



MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON

# EXETER COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT & STREETScape DESIGN PLAN

JULY 5, 2012



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Municipality of South Huron

## Exeter Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan

July 5, 2012

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in  
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with

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**APPENDIX A: By-law to Designate a Community Improvement Plan Project Area  
Within the Municipality of South Huron**

**APPENDIX B: By-law to Adopt a Community Improvement Plan Within the  
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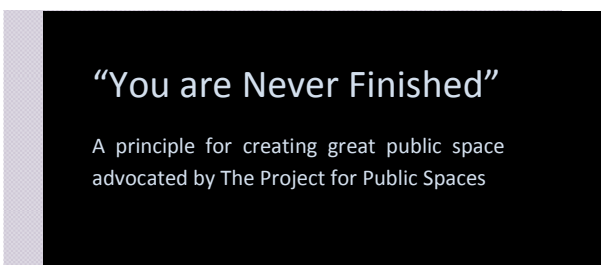
**APPENDIX C Summary of Statutory Public Meeting from the Exeter Times-Advocate**

# 1.0 THE PLAN



This Section introduces the Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan and contains the terms of reference, methodologies, summary of the consultation process, and the organization of the Plan.

## 1.1 FROM STREET TO STREETScape



In October 1978, the Exeter Board of Management commissioned an urban design study of Exeter's Main Street between Huron and Gidley Streets. The purpose of the report was to facilitate agreement on how to fund and implement the revitalization of Main Street.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-four years later, this Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan (CISDP) is intended once again to facilitate the revitalization of Exeter's Main Street. Since 1978, however, there have been significant changes in Exeter such that the area of study related to revitalization or community improvement has expanded along Main Street to the north and south edges of Exeter while also including the east-west Thames Road highway-commercial corridor (largely due to residential and commercial growth).

Of importance to this study is the change in thinking about streets that has occurred over the last thirty years. Everybody knows what a street is, but there is less general awareness of the term streetscape - it was not even used in 1978. Streetscape is used to denote a street landscape essentially: a comprehensive area focused on a street or streets for study, planning and design purposes. So it is with Exeter's Main Street in particular.

The implications of the adjacent quote are that a Community Improvement and Streetscape Design Plan for Exeter completed in 2012 is no more a definitive plan than the urban design plan for Exeter completed in 1978. Both plans are part of an ongoing process of community planning and design. Some of what was proposed for 1978 Exeter was implemented: the Exeter Parkette on the east side of Main Street with its connection to public parking; the pocket park, north of that on the west side of Main Street, again providing a pedestrian connection to parking behind Main Street buildings; the enhancement of the area in front of the civic buildings. The 1978 urban design plan did not foresee the development of the current civic building complex though, and little has been done to organize the open space behind the Main Street buildings to provide parking in response to a stated need whether real or perceived.

If there has been progress in planning and design over the last thirty years, it is in the attention paid to a community's physical quality or its urban design. This has arisen out of the acknowledgement that the physical quality of a place is essential to a community's socio-cultural, economic and ecological well-being, or more generally, its sustainability.

<sup>1</sup> Project Planning Associates Ltd. 1979. "Exeter B.I.A. Urban Design". p.1.

## 1.2 PROJECT TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Project Purpose

To improve the existing physical landscape, and to stimulate rehabilitation of the commercial district by using, reusing and restoring lands, buildings and infrastructure.

- *Community Improvement Plan & Streetscape Design Plan Request For Proposal*

In April 2011, the Municipality of South Huron issued a Request for Proposal to undertake a Community Improvement Plan & Streetscape Design Plan, focused upon Exeter's commercial district. The project was subsequently awarded to the Consulting Team of MONTEITH BROWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS, Sylvia Behr Heritage Consultant, and BM Ross Associates Ltd. after a competitive tendering process.

This Community Improvement Plan & Streetscape Design Plan, herein referred to as the '*Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan*' or the '*CISDP*', is rooted in a number of previous initiatives. Between 2005 and 2008, the Municipality of South Huron, along with the Chamber of Commerce and Exeter BIA, participated in the development of a 'Business Retention and Expansion Survey' guided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). This work identified a number of opportunities for improvement, culminating in the 'First Impressions' community exchange program. Subsequently a Trade Area Analysis and Business Mix Analysis was completed with OMAFRA in 2009, followed by the launch of a three-year community revitalization project named 'Main Streets Exeter' in 2010 with a number of local partners.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> **Main Streets Exeter** is a collaboration between OMAFRA, the Municipality of South Huron, the South Huron Chamber of Commerce, the Exeter BIA and the Exeter Community Development Fund. The primary goals of the multi-year project are to develop a strategic alliance between the key community stakeholders and to further develop the Main Street and Thames Road commercial areas as the regional commercial centre for adjacent areas of Huron, Perth, Middlesex and North Lambton County (hence the impetus for the CISDP). Main Streets Exeter is comprised of four organizational committees, namely the Management Committee, the Promotion Committee, the Development Committee and the Streetscape Committee, the latter of which oversees the CISDP.



### 1.3 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT & STREETScape DESIGN PLAN

The CISDP consists of two complementary and interconnected components:

1. a statutory Community Improvement Plan, as prescribed through the *Planning Act*; and
2. a Streetscape Design Plan to guide design and development projects related to the Main Street streetscape.

#### Community Improvement Plan

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a powerful tool that allows the Municipality to direct funds and implement policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project area or areas. Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O., 1990 provides those municipalities which have enabling policies within their Official Plans with the ability to prepare

Community Improvement Plans in accordance with Sections 106 and 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*.<sup>3</sup>

#### Community Improvement

“Planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary.”

- *Planning Act*, Section 28

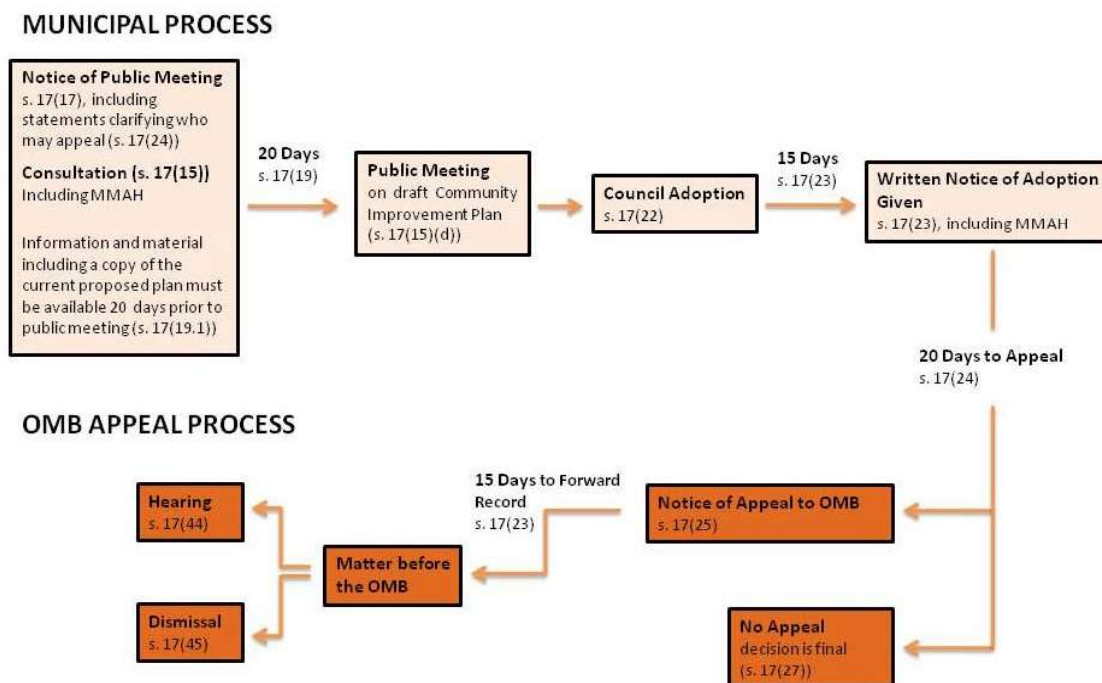
The intent of the CIP is to encourage the rehabilitation of lands and buildings and/or the stimulation of development. Once implemented, the CIP will allow Council to provide grants or loans to promote the rehabilitation of lands and/or buildings within a defined project area or areas. While the Municipality of South Huron Official Plan contains enabling Community Improvement policies as directed by the *Planning Act*, increased interest brought about by revisions to the *Planning Act* and

the heightened awareness of downtown revitalization has spurred interest in Community Improvement Planning within Exeter as a vehicle to assist in promoting improvements.

Prior to 2007, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing was responsible for approving CIPs which contained financial assistance and/or land related programs. Changes in legislation now permit municipal Councils to adopt all of their CIPs without formal approval from the Province. As shown in the following figure, once Council adopts a CIP, notice of its decision must be provided in accordance with the *Planning Act*, and is subject to a 20 day appeal period after which the CIP comes into effect (barring no appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board).

<sup>3</sup> Section 106 of the *Municipal Act* prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of certain financial incentives (known as the ‘bonusing rule’). Prohibited incentives include giving or lending money or municipal property; leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; guaranteed borrowing; and giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee. **Exceptions** to Section 106 of the *Municipal Act* are granted by Section 23 of the *Planning Act* (allowing grants, loans and provision of land) as well as Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act* (allowing tax assistance).

Figure 1: Public Notice Process for a Community Improvement Plan



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, *Community Improvement Planning Handbook 2008*

## Streetscape Design Plan

The process for creating the Streetscape Design Plan (SDP) goes hand-in-hand with the formation of the community improvement tools and strategies. With the aim of creating a unified, functional and aesthetically-appealing appearance for the commercial district, the SDP component offers design strategies which offer design guidance and strategies for streetscape improvements such as lighting, furniture, paving and planting.

The SDP facilitates decision-making related to a desired streetscape or more generally, urban design. The SDP design will be applicable to other municipal policy related to land development.

## CIP + SDP = Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan

The CISDP contains an analysis of Exeter's streetscape, out of which planning and design policies and principles were developed for its improvement. The CISDP provides a range of ideas for improving the streetscape and associated buildings in support of Exeter's overall branding as a community with a diverse yet unified main street. Wherever possible, initiatives outlined in the CISDP should align with other municipal infrastructure projects to ensure fiscal responsibilities. Presently, four major infrastructure projects have been identified for Exeter: Bridge refurbishment at the Ausable River; Sewer pipe replacement in Main Street rear laneways; Main Street Resurfacing; and Main Street Streetlight Replacement.

## 1.4 CISDP METHODOLOGY

The CISDP arises out of the local planning context through a review of applicable legislation, local history, trends, and consultations with Municipal staff, key stakeholders and the general public. A Steering Committee consisting of County and Municipal Staff, representatives from Municipal Council, and community stakeholders was created to guide the CISDP process. A research and consultation process included the following activities summarized here and documented in the CISDP Foundations report that supports and precedes this plan:



- summarizing the legislative framework applicable to local, provincial and national policies;
- reviewing trends and best practices in community improvement and streetscape design employed in other jurisdictions;
- recording the general public's and community stakeholders' responses to an introductory open house, online survey, and meeting with the public and Council to confirm and validate directions;
- conducting a comprehensive site inventory to determine and document existing land uses, occupancies, architectural conditions, and quality of landscaping and associated features within the Study Area;
- conducting a SWOT/sustainability analysis based upon findings from consultations, site visits, and discussions with the Steering Committee; and
- identifying a number of potential tools for the Municipality to promote and support the enhancement of the Community Improvement Project Area.

Based on the Foundations Report, this CISDP was developed. A draft copy was reviewed by the public and Council prior to its finalization.

## 1.5 DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

To create the foundational basis for the CISDP, a number of legislative and policy-related documents were reviewed including:

Legislative	Policy & Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Act, 2001</li> <li>• Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990</li> <li>• Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990</li> <li>• Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</li> <li>• Development Charges Act, 1997</li> <li>• Brownfields Statute Law Amendment Act, S.O. 2001</li> <li>• Tax Increment Finance Act, S.O. 2006</li> <li>• Ontario Reg. 608/06, Development Permits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Policy Statement, 2005</li> <li>• County of Huron Official Plan</li> <li>• Municipality of South Huron Official Plan</li> <li>• Municipality of South Huron Zoning By-law</li> <li>• Municipality of South Huron Strategic Plan 2010-2014</li> <li>• Take Action for a Sustainable Huron</li> <li>• Downtown Exeter's Trade Area Report (Draft)</li> <li>• SHARE BR+E: South Huron Business Retention &amp; Expansion</li> <li>• Geometric Design Standards for Ontario Highways Manual</li> <li>• Ontario Traffic Manual Book #11 (Pavement, Hazard and Delineation Markings)</li> </ul>

## 1.6 SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

A targeted community engagement and feedback program was initiated at the onset of the planning process, which carried through the entire period in which the CISDP was being developed. The following efforts were undertaken:

- A Public Open House on June 30, 2011 that was attended by over 50 individuals representing business owners and the general public.
- A workshop with the BIA and Council on December 5, 2011.
- Written submissions directed through the Main Streets Exeter website
- Regular meetings with the CISDP Steering Committee made up of Municipal and Main Streets Exeter staff, Council, and local stakeholders.
- A public meeting on May 28, 2012 in accordance with the statutory requirements prescribed through the Planning Act (refer to Appendix C for a summary of this event); and
- A final presentation to Council for the adoption of the CISDP.

The following graphics illustrate key themes that emerged from the June Open Houses, with the most prevalent themes shown in the larger text fonts.

### Local Strengths & Values Articulated through the Public Open House



### Local Improvements Suggested through the Public Open House



## 1.7 REPORT ORGANIZATION

The CISDP is organized into the following Sections.

**Section 1    The Plan**

Introduces the Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan along with its purpose, methodologies and overall organization of the report.

**Section 2    The Framework**

Contains the document's strategic framework, based upon principles of sustainability and alignment to other County and Municipal frameworks.

**Section 3    The Context**

Discusses key characteristics that influence the context in which the Plan has been prepared.

**Section 4    The Streetscape**

Identifies key elements of a high quality streetscape, along with several conceptual designs that will guide the Municipality in achieving its goals of developing a vibrant public realm.

**Section 5    The Incentives**

Articulates several incentives to assist the private sector play a role in community improvement, as permitted under the Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

**Section 6    The Implementation Plan**

Presents key tasks that should be completed for the Plan to be implemented and realize its full potential surrounding public and private sector improvements, along with a discussion on how to market the Plan to build its profile and awareness within the community.



## 2.0

# THE FRAMEWORK



This Section contains the planning framework and describes the vision, goals, and principles for developing the CISDP.

## 2.1 PLANNING & DESIGN VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan (CISDP) is based upon a Vision brought forward by Main Streets Exeter, along with supporting Goals and Objectives. This strategic framework has been validated through the public consultations held for this process, and represents the foundational elements of the CISDP through which plans and activities can be developed.<sup>4</sup>

A **Vision** captures a compelling description of how the municipality and its partners would like to be viewed. The vision portrays what the collective of staff and community feels is important and is set to inspire, determine priorities, and allocate resources, guide efforts and future plans. The CISDP Vision is as follows.

### **The Heart of the Community!**

A friendly, bustling place for all kinds of people to live, work, shop and enjoy. Our main streets are rich in character and tradition and support an active, healthy lifestyle. The trail system reaches into the downtown, enabling people to walk or cycle to the surrounding natural areas.

### **A Vibrant Commercial Centre!**

Exeter offers things to see and do no matter what the season. With over two hundred shops, professional services and exceptional dining, Exeter has something for everyone. The community's rural roots are evident from the main street farmers' market that attracts both residents and visitors.

### **A Sustainable Community with a Bright Future!**

The pursuit of just the right balance between economic, environmental and social priorities moves us ever forward.

**Goals** are intended to specifically articulate ways in which a Vision can be realized. The overall goal of the CISDP is to focus on key issues and opportunities that are of immediate and near-term priority. As set out in the Study Terms of Reference, the CISDP Goals are:

1. to facilitate the emergence of a stronger local economy;
2. to encourage reinvestment and new investment in the commercial district;
3. to retain and expand upon the trade area and its customer base;
4. to increase tourism and elevate the community's status as a day or weekend 'Destination';
5. to attract and provide for more and longer term visits to Exeter by people involved in business, social services, cultural and artistic pursuit;
6. to protect and enhance the heritage character of heritage buildings;

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<sup>4</sup> The vision, goals and objectives constitute a strategic framework for the CISDP in keeping with other planning frameworks guiding the Municipality and the County contained within Official Plans, Strategic Plans and documents such as the Take Action for a Sustainable Huron report.

7. to harmonize the north and south commercial districts aesthetically and visually into a single commercial area with an appropriate heritage theme; to encourage more diversity in land use and in community activities; and
8. to encourage and support a mix of housing types within the commercial district with an emphasis on high density intensified residential development and affordability.

A set of **Objectives** has been established through the Terms of Reference in support of progress and ultimately the realization of the CISDP vision and goals. The Objectives of the CISDP are:

- a. to encourage building rehabilitation, development, and redevelopment by providing support and advice;
- b. to encourage building rehabilitation, development, and redevelopment by providing incentives as defined herein;
- c. to work closely with the Exeter Business Improvement Association (BIA) and the South Huron Heritage Advisory Committee, to monitor the condition of heritage buildings, their facades and associated signage to promote their preservation and enhancement;
- d. to add new programs for heritage and facade enhancement if monitoring shows that to be necessary;
- e. to monitor the condition of streetscape, public buildings and public space and to approve capital projects and to introduce programs that enhance these aspects of the downtown;
- f. to encourage the expansion of the Business Improvement Area to encompass appropriate development on Main Street and Thames Road;
- g. to develop supportive Zoning and Official Plan policies that encourage and permit residential intensification projects within the commercial district; and to explore the benefits of implementing a Development Permit System.

## 2.2 THE SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Framework, defined as the Vision and Objectives, ties into a greater framework at the Municipal and County level. The County of Huron recently prepared a report entitled Take Action for a Sustainable Huron (2010) that was accepted by its Council as a framework document to provide guidance in becoming a more sustainably progressive community. Ten key goal areas were identified, many of which have relevance to the CISDP, consisting of Economy, Transportation, Agriculture, Energy, Liveable Communities, Natural Environment, Population, Downtowns, Community Needs, and Healthy Active Communities.

Furthermore, the concept of sustainability is reflected through numerous other overarching documents, notably the County and Municipal Official Plans (promoting elements of pedestrian-oriented environments, mixed use, respect for the environment, etc.) and the Municipal Strategic Plan. These documents recognize that economic success is also tied into the overall vibrancy of the community as a whole.

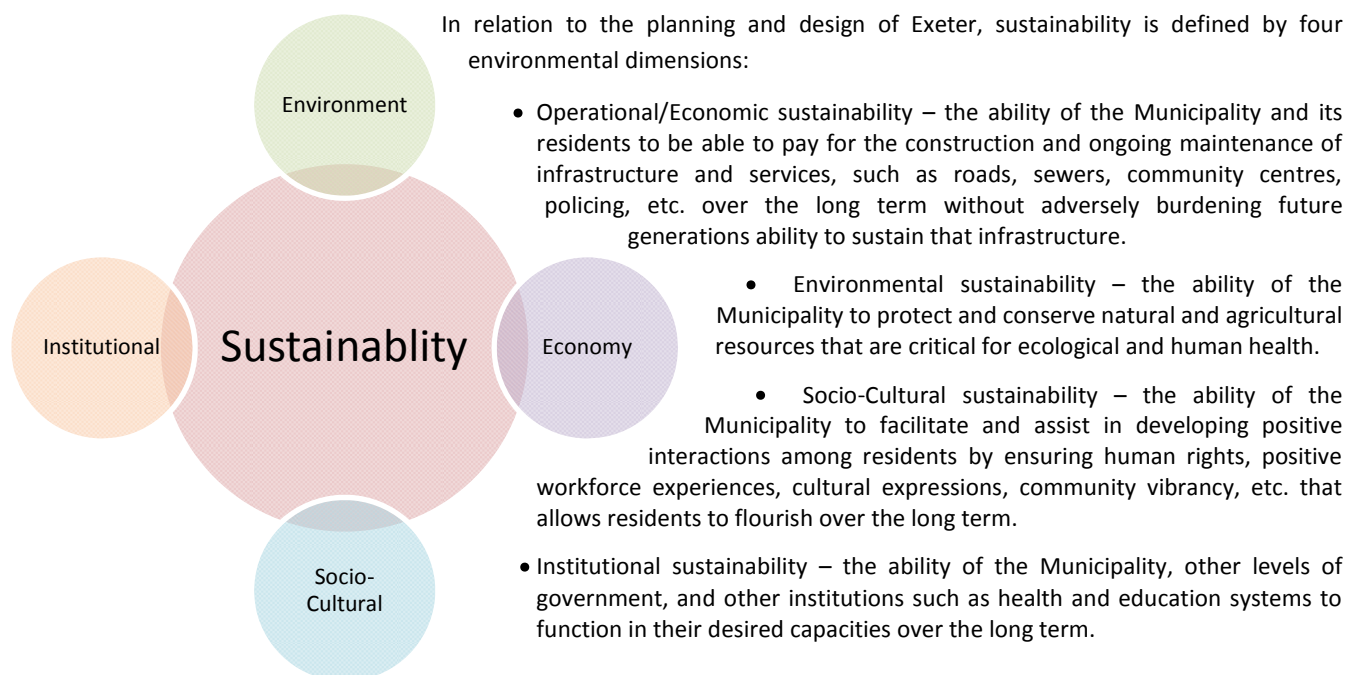
To guide the CISDP, a framework based upon the concept of sustainability has been developed with six key planning and design principles. These principles provide a rational basis for decision-making, associated action, review and evaluation. The principles are based on fundamental values pertaining to human-environment interaction and ultimately our quality of life.

1. Sustainable Development
2. Smart Growth
3. Community Vibrancy
4. Mixed-Use Public Realms
5. Inclusive Places to Live
6. Ecological Democracy

### Principle 1: Sustainable Development

Sustainability is a comprehensive idea related to human-environment interaction that is being embraced as a civic principle, both at the County and Municipal levels, through updated Official Plans and documents such as the Take Action Report. At its most fundamental level, achieving sustainability would mean a state of harmony has been realized between people, their cultural and economic activity, and their built and natural communities, or more generally, between humans and nature.<sup>5</sup>

In relation to the planning and design of Exeter, sustainability is defined by four environmental dimensions:



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<sup>5</sup> Sustainability may be so open to interpretation based on our ever-changing awareness and understanding of human-environment interaction that the goal of achieving it is never fully realized. Nevertheless, the idea of sustainability is worthy and perhaps increasingly necessary for motivating and guiding us in such things as the physical planning and design of our communities; in this case, Exeter's main streets.

### Principle 2: Smart Growth



The process of balancing, accommodating and directing growth<sup>6</sup> as required for sustainability is known as Smart Growth. It is a planning and design approach that advances compact development models with the goal of enhancing quality of life as communities grow. Exeter is already a compact community, a built form that needs to be maintained and supported by adhering to Smart Growth principles. This CISDP relates especially to the following principles echoed throughout the Sustainability Framework. The Smart Growth Network, an advocacy group based in the United States, offers the following smart growth principles which are all applicable to the Municipality of South Huron:

- Create a Range of **Housing** Opportunities and Choices
- Create **Walkable** Neighbourhoods
- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong **Sense of Place**
- Encourage Community and Stakeholder **Collaboration**
- Make Development **Decisions** Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective
- **Mix** Land Uses
- **Preserve** Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
- Provide a Variety of **Transportation** Choices
- Strengthen and **Direct Development** Towards Existing Communities
- Take Advantage of **Compact** Building Design<sup>7</sup>

### Principle 3: Community Vibrancy

The creation of vibrant, healthy and active communities is one of the desired outcomes of community improvement, and is a goal that is consistent with sustainable urban development. A number of land-use components influence human activity, facilitate healthy lifestyles, and promote social interaction and inclusion, including:

- layout, design, connectivity and maintenance of motorized and non-motorized transportation systems (e.g. roads, sidewalks, trails, etc.);
- land uses that combine a mix of uses such as homes, stores, businesses, institutions, community and cultural facilities;
- compactness, density and accessibility of built areas;
- access to recreational facilities and green spaces;

<sup>6</sup> Specific population forecasts are not available for Exeter, though the Municipality's population as a whole is expected to grow to 11,526 people by the year 2031 (County of Huron Official Plan, 5 Year Review: Amendment No. 3).<sup>6</sup> How Exeter grows and develops will affect its urban form. Historically, new housing has been provided through low density forms with some densification through town houses and low rise, multi-family residences. This approach, typical of many communities in Canada, has been successful for land developers but generates costs in terms of required public infrastructure and municipal services, along with the loss of natural and agricultural lands. Such development practices are now generally regarded as being unsustainable.

<sup>7</sup> Smart Growth Online (A Service of the Smart Growth Network). Smart Growth Principles. Accessed August 19, 2010 from <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/default.asp?res=1280>.



- safe, comfortable and attractive streets, public spaces, buildings and structures; and
- healthy and resilient natural environments and biodiversity.<sup>8</sup>

Quality of life in Exeter is heightened potentially when attention is paid to the above characteristics consistent with the principles of sustainability and ecological democracy. A streetscape and broader public realm that reflects a vibrant community attracts visitors, prospective residents and businesses.

### Principle 4: Mixed-Use Public Realms

Traditional or exclusive zoning concentrates and separates seemingly incompatible land use. While this has had some benefits, the separation of heavy industrial land use and residential land use, for example, exclusive zoning in conjunction with land economics has resulted in urban sprawl with its associated issues:

- inefficient use of land associated with the extension of infrastructure;
- longer travel times to jobs, schools and other essential services;
- the reliance on the automobile; and
- destruction of ecosystems.



Exeter's Main Street exemplifies how multiple uses are integrated within individual blocks. Such a diverse main street predates the land use exclusivity and car reliance of suburban forms of development. Maintaining and supporting the diverse land use within Exeter's Main Street corridor is vital to community well-being as it offers a variety of lifestyle and employment opportunities to current and future citizens.

Variety in land use is encouraged, however, the actual mix of use would depend upon site context; for example, Exeter's historic commercial core as compared to the highway commercial district north of the Ausable River. Mixed use developments can consist of horizontal and vertical mixed uses:

- **Horizontal** mixed use - permitting a variety of uses within a zoning district, such as retail/office within a low density residential subdivision.
- **Vertical** mixed use - different uses within a small building footprint but higher elevation, such as a building with ground floor retail and office/residential on the upper floor (Vertical mixed use is typical of many storefront spaces along Main Street).

The South Huron Official Plan and Exeter Zoning By-law contain provisions to allow residential units in commercial uses, provided that they are located either behind or above of the commercial use. This practice is also endorsed in the County's Housing Strategy (2006) which states that the County and area municipalities should encourage the renovation of the upper floors of buildings in commercial areas and main streets.

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<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing & Ontario Professional Planners Institute. Planning By Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook. Fall 2009.

### Principle 5: Inclusive Places to Live

The creation of a vibrant public realm necessitates land use diversity, through which the provision of a range of housing choices is a central element. Providing a diverse mix of housing is essential for encouraging and maintaining a diverse population.

An interesting trend in many municipalities, particularly those with rural characteristics like South Huron, is the increasing population of older adults and seniors despite an overall decline in the community population. As such, a situation is expected to arise whereby the demand for housing favoured by younger households may actually drop while the need for older adult and seniors-oriented developments may increase. The Official Plan and Zoning By-law, therefore, should position the Municipality to flexibly adapt its existing housing stock to accommodate accessory units (such as “in-law” or “granny” suites). This would also facilitate the sustainability goal of people remaining in their neighbourhoods to ‘age in place’.

The need to consider affordable housing is important in facilitating inclusive and integrated living. The Municipality of South Huron Official Plan, however, does not appear to specifically encourage the provision of affordable housing. Through the Official Plan Review it is suggested that affordable housing be defined and encouraged, where practical, to provide opportunities for the production of affordable new housing units that contribute to the attainment of affordable housing targets established by the County of Huron. This would allow general conformity to the Huron County Housing Strategy<sup>9</sup> which articulates a theme for additional affordable housing opportunities.

Based upon the County’s Housing Strategy, integration of inclusive housing within the CISDP Project Area is advocated through the promotion of a mix of owner-occupied and rental housing stock and development of multi-unit dwellings. As an implementing tool, the Municipality could create incentives for developments to offer multiple housing types, even in infill situations through application of dimensional standards. For example, in addition to heights and setbacks, definitions of smaller lot sizes and shorter distances between detached dwelling units could be set out in the zoning by-law). Furthermore, provisions based on Section 37 of the *Planning Act* could be used to encourage additional units to be provided to vulnerable population groups requiring affordable and accessible housing units.

### Principle 6: Ecological Democracy

Ecological democracy<sup>10</sup> is a summary planning and design principle that has guided the thinking behind this streetscape plan. The words ecological and democracy are combined to reinforce the inseparability of persons and place. It is advocated that all physical planning and design be grounded in the ecological reality of places and the democratic involvement of citizens in decision-making and choice.

Ecological democracy as applied in this streetscape plan is defined by fourteen more specific principles, defined as follows:

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<sup>9</sup> County of Huron. [A Housing Strategy for the County of Huron](#). 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Randolph Hester. 2006, *Design for Ecological Democracy*. The MIT Press.

- 1) **Adaptability:** This is achieved through maintaining flexibility; being able to accommodate change while maintaining a place's fundamental form and genius. An adaptable place is resilient.  
**Action:** Propose a comprehensive streetscape design implemented through simple and cumulative or adaptive interventions responsive and appropriate to each district.
  
- 2) **Centredness:** Centres are essential to a community's social and economic well-being. A centre should be accessible to everyone. It should encourage and support frequent use through a diverse mix of services. Informal and formal social interaction is accommodated in a center. There should be an obvious logic to the layout of a centre; its entrances and exits are important. There should be uniformity to the built form and buildings should reflect community values. Natural landscape provides context for built form.  
**Action:** Enhance Exeter's historic core and especially the civic building complex to reinforce the area as the town centre.
  
- 3) **Connectedness:** Each element of a landscape is affected in some way by another aspect of that landscape. Recognizing social and ecological connections will benefit a place. Attention is paid to what goes together. Streets are critical to movement and communication. The design of transportation corridors must be inclusive of pedestrians and bicycles.  
**Action:** Reinforce Main Street as the central, connecting axis through streetscape design.
  
- 4) **Density & Smallness:** Resilience depends on a relatively high density of population in a small concentrated space. Living in dense concentrations protects biodiversity, access to nature, supports centredness and reduces transportation and health costs.  
**Action:** Use gardens and open areas, street trees and traffic calming to enhance the perception of Exeter's smallness.
  
- 5) **Ecological Literacy:** The act of making urban ecological principles part of our daily lives contributes to ecological literacy. Ecological literacy is essential for making good planning and design decisions.  
**Action:** Maintain and highlight the Ausable River watershed through the extension of the existing trail system.
  
- 6) **Everyday Future:** This refers to the necessity of ground planning and design ideas and visions in the reality of daily life and experience.  
**Action:** Offer flexible planning and design solutions that may be implemented incrementally and creatively in conjunction with necessary and ongoing programs such as facilities maintenance and infrastructure renewal.
  
- 7) **Fairness:** Equal access to information is critical for involvement in public activity. A well-informed public is crucial to democracy. Planners and designers should engage people in proposed projects and better ensure that resources and amenities are distributed fairly.  
**Action:** Provide the planning mechanisms allowing for participation in community improvement and enhancement.
  
- 8) **Naturalness:** The enjoyment of nature contributes to longer, healthier lives. Greener places are healthier places.  
**Action:** Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.

- 9) Pacing:** The pace of urban life seems to be accelerating with detrimental effects on health. Vitality is not measured by speed. Calmness is a positive value that may be upheld through planning and design. Traffic calming is an example. Walking is a calmer and healthier way of moving. In general, reducing the emphasis on the car and creating pedestrian-oriented streets encourages active but calmer living.
- Action:** Encourage walking in keeping with the scale and walkability of Exeter.
- 10) Particularity:** Places are particular to their landscapes. The better a place fits into its unique natural ecosystem, the more distinctive it will be. Scale is implicated in this principle as is adaptation and conformity to local and regional biophysical systems.
- Action:** Utilize this CIDSP as it is particular to Exeter.
- 11) Sacredness:** Sacred places embody our highest values, virtues and convictions; it is about shared experiences and identity. Identifying and acknowledging sacred places is important for communities and residents alike. Natural boundaries are a common element of sacred places as are social and cultural connections. Planners typically take a functional or economic approach to planning; however, with the inclusion of sacred places, the decision-making process must include social, ecological and spiritual dimensions. Sacredness gives life to public participation and reveals the true sense of place, sense of wholeness or essence of place, within a community.
- Action:** Respect, protect, celebrate and incorporate Exeter's sacred places.
- 12) Sensible Status-Seeking:** Action should be based on a realistic sense of collective identity. Misguided status seekers jeopardize the identity of a place while often wasting resources. Bigger or newer is not better. Rarity is special and it should remain in the public domain if not by ownership then by design.
- Action:** Be sensible, community improvement happens incrementally and strategically.
- 13) Selective Diversity:** Diverse communities are resilient, they are also more distinctive. Diversity should respond to local cultural needs. Biodiversity is essential to the health of communities and ultimately their wealth.
- Action:** Maintain and extend diversity while attending to the need for unity or harmony throughout the streetscape.
- 14) Stewardship:** Stewardship is defined as actions taken to maintain, restore and improve a community, landscape or ecosystem. Caring and civic responsibility is inferred, a sense of personal fulfillment may result. The purpose of stewardship is to counteract the negative impact that we have had on the earth.
- Action:** Implement the Community Improvement and Streetscape Design Plan.

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## 3.0 THE CONTEXT



This Section contains the context for developing the CISDP. It includes a background of the Municipality, a description of the project area and planning districts, and discusses key characteristics that influence the context in which the Plan has been prepared.

### 3.1 MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

Located in Huron County, the Municipality of South Huron is home to approximately 9,982 people. Amalgamated in 2001, the Municipality is comprised of the former Village of Exeter and the former rural Townships of Stephen and Usborne. In 2006, Exeter was home to an estimated 5,061 residents<sup>11</sup>, representing the largest and only urban settlement in the Municipality. The Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan focuses upon the Main Street corridor (Provincial Highway #4) and the Thames Road (County Road 83) corridor within the community of Exeter, which is located in the northern part of South Huron.

The Main Street corridor between Thames Road East to the north, and Waterloo Street to the south is the primary location of Exeter's business community. Beginning with the first general store opened in 1847 by Isaac Carling, the commercial corridor was home to the usual shops and services one would find in small Upper Canada towns and villages. Today, the local business community services a population of over 14,000 people from up to 20 kilometres away.

Exeter's commercial district is diverse. At its core, Main Street is characterized by small shops and restaurants that front onto the sidewalk, providing the community with its pedestrian-oriented small-town look and feel. At its north end, Main Street intersects Thames Road which fronts a number of light industrial and large-format retail uses. At the south end of Main Street, car dealerships and a farm implement dealer define the entrance to town. In between a range of home occupation and conversion uses characterize the street. Landmark buildings and green spaces are significant as is the potential for mixed use development, infill and intensification.

As with other communities in Ontario, the commercial and community prominence of the 'Main Street' has declined due to changing economies and lifestyles. A result of such changes has been a decline in community growth both in terms of population and business. This Community Improvement and Streetscape Design Plan represents an acknowledgement of change<sup>12</sup> and a step in the direction of a desired future of South Huron's own making.



*Photo Source: Warwick Bros. & Rutter Limited Publishing*

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<sup>11</sup> Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. 2009. Downtown Exeter's Trade Area Report: Analyzing Local Market Conditions for Effective Downtown Revitalization (Draft).

<sup>12</sup> A study assumption is that planning policies and programs aimed at stimulating economic development and revitalization could result in population retention minimally and growth optimally.

### 3.2 CISDP PROJECT AREA

The Community Improvement Project Area includes all properties that front along Main Street and Thames Road, as well as all properties on the east side of William Street and west side of Andrew Street. This Study Area is bound by the settlement area

**Figure 2: Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan Project Area**



*Note: this Community Improvement Project Area is also referred to as the CISDP Project Area*

boundaries of Exeter in the north and south, which represent the gateways to the commercial district. This boundary not only represents the location of most commercial and industrial activity in Exeter, but includes a number of Exeter's most historical commercial and residential buildings.

Municipal Staff and its partners have identified properties contained within the Study Area as having a significant impact in establishing a strong commercial corridor that includes the downtown core and a commercial/industrial node in the north. The adjacent map illustrates the proposed boundary for the Community Improvement Project Area (also referred to in this document as the CISDP Project Area).

#### Districts within the Project Area

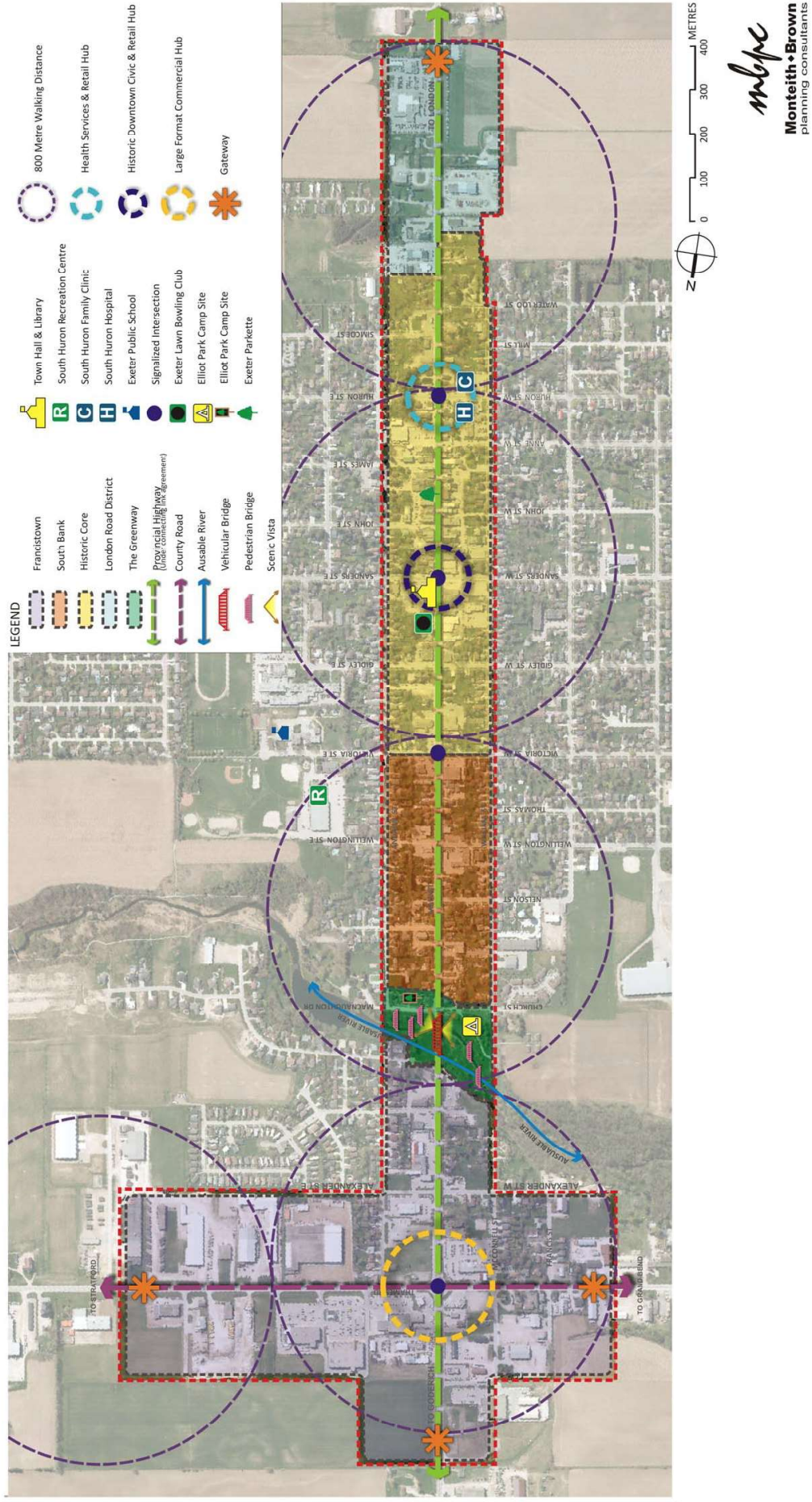
In light of the CISDP area inventory and analysis, and in relation to information and experiences offered through public consultation, five community improvement and streetscape districts became evident. From the south, the districts are labelled:

- 1) London Road District
- 2) Historic Core
- 3) South Bank
- 4) The Greenway
- 5) Francistown District

These community improvement and streetscape districts divide the study area into districts (Figure 4, on the following page) based primarily on land use, landscape character and community heritage. This division informs project conceptualization through to implementation, decision-making and management.



Figure 3: Spatial Analysis & Boundaries Map



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## London Road District



The southern boundary of Exeter to Waterloo Street is the London Road District of the CISDP area. It is an area defined largely by land use rather than street pattern. Visually this district is defined by highway commercial uses. As Exeter's boundary land use has extended into the countryside a number of rural residential dwellings have been incorporated. The area presents a transition landscape, from rural to more urban. Its components sites are diverse in age, architecture, scale, and site plan orientation.

The age and character of the landscape is as diverse as its commercial uses:

- the west side landscape is mostly rural - fields and hedgerows;
- the east side landscape varies from naturalized edges on property boundaries, to maintained residential front lawns, to commercial tree and shrub plantings as required by site plan approval.

There is very little sense of arrival to Exeter at the south entrance, with only a single highway sign and an Elm tree to suggest the presence of settlement.

## Historic Core



This Historic Core district represents the original core of Exeter, with some of the Town's oldest buildings dating back to 1855. The district is considered to be bound by Waterloo Street to the south, Victoria Street to the north, and all properties that front on to the east side of William Street and the west side of Andrew Street. The Historic Core demonstrates the evolution of the village in response to road travelers, an increase in local population following the subdivision of surrounding land and to commercial and industrial growth supported by the construction of the railway. The Historic Core continuum is evident in the brick buildings of the nineteenth and twentieth century. There is diversity within the core, most notably:

- the density of specialty shops and pedestrian scale atmosphere between Anne Street and Sanders Street Core, that serve local needs;
- The landscape character on the west side of Main Street that is defined by the original pattern of residential lots;
- a variety of 'new' development opportunities stemming from the loss of original buildings along Main Street, including some that have contributed positively to the streetscape such as the Parkette; and
- a municipal 'hub' defined by Exeter's Town Hall, public library, and post office at the intersection of Sanders Street and Main Street.



### South Bank



The South Bank is bound by Victoria Street to the south and Church Street to the north and encompasses all properties situated on the east side of William Street and west side of Andrew Street. This district represents a transition area from Main Street Centre because of its diversity of residential and commercial architecture and land use residential dwellings

The residential architectural fabric of this area is mostly late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> century with some post-war houses. The older commercial architecture is often sited appropriately to blend into the traditional residential development pattern whereas the more contemporary redevelopment sites stand out. The range of shops and services as well as the park system at the north end of Main Street offers an opportunity to enhance the districts' walkability by reinforcing the street qualities of Andrew and William Streets. These two streets are characterized by generous roadways, grass and treed boulevards and wide front lawns with extensive mature landscaping. This character is possible on Main Street and is already present in some parts.

### The Greenway



The most distinctive aspect of the Greenway landscape is the Ausable River valley with its parkland and gardens. The topography of the valley frames the landscape with long views along the river. It reorients the Main Street traveler's landscape perception east-west rather than the north-south orientation of Main Street. The Greenway is characterized by the river and its associated parkland and open space. The land use is primarily recreational: Elliot Park located on the west side of the Greenway offers camping space; McNaughton Park includes the show gardens by the Exeter Lions Club, linkage to the swimming pool and the McNaughton Trail to Morrison Dam. Five wooden bridges throughout the Greenway provide pedestrian routes across the Ausable River.

The concrete bridge on Main Street channels vehicular and pedestrian traffic; it could serve traffic calming purposes. The bridge with its flower boxes and event banner is a landmark along the road and contributes significantly to Exeter's identity, while serving as a transition point and gateway along Main Street.

### Francistown

The name Francistown for Exeter's most northerly district acknowledges the community's history. This district is bound by the town's northern boundary, the northern edge of McNaughton Park, the eastern and western entrances to Exeter on Thames Road at Rosemont Avenue and approximately 150 metres west of Francis Street respectively.

In addition to a range of residential dwellings and large industrial uses, the Francistown District encompasses the most recent commercial development in Exeter with additional vacant lands providing opportunities for further expansion and

development. A range of highway commercial uses are found in the Francistown District, some of which are found typically in low density, vehicle-oriented communities. The largest group of industrial land uses is found along Thames Road east of Main Street. The density of this land use on the south side of Thames Road suggests an industrial park and presents opportunities to improve the landscape to reflect a designed streetscape like those found in contemporary, urban, industrial parks.

The district has Exeter's other 'hub', marked by the intersection of Highway 4 and County Road 83, which functions as a centre for commercial activity. The sense of place in this district is related to the scale and function of vehicles, notably different than the heritage character enjoyed in Exeter's Historic Core.

### 3.3 EXISTING LAND USE

The Municipality of South Huron Official Plan contains a number of land use designations, many of which are present in the CISDP Project Area (also known as the Community Improvement Project Area). These designations include Residential, Core Commercial, Highway Commercial, Industrial, Community Facility, and Urban Natural Environment & Open Space (shown in Schedule C of the Official Plan, illustrating the land use plan for the Exeter Ward). The CISDP Project Area is typically characterized by:

- Residential land uses concentrated on the blocks abutting William Street and Andrew Street, though some residentially designated land fronts Main Street north of Wellington Street.
- Core Commercial land uses concentrated along Main Street, generally between Church Street to the north and Waterloo Street to the south.
- Highway Commercial lands at polar ends of the Project area, notably north of the Ausable River and south of Waterloo Street.
- Community Facility designations spread throughout, with notable sites being the Town Hall & Library complex at the intersection of Main Street and Sanders Street, as well as the Hospital at Huron Street and William Street.
- Urban Natural Environment & Open Space lands associated with the Exeter BIA Parkette and the large green space surrounding the Ausable River.
- An Industrial designation at the intersection of Walper Street and McConnell Street.

A detailed description of these land uses and their implementing policies are contained throughout the Official Plan.

Figure 4: Existing Land Uses in Comparison to Official Plan Designation



The Figure on the preceding page identifies the land uses that currently exist within the Project Area. Understanding the make-up of existing land uses and obtaining an accurate snapshot of the Project Area assists with the formation of effective recommendations. Through an analysis of land uses within the Project Area, a number of areas have identifiable inconsistencies with the designations set out in 'Schedule C' of the Official Plan. Areas where inconsistencies exist have been mapped on the preceding figure, and are articulated using a hatched boundary which denotes the land use designation in the Official Plan.

A few of the land uses which are located in the Project Area are presently inconsistent with the Official Plan designations, largely due to two primary scenarios:

- i. An existing legal non-conforming use is in place where the Municipality has identified a desired use for future development while respecting the right of the existing use to continue in its present state (e.g. residential uses in the south end were constructed prior to the lands being designated for Highway Commercial); or
- ii. Where the existing uses have been approved by Council through amendments to the Official Plan and/or Zoning By-law pursuant to a formal review process.

Lastly, there are 6 vacant commercial units in Project Area at the time of writing, all of which are located in the Historic Core. As indicated in the Exeter Trade Area Report, Exeter's commercial main street has a very low vacancy rate. Vacant properties present opportunities for accommodating new businesses and/or redevelopment of the storefronts in a manner that is consistent with the CISDP objectives; the availability of certain financial incentives, such as those articulated in subsequent sections of this report, could attract new businesses to the area.

### 3.4 ZONING

The Exeter Zoning By-law #30 (consolidated December 2010), as amended, is the legal tool that implements the policies of the Official Plan. As such, the Zoning By-law influences built form, therefore specific recommendations and policies contained within the Community Improvement Plan must have consideration for this important document.

The Zoning By-law divides the municipality into different land use zones with detailed maps. It specifies the permitted uses (e.g. commercial or residential), the required performance standards (e.g. building size and location) and parking requirements in each zone. The following zones are present in the CIP Project Area:

- Residential Low Density (R1)
- Residential Medium Density (R2)
- Retail Commercial-General (C1)
- Highway Commercial (C5)
- Restricted Industrial (M1)
- General Industrial (M2)
- Institutional
- Open Space (OS)
- Hazard Land (HL)



### 3.5 THE BUILT FORM



A range of buildings and architectural styles were identified through observations conducted during the walking tour of the Project Area, a majority of which appear to be in good condition cosmetically. The mix of one and two-storey buildings have varied periods of construction, generally between the early 1850s to late 1900s, contribute to Exeter's unique character. Yellow brick is typical as it was a popular building material during Exeter's early formative period. Architectural styles include:

- *Gothic Revival* - a common architectural style found in the Historic Core, popular from the mid 1700s to early 1900s. This style is commonly identified by the centred gable roof and rounded windows, some with decorative window surrounds. Some modern buildings found elsewhere in the Project Area have taken design cues from the Gothic Revival period.
- *Victorian* - also prevalent in the Historic Core is Victorian architecture, popular during the mid to late 1800s. These dwellings were typically built from yellow brick and were commonly seen with a porch or veranda.
- *Victory Housing* - found outside of the Historic Core, these were a government response after the Second World War to providing low-cost, pre-fabricated housing for the working class. The Victory architecture was often small, one to one-and-a-half storey dwellings with steep roofs and no dormers.
- *Bungalow and Suburban* - commonly built between the 1900s to present time, these are still a widely-used architectural style and are found throughout the Project Area (primarily in the north and south ends as well as along William Street and Andrew Street), boasting a diverse range of details.
- *Renaissance Revival* - these buildings, constructed from the same yellow brick used for residential dwellings located in the Project Area, represents an architectural style from the Renaissance Revival period, popular during the 1870s to early 1910. This architectural style was common for commercial main street buildings and urban centres, adopting design cues from the Italianate building style.
- *Large Format Commercial* - typical large format style big box stores are located at the north end of the CISDP Project Area with the exception of a few commercial uses along Main Street such as the Foodland grocery store, dollar discounts, and plazas.

Observations of the CISDP Project Area suggest that the majority of the buildings are generally well kept with no buildings showing a high degree of disrepair or deterioration. The presence of buildings that are kept in good condition and accentuating key architectural detailing contributes to the sense of place, resulting in a functional and attractive streetscape.

### Historical Characteristics

One of the key themes of the Project Area that was raised in the public consultation session was the importance of the community's heritage core with regard to the historical architecture and key details such as the yellow brick. Many residents understand that the preservation of this historical character is critical to maintaining Exeter's unique identity in an evolving environment and in instances where development is being undertaken. The *Ontario Heritage Act* provides guidance and the legislative framework for historical conservation and preservation in Ontario. Within the CISDP Project Area, Town Hall is presently the only designated heritage property under the *Heritage Act*, though the structures that have been built over the past century are indicative of the historical character upon which the downtown was originally built.

The South Huron Official Plan contains policies relating to ***Heritage Resources***, the goals of which include promoting awareness and preservation of historic elements of the built environment, in order to ensure that present and future generations are able to appreciate and enjoy the Municipality's heritage resources. It is a policy of the Official Plan to enhance opportunities for economic diversity by preserving the Municipality's unique rural and small town atmosphere, including its heritage features, and preserving the well being of downtowns and main streets by appropriate regulation of non-core development.

Some buildings may be potential candidates for formal designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, given they are found to have well maintained exteriors, facades, materials, and details that merit further study to determine their historical value. The identification of potential properties to be designated would further assist with the preservation of Exeter's historical architecture. A significant number of older historical buildings in the Project Area have had modifications to the original building that are not in keeping with the architectural style and diminish the building's historical value. Some of these modifications include vinyl additions to the rear, sides, or front (although in some instances, owners matched the colour of brick as best as they could), new windows and paint, and front porches.



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# 4.0

## THE STREETScape



Identifies key elements of a high quality streetscape, along with several conceptual designs that will guide the Municipality in achieving its goals of developing a vibrant public realm.

## 4.1 STREETScape DESIGN

Urban design has come to refer to the comprehensive planning and design of urban environments with a focus on their sustainability. It may also be referred to as sustainable urbanism or landscape urbanism. The planning and design principles advocated in this plan are urban design principles.

Streetscape is a collective term for a street landscape, a fundamental component of any urban area. Streetscapes have character that may be identified in relation to their individual landscape elements; for example, the combinations of Exeter's buildings, trees, street lights and so on. It is the combinations of streetscape elements particular to Exeter that led to the identification of different street districts. Diversity within Exeter's streetscape exists and should remain. The challenge with five identifiable streetscape districts is to achieve a sense of unity or harmony within that diverse streetscape.

The citizens of Exeter are concerned about the design quality of their community as demonstrated by the 1978 urban design study and now this CISDP. Exeter's history and the reality of contemporary urban renewal means there will be no wholesale redesign and construction of the area covered by this CISDP in order to achieve a unified streetscape; given that, no wholesale redesign of the area covered by this CISDP is offered. This is not to suggest that there will be no opportunities to make significant changes to the existing situation; for example, infrastructure renewal does provide an opportunity to change things if desired as will be outlined below. In acknowledgement of change occurring incrementally the streetscape design offered is a set of urban design ideas that may be implemented over time, in combinations and as finances allow that will result in a diverse yet unified streetscape.

Streetscape design as conceived in this plan is sustainable design. This denotes an urban design approach attending to the varied dimensions that define Exeter, or at a smaller scale, a site such as the intersection of Main Street and Sanders Street. Every place is defined by its history, physical form, beauty, ecology, economy, society, and culture. Sustainable design requires that people respect the place they live and accept responsibility for its state. This is reinforced by the associated urban design principle of ecological democracy.

## 4.2 DEFINING GATEWAYS

### Using Signage to Define a Gateway

A sense of having arrived at, or departed from, a place is heightened by something noticeable and particular to the place. The most obvious and usual way to announce arrival at a place in Ontario is with a standard place name sign that uses white text on a blue background as with Exeter's signs. Such signs are simple, legible and cost-effective.



The Bayfield sign with its updated font is a good variation of the standard



The Ayton sign expresses a unique character simply and cost-effectively

The standard sign at Exeter's north end is effective because it does not compete visually with other signs; by comparison, the Exeter sign at the south entrance is diminished by the visual clutter of additional signs, especially given their use of blue and white. It is important to locate a place name sign where it does not compete with other signs, be they regulatory or commercial. Examples from other municipalities can help provide good practice examples for Exeter.



Landsaped gateway signs have limited effect generally because the scale is too small for the speed at which viewers are traveling. This decorative approach is more related to residential landscape than civic/streetscape design.



The Owen Sound sign makes use of local stone, though it could become dated because of the text style and marketing slogan. A trendy sign can appear outdated long before its replacement can be justified economically.

It is important to highlight the place name (in this case, Exeter) as part of the Municipality of South Huron. It needs to be communicated as simply, effectively and economically as possible both in terms of design and construction, as is done in the Bayfield and Ayton examples.

A place name sign does indicate arrival at a place but on its own such a sign is not interesting necessarily. What distinguishes communities more significantly is their landscape. That suggests the creation of a community gateway through some combination of place name sign and landscape. The typical interpretation of this is a substantial and unique sign decorated with plants as with Listowel's or Atwood's signs. Of limited effect because of landscape scale and the speed at which viewers are traveling, a decorative approach is related to residential landscape design rather than civic landscapes; a community gateway is part of a civic landscape. It is noted that approval from the Ministry of Transportation may be required depending upon placement of the gateway sign.

### Using Landscape to Define a Gateway

Exeter is approached through a rural landscape characterized by relatively open, level, agricultural land. One of the most distinctive features of southern Ontario's rural landscape is the rows and avenues of large, deciduous, shade trees, such as Sugar



Maples, bordering roads, farms and their laneways. Such trees are a legacy of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century government-sponsored tree planting programs. Most rural communities, such as Exeter, also benefit from street trees planted during the same era of settlement. That legacy is being lost as the trees die or are removed.

The most distinctive and unique element at Exeter's south boundary is a lone elm tree. While the type of tree is significant in itself, due to the loss of so many White or American Elms due to Dutch Elm disease, the grandeur of mature, large deciduous trees is obvious. This tree at Exeter's south entrance coupled with the legacy of tree planting in the rural landscape suggests a simple yet historically relevant landscape approach to highlighting the entrances to Exeter or creating a civic gateway. At each road entrance to Exeter it is recommended that an avenue of large deciduous trees be planted.

A long term sense of place or commitment to place is required for this scheme as it will take decades for the trees to mature. A concept plan of the south entrance to Exeter follows. The actual placement of trees and associated place name sign at each entrance will be influenced by existing infrastructure and land use.

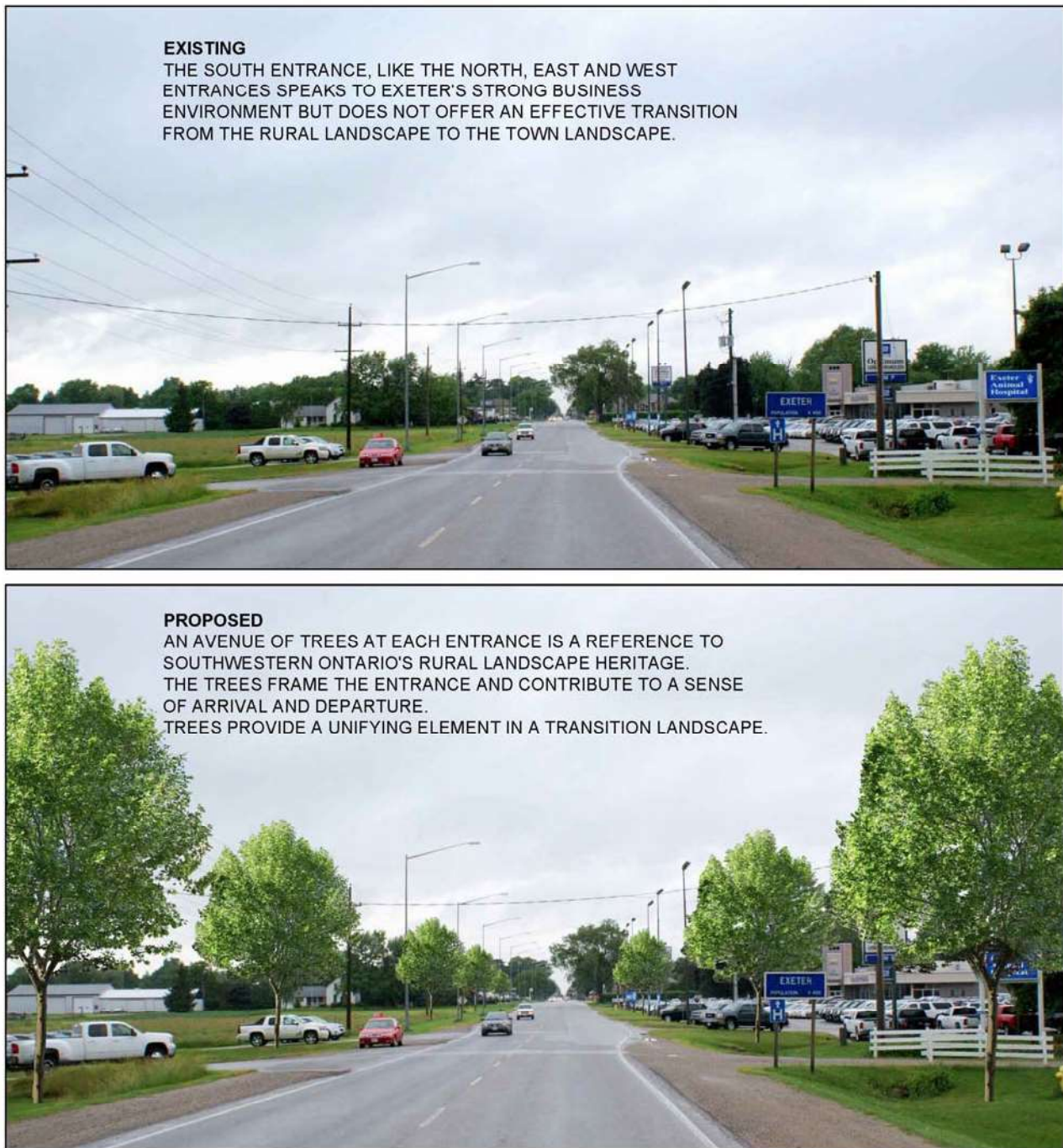


Figure 5: Landscape-Based Gateway Concept for Exeter





Figure 6: Conceptual &amp; Existing Street Tree Planting – Exeter South Gateway



### 4.3 STREETScape ELEMENTS

Arriving on Exeter's Main Street there is noticeable change in landscape scale and enclosure when travelling from the London Road District or Francistown districts to the Historic Core as can be seen in the two images below.



*London Road District*



*Historic Core*



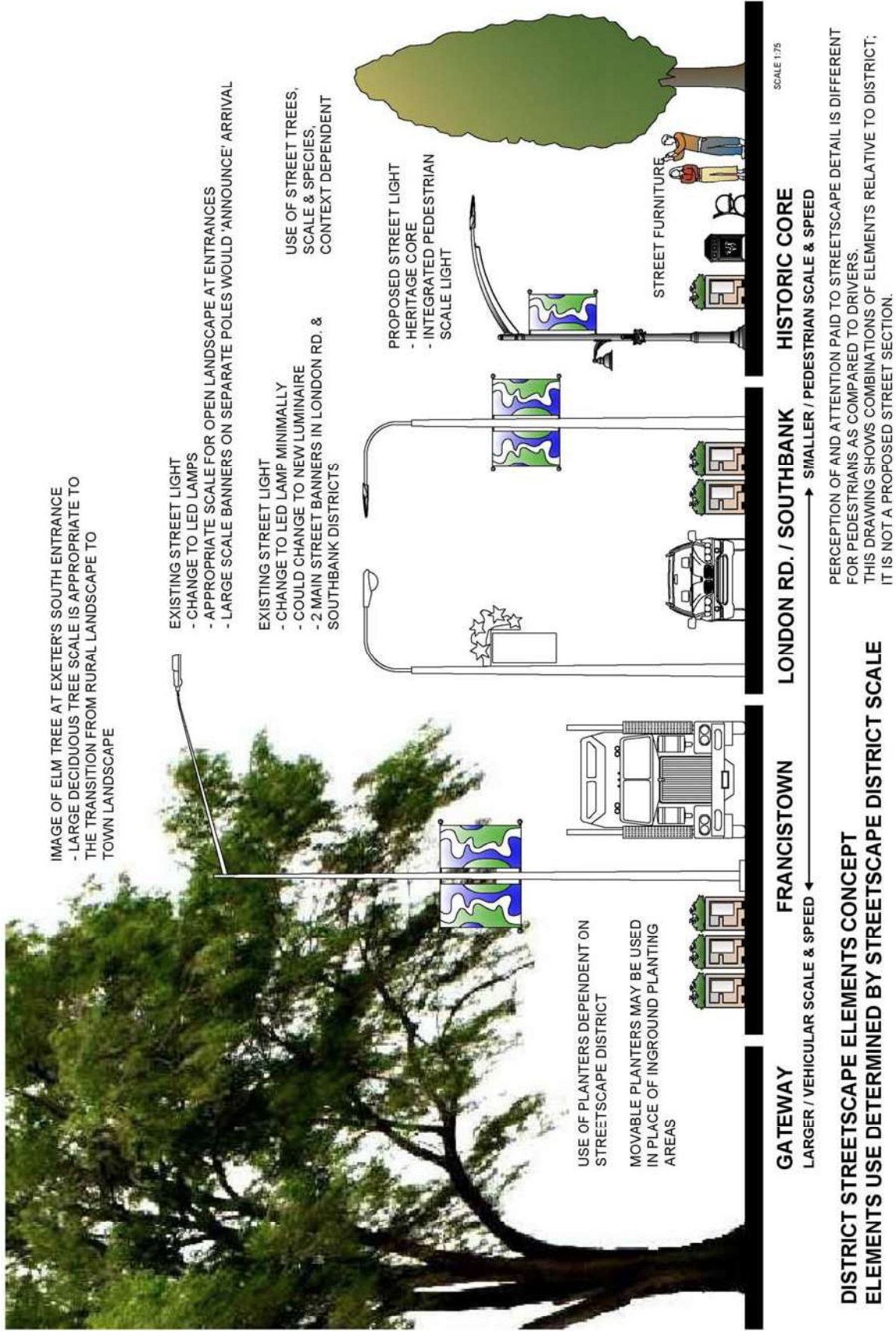
This change in scale and complexity in the Main Street streetscape influenced how streetscape elements were considered: street trees, street lights, banners, seating and waste receptacles. The size, scale, detail of streetscape elements is related to specific their application in districts; they are not used uniformly throughout the Main Street streetscape. For example, the existing planters are too small in size and scale, and too dispersed to make a strong impression. The placement and mass of planters should be determined by whether the viewer is travelling in a vehicle, cycling or walking.



Similarly, the effectiveness of the Exeter banners and street lights increases within the Historic core because of spatial scale. The District Streetscape Elements Concept, as shown on the following page, requires that streetscape element scale, size, mass and detail to be relative to the district in which they are used. The concept is simple: the more spatially expansive a district, the larger the element or in the case of planters, they are grouped to achieve a sense of increased scale or mass. Presently, the planter boxes on the Greenway Bridge are an excellent example of planter quantity being effectively used in context. Benches and waste receptacles are excluded from this design approach since the primary consideration for their placement should be to optimize use.



Figure 7: District Streetscape Elements Concept





In the case of a planter, as illustrated in the concept diagram, planters are grouped to achieve a sense of increased scale or mass. Benches and waste receptacles are excluded from this because they are not scaled up or down relative to location; of primary consideration is their optimum placement to maximize use. The placement of all streetscape elements is critical to their function and effectiveness.

These hanging baskets are great in the Historic Core because of the district's pedestrian orientation. Their effectiveness is diminished as pedestrian use diminishes. The planter boxes on the Greenway Bridge are lovely. They green and enliven the bridge sidewalk and connect bridge and pedestrian visually to the river corridor. They are an example of planter quantity being appropriate to context.

Street furniture may be used to unify the look of a community. This does not mean that the same street furniture should be used everywhere. Use and choice should be context dependent resulting in a complementary and unifying selection of street furnishings. For example, the white squirrel waste receptacle is unique to Exeter. If the receptacle works well there is no need to replace it. The use of a different receptacle outside the Town Hall may be justified, for example, as a signifier of the importance of the public building. Again, if the receptacle functions as required there is no need to change it. In these cases receptacle colour unifies the choices. The point is to have a clear rationale for the choice.

A third type of waste receptacle is installed in Exeter as seen in the sidewalk image: it allows for the separation of recyclables and non-recyclables; its design is complementary to the cube form and colour of the squirrel receptacles. This unit raises operational questions because of where and how it is placed and the way waste is handled. It also introduces another element into the streetscape. That may not be desirable depending on what and where it is. Generally, less is more. The squirrel receptacle could be redesigned to allow for waste-streaming.

The parkette image at the right shows one of the benches used in Exeter's public realm as well as a sign type and fencing. Given the prominence of the parkette in the Historic Core, it could set the standard for streetscape elements to be used throughout the town. As with the Town Hall though, the parkette site furnishings and features could be unique to that place as long as they are complementary to those used elsewhere. Generally, a sense of unity would result from diversity in Exeter's streetscape if there is some evident common element.





Different place-name signage could be justified, however, consistent public signage is one way to unify a streetscape. Streetscape elements have to be complementary if not unified.



The Lawn Bowling Club sign is complementary to the Exeter Parkette sign, attractive and legible.



Two types of benches are seen in the parkette and McNaughton images. The same style of bench used at McNaughton Park is used in the public right-of-way at the Lawn Bowling Club as shown here. Using different style benches in the public realm may be justified but the justification should be clear and consistent. In this case there are two styles of bench used in public parks and both styles are used in the Historic Core. Again, this is not to say a choice between one or the other be made only that there should be consistency in decision-making. For example, if it is decided that a new bench will be selected for Exeter to serve as a unifying streetscape element, then a standard for selection, placement and care should be established. The maintenance of streetscape elements is often overlooked. Maintaining a high standard of care for streetscape elements contributes to a positive sense of place for residents and visitors alike.

#### 4.4 PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

Walking is the most basic form of transportation for a human-being. While society has evolved and invented new modes of transportation (such as cars, bicycles or scooters), walking remains the fundamental way in which people access their needs and interact with each other (which in this instance also recognizes travel in wheelchairs/motorized scooters among those with mobility restrictions). Sidewalks form the backbone of all pedestrian transportation systems, providing safe linkages that are separated from conflicting modes such as vehicular or cycle traffic while offering a travel choice for people who do not have or want access to a car. As such, sidewalks are most often used by children, students, the elderly, persons with disabilities and those looking for recreational activity.

While an important function of sidewalks is to function as routes for pedestrians, there are a number of other benefits that they provide. Sidewalks promote healthy lifestyles through principles of active transportation, community vibrancy, accessibility, economic development, and environmental benefit. There are a number of ways in which to enhance the pedestrian experience, that can contribute to many of the benefits previously mentioned. From a design perspective, the Municipality could consider increasing the walkability of community improvement areas to create better connections, widening sidewalks or integrating bicycle paths without necessarily expanding the amount of space required for motorized transportation choices. Furthermore, street standards could be revised to improve pedestrian safety, convenience and comfort (e.g. provision of trees for shade, benches for resting, bicycle racks, etc.) as part of routine public works or new infrastructure development. Other examples of infrastructure may include (but not be limited to) crosswalks, differentiated surfaces, bump-outs, pedestrian districts, or the 'Pavement to Parks' concept.<sup>13</sup>

The planning and design principles outlined in this plan advocate a quality pedestrian environment and traffic calming; this infers pedestrian priority. Pedestrian priority may be expressed through design in relation to the streetscape districts. For example, the highest priority district for pedestrians is the Historic Core given the scale of the street space as defined by the proximity of buildings to the street (the street wall) and the concentration of shops, offices and public buildings within 500 metres of many homes. In contrast to that are Francistown foremost and London Road and Southbank secondarily. Greenway is a special case because it is mainly an open space district for recreation. It is pedestrian-oriented certainly; still, improvements could be made: for example, paths connecting the existing footbridges as shown in the Greenway Plan. Occasional flooding is a fact so any paths or trails would have to be designed to withstand that.



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<sup>13</sup> Pavement to Parks San Francisco. Accessed August 25, 2011 from

<http://sfpavementtoparks.sfplanning.org>. This is a movement utilized in cities such as New York and San Francisco that temporarily reclaims unused public rights-of-way (particularly at intersections) and turns them into public plazas and parks. Plazas and seating areas have been created in excess roadways simply by painting or treating the asphalt, placing protective barriers along the periphery, and installing moveable tables and chairs.



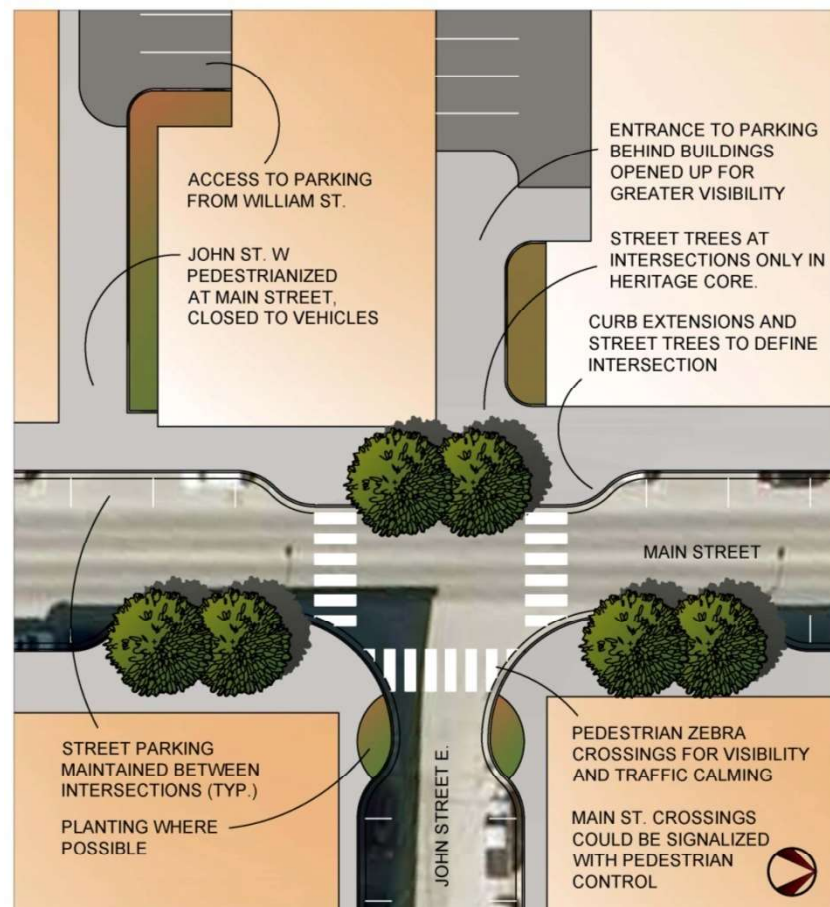
## 4.5 ROADWAYS

Street intersections are critical junctures for the interaction of pedestrians and vehicles. Four different intersection treatments are shown in this plan pertaining to the London Road, Southbank and Historic Core districts.

### Historic Core “T” Intersections

In the plans showing the possible reorganization of parking behind the Historic Core buildings the ‘T’ intersections at John, James and Anne Streets are changed. This change is shown at a larger scale here. As can be seen the roadway is narrowed using curb extensions. Street trees are suggested at the visual terminus of James and John Streets. Street trees are suggested on both sides of those intersections also. The trees would define the intersections for drivers and pedestrians. Pedestrians are further served by zebra crossings. Such crossings are very effective; they have high visibility and are easy and thus relatively inexpensive to install. Crossings could be defined with paving that differs from the asphalt roadway. That treatment is more costly but potentially more enduring than the elastomeric coatings used for lined crosswalks. There is a driveway in line with Anne Street so that intersection would differ from the John and James Street intersections.

Figure 8: Historic Core ‘T’ Intersection Conceptual Plan



### Main Street & Sanders Intersection

In the same parking reorganization plans, the intersection of Main and Sanders Streets is shown as two lanes only in all directions. This is to give priority to pedestrians over vehicles at that intersection given its importance not just in the Historic Core district but to the whole town. Street trees are used to further define the intersection. **Only at intersections are street trees advocated in the Historic Core.**



The intersection of Main and Sanders Streets was modified in autumn 2011 to include a left turn lane as a result of recent changes made by the Town. That was accomplished by re-lining the road as opposed to altering the road curbs and width. This has improved the intersection for drivers only. The pedestrian experience is unimproved and actually worsened on the northeast side adjacent to the library where there is a minimal walkway and no barrier curb as shown on the left.

### Intersections with a Left Turn Lane

The plan in Figure 9 titled *Historic Core, London Road, Southbank Intersections – Signalized with Left Turn Lanes*, uses the Main and Sanders intersection as an example to show how left turn lanes could be accommodated in the three noted districts while also providing a quality pedestrian environment that includes space for planting. Two options are shown in plan: a conventional intersection with well-marked pedestrian crossings at road grade and a raised intersection in which the road intersection is raised to create a smooth transition from roadway crossings to a sidewalk. The latter is a way of signalling pedestrian priority. The pedestrian crossing in the example plan is distinguished by a change in paving colour.



In a raised intersection, crossings may be distinguished numerous ways: for example, a change in paving, colour and texture as shown in this image. As with the intersection depicted, bollards are often used when a sidewalk and roadway are level to mark the corner for both pedestrians and drivers. Note how the barrier curb becomes a roll curb and while the intersection is raised, pedestrians are protected and traffic guided with the use of bollards. The treatment is only recommended in the pedestrian friendly intersection areas where traffic speeds are restricted to 50km/hr. or less and the intention is to make the crosswalk and sidewalk universally accessible.

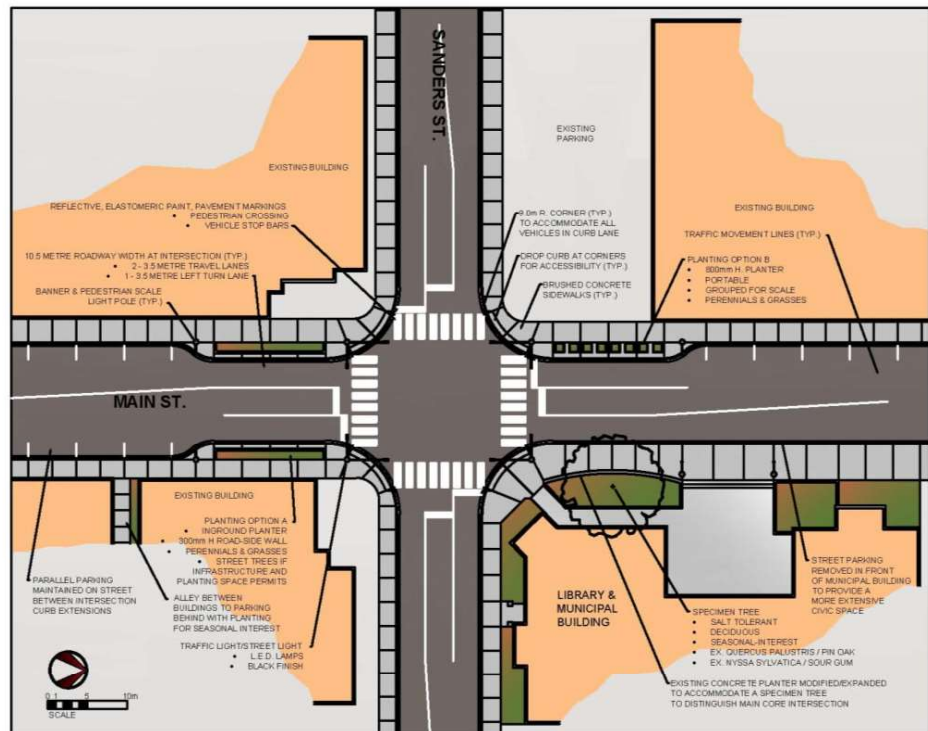
Figure 9: Historic Core, London Road, Southbank Intersections Signalized with Left Turn Lanes

### MAIN ST. & SANDERS ST. INTERSECTION MODIFICATION A.

CURB EXTENSIONS AT  
CORNER TO: DECREASE  
PEDESTRIAN CROSSING  
DISTANCE, PROVIDE  
PLANTING OR PLANTER  
SPACE, CALM TRAFFIC.

LEFT TURNS ARE  
ACCOMMODATED WITH  
DESIGNATED LANES.

STREET LIGHT &  
TRAFFIC SIGNAL STYLE  
COORDINATED.



### MAIN ST. & SANDERS ST. INTERSECTION MODIFICATION B.

AS ABOVE PLUS  
INTERSECTION IS  
RAISED GIVING  
PEDESTRIANS PRIORITY

INTERSECTION  
MODIFICATION IN  
CONJUNCTION WITH THE  
GENERAL REPAVING OF  
MAIN STREET AS PART OF  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
RENEWAL.

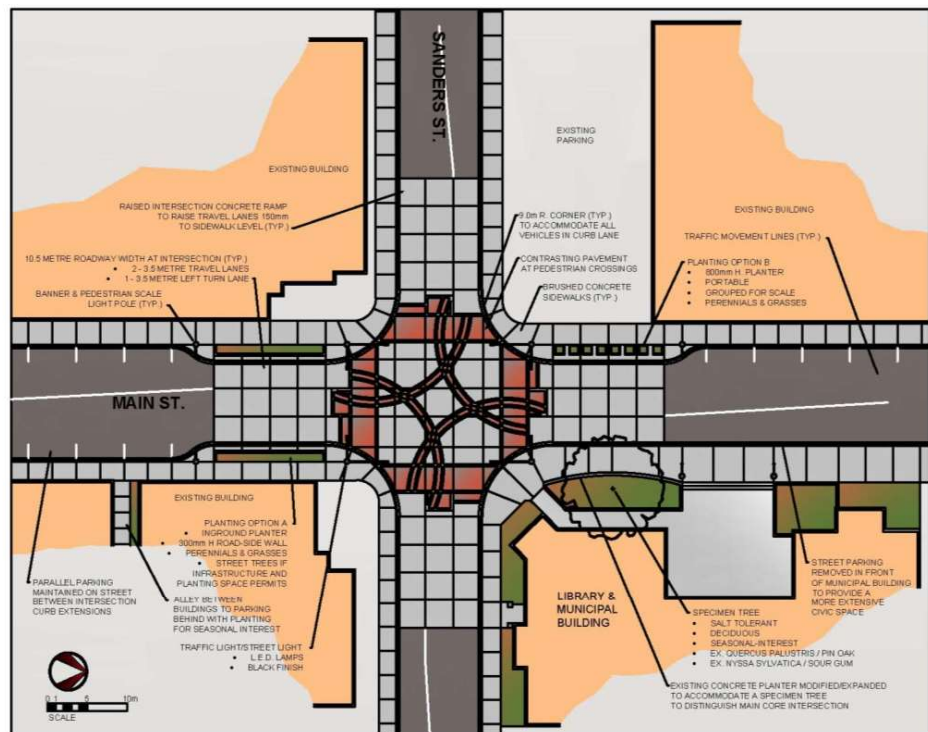




Figure 10: Conceptual Modifications for the Main Street & Thames Road Intersection in Francistown



LIKE THE HERITAGE CORE, FRANCISTOWN HAS A COMMERCIAL FOCUS; HOWEVER, THE DESIGN OF THE AREA IS VEHICLE-ORIENTED. THAT COULD CHANGE IF EXETER REQUIRES GREATER DEVELOPMENT DENSITY IN THE AREA. AT THIS TIME IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE FRANCISTOWN MORE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY FOR SAFETY AND LIABILITY REASONS IF NOTHING ELSE.

FRANCISTOWN'S MAIN STREET AND THAMES ROAD INTERSECTION SHOWN HERE MAY BE CROSSED IN RELATIVE SAFETY BECAUSE IT IS SIGNALIZED. AS CAN BE SEEN IN THE EXISTING CONDITION IMAGE, HOWEVER, THERE ARE NO SIDEWALKS ALONG THAMES ROAD. THE SIDEWALK IS CONTINUOUS ON THE WEST SIDE OF MAIN STREET ONLY. FROM THIS INTERSECTION A PEDESTRIAN CAN NEITHER WALK TO NOR BETWEEN BUSINESSES ON A MUNICIPAL SIDEWALK.





Figure 11: Thames Road Pedestrianization &amp; Planting - Francistown

THE EXISTING THAMES ROAD STREETScape IS DESIGNED TO SERVE VEHICLES PRIMARILY. NO PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES EXIST. WHILE THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE STYLE, THE SCALE OF EXETER MEANS RESIDENTS COULD EASILY WALK TO FRANCISTOWN BUSINESSES, HOWEVER, THE LACK OF MUNICIPAL SIDEWALKS MAKES WALKING IN THE AREA UNSAFE.

AS CAN BE SEEN HERE, THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM TO INSTALL A SIDEWALK AND A MORE DIVERSE LANDSCAPE BUFFER BETWEEN THE PARKING LOT AND ROADWAY.

THE DEPICTED CHANGE IN LANDSCAPE TREATMENT IS IMPORTANT TO FRANCISTOWN; IT REPRESENTS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE AREA'S PEDESTRIAN SCALE AND OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY.



SIDEWALK, BUFFER PLANTING, STREET TREES



SIDEWALK, BUFFER PLANTING, STREET TREES



## 4.6 PARKING

### Existing Parking

Concerns regarding parking have been heard throughout discussions held prior to, and within, the processes leading up to the CISDP. The primary concern is that there is a perceived deficit in the parking supply, predominantly serving the Historic Core. There are diverging views, however, regarding how to enforce parking that is available:

- Enforcing parking spaces through fines is a ‘bad-for-business’ approach that deters patrons from visiting the Historic Core, particularly when competing with the large-format retail uses in the north end have large parking lots offering free and convenient parking.
- Not enforcing parking rules exacerbates the parking deficit through an inability to ‘turnover’ spaces frequently enough to encourage greater business volume. This is further compounded by a perception that many downtown employees park on the street, meaning the spaces remain occupied during business hours thus removing supply from potential customers).



The analysis of parking issues is beyond the scope established for the CISDP, but can be something that is explored as part of a larger study/studies on transportation planning. For the purposes of the CISDP, discussions related to parking will generally be relegated to articulating the existing supply of parking, as well as standards that would achieve the objectives of the CISDP. Any findings or recommendations emerging from future transportation studies, including the recently completed Traffic Study, should be considered and integrated as appropriate in the CISDP implementation process.

For the purposes of the CISDP, only municipal parking spaces have been documented utilizing parking count information provided by Municipal Staff. It is recognized that there is a great deal of space behind the storefronts along Main Street that is paved and could be used for additional parking. According to data provided by the Municipality, there are 216 on-street parking spaces along Main Street frontages, 80 on-street parking spaces along various blocks intersecting Main Street (applying a 1 block radius east and west), as well as 86 parking spaces located within Municipal parking lots. **This forms a total supply of 382 municipal parking spaces within the CISDP study area boundary;** please note that **another 266 parking spaces exist** at the South Huron Recreation Centre, located about two blocks from Main Street.

A rough estimate based upon aerial mapping suggests about 1,000 potential parking spaces may be accommodated in areas on private lands located south of the river; this number, however, would need to be confirmed through further site specific study). As such, there is enough parking throughout the streetscape districts to accommodate commercial and public use. Whether parking is where a person wants it is an expressed concern in the Historic Core primarily. Some business owners do not want any modification to Main Street in the Historic Core if that means changing the existing street parking.

Figure 12: Availability of Parking Spaces in the CISDP Project Area



## Parking Reorganization

Three Historic Core Parking Reorganization plans are presented below: two show the layout of Main Street and the areas behind the Main Street buildings; one is a larger scale plan of the municipal building parking lot.<sup>14</sup> The intersection modifications proposed would remove some parking from Main Street. For example, at the John and James Streets T intersections, the curb modifications to define the intersections and provide space for street tree planting do eliminate space that could be used for parking, approximately six to eight cars at each intersection. Two spaces are gained where it is suggested that the one way entrance to John Street West be closed. That laneway is a great way for pedestrians to get to and from the parking behind the buildings but an unnecessary vehicle route.



*John St. looking west*



*Curb bump-out and street trees at the Exeter Parkette*

54 parking spaces are shown in the Historic Core Parking Reorganization Plans between Sanders and Anne Streets. Twelve more cars could be accommodated with no curb bump-outs at intersections; those cars however, could be accommodated behind either the Main Street buildings or in the municipal parking lot behind Town Hall.



*Town Hall parking lot*



*Laneway with parking behind Main Street buildings*

The larger scale drawing of this parking lot shows how a simple reorganization of the space would result in more parking spaces. The municipality could set an example in relation to its own parking facilities. Nevertheless, incentives for the modification of private areas may be offered to building owners as discussed elsewhere in this plan. The sewer infrastructure under the laneway behind Main Street buildings requires replacement. That would be the time to make more significant changes than line painting to demarcate and differentiate loading and parking areas and signage to direct the use of the areas. Waste management would also be an essential consideration in any reorganization of the area.

<sup>14</sup> Note that all parking lots tend to have a reduced number of spots available during the winter due to onsite snow storage



Figure 13: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Shared Private/Public Parking Areas Behind East-Side Main Street Buildings



REORGANIZING PARKING BEHIND THE MAIN STREET BUILDINGS COULD PROVIDE FOR BOTH PRIVATE BUSINESS AND PUBLIC USE. IMPROVEMENT TO THE AREA COULD COINCIDE WITH NEEDED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE. THE SCHEME SHOWN ACCOMMODATES FIRE VEHICLES.



Figure 14: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Shared Private/Public Parking Areas Behind West-Side Main Street Buildings



REORGANIZING PARKING BEHIND THE MAIN STREET BUILDINGS COULD PROVIDE FOR BOTH PRIVATE BUSINESS AND PUBLIC USE. IMPROVEMENT TO THE AREA COULD COINCIDE WITH NEEDED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE. THE SCHEME SHOWN ACCOMMODATES FIRE VEHICLES.



Figure 15: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Municipal Building/Library Parking Lot



HISTORIC CORE PARKING REORGANIZATION



REORGANIZED PARKING - 68 PARKING SPACES; NO PARKING IN ENTRY LANE FROM MAIN ST.; PARKING AISLES PERPENDICULAR TO DESTINATION FOR VISIBILITY & SAFETY; PERMEABLE PAVING FOR WATER MANAGEMENT; LED LIGHTING FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY; ADDITIONAL GREEN SPACE.



Figure 16: Historic Core – Alleyway Renovation Concept

THERE ARE  
NUMEROUS  
ALLEYWAYS IN THE  
HERITAGE CORE  
THAT CONNECT  
MAIN ST. TO THE  
AREA BEHIND THE  
STREET BUILDINGS  
WITH ITS  
POTENTIAL PUBLIC  
PARKING.  
IF PEOPLE ARE TO  
USE THE PARKING  
BEHIND THE  
BUILDINGS THEY  
NEED TO HAVE  
GOOD  
CONNECTIONS  
BETWEEN THE  
STREET AND  
THOSE AREAS.



FOUR SIMPLE  
THINGS WILL  
CONTRIBUTE TO  
IMPROVING  
ALLEYWAYS AS  
CONNECTORS:  
GOOD PAVING;  
PLANTING FOR  
SEASONAL  
INTEREST AND  
GREENING;  
LIGHTING FOR  
VISIBILITY AND  
SECURITY;  
INFORMATION AND  
DIRECTIONAL  
SIGNAGE.

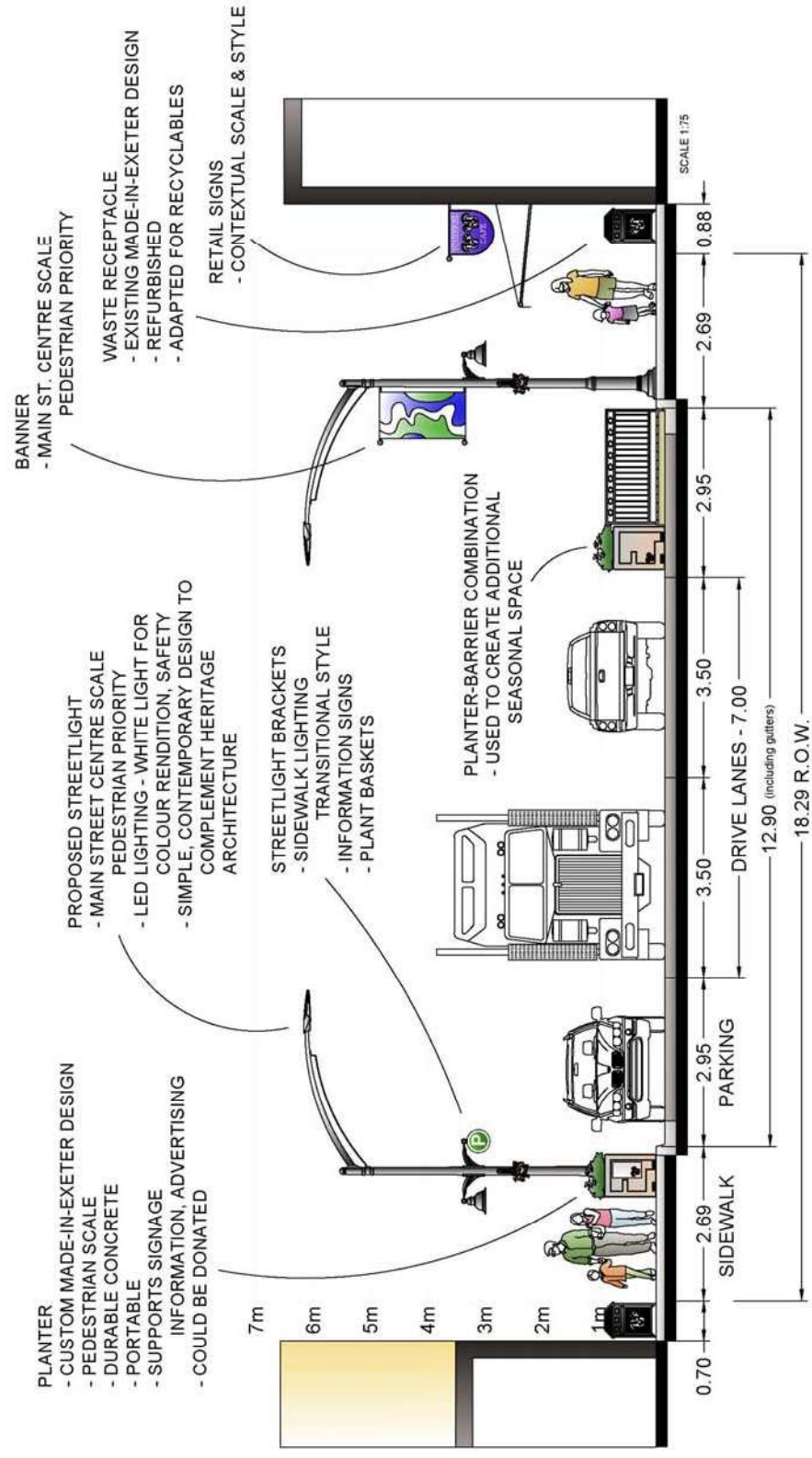


Figure 17: Historic Core Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Parallel Parking

THERE ARE NUMEROUS OPTIONS FOR THE HISTORIC CORE STREET SECTION:

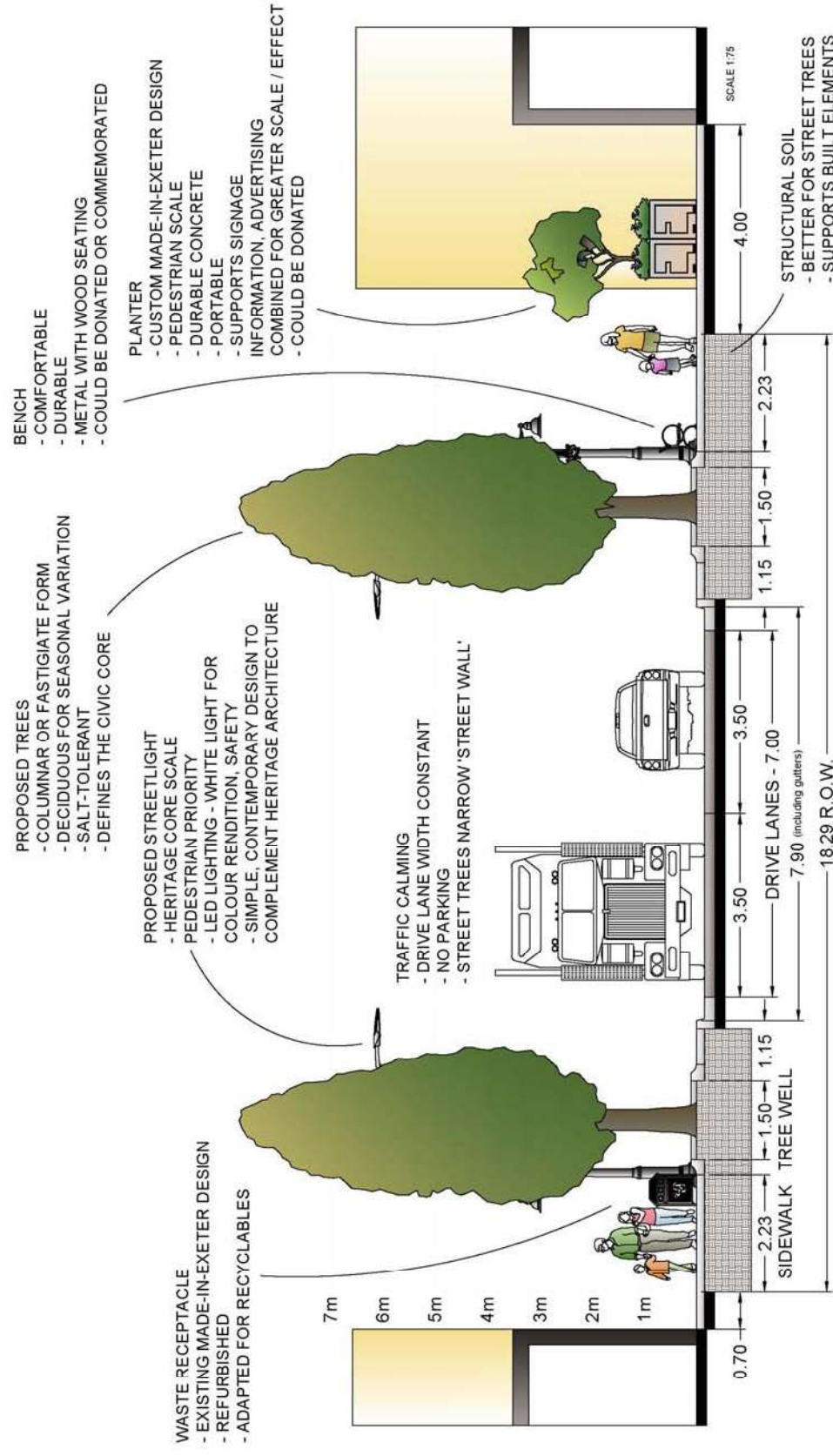
1) NO CHANGE; 2) 2 NARROWER DRIVE LANES, 2 PARKING LANES, WIDER SIDEWALKS; 3) 2 NARROWER DRIVE LANES, 1 PARKING LANE, WIDER SIDEWALKS, BOULEVARD PLANTING; 4) 2 NARROWER DRIVE LANES, NO PARKING LANES, WIDER SIDEWALKS, BOULEVARD PLANTING.

THIS DRAWING SHOWS THE HISTORIC CORE STREET SECTION AS IT EXISTS WITH TWO DRIVE LANES AND PARALLEL PARKING ON BOTH SIDES BUT WITH NARROWER DRIVE LANES RESULTING IN WIDER SIDEWALKS. THIS IMPROVES THE PEDESTRIAN REALM WITHOUT COMPROMISING ROAD SAFETY OR REMOVING PARKING.





**Figure 18: Historic Core Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Street Trees (at Intersections, Bump-Outs, etc.)**



THIS DRAWING SHOWS THE EXISTING MAIN STREET SECTION MODIFIED TO INCLUDE APPROPRIATE SPACE FOR STREET TREES WITHOUT COMPROMISING TWO-LANE TRAFFIC MOVEMENT. THIS IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE THAT COULD BE MADE TO MAIN STREET. IT GIVES PRIORITY TO PEDESTRIANS AND WOULD RESULT IN TRAFFIC CALMING. IMPLEMENTATION COULD BE AT INTERSECTIONS ONLY OR THROUGHOUT THE HISTORIC CORE. A VARIATION OF THIS SECTION: STREET TREES ON ONE SIDE, PARKING ON THE OTHER SIDE.

OBJECTIVE - IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE INCLUSION OF STREET TREES.

Figure 19: Historic Core – Main Street & Sanders Street Intersection Modification





## 4.7 GREENWAY

Greenway accurately describes the streetscape district defined by the Ausable River valley and municipal parks. This district is aligned perpendicular to Main Street and serves as a landscape buffer between Southbank and Francistown.

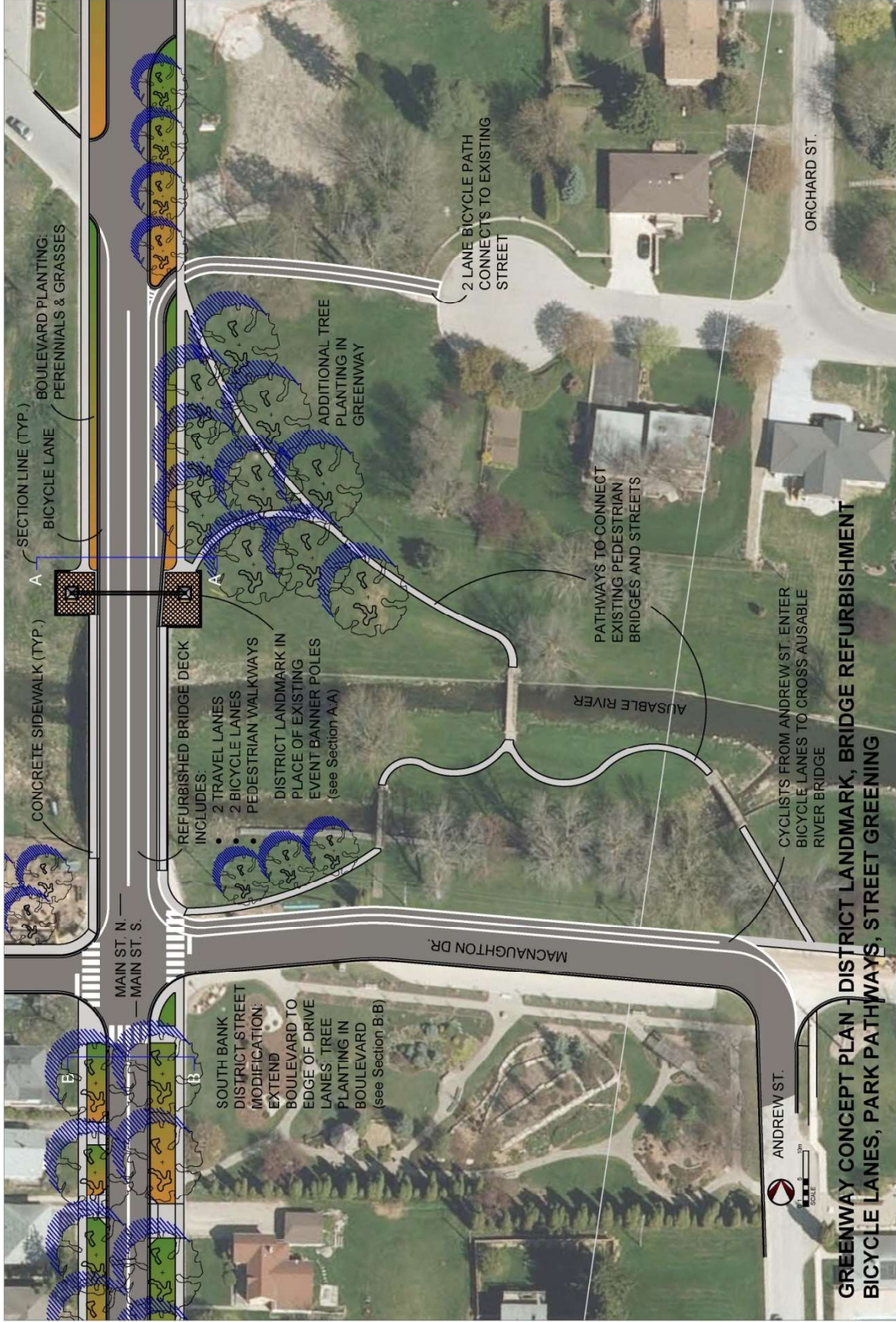


*Main Street looking north from Southbank with the Greenway in the mid-ground and Francistown in the background.*

The Ausable River bridge is a significant landmark; it reinforces the Greenway's transitional quality and the change in landscape character of Southbank and Francistown. Accentuating that quality is an objective of the bridge landmark proposal shown in the following figures.

Municipal infrastructure renewal plans call for bridge refurbishment. In conjunction with that it is proposed that bicycle lanes be created on the bridge deck. The Greenway plan shows that pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles can be accommodated safely on the existing bridge. Furthermore, the plans propose the inclusion of planted boulevards and the modification of the Main Street and McNaughton Road intersection. These proposed modifications to the district build on its ecological and aesthetic qualities, while making it more conducive to walking and cycling.

Figure 20: Greenway Concept Plan – District Landmark, Bridge Refurbishment, Bicycle Lanes, Park Pathways, Street Greening





**Figure 21: Greenway Landmark – Refurbished Ausable River Bridge Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Bicycle Lanes**

THE AUSABLE RIVER BRIDGE WILL BE REFURBISHED AS PART OF AN INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL PROGRAM. THAT WOULD BE THE TIME TO MODIFY THE BRIDGE AREA.

THIS CONCEPT SHOWS THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BRIDGE DECK TO INCLUDE BICYCLE LANES WITHOUT THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL BRIDGE DECK WIDTH, AS WELL, THE PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS REMAIN, TO ENHANCE THE PEDESTRIAN REALM. RIVER LOOKOUTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BRIDGE ARE PROPOSED. THE LOOKOUTS PROVIDE A FOUNDATION FOR THE DISTRICT LANDMARK PILLARS AS SHOWN. THE PILLARS WOULD BE BRICK OR STONE TO COMPLEMENT THE LOCAL USE OF THOSE MATERIALS. CURRENTLY, AN EVENT BANNER IS STRUNG BETWEEN TWO WOODEN POLES. THE PILLARS REPLACE THOSE POLES AND ALLOW FOR THE CONTINUED AND EFFECTIVE USE OF EVENT BANNERS.

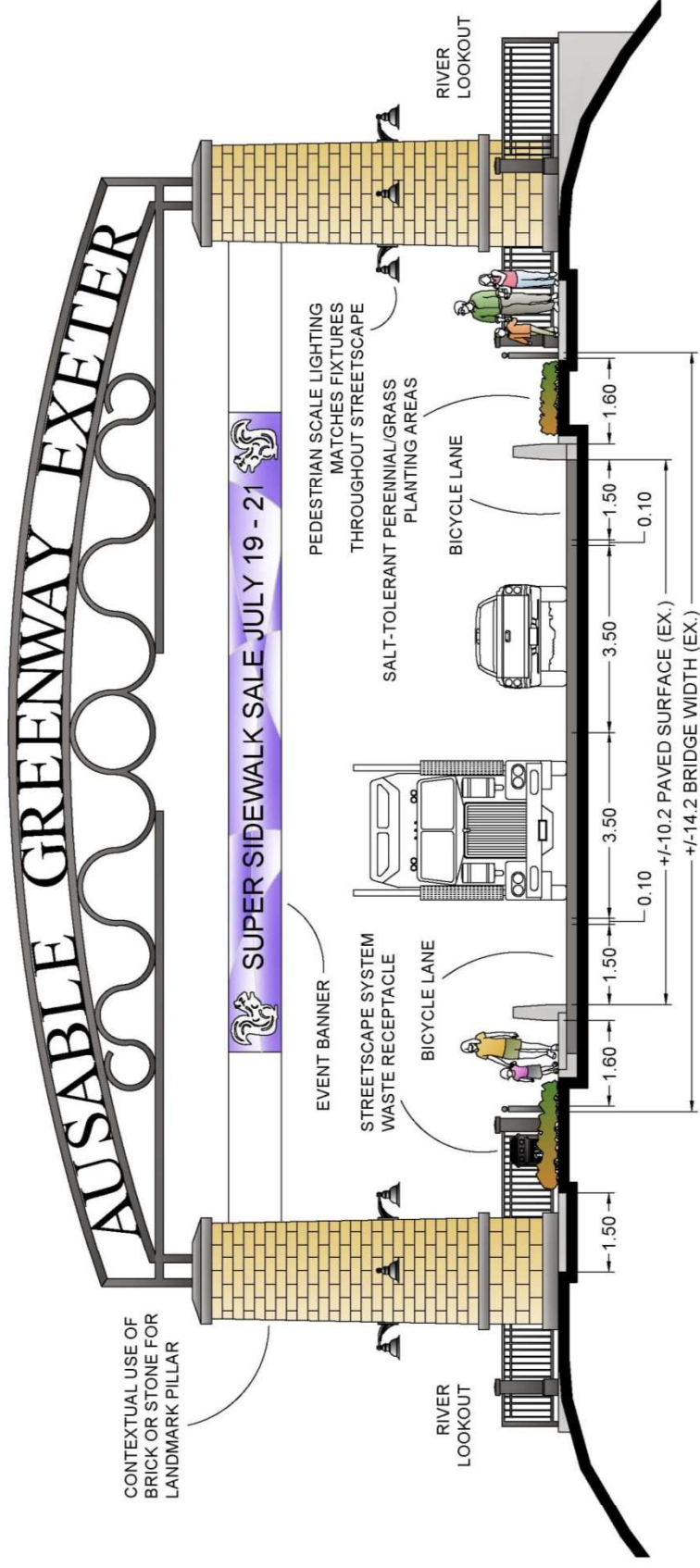
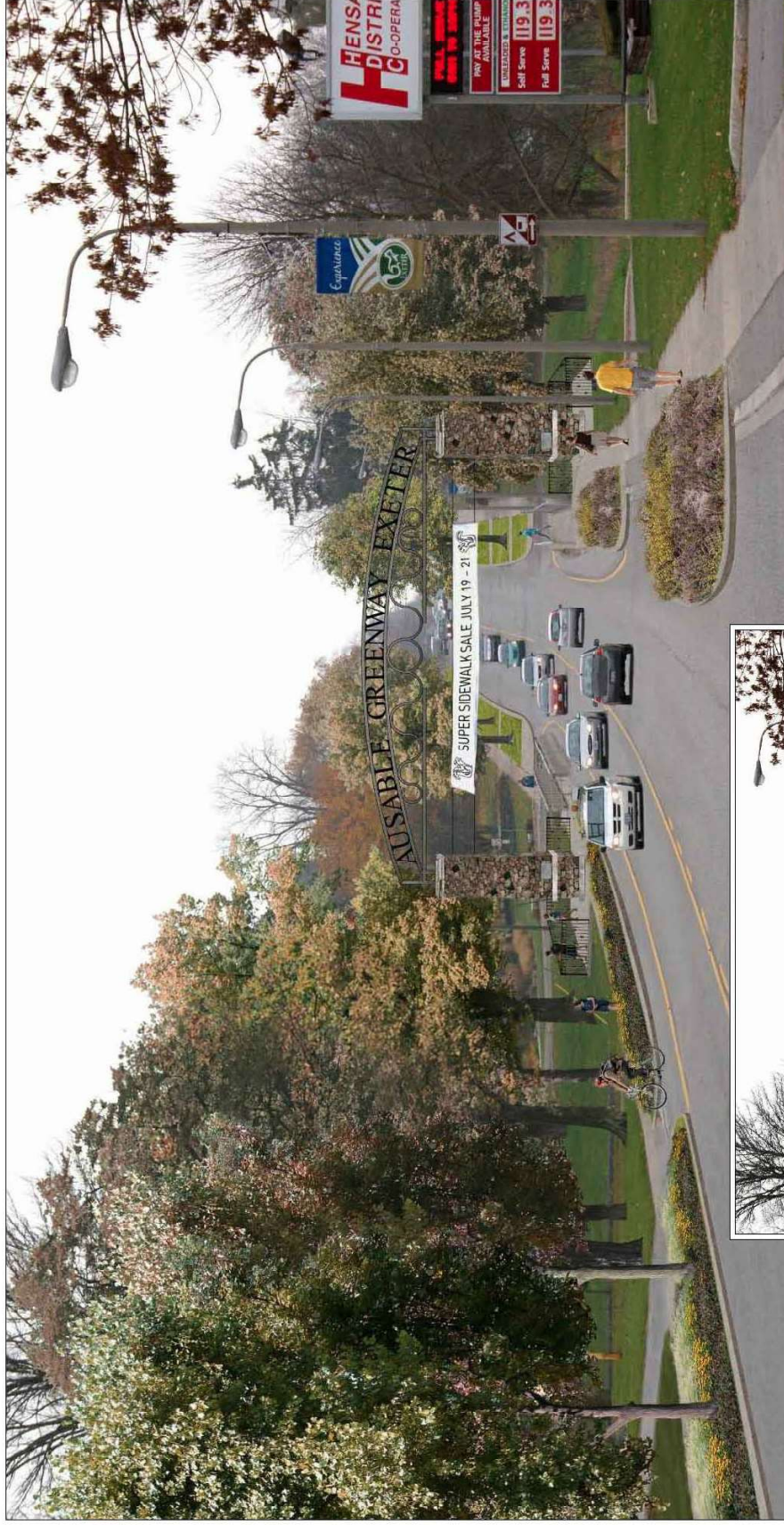


Figure 22: Greenway – Bridge Landmark &amp; Street Greening



THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE AUSABLE RIVER BRIDGE AS PART OF AN INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL PROGRAM WOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE BRIDGE AS A DISTRICT LANDMARK.

THE PROPOSED STONE PILLARS RELATE TO THE BRIDGE BUT ARE NOT PART OF ITS STRUCTURE. THEY SUPPORT THE CONTINUED USE OF AN EVENT BANNER.

THERE IS ENOUGH ROOM ON THE BRIDGE DECK TO PROVIDE FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND VEHICLES.

CURBS MAY BE MODIFIED TO PROVIDE PLANTING BEDS FOR GENERAL GREENING OF THE STREET.



## 4.8 GREENER STREETS

Greenway is a term that is used in urban environments to describe a street corridor that is 'green' in its design and management; one that caters to pedestrians and cyclists while still accommodating cars and trucks but at a slower pace than would otherwise be allowed. This promotes and facilitates walking and cycling as 'green' alternatives to car use. Exeter's size and its simple grid street layout make walking and cycling attractive and sensible. 400-500 metres is considered the general distance an able-bodied person will walk readily before considering cycling or driving.

The quantity of vehicular traffic on Main Street is a significant impact on pedestrians and cyclists. Main Street could become a greenway as described above with changes to vehicular traffic movement related to roadway design changes. William and Andrew Streets parallel Main Street with many cross streets providing regular routes from William and Andrew Streets to Main Street. William and Andrew Streets are relatively wide with standard sidewalks providing many alternative routes through Exeter and to Main Street for pedestrians and cyclists. For the latter, the alternatives to Main Street are safer due to low truck traffic and overall decreased traffic volume. The Greenway Concept Plan shows bike lanes that could be connected to bike routes off Main Street.

The District Street Profiles diagram in Figure 23 illustrates what Main Street could be like if the existing parking lanes in Southbank and London Road districts were replaced by extended boulevards accommodating street trees. There are parts of Main Street in the Southbank and London Road districts that do not require fulltime street parking and the road width is not essential to the movement of traffic. A narrower roadway would result in slower driving, parked vehicles can have a traffic calming effect but most importantly the benefits of a greener street should be considered.

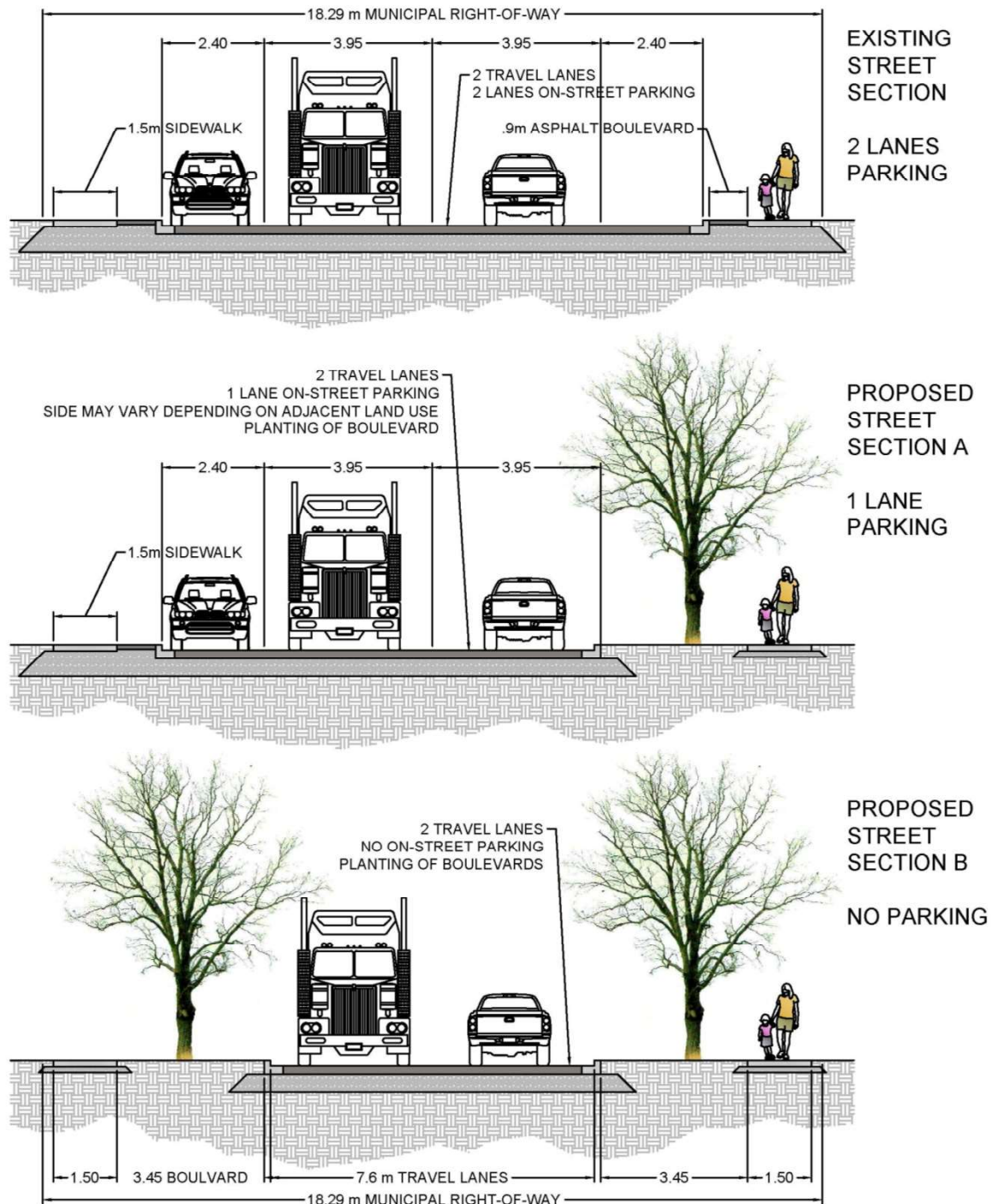


*Main Street in London Road district looking north showing excessive asphalt street area and a paved boulevard.*

The Exeter practice of paving boulevards may be understandable for maintenance but it is detrimental for the following reasons: it leads to the perception of a wider street contributing to faster driving; it increases stormwater run-off to water pipes; decreases surface water infiltration and ground water recharge; and misses an opportunity for greening Exeter's streetscape and improving its environmental quality.

Green boulevards require a commitment to their maintenance. Hardy, drought tolerant perennials and ornamental grasses offer a way of greening boulevards with minimal maintenance. This could be operated through an incentive offered to adjacent land owners to maintain the public boulevard. The boulevards of Exeter's Main Street are important to the streetscape.

**Figure 23: District Street Profiles – Conceptual & Existing – Southbank & London Road Districts**





## 4.9 RECOMMENDED STREETSCAPE DETAILS

Every streetscape is defined by its elements, for a streetscape to be legible its built elements must be logical and complementary if not consistent or standardized. The following criteria for streetscape detail criteria is not prescriptive, there is room for informed and justified choice relative to context.

### Paving

A streetscape is dominated by paving, the following criteria should be applied to Main Street paving improvements.

1. Paving should provide an accessible, durable, relatively maintenance-free surface for vehicles and pedestrians.
2. The choice of materials, patterns and finishes is context dependent.
3. Paving should be permeable wherever possible.
4. Existing, adjacent materials or patterns should be integrated in new construction or renovation through adoption of material/pattern; or a logical transition from one material/pattern to another is to be designed.
5. Vehicular surfaces should generally be asphalt.
6. Pedestrian systems should be concrete with concrete/stone pavers used to distinguish areas and systems as with the entry plaza at the Town Hall/Library.



### Roads

1. Main Street should be:
  - a. without parking - 2 lanes - 7.0m W = 2(3.5 m)<sup>15</sup> lanes
  - b. with parking - 2 lanes + 1 or 2 parking = 9.5 m W or 12.0m W = 2(3.5m) + 1 or 2(2.5m)
2. Road surfaces should be asphalt.

### Intersections

1. Intersections may be raised or demarcated using a material other than asphalt for pedestrian priority where merited.
2. Where intersections are designed for pedestrian priority, pedestrian crossings should be concrete – finish/patterning context dependent
3. Intersections may be used as traffic calming elements where pedestrians are given priority over vehicular traffic

### Sidewalks

1. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of a road
2. Sidewalk width is context dependent – 1,500 mm minimum width
3. Sidewalks should be concrete or concrete unit pavers – finish/patterning context dependent
4. Sidewalks should connect to existing systems
5. Laneways and service roads should provide for pedestrians as required.

### Crosswalks

1. Crosswalks should be distinguished from the predominant road surface using an elastomeric zebra crossing
2. Crosswalks should be concrete (if another material is used) – finish/patterning context dependent
3. Crosswalks may be used as traffic calming elements where pedestrians are given priority over vehicular traffic

### Utilities

1. Utility locations should be coordinated, bundled and located for ease and cost effectiveness of installation and maintenance.

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<sup>15</sup> Road dimensions exclude a concrete gutter dimension. An integral concrete 300mm or 450mm W gutter with a 150mm W barrier or roll curb is shown in the streetscape plan.

## Lighting

Street illumination in Exeter is provided by standard cobra-head lighting. There are two heights of pole used: higher poles are used in the Francistown and London Road districts. The current level of illumination is sufficient for both road and sidewalks.

Though sufficient, the quality of illumination is poor being the orange light of high pressure sodium.

White light is desirable for the public realm as it renders environmental details accurately, important as a safety matter. Energy efficient, long-lived, LED lighting offers a good alternative to high pressure sodium lighting.

Exterior public lighting is necessary and expensive, making immediate replacement of existing street lighting unjustifiable. Instead, a rational and strategic lighting plan should be developed for implementation in conjunction with infrastructure renewal.

The following guidelines support the creation and maintenance of a safe and user friendly illumination system while reducing total energy consumption.

1. Plan for and use appropriate light levels.
2. Minimize glare.
3. Eliminate light trespass and sky-glow.
4. Evaluate total cost.
5. Reverse the trend of using more efficient lamps to produce higher light levels.
6. Evaluate existing exterior lighting systems and identify non-critical lighting.
7. Use energy efficient lamp technologies wherever possible.
8. Use IESNA<sup>16</sup> recommended light level ranges, especially the lower recommended values in order to lower energy usage, yet stay within recommended values.
9. Use efficient and cut-off lighting fixtures in parking lots that emit no light above the horizontal or into the sky.
10. Use cut-off lighting fixtures for all lamps greater than 2800 lumens to minimize wasted light going up into the sky.
11. Use color contrast rather than high levels of illumination in signage generally and retail signage particularly.
12. Provide reflective surfaces for lettering or other elements that need to be illuminated at night and illuminate only the lettering, not the background.
13. Use lighting controls (switches, energy management systems, time clocks, motion sensors) to:
  - a. reduce the amount of energy consumed by exterior lighting;
  - b. automatically turn off exterior lights when appropriate and when adequate daylight is available;

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<sup>16</sup> Illuminating Engineering Society of North America

- c. limit lighting within certain operating hours;
  - d. turn on lights for short durations;
  - e. either turn on lights or turn up lights that have been dimmed, whenever required for use, safety and security.
14. Eliminate light waste.<sup>17</sup>

### Site Furniture



Site furniture provides an important outdoor amenity. The furniture system typically consists of seating, waste receptacles, bike racks, and drinking fountains.

1. Seating – context dependent
  - a. Seating is to provide a comfortable surface for sitting.
  - b. Benches are to have backs generally - backless benches may be used where seating may be multi-directional.
  - c. Benches shall be metal with wood or metal: wood – hard wood treated for exterior use such as Ipe<sup>18</sup>.
  - d. Bench metal is to be black.
  - e. Seat walls may be provided as long as they are not the only seating option.
  - f. Seating is not to provide opportunities for skateboarding.
2. Waste Receptacles
  - a. Metal – existing, locally-sourced design modified to separate waste and recyclables.
3. Bike Rack
  - a. Cora – size dependent on location, Comet Black or stainless steel
4. Drinking Fountains – context dependent

### Planting

Trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and grasses are critical ecological, cultural and aesthetic components of Exeter's landscape. Exeter is fortunate to have many mature shade trees, especially on the residential side streets.

Tree-lined streets are common to Exeter with the exception of Main Street. This impression is caused by the layered view of tree canopies on the streets perpendicular to Main Street in conjunction with the remaining trees that are on Main Street.

1. Plants should be used variously depending on context to unify, integrate, order, diversify and distinguish landscape areas.
2. Plant specification should be consultative between project landscape architects and municipal officials in order to achieve a balance between aesthetic, cultural and maintenance considerations.

<sup>17</sup> The International Dark Sky Association estimates that 30% of all illumination produced by outdoor lighting is wasted owing to the use of inefficient, non-cut-off fixtures as well as, over-lit areas, signage and floodlights.

<sup>18</sup> Ipe is a South American hardwood that is sustainably harvested. The long-term durability of Ipe as compared to local hardwoods such as oak, maple, ash, beech or birch may justify its choice.



3. The achievement of unity through tree planting should be tempered by the ecological implications of limiting species diversity.
4. Tree selection should integrate, extend and reinforce existing planting patterns and connections between areas and sites where possible.
  - a. A single species may be used to characterize a small site.
5. If a landscape should be modified, existing trees are to be retained where possible and incorporated into site planning and design.
6. If tree retention is not feasible:
  - a. trees should be relocated on site or to another site; or
  - b. trees should be replaced with appropriate species located in keeping with site development.
7. An existing tree removed because of land development should be replaced 2 for 1 minimally in the course of providing as many trees as are necessary to the creation of a new landscape.
  - a. That landscape should be designed and approved as part of the municipal land development process.
8. The condition of existing trees is to be evaluated in keeping with the standards of the American Society of Consulting Arborists and/or International Society of Arborists.
9. A determination of tree value is to be based on the most current edition of the *Council of Landscape and Tree Appraisers Guide*.
10. Shrubs and groundcovers should be specified in relation to specific site conditions.
11. Annual plantings are discouraged generally given their maintenance costs; however, the aesthetic value of annuals in planters, such as hanging baskets, may outweigh their cost.
12. Native or naturalized planting is desirable if adaptable to intensive use.

The following figure illustrates a schematic approach to ‘greening’ Main Street with planting. The plan schematically applies the models of planting as are outlined in the report and streetscape illustrations.

*London Road District & Francistown District* - As suggested in the Gateway Plan the entry to a locale can be noted by a place marker but it can/should be distinguished by its landscape character. This plan proposes avenues of large, deciduous trees be used to define a welcoming gateway to Exeter. Suggested species are;

1. Accolade Elm – *Ulmus japonicum x wilsoniana*
2. Burr Oak – *Quercus macrocarpa*
3. Silver Maple – *Acer saccharinum*
4. London Plane Tree – *Platanus acerifolia*

Figure 24: Schematic Planting – Greening Main Street



*South Bank and Greenway District* - The Streetscape Elements plan and section illustrate opportunities for 'greening' Main Street in these districts. The tree plantings in these districts need to be individually located in regard to driveways, utility lines, signage and viewsheds. These should be deciduous, shade trees with canopies that can be pruned to provide scale and character to the streetscape. Suggested species include;

1. Freeman Maple – *Acer x fremanii*
2. Redmond Linden – *Tilia Americana 'Redmond'*
3. Hackberry – *Celtis occidentalis*
4. Silver Maple – *Acer saccharinum*
5. White Oak – *Quercus alba*

*Historic Core District* - The density and scale of streetscape in the historic core is characterized by the its commercial development, there is little room for street tree planting in this district. As the Main Street – Sanders Street intersection proposal suggests, at points of intersection there may be opportunities to plant trees. Due to the requirement that these trees have a compact form and upright habit, ornamental species are recommended. Suggested species for these situations are;

1. Flowering Ornamental Pear – *Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'*
2. Thornless Honeylocust 'Skyline' – *Gleditsia triacanthos Varieties inermis*
3. Whitebeam Mountain Ash – *Sorbus aira*
4. Silver Linden – *Tilia tomentosa*



### Planters

Exeter makes use of planters to enhance the Main Street streetscape: in particular, hanging baskets, half-barrels and planter boxes. The planter boxes on the Ausable River bridge are very effective. The hanging baskets in conjunction with the metal Exeter sign are also effective. The half-barrel planters are inappropriate to the street environment because of their scale primarily; they are too small relative to their surroundings. The half barrel, while cost effective, is more appropriate to a residential environment.

### Street Planter

1. The street planter is proposed to be used instead of the half-barrel planters. The scale or size of the street planter is critical.
2. The planter should be durable, portable and conducive to maintaining plants.
3. The planter can be a place identifier.

### Planting Beds

1. The design and construction of planting beds is critical to the maintenance of plants and should be specified by a landscape architect or certified landscape designer.
2. In paved areas structural soil should be used as a growing medium for street trees as it will support engineered hard surfaces such as sidewalks and roadways.



3. Planting areas should be continuous where possible; structural soil may be used to bridge hard surface areas.

#### **Boulevard Landscape Strip**

1. Landscape strips are to be located between the road curb and sidewalk unless the design and use of an area negates its merits. The practice has little value for the streetscape and should be avoided.
2. Landscape strip width is context dependent – 1,000 mm minimum width

#### **Irrigation**

Irrigation is critical to the health of streetscape plants generally. The supply and installation cost of irrigation is relatively high, however, that cost pays off in both the short and long term because plants are better established resulting in less mortality and better overall health. Integrated Pest Management for designed plantings relies on maintaining the health of plants through informed care rather than through chemical means. Irrigation is an essential component of Integrated Pest Management programs and should be incorporated in all public plantings.

1. The most efficient irrigation system possible is to be specified.
2. A rain gauge is imperative.

#### **Signage**



Wayfinding can be described as the ordered placement of information to enable people to reach a desired destination. Signage is a component of wayfinding (often a study in itself). Wayfinding is rarely an issue once a person is familiar with a place except in relation to physical accessibility.<sup>19</sup> A successful wayfinding system is best achieved when all design elements are tied together to reinforce one another. It must be realized that even though wayfinding is heavily reliant on signage, the process involves the combination of a number of visual elements.

Signage, to be a highly effective tool, must be designed to be complementary to the surroundings. Signage can provide a unique sense of place and be a public relations or marketing tool. Signs also provide interpretive information that connects a patron/visitor to the immediate streetscape and may encourage the person to take further interest in their surroundings (e.g. understanding historical context or architectural features of a specific building or block). Signage is also important as part of the tourism infrastructure that easily directs tourists to destinations and encourages them to return— they are also one of the first impressions of a site.

There are two general sign categories:

- i. regulatory signs (permanent / nonpermanent) – warning signs, instructional signs
- ii. non-regulatory signs (permanent / non-permanent) – street signs, commercial signs, place marker signs

<sup>19</sup> Universal accessibility is advocated and upheld in this plan. In relation to physical design, universal accessibility refers to the genuine attempt to make facilities and landscapes accessible to all regardless of physical ability.

The design and placement of signs has a significant influence on the quality of a streetscape. Exeter's sign bylaw regulates the design and installation of signs so it should be reviewed for correspondence with this plan. Regulatory signs should be kept to the minimum required to inform and advise in keeping with accepted standards. Non-regulatory signs should not visually overwhelm the streetscape. Often such signs are used in addition to permanent signs and are a visually intrusive form of advertising in the public realm. Many communities require permits for such signs.



*The scale and style of some temporary signs is inappropriate to the pedestrian realm especially in comparison to the attractive business sign on the building.*



*Francistown commercial signs create visual clutter. The chairs add to that becoming advertising as well; though in this case the colourful chairs do enliven an otherwise dull pedestrian realm.*



The necessity for impermanent signage within the public realm may be justifiable as with the Bach Festival or the annual sidewalk sale. Banners and flags lend themselves to that. Of note, the Town has initiated completion of a new sign at the north entrance of Exeter. This sign will integrate an LED component for advertising.

### Banners and Flags

Exeter uses two forms of banner to convey graphic information. Pole banners serve as decorative street elements while the overhead banner at the bridge serves as a public notice of an event, celebration or special occasion.



Banners are effective in the appropriate context. Note how the Exeter pole banner in the Francistown commercial sign image is insignificant visually given the expansive streetscape and clutter of commercial signs.

1. Pole banners should be constructed of flexible, durable, weather-proof, recyclable material normally designed to hang vertically and to be attached by their top and bottom edges to a rigid support.
2. The design of a banner is context and information dependent.

### Art



Art represents a fundamental exploration and expression of human experience. Landscape and buildings provide both a medium and a setting for artistic expression. Art need not be thought of as a monumental, singular piece, it could well be a series of banners, or inserts in waste receptacles or the waste receptacles themselves. If there is a desire in Exeter for public art, it is advisable to establish a public art program. The acceptance, selection and placement of public art can be contentious so there needs to be a clear and open process for dealing with it.

1. Art should serve as a visual focus within the public realm or a proposed site.
2. The operational impact of a work of art is to be accounted for and the amount and source of maintenance funding identified.



## 5.0 THE INCENTIVES



This Section describes several incentives that can be promoted through the CISDP to facilitate private-sector investment, as permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

## 5.1 CIP APPROACH & REQUIREMENTS

The Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan (CISDP) process is driven by a number of factors ranging from tying into regional and national sustainability objectives, economic development and expansion opportunities, downtown revitalization efforts, integration of high quality urban design and developments, and the promotion of healthy communities to name but a few. Whereas the Streetscape Design Plan component of this Report is geared to public sector initiatives, **the Community Improvement Plan component is oriented towards facilitating private sector investment in Exeter.**

Finding creative ways to fund and implement community improvements within constrained municipal budgets is undoubtedly challenging. Minimizing impacts on municipal ratepayers is of key concern, yet municipal resources are needed to stimulate investments within the community be it social or economic. This Section presents a range of financing tools that are intended to support community improvement objectives in Exeter, along with their eligibility requirements.

The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) component of the CISDP functions in accordance with the implementing policies of Section 28 under the *Ontario Planning Act*. Implementation of the CIP will facilitate the following:

- Improvement of the appearance and function of the CISDP Project Area.
- Economic development through business attraction, expansion and retention.
- Improving quality of life for residents of Exeter, and the Municipality as a whole.
- Diversification of the types of land uses that exist in the CISDP Project Area, while providing flexible opportunities to respond to emerging needs for housing and shifts in the Municipal employment base.
- Preservation and integration of buildings with historical value.
- Coordinating the appearance of commercial signage and the provision of off-street parking for local business.

The CIP Project Area is defined as the CISDP Project Area illustrated in Figure 2 of this Plan; furthermore, certain community improvement incentives are intended for application in the sub-districts of the Project Area, defined in Figure 3 of this Plan. A number of financial incentive programs have been recommended through the CISDP, each of which is subject to the following general requirements (over and above requirements that are identified for each incentive program).<sup>20</sup>

- 1) The amount of funding available for any or all financial incentive programs will be defined through a **Council-approved budget allocation** for any given year. It is the right of Council to cap the maximum available funding for any or all

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<sup>20</sup> The general and program specific requirements contained in the CISDP are not necessarily exhaustive and the Municipality of South Huron reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property-specific basis.

financial incentive programs to a specified amount per Municipal fiscal year, giving Council or a designate approved by Council the right to offer financial incentives to eligible projects on a “first come, first served” basis.

- 2) Only **properties within the CISDP Project Area** (as defined in Figure 2 and Figure 3) are eligible for incentive programs identified in this Plan.
- 3) Financial incentives are **available only to registered assessed owners of properties** located in the CISDP Project Area; applications received from other parties must be accompanied by written consent of the property owner to be considered for financial incentives.
- 4) A **complete application** must be submitted to the Municipality and meet all eligibility criteria for approval, prior to commencing any works to which the financial incentive program will apply.
- 5) Improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made **pursuant to a Building Permit**, and constructed in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code*.
- 6) Applications for financial incentives must be **accompanied by appropriate documentation** to satisfy eligibility requirements, including but not limited to (at the discretion of the Municipality) estimates, contract documents, designs and plans, or other documents that articulate the costs of the works to be undertaken. Documentation must **demonstrate how such work conforms to the Goals and Objectives of the CISDP**.
- 7) Applicants shall **disclose any grants or loans** stemming from governmental and non-governmental sources that are intended to be applied to costs eligible to financial incentives contained herein. The Municipality reserves the right to adjust the amount of its financial incentive dependent upon any anticipated or successful procurement of non-municipal funding for the property.
- 8) Municipal Staff will be responsible for the review and evaluation of applications that are submitted for financial incentive programs. **Municipal Council, or a designate approved by Council, will render the final approval decision** with respect to acceptance of the application after considering a recommendation from Municipal Staff. Final decisions on applications and allocation of funds shall be made by Municipal Council or a designate approved by Council. Further, if Council delegates its authority then the applicant shall be afforded an opportunity to appeal the staff decision to Council or an appropriate Standing Committee.
- 9) The Municipality may, at its discretion, require successful applicants to **enter into an agreement** specifying the terms and conditions of the grant or other benefit awarded through Municipal incentives.
- 10) The Municipality **is not responsible for any costs incurred** by an applicant pertaining to the submission of an application for a financial incentive



program(s), nor is it held responsible for any costs that may be incurred in anticipation of a grant.

- 11) If the applicant **defaults or does not meet any of the requirements of the financial incentive programs** for works approved in principle, the Municipality may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant, loan or exemption and may require, at its discretion, repayment of the approved grant.
- 12) All proposed works that are approved for financial incentive **programs shall conform to Municipal policies, by-laws, procedures and standards** set out through documents such as (but not limited to) the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, technical design guidelines, Strategic Plan, etc.
- 13) Applications **approved by other bodies** (e.g. Ontario Municipal Board) or intended to expand/rehabilitate **legal non-conforming uses** are not eligible.
- 14) Property taxes applicable to properties approved for financial incentive programs **must be in good standing** at the time when the grant is advanced, and remain in good standing throughout the term length specified for the financial incentive (i.e. the property must not be in a position of tax arrears). All property taxes and any other financial obligations to the Municipality shall be paid or cancelled, prior to the disbursement of Municipal funds.
- 15) The Municipality reserves the right to **monitor or inspect any property**, and work undertaken on the property, prior to and after approval of a financial incentive program for the subject property.
- 16) In the event a property is sold while receiving assistance from one or more approved programs, the remaining **assistance may be transferable** to the new owner, subject to approval by Municipal Council or its appointed designate.
- 17) The Municipality reserves the right to **discontinue any financial incentive program** contained in the CISDP at any time. Applicants who have approved grants at the time of discontinuation will continue to receive the incentive subject to the terms of the approved application, provided that works continue to meet the requirements of the application as approved in principle.
- 18) Financial incentive programs will only be permitted for applications and works initiated after adoption of the CIDSP (i.e. retroactive incentives are not eligible).

Appendix A contains the implementing by-laws that are required to be passed prior to implementation of the community improvement incentives enabled under Sections 17 and 28 of the *Planning Act*.

## 5.2 FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

**INTENT:** The intent of a Façade Improvement Program is to encourage building owners, through grants, to improve their façade in a manner that contributes to the streetscape, thereby improving the overall appearance of the CISDP Project Area. Council may offer assistance to an applicant who undertakes façade improvements to residential and/or commercial buildings within eligible districts of the Community Improvement Project Area which are consistent with the Goals and Objectives of the CISDP. The objectives of the Facade Improvement Program are to:

- a) Support and promote the maintenance of properties within the eligible districts in order to strengthen the role of the Exeter Downtown as a commercial and retail centre serving a regional market.
- b) Provide for and promote community improvement and promote investment activity;
- c) Promote the maintenance and appearance of buildings within the eligible districts; and
- d) Compliment any existing and future municipal service and streetscape improvements implemented by the Municipality of South Huron.

**RATIONALE:** The Main Street corridor and its surrounding streets, south of the Ausable River, contain a diverse range of structures of varying architectural details and building conditions. By providing property owners with an incentive to improve their facades, the Municipality can facilitate the conservation or continuation of historical character, as well as the creation of a consistent and coordinated streetscape theme while benefitting property owners to increase the value of their properties, attract patrons, and increase the value and longevity of their properties.

**ELIGIBLE DISTRICTS:** The intent of this Program would apply to building facades having street frontage along Main Street, including corner lots, within the Historic Core of the CISDP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS:** Cost of materials; equipment and contracted labour to complete eligible improvements based on the lower of a minimum of two cost quotations; fees of a professional engineer, architect or other design consultant.

**ELIGIBLE WORKS:** Only exterior renovations and the associated design work for building facades facing a street, side laneway, or open space are eligible. Improvements that may qualify for the Facade Improvement Program include:

- 1) Restoration of brick work or cladding, or the installation of new cladding;
- 2) Replacement or repair of cornices, eaves and parapets;
- 3) Window and door repairs and/or exterior painting;
- 4) Cleaning in a manner that is not detrimental to the facade;
- 5) Entranceway modifications, including provisions to improve accessibility for those with disabilities or special needs;
- 6) Signboard improvement, in accordance with Municipal by-laws (*note: window signage is not an eligible item*);
- 7) Exterior lighting;

- 8) Repair, replacement or the addition of awnings and canopies;
- 9) Replacement of facade appointment (e.g. decorative or architectural details) originally in place during the initial construction of the building; and/or
- 10) Such other similar repairs, and/or improvements to the building exterior as may be approved by Council or Council's designate.

**GRANT PROVISIONS:** Successful applicants can qualify for a one-time grant worth 50% of the costs associated with eligible works, up to a maximum of \$5,000 for improvements to each facade having street or side laneway frontage. Where buildings exceed two stories, the grant may be increased by \$1,000 for each storey above the second storey. Payment of the grant shall be made upon completion of the applicable work, to the satisfaction of the Municipality, submission of all paid receipts, and photo documentation of the completed work. Applicants must submit a minimum of two cost estimates ('quotes') to undertake the work; applicants are not bound to accept the lowest quote, however, the contribution from the program will be based on the lowest relevant quote.

### 5.3 REAR PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT GRANT

**INTENT:** The intent of the Parking Lot Improvement Grant is to encourage property owners to create parking opportunities for public utilization in the CISDP Project Area by undertaking rear parking lot improvements, paving and sharing parking with the Municipality and other property owners, after entering into shared access agreements with the Municipality.

**RATIONALE:** The availability of parking is an important element in attracting residents, visitors and store patrons to the CISDP Project Area. A person may not be inclined to visit a particular area if they deem that parking is not convenient. While this may be a societal trend that the CISDP is trying to alter in the hopes of achieving vibrant and healthy community principles (e.g. enticing people to walk and interact with each other, rather than "driving by"), parking does still represent a competitive element among businesses (and other destinations, such as parks) in terms of convenience. Rather than investing in additional parking lots or devoting more of the right-of-way to on-street parking, it would be an effective strategy to improve existing paved areas such as those located behind or adjacent to existing commercial areas in the CISDP Project Area. By encouraging abutting property owners to coordinate parking behind their stores, opportunity is created to maximize the number of potential parking spaces on existing asphalt surfaces in the CISDP Project Area.

Furthermore, improving the aesthetic of existing lots through landscaping and pedestrian circulation provides a number of benefits related to urban design (e.g. creating a 'public realm' within a lot so that it is not simply just an expanse of asphalt) and environmental sustainability (e.g. planting trees or other plants can reduce microclimate temperatures, create carbon sinks and produce oxygen, opportunities for wildlife habitat, etc.).



**ELIGIBLE DISTRICTS:** The intent of this Program applies to properties with existing rear parking lots located within the Historic Core of the CISDP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS:** Cost of materials required to surface and mark parking areas; equipment and contracted labour to complete eligible improvements based on the lower of a minimum of two cost quotations; professional fees of an engineer, planner, landscape architect, land surveyor, or other design consultant.

**ELIGIBLE WORKS:** Eligible works include resurfacing, striping, installation of accessible/handicapped parking spaces, wheel stops, drainage improvements, and/or other safety improvements. Pedestrian circulation areas within or providing access to parking lots, as well as any pedestrian amenities (e.g. landscaping, furniture, pathway creation), are also eligible. New developments, where parking must be provided under zoning and/or site plan regulations, are not eligible for the grant.

**GRANT PROVISIONS:** For eligible projects, the Municipality will provide a grant of up to 50% of costs associated with creating rear lot, paved parking that is shared with the general public (i.e. non-exclusive for property owners or patrons). A maximum of \$500 per parking space plus up to \$1,000 per 10 metres of laneway which is created for circulation will be allocated. The total eligible for each qualifying grant shall be capped to a maximum of \$5,000. Other requirements required to qualify for the grant shall include:

- 1) Property owners participating in this grant incentive shall enter into a shared access agreement with the Municipality to permit rear lot access and annually contribute a share of maintenance costs associated with the entire parking circulation system (that may include adjacent and nearby property owners).
- 2) The Municipality, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to defer or reject grant applications in instances where adjacent or nearby property owners who choose not to participate in shared use agreements inhibit legal access to the applicant's property.
- 3) Applicants are encouraged to submit joint applications as a means to facilitate a connected network of shared parking lots to the rear of their properties. In these instances, the grant amounts shall be calculated as identified above and be applicable to each individual legal property listed in the joint submission, provided that all applicants enter into the shared use agreement prepared by the Municipality.
- 4) Applicants must submit a minimum of two cost estimates ('quotes') from qualified professionals to undertake the work; applicants are not bound to accept the lowest quote, however, the contribution from the program will be based on the lowest relevant quote.

## 5.4 TAX INCREMENT EQUIVALENT GRANT

**INTENT:** The intent of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program is to promote the goals and objectives of the CISDP by providing financial incentive for the redevelopment of lands or buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area. Incentive will be provided through the reduction of the increase in the municipal portion of property taxes resulting from the reassessment of the property due to its redevelopment.

**RATIONALE:** The *Tax Increment Finance Act* allows municipalities to provide a loan or grant for the amount of the incremental tax increase associated with developing/redeveloping a property. Providing this incentive offers property developers/redevelopers upfront funding to assist with the project undertaking and is seen as a stimulus to investment in the CISDP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE DISTRICTS:** The intent of this Program would apply to the South Bank District of the CIDSP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE WORKS:** Eligible works are considered to be projects through which the assessed value of the property increases by no less than 25% as a result of the development, redevelopment or rehabilitation. Furthermore, projects that involve development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of more than 25% of the existing gross floor area are considered to be eligible.

**GRANT PROVISIONS:** As a result of an eligible rehabilitation, development or redevelopment project, 50% of the Municipal portion of the property tax differential (defined as the difference between predevelopment and post-development assessment) will be granted to the applicant. Grants will be disbursed over a maximum period of ten (10) years with 50% of the increase in the municipal tax increment granted in year one. The amount of subsequent grants will be decreased by 10% each year thereafter, up to a maximum of ten (10) years. The tax grant will not be paid and will not accumulate for any year when property taxes do not remain in good standing. The value of the grant provided through this and other financial incentives shall not exceed the total cost of rehabilitating the lands or buildings. The Municipality should notify the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) upon project completion to determine the re-assessment value.

## 5.5 BROWNFIELDS FINANCIAL TAX INCENTIVE PROGRAM

**INTENT:** The intent of the Brownfields Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP) is to encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield properties by providing tax assistance for the purposes of environmental rehabilitation, as enabled under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*. Assistance is provided in recognition that brownfield sites have increased costs due to the need to undertake environmental site assessments and site rehabilitation, which represent upfront costs that may otherwise discourage reinvestment in the site. The objectives of the BFTIP are to:

- a) Create and support a strategy to remediate and redevelop brownfield sites in Exeter.

- b) Promote brownfield redevelopment as a practical tool for sustainable development.
- c) To enhance the environment and economy of Exeter through environmental remediation, site enhancement, building improvements and redevelopment.

**RATIONALE:** There are increased costs associated with the redevelopment of brownfield sites due to the need to undertake environmental site assessments and site rehabilitation. If these upfront costs can be reduced, the economic feasibility for a brownfield redevelopment/reuse may be enhanced. While there are no contaminated sites in the CISDP Project Area at present, there are a number of light industrial properties that may require remediation in the future if a redevelopment is proposed.

**ELIGIBLE DISTRICTS:** The intent of this Program would apply to all districts within the CISDP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS:** Costs associated with the preparation of Phase I or II environmental site assessments or site specific risk assessments by qualified professionals<sup>21</sup>; identification and removal of designated substances; and environmental remediation, including the costs of preparing a Record of Site Condition.

**ELIGIBLE WORKS:** Eligible properties as defined under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, means a property for which a Phase II environmental site assessment has been conducted and indicates that the property did not meet the standards under Section 168.4(4) of the *Environmental Protection Act* to permit the filing of a Record of Site Condition in the Environmental Site Registry. Eligible properties will also include those where a site specific risk assessment has been completed to identify the work required to comply with a certificate of property use issued under the *Environmental Protection Act*.

**PROGRAM PROVISIONS:** Successful applicants for eligible properties in the CISDP Project Area can qualify for cancellation of up to 100% of property taxes for municipal and school purposes during the rehabilitation period. Similarly, successful applicants can qualify for cancellation of up to 100% of property taxes for municipal and school purposes during the development period.<sup>22</sup> The total amount of property taxes cancelled during the rehabilitation and development periods for a property shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the work required to prepare a Record of Site Condition for the property that is acceptable to the Ministry of the Environment. The following program requirements shall apply:

- 1) Any property approved for tax assistance shall require the passing of a Municipal by-law containing conditions required by the Municipality, County, and Minister of Finance.
- 2) To qualify for tax assistance, applications must be submitted to the Municipality prior to any remediation works being undertaken.

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<sup>21</sup> Qualified professionals shall be those as defined by Ontario Regulation 153/04, as amended.

<sup>22</sup> The terms "rehabilitation period" and "development period" shall have the same meanings as set out in Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001

- 3) The Municipality will request the Province to provide relief for the education portion of taxes and request the County of Huron to provide relief from the County portion of municipal taxes.
- 4) The applicant shall provide the Municipality with estimates, prepared by qualified professionals, of the cost of rehabilitating the property to permit the filing of a Record of Site Condition with the Environmental Site Registry and the cost of complying with any certificate of property use issued under the *Environmental Protection Act*.

## 5.6 PLANNING FEE & DEVELOPMENT CHARGE GRANT PROGRAM

**INTENT:** The intent of the Planning Fee & Development Charge Grant Program is to promote the improvement, development, redevelopment and/or preservation of the Municipality's Community Improvement Project Area by providing a financial incentive that waives a portion of Development Charges as well as the cost of municipal planning and building fees such as (but not necessarily limited to):

- Application fees, site plan approval fees, development charge fees;
- Building permit fees; and/or
- Official Plan or Zoning By-law Amendment fees.

**RATIONALE:** The Municipality of South Huron's annually sets a fee schedule for processing planning applications, as permitted through Section 69 of the *Planning Act*. While some of these fees may not be seen as being prohibitive to discourage or stimulate investments, they do represent another opportunity for property owners, particularly smaller business owners/property developers to increase their return on investment through the reduction of upfront costs. Such a program would also be supported through County of Huron Housing Strategy<sup>23</sup> that recommends that municipal fees and development charges be waived (subject to an amendment to the DC By-law) to increase the affordability of housing developed under the Affordable Housing Program.

Exempting development charges in preferred growth areas (such as the CISDP Project Area) stimulates investment in desired areas and makes them competitive with greenfield developments by reducing the end cost to the developer and ultimately the consumer. While this will mean that the Municipality would bear a greater share of infrastructure costs, the true cost may in fact be lower if targeting the incentive to areas where infrastructure already exists.

**ELIGIBLE DISTRICTS:** The intent of this Program would apply to properties within the South Bank District of the CISDP Project Area.

**ELIGIBLE WORKS:** Large and small scale development and redevelopment projects that promote principles of sustainability and community vibrancy as set out by the Vision and Objectives of the CISDP, in a manner that is satisfactory to Municipal Council or its designate. Specifically, eligible works shall include:

<sup>23</sup> County of Huron. *A Housing Strategy for the County of Huron*. 2006.



- 1) New residential, commercial or mixed-use developments proposed for vacant lots (including parking lots) located within the eligible districts;
- 2) Expansion or redevelopment to commercial or mixed-use buildings that results in the addition of new commercial or residential units; and
- 3) Conversion of non-commercial space to commercial or mixed-use space.

**PROGRAM PROVISIONS:** The Municipality will provide successful applicants with a grant equal to the applicable cost of normal planning application fees (Municipal portion only) pertaining to Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, Minor Variances and Site Plan applications. The Municipality will grant 100% of application fees, up to a maximum of \$3,000 per applicant. The planning application fees will be granted back upon successful completion (i.e. in accordance with the intent of the CISDP and satisfaction of the Municipality) of the approved work. The Municipality may request the County of Huron to also waive any such fees for works within the eligible district.

With respect to the Development Charges portion of the incentive, the Municipality will provide a grant equal to 50% of the sum of the fees paid under the Municipality of South Huron's Development Charges By-law, applicable to "soft services" (such as emergency and community services, parks and recreation, growth studies, etc.).<sup>24</sup> The grant will be provided to the applicant upon successful completion of the approved works. The maximum total grant available through this program will be capped at \$200,000.

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<sup>24</sup> Soft services generally refer to those not falling under those described under Section 5(5) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997* ("Services with no percentage reduction")

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## 6.0

# THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



This Section articulates future directions, municipal priorities, and marketing and monitoring programs to ensure the ongoing success of the CISDP.

## 6.1 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

For the Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan (CISDP) to be successful, it must be viewed as a tool that is part of a broader, more comprehensive and integrated strategy tying together Municipal and community-based objectives. Creating a sustainable, vibrant community is a “sum of all parts” approach requiring strategic partnerships and collaboration with the end means of revitalizing and re-energizing Exeter’s Main Street corridor.

The Municipality and its community partners have already initiated a number of projects along Main Street from new and modernized signage, landscaping activities in front of the Town Hall, and improving the pedestrian experience through planters and sound systems. Much remains to accomplish, however, a willingness has been already been demonstrated which yields much hope for the future. Before the CISDP can be truly effective, a number of actions should be undertaken as part of the broader comprehensive strategy to ensure that the Vision for Main Street can truly be realized.

A strategic benefit in the way that the CISDP has been developed stems from the ‘District-based’ approach that divides the Project Area (i.e. the London Road, Historic Core, South Bank, Greenway, and Francistown districts). The Municipality can proceed with streetscape and community improvements on an incremental basis, choosing to focus on key districts rather than potentially being overextended to address improvements over the entire Project Area. This will provide the Municipality with flexibility in its funding allocations, as narrowing improvements to a district-by-district approach can reduce pressures upon municipal finances compared to improving the entire Project Area all at once.

Lastly, it will be important for the Municipality to coordinate and align streetscape and community improvement projects with its planned public works. For example, a major sewer project is planned along Main Street and the rear private laneways that provide opportunity for joint planning and implementation (the rear parking lot improvements, as discussed throughout the CISDP, could be undertaken in conjunction with this capital infrastructure project).

## 6.2 MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

The Municipality of South Huron must continue to be the leader for the rejuvenation of Exeter’s Main Street corridor. As such, a number of public sector actions will be required for the success of the CISDP.

- 1) The Municipality must adopt the Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan and its proposed directions, programs and policies as a guiding document that influences amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law.
- 2) The Municipality should develop a set of Urban Design Guidelines, to be adopted by Council, as a means to ensure that new developments conform to



the general vision and specifications set out to develop a high quality public realm.

- 3) The Municipality should continue to enforce its by-laws pertaining to property standards in order to ensure compliance with rules and regulations that are critical to upholding the community's aesthetic image.
- 4) The Municipality should continue to investigate funding opportunities available from senior levels of government, while encouraging community organizations to also explore opportunities to procure grants and loans.
- 5) Public parking should be better organized, better identified and made more accessible. The Municipality should take the lead in coordinating with private businesses and the BIA/Chamber of Commerce to increase the viability of parking lots behind Main Street storefronts to be better utilized by employees and patrons. The Municipality may facilitate agreements between adjacent property owners for joint maintenance of parking spaces (and require them when providing Parking Lot Improvement Grants), or the Municipality could contribute towards maintaining rear private parking lots in exchange for public access. This initiative would require alignment with initiatives such as improvements (e.g. striping, creation of common pedestrian and vehicular circulation routes, connecting walkways to Main Street, etc.) through a coordinated parking strategy.

### 6.3 STREETScape DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

The streetscape design components of the CISDP could be implemented all at once but the plan is conceived with the reality of planning, decision-making and public financing in mind. The urban design intent is to facilitate the revitalization of the study area focused on Main Street and Thames Road through the strategic implementation of the ideas presented in this plan in conjunction with those brought forward by citizens in response to the plan. The plan itself is a stimulus.

The CISDP proposals are to serve more detailed design required for implementation. Further to this the following is recommended:

1. The Municipality should work with the South Huron Heritage Advisory Committee to encourage the restoration of Exeter's oldest buildings through the provision of such incentives that will be identified through the development of this CISDP.
2. It is proposed that the Francistown landscape be enhanced. While there is precedent for requiring a different approach to commercial site design and building architecture, the established form of private development is a result of existing and accepted planning policy. The public realm landscape is the area most readily enhanced and unified; enhancing the existing private property landscape, though desirable, will require consultation and cooperation and for new development, policy change.

3. It is proposed that banners continue to be used in the Greenway district. Further to that, however, it is proposed that the wooden poles used to hang a banner presently be replaced with a column that references existing stone cairns and pillars.
4. It is proposed that the intersection of Main and Sanders Streets be redesigned in keeping with the importance of Exeter's civic complex .
5. It is also proposed that vehicular traffic be managed differently to facilitate the redesign of the Main-Sanders intersection.
6. It is proposed that each of the main road entries to Exeter be planted with an avenue of trees because of the visual impact of mature trees, especially when planted in a row or avenue in Ontario's rural landscape, The use of trees rather than built structure is aesthetically, ecologically and economically sound. A tree avenue will serve as a marker of arrival and departure; it will reiterate and celebrate the town's and province's heritage.
7. It is proposed that a simple, place name sign be incorporated with the tree avenue.
8. It is proposed that signage be used to identify alternative or greener routes to Main Street through Exeter.
9. Develop a wayfinding program for the CISDP Project Area which, at a minimum, should be targeted at key locations situated within the Historic Core as this area encapsulates nearly all of the key destinations which are likely to attract visitors and passers-by into the historic core.

## 6.4 STREETSCAPE & COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY MATRIX

STREETSCAPE DISTRICTS	ACTIONS FOR ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY DIRECTED FROM MAIN STREET STREETSCAPE ANALYSIS	MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PROPOSAL	COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN INCENTIVES
	<p><b>Action for Adaptability:</b> Propose a comprehensive streetscape design implemented through simple and cumulative or adaptive interventions responsive to the strengths and attributes of and appropriate to each district.</p> <p><b>Action for Everyday Future:</b> Offer flexible planning and design solutions that may be implemented incrementally and creatively in conjunction with necessary and ongoing programs such as facilities maintenance and infrastructure renewal.</p> <p><b>Action for Fairness:</b> Provide the planning mechanisms allowing for participation in community improvement and enhancement. Providing safe and accessible improvements on Main Street.</p> <p><b>Action for Particularity:</b> Propose a community improvement and streetscape design plan that is particular to Exeter.</p> <p><b>Action for Sacredness:</b> Respect, protect, celebrate and incorporate Exeter's sacred places.</p> <p><b>Action for Sensible Status Seeking:</b> Be sensible, community improvement happens incrementally and strategically. Propose improvements that are responsive to/build on Exeter's heritage, vernacular and legacy of community building.</p> <p><b>Action for Selective Diversity:</b> Maintain and extend diversity while attending to the need for unity or harmony throughout the streetscape.</p> <p><b>Action for Stewardship:</b> Implement the Community Improvement and Streetscape Design Plan</p>	<p><i>These actions for Ecological Democracy have guided the proposals for Streetscape Improvements outlined below and therefore are not assigned to a single district.</i></p> <p><i>Specific Streetscape Improvement projects are referenced below for each Main Street District.</i></p>	

STREETSCAPE DISTRICTS	ACTIONS FOR ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY DIRECTED FROM MAIN STREET STREETSCAPE ANALYSIS	MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PROPOSAL	COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN INCENTIVES
LONDON ROAD DISTRICT	<p><b>Action for Naturalness:</b> Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.</p> <p><b>Action for Pacing:</b> Encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in keeping with the scale and walkability of Exeter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 5: Landscape-Based Gateway Concept for Exeter</li> <li>Figure 6: Conceptual &amp; Existing Street Tree Planting – Exeter South Gateway</li> <li>Figure 7: District Streetscape Elements Concept</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program</li> </ul>
'DOWNTOWN' / HISTORIC CORE DISTRICT	<p><b>Action for Centeredness:</b> Enhance Exeter's historic core and especially the civic building complex to reinforce the area as the town centre.</p> <p><b>Action for Density and Smallness:</b> To encourage street-life and 'front yard' living by residents and businesses through the use of gardens and open areas, street trees and traffic calming to enhance the perception of Exeter's smallness.</p> <p><b>Action for Naturalness:</b> Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 7: District Streetscape Elements Concept</li> <li>Figure 15: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Municipal Building/Library Parking Lot</li> <li>Figure 16: Historic Core – Alleyway Renovation Concept</li> <li>Figure 17: Historic Core Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Parallel Parking</li> <li>Figure 18: Historic Core Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Street Trees</li> <li>Figure 19: Historic Core – Main Street &amp; Sanders Street Intersection Modification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facade Improvement Program</li> <li>Rear Parking Lot Improvement Grant</li> <li>Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program</li> </ul>
SOUTH BANK DISTRICT	<p><b>Action for Connectedness:</b> Reinforce Main Street as the central, connecting axis through streetscape design. To link William Street and Andrew Street with Main Street as alternate routes for pedestrian and cyclist traffic.</p> <p><b>Action for Density and Smallness:</b> To encourage street-life and 'front yard' living by residents and businesses through the use of gardens and open areas, street trees and traffic calming to enhance the perception of Exeter's smallness.</p> <p><b>Action for Naturalness:</b> Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.</p> <p><b>Action for Pacing:</b> Encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in keeping with the scale and walkability of Exeter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 7: District Streetscape Elements Concept</li> <li>Figure 13: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Shared Private/Public Parking Areas Behind East-Side Main Street Buildings</li> <li>Figure 14: Historic Core Parking Reorganization – Conceptual Shared Private/Public Parking Areas Behind West-Side Main Street Buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax Increment Equivalent Grant</li> <li>Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program</li> <li>Planning Fee &amp; Development Charge Grant Program</li> </ul>



STREETSCAPE DISTRICTS	ACTIONS FOR ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY DIRECTED FROM MAIN STREET STREETSCAPE ANALYSIS	MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PROPOSAL	COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN INCENTIVES
THE GREENWAY	<p><b>Action for Ecological Literacy:</b> Maintain and highlight the Ausable River watershed through the extension and enhancement of the trailhead, park and existing trail system.</p> <p><b>Action for Naturalness:</b> Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 20: Greenway Concept Plan – District Landmark, Bridge Refurbishment, Bicycle Lanes, Park Pathways, Street Greening</li> <li>Figure 21: Greenway Landmark – Refurbished Ausable River Bridge Street Section – Two Traffic Lanes with Bicycle Lanes</li> <li>Figure 24: Schematic Planting – Greening Main Street</li> </ul>	None proposed
FRANCISTOWN DISTRICT	<p><b>Action for Naturalness:</b> Promote and enhance Exeter's green qualities.</p> <p><b>Action for Pacing:</b> Encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in keeping with the scale and walkability of Exeter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 5: Landscape-Based Gateway Concept for Exeter</li> <li>Figure 6: Conceptual &amp; Existing Street Tree Planting – Exeter South Gateway</li> <li>Figure 7: District Streetscape Elements Concept</li> <li>Figure 10: Conceptual Modifications for the Main Street &amp; Thames Road Intersection in Francistown</li> <li>Figure 11: Thames Road Pedestrianization &amp; Planting - Francistown</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program</li> </ul>

## 6.5 MARKETING & MONITORING THE CISDP

Marketing and monitoring of the CISDP is critical to its ongoing success. A consistent brand needs to be established and communicated to the public to provide information regarding the benefits and abilities in undertaking community improvement activities. As documented in the MMAH Community Improvement Planning Handbook (2008), the final phase of implementing a CIP is to establish marketing programs that raise interest and stimulates uptake of each incentive program.

- 1) The Municipality should create a branding strategy to market the CISDP as a means to raise awareness and stimulate uptake of incentive programs. Branding would involve a set of consistent and coordinated elements that would be translated into marketing materials (such as newsletters, a website, etc.) as well as into streetscape design by using a palette of colours, textures and building materials that are articulated within the CISDP.
- 2) As part of the of the municipal website enhancement/refreshment process, the Municipality should create a webpage dedicated to informing the community about the CISDP, its objectives, and its incentive programs.

With respect to the monitoring component, ongoing exercises will need to be undertaken by the Municipality to ensure that the CISDP remains relevant in the context of changing demographics and land use patterns, amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, funding scenarios, success of programs, etc. While the CISDP is grounded in a comprehensive foundation that considers existing conditions and a forecast of the future, this Plan represents a snapshot in time whose success as a “living document” depends upon the Municipality’s ability to continually implement and revisit directions. As such, the following actions should be undertaken.

- 1) Municipal Staff should annually review the CISDP to determine its success and effectiveness. As necessary, adjustments to policies, programs or directions may be required after consulting with Council.
- 2) Remain apprised of current conditions and any changes to specific variables used to determine baseline conditions.
- 3) Monitor the success and effectiveness of financial incentive programs, through tracking key statistics (e.g. number of applications submitted per incentive program, dollars allocated, timing, etc.) and community/applicant feedback to understand strengths and challenges associated with implementation.

## 6.6 SUMMARY

“You are never finished.” is one of the Project for Public Spaces implementation principles. There are two others:

- “Start with petunias.”
- “Money is not the issue.”

Given the 1978 urban design plan for Exeter that highlights many of the same concerns addressed in this 2012 plan, we understand and accept that we are never finished when it comes to the revitalization of a community. Revitalization or improvement is an ongoing process open to redefinition because change is a constant. Starting, or more accurately, continuing that process with petunias reminds us to start small with things that are manageable, affordable and that we all agree with.

Despite the insistent calls for more money in every public endeavor, the real issue can be one of management or organization, planning or resource allocation, choice and certainly will. This is not to dismiss the very real need for money to provide and maintain public services; however, we are a very wealthy society. The allocation of both private and public money is a matter of choice. This plan offers choice. It is suggesting ways to improve Exeter’s public and private realms which is to say, the Town of Exeter.

Some of those ways offer citizens a chance to seek public funding to improve their properties. The municipality’s responsibility in that is to put policies in place to allow for the expenditure of public money. The modification of Exeter’s streets is suggested in a way that will require a change in behaviour or perception. The question always is whether the benefit of a proposed change outweighs the cost. In this sense, in this plan it is the cost of sustainability meaning the socio-cultural, economic, ecological and aesthetic costs to Exeter and its citizens.

A street is public infrastructure. It is in everyone’s best interest to maintain that infrastructure.<sup>25</sup> Seeing a street as a streetscape, a landscape with a street as a focus, is a change of perception. As part of a landscape a street is more than an engineered surface to facilitate the movement of people and goods safely and efficiently. It is part of an interconnected, defining, linear, public, open space. Its quality matters to the sense of a place. To remain vital, Exeter needs vital streets and especially a vital Main Street.

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<sup>25</sup> Four major infrastructure projects have been identified for Exeter:

1. Bridge refurbishment at the Ausable River
2. Sewer pipe replacement in Main Street rear laneways
3. Main Street Resurfacing
4. Main Street Streetlight Replacement

Associated changes to the streetscape should proceed in concert with the noted infrastructure projects.

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **By-law to Designate a Community Improvement Plan Project Area Within the Municipality of South Huron**



SCHEDULE 1

CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON  
BY-LAW NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

BEING A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA  
WITHIN THE EXETER URBAN SETTLEMENT AREA

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**WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Huron has an Official Plan that contains provisions relating to community improvement;

**AND WHEREAS** the lands hereinafter described are part of that area covered by the Official Plan of the Municipality of South Huron;

**AND WHEREAS** authority is granted under Section 28 (2) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, to pass a By-Law;

**AND WHEREAS** Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines a 'community improvement project area' as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.";

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Huron deems it in the interest of the municipality to designate the lands hereinafter described as the Exeter Community Improvement Project Area;

**NOW THEREFORE THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON ENACTS** as follows:

1. Pursuant to Section 28 (2) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, the following lands are hereby designated as Community Improvement Project Areas and that these areas of land and premises situate, being in the Municipality of South Huron and being composed of those areas of land which are shown on Schedule "A" attached and referred hereto as the Exeter Community Improvement Project Area, be more particularly described as follows:

Enacted and passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

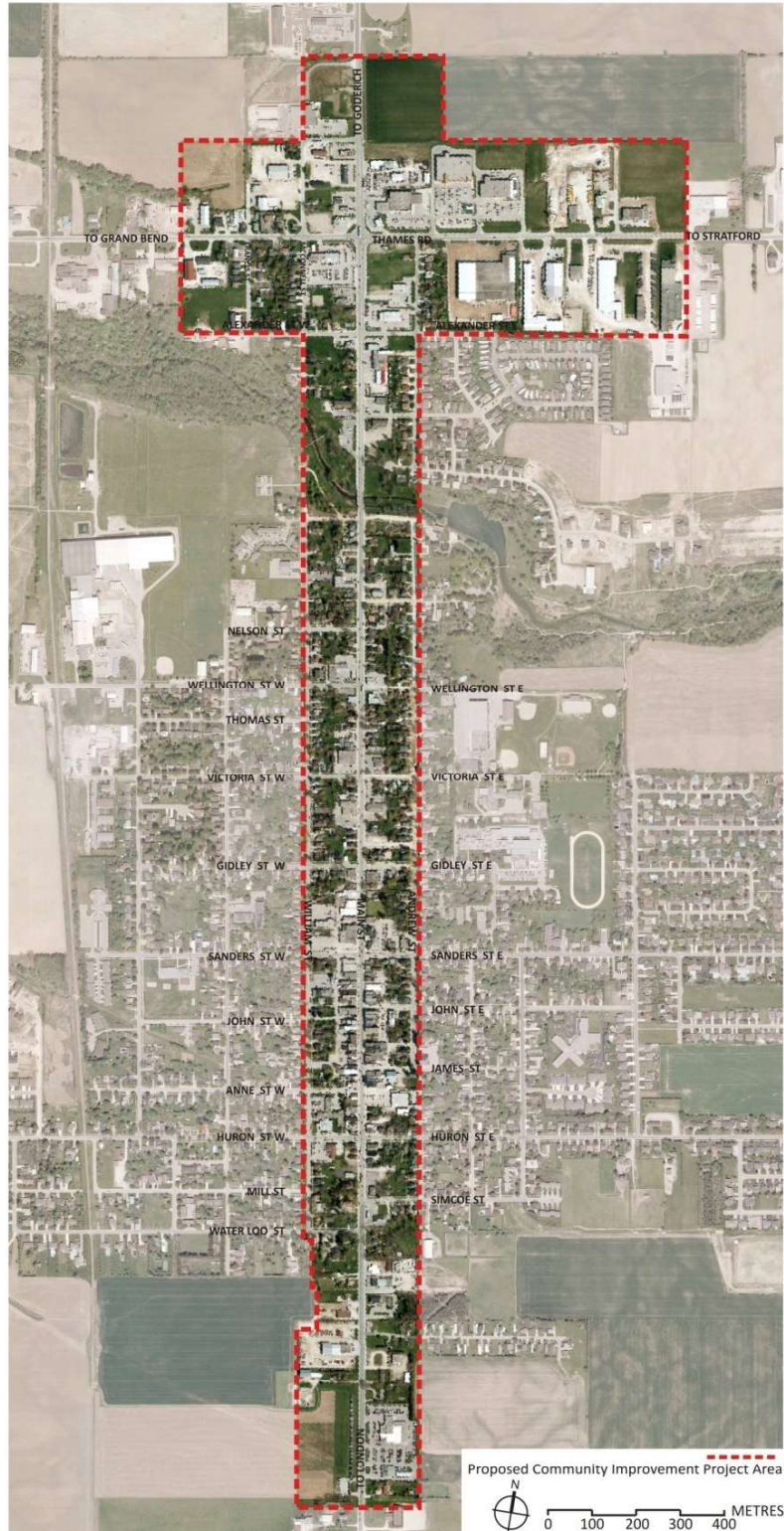
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I hereby certify that the above is a TRUE COPY of By-Law No. \_\_\_\_\_ enacted and passed by the Council of the Municipality of South Huron on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

SCHEDULE "A" to By-Law No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Exeter Urban Settlement Area  
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA**



**SCHEDULE 2**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

It has been determined that it is in the best interest of the Municipality to encourage the conservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment of the identified Community Improvement Project Area. These lands are found generally along the Main Street and Thames Road corridor in Exeter in which programs of conservation, rehabilitation, or transformation may be carried out in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

The purpose of this Community Improvement Plan is to establish a framework for the implementation of various programs to promote and achieve improvements and enhancements to the above-noted project area identified in accordance with the Community Improvement policies of the Official Plan.

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **By-law to Adopt a Community Improvement Plan Within the Municipality of South Huron**



**CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON  
BY-LAW NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_**

**BEING A BY-LAW TO ADOPT A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON**

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**WHEREAS** By-law No. \_\_\_\_\_, being a By-law to designate a Community Improvement Project Area within the Municipality of South Huron, pursuant to Section 28(2) of the *Planning Act*, was passed by Council on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012

**AND WHEREAS** the Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan for the Municipality of South Huron conforms to the Official Plan of the Municipality of South Huron;

**AND WHEREAS** a Public Meeting was held on May 28, 2012 with respect to the Community Improvement Plan;

**NOW THEREFORE THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON ENACTS** as follows:

1. The Municipality of South Huron Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan consisting of its explanatory text, maps, tables, and schedules, is adopted and is attached hereto as Schedule "A". The Appendices do not form a part of the Plan.
2. That this by-law shall have effect immediately upon final passing.

Enacted and passed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

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I hereby certify that the above is a TRUE COPY of By-Law No. \_\_\_\_\_ enacted and passed by the Council of the Municipality of South Huron on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

**SCHEDULE "A" to By-Law No. \_\_\_\_\_****EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The attached Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan dated June 5, 2012, consisting of the explanatory text, figures, tables, and maps constitute the Municipality of South Huron Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan. The Appendices attached to the Community Improvement Plan do not constitute a part of the Plan.

The purpose of this Community Improvement & Streetscape Design Plan is to establish a framework for the implementation of various programs to promote and achieve improvements and enhancements to the three above-noted project areas identified in accordance with the Community Improvement policies of the Official Plan.

## **APPENDIX C:**

### **Summary of Statutory Public Meeting from the Exeter Times-Advocate**

**Public provides input into Streetscape Design Plan****Wednesday, June, 06, 2012 - 1:01:08 PM***By Scott Nixon, Times-Advocate Staff*

SOUTH HURON — Those in attendance at the May 28 South Huron council meeting caught a glimpse of what Exeter's Main Street could look like in the future.

Planner Jay McGuffin of Monteith Brown Planning Consultants and landscape consultant Sylvia Behr appeared before council to update councillors and the public about the Exeter Community Improvement and Streetscape Design Plan.

They were previously at council in October 2011 and have since held meetings with MainStreets Exeter and the Exeter BIA.

McGuffin said the plan comes out of previous local initiatives like the Business Retention and Expansion survey, and other community meetings, analyses and workshops with council. The draft plan was submitted to council in February, while last week's meeting was another chance for the public to have input. The public can also submit feedback in writing until council adopts the plan.

During a PowerPoint presentation, McGuffin said the purpose of the plan is "to improve the existing physical landscape, and to stimulate rehabilitation of the commercial district by using, reusing and restoring lands, buildings and infrastructure."

McGuffin said the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is for private investment and can address things such as façade improvements to downtown commercial buildings, downtown revitalization, the supply and quality of parking lots, and grants and incentives to help with projects.

The Streetscape Design Plan aims to create an appealing and unified streetscape and can work in conjunction with the CIP. Improvements suggested can include lighting, planting, street benches and more.

McGuffin said the streetscape plan will require partnerships between the municipality, service clubs and the private sector.

A survey asking for the strengths and values of the community saw the public mention Exeter's historical architecture, flowers and beautification and retail as the top strengths, while suggested improvements included more trees, street lighting, public washrooms and building facades.

The framework for the project "embodies a theme where Exeter's core strengths and values are pursued over the long term to meet the needs of future generations."

Guiding principles include sustainable development, smart growth, community vibrancy, mixed-use public realms, inclusive places to live and ecological democracy.

The project focuses mostly on Main Street and Thames Road, plus the east side of William Street and the west side of Andrew Street.

As previously reported the plan has identified different areas within Exeter's commercial core: London Road, the downtown historic core, a Francistown district near the Ausable River and Thames Road.

In enhancing the look of the town, signage and landscape features are suggested at the main entrances to town. Trees are recommended at gateways and key intersections, while other plantings are considered in other areas of town.

Sidewalk improvements are also suggested, as are areas to make Exeter a friendly place for pedestrians and cyclists.

Downtown parking was a big topic at last week's meeting and the plan presented suggests using existing alleyways to access parking lots behind downtown businesses.



Bump-outs and trees are also suggested at some 'T' intersections like that of John and Anne streets. Such bump-outs reduce the distance pedestrians have to cross and act as a calming influence on traffic.

The project identifies 382 municipal parking spaces in the project area, including 216 on Main Street, 80 on the streets flanking Main and 86 spaces in municipal lots. There are also 266 spaces at South Huron Rec Centre.

In terms of incentives McGuffin spoke of the municipality providing funding for things such as building façade improvements. The incentives would be given on a first-come, first-served basis and would be one-time-only grants for buildings with Main Street frontage.

Other possible incentives include grants for paved rear lots, tax assistance and breaks on things such as municipal fees.

#### **Public comments**

The meeting included much discussion from the public. Tom Hartai of Thomas H Fine Menswear said the plan is great news and that moving forward is good for a community, but he has concerns about downtown parking.

He said the recently-installed left hand turn lanes were a deterrent to parking and expressed concern that if customers can't park within three or four spots of his store, they will go elsewhere.

Referring to the parking spots available, he said there's no point including the parking spots at the Rec Centre in the discussion because people aren't going to park at the Rec Centre, then walk downtown to shop.

Ross Alexander of Dashwood Lock and Key agreed with Hartai's concerns regarding parking and said many of the rear parking lots have been designed "haphazardly" and have things such as dumpsters and hydro poles that are in the way of any potential parking. He asked who would be responsible for cleaning up things like hydro poles in order to lay asphalt on the rear lots.

McGuffin said it would be the property owners' responsibility to improve the lots, but the municipality can provide incentives.

Nancy Mason of the Exeter Cleaning Centre said her business dropped 75 per cent when the parking spots in front of her business were taken away by the left-hand turning lanes. She said business has since bounced backed up a bit, but said there is no space for seniors or those in wheelchairs to drop off items at her business. She said the turning lanes have created a problem with traffic flow that didn't exist before.

McGuffin said the CIP and Streetscape Design Plan didn't recommend the turning lanes — that was the municipality's initiative. He later admitted that his plan likely would have taken out some parking spots, but that would have been for things such as bump-outs.

Alexander said bump-outs have been proven not to work in places like London and Grand Bend and said a proposed sidewalk to Canadian Tire in the plan wouldn't really benefit many people.

Consultant Sylvia Behr said bump-outs are pedestrian friendly and have been used in St. Thomas. She said there are opportunities for bump-outs at certain intersections in Exeter.

Regarding a sidewalk to Canadian Tire, Behr said Thames Road is not a safe environment for pedestrians and adding a sidewalk would be a great attribute for the area.

McGuffin added costs for sidewalks are usually the responsibility of the developer.

Hartai asked if the proposals were being done to spend taxpayers' money. He added he talked to three business owners in Grand Bend that same day and they told him the changes to the strip in Grand Bend have been devastating to their businesses.

He added the downtown parkette is underutilized and asked if it could be used for parking.

Anne Langendyk of the Bank of Montreal and the South Huron Chamber of Commerce said her customers refer to the parkette as “the smokette,” and they try to avoid it.

Coun. Wayne DeLuca asked that the traffic study that recommended the left-turn lanes be forwarded to those who had expressed concern about them.

Coun. Dennis Hockey complimented McGuffin and Behr on the report and added Exeter has “some serious challenges” regarding parking, a situation he said was ignored for many years.

He said the traffic study shows why the municipality implemented the turning lanes.

He summarized that the report from McGuffin and Behr gives council guidance to move forward and make the community even better.

Deputy Mayor Jim Dietrich said he likes the report, but wondered about the timelines.

“It’s a huge project,” he said.

McGuffin said the streetscape implementations can be made at council’s leisure as it budgets for projects.

South Huron chief administrative officer Roy Hardy said the municipality will have to prepare for streetscape projects over the long term, such as 20 years.

He said eventually Main Street will have to be redone and the bridge deck over Ausable River will have to be replaced. He added the municipality needs a co-ordinated effort to plan for such realities.

Hardy said engineering will have to be done to see when things such as Main Street sewers have to be replaced.

Up next for the CIP and Streetscape Design Plan is formal adoption from council. Other suggestions include looking further into the co-ordination of parking spaces behind storefronts, preparing urban design guidelines, exploring funding from senior levels of government, creating branding for the new initiatives and building a web page for the CIP and Streetscape Design linked to the BIA and municipal economic development sites.

Mayor George Robertson said the municipality will take note of all the comments received from the public and will communicate back and forth with Exeter businesses.

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Source: Exeter Times-Advocate. *Public provides input into Streetscape Design Plan*. June 6, 2012. Accessed from <http://www.southwesternontario.ca/news/public-provides-input-into-streetscape-design-plan/> on June 8, 2012.