



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 27, 2006
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CC File No.: 13-4000-30
Meeting Date: July 13, 2006

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services and Director of Current Planning

SUBJECT: Carrall Street Greenway: Detailed Design and Implementation

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the construction of the Carrall Street Greenway as detailed in this report at an estimated cost of \$5,073,500 with funding to be provided as follows:
- \$1,500,000 from 2006 Streets Basic Capital for the Carrall Street Greenway
 - \$73,500 cost sharing from the 2006 Translink Bicycle Program
 - \$3,500,000 from the 2007 Streets Basic Capital for the Carrall Street Greenway subject to approval of the 2007 Streets Capital Budget
- B. THAT Council approve an increase of \$76,500 for maintenance costs to the Engineering Operating Budget, without offset, beginning in 2008 and subject to an annual budget review.
- C. THAT Council approve the conversion of the temporary landscape designer position to regular full-time to further develop the Carrall Street Greenway and other on-going greenways projects at a total annual cost of \$63,700 including Fringe Benefits. 2006 funding to be provided from the Carrall Street Greenway Capital Budget while subsequent year funding to be provided equally from the Operating and Street Capital Budget, resulting in a \$31,850 increase to the Engineering Operating Budget in 2007.

- D. THAT Council instruct staff to review the usage of the Carrall Street Greenway after construction.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Managers of Community Services and Engineering Services RECOMMEND approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

In 1989, 1990 and 1994, Council approved the False Creek Policy Statement, the Coal Harbour Policy Statement and the Central Waterfront Port Lands Policy Statement, all of which include policies to create waterfront walkways-bikeways along their respective waterfronts.

On July 18, 1995 Council approved the Vancouver Greenways Plan. This plan supports the development of Greenways to support walking and cycling opportunities to local connections and promote community building. A total of 14 "citywide" greenways were identified, including a greenway from False Creek to Burrard Inlet between Cambie and Main Streets.

On July 28, 1998, Council confirmed principles to provide general guidance to actions and planning on the Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown and Strathcona, which include encouraging legitimate commercial activity, improving conditions at the street level, improving SROs, reducing crime, and helping community people find allies and seek a common future.

On July 9, 2002 Council approved the Downtown Transportation Plan to improve downtown access and liveability by improving streetscapes and creating a balanced transportation system that includes the promotion of walking and cycling in the downtown, and development of Carrall Street as part of a network of downtown greenways and bike routes.

On April 28, 2005 Council approved the concept design and a long term vision for the Carrall Street Greenway and confirmed the objectives that Carrall Street be a greenway that connects Gastown, the Downtown Eastside and Chinatown and build on the unique heritage character of these three neighbourhoods, a greenway that completes the downtown recreational seawall loop by linking False Creek to Burrard Inlet, and a greenway that encourages active ground floor uses and facilitates economic revitalization and community development.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the detailed design of the Carrall Street Greenway and to seek Council approval of the budget and staffing costs for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the Carrall Street Greenway.

This Greenway is proposed as a significant public realm feature that will link False Creek and Burrard Inlet and complete a recreational seawall loop around Downtown Vancouver and Stanley Park. It is also a strategic initiative intended to focus public realm improvements and private investment along the Carrall Street corridor which will attract visitors to the area

and stimulate business activities while providing improved neighbourhood areas and employment opportunities for Downtown Eastside residents.

This report presents special features of the design as well as multiple objectives for the project including additional greening, a granite water feature, recreational and pedestrian amenities, integrated placemaking through programming and arts, and economic revitalization.

The report also seeks Council approval for the construction, maintenance and staffing budget. The total estimated cost to complete the Carrall Street Greenway between Expo Boulevard and Water Street is \$5,073,500, the increased annual maintenance cost is \$76,500 and the total annual cost for a permanent Landscape Designer, including benefits, is \$63,700.

BACKGROUND

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) is a diversity of communities, home to people of differing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. It is also a neighbourhood that is experiencing considerable changes that create both new opportunities and challenges. Issues of social and economic sustainability and concerns about potential displacement of low-income residents in the face of increasing development pressures have been debated in the community.

The City has implemented a number of policies to address the complexity of these issues with the over-arching goal of area revitalization without displacing existing residents. The City is also a partner in the Vancouver Agreement, a tri-level government urban agreement intended to better coordinate government policies and resources to work together with communities and business in the Downtown Eastside on a coordinated strategy that promotes and supports sustainable economic, social and community development. The Four Pillar Drug Strategy, redevelopment of Woodward's, Heritage Incentive Program, DTES Housing Plan and the Vancouver Agreement's DTES Employment Strategy and Economic Revitalization Plan are all part of this comprehensive approach.

Carrall Street represents an intersection of history and contemporary urban life in Vancouver and the DTES. It connects the City's historic districts of Chinatown, the Hastings Street corridor and Gastown, with the future development along north False Creek. It is also the location of the historical Canadian Pacific Railroad line and interurban crossing. The street is lined with heritage buildings, dotted with parks, squares and other public realm spaces, and is now the heart of an emerging contemporary arts district. Within this intersection of historic places and built forms, Carrall Street is home to diverse cultures and economies.

One of the key objectives for the Carrall Street Greenway is to be a key driver of economic revitalization in the DTES. It will focus public realm improvements in the area and has already leveraged private investments along the corridor to support new businesses and social enterprises and to provide training and employment opportunities for local residents. An important objective of the Vancouver Agreement's DTES Employment Strategy is to assist local residents in filling new jobs, including part-time and low-threshold employment opportunities that will be created through increased business activities in the area.

Discussion of making Carrall Street a unique pedestrian route has taken place in the community for several years. The Carrall Street Stewardship Committee, comprised of local business and non-profit representatives and community residents, was formed in 2002 to help guide the consultation and design process. City staff, working in partnership with the Stewardship Committee, established a set of project principles in 2003, explored various design concepts throughout 2004, and worked towards finalizing the greenway's design concept amidst broad community support for the project. In April 2005, Council confirmed the objectives for the project, adopted the proposed concept design and instructed staff to proceed with the necessary detailed design.

DISCUSSION

Recommendation A calls for Council approval of the Greenway construction as described in the following section which outlines the Greenway detailed design, as well as drawings and sketches in Appendices B, C, D and E.

1) Greenway Detailed Design

Council approved the concept design for the Carrall Street Greenway where the roadway width is narrowed and parking is removed from one side of the street. This allows the sidewalks to be expanded and dedicated recreational paths to be provided for cyclists, skateboarders and inline-skaters on both sides of the street. The Greenway is subdivided into the Park Zone and the Heritage Zone. (see Appendix A for map and cross sections). Based on the concept design, staff have completed the detailed design for the Greenway and the concept design for the Maple Tree Square, in consultation with the community.

Design Features

The detailed greenway design is a balance between creating a continuity of the greenway corridor while celebrating and acknowledging the different communities along the route. Each community along the route has different desires for the greenway features, yet without some unifying features the greenway will lose character and continuity.

One of the most important physical features of the greenway is the street tree alignment. Within the Heritage Zone north of Keefer Street there are three rows of street trees and within the Park Zone there are four rows of street trees. Each of these street trees will add to the street tree canopy and continuity of the greenway throughout the entire corridor. Custom tree grates have been designed to create a unifying design feature to be used at each tree location along the greenway.

Between the street trees on the western side of the street, a shallow granite channel is proposed to signify the 'water to water' theme of the greenway. This channel is located between the recreational path and the pedestrian area. Although very shallow, this channel collects rain water from the sidewalk area and funnels it into the street tree pits. Rain water is also reused in six other locations along the greenway in small infiltration gardens (see Appendix C for sketches of the granite channel and tree grate design).

Differences in lighting fixtures will help emphasize the different communities along the route. In Chinatown the red lighting poles will be used and in Gastown the standard nine ball features will be used, consistent with existing lighting features in each area. Each of these

standard designs will be retrofitted with energy efficient lighting fixtures while still retaining the individual character of each community.

Balancing Needs

Although the concept design approved by Council gave clear direction on the space allocation required for each transportation mode, several minor design modifications were required as part of the detailed design. The most significant change is the provision of a dedicated tour bus loading zone on the west side of Carrall Street between Keefer Street and Pender Street.

In the concept design the tour bus loading zone was located on the NE corner of Keefer Street, in addition to the tour bus loading zone on the south side of Pender Street in front of the Chinese Cultural Centre. In the detailed design another tour bus loading zone will be provided on the west side of Carrall Street opposite the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden (the Garden). There are several concerns related to the location of this tour bus zone on Carrall Street including concerns related to pedestrians exiting the tour bus and interacting with users of the recreational path, as well as pedestrians crossing mid block to access the Garden. The Garden strongly believes their financial future is dependent upon a tour bus loading zone on Carrall Street but they have also acknowledged that should there be operational concerns with this tour bus loading zone, tour bus loading may have to be accommodated on the NE corner of Keefer and Carrall Streets, and/or the one on Pender Street.

Throughout the detailed design process the need for loading and parking was also further defined. Parking spaces and loading zones have been included on the west side of the street wherever possible and discussions have been ongoing with businesses in the area. The geometric design of the street has been further defined to ensure accessibility for loading vehicles and tour buses.

Maple Tree Square

The original concept design did not include a design for Maple Tree Square or the bike connection on Alexander Street. Further work has been undertaken on these sections and the designs are included in Appendices D and E. The Alexander Street bike lane requires only one significant geometric change related to the parking on the south side of the street. The angle parking in this location would be reversed from nose-in parking to back-in stalls to increase the visibility of cyclists and parking vehicles.

The concept design for Maple Tree Square focuses on making a space to be owned and enjoyed by the community. The main theme of the design is to strengthen Maple Tree Square as a 'destination' rather than a place to simply travel through. Discussions have been ongoing with the community regarding how this space should be used and how to incorporate all these potential uses into the geometric design while maintaining the Gastown character.

The concept itself uses a normalized intersection design to maximize the space available for the community and pedestrians on each corner. The intersection is designed to improve the sight lines for all road users therefore creating greater clarity. This also provides more space for programming activities such as sidewalk cafes. Superimposed on this geometric design is the urban design concept with a circular pattern. The traditional red pavers of Gastown are used to create concentric circles reinforcing the 'destination' theme of the space. Granite banding is used for the pedestrian crosswalks, for curbs and to announce the edges of the space.

Further detailed design work for Maple Tree Square will continue in the rest of 2006 and its re-construction is included in the implementation plan presented in this report.

2) Other Activities Related to the Greenway

The Carrall Street Greenway is a focal point for coordinating a variety of design and placemaking projects as well as revitalization initiatives in the area. These projects seek to enhance the visual and physical links between the DTES neighbourhoods and other parts of the City, increase arts and cultural programming opportunities along the corridor and create spaces that showcase community artwork. The following provides description of some of these projects:

- **Pigeon Park Design Improvement**

Pigeon Park, also known as Pioneer Place, is a small (400 square metres or 4300 square feet) park located at Hastings and Carrall Streets. It is well used by the community as a gathering place for residents of the Downtown Eastside. The last major upgrade of the park occurred in the mid-1970s. Improvements that are being considered include replacement of existing elements in the park (concrete surface, benches, drinking fountain, and lamp post) and provision of additional elements (possibly a public toilet and a covered canopy area; tables, trees, historical references, public art, etc.).

A preliminary concept plan has been prepared and discussed with the public. Additional consultation with park users and low-income community groups will continue this summer. A report to the Park Board is expected in the fall of 2006. The timing of the upgrades to the park will be coordinated with the renovation of the Merchants Bank, the Class A heritage building located immediately west of the park (the Media Centre at 1 West Hastings).

- **Conservation and Reuse of Heritage Buildings;**

Carrall Street is lined with heritage buildings. The Heritage Incentive Program provides façade grants, density bonuses and property tax abatement to facilitate rehabilitation and active reuse of heritage buildings and to help initiate economic activities in the Heritage Precinct. Appendix F provides a list of recent developments, including market and non-market and heritage and non-heritage projects, occurring along and around Carrall Street that will contribute to the gradual physical transformation of the street.

- **Carrall Street Public Art Plan**

The Carrall Street Greenway presents a significant opportunity to increase arts and cultural programming in the area, promote creative expression through the arts, encourage ongoing community participation in arts-related activities and showcase public art as an important component of urban placemaking. This corridor has potential to become the most exciting art precinct in the city, rivaling public art projects in many jurisdictions.

The City of Vancouver, through funding received from the Vancouver Agreement, commissioned the development of the Carrall Street Public Art Plan, which builds on the previous consultation and existing planning processes completed to date. Staff will report to Council on this Plan and its implementation in the fall of 2006.

- **Programming Opportunities**

Improved infrastructure is only one aspect of creating a re-energized Carrall Street. The vision for this urban greenway is to see an increase in active ground floor uses, including sidewalk cafes, galleries with activities promoting pedestrian interest and interaction and community-based arts and cultural programming in public spaces along the corridor. The greenway is designed to provide flexibility for these programming uses to occur.

An extensive public process took place in 2005 to generate ideas for and develop a coordinated approach to encourage community-based programming in public spaces and parks. This work led to the creation of the DTES Public Realm Programming Plan. Development of the Plan was funded by the Vancouver Agreement and Park Board, and jointly administered by the Planning Department and the Park Board staff. This Plan will become a significant component of the overall DTES Arts & Cultural Investment Strategy. Staff will report to Council on this Strategy in the fall of 2006.

PUBLIC PROCESS & FEEDBACK

Staff began the detailed design work for the Greenway last year, based on the concept design adopted by Council in April 2005. The proposed detailed design outlined in this report was endorsed by the Carrall Greenway Stewardship Committee, the Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, and the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee.

Staff also held additional meetings with the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden staff and board to address their concerns regarding the location of the tour bus stop, as previously discussed.

In February 2006, the Stewardship Committee organized a Sustainability Forum with participation of more than 130 local residents, businesses, representatives of diverse community groups, university students and the interdepartmental staff team to discuss how the Carrall Greenway can further the goal of building a sustainable community in the DTES. Many creative ideas were generated through this Forum and some of these ideas have been incorporated into the planning and implementation process of the Greenway. The summary report of this Forum is included in Appendix G.

The interim detailed design was presented to the public at the Car Free Day event that took place in Gastown in September 2005 which was attended by more than 2000 people. Another open house was held in December 2005 at the *Centre A Gallery* on the corner of Hastings and Carrall Streets to showcase the detailed design ideas and gather feedback from the community; approximately 300 people attended this event. Film footage of the open house held at *Centre A Gallery* and produced by the *Greater Vancouver TV* is available for viewing at the recently launched interactive Carrall Street Project website at: <http://vancouver.ca/carrall>

In addition, a separate open house was held on June 1, 2006, to discuss the concept design for Maple Tree Square and the Alexander Street interim bike connection. The extensive public consultation process held to date indicates strong community support for the Greenway design and proposed strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total estimated cost to complete the Carrall Street Greenway between Expo Boulevard and Water Street is \$5,073,500. This cost includes:

- \$3,498,500 for complete street reconstruction including new sidewalks, recreational paths, street repaving, street trees and landscaping
- \$750,000 for trolley line relocation from Coast Mountain Bus Company
- \$825,000 for street lighting

Costs associated with items such as the Carrall Street Public Art Plan, Pigeon Park Redesign, Downtown Eastside Public Realm Improvements and Chinatown Community Plan Improvements will all be funded from the relevant program budgets and are not covered in this estimate.

Funding for the construction of the Carrall Street Greenway is available from the following sources:

- \$1,500,000 from 2006 Streets Basic Capital for the Carrall Street Greenway
- \$73,500 cost sharing from the 2006 Translink Bicycle Program
- \$3,500,000 from the 2007 Streets Basic Capital for the Carrall Street Greenway subject to approval of the 2007 Streets Capital Budget

Applications for cost share funding will also be submitted to Translink and the Province's Cycling Infrastructure Program for the cycling component of this project. Applications will also be submitted through the Vancouver Agreement to fund the placemaking and economic revitalisation aspects of the greenway. If approved, this funding would be used to add complementary urban design features to the greenway. Any additional funding received from these sources will be reported back through the 2007 Capital Budget Process.

Future operating budgets will be affected by the increased maintenance costs associated with the greenway for a total of \$76,500 as follows:

- \$33,700 increase to the Traffic Operating Budget for street lighting maintenance
- \$40,000 increase to the Streets Operating Budget for street maintenance
- \$1,800 increase to the Streets Operating Budget for horticultural maintenance
- \$1,000 increase to the Traffic Operating Budget for sign and paint maintenance.

Due to the large number of new materials and treatments incorporated into this greenway design, some maintenance costs have been difficult to estimate. As more information becomes available regarding these maintenance costs, staff will report back on any increases or decreases required to the operating budget.

The conversion of the Landscape Designer into a regular full-time position (as noted in the Personnel Implications) will be funded in 2006 by the Carrall Street Greenway project. For 2007 and beyond, funding will be equally distributed between the Operating and Capital Budget given that the position supports both capital and operating landscape work. Therefore, the annual cost of the position at \$63,700, including fringe benefits, will result in an increase to the Engineering Operating Budget of \$31,850 in 2007.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

The design of the Carrall Street greenway has absorbed a large amount of Greenways staff resources over the past 4 years. The landscape designer working on this project has been devoted almost full time to this project for the past 2 years and it is anticipated the role of this designer will continue well into the construction phase of the project.

The landscape designer position within the Engineering Services department is currently a temporary position subject to annual review. During that review and based on its six year history, it was determined that this position is needed on an ongoing basis and the work is split evenly between operating and capital. This position will also be involved with the Granville Street redesign, various sustainability initiatives and the on-going promotion and maintenance of existing greenways.

If approved as a regular full-time position the Landscape Designer position will be forwarded to the GVRD Labour Relations Department for review and classification.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental sustainability is integral to the design of the Carrall Street Greenway. By reallocating existing road space to alternate 'green' modes of transportation, walking and cycling are promoted as the most important modes of transportation along the greenway.

Environmental design features of the greenway also includes the use of sustainable materials including recycled granite curbs, installation of energy efficient lighting and the reduction of storm water runoff through the use of infiltration planting areas and permeable materials selection.

The Carrall Street Greenway community discussed and celebrated the various sustainable features of the greenway at the Carrall Street Sustainability Forum in February 2006.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The planning process for the Carrall Street Greenway has facilitated several new community partnerships, generated dialogue and built community cohesion. Both public consultation and ongoing, in-depth community engagement are critical elements of this project.

During the past three years, the Stewardship Committee has been an important venue for community members to come together and work with the City staff team to look at ways to better design and program the public spaces along Carrall Street and advocate for interim improvements and a long-term plan for the Greenway.

In addition to the ongoing efforts by the Stewardship Committee, the City has also undertaken many community-based outreach projects with funding from Western Economic Diversification through the Vancouver Agreement, including:

- "Renovating the Living Room" is a public process outreaching to the low-income community and existing park users, prepared for design improvement in Pigeon Park. The process was designed and coordinated by the Environmental Youth Alliance;

- Storyscapes Chinatown: a story telling and collection project engaging the Chinese and Aboriginal communities;
- Youth Video Project: engaging at-risk youth in a participatory video project;
- Alexander Street Public Art: a visioning process to engage residents and businesses along Alexander Street to identify public art opportunities and possible public realm improvements; and
- Sustainability Forum: to bring together a wide spectrum of stakeholders to further generate ideas for the Greenway to contribute to a sustainable DTES community.

This Greenway project intends to ensure strong community ownership of the street and public spaces and promote dialogue among different community groups, both of which are critical to the goal of revitalization without displacement. With all of these elements in place, the Project will add another rich layer of meaning to this distinctive part of the City.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Construction is currently scheduled to commence in October 2006 and continue through 2007. The first block to be constructed will likely be between Keefer Street and Pender Street, adjacent to the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden. By constructing this block through the winter months it is hoped the impact to tourism at the Garden will be minimised.

Following the construction of the block between Keefer Street and Pender Street, crews plan to construct between Expo Boulevard and Keefer Street before completing the northern blocks between Pender Street and Water Street. It is hoped construction of the Block between Cordova and Pender Streets will coincide with Pigeon Park improvements and construction of Maple Tree Square will coincide with the low tourism season in winter 2007. Further consultation will be undertaken with local community groups and affected businesses in the Gastown area as the construction schedule is finalised.

After construction, staff will continue coordinating different aspects of the Greenway implementation and monitor the gradual transformation of the street. This would include information regarding the usage of the greenway as well as developments and activities along and around Carrall Street. Staff would then proceed with a detailed evaluation of the issues affecting the implementation of the communities' long term vision for the Carrall Street Greenway and the northern bridge connection. Items such as access requirements, traffic volumes, transit service relocation, crime and policing issues, sidewalk café applications, street activity and function, public art, public realm programming, heritage conservation and business development will be included in this evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The Carrall Street Greenway is a significant public realm feature linking False Creek and Burrard Inlet to complete a recreational seawall loop around Downtown Vancouver and Stanley Park. It is a strategic initiative intended to focus public realm improvements and private investment along the Carrall Street corridor which will attract visitors to the area and stimulate business activities, while providing improved neighbourhood areas and employment opportunities for Downtown Eastside residents.

Implementation of the Carrall Street Greenway is timely, given the emerging initiatives in the area and the opportunities presented. The partnership and momentum built with the community in the past years presents a good opportunity to pull together diverse areas of work such as greenway construction, placemaking, urban design, public art, economic revitalization, heritage conservation and park and public realm programming.

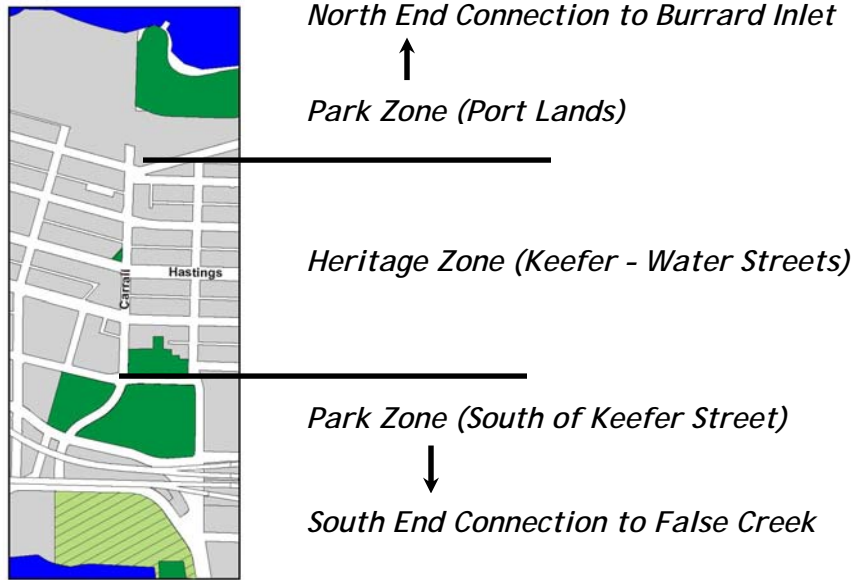
Staff recommend that Council approve the detailed design of the Carrall Street Greenway and the budget and staffing costs for the construction and ongoing maintenance of this Greenway.

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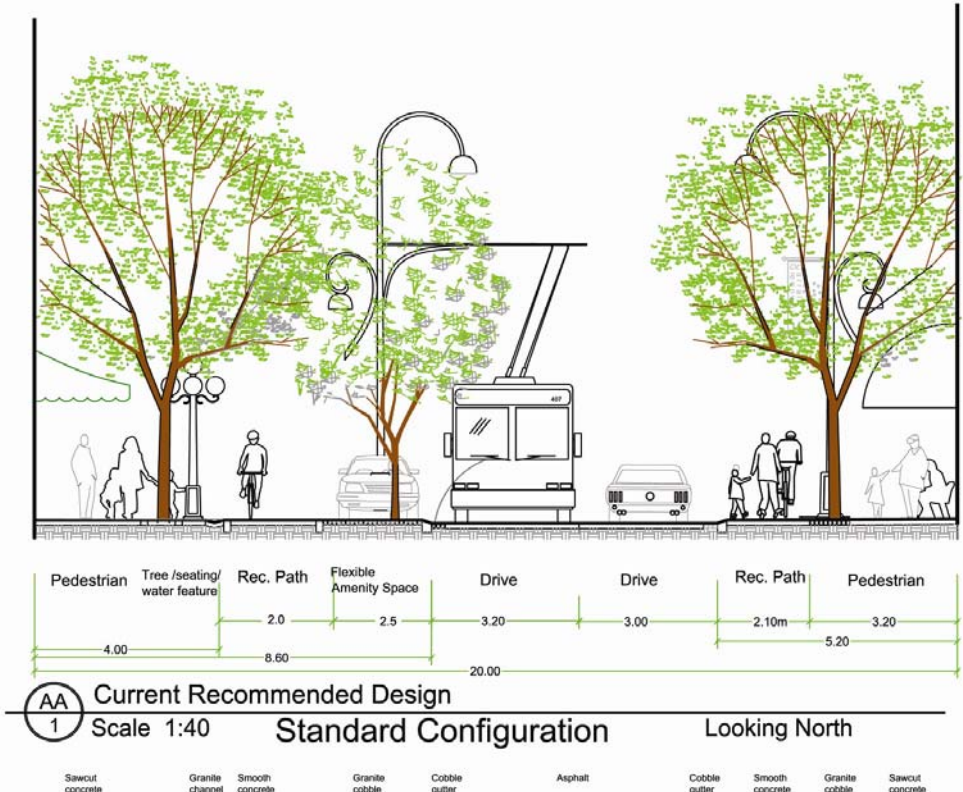
Appendices

- A. Cross Sections and Location Map
- B. Detailed Design Drawings
- C. Sketch of the Design Features: granite channel and tree grate design
- D. Alexander Street Bike Route
- E. Concept Design for Maple Tree Square
- F. Development projects along and around Carrall Street

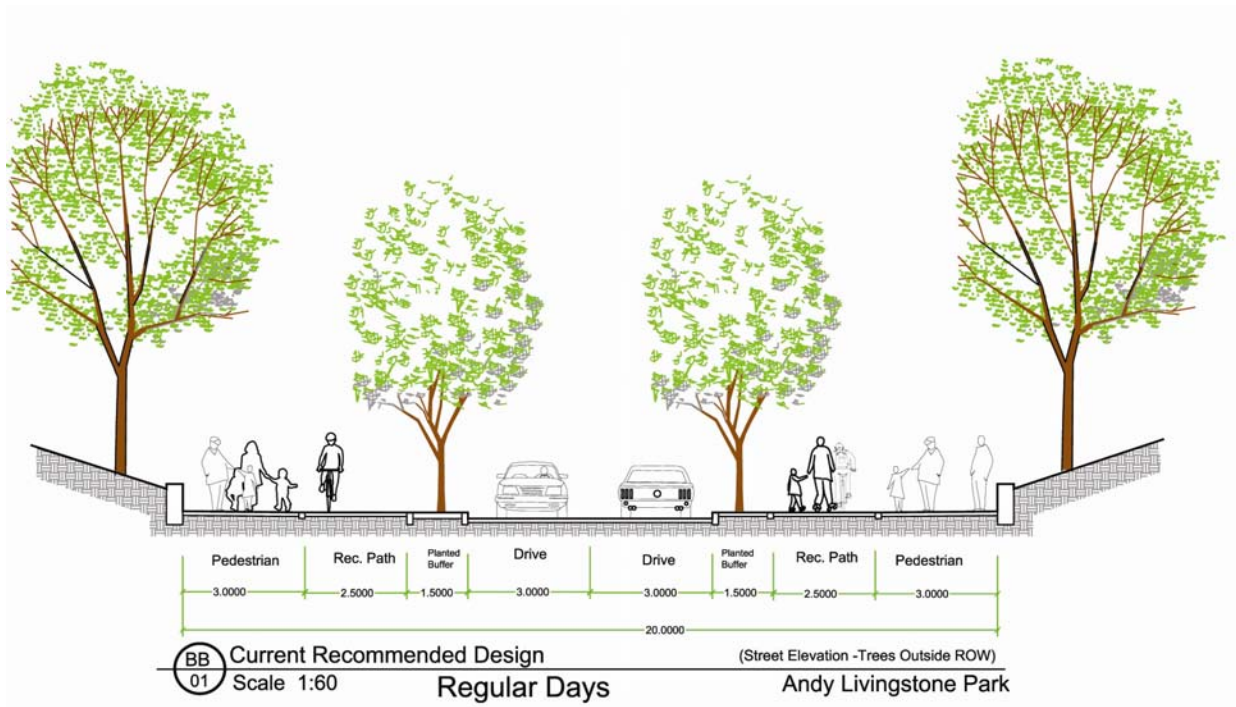
Cross Sections and Location Map



Location Map

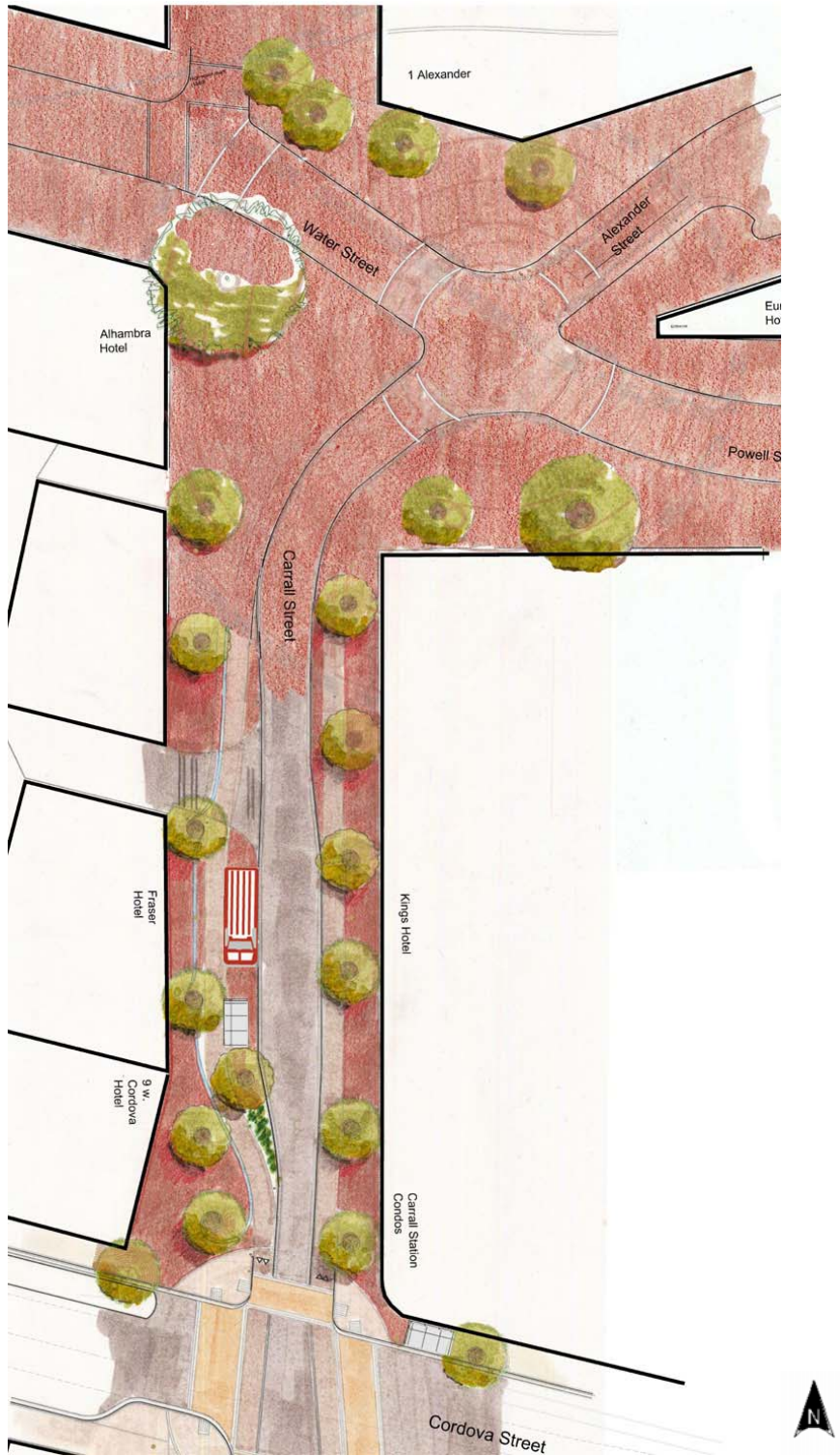


Heritage Zone Cross Section

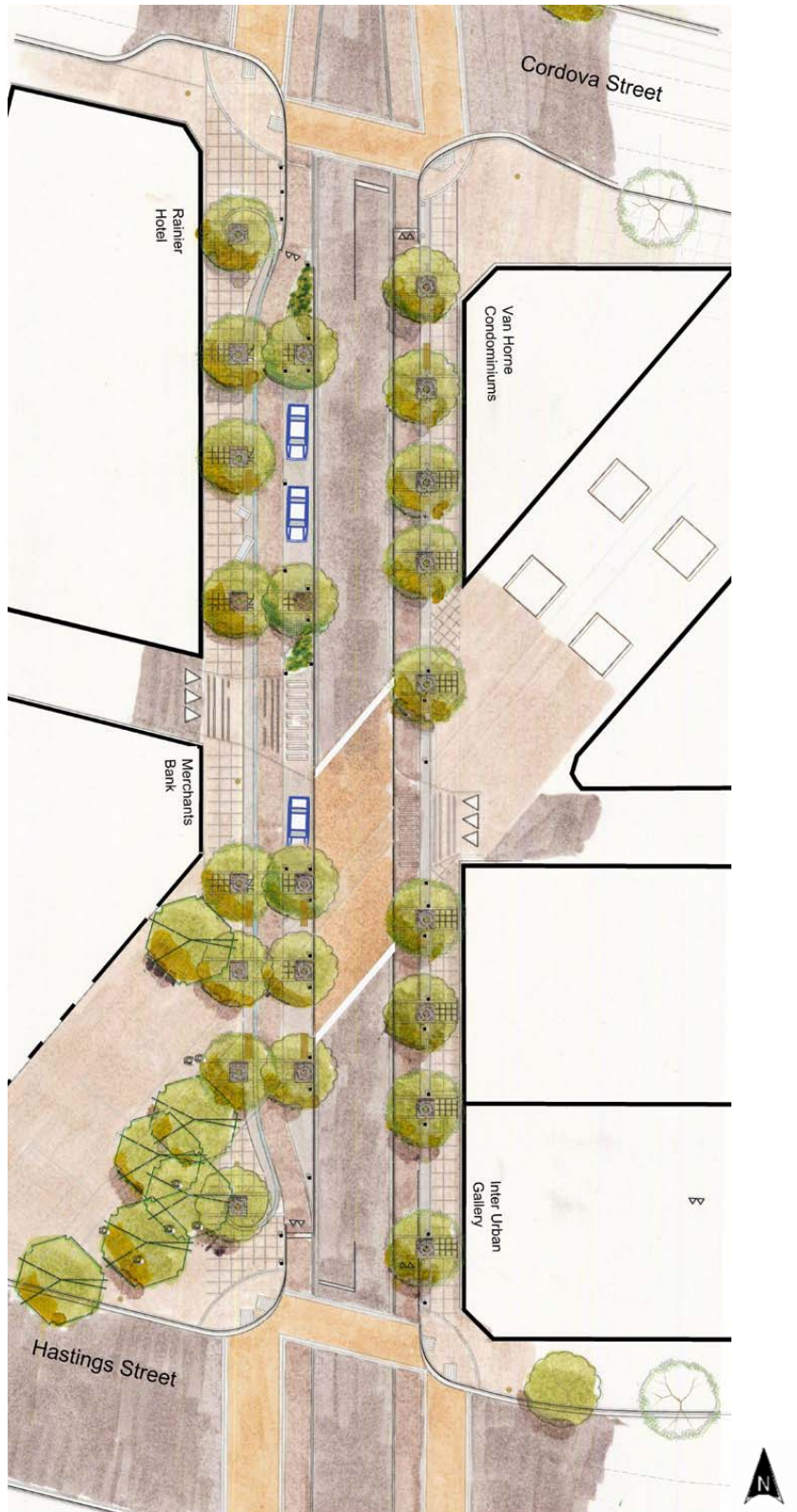


Park Zone Cross Section

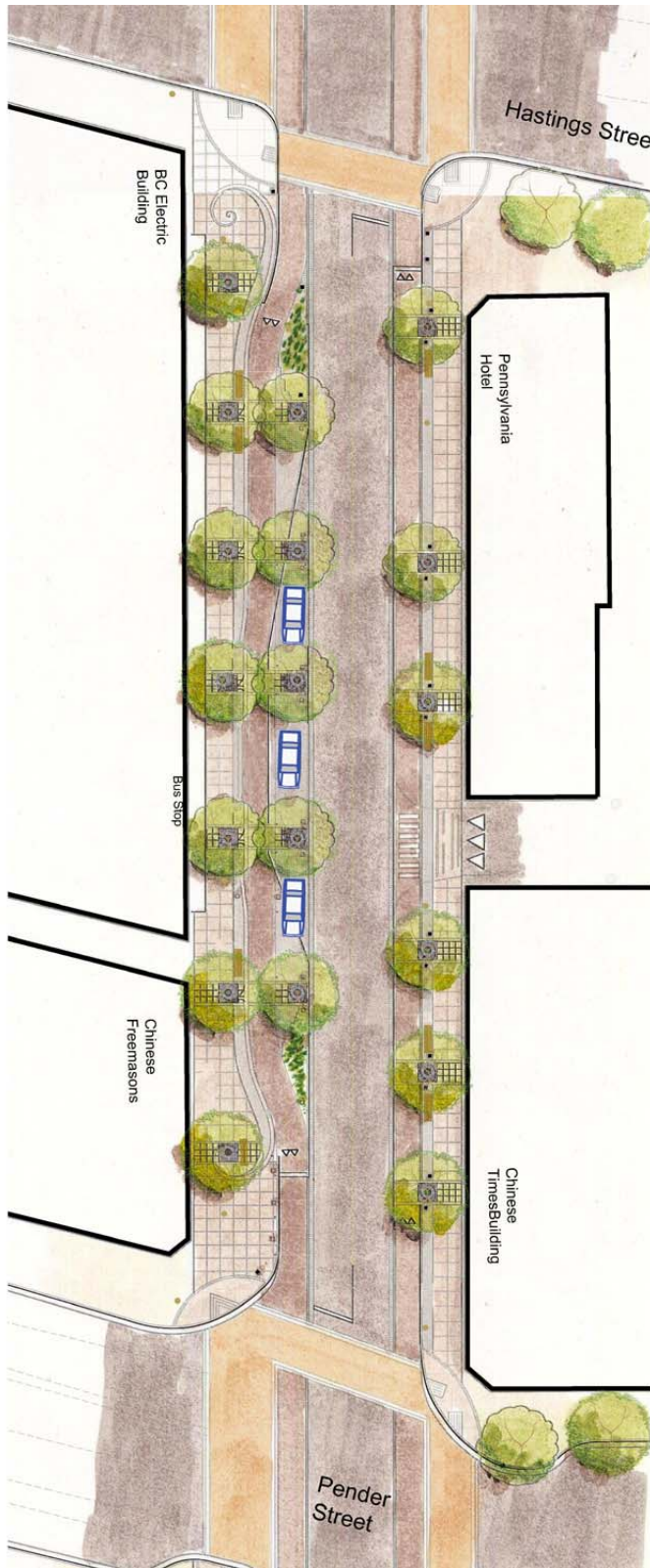
Detailed Design Drawings



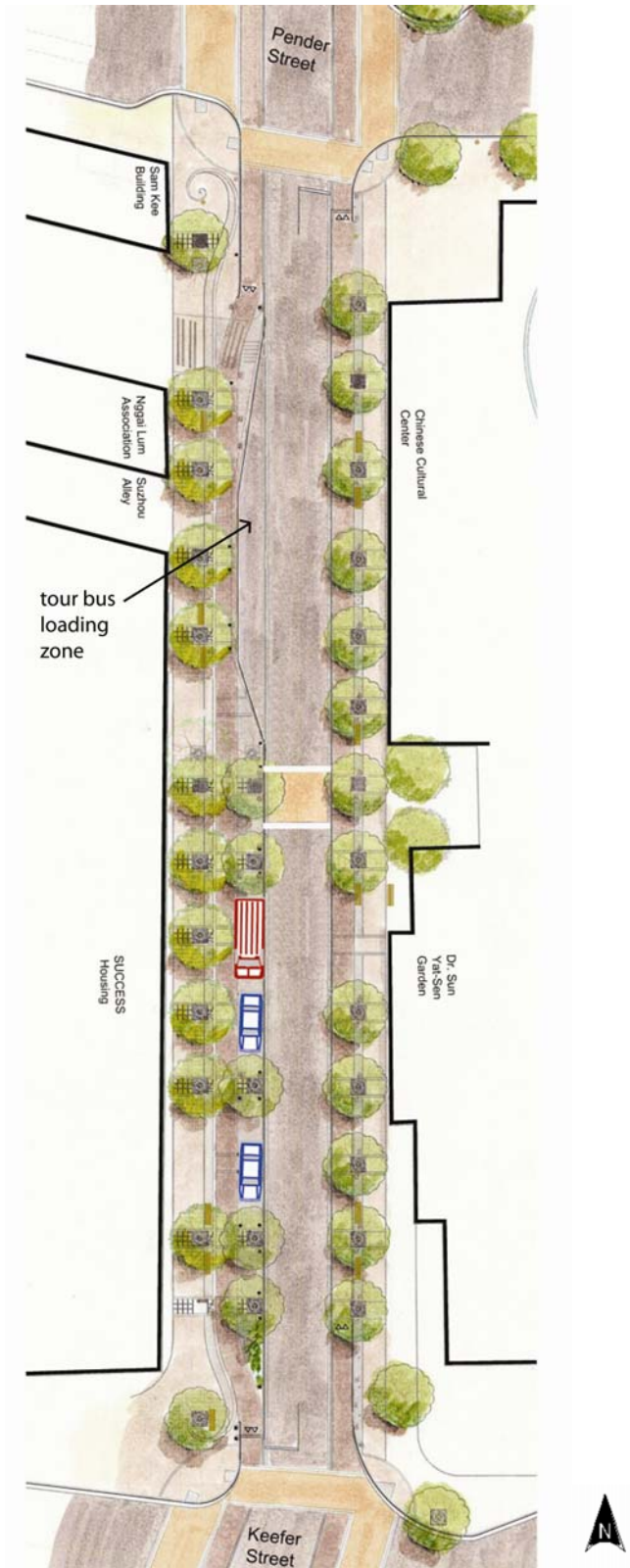
Water Street to Cordova Street



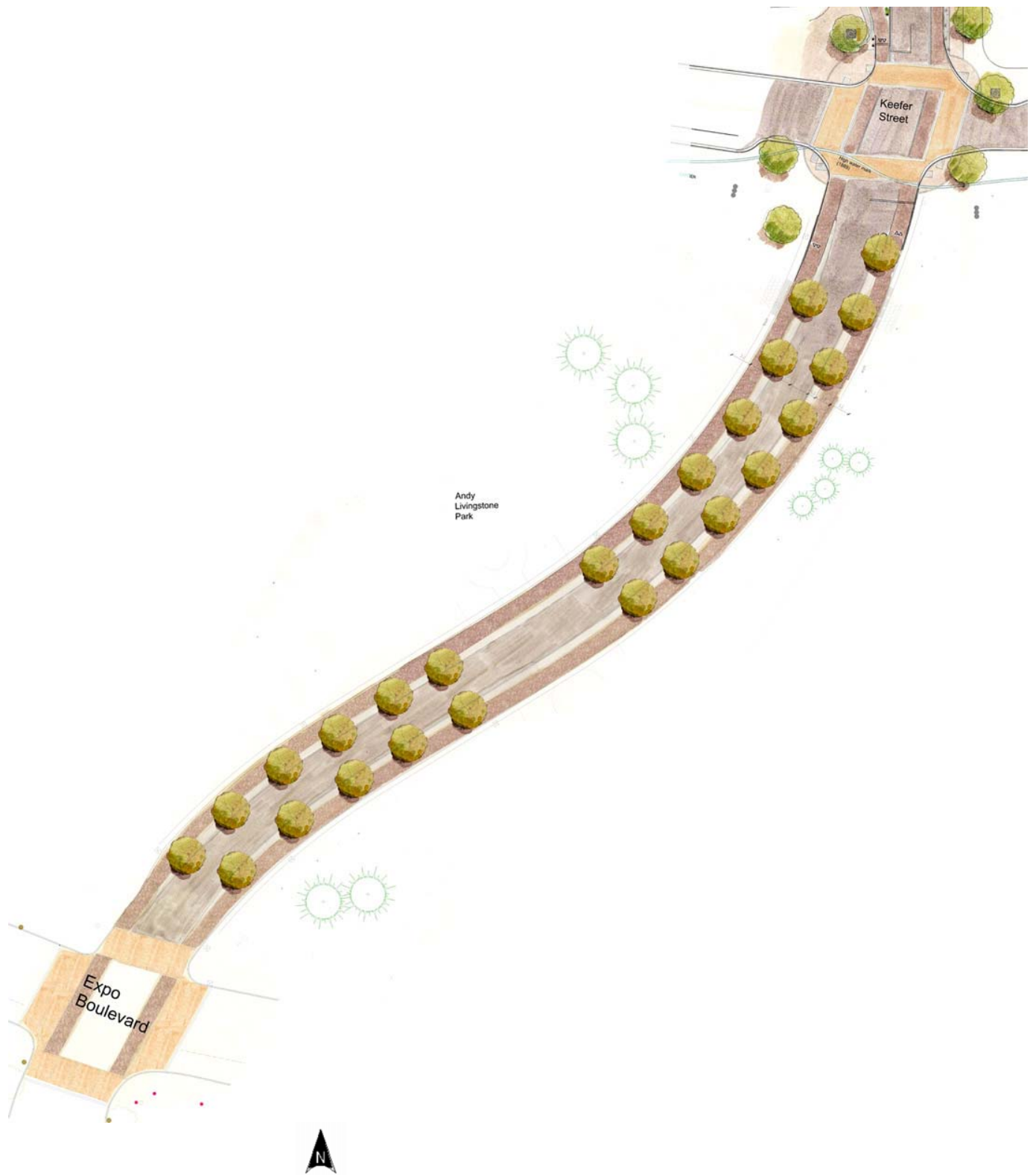
Cordova Street to Hastings Street



Hastings Street to Pender Street

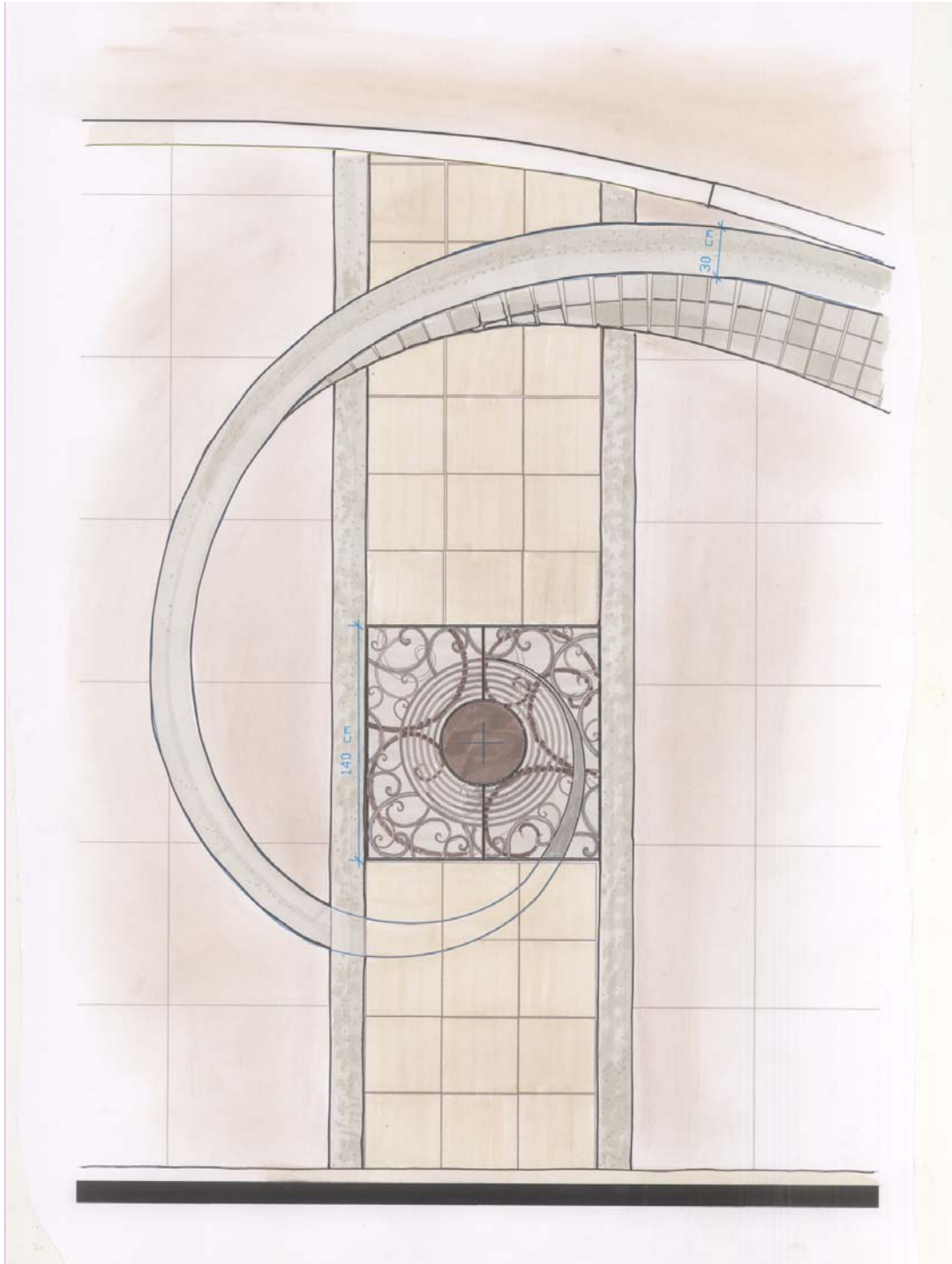


Pender Street to Keefer Street

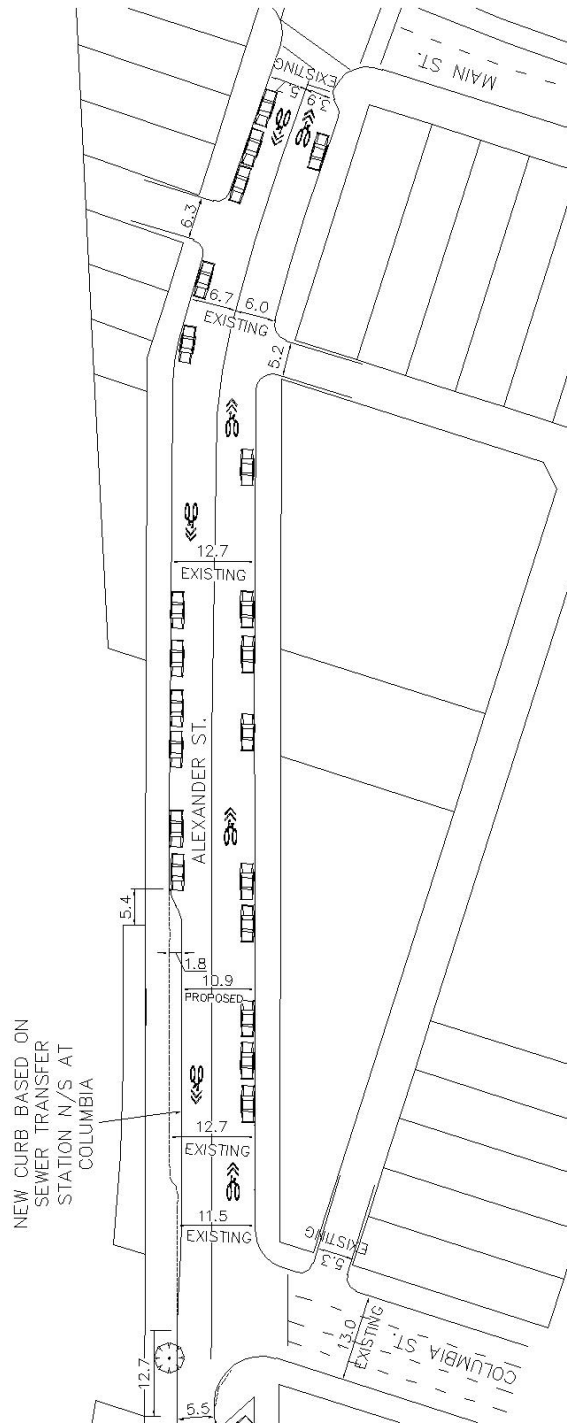


Keefer Street to Expo Boulevard

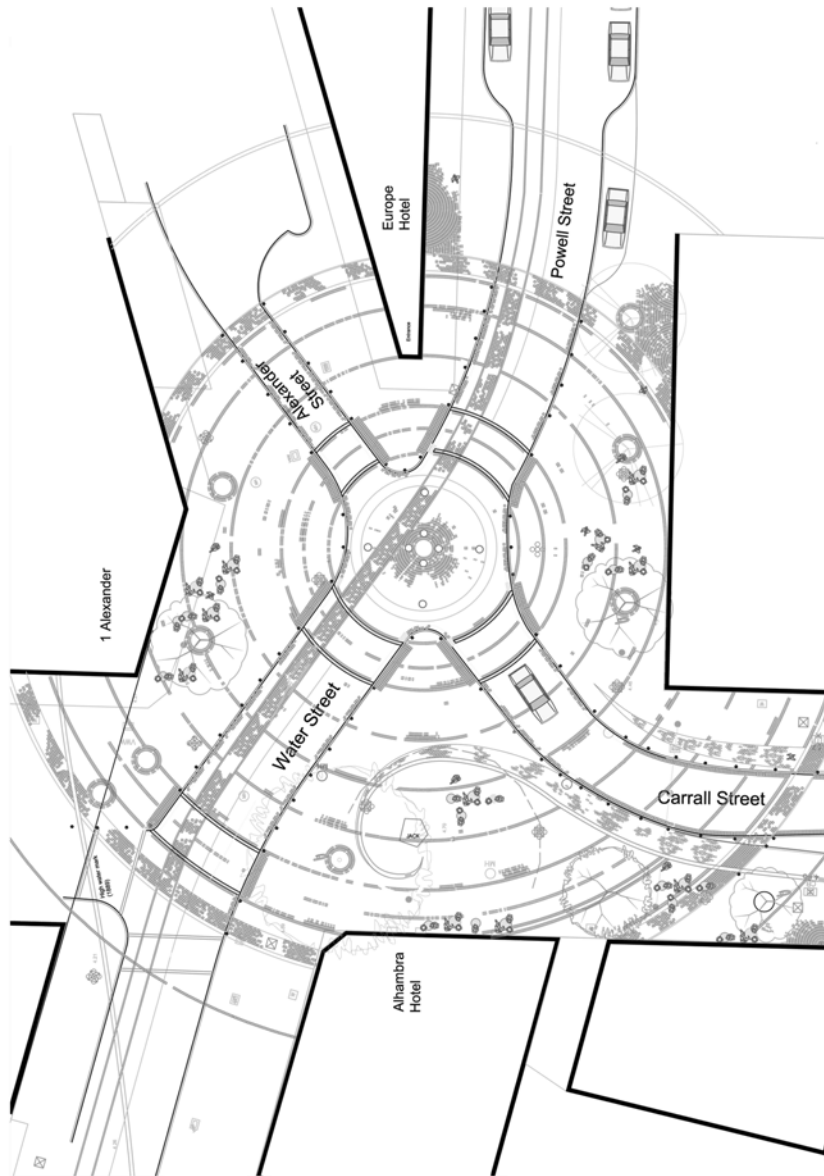
Sketch of the Design Features: granite channel and tree grate design




Alexander Street Bike Route - Main Street to Columbia Street



Concept Design for Maple Tree Square



N  Maple Tree Square
Draft A May 17th 2006

Development projects along and around Carrall Street

- Chinese Freemason Building (1 West Pender);
- Wing Sang Building (59-75 East Pender);
- BC Electric Building (425 Carrall);
- Pennsylvania Hotel (412 Carrall);
- Merchants Bank (1 West Hastings);
- Woodward's (101 W Hastings);
- Lux Theater Site (55 E Hastings);
- 1 Alexander
- Kings Hotel (210 Carrall);
- Boulder Hotel (9 W Cordova);
- Alhambra Hotel (2 Water);
- The Garage (12 Water);
- Grand Hotel and Terminus Hotel (36 Water); and
- Standley New Fountain Hotel (36 Blood Alley Square).