

Canadian National Railways Station Railway Garden and Plaza Heritage Assessment

1177 Ellis Street, Kelowna BC

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Cover Photo courtesy of Team Construction Management Limited

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ATTACHMENT B

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INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to document the existing condition of the landscape heritage assets at the Canadian National Railways Station property, located at 1177 Ellis Street in Kelowna, BC. This report, alongside a report for the existing heritage building (Train Station Pub, formerly CN Station) and a Gingko Tree, record the condition of the heritage assets of this site. This will be included with a Development Permit submission for the redevelopment of the site.

This report will include a brief description of the history of the Station, garden and plaza; photographically document the current condition of the landscape elements, and provide recommendations for repair and protection during the course of construction.

History

The Canadian National Railways Station (CN Station) represents the first and only rail link that integrated Kelowna into the provincial and national rail transportation networks. It is one of only two buildings from the original Canadian Pacific rail yards that remains today.

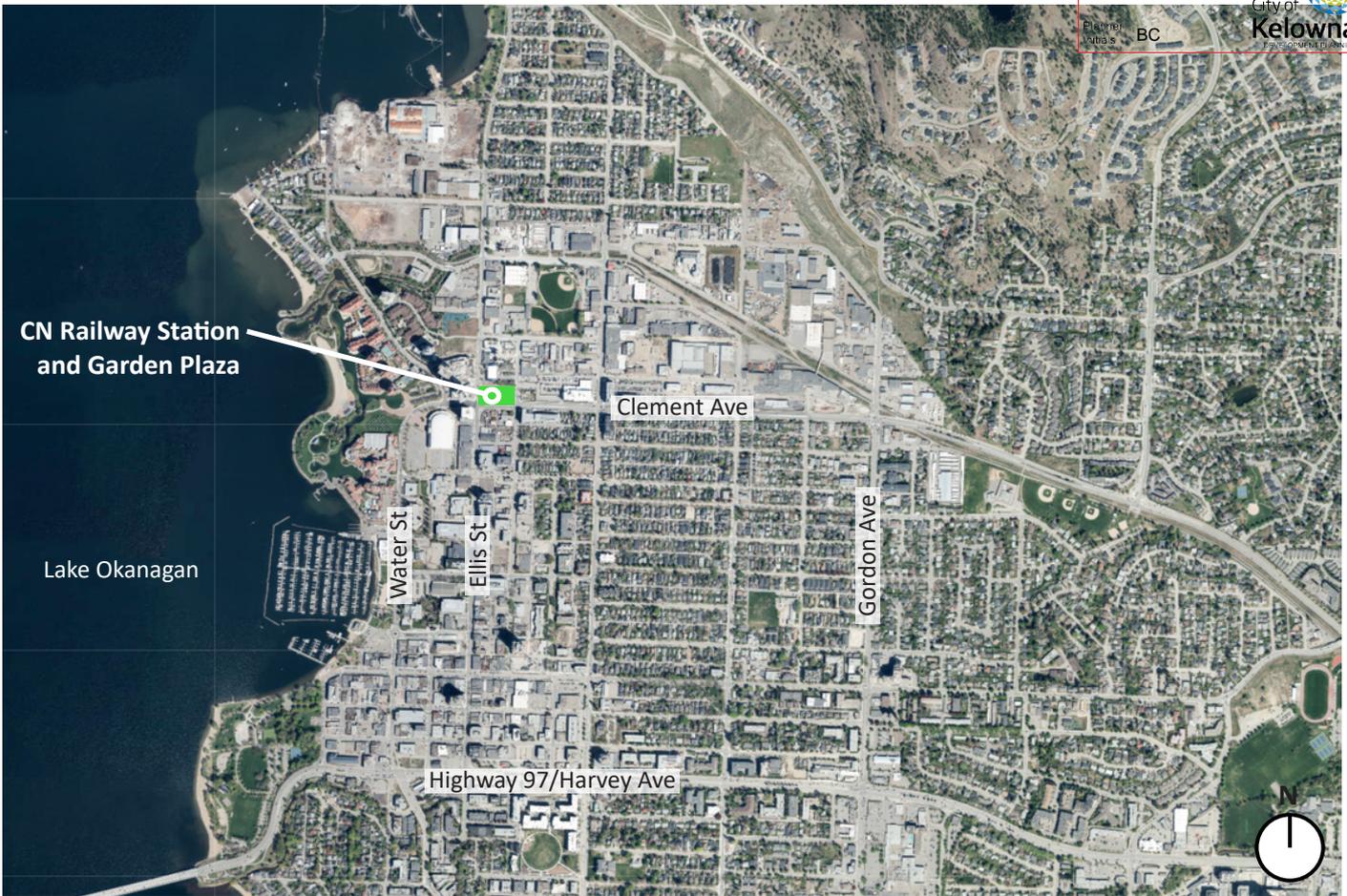
The station was built in 1926 of stucco and fieldstone and was a key element in the switch from Kelowna's economy being through water-based to land-based access.

In 2012, the station was renovated and revitalized, turning into the popular Train Station Pub. At this time, a small garden and public plaza was built at the Southwest corner of the site, which included a sculpture named The Conductor, by Ken Curley, to commemorate the role of the railway in the economic development of Kelowna.

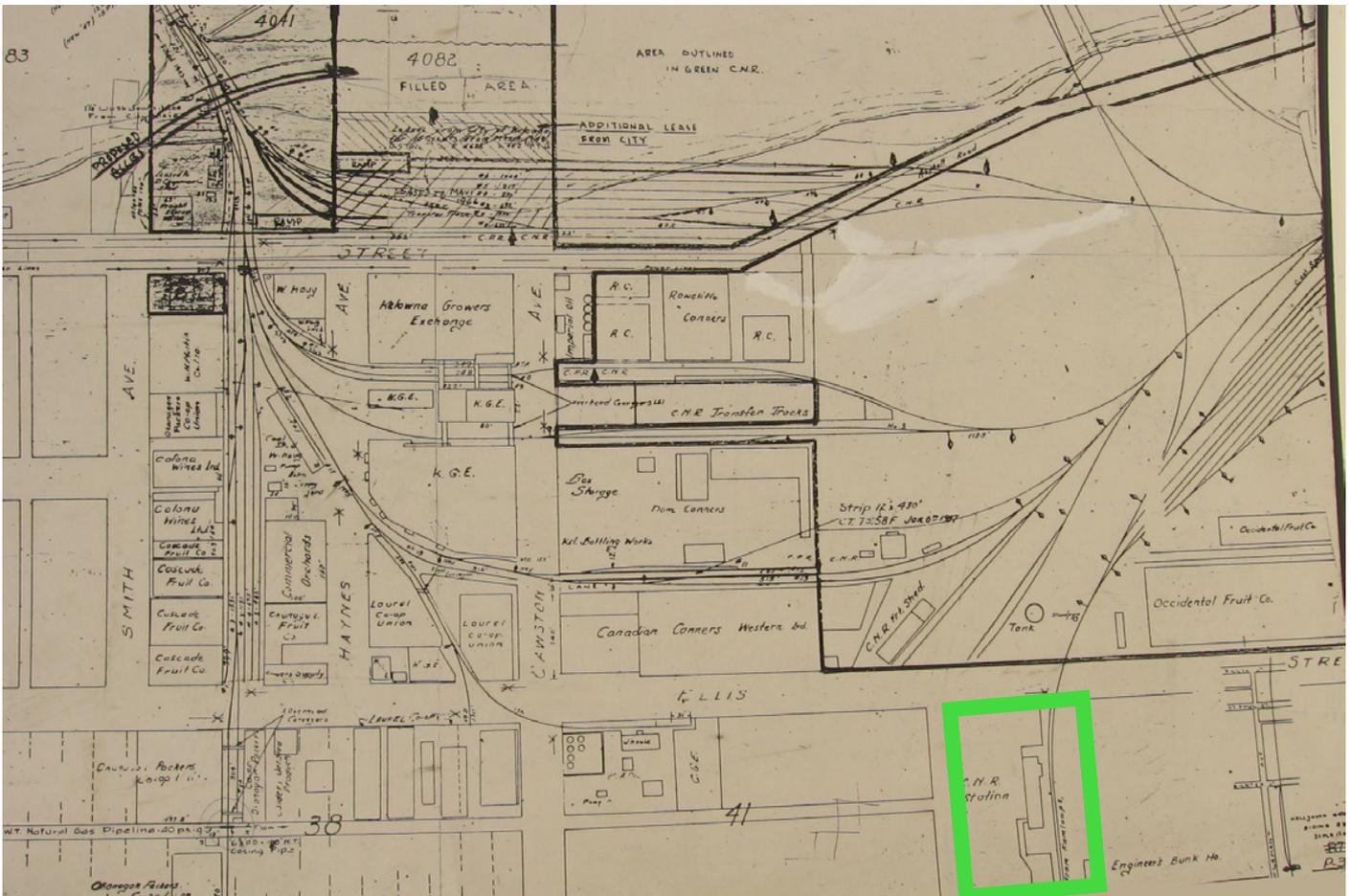
The garden includes evergreen, decorative shrub and perennial plantings, centered around a raised planter with the sculpture. The plaza includes seating with small tree plantings and bicycle racks, incorporating stamped concrete paving emulating the brick utilized on the building itself.



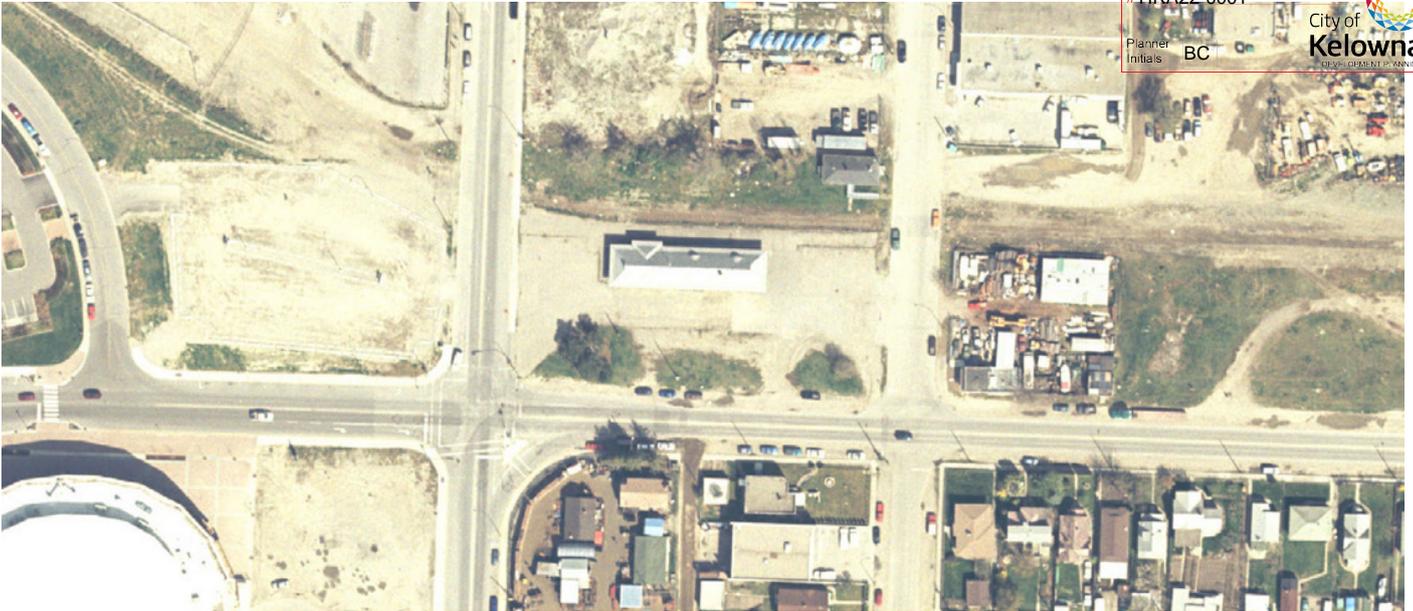
Aerial photograph of the rail yards in 1957. The CN station can be seen at the right side of the image, near the bottom, courtesy of Jim and Jeremy Spurway via okanagan.net



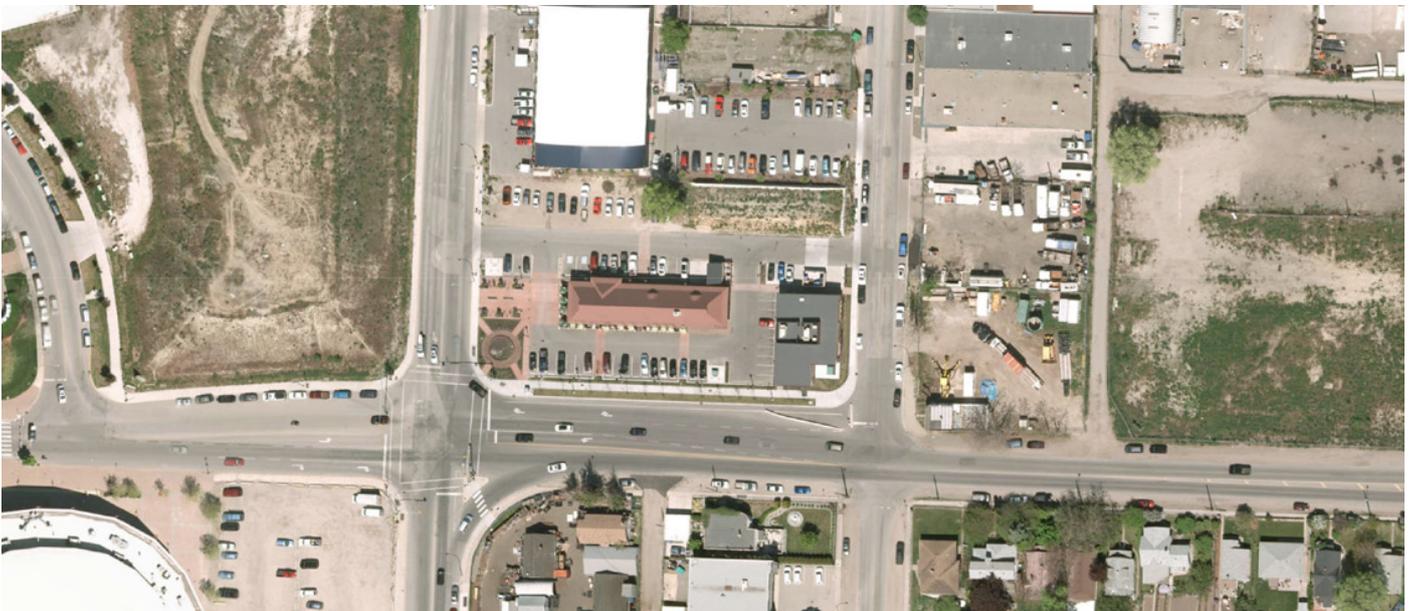
Context and Location Map, aerial courtesy of City of Kelowna



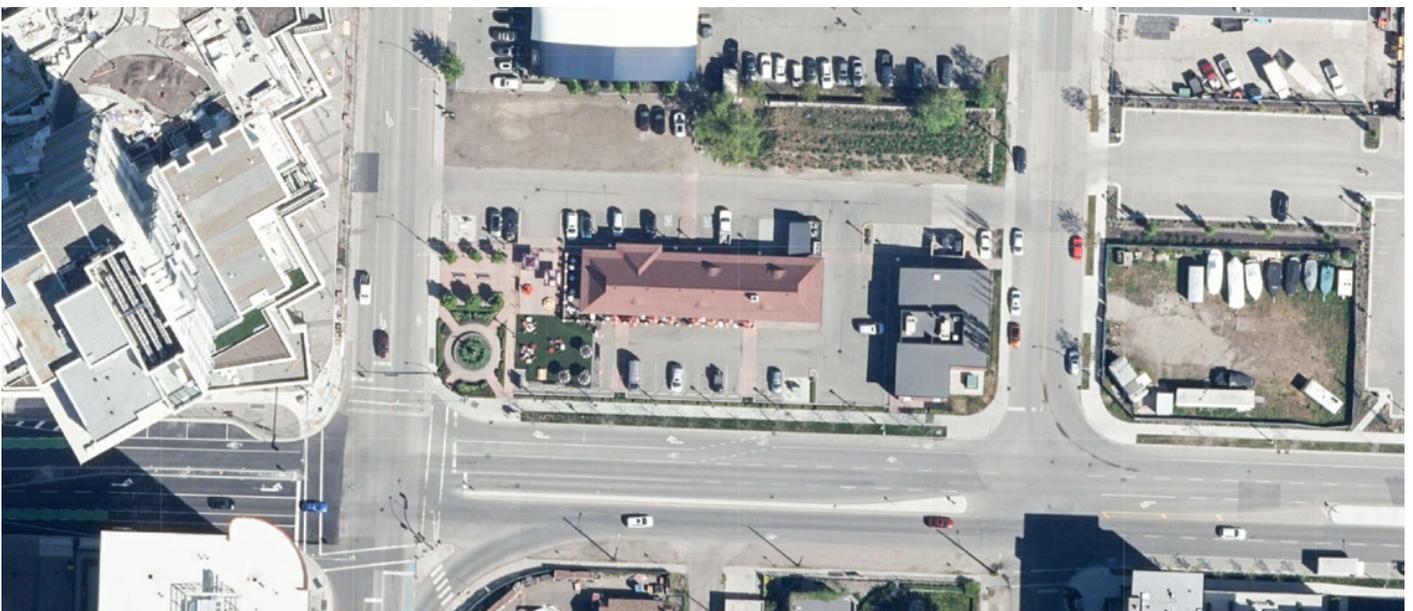
Map of the Canadian Pacific Rail Yard in 1960 with CN Railway at bottom right, courtesy of Jim and Jeremy Spurway via okanagan.net



Aerial photograph of the site in 2000, courtesy of City of Kelowna



Aerial photograph of the site in 2012, courtesy of City of Kelowna



Aerial photograph of the site in 2021, courtesy of City of Kelowna

ASSESSMENT & IMAGERY OF THE GARDEN

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Assessment

The garden sits at the corner of Clement Avenue and Ellis Street (figure 1) and includes perennial and shrub plantings, feature boulders, a circular raised concrete planter with a sculpture feature of The Conductor (figure 2), four stamped concrete access walkways, and a textured concrete circular path. There are feature boulders within the planting areas and uprights for the sculpture.

Generally, the garden appears to be in good condition. At the time of the site visit (mid-February, 2023), some foliage was visible on the perennial Lamb's Ear plantings (figure 5), and decorative rose hips were visible on both types of roses (figure 3). The boxwood looked green and healthy (figure 3). Plant density appeared good, with only a few small gaps in the boxwood hedge along the perimeter (figure 4 & 6).

Some irrigation lines were visible, exposed above the soil, and there appeared to be no mulch remaining within the planting beds (figure 8 & 9). A few of the irrigation valve boxes were missing lids and a substantial amount of garbage was noted within the planting beds at the time of inspection (figure 10).

The circular raised planter was in fair condition, with some minor cracking, scratches, and cone tie holes from normal aging of the plaza (figures 11-13). Some graffiti was noticeable on the edges of the planter (figure 14).

The sculpture appeared to be good condition with uprights visible and working in the early morning.

The stamped concrete paving has a red brick finish to complement that found on the station building. Only a couple tiny cracks were visible, likely from expansion and contraction of the material through the winter seasons, but do not pose structural or public safety hazards (figures 14 & 15). Some salt damage was visible at the East side of the garden, where a pathways connects North-South from Clement Avenue to the Train Station pub, next to an asphalt parking area (figure 16). Some fading of the red colour has occurred over the years due to sun exposure.

The textured circular concrete path around the raised planter/sculpture feature appeared in excellent condition, with a single surface crack visible.

Comparison with Original Plans

The constructed plaza is very similar to the original plans.

There are a few changes, noted below:

- Some plantings appear to be missing, notably the perennial groundcover plantings of Sweet Alyssum.
- There are two types of stamped, coloured concrete paving in the garden, where the plans showed only a single type.
- Feature boulders have been incorporated into the garden space, where none were shown on the plans.

Context Map



Figure 1: Aerial View of Garden space, courtesy of City of Kelowna

Imagery



Figure 2: View of the garden area from the corner entrance at the intersection of Clement Avenue & Ellis Street



Figure 3: Decorative rose hips visible on rose plantings



Figure 4: Healthy green boxwood hedge and dense rose plantings



Figure 5: Dense cover of perennial Lamb's Ear plantings at base of roses in raised planter feature



Figure 6: Small gaps in Boxwood hedge at eastern edge of garden



Figure 7: Feature boulder in landscape bed.



Figure 8: Exposed irrigation lines visible in planting bed at Northwest corner.



Figure 9: Exposed irrigation line visible in raised planter near uplight.



Figure 10: Irrigation valve box missing lid and garbage behind roses in North planting bed. Another valve box was missing a lid in the southwest planting bed.



Figure 11: Cracking and scratches along top edge of raised planter



Figure 12: Holes in wall of raised planter



Figure 13: Additional cracking along wall of raised planter

Figure 14: Graffiti on raised planter



Figure 15: Cracking of stamped concrete paving along edge of municipal sidewalk at Southeast corner of garden, off Clement Avenue

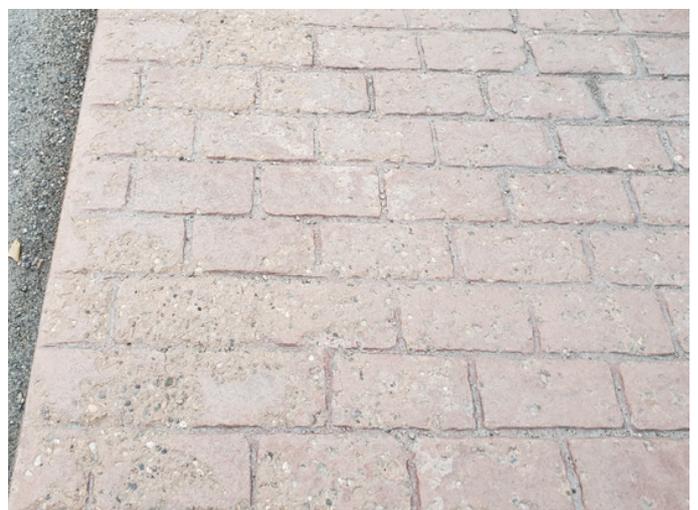


Figure 16: Small crack in surface of stamped concrete paving

Figure 17: Salt damage along East pathway bordering asphalt parking area

ASSESSMENT & IMAGERY OF THE PLAZA



Assessment

Site Inspection Summary

The plaza is sited North of the garden along the West side of the property and connects Ellis Street to the Train Station building (figure 18). It includes a variety of site furnishings, light standards, bicycle racks, benches, bollards, a waste receptacle, and tree plantings with tree grates. The surface is constructed of the same stamped red brick concrete paving as the garden, with a timber boardwalk stamp along the far North end of the plaza, along the parking stalls (figure 19).

Generally, the plaza appears to be in good condition. At the time of the site visit (mid-February, 2023), no foliage was visible on the tree plantings. Some moss was visible on the tree trunk, but the trees appeared healthy with no visible broken or cracked branches. The tree grates were in excellent condition.

The site furnishings were in good condition and were firmly bolted to the concrete surfacing. There were some signs of wear and damage on the timber slats of the benches, such as small chips in the wood and minor checking (figure 20 - 22).

The bicycle racks and bollards had some signs of weathering of the recycled plastic components. There were some minor scuffs and other aesthetic impurities, but otherwise were in good condition (figure 23 & 24).

Light standards were all in good condition and working at the time of inspection.

The waste receptacle has some chipping of the powdercoat surfacing along the inner rim and top surface, from normal use. It was otherwise in good condition (figure 25).

The stamped red brick concrete paving was in good condition, with some fade in colour over the years due to weather and sun exposure, similar to that of the garden area. There still appeared to be positive drainage across the plaza, with no visible low spots (figure 26). There was some additional wear of the surface near the Northeast most tree planting, where the surface was darkened (figure 27). Minor cracks were visible in a few places, but do not pose structural or public safety hazards (figure 28).

The stamped timber boardwalk concrete paving was in good condition.

Comparison with Original Plans

The constructed plaza is very similar to the original plans.

There are a few changes, noted below:

- Additional bicycle racks from what was shown in the plans; sixteen installed compared to eight on the plans
- The benches are in a slightly different layout, with two located in the centre of the plaza, but the overall quantity is the same
- The stamped concrete was noted on the plans to be a grey tone, but is red. The installed colour matches nicely with the materials of the building.
- The bollards along the east side of the plaza are in a slightly different layout than the plans, which may have been a result of revised barrier curb locations.

Context Map



Figure 18: Aerial View of Plaza space, courtesy of City of Kelowna

Imagery



Figure 19: View of the plaza area from Ellis Street



Figure 20: Chip damage on timber backrest top slat of bench



Figure 21: Chip damage on front of timber bench slat



Figure 22: Timber checking on rear bench slat



Figure 23: Scuffing and wear on bike rack posts



Figure 24: Chipping of powdercoat along rim of waste receptacle



Figure 25: Positive drainage on plaza surface with no visible low points



Figure 26: Darkening on stamped concrete paving



Figure 27: Small crack in surface of stamped concrete paving



Figure 28: Salt damage along East side of plaza

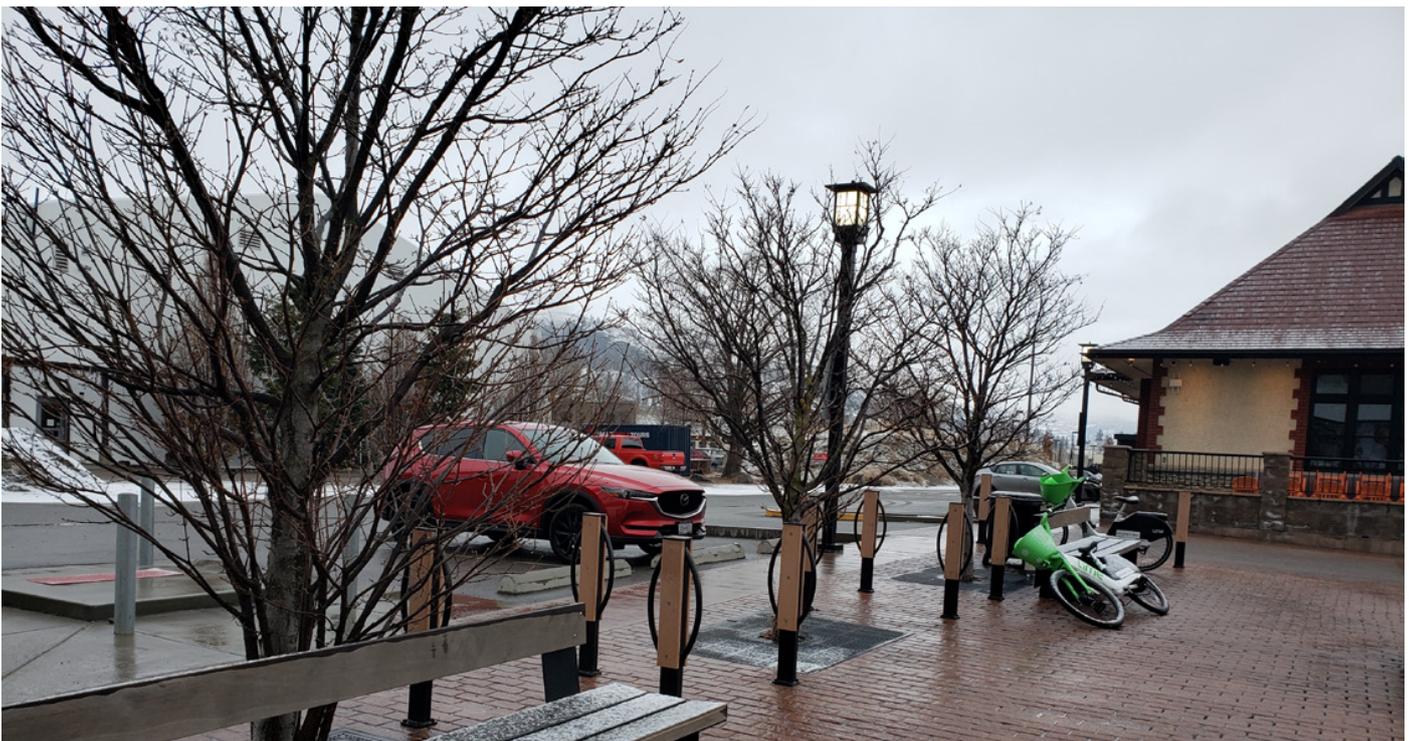


Figure 29: Plaza tree plantings which appear to be in good condition

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Repair and/or Replacement

Soft Landscape Elements

Based on a review of the original plans for the garden, some plant material, most specifically the Sweet Alyssum plantings appear to be missing. While there are noticeable empty areas in the planting beds along the perimeter of hardscapes, the existing shrubbery may grow into this space in the summer months. Additional groundcover plantings could be incorporated, however, these may compete with the existing rose plantings. It is recommended that at a minimum, all planting beds be cleaned up through a top dressing of 25-50mm depth of wood mulch.

Exposed irrigation lines should be re-buried and additional stakes added to hold these in place. Mulch, as noted above, should then be added to the planting areas. Locking lids should be replaced for the two irrigation valve boxes which do not have these. Consider adding lockable lids for remaining valve boxes, as required.

General site cleanup, such as removal of garbage and leaf debris should occur prior to additional wood mulch being placed.

Raised Planter

The visible linear cracking within the walls of the raised planter may be a result of the rebar spacing and lack of control joints installed during construction. There is little that can likely be done to fix this.

Regarding the various cracking and/or holes where cone ties were used in construction of the planter, there are two possible recommendations for the treatment of these. The first would be to remove cracked concrete and patch with new concrete. It is likely that patches may result in similar cracking in the future. Another option would be to break out all concrete from the cone ties locations and re-finish the entire planter wall with a sand blast. This will create a consistent look across the planter, but may come with a higher cost. Either option would be an acceptable sand blast the entire planter wall.

Graffiti on the raised planter walls should be removed. Consider applying an anti-graffiti stain to the wall.

Hardscape Elements

The cracking of the stamped brick finish concrete paving is superficial and does not require attention.

The fading of the stamped brick finish concrete paving is

a normal result of weathering and could be considered to reflect the rustic and heritage style of the property. If desired, a stain or acid wash, with a top could be applied to the surface to renew the colour.

It is recommended that the entire stamped plaza and garden pathway system be pressure washed to remove dirt and darkened spots and restore consistency in the colour. This should occur in Spring once there is less sand and salt around.

Regarding the salt damage or spalling, a densifying sealer could be applied to preserve the stamped surface and increase longevity. A contractor would need to be hired to specify and apply an appropriate sealer for this particular application.

Site Furnishings

All items of note for the site furnishings are a result of normal wear and tear in this type of public application. These are aesthetic items only which do not affect the function or structure of the furnishings.

Recommendations are listed below:

- An overcoat or paint could be applied to the waste receptacle where powdercoating has chipped. A paint contractor would need to be hired to specify and apply the appropriate product for re-coating.
- Bench boards could be replaced with an IPE wood, which may grey to a similar colour over time.
- Pressure washing or general cleaning of the bicycle racks could remove scuffs and other stains.

Protection During Construction

All elements of the garden and plaza should be protected during the course of construction of any new developments on the site. Temporary construction fencing should be installed along the perimeter of the heritage assets along the interface of construction. No construction materials should be stored within these areas.

If any existing site elements are damaged during construction, these should be repaired to their condition prior to the start of construction.