





DOWNTOWN CONCEPT PLAN

District of Kitimat



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1 Introduction

The District of Kitimat is uniquely situated at the northern tip of the Douglas Channel, with the Kitimat River separating the east and west parts of the town. The area is rich with forests, mountains, and rugged coastlines. The wilderness provides a home for many species of wildlife, including grizzly bears, cougars, wolves, and several salmon species. The weather is mild but with heavy rainfall.

Within the centre of the community is downtown Kitimat, which plays an important role as the heart of the town where commercial, cultural, employment, and civic activities are concentrated. Here is where you will find grocery stores, health services, recreational facilities, a public library, restaurants, hotels, and more.

The Downtown Concept Plan establishes a vision for downtown Kitimat to be viewed as a complete, connected, and vibrant place while formalizing guiding principles and identifying opportunities for improvement that can bring the vision to life. The plan is intended to focus on improvements that can be made primarily to "public" spaces, which includes parks, walkways, crosswalks, roads, and publicly- or municipally-owned land.

The District of Kitimat will use this plan to evaluate public projects and initiatives related to land use, development, infrastructure, and transportation in the downtown. The Downtown Concept Plan should be viewed as a "living" document, which will continue to change as the needs of the downtown and greater community evolves.



1.1 How to Use this Plan

Sections 1 and 2 of the Concept Plan introduce the history and context of downtown Kitimat and provide information on the different downtown precincts and the surrounding area.

Section 3 presents the existing conditions as they relate to:

- Land use
- Services and amenities
- Parks and the public realm
- Viewscapes
- Walkways and connectivity
- Roads and parking

Section 4 establishes the vision and guiding principles for downtown Kitimat. This section also outlines the engagement activities that took place that helped inform the plan.

Section 5 introduces the focus areas and improvement projects by applying the community feedback, vision and guiding principles to the existing conditions.

Section 6 presents the Concept Plan which has combined the improvement projects together into one drawing or image.

Section 7 highlights the direction from the Downtown Design Guidelines (2022) document that will be used to provide design guidance for municipal projects in downtown.

2 Downtown Context

2.1 Historical Context

The District of Kitimat is located on the traditional territory of Haisla Nation, who occupied lands within the region for thousands of years. European settlement of Haisla territory has been relatively recent. Kitimat became a reality in the 1950s, when the Aluminum Company of Canada (Alcan) chose a site at the Head of the Kitimat Arm for an aluminum smelter. Alcan hired the first community planners who designed the layout of the town based on the Garden City concept, with the goal to create a community that would attract and retain workers.

The Kitimat Townsite Report was first prepared for Alcan in 1952-1953. The Townsite Report was edited and reissued by the Corporation of the District of Kitimat in 1960. The report reflected the plan for the community and a broad outline for its development. Downtown Kitimat was envisioned to be the main commercial and business centre, with nearby hospital and health services.

Although downtown looks different today than what was envisioned during the initial town planning in the '50s, as the town grew and neighbourhoods were built, downtown stayed the main centre with a mix of services and amenities to help support the community.









2.2 Current Context

Downtown Kitimat has seen incremental growth since construction first began in the mid 1950s. The lands around Haisla, Tsimshian, and Lakahas Boulevards were the first to be developed. Further expansion occurred in subsequent years east towards Wakashan Boulevard, Mountainview Square and the current location of the Kitimat General Hospital.

Over the years, downtown Kitimat has seen a change in the services and amenities offered. This can largely be attributed to two primary factors: Shifting Population and Proximity to a Larger Centre.

Shifting Population

Kitimat's population reached its peak of 12,814 in the early 1980s, and saw a continued decline thereafter, reaching a low of 8,131 by the 2016 census year (roughly the same population there was in the early '60s). Although there was an influx of temporary workers and increased activity related to major projects in Kitimat starting in the mid 2010s, it was not until the 2021 StatsCan census that this activity was reflected in an increase to Kitimat's permanent population.

Proximity to a Larger Centre

Kitimat is located roughly 60 km south of Terrace, a retail hub of services and amenities that serves the north coast region. Terrace has a large trade area that supports diverse commercial activity, ranging from small local businesses to larger franchises in various formats up to and including big box retail. This limits the size of Kitimat's market and the types of businesses that are viable in the community.

Despite this, downtown Kitimat has shown a sense of resilience. Throughout some of Kitimat's more challenging years, new businesses and restaurants were built, recreational and institutional facilities were renovated or expanded, and community events continued to be held downtown.

With a recent increase in economic activity in the community related to large industrial projects, long-term and new residents have voiced a need to establish a plan to reinvigorate the downtown as the community heart and support new investment and revitalization efforts that bring life, vibrancy and a renewed civic pride to this area.

2.3 Downtown Precincts

There are seven areas or "precincts" that make up downtown Kitimat, as shown in Figure 1 below. Each precinct plays an important role in the overall form and function of downtown.



Figure 1

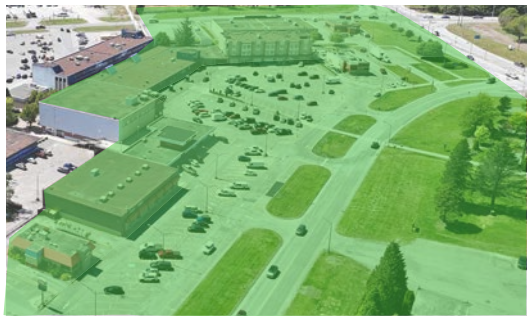
HAISLA CENTRE

Most of the land in this precinct is privately owned but as the area is incrementally developed, additional municipal streets and walkways will be created. Ensuring that opportunities for crosswalks, wayfinding, and improvements to landscaping occurs alongside future development will help establish a connection between this precinct and the other downtown precincts.



CITY CENTRE or "UPPER" CITY CENTRE

Viewed as the main "entry" to downtown, this precinct plays an important role in downtown Kitimat. Improvements to the public realm in this prominent location of downtown Kitimat can help establish civic pride and benefit the community events that occur in the area. Although this area is mostly car-orientated, establishing wayfinding and walkways will have a significant impact to the area and to creating a connected downtown.



PEDESTRIAN CORRIDORS & WALKWAYS

Corridors and walkways are an integral component of the pedestrian area in downtown. The quality of the public realm in this precinct has a direct impact on the commercial businesses and recreational facilities that depend on pedestrian foot traffic. Particular attention to lighting, seating, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and activating the space at different times of the day will have positive impact to the success of this part of downtown.



LOWER CITY CENTRE

Often known based on the large surface parking area, this precinct offers an opportunity for infill development as well as continued and expanded uses that activate the space during different times of the year. Considerations made to establish safe pedestrian routes to navigate the different destinations, a formalized road, and landscaping will be particularly beneficial for this precinct.



WAKASHAN CORRIDOR

The orientation of buildings can have a significant impact on the public realm. As the Wakashan Corridor continues to build out, ensuring buildings front the street, along with establishing walkways, lighting, street furnishing, new public spaces and improved transit, will help Wakashan be viewed as a well-connected, multi-purpose, and vibrant street.



MOUNTAINVIEW SQUARE

This precinct has a mix of vehicle-orientated buildings with "back of house" activities and pedestrian-orientated buildings with open public space. The appropriate location of wayfinding signage, lighting, and screened utility and service areas will have a positive impact on the area to ensure that it meets the needs of the various users of the space and that users of this precinct can easily connect to other downtown precincts, either by foot, roll, bike or car.



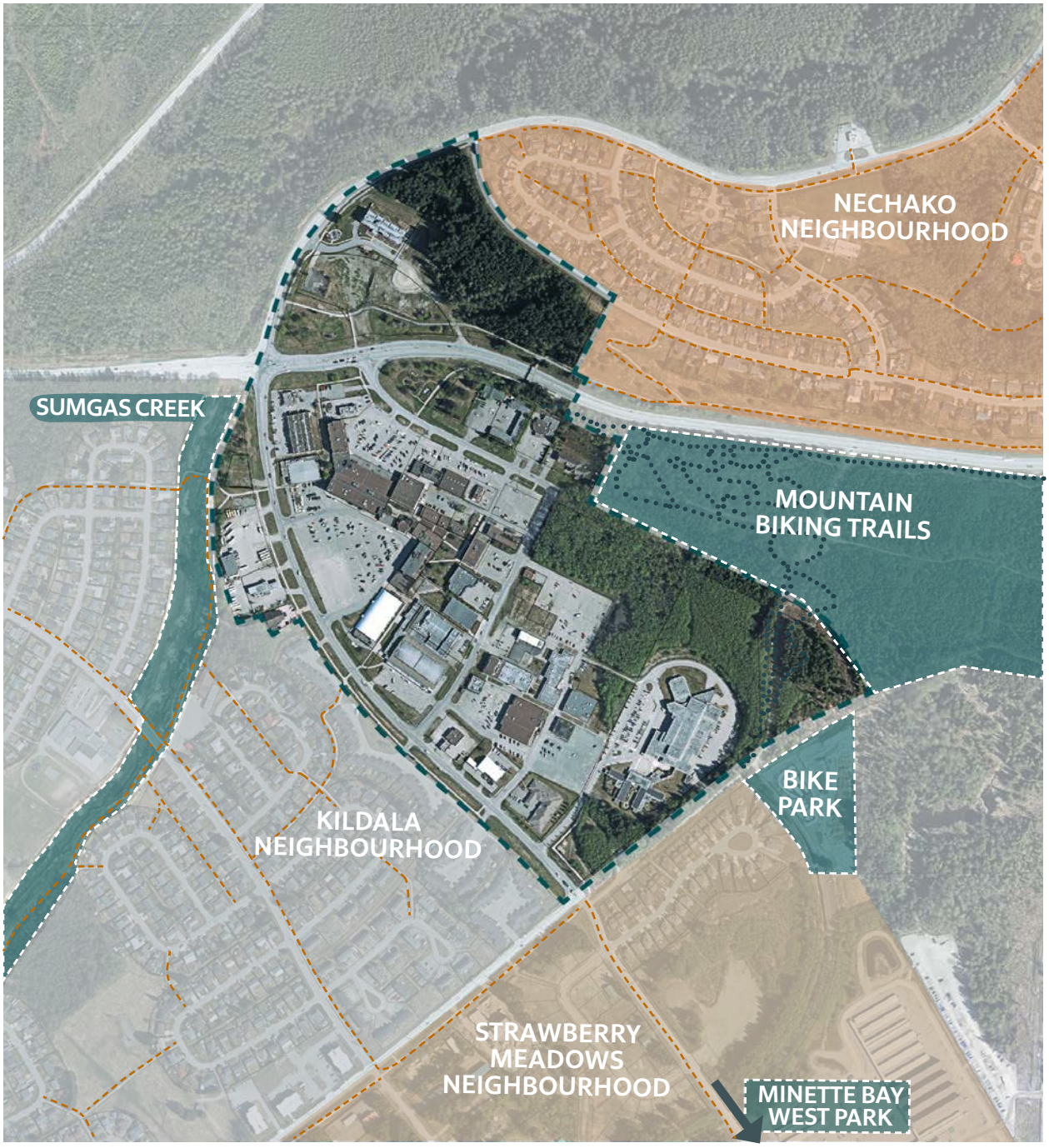
HOSPITAL

The inclusion of health care services within downtown Kitimat helps ensure that downtown remains an integral part of the community. Further expansion of the Hospital precinct for health care services will have a positive impact on the downtown, community, and region.



2.4 Surrounding Context

This map demonstrates that downtown Kitimat has strong linkages to residential areas, recreational amenities and larger natural settings. Connections to residential areas date back to the original town plan for Kitimat while the integration of mountain biking trails, a bike park and a park at Minette Bay are more recent additions.



---- **Walkways**
•••••• **Mountain Biking Trails**

Figure 2



3 Existing Conditions

Establishing an understanding of the existing conditions in downtown Kitimat helps ensure the plan is grounded in a realistic assessment. The following maps in Figures 3 - 7 document existing:

- Land uses
- Services and amenities
- Parks and the public realm
- Viewscapes
- Walkways and connectivity
- Roads and parking

The existing conditions for four primary streets are also illustrated in Section 3.6. Collectively, this information informs the opportunities for improvement in Section 5.

3.1 Land Uses



- One Tenant Commercial
- Multiple Tenant Commercial
- Residential
- Recreational
- Cultural
- Parks
- Institutional

Figure 3

3.2 Services and Amenities



Service or Amenity

Figure 4

*This map above displays a snapshot of the variety of services and amenities in downtown Kitimat at the time of this plan's preparation. It is not intended to be an exhaustive visual of all services and amenities but rather a cross section of the daily needs and other offerings available in the downtown core.

3.3 Parks and the Public Realm



Parks and the Public Realm

Protected Forests

Figure 5

3.4 Viewscapes

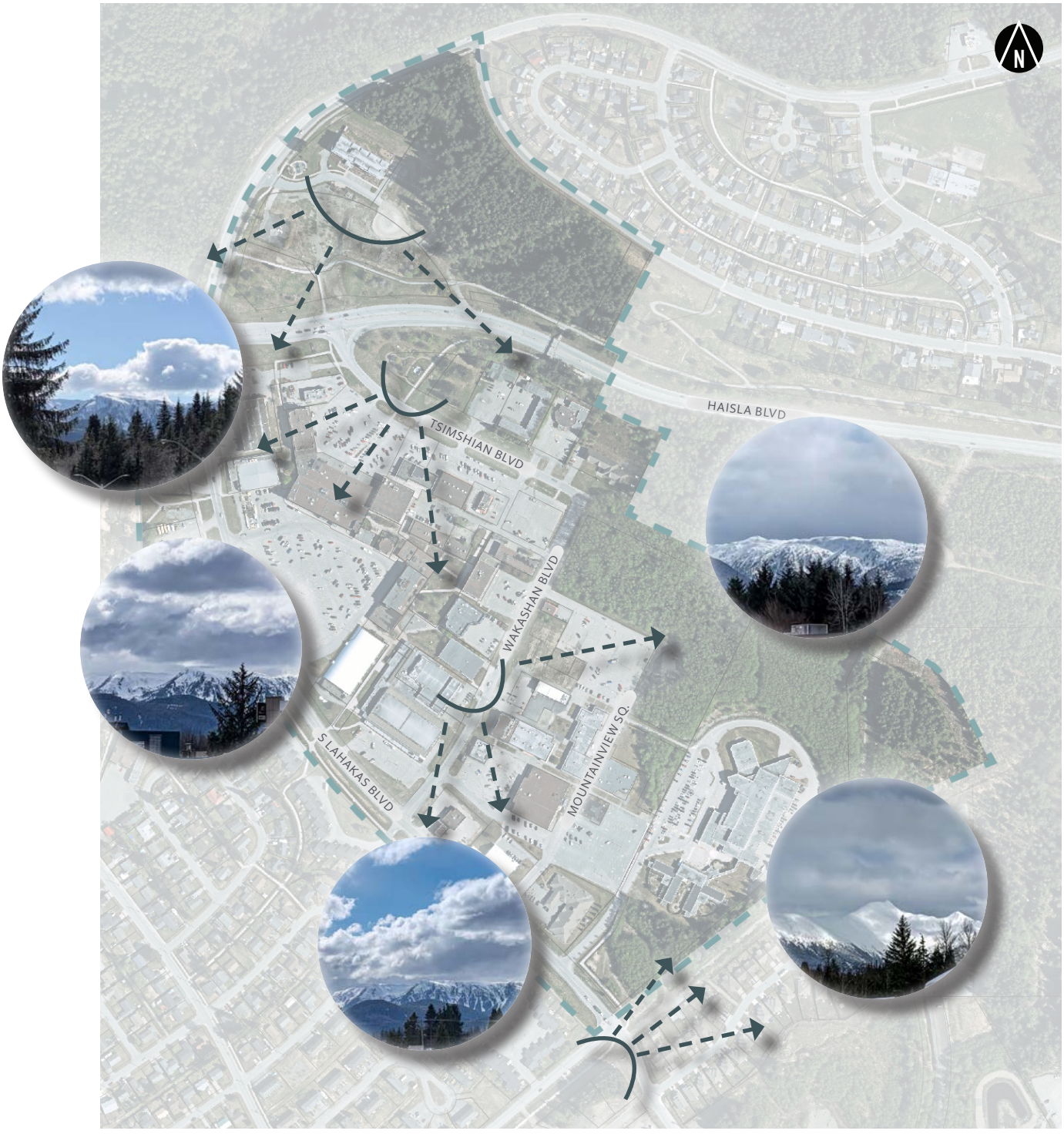


Figure 6

3.5 Walkways and Connectivity



- Walkways, Sidewalks and Crosswalks
- Buildings
- Parks
- Vacant / Development Properties

Figure 7

3.6 Roads and Parking

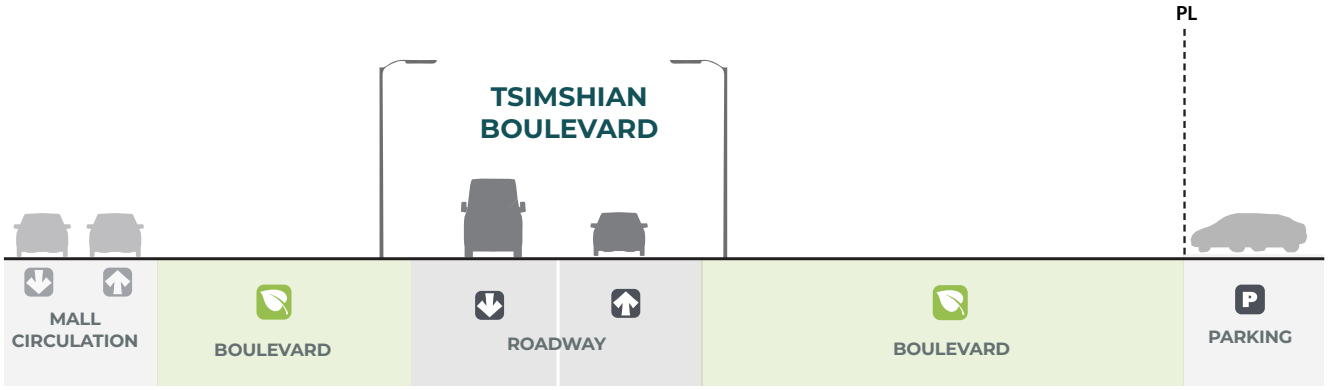


Municipal Parking Lots
Street Cross-Section (see next page)

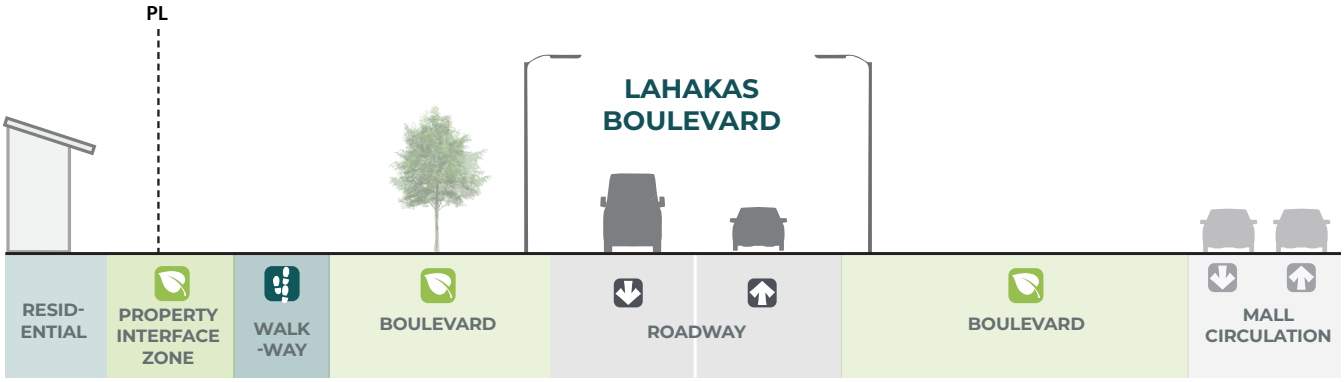
Figure 8

3.7 Street Conditions

1 TSIMSHIAN BOULEVARD

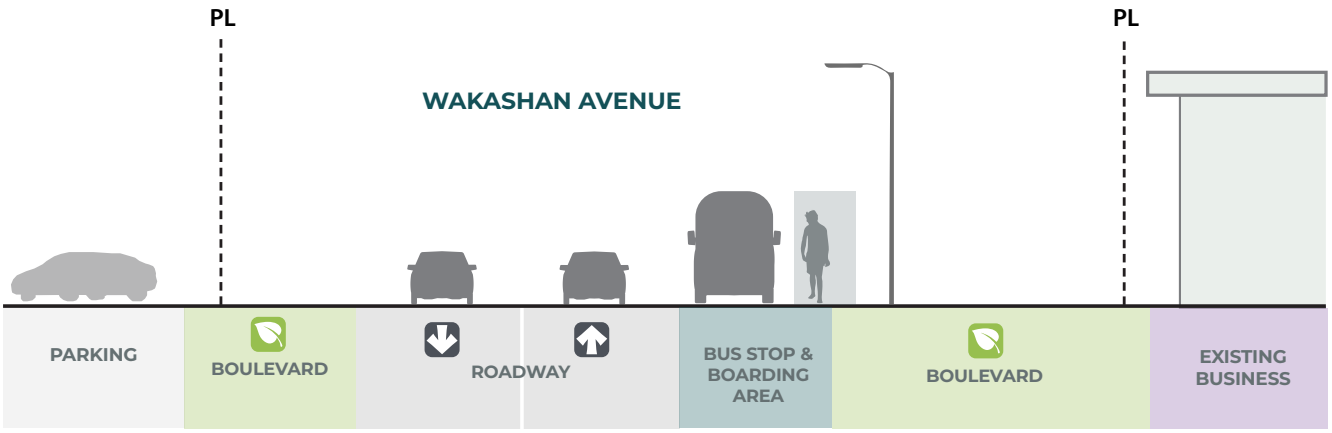


2 LAHAKAS BOULEVARD

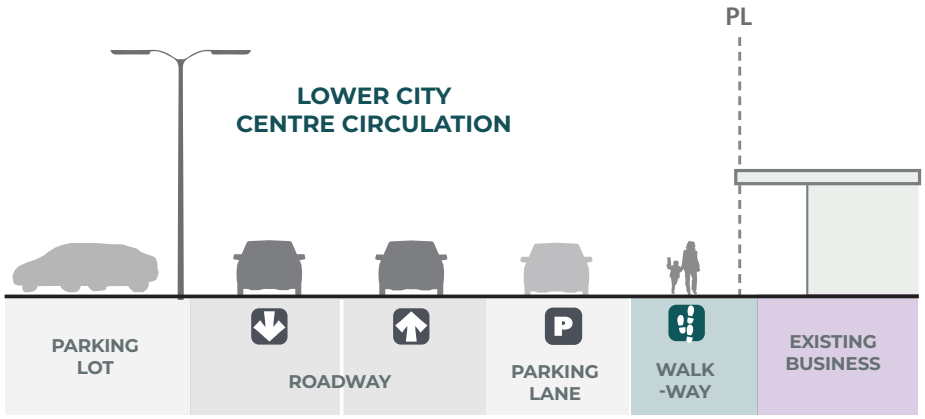


*Cross sections are not to scale and are intended to represent what is existing within the ROW.

3 WAKASHAN AVE



4 LOWER CITY CENTRE



*Cross sections are not to scale and are intended to represent what is existing within the ROW.



4 Looking Forward

4.1 Vision Statement

Defined by its unique heritage masterplan, downtown Kitimat is a reinvigorated community heart. Transformed by infill development, new investment and revitalization efforts, pedestrian-friendly streets connect the community with downtown. New downtown residents bring life and add vibrancy to gathering places and a renewed civic pride in downtown Kitimat.

4.2 Guiding Principles



PEOPLE-ORIENTED

Prioritize people through (re)orientation of downtown development and the creation of high-quality pedestrian spaces.



COMPACT

Prioritize infill development within the downtown and strengthen the unique identity and programming of complementary "hubs of activity".



COMPLETE

Encourage the development of complementary uses within the downtown, including residential and additional commercial/ retail offerings.



CONNECTED

Enhance connections and wayfinding within and beyond downtown Kitimat, linking pedestrian spaces and gathering places to the larger landscape and natural setting.



TIMELESS

Employ thoughtful architecture that honours downtown Kitimat's historically unique mid century modern form and character or complementary designs that add variety to the built environment.



SUPPORTED

Partner with community stakeholders and local First Nations in the planning, design and development of downtown Kitimat.



4.3 Downtown Planning Process

The Downtown Concept Plan was first envisioned when updating the Downtown Design Guidelines, which were adopted by Council in 2022. The intention of the plan was to address the aspects of downtown Kitimat that were outside the scope of the form and character design guidelines that were being updated.

Below is a summary of the process that informed the concept plan.

1. **Updating the Downtown Design Guidelines** || 2018

   Project was launched in 2018, which included a series of public engagement activities, including an online survey, pop-up events, a two-day workshop, a site tour of downtown, and a public presentation. Over the course of the engagement activities, it was identified that a new vision and plan for downtown Kitimat was needed.

2. **Laying the Groundwork** || 2019

   The District of Kitimat hired a transportation consulting company to evaluate parking needs downtown. The goal was to quantify parking surplus and to identify opportunities for infill development.

3. **Developing the Plan** || 2019 - 2021

   Following the completion of the parking study, meetings and engagement events were held to establish the vision and guiding principles with District staff, Council, the public and downtown landowners and business operators.

4. **Finalizing the Downtown Design Guidelines** || 2021-2022

   The new Downtown Design Guidelines were completed in 2021 and adopted by Council into the Official Community Plan in 2022. The guidelines are now used to regulate form and character of development, including buildings, landscaping and other features within the Downtown Revitalization Area Development Permit Area.

5. **Downtown Concept Plan Reinvisioned** || 2024 - Present

   The Downtown Concept Plan was last presented to Council in 2021, when the plan was referred to as a "Master Plan". Council at that time approved the vision and guiding principles and directed staff to restructure and redraft the remaining content of the Master Plan as a Concept Plan. The content of this 2026 Downtown Concept Plan is the culmination of the restructuring process based on Council direction.



5 Opportunities for Improvement

As outlined in the earlier sections of this Concept Plan, downtown Kitimat has shown a sense of resilience despite a shifting population and regional economy. While there are many great public and private assets in the downtown, there are also opportunities for improvement to support new investment and ongoing revitalization efforts. This section presents the opportunities for improvement into four main focus areas:

- Parks and the Public Realm
- Roads and Parking
- Walkways and Crosswalks
- Leveraging Public Land

Each focus area should be viewed as a component required to help bring the vision for downtown to life. Several improvement projects have been identified in each area through the concept planning process, and these are shown on maps on the following pages and integrated into the concept plan drawing.

There are many different factors that may influence the timing of improvement projects to downtown. For example, projects may happen incrementally as lands get developed or redeveloped. Projects may also be implemented as grant funding or other funding opportunities emerge. Having a plan that establishes the overall vision and is consistent with the existing Development Permit Area guidelines for private lands will help create a cohesive, unique, downtown.







5.1 Parks and Public Realm

The inclusion of park space in Kitimat was an integral part of the community's design. There are three parks in downtown Kitimat, which equal roughly one hectare or 2.5 acres. Parks offer an informal space for people to gather and interact, and there is a common understanding that parks and greenspaces provide numerous benefits to human and ecological health.

The public realm includes parks but extends to streets and sidewalks, seating areas, pedestrian and vehicular lighting, and the landscaping, wayfinding, and gathering spaces (plazas or squares) that weave it all together. The quality of the public realm helps create a welcoming environment that fosters community and sense of place while stimulating economic activity.

Wayfinding strategies help guide users through the built environment. In downtown Kitimat, this means guiding pedestrians from entry points and parking lots to the interior spaces and corridors that together, form a spine of public realm features. Thoughtful consideration on the placement, location and cohesive design of different types of wayfinding (signage, maps, symbols, road and sidewalk markings, public art, etc.) will allow people to orientate themselves downtown and navigate from place to place.

Back of house activities, such as outdoor storage, loading and refuse areas for developments are important aspects of an attractive and well-functioning downtown, as they support the public-facing elements or uses. Establishing a clear distinction between front of house and back of house activities, through physical location and/or thoughtful screening, can have a significant impact on improving the public realm.

Improvement Plan - Parks and the Public Realm

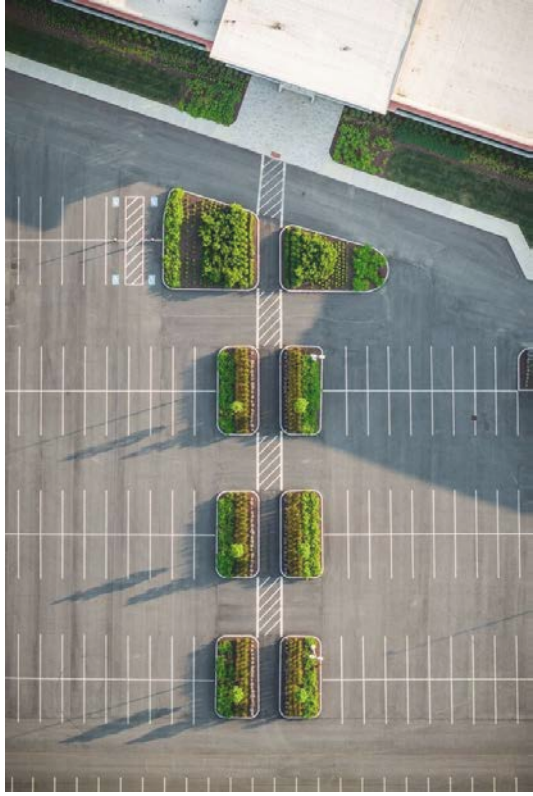


Public Realm Improvements
(streetlights, wayfinding, banners, landscaping, street furniture, screened refuse and utility areas)
Parks & Open Space Improvements
New Public Space

Figure 9







5.2 Roads and Circulation

A well-designed road network improves the ease of travel to and within a certain area. Wakashan Avenue and Haisla, Tsimshian and South Lahakas Boulevards are the four main streets in downtown. Road networks are inclusive of several important components to provide safe, comfortable access for all users, regardless of the mode of travel. Examples include: right-of-ways for vehicles; sidewalks or walkways for pedestrians; bike lanes for cyclists; and bus stations or stops for transit riders.

Improvements to the road network in downtown Kitimat can formally establish other essential transportation infrastructure, which can occur when downtown sees more development or based on the timing of other needed infrastructure upgrades. Additional enhancements, such as gateway signage, pedestrian lighting, or covered bike parking, can improve the network and help distinguish downtown as the heart of the community.

Thoughtful placement of a transit exchange and transit stops that are centralized and well connected to recreational or civic facilities and important services and amenities, such as a grocery store, post office, hospital, or medical office, can promote ridership and enhance user experience.

Certain precincts in downtown Kitimat have more capacity for infill and parking lot reconfiguration than others, which will be discussed further in Section 5.4. However, incorporating landscaping and a pedestrian route through larger parking lot areas can serve several key functions, such as adding visual appeal, providing a safe passage for pedestrians, and supporting rainwater infiltration, especially if the landscaping is designed as a type of green infrastructure.

Improvement Plan - Roads and Circulation



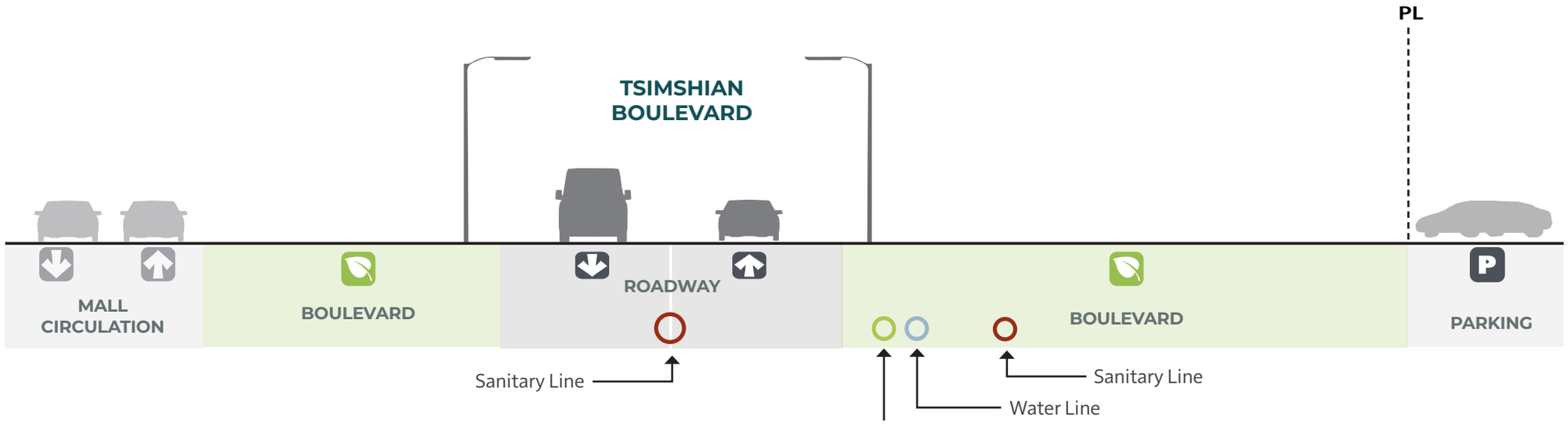
Figure 10

- **Primary Intersection Improvements** (e.g., intersection realignments, walkway improvements, new downtown entry signage and features, and removal of aging traffic medians where applicable)
- **Secondary Intersection Improvements** (new and upgraded walkways, crosswalks and wayfinding where applicable)
- **Transit Improvements**
- **Road Cross Section Improvements** (see next page)
- **Proposed Covered Bike Racks** (approximate location)
- **Formalize Road Network as Part of Future Development**

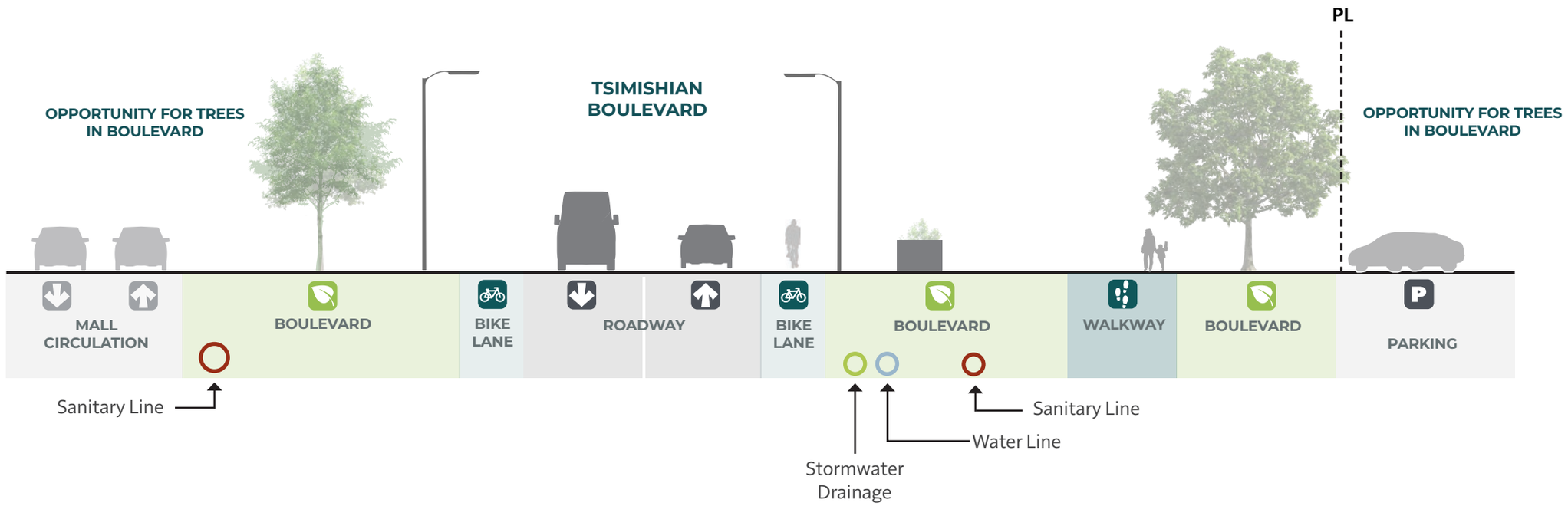
Proposed Street Conditions

The proposed cross sections are conceptual only and highlight opportunities that may vary based on future design work.

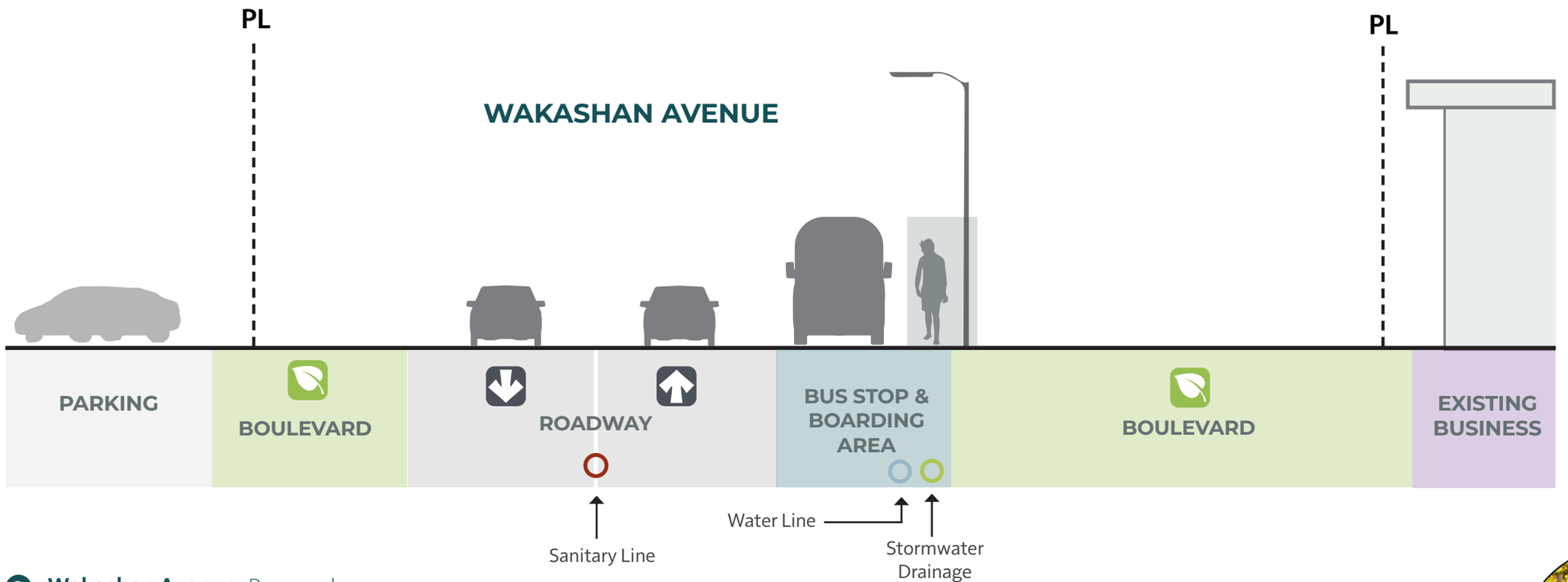
1 **Tsimshian Boulevard:** Existing



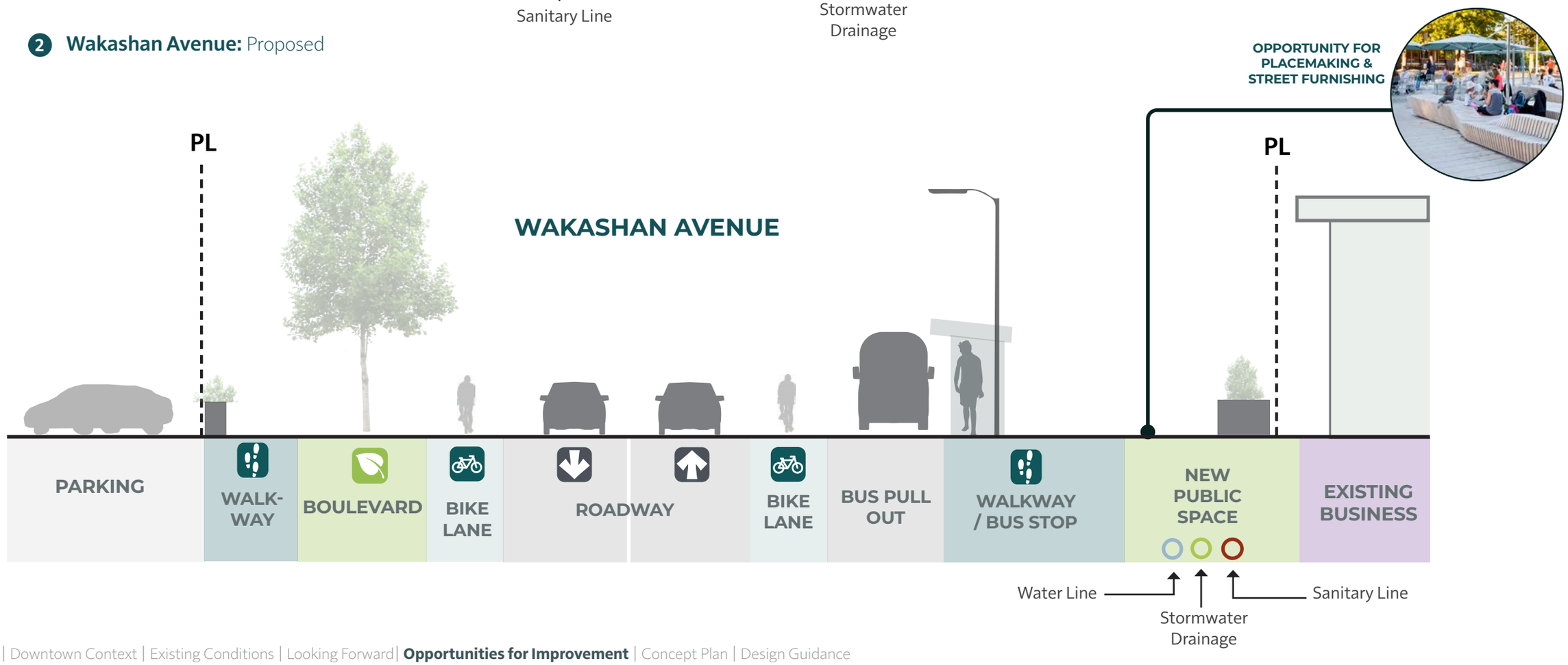
1 **Tsimshian Boulevard:** Proposed



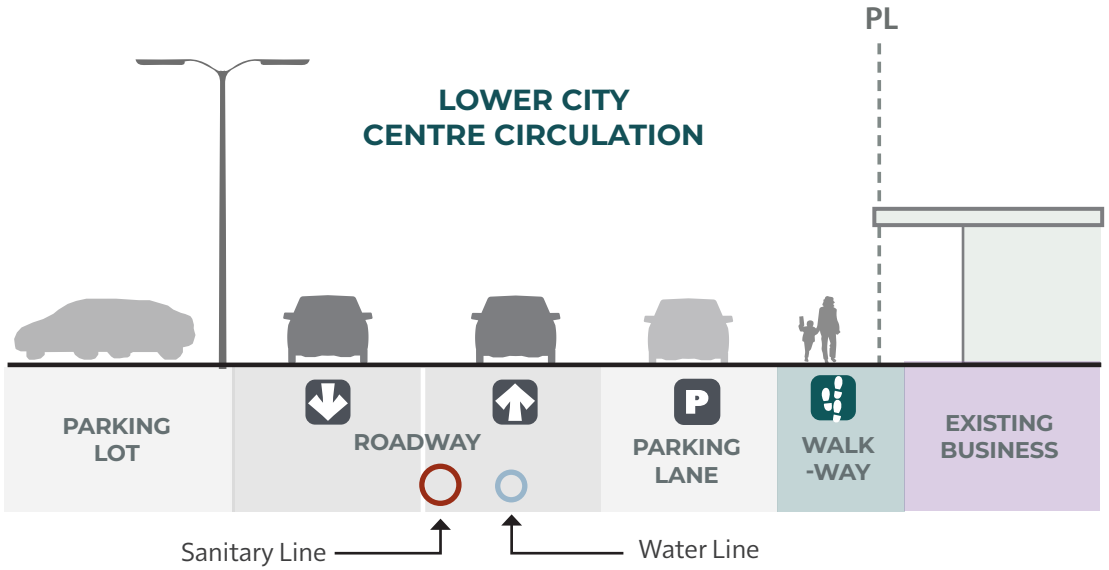
2 **Wakashan Avenue:** Existing



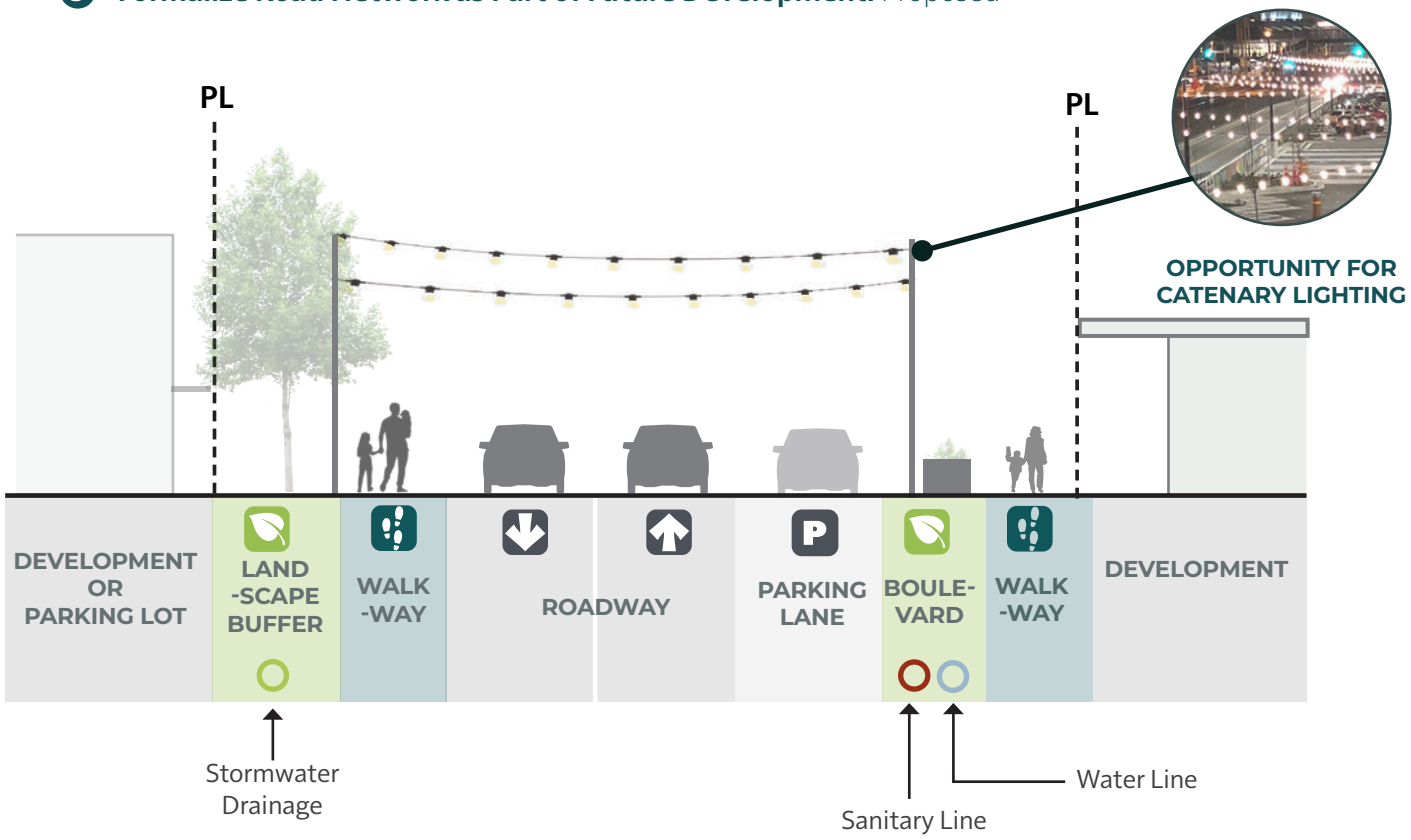
2 **Wakashan Avenue:** Proposed



3 **Lower City Centre:** Existing



3 **Formalize Road Network as Part of Future Development:** Proposed









5.3 Walkways and Crosswalks

Kitimat was designed with an extensive walkway network, which connects through the residential neighbourhoods as well as downtown. Communities of all sizes strive to provide a pathway system that makes walking safe, convenient, pleasant and universally accessible as it is well-understood that active transportation encourages physical activity, benefits mental health and can boost the local economy when connected to commercial centres.

Filling in gaps in the existing system downtown will benefit the community as well the businesses, recreational facilities, and civic and health services located in the seven downtown precincts. Notably, adding walkways and crosswalks to Wakashan Avenue and Tsimshian Boulevard will help make these streets and the abutting properties safer and more accessible, ultimately providing better connections and a more cohesive network overall.

Adding different surface treatments and street furnishing can enhance pedestrian routes and make them feel more multi-purposed. Incorporating lighting and different coloured walkways and crosswalks can also provide vibrancy to streets and pedestrian routes, especially during the dark, grey and wet seasons in Kitimat.

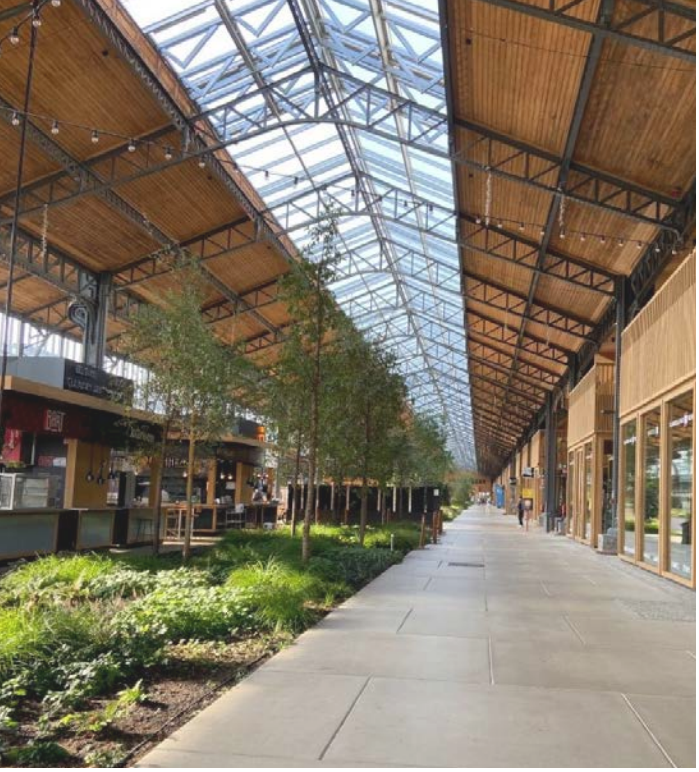
Consideration should be made during the redevelopment of Kitimat's boulevards for opportunities to implement green infrastructure, such as bioretention ponds and bioswales, to help with stormwater management.

Improvement Plan - Walkways and Crosswalks



- Existing Walkways and Crosswalks
- Proposed Walkways and Crosswalks
- Existing Buildings
- Parks
- Vacant/ Development Parcels

Figure 11





5.4 Leveraging Public Lands

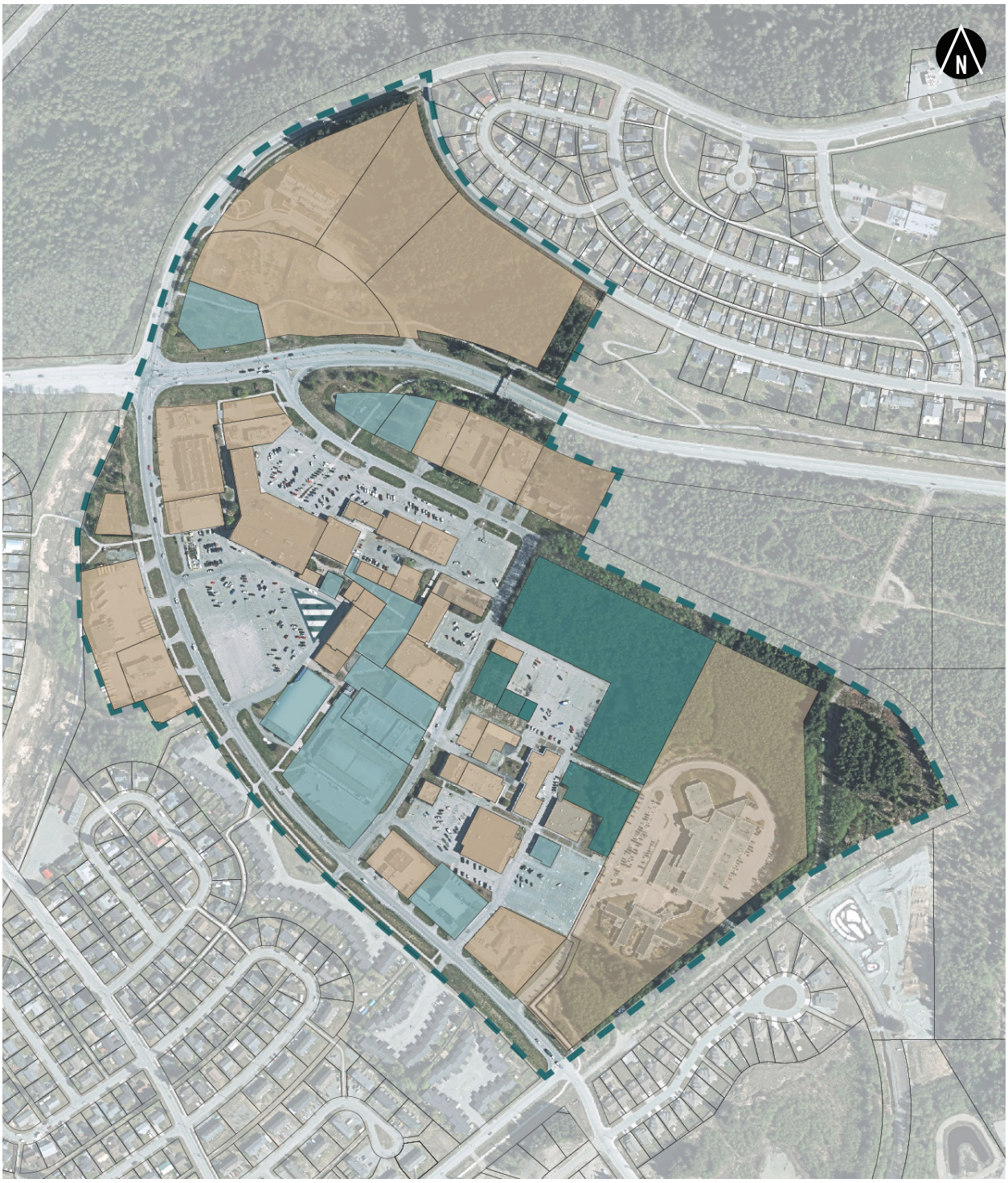
The District of Kitimat owns a significant amount of land in downtown in the form of fee simple parcels, parks, parking lots, and road right-of-ways. There is an opportunity to use this land to leverage further development downtown, improve the public realm, and add additional parks or public spaces. Some of these opportunities may happen incrementally and occur alongside future development, while others can occur during the redevelopment or revitalization of an area.

The Lower City Centre parking lot offers the most apparent opportunity for infill development as it has been determined that there is a surplus of parking spaces and a feasibility study to determine its viability. However, infill development should be thoughtfully considered to ensure that it positively contributes to the surrounding businesses and recreational facilities that are important to the community.

The District should consider other creative ways to leverage its public lands downtown to encourage downtown investment and reinvigorate the area without requiring permanent development or redevelopment. For example, continuing to allow or expand temporary or seasonal activations can help utilize an area that may not be needed year round such as areas used for snow storage. Creating an outdoor market removes barriers to entry for small business owners while still creating space for additional retail, handmade or locally produced offerings.

Lastly, District-owned land that fronts businesses and facilities, particularly in the Pedestrian Corridor, offers an opportunity to foster partnerships with key stakeholders to implement improvements that can help activate the space, such as lighting, seating, park upgrades and landscaping, which can have a significant positive impact to downtown without requiring new development.

Improvement Plan - Leveraging Public Land



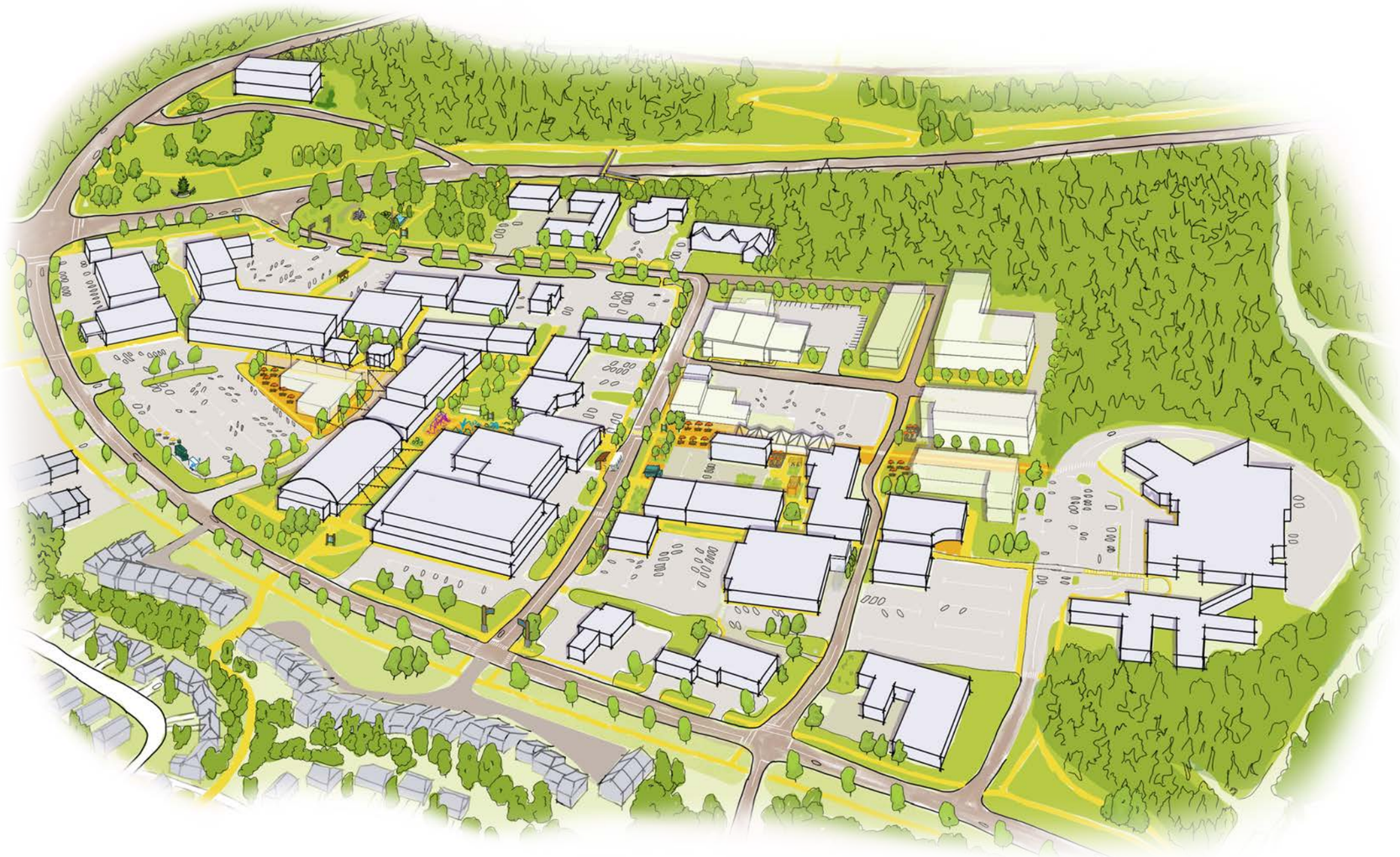
Vacant Municipal Development Parcels
Future Infill Development Opportunity
Municipally Owned Property (parks and facilities)
Privately or Provincially Owned Property

Figure 12

6 Downtown Kitimat Concept Plan

Below is a visual representation of the Downtown Kitimat Concept Plan that integrates the historical context and existing conditions strengths with forward looking aspirations as per the vision, guiding principles and opportunities for improvement.

The downtown depicted in the artist's rendering below is complete, connected, vibrant and resilient. Through focused pragmatic efforts by the District of Kitimat, this vision can be achieved by undertaking the listed actions over the short, medium and long term. These and other projects, where applicable, should align with the "Design Guidance for Municipal Projects" outlined in Section 7.



SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM (0-3 YEARS)

- Bring vacant developable municipal properties to market.
- Advance the next steps in the outdoor market project.
- Continue to work with BC Transit for transit exchange upgrades.
- Enhance downtown park spaces, including adding new public washrooms, landscaping and playgrounds.
- Formalize and improve District loading and waste locations.
- Make intersection improvements at South Lahakas and Haisla Boulevard, including adding new walkways and crosswalks.

LONGER TERM (4+ YEARS)

- Upgrade downtown gateway or entrance signage.
- Add landscaping to the Lower City Centre parking lot.
- Construct additional walkways and crosswalks where needed to address existing gaps.
- Develop a downtown wayfinding strategy.
- Integrate future improvement projects into the District's asset management program.
- Pursue infill and redevelopment opportunities once vacant lands are built out.

7 Design Guidance for Municipal Projects

The following guidelines are provided to influence and inspire public space improvement projects that facilitate a cohesive downtown between public and private land. The guidelines shall be used by District staff when undertaking future downtown projects. To assist in their implementation, an internal committee of staff may be established to review future projects in downtown to ensure consistency with the design guidance.

7.1 Site Design

pre-design

- Low Impact Development Best Management Practices must be utilized in site design, including swales or other landscape features that alleviate impacts of storm runoff.

prioritizing people in site design

- Site design shall consider CPTED principles to reduce crime and nuisance, while ensuring that public and semi-public open spaces remain equitable, inclusive and enjoyable.
- Design must prioritize pedestrian movement, safety, and comfort through integrated planning and accommodation of publicly-accessible pathways, plazas and greenspaces.
- Where feasible, publicly-accessible open spaces must be designed to optimize solar access and views.
- If views to natural landscapes are not available, site designs should establish "internal views" through the development of open space and or feature elements (e.g. structural and/or landscape designs or public art).







snow storage

- The storage of snow must be considered in order to achieve a site design that functions well year round.
- Locate snow storage piles in areas that do not create visual obstructions for drivers, pedestrians, & cyclists.
- Where possible, plan for smaller snow storage areas with solar access rather than one large shaded area as the snow will melt faster.
- To prevent ice formation due to freezing of run-off, snow storage areas should be designed to promote melting towards specific catch basins through grading rather than draining into high traffic areas.
- Areas designated for snow storage in the winter but utilized as public space in the summer are strongly encouraged.





vehicular access, servicing, and parking

- Clearly indicate pedestrian priority by separating and/or differentiating walkways from parking areas with raised and/or design features (e.g. landscape elements, different colours, materials and/or textures).
- Landscaping should be used to screen off-street parking areas to limit the visibility of surface parking from the street.



7.2 Pedestrian Wayfinding and Circulation

Wayfinding encompasses all the ways in which people orientate themselves in a physical space and navigate from place to place. Wayfinding used in the built environment helps a user understand where they are but also helps them choose a path for where they want to go. The basic process of wayfinding involves four stages:

1. **Orientation** - to determine one's location in relation to objects that may be nearby and the desired destination.
2. **Route Decision** - the path chosen to get to the desired destination.
3. **Route Monitoring** - checking to make sure that the selected route is leading to the desired destination.
4. **Destination Recognition** - when the destination is recognized.

Wayfinding strategies often combine signage, maps, symbols, sidwalk or road markings, and colours to help users guide themselves in the built environment.

wayfinding

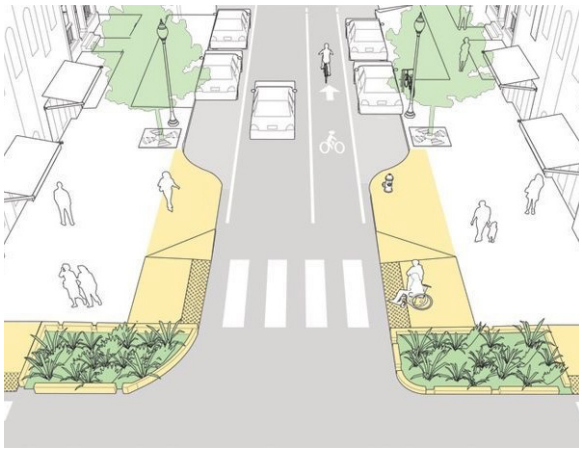
- Support wayfinding strategies by providing:
  - continuous application of accent paving (concrete, tiles, bricks, etc.) and pedestrian-scale lighting to define and distinguish walkways and sidewalks, from adjacent hardscapes, such as parking surfaces and plaza paving;
  - definition of gateways (e.g. to destinations such as parks) that are visible and accessible from primary pedestrian loops/sidewalks by using trees, signage, feature landscaping or special paving; and
  - landscaping that is maintained (trimmed and clear) to ensure visual connections are not obstructed.
- Wayfinding signs must be highly visible and placed in key access points and destinations.





pedestrian circulation

- Walkway design must be accessible to persons with disabilities, bicycles, scooters and strollers, with non-slip surfaces and should align with the current BC Building Accessibility Handbook.
- Pedestrian-vehicular conflict should be reduced wherever possible, with priority given to the safety and convenience of pedestrians.
- Where pedestrian-vehicular conflict is unavoidable, crossings must clearly identify areas where pedestrians may encounter vehicles along their route such as drive aisles, crosswalks and intersections. Maintain pedestrian material treatment and sidewalk grade across conflict zones.
- Pedestrian priority areas should be emphasized by using varied hardscape treatments, such as coloured, stamped or patterned concrete, and raised crosswalks.
- Covered walkways that provide pedestrians with an unobstructed all-weather route is encouraged.





7.3 Open Spaces and Landscaping

general



- Open spaces should support a range of activities within the downtown, from quiet gathering spaces (e.g. passive), to more active places to play, to flexible spaces suitable for events.
- Furnishing should complement the intended use of the open space and be comfortable and functional, year-round.
- Sitting areas should be located and designed to provide a sense of protection with edges reinforced by landscape elements such as shrubs, small trees and hardscape treatments. Spaces must maintain safe physical and visual access to adjacent spaces.



- Enhance the urban forest to support the health and well-being of downtown Kitimat through tree planting where space permits. Tree selection should account for appropriate soil volumes, utility conflict, irrigation needs, and resilience during winter conditions.
- Open space designs should be well adapted to climate by:
    - maximizing sun exposure from south to west in all seasons;
    - supporting shading strategies (passive cooling) with deciduous plantings that allow increased solar gain in winter months; and
    - accommodating windbreaks (perpendicular to the direction of prevailing winter winds) to reduce heat loss in winter.



plazas and patios

- Plazas should be located at centres of activity, such as transit exchanges, intersections of important streets and retail focal points.
- Plazas should be framed by well defined edges. One side should be an active building edge, with active uses facing the plaza such as shop entrances and displays, food and beverage, or recreation and community activities.

7.4 Materials & Elements

lighting



- Lighting shall be provided at all building entrances, walkways, driveways, parking areas and loading areas. Light strength should be sufficient to provide clear orientation, personal safety and site security, including allowing for overlook from adjacent buildings.
- Lighting design should support the quality and comfort of pedestrian spaces with warm color ranges and minimized glare.
- Pedestrian-scaled light standards should be used to light pedestrian spaces, main corridors and focal points (in parks and plazas), with preference for low level, bollard-type light fixtures that illuminate the ground.
- Common light standard designs should be established to define specific precincts and within downtown as a whole.
- Minimize light pollution by directing lighting downwards, avoiding light reflectance and through the use of full cut-off lighting.
- Use lighting to create character and ambiance, illuminating special buildings, monuments and feature landscaped areas. Lights flanking doors or at entryways are encouraged, especially where light will fall on a sign or product display.



landscape elements



- Bollards can be used as traffic barriers to limit vehicle traffic in pedestrian zones. Bollards should be removable for commercial and emergency access.
- Tree grates must be used where trees are incorporated in paved areas.
- Tree guards must be used to protect newly planted trees from vandalism, vehicles and snow removal.

screening of servicing elements



- Servicing infrastructure, drainage and related structures, and refuse containers must be situated and/or screened so that their visual and physical impact on the public realm is minimized.
- The location of refuse containers must consider ways to minimize attracting wildlife.
- Refuse containers must be bear proof.

landscape material selection







- The use of annuals (bedding plants/temporary bulbs) should be minimized or eliminated wherever possible.
- Landscape material selection shall prioritize native and/or similarly robust, durable and easily-maintained or no maintenance materials.
- Landscape designs shall consider aesthetic qualities, plant suitability and soil volumes to ensure "right plant, right place" and to maximize growth to maturity of plants and trees. Materials must consider snow accumulation and snow clearing activities.
- Structural diversity in plant palette composition – including groupings of native plants, combinations of groundcovers, shrubs of various heights and trees – is encouraged.
- Plant selection should provide year-round appeal and seasonal interest (colour, texture, form) through use of flowering shrubs, perennials, and winter twig colour.
- Large and medium canopy trees are to be used as "street" trees where there is pedestrian circulation and in small courtyards.
- Invasive species and synthetic turf are prohibited.







hardscape materials

- To the extent possible, locally sourced materials are preferred to reflect local climate, history, and culture.
- Hardscape designs should utilize durable materials that are easily maintained, with particular consideration for snow removal and high precipitation events.
- Public courtyards and pedestrian pathways should be paved with design and patterns to define plazas and walkways as distinct spaces.
- Mitigate runoff from impervious surfaces through rainwater management strategies.
- The use of permeable paving (e.g. porous asphalt, porous concrete, permeable pavers, or concrete-glass-block grid) for paved areas is encouraged where practical to mitigate stormwater runoff, taking winter freeze/thaw processes into account.
- Where feasible, minimize the use of low albedo (heat-absorbing) surfacing materials (i.e., use lighter-coloured, more reflective materials), particularly in surface parking lots.

public art

- The design of public open spaces should support public art.
- Identify opportunities for artists to be involved in creation public art pieces (murals, sculptures, water features, and banners), including elements that serve functional uses such as seating, gateway signage, bicycle parking, etc.