

# IDEAS PLAN

## A Design Charette for the Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue Area

May 1998

Never adopted  
by Council

Prepared by  
Ideas Plan  
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# IDEAS PLAN: A Design Charette for the Quadra Street/Mckenzie Avenue Area

## Introduction

Council directed that a design charette be undertaken for lands around the Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue intersection. A charette was held March 13 and 14th 1998. Part A of this report presents the activities and results from the charette process and has the support of the Team members.

The consulting architects were directed to build on the work of the Team and to prepare an urban design analysis, an overall plan and selected illustrations which highlight a key issue or concept. Part B of the report contains this material which reflects the experience and expertise of the architects.

# PART A:

## Ideas Plan Process, Activities and Results

### Design Charette

#### *What is a charette?*

A charette is a way of illustrating or putting into pictures a vision for an area. Participants explore opportunities and constraints then brainstorm to create a broad urban design and land use concept. The concept illustrates general size, massing and overall land use and is often presented in a visual format, and may include site specific design guidelines. It does not provide details to the level required for a rezoning or development permit application.

The term "charette" was coined by students at the School of Architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the late 1800's. The architecture students would be given a complicated and challenging design problem, and a limited time to complete it. At the end of the allotted time, a pushcart or "charette" was pushed past the drafting tables and the students would have to throw in their drawings, completed or not.

In recent years, charettes have moved beyond the university setting to become a planning tool at the municipal level. Along with architects, participants can include landscape architects, planners, engineers, landowners, business people, and interested residents.

#### *Why do a Charette?*

The purpose of the charette was to develop an urban design and land use concept for the area around the Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue intersection that could be referenced by Council when considering redevelopment proposals including consideration of relocating its Public Works Yard from its property on McKenzie Avenue.

The charette is a first step in a community planning process to develop a comprehensive plan for this area. The results will act as a catalyst for the development industry and provide direction and inspiration for future proposals. The process provides the Municipality with the opportunity to be proactive about redevelopment in the area as opposed to reacting to individual proposals.

The charette provided the forum to explore the opportunities and constraints of the site to develop an overall vision for the future. It produced conceptual drawings that illustrate the general size, massing, and land use for the site along with design guidelines. The plan is conceptual, meaning that it is not intended to provide the level of detail required for a development application and that the illustrations do not represent exactly what will be built.

#### *What is the Study Area?*

Figure 1 outlines the area included in the charette. It is bounded by Cedar Hill Cross Road on the north, Hulford Street on the south, Reynolds Junior Senior Secondary School on the east, and the commercial and industrial lands along the west side of Quadra Street. It contains the Municipal Public Works Yard, properties that may redevelop, and properties that are expected to remain the same over time. Sections of the regional trail bisect the area - called the Saanich Spur south of McKenzie Avenue and Lochside Trail north of McKenzie Avenue.

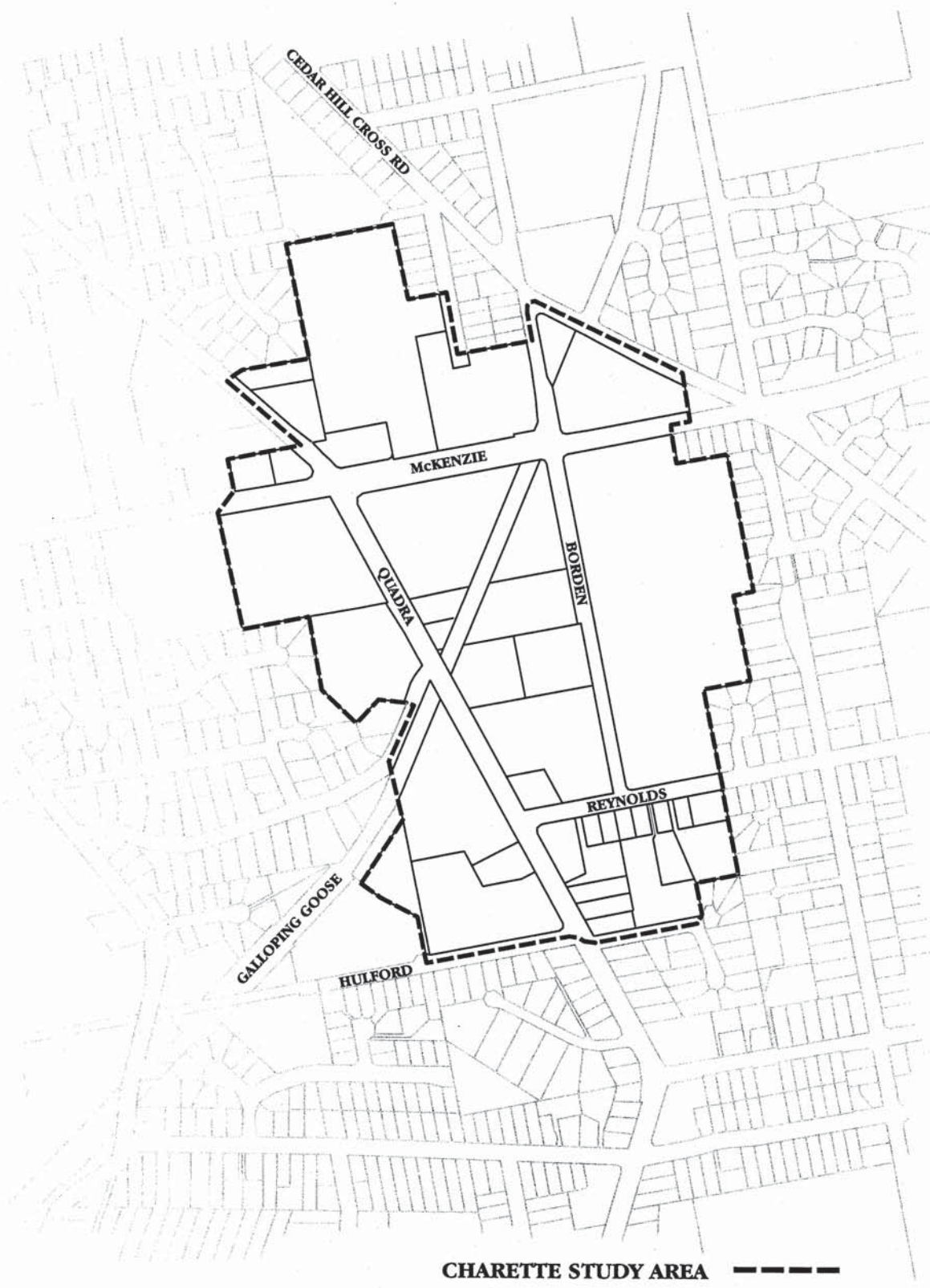


Figure 1 — Study Area Map.

## The Charette Team

The Team which participated in the charette comprised business and community representatives, municipal staff, Saanich Councillors, architects and designers. Staff from Saanich Planning, Engineering and Parks acted as facilitators and resource people for the charette.

### **Business Representatives**

- ◆ David Flaig, *Owner/Operator, Park Pacific Lumber World Ltd.*
- ◆ Jeff Freeland, *Owner/Operator, Dairy Queen*
- ◆ Ellen Gallacher, *Property Manager, Saanich Centre (Hansbraun Investments Ltd.)*
- ◆ Debbie Nikula, *Owner/Operator, Community Business Centre Services*

### **Community Representatives**

- ◆ Vic Derman, *North Quadra Land Use Protection Association*
- ◆ Diana Lucas, *North Quadra Land Use Protection Association*
- ◆ Vicki Sanders, *Quadra/Cedar Hill Community Association*
- ◆ Chris Goldburn, *Quadra/Cedar Hill Community Association*

### **Saanich Councillors**

- ◆ David Cubberley
- ◆ Sheila Orr

### **Architectural Consultants**

- ◆ Frank D'Ambrosio, *De Hoog D'Ambrosio Architects*
- ◆ Charles Kierulf, *De Hoog D'Ambrosio Architects*
- ◆ Eric Barker, *Eric Barker Architect Inc.*
- ◆ Margaret Newell, *Eric Barker Architect Inc.*

### **Municipal Staff**

- ◆ Alan Hopper, *Municipal Planner*
- ◆ Roger Tinney, *Planning*
- ◆ Pam Hartling, *Planning*
- ◆ Karen Hurley, *Environmental Planning*
- ◆ Rick Lloyd, *Deputy Engineer*
- ◆ Colin Doyle, *Engineering*
- ◆ Gerald Fleming, *Parks*
- ◆ Gary Darrah, *Parks*

### **Facilitators**

- ◆ June Klassen, *Planning*
- ◆ Anne Topp, *Planning*



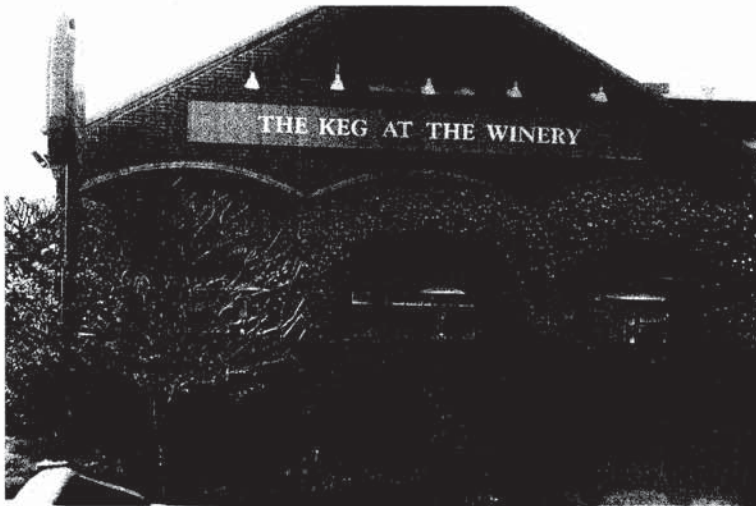
## Charette Activities

The charette was held on the evening of Friday March 13th and all day Saturday March 14th 1998. A follow up meeting was held on April 23rd to allow the Team to review and comment on the draft of Part A. The architects presented an overview of Part B: Urban Design for information. A variety of activities were scheduled for the charette.

### *Walkabout*

The charette started with a walkabout of the area on Friday evening. Municipal staff escorted the Team around the Municipal Public Works Yard, through the Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue intersection, up and down Quadra Street, behind buildings and along the regional trail (Saanich Spur/Lochside Trail).

Although most of the participants were generally familiar with the study area, the walkabout gave all members of the Team the opportunity to really look at the area and to see first hand some areas that they might not have visited. Before starting, the Team members were asked to note their impressions of the area - both good and bad and to remember surprises. Participants were encouraged to experience the area as if they were a child, or an elderly person to better understand the environment.



The walkabout was done in two groups. It revealed a surprising number of new impressions from the Team members. Following the walkabout, the participants were asked to share any new impressions of the site or surprises that they found. The comments included:

- ◆ the large amount of land devoted to surface parking
- ◆ the volume and speed of traffic on all roads
- ◆ the fragmentation of the site caused by heavy traffic and pavement
- ◆ how uncomfortable it was to walk along Quadra Street - noise, speed and closeness of vehicles, placement of sidewalks, lack of greenspace
- ◆ the lack of pedestrian and bicycling amenities
- ◆ the key elements of the natural environment - Blenkinsop Creek and tributary through the Municipal Public Works Yard, remnant Garry oak stands, open space
- ◆ the length of stream which was still at the surface, and not piped and buried
- ◆ the jewels in the chaos such as the old winery office building and the Keg
- ◆ the poor transition to adjacent residential areas
- ◆ the undulation and topographical variation throughout the study area
- ◆ the total disregard for natural areas as the area developed
- ◆ the spaces between developments is ignored
- ◆ the amount of garbage along the proposed Saanich Spur extension
- ◆ the great oasis of the Saanich Centre, built to human scale, with good pedestrian areas, and lots of greenery
- ◆ the incredible contrast between the green areas and quiet areas, and paved and noisy areas
- ◆ the views to Mount Douglas and Christmas Hill
- ◆ the large size of some parcels e.g., Municipal Public Works Yard



### Staff Presentations

Presentations by Planning and Engineering staff followed to ensure that key concepts were understood by all members of the Team.

The Manager of Planning Services, Anne Topp, outlined the local area planning process and how the charette would fit within that process. The Manager of Environmental Services, Karen Hurley, talked about opportunities and responsibilities surrounding Blenkinsop Creek and its tributaries, as well as the Garry oaks in the area. The Deputy Engineer, Rick Lloyd, described the underground servicing constraints with particular note of the known poor soil conditions running diagonally through the Municipal Public Works Yard. The Traffic Engineer, Colin Doyle, gave an overview of road classifications and traffic counts within the study area.

Aerial photos of the site at 1:1,250, a land use map, municipal services map, roadway cross sections, a series of photographs of the area, and a variety of design books and articles were available for reference purposes.



### Issue Group Presentations

Invitations were extended to Council Committees and relevant special interest groups to make a brief presentation early Saturday morning outlining significant issues that should be considered during the charette. Presentations were made by:

- ◆ Advisory Planning Commission - Joan Barton
- ◆ Bicycle Advisory Committee - Darrell Wick and Pam Fitzgibbon
- ◆ Citizen's Advisory Transportation Committee - Gerald Walter
- ◆ Swan Lake - Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society - Willie MacGillivray
- ◆ Reynolds School - Dave Petrie

Informal verbal and written submissions were provided. The presentations were important because they highlighted issues and helped inform the discussions that took place later in the day. The following key points were presented:

- ◆ Regional trail should be a focus of the area
- ◆ There should be a mix of residential and commercial
- ◆ Open space is key design feature for the area
- ◆ Future LRT may access through this area to University of Victoria
- ◆ Parking should be mostly underground except for some surface parking for retail
- ◆ Borden Street and Quadra Street at McKenzie Avenue should be bridged
- ◆ The streams are a major feature that should be retained and enhanced
- ◆ There is an opportunity to integrate Reynolds School with community/possibility of partnerships to address environment, social and community arts issues.







## Participants Ideas and Issue Statements

The participants were asked to informally share their ideas, issues, and feelings about the area. They were united in their dissatisfaction with the area as it is and in wanting it to be different. Any possibility of change was seen as an opportunity to guide future development in a comprehensive manner. The Team recognized that there is potential to create a unique mix of natural features and built elements, building on the strengths of this location.

From the presentations the Team grouped the ideas presented into six categories.

- ◆ Integration of Land Use and Design
- ◆ Mixed Use/Village Centre - atmosphere and character
- ◆ Amenity and Open Space - green space and trail
- ◆ Mobility - cars, transit, pedestrians, cycling, parking, safe, connected, attractive
- ◆ Social opportunities - school, arts, and employment
- ◆ Environment - ecological health and diversity

The Team broke up into smaller work groups to explore the concepts, captured in the categories above, in more detail. Groups were established for social opportunities and environment, mobility, mixed land use, and amenities. Integration was seen as an overriding issue that was common to whatever direction developed.

The following notes the key points identified by each of the working groups.

### *Social Issues and Ideas*

- ◆ Make a strong connection with Reynolds School and support community school designation
- ◆ Consider expanding the school functions to include a performing arts centre and a community recreation and adult education centre
- ◆ Efforts should be made to encourage mixed income/affordable housing elements
- ◆ Promote a market atmosphere through a mix of homes and offices/commercial store fronts, studios, and court yards
- ◆ Area and facilities should be accessible to those with special mobility needs
- ◆ Provide for informal gatherings and social interaction through provision of outdoor seating
- ◆ Design sidewalks/walking areas away from roads and, when necessary, install protective sidewalk barriers

### *Environment Issues and Ideas*

- ◆ Protect and restore what is already there
- ◆ Stream enhancement daylighting - vegetation/education/relocate stream with redevelopment
- ◆ Vegetation - identify, buffer, and connect
- ◆ Rocky outcrop - design with topography
- ◆ Environmental Goals:
  - ◆ acknowledge natural features and implement recommendations
  - ◆ design for alternative transportation to benefit emission reduction, more user friendly trails, and bus service

### *Amenity Issues and Ideas*

Figures 2 and 3 show the concept for site amenities developed by this sub-group. The figures highlight the key ideas.

- ◆ Hierarchy of open space including site landscaping, formal and informal open space areas, and natural vegetation preservation areas
- ◆ The role of Blenkinsop Creek and branch tributary to establish the environmental and recreational atmosphere and to be the focus for area development
- ◆ The connectivity provided by the regional trail and internal pedestrian linkages
- ◆ Preserve and utilize the significant view corridors of Mt. Douglas and Christmas Hill available from the site

# OPPORTUNITY ; CONSTRAINTS

## PEN SPACE AMENITY:

- ACTIVITY AREAS
- PASSIVE QUIET AREAS
- HARD LANDSCAPE
- SOFT LANDSCAPING

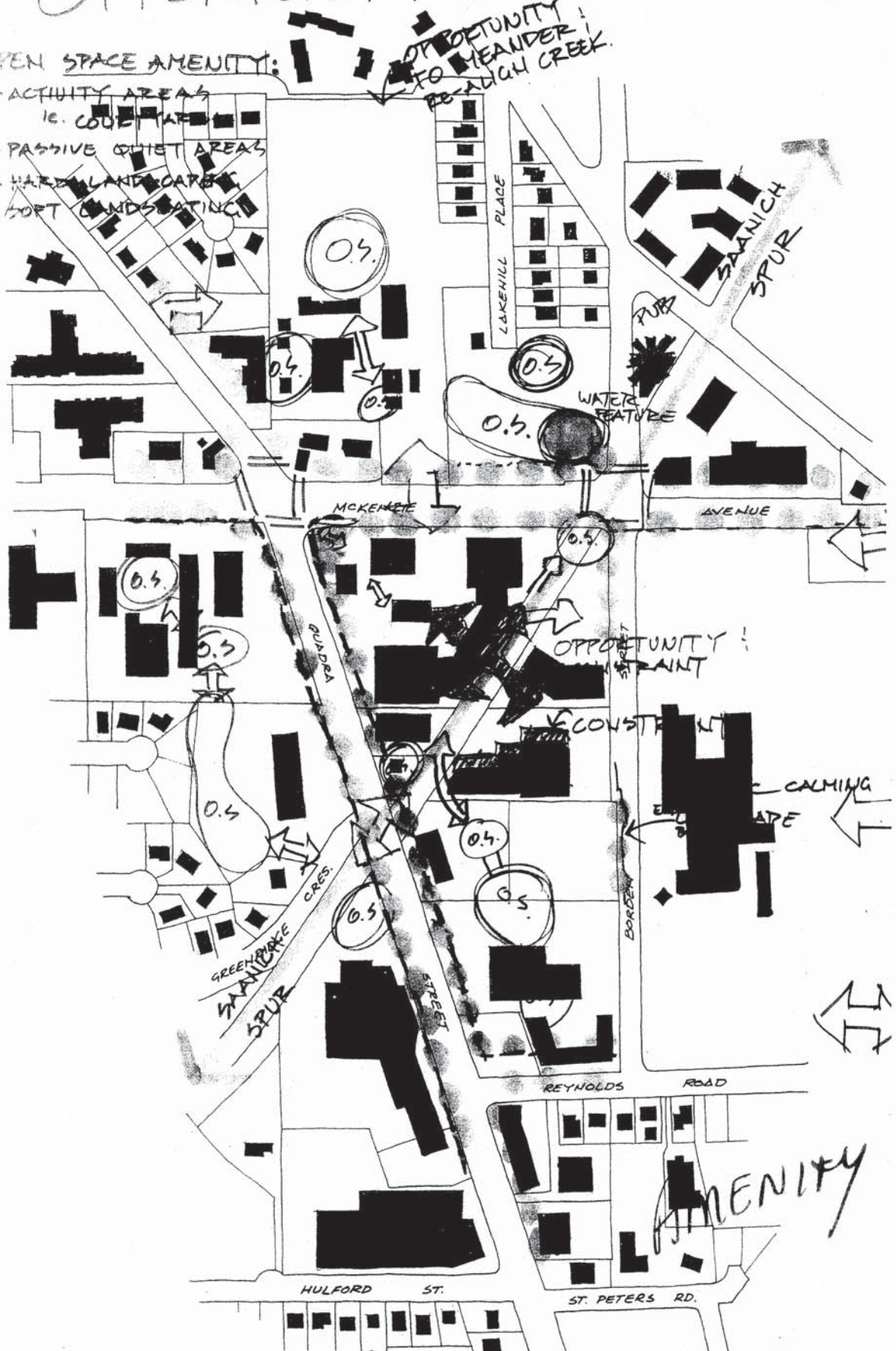


Figure 2 — Amenity Group.



Figure 3 — Amenity Group.

### ***Roadway Issues and Ideas***

- ◆ McKenzie Avenue is the major east-west route
- ◆ Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue intersection needs free right turn lanes at all corners and additional left turn lanes are also required
- ◆ Borden Street/McKenzie Avenue needs a right turn lane east and one south onto Borden Street
- ◆ Reynolds Road traffic is a concern to neighbourhood
- ◆ There are too many driveway entrances off the east side of Quadra Street
- ◆ Need left turn queues on Quadra Street with low shrubs in medians
- ◆ Traffic calm Borden Street and allow on street parking
- ◆ Consider satellite parking area for employees at remote locations
- ◆ Pursue the continuation of the regional trail through the Borden Mercantile site
- ◆ Establish a safe crossing at Quadra Street and the regional trail
- ◆ Consider the need for a four-lane regional trail in the future
- ◆ Need a linkage from the regional trail to Saanich Centre and to properties on Borden Street and Reynolds School

When the mobility group reported back to the Team there was concern that issues beyond the automobile had not been discussed. The following is the results of the whole Team brainstorming around additional mobility issues.

### ***Cycling Issues and Ideas***

- ◆ Need to increase capacity for cycling - regional trail is one option but it does not link with every major destination and need on-street facilities as well
- ◆ Regional trail is not a high speed commuter link
- ◆ Need an improved cycling crossing at Quadra Street and at Borden Street/McKenzie Avenue
- ◆ May need to limit or restrict on street parking to accommodate cycling
- ◆ Need feeder trails onto the regional trail
- ◆ Some roads are good for cyclists others are less suitable
- ◆ The General Plan 1993 designates both Quadra Street and McKenzie Avenue as Commuter Bikeways

### ***Transit Issues and Ideas***

- ◆ Use of the regional trail as route for the LRT is not supported. The alignment should use McKenzie Avenue. The trail alignment does not provide a direct connection to the University of Victoria and other destinations. However, it is recognized that the provision of LRT is a long term proposal
- ◆ Need good transfer opportunities between bus routes on McKenzie Avenue and Quadra Street
- ◆ Need good pedestrian - street - building interface
- ◆ Bus stop needed near trail entrance on McKenzie Avenue at Borden Street
- ◆ Need high quality street furniture for transit stops to make them part of the community
- ◆ Many people see bus use and bicycle use as second class forms of travel - need to raise its profile
- ◆ Need more buses - need to increase frequency and to guarantee arrival/departure

### ***Mixed Use Issues and Ideas***

Figure 4 illustrates the land use concept developed by the mixed use sub-group.

- ◆ The eastern edge of the Municipal Public Works Yard should have special residential use as it has good views
- ◆ Realign the creek through the Public Works Yard over the blue clay area to create a no build area and to give prominence to the creek
- ◆ Identified south western part of the Municipal Public Works Yard for high technology development
- ◆ Regional trail needs some way to get across Quadra Street
- ◆ BC Tel site should be mixed use residential and commercial - building should be stepped at rear
- ◆ Area near Keg and former bottling plant should be an employment area with high tech light industrial with residential above
- ◆ Tie Reynolds School into the commercial technology centre
- ◆ Provide a north/south pedestrian access mid way through block just south of Borden Mercantile
- ◆ Area has a number of small nodes and sites - e.g. ESSO, BC Tel and office building to the south, area of winery south of regional trail to Hulford Street, Reynolds Road/St Peter's Road
- ◆ Create a commercial recreation centre north of McKenzie Avenue east of Borden Street - activity centre - rock climbing
- ◆ Village centre concept for area from McKenzie Avenue to Reynolds Road
- ◆ Performing arts centre on school site or nearby
- ◆ Need double fronting developments to serve pedestrians/cyclists and cars
- ◆ Move sidewalk and development back from Quadra Street
- ◆ Generally have ground floor commercial/retail/office with residential above and at back
- ◆ Consider moving Borden Street to east side of Reynolds School
- ◆ Character - streetscape - not canyons - variation in design, heights and landscaping
- ◆ Reynolds School is a significant body of people and need a pedestrian promenade
- ◆ Focal point is central area between McKenzie Avenue and Reynolds Road, and Quadra Street to Borden Street
- ◆ Daylight the stream and with the regional trail make it the major focus
- ◆ Recognize that McKenzie Avenue is major east-west route - it is like a highway
- ◆ West side of Quadra Street commercial fronting on but back from the street with parkades and residential behind
- ◆ Townhouses near existing houses along Borden Street north of the Public Works Yard
- ◆ Open space - variation in type size and shape
- ◆ Some Garry Oak and remnant natural areas need preservation and enhancement and not public access
- ◆ Need more green space to integrate elements
- ◆ Enhance streetscape with plantings
- ◆ Borden Street/students/7-11 and Tim Horton's - need traffic calming to make pedestrians safe - look at pinches and corner bulbs
- ◆ Move sidewalk back from the road in front of BCTel site and elsewhere on west side of Quadra Street
- ◆ Need a crossing for McKenzie Avenue to link Saanich Centre to Municipal Public Works Yard
- ◆ McKenzie Avenue lowered in future which would allow at grade connection between Municipal Public Works Yard and Saanich Centre



Figure 4 — Mixed Use.

## Areas of General Consensus or Conflict

After the separate sub-group presentations, the Team considered integration of the various elements. In general there was consensus for most of the issues and ideas presented by each of the sub-groups.

It was noted that this area should not be a retail mall dominated by surface parking nor should it be a regional destination. The development should create an internal village which looks in on itself, not just outward to the street. The mix of uses must be balanced to support a variety of elements including residential uses to help sustain a variety of commercial and office uses. New residential uses should be integrated into existing residential areas surrounding the study areas.

There was, however, some disagreement with the mobility characteristics. The Team did not agree that free right turn lanes were required on McKenzie Avenue and Quadra Street nor was there support for additional lanes on McKenzie Avenue which would make pedestrian crossing difficult. The Team was concerned that additional lanes would encourage traffic to use Quadra Street/McKenzie Avenue and result in more of the same vehicle oriented mobility patterns in the future. The majority felt that traffic could be adequately handled by the existing number of lanes.

There was unanimous agreement that surface parking was not to dominate the area. There was support for some surface parking near retail activities, semi-

underground parking was supported more than underground parkades. In general, cars are not to be excluded from the area but they should not have first priority.

The Team supported a system of natural and urban open spaces, public spaces, and plazas to create a hierarchy of linked open space. The open space amenities were seen as a focus for the area. The creek and tributary are important environmental features that, through retention and restoration, would create a significant environmental and design amenity. As well, the remnant areas of Garry oak trees and habitat can be preserved and contribute to the character of the area.

Improvements to the street side pedestrian environment with sidewalks separated from the travel lanes by boulevards and trees were seen as critical for the future character of the area. The internal pedestrian system should complement the on-street pedestrian environment. These improvements would help to green up the area.

From a social perspective there was support for an arts centre attached to Reynolds School or somewhere in the block between McKenzie Avenue and Reynolds Road. Programs would be linked however. Additional linkages could be made between the School and high tech industries in the area.

## Block Plan

Through integration of the various elements, a block plan for the area was developed. This plan provides a concept of the land uses, streetscape and vital pedestrian linkages. Figure 5 illustrates the land use concept, Figure 6 the pedestrian, water and open space features and Figure 7 shows the roadway pattern. The Team did not refine the concept to suggest density parameters or building massing.

The overall land use concept has eight major elements. While there is a separation created by the bisecting roadways, attempts have been made to create linkages between the Municipal Public Works Yard and the central core, between the core and the school, and between the BC Tel site and the winery site. The degree of interaction will be a function of the type of linkage e.g., crosswalk versus bridge overpass.

The following provides a block by block description of what the Team envisioned for the area.

Block 1 includes an office building and a gas station site which could be redeveloped into an office/residential use. Improved landscaping at the corner is suggested to soften the impact of the intersection.

Block 2 combines the existing gas station and 7-11 site, and the Municipal Public Works Yard. Office uses are envisioned for the existing commercial sites. The Municipal Public Works Yard will have a variety of land uses as shown on Figure 5. Residential uses would be located at the

north end of the site to provide continuity with existing residential areas. A special residential area would be created along the east side to take advantage of the elevation and views. The creek and pond, and an open space area would provide a buffer and amenity for the residential uses. Office uses should be located along McKenzie Avenue with high tech uses behind. Should the Municipal Public Works Yard remain on the site, the storage and service component could be moved to the north end and the office component could be along McKenzie Avenue. A roadway could be constructed through the site to provide access and should be designed to prohibit short cutting traffic. A connection from the site across to Saanich centre provides a continuation of the internal pedestrian system from the south through the site.

Block 3 is the existing commercial site, with the motor vehicle office, on Borden Street north of McKenzie Avenue. In the long term this site would remain commercial, however, consideration should be given to incorporating some commercial recreational use such as climbing facility as an amenity that builds on proximity to the school. As well, any future redevelopment should include daylighting of Blenkinsop Creek and continuation of the regional trail on the railway right of way.

Block 4 includes BC Tel and the five storey office/retail building north of Greenridge Crescent. The concept includes an open space area protecting the Garry oaks with a walkway which provides a buffer for

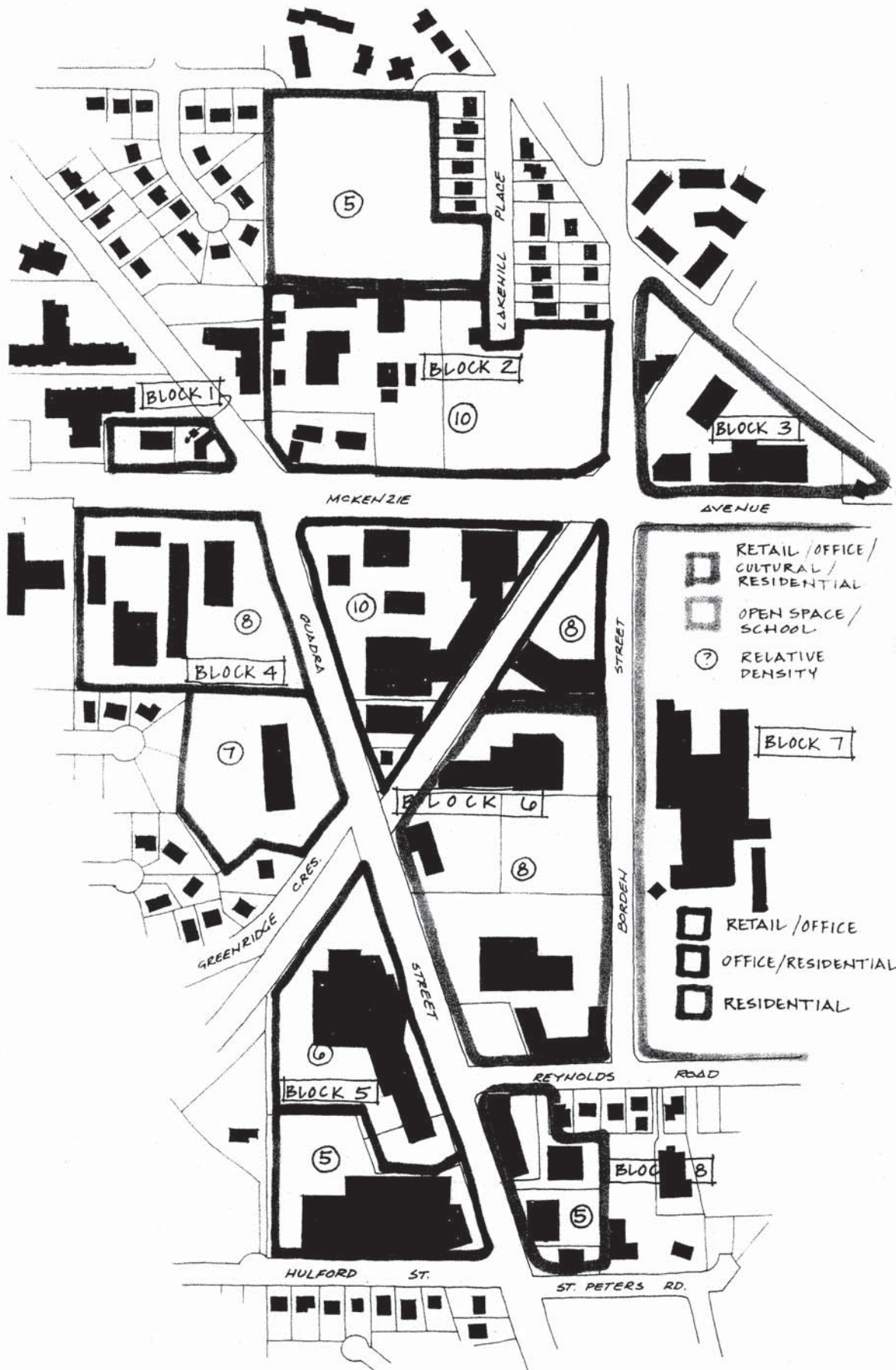


Figure 5 — Block Plan, Land Use.



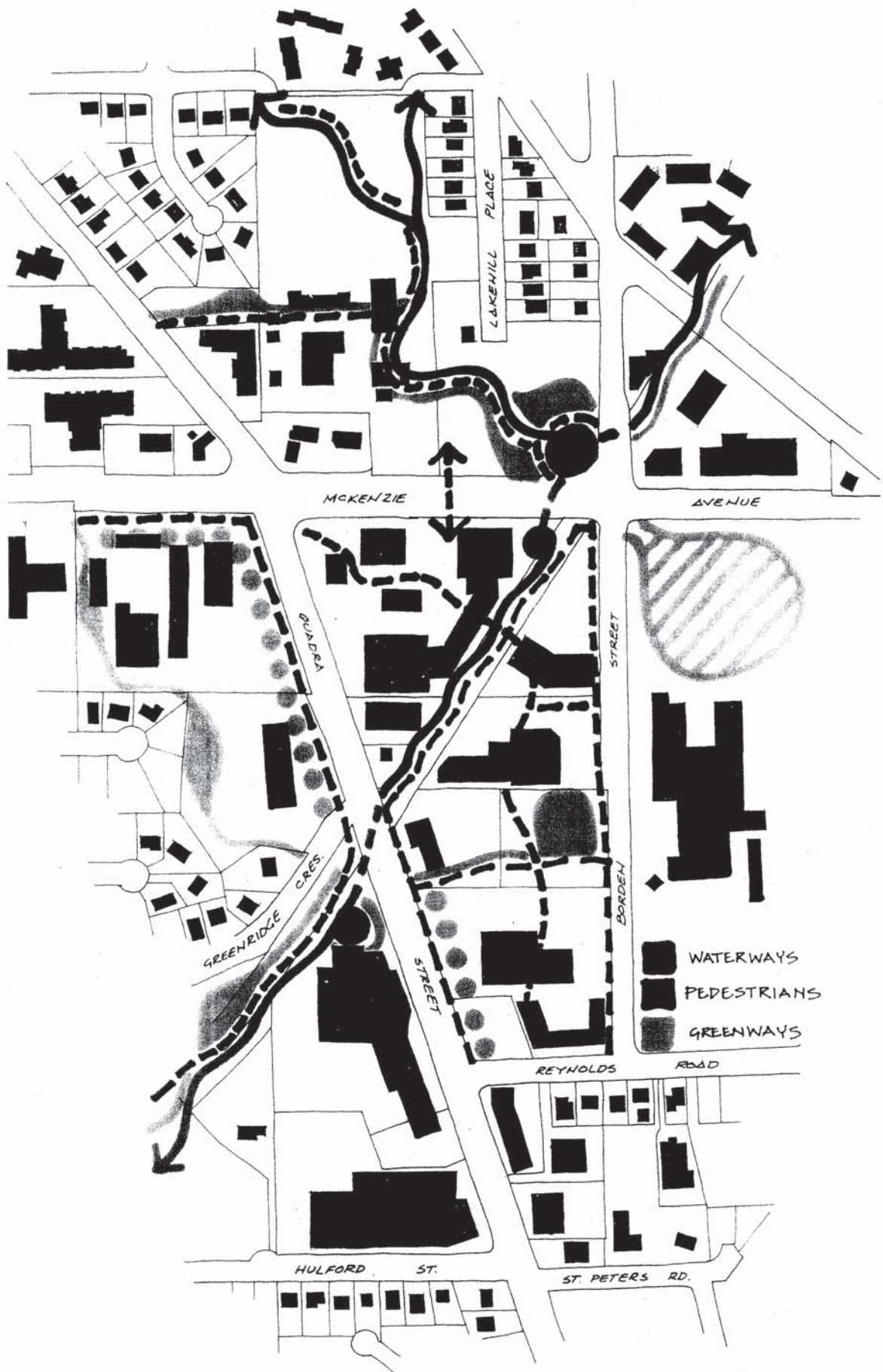


Figure 6 — Block Plan, Amenity.

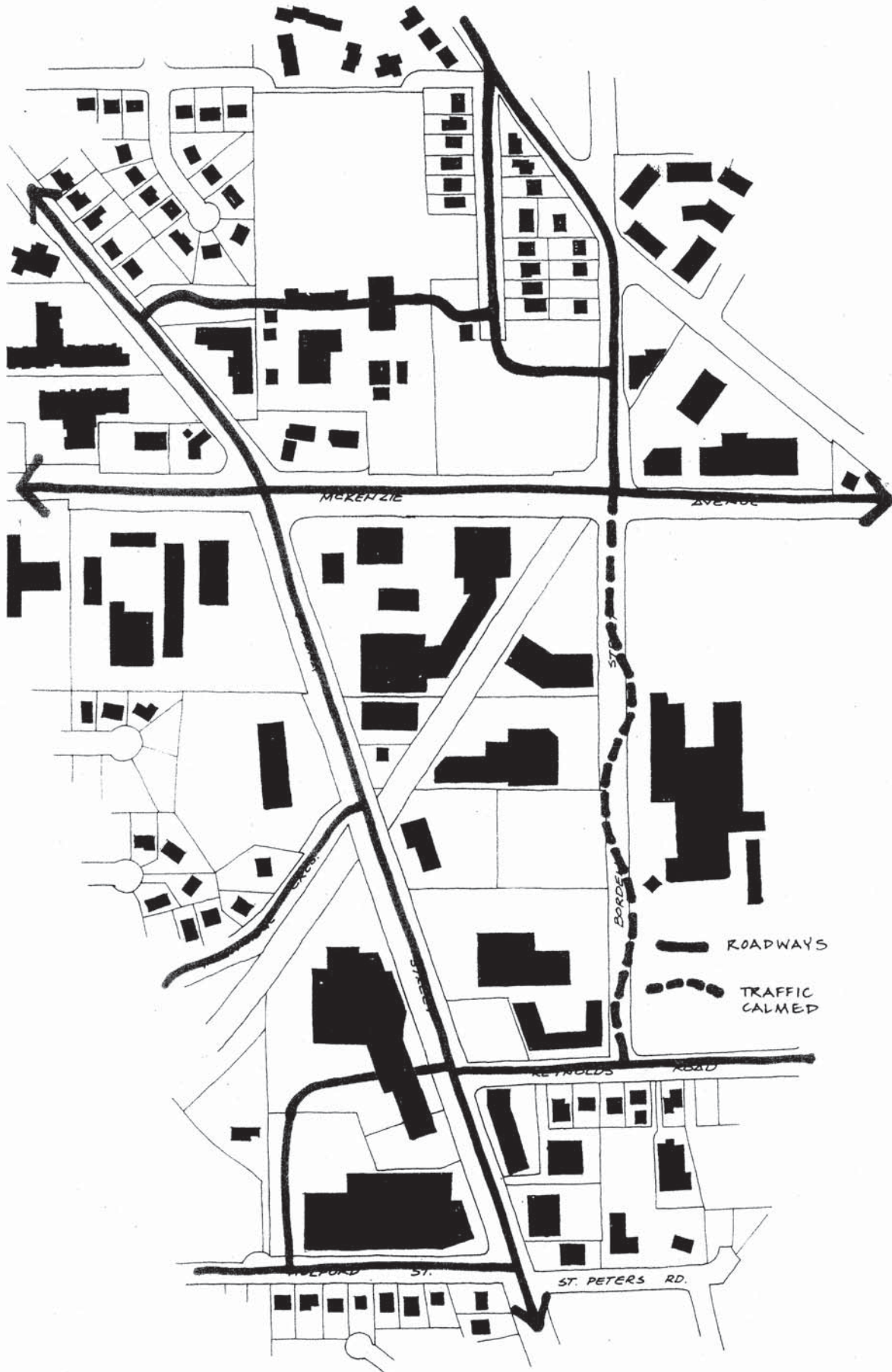


Figure 7 — Block Plan, Road Ways.

adjacent existing residential areas to the west. Land use would include both residential and office uses in buildings terraced both sides with semi-underground parking. The connection to the Saanich Centre site would be via the intersection and through a crossing for the regional trail along the southern boundary. Streetscape improvements include establishing a landscaped boulevard to separate the sidewalk from the roadway.

Block 5 includes the old winery building and the former bottling plant. A new roadway with a signal at Reynolds Road and Quadra Street would provide access to the interior of the site and offer an alternative access for Hulford Street. An open space buffer and walkway continues through the site to link with the regional trail and the sites to the north. Daylighting and realignment of Blenkinsop Creek and creation of a pond feature were suggested. An opportunity for high technology light industrial is considered appropriate as is some residential and office uses and perhaps commercial recreation uses. The Keg heritage building should be retained.

Block 6 is the central core of the area and is bound on all sides by roadways. This site includes Saanich Centre, Borden Mercantile office/retail building, and the office/retail building on Borden Street south of McKenzie Avenue which will remain in the future. Redevelopment is anticipated on some of the Borden Mercantile property and on the Lumberworld holdings to the south. Key features of this area are the regional trail alignment, Blenkinsop Creek, and the

internal pedestrian linkages which unite the site. Uses include retail and office commercial, residential, and perhaps an alternative arts centre site. The buildings should face both the internal amenity areas as well as toward the streets. Saanich Centre should be designed to open onto and provide a rear connection from the Centre to the trail. Parking should be semi-underground with some surface parking on the street side adjacent to retail areas. The general character of the area is expected to be similar to Saanich Centre - low rise - good pedestrian flow and public interaction areas. Pedestrian connections, to the Saanich Centre, the Municipal Public Works Yard and to Reynolds School are important to link the various blocks together. Boulevards along the southern portion of Quadra Street would improve the pedestrian environment.

Block 7 is the Reynolds School property which needs to be integrated with the area. Traffic calming measures on Borden Street and key pathway linkages are expected to foster this integration. The performing arts centre in association with the school, or on a site in Block 6, would also contribute to the linkage. The creation of an open space feature at the corner of Borden Street and McKenzie Avenue would tie together the creek and pond elements surrounding the intersection.

Block 8 is the strip mall and office and residential buildings south of Reynolds Road. An open space buffer should be provided as a transition to the adjacent residential areas. Commercial uses are expected to continue on this block.

# Principles

A series of general principles were developed that should be used to guide an action plan and refinement of the development permit area guidelines.

## **Land Use/Form**

- ◆ Scale of area to be a neighbourhood/village centre rather than a "town centre"
- ◆ Height is generally not to be more than 4 stories
- ◆ Density on site increased but should use a low-rise form
- ◆ Density feathered in from edges adjacent to residential areas to soften transition between uses
- ◆ Optimize green/open space and use it as a framework for overall design direction
- ◆ Require high architectural design recognizing sensitivity to transition issues and sensitivity to streetscape
- ◆ Land use pattern should be pedestrian friendly and promote pedestrian flow between areas
- ◆ Landscaped boulevards should separate sidewalks from travel lanes on Quadra Street
- ◆ Require semi underground parking versus surface parking
- ◆ Limit surface parking to near retail where necessary
- ◆ Internal area of blocks should not be dominated by parking
- ◆ The regional trail should be a major feature of the area

## **Social**

- ◆ Pedestrian routes and open space should link all uses
- ◆ Design safety for users in parking facilities, when daylighting the creek, and by providing crossings of roads
- ◆ Area should be accessible for all mobility levels
- ◆ Provide a mix of housing types and affordability
- ◆ Support establishment of a public Performing Arts Centre in area or at Reynolds School
- ◆ Integrate and form partnerships between business and Reynolds School

## **Environment**

- ◆ Daylight creeks and restore riparian areas
- ◆ Protect and enhance remnant natural green spaces

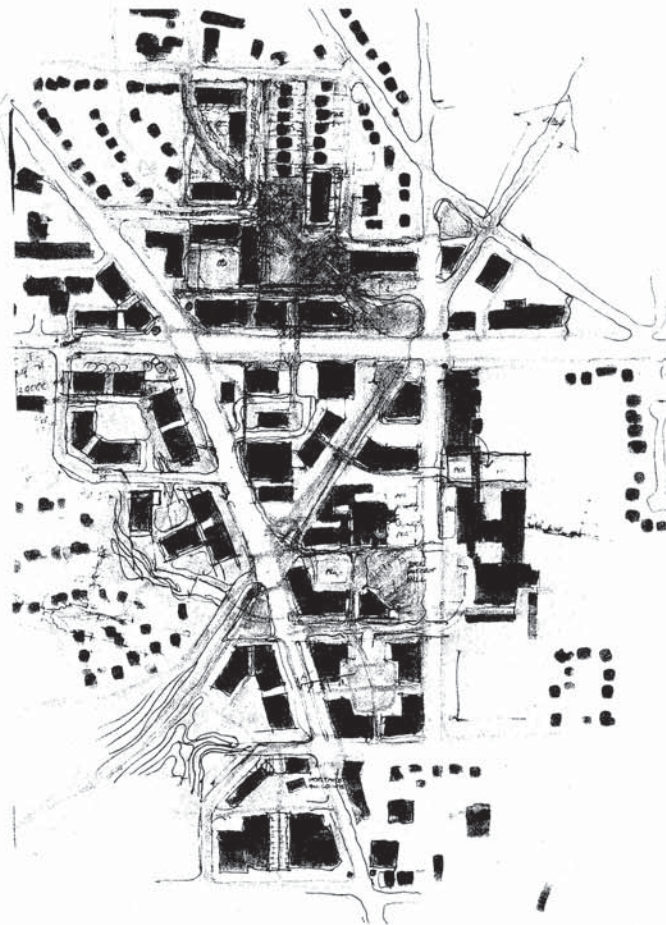
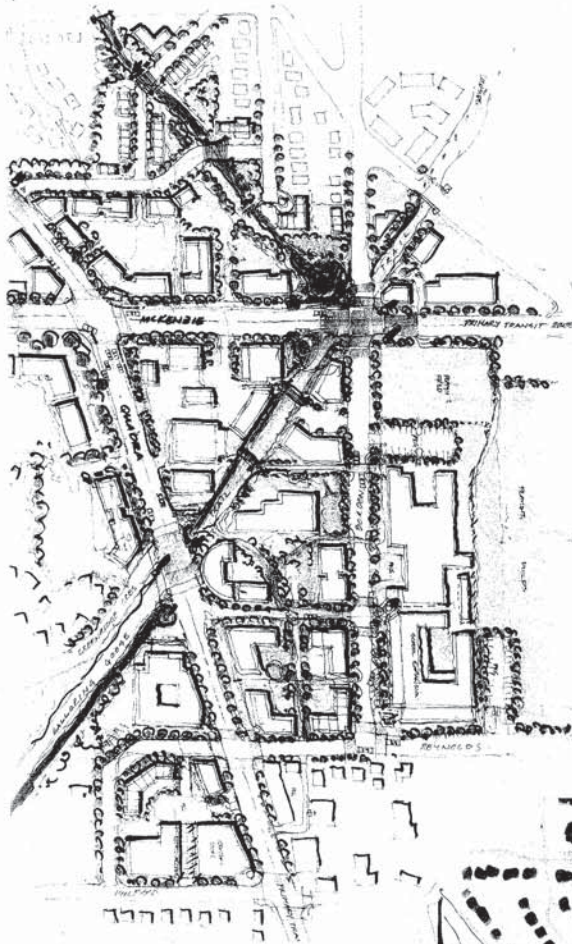
## **Open Space**

- ◆ Create new activity areas such as plazas
- ◆ Establish a hierarchy of green/open spaces (formal) and boulevard enhancement
- ◆ Use open space and plantings to soften edges with residential areas to the west and north
- ◆ Integrate pedestrian areas and some green spaces
- ◆ Protect views available to Mount Douglas and Christmas Hill from many locations
- ◆ Vary scale of public and private spaces to provide for transition to existing residential areas

## **Mobility**

- ◆ McKenzie Avenue to remain the major east-west route
- ◆ Quadra Street is a major north-south route. Maintain lane configuration except for selected left turn lane segments
- ◆ Traffic calm Borden Street - improve safety and enhance streetscape but do not reduce capacity, or parking. Community is concerned about current volume and speed
- ◆ Reduce number of driveway access points but not to the detriment of commercial uses and safety interest
- ◆ Establish a safe and convenient regional trail crossing at Quadra Street
- ◆ Provide user friendly bus shelters and integrate stops with human activities on site and access points
- ◆ Pedestrian linkages should be accessible for all ages and mobility levels, and safe day and night for children and seniors

# PART B: Urban Design Study Plans



## Project Synthesis: The Urban Design



As a result of the workshop that was held on March 14, representatives of a cross section of the Saanich community expressed a variety of concerns and observations in regards to the Quadra and McKenzie study area. As a team, they explored the possibilities in conversation, debate and presentations. The brainstorming resulted in numerous diagrams, sketches and a full range of principles and ideas.

It is the purpose of this section to synthesize the information that was gathered, analyzed and put forward during the intensive workshop, and communicate these with illustrations and text. The forms chosen for this are the conventional methods of communicating ideas about urban design. These are:

- 1) To state the goals and objectives as expressed by the representatives of interests involved in the project area
- 2) To outline the general design principles derived from the workshop, and
- 3) To illustrate with plans, sections and 3D sketches, the urban design strategies that would satisfy these principles.

The next step in the process will be the composition of urban design guidelines to assist public and private development implementation.

This section was prepared by deHoog D'Ambrosio architects in collaboration with Eric Barker Architect based on the efforts of the Workshop Team and recommending possible urban design strategies.

# Aerial Photograph



# District Features

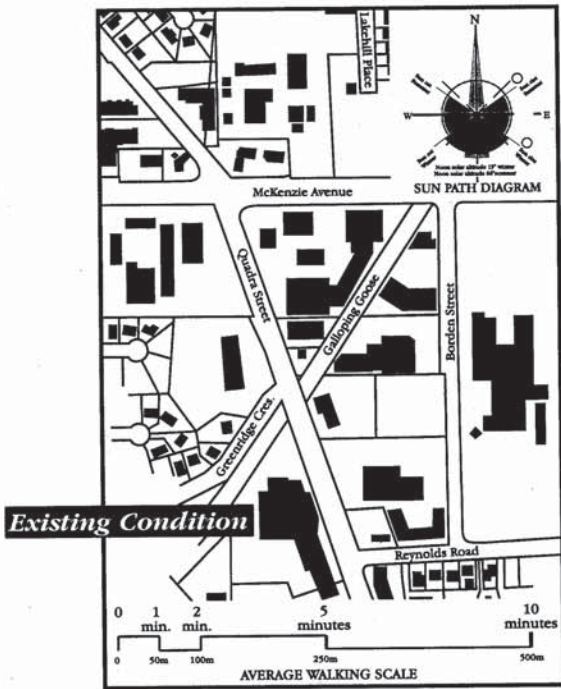


FIGURE | GROUND showing existing land covered by buildings and land without buildings.

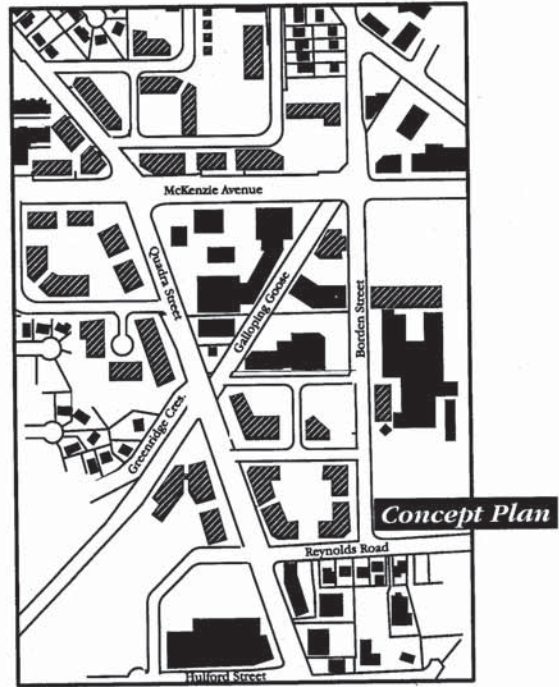
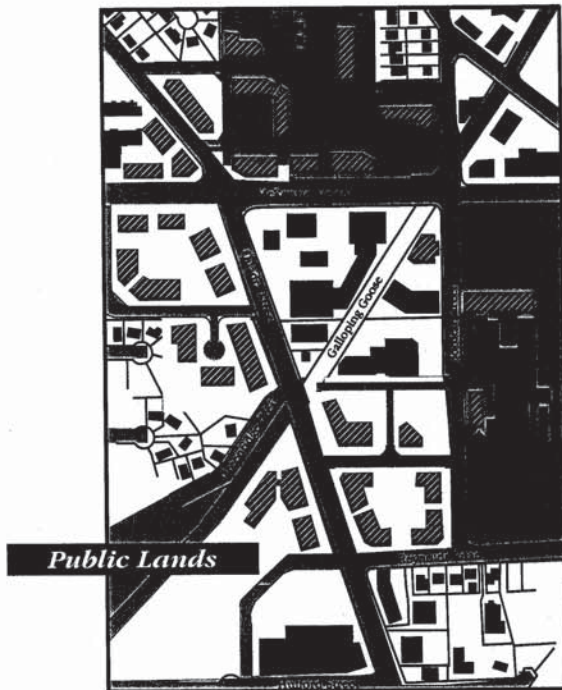


FIGURE | GROUND showing sites that may be redeveloped in the future with approximate building footprints.



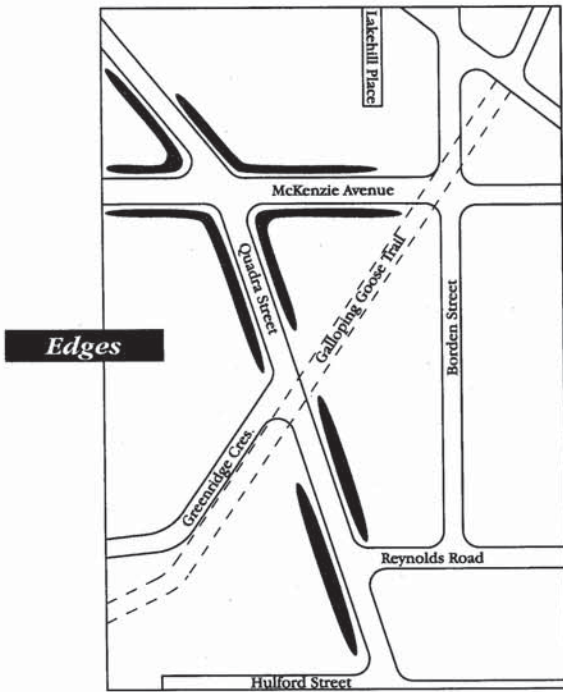
Including publicly owned lands, street right of ways, greenways, board of education properties, easements, etc. These areas are shared by people of all ages and abilities.

### Elements & Activities Of Our Urban Habitat

- ◆ People / Animals
- ◆ Topography / Vegetation
- ◆ Water Drainage / Ecosystem
- ◆ Travel Routes / Transportation
- ◆ Commerce
- ◆ Industry
- ◆ Recreation / Leisure
- ◆ Culture
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Sport
- ◆ Entertainment
- ◆ Residing

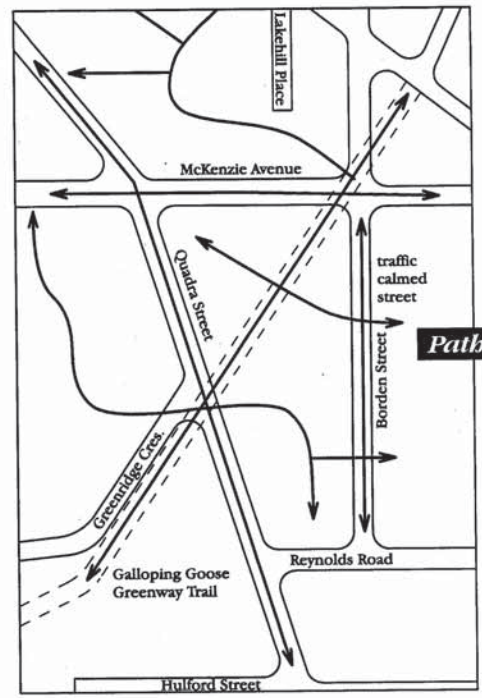






**Edges**

— EDGES Boulevard landscaping



**Pathways**

↔ VEHICLE AND BICYCLE PRIORITY with pedestrians on sidewalk system  
 ⇄ PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PRIORITY  
 - - - SPECIAL WOONERF (traffic calmed street)

## Urban Design Elements

Urban design is the conscious and intentional composition of urban elements including buildings, open spaces and circulation spaces, to serve the functions of habitation, recreation, industry, commerce and the myriad of activities that occur in human settlement. The quality of urban life is directly affected by urban design.

There are five essential elements of urban design. These are the edge, pathway, the district, the landmark and the node. All towns and cities in the western world can be described using these simple categories.

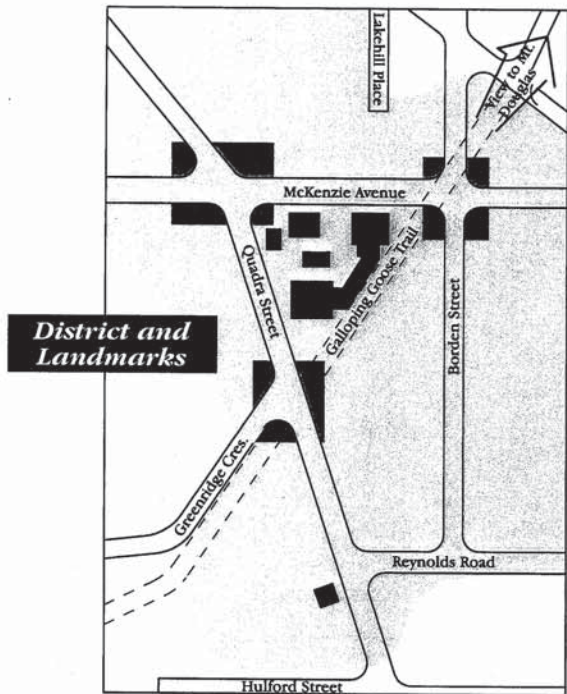
### Edge

In urban design, an edge can take many forms. A boundary between districts is an edge. There is the edge of town, the water's edge and the edge of downtown. An edge can be clearly defined or transitional. It can be a path or place.

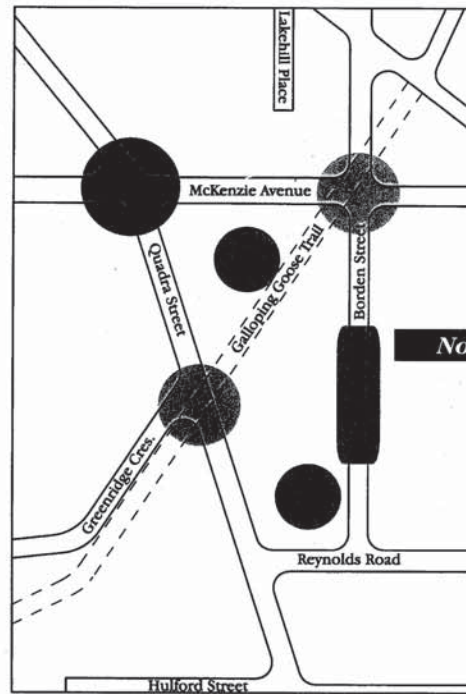
### Pathway

This element of urban design includes street rights of way, trails, sidewalks, boardwalks and all kinds of circulation elements in a town or city. It recognizes all transportation modes from automobiles and trains to bicycles and pedestrians. It can be formal, informal or some of both.





- DISTRICT Boundary of study
- LANDMARK (existing) Saanich Centre  
"The Keg at the Winery"
- LANDMARK (proposed) Crossing points of the Goose  
celebrated with park, plaza and water



- Major intersection of vehicles and pedestrians
- Major intersection with addition of bicycles & creek
- Intersection/Integration of vehicles, pedestrians & cyclists

### District

A district is an area of a town or a city that can be identified and defined by its particular traits, location character or activity. For example, many North American cities have a Chinatown district, a warehouse district and a financial district.

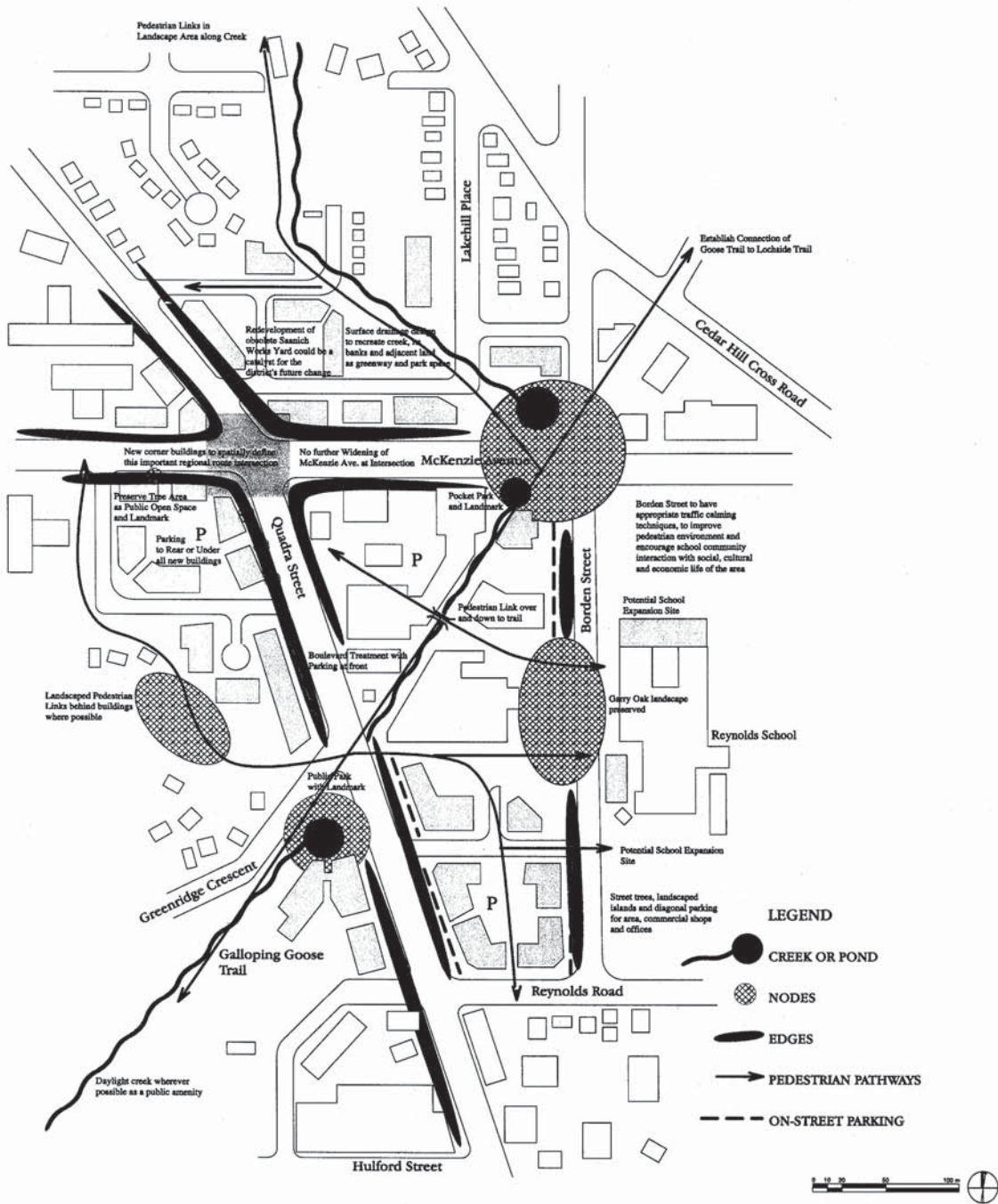
### Landmark

Although often found at a node, a landmark can exist separately. Typically, a landmark is a three-dimensional object, sometimes man-made like a statue, a monument, a fountain; and sometimes natural like a particular tree, a mountain, the mouth of a river or creek. More unusually, a landmark can be a particular view that is seen from a particular place. The glimpse one gets of a distant mountain peak when turning onto a route to work can be a landmark. It is something that we define and name and refer to, that will help establish a location relative to the rest of the city.

### Node

A node is a place where human activity converges. Most typically, a node is an intersection between two or more pathways. A node is a place where things cross – people, goods and materials, particular geographic features and the numerous combinations possible among these.





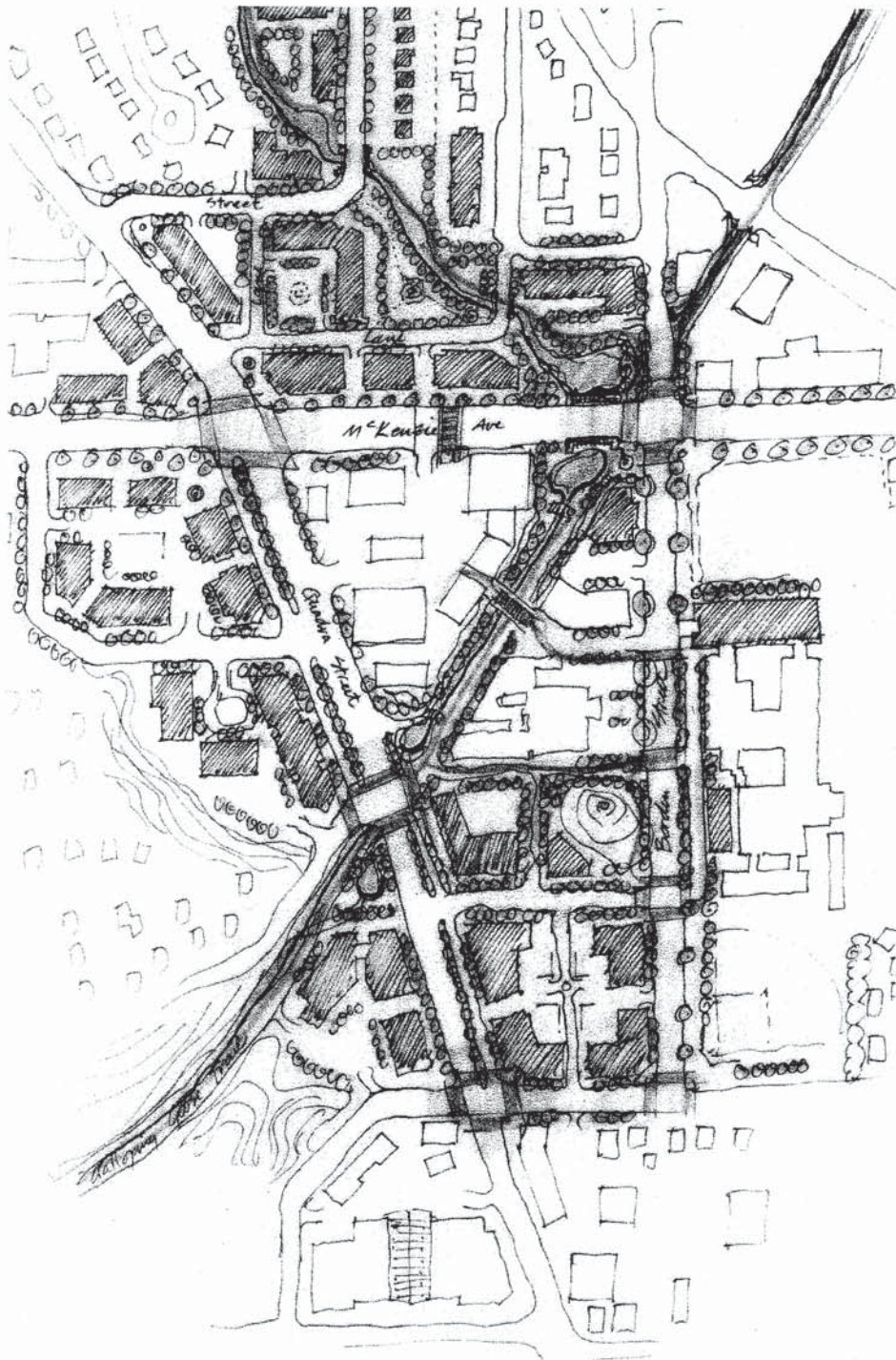
## Ideas Plan

### Urban Design Objectives

The following goals or objectives will describe the urban design that is implied by the work of the Ideas Plan Team. They are in no particular order or priority and some may be applicable as general objectives for other comparable urban areas.

- ◆ Improve the quality of the physical environment and prevent further deterioration
- ◆ Encourage a mix of uses and a diversity of activities
- ◆ Improve accessibility for persons of all ages and capabilities
- ◆ Connect and integrate the people and activities of the school with the social, cultural and economic life of the district.

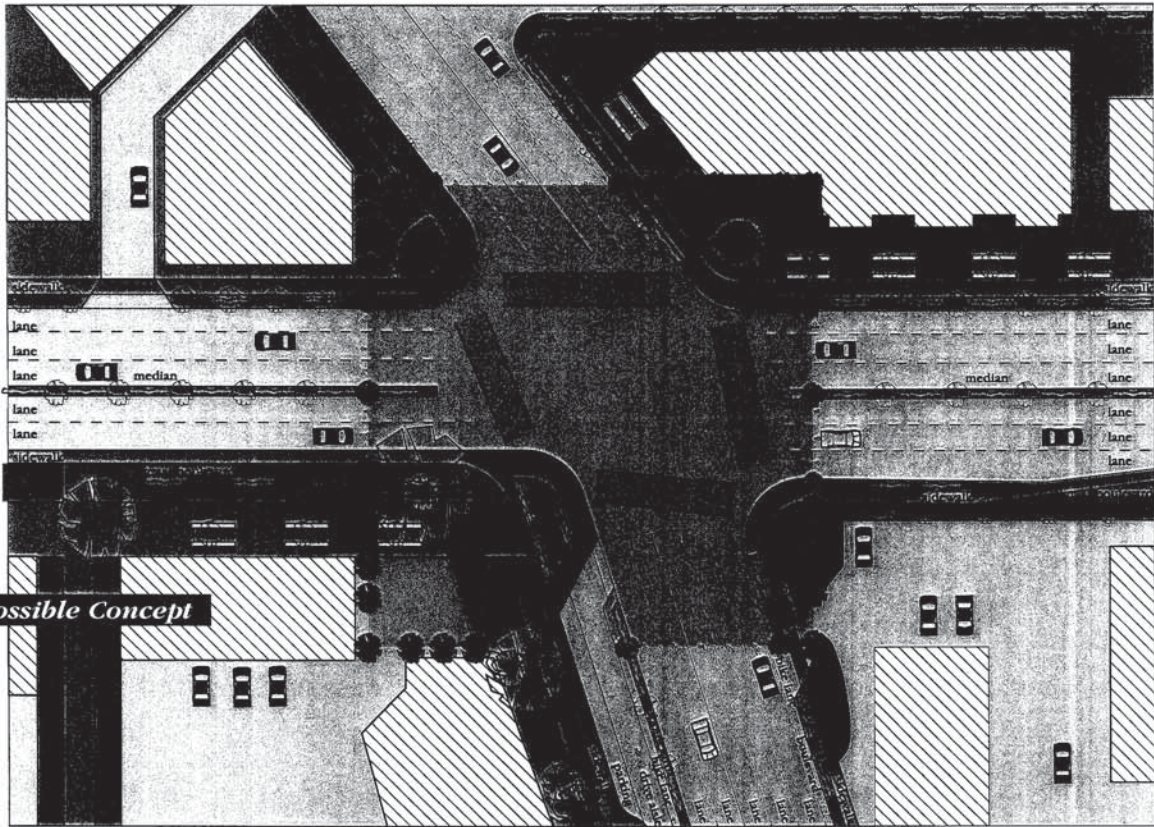
- ◆ Improve the safety and appearance of all the streets and locations where pedestrians and drivers are in close proximity
- ◆ Make a variety of public open spaces that cater to solitary, quiet activities and to public gatherings
- ◆ Maintain and emphasize the view corridors to Mount Douglas and Christmas Hill
- ◆ Balance and consider fairly, the requirements of drivers passing through the area on regional transportation routes with those of the people who live and work in the Quadra and McKenzie area



- ◆ Recognize and commemorate the history and historic elements of the area
- ◆ Use the existing water course as a natural amenity and focus for the area
- ◆ Increase the planting of trees and plants along all streets and pathways
- ◆ Encourage the making of commercial spaces that relate directly to streets
- ◆ Consider appropriate traffic calming strategies for all streets, especially Borden
- ◆ Create pedestrian links throughout the district to provide an alternative to the use of cars
- ◆ Identify private sites that can be developed in an integrated fashion with the public domain
- ◆ Maintain a low building scale with heights determined by the size of adjacent public rights of way, the shadowing effects of adjacent buildings and other site-specific criteria
- ◆ Encourage vehicle parking in small screened lots, behind buildings and in garages
- ◆ Maintain public participation in the growth of the district



**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



**Section 1**

**Quadra & McKenzie Intersection**

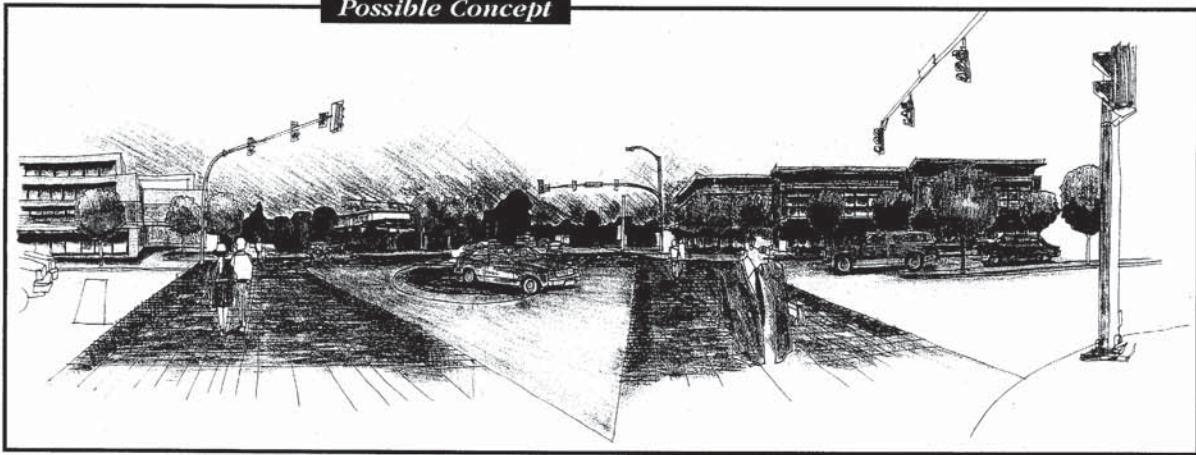
As the principle focus (and namesake) of this Urban Design Initiative, the Quadra and McKenzie intersection is more a confluence than a community. However, the lands that make up the district's four quadrants are occupied by a variety of building types and uses. Each corner is a potential gateway to zones of commercial, retail, service and residential activity. As such, the improvement of accessibility of one from the other could be the single most important goal of any redevelopment in this area. Of the four corners, only one, Saanich Centre, is a viable pedestrian destination. As a regional retail complex, however, more attention has been paid to auto access. This has resulted in the erosion of the pedestrian domain along the



*Existing Condition*



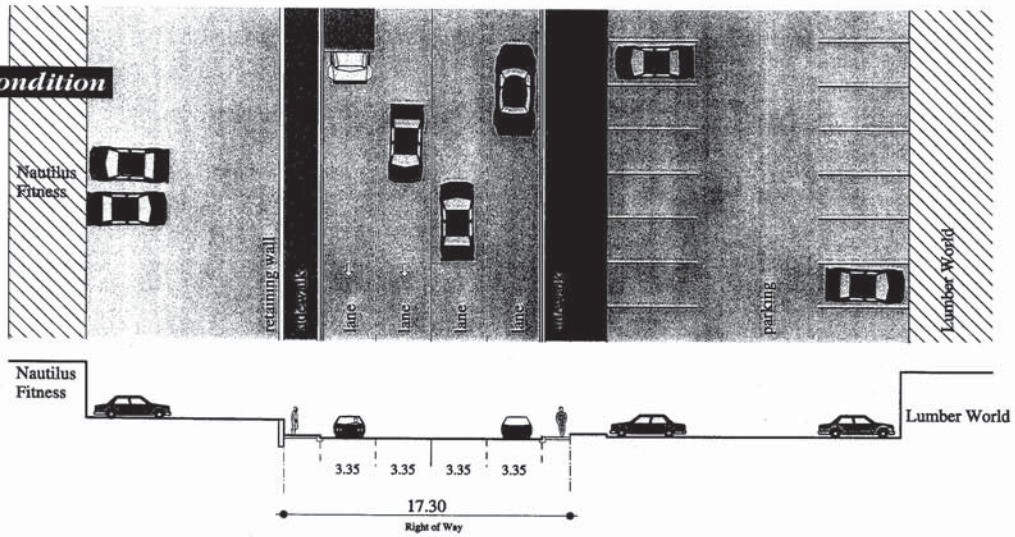
*Possible Concept*



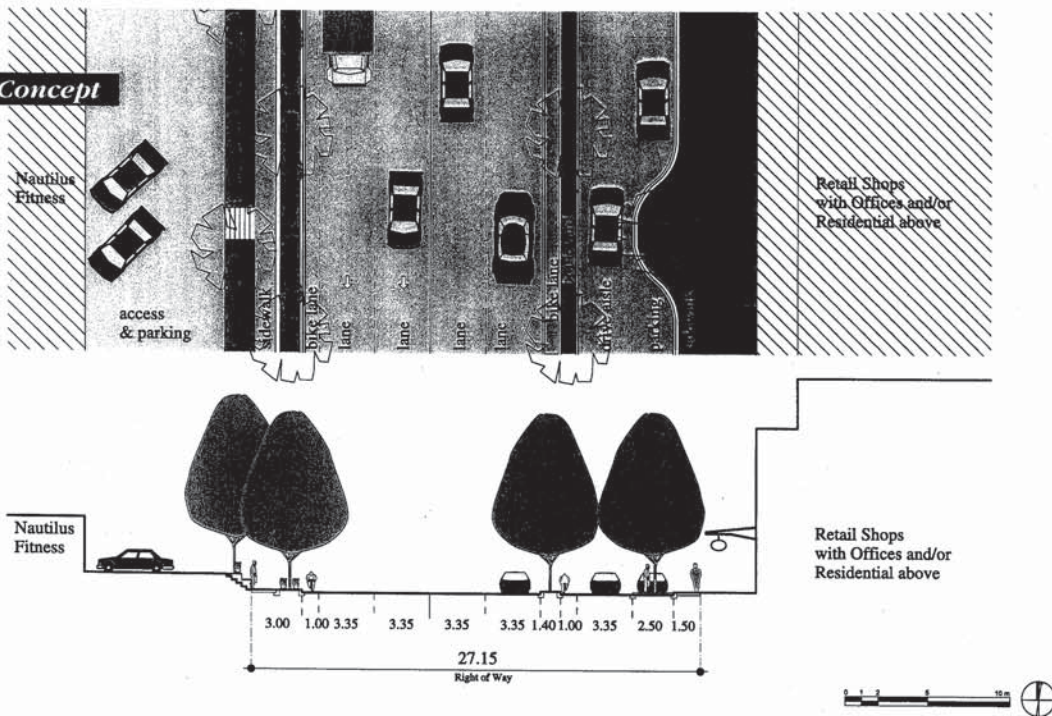
peripheral street edges and most significantly at the corner. This proposed concept suggests an enlarged corner sidewalk area and accessible green space there, as well as improved access to the shops. Redevelopment of the two gas station corners to include commercial, retail and office uses in up to 4 storey to 6 storey buildings would also be appropriate. The BC Tel site could incorporate the beautiful and unusual trees and other plants that have been lovingly maintained there for years. In addition, a pedestrian cut-through path could link the potential future laneways and paths along the rear of the BC Tel and other nearby properties. Adjacent to the rise of land to the south west, these could extend to link up with the Galloping Goose Greenway.

Other important urban design strategies for the intersection are enlarged and clearly distinguished pedestrian crossings, slightly raised and textured pavement at all four legs and treed centre-street boulevards to reduce apparent road widths. The single most important contribution toward the balancing of local pedestrian use and regional drive-through use of public rights-of-way will be the cancelling of all future driving lane widenings and the construction of so-called free-right-turn lanes with dividing triangular islands. If these are avoided at the direction of Council, it will mark a fundamental shift away from the damaging dominance of design expediency for us as drivers and toward a more balanced urban design for us as people.

**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



**Section 2**



**Location Plan**

**Quadra Northbound past Reynolds**

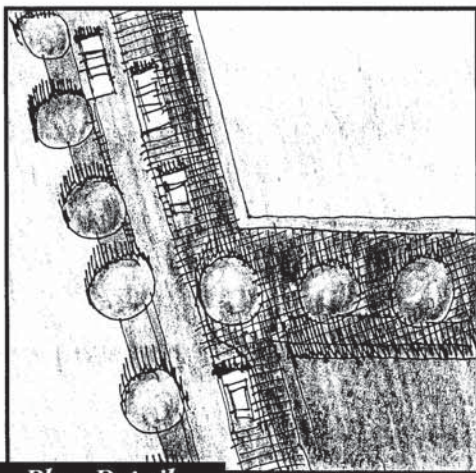
One of the most effective ways to reclaim public land that has been misappropriated by the expansion of auto-only portions of street Rights-of-Way is to consider uses and proximities in a comprehensive and balanced manner. This means that the comfort and safety of pedestrians of all ages and abilities are considered equally with that of cyclists and drivers. Street trees, landscaped boulevards and designated bicycle lanes, along with separated pedestrian sidewalks, defined street edges and carefully placed parking areas are all important elements of a good public street. This section shows an alternative method for separating local traffic. The one-way drive aisle with parallel parking separated from the through lanes is a configuration that is used successfully

elsewhere. Along with bike lane, a drive aisle works as a slower secondary street to service, retail and other commercial uses in buildings that face onto arterial streets such as Quadra. This section drawing shows the improved pedestrian environment created by the drive aisle, and the potential to increase landscaping in the right-of-way.

**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



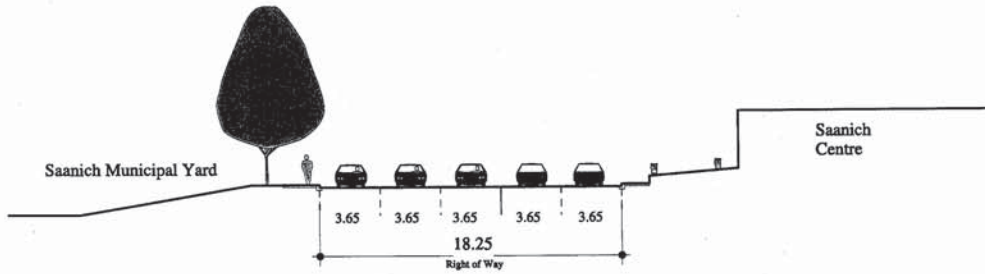
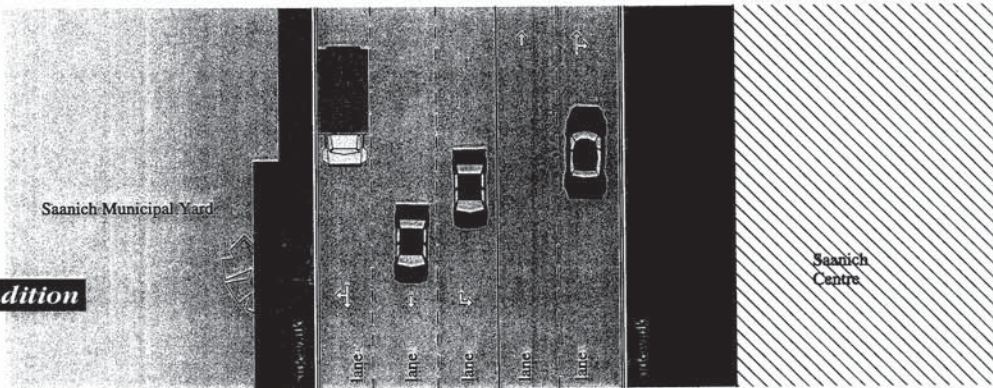
**Plan Detail**

**Concept Plan**

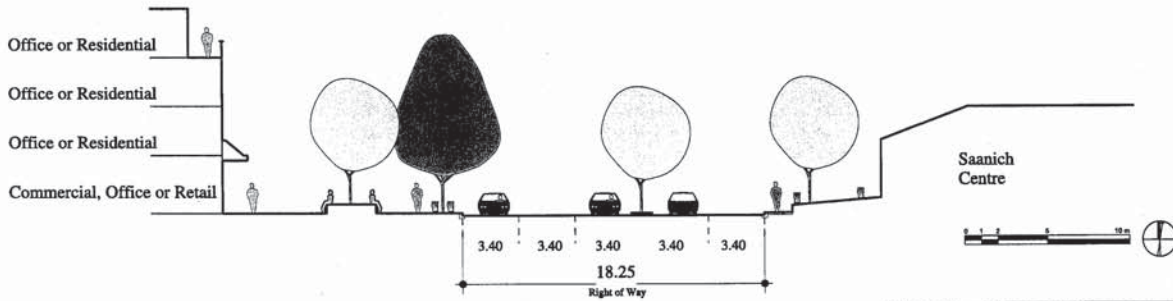
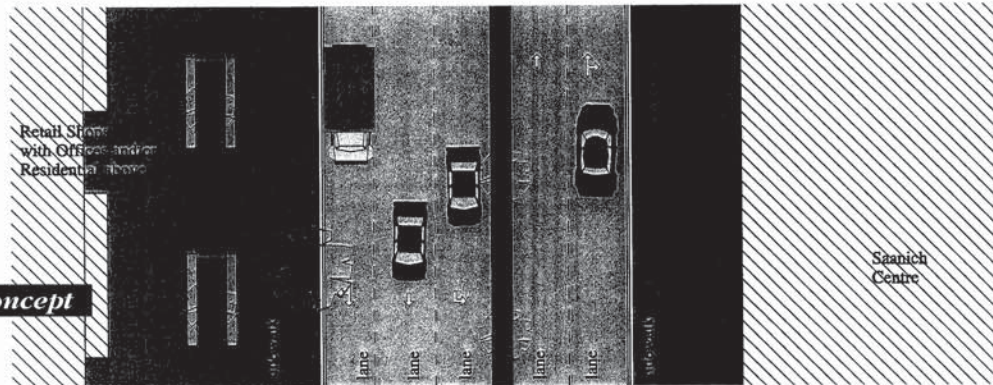




**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



**Section 3**

***Mckenzie Eastbound past Quadra***

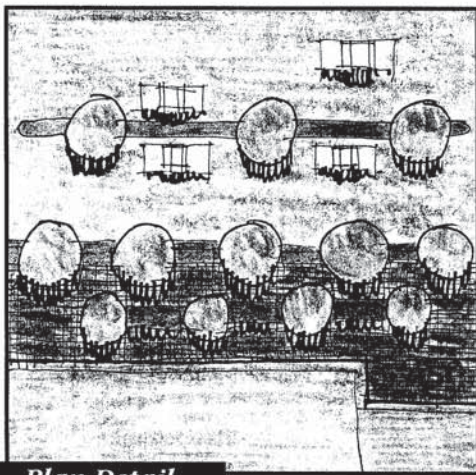
This portion of McKenzie Avenue is now a fairly hostile pedestrian environment and therefore requires a number of mitigating strategies. Among them, are larger setbacks, landscaped boulevards with large street trees and a mid-street boulevard to reduce the excessive apparent width. Building height along the north side of this wide street right-of-way could comfortably be 4 storeys.



**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**

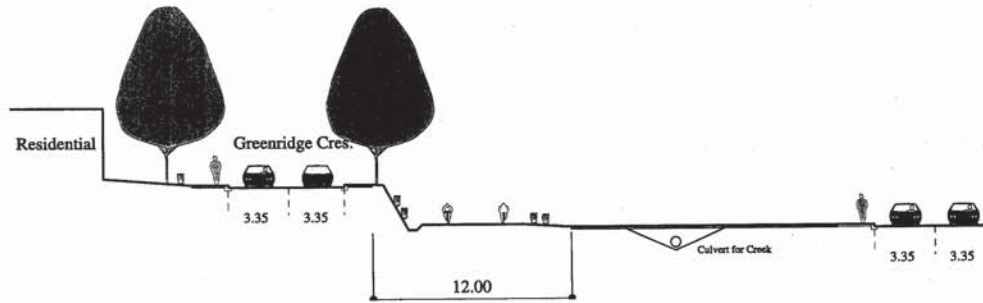
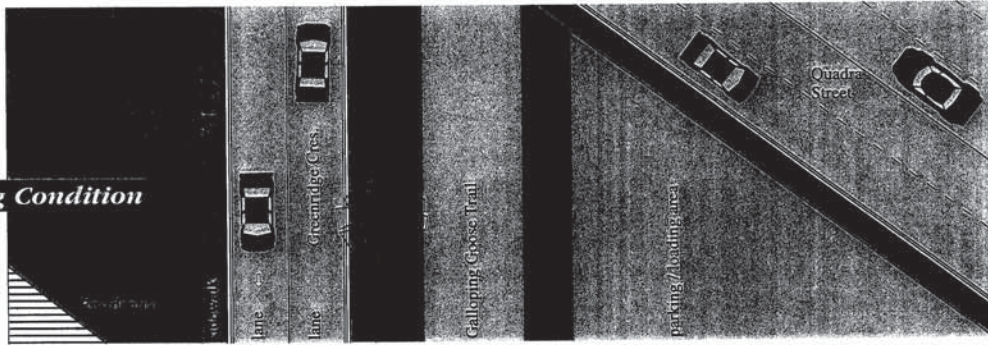


**Plan Detail**

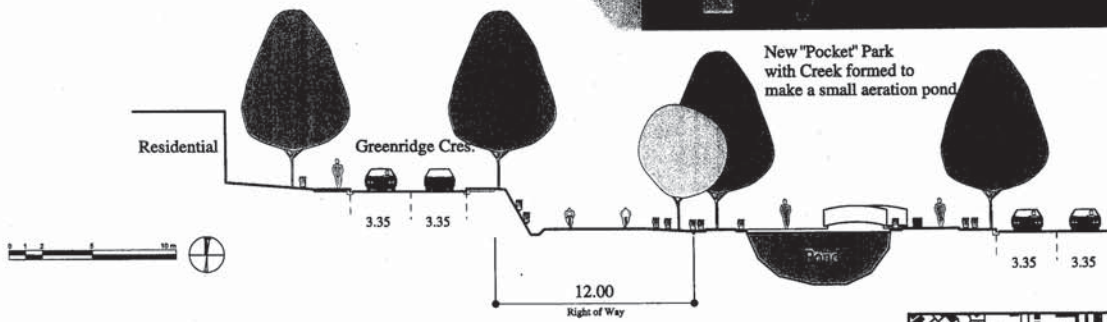
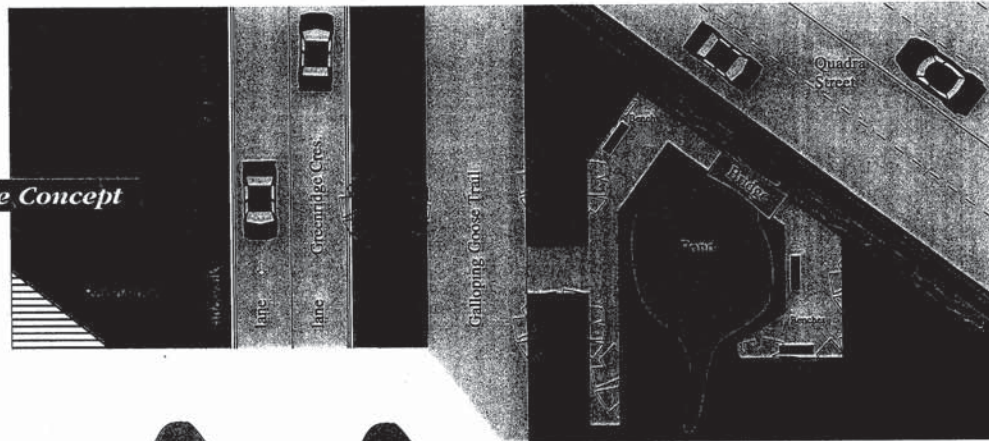
**Concept Plan**



**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



**Section 4**

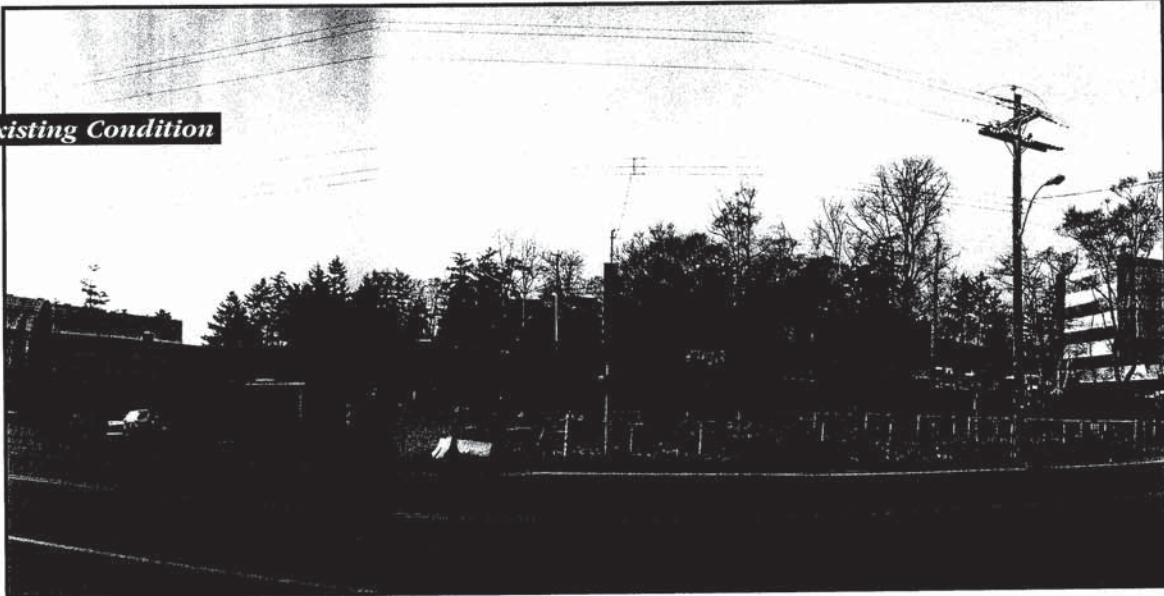
**Galloping Goose North-Eastbound before Quadra**

Similar to Section 5, this intersection of the Galloping Goose Greenway and Quadra Street could become a significant pedestrian node. In addition to being a signalized crossing, the creek could be turned into a central water feature of a small park. Trees, seating, landscaping and a drinking fountain could contribute to a humanizing public space in the Quadra McKenzie District.

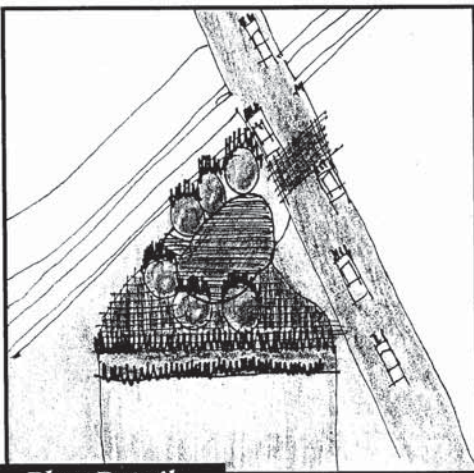
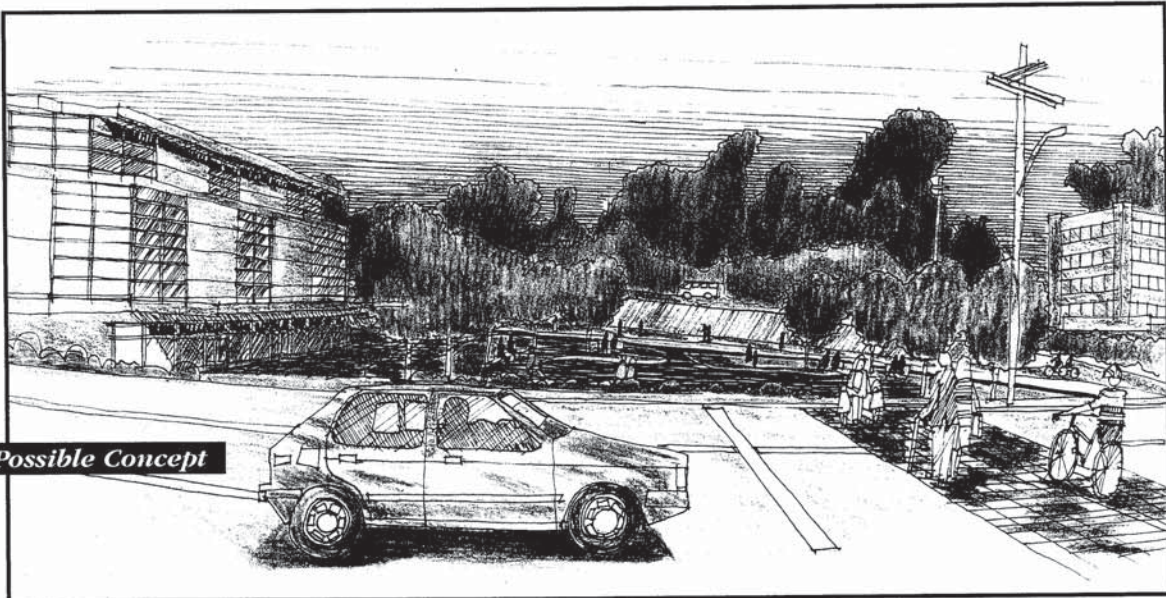


**Location Plan**

**Existing Condition**

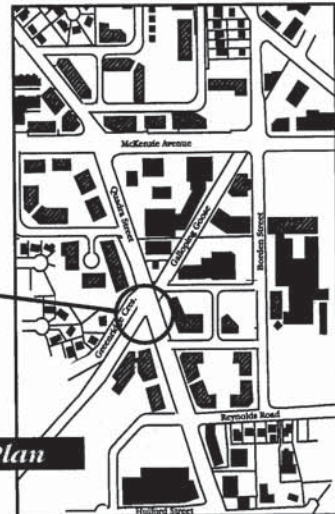


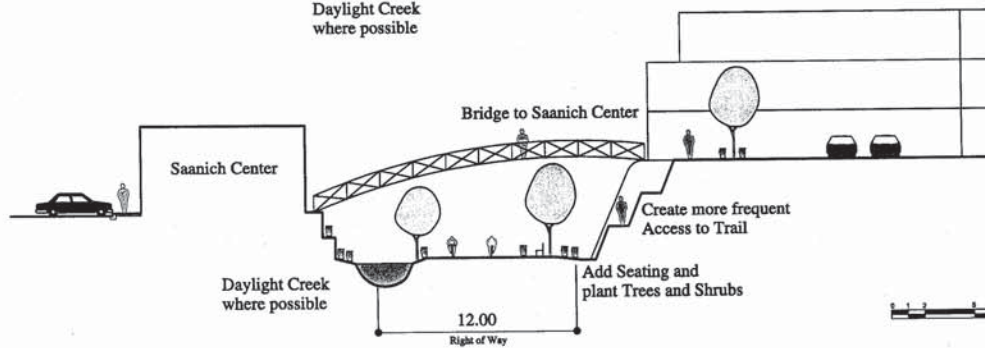
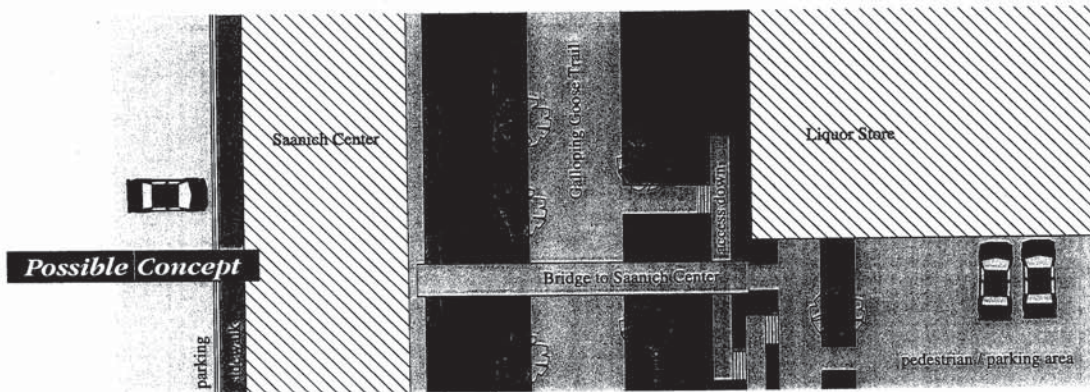
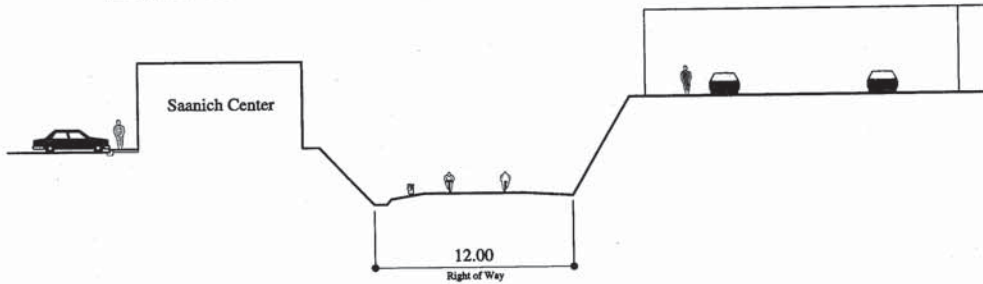
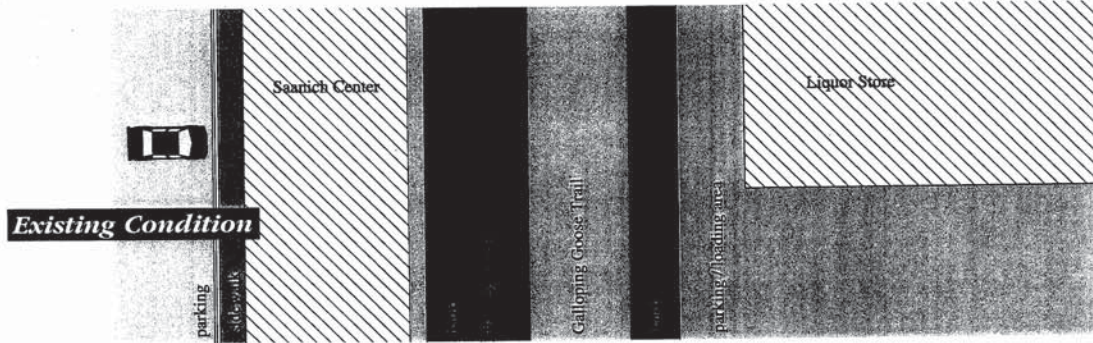
**Possible Concept**



**Plan Detail**

**Concept Plan**





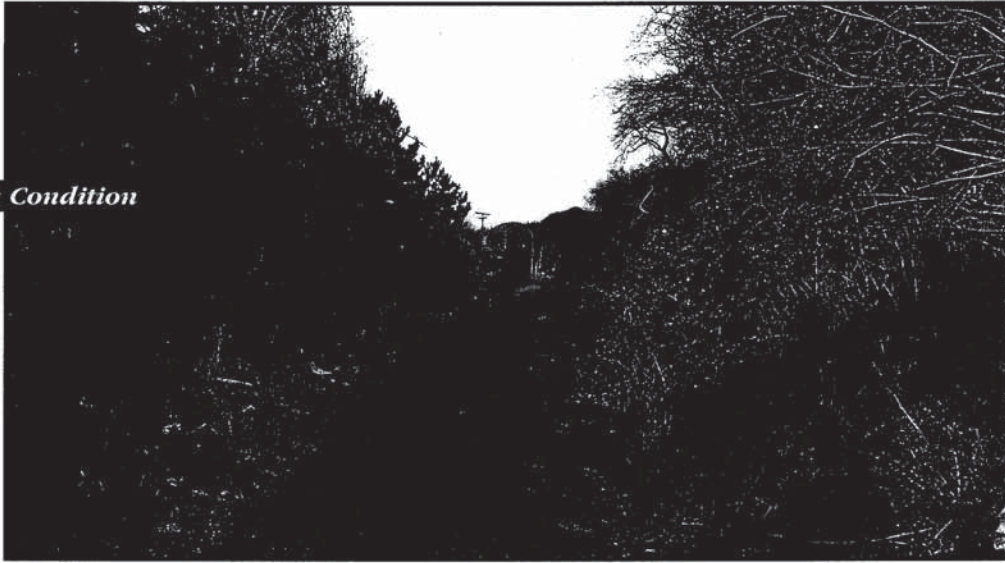
Section 5

**Galloping Goose North-Eastbound before McKenzie**

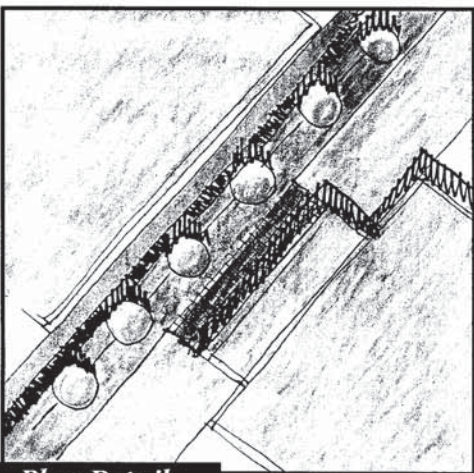
This section of the Galloping Goose Trail is atypical in that it traverses a commercial/industrial area, 2 major streets as well as significant variations of adjacent grades. This could provide an opportunity to interconnect the greenway with other neighbourhood paths and sites. This diagram shows a pedestrian bridge, seating, landscaped terraces, access stairs and a portion of the small creek that could be daylighted. It is clear that the Galloping Goose Greenway can be the focus and organizing element of an invigorated non-vehicular transportation network for the district.



**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**

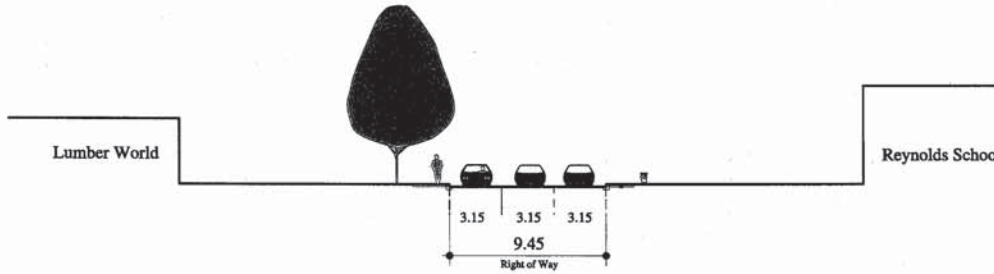


**Plan Detail**

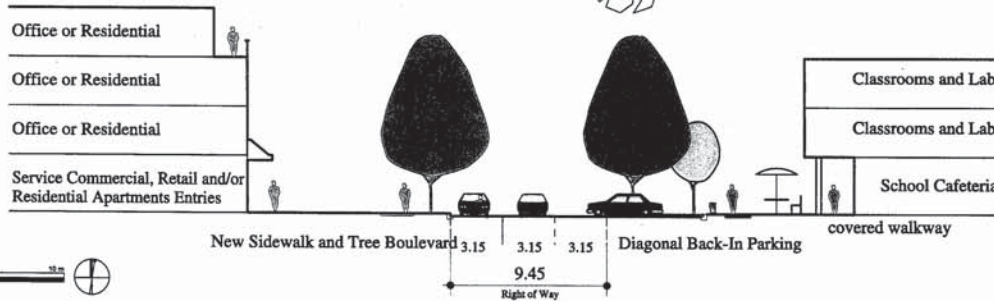
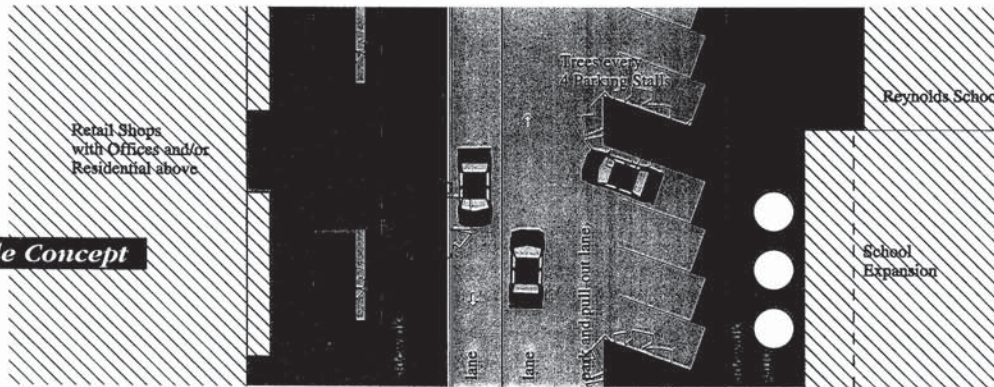


**Concept Plan**

**Existing Condition**



**Possible Concept**



**Section 6**

***Borden Northbound past Reynolds***

The traffic calming strategy for Borden Street includes street trees in landscaped boulevards, 2 travel lanes and a pull-out lane for the new diagonal parking. Although unorthodox, by orienting the parking this way, the most challenging movement, that of pulling out into moving traffic, is done by the driver while facing forward and with full view of oncoming traffic. The school activities that are most public, those of the dining area / cafeteria, lounge and circulation spaces, could be located adjacent to the street front. This would contribute to the integration of the school community with the rest of the neighbourhood. Building heights are based on their proportion to street right-of-way width. This is a desirable degree of street space definition while avoiding excessive overshadowing.

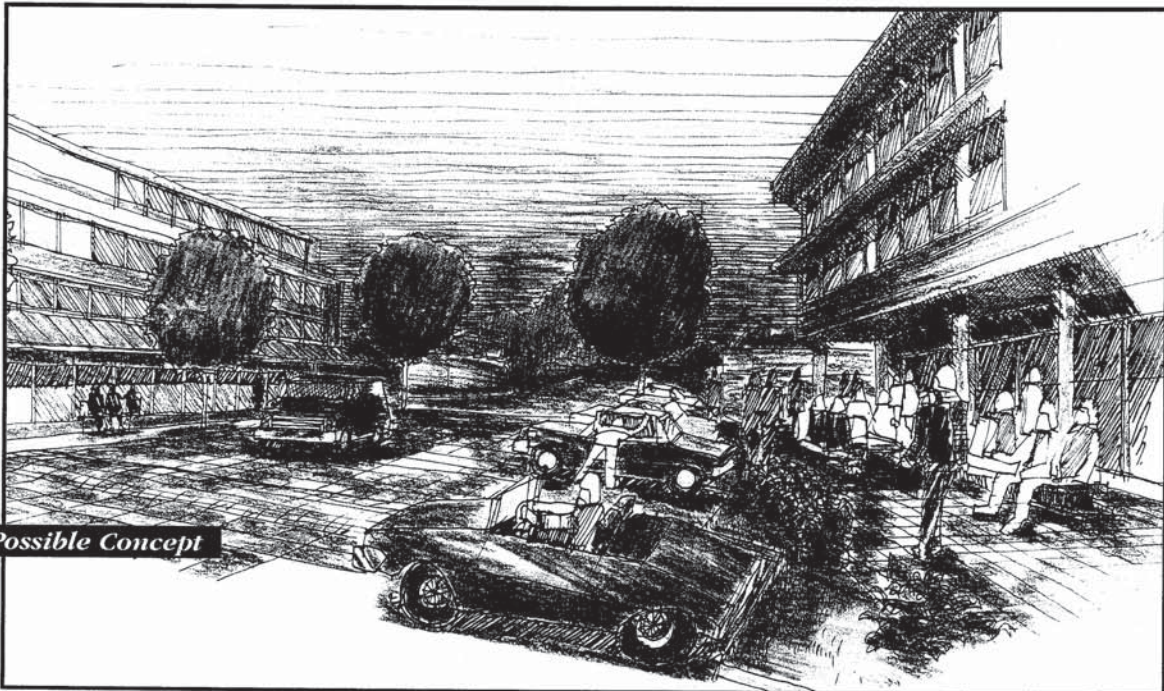


**Location Plan**

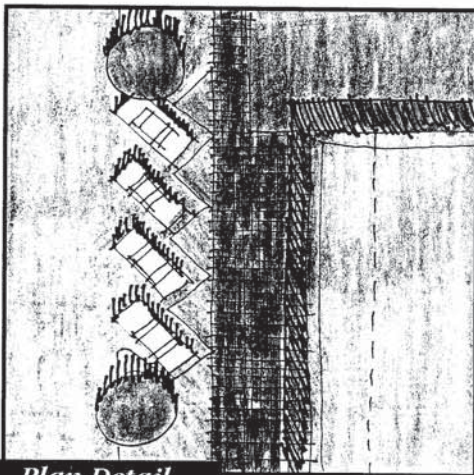
*Existing Condition*



*Possible Concept*



*Plan Detail*



*Concept Plan*







## Next Steps!

The Ideas Plan is just the beginning of the planning process for the Quadra/McKenzie area. Copies will be made available and an open house held for interested residents, landowners and business operators.

An Action Plan will build on the Ideas Plan and the comments received. Land use and design guidelines will be developed through a public consultation process.

To be kept informed about the planning process add your name to the Ideas Plan mailing list. Contact the Planning Department by phone at 475-5494 local 3400 or by fax at 475-5450 or mail to:

**Planning Department,  
District of Saanich,  
770 Vernon Avenue,  
Victoria, BC, V8X 2W7.**

