



Design Commercial

Downtown Reimagined

Draft Final Report



Territorial / Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that the city boundary lies within the Traditional Territory of Snuneymuxw First Nation who have many significant ancestral village sites throughout the city including in the downtown core, as well as StiiInup (Departure Bay) and Sxwuyum (Millstone River). We recognize the Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854, a trade and commerce treaty that forever and always preserves and protects Snuneymuxw villages, waters, enclosed fields, harvesting and gathering sites, and the right to hunt and fish as formerly.

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City of Nanaimo

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1.0 INTRODUCTION: REIMAGINING NANAIMO'S HISTORIC CENTRE



Nanaimo has been in a state of growth, evolution, and change for centuries. Since the Snuneymuxw established themselves on these rich, waterfront lands, the area has been a point of connection to Vancouver Island and the mainland across the Georgia Strait. When the City of Nanaimo was established on these traditional lands in 1874, the city's historic downtown looked slightly different, with the traditional salmon run in place of today's streets and local businesses. One thing, however, has remained consistent: Commercial Street and its connecting streets make up the core of Nanaimo's past, its present, and its sustainable and resilient future. Looking ahead, the goal is to ensure Commercial Street remains connected to that past while adapting and evolving for a vibrant and thriving future for the community and its residents.

1.1 Reimagining Nanaimo through a revitalized Commercial Street

The Design Commercial project is one part of the larger Reimagine Nanaimo process launched in the fall of 2019. Reimagine Nanaimo was focused on revitalizing the spaces that connect residents and visitors to this city and the life within it. The result of the process is the City Plan – Nanaimo Reimagined, which integrates and serves as the City's Official Community Plan; Parks, Recreation, and Culture Plan; Transportation Plan; Active Mobility Plan; Climate Action and Resiliency Plan; and Accessibility and Inclusion Plan.

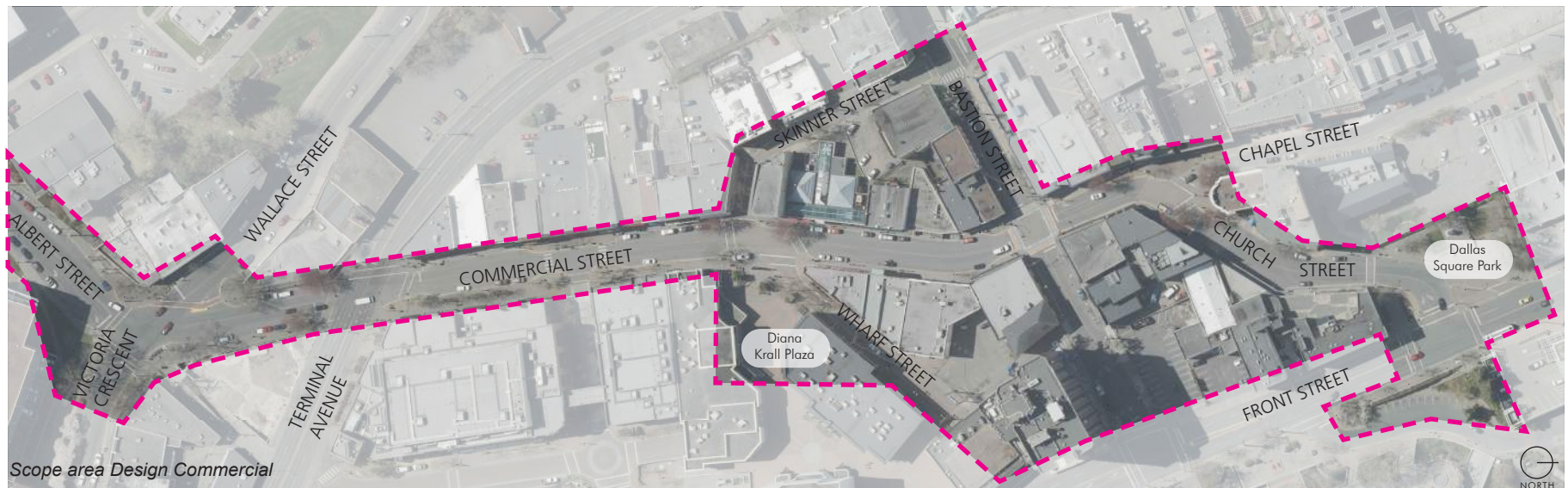
Design Commercial connects to Nanaimo Reimagined through its objectives to improve the quality of the human experience of the Commercial Street corridor and its adjacent plazas. Whether you are moving through the space on foot, by bike, on transit, or in a vehicle, you are participating in community events and activities, or the City of Nanaimo is improving the sustainability and resiliency of the streets and plazas for future climate stresses, Design Commercial will play an important role in creating a central place to be enjoyed by visitors to Nanaimo and the people that call it home.

Commercial Street plays an essential role in the City Plan – Nanaimo Reimagined as a location that combines the five goals of: **A Green Nanaimo; A Connected Nanaimo; A Healthy Nanaimo; An Empowered Nanaimo, and; A Prosperous Nanaimo.** The past few years have been challenging for visitors and residents of Downtown Nanaimo, as well as business owners. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for the community, impacting the economic vitality of the business community, limiting the opportunity for social gathering and celebration, and leaving many seeking the opportunity to reconnect with their city and its people. As Nanaimo moves into a period of recovery, it is more important than ever to have a plan that aims to reinvigorate Commercial Street as a place that brings people together.

Downtown is a place to celebrate what Nanaimo is – a diverse and passionate community of residents, visitors, entrepreneurs, artists, and everyone who makes up the cultural past, present and future of this city. Through the reimagination process, the goal is to develop a design for Commercial Street that works for the entire Nanaimo community. The Design Commercial project is focused on supporting economic recovery by creating a more welcoming, flexible downtown and one that allows people of all ages and abilities to come and enjoy downtown, to play in its public spaces, to stay and rest, and connect socially to each other and their community.

1.2 A design developed from what we heard

Commercial Street is a central part of the history of Nanaimo and it continues to play a role in bringing people together. As a result, it is imperative that Design Commercial reflects the community's vision of their downtown. Through a process based on consensus and collaboration, the design for Commercial Street honours the values of the community while creating a vision of vibrancy and connection in the heart of Nanaimo. The design process has been guided by a set of principles that link to the goals of Nanaimo ReImagined and includes a fresh and inclusive redesign of Commercial Street and its connecting streets, as well as two of downtown's important public spaces: Diana Krall Plaza and Dallas Square Park.



In particular, Diana Krall Plaza is a point of pride for many Nanaimo residents who want to see the space act as a central gathering location for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. The reimagining of Diana Krall Plaza reflects extensive community feedback and builds on previous efforts by Dr. Dave Witty and the ReEnvision Diana Krall Plaza team, to achieve a vision that reflects the community's need for a place to meet, stay, and enjoy Downtown Nanaimo.

I think the idea of the hubs in the new City Plan - Nanaimo ReImagined are great because they encourage livability, walkability, and play within small radii. It will mean that people aren't dependent on their cars, that they'll walk more, bike more, getting around in more social ways and ways that are healthier for us and for the planet.

- James Chamberlain, Nanaimo Resident

1.3 Design Commercial: Continuing the Legacy

The story of Nanaimo started centuries ago and continues to evolve and adapt to the changing world around it. Like many cities, the challenge is to adapt in a way that honours the past and events that have led to this point in history while also invigorating and reimagining in a way that is bold, exciting, and inspires celebration and pride. Design Commercial integrates with other City of Nanaimo initiatives such as the City Plan - Nanaimo ReImagined, ReEnvision Diana Krall, The Hub – Public Space and Transit Improvements at Terminal and Commercial, and the Downtown Nanaimo Safety Action Plan as well as private development projects such as the redevelopment of the former A&B Sound building into the proposed One Commercial. Design Commercial is part of this complete vision of how downtown Nanaimo can better reflect its historic past while creating a legacy that can be enjoyed by everyone who spends time along the city's vibrant streets.

2.0 FROM SHARED VALUES TO VISION AND PRINCIPLES



Throughout the development of the plans for Design Commercial Street, a consistent connection has been maintained to the values of what makes Nanaimo a place where people continue to choose to live. These values are why the Commercial Street corridor is so integral to the experience of residents and visitors as identified through engagement on the project and through the ReImagine Nanaimo process, and Design Commercial needs to reflect that. The vision map of the corridor has been created in a meaningful way that uses an inclusive approach, matching the principles set out in multiple community engagement sessions, stakeholder meetings, interviews, and feedback from the public. The central idea has been that through an iterative process, the project team, together with City of Nanaimo staff and people from the community, reimagine a truly welcoming and vibrant place.



1881 Map of Nanaimo

2.1 Values: Commercial Street as the Heart of the City

Although spread over 91 km², and part of a larger region along the East coast of Vancouver Island, the City of Nanaimo is a cozy community that prides itself on its culture, location, and history. The land on which Commercial Street sits has had many purposes over time; the ancestral lands of the Snuneymuxw, a harbour for trading activities and the coal mining industry, and, more recently, a commercial hub for fishing, forestry, industry, and tourism. Commercial Street, in many ways, has acted and continues to act as the heart of the community – a place for commerce, supporting the livelihood of local merchants, community, as home to cultural landmarks, galleries, and community centres, and connection, a place to come together and celebrate life in this coastal city.

ONE FRAMEWORK FIVE CITY GOALS



The Nanaimo Doughnut - Nanaimo Reimagined city goals

The ReImagine Nanaimo process was focused on realizing the love of the city by reviving underutilized spaces and breathing new energy into the established centres of the community. As the main corridor through the historic downtown, Commercial Street represents a key location to bring people together in the city. Design Commercial must therefore connect the values of the people of

Nanaimo with the five goals of the Nanaimo Reimagined framework. As such, the approach to this project has continually aimed to honour the vision statement set out early in the engagement process of Design Commercial:

Commercial Street is a green, connected, safe, and equitable place that reflects the history of Nanaimo while attracting people, investment, and vitality.

2.2 Vision: Connecting vibrant people in a vibrant space

A reimagined Commercial Street needs to be a place that encourages residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds to gather and spend time in the downtown. Some of the most successful city centres inspire the desire to connect with the community, support local business, take part in events, find opportunities for play, or just spend time in a comfortable space and enjoy the vibrant street life.

The Design Commercial project is focused on removing barriers in the built environment that may discourage people from spending time along the corridor. The built environment is the human-made space in which people live, work, and recreate on a day-to-day basis. The current design of Commercial Street and its public spaces are less compatible with a more sustainable, accessible, healthy future. Design Commercial therefore emphasizes a Commercial Street that meets the demands of a growing 21st century city: widened areas for people walking, the creation of flexible spaces that encourage diverse activities, greening and lighting that enhances the experience of spending time and travelling through the space, and public spaces that act as a point of pride, welcoming the community together in a place of enjoyment.

The design plans for Design Commercial are just the beginning; a launching point to find new opportunities for vibrancy. The flexible and adaptive designs, once constructed, enable the continuation of beloved community events like the Night Market and Jazz Festival, as well as a place to establish new events as part of the legacy of Nanaimo. The addition of trees and plants, play elements, and colour creates excitement, hopefully welcoming new businesses into the local economy while supporting established local favourites. Commercial Street should be an inclusive space, and the plan helps reimagine how the Nanaimo downtown can be a place that brings communities together, building compassion and comradery.

2.3 Principles: Designing a Nanaimo for everyone

The success of any reimagining of a public space is inextricably linked to how inclusive the space is, and Design Commercial is no different. Inclusive design is not just about accessibility – although that is an important aspect of inclusion. To create a space that meets the needs of everyone regardless of identified gender, race, background, age and/or economic means, a clear and comprehensive set of guiding principles are integral. The approach to developing the design plans for the Commercial Street corridor has been no different.

In the early stages of the Design Commercial process, a set of principles were established for the design of the street, as well as the public spaces. These are based on community feedback gathered during the first set of engagement activities (further outlined in Section 3.1) and in relation to the ReImagine Nanaimo engagement process. Each principle has played a role in informing the approach, materials, treatments, and overall look and feel of the area.

A key part of rejuvenating a downtown core is establishing commercial spaces which encourage both locals and tourists to spend time in the area, supporting local dining, shops, and other small businesses. Additionally, creating public and green spaces which mesh well with the overall downtown aesthetic is an essential part of encouraging people to engage with the area

- Design Commercial Survey Response

For Design Commercial, nine principles have guided the vision and visualization of a reimagined Commercial Street corridor.



CONNECTED

As a central location, Commercial Street must be well connected to the adjacent streets and public spaces in a mindful way. A clear and intuitive pathway from the waterfront, the public transit hub at Commercial and Terminal, and from surrounding neighbourhoods will ensure people are encouraged and enabled to access downtown.



CONVENIENT

Visiting downtown needs to remain convenient and inviting in order to remove any barriers that could dissuade people from visiting and spending time on the Commercial Street corridor. This includes easy access to walking pathways and the availability of safe and secure parking for cars and bicycles.



COMFORTABLE

Provision of ample room for walking, traffic calming to reduce high traffic volumes traveling through downtown, as well as ample spaces for people to stay and play will enhance the comfort of Commercial Street for visitors, residents, and businesses.



ENGAGING

The Commercial Street corridor needs to inspire people to come and spend time downtown, which requires creating a space that is engaging and inviting. This includes adding colour through greening and public art / street painting and enabling public events that bring people downtown.



ACCESSIBLE

There should be as few barriers to come and enjoy the Commercial Street corridor as possible. Wider sidewalks, flush curbs, and continuous crossings and public spaces, combined with places to sit, play, or relax, create a downtown that can be enjoyed by all ages and abilities.



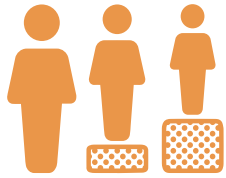
LEGIBLE

Because the very nature of a downtown is to allow for multiple uses, functions, and activities, it is important that it remains clear to users how to behave in the space to ensure the enjoyment of everyone. Contrasting colours and materials, as well as delineation through use of trees & clearly defined parking bays, help create a space that is legible and easy to navigate in all seasons.



SAFE

It is imperative that users feel safe when moving through the Commercial Street corridor. Measures that reduce and/or eliminate conflicts between road users, reduce isolated or dark spaces that invite dangerous activity, and increase visibility through lighting create a safer environment for Commercial Street.



EQUITABLE

The Commercial Street corridor must remain a welcome space for all members of Nanaimo's community. Equitable design encourages visitors of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and economic means to enjoy the street and its plazas without discrimination or exclusion.



FLEXIBLE





























As the location of numerous events throughout the year, the Commercial Street corridor must be designed for flexibility. Flush curbs, flexible parking areas, and continuous spaces through intersections and plazas allow for flexibility in the use and enjoyment of downtown Nanaimo and support a sustainable and resilient future.

The combination of the guiding principles has ensured that the design plans for Design Commercial reflect a diversity of needs and wants from the Nanaimo community. In this way, the reimagined spaces are more inclusive, and encourage residents and visitors of all ages to come and enjoy the space.

When I think of Diana Krall Plaza, I envision a place that could be a destination, it could be somewhere that children could run around and get some steam out and express themselves, where families can visit the library or the museum. Looking at the design, I could imagine a day camp of 12 children and their leaders walking through that space with all these things to see on the way and then walking down to the museum. I thought it was pretty cool.

**- Carolyn Holmes, Executive Director of
Nanaimo Art Gallery**

CITY PLAN - REIMAGINED NANAIMO GOALS

	A Green Nanaimo	A Connected Nanaimo	A Healthy Nanaimo	An Empowered Nanaimo	A Prosperous Nanaimo
CONNECTED					
CONVENIENT					
COMFORTABLE					
ENGAGING					
ACCESSIBLE					
LEGIBLE					
SAFE					
EQUITABLE					
FLEXIBLE					

The goals of Nanaimo ReImagined are really an examination and evaluation and, hopefully, renewal and re-creation, of all the existing community plans - the Community Plan, Transportation Plan, Parks and Recreation Plans - everything is on the table. We engaged with the community and developed a framework based on the question: “What do people want to see their city be?”

- **Mayor Leonard Krog**



3.0

A NEW VISION FOR COMMERCIAL STREET



Commercial Street has served as a connecting point for Nanaimo as far back as people can remember. When envisioning a revitalization of this space, including Diana Krall Plaza and Dallas Square Park, it is beneficial to view the space as zones, each connected and integrated to create a cohesive space that welcomes people from the surrounding neighbourhoods, the waterfront, and the Island Highway. However, this could not be done without understanding what the community wants for the space.

If the Commercial Street corridor is to truly become a place for greater commerce, community, and connection, it needs to be a place that reflects who the people of Nanaimo are and how they envision their city.



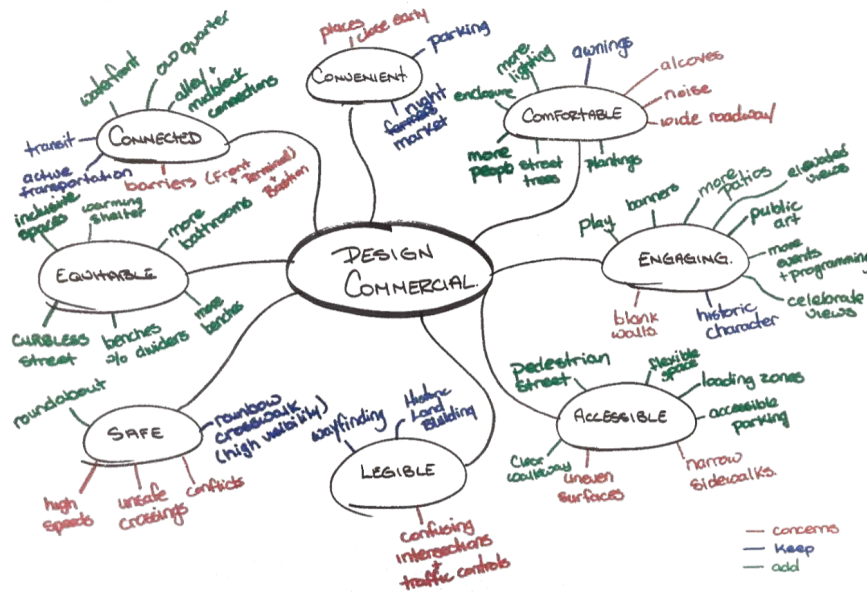
3.1 Developing options through consensus

Because of the importance of the Commercial Street corridor in acting as a central point in Nanaimo, the Design Commercial project needed to be informed by the needs and wants of the community. As a result, the process from idea to design has included several opportunities for residents and stakeholders in Nanaimo to provide their valuable insights and feedback. These included a Discovery Charette in late 2021, two online surveys, stakeholder interviews, and a Design Charette in early 2022. The information and responses provided through these activities ensured the final designs reflect the desires of the community for Commercial Street, the connecting corridors, Diana Krall Plaza, and Dallas Square Park.

3.1.1 Discovery Week: Forming the basis for the approach

Early in the process, it was important to fully understand the opportunities and challenges of the Commercial Street corridor and connecting plazas. The Discovery Charette, held November 22-25, 2021, at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre, was a week-long workshop where members of the public, various stakeholders (e.g., Business Improvement Associations, Neighbourhood Associations, project teams), staff from City of Nanaimo departments, and Nanaimo City Council were engaged to understand the local context. Activities included on-site walk-throughs with stakeholders, public Open Studio sessions, and a presentation of the findings.

Through these various opportunities to provide input, some core ideas and themes were identified that became the basis for much of the approach and work that followed. These themes, as previously noted in Section 2.3, can be seen in the mind map illustrated below.



Themes and ideas collected during the Discovery Charette from participants

In addition to the in-person Discovery Charette engagement activities, an online survey was released in the form of an Integrated Place Assessment, allowing respondents from Nanaimo to offer feedback on how they currently use the Commercial Street corridor and connecting plazas, what barriers exist in the use of the space, and how they would like to see the space reimaged. The responses to the survey, combined with the Discovery Week engagement, revealed a number of repeating elements that were clearly integral considerations for a successful design. These include:

1. Wider Sidewalks
2. Accessible Parking
3. Flexible “Parking Row”
4. Outdoor Dining
5. Easy & Flexible Event Set-up
6. Easier Snow Clearing
7. Easier Street Sweeping
8. Fewer Trip Hazards

All the information collected during the Discovery Week and Integrated Place Assessment surveys were summarized in a What We Heard document and used to inform the next stages of the project: developing concept designs.

3.1.2 Four Guiding Themes

Based on the information and feedback gathered during the Discovery Week and online survey, four guiding themes were established that would inform the process going forward. Each theme reflects the ideas and elements identified in earlier

engagement. By establishing these four guiding themes, the later stages of the Design Commercial project could be developed in line with public needs and wants. These themes were also integrated into later engagement activities.

THE FOUR GUIDING THEMES ESTABLISHED ARE:



ENHANCED STREETSCAPES

Create a flush curb street with wider sidewalks, increased lighting, greenery, and street trees, opportunities for seating, and space for public art.



COMMERCIAL OFFERINGS & LIVABILITY

Expanded and increased commercial opportunities and space for dining, shopping, and supporting local businesses during the daytime as well as in the evenings. Increase offerings of quality housing, community amenities, and law enforcement to support the livability of Downtown.



TEMPORARY STREET ACTIVATION

Continue to support and enhance opportunities for temporary events on Commercial Street, such as markets, music events, and performances.



PUBLIC AND GREEN SPACES

Improve public and green spaces in Downtown and improve access and connections to the water.

3.1.3 Design Charette: Presenting the possibilities for Design Commercial

In February 2022, the project team returned to Nanaimo to run a second engagement session with City staff, local stakeholders, and the public. This Design Charette focused on presenting the starter ideas resulting from what was heard during the Discovery Charette and through the online survey. Held from February 1-3, 2022, engagement activities included a combination of in-person meetings with staff and stakeholders, as well as online public forums due to continued COVID-19 measures.

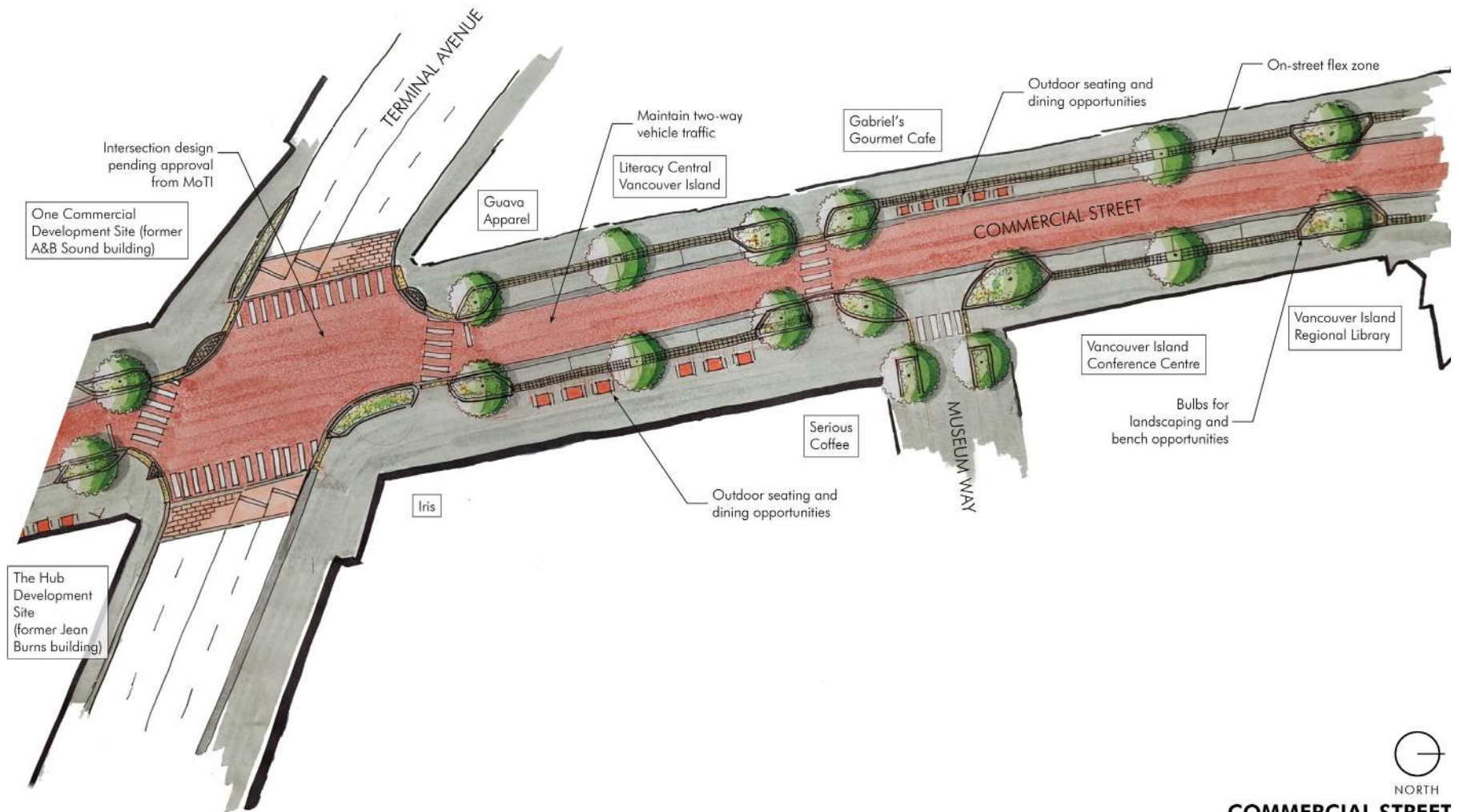
It's going to be a fresh look, like somebody put a nice coat of paint on downtown. I think that's going to help downtown merchants and residents feel better about their community. It makes a clear statement when you go out and do something like that.

- Kim Smythe, President and CEO of the Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce and the BIA

During these events, the themes and principles developed and defined through the initial engagement activities, as well as the four guiding themes discussed in the previous section, were presented. This information provided the context for the approach taken for the reimagining of the corridor. Additionally, the initial starter ideas were presented to participants, with time allowed for providing constructive feedback to further develop the designs. The Design Week included developing design options and a draft design. Draft designs developed during the Design Week looked like the those shown on the following pages.

Following Design Week, a second online survey was released to collect further feedback from the public about the draft design. The survey provided respondents the opportunity to offer overall feedback and impressions of Design Commercial, as well as provide feedback on the concept designs drafted for the Commercial Street corridor. Feedback received from the survey was used to further refine the designs and address any concerns as best as possible.

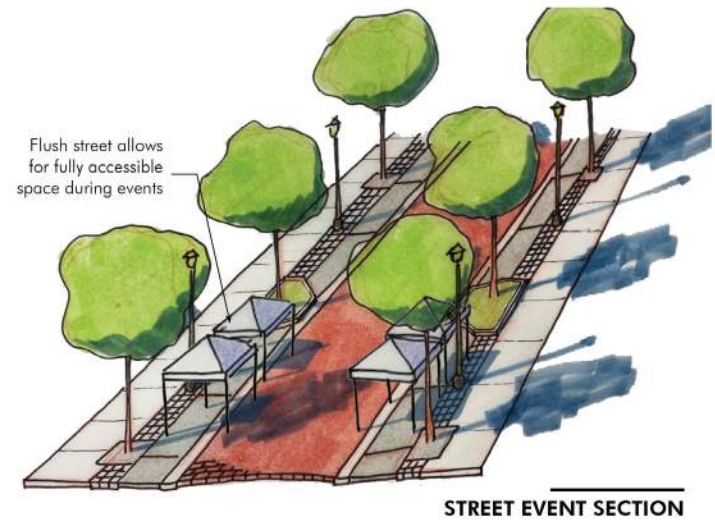
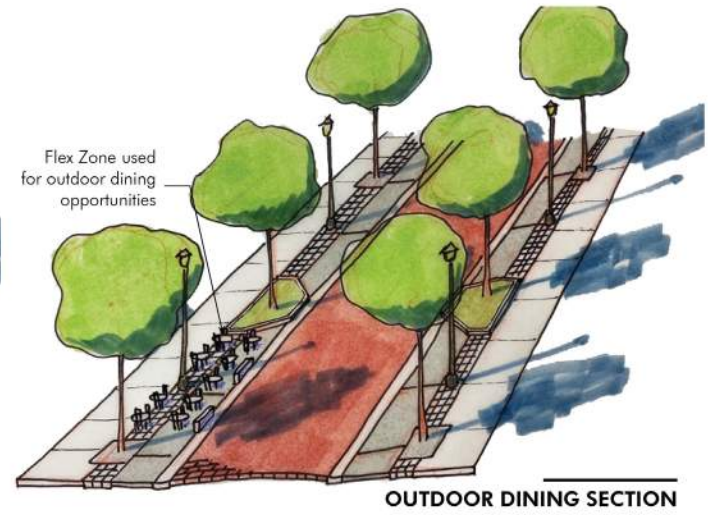
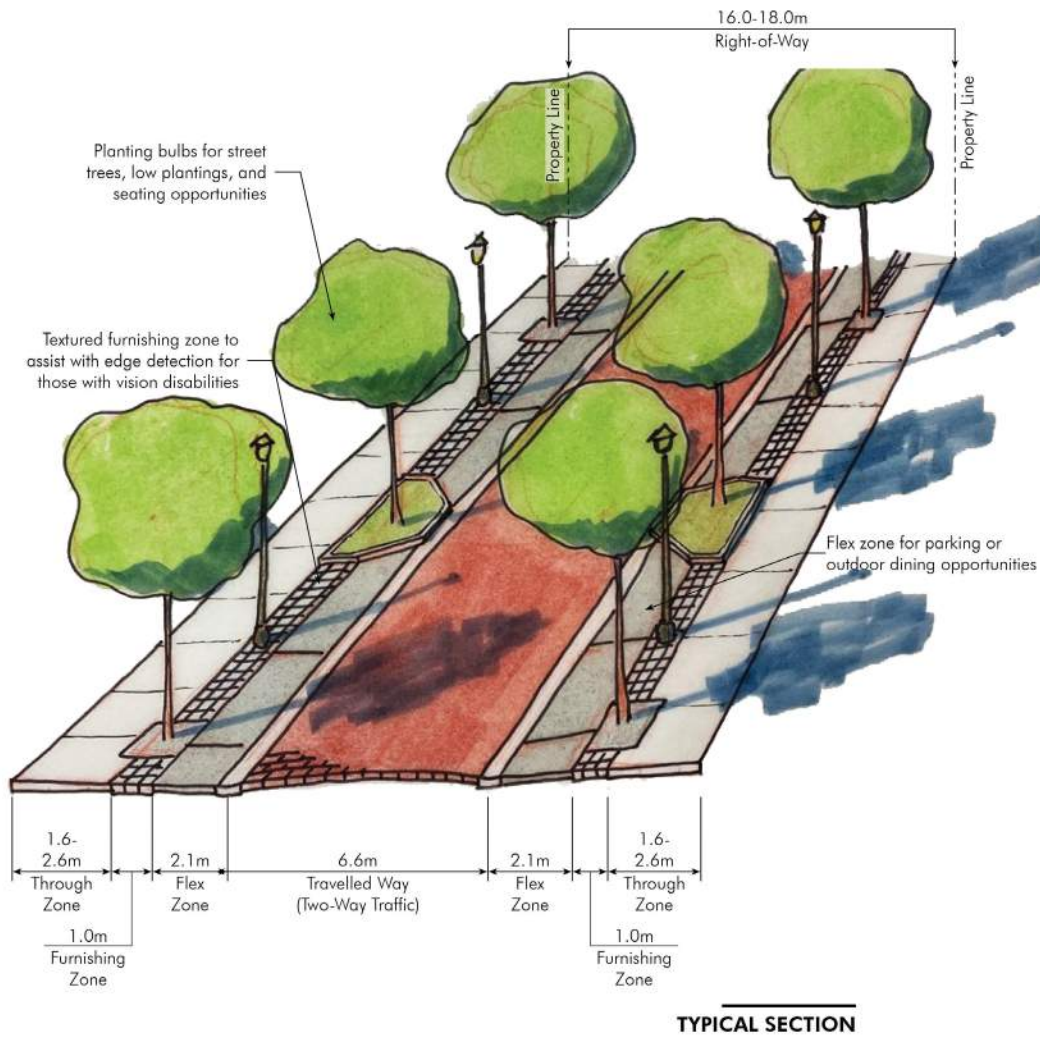
All the information collected during the Design Week and online surveys were summarized in a What We Heard document and used to develop the final concept design plans for the project. The resulting final designs (see Section 3.2) reflect the consensus communicated throughout all engagement activities.



*GRAPHICS SHOWN ARE CONCEPTUAL.
EXACT DESIGN FEATURE TO BE DETERMINED.

COMMERCIAL STREET
STREETScape REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN
— TERMINAL AVENUE TO DIANA KRALL PLAZA

Plan view of concept design for Commercial Street from Terminal Avenue to Diana Krall Plaza



COMMERCIAL STREET
STREETScape REDEVELOPMENT
CROSS SECTIONS

*GRAPHICS SHOWN ARE CONCEPTUAL.
EXACT DESIGN FEATURE TO BE DETERMINED.

Cross section view of concept design for Commercial Street



NORTH

DALLAS SQUARE PARK
PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT
CONCEPT PLAN

Plan view of concept design for Dallas Square Park



TREE BOSQUE



PERMANENT BENCHES WITH PLANTERS



WATER FEATURE



OUTDOOR DINING AND SEATING



**DALLAS SQUARE PARK
PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT
FEATURES**

Precedent photos for proposed elements in Dallas Square Park

3.2 The design and its rationale

The resulting designs for Design Commercial aim to reflect what was heard throughout the engagement process. Each decision has been made mindfully, referring back to the vision, the City Plan – Nanaimo ReImagined and its goals, the values of the community, and the principles and themes created through public engagement for the project.

Delving deeper into the designs, the reasoning behind the core elements selected for Commercial Street, Church Street, Wharf Street, Skinner Street, Bastion Street, Diana Krall Plaza, and Dallas Square Park have been made to honour those visions in the following ways. The full Design Commercial concept design plans are included in the Appendices of this report.



Design Commercial Concept Plan

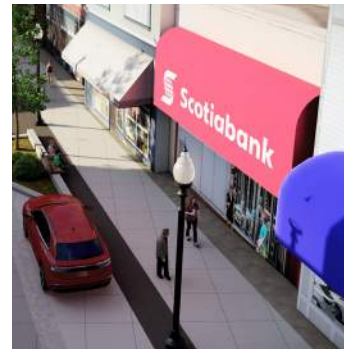




Flush Curb Street: Establishing flush curbs serves a number of purposes. The first and most important is to improve accessibility of the corridor. Traditional curb cuts only at intersections limits access. Designing flush curbs allows the free movement

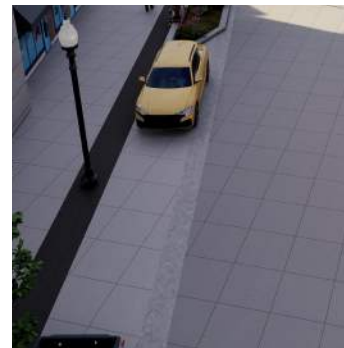
of people using mobility aids such as walkers, rollers, wheelchairs, and mobility scooters. Additionally, caregivers pushing strollers and people with bicycles needing to move from the road space to the walking area (to park their bicycle for example) are not limited due to having to lift heaving equipment up over traditional curb heights. Deliveries to businesses can be made more easily from either the sides, back, or fronts of vehicles or cargo bicycles without having to navigate a curb. By creating an entire corridor with flush curbs, people can move freely through the corridor.

At the same time, the flush curbs promote the flexibility of the space. Tents and market stalls for the night market and other festivals, temporary seating for restaurants, or displays for retailers, are facilitated easily, enabling a more dynamic use of the public realm.



Widened Sidewalks: It was repeatedly communicated through the engagement activities that the ease of moving along the corridor on foot, with a stroller, or a mobility aid such as a wheelchair or mobility scooter was important to creating a more welcoming

experience in downtown. By widening the sidewalks, more space to walk side-by-side, pass others, or stop and perhaps do some window shopping is better facilitated. Widening the sidewalks also results in a narrower road space, encouraging people driving to slow down, and improving the quality of the experience downtown while reducing related stresses.



Contrasting Colours in the Public Realm: Although one of the principles of Design Commercial is flexibility, it was important to still define the spaces for clarity. The paving materials for the centre area of the street where people driving will operated, the materials for the sidewalk area, and the materials

for the flex zone (used for parking, seating, and landscaping) are different colours to delineate the spaces for their intended function. The use of contrasting elements are also important for improving the experience of the visually impaired, particularly when combined with texture. The scale of visual impairment for each individual is varied, and high colour contrast mixed with selective use of texture improves the ability to safely navigate the street.



Lighting: It was heard that lighting along the corridor and in the public spaces needed to be enhanced to improve the safety and enjoyment of the space at darker periods of the day. Nanaimo experiences longer periods of darkness in the winter months and

it is important that lighting encourage a comfortable environment year-round, and not just in lighter summer months. The addition of string lighting in key locations like Diana Krall Plaza also aids in the softening of the hard surfaces along the Commercial Street corridor.



Greenery, Street Trees, Natural Elements: The “greening” of the Commercial Street corridor through plants and trees provides a diversity to the landscape in terms of texture and colours, while also improving the sustainability and resilience of the

space. The addition of other natural elements further enhances the experience, creating potential spaces for play, while maintaining a connection to the natural environments (mountains, water) that surround Nanaimo. These elements are located in curb bulbs along with potential seating as well as along the corridor including in the parks and plazas.



Creating an On-Street Flex Zone to support Activation and Businesses:

The vision of Design Commercial is to create a welcome, vibrant public space. On-street parking and loading spaces are included in the design as these provide important opportunities to access local businesses and

destinations. The space for parking is also intended to function as a “flex zone”: a space that can be used for parking and loading, but is also a place for trees that provides narrowing at regular intervals to slow motor vehicle speeds and provide shelter, as well as space that can be used by adjacent businesses for seating and patios. To encourage residents and visitors to come and spend time and money in downtown Nanaimo, it is important to provide opportunities to rest and expanded seating for local restaurants and cafes. The temporary seating in the flex zone and the permanent seating additions in the furnishing zones can provide refuge for elderly visitors or caregivers while children play, flexibility for local eateries to encourage outdoor dining, and inspire social connection by having central meeting spaces.



Redistribution of Space and Integration of Plazas and Parks into the Street:

Dallas Square Park serves a very important purpose as a memorial for the individuals who have served their country, particularly during Remembrance Day ceremonies. It was important to maintain the honour

of the space while also encouraging year-round use. Diana Krall Plaza was created to celebrate a world-famous musician that grew up in the community and has inspired many through her music. The design of the Park and Plaza include elements to support thought and reflection, space to play for children and families, and space for events, festivals, and ceremony. Intergenerational enjoyment is a critical element of successful public space and for building connection between past and future generations, and this was kept in mind when proposing the elements for the park.



Public Art: Throughout the corridor, the addition of public art and colour has been carefully considered. The enhancements in Diana Krall Plaza build vibrancy into the space through street art, performance space, and colour. This is continued further along the corridor at the intersection

of Bastion and Commercial with the expanded rainbow crossing. Adding colour and art to the public space improves the diversity of elements in the space, creating interesting areas where people are inspired to stay and discover. There is also flexibility in the future to showcase the work of local artists, beautifying dull surfaces.

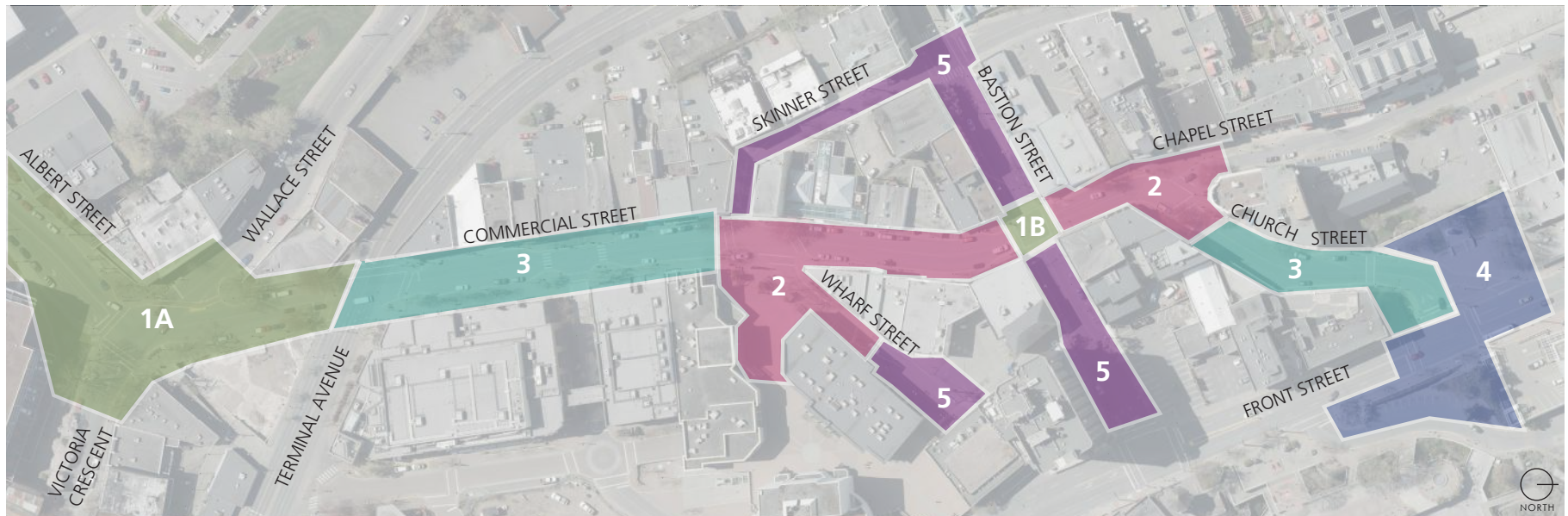
The flush sidewalks and wider the sidewalks will make the downtown more pedestrian-friendly, and it'll bring more people to the businesses in that area. I'm excited because there are new opportunities for events as well as build on the success of the night market.

COVID meant we weren't able to host events downtown, so the flexibility of the space will provide an opportunity for more joyful celebrations downtown, and more community engagement.

My hope is that the legacy will be a downtown core that is a vibrant, exciting, joyful place to gather with friends and family.

- James Chamberlain, Nanaimo Resident

4.0 REALIZING THE VISION: THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Design Commercial Implementation Phasing Plan



4.1 Phasing the construction of the design

Based on coordination with other projects and consideration of potential funding allotments for transportation, downtown, and infrastructure projects in Nanaimo, we have identified the following implementation phases to design and construct Design Commercial.

PHASE 1A 2023/2024

COMMERCIAL STREET FROM VICTORIA CRESCENT TO TERMINAL AVENUE:

- With funding in place as part of The Hub project, private development potentially occurring at One Commercial, and the Ministry reconstructing Terminal Avenue, the first phase of building Commercial Street, including the intersections with Victoria Crescent and Albert Street forms, Phase 1 of the implementation.
- Continued coordination will be required with the other projects in the area as the next phase of design for Commercial Street is undertaken.

PHASE 1B 2022/2023

COMMERCIAL STREET AND BASTION STREET INTERSECTION:

- Bastion Street has already been identified for funding for the reconstruction of this intersection with Commercial Street.

PHASE 2 2024/2025

DIANA KRALL PLAZA (INCLUDING THE CLOSURE OF WHARF STREET) AND COMMERCIAL STREET FROM DIANA KRALL PLAZA TO THE LAND BUILDING

- Transformation of Diana Krall Plaza and its integration with the streetscape is a very important early phase of the implementation of Design Commercial as it will shift travel patterns and establish the streetscape for a major portion of the corridor including the and space outside the Land Building.
- Consistent with the ReEnvision Diana Krall implementation plan, including the portion of Diana Krall Plaza adjacent to Commercial Street will allow for the plaza to be integrated with the street and provide a focal point for activation of this important downtown public space.
- Implementation will require additional discussions with the Vancouver Island Regional Library and the Coastal Community Credit Union, including the property owners, during more detailed design of the Diana Krall Plaza.

PHASE 3
2025/2026

COMMERCIAL STREET FROM TERMINAL AVENUE TO DIANA KRALL PLAZA AND CHURCH STREET

- The third phase of implementation fills in the gaps of construction along Commercial Street and Church Street and will create a continuous street design along Commercial and Church Streets from Victoria Crescent to Front Street.

PHASE 4
2026/2027

DALLAS SQUARE PARK AND THE WATERFRONT UPGRADES

- Redesigning and reconstructing Dallas Square Park and the interface with the waterfront will require additional time to complete further engagement with stakeholders such as the Royal Canadian Legion, as well as technical studies related to geotechnical items and others.
- Identifying these parts of Design Commercial for Phase 4 will provide the additional time required to complete the engagement and technical investigations.

PHASE 5
2027/2028

SKINNER STREET, BASTION STREET, AND WHARF STREET

- The final phase of the project will include the reconstruction of Skinner and Wharf Streets into flush streets and shared spaces.
- The Wharf Street shared space was also identified as a later stage of implementation in the ReEnvision Diana Krall plan.
- Bastion Street reconstruction completes the loop from Skinner Street to Front Street and including it in Phase 5 may allow for transit rerouting once Terminal Avenue, The Hub, and the rest of Commercial Street have already been reconstructed.

4.2 Opinion of Probable Costs

A high-level cost estimate was developed for the project and aligns with each phase presented above. Given the significant inflation occurring in the market for materials from supply chain issues, global geopolitical issues, and the COVID-19 pandemic, we have attempted to add reasonable contingencies to attempt to account

for price escalations; however, these contingencies may not fully account for price fluctuations in the near term. The following table summarizes the high-level cost estimate for each phase of the project.

PHASE	COST
Phase 1A – Commercial Street from Victoria Crescent to Terminal Avenue	\$2.8 to \$3.4 million
Phase 1B – Commercial and Bastion Street Intersection	\$0.7 to \$0.8 million
Phase 2 – Diana Krall Plaza (including the closure of Wharf Street) and Commercial Street from Diana Krall Plaza to the Land Building	\$3.4 to \$4.0 million
Phase 3 – Commercial Street from Terminal Avenue to Diana Krall Plaza and Church Street	\$3.3 to \$3.9 million
Phase 4 – Dallas Square Park and the Waterfront upgrades	\$3.2 to \$3.8 million
Phase 5 – Skinner Street, Bastion Street, and Wharf Street	\$2.8 to \$3.4 million
TOTAL	\$16.2 TO \$19.3 MILLION

Disclaimer: Opinions of probable cost were developed by identifying major pay items and establishing rough quantities to determine a rough order of magnitude cost. Additional pay items have been assigned approximate lump sum prices based on a percentage of the anticipated construction cost. Planning-level cost opinions include a 50% contingency to cover items that are undefined or are typically unknown early in the planning phase of a project. Unit costs are based on 2022 dollars and were assigned based on historical cost data from provided from previous City of Nanaimo projects. Cost opinions do not include easement and right-of-way acquisition; permitting, inspection, or construction management; engineering, surveying, geotechnical investigation, environmental documentation, special site remediation, escalation, or the cost for ongoing maintenance. A cost range has been assigned to certain general categories such as utility relocations; however, these costs can vary widely depending on the exact details and nature of the work. The overall cost opinions are intended to be general and used only for planning purposes. Toole Design makes no guarantees or warranties regarding the cost estimate herein. Construction costs will vary based on the ultimate project scope, actual site conditions and constraints, schedule, and economic conditions at the time of construction.

5.0

CONCLUSION:
A REIMAGINED NANAIMO

Reinvigorating Nanaimo's downtown is vital to the continued legacy of Commercial Street and its connecting streets and plazas as central gathering points in the city. The urgency to support the economic recovery of local businesses and tourism, while improving the opportunities to reconnect socially with the diverse community in Nanaimo is palpable, not just to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to establish resilience in the face of future stresses on the city and surrounding communities. Design Commercial is poised to reinforce the five goals of the City Plan – Nanaimo Reimagined and connect the values of the community to achieve the vision of the plan: *Commercial Street is a green, connected, safe, and equitable place that reflects the history of Nanaimo while attracting people, investment, and vitality.*

A reimagined Commercial Street will encourage vibrant street life in this historically significant place. The design developed throughout this process focuses on respecting the established traditions of downtown Nanaimo while presenting new opportunities to adapt and evolve, creating new traditions future generations will come to celebrate. Design Commercial aims to remove barriers that hinder the enjoyment of downtown by people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and economic means, and backgrounds, because it is just that: a space for everyone's enjoyment.

The nine principles for Commercial Street are beacons that guided this process and will continue to do so beyond this project. By creating a community space that is *connected, convenient, comfortable, engaging, accessible, legible, safe, equitable, and flexible*, the corridor and its public spaces can become an inspiration for how to improve the quality of the experience throughout Nanaimo. It will also act as a draw for visitors, who will come to celebrate Nanaimo's culture, creativity, and diversity.

As noted earlier in this document, Design Commercial presents a transition; a launching point to find new opportunities for vibrancy. The **Enhanced Streetscapes** created with improved walking spaces, the addition of greenery and natural elements, and more colour through plants and public art will become a point of pride for residents of downtown and throughout Nanaimo.

The improvements to **Commercial Offerings and Livability** will provide stability and vitality for local businesses and create a home for people looking to live centrally in a place that encourages active and welcoming street life.

People want photo opportunities, they want little places that they can capture memories, take photos, and share their experiences. For tourism in Nanaimo, it's great to always show the natural beauty, the ocean view or mountains, but it's also great to celebrate the culture, to celebrate the downtown, and let people know when they're visiting this region. There are things to do, and there are reasons to come and stay for a few days.

- **Carolyn Holmes, Executive Director of
Nanaimo Art Gallery**

Nanaimo's established Night Market and Jazz Festival, as well as countless new events, with the support of the Nanaimo Business Improvement Association and the Victoria Crescent Association, will be encouraged through the provision of space for **Temporary Street Activation**.

Finally, by enhancing the **Public and Green Space**, Commercial Street and its connecting streets and plazas will become public spaces connected to the natural landscapes around downtown and Nanaimo, and become spaces residents and visitors will be happy to visit and spend time in.

Downtown Nanaimo has a legacy of being a meeting place and an inclusive space, meant for the use and enjoyment by everyone, and celebrating the diversity of cultures, histories, and landscapes that make Nanaimo a city people continue to visit and choose to make their home. Design Commercial reimagines a downtown Nanaimo that is linked to its past, provides a space for pride today, and will evolve as future generations build upon it as a location for gathering as a community, building compassion and comradery, and supporting the social, economic, and environmental vitality that has established Nanaimo as a beautiful harbour city.

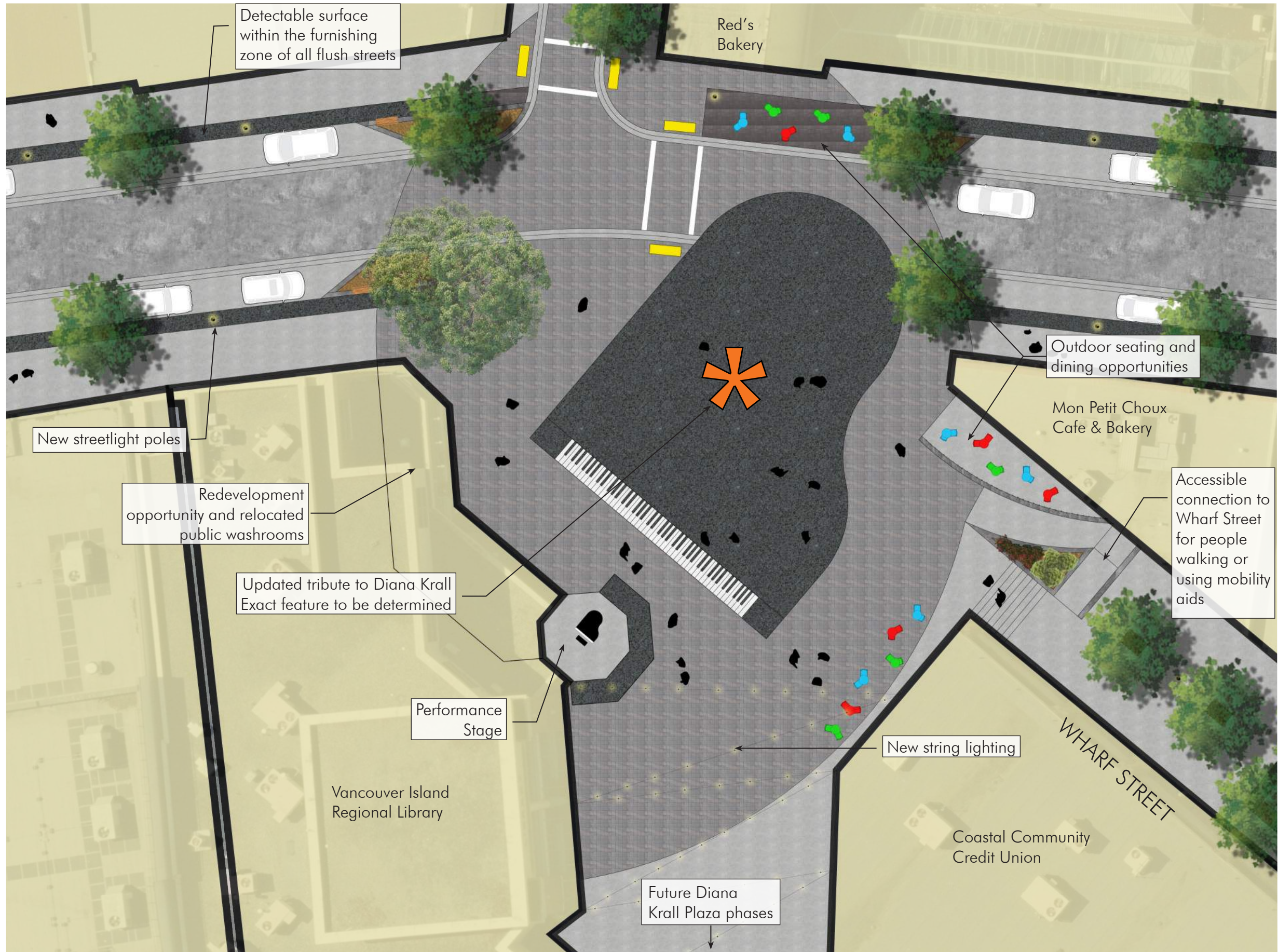
APPENDICES





*GRAPHICS SHOWN ARE CONCEPTUAL.
EXACT DESIGN FEATURE TO BE DETERMINED.



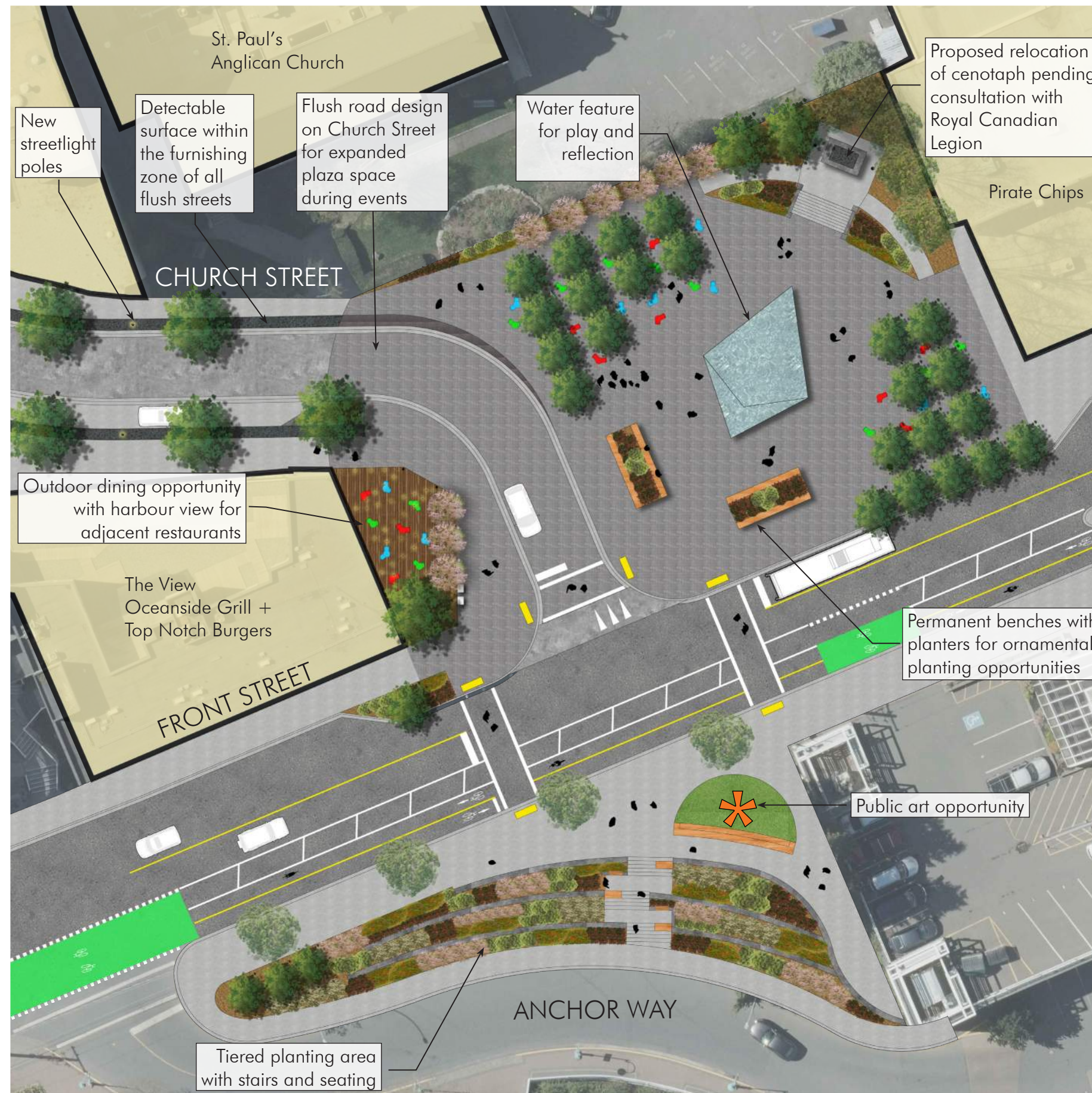


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EXACT DESIGN FEATURE TO BE DETERMINED.



NORTH

DIANA KRALL PLAZA
REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN



*GRAPHICS SHOWN ARE CONCEPTUAL.
EXACT DESIGN FEATURE TO BE DETERMINED.



DALLAS SQUARE PARK AND WATERFRONT

REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN



NORTH



Design Commercial

Downtown Reimagined



www.nanaimo.ca



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