BRAGG CREEK COMMERCIAL CORE PLAN

PREPARED BY:

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF ROCKY VIEW No.44
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL MAY 9, 1989

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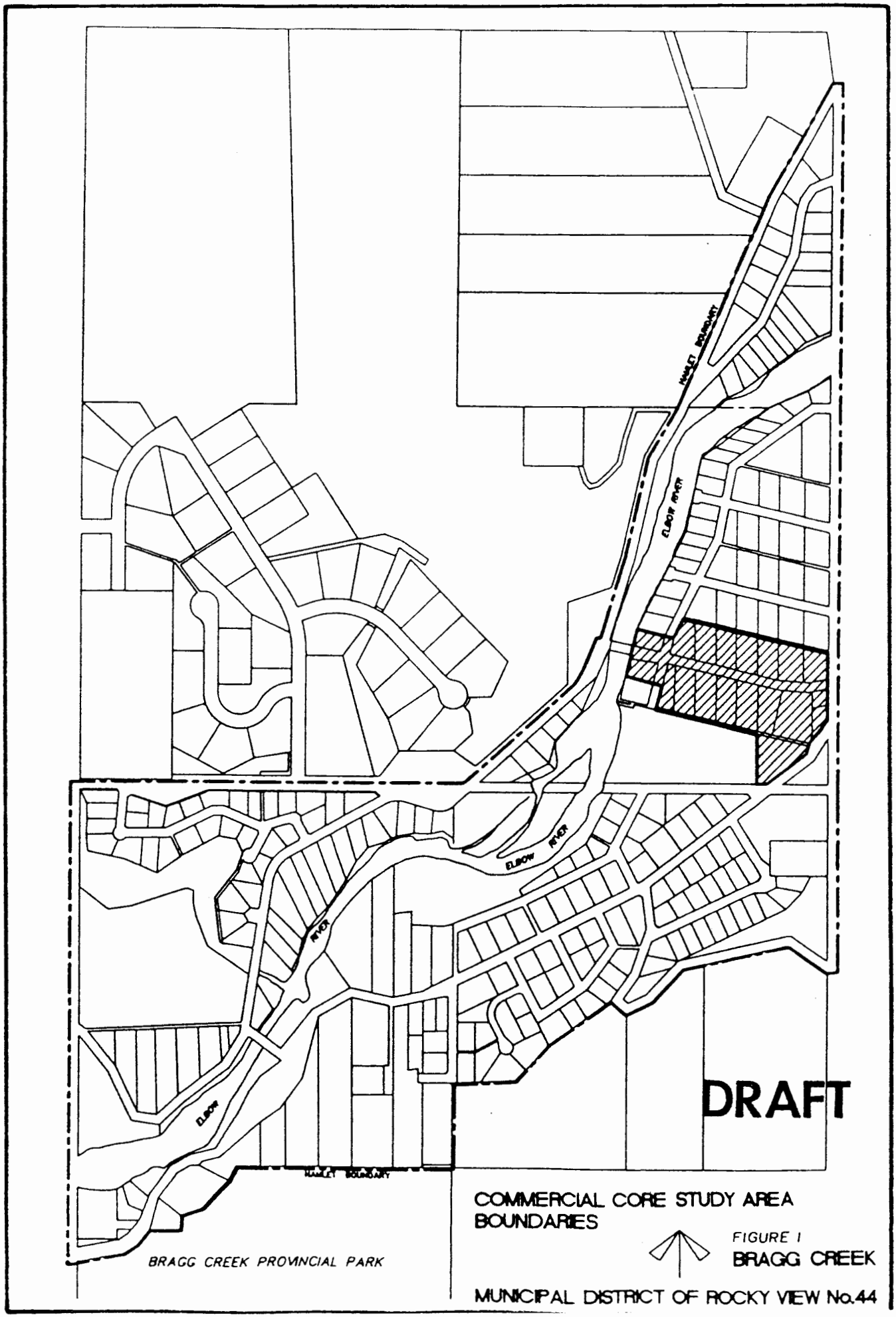

COMMERCIAL CORE STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES

FIGURE I

BRAGG CREEK

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1.0.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Hamlet of Bragg Creek Commercial Core Plan is to provide policies to evaluate development proposals; to guide any future development; and to determine the design of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) at varying stages of commercial development that may occur within the commercial area of the Hamlet (see Figure 1). The commercial core area plays a significant role as a retail trade centre and focal point for the Hamlet residents, for residents of the country residential and agricultural community and for visitors to the surrounding recreational amenities and tourists.

The Plan provides policies to ensure the orderly development of commercial land by establishing standards for land use, building size, architectural guidelines, landscaping requirements, site design, vehicular circulation, and road improvements. Mitigative measures are provided to protect the environment and to protect the privacy of the surrounding residential community.

The M.D. of Rocky View Council, Municipal Planning Commission, Development Appeal Board, Administration, developers and residents will apply the policies contained in the Plan when preparing, evaluating and approving development proposals, redesignations, and subdivision applications in the commercial area of the Hamlet of Bragg Creek.

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1.2.0 Plan Preparation Process

The Bragg Creek Commercial Core Plan was prepared in response to several applications received for commercial land use redesignations along Main Street (Balsam Avenue), new commercial development proposals, traffic circulation and parking overflow problems.

The goals and objectives of the Plan were derived from the results of a questionnaire administered by the Calgary Regional Planning Commission in 1984 and report, "The Main Street Transportation Study" prepared by B.A. Consulting Group Ltd. in 1988.

1.3.0 Study Area Characteristics

The Hamlet of Bragg Creek is located forty kilometres west of the City of Calgary in the foothills region of the Rocky Mountains. The area is heavily treed. The Hamlet is bisected by the Elbow River and portions of the Hamlet, and in particular the commercial core, lie within the floodplain.

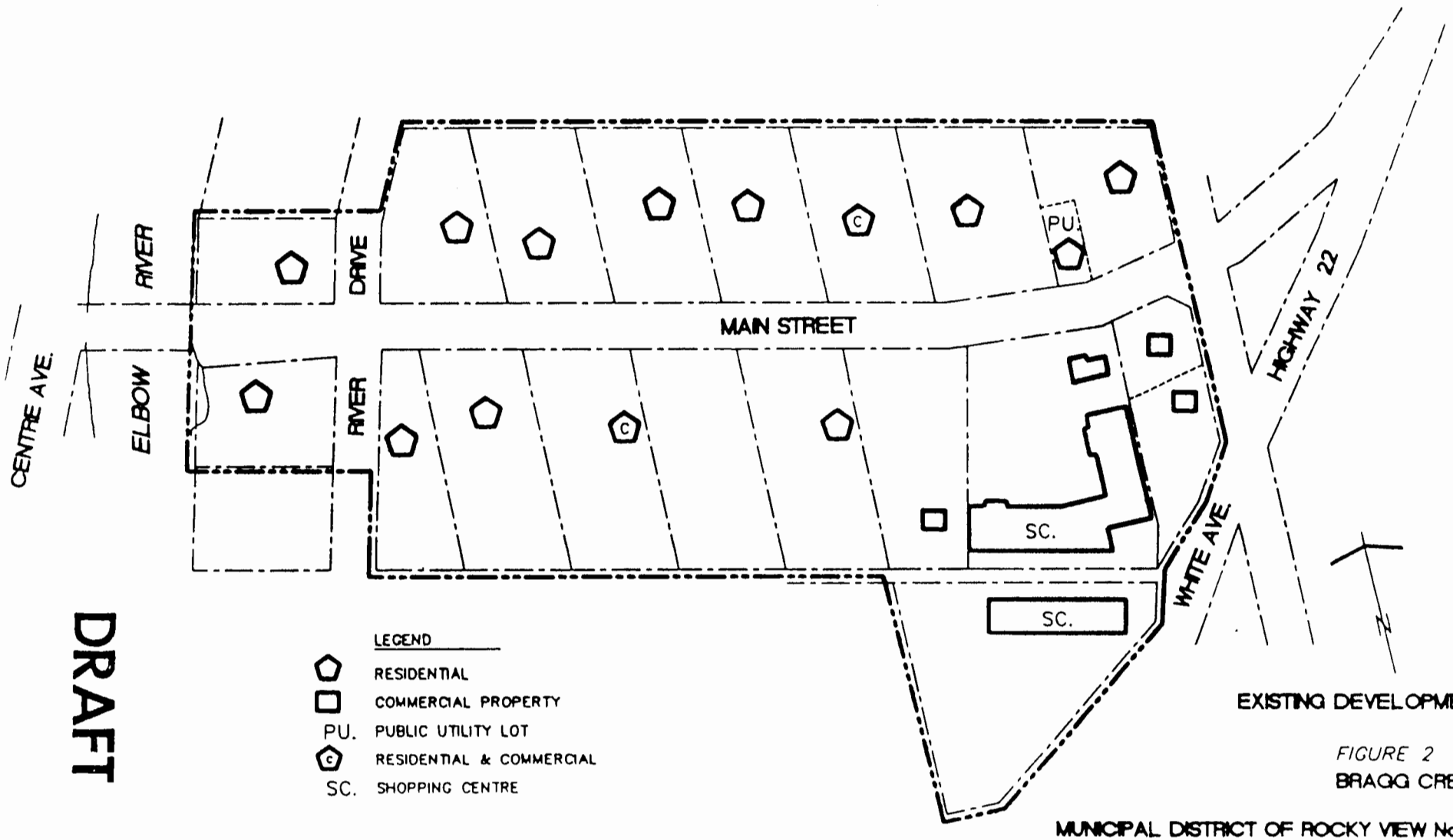
The residents of the Hamlet and surrounding country residential lots and Redwood Meadows, for the most part, commute to the City of Calgary for employment. The Bragg Creek area attracts day users to the numerous recreational facilities such as Wintergreen Ski Resort, Bragg Creek Provincial Park, Youth Hostel and Kananaskis Country. There are several arts and crafts retail stores that attract tourists for an afternoon outing. Consequently the commercial core area is attracting a variety of customer markets ranging from residents purchasing everyday

convenience goods, visitors browsing in the arts and crafts stores, to people stopping after a day's skiing or camping.

Main Street, a two lane paved road, and its bridge over the river is the only east-west connection to the country residential and recreational facilities in the area. The 1984 Rocky View Transportation Study provided options for alternate access points from Highway #22 to the area west of the Elbow River. Such an access will not be anticipated within the foreseeable future, therefore Main Street must accommodate all the through and local traffic movements for many years.

Main Street serves several functions. It is a regional connector as a significant amount of regional traffic is channeled through Main street. Along with it being a regional connector, Main Street provides access to the various commercial and retail buildings and to the residences that front onto the street and via River Drive to the residential areas north and south. Main Street serves many functions in the movement of vehicles through and within the Hamlet. It is the mixture of these types of traffic circulation that has necessitated further examination of the land uses surrounding Main Street and subsequent improvements to the street.

The study area is illustrated in Figure 2. It is bounded on the west by the Elbow River and on the east by Highway #22 and White Avenue. The northern boundary is formed by the rear property line of the lots which lie to the north of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) and the south boundary is formed by the rear property line of the lots which lie to the south of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) but also includes the shopping centre lot adjacent to White Avenue.



EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

FIGURE 2

BRAGG CREEK

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Figure 2 illustrates existing development within the commercial core. There are thirteen residential developments, two of which are developed in conjunction with retail uses. The study area also contains a public utility substation, two shopping centres, a post office, a take-out restaurant, an independent retail store, and a service station. In general, the commercial developments are located at the eastern end of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) with residential uses predominating in the western end.

1.4.0 Plan Conformity

The Plan conforms with The Planning Act, the Calgary Regional Plan and the Municipal District of Rocky View No. 44 General Municipal Plan.

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2.0.0 COMMUNITY GOALS

The community goals are derived from statements from the questionnaire administered by Calgary Regional Planning Commission in 1984 and the B.A. Transportation Study, 1989. The goals are restated in subsequent chapters, accompanied by detailed objectives and policy statements that direct the implementation of the goals.

2.2.1 Commercial land uses should be located along White Avenue and Main Street (Balsam Avenue).

2.2.0 Appropriate commercial development should be encouraged to locate and expand in the Hamlet in an orderly and efficient manner, compatible with adjacent development.

2.3.0 Future commercial development shall consider environmental concerns and measures must be taken to mitigate any potential environmental damage.

2.4.0 The unique natural features of the Bragg Creek area, such as the foothills setting and the natural vegetation should be preserved when assessing development within the commercial core.

2.5.0 Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian movement should be provided within the commercial core area.

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3.0.0 COMMERCIAL LAND USES

GOAL

3.1.0 ***Commercial land uses should be located along White Avenue and Main Street (Balsam Avenue) as far west as the Elbow River.***

Objective

3.1.1 To create a central community focus.

Policies

a) New commercial development should be restricted to the commercial core area only (see Figure 3).

b) Redesignation of land within the commercial core to Hamlet Commercial in the Land Use Bylaw shall be staged and proceed when a specific development is proposed.

c) Commercial land use redesignation and development should proceed in accordance with the phasing plan established in Figure 4. In general, commercial developments in the western end of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) should not proceed until;

i) the eastern end has been developed; or
ii) until it can be shown that adequate demand exists to proceed in a westerly direction; or
iii) the traffic impact on Main Street (Balsam Avenue) will be such that upgrading of the road will not be necessary as a result of the development.

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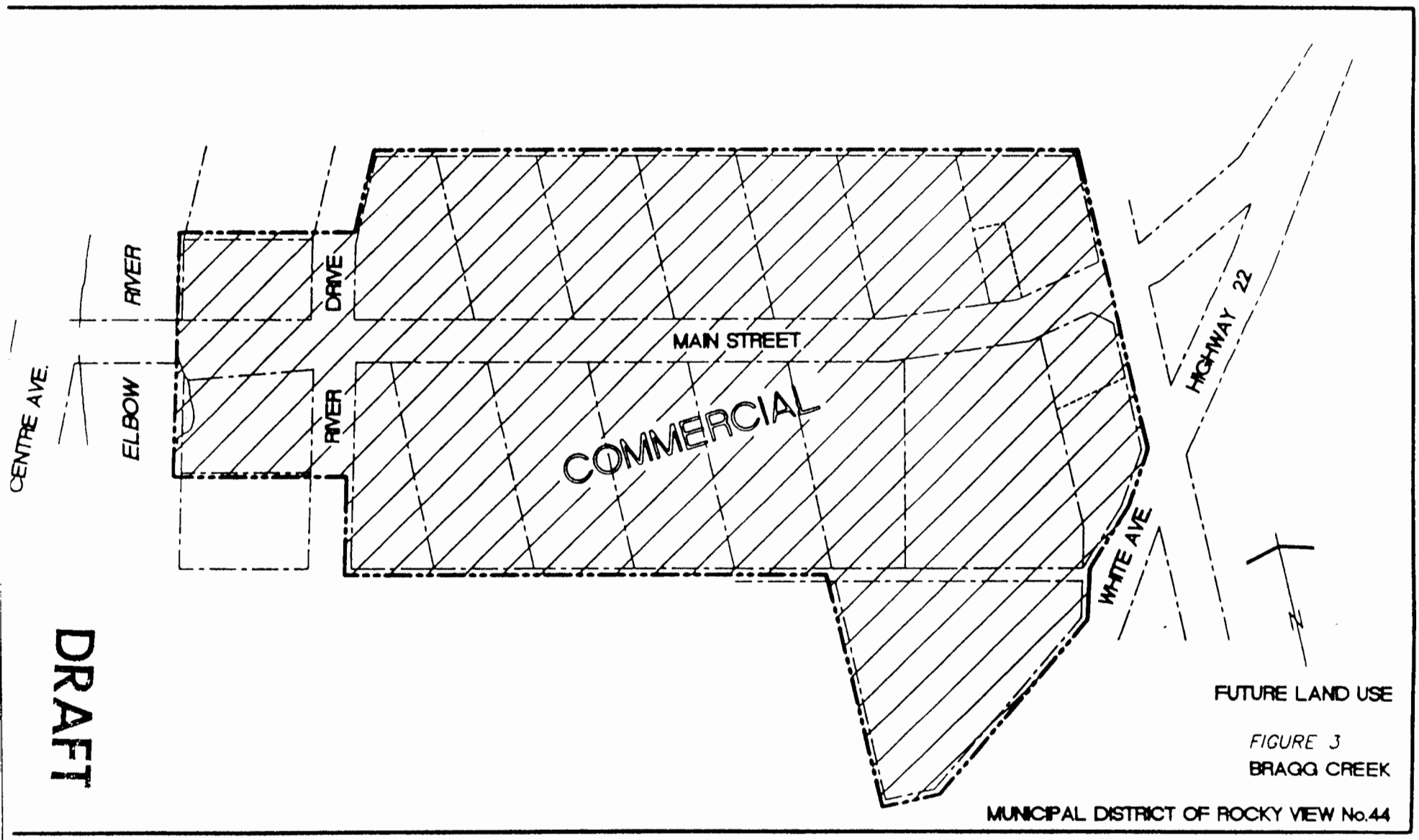

FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 3

BRAGG CREEK

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Objective

3.1.2 Commercial land uses should be limited to meet the needs of the local residents, country residential and agricultural community, and the tourists.

Policies

a) Lodging facilities for tourists or travellers such as hotels, motels, and campgrounds should not be permitted within the Hamlet.

b) The conversion of residential dwellings into commercial land uses will be encouraged.

Objective

3.1.3 To discourage the subdivision of lots within the commercial core area.

Policy

a) The size of the existing lots should be retained and future subdivision shall be discouraged. Smaller lots would increase the problems of parking, landscaping and site development.

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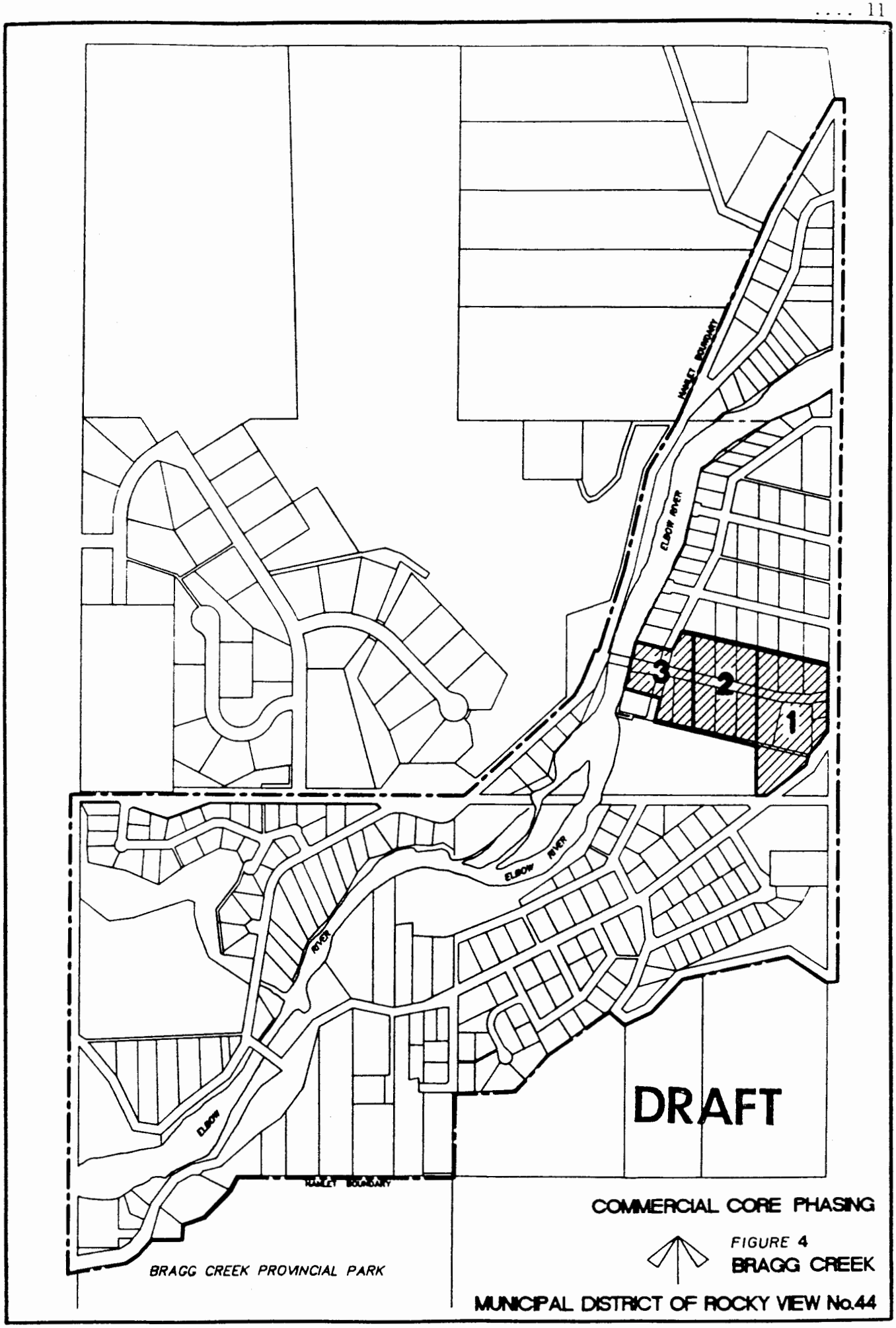

COMMERCIAL CORE PHASING

FIGURE 4

BRAGG CREEK

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4.0.0 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

4.1.0 Appropriate commercial development should be encouraged to locate and expand in the Hamlet in an orderly and efficient manner, compatible with adjacent development.

Objective

4.1.1 To encourage development and architecture which is compatible with the natural and built environments of the commercial core.

Policies

a) Commercial development should not exceed a floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of 0.25. This F.A.R. may only be achieved in cases where it has been demonstrated that adequate parking is being provided and that adequate landscaping of the site is not jeopardized. (Floor area ratios specify the relationship between the area of permitted floor space in a structure and the area of the lot in which it is situated. In this case, the maximum floor space permitted should not exceed 25% of the lot area. The floor space may be distributed over one or two storeys or a combination of the two.) (See Figure 5).

b) Building mass should be controlled by height and site coverage restrictions and the capability of the site to adequately dispose of sewage generated as a result of development.

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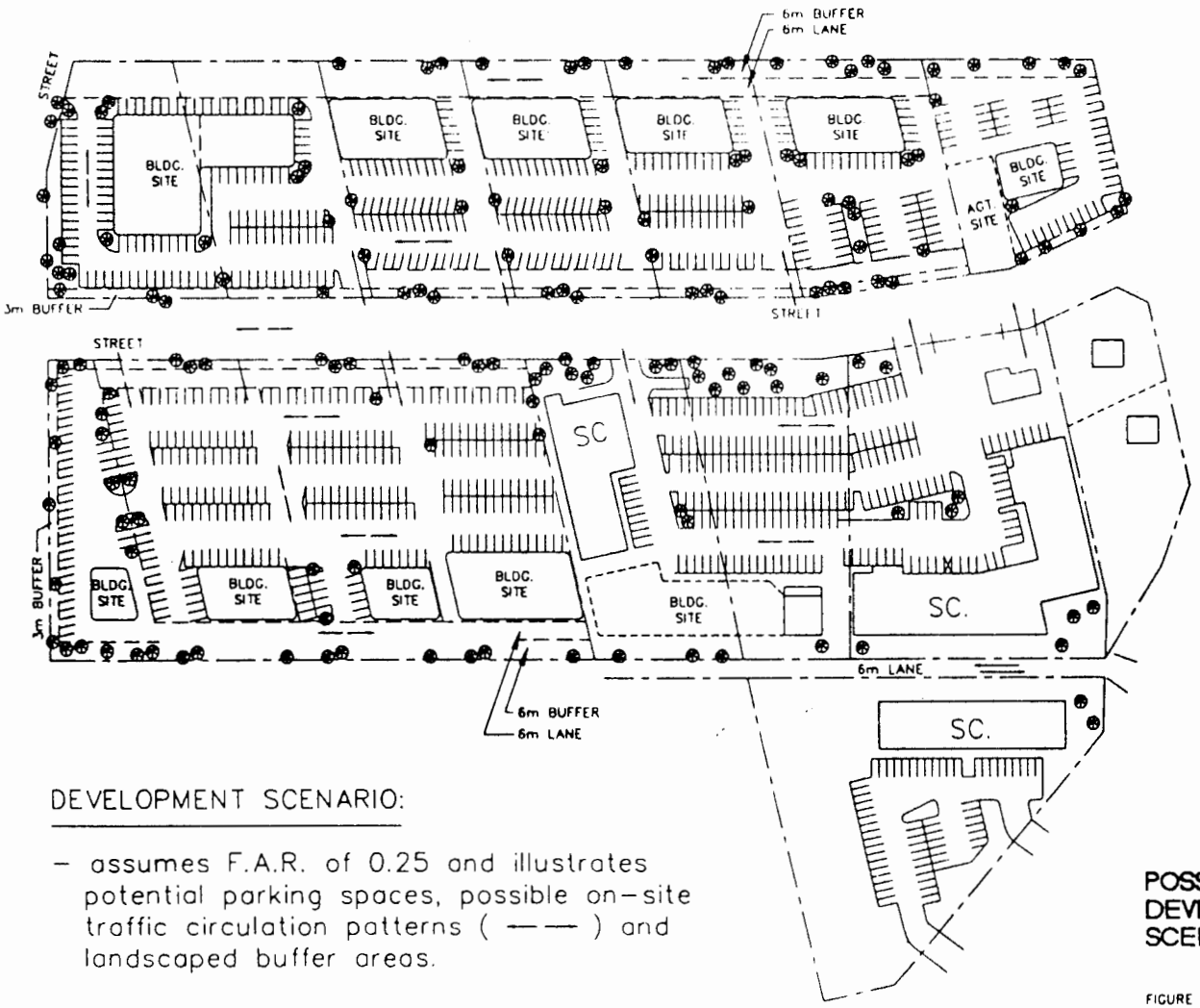

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO:

- assumes F.A.R. of 0.25 and illustrates potential parking spaces, possible on-site traffic circulation patterns (— —) and landscaped buffer areas.

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

FIGURE 5 **BRAGG CREEK**

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c) Buildings should be oriented on the site so that where possible, any significant natural features such as large stands of trees, etc., are enhanced and incorporated into the site design.

d) Buildings should be oriented so that where possible, they complement existing development.

e) New buildings should be sited so that they contribute to the development of a co-ordinated streetscape. In this respect, attention should be given to the setback distances from the street.

f) Site design should provide for pedestrian and vehicular connections between adjacent commercial developments.

g) The architecture of new developments should complement and enhance the style of architecture which has been established by existing developments in the commercial core.

h) Buildings should be finished with natural materials such as brick, stone and wood to as large an extent as possible. In addition, the predominant colours used in finishing should be earth tones.

i) Where they are visible to the passing motorist or pedestrian, the sides of the buildings should continue the architectural theme as established at the front of the structure.

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Objective

4.1.2 To ensure that commercial development occurs in a manner which is compatible with adjacent residential developments.

Policies

a) Where traffic circulation and/or parking is being accommodated at the rear of the building, a landscaped buffer shall be required. The landscaped buffer should be a minimum of 6 metres (19.68 feet) in pependicular width across the entire width of the lot or lots subject to development.

b) Adequate buffers must be established where the commercial development lies adjacent to residential development, or land designated for residential use which is not on Main Street. Buffers should include but may not be limited to landscaping and fencing to the satisfaction of the Municipal Planning Commission. Fences should be constructed from wood to complement the natural character of the area, and to prevent debris from creating a nuisance for adjacent residences.

c) The architectural treatment of the commercial building(s) should be sensitive to the interface between the commercial development and existing or potential residential development. In particular, the roof and sides of the building may continue the architectural theme established for the front, where desirable, especially where these portions of the buildings may be visible from adjacent residences.

d) Parking spaces in the rear of developments that abut residential properties should be restricted.

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e) Garbage compactors shall not be permitted on-site unless noise attenuation measures are instituted such that nearby residences are not disturbed.

f) The exhaust from food preparation areas and other odour-creating enterprises should be adequately vented and filtered in order to ensure that odours do not create a nuisance for nearby residences.

g) Where commercial development abuts residential property, windows, loading zones, and garbage pickup areas should not be permitted at the rear of buildings.

h) Lighting for parking and security purposes shall be restricted to directional lighting, particularly at the rear of the development, such that adjacent properties are not adversely affected.

i) Flashing or animated lighting for signs should not be permitted.

j) Where the proposed development lies adjacent to an existing or potential residential use, adequate provision must be made to ensure that traffic will not impact the residential property. Mitigation measures should be provided to the satisfaction of the Municipal Planning Commission.

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Objective

4.1.3 To ensure that adequate off-street parking is provided within the commercial core area in order to eliminate parking on Main Street (Balsam Avenue).

Policy

a) Applications for commercial development should be supported by adequate information to demonstrate that sufficient parking will be provided on-site to satisfy the parking needs of the proposed development. Proposed developments should not be permitted unless adequate parking can be provided on site.

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5.0.0 ENVIRONMENT

GOAL

5.1.0 ***Future commercial development shall consider environmental concerns, and measures must be taken to mitigate any potential environmental damage.***

Objective

5.1.1 To provide information at the development or subdivision stage in order to properly assess any impact on the environment.

Policy

a) Applications for subdivisions and for development should be supported with the following information:
   - i) topographical contours at intervals of 0.5 metres (1.64 feet);
   - ii) a site plan at a scale of 1:400 showing the location of existing vegetation coverage and vegetation to be removed in order to accommodate development;
   - iii) proposed areas of cut and fill;
   - iv) location of flood susceptible areas impinging on the site and proposed mitigative measures;
   - v) the proposed method of servicing (including on-site drainage, stormwater management and sewage disposal) should be described in detail; and
   - vi) points of access and egress as they relate to natural vegetation and the transportation plan for the core area.

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Objective

5.1.2 To preserve natural drainage patterns.

Policy

a) Until such time as an overall drainage plan is adopted, the existing drainage patterns should be maintained. Where a proposed development may affect existing drainage patterns, adequate mitigative measures should be proposed so that adjacent lands are not negatively impacted. In order to assess the possible effects of a proposed development on the existing drainage patterns, the applicant may be required to provide contour information for the drainage areas that the proposed development is likely to affect.

Objective

5.1.3 To provide for mitigative measures to protect land and development from flooding.

Policies

a) For lands lying partially or wholly within identified flood susceptible areas (1:100 years), mitigative measures may be required to eliminate potential structural and/or natural damage as a result of flooding, such measures shall be to the satisfaction of the Municipal Planning Commission and Alberta Environment. Mitigative measures may include the need to change grades in order to raise development above the level of potential flooding.

b) Basements in all commercial developments shall be prohibited.

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6.0.0 NATURAL FEATURES AND SETTING

GOAL

6.1.0 ***The unique natural features of the Bragg Creek area, such as the foothills setting and the natural vegetation, should be preserved when assessing development within the commercial core.***

Objective

6.1.1 To preserve existing vegetation.

Policies

a) Development applications should be accompanied by a site plan at a scale of 1:2000 (metric) which shows the location of existing vegetation coverage.

b) A description of the type, age, and size of trees, and assessment of their health should be provided.

c) A landscaping plan should be submitted which illustrates the location of vegetation which is to remain undisturbed, as well as any new vegetation that is to be planted. Landscaping should be carried out in accordance with plans as approved by the Municipal Planning Commission.

d) The landscaping plan should use the existing trees as much as is possible in order to form a backdrop for new developments and to act as a buffer between commercial and residential areas.

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Objective

6.1.2 To enhance the existing vegetation on site.

Policy

a) Landscaping should be in keeping with the natural environment with respect to the types of vegetation and their placement on the site. Landscaping should enhance and complement the natural environment.

Objective

6.1.3 To provide landscaping and vegetation as a buffer between residential and commercial land uses.

Policies

a) Where the site abuts a residential area, a dense landscaping strip (of not less than 6 metres (19.68 feet) in perpendicular width) composed of native and newly planted indigenous species , should be maintained adjacent to the residential area for screening and buffering purposes. This buffer should be included in the landscaping plan which should be approved by the Municipal Planning Commission. Where the site abuts another commercial site, landscaping of the property should be at the discretion of the Municipal Planning Commission.

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7.0.0 TRANSPORTATION

GOAL

7.1.0 ***Efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian movement should be provided within the commercial core area.***

Objective

7.1.1 To provide for adequate vehicular and pedestrian connections between developments on site, where possible.

Policies

a) Development applications should be accompanied by a traffic impact and mitigation study which, at a minimum, should include the following:

   i) estimates of the amount of traffic that will be generated as a result of the development;
   ii) a plan of traffic circulation on the site, including pedestrian and vehicular points of access and egress, service roads, etc.; and
   iii) provision for parking which meets the minimum standards established in the Land Use Bylaw.

b) Each commercial development should be designed so that provision is made for a 6 metre (19.68) driving lane at the front of each lot, which will provide a vehicular access between lots (Figure 5.)

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c) Access to each lot should be restricted to three points on the north side and three points on the south side of Main Street (Balsam Avenue). Therefore, access easements will be required, in particular for Lots 5 and 6 (north side), and Lots 4 and 5 (south side) in order to reduce the number of access points onto Main Street (Balsam Avenue) (Figure 5).

d) Developers should be encouraged to provide pedestrian pathways which will link adjacent commercial developments.

Objective

7.1.2 To stage road improvements to Main Street in an orderly and efficient manner.

Policies

a) The developer should provide adequate information to assess the impact of the proposed development on existing traffic patterns, to the satisfaction of the Municipal Planning Commission.

b) In general, commercial development should be staged to coincide with improvements to the road system so that the road is capable of handling increased traffic resulting from new commercial developments.

c) Signs shall be erected and bylaws passed to prohibit on-street parking.

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d) The upgrading of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) should occur in the following stages (Figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10).

i) Stage 1 -
protect the land for future road widening. (This step has already been taken.)

ii) Stage 2a -
- acquire land for widening on the south side;
- construct 1.75 metre sidewalk;
- provide gravel shoulder for parking (emergency purposes only);
- construct 4 metre eastbound driving lane;
- provide temporary asphalt or precast concrete gutters; and
- transition median with drive-throughs.

iii) Stage 2b -
- acquire land for widening on the north side;
- construct new westbound driving lane;
- gravel shoulder and ditch; and
- construct and landscaping median with crossings.

iv) Stage 3 -
- install concrete and storm sewer improvements;
- pave additional east/west lane.

v) Stage 4 -
- pavement overlay.

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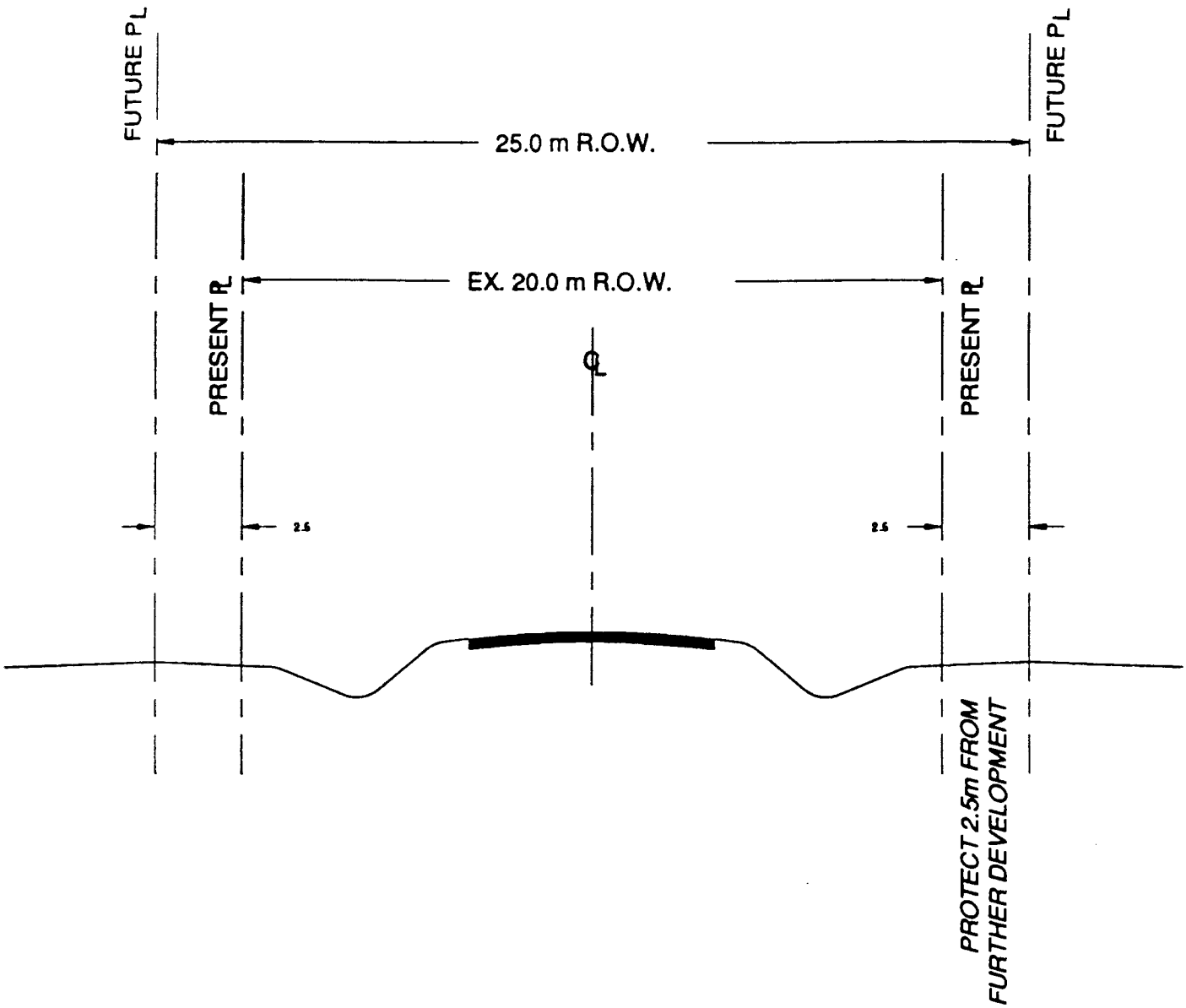
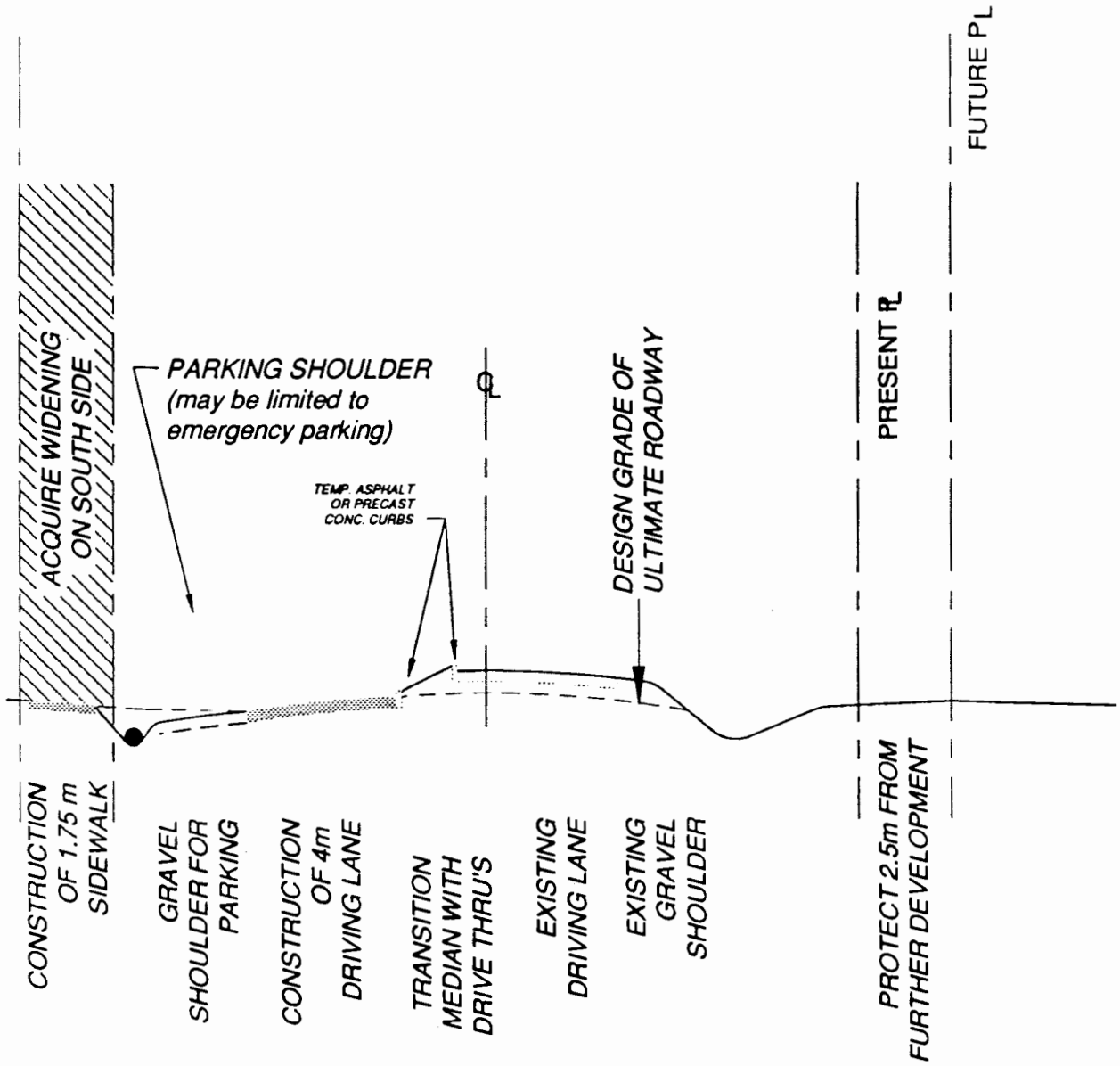


NOTE:

BASE UNDER EXISTING ROADWAY IS ASSUMED TO BE INADEQUATE. GEOTECHNICAL CONFIRMATION IS REQUIRED, HOWEVER, FOR THIS REPORT IT IS ASSUMED COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION IS NECESSARY.

STAGE 1
EXISTING ROADWAY

FIGURE 6



-ACQUIRE WIDENING ON SOUTH SIDE
-CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK ON SOUTH SIDE
-CONSTRUCT NEW DRIVING LANE (EAST BOUND) AND GRAVEL PARKING SHOULDER.

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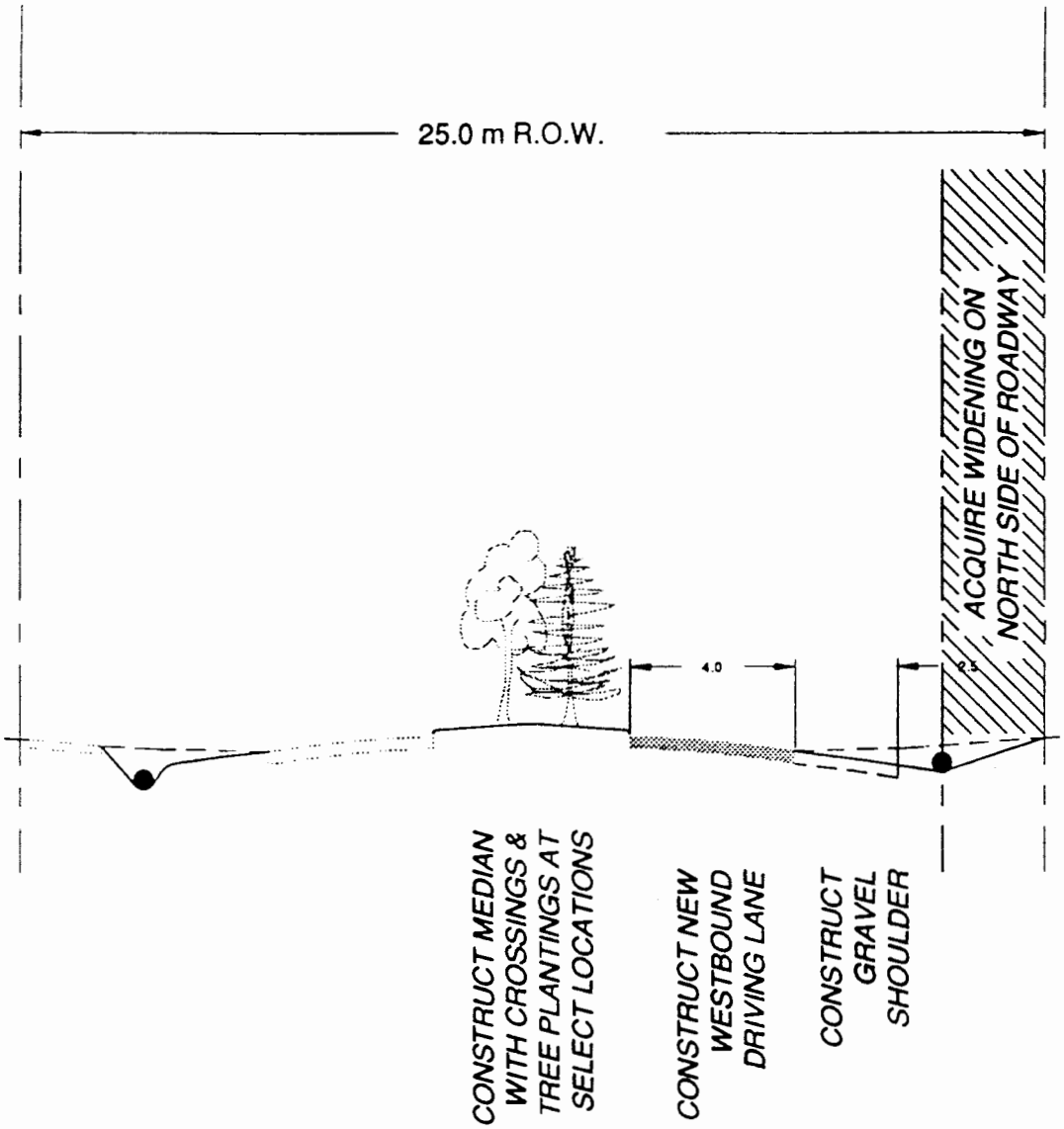
STAGE 2a

INTERIM CONSTRUCTION STAGING

FIGURE 7



-ACQUIRE WIDENING ON NORTH SIDE
-CONSTRUCT NEW WESTBOUND DRIVING LANE & GRAVEL SHOULDER & DITCH
-CONSTRUCT & LANDSCAPE MEDIAN c/w CROSSINGS.

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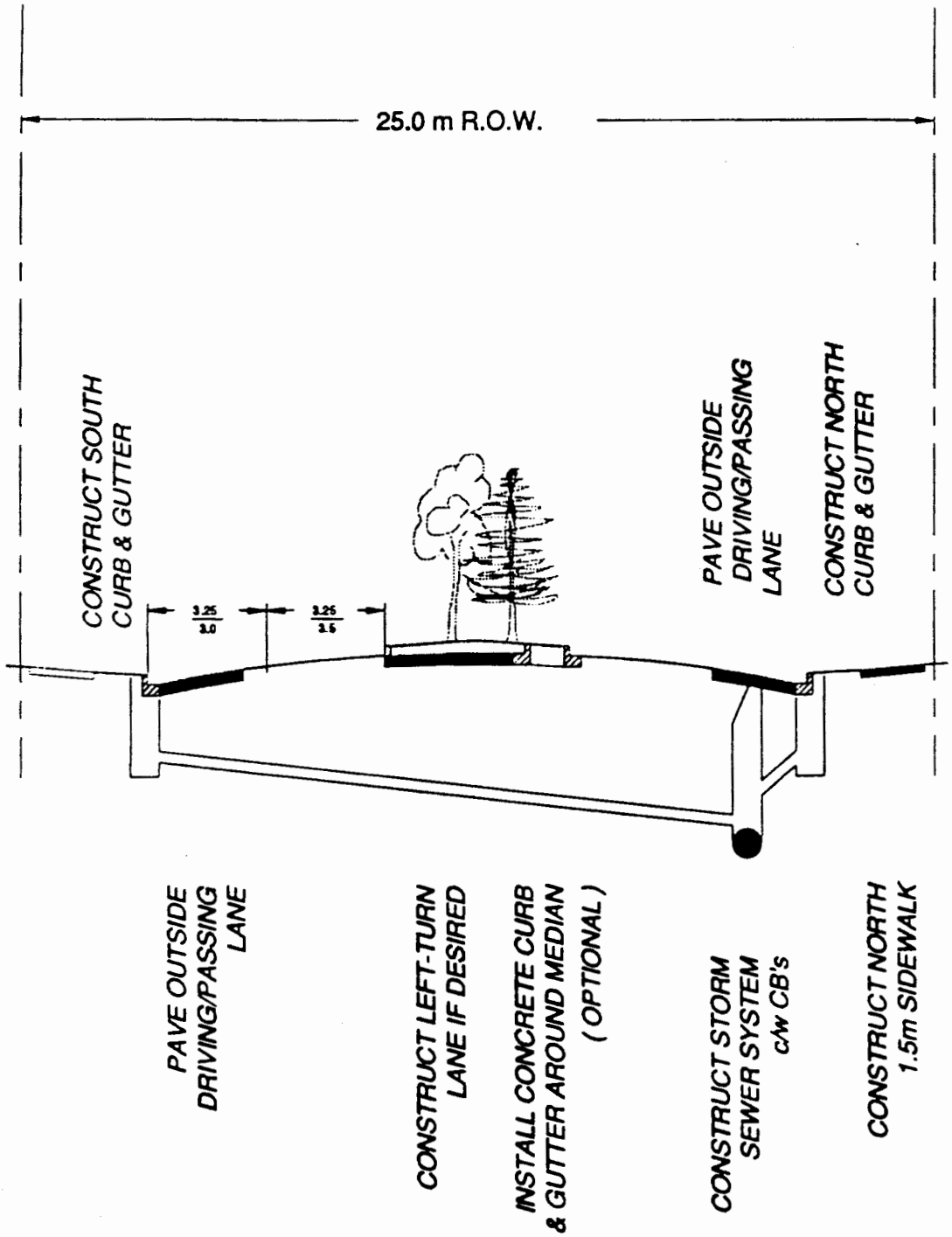
STAGE 2b

INTERIM CONSTRUCTION STAGES

FIGURE 8



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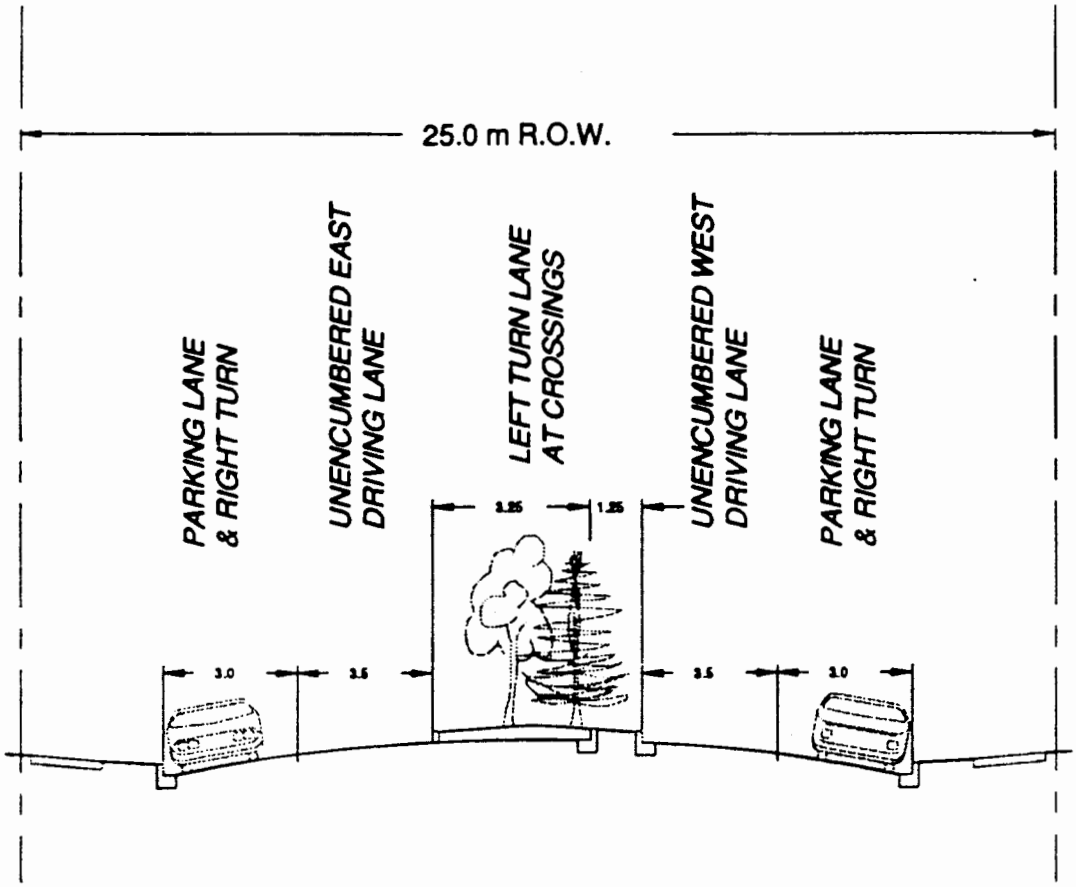
STAGE 3

CONCRETE & STORM SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

PLUS PAVING OF ADDITIONAL LANE EAST/WEST

FIGURE 9



ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT

ASSUMES 2nd. RIVER CROSSING THEREFORE REDUCTION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC BUT CONTINUED INCREASE IN COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC & THEREFORE PARKING REQUIREMENTS.

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STAGE 4

FINAL STAGE - PAVEMENT OVERLAY

FIGURE 10

8.0.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

8.1.0 The policies of this Plan should be put into practice, upon receipt of development proposal applications, in a number of possible ways, including:

a) the redesignation application and approval process;
b) the development permit application process; and
c) the development agreement.

8.2.0 The policies of this Plan should also be implemented by adopting appropriate amendments to the Land Use bylaw. The amendments should include the following.

8.2.1 The establishment of a new Hamlet Commercial District specific to the Bragg Creek Commercial Core. The rules for this District should include, among other things;

a) Maximum floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of 0.25 to be achieved only when it is determined that the provision for adequate parking is not jeopardized.

b) Minimum rear yard setback distance of 14 metres (45 feet) where the development;
- backs onto a residential area;
- the setback will include a minimum 6 metre (20 foot) landscaped buffer and a 7.62 (25 foot) strip for vehicular circulation.

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c) Minimum landscaping requirements. The conservation of existing tree stands and vegetation should be included in the requirements for landscaping. Other requirements shall be as established by the Municipal Planning Commission.

d) Minimum parcel size.

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PART II

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

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A. TRANSPORTATION

1. Introduction

As commercial development takes place along Bragg Creek's Main Street and as recreational facilities in the area increase in usage, improvements to Main Street become imperative. Conflicts between the through traffic and the commercial traffic with its turning and parking movements are already causing a serious reduction in the carrying capacity of Main Street (Balsam Avenue) as a thoroughfare.

In addition, the increase in paved area, resulting from commercial development and roadway improvements, causes a considerable increase in surface runoff that must be handled through open ditches or via a storm sewer system. Open ditches will accommodate runoff requirements in the immediate future. As the requirements of vehicular and pedestrian traffic increase, however, these ditches will have to be eliminated due to their large space requirements, and a storm sewer system installed.

The M.D. has already taken steps to facilitate the acquisition of land required for road improvements by the passing of a bylaw on December 13, 1988. The bylaw established a new frontyard setback distance for properties fronting onto Main Street which takes into account lands required for future road widening.

2. Proposed Improvements

Numerous alternatives exist with respect to Bragg Creek's Main Street improvements. Local preferences also differ significantly. Some of the more important differences are;

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i) on-street parking as opposed to no on-street parking;
ii) curb and gutter and storm sewer as opposed to open ditches;
iii) the provision of a left turn and median as opposed to no median.

Generally it is agreed, however, that as much as possible, a policy should be adopted that preserves the rural character of Bragg Creek.

Prevailing uncertainties regarding the economy, the demand and extent of recreational development in the region west of Bragg Creek, and the type and timing of future development along Main Street, make the precise identification and scheduling of improvements impossible.

Transportation studies done to date, while identifying various alternatives, have not been able to identify the required timing of the proposed upgrading of Main Street, nor have they been able to identify the make-up of traffic. As a result of not knowing the extent of parking and turning movements, truck traffic, etc., the carrying capacity of various roadway configurations can only be approximated.

Consequently, in planning road improvements for Bragg Creek, considerable flexibility had to be worked into the development plan.

The M.D. has therefore proposed a development scenario that allows Bragg Creek to develop as fast or as slow and to the extent that the prevailing development and local preference dictates.

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This scenario also allows for the complete reconstruction of the existing roadway on the yet to be confirmed assumption that the existing base is not adequate for the ultimate roadway system. It also allows for the fact that this road is the only access and egress to the region west of the Elbow River and must therefore remain functional through its development phase.

3. Development Scenario

Stage I

The first step necessary in the upgrading of Bragg Creek's Main Street is the protection of the future road widening. This step has already been taken.

Stage II

A second step in Main Street improvements should facilitate its ability to handle a greater volume of traffic and possibly some on-street parking. To do this, the improvements shown on Figure 8 or both Figures 8 and 9 may be implemented. The median shown in Figure 9 may include left turn bays, thereby reducing the interference of turning traffic and considerably increasing the capacity of the two driving lanes. This stage is expected to occur over the next 10 years.

Stage III

The third stage upgrades Main Street from the rural cross-section to an urban cross-section with the addition of storm sewer and curb and gutter, and a sidewalk on the north side. Should the demands of traffic be such, the proposed roadway can be four lanes, two each way, with a left turn lane enabling it to handle considerable volumes of traffic. Four driving lanes (two each way) will be required for the most easterly 100 metres of Main

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Street preceding its intersection with Highway #22. This will facilitate both the stacking of traffic as well as turning movements in both northerly and southerly directions from this intersection. Stage III is anticipated in approximately fifteen to eighteen years.

Stage IV

After all the proposed improvements have been completed, and after a period of time to allow for the occurrence of settlements and other deficiencies, we proposed that Main Street be given a final lift of asphalt, bringing it up to the lip of gutter. This should ensure a high quality roadway for many years to come. We expect Stage IV to occur in fifteen to twenty years, or as development and ratepayers dictate.

This development scenario also allows for the possibility of a second access to the region west of Bragg Creek. If a second access is developed, it will relieve much of the traffic that passes right through Bragg Creek without stopping. Only those vehicles wishing to shop, lunch or browse in Bragg Creek will enter the Hamlet. This would seem to be very desirable from all perspectives. The considerable reduction on traffic, if it occurs in the future, will co-incide to some extent with the ever-increasing parking requirements of the commercial developments along Main Street.

It may therefore be feasible to convert the two outside lanes of Main Street to parking lanes, thereby relieving the parking requirements at a time when it will provide the most benefit.

This development scenario should be modified as development proceeds to suit the demands imposed on it.

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