

DRAFT Flats Area Redevelopment Plan

Public Open House Comments

June 2009

***Please note that while comments are reported verbatim, some have been edited to remove any personally identifying words. These edits are indicated by [edited].**

A number shown behind a sentence shows the number of people who had a similar comment.

1. WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT THE VISION, PRINCIPLES AND POLICY DIRECTION PRESENTED IN THE DRAFT FLATS AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (THE “PLAN”)?

Transportation

- The principle in other roads or pedestrian access
- Merging the different areas together with walkways, cycling and vehicular traffic

Pedestrian/Cycling

- Emphasis on walkability, mixed community
- The creation of distinct neighbourhoods with the “walkability” aspect is welcoming
- I liked some of the aspects such as improving the pedestrian walkways
- On-road bike lanes
- Designated pedestrian and crossing improvements
- Focus on pedestrian/cycling friendly infrastructure – very important

Public Transit

- ...nor do we need a new transit hub a block away from the current one.

Railway

- Railway District improvements are great!
- Great idea to preserve the railway station
- Love bringing back passenger rail services (3) – The CEO that started the Moose Jaw spa presented a few years back at a breakfast meeting at Medalta – that she would like to see passenger rail service from Calgary to Medicine Hat over night here and take in Medalta then continue on to Moose jaw and take in the spa and then return to Calgary

Vehicular/Parking

- One issue would definitely be the need for more parking to accommodate the activity planned along North Railway Street.
- Maintain and enhance the grid

Connections

- I like the pedestrian and bike overpasses of the rail yards (5). A proposed pedestrian bridge to Police Point Park. The bridge between Strathcona and Police Point (5).
- Neighbourhood entrance (under overpass). It's a wall pass now
- Enhanced connection to Downtown
- The additional pedestrian overpass above the tracks
- ...connections especially pedestrian path to Police Point Park
- Better and more crossings of the CPR tracks is imperative
- It's great that you are doing something about crossing the tracks.
- Making underpass user friendly and safe is a great idea! (2)
- Like the walkway from Flats to downtown

Aesthetics

- Improve all housing
- Beautification will gradually reduce vandalism and encourage residents to take pride in their neighbourhoods
- Architectural Guidelines Good
- Love the market → needs the red brick, architecture of early Medicine Hat building flavour. Like overpass walkway connecting North and South Railway

Uses

- Some great ideas/density is good for the neighbourhood – that brings commercial opportunities
- Artisan/Farmers Public Market is a great draw for Hatters and “out of towners”
- Promoting the value of heritage is important.
- Local neighbourhood commercial node
- Arena curling rink area high density infill
- Mixed use infill and multi dwelling along CPR and Maple Avenue
- Keeping the old houses the trees the building. Using the CPR station area making it viable
- Commercial/residential makes sense – the idea of forming smaller communities within the larger one.
- Farmer’s market, public market (3)
- More condo’s – more apartments so more people can live in the area
- Improved housing, although I am not sure how you will go about it. 50 to 75% of the Flats are single resident homes that are rental with transient population.
- The centrality of the clay district
- Parks enhancement
- It is good to see interest in redevelopment as long as more historic buildings are preserved
- Everything – the residential, cultural and commercial
- The train station is a beautiful structure to inspire a new “Yale town” – funky neighbourhood anchored by parks
- Creating sense of place → heritage preservation
- Tourism focus and development (in and around the Historic Clay District).
- Market on North Railway Street and use of the CPR station
- Downtown housing
- Pleased to see railway area redeveloped
- I like the emphasis on Downtown development bringing back passenger train, artisan and marketplace
- Love the development of the train station area
- Practical/accessible retail
- Community “meeting places”
- More affordable housing – possible to clean up slum lords properties while providing very decent housing for the financially disadvantaged?
- ...however we DO NOT need more multi dwelling
- Also, preserve the river area for use and wildlife to share in harmony as it makes our City unique.
- Keeping existing green spaces and walking spaces some, seems useful.
- The architect’s drawings are pretty and inspiring – love the shady outdoor areas for people gathering, shopping, and lunching. But only useful 5 months out of the year in our climate.
- Keeping the green and historic area open to family and all ages
- Using historical values to define spaces makes sense – Historic Clay District would support a wonderful eclectic arts community aka Greenwich Village)
- I like the notion of artisan shops and markets having a permanent presence.
- Great idea to re-develop arena, parking lot, curling club, Ball Park.
- Mixed business/residential neighbourhoods live/work zoning
- It respects the traditional uses and sense of the neighbourhood, although the greenhouse industry which has been new for a century is ignored.
- Redevelopment of the area around the CPR station
- Like the changes to the North Railway area

- The Flat's is a wonderfully colourful area in terms of the variety of residential buildings, and old commercial building that are full of character, of various types and sizes of parks and recreational areas. It does require a plan; a vision to ensure this character is maintained and built upon. I like the way the area is separated into 3 distinct, yet compatible districts.
- I like the idea of the North Railway idea.
- Preserve green space

Vision/Identity

- The idea, visions are generally good and show great potential for the area of Medicine Hat and what it could truly be.
- The vision is ok. The principles are ok. Policy directions appear to create substantial new barriers to infill development when there are already few developers willing to undertake this work as a result of existing barriers.
- Yes, we did like the vision, principles, and policy direction presented. This area of Medicine Hat is full of potential.
- I am pleased with the vision of establishing a "sense of place" for each area of the Flats.
- Good vision
- Could be a little clearer. Vision/Direction is somewhat vague – perhaps waiting to get public input?
- The vision and plan respects the historical integrity of the area. In addition, the vision includes and recognizes the diversity of our community.
- Overall vision is excellent especially the railway district – long over due.

Implementation

- Would take a number of days to review said blueprints, before final review is given
- Looks nice however I do not think the current City bureaucracy is capable of seeing it through
- Nothing much new that everyone ever involved thought – buying and spending a lot of money and time on nice boards does nothing if the Planning Department and the Alderman don't start as they should have already been supporting projects that are proposed and have fit this plan for many years past already.
- The fact people will not be pushed out of their homes. A progressive plan to beautify but...more importance needed to be placed on utilities and the "major" time it will take to dig up and replace and what existing homes – owners will pay
- The Draft Flats Area Redevelopment Plan seemed a little over the top, expensive and a lot of work to achieve
- Why not ask/contact local people?
- It has its problems in completing but I think it is a good plan
- Must think in this visionary method or else no one could or would ever get excited about getting involved – need at least one major project to get started - don't think too big – people have trouble visualizing
- Keeping the integrity of the positive "flats" values
- It's good just as long as we don't lose the character of the area. There are lots of old homes that date back to early Medicine Hat. People should be encouraged to repair and maintain their character.
- If you get more people living in the area more residents will force more business and that is how to achieve sustainability
- I thought it was understandable. I just was not enthusiastic about the initial approach of a restricted land base and little if any economic parking spaces. Although it may not be in the committee's mandate, it needs to be attached to a clear property tax plan to encourage expenditure.
- Lobby for the return of passenger rail service

General Comments

- I like the plan in general.
- Love it all! It is thorough and insightful. It is an incredible undertaking that is admirable (I like the prioritizing on the back)
- Please – The Downtown is part o the Flats
- Nice improvement to the Flats
- Great!
- It breathes life back into the area and makes the community vibrant and alive! The blend of

- It was a start which all things need
- Recognition that this is the best place in town to live, particularly for those whose mobility is limited, i.e. unable to drive/own and automobile
- Well thought out
- Love the River Flats branding but it will take major effort to make that new name happen
- Must be redeveloped
- Agree would be great. Start now!
- My thoughts on this plan for the redevelopment of the Flats are yes we need this to help our City grow. To make us look better. To bring more tourism
- I like that there is a plan...get started, treat it as a living document able to change as we grow
- Excellent work (3)
- Renaming important
- Great work done on the draft
- Well done, good ideas (2), very exciting!
- I like the plan. I hope the City will be able to move forward quickly. I feel the River Flats could be a unique community like Calgary's Kensington.
- Community focus is important to me and my family this plan fits into what I see a community being
- A plan (any plan) is better than none.
- I loved the focus on "sense of place/neighbourhood" Loved the redevelopment concept area #1 as a gathering place
- Sense of purpose and direction for the area – long neglected
- Just the fact that it exists as a plan and redevelopment is underway is something very significant
- Ambitious – a tad unrealistic about what the CPR will do.

2. WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR ADD TO THE DRAFT PLAN?

Transportation

Pedestrian/Cycling

- – the access to the trails for non-hour recreation (jogging, walking) is like what Princes Island is to Calgary Downtown
- More walking areas
- Please make room for roller bladders as a transport way for the growth!
- More emphasis on alternate transportation – on road bike lanes

Public Transit

- Transit – currently it takes three buses to go from certain parts of the City to other parts. I would take a bus if two could get back to work in 15 minutes instead of the 45 minutes a bus ride takes now.

Railway

- Remove the rail yard and turn old train station into a rail museum.
- A vision for the CPR marshalling yard needs to be developed. Keep the track, return passenger service – get rid of the yard and redevelop.
- There appears to be a significant emphasis on the historic clay area. This area has received a lot of attention in recent years. I would place more emphasis on the rail station area. We need to re-establish passenger service in Medicine Hat.
- Proposed the removal of the marshalling yards but bringing back passenger rail to the Downtown.
- Add Via passenger train in the railway station on the pictures? Of train yard.

Vehicular/Parking

- The multi-family area next to Athletic Park arena and curling club is a concern unless there would be some accommodation for parking in the area.
- Improving streets and arterials to accommodate future growth that look forward 30 years
- More parking areas
- Add roundabout intersections in lieu of signage or uncontrolled intersections (as no one uses them properly). I have seen them in Vancouver and they work great for keeping traffic slow in residential areas.

- Better control of traffic on Maple Avenue – speed and noise.

Connections

- No need for bridge to Flats over tracks. A simple traffic lights and sidewalk would suffice
- Improve access and connection from Downtown/Scholten Hill
- It would be great to see specific mention, i.e. accessibility in terms of housing paths of travel and places of business.
- Footbridge to Police Point Park is not needed.

Aesthetics

- Fancy street names using landmarks like the cannery or river street etc.
- Guidelines and programs to upgrade sub-standard buildings – to comply with infill guidelines
- Historic interpretive signage – adds a lot to sense of place

Uses

- More Medicine Hat High Density Infill
- Cultural Centre should be in the Flats, not in Armoury Park
- Nothing was mentioned on existing sports venues. Arena which is gone from the site as is the curling rink.
- Where are the people? key community locations are absent: schools, Veiner Centre, Strathcona Centre. WHY NOT DAYCARE developments
- Development seems largely commercial rather than community focused
- I would like to see the old buildings restored along North Railway Street
- Stressing the opportunity for professional, i.e. engineering, architectural etc along the railway- Clay District corridor
- More emphasis on the river. Patio overlooking the river (i.e. restaurants, bars and coffee shops)
- Have an event centre where it is a start putting overpasses on...???
- Allow empty buildings, churches etc. to be re-utilized in creative ways (workshops, artists, studios etc.) without blocking efforts with your out of control red tape bureaucracy – note what they did to the Esplanade vs. the initial vision.
- Less building of multi-dwelling houses and I believe the river area should be left alone as to not take away habitat from wildlife and the name River Flats SUCKS
- Lots of thought put into young folks areas (skate boarding, legally etc.) Are you considering schools/college/school/training centres?
- I liked the idea of a farmers market around 3rd Street and CPR station.
- An excellent grocery store or a few more corner stores.
- – if possible enhanced retail areas.
- Clean up Lions Park. It was a great destination but now looks un-kept.
- Move rail yard not railway
- Police Point Park is already a national area and wildlife sanctuary. Kin Coulee also has natural areas. Lions Park and Strathcona have to be groomed and more user friendly to increase usage. Existing parks have been left to grow naturally and are severely underused compared to even 10 years ago.
- Multi-family where currently horticultural and adjacent to heavy industrial – poor transition.
- Curling rink/arena gone – where?
- Just to develop residential areas by the river, not realistic
- How about an indoor skating rink since the arena is being taken down.
- Add mini train for children (like one by Mendel Art Gallery and South Saskatchewan River in Saskatoon) in a park space.

Safety

- Safe, un slippery sidewalks and roads

Implementation

- How is the change going to be implemented?
- A timeline?
- Prioritize what needs to be done

- I would delete a lot of the historical study and pie-in-the-sky possibility exploration such as the scenic drive off Strathcona and the pedestrian bridge to Police Point. I would also relax onerous seeming architectural controls, as developers are reluctant to put premium stuff next to slums
- Possible future development area should be priority. I would change the name "Railway District". The dead end streets – 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, Aberdeen
- Have an open minded forward thinking administration and management staff in place at City Hall
- There are not that many decisive points. Set a course and then see what the response is.
- Need for tax strategies to keep seniors in their homes. Young-old age mix needs attention and enhancement
- I would have waited until a developer owned land before drafting the plan
- Look at cities waterfronts like Halifax and Kelowna. Add a boardwalk close to the river with stops
- Time and the ability to make changes if necessary as the plan progresses
- Make members of the rest of the City feel involved – it will take everyone's help and ideas to make these projects work.
- Each resident to be kept up to date with meetings at schools, churches etc.
- Timeline moved up
- You need to incorporate the South Flats area into the plan!! Extremely shortsighted for this not to be considered.
- I would like to see the entire draft plan begin quicker than proposed. We are already behind Calgary and Edmonton.
- Information as to how development decisions are to be made interim
- Maybe I would add some potential costs to do some of the real items.
- Adopt Winnipeg's Derelict Building Bylaw. (Given 3 Months to improve? Or confiscate property?)
- I think you should start by adding commercial land base to downtown area, and then do a plan on the increased area. Here you have tried to have a plan limiting commercial area to existing boundaries and surrounding it with high density. Surrounding with high density might work but not if you do not first define the total community land base.
- Given that the CPR station is a National Historic Site and was originally designed as a combination station and hotel, I believe that there are additional incentives to work with.
- Reference: Native history of the area (Cree and Blackfoot, Métis) early pioneers natural history of area (like Police Point Park)

General Comments

- Go with it
- Nothing, we think it's great
- Looks nice however I do not think the current City bureaucracy is capable of seeing it through
- The plan has imposed a sense of contemporary urbanization or urban renewal, mostly it seems, architects or urban planners vision for a "trendy space". The plan doesn't seem to connect with the neighbourhood as it isseems externally imposed??? The Veiner Centre isn't referred to once (that I find); there's little reference to the kind of social amenities (child care centres for example that such an area might benefit from).
- Not sure
- I wouldn't add anything...much has been proposed
- I have to say this is very well laid out, very good input over the last 1 ½ years.
- Nothing
- The river flooded 15 years ago and still no dyke protection for the area. Design for 1:100 flood – not some other unreasonable criteria. Just get it done!
- I like most of the things – can't think of anything to add
- Are there any considerations to the existence and reality of it being built on the flood plain of the South Saskatchewan River?
- Leave the name the Flats as is – "if it isn't broke don't fix it"

3. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE *DRAFT PLAN*?

#1 Priority

Pedestrian/Cycling

- Enhance walkways
- Make the areas accessible to pedestrians
- Movement – bike paths system

Vehicular/Parking

- Streets
- The City has control of transportation, a good place to lead.
- Make the areas accessible to traffic

Railway

- Start with the removal of the rail yards. There is no reason for the rail yards to be in the City with all the wasteland east of the City. Leave the main line through the City. Other cities, e.g. Bismarck ND, have connected areas on both sides of the tracks.
- CPR regarding the following: Relocation the marshalling yards to Dunmore (where a large marshalling yard already exists, specifically due to the Crowsnest line starts there).

Connections

- Connecting with CPR and businesses in the North Railway mixed use area
- Pedestrian – overpass and walkways
- Begin with trail system (bridges) immediately (and underpass)
- Changing the tunnel for better access between Downtown and the Flats.
- Better access to North Railway
- Improved accessibility

Aesthetics/Safety/Heritage Preservation

- Definitely maintain heritage area
- Large sidewalks
- Lighting

Uses

- Infill
- Increase family housing opportunities
- Buying up and demolishing substandard housing
- Begin parks/trees
- Would like to see the Chinese tunnels opened up for tourists which would bring in revenue
- Must take firm stand to develop areas of interest – such as public market shown, coffee houses, shopping, not just talk and striking lots of committees to look into things.
- Let's get the artisan/farmers market going now!
- Would be nature, a lot of people have dogs that need more nature
- Continue to develop Elm Street School
- Less building of new complexes and implement current complexes
- Preserve areas known as green space
- Creating residential (safe) neighbourhoods around given design guidelines.
- Redevelop area: arena, parking lot, ballpark and curling rink.
- Development of arena area
- Create a sense of place
- Creating sense of place – great gathering places that are used and valued by the community that gather people together.
- Bring the events centre to this area.
- ...Parks too.

- Dykes
- Retain and maintain existing buildings, parks, physical features
- Market

Implementation

- Incentives for businesses to update.
- Reduce barriers for developers
- Guidelines for home renovations and timelines to finishing projects.
- Budget
- Funding
- Lots of money needs to be spent, someone will have to lead.
- Money allocation
- Keep the public informed and excited
- Approve projects that fit somewhat or that are even better than what is proposed
- Start small, by actually encouraging redevelopment from within, programs to support renovation of resident's homes, planting of trees on boulevards that have lost trees, programs to support boulevard maintenance; paving of alleyways, accessible curbing etc.
- Need to entice 1-2 developers to take a chance and get the "ball rolling"
- A definite proposal
- Policies and political will to implement quickly
- Downtown revitalization
- In an uncertain economy, how will this be paid for?
- Water, sewer, utilities improve the unseen to build better visions.
- Letting renters and owners know the plan
- City Council on side and active
- Community and social development
- Make sure that the local school board does not close Elm Street School. The community will die if we cannot provide schooling for young families.
- Liaison/co-operation with CPR to move the yards to the outskirts
- Focus on Downtown first.
- Residential clean up Bylaw
- Have a plan to begin earlier than 20-30 years
- More residents
- Steadfastness in implementation plan – MPC and Council
- Actually activating the plan
- We need a tax plan to attach to this.
- How much will it cost for developers?
- The area is starting to be redeveloped and this should be done with a clear vision in place.
- Start it. Don't put plans on hold. Do the Downtown first and the high rise in the Flats.

#2 Priorities

Pedestrian/Cycling

- Expansion of trails- pedestrian or cycling connections (2)
- More biking, walking trails

Railway

- Freight yard moved to Suffield
- Leaving the existing tracks #1 & #2 as CPR main line tracks, as they line up with the tracks across the bridge

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Vehicular/Parking

- Better road system to area
- Parking

Connections

- Connectivity with the Historic Clay area in the Flats both with pedestrian pathways and vehicular
- Joining North Railway and shopping area with a over pass (pedestrian)
- Ensure there is adequate accessibility to area.

Aesthetics/Safety/Heritage Preservation

- Relax architectural controls
- Not too much concrete, keep the look
- Maintaining as much historical value as possible and using it to the stakeholder's advantage.

Uses

- The redevelopment of the train station into an Artisan/Farmer's Market (2)
- Working with the Historic Clay District
- Expanded border of Downtown
- Develop a community centre concept (existing plan...sigh!)
- Maintaining a good mix of residential/business/recreational uses
- Houses – do not remove any that don't primarily need to be moved
- North Railway development initiatives
- Emphasis on river, bringing people towards the river
- Local neighbourhood commercial node
- Various areas CPR tracks – probably contaminated deep into the soil.
- Enhance public park services
- Community health/sports facility on arena site
- No high-rise in Riverview
- Create viable areas
- We need to recognize large box stores represent a large carbon footprint because they are located on fringes, require high carbon output to reach, increase cost to transportation and increase local faster (as they put vehicles on the road longer). Current tax policy favours large box and does exactly the opposite of what is needed.
- Historic Clay District – wow!

Implementation

- Promotion of advantages for updating homes with closeness and schools and parks
- Time
- CP Rail will need to be convinced that it's worth their partnership with Medicine Hat
- Put some (all) of the building guidelines in effect asap so that current projects fit into the long term goals
- Getting businesses to buy in
- Cooperation of the people of the area
- Marketing the vision for small and large investment – the rebranding
- Buying land
- Planners keeping at it
- City red tape road blocks must be removed, guidelines set and followed by all departments
- All of us need to lobby the federal government to re-establish rail passenger service.
- Infrastructure repairs - sidewalks, wooden power poles that look as if wind got a hold of them.
- Infrastructure upgrades, sidewalks and roads and allow Flats residents to provide input.
- The will of our City to go forward its being hyped for 35 years now. We have to want to bring it back to life.
- More residents
- Communicating the vision to development – Community UDI & CHBA and MH Construction Association
- How much will it cost for existing owners?

Changed Name

- Do not change the name to River Flats
- Renaming

General Comments

- The area has a bad reputation, "floods", and "drugs" and needs a fresh start.

#3 Priorities

Public Transit

- Fix the transit system

Railway

- Passenger train

Connections

- Connectivity between each side of the railway
- Pedestrian bridge to Police Point

Aesthetics/Safety/Heritage Preservation

- Keeping our City heritage (clay, factory, CPR, all the parks etc.)
- Make buildings welcome and beautiful- note all the US studies that prove street front garages promote alienation, street front porches promote neighbourhoods
- Make sure housing lots are not so close together, it takes away the feeling of space.
- Streetscapes on Maple and Allowance
- Handbook of architectural details that could be used to comply with architectural guidelines (2).
- Make it more appealing
- Ensure future growth/development adhere/respect the historical/physical nature of the area.

Uses

- Let the market work
- The redesigning of the arena as planned.
- Maple Avenue/ North Railway development.
- More density in Downtown residential
- Understand Flats as a seniors enhanced living location (existing plan – sigh!)
- Enforce the removal of condemned properties and encourage redevelopment that meets the needs of the population
- Sense of place
- Leave the river area natural please
- Keep green and park areas.
- Removed abandoned buildings and those that are badly rundown
- Liberating the remainder of the yard downtown for City Development
- Market
- Old Town Neighbourhood

Implementation

- Promoting and getting the public and schools on board
- Coordination
- Make it feasible for artists, vendors etc. to be part of the public market
- Advertising – promotion of the area as an exciting place to live/visit – has to live up to the advertising though.
- Corporate investment
- The financial effect on the existing people, who are responsible for it being at the stage its at now
- Develop it
- Engaging the public
- Encourage the public to get active and get things going
- CPR has to be in agreement or else the areas will still be divided bureaucrats
- Attracting and marketing the areas to developers/funders
- More residents
- Land Base: no one wants to invest in areas that do not have sufficient land base to form a magnet....
- How much will it cost for a tax base for common improvements?

Additional Priorities

- Places for the children to go safely, sidewalks. Promotion of family areas
- Trees
- Residential more than two floors
- Transportation – how will it work? Must be reasonable, must be convenient...
- Good bus service

4. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON REBRANDING THE COMMUNITY TO “RIVER FLATS”?

In Favour of the Change

- A great idea—a good attempt to remove stigma the area has at present. I foresee the single family residential homes becoming sought after because the lot sizes will accommodate larger homes.
- I do not mind, “River Flats”. I prefer “River Flats” to anything with the word, “railroad”
- Is an excellent idea
- I think it may be necessary to use the name, “River Flats” as “The Flats” has a bad representation with many people.
- Again, the externally imposed “fix” rebuild to eliminate all the negative connotations. Leave as it is, and work toward the neighbourhood defining itself and changing the associations to the name “Flats”
- Probably good, as when the river floods so do the Flats. Might be wise to build a levy system for the river and creeks
- The “Flats” sounds flat – so yes change it...
- I like the name “River Flats” (2)
- Great, new restart, new name
- Great it’s a great idea (heritage and scenic) that would do well if revitalized. New start, new name (3).
- Anything to clean up the Flats and get rid of the stigma
- Good (3)
- Better than “the flats” – the place not to live. Like the improved CPTED
- Excellent! The name preserves the historical integrity of the area, but the “re-branding” gives impetus to the future.
- Great! Comment re: North Railway development - perfect for markets etc. Area has been neglected for development.
- Okay.
- River Flats is excellent for the North Flats. Not an appropriate name for the South Flats. I suggest the name “Mill Flats” for the South Flats – 3 flour mills from the last turn of the century were all located in the south flats. One is still operable (Ogilvie or ADM) – Spencer Street. One Maple Leaf Mills – Kipling Street, One Lake of the Woods – Still standing on South Railway Street.
- Adequate, however not overly creative – we could do better.
- Anything is better than “the Flats” it’s depressing. Give use something we can be proud of.
- Good idea (2). “Flats” as it is now, equates in my mind with “flooding” and nothing positive.
- River Flats would be in keeping with the old name
- River Flats is ok
- Gives the area a better appeal as it has often been reflected to as the slums of the City
- Great idea, just “Flats” denotes slum area. Our Flats are sure not that.
- I like the new or amended name! I agree with this suggestion and direction.
- River Flats is almost implied. “Flats” keeps historical aspect. River gives more of an upscale image. Will take time to make the transition.
- Great improvement – improves the stigma attached to the Flats
- The name Flats is historic. It should be left with the name Flats. Good name!!
- Yes, yes, yes
- After completing the questionnaire I remember more history in regards to the South Flats area (from South Railway Street to the hills by Kingsway, etc). This is the area in which I grew up, so it is special to me. [Edited]. Regarding the Steering Committee’s recommendation to re-brand the community from “The Flats” to “River Flats”. I totally agree with the proposed name, but only for the North Flats area. The South Flats area is quite a distance from the river and I would suggest the name “Mill Flats” for this area. In my questionnaire that I dropped in the box I mentioned that to back up this name, there were 3 flour mills in

that area. However, I now realize that there were 5 mills; those being: Maple Leaf Mills – Kipling Street. Only the elevators are still standing and are now operated by Parrish and Heimbecker. Lake of the Woods Mills – South Railway Street. The building is still highly visible, but no longer producing flour. Ogilvie Flour Mills/ADM – Spencer Street – still operating as a flour mill. These three flour mills came to Medicine Hat in the early 1900s and employed thousands of people. [Edited]. Also Linseed Oil Mill – Allowance Avenue and no longer there was operated by the Yuill family for many years. Another mill was the Puffed Wheat Mill located at the corner of Spencer Street and Kingsway Avenue, by the creek. This was operated by the Dederer family. You can see that in a very small area, 5 mills operated and contributed for the City for many years, employing thousands of people. I sincerely hope that the Steering Committee will consider the name “Mills Flats” for the South Flats section of the City.

Not in Favour of the Change

- River Flats sounds terrible. I don't know how you can connect the two. It's as bad as changing 1st, 2nd, 3rd street numbers and streets that have been “ok'd” by hundred of citizens of this city. Why change and for what purpose. Don't destroy the “Flats” name or the “Flats” area. Regarding the transit department. There's an area that can stand close scrutiny. There's something else to consider. In the City of Medicine Hat, your population is 98% of all people drive their own vehicles. If you're in the minority you're pushed aside like a Russian thistle. In the 98%, people don't have any idea of a bus run, bus route, bus drivers, bus management, and I add care less on the department itself. Your system on river side has been terrible. Riverside routes are far gone. To catch one bus to the Hat Mall, or ...mall from Riverside, one has to walk 6 blocks to catch a bus at the Transit Terminal, on returning to one's habitat of life, we walk another 2 blocks, were not Calgary, but we are not making it be made easier. Your general public does not care for the Transit Department, even less for the people who take it. They have no knowledge about any part of its operation. Riverside has the poorest run route I've ever seen. These young people who run buses, run routes and service people must have to memorize every inch they run. Your general public doesn't know any knowledge of bus management and care less for bus patrons... Straighten out one mess before approaching anymore problems. Please consider what you people propose to do with this department. As for habitat able living, consider building some brand new condos in the IGA store area. For low income seniors, or low income adults. With bus routes with no hand. Custodian care, security will at hand drug free, peaceful area. This could improve your area will at hand. City Hall blocks all traffic of any sort by revamping Finlay Bridge, will make everyday living for a lot very difficult. Said four months could stretch into 6. Meaning City Hall doesn't care for its people. Money given to them last year should have gone into making of a brand new bridge instead of a shaking antique land mark. Your Council is not interested in anything but landmark history. It will be a long time before your so called blueprints or drafts will be presented to Council. Please consider what your company really plans to do.
- Forget it (4)
- Take the Flats name out otherwise is will always be called “Flats”.
- I'm not sure about keeping the word “Flats”. Too much history (negative) to that word for the community - just like other words that have been dropped in other sectors, i.e. mentally retarded, mentally handicapped, persons with developmental disabilities.
- ...doesn't sound right
- ...Have no problem with “Flats” though
- Rebranding is a gimmicky irrelevant strategy for change when real change is needed
- I would say that re-making anything in this city would be an insult. We have been Riverside, the Flats forever. My thought would be no thanks
- Names must come from bottom not top – don't do it
- I do not feel that we need a name change – change the way people view “The Flats”
- It sucks, leave it as the flats.
- Need to drop the word “Flats” as it has a slum connotation to some.
- “River Flats” is urban hill billy.
- I think “River Flats” lacks creativity and vision.
- Rebranding won't make any difference unless the area moves upscale.
- ...but I don't think there is anything wrong with just Flats
- Really don't like it, kind of like “River Rats”. That may be the new catch name. Try something that talks about lifestyle.

- All it makes me think of is all the people left homeless by the 1995 floods...may be perceived as out of touch and tasteless.
- Waste of time, people will still refer to it as the Flats
- I don't think it should be changed – River Flats sounds so much lower class than just the Flats – I like the original name better.
- What is wrong with The Flats? River Flats sounds a little retirement homeish.
- Not necessary.
- Keep it as “The Flats” (3)
- I have a suggestion. Let's please find a different name other than The Flats. I was born, and raised and still live down here on the Flats with my family. Every time I mention where I live, people look at you and go “ehh the flats”. They think of a scummy, filthy and unsafe area filled with crime and crooks. We have to get rid of the name “Flats” somehow to make the area sound more appealing.

Approach Taken

- Rather have a community contest to let the community decide. The title of “River Flats” could be suggested.
- My only suggestion here is ask the stakeholders business people, school kids, etc. It is their area and they need to take ownership of the vision – perceived or real

Additional Comments

- In my opinion, those people in the community of Medicine Hat whom have lived here for any length of time or are familiar with Medicine Hat will refer to this area of Medicine Hat as the Flats regardless of renaming it or not (7).
- I think the idea of re-branding is a good one – not sure about “River Flats”. It will likely still be shortened to the “Flats” again. I would like to see the area move away from the “Flats” mentality – a total name change would be positive
- Yes (rebranding)
- It has no bearing on the people who probably won't change the name in their minds
- Same as changing to metric – just more politics and cost to make unnecessary changes
- Who will follow the idea? Except real estate sales people
- Mixed on this
- Will always be known as North and South Flats. Rebranding promote a sense of community or increase division. I see the area needs to compliment the CCDA.

Alternative Names for “Flats” Area

- Plain “River Valley” (2)
- I love remaining the whole area as “Old Town” (2) – this expression has a distinct, quaint neighbourhood flavour to it.
- Why not use...“Clay District”, etc.?
- Change it to the “Valley” (2) because it sounds better than the “Flats”. Agree with re-branding
- Yes, but to “Flats District”
- Prefer “River View on the Flats” or “Parkside” to complement “Riverside”.
- ...and even better remove “Flats” from the name.
- Also like naming districts, “Old Town” and “Park”
- Prefer “River Place” (2)
- “Flats” = boring
- “Riverside” is a basic label for that community but screams of affluence and class...
- Okay – also “River Dale” (2) – rename the streets to their original names.
- How about “River bend”, “Strathcona”, something to get rid of the negative flats stereotype.
- If you have to change it, call it Clay Flats (2).

5. PLEASE CONTRIBUTE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

Transportation

Pedestrian/Cycling

- Trail system (on going work) not evident enough in this plan
- Have the designers ever considered that we live 8 months in winter? What plans are afoot for a pedestrian friendly winter community...the drawings look like Victoria?!
- Think of seniors etc. with canes, walkers on scooters before you put down pavers or stamped concrete – sidewalks. Hated by most in Port Coquitlam, BC. The uneven walkways from pavers and slippery finish on stamped concrete
- Trail systems are excellent but needs more public relief areas that are open all the time. Side walks need to be wheel chair friendly in major areas.

Public Transit

- ...transit plan (on going work) not evident enough in this plan
- You shouldn't move existing bus stops – can you put the bus stop back that was across from St. Pats Church?
- The City bus should still stop across the street from St. Pat's Church on Riverside. There are a lot of apartment buildings beside that bus stop (old bus stop). Also a lot of people use the bus to go to church.

Railway

- I would love to see the passenger train brought back
- This community needs to have the CPR yard moved to Dunmore:
 1. Health hazard
 2. More green space if it is removed
 3. Keep CPR for passenger travel.

Connections

- Love the idea of a bike/pedestrian bridge to Police Point Park and vehicle traffic to Clay district from Strathcona.

Aesthetics

- Just do it to beautify our City and attract more people. This area needs to become more full or activity.
- Handbook of architectural details to make the builder's job easier.
- Relocating and restoring the 1929 Bullman Sleeper (now Medalta Property, but currently sitting in CPR yards) to the CPR station area for use as an exhibit item, after suitable restoration.

Uses

- Take care of the children – places for them to go safely will ensure and attract future generations to live and stay
- Please consider docking areas along the river – our river would be used more. What about a...? to raise the level to give us a lake through Medicine Hat.
- Ensure a mix of housing to encourage economic diversity – move from “the low side” to a mix like riverside.
- The Flats should be maintained as a mostly single family home area
- New housing no taller than existing homes.
- The Flats is a great neighbourhood. Best residential land in the City.
- It is more enjoyable to look at an area that blends in rather than stands out. The feeling of spaces comes from being able to see sun rise at 6am not 3 hours (river development → Lions Park and Strathcona saved a lot of houses during two major floods. These could be enhanced to serve this purpose) later because of tall buildings (housing recreation)
- Like green areas and parks kept intact. The connection to Police Point Park is a great idea.
- Strathcona Centre in the park needs to be used better than is (2-3 times yearly)
- A farmer's market near the core would be wonderful. Historically the market was where the City bus terminal is.

- Would really like to see North Railway come alive! Has a load of potential. It is also great to see there is a plan inclusion of Elm Street School. I love those old brick school houses used instead of demolished.
- Redeveloping the CPR station as a point of focus in the area as a railway museum etc.
- Relocating the two diesel F units currently in Riverside Memorial Park to tracks near the station.

Implementation

- Council has had numerous opportunities to affect change in the “Flats and Downtown” and continually back down. The location of the arena in the Flats would (in my opinion) have been the catalyst to begin change from a residential and commercial perspective. Thanks for this opportunity.
- The Flats has great attributes and need to be promoted to be more visible in the community of Medicine Hat
- I like the open house and other community awareness ideas. A project like this is so much easier to implement with community support.
- We really have made a huge mistake by not having the Events Centre in this area of the City. The Events Centre would develop the whole area including Downtown
- Really encouraged by the vision – now we need commitment to make it a reality!
- What sort of compensation will be made for the house that will be torn down for the multi-dwelling complexes? Will it only be the City’s assessment of land value or something else?
- Keep people informed of the progress so if they have any input they will let it be known
- Stay the course!
- Enlist private sector champions to make major financial investments
- The Flats have been neglected for a long time and we are paying a dear price for it- vandalism, drugs. Crime. Firm action, not words, need to be taken
- When can we get started, the sooner the better!
- People are tired of hearing about downtown revitalization if nothing happens or happens too slower piecemeal, people lose interest. Need to get ideas and start solidly and forcefully – don’t let people lose interest in this draft plan as well.
- Keep promoting the clay district – the best tourist site in town – encourage supportive development around it. Instead of just talking for years on a few plans to give people some hope.
- This would create a long (years) period of “Construction Zone” areas
- Do you think there will be that many hundreds of people who want to live downtown without yards – maybe it will be a new age of home owners.
- I would prioritize the Flats development over the Downtown.
- I would be happy to sit on any committees needed.
- I very much like this and support the implementation ASAP
- Will the neighbourhood parks/playgrounds reflect/ carry on the sense of place of each of the communities.
- By-law enforcement against non-standard, sub-standard or non-compliant buildings requires City commitment
- What about improving flood protection for areas in the flood plain?

General Comments

- Liked the FARP better than the DTARP
- [Edited]. We moved to the Flats because of the beauty of the boulevard streets and magnificent elms. We knew it was a matter of time to revitalize and rejuvenate the natural and historical beauty of this area. Well done!! Love it...so exciting!
- I lived in the Flats for a number of years and loved the sense of community, nearby parks and close proximity to Downtown. I don’t live in the Flats now but support efforts to redevelop it.
- The South Flats should have been included!
- Kingsway and South Railway NEED to be improved!
- One can’t help but be skeptical of such projects. The last one I attended had a new arena built in the Flats recommended by the consultants for all manner of good reasons. Now that vision is replaced by high-density housing. Now there is a real improvement!!! (not!)
- I note that the plan’s “guiding principles” say nothing about the Flats as a community (i.e. the people and the collective character their hopes and aspirations). The result is a “cold” plan overall, a collection of little gentrification mini-projects (a market here, a condo development there)—not an organic vision of a people’s place.

- Words like “promote”, “foster”, “create”, “preserve”, “respect”, “encourage”, “nurture” – just warm and fuzzy but wishy washy. Let’s get more concrete.
- Keep name consistent: Downtown District, Railway District, Flats District, and River District
- A one of a kind opportunity to redevelop a unique community – park, river, trail and history – Let’s do it!
- Flood worries should not be of a concern, cost of doing business. Halifax gets damage to their waterfront every year due to storms, hurricanes, etc.
- Great work on putting this together! It will take a bit of time to digest several years’ worth of your studies, projections, plans etc. I trust City Hall will have the foresight and wisdom not to mention common sense and courage to implement these plans. Thank you!
- The City of Medicine Hat needs to be commended for establishing the vision and principles for this special area of our community.
- The river is a long distance from the South Flats area – off Kingsway to railway tracks.
- I would live in this area with the information you supply. I [Edited] find there were too many uncaring landlords raking in rental income without being connected to their community. [Edited].
- Good job thinking ahead (2).
- Well thought out plan.
- You have done an excellent job.
- Thank you!
- I attended the display of the Downtown and Flats Redevelopment Plans. Well done! Good ideas!