

THE MIDLAND

Love Your Laneways

HANDBOOK



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A little love can go a long way!

Loving Your Laneways

The Love Your Laneways Project is an opportunity to capitalize on the good that Midland's laneways offer.

The vision of the Love Your Laneways project is that Borsa and Bourgeois Lanes are transformed into safe, functional and vibrant public spaces that contribute to a thriving downtown.



Images: MacKenzie King

Short-Term Vision

The laneways and adjacent properties will show improvements that create a welcoming environment and keep people coming downtown during the King Street infrastructure renewal project.

Long-Term Vision

The laneways are an essential component of downtown economic and environmental sustainability. They integrate public and private spaces into a vibrant, pedestrian friendly area, supporting business retention and growth, and a variety of programs and events.

Motivation

Following Midland's motto *persequi qualitatem vitae*, or "in pursuit of quality of life" the Love Your Laneways project is driven to improve the quality of life and experience in the Downtown (Town of Midland, n.d.).

The laneways will become increasingly important to the Downtown. With unmet potential to become vibrant public spaces for events, shopping and strolling, the laneways are an opportunity to become unique personalities of their own. Expressing art, culture and business individuality, the laneways can connect the shoulders of the Downtown with the Downtown Master Plan and the Unimin Waterfront Lands Master Plan.

Untapped Potential

Laneways & Why We Love Them



Image: Seattle / The Laneway Project

Laneways are public right-of-ways traditionally used as service corridors that allow the downtown to function behind the eyes of the main street. Although laneways are still used for deliveries, they are sometimes ignored and neglected.

The potential benefits these undervalued spaces can offer a community are significant. Through claiming and caring for these spaces laneways can be transformed into areas that are safe and attractive for pedestrians, customers, pop up businesses and events.

The Town of Midland has a unique laneway advantage. Most laneways are limited by the walls that contain them. In Midland, the laneways interface with both parking and pockets of privately owned spaces that connect the laneways to the back of the King Street businesses. These interconnected areas have the potential to be as unique as their businesses, creating valuable public spaces that enhance the urban fabric of Downtown Midland.

Laneway improvements have the potential to catalyze long term sustainability and success for the Downtown by creating:

- **A Safer Environment for Everyone**
- **A Place for Green Initiatives to Bloom**
- **Quality Spaces with Multiple Uses**
- **A Healthy, Thriving Downtown - Economic Support**
- **A Unique Experience**



Image: Eric Peterson / Issue Media Group



Image: Danforth Village / Laneway Project



Image: Casey Plett / CBC Arts



Image: Kenneth Chan / Daily Hive

Laneways We Love

Loveable Laneways

Laneways around the world are being reclaimed and renewed to create vibrant public spaces. Public spaces that contribute to their community by:

- Improving - walkability, sustainability and aesthetics
- Creating spaces for - events, entertainment and activity
- Embracing - artistry, expression and individuality

1

Chicago

The Green Alley Handbook is an action guide to create a greener, environmentally sustainable Chicago.

2

Toronto

Toronto has many laneways bursting with potential. The Laneway Project is encouraging communities to revitalize the laneways to become vibrant, liveable spaces.

3

Windsor

United-Way Alley Revitalization Strategy focuses on embracing the alleys as places both liveable and loveable. Naming, greening and commercializing the alleyways are some of the focuses.

4

Vancouver

Vancouver's laneway activation is focused on community impact by creating liveable, creative spaces. Seen here is Alley-Oop - a bold, active basketball themed alley.

We want to help!

Assistance Available

From the initial site analysis to the finished laneway celebration, the Love Your Laneways Action Committee and Design Team are here to support you, supply design expertise and planning throughout your project.

Financial Assistance

The Town is offering a Community Improvement Program(CIP) grant. Eligible improvements include: pedestrian access; improved accessibility, appearance, signage, landscaping and drainage, and waste management facilities. The CIP grant program will cover 100% of the first \$2,000 eligible costs and 50% of costs between \$2,000 and \$10,000. The minimum grant is \$2,000 maximum of \$6,000. The BIA will help with 50% of the funding(the other 50% covered by the building/business owner) for projects under \$2,000. *rules apply*

For applications and more information please contact:

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Design Assistance

The Love Your Laneways Design Team can assist with the design process for your space: from a consultation to completing an Inventory & Analysis of the space to helping you design and achieve your vision.

Volunteer Assistance

The Love Your Laneways Action Committee can arrange for volunteers to help carry out your project from clean-up, to painting, to planting: many hands make light work. Think about this possibility as you work on your design and plans.

Corporate Donations

Some products/supplies may be available at discounted prices. Before you make your purchases check with the Love Your Laneways Design Team.

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody”

- Jane Jacobs

9 Areas to Show Your Laneway Love

Facades & Facelifts

The Glow We're Going For

Tackling Traffic

Identity + Wayfinding

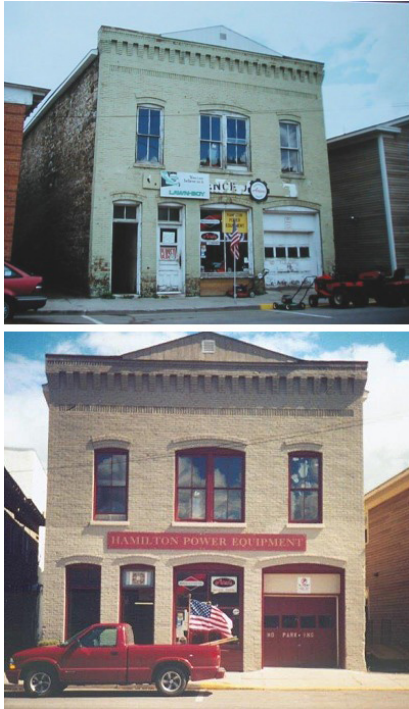
Magnificent Masterpieces

Make It Green

Creature Comforts

Down To The Earth

Waste With Class



Showing Love Facades & Facelifts

Laneways and rear spaces are not usually main entrances to businesses and have not traditionally been a focus for appearance, maintenance and inclusion of design elements.

This absence of interest combined with blurred ownership and division of space has left holes in our urban-fabric. These unclaimed areas, once hidden from the eyes of the public, can attract transients looking to claim a space as their own. These overlooked areas can be revitalized with care and attention. By showing love for the condition of the space, the comfort of visitors will be enhanced. Show love by:

General Cleanup

Remove garbage, discarded items, weeds, and other unsightly items to create a maintained area.

Surface Cleaning

Walls and ground surface have a tendency to embrace dirt. For a refreshed look, if the exterior is in good repair, consider a simple clean/wash/scrub:

- Brush with a broom removing dust and loosening debris
- Wash to remove any dirt, mud, mildew or mold
- Soda blasting is a slightly different option from sandblasting. Soda blasting is a more delicate process removing old paint, graffiti or environmental staining with limited impact on the building material



If pressure washing check strength and resistance of exterior before starting

Repairing and Restoring

Exteriors wear over time. By repairing and restoring elements you are keeping the exterior looking well cared for and you are also protecting the structural integrity of the building.



Fresh New Look

A fresh coat of paint or a new colour can bring a renewed sense of space. Using fun fresh colours, patterns and designs can add to the identity of place and express the business inside.

Windows

Although laneway facing windows may be staff only areas, the windows themselves add to the laneways appeal. If windows are facing the laneways, it is important that there is no unintentional clutter left on the sill of the window inside.

Privacy and security of business is important. Windows can leave a favorable impression and enhance marketing and branding while maintaining privacy. One-way vision signs are an affordable alternative to plain window blockers such as blinds or paper.



Image: Catering / Quality Prints

Pedestrian Friendly Lighting

The Glow We're Going For

Light is often associated with comfort, security and crime prevention. However, it is not just the presence of light that creates optimum results. The consideration of the quality and quantity of light is paramount to making positive changes. If your laneway entrance needs a little more light please consider:

Dark Sky Lighting

Modern day lighting is limiting our ability to see the wonders of the night sky. Even on the clearest of nights, stars may no longer be visible due to light pollution. The great news is that light pollution can be reduced by using dark sky friendly light fixtures. In order to preserve the night sky for generations to come, light pollution can be addressed and controlled.

Dark sky friendly lighting, according to the International Dark Sky Association, are those lighting fixtures that meet the following:

- only on when needed
- only lights the areas that need it
- no brighter than necessary
- minimize blue light emission
- are fully shielded (point light downward)

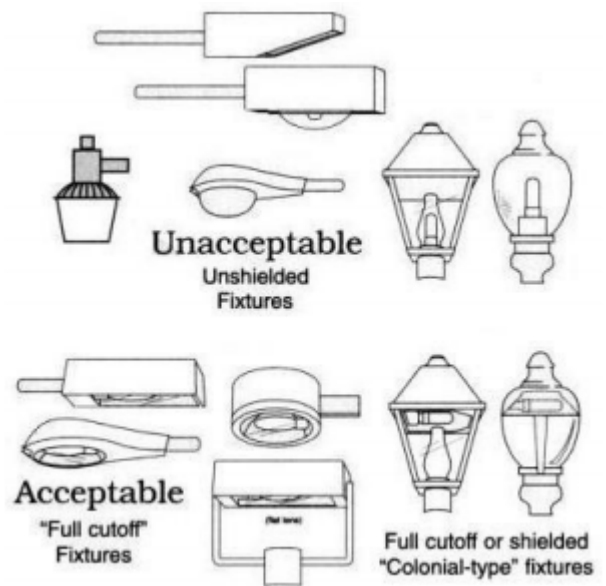
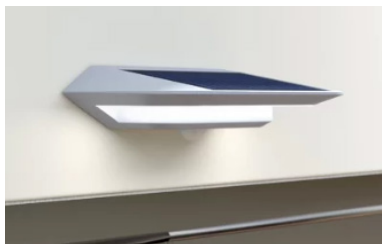


Image : Midland Lighting Guidelines



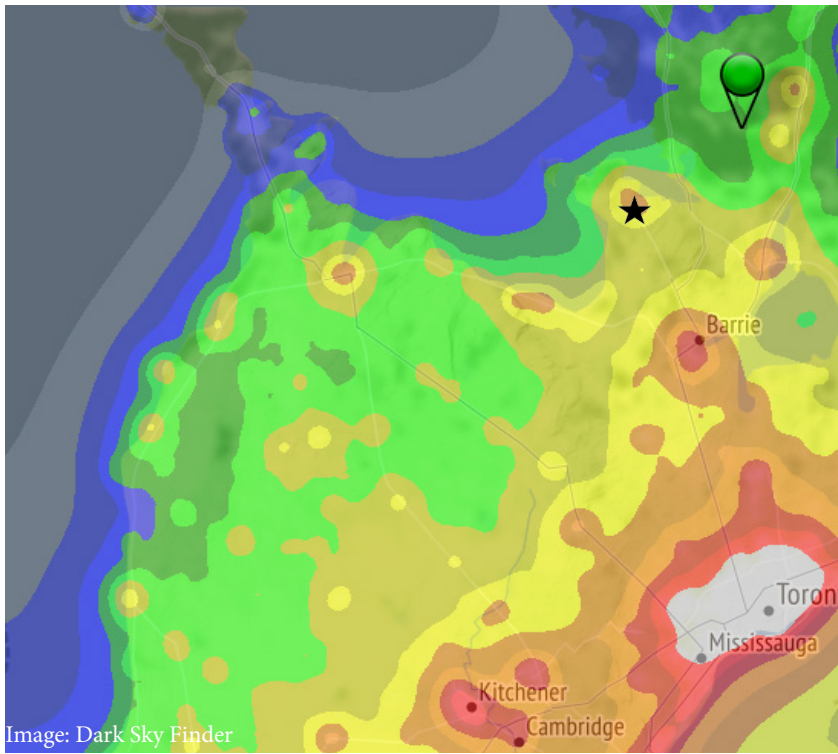
Lowes \$140



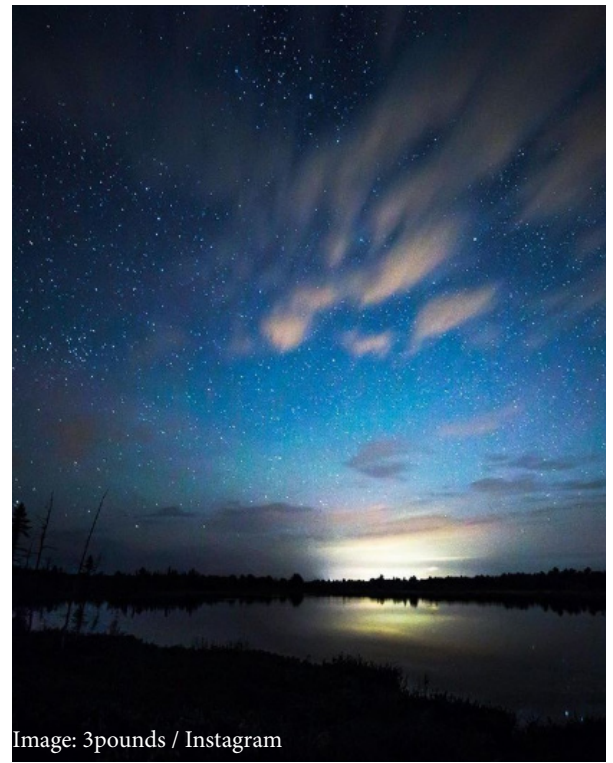
Wayfair \$80



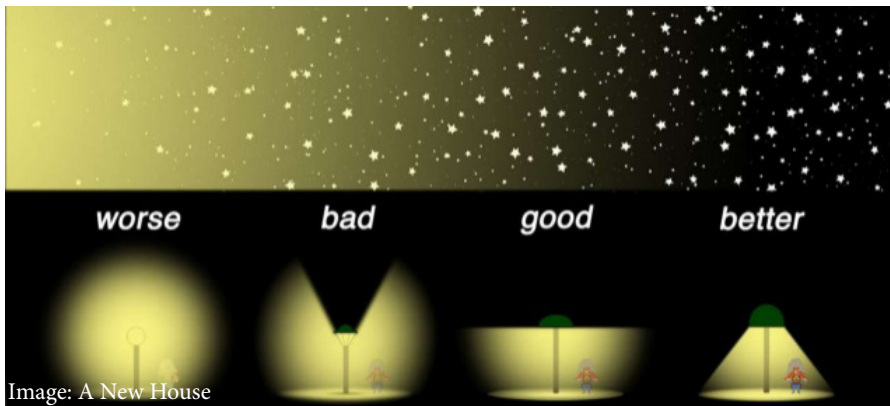
Lowes \$140



Dark | Bright
Midland



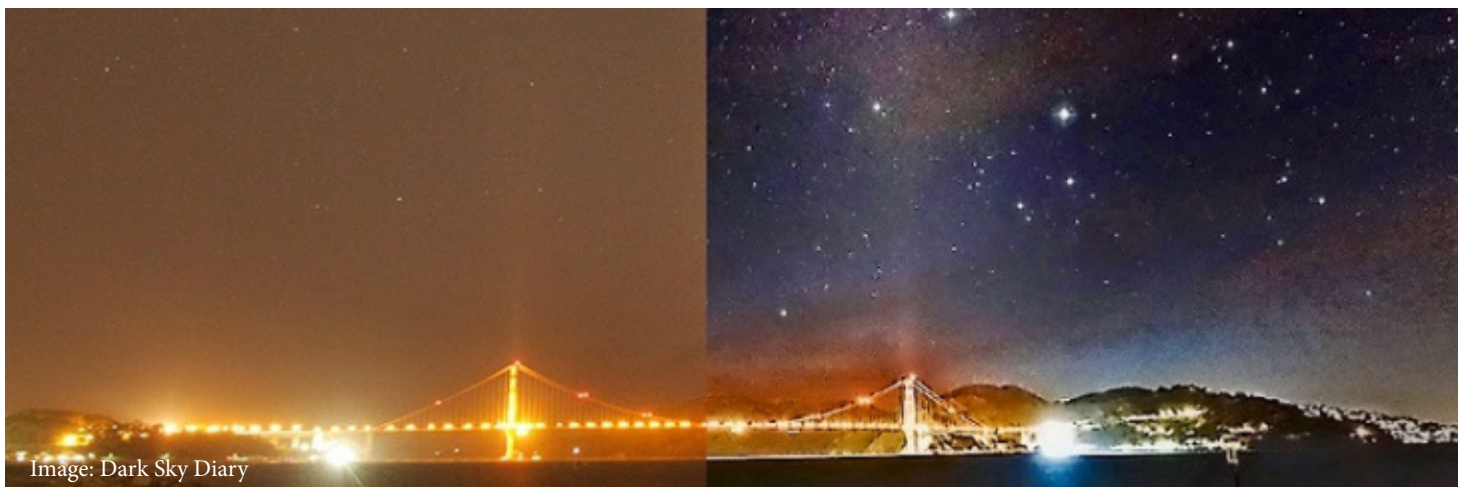
Stargazing destination: Torrance Barrens Dark Sky Reserve



Taking Part

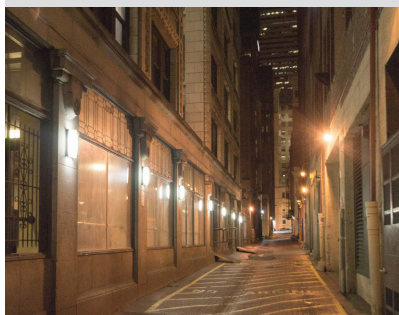
Nearby Areas with Dark Sky By-Laws include:

- The Town of Gravenhurst
- The Township of Muskoka Lakes
- The Township of Lake of Bays



Pedestrian Friendly Lighting

The Glow We're Going For



Predictable Light

The goal of lighting the laneway area is to allow pedestrians to feel comfortable and aware of their surroundings. Key lighting hours change seasonally based on sunset; however it is good practise to have lights remain on until after 11pm or the closing of the last business. Minimal use of motion sensor lighting is suggested as it can be disorienting when it turns on.



Height of Light

When installing lights for pedestrian comfort, consider the placement height near the height of the first storey of the building. This height is beyond reach to discourage vandalism and creates a sense of an outdoor room making the area seem more human in scale.



Colour and Brightness

Selecting lighting with warmer undertones (ex. yellow and orange, or 2700K to 3000K) can lead to an increase in pedestrian comfort.

Lighting without glare is encouraged as it allows pedestrians to be more aware of their surroundings. Human eyes need adjustment time from darkness to light. It is important that the light is not so bright as to cause disorientation or temporary lack of vision when transitioning through a space.



Image: Goudy's Lane



Image: Honest Ed's Annex

Parking and Pedestrian Paths

Tackling Traffic

Safety is enhanced when there is clear designation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic areas. Efficiency and safety are a priority for traffic circulation. Clearly identified walkways for pedestrians and parking can enhance the understanding and awareness of pedestrians to drivers and increase the awareness of vehicles to pedestrians.

Pedestrians benefit by having unobstructed sight lines to entrances. Pedestrian paths can be differentiated by material, paint, or protection from parking and vehicular traffic.

By having standard parking spaces, stores benefit from efficient, predictable and uniform parking. Indications by paint, parking stops and signage can be used in combination to communicate the parking configuration.



Image: Parking with Walkway / Nation Wide Consulting

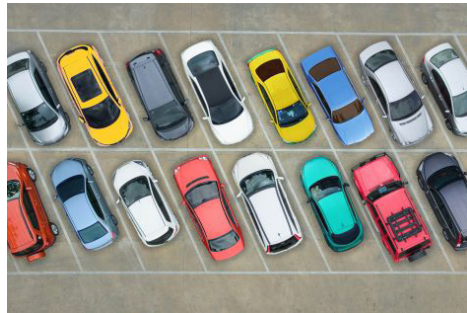


Image: Uniform Parking / Piran Parking



Image: Parking Lot Dandelions / Art 123

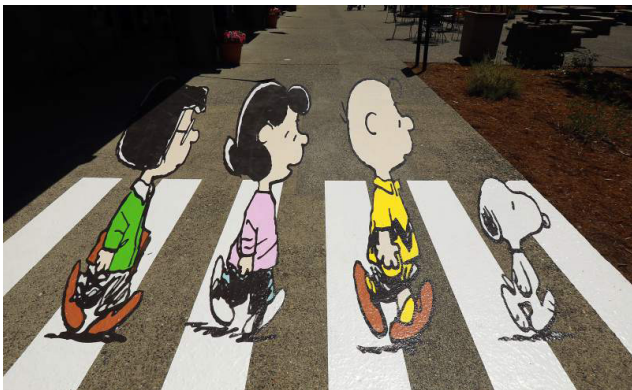


Image: Peanuts Crossing / Chris Smith

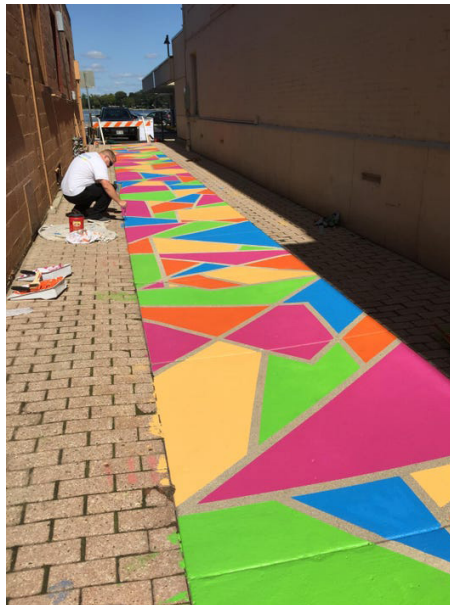


Image: Fowler Lake



Image: Pathway Planters
Hartecast Street Furniture

Unique and Noticable

Identity + Wayfinding

On King Street, businesses are recognizable by their signage and facade. The uniform frontages of each building create a continuous sightline to the water. Businesses have created an identity that they can be very proud to show.

The back laneways have a built personality different than that of King Street. The personality of each laneway space is different and can complement the business inside. You know your business and your clients. Think about what makes your business attractive and build those elements into your plans for design.

If you are considering installing a sign or placing a sandwich board please remember all signage must comply with the Midland Signage By-Law.

Distinctive Doorways

By creating a distinct doorway, you can create an entrance as unique as your business. Participate by using: creativity, paint, light and/or decorative features.

The more participation in this initiative the more attraction and curiosity for our laneways!

Imagine:



Image: Colourful Door
Bristoldoors Instagram



Image: Locksmith / Shoreditch, London



Image: Cafe in Madrid / Stacy Kole

Artistic Elements

Magnificent Masterpieces

Midland's Murals are #5 on Trip Advisor's *Things To Do* in the Midland Area

Murals are a great way to express culture, history, place, surroundings and the business within. As an already established element of tourism in Midland, the presence of murals attract attention.



Image: Midland Murals / MacKenzie King

There are many ways to create a mural. Local schools, groups or clubs can be engaged to create a sense of community pride.



Image: Rainbow Diagonal Stripes / Carrie Colbert



Image: Natural Heros / Louis Masai

Murals do not have to be formal, done traditionally, or be everlasting. They can be ever changing yet become a tradition. There are highschools that have what they call a Senior Wall where each year the wall is repainted by the graduating class. It becomes a well loved tradition that can be celebrated upon completion. A picture log of each mural can be created to show what came before. It then acts as a time capsule for art and student trends.

Graffiti walls are also a form of expression. Dedicating a wall to graffiti can give street artists an outlet to create. For some, graffiti is a form of therapy. Graffiti styles range from tagging to replicas of famous works of art. Allowing a designated wall, or walls, for graffiti within the downtown can reduce vandalism elsewhere and provide youth a canvas to develop artistic skills while providing a free platform for creativity.



Image: Graffiti Alley / Ainsley Smith



Image: Hello / Carrie Colbert



Image: #WhatLiftsYou / Kelsey Montague



Image: All The Way / Kate Sierzuptowski

For information about murals or the longevity of any art installation, please consult with an experienced artist. Local artists looking to participate include:

- Cheryl Daniells
- Colleen Morrow
- Josie Kvas
- Karen L. Bowen
- Linda Brubacher
- Lisa Harpell
- Ruth Hurdle
- Susanna Lamy
- William Hodges

For contact details please email:
 Martin Uharcek, Town of Midland
 muharcek@midland.com
 Quest Art, ginette@questart.ca



Image: Senior Wall / Juliana Rube



Image: Hanging Basket / Gardening Know How
\$14 Home Depot for Basket and \$12 for Wall Bracket



Image: Gutter Garden / T10 Ideas - \$18.20 for 10 ft HomeDepot



Image: Window Box / Stakelums



Image: Stock Planter / Murdochs - \$173 RONA



Image: Cinderblock / Right This Minute - \$2.55 per block HomeDepot



Image: Verticle Garden / Country Living





Make It Green

With the exception of the planters that line King Street and Neezhoday Park, Downtown Midland has little greenery within its core. Greenery can uplift the overall look of the Downtown. Small or large, movable or not, there are many different, creative ways to introduce greenery in the laneways.

Studies show that the perceived level of safety is heightened in areas where there is maintained greenery (Li et al, 2015). Studies in Chicago showed that with even small amounts of green, both crimes against people and property were reduced (University of Illinois, 2001). The presence of greenery allows people to feel more comfortable in their surroundings and it can actually lead to a safer environment.

Greenery can be incorporated economically in a variety of different ways. Upcycling containers related to businesses inside can act as unique planters that also contribute to the identity of the business.

Some examples of easily introduced greenery are:

-  Hanging Baskets
-  Planters
-  Window Boxes
-  Creative
 - Recycled or Reimagined
 - Rain Gutter Gardens
 - Stock Tanks

Plant Power

Providing For Pollinators

When considering the installation of greenery, choose plants that attract and assist pollinator populations. Pollinators are creatures that aide in the pollination of flowers. Some of these creatures include butterflies, bumblebees, and hummingbirds.

Why are pollinators so important? Pollinators transfer pollen from flower to flower resulting in the creation of food and plant products we enjoy. Pollinator populations are under pressure from climate change, pesticides, and loss of habitat. By supporting them with plant choices that help we are also helping ourselves.

Here are some native plants that help our pollinators:

Wildflowers

Agastache nepetoides, Yellow Giant Hyssop
Anemone canadensis, Canada Anemone
Aquilegia canadensi, Canadian Columbine
Asclepias tuberosa ssp. interior, Butterfly Milkweed
Cirsium pitcheri, Pitcher's Thistle
Cypripedium candidum, Small White Lady's Slipper
Echinacea purpurea, Purple Coneflower
Eutrochium purpureum, Sweet-scented Joe Pye Weed
Eutrochium maculatum, Spotted Joe Pye Weed
Galanthus nivalis, Snowdrops
Heliopsis helianthoides, Oxeye Sunflower
Lupinus perennis, Wild Lupine
Monarda fistulosa, Wild Bergamont
Narcissus pseudonarcissus, Daffodil
Penstemon digitalis, Foxglove Beardtongue
Pycnanthemum virginianum, Virginia Mountain Mint
Rudbeckia hirta, Black-eyed Susan

Climbing Plants

Clematis virginiana, Virgin's Bower or Woodbine
Parthenocissus quinquefolia, Virginia Creeper

Shrubs

Diervilla lonicera, Honeysuckle Bush
Ribes americanum, Wild Blackcurrant
Rubus allegheniensis, Blackberry
Vaccinium angustifolium, Blueberry

Grasses

Anthoxanthum hirtum, Sweet Grass
Carex brevior, Plains Oval Sedge
Carex rosea, Rosy Sedge
Schizachyrium scoparium, Little Bluestem





Images: The Good Earth Gardener

Elements of a Perfect Planter

1

Thriller

Plants with vertical or dramatic interest

Typically foliage plants or ornamental grasses

Placed toward the center if viewed on all sides or rear if viewed face on

Example Plants:

Rudbekiahirta, Black-eyed susan
Echinacea purpurea, Purple Coneflower

2

Filler

Plants that fill the container to add texture and colour

Typically plants that mound

Placed surrounding the Thriller

Example Plants:

Coreopsis lanceolata, Lanceleaf oreopsis

3

Spiller

Plants that trail over the edge of the container, filling in the base of the planter

Typically placed on sides that will be viewed toward the edge of the container

Example Plants:

Phlox stolonifera, Creeping phlox
Glandularia canadensis, Verbena

Use creativity to make it your own! Remember to select plants with similar water and sun needs.

Human Needs

Creature Comforts

Outdoor Furniture

The inclusion of furniture is a welcome addition to business entrances and provide shoppers somewhere to sit, take a break and enjoy the area.

By providing somewhere to sit, the laneways become less of a transition area for shoppers and more of a gathering place.

It is important to choose a location that allows the user to look out onto the area while preferably being in the shade. Location should be considered based on the orientation of the entrance and the highest time of use.



Image: Wooden Outdoor Bench / Spiritual Coffee

Shade, Canopies and Overhead Elements

Shade is an important element of comfort during the summer. Providing shade in the form of a canopy, umbrella or other options paired with a seating space can make the area more comfortable for visitors. By adding overhead elements you are creating an outdoor room, adding a sense of human scale and increasing comfort levels.

Creative and cost effective ways to create overhead interest include:

- Twinkle lights
- Umbrellas
- Canopy shades



Image: Madrid / Ernie Fraser



Image: Sun Shade / Tension



Image: Anne's Lane / Gregory Dalleau



Image: Bate's Alley / Michigan

Surface Solutions

Down To The Earth

Resurfacing may be a necessary consideration. Resurfacing can vary from the implementation of an accessible pedestrian pathway to the full resurfacing of the entire area.

Using different materials can show a visual distinction between pedestrian and vehicular space. The use of multiple materials can also add interest and design aesthetics. By allowing for a change in materials there is an opportunity to use permeable surfaces to assist drainage and stormwater percolation.

Environmentally focused alternatives to asphalt or concrete include but are not limited to:

- Permeable concrete
- Pea Gravel
- Eco-Stone
- TurfStone Pavers
- EcoRaster Grid Systems

Why is permeability important?

- Reduces surface runoff
- Natural filtration for pollutants
- Replenish groundwater



Image: EcoRaster



Image: Hydromedia / Lafarge



Image: EcoRaster



Image: Eco Stone / Unilock



Image: TurfStone Pavers / Unilock

Working With Waste

Waste With Class

From recycling to food scraps, waste is a part of most business operations. When thinking about waste receptacles of any size it is important to consider placement, frequency of pickup, and creative solutions.

If possible, work together with neighbours to reduce the number of dumpsters through sharing bins and increasing the frequency of pickup. This way there are less dumpsters to distract from the aesthetics of the area and more space is gained.

Receptacles are necessary whether small or large. Surprisingly, the most important part of waste aesthetics may not be the receptacles themselves but the level of care in the area around them.

When the area around the bin is free from small debris the area looks well maintained and the bin does not impact the overall perception of the space.





Image: Graffiti and Rubbish / David Wall



Image: Fence Consultants

Placement

The area of placement should be considered based upon the ease of pick up and the viewpoint of neighbours and the public. Convenience is important within reason. Compromising by adding a few extra steps for improved aesthetics and ease of pick-up is worth it.

Pick-Up Frequency

The nose knows. The type and amount of waste being disposed of will determine the frequency of pick up required. During the time that the laneways will act as primary entrances it is important to ensure smells and excess materials are kept to a minimum.

Creative Solutions

There are a few ways to “pretty up” dumpsters or waste storage areas. One way to disguise waste receptacles is through enclosures. Small or large enclosures can blend into their surroundings.

Dashing Dumpsters!

Some communities and creative individuals have the ability to make almost anything aesthetically pleasing. Check out these dumpsters - wallpaper, landscapes, and more! www.mills50.org



Image: Wallpaper / Mills 50



Image: Painted Dumpsters / Kenora



Image: Dumpster Art / Salmon Jam

Getting It Done

First, complete a site inventory and analysis using the Love Your Laneways Inventory & Analysis form to gain a better understanding of what the strengths and opportunities are for your laneway entrance.

Consult with a member of the Love Your Laneways Project Design Team for design ideas, project plans, and about the process of making improvements.

Create an overall vision and site plan. What elements would you like to improve or install and where is the placement?

List the project components that you wish to undertake along with the associated costs and the timeframe that you believe it will take to complete them. Breaking down the overall vision into manageable portions allows for a feeling of success and advancement during completion.

Arrange your projects by priority. Not everyone's priorities are the same. Priorities may be based upon budget, time for project completion, and/or a level of aesthetic influence as examples. Arranging projects will allow for a greater understanding of what can be completed within budget and timeframe.

Completing improvements in order of priority and project-by-project will help to create a sense of continual improvement while helping to avoid ambitious all at once undertakings.



Image: Werribee Lane / Simon Leo Brown

Creating Change

Do not hesitate to consult with your Love Your Laneways Design Team when considering any changes. Designs must be in compliance with Town of Midland

By-laws and necessary permits must be acquired.

Ensure that all projects are completed within the property line unless collaborating with neighbours.

Cosmetic changes including painting and murals, greenery installations, retrofitting of existing lighting, may be completed without obtaining a permit. Replacement of doors may be completed without a permit unless there are alterations required to the frame or wall structure.

Changes that will require a permit include:

- Additions or alterations to the building
- Awnings and canopies
- Signage
- Ground resurfacing (inspection also required)
- Resurfacing of walls
- Electrical

For local contractors, suppliers and service professionals ask your Design Team or visit: www.mpdbuilders.com

Building and Sign Permit Applications can be found at:
www.midland.ca

The Love Your Laneways Design Team is happy to help with permits and applications.

**“There is no place in a city that can’t be better.
There is no toad that can’t be a princess, no frog
that can’t become a prince.”**

- Jaime Lerner

Celebrate

The Love Your Laneway Action Committee is here to support and celebrate improvements made to the Laneways through mini-events and community events throughout the process.

We will deepen the sense of community by celebrating success together as we contribute to the motto: *persequi qualitatem vitae*, or “in pursuit of quality of life”.



Image: Pork, Fork and Cork Party / Double One 3 Lane, Brisbane

Love Your Laneways Inventory & Analysis

Name of Business:

Address:

Laneway:

Date:

Conducted By:



Complete the following while observing the area of improvement.

The 3 areas of focus are: Ground Surface, Vertical Elements and Overhead Elements. Take photos to document the improvement process.



Ground Surface

Material

- Is your laneway access asphalt, gravel, interlocking brick or an alternate material?
- Is the surface in good, fair or poor condition?
- Is the surface sloped?
- Is there drainage?

Notes:



Traffic

- Total number of parking spaces available:
- How are the parking spots marked for drivers? (ex. signs, paint, parking stops)
- Does your business require delivery access?
- If so, what size is the largest vehicle?
- Describe the delivery(reverse to door, parked in laneway)

Notes:



Experience

- Is there a designated pedestrian walkway to your entrance?
- Is the doorway accessible?
If not, please describe:
- Is there any seating or patio space?
- Is there opportunity or desire for seating or patio space?

Notes:



Waste

- Are there waste bins in your area? (ex. dumpsters)
- Are the bins shared with other businesses?
- How often is the waste collected from the bins? When? By who?(ex. county, private)

Notes:



Greenery

- Is there any greenery in your area?
- Would there be opportunity to install a garden, planters, window boxes or hanging baskets?
- If so which would you have an interest in?

Notes:



Vertical Elements

Material

What material are the walls made of? (ex. stucco, painted brick, exposed brick, siding)
Is the surface in good, fair or poor condition?



Notes:

Wall Details

Are there multiple entrances? In what condition?
If so, what are their uses? (ex. access to storage area)
Would you be interested in creating a unique look for your entrance door to make it stand out?

How many windows face onto the laneway area?
Are the windows in good, fair or poor condition?

Are there any utility meters or other similar features on the walls?

Is there an area that would make a good mural canvas?
Is there any signage?
If so, what type? (ex. wall mounted, stand alone)
If so, what is the purpose of the signage? (ex. parking)
Are the signs in good, fair or poor condition?



Notes:

Overhead Elements

Lighting

What type of lighting is in the area? (ex. motion sensor, entrance light, floodlight)
Is your entrance way illuminated at night?

Are there any areas light does not reach?

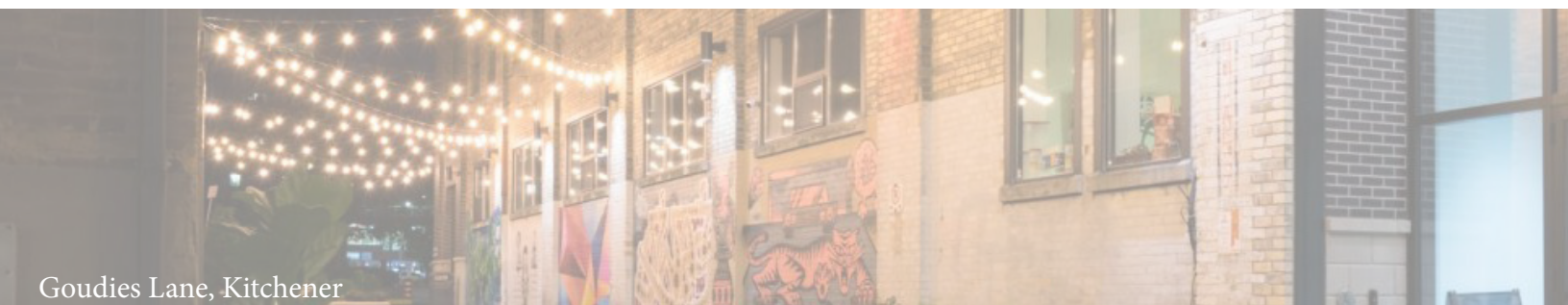
Notes:



Canopy

Is there anything overhead? (ex. wires)
Is there opportunity to have interest overhead? (ex. twinkle lights, canopy or awnings)

Notes:



Goudies Lane, Kitchener

For more information about the
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Love Your Laneways Action Committee



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