

MARKET LANDS





PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Since the Public Engagement launch on January 17, 2017, over 300 Winnipeggers have actively participated in the Market Lands Initiative, with thousands more engaging through the web and social media.

The process got underway with Faculty of Architecture students at the University of Manitoba exploring building massing and programming concepts for the site as part of their semester coursework. This work helped to develop an early understanding of potential density and configuration options for the site.

An online public engagement portal was launched to provide background information on the process, the site, its history and context. It is updated regularly with notice of events, feedback to date, and a social media aggregator. Over 80 people have provided written submissions through the portal.

To encourage creative conversation, StorefrontMB was sponsored to hold two panel discussions on reimagining the Market Lands. Architects were invited to submit thought-provoking ideas for the site, prompting dialogue and interesting conversations among the panelists and the audience.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted with over 120 area stakeholders. These structured sessions sought to better understand peoples' perceptions of the neighbourhood and ideas for the future redevelopment of the Market Lands. These discussions were rich and insightful.

It became clear through the process that citizens and stakeholders have high expectations for something special to occur on the Market Lands, but are concerned that whatever happens fits within the unique context of the area. There is strong support for a mix of commercial and residential uses on this site to bring more people to the area. People envision appropriate and well-designed public spaces incorporated, but are concerned that large un-programmed open spaces will be unsafe and will not add more vitality to the area. When imagining those public spaces people talked about greenery and winter uses incorporated throughout the property. Finally, there is a clear understanding and mandate to balance community aspirations with market realities and achievable.

Results from this stage of the public engagement process were organized into a matrix of common concepts and themes, leading to the development of five guiding aspirations outlined in this document. These aspirations are meant to provide direction for future planning of the site, influencing the types of uses and the physical character.

AREA STAKEHOLDERS

- Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg
- Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce
- Artspace Inc.
- Central Neighbourhoods Development Corp
- Chinatown Development Corporation
- City Councillors
- City of Winnipeg Departments
- Downtown Wpg Business Improvement Zone
- Economic Development Winnipeg
- End Homelessness Winnipeg
- Exchange Business Improvement Zone
- Folk Festival
- Fringe Festival
- Heritage Winnipeg
- Jazz Festival
- Manitoba Technology Accelerator
- Metis Economic Development Organization
- Winnipeg Arts Council
- Manitoba Centennial Centre Corp
- Manitoba Museum
- North Forge/Innovation Alley
- On Screen Manitoba
- Residents of the Exchange District (RED)
- Red River College Students Association
- Retail Businesses
- Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre
- Video Pool
- Winnipeg Architecture Foundation
- Winnipeg Film Group
- Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra

WE ARE HERE



GUIDING ASPIRATIONS



BELONGING



DESTINATION



AUTHENTICITY



CONNECTIVITY



INNOVATION

BELONGING

The Market Lands should:

- Provide affordable and attainable spaces for a mix of users.
- Achieve a sense of place that's inclusive, welcoming, and comfortable.
- Strive for multiple uses and flexible spaces - 'something for everyone'.
- Ensure public, open, and permeable spaces at the ground level.
- Be safe and accessible for all.





DESTINATION

The Market Lands should:

- Strive for a greater critical mass of people living, working, learning, and playing in the area.
- Create a place that draws people in, and becomes a gathering spot for the community.
- Return to its history, as a centre for social interaction and local commerce.
- Achieve something unique, to be a draw for citizens and tourists.
- Establish a new point of pride for the entire city.





AUTHENTICITY

The Market Lands should:

- Respect the rich architectural history of The Exchange District.
- Advance reconciliation and celebrate Indigenous culture.
- Protect and enhance the artistic foundation of the area.
- Draw experience from the diverse communities that surround the site.
- Build upon the local, independent business tradition of the neighbourhood.





CONNECTIVITY

The Market Lands should:

- Enhance the visual and intuitive connections between Chinatown, Old Market Square, Red River College Buildings, and the Exchange District.
- Create opportunities to draw districts together - north, east, south and west.
- Improve multi-modal circulation and access in the area – transit, vehicular, active transportation.
- Better integrate the site with its surroundings through urban design.
- Focus on accessibility and the pedestrian experience to, from, and through the site.



The Market Lands should:

- **Showcase new technologies in buildings and public spaces.**
- **Integrate public art in a meaningful and impactful way.**
- **Strive for architectural and design excellence.**
- **Support the community of innovators establishing in the area.**
- **Make advancements in winter-city celebration and adaptation.**

INNOVATION

EXAMPLE ONLINE FEEDBACK

"I think it's time we start looking to the past to lead us into the future! A public market of sort would be a wonderful addition to the area. Groceries, fresh produce, local products! Just what the neighbourhood (and it is turning into quite the neighbourhood) needs."

"I'd like to see something integrating arts and cultural needs in the district, and adding parking back to this neighbourhood. Below grade would be fine, but safe parking will help Winnipeggers feel confident to come downtown and engage in the many exciting festivals and events in the Exchange."

"Really hoping the city will make good use of the land and not create more unneeded "green space". If we can't do that, then give the land back to the original owner and let them develop it. Don't spend more tax dollars on public spaces so close to old market square."

"The site must contain a mixture of housing, shops, and food & beverage outlets, with inviting storefronts."

"The current Public Safety Building is structurally sound and could be rehabilitated and reused. This would be the sustainable approach for an important building designed by a prominent architectural firm."

"Farmers market. Local shops. No chains allowed. Grow the area with independent businesses."

"This is an opportunity to improve connections to growing neighbourhoods and downtown districts in radiating vicinity. Connectivity to other districts, draw for downtown residential, office and student population but also unique and accessible draw to those that do not regularly frequent downtown."

"Site should be pedestrian scale and not have dead space/walls. Doesn't need to be park/plaza space – Old Market Square is already right there."

"The area is slowing becoming a dense neighbourhood with new warehouse conversions and apartments happening in the East Exchange as well as the west. Hundreds more are living in the area each year. The Exchange in general is quietly becoming "the" place to come to for dinner and unique shopping adventures with many one-off type of stores. Without a doubt it's the hippest area Winnipeg has ever seen. The Exchange is Winnipeg's Brooklyn. The alleyway farmer Market on Elgin Ave was a HUGE success last summer. Can you imagine that on a larger scale 250+ days a year?! "

"Make it an indoor/outdoor farmers market. Saskatoon has a good example. In the summer you can open large glass paneled "garage" doors and it effectively becomes a shelter with vendors both inside and out. In window you keep the doors closed and it still has the feel of an open-air market inside. This is a concept we don't have yet in Winnipeg, but it popular everywhere else."

"My preference would be for a mixed-use development of the size and scale of the Public Safety Building. I like that the neighbourhood is dense and do not want it to be less dense. Density is one of the things I like about the neighbourhood and it is a draw that makes downtown unique."

"I would like to see a significant portion of the site remain green space with gardens and grass. It creates a nice environment that breaks up the concrete jungle of downtown. Any new developments should be well lit and designed in such a way as to encourage healthy traffic and discourage crime and vagrancy."

"I feel that the development of this land for public use should include: clean, safe temporary housing for the homeless (humanitarian good)."

"Love the ideas put forward to redevelop the site. My first priority would be to include a parkade of good size. I am a long time RMTC subscriber, and some nights when the concert hall and / or Pantages is also presenting, parking can be a nightmare. There is a tunnel existing to the concert hall that should be incorporated. You could even sink the parkade to allow green on top."

"A year round market/flexible venue space. No plazas or green space. One or two levels of underground parking if feasible with structure above. No cheap building materials, brick to match surrounding exchange district buildings."

"A combination of small businesses, well priced markets, cafés and space that gives the opportunity for art installations or exhibits. I see this space for the people that actually live and work there."

"It seems to me what this city needs more of is affordable housing. If there is mixed housing market/assistance this area could be revitalized and renewed. Include in this mixed living area seniors housing where families might be in a separate building but attached to their aging parents and you would have my dream place to live. We need more variety in our living spaces down town."

"Part of it should become a semi enclosed open air market, the other part should be developed into a mixed use building with ground floor CRUs and a modest residential building not exceeding 10 floors on top."

"For sure build something that will generate property taxes (i.e. not a park). As an RMTC season ticket holder, I sure miss the convenience of the old parkade (especially in the winter!) Parking is tough in the area."

"The Market Lands including the parkade should be saved for the needs of RRC. Let them put a master plan in place and work towards it. More students in the area is the biggest catalyst for progressive change."

"Restore Market Avenue alignment through to Princess Street as a pedestrian walkway. A community centre and market on the part of land south of Market that must remain public. Residential development on the part north of Market Lands."

"The area is desperate for additional parking especially since the closure of the City parkade on Princess pushing all those cars into an already parking stressed Cultural District across Main St. It would be great to have a mixed-use project that was complementary to the area businesses and residents with provision for incremental parking."

"The diversity of the exchange district & the walking/cycling friendly nature of the area are what make it special. The public safety building shuns the outside world - whatever replaces it should welcome people in from the street. Parking is not a priority. It also shouldn't just be another park - something that generates economic activity, and prioritizes small/local businesses. It should be a place people want to be, that contributes to the fabric of the neighbourhood."

"My favorite part of the neighborhood is all of the turn-of-the-center buildings, and how some of newer buildings (such as the Red River College Princess Campus) are modern structures that blend in well!"

"The Public Safety Building is a significant example of Brutalism architecture in Winnipeg. It should be kept as an integral part of the Mid-Century Modern collection of buildings in the neighbourhood. The focus should be finding an economic use for the building."

"It's a shame streets like King and Princess are one-way. I'd like to see some sort of public market set-up with attached housing (mix-use all the way). A park or plaza would not be a good use of that space. Old Market Square is close and that more than services the area. We need to encourage building density and anything other than a structure would run counter to what makes a good and thriving urban center."

"Use its name to make the decision. Market place. Use 70% of the space as an indoor market for locally sourced items. 30% as an outdoor market/venue. Transform it into a place where people from all walks of life can come together."

"The Public Safety Building has incredible potential to be rehabilitated as part of this project. It is a key element in Winnipeg's modern civic precinct, and a remarkable example from the period of fitting into a warehouse district. We don't need this building in a landfill...we need to reimagine it. Such a bold design needs equally bold thinking!"

"Do the right thing and rehabilitate the PSB. To waste the embodied energy in this structure is unconscionable. And, bonus, there's an underground parkade as well."

"I would like to see it developed as a multi use outdoor (and indoor?) space for events, public gatherings, historical elements, celebrations, etc. Consider accessibility, cost to enter, beauty (artistic elements, cultural elements), multi-purpose uses, indoor and outdoor, multi-seasonal."

"I would love to see a pedestrian corridor with pubs, cafes, restaurants and specialty shops or commercial brands. Limit vehicles in the area. Winnipeg lacks a pedestrian only market/commercial district! It has the potential to be the main draw for the exchange district, alongside the cube. It needs more than just a public market, but that could be included as well!"

"Love living downtown and excited to see all new development only thing we need is a market/grocery store....that building would make an amazing market bring in local producers and it would bring people downtown... look at St. Norbert's farmers market on a Saturday!!!!!"

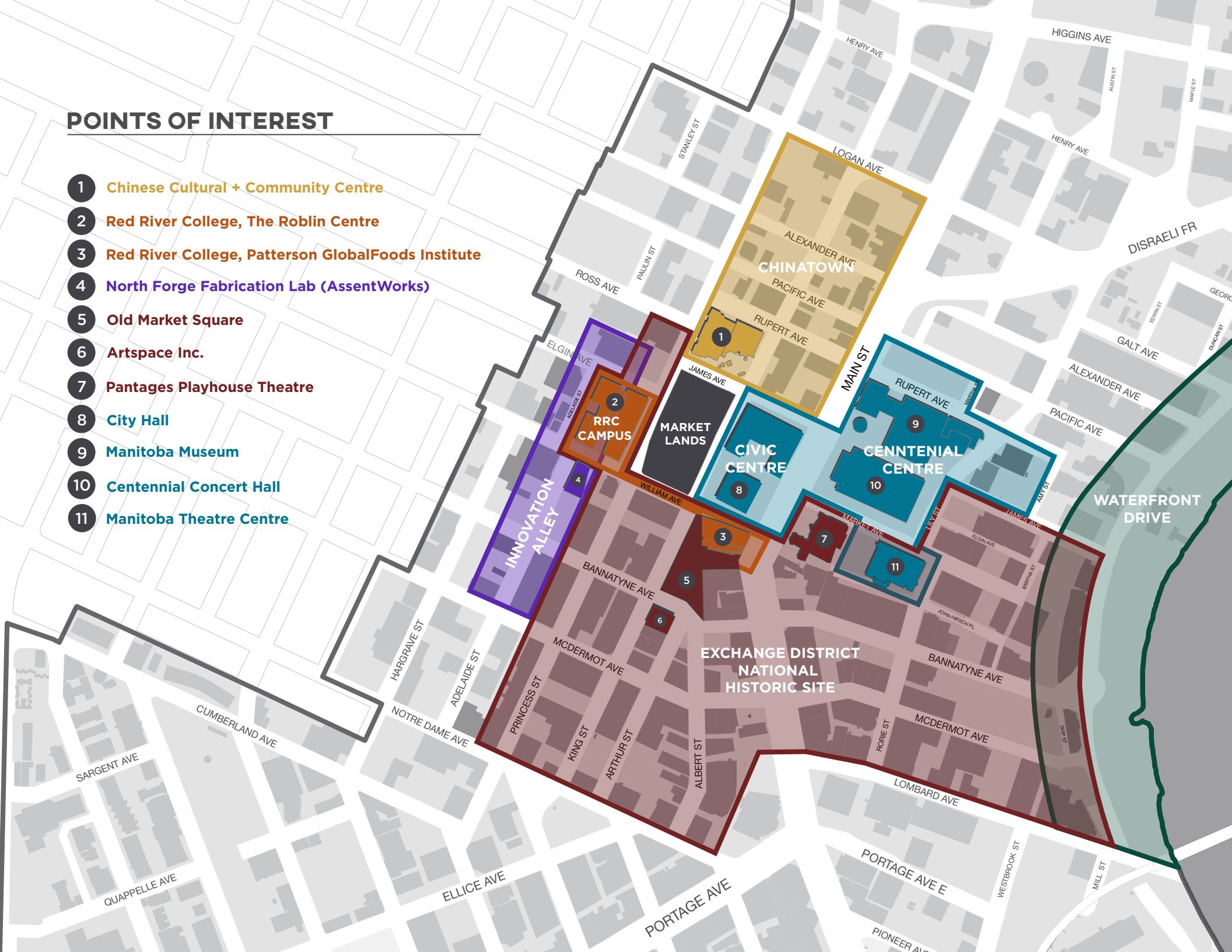
"Unable to attend round table discussion as a member of RED on April 4th, but have some concerns now with the perceived safety factor around the former Public Safety complex now that Winnipeg Police Force has moved elsewhere."

"I am a retired senior citizen living in the East Exchange. One of the things that attracted me to the downtown area is that I can walk to so many places and I love the free bus (Downtown Spirit). I would LOVE to see a working greenhouse on the top floor(s) that grows simple common things year round like lettuce, herbs, tomatoes, green onions, green peppers, bean sprouts etc. that could be sold in the store (market)."

"I wonder if it would be feasible for the site to include the function of a year-round, productive rooftop farm. The roof farm could provide fresh vegetables year round to a ground floor retail area, in addition to other market-appropriate retail. I like the idea of the site being occupied by a building or buildings, approximately 6-7 stories tall with the above rooftop farm."

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1 Chinese Cultural + Community Centre
- 2 Red River College, The Roblin Centre
- 3 Red River College, Patterson Global Foods Institute
- 4 North Forge Fabrication Lab (AssentWorks)
- 5 Old Market Square
- 6 Artspace Inc.
- 7 Pantages Playhouse Theatre
- 8 City Hall
- 9 Manitoba Museum
- 10 Centennial Concert Hall
- 11 Manitoba Theatre Centre



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Exchange District photos in this document courtesy The Exchange BIZ/Mike Peters.