

Yangon Heritage Strategy

Combining Conservation and Development
to Create Asia's Most Liveable City





Yangon Heritage Strategy
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now is a key moment for Yangon, Myanmar's most important urban economic centre. The current political transition and substantial international good will provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set the city in a new direction.

This is also the last best chance to avoid the urban planning mistakes of regional neighbours. Yangon's built, cultural and natural heritage should be carefully conserved during future growth to ensure the city can be regionally competitive and liveable.

Yangon is one of the world's great heritage cities, containing an unparalleled collection of heritage assets – these include traditions, communities and memories as well as physical things like parks, buildings and whole neighbourhoods. The city has a rich history as the stage upon which national independence was won and the foundations of modern Myanmar were laid. Great writers, artists and leaders from across Myanmar and the world have lived and worked here. This broad variety of peoples and traditions gives the city its strong cultural identity.

Please consult the [glossary](#) on page 142 - many terms used in this document are new to Myanmar.

Yangon doesn't have to be a museum frozen in time nor a soulless jungle of concrete and steel; there is a middle path that can transform it into a prosperous, regionally competitive and creative metropolis. Yangon's residents can enjoy all the advantages of modern infrastructure while retaining the social and economic benefits of their unique and irreplaceable heritage.

The Yangon Heritage Trust - Working with local partners and government bodies, the Trust has assisted Yangon to achieve what no other Asian city of its scale and economic importance has – avoiding the first wave of unregulated demolitions that tore through so many other historic cities. Continuing this positive momentum, the Trust has produced the Yangon Heritage Strategy to put forward a vision and first-step action plans for the city's future. This document aims to provide decision makers and the general public with a new positive vision of what Yangon can be. Practical first steps towards implementation of this vision are outlined in a set of realistic and achievable Action Plans. These address individual buildings, wider urban areas and various city systems (for an index to the 24 Action Plans, see page 53).

This document was written for all relevant stakeholders from national leaders to street vendors, city residents and businesses. For the city's civic and business leaders, it can provide new ideas that might not have been considered before as well as a sense of the huge longer-term economic potential Yangon has to become a regional hub that combines heritage conservation with sustainable development. For the



general public, this document can provide a sense of how special their home city is and how, together, we can make Yangon Asia's most liveable city.

Yangon as Asia's Most Liveable City - The conservation of Yangon's built, cultural and natural heritage is essential to making it a success. A city's residents, leaders, businesspeople and innovators are the source of its ability to grow, evolve and meet future challenges. Making Yangon a liveable city will enhance its regional competitiveness and ability to attract future talent and investment. Yangon already has assets that can't be bought or planned into existence; it is a green and fundamentally well-planned city with rich cultural heritage and one of the best surviving historic cityscapes in Asia. These features provide it with the economic edge needed to succeed in the future and must be protected. By combining the infrastructure necessary for a 21st century city with Yangon's unique heritage, a set of advantages not available in other cities can be offered to investors, businesses and residents.

The Yangon Heritage Strategy identifies 12 key principles for a liveable Yangon. These represent the following core areas to develop and work towards: a **Compact** city; well-**Connected** transport networks; **Resilient** in the face of disaster risks; inclusive of **Diverse** communities; residents **Engaged** in civic issues; a strong **Economy**; access to good **Education** and **Health** infrastructure; high-quality and accessible **Public Assets** like parks, libraries and theatres; strong **Rule of Law**; well-conserved **Unique** natural, cultural and built heritage; finally, all of this must be **Affordable** for city residents. (For a full explanation of these liveability principles, see page 33).

The Importance of Heritage Conservation – Heritage is all the ideas, places, objects, buildings, traditions and values we have inherited from past generations. Heritage conservation is the process of protecting and enhancing the important parts of that inheritance. For Yangon, good heritage conservation means looking at the city as a whole, from small-scale residential and commercial buildings to landmark monuments, parks and view lines. It also means guiding new development within heritage neighbourhoods to protect their character. Protecting a few landmark buildings is not enough. Without both targeted individual and broad area controls, Yangon's uniqueness will quickly be lost through unregulated development.

The many benefits of conserving Yangon's heritage assets through good urban planning and sustainable development include the following:

- Retaining Yangon's uniqueness, leading to a stronger urban identity.
- Fostering greater civic pride and inspiring residents, businesses and philanthropists from all Yangon's diverse communities to engage in urban issues.
- Improving social cohesion and the continuity of cultural tradition as conservation area designations with good urban infrastructure assist members of established communities to live healthy and happy lives.
- Enabling residents and visitors to reconnect with Yangon's history and appreciate the important contribution of past generations.



- Protecting the environment through the conservation and reuse of historic buildings.

- Generating billions of dollars for residents and businesses through a local and international tourism industry built around, and attracted by, Yangon's heritage assets.

- Creating a new economic sector through the management, planning, design and construction of heritage reuse projects, which will lead to greater demand for local materials, labour, manufacturing and skills.

- Encouraging the city to diversify into skilled knowledge-based economies.

Having a set of well-conserved heritage assets will mean Yangon is a green, diverse, unique and beautiful city. With good urban planning, residents can also enjoy the benefits of modern infrastructure. All this has the potential to transform Yangon into a liveable regional hub able to attract talent, investment and business.

A Vision for Yangon - Yangon can be Asia's most liveable city. Continuing as Myanmar's commercial capital, it can also be a centre for the arts & culture, creative and knowledge-based economies as well as for new manufacturing and service industries. With improved industrial areas, new air and sea ports with transport links across the country and the globe, Yangon can lead Myanmar's growth. It can also be a top international tourist destination and a global example of inclusion of cultural diversity. Undertaking the major infrastructure upgrades needed to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming years is achievable. The solution

lies in careful heritage conservation (see The Importance of Heritage Conservation, page 16) and good urban planning (see The Importance of Good Urban Planning, page 20).

For a vision of Yangon in the future see Imagine: Yangon in 15 Years Time (page 28).

A Strategy that Combines Immediate Action with Long-term Planning - Heritage conservation in Yangon faces a very particular set of political, social and financial challenges. There is great pressure on the city's heritage from development and neglect, this pressure will only increase in coming years. To succeed, conservation and urban planning efforts must combine immediate action with small-scale demonstration projects and establish a broader planning framework based on a long-term vision and strengthened legislation.

Immediate Action: establish a moratorium on demolition in interim conservation areas and set up basic planning processes to manage change affecting heritage places.

Building Support and Awareness: begin key renovation projects (see 11 landmark reuse opportunities, page 45) and public realm upgrades for public benefit to provide living examples of proper conservation practice, while YHT continues its advocacy work.



Long-term Planning: introduce first-generation, full planning controls and processes; introduce a revised Yangon Heritage Conservation Law that defines heritage in a new way; put in place formal conservation areas and heritage lists; and provide detailed urban design and heritage building guidelines for new development (See Action Plan on Regulatory and Legal Reform, page 134).

The catalytic actions outlined in the Action Plans (page 53) have the potential to make Yangon a national, and regional, showcase for good urban design and problem-solving initiative – a shining example for Southeast Asia of how proper heritage conservation and sustainable development can maintain a city’s uniqueness, increase its liveability, and make it more competitive and prosperous.

Additional Resources

The Yangon Heritage Strategy website can be found at:

www.yhtliveableyangon.org

The website has a pdf version of the Strategy available for free download as well as additional material such as area-based assessments, reports, studies undertaken over the last three years, and good examples of heritage work done in other urban contexts.

You can join the conversation about the Yangon Heritage Strategy at:

www.facebook.com/theyangonheritagetrust

HOW TO USE THE YANGON HERITAGE STRATEGY

The Introduction provides background on the importance of cities (page 14), heritage conservation (page 16), urban planning (page 20) and puts the current situation in context.

The Vision (page 26) provides a new and hopeful way of thinking about Yangon’s potential as a regional leader.

A set of principles have been defined in Liveability (page 34) to generate a discussion about making Yangon a good place to live and work.

The Strategy (page 44) provides an overview of the Yangon Heritage Trust’s recommendations for achieving this vision within Yangon’s cultural, social and political context.

The Action Plans (page 52), designed to make the vision of Yangon’s future a reality, provide ideas for both immediate projects that can be quickly achieved and longer-term goals.



THE YANGON HERITAGE TRUST

The Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) was established in 2012 as a centre of excellence in urban built and cultural heritage management. Since then YHT has led the conservation effort in Yangon and set the standard for good heritage practice.

YHT oversaw the creation and implementation of Yangon's first Conservation Management Plan at the Secretariat site (see Online Annexe 01) and has undertaken numerous training and capacity building exercises for local architects, builders and engineers. The Trust has had significant early success in ensuring that the conservation of Yangon's unique heritage is incorporated into a vision for the city and plans for its development.

Currently, YHT is the only dedicated body looking at urban heritage issues in Yangon and how they relate to making it a modern and liveable city through good urban planning and physical conservation. The Trust aims to ensure that Yangon can modernise without losing its unique heritage. Although the Trust is not a statutory authority it provides advice to relevant government bodies when requested. Currently YHT is providing support to over 65 building conservation projects in addition to its many advocacy and research tasks.

The organisation has a dedicated staff of around 30 local people as well as full-time and consulting international specialists, a local Board of Directors and an International Advisory Group. It falls under the leadership of Chairman and historian U Thant Myint-U and Director and architect Daw Moe Moe Lwin.

The early mission of YHT was to raise awareness about the city's heritage assets and to encourage authorities to protect them. This advocacy gained significant traction at a Union and Regional level within the new administration of U Thein Sein. The Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) moved away from supporting demolition of heritage buildings and several large projects with major heritage impacts were halted.

From mid-2013, YHT became increasingly focussed on broader urban planning issues. This expanding scope came out of a realisation that, if the conservation of Yangon's built and cultural heritage was to succeed, the economic and social benefits must be clear to leaders and the public. As an early step, YHT undertook a project funded by the government of New Zealand to understand what residents value and dislike about their local neighbourhood. The results informed the drafting of a vision for the city completed in early 2014 and this formed the basis for YHT's future work. Around this time, YCDC and YHT staff undertook a series of trainings and studies funded by the European Union.



From the outset, YHT has focussed heavily on producing the city's first comprehensive heritage list and proposed conservation areas. The first conservation area to be clearly identified (based on the assessment of over 3,000 individual properties) was the Downtown Conservation Area. Due to its high concentration of significant heritage places and the high development pressures there, the downtown was the first area to receive attention. The Trust continues its inventory process across the city and as of mid-2016 has covered 7,000 properties and around 30% of the wider historic city. More than 30 proposed conservation areas have also been identified.

In early 2014, YHT drafted a set of proposed first generation regulatory tools. These included a Yangon Heritage Conservation law, a heritage planning framework and guidelines for managing change to heritage places and conservation areas. In drafting these tools, the Trust worked with local and international experts from a wide variety of fields taking the best of this advice and tailoring it to the local context. The Trust also learned from the experiences of other post-colonial 19th and 20th century cities internationally to ensure proposed systems avoided mistakes made in other countries.

YHT has assisted in laying the foundations for a new sector of Yangon's construction industry through training the first generation of specialist heritage tradespeople. This work will continue into 2017 through a programme funded by the Australian government.

Since late 2014, YHT has increasingly seen the need for a single document presenting the organisation's vision and proposed first generation actions towards that vision. Through the Trust's community engagement it became clear that this was also something local businesses needed to invest more securely in conservation-led development. The Trust is now advocating for a comprehensive master plan to be drafted for Yangon with the conservation of the city's unique built and cultural heritage at its core.

In this Yangon Heritage Strategy, YHT puts forward a vision for Yangon and a first-steps action plan for the implementation of that vision. Working with local partners and government bodies, the Trust has assisted Yangon to achieve what no other city of its scale and economic importance has in the Asian region – avoiding the first wave of unregulated demolitions that tore through so many other historic cities.

Government support for conservation, good urban planning and sustainable development is in place and time for action has been bought. Work now begins on making Yangon Asia's most liveable city. This will involve continuing public advocacy and awareness raising, working closely with government and business leaders and ensuring that Yangon's heritage places are protected for the social, cultural and economic benefit of its current inhabitants and future generations.

To learn more about the work of YHT go to:

www.yangonheritagetrust.org





Introduction

A Key Moment for Yangon

Yangon today has everything to gain and everything to lose. Now is the moment to set the city in a new direction and avoid the mistakes of its regional neighbours. Now is the moment to begin turning Yangon into Asia's most liveable city.

Myanmar stands at a crossroads. After decades of military rule, the country is taking steps towards political reform, negotiations with armed ethnic groups can lead to sustainable peace, and the early stages of economic restructuring are under way. Myanmar's population has endured years of poor economic growth and is now hopeful of a better future.

Yangon is Myanmar's most important urban economic centre¹ and the city's future is closely linked to that of the country. The newly elected government, which has an unprecedented mandate for change, has stated that getting Yangon right is one of its key aims². Indeed, the current transition provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set a new agenda for Yangon and lay down a guiding vision. There is also substantial international good will and interest in Myanmar, shown by the numerous trade, diplomatic and humanitarian missions over recent years.

Myanmar's transition coincides with a global political and economic rebalance. Asian countries are expected to lead global growth over coming decades. The country's existing natural assets, arable land and large working-age population mean there is huge potential for economic growth. Positioned at the heart of Asia between the world's two largest and fastest growing major economies, India and China, Myanmar is emerging at the right moment to be part of a regional boom and an increasingly globalised economy. With the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projecting Myanmar's national GDP will grow by 8.6% in 2016 and 7.7% in 2017³, many potential investors are eagerly watching the country's emerging markets.



If Yangon can adopt a comprehensive master plan, improve its governance and upgrade its infrastructure while also conserving its uniqueness, by 2030 it could become one of Asia's most liveable and regionally competitive cities, able to offer a distinctive set of advantages to investors, residents and businesses. As many of Myanmar's neighbours have experienced intensive growth periods over the last two decades, Yangon is well-positioned to learn from their mistakes and successes, leapfrogging them into a period of enhanced prosperity.

The Need for Action

The city is at a tipping point and, without action, Yangon may become another of the region's urban disaster zones. In a city containing so much irreplaceable cultural, built and natural heritage this would be a terrible loss to Myanmar and the world.

It is not too late; now can be the moment to end the current inertia of short-term planning and poor urban management and reset the city in a new direction. Bringing about real change in the coming months would set new trends and establish guiding precedents.

In addition to writing policies, plans and guidelines, real examples of good cultural and built heritage conservation are required. If projects can be seen, touched and visited by local people and business leaders, then these ideas may gain a life of their own and be emulated throughout the city.

This will require strong leadership not only from government but from all sectors of the city's population. The business community has an important role to play in realising a vision for Yangon as an economically strong city combining heritage conservation and sustainable development.

The catalytic actions suggested in this document's Strategy (page 44) and Action Plans (page 53) have the potential to make Yangon a national, and regional, showcase for good urban design and problem-solving initiative – a shining example for Southeast Asia of how targeted heritage conservation can maintain a city's uniqueness, increase its liveability, and make it more competitive and prosperous.

The Importance of Cities

Cities are engines of economic growth. As Asia moves to the fore of the global economy, Yangon is in a prime position to build on its strengths and become more regionally competitive. Yangon's ability to compete with other cities in the region is crucial to Myanmar's future.

Cities are where most people will live in the future. Globally, urbanisation has been growing since the 19th century. By 2008, more than 50% of the world's population lived in cities⁴. The Global Health Observatory predicts substantial urban population growth between now and 2030⁵. By 2050, 64% of Asia's population is expected to be living in cities⁶. McKinsey suggests that 54% of Myanmar's overall GDP growth between now and 2030 will be delivered by the country's urban centres, led by Yangon⁷.

Yangon as a Competitive City

Currently urban populations account for 70% of the world's GDP⁸ and, more than ever, cities will be the driving engines of national economies. In order to grow their economies cities need to attract talent, investment and business. Before a city can do this it needs a basic level of infrastructure, rule of law, health and education services, affordable housing and good transport.

To be competitive, a city should have the following (adapted from McKinsey⁹ and *The Economist*¹⁰):

- Transparent land ownership and zoning systems
- Reliable urban infrastructure
- Efficient public transport
- Good inter- and intra-city communication networks
- Good public safety
- Good affordable housing
- High-quality education
- High-quality healthcare
- Good environmental sustainability
- Good city administration and management
- Administrative links with knowledge creators such as NGOs, universities and think tanks
- Good partnerships between the public and private sector
- Responsible financial management

Yangon currently lags behind its regional neighbours in many of these indicators. However, with investment and good management, Yangon could compete with Asian hubs such as Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and Manila.



Uniqueness: Yangon's Key Advantage

Making Yangon regionally competitive in the future means understanding and enhancing what makes it unique now. Part of this document's aim is to suggest first steps towards making Yangon competitive with other cities in the region through enhancing its strengths and addressing its weaknesses. Key to this is making Yangon liveable through the conservation of its built and cultural heritage. Having a liveable city is fundamental to having a competitive city. This is because a city's residents, leaders, businesspeople and innovators are the source of its ability to grow, evolve and meet future challenges. Making Yangon a liveable city, according to the principles outlined on pages 36-41, will enhance its competitive edge and regional allure.

In an increasingly globally networked economy, where investors and businesspeople can choose to live in a huge variety of cities with good basic infrastructure, competitiveness will depend on how well a city can set itself apart from the pack. Cities that have something unique to offer will have the leading advantage in the ever-increasing competition to attract local and international talent and investment.

Yangon already has many assets. It is a green and fundamentally well-planned city with rich cultural heritage and one of the best surviving historic cityscapes in Asia. These unique features provide it with the economic edge needed to succeed in the future and must be protected.

Yangon as a Regional Hub for Knowledge-Based Industries

Cities are increasingly important centres of the global economy as it evolves to include knowledge-based systems. They will be the gateways of economic connection and major centres of innovation and growth.

Yangon has historically been Myanmar's major centre for important economies such as trade, manufacturing, retail and financial services. While these economies will continue to be important, the city also has great potential for the emerging knowledge-based economies. These include: design industries such as fashion, architecture, interior and urban design, graphic and industrial design; the creation, presentation and sale of visual, literary and performance arts; the communication industries such as television, film, publishing, advertising and marketing; and the booming digital information technologies sector.

Developing Yangon in time to be part of the global transition towards knowledge-based economies is vital. Cities that can offer a healthy, culturally rich, vibrant and interesting environment and that are connected globally through technology and finance will attract and grow locally the kind of talent needed to prosper. In this respect, Yangon can become a regional leader and a truly global city.

The Importance of Heritage Conservation

Heritage conservation involves protecting and enhancing aspects of the city that make Yangon unique. By improving the social, cultural and economic environment, the city can become more liveable, more competitive and more prosperous.

As the Asian region leads global economic growth, there is a re-emergence of interest in local heritage assets and a realisation of their economic and social value. In recent years, many cities in the region have seen the importance of heritage conservation. Major centres such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila and Jakarta lost huge swathes of their historic cities to development over the last 50 years. Today, these places regret losing so much of their heritage as they pushed ahead with new construction.

From Kolkata to Jakarta, conservation movements and government support mechanisms are growing. Led by China and India, the region has seen an increase in the number of World Heritage nominations over recent years¹¹. The effort to better plan and manage Yangon's development is perfectly timed to take advantage of these trends and to learn from the mistakes of neighbours. The city's heritage buildings, streetscapes and neighbourhoods, together with their existing communities, represent a social and economic asset worth billions.

Good Heritage Conservation

The concept of heritage incorporates the objects, places, buildings, designs, styles, ideas, memories, practices and traditions inherited from past generations. Buildings, streets, parks, gardens and areas that have heritage value can be called heritage places. Heritage Conservation is the process of understanding, protecting, managing changes to, and use of, such heritage places. This can involve everything from restoring a place to its original state or keeping it exactly as it is, to stabilising against further damage or building modern additions. Heritage conservation also involves managing how a place is used and understood by current generations.

For Yangon, protecting just a few landmark buildings will not be enough. Good heritage conservation should involve taking a wide view of the city. Its small-scale residential and commercial heritage buildings are just as important as its larger historic landmarks. They contribute to an understandable cityscape with atmosphere and integrity, and are a fundamental part of what makes Yangon unique. It will therefore be necessary to identify large-scale conservation areas where low height limits apply. With good zoning regulations, other areas can be identified where more intense development can occur.

In the future, Myanmar should develop its own heritage management principles and standards. These can be tailored to the nation's unique social and historic context. Existing examples such as the Burra Charter¹² and the Nara Document¹³ contain important ideas to consider.



Working on a heritage places should start with understanding why it is important. This can be achieved through making site visits, assessing it in its context, speaking to the community and other stakeholders and investigating historical records.

After this, guidelines for the works program and future use can be drafted to help tradespeople and project managers during the project. In some places these guidelines may be very detailed; for instance, the former Executive Council Room in the Secretariat

building, where the Martyrs were assassinated in 1947, has very strict guidelines on how it can be restored and used. Other places may have only basic guidance.

Undertaking work, especially demolition, before heritage significance is understood can lead to the loss of important and irreplaceable elements. Good city management and legal frameworks involving specialists and the community can make sure this processes is followed. A Conservation Management Plan includes these steps and can provide a common understanding for all involved around how a place is to be managed during a renovation project.



Harmonious: similar scale and facade rhythm to neighbouring heritage buildings using high quality materials and not imitating heritage styles- fits into the street



Out of Place: too high with inappropriate facade treatment, making no attempt to fit with neighbouring buildings and using poor quality materials.

Conserving Heritage Buildings Well

Heritage conservation should be a process of taking buildings and communities forward into a better future, rather than taking them back into the past. Heritage buildings should be safe, easily maintained, function well and have an appropriate use.

Conservation of a building should involve its interiors as well as its exteriors. Facadism, or the demolition of everything except an outside shell, should be avoided. Without its interiors, a building can be like a face with no eyes.

Additions to heritage buildings or new buildings beside them should be carefully designed. They should reference, respond to, and converse with nearby heritage assets and seek a harmonious way to become part of that context by adding a new layer of history. They should also be clearly modern in their materials and design. Imitating old styles leads to confusion about what is original and what is new. For architects and designers this is an exciting opportunity – they are not limited to copying the past and can design more creatively. This is also the case with historic interiors where new features can be modern in style and material to distinguish them from the building's original fabric.

How Good Heritage Conservation Benefits Yangon

Yangon will modernise and change in many ways. That modernisation does not have to replace what makes the city unique. Heritage conservation with good city management can ensure Yangon is modern, liveable and economically strong. Yangon should not be a museum, nor should it be a soulless maze of concrete and steel. The middle road is the right path to a liveable and regionally competitive city.

Conserving Yangon's built, cultural and natural heritage will distinguish the city from its regional neighbours, enhancing its competitiveness. Beautiful buildings, parks and streetscapes with historic associations and established communities contribute to a sense of civic pride and retain vital connections with the past.

Benefits of good heritage conservation include the following:

Increased Liveability and Civic Pride: Retaining individual heritage buildings, whole streets and neighbourhoods will conserve Yangon's established communities and enhance civic pride. Complex social networks revolve around local marketplaces, wider family connections and services like schools and clinics. Retaining these links strengthens social cohesion at a time of great change in Myanmar. Having a city that is distinctive, beautiful and firmly grounded in its history will help create a sense of civic pride, which will be so important as the city develops.

Infrastructure: Yangon's historic neighbourhoods are serviced by narrow street systems, well-designed but not able to absorb high traffic flow. Protecting historic areas and limiting density in them will reduce traffic congestion and improve liveability. It also means the city authorities can keep up with supply of basic infrastructure such as clean water, sewerage, electricity and waste disposal.

Better Economy & More Jobs: The restoration of heritage buildings creates a wide variety of local jobs and generates income for local businesses. The work of fixing up and adding to heritage buildings is specialised work that requires up to twice as many tradespeople as a typical new development. The resources used during heritage projects is largely locally sourced due to the need for special timbers or roofing materials, natural products such as lime and sand, and hand-crafted fixtures. Demand for these products, for the skilled tradespeople needed to install them and for the specialist managers needed to run the projects is already creating entirely new sectors for Yangon's economy. With the stock of heritage buildings the city has and good regulation, this can become a multi-billion dollar industry.

With heritage conservation work becoming more common in the region, these kinds of skills are also needed in neighbouring countries. Yangon's skilled labour can be employed internationally and Yangon-based vocational training programmes can educate international workers.

Environmental Sustainability: Heritage conservation is environmentally sustainable. The reuse of existing buildings is a form of large-scale recycling. Adapting an existing building is far more energy efficient than building a new one. Conservation also produces much less waste. Concrete is one of the most energy inefficient building materials to produce, accounting for 5% of global CO2 emissions¹⁴.

Increased Tourism Revenue: With a unique set of built and cultural heritage assets, Yangon stands to generate billions of dollars in tourism revenue over the coming years. Heritage tourism is a growing sector of the global industry. The huge growth of spending power in China and India¹⁵ means tourists from these countries are taking more overseas trips. With good regulation and management in place, a wide variety of businesses in Yangon stand to generate more income from increased visitor numbers. Avoiding the mistakes of cities like Lijiang and Venice, where locals were driven out by poor visitor management, tourism in Yangon could put maintaining local liveability first.

Boosting Talent & Innovation: Conserving Yangon's beautiful parks, heritage buildings and diverse communities will mean the city retains an edge over its neighbours. These assets will give it an advantage in competing for investment and business. They will also mean Yangon can attract and retain local and international talent. The ideas needed to evolve Yangon's economy come not only from established companies but also from new initiatives led by talented people. Heritage areas can function as incubators for these start-ups. In Yangon, where up to 70% of the available existing real estate is of heritage value, new initiatives – local, regional and international – can find a home in historic buildings and communities.

Figure 1 Yangon's Historic City

- Historic City
- Shwedagon Pagoda
- Circle Line
- Downtown Conservation Area



The Importance of Urban Planning

For Yangon to be regionally competitive and improve its liveability, it requires city management that can address the needs of a wide variety of stakeholders. A good urban plan can ensure Yangon has the infrastructure of a modern city together with all the social, cultural and economic benefits of a historic one.

Urban planning is the process of designing how best to effectively use, protect and manage a city's assets and how best to address its challenges. This process involves preparing for the future through a set of proven principles and processes that have worked in other urban contexts. Urban planning can apply at a very local scale or at a comprehensive scale across a whole city. This type of plan is called a master plan and involves looking at all of a city's systems and how they relate to each other, and strategically preparing actions and guidelines for their management. A master plan may contain many specific plans for issues such as sanitation or transportation.

Until the early 1960s, Yangon was well managed under the guidance of good urban planning principles. Since 1990, several poor decisions including the Strand toll road, badly placed towers like Centrepont and the HAGL Myanmar Centre, new road overpasses and the downtown pedestrian footbridges have further damaged the urban environment.

Yangon still has many surviving assets – the result of good past planning decisions. The city was laid out on proven urban planning principles originating in ancient Rome and the Middle East. These assets include abundant parks and gardens for passive and active recreation, a well-planned road network, a central circular rail line and generous waterfront spaces.

The city also has great potential for future urban planning initiatives. At the confluence of six major waterways, Yangon has a total river frontage of 71 miles, of which 15 miles is within the historic city. The city also has 39 miles of lake frontage. There is a good existing stock of primary and secondary schools. The university campus is highly intact and represents an extremely valuable asset. Designed around the Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon is respectfully situated around a historic religious landscape and splendid views of the pagoda can still be seen from many parts of the city. Numerous smaller ancient temples and monasteries were conserved in the original city plan and are an integral part of Yangon's social fabric.

Many cities are now experiencing huge social, economic and health problems due to unplanned development that has led to physical and economic isolation of outer urban areas. In such cities, slums entrench the social gap between rich and poor, traffic becomes gridlocked for hours and access to new job and education opportunities is minimal. Poor infrastructure means high levels of noise and air pollution, rivers clogged with rubbish, piles of garbage in the streets, and lack of hygiene from congested sewers or water drains. All this leads, in turn, to a downward cycle of investment as investors choose to take their business elsewhere. Without good planning, Yangon could end up like this within a few years.



Time for a Comprehensive Master Plan

Myanmar’s current political and economic transitions provide the key moment to produce a comprehensive urban master plan for Yangon’s next 100 years that will prevent the city from becoming an urban disaster zone and instead transform it into Asia’s most liveable metropolis.

Urban planning can improve Yangon’s liveability and provide a framework for sustainable population and economic growth. Well-planned cities can combat issues and challenges better. Anticipating these challenges is far cheaper than reacting to them, particularly in the case of natural disasters. Prepared cities with good urban plans in place are also better able to attract future investment. Having a framework for the city and its development creates consistency and continuity. This in turn generates credibility. These are important steps in establishing an upwards investment cycle. The urban economy will benefit hugely from basic upgrades to public areas, transport systems and utilities. Improving Yangon’s basic infrastructure in a planned way will minimise waste of resources, time and money. Cleaning up the city’s waste and water systems will dramatically increase public health, happiness and productivity.

Making Yangon liveable and attractive means achieving function and efficiency first. These two things, at a city scale, require good urban master planning. Without it, small-scale and short-term profit interests will constantly undermine overall progress. To this end, Yangon will need a strong and fiscally responsible city authority held to account for its performance in implementing initiatives and projects within the shared city vision.

Dream Large, Act Now

While an urban plan for Yangon should dream large and provide an overarching vision, it can also start small and get actual work off the ground.

We should prepare and think long-term but can also act now. Key demonstration projects can be put in place very quickly to illustrate a new direction for the city.

Good Urban Planning

A key first step in any planning process is having a broad but detailed vision for what kind of city Yangon should become based on the aspirations, opportunities and challenges of the local people. That vision provides the goals towards which a plan is developed. A future plan should be holistic across disciplines and government departments and address a variety of issues. Drafting an urban plan can mobilise the bureaucracy and excite and engage the public.

Short-term and Long-term Action: Both short-term action and long-term planning is needed. Waiting for a comprehensive plan should not stop short-term actions being taken on key utility and infrastructure issues, such as water supply, waste, drainage and simple steps towards improving transport and traffic congestion. The 12 liveability points outlined in Liveability (pages 36-41) require both immediate action and longer-term responses.

City-wide: A plan for Yangon should be broad in its scope to make sure city-wide issues like traffic congestion, utilities provision and zoning can be improved.

Flexible: Within a clear vision, an urban plan should be flexible allowing detail to be added over coming years. It should also be rigid in key areas such as designating areas for increased development, height controls and a zoning plan.

Accountable: With good urban planning Yangon can grow in a smart way and become a compact city rather than a sprawling city. This requires a good land-use policy, a full audit of underutilised land within the urban footprint and a zoning plan.

Inclusive: The process of drafting an urban plan is as important as the plan itself. It represents an opportunity to bring many stakeholders together, particularly the local community who can get behind a positive vision for their city. The more people from all walks of life and levels of society who can relate to the vision and see it as achievable, the more likely it is to succeed.

Supported by Government: To succeed, a plan also needs government and bureaucratic support. Consulting with all relevant government bodies along with the community can lead to better alignment between these two groups. It may not be possible to align the views of all stakeholders but this should not derail a plan; achieving as much agreement as possible and moving ahead on agreed areas can be better than taking no action at all.

Good Urban Planning in Brief: Planning, regulation and vision are how the long-term conservation of Yangon's built and cultural heritage will be achieved. There should be citywide heritage designations within a legal framework – clearly identifying what is valuable and what is not. Conservation areas with enforced height controls can be coupled with designating areas for high-rise development and increased growth. Through good transportation there can be a mutually beneficial relationship between low-rise historic areas and higher-rise modern ones. A good urban plan will take into account the city's weaknesses and seek strategies for enhancing its many assets. It can also ensure Yangon has all the infrastructure of a modern city woven into and around the benefits of a historic one.

Figure 2 Sympathetic Transit-Oriented Planning

- Historic City - carefully controlled new development
- Possible Growth Focus Areas - around transport hubs and carefully planned in the historic city
- Possible Growth Areas - taller and denser development
- Downtown Conservation Area
- Circle Line
- Shwedagon Pagoda







Vision

Yangon as Asia's Most Liveable City

By combining the infrastructure needed for a 21st century city with Yangon's unique built and cultural heritage, its natural waterfront setting and its many parks, Yangon has the potential to be the most liveable city in Asia.

Yangon will continue to be Myanmar's commercial capital – its most important and populous city. As such, it should become a dynamic modern city. It can be a centre for the arts and culture, for creative and knowledge-based economies, as well as for manufacturing and service industries. With improved industrial areas, new air and sea ports, transport links across the country and around the world, Yangon can lead growth in the manufacturing sector. It can also be a top international tourist destination and a global example of cultural diversity and inclusion. It can become regionally competitive. This combined growth will create tens of thousands of jobs in the near term, enabling Yangon's social and economic prosperity.

Over the coming ten-to-fifteen years, Yangon must focus on providing its residents with jobs and decent and affordable housing and public transport. To do this, the city will need to attract investment, upgrade its energy supply, communications, transport systems, legal frameworks, and ensure the best possible healthcare and education facilities. By the early 2030s, Myanmar will be a medium-income country and Yangon will be actively competing with cities across Asia to attract investment and retain talent. It is then, when Yangon is trying to move beyond light manufacturing and low-paid jobs to creative, knowledge-based economies, that having a beautiful, dynamic and well-planned historic city will make all the difference.

If Yangon does not protect its current assets, the city's leaders and residents will regret it. Many other Asian cities have gone through a similar period of unplanned growth to become bigger, more modern and prosperous cities. Such progression leads to a bigger economy but with many negative consequences, from extreme traffic congestion and



noise and air pollution to the loss of established communities and social cohesion. Bangkok, Manila, Jakarta are prime examples and even Singapore, so well-planned, regrets the destruction of its built heritage. Yangon must learn from the mistakes of its neighbours and prioritise the conservation of its unique heritage.

Undertaking the major infrastructure upgrades needed to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming decades is achievable. Ensuring that the city doesn't destroy the assets it already has will make it liveable, regionally competitive and economically successful. The answer lies in careful heritage conservation (see page 16) and good urban planning (see page 20).

Regretting the Loss of Heritage:

“We made our share of mistakes in Singapore. For example, in our rush to rebuild Singapore, we have knocked down many old and quaint Singapore buildings. Then we realised we were destroying a valuable part of our cultural heritage....”

Former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew¹⁶

Imagine: Yangon in 15 Years Time

The historic city of Yangon, from Parami Road to the Strand waterfront (see map, page 19), has modern infrastructure, clean water supply, functioning drainage and sewerage systems and constant electricity. It is greener and pedestrian-friendly. Its heritage places are well-conserved and protected by a comprehensive heritage management framework. Its traditional communities are strong and prosperous.

New high-rise development is concentrated to the north, east and west, away from historic areas. New suburbs are built along planned and existing transport corridors. Fine-grain development sites within the existing urban footprint have been utilised to avoid urban sprawl. The historic residential areas, the diplomatic quarter, Windermere Estate and Golden Valley are kept residential with low-rise shopping and services. Slums and high-end gated communities have been avoided by providing affordable housing across the city. Yangon has become a compact city through proper planning and city management.

Still unquestionably the heart of Yangon, views of the Shwedagon are protected from miles away. The pagoda has become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is still a place of quiet contemplation and spiritual practice for local people. The precincts around it are home to historic monasteries and traditional workshops. The area is accessible by foot or public transport. The floodlit Shwedagon still dominates the night sky.

The Shwedagon is surrounded by a green belt of public parks stretching from the Martyrs' Mausoleum through the People's Park, U Ottama (Cantonment) Gardens, the former War Office and the Yangon Zoo & Botanical Gardens to Kandawgyi Park – each with its own circular walking path. The zoo has been upgraded into an educational centre and showcase for Myanmar's environmental conservation; the animals' welfare is a priority.

Tree-lined walking routes with wide pavements make it enjoyable to walk or bicycle from the Shwedagon, around the interconnected parks, through the historic downtown, to the Sule Pagoda and then along the waterfront to the Botahtaung Pagoda. Along the way, visitors and locals pass hundreds of nationally and internationally significant sites. The Aung San Museum is easily accessible on foot via Kandawgyi Park. These routes are a key part of Myanmar's prime place on the international tourism map.

Action Plan

16.0

2.0

24.0

9.0

21.0

1.0

14.0

All of the downtown grid is low-rise, its historic core is protected by a Conservation Area designation and regulated in detail. Some streets are carefully conserved, others are a mix of historic and non-historic buildings where new development is allowed in accordance with clear guidelines. Pavements are re-widened and trees and porticos provide shade. Vendors and advertising are carefully regulated to ensure pedestrian priority. Noise pollution is controlled. Car use and parking is discouraged to combat congestion.

Established communities continue to live downtown, keeping their inter-generational links to the area and enjoying improved infrastructure. The authentic atmosphere and character of their neighbourhoods remain intact. Visitors come to experience a thriving social and architectural connection with the city's past. Latha and Pabedan Townships remain a focus of Chinese and Indian Myanmar heritage. Their historic temples, mosques, churches and *dhamma* halls are well-maintained and used.

Additionally, the historic downtown has become a hub for culture, the arts and new creative economies (from advertising, film, television, architecture and design to visual, literary and performance art, fashion and IT). The many government buildings in lower Kyauktada, such as the Burma Translation Society (Sarpay Beikman) building have been renovated. There are new spaces for public forums, exhibitions, performances and live events. The old Grindlay's Bank (Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank) is a city museum and memory hub. The Former Accountant-General's Office is beautifully restored. Some historic buildings, such as the former New Law Courts, have become high-end hotels; others, like the High Court, have been renovated to better serve their original purpose.

The Secretariat is a place to remember Myanmar's modern history, including its anti-colonial movement, and the sites where the Martyrs were assassinated and Myanmar's first parliament was established have been preserved. New event spaces as well as carefully chosen commercial activity are allowed and the lawns have been opened as public gardens. The nearby Printing and Publishing Enterprise building houses bookstores and cafes.

Throughout the historic downtown area, blue plaques identify sites of historical and social importance. There are many other small museums, galleries, and places of local and visitor interest, from the Armenian Church and Jewish Synagogue to Sule Pagoda and the Surti Sunni Jamah (Mogul) Mosque. The historic city is a place where people come to recover memories and knowledge of the city's past.

8.0

9.0

11.0

12.0

6.0

3.0

7.0

15.0

14.0

10.0



The waterfront has been redeveloped for public use with a mix of new public parks, restaurants and shops. All new development along the waterfront is low-rise and the old warehouses are adapted into retail and cultural centres. Yangon's residents are once again connected to the river. Water taxis and ferries link the downtown to other parts of the greater metropolitan area. 13.0

The Central Railway Station is an ultra-modern transport hub. Surrounding new development is designed to protect views of the Shwedagon. Old and new architecture is mixed. A comprehensive public transport system, with the circle line at its heart, takes passengers across the greater metropolitan area. An express train runs directly to the international airport. The existing bus system has been replaced with a well-designed and managed network and circular bus lines run from the central station into the downtown grid. 5.0 4.0

The Yangon General Hospital provides high-standard health services within its existing campus and surrounding land. New development is carefully planned and the existing historic structures have been upgraded. 17.0

Yangon University is once again a world-class centre of learning and research. Its lakeside areas have been returned to the students for sports and recreation. The government-owned homes in the nearby Windermere Estate now house think tanks, public policy institutes and meeting spaces (like the already existing U Thant House), benefiting from their location next to the university and to each other. 19.0 18.0

Inya Lake is conserved as a vital part of the city's natural heritage. Development close to the lake is low-rise and planned so that views to-and-from the public areas are not overshadowed. Government land adjoining the lake has become publicly accessible, the numerous islands and other inaccessible areas are designated as nature reserves. The boat clubs continue to be important sporting facilities. Commercial use of public land has been minimised. 20.0

YANGON'S POTENTIAL

Yangon can become a centre of learning and knowledge-based economies; a regional hub of innovation, creativity, skill and new technologies.

It can attract and keep national and international talent by providing a beautiful and well-planned city. This, along with access to venture capital, fast internet and good infrastructure will allow Myanmar's economy to diversify beyond low-income sectors. Yangon can take advantage of the global shift towards knowledge-based economies just as the Asian region is growing quickly.

Yangon can be a place all Myanmar people feel at home and play an essential role in building a more unified nation; its schools, universities and offices can attract young people from across the country to live, study and work together.

Yangon can be a beacon of religious and cultural diversity; home to hundreds of places of worship, representing all the world's major religions, it can showcase harmonious inclusion of diverse cultural backgrounds, world-views, lifestyles, relationships, business and problem-solving skills and be a meeting place across cultures and religions.

Emerging out of decades of isolation, Yangon can once again be a global city; since its 18th century founding, it has been Myanmar's window on the world. In 15 years it can be a regional hub for public and private sectors, business and learning and inter-governmental and civil society initiatives in Southeast Asia.

Yangon can be an extremely liveable city; healthy, happy, beautiful and modern, with park systems, an expansive waterfront, upgraded infrastructure, and its built and cultural heritage intact.

Undertaking the major infrastructure upgrades needed to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming century is achievable. Ensuring that the city doesn't destroy what will make it liveable, regionally competitive and economically successful is the challenge. This can be achieved through good urban planning, careful heritage conservation and good city administration.

The Strategy section of this document suggests what can be done immediately and over the coming years to begin to realise this vision.

Figure 3 A Vision for Yangon

- YHS Action Plan Areas
- Proposed Shwedagon Park System
- Building Reuse Opportunities
- Proposed Downtown Conservation Area
- Shwedagon to Botahtaung Walking Route
- Historic Pagoda







Liveability

Liveability in Yangon

YHT has identified 12 key principles for a liveable Yangon. These represent the core work areas where improvement is required if Yangon is to reach its full potential as one of Asia's most liveable cities and become more regionally competitive.

In aiming to make Yangon liveable, there must be a common understanding around what that means. Defining liveability in Yangon can be based on the city's unique strengths and specific challenges. Enhancing liveability will help to ensure that Yangon is a city people want to live and work in and that it can attract additional talent and investment in the future. Yangon must be liveable if it is to be regionally competitive and economically strong.

Several global liveability rankings exist and are increasingly used as guiding tools for potential investors. The liveability principles in this plan have been identified based on YHT's consultations with the local community and business leaders, its local experience and vision for the city.



Improving liveability in Yangon will be a challenge but the city has strong foundations on which to build. In several of the 12 liveability principles, Yangon falls behind; the city has poor infrastructure, weak institutions and lacks good fiscal management. However, in other areas, Yangon is well-placed and has many strengths, among these are its rare collection of heritage assets, existing cultural diversity, and high-quality but under-utilised public assets like parks and gardens. There is also ample land for expanding the city’s education, health and transport systems.

If Yangon is to become more liveable, good short- and long-term urban planning is required. A future master plan for Yangon should respond to each of the 12 liveability points below.

These liveability points are also used within the Action Plans to show how they contribute to making Yangon more liveable.



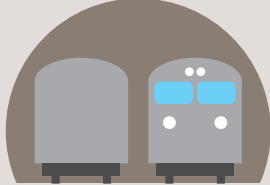
UNIQUE
Distinct cultural, built and natural heritage assets are protected and utilised to benefit the community and the economy



ECONOMY
Prepared for future challenges and opportunities by being strong, diverse, well-managed and resilient



ENGAGED
Encourage residential and commercial communities to become involved in city management and problem-solving



COMPACT
Minimise sprawl through the integration of growth and transport routes within an existing urban footprint



RULE OF LAW
Correct application of regulations and management processes so that all are treated equally and fairly



DIVERSE
Peaceful and productive inclusion of all cultural, religious and ethnic communities



CONNECTED
Private and public transport systems that are affordable, efficient, comfortable and safe



COMPACT

Compact cities minimise sprawl through the integration of growth and transport routes within an existing urban footprint

This involves the smart use of available space. In Yangon, increasing density needs to be focussed away from conservation areas such as the downtown grid to protect cultural assets. Compact cities rely on good public transport rather than cars and are designed to provide maximum access for pedestrians and cyclists. Many cities are now dependent on cars, trapped in an expensive and environmentally unsustainable loop of building more and more roads to accommodate ever-increasing traffic. Compact cities, instead of sprawling across arable farmland and adjacent natural areas, conserve these assets for the use of city residents and protect the environment that sustains the city.

Benefits

Compact cities reduce reliance on vehicles. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Limiting urban sprawl means that arable land at the city's boundary is not lost to new suburbs; this is important at a time when food security is a challenge. Less reliance on vehicles means that cities don't need to spend as much on new roads and bridges, and can also retain valuable real estate and public spaces otherwise given to car parking. Social benefits include people spending less time in cars and more time at home, with family or friends. Cities not reliant on cars are more socially equitable. Those who can't afford a car are able to walk or take public transport to a place of work or education. Walking instead of sitting in a car has physical health benefits. The reduced noise and air pollution of cars can greatly increase the liveability of a neighbourhood and its air quality.



CONNECTED

Connected cities have private and public transport systems that are affordable, efficient, comfortable and safe

Yangon must have a strong public transport system in place if it is to reach its full liveability potential. This involves upgrading the existing circle line, diversifying and improving the bus system, properly using the rivers to establish new ferry links and providing walkable streets and bicycle lanes.

Benefits

A connected city with good public transport has a number of benefits. These include increased personal opportunities and upward income mobility allowing people to travel more easily for education and jobs. Toronto's Thorncliffe Park¹⁷, a low-income neighbourhood, avoided many social problems seen elsewhere in the city by providing high-quality public transport. Good public transport also increases economic activity. U.S. cities receive a \$4-return on every \$1 invested in public transport¹⁸, every one-billion dollars spent results in the creation of an estimated 50,000 jobs¹⁹.

Good public transport reduces fuel consumption, noise and air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions; in the U.S. it saves 4.2 billion gallons of fuel, or around 37 million tonnes of carbon emissions, every year²⁰. In Yangon, it will also reduce congestion and alleviate the need for car-parking areas downtown, leading to more space for providing footpaths.

Improving walkability has been shown to improve commercial retail sales. If more people can get to a market or retail outlet, the healthier that economy will be. Kyoto and Seoul have invested in major walkability upgrades in recent years and U.S.²¹ and U.K.²² studies show that improving walkability and public realm on shopping strips can increase retail sales dramatically and reduce commercial vacancies.



RESILIENT

Resilient cities are prepared for natural disasters and the effects of climate change

Yangon must be able to weather future challenges, particularly major natural disasters. Climate change is increasing the risk of natural disasters in the region. Globally, extreme weather events have been rising steadily since the 1970s²³ and a study commissioned by the World Bank suggests that low-lying coastal areas within South East Asia will experience the world's most extreme weather over the next 50 years²⁴. For Yangon, risks include earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, cyclones and droughts. The city's growing population and density mean that more people than ever are at risk of injury, death or loss to property and business.

Resilience and disaster risk reduction must be part of urban planning strategies if sustainable development is to be achieved. This includes enforcing seismic building codes and preparing disaster response procedures. The vast majority of Yangon's buildings constructed after the 1980s are not designed for earthquake resilience, while the experience of Cyclone Nargis in 2008 showed that emergency services in Yangon are ill-prepared for major events.

Benefits

Improving Yangon's resilience will allow the city to better endure natural disasters and future challenges. It will also reduce loss of life and property and minimise the impact of disasters on the community and economy. This will mean that city resources can be directed towards any necessary rebuilding of infrastructure or heritage assets and provides assurance to investors that risk is being managed, which, in turn, leads to greater economic growth and job creation.



RULE OF LAW

Rule of law in cities promises the correct application of regulations and management so that all are treated equally and fairly

The rule of law must be applied to all aspects of society from traffic rules and parking fines to construction regulations and national political administration. All citizens and government bodies must be equal in the eyes of the law.

This is vital for good heritage conservation. There must be a founding law that defines heritage to include the protection of all Yangon's diversity. A set of regulations and a management framework which ensures that heritage is conserved as the city develops is also required. Clarifying property tenure is a major aspect of unlocking the economic potential of Yangon's heritage places. This framework must be administered by a corruption-free enforcement and judicial system.

Benefits

The international participants who wrote up the Declaration of Delhi (1959)²⁵ concluded that the rule of law can be conducive to "social, economic and cultural conditions", which "permit men to live in dignity and to fulfil their legitimate aspirations".

Rule of law will encourage more productive and established companies to do business in Yangon. The informality of taxation and lack of labour regulation means many companies are not able to bring their staff or business to Yangon. Improving this will allow a wider number of businesses to make investments with a reasonable amount of confidence; without legal equity and predictability, Myanmar's growth and regional competitiveness will be limited.

Rule of law will also help the conservation of Yangon's built and cultural heritage by ensuring the application of planning guidelines, controls and processes.



UNIQUE

Unique cities ensure that their distinct cultural, built and natural heritage assets are conserved and utilised to benefit the community and the economy

Yangon can improve its liveability and regional competitiveness through the conservation of its unique built, cultural and natural heritage. In an age when cities are becoming ever more important engines of growth and in a region set to become a global economic hub, Yangon needs to be competitive. To be competitive it must provide basic infrastructure and differentiate itself from its competitors. The latter can be achieved by conserving,

Benefits

As a liveable city with unique cultural assets to offer, Yangon will be able to attract talent and investment from around the world. The localised nature of the knowledge economy and its highly mobile creative work force means cities offering something special, interesting and vibrant for potential residents stand to gain.

There are many social benefits to conserving Yangon's small-scale and fine-grain heritage areas. These places have established interwoven social networks centred around long-term relationships, family connections and local economies. Conserving this will ensure social and cultural continuity in Yangon. The city's heritage buildings have many balconies and windows and are no more than five stories high meaning that there is a strong visual and audible connection to the street below; this enhances neighbourhood safety and community integrity.



PUBLIC ASSETS

Public assets, such as facilities for recreation, sports, entertainment, education and cultural activities can be accessible and available for all

Examples of public assets include libraries, theatres, museums, parks, sports facilities, public squares, wilderness areas and neighbourhood gathering places. Many of these places contribute to a sense of civic pride, such as the Shwedagon Pagoda and Kandawgi Lake. Others, like the National Theatre and the Aung San Stadium, provide space for exercise and recreation, cultural performances, and festivals.

Benefits

Improving access to spaces for fitness, relaxation, quiet contemplation, cultural activity and education has various social, economic and health benefits. Green spaces reduce the city's carbon footprint, improve air quality, combat the heat and provide space for exercise. Providing small-scale neighbourhood areas for sports such as *chin lone* courts and soccer fields strengthens the local community and improves health. The arts will flourish if more space for performance, exhibition and creativity is made available. Investment in spaces for the arts improves community engagement, and civic pride. It will also boost Yangon's tourism and arts economy at a time when contemporary Asian art is growing in global popularity. Additionally, public art has the ability to sustain and forge the new cultural links that will be key to this new era in Myanmar's political and social history.



ECONOMY

The city's economy can be prepared for future challenges and opportunities by being strong, diverse, well-managed and resilient

The traditional sectors of Yangon's economy, retail, local and international trade, manufacturing, financial services will continue. Businesses across the spectrum, from major companies to individual street vendors should be able to reach their full potential.

Laying the foundation of a knowledge economy in Yangon will both diversify and prepare it for future opportunities. For this to be achievable, access to small-scale, venture capital and improved education opportunities are required. A basic level of infrastructure is also needed for Yangon to take its place as a regionally competitive and economically strong city. Its unique built, cultural and natural heritage assets represent a major advantage in generating income from local and international tourism and in attracting talent and investment.

Benefits

The benefits of a strong economy are inextricably linked with the other 11 liveability principles. A strong economy leads to lower unemployment and a more stable and successful city. As businesses grow, they require more staff. For Myanmar, with its large working-age population, this is a key opportunity. Higher incomes are also a result of economic strength leading directly to an improved standard of living, better education opportunities and improved spending power. This spending feeds back into the local economy. With higher revenues from tax, governments can reduce their reliance on borrowing capital and reduce debt load. This, coupled with increased tax revenues, will allow the government to invest more on growing and diversifying the economy as well as on public infrastructure and utilities that improve quality of life for city residents. Eventually, a strong economy becomes self-strengthening as investors are more likely to put money into an already healthy economy, creating an upward cycle of investment and return.



AFFORDABLE

Affordable cities ensure that all residents have access to good housing, healthcare, education, transport and basic services

Designing and managing Yangon for the benefit of local middle and low-income residents is vital for a sustainable and liveable city. As the city population grows, low-cost public housing provision close to public transport corridors will need to be improved ahead of the growth curve. Lack of affordable housing in other Asian cities has led to urban slums developing, which further worsens lack of access to health and education opportunities. To prevent this, the government needs to invest in healthcare, education, public transport, housing and other public assets to make them affordable.

Benefits

WHO²⁶ and OECD²⁷ research shows major national social and economic benefits in making health and education opportunities available to young people. In order for the social and economic benefits of civic spaces to be realised, access to these assets must be affordable.

A recent study in California²⁸, where a tax credit scheme is used, found that access to affordable housing had a wide variety of benefits, including: improving education outcomes by providing stability for families; improving the health of residents by reducing exposure to environmental hazards; job creation through the construction industry; increased employee retention through lowering housing costs; and saving government expenditure by preventing demand on government services such as unemployment, welfare and healthcare.



DIVERSE

Diverse cities promote the peaceful and productive inclusion of all cultural, religious and ethnic communities

Yangon is blessed with a diverse population. To benefit from this diversity, the city should engage with all its residents. New and existing communities from across Myanmar and the world can be welcomed and actively included in the city's life, business and management. With such a wealth of cultural backgrounds, world views and problem-solving skills, Yangon stands to gain a great deal from including its diverse communities.

Benefits

Conserving, including and engaging the diverse peoples that make up Yangon's population can be a major economic asset in addressing current and future challenges. The urban theorist Richard Florida²⁹ suggests that a place's openness to different cultures, religions and sexual orientations plays a key role in economic growth. The economic health of many of the world's major 20th century growth economies has been partially attributed to their openness to different cultures. Australian and North American cities are testament to this. A Forbes study³⁰ has identified workforce diversity and inclusion as a key driver of internal innovation and business growth. McKinsey³¹ found that companies which have diverse executive boards enjoy significantly higher earnings and returns on equity. Academic research³² has shown that diverse groups of problem solvers can outperform groups of high-achieving problem solvers.



ENGAGED

Engaged cities encourage residential and commercial communities to become involved in city management and problem-solving

Local people should be involved in planning, upkeep and decision-making in Yangon. This will encourage them to take part in maintenance of public space as well as being involved in determining what kind of city Yangon can be. A community that is engaged in its local environment is more likely to be concerned about its maintenance and actively monitor and improve the cleanliness and quality of public areas. This is an important area of reform for city authorities and aligns with a broader political movement towards democratic involvement in Myanmar.

Benefits

Involvement allows local residents to gain a sense of civic ownership and pride. Community engagement in decisions concerning their neighbourhood can have a positive impact not only on the neighbourhood itself but also on the community as it experiences stronger social ties, reinforced shared values and greater appreciation of the local skills available.

The benefits extend to all levels of society. In cities where there is a strong tradition of engagement in civic affairs, a large philanthropic community often exists (Austin, Melbourne, Berlin) and donates to the health, education, arts and cultural sectors. The result can be a benevolent cycle of civic engagement, pride and investment. The more engaged people feel and the more proud they are of their city, the more they will support it, leading to greater improvement and greater pride.



HEALTHY

Healthy cities have well-managed urban infrastructure, a clean environment and reliable medical facilities

This is a fundamental aspect of a liveable and regionally competitive city. City authorities and local residents can work together to maintain a clean and healthy urban environment. In Yangon, this will require behavioural change such as not littering or spitting betel in the street as well as more concerted efforts to redesign and rebuild the urban environment. The rapidly increasing size of Yangon's urban population poses a huge risk if water cleanliness, sewerage management and waste disposal are not better managed. In recent years, the city has seen outbreaks of cholera and typhoid – largely eradicated in many other Asian cities. Regulatory and administrative reform is required along with education and empowerment of local communities to address these issues.

Benefits

Improving cleanliness and healthcare in Yangon reduce morbidity and mortality rates. According to WHO, mortality rates can be reduced by up to 50% in cities where air quality is improved³³. There will also be a reduction in the associated psychological and financial impacts on families. Controlling preventable diseases through basic infrastructure upgrades will reduce demand on the healthcare system and allow resources to be directed towards improving services. In addition, better health will improve GDP by creating a more productive workforce. There will also be improved education standards for school children, many of whom suffer from stomach upsets on a daily basis.

Good healthcare improves the economy. In a country where needing emergency healthcare can be financially catastrophic, good preventative healthcare is hugely important. Cleaning up Yangon's streets, water supply, food- and-beverage businesses and street vendors will also have a positive effect on local economies as these businesses become more accessible and safer, for visitors and local patrons. Finally, a clean Yangon, where the local population is proud of its urban environment, engenders increased civic pride and engagement.



EDUCATED

Educated cities ensure that all residents have full access to primary, secondary and tertiary education and/or vocational training

A high-quality education system is vital if Yangon is to be regionally competitive and diversify its economy. Vocational training, such as the programme YHT runs for heritage builders, is vital if Yangon is to grow its economy to include sectors relying heavily on the creation, use and enhancement of specialised knowledge and skills.

Benefits

As those who do not complete high school education are more likely to be unemployed and require state support in the future, improved education leads to greater employment stability, which in turn leads to higher tax revenues. A much higher proportion of Australian³⁴ and U.S.³⁵ prison populations have not completed high school education compared to the general population. A U.S. study³⁶ suggests that if high school drop out rates were halved, the government would earn 45 billion dollars more in revenue and reduced public health, crime-related costs and justice and welfare payments. The study also found that people who complete high school education have lower alcohol abuse rates and better health.

An educated population with good access to capacity building and industry training will greatly strengthen the economy and assist in laying the foundations for a knowledge-based economy. These skills can eventually lead to an education industry in Yangon where regional neighbours can be trained in specialised skills. Australia's education industry, which relies heavily on international students from the Asian region, generated an income of AU\$18.1 billion during 2014/15³⁷.



Strategy

As Myanmar's most important urban economic centre, Yangon's future is closely linked with that of the country. The city's extraordinary built, cultural and natural heritage make it unique and provide it with many invaluable - and irreplaceable- assets. From its waterfront location and well-preserved heritage buildings and established communities throughout the historic city to its parklands, lakes and diverse religious sites. When combined with modernised infrastructure that provides basic utilities and efficient methods of transport, these assets have the potential to make Yangon one of Asia's most liveable and regionally competitive cities.

Currently, the heritage conservation effort in Yangon faces a particular set of political, social and financial challenges. There is great pressure on the city's heritage from development and neglect, and this pressure will increase in coming years. Now that Myanmar is undergoing political and economic reform, it is time to draw up a master urban plan for Yangon that will enable it to grow, develop and thrive. The conservation of Yangon's heritage is essential to enabling the city to realise its full potential. To this end, the Yangon Heritage Trust suggests the following strategic measures:

Interim Measures: In order to protect the city's unique heritage from imminent development pressures, it is necessary to immediately establish an interim set of conservation areas with a moratorium on demolition and basic guidelines on development. A calibrated mix of initial regulation must be put in place to prevent thoughtless demolition until there is wider support and willingness to adopt comprehensive legislation that can ensure conservation in the long term. Key to this process is the creation of a coordinating body that can oversee the creation of a comprehensive urban plan for Yangon; this body can coordinate the wider planning effort and ensure that cross-departmental consultation and collaboration occurs and that the needs of all relevant stakeholders are sufficiently addressed (see Regulatory and Legal Reform Action Plan, page 134).

Build Support and Awareness for Conservation: There is limited public awareness of the importance of heritage conservation and the economic and social benefits of retaining the city's heritage buildings and established neighbourhoods. It is also likely that new heritage regulation will face opposition from parts of the business community. To generate willingness and enthusiasm for new planning processes and guidelines, government should see that heritage conservation is supported by the general public. Wide-spread support from all levels of society can also attract financial assistance through private sources, charities and foreign governments. High-profile conservation projects that upgrade highly used public spaces, improve local economies and enhance civic pride can improve public awareness (see Waterfront Action Plan, page 106, Latha Street Action Plan, page 102, Shwebontha Street Action Plan, page 98, and Lower Kyautada Action Plan, page 74).

In tandem with the above measures, a set of 5-10 major building conservation and public realm upgrade projects should be launched straightaway. These projects can generate immediate public benefit and have a knock-on effect by providing working examples of proper conservation practice, the use of Conservation Management Plans, and good

community involvement. In this strategy, 11 key buildings have been selected for their high heritage significance and ability to serve as catalytic demonstration projects. With the right mix of government support and private investment, they are ready for immediate action (see Figure 4 below).

There should also be major public-realm upgrades in which key streets around these buildings linking to highly used walking routes and commercial centres can be improved (see the Better Streets Action Plan, page 80). Additionally, strategic areas can be designated as public space and opened up to a broader network of walking and cycling routes; for instance, the Zoo & Botanical Gardens, the former War Office, the U Ottama Gardens and the People’s Park and Regional Parliament (see Shwedagon and Surrounds Action Plan, page 54, Public Parks and Gardens Action Plan, page 58, and Government Property Action Plan, page 60).

Long-Term Regulation: To succeed in the long term, the conservation of Yangon’s built, cultural and natural heritage must involve a tailored mix of immediate actions and a comprehensive urban plan within a solid regulatory framework based on a revised heritage law. This final step involves the introduction of a first-generation set of planning controls and processes to ensure the city can grow while not destroying what makes it unique. The revision of key legislation will be critical to this process as will a mandatory system for height controls across the city. These height limits can both protect heritage areas and free up space for high-rise. Clarifying issues of land ownership and tenancy as well as clearly outlining the rights and responsibilities of property owners is key to long-term success (see Legal Property Ownership Action Plan, page 132). Ultimately, what is needed is a full set of regulations to manage change affecting the city’s heritage buildings and areas (see Regulatory and Legal Reform Action Plan, page 134).

Figure 4 11 Landmark Reuse Opportunities

The Yangon Heritage Trust has identified the following eleven landmark buildings as key opportunities for immediate action. Each have high heritage significance and an ability to serve as catalytic demonstration projects. Six of these (Buildings C to H) are within the lower Kyauktada area and should be considered together to ensure the best uses can be found for them (see page 76-77).

BUILDINGS:

- A. Former Ministry of Hotels and Tourism
- B. Waziya Cinema
- C. Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank
- D. Yangon Division Court and Pension Office
- E. Former U.S. Embassy
- F. Balthazar Building
- G. Myanmar Economic Bank 2
- H. Former Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise
- I. Compressor Station
- J. Printing and Publishing Enterprise
- K. Sarpay Beikman

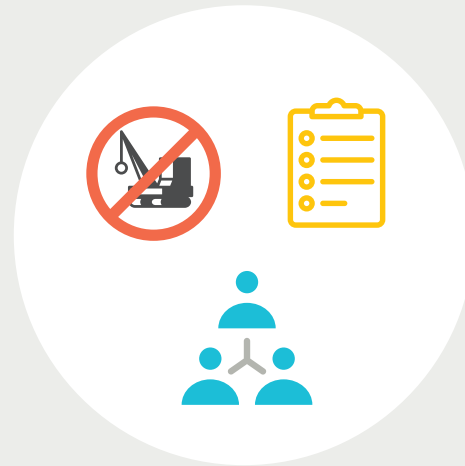


Figure 5 A Three-Phase Strategy

1. INTERIM MEASURES

Assist government to protect the historic city with interim legislation

- Moratorium on demolition of heritage assets
- Establish interim review process
- Identification of all public assets
- Protect and open up key public assets
- Review commercial uses and development threatening public assets
- Interim conservation area designations
- Interim individual heritage place protection



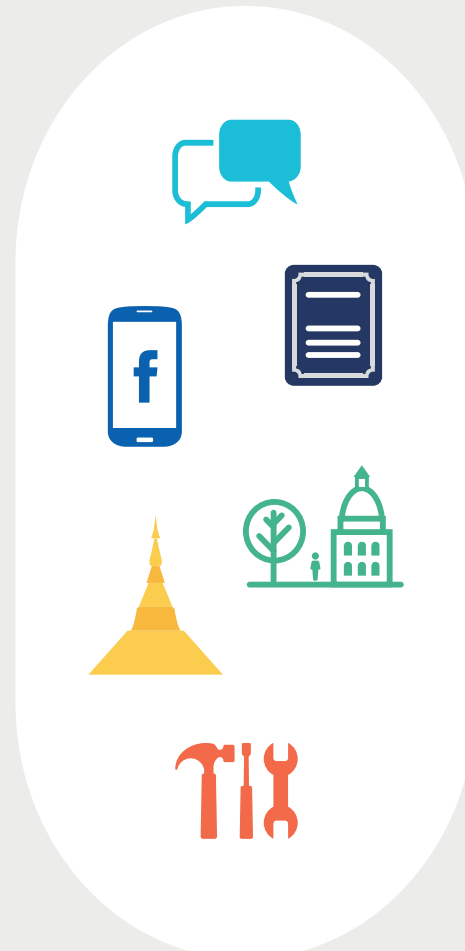
2. BUILD SUPPORT AND AWARENESS FOR CONSERVATION

Raise awareness of conservation and planning benefits

- YHT Blue plaques
- YHT Tours
- Media
- Community forums
- Assisting local government

Undertake demonstration public realm upgrade and building reuse projects

- Complete 5-10 historic building projects
- Establish a public private fund for conservation
- Master plan waterfront and railway sites
- Upgrade key walking routes in historic city in line with Better Streets Plan
- Create Shwedagon green belt
- Work on public transport



Provide advice and training for conservation projects

- YHT continues its training work
- YHT continues to provide advice to government
- YHT continues to assist government and private sector with conservation projects

3. LONG-TERM REGULATION

Introduce first-generation planning controls and processes

- Revised Yangon Heritage Conservation Law
- Introduce first generation planning regulations and processes
- Guidelines for new development in conservation areas
- Heritage guidelines for Individual places
- Revise supporting legislation
- Complete major projects such as waterfront and railway station redevelopments



Interim Measures

INTERIM REGULATION

Frameworks for Heritage Conservation

Interim conservation areas and individual heritage place designations 24.1.1, 24.1.2

Moratorium on development within interim conservation areas 24.1.3

Establish a review process for development proposals within conservation areas or affecting individual heritage places 24.1.4

Identify development priority areas away from heritage assets and close to public transport routes 24.1.5

Establish height controls for Yangon 24.2.1, 24.2.2

Use Conservation Management Plans as standard tools for significant heritage places 24.3.1

Establish New Bodies

YCDC arboreal unit 8.2.1

YCDC Deep Clean Unit 16.3.1

Tourism stakeholders body 14.1.2

Food hygiene capacity building body 16.6.1

Secretariat oversight committee 15.1.1

Reformed central Land Titles Office 23.2.1

Capacity building body for local businesses 14.5.1-14.5.3

PROTECTING, ACCESSING AND MANAGING PUBLIC ASSETS

Undertake Significance Assessments

Central Railway Station compound 5.7.1

Waterfront 13.1.2

Yangon University 18.1.2

Shwedagon and surrounds 1.1.1

Seek Expert Advice

Yangon University 19.2.1

Yangon General Hospital 17.2.2

Disaster resilience 24.5.1

Upgrade drinking water supply 16.5.1

Sanitation system upgrade 16.5.1

Hold Design Competitions

War Office compound 1.2.3

Waterfront 13.1.3

Sule Pagoda and surrounds 7.1.2

Central Railway Station 5.7.7

Identify Public Assets

Public housing 21.1.1

Parklands 2.2.1

Railway assets 4.1.1, 4.1.3

Education and university assets 18.1.1

Access to Public Assets

Public markets 9.2.2

Cemeteries 9.3.2

Shwedagon and surrounds 1.1.2

Affordable housing 20.2.1

Heritage buildings for the arts 6.1.2

Secretariat parklands 15.1.4

Night markets 11.9 and 12.9

Remove entrance fees to parklands 2.2.5

Protect Public Assets and Utilities

War Office 1.2.1

The Zoo 1.2.9

For future underground public transport systems 4.2.2

For future tram systems 4.6.1

Control and Review of Commercial Activity within Public Lands

Shwedagon and surrounds 1.1.3

Waterfront ferry terminal 13.1.8

Public parklands 2.1.2 and 2.2.3

Kandawgyi Lake 1.2.6

Inya Lake 20.2.1

Control Development Affecting Public Assets

Inya Lake 20.1.1-20.1.3

Yangon University 19.2.3-19.2.4

Shwedagon and surrounds 1.4.1, 1.4.2

Central Railway Station 5.7.2-5.7.6

Yangon General Hospital 17.2.1-17.2.4

Require large-scale new developments to provide public parkland 2.3.2

PUBLIC REALM MANAGEMENT

Improve Streets for Pedestrians

Halt removal of footpaths 8.1.1

Install traffic light crossings 8.1.4

Replace pedestrian overpasses 8.1.5

Remove generators 8.5.1-8.5.4

Replant trees in public streets 2.4.1

Vendor management 9.2.4

Traffic Management

Paint junction boxes 8.8.1

Mark traffic lanes 8.8.2

Introduce after-hours commercial delivery times 8.8.4

Introduce hourly parking fees 8.9.2

Improve the bus system 4.3.1-4.3.10

Public Health

Ban spitting of betel in public 16.1.5

Ban feeding of pigeons in public spaces 16.1.6

Hold community clean-up days 16.1.3, 16.1.4

Recycle waste from street markets 16.4.5

Improve food safety 16.6.1

Manage traffic around Yangon General Hospital 17.3.1-17.3.4

Review waste disposal laws and regulations 16.1.2 and 16.2.4

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Recovering Memory and Celebrating Diversity

Produce religious festival calendar 10.3.1

YHT continues blue plaques programme 10.2.1

YHT continues local tours 10.4.1

Improve access to archives 10.5.1

Public Awareness

Bicycle safety 8.3.1

Cleanliness of public spaces 16.1.1

Build Support and Awareness

RAISING AWARENESS

Recovering Memory

Memory hubs 10.1.1-10.1.4

Walking routes 10.3.2,10.3.3

Sustainable Tourism

Marketing strategy 14.1.3, 14.1.4, 14.2.1

Introduce walking routes through historic areas 14.3.1-14.3.4

Shwedagon 14.4.3

BUILDING STRONGER REGULATION

Finance for Heritage Conservation

Establish and fund investment vehicle for government property 22.1

Collect contributions from tourism 22.2

Collect developer contributions for public realm upgrade and heritage conservation 22.3

Clarity of Title Project

Define legal ownership 23.2.2

Establish fast-track court system 23.2.3-23.2.5

Establish body corporate 23.3

Review Regulations and Laws

Establish guidelines for development within Conservation Areas and where Individual heritage places are affected 24.3.2

Designate heritage conservation areas and create a list of individual places 24.4.1-24.4.4

Review the National Building Codes 24.5.4

UNDERTAKE MAJOR PUBLIC ASSET IMPROVEMENTS

Key Assets

Landmark building reuse opportunities throughout Action Plans, especially pages 76-77

Central Railway Station 5.7.8,5.7.9

Downtown City Museum 6.1.4

Waterfront 13.1.4-13.1.7

Yangon University 19.2.5-19.2.8

Secretariat 15.1.6

Yangon General Hospital 17.1.3

Public Transport Upgrade

Rail system upgrade 4.1.4-4.1.6

Bus system upgrade 4.3.11

Establish new bus routes 4.3.13, 4.3.14

Establish trishaw lanes 4.4.2

Undertake a feasibility study for a reinstated tram system 4.6.2

Improve Yangon's ferry system 4.7.1

PUBLIC SPACE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Key Area Upgrades

Better Streets upgrade for Mahabandoola and Anawrahta Streets 8.1.6-8.1.8 see page 92-92

Create Shared Community Spaces 8.6.2-8.6.4

Greening streets 2.4.2-2.4.4

Latha Street 9.1.3 and 11.0

Shwebontha Street 9.1.3 and 12.0

Sule pedestrian upgrade 7.1.3

Mahabandoola Garden Street 7.2.4

Bank Street 7.3.6

Public Realm Cleanliness

Back lanes used and maintained 16.2.6, 16.2.7

Upgrade utilities like water, sanitation and drainage 16.5.2, 16.5.3

Provide clean washup areas for vendors 16.6.3

Parking

Residential permit system 8.9.4

Redesign parking space availability 8.9.6

Improve Public Access to Parklands

The Secretariat 15.1.4

Zoo 1.2.11

Kandawgyi Lake 1.2.8

U Ottama Park 1.2.15

Peoples Park 1.2.18

Martyr's Mausoleum 1.2.23

Long-Term Regulation

KEY ASSETS AND MASTER PLANNING

Master Planning

Yangon to have a revised urban plan covering the entire metropolitan area [page 20-24](#)

Growth areas for increased density along transport corridors are defined [3.3.7](#)

Shwedagon and surrounds are planned to ensure good development, tourism management, traffic management and heritage management [1.1.5-1.1.11](#)

Central Railway Station and surrounding public spaces planned and redeveloped as an improved transport hub and with a major new public square [5.7.10, 5.7.11](#)

The waterfront has been planned and redeveloped as a key public space with retained heritage assets and historic warehouses used for arts and cultural uses [6.1.8](#)

Yangon General Hospital and surrounding government land has been planned to meet the city's health needs [17.0](#)

Key Public Assets

Yangon University is again a leading education institution and its important heritage buildings and open spaces have been retained [17.0](#)

Windermere Compound is a centre for think tanks and NGOs contributing to Myanmar's wider development [18.3](#)

Yangon General Hospital is connected to the wider health district and its historic significance and important buildings have been conserved [17.0](#)

The Secretariat is a major cultural hub and destination for local and international visitors, also a key place where Myanmar people can learn about their history [15.0](#)

Lower Kyauktada Township has become a hub for cultural institutions and activities [7.0](#)

The Central Railway Station is conserved and the surrounding spaces redeveloped as a transport hub with carefully designed commercial uses [5.0](#)

The city has been reconnected with the Yangon river via a major redevelopment of the downtown waterfront [13.0](#)

The Zoo has become a centre of excellence in Myanmar's ecological conservation [1.2.13](#)

Parklands

Shwedagon and surrounds park system including the Kandawgyi Lake, Botanical Gardens, War Office, People's Park, Parliament Compound and Martyr's Mausoleum are fully utilised and open to the public [1.1.5, 1.1.6](#)

New waterfront parks established at the southern end of Shwedagon Pagoda Road and Pansodan Road [13.1.13, 13.1.14](#)

An integrated system of walking routes is created making it possible to walk or bicycle from Inya Lake to the downtown waterfront via the Shwedagon park system [1.3, 8.1, 8.3, 13.1.10, 14.3, 19.2.6](#)

Inya Lake is protected from commercialisation and threatening development [20.1](#)

New developments over a certain size are required to dedicate a set proportion of their parcel to new parklands and public spaces [2.3.2](#)

Transport

Fully functioning circular rail line is created with increased regularity of service to 10 minute intervals [4.1.7](#)

Fully redesigned bus system with dedicated express routes, circular routes and feeder routes into the rail circle line is in place [4.3](#)

Fully integrated traffic light system with redesigned road system including pedestrian crossings across the city is established [8.8.5](#)

Dedicated bicycle lanes for cyclists and trishaws are installed across the city [8.3](#)

The Better Streets Plan is rolled out across the city [8.0](#)

PROPER REGULATION

Urban Management

Introduce an underground space law to allow planning of a subway system [4.2.3](#)

Clarify legal ownership and land title systems [23.1.2](#)

Introduce a revised Condominium Law [23.1.2](#)

Introduce a revised Urban Rent Control Act [23.1.2](#)

Introduce a new Commercial Tenancies Act [23.1.2](#)

Establish a fully functioning Land Titles Office [23.2.6, 23.2.7](#)

Establish a government property office [3.3.6](#)

Undertake disaster preparedness [24.5.5, 24.5.6](#)

Heritage Management

Sustainable financing for continuing heritage conservation and urban upgrade [22.0](#)

Revised Yangon Heritage Conservation Law [24.3.2](#)

Full set of conservation area designations [24.4.2, 24.4.3](#)

Full list of individual heritage places [24.4.5](#)

Guidelines for new development in conservation areas [24.3.4](#)

Guidelines for changes affecting individual heritage places [24.3.5](#)

Strong heritage planning process as part of the broader urban planning and regulation of development in Yangon [24.3.3, 24.3.6](#)



MOBILE IT

ကမ္ဘာ့နာမည်ကြီး
Watch Service Center

MUSIC HEART
GUITAR SHOP

နူးထူးစွာ Digital Photo

MOBILE IT

MUSIC HEART
GUITAR SHOP

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Action Plans

Introduction




The following Action Plans put forward both short-term and long-term achievable plans that contribute to the Yangon Heritage Trust's Vision outlined on pages 26-31.

The selection of these Action Plans is based on several criteria. Firstly, their importance in making Yangon liveable and regionally competitive. They all contribute to this aim and several are considered vital to its achievement, including the Better Streets Plan (page 80), the Shwedagon and Surrounds Plan (page 54) and the Transportation Plan (page 64). Secondly, they are related to the work of YHT and fall within the organisation's experience and expertise. Thirdly, they are achievable and have a good chance of being implemented.

Each plan provides varying degrees of detail; some require further work before specific decisions can be made and some can be implemented immediately. As all of these plans – the buildings, areas and themes covered – represent a core area of YHT's work, the Trust has more detail and material related to each plan that can be accessed upon request. The Trust is also constantly updating and adding new potential Action Plans as demand requires.

How to Navigate The Action Plans: The YHT Strategy (page 44) outlines how these actions can best be enacted and provides a suggested order of delivery as well as interdependencies.

Throughout the following Action Plans, a system of coloured bars show which of the three strategic steps each individual action point relates to (see page 46).

-  Interim Measures
-  Build Support and Awareness
-  Long-Term Regulation

The Action Plans are arranged thematically and summarised opposite.

The Online Annexes referred to within this chapter can be found at www.yhtliveableyangon.org



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LANDMARK BUILDING REUSE OPPORTUNITIES

Former Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	61
Waziya Cinema	73
Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank	76
Yangon Division Court and Pension Office	76
Former U.S. Embassy	77
Balthazar Building	77
Myanmar Economic Bank 2	77
Former Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise	77
Compressor Station	112
Printing and Publishing Enterprise	115
Sarpay Beikman	123



1. Shwedagon and Surrounds



**PUBLIC
ASSETS**



UNIQUE



HEALTHY



ECONOMY

The Shwedagon pagoda is one of Myanmar's most valuable cultural and economic assets. As the country's most important religious site and a major tourist destination, it is a key part of what makes Yangon unique. However, it is currently under threat from neighbouring development and risks being separated from the wider city by badly placed high-rises and poor links to surrounding parklands.

Strong planning and development guidelines applied to the Shwedagon and surrounding temples and monasteries can provide urgently needed protection. A review of development guidelines within a 1.5 mile radius of the monument can ensure that key views are not lost to high-rise development and that the Shwedagon's presence remains felt across the wider city.

The Shwedagon can be circled with a green belt of public parks that separates it from the busy urban environment. These parks include Kandawgyi Lake, the Zoo & Botanical Gardens, the former War Office, the U Ottama Park (formerly Kan Taw Mingalar or Cantonment Gardens), the People's Park and Regional Parliament compound and the Martyr's Mausoleum. Each of these green areas can have a circular walking path within its perimeter. These individual loops can then be linked into a broader path circling the Shwedagon by overpassing public roads. This walking track system can be separated from the road system and existing pedestrian routes. This will provide over nine miles of walking and cycling routes, giving Yangon an invaluable liveability and public health asset. Once pedestrians or bicyclists enter the path system they won't have to stop at traffic lights or cross roads. The system will also enable international and local visitors to walk all around the Shwedagon and view it from every angle, enjoying a variety of different views and settings.

1.1 MASTER PLANNING

- 1.1.1 Undertake a significance assessment of all structures and areas as well as view lines around Shwedagon to ensure that important heritage is conserved and that other areas are identified where carefully controlled new buildings are allowed
- 1.1.2 Good public access provided to all parks by improving entrance points, removing entrance fees and creating walking paths
- 1.1.3 Careful control of commercial activities within public parklands and review of existing activities to protect the parkland and ensure public benefit
- 1.1.4 Put in place proper management of the Mausoleums at the southern entrance to the Shwedagon to ensure their maintenance and that they are open to the public
- 1.1.5 Create a Master Plan for the Shwedagon and surrounding parks
- 1.1.6 Planning to include Kandawgyi Lake, the Zoo & Botanical Gardens, the former War Office, the U Ottama Park, the full extent of Shwedagon Pagoda Road to the waterfront, the People's Park and Regional Parliament compound, the Martyr's Mausoleum, the monastic areas to the north and east of the Shwedagon
- 1.1.7 Creation of a Tourism Management Plan to ensure that increased numbers do not damage the cultural and religious significance of the site or local people's ability to worship there
- 1.1.8 Creation of a Traffic Management Plan to reduce heavy traffic flow (consider planning for tunnels in the area where new or widened roads are required)
- 1.1.9 Create a Heritage Conservation Master Plan and, where required, more detailed Conservation Management Plans to ensure cultural and religious significance is protected
- 1.1.10 Creation of walking and cycling paths (see Figure 6)
- 1.1.11 Provision of good public transport to-and-from the area to minimise reliance on taxi usage and improve traffic flow at pinch points, such as the western entrance to the Shwedagon on U Wisara Road

1.2 SHWEDAGON GREEN BELT

WAR OFFICE

- 1.2.1 Designate former War Office compound as public parkland
- 1.2.2 Re-green the compound to ensure stability of sub-soils
- 1.2.3 Undertake a design competition for reuse of the compound (YHT guidelines available)
- 1.2.4 Create internal walking path network
- 1.2.5 The compound can then be opened to public visits on weekends and people can walk from the Shwedagon to Alan Pya Pagoda and down to Kandawgyi Lake through the site

KANDAWGYI LAKE

- 1.2.6 Review commercial activities to ensure public benefit
- 1.2.7 Increase the number and regularity of access gates
- 1.2.8 Improve access and create a pathway around Kandawgyi Lake

ZOO

- 1.2.9 Review captivity of animals to ensure proper care and welfare
- 1.2.10 Partner with international animal welfare associations
- 1.2.11 Create internal walking path network
- 1.2.12 Reinvigorate the Zoo as a centre for Myanmar's environmental conservation efforts

U OTTAMA PARK

- 1.2.13 | Open site for free public access
- 1.2.14 | Increase the number and regularity of access gates
- 1.2.15 | Create internal walking path network

PEOPLE'S PARK

- 1.2.16 | Review all commercial activity within the park to ensure public space is not used for private commercial interests
- 1.2.17 | Increase the number and regularity of access gates
- 1.2.18 | Create internal walking path network that includes access to the military parade ground and the area currently used by Happy World

REGIONAL PARLIAMENT COMPOUND

- 1.2.19 | Ensure security of Regional Parliament by creating a new fencing system separating it from the wider park
- 1.2.20 | Create internal walking path network
- 1.2.21 | Open park for public recreational use
- 1.2.22 | Increase the number and regularity of access gates

MARTYR'S MAUSOLEUM

- 1.2.23 | Create internal walking path network at a respectful distance from the monument

1.3 PUBLIC PATHWAY SYSTEM

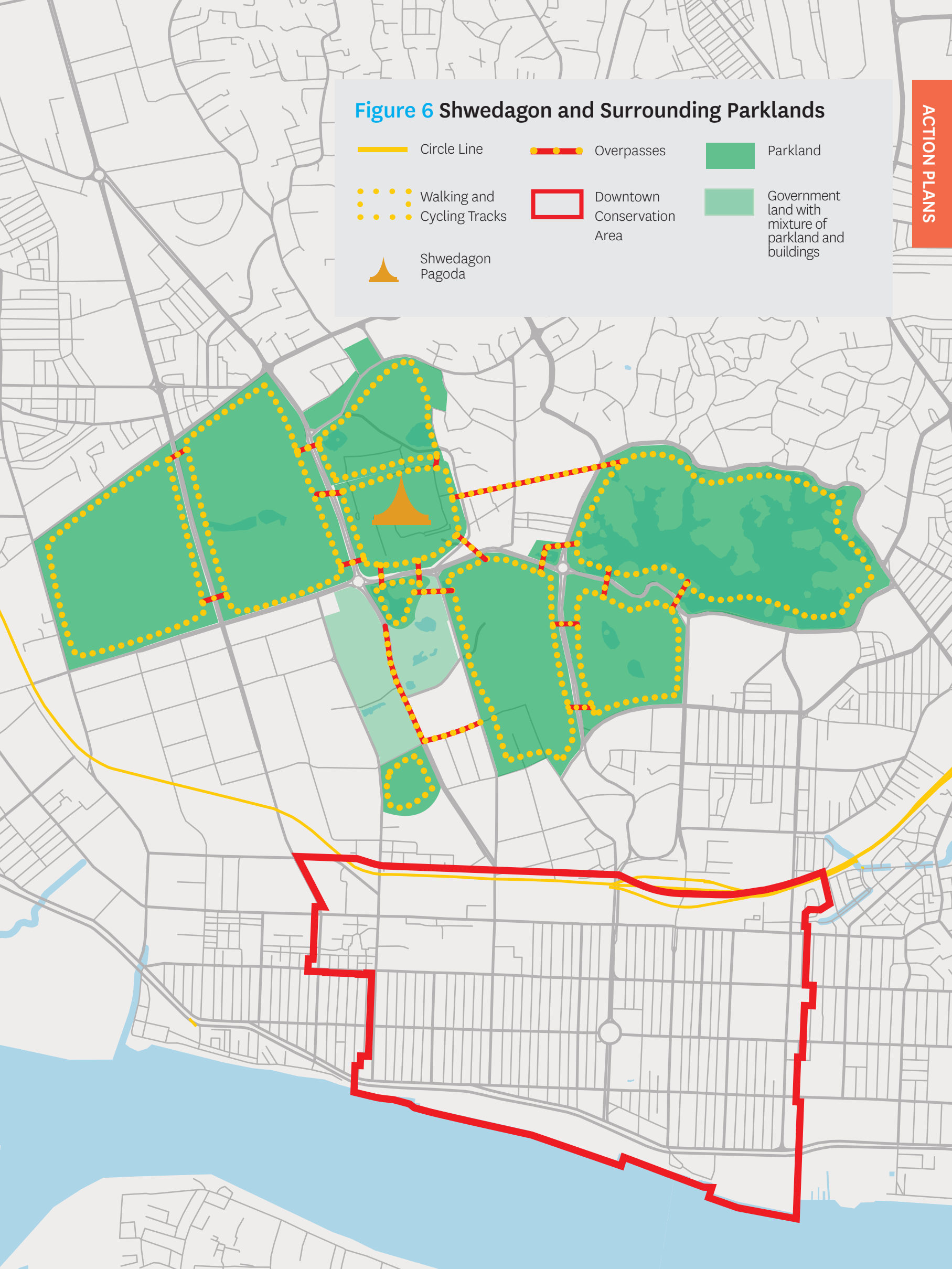
- 1.3.1 | Each of the above parks can have a dedicated and self-contained walking and biking path that is ten feet wide
- 1.3.2 | Each of these loops should be linked to each other with a system of overpasses and underpasses across public streets, creating a grand loop around the Shwedagon
- 1.3.3 | Overpasses should use ramps rather than steps to allow cyclists to use the network
- 1.3.4 | The system should allow continuous walking or cycling without the need to stop at road intersections
- 1.3.5 | This route could be inaugurated at a future Yangon Marathon

1.4 CONTROL NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 1.4.1 | Give the Shwedagon and surrounds a conservation area overlay under the proposed Yangon Heritage Conservation Law (see Regulatory and Legal Reform Action Plan, page 134), in addition to its existing Cultural Heritage Regions Law (1998) designation
- 1.4.2 | Place a moratorium on new development within 1.5 miles of the Shwedagon or within 2,000 feet of the boundary of the proposed park system (See Figure 6) – this will allow time for all construction to be reviewed and ensure that new development does not damage the Shwedagon or surrounding parks
- 1.4.3 | Continue with the Yangon Zoning Plan to ensure that effective height controls will be put in place surrounding the Shwedagon and adjacent parks and gardens

Figure 6 Shwedagon and Surrounding Parklands

- Circle Line
- Overpasses
- Parkland
- Walking and Cycling Tracks
- Downtown Conservation Area
- Government land with mixture of parkland and buildings
- Shwedagon Pagoda

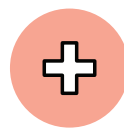




2. Public Parks and Gardens



**PUBLIC
ASSETS**



HEALTHY



UNIQUE

Yangon is blessed with more than 1500 acres of parkland representing a huge liveability and health asset. However, many of these parks are inaccessible to the public. Areas such as the Regional Parliament compound are not open to the public and existing parks such as the zoo, the People's Park and Kandawgyi Lake have been eroded by semi-private developments and lack of coordinated management. With a new system of connected circular paths, residents will have access to better exercise and relaxation options. Current walking areas such as Kandawgyi Lake are under-utilised because existing walking tracks lead to dead ends.

A city-wide network of parks and gardens can be created in Yangon. With good planning, they can link the central Shwedagon park system into a wider network of green corridors and gardens all the way around Kandawgyi and Inya lakes out to the Yangon River and Pazundaung Creek waterfronts.

All of Yangon's government-owned parkland can be identified and protected for public use. With strong legislation in place, commercial development can be managed to ensure public parks are not eroded.

There can also be a concerted effort to create new parks such as at the War Office (page 55) and on the Waterfront (page 107).

Access to parkland can be improved by ensuring that fences are removed or that gates are built and opened at regular intervals.

Paths should also avoid stairs to allow for cyclists, prams and disabled access. All entrance fees should be removed to encourage people to use parks.

In addition to parks, Yangon's streets can also be greened by planting more trees within public spaces and along footpaths and by making sure existing heritage trees are healthy and well protected.

Consideration can also be given to introducing YCDC bylaws encouraging private property such as back gardens to be greened.

2.1 LEGISLATIVE REFORM

- 2.1.1 | Protect public parks through application of conservation area designations
- 2.1.2 | Limit commercial activity and development within parks
- 2.1.3 | Review existing legislation dealing with public parks and strengthen to ensure public access and shared public ownership of these spaces is enshrined in law

2.2 IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS

- 2.2.1 | Undertake an audit of all public parks in Yangon with a view to protecting them

- 2.2.2** Halt future commercial development in public parks and review their appropriateness
- 2.2.3** Review all existing commercial operations within public parks to ensure they do not diminish public usability or the installation of new walking and cycling paths
- 2.2.4** Each public park should have a dedicated live-in caretaker or team and a budget for maintenance
- 2.2.5** Remove entrance fees on all public parks to encourage public use
- 2.2.6** Improve access to public parks by removing fences around small-to-medium size public gardens
- 2.2.7** Remove existing commercial activities damaging or obscuring public access to parks, especially around the Shwedagon Pagoda, the Zoo and Kandawgyi and Inya lakes
- 2.2.8** Where large-scale parks require permanent fencing, they should have a gate every 300 feet that is opened daily
- 2.2.9** Improve provision and quality of circular walking and cycling paths within public parklands

2.3 ENCOURAGE PROVISION OF NEW PARKLANDS

- 2.3.1** Consider using open sites that have no clear ownership status as public parks
- 2.3.2** Require at least 20% of space within large-scale developments, such as the Central Railway Station, to be used for public parks
- 2.3.3** Protect and open the War Office, Regional Parliament compound and other under-utilised parklands for public use
- 2.3.4** Historic cemeteries, such as that at the corner of Bogyoke Aung San and Theinbyu roads or the former Chinese cemetery at Myanma Gone Yi Street can be used as public parks and protected
- 2.3.5** Open the Secretariat as a public park (page 115)
- 2.3.6** Create two new waterfront parks (see page 107)

2.4 GREENING PUBLIC STREETS

- 2.4.1** Replant and restore trees lost in recent years
- 2.4.2** Redesign streets to allow maximum re-greening and public ability to enjoy them through provision of open space around trees and provision of public furniture (see Better Streets Plan, page 80)
- 2.4.3** Different species can be used in different neighbourhoods or streets as place makers and for major thoroughfares or specific neighbourhoods to give them character

- 2.4.4** The bases of all trees should be properly contained using boxes or grates to ensure that dirt is not washed away onto streets or into drains and to stop rats from burrowing into route systems

2.5 PROTECTING HERITAGE TREES

- 2.5.1** Footpaths, roads and parking bays can be designed around existing heritage trees to ensure they are protected and that they can be enjoyed and used by the public
- 2.5.2** Established trees and those with religious significance can be identified and protected through being listed as heritage items within new legislative frameworks

Best Practice: Green Spaces SEOUL, THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA



With 26.6% of the city covered by green parks and gardens, Seoul is one of the greenest major cities in Asia⁴⁰. The green coverage of Seoul is the result of several policies implemented since the 1980s. At that time the city was seeing negative impacts from poorly planned development. Notable initiatives: *Parks & Green Space Expansion 5 year Plan* (1996), *Ten Million Trees: Making a Livable City* (1998) and *One Million Pyeong Expansion of Parks & Green Spaces* (2002).

With these efforts, air quality and general liveability have been improved. The city's green spaces have huge social, economic and environmental value. Examples include:

1. Cheonggyecheon River, a river park restored from a sewerage stream once covered by an elevated highway
2. Seoul Plaza, a civic green space outside the renovated City Hall
3. Dongdaemun Design Plaza and the surrounding green park, converted from a former stadium and marketplace
4. Small-scale green spaces across the city, trees and shrubs acting as natural barriers, rooftop gardens



3. Government Property



PUBLIC ASSETS



ECONOMY



COMPACT

Various government bodies own huge areas of land and real estate in Yangon. Many of these are also the most significant heritage places in Myanmar with enormous potential for reuse as anything from public libraries and business incubators to boutique hotels and retail outlets.

Until now, government departments and ministries have planned and developed their own assets separately. There has not been cross-departmental collaboration or master planning on how to use or develop these properties. Several key ministries such as Finance, Information, Railways, Construction and the Port Authority are vital stakeholders in the conservation and urban planning effort.

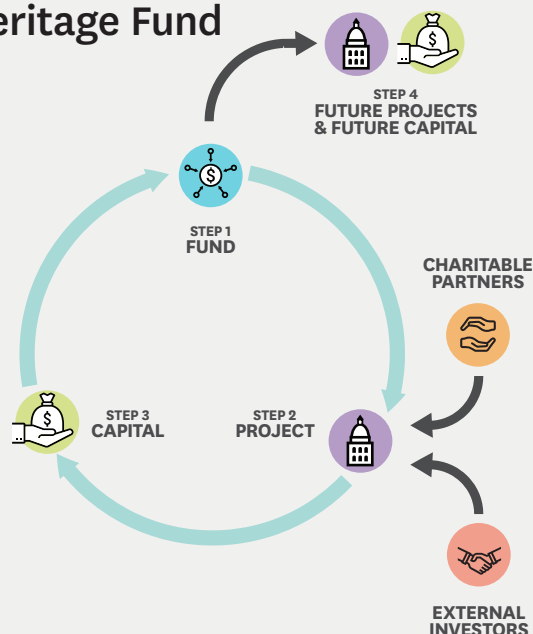
The move to Naypyitaw left many government buildings and sites under-utilised. Having a strategy for the use of government office space can ensure that the city's many requirements are efficiently linked with the opportunities provided - especially as technology lessens demand for large amounts of space.

An audit of government land and real estate in Yangon will assist authorities in understanding who owns what and where. A dedicated government office can be responsible for this effort. A plan is then required to strategically utilise this land and real estate for public good.

This office could also include a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) department responsible for bringing government property to market and seeking, assessing and overseeing partnerships with the private sector in the form of leasing or development arrangements for the public good. Premium leases could be sought on high-profile historic buildings. With a mix of commercial and public use being allowed. At the end of the lease, they would be returned to the government as an improved asset.

As a pilot, a public private vehicle could be established to take responsibility for the conservation, funding and maintenance of large government-owned heritage buildings such as those highlighted on pages 76-77. This body could be established quickly as a workable third option between keeping these properties exclusively in government hands and leasing them directly to commercial interests. Modelling undertaken by the Yangon Heritage Trust and the Asia Development Bank show that when groups of buildings are bought together as a package, their conservation, continuing public use and tailored commercial use are financially viable and able to generate an income to be fed into further conservation projects across the city and public realm upgrades (see Figure 7, opposite).

Figure 7
Heritage Fund



3.1 HERITAGE INVESTMENT VEHICLE

- 3.1.1 Establish a vehicle that allows commercially viable and socially beneficial use of heritage buildings across Yangon to generate an income for government and the wider conservation effort
- 3.1.2 A committee consisting of representatives from several sectors including the government and business community would oversee the vehicle
- 3.1.3 The same committee would oversee the fund attached to this body (see below)

3.2 ESTABLISH A FUND FOR GOVERNMENT-OWNED HERITAGE BUILDINGS

- 3.2.1 A fund could be established for the upgrade of heritage buildings and public realm improvements in conservation areas
- 3.2.2 This fund would be managed by a committee consisting of government and private sector representatives
- 3.2.3 It could be independently audited to ensure accountability and transparency
- 3.2.4 The fund would be used to finance public realm upgrades and both built and cultural heritage conservation projects

3.3 ESTABLISHING A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PROPERTY OFFICE

- 3.3.1 This office should have the authority to determine the legal ownership status of all government property under each ministry and department
- 3.3.2 The office should establish a central record of all property

- 3.3.3 Another key aim should be identifying under-utilised or badly maintained heritage buildings in the historic city that can be reused, particularly within Action Plan areas such as Lower Kyauktada (page 74)
- 3.3.4 This office could include a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) department that brings government properties to market and oversees arrangements with the private sector for renovation, reuse and leasing for the public good via a heritage investment vehicle
- 3.3.5 The PPP department would also produce, with assistance from YHT, investment packages with guidelines and parameters in place to provide potential investors with certainty on what will and will not be permitted for each heritage building
- 3.3.6 The office should facilitate the creation of a strategy for the use of government-owned property for public good – uses can include leasing, restoration and reuse, continuing government use and new development
- 3.3.7 A key aim should be to identify areas of public land that are currently under-utilised within the urban footprint – these can be developed more intensively to remove pressure from conservation areas, in accordance with the liveability principles (Liveability, pages 36-41)

Reuse Opportunity Former Ministry of Hotels and Tourism



ADDRESS: Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Sule Pagoda Road

BUILT: circa 1905

ORIGINAL USE: Department store

CURRENT USE: Vacant

PROPOSED USE: Visitor Information Point and Civic Forum

Adjacent to Sule Pagoda, Mahabandoola Garden and the City Hall, this building can serve as a visitor information point. Limited commercial activity associated with tourism can generate an income for the building's maintenance. Gallery space, meeting rooms, conference facilities and offices can support the future urban planning effort in Yangon.

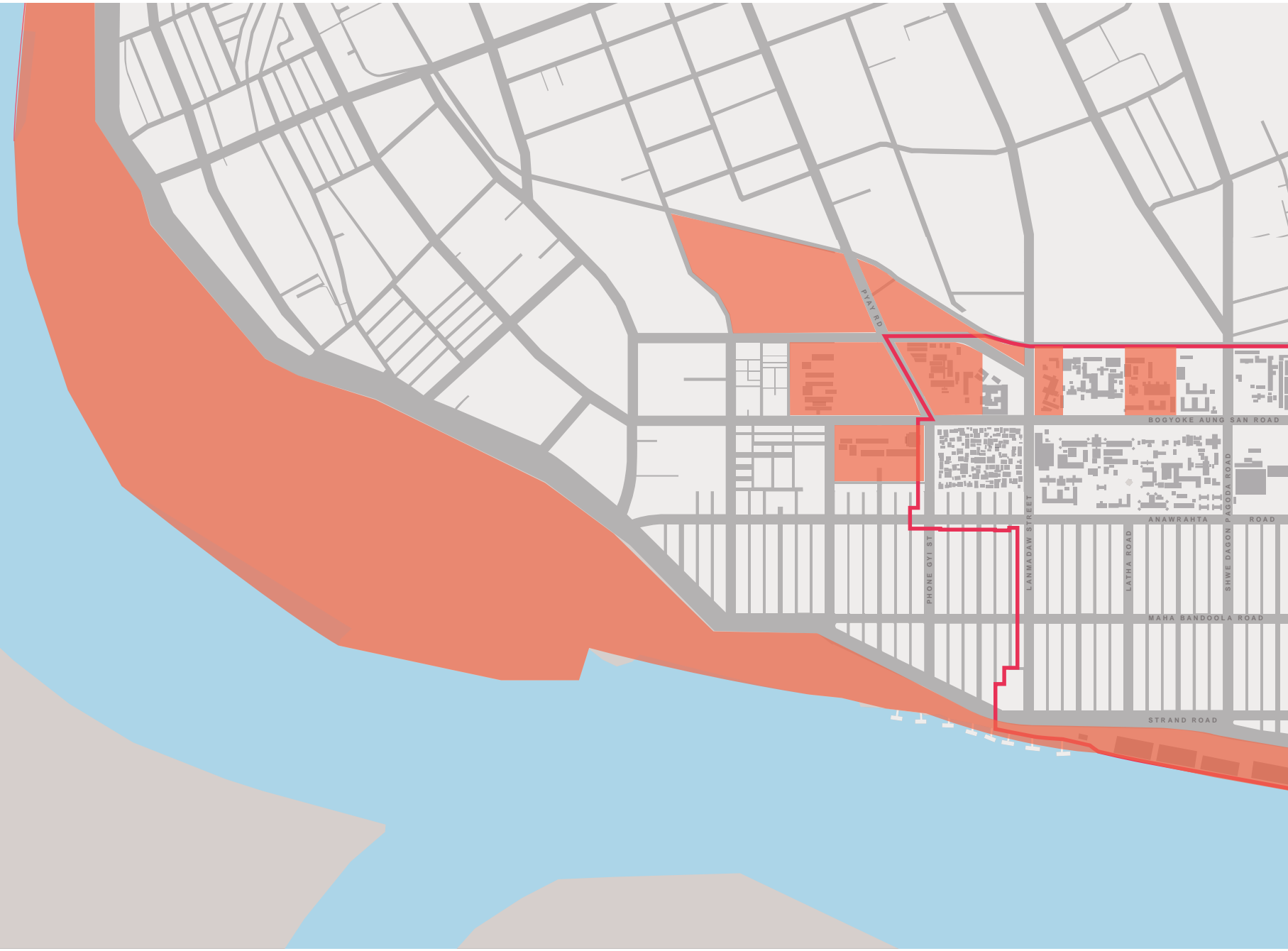


Figure 8 Under-utilised Downtown Government Property



MAKING THE BEST OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS

This map shows several pieces of government-owned land. Some are fully used and some are partially used or entirely disused. Looking at all this land holistically is important. This can ensure key public assets like the Yangon General Hospital and surrounding Ministry of Health land is fully used for public good. Other areas along the expansive waterfront and key transport routes could be developed to avoid urban sprawl. Good master planning and strategic thinking is key.



4. Transportation



ECONOMY



COMPACT



HEALTHY



CONNECTED

Yangon is blessed with an extensive river system, a generous circular rail line, well-designed gridded downtown area, an extensive road network across the city and a strong walking culture. With good planning, the city can take advantage of these assets and address the enormous transportation challenges it currently faces.

The number of cars on Yangon’s roads has dramatically increased in recent years, without good planning or preparation. Poorly designed catch-up interventions such as flyovers and footpath removals across the city are having a negative impact on traffic flow and the city’s liveability. Yangon lacks an integrated traffic light system. This, coupled with poor adherence to traffic rules, and a badly managed bus system causes major delays as busses and cars block roads and intersections. The Circle Line is extremely under-utilised, currently only carrying a very small amount of the local population.

The city urgently requires a comprehensive, multi-modal transport strategy. The strategy can have at its core an upgraded Circle Line – the key to unlocking the transport gridlock in Yangon. A fully restructured bus system is also needed with new feeder, express and circular routes. These two major public transport systems need to work in harmony. As more people use public transport, traffic congestion will improve.

To address congestion, investment for public transport should be prioritised over investment in car infrastructure.

By 2025, Yangon should have a subway system that services the area within the bounds of the Circle Line. Subways should be used to ensure that the historic city and key areas such as the downtown area, the Shwedagon and its surrounding parks and Inya Lake are not impacted by multi-deck transport routes.

At the confluence of six rivers, Yangon’s water system is currently under-utilised as a public transport asset. An expanded system of ferries and taxis could help address transportation issues.

Trishaws and bicycles are also an important mode of environmentally sustainable transport in the city providing a livelihood for low-income families. There should be a dedicated system of bike lanes in the city to cater for this culturally and economically important mode of public transport.

Yangon already has an established walking culture and this should be further encouraged by upgrading key pedestrian routes such as Mahabandoola and Anawrahta roads, in accordance with the Better Streets Plan (page 80).

4.1 CIRCLE LINE UPGRADE

- 4.1.1 Audit all railway and government land with a view to protecting it for future growth of the railway system, particularly in the eastern and western sections of the city
- 4.1.2 Investigate routes for additional circular rail lines, especially in the east of the city where a new line could cross the Pazundaung Creek and loop out through Thaketa, South Dagon and Dagon Seikkan townships
- 4.1.3 Identify public land adjacent to key railway stations on the Circle Line where government-run medium-rise carparks can be built to allow the Circle Line to be used as a “park and ride” system
- 4.1.4 Upgrade and increase the number of rolling stock (carriages) to ensure reliability and adequate service provision
- 4.1.5 Design a system of bus feeder routes that take people from surrounding areas into Circle Line stations and back
- 4.1.6 Plan for over/underpasses of major railway road crossings in anticipation of traffic delays from increased services on the Circle Line to be carried out before service regularity increases
- 4.1.7 Enable regularity of service at 10-minute intervals at peak demand during the morning and evening

4.2 SUBWAY SYSTEM

- 4.2.1 Identify key routes where the area within the bounds of the Circle Line can be serviced by underground lines – possible routes are suggested in Figure 9 (page 67).
- 4.2.2 Identify, protect and acquire land for utilities and stations associated with a subway system and its construction
- 4.2.3 Draft a new law to regulate the use of underground space

4.3 BUS SYSTEM UPGRADE

- 4.3.1 Extend rapid transport routes and rationalise existing routes to improve efficiency
- 4.3.2 Identify dedicated express bus routes from outer areas into key locations such as the Central Railway Station
- 4.3.3 Rationalise the number and path of bus routes based on a clear understanding of demand
- 4.3.4 Redesign the bus stop system in Yangon to ensure that bus stops have minimal impact on traffic and pedestrian flow
- 4.3.5 Designate with road surfacing treatments dedicated bus lanes within the downtown area and along key express routes (see Better Streets Plan, page 80)
- 4.3.6 Introduce heavy fines for busses driving outside of dedicated lanes
- 4.3.7 Improve police monitoring of bus routes to ensure safety and good driver behaviour
- 4.3.8 Establish a community reporting centre where bus users and the general public can report unsafe driving or bad behaviour
- 4.3.9 Bus drivers and conductors should be paid a fixed salary rather than get paid for the number of loops they complete
- 4.3.10 Begin a full review of the existing management and licencing system of busses in Yangon with a view to improving reliability, safety, professionalism and driving skills
- 4.3.11 Introduce operational guidelines for bus drivers and conductors outlining safety standards, driving techniques, customer interaction standards, cleanliness and professionalism
- 4.3.12 Re-licence all drivers and conductors according to the new operational guidelines
- 4.3.13 Designate new feeder routes that take people into-and-out of key Circle Line stations
- 4.3.14 Upgrade the busses to ensure they are safe, accessible and clean

4.4 TRISHAWS

- 4.4.1 Dedicated trishaw ranks to be placed at key intersections
- 4.4.2 Dedicated trishaw and bike lanes to be marked in the downtown area
- 4.4.3 Standard guidelines and road rules to be written for trishaw operation and all operators to be retested within a moratorium period
- 4.4.4 Trishaw drivers to be relicensed and regularly checked for safety

4.5 WALKABILITY

- 4.5.1 See the Better Streets Plan (page 80)

4.6 DOWNTOWN TRAM LOOP

- 4.6.1 All tram-related infrastructure, including former generator buildings and termini, to be identified and protected for public transport use
- 4.6.2 Feasibility study to be undertaken on reinstating a circular tram route in the downtown grid

4.7 WATER TRANSPORT

- 4.7.1 Key jetties to be linked via water taxi and ferry services running people from Dala, Lan Thit, Pazundaung, Kemmendine and Thanlyin via the river system

Best Practice: Public Transport CURITIBA, BRAZIL



Curitiba's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system implemented in 1974 and revamped in 1991 services a population 1.8 million people as of 2015⁴¹.

In the 1960s the city's population surged. Initial proposed responses included widening the avenues and redesigning the city for cars and creating underground links.

Instead of looking at an expensive subway system, the city invested in an integrated BRT network involving:

1. Dedicated bus lanes along the city's main arteries, allowing buses to run at speeds comparable to light rail with minimal initial cost.
2. Striking a deal with bus operators to fund new infrastructure while the government supplied the busses.
3. Developing a comprehensive route network and focussing new development around it

In 2010, Curitiba was given the "Global Sustainable City Award". Its bus system was mentioned for its frequent and reliable service (with some buses running as often as every 90 seconds).

Today, Curitiba's bus system is used by 70% of the city's commuters, with 357 stations throughout the city. About 1,100 buses make 12,500 trips every day⁴².

Figure 9 Public Transport in Yangon

- Circle Line
- Potential Subway Routes
- Downtown Conservation Area
- Potential Subway Route Extensions
- Potential Bus Feeder Routes





LAMADAW STREET

LATHA ROAD

SHWE DAGON PAGODA ROAD

ANAWRAHTA ROAD

MAHA BANDOOLA ROAD

Figure 10 Transport Downtown

- Circle Line
- Possible Downtown Circular Bus Routes
- Possible Bus Rapid Transport Route
- Downtown Conservation Area
- Possible Bus Rapid Transport Route
- Transport Interchange

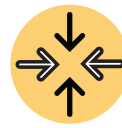




5. Central Railway Station



CONNECTED



COMPACT



ECONOMY



AFFORDABLE

The 63-acre site of the Central Railway Station, if developed well, can dramatically improve the downtown area. It also represents an opportunity to provide Yangon with an enhanced transport hub that links into a wider bus network, the Circle Line and Myanmar's wider 3,100-mile-long railway system. There is also an opportunity to provide much-needed parking spaces for the downtown area, which will discourage parking within nearby narrow streets. Development on the site can incorporate its full variety of existing heritage places, including the station itself, historic staff housing, warehouses and utilities such as water towers.

Redevelopment of this site can respond to its wider setting at a key junction in Yangon's urban layout. Development

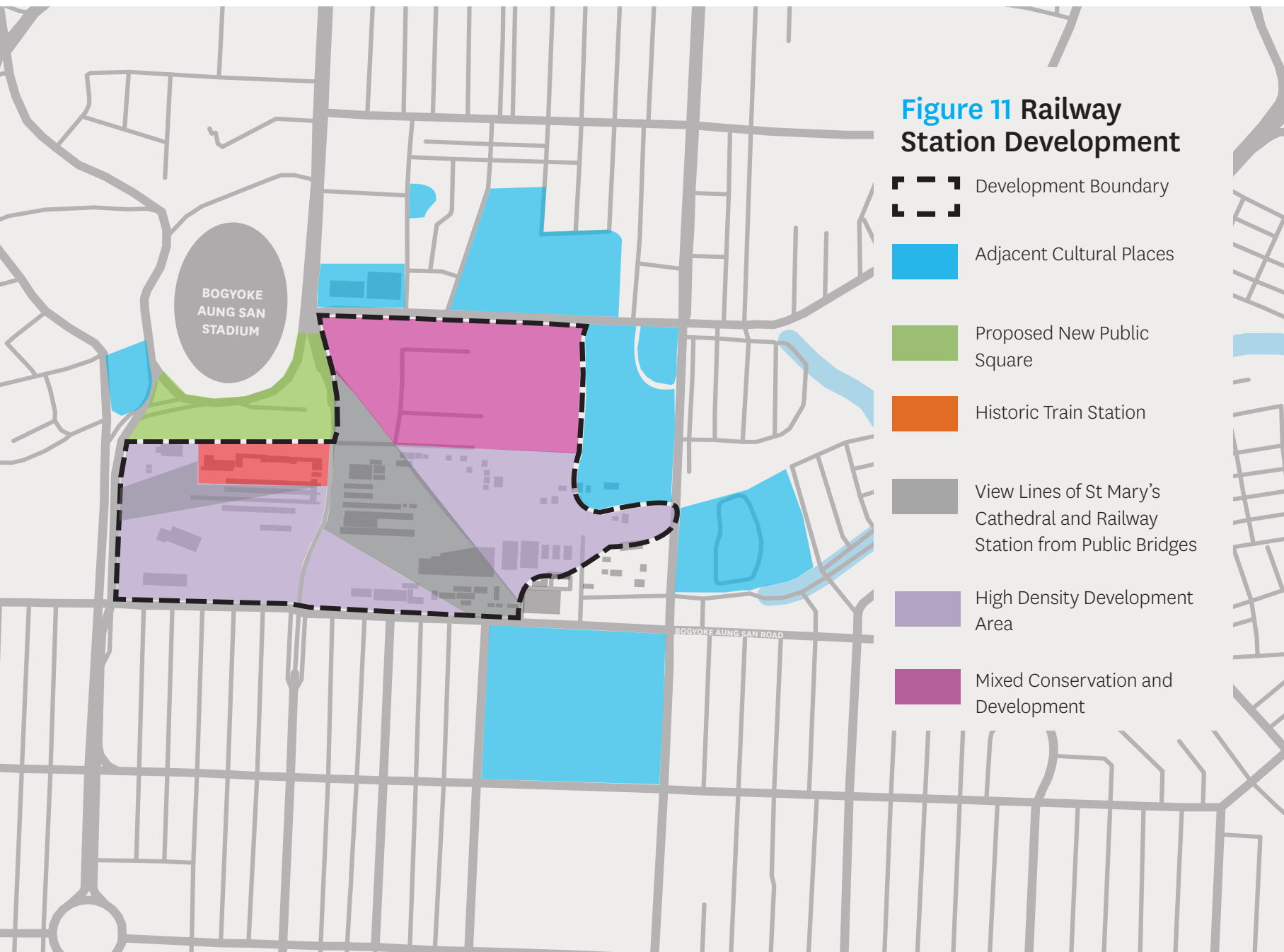
should include consideration of important adjacent cultural places such as the Railway Headquarters, the Scots Church, the Jewish and Islamic cemeteries, Theinbyu Monastery, St. Anthony's Church, St. Mary's Cathedral, Aung San Stadium and the open space between the stadium and the station itself (Figure 11 opposite).

The large open area between the Central Station, the Scots Church and the Aung San Stadium – formerly the tram terminus – should be redesigned as a large public square with ample provision of street furniture, tree coverage, usable public realm for festivals, night markets and sports. Cars can be managed to provide safe pedestrian access. It can also include space for bus stops linking to the railway network.

5.1 MASTER PLANNING OF THE RAILWAY SITE AND SURROUNDS

- 5.1.1** Undertake a heritage Significance Assessment of the entire site to identify all items of value
- 5.1.2** Limit the height of new builds on the site to ensure that wider views of the Shwedagon are not impacted
- 5.1.3** Ensure views of St. Mary’s Cathedral from the Pansodan Bridge and views of the historic station from Sule Pagoda Road Bridge are protected
- 5.1.4** Ensure that new development is respectfully designed to fit well with adjacent cultural heritage sites
- 5.1.5** The existing railway staff housing and goods sheds shown in Figure 11 below are important heritage sites and should be conserved - this area could become a vibrant new district mixing old and new low-rise architecture
- 5.1.6** Earmark a set percentage of the site’s 63 acres for multi-storey parking to provide ample parking for surrounding area and the station development itself

- 5.1.7** Undertake a design competition for the site and surrounds according to a detailed brief to ensure that development is properly designed and built
- 5.1.8** “Surrounds” defined to include Aung San Stadium, the disused area in front of Scots Church and the area between the station and the stadium
- 5.1.9** Railway Station to be retained and modern architectural additions designed to ensure it is a fully usable transport hub able to respond to future growth of the system
- 5.1.10** Aung San Stadium to be integrated into planning for the Railway site, with consideration given to using it as underground parking with the oval rebuilt on top
- 5.1.11** Large public square to be created between Aung San Stadium and the station, which can be pedestrianised and used for night markets, bus terminals and in future perhaps reinstated as a tram terminal for downtown loops





6. Arts and Culture Hub



PUBLIC ASSETS



UNIQUE



EDUCATED



ECONOMY



ENGAGED



DIVERSITY

Yangon has been Myanmar's window on the world for centuries, setting and receiving international trends. It has been home to a vibrant and active arts scene for generations. However, the city lacks basic cultural infrastructure such as a dedicated city museum, performance spaces for live music or the traditional Burmese arts, theatres, a major public art gallery and a Myanmar Museum of Modern Art.

Providing public spaces for performance and practice is key to encouraging Yangon's arts. The downtown area, particularly lower Kyauktada and the Secretariat surrounds, can form an enhanced cultural core for the city where major arts and cultural institutions are located.

With a unique set of heritage buildings and areas, Yangon also stands to gain financially from permitting advertising, film and television shoots in the city.

6.1 THE DOWNTOWN AREA AS AN ARTS AND CULTURE CORE

- 6.1.1 Enact the Better Streets plan (page 80) within the lower half of Kyauktada Township and in the Secretariat surrounds to improve walkability and access
- 6.1.2 Encourage use of public spaces for performance and festivals by establishing a website with contact details of public and private spaces for hire
- 6.1.3 Establish a facilitating body to encourage access to and artistic use of the lobbies of major public and private buildings, hall spaces and other grand historic interiors

- 6.1.4 Establish a city museum (Lower Kyauktada Plan, page 74)
- 6.1.5 Include a café and bookshop at the Printing and Publishing Enterprise building (see page 115)
- 6.1.6 Establish a space for local craft industries at Balthazar Building (page 77)
- 6.1.7 Establish a key space for the revival of local cinema and performance art at Waziya Theatre (page 73)
- 6.1.8 Use warehouses 5, 6 and 7 for arts and cultural purposes (Waterfront Plan, page 106)

Reuse Opportunity Waziya Cinema



ADDRESS: Bogyoke Aung San Road, between 33rd and 34th Street

BUILT: Circa 1922

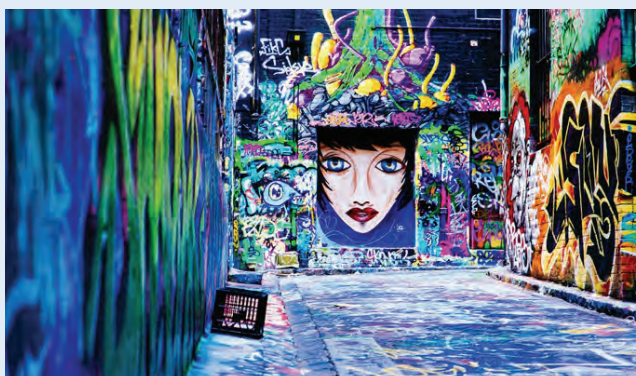
ORIGINAL USE: Theatre

CURRENT USE: Cinema

PROPOSED USE: Revived Cinema and Theatre

A multi-use performance venue with highly flexible stage space for cinema, live theatre, forums, plays and live music. The building can also include rehearsal and training spaces and an archive for Myanmar's film industry. Café, bar and restaurant facilities can be housed within the building to generate an income for its ongoing improvement.

Best Practice: Urban Arts & Culture MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA



Melbourne has remained the world's most liveable city for five consecutive years up to 2015, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit⁴³.

Melbourne's Central Business District, covering an area of 2.4 square miles in a grid pattern similar to Yangon, contains world-renowned arts and cultural facilities, eight historic theatres, hundreds of live music venues, major libraries, public and private galleries, cafes and cultural retail and arts institutions. Melbourne is also a literary center and was designated a "City of Literature" by UNESCO in 2008. The arts are actively supported by the City of Melbourne, the State and Federal governments and a generous community of donors. Several heritage buildings are also used as artist studios such as the Nicholas Building.

Melbourne is famous for its historic laneways and arcades which were revitalised under a city programme to encourage their use. Now home to shops, cafes, restaurants, street art and live music venues. Several annual arts and cultural festivals take place each year such as the 24-hour White Night, the Melbourne Festival, the Melbourne International Film Festival and the Open House weekend when important buildings are opened for public visits.



7. Lower Kyauktada



PUBLIC
ASSETS



ECONOMY



CONNECTED

The lower half of Kyauktada Township from Sule Pagoda down to Strand Road can form an enhanced arts and cultural core for Yangon and be a major asset for the local community and the tourism industry. This area contains one of the most intact and historically important collections of heritage buildings in the region.

Public arts and cultural institutions, private galleries and arts venues can be focused here. A branch of the National Museum can be established in the former Grindlay's Bank, today the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (see Lower Kyauktada Building Reuse Opportunities, page 76). The Balthazar Building can become a retail and training centre for traditional Myanmar arts and crafts. The Lokanat Building can continue to be a hub for the visual arts. The Burma Translation Society can become an upgraded public library and cultural space.

The public realm in this area can be dedicated to walkability and public use. The lower Kyauktada area forms an important link between the wider downtown and the waterfront. Bank Street, Lower Pansodan and Mahabandoola Garden streets can be used for regular night markets, street festivals and sporting events such as street soccer. Cars should be discouraged from these streets and ample space for vendors and street dining provided.

7.1 SULE PAGODA AREA

- 7.1.1 Improve views of the pagoda from Mahabandoola Garden by pruning trees
- 7.1.2 Announce a design competition to revisit the 1990s additions to the Sule Pagoda - designs should allow more of the pagoda to be seen and add access to an expanded platform while also allowing commercial income for its management
- 7.1.3 Improve pedestrian management and safety around the pagoda with painted crossings and pedestrian lights

7.2 MAHABANDoola GARDEN STREET

- 7.2.1 Designate the section of Mahabandoola Garden Street between Merchant Street and Mahabandoola Road as a place for public sports after 6pm by excluding traffic from this area in the evenings with removable bollards
- 7.2.2 This section of Mahabandoola Garden Street could be repaved with permanent soccer and *chin lone* courts marked out
- 7.2.3 This section can also be used for night markets or other public use during certain times
- 7.2.4 Enact the Better Streets Plan (page 80) in the lower block beside Mahabandoola Garden as a demonstration to provide maximum access for pedestrians and to limit parking

7.3 BANK STREET

- 7.3.1 See Figure 12
- 7.3.2 The existing banking and legal operations should continue in this area as an important part of the local economy
- 7.3.3 Parking along Bank Street should be limited to ensure the area is pedestrian friendly
- 7.3.4 Footpaths should be conserved at their existing width and reinstated in front of the former New Law Courts and in front of the apartment block between Mahabandoola Garden Street and 34th Street
- 7.3.5 Taxi ranks should be provided to ensure that taxis do not park casually in the area
- 7.3.6 Footpaths should be repaved according to the Better Streets Plan (page 80) to accommodate street vendors and restaurants while allowing free passage of pedestrian traffic

- 7.3.7 Large businesses on Bank Street that will benefit from major public realm upgrades in the area should contribute financially to the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund (page 130) – that money can go towards improvements on Bank Street

7.4 CONTROL PARKING AND FOOTPATH OBSTRUCTIONS

- 7.4.1 The banks and other major employers that park their busses on the street in lower Kyauktada, could rent parking spaces elsewhere such as on the waterfront, the YCDC plot at the corner of Mahabandoola and Theinbyu streets or in Botahtaung Township to free up space in the congested lower Kyauktada area
- 7.4.2 Parking can be discouraged in lower Kyauktada by marking designated parking spots, providing local parking permits and charging for parking by the hour
- 7.4.3 Where embassies, private residences or businesses block footpaths or roads, these obstacles should be removed to allow free passage for pedestrians and physical barriers required for security reasons should be constructed within private property boundaries

Lower Kyauktada Building Reuse Opportunities



The southern half of Kyauktada Township around lower Pansodan Road, Bank Street and Mahabandoola Garden is home to several important government-owned heritage buildings. The seven mentioned below are all nationally significant buildings; they are under-utilised and could be reused quickly.

Importantly, uses for these buildings should be considered together. They should all have a mixture of commercial use to generate funds for the ongoing conservation effort and public use for the wider benefit of the community.

Each property will require a significance assessment and a Conservation Management Plan to be undertaken as part of their renovation and reuse.

Below are suggested uses for these buildings which could be refined further upon discussion with relevant stakeholders.

A: Former Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

SEE PAGE 61



C: Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank

ADDRESS: 26-42 Pansodan Road

BUILT: Circa 1930

ORIGINAL USE: Grindlay's Bank later National Museum (1970-1996)

CURRENT USE: Bank and Offices

PROPOSED USE: Yangon City Museum and Memory Hub

The ground floor and former banking chamber can be used as a museum and memory hub dedicated to the city. Here visitors can rediscover Yangon's important history and safeguard important documents through digitisation. Upper floors can be used for commercial office space to generate income or continue as government offices.



D: Yangon Division Court & Pension Office

ADDRESS: Corner of Pansodan Road and Strand Road & Corner of Bank Street and Mahabandoola Garden Street

BUILT: Circa 1890

ORIGINAL USE: Accountant General Office & Currency Office

CURRENT USE: District Court & Pension office

PROPOSED USE: Offices and Food Hub

Can be renovated as high-end offices in one of the most important downtown locations. The area in between, bombed during World War II, can be rebuilt as a sympathetic piece of modern architecture. Space can be rented for commercial food and beverage creating a central location for good and affordable local cuisine.



E: Former U.S. Embassy

ADDRESS: Merchant Street, between 33rd and 34th Street
BUILT: 1926

ORIGINAL USE: Office of Messrs Balthazar & Son

CURRENT USE: Vacant

PROPOSED USE: The building could serve a new public function, including areas for exhibitions and rooms for lectures and workshops. A small museum could be linked to the history of democracy in Myanmar. The building could have limited commercial use to assist with financial sustainability.



F: Balthazar Building

ADDRESS: Bank Street, between 33rd and 34th Street
BUILT: 1905

ORIGINAL USE: Head office of Messrs Balthazar & Son later lawyers' chambers

CURRENT USE: A mix of residential, office and retail uses

PROPOSED USE: Centre for Traditional Burmese Arts and Crafts

Located opposite the new Kempinski Hotel, this is ideal for retail and training facilities focused on traditional Burmese arts and crafts with some continuing legal tenants and limited food and beverage uses.



G: Myanmar Economic Bank 2

ADDRESS: 27 Pansodan Road

BUILT: 1941

ORIGINAL USE: The Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China offices

CURRENT USE: Bank, upper floors not used

PROPOSED USE: High-End Offices

The upstairs office spaces can be used for high end offices, restored and upgraded to accommodate head offices of major banking corporations who wish to have a presence in Yangon. Some public use of the ground floor lobby should be found to ensure this important space can be appreciated by the public.



H: Former Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise

ADDRESS: 604-608 Merchant Street

BUILT: 1908

ORIGINAL USE: Offices, including Burma Oil Company headquarters

CURRENT USE: Vacant

PROPOSED USE: Downtown National Library

Reading rooms, study spaces and library containing National Library collections. Conference and meeting-room spaces could be rented out to generate an income. Also some limited food and beverage is possible.



Figure 12 Proposed Bank Street Redesign





8. Better Streets



UNIQUE



DIVERSITY



AFFORDABLE



COMPACT



HEALTHY



CONNECTED

Yangon's downtown is blessed with a logical and well-planned hierarchical grid of streets. Before it was badly damaged by a recent government programme to provide parking spaces through the removal of footpaths, this system provided generous space for walking, relaxing and convenient access to businesses and homes. This Action Plan suggests an entirely new set of designs for Yangon's streets – an approach that will ensure they are safe, walkable, usable for vendors and the general public and that they will allow for better flow of traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular.

Today, Yangon's pavements function poorly. Generators, badly placed trees and power poles, along with sprawling vendor stalls and uncontrolled advertising, block pedestrian flow. The street surface is unsafe due to lack of maintenance and poor design. In many places, new curbs are dangerously high. The new drainage system is also inadequate, with narrow gutters and small drain inlets. The use of poured concrete surfaces means the urban environment has very little ability to absorb rainfall, which worsens localised flooding. There is also no public furniture or open space for relaxation or recreation.

Many recently planted trees are of species that do not provide good shade coverage, have invasive root systems and block views of historic buildings while many of the established trees are badly maintained and cannot provide adequate shade due to the poor quality of surrounding pavements.

The roads also function poorly. Traffic is not guided by clearly defined road lanes or stopping points. Parking is provided along key transport routes, which impedes traffic flow, and double parking is common. The traffic light system is not integrated, causing bottlenecks. Busses often park two or three abreast and completely block traffic. There are no pedestrian crossings or lights in the downtown area, making the streets difficult to cross and dangerous. The use of pedestrian overpasses actually has a negative impact on street usage and pedestrian safety; pedestrians avoid climbing stairs and the overpasses complicate intersections making them more dangerous.

With few hills and wide streets, Yangon is highly suitable for bicycling. Trishaws are also a sustainable mode of transport; they are part of the city's heritage and an important job for low-income families and individuals. As there is currently no infrastructure for cyclists in place, the city should consider creating dedicated lanes for cyclists and parking places for trishaws.

Yangon's streets can be entirely redesigned to improve their usability. Casual parking should be discouraged in the downtown area, ample space provided for pedestrians, and vendors managed so that this important aspect of the local economy can continue without constricting walkability. The drainage systems need to be rebuilt to enable runoff and can be redesigned as "sponges" using concrete pavers instead of poured slabs so that water can be absorbed back into the ground.

This Action Plan recommends treating 30-foot, 50-foot and 100-foot streets differently, according to their commercial and residential use. The numbered 30-foot streets are largely residential and function as throughways for pedestrians with less commercial activity than 50- and 100-foot streets. They need space for local car parking and vendors should be restricted due to space constraints.

The 50- and 100-foot streets are a mix of residential and commercial activity. The footpaths could be broken into streams to designate where vendors can work and where the pavement should be left clear for pedestrians. 50-foot streets can have parallel parking on both sides while the 100-foot streets can have perpendicular parking. Trees and street furniture can be placed at regular intervals.

Shared community spaces could be created in each block on both sides of the street. Footpaths can be widened to accommodate space for relaxation, night markets and community uses. Each block would be assigned a set amount of shared community space, which could be placed in the centre of the block or outside public buildings according to local preference. Shared community spaces in 30-foot streets can be placed in the centre of the block and raised off the road surface, paved differently and have good tree coverage and public furniture. In 50- and 100-foot streets, these spaces can be placed outside of important public buildings or on the site of existing night markets. These spaces are where children can play and people can relax in a pleasant urban environment.

The corner sections of all blocks should be returned to full width and parking should be prohibited. These areas can have good tree coverage and street furniture. Vendors can also work here, within guidelines.

Charging for parking in Yangon in partnership with a resident parking permit system could be a huge revenue raiser for the city. An extremely conservative estimate puts potential revenue in the downtown area alone at several million dollars a year, which could be fed back into public realm improvements.

8.1 IMPROVE WALKABILITY

- 8.1.1 Put an immediate halt to the footpath removal programme across Yangon
- 8.1.2 Undertake review of current availability and quality of footpaths to identify areas most used and most in need of upgrades
- 8.1.3 Prohibit advertising boards or banners on public streets
- 8.1.4 Install traffic lights with accompanying pedestrian cycles and painted pedestrian crossings at all major road crossings
- 8.1.5 Replace all pedestrian overpasses with painted crossings and pedestrian lights
- 8.1.6 Re-widen footpaths along key streets such as Mahabandoola and Anawrahta (see Figure 14, page 84)
- 8.1.7 Consider introduction of proposed street layout systems (pages 86-93) – these street layouts take into account proper provision of areas for vendors, machinery, lighting, trees, pedestrians, public transport and pedestrians
- 8.1.8 Break footpaths into streams providing space for the curb, vendors, street furniture, trees and pedestrians

8.2 GREENING

- 8.2.1 Establish YCDC Arboreal Unit tasked to plant and maintain trees
- 8.2.2 Create planting guidelines to ensure appropriate species are planted according to the streets width, orientation, use and footpath design
- 8.2.3 Appropriate species for the downtown should be chosen based on their root systems, height, canopy form, shelter provision and maintenance requirements
- 8.2.4 Install a system of grates and boxes around the base of each tree

8.3 BICYCLE NETWORK

- 8.3.1 Undertake a bicycle safety campaign to raise awareness amongst drivers
- 8.3.2 Create dedicated bicycle lanes painted onto the street (see images on page 89)
- 8.3.3 Designate key routes for bicycles in Yangon to ensure people can ride safely and access key areas of the city
- 8.3.4 This network should be designed for use by trishaws as well as personal bicycles

8.4 VENDOR MANAGEMENT

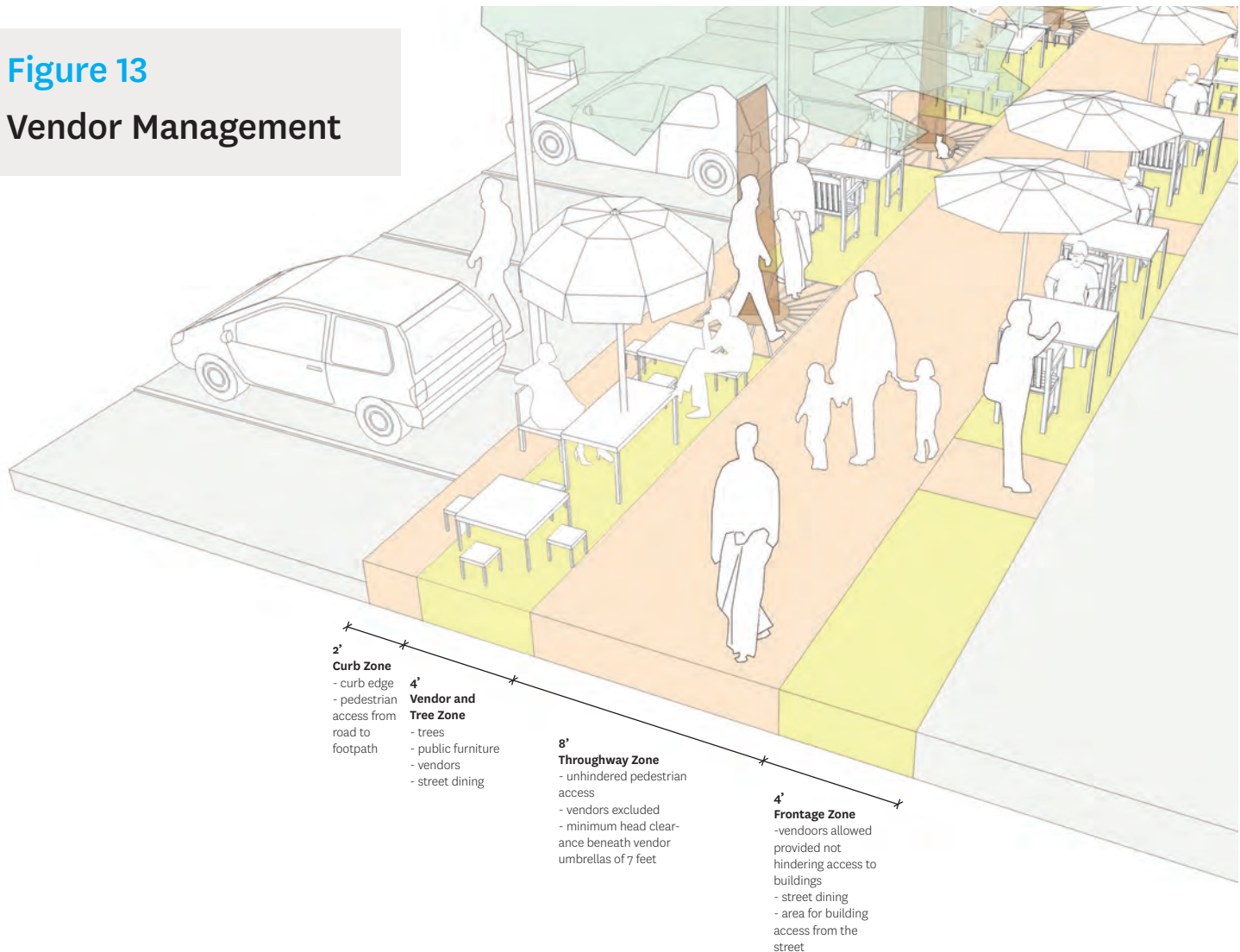
- 8.4.1** Vendors should be limited to the areas identified in Figure 13 below within a street layout – they should not impede pedestrian flow or access across a footpath from buildings to car parking
- 8.4.2** Vendor umbrellas should provide a minimum clearance of 7 feet to allow free passage of pedestrians
- 8.4.3** All vendors should be relicensed according to their knowledge of a revised set of simple regulations, which should be made public in Burmese with simple diagrams
- 8.4.4** The guidelines should be designed to ensure public safety and pedestrian priority while still allowing vendors to function
- 8.4.5** The guidelines should be written in partnership with vendors
- 8.4.6** A moratorium period for vendors to comply with the new regulations should be provided
- 8.4.7** After the moratorium period, a full-time team of plainclothes YCDC officers should issue on-the-spot fines for noncompliant vendors

8.5 UTILITIES MANAGEMENT

- 8.5.1** Until the electricity grid is reliable, generators should be moved from the footpaths into designated car parking spots or into back lanes
- 8.5.2** Where possible, generators should be moved into back alleys or larger generators shared between buildings and exhausts will need to extend above the roof line
- 8.5.3** A moratorium period for this work should be provided after which daily fines for generators occupying public space outside of designated spots should be issued
- 8.5.4** Public bins should be redesigned and placed in areas where daily placement and collection of household rubbish can occur
- 8.5.5** Power poles, light poles and other raised utilities can be redesigned to be better placed in the streets and to ensure they are not damaged by growing trees

Figure 13

Vendor Management



8.6 SHARED COMMUNITY SPACES

- 8.6.1** See pages 86-91
- 8.6.2** For every north-south running street in the downtown area, a 100-foot section of the footpath on both sides can be extra wide – to be used for relaxation and shared community use - vendors and car parking can be excluded
- 8.6.3** Shared community space is particularly important on numbered streets that have very little publicly usable space – in these residential areas they will become important places for meeting and talking, and for children to play
- 8.6.4** The proposed YCDC Deep Cleaning Unit (see Public Space Cleanliness Plan, page 116) can be responsible for the upkeep of these areas

8.7 STREET FURNITURE

- 8.7.1** Street furniture – such as benches, planters and tables – can be placed in shared community spaces
- 8.7.2** The furniture should be durable and ergonomic

8.8 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- 8.8.1** Paint all intersections with bright grid patterns to discourage motorists from stopping and blocking traffic flow
- 8.8.2** Clearly mark road lanes, flow arrows and stopping points according to best practice and local needs
- 8.8.3** Carefully manage car parking to discourage parking adjacent to major roads
- 8.8.4** Dedicated delivery times after business hours can be put in place to minimise impacts on traffic flow during the day, particularly with major markets such as Theingyi Zay
- 8.8.5** Install integrated traffic light systems across the city, with accompanying pedestrian crossings

8.9 PARKING MANAGEMENT

- 8.9.1** Tow away cars that double park
- 8.9.2** Introduce fees for parking downtown, at 1,000 Kyats per hour for cars without resident permits – this would require the employment of around 300 parking attendants
- 8.9.3** Introduce short time limits for delivery of goods
- 8.9.4** Introduce a residential permit system that allows residents to park in their local street for a yearly fee
- 8.9.5** Only allow such permits on north-south running streets

- 8.9.6** Redesign the street system and profiles to reduce the number of parking options available downtown (see pages 86-93)
- 8.9.7** Allow parking in numbered streets only on one side – the other should be given over to footpaths
- 8.9.8** Undertake a public awareness campaign to educate drivers about new regulations
- 8.9.9** Increase patrols by traffic police
- 8.9.10** Introduce a parking sign system so people know when and for how long they can park in a certain area

8.10 UTILITIES

- 8.10.1** See Public Space Cleanliness Action Plan, page 116

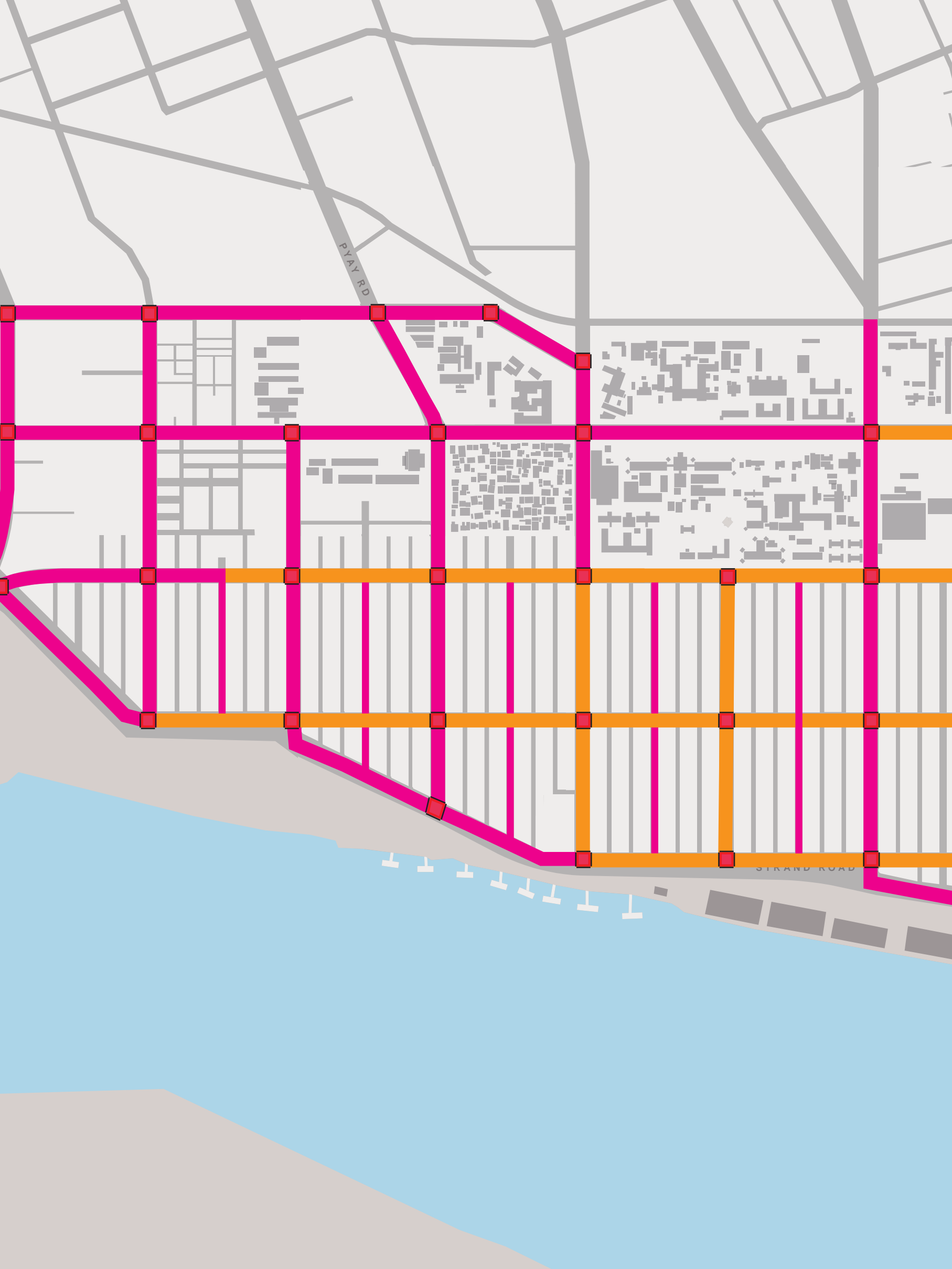
Best Practice: Better Streets SAN FRANCISCO, U.S.A



Aiming to make the city's streets safer, greener and more usable, the City of San Francisco adopted the Better Streets Plan in 2010⁴⁴. It was based on an inclusive public consultation process with input from over 100 community meetings and 1,000 surveys. The plan provides street design manuals for locals to improve the quality and character of their neighborhoods and districts by implementing:

- The Pavement to Parks programme (reclaiming under-utilised portions of roadway for public spaces)
- Better Market Street (revitalizing Market Street in the downtown area as a civic centre)
- The Great Streets Programme (improving neighborhood main streets to support local merchants and communities)

The Better Streets Plan demonstrates that, by working closely together, the city government and the community can bring about significant changes to improve local streetscapes for all.

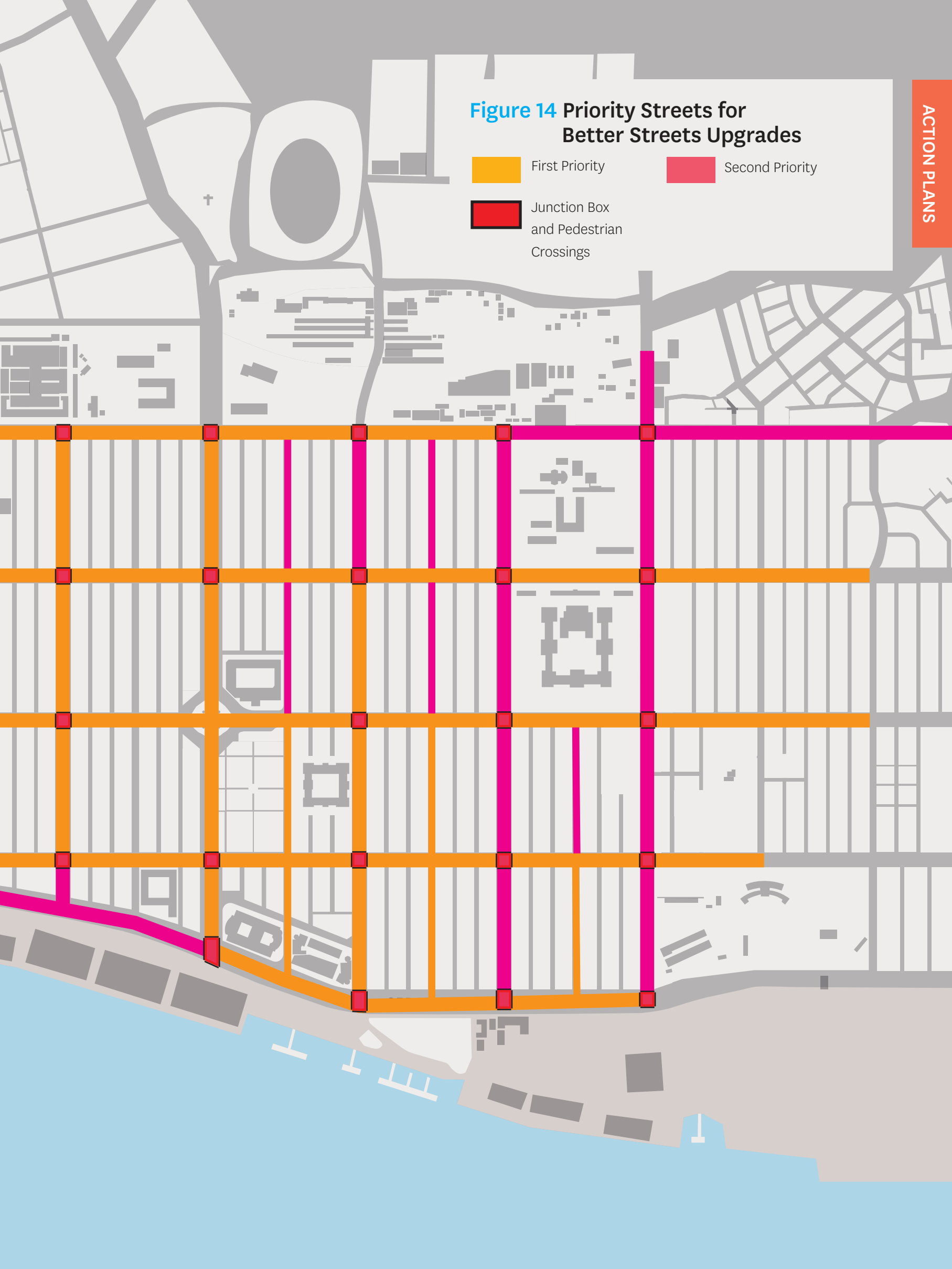


PYAY RD

STRAND ROAD

Figure 14 Priority Streets for Better Streets Upgrades

-  First Priority
-  Second Priority
-  Junction Box and Pedestrian Crossings



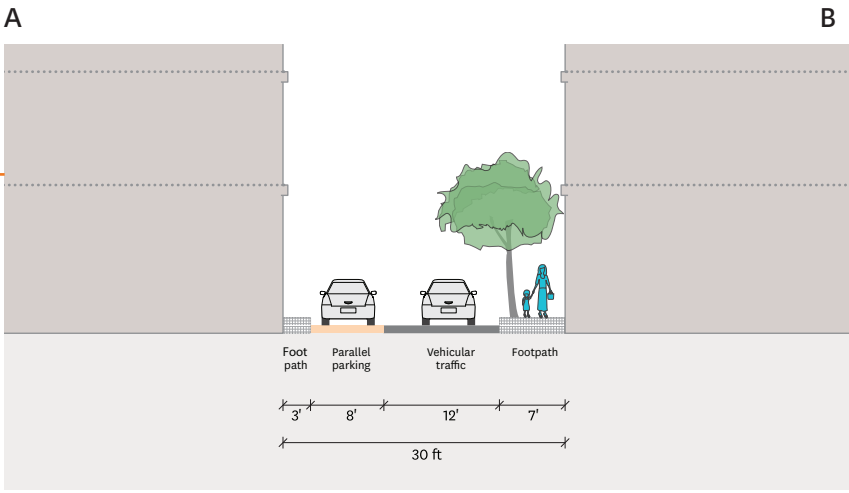
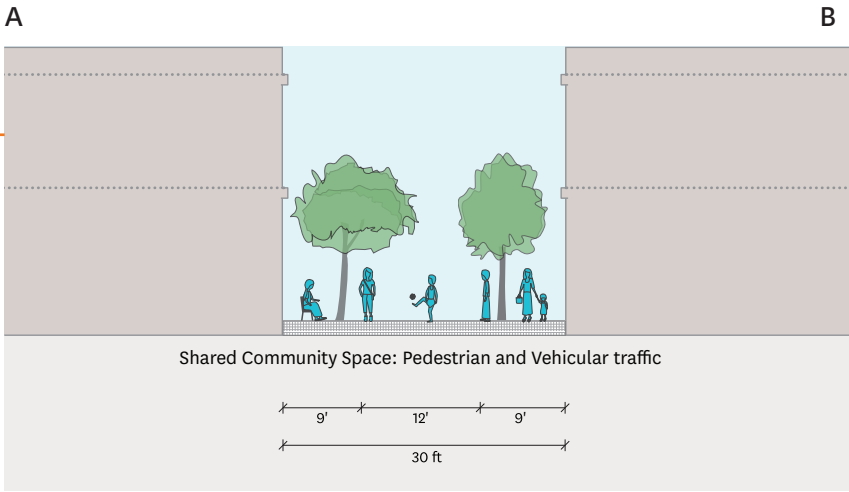
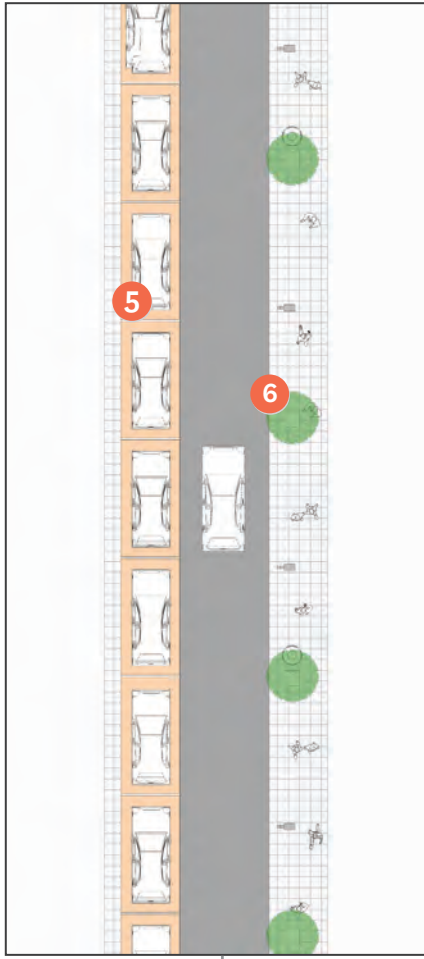
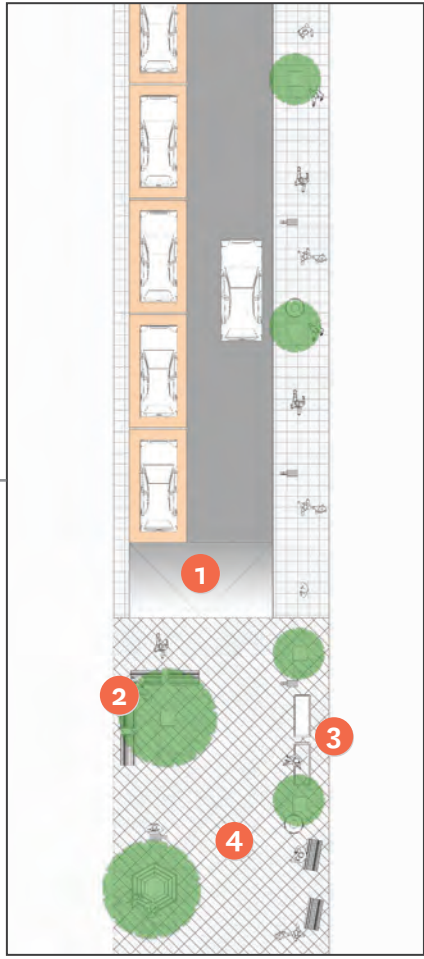
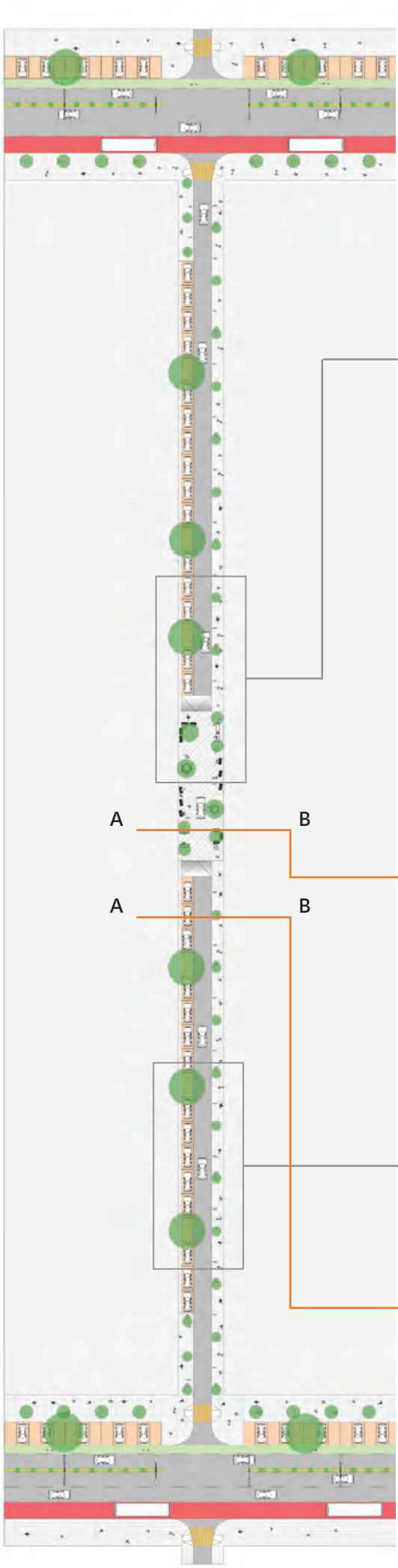


Figure 15 Neighbourhood Residential Streets

(30-FOOT WIDE)

Within the downtown grid most streets are 30-foot wide, numbered streets. They are predominately residential with some commercial and retail activities at ground level. They have less vehicle traffic and parking is limited. Many are also important pedestrian thoroughways.

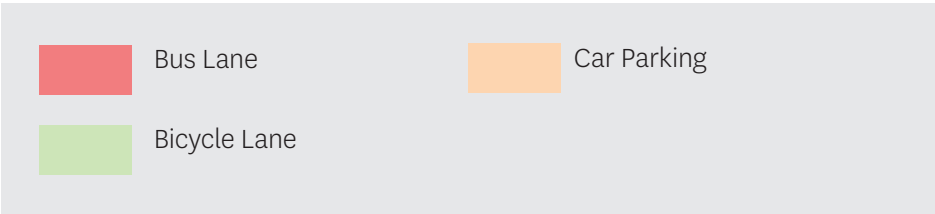
The residential and community-focused nature of these streets can be enhanced. Key to this can be creating Shared Community Spaces within the centre of each block where the footpath is extended across the whole street width, parking is excluded and trees and furniture are provided for public use.

Pedestrian access and safety can be improved by widening a footpath on one side to separate car and foot traffic. Car parking can also be limited to local residents by instituting a resident parking permit system.

Vendors should be excluded from these streets and their Shared Community Spaces to improve usability for local residents and pedestrians. Vendors can set up at the end of each street.

Key Concepts:

- Shared Community Spaces
- Resident parking rights
- Improved pedestrian access and safety
- Vendors able to set up at intersections only



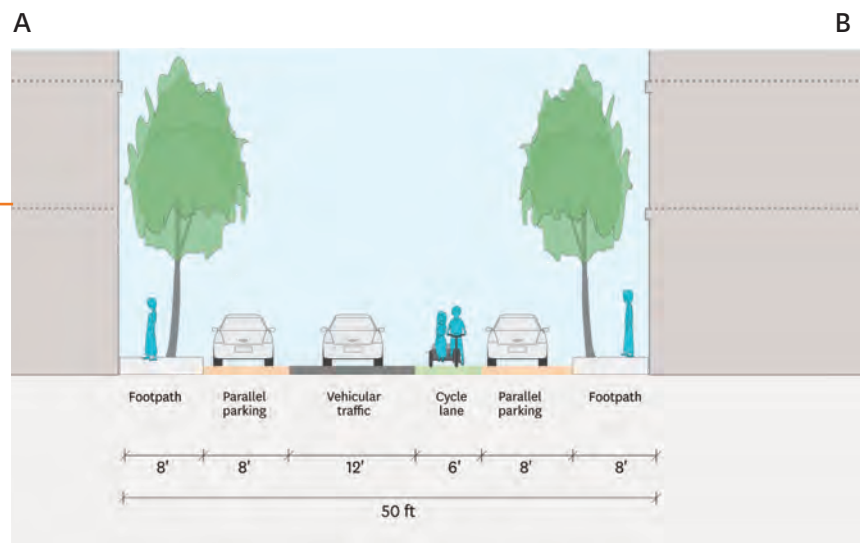
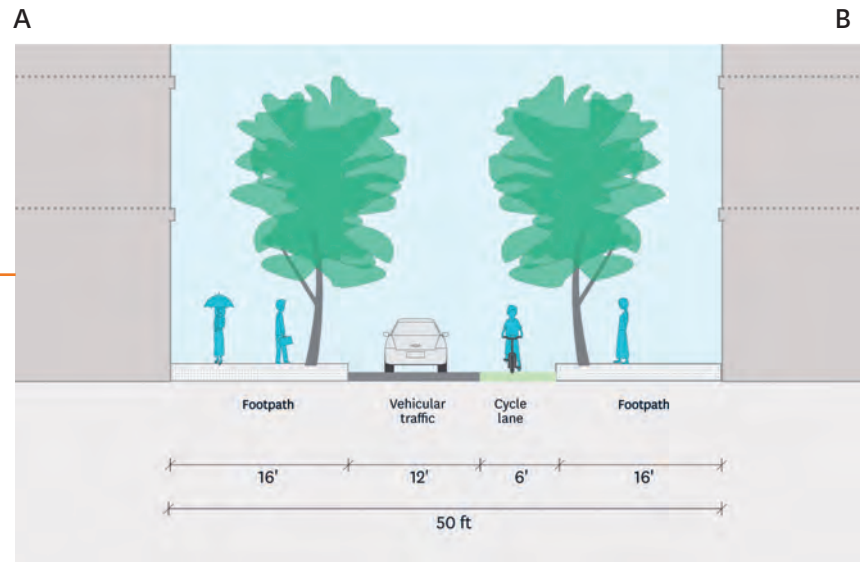
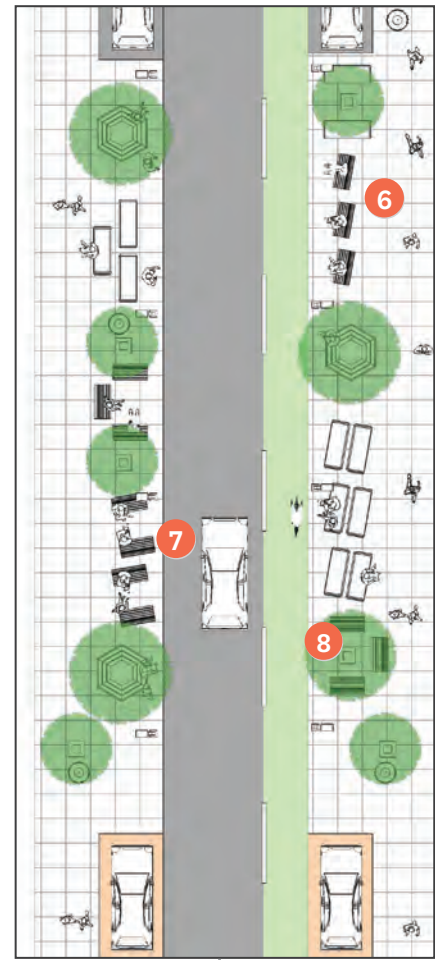
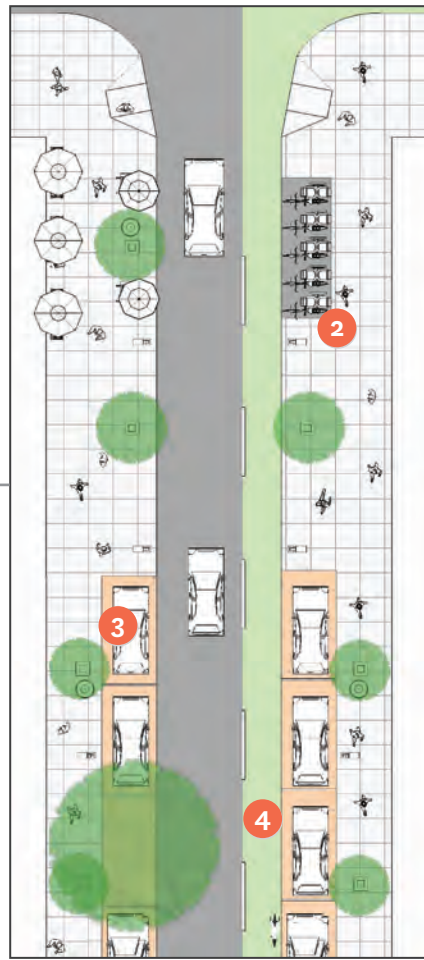
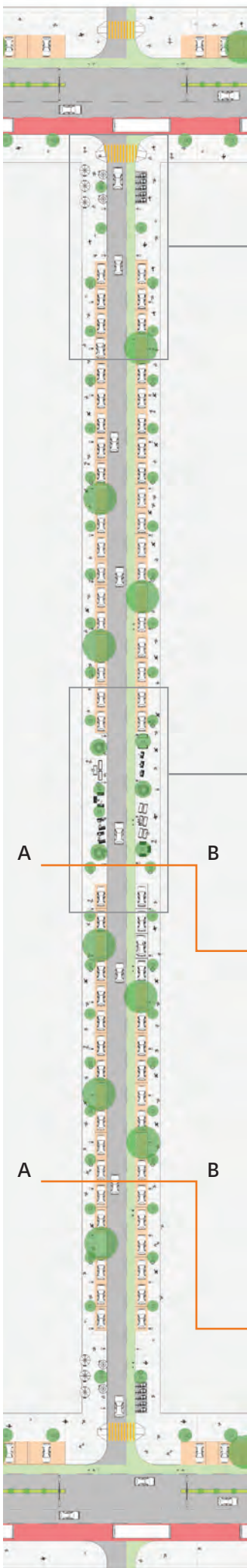


Figure 16 Neighbourhood Mixed-Use Streets

(50-FOOT WIDE)

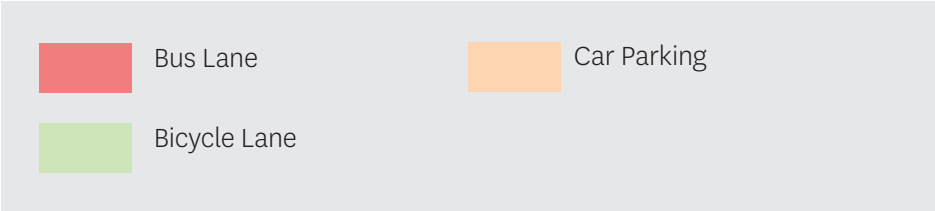
The 50-foot wide streets in the downtown grid are mixed-use, with residential use on the upper levels, and mostly commercial activities, both formal and informal, on the lower levels and along the sidewalks. Vehicle traffic on these streets tends to be slow but can be of high volume. Space for parking and loading facilities serve the needs of local businesses, customers and residents. These streets are important pedestrian links.

Due to the mixed nature of these streets, a tailored approach to public realm upgrade is required. Widened footpaths in the central area can provide Shared Community Space for local residents and can contain trees, furniture and be free of vendors. Vendors can set up along the street according to the guidelines in Figure 13 (page 82).

Bicycle lanes can be provided in these streets for trishaw operators and public bicycles. Due to the high level of pedestrian traffic, widened footpaths should be provided on both sides. Parking can be provided on both sides parallel to the street.

Key Concepts:

- Corner extensions provide extra space for vendors and public
- Shared Community Space for local residents
- Bicycle lanes provided for cyclists and trishaws
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Vendors allowed to set up on full length of street within guidelines



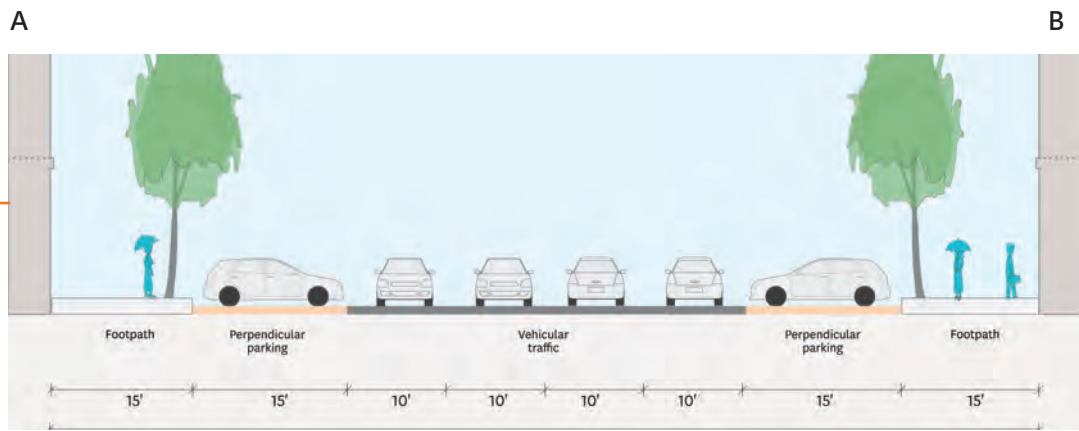
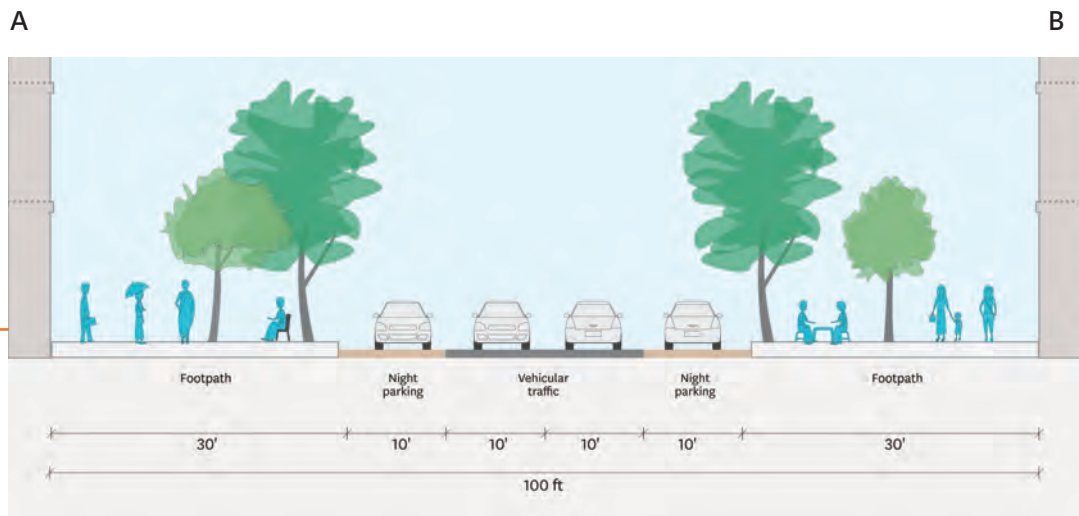
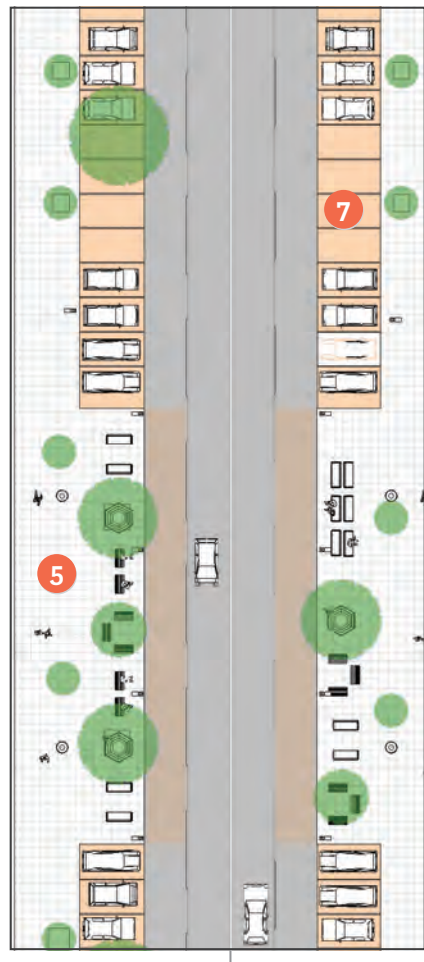
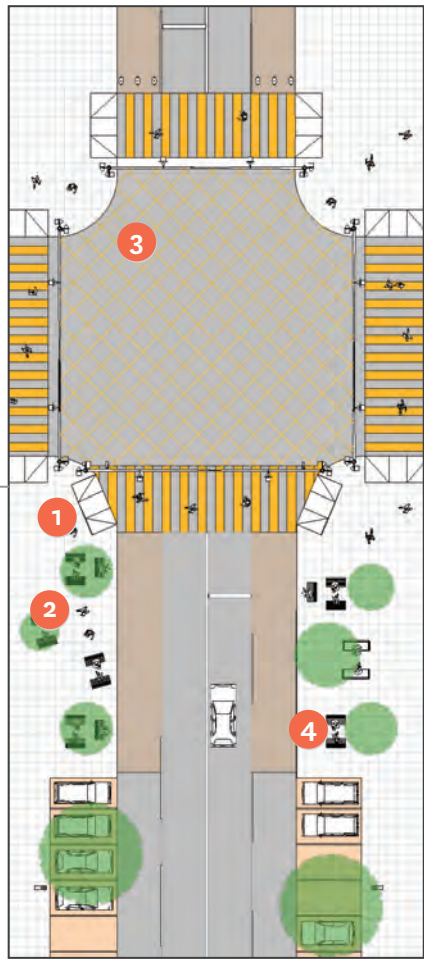
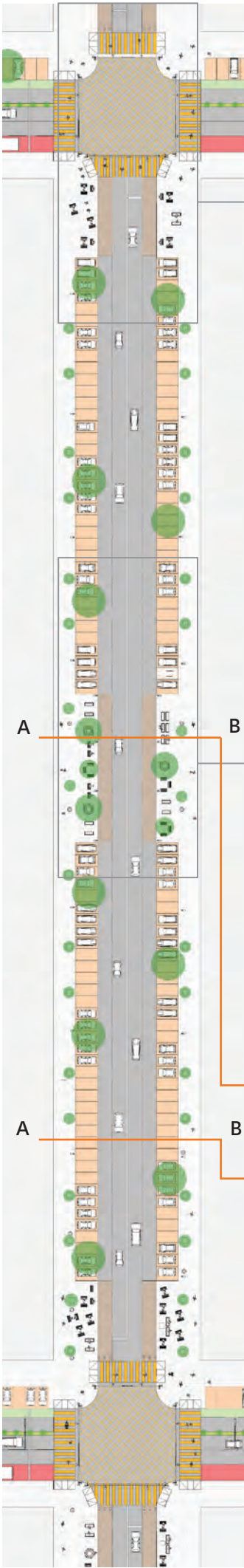


Figure 17 North-South Commercial Streets

(100-FOOT WIDE)





The 100-foot, north-to-south running streets (such as Pansodan Road and Shwe Bonthar Street) are predominately commercial at ground level with mixed commercial and residential above. These streets draw significant volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Vehicle traffic is of higher speed and pedestrian safety needs special attention. These streets can accommodate larger species of trees.

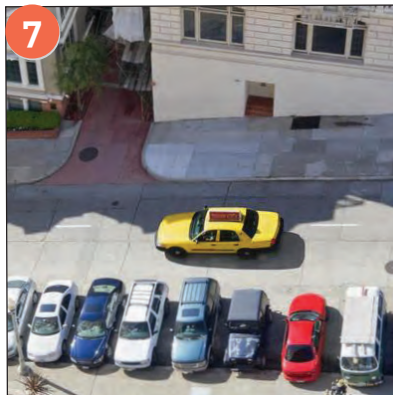
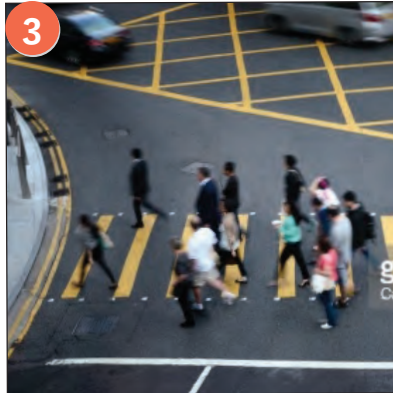
Given the high volumes of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, these streets should maintain well-managed parking and loading facilities for local businesses and residents while enabling improvement of public realm for pedestrians, vendors, businesses and residents. Vendors can be allowed to set up along their full length within guidelines. Parking can be carefully controlled and designated as perpendicular to the street to increase

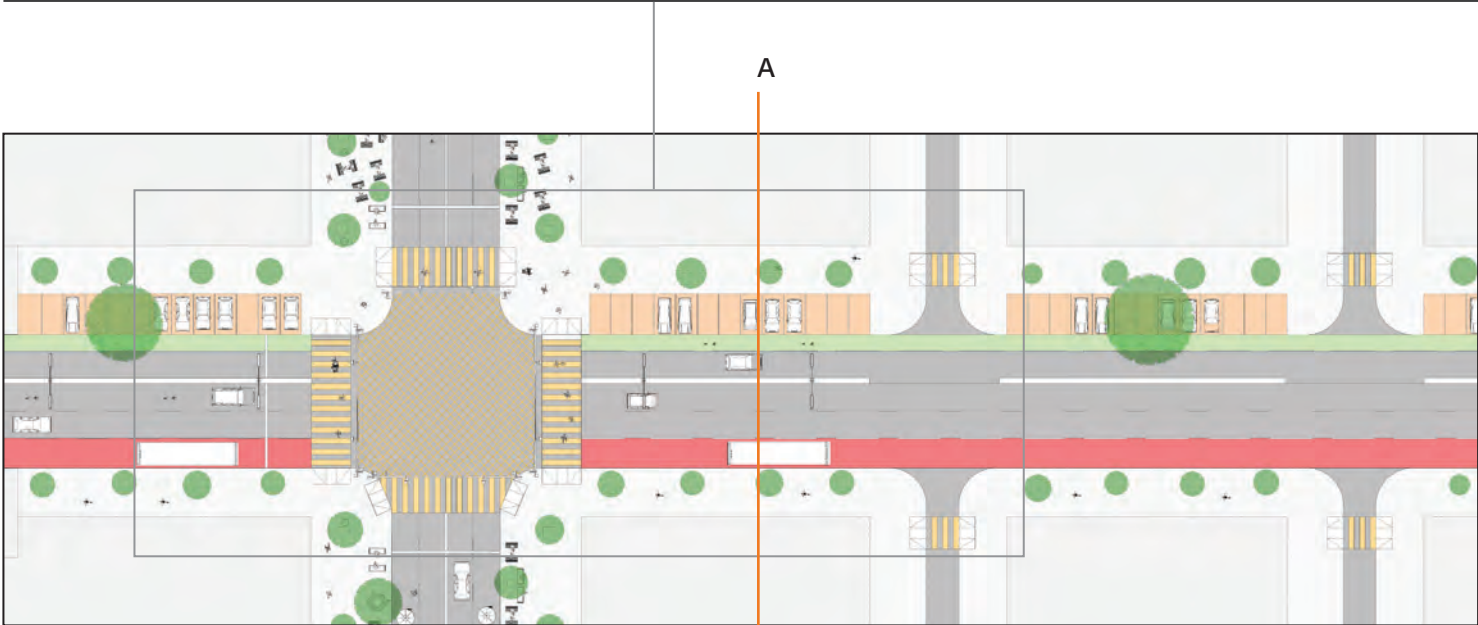
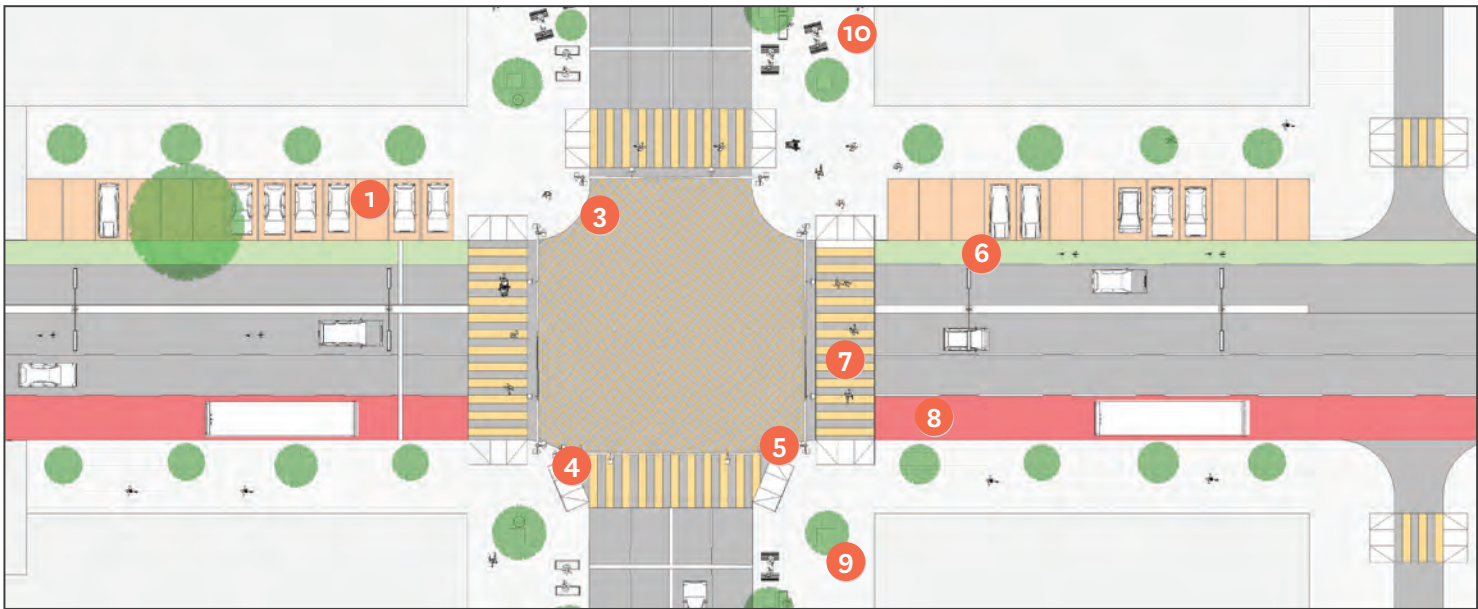
volume. Footpaths can be re-widened to accommodate high levels of foot traffic.

Key Concepts:

- Shared Community Spaces provided as extra-wide footpaths
- Footpaths along full length of street to be widened
- Vendors allowed along full length of street within guidelines
- Bicycle lane provided as a mixed lane with traffic
- Perpendicular parking provided
- In front of Shared Community Spaces, extra parallel night-time parking can be provided

	Bus Lane		Car Parking
	Bicycle Lane		Shared Road Surface - Night Market





A

B

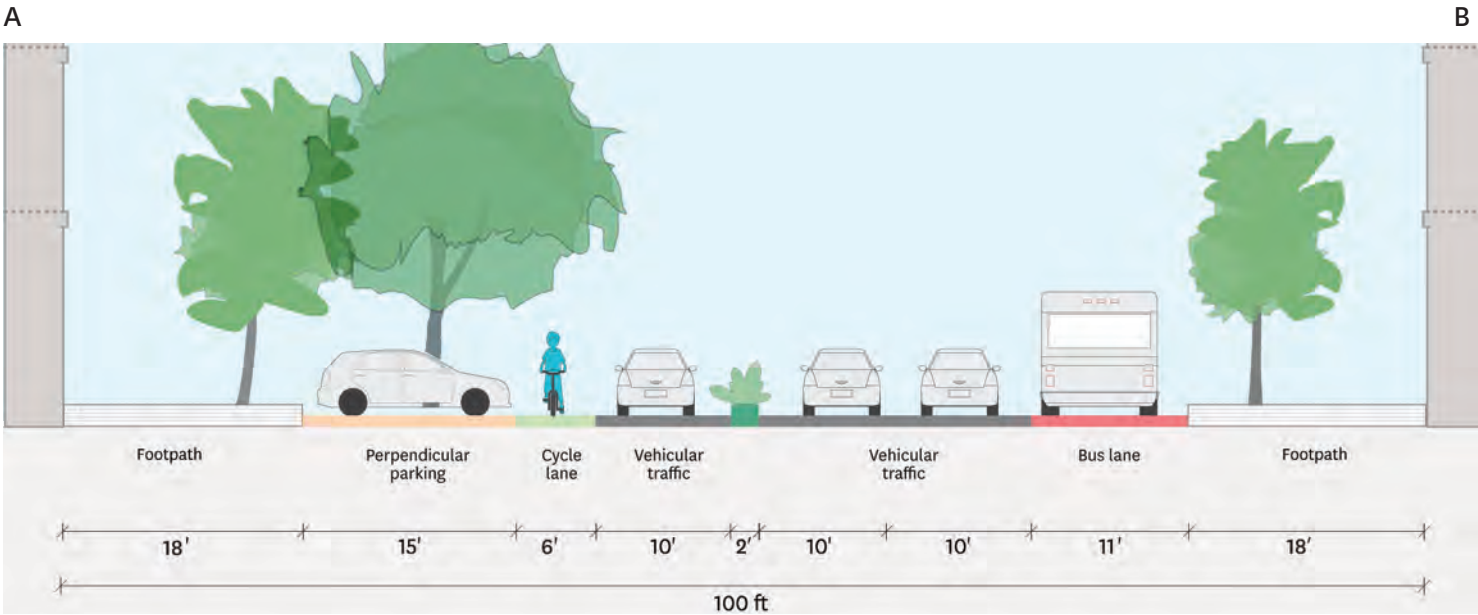


Figure 18

East-West Commercial Streets

(100-FOOT WIDE)

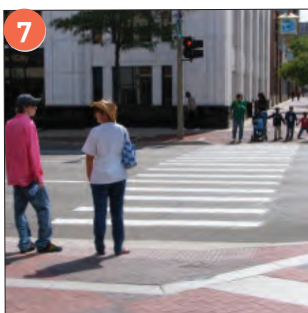
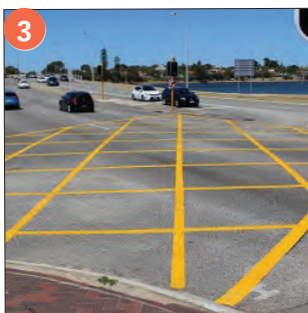
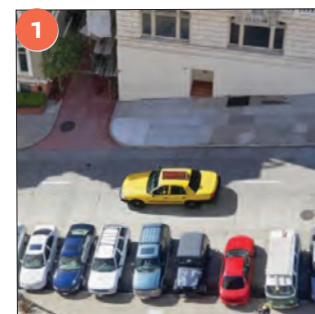
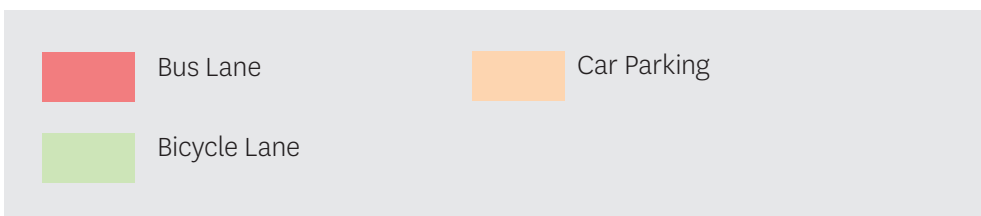
The 100-foot, east-west running streets are predominately commercial at ground level with mixed commercial and residential above. These streets (particularly Anawrahta and Mahabandoola roads) draw the highest volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic within the grid. They are the main public transport routes for bus lines and are currently not functioning well. Vehicle traffic is of higher speed and pedestrian safety needs special attention. These streets can accommodate larger species of trees and the northern side of the street is particularly in need of shade trees.

These streets are the key to ensuring Yangon's pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be managed well. The high demands placed on them for public transport and pedestrian traffic means upgrades need to be carefully tailored. Given the high traffic flow and concentration of businesses along the streets, short-term parking for customers and space for loading facilities can be provided. Designated and exclusive bus and bicycle lanes can be provided. Painted junction boxes and zebra

crossings at major intersections along with an integrated traffic and pedestrian light system can improve safety and circulation. Vendors will need to be carefully managed in these streets as they currently impede pedestrian flow and safety.

Key Concepts:

- Dedicated bus lanes
- Widened footpaths
- Vendor management
- Dedicated bicycle lanes
- Shared Community Spaces
- Short-term parking for commercial use during business hours provided
- Painted junction boxes to avoid gridlock
- Bus stops redesigned for safety





9. Celebrating and Including Diversity



DIVERSITY



ECONOMY



COMPACT



AFFORDABLE



CONNECTED

Yangon's historic city contains an unparalleled range of religious sites and is home to living communities with diverse cultural backgrounds. It was a multicultural city long before the British arrived; Chinese, Armenian, Portuguese, and Muslim traders have had a presence in the city for hundreds of years. YHT has identified over 140 religious sites in the downtown area, including: dhamma halls; monasteries, pagodas; mosques; Armenian, Baptist, Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches; Hindu, Parsi, Sikh and Jain temples; Chinese temples and clan houses; and a synagogue.

These diverse communities have all contributed a great deal to Myanmar and Yangon, and continue to contribute to the city's life and economy today. The diverse range of cultural backgrounds in Yangon is of huge benefit in making the city liveable and regionally competitive. There has also been a long history of inter-communal violence and discrimination that needs to be permanently overcome. Enabling the understanding and celebration of their history within the wider community of Yangon is an important part of ensuring they are included. Celebrating and protecting the diversity of Yangon's communities is a key step towards a more inclusive and regionally competitive city.

In the downtown area, Shwebontha Street forms an important centre for the city's Myanmar-Indian community while Latha Street is the historic core of the Myanmar-Chinese community. Public realm upgrade for these two areas will be addressed in the Latha Street Plan (page 102) and Shwebontha Street Plan (page 98). These communities are centred around traditional market places which are key spaces for establishing and maintaining social connections and tradition.

The city is also a place where people from many different regions in Myanmar have made a home. Each bring their unique cultural heritage with them to Yangon.

The vibrancy of these areas and of the city more widely also comes from the way residents and businesses of different income levels exist side by side. This lack of economic segregation is an important ingredient for Yangon and should be encouraged.

9.1 MAINTAINING GOOD PUBLIC SPACES

- 9.1.1 Introduce a height control for the downtown area to ensure that existing fine-grain communities are not displaced by high-rise development
- 9.1.2 Ensure that all new residential developments within the downtown grid have balconies overlooking the street to maintain community links to the street
- 9.1.3 Enact the Better Streets Plan (page 80) in the downtown area, and particularly on Latha and Shwebontha streets
- 9.1.4 Protect parking rights for local residents within their neighbourhood by issuing parking permits and charging non-residents for parking by the hour
- 9.1.5 Implement the Public Space Cleanliness Plan (page 116) to ensure that neighbourhood streets are accessible and clean

9.2 CONSERVE AND UPGRADE TRADITIONAL MARKET PLACES

- 9.2.1 Institute dedicated delivery times during the night for downtown area businesses and markets in order to reduce traffic congestion during the day
- 9.2.2 Ensure the protection of key downtown markets, such as Theingyi Zay and Bogalay Zay, from development
- 9.2.3 Limit the floor area of supermarkets and convenience stores in the downtown area

- 9.2.4 Improve hygiene and management of local markets to ensure they remain attractive to local customers
- 9.2.5 Require a set proportion of stalls within designated wet markets to sell fresh produce so that residents can still buy fresh food within their local area
- 9.2.6 Provide public realm upgrades for night markets such as those at the Telegu Church, upper Shwebontha (page 98) and Latha night market (page 102) to ensure public safety and free passage for pedestrians and traffic
- 9.2.7 Allow vendors to operate within downtown streets according to guidelines that ensure pedestrian traffic has priority (Figure 13, page 82)
- 9.2.8 Establish standard requirements for restaurants, markets and street vendors to ensure food safety and pedestrian access

9.3 CONSERVING RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL PLACES

- 9.3.1 Ensure all historic religious sites in the city are identified for their heritage significance, including sacred *nat* trees
- 9.3.2 Designate and protect Yangon's important cemeteries
- 9.3.3 Produce a calendar of religious festivals so local people and visitors can be part of and see various celebrations
- 9.3.4 Ensure the provision of shared community spaces with widened footpaths outside of major religious sites



10. Recovering Memory



ECONOMY



DIVERSITY



UNIQUE



ENGAGED

Yangon has a proud and diverse history as one of the great cultural and mercantile cities of the 20th century. Famous artists, thinkers and leaders from across Myanmar and the world have lived in the city and left their mark. Independence was won here and the foundations of a modern nation were laid in buildings and public spaces that still exist today. Yangon also contains surviving strands of tradition and cultural connection that reach out across the globe to Europe, the Middle East, India and other parts of Asia – the array of religious practices that still exist and thrive through these connections contribute to Yangon’s unique vibrancy. Every resident, building and street has a story to tell.

Successive governments since colonial times have attempted to suppress aspects of Myanmar’s history for political reasons. Certain themes, ideas, people and movements have become distorted or politicised. There now needs to be a balanced, non-political recovery of memory in Yangon. Historians and civic leaders can ensure that local people have access to historic records and institutions where memory

can be recorded, digitised and made available for current and future generations. These places can include archives, digitisation facilities, museums, community centers, reading spaces and forums where people from across Myanmar can come to safeguard and tell their stories and learn about local history.

These Memory Hubs can be placed in key locations within the city, wherever a local community sees their value. They can range in size from a major Yangon City Museum to small locally run spaces in the city’s townships (see page 76). These hubs can serve as useful information points for international visitors.

10.1 MEMORY HUBS AND A CITY MUSEUM

- 10.1.1 | Yangon City Museum can be established within the former Grindlay's Bank on lower Pansodan Road (see Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank Reuse Opportunity, page 76)
- 10.1.2 | Space to be found in Latha Street, perhaps in an under-utilised clan house, for a memory hub, community centre and tourism information point
- 10.1.3 | Location to be found on Shwebontha Street for a memory hub, community centre and tourism information point
- 10.1.4 | Memory Hubs can be established within many other communities across Yangon

10.2 BLUE PLAQUES PROGRAMME

- 10.2.1 | Continue the roll out of 50 blue plaques per year across Yangon
- 10.2.2 | Begin installation of information boards to communicate information to locals and visitors in public areas such as Bo Aung Kyaw Street, Latha Street, Shwebontha Street, the waterfront and Lower Kyauktada

10.3 FESTIVAL CALENDAR

- 10.3.1 | Creation of a calendar showing all the major religious festivals in Yangon
- 10.3.2 | The calendar could be coupled with the proposed walking routes outlined in Figure 23 (page 113)
- 10.3.3 | Both will require a marketing strategy in Burmese and English

10.4 YHT PUBLIC TOURS AND ADVOCACY

- 10.4.1 | YHT to continue providing free tours for local people and expand to include themed tours of key areas
- 10.4.2 | YHT to continue its broader work on raising awareness of Yangon's important history

10.5 PUBLIC ARCHIVES

- 10.5.1 | Improve access to public archives and libraries by improving difficult registration processes
- 10.5.2 | Create a central online catalogue of historic records making it easier for people to know what resources are where and how to access them
- 10.5.3 | Digitise important documents, films and images – particularly urgent as Yangon's climate works against the survival of film and paper

Best Practice: Memory Hubs CHINATOWN HERITAGE CENTRE, SINGAPORE



In January 2016 the new Chinatown Heritage Centre opened. The facility contains a number of recreated historic interiors. Using interactive media and historic objects and images, visitors learn about the contribution of Chinese immigrants to Singapore. The facility is housed within three conserved historic Chinese shop houses on Pagoda Road. The project was supported by the Singapore Tourism Board⁴⁵ as part of their efforts to enhance Chinatown.



11. Shwebontha (Mogul) Street



DIVERSITY



ECONOMY



AFFORDABLE



CONNECTED

Shwebontha Street is a focal point for Yangon's Indian-Myanmar heritage. This is where the retinue of the last Mogul Emperor of India, Bahadur Shah Zafar, settled in the late 19th century and where Gandhi stayed on his visits to Yangon.

The Better Streets Plan (page 80) should be enacted here to ensure that shared community spaces are provided outside major religious sites such as the Surti Sunni Jamah Mosque. Street vendors should be well-managed and space provided for night markets. The numerous trees and tree shrines along the street should be protected and paved areas supplied around them for relaxation and worship.

Drainage upgrades, tree planting and traffic management can improve health and cleanliness.

11.1 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- 11.1.1 Paint pedestrian road crossings using best safety standards
- 11.1.2 Equip all traffic lights with pedestrian lights and crossing systems
- 11.1.3 Widen footpaths according to Better Streets Plan
- 11.1.4 Redesign paving for safety and to allow rain absorption
- 11.1.5 Manage vendors to ensure good flow of foot traffic
- 11.1.6 Redesign curbs to ensure safety and accessibility
- 11.1.7 Access from the road to the footpath can be provided beneath trees by ensuring vendors do not block these spaces

11.2 VENDOR CONTROL

- 11.2.1 Allow vendors to occupy only designated plots in the street as shown in Figure 13 (page 82)
- 11.2.2 Minimum clearance beneath umbrellas to be 7 feet

11.3 ADVERTISING CONTROL

- 11.3.1 Restrict standing advertising posters on public footpaths
- 11.3.2 Amplified music to be restricted for the benefit of local residents
- 11.3.3 Redesign advertising boards covering heritage buildings so they do not obscure facades

11.4 SHARED COMMUNITY SPACES

- 11.4.1 Provide community spaces free of vendors, car parking and with widened footpaths, tree coverage and public furniture
- 11.4.2 These spaces should be located outside of public places such as religious sites, libraries or public institutions
- 11.4.3 The shared community space allocation for upper Shwebontha could be placed in the middle of the block or on the street outside the mosques

11.5 STREET FURNITURE

- 11.5.1 Provide street furniture along all 50-foot and 100-foot streets and in all shared community spaces within 30-foot streets
- 11.5.2 Furniture should be strong and durable
- 11.5.3 Vendors should be excluded from using this furniture for commercial purposes
- 11.5.4 Furniture to be placed close to trees to ensure shade and rain protection

11.6 GREENING

- 11.6.1 Protect major existing trees and extend footpaths around them
- 11.6.2 Plant new trees of appropriate species at regular intervals

11.7 LIGHTING

- 11.7.1 Provide street lighting at regular intervals
- 11.7.2 Utilise solar panels for sustainability
- 11.7.3 Provide extra lighting for night markets

11.8 DEDICATED PARKING SPACES

- 11.8.1 Restrict parking to dedicated bays
- 11.8.2 Paint parking bays onto the road surface
- 11.8.3 Collect parking fees by the hour
- 11.8.4 Introduce a residential permit parking system
- 11.8.5 Nearby undeveloped sites can be required to provide multi-level parking to relieve pressure on nearby neighbourhood streets



11.9 SPACE FOR NIGHT MARKETS

- 11.9.1 Use road lanes, as in Figure 20 (page 101), for night markets in specific areas that are closed to traffic after 6pm through the use of movable bollards
- 11.9.2 Road lanes can be used during certain times for night markets by using movable bollards to direct traffic flow
- 11.9.3 Provide dedicated rubbish collection
- 11.9.4 Collect food waste for compost (this can be financially profitable if sold as fertiliser)

11.10 TRAFFIC CONTROL

- 11.10.1 Mark traffic lanes with painted lines
- 11.10.2 Paint junctions in a bright grid pattern to discourage traffic from stopping and causing gridlock
- 11.10.3 Use moveable bollards to restrict traffic access to key spaces in the evenings
- 11.10.4 Install traffic lights at major intersections and integrate this into a city wide system

Figure 19 Shwebontha Street Proposed Public Realm Upgrade - Day

 Bus Lane  Bicycle Lane

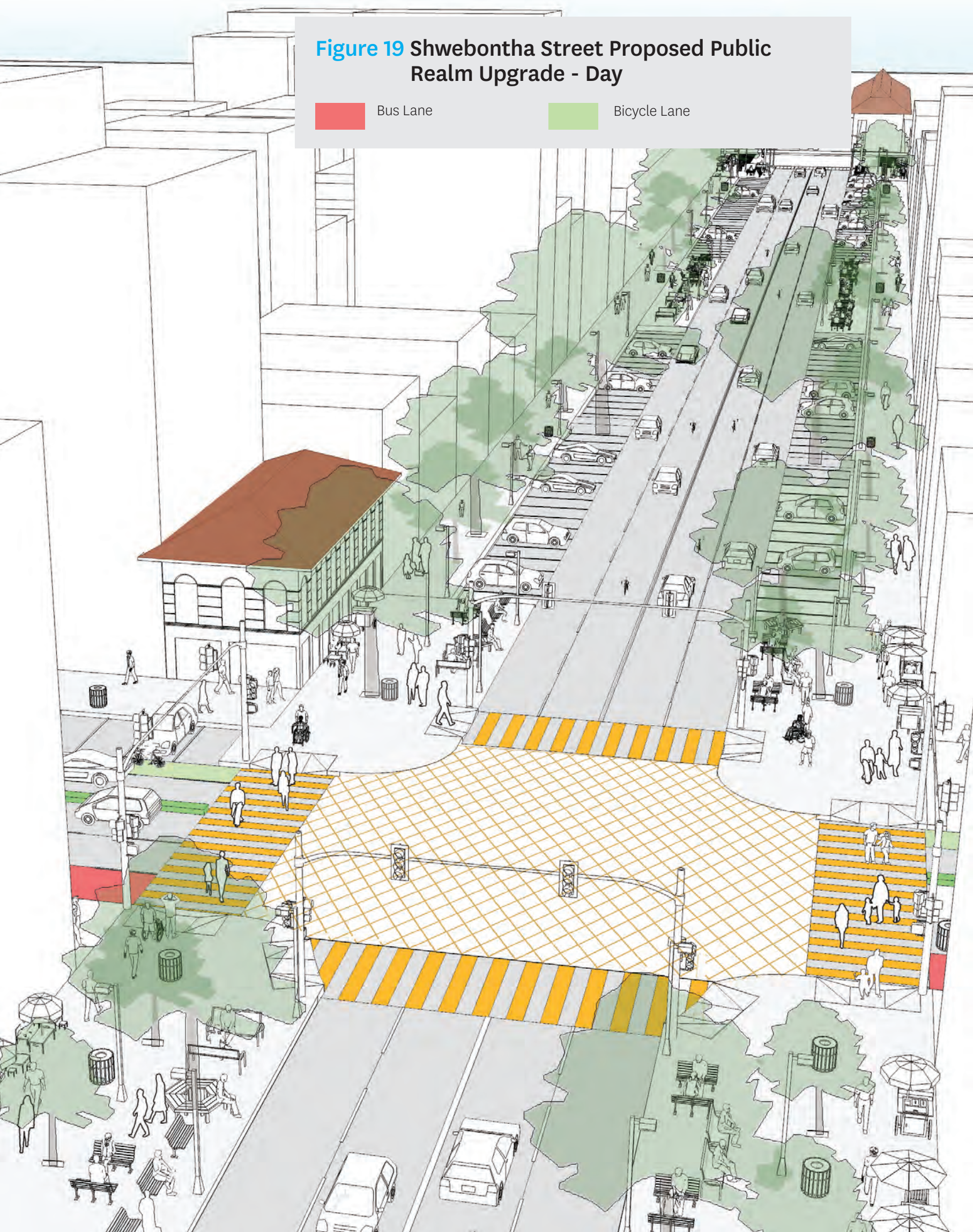




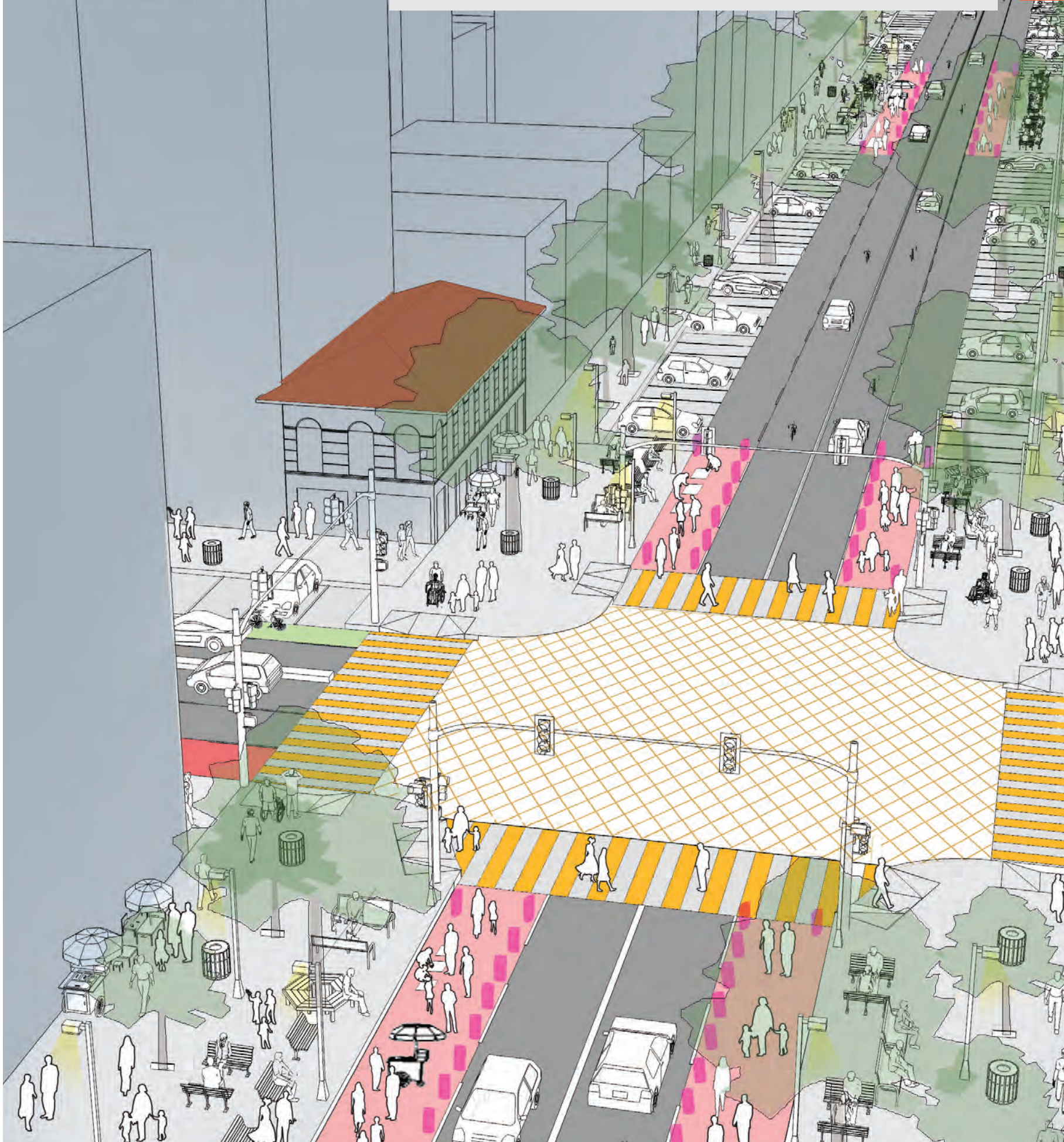


Figure 20 Shwebontha Street Proposed Public Realm Upgrade - Night

-  Bus Lane
-  Bicycle Lane
-  Moveable Bollards
-  Shared Road Surface - Night Market





12. Latha (Latter) Street



DIVERSITY



ECONOMY



AFFORDABLE



CONNECTED

Latha Street is a key focal point for Yangon's Chinese-Myanmar heritage. The Better Streets Plan (page 80) should be enacted here and shared community space provided outside major temples and clan associations. The northern side of Mahabandoola Road between 21st and Sin Oh Dan streets should be closed to traffic every evening to accommodate the night market and restaurants operating there. The area should have permanent traffic management measures put in place such as moveable bollards. It should also be paved to signify its designated use as a night market. The Guandong Guan Yin Temple at the northwest corner of the Mahabandoola-Latha intersection should have a dedicated public space outside, as should the Ning Yang Clan House on the opposite side of Latha Street.

The space between the Guan Yin Temple and the Ning Yang Clan House could become an important public space. This would involve relocating the public toilet and providing good street furniture and lighting.

An appropriate historic clan house (perhaps the Ning Yang Clan House) could be used as a Chinese cultural centre, museum and Memory Hub (see Recovering Memory Plan, page 96) if the owners are agreeable and an income can be generated for them and the community. This could have a highly beneficial effect on local businesses by attracting more visitors to the area.

12.1 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- 12.1.1 | Paint pedestrian road crossings using international standards
- 12.1.2 | Equip all traffic lights with pedestrian lights and crossing systems
- 12.1.3 | Widen footpaths
- 12.1.4 | Redesign paving for safety and to allow rain absorption
- 12.1.5 | manage vendors to ensure good flow of foot traffic
- 12.1.6 | Redesign curbs to ensure safety and accessibility
- 12.1.7 | Access from the road to the footpath can be provided beneath trees by ensuring vendors do not block these spaces

12.2 VENDOR CONTROL

- 12.2.1 | Allow vendors to occupy only designated plots in the street, see Figure 13 (page 82)
- 12.2.2 | Minimum clearance beneath umbrellas to be 7 feet

12.3 ADVERTISING CONTROL

- 12.3.1 Restrict standing advertising posters on public footpaths
- 12.3.2 Amplified music to be restricted for the benefit of local residents
- 12.3.3 Redesign advertising boards covering heritage buildings so they do not obscure facades

12.4 SHARED COMMUNITY SPACES

- 12.4.1 Provide community spaces free of vendors and car parking, and with widened footpaths, more tree coverage and public furniture
- 12.4.2 These spaces should be located outside of public places such as religious sites, libraries or public institutions
- 12.4.3 The space between the Guan Yin Temple and the Ning Yang Clan House could become an important shared community space - upper Latha Street's allocation of Shared Community Space can be placed at its southern end, creating a large public space between the two cultural sites
- 12.4.4 Toilet block currently located at the northeast corner of the Mahabandoola-Latha intersection can be relocated and redesigned

12.5 STREET FURNITURE

- 12.5.1 Provide street furniture along all 50- and 100-foot streets and in all shared community spaces within 30-foot streets
- 12.5.2 Furniture should be strong and durable
- 12.5.3 Vendors should be excluded from using this furniture for commercial purposes
- 12.5.4 Furniture to be placed close to trees to ensure shade and rain protection

12.6 GREENING

- 12.6.1 Conserve major existing trees and extend footpaths around them
- 12.6.2 Plant new trees of appropriate species at regular intervals

12.7 LIGHTING

- 12.7.1 Provide street lighting at regular intervals
- 12.7.2 Utilise solar panels for sustainability
- 12.7.3 Provide extra lighting for night markets

12.8 DEDICATED PARKING SPACES

- 12.8.1 Off-street parking could be provided on the waterfront in under-utilised warehouses
- 12.8.2 Restrict parking to dedicated bays
- 12.8.3 Paint parking bays onto the road surface
- 12.8.4 Collect parking fees by the hour
- 12.8.5 Introduce a residential permit parking system
- 12.8.6 Nearby undeveloped sites can be required to provide multi-level parking to relieve pressure on nearby neighbourhood streets

12.9 SPACE FOR NIGHT MARKETS

- 12.9.1 Use road lanes, as in Figure 21 (page 104-105), for night markets in specific areas that are closed to traffic after 6pm through the use of movable bollards
- 12.9.2 The northern end of Mahabandoola between Lanmadaw and Latha streets can be designated for night markets after 6pm each evening - traffic control and vendor management can be put in place
- 12.9.3 Provide dedicated rubbish collection
- 12.9.4 Collect food waste for compost (this can be financially profitable if sold as fertiliser)

12.10 TRAFFIC CONTROL

- 12.10.1 Mark traffic lanes with painted lines
- 12.10.2 Paint junctions in a bright grid pattern to discourage traffic from stopping and causing gridlock
- 12.10.3 Use moveable bollards to restrict traffic access to key spaces in the evenings
- 12.10.4 Install traffic lights at major intersections and integrate this into a city-wide system

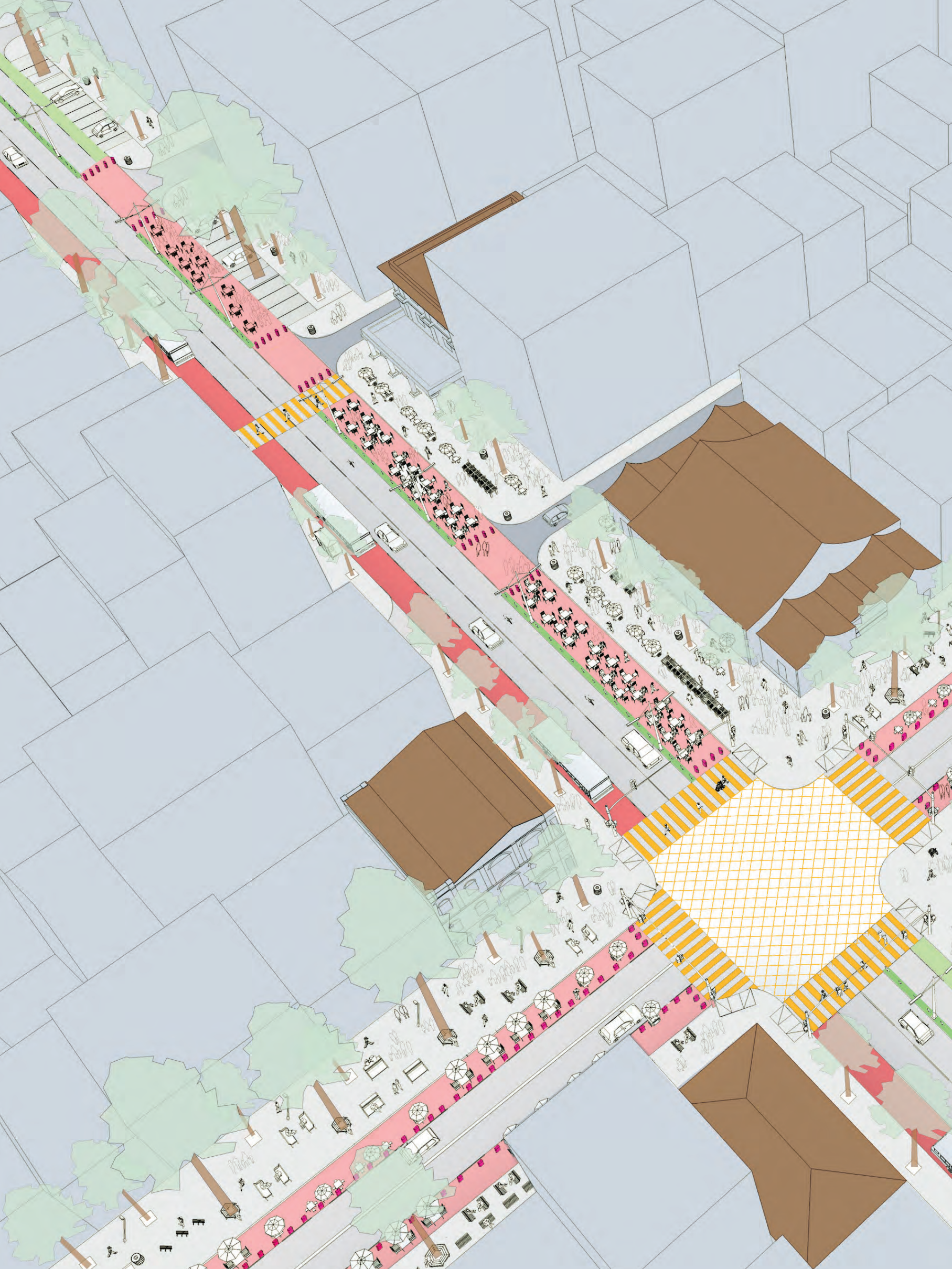






Figure 21 Latha Street Proposed Public Realm Upgrade - Night

-  Bus Lane
-  Bicycle Lane
-  Moveable Bollards
-  Shared Road Surface - Night Market





13. Waterfront



PUBLIC
ASSETS



CONNECTED



ECONOMY



UNIQUE

Yangon's waterfront is an under-utilised economic and tourism asset that has the potential to dramatically improve Yangon's liveability and regional competitiveness. This Action Plan addresses the area between Lanmadaw Street and the Botahtaung Pagoda, today almost entirely inaccessible to the public and largely unused. Sheds 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 could become major new cultural and arts facilities with space for commercial retail. New parks and gardens and a public promenade could be built. Limited new development and commercial use could provide an income for the Port Authority.

The area between Bo Aung Kyaw Street and Warehouse 7 can be dedicated to public parkland (see Figure 22, page 108) this will open up a view of the 2,300 feet of continuous grand heritage buildings along Stand Road to reveal a lost city icon, rivalling the Bund in Shanghai and becoming a major tourism asset.

The waterfront at Mahabandoola Garden Street has been severely damaged by the recent construction of a poorly designed and located ferry terminal. This terminal occupies space that could be used as public park land, is located away from the only pedestrian crossing in the area at Pansodan Road and blocks views from Mahabandoola Garden Street to the water. The terminal should be redesigned and relocated

in the near future if the area is to reach its full potential. A redesigned ferry terminal could be added to the existing historic terminal breathing new life into this important building and reinstating its original use while keeping its current restaurant function.

The point at which Shwedagon Pagoda Road (once a sacred religious route) meets the waterfront could be designated as a public park and again find its place as an aspect of the wider religious landscape of Yangon. This park can form the river gateway to Shwedagon as it did for Burmese royalty hundreds of years ago. Shed 3 could be demolished to make way for the park.

Warehouses 5, 6 and 7 could be reused as part of a cultural hub on Lower Kyauktada street (see Lower Kyauktada Plan, page 74). Myanmar's first Museum of Modern Art could be located here, along with major new performance spaces for pwe, theatres, a recital centre and concert hall.

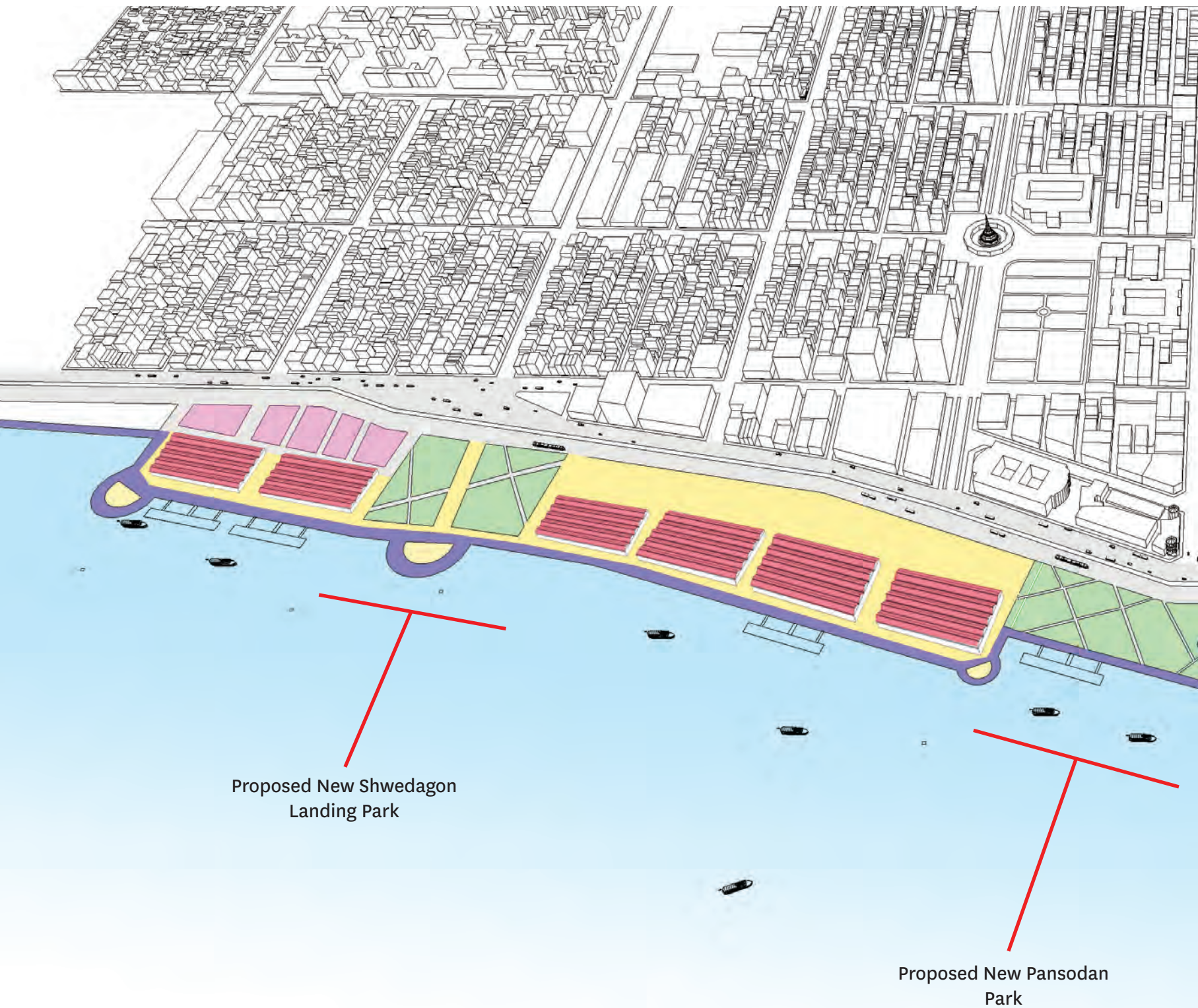
13.1 MASTER PLAN YANGON'S WATERFRONT

- 13.1.1 Ensure planning of Seikkan Township is overseen by a dedicated body - all demolition, construction and alteration within this area can be planned from a wide perspective to ensure that piecemeal work does not damage the area's huge potential
- 13.1.2 Undertake a significance assessment of all structures and areas, including view lines to ensure that the important heritage of the area is identified and can be protected during development
- 13.1.3 For the area between the Botahtaung Pagoda and Lanmadaw Street, a design competition can be held in accordance with a detailed brief to reinvigorate the area and ensure new development is of a high standard
- 13.1.4 Ensure no new development in the area between Botahtaung Pagoda and Lanmadaw Street exceeds 5 storeys and is limited to its far eastern and western ends (see Figure 22, page 108-109)
- 13.1.5 New builds within the waterfront should be within extensions of the city grid so view lines down the grid streets to the waterfront are left unobstructed
- 13.1.6 Ensure that an expanded ferry network and water taxi service is planned for
- 13.1.7 Relocate the newly built ferry terminal to the former terminal site and design a modern addition to the historic building to make it fit for use as a high-capacity terminal with some commercial space
- 13.1.8 In the interim, no commercial tenancies should be signed for the newly built ferry terminal at the south end of Mahabandoola Garden Street
- 13.1.9 Ensure sheds 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are retained and reused
- 13.1.10 Ensure that the entire waterfront from Lanmadaw Street to the Botahtaung Pagoda is publicly accessible with a promenade along the water's edge
- 13.1.11 Plan for eventual sinking of Strand Road between Theinbyu and Shwebontha streets
- 13.1.12 Plan for eventual removal of toll road
- 13.1.13 Establish a new public park at the southern end of Pansodan Street (see Figure 22, page 108-109)
- 13.1.14 Establish a new park at the southern end of Shwedagon Pagoda Road where royal barges once landed (see Figure 22, page 108-109)

Best Practice: Urban Waterfront THE BUND, SHANGHAI, CHINA



This three-year project was completed in March 2010. It involved moving six lanes of traffic into an underground tunnel, creating a safer pedestrian environment and widening the existing waterfront promenade. This new space connects the city back to the waterfront and has created an important civic space. A unique collection of significant heritage buildings provides a backdrop to the promenade and is today one of the city's most iconic assets. In conjunction with this redevelopment, over 50 heritage buildings were preserved and renovated, and a 40% increase of public space was provided along the river, including four new parks and public squares along the 1.8 km long waterfront promenade⁴⁶. Built atop a floodwall with integrated parking, the promenade serves as both recreation space and vital infrastructure.



Proposed New Shwedagon
Landing Park

Proposed New Pansodan
Park

Figure 22 Proposed Waterfront Redesign

- Waterfront Promenade
- Proposed New Parkland
- Public Roads
- Proposed Public Open Space
- Conserved Heritage Buildings
- Proposed New Development Areas
- Botahtaung Pagoda Complex



Redesigned Ferry Terminal



14. Sustainable Tourism



ECONOMY



UNIQUE



DIVERSITY

Yangon's tourism industry has expanded dramatically in recent years with visitor numbers at Shwedagon Pagoda growing from around 175,000 in 2010 to over 500,000 in 2015³⁸. However, management and investment in the local tourism industry has not kept pace.

The city is seen as a gateway to the rest of Myanmar and, aside from the Shwedagon, its cultural and built heritage is not viewed as a tourism asset. If government can protect, market and properly manage the city's heritage assets, Yangon can become a major destination in its own right. With good facilities, visitors will stay an extra three nights or more before travelling on to Inle Lake or Bagan. This has the potential to generate billions of dollars for the local economy.

Yangon's heritage tourism industry can be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable and benefit the local community. Spreading profits from this growing sector through local medium and small businesses in addition to large hotels and established restaurants is key.

Making Yangon an international tourist destination means making Yangon a liveable place for its residents. This is because visitors come to see Yangon as an authentic living city with its vibrant and diverse local communities thriving. If Yangon is to have a successful tourism industry, it must avoid the mistakes of Venice, Penang and Lijiang to ensure local people are able to continue to live healthy and happy lives within tourism focus areas. This can be achieved through good management of the tourism industry and meaningful consultation with local residents.

For more information on sustainable tourism in Yangon see YHT's Tourism Study (Online Annexe 02).

For more information on how local businesses work on three streets in the downtown area see YHT's livelihoods study (Online Annexe 03).

14.1 TOURISM MASTER PLAN

- 14.1.1 In drafting the master plan, government should work closely with the local and international tourism industry
- 14.1.2 Create a body of stakeholders to ensure all relevant parties are included from the outset and that community concerns and aspirations are addressed
- 14.1.3 Government to look at marketing, destination improvement, visitor management and site interpretation as part of a tourism master plan
- 14.1.4 Consider a voluntary payment automatically added to hotel bills unless refused – funds could go to the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund (see page 131) and feed back into the community by promoting sustainable tourism

14.2 DESIGNATE TOURISM FOCUS AREAS

- 14.2.1 Designate five major tourism focus areas within the downtown area where new destinations are created, public realm is upgraded for the benefit of local residents and visitors and walking routes are identified and marketed:

Lower Kyauktada

Secretariat and Surrounds

Latha Street

Shwebontha Street

Shwedagon and Surrounds

Best Practice: Sustainable Tourism CHILE



Since the 1990s, Chile has expanded its tourism industry. Today tourism accounts for around 10% of national GDP⁴⁷. The government has strong marketing campaigns focusing not only on buildings but also on intangible cultural heritage - carnivals, festivals, food and pilgrimage trails. In 2014, 40% of tourists who visited Chile were motivated by culture, heritage and traditions⁴⁸.

Within this strong national framework, a high proportion of the National Tourism Authority's projects are related to cultural heritage:

Authorities have focused on diversifying the types of tourism offered by developing destinations and marketing. They have also worked to improve economic development for small and medium enterprises ensuring equitable spread of income from tourism.



14.3 ESTABLISH WALKING ROUTES

- 14.3.1 These five areas can be linked by walkable streets – Figure 14 (page 84) shows priority areas where the Better Streets Plan (page 80) can be rolled out along routes of visitor interest
- 14.3.2 A walking route should be established from the Shwedagon Pagoda to the Botahtaung Pagoda that links into a wider system of walking routes in the downtown area (see Figure 23, opposite)
- 14.3.3 Enact the Better Streets Plan along key streets in the downtown area to establish this network
- 14.3.4 Designate several key sites as retail and food-and-beverage outlets along the walking route system where visitors can rest, eat and shop

14.4 SHWEDAGON

- 14.4.1 Shwedagon Pagoda Trustees can link with another major Buddhist temple, such as Mahabodhi in India or Wat Phra Kaew in Bangkok, to learn from their experiences in visitor management – this could involve a staff exchange programme
- 14.4.2 Consider options to limit numbers of tourists allowed onto the platform to ensure that access for local people is not impeded
- 14.4.3 Enact the Shwedagon and Surrounds Plan (page 54) to provide new walking routes around the monument linking to wider city walking routes

14.5 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

- 14.5.1 Small and medium scale local businesses can be encouraged to make themselves more attractive to visitors with basic changes in hygiene, signage and furniture
- 14.5.2 This work should ensure that the local essence and character of these businesses is maintained by showing businesses how to make local food and beverage inviting for visitors
- 14.5.3 This could be achieved through the creation of a simple booklet for local businesses and could be assisted by the creation of a dedicated NGO building the capacity of vendors

Reuse Opportunity Compressor Station



ADDRESS: 233-237, Mahabandoola Road, Botahtaung Township

BUILT: C. 1890

ORIGINAL USE: Compressor station

CURRENT USE: Compressor station, partially vacant

PROPOSED USE: Industrial Tourism Destination

Use of the pumping station can be relocated to another building. The compound can be open to the public as a tourist attraction centered around the historic steam engines and engineering systems. Could contain some retail and food and beverage.

Figure 23 Downtown Heritage Walking Routes

- St. John's Church to Sein Young Chi Pagoda
- Liao San Tao Temple to Thayettaw Monastery
- Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue to Sule Pagoda
- Sule Pagoda to Botahtaung Pagoda
- Payaphyu Monastery to Pylone Chanthar Pagoda
- Shwedagon Pagoda to Botahtaung Pagoda
- Downtown Conservation Area
- Historic Place of Worship





15. Secretariat and Surrounds



PUBLIC
ASSETS



UNIQUE



ENGAGED

The Secretariat complex, including the former parliament building, is perhaps the most significant secular heritage site in Myanmar and is where the legal and administrative foundations of the modern nation were laid by Aung San and colleagues. Despite this, the building has not been publicly accessible for 60 years. Since the early 2000s, the Secretariat site has largely been disused. The site is currently leased to a private company that plans to restore the building and use it as a museum, art gallery and for limited commercial activity. The site also contains a large amount of parkland which can be opened to the public.

The surrounding area contains a high concentration of significant heritage places that can be reused for public good and as new tourism destinations. These include St. Mary's Cathedral, the Printing and Publishing Enterprise building (see page 115) and the Compressor Station (see page 112).

In many ways, the future of Yangon's downtown pivots on the future of this area. The Secretariat has the potential to be the other major attraction for Yangon along with the Shwedagon. Once it is properly managed and restored, it will dramatically improve the downtown area's available public space, economy and liveability as well as Yangon's standing as an international tourist destination.

All future work at the Secretariat site should be guided by the Conservation Management Plan commissioned by YHT and written in partnership with heritage specialists Simpson and Brown of Edinburgh (see Online Annexe 01).

15.1 MASTER PLANNING

- 15.1.1 An advisory committee can be established with clear terms of reference to guide the conservation of the site and proposals for its future use
- 15.1.2 Planning for the area should be holistic and look at the Secretariat within its broader urban context
- 15.1.3 The Better Streets Plan (page 80) should be enacted surrounding the complex and in major streets leading to it such as Mahabandoola and Bogalay Zay
- 15.1.4 Parkland within the complex should be protected and made publicly accessible
- 15.1.5 Car parking spaces could be provided for the site in future redevelopment of the adjacent YCDC plot at the corner of Mahabandoola-Theinbyu intersection to ensure parkland within the Secretariat complex is not eroded
- 15.1.6 The Secretariat should be used for public cultural and arts purposes, with some limited commercial activity and food and beverage to support its conservation

**Reuse Opportunity
Printing and Publishing Enterprise**



ADDRESS: Corner of Theinbyu Road and Anawrahta Road

BUILT: 1912

ORIGINAL USE: Government press and offices

CURRENT USE: Offices, press, residences, partially vacant

PROPOSED USE: Literary Hub

To be refurbished as a hub for literature. Ground floor to contain bookshops, cafes and continuing use as a government press. The upper floors to retain government office use.





16. Public Space Cleanliness



HEALTHY



ENGAGED



PUBLIC
ASSETS

Yangon's urban environment has great potential and is fundamentally well designed. However, it suffers from poor management, badly maintained infrastructure and ineffective waste disposal. The streets have uneven surfaces, open drains, piles of rubbish and dirt, and infestations of rats and pigeons. Residents often leave rubbish on the street and do not use the YCDC-provided bins because the lids have to be opened by hand. The city's greywater system has mingled with the sewerage system and water pipes have been run along existing greywater drains. Because of this, drinking and showering water is often contaminated with sewerage. The downtown grid's drainage system is also highly stagnant as the existing road drainage system outlined in the Better Streets Plan (page 80) means that rubbish flows into the greywater system clogging it and causing blockages. The accumulation of dirt, dust and animal droppings becomes airborne when dry and aerated by traffic, leading to an increase in lung, throat, eye and nasal infections as well as spreading disease.

The back lanes of the downtown area represent an important opportunity to create shared space through upgrades and greening. Today they are often filled with rubbish and overflowing with sewerage and wastewater. This poses a huge health risk, particularly for ground-floor residents. To ensure a long-term solution for these spaces, they should be cleaned up and drainage and sewerage infrastructure improved.

Community perception of these lanes as rubbish dumps can change if a shared public use can be found. They can become spaces local residents are proud of and willing to maintain themselves.

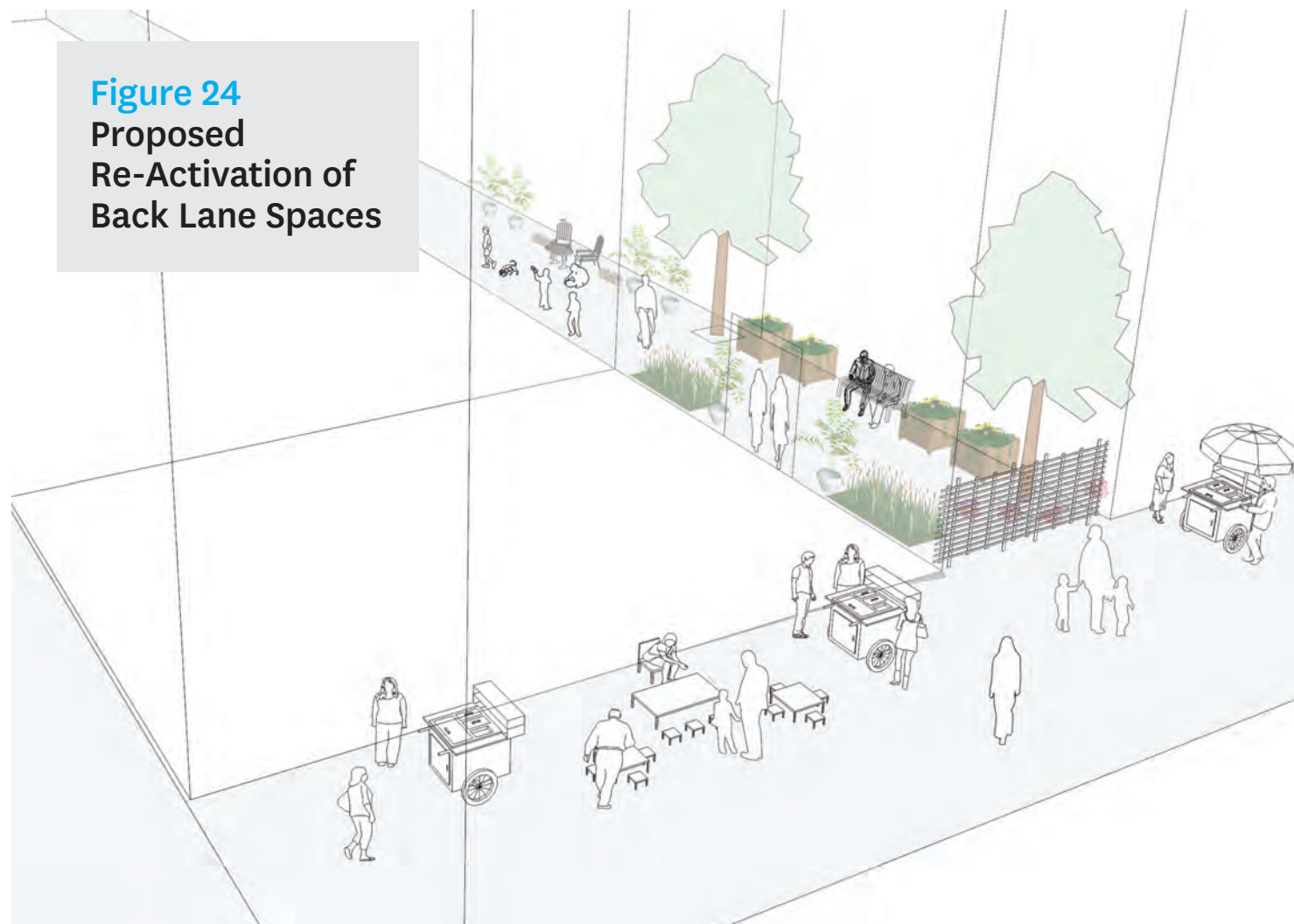
As the city's population expands in coming years, issues of basic sanitation will become major health threats and will affect the city's liveability and regional competitiveness if not addressed. City authorities can work closely with local communities to undertake an initial clean up of the streets and back lanes in tandem with a public awareness campaign on the health, economic and civic pride benefits of maintaining a clean urban environment. A monitoring system by residents could be instituted and, in addition to YCDC's extensive daily rubbish collection activities, a Deep Clean Unit could be established that involves removing accumulated rubbish and dirt, and reporting unstable, damaged or badly functioning footpaths, roads, drains and trees for repair by the city's maintenance department.

16.1 CLEAN UP OF PUBLIC SPACES

- 16.1.1 Government to institute a public awareness campaign around proper waste disposal practices
- 16.1.2 YCDC to establish clear requirements on waste disposal for local residents
- 16.1.3 YCDC to hold community clean-up days when local residents on a street clean up their environment – free food and entertainment could be provided by YCDC or sponsors
- 16.1.4 YCDC could award a prize to the cleanest street each year and give that street a grant to upgrade its public realm
- 16.1.5 Spitting betel could be banned in public places
- 16.1.6 Feeding of pigeons in the urban area should be banned – where this is done for religious reasons, it should be within the boundary of religious sites
- 16.1.7 All trees should be properly contained to ensure that dirt around their bases is not washed into drains and streets
- 16.1.8 All footpaths and shared surfaces in public spaces should eventually be paved with permeable surfaces (see images, page 87) to allow water permeability and minimise the intensity of localised flooding

16.2 BACK LANES

- 16.2.1 See Figure 24, below
- 16.2.2 Back lane clean-up can occur during community clean up days
- 16.2.3 Residents can be informed about the health impacts of dumping rubbish in back lanes
- 16.2.4 Regulations can be strengthened to stop the dumping of rubbish in back lanes
- 16.2.5 Small, east-west running lanes could be used for limited commercial activity and as pedestrian through ways
- 16.2.6 YCDC Deep Clean Unit should inspect back lanes regularly to ensure sewerage pipes and rainwater downpipes are functioning well - where they are not, owners should be issued with a notice to repair
- 16.2.7 Back lanes should be put to community use, such as open space for children to play or the public to relax in – this will involve resurfacing and greening, and the repair of sewerage piping and infrastructure



16.3 DEEP CLEAN UNIT

- 16.3.1 In addition to the existing YCDC street cleaning and rubbish collection programme, a Deep Clean Unit can be established
- 16.3.2 Several teams could rotate through the city to ensure that each street is visited regularly
- 16.3.3 The unit would be responsible for removing accumulated rubbish and dirt in the public realm
- 16.3.4 The unit would also monitor the state of street pavements and other assets such as street furniture, trees and infrastructure - where issues are identified they can report back to the YCDC for repair

16.4 PUBLIC WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 16.4.1 Public bins should be supplied within the urban setting, especially in public parks and gardens
- 16.4.2 YCDC could hold a design competition for the bins within set guidelines
- 16.4.3 The existing YCDC-supplied bins should be replaced with models that do not require people to open the lids by hand
- 16.4.4 Areas where earth is exposed, such as at the base of trees, should be properly contained with vegetation or paving to minimise dust generation, see Better Streets Plan (page 80)

Best Practice: Urban Cleanliness TAIWAN



In 1997, Taiwan was running out of landfill sites. In response, the government adopted the “4-in-1 Recycling Programme”, aimed at better connecting and providing incentives for everyone involved in the recycling process. This included local residents, private recyclers and waste collectors, local governments, manufacturers and importers of new recyclable goods. The government also introduced “Pay-as-You-Throw” (PAYT) schemes where collection agencies only accept waste in government-branded garbage bags. Taiwan has reduced its per-capita daily waste by 57.5% from 1998 to 2010⁴⁹, a period which coincided with 47% growth in the national GDP⁵⁰. In the same period, the national recycling rate soared from 5.87% to over 60%, making Taiwan one of the world’s top recyclers⁵¹.

16.4.5 Existing wet markets and night markets should have in place a public or private service to collect organic waste for recycling – the waste could be made into fertiliser and sold to small-scale farmers or gardeners (this can generate a profit)

16.5.4 The existing drainage system for streets will need to be rebuilt to ensure that the gutters and drain openings function well and that dirt and rubbish do not enter the drainage systems (see Figure 25, below)

16.5 PUBLIC UTILITIES

16.5.1 Advice from relevant specialists should be sought

16.5.2 Yangon's clean water supply needs an urgent upgrade to ensure that safe drinkable water is provided, especially where there are high concentrations of restaurants such as the downtown area – city authorities should work with relevant experts

16.5.3 Yangon's sewerage, wastewater and greywater drainage systems need an urgent overhaul – to do this, city authorities should work with relevant experts

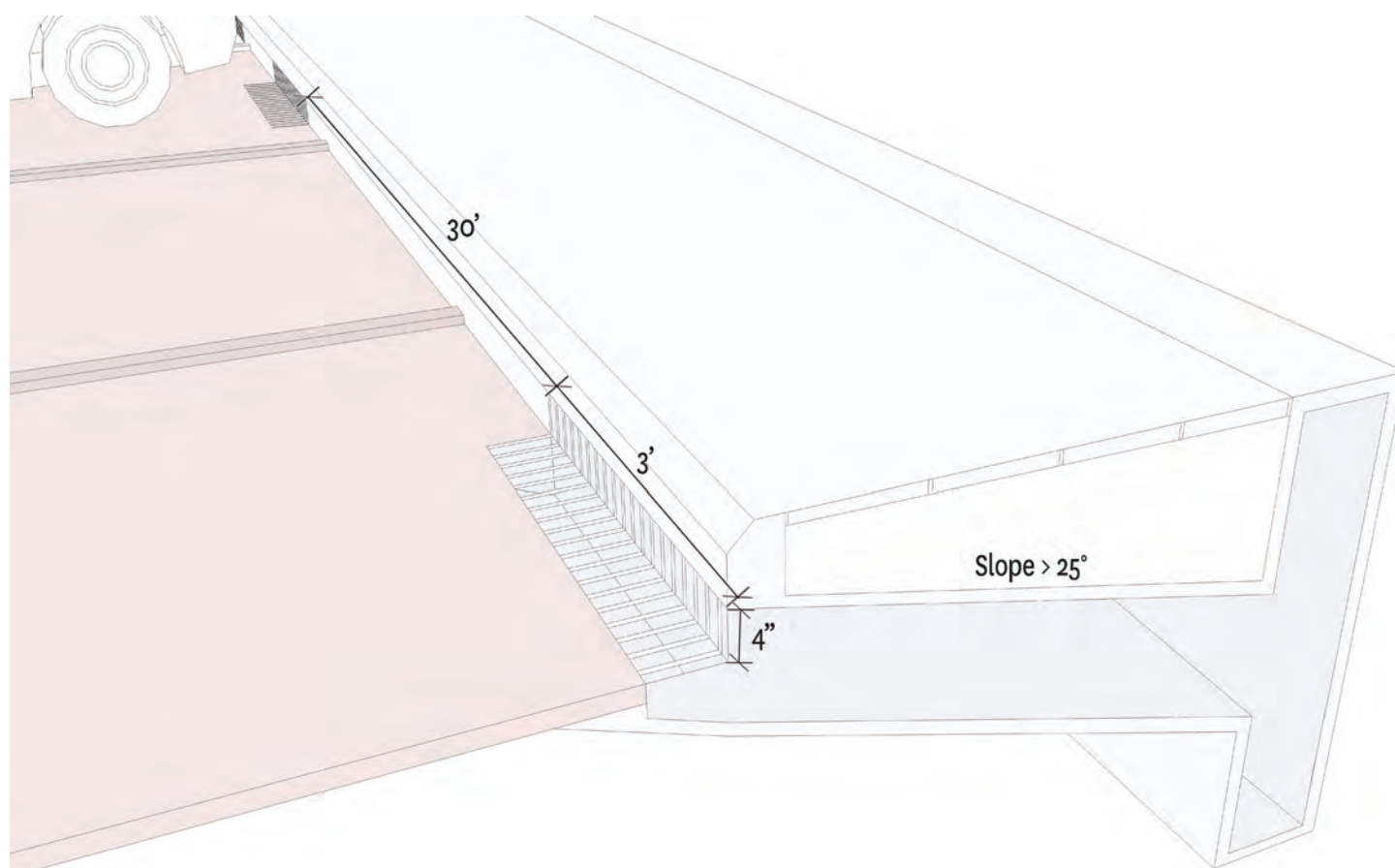
16.6 FOOD SAFETY

16.6.1 A capacity building body for vendors and restaurants should be established to undertake a wider education programme about food hygiene and how to improve food-handling techniques

16.6.2 Health and hygiene inspectors within YCDC should be trained to monitor the standards of and improve the practices of street vendors and restaurants

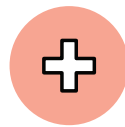
16.6.3 Wet areas for food preparation and clean up should be supplied by the city with clean running water, raised benches and proper drainage at key locations such as night markets

Figure 25 Proposed Drainage Specifications





17. Yangon General Hospital and Surrounds



HEALTHY



PUBLIC
ASSETS

Through master planning, the contribution of the Yangon General Hospital (YGH) site and surrounding areas to the health system of the wider city can be maximised. The main hospital site should not be considered in isolation and instead planned into a wider health-services precinct that includes all available nearby public land as illustrated in Figure 26, opposite.

Worsening traffic congestion in the area will affect the ability of people to access health services quickly. Physical road design and traffic management for major roads leading into the hospital can combat this problem.

The currently unfinished hospital wing and all recently completed buildings should be reviewed. Their earthquake strength should be carefully assessed. Their fitness for use should also be assessed including placement of lifts, supply of emergency exit ramps and placement of columns and drainage facilities. From a heritage perspective, the uncompleted new YGH wing is poorly located, blocking views north from Latha Street and obscuring views of the Shwedagon from upper stories of nearby buildings.

New hospital buildings can be sympathetically designed within the YGH site. New high-rise facilities can be built within nearby under-utilised government land.

17.1 MASTER PLAN THE SITE AND SURROUNDS

- 17.1.1 This can include all available government land in the area
- 17.1.2 Demolition and new builds within YGH to be confined to the areas identified in Figure 26 below within the hospital compound – YHT has done a Significance Assessment of the site which is illustrated in Figure 26 (opposite), in which the orange areas represent space that can be developed without the need to demolish significant heritage buildings
- 17.1.3 The YGH complex and surrounding government land can be master planned to create a wider health district

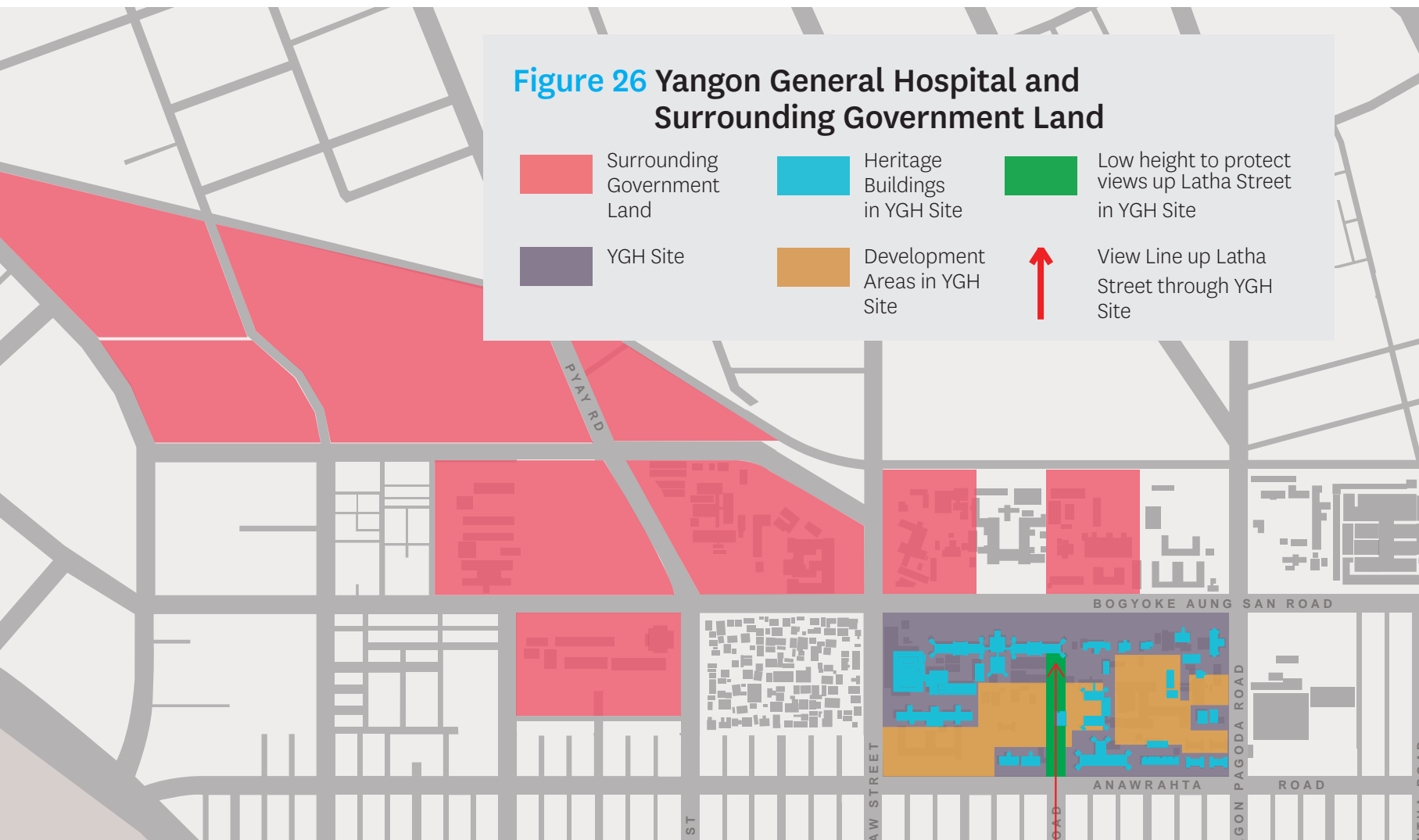
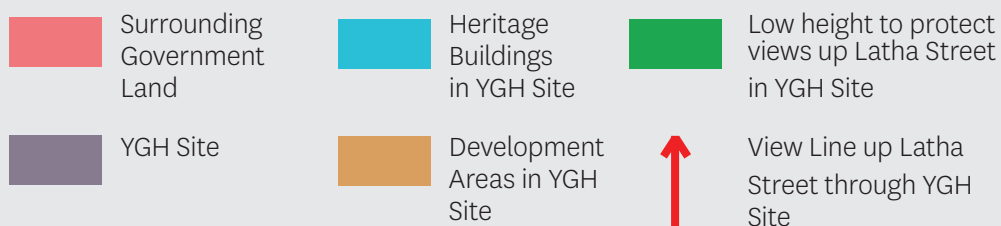
17.3 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- 17.3.1 Off-street entrance and parking for emergency vehicles should be provided to stop queuing in the street at emergency drop off
- 17.3.2 Road surfaces at hospital entrances should be painted with box junctions to discourage traffic from blocking these areas
- 17.3.3 Signs can be installed at these intersections informing drivers that they can save lives by leaving the painted entrance areas clear, allowing people to access treatment quickly
- 17.3.4 Emergency lanes can be installed in surrounding streets to aid access for ambulances

17.2 REVIEWING RECENT AND PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

- 17.2.1 The unfinished new wings should be assessed for fitness of use and safety
- 17.2.2 Any new buildings should be designed with qualified hospital architects and engineers
- 17.2.3 Proper site planning should be used to determine the best possible location for the buildings taking into account the YGH complex’s heritage significance
- 17.2.4 Placement and design of new buildings should carefully consider impacts on the surrounding streets and view lines

Figure 26 Yangon General Hospital and Surrounding Government Land





18. Education and the Knowledge Economy



ECONOMY



EDUCATED



DIVERSITY

In order to take advantage of the emergence of a global knowledge-based economy, Yangon should invest in making knowledge sources and training programmes available to the general public.

To enable Yangon's economy to diversify, several important steps outside of the scope of this strategy need to take place. These include better access to high-speed Internet, reliable energy provision and access to venture capital for startups. Other requirements addressed in this strategy include better transport infrastructure, health services and improving liveability in order to attract and retain the talent required to drive growth.

Transforming Myanmar's education system is an integral part of this process. Yangon University can again be a leading education institution of Southeast Asia and Myanmar's leading higher education hub (see Yangon University Plan, page 124). The growth in Myanmar's public and private education system can be absorbed by the large number of government-owned, under-utilised properties, many of which are historic. Other initiatives will be required, including the improvement of public libraries (see Recovering Memory Plan, page 96).

A key area of growth in the skill and knowledge sector of Yangon's economy is in training the first generation of specialist heritage tradespeople. YHT has begun this with

workshops in brick and plaster conservation. This programme will continue over the next year with funding from the Australian government.

The Windermere compound (see Figure 27, page 125) can be used as a hub for NGOs, government bodies and think tanks contributing to the development and good governance of Myanmar. The area's numerous under-utilised residential buildings could be restored. The university and the Windermere compound can benefit from their proximity to each other.

Yangon's many Basic Education High Schools and Primary Schools be protected as heritage assets and enhanced as the bedrock of education in Myanmar.

The Education Ministry has a large amount of real estate and land. With a holistic approach, these places can be utilised and improved to make the best possible contribution to improving education opportunities in Yangon and Myanmar.

Facilities such as the Burma Translation Society (Sarpay Beikman), located within their historic premises on Merchant Street, will continue to perform an important role in making international ideas and perspectives accessible to Burmese speakers and vice versa (see Reuse Opportunity Sarpay Beikman, opposite).

18.1 IDENTIFYING AND PROTECTING EDUCATION ASSETS

- 18.1.1 Undertake a full audit of property owned by the Ministry of Education
- 18.1.2 Assess the heritage significance of all properties and protect significant places
- 18.1.3 Develop a strategy to utilise these properties for the wider education of Myanmar's population

18.2 YANGON UNIVERSITY

- 18.2.1 See Yangon University Plan (page 124)

18.3 WINDERMERE COMPOUND

- 18.3.1 The site can be master planned to ensure a vision is in place for the compound and potential tenants

- 18.3.2 Tenants could agree to pay three years rent up front on a ten-year lease to cover renovation costs
- 18.3.3 The proposed Government Property Office and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) department (page 61) could oversee leasing arrangements
- 18.3.4 Physical links to the Yangon University campus could be created

18.4 HERITAGE SKILLS TRAINING

- 18.4.1 YHT to undertake a series of eight workshops for local tradespeople in heritage-related renovation and maintenance
- 18.4.2 Putting in place a wider set of heritage guidelines will ensure that good quality work is required for significant heritage places

Best Practice: Education and the Knowledge Economy BARCELONA, SPAIN

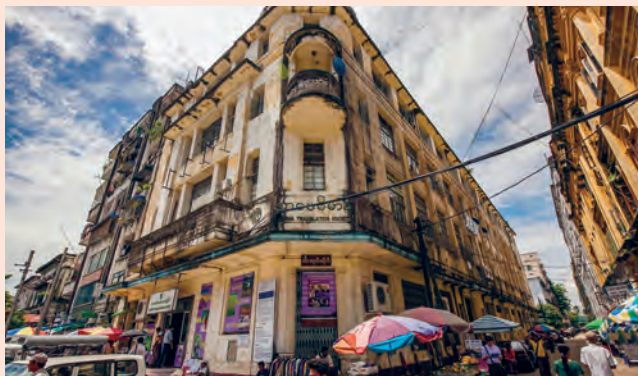


In 2015, Barcelona was named the Smartest City in the world⁵². Here, government works closely with local innovators to improve city efficiency and quality of life, ultimately creating a better economy.

To foster an environment of innovation, the city has provided powerful tools to the public, including open data initiatives that particularly encourage startups to create new functionalities. An example is CityBikes, which notifies where bikes are available in Barcelona's bike share programme, and ApparkB, which helps find parking spots in the city.

Barcelona is also working on building a Smart City Campus, an innovation hub near the city centre, with cutting-edge technology, where research centres and universities are linked. It includes housing, public facilities, green areas, conserved industrial heritage buildings and harmoniously designed new buildings.

Reuse Opportunity Sarpay Beikman



ADDRESS: Corner of Merchant Street and 37th Street

BUILT: 1950s

ORIGINAL USE: Burmese Translation Society office and library

CURRENT USE: Office, library and bookshop

PROPOSED USE: **Continues as the Sarpay Beikman Building**

With enhanced library and public-use facilities, this building can continue to house important translating facilities which will be in ever-increasing demand over the coming years. The main hall can be returned to a public forum and lecture space. An improved library can serve the public as a reading and studying space. Limited commercial activity could generate an income for the society.



19. Yangon University



ECONOMY



EDUCATED



PUBLIC
ASSETS

Established in the late 19th century, Yangon University was once the most prestigious in Southeast Asia and attracted students from across the region.

Since being closed in the 1980s, the campus has been largely unused. The buildings on the site and in the surrounding parklands are in need of protection and renovation. This will require a dedicated effort and a master plan for the site. This master plan should include education, research, management, funding and conservation plans for the reinvigoration of the university so that it can once again be one of the region's leading education institutions.

19.1 PROTECT THE CAMPUS

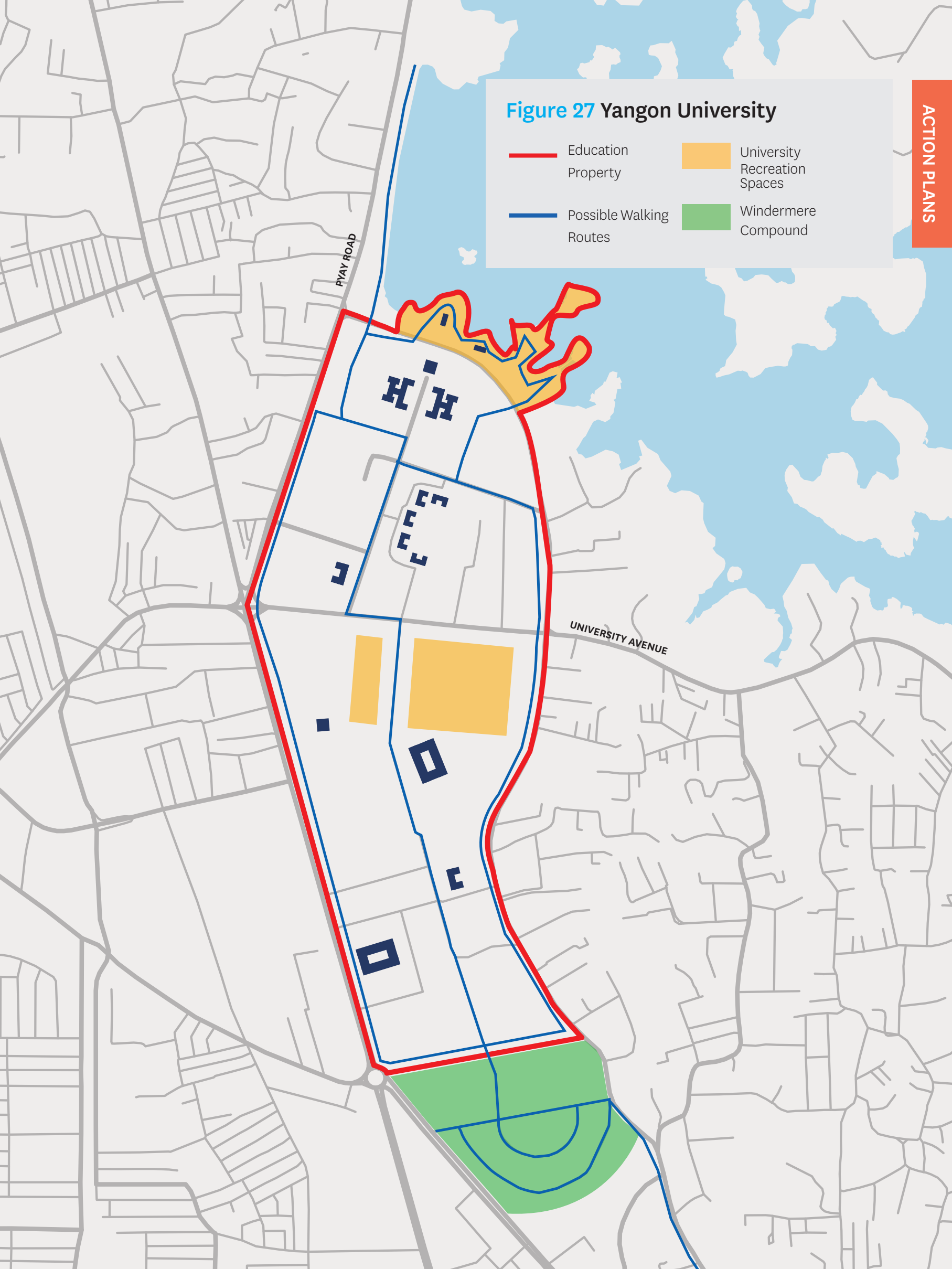
- 19.1.1** | Designate entire campus as a heritage conservation area
- 19.1.2** | Undertake a Significance Assessment of the campus, building by building, to determine what has heritage value and what does not – this assessment should designate open spaces, trees, buildings and views that need to be conserved during future development

19.2 DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN

- 19.2.1** | Seek assistance and advice from appropriate experts
- 19.2.2** | Parks and significant trees should be protected and included in future development of the campus
- 19.2.3** | A low height control should be put across most of the campus
- 19.2.4** | Designated areas for higher development should be put in place to accommodate future growth
- 19.2.5** | Detailed guidelines and, where required, Conservation Management Plans for specific buildings or groups of buildings should be put in place
- 19.2.6** | Establish a walking track system within the campus and linking into the wider Shwedagon Park system
- 19.2.7** | Consideration should be given to rebuilding the Student Union Building as a modern interpretation of the original
- 19.2.8** | These steps should also include/form part of a plan for the academic reinvigoration of the campus

Figure 27 Yangon University

- Education Property
- Possible Walking Routes
- University Recreation Spaces
- Windermere Compound





20. Inya Lake



PUBLIC
ASSETS



HEALTHY



UNIQUE

Inya Lake represents one of the city's most important liveability assets. It covers 700 acres, has a lake frontage of 14 miles, is a vital area of public space for Yangon and a major carbon sink. The lake supports many species of plant and animal life. However, much of the lake is not publicly accessible and high-rise development has already begun to obscure important views to-and-from the area.

Urgent protection of the lake with a conservation area overlay and a zoning plan that limits the height of adjacent developments is required. The government-owned land within the lake compound can also be made publicly accessible as parks with new walking and cycling tracks. Currently only around 0.75 miles of the water's edge is publicly accessible. Commercial development within the lake compound should be halted and all projects reviewed to ensure they do not impact on the lake's setting, character and the public's ability to use it.

20.1 CONTROL NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 20.1.1 | Halt all construction above 3 storeys within 500 feet of the lake shore
- 20.1.2 | Review all construction within 500 feet of lake shore
- 20.1.3 | Identify and conserve important view lines, particularly those to-and-from the public boulevards on Pyay Road and Kaba Aye Pagoda Road
- 20.1.4 | Ensure that new developments do not overshadow or dominate view lines

20.2 REVIEW COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

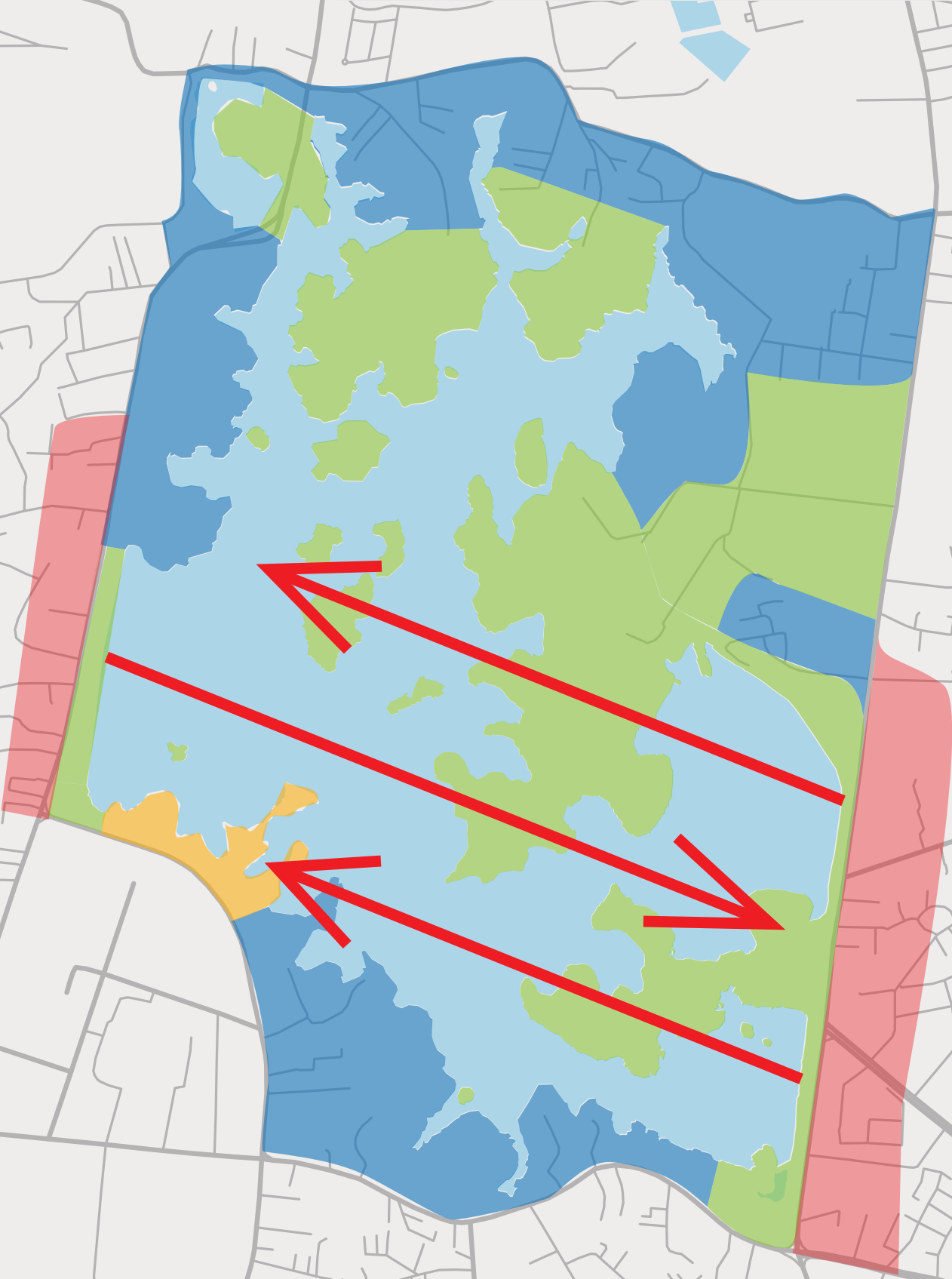
- 20.2.1 | Undertake a review of all commercial activity within government lands around the lake to ensure they do not damage public use of or access to the lake

20.3 PROTECT AREAS AS NATURE RESERVES

- 20.3.1 | Protect the lake islands and surrounding areas as nature reserves where vegetation and animal life is allowed to flourish

Figure 28 Inya Lake

- Height Control to Protect Views
- Privately Owned Lakeside Property
- Government-owned Lakeside Property
- University Land
- Major Public View Lines





21. Affordable and Mixed Housing



AFFORDABLE



DIVERSITY



ECONOMY

Yangon's population is expected to grow dramatically in coming years. Many of the city's new residents will be migrant workers, particularly from rural areas. In order to avoid the emergence of slums, with their associated negative social and health impacts, affordable public housing should be supplied ahead of the growth curve.

Yangon currently risks becoming a divided city through the construction of exclusively high-end residential projects. The careful mixing of different incomes within the same development parcels is a model used in many developed cities such as Singapore. New residential developments over a certain size could be required to build a set amount of low-cost housing within the same development parcel.

21.1 ENCOURAGE NEW MIXED AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 21.1.1 Identify and protect vacant or underdeveloped plots in the inner city for affordable housing
- 21.1.2 Review the Condominium Law to ensure it is equally weighted towards the interests of developers and tenants/owners
- 21.1.3 Review and reinforce the Urban Rent Control Act to ensure that the rights of low and middle-income tenants and property owners are protected
- 21.1.4 Require developments over a certain size to build a set proportion of affordable housing per square metre of high-end housing within the same development parcel

21.2 PROTECT AND ENHANCE EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 21.2.1 Protect existing public housing blocks such as Hpa Sa Pa La near Aung San Stadium and Min Ma Naing to ensure they are not privatised or given to commercial interests
- 21.2.2 Ensure they are not developed or sub let for commercial purposes
- 21.2.3 Zone the downtown area and other neighbourhoods with established communities as residential mixed-use areas

Best Practice: Affordable and Mixed Housing SINGAPORE



The Housing Development Bureau (HDB) was established in 1960 to oversee the development of public housing. The housing was initially built for low-income renters.

In 1964, the Home Ownership Scheme was introduced to help citizens buy their own flats. From 1974 to 1982, the HDB started to build middle-income apartments to cater to increasing demand. In 1999, “executive condominiums” were offered, aimed at higher income citizens.

An ethnic quota system is in place through the Ethnic Integration Policy, requiring each block of flats to have comparable proportions of various groups similar to the national figures. This is aimed at avoiding racial segregation.

Currently, more than 80% of Singapore’s population live in HDB flats, with about 90% of them owning their flat⁵³.



22. Finance for Heritage Conservation



AFFORDABLE



DIVERSITY



ECONOMY

Several financing mechanisms could be put in place to assist with funding the conservation of Yangon's built and cultural heritage. These range from taxes to cross subsidisation and variations of the Built Operate Transfer model. A key foundation will be to establish a Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund administered by the Regional Government and independently audited. The fund could receive capital from a variety of sources and spend it according to a specified strategy and set criteria, overseen by a committee comprised of members representing a variety of sectors.

A key option is establishing an investment vehicle for government-owned heritage property. This could be financially viable and result in the conservation of key buildings, the upgrade of surrounding public realm, socially beneficial use of important heritage buildings and generation of funds for the wider conservation effort in Yangon. Modelling undertaken by the Yangon Heirtage Trust and the Asia Development Bank in mid-2016 has shown this model can work in Yangon.

Another important idea for Yangon is that developers should contribute to the improvement of surrounding neighbourhoods. This is well established in many cities around the world. Funds could be contributed to the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund according to the floor area of a development and can be used for street upgrades or the conservation of nearby heritage buildings or other public benefits.

The measures outlined here and in the Government Property Action Plan (page 60) will create an upwards cycle of investment in Yangon's cultural and built heritage.

22.1 YANGON HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND LIVEABILITY FUND

- 22.1.1 Established for the benefit of the wider conservation effort in Yangon, including physical conservation projects, community engagement, sustainable tourism and public realm upgrades
- 22.1.2 Spending overseen by a committee
- 22.1.3 Audited independently

22.2 TOURISM CONTRIBUTIONS

- 22.2.1 A set amount of money taxed from each tourist visa application or as a scaled bed tax to go into the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund
- 22.2.2 These funds could be earmarked for sustainable tourism projects and upgrading heritage-related destinations

22.3 CROSS SUBSIDISATION

- 22.3.1 A set proportion of capital invested in new developments within the historic city to be given to the city for use in upgrade or conservation projects
- 22.3.2 These funds could be channelled into the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund and earmarked for public realm upgrades in the vicinity of the contributing development or to other areas such as hospital and education facilities

22.4 HERITAGE INVESTMENT VEHICLE

- 22.4.1 Through the Government Property Office (see Government Property Plan, page 61), heritage buildings could be brought to market with investment packages and rented out on long leases with all or part of the capital generated could go towards the restoration of the property and other conservation projects - the property would then be transferred back to the government at the end of the lease as an improved asset

22.5 PARKING FEES

- 22.5.1 Revenue generated from resident parking permits and hourly fees charged for parking in the downtown area could be used to fund public realm upgrades (see Better Streets Plan, page 80) or heritage projects in the area

22.6 LOTTERY

- 22.6.1 Revenue raised from a government lottery for heritage conservation could be used for specific conservation projects or fed into the Yangon Heritage Conservation and Liveability Fund

Best Practice: Developer Contributions

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM



The City of London requires developers to pay for improvement of public facilities through a Community Infrastructure Levy⁵⁴ (CIL). This is a charge levied on development according to the project's floor area. In this way money is raised to help pay for schools, leisure centres, care accommodation for the aged, roads and other facilities.

The type of project the CIL contributes to is defined in a regulated list of infrastructure to be funded. In virtually all cases the amount to be paid in CIL will be calculated when planning permission is issued. The trigger for payment is usually the commencement of development.

The city is required to make annual reports on the amount raised through the CIL and expenditure. In Yangon such a scheme could pay for a number of urban conservation or improvement projects such as heritage buildings or street upgrades.



23. Legal Property Ownership



ECONOMY



RULE OF LAW



AFFORDABLE

Clarifying the rights and responsibilities of owners and tenants is vital if Yangon's economy and conservation effort is to reach its full potential.

A good understanding of the existing real estate market and future trends will be important in order to introduce incentives for good property management in Yangon. For a recent assessment of the market see YHT's Real Estate Study (Online Annexe 04).

The lack of clarity around individual property ownership is one of the greatest obstacles to sustainable development and heritage conservation. Currently, tenants and apartment owners are often blocked by landowners from upgrading their heritage buildings under existing regulations. Landowners tend to hope that a building will decay to such a point that it can be argued demolition is the only option so they can gain approval to construct a new apartment block on the site. Between 1990 and 2011, Yangon lost hundreds of heritage buildings in this way.

A moratorium period for people to produce evidence of legal ownership and a dedicated court process to determine the veracity of ownership claims is required. This should be overseen by a taskforce and result in the creation of a new titling system under a dedicated Land Titles Office. The process can focus on validating legal claims rather than

displacing existing tenants. The system should be designed to make it desirable for owners to formalise their ownership by highlighting the legal benefits of having clear title.

Establishing a system whereby individual owners hold title to apartments while the common areas, land and shared utilities are held by a joint ownership model (body corporate) is key. This would require individual owners to pay a management fee to the body corporate which ensures the upkeep of the building and common facilities. If a landowner is willing to undertake this role, they could receive the body corporate fees.

For more information on possible solutions to legal property ownership issues in Yangon see YHT's Legal Ownership Study (Online Annexe 05).

23.1 REVISE LAWS

- 23.1.1** Establish a meaningful and effective Conservation Area, enforced with height restrictions and guidelines regarding allowable change
- 23.1.2** Institute a revised set of property laws to bring clarity to owners, residents and occupants, including but not limited to:
- Develop a new overarching Property Law for Myanmar to include strata and body corporate titles in the urban context
 - Update and revise the Urban Rent Control Act (1960) to clarify all aspects of residential tenancies, giving consideration to a requirement for tenants to pay landowners a yearly fee in exchange for the landowner taking on the body corporate management role
 - Redraft the proposed Condominium Law, which is heavily weighted towards developers' interests and has not been well-received by lawyers or city authorities
 - Develop a Commercial Tenancies Act to clarify rights and responsibilities when space is rented for commercial purposes

23.3 ESTABLISH BODY CORPORATE

- 23.3.1** The establishment of a body corporate for each building can be required as a building's ownership status is clarified
- 23.3.2** This would need to be required under a revised Property Law

23.2 CLARITY OF TITLE PROJECT

- 23.2.1** Establish a reformed Land Titles Office with a comprehensive and publicly accessible titling system
- 23.2.2** Legally define what constitutes ownership and how this can be documented and proved
- 23.2.3** Establish a dedicated fast-track court system to hear cases of disputed ownership
- 23.2.4** Identify discrete areas that can be given a moratorium period for ownership claims to be heard
- 23.2.5** Phase this process across the city, beginning in the Downtown Conservation Area
- 23.2.6** The Land Titles Office would be responsible for issuing a new generation of titles that would require proof of ownership after the moratorium period
- 23.2.7** All future property sales or applications for demolition, alteration or addition to a building after the moratorium period would be invalid without a reissued title



24. Regulatory and Legal Reform



RULE OF
LAW



DIVERSITY



UNIQUE



ECONOMY



PUBLIC
ASSETS



ENGAGED



RESILIENT



COMPACT

Ensuring Yangon has a strong regulatory system in place is a vital step towards making sure the city's heritage is conserved. City authorities have done a great deal to limit the demolition of heritage buildings in recent years and to prevent projects that cause damage. However, there is currently no dedicated planning framework for managing development that affects Yangon's heritage places.

There is also no law defining "heritage" in such a way that allows the city's diverse range of significant places to be legally protected. This can include not only buildings, but their interiors, collections of buildings, view lines, parks, gardens, heritage trees, archaeological sites, neighbourhoods, areas and shipwrecks. Consideration should also be given to protection for intangible heritage such as associations, practices, skills and traditions. Currently there is no standard list of individual heritage places or conservation areas. If site owners want to change, add to or partially demolish a heritage building there are no guiding principles or processes in place to ensure that work is appropriate.

An interim set of controls and guidelines can be put in place quickly. A full set of planning frameworks will require time to be drafted and adopted. Before that happens, Yangon could easily lose hundreds of heritage buildings, neighbourhoods and established communities. To prevent this, interim controls can include a moratorium on demolition of heritage buildings, a review of construction projects adjacent to significant heritage places, and a system of interim conservation areas and individual heritage designations.

The most important medium-term regulatory step in conserving Yangon's unique cultural and built heritage is the establishment of a mandatory system of height controls across the city. This system should allow high-rise construction in areas with no heritage value and put in place a low enough height limit on heritage areas to encourage demolition.

In the longer term, Yangon Regional Government can move to pass a new Heritage Conservation Law for Yangon that does two main things. Firstly, defining "heritage" more widely

than being constrained by a set age as it is now. Secondly, establishing a list that identifies places and conservation areas that must be conserved. The law could also establish a heritage body responsible for assessing nominations to the list and controversial applications to alter listed items.

The next step is to establish a planning framework for the management of change that affects listed sites and areas. This should be based on a detailed understanding of the city's built form (see YHT's Built Form Study, Online Annexe 06). A future system could involve a system of permits issued after construction, demolition or alteration applications are assessed. These assessments, to be undertaken by city authorities, could be based on a set of detailed heritage guidelines defining what kind of work is permissible for heritage sites and within conservation areas.

At the same time, the heritage list can be populated with individual sites and conservation areas. YHT has undertaken assessments of thousands of buildings in Yangon and is able to begin rolling out the nomination of sites once a legal mechanism to receive them is in place. YHT has also prepared a set of possible future conservation areas (see Figure 29, page 136).

As a coastal city with an increasingly dense population, Yangon is particularly susceptible to climate-related hazards and natural disasters: cyclones, intense rainfalls, flooding and storm surges, heat waves and sea-level rises. Yangon is also in an earthquake risk area. In 2015, the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) identified Myanmar as one of the world's most affected countries between 1994 and 2013³⁹. Climate change poses huge challenges to economic growth, health and regional competitiveness.

In order to better prepare Yangon for the impact of natural disasters, the government and private sectors need to work in partnership. To achieve this, there can be an effective disaster response administrative network, disaster risk assessments, investment in risk reduction infrastructure, an urgent assessment of school and health facilities, enforcement of safe building regulations, public education programmes, protection of natural buffers, installation of early warning systems and planning for post-disaster responses.

For a comparative analysis of legal frameworks used in other cities see YHT's Comparative Legal Study (Online Annexe 07).

24.1 INTRODUCE INTERIM CONTROLS

- 24.1.1 Designate interim conservation areas
- 24.1.2 Designate interim individual heritage place listings
- 24.1.3 Put in place a moratorium on demolition of heritage buildings designated as significant and a review process involving YHT for all proposals to alter them
- 24.1.4 Put in place a review process for any construction or major alteration proposals within the interim conservation areas for both heritage and non-heritage buildings or empty sites
- 24.1.5 Designate development priority areas close to existing public transport lines and away from heritage areas to ensure growth can continue

24.2 INTRODUCE HEIGHT CONTROLS WITHIN A ZONING PLAN

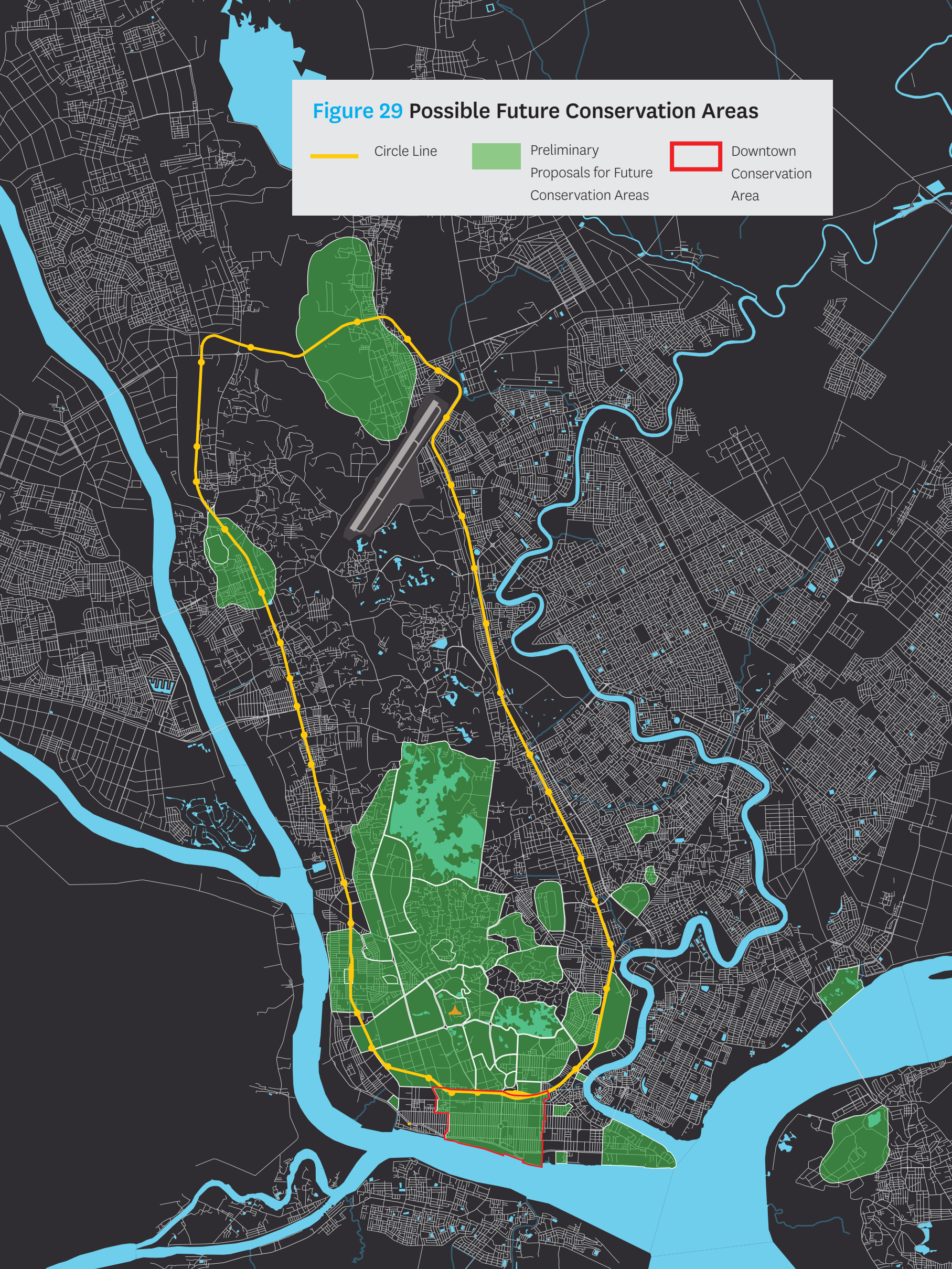
- 24.2.1 Establish a height control low enough to discourage demolition of heritage buildings within the Downtown Conservation Area and other conservation areas
- 24.2.2 Identify growth areas according to the liveability principles identified in the Liveability chapter (page 34) where high-rise development can occur to relieve development pressure on conservation areas

24.3 INTRODUCE A HERITAGE PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES

- 24.3.1 Conservation Management Plans to be used as a standard tool for heritage planning in Yangon
- 24.3.2 Introduce a revised Yangon Heritage Conservation Law through Regional Parliament
- 24.3.3 YHT to work with local authorities on designing a heritage planning framework and heritage guidelines for Yangon
- 24.3.4 Put in place a set of specific guidelines for new development, demolitions and alterations within conservation areas
- 24.3.5 Put in place a set of specific guidelines for new development, demolitions and alterations that affect individual heritage places
- 24.3.6 Where possible introduce these frameworks and guidelines as YCDC bylaws in line with the proposed Yangon Heritage Conservation Law

Figure 29 Possible Future Conservation Areas

- Circle Line
- Preliminary Proposals for Future Conservation Areas
- Downtown Conservation Area



24.4 DESIGNATION AND PROTECTION OF HERITAGE PLACES

- 24.4.1 | Nominate individual heritage places to be protected through listing under the Yangon Heritage Conservation Law
- 24.4.2 | Nominate conservation areas to be protected through listing under the Yangon Heritage Conservation Law
- 24.4.3 | Enshrine the Downtown Conservation Area in law as Yangon's first conservation area
- 24.4.4 | Areas of archaeological sensitivity should be identified and listed – if threatened by development, salvage excavations could be required
- 24.4.5 | Establish a full statutory list containing conservation areas and individual heritage place designations

24.5 RESILIENCE AND DISASTER RISK PREPAREDNESS

- 24.5.1 | City authorities to seek advice from expert bodies such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- 24.5.2 | Poorly constructed public and residential buildings to be assessed for seismic resilience and demolished if necessary
- 24.5.3 | Identify open refuge spaces to be used in the event of major natural disasters - protecting Yangon's parks and gardens will contribute to the availability of such spaces (see page 58)
- 24.5.4 | The National Building Codes to be reviewed and to include requirements for disaster preparedness, particularly seismic resilience
- 24.5.5 | Disaster preparedness to be part of the broader urban master planning process
- 24.5.6 | Government to oversee production of a Disaster Risk Assessment and Disaster Response Plan for Yangon

Best Practice: Regulation

KYOTO, JAPAN



Kyoto was the former imperial capital of Japan for over 1,000 years and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1994. Special measures have been enforced in this historic city to protect its heritage.

Most significantly, Kyoto city drew up a Landscape Plan in 2005⁵⁵ (amended 2007), aiming to holistically protect and conserve the city's heritage assets within a wider urban landscape.

The 2007 Landscape Policy entails:

1. Building height controls
2. Conservation of natural and historic landscapes, including ambiance, scenic landscapes and green spaces
3. Conservation of urban cityscapes, including groups of historic buildings, conservation areas, as well as designating individual structures
4. Conservation and creation of important views
5. Regulation of outdoor advertising
6. Regulation of public utilities (such as moving cables underground) and improvements to public facilities (such as parks and civic buildings)



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Annexes

A: GLOSSARY

For the purposes of this document, these terms are taken to mean the following:

Facadism

The practice of demolishing the interior of a building leaving only the exterior walls or just the front wall. A new structure is then built within the original shell or sometimes a much larger new building is constructed behind the remaining front wall.

Heritage Significance/Cultural Heritage Significance

Including but not limited to the spiritual, religious, social, architectural, aesthetic, historic, associative, technical, archaeological, political value that a place has inherited from past generations and that is valued by the current generation.

Heritage Place/Asset

A site, area, piece of land, landscape, building or other structure, collection of buildings or other structures, or park or garden that has heritage significance; can also include components, contents, objects, trees or other vegetation, spaces and views. In the case of a building it can include interiors and associated features, fixtures, fittings or objects.

Heritage Fabric

The physical material of a place including features, components or material that has heritage value such as original door and window frames, original paint schemes or flooring materials. Many heritage places have both heritage fabric and later additions that have no heritage value.

Built Heritage

Tangible heritage that has been constructed or created by human activity, especially buildings, cityscapes, designed landscapes, structures and other immovable features.

Natural Heritage

Places, flora, fauna, ecosystems and objects resulting from natural processes and actions inherited from past generations.

Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

A document and process used to reach agreement on a clear plan for managing change that affects heritage places. The CMP sets out to understand all the ways in which a place has heritage significance (through a Significance Assessment, see below), then establishes guidelines or policies to conserve that significance and recommends a plan for conservation within a wider construction programme.

Significance Assessment

Due diligence taken to understand the ways a place has heritage value; can involve research into historical records, interviewing relevant people and investigating the place itself. A Statement of Significance is produced to define the ways a place has heritage significance; including the identification of what fabric, features, spaces or objects require conservation and what can be altered during future works.

Heritage List

A statutory list of heritage places and items that can include individual heritage places such as buildings or groups of buildings, trees and also areas listed as Conservation Areas.

Individual Heritage Place Designation

A proposed type of heritage designation and legal protection that applies to a single heritage asset such as a building and provides controls on how it can or cannot be changed.

Conservation Area Designation

A type of proposed heritage designation applied to an area containing many heritage assets such as buildings, streets, parks and trees that have a shared significance; for example, a monastic compound or particular neighbourhood. Applying a Conservation Area Designation provides guidance for any new buildings in the area to make sure they do not damage its wider heritage significance.

Conservation

All the processes of caring for and managing change that affects cultural, built and natural heritage so as to protect and enhance heritage significance.

Preservation

To keep a place as it is without change in order to protect or enhance its heritage significance.

Restoration

To return a place to a known earlier state by reassembling original features or removing existing later additions in order to protect or enhance its heritage significance.

Reconstruction

To rebuild dispersed or damaged pieces of a place to reassemble them into a previous arrangement or form; can involve the addition of new elements to assist in the appreciation of that form.

Adaptation

To physically change a place to accommodate a new use, which should ensure the protection or enhancement of its heritage significance; may require alteration of heritage fabric.

Urban Planning

The process of assessing and understanding the challenges and opportunities faced within an urban environment now and into the future and designing appropriate responses. This includes the design of urban spaces, designation of land use, creation of an urban vision, consultation with local communities and planning for transport, water, air, waste, communications and distribution networks. Urban planning can be undertaken on either a local or a city-wide scale

Master Planning

An exercise in broad-level strategic planning that can include detailed plans targeted at specific issues. Master planning within urban planning refers to taking a comprehensive view of an area, such as a waterfront, and considering all the relevant challenges and opportunities.

Sustainable Development

An approach to achieving development goals while also responding to community concerns and environmental issues; this allows the natural and social systems upon which economy and society rely to continue in place.

Knowledge Economy

A type of economy that relies heavily on the creation and use of specialist knowledge to generate marketable values. Examples include: fashion, architecture, interior and urban design, graphic and industrial design; the creation, presentation and sale of visual, literary and performance arts; the communication industries such as television, film, publishing, advertising and marketing; and the booming digital information technologies sector.

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