

# WHY A PLAN FOR THE CENTRAL PENINSULA, AND WHY NOW?

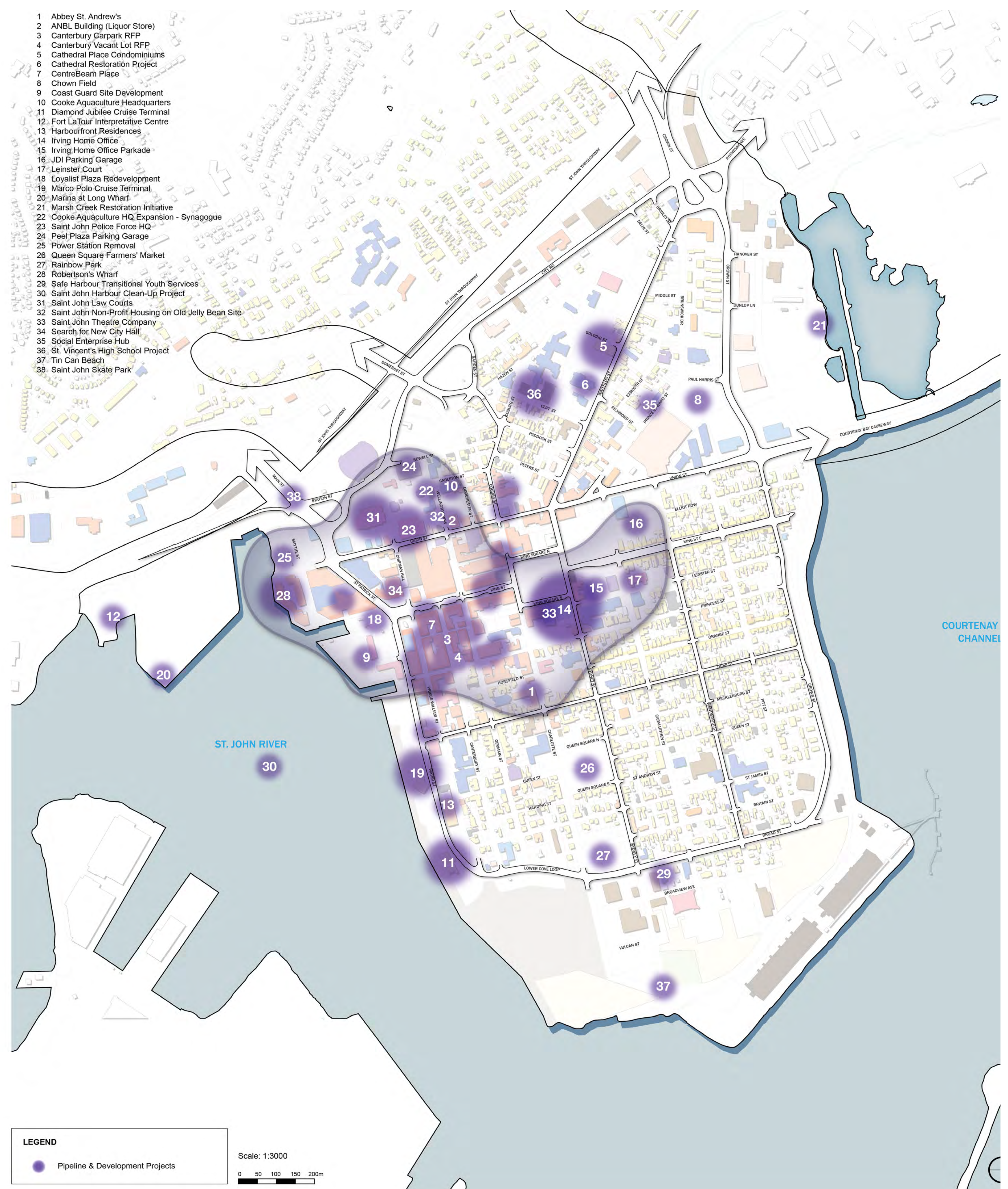
Because the Central Peninsula plays a central role in the economic and cultural health of the city as a whole, a strategy for neighbourhood reinvestment and growth will benefit the entire city. Public and private investment - through the rehabilitation of heritage buildings, upgrading of housing stock, new infill development, public realm improvements, the attraction of new residents and jobs - will create a stronger and more resilient city.

There is increasing energy and action within the Central Peninsula. After years of population decline, Uptown has seen a 15% population increase since 2011, a period that saw the Saint John population decline. Neighbourhoods adjacent to the Uptown Core are also growing.

There is momentum at all scales. The Irving Home Office will bring more people to the Peninsula every day, many of whom will visit local restaurants and stores. New public spaces such as Tin Can Beach have become important community focal points.

More generally, 40 new restaurants, bars and galleries have opened Uptown in recent years.

At the same time, there are underutilized or vacant areas which can be repositioned through redevelopment as viable, tax-generating uses to enhance the vitality of the Central Peninsula. The Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to capture this momentum, build on these opportunities, and create positive transformation.



Heatmap of recent and future development activity.





# WHAT WILL THE PLAN INCLUDE?

The Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Action Plan will include a set of tools, guidelines, policy, by-law recommendations and implementation strategies to address issues, leverage opportunities, and achieve positive transformation. These include:

**Place-based analysis** that will examine existing conditions, trends and opportunities on the Central Peninsula, relating to land use, the public realm, areas of significant and gradual change and areas of stability, and heritage.

**Place-making concepts** that will show how various areas should transform over time.

**Urban design guidelines/manual** for specific areas of the Central Peninsula, such as vacant lots, heritage conservation areas, streetscapes and character areas.

**A review and update of the heritage by-law** to regulate how new development is integrated into a historic built form.

**Direction on emerging policy issues and programming needs** to encourage urban development and the revitalization of the Central Peninsula.

**A clear community vision identifying key priorities** for growth and change in the Central Peninsula.

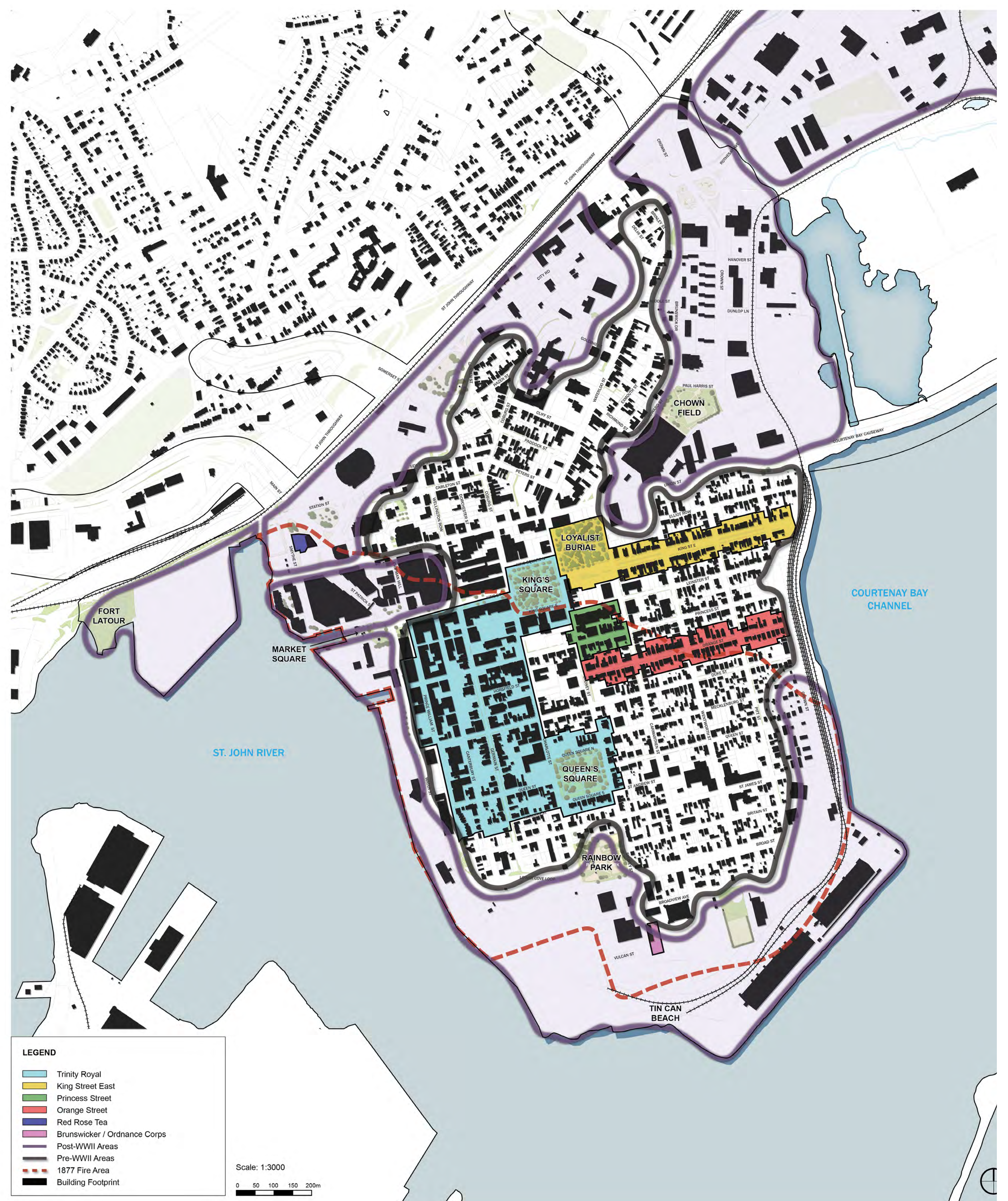


Figure grounds and heritage conservation districts

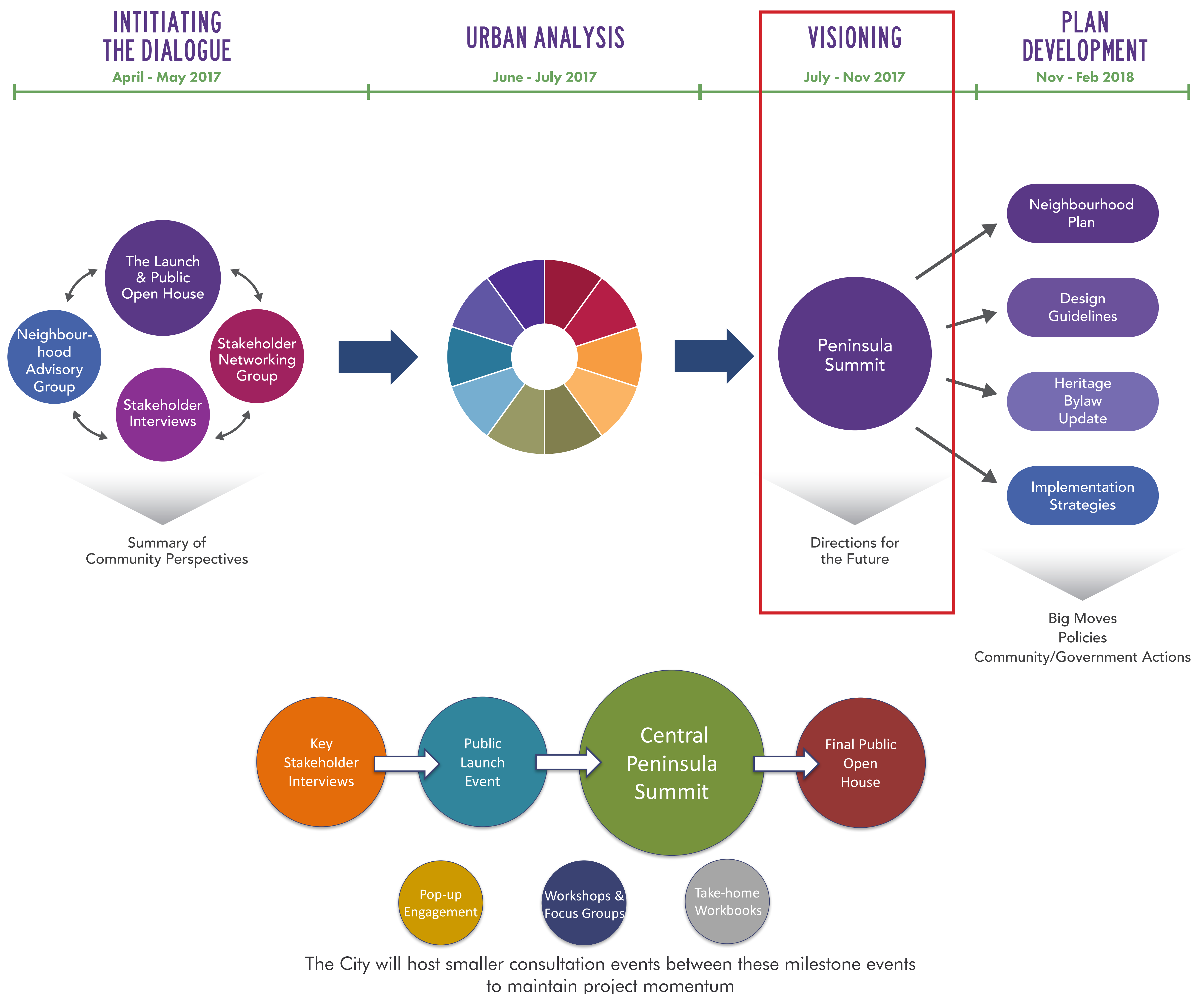




# CENTRAL PENINSULA NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN TIMELINE

The Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Action Plan will take approximately one year to complete, with Common Council approving the plan in spring 2018.

The plan will be undertaken through a series of four work phases, which include numerous opportunities for the public to provide input. The key phases of the work plan are summarized below. Each phase includes a significant public consultation component.





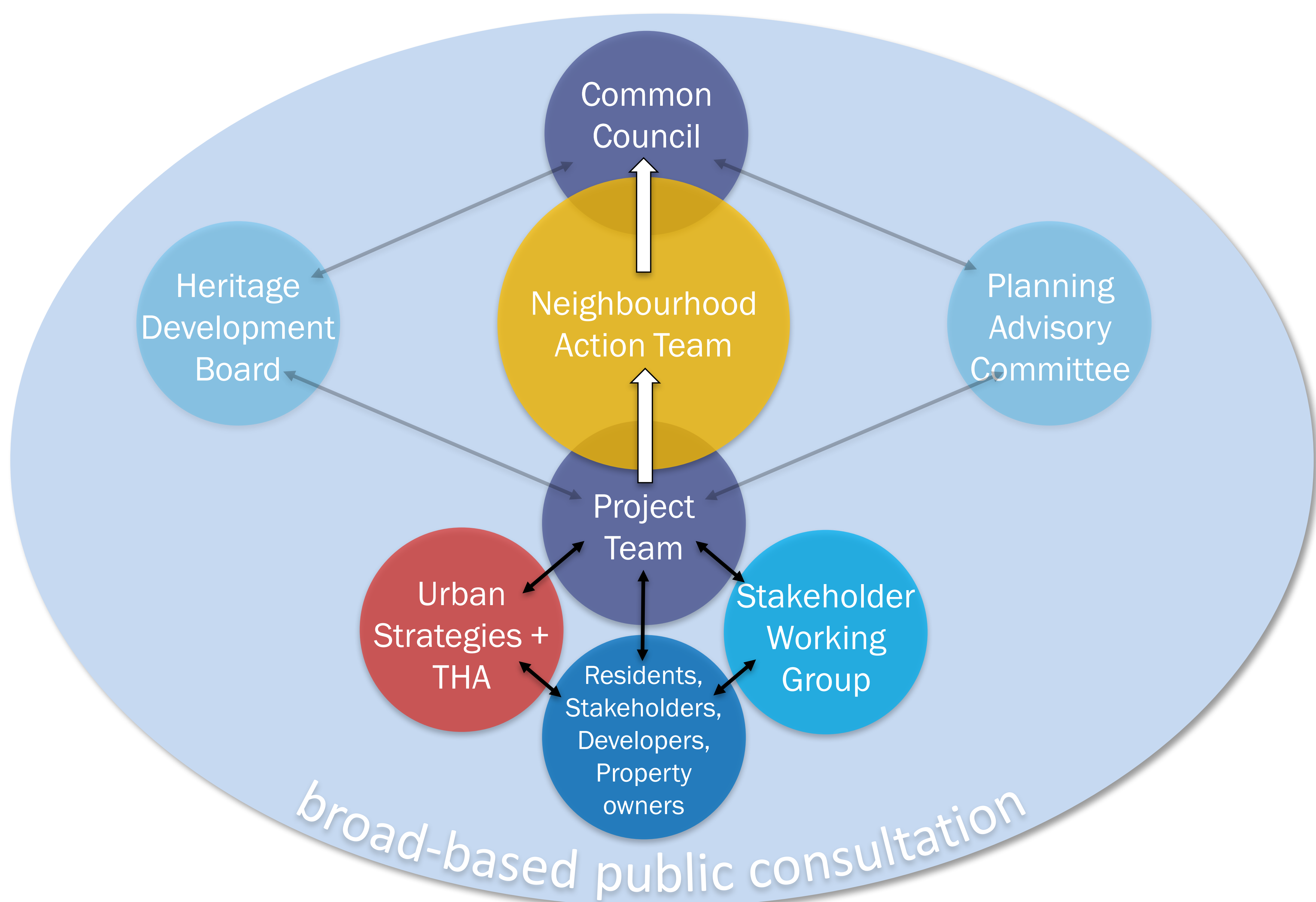
# CENTRAL PENINSULA NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN TEAM

The Neighborhood Plan initiative for the Central Peninsula is a Saint John Common Council priority, with Common Council acting as a champion for the project and making the final decision on the adoption and implementation of the plan.

In addition to Common Council's direction, through an open call for members, the City has established a Neighbourhood Action Team to act as ambassadors of the project, and a Stakeholder Working Group to provide input and direction.

The core planning team will work with the Neighbourhood Action Team, the Stakeholder Working Group, Common Council, and the public in the creation of the plan.

The City has retained Urban Strategies Inc. to work closely with staff in the Growth & Community Development Services department to undertake the plan. Urban Strategies is supported by Taylor Hazell Architects, who will provide expertise on matters of heritage conservation and integration. This is the core planning team.





# HOW TO STAY INVOLVED

## Major Events:



### Open House (October 2017)

An Open House will be held to present how the plan has developed based on past consultation. This will be an interactive and collaborative event where participants can provide feedback.



### Online

The City of Saint John has launched a digital engagement platform for the Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Action Plan. This platform acts as a project website with information about the project, upcoming events, and includes interactive commenting features to allow the community to provide input. The website will be updated regularly to keep you informed on how the project is developing and how you can stay involved. Visit the site at [www.takingshapesj.ca](http://www.takingshapesj.ca)



### In Your Neighbourhood

The City of Saint John will be maintaining the community engagement efforts between major milestones through grass roots and stakeholder lead engagement sessions throughout the summer and fall. Keep your eyes open for any of the following activities:

- Signs placed throughout the central peninsula encouraging people to text in feedback;
- Pop-up engagements where city staff will attend community events and facilities to engage participants;
- Small workshops and focus groups coordinated with key stakeholders and addressing specific themes; and
- Take-home workbooks for community members to provide more detailed feedback.





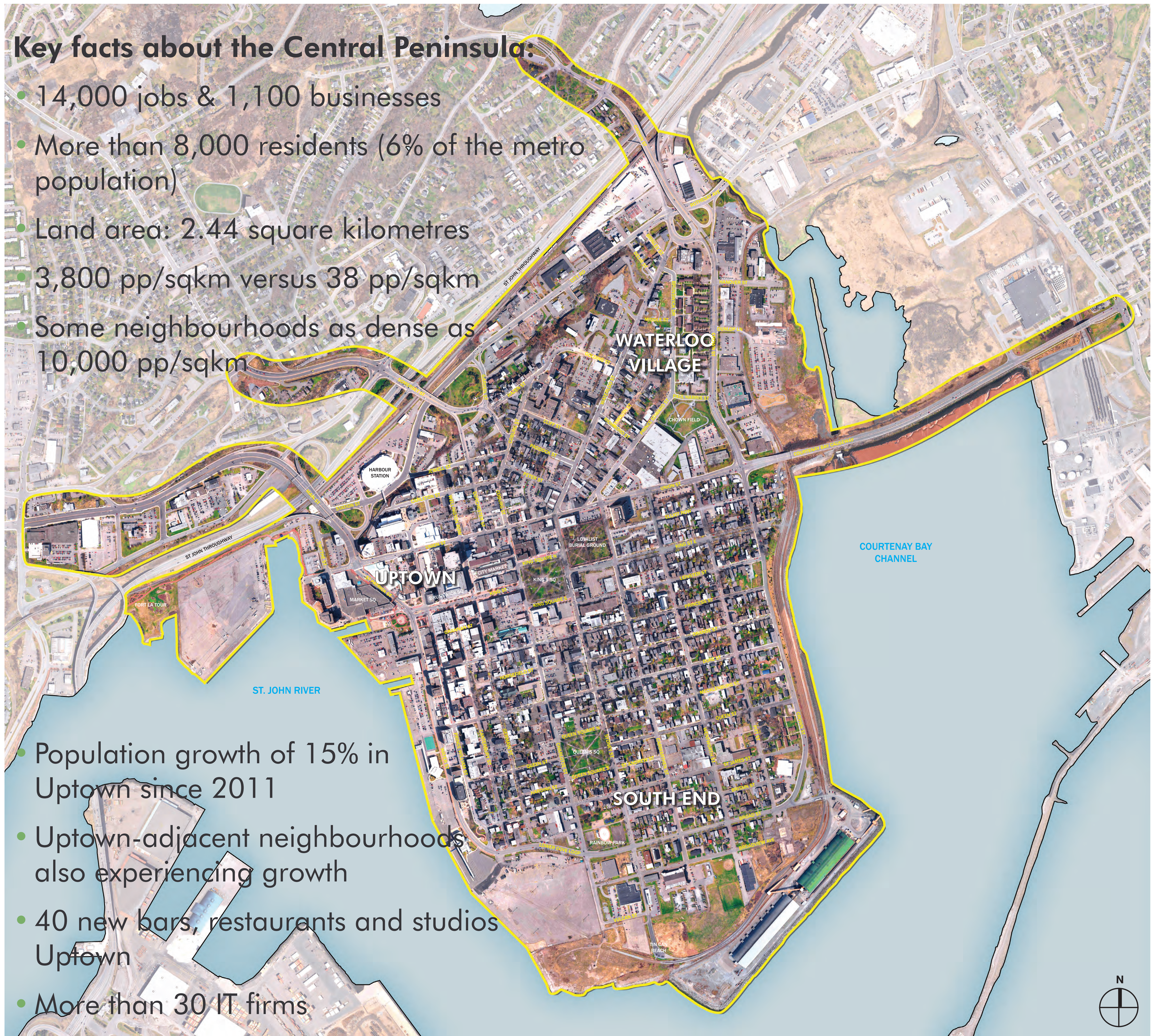
# STUDY AREA

The study area includes the Uptown, South End, and Waterloo Village neighbourhoods, as well points of connection to other parts of Saint John.

## Key facts about the Central Peninsula:

- 14,000 jobs & 1,100 businesses
- More than 8,000 residents (6% of the metro population)
- Land area: 2.44 square kilometres
- 3,800 pp/sqkm versus 38 pp/sqkm
- Some neighbourhoods as dense as 10,000 pp/sqkm

- Population growth of 15% in Uptown since 2011
- Uptown-adjacent neighbourhoods also experiencing growth
- 40 new bars, restaurants and studios Uptown
- More than 30 IT firms





# REGIONAL CONTEXT

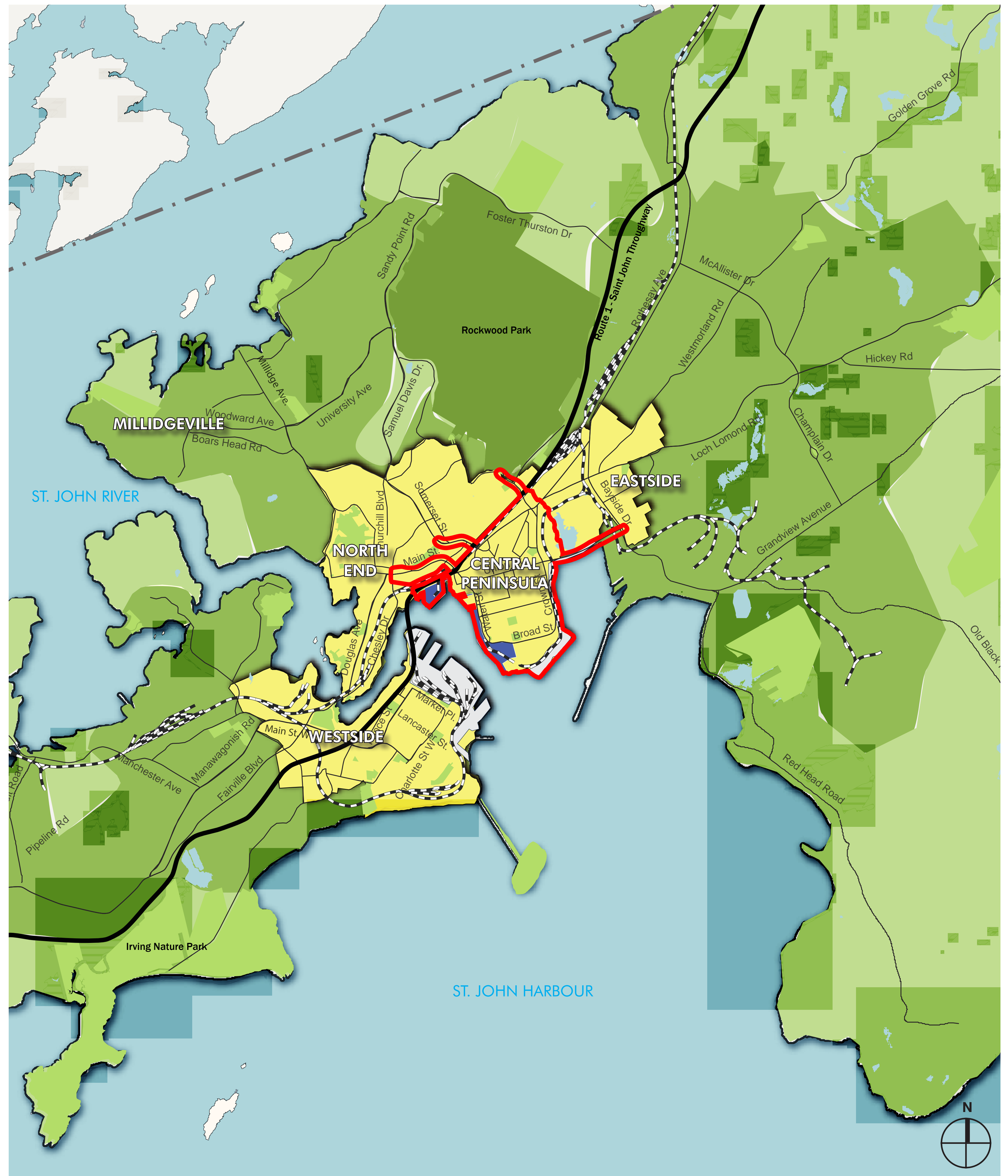
The neighbourhood plan must consider that the Central Peninsula is the anchor of a broader city and region. It is the focal point of the local and regional economy, and is an important hub for arts and culture, heritage, tourism. PlanSJ – the city’s municipal plan – seeks to reinforce the key role the Central Peninsula plays by directing much of new growth to built-up areas.

The Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Action Plan should also consider how the peninsula *physically* relates to the rest of the city.

The primary entry points to the peninsula – Main Street, Somerset Street, Crown Street and the Causeway – were designed with cars in mind, and create harsh conditions for pedestrians and cyclists – fast-moving traffic, streets that are wide with few designated crossing points, and narrow sidewalks.

These points of entry are also unattractive, and create a poor first impression of the Central Peninsula.

**How should these connectors be improved to improve safety, enhance neighbourhood character, and increase accessibility and mobility for all?**





# LAND USE

The neighbourhood plan must consider that the Central Peninsula is the anchor of a broader city and region. It is the focal point of the local and regional economy, and is an important hub for arts and culture, heritage, tourism. PlanSJ – the city’s municipal plan – seeks to reinforce the key role the Central Peninsula plays by directing much of new growth to built-up areas.

The Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Action Plan should also consider how the peninsula *physically* relates to the rest of the city.

The primary entry points to the peninsula – Main Street, Somerset Street, Crown Street and the Causeway – were designed with cars in mind, and create harsh conditions for pedestrians and cyclists – fast-moving traffic, streets that are wide with few designated crossing points, and narrow sidewalks.

These points of entry are also unattractive, and create a poor first impression of the Central Peninsula.

**How should these connectors be improved to improve safety, enhance neighbourhood character, and increase accessibility and mobility for all?**





# CHARACTER PRECINCTS

## WILL PROVIDE DIRECTION FOR URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR VARIOUS AREAS OF THE CENTRAL PENINSULA

Character precincts are sub-areas of the Central Peninsula that share common features, such as the size and shape of the buildings, how the buildings relate to one other and to the street and other public spaces, when they were built, as well as the land uses.

Identifying character precincts is useful for defining the appropriate character for new development within them and for directing public investment.

Through this analysis, 11 precinct areas have been identified:

**Uptown & Central Waterfront:** Uptown Core contains the greatest density and diversity of uses, and is characterized by an intact and cohesive historic built form.

**Upper Waterloo:** Traditional two- and three-storey house form buildings, similar to the rest of the Central Peninsula, with many gaps in the fabric, including vacant and derelict buildings.

**Lower Waterloo:** Having undergone urban renewal in the mid-20th century, Lower Waterloo Village is characterized by low-rise buildings with large floor plates set within expansive surface parking lots.

**Upper South End:** The Upper South End, adjacent to Uptown Core, is characterized by a cohesive and intact historic residential built form.

**Deep South End:** There are numerous historic buildings in the South End, though many are in need of repair, and there are many vacant lots. Several low-rise commercial/industrial buildings with large floor plates have been built.

**Port:** Largely inaccessible to the public, the Port area is characterized by large open surfaces, including parking lots and port facilities.

**Barrack Green:** The southern tip of the Central Peninsula, characterized by expansive open areas (both maintained and not maintained), the prominent Barrack Green Armoury, and several commercial/industrial uses.

**Potash:** At the eastern edge of the peninsula, this large waterfront site is dominated by two enormous storage sheds. Access to the waterfront is prevented by Crown Street, the steep topography, and the rail corridor.

**Germain:** Germain is characterized by intact historic residential fabric, including the area around Queen Square.

**City Road:** City-road is a car-oriented corridor. The built form is characterized by low-scale commercial/industrial buildings with large floor plates set within expanses of surface parking.

**Long Wharf:** Port facility characterized by expansive paved surface with views back to the Central Peninsula. Long Wharf supports a range of uses: port/industrial, recreation, and entertainment.





# CHARACTER PRECINCTS

## WILL PROVIDE DIRECTION FOR URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR VARIOUS AREAS OF THE CENTRAL PENINSULA





# EXPLORING A RANGE OF OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

**There are many opportunities on the Central Peninsula to enhance existing open spaces, create new ones, and create linkages between them.**

The Central Peninsula boasts two traditional squares – Queen Square and King’s Square – as well as the Loyalist Burial Grounds, which provide opportunity for passive recreation, and contribute greatly to neighbourhood character.

New public spaces, such as Harbour Passage, Loyalist Plaza, Rainbow Park, Chown Field and Tin Can Beach – have brought much needed green and open space and active recreation opportunities to the Uptown, South End and Waterloo Village, but could be improved or expanded.

There are key linkages between these spaces that should be enhanced with street improvements, with the effect of encouraging use and enhancing neighbourhood character.

Marsh Creek – which is undergoing restoration – is an opportunity for a more naturalized form of open space, providing opportunities for both recreation and learning about biodiversity and water systems.

A future open space should reach beyond the Central Peninsula. The popular Harbour Passage could potentially be extended along the eastern side of the peninsula, crossing Marsh Creek and connecting to Rockwood Park.



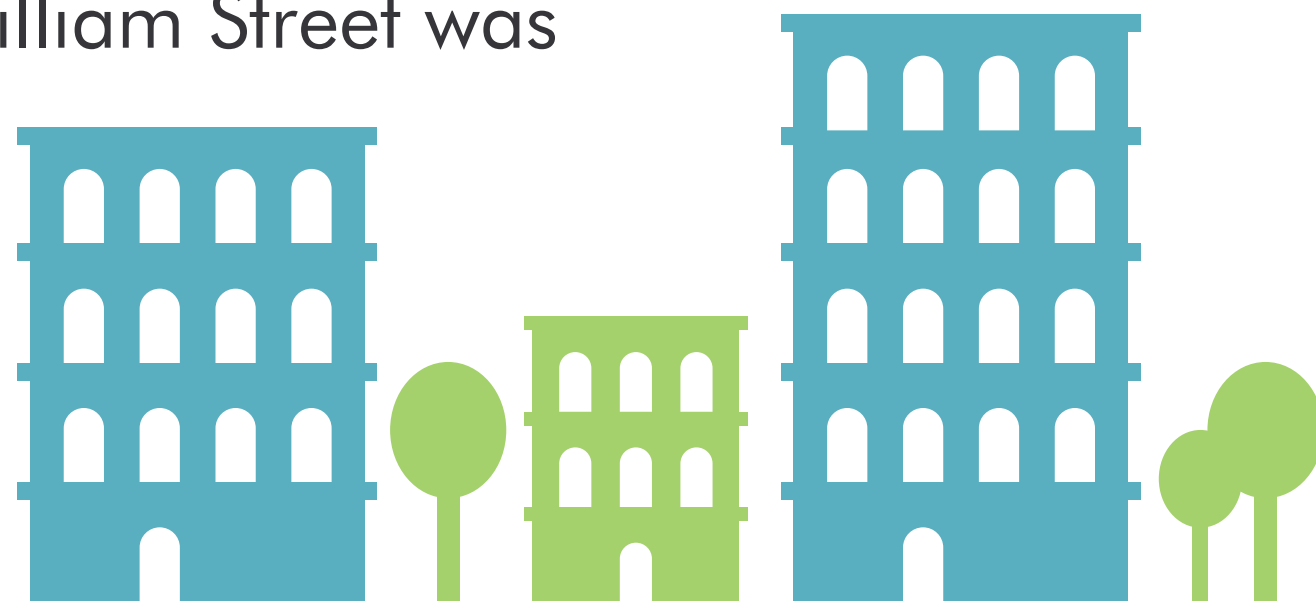


# PRE/POST WAR FABRIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Great Fire of 1877 destroyed two thirds of the Central Peninsula. Within 5 years, much of the peninsula was rebuilt, largely in brick and stone. Today, the Central Peninsula's historic fabric is outstanding among Canadian cities for being incredibly cohesive and intact.

There are more than **400 buildings** protected within the Central Peninsula Heritage Conservation Areas

In 1982, Prince William Street was **designated a historic streetscape** – the first of its kind in Canada



In 2016, the City of Saint John awarded more than **\$90,000** in heritage grants, which was matched by **\$668,000** in private investment

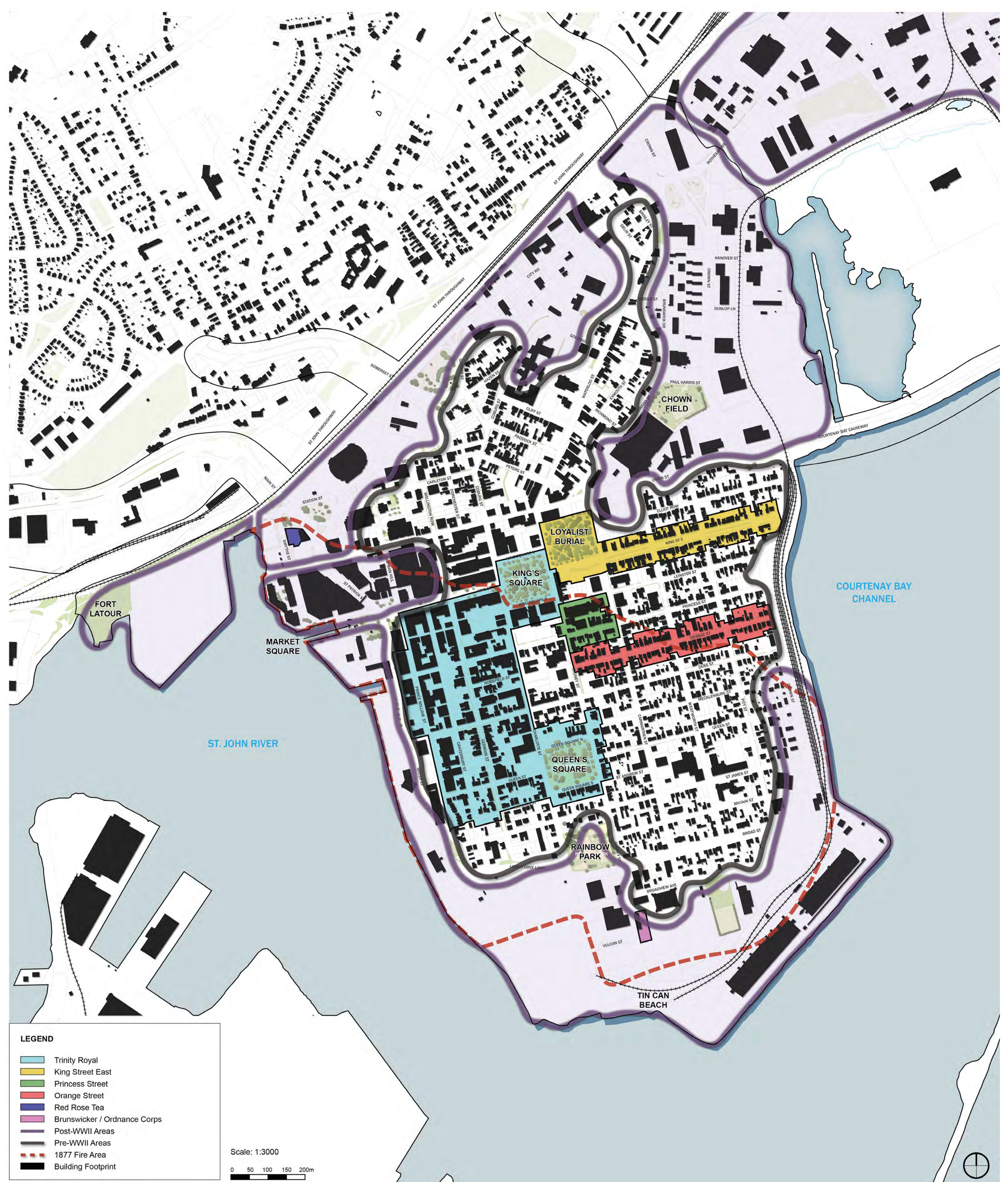
Being a historic city contributes to local character and civic pride, but there are also clear economic benefits. For example, the historic fabric of the Central Peninsula anchors the city's tourism/cruise industry. It is also at the root of renewed interest in living in the core.

At the same time – some people find building within a heritage context to be a challenge.

**What tools can we use to conserve our built heritage at the same time allowing for much-needed growth?**

**How can we ensure that new development is compatible with our built heritage?**

**How can we broaden our understanding of 'heritage' to include cultural landscapes, marine and industrial heritage, and the stories of the peninsula?**



**TAKING SHAPE**  
CENTRAL PENINSULA



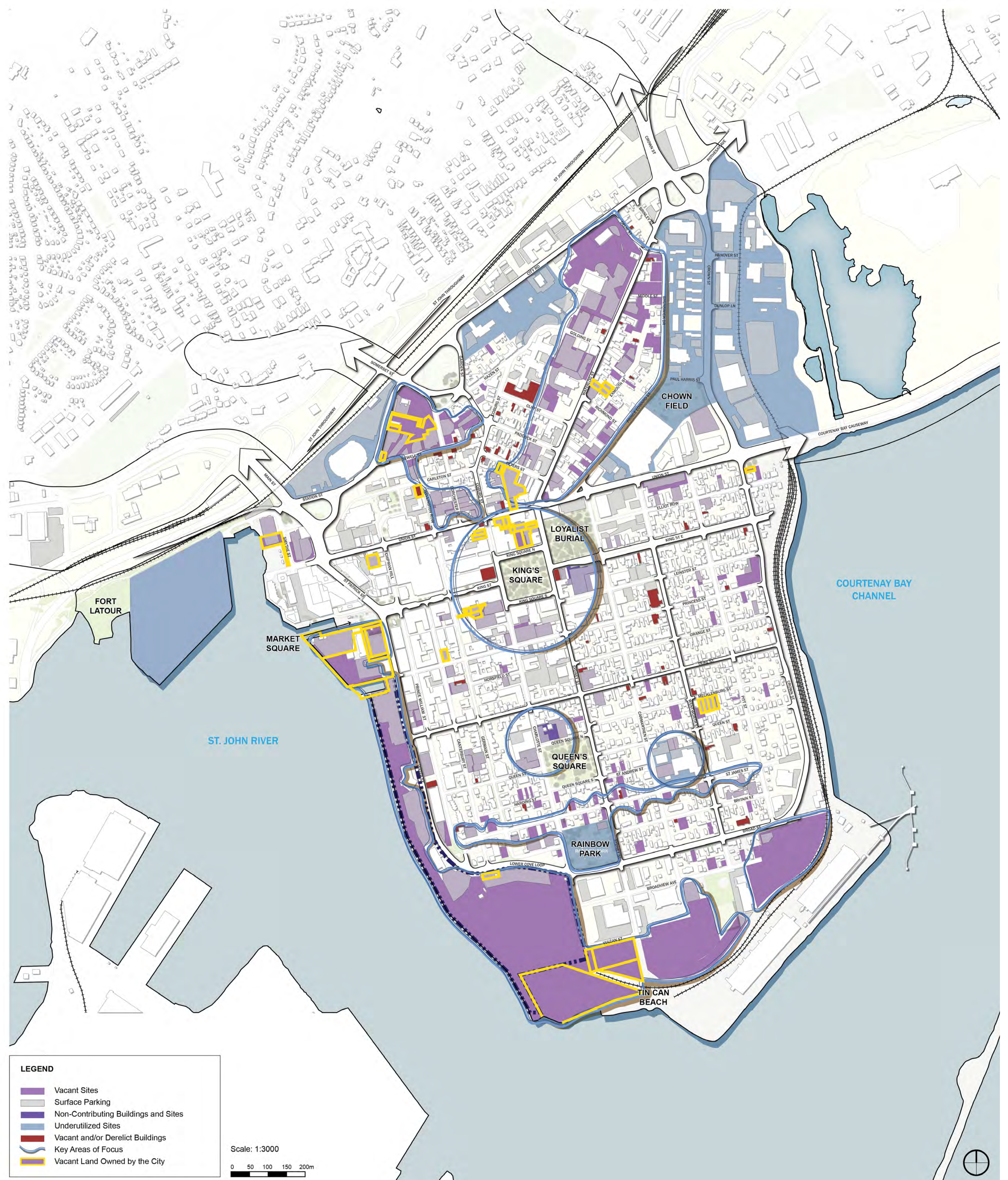
**URBAN STRATEGIES INC.**



# VACANT & UNDERUTILIZED LANDS

There are 287 vacant lots in the Central Peninsula, many located in prime, mixed-use areas. Empty lots detract from neighbourhood character, negatively impact property values, and discourage investment. But they also represent enormous opportunity: if developed at typical neighbourhood densities, these lots could yield up to 4,000 residential units and \$400M in new property assessment. New and diverse opportunities for living, working and recreating in the core will also reinforce and expand the Central Peninsula's role as the urban heart of Saint John.

There is substantial vacant and underutilized land along the waterfront. Some of these parcels - such as Fundy Quay and the Lantic Sugar site - are City-owned, and present strategic opportunities for place-making on the peninsula. How could these sites be better used?





# THE WATERFRONT

Since its beginnings, Saint John has been a waterfront city.

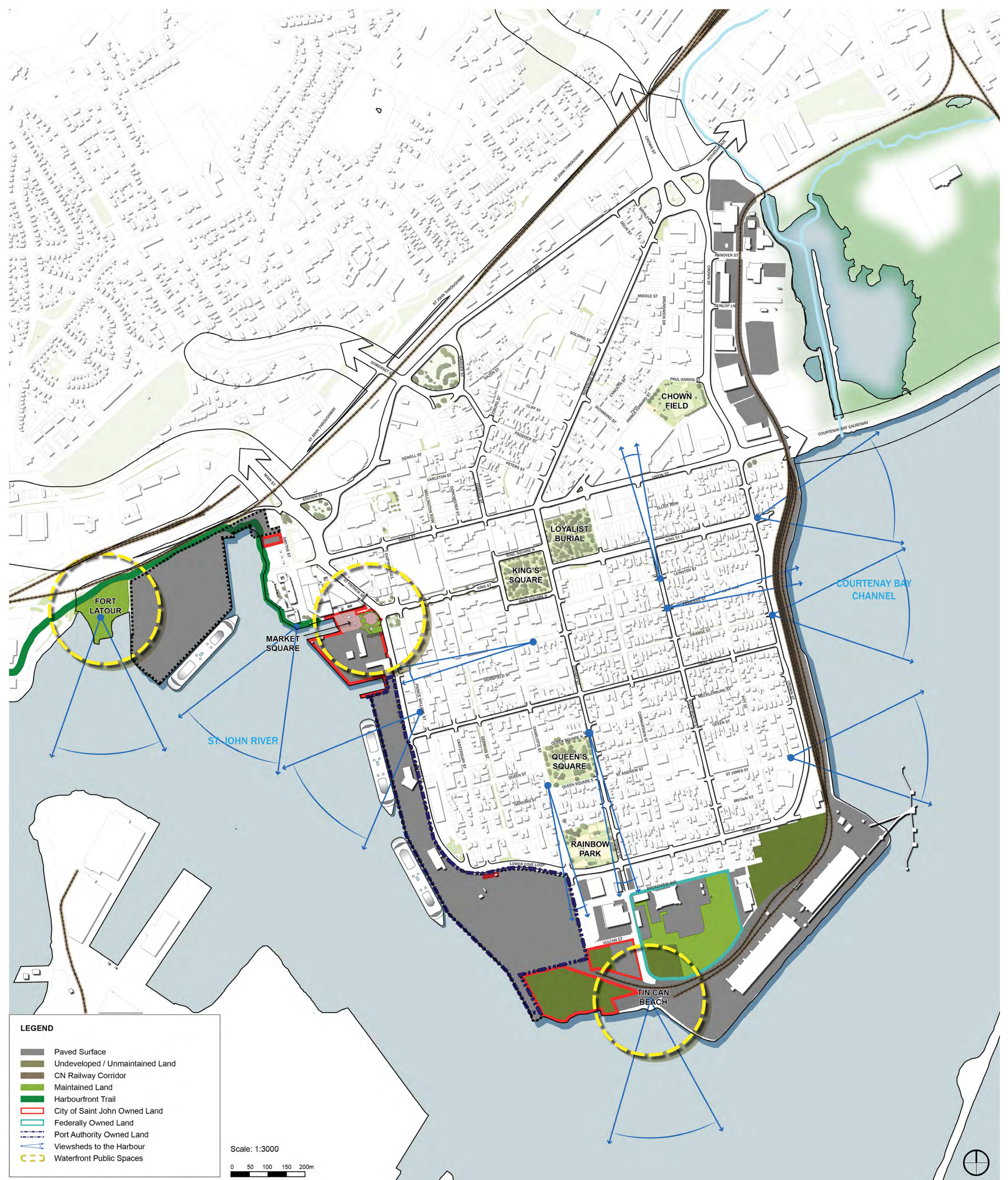
The Port of Saint John is the **fourth busiest in Canada**, handling more than **26.4 million tonnes** of cargo in 2016. Recently, Saint John has become an important port-of-call on the Canada-New England cruise arena. This year is the city's 29th cruise season; by November, 66 ships will have visited Saint John, bringing in 144,000 passengers and 58,000 crew members.

The economic importance of the port to the city, the province and region is clear, but working waterfronts also present challenges.

There is more than **5km of waterfront on the Central Peninsula**, but there are only a few places where it can be accessed. In fact, 80% of the waterfront is inaccessible to the public.

**Where on the Central Peninsula are there opportunities to experience the waterfront, either through active use, passive use, or simply enjoying the views?**

More than **1,000 cruise ships** have visited since 1989.



**80%**

of the waterfront is inaccessible to the public



**TAKING SHAPE**  
CENTRAL PENINSULA



**URBAN STRATEGIES INC.**

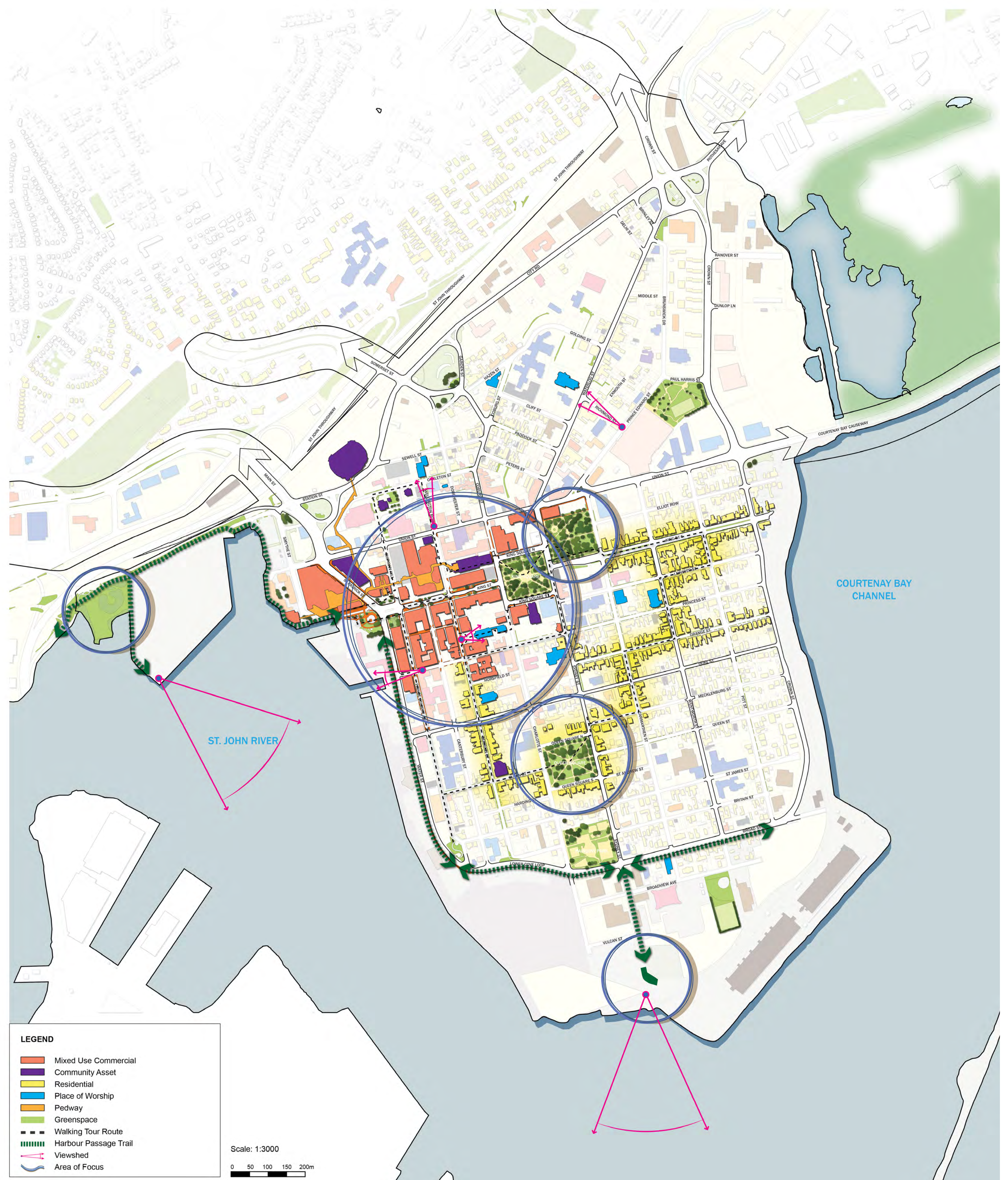


# KEY DESTINATIONS & EXPERIENCES

The Central Peninsula offers a diversity of experiences for both locals and visitors. This includes classical music at the Imperial Theatre, music festivals and other events on the waterfront, and walking tours through the peninsula's numerous heritage areas. In recent years, the Uptown Core has emerged as a trendy destination for shopping, dining, nightlife and entertainment, with more than 40 new bars, restaurants and studios opening in the past 7-8 years.

There are also many iconic views – views out to the Bay of Fundy, back to the city, and of historic buildings.

**What types of destinations and experiences are missing on the Central Peninsula? How can we enhance, draw attention to, or connect the key destinations and experiences that exist?**





# ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The Central Peninsula contains the greatest diversity and density of uses in the city, providing a wide range of opportunities to live, work, shop, and recreate.

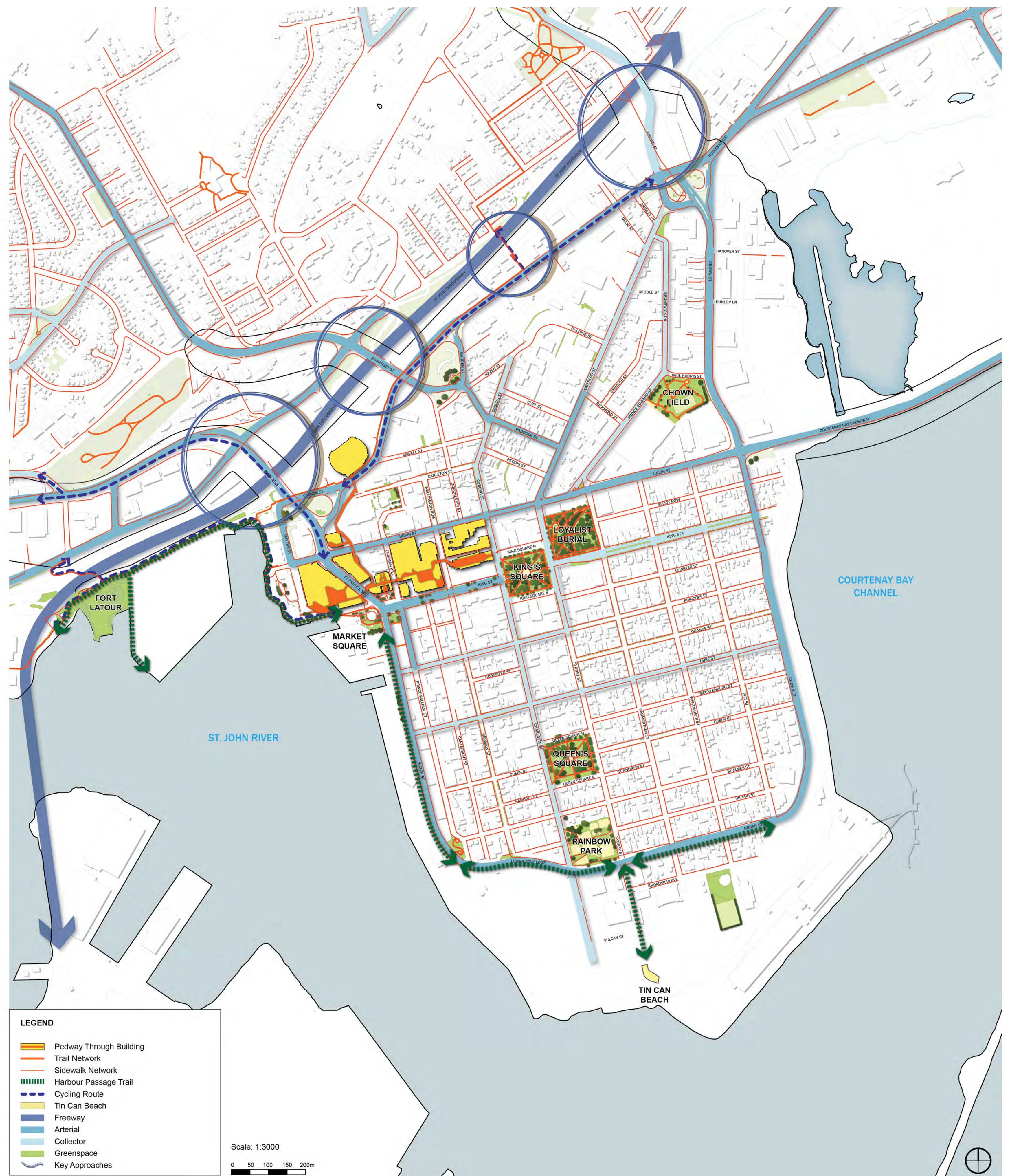
Density and mixed uses make it possible to move around the neighbourhood via active transportation.

**42% of the residents of the Central Peninsula walk or bicycle to work**, compared to only 7% of the broader city. Many more walk or cycle for recreation, making use of the peninsula's trails, sidewalks, Harbour Passage and bicycle lanes.

Though many people get around by foot and bicycle, the existing network of active transportation is incomplete.

Building on the existing network of active transportation would make it easier and more enjoyable for people who currently use it, and would attract new users. Better connections to the peninsula, for example, might encourage more people to commute to and from work.

**How can the peninsula's active transportation network be improved? Where are the best opportunities to create linkages in the network? What are the important destinations to connect? How do we improve integration with the rest of the City, including along Main Street?**



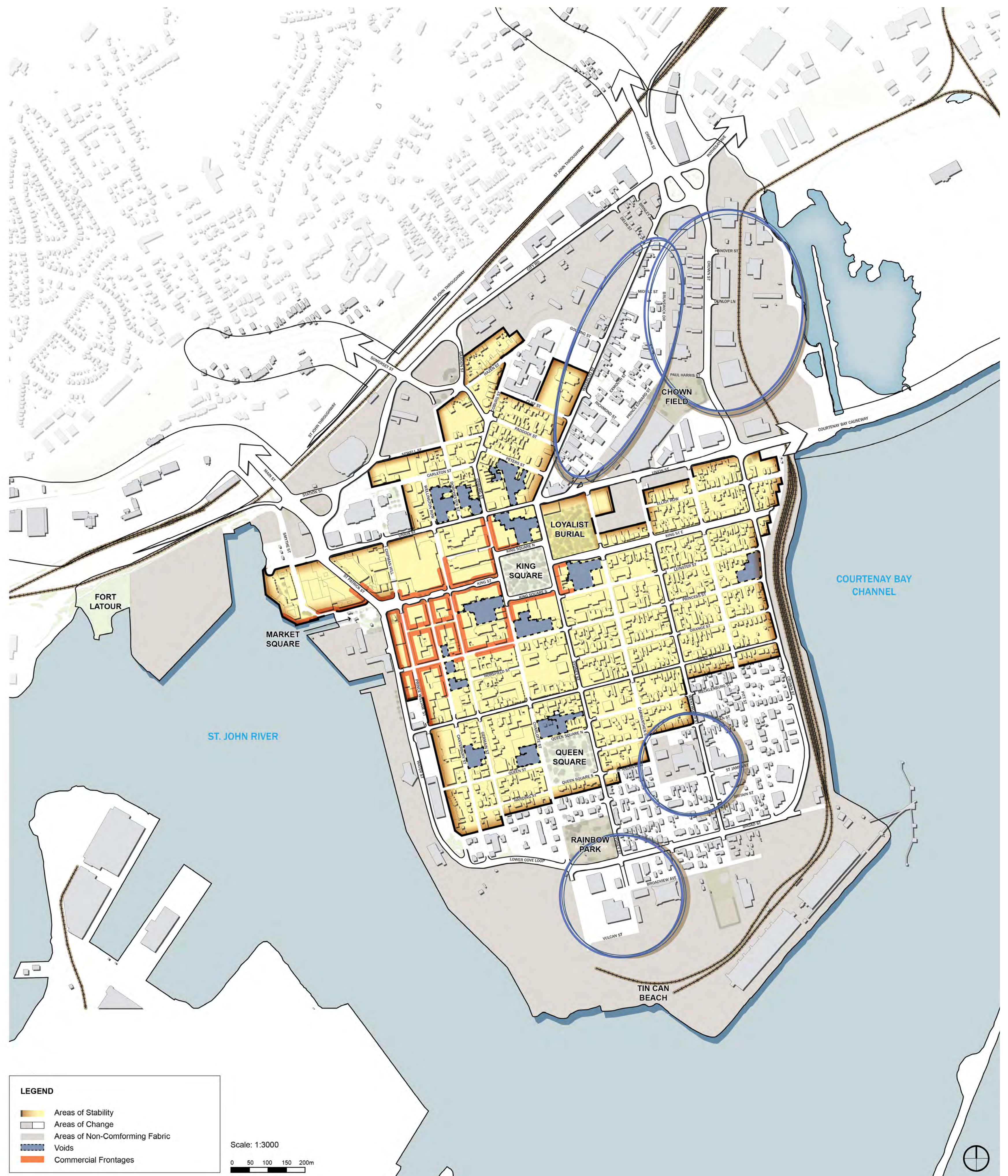


# GENERAL AREAS OF STABILITY AND CHANGE

Through the urban design analysis, general areas of stability and general areas of change have been identified.

General areas of stability are areas of the Central Peninsula where the urban fabric is largely intact and cohesive, and most of it was built before the Second World War. This doesn't mean that placemaking concepts won't focus on these areas. Within the general area of stability there are gaps and holes in the fabric that create infill and development opportunities. If developed in a manner that fits the adjacent context these areas can contribute to the enhanced character and vitality of the Central Peninsula's streets, squares and neighbourhoods.

General areas of change are the parts of the Central Peninsula where the urban fabric is largely not intact or cohesive. In some places, like along Waterloo Street, this is due to the number of vacant lots and derelict buildings. In other places, like along Crown Street, the fine grain nature of buildings and lots has been replaced with large format, suburban-style commercial and industrial buildings set within vast areas of surface parking. In the Deep South End, there are large areas of underutilized port and waterfront lands.





# PLACE-MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

These are the areas where new economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits to the Central Peninsula and city can be delivered through focused and intentional placemaking.

Some of these areas for placemaking are infill opportunities, such as around King's and Queen Square, and along the St. James Street Corridor, where infill will complete the missing urban fabric and add people and vitality to support the overall health of the peninsula. Others require a more comprehensive and long-term approach, such as Crown Street in Waterloo Village where the historic fabric was replaced with commercial and industrial uses. Over time, this area can be redeveloped as a mixed-use community with a renewed relationship to Marsh Creek, creating a whole range of public realm and recreational opportunities. Other areas, such as South Waterfront and Central Waterfront, have the potential to bring important new cultural and destination attractions to the city, and to support broad-based opportunities for economic growth, recreation, and city-building.

