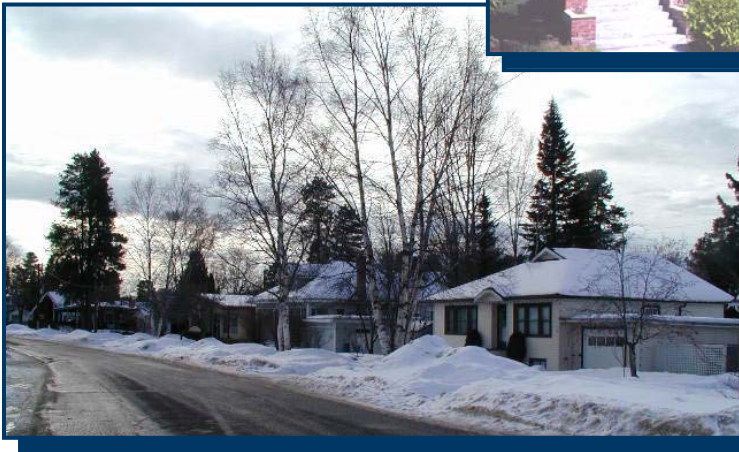




# City of Prince George



November 2003

# *Crescents Neighbourhood Plan*

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## 1.0 Introduction

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The Crescents Neighbourhood Plan is intended to provide more specific land use policy direction under the Official Community Plan and to be the guiding document for rezoning and redevelopment over the next several years.

The services of UMA Engineering Ltd. were acquired to facilitate the preparation of this neighbourhood plan. UMA were involved with conducting public consultation sessions and surveys, as well as preparing reports and draft plans for review under the direction of the Long Range Planning Division of the Development Services Department.

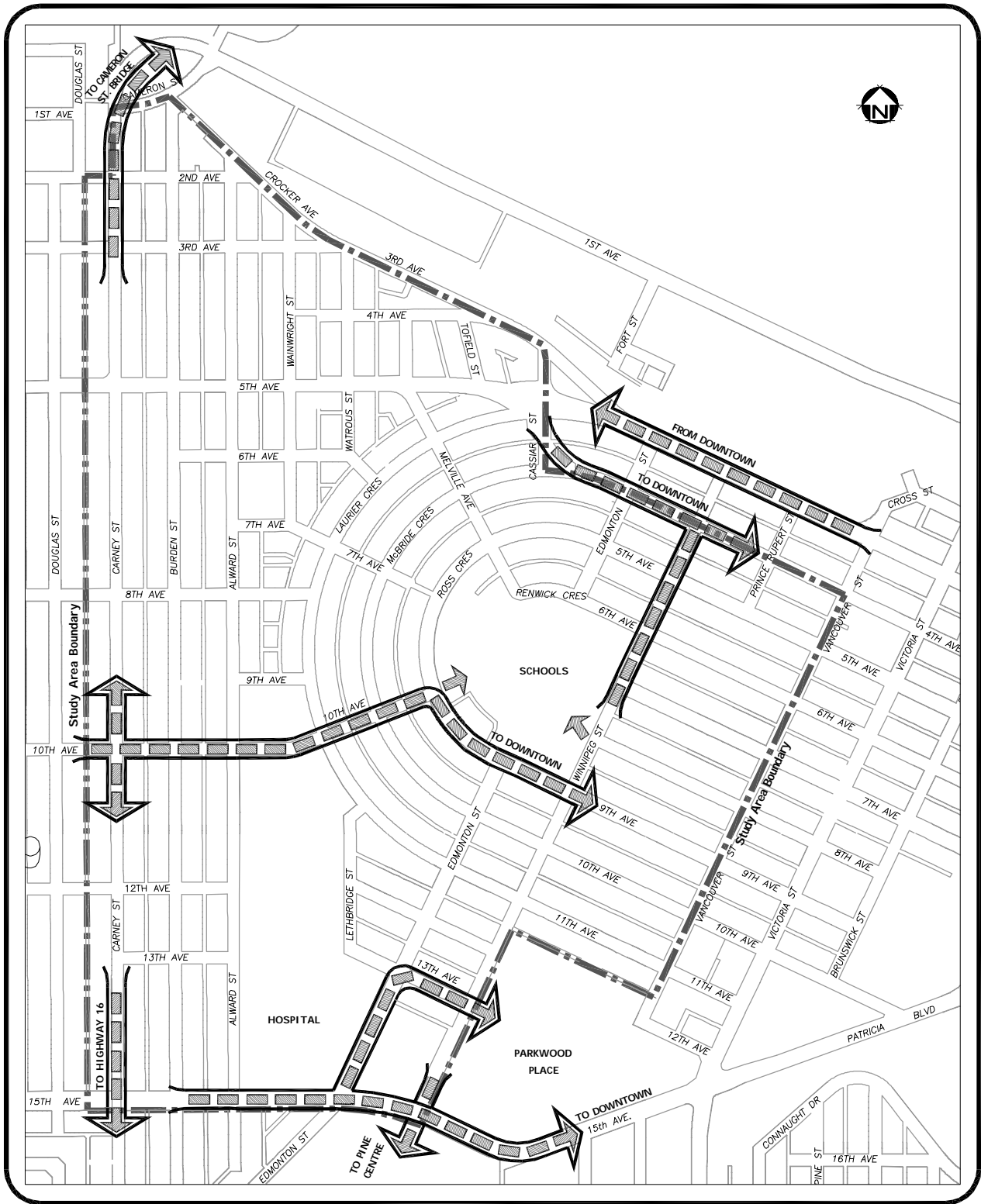
The Crescents Neighbourhood study area is located immediately west of the downtown core of the city and includes the area from 15th Avenue to the escarpment along Crocker Avenue and extends from Vancouver Street to Carney Street. The neighbourhood includes residential areas as well as the Prince George Regional Hospital, the Health Unit, the Phoenix Medical Centre, seniors housing complexes and an intermediate care facility. Also within the plan area are an elementary and secondary school and the school district offices.

The entire Crescents Neighbourhood Plan area is within the original plan for the townsite of Prince George as established by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Co. in 1912 – 1913. The townsite was developed on 1366 acres of land purchased from the Fort George Indian Band, and a Boston architectural firm, Brett, Hall & Co. designed the townsite. The plan was developed based on a site visit and a detailed topographic survey and lots were being sold by 1913. As outlined by J. Kent Sedgwick's "The Downtown Streets of Prince George: A City Beautiful Plan", the design elements were inspired by the "City Beautiful" planning movement which was popular in the United States in the early 1900s. These design elements are evident in the concentric, semi-circular streets which surround Duchess Park Secondary School on the west and which terminate the vistas along the straight portions of Third to Eleventh Avenues. Inherent in the "City Beautiful" design was the idea that a park, "Duchess Park", would provide the green space at the centre of the crescents and at the terminus of Seventh Avenue, a major thoroughfare providing the link from "Princess Park" (City Hall).

Several of the streets in the area have been changed from the original plan, however the principal design elements remain evident.



Today, the area contains a mix of older homes, many constructed in the first half of the 1900s, some newer homes and duplexes interspersed among these and, as well, a multiple family townhousing and apartment development. Within the "heart" of the plan area, the "crescents", there are many older homes with heritage appeal.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PRINCIPAL LINKAGES

City of Prince George  
CRESCENTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Map  
1



14 March 2002

DATA SOURCE: City of Prince George, 1999 (cadastral)

The Crescents is a strategic neighbourhood in the City, given its location close to the downtown and its proximity to several major roads. Important thoroughfares, such as 15<sup>th</sup> connect Highway 97 to the downtown, 5<sup>th</sup> also provides an access downtown, and Winnipeg offers access into the neighbourhood, the hospital area, the school complex, and Parkwood Place. Carney links the area to Highway 16 and to Highway 97 via the Cameron Street bridge. Some of the principal linkages are identified on Map 1.

## **1.1 Relationship to Community Plan**

The City of Prince George adopted its most recent Official Community Plan (OCP) in September, 2001. An Official Community Plan provides an overall strategic land use plan for the city. As the OCP deals with land use objectives for the entire community, given its scope it cannot address some specific issues that arise at the neighbourhood level. Therefore, the broader community plan calls for the implementation of a series of neighbourhood level plans capable of examining issues at the local level. The Crescents Neighbourhood Plan is the first to be initiated.

Within the Official Community Plan the study area is designated Urban, recognizing the existing urban nature of the area, fully developed and serviced. The Plan acknowledges the area is under pressures for redevelopment due to its proximity to the city centre.

Parts of the Crescents Neighbourhood Plan area are identified as transitional residential areas. These are older areas of the city that can be expected to undergo some degree of change in the long-term. For all transitional areas, the OCP emphasizes that redevelopment through advance planning will require involvement of neighbourhood residents prior to rezoning. Where significant change was anticipated, completion of a Neighbourhood Plan was considered mandatory.

Policy 6.3 9 of the OCP provides the following direction:

*c. Redevelopment to higher density multi-family*

*The neighbourhood between Vancouver and Winnipeg streets is recommended for apartments due to the age of the housing stock and its strategic location in the city centre. Future housing in this area may consist of a mix of ground-oriented townhouses and apartments; property assembly is required to create larger sites and improved site design. A small part of this area may be suitable for conversion to residential commercial, although this would have to be established during a Neighbourhood Planning process.*

*d. Redevelopment to professional offices*

*Properties adjacent to the Regional Hospital are well suited for conversion of older homes into professional offices and care facilities which require proximity to hospital services. The Plan supports this transition, and recommends that a new specific zone be established, the exact boundaries to be determined in consultation with neighbourhood residents. Preference should be given to parcels facing hospital facilities."*

## 1.2 Previous Plans

The Crescents area has been the subject of several previous planning studies. Some key points made in those studies are summarized here.

### Vancouver-Winnipeg Study, 1973

This 1973 study by Central Interior Planning Consultants prepared policy recommendation for the redevelopment of this area. The study concluded that the density of the area should increase to 50 units per gross acre (about 125 units per hectare) and that this increase was to be accomplished by a combination of densities (high rise, townhouse and single/two-family). Land use contracts were at that time the method used to exercise direction. The study also proposed to eliminate through traffic on several of the streets to retain the neighbourhood residential character. Open space gained from these street closures were to be used for various recreation purposes. A priority or phasing plan was included and the design criteria was developed.

### Official Community Plan, 1979

The OCP adopted in 1979 designated the entire area as Urban Residential with the exception of Highway Commercial at 5th and Watrous and 5th and Carney, the Hospital designation and designation of the schools. Urban Residential designation included all types of urban serviced residential densities. In the text of the OCP, the Vancouver – Winnipeg area was defined as a special development sub area for which an overall plan was called for. The OCP also called for containment of the Central Business District.

### Central Business District Study, 1980

This study proposed a substantial increase in density in the Vancouver to Winnipeg Street area to form a strong population base for downtown revitalization. It was recognized that the CBD was underutilized and it was strongly recommended that the boundaries of the CBD be contained with no expansion into the residential areas.

### Vancouver – Carney Sector Plan, 1984

The Vancouver-Carney Sector Plan was initiated in 1981 as a response to conflicting development pressures and as a follow-up to the then OCP. At that time the area was being considered for the development of higher density residential because of its proximity to the downtown core. The area was also under pressure to see redevelopment of homes into commercial offices and there were suggestions for strip commercial development along 5th Avenue. Residents however were strongly in support of protecting their lifestyle and preserving the neighbourhood.

The Sector Plan was extensive and contained many recommendations to guide future development over a period of ten years. Many of those recommendations are still valid today; however some are outdated and require review.

Official Community Plan, 1993

This OCP designated the area between Vancouver and Winnipeg Street as RH Residential High density and much of the remaining area as RL Residential Low density. There were scattered RM Residential Medium density designations in recognition of existing uses. The school and hospital sites were identified as Institutional and the commercial sites along 5th Avenue were recognized as Commercial Local.

### 1.3 Community Input

Community participation in this neighbourhood plan has been significant. Early in the process a meeting was held with the Crescents Community Association. Approximately 25 interested participants attended this meeting, organized by the Community Association. The purpose of this initial meeting was to introduce the neighbourhood planning process and to discuss the study area, the tasks and the timeline. A number of neighbourhood concerns were also identified at this first meeting.



Source: "There's Life in these Old Houses: Heritage Homes in Prince George", 1995

A four page survey to obtain comments on key land use issues was then developed in conjunction with the University of Northern BC's Institute for Social Research and Evaluation (ISRE). Approximately 1300 surveys were distributed to property owners and residents within the study area and about 368 surveys were returned, resulting in a return rate of about 28%. The results were analyzed by ISRE. (For more detail, see Appendix A.)

Based on background research and public input various land use options were prepared. A public open house and community meeting was held to discuss the survey results and land use options for the Crescents Neighbourhood. The meeting was lively and well attended with over 120 people in attendance. A further questionnaire was handed out at the public meeting requesting response on the various land use options presented. Comments at the meeting and the survey results were used to move forward to the draft plan stage. A public meeting on the final draft plan, held in April 2002 was attended by nearly 80, and contributed to additional changes which were incorporated in this document.

To supplement these public meetings there have been several other meetings held with representatives of the major medical and institutional facilities in the area, providing input on land use issues and development plans and trends.

## 2.0 Current Land Use

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The largest single land use in the neighbourhood is residential. Residential development in the study area consists primarily of single family residential with some two family units scattered throughout. There are four apartment buildings with between 20 and 30 units each, totalling 109 units in the Vancouver to Winnipeg Street area and one apartment building (29 units) at Renwick and Edmonton Street. There are several townhousing complexes throughout the entire study area, totalling 48 units.

Public Institutional development is the second largest land use category, including school properties and several medical and health related buildings.

School property in the neighbourhood is significant, including a 6 hectare site occupied by Duchess Park Secondary School and King George V Elementary School (now closed) and School District #57 Administration Offices. Also located on that site is a vacant warehouse, formerly housing school district warehousing and maintenance facilities.

Medical and health related facilities are centered around the Prince George Regional Hospital and include Northern Interior Health Unit and an Ambulance station.

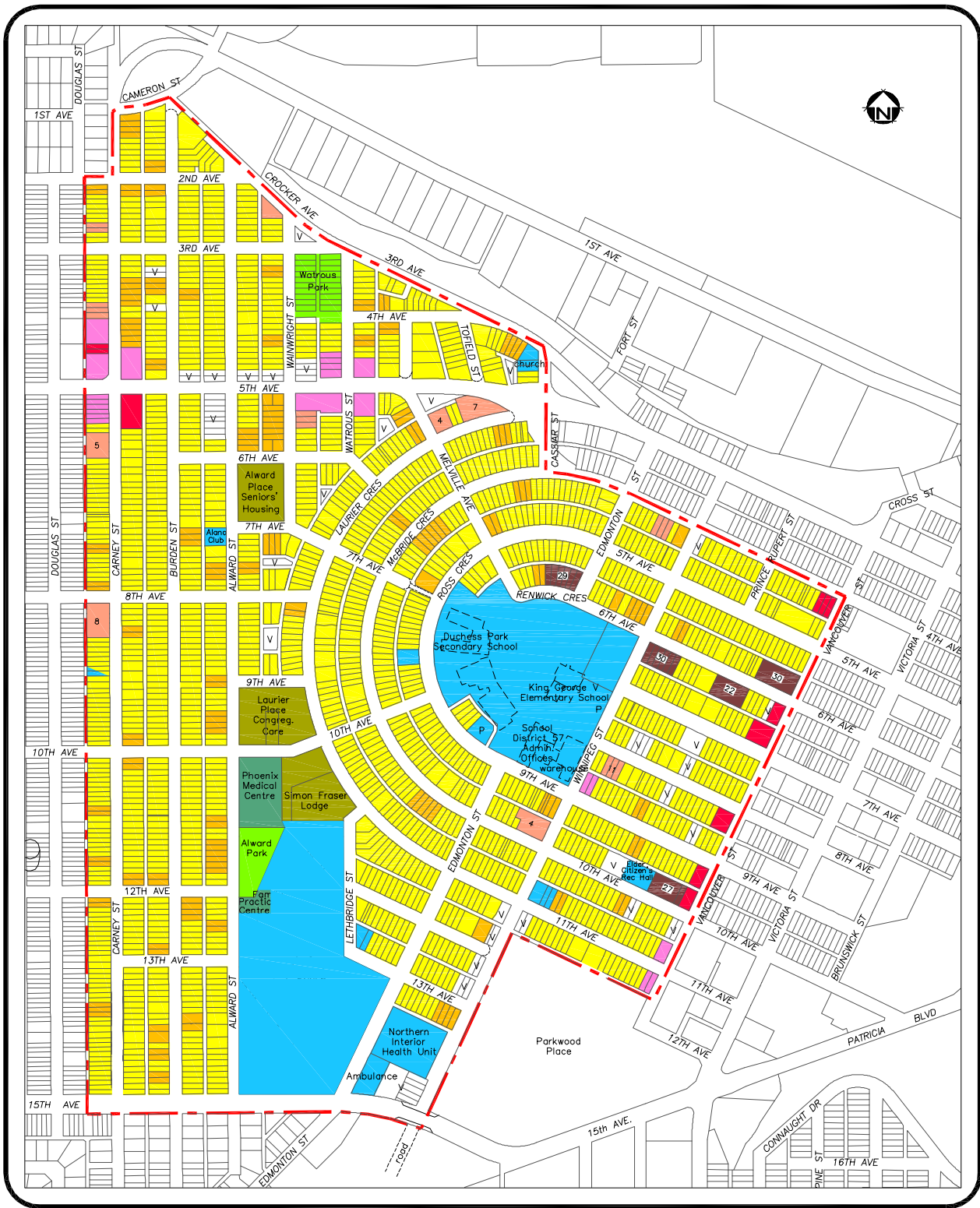
Seniors or special care housing includes Alward Place, a seniors apartment building containing 120 independent living units, Laurier Place (a mix of independent living and supportive units), and Simon Fraser Lodge (intermediate care home).

Commercial development is confined to a small proportion of the land use within the study area. There are commercial offices and a restaurant located along the west side of Vancouver Street and a small cluster of commercial stores at 5th and Carney Street and at 5th and Watrous Street. A significant medical office development, that is not publicly owned, the Phoenix Medical Centre, is located at 10th Avenue and Alward Street.

Park development includes Watrous and Alward Parks and the escarpment along the northern end of the study area. Watrous Park contains lawn bowling facilities.

The various land uses, as of early 2002, are shown on Map 2.





## CURRENT LAND USE

City of Prince George  
CRESCENTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Single Family
- Duplex
- Seniors or Special Care Housing
- Apartment/Townhouse (2 storey or less)
- Apartment/Townhouse (3 storey plus)
- Commercial (including associated parking)
- Offices (General)
- P Parking
- Public Institutional
- Medical Office
- Park
- V Vacant
- ↘ Dead-End Road
- Building Footprint (major buildings)



6 April 2002

DATA SOURCE: City of Prince George, 1999 (cadastral)

## **3.0 Planning Issues**

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### **3.1 Market Trends and Issues**

To determine the need for long-term land uses, an understanding is required of market trends and conditions as well as area potential. The nature of the Crescents is largely two fold – a prime residential district close to the downtown, and a significant institutional land use area, containing the Prince George Regional Hospital and ancillary uses, as well as a site having a secondary school and elementary school. Future needs were documented largely through an interview process with key individuals of various organizations.

#### *3.1.1 Medical Offices and Facilities*

There are currently two major private medical office buildings in the City, with one, the Phoenix Medical Centre situated within the study area. This centre includes a large number of strata offices for practitioners including general practitioners, neurologists, orthopaedic surgeon, urologists, paediatricians, ophthalmologists and others. The centre also accommodates support services such as X-ray, laboratory and pharmacy services, which benefit from the proximity of many doctors' who use the support facilities. In addition it has been observed that this concentration of medical practitioners encourages referrals and interaction between professionals. Current commercially available office space does permit some sharing of offices, and there is regular turn over which generates new office space. There is provision at the Phoenix Medical Centre for expansion on site.

It has been indicated that nearly 8000 Prince George area residents currently have no direct access to a physician, relying on medical clinics for service. If more medical practitioners are enticed to the city area, then demand for offices will increase. Expanded medical education programs at UNBC, and those available at CNC may lead to additional future demand. The Prince George Hospital is expanded with a new wing, which will add additional beds, including a geriatric treatment centre, ambulatory walk in service, and in-patient units, and will include a trauma centre. The old wing is to be modified for paediatrics and maternity use. Some specialized office space is available in the hospital (e.g. renal specialist, and ophthalmology, as well as a Physician resource rooms and dictation/digital document). The hospital site also has the Iris Place Mental Health Centre, which has the potential for further expansion.

A major factor in overall demand is the provincial restructuring of hospital and medical services in the region. Prince George is now the centre of the Northern Health Authority. This Authority covers areas previously serviced by the Northern Interior Regional Health Board and the Quesnel and District Community Health Council. This reorganization may be expected to result in further medical services being centred in Prince George with long term implications for added practitioners and office space.

Various medical oriented publications have noted the trend for offices to cluster near hospitals. The ability to easily access specialist expertise and services, as well as doctor/patient convenience are contributing factors. The ability to access support services in one building favours use of medical buildings such as the Phoenix Centre. Some practitioners however have indicated that the ability to customize offices and space in a less formal setting, with comfortable home-style waiting rooms, close to the hospital but not comprising part of a major building is also attractive. It is reasonable to expect that given the opportunity locations within either existing office facilities or sites in proximity to the hospital and nearby medical facilities will be desirable. Any expansion will have to be weighed against neighbourhood impact.

### *3.1.2 Residential*

Much of the Crescents area consists of single family housing, with a reasonable proportion of duplex buildings. There are numerous older and heritage buildings in the neighbourhood. Apartments are clustered mainly in the Winnipeg to Vancouver Street area in accord with long standing planning policies. The Alward Place Seniors Housing high rise is a notable exception since it is situated outside the main higher density area. Future demand for multiple family housing is expected to be largely driven by the regional economy, and while expected to be focussed on the Vancouver-Winnipeg area, may over time become increasingly attractive for sites near the hospital especially for health care workers. However without significant economic growth any increase in demand for multiple family housing should be perceived as long range only.

### *3.1.3 Commercial Retail*

Prince George is well serviced with retail commercial sites and other than minor infill, and given the areas relative proximity to downtown and the Gateway area, it is unlikely that there will be much demand for commercial space except for some neighbourhood oriented use, and for infill along the Vancouver Street Corridor, as well as in existing nodes at Carney and Fifth Avenue and Fifth and Watrous Street.

## 4.0 Review of Land Use Options

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In order to gain an understanding of public response to a series of land use options, the consultant team prepared a handout and map illustrating a series of alternatives for the area. In the handout it was observed that most of the area would remain unchanged, however there were some alternatives deemed worthy of consideration in order to gain insight into public thoughts. The options were presented at a well attended public meeting held on January 30, 2002. The options presented acknowledge the regional importance of the Crescents area for medical facilities, the proximity to the downtown and housing opportunities, and the value of current school facilities to retaining a complete neighbourhood. The specific options indicated were:

***Commercial Retail*** - Retain in current nodes, allowing virtually no expansion, with the possible long-term exception of 4 existing residential parcels at 9th Avenue by Duchess Park Secondary School (an alternative for these lots was identified as 'institutional' land use).

***Offices*** - There is limited demand for some potential small-scale medical offices (with proximity to hospital facilities a key factor). Potential location options included:

- Block on either side of 12th Avenue on west side of Alward Street (perhaps if developed in conjunction with upper storey apartments).
- Blocks on 13th Avenue near Edmonton, adjacent to hospital. Parking could be accommodated under building to take advantage of grade on site.
- Laurier at 10th Avenue (across Simon Fraser Lodge). Has good proximity to hospital, but may erode residential potential of area given the lack of a clear boundary towards Edmonton Street. Development to be kept low profile similar to single family residential and compatible with Simon Fraser Lodge, and contingent on suggested limit of not more than 1 office per 225m<sup>2</sup> of site area).

***Multiple Family Housing*** – to include area between Vancouver and Winnipeg in compliance with OCP, subject to following:

- Townhouse development to be permitted only if site comprises about 5 lots, to minimize chance of single family homes from being 'locked in' by higher density uses.
- Apartments to be permitted only if the site area comprises at least 6 lots.

***Multi Family in Other Areas***

- Apartment use was noted as an option for blocks immediately south of 4th Avenue, between Winnipeg and Vancouver
- Apartment or townhouse as option suggested for block bounded by 5th Avenue at north, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to south, the lane east of Burden to west, and Wainwright Street (Alward Housing)

***Other***

- Complete pedestrian way between McBride and Ross Crescent with pedestrian link through Duchess park school site to Renwick Crescent. Create pedestrian signal at 6th and Winnipeg.
- Review sidewalk linkages to ensure ease of access, and consider improvements in several areas.

Each of the above indicated options or suggestions were reviewed at the public meeting and were the subject of a survey distributed at the January 30, 2002 meeting.

## 5.0 Land Use Plan

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Once the public consultation was completed, previous analysis combined with input from comments contributed to formulation of a draft land use plan. The plan is guided by the following vision:

### **The Vision**

Maintain the primary residential focus of the Crescents area, building on its planning and heritage significance and functioning as a desirable area close to the downtown, balanced with serving as the location of the Prince George Regional Hospital which has an increasingly important role as BC's northern medical service centre.

With the aforementioned vision in mind, the key land uses and related policies are described in the remainder of this chapter. The policies are designed to achieve increased liveability in the Crescents area. Policies propose improvements to community infrastructure while accommodating a limited degree of land use change to anticipate future needs. All of the Land Use designations are illustrated by Map 3. Transportation issues are noted on Map 4. Maps appear at the conclusion of this section.

### 5.1 Residential

This Plan maintains the role of the Crescents as a desirable well functioning neighbourhood in proximity to the city centre. Modest new growth is expected, oriented largely to the area between Winnipeg and Vancouver Streets, where redevelopment to higher density housing is expected to continue over the years to come. Based on more detailed fieldwork, recommendations are being made to define the Vancouver - Winnipeg area into two density blocks. The sites situated to the south from 9th Avenue through 11th Avenue are proposed for lower density townhousing or row housing, while the remaining blocks to 5th Avenue as well as those blocks facing 4th Avenue may incorporate densities up to and including 4-storey apartments. The recommendation to retain part of the area to lower densities is predicated on the following:

- The availability of a reasonable quantity of single family housing that is unlikely to be redeveloped for some years. Where redevelopment does occur, lower impact housing such as townhousing tends to be more sympathetic to single family housing in relation to building height, bulk, and massing.
- Several portions of these blocks include significant tree stands that are (and should be) more readily accommodated in site planning for townhouses.
- The 'family' orientation of townhousing is likely to produce more students which will support retention of the schools in the neighbourhood.

A few other blocks of land may accommodate higher density residential use, but much of the neighbourhood area will continue to provide a range of single family and two family (duplex) dwellings.

Congregate care housing for seniors or people with special needs is encouraged within areas designated for multi-family residential housing. This type of housing offers independent living for residents who need non-medical assistance such as meals, housekeeping and personal care service. Residents also benefit from a communal environment by sharing activities of daily living with other residents. Typically, medical care or nursing assistance is made available, but not on a continuous basis. Due to small size units, somewhat higher densities may be appropriate.

## Policies

1. The Crescents Neighbourhood shall continue to retain most of its residential neighbourhood blocks with single family and duplex dwellings in accord with the applicable policies of the Official Community Plan. For two family dwellings, it is encouraged adjacent buildings be non mirror image, and are preferably situated on parcels at intersections.
2. Provision is made for continued development and conversion of parcels situated between Vancouver and Winnipeg Streets for apartment or townhouse developments. Future rezoning applications in this area shall also be subject to consideration of the following:
  - a. The area between 11th Avenue and 9th Avenue shall be considered only for redevelopment to townhouse type projects, or continued use for single family or duplex dwellings. Townhouse developments are encouraged where the site area is at least 1125 m<sup>2</sup> (12,110 sq. ft.) in area (normally requiring development of about 5 existing lots) with a density maximum of **40 units per hectare** with the exception of the Elder Citizens Recreation site where higher density may be appropriate. Smaller sites may be considered in special circumstances.
  - b. The area between 8th Avenue and 4th Avenue is preferred for either townhouse or apartment type densities. Apartments are preferred where the site area is 1375m<sup>2</sup> (14,800 sq. ft) in area (normally about 6 lots) with a maximum density of **90 units per hectare**. (The accompanying photograph provides an example.)
3. Any redevelopment within the area between 8th Avenue and 4th Avenue is contingent on any lots that are left within the block not being 'locked-in' thus prohibiting the opportunity for redevelopment.
4. Multifamily sites are to be consolidated to form one parcel of land per development, as a condition of rezoning.
5. Blocks immediately south of 4th Avenue, between Winnipeg and Vancouver (extending to the lane), shall have no specific site minimum, but are subject to a density maximum of **90 units per hectare**.



6. The area bounded by 5th Avenue at north, 8th Avenue to south, the lane east of Burden to west, and Wainwright Street to east may be considered for multiple family housing. As a guideline, a site area minimum of 900m<sup>2</sup> (about 4 lots), is suggested with the intent of minimizing the probability for locked in parcels. A maximum density of **90 units per hectare** applies, however a mix of densities is preferred in this area.
7. Congregate care housing, which provides assisted living for seniors and special needs housing, is encouraged within areas designated for multi-family housing. Typically, assisted living deals with non-medical aspects of daily activities in an atmosphere of separate, private living units. Medical care or nursing assistance may be permitted within this type of a facility, but not on a continuous basis.
8. Housing for seniors is encouraged in all multi-family areas including townhouse and apartment designated areas. If redevelopment of the Duchess Park Institutional designated site is considered, a small portion (less than 20% of the overall area) may be considered for seniors housing and ancillary services.

## 5.2 Office Use

A significant issue was the extent to which new office use, particularly medical offices, should be permitted in the area. The increasing importance of the hospital, and the growing interest in intermediate care facilities suggests that there will be a corresponding interest in office space, especially for locations near the hospital. The local Crescents community has a legitimate interest in ensuring that any such uses do not jeopardize the quality and integrity of the neighbourhood. For this reason only a few specific locations for offices are proposed, all for areas adjacent to or in proximity to the hospital.

### Policies

Areas for potential medical office use in accord with the policies below are identified on Map 3.

1. Medical and/or dental office use or residential and medical office use conversions may be considered for the blocks on 13th Avenue near Edmonton, adjacent to the hospital. To reduce impact on the neighbourhood, and to take advantage of local grades parking is preferably accommodated under the building. Any development of this area shall be limited to buildings with low profile structures similar to single family residential and compatible with the neighbourhood. This site may also be considered for independent living accommodation including some nursing care and perhaps some hospital expansion. A density maximum of **40 units per hectare** shall apply.
2. The Plan supports provision for minimal and specialized professional office accommodation within the existing hospital; and supports expansion of office facilities in conjunction with the Phoenix Medical Centre.



### **5.3 Commercial**

The neighbourhood is reasonably supplied with retail commercial uses, although all such uses are situated on the fringe of the neighbourhood. Some sites historically accommodated small convenience stores, but site limitations, as well as the location of those retail outlets detracted from their ability to operate successfully. However, over time, there may well be renewed interest in a convenience retail outlet. Some infill and redevelopment within already established areas is appropriate, with some minimal provision for new facilities. Major commercial uses are also available immediately adjacent to the Crescents neighbourhood at Parkwood Place and downtown.

#### **Policies**

1. Some minor expansion of commercial confined to service commercial and office use is encouraged on the west side of Vancouver Street, permitting redevelopment with consolidation of lots fronting on Vancouver Street. No further expansion westward is recommended in this area, as most of the lots in this area are proposed for various housing densities.

### **5.4 Institutional**

Most of the areas designated for Institutional use are intended to reflect land being used or proposed to be used for major public facilities. This mainly accommodates medical and educational facilities. Further redevelopment is possible within the hospital site, and an overall plan for this area is desirable. Some long term expansion may be considered, however this should be examined in relation to an overall plan for the hospital site.

The Duchess Park School continues to operate, however the KGV Elementary School has been closed. If any redevelopment is contemplated, it should be considered in the context of an overall strategy to be developed identifying appropriate uses of redundant school properties. Initial reviews indicate that public recreational use is deemed most appropriate at this locality given its central and strategic location in the neighbourhood. A limited amount of seniors housing may also be appropriate. Similarly, use of the current warehouse on school district property should be explored for recreational purposes. Retention of this building as a warehouse is not desired.

As noted in Section 5.1, congregate care housing that provides assisted living to seniors or people with special needs is encouraged in multi-family residential areas. However, housing that offers assisted living, combined with intermediate or extended nursing care, should be directed towards the hospital site. Typically, these facilities operate more as a medical facility rather than a multi-family dwelling as medical staff is required on a continuous basis.

## Policies

1. If, in the very long term consideration has to be given to hospital expansion, this should be considered in a comprehensive manner as part of an overall plan for the hospital site.
2. Redevelopment of the existing 4 residential parcels on Ross Crescent, to Institutional is favoured, subject to such redevelopment being compatible with established educational or public facilities in the area.
3. Redevelopment of the Duchess Park school property should primarily focus on recreational opportunities, including adaptation of the existing warehouse on the site for recreation or local cultural use.
4. Intermediate or extended care facilities for seniors or special needs residents shall be directed towards areas designated as Institutional. These type of facilities generally provide 24-hour medical care and/or nursing assistance and are encouraged to be located near the hospital site.
5. Consideration may be given to permitting seniors housing and/or an expanded community centre on the Elder Citizens site, and also for not more than 20% of the Duchess Park area.

## 5.5 Public Open Space, Parks, Trails

The neighbourhood includes two developed parks, Watrous Park and Alward Park. Survey results indicate that Alward Park situated along a busy traffic corridor is well appreciated by residents, and provides some needed green space in an area with significant medical buildings and associated parking lots. Improvements may be desirable, to allow the park to serve a wider range of needs. Watrous Park includes a lawn bowling green and serves many seniors who live south of 5th Avenue who may use the park but there is not an easy safe crossing location. Several vacant city owned lots occur in the area, some representing remnants of land after road widening also offer opportunities for landscaping and open space. In addition, redevelopment in the Duchess Park area must consider provision for open space.

## Policies

1. Consideration is to be given to potential redesign of Alward Park in conjunction with a hospital site master plan, to enhance its compatibility with changing demographics. There is need for children's park in this location, as well as a need for a sitting area for staff and patients of adjacent institutional facilities. Any such redesign should involve community consultation.
2. Opportunities to establish other smaller parks or resting spaces shall be considered where appropriate and in consultation with the neighbourhood and developers of multi-family housing projects. Such opportunities are especially important if combined with lands already owned by the city. Particular attention is required to areas where higher density population nodes exist or are expected such as the vicinity of Alward Place, and in the multiple family housing areas between Winnipeg and Vancouver Streets.
3. Attention must be given to retention and maintenance of open spaces in the area. The Crocker Avenue trail link should be formalized and developed in accordance with the City Trail Plan. Neighbourhood trails are shown on Map 4, and many connect to other city trails. New development should not interfere with the continuity of such trails.

4. To enhance overall neighbourhood appearance and to soften hard edges, consideration should be given to the planting of boulevard trees along major arterial roads in the area.
5. Any redevelopment of the Duchess Park school site area should consider provision for park and open space to serve the immediate community area needs.

## **5.6 Transportation and Traffic**

With its location at the periphery of the downtown core, there are several significant transportation routes in the area. Fifth Avenue serves as an arterial route into the downtown, as does 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Patricia Boulevard. Tenth Avenue is a collector road extending to the school complex in the neighbourhood centre. Several of the more major roads also serve as bicycle routes, notably 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the downtown, Winnipeg Street, Carney Street, and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. At the north end cyclists can ride by the edge of the escarpment along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the downtown. A bicycle study completed in 2001 has made several routing and infrastructure improvement recommendations. Key intersections which have full traffic signals include Carney and Fifth, Carney and 15<sup>th</sup>, Winnipeg and 13<sup>th</sup>, and Winnipeg and 4<sup>th</sup>. Pedestrian activated signals are available at Winnipeg and 9<sup>th</sup> and Winnipeg and 8<sup>th</sup>. Another important crossing, Winnipeg and 6<sup>th</sup> has no signal.

A number of neighbourhood residents have raised issues related to traffic in the area. One initiative that may have an impact on the area is completion of a possible off-ramp at the southeast corner of Winnipeg at Massey. Motorists accessing the area from west of Carney would be able to use 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue to access the Parkwood Place mall and other destinations in the area. Currently patrons wishing to access this area must use other east-west streets (for example 10<sup>th</sup>, Edmonton, 13<sup>th</sup>) in addition to 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. An off-ramp at this location will require further design analysis. Improvements to Winnipeg and adjacent neighbourhood streets and intersections may be required to better accommodate traffic flow through the area. Improvements may include such items as traffic calming measures for neighbourhood streets, access control along Winnipeg, improved traffic control devices at key locations and traffic progression along Winnipeg. A more detailed operational assessment and traffic warrant analysis is necessary to identify and confirm the issues and test alternative solutions.

One initiative that deserves consideration is traffic calming in the Crescents Neighbourhood. The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) publishes the *Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming*. These guidelines describe a four-stage process guiding the development and implementation of traffic calming plans for neighbourhoods. These measures are essentially grouped into four categories that describe the type of impact on vehicles: vertical deflection (e.g. speed hump), horizontal deflection (e.g. road narrowing), obstruction (e.g. diverter or closure) and signage. Although the guide identifies 25 traffic calming measures that may be used on local and collector type streets, the suitability of each type of measure is conditional to the unique circumstances of the roadway itself and the nature of the problem that has been identified.

It is suggested that consideration be given to introducing traffic calming measures as part of an overall traffic calming analysis for the neighbourhood and after further consideration to the possibility of an off ramp at Winnipeg and Massey.

Several other issues, including aspects related to snow removal and transit are noted in appropriate policies.

## Policies

1. Completion of the 7th Avenue pedestrian pathway between McBride and Ross Crescent should be explored, including the development of stairs, with the pedestrian link to be continued adjacent to Duchess Park School to Renwick Crescent. This initiative should also consider the needs of cyclists, and must be considered in the context of overall City priorities with respect to walkway and trail development.
2. A pedestrian link is desirable and should be appropriately signed through the hospital site to connect Alward and Lethbridge. This should be coordinated with any master planning to be done for the hospital site by the Northern Health Authority.
3. It is proposed that development of a pedestrian activated signal at the intersection of 6th and Winnipeg be considered subject to further traffic analysis. Existing signalization on Winnipeg will be reviewed and possibly reduced. A crossing of Winnipeg to connect to the downtown area, via 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue may offer improved traffic flow and improved pedestrian connections to downtown.
4. A pedestrian signal at the crossing of Fifth Avenue at Wainwright or Watrous is suggested for consideration especially to allow safer pedestrian links to Watrous Park, and to enhance safety for students living north of Fifth Avenue wishing to cross to the school complex. Crossing requirements will consider traffic and pedestrian warrants and proximity to Carney.
5. The Crescents area supports several bike links forming part of the City bikeway system. This includes 10th Avenue to 9th Avenue, and along the major road arterials of Carney Street and 15th Avenue. Appropriate street pavement markers and signage shall be established. To facilitate cycling on Carney, on-street parking may need to be restricted. Cycling linkages should be coordinated with pedestrian routing and take into consideration the conclusions of the pedestrian network study.
6. Further design is to be completed for an off-ramp at Winnipeg and Massey. Associated with this, it is recommended that a traffic calming plan be developed for the Crescents neighbourhood.
7. Transit service represents an important mode of transportation, and every effort is to be made to ensure adequate neighbourhood transit facilities.
8. As a winter city, snow clearing is to be considered as an aspect of future development. Operation and design policies should address:
  - a. Procedures for clearing snow from discontinuous sidewalks,
  - b. The need for soundproofing of buildings facing arterial and collector roads where nightly snow removal may occur.

## 5.7 Heritage Characteristics

The Plan acknowledges that many of the homes in the “Crescents” area, specifically Ross, Laurier and McBride Crescents, have significance in terms of the city’s heritage. The development of this area occurred primarily in the 1920’s and 1930’s. These crescent shaped streets around Duchess Park formed a prestigious neighbourhood where the streets curved along the natural topographic benches. Duchess Park and these curved streets provided a terminus for several east-west avenues leading from the “main” street of downtown, George Street. While the “Duchess Park” site has been developed with two schools and the school district office, the city is fortunate to have retained the homes and street patterns developed early in the 1900’s, following design elements found in the “City Beautiful” movement. The neighbourhood today contains a variety of homes on relatively large, well landscaped properties.

It is beyond this plan to provide detailed recommendations with respect to retaining heritage features, although both the basic land use and road patterns are proposed for retention. However more specific preservation guidelines may be appropriate and should be considered as a future implementation item. Boundaries for such a study area could consider only part of the neighbourhood, but may be appropriate for the entire area.

## Policy

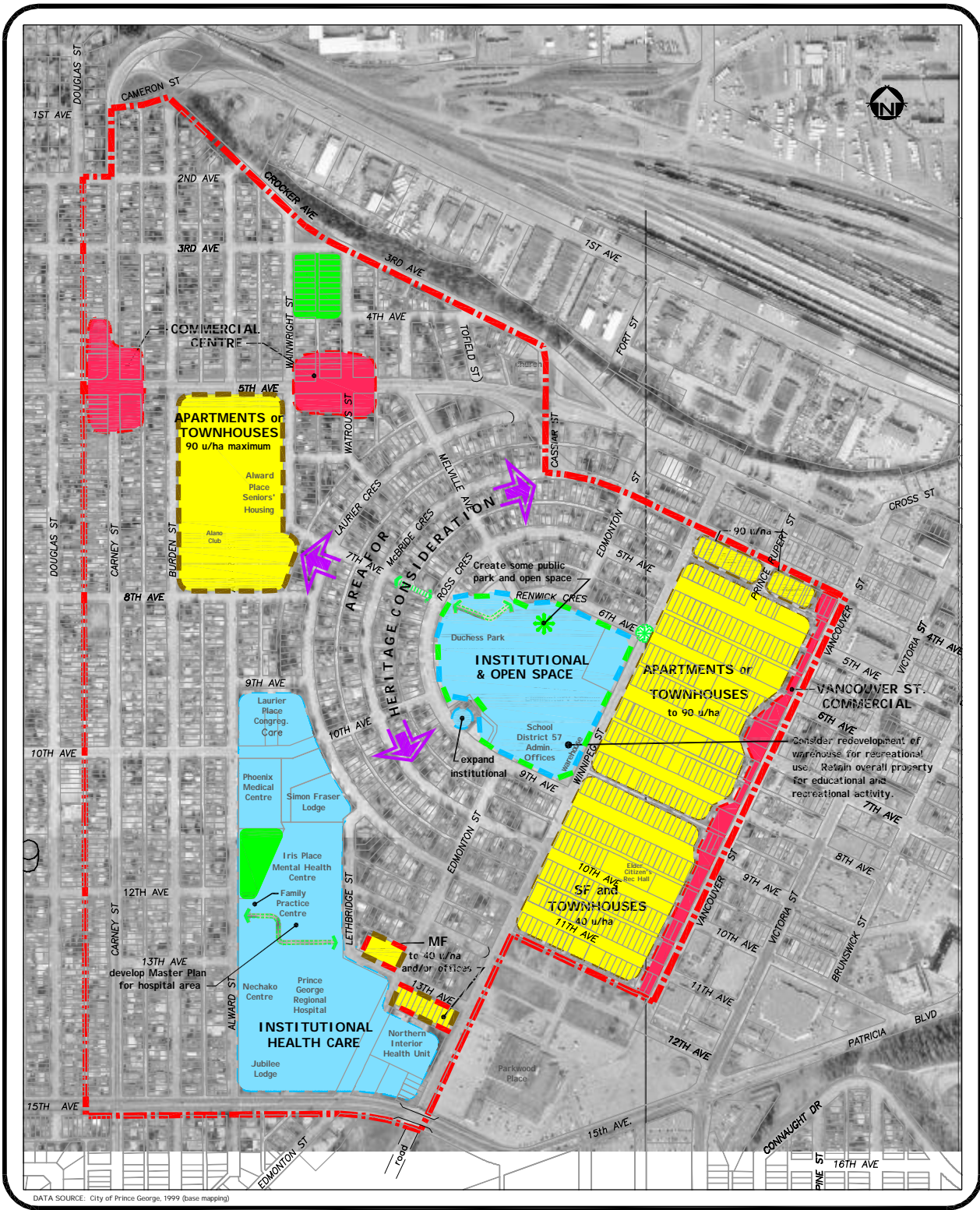
1. The heritage area comprising the “crescent” streets, as shown conceptually on the Land Use Strategy, Map 3, shall be considered for a potential Heritage Conservation Area bylaw. This bylaw or other appropriate implementation measures shall be developed jointly between the City and area landowners and residents. If agreement is reached on a Heritage Conservation Area, the designation of such an area will require an amendment to the Official Community Plan. Study area boundaries are to be established in consultation with the local community.

## 5.8 Utilities

As a well established neighbourhood, utilities in the area, such as sewer and water service, have been in place for a considerable period. The City has noted that water mains may be undersized, especially the 100 mm water mains on Alward between 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the hospital, and also between Vancouver and Winnipeg Streets. A condition assessment of the sewer system in the area, most of which is over 50 years old, is also desirable. A review of utility infrastructure will allow recommendations to be made with respect to any desirable upgrading.

## Policies

1. By using a computer water model, ascertain the need for any desirable upgrading to the Crescents area water system.
2. Review the current condition of both the sanitary sewer and storm water systems, including down stream impacts, to confirm the suitability of these systems for potential redevelopment in the area.



## LAND USE STRATEGY

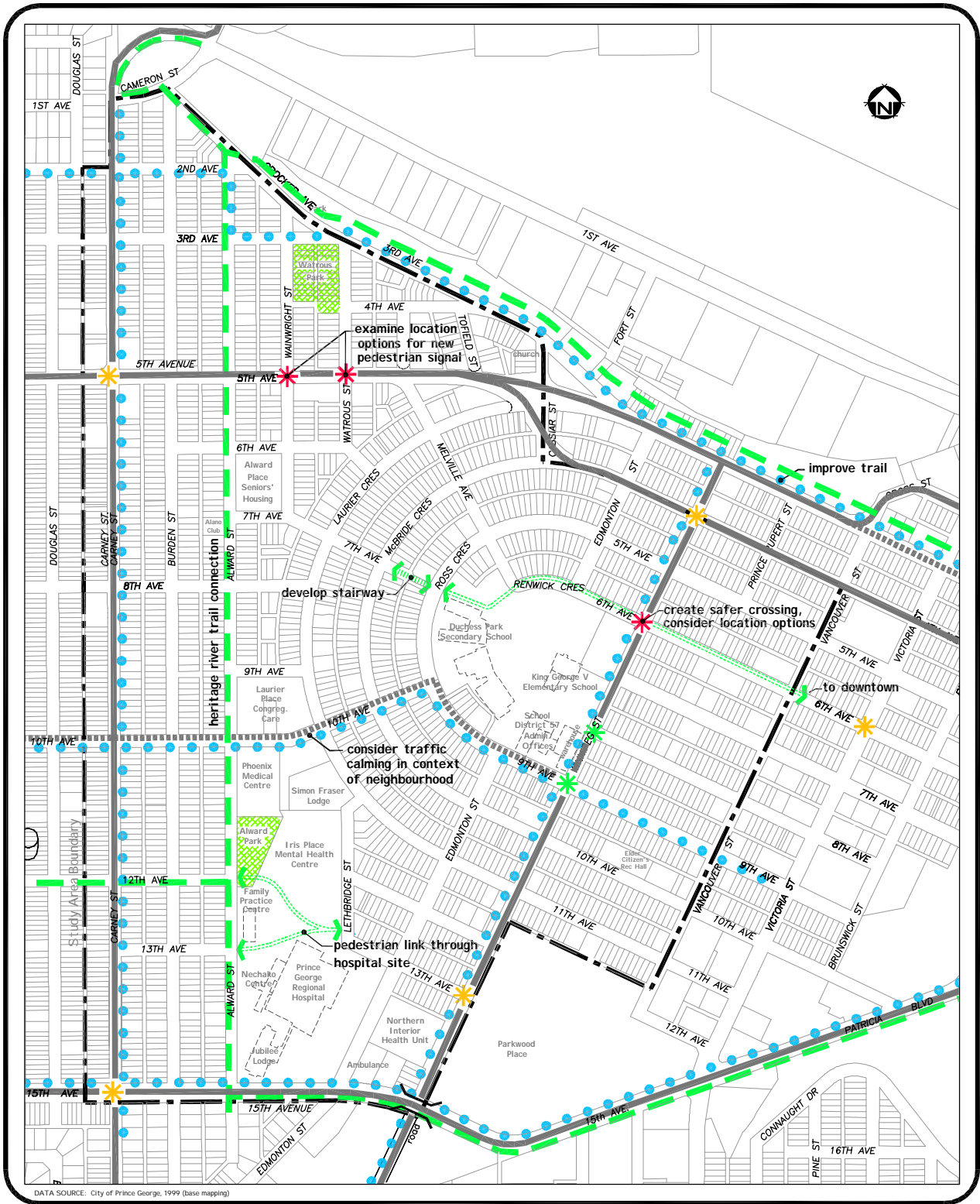
City of Prince George  
CRESCENTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Pedestrian Link
- Stairway
- Potential Pedestrian-Activated Signal

- Long Term land use changes as indicated
- All proposed Multi-Family and Multi-Family/Office areas are suggested as Development Permit Areas
- Balance of area to remain as single family or two family dwelling, except where designated otherwise.







# TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

City of Prince George  
CRESCENT ST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Cycling Route
- Desirable Pedestrian Route
- Stairway
- Proposed City Trail Link (includes sidewalks)
- Pedestrian Activated Signal
- Potential Pedestrian Activated Signal (subject to further study)
- Full Signal
- Arterial Road
- Collector Road
- Road Closed

Map  
4



## 6.0 Implementation Actions

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The following are some of the principal implementation items that deserve consideration.

1. It is recommended that consideration be given by the Northern Health Authority to preparation of a Master Plan for the Prince George Regional Hospital that considers the layout of buildings, pedestrian corridors, landscaping, and the interface with adjacent properties with regard to building facades, building setbacks, landscaping and vehicle access points.
2. Given the deterioration of a number of sidewalks in the Crescents area it is recommended that the City establish a rehabilitation plan with the objective of gradually improving all of the sidewalks in the area to an acceptable standard, with consideration of access to the disabled and elderly by way of curb cuts at intersections or through other appropriate means.
3. It is proposed that potential implementation for traffic calming in an overall neighbourhood context be considered. This should include consideration of the nature of traffic calming, the location, impact on vehicles and parking, as well as long term maintenance.
4. Proceed with design and construction of the pedestrian stairway at 7th Avenue to Ross Crescent. Costs will need to be identified and incorporated into capital expenditure plans.
5. Continue to consider commercial land uses of an office or service nature for parcels of land that abut Vancouver Street.
6. In consideration of redevelopment opportunities for the KGV School, and in the event of further abandonment or reduction of school facilities, the primary focus should be on public park and/or recreational use. Also, institutional uses such as seniors housing or similar uses which may include a degree of medical care are suggested for consideration.
7. Give consideration to zoning applications that are in accord with the broad land use designations identified on Map 3, Land Use Strategy.
8. All future land use and development related decisions of Council in the Crescents Neighbourhood shall be made only after careful consideration of the direction and policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan.
9. Work with the landowners in the Crescents to pursue the establishment of a Heritage Conservation Area.
10. Proceed with water modelling to confirm system suitability and carry out an assessment of both the sanitary sewer and storm drainage systems with respect to the ability of the systems to accommodate changing land uses.



## Appendix A

### Summary of Crescents Neighbourhood Plan Survey Results (January 2002)

1. The survey involved the distribution of 1300 surveys with 368 surveys returned by tabulation date (28% response rate).
2. Approximately 28% of respondents live in Sector 1, 7% in Sector 2, 39% in Sector 3 and 23% in Sector 4 (sector boundaries were illustrated on the survey).
3. Approximately 90% of respondents own their home and live in either a single family or two family home in the Crescents neighbourhood.
4. In terms of how many years respondents have lived in their home, the range of residency varied from less than one year to sixty years with the median being 17 years reflecting a well established and stable neighbourhood.
5. In response to the question on the number of school age children, 78% of respondents indicated that they do not have any school age children living with them.
6. In terms of what respondents liked best about living in the Crescents neighbourhood, 54% indicated proximity to amenities, downtown, schools, hospital, etc.
7. In terms of what respondents liked least about living in Crescents, 33% indicated high traffic and noise levels.
8. In terms of the biggest problem facing the Crescents neighbourhood, 21% of respondents indicate commercial/business overdevelopment, 17% high traffic/no parking, 17% rundown properties, 16% crime and safety.
9. 74% of respondents indicate support for measures to preserve heritage homes.
10. In terms of "what new developments, if any, would you support in each sector," a significant number of respondents living within each sector support:
  - single family homes in all 4 sectors,
  - senior housing and parks in 3 out of 4 sectors
  - care homes and office in residential structures in sector 1
  - medical office buildings in sector 2.