

Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

# Final Vision Report

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# Introduction

The Town of Qualicum Beach has positioned itself as a culturally-rich and vibrant community. Within the heart of the Town is an eleven acre area comprised of two sites, known locally as the “Bus Garage Property” and “Qualicum Commons”. The current site includes a community garden, parking lot, art centre, former elementary school turned community services hub, and a largely underutilized open field. Widening the scope of observation shows that the location within the larger community of Qualicum Beach makes this land a significant community asset with many opportunities. This site has the ability to become a focal point for community development in the coming years, increasing the quality of life for residents, extending the vibrant community core, and increasing the Town’s appeal to visitors and new residents alike.

This report acknowledges that the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage lands exist on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples and particularly the unceded territory of the Qualicum First Nation.

## The question now is, what could this site become?

In September 2019, the Town of Qualicum Beach and Vancouver Island University’s Master of Community Planning program began a process to develop a vision for how the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage lands could be better utilized for community benefit. Public consultation kicked off in the Fall with an open house and a community survey. A World Café and subsequent design charrettes with stakeholders and youth explored in depth design ideas and discussion. After draft vision concepts were prepared, a second open house on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 was held to invite feedback from the community.

The resulting Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage Vision Report includes three key products. Firstly, a comprehensive contextual analysis of the site that summarises relevant policies, land use, environmental considerations, existing form and character of the neighbourhood and circulation. Additionally, the report provides a summary of the extensive community consultation that took place

from October 2019 to March 2020, which informed two site visions. Finally, the two visions outline relative land uses supported by the community and a distribution of amenities on the site to best realize beneficial synergies, address existing site shortfalls and optimize the opportunities the lands provide.

This process of community dialogue and the resultant final document gives the landowners, the Town and School District 69, the opportunity to consider comprehensive redevelopment options of the site. If development is advanced on these lands, this report provides vision and guiding principles to help inform decisions on future development of these lands.

This document presents two different visions, with a focus on explaining principles and illustrating concepts, rather than providing details.

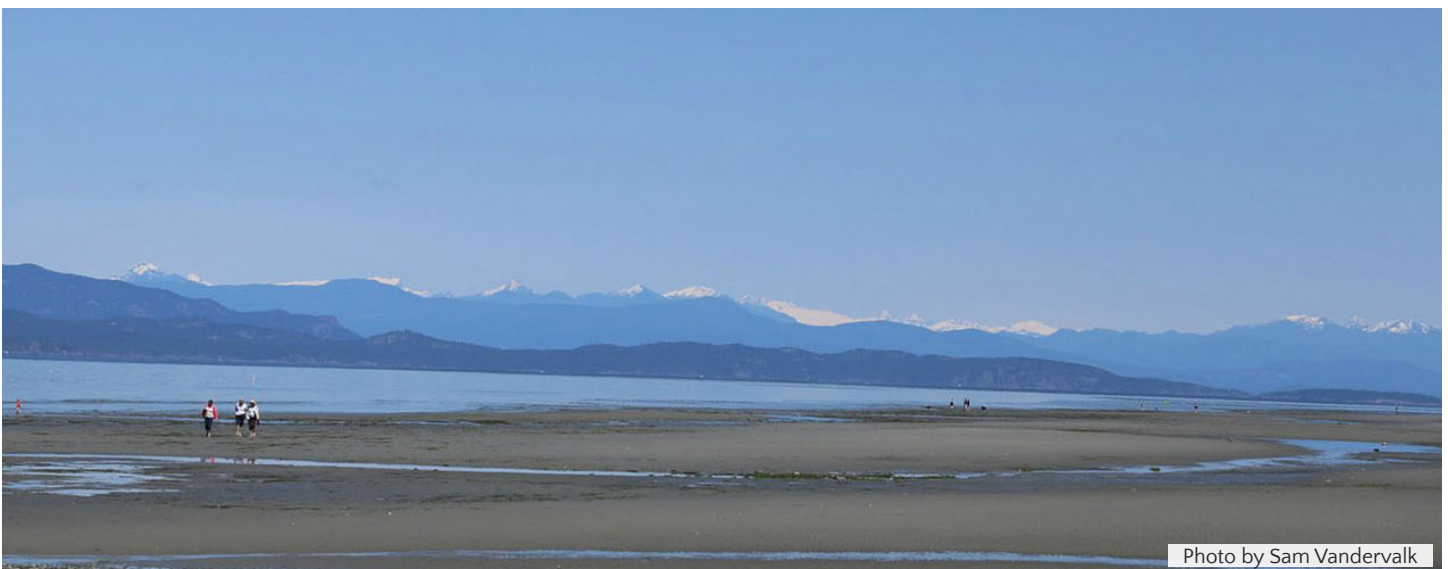


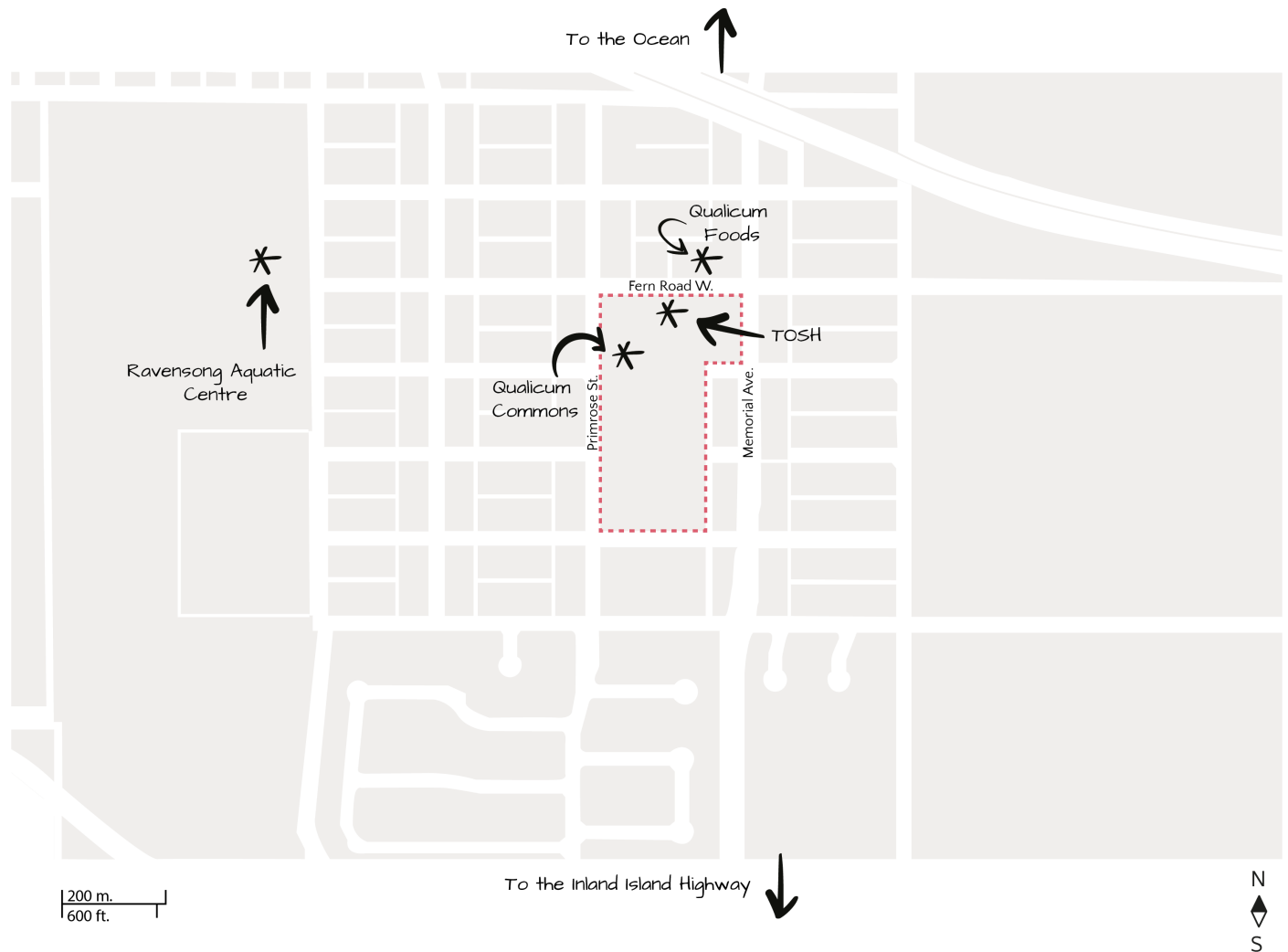
Photo by Sam Vandervalk



# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Map Orientation

All maps in the report are oriented with north at the top of the map. The below map shows some key landmarks to provide site context.



# Project Process Overview

To develop the visions for the site, an extensive context analysis was carried out as well as a number of consultation events. Below is an overview of the process.



# Context Analysis

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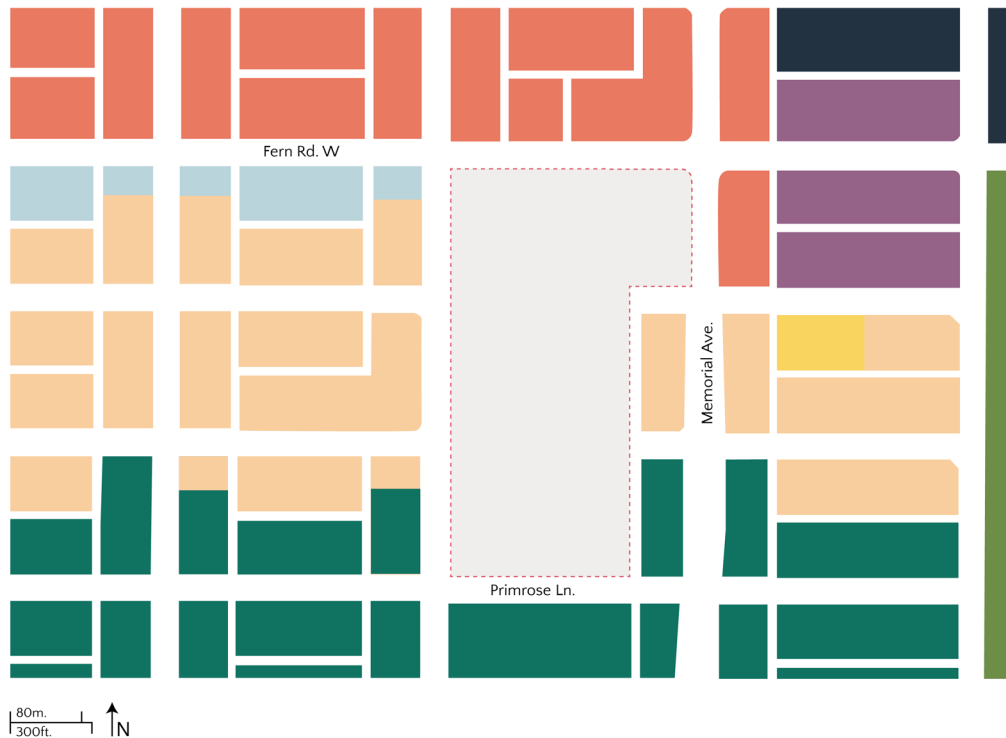
Appendix

# Ch. 2





# Map 1: OCP Policy Context Analysis



Map not to scale

## Map Legend

<span style="color: red;">■</span> • Commercial Residential	<span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> • Mixed Residential 1	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> • Light Industrial	<span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> • East Village
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> • Mixed Residential 2	<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> • Transitional Commercial Residential	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> • Institutional	<span style="color: green;">■</span> • Rural

This map shows the Official Community Plan land use designations and permitted densities of the surrounding area. The Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage lands are located within a mixed use and compact core, generally characterized by single family homes to the south and mixed use commercial to the north.

**Commercial Residential** – This land designation permits commercial uses and accessory residential uses, with a maximum density of up to 110 units per hectare.

**Mixed Residential 2** – Permits a maximum density of up to 80 units per hectare.

**Mixed Residential 1** – Permits a maximum density of up to 60 units per hectare, with slightly larger setbacks and more landscaping than Mixed Residential 2.

**Transitional Commercial Residential** – This land use designation permits flexibility: commercial, residential or a combination of the two. Maximum density is 80 units per hectare.

**Light Industrial** – Industrial uses with accessory residential to a maximum density of 20 units per hectare.

**Institutional** – The Institutional designation includes publicly owned land, with uses that complement the private business and residential uses in the area and are part of a complete, compact community.

**East Village** – Parcels within this designation are intended for comprehensive redevelopment with a maximum density of 80 units per hectare.

**Rural** – Indicates land outside of the Village Neighbourhood core area.

# Map 2: Figure Ground Analysis



Map not to scale

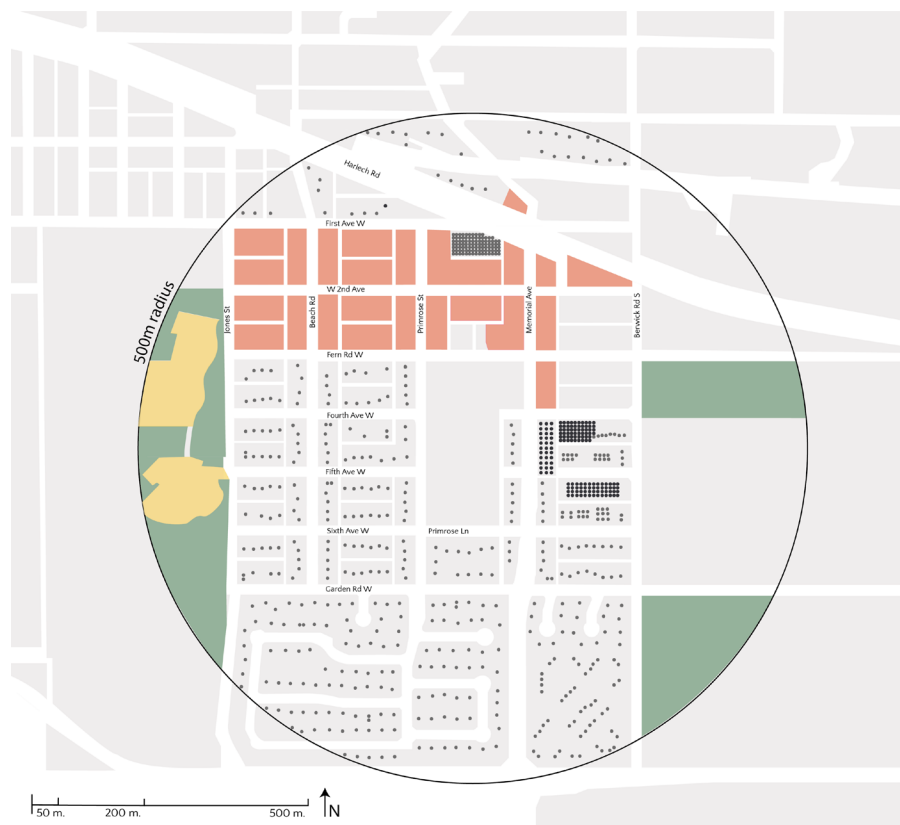
## Map Legend

■ Building Footprint

The Figure Ground Analysis reveals a strong grid pattern with a typical neighbourhood block measuring 186 x 96 metres. The commercial area along Fern Road follows a perimeter block pattern, with buildings located on the periphery and parking situated at the rear. The newer residential development along Memorial Lane follows a new pattern with buildings maximizing site coverage. This contrasts with historical residential lots, with smaller homes and more open yard areas. South of the site, within the Garden Road West subdivision, the grid network is abandoned in favour of winding roads and cul de sacs.



# Map 3: Density Analysis



## Map Legend

- Commercial Amenities
- Recreational Amenities
- Greenspace
- One Dwelling Unit

This map shows the relative density of residences in relation to commercial, recreational and green space within a 500 metre radius. 500 metres is the distance at which people choose to walk versus driving a vehicle, and is a relevant factor in defining a community as “walkable” and “mixed use”.

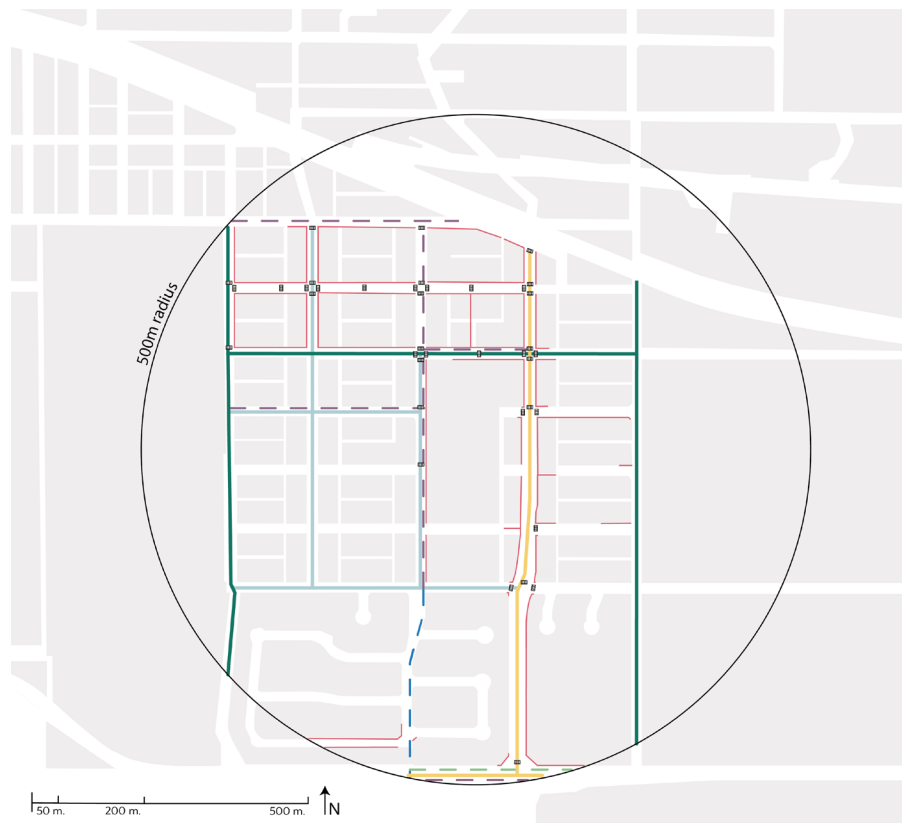
Within the 500 metre radius surrounding the subject site, there are approximately 711 dwelling units, out of a total of 4644 private dwelling units in the town. With an average household of 2 people per dwelling unit, there are an estimated 1,400 people that live within the 500 metre radius. The total town density is 497 people per square kilometer.

The uptown area of Qualicum Beach is primarily a commercial zone with secondary residential use. The majority of two-storey commercial buildings appear to have residential units on the second floor, suggesting several properties are “mixed use”. These units have not been included on the density analysis map.

According to the 2016 Census, Qualicum Beach has a population of 8943 residents and a median age of 66 years old. The community has the oldest average population in Canada at 60 years old. Over half of the population (5170 people) are not in the labour force.

**Note:** There are several seniors residences within the 500 metre radius surrounding Qualicum Commons.

# Map 4: Circulation Analysis



## Map Legend

- Arterial Road
- Minor Collector Road
- Sidewalks and Bikeway
- Multi-Use Path
- Major Collector Road
- Sidewalks
- Bikeway

### Roadway Circulation

The site is accessible by a personal vehicle and public transit buses. To the west of the site is the town's primary arterial roadway on Memorial Ave., which transitions into Highway 4 and provides access to the Island Highway (Highway 19). Fern Rd., a major collector road, borders the north side of the site, and there is a grid network of minor collector roads nearing the site.

### Active Transportation

The community's flat topography and availability of active transportation infrastructure offers ideal conditions for walking and cycling to the site. Qualicum Commons is also accessible via sidewalks, bikeways, and multi-use paths. Bikeways are not on every street in the surrounding area, but there are direct bike routes bordering the site.

# Map 5: Land-use Mix Analysis



## Map Legend

<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> · Residential	<span style="color: red;">■</span> · Commercial	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> · Industrial
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> · Institutional	<span style="color: green;">■</span> · Recreational	<span style="color: olive;">■</span> · Rural/Agricultural

- |                         |                            |                                   |                         |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ① Qualicum Commons Site | ③ Qualicum Civic Centre    | ⑤ Eagle Park Health Care Facility | ⑦ Town Office & Library |
| ② Qualicum Foods        | ④ Ravensong Aquatic Centre | ⑥ Qualicum Beach Community Hall   |                         |

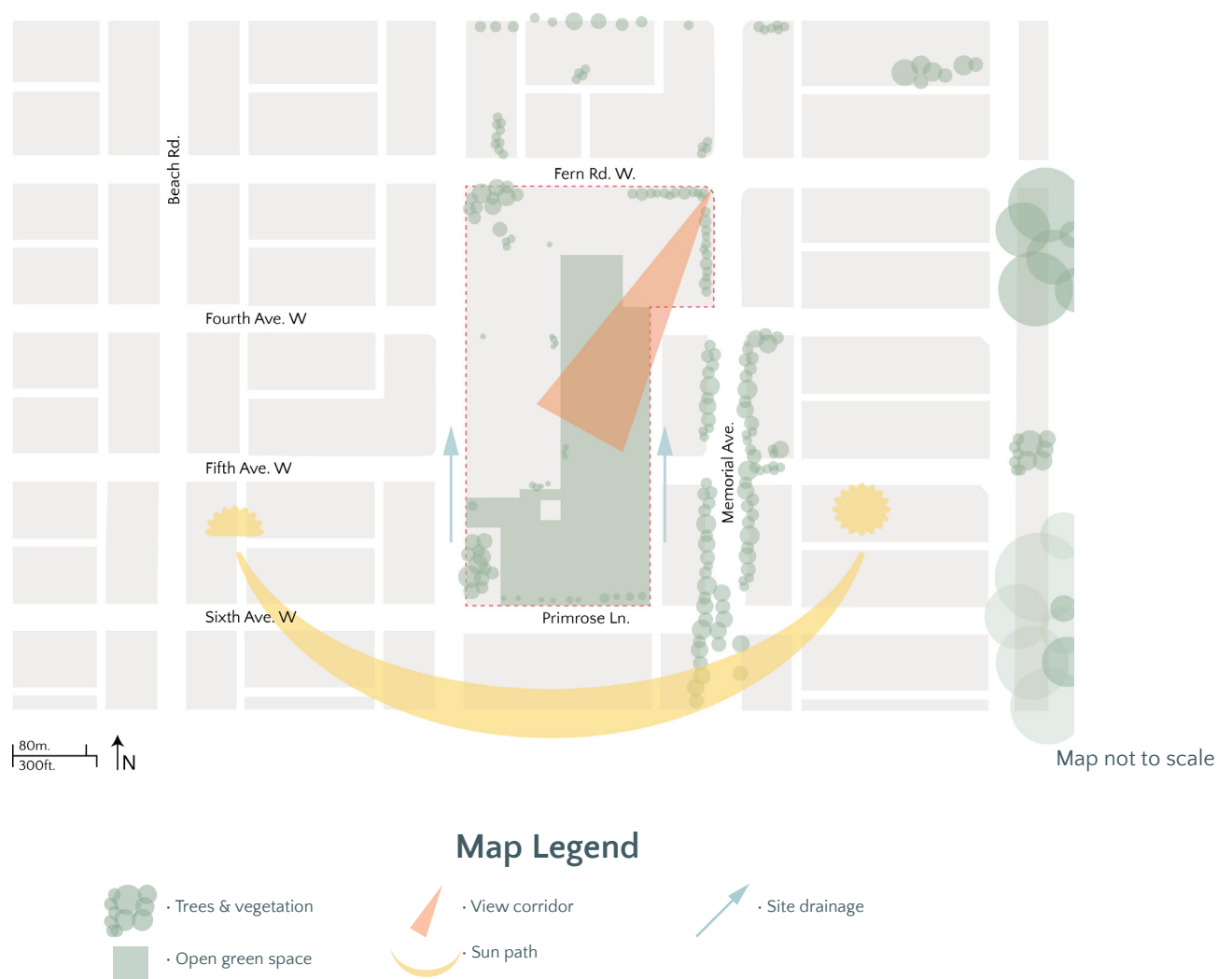
The Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site is situated at the confluence of residential and commercial areas in the community's core. The commercial area bordering the site to the north is primarily occupied by retail and service establishments, and extends two blocks north to First Ave. W. Residential areas border much of the site to the east, west, and south.

This map illustrates the many key landmarks that are in close proximity to the site. Qualicum Foods, the Town's office, and library are located

in the commercial core. The community hall, which hosts a number of seasonal and year-round events, is located approx. 400 metres north of the site. To the west of the site, beyond Jones St., lie a number of key amenities. The Ravensong Aquatic Centre and Qualicum Beach Civic Centre offer recreational opportunities and community programming for residents, and the Eagle Park Health Care facility offers around-the-clock nursing and personal care.



# Map 6: Environmental Analysis



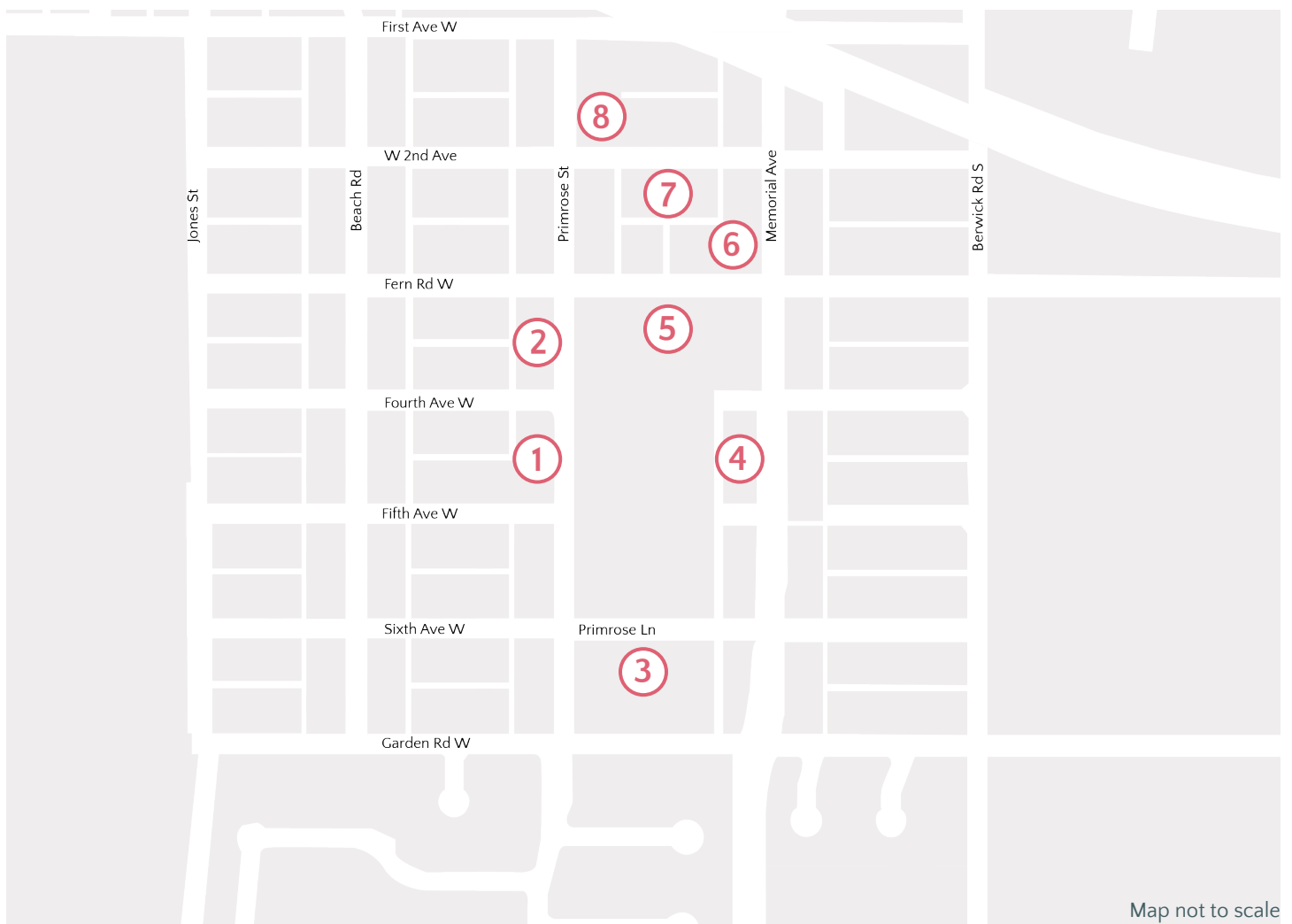
This map illustrates the environmental analysis of the site, including sun exposure, slope, vegetation and natural areas.

The site has been previously developed, and does not contain any untouched natural assets. Clusters of trees are found in the northwestern and southwest corners of the site. The southern border of the site is lined with intermittent trees. Aside from these identified areas, the majority of the unbuilt portions of the site consist of a gently sloping grass field.

A view corridor to Mt. Arrowsmith is indicated on this map by an orange cone. The sun's path, shown by the yellow arc, identifies the sun's movement over the course of the day. The blue arrows show the direction of water/drainage flow from high to low points of the site.

Parking and paved areas account for 40% of the site. Buildings account for 10%, grass 45%, and trees 5%. All percentages are approximate.

# Map 7: Character Evaluation



The Town of Qualicum Beach is a small town with a charming character. Development within the commercial core follows the Qualicum Beach OCP Village Design Guidelines which ensure buildings continue to uphold, embody and express the historic village feel of Qualicum Beach.

The majority of buildings surrounding the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site are one- to two-storey residential buildings, typically with pitched roofs. To the north of the commercial core, the new Berwick retirement home is a 5-6 storey building. Adjacent to Berwick is the Qualicum Beach Library and Town Municipal Office,

which occupy a 3-4 storey building. These are the tallest buildings within the town's commercial core.

It is apparent that several key public buildings hold historical significance. A portion of the area north of the Qualicum Commons, east of Primrose St, is considered a historic main street. The area retains a number of historical buildings styles from previous decades, including The Old School House Arts Centre (TOSH) and the Qualicum Beach Chamber of Commerce (formally the Thrall Residence). These two buildings are listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP) and lie within this area.



1

### Primrose St.

- Residential
- Built in 1988
- Single storey



5

### TOSH,

122 Fern Rd. W.

- Constructed in 1915
- Reopened as arts centre in 1988
- Canadian historic place register
- 2-storey building
- Ornate, Classical Revival style



2

### Primrose St.

- Residential
- Built in 1975
- Single storey



6

### Qualicum Foods,

705 Memorial Ave.

- Commercial
- Opened in 2003
- Stucco and wood
- Sloped rooflines
- Simple ornamentation



3

### Primrose Ln.

- Residential
- Built in 1989
- Single storey
- Strata



7

### Thrall Residence,

124 W 2nd Ave.

- Chamber of Commerce
- Constructed in 1933
- Acquired by the Town in 1990
- One-storey Craftsman style
- Earthtone colours



4

### Memorial Ave.

- Residential
- Built in late 2000s
- Sloped roof form
- Landscaping



8

### Heaven on Earth Natural Foods,

149 W 2nd Ave.

- Commercial
- Built in 1998
- Ground level store fronts
- Recessed entries
- Two storey

# Consultation Summary

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# Ch. 3



# Consultation Summary, Overview

This section provides an overview of the public engagement events held between October 2019 and March 2020. Detailed summaries of each event follow in the subsequent pages.



## Open House I October 2019

On October 24<sup>th</sup> 2019, 103 people attended Open House I. In this open format event, community members circulated a room at the Qualicum Commons to learn about the project and give preliminary input. 12 poster boards explained the project and invited feedback in the first stage of developing a vision.



## Survey October 2019

A survey provided an additional way for the community to be involved and provide feedback.



## World Café October 2019

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 18 members of the public participated in a World Café. This was an evening of intentional conversation to help shape the vision for a redeveloped community core for the Town.



## Charrette Nov. & Dec. 2019

A charrette is a visioning exercise where participants work together to brainstorm and sketch out ideas, to come up with a broad diversity of collaborative plans or designs.

### Community Stakeholders

A charrette was held with community stakeholders on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019. 19 people participated, creating five detailed site maps outlining their collective vision for the site.

### Youth

A charrette was held with youth on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at Kwalikum Secondary School. 51 students participated, creating 73 site maps outlining their vision for the site.



## Open House II March 2020

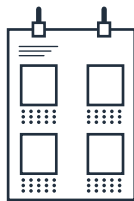
On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020, approximately 250 people attended Open House II. In this open format event, community members circulated the room at Qualicum Beach Civic Centre to view and provide feedback on initial concept plans.



# Open House I

## Precedent Images

Two poster boards were dedicated to giving community members the opportunity to vote on images that could be applied at the Qualicum Commons site. The images were not meant to show what was currently there, but rather to help envision what could be. 227 votes were cast for images that best reflected the community's preferred uses and ideas for the site. Four themes were identified.



227  
votes



45 votes for all weather **entertainment and cultural spaces** for theatre, performing arts and events.



40 votes for **gathering places to socialize** and take part in activities, such as community gardens and outdoor patios.



16 votes for **walkable and green park spaces** with landscaped, naturalized drainage.



14 votes for **housing** for current residents and future people moving to the town.



## OCP Policy

Three of the poster boards summarized Official Community Plan policy and asked the community to prioritize the various OCP policies that apply broadly to the site. Six hundred forty six votes were cast.



646  
votes

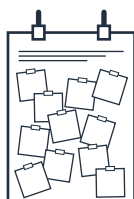
The top six potential uses listed in the OCP were:

1. Retain TOSH
2. Parks
3. Movie Theater
4. Neighbourhood pub
5. Performing Arts Centre
6. Residential Above Ground

Of the Eight Sustainability Principles listed in the OCP, Healthy Communities and Landscapes, and Sustainable Infrastructure such as green buildings and food systems were the top principles the community would like to see.

## Site Vision

Two of the poster boards asked people to write their own ideas and opinions on sticky notes, based on broad topic headings: Strengths, Opportunities, and Vision.



91  
post-its

### Strength



Location

### Opportunity



Gathering

### Vision



Culture & entertainment  
56 Post-its



Housing  
18 Post-its

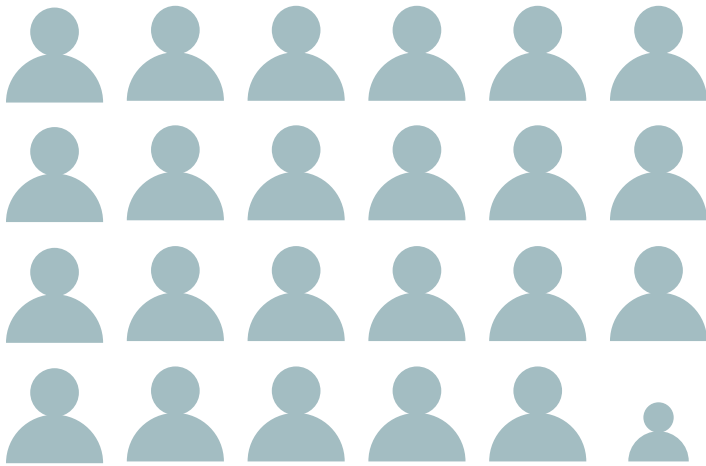


Greenspace  
16 Post-its

# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## World Café

The World Café attracted 18 participants, including one youth, to discuss 6 different table topics: culture, parks and open spaces, housing, seniors and aging in place, alternative transportation and a wild card (the wild card topic was chosen by the members at the table).



The most dominant aspiration for a redeveloped site was a place for multi generation community gathering, similarly to how the existing school building provides a space for young and old to gather and create.

The second most popular idea was parks and open spaces creating places to pause and people-watch in a natural setting.

The third most dominant idea was housing, including cooperative and affordable housing, with a preferred height of 2 to 3 storeys.

A preliminary and low budget set of actions to improve the site was discussed and generated these ideas:

1. Landscaping
2. Removal of the perimeter fencing
3. Add seating



# Charrette: Community Stakeholders

On November 25<sup>th</sup> 2019, 19 community stakeholders gathered for a three hour long design charrette. The final five maps produced at each table were analyzed by the project team. Important site features and ideal uses were noted, as well as the location of both throughout the site.

From the maps, the ideas for suggested uses on the site were grouped into the following categories: green spaces (including parks and gardens), housing (all types from single unit to apartments, market to affordable), gathering spaces (such as recreation facilities and restaurants), services (medical facilities and institutional uses), and existing features from the site that stakeholders valued and wanted to see retained (parking, TOSH, etc).

- Cross site pedestrian connections to access and utilize the greenspace.
- Intergenerational uses.

## Unique Ideas

- Open air market
- Indigenous elements
- Carving shed
- Wilderness maze
- Outdoor chess



Green space, illustrated 19 times

Services, illustrated 13 times



Gathering spaces, illustrated 11 times

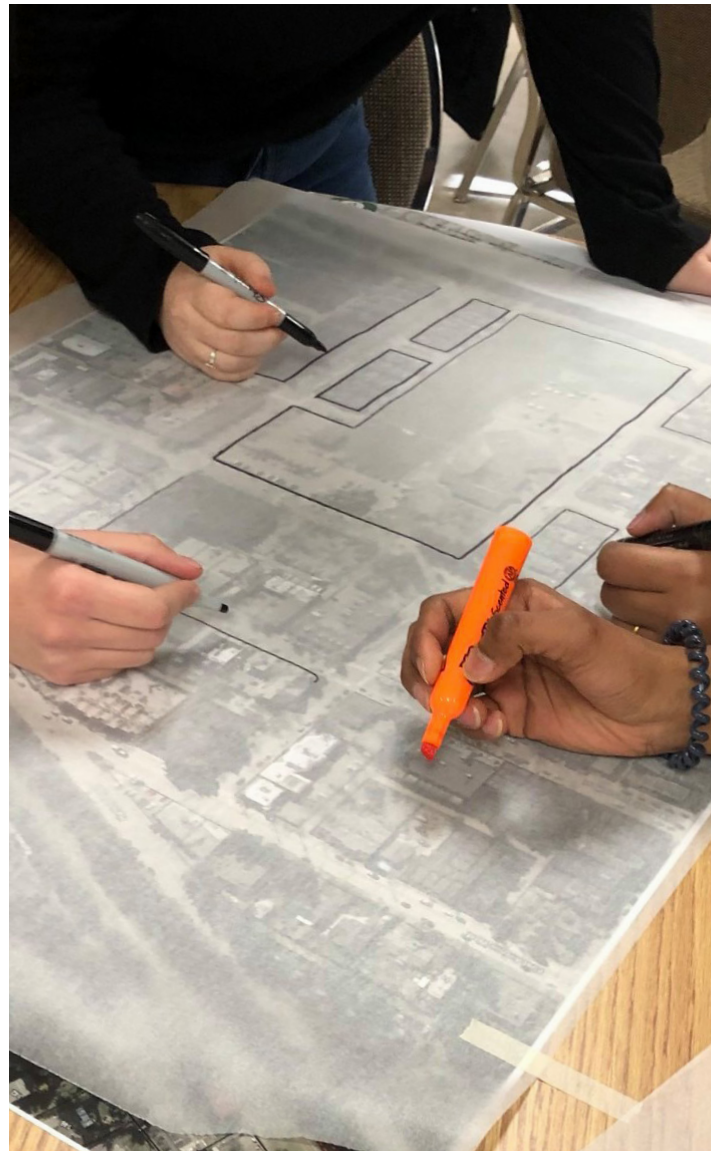
Existing amenities, illustrated 6 times



Housing, illustrated 5 times

## Additional Themes

- A view corridor towards the southwest corner of the site.
- Identification of TOSH as an integral feature of the site.
- Various arts and culture uses located in the north east corner of the site.
- A transition of commercial to residential uses from north to south.
- The site's location at the gateway/entrance to the downtown core.
- Incorporating/maintaining greenspace.





# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Charrette: Youth

73 maps were created by 51 students from Qualicum Secondary School on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Some maps were individually created, others were group generated. When asked to design their ideal development at the site, retail for youth shoppers, recreational activities, restaurants and greenspace were common desired uses.

From the maps, the ideas for suggested uses on the site were grouped into the following categories: green spaces (including parks and gardens), housing (all types from single unit to apartments, market to affordable), gathering spaces (such as recreation facilities and restaurants), services (medical facilities and institutional uses), and existing features/amenities from the site that students valued and wanted to see retained (parking, TOSH, etc).



Gathering spaces, illustrated 186 times

Services, illustrated 144 times



Green spaces, illustrated 103 times

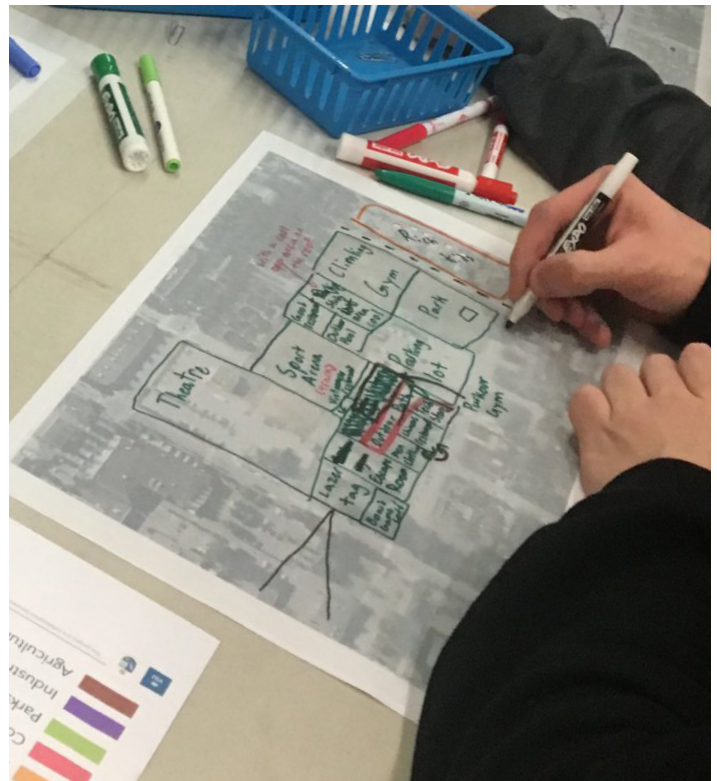
Housing, illustrated 48 times



Existing amenities, illustrated 5 times

### Unique Ideas

- Dirt jump/Bike park
- 30 year and under spaces
- Climbing gym
- Food trucks
- VI Arcade
- Trampoline park
- Martial arts studio
- Board game cafe

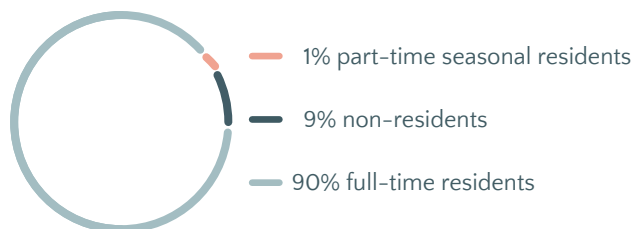


# Survey: Community Members

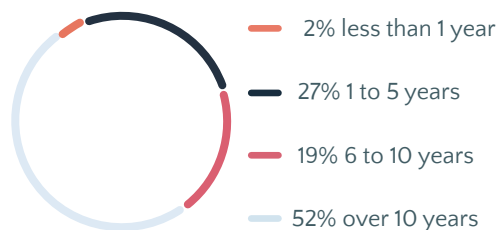
A community survey was launched at the Open House and available online for an additional two weeks. Overall, 57 respondents participated. In the survey, community members were asked a series of questions regarding the current use and the future vision for the site.

## Respondent Profile Survey Questions

### Are you a resident of Qualicum Beach?



### How long have you lived in Qualicum Beach?



### 8 out of 10 respondents use the site



## Principle Survey Questions

### What are the greatest strengths of the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site?

According to respondents, the greatest current strengths of the Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage site are its location and the existing on-site amenities. This includes the programming taking place at TOSH, as well as the services operating in the Qualicum Commons (former elementary school). When asked about what areas of the site need improvement, the open spaces on the site were addressed as being under-utilized.

### How do you access the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site?

When accessing the site, the majority stated they either walked or used a private vehicle. Various modes of transportation are used, with 73% of respondents noting that they either walked or biked to the site. This illustrates the walkability of the uptown core of Qualicum Beach. The survey data showed that many people use the site for parking to access the commercial core of Qualicum Beach.

### If the site was developed, what features and services are important to you to maintain?

It is clear that the existing programming and services operating on the site are highly valued by the community. Over 85% of respondents mentioned TOSH as being a valuable facility for the arts as well as an important heritage site in the community. It was also stated by numerous respondents that the existing programming and services are of high value, as is the community gardens, which was previously identified as a successful and highly-valued place, and has the potential to expand in the coming years.

### If developed, what uses would you like to see on the site in the future?

- Recreational
- Community centre for culture and entertainment
- Social commercial and entertainment spaces

### What is your future vision for the site?

- Vibrant hub
- Aesthetic uplift
- Social community
- Cohesive development

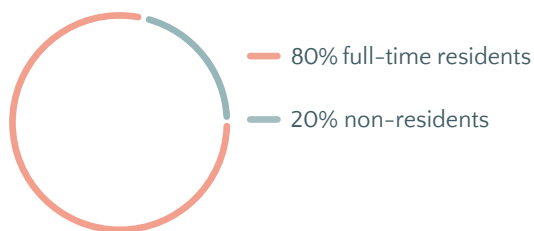
# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Survey: Youth

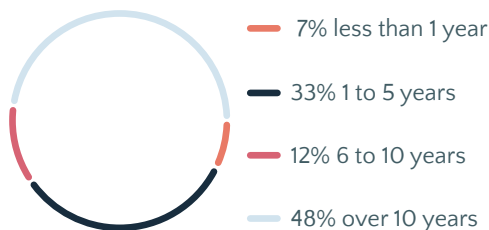
The survey was distributed to students at Kwalikum Secondary School during the charette event on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Overall, 51 respondents participated. In the survey, students were asked a series of questions regarding the current role and the future vision for the site.

### Respondent Profile Survey Questions

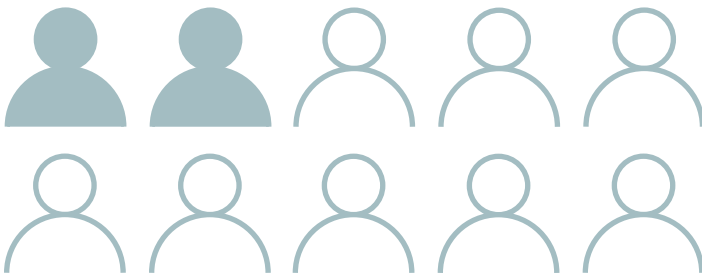
#### Are you a resident of Qualicum Beach?



#### How long have you lived in Qualicum Beach?



#### 2 out of 10 respondents use the site



### Principle Survey Questions

#### What are the greatest strengths of the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site?

According to respondents, the greatest strengths of the Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage site are its location in the commercial core of the community and accessibility. This includes programming taking place at TOSH and the services operating in the Qualicum Commons. When asked what areas of the site need improvement, the Qualicum Commons building, and the open field space to the south east of the site were identified.

#### How do you access the Qualicum Commons and Bus Garage site?

The majority of respondents walked or used a private vehicle to access the site. Due to a low number of site users and responses to this question, there is insufficient evidence to draw conclusions.

#### If the site was developed, what features and services are important to you to maintain?

Youth in Qualicum Beach value the services and programming offered at TOSH and the Qualicum Commons. Despite a lack of use amongst the youth respondents, there is a general consensus current programs, including the dance school and daycare, offer important services to other residents.

Approx. 40% of respondents mentioned TOSH as being a valuable facility for the arts, as well as an important heritage site in the community. It was also stated by numerous respondents that while the open field and playground are in need of uplift, they provide important recreational spaces. The community gardens were also identified as a feature of high-value.

#### If developed, what uses would you like to see on the site in the future?

- Entertainment
- Recreational
- Mixed-use space

#### What is your future vision for the site?

- Active environment
- Intergenerational space
- Social community
- Attractive entertainment options



# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Open House II

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020, approximately 250 people attended a second Open House. In this open format event, community members circulated a room at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre to view and provide feedback on initial concept plans.

At the Open House, information boards summarized the context analysis and community consultation that formed the basis of the concept and vision development.

Two draft concept plans, along with their respective design principles, illustrated future visions for the site. Feedback was collected through comment cards. A number of key themes emerged in response to the concept plans presented:

- **Social-commercial space** is encouraged and highly valued by the public. This could include, but is not limited to, cafe space, a restaurant, bar, theatre, or live entertainment space.
- **Preserving green space** is a key priority for residents. Existing parkland space is in need of aesthetic uplift.
- **Response to parking allotment was divided.** Some residents felt more parking was needed to access amenities and services, while others felt the space should be more pedestrian-oriented.
- **Social gathering spaces** (plaza space) and seating areas are of high value to the community.
- Ensure that future provisions for **community garden space** allows for expansion.
- Increase number of entry points to the site to **ensure increased accessibility.**
- **Make provisions for future development** on-site beyond what is proposed in the plans.

In addition to comment cards, participants were also able to provide feedback and address specific site concerns via a map table with sticky notes. In total, **168** comments were submitted, and this public feedback helped to guide the planning team in updating specific aspects of their design and in reviewing the strengths, opportunities, and future vision for the site.

This engagement opportunity was highly valued by the planning team, and allowed for the opportunity to gauge public opinion on the progress of the project.

**Note:** Upon review, the feedback channel called “Amenity Boards” was discounted as confusion arose amongst participants on how to rank choices.

**Note:** Due to the ongoing COVID-19 concerns, potential future in-person engagement was suspended by the Town of Qualicum Beach and Vancouver Island University.

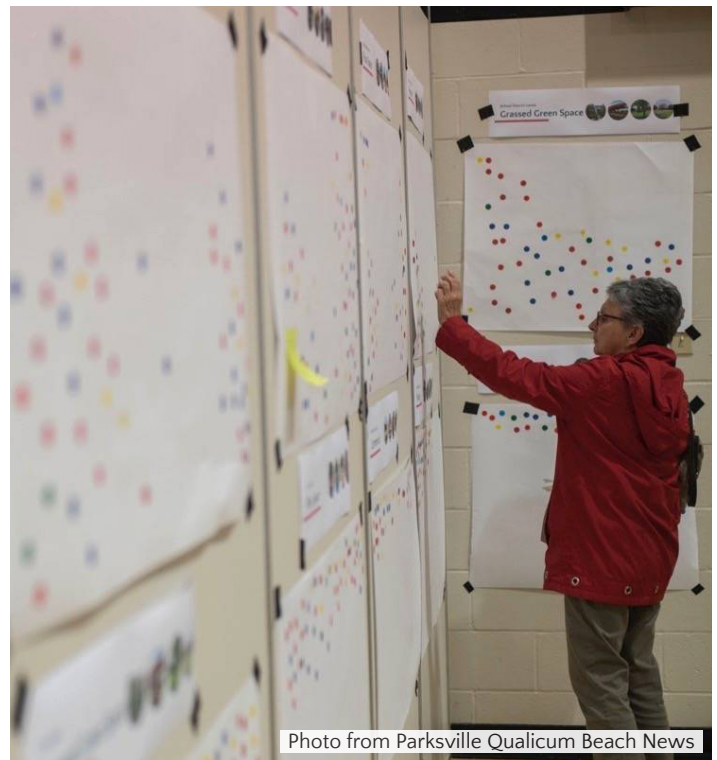


Photo from Parksville Qualicum Beach News

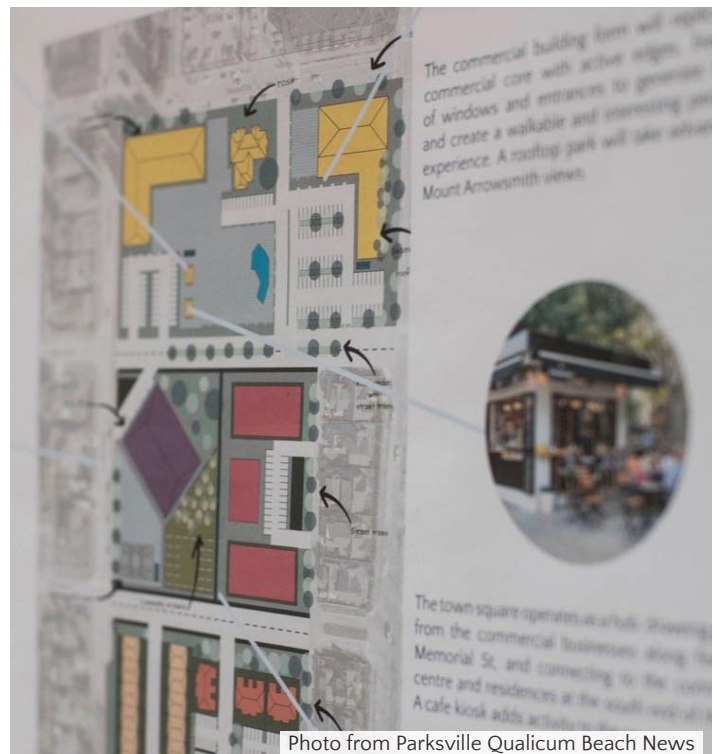


Photo from Parksville Qualicum Beach News

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Site Vision

Looking  
Ahead

Appendix

# Ch. 4





# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Vision Introduction

Two different concept plans are presented in this chapter. They reflect feedback provided from community consultation, findings from the context analysis and best practice urban design approaches.

These are concepts to be used to help guide future land use decisions, not detailed plans. The plans identify land uses, such as residential, commercial, institutional, and amenities sought by the community, including public space, playgrounds, pathways and natural areas.

Each plan begins with a vision statement followed by design principles. Consideration was given to where land uses and amenities should be located to maximize benefits within the site and in relation to surrounding lands and to minimize potential conflict.

The two visions differ in the amount of commercial and residential density proposed and whether Qualicum Commons is renovated or rebuilt. They present different options in terms of the amount of green space on the site and integration of the existing street network.

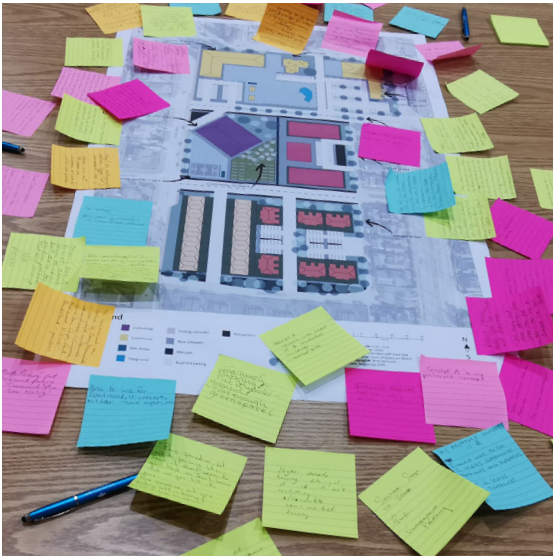
The concepts do not speak to specifics such as particular tenants sought, specific uses, or types of residential tenure (rental, below market, etc.) as these are typically market driven and determined on a case by case basis. The plans have also been designed to be dynamic so that they can accommodate all manner of tenures or specific tenants that the community has identified.



**Qualicum Commons Site** Town of Qualicum Beach









# Qualicum Commons & Bus Garage

## Plan A, Site Plan



The Qualicum Commons Site in the Town of Qualicum Beach - Map Legend





## Vision Statement

To enrich the existing vibrant community with a comprehensive vision for developing the Qualicum Commons lands in a way that simultaneously shows respect to the community's history, including its valued places and existing street fabric, while preparing for future housing and recreational needs. Sustainability is incorporated into the site, and includes environmental considerations such as food, air, energy and water, as well as social sustainability, by creating opportunities to gather, build community resilience, and incorporate nature into the town's core.



# Plan A, Design Principles



## Build housing. Make it diverse.

This vision prioritizes housing affordability and diversity of building type and tenure in order to address the community's basic need for shelter in a built form that respects the surrounding neighbourhood. Residential densities were designed to fit with the existing neighbourhood, beginning with a single family housing form in the southwest corner, graduating in density relative to proximity to the commercial area.

## Sustainability with impact

A broad interpretation of sustainability is applied at the site, to include both environmental and social sustainability. This is accomplished by expanding the community gardens, building housing within the community's core, building green infrastructure such as rain gardens to manage stormwater runoff, and also by creating opportunities for social interactions and healthy lifestyles, and thereby building community resilience.



## Strengthen the existing grid street network

Two new east-west roads are proposed to connect to the existing street network, as grid street networks create efficient use of land, ease of legibility, diversity and choice in travel routes. To encourage connection across the site, a north-south "active corridor" that prioritizes walking, cycling and scooters is proposed. All sidewalks are interlaced with landscaping and trees to soften the hard paved edges, and make walking the preferred way to experience the town.

## Accommodate existing valued places

This vision respects the valued places on the site, such as TOSH, the community gardens and Qualicum Commons. As TOSH acts like a magnet drawing people to the site, it serves as the central point from which to build public space and connection across the site. A rebuilt Qualicum Commons building could accommodate the organizations currently serving the community from the former elementary school, but in a more efficient, two-storey building, adjacent to an expanded community garden.



## Gathering space

This vision hopes to create the community's outdoor living room, with places to gather, shop, enjoy the sun, take in the view, sip a warm drink, enjoy children's play, and — best of all — people watch. Active and well used community gathering spaces help to support the local economy, encourage human relationships and social connections, and build community spirit.

# Plan A, Design Rationale



## Commercial/Residential Mixed Use

Commercial/residential mixed use buildings are proposed on the north end of the site, as an extension of the Town's commercial core. The proposed building form will replicate the existing commercial core with frequent and active entrances and doorways to generate interest and create a walkable and enjoyable pedestrian experience. Buildings will be mixed use, meaning ground floor commercial businesses will have residential condos for sale above. Residential density on the site increases activity, improves safety of downtown commercial streets, and increases profitability of the development in order to offset costs of public amenities.

## Circulation and Connectivity

The new east-west roads connect with the existing street grid to create efficient use of space, and facilitate the safe and orderly movement of people, whether walking, cycling or driving. Although the built roads may be narrow to slow traffic, the right of ways are 20 metre wide to allow for flexibility in the future, as well as providing sufficient width for vehicles for special events or emergency access.

This plan encourages the safe and enjoyable movement of people throughout the site by proposing an active corridor that runs north-south, and is wide enough to include separated bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways. All surfaces are even to promote accessibility. Benches, landscaping, lighting and signage are interlaced along the corridor for safety, beauty, information and opportunities to stop and rest. Large, visible crosswalks are located where pedestrian ways intersect with roads to improve safety and reclaim roadways as space for pedestrians as much as cars. A cross section drawing is provided in the following pages to illustrate what this active corridor could look like.

Active and multi modal transportation is considered in the proposal, by providing safe and rain proof bike storage facilities in two locations on the site.

## Residential

Residential densities are context sensitive, balancing the need for diverse housing with a built form that fits in with the surrounding neighbourhood. The residences on the southern end of the site include three different housing types, including row townhouses, 6-plexes and apartment buildings. While variation of housing type, tenure and size is a goal for this development, the design team also considered the financial viability of various density scenarios, which is explored in Chapter 5 and the Appendix to this report.

Each residential block is designed to encourage interactions amongst the residents. For example, the 6-plexes share a common parking area and are connected by internal green space. The apartment buildings, which have underground parking, are similarly designed around a common courtyard area. The clustered design of each residential area is intended to strengthen the social fabric of the neighbourhood block.

## Public Space

The town square operates as a hub, drawing people from the commercial businesses along Fern Rd. W. and Memorial Ave. and connecting to the community centre and residences at the south end of the site. A café kiosk adds activity to the square.

The community centre is intended to house the existing organizations currently operating in the Qualicum Commons, in an energy efficient two storey building. A multi-sport court





and expanded community gardens will connect the community centre to residences in the south and west of the site. Their location adjacent to the multifamily development make these features an amenity for the residents. A sense of ownership and pride from residences over the sport court and community garden will encourage safe and positive use of these spaces.

Various gathering spaces are featured, including a plaza space that takes advantage of Mt. Arrowsmith views and adds to the existing activity at TOSH and the anticipated commercial businesses. The plaza areas can include café kiosks, seating, outdoor art exhibits, vendors and a structure to show outdoor movies.

To balance the demand for parking and public space, a flexible parking plaza area is proposed in the design. This flexible space can convert from week day parking stalls to public market space on a weekend simply by blocking off vehicle access using signage and bollards. This can be done at a predictable time and place each week when business activity is typically reduced or for special events. A cross section of the flexible parking plaza illustrates what this area could look like, in the following pages of this report.

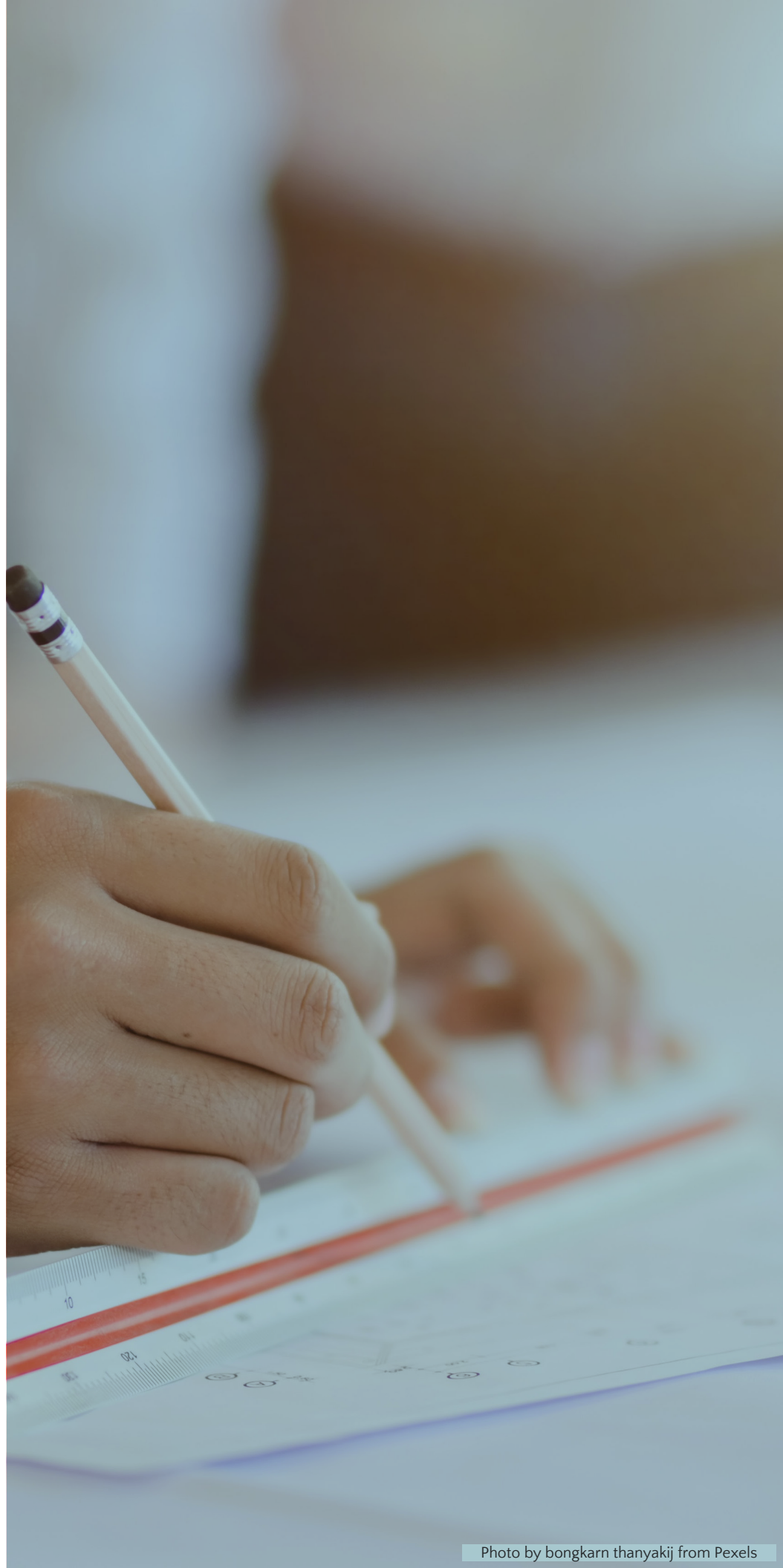
## Sustainability

Sustainability initiatives feature food production at the community garden, green infrastructure such as rain gardens to manage stormwater, and opportunities for social interactions and healthy lifestyles. Vegetation on the site will be multi-functional, to include pollinator plants to encourage bees and other pollinators, water wise plants to conserve water, or plants that function to treat stormwater for improved water quality.

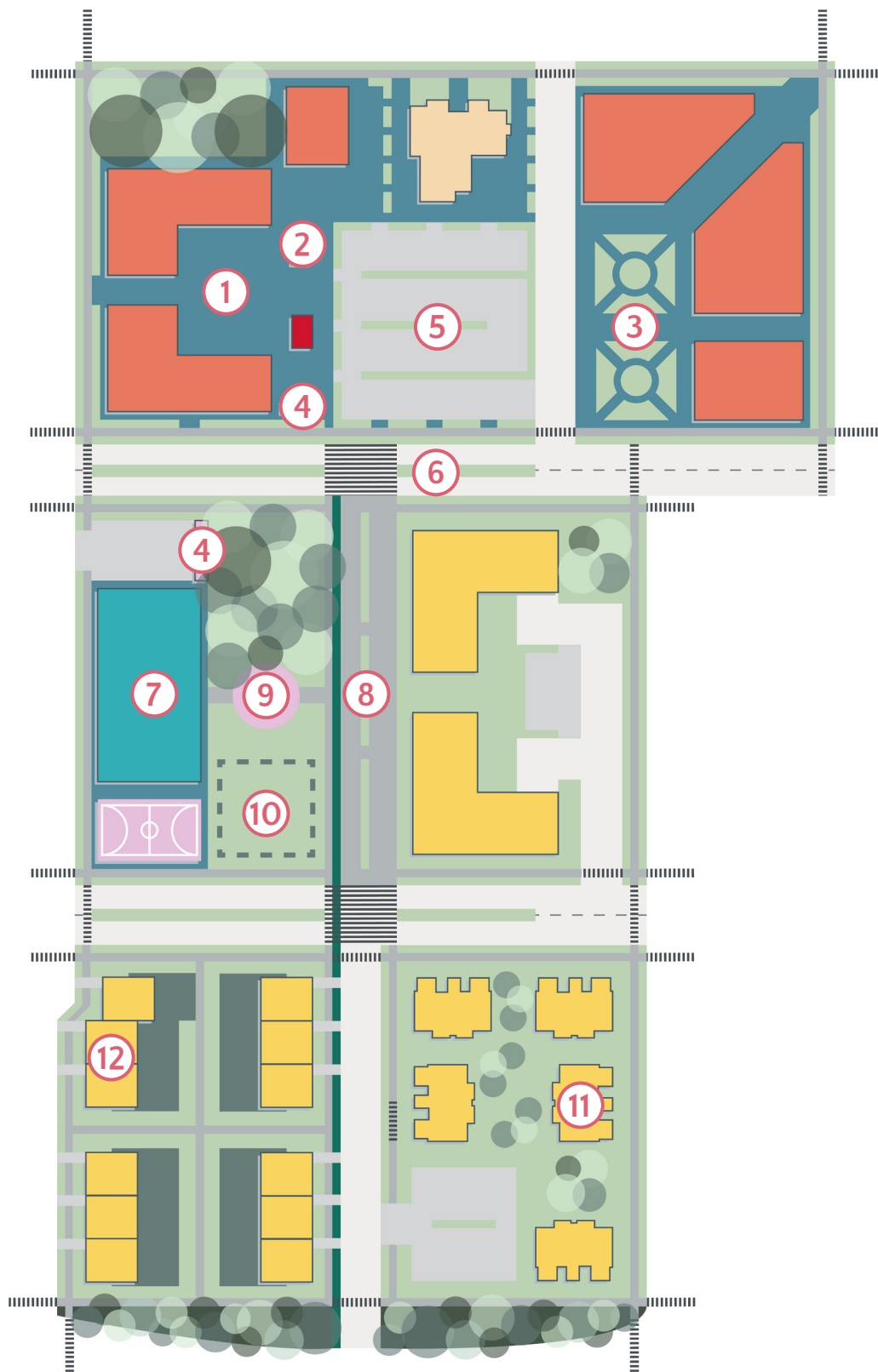
## Incorporating Community Feedback

This vision was refined following Open House II by retaining the grove of trees at the corner of Fern Rd. W. & Primrose St., expanding community garden space, adding a plaza space to optimize Mt. Arrowsmith views and creating a connection to the site directly from the Memorial Ave. and Fern Rd. W. intersection. These changes clearly reflect the community's desire for the site to provide public gathering opportunities and natural areas.





# Plan A, Precedent Images





A town square is designed to serve as a multi-generational gathering space with potential for open air markets, café kiosk, various seating, trees and green spaces. Umbrellas and canopy trees provide shade and shelter.

The town square operates as a hub, connecting the new and existing commercial spaces and the community centre. Stores and kiosks add activity to the square, creating essential meeting places.



The Mt. Arrowsmith view plaza maintains sight lines to one of the community's beloved natural assets, while physically connecting the new commercial area to the rest of the site. Trees and green space are incorporated to create a pleasant seating area.

Active transportation activates the site while helping to make communities healthier. Covered bike racks with green roofs helps make cycling viable year round, while incorporating essential green space onto the site.



Integrating trees into an urban fabric, including parking areas, helps with rainwater management, creates habitat for birds and insects, improves air quality and provides shade.

Rain gardens are a sustainable way to manage rainwater and add essential green space to urban spaces. They can also act as barriers between sidewalks, parking lots and roads creating much needed separation between pedestrians and vehicles.







The community centre is intended to house the existing organizations currently operating in the Qualicum Commons, in an energy efficient two storey building. A multi-sport court and expanded community gardens will connect the community centre to the residences south and west of the site



The interconnected pedestrian boulevard includes bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways that are even surfaced for accessibility. Benches, landscaping, lighting and signage are interlaced along the boulevards for safety, beauty and information — creating opportunities to stop and rest.



Connected to the new wooded area, this nature playground creates opportunities for children to play and connect with nature in an urban environment.



Community gardens create opportunities for residents to connect with nature and one another, while engaging in the joy of local food production. Planters at varying heights and permeable paving help to make gardening accessible to all members of the community.



Residences at the south end of the site are designed to be context appropriate, at a density that will balance the need for diverse housing with a built form that fits in with the surrounding neighbourhood. Images 11 and 12 show that a higher density can be achieved while remaining sympathetic to the existing single family development.

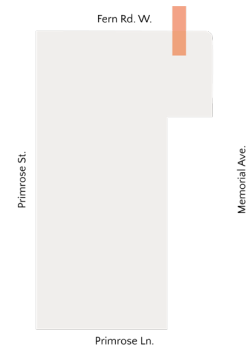


# Plan A, Cross Sections

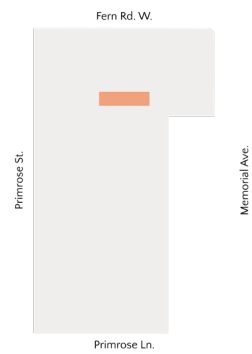
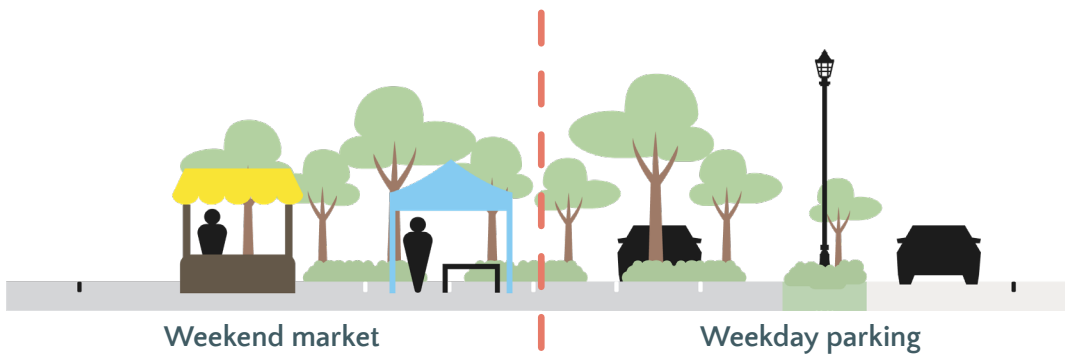
A cross section provides a view into a particular part of the site. Below are 3 cross sections to illustrate concepts for general uses and

dimensions of each particular location. The map to the right shows the locations from which the cross sections are taken.

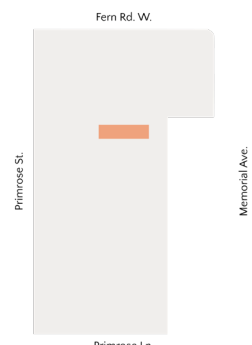
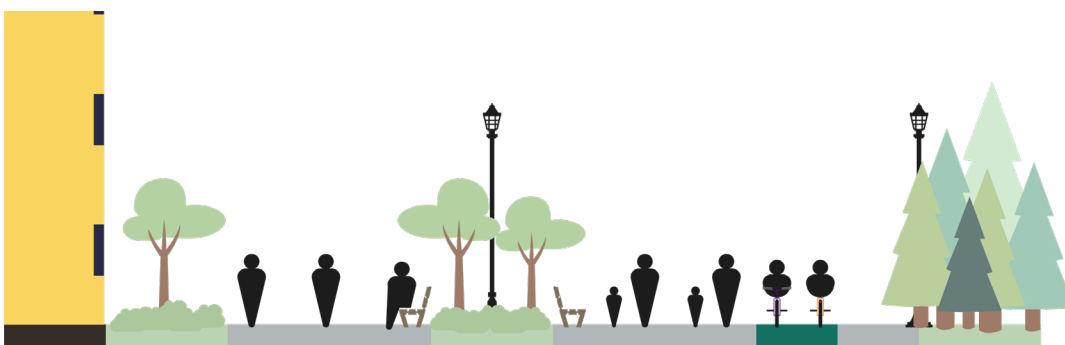
## Looking west along Fern Rd. W.



## Looking north at flex parking plaza



## Looking south at pedestrian boulevard



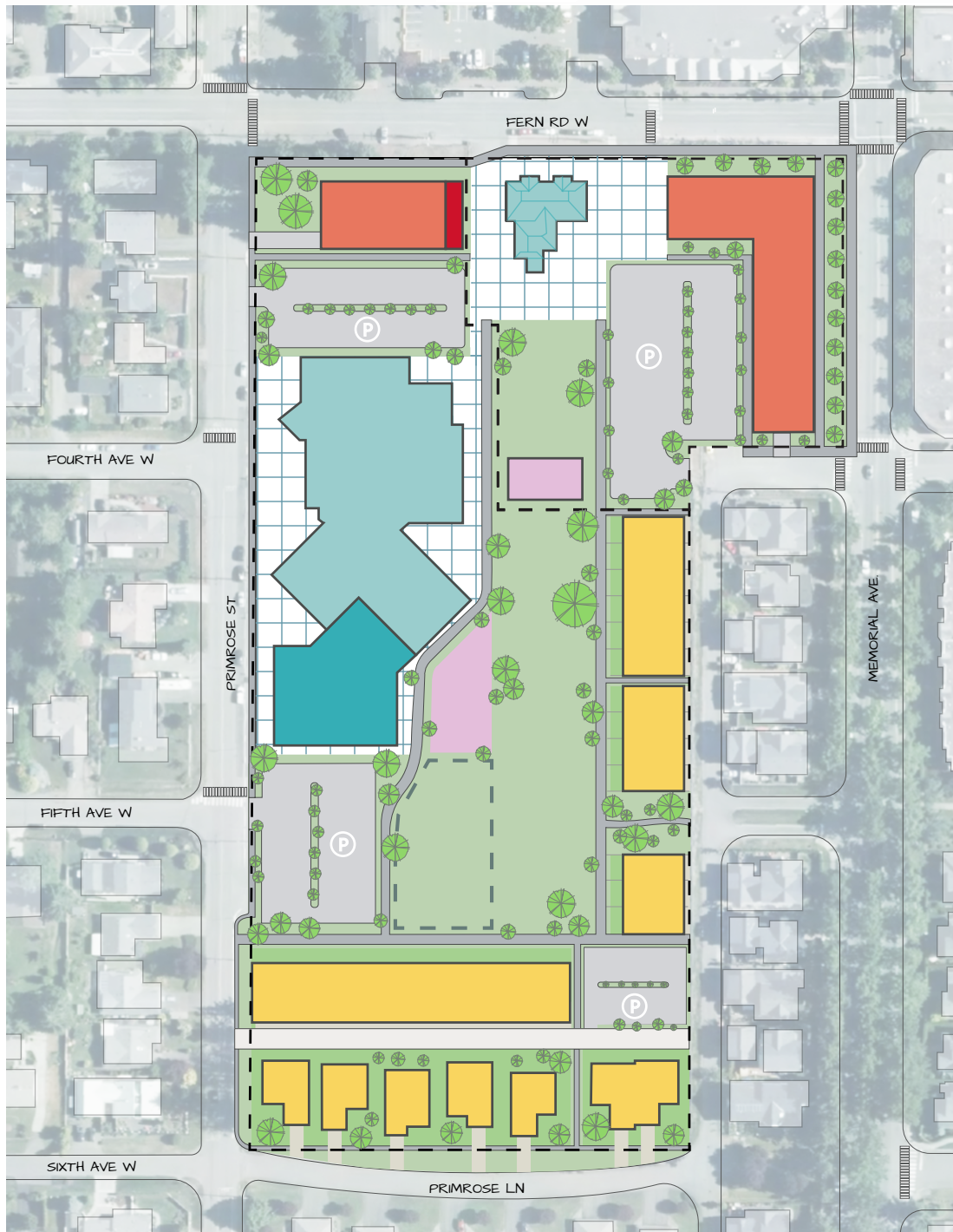
# Vision – Plan B

## Map Legend

 Existing buildings	 Plaza	 Playground	 Trees
 Laneway	 Community gardens	 Commercial	 Open Air Pavillion
 Sidewalk	 Greenspace	 Mixed-use	
 Parking lot	 Institutional	 Residential	



Relative Scale: 1 cm = 5 m  
 Absolute Scale: 1:500  
 Projection: NDA 1983 UTM Zone 10N  
 Data Source: Town of Qualicum Beach  
 Cartographer: Ariel Verhoeks  
 Date: August 23, 2019





## Vision Statement

The comprehensive vision surrounding this site plan is to create a space that complements the already vibrant community core, and offers increased safe access between neighbourhoods and key amenities/services. This vision offers an open space oasis within a growing community, and would also provide a space that could facilitate community programming, intergenerational engagement, and healthy living. This site would allow residents to live, shop, and play, all within walking distance of the site, and encourage residents and visitors alike to spend more time in the heart of the community.





# Vision – Plan B, Design Principles



## Multi-generational

One of the key goals of this design is to create a space that is multi-generational. With different types of housing on-site and spaces for programming and activities, this site has the potential to bring residents of all ages together. A multi-generational space provides residents and visitors opportunities for diverse social engagement. A number of features on the site, such as the community gardens and Commons building, have the potential to be productive multi-generational spaces and build community relations.

## Connectivity

Connectivity relates to how the site would fit in with its existing surroundings and how residents outside of the site boundaries would utilize and engage with the space. In this concept, active transportation corridors connect amenities and features within the site and connect the commercial core to the residential areas to the south of the site. The pathways will be tailored to both pedestrians and cyclists and will offer safe routes for children, families, and the seniors.



## Active space

This site design facilitates active community connections through different activities and programming, and creates a place where residents can be physically active, mentally active, and socially engaged. This design would help to facilitate healthy living and expands current programs and activities residents are engaged in. Creating a public space that is tailored towards social activity is key in creating a vibrant community hub.

## Mixed-use

This design allows residents to live, shop, and play, all within the site or within walking distance of the Qualicum Commons, facilitating a comprehensive community space. It would give residents living on-site direct access to commercial amenities and services without the need to use a vehicle. Creating a place with more local retail and service opportunities, along with community-oriented programming, enhances the existing community core. It encourages residents and visitors alike to spend more time in the core centre of Qualicum Beach and support local businesses.

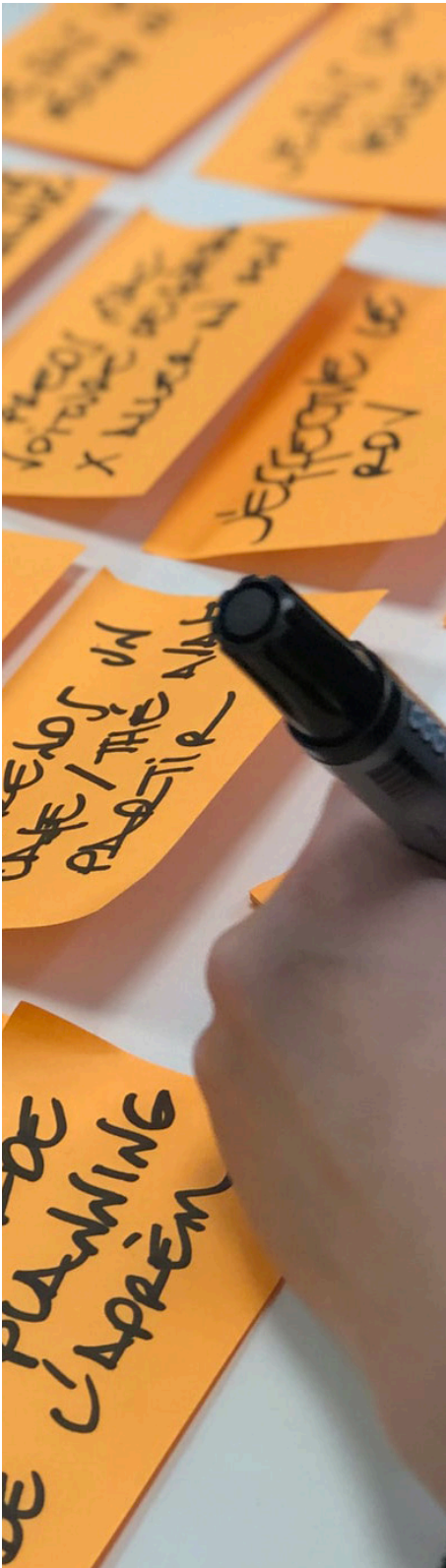


## Green space

Numerous studies have shown that parks within built-up areas can improve physical and psychological health. For those living on-site, instead of having to drive to a distant location to experience green space, it would be at their front door. On this greenspace, there is potential to host a number of casual activities and sports for different groups. Parks offer a space for social interaction and recreation, facilitate physical and mental well-being. They can also make communities more liveable and can help in attracting visitors to the area.



# Vision – Plan B, Design Rationale



## Building Uses: Housing

This proposed site plan includes provisions for housing of various densities, from single-family homes, to 1-2 story townhomes, to multi-story apartments. The frontages of townhomes will be facing the open park space and pedestrian pathway that spans the site. On the southern edge of the site, neighbouring the strata neighbourhood on Primrose Ln., this plan proposes single-family housing. This style of home is best suited to this part of the site, and would provide a buffer for incremental residential densification. Lastly, this plan includes provisions for higher-density accommodation through multi-story apartments. Apartments are a suitable option for both young people and seniors looking to downsize their living space, and, as emphasized throughout public engagement, this proposal includes the recommendation of mixed-use developments with the ground floor designated as commercial space with the 1-2 floors above dedicated to residential units.

## Building Uses: Commercial

Recommendations for commercial space in this site plan are general, and does not specify types of establishments. Proposed is a mixed-use development in both the northwest and northeast corners of the site with commercial space on the ground floors. At the intersection of Fern Rd. W. and Memorial Ave., a three story building with ground-floor commercial and second-floor residential is included, with provisions for a large setback, which could allow for pedestrian-focused space along both main streets, and include a natural green buffer to separate pedestrians from vehicle traffic.

## Building Uses: Institutional

### Qualicum Commons

The Qualicum Commons (the former Qualicum Beach Elementary School) was identified as a key location during preliminary site analysis and public consultation. Proposed in this plan is the construction of a building directly to the south of the Qualicum Commons. This would allow the existing services and groups using the Qualicum Commons space to be accommodated in a new community centre space (a “sister building”), if the existing building were to undergo renovation, with both buildings eventually offering multi-purpose community-oriented space. This also takes into account the existing provision in the Town’s Official Community Plan for a future school site on the lands, with the potential for the existing building on-site to once again function as an educational facility.

### The Old School House Arts Centre

Throughout the community engagement process, participants and key stakeholders stressed the importance of maintaining TOSH. This plan proposes the building remains as is, with new landscape design features, such as a pedestrian-focused common area with seating, tables and covered areas. This would allow more people to utilize the site and appreciate the architecture and history of the structure.

## Roads

### Access roads and laneways for motorized vehicles

This plan proposes the construction of just one access road. To serve the residents of the



proposed townhome development in the southern portion of the site, an access road would need to be constructed from Primrose St. to the existing laneway that runs parallel to the west of Memorial Ave. This access road would provide residents with vehicular access to the back of their homes, and would feature two entrance points for emergency and municipal service vehicles. A future consideration for this laneway would be how to manage the subsequent increased traffic from residential users, and whether or not the spatial specifications (width, driveway access) would require the laneway to have one-way access.

## Parking

This plan has provisions for the development of 4 parking areas on the site. A community parking lot would be located on the northeast side of the site, with access from Memorial Ave. This lot would primarily serve shoppers frequenting businesses along Fern Rd. W. and in the downtown core, as well as visitors to the park space, open plaza, and The Old School House Arts Centre.

Two public lots would be located on the western side of the site, with access via Primrose St. The purpose of these lots would be to serve residents partaking in activities and utilizing the services available in the Qualicum Commons (and future “sister building”). The other public parking area in the southwest portion of the site would serve the relocated community gardens and playground. The northwest apartment building, which lies adjacent to one of these lots, would be served by a resident-exclusive underground parkade. This would allow for the provisioned street-level parking to be used by the general public, thereby increasing the amount of community parking on-site. The final lot in the southeast corner of the site would serve as parking for visitors to townhome units.

## Open Spaces

### Pavilion and plaza

Included in this plan is the construction of a covered pavilion for year-round activities, with tables and seating available. The pavilion should be non-intrusive, so as to preserve the existing view corridor, and will be smaller than what was proposed prior to public engagement in March of 2020. In addition to the pavilion, an open space plaza area around The Old School House Arts Centre could also play host to seasonal events with potential to attract people from a number of different areas such as the commercial core, proposed on-site residential units, and nearby neighbourhoods.

### Playground

While the current site has several separate dedicated playground areas with equipment that is largely outdated and unmaintained, this plan has set aside a dedicated space for an accessible, safe, and engaging play area. In its proposed location, it will be a safe and secure space for children away from vehicle traffic coming in and out of the parking area. After additional public engagement in March of 2020, it was determined that the playground could be expanded beyond its proposed size and flexible for further expansion, due to the extensive green space lying directly adjacent to the playground site.

### Community garden

Based on feedback in both our survey and via our community engagement events, it has been stressed that the community garden has an important role in bringing together local residents. It was also made clear that the garden is at capacity and that expansion is needed if the project is to grow. As an amendment to the design presented at the community engagement event in March of 2020, this plan will further extend the community garden space alongside the pathway south of the Qualicum Commons building. With a demand for an expansion of the existing community garden, this plan would allow the garden to be expanded to twice its current size with the potential for more growth as the community sees fit.



## Parkland and On-Site Vegetation

This plan has dedicated much of the central area to parkland. For those living in the proposed units on the site, being steps away from the natural environment is key to increasing the livability of the neighbourhood. Vegetation should line the proposed greenways and pedestrian pathway, which not only offers natural shading along corridors, but also provides a natural buffer and helps to increase the privacy of the compact and denser townhome units. In addition to this, the small forested area in the northeast corner of the site (intersection of Primrose St. and Fern Rd. W.) would be preserved.

## Pathways

### Pedestrian and cycle pathways

This plan proposes the construction of a number of active transportation-focused corridors. These pathways will run the perimeter of the parkland area and will be tailored to pedestrians and cyclists, offering safe routes for children, families, and the elderly. The pathways will provide access to the community garden, playground, pavilion/plaza area, and public parking as well as convenient connections to the various amenities and core areas outside of the site. In order to make these pathways fully accessible, they must be paved to accommodate mobility scooters, mobility aids, and wheelchairs. In addition to the pathways proposed in the initial site plan, this plan includes a number of green access corridors to connect to the adjacent neighbourhood and to provide a provision for any potential future development additional to that which is proposed. This provides the community-focused site with an increased number of access points.

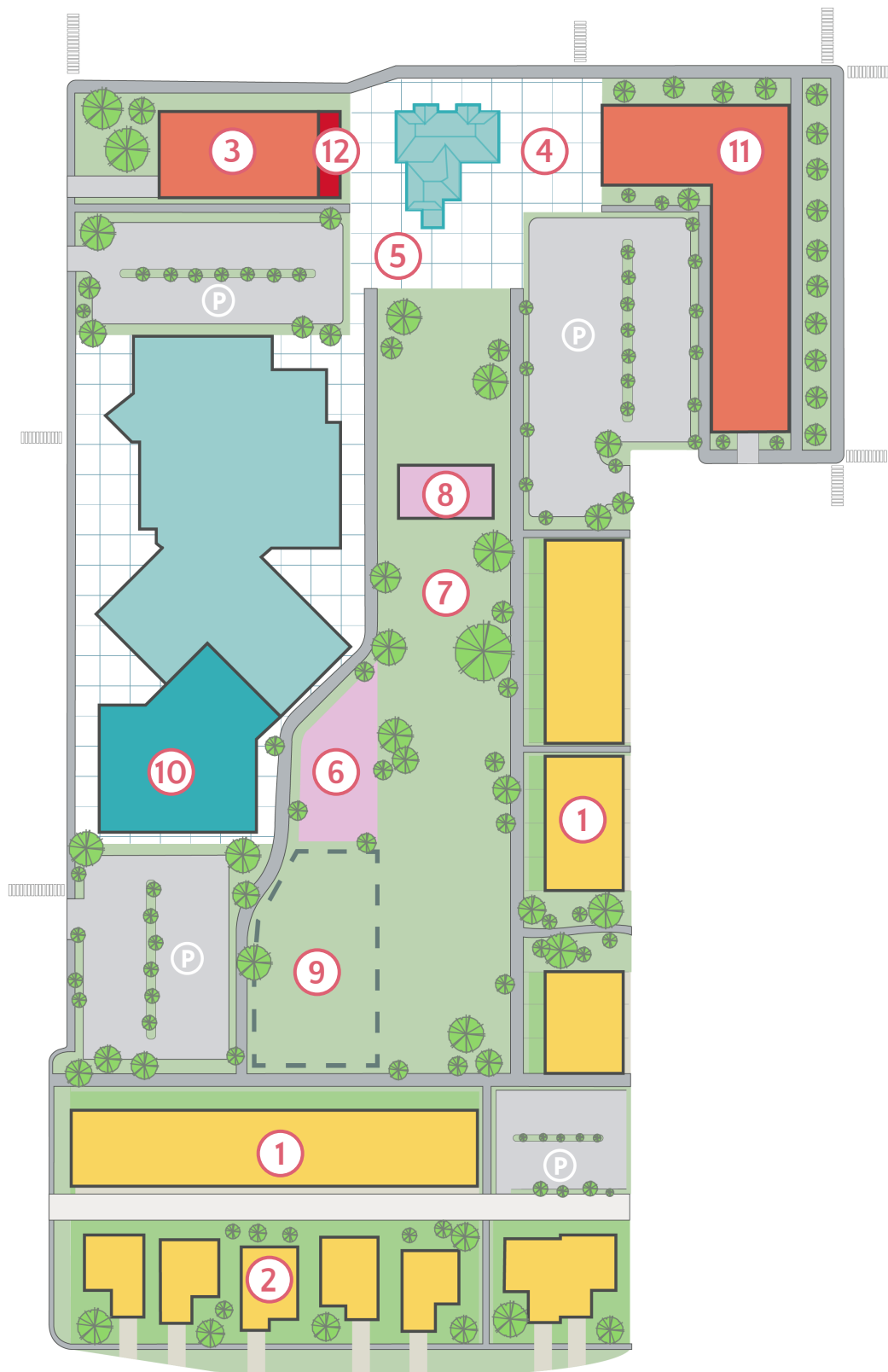
### Sidewalks

While portions of the perimeter of the site feature existing sidewalks, this plan proposes that connections be made to connect them and offer dedicated space for pedestrians. Included is the extension of the sidewalk along the north edge of the site (Fern Rd. W.) between The Old School House Arts Centre and the Primrose St. intersection. This plan also proposes a sidewalk constructed along Primrose Ln. at the southern edge of the site. With the proposal of new residential units along this street, and the subsequent vehicle traffic that would come with that, it is suggested that a sidewalk is necessary to keep residents young and old safe and facilitate modes of active transportation.

### Circulation plan

This plan has a heavy focus on active transportation and creating an environment where residents can live, shop, socialize, and play. The proposed multi-use pathways form a natural walking loop around the site and provide a space in which youth can ride their bikes, and seniors and families can walk safely, isolated from vehicular traffic. This plan also gives residents living on-site direct access to commercial amenities and services without the need to use a vehicle, and would provide adjacent neighbourhoods with more modal choice. In considering those coming from further afield to access the site (Qualicum Bay, Bowser, Dashwood, etc), provisions for a number of public parking lots to access all public site amenities are included.

# Vision – Plan B, Precedent Images







Townhomes in this location allow for increased residential density while still matching the character of the housing in the adjacent neighbourhood.



It is important that future plans for the site take into consideration the various housing needs of different groups in this growing community, and integrating the site with the surrounding housing composition.



Apartment living is a suitable option for both seniors looking to downsize their living space and young people.



Seating in pedestrian-focused spaces encourages people to spend more time socializing and engaging with the space.



Paving stone in common areas allows for increased definition of the flexible pedestrian-focused space.



Park space allows for the existing view corridor to be maintained while bringing a natural “oasis” close to the heart of the community.





Park space would have the potential to play host to a number of casual activities and sports, giving residents a place to relax and connect with nature. Numerous studies have shown that parks in close proximity to living spaces can improve our physical and psychological health.

A pedestrian-focused common area and adjacent pavilion could play host to seasonal events such as markets, outdoor concerts, or art walks. The location of this space has the potential to attract people from Qualicum Beach and the greater Oceanside community.



An expanded, uplifted community garden has the potential to be a productive multigenerational space. With a demand for an expansion of the existing community garden, this concept would allow the garden to be expanded to twice its current size with the potential for more growth as the community sees fit.

A new-look expansion of the Qualicum Commons would offer state-of-the-art multi-purpose space for community-oriented programming.



The two commercial areas proposed along Fern St. will complement and reflect the existing commercial activity along the north side of the street, creating a walkable corridor of services and amenities.

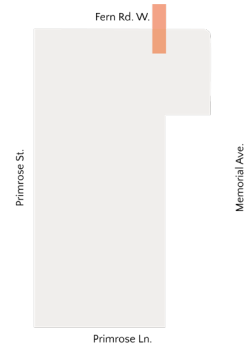
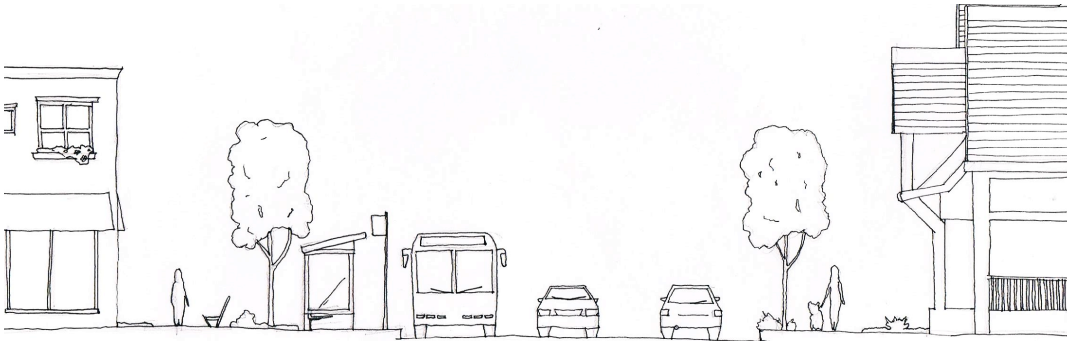
Creating more “social-commercial” space would help to enhance the existing downtown core, and encourage residents and visitors alike to spend more time in the heart of the community.



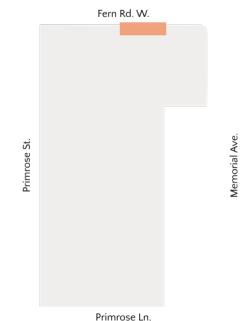
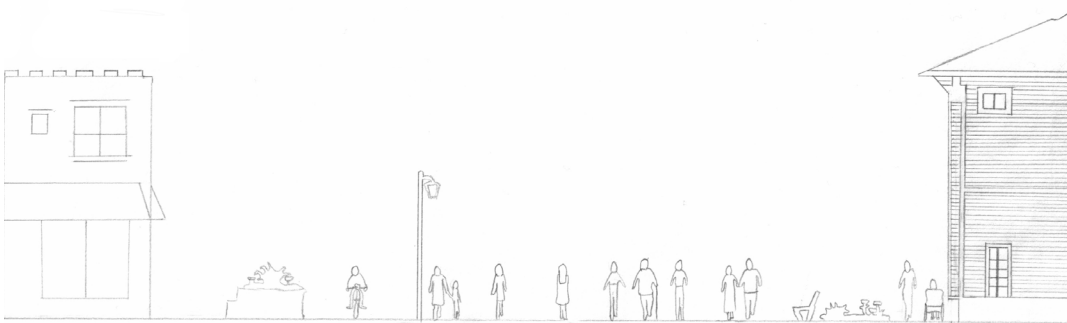
# Vision – Plan B, Cross Sections

Below are three cross sections that depict three separate areas on or adjacent to the Qualicum Beach Commons and Bus Garage site.

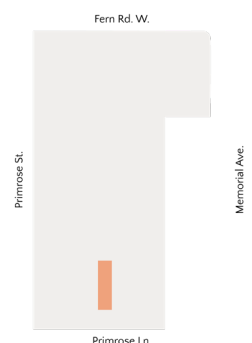
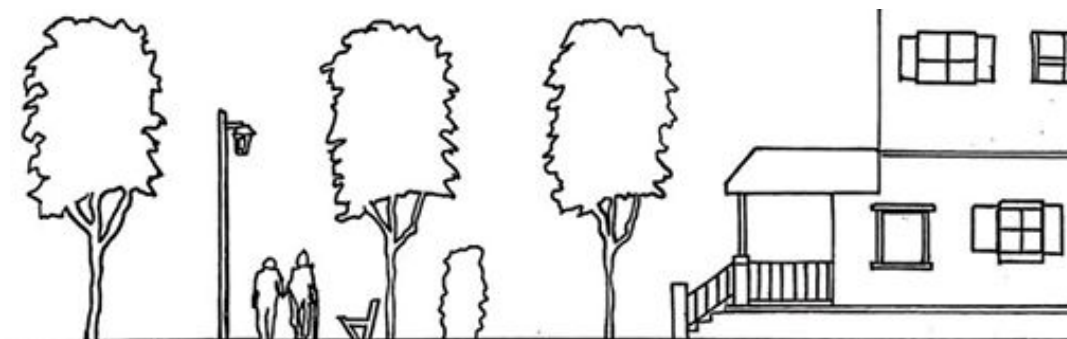
## Looking west along Fern Rd. W. from Memorial Ave.



## Looking south from Fern Rd. W.



## Looking east from Primrose St. parking lot



# Looking Ahead

Next Steps .....54

Acknowledgements .....55

# Ch. 5

Looking Ahead

Appendix





# Next Steps

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The visions presented in the report provide the landowners, the Town of Qualicum Beach and School District 69, with options for a comprehensive future for the site, should they choose to develop. An in-depth market analysis should be carried out to help determine if further refinements are required, and to ground truth the assumptions made in this process.

It is recommended that an implementation strategy be carried out to determine how best to realize some of the ambitions and goals outlined in the vision report and to evaluate phasing approaches that would benefit the plan and/or amend it. A policy assessment should be carried out to determine how this plan, with any potential amendments, may be adopted into the Town's Official Community Plan. Additionally, if a plan is considered for adoption, design guidelines, subject to public input, should also be created.

# Acknowledgements

Town of Qualicum Beach	VIU, MCP Faculty & Staff	Project Team
<b>Mayor &amp; Council</b>	<b>Dr. Miko Betanzo</b> , PLAN 504 Professor	<b>Jacob Burnley</b> , MCP Candidate
<b>Rebecca Augustyn</b> , Planner	<b>Spencer Croft</b> , PLAN 504 Teaching Assistant	<b>Felicia Fischer</b> , MCP Candidate
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	<b>Dr. Pam Shaw</b> , Director of the Master of Community Planning program at VIU	<b>Maureen Nolan</b> , MCP Candidate
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		<b>PLAN 504, 2020 &amp; 2021 Cohorts</b> , Assistant Community Engagement Facilitators

Qualicum Beach Community	MABRRI	
We would like to extend a thank you to all the residents and community stakeholders who were involved during our various stages of consultation. Your commitment to your community and your engagement through the process is greatly appreciated.	<b>Graham Sakaki</b> , MABRRI Research & Community Engagement Coordinator	<b>Trevor Davidson</b> , Design Consultant
	<b>Ariel Verhoeks</b> , Cartographer	

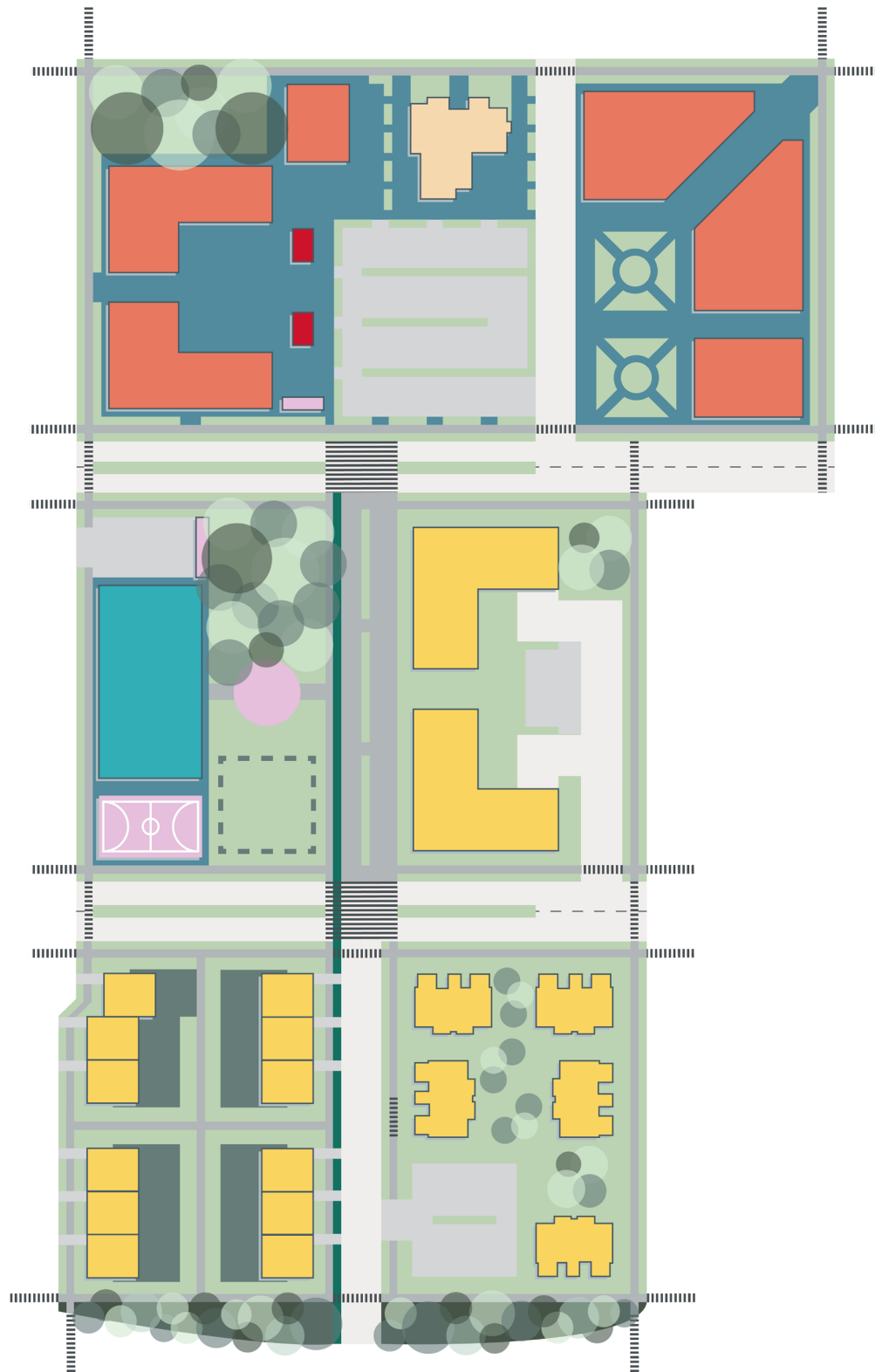
# Appendix

Plan A Site Map .....58

Plan B Site Map .....59





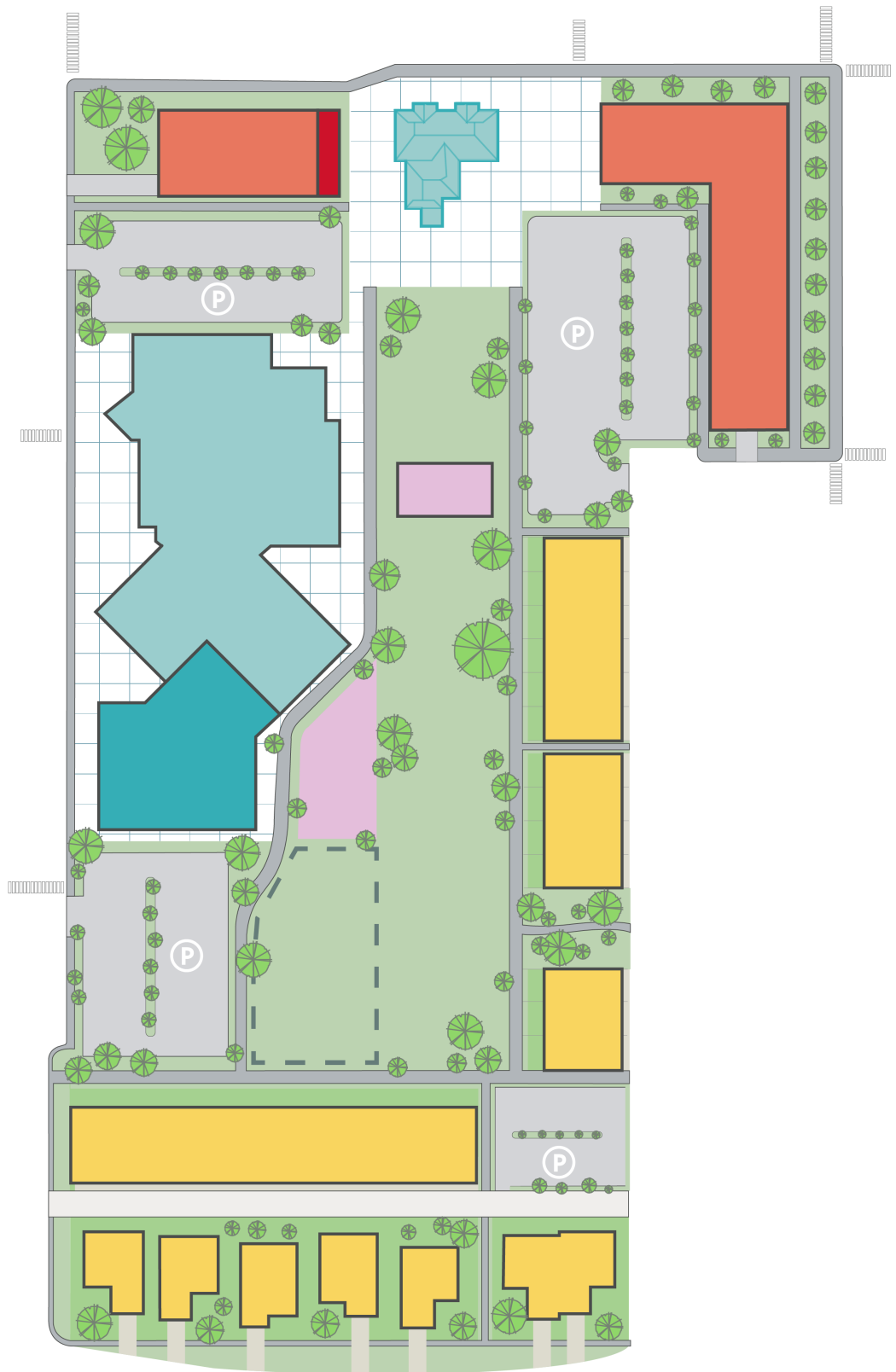


## The Qualicum Commons Site in the Town of Qualicum Beach – Map Legend















<span style="color: red;">■</span> Commercial	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Plaza	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Bike Lane	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Private Garden	<span style="color: green;">●</span> Trees & Shrubs
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Mixed-Use	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Parking	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutional	<span style="color: black;">■</span> Rain Garden	
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> TOSH	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Roads & Driveways	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Community Garden	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Green Space	
<span style="color: pink;">■</span> Public Amenity	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Sidewalks & Paths	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Residential		

0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
 metres  
 Relative Scale: 1 cm = 5 m  
 Absolute Scale: 1:500  
 Projection: NDA1983 UMT Zone 10N  
 Data Source: Town of Qualicum Beach  
 Cartographer: Ariel Verhoeke  
 Date: August 23, 2019

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## Map Legend

 Existing buildings	 Plaza	 Playground	 Trees
 Laneway	 Community gardens	 Commercial	 Open Air Pavillion
 Sidewalk	 Greenspace	 Mixed-use	
 Parking lot	 Institutional	 Residential	



Relative Scale: 1 cm = 5 m  
 Absolute Scale: 1:500  
 Projection: NDA 1983 UTM Zone 10N  
 Data Source: Town of Qualicum Beach  
 Cartographer: Ariel Verhoeks  
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