



The Intersection

Lethbridge, AB

For nearly thirty years, an uninspiring blue, box-like building sat on one of the highest profile sites within the Lethbridge cityscape. The structure was initially designed and long used as a warehouse, undergoing little change besides the paint colour. This was particularly unfortunate considering the building's prime location on one of the City's major intersections. Located on the corner of Mayor Magrath Drive South, the City's main commercial artery, and Fairmont Boulevard South, the site had been underutilized, waiting for rejuvenation.

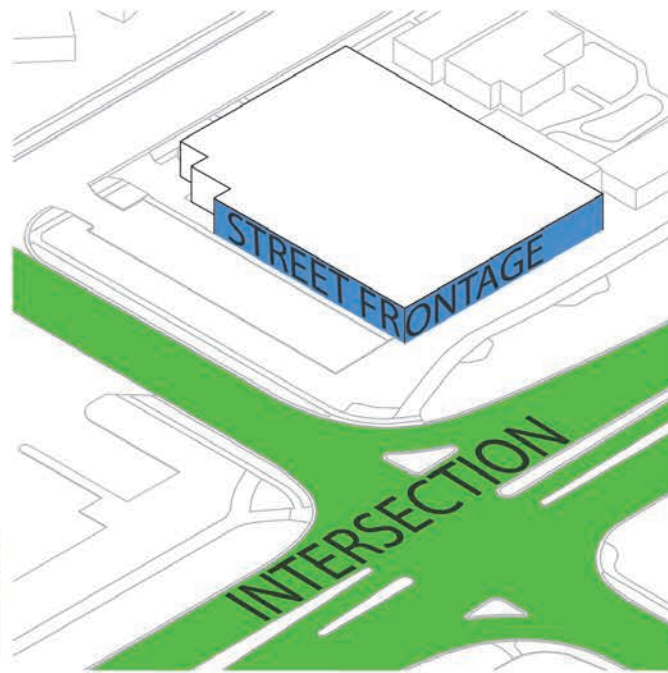
Seen as the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the potential inherent in reusing an existing building, the goal from the onset was to set a new standard for revitalization within the City. While the location was ideal, the site had always lacked adequate parking. This deficiency was even more daunting when considering amending the building's use to one with a higher parking demand. Consequently, the design sought to simultaneously take advantage of the proximity to the intersection while also increasing the available parking.

Programmatically, the design had to consider how to best create five new separate commercial units within one newly renovated shell. The primary defined Commercial Retail Unit (CRU) is an optometry clinic located with the greatest exposure to the intersection.

Jim Asuchak and George Day, the Owners of the clinic, desired the highest degree of visibility to market their practice as well as the products they sell in-store. An additional CRU has been defined as a small bespoke furniture store, while the other three CRU's have yet to be defined. The design provides access to these units through a primary entrance oriented north, visible from the intersection, as well as a secondary public entrance on the east side of the building. Both entrances open into a central atrium from which users are able to access all units of the building.

*Render by ARFAi
Authored by Graham Ouwerkerk*

ANALYZE



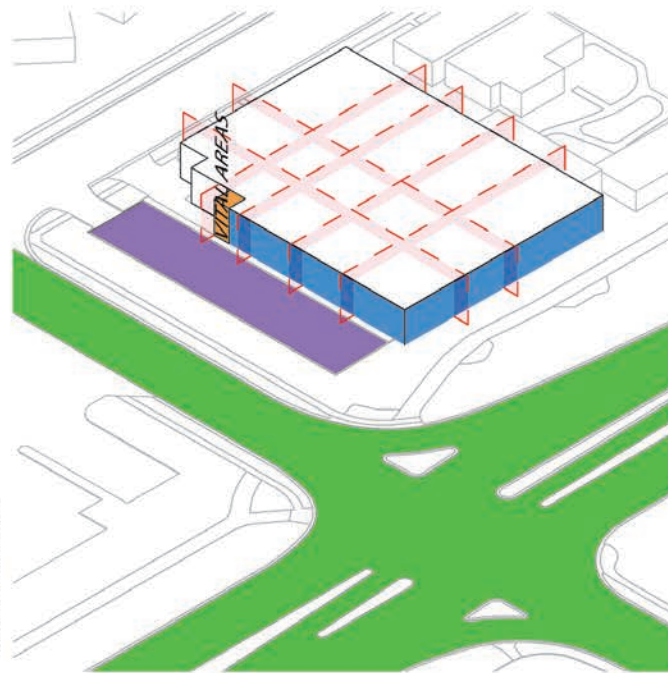
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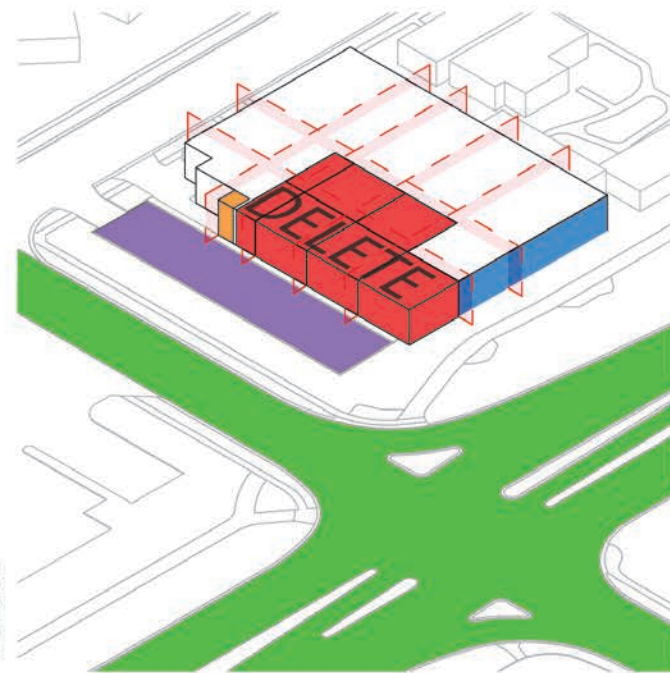
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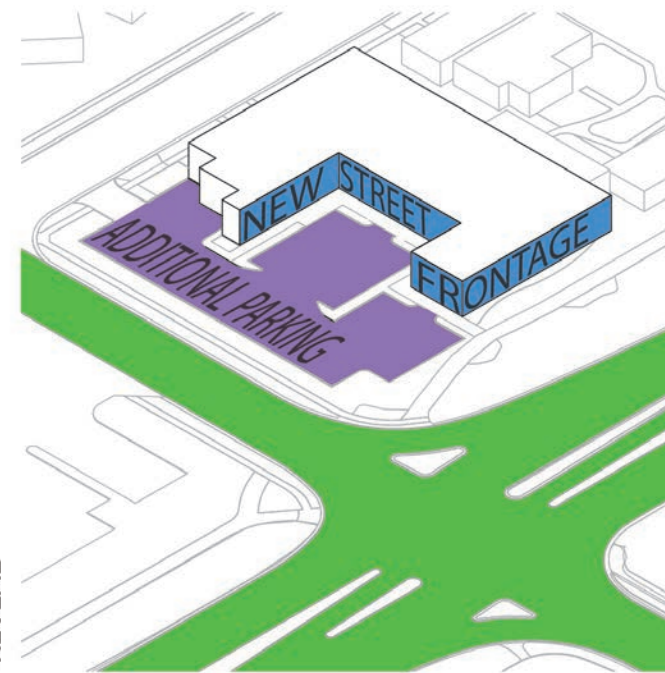
DETERMINE



DELETE



REVEAL



A Strategic Journey From Analysis to Reveal

Transforming the warehouse into commercial spaces anchored by an optometry clinic began with an analysis of the primary benefits and hindrances to the site.

To achieve this, the building was reduced in size from a footprint of 2,390 m² to 1,697 m². This served to both make it a more manageable scale for five commercial units as well as to open the site for the parking to serve these units. Based on the existing structural grid, the building was pulled back from the intersection and articulated to create a much more dynamic and inviting primary entrance and street frontage. As a result of the new articulated form and contemporary industrial aesthetic, potential clients of the CRU's will be drawn into the building, able to utilize the newly expanded parking lot fully.

Site analysis revealed the importance of the intersection. Mayor Magrath Drive South is the busiest thoroughfare in the City, therefore, maximizing building frontage towards the intersection was key. The existing building was diagnosed to have a notable parking deficit. A successful renovation required the creation of additional stalls. The existing structural grid was identified to provide a baseline of possibilities. Utilizing the existing structure ensured a cost-effective renovation.

The noted vital area (bottom left of diagram) is where all of the City services and utilities entered the existing building. Maintaining them was necessary to the feasibility of the project.

Following the identification of the structure and determination of areas to be maintained, the design deleted parts of the building along the existing grids. The revealed form provides superior dynamic street frontage while also solving the site's parking deficiency.



Sales Gallery

The dispensary or sales area was designed to create an engrossing and dynamic interior environment, one which attracts clients and showcases the products for sale. Similar to an eye exam chart, the space was intentionally designed with high contrast black and white finishes in order to create an aesthetic which conceptualizes the space's use. Furthermore, the materiality includes distinct wood veneered millwork to provide some warmth and nature to the space. The polished concrete floor and exposed roof trusses ensure continuity of the industrial, contemporary design throughout the interior and exterior of the building. Finally, the triangular acoustic baffles enhance acoustic performance and add vibrant splashes of colour.

The two-storey space, combined with the overheight glazing, conspire to offer a true feeling of spaciousness and luxury as one

browses through the glasses, frames and accessories for sale.

Through the use of multiple projectors, the plain white walls will come to life with visually stimulating displays, creating the sense of a digital gallery, which will assist in marketing the products for sale. Furthermore, a coffee bar and kids play area will ensure that clients, either shopping or waiting for an eye exam, will engage with the space.

The display shelves are designed with ample crisp lighting to create a spectacle of products available. The display cases also serve to create privacy at various fitting desks. All the while, overall transparency throughout the space has been prioritized to ensure sightlines for security.