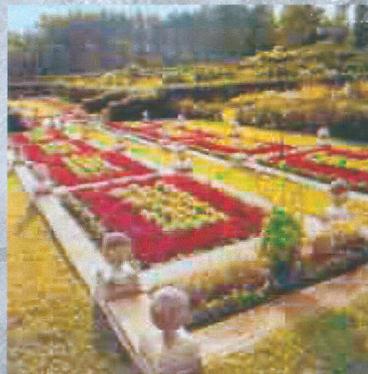


Central (Memorial) Park



A Conceptual Proposal for Redevelopment

SEPTEMBER 2004



A Conceptual Proposal for Redevelopment Central (Memorial) Park

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SEPTEMBER 2004

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Acknowledgements

Central (Memorial) Park – A Conceptual Proposal for Redevelopment is the product of a Land Use and Programming Feasibility Study commissioned by The Victoria Crossing Business Revitalization Zone on behalf of **The Beltline Initiative** – a collaborative organization composed of the Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught and the Uptown 17, 4th Street and Victoria Crossing Business Revitalization Zones. The scope of the Beltline Initiative ranges from land use and physical planning to community and social development.

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- The Alberta Historical Resources Foundation
- The City of Calgary (Calgary Heritage Authority)
- The Beltline Initiative

Executive Summary

Comprised of 1.91 hectares of land granted to the town of Calgary in 1885 from the Dominion of Canada as part of the survey plan for the original town site, Central (Memorial) Park and the Library along its eastern edge, are among our most important historical resources. Unfortunately, despite their significance and value, both the Park and Library have struggled to achieve a sustainable role. The role and use of the Library changed when the new downtown Central Library opened in 1963. Since then, the visibility of the building has become increasingly obscured by trees and hedges at the east end of the Park. The Park has deteriorated and lost its former grandeur, is now undervalued in terms of making an active contribution to the surrounding community and fails to function as a successful urban, public space.

Lack of adequate programming and a deficient maintenance program have contributed to creating a favourable environment for the homeless, open alcohol consumption and drug and sexual activity in Central (Memorial) Park. A thorough evaluation of the types of uses that could be accommodated in the Park and a determination of the Park's key historical elements were fundamental in understanding the appropriate type of development that could occur within the site to make it more vibrant and reinstate it as a valuable community asset.

The conceptual proposal presented in this report, however, goes beyond addressing the physical planning of the Park and the creation of new opportunities for increased active, social use. It also offers a strategic plan for effective management and community involvement that will ensure that any physical restoration and capital investment will result in a revitalized Park that also yields significant economic return to the community at large.

Central (Memorial) Park A Conceptual Proposal for Redevelopment

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of Significance – Description of Historic Place¹

Central (Memorial) Park is a Victorian era inspired park encompassing an entire city block (1.91 hectares or 4.78-acres) in the Beltline district of Calgary (4th & 2nd Streets SW and 12th & 13th Avenues SW). The Park's formal 1911 layout, described as a design elaboration of geometric carpet beds of the Victorian era, follows a strict symmetrical pattern of lawns, beds, and paths that is still essentially intact.

The Park is currently home to 8 memorials including The Horseman of the Plains memorializing the Boer War, located in the centre of the Park and a Cenotaph and Plaza area memorializing WWI, WWII and the Korean Conflict at the west end of the Park. The Library (opened January 2, 1912), funded in part by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation and located at the east end of the Park, is an excellent architectural representation of the neo-classical revival style.

Recognizing that both the Park and Library are registered historical sites of the Province of Alberta, it is understood that any alterations must conform to the Department of Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada standards and guidelines for the conservation of historic places. It must be noted that any proposals made as part of this study are conceptual in nature only and require full review as part of detailed design development at a later date.

¹ A complete Statement of Significance, written according to the requirements of the *Federal Heritage Places Initiative (HPI)*, and accompanying Statement of Heritage Value is provided in Appendix I.

1.2. Background

The Beltline communities of Victoria and Connaught comprise half of Calgary's central city. However, despite being Calgary's largest, high-density residential community, very little organized effort had been directed towards its revitalization until the Beltline Initiative was established. Comprised of the two original community associations of Victoria and Connaught² and the Uptown 17, 4th Street and Victoria Crossing Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs), the Beltline Initiative demonstrates a strength and commitment to improving the Beltline communities and creating Calgary's model large city, urban community.

Towards this effort, in May 2003 *The Beltline Initiative: Rediscovering the Centre* was published and recommended a comprehensive review of Central (Memorial) Park with respect to its role, function, current design, safety, maintenance and management. The intent was to restore Central (Memorial) Park to its former glory as a significant public space and thereby better serve the growing population for the Beltline communities. The Park would then act as a catalyst in revitalizing this part of Calgary's central city.

Rediscovering the Centre notes the significant decline in the Park and calls for corrective action:

Central (Memorial) Park is beautiful but underused. Beltline residents and office workers avoid it. Library patrons enter from 2nd Street – they do not walk through the Park. Very few events occur there. The park appears to be most popular with Calgary's homeless, who see it as one of their resting stops.

The Park lacks activity. It desperately needs a new raison d'être... Bold new initiatives should result from the review including new capital investment, uses and activities, and increased safety, as well as improved management and maintenance practices. (The Beltline Initiative, 2003, p.47).³

² In June of 2004, the communities of Victoria and Connaught were officially amalgamated to form the "Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught".

³ *The Beltline Initiative: Rediscovering the Centre, 2003.*

In order to accomplish these goals, funding for a comprehensive review was obtained through Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, The City of Calgary (Calgary Heritage Authority) and the Beltline Initiative. The intent of the study was to address the feasibility of reprogramming and development options that would enhance the public use and enjoyment of Central (Memorial) Park without compromising the Park's historical significance or its integrity.

In December 2003 Carson • McCulloch Associates Ltd., landscape architects, was retained by the Victoria Crossing BRZ⁴ to undertake a land use and programming feasibility study for redevelopment of Central (Memorial) Park. To direct progress of the study, a Steering Committee was formed and included representation from the Beltline Initiative, The City of Calgary (Parks and Planning Departments), The Province of Alberta, and the Calgary Public Library. Specifically, the participants in this process have included:

1.3. Steering (Site Revitalization) Committee

Eileen Stan	Victoria Crossing BRZ, Executive Director (Project Manager)
Rob Taylor	Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught, President
Jennifer Rempel	4th Street BRZ, Manager
Gae Van Siri	The City of Calgary, Planner (Park Development & Operations)
Darryl Cariou	The City of Calgary, Heritage Planner (Land Use Planning & Policy)
Rino M. Basso	Alberta Community Development, Senior Preservation Advisor (Heritage Resource Management)
Barbara Killick	Calgary Public Library, Manager (Planning & Research)
Sheldon Smithens	4th Street BRZ (business owner)
Madeleine King	The City of Calgary (Alderman for Ward 8)

⁴ Victoria Crossing BRZ served as the funding applicant and was granted the authority from The City of Calgary to conduct the study on behalf of the members of the Beltline Initiative.

1.4. Consultant Team⁵

Garry Carson	Carson • McCulloch Associates Ltd.
Lorne Simpson	Simpson Roberts Architects
Len Novak	Len Novak Landscape Architect
Glenn Lyons	Lyons Venini and Associates

1.5. Key Planning Issues

Acknowledging the breadth of work that has been compiled over the years on Central (Memorial) Park (i.e., historical documentation), the current examination focused on the enhancement of the public use and enjoyment of the site, with specific concern to the Park's safety and social environment. Of particular importance to this assessment is the need to respect and maintain the historical integrity of the Park with regards to the introduction or reintroduction of uses that do not currently exist on the site.

At the project's outset, the Steering Committee and the Consultants agreed that Central (Memorial) Park, as it exists today and in its present condition, does not fulfill its original mandate as a formal commemorative garden; nor does it satisfy the needs of current residents for usable public open space. The purpose of this project, therefore, was to explore planning and programming options, and to consider appropriate development scenarios that would respect the Park's historic importance, while also creating an active, safe and usable public open space in the central city. Integral to any proposal was to be a new direction and strategy for programming, management and maintenance of the Park that would go beyond current maintenance practices allocated to the site.

Resolution of the following three key issues was thus articulated as the primary focus of this project:

⁵ The Consultant Team was selected by the Steering (Site Revitalization) Committee from an invited list of consultants through a Request for Proposal process.

- **Historical Significance:** Central (Memorial) Park is Calgary's oldest and most significant historic park. From an historical perspective therefore, the key question to be addressed, was: ***What existing Park elements must be maintained and restored?***
- **Public Safety:** It was concluded that the best way of addressing issues of real and perceived public safety in the Park would be to facilitate legitimate year round public uses within it. The key question was therefore: ***What appropriate facilities and uses should be added to the Park and Library building?***
- **User needs and expectations:** It was recognized that the Beltline has insufficient public open space for its growing population and that the Park represents a significant proportion of what is currently available. In response to this need, the key question was: ***What new facilities and uses should be programmed into the Park to compliment those in other areas of the district?***

2. Documentation and Analysis

2.1. History & Evolution

Although at first glance it may not seem that the Park's specific design elements have been dramatically altered over the years, a review of the development of Central Park, as it was historically known, clearly indicates that the Park has gone through significant changes over the past century. This has been the result of two things:

- The influence of at least three, and possibly four, park designers who played roles in the actual planning of the Park layout.
- Responses to changing functional demands placed upon the Park over the century.

Central (Memorial) Park has changed and evolved as its and the Library's roles have been transformed. The most dramatic period of Park changes occurred from the 1880's to the late 1920's. For the latter part of the 20th century it has remained almost static.

Briefly, the Park's evolution can be traced⁶ as follows:

- In the 1880's land was set aside for Central Park by William Pearce, and by 1894 the site was being used as a tree nursery.
- In 1908, H.G. Burrows, Park Superintendent, laid out the first park/garden design; it featured formal pathways and a central band shell. A photograph from 1908 clearly shows that there was extensive tree planting throughout the Park at the time. The context for the Park was that of a residential district of upper and middle class housing (*Figure 1 – Central Park c.1908*).
- In 1910, construction of the Carnegie Foundation funded Central Library began. This represented a significant alteration of the site from exclusively a park, to a "center of culture" for the city. The new building housed not only a library, but also a natural history museum, and was the home for a number of cultural organizations within Calgary. In a raised flowerbed immediately on axis with the front entrance of the Library, a Statue of the Amazons was placed and two Egyptian style jardinières or urns. The Statue of the Amazons was a mythological figurine clearly indicating the cultural role associated with the Library (*Figure 2 – Library building illustrating early garden development*).
- In 1912, immediately after the opening of the Library, a new formal park plan was designed and laid out by Richard Iwerson, the new Park Superintendent for The City of Calgary (*Figure 3 – 1912 Formal park plan*). The existing bandstand was replaced with a music pavilion at the west end, and a space was created at the center of the Edwardian garden for a future Boer War Memorial. A prominent design element within the Edwardian garden plan were two circular pools to the east and west of this Memorial. Although foundations for these fountains were constructed at the time, they were never completed, possibly due to lack of funds brought on by WWI. As

⁶ A complete historical timeline for the Park is illustrated in Appendix II.

part of this original plan, also apparent in early photographs, is a long linear series of vine covered trellised summerhouses along the south boundary of the Park.

- From 1912 to 1914, Thomas Mawson prepared an overall plan for The City of Calgary. His drawings include a view of the layout for Central Park, as designed by Iwerson, indicating a development of the east entrance to the Library, and the full development of the Park with its two pools and the pavilion on the west end (*Figure 4 – c.1912-14 Mawson Plan*).
- From 1913 on, the new Park Superintendent, William Reader, continued to execute the principal components of the plan developed by Richard Iwerson. Reader also added boundary plantings along the south and north edges of the Park which have become the towering Russian Poplars still in evidence today. Spruce plantings used as topiary, and many shrubs were also added (*Figure 5 – Central Park c.1919*).
- In 1928, as the music pavilion was showing its age and had out grown its usefulness, William Reader, at the direction of Calgary City Council, designed a memorial Plaza at the west end of the Park to replace the pavilion. The Plaza was centered on a Cenotaph and flanked by two memorial benches. Alterations were also made to the configuration of the geometric garden pathways, reflecting changes in the use of the Park. In particular, pedestrian access was provided to the dominant Park feature of the time - the Boer War Memorial. It was at this time that the Park was renamed Central (Memorial) Park (*Figure 6 – Central (Memorial) Park with Cenotaph*).
- By 1936, the Park had matured and become a spectacular centerpiece for Calgary. It featured striking topiaries throughout the formal plan, structured ornamental lighting, and allees of Poplar trees on the north and south, which framed the space and provided a more introverted, contained Park environment. A new public washroom building was the primary structure along the south edge of the Park. At the west end, a tall flagpole dominated the Cenotaph and Plaza (*Figure 7 – 1936 Reader plan; Figure 8 – Aerial view c.1950*).



Figure 1 - Central Park c.1908



Figure 3 - 1912 Formal park plan



Figure 5 - Central Park c.1919

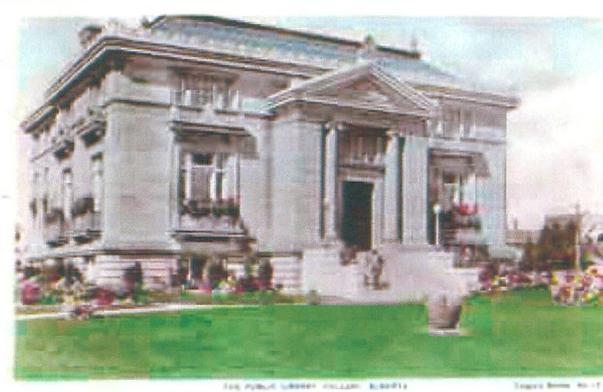


Figure 2 - Library building illustrating early garden development



Figure 4 - c.1912 - 1914 Mawson Plan



Figure 6 - Central (Memorial) Park with Cenotaph

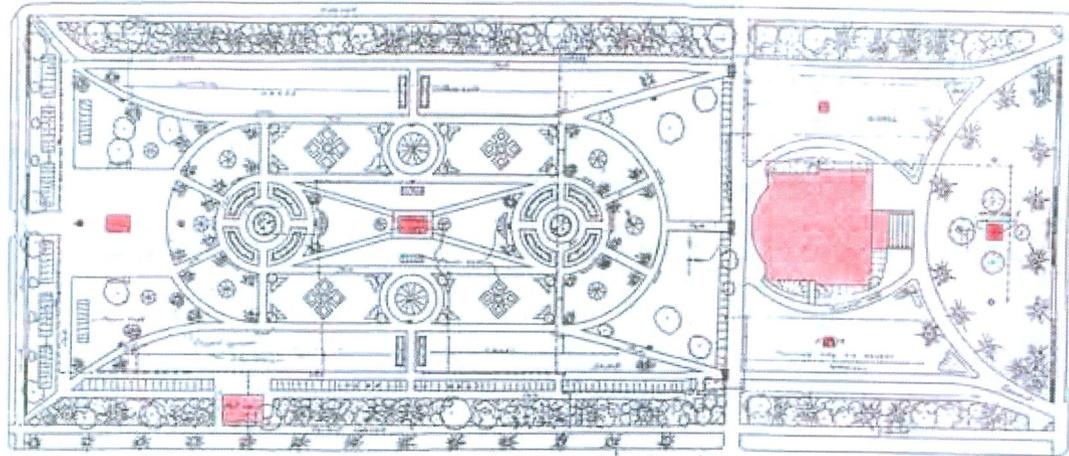


Figure 7 - 1936 Reader Plan



Figure 8 - Aerial view c. 1950



Figure 9 - Central (Memorial) Park 2004

- The Park layout today has remained more or less unchanged since the late 1920's. The most dramatic changes over the past 60 years include the maturing, decline and in some cases replacement of plant material, and the deterioration of pathways, furnishings and the washroom building (*Figure 9 – Central (Memorial) Park 2004*). The introduction of a temporary storage shed south of the Library illustrates how maintenance practices have been more focused on convenience than on respect for the historical significance of the Park.

2.2. Site Analysis

- **Location & Context:** Central (Memorial) Park is located between 12th and 13th Avenues, between 2nd and 4th Streets South West in Calgary's Beltline community (*Map 1 – Context Map*). It is currently surrounded by a mix of residential condominiums to the south and east, low office buildings to the north, and the Colonel Belcher Veteran's Hospital, currently under consideration for redevelopment, to the west. Across from the southeast corner is historic Haultain School and Park, now the current office of the Parks Foundation Calgary. At the time of this study, planning for restoration of Haultain Park as an active recreational site was underway. It is felt that the continued active use of Haultain Park will compliment the more passive, contemplative function of Central (Memorial) Park.
- **Library Building:** One of the most dramatic features of the Park is the original Library building financed from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, which dominates and anchors the eastern end of the site. This building is noteworthy not only for its attractive appearance and fine condition, but more importantly for the role it has played in Calgary's history. It is Calgary's and Alberta's first public library and since its opening in 1912, has served a wide variety of cultural, community, educational and arts functions. At present the Library provides a valuable service to the Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught, Cliff Bungalow and Mission, and more generally to the entire city of Calgary.



CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK

CONTEXT MAP

- **Monuments & Memorials**⁷: All but one of the remaining commemorative memorials/monuments are located along the central east/west axis of the Park.
 - Directly west of 2nd Street, the WWI Memorial sits directly in front of the Library entrance. This is near the original the location of the Statue of the Amazons, which was also situated directly in front of the Library's entrance. The Statue of the Amazons was removed from the Park in the 1920's and its whereabouts is no longer known.
 - Approximately half way between the Library building and 4th Street SW, the Boer War Memorial (Horseman of the Plains Statue) dominates the main body of the Park.
 - Along the east side of 4th Street W, the WWII Cenotaph shares an entry plaza with an inlaid stone medallion, a water fountain, eternal flame and a ceremonial flagpole. Two ceremonial benches and more recently the Burma Star and ANZAC War memorials commemorating WWII have been installed here.
 - A Federal Geodetic Survey Marker, establishing Calgary's benchmark elevation point at 3,439.66 feet above sea level, is imbedded as a 7 foot column below grade directly east of the circular pathway between the Horseman of the Plains Statue and the Library.
 - The one monument that is not on this central axis is the R.B. Bennett Monument located directly south of the Library building.

There is no current effort made to provide an historical interpretation of the Park's memorials and monuments and their significance to Calgary. Likewise, there is no

⁷ A catalogue of Central (Memorial) Park's memorials and monuments is found in Appendix III.

program to ensure that the memorials and monuments receive adequate funds for their ongoing maintenance.

- **Landscape Elements:** In stark contrast to the relatively sound condition of the Library building and monuments is the generally worn out and overgrown condition of the landscape and Park furnishings. Pathways are cracked and crumbling, benches are broken and dilapidated and garbage receptacles and bike racks are not in keeping with the historical period of the Park and badly in need of repair (*Figures 10 - 14*).

The Egyptian style “jardinières” or urns that were once located along the pathway leading up to the Library’s main entrance were originally planted with showy exotic plants, most likely palms. These urns are no longer in place and have since been lost.

With regard to soft landscaping, many of the large Poplar and Spruce trees on the periphery of the Park are overgrown and will soon present a safety hazard. Topiary trees, noted in the Statement of Significance for their rarity and uniqueness in Western Canada, have all been removed. Remnants of large shrub plantings along the edges restrict views into the site and severely compromise the safety and security of the Park (*Figures 15-18*).

In the interior of the Park, the original flowerbeds, while still in evidence, are not maintained at a level that represents their historic quality and significance. The species and quality of plantings currently found in the Park do not resemble nor capture the exotic, showy character of Reader’s historical intent (*Figures 19-21*).

Equally troubling, from a landscape design perspective, is the choice of both materials and locations for many of the Park’s landscape elements. Furnishings are of an inferior and inappropriate standard and plantings are inconsistent with what should be found in a formal garden. As well, benches, garbage receptacles, and other furnishings have not been sited with sufficient attention to views, shelter,



Figure 10 - Deteriorated pathway



Figure 11 - Deteriorated pathway



Figure 12 - Broken park bench



Figure 13 - Typical garbage container



Figure 14 - Deteriorating bollard



Figure 15 - Dying tree



Figure 16 - Former tree at east end of park



Figure 17 - Shrubs blocking visibility into Park from 12th Avenue



Figure 18 - Aging spruce blocking view of library



Figure 19 - Poorly maintained flowerbeds



Figure 20 - Poorly maintained flowerbeds



Figure 21 - Poorly maintained flowerbeds



Figure 22 - Inappropriate garbage container

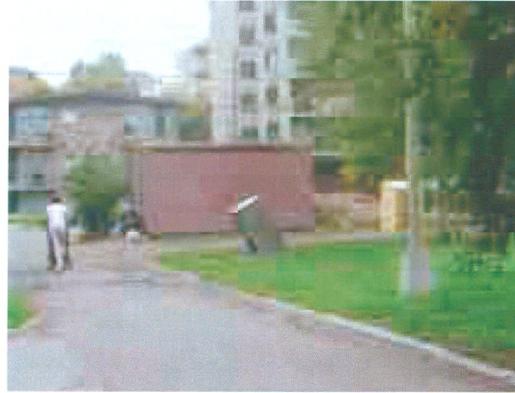


Figure 23 - Inappropriate landscape elements



Figure 24 - Typical light fixture



Figure 25 - Uncleared ice on pathways

articulation of movement corridors, or creation of outdoor spaces. Neither have they been selected to respect the Park's historical period and significance (*Figures 22-23*).

The level of pedestrian lighting and feature lighting of the Library and monuments throughout the Park is highly inadequate and the existing fixtures are inappropriate for an historic commemorative park. Lighting levels in the Park are not sufficient to ensure the safety of pedestrians and Park users. As well, no feature lighting is provided on any of the historic monuments (*Figure 24*).

The insufficient maintenance within Central (Memorial) Park is evident throughout the year. Particularly noticeable in winter months are pathways and adjoining sidewalks not properly cleared of ice and snow, making walking extremely hazardous. Throughout the year, refuse, litter and human excrement accumulates in flowerbeds and throughout the Park. The cracked and crumbling pavement walkways make any navigation by stroller, wheelchair or elderly person difficult at best (*Figure 25*).

- **Social Environment:** Open alcohol and drug use is readily apparent and people are seen to be sleeping in the Park and beneath trees at all times of the day or night and throughout all seasons. The Library employs full time security personnel to patrol the building and to ensure safety of customers and staff. The Park is known by the community and police for drugs and prostitution. A "needle safety" drop off box is located prominently in the Park. A local social service agency regularly parks its outreach bus at the northwest corner of the Park which, although responding to the needs of the community, nevertheless does not contribute to a positive social environment in the Park. The condition of the grass and tree beds at this location has been severely eroded as a result (*Figures 26 - 27*).

3. Design and Programming Analysis

The development of a conceptual redevelopment plan for Central (Memorial) Park required consideration of a number of factors: the current physical and social condition of the Park, how the Park is utilized by the community and the historical elements that must be preserved and retained as part of the site's historical designation with the Province of Alberta and The City of Calgary.



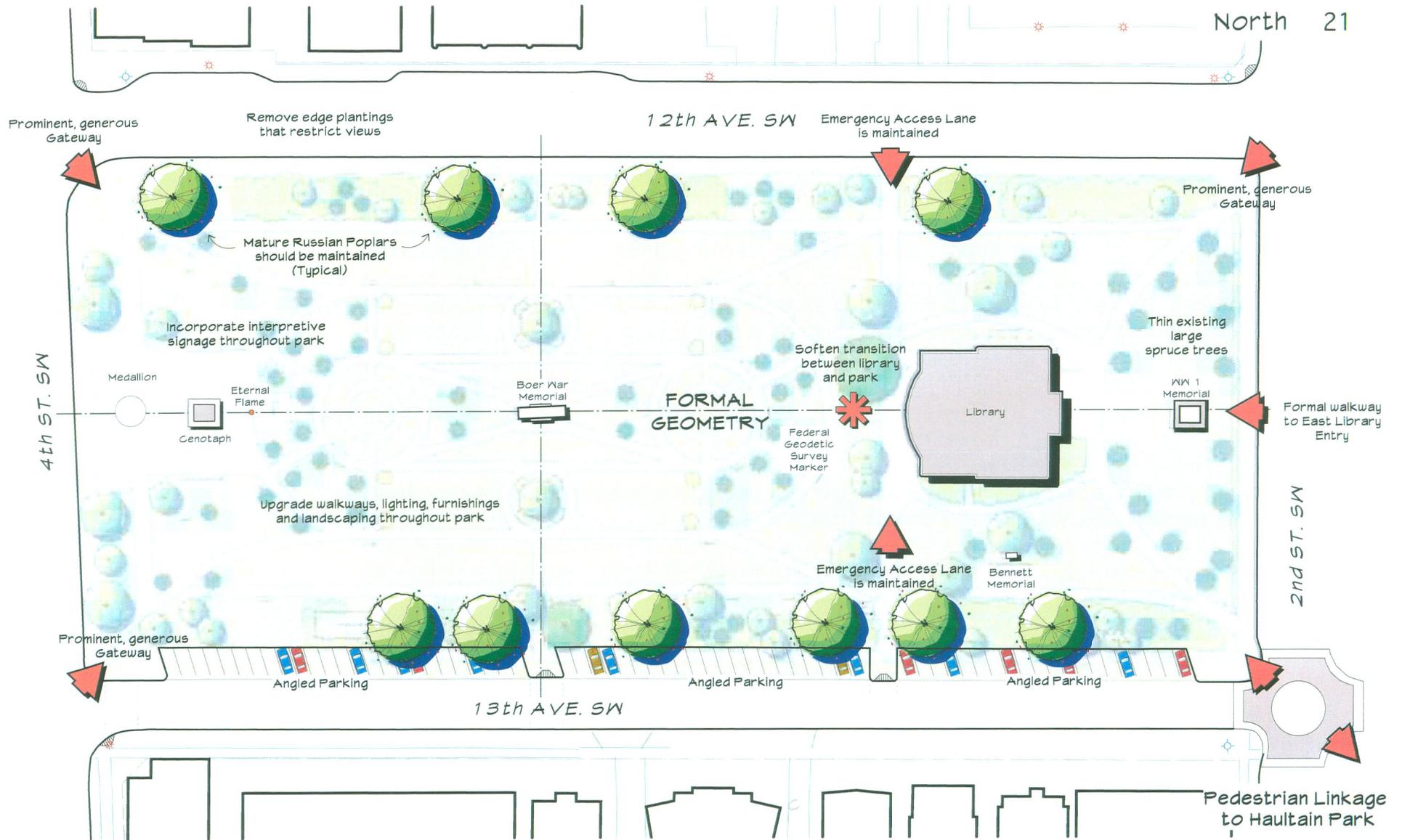
Figure 26 - Needle safety drop box



Figure 27 - Eroded lawn area at NW corner



North 21



CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK

PROPOSED COMMON IMPROVEMENTS

MAP 2

With this understanding, the Consultant Team and Steering Committee developed an approach that identified common improvements that could be incorporated into the Park along with a set of new uses and Park features. Due to the historical nature of the Library and the need to preserve its architectural character, no physical alterations to the building were considered in this exercise. Different scenarios for possible redevelopment of the Park were illustrated, vetted and debated among the members of the Steering Committee and various stakeholder and user groups. A final conceptual redevelopment proposal was prepared once all input had been obtained and the key defining character elements for Central (Memorial) Park identified.

As was noted earlier, the resulting proposal is conceptual in nature only and requires full review as part of detailed design development at a later date. The concept that was derived through this process presents a scenario that has taken into account many factors and points of view and suggests a direction that possible redevelopment could take in the future.

3.1. Planning & Development Options

3.1.1. Common Improvements

Based upon the analysis of current site conditions and issues of public safety and usability, a number of improvements were identified which should be included in the rehabilitation of Central (Memorial) Park, regardless of any new facilities, which might be considered. As illustrated (*Map 2 – Proposed Common Improvements*), these include:

- Generous gateways at each Park entry
- Pedestrian friendly connections across adjacent roadways
- Upgraded walkway surfacing throughout the Park
- Widened, continuous walkways inside north and south Park edges
- Removal of edge plantings, which restrict views into the Park
- Thinning Spruce trees which hide the east Library elevation

- A formal walkway to the east door of the Library providing direct access from 2nd Street W
- A softer transition between the Library and the Park
- Emergency and service vehicle access west of Library
- Angled parking on north side of 13th Avenue
- Better quality site furnishings throughout the Park
- Improved pedestrian and feature lighting throughout the Park
- Historic interpretive signage throughout the Park

3.1.2. Possible New Facilities and Uses

In addition to the above common improvements, a range of additional uses and/or facilities were identified which would improve the Park's safety, year round usability and appearance. Because of its history and the proximity of Haultain Park (*see Map 1*), where the focus will be on providing opportunities for active recreation and play, only passive informal activities such as the following were considered appropriate for consideration in Central (Memorial) Park:

- Restaurant
- Concession (e.g., News/beverage kiosks)
- Outdoor patio
- Market stalls
- Performance area
- Fountains
- Skating pond

In order to explore the implications of incorporating various combinations of these new facilities in the Park, three separate planning options were prepared and developed with the Steering Committee and presented to a select group of Park users. Each option represented a viable plan and was intended to illustrate the implications of different facility layouts and the effect these changes would have on the historic integrity of the Park (*Map 3 – Planning Options*)

Option A - In addition to the above common features, the significant new facility proposed in Option A was a glass conservatory building centrally located south of the Boer War Memorial. This building would accommodate food service, concession, public washrooms, a greenhouse and storage. A much strengthened North-South axis would extend around the Boer War Memorial from the conservatory entry to a prominent gateway on 12th Avenue.

The interior of the Park would be restored as a formal garden, and well-lit public walkways and furnishings would accommodate current pedestrian needs throughout. The west edge of the Library building would feature a sunken garden at the level of the lower floor.

Option B - In addition to the common features listed above, Option B included two symmetrically curved glass buildings at the west end of the Park, reminiscent of an Park's former music pavilion. The new buildings would accommodate a restaurant, concession, outdoor patios, washrooms and equipment storage. They would also frame the outer edge of a performance area east of the Cenotaph. Occasionally, audiences of up to 500 people would sit in a shallow grass bowl facing a stage located in approximately the same location as the very first park band shell.

The interior of the Park, east of the Boer War Memorial, would be restored as a formal garden. Paved pads with water supply and electrical outlets would be installed adjacent to the north and south walkways to accommodate temporary, seasonal market stalls. The west side of the Library would be developed into a reading patio at existing grade.

Option C - In addition to the common features listed above, Option C included two glass buildings similar to Option B and a hard surface amphitheater designed for more frequent, intensive use. A fountain and reflecting pool were also included east of the Boer War Memorial. The fountain is reminiscent of a pond that was constructed when the Park was first built, and could incorporate dynamic lighting and water displays to attract evening visitors. In winter the fountain would convert to a well lit, informal, community oriented skating pond. Ice making would be included.

The west edge of the Library Building in Option C would be developed as an elevated viewing terrace at the main floor level. Because the Park's west area would be more active, the area east of the Library would be developed as a reading garden.



OPTION A



OPTION B



OPTION C

CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK

PLANNING OPTIONS

3.2. User Analysis and Visioning

3.2.1. Stakeholder & User Input – February 18th 2004

A visioning exercise was conducted with a group of invited stakeholders on the evening of February 18th 2004. The invitees were selected among a wide range of Park users, community representatives, and stakeholder groups with an effort to achieve a balance of views and interests. The intent of this session was to understand the concerns and issues with respect to proper utilization of this public space and to determine the design elements considered to be most valuable to these users and the types of activities user groups felt would best be served in the Park.

In preparation for the session, invitees were presented with the three different Park restoration options to “test” alternate directions for development that had been vetted previously by the Steering Committee. All options were determined to be “viable” and responded to current issues, illustrating possible new functions and facilities for the Park. Additional background information (*see Appendix IV*) was also provided that explained the issues to be considered, the planning options and their rationale, along with advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Along with the participation of the Consultant Team and the Steering Committee, 38 individuals representing the following groups contributed to the February 18th session: CLIC (Community Life Improvement Council), Beltline Aquatic & Fitness Centre, 4th Street BRZ, Parks Foundation Calgary, Calgary Public Library, Friends of Memorial Park Library, The City of Calgary (Parks, Planning and Traffic Divisions), Beltline Community residents (including residents from adjacent senior housing complexes), Calgary Civic Trust, University of Calgary, Royal Canadian Legion, Beltline Communities Heritage Group, Beltline Communities Planning Group, First Baptist Church and the Australian/New Zealand Airmen.

The visioning session was introduced by a presentation of the historical/evolutionary development of the Park and was followed by an open discussion regarding the different planning options. Subsequent to this discussion, invitees were asked to complete a

questionnaire to determine the responses to the proposed options and preferences for particular functions and facilities in the Park.⁸

These responses were considered by the Steering Committee and the Consultant Team in the development of the preferred option presented to the Public Open House and in the final conceptual redevelopment plan of this report.

3.2.2. Public Open House – March 21st, 2004

On March 21st the Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught sponsored a public open house to present the preferred option for the Park as was developed subsequent to the Stakeholder and User session. Presentation panels of the three design options and the preferred design were available for viewing. The Consultant Team and Steering Committee made a scheduled presentation with respect to the rationale for the study, the history of the Park and details behind the preferred design option. Approximately 75 people attended the public open house and had the opportunity to discuss the proposal and provide their comments.

3.3. Defining Character of Central (Memorial) Park

Because of the historical significance of the Park, an important and final task of the Consultants' and Steering Committee's analysis involved identifying the key character defining elements and characteristics that must be maintained within the Park and incorporated into the proposed design. In addition to naming these specific elements, areas of the Park that contribute to the site's particular historic significance are identified, as well as those areas of the Park which can be modified without compromising the site's historical integrity (*Map 4 – Historic Elements*). The key guiding principle to this exercise was that ***“the area of the Cenotaph, the elongated circular formal garden and the Library are elements to preserved, while the perimeter elements are to be rehabilitated”***.⁹

⁸ The responses to the questionnaire are tabulated in Appendix V.

⁹ See Appendix VI – Meeting Minutes.

3.3.1. Preservation and Rehabilitation Areas

It is recommended that the area within the elongated pathway surrounding the Boer War Memorial be treated as a **preservation**¹⁰ area. Within this area, the configuration of pathways, flowerbeds and tree plantings will be preserved, enhanced and/or replaced consistent with the original Park layout. No significant alterations or new structures will be proposed within this area.

Areas outside the elongated pathway are recommended to be treated as **rehabilitation**¹¹ areas. Pathways and plantings as well as new and refurbished facilities will respect the formal geometry, character and original layout of the Park, but will be designed to accommodate current and future uses and structures.

3.3.2. Historical Design Elements

As illustrated (*Map 4*) the specific historic elements within the Park were identified and noted with respect to their preservation/rehabilitation status:

- Preservation of the Library building;
- Preservation of the overall formal geometry;
- Preservation of the existing memorials/monuments;
- Preservation of the entire central pathway configuration circling the Boer War Memorial;
- Preservation of the North-South central axis, respecting the original circular configurations in the formal garden area including the planting of the flower beds;

¹⁰ **Preservation:** the action or process of protecting, maintaining and/or stabilizing the existing materials, form and integrity of an *historic place*, or of an individual component, while protecting its *heritage value* (Federal Heritage Places Initiative).

¹¹ **Rehabilitation:** the action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use for a *historic place*, or of an individual component, through repair, alterations and/or additions, while protecting its *heritage value* (Federal Heritage Places Initiative).

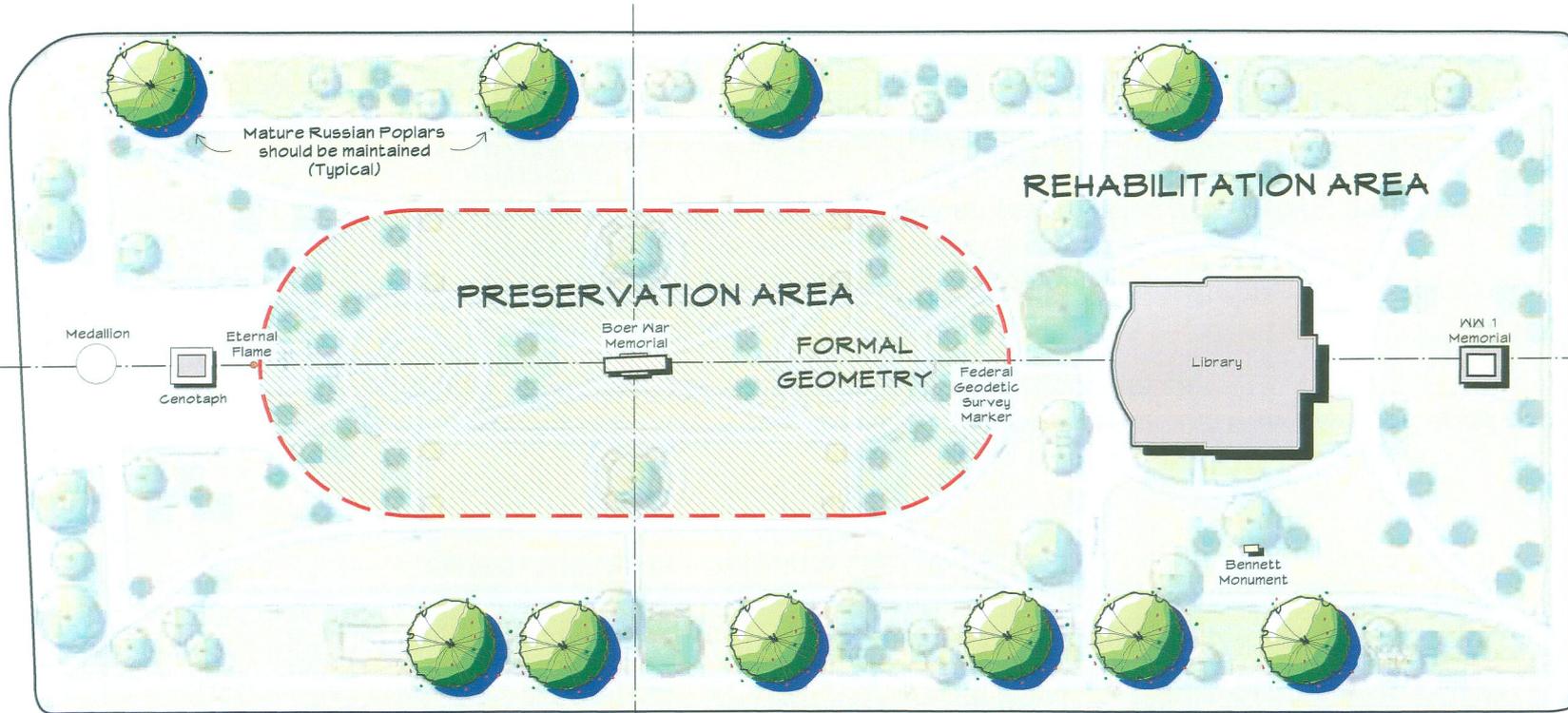


North

30



12th AVE. SW



4th ST. SW

2nd ST. SW

13th AVE. SW



ALSO: THE COMMEMORATIVE FUNCTION AND ELEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE PARK



CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK

HISTORIC ELEMENTS TO REMAIN

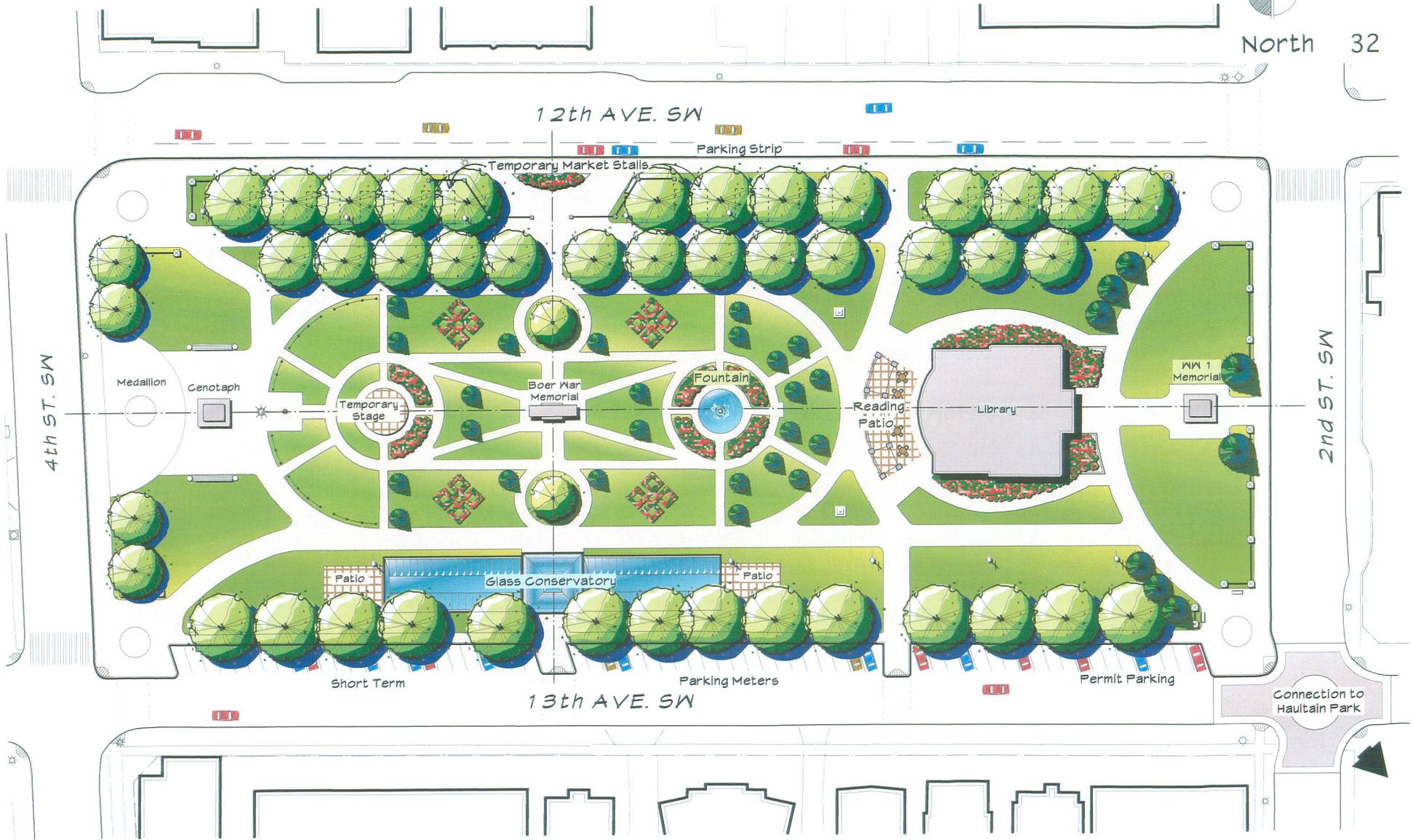
MAP 4

- Preservation of the formal pattern of flower beds throughout the preservation area including the diamond shape configurations and circle configurations;
- Rehabilitation and re-introduction of lighting based on the original “Mount Royal” lamp standard;
- Rehabilitation of park benches in keeping with the original style of park benches
- Interpretation of the evolution of the Park and its gardens integrated throughout the Park;
- Retention of the original pathway configuration in the rehabilitation area unless function dictates otherwise. Path size/width may be increased to meet current requirements.

In addition it was agreed that the remaining, large Russian Poplar trees adjacent to 12th and 13th Avenues should be retained for as long as possible. Not only do these trees represent the first plantings in the area, their huge scale is important in defining the space within the existing Park. Selective clearing of Spruce trees at the east, formal entrance to the Library will be addressed at the design development stage and as the life of the tree dictates.

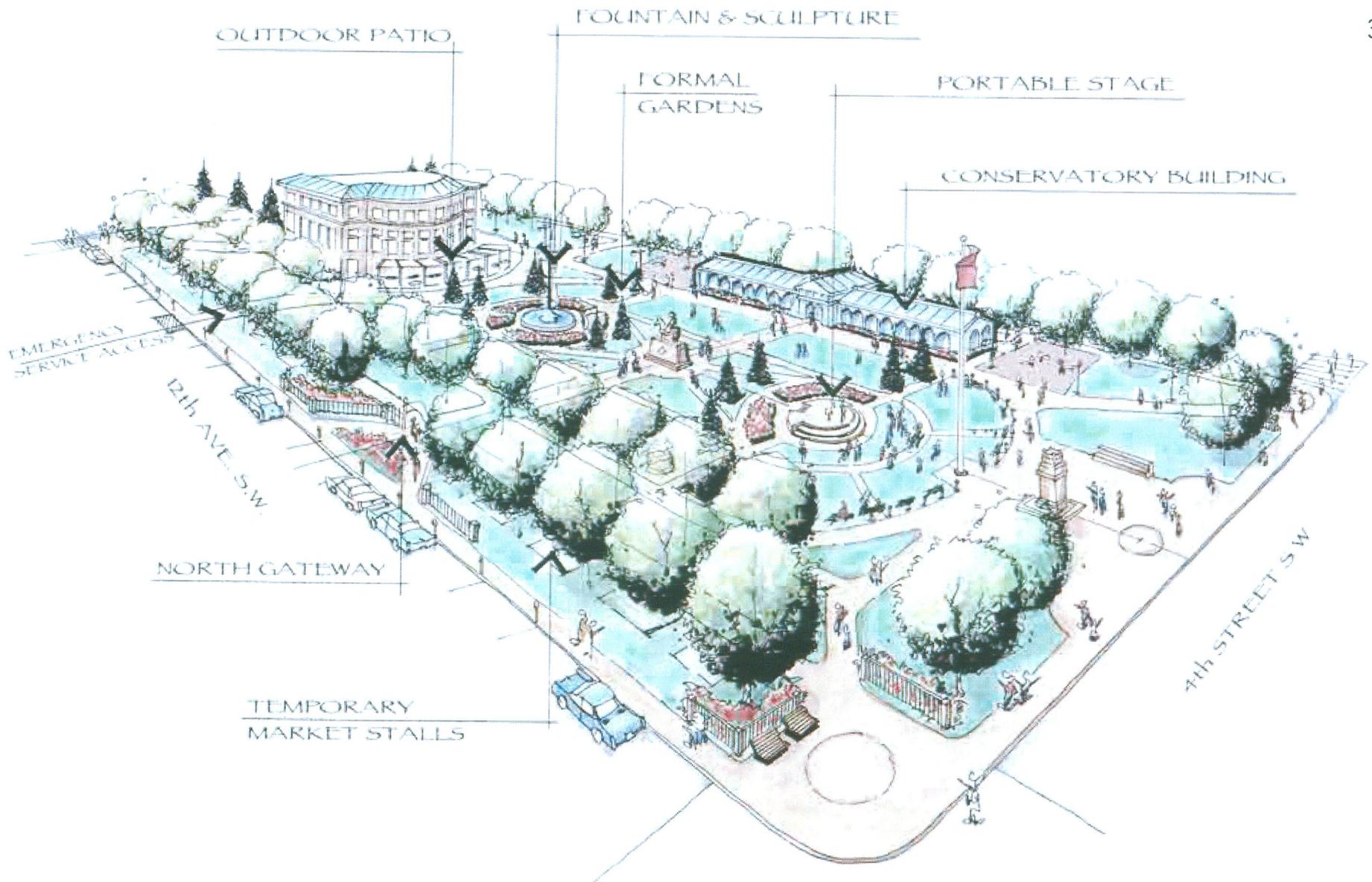
4. Conceptual Redevelopment Plan and Recommendations

The proposed conceptual redevelopment plan illustrated on the following drawings (see *Conceptual Redevelopment Plan and Perspective Sketch*) includes elements of the previously described planning options which were favoured by Park users, local residents, the Steering Committee and the Consultant Team. The Consultant Team and Steering Committee, within the context of this study, considered this combination of facilities and uses to represent a balanced direction for redevelopment of Central (Memorial) Park while still respecting the historical character of this important site. The concept proposed maintains the historic features and functions that currently exist and also re-introduces some of the original activities that historically made this Park so successful. In addition, upgraded walkways, landscaping and lighting will ensure a safer and more attractive environment and the introduction of food service, market stalls and performance facilities will provide



CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK

Conceptual Redevelopment Plan



CENTRAL MEMORIAL PARK
CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN - PERSPECTIVE SKETCH

opportunities for a range of formal and informal community activities that are desired by users.

Specifically, the new facilities being proposed include:

Conservatory Building: A light glass structure of approximately 6000 ft² (560m²), to accommodate two restaurants and public washrooms, with site storage and Park maintenance facilities in the basement is proposed as the major development piece for the site. Outdoor patios at the ends of the conservatory will provide a pleasant space from which to enjoy the Park surroundings while dining. The conservatory will be located on the central north/south axis of the Park, on the south edge of the formal gardens. The design of this structure will incorporate CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principals.

The conservatory and its patios have the potential of attracting hundreds of patrons to the Park, sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, throughout the year. The activity generated by the restaurants will serve an important public function in addition to the amenity they will provide to Park users. Reestablishing year round uses and activity will create vitality in the Park and will lend to an improved social environment for pedestrians and neighbouring businesses and residents.

Performance Area: Directly east of the existing Cenotaph a semi circular grassed area is proposed to accommodate a variety of performances, ceremonies and community functions. Centrally located within this area will be a low profile, removable stage complete with power and lighting connections. Radiating from the stage, feature paving will continue the pathway patterns of the historic Park. Around the periphery of the Plaza a simple wrought iron railing will physically separate the performance area from the Cenotaph and Plaza areas.

Musical and cultural events are an important part of the Park's early history. Reestablishing performance events will give people an excuse to visit the Park and enjoy themselves and will have a positive economic impact on local commercial activity.

Formal Gardens: With the exception of the grassed performance area, the original Edwardian garden will be reestablished with flowerbeds of original quality, manicured hedges, pollarded Spruce trees and lawn. The original pathways will be restored, and directly east of the Boer War Memorial a formal sculpture fountain, as envisaged by the Park's original designers, will be installed.

The original beauty of the Park must be returned and celebrated. A restored garden in Central (Memorial), in conjunction with the refurbished Lougheed House and Beaulieu Gardens to the west and Reader Rock gardens in the east part of the Beltline, are all important historical, horticultural venues that contribute to the richness of this Calgary neighbourhood.

Outdoor Reading Patio: Directly west of the existing Library building an outdoor reading patio is proposed. This may include an arbor, feature paving, furnishings, special lighting and a coffee/news kiosk. Access to the patio will be from the Park. The existing emergency and service access lane, which currently runs along the west wall of the building, will be reconstructed as a pedestrian walkway circling the west edge of the patio.

The reading patio enhances the Park and provides that essential connection between the Library building and the rest of the Park that currently does not exist. In so doing, the Library's presence in the Park is elevated with the focused attention to the west side of the building and is integral to the Park's renewed vitality.

Gateways: Generous, open gateway plazas are suggested at each corner of the Park and north of the Boer War Memorial on 12th Avenue. These will include feature paving, wrought iron railings, benches, garbage receptacles and lighting. All furnishings and plantings will be low, so as to ensure clear visibility into and through the Park. Each gateway plaza will include low profile curbs and pedestrian crosswalks across adjoining roadways.

Creating obvious welcoming points for pedestrians to enter the Park encourages people to walk through and enjoy the Park rather than simply walking by. Sensitively locating beverage/news kiosks at these entry points will further encourage pedestrians to stop and enjoy the relief provided by the Park.

Tree Planting: A double row of large deciduous trees is proposed to line the main pedestrian walk on the north side of the Park and a single row will line the south edge behind the conservatory building. Over time, these will replace the large Russian Poplars, which remain along 12th and 13th Avenues. East of the Library, the very large Spruce trees will be selectively thinned and/or replaced to improve the visibility of the east elevation of the Library. Throughout the formal garden, small, pollarded Spruce will replace original plantings. A planting program of this type will reestablish the uniqueness and Edwardian character within the centre of the Park and will provide a pleasant pedestrian environment along the edges which are adjacent to major roadways.

Walkways: Within the original oval shaped garden, pathways will be constructed on their original alignment. The only exceptions within this area will be the North-South axis where they will be widened, and the performance area where the historic layout will be reflected in the pattern of paving. Along the north edge of the Park a wider “promenade” is proposed to accommodate pedestrian traffic and the spill over from temporary market stalls. The pathway in front of the conservatory building will be similarly widened. Pedestrian mobility must be enhanced in the Park to ensure that all types of people can safely use the Park during all kinds of weather and all times of the year.

Lighting: The most obvious way of creating a safer and more inviting after-hours Park is through installation of high quality pedestrian lighting at gateways, along pathways and in gathering areas. Feature lighting is also suggested to highlight the Library, monuments, commemorative features and landscaping. As well, the fountain will incorporate a dynamic lighting program as part of its basic design.

Animating the Park through lighting during the evening hours is another way of instilling life and vitality to the space. A well lit Park will discourage illegitimate use of the Park as people will be easily seen and identified from the street and neighbouring buildings.

Temporary Market Stalls: Abutting the north walkway, the installation of paved pads between the trees to accommodate small, temporary market stalls is proposed. The intent is to attract temporary, seasonal activities such as flower and produce stands, art markets and

used book sales. These pads will be equipped with secure power and water service to facilitate easy setup by vendors.

Angled Parking: Along the north side of 13th Avenue, the existing 26 parallel parking stalls will be converted into 60 angled stalls. Directly south of the Library, 30 stalls will be maintained as permit parking for local residents, Library and Alliance Francaise staff. The remaining 30 stalls will have short-term meters for public use, including Library and Park users and designated handicapped stalls. A continuous concrete sidewalk will be installed between the new parking and the formal line of deciduous trees. 13th Avenue will continue as a two-way roadway.

This parking area is essential to provide for the operational needs of the Library, while still accommodating the needs of local visitors and commercial requirements of the proposed restaurant. Possibilities for sharing of parking revenue will be explored with The City of Calgary as part of the management component for the Park.

Commemorative Elements: The historic, commemorative function will remain as a significant component of Central (Memorial) Park. Existing monuments will remain and policy consideration will be given to the ongoing introduction and/or placement of new monuments and any relocation of existing monuments. Dependent on this policy development, it may be recommended that the current R. B. Bennett Memorial be relocated to a more prominent site on a more substantial base, and the original (or a replica of) the Statue of the Amazons be returned to the Park, as well as the Egyptian style jardinières.

Interpretation: Throughout the Park, high quality, tasteful interpretive signage will be installed to supplement the commemorative elements, and to “tell the story” of Central (Memorial) Park. As well, an active program of interpretation involving the Royal Canadian Legion, local historians and school history programs will be encouraged.

The story of Central (Memorial) Park is in many respects, the story of Calgary. It is important that the public understand the history and significance behind the Library, the development of the Park and the commemorative elements that recognize the efforts of local Calgarians and war veterans.

Streetscape Design Guidelines: Relevant to the Park's historical period of significance, a set of Streetscape Design Guidelines are necessary to establish a clear set of criteria for the selection of Park furnishings, signage, features, etc. These guidelines will be an important element of the design development stage of the revitalization process and will ensure that consistency and quality are maintained throughout the Park.

5. Implementation

Parks are community assets, and as such, the potential impact of a neighbouring park is a strong consideration as part of the decision to purchase, invest or finance a property. Capital improvements can result in increases to both commercial and residential real estate value. Strategic investment in revitalizing parks yields significant economic returns to the cities, investors and neighbouring communities. The recipe for successful park investment, one that results in economic revitalization, requires strategic planning, effective maintenance and community involvement.¹²

5.1. Management & Operations

Central (Memorial) Park, even in its current derelict condition, has a Civic, Regional and National significance beyond other parks in central Calgary. It is unique for its accumulated history, its importance as a public event space, for containing a functioning Carnegie funded Library, and for being one of the only formal Edwardian gardens in Western Canada. The overwhelmingly positive support for its restoration, received during this planning process, has confirmed the valuable and significant role this Park plays in today's society.

In addition to a physical restoration and capital investment program however, it is essential that a new management structure be established for Central (Memorial) Park. Not only is there a substantial responsibility for maintaining the historical quality and integrity of this designated space, the gradual deterioration and misuse of the Park over the past quarter century is testimony to the need for a more generous commitment to operations,

¹² *Ernst & Young, How Smart Parks Investment Pays Its Way, 2003.*

maintenance and programming than is available for other inner city parks. Also, the significant capital investment required to bring the Park back to life will carry with it a responsibility for ongoing stewardship at the highest level.

Manhattan's Bryant Park in New York City¹³ is a demonstrated case where capital reinvestment in parks has been shown to have tangible fiscal benefits when they are secured and preserved through effective administration, community participation and maintenance. The management model proposed in this report is similar to the organizational and management structure overseeing the capital expenditure and ongoing maintenance programs in Bryant Park. This structure is a successful example of cooperation between city, local, business and community interest for the intent of maximizing investment. Through the Bryant Park Management Corporation and the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, a large portion of revenue sources for park funding is now coming from concession and usage fees, and restaurant and rental income, reducing the required funds from assessments on abutting property owners. Once considered a social and economic blight to midtown Manhattan, Bryant Park's renovation and management structure has created a strong amenity to the local office market while eliminating the former negative impact the park once had on the local community and real estate market.

In this regard, there are a number of local Calgary organizations that have a vested interest in the revitalization and maintenance of Central (Memorial) Park, and their active on-going involvement in the Park's operations should be solicited in a similar fashion.

It is recommended that a **Central (Memorial) Park Restoration Corporation** be established to manage the Park's revitalization and future operations. The "Corporation" would be an independent entity, composed of representatives from the Victoria Crossing BRZ, the Fourth Street BRZ, the Beltline Communities, the Parks Foundation Calgary, the Calgary Public Library, the Veterans community, and The City of Calgary.

¹³ See *New Yorkers for Parks & Ernst & Young LLP, Analysis of Secondary Economic Impacts, New York City Parks, Capital Expenditures – Final Report, 2003.*

It is proposed that the Corporation would operate the Park under contract from The City of Calgary, in a manner similar to the way that the Calgary Downtown Association and its predecessor, the Stephen Avenue Board, have been responsible for Stephen Avenue Mall and Barclay Mall. Other precedents for establishing independent park management include Civic Partners such as Heritage Park, Fort Calgary and the Talisman Center (Lindsay Park). The exact nature of the Corporation's status would be determined through discussions with The City of Calgary and the Calgary Public Library Board.

Through this type of structure, the Corporation would receive operating funds from the City of Calgary to cover basic maintenance of the Park. It could also have the ability to draw funds from the Central (Memorial) Park Restoration Fund, created as part of the capital fundraising effort. The Restoration Fund would retain approximately 25% of all capital funds raised from non-civic sources for Park reconstruction. This money would be invested and the annual earnings would be used to fund Park programming, on-site security, and additional maintenance. Additional revenues from the restaurant and kiosk leases, parking meters, and market stalls would be used for these purposes.

It is anticipated that some \$200,000 per year could be acquired from these sources. Combined with Civic spending on basic park maintenance, Central (Memorial) Park's future can be more properly secured.

5.2. Capital Fundraising

In consulting with the different user groups and residents, it was expressed loudly and often that support for a grand revitalization of Central (Memorial) Park exists. Calgarians value this Park and feel strongly that it has been neglected too long and is too important a site to not receive the attention it is due. However, given The City of Calgary's current financial restraints and the amount of funding required to undertake this revitalization project, it is reasonable to assume that a combination of civic funding, privately raised funds, and grants from other levels of government will be required to achieve the stated objectives. The Parks Foundation Calgary is encouraged to take a lead role in this effort and would require assistance from the local community and other committed citizens. One of the next steps in

the revitalization process will be to establish an implementation coordinating committee that will be charged with development of a capital fund raising campaign.

5.3. Capital Costs:

Preliminary capital costs for the proposed conceptual redevelopment plan have been estimated as follows, for all recommended improvements to Central (Memorial) Park.¹⁴ Because of the importance of this Park, not just to the Beltline communities, and The City of Calgary, but provincially and nationally as well, it is assumed that only the highest standards of materials and construction will suffice.

A 15% contingency has been included for unforeseen conditions, and a 15% allowance is added for survey, testing, design, and construction management. The following estimates are intended for budgeting and fundraising only. They will be confirmed and adjusted through the design development phase of the project.

Site Demolition, Preparation and Grading	\$ 500,000.00
Feature Paving and Concrete	1,200,000.00
Angled Parking Stalls	80,000.00
Pedestrian and Feature Lighting	350,000.00
Decorative Fencing and Masonry	300,000.00
Fountain and Sculpture	200,000.00
Site Furnishings and Structures	220,000.00
Soft Landscaping	150,000.00
Site Irrigation	200,000.00
Conservatory Building and Washrooms	1,500,000.00
Interpretive and Feature Signage	150,000.00

¹⁴ Estimates are based on 2004 construction costs for work of a similar kind in downtown Calgary.

Total Estimated Construction Cost	\$4,850,000.00
Plus 15% Contingency	727,000.00
Plus 15% Soft Costs	727,000.00
 Total Estimated Cost	 \$6,304,000.00

5.4. Possible Construction Phasing:

From the perspective of minimizing inconvenience to users, reducing project costs and dramatizing the “revival” of Calgary’s original Central Park, it would be ideal if all proposed improvements could be undertaken through a single construction program. If however, sufficient funds are not available in a timely fashion, improvements could be made to the Park through phased construction. Restoration and construction of new facilities could proceed in several logical increments. Based upon maximizing benefits to Park users and the nature of the work involved a phasing program such as the following could be considered:

- **Phase 1:** Basic restoration, including new gateways, walkways, performance area, pedestrian walkways, furnishings, irrigation system and soft landscaping. (Possible Budget \$2.0 million)
- **Phase 2:** Construction of the Conservatory Building as well as adjacent hard and soft landscaping. (Possible Budget \$2.0 million)
- **Phase 3:** Installation of feature areas, special structures, upgraded lighting, ornamental fountain, upgraded gardens, additional furnishings, signage and landscaping. (Possible Budget \$2.0 million).

5.5. Design Development Phase

The purpose of the enclosed schematic plans and recommendations, are to provide a direction that the redevelopment and continued evolution of Central (Memorial) Park could take. The concept included has been prepared by the Consultant Team with input and

discussion from selected Park users, interest groups, local residents and members of the Steering Committee.

The next stage in the planning and design process will involve confirmation and refinement of Park programming, facility requirements, infrastructure, layouts, materials, and schedules of capital costs. The development of a sound management and maintenance structure for the Park is fundamental to this proposal. The “design development plan” will also provide sufficient detail to allow for circulation to approving authorities, initiation of a focused fund raising program, and preparation of a detailed implementation strategy.

APPENDIX I – Statement of Significance

Central (Memorial) Park Statement of Significance

Historically known as Central Park

Description of Historic Place

Central (Memorial) Park is a Victorian era inspired park encompassing an entire city block (1.91 hectares or 4.78-acre) in the Beltline district of Calgary (4th and 2nd Streets SW and 12th and 13th Avenues SW). The Park's formal 1911 layout, described as a design elaboration of geometric carpet beds of the Victorian era, follows a strict symmetrical pattern of lawns, beds, and paths that is still essentially intact. The Park is currently home to 8 memorials including *The Horseman of the Plains* memorialising the Boer War, located in the centre of the Park and a Cenotaph and Plaza area memorialising WWI, WWII, and the Korean Conflict at the west end of the Park. The Library (opened January 2, 1912), funded in part by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation and located at the east end of the Park, is an excellent architectural representation of the neo-classical revival style.

Heritage Value

Central (Memorial) Park is home to numerous memorials/monuments and was historically, and is currently, a place for memorialising and remembering. Although the Boer War Memorial was a fundamental element in the Park early on (it was unveiled in 1914), it was in 1928 that the Park was renamed Central (Memorial) Park with the construction of cenotaph and ceremonial benches. After that date annual Remembrance Day ceremonies were held at the Park until the 1970's. The tradition was reinstated again in 1994 and the ceremonies continue to be held there today.

Central (Memorial) Park is Calgary's oldest surviving park and was typical of civic parks and squares in both Canada and Britain during the late 19th and early 20th century. Its origins can be traced to 1885 when the land was donated by William Pearce, Superintendent of Mines on behalf of the Dominion of Canada. While H.G. Burrows, a British immigrant horticulturist originally designed the Park in 1908; it was in 1911-12 when the Park began to take on the current appearance. In 1911 Richard Iwersen proposed "a formal garden" for the Park to the city commissioners that was designed around a central oval of symmetrical lawns, flower beds and paths. The central oval is essentially intact today and illustrates, on a larger scale, Victorian era geometric carpet beds. The design also included 2 large fountains flanking the Boer War Memorial, a music pavilion on the west edge of the Park, trellised summerhouses on the south edge, and a large flowerbed with the Statue of the Amazons in front of the library.

Heritage Value Cont.

In 1913 William Reader, Calgary's most influential Park's superintendent, replaced Iwersen and began a comprehensive planting program of the Park. To emphasise the formal character of the garden Reader included showy exotics, brilliantly coloured annuals, and topiary. Spruce topiary is very rare in Alberta and no other examples are known to exist in the Province dating from the Edwardian period. Reader's vision for Calgary was as a civilized urban city with high quality open space and private space; Central (Memorial) Park was an integral tool in realizing this vision. Readers believed that creating a beautiful city would entice people to settle in Calgary and make it their home. In addition to that he encouraged Calgarians to improve their private spaces and saw the Park as educational tool - a way to demonstrate to Calgarians what could be planted in their own gardens.

Central (Memorial) Park was an important landmark in the city and afforded Calgarians a certain way of life. The Park was a social and cultural centre of Calgary. Reading and music were considered essential within society, as was the ritual of the Sunday afternoon promenade. The Library, music pavilion, and intersecting formal path system all contributed to that society. Today Central (Memorial) Park offers visitors the sense of time and place of that era. The suburban parks of the 1960's and 70's, where more emphasis was placed on active recreation, resulting in large expanses of turf are in obvious contrast with the elaborate geometric design and symmetrical pattern of the lawns, carpet beds, and paths of Central (Memorial) Park.

Character Defining Elements

General

Central axis running east-west

Formal structure illustrated with symmetrical, geometric patterns of the paths, carpet beds and lawn areas

Showy plant material (such as topiary spruce, colourful annuals, palms)

A treed buffer along the north and south edges, allowing a focus on the interior of the Park

Numerous memorials and monuments

Placement, form and massing of the Carnegie Library

View to the First Baptist Church

Cenotaph Area

Location and placement of the following:

- Cenotaph
- Ceremonial benches
- Eternal flame
- Medallion stone
- Flagpole

Use of hard surface

Formal Garden

Original symmetric/geometric layout of lawns, carpet beds, and paths

East-west central axis

Central equestrian monument node, commemorating the Boer War

Use of showy plant material (such as topiary spruce, colourful annuals, palms)

Federal Geodetic Survey marker, establishing Calgary's benchmark elevation point

Library Area

Semi-circular carriage way on east side of library

North-south path on west side of library

This ends the Statement of Significance (SOS). A breakdown of Heritage Value has been included but will not be included in the final SOS.

Please note that this is not part of the Statement of Significance but is included only because it helped to form the Heritage Value section of the Statement.

Heritage Value – by category

Historic

Age:

1885 - Central Park, as it was originally known, (along with an area of 12.14 hectares or 30 acres adjacent to the Bow River) was donated by William Pearce, Superintendent of Mines on behalf of the Dominion of Canada and was designated as park reserve for The City of Calgary.

1894 - Used as a tree nursery for the parks department.

1908 - First laid out as a formal park by H.G. Burrows, a British immigrant horticulturist. The work included a centrally placed bandstand.

1910 - Work began on the Central Library.

1911 – Richard Iwersen proposed “a formal garden” for the Park to the city commissioners. His design included 2 fountains flanking the proposed Boer War Memorial, a new music pavilion on the west edge of the Park, trellised summerhouses on the south edge, and a large flowerbed with the Statue of the Amazons in front of the library.

1912 – Calgary’s Central Library, the first public library in Alberta, is completed.

1912 – The central bandstand was removed and was replaced with a larger band shell, in the form of a semi-circular pavilion, at the west end of the Park.

1913 - William Reader replaces Iwersen as Park’s superintendent, continues to implement Iwersen’s plan, and begins a comprehensive planting program of the Park.

1913 - The Statue of the Amazons is placed at the front of the Library until 1925, when it is removed and subsequently lost.

1914 - Boer War memorial is unveiled

1928 – Park is renamed Central (Memorial) Park, the semi circular pavilion is removed and the cenotaph and ceremonial benches are erected in its place. A Federal Geodetic Survey marker establishing Calgary’s benchmark elevation point was installed by the by the Monuments Board of Canada. This date marks the last major development of the Park. Alterations after this date are essentially limited to the addition of memorials and enhanced planting of the Park edges.

Event:

Unveiling of Boer War memorial on June 20th, 1914

Royal visit of 1939 - rose gardens created for the event

Annual municipal Christmas trees were placed in the Park

Remembrance Day ceremonies from 1928 - 1970, then again from 1994 – present.

Commemorates wars, but is not itself associated with those events

Person:

William Pearce

- Vision for Calgary
- Key in land donation

William Reader

- Vision for Calgary as a civilised urban city with high quality open space, Reader believed that this would attract people to Calgary. Central (Memorial) Park was the showpiece
- Specific use of plant material. Topiary, showy exotics and brilliantly coloured annuals to emphasise the formal character of the garden and to commemorate various events. As an educational tool to illustrate to Calgarians what could be planted in their own gardens.
- Programming for memorial/commemorative components of the Park.

Richard Iwersen

- Creator of present day garden design

Thomas Mawson

- Incorporated Central (Memorial) Park into his 1914 plan for the City of Calgary

The Park was also the community park for several prominent Calgarians including:

- Patrick Burns
- Mayor Thomas Underwood
- Senator Lougheed

Theme:

Leisure and Recreation – includes reading at the Library and listening to music at the bandstand as well as ‘being seen’ in society and courting within the trellised summerhouses.

Settling the West - especially in attracting people to move to Calgary, one of Reader’s goals as park superintendent.

Way of Life:

Central (Memorial) Park was a social and cultural centre of Calgary with the Central Library, music pavillion, and proximity to First Baptist Church. Reading and music were considered essential within society, as was the ritual of the Sunday afternoon promenade.

Aesthetic

Style and Design

Victorian, ornate landscaping

Strict symmetrical patterns of lawns, flower beds and paths illustrate the design elaboration, on a larger scale, of Victorian era geometric carpet beds

Typical of civic parks and squares in both Canada and Britain during the late 19th and early 20th century – including elaborate embroidery borders and raised medallion carpet beds filled with brilliantly coloured flowers

Artwork

Central (Memorial) Park is a significant work of garden/landscape art. Reader, although he didn’t work on the original layout of the garden/park, had a vision for Central (Memorial) Park as the civic and horticultural showpiece of Calgary. He was a masterful horticulturist who continually used plant material to support that vision of the Park. He kept complete records of plant species that show up to 20,000 annuals, colour-keyed for brilliancy, were planted yearly. Magnificent floral tributes were also mounted to celebrate the 1936 Coronation year and the Royal visit of 1939.

The Horseman of the Plains equestrian statue, commemorating the Boer War of 1899-1902, was created by sculptor Louis Phillipe Hebert in 1928. It was considered to be one of the four finest statues of its type in the world at the time and was Calgary’s first piece of public art.

Materials

Extensive use of Spruce trees as topiary – topiary is very rare in Alberta (and across the Prairie Provinces) and no other examples are known to exist in Alberta dating from the Edwardian period

“Brilliantly” coloured annuals (up to 20,000 per year), and associated floral tributes

Palms and exotics to reinforce the formal character of the garden

Environment/Setting (continuity, landmark)

Central (Memorial) Park was an important landmark for The City of Calgary during the period of significance, cultural and social centre

The Library’s association with the Andrew Carnegie Foundation enhances its landmark value

Still an important landmark for the community

Scientific

Knowledge/Information

William Reader was known internationally as a horticulturist and plant collector. An important part of his legacy is his work testing the hardiness and survivability of plants in Calgary’s relatively harsh conditions (including low moisture levels, Chinook effects including fluctuating temperatures, strong winds, and the lack of snow cover). Pyramid Box trees were specifically experimented with at Central (Memorial) Park.

Educational

Central (Memorial) Park and its plantings were used as educational tools. Reader believed it was a way to demonstrate to Calgarians what could be planted in their own gardens.

The library, under the direction of Alexander Calhoun, was the centre of culture and education for Calgarians. It was also the first home of the University of Calgary.

Cultural/Social

Community

The Park was a cultural centre of Calgary with both the Library and a the bandstand located on the site. The Statue of the Amazons was the first statuary in the Park and illustrates that the Park's original function focused on culture and education.

Lattice summerhouses on the south edge of the garden were often used as courting areas.

Tradition

Site of Municipal Christmas Tree from 1914 – date unknown

Remembrance Day ceremonies held there from 1928 – 1970's then again from 1994 – present day

Memorial

Central (Memorial) Park is home to numerous memorials, monuments and markers:

- 1914 - Boer War Memorial (Horseman of the Plains)
- 1924 - WWI Memorial
- 1925 - RNWMP Cairn (now located at Fort Calgary)
- 1928 - Cenotaph and ceremonial benches
- 1928 – Federal Geodetic Survey Marker
- 1930 - Water fountain commemorating 50th Battalion in WWI
- 1953 - R.B. Bennett memorial
- 1967 - Eternal Flame commemorating 100 years of service
- 1994 - Royal Canadian Legion Commemorative Medallion
- 1996 - Burma Star - WWII memorial
- 2004 - Australia and New Zealand Airmen (ANZAC) - WWII Memorial

Spirit of Place

The spirit of Central (Memorial) Park lies in its historic role as a social gathering centre for Calgary. The Carnegie library and the numerous memorials and monuments still illustrate the importance of the Park within Calgary. The retention of the original path system, with its strict symmetrical design and intersecting geometric form (well suited for Sunday promenades) is extremely valuable when comparing it to more contemporary urban parks. For example, Prince's Island Park and the long, wide, Bow River pathway system is used for more active recreation.

While the cultural prominence of Central (Memorial) Park has diminished over time it still retains at least two its historic functions - as a place for memorialising and remembering, and as a place for passive recreation.

Sense of Time and Place

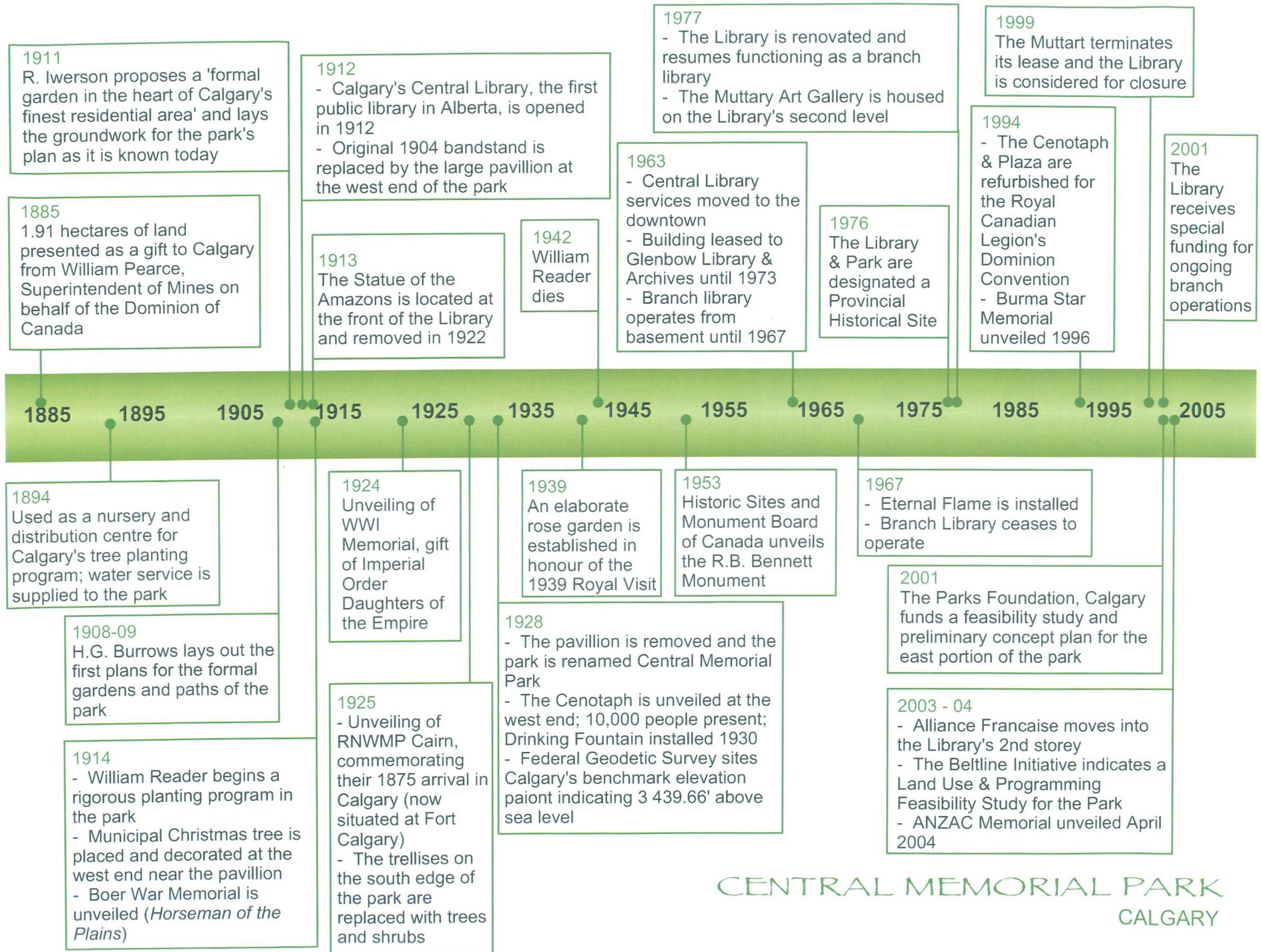
Central (Memorial) Park does offer visitors a sense of time and place of another era. The elaborate geometric design and symmetrical pattern of the lawns, carpet beds, and paths are in contrast with most of the suburban parks of the 1960's and 70's, where more emphasis was placed on active recreation and resulted in large expanses of turf used for playing fields.

Spiritual

Ceremonial

Commemorative Remembrance Day ceremonies

APPENDIX II - Historical Timeline 1885 - 2005



APPENDIX III – Catalogue of Memorials & Monuments



Egyptian Jardinières
1912
(removed)



Statue of the Amazons
1913
(removed 1922)



Horseman of the Plains
Louise Philippe Herbert
Boer War Memorial
1914



Municipal Christmas Tree
1914



WWI Memorial 1924
Coer de Lion McCarthy



RNWMP Cairn
1925
(relocated to Fort Calgary)



Cenotaph
1928



Federal Geodetic Survey Marker
1928



Water Fountain
1930



R. B. Bennett Monument
1953

2004
ANZAC Memorial



1996
Burma Star Memorial



1994
Royal Canadian Legion
Commemorative Medallion



1967
Eternal Flame



APPENDIX IV – Background Information

Central Memorial Park Land Use and Programming Feasibility Study

User Group Review

February 18th, 2004
5:00 to 8:00 PM
Central Memorial Library
Lower Boardroom

Background

In May 2003 **The Beltline Initiative: Rediscovering the Centre** was published and recommended a comprehensive review of the role of Central Memorial Park in terms of its current function, design, public safety, maintenance and management. The intent was to better serve the growing population in Beltline communities and to use redevelopment of CMP as a catalyst in revitalizing this part of downtown Calgary.

In December 2003 the landscape architectural firm of Carson McCulloch Associates Ltd. was retained by the Victoria Crossing BRZ to undertake a land use and feasibility study for redevelopment of Central Memorial Park. This study is currently exploring options for revitalization of the park, and in April of this year a recommendation will be made for the direction redevelopment should take. An important component of this exercise involves understanding the concerns and expectations of the local community and park users.

To assist the park planners, a meeting will be held on February 18th, between 5:00 and 8:00 PM at the Central Memorial Library at which special user groups will have an opportunity to review and discuss several possible options for park revitalization.

Proposed Meeting Agenda

5:00 PM	Displays Boards Open for Viewing
5:15 PM	Introductions and Project Background
5:30 PM	Consultant Presentation
	History of the Park
	Current Conditions
	Possible New Uses
	Possible Layout Options
6:00 PM	User Group Representations
6:30 PM	Break for Refreshments
6:45 PM	General Discussion
7:45 PM	Questionnaires and Wrap Up

Issues To Be Considered

Underlying this study is an understanding that Central Memorial Park, in its present condition, does not satisfy its original role as an historic commemorative garden, nor does it function as a usable public open space for growing Beltline communities. Three key issues to be considered at the user group meeting will be:

1. Historic Integrity:

Central Memorial Park is Calgary's most significant historic park. Over the past century however its forms and functions have evolved, and many of its early features have been replaced, and then replaced again. From an historical perspective, a key question is; ***what historic elements, qualities and functions should be maintained within the park?***

2. User Needs and Expectations:

The beltline has very limited green open space for it's growing population, and Central Memorial Park represents a significant proportion of what is currently available. A key question therefore is; ***what facilities and activities should be provided for in Central Memorial Park to compliment those in other areas of the community?***

3. Public Safety:

A major deterrent to regular use of Central Memorial Park is a real and/or perceived threat to personal security. In addition to improved visibility, better lighting and upgraded pathways and landscaping, the most effective way of addressing this problem will be to encourage legitimate year round public use within the park. A key question therefore is; ***what facilities and uses should be considered which will bring people into the park after hours and year round?***

Possible New Facilities and Functions:

Based upon consideration of the above questions the planners are considering the following new facilities which are felt to be appropriate to the park's history, complimentary to other community open space, and which will bring people back into Central Memorial Park.

1. Glass Conservatory Building (which might include):

- restaurant
- coffee shop/concession
- greenhouse
- public washrooms
- equipment storage

2. Performance Area

- grassed sitting area
- amphitheater and stage
- band shell

3. Water Feature

- fountain
- reflecting pond
- skating pond

4. Temporary Market Stalls (for seasonal use)

- art market
- flea market
- flower displays
- produce

Planning Options

The three planning options that follow explore the possibilities of locating various combinations of the above facilities in Central Memorial Park. Each option represents a viable plan and illustrates a possible direction that park reconstruction could take. Each option also includes a number of common elements that should be incorporated in any park renovation plan.

Common Features of Each Option:

- Formal geometry of historic park is maintained
- All commemorative monuments are maintained
- Large Russian poplars on 12th and 13th avenues are maintained
- Formal walkway to the east library entry is introduced
- Some of the Large Spruce Trees east of the Library are removed
- Westward outdoor extension to library building is proposed
- Emergency access lane west of Library is maintained
- Angled parking on 13th, Avenue is proposed
- Prominent, generous gateways are introduced at all park entry points
- Wide, well-lit walkways are introduced inside north and south edges of park
- A prominent pedestrian linkage is proposed with Haultain Park to the S.E.
- New park management and maintenance structure is proposed

Option A

In addition to the above common features, the only significant new facility being proposed in **Option A** is a glass conservatory building centrally located south of the Boer War Memorial. This building would accommodate food service, concession, public washrooms, a greenhouse and storage. A much strengthened north-south park axis would extend through the Boer War Memorial from the conservatory entry to a prominent gateway on 12th, Avenue.

The interior of the park would be restored as a formal garden, and well-lit public walkways and furnishings would accommodate current pedestrian needs throughout the park. The west edge of the Library Building would be developed as a sunken flower garden at the level of the lower floor.

Advantages: Most like the original historic garden
Softest, greenest, quietest option
Best visibility from 12th Avenue and 4th Street

Disadvantages: Least conducive to after hour or winter use
Least flexible for community events or performances
Least active and “safe” option

Option B

In addition to the common features listed above, **Option B** would locate two symmetrically curved glass buildings at the west end of the park, reminiscent of an early park band shell. The new buildings would accommodate a restaurant, concession, outdoor patios, washrooms and equipment storage. They would also frame the outer edge of a performance area east of the Cenotaph. Occasionally, audiences of up to 500 people would sit in a shallow grass bowl facing a stage located in approximately the same location as the first park band shell.

The interior of the park east of the Boer War Memorial would be restored as a formal garden. Paved pads with water supply and electrical outlets would be installed adjacent to the north and south walkways to accommodate temporary, seasonal market stalls. The west side of the library would be developed into a reading patio at existing grade.

Advantages: Most commercially viable building location
Best balance of active and passive park areas
Good flexibility for community events

Disadvantages: Offers little for after hour or winter users
View from 4th Street is somewhat restricted

Option C

In addition to the common features listed above, **Option C** includes two glass buildings similar to Option B and a hard surface amphitheater designed for more frequent, intensive use. A fountain and reflecting pool are also included east of the Boer War Memorial. The fountain would be reminiscent of a pond that was constructed when the park was first built, and would incorporate dynamic lighting and water displays to attract evening visitors. In winter the fountain would convert to a well lit, informal, community oriented skating pond. Ice making would be included.

The west edge of the Library Building in Option C would be developed as an elevated viewing terrace at the main floor level. Because the west park area would be more active, the area east of the Library would be developed as a reading garden.

Advantages: Most commercially viable building location
Most attractive for year round and after hour use
Most flexible for community events and performances
Most “active” park area

Disadvantages: Least consistent with original formal garden
View from 4th Street is somewhat restricted

- Rental area for skates to accompany the skating rink
- Increased lighting (3)
- Improved park access (esp. 2nd Street access to park & grand entrance to Library)
- Put the power lines underground
- Farmer’s market/market stalls
- Better lighting of memorials
- Better access/visibility of library
- Prefer fountain over a pond
- Grass performance area preferred over concrete;
- Availability of parking/revenue generation from parking (consideration to allocated parking to the Library, esp. handicapped stalls)
- Informal programmable space seen as necessary
- Retention of formal geometry of flower beds
- Military memorial significance of the park
- If formal flower beds are to be retained, they must be of a nature & type that respects the history (i.e., not just the siting & shape but also planting materials); formal beds must receive a high degree of maintenance if they are to be retained.
- Cast iron fencing to contain the park & secure it at night
- Support a busking program in the park
- Improve and increase the number of benches in the park

5. Which of the three options (A, B and C) being presented do you prefer?

	A	B	C	NC	part of all
First Choice	0	3	11*	1	2
Second Choice	2	2	1		
Third Choice	3	0	2		

(* - preferred C but qualified their choice with the pavilion from option A)

Other comments received:

- Concerns regarding a “sunken” garden/raised terrace adjacent to the W. side of the Library; at grade terrace preferred
- Assurance of relocation of fire lane/delivery access for Library building
- Fountain an expensive amenity (require year round staffing; mechanical requirements for water filtration, chlorination, brine support systems)
- Mixed support for removal of trees at East end of the Park

MINUTES OF MEETING

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Project	Central Memorial Park
Project No.	2519-011
Client	City of Calgary
Date	Friday, May 21, 2004

In Attendance	Eileen Stan	Fax 398-1510
	Darryl Cariou	Fax 268-3542
	Michelle Reid	Fax 268-3542
	Rino Basso	Fax 297-4093
	Garry Carson	Fax 233-2436
	Len Novak	Fax 246-0090
	Lorne Simpson	

The purpose of the meeting was to review the key character defining elements to be incorporated into the design. A detailed discussion occurred on the various aspects of the historic garden components that need to be integrated into the ultimate design. The key guiding principle articulated is as follows:

- The area of the cenotaph, the elongated circular formal garden and the library are elements to be preserved, while the perimeter elements are to be rehabilitated.

A variety of detailed elements were reviewed and agreed as follows:

- The minutes of the meeting from February 11, 2004 (meeting between Rino Basso and Lorne Simpson) which outlined the principal various precincts within the park and their key defining elements was reviewed (copy attached).
- At the performance area, the extensive hard surfacing to be deleted and replaced with clear pattern of the original radiating/circular pathways with grassed areas (not turf stone).
- At the west end of the park, the curved pathway geometry is to be retained.
- The north-south central axis is to respect the original circular configurations in the formal garden area including the planting of the flower beds.
- The formal pattern of flower beds throughout the central formal garden are to be retained. This includes the diamond shape configurations and circular configurations.
- The re-introduction of lighting based on the original "Mount Royal" lamp standard.
- The park benches to be in keeping with the original park benches.
- Interpretation of the evolution of the park and its gardens to be integrated throughout the park.
- The semi-circular sidewalk cafe on the north side of the conservatory to be deleted and replaced with patios at the east and west ends of the conservatory.

MINUTES OF MEETING

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- The original pathway configuration to be retained/not altered unless function dictates otherwise, in particular, this applies to the south-east corner of the gardens immediately south of the library. Path size/width increased to meet current requirements.
- A policy is required with respect to the current memorials in the park, as well as the placement for any future memorials and/or the relocation of existing memorials (Bennett Memorial).
- Selective clearing of spruce trees at the east formal entrance to the library - central plaza/pathway as per original intent.

With regards to the next steps, the following items were identified:

- A notice of proposed change is to be forwarded to Alberta Community Development for their review so that their comments are on record prior to the next phase of development.
- The statement of significance being developed by Michelle should be included in the report and/or referenced to as establishing the principal components of significance and the key character defining elements.
- The report to include a summary statement of key character defining elements based on the above discussion.

SIMPSON • ROBERTS
Architecture Interior Design Inc.



Lorne G. Simpson, MRAIC RCA

LGS:kj
attachment
c.c. To All Present

MINUTES OF MEETING

Page 1

Project	Central Memorial Park Library	
Project No.	2519-011	
Client	City of Calgary	
Date	February 11, 2004	
In Attendance	Rino Basso, Alberta Community Development Lorne Simpson, Simpson Roberts Architecture	via e-mail

The purpose of the meeting was to review the three (3) proposed layout options for the purposes of outlining / establishing the character defining elements which must be recognized / retained in any proposed redevelopment of the park. The primary review is with respect to the landscape and, secondary, with respect to the library facade.

Park Design Evolution: The history of the design evolution of the park was reviewed, and it was noted that the present day design is likely the direct / indirect result of the input of at least three (3) and possibly four (4) different designers as follows:

- H. G. Burrows - completed a design to Central Park for which no definitive plans have been located; however, the principles of the design can be deduced from photographs of the park from the era. The principal elements include an octagonal band shell located at the geographic centre of the park. Around the band shell is a clear organization of geometrically /symmetrically placed pathways. The pathways are organized primarily east-west with parallel pathways interconnected with north-south pathways.
- Richard Iwersen - the superintendent of the park at the time when the library was built and the park layout was completely reconfigured (the original garden layout was completed by Burrows). He completed the formal garden layout including two fountains/ponds (designed and partially built but never fully completed).
- William Reader - parks superintendent who inherited the layout completed by Iwersen, and generally enhanced the design in the central formal garden area and added to the perimeter of the overall park with major tree planting.
- Thomas Mawson - who was active in the City of Calgary from 1912 to 1914 for the preparation of the City Plan. His urban plan was predicated on the major north-south axis in the city to be 4th Street S.W. - the street which forms the westerly border of Central Park. Due to the extensive public debates occurring within the City it is likely (conjecture) that Mawson, an internationally recognized urban designer, had a direct influence on the plan being developed by Iwersen on the City's principal park. Mawson's extensive drawings of the City indicate a layout of the gardens which show a number of significant elements which were intended / implemented in the Iwersen plan. These elements include (starting at the east side of the site) an axial walkway directly in line with the front entrance stairs to the library framed with a semi-circular carriage way, a north-south axis immediately on the west side of the new library, an axially organized east-west garden with a central elongated / circular plaza flanked on either side by a circular fountain, and, a semi-circular pavilion terminating the axis on the west end of the park.

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Proposed Option Layouts Reviewed: The purpose of the review was to establish character defining elements which must be retained / interpreted. The plans were reviewed in a sequence of five (5) components as follows:

- Plaza area on east side of the library.
- The interface between the west side of the library and the formal gardens in the central portion of the park.
- The formal central garden area set along the east-west axis.
- The memorial cenotaph precinct at the west end of the east-west axis.
- The north and south allees forming the outer perimeter of the park.

East Plaza:

- The character defining elements of the east plaza include an east-west central axis on which the WWI monument is located, the original proposed hard surface plaza / pathway centred on the axis through the monument and the library entrance, and, the semi-circular carriage way.

Interface Zone on West Side of the Library:

- The key character defining elements include in the provision of a north-south pathway, and, the full expression of the west facade of the library.

Formal Garden:

- The key character defining elements include the symmetrical / geometrical layout of pathways in keeping with the Iwersen plan, central WWI monument node, two flanking circular nodes reflective of the Iwersen circular pond configuration, recognition of formal symmetrical / geometrical planting beds, and, use of symmetrical placement of topiary.

Cenotaph Zone:

- The key character defining elements include the east-west axial plaza organization with the cenotaph and ceremonial benches, eternal flame, medallion stone, and flagpole.

Park Perimeter:

- The key character defining elements include parallel large tree planting allees forming the north boundary and south boundary of the park.

General Discussion: general comments identified with the various elements contained within the three (3) options of particular concern are noted as follows:

- At the interface zone of the west face of the library, the suggested elevated viewing terrace obscures the lower level of the library facade.
- None of the formal garden layouts reflect accurately the Iwersen geometry / symmetry which is considered to be a key element of the formal garden. Archaeology would confirm the presence / configuration of the original fountains.
- The scale and extent of hard surface material in the formal garden in Option C is excessive - it would not receive ministerial endorsement in its present configuration.

MINUTES OF MEETING

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- The western cenotaph zone does not retain the ceremonial benches, an integral part of the plaza.

The above noted comments to be reviewed in the context of the proposed plans. The final plan to be submitted to Alberta Community Development Historic Sites Services Branch for review prior to the formal submission of a Proposed Notice of Action which is required for formal acceptance of any proposed changes to the park layout.

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Architecture Interior Design Inc.



Lorne G. Simpson, MRAIC RCA

c.c. Darryl Cariou
Garry Carson
Len Novak