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AGE-FRIENDLY

MORDEN

REPORT &

DOCUMENTATION



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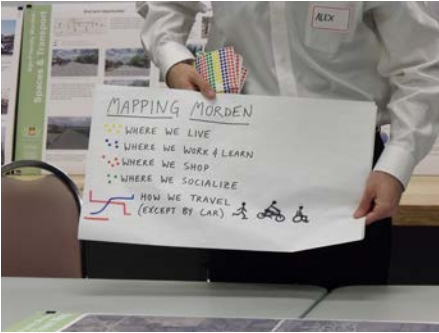
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*Cover Image:
Pembina Hills Arts Centre
clocktower*



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Executive Summary



This report summarizes the findings of the University of Manitoba City Planning Age-Friendly Study for Morden. In the fall of 2011, group members Alex Henderson, Adam Prokopanko, Andrea Spakowski, and Liam Speirs conducted research and held a consultation with town officials and local residents. Morden's age-friendly characteristics were examined in four topic areas: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Transportation, Housing, and Social Participation. Strengths and areas for improvement were identified in each of these facets of the community. Finally, proposals were prepared in order to further improve the age-friendliness of the town.



Team Morden at a community consultation (Credit: M1 Studio)

A key asset of Morden is its historic and walkable downtown area with seniors housing in close proximity to amenities. Sidewalks should be extended into newer residential and commercial developments where they are currently lacking. People young and old would benefit from having more crosswalks on busy Thornhill Street. There are currently some vacant and under-utilized lots downtown that could be used for additional seniors housing.

It is easy to drive around Morden and parking is free and plentiful. The existing handi-van service is limited, particularly on evenings and weekends. Negotiations are ongoing between Morden and Winkler to establish a joint transit service that will travel between the communities and provide service to the hospital. As part of the transit plan, a section of 8th Street could be redeveloped into a transit hub and pedestrian-friendly public plaza including a patio and bandstand.

Seniors in Morden want affordable housing that allows them to maintain an engaged and active lifestyle and connections with friends and family. Emphasizing mixed-use development would enhance walkability, building on the existing strengths of community resources and networks and a wealth of heritage resources. Infill development, secondary suites, and visitable housing are all strategies that will contribute to the ability to age in place within the community.

Morden provides many opportunities for social participation. The 55+ Activity Centre is a key gathering place for seniors from the town and region. Initiatives such as the Snow Angels of Morden allow year-round participation in the community. Improvements to physical infrastructure and focusing new retail development to the southeast of downtown would make it easier for all members of the community to have easy walking access to the services they need. Anchoring this development with attractions would create a focal point for residents and visitors alike.

Introduction

This report represents the accumulation of efforts from one semester of work in the first year (M1) studio of the Masters Program in City Planning at the University of Manitoba. It is a study which focuses on features in the town of Morden that relate to the specific needs of older adults. The information contained in this report is based on first hand observations that were made in Morden during visits to the town, communications with representatives of the town council and age-friendly committee, and resident mapping exercises.

This report will consistently refer to the 2007 World Health Organization document, *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, which lays out a series of recommendations for communities desiring become age-friendly. It consists of testimonials gathered from older adults around the globe (including Portage la Prairie). The Guide summarizes its findings by saying an age-friendly community is one that: "...adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capabilities."

The WHO document is further divided into eight categories: outdoor spaces & buildings; transportation; housing; social participation; respect & social inclusion; civic participation & employment; communication & information; community support & health services. The first four categories, in particular, have served as the basis for this study. They acted as the criteria with which to determine particular strengths, areas for improvement, or opportunities in Morden.

It is hoped that the information displayed in this report will provide a catalyst for local feedback as to the relevance of the age-friendly issues that are examined. It is additionally desired that this report will provoke discussion about age-friendly issues that have either not been covered, or have not been appropriately addressed.

We would like to acknowledge the following: Ashlyn Haglund, who contributed a great deal to this project at the outset of this semester; Heather Francis, our very helpful liaison, as well as Maurice Butler, and others on Town council; Carol Fehr, Program Director of the 55+ Activity Centre; Cheryl Digby, Community Development Officer; Clare Agnew, Director of Community Services; Nettie Dyck, and the other wonderful people at the 55+ Activity Centre.



Mapping activity with Morden seniors (top), WHO Age-Friendly Categories (above)

Regionally, Morden serves a vital role as an urban centre in the rural landscape. What this means for the community, is that the town and its amenities serve not only the local population, but also many people from the surrounding areas. There is also a close relationship between the town of Morden and the nearby community of Winkler.

The relationship between Morden and Winkler is largely cooperative, and the two communities are able to share certain key amenities. For example, the city of Winkler contains a number of typical, big box retail locations, not present in Morden. While Morden serves the region as the centre of provincial government services.

The most significant regional amenity, however, is Boundary Trails Hospital. It is situated directly between the two communities, at the junction of Highway #3 and Highway #14. This is a modern medical facility which serves the entire region. The hospital is of particular interest for seniors living in Morden and Winkler. However, because of its location it only easily accessible by car. There is a strong potential for a public transit corridor between the two communities of Morden and Winkler, which could include a stop at the hospital.



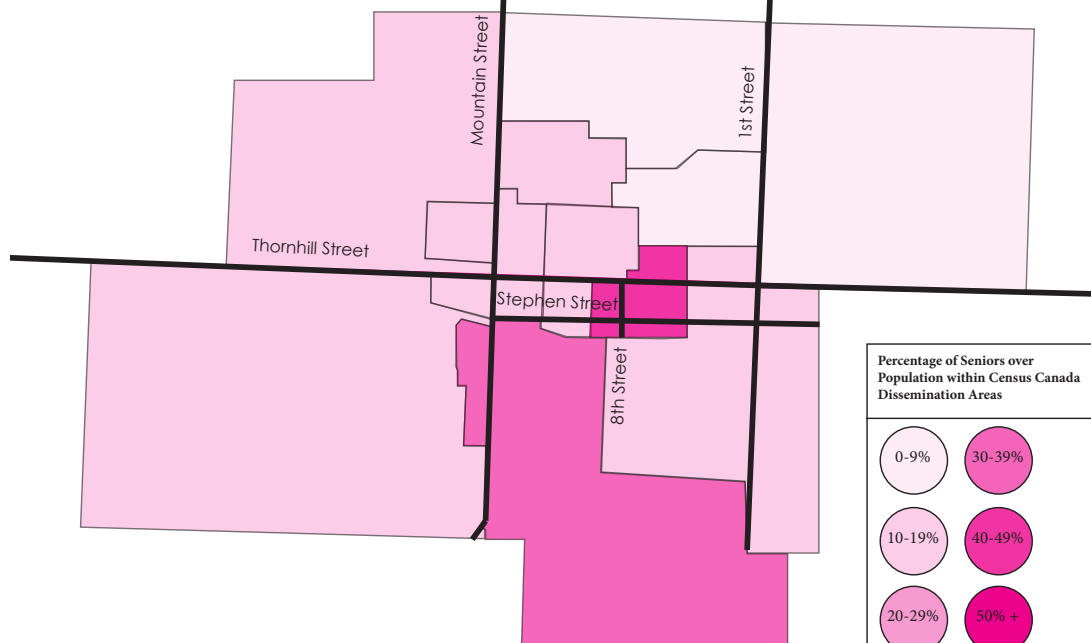
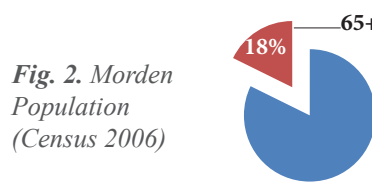
Map 1: Morden

The current style of growth within the town boundary is geared mostly for regional uses and not local uses. The present trend of development in Morden is for new construction projects to occur on the edge of town. What this has done, is shift the development from the inviting downtown area, to more car exclusive zones on the periphery.

Demographics

Geographically, the largest concentration of seniors resides in downtown Morden and is represented by the darkest pink area on this map. There is high number of senior-oriented residences here, such as the Legion House, indicated on the centre of the map. The second largest concentration of seniors is in south-central Morden because of the existing Tabor Home.

It is important to note that Morden has 5% more people aged 65 and over when compared to the Manitoba average from the 2006 census. In Morden it is 18%, compared to the 13% provincial average. The town of Morden is also experiencing faster growth rates than many other communities in the province. So it is likely that the number of seniors living in Morden could continue to climb significantly over the next few years.



Population 2006 (65+ Breakdown Data)

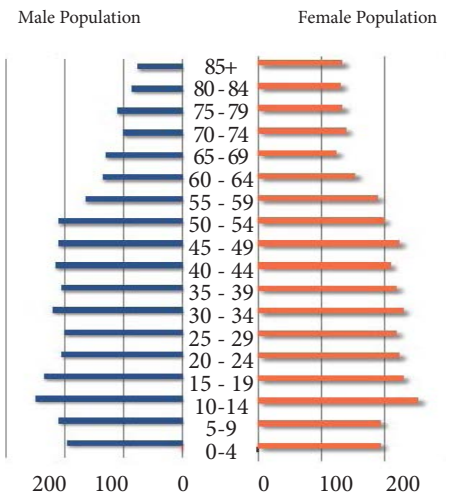


Fig. 3. (above)
Fig. 4. (right)

Total population	6570
Absolute over 65	1165
Percentage of Population over 65	17.7 %

Population 2006

Total population	6140
Absolute over 65	1155
Percentage of Population over 65	18.8 %

Population 2001

Total population	5690
Absolute over 65	1095
Percentage of Population over 65	19.2 %

Population 1996

Total population	5275
Absolute over 65	1010
Percentage of Population over 65	19.1 %

Population 1991

Total population	5005
Absolute over 65	910
Percentage of Population over 65	18.2 %

Population 1986

Total population	4580
Absolute over 65	810
Percentage of Population over 65	17.7 %

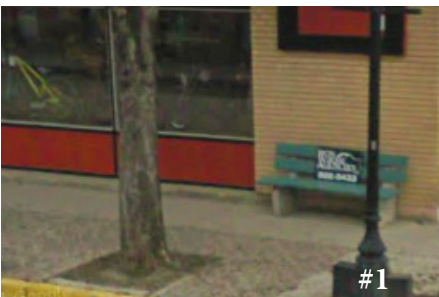
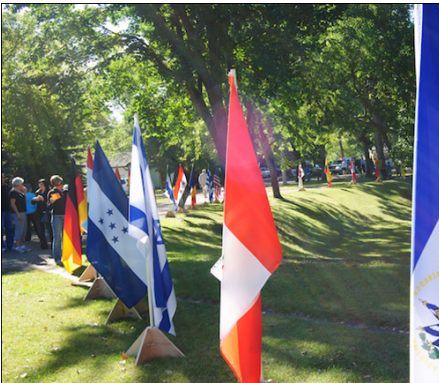
Population 1981

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

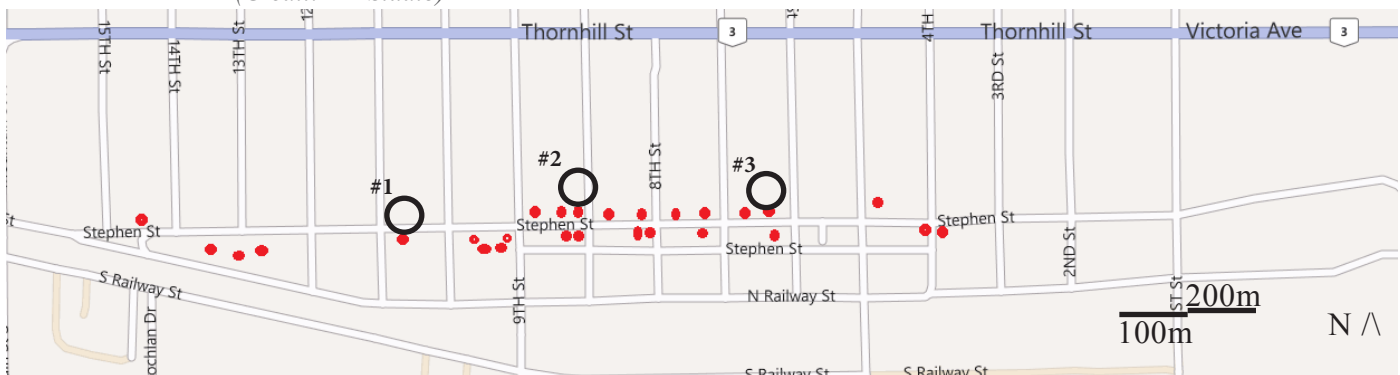
Strengths

Morden's environment, buildings and public spaces are generally age friendly in accordance with the WHO Guide. Morden has beautiful parks and green spaces. It has one of Manitoba's premier golf courses, historic architecture, and a variety of well-organized trails. Morden's greatest strengths seem to lie in its walkability and its downtown.

There is ample public seating, providing places to stop and rest, along Stephen Street in the historic downtown. For some seniors these benches are needed to be able to walk around and maintain an active lifestyle.



Locations around Morden
(Credit: M1 Studio)



Map 3: Benches on Stephen Street

Areas for Improvement

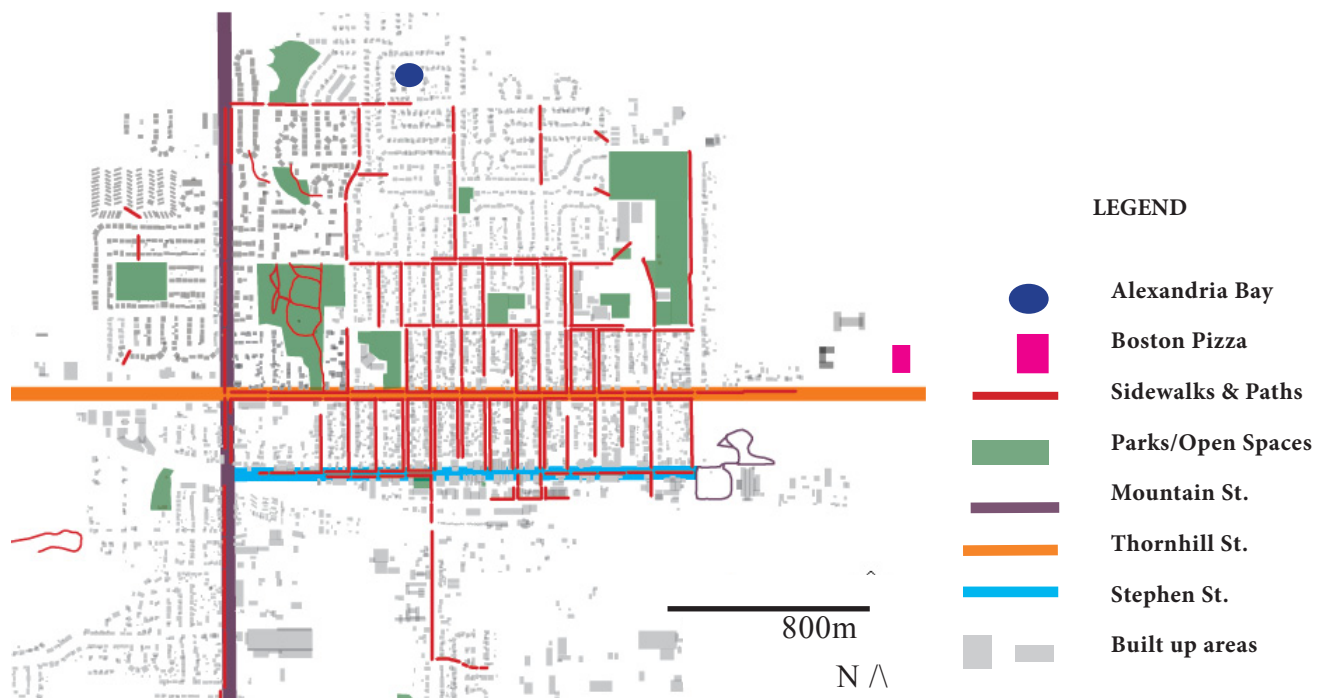
The WHO Guide reports that safe and smooth sidewalks and pathways are an essential part of promoting a healthy, age-friendly environment.

The map of Morden below shows existing sidewalks and paths using red lines. Notice how sidewalks and paths do not extend into the outer areas of town where newer developments are taking place.

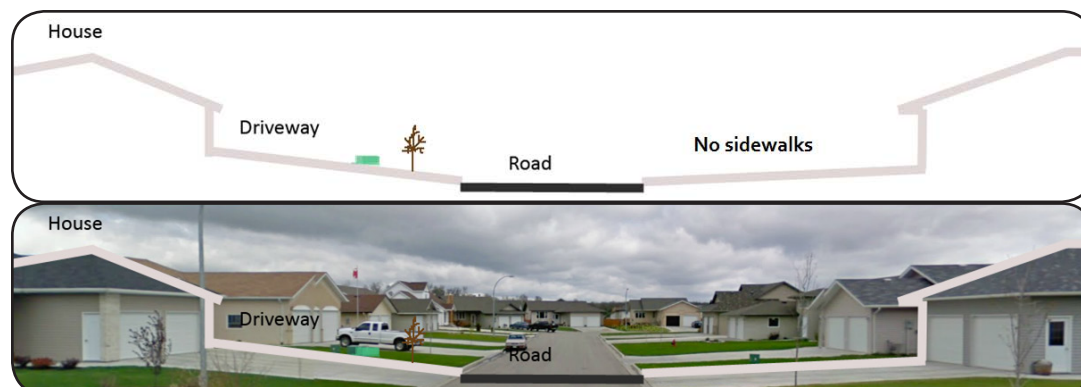
Sidewalks should be extended into these newer residential and commercial developments. Sidewalks and pathways allow seniors who no longer drive to “Age-in-place” by ensuring social connections and safe walking in all seasons.



Boston Pizza on the east edge of Thornhill Street



Map 4. Sidewalk map



Alexandria Bay with overlay (Credit Google Street View)

Short-Term Opportunities

The WHO Guide states that the ability to cross the road safely is a ubiquitous concern for seniors.

Older adults with less mobility would benefit from having more crosswalks on busy Thornhill Street, Highway #3. This would shorten walking distance and remove the need to jaywalk. It would also help make downtown and highway commercial areas more accessible from residential areas north of the street.

The Kinsmen trail is a remarkable feature that allows pedestrian access to Lake Minnewasta through the golf course. This trail could be improved by adding age-friendly seating, paving, clear direction signs, and a crosswalk on Thornhill Street. It is important to further define this trail along a strictly delimited route because it is a community trail on private property.



Thornhill Street (top) and proposed crosswalk (above) (Credit: Google Street View with overlay)

Walking trail and improved trail (Credit: M1 Studio)



LEGEND

- New Crosswalk
- Kiwanis Trail

Map 5. Walking Trail

Longer-Term Opportunities

The WHO Guide suggests that building smaller parks throughout a town is a useful way to help integrate seniors with their neighborhood communities. This is because small parks can act as social hubs; they are places to see other people and places where neighbors cross paths. Small parks work best for this purpose when they have age friendly features like public washrooms, smooth paving, and places to rest.

The WHO Guide reports that long travel distances can be a barrier to seniors. Many services and amenities are in easy walking distance downtown, this is a reason for concentrating development here. There are vacant and under-utilized spaces downtown that can be used for future senior accommodations. In some places downtown, along Stephen Street, a second storey of age-friendly apartments could be built above existing retail stores.



A small park with bench and improved walking path (Credit: Google Street View with overlay)



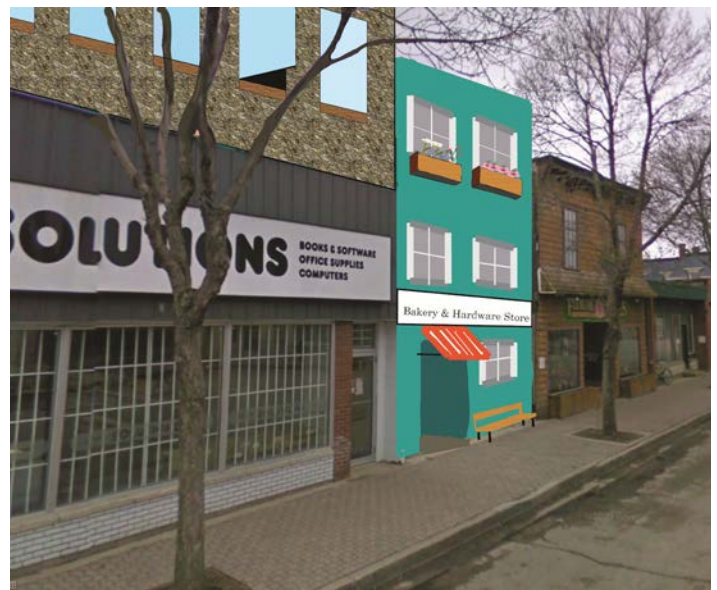
LEGEND

- Vacant Land & Unused Buildings ■
- Under-Utilized Downtown Land ■

Map 6. Empty and under-used land downtown



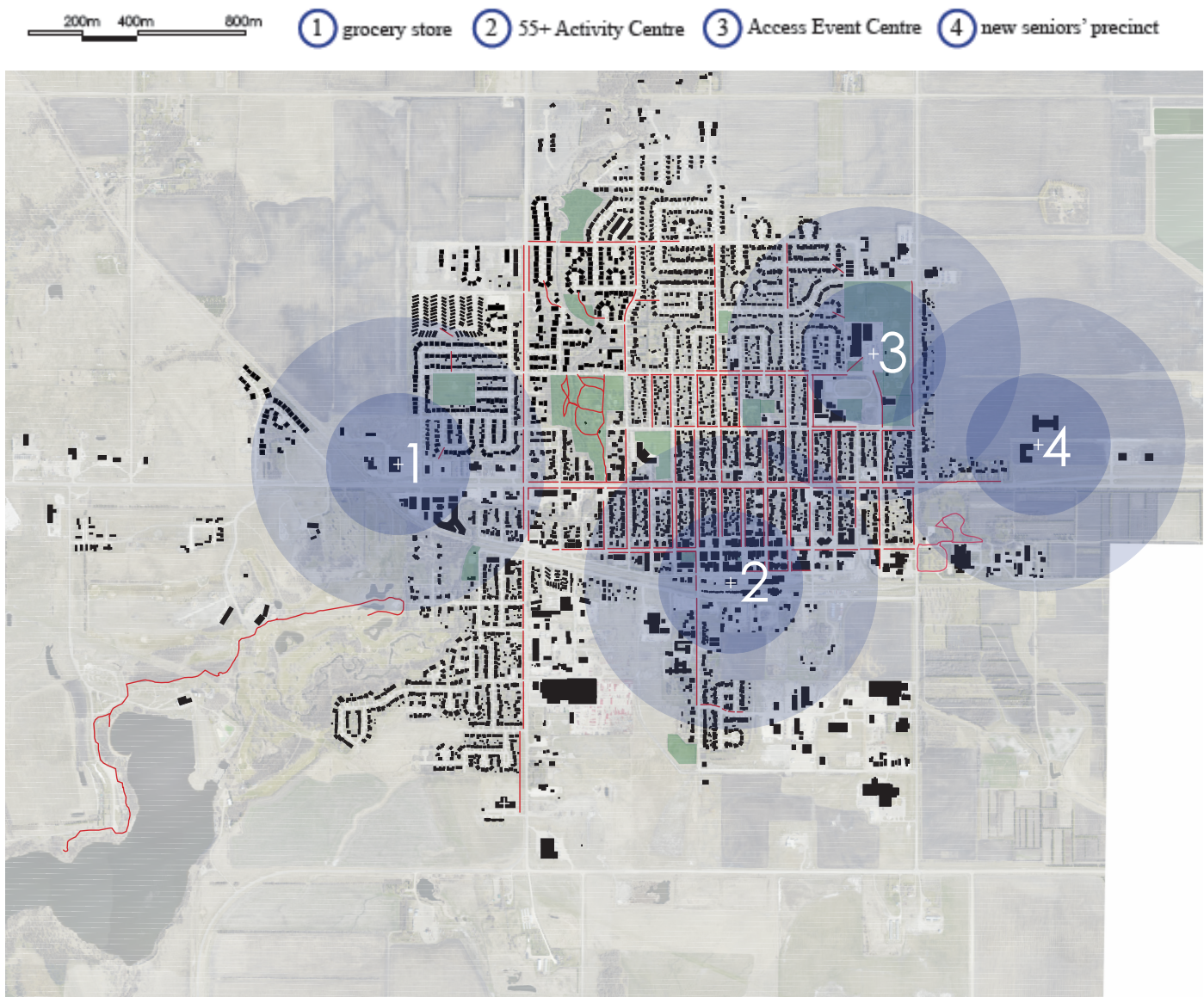
Infill mixed-use development downtown (Credit: Google Street View with overlay)



Some Walking Distances for Seniors

This map illustrates reasonable walking distances to the existing major grocery store, the 55+ Activity Centre, the Access Event Centre, and the new Homestead South assisted living home, and future location of the Tabor Home. The inner circle shows a 400 metre distance while the outer circle is an 800 metre distance. Seniors who live outside of each blue circle will be less likely to walk to that particular amenity. This map shows how centrally-located amenities, such as the 55+ Activity Centre, are more accessible by walking, for many more people.

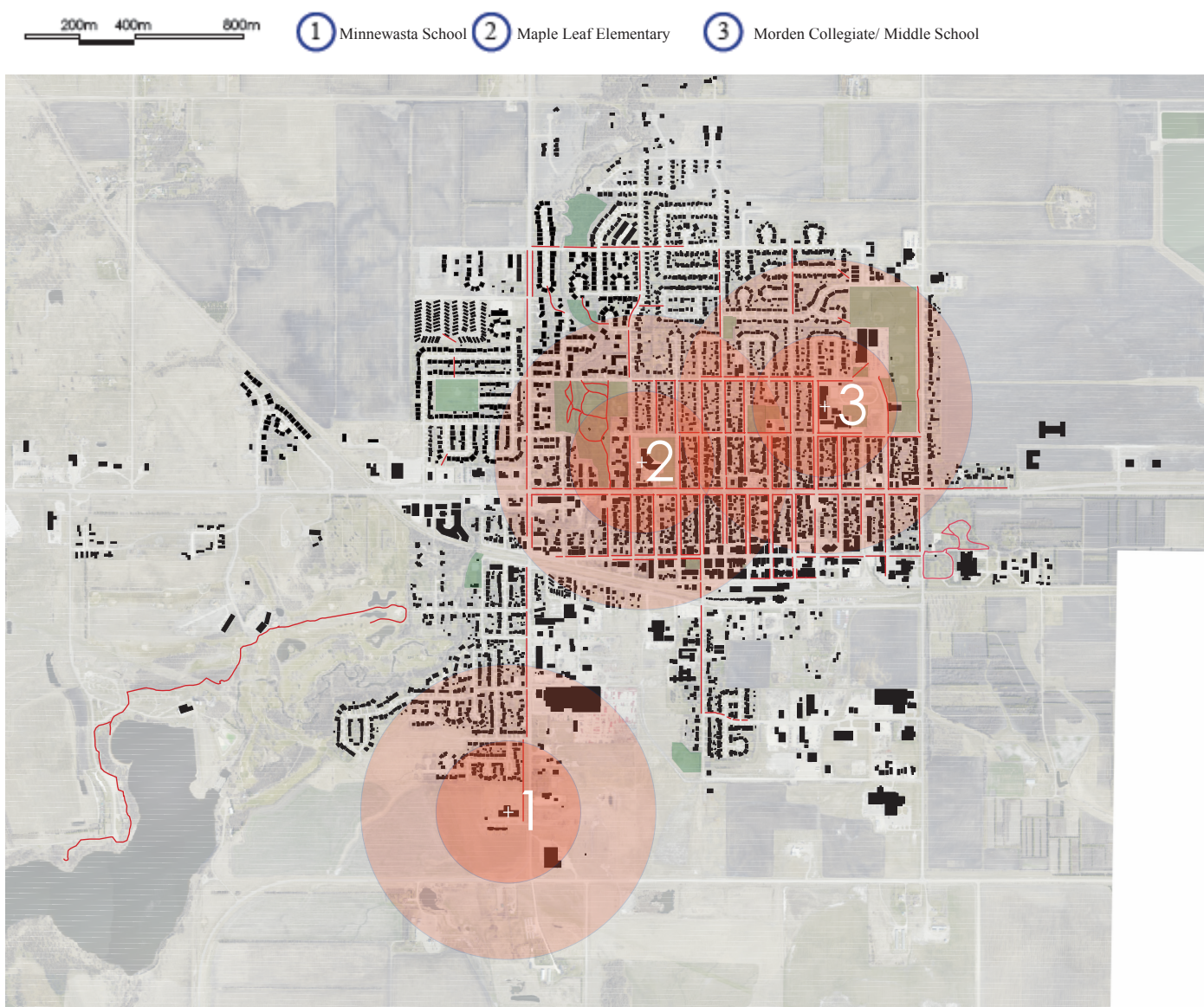
Map 7. Walking distance and major amenities in Morden



Walking Distances to Schools

This study primarily focuses on seniors but the concept of age-friendly also includes a consideration of children. This map shows reasonable walking distances to Minnewasta School, Maple Leaf Elementary, and Morden Collegiate/Middle School. The inner circle is a 400 metre distance while the outer circle is an 800 metre distance. Students who live outside of each blue circle will be less likely to walk to that particular school. The map shows how Maple Leaf Elementary, Morden Collegiate and Morden Middle School are well located to encourage students to walk. It is important to note, however, that Minnewasta School mostly receives students from the surrounding rural regions by bus.

Map 8. Walking distance and schools in Morden

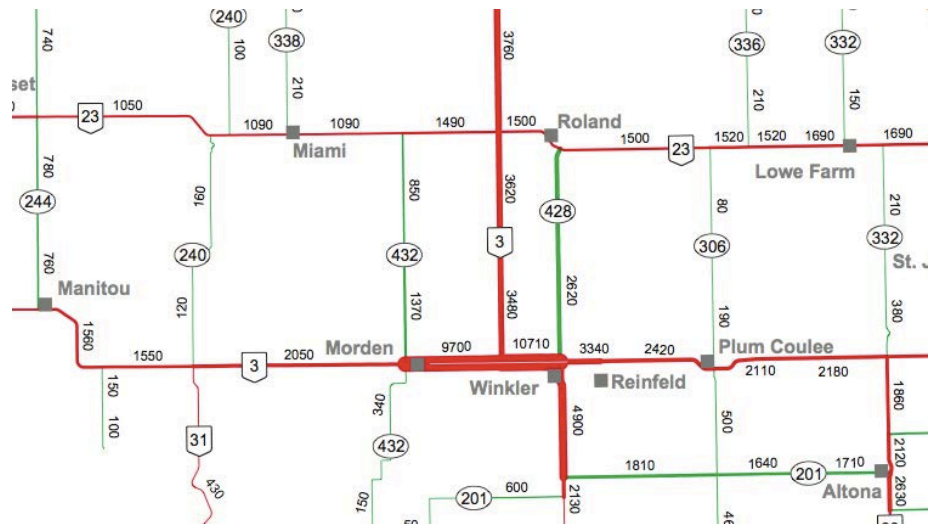


Transportation



From top: Walking trail, Morden Legion, a Handi-van (Credit: M1 Studio)

Mobility is important for many seniors to maintain an independent lifestyle. It is easy to drive around Morden and parking is plentiful. Currently the only public transportation in Morden is the handi-van. It provides access to the hospital and to Winkler, but availability is limited, especially during evenings and weekends when the service depends on volunteer drivers. A new transportation option worth consideration are neighbourhood electric vehicles (NEVs). This includes vehicles such as golf carts that travel at low speeds and do not require a driver's license to operate. NEVs are already used extensively in many communities including Leaf Rapids in northern Manitoba.



Map 9. (above) Highway traffic volumes



Neighbourhood electric vehicle (credit: outforarun.blogspot.com:)

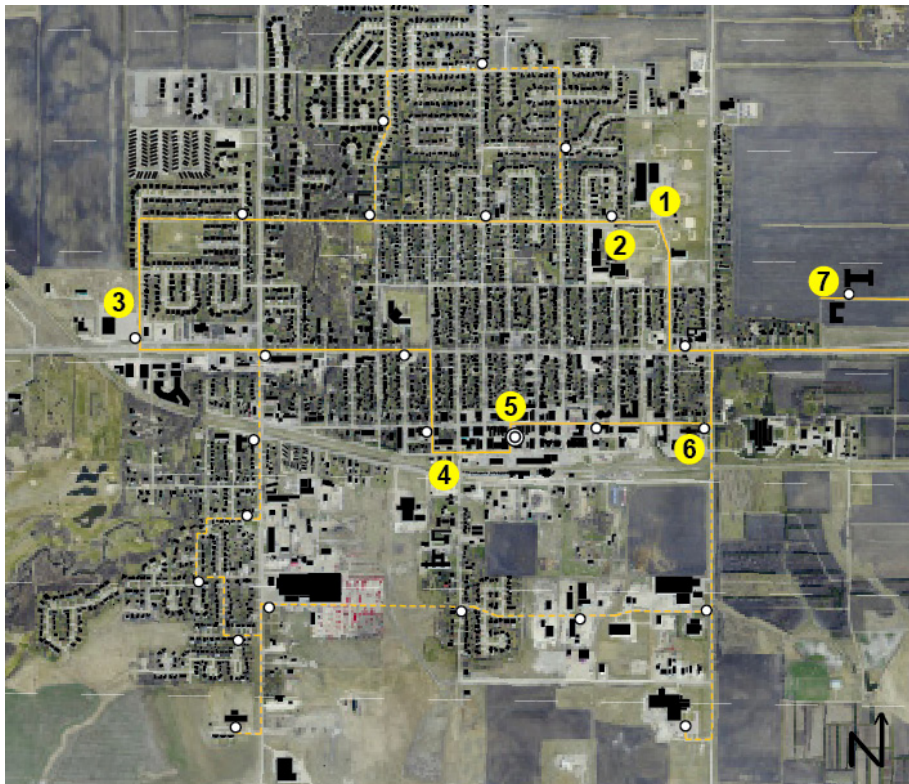
Transit

Negotiations are currently underway between Morden and Winkler to establish a joint public transit service. This would improve access to the Boundary Trails Hospital located between the two communities. A basic route around both Morden and Winkler with stops at the hospital could be served by a single bus with hourly frequency. This would provide service to all key destinations in both communities. Service to additional locations could be added in the future based on demand and available resources.

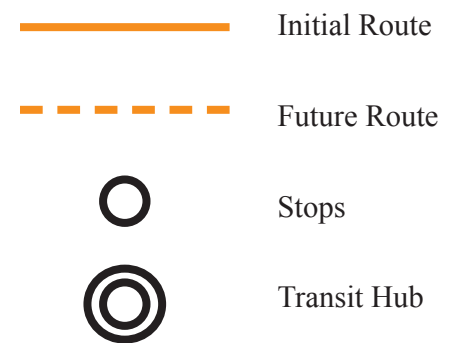
As part of the new transit service, a transit hub could be established on 8th Street between Stephen Street and North Railway Street. This would be an indoor waiting space for both the transit service as well as the Greyhound intercity bus depot. The transit hub could also incorporate a café, patio, and public washrooms.



8th Street bus stop



Map 10. (above) Proposed public transit route, **Map. 11** (below) Proposed inter-city transit route



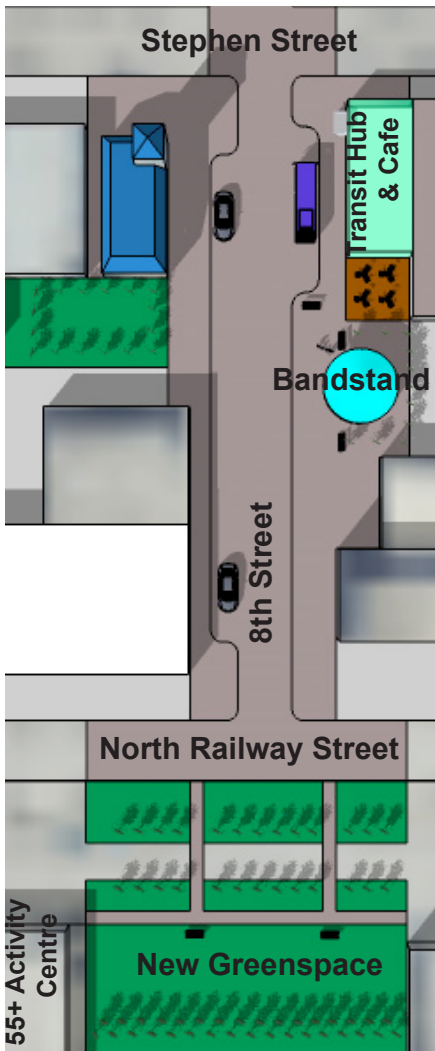
Destinations Served

1. Access Centre
2. Morden Collegiate Institute
3. Co-op grocery store
4. 55+ Activity Centre
5. 8th Street Transit Hub
6. Agassiz Medical Centre
7. Homestead South development
8. Boundary Trails Health Centre
9. Southland Mall
10. Winkler Wal-Mart

8th Street Plaza



This is an ideal location for a public plaza due to its central downtown location and proximity to Morden's most beautiful heritage buildings. In conjunction with the new transit hub, the rest of this block of 8th Street could be redeveloped into a public plaza. Patio cafe seating, sidewalk bump-outs, and textured paving on the sidewalk and street will create a pedestrian-friendly area. Some vehicle traffic could still be permitted, or the street might allow buses only. The street can be completely closed to all traffic during farmers' markets, the Corn & Apple Festival to extend the plaza venue across the whole street. An open-air bandstand would provide a venue for outdoor performances and festivals. This plaza would provide a key connection between Stephen Street and the 55+ Activity Centre on North Railway Street. A new greenspace at the south end of 8th Street would serve to anchor the plaza and provide a pleasant sitting area adjacent to the 55+ Activity Centre.



8th Street facing east



8th Street & North Railway Street looking north

*Morden Corn & Apple Festival (top)
(Credit: www.wikipedia.org), 8th Street
redevelopment (above)*

Location of Amenities in Morden

*Map 12. (right) Buildings and amenities,
Map 13. (below) Downtown and nearby
agricultural land*

Space for Future Development

Under-developed land is available within walking distance of Morden's downtown area, without resorting to problematic edge growth elsewhere. Development in these areas will stabilize the existing downtown and allow for more diversity in urban housing options, all within desirable proximity of the existing health care precinct. Development in the south also helps to avoid increasing traffic volumes on Thornhill Street.



- | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| greyhound bus stop | institutional, schools | physical fitness | retail, dining, services | multi-family residential | primary health |
| trailer court living | bank, tax, loan | public green space | church, social club | single-family residential | health related |

A Strong Urban Community

Newer housing developments located close to doctors' offices at the Agassiz Medical Centre and downtown shopping encourage a walkable lifestyle. Minimizing motor vehicle usage supports communities that are eco-friendly and affordable, and encourages active living. Building on existing clusters of walkability will continue to promote a vibrant community.

As farming families continue to retire and move to town, Morden's existing amenities and lifestyle will continue to attract new residents. New housing options will be needed to accommodate them.



New multi-family dwellings (Credit: Google Street View)

The 55+ Activity Centre

The 55+ Activity Centre is located in the heart of Morden and is a busy centre of senior activity. It provides a wide variety of services including affordable lunches, social events, fitness classes, and a walking club. It is an information hub and provides links to a variety of services, like snow removal, home repairs, and yard work services. Perhaps its most essential service is that of a gathering place for the retired community.

As the senior cohort continues to grow, the centre will likely need to expand its premises and services. Ensuring that this valuable resource remains viable will support aging adults in maintaining independence and working families care for aging parents.

We think that more housing built nearby, along North Railway Street can benefit from this great resource.



The 55+ Activity Centre (Credit: M1 Studio)



Envisioning a future expansion of the 55+ Activity Centre on North Railway Street at 8th Street. Parking has been relocated from the front to the rear of the building and the new bus route stops out front. New housing across the street will increase mixed-use density and increase convenient and walkable housing options in the neighbourhood. Green spaces and benches along North Railway provide places to rest and gathering places for events.

Housing: Short-term

This section outlines a variety of short-term strategies that address some of the issues facing Morden seniors, including:

- Shortage of spaces in care facilities;
- Shortage of affordable living options for seniors;
- Facilitating healthy, safe and active aging-in-place;
- Maintaining family and social connections.



Single detached home (Credit: M1 Studio)

Secondary Suites

Granny flats, basement suites, garage suites, garden suites and guesthouses are an affordable solution to short and medium term needs, for snowbirds who travel for part of the year, or for those wanting to downsize. It allows busy families to have loved ones living nearby, while maintaining privacy.

An added benefit is the creation or improvement of an existing building. They facilitate affordable aging-in-place, and build urban density with minimal new infrastructure. Provincial incentives exist to assist families to develop secondary suites.



Ground level home (Credit: M1 Studio)

Visitable Housing

For many people, it is difficult to imagine one day being unable to get around independently. ‘Visitable’ housing is a concept that provides a zero-step entry, a full bathroom and a wheelchair-accessible main floor in all new housing, in order to accommodate those with mobility issues later.

A strong policy commitment to ensure every new house is built to visitable standards will help save on future housing renovation costs and inconvenience for those who become disabled. It will assist individuals to age in place, thereby maintaining strong social ties within communities, reducing stress and difficulty for families already dealing with illness. As a leader amongst Manitoba communities, Morden could set an important precedent in this regard.

Another significant benefit to the health care system involves minimizing both the risk of stair-related falls and the length of hospital stays, through the elimination of stairs, which are a major cause of accidents for seniors.

In 2002, fifty percent of all Canadian waste originated from renovations, construction and demolition sources. (Statistics Canada)

Housing: Short-term



Infill house (above), existing Tabor facility (below) and mobile style housing (bottom)



1 in 3 seniors will experience a fall each year, and half of those more than once.

40% of seniors' falls result in hip fractures.

20% of injury-related deaths among seniors can be traced back to a fall.

Seniors are injured at home more than any other location.

*The bathroom and stairs are particularly dangerous.
(Health Canada)*



Infill and Neighbourhood Renovation

There is room for incremental growth in central areas of Morden without the need to sprawl at the perimeter of town, thereby lessening the need for new infrastructure and controlling service delivery costs. Affordable and attractive older neighbourhoods can be attractive to younger residents. Infill housing will also encourage neighbourhood renewal in older areas such as around east Stephen Street.

Old Tabor Home

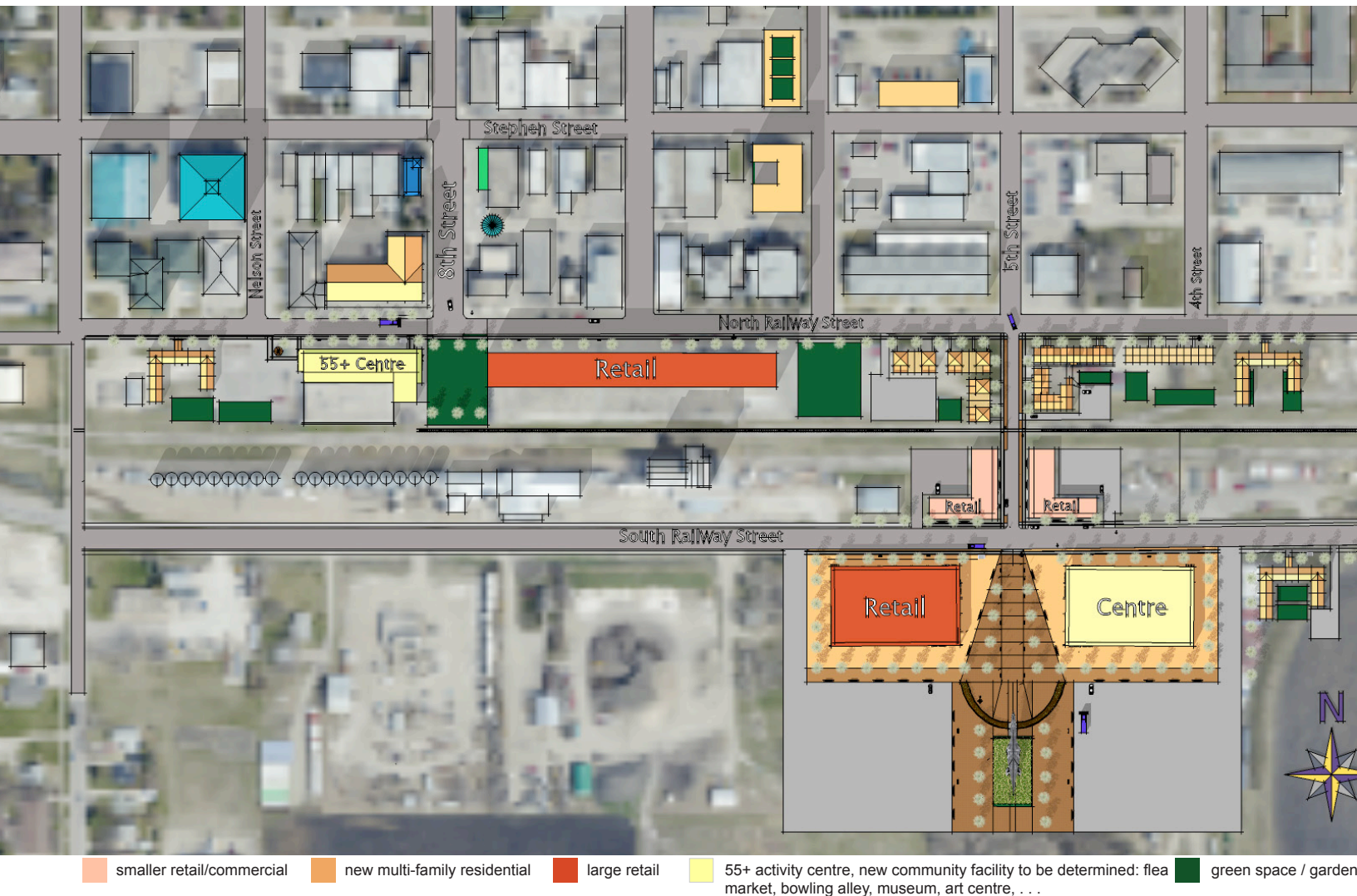
With the new Tabor Home development, there may be an opportunity to upgrade the old facility for other uses. Some ideas include: a satellite location for the 55+ Activity Centre, temporary housing for those awaiting a permanent place in apartments or care facilities, a learning centre offering continuing education classes through a larger college or university, or a hostel for budget travellers.

Recognizing Volunteerism

Programs that reward outstanding acts of neighbourliness, such as the Snow Angels of Morden initiative, are simple and cost-effective ways to assist seniors to remain active in winter. In addition, they encourage community service and neighbourhood interaction, and are a great way to get kids involved.

Mobile Homes

Mobile home living is affordable and convenient for many seniors. Morden should work to ensure that trailer parks continue to provide an environment that is healthy, beautiful and integrated with the community.



*Map 14. South-East development
centred on South Railway and 5th Street*

Southeast Mixed-Use Development

Morden is growing, and needs to accommodate this growth in a sustainable way, ensuring that it can continue to provide a rich and healthy lifestyle in the face of climatic, demographic and economic change.

Morden needs to make sure that viable housing alternatives are available so that all residents, especially the most vulnerable, are able to live in comfort, dignity and fulfillment. Encouraging sustainable and healthy housing will be of the utmost priority in the coming decades.

With the increasing scarcity and cost of fossil fuels, and the recognition that habits of the past will not be viable for future generations, Morden needs to prepare for these changes by ensuring that the town remains walkable.

Natural Environment & Sustainability

A beautiful and lush natural environment shelters wildlife, enhances quality of life for residents, and attracts tourists and immigrants. Trees provide shade in summer, protection from wind in winter, slow topsoil erosion, and enhance beauty. Planting street trees in all areas of Morden, especially along North Railway will help ensure a consistent ambience and help tie together different neighbourhoods and create a more neighbourhood-like feeling.

Morden has a strong tradition of innovation in agriculture and industry to draw upon: the Morden Research Centre, a wealth of manufacturing and health care expertise, and thriving local businesses provide partnership opportunities. Morden is well-placed to take a leadership role in this regard, and should seek innovative ways to encourage families and individuals to improve environmental practices at every level, in every sphere, including the industrial and health care sectors.

Some ideas include:

- low maintenance landscaping and xeriscaping will minimize water, herbicide and pesticide use, and provides opportunities to partner with the Morden Research Centre;
- promoting organic growing practices and eating local will help keep people, the land, and waterways healthy. Integrating garden plots with multi-family housing developments will support local eating and minimize driving. Raised garden beds are helpful for seniors;
- a facility to house a year-round farmer's or 'flea' market will encourage entrepreneurship, attract visitors and create a gathering place for young and old. Locating these in a walkable location, clustered with commercial retail, will ensure the success of both;
- new housing should minimize energy usage, while providing beautiful views in a convenient and walkable location;
- minimizing energy costs through passive solar design and use of alternative technologies like solar and wind power can help build new economies, and provide a sustainable future;
- encouraging and supporting green industry and technology will help build an innovative future for Morden.

With an understanding that fossil fuels as an energy source are rapidly becoming unaffordable, towns like Morden need to plan for their energy futures.

As a leader within Manitoba and Canada, Morden is well-placed to continue to innovate and exemplify the potential of towns everywhere. Its attitude is forward-thinking, open-minded, imaginative, youthful and hard-working.



Downtown Morden's unique ambience and historic quality is a priceless resource. Continuing development within walking distance of the existing downtown will ensure its viability. A strong policy to limit growth around the periphery will ensure the future of downtown businesses (Credit: Google Street View)



The German village of Wildpoldsried, population 2531, produces 321% more energy than it needs, through renewable sources, which it then sells back to the grid (Credit: <http://inhabitat.com/german-village-produces-321-more-energy-than-it-needs>)

Strengths

The 55+ Activity Centre and the Access Event Centre provide a huge variety of social services, wellness activities and are excellent places for social interaction with community members. Many of these activities are targeted specifically for seniors. These facilities also provide relevant information for seniors living, or planning to live in Morden. Morden is a cultural centre for the province and the Corn & Apple festival draws people from a wide range.

Boundary Trails Hospital is a nearby, modern facility with short wait times. Boundary Trails Place in Morden provides many health services. There are many active living opportunities at the golf course, curling rink, and the Access Centre.

Areas for Improvement

The 55+ Activity Centre, Access Centre and Boundary Trails Hospital are difficult to get to for seniors who either cannot, or choose not to drive. The new seniors housing developments, Homestead South and the new Tabor development are located at the eastern edge of Morden and do not currently have any sidewalk access.

Opportunities

Social, community and physical activities for seniors need to be available year round. The hospital needs to be easily accessible to seniors who do not drive. Morden is continuing to promote itself as a cultural centre, and as a desirable location for seniors and people of all ages to live.



Access Centre (top), bulletin board (middle) (Credit M1 Studio) and Seniors Playground (above) (Credit <http://www.jempolr.com/images>)

Southeast Development



(above) Facing west on South Railway at 8th St., (below) Birds eye view of South-East Development facing south

Recognizing that a large number of seniors live in downtown Morden, priority should be given to creating a positive and walkable social space close to downtown. The development envisioned here takes advantage of under-utilized land in the southeast corner of town, along North Railway and South Railway Streets.

This site is close to the health care precinct, the 55+ Activity Centre, and downtown shopping and services. It provides walkability to the services that seniors use regularly (health care, banks and shopping) and the ability to age-in-place with convenience and comfort, close to family and friends.

Avoiding the heavy traffic of major highways is an advantage to residents because slower and quieter streets are easier and safer for pedestrians, scooter drivers, cyclists and children to travel.

In this plan, 5th Street becomes a major linkage between the north and the south sides of the tracks for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, and cars.



Features

The Southeast Development project seeks to incorporate density of housing close to downtown Morden. This vision creates a walkable neighbourhood and incorporates many different social activities.

The rail yards are an important aspect of Morden's history. Though trains are infrequent, they remind us of Morden's past and provide a powerful landmark in the centre of town.

Morden Plaza: Morden is a proud international community. Recognizing the strength of this diversity, the centerpiece of the Southeast Development is a plaza lined with the flags of all the countries represented in Morden.

Large-scale retail: Space in an attractive central location close to downtown exists to house large scale retail such as a grocery or department store.

Social Centre: Adjacent to the retail facility, space exists for a local market, museum, swimming pool, concert venue, arts centre, bowling alley or other facility.

Morden Mosasaur: We imagine the time when dinosaurs inhabited glacial Lake Agassiz, where Morden now stands. The Morden Mosasaur swims through the waves of a Paleolithic garden, as through the waters of a vast lake. The Mosasaur is a tourist attraction for visitors; an educational opportunity; and a symbol of the history of this land. Seen against the wide horizon, we can begin to truly appreciate the size of this ancient creature. Interpretive panels and paving patterns complement the outdoor museum display, bringing natural history to life in the community.

The 55+ Activity Centre plays a large part in the lives of many Morden seniors. It provides meals, recreation, fitness, social events and links to services such as personal transportation, home maintenance and more. Its facilities have been expanded and re-imagined on its current site along North Railway Street.



Intersection of South Railway St. & 5th St. (Facing West)



South Railway St. facing the proposed plaza

Southeast Development

The Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre is a Manitoba Star Attraction. The Access Centre also provides conference and banquet facilities, indoor ice sheets, a children's indoor playground and community offices.

Linking existing amenities together with walking paths or sidewalks will increase opportunities for people to get outside and participate in social activities. It is important to plan to link these sites with the new seniors development at the east end of town.



Morden Mosasaur in the new plaza



Intersection of South Railway St. & 5th St. (Facing South)

Conclusions

The town of Morden is a diverse community. It has a good balance of modern amenities, as well as a particular small town character. These elements combine to form the unique environment found in this community. This report has examined this environment with regards to seniors, and how age-friendly Morden is. Presently, many of the recommendations of Global Age-Friendly Cities are already in place, and it would appear that Morden is in fact, quite age-friendly.

However, with the current trend of development, there is now a focus on car-dependent projects towards the peripheries of town. This presents some concerns for seniors, but should also concern other residents of the town. Morden is in danger of losing the walkable urban character of its downtown. This is an essential feature of Morden's unique identity and it is age-friendly quality.

Some options have been presented here as to how to guide current and future development in a more age-friendly way. Morden is growing faster than many other communities in the province and it also has a higher proportion of seniors (Statistics Canada, Census 2006). It will be invaluable to consult these seniors in the future development of Morden. The town is exceptional in that it already has in place an age-friendly committee. Residents and seniors and of the age-friendly committee can aid in finding appropriate, age-friendly developments. Morden has within it the capacity to lead the province as community carefully built to accommodate the needs of seniors, enhancing the quality of life for all ages in the process.

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