



CHARLOTTETOWN PROVINCE HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Prepared for the Charlottetown Area Development Corporation

2021

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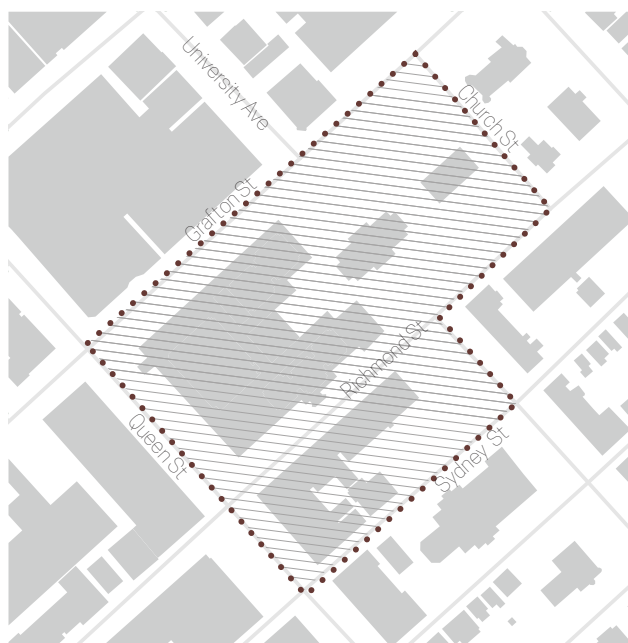
01 Background

1.1 Study Context

1.1.1 Location



Fig 1.1.1 Study Context & Site



Province House Historic District is located in the downtown core of the capital city of Charlottetown, Queens County, Prince Edward Island. The District occupies space within the original 500 Lot Area that constitutes the earliest urban configuration of the City comprised of rectilinear lots bounded by gridded streets. The area is centred around the Province House National Historic Site, the Hon. George Coles Building, and the Confederation Centre of the Arts. It is externally bounded by Grafton, Queen, Sydney, Great George, Richmond and Church Streets. The District forms the principal centre of activity in the Charlottetown's downtown.

Province House Historic District offers locals and visitors alike varied entertainment, retail, and dining opportunities, as well as the chance to explore the rich heritage of Charlottetown and the events that led to Canadian Confederation. The District serves as an important economic generator, and it also plays a pivotal role in defining the character and identity of Charlottetown. Diverse stakeholders in the District are interested in seeing the area become revitalized to align with the transformations currently underway at Province House and the Confederation Centre of the Arts.

1.1.2 Planning Context

In recognition of the importance of Province House as the location of the Charlottetown Conference, which initiated the formation of the Dominion of Canada, the federal government has dedicated substantial funds to restore and modernize the building, and expand interpretive and wayfinding elements. Building off the momentum of these improvements, the Charlottetown Area Development Corporation (CADC) commissioned Fathom Studio to undertake a conceptual streetscape design for the District.

The objective of this project is to imagine ways in which the District can be reinvigorated to provide long-term, sustainable economic growth and world-class amenities for both residents and visitors. The streetscape design will ultimately improve the comfort and usability of the District while simultaneously strengthening and expanding the narratives of the City and Island's rich history and culture.

The District currently benefits from a diverse mix of municipal zones that represent a wide range of economic, civic, and cultural amenities. The majority of the District surrounding Province House, the Hon. George Coles Building and the Confederation Centre of the Arts is zoned for community, cultural, governmental, recreational and religious uses. The surrounding streets are reserved for commercial, entertainment, retail, civic services, and multi-unit residences and accommodations. The entire District is zoned to allow for future economic growth, densification, and street activation.

Given the prominence of the District in the economic and cultural fabric of the City, maintaining and expanding access to high-quality public spaces is of paramount importance. The public realm plays an integral role in stimulating visitation to the key attractions in the District and ensuring people feel welcomed into the urban core. Public spaces that are currently under-utilized or uninviting are re-imagined in this report as active, beautiful, and functional amenities for everyone.

1.1.3 Scope of Study

The Charlottetown Area Development Corporation (CADC), an economic development agency for the capital city area of Charlottetown, was the lead agency overseeing the delivery of this project as well as coordination with the various land owners and stakeholders who have a vested interest in implementing this project.

The CADC’s goals for this plan were to:

1. Improve the look and feel of the District (Fig 1.1) and bring it up to a standard that is befitting of an area replete with heritage resources.
2. Introduce the concept of barrier free, shared/complete street designs where pedestrians and bicyclists have priority over motorized vehicles during specified times. The proposed concept should form the basis of a ‘shared street’ design where existing right-of-way infrastructure and signage can be redesigned in a manner that is more reflective of a pedestrian-friendly city that hosts multiple festivals in the downtown and caters to tourists and locals travelling on foot.
3. Provide detailed guidance for the development, improvement and/or reinstatement of landscaping, sidewalks, streets, wayfinding, commercial activity, patios and pergolas, and vehicle/pedestrian traffic.
4. Maintain and expand the urban tree canopy in the area.
5. Address lighting and safety in practical ways.
6. Work with the many stakeholders in the area to address the many issues and challenges in the District—including site security—while not causing any unsought for consequences.
7. Provide guidance for the replacement or upgrading of both underground and overhead infrastructure. These items include but are not limited to water, sewer, storm water, communications and electrical.

Concurrent with this study, the Confederation Centre of the Arts was also conducting a detailed conceptual design study for their facilities which required coordination amongst the Fathom

Studio design team and the Centre’s design team (Abbot Brown Architects). While there was much coordination amongst teams and stakeholders during the fall and early winter during this study, the Confederation Centre of the Art’s timelines were slightly behind this project, and consequently, they may have new or differing ideas than presented in this report with regard to the design of their lands. While the Centre is supportive of the idea of creating a coordinated heritage district, they may have different ideas about how to implement the changes on their own property.

Similarly, once the Province House renovations are nearer to completion, Parks Canada and the Province of PEI will likely undertake a more detailed site design study for the grounds of Province House, building off of the work of this plan. Both groups were key stakeholders in this process, but Parks Canada is desirous of conducting a more involved design process for their designated National Historic Sites than was scoped for this design study.

There are many land owners and varying jurisdictions in the study area, and while each has their own mandate and ideas for their individual properties, the participants were supportive of the idea of developing a coordinated heritage district and a shared street concept.

This study engaged the various stakeholders and the public to develop a shared vision for the future of the District. It also undertook a more detailed drainage design and engineering assessment of the study area to determine the feasibility of implementing a shared street concept. A traffic impact assessment was also prepared to ascertain the impacts of the design proposals in this study. High-level framework plans were developed to provide two concepts for stakeholder feedback. Based on the feedback from participants, the study team developed one final design concept, class D cost estimates, and a preliminary delineation of project areas for implementation.

Following this study the CADC, the City of Charlottetown, and the other land owners will need to identify priorities and funding for implementing the first phases of this project. This report is the culmination of the shared vision, but much work remains to manifest this design as reality.



Photo Credit: All by Fathom Studio



1.2 Historical Context

1.2.1 Geology

Prince Edward Island is of relatively young geological age. The Island was formed as the Pleistocene glaciers retreated, exposing and scouring a sedimentary basin lying beneath the present-day Gulf of St. Lawrence. As the earth warmed sea levels rose and the land rebounded, which resulted in the inundation of a low-lying plain that connected the Island to the mainland. By 5,000 years ago, the Island assumed its present form.

The Prince Edward Island ecoregion is characterized by a temperate, marine climate and gently rolling hills intermittently covered by second-growth forests. The original forested ecosystem of the Island prior to agricultural clearing was dominated in upland areas by old-growth, mixed deciduous-coniferous stands of sugar maple, American beech, yellow birch, red oak, and eastern white pine. Due to extensive conversion of forests into croplands, roads, and settlements following European settlement, the original land cover is largely disturbed. The ecoregion also encompasses numerous wetlands, tidal flats, salt marshes, coastal estuaries, eel-grass beds, and floodplains. Floral and faunal diversity is typically richest in these environments.

1.2.2 Early Human Occupation

Prior to the arrival of the first European settlers, the Island was home for millennia to the ancestors of today's Mi'kmaq communities. The land was known as "Epekwitk" meaning "something lying on the water". The earliest known occupants who arrived some 12,000–13,000 years ago encountered the Island in a markedly different state from how it appears today. As the region slowly warmed, the landscape transitioned from a tundra ecosystem to a mixed hemlock-pine forest that endured from approximately 8,000 to 4,500 years ago. Beginning around 3,400 years ago beech became established in the forest ecosystem, and a hemlock-beech-birch association known as the "Acadian Forest" was established that persisted into the modern era.

The earliest human communities lived during a period of time known as the Palaeo-Indian, and for their survival they depended on traversing ice sheets to hunt migratory herds of caribou. They fashioned tools from different rock cobbles found both on and off the Island. Evidence from the Archaic Period (10,000 to 3,000 years ago) shows that maritime communities favoured a subsistence system based on hunting large, migratory sea mammals like seal and walrus. During this time people also adopted new technologies,



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such as ground stone tools, that aided in the construction of canoes, shelters, and domestic and hunting objects. The introduction of ceramics marked the transition to the Maritime Woodland Period, which lasted from approximately 3,000 years ago until the time of European contact in the 16th Century AD. The earliest ceramic finds on the Island date to around 2,200 years ago. During this period the first birch bark canoes were likely developed, and remains from shell middens indicate an increase in the consumption of shellfish. Throughout millennia of change, the ancestors of the Mi'kmaq thrived on Prince Edward Island.

1.2.3 Mi'kmaq

At the time of European contact, indigenous Mi'kmaq communities existed throughout the Maritime provinces and were allied to one another through shared kinship, language, spirituality, socio-political structures, and trade relations. Communities moved seasonally between summer and winter camps. During the warmer months, families moved to coastal areas to fish and collect marine resources, and during the winter months they relocated to inland areas to hunt land animals such as beaver, moose, and bear.

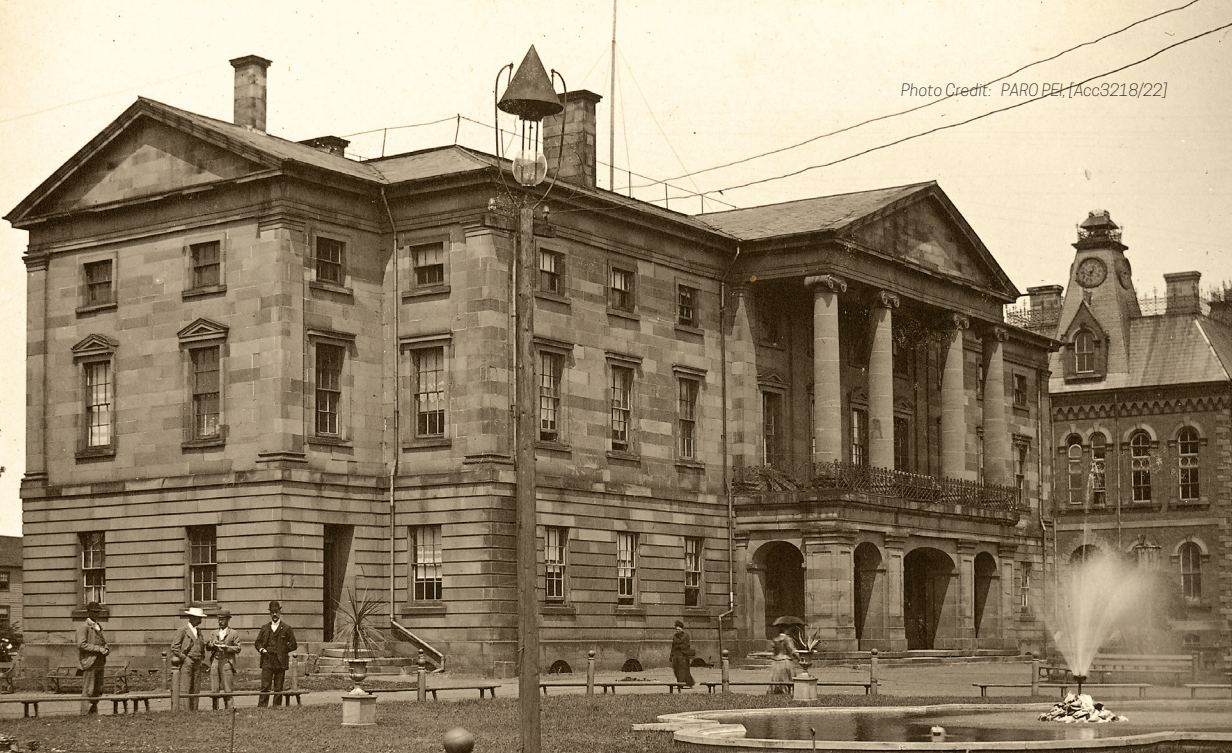
Mi'kmaq communities were traditionally organized along relationships of kinship and alliance, and larger confederations of nations existed to manage regional power dynamics. The Sante' Mawio'mi (Grand Council) was comprised of regional chiefs and a Grand Chief. Leadership positions were typically passed from father to son, and the Grand Council managed issues that affected the entire community, such as peace treaties and political alliances. Important decisions were reached through consultation and discussion with elders and spiritual leaders, and chiefs did not act alone without seeking guidance from the people.

1.2.4 Les Acadiens

Indigenous communities that had existed for millennia in the Maritimes were greatly disrupted with the arrival of European settlers beginning in the early 16th Century AD. The earliest permanent settlement on the Island was established in 1720 by the French at Port-la-Joye. This settlement, located just south of present-day Charlottetown, was the port of entry and political hub for French colonization of the Island, then known as Ile Saint-Jean. The colony subsisted on farming and fishing, including lucrative cod fishing. These earliest French settlers

worked in both domestic and agricultural settings, but all were denied basic human rights and were considered to be the personal property of slave owners. Prince Edward Island was the only Maritime colony to pass a law explicitly regulating slavery in 1781, and this legislative act was not repealed until 1825.

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Smith and officially opened in January 1847. Province House was renowned at the time of its construction for its elegant neoclassical design, and the building played an important national role when it housed the first series of meetings that would eventually lead to Canadian Confederation. The building is currently undergoing significant renovation and restoration.

1.2.8 Canadian Confederation

Charlottetown was chosen to host the first in a series of conferences to discuss the possibility of a Maritime union, which quickly grew to include a broader confederation of British North America. Delegates for the Conference arrived on September 1, 1864 aboard the SS Queen Victoria and disembarked to convene at Province House. The negotiations took place in the legislative chamber of the Province House building and were also accompanied by an evening ball. Delegates came to a general agreement that union would be advantageous, and they arranged to reconvene in Québec City to continue discussions. The Charlottetown Conference was instrumental in initiating the confederation process, which was finalized on July 1, 1867.

The building known today as Province House—originally called the Colonial Building—was built between 1843 and 1847 to house Prince Edward Island’s Provincial Legislature and Supreme Court. The structure was designed by Isaac



Photo Credit: PARO PEI, [Acc3218/33]



1.2.9 Women and Confederation

In addition to the thirty-six men who served as delegates at one or more of the conferences that culminated in Canadian Confederation, numerous women played important roles in the political negotiations as leaders in their own right as well as family members, confidants, record-keepers, and more. These include:

- » Queen Victoria, who took a deep interest in Confederation and was instrumental in passing the British North America Act
- » Anne Brown, wife of George Brown, who advised her husband and helped persuade him to form a coalition government to achieve Confederation
- » Mercy Coles, daughter of the first Premier of PEI George Coles, who attended the Charlottetown Conference and was engaged in political networking and discussions regarding Confederation
- » Luce Cuvillier, philanthropist and businesswoman, who was the romantic partner and influential



Photo Credit: DiscoverCharlottetown.com

advisor of one of the instrumental Fathers of Confederation, George-Etienne Cartier

- » Lady Agnes MacDonald, second wife of the first Prime Minister of Canada Sir John A. MacDonald, who was actively involved in her husband's political career and the aims of the Conservative Party
- » Lady Dufferin, wife of Governor General Lord Dufferin, who was a close political advisor and informant to her husband and active participant in social and cultural life in Ottawa
- » All the unknown women whose involvement in the events and aftermath of Confederation were undocumented or have been forgotten

1.2.10 Queen Square Gardens

Despite the magnificence of the Province House building, Queen Square surrounding it was in poor shape with little usable public space until the late 1800s. Beginning in 1884, the Charlottetown Arbor Society appointed Arthur Newbery to undertake a project to green the Square and transform it into a beautiful public space. Newbery implemented

a picturesque design that featured a large public fountain, numerous ornamental planting beds, shade trees, and ample pathways and seating. The Queen Square Gardens were widely celebrated and became an important gathering place within the City. The Gardens hosted a variety of entertainment and musical events throughout the years. Newbery's design was successful in its transformation of Charlottetown's urban core into a pleasant, inviting, and enjoyable public realm. The Gardens survived until the 1960s when the Square was altered to accommodate the construction of the Confederation Centre of the Arts.

1.2.11 The Confederation Centre of the Arts

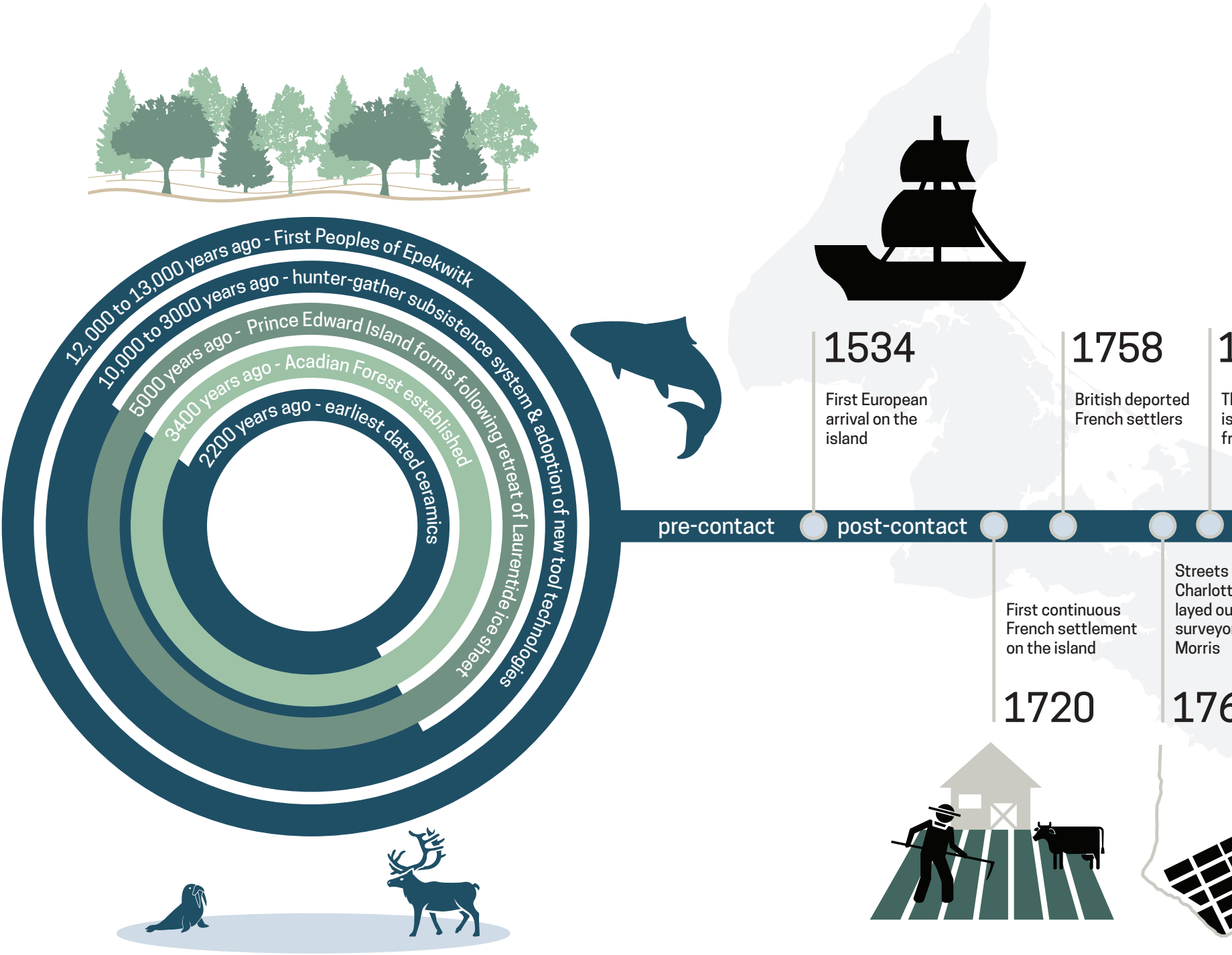
The Confederation Centre of the Arts (formally known as The Fathers of Confederation Centre of the Arts) opened in 1964 to commemorate the centenary of the Charlottetown Conference. The Centre's mission is to celebrate an evolving Canada through the visual and performing arts, and given its prominent location in the downtown core, it acts as an important landmark as well as an economic driver. The Centre anchors the District as not only a heritage destination, but also an entertainment destination.

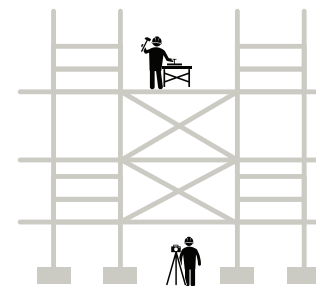
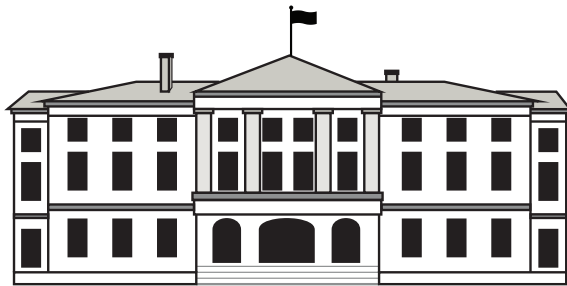
1.2.12 The District Today

Province House Historic District continues to serve the needs of both government and private citizens while simultaneously acting as an important tourist destination. Situated in the bustling downtown core, the District attracts both visitors and residents to enjoy its unique offering of services and public amenities.

The next phase of the District will help to preserve the legacy of civic activity and community gathering through the enhancement of public space. Meaningful and modern design throughout the District will provide opportunities for everyone to engage in public life and will position the District to expand its position as the foundation of cultural and economic activity within the downtown. Reflecting on the past and acknowledging the rich history of the District will help serve serving the needs and desires of the contemporary population and economy.

1.3 Province House Historic District Timeline





1810

The Bog settlement is founded by freed slaves

1843

Construction of Province House began

1855

Charlottetown became a city

1867

The Confederation of Canada borne from the discussions at Province House in 1964

1889

Fountain designed by Newbery is installed in Queen Square Gardens

2015

Province House National Historic Site closed for beginning of Conservation Project

2018

Phase two of the Province House National Historic Site Conservation Project began

Streets of Charlottetown are surveyed out by surveyor Charles Morris

1768

Construction of Province House was complete and first legislature was held

1847

Meeting at Province House in which the possibility of Canadian Confederation was discussed

1864

Public tree planting began in Queen Square on May 24 subsequently known as Arbor Day

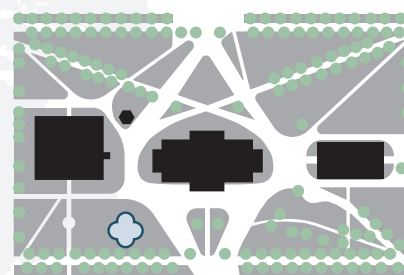
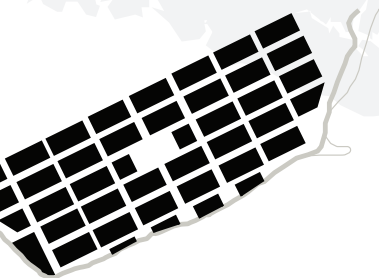
1884

Confederation Centre of the Arts opens on the former Queen Square Gardens site

1964

Phase one of the Province House National Historic Site Conservation Project began; construction will be ongoing until 2022

2017



1.4 What We Heard

Beginning in October 2020, the CADC began work with Fathom Studio and Coles Associates to facilitate public engagement with the community and local property owners to determine key concerns and priorities for the District. The feedback received from this engagement process was instrumental in developing the conceptual design presented in this report.

1.4.1 Business Stakeholder Meeting

On October 13, 2020, an engagement session was held exclusively for business stakeholders within the District. Meeting participants represented diverse industries including retail, dining, and commercial businesses as well as St. Dunstan’s Basilica Cathedral and the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island. In small groups, participants discussed elements of the District they currently like and dislike, envisioned desired improvements to the streetscape and public realm, and determined priority projects in the short-term.

Elements that are well-liked included:

- » Street trees and planters
- » Patios, seating, and stage on Victoria Row
- » Recently improved sidewalk and lighting on Sydney Street

Elements that are disliked by some participants included:

- » Location of the parking lot at corner of Richmond Street and Great George Street
- » Location of transit stop on Grafton Street
- » Division of pedestrian space between the Confederation Centre and Victoria Row
- » Appearance of dumpsters on Grafton Street
- » Unsafe intersection at Grafton Street and University Avenue

Desired improvements and amenities included:

- » More street trees and planters
- » Beautiful water feature
- » Space and programming for winter activities
- » Bicycle parking
- » Comfortable seating
- » Activated use of plazas around the Confederation Centre of the Arts
- » Overhead lighting on Victoria Row
- » Larger stage on Victoria Row

Priority improvements in the short-term included:

- » Beautification of the landscape around Province House
- » Implementing shared streets
- » Relocating Grafton Street transit stop
- » Resolving parking conflicts
- » Implementing sidewalk improvements
- » Increasing public amenities such as bicycle parking and seating
- » Activating the Confederation Centre of the Art’s walls that front on to Queen Street and Victoria Row

1.4.2 Public Meeting

Also on October 13, 2020, an open public meeting was held, preceded by a heritage walkabout around the District led by local historian Catherine Hennessey. The meeting included citizens as well as representatives from the City of Charlottetown. Participants were then led through the same visioning exercises as the business stakeholders.

Elements that are generally appreciated included:

- » Visual connection from Victoria Row to events at the Confederation Centre of the Arts
- » Mature trees around Province House and along Great George Street
- » Public entrance to the Confederation Centre of the Arts off Grafton Street
- » Events held on Victoria Row
- » Overhead lighting installed on Sydney Street

Elements that are disliked included:

- » Plazas and walkways around the Confederation Centre of the Arts that feel unsafe for some users
- » Trees around the Hon. George Coles Building that feel unsafe for some users
- » Parking lot at corner of Richmond Street and Great George St which poses safety concerns
- » Unsightly picnic tables beside Province House

New amenities and improvements that would enhance the District included:

- » Large, interactive water feature
- » A fire pit and skating rink for winter entertainment
- » Improved lighting throughout the District
- » Seating within the streetscape
- » Improved pedestrian access to the Confederation Centre of the Arts
- » Designating Sydney Street as a shared street
- » Public art
- » Transforming the parking lot at the corner of Richmond Street and Great George Street into an active public realm

Priority projects identified for completion in the short-term included:

- » Installing better lighting throughout the District
- » Turning the parking lot into usable public space
- » Public water feature
- » Improving pedestrian circulation and accessibility
- » Creating space for year-round activities

The two engagement sessions provided valuable feedback to the design team, and it is recognized that as the District transforms in the future public consultation will continue to play an important role in the design process.

1.4.3 Stakeholder Interviews

In addition to the aforementioned public meetings, numerous interviews were conducted with important stakeholders in the District as identified by the CADC. These interviews revealed many of the same concerns for the current state of the District and hopes for future improvements. The majority of interviewees agreed that the District could benefit from the development of a stronger visual and branding identity as well as general enhancement of public amenities. Pedestrian accessibility and safety were noted as important aspects to address as was the need to maintain emergency vehicle access to all areas. Honouring the special security needs of Province House was also identified as a key priority.

Stakeholders generally agreed that the goal of any changes in the District should be to introduce a contemporary design vocabulary while continuing to respect and celebrate the unique heritage of the area. Most stakeholders voiced support for transitioning Sydney Street into a shared street while maintaining Victoria Row as a seasonal, if not year-



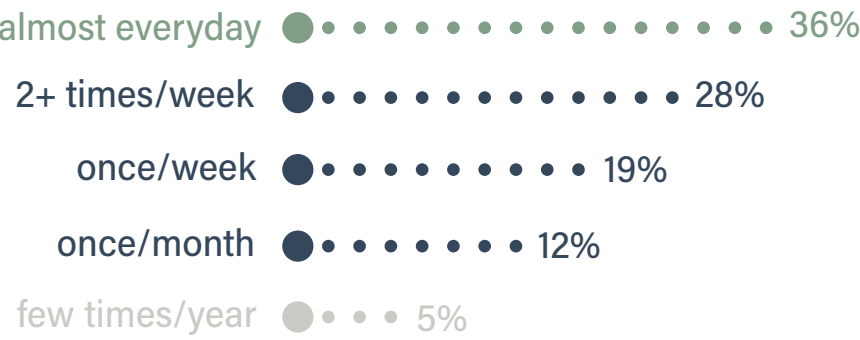


Fig 1.2 Frequency of visitation to District

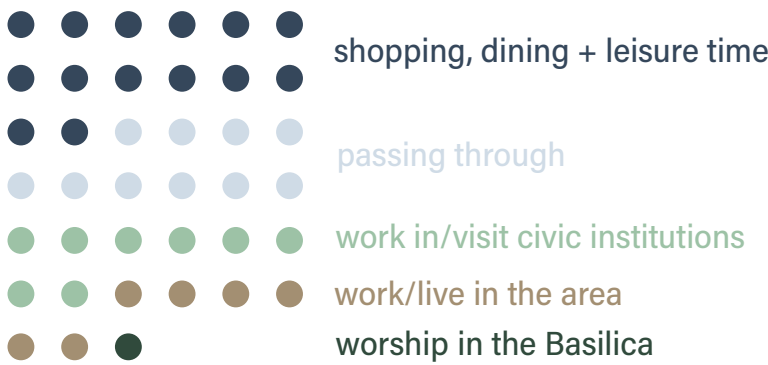


Fig 1.4 Primary reason for visitation

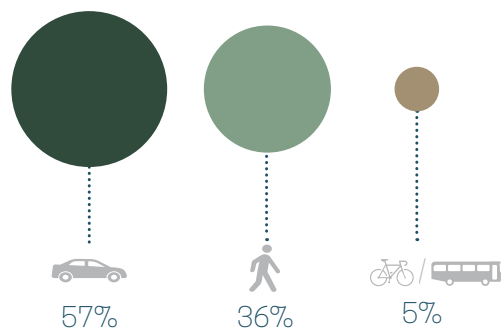


Fig 1.5 Method of travel to District

priority

- street trees + water features
- warm + comfortable patio space
- green infrastructure
- winter activities + year-round events
- improved interpretation + wayfinding
- improved lighting + pedestrian access

Fig 1.3 Priority amenity improvements

round, pedestrian street. Maintaining delivery access to businesses on Victoria Row was identified as a key concern to resolve in the final design. All interviewees agreed that the District should have summer and winter activities.

The majority of stakeholders were desirous of transforming the parking lot at the corner of Richmond Street and Great George Street into an activated public space. Maintaining some on-street parking was identified as a need.

Other suggested improvements included the incorporating public art, expanding street events and parties, creating flexible gathering spaces, and increasing user safety around Province House and the Hon. George Coles Building. The transit stop on Grafton Street was also flagged as being problematic in its current location.

Overall, interviewees agreed that the District is an important nucleus for the City and that it should continue to serve residents while attracting future economic investment and increased tourism.

1.4.4 Online Survey

In addition to in-person public engagement and stakeholder interviews, an online survey was developed to gather input on the project from across the community. Feedback was

collected from 182 respondents, the majority of whom are young to middle-aged adults who have been full-time residents of Charlottetown for more than 10 years. The majority of respondents work or own businesses in the downtown and visit the District more than once a week.

Over half of the respondents travel to the District by car, but more than a third indicate they walk to the area. Those individuals who drive report finding parking spots in the downtown in under five minutes on average, although a majority of respondents consider parking to be a problem in regards to the availability of spaces close to amenities. The majority of respondents would not be willing to pay more for additional parking spaces. A third of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the current transit service. The majority of individuals do not feel that accessibility is an issue in the District.

Respondents rated the quality of the experience in the District as 3.4 out of 5, and the majority agreed that Queen Square could have more destination potential. Richmond Street is viewed as providing the highest quality experience, while Sydney Street is rated as providing the poorest quality experience. Most individuals visit the District to shop and dine, and many respondents also report passing through the area to reach a final destination or elsewhere in the District.

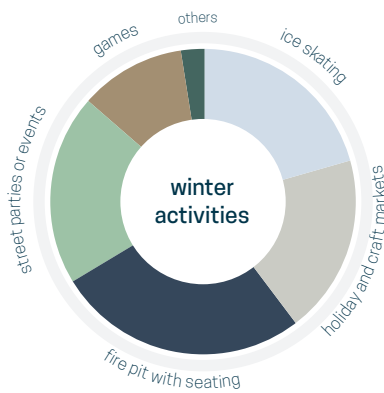


Fig 1.6 Desired winter activities

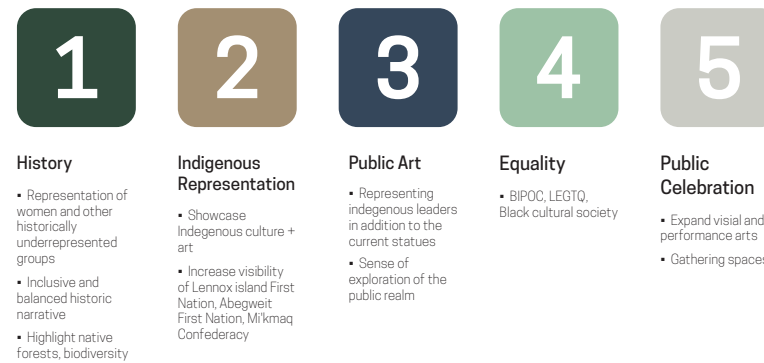


Fig 1.7 Priorities for expanded representation in the District

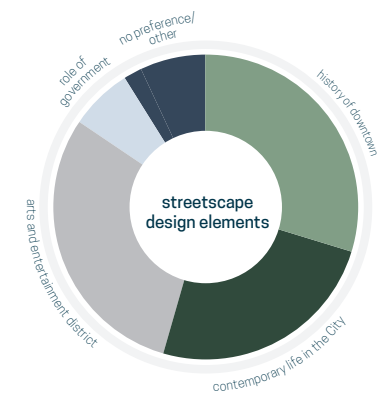


Fig 1.8 Desired streetscape interpretive design elements

The primary complaint about the District today is the lack of seating and generally uninviting state of the streets. Some respondents also reported feeling unsafe in the area. When asked what is missing in the District today, respondents most strongly agreed that street trees and planting, seating amenities, and expanded attractions for residents are lacking. In the future, the majority of respondents would like to see additional street trees and plantings, more year-round patios, green infrastructure, winter skating, and water features. When asked specifically about winter activities, the majority voiced support for ice skating, fire pits with seating, holiday and craft markets, and street parties and events. When asked which improvements would be the most impactful, respondents most strongly agreed on including more vegetation in the District, incorporating public art and street theatre, and wider sidewalks.

The majority of individuals feel that the historical importance of the District is somewhat reflected in the streetscape, and an equal number of respondents prioritized history and contemporary life in Charlottetown as top priorities for the new design. Regarding incorporation of historical elements, many respondents voiced the need to expand interpretation beyond the events of Canadian Confederation to include representation of diverse peoples including women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ2+. Incorporation of Indigenous representation was identified as a key change in the redesign of the streetscape, and many respondents felt that the natural history of the Island

could be better incorporated.

When asked for final suggestions for the design team, many respondents expressed the desire to see the District catering more to residents than tourists. Many individuals also voiced support for the District operating as a pedestrian-only space with expanded communal green spaces throughout the area.

1.4.5 Summary

Charlottetown's Province House Historic District represents an important node of economic, cultural, and heritage activity within the City that demands careful planning and design to ensure the vitality of the area in the coming years. Community stakeholders overwhelmingly support an improved streetscape that will introduce much-needed amenities and expand the public realm while honouring the needs of existing businesses and institutions. The desires of the community guided the development of the final conceptual design and will ultimately determine the success of project implementation.

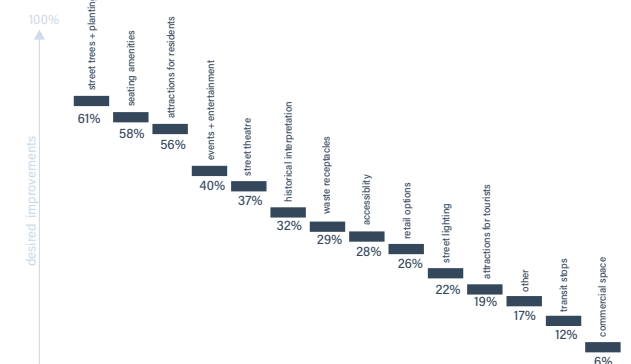


Fig 1.9 Agreement on priority areas for improvement

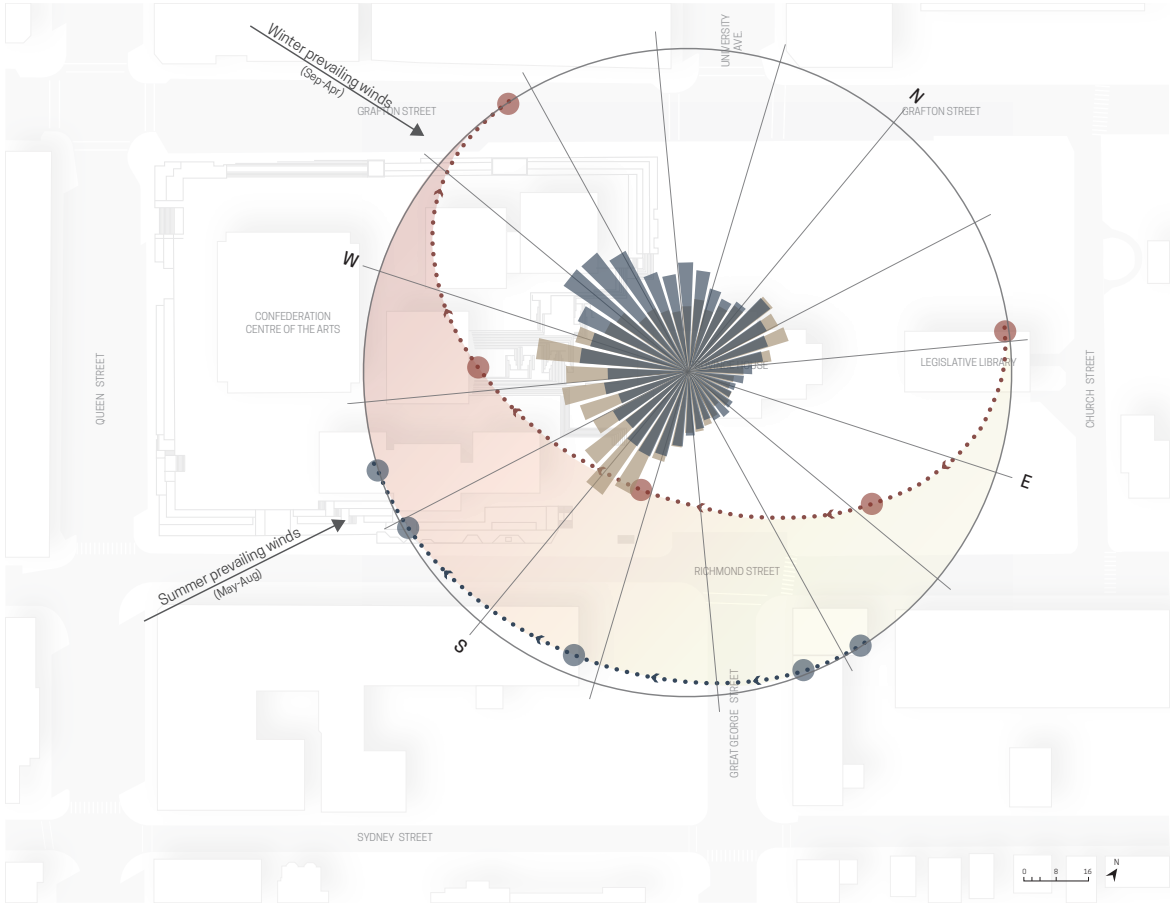


Fig 1.10 Microclimate map showing solar and wind exposure

1.5 Biophysical Attributes

Every successful design takes into consideration the unique physical conditions of its site. The Province House Historic District is notable for its rich heritage and its location in the heart of Charlottetown’s downtown. The District serves as both a provincial seat of government and an important entertainment destination.

Much as Charlottetown itself has evolved over the past years, the District has also changed and adapted to uses that are different than those originally planned. In order to ensure an exceptional experience for site users, the final design builds off of existing biophysical conditions of the area to best utilize positive elements that contribute to comfort and enjoyment in the streetscape while minimizing negative elements and improving safety in the public realm.

1.5.1 Climate and Microclimate

Charlottetown has a mild, maritime climate with moderately cold winters and warm summers. Prince Edward Island receives precipitation in the form of both rainfall (average of 890 mm/year) and snowfall (average of 290 cm/year) and is often windy. The plant hardiness zone for Charlottetown is 6a.

Human comfort within the Province House Historic District is largely a function of site-specific microclimate factors, principally solar and wind exposure. The District receives the majority of its solar exposure from the south, although the degree to which sunlight reaches the streetscape is highly variable and largely dictated by building height and orientation. The area receives prevailing summer winds from the south-southwest, while winter winds prevail from the west-northwest (Fig 1.10). Creating adequate protection and shelter from the elements, particularly in the wintertime, is an important design consideration that guided the development of the conceptual plan.

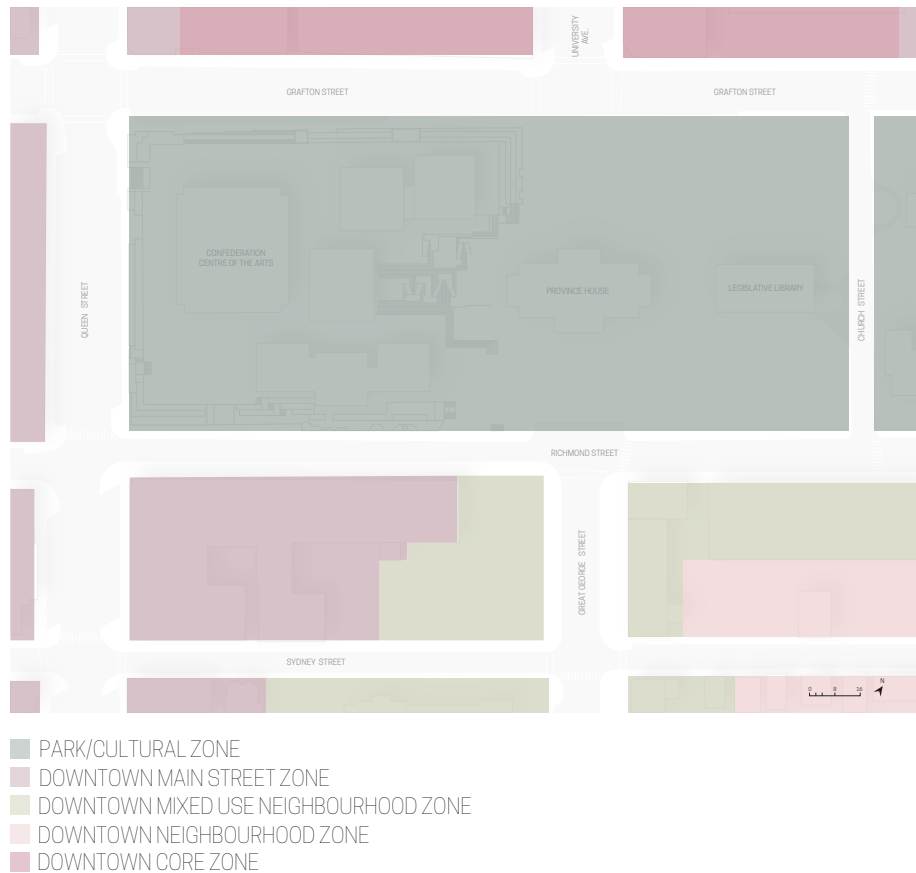


Fig 1.11 Charlottetown Zoning and Development Bylaw zones

1.5.2 Existing Infrastructure

Through conversations with the City of Charlottetown Water and Sewer Utility, it was determined that there is a potential need for sewer main upgrades in the Province House Historic District. The Utility would like to coordinate water and sewer renewals in areas where the streets are being revamped, and this project will provide that opportunity in the downtown core. This would also be an opportunity to access existing water mains and services that may require replacement or liner upgrades as preventative measures. While the streetscapes are being revitalized, any storm water infiltration issues could be assessed at select properties and remedied as needed. Most notably, the Mack Theatre could have both its sanitary sewerage capacity increased as well as the below grade building exterior improved to increase foundation drainage to prevent water infiltration.

1.6 Cultural Attributes

1.6.1 Land Use Zones

The District is located in the downtown of Charlottetown and is zoned to allow for a diversity of commercial, residential, and institutional activities. The central area of the District which is occupied by Province House, the Hon. George Coles Building, and the Confederation Centre of the Arts is zoned park/cultural to accommodate cultural, community, and government uses. The zoning of the core area ensures that the downtown will remain freely accessible to the public.

The remaining areas of the district are zoned for mixed uses including medium to higher-density residential, various commercial and retail activities,

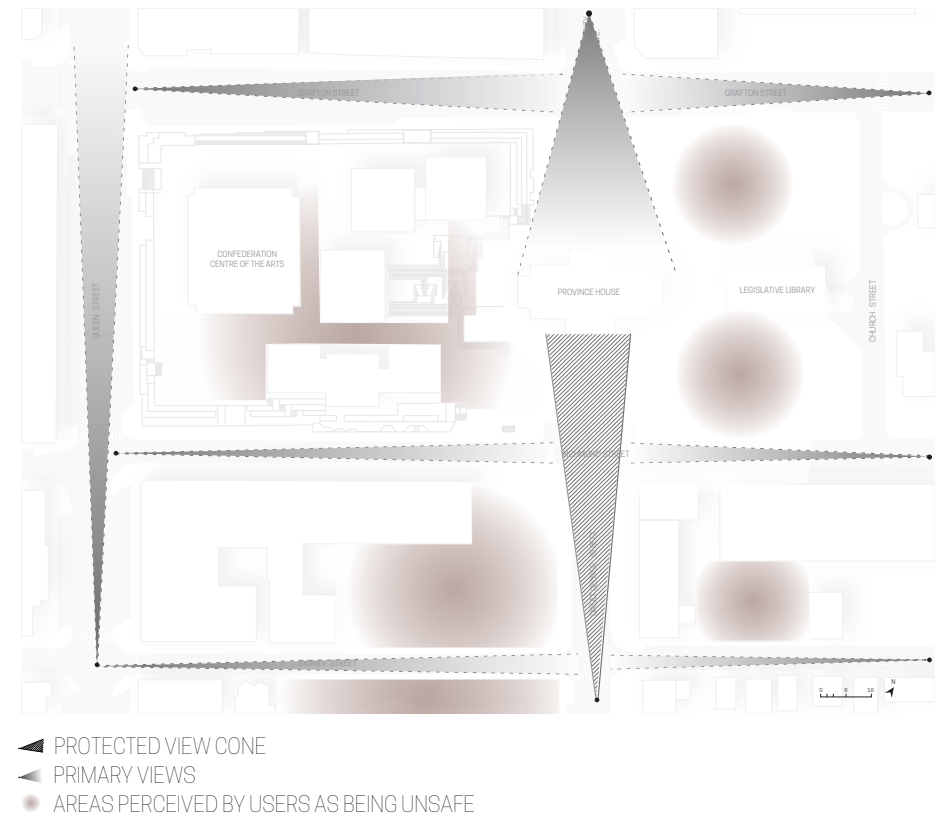


Fig 1.12 View planes and perceived unsafe areas

as well as important civic and institutional uses such as emergency services. This breadth of allowable uses positions the District to densify and intensify activities in the coming years as the City continues to evolve and grow (Fig 1.11).

1.6.2 View Corridors

The primary view corridors within the District are oriented around Province House and are dictated by the gridded alignment of the streets. The view cone along Great George Street looking northwest towards Province House is protected for its heritage connection to the events of the Charlottetown Conference. Maintaining and enhancing this view cone is an important design constraint that guided the final conceptual plan (Fig 1.12).

1.6.3 Safety Considerations

Public engagement revealed that some users feel unsafe in specific areas of the District; namely along the internal pathways of the Confederation Centre of the Arts, underneath the mature trees surrounding the Hon. George Coles Building, and within and adjacent to the parking lots in the southern section of the District. Increasing safety and ensuring users feel comfortable in the public realm is an important improvement that should be enacted as the area undergoes change.

The project partners aim to ensure that this project supports the principles and objectives of “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED). CPTED principals employ a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention dependent on urban and architectural designs as well as the management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to “reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime” (International CPTED Association).

The key design objectives promoted through this plan include creating a destination that has more ‘eyes on the street’ and thus increased natural surveillance to deter potential criminal activity. Proposed CPTED measures also include installing adequate lighting at night, promoting clear sightlines, and renovating neglected or under-used spaces. Given the political importance of Province House, there are additional defensible space safety objectives that stem from its role as a centre of government. These include security cameras with clear views of the building surroundings, design strategies to limit vehicle access to the immediate proximity of Province House, and expanded hardscaped areas to allow for safe public gathering throughout the daytime and evening.

1.6.4 Mobility

Grafton Street is a vital transportation corridor within the District that serves as a primary public transit route for three bus routes. One of the City’s principal bus stops is located

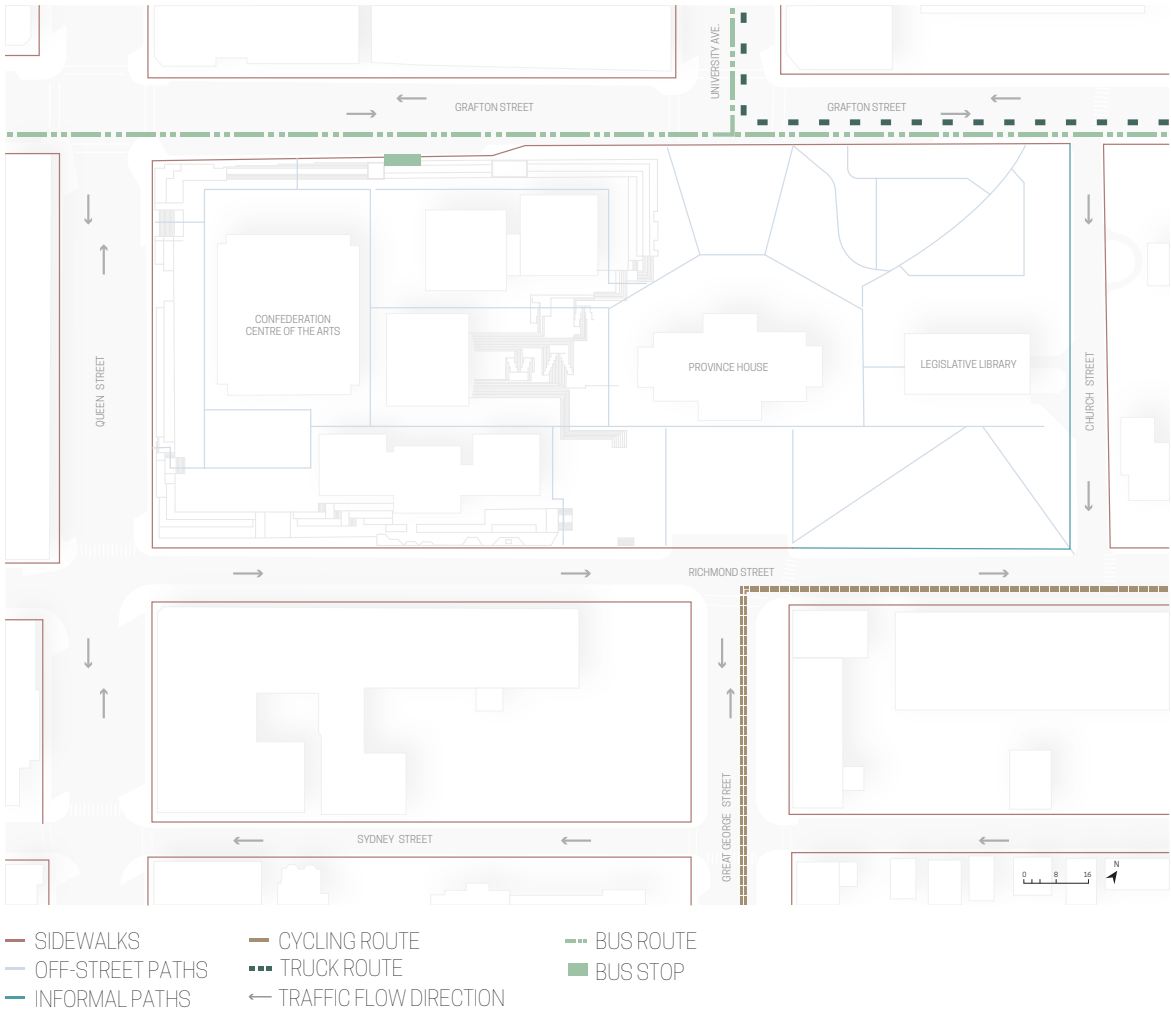


Fig 1.13 Existing circulation routes and public transit infrastructure

in front of the Confederation Centre of the Arts. Additionally, University Avenue and Grafton Street both serve as truck routes into the downtown core. The current location of the principal bus stop on Grafton Street was identified during public engagement as being problematic and potentially hazardous. The plan relocates the stop to improve visibility and access and also reduce conflict with parked or off-loading vehicles.

The District is characterized by traffic flow that is two-way on the periphery and primarily one-way in the interior. Grafton and Queen Streets are the primary circulation routes through the District. Sydney, Richmond, and Church Streets are one-way, which regulates traffic circulation internally. Richmond Street between Queen Street and Great George Street currently operates as a pedestrian-only street during the summer months with the exception of emergency service vehicles. Traffic studies conducted by the design consultants indicate that the level of service is adequate, but that multi-modal level of service could be improved through expanding opportunities for increased active transportation. Analysis of current parking availability revealed adequate numbers of spots within the site (184) with the potential to strategically re-purpose some parking for different uses. Emergency vehicle access to all required areas within the District is maintained and accommodated in the final conceptual plan.

Existing sidewalks in some areas of the District—notably along Sydney Street—are narrow and pose potential difficulties to universal accessibility throughout the District. Sidewalk connectivity is lacking between Richmond and Church Streets, as evidenced by informal desire lines trodden into the existing lawn from the action of pedestrians walking across undesignated pathways. Paths around Province House and through the complex of the Confederation Centre of the Arts are passable but in many places lack clear visual or physical connections to the surrounding street sidewalks.

The District also contains a portion of the Experience Charlottetown designated cycling route established by the City of Charlottetown; however, this section of the route does not have a dedicated bike lane or adequate cycling infrastructure (such as bike parking) along Great George or Richmond Streets along which it passes (Fig 1.13).

1.6.5 Heritage Designations

Several heritage designations exist within the District in relation to individual buildings as well as historic sites. Several of these designations are recognized in varying forms at the municipal, provincial, and federal level (Fig 1.14). Province House, Great George Street, and the Confederation Centre of the Arts are each designated as National Historic Sites of Canada, which makes the District uniquely historically rich and greatly contributes to tourism in the area. Many of the designations relate to the early history of the City as well as the events of Confederation and provincial government.

Province House is designated for its beautiful architectural style, its role in the Charlottetown

Conference, its connection to Great George Street, and its position as the judicial institution within the Province. Great George Street is designated for its rich domestic architecture as well as its connection to the Charlottetown Conference. The Confederation Centre of the Arts is designated for its importance as an artistic institution and its Brutalist architectural form.

The heritage designations throughout the District safeguard many aspects of the built environment and visual connectivity through the area, and as such they helped guide the development of the conceptual plan. The plan adopts an approach that respects and celebrates the unique heritage of the District while rehabilitating the public realm to better meet the needs of present and future generations.

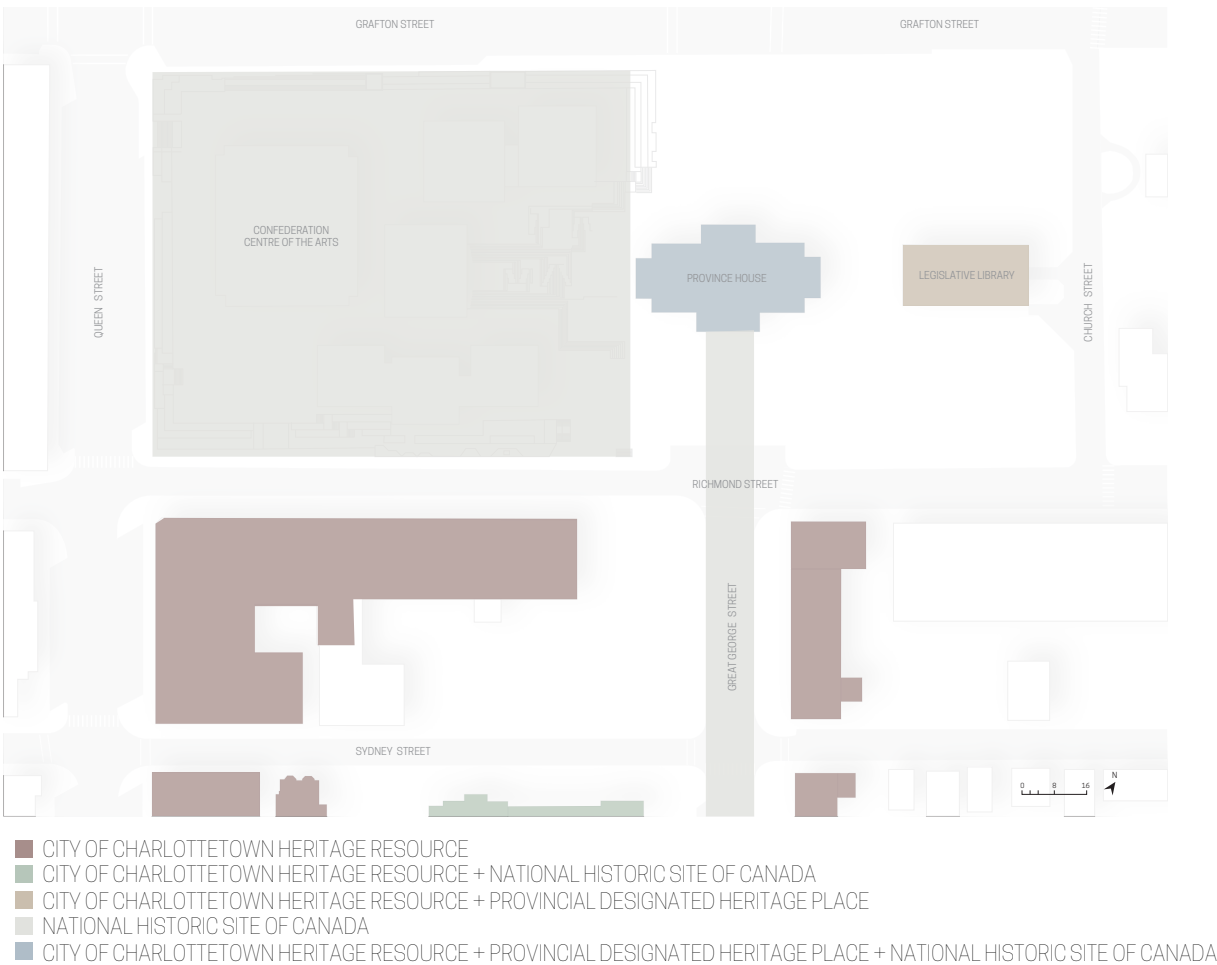


Fig 1.14 Designated heritage buildings and sites

02 Design Framework



Photo Credit: DiscoverCharlottetown.com

2.1 Design Vision

The vision for the future of the District is founded on the idea that successful historic public spaces are democratic, accessible, walkable, multi-purposed, activated year-round, and enhancing of the beauty of their cultural resources. The project partners are supportive of a pedestrian-oriented streetscape surrounding the District with both Richmond Street and Sydney Street designed to be shared streets. The design implements both functional and aesthetic interventions to achieve these ideals.

Province House Historic District is perfectly situated to develop into a premier destination of choice for residents and visitors year-round. This design envisions ways in which the District can become a vibrant, bustling centre of cultural and economic activity that unites users in a celebration of the City's rich history and first-class arts and entertainment scene. The development of animated streets anchored by cohesive, distinctive visual wayfinding and branding elements will greatly improve current usage and comfort of the District while simultaneously strengthening the economic prospects of the area. The success of new shared street models in Canada like Argyle Street in Halifax and St Catherine Street in Montreal (both in heritage areas of the City) are a template for the District in Charlottetown.

2.2 Guiding Design Principles

Province House Historic District encompasses dozens of designated heritage buildings and places representing centuries of Island life. The District bears many vestiges of the past in its architectural forms and street grids, yet the area is a heavily trafficked seat of governance and contemporary cultural activity. To marry the past with the present, the design principles draw inspiration from the irreplaceable cultural resources of the District to create new, inclusive spaces and modern amenities that are visually and functionally congruent with the historic context.

2.2.1 A Walkable District with Shared Streets

The District should be designed to be a safe, walkable, must-see destination in the core of historic Charlottetown. The shared street concept, which removes curbs and gutters that ordinarily separate vehicles from pedestrians, is flexible by virtue of its ability to accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians safely while firmly prioritizing pedestrians. Shared streets also allow streets to host a variety of festive uses that are unimpeded by grade changes associated with traditional curbs. These spaces are also much friendlier for mobility impaired and even visually impaired individuals, and they are thus more inclusive than traditional auto-centric streets.

The design includes more hardscapes, flexible-use spaces, expanded opportunities for year-round gathering, and a greater emphasis on the walking public. At the same time, the design allows the streets to be fully serviced by daily deliveries (perhaps during restricted times of the day), periodic loading into the Confederation Centre of the Arts, and for formal events at Province House. The design places a priority on walkability while still ensuring businesses within the area can be serviced regularly. Emergency service vehicle access is assured at all times of the day and night. Despite a slight loss of convenience for cars (on Sydney Street) and a small reduction in total number of available parking spots to allow for wider sidewalks and improved public spaces, the trade-off is seen as an important step in creating a walkable and safe destination for visitors and residents. The proposed changes represent a natural progression of urban city building and place-making uniquely tailored to the context of Province House Historic District.

2.2.2 Connection to Nature

The District in its current state is host to numerous small and disconnected planting areas with species that

inadequately respond to the natural ecosystems of the region and site microclimate. There is a clear opportunity to introduce material and planting palettes that directly respond to the larger natural context of the District including the Island’s geology and ecoregion. In this way, the District will develop a definitive sense of place that builds on the Province’s iconic features responsible for bringing joy to residents and visitors alike including interaction with water, the coastal sandstone earth and cliffs, and highly varied vegetative land cover that supports local biodiversity. To develop a naturalized urban landscape the design proposes to:

- » Incorporate sandstone as a characteristic material of the District
- » Invoke the distinctive stratigraphy of the Island’s cliffs through the forms of various design elements
- » Establish a colour palette inspired by the rich earth-tones of the Island
- » Create opportunities for playful interaction with water

- » Use water as a microclimatic regulator to increase users’ comfort
- » Develop a planting palette that prioritizes native and non-invasive naturalized plants
- » Introduce a shade garden to create wildlife habitat and invoke the Island’s old-growth forests

2.2.3 Celebrate Our Collective History

Charlottetown is a testament to the collaborative achievements and contributions of diverse groups of citizens beginning long before the formal establishment of the City in the 18th Century. From the Indigenous communities that first peopled the Island to more recent settlers, the early histories of Prince Edward Island and the City are important contextual elements deserving of representation and celebration alongside existing commemorative narratives focused on British colonial and early Canadian achievements. Delving into the rich history of the Island and introducing an expanded vocabulary of design elements will contribute to creating inclusive spaces



wherein all users of the District can enjoy seeing their own heritages acclaimed. To expand groups currently included in historic interpretive elements in the District, the design incorporates:

- » Expanded commemorative spaces integrated into the physical landscape of the District
- » Opportunities for inclusion of contemporary Indigenous culture and narratives
- » A garden planting palette that evokes the Acadian forest landscape

women who exerted their efforts in supporting the political negotiations. To ensure a more holistic representation of these historical events, the design will:

- » Introduce embedded interpretive elements to honour influential women involved in Confederation
- » Synthesize and collect disparate commemorative elements distributed across the District into central interpretive foci that include a greater breadth of individuals and groups

2.2.4 Expand the Narratives of Confederation

The existing narrative of Canadian Confederation focused within the centre of the District is predominated by commemoration of the 36 men, known as the Fathers of Confederation, who attended the conferences that culminated in the Dominion of Canada. This interpretive slant fails to consider the many individuals who collaboratively worked to achieve Confederation, such as the many

2.2.5 Develop a Cohesive District Identity

The Victorian architecture that dominates the District as well as the Brutalist modernist style of the Confederation Centre of the Arts together constitute the unique visual character of the area. The urban form of the District is largely shaped by the juxtaposition of ornate, highly detailed facades alongside the monolithic, monotoned structure of the Centre. The two distinct manifestations of the built form are equally important components of the identity of



the area, but they are currently spatially divorced from one another with low levels of visual and physical permeability. To improve accessibility within the public realm and create a synergy between the Victorian and modernist elements of the District, the streetscape design draws inspiration in form, materials and spatial arrangement from the surrounding buildings. Specifically the plan develops a design vocabulary that:

- » Responds to the proportions and forms of the Victorian and Georgian building facades, including windows, entryways and pilasters
- » Creates a pavement pattern that directly responds to the form of neighbouring buildings
- » Utilizes an earth-tone colour palette corresponding to the colours of existing buildings and the natural landscape
- » Proposes a unique public art feature to highlight the beauty of existing architecture along Sydney Street
- » Utilizes sandstone as a key unifying material to bridge the Victorian and modernist architectural styles and invoke the Island’s cliffs

2.2.6 Foster Inclusivity

The District represents the core of Charlottetown’s downtown, and it currently serves a wide range of users. As such, creating comfortable, safe and enjoyable public spaces is of paramount importance to long-term prosperity in the area. Feedback regarding current issues in the District’s streets and adjacent public areas highlighted the need to develop more inclusive, welcoming gathering places that prioritize pedestrian experiences while addressing safety and security. Many current users of the site also voiced the need for better and more abundant public streetscape amenities. To achieve these aims, the design proposes to:

- » Introduce expanded gathering places and site

amenities to activate use during the winter season and at night

- » Respond to climate and microclimate to ensure users’ comfort in the public realm
- » Prioritize the pedestrian and cyclist experience
- » Ensure the space celebrates the diverse heritage and culture of all Islanders
- » Remove existing physical and visual barriers wherever possible to enhance inclusivity and participation in activities in the public realm

2.2.7 Improve Safety in the District

The pedestrian-centric experiment begun (and funded by) the merchants on Richmond Street almost 20 years ago has proven its success. Now, the opportunity for a permanent shared street installation and an introduction of a shared street along Sydney Street will increase pedestrian traffic and safety in and around the District. Employing CPTED principals in the design of the public road spaces and private properties around the Confederation Centre of the Arts, Province House and the Hon. George Coles Building will make the District safer for pedestrians.

2.2.8 Celebrate Heritage Without Creating a False Narrative

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada guide designs that impact cultural resources such as those in the District. Province House was designated a National Historic Site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1966 as a nationally significant building, and again in 1980. As part of its designation, the Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) recognizes the importance of the view planes up and down Great George Street to and from Province House, the symmetry on the Province House grounds as viewed up Great George Street, and the need to ensure that developments

in adjacent areas remain sympathetic to Province House.

The Great George Street Historic District was designated a National Historic Site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1990, and many individual buildings within the district have their own heritage designations with overlapping designations (Fig 1.14).

Chapter 4 of the Standards and Guidelines outlines the considerations for historic places in Canada which have been deeply considered as part of this design; especially in regards to protecting all character defining elements and preserving the heritage value of the historic places. Parks Canada representatives have been very helpful in assisting the team with a greater understanding of the sites and expectations.

The Standards and Guidelines stipulate designs should avoid creating ‘a false historical appearance’ by introducing new built features, including cultural landscapes. Many progressive historic cities in Europe and in Canada approach public space design in culturally important heritage landscapes in a very purposeful way. They typically use natural historic materials (like stone, plants, metal, etc.) in modern forms, which creates an uncluttered foreground from which to appreciate heritage features. The goal is to ensure the landscape design does not compete with the heritage features and that it remains sympathetic to these features, rather than trying to recreate ‘fake’ heritage features. In the case of the Province House grounds, the spatial organization relies on symmetry and the traditional use of the carriage lane for dignitaries and special events, as well as the framing of the building by mature trees.

Montreal has done an excellent job at crafting very progressive and modern landscapes as forecourts for heritage buildings or heritage spaces and offers a good model for the District.





Fig 2.1 Balancing history and modernity in Old Montreal



2.3 Design Vocabulary

Successful designs in the public realm depend upon strong symbolic and metaphorical devices that help communicate to users the intended design narrative. The chosen devices represent aspects of the design vocabulary, which is a primary determinant of the physical forms the design assumes.

The design presented here for the Province House Historic District develops a design vocabulary informed by the historic and physical context of the area as well as the need to increase enjoyment, comfort and safety for the people who visit and live in the District. Some of these vocabulary elements are discussed below.

2.3.1 Gateways and Activity Nodes

The District in its current state lacks clearly identifiable pedestrian connections or entry points into public spaces. This is particularly pronounced in the areas around the Hon. George Coles Building, the sides of the Confederation Centre of the Arts, and along Sydney Street. To develop strong visual and physical thresholds and help delineate the edges of the District, the design employs unique, multi-functional amenity and wayfinding elements. Positioning gateways along the spatial thresholds into the area also develops a natural rhythm of entry into the public domain that will draw passerby into the District.

Pockets of Amenity

Streetscape amenities not only increase usability and comfort in the public realm, but they also serve to create a sense of invitation into shared spaces and encourage activities to extend into the outdoors. Despite the existence of large areas of publicly accessible land, the District has the potential to significantly increase its use as a central gathering place for the community. Introducing strategically located pockets of amenity at key intersections and within existing activity nodes

will incentivize increased activity—and therefore safety—in the area. Incorporating improved lighting, fixed and flexible seating, cycling infrastructure, and natural elements such as vegetation and water will clearly delineate pedestrian spaces and help to regulate microclimate for increased physical comfort.

Wayfinding and Branding

Wayfinding forms the primary way by which people orient themselves in a space and navigate from one place to another. When clear wayfinding devices are absent, people can easily become confused and disoriented, which detracts from comfort and enjoyment of a place. The District presently lacks legible wayfinding and identity branding elements that would greatly improve navigability throughout the different spaces and direct passerby into the interior of the site.

To address this, the design proposes to develop a visually strong set of wayfinding devices to be strategically located at the gateways into the District. These devices take the form of sandstone markers embedded with lighting and signage. Some of these devices serve secondary functions as public amenities including seating, blockades, or waste receptacles. The embedded element of lighting also acts as a street-level signal that the District is a place of nighttime activity and entertainment.

2.3.2 Forms and Materials

The Province House Historic District is nationally renowned for its extensive architectural heritage resources. These resources are carefully protected to ensure their continued enjoyment for future generations. The distinctive architectural forms of Charlottetown’s downtown serves as primary design inspirations in terms of physical form, spatial layout and material choices.



Geometry and Material Palette

The design vocabulary relies on visually clean, rectilinear forms that mimic the architectural context of the public realm. The angular geometry of the Confederation Centre of the Arts and the repetitive, symmetrical Victorian-era facades punctuated by rectangular openings inspired the forms of the major design interventions and site furnishings. The use of geometrical layouts for site elements helps to visually marry distinct architectural forms and harmonizes proposed design elements with existing structures.

The material palette for the design prioritizes extant materials in the District, primarily split-faced and sawn sandstone, glass, and black metals. These materials already occur on adjacent building facades and in the streetscape, and they are visually well-suited to coordinating the distinct architectural styles within the site.

Sandstone is evocative of the Island’s geological characteristics and is a clear visual connector to the Confederation Centre of the Arts and Province House. Sandstone is also present throughout the District as architectural trim on many heritage buildings. By utilizing rough-cut slabs of sandstone stacked atop one another to create public amenity space, the design introduces a contemporary slant to the traditional material while also referencing the distinctive layered stratigraphy of the coastal regions surrounding the City.

The use of glass in both site furnishings and glass-like (acrylic) materials in public art is a direct response to the prevalence of this material in existing building facades. The striking inclusion of glass panelling as cuts in the exterior of the Confederation Centre of the Arts inspired the design of site amenities with embedded glass panels that double as lighting during evening hours. The proposed public art feature on Sydney Street (discussed below) also employs acrylic that

mimics glass as a primary material and borrows proportions and forms from adjacent historic building windows.

Many proposed metallic site furnishings are powder-coated black as a direct nod to the prevalence of wrought iron as a distinctive Victorian-era material. Specifically, the embedded street signage that acts as a wayfinding device throughout the District is designed to visually connect to the primary existing gateway arch on Victoria Row. In general, the choice of black or earth-toned metal site furnishings throughout the site ensures introduced elements are visually subordinate to heritage buildings and are aesthetically harmonious with one another.

Ground Plane Treatment

Given the disconnected nature of the District in its current state, a unifying ground plane treatment will serve as a primary means to develop a cohesive identity for the area. The design proposes a pavement pattern that responds to the architectural features of the buildings fronting the streetscapes along Victoria Row and Sydney Street. Elsewhere within the District, the proposed ground plane treatment acts to visually guide users to notable attractions, such as Province House. The proposed materials and colours for the pavement pattern reflect the need to introduce the functionality and aesthetics of a contemporary hardscape while still maintaining a visual connection to the historic buildings within the District.

Public Art

Successful public spaces implement creative ways in which to celebrate the context of their surroundings. The proposed public art feature on Sydney Street is comprised of 500 suspended

colourful translucent acrylic panels that are inspired by the proportions and shapes of the window panes of heritage buildings along the street. The quantity of panels represent the City’s original 500 city lots, in which the District forms the physical and cultural centre. The overall spacing and patterning of the rows of panels are also informed by the spacing of architectural features and articulation with the heritage buildings, including St. Dunstan’s Basilica Cathedral.

2.3.3 Interaction with Water

During the process of engaging with the community the design team repeatedly heard about stakeholders’ desire to touch and interact with water within the public realm. Despite the relative proximity to Charlottetown’s waterfront, the District is largely visually disconnected from the Harbour and currently has only one small public water feature on the Confederation Centre of the Arts’ property. As a response to community feedback and in order to invoke the historically important connection between the District and the Harbour, the design proposes a geometrically formal, interactive splash pad in front of Province House. In addition to enhancing enjoyment of the public realm and encouraging social gathering, the water feature also contributes to regulating microclimate during the summer months. The design of the feature is carefully considered in order to ensure visual subservience to the architecture of Province House and to maintain clear sightlines to the building when approached from Great George Street.

2.3.4 Creating Connections

Connectivity is essential within any public realm, and the District currently suffers from an absence of clear physical and visual connections. Additionally, the area does not benefit from well-developed,

cohesive thematic narratives that would help to guide users’ experiences and draw important connections to the historical and contemporary context of the District.

Physical Connections

The District will greatly benefit from increased pedestrian accessibility and greater visual permeability between its distinct public spaces. The primary obstacle to integration of these spaces is the exterior, street-facing edge of the Confederation Centre of the Arts which currently presents as a blank concrete wall with limited points of access. The Centre is currently being redesigned to enhance street-level connections, and the design team for this plan worked in conjunction with the Centre’s consultants to propose improved interfaces between the complex and the surrounding public spaces.

Additionally, the design introduces several strategic interventions to increase visibility along Victoria Row and at traffic intersections. Widened sidewalks and curbless street sections on Victoria Row and half of Sydney Street will enhance accessibility and improve pedestrian circulation. The design also proposes to utilize planting and hardscape treatments to strengthen the visual connections to Province House from both Victoria Row and Great George Street.

Thematic Connections

The area around Province House and the Hon. George Coles Building is currently host to a wide range of disjointed commemorative elements that—if spatially and thematically unified—could transform into a strong narrative tied to the history of the City and the District. The design plans for the integration of the various narrative elements surrounding Confederation and the history of Province House and Queen Square Gardens into the central activity node surrounding the water feature. In addition to creating space for integrated historical interpretation, the design proposes to introduce visually coordinated site amenities and lighting that draw thematic connections to the contemporary importance of the District as an arts and entertainment destination.

2.3.5 Green Infrastructure

The reconstruction of the District’s streets presents a once in a generation opportunity to demonstrate PEI’s commitment to environmental sustainability and climate action. This includes integrating tree planting best practices and stormwater best management practices (BMPs) in a way that is not yet present in the Province’s urban areas.

Urban Tree Canopy

Augmenting the urban tree canopy is an important feature to enhance ecological function and pedestrian comfort in the District. A robust and diverse variety of species of trees will help foster the welcoming nature of the area while providing shade and a sense of enclosure. When trees mature, they become a visually integral feature in the streetscape. Trees are the best indicator of the transformation of the streetscape and they add a level of character that only improves with time.

For street trees to thrive in urban conditions, it is extremely important that they be planted in root (soil) cells. Root cell systems prevent root and soil compaction by supporting the weight at grade of paved surfaces such as asphalt, concrete sidewalks, and unit pavers. These systems are essential for the growth and long-term health of trees as they also provide adequate volumes of soil below grade with increased soil pore space for air movement, water infiltration, and water and nutrient retention.

Stormwater Management

In addition to supporting the healthy growth of trees, root cell systems can also be used as stormwater infrastructure. Specifically, on Richmond and Great George Streets, stormwater can be piped from the linear trench drain into the tree root cell system. Here it will be retained, filtered through the soils, and taken up by the trees, before the excess is conveyed municipal stormwater system, thereby reducing the burden on existing infrastructure. Overall benefits include water volume management, water quality improvement, and peak flow reduction.



03 The Plan

3.1 Conceptual Plan

The conceptual plan presented in this chapter represents the culmination of months of community engagement, stakeholder interviews, and visioning exercises to create a design that will position the Province House Historic District to become the top public amenity and attraction within Charlottetown. The plan envisions practical, achievable, but ambitious, changes to the District's streetscapes and adjacent public spaces through implementation of the guiding design principles and vocabulary (see Chapter 2).

3.1.1 The Design Process

To guide the technical aspects of the final conceptual plan, the design team conducted both a traffic engineering study and an engineering assessment of drainage on-site (See Appendices). These two studies informed proposed alterations to existing parking and vehicle circulation as well as the introduction of linear trench drains to facilitate the removal of curbs and improve storm-water management within pedestrian areas.

Following extensive community engagement and assessment of existing site conditions, the design team developed two framework plans that envisioned distinct programmatic and functional schemes for the site (presented in the following pages). These plans

were presented and reviewed with the CADC and key stakeholder groups in December, 2020. The design team received the following general feedback:

- » The District should continue to feel authentic and celebrate its historical roots while also evolving to accommodate changes in the downtown core
- » There is currently extensive work and planning underway to increase connectivity between the Confederation Centre of the Arts and Victoria Row, which should factor into the conceptual design
- » The renovations to Province House provide an opportunity to phase in some landscape and streetscape improvements in the near future
- » The historical character of the District should be respected in any future streetscape improvements
- » Security within and around Province House is an important design priority

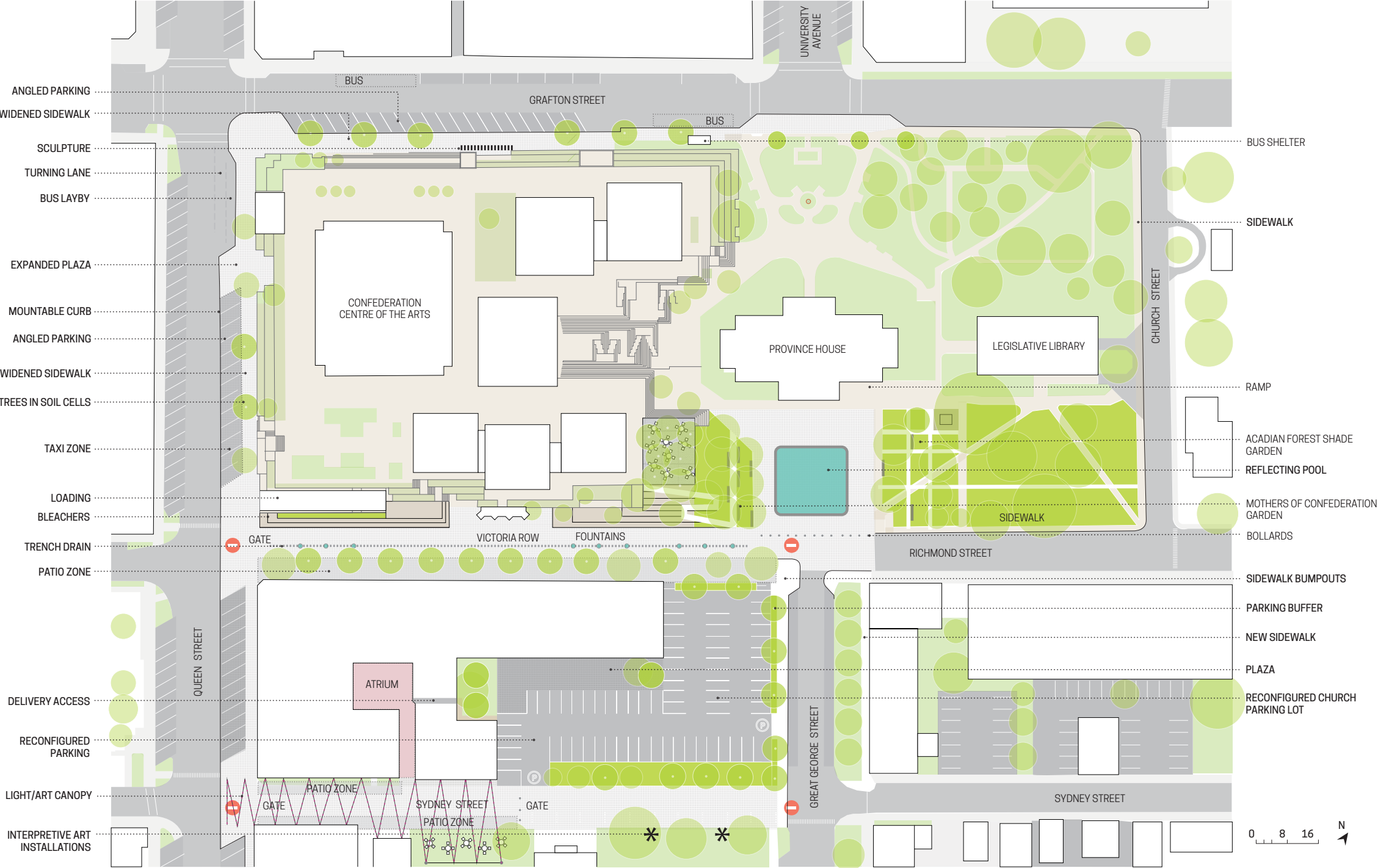


Fig 3.1 FRAMEWORK PLAN OPTION A

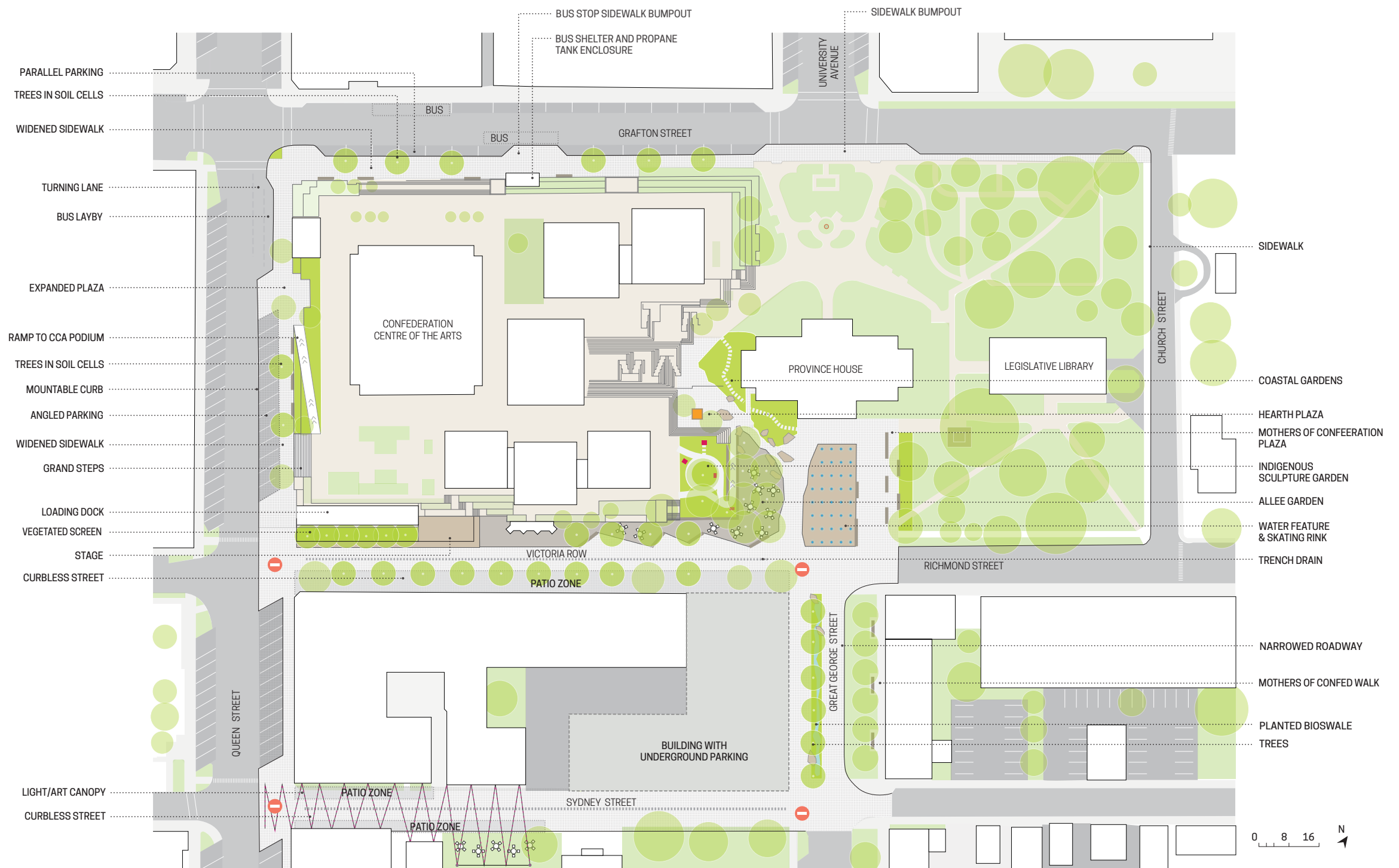


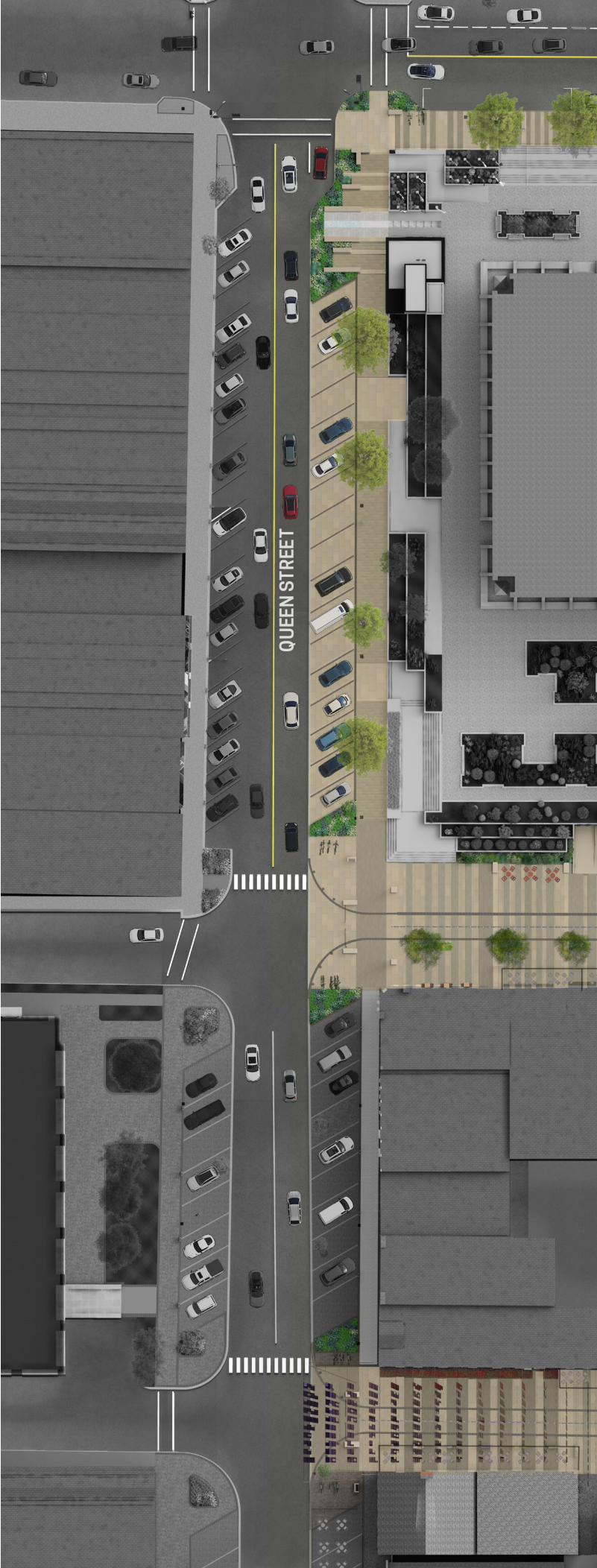
Fig 3.2 FRAMEWORK PLAN OPTION B

3.1.2 Intent of the Concept Plan

The concept plan acts as a vision for how the District can successfully transform into a vibrant, activated public space. The plan does not resolve in final detail any areas of the site. Instead, it serves as inspiration for the public and stakeholders, guides future planning and detailed design processes, and allows for the generation of preliminary cost estimates to organize project funding and phasing.

The conceptual plan will guide the creation of more detailed, refined streetscape designs that will continue to be driven by input from the community and key property owners in the District with the aim of ultimately leading into construction.

What follows in the remainder of this chapter is an overview of the conceptual plan and the key features associated with the major design interventions proposed for different areas of the site. Preliminary material and plant palettes as well as appropriate site furnishings are also proposed. Taken together, these resources present an exciting, contemporary iteration of the streetscapes of the Province House Historic District.





GRAFTON STREET

CONFEDERATION
CENTRE OF THE
ARTS

PROVINCE HOUSE

CHURCH STREET

RICHMOND STREET (VICTORIA ROW)

GREAT GEORGE STREET

SYDNEY STREET



3.1.3 RICHMOND STREET

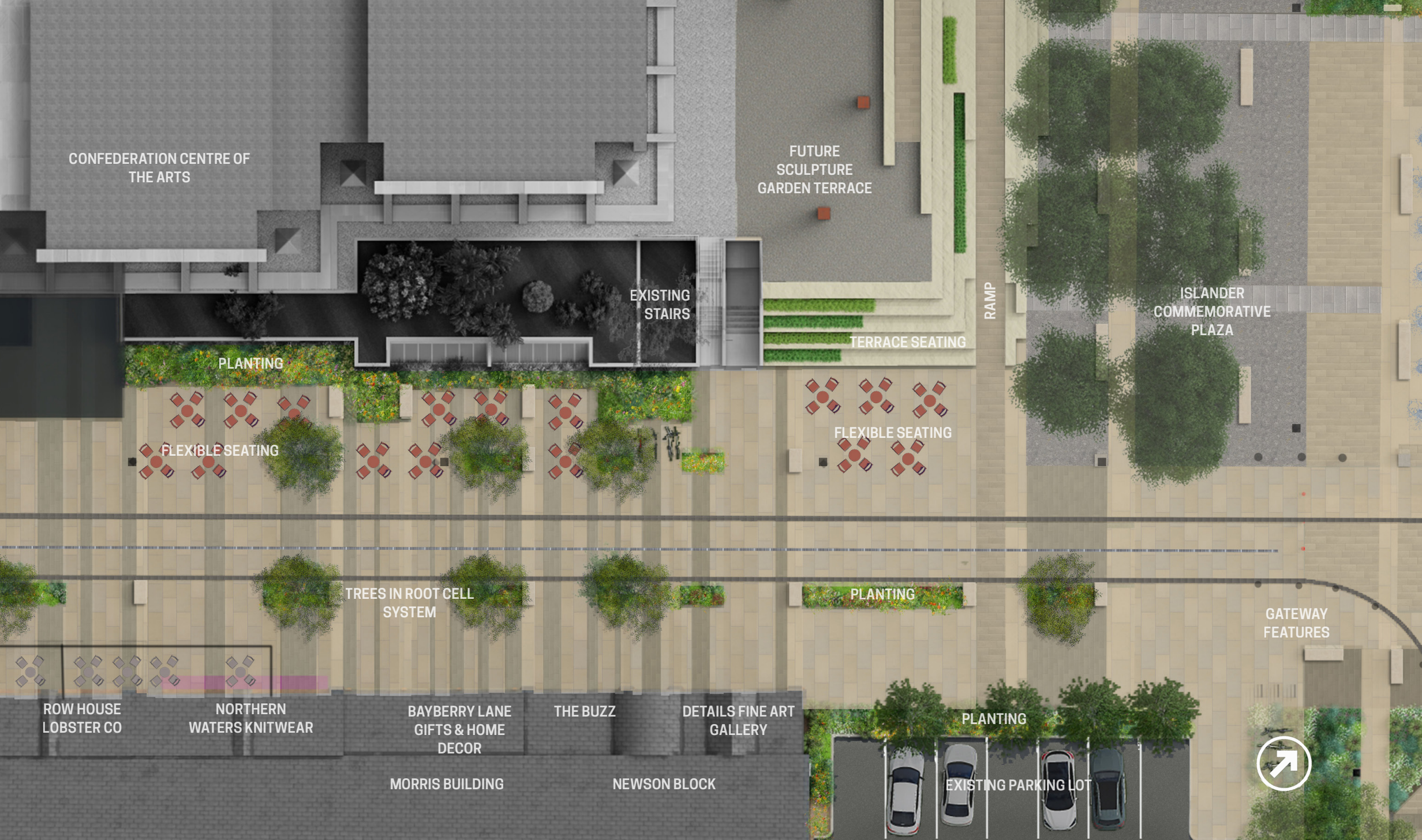
KEY FEATURES

- » Curbless cross section with central linear drain providing continuous level plaza-like surface
- » Narrow one way vehicle travel lane demarcated with tactile indicators for the visually impaired
- » 6m wide clear zone free of vertical obstructions to meet fire department operational requirements

- » Private licenced patio zone relocated directly adjacent to buildings. Creates opportunity for rain canopies, electrical, and other services without the need to cross the public sidewalk. Also provides a larger, more flexible public pedestrian plaza area in the centre of the street during vehicle traffic closures
- » Entire street repaved with concrete and stone unit pavers. Decorative banding mirrors the

architectural features, windows, and articulation of the adjacent historic buildings

- » Stone bench features provide seating, mark the edge of the roadway, and protect trees. Many are also illuminated and indicate the names of adjacent historic buildings
- » New street trees planted in root (soil) cell system to foster the healthy growth of trees



- » Linear drain tied into root cell system for passive stormwater capture and tree watering
- » Trees adequately spaced away from buildings to allow more space for balanced canopy growth
- » Consideration for future renovations and additions to the Confederation Centre of the Arts. Includes additional space for larger crowds in front of new door locations, and integrates the community stage into new steps up to the building podium plaza
- » Flexible bistro style seating for visitors not patronizing licenced restaurant patios
- » New entry gates attached to gateway features to facilitate street closures
- » Defined planting beds with native and naturalized planting
- » Terrace feature and ramp replacing the existing sod slope to provide access to the Confederation Centre of the Arts podium level. A defining feature of that anchors the east end of the block and creates opportunities for public seating, planting, and interpretive elements
- » Reinstatement of Victoria Row Archway on new sandstone bases
- » New ornamental light standards for enhanced lighting and public safety

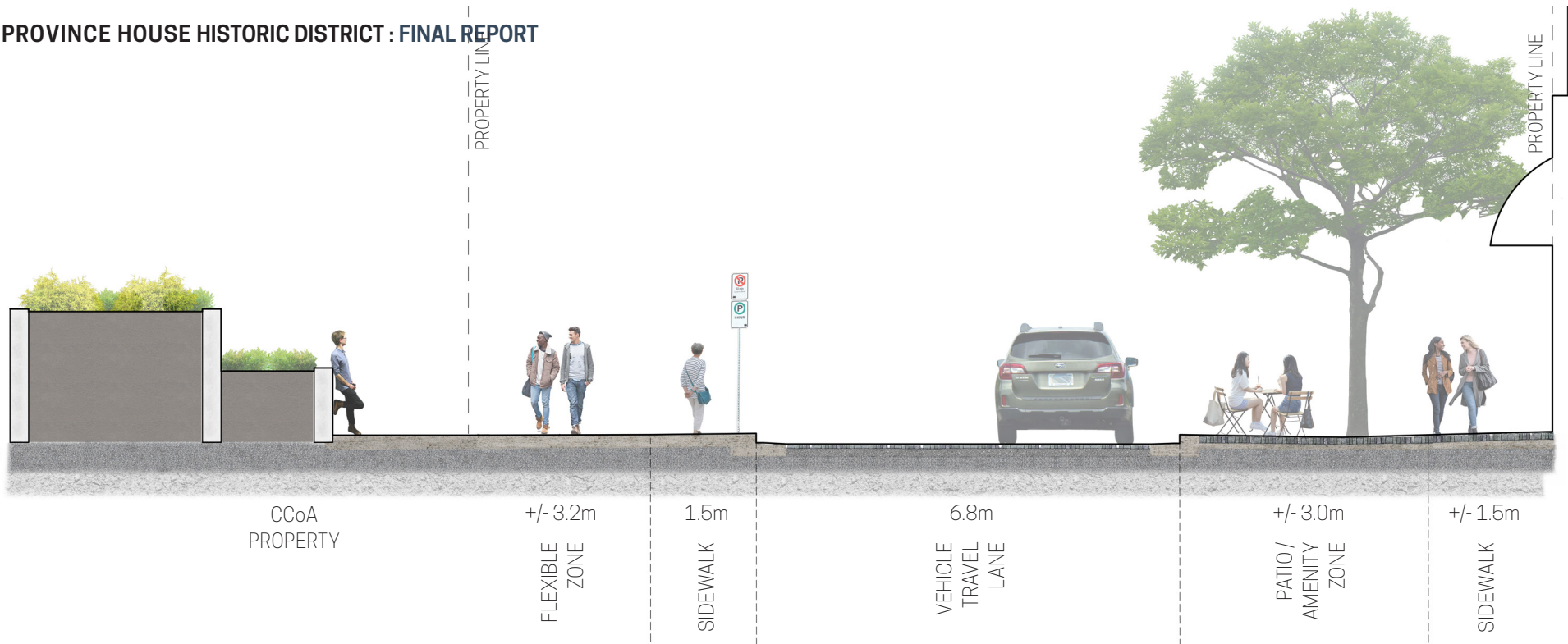


Fig 3.3 RICHMOND STREET EXISTING CROSS SECTION

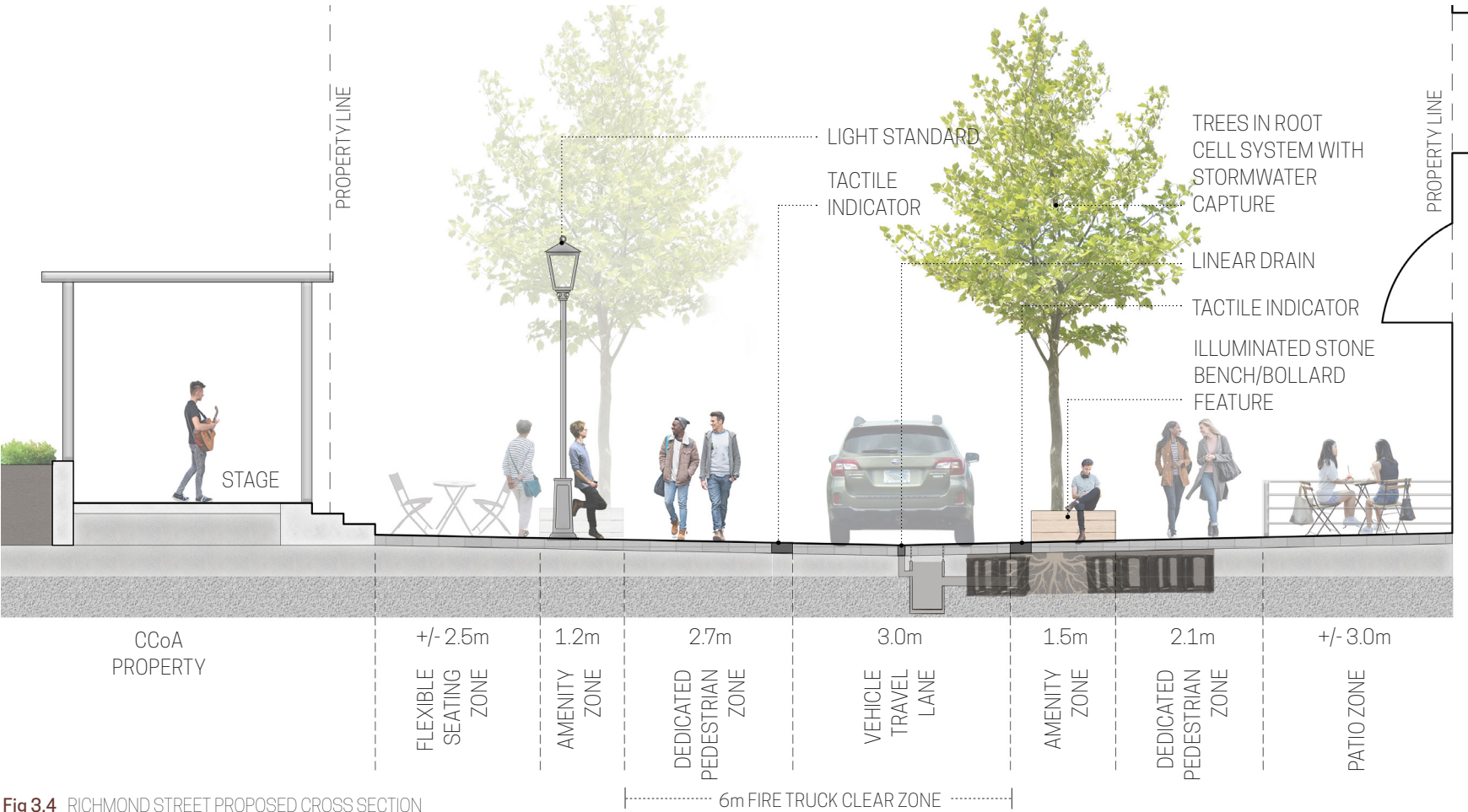


Fig 3.4 RICHMOND STREET PROPOSED CROSS SECTION



Fig 3.5 BIRD'S EYE VIEW DOWN RICHMOND STREET (VICTORIA ROW) FROM QUEEN STREET



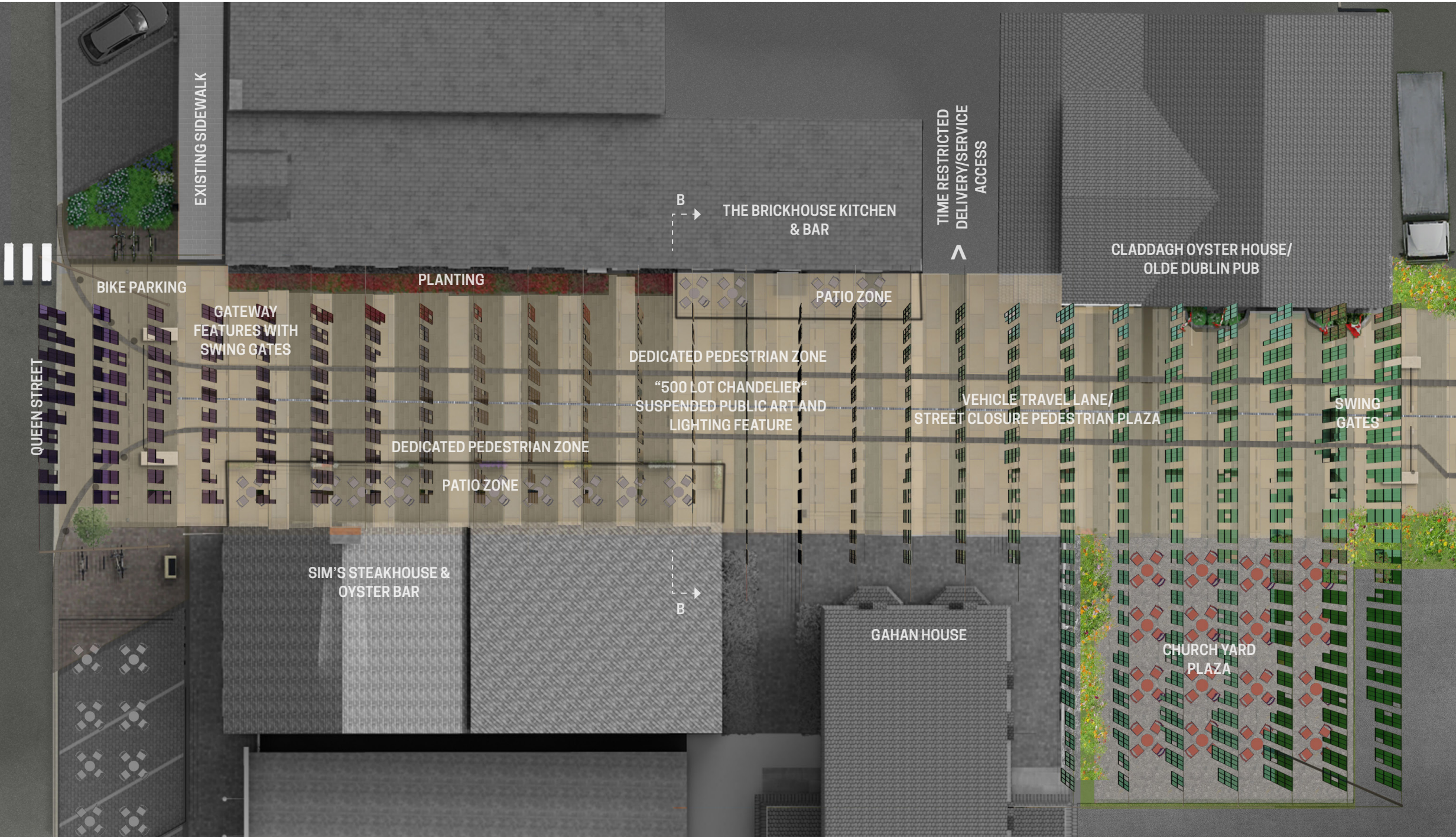


Fig 3.6 STREET LEVEL NIGHT VIEW OF RICHMOND STREET
LOOKING TOWARDS QUEEN STREET





Fig 3.7 STREET LEVEL MID-BLOCK VIEW OF RICHMOND STREET LOOKING TOWARDS QUEEN STREET



3.1.4 SYDNEY STREET

KEY FEATURES

- » Curbless cross section with central linear drain providing continuous level plaza-like surface
- » Narrow one way vehicle travel lane demarcated with tactile indicators for the visually impaired
- » 6m wide clear zone free of vertical obstructions to meet fire department operational requirements
- » Private licenced patio zone maintained directly adjacent to buildings allowing for rain canopies, electrical, and other services without the need to cross the public sidewalk. Also provides a larger, more flexible pedestrian plaza area in the centre of the street during traffic closures
- » Entire street repaved with concrete and stone unit pavers. Decorative banding plays off the architectural features, windows, and articulation of adjacent historic buildings



- » Signature overhead suspended public art and light feature; a gradient of 500 colourful “windows” referencing the window style of the adjacent historic buildings that are part of the City’s original 500 Lot Plan
- » Option for vehicular street closures on the west end of

- the block; facilitated by reconfigured parking lot with continuous drive aisle for service access and one-way traffic turnaround to Great George Street
- » New entry gates attached to gateway features to facilitate street closures
- » Churchyard plaza with flexible bistro style seating under

- the canopy of the public art feature
- » Defined planting beds with native and naturalized planting
- » Gateway wayfinding features at each end of the street

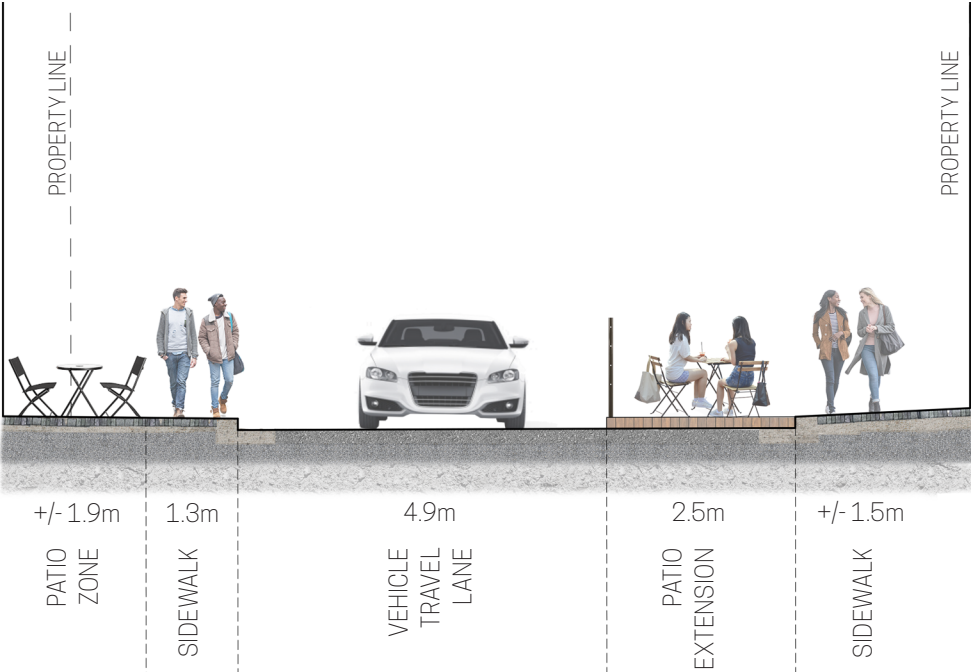


Fig 3.8 SYDNEY STREET EXISTING CROSS SECTION

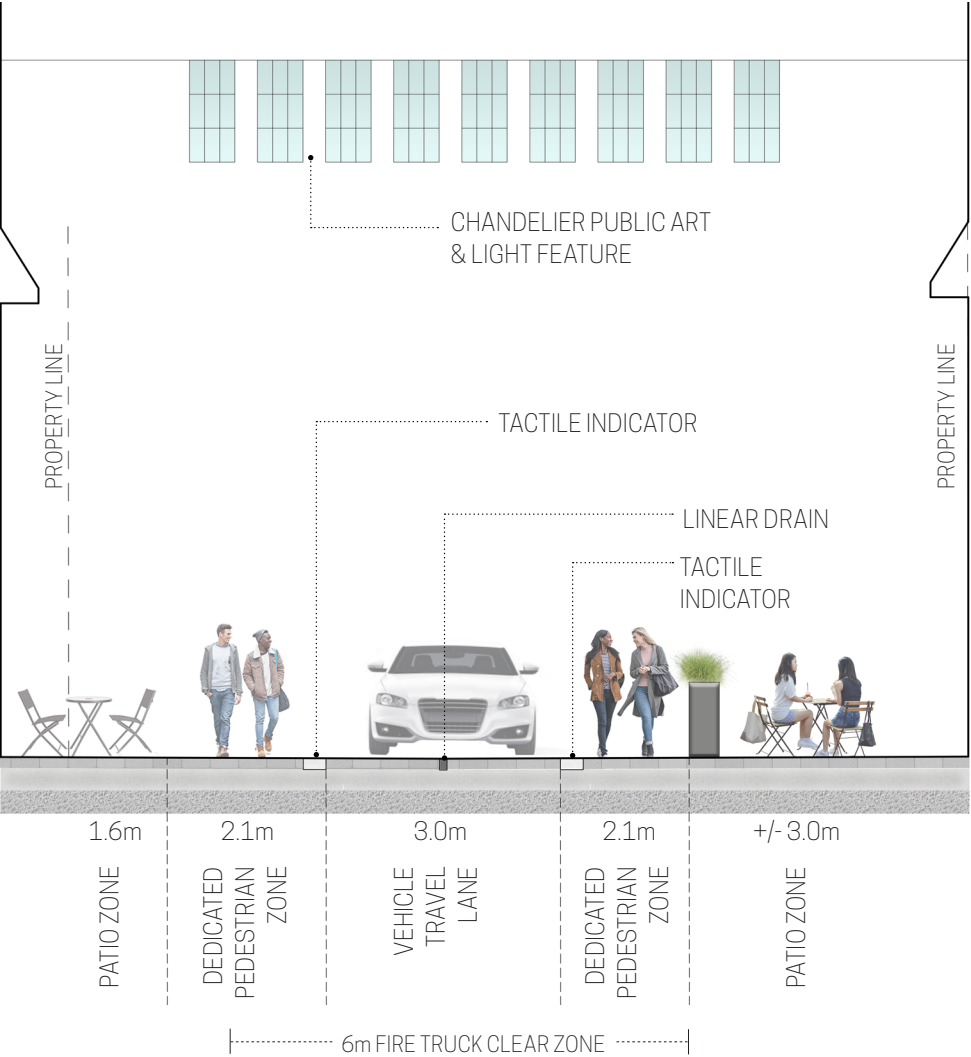


Fig 3.9 SYDNEY STREET PROPOSED CROSS SECTION



Fig 3.10 VIEW OF SYDNEY STREET ENTRANCE FROM QUEEN STREET



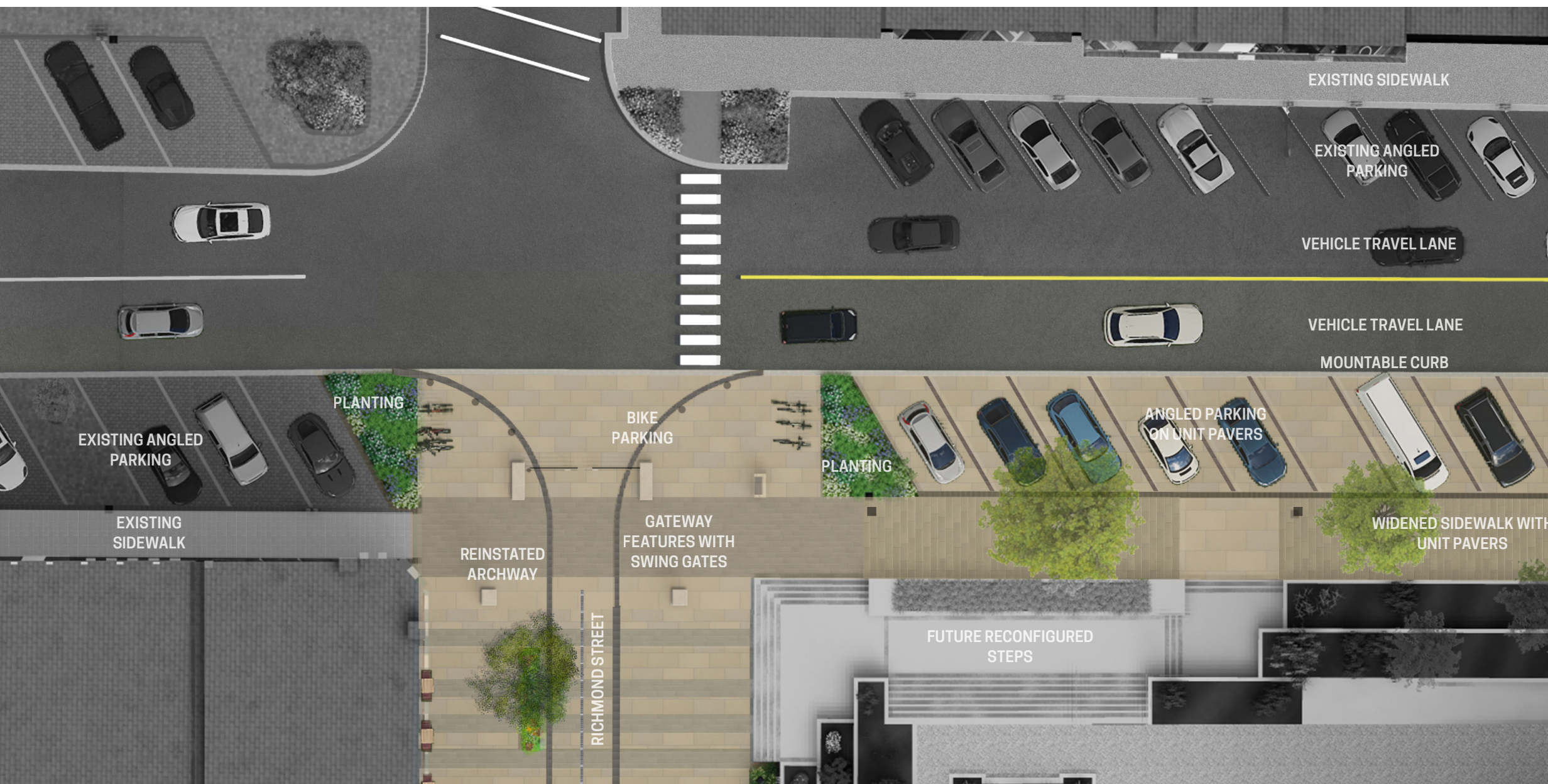


Fig 3.11 WINTER VIEW OF SYDNEY STREET LOOKING
TOWARDS GREAT GEORGE STREET





Fig 3.12 MID-BLOCK VIEW OF SYDNEY STREET LOOKING TOWARDS QUEEN STREET



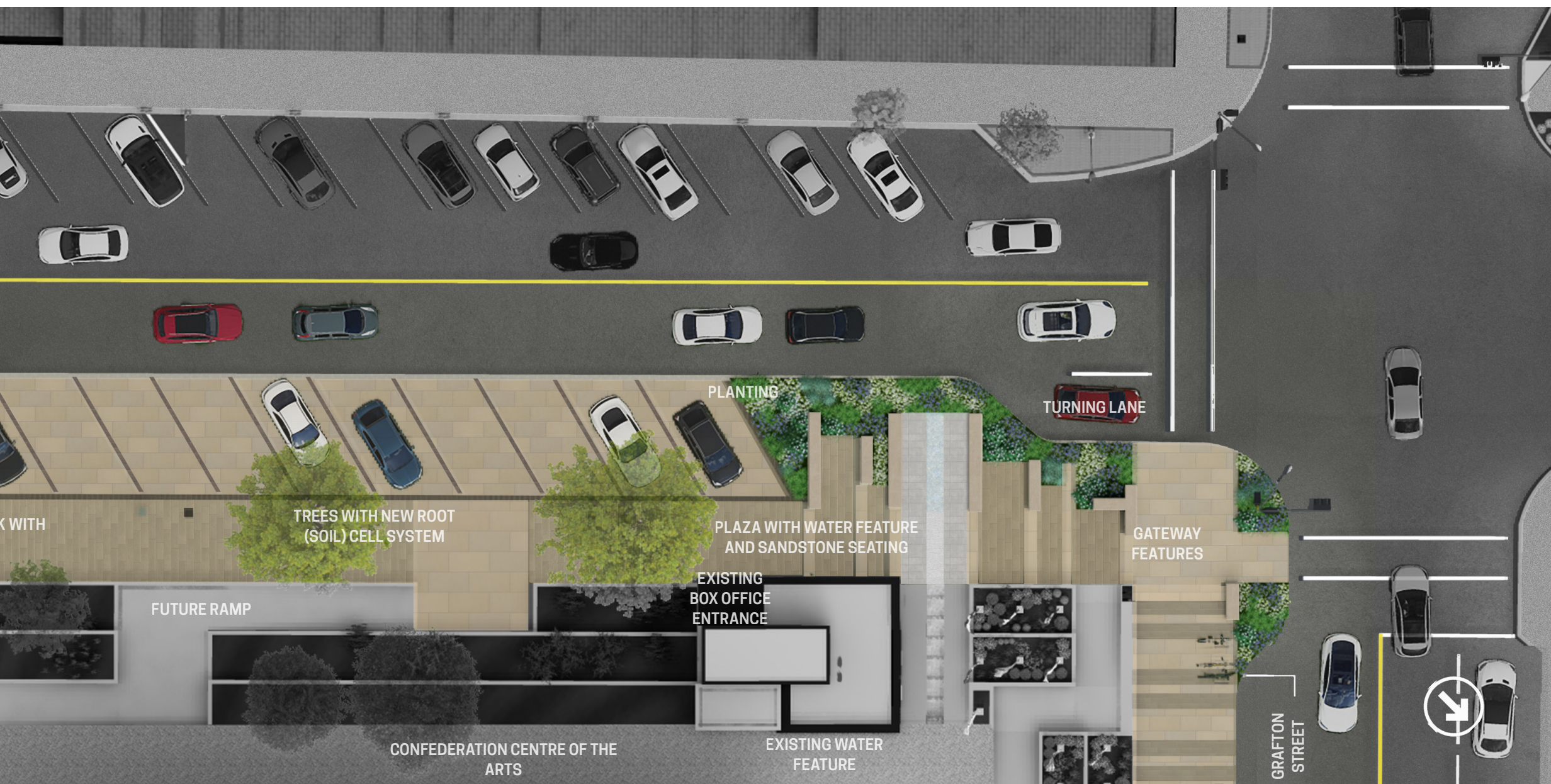
3.1.5 QUEEN STREET

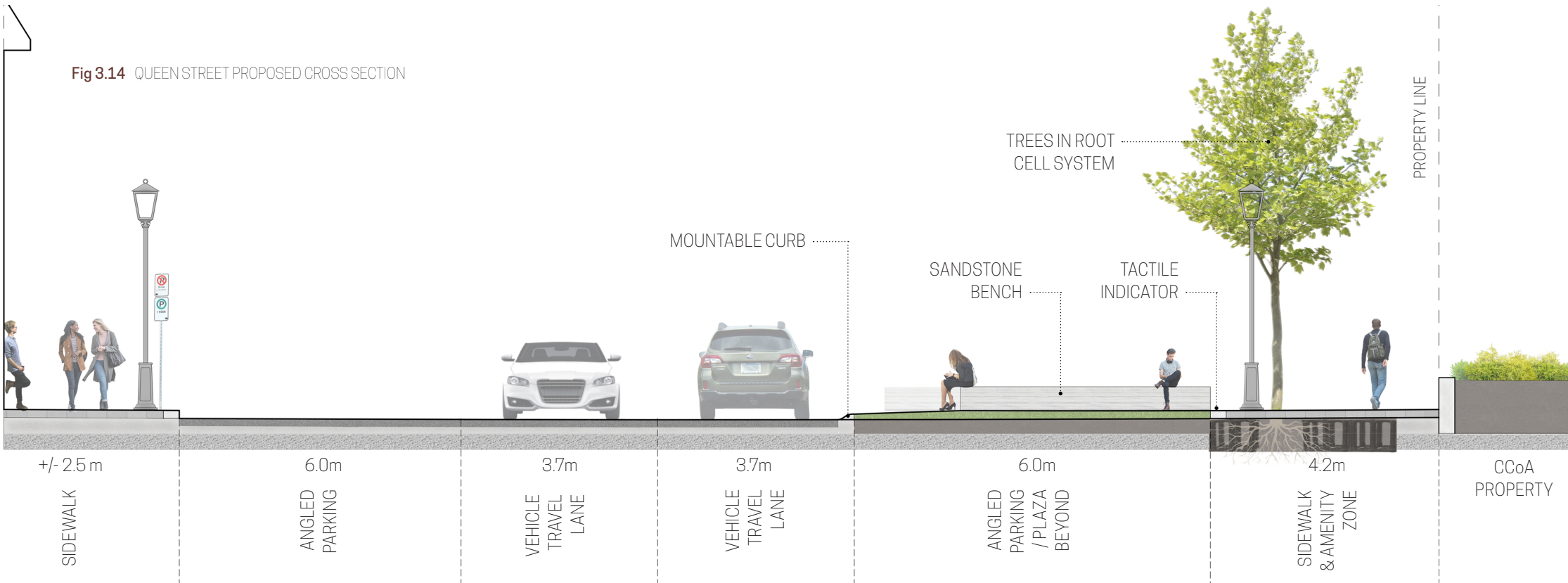
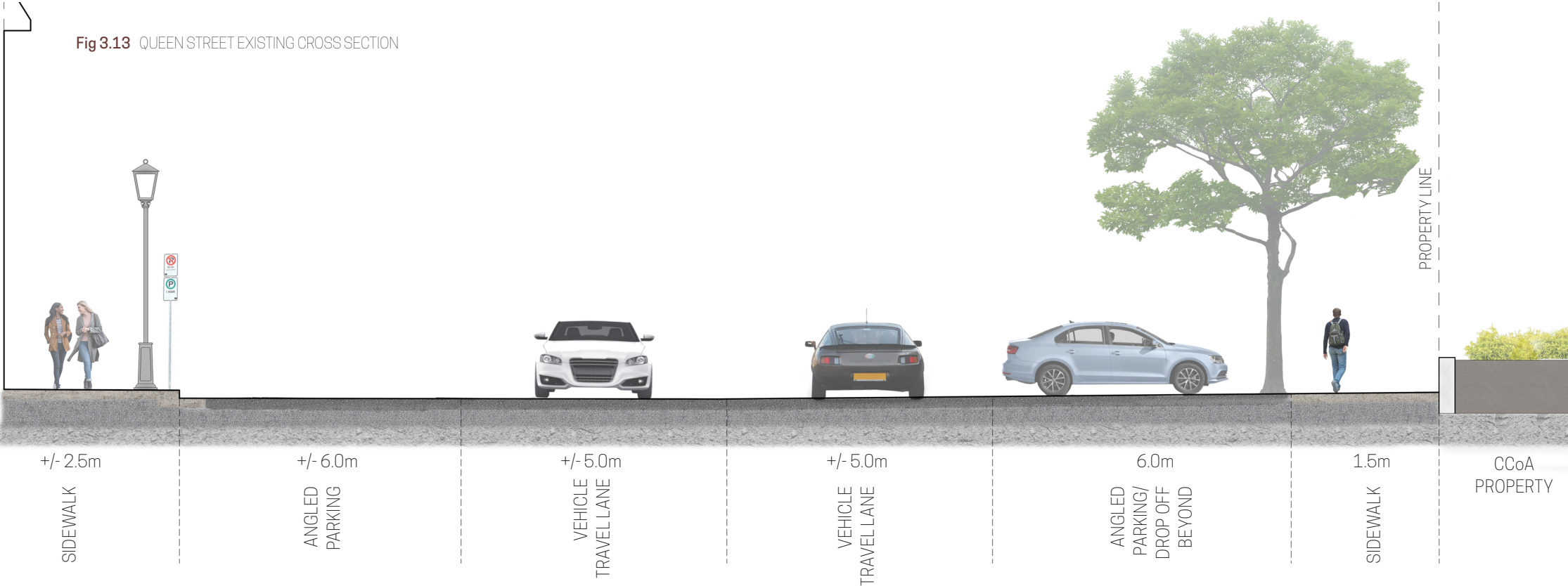
KEY FEATURES

- » Road cross section reconfigured with reduced vehicle travel lane width to allow for widened sidewalk
- » Maintains angled parking; located at sidewalk level separated from roadway by mountable curb in same manner as previous street improvements to the south

- » Sidewalk and parking area surfaced with unit pavers
- » New street trees planted in root (soil) cell system to foster the healthy growth of trees
- » Consideration for future Confederation Centre of the Arts improvements including new steps and ramp to podium terrace level
- » New signature plaza space at Grafton Street

- intersection; includes a water feature that extends the theme of the Confederation Centre of the Arts fountain into the public right-of-way
- » Consolidated and clearly defined bike parking areas
- » New ornamental light standards for enhanced pedestrian lighting that visually coordinate with existing light standards





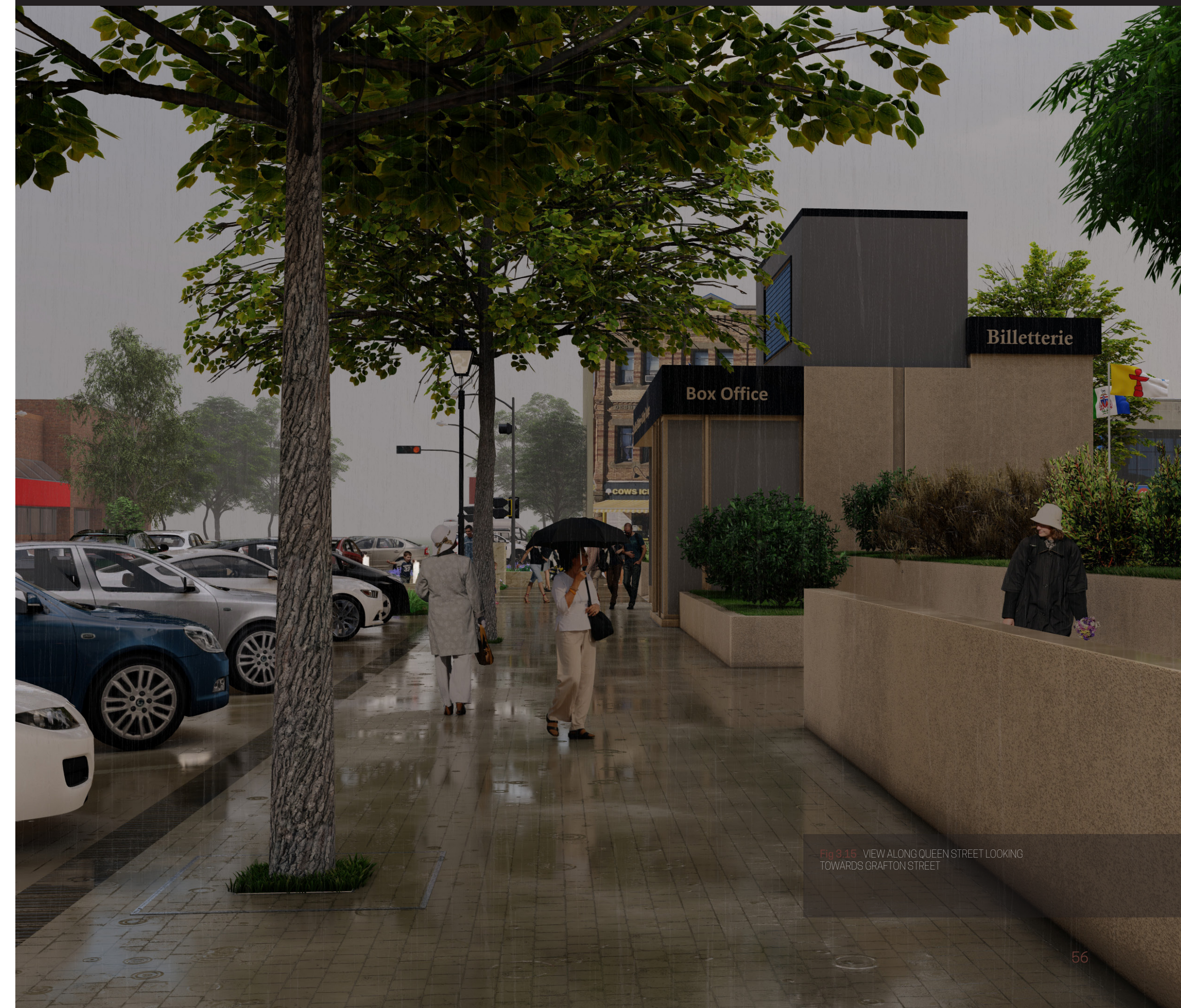
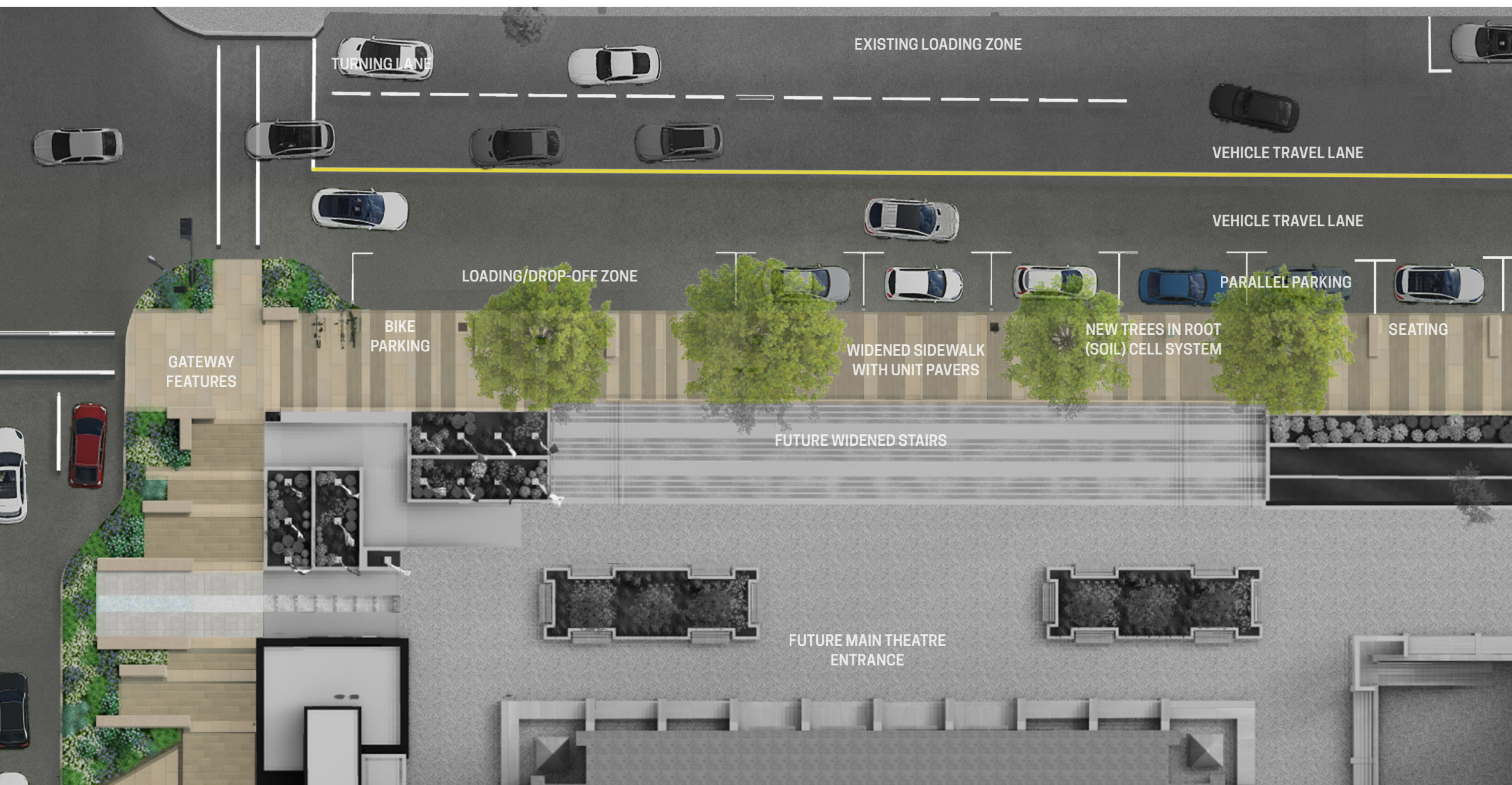


Fig 3.15 VIEW ALONG QUEEN STREET LOOKING
TOWARDS GRAFTON STREET





Fig 3.16 VIEW OF PLAZA WITH WATER FEATURE AT INTERSECTION OF QUEEN AND GRAFTON



3.1.6 GRAFTON STREET

KEY FEATURES

- » Road cross section reconfigured with parallel parking and loading to allow for widened sidewalk and additional space for Confederation Centre of the Arts main theatre spill-out; loading/drop-off zone relocated from Queen Street
- » Sidewalk surfaced with unit pavers

- » Bus stop relocated closer to University Ave; includes new shelter and seating
- » New street trees planted in root (soil) cell system to foster the healthy growth of trees and enhance opportunities for stormwater capture
- » Consideration for future Confederation Centre of the Arts improvements including steps up to podium terrace level to new main theatre

- entrance
- » Consolidated and clearly defined bicycle parking areas
- » New ornamental light standards for enhanced pedestrian lighting



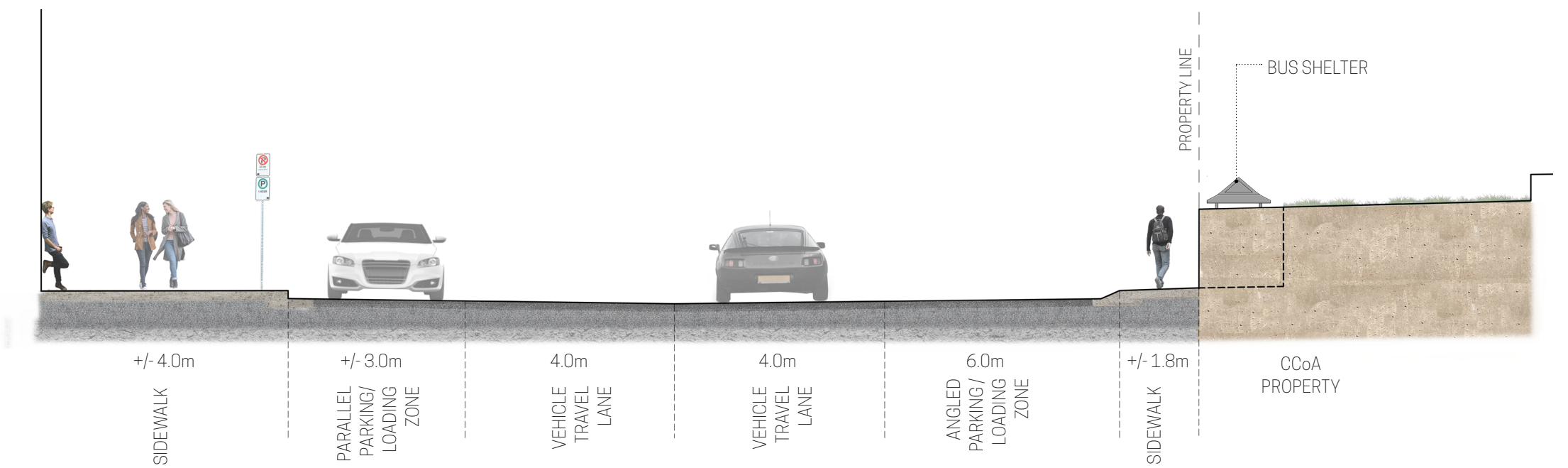


Fig 3.17 GRAFTON STREET EXISTING CROSS SECTION

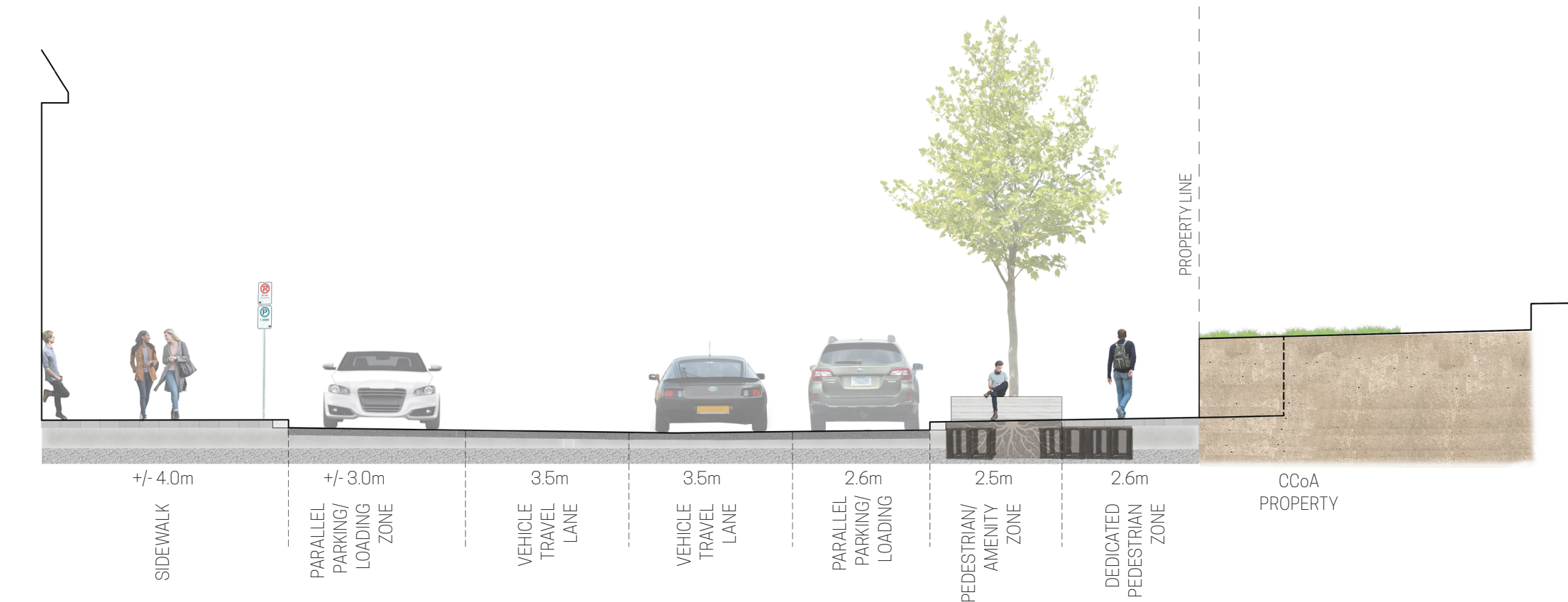


Fig 3.18 GRAFTON STREET PROPOSED CROSS SECTION



Fig 3.19 VIEW DOWN GRAFTON STREET FROM QUEEN STREET INTERSECTION



3.1.7 GREAT GEORGE STREET

KEY FEATURES

- » Curbless cross section with central linear drain to create level surface; creates one continuous and cohesive plaza between Province House and Richmond Street
- » Large, mature, transplanted trees planted with root (soil) cells system on west side of the street to balance the view corridor focusing on Province

- House
 - » Entire street repaved with concrete and stone unit pavers. Decorative banding reinforces the visual connection to Province House
 - » Normal operation is two-way vehicle traffic; option to close for festivals and events
 - » Maintains parallel parking when street is open to vehicle traffic

- » Interpretive walk introduced along Hartz-O'Halloran Row; illuminated benches interpret the names of lesser-known contributors to Canadian Confederation
- » New carriage ride waiting area with shelter and integrated gateway/wayfinding feature



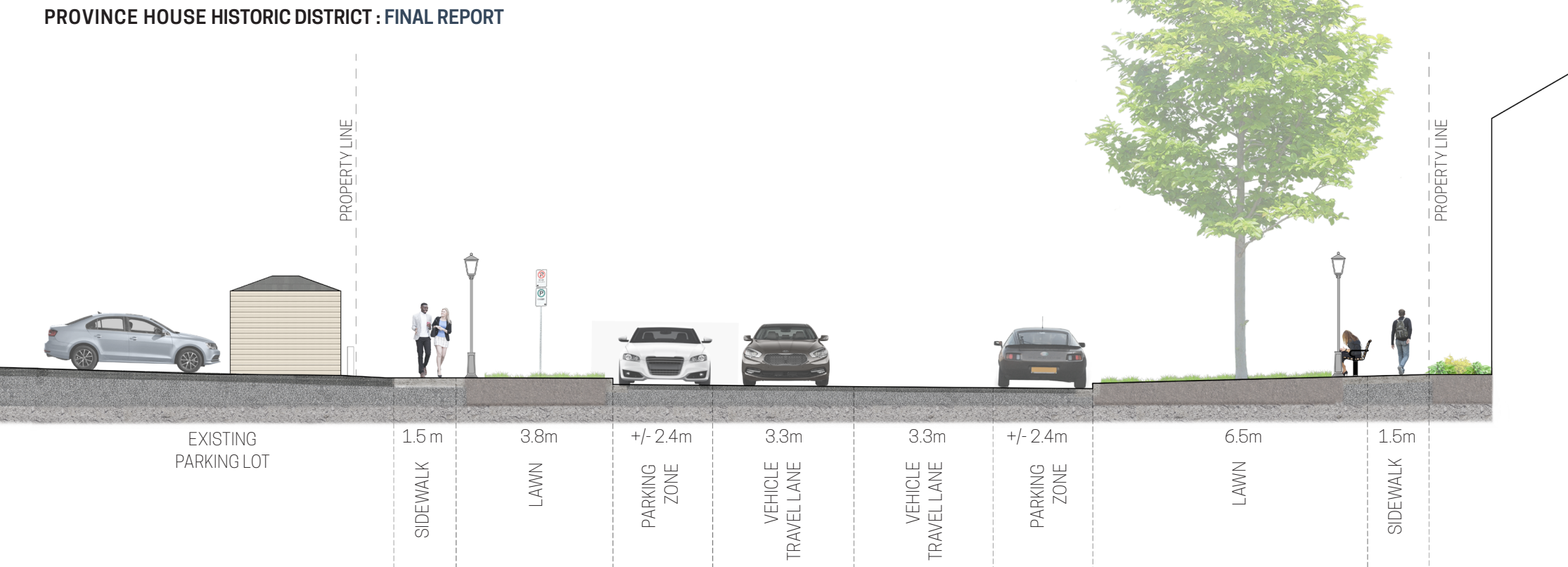


Fig 3.20 GREAT GEORGE STREET EXISTING CROSS SECTION

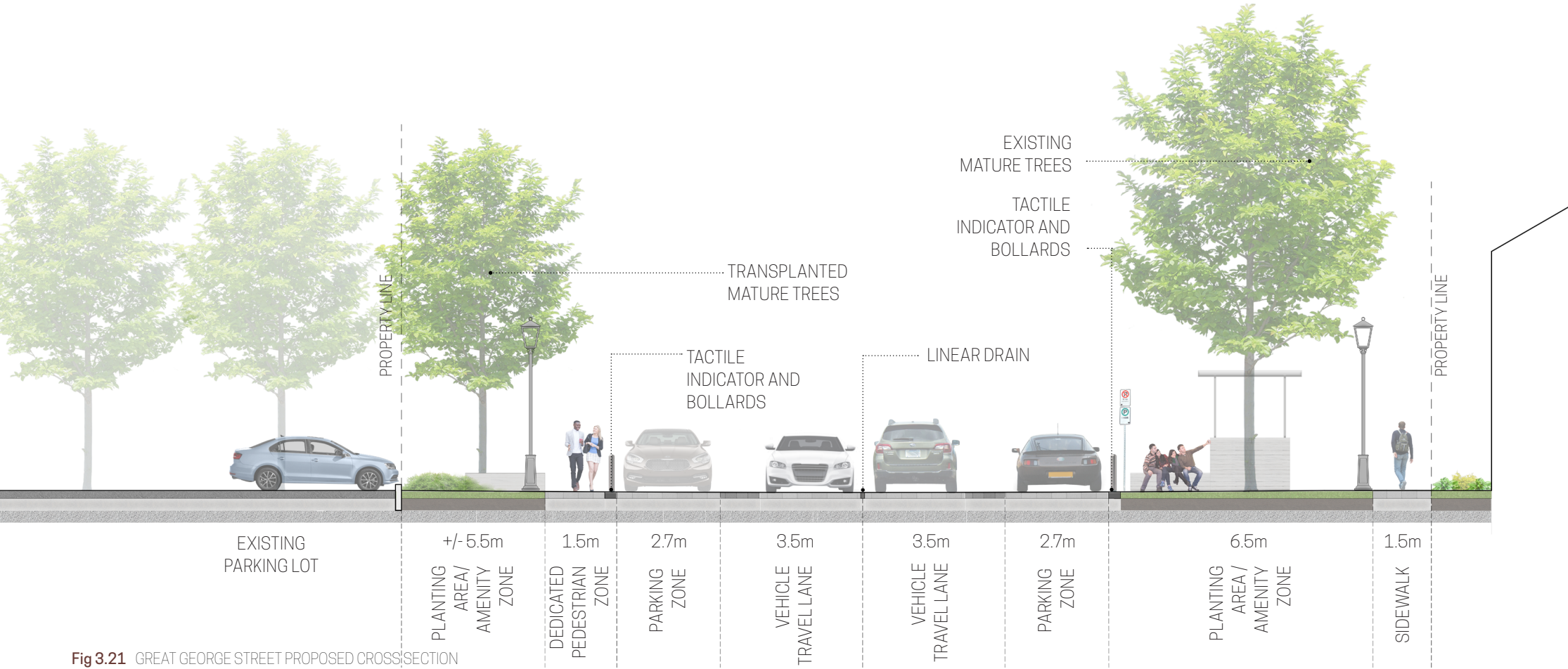
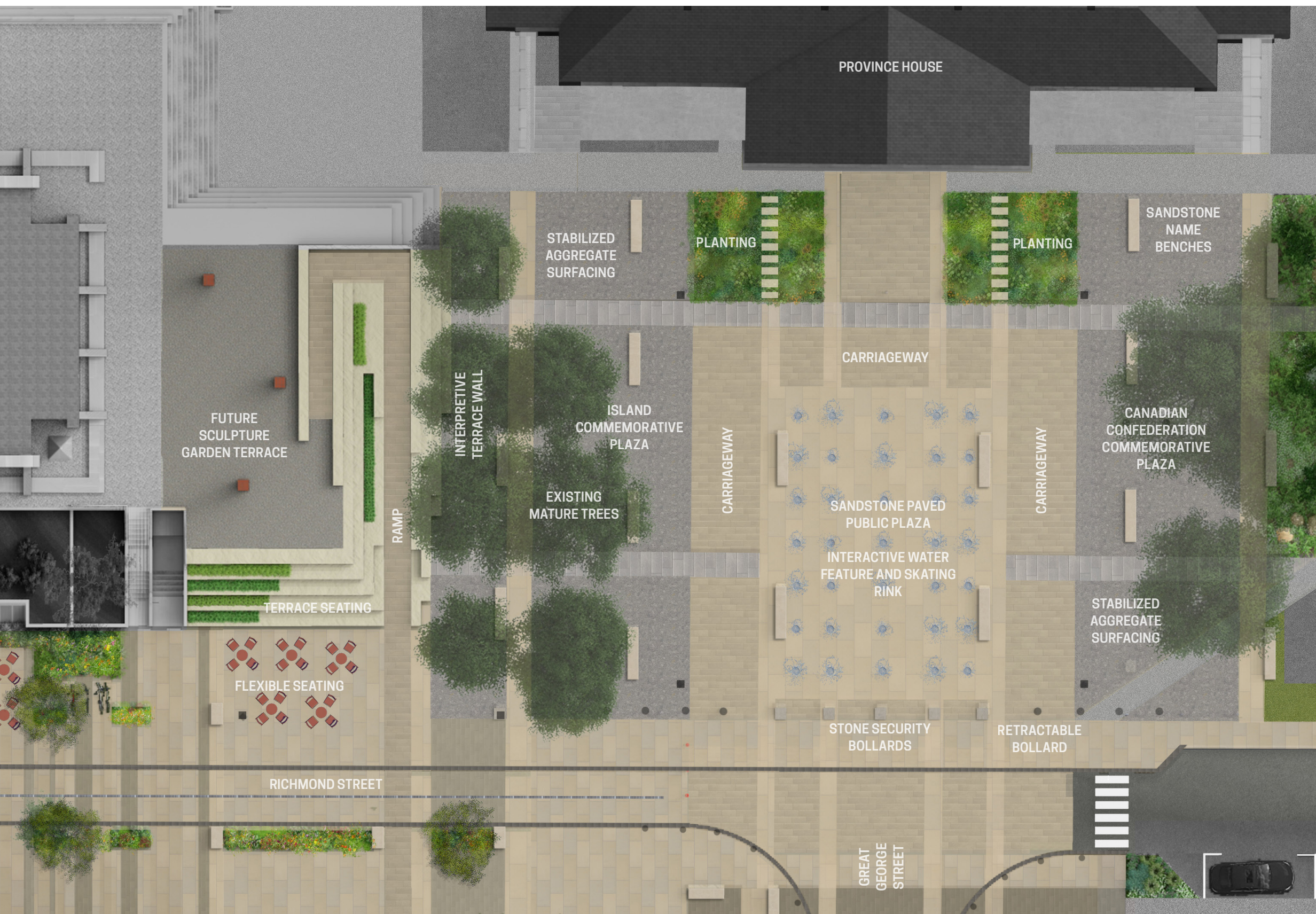


Fig 3.21 GREAT GEORGE STREET PROPOSED CROSS SECTION



Fig 3.22 VIEW DOWN GREAT GEORGE STREET TOWARDS PROVINCE HOUSE





KEY FEATURES

- » One continuous and cohesive public gathering space flush with Richmond and Great George Streets
- » Flexible, central plaza with interactive water feature with potential to double as a skating rink in winter months
- » Unobstructed, at-grade plaza allows for public gatherings and demonstrations while ensuring security by preventing unauthorized vehicular access
- » Flanking plazas surfaced with stabilized aggregate to prevent compaction to existing mature trees and demarcate spaces intended for more passive uses
- » Island Commemorative Plaza celebrates local citizens and groups who contributed to the development and culture of Charlottetown and the Province
- » Confederation Plaza compliments existing narratives of Canadian Confederation and honours women who were influential in these historic events
- » Universally accessible ramp access to Confederation Centre of the Arts upper podium level with integrated terraces provides amphitheatre-style public seating
- » Terraces include embedded commemorative and interpretive messaging to celebrate notable Islanders and citizens of Charlottetown
- » Acadian Forest ecosystem garden consisting of understory planting to complement existing mature trees
- » Formal carriageway maintained to allow processional events
- » Enhanced lighting for safety and security
- » Emergency vehicle access maintained to Province House

3.1.8 PROVINCE HOUSE AND CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS



Fig 3.23 VIEW OF PROVINCE HOUSE PLAZA FROM THE INTERSECTION OF GREAT GEORGE STREET AND RICHMOND STREET



Fig 3.24 NIGHT VIEW OF PROVINCE HOUSE PLAZA FROM THE INTERSECTION OF GREAT GEORGE STREET AND RICHMOND STREET



Fig 3.25 VIEW OF RICHMOND STREET, ISLANDER COMMEMORATIVE PLAZA AND THE CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS TERRACES FROM PROVINCE HOUSE PLAZA



Fig 3.26 NIGHT VIEW FROM PROVINCE HOUSE PLAZA OF RICHMOND STREET AND THE CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS TERRACES



Fig 3.27 VIEW OF THE ACADIAN FOREST GARDEN FROM THE CONFEDERATION
COMMEMORATIVE PLAZA



Fig 3.28 BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF PROVINCE HOUSE PLAZAS, GREAT GEORGE STREET, AND RICHMOND STREET



3.1.9 CHURCH, RICHMOND, & GRAFTON STREETS



Fig 3.29 VIEW OF GATEWAY FEATURES AT THE INTERSECTION OF RICHMOND STREET AND CHURCH STREET

KEY FEATURES

- » Gateway features and plazas to signal entry into the District and public spaces within the block
- » Sidewalks introduced along Church and Richmond Streets and widened on Grafton Street; unit paver treatment continued around the block to unify the visual identity of the District
- » Enhanced lighting
- » Numerous seating amenities introduced along sidewalks
- » Grafton Street transit shelter replaced to match central transit stop at University Avenue and to provide increased amenity and comfort for users



3.2 Material Palette

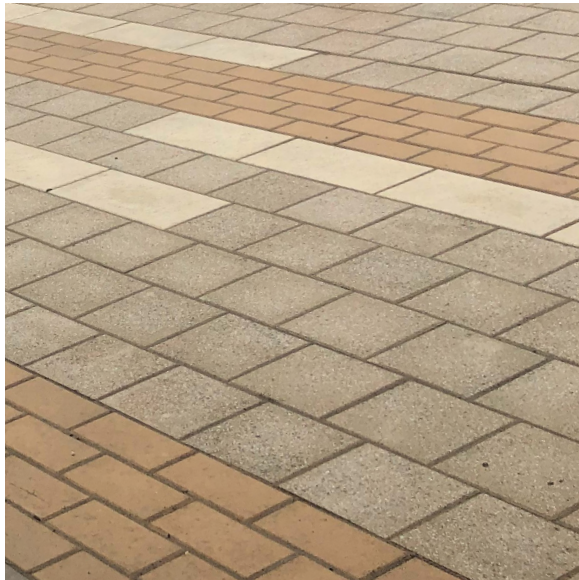
The proposed material palette for the conceptual design is grounded in existing materials present within the built environment of the District. The defining elements of stone, glass/glass-like materials, and black metals are integrated throughout to create visual harmony between proposed interventions and the surrounding historic buildings.

The ground plane is conceived of as a combined treatment consisting of both concrete unit pavers and stone unit pavers and tactile indicators. Concrete pavement treatments are both cost-effective and contemporary in appearance with the added benefit of easily accommodating different colour schemes. Stone unit pavers and tactile indicators serve as a sensory break within the ground plane that indicate spatial changes and demarcate pedestrian and vehicular zones. Stabilized aggregate is proposed for the central public

gathering space in order to create a clearly differentiated programmatic zone defined by a softened hardscape that invites rest and relaxation.

Sandstone is the dominant architectural material for both the Confederation Centre of the Arts and Province House, and it is strongly evocative of the Island's distinctive geology. The design proposes to include sandstone site amenities to visually align with the existing architectural context as well as the natural environment of the site's surroundings.

The proposed use of both glass/glass-like plastics and black metallic materials is directly inspired by the historic buildings in the District as well as the distinctive Victoria Row archway. Both glass and black metals are timeless materials that can be easily integrated into the context of the Victorian architecture of the District while simultaneously introducing a refined and contemporary aesthetic.



Concrete Unit Pavers



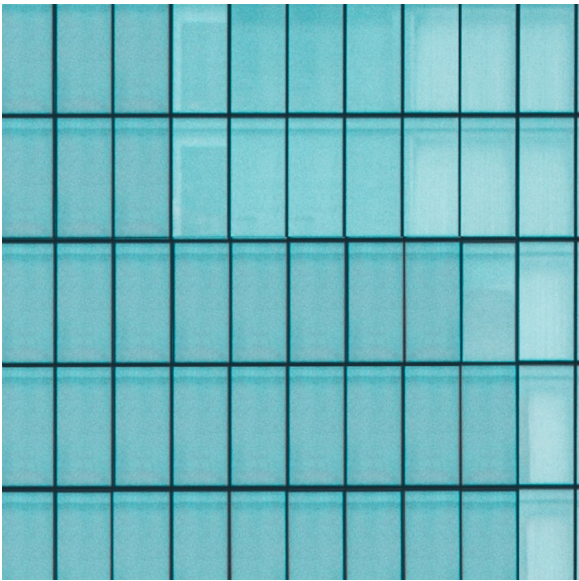
Stone Feature and Tactile Pavers



Stabilized Aggregate Seating Area



Sandstone Features



Glass/Acrylic



Black Metal

Recommended Amenities



Custom Sandstone Waste Receptacle



Sandstone Bench with Integrated Light



Sandstone Bench with Mounted Seat Top



Sandstone Bench



Solid Bicycle Parking: Streetlife



Castle Tree Grate: Green Blue Urban



Talia Light Bollard: Flos



Bistro Style Table and Chairs: Maglin Kontour Collection



Custom Safety Bollard: Nelson Industrial



Ashbery Area Light: Landscape Forms

3.3 Site Furnishings

The recommended site furnishings prioritize durability, usability and visual integration into the existing built environment. The proposed amenities also align with the material palette and the spatial and functional constraints within the District.

Custom sandstone amenities are proposed to incorporate the design vocabulary into the site and to introduce a variety of multi-functional seating, lighting, signage and waste receptacles. By creating custom furnishings and distributing them throughout the site, the District's identity is easily established and signalled to users of the site.

Flexible seating in Island-inspired earth tones is proposed as a programmatic alternative that allows for self-directed gathering and spontaneous activities within the public realm. Expanded bicycle parking is introduced throughout the District to encourage active transportation to the area and accommodate increased cycling activity in the downtown core.

Additional furnishings such as tree grates, lighting, and safety bollards perform essential functions to ensure the design is practical and operational in the long-term. Given the need for increased safety throughout the District as well as the constraints of maintaining its historic identity, the recommended amenities are proposed as a method to successfully introduce contemporary furnishings that do not detract from the visual character of the area.

3.4 Planting Palette

The recommended planting palette for the design prioritizes natural woodland and coastal species wherever appropriate for the site conditions. Native plants often have the best survival rates since they are adapted to the specific climatic conditions of their growing context, and they also provide abundant opportunities for education and habitat creation.

Species such as lady fern, bunchberry, and red twig dogwood represent naturally occurring elements within the Island's old-growth Acadian forest plant communities. They are well-suited for shaded areas of the site and can be used to establish a highly appealing understory beneath existing mature trees.

Native grasses, such as Canada blue joint, are proposed wherever appropriate to contribute a strong sensory and textural interest within the District. The inclusion of these species helps to expand the urban habitat for local wildlife and provide year-round structure and visual appeal. Associated species, such as white bergamot, are proposed to create pollinator habitat and expand ecological health within the District.

Non-invasive, introduced species are proposed in areas across the District wherever they are better positioned to successfully thrive given the constraints of urban environments including soil compaction and salt exposure. These species, such as the katsura tree, will improve visual interest within the District and will withstand the hardships of growing within the streetscape.

In accordance with Charlottetown's tree protection bylaw, all proposed tree species are identified as being in keeping with existing vegetation in the District and are typically disease-free. American lindens are proposed as well-suited complements to existing mature trees within designated heritage sites, including Great George Street.



01. American linden



02. katsura



03. red maple



04. red oak



05. lady fern



06. bunchberry



07. chokeberry



08. red twig dogwood



09. false Solomon's seal



10. astilbe



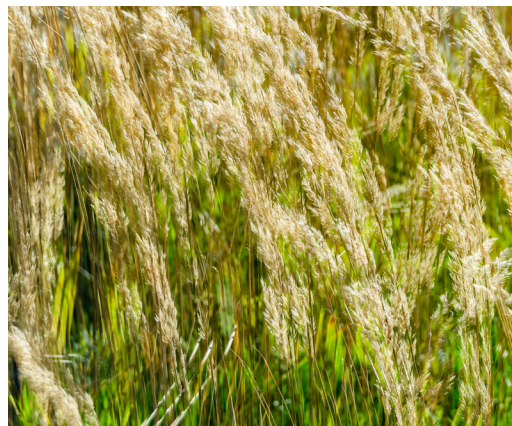
11. white bergamot



12. Japanese spurge



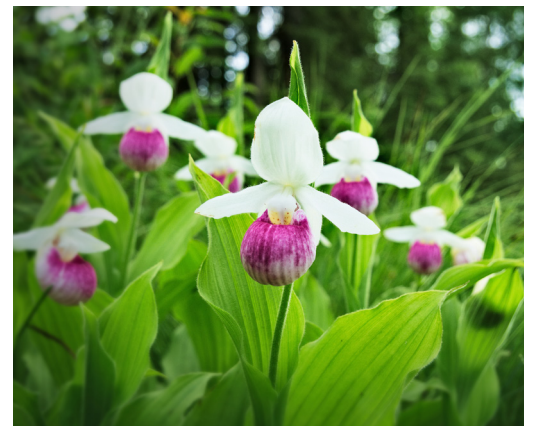
13. blue zinger sedge



14. Canada blue joint



15. sweetgrass



16. common lady slipper

04 Implementation

4.1 Business Considerations

For all street improvement projects, it is imperative to keep the businesses operating during construction. Projects should be purposefully designed to maintain access to existing businesses at all times during construction. It is anticipated that any phase of this project would take 4–5 months of construction. A successful example of balancing street construction with business needs is Argyle Street in Halifax, Nova Scotia. There is a strong need to create a campaign that is operational during construction to encourage locals and tourists to be aware of the process and to continue to support local businesses. A portion of the construction budget should be allocated to a directed marketing strategy for impacted businesses during construction. If the City and businesses work together closely, the short term pain should be minimized, leading to long term benefits for businesses on the street.

4.2 Costing

The conceptual plan has been separated into seven project areas for the purposes of generating preliminary Class D cost estimates. The project boundaries have been determined based on feasibility of construction activities within a single construction season, which limits disruption to businesses and activity in the area and aids with coordinating adjacent ongoing or future construction projects at Province House and the Confederation Centre of the Arts.

Other factors, such as funding sources and budget timing, may also influence the size and scope of the individual projects. A 30% construction contingency should be carried until the projects progresses through the Schematic Design and Design Development phases, which will provide more certainty for pricing.

Fig 4.1 Class D Cost Estimates

Item	Description	Richmond Street	Sydney Street	Queen Street	Grafton Street	Great George Street	Province House	Church/Richmond/ Grafton West
1	Water System	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 19,000	\$ 5,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 28,500
2	Stormwater System	\$ 268,950	\$ 156,250	\$ 20,570	\$ 66,250	\$ 94,580	\$ 59,070	\$ 25,340
3	Hardscape	\$ 842,500	\$ 711,490	\$ 220,320	\$ 326,770	\$ 393,410	\$ 793,890	\$ 200,580
4	Furniture & Fixtures	\$ 223,400	\$ 171,200	\$ 54,350	\$ 87,150	\$ 53,500	\$ 93,800	\$ 207,400
5	Landscaping	\$ 260,650	\$ 27,650	\$ 78,750	\$ 104,100	\$ 32,680	\$ 56,050	\$ 21,630
6	Electrical	\$ 104,500	\$ 87,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 36,000	\$ 137,250	\$ 192,750
7	Miscellaneous	\$ 60,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 99,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
8	Water Feature			\$ 40,000			\$ 200,000	
9	Stage	\$ 32,000						
	Construction Total	\$ 1,801,500	\$ 1,218,090	\$ 545,490	\$ 776,270	\$ 660,670	\$ 1,404,560	\$ 731,200
	Construction Contingency (30%)	\$ 540,450.00	\$ 365,427.00	\$ 163,647.00	\$ 232,881.00	\$ 198,201.00	\$ 421,368.00	\$ 219,360.00
	Total with Contingency	\$ 2,341,950.00	\$ 1,583,517.00	\$ 709,137.00	\$ 1,009,151.00	\$ 858,871.00	\$ 1,825,928.00	\$ 950,560.00
	Design & CA Services (17%)	\$ 398,130.00	\$ 269,200.00	\$ 120,550.00	\$ 171,560.00	\$ 146,010.00	\$ 310,410.00	\$ 161,600.00
	Grand Total	\$ 2,740,080	\$ 1,852,717	\$ 829,687	\$ 1,180,711	\$ 1,004,881	\$ 2,136,338	\$ 1,112,160
Total Project Costs		\$ 10,856,574						

- Notes:
- 1. HST not included in unit prices and totals as indicated
 - 2. Unit prices are in 2021 dollars and do not reflect inflation
 - 3. All items include demolition, removals, and adjustment of existing infrastructure
 - 4. All items include traffic control, construction mitigation, and contractor mobilization
 - 5. Cost estimate does not include replacement of water service or sewer line laterals to adjacent buildings

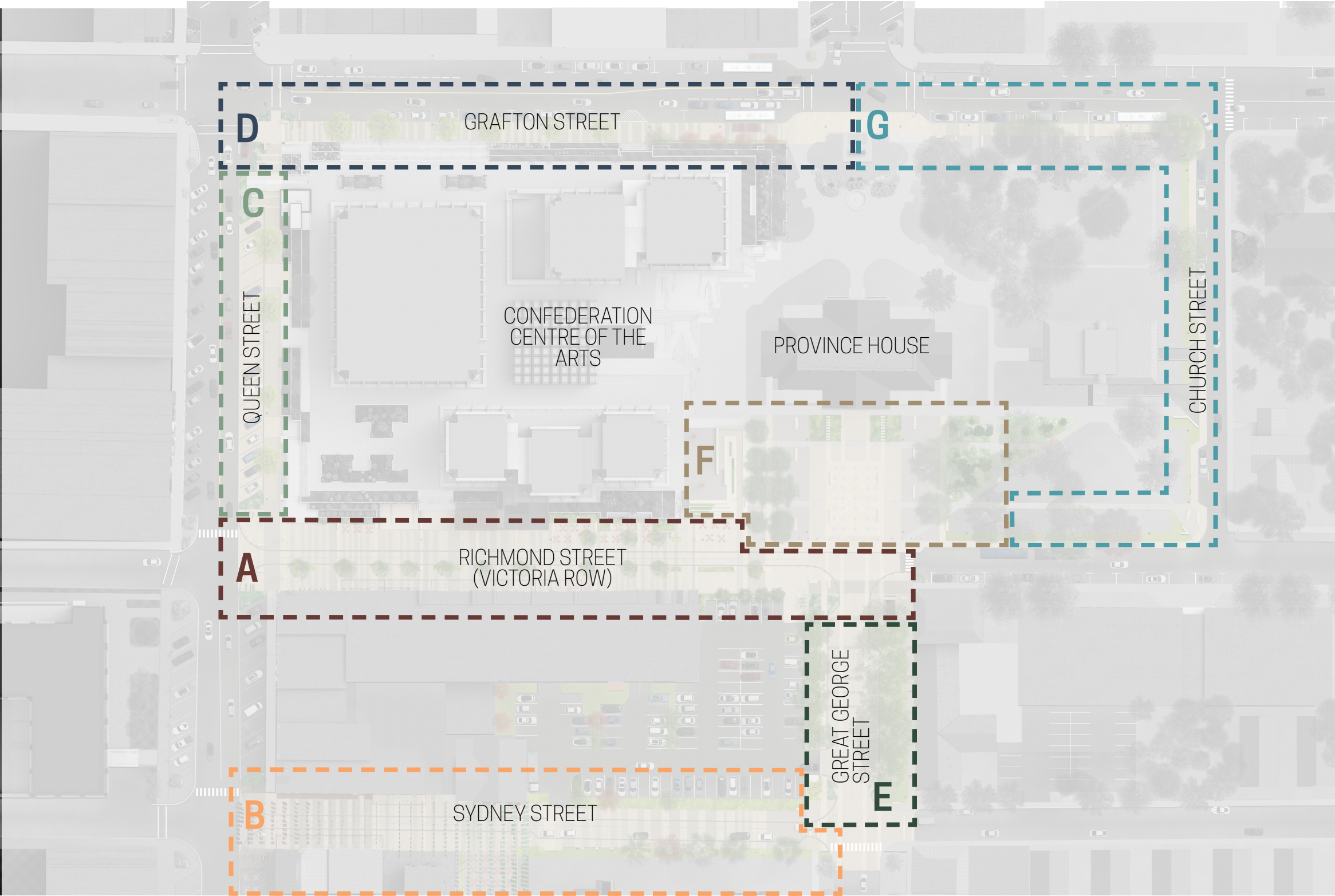


Fig 4.2 PROPOSED DIVISION OF PROJECT AREA FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.3 Next Steps

The conceptual plan represents the first step in the process to revitalize the streetscapes of Province House Historic District. To ensure the design vision is successfully implemented, it is essential that the proper steps are taken to continue an open dialogue with key stakeholders in the area, including the City, the community, and property and business owners. Cooperation amongst all interested parties will be vital to progressing the design into working drawings and ultimately phased construction.

Next steps for the project include:

- » Consult with stakeholders and funding agencies to refine the scope of work, define boundaries and responsibilities for the various components of the plan, and establish the phasing for implementation
- » Retain a branding and interpretive planning & design firm to more fully develop the brand for the District (Queens Square District? The District, etc.) and the interpretive content more fully.
- » CADC may wish to consider completing a feasibility study to model the payback for the investment for this project. The Argyle Street and Spring Garden Road projects fully modelled the economic impact of the proposed changes before budgets were allocated. We have provided CADC with a copy of that report prepared by GroupATN for HRM.
- » Secure funding for development of detailed design and class A cost estimates
- » Enlist landscape architects and engineers to develop schematic designs for all or parts of the District moving to Class B or C cost estimates.
- » Acquire accurate final survey for the District including property boundaries.
- » Undertake a geotechnical study of the area needed for eventual road design.
- » Develop working drawings and class A cost estimates for the refined scope of work
- » Continue public engagement and coordinate with the City

and individual property owners within the District throughout the entire process

Further refinement of the design will depend upon careful, detailed analysis of existing site conditions including existing infrastructure, grading and drainage, vegetation, utilities, and heritage designated properties. CADC will need to continue to work closely with the City on the engineering, heritage and urban forest components of this project.

The final steps in the project will include:

- » Issue final drawings for tender and enlisting professional construction contractors to implement the design
- » Award construction contract
- » Retain project management to oversee the construction process and ensure the design intent is met

4.4 Conclusion

The conceptual plan and accompanying materials presented in this report represent a collective vision for how Province House Historic District may be successfully transformed into a thriving, vibrant public realm that celebrates the unique heritage and culture of both Charlottetown and Prince Edward Island. The intent of this report is to guide ongoing discussions to establish a definite path forward to enacting strategic changes to the public realm. This report is NOT the definitive final plan for the District. It advances the shared vision for the District but will require additional levels of detail and involvement with the various stakeholders.

The District is well-positioned to solidify its position as the economic and cultural hub within the City. With proper wayfinding, connectivity, and improved site amenities the area will undoubtedly attract increased visitation and economic activity in the coming years. The District's incomparable heritage and entertainment assets ensure that people will continue to find inspiration and joy in the area. Now is the critical time to think innovatively and ambitiously to revitalize shared public spaces and ensure a secure and bright future for the area as a cherished community resource and world-class destination.

05 Appendices

