



OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

PART B.13

Warehouse District Neighbourhood Plan



Regina OCP – Part B

Part B.13 – Warehouse District Neighbourhood Plan

BACKGROUND

The Warehouse District is defined as the area bounded by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) yards, 4th/Ross Avenue, Albert Street and Winnipeg Street (Map 1).

This area is unique in containing many multi-storey warehouses built prior to the 1930's. Rail line spurs that once crossed the area have been removed or abandoned, excepting the line connecting the Canadian National Railway (CNR) to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) yards, and the tracks located adjacent to 4th Avenue. Newer development is interspersed throughout, particularly along Albert, Broad and Winnipeg Streets.

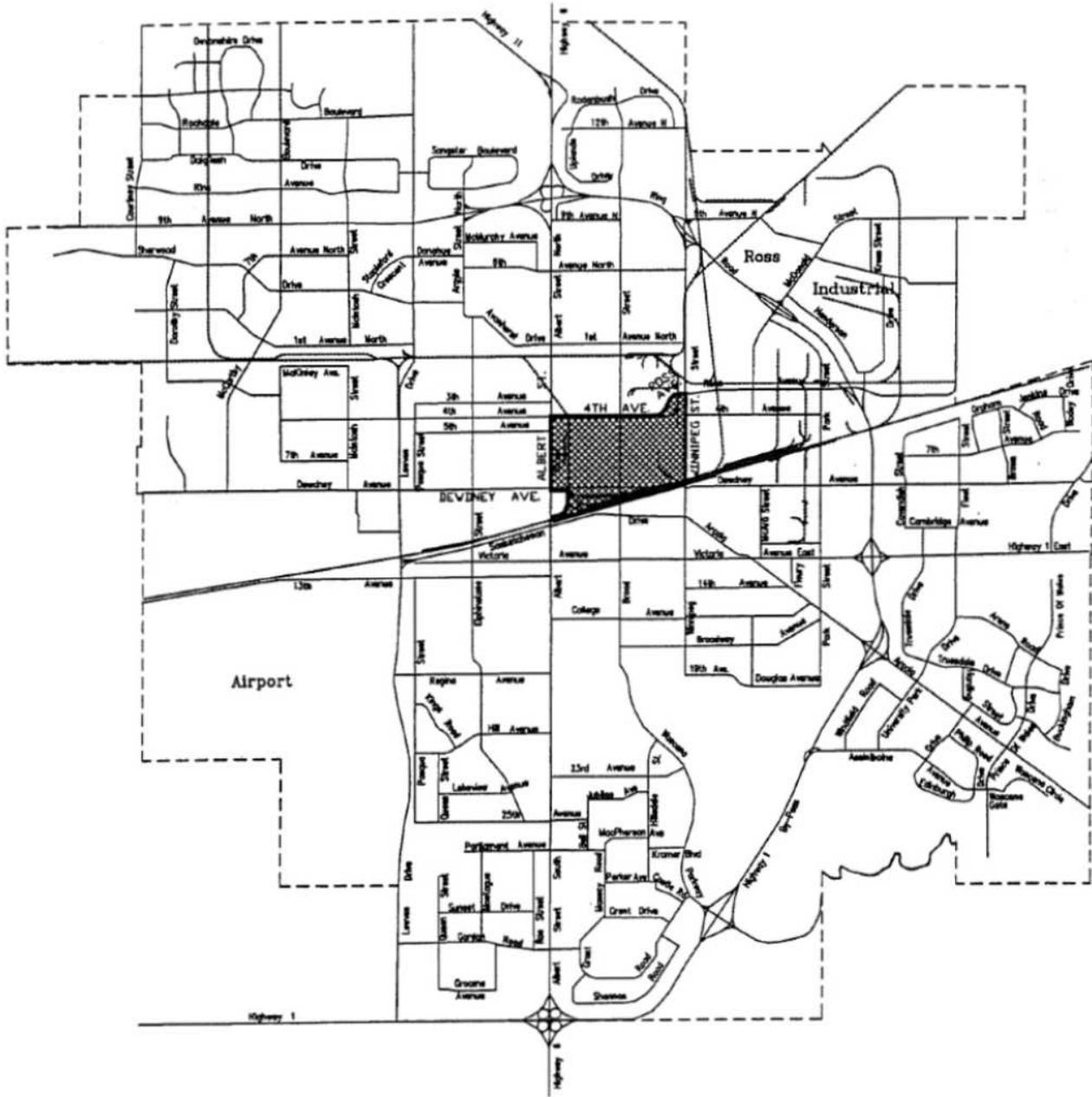
Historically, development of the Warehouse District complemented the CPR station and freight yards. The need to serve the surrounding farming community also encouraged the development of farm machinery and implement dealerships in the District. Other commercial enterprises followed, strengthening Regina's position as an important wholesale and distribution centre. Simpson's and Eaton's established mail order facilities in the Warehouse District during World War I. A rise in the trade and business activity of Regina contributed to Eaton's converting a portion of its mail order operations into a retail outlet in 1926. During the same period, sale of farm equipment grew to great proportions enhancing the operations of implement dealers in the District. In 1928, the General Motors assembly plant began its operations. Economic depression during the 1930s resulted in general commercial and industrial stagnation until the onset of World War II.

The post-World War II period saw economic resurgence generated primarily by improved agricultural practices and a growing demand for farm produce. This prosperity provided a solid base for Regina's economy and growth. Up until the mid- 1950s, the Warehouse District remained the focus of local industry. However, rapid population growth and a need for land for industrial development resulted in the establishment of Ross Industrial Park to the northeast.

The role of the Warehouse District in Regina's development has changed considerably since its early formative period. Rail dominance gave way to the car and truck as the primary means of transportation of goods and people to, from and within Regina. Suburban residential growth, coupled with the decentralization of retail, warehousing and industrial land uses, diminished the importance of the Warehouse District.

More recently, many new businesses representing a great diversity of land uses have become established in the Warehouse District. Its central location and the low cost of rental space are identified as primary reasons for locating in the District.

WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - LOCATION



LEGEND



Warehouse District


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MAP 1

PLANNING CONTEXT

The *Design Regina Plan* provides for the adoption of secondary plans.

Current conditions providing a new context for the area's development include:

- the new *Design Regina Plan* adopted in 2013 which identifies the need for the preparation of a concept plan for this area;
- The Planning and Development Act, 2007 and The Heritage Property Act which provide for municipal authority to apply design controls or guidelines as may be warranted in an area;
- changing economic circumstances;
- recognition of Dewdney Avenue as "Saskatchewan's Heritage Street" to promote cultural appreciation, tourism and economic development;
- the potential for development of some of the lands associated with the existing C.P. Rail yards;
- the emergence of a cultural, arts, entertainment and hospitality area having a focus on Dewdney Avenue.

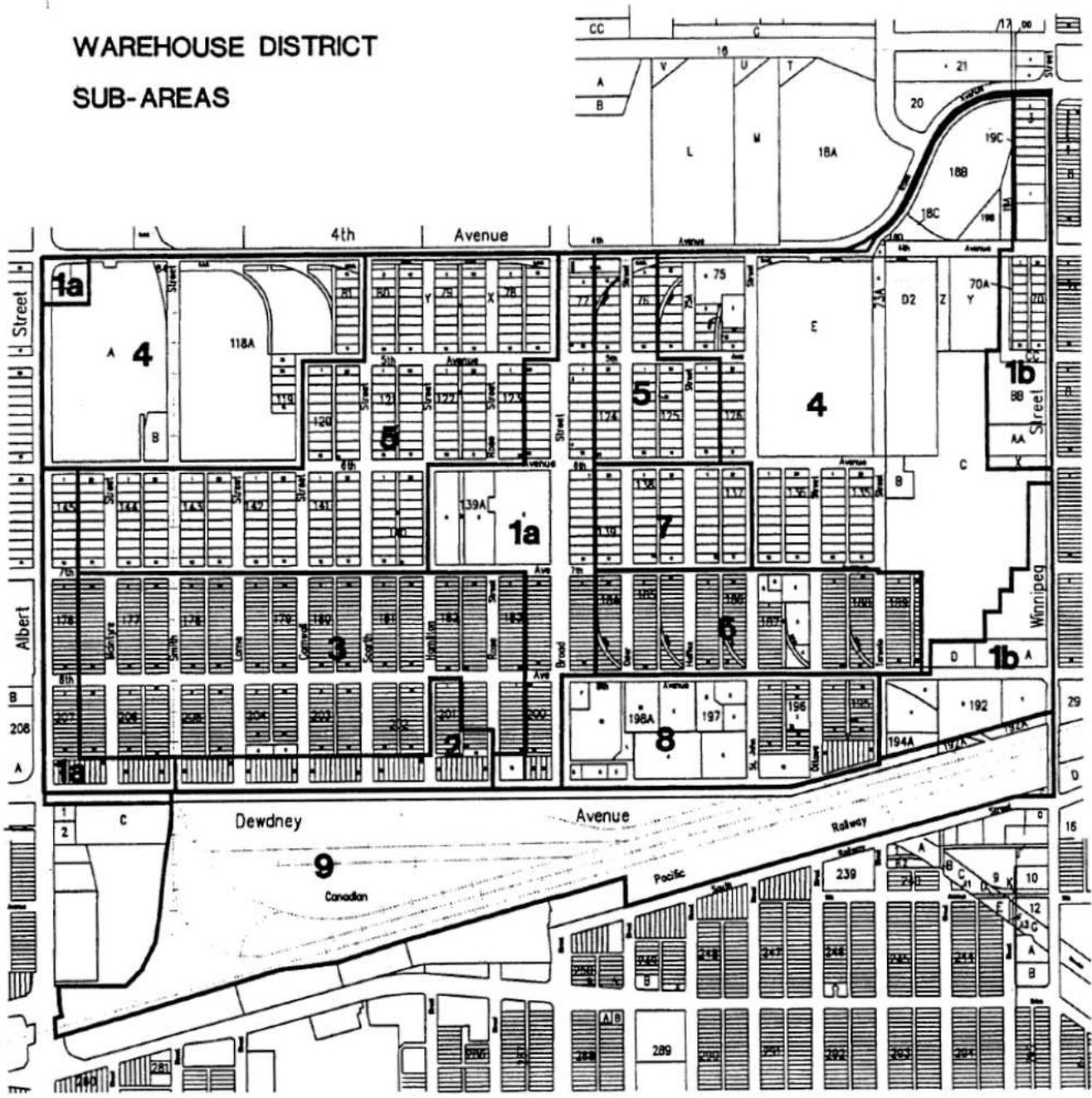
SUB-AREAS

The Warehouse District consists of approximately 80 city blocks occupied by nearly 600 businesses on over 400 individually owned properties. Sub-areas having common land use characteristics can be categorized as shown on Map 2 and described as follows:

<u>Sub-Area</u>	<u>Description</u>
1a	High Traffic, Newer Development, Retail/Service Uses
1b	High Traffic, Service/Office/Industrial Uses
2	Historic Dewdney Avenue Streetscape, Multi-Storey Warehouse Buildings, Limited Parking, High Traffic, Adaptive Reuse (Mixed Commercial/Industrial, Entertainment)
3	Diverse Mix of Commercial/Industrial Uses, Small/Old Buildings on Small Sites, Limited Parking
4	Industrial, Large Sites, Storage/Maintenance (eg. City and Sask Power Yards)
5	Industrial/Commercial Mix, Large Sites, Outdoor Storage
6	Industrial/Commercial Mix, Limited Retail/Service Use
7	Historic Multi-Storey Warehouse Buildings, Adaptive Reuse (Retail Specialization - eg. Furniture Sales)
8	Industrial, Large Sites, Large Buildings, Public Utilities

In recognition of this diversity, smaller, more manageable sub-areas will be defined with concept plans prepared and adopted accordingly. Definition of sub-areas and plan preparations will occur in consultation with businesses and property owners, and through the formation of citizen advisory committees. This will assist in identifying differences between areas in terms of issues, strengths and weaknesses, which will lead to more specific action/s for each, as appropriate. However, common goals will link sub-areas of the Warehouse District which share similar characteristics. Planning based on this approach will provide a greater chance for the successful development and implementation of more focused initiatives.

WAREHOUSE DISTRICT SUB-AREAS



LEGEND

SUB-AREAS

- 1a Albert/Broad Street Strip Development
- 1b Winnipeg Street Strip Development
- 2 Dewdney Avenue (Albert Street to Broad Street)
- 3 Small Business Commercial Core
- 4 Land Extensive Industrial
- 5 Industrial Commercial Transition (1)
- 6 Industrial Commercial Transition (2)
- 7 Warehouse Commercial
- 8 Industrial
- 9 C.P.R. Lands

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MAP 2
Not To Scale

1.0 AREA 1 - DEWDNEY AVENUE AND ENVIRONS

Based on consultation with a citizen advisory committee, Area 1 (bounded by Dewdney Avenue/C.P. Rail, 8th Avenue, Albert Street and Broad Street - Map 3) was defined as the first priority for Plan preparation.

1.1 GENERAL LAND USE

Dewdney Avenue provides a distinctive streetscape representing an historic era in Regina's urban development. The street offers almost continuous frontage of large old buildings, typically multi-storey and of masonry construction. Several properties are listed in the City's Heritage Holding Bylaw as potential municipal heritage properties. Two properties, the Ackerman Building (2128/32 Dewdney Avenue) and the Campbell, Wilson and Strathdee Warehouse (2206 Dewdney), have been designated as municipal heritage properties.

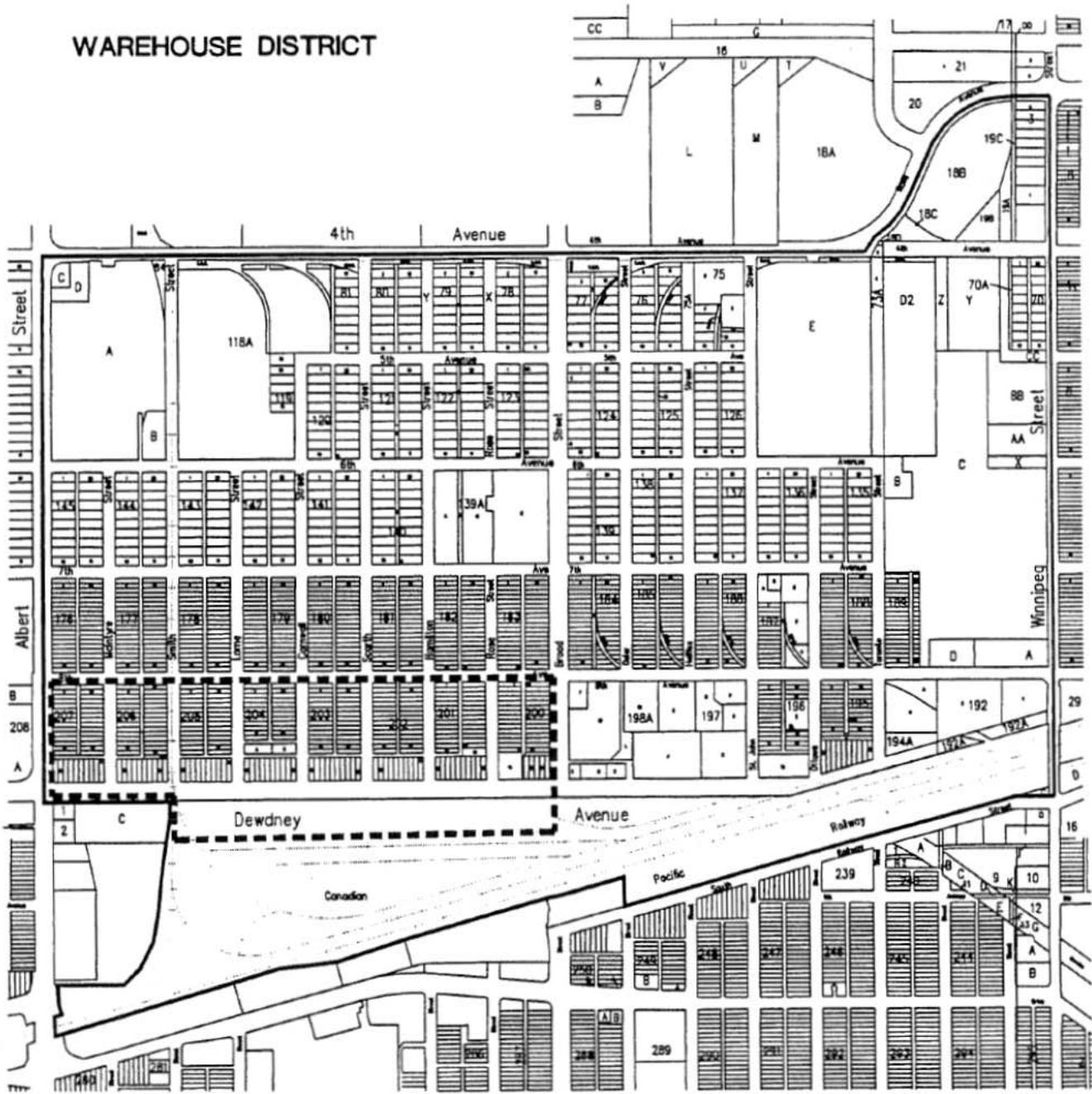
Historically, buildings on Dewdney Avenue were used primarily for wholesaling and warehousing. Some wholesale and warehouse activities continue on the street, but retail, office, entertainment, and residential condominium uses are becoming increasingly evident. The adaptive re-use of historic structures is creating a distinctive commercial precinct along Dewdney Avenue.

Land use immediately to the north of Dewdney Avenue is characterized by a wide variety of smaller sized commercial enterprises many of which occupy older, one-storey buildings located on fully developed and often small sites.¹ Many businesses have indicated that competitive pricing of space for sale or lease attracted them to the area.

Approximately seven single detached residential buildings are located in the area on Cornwall and Lorne Streets, and are generally in poor condition. Given the surrounding commercial/industrial development, these few remaining single detached residences will likely be redeveloped to more compatible uses. However, residential condominiums are being developed on the upper floors of the old warehouses on Dewdney Avenue.

¹ Newer development has occurred on properties fronting Albert and Broad Streets on the edges of Area 1.

WAREHOUSE DISTRICT



LEGEND

 Area 1

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MAP 3
 Not To Scale

1.2 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

A special development theme is emerging in Area 1 with arts, entertainment and hospitality establishments locating there. A dynamic mix of uses amid architecturally prominent and historic buildings contributes to this uniqueness. These characteristics, combined with a central location and association with Regina's downtown area, offer opportunities for enhancement. The location of a major casino at the VIA Rail Station site furthers the potential for development relating to tourism, culture and general hospitality.

In addition to arts, entertainment and hospitality, many other commercial and light industrial uses are currently operating in Area 1 north of Dewdney Avenue. These businesses contribute to the area's diversity.

While the area's historical development provides a unique setting, these same features present constraints to its use and development. The adaptive reuse of many older buildings is not always economically viable as more current building code regulations may require substantial building alterations. Sites are almost fully developed leaving little opportunity to provide off-street parking for patrons and employees. Convenient pedestrian access from the downtown is restricted by the C.P. Rail yards. Some businesses have expressed concern that business taxation is excessive and affects their on-going viability.² Competition from home-based retailers (eg. arts/crafts "cottage" industries) offers a further challenge to small business development in the area.

1.3 ISSUES

Several specific issues have been identified as concerns in Area 1.

1.3.1 Organization and Identity

While the area's physical uniqueness may be leading to the emergence of cultural, arts and entertainment activities, there is no organization to identify, coordinate and promote common interests.

1.3.2 Built Environment

While the City has been renewing streets, sidewalks and underground services, all needs have not been fully addressed. Dewdney Avenue, the area's potential showcase street, is in need of renewal.

Varying levels of property maintenance also contribute to some unsightliness in the area. Proximity to the C.P. Rail yards provides an abrupt interface between the prominent warehouse architecture and the rail marshalling yards and freight terminals immediately to the south.

² While this concern is noted, it cannot be resolved through this Plan under the authority of The Planning and Development Act, 1983.

1.3.3 Parking and Traffic Safety

The adequacy of on- and off-street parking in the area requires consideration. The availability of on-street parking is limited by extensive driveway crossings which serve area businesses. Customer traffic combines with truck service/freight deliveries to create traffic conflicts.

Off-street parking is limited, partially due to many sites being fully developed prior to the widespread use of the private automobile. In order not to stifle the adaptive re-use of older buildings, associated off-street parking requirements are reduced.³ Parking and traffic congestion have been intensified as a result. Estimates indicate that required off-street parking is deficient by 50 - 75 % if normal development standards are applied.

Some under-developed or vacant lands are being used for parking but in a relatively uncontrolled/haphazard manner. In particular, the south side of Dewdney Avenue is used for parking, encouraging uncontrolled pedestrian crossings to/from businesses located on the north side.

Poor lighting in parts of the area also contributes to the concern for pedestrian safety.

1.4 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

A unique commercial environment is evolving in Area 1. Its on-going development may be enhanced by:

- emphasizing arts, entertainment and hospitality including a focus for artisans (ie. production, display, sales);
- retaining a mix of compatible commercial and industrial land uses;
- providing unique residential living opportunities (eg. mixed residential/commercial use of upper floors of historic warehouse buildings);
- encouraging specialty shops offering hand crafted items;
- providing opportunities for special events/festivals;
- improving its image and creating a distinctive identity associated with its role(s) in local history.

These attributes may be best cultivated within a safe and pleasant environment.

Goal

The goal of this Plan is to encourage the development of a unique commercial area which includes arts, entertainment and hospitality as part of its development.

³ In the WH - Dewdney Avenue Warehouse Zone parking requirements are reduced by 50 %. Further reductions are often granted by the Development Appeals Board upon appeal by developers. Payment in-lieu of actual parking provision is also an available option, albeit one that is seldom used.

Objectives

The objectives of this Plan (Area 1) are:

- a) to coordinate area interests which would facilitate business/cultural development and property improvement;
- b) to encourage the adaptive re-use of historic buildings and physical development/redevelopment which is sensitive to the area's historic character;
- c) to improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety/access;
- d) to encourage commercially-oriented light industrial development; and
- e) to maintain existing stable and compatible industrial uses.

1.5 POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

1.5.1 Organization to Promote Common Interests

In order that common interests can be established and advanced, a formal organization is required. This organization would be best constituted by representatives from the area's businesses and cultural organizations. Initially, an association could be formed to assist in meeting this Plan's objectives in addition to fostering other mutually beneficial interests. Other forms of organization such as a Business Improvement District may become viable and effective in the future, perhaps incorporating other businesses and interests of the larger Warehouse District as a whole.

1.5.1.1 THAT the property owners and businesses be encouraged to:

- a) form an appropriate organization to coordinate area interests relating to:
 - promotion and marketing,
 - business/cultural development,
 - physical maintenance and enhancement, and
 - accessibility and parking.
- b) initiate the establishment of a Business Improvement District in order to plan and initiate improvements in the area.

1.5.2 Built Environment

Area 1 derives much of its uniqueness from the built environment, particularly along Dewdney Avenue. Prominent historic architecture dating from the period 1910 to 1930 provides a distinctive heritage streetscape contributing to Dewdney Avenue's identification as "Saskatchewan's Heritage Street".

Presently, there are no general standards or guidelines in place to assure that the architectural characteristics that define the streetscape are maintained in future development. Further, the pedestrian streetscape lacks the identity and appeal required to complement the historic avenue.

In order to encourage a heritage theme, preserve the distinctive architectural character of prominent historic properties, and enhance the related pedestrian streetscapes with regard to urban design, landscaping, lighting and signage, development guidelines are required. These guidelines may be implemented through designation of an Architectural Control District pursuant to The Planning and Development Act, 1983.

- a) THAT a Capital Works Program be initiated to affect sidewalk enhancements along Dewdney Avenue to improve the pedestrian environment consistent with the historic character of Dewdney Avenue and should include both hard and soft forms of landscaping. A heritage theme should characterize enhancements and provide a common basis for future extension along the rest of Dewdney Avenue (outside of Area 1) in its development as Saskatchewan's Heritage Street.
- b) THAT C.P. Rail and associated intermodal transport facilities be encouraged to improve and develop their properties in a manner which is sensitive to the development and enhancement of Dewdney Avenue as Saskatchewan's Heritage Street and unique commercial area.
- c) THAT the following guidelines be established for consideration in the development of properties in the WH - Dewdney Avenue Warehouse Zone (Zoning Bylaw No. 9250), including the alteration and maintenance of buildings, structures and landscapes:

General

- i) New development should enhance or complement the common design features of the existing and related historic structures and streetscape with regard to:
 - architectural detail, both structural and ornamental;
 - building facing materials, including colour, texture and design;
 - placement of windows and doors;
 - height;
 - scale, proportion and massing;
 - roof shape and pitch;
 - building setbacks and orientation to property lines; and
 - landscaping of yards and pedestrian walks.

- ii) New development located adjacent to a designated Municipal Heritage Property or a property listed on the Heritage Holding List (Schedule "A" to Bylaw No. 8912-HR-B89) should incorporate building materials that are compatible with those of the subject heritage property(ies) with regard to type, colour and texture.
- iii) A use proposed for an existing building should be compatible with the building's structure such that only minimal alterations are required to the building's exterior. The removal or alteration of any historical materials or features should be avoided whenever possible.
- iv) Careful consideration should be given to the placement of mechanical equipment in order to maintain the visual integrity of the architectural characteristics that are appropriate to the WH - Dewdney Avenue Warehouse Zone.

Rehabilitation

- v) Exterior design alterations to existing buildings should be consistent with the building's original architecture and period of construction.
- vi) Distinctive stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship should be preserved and treated sensitively. Where repair or replacement of such features is required, materials and design should match the original as much as possible.
- vii) Cleaning of building exteriors should be undertaken to minimize damage to surfaces and architectural features.
- viii) Rehabilitation of existing properties having minimal or limited historic architectural qualities should be undertaken in a manner which relates to and respects the design elements of neighbouring properties of greater significance and the general historic streetscape.

Landscaping and Lighting

- ix) New street furniture including, but not limited to, light standards, benches and trash receptacles, shall be of a design that complements the historic character of the WH - Dewdney Avenue Warehouse Zone.
- x) New light standards shall be of a scale and lighting intensity so as to enhance the pedestrian environment.

Signs and Awnings

- xi) Signs should be designed to complement the building to which they will be attached with regard to the size, typeface, graphics and materials used for the sign.
- xii) No sign should be of a size or situated in such a manner as to conceal any significant architectural features of a building.
- xiii) Signs shall be limited to the identification of the business being carried out on the premises.
- xiv) Repealed. [Bylaw 2001-98]
- xv) Indirect lighting or neon tube lighting are preferred to back- lit fluorescent sign illumination. When back-lit fluorescent signs are used:
 - only the lettering should be lit;
 - the background of the sign should be a dark or subdued colour that blends in with the building; and
 - light intensity should not conflict with pedestrian-level street lighting.
- xvi) The size and shape of awnings should be compatible with the sizes and shapes of windows and other architectural features.
- xvii) Colours of awnings should be compatible with the colour of the building on which they are situated.
- xviii) Awnings should be installed within masonry openings in a manner that does not obscure details in the masonry or distort the architectural features of the building.

1.5.3 Traffic Management

Pedestrian and vehicular traffic conflicts occur partially due to uncontrolled pedestrian street crossings. Proper provision of off-street parking is lacking in the area. Extensive driveway crossings and unrestricted physical access to properties in some locations have reduced the availability of on-street parking and have contributed to disruptive traffic movements.

- a) THAT off-street public parking be encouraged to develop at suitable locations, particularly in the area north of Dewdney Avenue.
- b) THAT on-street taxi loading zones be established at locations selected in consultation with area businesses.