

# MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
To: Sean O'Flaherty  
Cc: Shaun Heffernan  
From: Greg Leighton  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts

## SITE OVERVIEW:

The City of Merritt has retained Urban Systems to develop three concepts for a strip of land along Quilchena Avenue.

The Quilchena Avenue site is located west of Downtown Merritt roughly between Main Street and Coutlee Avenue. The site was formerly owned by Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway and it previously functioned as right of way for a rail line. This long and relatively narrow piece of land is approximately 1.11 hectares in area, with an average width of 20.1 metres and a length of approximately 550m.

**Figure 1.0 – Site Overview**



Although the total land area is 1.11 hectares, the City of Merritt is currently planning to use a 391 m<sup>2</sup> portion of the site to connect the two disconnected sections of Cleasby Street. This will result in the piece of land being partitioned in two separated pieces of land bisected by Cleasby Street extension. The portion between Main Street and the Cleasby Street right of way will be 480 m in length and 9645 m<sup>2</sup> in area. The smaller portion east of the Cleasby Street right of way will be 53 m in length and 1065 m<sup>2</sup> in area. The width for both pieces of land will be approximately 20.1 m.

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
 File: 000521.0197.01  
 Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
 Page: 2 of 14

Other than being split into two pieces by Cleasby Street, the other major development constraint of the site is that only 325m of the property has frontage on Quilchena Avenue; the remainder of the property is located in the rear yard between lots facing on to Quilchena Avenue and Coldwater Avenue. This limits development options for a large portion (40%) of the site.

The dimensions sites are broken down as follows (see Table 1.0 and Figure 2.0 below):

**Table 1.0 – Site Dimensions**

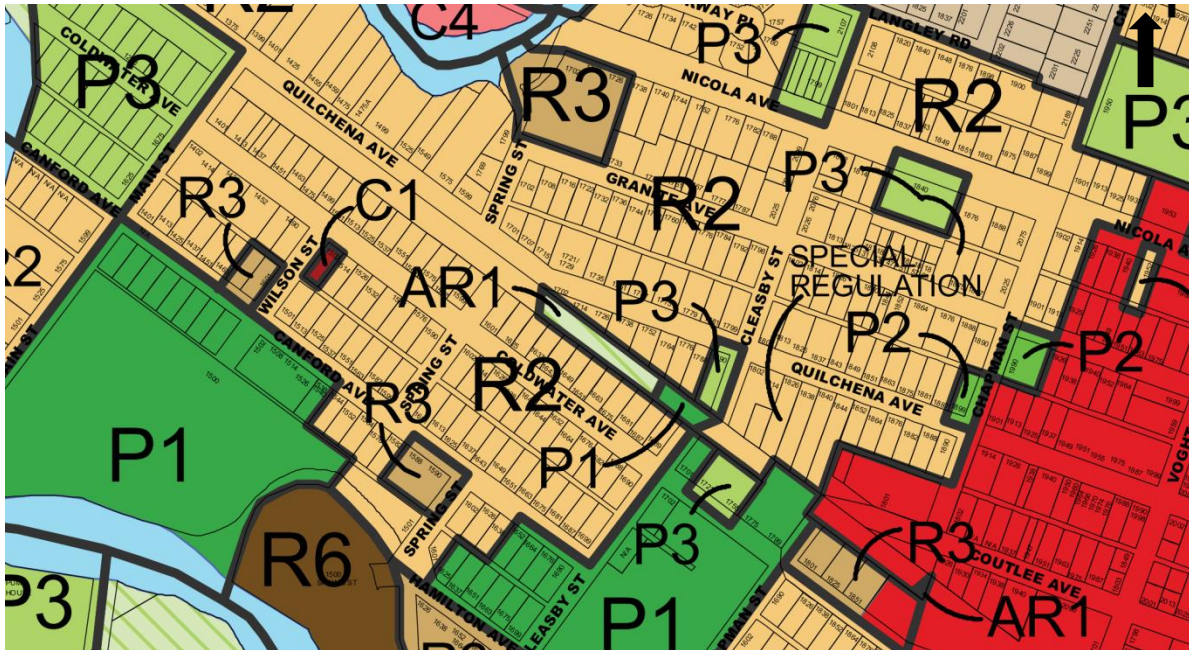
Description		Measurement	Dimensions
<b>Total Site Area</b>		<b>Total Land Area</b>	1.11 ha
		<b>Width</b>	20.1 m
		<b>Length</b>	550 m
		<b>Cleasby Road Right of Way</b>	391 m <sup>2</sup>
		<b>Remaining Land (minus the Cleasby Street ROW)</b>	1.07 ha
<b>Portion 1 - between Main Street and Cleasby Street</b>		<b>Width</b>	20.1 m
		<b>Length</b>	480 m
		<b>Area</b>	9645 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Portion 1-A</b>	<b>with road frontage on Quilchena Ave.</b>	<b>Width</b>	20.1 m
		<b>Length</b>	325 m
		<b>Area</b>	6533 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Portion 1-B</b>	<b>without road frontage on Quilchena Ave.</b>	<b>Width</b>	20.1 m
		<b>Length</b>	155 m
		<b>Area</b>	3112 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Portion 2 – East of Cleasby Street</b>		<b>Width</b>	20.1 m
		<b>Length</b>	53 m
		<b>Area</b>	1065 m <sup>2</sup>

**Figure 2.0 – Site Overview**



The current zoning for the property includes Low Density Residential (R2), Agricultural (AR1), and Park/Cemetery/School (P1) (see Figure 3.0 below). It should be noted that the site currently has recently undergone environmental testing and has been found to be free of contaminants.

Figure 3.0 – Site Zoning



Based on the development constraints found on the property, three concepts have been developed for the site, these include:

- **Concept 1** - Community Amenity Concept – Linear park
- **Concept 2-A** - Linear Park with Subdivision – A linear park and community garden connected to a subdivision with 8 single-family (530m<sup>2</sup>) and 3 duplex lots (750m<sup>2</sup>) with affordable housing requirements.
- **Concept 2-B** - Blended Option – Similar to Concept 2-A, but with more park space and a higher ratio of affordable housing.

It should be noted that for the purpose of developing these concepts affordable housing will be generally defined as shelter that costs less than 30% of before-tax household income.<sup>1</sup> Shelter costs include the following:

- **For renters:** rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services; and,
- **For owners:** mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services.

For a single parent household with full-time employment, earning minimum wage (\$10.25 per hour), affordable housing would constitute a maximum annual spending of \$6,369 dollars (\$533 per month) on shelter.

<sup>1</sup> CMHC. (2014) Housing Canada Online – Definition of Variables. [http://cmhc.beyond2020.com/HiCODefinitions\\_EN.html](http://cmhc.beyond2020.com/HiCODefinitions_EN.html)

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 4 of 14



## QUILCHENA AVENUE LOT CONCEPTS

### CONCEPT 1: COMMUNITY AMENITY CONCEPT – LINEAR PARK

#### a. Overview

This concept focuses on creating a large amount of park space with room for the potential development of other community amenities. In this concept the Quilchena Avenue strip will be broken up into two sections.

1. Section 1 - from Main Street to Cleasby Street will be converted into a park covering an area of 9647 m<sup>2</sup>. The park could contain lights, benches, and either a paved or gravel trail running between Main Street and Cleasby Street.
2. Section 2 - the smaller portion of the site, on the eastern side of Cleasby Street, could be turned into a community garden and composting centre. This could have planters, a small storage area, and a composting station.

Additionally, providing a paved multi-use pathway along Quilchena Avenue connecting the park with downtown could enhance the use of this space and create new public amenities for local residents.

#### b. Pros/Cons

##### Pros:

- Keeping this space as parkland or open spaces provides the City with a number of options and ways to develop the space.
- This concept provides a large amount of community amenity space that can be used for variety of uses.
- The central location is optimal for outdoor recreation facilities and there is a good deal of space to accommodate these uses.

##### Cons:

- It creates a large amount of park space in an area of town where there is already a good amount of outdoor space nearby.
- The expenses associated with developing this space will be higher as the City will not make any money off of the land; compared to Concepts 2-A and 2-B where the City will sell off a portion of the land to pay for the parks development and ongoing maintenance costs.

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 5 of 14

Figure 4.0: Concept 1 - Site Overview



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 6 of 14



## CONCEPT 2-A: LINEAR PARK AND SUBDIVISION (MORE HOUSING)

### a. Overview

This concept focuses on subdividing and selling off a portion of the Quilchena Avenue strip to generate the funds needed to pay for the development of a linear park space and community garden. In this concept the Quilchena avenue strip will be broken up into three sections:

1. Section 1 - could cover the portion of the strip with road frontage on to Quilchena Avenue, between Main Street to Cleasby Street, which could be subdivided into eight 530m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 26.5 m) single-family lots, and three 750m<sup>2</sup> (20 X 37.5) duplex lots. This portion of the plan area will cover 6,500 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 325 m) or 60% of the Quilchena Avenue strip. Three units of the duplex lots could be used for the purpose of developing affordable housing (20% of the total development) by providing duplex lots at ½ price with the condition one unit per duplex is sold or rented as affordable housing.
2. Section 2- could be a linear park on the remainder of the Quilchena Avenue strip, between Main Street and Cleasby Street, located between the rear yards of lots facing on to Quilchena Avenue and Coldwater Avenue. This portion of the plan area will cover 3,100 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 155 m) or 30% of the Quilchena Avenue strip. The park could contain basic amenities like lights, benches, and either a paved or gravel trail running between Quilchena Avenue and Cleasby Street.
3. Section 3 - the smaller portion of the site, on the eastern side of Cleasby Street, could be turned into a community garden and composting centre. This could have planters, a small storage area, and a composting station. This portion of the plan area will cover 1,065 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 53 m) or 10% of the Quilchena Avenue strip.

### b. Pros/Cons

#### Pros:

- This concept provides a balance between useable open space, urban agriculture and low-density residential development.
- The profits from the sale of the eight single-family lots and three duplex lots could be used to support the development of affordable housing and park infrastructure, as well as ongoing maintenance costs, lowering expenses for the municipality.
- This concept provides affordable housing in a location near schools and close to community amenities (20% of the total development).

#### Cons:

- It sacrifices potentially valuable parkland close to downtown for residential development.
- The expenses associated with developing this space may not be recovered until all the lots are sold, which will depend on the strength of the real estate market.

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
 File: 000521.0197.01  
 Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
 Page: 7 of 14

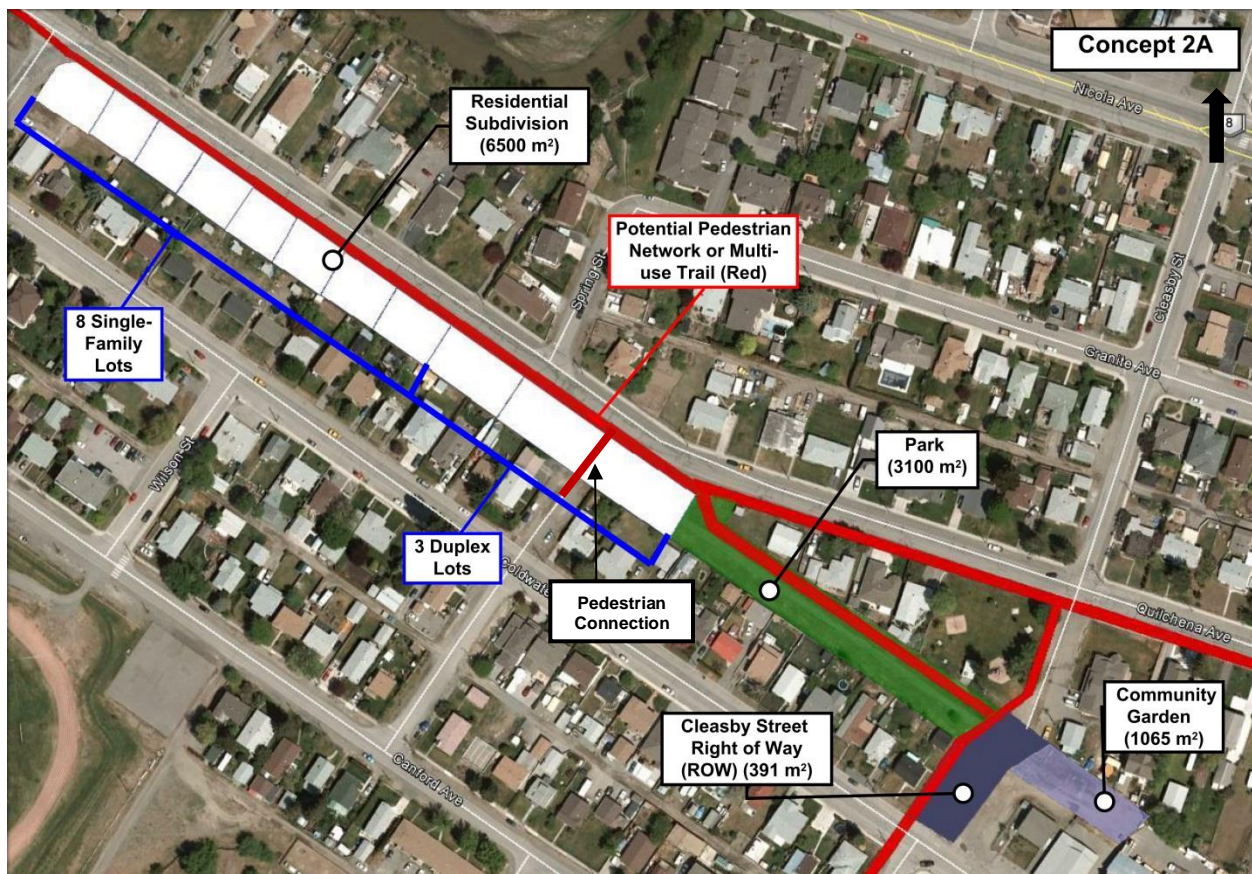
**c. Lot Values**

The following table provides an approximate estimate of the potential value of the 11 lots for the subdivided portion of the site concept. These estimates are based local real estate listings.

**Table 2.0 – Potential Profits from Lot Sales**

Items	Unit of Measurement	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price <sup>2</sup>	Profits
Single-Family (8 units)	Lots	8	\$45,000	\$360,000
Duplex (3 Units)	Lots	3	\$55,000	\$82,500 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$442,500</b>

**Figure 5.0: Concept 2A - Site Overview**



<sup>2</sup> Based on local real estate prices for vacant residential lots (2014)

<sup>3</sup> Assumes the duplex lots will be offered to potential developers at a lower price (50%) to support affordable housing initiatives.

## CONCEPT 2-B: LINEAR PARK AND SUBDIVISION (MORE PARK SPACE)

### a. Overview

Like Concept 2A, this concept focuses on subdividing and selling off a portion of the Quilchena Avenue strip to generate the funds needed to pay for the development of a linear park space and a community garden. However, this concept reduces the number of lots being developed and increases the portion of the site dedicated to parkland. In this concept the Quilchena Avenue strip will be broken up into three sections.

1. Section 1 - will cover a 75% of portion of the site with road frontage on to Quilchena Avenue, between Main Street to Cleasby Street, which will be subdivided into six 530m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 26.5 m) single-family lots and three 750m<sup>2</sup> (20 X 37.5) duplex lots. This portion of the plan area will cover approximately 5,430 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 270 m) or 50% of the Quilchena Avenue strip. Three units of the duplex lots could be used for the purpose of developing affordable housing (25% of the total development) by providing duplex lots at ½ price with the condition one unit per duplex is sold or rented as affordable housing.
2. Section 2 - will be a linear park on the remainder of the Quilchena Avenue strip, between Main Street and Cleasby Street, located between the rear yards of lots facing on to Quilchena Avenue and Coldwater Avenue. This portion of the plan area will cover approximately 4,200 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 210 m) or 40% of the Quilchena Avenue strip. The park could contain basic amenities like lights, benches, and either a paved or gravel trail running between Quilchena Avenue and Cleasby Street.
3. Section 3 - the smaller portion of the site, on the eastern side of Cleasby Street, could be turned into a community garden and composting centre. This would have planters, a small storage area, and a composting station. This portion of the plan area will cover 1,065 m<sup>2</sup> (20 m X 53 m) or 10% of the Quilchena Avenue strip.

### b. Pros/Cons

#### Pros:

- This concept provides a balance between useable open space, urban agriculture and low - density residential development.
- The profits from the sale of the six single-family lots and three duplex lots could be used to support the development of affordable housing and park infrastructure, as well as ongoing maintenance costs, lowering expenses for the municipality; though less so than in Concept 2A.
- This concept provides affordable housing in a location near schools and close to community amenities (25% of the total development).

#### Cons:

- It sacrifices potentially valuable parkland close to downtown for residential development;
- The expenses associated with developing this space may not be recovered until all the lots are sold; this will depend on the strength of the real estate market.

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
 File: 000521.0197.01  
 Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
 Page: 9 of 14

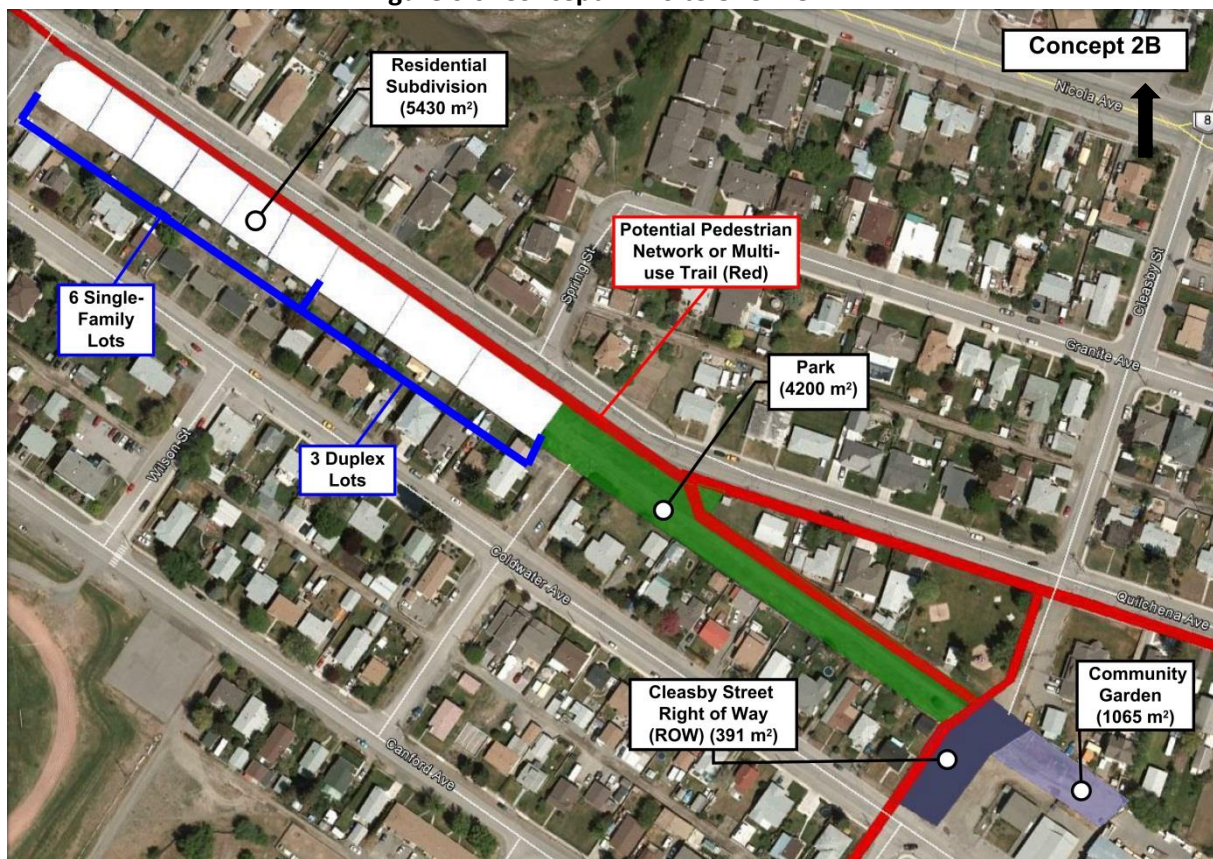
**c. Lot Values**

The following table provides an approximate estimate of the potential value of the 9 lots for the subdivided portion of the site concept. These estimates are based local real estate listings.

**Table 3.0 – Potential Profits from Lot Sales**

Items	Unit of Measurement	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price <sup>4</sup>	Profits
Single-Family (6 units)	Lots	6	\$45,000	\$270,000
Duplex (3 Units)	Lots	3	\$55,000	\$82,500 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$352,500</b>

**Figure 6.0: Concept 2B - Site Overview**



<sup>4</sup> Based on local real estate prices for vacant residential lots (2014)

<sup>5</sup> Assumes the duplex lots will be offered to potential developers at a lower price (50%) to support affordable housing initiatives.

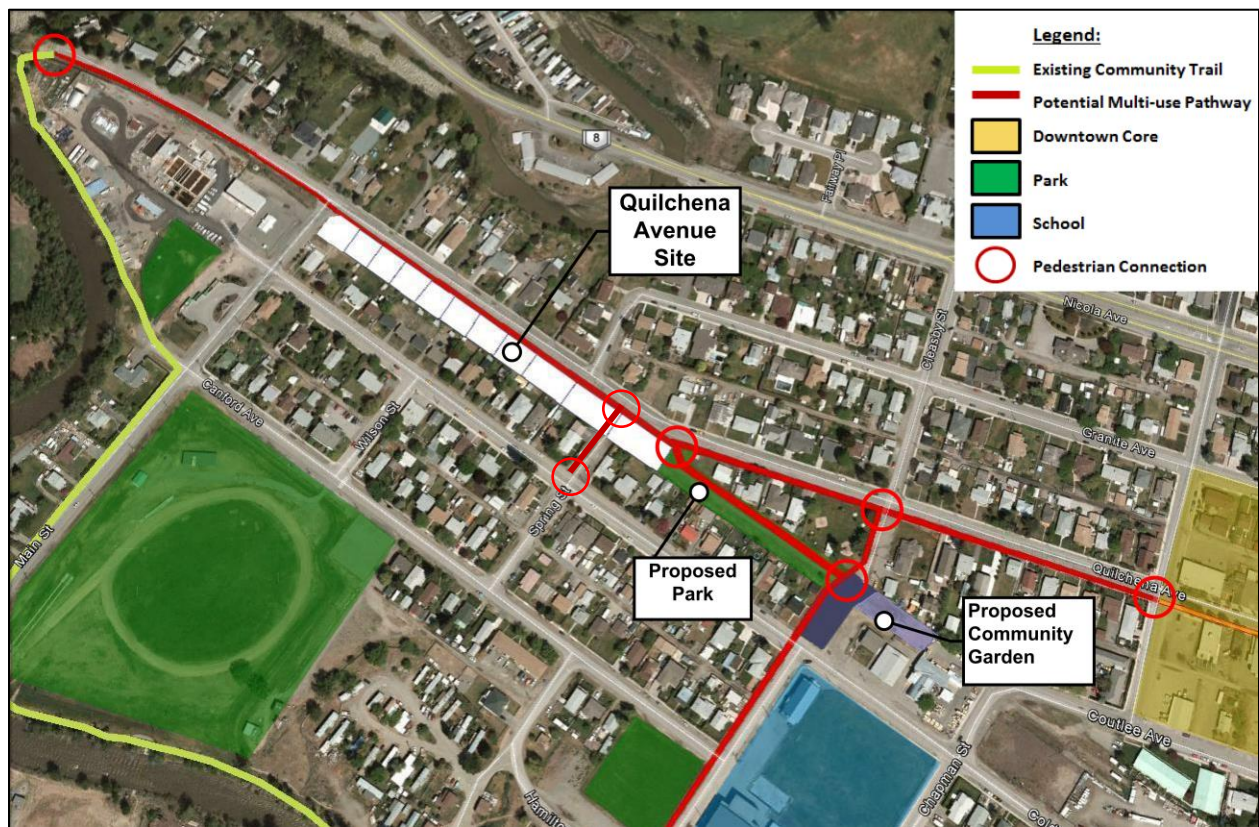
MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 10 of 14

**MULTI-USE PATHWAY AND POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS**

All three Concepts presented in this memorandum recommended providing a paved multi-use pathway along Quilchena Avenue connecting the park with downtown and other destinations nearby. Providing a multi-use pathway and pedestrian connection could enhance the use of this space and create new public amenities for local residents in this part of the City. The following multi-use pathway concept highlights various amenities that would benefit from greater pedestrian connections - improving pedestrian mobility in this part of Merritt. These include the downtown core, the Coldwater River Community Trail, Merritt Secondary School, the dog park on Canford Avenue, Merritt Central Elementary School, Merritt Morning Market, Voght Park and numerous other parks and public spaces (see Figure 7.0 below).

Figure 7.0 – Multi-use Trail and Pedestrian Connections



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 11 of 14

The development of a multi-use pedestrian amenity is supported by the City of Merritt OCP Bylaw 2116, 2011, which states the following:

2030 vision

*“Residents and visitors of Merritt are able to move freely throughout the City on attractive bike and pedestrian trails; part of an extensive greenways system which contains streets with multi-use pathways, street trees and parks and a regional cycling network connected to the Kettle Valley Railway Corridor with an abundance of sustainable self-propelled, non-motorized outdoor recreation options inside and outside the City boundaries...”*

## VISUALIZATIONS

The following section provides visualizations for four different features of the concepts presented in this memorandum. These visualizations include images for the community garden, the linear park, the multi-use pathway and subdivision (see Images 1-4).

**Figure 8.0 –Visualizations by Location**



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 12 of 14

**Image 1 – Community Garden**



**Image 2 - Linear Park**



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 13 of 14

**Image 3 – Quilchena Avenue Subdivision and Multi-use pathway (East)**



**Image 4 - Quilchena Avenue Subdivision and Multi-use pathway (West)**



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 10, 2014  
File: 000521.0197.01  
Subject: Quilchena Avenue Concepts  
Page: 14 of 14



**Summary**

The concepts presented in this memorandum are all possible given the zoning and constraints of the Quilchena Avenue Site. However, it should be noted that in every concept the portion of the lot zoned AR1 (agricultural) will have to be rezoned to P1 to allow for the development of park space.

Following the review and discussion of the concepts presented in this memorandum, it is suggested that the City considers developing detailed plans and costs for one of the options. We would be happy to assist the City to advance these concepts in greater detail. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you wish to discuss any aspect of this memo.

Sincerely,

**URBAN SYSTEMS LTD.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Leighton", with a dashed line extending from the end of the signature.

Greg Leighton, MCIP, RPP  
Community Planner