

DTD – Downtown District - DRAFT

(1)



(2) PLACE TYPE

The Downtown Core serves multiple functions. It is Fort Saskatchewan's historic downtown: home to many unique businesses, residential apartments, and government buildings. The District comprises the retail-focused corridors of 100th/Dennis Avenue and 102nd Street, the Civic Precinct containing City Hall and the Post Office, and finally, the Downtown Life District marked by a blend of street-oriented and ground-level commercial spaces and apartment blocks. Predominantly pedestrian-oriented, its infrastructure supports and encourages ground-level commercial activities. The active uses within this place type are varied, hosting a range of small-scale businesses, boutique shops, and service establishments, as well as residential uses. The District has a is built with a grid road network and very walkable block sizes. The Downtown Core features traditional prairie Main Street historic brick façades and Prairie Style architecture, with structures featuring brick, decorative brick, wood, and stone. The location is complemented by the river valley and Historic Precinct in close proximity.

(3) INTENT

(a) General Intent

In the Downtown District, there is an emphasis on creating a vibrant, human-centric environment through thoughtful urban design. This place type is intended to attract residents, visitors, and economic development to foster a lively historic downtown, distinguished by authentic development that invokes a strong sense of place. Each sub-character area, with its tailored design approach and functionality, contributes to the cohesive identity and dynamism of the Downtown Core. To create the vibrancy and population base to support the businesses, new development and redevelopment shall be at a higher intensity and density than that of existing development. However, the small-town character shall be maintained through design features, site planning, and massing.

(b) Land Use Mix

The "Land Use Intent" section for the Downtown Core is tailored to address the unique needs and characteristics of each sub-character area, guiding the development and utilization of land in a way that supports the overall vision for the area.

Dennis Avenue Retail-Focused Corridors

In the retail-focused Dennis Avenue Subdistrict, the aim is to foster vibrancy and a positive, comfortable, and seamless pedestrian experience. This area is intended for small-scale commercial retail, restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, salons, and similar establishments that cater to pedestrian traffic. To maintain the active street frontage and pedestrian engagement, professional services and other office-related uses are encouraged to occupy spaces above the ground floor. Residential units are also permitted within this sub-area, provided they are situated above the ground floor or set back from the primary street frontage to that commercial uses can have direct street frontage. This approach aims to create a lively street-level experience while accommodating a mix of uses.

Civic Precinct

In the Civic Precinct, the intent is to uphold and enhance its role as a hub for civic activities. This area is largely influenced by the activities and functions of City Hall and the Post Office. While there are limited opportunities for new development in this area, any future land use is expected to align with the character of the downtown and be compatible with the existing context. Appropriate and complementary uses that enhance the downtown, the area's civic nature, and public accessibility are encouraged, ensuring that the precinct continues to serve as a focal point for city-wide activities and interactions.

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Downtown Living Area

In the Downtown Living area, marked by a combination of standalone commercial spaces and street-oriented apartment blocks, the goal is to create a versatile urban space that accommodates a diverse mix of uses. This flexibility is essential for an adaptable and engaging urban environment, ready to evolve with changing urban dynamics in the mature Downtown Core.

This subdistrict is intended to accommodate the working, living, and shopping needs of Downtown residents and of the city as a whole. This subdistrict is primarily suited for higher density residential developments, particularly apartment blocks and other multi-unit residential structures with integration of compatible commercial uses. The inclusion of commercial elements is designed to be harmonious with the residential character of this sub-area, providing essential services and amenities while maintaining the overall mixed-use framework within a densifying urban fabric.

(4) BLOCK STANDARDS

- i. Block frontages should be maintained between lots to ensure a consistent street wall.
- ii. Block standards may be varied to the satisfaction of the Subdivision Authority to address constraints, such as but not limited to existing utilities, public amenities, and/or design constraints.

(5) USES AND TYPOLOGY

Use	Locations		
	Dennis Avenue	Civic Precinct	Downtown Living
Apartment	-	D	P
Stacked Townhousing	-	D	P
Commercial Block	P	D	D
Commercial Office Building	D	D	D
Mixed Use Building	P	D	P
Inn	D	D	D
Sign	D	D	D
Storefront	P	P	-
Indoor Assembly	D	P	P
Public Service Building	D	P	D
School	-	-	P
Community garden	D	D	D

(6) LOT AND SUBDIVISION STANDARDS

	Use	Dennis Avenue	Civic Precinct	Downtown Life
Site Width	Stacked Townhouses	-	Corner Site: Min. 6.0m	Corner Site: Min. 6.0m
			Interior Site: Min. 3.6m	Interior Site: Min. 3.6m
			End Site: Min 4.8m	End Site: Min 4.8m
	Apartment, Commercial Office Building, Inn, Mixed Use	Min. 15m Max. 50m	Min. 15m Max. 60m	Min. 15m Max. 60m
	Commercial Block	Min. 10m Max. 50m		
	Indoor Assembly, Public Service Building, School	Min. 15m Max 50m	Min. 12m Max. 70m	Min. 15m Max. 50m
	Storefront	Min. 3.6m Max. 16m	Min. 3.6m Max. 16m	-
Lot Depth	All Uses	Min. 30m Max. to the discretion of the Development Authority.	Min. 30m Max. 130m	Min. 30m Max. to the discretion of the Development Authority.

(7) BUILT FORM AND SITING

Vehicular access to the building shall be from the lane where a lane is available, unless otherwise approved by the Development Authority.

		Dennis Avenue	Civic Precinct	Downtown Life
Principal Building Setback	Build-To Line	Max. 3.0m	To the discretion of the Development Authority.	Max. 6.0m
	Flanking Yard	Max. 2.4m	-	Min. 2.4m
	Rear Yard	Min. 4.5m when adjacent to Detached, Duplex, Townhome, Stacked Townhome		
Building Width		Max. 40.0m	-	Max 40.0m
Principal Building Height		Min. 4.5m Max. 4 storeys (no more than 18.0m)	Min. 2 storeys (9.0m) Max. 6 storeys (21.0m)	Min. 2 storeys (9.0m) Max. 6 storeys (21.0m)

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		Dennis Avenue	Civic Precinct	Downtown Life
Lot Density	Apartments, Mixed Use, Stacked Townhome	Min. 100 du/nrha	Min. 120du/nrha	Min. 120 du/nrha
Lot Coverage; Total (Incl. Accessory Buildings)	All Uses	Max 85%	Max 70%	Max 85%

Variance to the requirements may be considered if significant hardship to achieve the built form and siting requirements due to the site configuration or other considerations are proven to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

(8) BUILDING CHARACTER AND DESIGN

General

- i. All outdoor lighting fixtures must be aimed and shielded in a manner that does not direct illumination onto a street or adjacent residential use.
- ii. Buildings taller than 12.0 m in height shall incorporate a step-back to address massing, sun penetration, shadowing and wind funnel impacts at the pedestrian level to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
- iii. Every building containing a non-residential use shall have at least one (1) path connecting the parking area to the public entrances of the building.
- iv. Where a building contains more than one use, every use that has an exterior public entrance shall have a pathway connecting the public entrance to the sidewalk.

Front Yard Setbacks

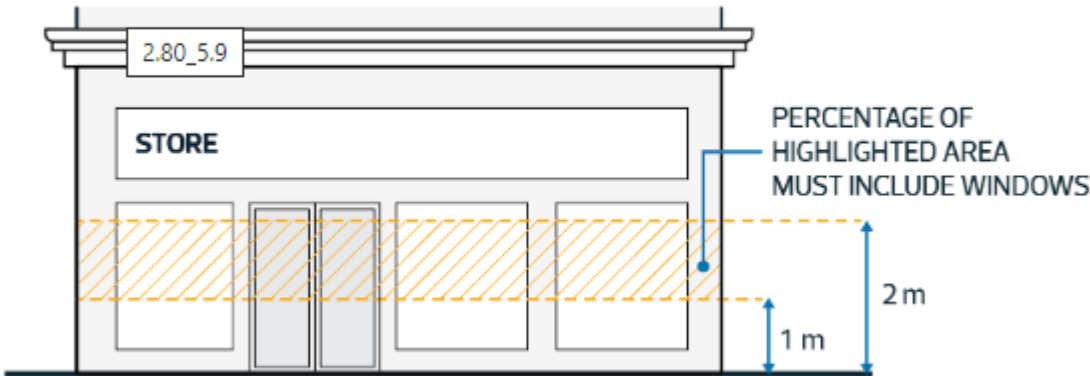
- v. Front setbacks will be established within the above noted range depending on building typology or the existing context.
- vi. Buildings should be sited to create an extension of the street wall with no gaps between buildings.

(9) PARKING AND LOADING

- i. Parking shall be located in the rear yard or underground, abutting the back alley or in a fully enclosed court accessed by porte cochere and not visible from the principal street. The Development Authority may require that parking facilities incorporate architectural screening up to 1.2m in height, or be framed by vegetation.
- ii. Rear parking and loading shall not be visible or accessible from the street in the Dennis Avenue subdistrict.
- iii. Waste collection areas shall be located in Parking Areas at the rear of buildings only, and shall be screened from view from any Street through the use of landscaping or architectural features.

(10) OTHER REGULATIONS

- vii. Façades must create human scale massing, minimize perception of massing atypical to each sub-character type, eliminate large blank walls, and provide visual interest. Design techniques or features may include variations in rooflines; vertical or horizontal building wall projections or recessions; visual breaks of building facades into smaller sections; or other similar techniques or features.
- i. Commercial and community uses shall be limited to the ground floor of a building. All Ground Floor building frontages must consist of non-residential uses oriented towards the adjacent street.
- ii. A minimum height of 4.0m shall be required on the ground floor of all mixed-use buildings.
- iii. A minimum of 60% of the ground floor façade area between 1.0m and 2.0m above grade, for non-residential use along a public street and/or park shall be comprised of windows, doors, or transparent glazing.



- iv. Canopies or awnings shall be a minimum of 0.6m from the curb face and will be located a minimum of 2.5m above grade.
- v. At the discretion of the Development Authority, an additional setback of 3m maximum to the front yard setback may be permitted for a Mixed-use building to accommodate a patio.
- vi. Accessory dwelling units may be allowed on the ground floor provided the accessory dwelling unit is located in the rear of the building and a non-residential use is located in the front of the building closest to the street.
- vii. To promote pedestrian interaction and safety, ground floor non-residential facades must comply with the following:
- viii. A minimum of 85% of all ground floor windows facing a street, park, or along facades with a main entrance facing a public area or parking area interior to the site must be clear and transparent. The remainder may be covered by non-transparent materials.
- ix. Façade articulation through architectural design and treatments such as cornices, decorative columns and beam.
- x. Minimization of blank facades through the use of murals and public art.
- xi. Barrier free access for users with physical or mobility disabilities.
- xii. A minimum of 60% of a building length shall be within the permitted setback range along the abutting street.

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- i. **Landscaping**
 - a. Landscaping on the site shall be in accordance with Section x.x of this Bylaw.
 - b. The maximum height of a fence may be located in the front yard where commercial use or mixed use is located within the principal building.
- ii. **Signs**
 - a. Signs may be located on fences and shall be in accordance with Section XX of this Bylaw.
 - b. Signs must comply with Section x.x.
- iii. The size, location, design, character and appearance of any building or structure requiring a development permit shall be acceptable to the Development Authority having due regard to:
 - a. The policies and objectives contained within the municipality’s statutory plans;
 - b. Other City plans, standards, and guidelines; and
 - c. Other factors, such as sunlight and privacy.
- iv. Accessory buildings shall not exceed 5.0m in height.
- v. Home Based Businesses must comply with Section x.x.
- vi. All principal and rear entrances must retain barrier free accessibility.

(11) APPLICABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The regulatory scheme within this place type is designed as a performance-based approach intended primarily for new developments and significant redevelopments of existing buildings. Given the qualitative nature of these standards, the intent is to avoid designating existing buildings as non-conforming wherever possible.

Existing buildings are not considered Non-Conforming if they meet the following development standards:

- Front Yard Setback: 0 to 2 metres
- Side Setback: 0 to 2 metres
- Rear Setback: Minimum 0 metres for sites adjacent to a non-residential land use district; minimum 4.5 metres for sites adjacent to a residential land use district
- Building Height: 4 storeys or less

For the purposes of this place type, "significant redevelopment" refers to any development that includes an addition to the building's floor area or improvements to the facade facing a public street that exceed 50% of the facade's surface area. This provision ensures that substantial changes to existing buildings align with the district's performance-based regulatory intent, maintaining consistency in design quality and streetscape character.

Unless exempt under section XX, all Development requires Development Permit approval. This includes, but is not limited to changes in exterior finishes, alterations to window openings, modifications to door locations, or similar visible modifications.

(12) NONCONFORMING ACTIVITIES

- i. The General Intent pertaining to nonconforming Activities is to regulate existing Activities such that further expansion of these Activities is not permitted, while allowing for maintenance and ongoing upkeep of the structures, as per Article X.XX of the Land Use Bylaw.
- ii. No new development is permitted with these nonconforming Activities:
 - a. Casino
 - b. Funeral Home
 - c. Pawn Shop
 - d. Recycling Drop-Off
 - e. Vehicle Repair Facility
 - f. Vehicle Repair Facility (Limited)
 - g. Vehicle Sales, Leasing, and Rental Facility
 - h. Vehicle Sales, Leasing, and Rental Facility (Limited)
 - i. Vehicle Wash
- iii. No drive-through, shipping container/sea can, or fuel stations will be permitted in the Downtown Core District.