



Village of Pemberton

Downtown Enhancement Strategy

Prepared by:

Village of Pemberton
Development Services

and

Michael von Hausen
MvH Planning and Urban Design

Funded by:

Real Estate Foundation of
British Columbia

and

Village of Pemberton

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Village of Pemberton recently initiated a process to update their Official Community Plan, which is intended to set policy for municipal growth and land use for the next five years. A key component of the success of the community's future is to ensure that the downtown core is a vibrant and functional focal point that is capable of providing the appropriate goods, services and activities needed by the community. It is with this goal, that the municipality has prepared this Downtown Enhancement Strategy. The document contains the following sections: the Introduction (background, scope and community consultation), Session Findings (walking tour, workshops, downtown principles and conceptual plans), the recommended Strategy (immediate actions, mid-term actions and resources) and Next Steps.

1.1 Background

In early 2009, the Village submitted a grant application to the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia for the purpose of developing a Downtown Enhancement Strategy. In late March the funding request was approved and an urban design specialist was retained to lead a series of downtown workshops. The purpose of the exercises was to determine how the downtown could be enhanced to better meet the expectations of the residents and visitors. In preparation for the workshops, staff compiled information related to the future of downtown including a parking inventory, building inventory, and orthographic, street and cadastre mapping.



Consultant Michael von Hausen of MVH Planning and Urban Design was retained by the Village to: facilitate sessions; present to the community about the principles of successful downtowns; and assist Pemberton in developing conceptual directions for a downtown enhancement plan. Village staff have since compiled the directions as the Downtown Enhancement Strategy.

1.2 Scope

For the purposes of this Strategy, “downtown” primarily considers lands currently zoned C-1 (Village Core Commercial), as illustrated to the right:

1.3 Methodology

The planning process was a grassroots initiative driven by the community, for their short and long term needs. The downtown enhancement initiative's success was therefore dependant on the involvement of an array of stakeholders and related community interests. These sessions were extensively advertised including the local papers, the community information sign, and hand delivered notices to all downtown businesses and property owners. The Strategy's methodology relied on input from the community, which were then documented and analyzed by staff and the consultant to develop conceptual plans and strategic directions.



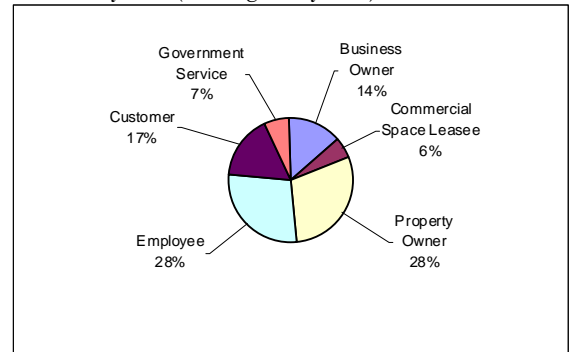
2.0 SESSION FINDINGS

The Downtown Workshops involved five distinct sessions, whereby comments and directions were collected from participants (except for the consultant presentation). The following summarizes the format of the sessions along with key findings:

2.1 Pre-Session Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was also set up to collect information about the current perceptions and future directions for improvement of the Village core. The survey completed by various community stakeholders with interests indicated the following;

- Business owners were involved in downtown from 6 months to 52 years (average 13 years), and landowners from 6 months to 25 years (average 8 years).
- The top five most identified downtown focal points included: 1) Birch/Prospect Streets; 2) Pemberton Supermarket with picnic tables, 3) Birch/Frontier Street; 4) AG Foods and adjacent parking lots; and 5) that there is no focal point.
- The top five most popular parts of downtown include: 1) the people, 2) Pioneer Park, 3) walkability, 4) the Pony, and 5) Birch Street sidewalk from the Pharmacy to the supermarket.
- The top five suggested improvements included to 1) create pedestrian oriented streetscapes, 2) encourage new businesses and retail diversity, 3) Create family oriented Pioneer Park/Foughberg Park, 4) Build a town square for gathering, meeting and relaxing, and 5) ensure universal accessibility (including strollers).
- The top five single most important improvements include 1) beautify downtown (greening, cleaning and decorating), 2) renovate existing businesses, 3) activate parks for families and gathering, 4) create great public spaces and meeting areas, and 5) fill in the gaps (redevelopment) for a cohesive business area.
- 85% of respondents indicated that the downtown core has suitable parking yet that parking issues include 1) that it is not orderly or organized, 2) Frontier St. Parking lots are unsightly, 3) Not convenient, too much in some areas, none in others, 4) More crosswalks and sidewalks to distinguish parking areas, and 5) inadequate parking at the Supermarket.
- Areas to further recognize or showcase Pemberton’s heritage, culture and artistic character include 1) public display/gallery for focal artwork, produce, etc, 2) welcoming and interpretative signage, 3) art on blank walls, 4) consistent storefront design, and 5) greening.



2.2 Walking Tour

The walking tour involved approximately 30 individuals representing a wide range of community interests including residents, business owners, realtors, elected officials, municipal staff and property owners. The participants were asked to share their initial perceptions of the core area; which included the following:

- Desirable areas included the Village offices, the Art Barn (Foughberg Park),
- Improved access and activation of public parks and open space corridors
- Expand pedestrian opportunities (wider, connecting, pedestrian, etc)



- Provide greater exposure for local arts and culture (Art Barn, Museum and Archives)
 - Green up downtown with boulevards, trees and greenery
 - Redevelopment sites include the Prospect Street houses (second hand stores)
 - Increase exterior exposure for businesses including displays, windows, and patios while accommodating pedestrian access;
 - Develop a parking strategy that provides the service but does not compromise the walkability and aesthetics of downtown;
 - Announce a sense of arrival from downtown from the roundabout to Prospect and Birch.
 -
- A summary of the “big ideas” collected are attached as Appendix B.

2.3 Issue Identification

Immediately following the walking tour, participants continued discussions about the character of downtown. The brief findings are noted in Appendix _.



2.4 Stakeholder Workshops and Community Open House

The purpose of the workshop was to provide an opportunity to map their downtown identifying certain traits of the core (what is unique/ what is missing). The attendees (approximately 20) were arranged in smaller working groups and were directed to identify certain traits and opportunities for the core area. Then the groups developed key principles and a “now” plan (initiatives that could commence immediately). The various downtown sessions identified the following **principles**:

- 1) ***Provide a mix of land uses at increased densities*** – *The downtown is currently undersubscribed of development. In particular, there are a number of vacant lots that limit the continuum of the core cohesiveness. These lands could be developed/redeveloped to introduce increased densities and uses that create a critical mass of goods, services and activities for residents.*
- 2) ***Environmentally, socially and economically sustainable*** - *The downtown is the centre of Pemberton and therefore sets the course for the rest of the community. The core should apply best practices of land use and development through integrating environment, social and economic priorities.*
- 3) ***Great, focused & designed open spaces***) – *The downtown currently offers several public spaces and parks; however, they are not activated and connected to promote community use. Further there needs to be a four-season greening of downtown through additional landscaping and planters.*
- 4) ***Pedestrian, bike & stroller friendly/accessible***) - *The core needs offer integrated connections for non-vehicular movement. It also needs the facilities to promote these activities.*

- 5) **Strong sense of arrival** - The downtown needs enhancement to be more inviting & welcoming (bring people into town).
- 6) **Appropriate Parking and Transit Facilities** – The downtown shall improve on opportunities for concentrated and visible parking and transit facilities.



- 7) **Economically Vibrant** – The downtown must support and sustain the local business community while meeting the needs of residents and visitors.
- 8) **Showcase Natural Assets** – The downtown is a central area that should protect and promote the valuable natural features such as views, solar exposure, watercourses, vegetation, etc.
- 9) **Share Pemberton’s Authentic Identity** – The core area is where people congregate, and therefore a stage to tell the community’s story by reflecting who we are.
- 10) **Working Together** – For the downtown to meet stakeholder and community’s needs to respect others interests and shares our ideas to move toward meeting our common goals.

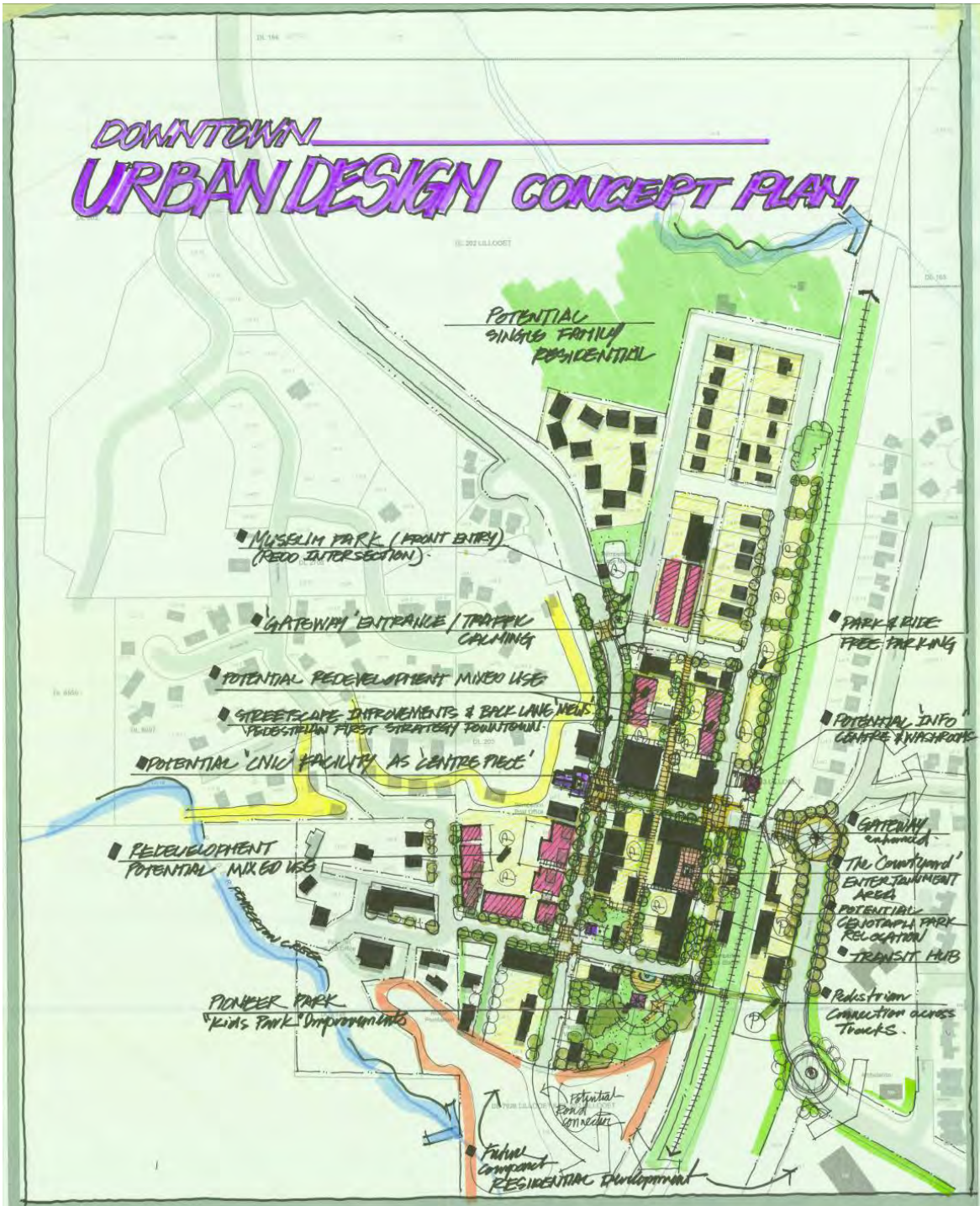
The following identified the **now plans** (or low hanging fruits):

- 1) Relocate the information booth to downtown
- 2) Complete a greens way Plan (capital plan)
- 3) Install free parking sign
- 4) Establish Court Yard at AG Mall
- 5) Improve access/egress to Supermarket/Legion (engage the Legion)
- 6) Move cenotaph
- 7) Improve signage-welcoming, initiate & program
- 8) Courtyard/parking lot design
- 9) Initiate talks with land owners for redevelopment
- 10) Investigate funding & investment (portion of business license fees to greening etc) Grants (Town of tomorrow-Cities in bloom-Localmotion)
- 11) Implement 50/50 streets
- 12) Renovate Museum Entrance (green space)
- 13) Remove fences at Pioneer Park
- 14) Prepare a Parking Management Plan
- 15) Protect the downtown from parasitic uses
- 16) Interim landscape plan (green up downtown)
- 17) Improve pedestrian route through temp paint, curb stops, boulders, planters
- 18) Pull down fencing at Pioneer Park (move to Fouberg/more benches)
- 19) BC Rail thing out brush behind park
- 20) Remove chainlink at Esso Card lock
- 21) Improve T-Intersection ugly metal signs
- 22) Rule free weekend (slow food weekend (business dream)
- 23) Look at sign guidelines/bylaw
- 24) Explore burying phone/powerlines (distribution lines) to downtown
- 25) Explore ways for commercial parking “in lieu”/ open space
- 26) Develop the Icon



2.5 Conceptual Plans

The sessions and exercises completed by participants in the two day workshops were then brought together to inform the downtown concept plans and strategic directions. The concept plans comprise illustrations of Pemberton's preferred downtown. Following the stakeholder workshops, Michael von Hausen translated the words into graphic design. The first concept plan identifies certain improvements to be considered for Pemberton's downtown:



3.0 RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

The principles, now plans and concept plans provide clear directions and illustration of where the community needs to move towards in the creation of their preferred downtown. Staff has since undertaken a detailed review of the information with the community’s preferred downtown improvements and worked to develop strategic directions. In particular, the Strategy identifies immediate and mid term actions together with possible resources for implementation.

3.1 Immediate Actions

There are certain projects that can be done in the short term as they do not require any significant planning, policy amendments or funding. During the course of the stakeholder workshops, the participants were asked to identify initiatives that could be undertaken immediately to improve the character and functioning of the downtown. Staff has since reviewed and consolidated this list together the interests that could be directly responsible, specifically:

| Principles | Action | Responsibility | Timing |
|--|---|--|---|
| Appropriate Parking and Transit Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim permission of utilizing parking spaces for outdoor patios • Improve access to Supermarket and Legion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village and local businesses • MoT, Village and property owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Patio Policy (done) • Temporary improvement will be completed shortly (no posts) |
| Mix of Land Uses at Increased Densities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate talks with land owners for redevelopment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village and private property owners regarding their lands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two landowner has contacted staff to date |
| Strong Sense of Arrival | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find funding to improve signage-welcoming, initiate & program (free parking!) • Request that BCR remove fence at former card lock site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village, Chamber and BCR | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July BCR has hired Mainline to remove fencing |
| Pedestrian, bike & stroller friendly/accessible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an interim/temporary pedestrian routing program, reclaiming part of the roads (line painting, curb stops, boulders, etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village, business and property owners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> June |
| Working Together | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate funding & investment sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July |
| Great, focused & designed open spaces) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do CPTED¹ for Pioneer Park (remove front fence, trip trees) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village and RCMP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMOW Bylaw Services and RCMP have indicated that they will do a review for the Village |
| Business Enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose a “bureaucracy free” weekend Reconsider short term traffic changes to enhance pedestrian movement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village, Chamber | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village currently investigating |
| Signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review sign bylaw | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August |

¹ Crime Protection through Environmental Design

3.2 Mid-Term Actions

The downtown sessions also identified additional plans or policies that are required to enable the appropriate improvements and/or development. The following listing has identified key areas of interest that should be addressed as part of the entire initiative. The following enhancement projects have been identified:

| Mid and Long Term Actions | Corresponding Principles | Priority | Responsibility Lead (Other) |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Pedestrian Routing Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian, bike and stroller friendly/accessible | Aug-Sept | Village (Downtown Merchants Group) |
| Parking, Traffic, Service Management Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Parking and Transit Facilities | Aug-Oct | Village (Downtown Merchants) |
| Open Spaces, Park and Landscaping Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great, focused and designed open spaces • Showcase Natural Assets | June-Aug | Village (Community Stakeholders) |
| Development of a Downtown Icon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Pemberton’s Authentic Identity | June-Aug | Community Stakeholders (Downtown Merchants) |
| Lighting and Streetscape Furniture Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Pemberton’s Authentic Identity • Strong sense of arrival | TBD | Village (Downtown Merchants, Community Stakeholders, Advisory Design Review Commission) |
| Downtown Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Pemberton’s Authentic Identity • Strong sense of arrival • Showcase Natural Assets | June-Oct | Community Stakeholders (Arts Council, Museum and Archives, Lil’wat Nation, Legion, Advisory Design Review Commission) |
| OCP/Zoning Bylaw and Development Permit Guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of Land Use at Increased Densities • Environmentally, socially / economically sustainable | July | Village (Advisory Land Use Commission, Advisory Design Review Commission, Community Stakeholders, Property Owners, Downtown Merchants) |
| Sustained Funding Source | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically Viable • Working Together | July-Sept | Village |
| Business Awareness Principles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically Viable • Working Together | July-Sept | Chamber, Downtown Merchants |

3.3 Resources

Fundamental to the development of the Strategy is to be realistic about the limited budgetary resources and community capacity available. Yet this also provides an opportunity to mobilize and pool the community’s potential resources to create our desired downtown.

It is recommended that all community groups and organizations be approached to participate in both the short and long term action items. Although, clearly there are some areas where the municipality is the most appropriate facilitator or implementer, there are some tasks that are most suited for other interests.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

To move forward with the Downtown Enhancement Strategy, this document should be referred to affected community organizations and agencies to gain their commitment and particular interests in improving the Village core. Once sufficient responses are received a 2 hour workshop will be held to determine the preferred structure and resources needed to move forward with the mid term actions of the Strategy.

Concurrently, the Village will further continue with undertaking the Immediate Actions, including the identification of funding options.