Fredericton city centre plan

1. Introduction to the Study & Process
2. Consultation Outcomes
3. Background Overview
4. Successful Downtowns & their Benefits
5. Observations from a ‘Fresh Eyes’ Perspective
Introduction to the Study & Process
Project Management:
City of Fredericton
Downtown Fredericton Inc.

Consultant Team:
The Planning Partnership
Planning, Urban Design, Landscape Architecture & Communications

Poulos Chung
Transportation Planners & Engineers
Goal:
Prepare a comprehensive City Centre Plan update & Urban Design Plan

Key Objectives:

• Create a vision and urban design framework for the Downtown that will aid future decision-making;

• Improve accessibility for all users, including pedestrians, cycling, transit and traffic;

• Enhance tourism initiatives;

• Ensure social issues and services are taken into account;

• Review current character areas;

• Strengthen connectivity with the riverfront;

• Create a City Centre that demonstrates design excellence in built form, public realm and sustainability.
Introduction to the Study & Process
**Introduction to the Study & Process**

**PHASE 1: PROJECT REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**
- Development and Implementation of the Communication Strategy & Project Branding
- Base Mapping and Policy Background Review
- Review of Studies, Policies and By-Laws

**PHASE 2: ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONCEPTUAL VISIONING**
- Trip One (Week 5):
  - Steering Committee Meeting
  - Preparation for Vision Workshop
- Trip Two (Week 10):
  - SWOC Analysis Report Preparation and Distribution
  - Walk & Talk Site Tour with Public and Stakeholders
  - Steering Committee Meetings, Presentation & Debriefing
- Trip Three (Week 15):
  - Development Committee, City Council & Public Stakeholder Meetings as necessary

**PHASE 3: DRAFT AND FINAL REPORT OF CITY CENTRE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT OF DETAILED URBAN DESIGN PLAN AND STREETSCAPE PALETTE**
- Prepare Presentation
- Trip Four (Week 19):
  - Final Presentation
- Prepare Summary Brochure for Web and Public Meeting
- Prepare Draft Consolidated City Centre Plan (Week 24):
  - Vision for City Centre
  - City Centre Plan Update
  - City Centre Urban Design Plan
  - Implementation Strategy and Plan
- Development Committee, City Council & Stakeholder Meetings on Implementation
- Present Draft City Centre Master Plan
- Finalize Master Plan Report Summary Brochure
- Development of Proposed Amendments to the City Centre Plan and Zoning By-Law
- Public Stakeholder Presentation

**DELRIVERABLES**
- Web Newsletter
- SWOC Analysis for Downtown Fredericton Report
- Draft Consolidated City Centre Plan
- Web Newsletter
- Final City Centre Plan Update and Urban Design Plan

**STUDY PROCESS**

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*we are here*
# Introduction to the Study & Process

## City Centre Plan Headquarters

**Address:**
620 Queen Street

**Feel Free to Drop in Any Time!**

### Workshop Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday, September 23rd</th>
<th>Tuesday, September 24th</th>
<th>Wednesday, September 25th</th>
<th>Thursday, September 26th</th>
<th>Friday, September 27th</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session</td>
<td>Project Management Meeting debrief and next steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Harold on CBC Radio @ 6:30am</td>
<td>Guiding Frameworks - circulation, open spaces, built form</td>
<td>Public Realm and Built Form Concepts</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>All depart - noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>RM, RC Arrive - 11:15am</td>
<td>Meeting w/ Police Chief @ Police Station</td>
<td>Meeting w/ DSPC (developers) @ HQ</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>HM, DL, IM, JD Arrive - 11:15am</td>
<td>Steering Committee Lunch Meeting (work to date @ HQ)</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Big Moves &amp; Guiding Principles</td>
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<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
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<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Meeting w/ Key Stakeholders @ Convention Plaza</td>
<td>Public Walk 'n' Talk Site Tour</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session</td>
<td>Meeting w/ Janice Legace (Parking Officer) @ HQ</td>
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<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Study Area tour</td>
<td>Consultant Team Working Session: Public Realm and Built Form concepts, Implementation</td>
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<td>Consultant Team Working Session: Public Realm and Built Form concepts, Implementation</td>
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<td>3:00 PM</td>
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<td>Meeting w/ Fire Chief @ HQ</td>
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<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Set-up Headquarters (HQ)</td>
<td>Meeting w/ Tim Derbary, Fortis Properties (Kings Plaza) @ HQ</td>
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<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Set-up for Council Meeting</td>
<td>Set-up for Public Meeting</td>
<td>Public Drop-in Viewing to review work to date 5-7pm</td>
<td>Set-up for Public Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00-9:00 PM</td>
<td>Council Meeting: Overview Presentation - until 7pm</td>
<td>Public Meeting 1: Kick-off presentations &amp; Reviewing Workshop</td>
<td>Public Meeting 2: Workshop outcomes</td>
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### Key Public Events
Fredericton city centre plan

1  Consultation Outcomes
key ideas, issues and themes raised in our initial consultation with stakeholders

Met with key stakeholders June 17-19, including:

• Mayor Brad Woodside
• City Centre Steering Committee
• Fredericton Heritage Trust
• Downtown Fredericton Inc.
• Fredericton Chamber of Commerce
• Community and Social Services (NB Non-Profit Housing Association, Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, UNB Community Health Clinic)
Public Realm

- The City Centre is disconnected from the riverfront
- Opportunities for more active, continuous & creative programming of public spaces
- Streetscaping requires comprehensive & consistent approach
Consultation Outcomes

Circulation

• **Cultural expectations** that parking be readily available & free

• Transformation of Regent & Westmorland Streets into **thoroughfares** have adversely impacted public realm & businesses

• Sense that transportation/engineering plays a **disproportionate role in decisions** impacting the public realm
Land Use

• There is a younger generation of residents open to downtown lifestyle & living

• The City Centre could benefit from a centralized health centre that could share space with affordable housing, UNB & retail

• An increase in the number of residents would contribute to the area’s vitality
Arts and Culture

- Desire for more cultural attractions & events

- Better coordinate between cultural institutions and events to create a robust cultural scene/hub – ie. Garrison District

- Cultural Plan & Playhouse’s Needs Assessment studies should be closely linked & coordinated with the City Centre Plan
Built form, Heritage & Development:

• Existing heritage stock is important but is often neglected

• Significant areas are occupied by surface parking lots

• Need for greater emphasis on achieving good urban design & architectural excellence

• Development has been directed outside of the City Centre at the expense of the area’s vitality.
Fredericton city centre plan

1. Background Overview
Some of the key documents reviewed include:

- Capital City Pedestrian Crossing Study (2012)
- Fredericton Southside Riverfront Development Draft Plan (2011)
- Downtown Fredericton Inc Annual Plan (2011)
- Capital City Traffic Study Update (2010)
- East End Traffic Study (2008)
- Recreation Master Plan (2008)
- In-service Road Safety Review (2008)
- Trails and Bikeways Master Plan (2007)
- Downtown Parking Strategy (2002)
- City Centre Plan (1997)
- Fredericton Tourism Strategy
- Fredericton Municipal Plan & Zoning By-law
Land Uses

Pedestrian Circulation

Vehicular Circulation

Cycling Network

Transit Network

Environmental

EXISTING & EMERGING CONDITIONS
Fredericton city centre plan

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Successful Downtowns & their Benefits
The success and health of downtowns have broad and far-reaching social, economic and environmental benefits to cities.
Advancing Sustainable Growth Objectives

- appropriate for intensification to counter sprawl & congestion
- promotes the efficient & effective use of existing resources & infrastructure
Nurturing Civic Life

- central location for concentrating civic spaces & amenities
- forum for community-wide interaction and for cultivating civic pride
3 Accommodating Diversity and Choice

- ensuring life-long and complete communities
- accommodating tremendous variety and choices for diverse population needs, lifestyles and life-stages

Successful Downtowns & their Benefits

7 KEY BENEFITS OF SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWNS
Heritage and Cultural Amenity

- heritage and cultural resources lend to a ‘sense of place’
- this attracts and retains youth, creative industries and visitors
Community Identity, Image and Profile

- makes a lasting impression for visitors
- often a measure of a community’s history, accomplishment, economic health, quality of life, values and aspirations
6 Independent Business and Incubators

- Unique formats, mix, variety and density attracts and flourishes creative and small-scale independent businesses and start-ups
Economic Development and The Bottom Line

• healthy downtowns can generate tourism, enhance real estate value, generate spending activity, attract investments, increase tax assessments, and revitalize neighbourhoods

• a recent CUI report on Canadian downtowns noted that despite occupying as little as 1% of land area, downtowns attract 10 to 20 times that in contributions to the assessment base and property tax revenues of cities

7 KEY BENEFITS OF SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWNS
Shared attributes of outstanding small and mid-sized downtowns

Comprehensive research conducted in 2005 for Cornell University.

Eleven Cities Identified as having national reputations for successful downtowns:

- State College, PA
- Burlington, VT
- Providence, RI
- Northampton, MA
- Portland, ME
- Madison, WI
- Ann Arbor, MI
- Boulder, CO
- Charlottesville, VA
- Chapel Hill, NC
- Wooster, OH

12 CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL
1. No Single **Organizational Model** Exists
2. They have **Multiple traffic generators** within short **walking distance**
3. They are **Beloved by citizenry**
4. They have been and are continuing to **overcome challenges and obstacles**
5. They are **walkable** and are scaled for the pedestrian
6. They have a commitment to **mixed use** development
7. There is broad **public/private investment** in their future
8. Nature of downtown **retailing appears to be in flux**
9. **Entertainment** is a driving market segment
10. There are **adjacent residential neighborhoods** within walking distances
11. Downtown **housing** is prevalent or underway
12. **Universities** help but are not the sole answer

12 CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL
Leverage Distinct Assets & Connect the Dots – know your ‘sense of place’ & link multiple attractors to stimulate foot traffic
2 Make pedestrians the top priority – downtowns are primarily experienced on foot
Friendly and/or Alternative Policies, Standards, Permits & Incentives – acknowledge the unique complexity & challenges of the Downtown
Make it about a Sustainable Growth Strategy – repopulate & intensify for efficient & effective use of existing infrastructure, services & amenities
Use Public Investments to Lead & Generate Private Investments – show confidence & commitment in the Downtown
6. Don’t Compromise Vision & Expect False Starts – don’t do what is easy, do what is right even if it takes time

7. Measure Downtown Performance to Empower Decision-Makers – put in place metrics & promote wins

8. Remember that Success Takes Cooperation & Long-Term Commitment

8 FACTORS FOR DOWNTOWN SUCCESS
Observations from a ‘Fresh Eyes’ Perspective

Fredericton city centre plan

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The City Centre is relatively healthy, vibrant, appealing and successful – but there are a number of key opportunities for improvements, change and progress.
Some transportation infrastructure and ‘improvements’ are at odds with factors for Downtown success and can often serve as barriers – too fast, too big, too many and too mean.

Ste Annes Point Drive
More can be done to cultivate and nurture an active transportation culture – need to make walking, transit or cycling an easier, safer, more convenient and appealing choice.
Outdated parking structure designs, surface lots and blank walls undermine the quality of the public realm and the pedestrian experience.

King St
There are significant ‘gaps’ that need to be filled to ensure a critical mass of activity, connectivity and sense of enclosure.
The quality and standards of streetscapes varies greatly from block to block and street to street.
Observations from a Fresh Eyes Perspective

Much of the Downtown turns its back on the riverfront – underutilized, disconnected, under-programmed, uninviting and overly ‘suburban’ in character
Observations from a Fresh Eyes Perspective

There are multiple attractors in the City Centre but they tend to be either clustered or isolated with weak connections between them.
Where the City Centre begins and ends is mostly unclear.
The scale and extent of commercial development on the periphery is somewhat troubling.
The City Centre has great ‘bones’ and successes to draw on for planning and guiding change.
There are numerous key existing and inherent assets to protect, reinforce, celebrate and/or promote in the City Centre.
A stunningly beautiful natural setting – in a green valley on a grand river
A capital city and regional centre
A ‘smart’ and ‘creative’ city - with strong academic, health, innovation and IT sectors
Extraordinary heritage resources and prominent landmarks

Officer’s Square

10 KEY ASSETS TO LEVERAGE
International calibre cultural attractions, venues and events
Observations from a Fresh Eyes Perspective

Queen Street – an intact, appealing, walkable, vibrant and nationally recognized Downtown environment

Check out Queen Street – voted Canada’s Great Street!

10 KEY ASSETS TO LEVERAGE
Successful high quality, mixed-use, dense developments – other comparable downtowns struggle to attract market residential
Stable and desirable neighbourhoods within walking distance – 8,000 residents in the Residential Town Plat
A significant post-secondary presence & student population
A friendly, proud, engaged and supportive citizenry
There are a number of key points to consider in the planning, design and guiding of the future City Centre.
Traffic and parking ‘inconveniences’ are relative, often perceived, will persist and are the hallmarks of successful downtowns – You don’t have a traffic or parking problem and overcoming these perceptions is in large part about making the City Centre great enough to make such perceived tradeoffs worthwhile.
Observations from a Fresh Eyes Perspective

Strengthen retailing by leveraging the novelty and charm of the ‘main street experience’, while providing modern comforts - human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented, variety, and local, supported by seating, washrooms, coordinated hours, festivals and events.

Queen Street

10 KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD
Strengthen retailing by leveraging the novelty and charm of the ‘main street experience’, while providing modern comforts - human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented, variety, and local, supported by seating, washrooms, coordinated hours, festivals and events.
Ensure ‘complete’, ‘life-long’, appealing and identifiable City Centre ‘neighbourhoods’ to attract a diverse and robust residential population – variety of types and tenures, amenities, services, and sense of security
Reconnect the City Centre with the river presents an opportunity to ‘complete’ the grid and to create an urban waterfront neighbourhood and destination.
New traffic generators and attractions are catalytic opportunities and should be strategically located – not too close and not too far, but mostly to the north and west.
Be proactive in harnessing and guiding opportunities for retrofitting or redeveloping non-compatible built conditions, as well as attracting new cultural, institutional and mixed-use development.
Observations from a Fresh Eyes Perspective

Strengthening historical, physical and visual connections can further attract and stimulate foot traffic; reinforce cultural hubs and character areas; and, revitalize areas in need – wayfinding, interpretive signage, streetscaping, public art, architectural landmarks, illumination and gateways.

10 KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD
The first three storeys matter most in shaping the quality of the streetscape and enriching the downtown experience – buildings last for decades so it is imperative to get the design and details right and without exceptions.
Consider the Business Case for High Quality Investments in the Public Realm – uplift in property values and long-term cost savings associated with the longevity and low maintenance

CABE Study on Streetscape Improvements, London

Average incremental increase of:

- **5.2%** for residential property values
- **4.9%** in retail rents

Increase in property values corresponds to extent of investments:

- **3%** for enhanced materials and fixtures
- **12%** for extensive pedestrian-priority schemes

Bloor Street Transformation, Toronto

- **$20 million** public investment
- **200% increase** in retail lease rates
- **10-15% increase** in retail sales
- **+$10 million** increase in property taxes
As the Capital, the Province needs to be at the table and a partner in bringing to fruition the vision for the City Centre – aligning policies, partnering, funding, investing and promoting.
Fredericton city centre plan