

## Case 18708

*Development Approvals*

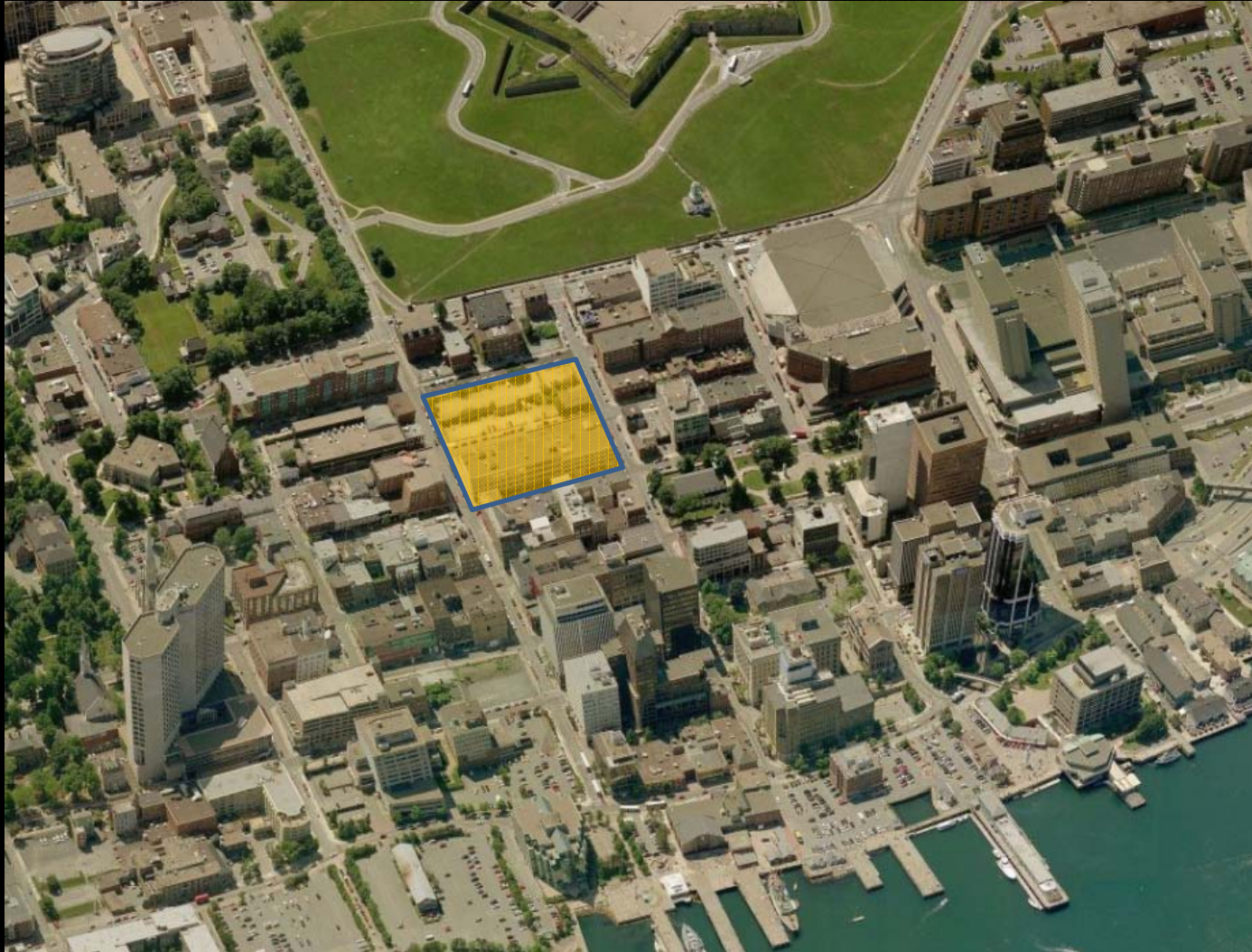
# Amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law

## Closure of Grafton Street

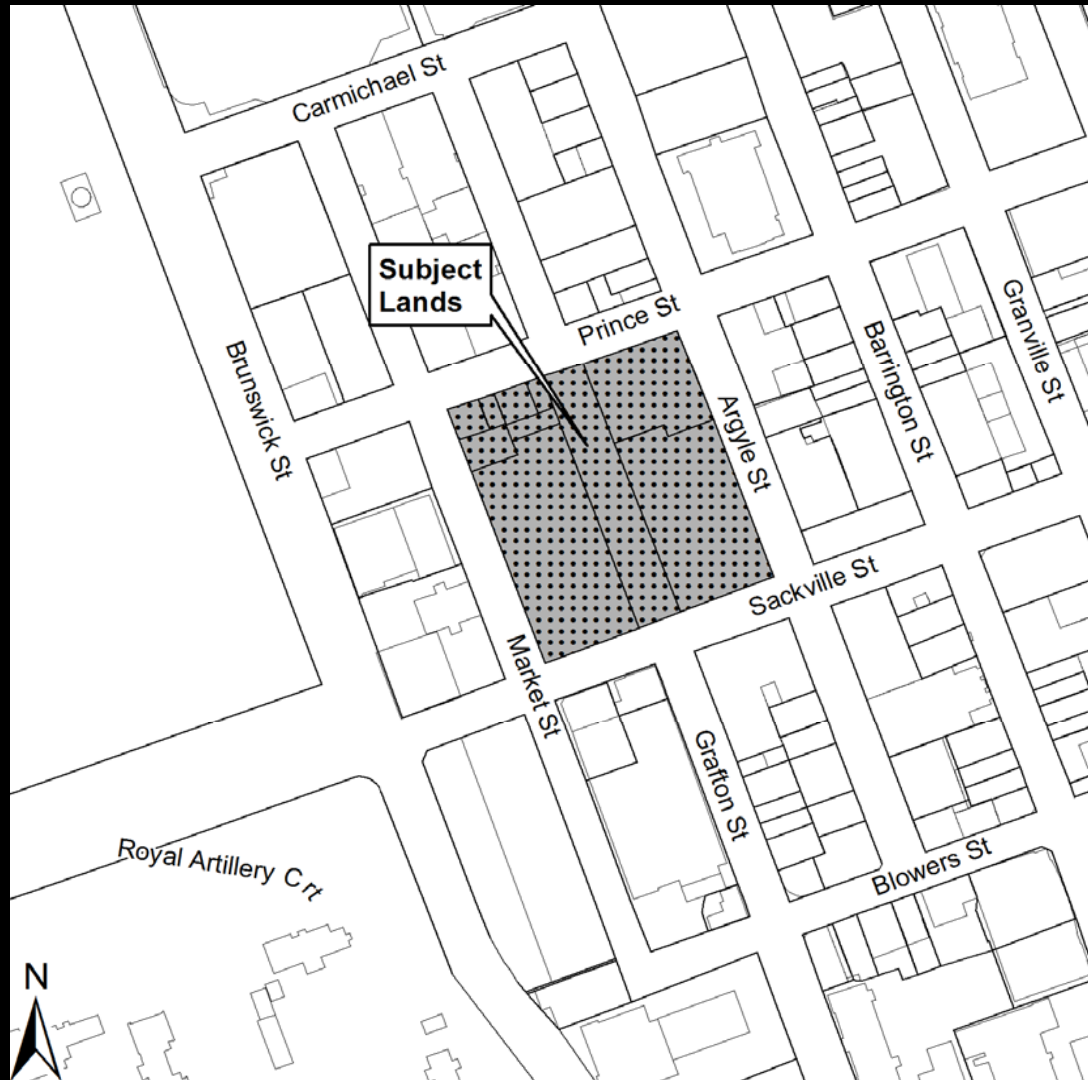
## Public Hearing

Richard Harvey  
Major Projects Planner  
April 29, 2014

# Location



# Planning



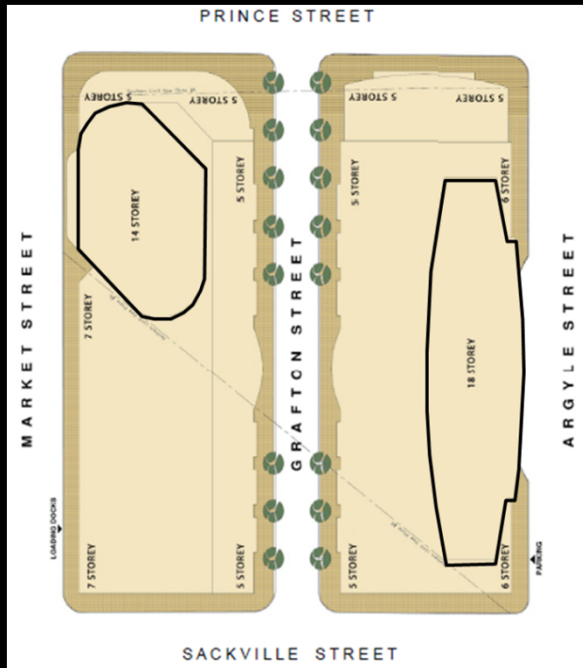
# Planning

## Publically Sponsored Convention Centre

“Such a development will have a significant economic, social and cultural impact on downtown Halifax, the province and the maritime region. The development will have the added benefit of revitalizing two, full underutilized yet prominent city blocks in the downtown core. Accordingly, it is appropriate to include specific provisions in this Plan to enable the development as contemplated.”



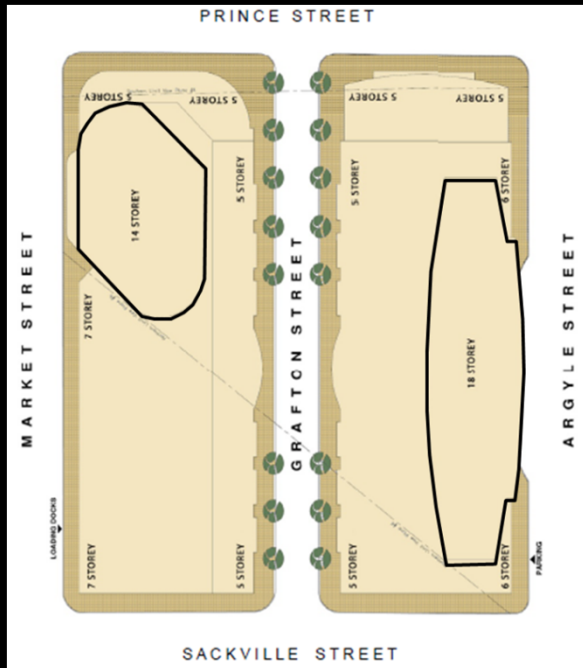
## Original Proposal



Special provisions were adopted to allow the built-form of the building

If the building met the built-form requirements specified in this diagram, an Appendix within the DHLUB, its approval would simply be subject to Substantive Site Plan Approval

## Original Proposal



There were concerns with the design – including with convention centre being completely underground

When funding was approved for the convention centre, the province specified that it be the subject of public consultation

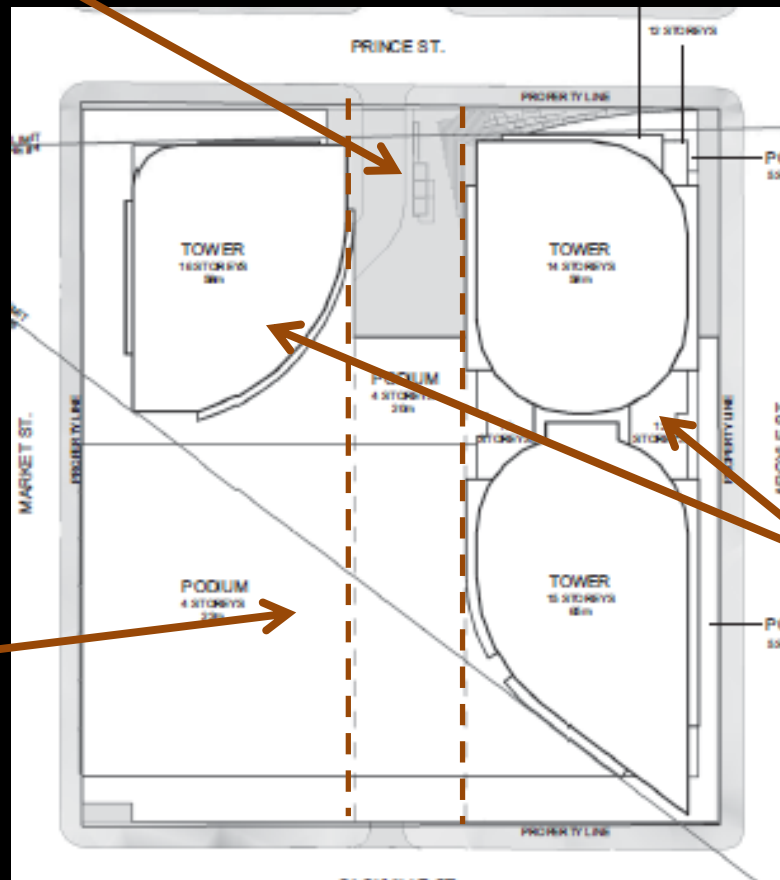
This consultation, along with changes initiated by the developer, resulted in changes to the building

No longer consistent with the Appendix within the by-law

## Current Proposal

Closure of  
Grafton Street –  
vehicle and  
pedestrian  
passageway

Convention  
Centre Ballroom  
raised above and  
over Grafton  
Street



Enlarged Towers

# Current Proposal



# Current Proposal





## Current Proposal



## Current Proposal



## Current Proposal



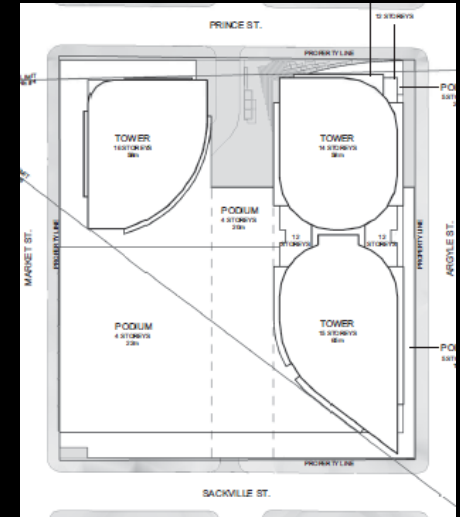
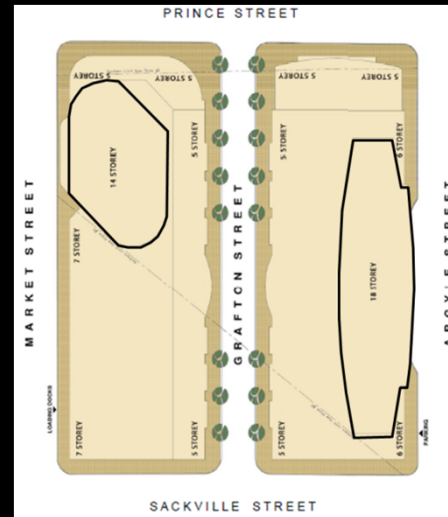
## Current Proposal

Policy 27 Except for the network of streets associated with the Cogswell Interchange, **HRM shall not close streets to permit blocks in the downtown to be consolidated for development.**



## Regional Council Considerations

1. Amendments to the planning documents to allow the new built-form
2. Amendments to the planning documents to allow the blocks to be consolidated
3. Consideration of the closure of Grafton Street
  - Following the approval of the amendments to the planning documents, Regional Council can consider the actual street closure
  - The final design of the building is subject to the Site Plan Approval Process





## Discussion

1. Changes to the Built-form
  - a. Raising the Ballroom over Grafton Street
  - b. Tower Widths
  - c. Shadow Impact
  - d. Wind Impact
  - e. Design Manual
2. Consolidation of Blocks / Closure of Grafton Street
  - a. Vehicular Traffic
  - b. Public Use / Connectivity
3. Conclusions / Recommendations

## Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

### Raising the Ballroom over Grafton Street



This has impacted the public nature of Grafton Street

The success of the Grafton Street space will ultimately depend on the detailed design and programming of this space

This detail will become clearer as the project progresses

## Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

### Tower Widths



The enlarged width of towers, particularly along Argyle Street, may be viewed as a negative feature

However, there are increased variations to the building face that helps break down the building's mass

## Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

### Shadow Impact

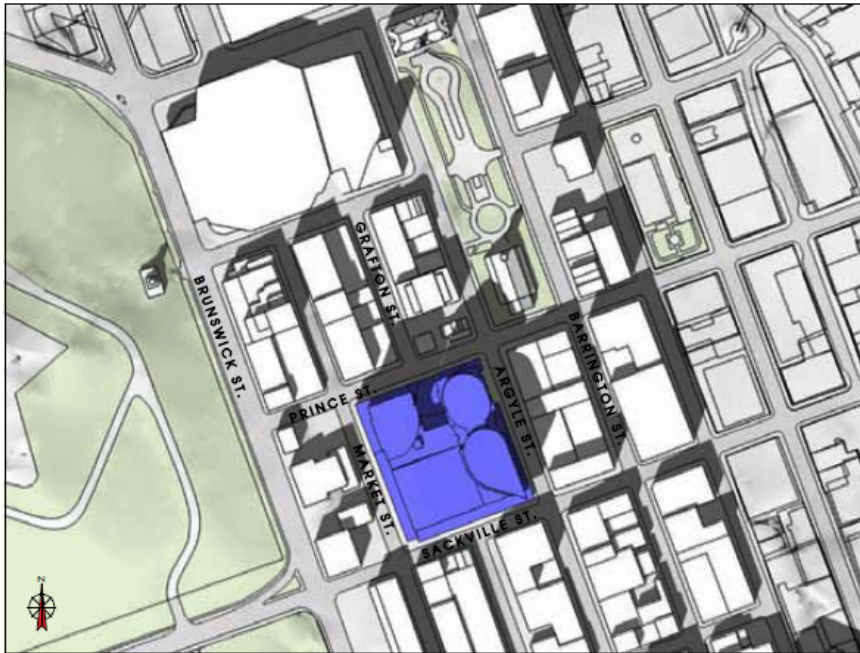
Primary concern is the impact on public spaces – in particular, the Grand Parade

# Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

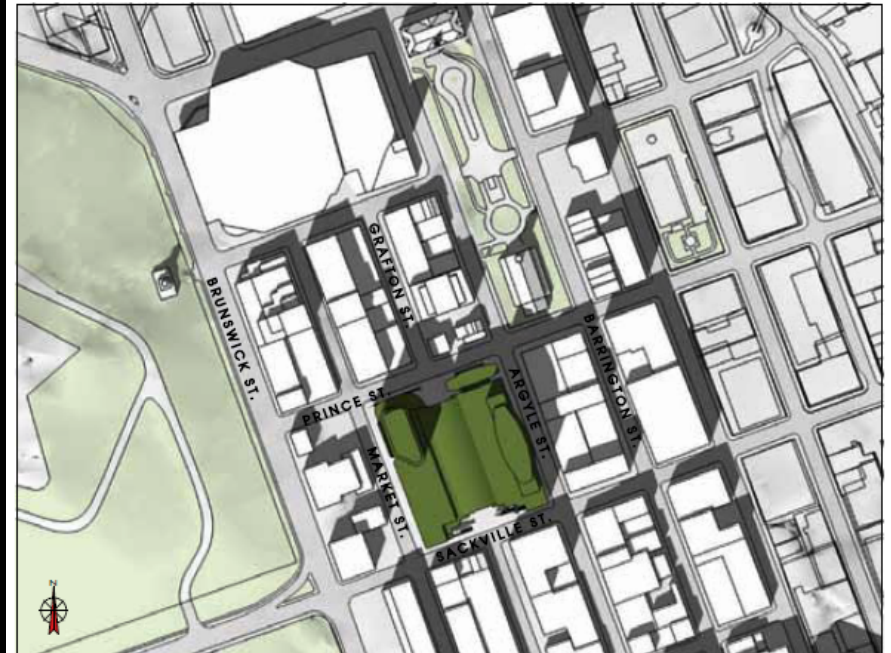
## Shadow Impact

September 22 - AUTUMNAL EQUINOX

2:00 PM



NOVA CENTRE - 2013 PROPOSAL



NOVA CENTRE - 2009 PROPOSAL

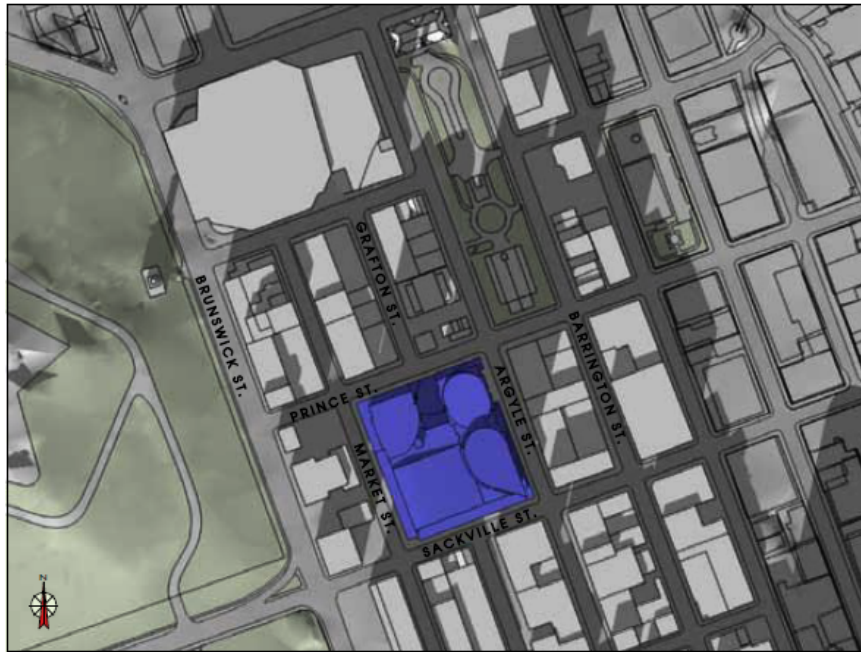


# Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

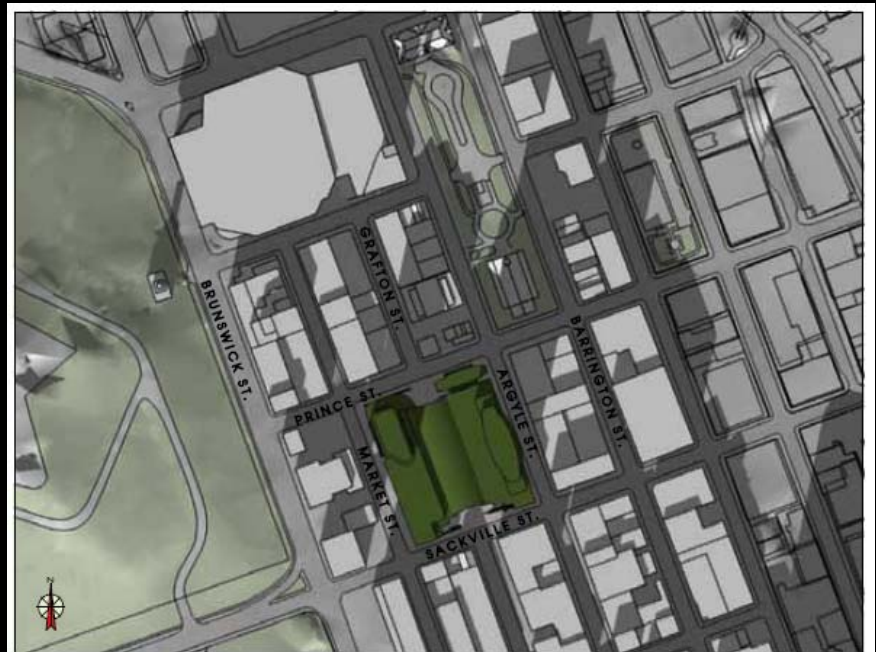
## Shadow Impact

DECEMBER 21 - WINTER SOLSTICE

1:00 PM



NOVA CENTRE - 2013 PROPOSAL



NOVA CENTRE - 2009 PROPOSAL

# Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

## Shadow Impact

JUNE 21 - SUMMER SOLSTICE

2:00 PM



NOVA CENTRE - 2013 PROPOSAL



NOVA CENTRE - 2009 PROPOSAL

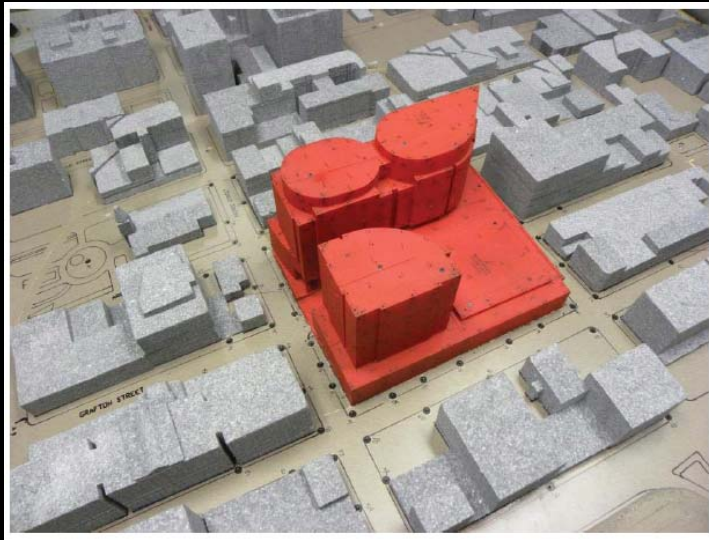
# Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

## Wind Impact

RWDI Pedestrian Wind Criteria		
Comfort Category	GEM Speed (km/h)	Description
Sitting	$\leq 10$	Calm or light breezes desired for outdoor restaurants and seating areas where one can read a paper without having it blown away
Standing	$\leq 14$	Gentle breezes suitable for main building entrances and bus stops
Strolling	$\leq 17$	Moderate winds that would be appropriate for window shopping and strolling along a downtown street, plaza or park
Walking	$\leq 20$	Relatively high speeds that can be tolerated if one's objective is to walk, run or cycle without lingering
Uncomfortable	$> 20$	Strong winds of this magnitude are considered a nuisance for most activities, and wind mitigation is typically recommended
<b>Notes:</b> (1) Gust Equivalent Mean (GEM) speed = $\max(\text{mean speed, gust speed}/1.85)$ ; and (2) GEM speeds listed above are based on a seasonal exceedance of 20% of the time between 6:00 and 23:00.		
Safety Criterion	Gust Speed (km/h)	Description
Exceeded	$> 90$	Excessive gust speeds that can adversely affect a pedestrian's balance and footing. Wind mitigation is typically required.
<b>Note:</b> Based on an annual exceedance of 9 hours or 0.1% of the time for 24 hours a day.		

## Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

### Wind Impact



Some concerns raised to date with regard to areas such as Argyle Street

Developer indicates that these are being addressed and will overcome at the time of substantial site plan approval application



## Discussion – Changes to the Built-form

### Design Manual

No amendments to the Design Manual have been sought by the Developer

Minor amendments have been suggested by staff to simply recognize the Nova Centre

There may be some streetscape issues that will need to be addressed through the substantive site plan approval process



## Discussion – Consolidation of Blocks / Grafton Street Closure

### Vehicular Traffic

No significant issues with closing Grafton Street with regard to downtown traffic / intersection performance

# Discussion – Consolidation of Blocks / Grafton Street Closure

## Public Use and Connectivity

The closure of the street is a loss of public space

It will be in the developer's interest to have the public use it

The proposed amendments specify that the space be open at both ends



## Conclusions

Changes to the Nova Centre have evolved through community consultation and as initiated by the developer

Attempts have been made balance a large building and circumstances of the site

## Conclusions

“Such a development will have a significant economic, social and cultural impact on downtown Halifax, the province and the maritime region. The development will have the added benefit of revitalizing two, full underutilized yet prominent city blocks in the downtown core. Accordingly, it is appropriate to include specific provisions in this Plan to enable the development as contemplated.”

Consistent with this overall intent of the DHSMPs, it is concluded that Council should support the new proposal

## Recommendations

Approve the proposed amendments to the Downtown Halifax MPS and LUB, as contained in the staff report

- Changes to the built-form; and
- An exception to the policy regarding the consolidation of blocks



## Next Steps

Contingent on these approvals of the MPS and LUB amendments, at a later time, Regional Council will consider the terms and conditions for the street closure

The final approval of the building will subject to a substantive site plan approval application