not in character with the riverfront are discouraged.

.5 Larger buildings are recommended to have sloped roofs with a minimum pitch of 3 in 12. Flat roofs are acceptable with appropriate edge treatment. If visible, the roofing recommended would be galvanized or coloured metal.

7.8 Walls

Wall finishes should be of a material with some historic precedent.

.1 Surfaces with texture are encouraged.

.2 Historic materials, natural materials, or processed materials closely resembling a natural finish, are recommended. This would include wood siding, composite wood or cement board sidings, stone, textured concrete blocks in small quantities, galvanized metal siding, pressed tin, or other period-appropriate finish.

.3 Materials not historically common, such as brick, stucco, or painted metal, should be used sparingly. These materials might be considered as accents comprising no more than 20% of a wall surface area.

.4 Materials that are out of character, such as vinyl siding, resin composite panels, or stucco EIF finishes are prohibited.

.5 Large, unbroken expanses of one material are discouraged. This will often be resolved through articulation of the wall plane.

7.9 Trim

Quality detailing with historic flavour is encouraged. Many modern buildings do not have a good craftsman level of construction at a small scale, and it is recommended that, just as quality design is required on all four sides, quality should be pursued from a large scale to a small scale.

.1 Trim should have a historical flavour, and may include eaves, cornices, moldings, belt lines, soffits, and the like.

.2 Trim materials should be similar to those for cladding.

.3 Trim should be detailed but not ornate or extravagantly overdone.

7.10 Openings

Openings typically consist of doors and windows.

.1 Doors may be of modern construction and materials in a period style.

.2 Applying trim to a modern door is an acceptable means of creating period character.

.3 The unobtrusive use of glazed sliding doors or overhead doors to create indoor/outdoor space is acceptable.

.4 Glazing in doors is recommended to be divided lites.

.5 Door hardware is open to choice, but period-appropriate styles and finishes are recommended.

.6 Windows should have a period character. This implies that windows will be broken into elements with a maximum width of about 2.0 metres, and lites will appear divided, preferably with a removable exterior screen.

.7 Period windows often had higher head heights than the currently standard 2.03 metres, and tall windows are encouraged.

.8 Window coverings, either exterior shutters or interior shading devices, are unrestricted.

.9 Tinted glazing is discouraged, other than normal low-E coatings.

.10 Window sash is preferred as wood, with aluminum-clad wood as a secondary choice. Fiberglass, PVC, or other materials are acceptable but should be well detailed with trim that is in character with the riverfront.

7.11 Materials, Finishes and Detailing

In addition to specific recommendations in Section 7.0, refer to 6.19 for additional comments.

7.12 Colours

A variety of surface finishes and colours is in keeping with riverfront character.

.1 Factory finishes, transparent and solid body stains, and paints are all acceptable.

.2 Traditional colour schemes were reasonably conservative, and it is recommended that that tradition be carried on. The base building colour should be a muted, solid colour ranging from light to dark tones.

.3 Trim colours should be in contrast to the base colour, and can be strong without being gaudy.

.4 The orange, blue, purple and green "Klondike" colour scheme is atypical, and strongly discouraged.

7.13 Signage

Building signage is important from informational, commercial and visual points of view, and is an important element that should be in character with the building and the riverfront development.

.1 Signage should be at a pedestrian scale, with building identification signs no higher than 4.2 m above grade to the top.

.2 Sign sizes should conform to the current zoning by-law, with a maximum size of 4.5 m^2.

.3 Signs are preferred to be fascia-mounted, projecting or canopy-mounted. Free-standing signs and sandwich boards are discouraged.

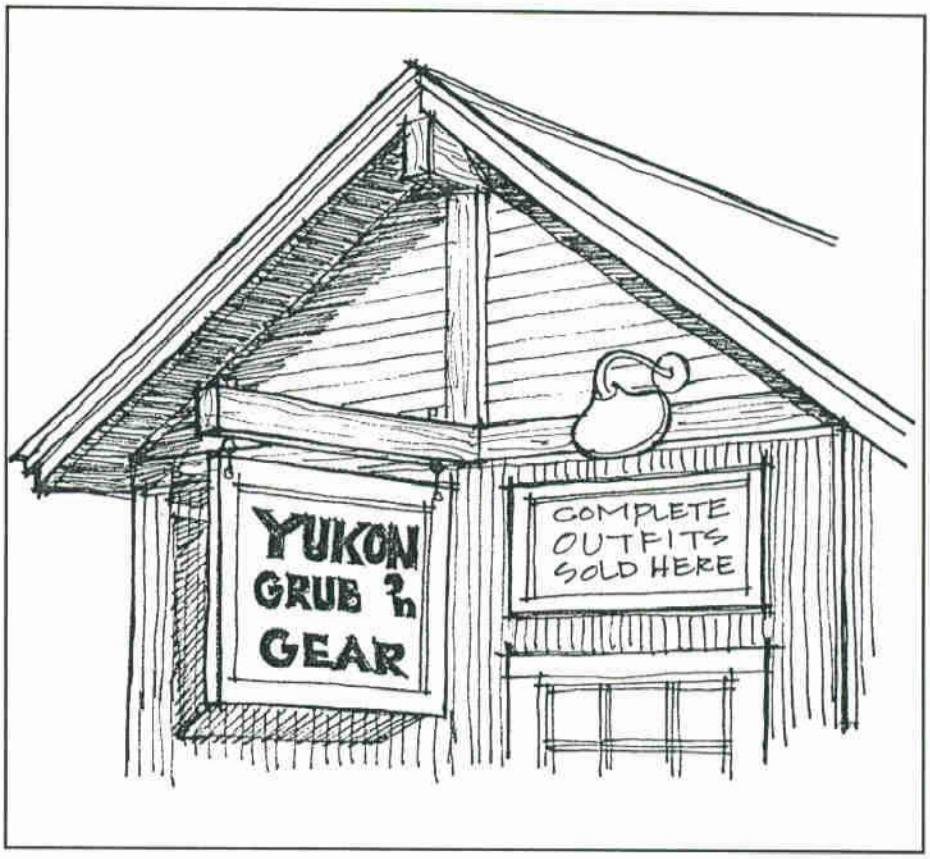
.4 Projecting signs should have a minimum clearance underneath of 2.7 m, and project no more than 1.5 m from the building.

.5 Free-standing signs shall be supported by a structure in keeping with the guidelines for site features.

.6 Signs are preferred to be individual wooden or metal letters on a wood background, painted signs, carved signs or canvas banners.

.7 Sign design shall be coordinated with the building architecture.

.8 Signs shall be front-lit if illuminated. Backlighting is acceptable only for fabric canopies or awnings. Internally illuminated, flashing or moving signs are prohibited.



.9 Address identification signs, directional signs, building directories, menu boxes and other small signs shall conform to these guidelines and the zoning by-law.

7.14 Lighting

Lighting should accommodate users, and be in character with the riverfront.

.1 Accent lighting should be used to identify signage, entries, and other important features.

.2 Area lighting should provide for general convenience and safety.

.3 Lighting design should be for some discernible reason. The indiscriminate, generic lighting of facades is discouraged.

.4 Lights should have a colour rendition similar to incandescent light sources.

.5 Concealed fixtures are acceptable.

.6 Exposed fixtures should have an historic character, which may range from the industrial to Victorian to Art Deco. Generally, period fixtures were simple, and goosenecks with hoods or protected "jars" would be acceptable.

7.15 Ancillary Structures

Larger projects may have subsidiary buildings for storage, refuse collection, or other uses.

.1 Ancillary buildings should be in character with the main building in a development.

.2 Detailing for an ancillary use may be simpler.

.3 Open structures such as screens, sunshades, etc. should generally conform to the main building character and site features guidelines.

7.16 Service Equipment

Modern buildings have servicing requirements unknown by their historic counterparts.

.1 All service equipment, including fuel tanks, electrical transformers, and mechanical ventilation units, shall be concealed or screened by structures in conformance to these guidelines.

.2 Noise from service equipment shall be minimized through location, insulation, and screening or baffling.

.3 Intakes and outlets for ventilation should not be located by pedestrian paths.

7.17 Sitework

Sitework for building development should be in character with the site feature guidelines and the building architecture. As an example of the hybridization recommended, a bench might use the materials noted in Section 6.0, SITE FEATURES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, but the style be modified to correspond more closely to the building.

7.18 Maintenance

Maintenance will greatly influence the long-term success of the riverfront.

.1 It is recommended that building developers plan an adequate maintenance program during the initial stages of development. Many Yukon buildings of both public and private ownership are poorly maintained and show the results. If the riverfront is to be, and remain, a quality environment for residents and visitors, maintenance is crucial.

8.0 HOTEL / COMMUNITY PRECINCT

The Hotel/Community Precinct is a more intensely developed area of the riverfront and merits additional, and varied, guidelines. Recognizing the potentially larger scale of buildings, Section 8.0 recommends more flexibility in materials, sizes and other attributes.

The general intent is for buildings in this area to be in keeping with the riverfront character, which will put a greater onus on designers to meet the demands of a larger building in a style that is pedestrian-friendly and reminiscent of the past.

Unless noted otherwise in this section, the recommendations of preceding Sections 5.0, GENERAL GUIDELINES, 6.0, SITE FEATURES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, and 7.0, BUILDINGS, are to apply.

Buildings in this precinct shall be subject to a design review pursuant to these Guidelines. Development Permits will include a provision that the guidelines be adhered to.

Several general provisions are reflected in the first parts of this section, followed by more specific guidelines dealing with the residential area, the commercial area, and the hotel/conference centre.

8.1 General Guidelines

Smaller buildings in this precinct should follow the guidelines of Item 7.2. Buildings greater than two storeys and 930 m² in building area should adhere to this section.

.1 Buildings should respect the intended overall character of the riverfront, and be designed so that the integrity of that character is maintained. Rather than evoke an historic image, buildings in this precinct may be "good neighbours" in a modern idiom.

.2 Character in keeping with the riverfront might include the continuation of a use or activity at grade that involves, and is scaled to, pedestrians; the use of heavy timber canopies; and detailing that is sympathetic to the historic nature of the area.

8.1.2 Building Mass

Items 7.5.2, .3 and .4 should be respected. Additional recommendations include the following.

.1 Buildings should be restricted to 4 storeys in height to a maximum of 20 m.

.2 Buildings should not create physical barriers to pedestrian access. Pedestrian ways should be provided at a maximum horizontal distance of 100 m.

.3 The lower floor of large buildings, depending on use, should encourage transition through the building by the general public. An open aspect is encouraged.

8.1.3 Articulation

Item 7.6 generally applies, with the proviso that excessive articulation and repetition of small elements, such as dormers, is not recommended. The intent is to have substantial buildings with enough articulation to provide interest, not a pastiche of Disneyesque paste-ons.

8.1.4 Roofs

Item 7.7 generally applies.

8.1.5 Walls

Wall finishes for buildings over two storeys and 930 m² in building area are recommended to have more latitude than 7.8.

.1 At the first floor, surfaces with texture or "grain" (wood, stone) are recommended.

.2 Natural materials, or processed materials closely resembling a natural finish, are recommended at locations where the wall is in close proximity to pedestrians or readily visible to pedestrians.

3. At other locations, a variety of wall surfaces is recommended, including stucco, composite "stone-look" panels, metal panel systems, composite wood siding systems, stone, or other materials sympathetic to the riverfront character.

.4 Surfaces or materials that are too slick and/or modern looking are not considered in keeping with the riverfront and would be discouraged. Examples of prohibited finishes are vinyl siding and reflective glazing in curtain walls.

8.1.6 Openings

Openings in buildings of modern design and of a size larger than 930 m² in building area or greater than 2 storeys in height are essentially unrestricted, bearing in mind the desirability of being a "good neighbour". Smaller buildings or those of historic character should follow Item 7.10.

.1 Large buildings may use storefront glazing systems, with no recommendations made as to material.

.2 Glazing may be tinted for solar control, but reflective coatings are prohibited.

8.1.7 Signage

Building signage should generally conform to Item 7.13. Large buildings may add the following provisions.

.1 Free-standing signs conforming to City By-laws are acceptable. The sign base and support should be in character with the building.

.2 One sign per business use may be internally illuminated, preferably as individual letters or neon. Flashing or moving signs are prohibited.

8.1.8 Lighting

Item 7.14 should be respected, but fixtures are not required to have an historic character. A consistent type of fixture should be used throughout the area.

8.2 Residential Area

The following guidelines provide amplification with respect to the design character for the residential node proposed south of Ogilvie. The guidelines are a supplement to those noted earlier in this section.

8.2.1 Design and Siting of Buildings

.1 Dwelling units should be designed to maximize year round exposure to the sun, with special consideration given to sun angles during winter months, when sun access is vital.

.2 At grade residential units fronting Ogilvie or the internal street should provide private screened outdoor areas, and where appropriate, front door access from the street or walkways.

.3 Design of housing units shall where appropriate allow for visual surveillance of the walkway.

.4 Buildings shall be designed to a high standard that complement public investment in the waterfront area. Innovative design is encouraged.

.5 Residential building clusters shall not exceed a continuous façade of more than 4 units.

.6 The design of residential clusters shall be such that buildings relate closely to nearby public spaces such as the riverfront walk, the walkway to nearby shopping facilities, and to the adjacent public park areas to provide additional security.

8.2.2 Landscaping and Walkways

.1 Access from the area of residential units shall be provided to the riverfront walkway, at both the north (Ogilvie) and south of the residential complex (to the park area).

.2 Access to the walkway shall be wheelchair accessible.

.3 Where outdoor patios are accommodated, landscaping needs to respond to issues of security and safety, but must offer an open character to the riverfront walkway.

.4 Common area walkways and parking areas shall be illuminated, and be in accord with Item 8.1.8 above.

8.3 Commercial Area

The commercial area including retail and personal service uses provides a link to downtown and Second Avenue commercial uses. The concept for the riverfront also provides for pedestrian connections to the riverfront. Supplemental guidelines for this area include:

8.3.1 Pedestrian Links and Sidewalk Treatment

.1 Within the commercial area a continuous east-west walkway (except for parking area curb cuts) shall be provided from Second Avenue to the riverfront walkway between the south side of the residential area and the north of the hotel and conference centre. This walkway is to follow the approximate alignment of the Cook Street right of way, and is to have a width of not less than 3.0 metres. Sidewalk surface treatment is to emphasize its importance as a direct link to the riverfront walkway.

.2 Within the retail area, pedestrian scale lighting is to be utilized in harmony with the type of fixtures found on the riverfront walkway.

.3 Street trees are required along the entire length of sidewalk facing Second Avenue and the First Avenue/Black Street extension, as well as along the pedestrian corridor on the appropriate alignment of Cook Street.

.4 Sidewalk treatment shall be such that accessibility and safety is enhanced.

.5 To emphasize pedestrian movement from one building cluster to another, every effort is to be made to provide for continuity between building complexes by extending the sidewalk paving patterns over crosswalk areas.

8.3.2 Design Character

Smaller building clusters which add interest and invite exploration are encouraged.

.1 All retail uses shall include weather protection along store fronts, with special consideration given to extending this weather protection between nearby buildings.

.2 The overall architectural design of new buildings may be contemporary in character, but should respond sympathetically with heritage buildings that remain in the downtown riverfront area. Wall treatment is to be in accord with 8.1.5.

.3 Attention is to be given to the inclusion of attractive street furniture, designed to foster a pleasant shopping environment.

.4 Trim colours may be used on buildings to add vibrancy, sparkle, and vitality. Colour treatment is left at the discretion of the architect.

.5 Entrances to retail businesses are preferably closely spaced to encourage pedestrian activity and vitality, with windows predominating in wall space facing walkways and public spaces. Glazing shall be of a non-reflective type.

8.3.3 Parking Treatment

.1 The perimeter of parking areas, as well as landscaped islands and buffers within parking areas shall include generous provision for tree planting.

.2 Within parking areas provision is to be made for decorative paving treatment, and extension of sidewalk bulbs at corners within parking nodes.

.3 Lighting of parking areas shall be consistent with 8.1.8.

8.4 Hotel and Community/Conference Centre

The following guidelines are intended to apply specifically to the hotel building and the community/conference centre. The guidelines supplement those in 8.1.

8.4.1 Building Treatment

.1 The overall architectural design of new buildings may be contemporary in character, but should respond sympathetically with heritage buildings that remain in the downtown riverfront area.

.2 The entrance treatment of both the hotel and the community/conference centre shall be open and inviting, using glazing and architectural features that reflect the purpose and importance of these buildings and which respond to their significance as focal points for downtown Whitehorse, and the riverfront area.

.3 Siting of buildings and public entrances shall be such that direct access is feasible from the riverfront walkway.

.4 Where retail areas are included in the hotel and/or conference complex, it is desired that such spaces be visible to the outside public. This includes restaurant and related spaces which are to be situated to allow direct viewing over the riverfront walkway and Yukon River.

.5 A direct structural link between the hotel and conference centre is preferred. This is intended to provide a service corridor and a means for hotel guests to access the conference centre. Care should be taken to ensure architectural compatibility between these two buildings.

.6 Building and landscape treatment must recognize the view corridors established along First Avenue and the Black Street extension, and be reflected in the adoption of high quality design.

8.4.2 Parking and Lighting

.1 Underground and underbuilding parking structures must be finished with high quality and durable finishes and must be compatible with the same high standard of finish and construction as the building as a whole.

.2 Underbuilding parking areas are preferably screened and secured by an open grilled grate.

.3 Underbuilding parking shall not project more than 1 metre above grade and shall be screened with plant material.

.4 Retaining walls and any protruding portions of underground parking structures shall be in architectural harmony and finished with good quality materials similar to the project as a whole.

.5 External area lighting is to be designed to minimize glare beyond the property lines.

.6 Lighting can add aesthetic pleasure to the space surrounding these important buildings, and is of vital importance in winter. Lighting of public landscape areas including walkways leading to the riverfront walkway and to parking areas is essential and is to be in keeping with the fixtures employed along the riverfront and other special areas downtown such as Third Avenue and Main Street.