

Forth Junction Heritage Society



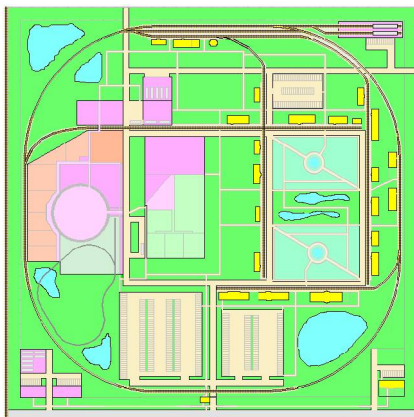
Celebrating the evolution of trails, trains and transit in Central Alberta through Education, Advocacy and Collaboration

A Vision for Red Deer as a world-class visitor destination

... The Proposed

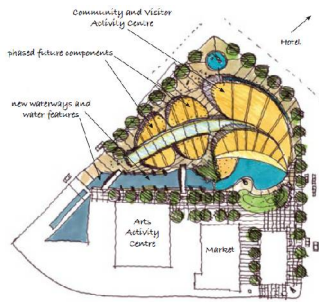
Forth Junction Project

The vision of the Forth Junction Project is that Red Deer and Central Alberta become a world class heritage destination celebrating the past, present and future of trails, trains and transit to be administered by a non-profit corporation, in co-operation with area municipalities, the business community and compatible organizations



Envisioned as a partnership between the City, County, private enterprise and non-profit agencies and administered by a not-for-profit corporation.

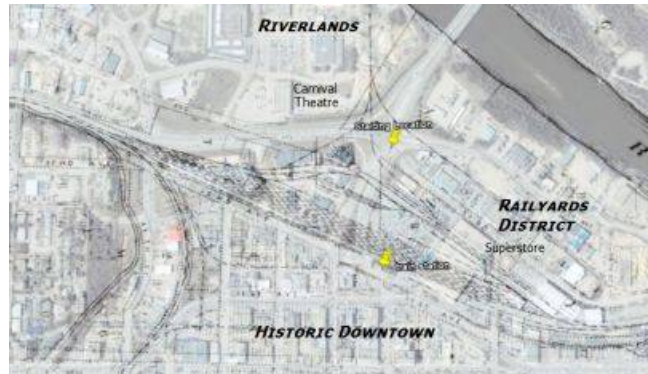
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A time to think big and bold . . .

The major initiatives in Red Deer and Red Deer County including concepts for the redevelopment of the city's downtown Riverlands and Railyards districts, a renewed interest in preserving the heritage of the region, and the exploration of new ways to move people in and around the city presents an unusual opportunity for a world-class visitor and community destination in or close to the city.

The two future redevelopment districts in the downtown surrounding the preserved historic CPR station and CPR bridge, were the heart of Central Alberta's railway network for 100 years and additionally were the community's center of communication, social interaction, commerce and distribution for more than 60 years.



As Red Deer celebrates its 100th anniversary as a city in 2013, the change in status a century ago was due in large part to the economic boom created by the major expansion of three railways in and around Red Deer between 1910 and 1913.

Both before and after that boom period, modified historic trails, new roadways, regional transit services and, of course, the railway, combined to make Red Deer area the economic, cultural, and distribution centre of Central Alberta. That, in turn, resulted in a high quality of life and an appreciation of the region's natural beauty and cultural heritage.



Furthermore, the Red Deer area is representative, in many ways, of how several factors combined toward the successful evolution of the settlement and economic development of Western Canada and how major centres flourished.



For the past few years, visionary citizens of the region have been looking for a unique, authentic and sustainable visitor magnet in the Red Deer area to compliment the city's valued river valley and trail system.

An opportunity now exists to showcase existing railway, trail and transit features throughout the region as a destination theme, expand those features, market the area as an integrated regional ground transportation attraction and create a major world-class landmark focal point close to where Central Alberta's railway network once radiated from.

The development of a railway and transit theme in the Red Deer area as a destination strategy

In many respects Red Deer and Red Deer County already celebrates its railway, trail and transit heritage as an integrated theme.



Two railway icons have been preserved downtown – the 1910 CPR railway station which has heritage designation from all three levels of government and is now an office building, and the 1909 CPR steel railway bridge across the Red Deer River which is also designated a historic resource and is now part of the Trans Canada Trail.



Close to downtown sits one of two 1911 Alberta Central Railway bridge piers along Taylor Drive that once supported a Red Deer-based railway bridge over Waskasoo Creek and the Calgary and Edmonton Railway.

The main intersecting roadways in historic downtown are named after the two men who determined where the Calgary and Edmonton Railway would cross the Red Deer River and ultimately the location of the future city of Red Deer – Rev. Leonard Gaetz and James Ross.



Alexander Way, once called Alexander Street (before being renamed 48 Street), was named after Alexander McKenzie, brother of William McKenzie (partner in the Calgary & Edmonton Railway and co-creator of the Canadian Northern Railway). Alexander built the city's first railway station over a 3 week period in 1891. Alexander Way has already started to evolve with a railway and transit theme as a walkable corridor through the historic downtown. The branding features 'Alexander', a fictitious railway worker that will guide people through future features of the street from one end of downtown to the other.

The Central Alberta Historical Society has created 'The Arches', shaped in the form of a railway roundhouse to eventually highlight the city's history punctuated with the original water fountain from the beautiful park that once greeted visitors to the city.

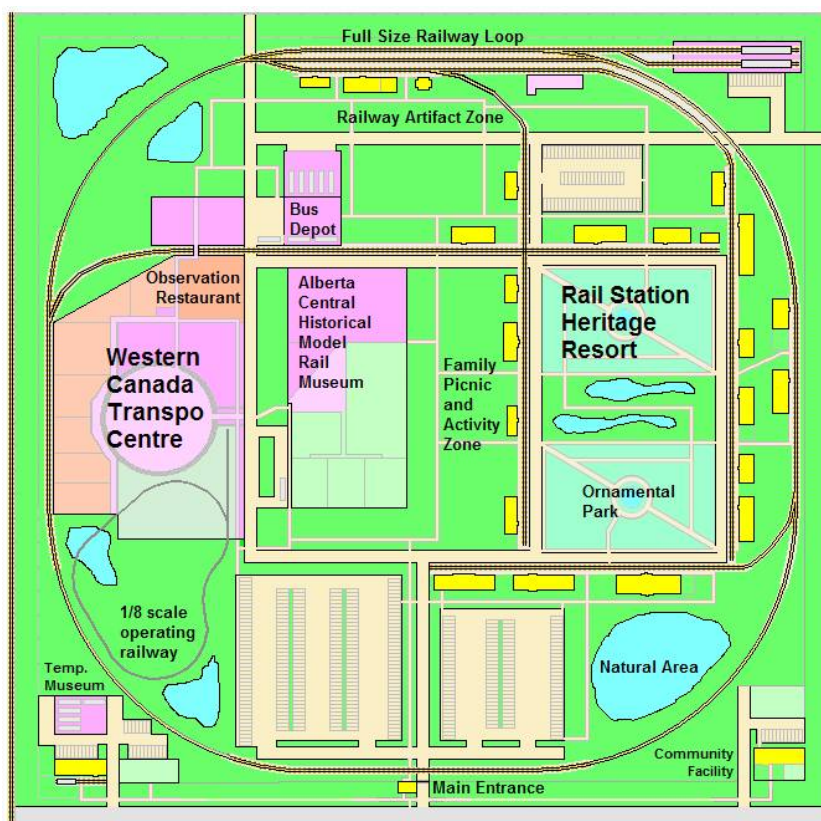
Recently, the modernized downtown transit terminal and parkade along Alexander Way was named Sorensen Station in honour of Central Alberta's primary transit pioneer – Gordon Sorensen.

As a potential compliment to the downtown, the region has several unconnected railway themed sites and attractions including the ACR Mintlaw steel trestle and the Stettler to Big Valley steam train excursions.



A concept proposal for **Forth Junction Transpo Park**

a world-class Interpretive Heritage, Activity and Nature Park
that includes several unique attractions celebrating the evolution of
trails, railways and transit in Central Alberta



a unique experience that values family recreational activity, the natural environment and the heritage of the prairies, a transportation-themed multi-activity community and visitor destination expected to be located close to historic and current road, rail and trail transportation corridors in close proximity to Red Deer.

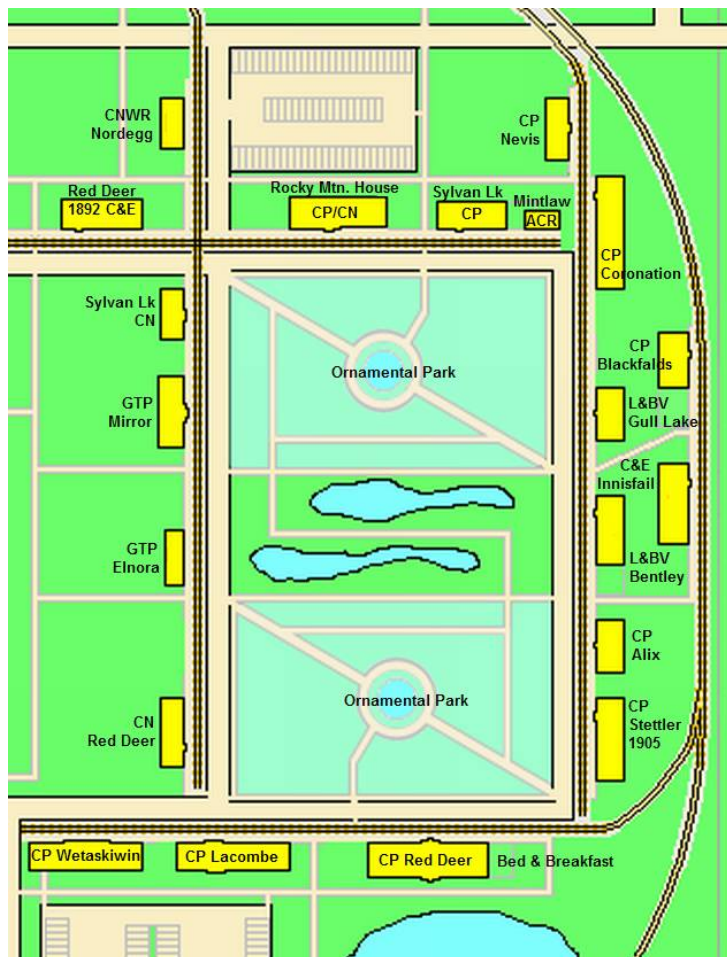
a world-class visitor and community destination based on the evolution of

Trails, Trains and Transit

that features an interpretive heritage, activity and nature park as well as Canada's only heritage railway station accommodation village, Canada's largest historical miniature railway, the Western Canada Transpo Heritage Centre, and the 1/8 scale replication of Canada's famous Jubilee locomotive 3001



A concept proposal for Canada's only Railway Station Heritage Resort



Railway Station Village

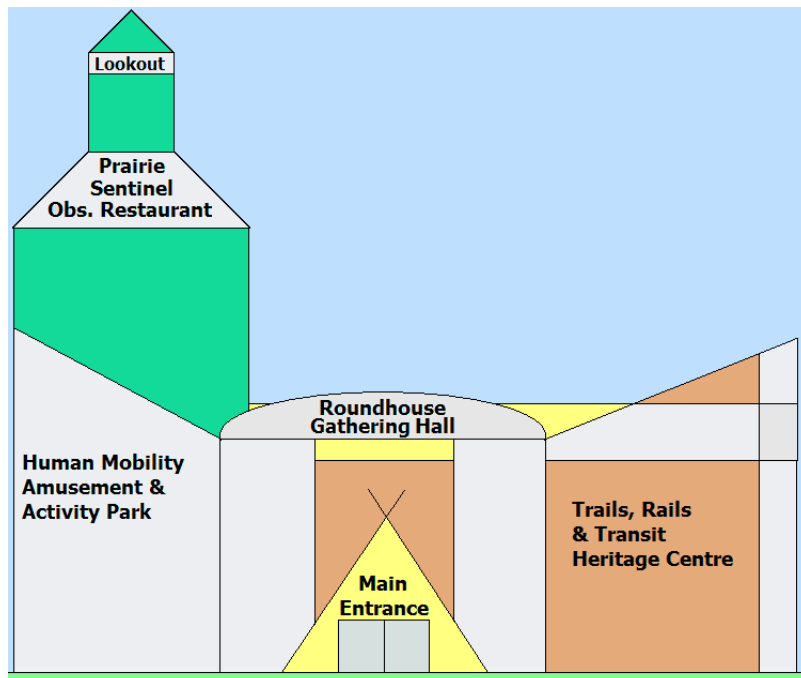
Several replicated and/or restored railway stations of Central Alberta representing Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk Pacific, Canadian National and Alberta Central.

Station uses would include bed and breakfast, single and multi-family overnight lodging, community hall, interpretive centre, gift shop and refreshment area for trail-users and visitors.



Up to 25 stations will be replicated over time and could include stations of Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Innisfail, Penhold, Lacombe, Blackfalds, Stettler, Coronation, Mirror, Alix, Rocky Mountain House, Bentley, Gull Lake, Wetaskiwin, Nordegg, Elnora, Nevis, Mintlaw or other communities of Central Alberta. The resort would include the ability to spot heritage rail cars and would contain natural areas and ornamental parks.

A concept proposal for the Western Canada Transpo Centre



a big, bold, fun, interactive, multi-activity community, regional and visitor architectural landmark destination and focal point for a transportation-themed gathering place for Red Deer and Central Alberta.

a world-class visitor destination as Canada's only Heritage-Retail-Entertainment Centre based on the evolution of
Trails, Trains and Transit

an attraction celebrating the settlement and economic development of Western Canada to be located in or close to downtown Red Deer or other historic transportation site

One of the primary objectives of the Forth Junction Project is to develop a heritage-entertainment-retail visitor and community focal point in the immediate Red Deer area focused on the preservation, education and promotion of trails, rails and transit.

featuring **6** major components . . .

1. The Roundhouse Gathering Hall

A grand 4-5 storey, open, round, multi-functional central community gathering place that includes:

- The Classic Railway Diner
- Dual Atrium Entranceway with Water Feature, Vegetation and operating Garden Railway
- Early Transportation Heritage Interpretive Zone featuring ancient, aboriginal and fur-trading methods of transportation



The year-round gathering hall would combine the style and essence of the engine roundhouse and the classic railway station with a large curved sun roof. Features would include an adaptable central turntable-style stage that can both rotate and change elevation, from which all other activities, displays and shopping radiate.

2. Multi-Level Retail Centre

A 4-storey shopping centre overlooking the Roundhouse Gathering Hall as well as display and activity areas. It would be highly visible from the main entrance and would be the primary economic generator for the operational sustainability for the entire Transpo Centre.



3. 'Prairie Sentinel' Observation Tower Restaurant

Overlooking the park, the railway feature and surrounding landscape, an 8- to 10-storey observation tower in the stylized form of a grain elevator (the skyline landmark of the prairies for 100 years) would punctuate the Transpo Centre with an upper observation deck and a mid-level restaurant.



4. Human Mobility Indoor Amusement and Activity Park

Indoor year-round entertainment and education amusement park for children and adults that features a transportation theme with rides that include a carousel and interactive activities teaching the principles of the evolution of human mobility.

5. Wagons, Rails and Transit Heritage Plaza

Featuring the role of trails, trains and transit in the prairie economy from 1885 to 1985 beginning with the crude stagecoach travel along the C&E Trail and other historic trails, extending to the vision of Red Deer as a major rail distribution centre in Alberta and representing the role of the railway divisional



point throughout the West, showcasing the glory days of inter-city passenger train travel, and evolving to the development of urban and inter-urban public transit.

6. Centre for the Exploration of Future Sustainable Transportation



An exploration of the options and opportunities for the future movement of people, individually and collectively, and the movement of goods in a responsible, environmentally-friendly and sustainable way, including the potential for high-speed inter-urban rail, maglev technologies, regional rapid transit, monorail, modern trams, regional trails and multi-use corridors.

Plus

The People Mover Shuttle and Tour Terminal

A variety of people movers, including local, regional and heritage transit, rubber-tired trains and shuttles for both adults and children, would transport people between the Forth Junction Transpo Park and Downtown Red Deer, the river, regional landmarks, and the trail system as well as to a possible future high speed rail terminal, the airport, the Westerner, the College and other locations. In addition, the Transpo Centre would be the starting point for local and regional heritage tours including the Stettler steam train excursions, the Innisfail Historical Village, the Alberta Central Railway Museum, the Anthony Henday Museum, and historic sites such as the ACR Mintlaw steel trestle.



a proposal for Canada's Largest Historical Miniature Railway Display

Alberta Central Historical Model Rail Museum

(100 year span from 1890 to 1990)

The centre-piece of the Forth Junction Project is an interactive and interpretive world-class miniature re-creation of the railways and landmarks of Red Deer and Central Alberta demonstrating the economic evolution of the region and the role of the railway past, present and future in that evolution.



A variety of modeling scales will be used from 7.25" gauge (1/8) and G (1/22.5) to HO (1/87) and N (1/160).

Some displays would contain accurate re-creations of railway and community scenes including historic landmarks that changed from time to time.

Five historic eras in the Red Deer region will be represented:

- 1892 – the beginning of a regional distribution centre
- 1913 – the building of the ACR & CNWR; railway and municipal expansion
- 1936 – the glory days of passenger service
- 1955 – a time of transition from steam to diesel and the start of passenger rail decline
- 1987 – a time of modernization and preparation for rail relocation

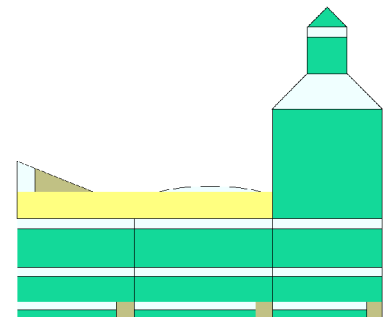
Replication of Jubilee 3001 'The Chinook' in 1/8 scale

An accurate and functioning scale replication of the historic Jubilee 4-4-4 F2a steam locomotive 3001 that headed the Chinook 'high speed' passenger train between Calgary and Edmonton between 1936 and 1955 (except during the war). Only five of this type of locomotive were built and none survived. The miniature locomotive would be capable of hauling passengers in the Transpo Park.



Trails, Rails and Transit Heritage Centre

Featuring the role of trails, trains and transit in the prairie economy from 1885 to 1985 beginning with the crude stagecoach travel along the C&E Trail and other historic trails, extending to the vision of Red Deer as a major rail distribution centre in Alberta and representing the role of the railway divisional point throughout the West, showcasing the glory days of inter-city passenger train travel, and evolving to the development of urban and inter-urban public transit.



Other features of the Forth Junction Transpo Park

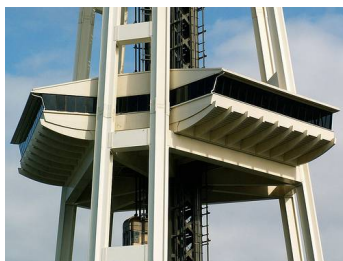


1. Retro Bus Depot

A 1950s-style interpretive centre to showcase restored passenger transit vehicles used in Red Deer and Central Alberta and to explore the future of people-movers.

2. Railway Station Ornamental, Activity and Nature Park

A general re-creation of the ornamental railway park that once greeted settlers and visitors to Red Deer. Alongside the ornamental park would be an activity area for all ages that will include a live-steam miniature train that carries passengers around the park. One of the leading locomotives will be the replicated Jubilee 3001. The park will also include a gazebo, band shell or stage for cultural events and lots of green space for a picnic area as well as access to a wetland and the regional trail system.



3. Observation Tower or Platform

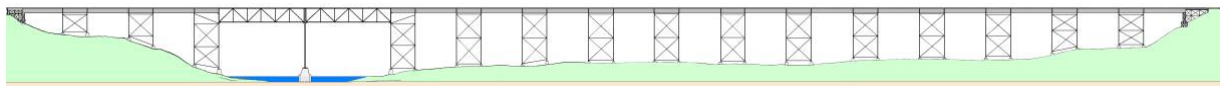
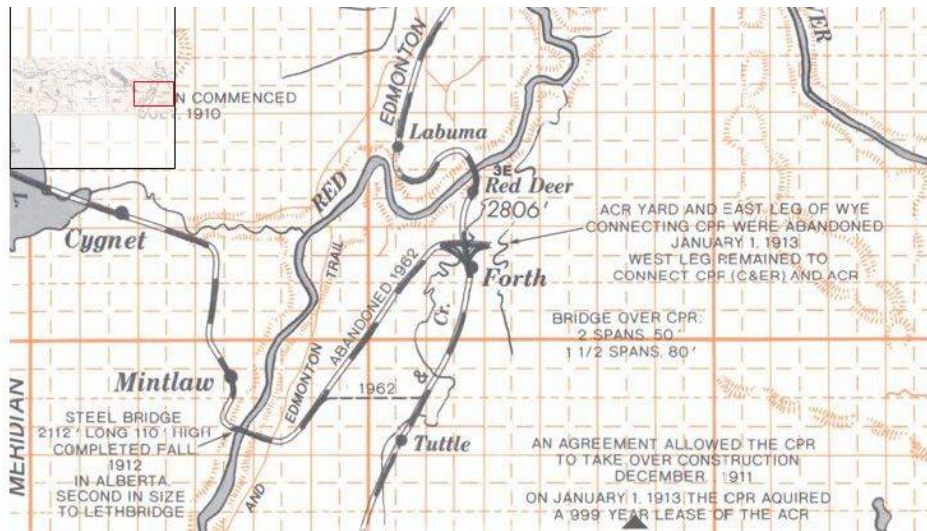
A restaurant or snack bar would augment a stylized observation tower or viewing platform to view active trains, acquired artifacts, the natural and built landscape and the overall park.

In addition, the resort would have sufficient space for the possible future acquisition of large railway and transit artifacts or the relocation of an existing rail museum

Where would the site be located?

A site has yet to be identified but the proposed Forth Junction Transpo Park could be located at several possible preferred sites including points along Highway 2A and the CPR corridor between Penhold and the Blindman River, or the former ACR corridor between Gasoline Alley and the Red Deer River. A minimum 40 acres will be required to accommodate the desired features.

Support for the proposed former ACR right of way as a future heritage Forth/Tuttle-Mintlaw-Sylvan Lake Linear Park



The former Alberta Central Railway (ACR), operated by Canadian Pacific as the Alberta Central subdivision from 1912 to 1981, was abandoned from Forth (in south Red Deer near the current Taylor Drive and 32 Street) to the Tuttle diversion in 1962 and from Tuttle (near Gasoline Alley at Lantern Street and Highway 2A) in 1983. Red Deer County identified the former ACR corridor (including the original route from Forth) as a possible future linear park in the Open Spaces Master Plan adopted in 2009. In late 2009, the County purchased the right of way between Tuttle and Benalto, including the historic 2,112 foot-long Mintlaw steel trestle, from Canadian Pacific for \$1 as a heritage resource and possible linear park. The



former right of way from Forth to the Tuttle diversion however is privately owned but intact. The joint City/County Red Deer River and Tributaries Concept Plan, adopted in 2010 by both municipalities for the future expansion of Waskasoo Park, identified the former ACR corridors as part of a future regional trail corridor.

The Forth Junction Heritage Society supports all efforts for the Mintlaw trestle and the former ACR right of way to be designated as a heritage resource to be used responsibly for a heritage linear park that could include one or more interpretive centres and facilities with a railway theme.

The Forth Junction Heritage Society

The Forth Junction Heritage Society was registered under the Alberta Societies Act in 2009 to promote the creation of a strategy toward world-class authentic and sustainable major attractions with a trail, rail and transit theme in Central Alberta. In 2011, the Society gained charitable status from Canada Revenue Agency permitting the issuance of tax-deductible receipts for donations used for educational and preservation activities.

The major tourist and public activity strategies, known as the Forth Junction Project, is an innovative proposal that includes the development of a major destination that includes the Forth Junction Transpo Park and the Western Canada Transpo Centre proposals.

The vision of the Forth Junction Project is consistent with and complimentary to the visions identified in the 2008 Red Deer Greater Downtown Action Plan, the Red Deer River Valley and Tributaries Concept Park Plan, the Downtown Recreation Park Master Plan and Red Deer County's Open Spaces Master Plan. It also blends well with current themes and historic sites, the Sorensen Station Transit Terminal, 'The Arches' and the preservation of the Mintlaw trestle.

The society in the past 2 years has attracted about 30 members including area residents who have a passion for the preservation and celebration of railway and transit heritage as well as people who recognize that a window of opportunity currently exists to make the region a major destination using the theme of the evolution of ground transportation.

Other objectives of the Forth Junction Heritage Society:

- Publish a Regional Trail, Rail and Transit Tour Guide of Central Alberta
- Publish a Trail, Rail and Transit History of the Red Deer region

The vision of the Forth Junction Project is for Red Deer and Central Alberta to be a world class heritage destination celebrating the past, present and future of trails, trains and transit.

The primary purposes of the Society are education and preservation. A not-for-profit corporation will be established to fulfill the vision of the Forth Junction Project, especially those aspects that are semi-commercial or tourist-oriented in nature.

The mission of the Forth Junction Heritage Society is to preserve, promote and share the transportation heritage of our community and region, and to pass that heritage to future generations in a sustainable and interactive way through education, advocacy and nurturing a passion for the continuous evolution of trail, rail and transit.

Celebrating the evolution of trails, trains and transit in Central Alberta through Education, Advocacy and Collaboration

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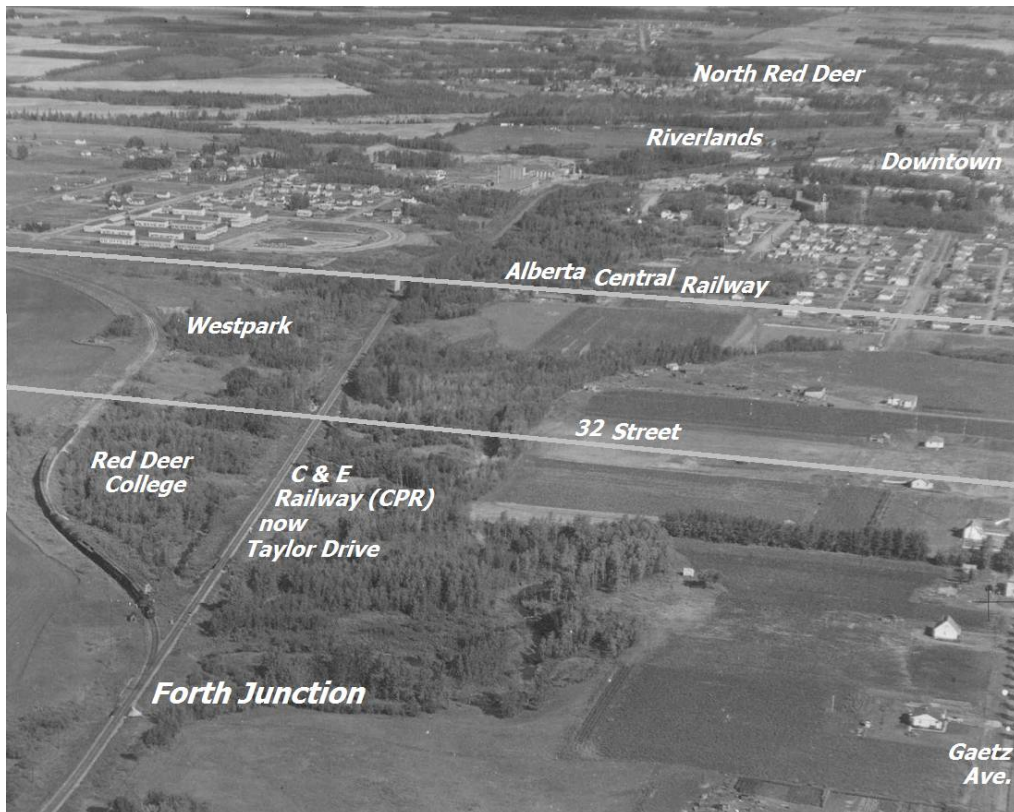
Forth Junction

Forth Junction is the point along Taylor Drive where the Alberta Central Railway and the Calgary & Edmonton Railway, both operated by Canadian Pacific Railways, interacted for a short time from 1911 to 1913. Today a lonely pillar marks the spot. The junction continued to be used for access to the CPR Alberta Central subdivision



west to Rocky Mountain House until 1962 when the access was moved to Tuttle, a few miles further south where the Highway 2A access to Gasoline Alley is now located, and used by the railroad until 1981.

Forth Junction is a symbol of Red Deer's existence as the primary transportation hub of the region both before and after the glory days almost 100 years ago when the city was poised to be the railway centre of Alberta.



Historical Perspective of the railway in Red Deer

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, fur traders and aboriginals used the Red Deer River and several trails using natural landmarks to guide them. The river crossing at the current location of Fort Normandeau became the focal point for trade, hunting, interaction and transportation. The 'Crossing' naturally became the main stopping house as the central point of the Calgary-Edmonton Trail, used for settlement, the movement of goods and the main of three connectors between the south and the north.



When Rev. Leonard Gaetz offered half-interest of his land holdings for a townsite in 1891 to James Ross representing the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, the site of Red Deer was secured.



The railway had looked at a number of sites to cross the Red Deer River including 'the Crossing' upstream (old Red Deer-Fort Normandeau) and the confluence of the Red Deer and Blindman Rivers downstream.

Thriving downtowns developed in Red Deer, Innisfail and Lacombe and all three communities were approximately the same size at the turn of the twentieth century, all vying to become the focal point of Central Alberta.



It was when the Canadian Pacific Railway (operators of the C&E Railway) decided to make Red Deer the divisional point between Calgary and Edmonton that the destiny of downtown Red Deer as the hub of Central Alberta became established.

As well as building a new station, the Canadian Pacific Railway built a roundhouse, coal chutes and other maintenance facilities to the west of the downtown in the area now known as Riverlands and the Railyards districts. The railway was the primary employer, customer and supplier for the fast-growing city.

The rapid growth, the central location and the enthusiastic entrepreneurial spirit of its citizens attracted more railways to look at Red Deer as the hub of their regional systems.



The Red Deer-based Alberta Central Railway envisioned a transcontinental system from the West Coast to Eastern Canada with the city as its headquarters. The Canadian Northern Railway planned to make the city its divisional point for its own proposed Calgary-Edmonton main line. The Grand Trunk Pacific saw north Red Deer as the divisional point for its own east-west line. Canadian Pacific planned to construct a line from Red Deer to Drumheller.

Between 1911 and 1914, it seemed that Red Deer would become the railway hub of Alberta with plans for railways running from the city in nine directions. The businesses of downtown Red Deer thrived and had their own vision of a major city rivaling or exceeding Calgary and Edmonton.

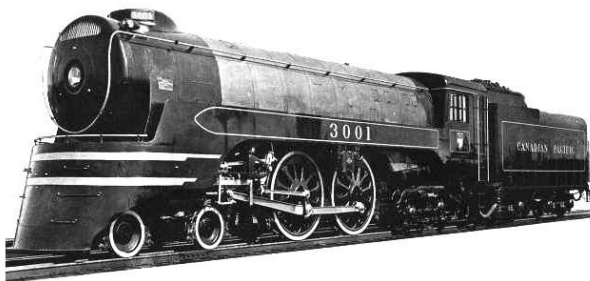


The First World War and a recession put a grinding halt to many of the ambitious plans and some of the railways went broke. The Canadian Pacific took over the Alberta Central and finished its line to Rocky Mountain House but no further. The ACR wooden trestle across Kin Canyon and the railway yards in Mountview were removed, as was the bridge across the CPR into West Park.

The Canadian Northern Western and the Grand Trunk Pacific became part of the Canadian National Railway system and built a station at the current location of the Co-op Plaza shopping centre on the east side of downtown. With the CN bridge crossing the river frequently being washed out in the spring breakup, the railway linked its station with the CP line through the area where the Golden Circle, museum, recreation centre and Lodge hotel are now located.



But the Canadian Pacific continued to be one of the dynamic forces in the economy of Red Deer and Central Alberta both north-south and east-west.



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For 94 years, the Canadian Pacific moved people in and out of Red Deer, from the earliest passenger trains carrying immigrants in 1891, the troop trains of the two world wars, the intercity Jubilee Chinook of the mid-1930's until the mid-1950's to the dayliners from the mid-1950's until 1985.

Cheap gas, the love affair with the automobile and regional to international air service made passenger service unprofitable for the railways and towards the end, the railway did everything in its power to discourage passengers from using rail.



Times have changed – gas will no longer be cheap, people are developing a greater awareness of the limitations and effects of fossil fuels, more people are looking for transportation alternatives and there's a great potential for the revival of rail as a people mover. The long-discussed high speed rail linking Calgary-Red Deer-Edmonton and beyond is gaining momentum.