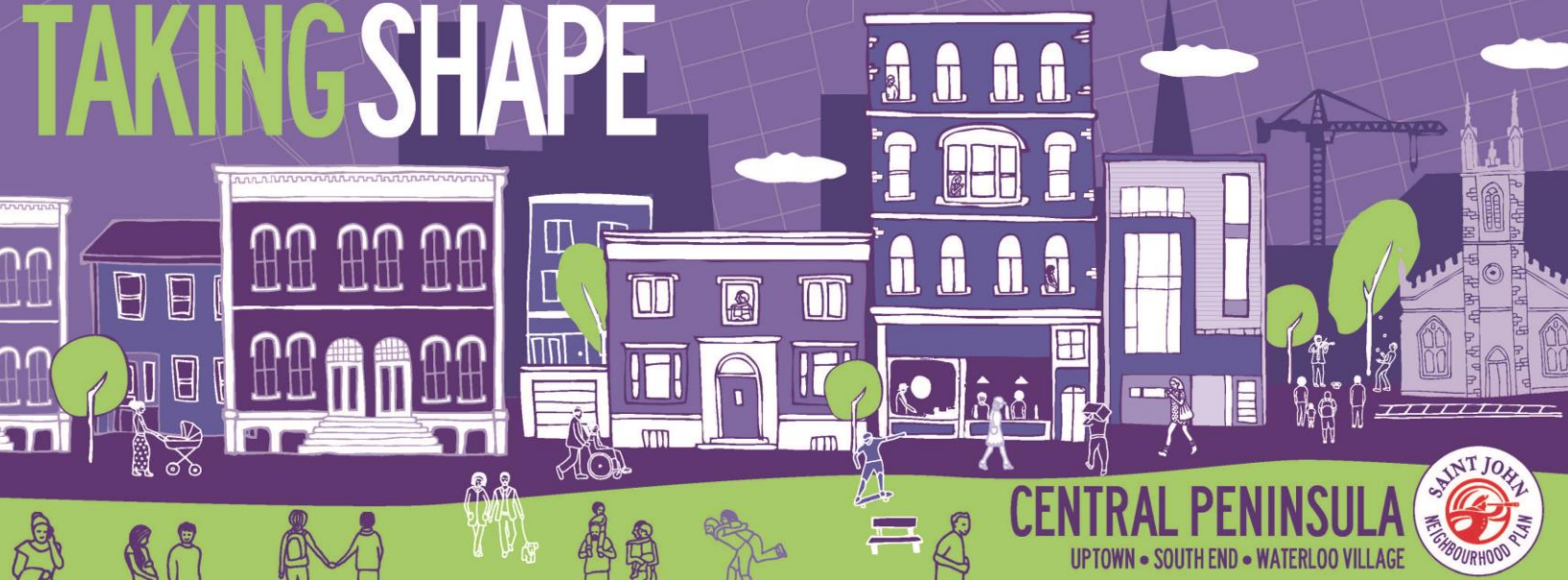


Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Action Strategy Options

November 23, 2017

TAKING SHAPE



CENTRAL PENINSULA
UPTOWN • SOUTH END • WATERLOO VILLAGE



Arts, Culture & Events



- 1. Establish the City of Saint John as a catalyst for new arts and culture initiatives that support neighbourhood vibrancy & revitalization**
 - a. Establish an arts and culture working group representing arts organizations, galleries, neighbourhood groups, and business.
 - b. Develop a 10 year arts and culture strategy for the Central Peninsula, with a focus on initiatives which support the revitalization of neighbourhoods
 - c. Review the Community Arts Funding Program guidelines to prioritize initiatives which align with the neighbourhood plan and the 10 year arts and culture strategy for the Central Peninsula
 - d. Develop strategies to use Uptown events to promote living in the Central Peninsula
- 2. Enhance the vibrancy of streets and public spaces through events and public art**
 - a. Identify prioritized sites for the placement of public art with an associated framework for selection and support of artists.
 - b. Develop an expedited “one stop” process for the closure of public streets for events in the Central Peninsula, including working with the Province of New Brunswick to simplify and integrate liquor licencing processes for festivals and events held in municipal rights-of-way.
 - c. Encourage more programming and events in public spaces such as King and Queens Squares.
 - d. Support the development of a street art festival.
 - e. Encourage community movie nights in public spaces.
- 3. Ensure that arts and cultural events are representative of the diverse population of Saint John**
 - a. Support the establishment of a youth arts, culture and events committee.
 - b. Support community groups in the organizing of more events and entertainment for youth.
 - c. Promote festivals that celebrate diversity, including the establishment of a multi-cultural festival.
- 4. Expand the cultural and event offerings of the Central Peninsula**
 - a. Establish an outdoor food festival.
 - b. Establish a Fall and Winter fair.
 - c. Establish a film festival for the Central Peninsula.



Clean and Safe



1. Aggressively target areas of significant blight and bring them up to a higher standard

- a. Establish a formal blight response program and implementation team to target key areas of decline with heightened enforcement and proactive service delivery. This could include coordination of the following services:
 - i. Municipal Incentive Programs
 - ii. Minimum Property Standards
 - iii. Vacant Buildings Program
 - iv. Unsightly Premises
 - v. Municipal Solid Waste Service
 - vi. Community Policing Program
 - vii. GNB SCAN Program
- b. Undertake a clean streets mapping program utilizing existing municipal service staff in the field.
- c. Evaluate the establishment of penalties for multiple offenders of illegal dumping.
- d. Support community organizations in building volunteer network of neighbourhood clean-up teams to support the cleaning of vacant lots and unsightly premises of owners with limited capacity to address the issue.
- e. Identify problem areas in the Central Peninsula for litter and dog waste and evaluate a pilot program to provide additional waste receptacles and publicly accessible dog waste bags.
- f. Evaluate the feasibility of a large item drop off bin in the South End.
- g. Partner with Uptown Saint John on the purchase of a sidewalk cleaning vehicle.
- h. Evaluate opportunities to improve existing garbage receptacles in problem areas

2. Improve Safety in Parks and on Streets

- a. Improve Lighting in Chown Field
- b. Review pedestrian Snow Plowing Routes
- c. Evaluate the installation of security cameras in high crime areas or in accordance with strategic blight targeting initiatives.
- d. Support the installation of needle drop-off boxes in strategic locations within the Central Peninsula.

3. Leveraging community relationships with law enforcement

- a. Promote the use of GNB SCAN Program in the Central Peninsula.
- b. Evaluate the establishment of a Police Athletic League



Community Well Being



1. Support the development of a stable supply of affordable housing for residents of the Central Peninsula

- a. Encourage the Government of New Brunswick to establish a pilot project to evaluate a housing allowance program as a housing model for the future.
- b. Work with community partners, housing agencies, the Government of New Brunswick, and the Federal Government to develop an aggressive affordable housing strategy for the Central Peninsula, in coordination with municipal blight response programs.
- c. Encourage the creation and adaptation of spaces and services for seniors and an aging population.
- d. Advocate for enhanced Provincial and Federal funding, services and programs to support homeless populations.
- e. Provide support for affordable housing development projects currently in the planning phases.

2. Advocate for educational services which support the social development and revitalization of neighbourhoods

- a. Encourage and support the Government of New Brunswick in identifying a location for the development of a new school in the South End.
- b. Work with the Government of New Brunswick to ensure that the design of a new school positively contributes to the local context and enhances the profile of the South End.
- c. Work with the Government of New Brunswick and Community Partners to ensure that the development of a new school is collocated with the additional community facilities required to meet the unique needs of the Central Peninsula.
- d. Work with the Government of New Brunswick to coordinate recreational and playground facilities with the development of a new School.
- e. Prioritize municipal programs, services and initiatives to maximize the revitalizing impact and benefits of the development of a new school in the South End.

3. Facilitate and support greater access to fresh, healthy and affordable food

- a. Work with existing grocers in the Central Peninsula to expand healthy food options and to better coordinate communication to all neighbourhood residents.
- b. Promote community-stewarded open spaces for use as community gardens and for urban agriculture
- c. Undertake a healthy corner stores feasibility study and pilot project
- d. Support community stakeholders regarding increasing food security on the central



peninsula through such means as advocating for a Community Food Centre

- e. Work with grocery store chains to better understand market requirements for the establishment of an urban format grocery store.
- 4. Support community partners in ensuring that the needs of residents are met**
- a. Evaluate the existing community group roles and structures and consider adaptations to align with and support the implementation of the neighbourhood plan.
 - b. Evaluate the community grants program to prioritize initiatives that implement key facets of the neighbourhood plan.
 - c. Promote development of South End Wellness Centre

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Environment



- 1. Promote and incorporate green infrastructure into municipal infrastructure and new development**
 - a. Evaluate options to incorporate low maintenance, green infrastructure in street design; explore removal of asphalt sidewalks to soften hard surfaces; and, create inventory of asphalt sidewalks.
 - b. Work with community organizations to build capacity to contribute to maintenance of green street infrastructure.
 - c. Promote the development of rain gardens in targeted areas of the Peninsula to reduce storm water runoff to municipal infrastructure.
 - d. Encourage the greening of rooftops for new development and redevelopment projects.
- 2. Prepare for the impacts of Climate Change on the Central Peninsula**
 - a. Support ACAP Saint John in undertaking climate change and sea level rise modeling for the Central Peninsula.
 - b. Adapt land use and development regulations to mitigate the long term potential impacts of sea level rise.
- 3. Pursue a mix of both short and long term site specific strategies for the remediation of high profile contaminated sites in the Central Peninsula**
 - a. The Coast Guard Site is envisioned as a short and medium term development opportunity. Feasibility of the use of new on-site remediation technologies should be explored, in addition to evaluating opportunities for commercial development on slab.
 - b. The coastal portions of the Sugar Refinery site will be naturalized with passive recreational uses providing access to the waterfront. This may require the placement of fill material where “hot spots” of heavy metal contamination exist. Opportunities to leverage external partnerships with community partner organizations should be explored to accelerate the reuse of the site. The rear portion of the site will be evaluated for potential long term naturalized remediation techniques such as urban orchards or urban forestry, with the potential for commercial recreation facilities to be constructed on slab.
 - c. The Imperial Oil site will be evaluated as a potential site for long term, natural remediation techniques. Techniques such as installing urban orchards or urban reforestation should be explored to provide additional buffering of the South End from port industrial facilities.
 - d. Support ACAP Saint John in their efforts to remediate Marsh Creek, with the goal of establishing recreational infrastructure on site.



Growth



1. Aggressively facilitate the Development of Vacant lots

- a. Develop a strategic real estate program and evaluate tools such as property assembly and expropriation of vacant property to support the development of the Central Peninsula.
- b. Push for legislation reform to support the establishment of an arms-length municipal Land Bank Corporation.
- c. Evaluate opportunities to adopt provisions for 12 Storey Wood Frame Construction & aggressively market the current provisions to encourage the development of six storey wood frame buildings.
- d. Continue advocacy for a Tax Increment Financing Program
- e. Identify, promote and incent key demonstration projects in slow growth areas of the peninsula.
- f. Develop a growth focused, infrastructure reinvestment strategy for the Central Peninsula.
- g. Evaluate further reductions to parking requirements for Infill development projects.
- h. Work with Provincial and Federal government departments to identify opportunities for infill development on government land.
- i. Advocate for Provincial funding or support for the remediation of key environmentally contaminated sites.
- j. Work with the Province of New Brunswick to establish disincentives to land speculation through the provincial taxation system.
- k. Evaluate the relocation of Barbours General Store and the potential development of a high quality, mixed use building.
- l. Evaluate the relocation of the Smythe Street electrical substation and pursuit of a high quality mixed use, waterfront development project.
- m. Review and revise existing development incentive programs to align with key priorities of the Central Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Adopt new, and build existing programs to facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic building stock

- a. Evaluate opportunities to ease regulations and to reduce costs for adaptive reuse projects.
- b. Evaluate opportunities to enhance the Vacant Building Program with the goal of identifying and piloting new features to further support the stabilization of neighbourhoods.
- c. Work with the Province of New Brunswick to encourage the extension of the Heritage Property Tax Abatement program to properties with municipal heritage designation only.
- d. Work with the Province of New Brunswick to encourage the development of a bridge financing program to provide low interest, short term loans for the development of vacant buildings which have been “red lined” by private market lending.

3. Explore opportunities to enhance Capacity to Improve the commercial offerings of the Central Peninsula

- a. Evaluate the existing boundaries of the Uptown Saint John BIA to incorporate targeted commercial growth areas identified by the neighbourhood plan and Plan SJ.
- b. Prepare an Uptown commercial market study and associated recruitment strategy to address gaps in the offerings of the Uptown



- c. Establish a commercial rent subsidy or lease abatement program to incentivize the establishment of gap businesses in the Uptown.
 - d. Establish a commercial matching and incubation program.
 - e. Develop & maintain an inventory of commercial leasing opportunities to market to both local entrepreneurs and external companies.
4. **Promote the Central Peninsula as a Great Place to Live**
- a. Undertake a residential market study to identify gaps and opportunities in the housing market.
 - b. Establish an employer live where you work program for Uptown businesses.
 - c. Evaluate emerging noise issues in mixed-use areas of the Uptown Core for possible solutions to support coexistence of residential and entertainment uses. This could include:
 - i. The establishment of high decibel entertainment use zoning district overlays
 - ii. Enhanced soundproofing requirements for high decibel commercial uses;
 - iii. Enhanced sound proofing requirements for residential development
 - iv. Enhanced flexibility for windows and other materials for non-street facades of heritage buildings.
 - d. Encourage Provincial and Federal governments to prioritize the promotion urban living, active and public transportation and to provide less free parking
5. **Attract new or encourage the expansion of knowledge based industries to the Central Peninsula**
- a. Build upon the Brick Park initiative by undertaking an Uptown office strategy to address high office vacancy rates.
 - b. Work with the Province to develop a targeted industry incentive program to attract corporate branch offices or headquarters to Saint John.
 - c. Explore expansion of St. Joseph's Health Care Services Cluster.
 - d. Promote the establishment of a joint NBCC/UNBSJ information technology facility in the Uptown and integrate programming with the Brick Park knowledge cluster.
 - e. Encourage Federal and Provincial departments to locate key offices and facilities in the Central Peninsula.
6. **Increase visitor traffic and spending in the Central Peninsula**
- a. Support the implementation with Uptown Saint John's way finding and coordinate with municipal streetscaping efforts to draw more visitors to the commercial core of the Uptown.
 - b. Prepare a waterfront oriented tourism strategy to capitalize on future investments in waterfront development.



Heritage & Urban Design



- 1. Encourage new development that is complementary to and respectful of the distinct character of the Central Peninsula**
 - a. Adopt precinct specific urban design guidelines for the Central Peninsula.
 - b. Adopt a design review committee by-law and establish a formal design review committee.
 - c. Develop precinct specific infill design guidelines for heritage context development and remove the Central Peninsula from the applicable areas of the Heritage By-law infill guidelines.
- 2. Establish a balanced approach to heritage conservation and urban design that adapts to unique circumstances of all the Central Peninsula's Neighbourhoods**
 - a. Amend the Heritage Conservation Areas by-law to introduce new provisions to provide additional flexibility. This should include but not be limited to:
 - Evaluating options for incorporating new technologies and materials
 - Flexibility for rear and side facades which are not visible from the street
 - Non-Contributing buildings
 - b. Establish a design framework which provides new standards for existing buildings outside of Heritage Conservation Areas addressing basic elements of building design such as fenestration, architectural detailing, materials and more.
 - c. Establish design guidelines for areas adjacent to heritage conservation areas.
 - d. Evaluate opportunities to amend the Heritage Conservation Areas By-law to strengthen provisions with respect to demolition.
 - e. Evaluate the expansion of the Heritage Conservation Areas By-law to important landmarks currently situated outside of the Heritage area.
- 3. Build community capacity around urban design and heritage conservation**
 - a. Develop a set of public information materials related to heritage, urban design and new features adopted in accordance with neighbourhood plan.
 - b. Work with the Heritage Development Board and existing heritage community groups to expand public education regarding the City's heritage and urban design programs.
 - c. Work with educational institutions to encourage expanded programming to train the skilled tradesmen necessary for the continued conservation of Saint John's built heritage.
- 4. Celebrate the cities built heritage & Communicate Changes to the Program**
 - a. Undertake a public education campaign to communicate the value of the City's updated heritage and design program to the general public and the development community.



Open Spaces, Parks, and Recreation



- 1. Realize full potential of existing parks and open spaces**
 - a. Complete the redevelopment of Rainbow Park.
 - b. Improve entrances to parks and open spaces.
 - c. Work with the Province of New Brunswick to evaluate a pilot project to selectively permit wine and beer in association with food in Queens Square during select daytime hours on Saturday.
- 2. Expand and enhance parks and recreation offerings**
 - a. Improve access to existing parks in the South Waterfront.
 - b. Increase recreational opportunities in the South Waterfront.
 - c. Support recreational opportunities along Marsh Creek.
 - d. Expand waterfront recreation opportunities.
- 3. Promote pocket parks, mobile parks and parkettes**
 - a. Evaluate opportunities to establish pocket Parks, parkettes, and pop up parks in both the South End and Waterloo Village as part of a coordinated strategy to revitalize neighbourhoods.
 - b. Sponsor design competitions for the repurposing of vacant properties in the Central Peninsula.
 - c. Evaluate the potential of establishing a mobile or travelling pop-up park
 - d. Participate in the Park(ing) Day event, temporarily converting parking spaces into public spaces.
 - e. Support the establishment and growth of urban horticultural groups and the development of more community gardens;
 - f. Build on the City's Green Machine initiative to support community garden and initiatives to green vacant lots.



Public Realm, Mobility and Infrastructure



- 1. Pursue the greening of the public realm through both public and private sector initiatives.**
 - a. Work with community partners to develop an urban forestry policy to guide tree planting on Central Peninsula Streets.
 - b. Where suitable infrastructure exists, pursue a street tree planting program to enhance streetscapes within the Central Peninsula.
 - c. Evaluate options to enhance programs to encourage and incentivize street level box planters and window box planters within the Trinity Royal area of the BIA.
 - d. Develop a “Street Seats” program to allow businesses to reclaim portions of the street right-of-way for flexible “green” patios, framed by box planters & greenery.
 - e. Explore potential for the establishment of crowd-funding and sponsorship programs for greening projects.
- 2. Foster the development of an active an engaging public realm.**
 - a. Identify opportunity streets to pursue a shared streets model. Facilitate public use and private sector encroachment into the public right of way.
 - b. Undertake infrastructure improvements to enhance shared streets when existing infrastructure reaches its end of life cycle.
 - c. Identify opportunities for the piloting of permanent or seasonal pedestrian streets as a future enhancement option for shared streets.
 - d. Improve street level access to the City Market (Germain Street) to include outdoor patio space and pedestrianization of the south laneway.
 - e. Undertake a strategic plan for the Saint John City Market.
- 3. Address aging and infrastructure in the Central Peninsula.**
 - a. Through the City's Asset Management Program, identify key local streets that require immediate lifecycle reinvestment.
 - b. Identify a hierarchy of streets on the Central Peninsula which considers land use, density, activity and historical and cultural significance.
 - c. Adopt a complete streets strategy to ensure all modes of transportation are considered in future infrastructure improvements.
 - d. Prioritize important streets for additional streetscape improvements including such items as hardscaping, street furniture, landscaping and the burying of utilities.
 - e. Pursue the enhancement of important gateways entering the City.



4. Enhance functional features of the public realm.

- a. Encourage awnings and weather protective elements along ground level street facades.
- b. Evaluate existing public gathering spaces have infrastructure to identify additional infrastructure needs such as water, power, and lighting to support both enhanced programming and public safety.
- c. Consider accessibility and mobility when undertaking work in the right of way.
- d. Develop a Winter Strategy as part of Neighbourhood Plan (parking, snow clearing, recreation).

5. Encourage the development of a pedestrian focused waterfront.

- a. Work with Port Saint John to enhance the use of cruise ship terminal areas and their relationship to the public right of way.
- b. Work with Port Saint John to enhance access to the waterfront and to identify design solutions to maintain safety while increasing the attractiveness of the waterfront.
- c. Identify and evaluate opportunities to improve public amenities along harbour passage, including functional improvements such as washrooms.

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Transportation and Parking



1. Strengthen the Active Transportation Network

- a. Evaluate opportunities to undertake “road diets” and infrastructure enhancements for the following public streets:
 - i. Union Street
 - ii. Water Street
 - iii. Broad Street
 - iv. Crown Street
- b. Establish a clear network of bicycle lanes through the Central Peninsula.
- c. Connect the harbour passage to Tin Can Beach.
- d. Connect the Harbour Passage to Rockwood Park.
- e. Evaluate the need for additional crosswalks and pedestrian crossing areas in the South End and Waterloo Village.

2. Improve connectivity between the Central Peninsula and adjacent neighbourhoods

- a. Encourage the government of New Brunswick to develop a short term strategy to convert 2 lanes of Main Street to Active Transportation lanes.
- b. Encourage the Government of New Brunswick to evaluate the redevelopment of Main Street.
- c. Encourage the Government of New Brunswick to evaluate potential improvements to the pedestrian overpass to the North End.
- d. Encourage the Government of New Brunswick to evaluate for short term enhancements to route 1 overpass infrastructure to add basic facilities such as crosswalks and pedestrian crossing lights.
- e. Encourage the Government of New Brunswick to evaluate options to enhance active transportation infrastructure along the Somerset & Rockwood Park Overpasses and the Causeway connecting to the east side.
- f. Evaluate the potential of a Ferry Service to Lower West Side.

3. Improve the efficiency of parking and increase usage of public transit

- a. Evaluate program options to improve parking efficiency in the Uptown and ensure that parking lease rates are in line with parking space utilization. This should include consideration of current parking fees.
- b. Enhance public education and wayfinding campaign to better inform the public of strategic parking areas in the Uptown.
- c. Improve signage and communications on the summer switch over program for on street parking.
- d. Evaluate options to expand on existing park and ride program to limit the land use impact of surface parking in the Central Peninsula.



- e. Evaluate opportunities to improve public transit connections between intensification areas and municipal parks.
 - f. Evaluate opportunities to improve public transit connections to the South End.
 - g. Monitor and evaluate the development of new technologies such as driverless and electric cars to assess their impact on the transportation network.
 - h. Improve online mapping and information on parking options in the Central Peninsula.
 - i. Evaluate options for a cash-in-lieu of parking program.
 - j. Work with employers to promote car sharing.
- 4. Evaluate opportunities to improve existing transportation infrastructure to improve efficiency and address safety concerns**
- a. Evaluate and improve the condition of pedestrian infrastructure along and connecting important public spaces.
 - b. Improve sidewalks on Water and Broad Street to improve connections to Harbour Passage
 - c. Evaluate the need for pedestrian lights at key intersections along Union Street.
 - d. Explore improvements to enhance pedestrian use at the intersection of Crown and Union Streets.
 - e. Evaluate options for traffic calming on both Garden and Paddock Streets.

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