



Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization Strategy & Community Improvement Plan

July 2014



Town of
East Gwillimbury

The Planning Partnership

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1.0 Executive Summary

The Mount Albert Community is a historic and rural service centre. Mount Albert will experience modest growth and the influx of new residents will require and seek services in the community. This presents additional opportunities for new investment and business development in the downtown core. The Downtown Area of Mount Albert also offers significant opportunities to attract economic activity through tourism-related initiatives such as festivals and events.

The Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization Strategy and Community Improvement Plan (CIP) has been undertaken under Section 28 of the Planning Act and was developed through an extensive research and public consultation process. This Strategy was developed with the support of the South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) and the assistance of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and the Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs (OMAF & MRA). The process was led by the Town of East Gwillimbury with input received from the Town's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and the Mount Albert Village Association (MAVA). The Town retained the services of The Planning Partnership to assist with matters of Urban Design, Architectural Guidelines and policy development.

This project stems from the Town's Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) study (2006), the First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE) program (2011) and is supported by the policies of the Town's Official Plan (2010), the Town's Economic Development Strategy (2012), and the Municipal Cultural Plan (2012). The findings and recommendations outlined in this strategy reflect the consultation process with residents and business owners of the Mount Albert community, key stakeholders, development interests, Council and Town Staff. It is recognized that the Downtown Revitalization project will take time and the impact of this initiative will be realized over a number of years. The strategy provides a number of key recommendations for implementation.

The vision seeks to restore the downtown core as a vibrant and successful business area and incent private sector investment and re-development. The vision also includes design concepts to guide investment within the public realm, i.e., streetscape elements.

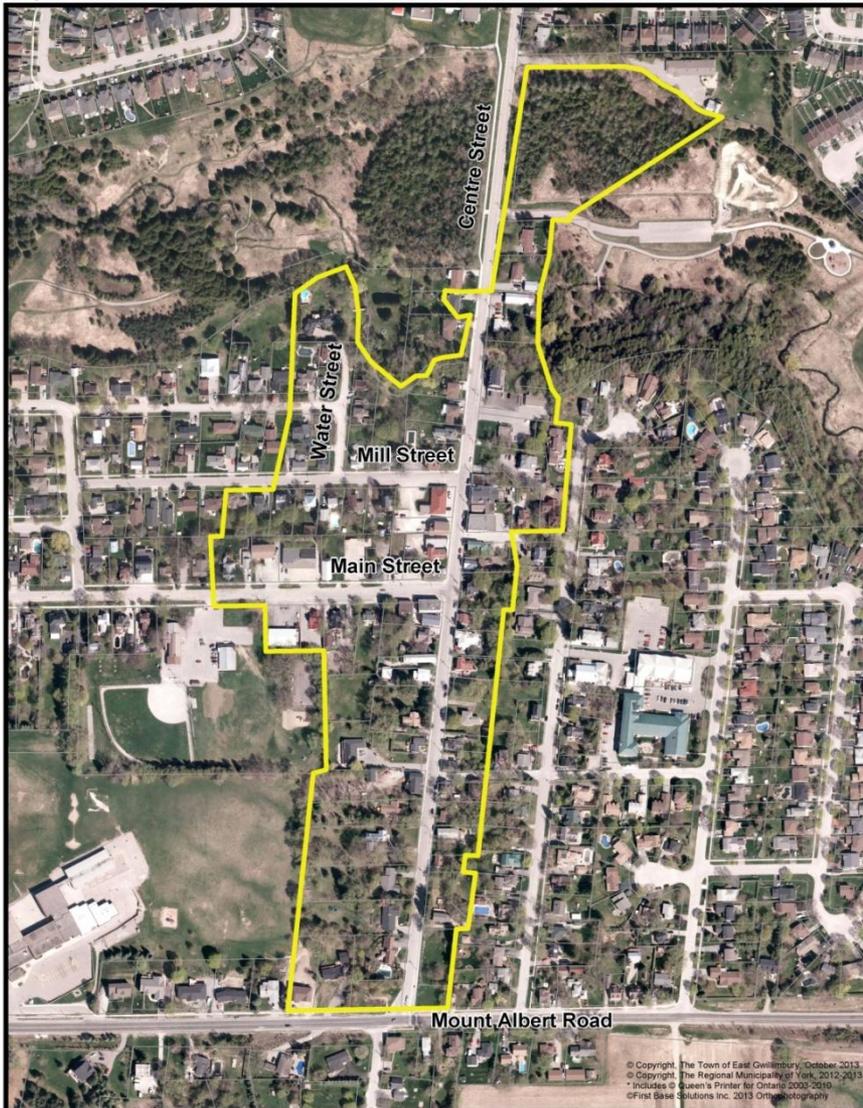
Recommendations of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy include:

1. The adoption of this report as a Community Improvement Plan under section 28 of the Planning Act, thereby providing the ability for the Town to develop loan and grant programs for private sector investment
2. The establishment of a Business Improvement Area (BIA) under the Municipal Act to enable private sector funding for revitalization efforts
3. The development of detailed urban design and streetscape plans to be used to form the basis for capital projects for improvements to the public realm
4. The development of architectural design guidelines to assist with the evaluation of private sector redevelopment in the downtown commercial core, including renovation and rehabilitation to the existing building stock.

The development of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and CIP will result in creating/improving key partnerships which will be critical to the successful implementation of this Plan.

2.0 Rationale & Goals

Figure 1: Downtown Mount Albert



The Community of Mount Albert is a rural settlement area which has a rich cultural heritage and a historic function as a focal point for the provision of services to the surrounding rural and farm community. The Community has also experienced considerable residential growth in recent decades.

Downtown Mount Albert is a traditional Village Core Area. The business mix is a combination of services, commercial, food and entertainment as well as retail activity. The downtown is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and natural heritage features.

Figure 1 identifies the boundaries of the Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization project which reflect the Village Core Area identified in the Town's Official Plan.

Village Core Areas

The Planned function of Village Core Areas is to serve as a hub of activity and the centre of each community, providing the widest range of goods and services warranted by the community in a pedestrian-friendly setting (OP, 2010).

2.1 Introduction & Primary Goals

The intent of the Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization Strategy and Community Improvement Plan is to articulate a vision for Downtown Mount Albert and establish a strategy for revitalization and economic development. The Strategy and Plan is designed to stimulate redevelopment and investment in the downtown core through the use of tools and incentives for the private sector together with public sector investment by the Town and its partners.

The Strategy seeks to ensure the downtown core achieves its potential in providing services to the residents of the community and attracting visitors and new businesses. Primary goals are:

- Provide a guiding framework and basis for public expenditures in the Mount Albert Community
- Establish urban design and architectural guidelines for private sector (re-investment) necessary to enable funding of applications for façade improvements and assist property owners with design ideas when considering improvements and/or redevelopment
- Establish an “agreed to” model for private and community-based commitment to the project through the establishment of a Business Improvement Area (BIA)
- Provide a clear and definitive framework for the submission of funding requests to various partners for projects and implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy (i.e. OMAF & MRA Rural Economic Development (RED), South Lake CFDC, and Central Counties Tourism).

What is Downtown Revitalization?

It is a process of improving the economic, physical and social well-being of a community's traditional town centre by:

- Strengthening local businesses and encouraging investment by property owners
- Creating enjoyable public streets and spaces animated by a variety of creative and civic activities
- Providing work and living opportunities for residents (OMAF & MRA, 2013).

2.2 Background & the Official Plan

The Town has completed a variety of plans, strategies, and initiatives which identified the need to develop the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and Community Improvement Plan (CIP), such as the Town's Official Plan, the Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program, the First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE) Program, The Town's Economic Development Strategy and the Town's Municipal Cultural Plan.

2.2.1 Official Plan

Under Provincial legislation, planning strategies to promote redevelopment through an incentives program must be facilitated through a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Under Section 106(3) of the Municipal Act and Section 28 of the Planning Act, municipalities are permitted to adopt Official Plan policies that permit the designation of a Community Improvement Project area through a By-law. Where a By-law designates a Community Improvement Project area, the municipality can then prepare a Plan to promote redevelopment through financial incentive programs.

The Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan speaks to the development of downtown revitalization strategies.

Section 2.2.4

- *Develop downtown revitalization strategies for existing Village Core Areas with a funding strategy to finance capital programs.*

Section 4.3.3

- *The Town may utilize Tax Increment Financing to promote private sector improvements to existing buildings and revitalize existing Village Core Areas. (s. 4.3.3.12)*
- *The Town may establish Business Improvement Areas in Village Core Areas to help promote and support local businesses in these areas. (s. 4.3.3.13)*

- *The Town shall encourage coordination, by local business persons or owners, of such things as signs, building facades, lighting, street furniture, landscaping and general maintenance. (s. 4.3.3.14)*

The Planning Act requires that a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) be prepared for a benefitting area before public funds can be advanced to help improve private properties through grants or loans. The Town's Official Plan and associated policies apply equally to all Village Core Areas (Sharon, Holland Landing, Queensville, and Mount Albert). Community engagement for this project has focused on the specific issues and challenges facing the Mount Albert Community. The focus of the CIP is on Downtown Mount Albert, however, some elements of the CIP have been written in such a way as to enable similar projects and enhancements within the downtown areas of Sharon and Holland Landing.

"...it is the policy of this Official Plan that Community Improvement shall be encouraged. Such improvements may be promoted through encouragement for upgrading of individual privately owned lands, or through area wide initiatives" (OP, 2010).

2.2.2 Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) Program - 2006

The BR+E program was conducted in 2006 by the Town in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food (OMAF), the Ministry of Rural Affairs (MRA), South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC), and the East Gwillimbury Chamber of Commerce. Businesses located in the Town of East Gwillimbury were invited to participate in a BR+E survey. The data collected from the surveys provided a better understanding of the local business community and the challenges that they faced. The findings identified priority areas for the Town to focus their economic development initiatives to enhance the community's business climate.

Action items and priority areas were identified. One of the key priority areas is *Retail District Beautification and Identity* - to create identifiable commercial districts that portray a safe, pleasurable, shopping environment. This would involve strategies to create downtown areas the community can be proud of and support the retail sector's role in anchoring the downtown core.

BR+E action items which support the community improvement plan include:

- Creating a community branding strategy
- Developing better commercial district signage for safety as well as part of the marketing strategy
- Providing tax and other incentives for businesses to improve their building facades
- Reviewing the potential for creating a Business Improvement Area (BIA)
- Ensuring "Pedestrian-friendly" commercial districts where applicable.



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

The Town of East Gwillimbury's Strategic Plan (2011 -2014) Vision Statement :

"Our Town...proud of our strong community values, culture and healthy mix of residential, employment, recreational, agricultural and natural areas. Our Future...working together to plan and retain a thriving community, today and tomorrow."

2.2.3 First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE) Program - 2011

The First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE) program was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Rural Affairs to help communities learn about the strengths and weaknesses identified by first-time visitors. In 2011, the community of Mount Albert participated in the FICE program with the community of Schomberg. During this exchange, participants focused their attention on the community of Mount Albert but more specifically on the downtown core. The participants logged their first impressions as they travelled through the community, identifying a variety of positive characteristics as well as challenges (**Table 1**). The final result was the development of a FICE Report by the first-time visiting team, the report outlined comments in a variety of categories including:

- Variety of Shopping
- Customer Service
- Window Displays
- Signage
- Variety and quality of merchandise
- Quality and availability of parking
- Quality (e.g., appearance, adequacy) of lighting
- Ease of locating the downtown area
- Potential for downtown to play a greater role in tourism
- Desirability to live downtown.



The FICE Report provided Recommended Actions (**Table 2**) that could significantly improve the downtown core of Mount Albert.

Table 1: Positive Characteristics & Challenges

Positives Characteristics	Challenges
1) Heritage Type Homes	1) Bedroom community – limited employment opportunities
2) Green spaces, views & parks, old trees & rolling hills	2) No tourist draw
3) Well maintained neighbourhoods	3) Little opportunity to open retail in downtown area
4) Sidewalks throughout	4) Limited shopping
5) Good restaurants	5) No identity/visible community spirit other than Family Sports Day

Table 2: FICE Recommended Actions

- 1) Brighten up downtown area with flowers/planters/benches
- 2) Encourage local crafters, artisans and retailers to open up
- 3) Start a Fall/Winter decorating contest among homes and among businesses downtown
- 4) Clean up signage; implement a signage “by-law”
- 5) Keep banners up-to-date with current events (e.g. Music Mania or fall/winter generic banners)
- 6) Update Town brochure (available on website as PDF/downloadable document)
- 7) The Town of East Gwillimbury should profile Mount Albert on website and provide proper links
- 8) Improve relationship between community groups and business community
- 9) Start to develop a plan for improving downtown

2.2.4 Economic Development Strategy (EDS) - 2011

In 2011, the Town of East Gwillimbury completed its first Economic Development Strategy anticipating the employment growth projections over the planning period to 2031. One goal of this strategy is create a community that is attractive, liveable, and sustainable. A number of recommendations in the EDS support the development of a Downtown Revitalization Strategy and a Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

The EDS identifies the need to “provide meaningful incentives to encourage appropriate forms of development in the village cores within the context of the Town’s community policies”. Key actions and recommendations that support this goal include:

- Development of a funding strategy to finance capital works programs and a business attraction strategy to ensure the downtown offers the right mix of retail experiences
- Promotion of arts and culture
- Development of a diverse, vibrant and active community through such activities as the hosting of large events and cultural festivals or developing initiatives that highlight the community’s cultural features.

“In an attempt to preserve the heritage of East Gwillimbury’s communities, CIPs could be designated for the village boundaries

(EDS Part 1, 2012).”

2.2.5 Municipal Cultural Plan (MCP) - 2011

In 2011, the Town of East Gwillimbury undertook a Cultural Mapping project which led to the development of the Municipal Cultural Plan. The Plan identifies an overall vision, goals and strategies to guide cultural development within the Town. One of the main goals of the MCP is to expand culture-led economic development as a way to broaden awareness of the economic importance of culture in the municipality.

Associated action items include:

- Developing integrated experience-based tourism offerings
- Developing integrated cultural and agri-tourism offerings and experiences
- Implementing a program to support start-up enterprises in underutilized downtown spaces
- Supporting youth engagement and retention
- Strengthening festivals.

3.0 Existing Study Area Context

This section describes the existing context of the study area in greater detail and speaks to the planning framework, the commercial structure, community facilities and public open space, and the Community’s parking supply and roads infrastructure.

3.1 Context

The Town of East Gwillimbury is one of the nine municipalities within York Region and is a designated growth municipality (**Figure 2**). The Town is projected to grow from its current population of 23,700 to 86,500 by 2031 and to 150,000 by 2051. Jobs are projected to grow from the current 7,400 to 34,400 jobs by 2031 and 75,000 by 2051. Amidst this rapid growth, the Town is committed to protecting its small town charm and rural character. Seventy percent of its land area will remain as “protected countryside”.

Mount Albert is a community within East Gwillimbury. Its current population is approximately 3,700 people and the community is projected to grow to 6000 by 2031. The community is situated towards the east side of the municipality, away from the major growth areas, and is surrounded by the Provincial Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine (**Figure 3**).

The approved land uses for the Mount Albert Community are identified on Schedule C-1 to the Town’s Official Plan (**Figure 4**). Lands along Main Street and Centre Street in Mount Albert are designated Village Core Area. Policies for the Village Core Area encourage redevelopment and intensification.

Figure 2: York Region

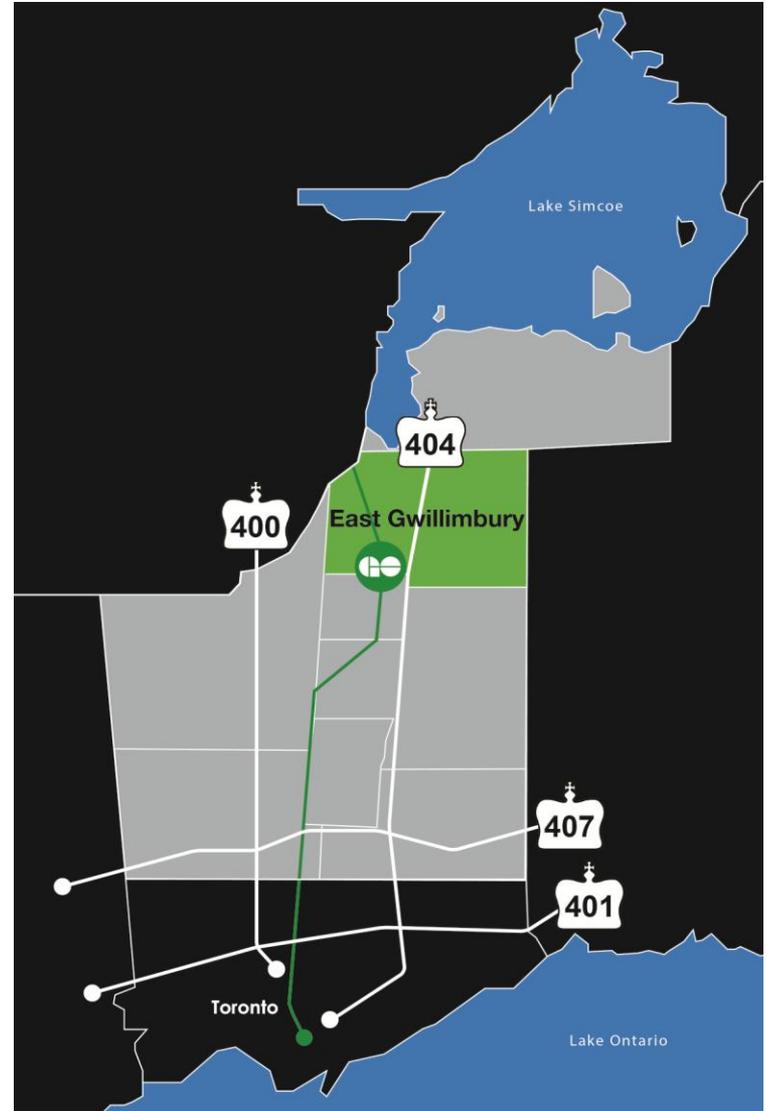


Figure 3: Study Area Context within East Gwillimbury

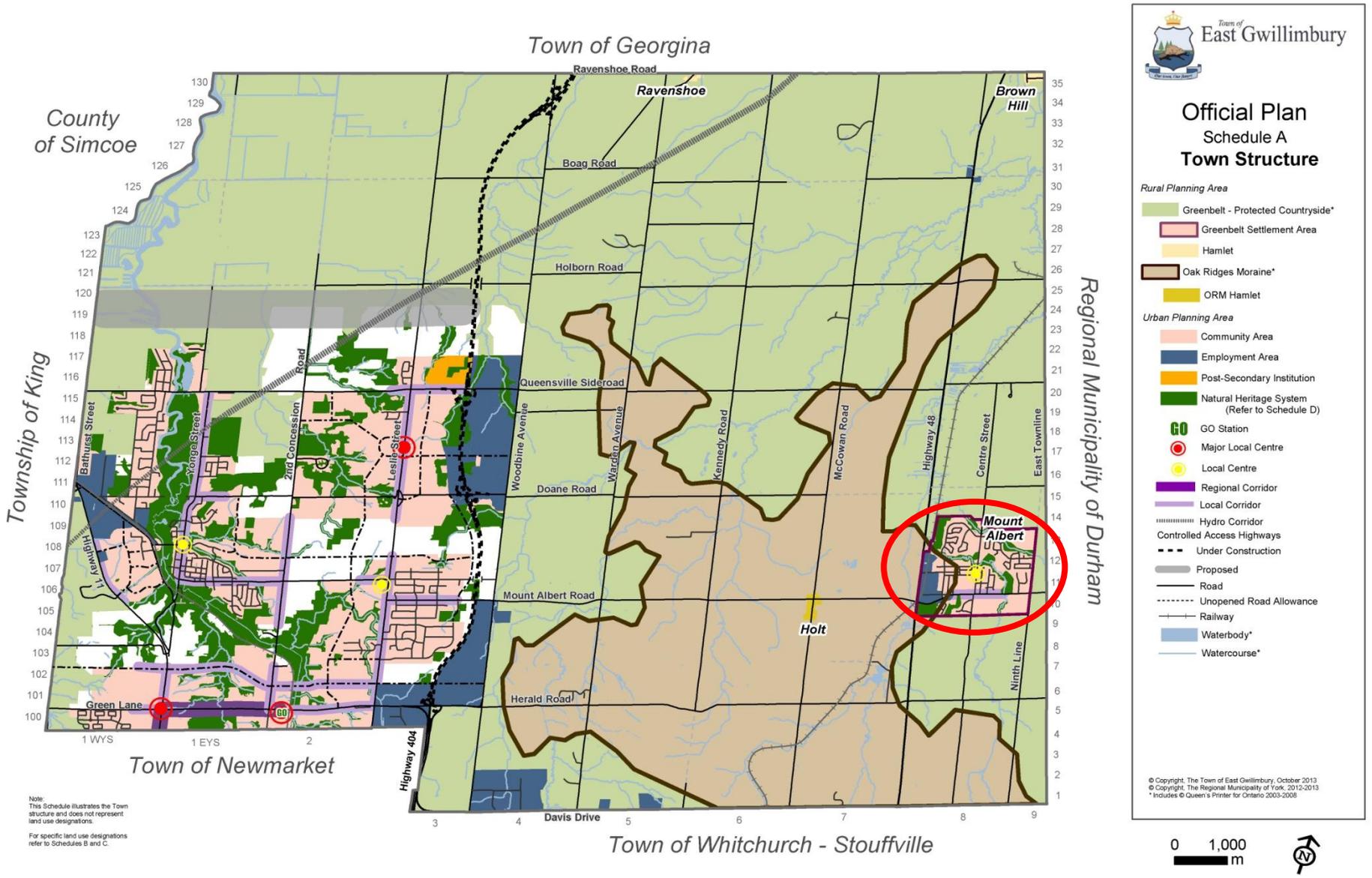
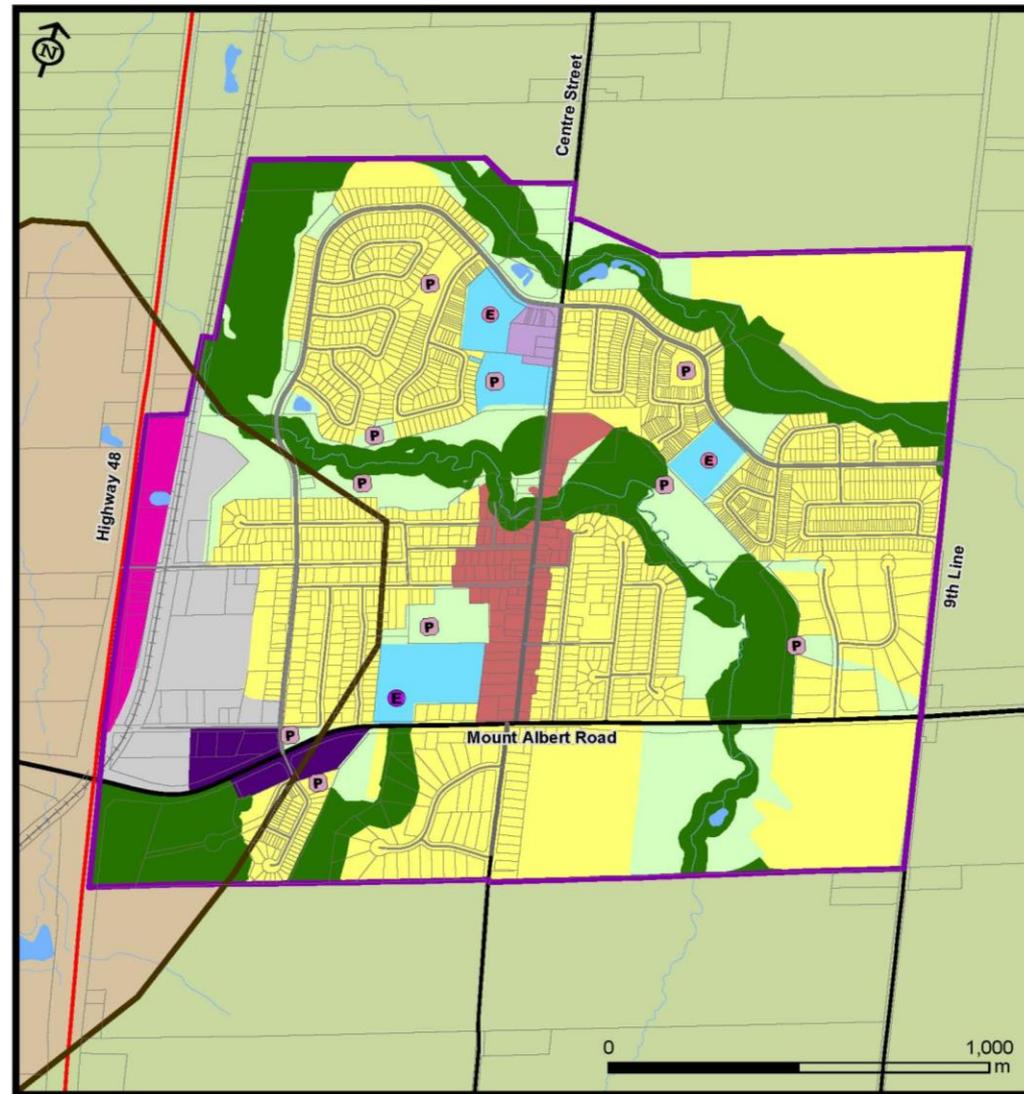
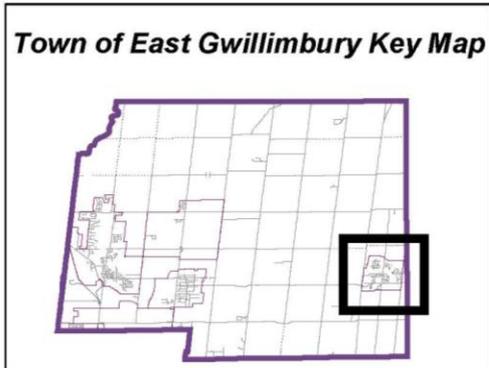


Figure 4: Mount Albert Land Use Plan



Official Plan
Schedule C-1
Greenbelt Settlement Area - Mount Albert Land Use Plan

- Greenbelt - Protected Countryside*
- Oak Ridges Moraine
- Mount Albert Secondary Plan Area
- General Employment
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Village Core Area
- Community Commercial
- Neighbourhood Commercial
- Institutional
- Environmental Protection Area
- Parks and Open Space
- Special Provision Area (Refer to Section 9.4)
- Elementary School
- Proposed Elementary School
- Existing Park
- Proposed Park
- Provincial Highway
- Arterial Road
- Collector Road
- Local Road
- Railway
- Waterbody*
- Watercourse*

Note:
This Schedule forms part of the Official Plan and must be read and interpreted in conjunction with the text.
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3.2 Planning Framework & Commercial Structure

3.2.1 Planning Framework

As identified on **Figure 4**, the Town's Official Plan identifies three commercial related land use designations within Mount Albert: Neighbourhood Commercial; Community Commercial; and Village Core Area. These designations and associated policies provide for a wide range of commercial activities and services to support the surrounding area.

Commercially designated areas within Mount Albert include:

- Neighbourhood Commercial designation of lands in the Mount Albert Road and King Street area
- Community Commercial land use designation on the lands on the east side of Highway 48 North and South of Princess Street (Home Hardware and Foodland)
- Village Core Area designation along Centre Street, including some properties fronting Main Street abutting the Centre Street area.

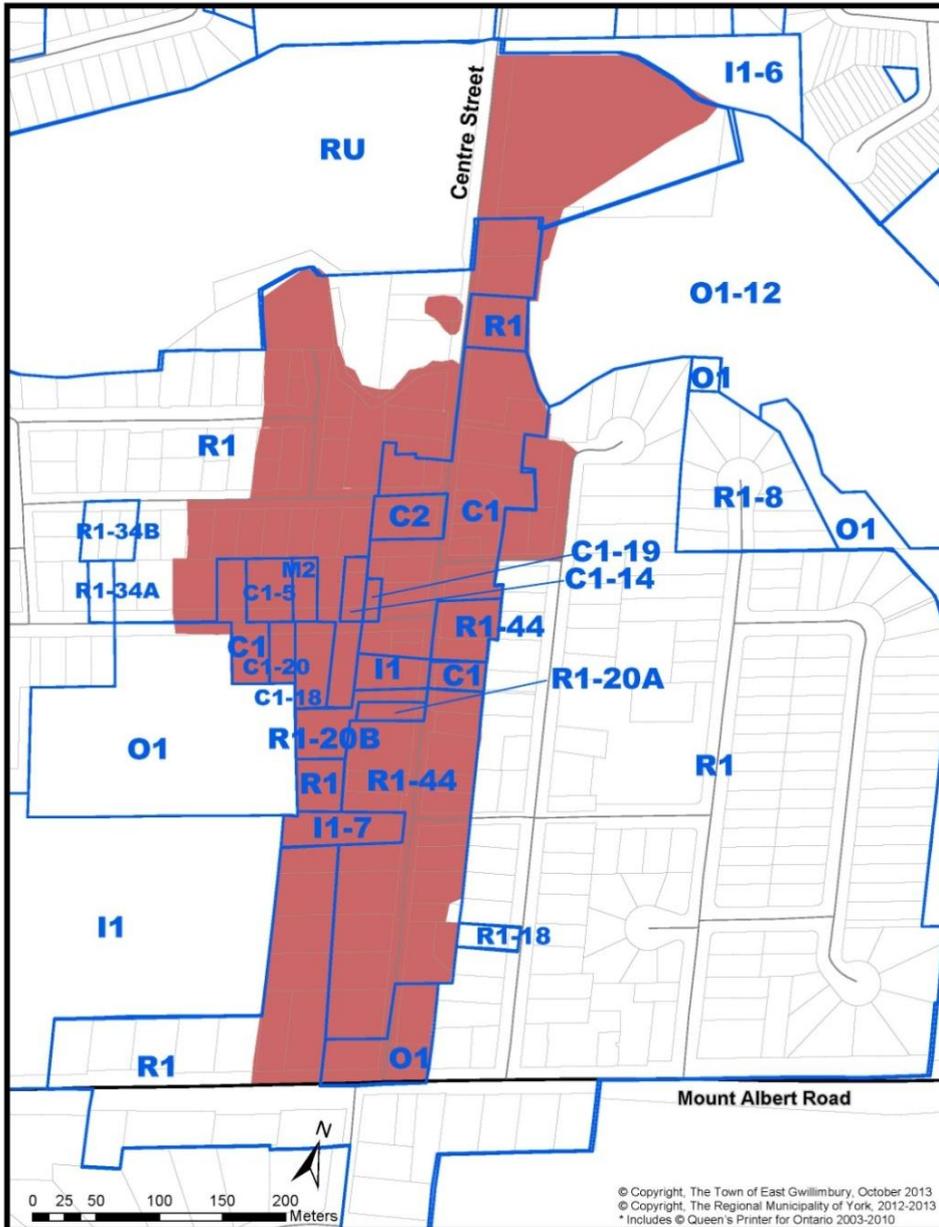
The Neighbourhood Commercial and Community Commercial areas situated in the periphery of the Community, removed from the Village Core. While these areas represent new development opportunities for uses and services which will benefit the larger community, there are concerns regarding the potential for new development to include uses which would draw away from the downtown core. This would potentially undermine the viability of the commercial activity in the core. The CIP is one tool which would serve to lessen negative impacts on and promote investment in the downtown core area.

Opportunities:

At the time of the next Official Plan review, we recommend the Town consider the following amendments:

- Limiting the range and size of permitted uses and activities within the Community Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial designations of the Mount Albert Community. This will reinforce and strengthen the role and function of the Village Core Area and to prevent the development of uses which should be reserved for the Village Core areas.
- Reducing the extent of the Village Core designation to more accurately reflect the size and extent of the core commercial area and to protect stable residential areas (i.e., Shannon road cul-de-sac, Centre Street at the south end at Mount Albert Road).
- Extending the Village Core Area designation westerly along Main Street to Victoria Street.

Figure 5: Mount Albert Village Core Zoning



3.2.2 Zoning

The Town's zoning By-law No. 97-50, regulates types of uses, locations of structures, lot sizes and dimensions, parking requirements, building heights and setbacks.

Figure 5 identifies the zoning categories in place for lands within and surrounding the Village Core Area. **Table 3** explains the different zoning categories and associated permitted uses.

- Village Core Area
- Zoning Boundaries
- R1 - Residential Urban Zone
- O1 - Open Space Zone
- I1 - Institutional Zone
- C1 - Commercial General Zone
- C2 - Commercial Highway Zone

Table 3: Mount Albert Village Core Zoning & Permitted Uses

Zone	Permitted Uses
R1 – Residential Urban Zone 1	Residential: a single detached dwelling and permitted accessory uses, buildings and structures, a home occupation, an accessory apartment, and public walkways.
C1 – Commercial General Zone	<p>Commercial: restaurants, take-out restaurants, retail stores, hotels and taverns, service shops and personal service shops, wholesale establishment which conduct retail stores in the same premise.</p> <p>Residential: a single detached dwelling on full municipal servicing, accordance with the R1 zoning may be permitted for the use of a caretaker or a person employed in the main operation on the same property. Such dwelling only is permitted in certain zones as set out in this by-law. Apartments shall be permitted in certain zones in accordance with the provisions set out in 6.8(c).</p>
I1 – Institutional Zone	Places of worship, non-commercial schools, public convalescent or nursing homes auditoriums, community centres, libraries, cemeteries, institutional uses, public parks.
C2 – Commercial Highway Zone	<p>Commercial Uses: Antique Shop, Motor Vehicle Service Station, bank or financial establishments, garden centres, golf driving range, hotels, farm implement sales and supply establishments, tourist information centres, take-out and fast food restaurants.</p> <p>Residential: a single detached dwelling on full municipal servicing, accordance with the R1 zoning may be permitted for the use of a caretaker or a person employed in the main operation on the same property. Such dwelling only is permitted in certain zones as set out in this by-law. Apartments shall be permitted in certain zones in accordance with the provisions set out in 6.8(c).</p>
O1 – Open Space Zone	Agricultural and Forestry Uses, and non-residential accessory buildings, golf courses, bird or animal sanctuaries, nurseries, community centres, trails, club houses, parking lots incidental to the forgoing, private or public parks, private and public recreation and sports facilities.
M2 – General Industrial Zone	Any manufacturing or industrial establishments boat and marine supply, storage, repair and sales establishments, farm implement sales establishments farm produce storage areas, contractor or tradesman shop, one single detached dwellings in accordance with section 6.8 of the zoning by-law, warehouse, machine and welding shops.

3.2.3 Commercial Structure – Mount Albert Downtown Area

The Commercial Structure Analysis template from the Downtown Revitalization Coordinator’s Manual developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Rural Affairs (OMAF & MRA) was used as a guide to develop the Commercial Structure Analysis for the Downtown Area of Mount Albert. Businesses were categorized based on the main commercial activity reflecting the nature of the business (**Figure 6**). These categories are: Retail, Service, Vacant, Food and Entertainment and Other (do not service a consumer market). In addition, Public Space, Public Service, Parking and Residential have been added to the list of categories to provide a complete representation of Mount Albert’s Downtown Area.

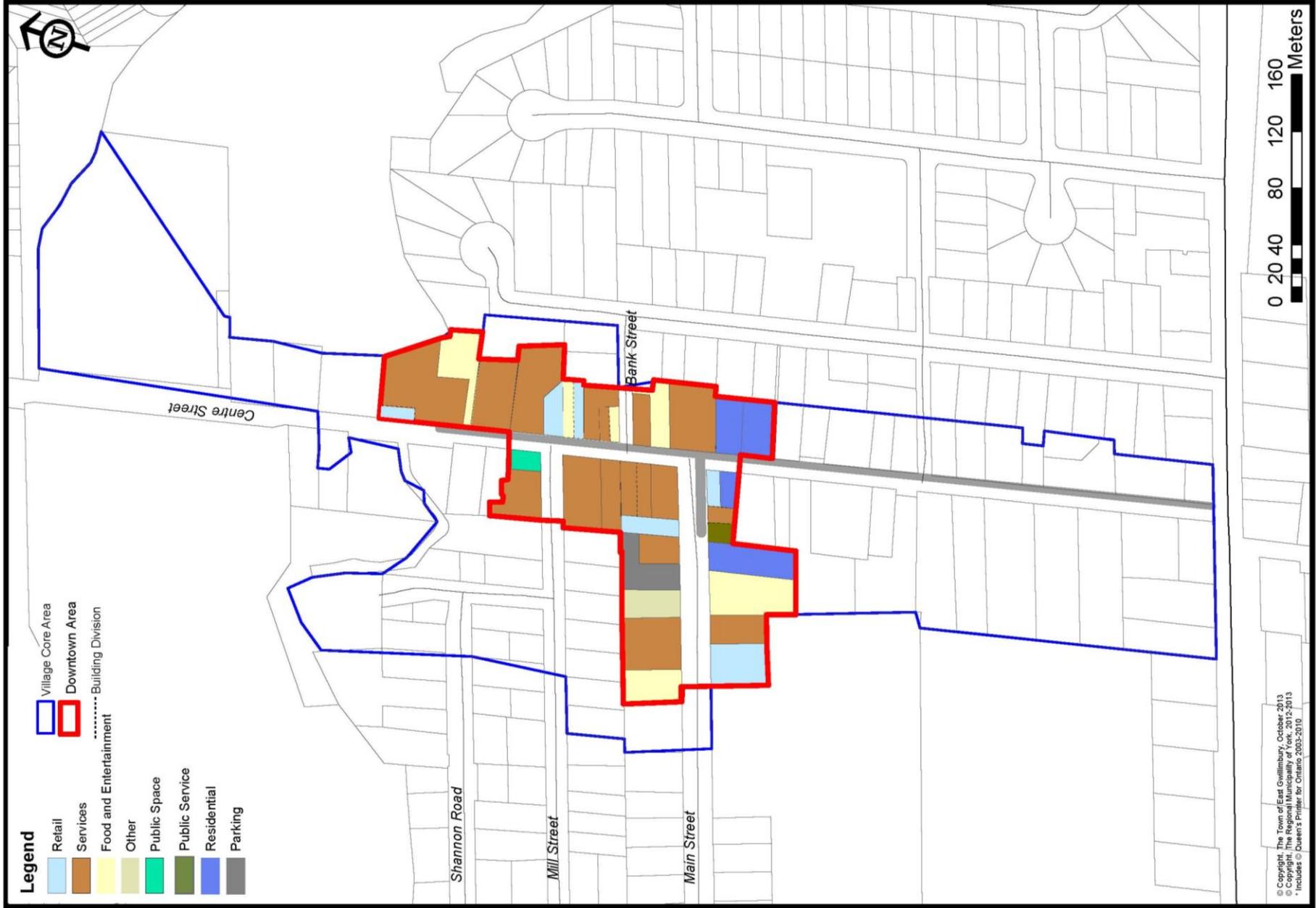
Table 4 summarizes the results of Commercial Structure Analysis. The largest percentage of businesses in the Mount Albert Downtown Area are service type businesses representing approximately 46% (17 out of 37) of the commercial structure. These businesses provide a service to a consumer market (e.g., Hair Salon). Food and Entertainment businesses have the second largest percentage of Mount Albert’s Commercial Structure with approximately 19% (7 out of 37), followed by Retail businesses with approximately 16% (6 out of 37). Food and Entertainment includes businesses that sell goods consumed on-site (e.g., restaurants) and Retail includes businesses that sell physical merchandise (e.g., paint supplies).

This summary provides a sense Mount Albert’s current commercial structure in the Downtown Area. As the community grows and changes throughout the revitalization process, its commercial structure will also change. These changes should be monitored and documented to assist in the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and CIP.

Table 4: Mount Albert Commercial Structure – Downtown Area

Category	Number of Business Types/Services	Percentage of Business Types/Service
Service	17	45.9
Retail	6	16.2
Food & Entertainment	6	16.2
Public Space	1	2.7
Public Service	1	2.7
Parking	1	2.7
Residential	4	10.8
Other	1	2.7
Vacant	0	0.0
Total	37	100.0

Figure 6: Mount Albert Commercial Structure



3.3 Community Facilities & Public Open Space

The Mount Albert area offers a range of services, community facilities and amenities. Some of the more notable community facilities include:

- 1) **Ross Family Complex and Mount Albert Public Library** - This facility is connected to Mount Albert's extensive trail system and offers a wide range of public services, programs, and amenities including a gymnasium and outdoor splash pad. Meeting rooms and a gymnasium are available for the community to rent as meeting space or for event purposes.
- 2) **Mount Albert Lion's Park** - This facility is located outside the Village Core Area, but offers excellent outdoor amenities such as soccer fields open green space and indoor space to rent for meetings and events.
- 3) **Mount Albert Community Centre and Picnic Shelter** - This facility also offers a wide range of public services, programs and amenities such as open green space, a baseball diamond, and basketball court. The community centre abuts the downtown area. It is available for community rentals for meetings or events.
- 4) **Vivian Creek Park** and trails system throughout Mount Albert. This is a publicly-owned, natural heritage outdoor amenity that promotes a healthy living lifestyle in Mount Albert.
- 5) **Mount Albert Policing Centre** in partnership with York Region Police. The policing centre is located in the downtown. It was established as a police presence and to serve the community and ensure public safety.
- 6) **Mount Albert Public School** - This public education facility is located within close proximity to the Downtown Village Core and offers public open space.
- 7) **Robert Munsch Public School** - This education facility is currently under construction in close proximity to the downtown.

The location of community facilities and publicly-owned lands are shown on **Figure 7**. This map clearly indicates that the Mount Albert Community is generally well served with ample public open space and community facilities. Of particular note, the Town-owned lands at the Mount Albert Community Centre and the adjacent green space of the Mount Albert Public School property present opportunities for shared use which should be further explored.

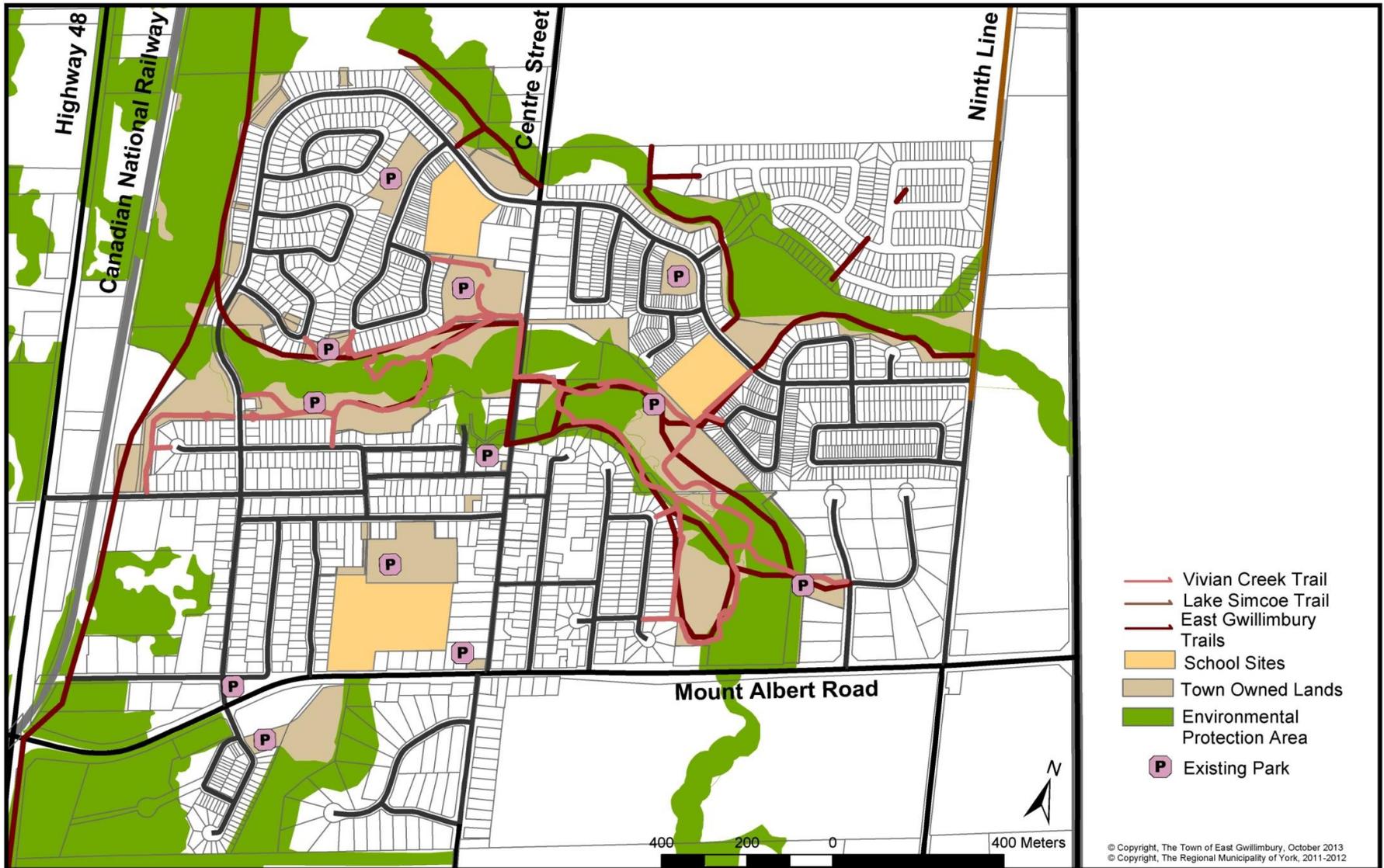
3.3.1 Community Utilities

Mount Albert's existing utilities and infrastructure are positioned above ground, framing local roads throughout the community, including Centre Street and Main Street in the downtown area.

Opportunities:

- 1) Development of a Downtown Core Area parkette feature/gathering place with business information kiosk at the Municipal property at Centre Street.
- 2) Provide signage and formalized sidewalk and trail connections linking the Downtown Core commercial area to the existing and future residential areas in the Mount Albert Community.
- 3) Explore expanded use of the Main Street Community Centre lands for community scale events and attractions to attract residents and visitors to the Downtown Core (e.g., re-instate winter skating rink, Mount Albert Village Association (MAVA) partner with Farmers' Market Committee for seasonal market).
- 4) Explore potential shared-use opportunity with Mount Albert Public School property adjacent to the green space located at Mount Albert Community Centre.
- 5) Burying all utility features should be considered by the Town for the downtown core area for improved maintenance and future development.

Figure 7: Community Facilities & Public Open Space

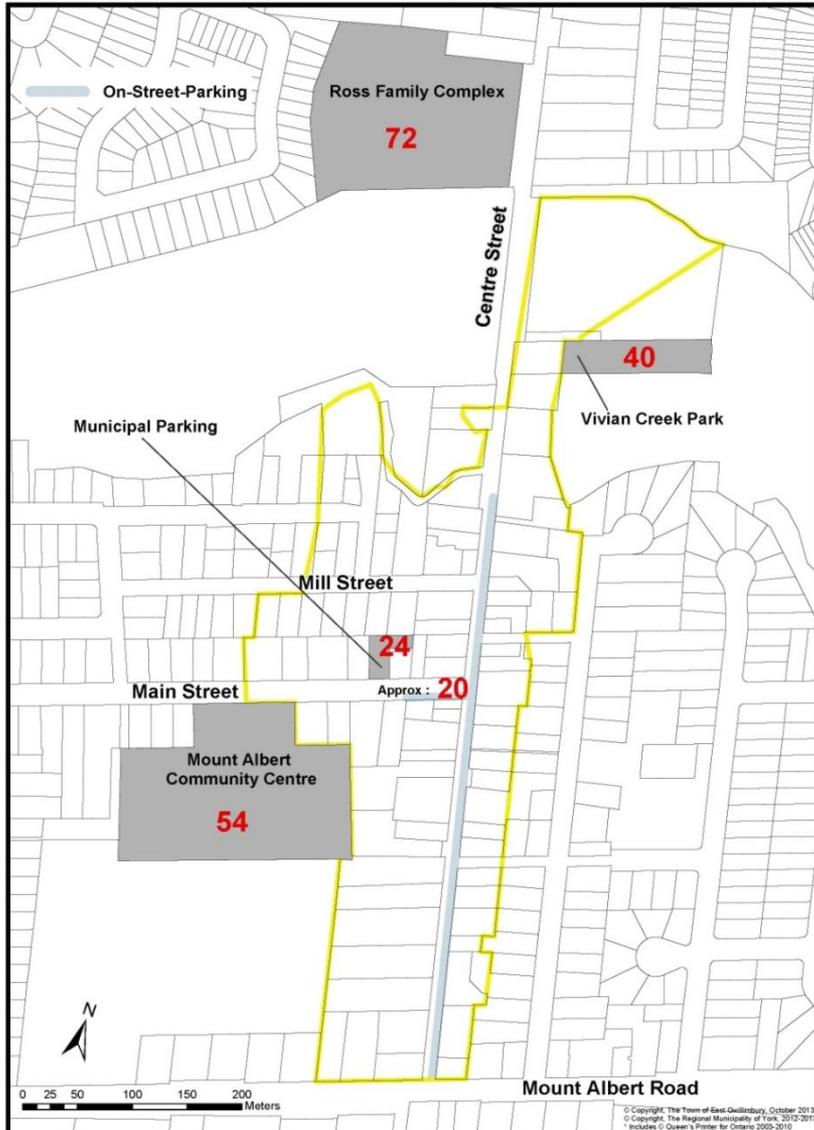


-  Vivian Creek Trail
-  Lake Simcoe Trail
-  East Gwillimbury Trails
-  School Sites
-  Town Owned Lands
-  Environmental Protection Area
-  Existing Park

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3.4 Parking Supply

Figure 8: Mount Albert Public Parking Inventory



The Public Parking Inventory is shown on **Figure 8**. This identifies only those parking areas which are public and available for general use. The overall parking inventory also includes an amount attributed to on-street parking as well as those spaces within the municipal parking lot adjacent to the TD Bank on Main Street. On-street parking is permitted on Centre Street for a maximum time limit of two hours. Public parking is available at the Community Centre. This parking area is generally underutilized. Although somewhat removed from the downtown area, parking is available at Vivian Creek Park and the Ross Family Complex.

Overnight parking is not permitted on-street or off-street within the downtown. Through the public feedback and consultation process, parking in the core was not viewed as being a specific issue. This may be attributed to the level of vacant commercial space and relatively small number of businesses at the present time. It should be noted that parking limitations and traffic congestion are symptomatic of vibrant and successful commercial areas.

Opportunities:

- 1) Provide signage and wayfinding to promote the Community Centre parking lot usage for downtown visitors.
- 2) Provide signage and directions to promote the use of the Vivian Creek Park and Ross Family Complex parking areas for longer term visits, festivals, and events.
- 3) Explore the implementation of a cash-in-lieu of parking program under Section 40 of the Planning Act for the downtown core to incentivize redevelopment and generate funds for core area parking lot development.

3.5 Roads

In general, the current residential population surrounding the Village Core does not use the existing roads through the downtown to access their neighbourhoods. Mount Albert residents primarily travel along the roads surrounding the Village Core of the community. Two primary roads direct traffic to Downtown Mount Albert; Centre Street and Main Street via Princess Street. These primary roads provide direct access to the downtown, as well as direct connections to the regional road network (Mount Albert Road and Provincial Highway #48).

Observations of existing traffic flows indicate that these roads provide acceptable levels of service and impart minimal delay to vehicles either accessing downtown or passing through Mount Albert. Congestion during typical weekday peak hours is minimal, even with the accommodation of on-street parking.

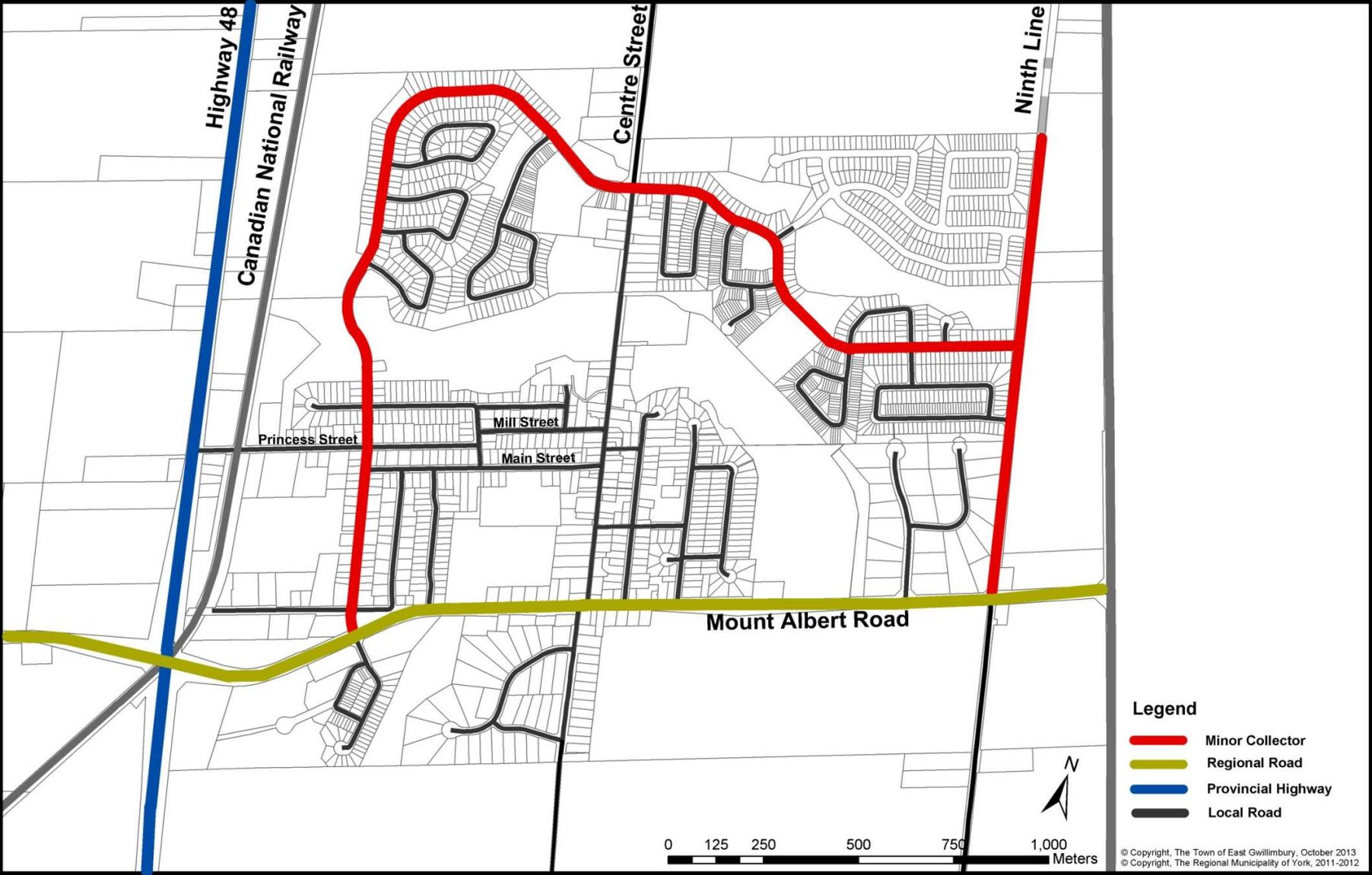
Centre Street and Main Street have a clear and defined role and function within Mount Albert to support the adjacent retail/commercial operations and provide direct access to established residential areas. The low posted speed is a direct control of all vehicles that intend to use these roads. It is expected and required that vehicle flows adhere to these controls as the roads fulfill a supporting role to the land uses and accommodate other primary modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking. Revitalization efforts in Downtown Mount Albert have the ability to strengthen the role and function of these primary roads. **Figure 9** shows Mount Albert's existing roads within and surrounding the community.

Opportunities:

1. Consistent Community level Gateway Features/ Way-finding signage to be designed for the major community gateway at:
 - Highway #48 and Princess Street
 - Mount Albert Road and King Street
2. Consistent Downtown Business Area Gateway Features/ Way-finding signage to be designed for the Village Core commercial area at:
 - Mount Albert Road and Centre Street
 - Centre Street and Vivian Creek Park
 - Main Street and Victoria Street



Figure 9: Mount Albert Community Roads



4.0 The Approach & Process

It was recognized that community consultation (**Figure 10**) was critical to ensure the Plan accurately addressed the needs of Downtown Mount Albert. The following sections provide further detail on the process and results of the community consultation.

A Key Stakeholder Meeting for the Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization project took place in October of 2012.

The Town retained the services of The Planning Partnership to assist with specific elements of the project including urban design, architectural control guidelines and policy development.

The Town's Downtown Revitalization Coordinator conducted extensive community consultation through a variety of avenues including a Community Kick-Off Meeting, various local outreach tools, stakeholder interviews and consultation, a Community Design Charrette, and working group consultation and feedback meetings.

Figure 10: The Approach & Process



4.1 Key Stakeholder Meeting

On October 12, 2012, Town staff organized a Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization meeting with key stakeholders. This included representation from the Mount Albert Village Association (MAVA), the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), Council and Town staff. The purpose of the meeting was to provide key stakeholders and community groups with information regarding Downtown Revitalization opportunities, other successful projects and available government programs. During this meeting, presentations were made by:

- Kathy Simpson - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Ministry of Rural Affairs Representative
- Daniel Kerr - Beaverton Downtown Revitalization Coordinator
- Chris Kallio - Economic Development Officer (EDO) from the Town of Newmarket, Main Street Newmarket CIP
- Peter Budreo - General Manager of South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC)

Following this meeting, both MAVA and EDAC created sub-committees to provide further input regarding their vision for the Downtown Revitalization project. The MAVA sub-committee engaged community representatives to gather their input on the challenges facing Downtown Mount Albert through the use of a survey. The EDAC sub-committee prepared a report on the Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization project which outlined a variety of items for the Town to consider. **Table 5** summarizes the results from both sub-committees and their respective feedback.

Table 5: MAVA & EDAC Feedback

MAVA Sub-committee	EDAC Sub-committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated advertising • Gateway/ sense of entrance • Recent new investment • Minimal infill – minor changes to building form • Do specific activities exist? • A coordinating body or coordinator position for marketing and development initiatives is in place • Strong and unique visual identity is conveyed through signage featuring identity, logo, branding, etc. • A positive overall physical image exists in the downtown area • A historic core of building stock exists with a mix of building styles and well-kept • Signage in the downtown • A strong ratepayers“ group or residents“ association is in place • Streetscape and pedestrian amenities are in place – downtown presents a pedestrian friendly environment; and • Coordinated events and activities are being undertaken in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to predict hard numbers on returns or the timing for an investment in the downtown however this does not mean they will not occur or be substantial. • A lack of predictability is not a reason to forego downtown revitalization. • The potential for taxpayer gain through downtown revitalization is higher with economic development in mind. • It would be reasonable to look to senior levels of government for a level of financial support for downtown revitalization. • “At the discretion of the Town, this sub-committee may have a future role in helping to fashion the nature of downtown revitalization to optimize the potential for economic development benefits. Other roles may also emerge.”

4.2 Community Kick-off Meeting

In October 2013, Town Staff led a community kick-off meeting in the community of Mount Albert. This meeting provided an overview of the work being undertaken and gave residents and business owners the opportunity to learn more about the project. During this meeting, Town Staff led a Community Feedback Activity which resulted in a list of what residents and business owners are looking for in their downtown. Examples of the types of initiatives that could potentially occur as part of the downtown revitalization process were also provided. **Figure 11** displays the results from the Community Feedback Activity

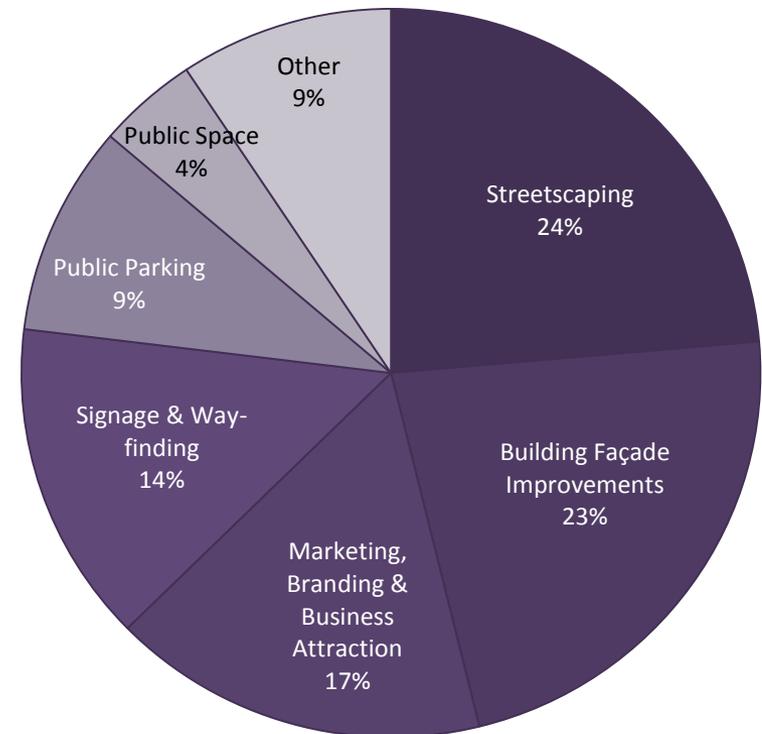
The following were suggestions provided in the “Other” category:

- Pool/recreation centre for youth – drop in centre
- Dog park
- Gift store/farmers’ market
- More attractive entrance to the Town (Mount Albert Road off of Highway 48 and Princes Street off of Highway 48)
- Car traffic diversion
- Highway 48 and Mount Albert Road is just a crossroad. it should be the welcome to the Town
- Help the Legion to be a social/cultural centre in Town.

This meeting received an excellent turnout with 80 people in attendance including residents, business owners, members of Council, community stakeholders and Town Staff. All those who attended were highly engaged and continue to be a part of the Downtown Revitalization process.

Figure 11: Community Feedback Activity Results

Question: What would you like to see in your downtown?



WHAT WE HEARD

Figure 12: Community Comments



Figure 12 highlights some of the comments received through the Comment Cards distributed at the Community Kick-off Meeting.



4.3 Local Outreach

Community consultation and local outreach was an important component of the Downtown Revitalization process. Residents, business owners and key stakeholders were given a variety of opportunities to provide their comments and feedback. The Downtown Revitalization Coordinator was stationed in the Downtown Area of Mount Albert, once a week, to facilitate community input. Information regarding the project was available at this location as well as on the Town’s website.

Three key local outreach opportunities were completed in the development process; the Resident Survey, Business Owner Interviews, and discussions with key developers in Mount Albert.

4.3.1 Resident Survey

The Resident Survey was carried out during the fall of 2013. This survey was designed to gather a better understanding of what residents thought about their downtown’s shopping and services. This survey was made available online through the Town’s website, distributed to all Mount Albert residents by mail, provided at the Community Kick-off Meeting and made available where all Resident Survey drop-off boxes were located in the Downtown Area. The Town received a significant response with a total of 154 surveys. Out of the 154 surveys, 150 respondents (97%) live in Mount Albert. **Table 6** highlights some responses from the Survey.

4.3.2 Business Owner Interviews

The Business Owner Interviews were another opportunity for downtown businesses to be involved in the Downtown Revitalization process. These one-on-one interviews allowed business owners to express challenges they face as well changes they would like to see in the downtown. **Table 6** highlights some suggestions that would benefit business owners in the downtown.

4.3.3 Mount Albert Developers Meeting

Consultation also included representatives of the development industry active in Mount Albert. These included:

- Averton Homes - Vince Baffa
- Dreamland Homes - John Pelosi
- Oxford Homes - Stephen Meyer

These partners recognize the value of downtown revitalization and support the notion of investing in the community in order to improve the success of local businesses and provide an attractive community.

Table 6: Resident Survey & Business Owner Interviews

Resident Survey: <i>What would draw you into Downtown Mount Albert?</i>	Business Owner Interviews: <i>What could benefit business in Downtown Mount Albert?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More community activities (e.g., recreation for families, dog park) • More entertainment, events and festivals (e.g., Cultural activities, concerts/music events) • A good coffee shop or café • More shopping options (e.g., variety and gifts; small boutiques and restaurants) • Outdoor patios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parking (location, availability etc.) • Community Information and message boards • Increased awareness and advertising (e.g., Existing Business Map) • More Events and Festivals (e.g., Folk Festival) • Façade Improvements (e.g. incorporate local artists/community) • Better lighting (e.g., Corner of Centre and Main Street) and streetscaping

4.4 Stakeholder Interviews & Consultation

Interviews were conducted with Council and Town staff. **Table 7** is a summary of the common themes and concepts that came out of these interviews.

Table 7: Internal Staff & Council Interviews

Common Theme	Comments
Draw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a "draw" to attract and keep people downtown (e.g. Events on Streets, well-run restaurants etc.). • Tools to manage amount and type of retail on Highway 48 to ensure appeal and viability of retail downtown. • Need a variety of reasons to come downtown - to make a "complete" trip. • More festivals and events would draw residents downtown – develop into tourism opportunities for the community. • Draw the children to downtown and the parents will come. • Opportunity for a cultural "incubator" downtown for artists to establish programs, studios etc. • Opportunity to market downtown as a “single entity” emphasizing heritage and even use (ie Restaurant Row). • New subdivision is very impactful on the downtown – need something that draws new residents into the downtown. • There are concerns with existing shopping options – not much • Develop programming for young families or potentially develop and “Children Centre”
Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a gateway to downtown Mount Albert. • Entrance way on Highway 48 and Mount Albert Road.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown revitalization requires time - while there may be some "quick fixes", change will occur slowly over many years.
Pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to continue to create a connected trail network (a good connection from downtown to Ross Family Centre is feasible). • Hill, speeding traffic, haphazard on-street parking and narrow sidewalks detract from the pedestrian appeal of Downtown Mount Albert . • Its not about the people who are currently living in Mount Albert, it is about the people that arrive here. • Sidewalk safety needs to become more urbanized.
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings are in a state of disrepair – buildings are the challenge, they need improvement. • Direction is required to accommodate residential conversions of main street buildings. • Direction is required for conversion to retail of houses. • Development Charges could be spent in the downtown, money needs to be defined and be given directly for a project. • Absentee property owners – need to be engaged regarding financing building improvements. • Some buildings have heritage designation.
Parks & other Green Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Albert has the building blocks of a plethora of green space and community amenities. • Need to connect new community with existing – could be through a trail system.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many tools and partners are required for implementation: developers Town, businesses and residents. • Don't think a Business Improvement Area (BIA) would change the situation – could be a challenge to fund through tax base however there is potential for future consideration.

4.5 Community Design Charrette

In December 2013, Town Staff and The Planning Partnership led a Community Design Charrette in Downtown Mount Albert. Design Drawings for Downtown Mount Albert were prepared and used to facilitate discussions. These drawings were prepared by The Planning Partnership and took into consideration the community, the downtown area, and feedback obtained through the consultation process.

Residents, business owners, key stakeholders, Council and Town staff took part in afternoon and evening Design Charrette sessions. More than 50 people were in attendance. Attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the design concepts and provide their thoughts and comments.

Following the Design Charrette, The Planning Partnership produced a series of drawings highlighting ways to improve downtown Mount Albert and overcome design challenges. These included:

- **Community Concept Plan** - which provides an over-arching concept for the community and specifically the Downtown Area of Mount Albert
- **Public Realm Strategy** - which focuses on gateways, public lands and how streetscaping elements can be incorporated
- **Urban Design Concept** - which highlights different features and elements that could be incorporated within the Village Core Area
- **Urban Design Strategy** - which focuses on the commercial core of Mount Albert and features various elements that could be incorporated into this area to encourage revitalization

- **Main Street Strategy, Street Cross Sections** - which provides a detailed concept plan to improve the public space
- **Building Façade Strategy** - which provides a detailed plan to guide investments for private sector improvements.

The design drawings produced by The Planning Partnership through the Community Design Charrette are found under Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of this document.



4.6 Working Group

A Working Group was established to participate in ongoing discussions and provide input into the CIP document.

The following are the members of the Mount Albert's Downtown Revitalization Working Group:

EDAC Sub-committee:

- Carolyn Watt
- Kevin Dixon
- Peter Budreo
- George Schrijver

MAVA Sub-committee:

- Janet Wheeler
- Ian Bowie
- Aaron Gillard
- Anne Wicks

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture & Food and Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs (OMAF & MRA)

- Kathy Simpson

Town of East Gwillimbury Internal Staff:

- Carolyn Kellington, General Manager, Development Services
- Phil Dawson, Fire Chief
- Gary Shropshire, General Manager Community Parks, Recreation & Culture
- Wayne Hunt, General Manager of Infrastructure & Environmental Services
- Mark Valcic, General Manager Corporate Services/Treasurer
- Michelle Alley, Chief Executive Officer of East Gwillimbury Library
- Genevieve Singh, Manager of Communications
- Sally Davidson, Community Engagement Coordinator
- Grant McKeich, Parks Supervisor
- Tessa Smith, Horticulturalist
- Tim Gibson, Director of Building Approvals/Chief Building Official
- Walied Zekry, Senior Building Official
- Chris Cannon, Planner
- Dan Stone, Economic Development Officer
- Aimee Artinian, Economic Development Coordinator
- Lindsay Leung, Downtown Revitalization Coordinator/Business Development Assistant

4.7 The Key Assets & Challenges

As a result of the community consultation process and local outreach initiatives, key assets and challenges were identified for Mount Albert to inform the foundation of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and CIP.

There are five assets that Mount Albert can leverage as part of the Downtown Revitalization Project. These include:

- Small Town Charm and historic buildings
- Good proximity to surrounding neighbourhoods
- The downtown is within walking distance
- The downtown is quaint and does not have too much traffic
- Great green space and public amenities.

There are six key challenges to address as part of Mount Albert's Downtown Revitalization Project. These include:

- Signage and wayfinding for the downtown core
- Existing streetscape – should incorporate continuous sidewalks and consistency throughout the downtown
- Downtown needs to expand the variety of services and businesses
- Parking (availability and location)
- Would like to see more festivals and events
- Want more commercial space to attract residents to draw them to the downtown.

5.0 The Vision & Plan

Establishing a clear vision is key in communicating the intent of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and CIP and providing direction for public and private investment. General design principles have been included as well as Public Realm Design Drawings, Design Guidelines for the Private Sector, and examples of architectural drawings developed for Downtown Mount Albert.

5.1 The Vision

A well defined and highly supported vision for the future is a fundamental requirement for success. It is the vision that establishes the environment for change and becomes the focus for political will and administrative support over the long-term planning horizon. All decisions about planning, design and ultimately revitalizing the downtown must consider and advance this vision.

Downtown Mount Albert has a number of attributes that can and should be used to create an outstanding regional and local destination. Making a place that is diverse, well connected, aesthetically pleasing and authentic are crucial in retaining and attracting new visitors to the downtown. A well-planned and designed community also benefits existing residents and businesses.

Downtown **Mount Albert** will be:

- A destination for residents and tourists
- A place to provide services to the residents of Mount Albert and beyond
- A central gathering place for the community to focus on and gather around
- An excellent mix of businesses and services that supplies the needs of the Community.

5.1.1 Building a Case to Ensure the Success of Downtown

Downtown Mount Albert has the potential to be a community destination point, a place that people look forward to visiting. Implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy and CIP will require a commitment from the Town, the Mount Albert Village Association (MAVA) and individual business operators. This commitment would be focused on implementation of policy amendments as well as public and private investment.

Healthy and vibrant downtowns are vital aspects of any great Town. Their success hinges on a broadly supported and recognized need to consider and deal with challenges unique to that area. As a preface to the planning and design framework, it is imperative that Downtown Mount Albert be understood within the context of a broad set of factors.

5.1.2 The Broad Public Benefits of Successful Downtowns

The success and health of downtowns have far-reaching social, economic and environmental benefits. Key reasons for implementing the Downtown Mount Albert Community Improvement Plan to support a successful include:

- **Sustainability** - The revitalization of traditional downtowns is consistent with the principles of sustainable development and 'smart growth' for several reasons. From an infrastructure perspective, downtown infill and redevelopment projects optimize the use of existing services and community facilities. Redeveloping traditional downtowns also reinforces the level of density and mixture of uses that support walking and cycling as viable alternatives to the car.
- **Civic Life** - Traditional downtown areas are prime locations for civic space and public amenities. These public spaces and amenities provide important forums for community-wide interaction and connection through everyday use, events and celebrations.
- **Diversity & Lifestyle Choices** - Downtowns provide alternative forms of housing, employment, services, products, entertainment and cultural amenities that are very different from those found in suburban environments. Many of these distinct features are made viable by the mix and critical mass of activities and people that are drawn to urban environments. Diversity, variety, and choice are fundamental to vibrant cultural environments and to attracting and retaining businesses.
- **Cultural Heritage** - Downtown Mount Albert has a concentration of heritage resources. The importance of conserving heritage resources is understood to be a key factor in creating and supporting healthy and viable communities. These resources are also fundamental to the character and image of Mount Albert.
- **Symbolic Importance & Image** - A downtown shapes impressions on its visitors. It is a reflection of community accomplishments, community economic health, local quality of life, pride, ideals, and values. Most importantly, the image of an entire Town and its quality of life is evaluated on the health and quality of the downtown area(s).
- **Independent Business & Incubators** - The Downtown provides ideal locations and environments for independent businesses, new businesses, and entrepreneurs. The mix and density of uses, as well as the variety of building types affords a range of unique spaces and distinctive environments that can enable creative and small-scale businesses to start-up and flourish.

5.1.3 Importance of the Public Realm in Economic Development

There are considerable public facilities in the community of Mount Albert. Some of these facilities include: the Mount Albert Community Centre and baseball diamond, Ross Family Complex Public Library and Splash pad, and Vivian Creek Park. These public facilities in close proximity to the downtown will help draw in residents and visitors. Drawing more people to the downtown core and giving them a reason to stay and spend time in the area, will lead to greater economic prosperity in the downtown.

Continued investment in the public realm will ensure Mount Albert remains as a desirable place to live and work. It will assist in realizing its potential to become a destination that generates new jobs, an enhanced business area, increased property values, and the ability to generate income for its investors.

What is a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)?

CIPs provide municipalities with planning and financial tools to rehabilitate and revitalize targeted areas.

A CIP is a flexible tool that can address various physical, social, economic or environmental challenges in a particular area (MMAH, 2008).

5.1.4 Investment in the public realm is expected to:

- Establish Mount Albert as a destination for events and festivals. Mount Albert has an array of facilities, activities and events, some of which include: Mount Albert Sports Day and the Mount Albert Santa Clause Parade. The downtown area has the potential to become a tourist draw within the Town and the Region. Its transformation will enhance Mount Albert's ability to attract tourists and create a true experience while being downtown.
- Promote redevelopment which will then result in increased property values and tax assessment within the downtown area. A healthy retail sector dramatically enhances the economic benefits through the collection of HST. Enhanced property values will enrich property tax assessments. An improved overall environment will attract residential intensification and redevelopment. Increased residential density will increase the residential property tax base.
- Promote reinvestment by the private sector in a rejuvenated and new building stock within the downtown area. Experience across North America indicates that public sector investment stimulates private sector investment in new buildings. Creating an attractive public realm is an investment in the future of Mount Albert. It is expected that public dollars spent will secure existing tax revenues and will have the potential to generate additional financial returns to all levels of government in the short term.
- Maintain downtown's existing retailers and attract new businesses. Retail redevelopment will attract shoppers to Mount Albert.
- Increase activity downtown, making it the centre of the community with opportunities for social interaction and engagement. It, along with the other key attractions (public library, splash pad, community centre), will become an experience to draw residents and tourists alike.

5.2 The Guiding Principles of the Community Improvement Plan

The four guiding principles for the Community Improvement Plan are specific to and important for the revitalization of Downtown Mount Albert.

5.2.1 Make Coming and Staying Downtown an Easier Choice (circulation, connections, amenities)

Presently, Downtown Mount Albert lacks visual cohesion and is visually difficult to navigate. Downtown Mount Albert should be an area that is cohesive, inviting, and well connected both visually and physically to other parts of the community. An opportunity is available to link the downtown to the trail system and provide another point of entry.

Improving connections to neighbourhoods with sidewalks will provide route options for pedestrians. Providing bike storage and public washrooms and having consistent business hours would attract more people to the downtown area.

5.2.2 Enhance the Pedestrian Experience by Making Walking Safe, Comfortable and Appealing

Pedestrian safety can be improved through traffic-calming (i.e., design features like “table-tops” and road narrowing). Other opportunities to improve safety and accessibility include:

- Minimizing curb cuts
- Consolidating rear parking to reduce conflicts between cars and pedestrians
- Eliminating front steps leading into businesses to improve access for people on scooters or in wheelchairs

- Articulated crosswalks that show where pedestrians should cross streets
- Enhanced pedestrian lighting to improve the visibility and safety of pedestrians at night
- Applying CPTED (crime prevention through environmental principles design) to new buildings and redevelopment.

To ensure the comfort of pedestrians, enhanced public realm features are required. These would include such items as direct links, protection from weather elements through the use of awnings, and pedestrian amenities such as seating.

Beautiful streetscaping with widened sidewalks give an appealing spacious feeling for pedestrians. By prohibiting large trucks from travelling through the downtown and using a by-pass route will remove unnecessary traffic and visual distractions. Combined, these amenities and traffic improvements will draw more pedestrians and this will animate the street.

5.2.3 Provide More Reasons to Come Downtown (stimulate traffic, intensify/critical mass of activity and attractions)

There are a number of possibilities to increase activity within and draw more people in to the downtown. For example, providing high quality, mixed-use infill development will generate the kind of variety that attracts people. Other opportunities include:

- Formalizing an event/market space in the downtown
- Organizing more events and festivals throughout the year
- Consider the establishment of a Gallery/Museum to celebrate the Town’s heritage
- Providing amenities for families with children, such as additional playgrounds or an off-leash dog park.

People can also be drawn into the downtown via visual connections such as gateways and signage that pique interest into the area, and landmarks that reinforce key view corridors. Including an ecological attraction at the Vivian Creek Park may also draw people to venture into Downtown Mount Albert.

5.2.4 Strengthen Pride in Downtown

An attractive environment has the ability to strengthen pride within the downtown. The uniqueness of buildings within the downtown area represents the history and local architectural style. Opportunities include:

- Feature lighting (e.g., uplighting) to accentuate the architecture of certain buildings
- Interpretative signage, along with public art, can be used to tell the story of Mount Albert, thereby increasing the 'sense of place'
- Banners, street trees, landscaping and enhanced maintenance can also make the downtown aesthetically appealing
- Coordinated and consistent paving and street furniture in the downtown adds to the sense of place and distinguishes it from other parts of the community.



5.3 Public Realm Design Drawings

Public Realm Design Drawings have been developed for the Community of Mount Albert, focusing on its Village Core Area and Downtown Area. The Figures referenced are found at the end of this section.

5.3.1 Community Concept Plan

The Community Concept Plan (**Figure 13**) defines an overarching structure for guiding improvements to the private and public realms. This concept plan is intended to reinforce the area's defining characteristics and focuses on three key considerations: gateways/key intersections, connections, and destinations.

- **Gateways/Key Intersections** - The primary access points into the Community of Mount Albert are identified as Community Gateways in **Figure 13**. These Community Gateways are located at Highway 48 and Princess Street, Mount Albert Road and King Street, Mount Albert Road and Ninth Line, and Centre Street and King Street. The primary access points for the Downtown Area have been identified as Downtown Gateways. These are located at Mount Albert Road and Centre Street, on Main Street just east of Victoria Street, and on Centre Street just south of the entrance to Vivian Creek Park. Key intersections in the Downtown Area that could showcase enhanced treatments have also been identified at Centre Street and Main Street as well as Centre Street and Mill Street. These sites celebrate important locations within the community and enhance the sense of arrival while promoting Mount Albert's identity.
- **Connections** - Connections have been highlighted as physical and visual connections. They enhance the sense of place, promote walkability and a cohesive community, and assist with wayfinding. Due to the importance of providing easy movement to Centre Street, connections to the downtown village core are to be implemented to link residents from the surrounding neighborhoods through Main Street, Mill Street and Elizabeth Street. Broader connections have also been suggested at the north and south ends of Centre Street and to community facilities in the downtown.

- **Destinations** - Destinations are important to “draw” people into the community. Several destinations have been identified throughout the community of Mount Albert and include parks, open space, and the community centres. Mount Albert's Downtown Area is recognized as the primary commercial area within the Village Core and is a key destination area for the community. Mount Albert's destinations are within a walkable area and enhance a sense of place.

5.3.2 Public Realm Strategy

Centre Street is a primary roadway of Mount Albert's Downtown and is a key stop along Mount Albert's existing York Region Transit (YRT) bus route (#58). Centre Street is framed by historic buildings and has great potential. It has a natural small town charm which can be capitalized on to create destination spaces for those who live, work, and visit there. The Public Realm Strategy (**Figure 14**) is intended to transform the streetscape by creating a place for people - a pedestrian oriented environment that provides features for cyclists and vehicles, a place where large trucks are not welcome, where people go to shop, eat and meet. Examples of public realm initiatives that could be implemented in Downtown Mount Albert are as follows:

- **Green Promenade** - to promote an open space character and presence of green space in the community. This feature creates opportunities for passive recreation and allows for views and vistas of natural areas. Defining elements of the Green Promenade include: a “boardwalk”, overlook area, seating, pedestrian lighting, interpretive signage and naturalized planting.
- **Village Streetscape** - elements can be consistent or complementary throughout the recommended area. These elements include: fencing, streetlights, driveways, planting, and street trees to highlight residential character and provide a transition from the “rural” area to the “village” area. Implementing Village Streetscape elements reinforces community identity at a pedestrian scale.

- **Downtown Streetscape** - is intended to create a “Main Street” character and builds on the “heritage” of the community. Downtown Streetscape elements are pedestrian oriented and support community gatherings and events. Street furniture and streetscape elements include: decorative paving, seating, signage, lighting, planting, and street trees. The Downtown Streetscape would allow for and promote infill development and/or redevelopment.
- **Views and Vistas** - important to the overall experience that the community offers and contributes to enhancing the sense of place in Mount Albert. Views and vistas should be framed, reinforced and highlighted. This can be achieved through a combination of enhanced streetscape design, special landscape features, building design, heights, massing and setbacks.
- **Community Gateway** - identified on the Public Realm Strategy (**Figure 14**) to include “Welcome to Mount Albert” signage elements, special landscape features and enhanced planting.
- **Downtown Gateway** - identified on the Public Realm Strategy, include items such as signage elements, special landscape features, enhanced planting, and special design considerations for buildings in these locations.
- **Potential Redevelopment or Infill Opportunity** - pursuing potential redevelopment or infill opportunities would minimize setbacks allowing buildings to frame the street and create pedestrian-scaled streetscapes. Potential redevelopment and infill opportunities may include the construction of a compatible building designed to complement heritage buildings. Decorative roadway paving could also be incorporated concurrently with redevelopment and/or infill projects.
- **Festival Street** - an area which could be closed along Centre Street and Main Street could occur for special events and gatherings (e.g. Mount Albert Sport’s Day). Within the identified Festival Street area, enhanced streetscape design could be introduced that coordinates all streetscape elements from building-face to building-face.
- **Urban Canopy/Forest** - this natural feature has been identified and should incorporate diverse and resilient tree species; choosing the right types of trees for the proper locations.
- **Downtown Gateway** - there are three key locations being proposed for Downtown Gateways on **Figure 15**. The proposed Downtown Gateway at Centre Street, just south of the parking entrance to Vivian Creek Park, has opportunities to incorporate signage elements with potential redevelopment on site. This location also presents an opportunity for a landmark commercial building. The Downtown Gateway proposed on Main Street, just east of Victoria Street, should incorporate ornamental or native planting, or an array of large canopy trees and signage that is complementary to the existing stone walls along the community centre frontage. Furthermore, the proposed Downtown Gateway at Mount Albert Road and Centre Street should incorporate vertical signage on street corners, decorative roadway paving, ornamental or native tree plantings.

5.3.3 Urban Design Concept – Village Core Area

Figure 15 focuses on potential urban design concepts and opportunities to improve Mount Albert’s Village Core Area. The following urban design features and elements should be considered:

- **Open Space Node/Parkette** - this feature could be further developed to establish a meeting place or small gathering space for residents and visitors. A new building could be developed on this site consistent with the urban design concepts being proposed (e.g., height, massing, materials, fenestration).

5.3.4 Urban Design Strategy - Downtown Area

The Urban Design Strategy (**Figure 16**) focuses on Mount Albert's Downtown Area which contains local businesses and commercial activity along Centre Street and Main Street. A series of streetscaping elements and features are included to differentiate the downtown commercial area from the larger Village Core Area. The series of streetscaping elements and features include:

- Large canopy street trees where space permits and smaller canopy trees where space is limited.
- Public seating area(s), public art and tighter tree spacing. These elements could be incorporated to frame the street view and reinforce the key intersection.
- Enhanced or special paving from building-face to building-face, including lay-by parking. Rolled curbs have also been suggested as urban design elements to differentiate the Downtown Area. Bump out areas may also be incorporated to reduce the width of roadways and allow tree planting in key areas.
- New building development or building additions within the downtown area should reinforce the street. Increased lot coverage should be considered to provide more building frontage along Centre Street and Main Street.
- Details on the proposed Downtown Gateways and their implementation are also identified on the Urban Design Strategy for the Downtown Area.

Main Street's cross-sections are highlighted as part of this drawing. Details explaining Main Street's cross-sections are provided on **Figure 17**.



5.3.5 Main Street Strategy – Street Cross-Sections

Main Street, together with Centre Street, forms the central crossroads in the downtown area of Mount Albert. It represents the commercial, institutional, cultural, and social heart of the community. The Main Street Strategy (**Figure 17**) embodies elements of its history while providing incredible opportunities for shaping its future.

Key elements identified in these graphics include:

- Pavement widths to be retained at approximately 8.0 metres
- On the east side of the road establish two tree planting zones, and one walk zone, with an objective of 6.0 metres of space
- On the west side of the road, a more flexible pedestrian space, that may include two tree planting zones, café/patio space, and/or parking with an objective of 6.0 metres.

It is recognized that the right-of-way for Main Street varies and is typically less than 20.0 metres. Building-face to building-face conditions have the potential to achieve a consistent treatment for sidewalks, tree planting zones, and other features.

The current character of Main Street, extending from Centre Street to Birchard Boulevard, is varied both in its physical form and its uses. A site walk by the design team identified a number of distinguishing features to note. These include:

- Variety of building setbacks, with some buildings very close to the street while others are set behind large expanses of surface parking lots
- Variety of building forms, styles and massing

- Marked change to a residential character beyond Birchard Boulevard
- An expansive paved roadway
- Relatively narrow pedestrian walkway
- Lack of street trees
- Lack of consistency in the design of the street.

Given these conditions, and with the overarching goal of creating a pedestrian-oriented and vibrant downtown area, the streetscape strategy for Main Street proposes the following:

- Prioritizing the pedestrian zone by reducing the paved roadway and introducing a consistent and widened sidewalk
- Implementing an urban tree canopy by planting trees in new grass boulevards where some lay-by parking currently exists
- Coordinating the elements that comprise the streetscape, including paving, light standards, trees and site furniture
- Promoting design elements within the street right-of-way that easily allow for and support special events such as street festivals and community gatherings etc.
- Framing the street through redevelopment of sites that have large areas of parking, to include buildings along the street.

Figure 13: Community Concept Plan



GATEWAYS/KEY INTERSECTIONS

- Enhances the sense of arrival
- Promotes community identity
- **Enhances wayfinding and orientation**
- Celebrates important locations within the community

CONNECTIONS

- Include physical and visual connections
- Enhances sense of place
- Promotes walkability and a cohesive community
- Assists in wayfinding

DESTINATIONS

- A concentration of destinations within a walkable area enhances the sense of place
- The Downtown Area has been identified as the primary commercial area within the Village Core.
- In addition to the Downtown Area, other destinations that may draw people to the area include, for example, parks, open space, the community centre, and Main Street.

 Community Gateway
 Downtown Gateway
 Key Intersections (Enhanced Treatments) (See Figure 18)

 Connections

 Village Core Area
 Downtown Area
 Public Open Space
 Destinations

Figure 14: Public Realm Strategy

- Green Promenade
- Gateways
- Downtown Streetscape
- Village Streetscape
- Views and Vistas

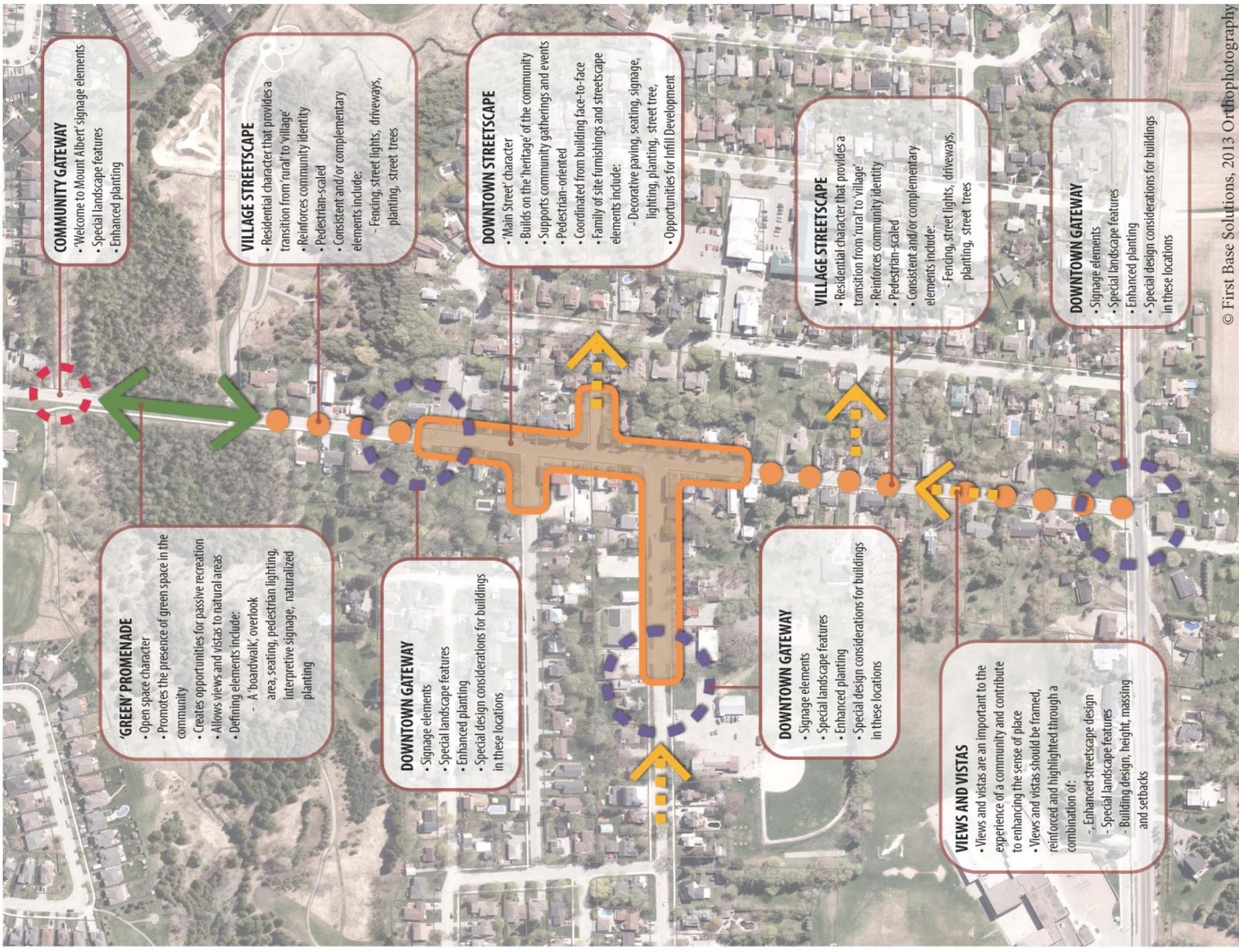


Figure 15: Urban Design Concept - Village Core Area

Urban Canopy
 Infill Development Opportunities
 Existing Buildings
 Main Street Retail
 Village Core Area
 Open Space Node
 Festival Street
 Gateways



Figure 16: Urban Design Strategy - Downtown Area

Tree Canopy
 Main Street Retail
 Gateways
 Cross Sections
 (See Figure 17)

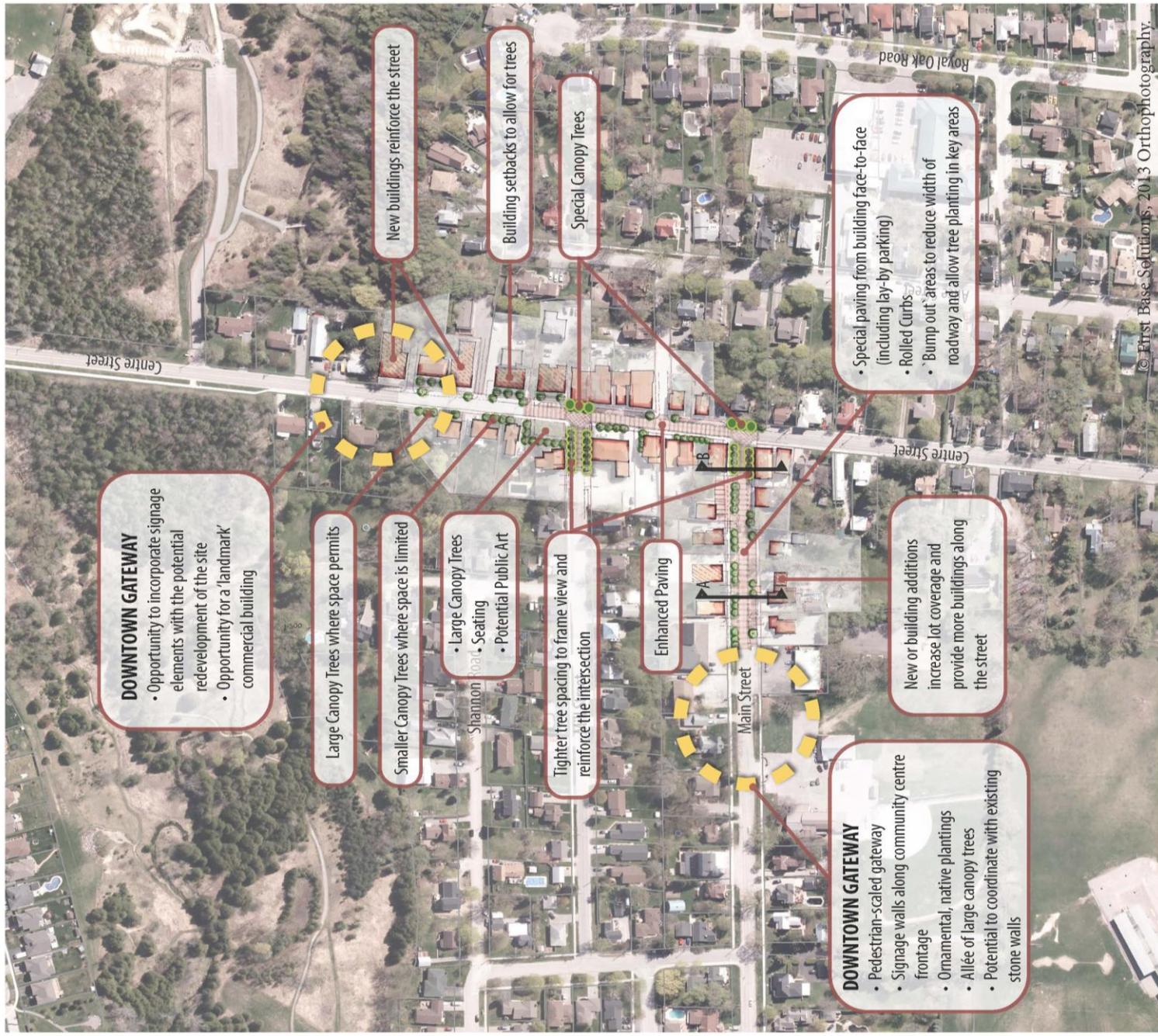
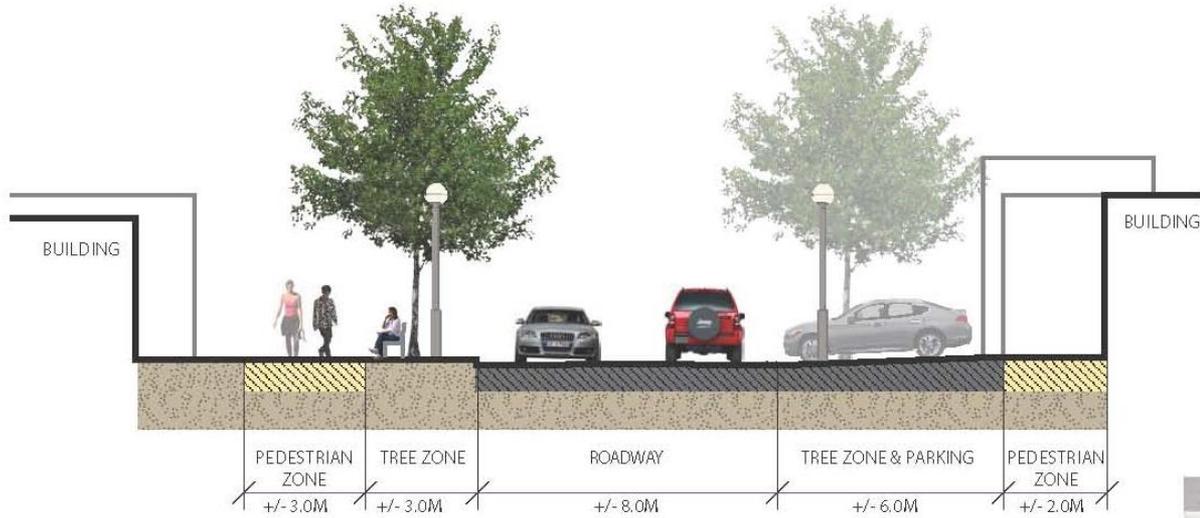
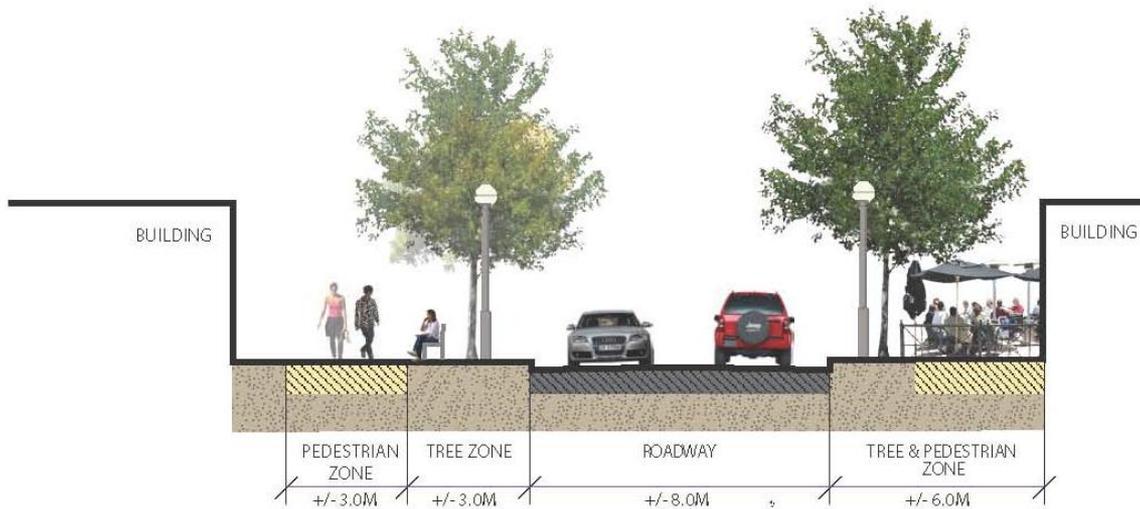


Figure 17: Main Street Strategy - Street Cross-Sections

Section A



Section B



Key Map

5.4 Design Guidelines for the Private Sector

The design guidelines for Downtown Mount Albert envision a variety of new buildings and renovations to the existing building stock. This will ensure the area is a mixed-use centre of the community, displays a high quality public realm, includes sensitive transitions to the surrounding residential neighbourhoods and is compatible with the existing heritage character. The guidelines will help to guide new construction and renovations and are intended to provide flexibility to encourage distinction and variety in architecture.

New buildings within the downtown area will act to complete the streetscape and reinforce the street edge conditions. All new development within Downtown Mount Albert is, by definition, infill development. As a result, a key consideration for new development is the relationship to existing buildings, in particular the existing buildings of heritage value that set the tone for the architecture of Downtown Mount Albert. This section provides:

- General building guidelines
- Guidelines for changes to existing buildings with heritage value
- Guidelines for infill buildings within a heritage context
- Guidelines for infill buildings on larger lots in the Village Core Area.



All new development/redevelopment Downtown shall be based upon and approved after the careful consideration of the concept of “Compatible Development”.

“Compatible development is development that is not the same as, nor necessarily similar to existing development in the vicinity. Compatible development is development that enhances the character of the community without causing any undue adverse impacts on adjacent properties in the vicinity.”

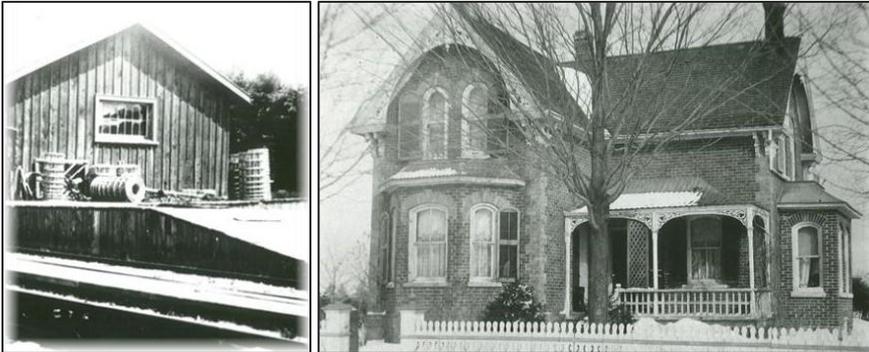
5.4.1 General Building Guidelines

All new development and redevelopment in the Village Core Area should be compatible with the character of the community. Attention must be paid to exterior design, scale, colour, building materials, appearance, and design features of buildings.

Architectural variety is crucial in creating a visually stimulating urban environment. Streetscapes composed of buildings of similar style and form can succeed through subtle variations in the façade treatment and building mass to improve the overall architectural richness, variety, and building articulation.

New building design shall:

- Be barrier free
- Have a textured architectural quality that can be achieved by introducing variation in certain elements of the façade treatment
- Create a street space that is scaled to the pedestrian and is organized to present an appropriate façade to all adjacent public roads to provide interest and comfort at ground level for pedestrians. Primary pedestrian entrances shall provide direct and universal access to the public sidewalk.
- Have a façade that is articulated with three-dimensional elements, such as balconies, bay windows and porches, cornices, window trim, entrances, canopies and the articulation of the building mass
- Employ architectural details and/or a step-back at the upper storeys as established in the Zoning By-law



High School, Mount Albert, Ont., Can.

- Include pedestrian weather and sun protection systems such as awnings, canopies, colonnades, or front porches along the sidewalk edge of important pedestrian roads and adjacent to the urban squares and at entrances to buildings
- Have all visible mechanical equipment appropriately screened and located in a manner that has a minimal physical and visual impact on public sidewalks and accessible open spaces
- Where feasible, have all transformers and other above ground utilities located within the building, or on private property located away, and/or screened, from public view.

In the design of development that includes a heritage resource, the adaptive re-use of significant cultural heritage buildings shall be encouraged. Significant heritage resources, including buildings and associated landscapes shall be developed in conformity with the heritage policies of the Town's Official Plan.

5.4.2 Changes to Existing Buildings with Heritage Value

In general, the original, distinctive qualities and character of a historic building, such as bulkhead details, piers, windows, transoms, entrances, cornices, brick detailing and various façade accessories, shall be preserved.

The removal or alteration of any historical materials or distinctive features shall be avoided. In instances where removal is required due to damage or deterioration, the materials shall be replaced with the same material or with materials that are compatible and/or complementary to the original design.

Changes to a building of heritage value should:

1. Treat distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship with sensitivity.
2. Repair or replace missing architectural features with an accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence, rather than on conjectural design on the availability of different architectural elements for other buildings or structures.
3. Respect changes to a historic building or resource which may have taken place over the course of time and may have acquired significance in their own right. The valid contributions of all periods to a historic building or resource should be respected.
4. Undertake the selection of windows such that the materials and surrounds are based on those of the original building.



5.4.3 Infill Buildings within a Heritage Context

Infill development is encouraged on Centre Street and Main Street. Its design should be sensitive and complementary to buildings in the immediate area. The new building should contribute, not detract from, the distinct character of Main Street Mount Albert. New buildings should respect the general conditions of the top, middle, and base of existing buildings within the immediate area.

5.4.4 Height and Massing

Building heights play an important role and can impact the character and quality of the street experience. The height and mass of buildings ensures visual continuity and maintains the pedestrian scale at the street.

1. Where new buildings or new additions to buildings exceed the height of adjacent buildings, the additional height should be set back behind the prevailing façades a minimum distance of three metres to reinforce the street wall height while allowing additional height.

5.4.5 Façade Articulation

New buildings should:

1. Consider and respect the height and massing of adjacent buildings (reflecting the base, middle, and top of those buildings).
2. Respect the pattern of façade division by ensuring the horizontal and vertical architectural orders are aligned with neighbouring buildings.
3. Include a cornice that is aligned with neighbouring buildings and of similar proportions.
4. Locate windows to be vertically aligned from floor-to-floor and horizontally aligned with the neighbouring buildings.

5. Have entries and display windows at regular intervals consistent with the established pattern on the block.
6. Avoid historical misrepresentation or mimicry of past architectural styles.
7. Be designed so that they do not appear to have been constructed earlier than they were.



Old Mill - Mount Albert



Presbyterian Church - Mount Albert

5.4.6 Orientation and Placement of Buildings

Orientation and placement of buildings along the street helps to reinforce the public realm by enhancing the pedestrian environment and creating a sense of enclosure. This is achieved by framing the street with parallel aligned buildings.

1. New buildings should be located at a distance from the curb equal to that of adjacent buildings.
2. Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to address both streets and located close to the street edge on both facades.
3. New buildings should be designed to occupy the highest portion of the street frontage as is possible to establish a continuous street wall condition.
4. A relatively consistent building edge is important to provide spatial definition and containment to the street. The front and exterior side walls of buildings should be located within a defined zone on the lot.
5. Where new buildings or additions exceed the height of adjacent buildings, the additional height should be set back behind the prevailing façades a minimum distance of 3.0 metres.



5.4.7 Storefronts

Well-proportioned and designed storefronts can contribute positively to the pedestrian environment by providing animation and visual interest at the sidewalk. Defining characteristics of a main street are the mix and variety of storefront styles and types, in addition to the narrow widths and high level of transparency that lends to the vibrancy and animation of the street.

Entrances, signage, weather protection and lighting are all elements of successful storefronts. New development should reinforce these characteristics in keeping with the following guidelines:

1. Barrier-free access should be accomplished in a manner that does not impede passage in front of the store. Ramps are encouraged to be incorporated within vestibules or where entries are set back from the storefront.
2. To ensure an attractive visual presence on the street and a high quality retail space at grade level:
 - Storefronts should have a high-level of transparency, with a minimum of 75% glazing to maximize visual animation.
 - Clear glass should be used for wall openings (e.g., windows and doors) along the street-level façade. Dark tinted, reflective or opaque glazing should be discouraged for storefronts.
 - An identifiable break or gap should be provided between the street-level uses and the upper floors of a building. This break or gap may consist of a change in material, change in fenestration, or with the addition of a cornice line. The identifiable gap or break can emphasize the storefront while adding visual interest and variety to the streetscape.

- On corner sites, storefronts should address both street frontages through entries or glazing.
- Storefront signage should be consistent with the signage guidelines (see Signage Section 5.4.10), but generally should add diversity and interest to the street and not overwhelm either the storefront or the streetscape.
- To reflect the existing character and context, storefronts should generally have a frontage that reflects their historic scale.
- Weather protection for pedestrians is encouraged through the use of awnings and canopies.
- Where retail frontages are greater than 8.0 metres, they should articulate narrow storefronts in the design of the façade.



5.4.8 Materials

New development should be mindful of ensuring excellence in architectural design and in the use of high-grade materials, particularly at street-level. A key objective of the Design Guidelines is to achieve balance and consistency in design quality and street interface, while enabling individual expression in new developments.

1. New buildings should respect the materials of adjacent buildings and consider the palette of materials and colours evident in nearby existing buildings.
2. Building materials should be chosen for their functional and aesthetic qualities and exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, sustainability and ease of maintenance. Materials should also be chosen for durability.
3. Mount Albert has a rich history of architectural styles, colours, and material quality from which to draw from. New developments should seek to contribute to this mix and variety.
4. Building materials recommended for new construction include brick, stone, wood, glass, in-situ concrete and pre-cast concrete.
5. In general, the appearance of building materials should be true to their nature and should not mimic other materials.
6. Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, darkly tinted and mirrored glass and metal siding utilizing exposed fasteners should be discouraged.

5.4.9 Doors and Windows

1. Doors and doorways should be designed to reflect the scale and character of those found in Mount Albert.
2. Traditional doorway surrounds should be incorporated into the façades of buildings including sidelights, clear transoms, and vision panels.
3. The materials and surrounds of new windows should be in harmony with adjacent buildings.
4. The scale of new windows should be in proportion to the windows on adjacent buildings.

5.4.10 Signage

Signs should contribute to the quality of individual buildings and the overall streetscape and should reflect the unique characteristic of their context. High quality, imaginative, and innovative signs are also encouraged.

Commercial storefront signage should be subject to the following guidelines:

5.4.10.1 Sign Placement

1. Signs should be placed in a consistent location on all building façades. Generally, it should be located above the storefront windows or on canopies over the storefront.
2. Signage should not obscure windows, cornices or other architectural elements.

3. To minimize visual clutter, signage should be integrated into the design of building façades, wherever possible, through placement within architectural bays and friezes.
4. Signage on character buildings should be consistent with traditional sign placement such as on a sign band, window lettering, or within the existing architectural orders.

5.4.10.2 Sign Types

1. Large freestanding signs (such as pylons), roof signs, and large-scale advertising (such as billboards) are discouraged.
2. Projecting/hanging signs should be permitted to encroach over the streetline provided that they do not project more than 1.0 metre from the building and they have a minimum 3.0 metre clearance between the bottom of the sign and grade level.
3. Moveable signs, like sandwich boards, should have two sign faces, and be located in front of the associated business on private property where possible. In some cases, encroaching onto public property should be permitted provided that there remains a 1.5 metre width of unobstructed sidewalk space.

5.4.11 Encroachments

Encroachments should ensure a comfortable pedestrian environment, (i.e., those which provide weather protection). It is important to promote building elements that provide shade and/or shelter from the rain. This may be done through permitted encroachments into the pedestrian realm. In addition, street activity/animation is to be promoted. Street cafés and outdoor seating for restaurants should be considered subject to the approval of Council. Encroachments should be permitted such as:

1. Awnings or canopies.
2. Outdoor cafés and seating for restaurants.
3. Semi-permanent structures over the sidewalk, including entry features, arcades and perpendicular signage and/or lighting fixtures attached to the building.
4. Temporary seating/tables may be permitted to replace some on-street parking.

However, encroachments that should not be permitted are permanent structural components of the building (colonnades and balconies).



The Ross Grocery Store around 1900



Mill Street - Mount Albert

5.4. 12 Infill Buildings on Larger Lots

There are opportunities for infill development in areas on Centre Street and Main Street . Infill development on these lots must ensure the building scale and character contributes to the fine grained texture of the built form in Downtown Mount Albert. Buildings should define the street edge with parking and service located at the rear to ensure the pedestrian focus of streets.

1. Where the setbacks of existing buildings are greater than five metres, the front yard setback of new buildings will be a maximum of five metres.
2. Side yard and rear yard setbacks should be developed in keeping with the historic configuration of buildings along common streets.
3. Side yard setbacks may be minimized to generate continuous street wall.

New infill development should be compatible with its surroundings, although it is recognized that new development may be somewhat larger in scale than existing buildings.

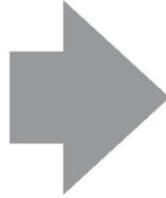
1. Height should be limited to six storeys.
2. The Town should, for significant infill development continue to waive parking requirements for non-residential development. For residential development, the Town should require between 0.75 and 1.0 spaces per unit, depending on the nature and intended market for the development.
3. Density should be measured through a Floor Space Index. The maximum density for infill development in downtown should be between 2.5 to 3.5 FSI (building floor area/lot area).
4. All new infill development within the downtown area should be subject to site plan control.

5.4.13 Building Façade Strategy

The Building Façade Strategy (**Figure 18**) has been developed to help guide private sector investments in Downtown Mount Albert. The Building Façade Strategy presents two examples of building facades along Centre Street and ways in which they can be retrofitted. The following are key focus areas that building owners may invest in and how existing buildings facades may be improved:

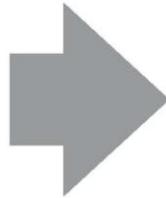
- Rediscover Heritage storefronts
- Open-up storefronts with larger windows
- Use signage that acts as a focal point and opportunity for the business to stand out and draw in customers as well as establish a presence
- Achieve consistent sign band across entire storefronts for continuity
- Improve accessibility to comply with Ontario Building Code standards.

Figure 18: Building Facade Strategy



Example 1

- Rediscover heritage storefronts
- Reveal original facades
- 'Open' up the storefront with glazing
- Create a consistent sign bands
- Provide barrier-free access



Example 2

6.0 The Implementation Strategy

Implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy will take place over the long-term. This section highlights ways in which the Town can implement the Downtown Revitalization Strategy, highlights key recommendations and identifies tools that could be used for implementation. The following are general recommendations relating to improvements in the public and private realm of the downtown:

- Streetscape improvements have been identified for the length of the downtown along Centre Street and Main Street. Streetscapes are the most important aspect for shaping and defining the character of the built environment and its impression on residents and visitors. A culture of walking is fundamental to achieving a successful downtown retail environment. Given this, a shift in conventional thinking about street design must take place to favour the pedestrian experience over efficient traffic movement.
- The existing Vivian Creek Park and Trails network is widely used by the community. Improved connections can augment the means to access the downtown. Key pedestrian connections are identified to link the downtown with the trail network and other key destinations.
- Key corner sites have been identified at intersections on Centre Street and often correspond with gateways. These sites present opportunities for massing and architectural treatment of buildings to visually reinforce the importance of their location in the downtown. Articulating corners is also a way to orient visitors and can draw pedestrian traffic by providing visual interest. Where alterations, additions or redevelopment occurs in these locations, attention should be given to ensuring prominent architectural features and orientation to the corner and/or both frontages.

- Landmark sites are those that are strategically located at the end of view corridors. These may also correspond to key corners. These sites offer an opportunity for architectural landmark buildings that can be visible from great distances and can add to the distinct identity of the area. They also help to orient visitors and provide visual interest.



6.1 The Formula for Success

Ongoing change is a positive sign of a healthy community. In order for Mount Albert to continue to be successful - economically, aesthetically and in terms of quality of life – a downtown that includes and supports businesses, administration, culture, social activities and community events, focused on pedestrians, must be promoted and, more importantly, achieved.

Throughout this process several key partnerships have been established (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Mount Albert Village Association, South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation). These partnerships should be fostered such that they garner continued support for downtown revitalization.

6.1.1 Variety of Tools to Achieve Success

Across North America, various levels of government have used a vast array of planning, financial and other tools to help stimulate downtown redevelopment and facilitate the desired mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environments. Success is usually a result of a combination of tools and circumstances, as opposed to one critical action. Government intervention, beyond infrastructure investment, through building programs, incentives and permissive planning policy regimes, is seen as a key development catalyst that can influence private sector investment decisions.

6.1.2 Change Takes Time

Downtown Mount Albert is small, diverse and unique. This Community Improvement Plan has identified a broad array of public sector initiatives and private sector redevelopment opportunities, within the context of an overall vision for the future. The success of this Plan is not related to one specific action, or the development of one large project. It is a series of activities that can be completed over a long period of time. Incremental success will be achieved in direct relation to the ability of the municipality and its partners to invest in public infrastructure and supportive programs, and the ability of the private sector to respond to market demands for redevelopment.

Despite the changes that have already occurred in the community, improving an established downtown takes time and will occur incrementally. It is not anticipated that wholesale changes to the downtown and consumer lifestyle can occur overnight in Mount Albert.

6.1.3 Cooperation and Commitment are Required

It is critical that all appropriate private sector initiatives within Downtown Mount Albert be supported by a reciprocal commitment between the Town, MAVA and other public agencies to create components of the road system, the pedestrian realm, public buildings and infrastructure. The improvements to the pedestrian realm and public infrastructure must be developed in combination with private sector investment.



6.2 Three Actions to Stimulate Change

Previous sections of this report have identified an overall vision for the downtown, and have provided guidance on facilitating public realm improvements and private realm built form development. In a general sense, starting and sustaining the successful evolution of the downtown will require that public sector partners lead the way. The private sector will respond when a clear and substantial level of commitment is shown by the public sector. A strategy for the successful implementation of the vision for the downtown requires that the Town focus their activities into three basic categories.

6.2.1 Establish the Environment for Change

Establishing the environment for change begins by having a clearly stated and supported “vision” for the future. Public sector investment in streetscape improvements and the building of public buildings and facilities also sends an important message of commitment to the development industry. A supportive administrative structure helps remove confusion, and supports the environment for change. This can be accomplished through:

- Articulating and implementing the vision through the Town’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law
- Identifying and prioritizing public realm improvements and including these in the capital improvements plan
- Articulating objectives for private sector development and preparing a strategy to facilitate improvements
- Developing a marketing and branding strategy.

6.2.2 Reduce the Risk of Development

The public sector needs to promote and champion private sector redevelopment that achieves the vision. As-of-right planning approvals, created and promoted by the public sector, will reduce the time and risk of the planning approvals process. Success requires political will and administrative support for redevelopment.

6.2.3 Reduce the Costs of Private Sector Development

Reducing the overall costs associated with redevelopment is a proven incentive to encourage private development. In many instances, existing planning and fiscal policy makes redevelopment costly. Indirect cost savings should be promoted within some areas of the downtown including reduced parking and parkland requirements. More direct financial incentives can include direct grants or loans for appropriate forms of development, as well as façade and landscape improvement grant programs.



6.3 The Key Recommendations

The following are key implementation recommendations which the Town should consider.

6.3.1 Potential Mechanisms to Finance Elements of the Revitalization Strategy

6.3.1.1 Business Improvement Area

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a “made-in-Ontario” innovation that allows local business people and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district.

In terms of collaborating with the BIA Association, there are recent examples where agreements were put into place whereby the municipality up-fronts the costs for improvements, and the BIA agrees to repay all or some component of that cost through a Downtown Improvement Area tax levy. In some instances, the municipality covers the up-front cost, and the BIA repays the entire amount, plus interest over a set timeframe. This approach is popular because it shares the costs of the improvements between the municipality and those who stand to benefit the most from the improvements

6.3.1.2 Resources Generated through the collection of Development Charges (DCs)

Development Charges (DC) assist in financing capital projects required to meet the increased need for services resulting from growth and development. A DC is calculated and payable on the date a building permit is issued. The Town’s current DC background study includes a component referenced as “streetscaping” which is complimented by a Town-wide charge. Combining these funds gives the Town the opportunity to implement streetscaping capital projects.

6.3.1.3 Municipal Grants/Loans authorized through an approved Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

A Community Improvement Plan is the vehicle through which a municipality may provide financial incentives to the private sector to:

- Promote improvements to the existing building stock and private properties
- Facilitate new development within the Community Improvement Area.

In terms of working with the financial tools that are available at the municipal level, the Plan may be implemented by any number of, or combination of the following sources:

- Funds allocated in the Town’s budget, or dedicated reserves
- Implementation of a Special Downtown Improvement tax levy
- Funds generated from the sale of Town-owned lands
- Donations, gifts, bequests from individuals, corporations or service clubs
- Funds generated through Section 40 of the Planning Act (cash-in-lieu of parking)
- Funds generated through Section 42 of the Planning Act (cash-in-lieu of parkland)
- Funds generated through use of the Town-owned Downtown facilities themselves (i.e. parking charges).

In Downtown Mount Albert, the desire is both to improve existing buildings and to facilitate new development. The following financial incentive programs are recommended for implementation in Downtown Mount Albert:

6.3.2 Promoting Improvements through Municipal Grant Programs - Once there is an approved CIP, the Town has the ability to advance financial programs to be funded through various sources identified previously. The recommended financial programs include:

6.3.2.1 Façade Improvement Grant Program - a program to promote the sensitive redesign of existing building façades to enhance the existing image of the area.

- The Town would need to set aside funds as part of annual budgets. For example, an **annual budget of \$50,000.00** should be set aside to provide financial assistance to those landowners who want to improve their façades in conformity with the design guidelines provided in this Plan. The grant would be a matching grant, up to a maximum of **\$7,500.00 per building**.

6.3.2.2 Accessibility Improvement Grant Program - a program to promote improved accessibility to individual retail establishments within Downtown Mount Albert.

- The Town should set aside an **annual budget of \$25,000.00** to provide financial assistance to those who want to improve the accessibility of their buildings in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The grant would be a matching grant, up to a maximum of **\$2,000.00 per building**.

6.3.2.3 Landscape Improvement Grant Program - a program to promote the establishment of enhanced landscaping to improve the existing image of the area.

- The Town should set aside an **annual budget of \$25,000.00** to provide financial assistance to those who want to improve the appearance of their properties through landscape plantings. The planting program would be subject to approval by the Town. The grant would be a matching grant, up to a maximum of **\$2,000.00 per property**.

6.3.3 Facilitating New Development - additional programs that facilitate new development in Downtown Mount Albert can also be implemented such as:

6.3.3.1 Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program - a program that provides rebates of various municipal development application fees for qualifying redevelopment projects.

- This program does not require a specific budget allocation, however, it would need to be recognized through the budget process. The program would only apply to redevelopment proposals that conform to existing planning policy as articulated in the Official Plan and the design guidelines identified in this Plan, or any redevelopment project approved by Council.

6.3.3.2 Residential Unit Development Grant Program - a program where the municipality provides a per-unit cash incentive for the development of new residential apartment units within the Downtown Community Improvement Plan Area.

- The Town should set aside an **annual budget of \$50,000.00** to provide financial assistance to those landowners who want to develop new residential apartments within Downtown Mount Albert. The grant would be **\$500.00 per unit up to a maximum of \$15,000.00 per project**. The program would only apply to redevelopment proposals that conform to existing planning policy as articulated in the Official Plan and the design guidelines identified in this Plan, or any redevelopment project approved by Council.

6.3.4 Capital Project Funding

Historically, the Provincial and Federal Governments have provided financial assistance to municipalities for the purposes of implementing downtown improvement and/or infrastructure projects just like what this Plan is proposing for Mount Albert. Typically, this form of financial assistance came in the form of matching grants, where the government agency matched a municipal contribution, or where grants came if matched by the municipality and the private sector in equal increments.

6.3.4.1 Rural Economic Development (RED) - The Rural Economic Development (RED) program assists with the costs of projects that benefit rural Ontario. Communities that succeed in the new economy are those that can attract and retain creative individuals-innovators in technological, cultural and social enterprises. As a province, there is a shared common goal: to create and retain jobs, to revitalize communities, and to train and develop the skills of the workforce.

The Rural Economic Development Program provides grant funding for projects aimed at strengthening rural communities. More specifically, these community-based projects:

- Support economic development planning activities
- Help foster more competitive and diverse rural and regional economies
- Attract investment
- Encourage greater collaboration among rural communities and businesses.

The Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs (MRA) is currently accepting applications to the Rural Economic Development Program. The RED program has two funding streams in which applicants can apply for:

- Planning Stream
- Implementation Stream.

Program funding details are available online as well as the application process for both funding streams.

6.3.4.2 South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) -

South Lake CFDC is a not-for-profit community based organization that provides a variety of small business and community economic development services. South Lake CFDC operates under a contract with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) to provide Community Futures programming.

The Community Futures Program is a national, rural community, economic development initiative. Community Futures Development Corporations provide business loans and other business financing to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Other services offered include business counseling and education, access to business resources and assistance with starting a new business. South Lake CFDC has two main funding streams and is currently accepting applications for:

- Business Development
- Community Innovation funds.

Details on each funding stream as well as the application process is available online.



6.3.4.3 Central Counties Tourism - Central Counties Tourism was established as a Regional Tourism Organization in 2010. This organization's main objective is to help the local tourism industry and the Central Counties region to realize its tourism potential.

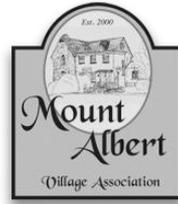
Central Counties Tourism creates and delivers targeted marketing programs and works with industry partners to encourage consumers to discover and visit the Central Counties. Tourism business operators and affiliated organizations within the Central Counties tourism industry can access marketing opportunities, funding information, and promotional programs. Details regarding the purpose and benefits of this organization are available online.



6.3.5 Governance Recommendations

It is important to establish mechanisms to manage change within the entire downtown. Further, the entire community needs to work together to establish a strategy to achieve common objectives. The Town and the Mount Albert Village Association (MAVA) must collaborate, and assign responsibilities for management and financial contributions, including:

- Marketing Mount Albert's uniqueness
- Increasing the rate of investment in the downtown
- Contributing to capital improvements
- Establishing and managing programs to maintain the physical appearance of its streets and other public spaces.



This approach is generally seen as a positive one because there is shared cost, and an understanding that the funds for the improvements are at least partially recovered.

6.3.5.1 Establish an Oversight Committee to Implement this Plan

To ensure the successful implementation of this vision, as well as the continued engagement of stakeholders, a Project Steering Committee that is dedicated solely to the realization of this Plan should be established. The Project Oversight Committee should include Council representation, members of staff, the MAVA, EDAC, and the Chamber of Commerce.

6.3.5.2 Support ongoing volunteerism

Based on the interest and enthusiasm encountered at the workshops, there is an existing core of dedicated individuals who have a keen interest in the future success of Downtown Mount Albert. The Town needs to recognize and support these individuals and organizations that are working to improve their community. The revitalization of the downtown will need to rely very heavily on the existing and, hopefully, expanded contingent of dedicated volunteers and the MAVA.

6.3.5.3 Maintenance/Operations

There are many symbols of pride and self esteem in Downtown Mount Albert. The Downtown shops and businesses and their maintenance are also a reflection of how the owners and residents feel about the place where they live, work and play. Enhancing and maintaining Mount Albert's downtown should be considered a priority for the community as it impacts the viability of the whole community.

Responsibility for maintenance of the public realm does not solely belong to the Town - it is a shared responsibility among the Town, the MAVA, individual business owners and residents. There are many opportunities for sharing maintenance. By taking pride in the downtown, it exemplifies a unified approach to maintaining the downtown as a whole as well as neighbouring properties.

6.3.5.4 Prepare a maintenance framework

An initial task of the Town, in collaboration with the MAVA should be to identify a framework to guide maintenance in Downtown Mount Albert. The framework should identify the full spectrum of components/elements, desired state of maintenance and responsibilities. The framework should include everything from clearing snow from the road and sidewalk, to emptying waste receptacles, sweeping and cleaning sidewalks, to planting. The responsibilities for maintenance should be distributed among the broad range of stakeholders including the Town of East Gwillimbury, MAVA, individual shop owners and local volunteers.

6.3.5.5 Funding for Ongoing Maintenance

Maintenance costs are typically to be funded through:

- Funds allocated in the Town's budget, or dedicated reserves
- Revenue generated through use of downtown facilities themselves
- Collaboration with Downtown Mount Albert.

In addition to those traditional funding sources, the Town may pursue a host of other, more innovative approaches to reducing maintenance costs through:

- Design for lower maintenance
- Urban streetscaping, due to its complexity can be expensive to maintain.

The Town should promote sustainable streetscapes and parks in the Downtown that require less maintenance over time.

Facilities can be designed with relatively low maintenance paving materials, furniture and plant materials. Plant material in an urban setting is crucial and requires special attention for maintenance, for example:

- Selection of plant species that are drought tolerant once their root systems are established is one example of reducing the maintenance requirements for water.
- Understanding the role of soil chemistry, soil volumes and soil types is also important to support lower maintenance plant material and must be specified in tandem with plant material.
- Pruning requirements of plant material can also be taken into consideration in the design process, to reduce maintenance.

The maintenance requirement for watering of plant material is important to consider early in the design process. Designers can work to identify opportunities for water sources from adjacent buildings, for example recycled rain water from roof tops (which provide the cleanest source of rainwater) that can be stored in cisterns, filtered and reused for irrigation. Even drought tolerant plant material needs irrigation to become established (the first year or two) and maintenance plans also need to prepare for extended drought periods to keep planted areas healthy and attractive.

6.3.6 Additional Recommendations

6.3.6.1 Marketing Strategy

The vision and goals contained in the Mount Albert Downtown Revitalization and Community Improvement Plan could be further supported through the development of a marketing strategy. This strategy should convey the messaging and imaging that Mount Albert as a unique heritage community with a high quality of life for residents and strong appeal for businesses. A marketing strategy can be an effective roadmap for a community and its partners (private, non-profit, public sector) illustrating how they can work together to enhance employment, investment and quality of life opportunities.

A marketing strategy will enhance recognition of the downtown as a special destination. Shoppers, new retail businesses and new residents must be attracted to help sustain the business area. As popularity grows, supporting facilities such as parking and pedestrian amenities will require enhancement.

6.3.6.2 Prepare Marketing Materials

In order to be 'market ready', all municipal departments and relevant government groups including Council, must be prepared to deal with any expected market demand. The Town must be prepared for quick responses to facilitate new growth within the downtown.

Tools such as a web-based resources should be developed to profile the quality of Downtown, the retailers, the size of the service area, the investment made by the public and private sector, the consumer profile, and prospectus of being a business in Downtown. Such web materials provide an effective way to engage prospective business owners and investors.

It is recommended that Mount Albert develop a specialized toolkit of web-based and social media resources to assist companies considering the downtown as a potential destination.

6.3.6.3 Branding

There is power in branding. Branding can create excitement and renew the community's energy for a project. It can kick-start a vision, and it can effectively position an area to become what it envisions. Branding needs to be supported on many fronts. Efforts expended on implementation over the long term need to be as great or greater than the effort expended on the initial development.

Effective branding occurs when multiple disciplines work together to achieve a clear and focused vision and when visual elements and graphics are applied professionally and effectively with an emphasis on continuity.

To successfully promote, grow and brand Downtown Mount Albert, it will be necessary to recognize and endorse its individual character. This involves improving façades, signs, streetscapes, festivals and events activities and marketing and promotional efforts. It is recommended that a distinct brand be developed to effectively reflect the character and identity of the downtown and the community as a whole.



It is also important for a downtown to reflect its brand and mix of retail, businesses and services in its marketing efforts. Dissemination channels include:

- The Town's website
- Advertising or articles in local newspapers
- Interviews with business owners on local radio
- A 'Downtown Mount Albert Business' booth at regional events
- A section on the Town's website about doing business in Mount Albert's downtown
- The distribution of brochures about 'Downtown Mount Albert Business' throughout the Town and Region.

6.3.6.4 Festivals and Events

Festivals and events serve as an economic stimulator that attracts people downtown. It is recommended that one event is held per season in Mount Albert, an ideal location is in Mount Albert Community Centre picnic shelter area.

6.3.6.5 Existing Festivals and Events in Mount Albert

Mount Albert's local organizations and business community have hosted different community events throughout the years. The Mount Albert Sports Day and Spring Fair is the community's signature event that happens during the first weekend in June. Mount Albert Sports Day and Spring Fair is a three day weekend event that takes place at the community centre property and has become an annual event. Friends and families from surrounding areas can enjoy a wide variety of events and activities that are sponsored by local businesses and organizations. Some of these events and activities include: Free Family BBQ, Live Entertainment, the annual 5k run and much more.



The Mount Albert Santa Clause Parade is another annual event that is sponsored by the Mount Albert Lions Club. This parade takes place during the winter and runs through the streets of Downtown Mount Albert and ends at the Mount Albert Community Centre where people can enjoy the holiday atmosphere and festivities.

The following are additional event Ideas. These are events held in BIAs of other Ontario municipalities.

- **Ice Fest in Yorkville** - Held during the winter months, a display of ice sculptures with ice-carving demonstrations and competitions. There are many local restaurants that participate in this event by serving their food on-site. This event is sponsored by local businesses. There is an opportunity to donate to charity by having a photo taken by a photographer in front of an ice sculpture.

- **Festival of Lights in Yorkville** - Features a seasonal light display of local businesses lighting up their storefronts, in addition to a large 20 foot Christmas tree. This event is in support of a local charity.
- **Art Crawl in Hamilton** - Every second Friday of the month, most galleries and some stores have art show openings.
- **Cross Country Ski Race in Huntsville** - The ski race is a 800 metre cross country competition that is held downtown. This event anticipated between 4,000 to 5,000 people with 400 to 500 of them being competitors in the race itself. After the race, the BIA hosts a mini-winter carnival.
- **Concerts in the Park in Huntsville & Richmond Hill** - During the summer months, in the evenings, bands play in different parks and residents bring their own seating. The event is free for Richmond Hill as it is presented by Tim Hortons, and it is the cost of a toonie for Huntsville to enjoy the music.
- **A Gallery without Walls Street Art in Tecumseh** - Banners and bike racks are created and designed by local artists as a contest and the selected ones are displayed through the Town as public art.
- **Brockton's Busker Festival in Walkerton** - This festival is held by the Walkerton Chamber of Commerce & BIA, and Walkerton Image Committee. Already in its 6th year, this event is held in the summer with professional buskers, carnival games and large inflatables for children.
- **Doors Open in Walkerton** - This event allows for the public to tour select historical or architecturally unique sites which include private homes, town hall and churches. This is an opportunity for people to visit place they wouldn't be able to see normally.
- **Downtown Christmas Open House in Owen Sound** - This annual event features carolers, the Owen City Band, and a horse-drawn carriage. The merchants and businesses in Downtown Owen Sound present this event and a passport is provided to be stamped by each store for prizes.
- **Farmers' Market in Owen Sound** - This market is open all year round on Saturdays and has vegetables, baked goods, meat, artisans and more.
- **Pumpkinfest in Port Elgin** - This event now attracts approximately 60,000 visitors. Was originally created as part of a recommendation from town business plan study to extend the tourist season. The event started in 1986 and features a pumpkin weigh-off competition of large pumpkins and a two-day car show.
- **Elora Festival Annual Fundraiser & Booksale** - This event is an annual fundraising event for the Elora Festival where second hand books are sold. This spring event is going into its 24th year. The books are donated and criteria is set for which types of books are accepted and which types are not. Over 70,000 books are available at this sale and it is the largest book sale in Ontario.

Similar events can be created as new events for Mount Albert or incorporated into existing events that are already held. They can be achieved at the scale appropriate for Mount Albert and have the potential to grow to something larger as their popularity grows. These seasonal events provide an opportunity for tourism throughout the year, and not just during the summer season.

6.3.6.6 Adopt-a-Park/Street Program

Local service clubs, school groups, horticultural societies or interested citizens/citizen groups may wish to become involved in specific park/streetscape maintenance events, and/or for ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

The Town should consider establishing an adopt-a-park/street program within Downtown Mount Albert, where individuals or groups can become the guardian of a specific park or street. The Town would need to establish an individual protocol, and prepare agreements to facilitate this type of intervention. The program could simply be to raise funds to retain a maintenance team, or there could be a strategy to utilize the sweat equity of these groups. Nonetheless, the Town would need to retain management control, while harnessing the tremendous enthusiasm and potential of service clubs, school groups, horticultural societies or interested citizens/citizen groups.

6.3.7 Recommendations for Public Realm Improvements

This sections provides key recommendations to improve the public realm that could be implemented as part of Mount Albert's Downtown Revitalization project. Key recommendations are outlined for each of the following categories: Centre Street, Laneways, Urban Squares, and Residential Streets.

6.3.7.1 Centre Street

- Plant large canopy street trees along Centre Street
- Ensure that there are adequate soil volumes in the tree planters, approximately 15 cubic meters per tree in combination pits
- Plant a diversity of trees to ensure that there is natural disease resistance built into the scheme
- Plant hardy perennials in the planting beds and consider directing storm water from the sidewalks into the planting beds

- Ensure that the trees and beds are irrigated
- Increase the width of the sidewalks on Centre Street
- Widen the sidewalks to provide more space for pedestrians by reducing the width of the travel lanes on the road. Currently the lane widths in the centre travel lanes are very wide and should be reduced to slow the speed of traffic.
- Create bump outs at intersections to reduce the width of the crossing distance and to provide additional space for small gathering areas that incorporate planting and seating. Increase the width of the sidewalk to the edge of the travel lane.

Improve Accessibility to the Buildings on Centre Street

- Grading along Centre Street is challenging at the street level creating a condition where steps are needed to access the stores
- Elevate the sidewalks along the building edge to improve accessibility to the stores and restaurants
- Use the planter to mediate the grade change between a lower curb edge sidewalk elevation and the elevated building edge sidewalk
- Create ramps through the planter to connect the elevated section with the street edge elevation.

Beautify Centre Street

- Develop a seasonal planting and decorating program for the planting beds along the street
- Consider year round interest

- Develop a complementary lighting program to illuminate the trees, vegetation and building façades

Create Space for Cafés and Outdoor Street Edge Retail

- Allocate a section of the widened sidewalk for an outdoor retail and café space directly adjacent to the buildings
- Provide an opportunity for seasonal cafés (May through October) to be developed in the parking spaces adjacent to restaurants.

6.3.7.2 Laneways

Make the Laneways Pedestrian Friendly

- Pave the laneways in a non-traditional road surface material such as unit pavers or impressed concrete to signal to drivers that they are share with pedestrians
- Avoid the use of barrier curbs in favour of flush or roll curbs. Prohibit curbside parking but provide for drop-offs and deliveries
- Extend the decorative street lighting from Centre Street into the laneways and ensure adequate light levels for safety and security.

Green the Laneways

- Plant street trees in groupings where space permits and ensure adequate soil volumes to support large canopy trees.

6.3.7.3 Urban Squares

Create a Festival Square in the Mount Albert Community Centre Parking Lot

- During off peak parking hours, program the parking area for festivals and events including a farmers market

- Resurface the parking area in a more pedestrian favourable material such as unit paving or impressed concrete

- Extend that material across Main Street to signal to drivers as they are passing through the Downtown

- Develop a pedestrian lighting approach for the square that supports special events.

Maintain and Program the Mount Albert Community Centre and Picnic Shelter

- Continue to program the Park to draw people to the civic precinct and downtown

- Develop an integrated program with the proposed Festival Square

- Ensure that the Community Centre and Picnic Shelter are maintained at the highest standards.

6.3.7.4 Residential Streets

Plant Large Canopy Street Trees

- Introduce a street tree planting program to green the residential streets with a priority on Centre and Main Street

- Plant a tree at the homeowners request in the municipal right of way

- Make Mill Street and Main Street Pedestrian Priority Streets

- Introduce bicycle lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street to encourage pedestrian mobility.

6.4 Recommendations Checklist

Potential Mechanisms to Finance Elements of the Revitalization Strategy

Support private sector investment in revitalizing the Downtown by offering a comprehensive set of grant programs and fee rebates.

- Business Improvement Areas (BIA)
- Resources Generated through the collection of Development Charges (DCs)
- Municipal Grants/Loans authorized through an approved Community Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Capital Project Funding.

Governance Recommendations

Forge partnerships and leverage the efforts of existing advocates to implement this Plan.

- Establish an Oversight Committee to Implement this Plan
- Support ongoing volunteerism
- Maintenance/Operations
- Foster a sense of pride in the appearance of Downtown, and explore opportunities for shared maintenance with the local business community.
- Prepare a Maintenance Framework
- Funding for Ongoing Maintenance,

Additional Recommendations

Promote the Downtown to bring in new visitors.

- Marketing Strategy
- Prepare Marketing Materials
- Branding
- Festivals and Events
- Adopt-a-Park/Street Program.

Recommendations for Public Realm Improvements

Make the public realm more inviting for pedestrians.

- Streetscapes
- Laneways
- Urban Squares
- Residential Streets.

6.5 Quick Wins & Short-term Priorities

Working in partnership with the local business community and residents, it will be up to the Town to determine an annual implementation schedule for the recommendations, based on available funding and local priorities. A number of short-term priorities are recommended to kick-start the implementation process, to keep the momentum for change going, and to demonstrate a commitment by the Town to revitalize Downtown Mount Albert.

Four Short-Term Priorities

1. Establish an Oversight Committee to implement the Strategy and Plan.
2. Allocate funding and implement the recommended financial incentive programs.
3. Prepare a maintenance framework.
4. Prepare amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, as required, to facilitate redevelopment within the downtown.

