



West End

Community Improvement Plan

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The Government of Canada is a partner in this initiative.



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Table of Contents

Preamble	Basis for the Community Improvement Plan	1
	Implementation & Funding of Improvement Project . .	4
Issues and Recommendations	Introduction	4
	Housing Rehabilitation	4
	Seniors' Housing	5
	Truck Traffic	6
	Transportation Vehicular	7
	Regent Street Corridor	7
	Lorne Street Corridor	8
	Elm Street Corridor	10
	Pedestrian Circulation, Bus Shelters	11
	Street Improvements	13
	Speed on Residential Street	13
	Improvement & Use of Lanes	14
	Parks and Playgrounds	15
	Landscaping	18
	Land Use Designation	19
	Special Concept Area	19
	Signage	21
	Drainage	21
	Transit	22
Draft Plan Maps	1. Issues & Opportunities Concept	
	2. Circulation & Open Space Concept	
	3. Landscape & Open Space Concept	
Street Cross Sections	1. Lorne Street at Industrial Park – Typical	
	2. Lorne Street at Ontario Street – Typical	
	3. Regent Street at Commercial District – Typical	
	4. Elm Street West of Lorne – Typical	
	5. Secondary Streetscape – Typical	
Appendices	1. Maintenance and Minor Issues	
	2. Pedestrians and Bicycle Pathways	
	3. Traffic Calming Measures	
	4. Use of Rear Lanes	
	5. Analysis Maps	

WEST END COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

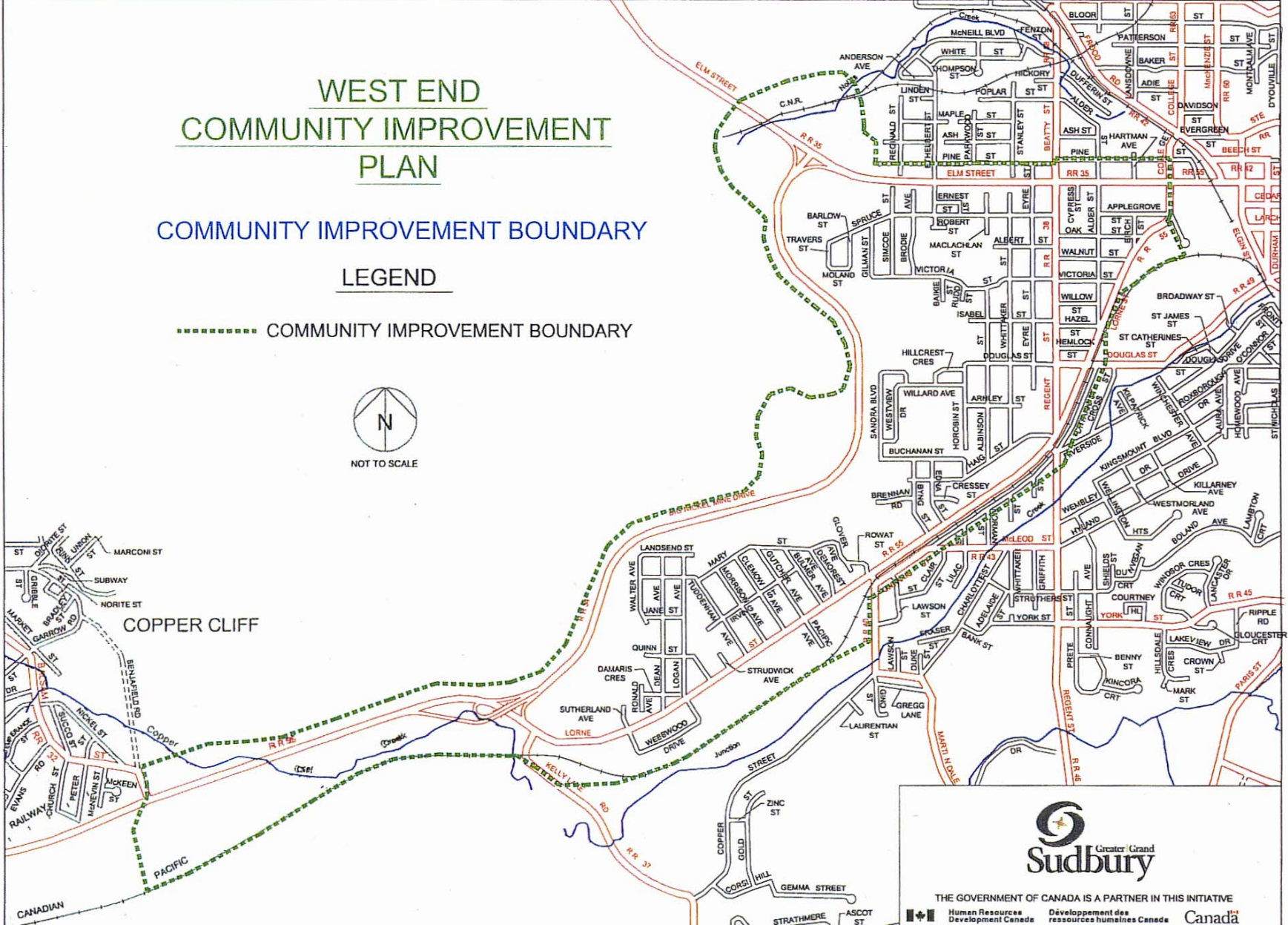
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LEGEND

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Chronology of Events

- September 1987 Regional Council adopts the new City of Sudbury Plan which provides for designation of Community Improvement Plans
- May 27, 1999 First Steering Committee Meeting
Staff Progress Report No. 1 submitted and comments received
- June 6, 1999 City Council establishes the *West End Community Improvement Plan Steering Committee*
- June 28, 1999 Second Steering Committee Meeting
Staff Progress Report No. 2, "*Background Study, Inventory and Analysis*" presented and comments received
- July 27, 1999 Public Meeting held at Tom Davies Square
Staff Progress Report No. 2, "*Background Study, Inventory and Analysis*" presented and comments on issues of concern to citizen received
- September 29, 1999 Public Meeting held at Lansdowne Public School
Staff Interim Progress Report No. 3, "*Summary of Issues*" presented to public and comments and issues of concern to public received
- October 4, 1999 Public Meeting held at Delky Dozzi Park Clubhouse
Staff Interim Progress Report No. 3, "*Summary of Issues*" presented to public and comments and issues of concern to public received
- October/December "*Issues and Recommendations*" Progress Report No. 3 prepared and circulated for internal review
- January 12, 2000 Progress Report No. 3 reviewed with City Staff
- May 26, 2000 Progress Report No. 3 reviewed with City and Regional Staff
- May 29, 2000 Progress Report No. 3 reviewed with Regional and City Staff.

Preamble

Basis for the Community Improvement Plan

It is in the nature of a city to experience change over time – sometimes even drastic changes. During those times, a city has to reinvent itself and be retrofitted, upgraded, redeveloped or replanned if it is to continue to prosper and provide a liveable, healthy environment for its residents.

Together with the rest of the City of Sudbury, the West End Community also has undergone dramatic change. Since WWII, the West End Community, with its roots in the original Townsite of the City of 1887, and the neighbourhood of Gatchell – a farming subdivision off Lorne Street at the turn of the century, has undergone major transformations, physically as well as socially, economically, and environmentally. The need and the opportunity is for the West End Community to be redesigned to visualize and achieve an urban form through provisions for civic design particularly in the public realm of right-of-ways, public parks and open spaces, and at the interface with the private, that might be called store front corridors.

The Community has been fortunate to have recently been designated a “community improvement area” for which a Community Improvement Plan is being finalized. It is in a position to exercise forethought to renew itself and redefine itself for the new times. The challenges for the Plan include integrating into itself those changes that have occurred in the community over the years, and redesigning the Community to become a renewed functional, aesthetic and liveable community. The community needs a new vision to renew an urban community that can best meet the challenges of a new age that comes with a new economy, a new lifestyle, and a new consciousness of what a liveable urban community should be.

The major changes that have occurred and other issues that the Plan must address can be summarized as follows:

- Socially, it has a greater proportion of its population aged over 65 years than the City as a whole. It also has smaller households and lower average household income, given the large number of pensioners residing



in the community. The need for physical design and community improvements appropriate for an aging population is obvious.

- Physically, it has been bestowed the Big Nickel site, the Delky Dozzi Park, and Big Nickel Mine Drive, with major open spaces alongside. The challenge and opportunities offered by this legacy are to enhance and to restructure the recreational and open space system for the community, and articulate a continuous open space to serve the subdivisions designed in the prewar period when little consideration were given to such matters.
- Economically, the positive impacts of the proposed Dynamic Earth on the surrounding area, that include commercial establishments along Lorne Street is expected to stimulate tourism related redevelopment while accentuating the gateway nature of the intersection at Big Nickel Mine Drive and Lorne Street.
- Environmentally, the renewed public concerns for a liveable city and a clean environment have challenged the past practice of building auto dependent low density urban settlements. A new vision for urban living, best illustrated by the Transportation Association of Canada's *A New Vision for Urban Transportation* has arisen. In terms of community planning it means building "compact, mixed use communities based on pedestrian, cycling and transit friendly design". Fortunately, the existing City of Sudbury Secondary Plan already has provisions that allow greater residential density than single family dwellings.
- The commercial component is an essential part of any community, whether it is the downtown or a community lower in the urban hierarchy.
 - i) The existing historical commercial node at Regent and Hazel is part of the identity of the West End neighbourhood and is a commercial area that must be enhanced if the pedestrian scale of the neighbourhood is to be retained and strengthened.

- ii) The linear commercial development along Lorne Street is to be enhanced, particularly in view of the potential tourism-related function of the establishments that would be induced by the development of the Dynamic Earth. Lorne Street should be made more pedestrian and visitor friendly by turning it into a type of boulevard.
- iii) Commercial uses along Elm Street represent some of the more lively areas within the West End Community. These need also to be enhanced with adequate parking and streetscaping.

- **Urban design.** The commercial corridors of Elm, Lorne and Regent Street are vital to the economic welfare of business and community at large, and constitute major gateways that set an image of the community and the city for residents and visitors. They “should not be just a thoroughfare but also a place to go.” The travelling public must be enticed to stop and become shoppers and patrons of those establishments. Transportation requirements must balance with the need for streetscape improvements that make the area more pedestrian friendly. To quote from TAC again “Urban designs that serve vehicles before people lack pedestrian friendly streetscapes, result in communities with no ‘sense of place’, reduce personal safety, damage older neighbourhoods, waste valuable land, add noise, and increase auto dependence.”

- **Community structure.** The community requires, in addition to primary streetscapes, internal structuring to guide the visitor to reach community amenities, i.e., parks and recreational and other facilities, and establish visual unity for the community. A walking and cycling pathway system linking various nodes of activities is also to be addressed as an alternative mode of transportation.

Redesigning the West End Community to meet the challenges of the new century is a major task that requires the cooperation of all stakeholders to see it realised. It is hoped that the proposed concepts provide sufficient guidance and vision to rebuild the community for the new urban lifestyle.

Implementation and Funding of Improvement Projects

During the preparation of the Plan, a number of community improvement projects have been identified. Detailed plans for selected projects will be prepared at the time of implementation. Depending on the nature of the project, it may be carried out by the municipality, a senior level of government or more likely through joint actions, especially in such areas as transportation and housing. Some improvement schemes will require joint action or partnerships between the municipality and the private sector. Some projects may benefit from fund raising and nonprofit sector involvement.

Given the nature of the Plan, many recommendations will go beyond current municipal policies and programs. Some may be implemented by phasing over the long term, such as corridor improvements; others will require approvals by Council when budgets for new projects are prepared. Ultimately, project implementation is subject to the availability of funds. Minor improvements, normal maintenance and enforcement issues would be referred to various departments charged with those responsibilities.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Since April of this year staff have been conducting background research for the West End CIP. In this regard, we have reviewed many relevant documents, have received comments from various departments and agencies, and have held three public meetings during the course of which we gathered comments and requests from West End residents. In addition, we have met with members of the Steering Committee to get their views on a one-to-one basis. The following is a summary of the issues that have been identified to date, and recommendations that have been formulated based on such input and upon review with City and Regional staff, and various departments and agencies:

Housing Rehabilitation

A number of properties appear to be in a state of disrepair. Some were noted in the Spruce Street area as well as in the Gatchell Pool area. In some case this is a health and safety issue, in other cases this is a property standards issue. It was also felt that security may be an issue and requires attention.

There are, moreover, a number of vacant properties which give the perception that they have been abandoned. These properties offer an opportunity for development or redevelopment to bring life back to an area.

Action

- Consider acquiring some of the old buildings, e.g., across the Gatchell Pool, and on Spruce Street, restore them, or demolish them and develop the grounds for public use, especially in those areas where parks are inadequate.
- Determine whether any areas require "Neighbourhood Watch" or policing.
- Home owners can be encouraged to apply for the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, a Federal Program to assist home owners with limited income.
- Apply for housing renovation funds that may be made available in the next federal/provincial budgets.

Seniors' Housing

Suggestion has been made about potential demand for a Multi-ethnic Retirement Home, in light of large proportion of seniors which is expected to keep increasing.

Background

There is a policy and a target established in the Sudbury Secondary Plan relevant to provision of Senior Housing.

Target, Section 4.7d of the City Secondary Plan is to:

Facilitate the construction of 50 senior citizen housing units per year for the next 10 years;

Policy, Section 5.4.1g, of the Secondary Plan is to:

Encourage the construction of senior citizen dwellings within 100 metres of a regular Transit route and discourage proposals not meeting this criterion.

Although at present there is no public funding available from the senior levels of government, the CMHC, through its Canadian Centre for Public-Private Partnerships in Housing provides some form of assistance in getting some groups started.



The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, in its National Housing Policy Options Paper, "A Call for Action", recommends a number of policy options, as part of a national housing policy. The February 2000 budget by Finance Minister Paul Martin, is expected to have some provisions on housing.

Action

- Consider forming a steering committee or group to promote or sponsor a Seniors Housing project in the West End Community.
- Committee to consider potential site location – availability of vacant land or property, closeness to bus route, and to facilities. Also consider, in view of the current high vacancy rate, ways in which vacant residences could be utilized.
- Make recommendations to take advantage of which ever new housing programs that may become available in the near future.

Truck Traffic

Local businesses have expressed concerns regarding truck traffic on the designated routes Elm and Regent Street, and also about trucks turning on Elm-Regent intersection. Truck traffic is viewed as invasive to the character of the areas and a negative from a business standpoint. The concerns relate to matters of safety and noise.

Background

Request in the past to remove truck traffic designation for Elm and Regent Streets were unsuccessful, "due to the lack of alternative routes currently available". The request was examined by Public Works Committee and considered by Council, and the decision was:

That the existing truck routing designation of Regent Street, between Elm Street and Lorne Street be maintained.

Action

- Except for trucks making local deliveries, diverting through truck traffic from Elm and Regent is still the stated objective of the City's Secondary Plan and should be pursued in the long term. To achieve this objective, the truck route system should be studied and assessed at the Regional level. Such a study should determine what requires to be done to achieve such an objective.

Transportation Vehicular

Letter from the Traffic and Transportation Section of the Region identifies various issues:

- improvement to the intersection of Regent/Lorne/Riverside/Ontario Streets
- installation of Intersection Pedestrian Signals (IPS) at the intersection of Regent and Hazel.
- Approval of the traffic signals at Walnut and Lorne for the retail development on the old Beaver Lumber site.
- Pedestrian crossing on Lorne Street, east of Edna, being considered for relocation.
- Arterial road corridor treatment (Regent/Lorne), and accommodating of alternative modes of transportation (transit, cycling, walking)
- Letter from Commissioner of Public Works indicates, in addition, widening and improvement of Regent Street and of various intersections, i.e., Lorne at Martindale, Douglas, and Elm, and Regent at Elm.

Action

It is noted that while arterial roads normally have the primary role of moving traffic; in the case of Elm, Lorne, and Regent, they have the dual functions of satisfying needs of the adjacent commercial and institutional uses as well. An analysis of the commercial structure (Map A2, appended) suggests the integrity of the community and neighbourhood varied functions need to be protected also.

- For treatment of Regent Street, consider the Regent Street Corridor concept discussed below.
- Intersection improvements to be consistent with recommended concepts for Regent Street Corridor, Lorne Street Corridor, and Elm Street Corridor as indicated below.
- Pedestrian crossing on Lorne, east of Edna Street may need to be assessed in the context of the pedestrian and bicycle path proposed in the Circulation Plan attached herein.

Regent Street Corridor

Concerns have been raised about Regent Street, such as pedestrian circulation and parking which is felt to be generally inadequate. Commercial vacancies have occurred on both Regent and Hazel Street, suggesting a need for commercial revitalization. However, widening of Regent Street to accommodate more traffic lanes was proposed and approved previously.

Action

- A unified streetscape image through design and use of materials could be established. A Streetscape Improvement Plan should be prepared, with the participation of owners of commercial and institutional properties to ensure coordination of potential improvements to yards and building facades, and general property rehabilitation. (See Street Cross Section attached). Alternatively, approach the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs about establishing a Development Permit System as a pilot project, or for implementation at a later stage, for the Commercial Corridors of Regent Street, Elm Street and Lorne Street, as shown in the Community Improvement Plan.

The Development Permit System allows for flexibility in development and streamlining the approval process of redevelopment, while ensuring coordination of design through the application of design standards for these areas.

- Consider preparing and adopting "Commercial Corridor Design Guidelines" to guide private redevelopment that may occur over time and improve the character of main street or to support the potential Development Permit System referred to above.
- Consider forming a BIA type of organization to facilitate common action to carry out commercial revitalization of the area.
- Retain and maintain rear lanes to facilitate vehicular movement by reducing number of vehicles backing up on this arterial street.
- Consider acquiring property to increase supply of parking, either on-grade or in parking garage.

**Lorne
Street
Corridor**

Various issues relating to Lorne Street were raised, for the industrial and commercial sections.

Commercial

- Parking is an issue at various locations, as is the difficulty for vehicles backing up on Lorne.
- The distance from the edge of the curb to the property line, on the north side of Lorne, is felt to be too narrow, for what could be a more inviting, boulevard type of environment for the pedestrians and business patrons. There is no sidewalk in the section close to the Big Nickel Mine Drive intersection.

- Poor visual image of street relating to lack of paved shoulders/gutter (in Gatchell section), lack of landscaping, and the full view of CPR unmitigated by landscaping and/or berming, from Martindale Road to the site of the proposed food store past Douglas Street.
- There is the opportunity to designate, protect, and identify with markers heritage buildings on Lorne Street.

Industrial

- Some industrial properties on the south side of Lorne Street, near the intersection of Lorne with Martindale and near the intersection of Lorne with Kelly Lake Road, appear poorly maintained, without adequate landscaping or adequate screening.
- Gravelled shoulders along Lorne Street present a poor sight and unappealing visual image.
- The Canadian Pacific Railway corridor alongside Lorne, Martindale to past Douglas intersection, to the new supermarket, also presents a poor sight and is in need of improvement.
- The commercial establishments on Lorne, between Douglas and Regent, and Martindale to Edna Street, situated between the street curb and the CPR, contribute to the poor street image as well.

Action

- The conceptual street cross sections illustrating the potential widening of the sidewalk on the north (the business side of Lorne), together with bicycle pathway; providing for gutter, curb, and bicycle pathway on the south side, can be incorporated in the long range plans for the future widening of Lorne Street.
- A unified streetscape image through design and use of materials could be achieved. Prepare Streetscape Improvement Plan with the participation of adjacent property owners, through a BIA type of organization, to ensure cooperation and coordination of improvement of the private portion of the storefronts and yards. Alternatively, consider developing and adopting "Commercial Corridor Design Guidelines" to guide private redevelopment that may occur in the future to improve the street image, and/or to serve as a support to a potential Development Permit System