

# CENTRE PLAN ROLL-OUT:

DRAFT URBAN STRUCTURE POLICY DIRECTION

October 2016



# CENTRE PLAN

# **3 URBAN STRUCTURE POLICY DIRECTION**

DRAFT

# 3.1 URBAN STRUCTURE HIERARCHY

Planning for growth and development within the Regional Centre necessitates a review of the existing urban structure; a vision of how and where the Regional Centre should grow; an understanding of what we need to protect; and policy direction on how to implement this vision. The Centre Plan puts forth this vision through the urban structure, and the following policies that enable the tools for implementing it.

'Urban structure' refers to the arrangement of physical elements – like buildings, streets, public spaces, trees, and street furniture – as well as the size, shape and design of these elements in the urban environment of the Regional Centre. The urban structure takes into account existing development and land uses, but also incorporates future growth objectives.

The urban structure hierarchy consists of various neighbourhoods and areas grouped under different classifications. When this work was presented in June 2016 for the first time some different nomenclature was used. We've responded to public comments and improved the language to better reflect the intended vision and altered the structure based on the feedback from the community. These classifications are:

- DOWNTOWNS**
- CENTRES**
- CORRIDORS**
- ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS**
- HIGHER ORDER RESIDENTIAL AREAS**
- PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES**
- FUTURE GROWTH NODES**
- EMPLOYMENT INTENSIVE AREAS**
- INSTITUTIONAL AREAS**

Each of these classifications are differentiated based on the characteristics of the overall built form, intended uses, and capacity for future growth within the areas they cover. Each classification has its own pattern of development and intended level of intensity. The hierarchy recognizes that each area across the Regional Centre is unique with its own capacity for future development, and that growth and change should be accommodated in ways that are sensitive to each local context.

This hierarchy lays the groundwork for land use policies within the Regional Centre, and directs where the Municipality should be making future long-term investments.

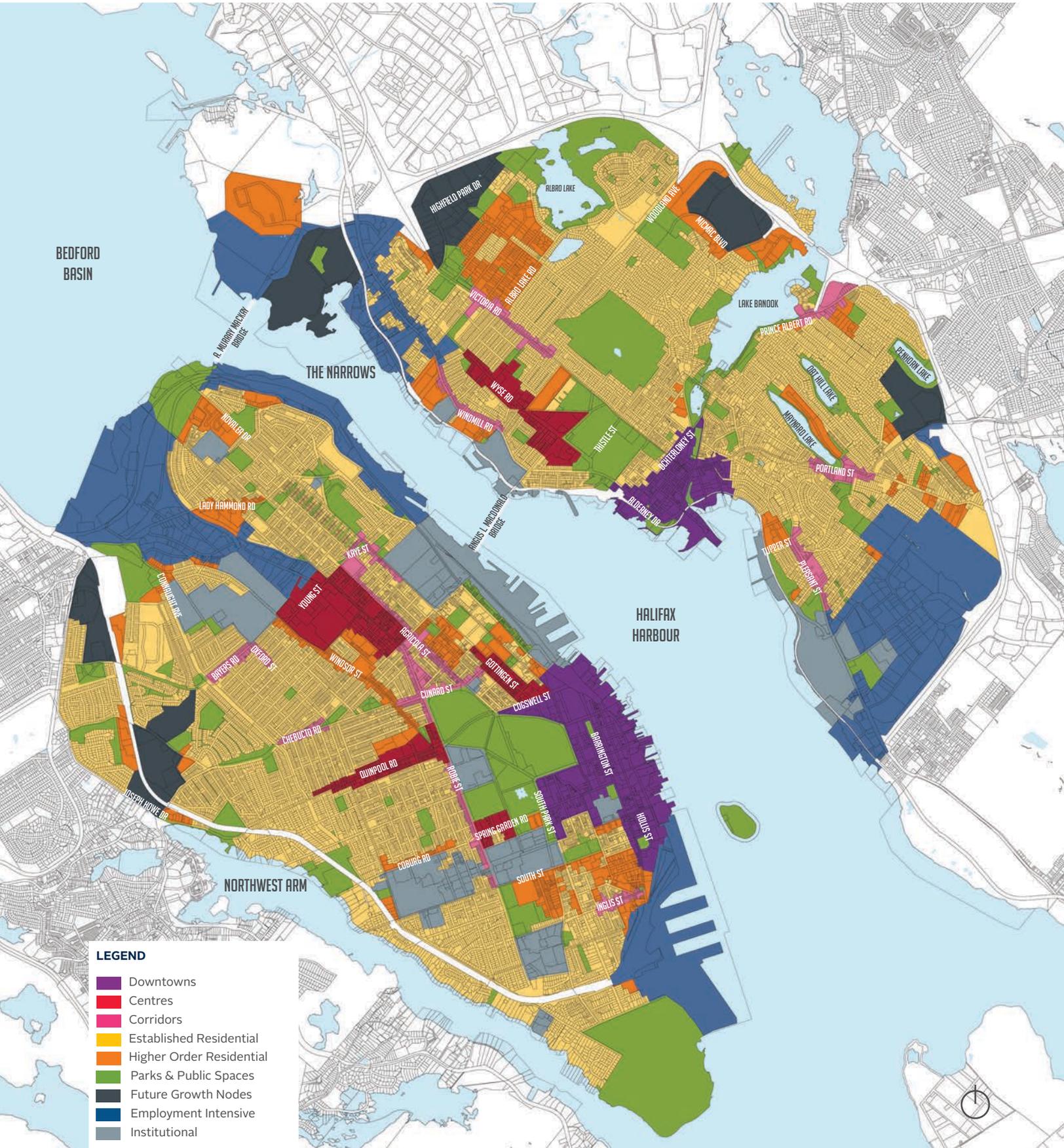
The Urban Structure Map (see *Figure 1*) illustrates which areas have been grouped under the distinct urban structure classifications.

The Urban Structure Map may be adopted to reflect the proposed degree of change and level of development within the Regional Centre.

The areas of future land use shown on the Urban Structure Map shall be determined primarily by the objectives and policies which correspond to the classification shown. All other Regional Centre-wide objectives and policies shall apply as appropriate, but should be subordinate to the classification specific objectives and policies.

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Figure 1: Urban Structure Map

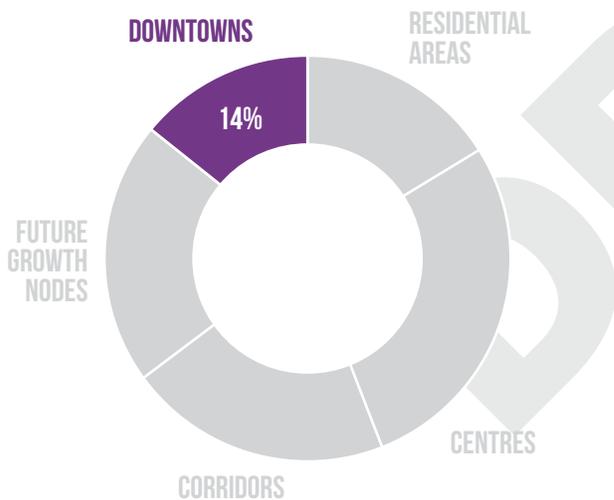


## 3.2 DOWNTOWNS

Downtown Halifax and Dartmouth will continue to benefit from new development. Both downtowns have significant redevelopment projects underway, including the Cogswell Interchange in Downtown Halifax, as well as Dartmouth Cove and King's Wharf in Downtown Dartmouth.

The downtowns can accommodate higher densities in moderate height and tall buildings because of their existing built form and the presence of similar buildings. Higher densities are also appropriate because of the downtowns' function as primary employment and cultural centres for the broader region.

The Downtown Dartmouth and Downtown Halifax Plans are currently being reviewed and will be included in the final Centre Plan.



**Figure 2: Growth in Downtowns**

*The Plan proposes that the Downtowns can accommodate 14% of new Regional Centre residents.*

# OBJECTIVES

- » To maintain and promote compact, intensified and walkable downtowns.
- » To accommodate residential redevelopment and supportive commercial uses.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.
- » To maintain distinctive downtowns by preserving and reinforcing the elements that impart a sense of history, culture and a unique natural setting.
- » To ensure visual appeal and inspiring qualities to the design, improvement and construction of streets, open spaces and buildings.
- » To strengthen the visual and physical connections between historical and natural assets, civic and open space destinations, and neighbourhoods.
- » To create a vibrant downtown through a broad mix of land uses, supporting infrastructure, and necessary critical mass.

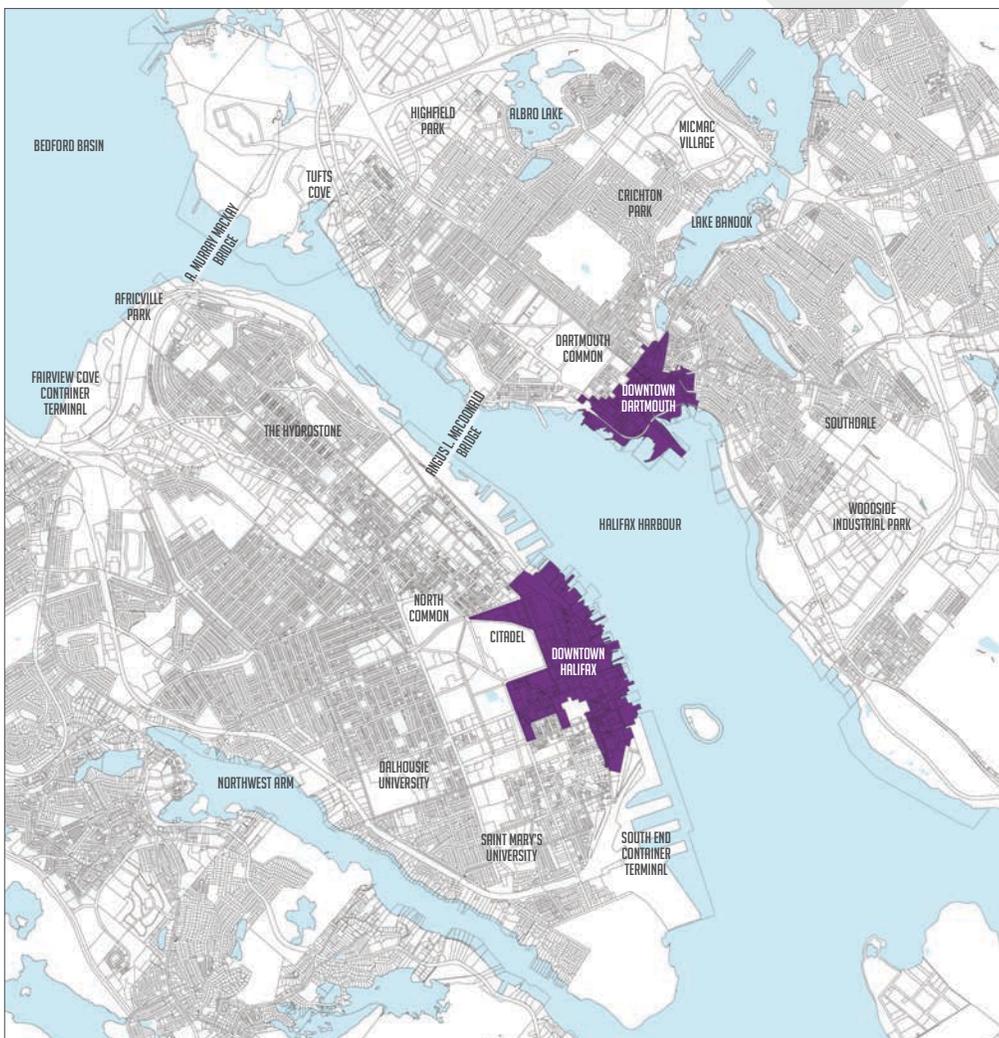


Figure 3: Locations of Downtowns within the Regional Centre

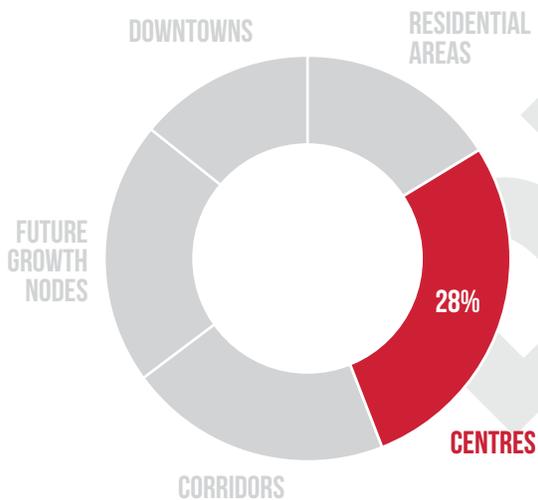
## 3.3 CENTRES

The Regional Plan sets out a vision for the Regional Centre that includes mixed use diverse neighbourhoods that support transit and active transportation. With this in mind, the Centre Plan focuses a significant proportion of growth on vacant and underutilized land along major streets to create walkable and complete communities. These areas, identified for targeted growth, are classified as Centres. An examination of the corridor work conducted in 2011 led to the identification of five Centres. Following engagement with the community this past summer their boundaries were further refined. The Centre's boundaries are centred around main streets, and in some cases include intersecting streets and adjacent blocks that have an existing concentration of people and jobs.

The five areas within the Regional Centre designated as Centres are: **GOTTINGEN, QUINPOOL, SPRING GARDEN, WYSE, and YOUNG.**

These five Centres have existing commercial activity including retail, restaurants, and offices, and include varying degrees of residential density. All have above average transit service and land available to accommodate growth. To achieve a concentration of people, jobs, and services; medium to high density development is appropriate for these areas. They have the ability to become complete communities with excellent transit accessibility, where pedestrians and cyclists feel safe and comfortable. Following the land use policies presented in this section; jobs, housing, and services will be concentrated together in the Centres to build dynamic mixed use areas.

This section provides policies that are general to all Centres and also includes specific profiles for each Centre.



**Figure 4: Growth in Centres**

The Centre Plan envisions the Centres playing an important role in managing growth within the Regional Centre. The Plan proposes that the Centres can accommodate 28% of new Regional Centre residents.

# OBJECTIVES

- » To encourage main streets that demonstrate high quality building standards and prioritize pedestrians.
- » To support a diversity of commercial activity, including office, retail, services and restaurants.
- » To accommodate new residents and jobs through moderate height and tall buildings at strategic locations.
- » To accommodate residential redevelopment and supportive commercial uses.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.
- » To support public transit and active transportation through land use and the built form.

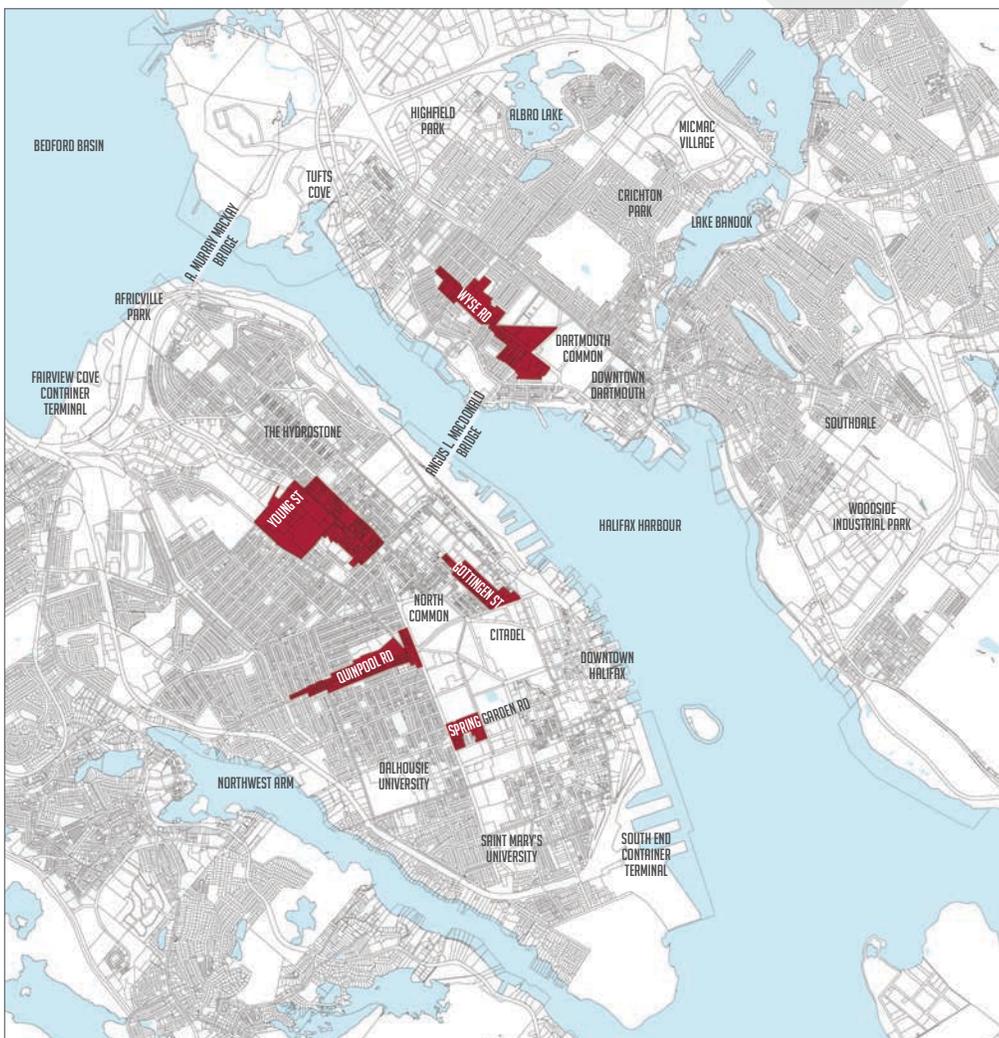


Figure 5: Locations of Centres within the Regional Centre

# POLICY DIRECTIONS

## 3.3.1 LAND USE

### Development Proposals

- a) Development proposals within Centres should include the following:
  - » Ground floor uses that are active and oriented to serve pedestrians along existing commercial and main streets
  - » A mix of uses that support pedestrian traffic
  - » The land use patterns of the nearby areas extended, or logically completed, to support integrated mobility to and through Centres
- b) When required, multi-site and large site redevelopment proposals in Centres should plan for:
  - » Buildings and parks that provide a focal point or anchor for key areas or intersections
  - » Neighbourhood gathering and activity places
  - » Integration with the public street grid and active transportation connections
  - » Proximity of mix of uses and employment to transit

### Mixed Uses

- c) Mixed use buildings with active uses at grade should be encouraged on main streets as identified in the Centre profiles maps (see *Figure 5*).

### Residential Uses

- d) Encourage a variety of residential forms within the Centres, including:
  - » Multi-unit apartment style buildings
  - » Semi-detached dwellings
  - » Townhouses
  - » Duplexes/Triplexes
- e) Where residential units are provided at grade level, all units that front a public sidewalk or publicly accessible private sidewalk should have individual, primary entrances to and from that sidewalk.

### Commercial Uses

- f) Office, retail, service, and restaurant uses that serve as both local and regional draws are encouraged throughout the Centres.
- g) Drive-through facilities are not permitted within the Centres.

- h) Automotive uses should be discouraged, other than fully-enclosed retail and accessory service, such as a vehicle showrooms.
- i) Any future automotive uses should meet the form requirements.

### **Animating Walkways**

- j) Developments that abut, or contain, a publicly accessible sidewalk or pathway should be encouraged to provide active uses, or architectural features at-grade, along the walkway.

## **3.3.2 BUILT FORM**

### **Regional Centre Character**

- a) When approving new developments, consider how the development contributes to the character of the Centre it is being proposed in.

### **Density**

- b) Control the density of new developments through maximum building envelope and Floor Area Ratio (FAR).
- c) Measure density by FAR.
- d) Control the building mass of large developments through FAR.

### **Building Height**

- e) Building heights shall be generally located as per the Centre Profiles (see *Figure 5*).

### **Bonus Density**

- f) Density Bonusing programs in the Centres where a bonus height is offered as an incentive for specific public benefits in excess of the minimum development requirements are supported.
- g) Create two building height regimes; a lower, pre-bonus height which may be achieved without the contribution of certain public benefits, and a post bonus height where public benefits in excess of the minimum development requirements are achieved.
- h) Consider a variety of public benefits when assessing site plan approval applications seeking a height bonus in exchange for the provision of public benefit, in accordance with the bonus zoning provisions of the Halifax Regional

Municipality Charter. Establish provisions in the Land Use By-law to guide negotiations of appropriate public benefits which must include affordable housing and may include:

- » Publicly accessible private open space
- » Community and cultural space
- » Public art
- » Cash-in-lieu where none of the above are appropriate

#### **Multi-Unit Residential**

- i) Where developments abut, or contain, a publicly accessible sidewalk or pathway, at-grade residential units should have accessible main floors set slightly above grade (typically 0.5-1.0 m) in order to achieve visual privacy from any sidewalk.
- j) Within a new moderate height and tall multi-unit residential, commercial, or mixed use building all recycling, composting, and garbage storage facilities should be located entirely within the building.
- k) In all other multi-unit residential, commercial, and mixed-use building forms, all recycling, composting and garbage storage facilities should be screened from adjacent properties and the public realm.
- l) Prohibit non-transparent privacy fences or walls that detract from the public realm.

#### **Setback Treatment**

- m) If buildings are setback from the street, their setbacks should be designed in a way that supports walkability and the pedestrian environment.
- n) Require new development to extend the public sidewalk to the front of the building using a design and materials that are consistent with the public sidewalk to create an attractive interface from the public to private realm.

#### **Building Massing**

- o) In order to reduce the massing impacts of tall buildings, above the streetwall podium the Gross Floor Area shall be restricted to 750m<sup>2</sup>.

### **3.3.3 MOBILITY**

#### **Parking Requirements**

- a) Allow, but not require, private onsite parking in support of new multi-unit residential developments in the Centres.

## CENTRE PROFILES

Since the Centres will accommodate significant growth to create active local and regional destinations, they were studied individually to understand their growth capacity, character and surrounding context. The following pages illustrate specific guidance tailored to each Centre.

Each map shows the distribution of different height ranges, main streets, and important connections to provide customized direction to guide the development and enhancement of each of these areas. The final draft of the Centre Plan will define maximum heights throughout the Centres. At this time height ranges are shown to demonstrate the form of development that could be supported within each Centre.

The height ranges shown reflect the following information:

- » Appropriate transitions to the neighbouring context, especially the low scale established residential uses
- » Market interest and development activity in these areas
- » Public feedback and insight garnered through the Centre Plan process

It is important to note that each of these heights must be read in concert with the urban design policies housed in the General Policy section to ensure that new development transitions appropriately to its surrounding context.

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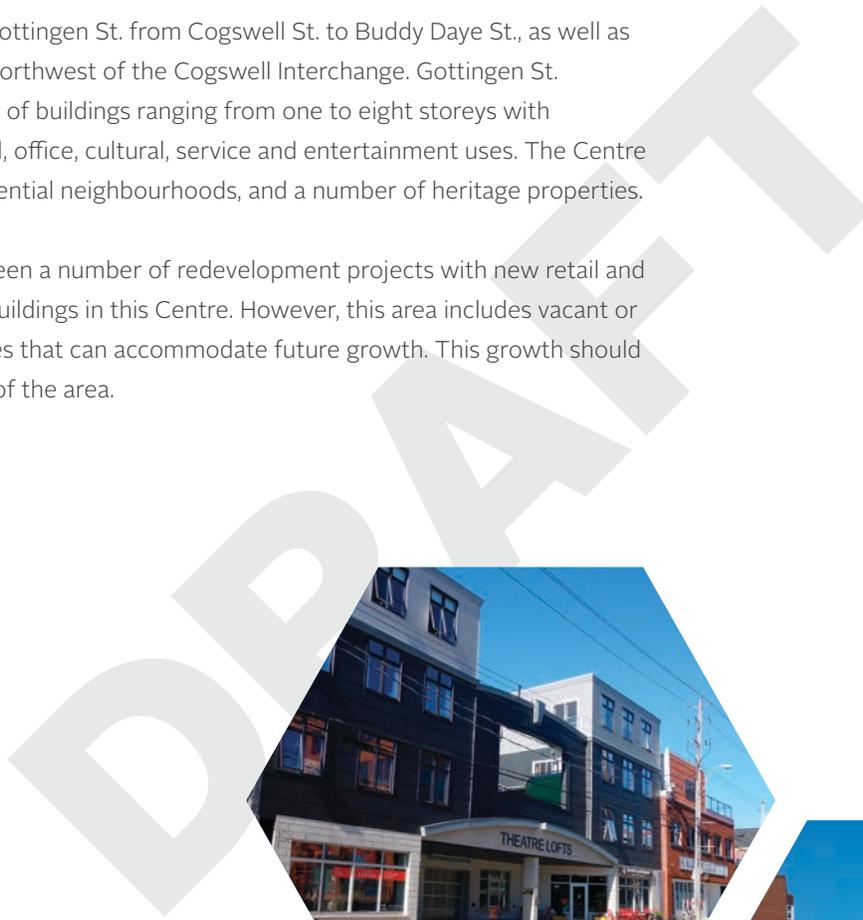


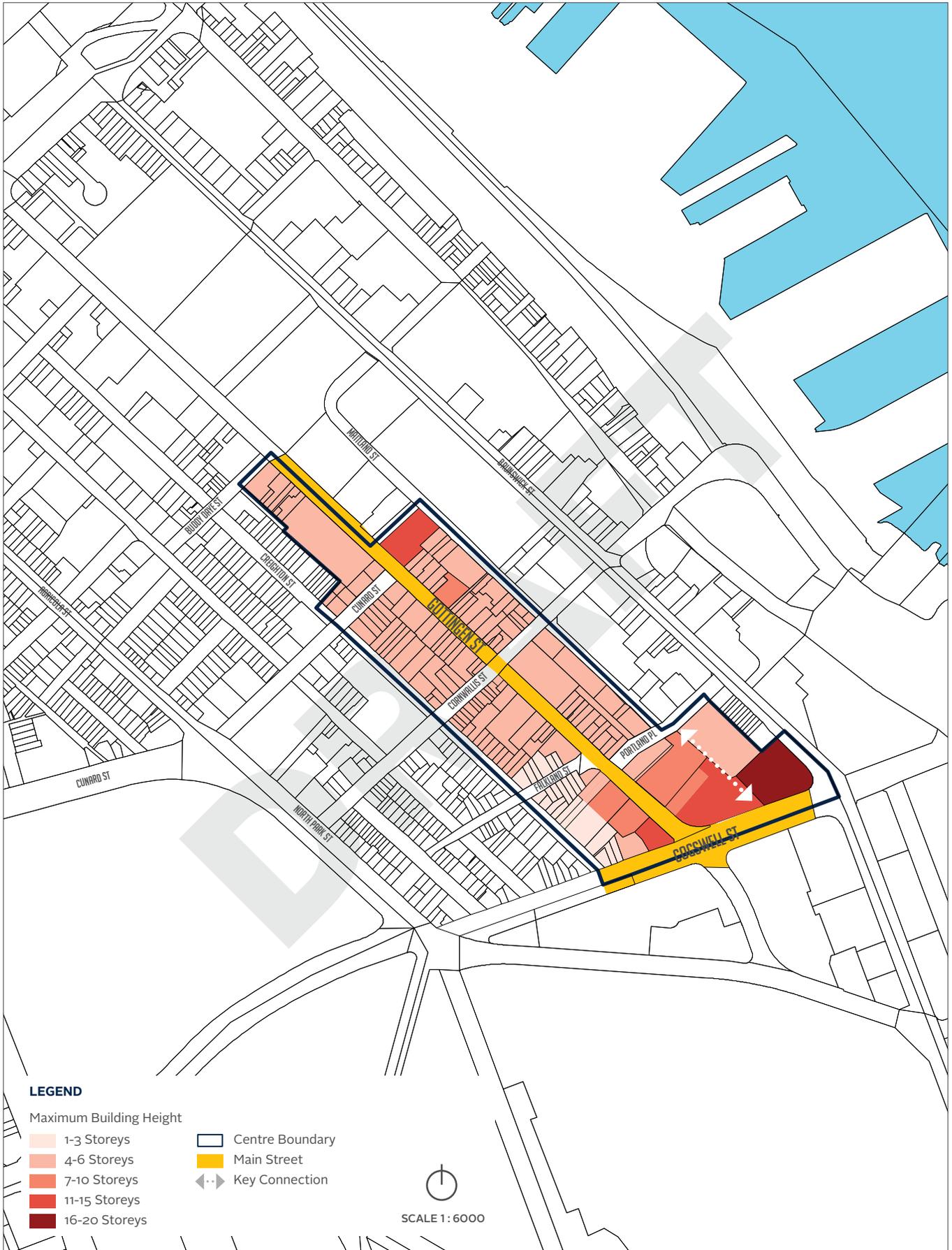
## CENTRE PROFILE: GOTTINGEN STREET

**Total Area: 11.7 ha / 0.12 km<sup>2</sup>**

This Centre includes Gottingen St. from Cogswell St. to Buddy Daye St., as well as larger parcels of land northwest of the Cogswell Interchange. Gottingen St. contains a wide variety of buildings ranging from one to eight storeys with residential, commercial, office, cultural, service and entertainment uses. The Centre is also flanked by residential neighbourhoods, and a number of heritage properties.

Recently, there have been a number of redevelopment projects with new retail and multi-unit residential buildings in this Centre. However, this area includes vacant or underutilized properties that can accommodate future growth. This growth should respect the character of the area.







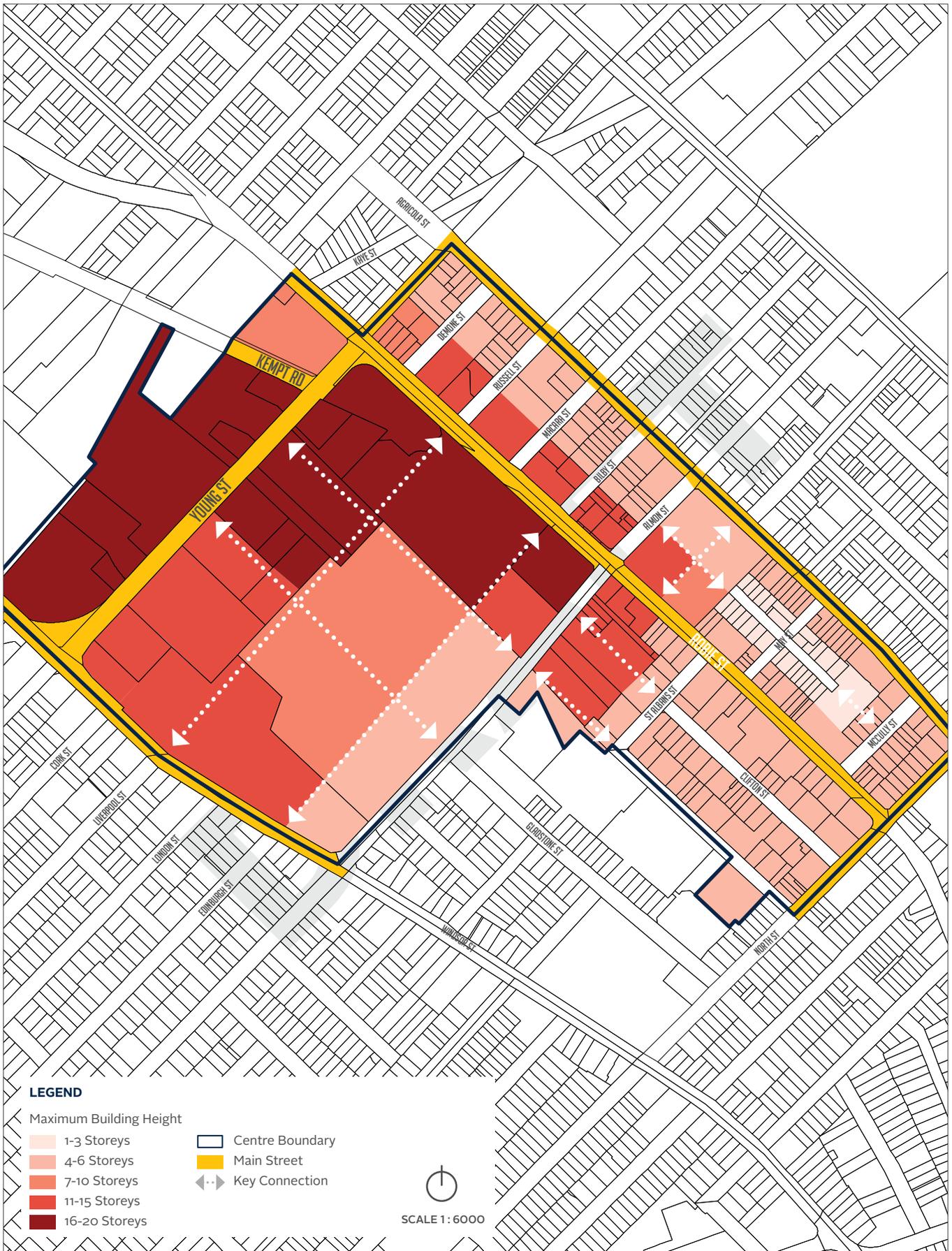
## CENTRE PROFILE: YOUNG STREET

**Total Area: 46.3 ha / 0.46 km<sup>2</sup>**

The largest in area of the five Centres, the Young St. Centre includes blocks that border Young St. and Robie St. This Centre has capacity for growth due to a number of large blocks, and underutilized or single owner properties. Currently this Centre has a broad range of building types including large warehouses, big box retail stores, one to three storey houses, and larger multi-unit residential buildings.

This area is already starting to see redevelopment with multi-unit residential buildings under construction or recently completed, with more likely to be built. A priority for this Centre is to reintroduce a formalized block pattern and to improve walkability.





**LEGEND**

Maximum Building Height

- 1-3 Storeys
- 4-6 Storeys
- 7-10 Storeys
- 11-15 Storeys
- 16-20 Storeys

- Centre Boundary
- Main Street
- Key Connection

SCALE 1:6000

# CENTRE PROFILE: SPRING GARDEN ROAD

**Total Area: 6.15 ha / 0.07 km<sup>2</sup>**

Spring Garden is the smallest of the five Centres, running along Spring Garden Rd. from Robie St. to Cathedral Ln. The area is characterized by apartment buildings set back from the street, and 2-3 storey single detached buildings with residential and commercial uses. A number of heritage properties along Carlton St. have been taken out of the Centre.

When situated appropriately, additional moderate and tall infill buildings can be accommodated that are in keeping with the apartment style character of this Centre.





# CENTRE PROFILE: QUINPOOL ROAD

**Total Area: 19.8 ha / 0.20 km<sup>2</sup>**

Quinpool Rd., from Robie St. to Summer St., has been included as a Centre. A number of mixed residential and commercial uses make this a popular destination and an area with significant development interest. The scale of buildings along Quinpool Rd. transitions from taller buildings at the eastern end to low buildings in the more residentially focused western end.

Development along Quinpool, as with all the other Centres, must transition appropriately to surrounding established residential areas.







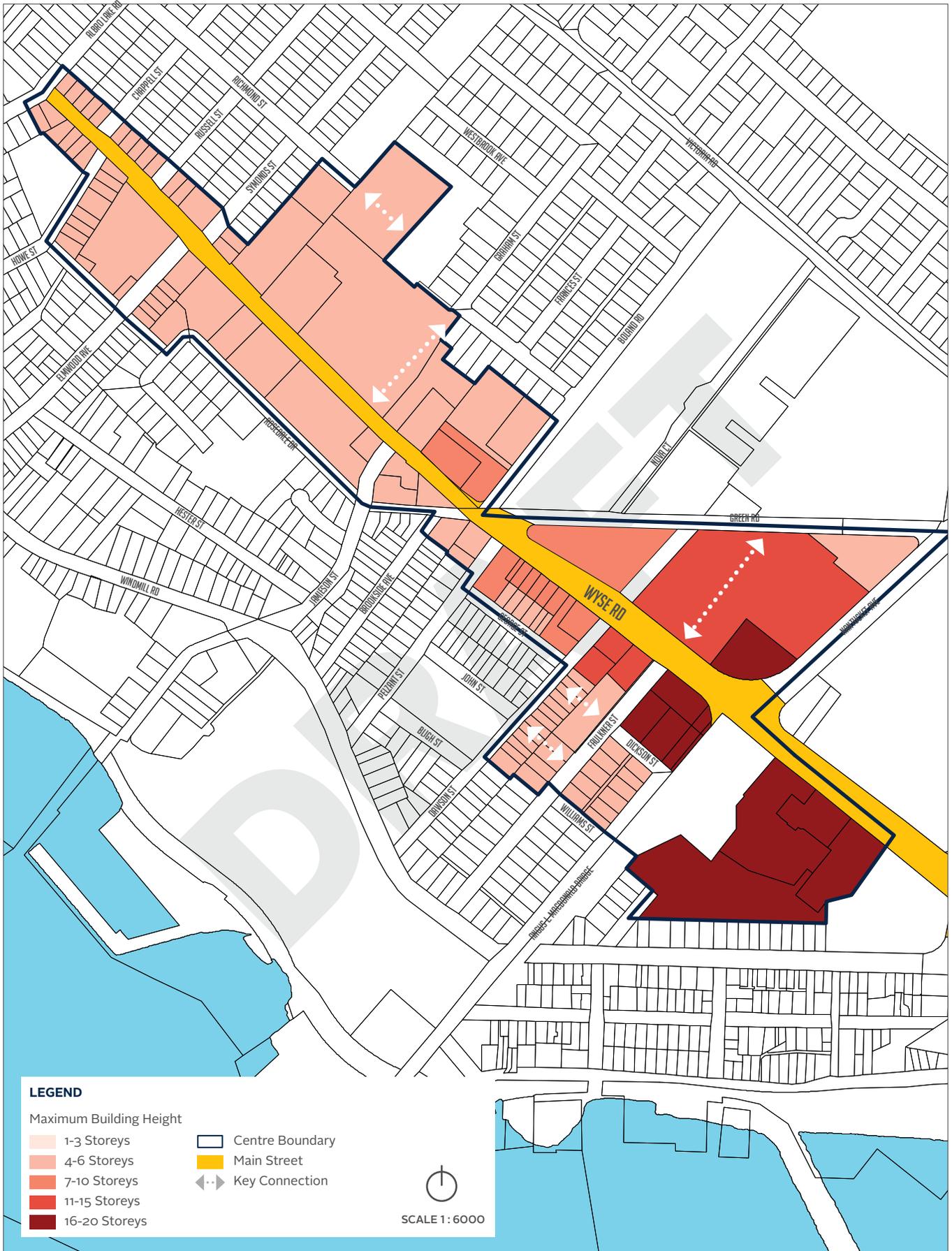
## CENTRE PROFILE: WYSE ROAD

**Total Area: 29.2 ha / 0.29 km<sup>2</sup>**

This larger Centre runs along Wyse Road in Dartmouth from Thistle Street to Albro Lake Road, and is primarily auto-dependent. Wyse Rd. transitions from a narrow two lane street in the North to a large median divided arterial road as it intersects with the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge. The scale of buildings vary from a tall office tower to one storey single detached buildings.

Growth can be accommodated as infill in vacant or underutilized lots. Over time, this Centre can become pedestrian-oriented when redevelopment creates environments that are pedestrian and cyclist friendly.





## 3.4 CORRIDORS

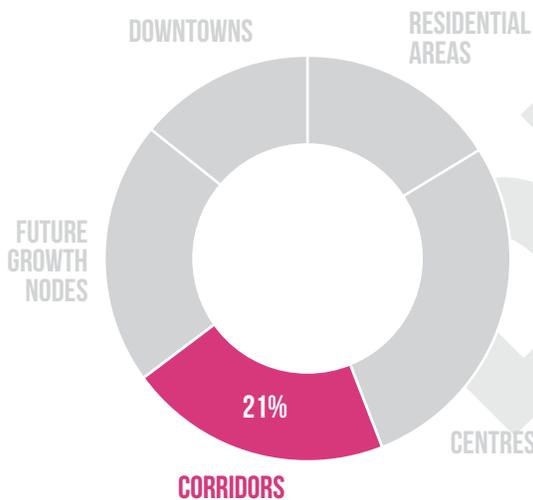
Corridors share many of the same attributes as Centres, however they are linear in nature and oriented along a single local or arterial road. Corridors have some existing commercial and residential density, and in most cases have good transit access, are near schools and parks, and are close to employment areas.

Redevelopment along the Corridors is anticipated and encouraged. The creation of new housing, commercial spaces, and job opportunities in mixed use buildings will bring new activity and life to the Corridors. Since corridors provide mobility links for local and regional commuters and border residential communities, the transportation system and land use should be designed to accommodate a variety of travel modes. An increase in people and amenities, along with improvements to the pedestrian environment, and transit service will make the Corridors a key part in creating complete communities across the Regional Centre.

Corridors are appropriate locations for low (three-storey) to moderate (four to six storey) development that, depending on local conditions, should include ground floor commercial spaces.

Areas designated as Corridors are:

- » Agricola St. – from Cunard St. to Young St.
- » Bayers Rd. – from Connaught Ave. to Oxford St.
- » Chebucto Rd. – from Connaught Ave. to Oxford St.
- » Cunard St. – from Windsor St. to Gottingen St.
- » Gottingen St. – from Young St. to Bloomfield St.
- » Inglis St. – from Barrington St. to Blands St./Brussels St.
- » Kaye St. from Isleville St. to Gottingen St.
- » Oxford St. – from Bayers Rd. to Liverpool St.
- » Pleasant St. – from Newcastle St. to Renfrew St.
- » Portland St. – from Maynard St. to Manor Dr.
- » Prince Albert Rd. - from Celtic Dr. to Harris Rd.
- » Robie St. – from North St. to Welsford St. & Shirley St. to South St.
- » Victoria Rd. – from Primrose St. to Frances St.
- » Windmill Rd. – from Brookside Ave. to Albro Lake Rd. (East side only)
- » Young St. – from Agricola St. to Gottingen St.



**Figure 6: Growth in Corridors**

The Centre Plan proposes that Corridors can accommodate 21% of new Regional Centre residents.

# OBJECTIVES

- » To strengthen neighbourhood destinations with commercial and retail uses focused on local service.
- » To create complete streets that demonstrate high quality streetscaping while prioritizing pedestrians.
- » To accommodate residential development in the form of low to moderate height buildings.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.
- » To support public transit and active transportation through land use and built form.

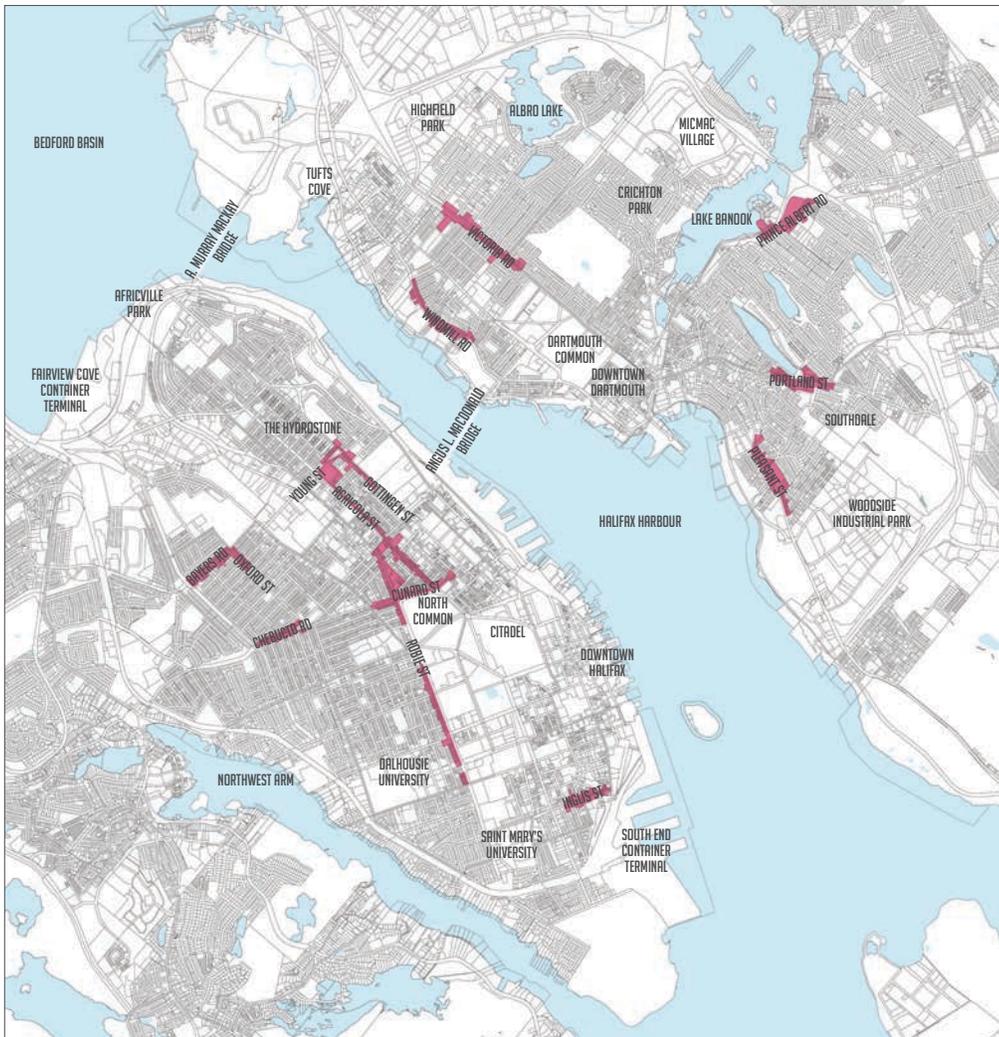


Figure 7: Locations of Corridors within the Regional Centre

# POLICY DIRECTIONS

## 3.4.1 LAND USE

### Mixed Uses

- a) Encourage multi-unit residential and mixed use buildings along Corridors.

### Residential Use

- b) Encourage a variety of residential forms within the Corridors, including:
  - » Multi-unit apartment style buildings
  - » Semi-detached dwellings
  - » Townhouses
  - » Duplexes/Triplexes
- c) Where residential units are provided at grade level, all units that front a public sidewalk or publicly accessible private sidewalk should have individual, primary entrances to and from that sidewalk.

### Commercial Uses

- d) Retail, service, and restaurant uses should be permitted along Corridors.
- e) New drive-through facilities along Corridors should not be permitted.
- f) Automotive uses should be discouraged, other than fully-enclosed retail and accessory service, such as a vehicle showrooms.
- g) Any future automotive uses should meet the form requirements.

### Comprehensive Redevelopment Sites

- h) Determine whether multi-site comprehensive redevelopment plans on a Corridor should require a master plan on a case-by-case basis.
- i) Multi-site and large site redevelopment proposals in Corridors should plan for:
  - » Buildings and parks that provide a focal point or anchor for key areas or intersections
  - » Neighbourhood gathering and activity places
  - » Integrate with the public street grid network and AT connections
  - » Proximity of mix of uses and employment to transit

### **Private Outdoor Amenity Space**

- j) For multi-unit developments, all new residential units should be provided with private outdoor amenity space, either exclusive to an individual unit or as a common amenity available to all units within a development. Common amenity space may be provided at or above grade and may be completely or partially visible from the street or other buildings.

## **3.4.2 BUILT FORM**

### **Neighbourhood Character**

- a) When approving new developments, consider how the development contributes to the character of the neighbourhood it is being proposed in.

### **Density**

- b) Measure density by Floor Area Ratio (FAR).
- c) Establish maximum densities for each Corridor.

### **Building Height**

- d) Building heights shall not exceed four storeys unless there is sufficient lot depth to accommodate up to six stories through appropriate transitions to adjacent buildings.

### **Multi-Unit Residential**

- e) Where developments abut, or contain, a publicly accessible sidewalk or pathway, at-grade residential units should have accessible main floors set slightly above grade (typically 0.5-1.0 m) in order to achieve visual privacy from any sidewalk.
- f) Within a new moderate height multi-unit residential, commercial, or mixed use building, all recycling, composting, and garbage storage facilities should be located entirely within the building.
- g) In all other multi-unit residential, commercial, and mixed-use building forms, all recycling, composting and garbage storage facilities should be screened from adjacent properties and the public realm.

- h) Prohibit non-transparent privacy fences or walls that detract from the public realm.

#### **Commercial Ground Floor**

- i) Reserve the right to require that new multi-unit development be built in a way that enables the transition from residential uses to commercial uses on the ground floor overtime.

#### **Setback Treatment**

- j) If buildings are setback from the street, their setbacks shall be designed in a way that supports walkability and the pedestrian environment.
- k) Consider coordinating and integrating setback area landscape improvements with existing or planned streetscape improvements in the public right-of-way in order to create an attractive interface from the private to public realm.

### **3.4.3 MOBILITY**

#### **Parking Requirements**

- a) Allow, but not require, private onsite parking in support of new multi-unit residential developments in the Corridors.

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## 3.5 FUTURE GROWTH NODES

Future Growth Nodes are large sites located within, or adjacent to, existing communities around the periphery of the Regional Centre. Currently, these areas contain predominately single-use development such as shopping malls, commercial development, and in the case of Shannon Park, former Department of National Defence lands. These areas have the potential to accommodate significant growth through infill and greyfield redevelopment. The Centre Plan envisions these nodes as having higher densities through a mix of uses and building types including - but not limited to - retail, apartments, and townhouse forms. The transition of Future Growth Nodes to mixed use areas, with a blend of tall, moderate, and lower height development, will not be immediate and may take several years to fully evolve into the desired developed form.

Future growth nodes are capable of transformative change as they have the land base to support population growth and a mix of uses. Redevelopment of these sites may face certain challenges, including servicing constraints and contamination issues. In general, however, development will be able to leverage nearby infrastructure and connect to the existing street grid. Redeveloping these large sites to function like complete communities will benefit nearby neighbourhoods.

Areas designated as Future Growth Nodes are: Joseph Howe, Mic Mac Mall, Mumford, Penhorn, Highfield Park, Graham's Grove, and Shannon Park.



**Figure 8: Growth in Future Growth Nodes**

*The Centre Plan proposes that areas identified as Future Growth Nodes can accommodate 21% of new Regional Centre residents.*

# OBJECTIVES

- » To support the current use of Future Growth Nodes until redevelopment.
- » To plan each node through a public process prior to redevelopment.
- » To design and build Future Growth Nodes following complete community principles.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.
- » To prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit over auto-oriented uses.



Figure 9: Locations of Future Growth Nodes within the Regional Centre

# POLICY DIRECTIONS

## 3.5.1 GENERAL

### Comprehensive Planning

- a) Prior to redevelopment of a Future Growth Node, a planning process should be completed that includes engagement with the surrounding community.

### Initiation of Planning

- b) A planning process may be triggered:
  - » by HRM if their interests are aligned with redevelopment of property within the Node.
  - » by the landowner seeking redevelopment of property within the Node.

### Development Components

- c) Future Growth Nodes must include the following:
  - » A transit hub
  - » A mix of residential, commercial, community, and employment uses
  - » Parks and open space network that is integrated with the surrounding community
  - » A street grid with a formalized block pattern that connects with the surrounding community
  - » Housing choice in terms of form (including townhouse forms and apartment housing) and capacity (bachelor, 1 bedroom, or multiple bedrooms)

### Studies Needed for Development of a Future Growth Node

- d) Consider, at a minimum, the inclusion of the following studies in a Future Growth Node planning:
  - » Concept Plan
  - » Transportation Impact
  - » Environmental Studies
  - » Urban Design Plan

## 3.5.2 LAND USE

### Residential Use

- e) Future Growth Nodes should include multiple residential forms that can include:
  - » Low, moderate and/or tall apartment style buildings
  - » Stand-alone or podium townhouses and stacked townhouses
  - » Duplexes/Triplexes

### **Community and Recreational Uses**

- f) May incorporate new community and recreational uses where appropriate to support a complete community.

### **Transitional uses**

- g) New development that borders existing residential areas must respect and complement the existing residential areas in terms of use and form.

### **Density**

- h) Work with the landowners and local communities to set the appropriate maximum density of people and jobs during the planning process for each Future Growth Node.

### **Transit-oriented Design**

- i) The planning of Future Growth Nodes should consider incorporating a higher intensity of employment uses around a transit terminal or stop.

### **Bonus Density**

- j) Density Bonusing programs in the Future Growth Nodes where a bonus height is offered as an incentive for specific public benefits in excess of the minimum development requirements are supported.
- k) Create two building height regimes; a lower, pre-bonus height which may be achieved without the contribution of certain public benefits, and a post bonus height where public benefits in excess of the minimum development requirements are achieved.
- l) Consider a variety of public benefits when assessing site plan approval applications seeking a height bonus in exchange for the provision of public benefit, in accordance with the bonus zoning provisions of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. Establish provisions in the Land Use By-law to guide negotiations of appropriate public benefits which must include affordable housing and may include:
  - » Publicly accessible private open space
  - » Community and cultural space
  - » Public art
  - » Cash-in-lieu where none of the above are appropriate

## **3.5.3 BUILT FORM**

### **Building Height**

- a) Building heights will be determined during the planning process.

### **Intensification**

- b) The highest level of residential and commercial intensification should be located strategically:
  - » At transit stops and along transit routes
  - » Near neighbouring developments of a compatible scale and intensity
  - » Away from lower scale neighbouring properties
  - » To maximize access to parks and trail networks
  - » To maximize access to commercial areas, schools, and other community services

### **Street Grid**

- c) Redevelopment should introduce a formal street and block pattern that incorporates short interconnected blocks for ease of walkability.

### **Building Design**

- d) The design of buildings and their sites should acknowledge the pedestrian realm with human scaled architecture and landscape design.

## **3.5.4 MOBILITY**

### **Connections**

- a) The internal street network must integrate with the public street grid network and active transportation connections.

## **3.5.5 PUBLIC SPACES AND PLACES**

### **Parks Network**

- a) The comprehensive planning process should address how the Future Growth Node can be integrated within the municipality's larger parks network.

### **Gathering Places**

- b) Future Growth Node should incorporate public spaces, such as a square or plaza space, to function as a focal point for the redevelopment.

## **3.5.6 NODE SPECIFIC POLICY**

### **Existing Planning Work**

- a) Where research, studies, and consultation has taken place for Future Growth Nodes that work shall inform the policies that will be set out for each specific node.

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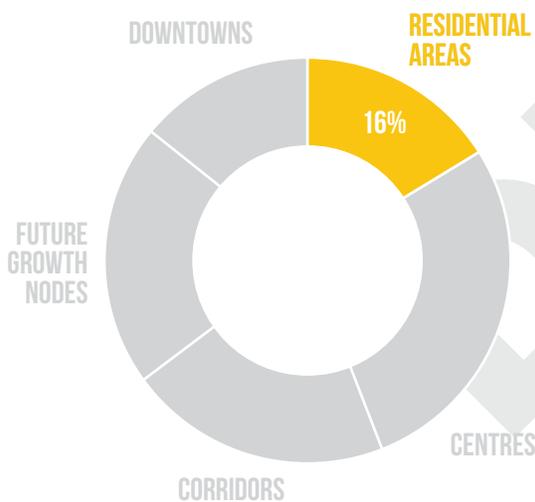
## 3.6 RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Residential areas in the Regional Centre have been divided into two areas:

**ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS** and **HIGHER ORDER RESIDENTIAL AREAS**. Neighbourhoods in both these categories are primarily residential in nature. They also contain parks, schools, places of worship, local institutions, and some commercial uses such as local markets, dry cleaners, and cafés. The Centre Plan puts forth policies to maintain these areas as residential neighbourhoods.

**Established Residential Areas** have lower densities and are largely characterized by single detached homes. These areas are suitable locations for auxiliary dwelling units, such as secondary suites, or other residential infill that is consistent with the character of the existing neighbourhood.

Moderate to high density **Higher Order Residential Areas** are characterized by clusters of multi-unit apartment and condominium buildings. Redevelopment of these areas should include similarly scaled infill of moderate buildings. Improving public amenities, promoting environmental sustainability, and accommodating sensitive infill are key development considerations within these areas.



**Figure 10: Growth in Residential Areas**

*The Centre Plan proposes that residential areas can accommodate 16% of new residential growth in the Regional Centre.*

# OBJECTIVES

- » To protect the character of residential areas.
- » To support commercial activity through home-based businesses, professional offices, and other commercial uses focused on local service, where appropriate.
- » To provide a range of housing options and forms.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.

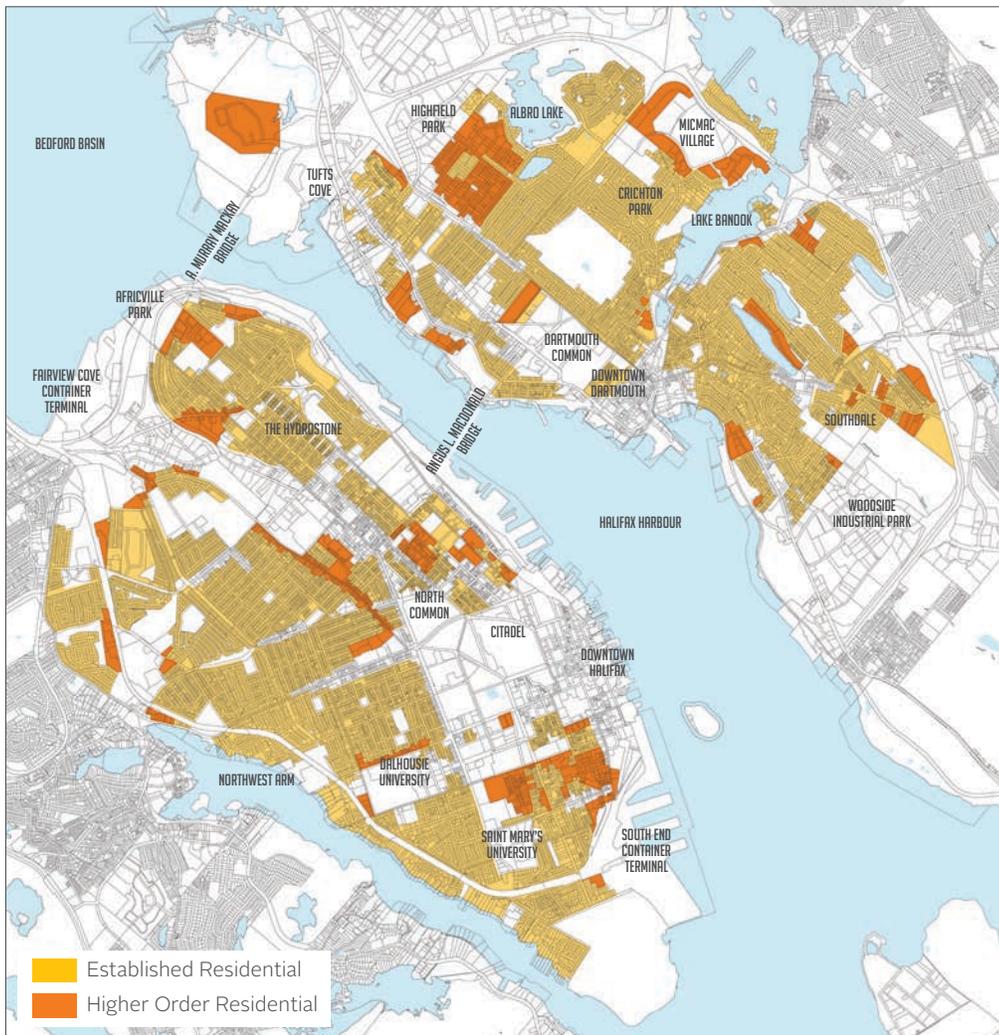


Figure 11: Locations of Residential Areas within the Regional Centre

# POLICY DIRECTIONS

## ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### 3.6.1 LAND USE

#### Residential Uses

- a) In addition to the general housing policies, permit modest redevelopment opportunities that respect the existing scale, character and built form of these areas. Appropriate housing types may include:
- » Low scale apartment style buildings
  - » Detached dwellings
  - » Semi-detached dwellings
  - » Townhouses
  - » Duplexes/Triplexes
  - » Housing conversions
  - » Garden suites
  - » Secondary suites/Auxiliary Dwelling Units

#### Commercial Locations

- b) Consider the location of small scale commercial and retail uses in established residential neighbourhoods at, or adjacent to, the intersections of local streets rather than mid-block.

#### Commercial Uses

- c) Commercial uses should be compatible with the immediate local residential context, and will be evaluated to minimize off-site nuisance impacts from noise, parking, or other adverse impacts upon adjacent or nearby residents.
- d) Permit the following commercial uses within Established Residential Areas:
- » Small-scale neighbourhood-serving retail uses
  - » Live/work units

### 3.6.2 BUILT FORM

#### Subdivision

- a) Consider development applications to subdivide a residential property by lot depth in order to support additional low impact density, when appropriate.

### **Infill Housing**

- b) Support infill housing and rehabilitation as the preferred form of redevelopment in established residential communities.

### **Street Setback**

- c) To maintain the character of a street, the building setbacks should be in keeping with the general existing setback along the block.

### **Lot Standards**

- d) Differing lot standards are appropriate in different areas of the Regional Centre. These standards should reflect the character of the surrounding area.

## **3.6.3 MOBILITY**

### **Permit Parking**

- a) In areas with high demand for on-street residential and commercial parking, residential permit parking should be supported to ensure a supply of parking for local residents.

### **Parking Requirements**

- b) Establish off-street parking requirements in residential areas that reflect local access to transit and active transportation services can replace the need to use vehicles.

## HIGHER ORDER RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### 3.6.4 LAND USE

#### Residential Use

- a) Permit all residential uses permitted in Established Residential Areas as well as moderately scaled (four to six storey) ground-oriented apartment style buildings in Higher Order Residential Areas as long as they are consistent in scale, or appropriately transition, to adjacent properties. Refer to *Figure 11* for location of Higher Order Residential Areas.

#### Housing Choice

- b) Support a variety of housing options that reflect the needs of a diverse population by encouraging the following:
  - » The provision of three or more bedroom units
  - » Ground-oriented units that provide private outdoor space
  - » Communal hard and soft surface outdoor children's amenity space

#### Commercial Locations

- c) Commercial and retail uses should be located at or adjacent to the intersections of local streets rather than mid-block and accessible through active transportation.

#### Commercial Uses

- d) Permit the following commercial uses in Higher Order Residential Areas:
  - » Live/work units at grade, and home occupations
  - » Small-scale, local-serving retail uses at intersections or clustered with existing commercial uses.
  - » Grocery stores

#### Mixed Use

- e) Small scale commercial and community uses may be permitted on apartment building sites.

#### Private Outdoor Amenity Space

- f) For multi-unit developments, all new residential units should be provided with private outdoor amenity space, either exclusive to an individual unit or as a common amenity available to all units within a development. Common amenity space may be provided at or above grade and may be completely or partially visible from the street or other buildings.

### 3.6.5 BUILT FORM

#### Neighbourhood Character

- a) When approving new developments, consider how the development contributes to the character of the neighbourhood it is being proposed in.

#### Building Height

- b) Moderate height (four to six storey) buildings are appropriate in these areas depending on lot size and depth.

#### Multi-Unit Residential

- c) Where developments abut, or contain, a publicly accessible sidewalk or pathway, at-grade residential units should have accessible main floors set slightly above grade (typically 0.5-1.0 m) in order to achieve visual privacy from any sidewalk.
- d) Within a new moderate height multi-unit residential, commercial, or mixed use building all recycling, composting, and garbage storage facilities should be located entirely within the building.
- e) In all other multi-unit residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings forms, all recycling, composting and garbage storage facilities should be screened from adjacent properties and the public realm.

#### Street Setback

- f) To maintain the character of a street, the building setbacks should be in keeping with the general existing setback along the block.
- g) If buildings are setback from the street, their setbacks shall be designed in a way that supports walkability and the pedestrian environment.

### 3.6.6 MOBILITY

#### Permit Parking

- a) In areas with high demand for on-street residential and commercial parking, residential permit parking should be considered to ensure a supply of parking for local residents.

#### Parking Requirements

- b) Establish off-street parking requirements in residential areas that reflect local access to transit and active transportation services can replace the need to use vehicles.

## 3.7 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

The Centre Plan has divided employment areas into **EMPLOYMENT INTENSIVE AREAS** and **INSTITUTIONAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS**. Small scale retail, daycares, restaurants and other commercial services that meet the daily needs of employees and clients are appropriate in these areas as well.

**Employment Intensive Areas** are well positioned to accommodate industrial and commercial activity. These locations should be retained for industrial and other employment intensive uses. They are not suitable areas for residential growth. Supporting these nodes of employment within the Regional Centre will help to provide economic efficiencies and ultimately enhance the national and global competitiveness of these sectors.

**Institutional Employment Areas** contain public institutions including universities, colleges, and health care facilities. These institutions are major employers in the Regional Centre, attracting thousands of students, patients, and employees every day. The clustering of these facilities plays a role in fostering partnerships and the development of innovative technologies and services.

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# OBJECTIVES

- » To maintain and protect existing areas of employment within the Regional Centre.
- » To increase jobs to support a diverse and economic base for the Halifax region.
- » To reduce Regional Centre commute times through land use decisions and an integrated transportation system.
- » To support the Regional Centre's institutions, including governmental, educational, and health sectors.
- » To create a safe and comfortable public realm for all ages and abilities.

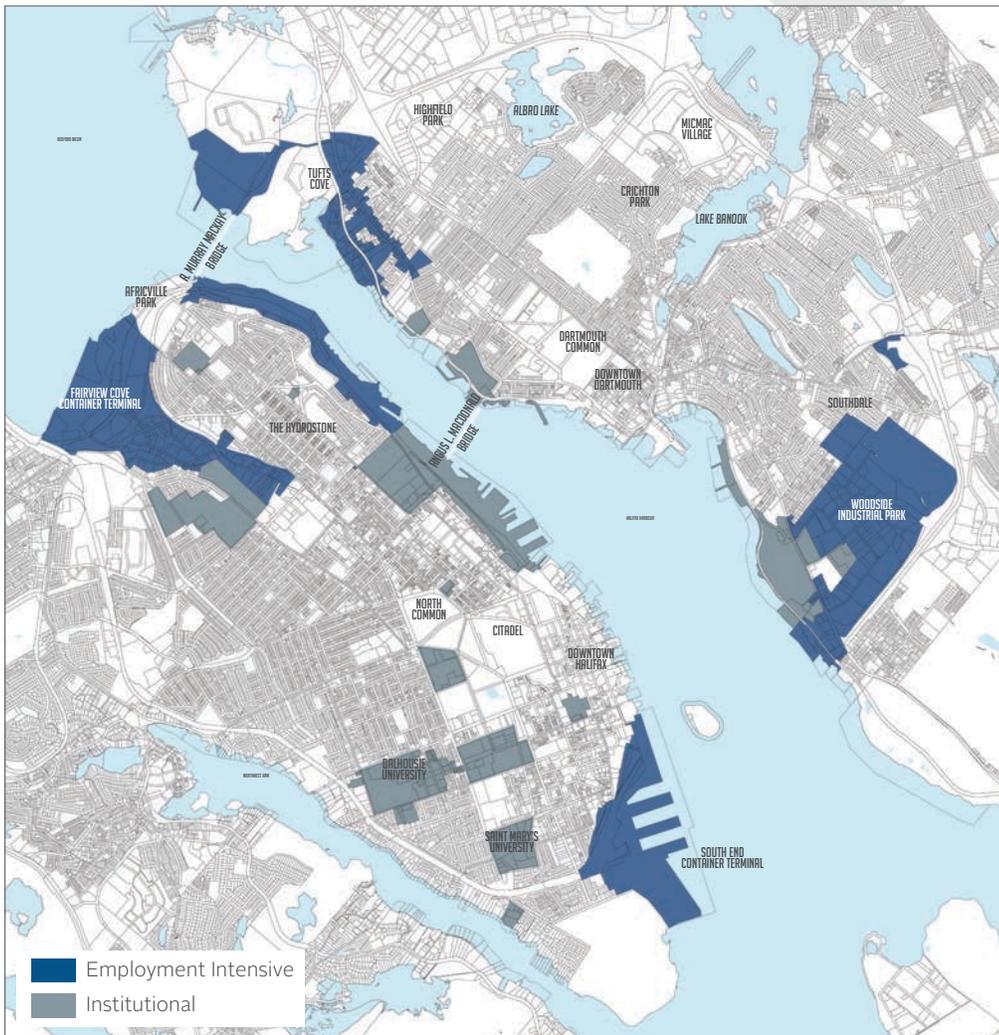


Figure 12: Locations of Employment Areas within the Regional Centre

# POLICY DIRECTIONS

## 3.7.1 GENERAL

### Employment Lands Expansion

- a) When the creation or expansion of an Employment Intensive Area requires a zoning change, request the proponent, in an enhanced applicant's statement, to provide, at a minimum, the following:
  - » Expected socio-economic costs and benefits to adjacent neighbourhoods
  - » An Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis
  - » A Transportation Impact Analysis
  - » An Environmental Impact Analysis

## 3.7.2 LAND USE

### PRIMARILY INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS:

#### Industrial Uses

- a) Industrial uses should be permitted in these areas.

#### Retail, Service and Restaurant Uses

- b) Permit supportive retail, personal service, and restaurant uses.

#### Working Harbour

- c) Along the harbour's edge, support industries which are harbour-related.

#### Non-industrial Harbour Uses

- d) Development of non-harbour related commercial and industrial use in areas designated "Industrial" and zoned harbour-related uses may be permissible provided that the long term intent of these areas for harbour industrial uses is preserved. The proposed development should:
  - » Not be detrimental to the port or other harbour related industries
  - » Generate only a level of vehicle trips that can be reasonably accommodated on the present street system
  - » Not negatively affect the long term preservation of the area for harbour related uses

#### Residential Uses

- e) Residential uses are not permitted in Employment Intensive Areas to preserve the industrial and commercial character of these areas. To respect the existing context, residential uses will continue to be permitted along Windmill Road.

## **INSTITUTIONAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS:**

### **Institutional Uses**

- f) Institutional uses should be permitted in these areas.

### **Retail, Service and Restaurant Uses**

- g) Supportive retail, personal service, and restaurant uses should be permitted.

### **Academic Facilities**

- h) Major academic and cultural facilities, such as, but not limited to, laboratories, lecture halls, libraries, theatres and student centres, should be located within the interior of designated University areas.

### **Future Planning**

- i) Support and facilitate the ongoing operation of health care and educational facilities.
- j) When land is no longer needed for institutional use, coordinate with other levels of government to develop a comprehensive planning process for the future uses.

### **Master Plans**

- k) Institutional Employment Areas including universities, colleges, and hospitals should consider having up to date master plans that have been developed through public engagement.

## **3.7.3 URBAN DESIGN**

### **Transition**

- a) When adjacent to residential uses, the transition from employment intensive areas shall incorporate natural and constructed buffers to minimize nuisance effects from sights, smells, noise, light and other potential impacts.

### **Parking**

- b) Parking may be provided through parking structures. Surface parking should be limited, and designed to support pedestrian comfort and incorporate Low Impact Development principles.

### 3.7.4 PUBLIC SPACES AND PLACES

#### Open Space

- a) Consider providing sufficient public open spaces to create recreational opportunities for employees and clients.

#### Recreational and Sports Facilities

- b) Municipal recreation and sports facilities may be located in Employment Intensive Areas so long as they do not negatively impact the functionality of these areas.
- c) When located in Employment Intensive Areas, recreational and sports facilities must be located in close proximity to transit routes and active transportation networks.

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# A GLOSSARY

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### **Active Frontage**

Building facades that are visually interesting and allow people on the street to see inside the building.

### **Active Transportation**

Human-powered, personal travel chosen as an option to motorized travel and includes walking, running, hiking, the use of wheelchair, cross-country skis, skateboard or canoe or kayak on water.

### **Active Use**

The design and use of public space, including the buildings and infrastructure within it, to create activity, interest, and pedestrian traffic. Examples of active uses include retail, café space, sidewalk display space, and public art.

### **Adaptive Re-Use**

Adapting a site or building for a use other than its original use.

### **Affordable Housing**

Measuring housing affordability involves comparing housing costs to the ability of a household to meet those costs.

Affordable housing costs a household no more than 30% of their gross monthly income.

### **Amenity Space**

On-site common or private space that can be either indoor or outdoor. Amenity spaces are designed for active or passive recreational use, and can take the form of exercise or common rooms, balconies, terraces, rooftop gardens, or deck space.

### **Bio-Swale**

Bioswales are gently sloped channels lined with vegetation that are designed to slow, store, drain, and filter stormwater.

### **Bonus Density**

An increase in built area in exchange for public amenities and/or benefits that contribute to the livability and proper planning of the neighbourhood affected by the resulting increase in density.

### **Brownfield Sites**

Properties which had contained industrial or commercial uses, which have been abandoned, or are underused and in decline. Brownfields are sometimes characterized by derelict buildings, contamination resulting from previous industrial uses, or undesirable activity occurring on or near the sites.

### **Commercial Streets**

Streets with clusters of commercial activity that serve as focal points for the local community.

### **Compact Development**

Development that uses land efficiently and is generally characterized by medium to high density, connected streets, and shorter distances between destinations.

### **Complete Community**

Communities that include a range of uses and housing options to accommodate people in all stages of life and at a variety of income levels. Complete communities provide a place for residents to live, work, shop, learn, and play. These communities contain mixed uses and compact development that enables people to safely and conveniently access the goods and services they need in their daily lives, all within a short journey.

### **Complete Streets**

Complete streets, an approach to planning, design, operations and maintenance of roadways, that enables safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless if they are on foot, on a bike, using transit, or in a private vehicle.

### **Co-op housing / Cooperative Housing**

Housing cooperatives provide non-for-profit housing for their members and only charge enough to cover costs, making co-op housing more affordable than average private sector rentals.

### **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

An approach to the planning and design of the built environment that aims to reduce crime and make people feel safer.

### **Culturally Accessible**

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people from a diversity of cultures.

### **Cultural Landscapes**

Geographic areas which have been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning. These cultural landscapes provide opportunities for the interpretation and understanding of important historical settings and past patterns of land use.

### **Cultural Space Chain**

Spaces for creation, rehearsal, and production to support all cultural disciplines including dance, film, literary arts, music, new media, theatre and visual arts, in all cultural spheres. These spaces may include warehousing and storage, offices, presentation, and performance space.

### **Density**

A measure of the number of people or housing units occupying a given area of land. The measure reflects the general character of the housing types in a neighbourhood. Low density generally refers to a neighbourhood that would result from an area developed as one and two unit housing; medium density generally applies to townhouses or apartment buildings no higher than 6 storeys; and high density generally refers to taller apartment buildings resulting in more people per hectare.

### **District Energy**

An energy system that generates steam, hot water, or cold water at a central facility that is then distributed to heat or cool a group of buildings within a defined area or district.

### **Dwelling Unit**

One or more rooms used or designed to be used by one or more persons as a place of abode which contains not more than one kitchen and includes but is not limited to living, sleeping and sanitary facilities.

### **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**

The gross area of all floors in a building, measured from the outside of external walls, divided by the site area.

### **Green Infrastructure**

A network of natural and semi-natural engineered landscape elements designed to provide products and services such as stormwater management, water filtration, and improved air quality.

### **Green Roof**

The flat roof of a building that is covered or partially covered by vegetation.

### **Greyfield Sites**

Developed sites that are underutilized and well positioned for redevelopment.

### **Heritage Conservation District**

An area of urban or rural properties collectively deemed to have local or community heritage values.

### **Heritage Property**

A building, public building interior, streetscape, cultural landscape or area registered in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

### **Human-scale**

The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size and proportion of parts of a building or its details, that relates in a positive way to the visual and physical experience of a pedestrian.

### **Incubator**

A shared space that offers a supportive environment and workspace for people such as entrepreneurs and artists to grow their business or develop their craft.

### **Infill**

The development of vacant parcels or redevelopment of existing housing or other buildings.

### **Intensification**

The development of a property, site, or area at a higher density than currently exists. This can occur through development, redevelopment, infill, and expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

**Intensity**

The relative measure of the number of people and jobs in an area.

**LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)**

A widely recognized sustainability certification program for buildings and communities that measures performance based on environmental sustainability.

**Live/Work Unit**

A single unit that includes both the primary living quarters of an occupant with their commercial or office space.

**Low Impact Development (LID)**

Low Impact Development (LID) practices minimize stormwater runoff at its source, mimicking natural hydrological processes, through site planning and physical installations. LID can improve water quality in terms of pollutant removal, reduced nutrient loading through the use of plants, and natural features to filter and distribute stormwater. LID installations most frequently include grassy swales (bioswales), which can include pipe filter drains, curbs with cutouts, or infiltration trenches and pits.

**Low-rise Building**

A building which is no more than 3 storeys high.

**Main Streets**

Streets with continuous commercial activity, including office, retail, service and restaurant uses that have both local and regional draw. These streets form the backbone of Centres.

**Maker Space**

A space where people can gather to work on projects and share resources and knowledge.

**Mass, Massing**

The combined effect of the height, bulk, and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

**Mixed-use**

Different land uses that are arranged in close proximity. These different uses may be located on the same site, in the same building, or along the same street.

**Moderate Height Building**

A building which is four to six storeys high.

**Multimodal**

Refers to facilities or trips that incorporate more than one mode of transportation.

**Open Space**

Open space includes unbuilt lands and waters set aside and reserved over the long-term for public service, conservation, and community-shaping purposes. It can include public and privately-owned lands such as parks and trails, significant habitat and wilderness areas, natural resource lands, corridors for active commuting and connecting communities, water resources, cultural landscapes and coastline.

**Pedestrian Oriented**

Elements of planning and urban design that prioritize the needs and comfort of pedestrians. The intent is to create safe, comfortable, and more enjoyable environments for people of all ages and abilities. Specific pedestrian orientated design elements include connected streets, short blocks, four way intersections, hard surfaced pathways and an extensive sidewalk network.

**Physically Accessible**

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people with a variety of physical abilities.

**Placemaking**

An approach to planning and design that aims to create memorable, quality public spaces.

**Pocket Park**

A small urban park.

**Pop-up**

A temporary structure, space or event.

### **Public Realm**

The parts of an urban area, whether publicly or privately owned, that are available for everyone to see, use and enjoy, including streets, squares and parks; all land to which everyone has ready, free and legal access at all times. It includes the features and amenities within those lands, such as benches, lights, sidewalks, etc. Also commonly referred to as “public domain” and “public space”.

### **Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy**

A neighbourhood planning strategy which forms part of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). Neighbourhood Planning Strategies include all secondary planning strategies that were in existence at the time of the adoption of the Regional MPS and will include future planning strategies adopted to guide and direct development in greater detail at the neighbourhood level.

### **Secondary Suite**

Refers to the concept of adding an additional dwelling unit to an otherwise single-unit house. Secondary units are usually incorporated into the main house, such as a basement or third floor apartment subject to meeting applicable Land Use Bylaw and National Building Code requirements and securing applicable permits.

### **Setback**

The distance from the property line to the nearest part of the associated building or structure, measured perpendicular to the property line. Zoning By-laws typically require minimum setbacks to ensure that the use of a property does not infringe on the rights of neighbours; to allow room for wider sidewalks, lawns and trees; to preserve access to light, sunshine, and views; for amenity spaces; or for access and circulation.

### **Shared Street**

A street, also known as a Woonerf, where pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles (restricted to low speeds) share the same space.

### **Socio-economically Accessible**

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

### **Streetscape**

The elements within and along the street that define its appearance, identity, and functionality, including adjacent buildings and land uses, street furniture, landscaping, trees, sidewalks, and pavement treatments, among others.

### **Tall Building**

A building which is seven or more storeys high.

### **Transit Hub**

A transit facility that supports high frequency transit use and is integrated with multiple modes of transportation, including walking and cycling.

### **Transit Oriented Development**

A mix of residential, retail, and office uses with a supporting network of roads, bicycle ways, and pedestrian ways focussed around a major transit stop designed to support a high level of transit use.

### **Transit Priority Measures**

Strategies to increase transit operating speeds and transit travel time reliability in mixed traffic, such as traffic signal priority or queue jumps.

### **Universal Accessibility**

Design elements that make places and activities accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

### **Urban Agriculture**

The practice of growing, processing, and distributing food in an urban environment.

### **Urban Forest**

Every tree within the city.

### **Viewplane**

An unobstructed line of sight that allows a person to see a particular landform, building or landscape.

### **Walkable**

Refers to a single route, or a system of routes, between points that is relatively short, barrier free, interesting, safe, well-lit, comfortable and inviting to pedestrian travel.

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