

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in white text on a blue square background.

City of Edmonton

# CHINATOWN URBAN INTERFACE PLAN



ISL Engineering and  
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# CHINATOWN URBAN INTERFACE PLAN

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## 1.0 PROJECT SCOPE

The Urban Interface Plan is part of a larger body of work to develop a strategy for Chinatown. The first phase of work involved developing an Economic Development Plan for Chinatown that provided an overview of the exiting market conditions, an assessment of the cultural attractions market, identified opportunities and identified challenges, established an economic market analysis and included a best practices analysis of other North American Chinatowns. Key economic pillars were identified as a result of the economic development plan to advance a vibrant Chinatown destination.

The economic development pillars relevant to the scope of the Urban Interface Plan are:

- Focused economic development;
- Celebrate Chinatown as a destination;
- Enhance built form, landmarks and open spaces; and
- Improve sense of safety and security.

- The Urban Interface Plan is a focused urban design analysis that identifies place making tools and establishes location criteria for improvements and/or interventions that support the economic development pillars established in the first phase. The analysis contained in the Urban Interface Plan is scoped to respond directly to translating these pillars into suggested placemaking initiatives. Portions of this work inform the final Chinatown Strategy, in consultation with community.



97 Street at 106 Avenue (looking South)



Aerial view of Chinatown Economic Development Zone from CN Tower (looking North)



FOCUS OF THE URBAN INTERFACE PLAN

The 'urban interface' in the context of this project refers to two key aspects of urban design:

Interface of the Chinatown-North district with surrounding neighbourhoods

The Urban Interface Plan illustrates a number of placemaking tools that may help to improve connections from key surrounding districts such as Downtown, Royal Alex Hospital, the Quarters and 107 Avenue Business Improvement Area to Chinatown-North. Special emphasis is placed on establishing the criteria for promoting unique cultural expressions, public art elements, gateways and open spaces that build on existing physical assets in Chinatown-North.

Interface between private and public realm within Chinatown district

The Urban Interface Plan illustrates a number of placemaking tools that may help to improve the interface between private buildings and the public realm within the Chinatown-North district. The Plan focuses on promoting activities and practices identifiable to modern or traditional Asian themed streets such as larger signage, use of public sidewalks for business activities, use of temporary culturally unique public art elements, and similar mechanisms that may improve the public/private interface. These should eventually contribute towards re-establishing a culturally vibrant Chinatown.

Each placemaking tool identified in this document contributes towards short-term or long-term economic development goals for a strong and vibrant Chinatown. These tools may be implemented by a variety of stakeholders including the City of Edmonton, the Chinatown and Area Business Association, private landowners and business owners. A coordinated effort by all stakeholders will help to ensure the short-term and long-term transformation of the area into a vibrant city-level attraction for citizens and tourists. In addition, creating unique spaces for a variety of activities to happen in new and interesting ways for all age groups and diversities, will help transform the Chinatown district into a vibrant community.

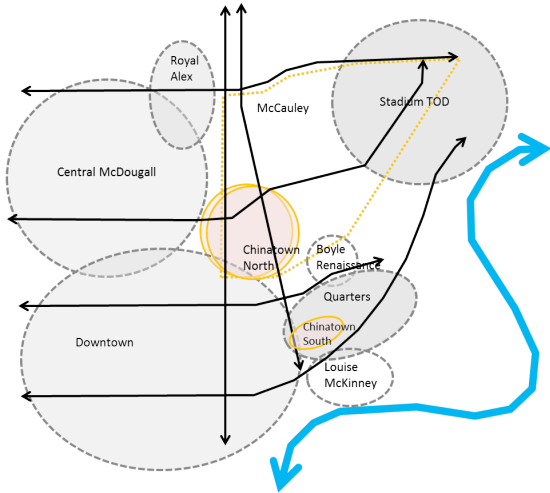


Figure 1: Chinatown's interface with surrounding neighbourhoods

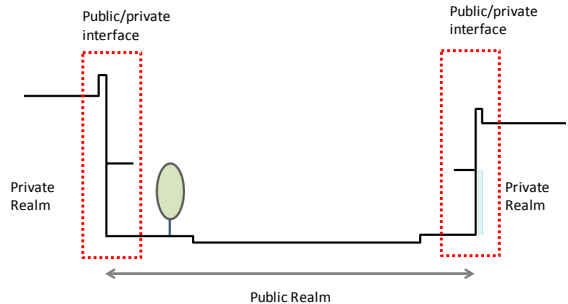


Figure 2: Public/private interface

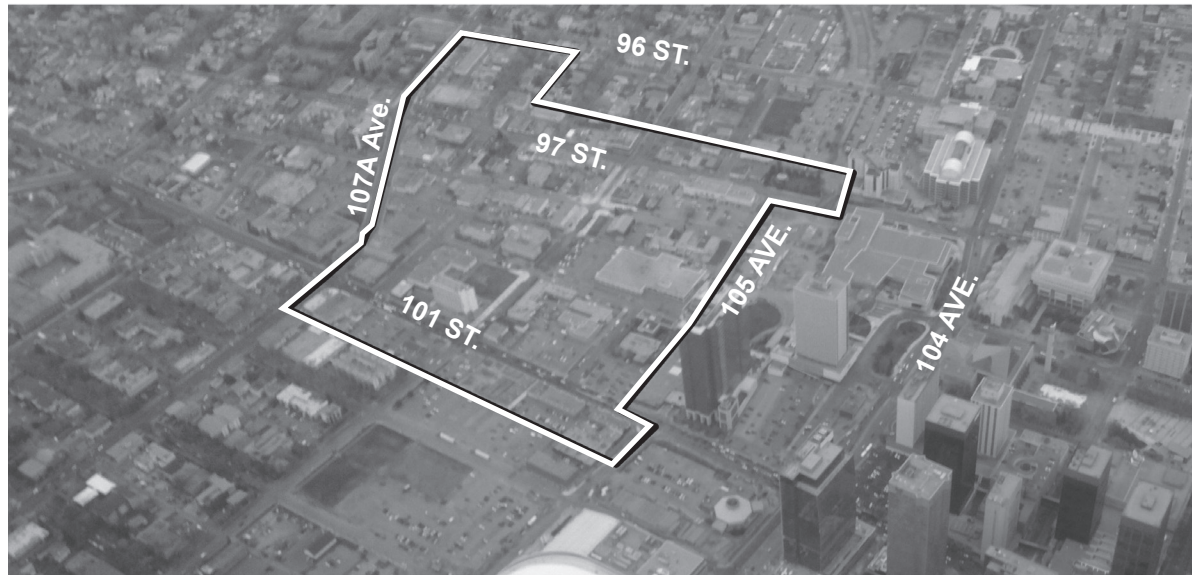
## 2.0. CHINATOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE

### ESTABLISHING AN AREA TO FOCUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

The Chinatown Economic Development Plan directs that efforts be focused towards an economic development zone where special emphasis should be placed on creating a favourable environment for private sector investments in cultural and business activities. Currently, Chinatown in Edmonton is quite dispersed and has two separate distinct areas that serve different purposes. It is not feasible in the short term to connect the two areas physically as the market will not be able to support the scale of the development. The Chinatown Economic Development Plan also recognizes that one of the key ingredients of a successful Chinatown is promoting a concentration of cultural and commercial activities in a cohesive area in order to establish a unique character that can provide better opportunities for economic development.


The recommendation of the Economic Development Plan is to focus immediate economic development efforts on a zone within Chinatown-North. It includes the geographic area defined by:

- 107A Avenue;
- Rear alley west of 101 Street;
- 105 Avenue;
- 97 Street (Between 105 Avenue and south of the Station Lands bridge);
- Rear alley east of 97 Street;
- Rear alley south of 107 Avenue; and
- Rear alley west of 96 Street.



Chinatown Economic Development Zone boundary

LEGEND

-  Chinatown Economic Development Zone Boundary

- ① Downtown Arena (Ice District)
- ② Boyle Street Community Services
- ③ EPCOR Tower
- ④ CN Tower
- ⑤ Royal Alberta Museum
- ⑥ Former Edmonton Remand Centre
- ⑦ John E. Brownlee Building
- ⑧ Edmonton Police Services Headquarters
- ⑨ Immigration Hall
- ⑩ Herb Jamieson Centre
- ⑪ Edmonton Public Schools Maintenance Services
- ⑫ Hull Block
- ⑬ Hope Mission
- ⑭ Emperor's Palace
- ⑮ The Brick
- ⑯ Lucky 97 Supermarket
- ⑰ Edmonton Paintball and Laser Tag
- ⑱ 99 Supermarket
- ⑲ Grand Manor
- ⑳ Capital Tower Apartments
- ㉑ Pacific Rim Mall
- ㉒ Mai King Market Place
- ㉓ Asia Square
- ㉔ Edmonton Korean Canadian Association
- ㉕ Edmonton Chinatown Multi-cultural Centre
- ㉖ Victoria School of Visual and Performing Arts

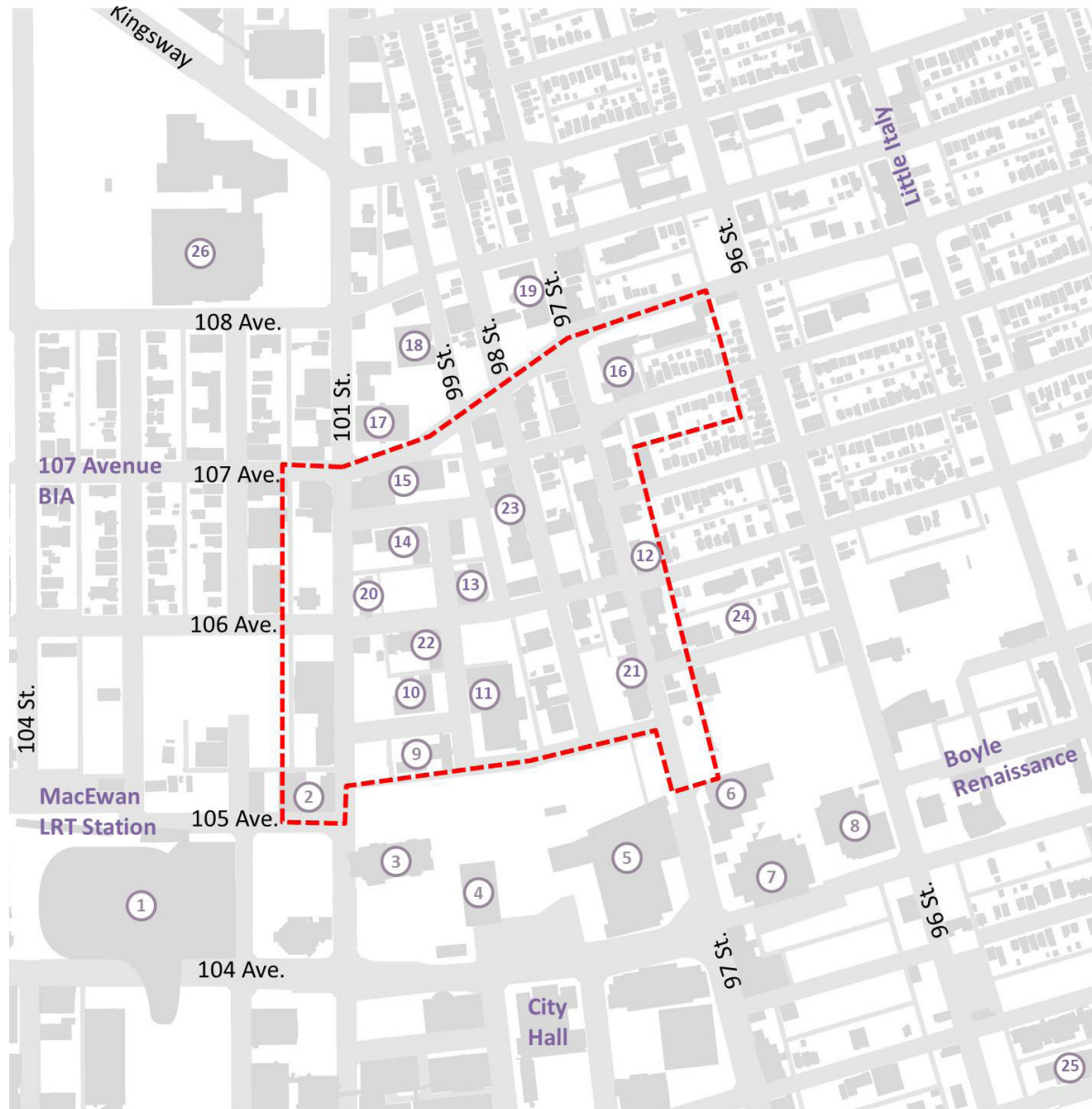


Figure 3: Key landmarks within and around the Chinatown Economic Development Zone



### 3.0. CHINATOWN PLACEMAKING TOOLS

#### PLACEMAKING AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOL

The Chinatown Urban Interface Plan has been developed to support the urban design and placemaking goals established in the Chinatown Economic Development Plan. It serves as an economic development toolkit by providing a flexible framework for establishing unique places in Chinatown through collaborative efforts between the private and public sector.

- *Placemaking is the process of creating quality places where people want to live, play, shop, work, learn, and visit. Placemaking is a simple concept – people choose to live in walkable, mixed use places that offer the amenities, resources, social and professional networks, and opportunities to support thriving lifestyles.*
- *Placemaking is the value-added process that turns a service into an amenity and a place into an attraction.*
- *Placemaking is not a single new tool; it is a set of best practices for improving the effectiveness and outcomes long targeted by the community and economic development professionals.*
- *Placemaking incorporates planning and implementation into the same process, so that one is not isolated from the other.<sup>1</sup>*

Some of the key economic benefits of effective placemaking practices include the following:

#### New retail opportunities that lead to diversity and increase investment potential

Well designed streetscapes, public plazas, improved lighting and people-friendly public spaces help establish a unique brand for the area where businesses gravitate towards. Sustained investment in public places help significantly in retaining businesses within the area.

#### Positive impact on housing values

Easy access to parks, open spaces, trails and family-friendly destinations have a positive impact on housing and land values and play a critical role in attracting new market housing to the area.

#### Provide cultural opportunities

Availability of well-designed multi-purpose indoor and outdoor places provide venues for a wide range of cultural activities. Areas with rich cultural diversity and cultural celebration opportunities tend to attract specialty businesses.

#### Tourism

Public places that celebrate unique architecture, history, art and cultural landscapes play a key role in attracting national as well as international tourism to

the area, which eventually provides a wide range of economic opportunities to local businesses.

#### Talent attraction and retention

High quality public places and landscaped areas contribute to the quality of life. Cities with unique places, a wide range of cultural amenities and unique districts play a key role in attracting and retaining new talent to the area. They play a critical role in providing a competitive edge over other cities trying to attract similar labour force.

Establishing people-friendly places also has a wide range of additional benefits such as reduced crime, a sense of safety, increased sense of ownership and improved quality of life for citizens. These factors in turn offer key economic benefits for the local residents, businesses and the city as a whole.

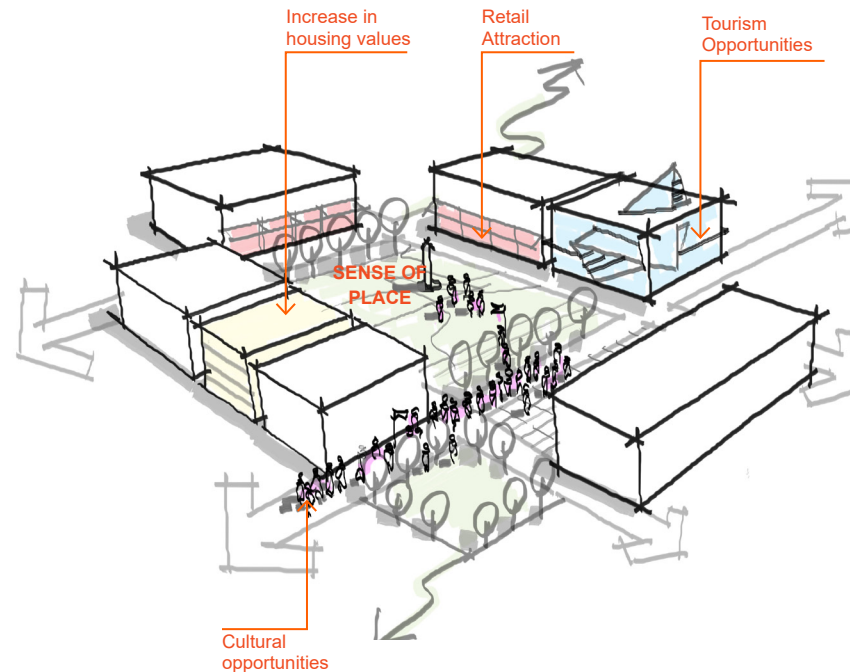


Figure 4: Benefits of good placemaking

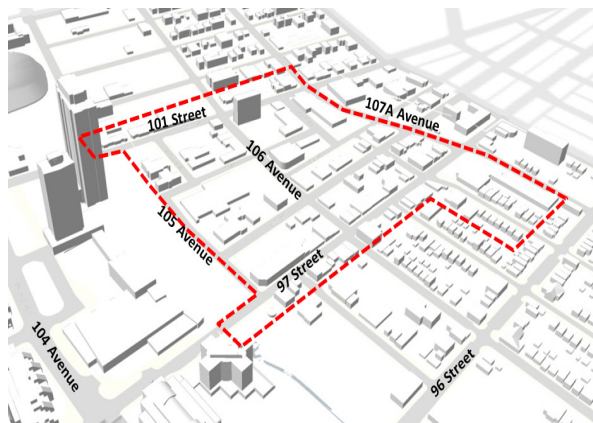
1. MSU Land Policy Institute and M/Place (2015). *Placemaking as an Economic Development Tool: A Placemaking Guidebook*. Retrieved from <http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/>



## KEY PLACEMAKING TOOLS

Four key economic pillars of the Chinatown Economic Development Plan are relevant to the Urban Interface Plan. They are: focused economic development, celebrate chinatown as a destination, enhance built form, landmarks and open spaces, and improve sense of safety and security. Each economic pillar is supported by a number of placemaking tools established in this document. High-level criteria for future action is also established for each tool in order to achieve a vibrant Chinatown with a strong sense of place.

The Chinatown placemaking tools established in this document should be referred to as high-level guidelines by municipal planners, economic development officers and urban designers while reviewing development projects, designing public realm improvements and attracting investment in the area. They will also provide a clear roadmap to the development industry about the desired long-term image for Chinatown and provide direction for potential alignment of their developments with Chinatown's long-term aspirations.



--- Chinatown Economic Development Zone

## 3.1 FOCUSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1.1. Identify criteria for public amenities along key streets.
- 3.1.2. Establish direction for active commercial frontage at ground level.
- 3.1.3. Identify criteria for potential opportunities for public art/murals along key corridors.
- 3.1.4. Establish direction for preferred built form and amenities around key nodes/gateways.
- 3.1.5. Promote mixed use developments.

## 3.3 ENHANCE BUILT FORM, LANDMARKS, AND OPEN SPACES

- 3.3.1. Identify and establish distinct character areas.
- 3.3.2. Establish criteria for an interconnected network of major pedestrian/bike routes from surrounding nodes to Chinatown nodes.
- 3.3.3. Develop high-level options for 97 Street bridge improvements.
- 3.3.4. Develop criteria for relocation of Harbin Gate.
- 3.3.5. Identify existing heritage buildings and provide direction for areas around them.
- 3.3.6. Identify opportunities to reuse existing decorative Chinatown street lights as public art.
- 3.3.7. Provide direction for connecting existing/future open spaces within Chinatown with surrounding open space network.
- 3.3.8. Identify and establish key view corridors.

## 3.2 CELEBRATE CHINATOWN AS A DESTINATION

- 3.2.1. Develop high-level conceptual scenarios for Mary Burlie Park.
- 3.2.2. Identify preferred criteria for cultural institutions including potential infrastructure improvements.
- 3.2.3. Establish criteria for cultural celebration areas such as streets, parks, and plazas.

## 3.4 IMPROVE SENSE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

- 3.4.1. Identify criteria to contribute to safe spaces.
- 3.4.2. Identify criteria for successful public washrooms and other amenities around key nodes and activity areas.

### 3.1. FOCUSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A key recommendation from the Chinatown Economic Development Plan is to establish a focused economic development zone in which efforts can be targeted to sustain a Chinatown destination that will be well known and celebrated. The Economic Development Plan evaluated a greater study area that considered three key areas identified as Chinatown-North, Chinatown South and the Chinese Garden. Each of these areas contributes to enhancing Chinese culture, but serves distinctly different purposes and creates different Chinatown experiences. While each area is important, the Economic Development Plan recommends concentrating short and medium term (5-10 years) economic development efforts within a focused geographic area in Chinatown-North to allow greater return on investment and achieve the overall goal of successful revitalization. Some of the additional high-level recommendations related to the Chinatown Economic Development Zone include identifying high-priority sites for redevelopment and attracting new residential developments to the area.

The direction established in the Chinatown Economic Development Plan, has provided the focused scope of this Urban Interface analysis. The following placemaking tools have been identified to provide direction to the key decision makers, city planners and development industry to enhance economic development in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:

- Identify criteria for public amenities along key streets.
- Establish direction for active commercial frontage at ground level.
- Identify criteria for potential opportunities for public art/murals along key corridors.
- Establish direction for preferred built form and amenities around key nodes/gateways.
- Promote mixed use developments.



Chinatown in Toronto



3.1.1. IDENTIFY CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC AMENITIES ALONG KEY STREETS

**ECONOMIC DRIVERS**

Provision of pedestrian-friendly amenities can have a high impact on shopping destinations and main streets. Designing comfortable places for people to interact and safely navigate within an area strengthens the “sense of place” that can further enhance the image and experiences that people have, making it a more attractive place to be. Strategic placement of public amenities strengthens the connection between existing assets in the area and contributes positively in establishing places where people want to pass through and linger.

**PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES**

Typical public amenities include temporary as well as permanent features such as seating areas, street furniture, art poles, banners, lanterns, crosswalk art, decorative lighting and other similar streetscape elements. Thoughtful analysis of the focused Chinatown area has been applied to identify criteria for future public amenity improvements along streets and places. The following criteria should be utilized while identifying key streets for future public amenities:

- The location, quantity and design of various public amenities should be decided based on the following hierarchy:
  - The major east-west and north-south connections in Chinatown such as 97 Street and 106 Avenue should include extensive permanent public amenities such as pedestrian oriented lighting, seating areas, bus transit shelters and other pedestrian oriented street furniture. Special emphasis should be placed on encouraging contemporary Chinese cultural themes in their design details.
  - A wide range of temporary or permanent beautification features such as art poles, banners, lanterns, crosswalk art and decorative lighting should be considered along portions of 100 Street (located between 106 Avenue and 107 Avenue), 99 Street (located between 106 Avenue and 107A Avenue), 98 Street (located between 106 Avenue and 107A Avenue), 107 Avenue (between 101 Street and 97 Street) and 107A Avenue (between 101 Street and 97 Street).
  - For the last three decades 97 Street has served as the heart of Chinatown-North. It is the spine of concentrated specialty retail, largely culinary, that extends north and south on both sides of the 4-lane 97 Street. Its main street character is enhanced by previous public realm improvements



**Figure 5: Key streets for public amenity improvements**

- ↔ Extensive public amenities/street furnishings with cultural theme
- ⇄ Temporary/permanent beautification features with cultural theme (banners, lanterns, art poles, crosswalk art, and decorative lights)
- ⋯ Potential alley improvement opportunities



Public realm features with cultural theme

that include the Zodiac Sign plaza, the Gate of Happy Arrival, culturally themed street furniture and decorative lighting. The City should continue to reinforce 97 Street as a key main street with a focus on culturally themed public realm design elements. Use of contemporary Chinese themes, colours and materials should be encouraged to allow the design expressions that reflect contemporary Chinese and Asian values, as reflected in the recent façade improvements on buildings such as Taipan Café or Guilin Noodles.

- Alleyways should be considered as unique public spaces that may provide alternative, safe and culturally unique experiences to tourists and visitors. Careful integration and programming of these spaces could result in creating very unique places currently used for rear access and parking. Businesses should be encouraged to provide secondary entrances along such alleyways to ensure access and active frontages. Alleyways, especially those adjacent to 97 Street, could benefit from improvements such as colored pavement, special lighting, temporary lanterns, banners and other treatments that can further contribute to a special sense of place.
- Opportunities for outdoor seating areas suitable for groups should be provided in close proximity to transit stops, and key intersections within the mixed commercial precinct.
- 97 Street and 101 Street should be developed in accordance with the Edmonton Main Streets Guideline document. Not only should the minimum widths established for various public realm zones such as the ancillary zone, furnishing zone, pedestrian through zone, and frontage zone be adhered to, but the opportunity exists to incorporate special design features to acknowledge the different character these main streets represent in relation to Chinatown. Emphasis should be placed on unique public realm amenities that could strengthen the cultural expression along the 97

Street corridor.

- Winter-friendly amenities such as covered canopies, improved lighting and outdoor heating areas should be promoted. Such amenities would allow an increased level of comfort to pedestrians during harsh winter conditions and would help significantly in promoting the area as a year-round destination for shoppers and visitors.
- Year-round food trucks, pop-up event spaces and temporary outdoor seating should be encouraged in designated areas. The mobile vending facilities provide the much needed flexibility in the design of public spaces and provide animated focal points for pedestrians. The food vending facilities also provide an alternative experience to visitors and generally contribute positively to the vibrancy of the area. The type and choice of food may be carefully chosen in consultation with the Chinatown and Area Business Association. Special measures should be taken to ensure such additional food retail or entertainment options complement the existing restaurants in the area.



Pedestrian amenities at the Chinatown transit station in Portland



Animated rear alley in Montreal's Chinatown

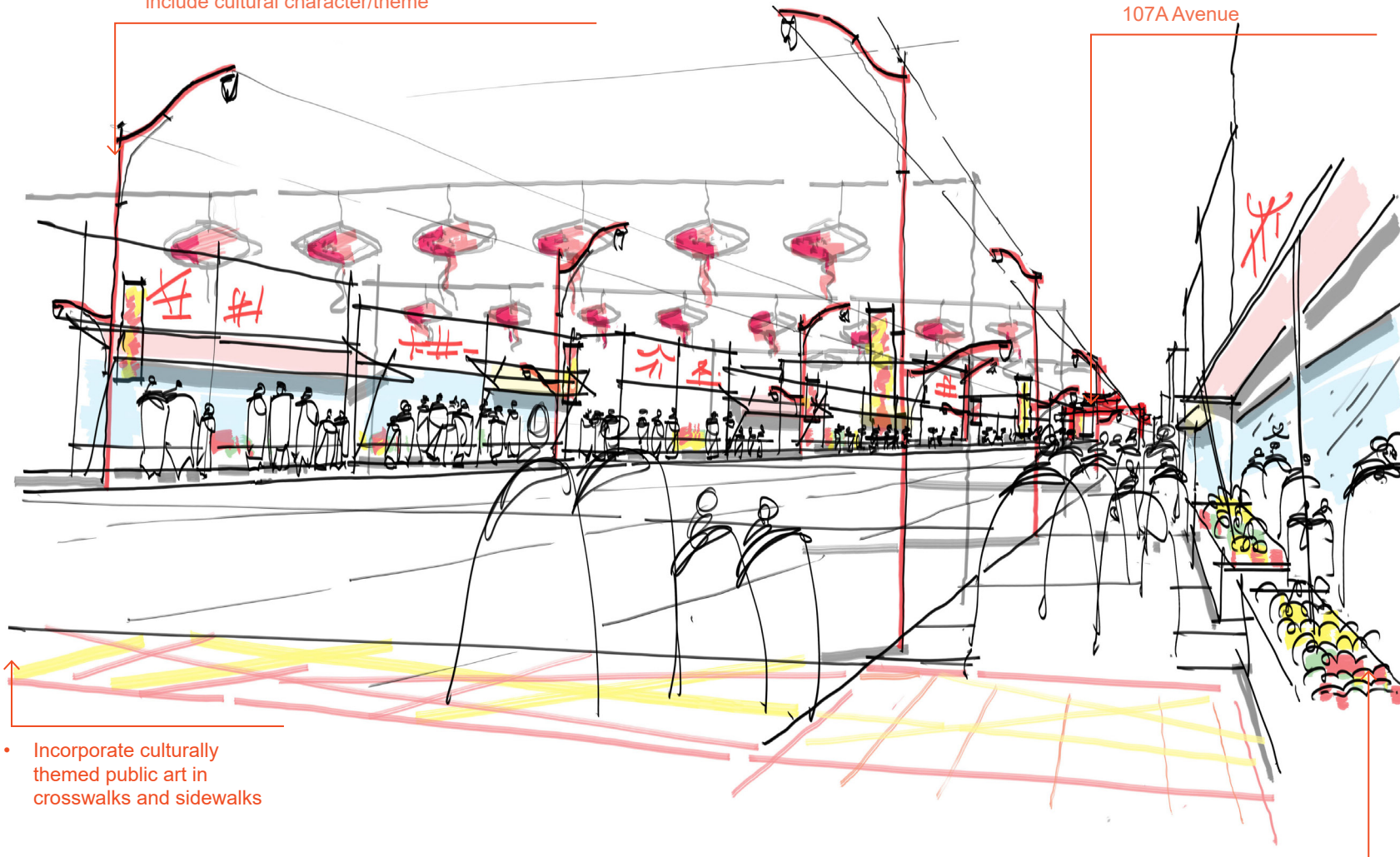


Movable seating features



- Replace existing street lights with new street lights
- Maintain existing banners or ensure new banners include cultural character/theme

- Maintain the existing Gate of Happy Arrival at the intersection of 97 Street and 107A Avenue



- Incorporate culturally themed public art in crosswalks and sidewalks

- Allow encroachments on public sidewalks
- Allow a wide range of canopies
- Encourage façade improvement projects

Figure 6: 97 Street placemaking opportunities

### 3.1.2. ESTABLISH DIRECTION FOR ACTIVE COMMERCIAL FRONTAGES AT GROUND LEVEL

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Vacant lots or buildings with poor ground floor treatment create undesirable gaps in the urban experience. A continuous frontage of active storefronts at ground floor level help establish a rich pedestrian experience and creates a better destination.

Building characteristics such as entrances at regular intervals, transparency at ground level, canopies, attractive signage and a variation in the streetwall tend to create a pedestrian-friendly environment where small-scale retail businesses can flourish lending to a distinct small-scale shopping appeal.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria/guidelines should be considered to promote active commercial frontages:

- Emphasis should be placed on establishing a continuous pedestrian experience with active frontages by avoiding blank walls and promoting transparent ground floor facades. This may relate to ongoing promotion of the City's Façade Improvement Program. The City should consider providing special incentives to promote continuous commercial frontages along 97 Street, 98 Street, 101 Street, 106 Avenue, and 107 Avenue. The City's existing Façade Improvement Program should identify key properties where significant gaps exist in terms of visual interest and work with those property owners to promote visually appealing commercial frontages.
- Vacant properties along the 97 Street corridor should be encouraged to provide temporary architectural and landscape features to provide continuity in the streetwall. Such features may include decorative architectural screens, columns, light features, and special landscaping treatment. Such features provide a sense of continuity in the built form and improve the overall pedestrian experience. The City should consider a separate matching grant program and partner with the vacant property lot owners to come up with interim solutions that may have a significant impact on improving the overall image of the area.
- Chinatown, being an ethnic enclave, provides a different urban experience than other commercial districts in the City. Historically, Chinatowns in some North American cities allow year-round street vendors, dynamic signage and encroachments on public sidewalks. Such measures play a critical role in establishing a very different shopping experience not available in typical commercial districts. The following measures have potential to enhance unique

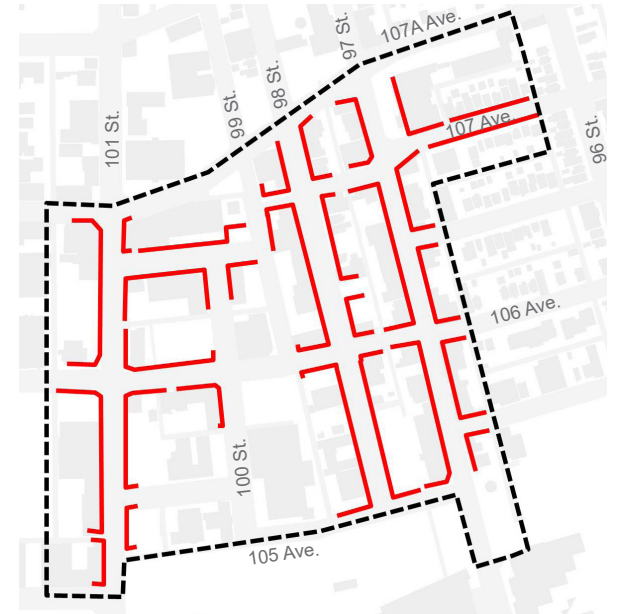


Figure 7: High priority commercial frontage



Active commercial frontage



Chinese or Asian experience in Edmonton's Chinatown and significantly contribute to improve its existing appeal as a city-level destination:

- Chinatown-specific sign regulations should be developed and typical restrictions on projecting signs should be relaxed.
- Signs with larger than typical projections should be considered. In addition, regulations should be relaxed for the number and size of projecting signs along 97 Street in order to enhance the 'Asian' character of the area.
- The City should consider relaxing current regulations to allow encroachment of business activities along sidewalks. In addition, a special zone should be developed to allow vendors along sidewalks. A pilot program should be considered to allow such activities on weekends.
- The City should consider waiving the requirement for encroachment agreements along 97 Street, 106 Avenue, and 98 Street for retractable awnings, small-scale private lighting, and temporary seating on City sidewalks provided certain minimum regulations are adhered to in order to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. Allowing such temporary features on public sidewalks will help to further animate the area.
- Transparent frontages improve visual dialogue of the ground floor with pedestrian traffic and eventually provide a safe and inviting shopping experience. Businesses should be encouraged to maintain transparent and active frontages along the ground floor. Use of opaque signs/images/advertising along the internal face of transparent windows and doors along ground floor frontages should be discouraged.



Taipan Cafe, 97 Street, Edmonton (City approved facade improvement project)



Padmanadi Vegetarian Restaurant, 101 Street, Edmonton (City approved facade improvement project)



### 3.1.3. IDENTIFY CRITERIA FOR POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART/MURALS ALONG KEY CORRIDORS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Public art, murals and other artistic expressions in the public realm have a significant impact on improving the pedestrian experience with the built environment. Art can be used to play a key role in establishing focal points and provide visual cues as landmarks that can contribute to wayfinding. The scale and creative nature of public art can also become a attraction in their own right, potentially enhancing the area's destination appeal.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria/guidelines should be considered to encourage potential public art/murals along key connecting corridors in Chinatown:

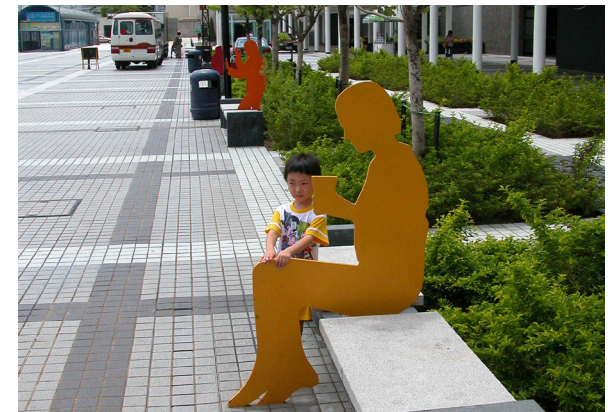
- Encourage businesses to include culturally themed art and murals on private properties in privately-owned but publically accessible spaces.
- The City should continue to explore partnerships with private landowners to provide culturally themed public spaces such as Zodiac Signs Plaza located near the Lucky 97 site.
- Chinese/Asian-themed public art elements should be developed and utilized throughout the Chinatown Economic Development Zone to provide continuity in urban experience. Opportunities to incorporate themed public art elements in street furniture, pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks should be encouraged. Incorporating art in street pavements, sidewalks and crosswalks provides maximum visual impact and provides a sense of arrival in the urban district. These elements can also be effectively used to provide unique visual cues to pedestrians and engage them in the area. In addition to permanent elements, temporary measures such as painting the street pavement or public plazas with vibrant colours or artistic patterns should be explored. These are comparatively inexpensive tools and may have significant impact on enriching the experience of visiting the area.
- Use of special banners, artistic poles, and lighting installations should be encouraged through public-private partnerships. These elements help establishing a unique visual branding opportunity for the area. Special focus should be placed on the streets identified in Figure 5 that have potential to be routes designated for special events.



Temporary Chinese art installations



Metal inserts in sidewalks



Integration of artistic elements with seating areas



- 101 Street is a well-travelled key north-south corridor along the west edge of the proposed Chinatown Economic Development Zone. Opportunities exist to enhance key intersections along 101 Street at 106 and 107 Avenues, where glimpses into Chinatown occur and could be strengthened by creating distinct entryways. Installation of potential large-scale public art should be encouraged along 97 Street, 98 Street and 106 Avenue corridors in order to achieve maximum visual exposure.
- The 97 Street Bridge provides a unique opportunity to serve as a potential gateway feature to the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. Culturally themed public art elements integrated within the 97 Street Bridge structure may significantly help in establishing a strong sense of arrival to the Chinatown Economic Development Zone and if designed well, improve connectivity and address safety issues. The City should work with the owner of the 97 Street Bridge and consider organizing a design competition to seek unique design ideas.



Chinese themed contemporary art installation



Artistic patterns in sidewalks



Themed mural



Metal inserts in sidewalks

### 3.1.4. ESTABLISH DIRECTION FOR PREFERRED BUILT FORM AND AMENITIES AROUND KEY URBAN NODES/GATEWAYS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The scale and character of the built form around key nodes plays a key role in establishing vibrant urban spaces and if done well could create 'urban living rooms'. The appropriate height of the built form creates enclosures that are suitable for comfortable pedestrian environments. Such 'outdoor living rooms' tend to create positive environments for retail businesses and residential developments to flourish in the area. Key components of a well-designed urban node include high-quality public amenities, open spaces and context-sensitive built form. Focusing efforts at key locations will help establish vibrant places and unique activity nodes that may trigger the redevelopment of other properties within Chinatown.

Points of arrival and departure, like transit stops, denote places where people will gather and disperse from, into the area. Transit nodes include urban spaces surrounding transit facilities such as bus stops, LRT station entrance areas or multi-modal transportation terminals. Enhancing public amenities around transit nodes provides a comfortable pedestrian experience for visitors.

Gateways play an important role in establishing a sense of arrival and provide a transition point from one character area to another. They also have a directional quality and act as key landmarks within the city. Well-designed gateways, can significantly help attract new visitors passing through the area.

The following is a brief summary of key strengths and opportunities associated with each urban node identified in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:

#### Node 1: Mary Burlie Park (97 Street and 105 Avenue)

##### Strengths

- Existing open/green space in the area;
- Existing statue of Mary Burlie;
- Multiple access points; and
- Connectivity with nearby off street bike route.

##### Opportunities (Refer to Figure 15 and 16)

- Improved visibility and accessibility to park;
- Opportunity for an urban plaza for large gatherings/celebrations and cultural programming;
- Integration with the 97 Street Bridge and potential gateway to Chinatown-North; and
- Corner sites should incorporate special architectural treatment.

#### Node 2: Hull Block (97 Street and 106 Avenue)

##### Strengths

- Designated historical resource; and
- Cluster of commercial activity.

##### Opportunities (Refer to Figure 9)

- Long-term redevelopment potential at this intersection;
- Corner sites should incorporate special architectural treatment to complement heritage character/language of Hull Block; and
- Enhanced public realm treatment at the intersection of 97 Street and 106 Avenue including unique crosswalk patterns and public art.

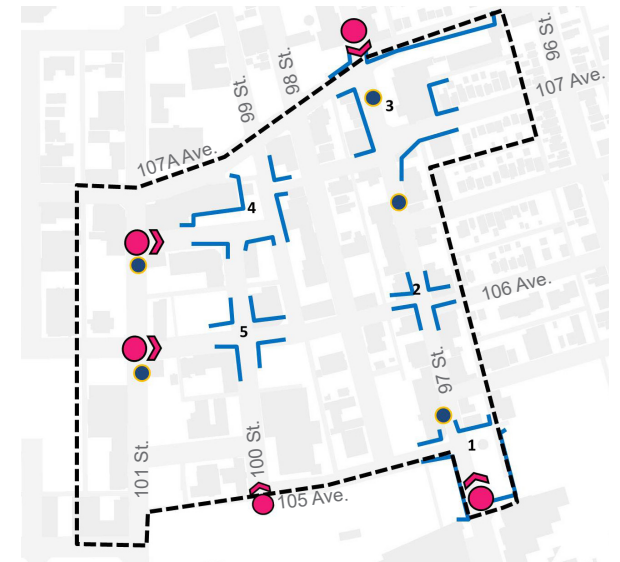
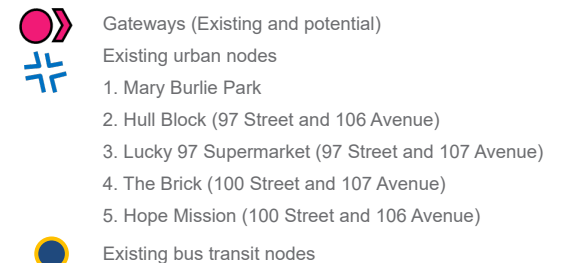


Figure 8: Key nodes and gateways





**Node 3: Lucky 97 Supermarket (97 Street and 107 Avenue)**

**Strengths**

- Major retail anchor, private Chinese statues, Zodiac Signs Plaza and entrance gate contribute to a strong sense of place; and
- Proximity to mature residential area along 107 Avenue

**Opportunities (Refer to Figure 10)**

- Long-term redevelopment potential;
- Corner sites should incorporate special architectural treatment; and
- Parking lot for Lucky 97 Supermarket could be designed as a flexible space for special events.

**Node 4: The Brick (100 Street and 107 Avenue)**

**Strengths**

- Variety of active boutique/service store frontages;
- Visually appealing architectural treatments; and
- Wide street right of way.

**Opportunities (Refer to Figure 11)**

- Low-rise commercial buildings;
- Active ground floor frontages; and
- Corner sites should incorporate special architectural treatment.

**Node 5: Hope Mission (100 Street and 106 Avenue)**

**Strengths (Refer to Figure 12)**

- Existing commercial frontages; and
- New streetscape under construction that will enhance the pedestrian environment.

**Opportunities**

- Redevelopment opportunities;
- Residential/institutional mixed use infill opportunity;
- Develop urban plaza on privately owned publically accessible spaces; and
- Corner sites should incorporate special architectural treatment.



Note 1: Mary Burlie Park (97 Street and 105 Avenue)



Node 4: The Brick (100 Street and 107 Avenue)



Node 2: The Hull Block (97 Street and 106 Avenue)



Node 5: Hope Mission (100 Street and 106 Avenue)



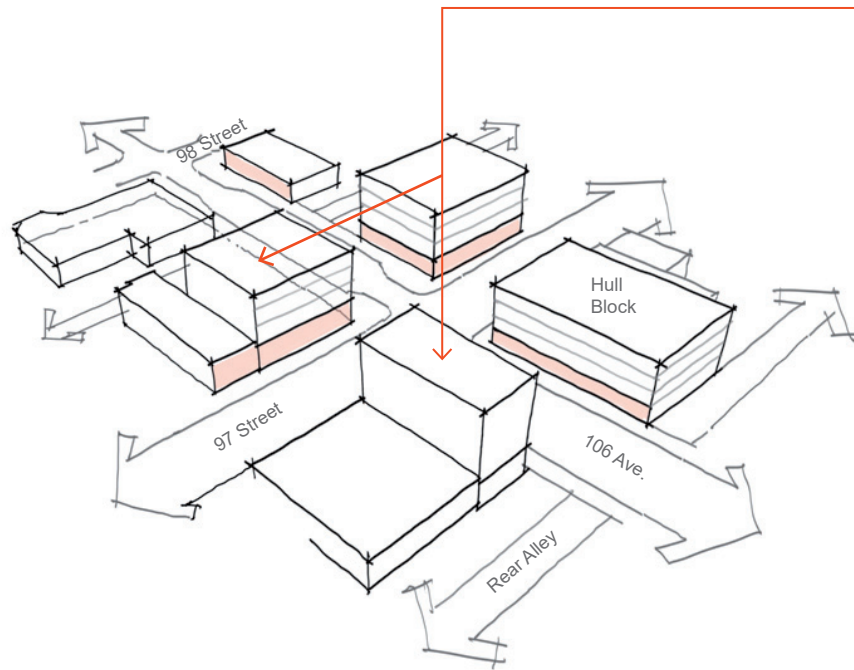
Node 3: Lucky 97 Supermarket (97 Street and 107 Avenue)



Gate of Happy Arrival (97 Street and 107A Avenue)

New building to complement Hull Block character

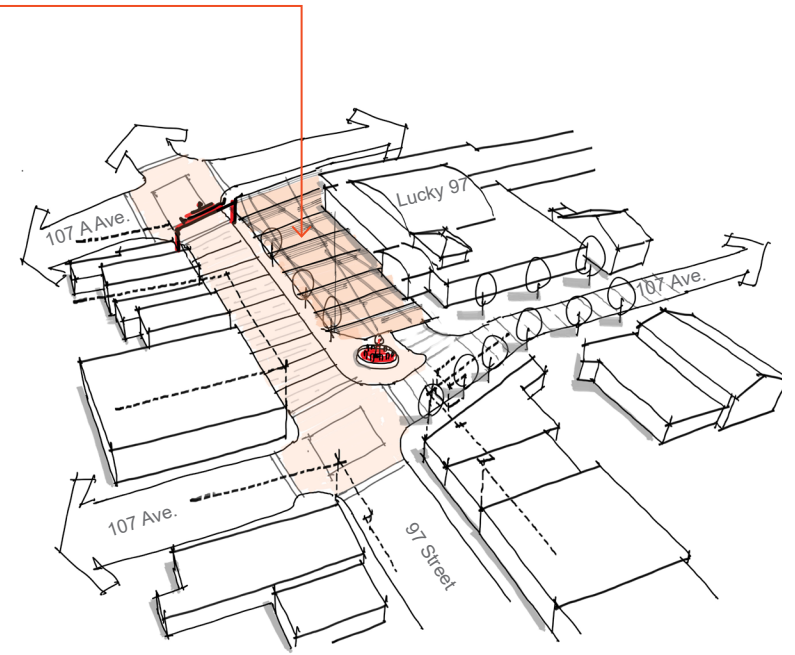
- Mixed use
- Continuous ground floor commercial frontage
- May have contemporary architectural expression



**Figure 9: Urban node 2-Hull Block intersection**

The intersection of 106 Avenue and 97 Street is perceived as the heart of Chinatown. Any redevelopment at this intersection should complement the heritage character of Hull block. New buildings should be built to the property line to strengthen the public-private interface. In addition, commercial retail frontage at the ground floor should be maintained. Allowing careful intensification at this node will contribute to the vibrancy of this node and Chinatown as a whole.

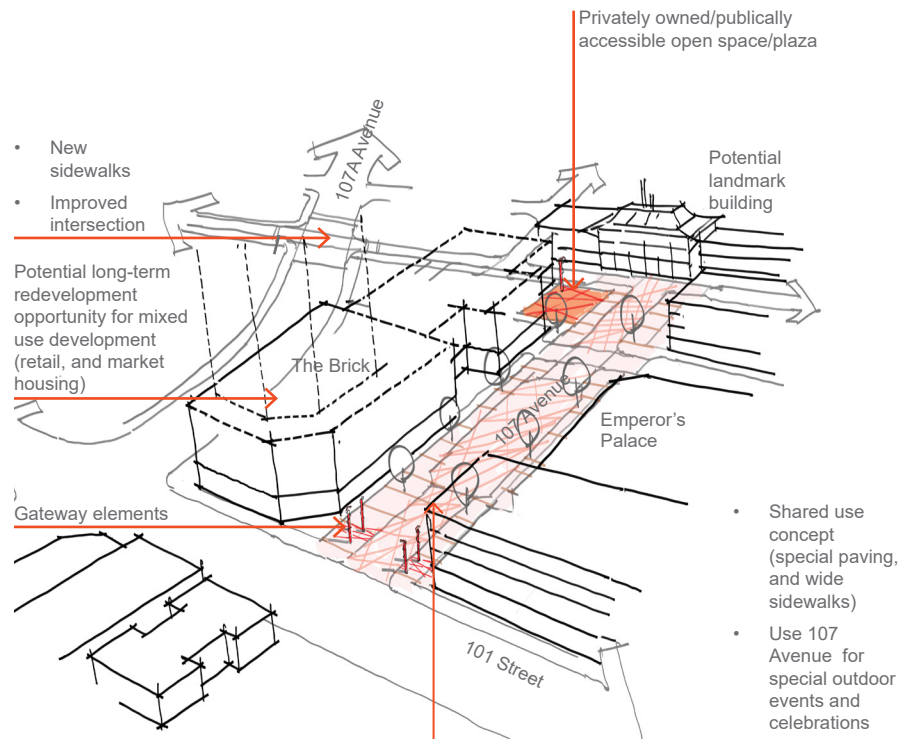
- Develop multi-purpose public space (parking lot, public plaza)
- Work with the land owner and identify location for food trucks, public art, etc.



**Figure 10: Urban node 3-Lucky 97 Supermarket**

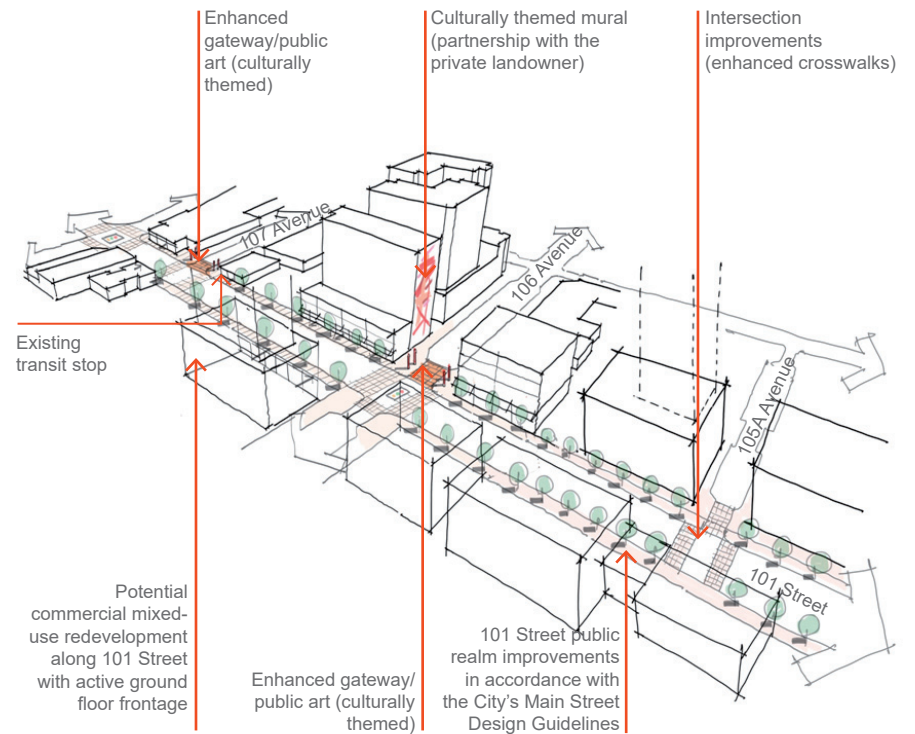
Lucky 97 is one of the busiest commercial anchors located at the north end of Chinatown. The parking lot along 97 Street frontage provides an opportunity to transform this area into a shared-use pedestrian plaza at non-peak hours or for special events. Partnership with the landowner should be explored to allow mobile vendors and other culturally unique year-round programming for this key urban space. The enhanced public realm treatment at the intersection of 97 Street and 107 Avenue can provide visual cues to attract pedestrians to 107 Avenue (Between 97 Street and 96 Street), which may be developed as a mixed use small-scale residential/commercial destination.





**Figure 11: Urban node 4-The Brick**

107 Avenue (between 101 Street and 99 Street) has a wide right-of-way and lacks public realm elements such as trees, wide sidewalks, pedestrian-oriented lighting and public art. This area can be transformed into a vibrant urban node by coordinating private and public investments. At present, the Brick store serves as a key commercial anchor. In the long term this site may be developed into mixed-use commercial/residential development. Opportunity also exists to develop a small-scale plaza at the intersection of 107 Avenue and 99 Street. Special emphasis should be placed on developing unique public realm along 107 Avenue and transform this node into an outdoor living room for citizens and tourists.



**Figure 12: Gateways along 101 Street**

101 Street is a key arterial road located along the western boundary of the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. It plays a key role in providing a glimpse of Chinatown to citizens passing through the area on a daily basis. As a result, developing a sense of gateways along 101 Street at key intersections (along 106 Avenue and 107 Avenue) should significantly help attract new visitors to Chinatown. In addition to these short-term placemaking initiatives, long-term comprehensive public/private realm investments along this key corridor would help improve the overall connectivity from downtown to the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.

## PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following additional criteria/guidelines should be considered for future developments and public realm improvements at the established urban nodes, bus transit nodes, and gateways in Chinatown:

### Urban Nodes

- Urban nodes identified in Figure 8 should include a combination of the following land use types and public spaces to ensure those areas serve as key activity centers within the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:
  - Mixed-use buildings, standalone residential or commercial/office buildings;
  - Institutional buildings;
  - Well-designed publically accessible landscaped private spaces; and
  - Wider sidewalks/enhanced public realm, public art.
- The character of the built form of the first four storeys has a significant impact on the pedestrian experience. New residential or commercial buildings with height greater than four storeys should provide a step-back above four storeys. The building podiums along key nodes identified in Figure 8 should incorporate special architectural treatment and use design elements, materials and colours to enhance Chinatown's cultural ambiance.
- At the time of redevelopment, new buildings should be encouraged to provide privately owned but publically accessible open spaces by providing additional front setbacks. Use of such spaces for patios and outdoor seating areas should be encouraged. Public realm treatment within key nodes should consider wider sidewalks, bulb-outs at key intersections and enhanced street furniture elements.

### Bus Transit Nodes

- Bus transit shelters, seating areas and pedestrian lighting around existing bus stops should promote safety and comfort of pedestrians.
- Consideration should be given to include visual cues in the public realm to direct pedestrians from bus stops to key urban nodes in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone and leverage the existing transit infrastructure to contribute to establishing new destinations.



Art poles along 99 Street in Edmonton



Traditional Chinese pedestrian oriented lights and lanterns

### Gateways

- Chinatown has an arched gateway called the Gate of Happy Arrival at the intersection of 107A Avenue and 97 Street to mark its northern entrance. There is no significant sense of gateway at the southern eastern or western entrances. Entrances to contemporary cultural or economic districts may be defined by timeless features such as building character, special architectural elements or enhanced public realm elements at key locations. For this reason, additional arched gateways should not be considered; instead other innovative measures should be explored to achieve a unique sense of arrival.
- A sense of gateway should be established at the following locations by creating unique corner gestures for buildings, culturally themed art-poles, high-quality public realm and other culturally themed landscape elements that enhance the sense of arrival:
  - 101 Street and 106 Avenue;
  - 101 Street and 107 Avenue;
  - 97 Street Bridge;
  - 100 Street and 105 Avenue (from Station Lands development); and
  - 98 Street and 105 Avenue (from Station Lands development).
- Enhancing a sense of gateway at these locations would provide strong visual cues along 101 Street and 97 Street corridors may significantly help attract pedestrian traffic from Downtown and the Arena district.



Contemporary gateway feature, Portland Chinatown



### 3.1.5. PROMOTE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS

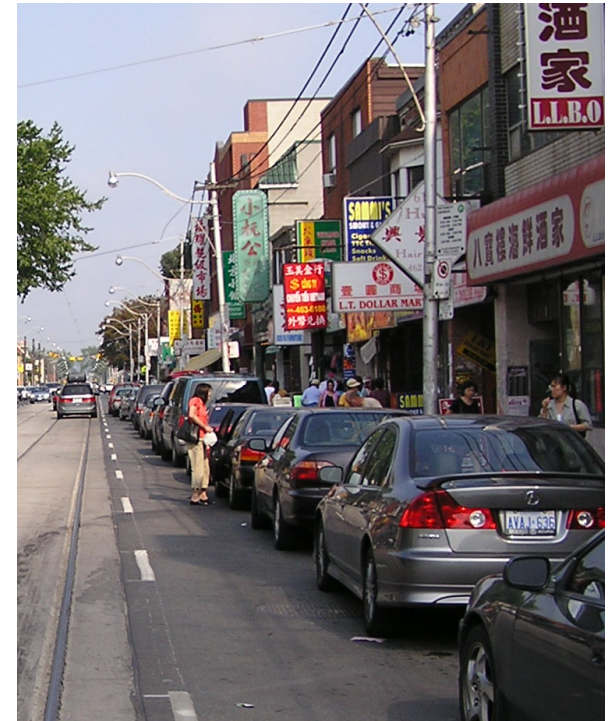
#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The physical built form of buildings along streets and uses contained within can greatly contribute to a unique sense of place. Mixed-use concepts in buildings are favored to support greater diversity in uses, transitioning throughout day and night leading to a greater sense of vibrancy. Supporting mixed-use development can create a captive trade area and introduce much needed residential development to the area. Mixed-use buildings refer to buildings with a variety of functions, like retail uses at ground level and residential or office spaces above. Vibrancy and viability of any pedestrian-oriented commercial district directly relies upon the density of residential uses located within a 5 to 10 minute walking distance. Increased residential density is required to support the viability of commerce. In addition, the proximity of local grocery and retail amenities are favorable attributes for attracting new residential infill development.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for promoting mixed-use buildings in Chinatown:

- Mixed-use residential buildings with retail commercial at ground floor should be encouraged throughout the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.
- Although mixed-use residential buildings are preferred, stand-alone residential and stand-alone commercial buildings should also be considered.
- Senior's housing and senior-friendly amenities should be encouraged in close proximity to commercial main street areas such as 97 Street, 98 Street and 101 Street.
- Figure 13 illustrates potential opportunities for mixed-use commercial, institutional and residential developments in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.
- Maintaining low to mid-rise built form along 97 Street is essential in maintaining its existing distinct cultural main street character. Future development should maintain 2-4 storey small grain built form along 97 Street frontage.
- Higher density mixed-use residential buildings should be promoted along 101 Street corridor.
- Low to mid-rise built form should be maintained along 98 Street corridor.

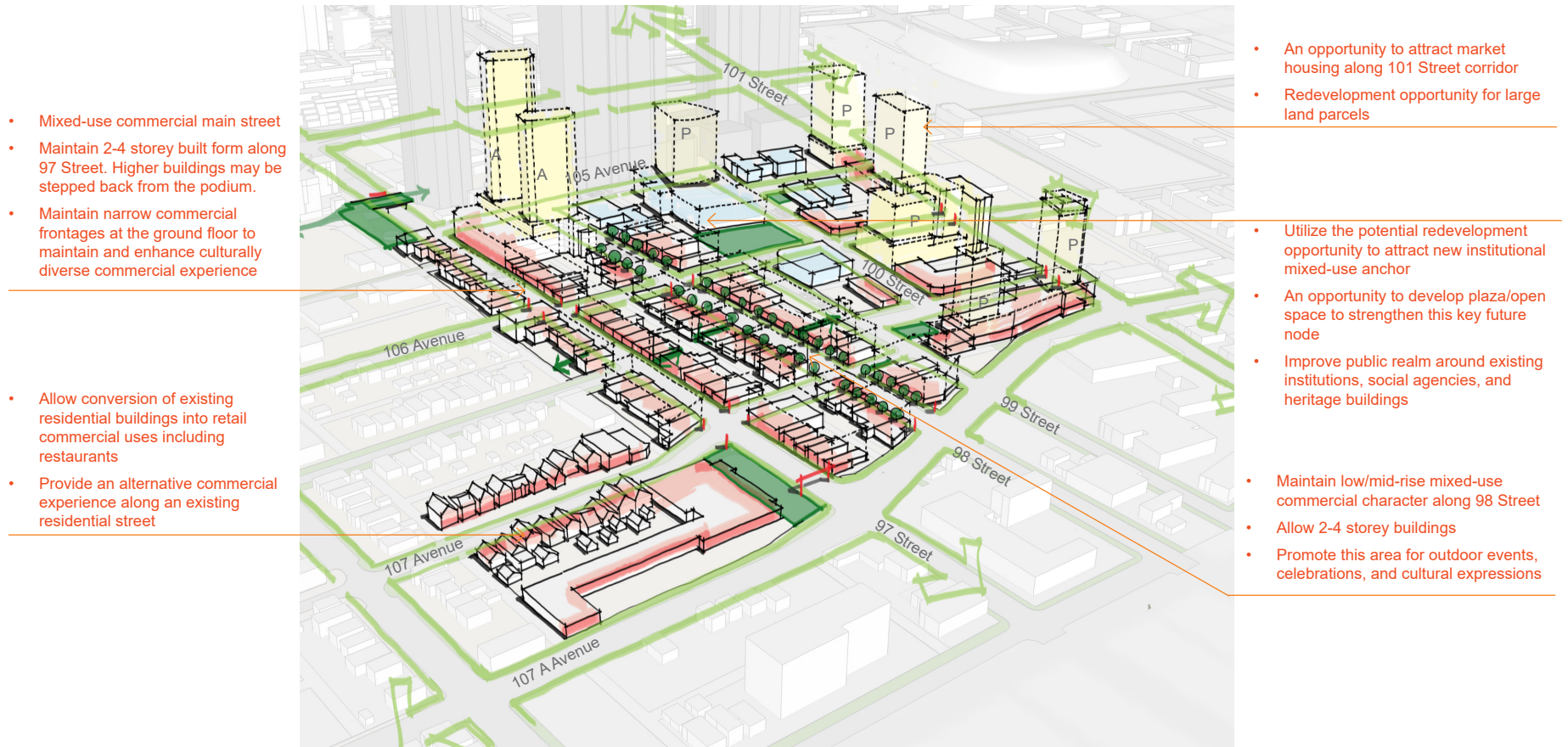


Mixed-use development



Encroachment along public side walls





- Mixed-use commercial main street
- Maintain 2-4 storey built form along 97 Street. Higher buildings may be stepped back from the podium.
- Maintain narrow commercial frontages at the ground floor to maintain and enhance culturally diverse commercial experience

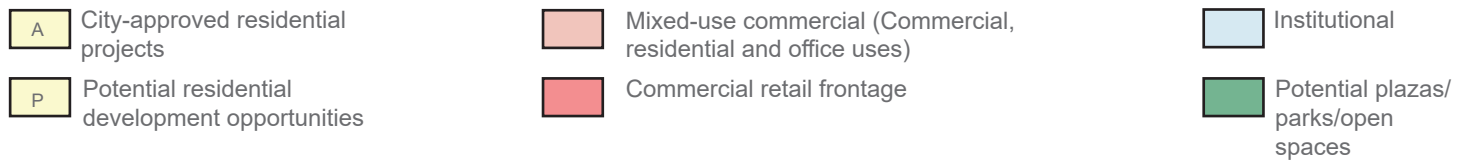
- Allow conversion of existing residential buildings into retail commercial uses including restaurants
- Provide an alternative commercial experience along an existing residential street

- An opportunity to attract market housing along 101 Street corridor
- Redevelopment opportunity for large land parcels

- Utilize the potential redevelopment opportunity to attract new institutional mixed-use anchor
- An opportunity to develop plaza/open space to strengthen this key future node
- Improve public realm around existing institutions, social agencies, and heritage buildings

- Maintain low/mid-rise mixed-use commercial character along 98 Street
- Allow 2-4 storey buildings
- Promote this area for outdoor events, celebrations, and cultural expressions

Figure 13: Potential land use opportunities



### 3.2. CELEBRATE CHINATOWN AS A DESTINATION

Chinatown has many attributes that contribute to creating a cultural shopping district, but it lacks a signature attraction and a collective approach to draw visitors to the area. Some aspects of attraction may be addressed through programming or marketing and can be further enhanced through physical means in the form of designed special streets, public plazas, and unique alley ways. Large-scale cultural institutions can serve as key anchors for the entire district and help trigger a long-term economic revitalization. The Chinatown Economic Development Plan identifies the need for promoting Chinatown as a key destination for residents as well as tourists, providing an appropriate mix of small-scale pedestrian environments as well as larger formal attractions and providing a wide range of experiences including retail, cultural attractions, festivals, programming, walking tours, food explorations, and specialty Chinese Herbal stores.

The Chinatown Economic Development Plan also identifies that focusing on promotional materials, cultural programming and tourist packages/branding is equally important to complement efforts to develop a significant cultural attraction.

Based on the direction established in the Chinatown Economic Development Plan, the following placemaking tools are developed to establish key destinations in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.

- Develop high-level conceptual scenarios for Mary Burlie Park.
- Identify preferred criteria for cultural institutions including potential infrastructure improvements.
- Establish criteria for cultural celebration areas such as streets, parks, and plazas.



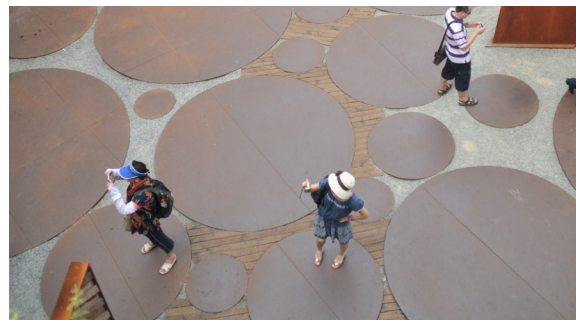
Culturally themed public plaza (Montreal Chinatown)



Animated rear alley (Montreal Chinatown)



Unique pavement patterns in an urban plaza



Hard-surfaced urban plaza



Night Market



### 3.2.1. DEVELOP HIGH-LEVEL CONCEPTUAL SCENARIOS FOR MARY BURLIE PARK

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Mary Burlie Park is a pocket park located within Chinatown, but not specifically designed or intended for Chinatown. However its location at the south entrance to Chinatown and its proximity to major trail networks presents an occasion to re-evaluate this space, its function, and redesign for all groups. Parks and open space are tremendous community assets when designed well. The park currently faces a number of challenges related to crime and social issues. Revisiting the design of this space could potentially have tremendous positive impacts for all members of the community that could shift perception and increase usability.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for revitalizing Mary Burlie Park:

##### Design and Programming

- Preference should be given to predominantly hardscaped design elements to ensure low maintenance, accommodate larger gatherings on a regular basis, and provide flexibility.
- Consideration should be given for utilizing landscape themes (pavement style/colours, materials, trees, and lighting styles) utilized elsewhere in Chinatown to establish continuity of urban expression and a sense of place.
- Consideration should be given to integrate the park design with the future direction related to the bridge and connection to Station Lands.
- Landscape design should incorporate opportunities for seating without particularly providing benches.
- Culturally unique as well as interactive focal points/public art elements should be strategically located at the termination of sight lines from key access points. A competitive design process should be considered for choice of public art. Design competitions generally help attract national and international talent and help explore out-of-the-box ideas capable of a comprehensive transformation of the entire district.
- A comprehensive design of the park space provides a unique opportunity to re-evaluate the role of this significant public asset to Chinatown as a whole. A redesign would enable the park to utilize its potential as one of the key entry features to Chinatown and a key area for cultural celebrations. The redesigned park space complemented by well-thought-out year-round programming can establish a strong sense of place for the entire Chinatown Economic Development Zone.



Figure 14: Mary Burlie Park location

— Existing edges



Themed plaza



### Access and Edges

- Adjacent landowners should be encouraged to provide active uses with main entrances and spaces fronting the park.
- Pedestrian connections from 97 Street and the 97 Street Bridge should be emphasized and enhanced to ensure ease-of-access and improve park utilization.
- Future building design and choice of land uses surrounding the park should ensure 'eyes on the street'. Any future redevelopment or reuse of buildings along the northern edge of Mary Burlie Park should maximize transparency at ground floor level and provide entrances oriented toward the park. Any potential redevelopment or reuse of the former Remand Centre building explore viability of providing active uses, entrances and transparency along its northern façade. Such measures on private properties surrounding Mary Burlie Park would significantly help in creating a safer environment in the park space.

### Safety

- Emphasis should be placed on developing an 'open urban plaza'. Compartmentalization of the park into smaller spaces should be discouraged.

The following two conceptual options are developed for Mary Burlie Park to illustrate potential opportunities to transform this urban park into a vibrant place for Chinatown.

- Option 1 (figure 15) illustrates minimum design interventions necessary to address issues such as safety, security access, placemaking, and image.
- Option 2 (figure 16) illustrates how enhanced design and landscaping interventions can help in transforming Mary Burlie Park into a unique destination in Chinatown.

Both options require removal of existing features such as the gazebo, Mary Burlie's Statue and various soft landscaped areas. In addition, both options include design direction to better integrate/connect this key urban space with the 97 Street Bridge, 97 Street and existing/potential multi-use trail network.



Rear alley east of Mary Burlie Park



Mary Burlie Park



The western edge of Mary Burlie Park along 97 Street

**Option 1: Key Design Features**

In order to address safety concerns and establish a strong sense of place, the following minimum urban design improvements should be undertaken to develop a unique multi-purpose urban plaza:

**Site preparation**

- Grade the site to establish a flat surface and a foundation for an urban plaza.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

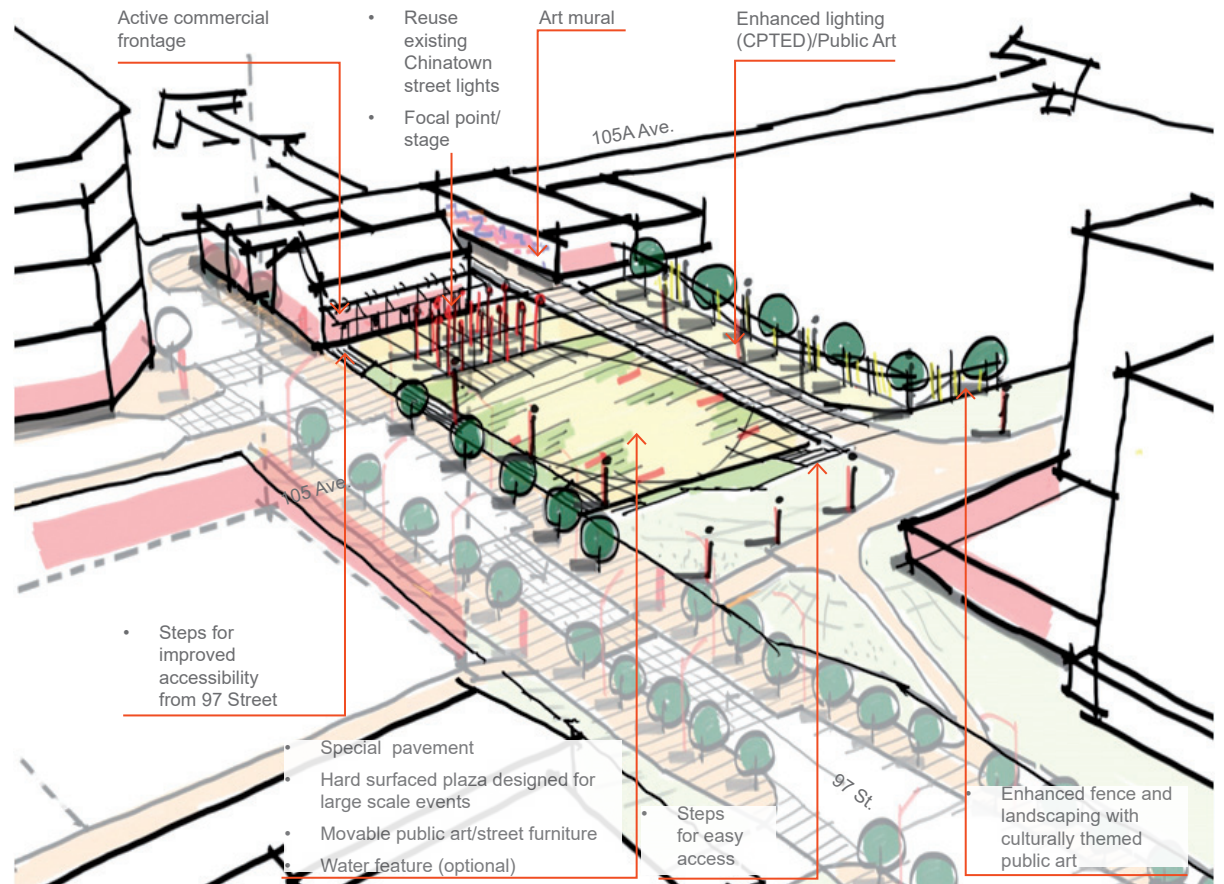
- Remove existing trees and shrubs that create areas for anti-social activities.
- Remove existing gazebo structure, which is a focal point of a variety of illegal as well as anti-social activities.
- Install enhanced pedestrian oriented lighting at the periphery of the plaza and along the rear alley located at the eastern edge of Mary Burlie Park.

**Plaza development**

- Develop decorative concrete plaza (50% hard landscaping, 50% soft landscaping) suitable for large-scale public gatherings. Plant low growing planting beds to achieve a fine balance between hard/soft landscaping. Culturally themed patterns should be incorporated in the pavement design.
- Pedestrian accessibility to the plaza from 97 Street and the multi-purpose trail along its southern edge should be improved by developing new staircases. The eastern and southern edge of the plaza should be developed as a combination of stairways as well as soft landscaping treatment. Use of high shrubs/trees along these edges should be prohibited to ensure visual transparency.

**Public Art**

An opportunity exists to create a unique public art installation by reusing existing pedestrian oriented decorative lights. Such installation may serve as a unique focal point in the new plaza and provide



**Figure 15: Mary Burlie Park-Potential opportunities (Option 1)**

a backdrop for a variety of cultural events and celebrations.

**Street furniture**

Install fixed as well as movable seating to visitors. Where possible, incorporate culturally themed public art elements in the design of street furniture.



## Option 2: Key Design Features

In addition to the minimum urban design elements established in Option 1, the following enhanced urban design features should be considered to develop this area as a true destination.

### Hard landscaped plaza

- In order to provide maximum flexibility and comfort to host large-scale public events, the new plaza should incorporate hard landscaping elements only. Use of soft landscaping designs should be discouraged. This approach should also provide ease of maintenance for the Parks Department.

### Edge conditions

- Eastern edge: The success of any urban open space depends upon the character of its edges. A mixed use building with retail uses at the ground floor should be explored on the provincially owned land located at the eastern edge of the Mary Burlie Park. The front setback of such building should be hard-landscaped with design elements consistent with the plaza design.
- Southern edge: The southern edge of the Park may be signed as an amphitheater, which may serve a dual purpose of improved accessibility as well as a seating area during large-scale public events/gatherings.
- Western edge: The western boundary of the plaza may be designed with a continuous staircase to maximize accessibility along 97 Street frontage.

### Special public art/lighting

- An opportunity exists to provide special lighting and public art elements along the rear alley at the eastern edge of Mary Burlie Park. This approach will significantly enhance the sense of safety and create a pedestrian friendly as well as welcoming environment for citizens and visitors in general.

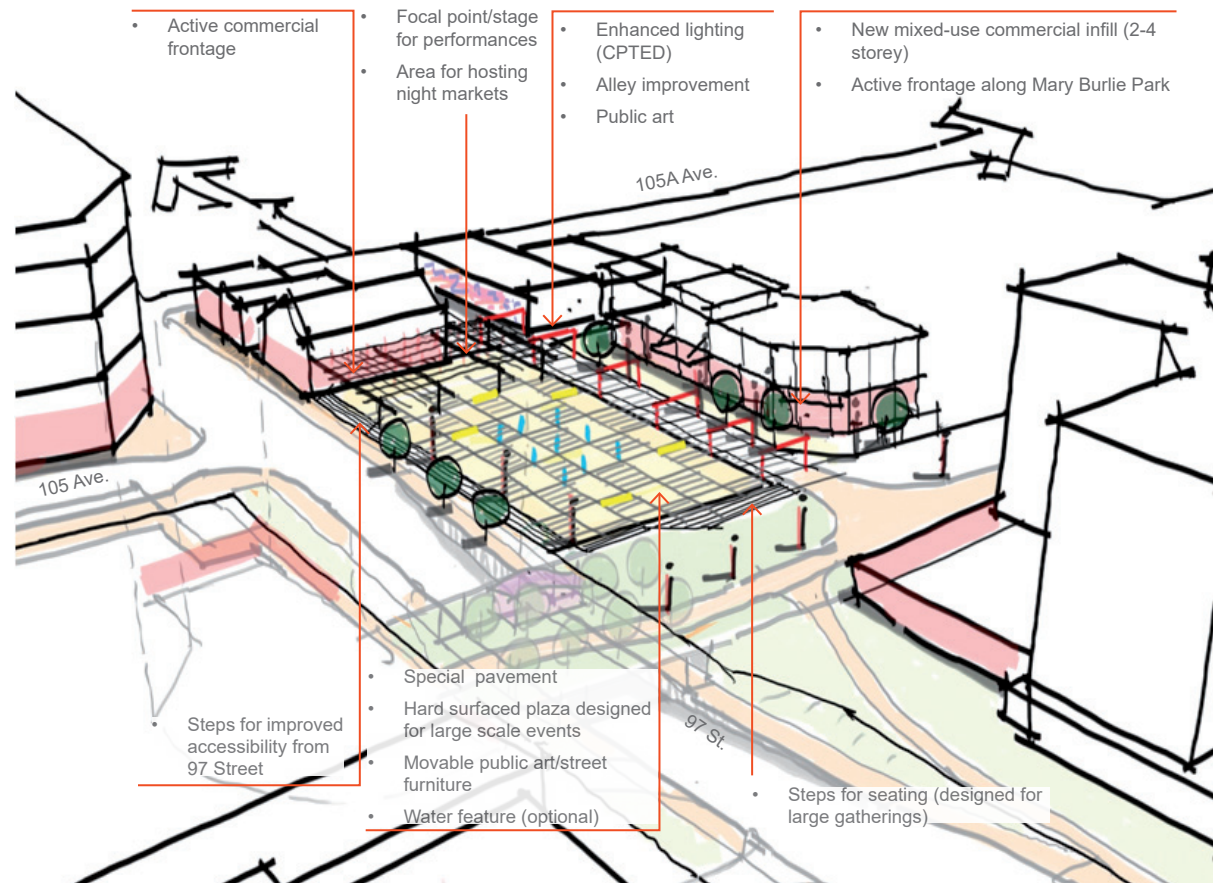


Figure 16: Mary Burlie Park-Potential opportunities (Option 2)

### Multi-purpose architectural structure

- An opportunity exists to develop unique architectural structure at the northern edge of the Park, which may be custom designed to host a variety of activities such as night markets, day markets, stage for events, and other similar activities.

### Interactive water features

- An interactive water feature at the center of the new plaza may provide an additional focal point to engage all age groups.
- The water feature should be designed as a flexible element, which may be turned off during large-scale gatherings .



### 3.2.2. IDENTIFY PREFERRED CRITERIA FOR CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Arts, cultural place and history contribute to cultural vitality of any community. Cultural assets of diverse scales can serve as key community focal points and anchors for urban revitalization efforts. A number of small-scale cultural, religious and social institutions of a variety of ethnic groups such as Vietnamese, Korean, African, Chinese and Malaysian already exist in Chinatown. Additional assets with architectural significance could support the sense of destination in the area. This could include a strong connection with the Royal Alberta Museum and other existing cultural assets.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria/guidelines should be utilized for potential cultural institutions in Chinatown:

- Large-scale cultural institutions should be located along key pedestrian routes and integrated with private or public open spaces. Carefully locating such potential large-scale cultural institutions along key pedestrian corridors and in close proximity to existing or potential open spaces would maximize their visual impact and help establish a larger destination zone with a variety of activities for tourists and residents alike. Large-scale institutional buildings should avoid blank walls and provide vertical articulation in their facades.
- In a winter city such as Edmonton, availability of affordable public or privately operated parking facilities located in close proximity to pedestrian oriented commercial main streets

is extremely important for the success of retail commercial businesses. Off-site parking facilities complemented by reduced parking standards for individual businesses improves the viability of larger restaurants and gathering places to happen along existing commercial streets with typically smaller lots. Off-site shared parking mechanisms should be explored to improve the viability of large-scale retail businesses and large-scale cultural institutions along or in close proximity to 97 Street, 101 Street, 106 Avenue, and 98 Street corridors.

- Cultural institutions integrated with senior's housing, market housing or religious assemblies should be encouraged to develop a multi-purpose node.



Cultural celebrations

### 3.2.3. ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR CULTURAL CELEBRATION AREAS SUCH AS STREETS, PARKS, AND PLAZAS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Regular programming within Chinatown for neighbourhood-level and city-level events and/or celebrations contributes to vibrancy that can support local businesses, cultural groups, and residents. Events provide a reason for local and regional populations to visit the area and are often connected to cultural festivals that can be promoted and marketed. Well-designed public spaces that are well connected to downtown and surrounding communities will contribute to improving the image of the area. With the right type of programming, spaces can be transformed to destinations that attract diverse visitors into the area that normally would not do so.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for considering urban spaces or streets for cultural celebrations:

- A number of interconnected loops identified in Figure 17 should be developed with enhanced public realm to provide options for a variety of street-oriented public events such as parades, street markets, public gatherings, etc. Special emphasis should be placed on strengthening east-west connections along 107 Avenue and 106 Avenue to enhance the key connections between the major corridors of 97 Street and 101 Street. Public realm improvements along 100 Street (between 107 Avenue and 105 Avenue) and 98 Street (between 107A Avenue and 105 Avenue) may provide strong visual cues to pedestrians and help improve connectivity of the Chinatown Economic Development Zone to the future Station Lands development. Establishing unique visual cues and streetscape elements along these streets identified in figure 17 will allow the BIA to program a variety of public events appropriate to their scale and complexity. The loop design will ensure these potential destinations are well connected with the existing destinations in the surrounding areas.
- Transforming arterial roadways into pedestrian streets should be limited along 97 Street and should be utilized for annual events and special cultural events.
- Viability of shared use spaces should be explored for the following streets, which may provide flexibility for accommodating a wide range of vehicular and pedestrian needs during special events:
  - 98 Street (between 106 Avenue and 107A Avenue)
  - 107 Avenue (between 101 Street and 99 Street)



**Figure 17: Potential streets for cultural celebrations**

 Existing Public Park     Streets with potential for cultural celebration events



Chinese cultural celebrations



- 98 street (between 106 Avenue and 107A Avenue) has a number of small-scale businesses representing a wide range of business types and cultural backgrounds. The street right-of-way includes angled parking on one side and has relatively less vehicular traffic compared to the surrounding arterial streets such as 97 Street and 107A Avenue. As a result, 98 Street (between 107A Avenue and 106 Avenue) provides a unique opportunity for special temporary/permanent public realm treatments that could encourage alternate multipurpose uses. The benefit would be that the busier 97 Street would be less impacted while having a flexible space nearby that could be more activated. The existing strengths of 98 Street including the small-scale built form, existing businesses, lower traffic volumes and proximity to 97 Street corridor provide a great potential for developing this street with an alternative destination that complements the primary commercial destination along 97 Street.
- 98 Street (between 106 Avenue and 107A Avenue) and 107 Avenue (between 101 Street and 99 Street) should be considered for extended day-long events. Existing low vehicle volumes and presence of key anchors/businesses along these streets provide a unique opportunity to design their right of ways to accommodate potential local events.
- Night markets are popular in most Asian cultures and not uncommon in Chinatowns all over North America. They are generally outdoor in nature and provide an exciting alternative shopping experience, particularly activation of the late-night economy. Support for future on-street night markets could be enhanced through special treatments along 98 Street (between 106 Avenue and 107 Avenue). The location being central to the district and physical attributes like wide right-of-way of this street provides necessary conditions for potential success.

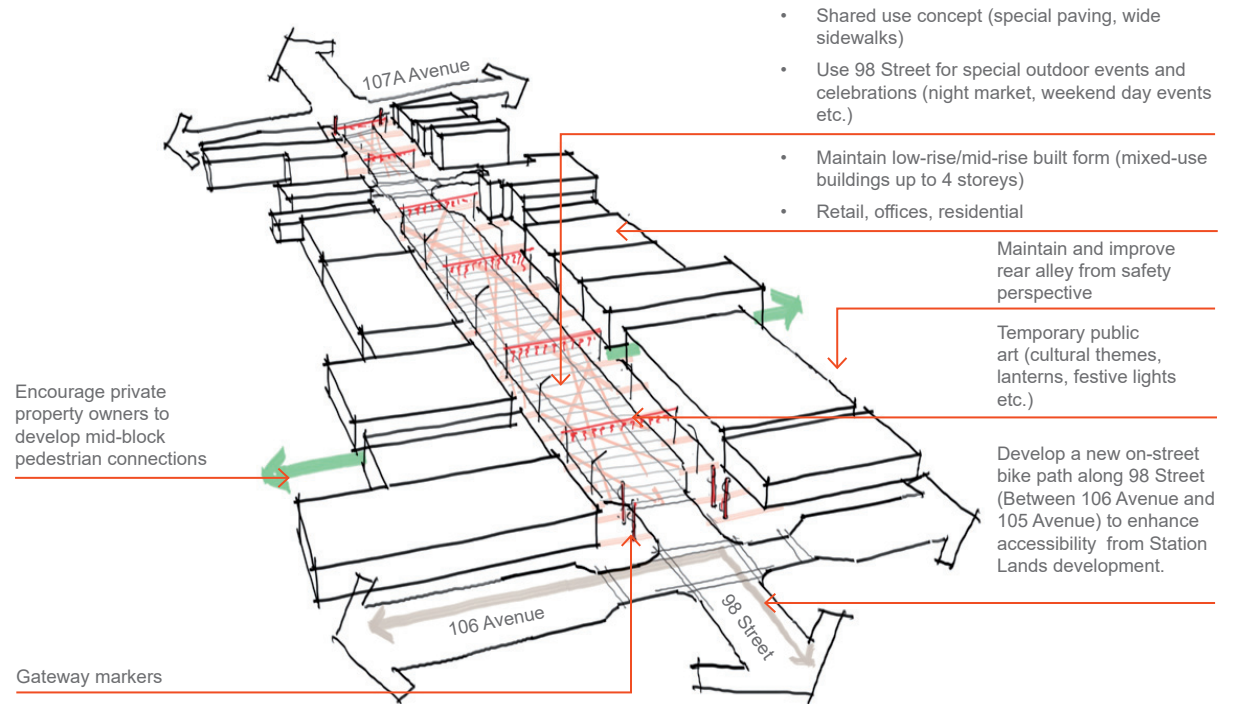


Figure 18: Placemaking concept for 98 Street



Traditional lanterns in San Francisco's Chinatown



Outdoor night events



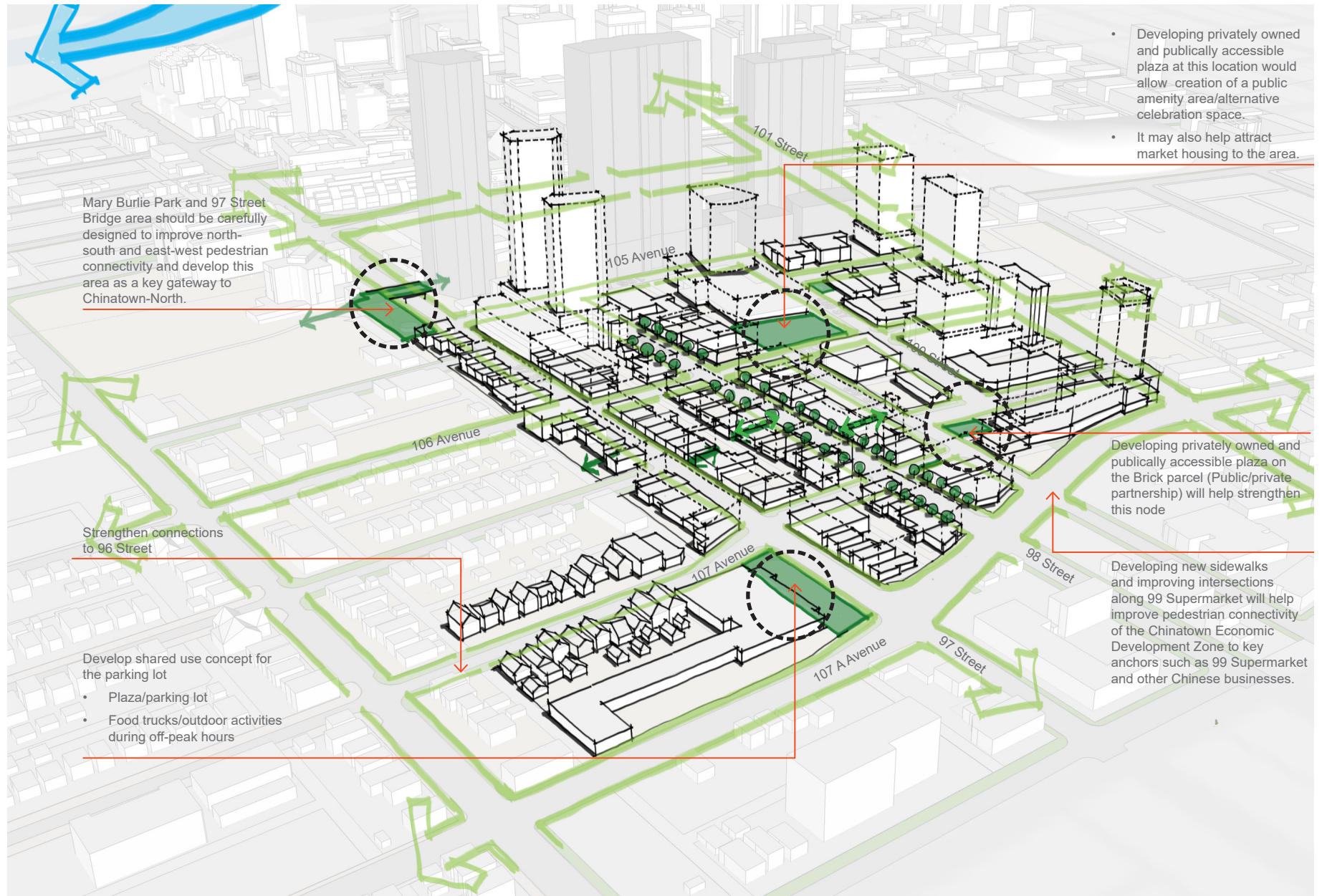


Figure 19: Potential open space development opportunities

### 3.3. ENHANCE BUILT FORM, LANDMARKS, AND OPEN SPACES

Key physical assets in Chinatown include Mary Burlie Park, 97 Street streetscaping, 97 Street Bridge and Gate of Happy Arrival. Complementing these key infrastructure elements are private buildings and structures that lend the district character and are key landmarks/destinations that enhance Chinatown. In addition to these key assets other assets also contribute to the Chinatown fabric though more dispersed throughout the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. These include:

- Restaurants and banquet facilities (Emperor’s Palace Dim Sum, Italian Bakery, Pagolac, Taipan Café, Garden Bakery and Restaurant, and Dynasty Century Place)
- Anchor businesses (The Brick, Lucky 97 Grocery Store, and Kim Fat Market)
- Commercial Plazas (Pacific Rim Mall, Mei King Market Place, and Asia Square)

Investing in and strengthening existing physical assets could positively contribute to improving the image of the area and trigger the transformation of the surrounding vacant lots and underutilized properties. The City can lead by committing some public realm investments to the area.

The Chinatown Economic Development Plan provides a number of recommendations to enhance accessibility/connectivity, identity and heritage assets of the area. Improving connectivity of Chinatown from other destinations in the surrounding area will help to increase total daily pedestrian visits to the area.

Based on the direction established in the Chinatown Economic Development Plan, the following placemaking tools have been identified to enhance the existing physical assets in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone including key buildings, landmark, and open spaces:

- Identify and establish distinct character areas.
- Provide direction for establishing an interconnected network from major pedestrian routes/bike routes from surrounding nodes to Chinatown nodes.
- Identify key transit stops and gateways and establish direction for improved amenities in close proximity to transit nodes.
- Develop high-level options for 97 Street Bridge improvements.
- Develop criteria for relocation of Harbin Gate.
- Identify existing heritage buildings and provide direction for areas around them.
- Build on the direction established in the Parks Master Plan and provide direction for connecting existing/future open spaces within Chinatown with surrounding open space network.
- Identify opportunities to reuse existing decorative lantern-style street lights as public art.
- Identify and establish key view corridors.

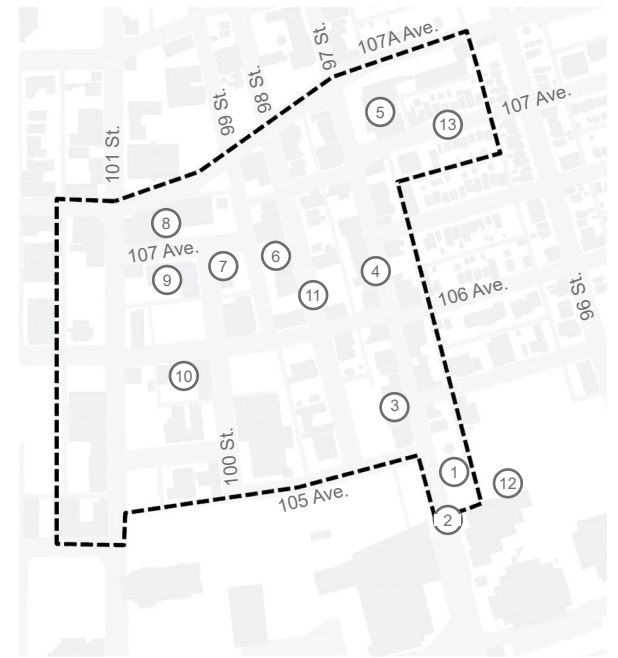


Figure 20: Key physical assets

- |                        |                                      |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ① Mary Burlie Park     | ⑨ Emperor’s Palace                   |
| ② 97 Street Bridge     | ⑩ Mei King Market Place              |
| ③ Pacific Rim Mall     | ⑪ 98 Street                          |
| ④ 97 Street Commercial | ⑫ Multi-use Trail                    |
| ⑤ Lucky 97 Supermarket | ⑬ 107 Avenue Mature Residential Area |
| ⑥ Asia Square          |                                      |
| ⑦ Kim Fat Market       |                                      |
| ⑧ The Brick            |                                      |

### 3.3.1. IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH DISTINCT CHARACTER AREAS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Within the Chinatown Economic Development Zone, certain distinct characters can be identified through subtle distinction of built form and uses from one street to the next. These distinct character areas/small precincts can help define destinations within the overall Chinatown. Place identity can be used to support economic development through promotional materials and tourism attraction.

Urban design can help communicate the character of a precinct through influencing aspects of the private built form and public realm such as:

- Street furniture styles;
- Public art content, messages and themes;
- Configuration of public open spaces/parks; and
- Architectural styles and building positioning.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for strengthening existing character areas in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:

- **97 Street Corridor:** Building on the existing image of 97 Street as the cultural heart of Chinatown will enhance and solidify in attracting a wide range of new small scale specialty businesses to the area. The small-scale businesses with narrow building frontages help in maintaining the unique historic character of the area which is important in differentiating it from other commercial districts and provide an alternative experience to visitors.
- **Mixed Commercial:** This area has a number of larger consolidated lots including vacant lots, surface parking lots and large-scale commercial anchors. It provides a great opportunity to attract new market housing and commercial and institutional anchors. Enhanced public realm within this district would help in connecting the future anchors/destinations within this district to surrounding destinations and in turn increase its appeal for attracting new investments.
- **107 Avenue Transition Area:** This area predominantly consists of single-family homes and is already experiencing conversion of existing buildings for small-scale commercial uses. The City should capitalize on this trend and undertake necessary zoning changes to encourage property owners to consider small-scale restaurants or other specialty businesses in existing buildings. This approach would allow creation of an alternative commercial experience valued by pedestrians and add additional appeal to the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.
- **101 Street Corridor:** The 101 Street corridor is a major vehicular route to and from the Downtown. This section of the corridor within the focused study area is currently an undesirable passage for pedestrians due to lack of comfort from heavy

traffic, uninteresting street frontages, lack of trees or any street furniture. This passage is frequented by homeless population throughout the day attributed to the proximity to major social agencies in this area. In addition, the existing land uses and buildings flanking 101 Street do not have active pedestrian-oriented businesses at ground level. 101 Street (between 105 Avenue and 108 Avenue) is identified by the City of Edmonton as a Main Street and as such should be developed in accordance with Edmonton's Main Street Design Guidelines. Enhancing the pedestrian character of 101 Street would significantly improve the connection for pedestrians from the nearby high-population areas such as the Arena District, Downtown and Royal Alex Hospital.



97 Street Corridor



**97 Street Corridor**

**Strengths:**

- Focal point of Chinatown;
- Chinese-inspired architectural styles; and
- Active and engaging pedestrian environment.

**Opportunities:**

- Promotion of cultural Chinatown presence;
- Strengthen pedestrian connections; and
- Incorporation of public art.

**Mixed Commercial**

**Strengths:**

- Variety of commercial uses;
- Active store fronts; and
- Wide sidewalks framed by boutique commercial facades.

**Opportunities:**

- Attraction of market housing developments;
- Anchor businesses, cultural institutions;
- 98 Street;
- Enhanced public realm; and
- Incorporation of public art.



Mixed Commercial

**101 Street Corridor**

**Strengths:**

- Commercial store fronts;
- High volumes of pedestrian traffic; and
- Main Street presence and view corridors into Chinatown.

**Opportunities:**

- Enhance Chinatown gateway elements;
- Strengthen connection to downtown; and
- Creation of an attractive public realm.

**107 Avenue Transition Area**

**Strengths:**

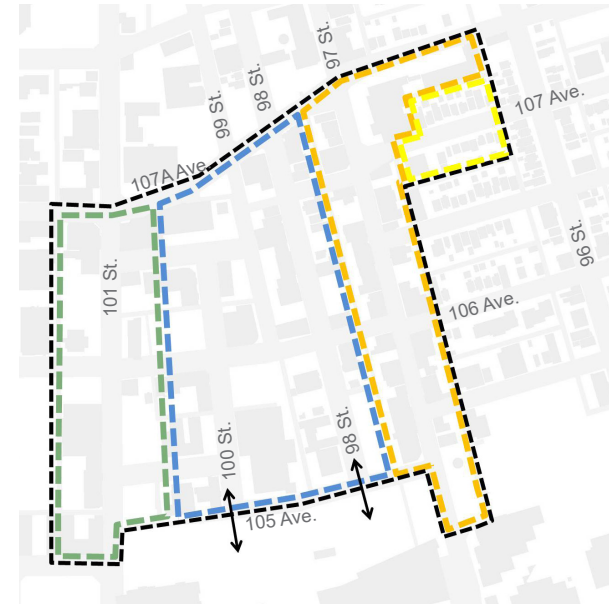
- Commercial uses within converted single-detached buildings. This is an interesting and special place that organically evolved - already a number of small businesses here – and the blend into residential is great;
- Street tree canopy; and
- Pleasant neighbourhood commercial / residential atmosphere.

**Opportunities:**

- Support conversion of residential buildings to commercial uses.



101 Street Corridor



**Figure 21: Key character areas**

- 101 ST Corridor
- 97 ST Corridor
- Mixed Commercial
- 107 Avenue Transition Area
- ↔ Improve connections to Station Lands development



107 Avenue Transition Area

### 3.3.2. ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR AN INTERCONNECTED NETWORK OF MAJOR PEDESTRIAN /BIKE ROUTES FROM SURROUNDING NODES TO CHINATOWN NODES

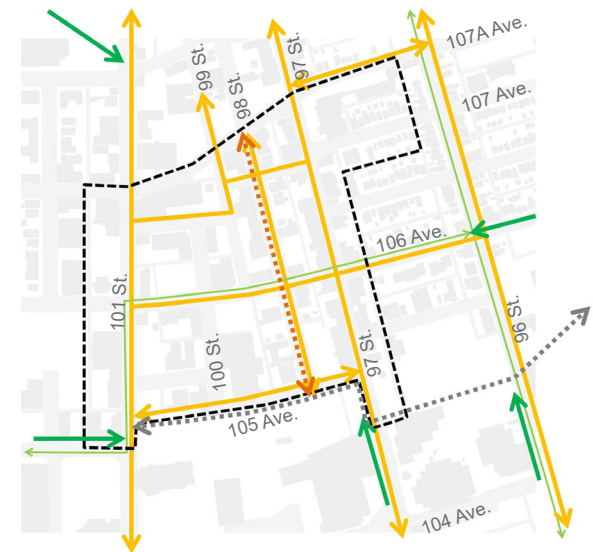
#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

A number of existing and planned bike routes and pedestrian corridors exist in the areas surrounding Chinatown as identified in Figure 22. A number of key civic landmarks and institutions are also located within 5 to 10 minutes walking distance. Establishing enhanced pedestrian and bike-route connections from the surrounding destinations to Chinatown Economic Development Zone will improve pedestrian traffic to the area and eventually benefit local businesses. In addition, the interconnected pedestrian network may also provide a value-added amenity to existing and potential market housing projects in the area.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for promoting an interconnected network of major pedestrian/bike routes from surrounding nodes to Chinatown nodes:

- Pedestrian routes from the following key surrounding destinations should include enhanced public realm elements such as wider sidewalks, trees, enhanced lighting, banners and other streetscape elements to improve walkability and provide visual cues to visitors that may attract them towards Chinatown:
  - Royal Alexandra Hospital;
  - Edmonton City Hall;
  - Art Gallery of Alberta;
  - Churchill Square;
  - 96 Street (Armature); and
  - Downtown Arena.
- A number of vacant lots exist in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. Some may provide an opportunity to develop mid-block pedestrian connections to improve circulation and access within this district. Partnerships with private land owners to develop pocket parks and mid-block connections should be explored. Such connections may be established by encouraging private property owners to incorporate publically accessible pedestrian pathways within their site. Such privately owned but publically accessible spaces enhance the pedestrian appeal of the area and are well-suited for creating culturally relevant public spaces in Chinatown.
- East-west and north-south trail and bike connections throughout the Chinatown Economic Development Zone should be enhanced by identifying additional opportunities to complement existing/planned on-street bike route along 106 Avenue and 101 Street. Potential north-south bike route along 98 Street (between 107A Avenue and 105 Avenue) provides an opportunity to connect



**Figure 22: Existing and proposed pedestrian/bike network**

- ↔ On-street (Planned)
- ↔ On-street (Potential)
- ↔ Off-street (Existing/potential)
- ↔ Key pedestrian routes
- Potential pedestrian/bike connections



the area to a planned bike route along 105 Avenue along the northern edge of Station Lands. Use of artistic, culturally unique paving patterns should be considered for potential bike routes, sidewalks, and multipurpose trails to establish a sense of arrival in this district.

- Enhanced wayfinding signage and streetscape elements should be encouraged in the landscape design of Station Lands and the Royal Alberta Museum. The City of Edmonton has established a city-wide Wayfinding Strategy that establishes size, design and branding for various wayfinding signage elements and provides a high-level guidance for preferred locations for each sign types. The strategy provides a detailed direction for the Downtown District. Additional study should be undertaken for the Chinatown Economic Development Zone to establish application of the city-wide wayfinding strategy to this district. Special branding for the Chinatown district should be established and viability of incorporating such unique branding into various typical signage elements should be explored. The placement of key signage elements should aim to direct pedestrian traffic towards 97 Street and 98 Street commercial areas as well as other key existing and potential anchors.
- Special emphasis should be placed on providing universal accessibility to all pedestrian routes within the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.



On-street bike paths





### 3.3.3. DEVELOP HIGH-LEVEL OPTIONS FOR 97 STREET BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Gateways to cultural districts play an important role in establishing a welcoming environment and a sense of arrival for visitors. Ease of pedestrian and vehicular connectivity as well as overall perception of safety are important factors in providing an attractive environment for potential visitors to an area. At present, the 97 Street Bridge in its current state acts as a major barrier from a safety and access perspective. Improving the perception of safety and the overall ease of pedestrian movement at this location would significantly help in attracting downtown population to Chinatown. The 97 Street Bridge is currently owned by the proponents of the Station Lands project. The first impressions to any cultural district matter when it comes to attracting new investments. Significant improvements at this key gateway location may provide the much-required trigger for economic development and revitalization of Chinatown.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA

Three conceptual design options are developed to establish a strong sense of arrival at the current location of the 97 Street Bridge.

##### Option 1: Keep and enhance the existing bridge

This option proposes to preserve the existing bridge structure and provides design strategies to improve its aesthetic quality and establish it as a key gateway to Chintown. Features such as enhanced architectural lighting and culturally themed public art would significantly help improve the aesthetic and safety aspects of this area. It also proposes improved pedestrian pathway connection along eastern side of 97 Street to improve pedestrian connectivity to the top of the bridge and Mary Burlie Park. Provision of retail kiosks or similar commercial opportunities on top of the bridge may help activate this space.

##### Option 2 : Replace the bridge with a new pedestrian bridge

This option provides an alternative approach to replace the existing bridge with a new pedestrian bridge. Other placemaking strategies include a new pathway along the eastern side of 97 Street, enhanced architectural lighting and boulevard trees along 97 Street.

##### Option 3: Remove the bridge and develop a pedestrian-friendly streetscape

This option proposes to remove the existing bridge and illustrates design strategies to improve pedestrian connectivity from downtown. Key features include raising the existing street (3 to 4 feet), wider sidewalks, boulevard trees, new public art/gateway features, new pathway along the eastern edge of 97 Street and improved east-west connectivity. If done well, this option may significantly improve the sense of safety and aesthetic image of the area.



97 Street bridge (looking north)



97 Street bridge (looking east)

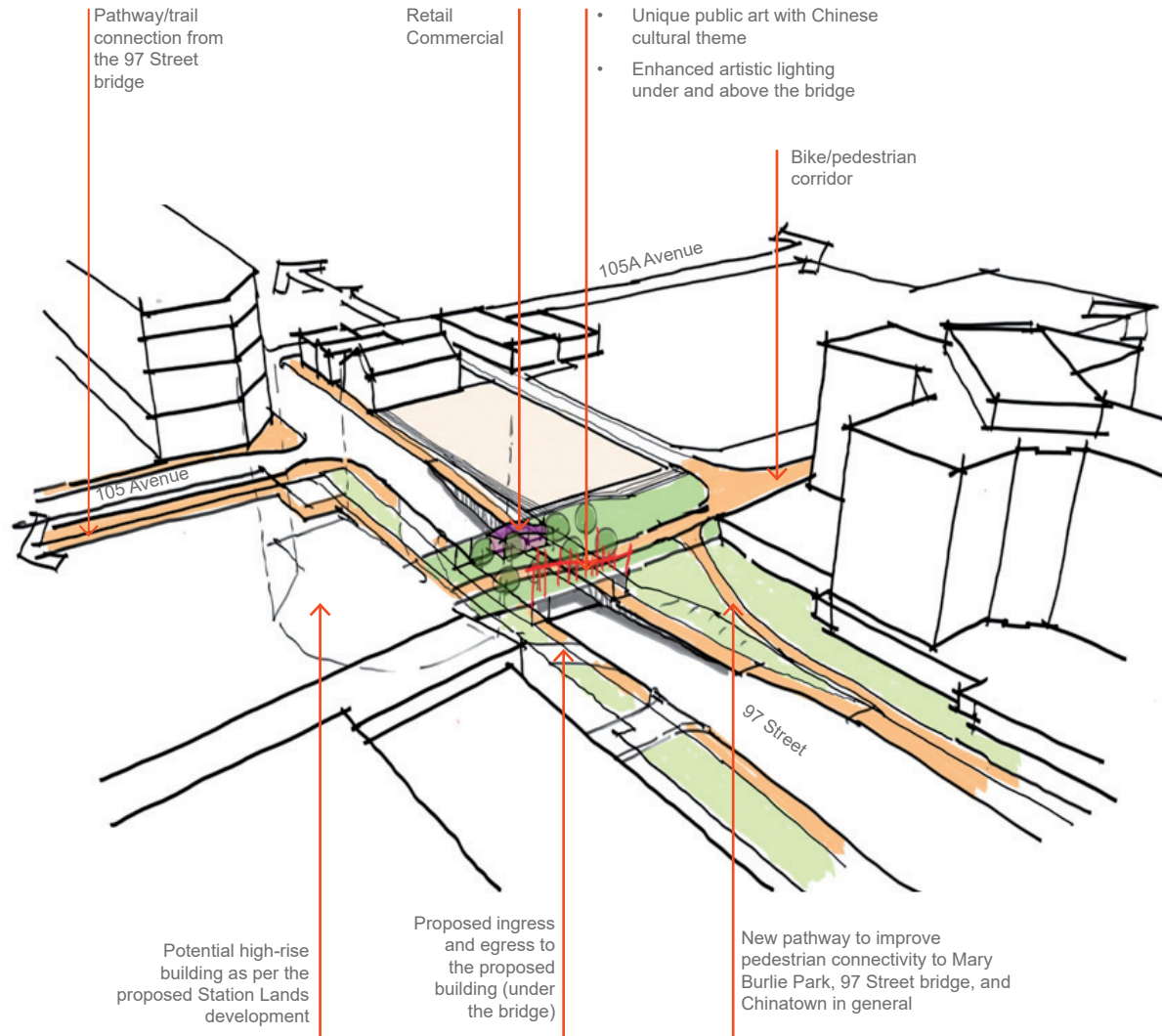


Architectural lighting



Architectural lighting (<http://thehypebr.com/2013/08/08/tunnel-abandonado-e-transformado-em-obra-de-arte-por-bill-fitzgibbons/>)





- Unique public art with Chinese cultural theme
- Enhanced artistic lighting under and above the bridge

**OPTION 1**

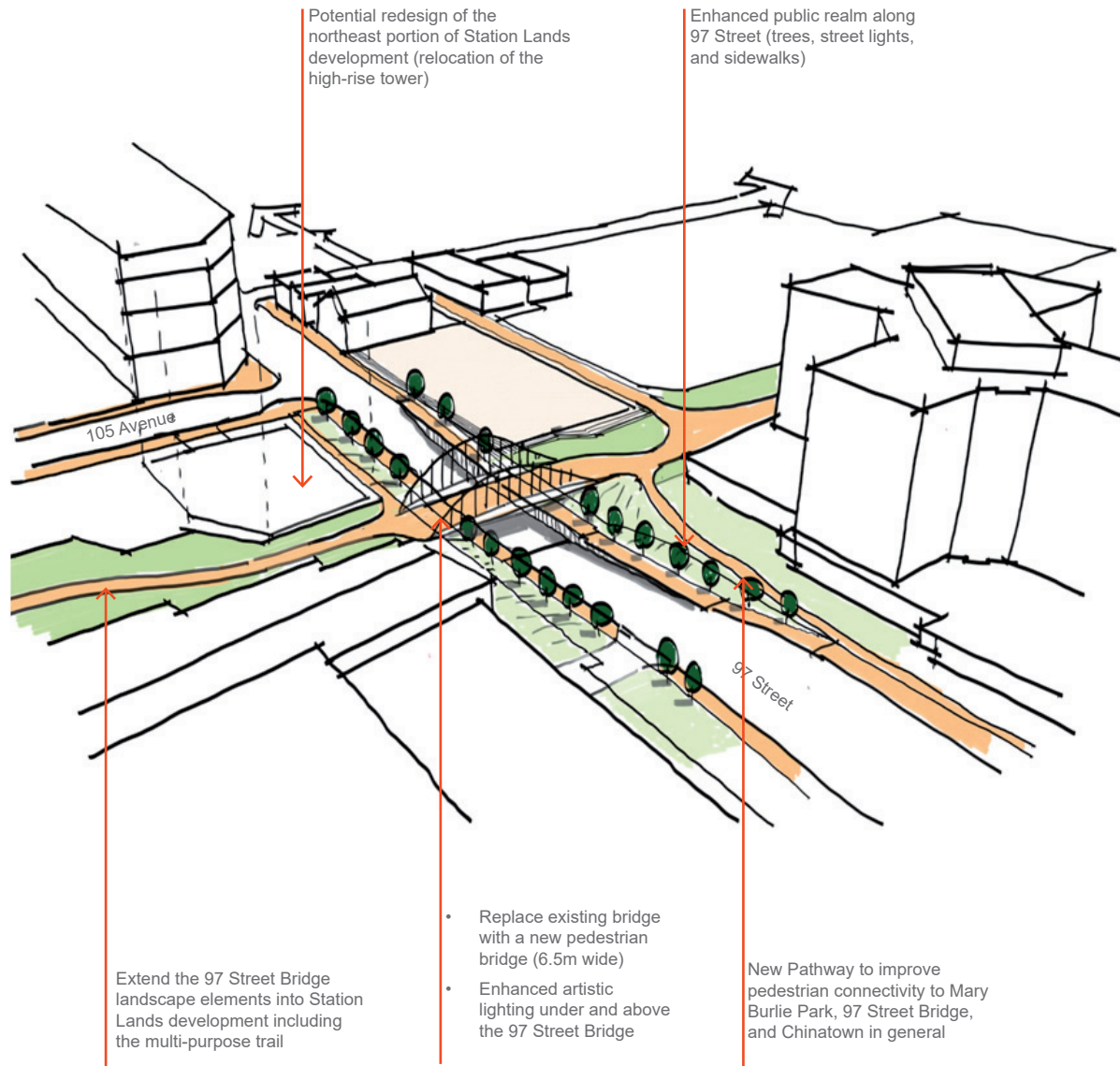
**Key Design Features**

- Maintain existing bridge
- Retail kiosk on the bridge
- Architectural lighting under and above the existing bridge
- Public Art
- New asphalt trail with retaining wall and handrail (east of 97 Street)
- Asphalt trail connection above the bridge
- Intersection enhancements at 105 Avenue and 97 Street
- Concrete sidewalk replacement (97 Street)
- Asphalt roadway (97 Street)
- Landscape rehabilitation and removals
- Paint the bridge as a temporary short-term initiative

**Economic Benefits**

The 97 Street Bridge is one of the last remaining aspects of the rail infrastructure in the city core. New lighting and public art enhancements would help firmly establish the 97 Street Bridge as a key gateway to the Chinatown-North district. This option would enhance pedestrian connectivity and safety along 97 Street while conserving this architectural element. The 97 Street Bridge would also provide the much-needed east-west pedestrian and bike connectivity to draw people into the future Station Lands development. The bridge enhancements would provide an important trigger to change the negative perception of the area and help in attracting more visitors.

**Figure 23: Option 1-Keep and enhance the existing bridge**



## OPTION 2

### Key Design Features

- Demolition and removal of existing bridge
- Modifications to substructure elements
- New 6.5m width pedestrian bridge (architectural structure)
- New asphalt trail with retaining wall and handrail (east of 97 Street)
- New asphalt trail connection above the bridge
- Concrete sidewalk replacement (97 Street)
- Asphalt roadway (97 Street)
- Boulevard trees and sod on topsoil (97 Street)
- Landscape rehabilitation and removals

### Economic Benefits

Developing a new narrower and architecturally significant bridge would provide a sense of gateway and also minimize safety issues at this location. An enhanced multi-use trail above this bridge would maintain the east-west trail connection to Station Lands development. The new bridge may help establish a contemporary image to this historic cultural district, which may in turn help attract new businesses to the area.

Figure 24: Option 2-Replace the bridge with a new pedestrian bridge



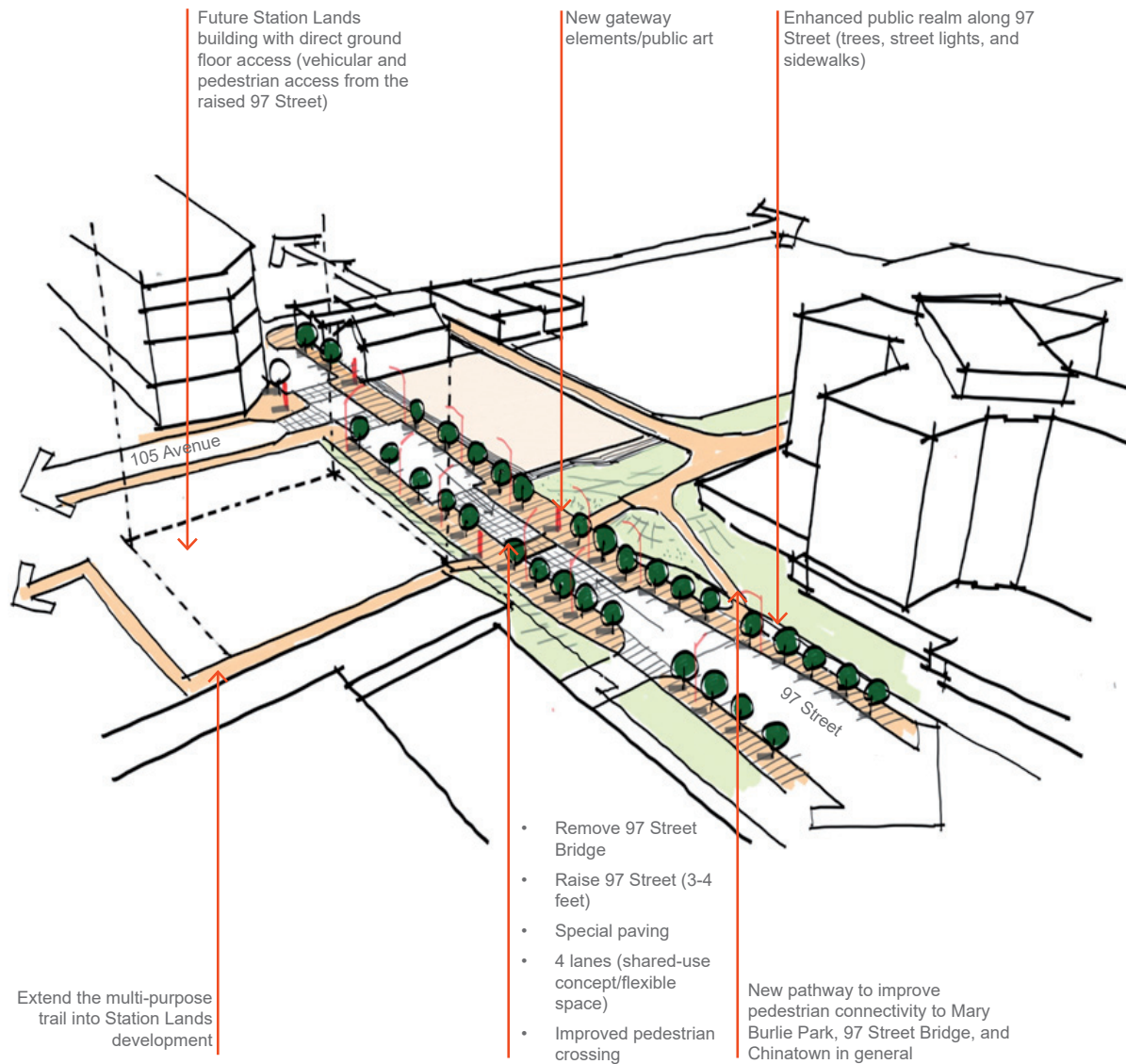
**OPTION 3**

**Key Design Features**

- Demolition and removal of existing bridge
- New asphalt trail with retaining wall and handrail (east of 97 Street)
- Asphalt road removal
- New asphalt road
- Decorative concrete mid-block crossings, intersection treatment
- New concrete stairs connecting 97 Street to existing and potential multi-use trails as well as Mary Burle Park
- Landscape rehabilitation and removals
- Streetscape Options:
  - 3A-Curb to property line enhanced streetscape
  - 3B-Boulevard landscaping and decorative concrete

**Economic Benefits**

Removing 97 Street Bridge and developing a pedestrian friendly streetscape would establish a strong sense of arrival to the Chinatown-North district. The enhanced streetscape would play a key role in improving safety and help in attracting more visitors from the downtown. Mid-block pedestrian crossing would maintain east-west trail connection to Station Lands development. The bridge removal may significantly help improve the image of the area at this key gateway location.



**Figure 25: Option 3-Remove the bridge and develop a pedestrian friendly streetscape**

### 3.3.4. DEVELOP CRITERIA FOR RELOCATION OF HARBIN GATE

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Harbin Gate is a historic landmark located at the edge of Chinatown South at the intersection of 97 Street and 102 Avenue. The City of Edmonton is currently undertaking its removal from the current location to make way for the Valley Line LRT planning to run through the area along 102 Avenue. There may be a unique opportunity to incorporate key elements of the current gate in the potential Chinatown Economic Development Zone in Chinatown-North. The relocated gateway elements may play a key role in improving the cultural image of Chinatown North.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria/guidelines should be considered for potential relocation of Harbin Gate:

- Consider incorporating elements of the Harbin Gate within potential new gateways or entrance features at the following locations:
  - At the intersection of 101 Street and 106 Avenue
  - At the intersection of 101 Street and 107 Avenue
  - In potential parks or open spaces
- If on-street relocation of the gateway elements is not feasible, park locations within Chinatown should be considered. Use of architectural elements of potentially dismantled Harbin Gate in other public spaces would provide an alternative option to preserve and utilize this historically significant architectural heritage monument in the new Chinatown Economic Development Zone.
- An opportunity for relocating the Harbin Gate in close proximity of Jasper Avenue and 97 Street should be considered. Such location would establish a key landmark along 97 Street that may complement the existing Gate of Happy Arrival in Chinatown North.

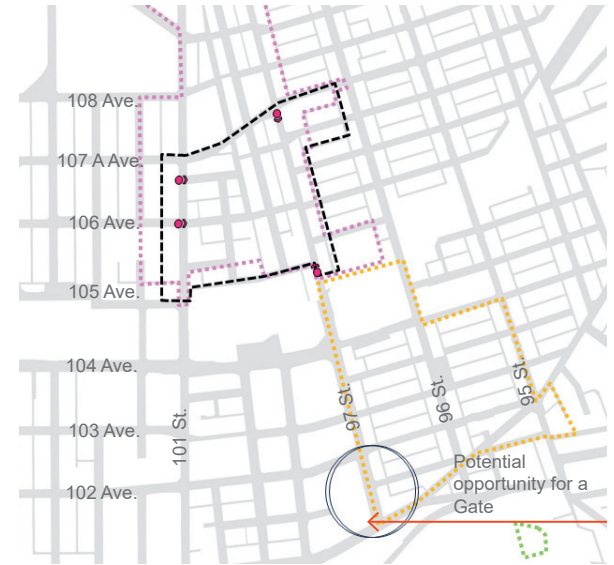


Figure 26: Potential relocation of Harbin Gate

- Chinatown Economic Development Study Area
- Chinatown Business Revitalization Zone
- Old Chinatown
- Existing/potential gateways



Harbin Gate at the intersection of 97 Street and 102 Avenue



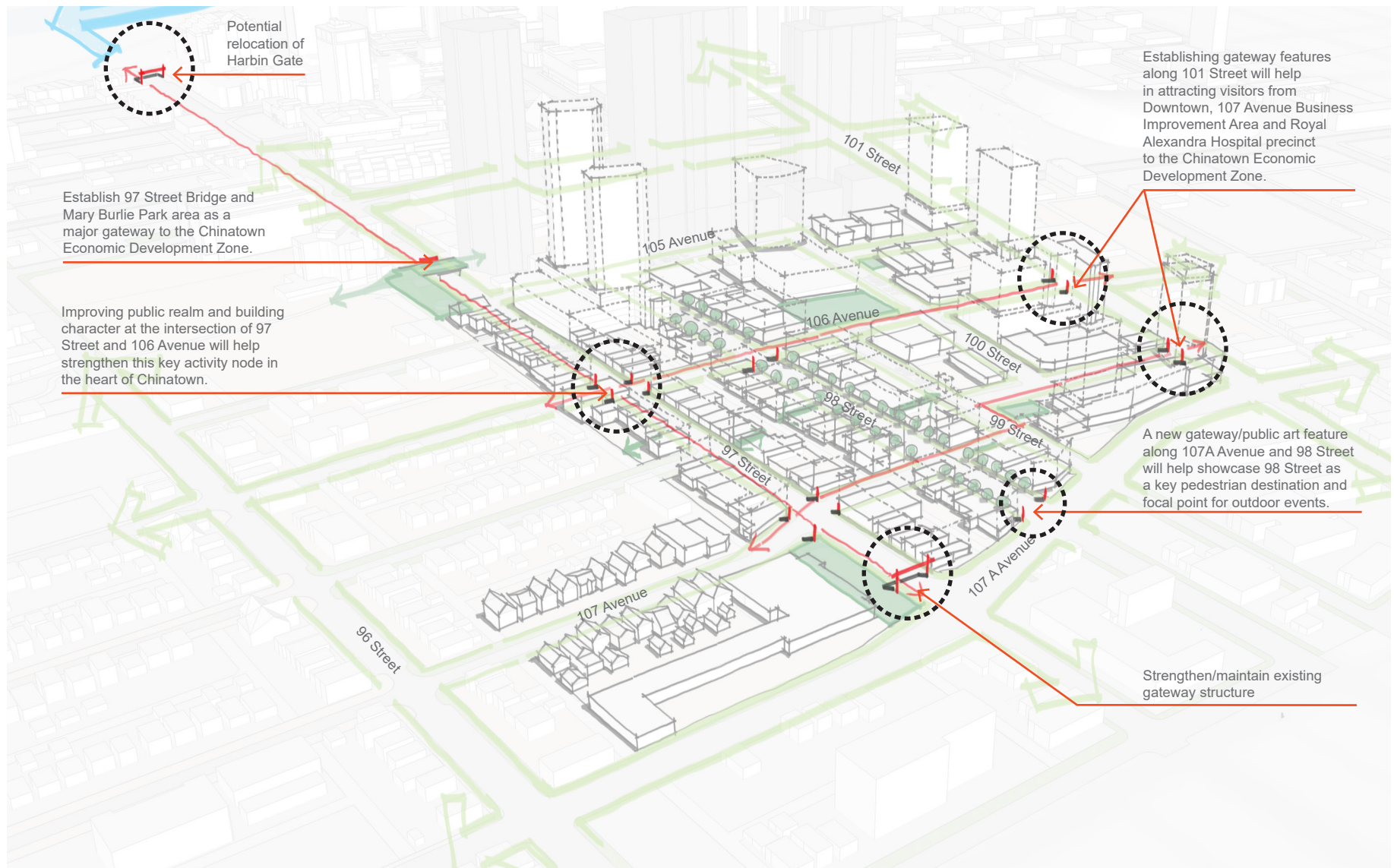


Figure 27: Potential gateway opportunities for the Chinatown Economic Development Zone

### 3.3.5. IDENTIFY EXISTING HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND PROVIDE DIRECTION FOR AREAS AROUND THEM

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Heritage buildings are reminders of the past and are key assets of any neighbourhood. Neighbourhoods or commercial districts with a rich inventory of heritage buildings provide a unique historical context to the changing urban fabric around them. Well-preserved and well-integrated heritage buildings act as landmarks and focal points. Special care should be taken to ensure the areas around respect their character and scale. Districts with a rich inventory of heritage assets are inherently pedestrian-friendly due to their scale, architectural details and ground-floor interface. There are two designated heritage buildings in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. Along 97 Street, there are a few other buildings that are not registered under the City's heritage inventory, but have some heritage/cultural value.

The following three designated municipal heritage buildings exist in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone.

**Hull Block:** The building is an excellent example of an Edwardian era combination commercial and residential block, using red brick with pressed-metal and cast stone features on the two corner façades with white lime brick on the rear façades. The building design reflects the influence of the Edwardian era with a tripartite façade arrangement and tall glazed storefronts for commercial uses.

**Immigration Hall:** Designed in 1927 and constructed in 1930, Immigration Hall is significant as a federal government building in Edmonton from the inter-war period and is an excellent example of the Classical Revival architectural style. It possesses design characteristics typical to other urban federal buildings built at the time, including the heavy massing, use of brick and stone, prominent front entrance, central flag pole, symmetrical fenestration, flat roof and cornice. It is one of three surviving post-World War One Immigration Halls in western Canada, and was the last and most elaborate of a series of immigration halls erected across the Prairies over a 50-year period.

**Cameron Block:** Cameron Block, located at the intersection of 97 Street and 105 Avenue, is significant for its association with early commercial development on 97 Street. Its architecture is representative of Edmonton's commercial architecture during the Edwardian era.

Improving public realm around these heritage resources would improve their overall appeal and help in integrating them with the surrounding pedestrian network and key landmarks. Such enhanced heritage focal points help in attracting high-quality developments around them.

In addition to these three designated municipal historic resources, four additional buildings identified in Figure 28 are also identified in Edmonton's inventory of historic resources.



**Figure 28: Existing historic resources**

- Designated municipal historic resources
- ① Immigration Hall
- ② Hull Block
- ③ Cameron Block
- Buildings on the municipal inventory of historic resources
- ④ Safeway store
- ⑤ Ukrainian National Federation
- ⑥ Edmonton Public Schools Maintenance Building
- ⑦ Perfection Tailoring and Clothing Company
- Key nodes for public realm improvements



### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for potential public/private realm improvements around existing heritage buildings and historic resources:

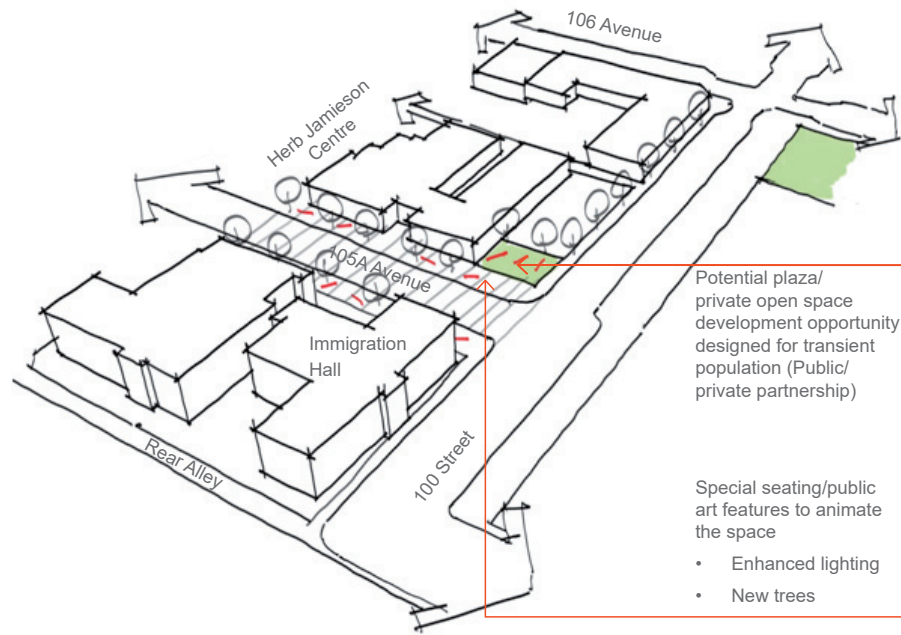
- Encourage buildings surrounding existing heritage buildings provide context-sensitive materials and appropriate architectural language.
- Buildings adjacent to or in close proximity of existing heritage buildings may be designed in any architectural style, but should be encouraged to respect key architectural elements such as cornices, materiality and roof lines.
- Wayfinding signage should be strategically located around key heritage buildings to direct pedestrians and auto-travelers towards them.
- Special night lighting should be encouraged for heritage buildings in order to enhance their impact as landmarks.



Immigraton Hall

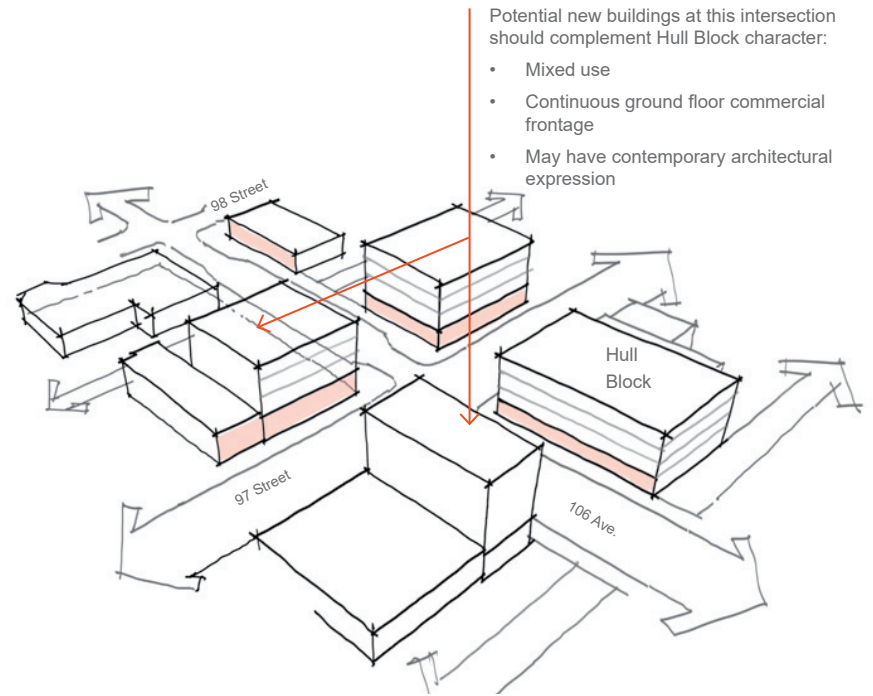


Hull Block



**Figure 29: Public realm improvements at 100 Street and 105A Avenue**

An opportunity exists to improve the public realm quality around two key landmarks/destinations in the area such as the Immigration Hall and Herb Jamieson Centre-Hope Mission. This area is often frequented by the transient population. Improved public realm with trees, seating areas, public art and a small plaza would contribute towards improving a sense of safety at this key urban node.



**Figure 30: Urban node 2-Hull Block (97 Street and 106 Avenue)**

Hull Block located at the intersection of 106 Avenue and 97 Street is one of the key historic landmarks in Chinatown-North. It stands out at this urban node due to its architectural significance and height. Other parcels at this intersection have low-rise single-storey buildings with active businesses at the ground floor level. These parcels have potential for redevelopment in the long-term. Potential redevelopment at this intersection should be encouraged and be required to complement the architectural language and character of Hull Block. Such approach would strengthen the potential of this urban node as a key focal point in the area.



**3.3.6. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO REUSE EXISTING DECORATIVE LANTERN-STYLE STREET LIGHTS AS PUBLIC ART**

**ECONOMIC DRIVERS**

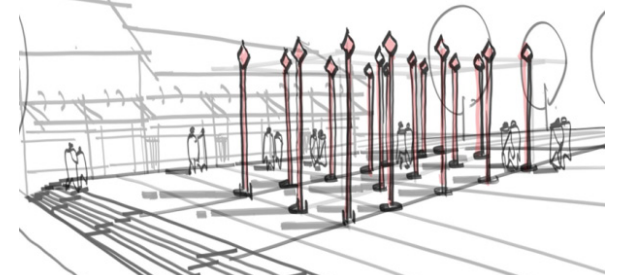
Renewal plans are in place to refresh the street lights along both the east and west sides of 97 Street within the focused Economic Development Zone. The renewal is part of a scheduled 20-year infrastructure plan and needed in order to improve the quality of lights on sidewalks and streets. The plan intends to remove the decorative lantern-style pedestrian street lights with more modern, decorative city standard light poles in red colour.

The lantern-style lights have enhanced the character of Chinatown for the past few decades and since they are not able to be refurbished in place, a creative and innovative opportunity to reuse these street lights should be pursued. The idea of recycling old infrastructure into something transformative and interesting can contribute to economic development, if done well. Securing support to store and refurbish and reinstall these fixtures in a new place or configuration could be transformational.

**PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES**

The following criteria should be utilized for reusing existing decorative lantern-style street lights in Chinatown:

- Incorporate aspects of the existing decorative lantern-style street lights into one or multiple public art installations. The City should work with Edmonton Arts Council or other art organizations to organize a design competition to attract innovative design ideas.
- Utilize aspects of existing decorative lantern-style street lights as lighting for public parks within Chinatown.
- Strengthen main pedestrian connections into Chinatown by reusing aspects of the existing decorative lantern-style street lights.



Concept for potential public art installation



Existing decorative pedestrian lights along 97 Street

### 3.3.7. PROVIDE DIRECTION FOR CONNECTING EXISTING/FUTURE OPEN SPACES WITHIN CHINATOWN WITH SURROUNDING OPEN SPACE NETWORK

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

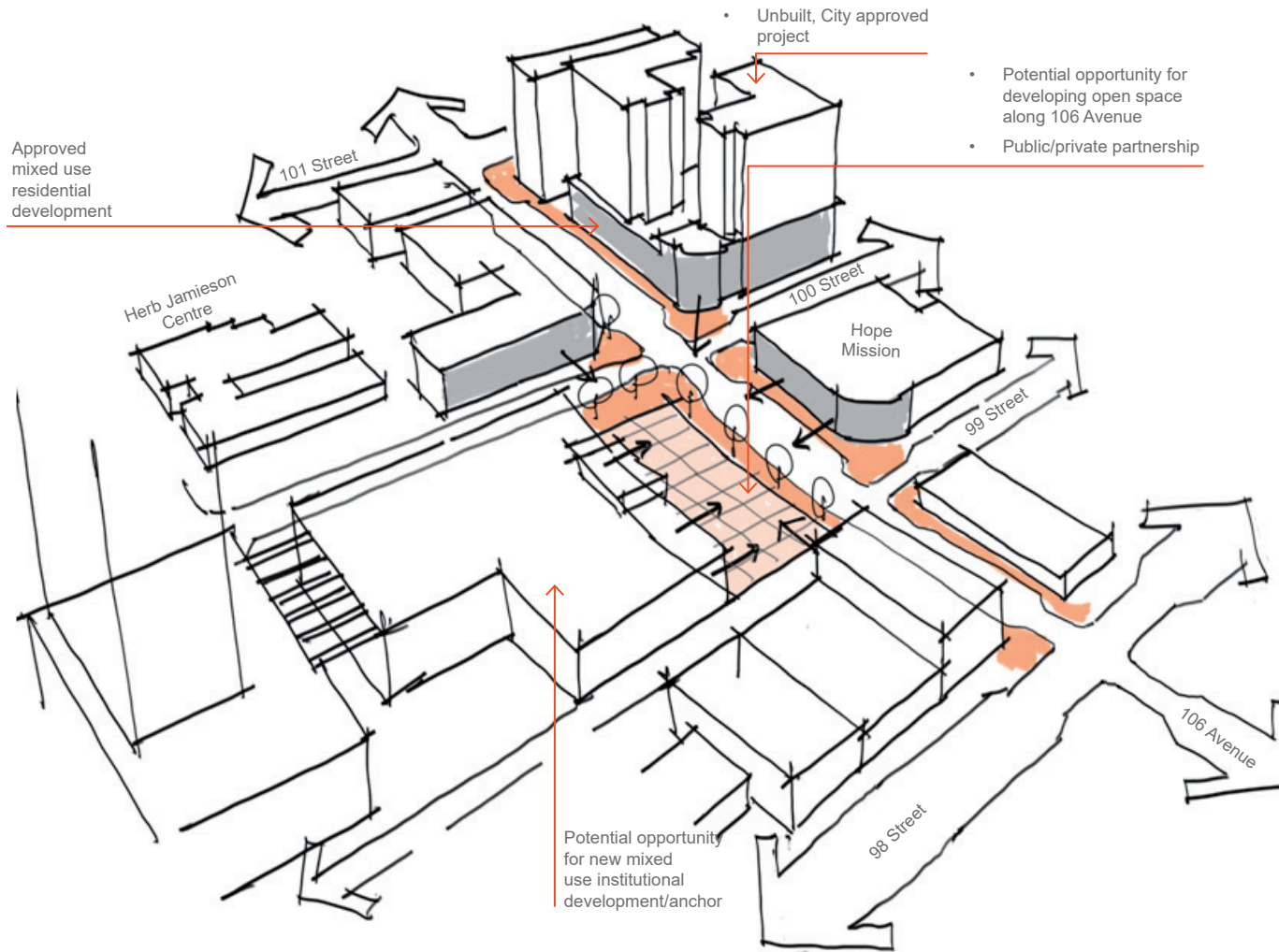
Improved connectivity to surrounding City-level open spaces and destinations brings more traffic and people to the area and supports the establishment of vibrant places. The primary functions of open space, as organized in Breathe-Edmonton's Green Network Strategy are organized into three central themes, which are ecology, celebration, and wellness. Of particular relevance to Edmonton's Chinatown is the theme of celebration which can encompass great community building benefits by enhancing aesthetic value, public safety, and highlight the cultural or historic value of an area. A rich network of interconnected open spaces within a neighbourhood plays a key role in attracting new market housing and improves the viability of the commercial districts nearby. The variety of interconnected open spaces including parks, neighbourhood plazas, pocket parks and linear walkways/trails help in leveraging physical assets from surrounding neighbourhoods and contribute towards the overall appeal and vibrancy of the area.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria/guidelines should be utilized to improve open space connectivity:

- Develop a variety of open spaces including pocket parks, small plazas, and public parks at locations such as:
  - Along 106 Avenue and 97 Street;
  - At key urban nodes and along key pedestrian routes; and
  - Along key existing/potential bike routes and trails.
- Large-scale gathering spaces should predominantly utilize hardscaping techniques to allow accommodation of large crowds on regular basis. Such approach would allow creation of flexible programmable urban spaces with low maintenance cost for the City Departments. Special emphasis should be placed on including culturally significant focal points. The open space design should incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to ensure 24-7 safe spaces.
- All public open spaces should have at least one major frontage along the public street. The buildings around public open spaces should be encouraged to provide eyes on the street by creating transparent and active frontages at the edges of the public space. Such active building frontages with people-oriented businesses at ground floor would help in animating the open spaces and establish a safer environment.
- As a condition of redevelopment, private land owners should be encouraged to provide privately owned but publicly accessible landscaped open spaces. Such spaces should complement the public realm theme along the public street to achieve a unified impact. This approach would also allow creation of culturally unique and locally relevant public spaces throughout the community without incurring significant capital costs for the City. Incentives such as a density bonus may be considered in return for high-quality public spaces and off-site improvements.
- Provincially-owned land within Chinatown should be considered for alternative uses such as cultural gatherings, public markets and other opportunities during off-peak days and hours. These spaces should complement the existing open space network.
- Presence of a number of underutilized vacant lots spread throughout the community negatively impacts the aesthetic image of the areas as well as the pedestrian experience. Interim measures such as community gardens provide people-oriented activities that help in animating the area without requiring significant capital costs. Temporary use of vacant lots for temporary public use allows future redevelopment of those parcels subject to positive market conditions. In addition to community gardens, opportunities for short-term landscaping solutions such as mid-block pathways, temporary seating areas and public art should be encouraged.
- The important cultural and social history of the area provides the strongest asset to the economic future of Chinatown. It is essential to capitalize on existing cultural themes in open spaces to strengthen the identity and destination appeal of the area.





**Figure 31: Urban node 5-Hope Mission (100 Street and 106 Avenue)**

The large parcel of land located between 106 Avenue, 105 Avenue, 99 Street, and 100 Street is publically owned and has the potential for future redevelopment. This parcel of land has significant frontage along 106 Avenue, which is one of the key east-west connections in the area. Recent public realm improvements along 106 Avenue also strengthens its role as a key

pedestrian-friendly corridor in the Chinatown-North district.

An opportunity exists to develop a privately owned and publically-accessible open space/plaza/park on this parcel in partnership with the existing or future landowner. This approach would allow for the creation of a much-needed centrally located open space in

the Chinatown-North district without compromising the development potential of this key land parcel. Opportunity also exists to promote the development of a mixed-use institutional/residential development at this location that may serve as a unique cultural destination for citizens and tourists alike.

### 3.3.8. IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH KEY VIEW CORRIDORS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Identification of key view corridors helps in defining locations for potential landmarks in the area attributing to the destination appeal. Well-defined view corridors provide direction for the design of buildings and spaces along the sightlines of the established view corridor. Identifying key view corridors and potential locations for new landmarks provide clear direction to the development industry and assist in attracting context-sensitive development at right locations. Establishing clarity about design expectations along key corridors contributes positively towards creating cohesive urban development and in turn economic development of the overall district.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for establishing key view corridors in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:

- Encourage new developments in close proximity to an existing landmark to provide special public realm elements, setbacks, and massing that collectively enhance the visual image of the existing and potential landmarks.
- Encourage new developments along the established view corridors to incorporate visual cues and create a directional flow in public realm intensity directed towards the established landmarks. Such measures may include increasing the intensity and design articulation of public realm elements including enhanced landscaping features, lighting, and similar features towards the direction of the landmark located at the end of the view corridor.
- Hull Block and the Gateway of Happy Arrival are key landmarks within the focused Chinatown Economic Development Zone.
- Locations at the termination of established view corridors provide opportunities for potential landmark buildings. Potential landmarks identified in Figure 32 should include special design features such as strong vertical architectural elements, enhanced building frontages and special materials/colours. These potential landmarks at the termination of 107 Avenue, 100 Street, 99 Street, and 98 Street would provide additional visual cues to attract people to Chinatown and connect Chinatown to key potential future destination such as Station Lands development.

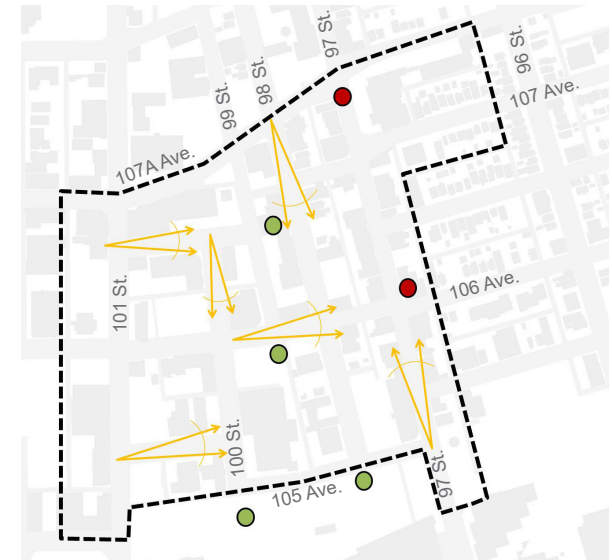
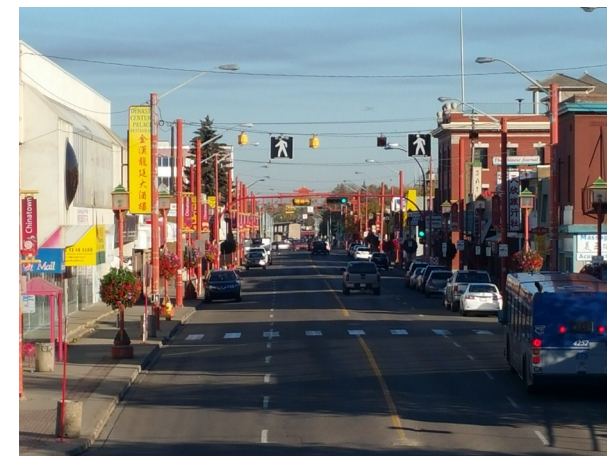
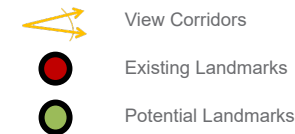


Figure 32: Key landmarks and view corridors



97 Street (looking north)



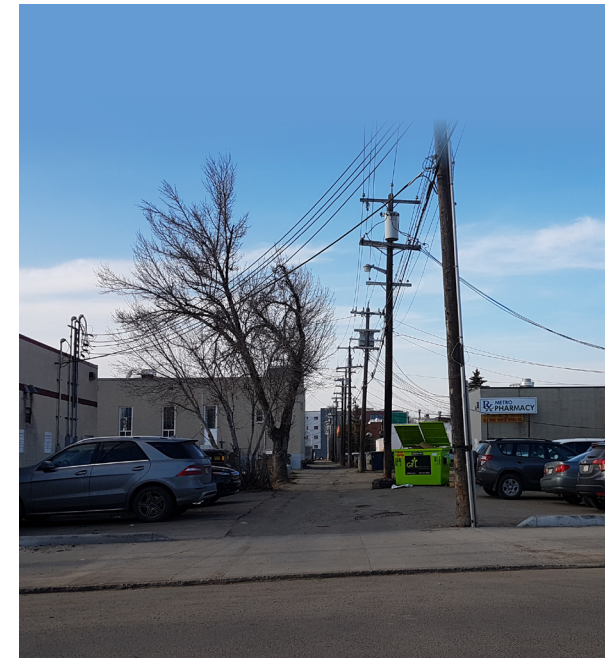
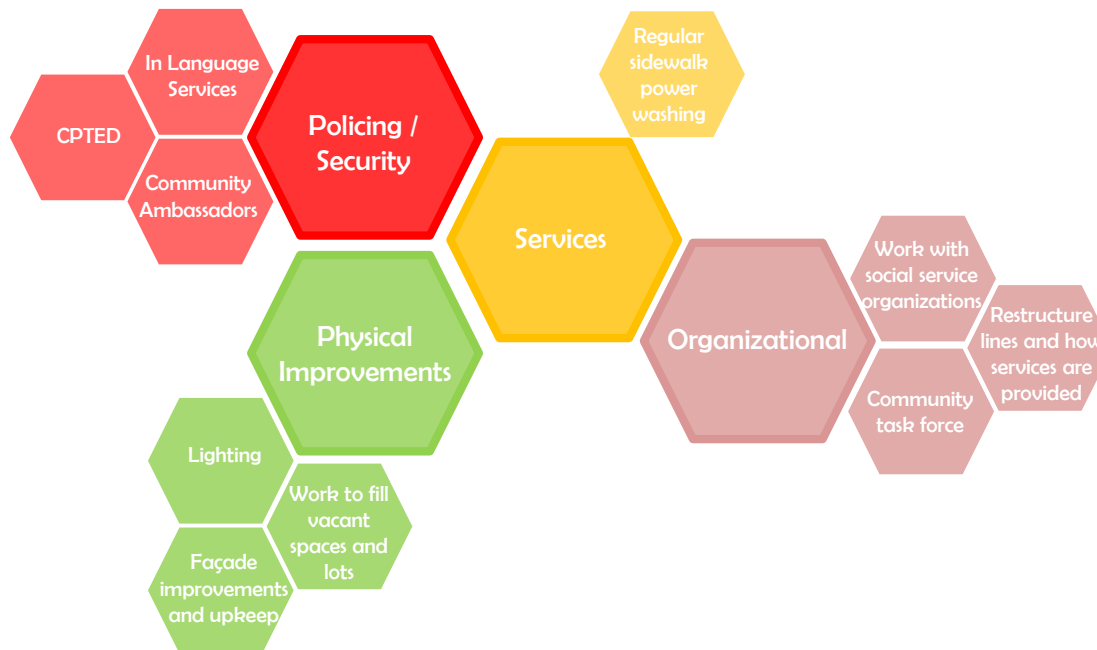
### 3.4. IMPROVE SENSE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

The sense of safety and security is a vital attribute for any vibrant thriving place. Real and perceived safety and security issues are identified as the primary challenge that negatively impacts the image of the area and poses barriers for promoting the area to visitors and business owners. Input received from the community and the existing business owners cite challenges to manage and mitigate the negative impacts of a large homeless population in the area and the strain of additional cost of property maintenance. The Chinatown Economic Development Plan outlined the following key recommendations:

- Undertake physical improvements in the area with focus on lighting, developing vacant lots, and façade improvement/upkeep.
- Invest in resources related to policing and security in general with a focus on incorporating CPTED principles in design of public spaces, identifying local community ambassadors, and providing language services to area residents.
- Invest in improved services including regular sidewalk power washing and neighbourhood cleanup.
- Improve organizational capacity of the City and the BIA by working closely with existing social service agencies, establishing a community task force, and revisiting service delivery approach.

Based on the direction established in the Chinatown Economic Development Plan, the following placemaking tools may be the fundamental first steps towards improving safety and security in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone:

- Identify criteria to contribute to safe spaces.
- Identify criteria for successful public washrooms and other amenities around key nodes and activity areas.



Rear alley east of 97 Street

Figure 33: Safety and security related recommendations from the Chinatown Economic Development Plan

### 3.4.1. IDENTIFY CRITERIA TO CONTRIBUTE TO SAFE SPACES

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The general perception is that Chinatown is currently an unsafe place attributed to presence of a high homeless population, poor lighting in some areas and ongoing undesirable activities at certain locations.

The most recent safety audit - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) study was completed in 2010, for a portion of Chinatown located between 97 Street, 98 Street, 105 Avenue, and 107A Avenue. A comprehensive updated CPTED analysis should be undertaken for the entire Chinatown Economic Development Zone with emphasis on identifying areas of concern to fully evaluate the current environment and understand mitigation measures that can be employed to address current safety and security issues.

Although the area has some unique cultural assets including a wide range of active businesses along 97 Street corridor, the negative perception about safety and security is a major barrier for attracting new visitors to the area especially in the late evening and night time. The negative perception of the area also limits its potential to become a true destination of choice for tourists and market housing developments. Over the years some of the local Chinese businesses have also moved out to other parts of the city due to safety issues. Public places with good lighting, active building frontages, and good pedestrian oriented amenities are perceived as safer places and help attract 24/7 activities that contribute to the overall vibrancy of the area.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for improving safety and security in Chinatown:

##### Alleyways:

- Encourage businesses to remove clutter in the back alleys.
- Encourage key businesses to undertake building maintenance including lighting, painting, and landscape improvements.
- Encourage businesses to provide secondary entrances fronting rear alleys. This may help significantly in animating rear alleys.

##### Vacant properties:

- Work with property owners and explore ways to provide temporary public spaces including seating areas and similar landscape elements.
- Focus on establishing a sense of continuous frontages by careful use of landscape elements and architectural features.
- Encourage businesses to maximize transparent facades along ground floor frontage.

##### Unkempt facades:

- Encourage business owners to take advantage of the City's Façade Improvement Program and improve the aesthetic qualities of building facades.

##### Parking lots:

- Existing large-scale parking lots should be encouraged to provide enhanced lighting within and at the lot edges to improve safety.

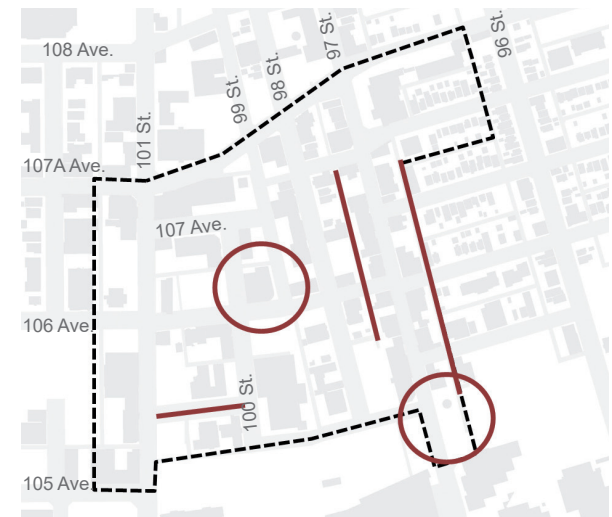
##### Areas around existing Social agencies:

- Work with existing social agencies to establish better relationships and a better understanding to minimize conflicts between peak business hours and key event times.
- The City should partner with existing social agencies and encourage them to maintain and

beautify the public-private interface along their properties.

##### Public Parks:

- Potential public parks should be located in areas with high visibility and have at least two frontages along public streets.
- Design of park spaces should incorporate CPTED design principles and avoid use of landscape and architectural elements that create unsafe environments.



**Figure 34: Areas with safety concerns**

Key areas with safety concerns



97 Street Bridge

### 3.4.2. IDENTIFY CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC WASHROOMS AND OTHER AMENITIES AROUND KEY NODES AND ACTIVITY AREAS

#### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The concentration of a large number of social agencies, religious assemblies, and non-market housing in Chinatown and surrounding neighbourhoods creates a number of challenges and opportunities. Lack of amenities for the vulnerable population results in misuse of public and private properties for unsightly activities. Provision of public washrooms in close proximity to the existing service providers and social agencies may minimize the negative perception of the area and improve the health and safety of the neighbourhood. Establishing a positive perception and image is essential for achieving sustained economic development in Chinatown.

#### PLACEMAKING CRITERIA/GUIDELINES

The following criteria should be utilized for establishing the design and location of potential public amenities for the transient population:

##### Public Washrooms

- Public washrooms should use context appropriate and functional designs and be located at highly visible locations in close proximity to key nodes.
- Designated hours of operation should be scheduled for public washrooms in order to avoid illegal activities and ensure regular maintenance.
- The City should explore the viability of public-private partnerships for the delivery and day-to-day operation of publically accessible washrooms in private buildings.

##### Other Amenities

- Outdoor seating areas with artistic designs should be considered for locations in close proximity to existing social agencies and service providers.
- Options for temporary seating on private properties should be explored in consultation with service providers and private property owners.



Public Washroom along Whyte Avenue, Edmonton



### 3.5. KEY SITE SPECIFIC PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

The placemaking criteria identified in this document provide a framework for future investments. Figure 35 and Table 1.0 illustrate how various placemaking tools identified in this report can be implemented at specific sites in the Chinatown Economic Development Zone. Table 1.0 also allocates priority to each placemaking project. The high priority projects identified in Table 1.0 have potential to provide the much-needed impetus for economic transformation of Chinatown district.



Temporary culturally themed art installations

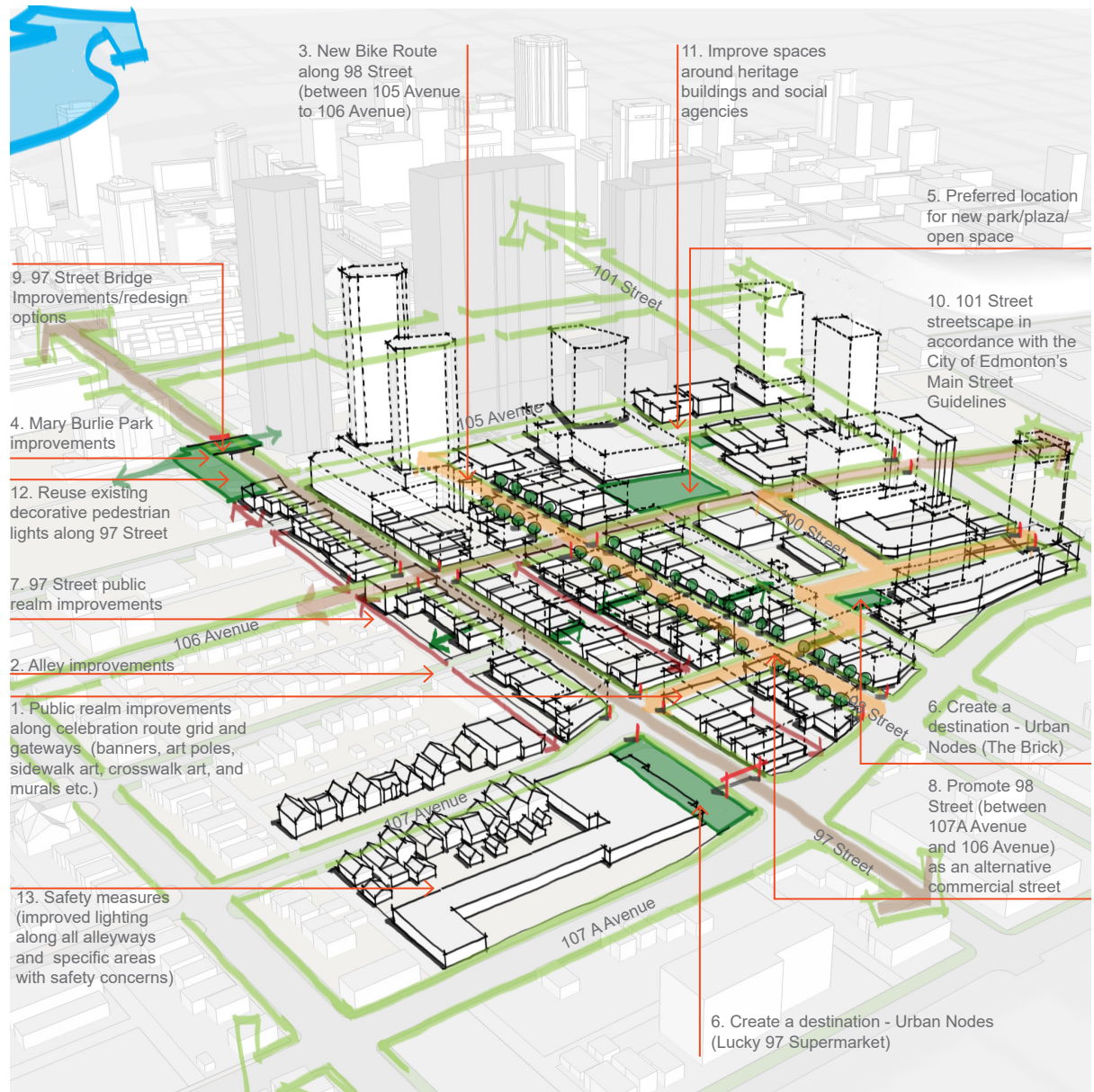


Figure 35: Key site specific placemaking opportunities

Table 1.0

**Focused Economic Development**

	Key Projects	Priority
1.	Public realm improvements along celebration route grid and gateways (banners, art poles, sidewalk art, crosswalk art, and murals)	High
2.	Alley improvements	Low
3.	New bike route along 98 Street (between 105 Avenue to 106 Avenue)	Low

**Celebrate Chinatown as a Destination**

	Key Projects	Priority
4.	Mary Burlie Park improvements	High
5.	New park/plaza/open space	High/medium
6.	Urban nodes improvement (node 2-Hull Block, node 3-Lucky 97 Supermarket, node 4-The Brick, node 5 - Hope Mission)	Medium

**Enhance Built Form, Landmarks, and Open Spaces**

	Key Projects	Priority
7.	97 Street public realm improvements	High
8.	Promote 98 Street (between 107A Avenue and 106 Avenue) as an alternative commercial street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared use concept</li> <li>• Promote opportunities for cultural expression/public art</li> <li>• Promote outdoor events (night markets, on-street celebration space)</li> </ul>	High
9.	97 Street Bridge improvements/redesign options	High
10.	101 Street improvements in accordance with the City of Edmonton's Main Street Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidewalk improvement, trees, and lights</li> <li>• Public realm improvements around transit stops</li> </ul>	Medium
11.	Improve spaces around heritage buildings and social agencies	Medium
12.	Reuse existing decorative pedestrian lights and develop a unique public art installation	Low/medium

**Improve Sense of Safety and Security**

	Key Projects	Priority
13.	Safety measures (improved lighting along all alleyways and specific areas with safety concerns)	High

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