



YARMOUTH DOWNTOWN BLUEPRINT

> Final Report

Ekistics Planning & Design
March 2010

COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL
FORM: MEDIA

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~ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Downtowns across North America have undergone major shifts over the last century. These once prosperous centres of commerce have been replaced by empty storefronts, boarded-up upper-storey windows, little or no housing options, decaying historic buildings, and lifeless or potentially dangerous streets at night. As a result, the loss of downtown diversity coupled with the exodus of people moving to the suburbs led to its physical decline and blight.

While the trend during the last half of the 20th century was away from downtown, during the past few decades, there have been signs of optimism regarding the renaissance of downtowns throughout North America. From 1990 to 2000 the number of households living in a sample of 45 U.S. downtowns increased 13 percent. "Re-centralization" has become the new buzz word in both large cities and smaller towns across North America. Many urban and rural municipalities (including HRM, CBRM, Saint John, etc.) are developing 'regional plans' to curb sprawl in the suburbs and intensify investment in their downtowns – known now as "smart growth". Downtowns have begun to reinvent themselves as the centre of the New Economy and as the nucleus of education, culture, art and finance.

Recognizing the ever growing strategic importance of its downtown, the Town of Yarmouth has embarked on this downtown revitalization blueprint to guide the rejuvenation of the Town's most important strategic asset. This plan summarizes the community's vision for their downtown and outlines a strategy to ensure its renewed relevance.

Objectives of this Report

Revitalizing Yarmouth's downtown requires strategic measures to strengthen the social, physical and economic condition of the central business district (CBD). The primary goal of revitalization is to improve the livability and quality of life in a community by making the downtown a focus for investment. Private investment in individual buildings and properties needs to be leveraged through public investment in downtown infrastructure and through concerted planning and organization.

The purpose of the downtown revitalization blueprint is to guide public investment in the downtown over the next 20 years and to establish a planning framework that encourages private investment.





The Blueprint outlines various tools and strategies to orchestrate decision-making regarding investments related to infrastructure, development, programming, policy, and urban design that reflect the current Vision for downtown as distilled through the public consultation process. The Blueprint works to strengthen the existing downtown assets, diminish the liabilities, re-focus priorities, build consensus, create partnerships, leverage investment and build capacity for downtown rejuvenation.

The specific objectives of the Blueprint are to:

1. Increase the number and diversity of people living downtown over the next 20 years
2. Maximize the potential of the public spaces.
3. Realize the potential of the waterfront.
4. Create pedestrian friendly connections between the waterfront and the Main Street.
5. Increase the diversity of businesses and public venues in the downtown
6. Protect and celebrate the community's built heritage
7. Realize a wide range of active transportation options
8. Strengthen and improve events for residents and guests
9. Strengthen downtown's competitive advantage
10. Provide a safe and memorable experience to pedestrians.
11. Inspire creativity and innovation
12. Celebrate the Town's cultural diversity
13. Maximize the potential of this gateway community.
14. Maximize the use of existing buildings and create in-fill projects that improve the quality of

the streetscape

15. Improve the quality of the building stock and open spaces in the downtown
16. Encourage visitors to stay longer and engage them in the rich history of the area.
17. Make it easy to navigate to all the exciting places downtown.
18. Leverage public funding sources for private investment downtown
19. Provide confidence for developers that the Town is committed to encouraging 'good' development and increasing the value of properties downtown.

Vision Statement

In 20 years, Downtown Yarmouth will be a diverse and thriving community made up of people living, working and playing in a historic yet modern waterfront setting. For the people who live in this community, their day to day services are available and close by. For those living on the outskirts, downtown becomes a much more frequent destination for services, leisure and commerce.

This new community will include families, older and young adults, students, professionals, and empty nesters. Downtown Yarmouth will also be THE cultural hub of the western shore, a place where residents and tourists alike come to experience culture and history, visit galleries, see a play, go to a restaurant, walk the waterfront, attend events, and shop at one-of-a-kind specialty retail stores. A major new creative sector anchor has been constructed in the downtown. It will be a place where the arts and creativity flourishes.

Heritage buildings will be restored and streetscapes will be lively and engaging. Missing buildings on the street will be infilled with high quality new mixed use developments. The waterfront will remain active and

working but new developments on the waterfront will bring more people to the waters edge. Main Street will have a stronger ties to the waterfront. Downtown will be a place of distinction and diversity.

Physical Revitalization Summary

The conceptual neighbourhood plan considers the high level contextual issues which will help the downtown become a distinct neighbourhood and a true 'destination' downtown.

Key plan features of the conceptual neighbourhood plan include:

1. The 'leisure' waterfront is extended. Notwithstanding the importance of the working waterfront to Yarmouth, an opportunity exists to strengthen the leisure waterfront which currently includes Rudders Restaurant and Pub, and the Killam Brothers property. The Town should encourage the redevelopment of other under-utilized waterfront parcels (e.g., Corkum's Wharf north of Rudders) for mixed use type development with an active commercial ground floor and office or residential uses above.
2. The waterfront boardwalk is extended. With the extension of the leisure waterfront comes the opportunity to extend the waterfront open space network. Ideally, the boardwalk should also include destination elements such as art parks, playgrounds or water features.
3. Streetscapes are improved for pedestrians and cyclists. Sidewalk 'bump-outs' are created at every street corner and areas where parking is impractical. These bump outs can create pedestrian amenity areas and interpretive or wayfinding opportunities. Existing street

lighting fixtures are raised higher to allow for festive banners and hanging planter arms. Sidewalk cafe's are incorporated into the street by forfeiting the occasional parking spot. Bike lanes are added to Main Street.

4. Streetscapes are greened. Street trees and select plantings are added wherever possible to every street downtown. Especially in the bump-out areas.
 5. Wireless Zone. Free wireless internet is provided downtown in conjunction with the Town and a local service provider.
 6. Destination public spaces are created. A series of destination open spaces are created and designed to a high quality. These would include a water park, an art plaza by the AGNS, waterfront plazas, etc. Public pocket parks are added wherever possible on existing or future public lands.
 7. Facade Improvement Program. A facade improvement program would be instituted on Main Street to create a public private partnership for improving private buildings.
 8. A major creative sector anchor is added to the downtown. Th'YARC Playhouse and Arts Centre is relocated to the downtown creating a major new public destination for the downtown to rally around. This starts a cultural cluster that can be expanded over time, including the possible addition of music studios for youth.
 9. A market is added to the downtown. A fish and farmers market complex is added to the Barn on Hawthorne Street. Temporary structures are also provided on the edges of the adjacent parking lots.
 10. The waterfront is connected to Main Street. The side streets connecting the waterfront to the Main Street are upgraded for pedestrians to create better linkages between the two.
- Particularly in the leisure waterfront zone.
11. Civic and wayfinding signage is added. A civic signage strategy is created to aid in wayfinding and improve the brand identity of downtown.
 12. Parking Lots are Upgraded. Parking lots are upgraded and made more environmentally friendly; wayfinding signage is also added.
 13. Vacant lots are infilled. vacant lots along main streets are infilled with mixed use developments wherever possible. A mixed use development strategy encourages more rental and condo housing downtown.
 14. Upper stories are filled. Upper stories of existing buildings are utilized for residential or office space.
 15. Gateways into the downtown are created. Gateways into the downtown (from the ferry terminal, Starrs Road and Forest Street) are highlighted as gateways to the downtown.
 16. A new ferry terminal is built which incorporates a "Fundy Discovery Centre" as a major waterfront destination.
 17. YMCA Expansion. The YMCA is expanded to strengthen its destination appeal.
 18. An urban campus is introduced. The Town should work with the NSCC to determine if an urban satellite campus can be located in the downtown. An ideal location would be either the former municipal building on main street, or for larger users, the Domtex building.
 19. The working waterfront expands as outlined in the Port Plan. Select opportunities for incorporating tourism into the working waterfront are explored.
 20. Frost Park is improved.
 21. An Urban Forest Master Plan is created
 22. An Active Transportation Plan is created.

23. Administration of the downtown is fine tuned.
24. Regular downtown events are hosted.
25. The Town becomes active in land assembly for redevelopment.

Implementation

The total implementation budget for the 20-year Downtown Yarmouth Revitalization Plan is approximately \$13,149,900 dollars (2010 dollars). If the Town and project funding partners were able to contribute approximately \$657,495 (2010 dollars) per year in capital or in-kind to the projects identified each year, all works could be completed within 20 years.

Some of the capital required may already exist within annual budgets for maintenance and renewal of the streets and other related infrastructure. We have included a 20% contingency to allow some flexibility during detailed design. We have also added 15% for design and project management costs however, these will vary from 8% to 18% depending on the size, nature and the level of project management required. Exact costs will depend upon detailed designs and bidding climate prevailing at the time of implementation. All projects require detailed design to facilitate quality implementation.





1: ORIGINS

As the symbolic and functional nucleus of every community, downtowns reflect the well being, vitality and prosperity of its resident and business community. A vibrant and robust downtown is important to the economic health and civic pride of a community and region; it stimulates cultural activities, incubates creativity, preserves and showcases cultural history, stimulates economic development, fosters diversity, and provides for the varied needs of its residents and visitors.

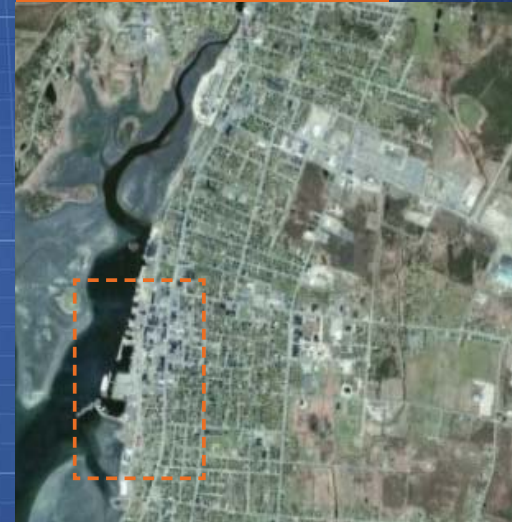
Downtowns across North America have undergone major shifts over the last century. These once prosperous centres of commerce have been replaced by empty storefronts, boarded-up upper-storey windows, little or no housing options, decaying historic buildings, and lifeless or potentially dangerous streets at night. Much of this change can be attributed to the impact of the automobile, which made commuting to the surrounding suburban areas much

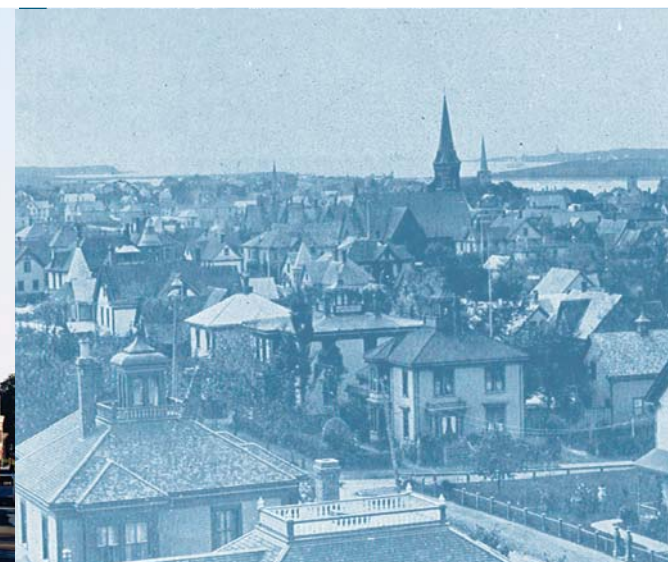
easier. As residents moved to the suburbs, so did shopping centres and other services, thus shifting these businesses out of their traditional home in the downtown. Municipal planners aided this shift by segregating land uses, thereby creating dedicated residential subdivisions, industrial parks, educational campuses, shopping centres, etc. As a result, the loss of downtown diversity coupled with the exodus of people moving to the suburbs led to its physical decline and blight.

While the trend during the last half of the 20th century was away from downtown, during the past few decades, there have been signs of optimism regarding the renaissance of downtowns throughout North America. From 1990 to 2000 the number of households living in a sample of 45 U.S. downtowns increased 13 percent¹. "Re-centralization" has become the new buzz word in both large cities and smaller towns across North America. Many urban and rural municipalities (including HRM, CBRM, Saint John, etc.) are developing 'regional plans' to curb sprawl in the suburbs and intensify investment in their downtowns

¹ Eugenie Birch, "Who Lives Downtown"
(Washington: Brookings Institution, forthcoming).

1.1 OVERALL STUDY AREA





1.2 Yarmouth Downtown Study Area

– known now as “smart growth”. Cities have begun to reinvent themselves as the centre of the New Economy and as the nucleus of education, culture, art and finance.

The Town of Yarmouth has mimicked many of these trends. For centuries, the harbour has been the economic lifeblood of the community, with jobs being created in the fishery, marine transportation and tourism. Before the advent of the automobile, virtually all commerce occurred on the waterfront, which had numerous wharves and an inter-modal connection to a rail line. Like other towns, Main Street was a block away from the waterfront so that formal commerce (e.g., banking, legal firms, etc) did not have to interact with the rough and dirty waterfront. Although Yarmouth still has a fair amount of maritime activity on its waterfront, the volumes have been reduced considerably, and today, many areas are under utilized and in need of revitalization. In addition, the growth of new large format retail stores on Starr’s Road has eroded the economic vitality of main street as a retail destination.

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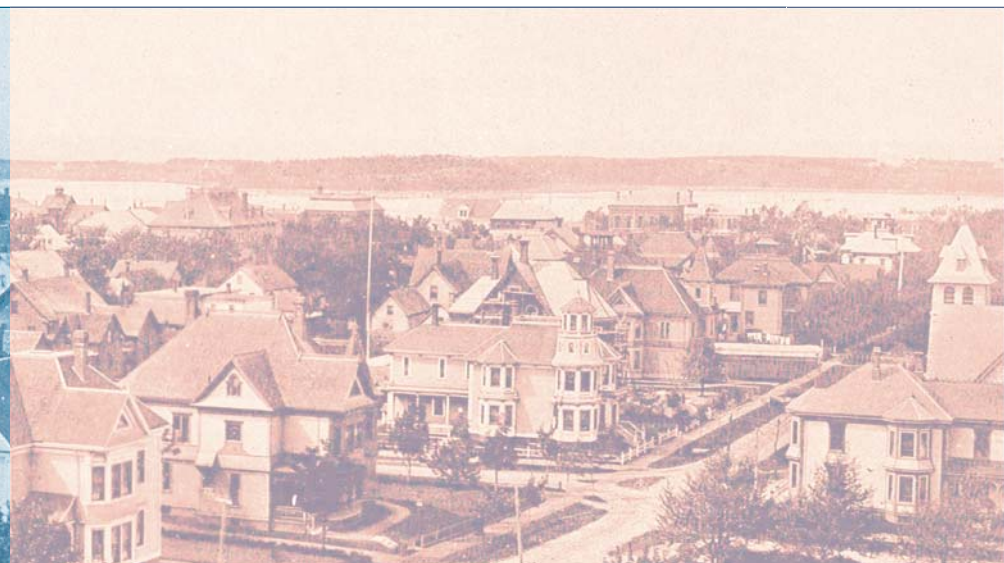
1.1 PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES:

Revitalizing Yarmouth’s downtown requires strategic measures to strengthen the social, physical and economic condition of the central business district (CBD). The primary goal of revitalization is to improve the livability and quality of life in a community by making the downtown a focus for investment. Private investment in individual buildings and properties needs to

be leveraged through public investment in downtown infrastructure and through concerted planning and organization.

The purpose of the downtown revitalization blueprint is to guide public investment in the downtown over the next 20 years and to establish a planning framework that encourages private investment. The report establishes the principles which underlay the foundation of the plan and then introduces a variety of revitalization components which, taken together, should set the downtown on a path to greater growth and prosperity.

The Blueprint outlines various tools and strategies to orchestrate decision-making regarding investments related to infrastructure, development, programming, policy, and urban design that reflect the current Vision for downtown as distilled through the public consultation process. The Blueprint works to strengthen the existing downtown assets, diminish the liabilities, re-focus priorities, build consensus, create partnerships, leverage investment and build capacity for downtown rejuvenation.



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1.2 RENAISSANCE OF DOWNTOWNS

Prior to 1945, manufacturing and industrialization was the major source of employment in Canada. Shipbuilding and rail drove the wealth of many Atlantic Canada towns. Shipping and rail provided one of the only reliable means of transportation and as a result, busy port towns and rail towns grew quickly. Restricted personal mobility clustered people and businesses together to create a tight urban texture and strong CBD's. Farmers populated the lands on the periphery of the downtowns, in close proximity to their downtown export markets. People lived and worked in downtowns and there was a great mix of land uses in a very tight area. Waterfront ports were bustling with import and export industry in Nova Scotia. In the mid to late 1800's in many large port communities, new rail lines dissected the waterfront from the downtown CBD creating an industrial waterfront and a business driven CBD (i.e., main street was typically one block away from the



waterfront). Booming waterfront ports with rail access to the hinterland became export hubs that fueled downtown growth. Industrial businesses lined the shores of many early port communities as waterways and rail lines preceded the road corridors; service businesses clustered nearby on main street.

With the post war baby-boom of 1945, cheap, accessible land surrounding downtown, coupled with federal infrastructure investment programs which encouraged road and highway development, led to suburbanization and decentralization. In the 1950's and 1960's, the concept of the 'shopping malls' took hold, and many enclosed facilities were constructed on inexpensive suburban with good proximity to the new highways. The prospect of indoor, convenient and accessible retailing competed heavily with traditional downtowns with many businesses opting for space in enclosed malls that became communities of their own. The growth of chain stores, which often preferred to lease space rather than own buildings, also favoured the shopping centre model over the downtown model. By the end of

the 1970's, regional and super-regional malls had saturated the market and covered the Canadian landscape in patterns that mirrored an area's buying power. The Urban Renewal program of the 1960's attempted to remedy the downtown situation by encouraging the demolition of derelict buildings (many of them heritage buildings) and building roads, interchanges and highway between the CBD's and the suburbs. By all accounts, the program did more to harm the downtown than the 'improvements' it was designed to foster.

By the 1970's, many of Canada's downtowns, large and small, had become run-down and derelict. In 1979 the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF) embarked on "The Main Street Canada Program"; a comprehensive effort to halt the decay and destruction of traditional main streets in Canadian towns and cities. Despite the program's many successes, the federal government's contribution to Main Street Canada ran out in the early 1990's. For a brief while, downtowns seemed like they were on the path to recovery.

However, the emergence of the Big Box and Power Centre retailing concept during the recession of the early 1990's created a new round of development that further depleted downtown of economic activity. Over time, many of these box stores (e.g., Staples, Future Shop, Home Depot, Kent) became indistinguishable from one another. The term "Generica" describes this trend towards homogenized big box development, where the stores are so similar, that visitors are hard pressed to tell where they are, as the buildings and landscape all look the same (i.e., they are generic). Large companies prefer this approach to conformity, as it simplifies the planning and design process, and maximizes the economic return of their stores. Towns like New Minas (NS) and Sackville (NS) have built their economy on accepting the concept of generic. While Big Box retailing fills a need for mobile local residents (as long as they don't have to live near it or in it), its niche is in specialty products and it does very little to contribute to the quality of life for communities.

In spite of this continued competition from suburban big box stores, downtowns in Canada continue to transform themselves. Some of the reasons include:

1. Downtown continues to provide a range of boutique retailers, restaurants and cultural amenities. As a result, downtown living has become fashionable to many segments of the population.
2. Municipalities are now recognizing the cost associated with providing municipal services to suburban sprawl, and as a result, many have implemented growth management strategies to restrict further sprawl. In addition, much of the inexpensive land on the periphery of downtown has already been developed.
3. As the cost of oil and gas continue to rise (many experts predict \$2/litre within the next two to five years), the cost of driving and living in the suburbs increases. In larger cities, this is encouraging people to live and shop back downtown.
4. New planning policies encourage mixed use development downtown which are bringing people back to the CBD to live and work. Similarly, planning policies which discourage suburbanization and unsustainable development forms are also being put in place further restricting sprawl.
5. Downtowns are being recognized as centres of commerce, culture, education and art. Their strength continues to be seen in their diversity.
6. Cultural tourism continues to be a driver of the tourism sector (In most Atlantic Canadian cities, over 70% of cultural tourists visit downtowns during their trip). These tourists are looking for unique environments and activities, and are not interested in generic box development.

7. Federal and Provincial funding programs are targeting downtowns and other sustainable initiatives like facade programs, downtown infrastructure, waterfronts, arts centres, active transportation plans, etc.

In 2010, the renaissance of downtowns in Canada has only just begun. The Town of Yarmouth is in an excellent position to act pro-actively to plan the evolution of its downtown.

1.3 HEALTHY DOWNTOWNS

The health of a downtown is a reflection on the health of a community. Healthy downtowns often represent a healthy community. In the same way active planning is required to ensure the health of a community, proactive planning is needed to ensure the vitality and growth of Yarmouth's downtown. There are many important reasons why downtown revitalization is important:

FOSTERS COMMUNITY IDENTITY. Because downtowns are the traditional heart of most communities, they are often the first way residents identify or distinguish themselves from other communities. In an increasingly homogenized world, communities that preserve their unique cultures and distinctive character have an economic advantage.

JOB AND WAGES. Locally owned businesses often create more jobs locally and often provide better wages and benefits than chain stores do.



1.3 Downtown Frankfurt, Germany



1.4 Downtown Montreal



1.5 Mont Tremblant Town Centre



EXPANDS THE TAX BASE. Successful downtowns generate revenues to pay for local community services. Public investment in downtown revitalization usually pays dividends in the long term to the entire region.

FIRST IMPRESSION. Downtown's appearance is typically the first impression a community offers to visitors. First impressions stay with people.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY. Downtowns help to sustain vibrant, compact, walkable Town centers—which in turn are essential to reducing sprawl, automobile use, habitat loss, and air and water pollution.

PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HISTORY. Because of their enduring history, downtowns are the custodians of our collective cultural history. They provide a glimpse of our past accomplishments and sometimes failures. Cultural tourism, the fastest growing sector of our economy in Nova Scotia, depends on preserving and showcasing our history.

PROVIDES RESIDENTS WITH RETAIL AND SERVICES. In many rural places, downtown offers a diversity of retail stores, financial institutions, historic areas, cultural and educational institutions and public agencies and local government offices. Diversity is the formula for the long-term strength of downtown.

KEEPS DOLLARS IN THE COMMUNITY. With services and goods available locally, residents will not need to shop outside the community as often.

IS SELF POLICING. A vibrant residential downtown population is much more secure than a 'work only' downtown. The many 'eyes on the street' reduce vandalism and crime.

PREVENTS BLIGHT AND ABANDONMENT. A strong downtown will have lower health and safety costs and concerns.

PROMOTES COMMUNITY WELL-BEING. Locally owned businesses build strong communities by sustaining vibrant Town centers, linking neighbors in a web of economic and social relationships, and contributing to local causes.

PRODUCT DIVERSITY. A multitude of small businesses, each selecting goods based on the interests and needs of local customers, guarantees a much wider range of product choices.

FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL REVITALIZATION ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE. Both the Feds and the Province offer a number of programs and a variety of assistance to help downtown revitalization efforts.

1.4 STUDY PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

This report was prepared by Ekistics Planning Design (in association with Colliers International and Form:Media), and is the culmination of 6-month community planning and urban design process commissioned by the Town of Yarmouth. The study builds on the outcomes and recommendations of the 1980 "Proposal for the Revitalization and Redevelopment of Yarmouth" prepared by Cochrane and Forsyth Architects.

Yarmouth's downtown vision reflects a true echo of the ideas and community dialogue heard throughout this project. This vision came into focus during a series of public workshops, where participants identified and agreed upon specific issues to address. The need for the Town to come together and work collectively toward similar goals was seen as the best way to successfully address these issues and move a vision forward. This collection of voices ultimately spoke to the need



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for a plan that would allow them to champion their ideas.

This study was organized into four phases that were framed by a public engagement process, and designed to generate a new Vision for the future of Downtown Yarmouth in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders.

1.4.1 Phase 1: Project Kick-Off and Background Research

Phase 1 commenced with a project Kick-Off meeting in August 2009 where the Consultant Team met with the steering committee and City staff to review the timeline, deliverables and protocol of the study. The steering committee was made up of business owners, elected officials and Town staff. A walk-about was held with some members of the committee to point out local observations. Policy information, past studies and base maps were thoroughly reviewed to inform the Blueprint.

1.4.2 Phase 2: Stakeholder Interviews

The steering committee provided a list of about 20 stakeholders (mostly business owners in the downtown) for the Consultants to interview. The interviews were completed over a 3 day period in August. Some interviews were done by phone. The interviews were generally consistent in their observations. The key issues included:

1. The need for a stronger downtown, more consistent business hours, greater commercial variety, more people living in the downtown.
2. Safety, vandalism, loitering, improved policing, improved lighting.

3. Quality of buildings and streetscapes in the downtown.
4. Better use of the waterfront resources to strengthen the downtown.
5. Improved ferry service.
6. Creative ways to use vacant upper stories.
7. The need for a large public anchor downtown and ways to strengthen existing anchors.

The interviews formed the basis for the public workshop questions.

1.4.3 Phase 3: Merchant Workshop & Public Workshop

A merchant workshop (afternoon) and public workshop (evening) was held separately on Wednesday August 5th. Both were very well attended. Twenty-five persons attended the merchant session from 3pm to 5pm and up to 65+ showing at the public workshop from 7pm to 9pm at the Lions Club. The overall response and activity generated during this process was positive and successful, especially during the public workshop. Both sessions used the same format with similar questions being asked both sets of participants. Participants were divided into groups of six to eight people, with each group working together to answer two questions. Each group was given about 45 minutes to prepare their answers, and then summary presentations were made to all in attendance.

The questions posed to participants were:

1. Describe the elements that will make downtown Yarmouth a great downtown; and
2. On the plan (provided), note all opportunity sites, constraints and downtown improvement elements.

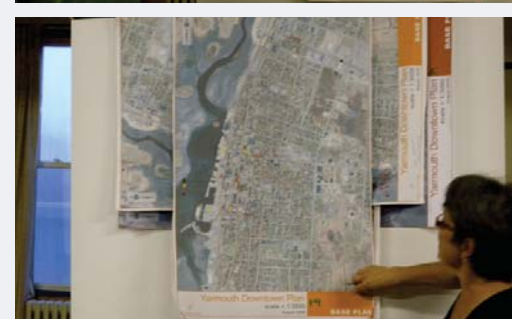
Ideas and discussion from both workshops were plentiful in particular at the evening session. Response to the questions were varied but centered around a number of common themes. Table 1.1 summarizes most of the issues addressed at both the merchant and public workshops. The consultants have organized the topics into the headings outlined in the table. The following is a summary of these themes:

1. STREETSCAPE:

At a conceptual level the group sought to improve the overall look of Main Street and the Waterfront. The physical and visual connections between the two were also presented as the “glue” needed to strengthen and unite the downtown as a whole. Two general themes surfaced the need for increased / improved greening and historical texture. “Green” had two meanings: more vegetation / green space; and, environmentally responsible action. The secondary level of this theme generated physical street improvements (e.g., Sidewalk cafes, a public square, and re-development of the block containing the Toots store). Tertiary ideas included streetscape elements (e.g., Improved lighting, bike racks bike lanes and a tidal clock).

2. BUILDINGS:

There was strong support for more residential opportunities as a way to restore underutilized buildings, and ultimately downtown. Access to the second stories of existing buildings was the suggested solution to the problem, as well as infilling of vacant lots. Participants also suggested that improvement incentives could generate much needed attention from building owners. Vacant buildings were also an issue and discussion focused on how find tenants for this space.



1.6 Community Workshop, Aug 5, 2009



1.7 Community Workshop, Aug 5, 2009

3. SOCIAL:

Participants stressed that first and foremost residents need to come first. To date, the focus of planning efforts has been centered on a seasonal tourist industry; this needs to change. Programming support for troubled youth and increased RCMP presence to reduce the number of loiterers was also voiced. Showcasing Yarmouth's diverse arts & culture scene was another opportunity tabled at the workshop.

4. BRANDING / SIGNAGE / PROMOTIONS

In a larger context, the need for a marketing strategy complete with a brand, theme, logo etc. was seen as important. Promotion of Yarmouth's many assets to existing residents and abroad was also requested. Within the town, directional signage to find the downtown when coming from the highway, (Starrs Road) and the hospital was suggested. Within the downtown district, promotion of architecture, a banner program, interpretive signage, and a gateway were suggested ideas. Interest was also shown in having a paid individual bring the business together as a unit, assess the missing markets and seek out different enterprises that would fit in the Downtown.

5. OPERATIONS / ADMINISTRATION

The concept of organizing, streamlining and restructuring the many groups and boards in the Downtown was discussed. Snow removal on Main Street should be maintained by the town to allow for universal access to existing shops.

6. WATERFRONT

The discussion about the waterfront fell into two categories, organization and elements. The key issue for the waterfront was the need to find the right balance between the working waterfront and the public waterfront. Once this was established expansion of the public waterfront was discussed. Proposed elements to improve the waterfront included: deep sea fishing operations, a yacht club, a fish market and new residential housing.

7. OPEN SPACE

Active transportation was a key theme in this section. Ideas discussed included: connecting existing green spaces, and the development of Bunkers Island and Alma Square.

8. FACILITIES

There was a strong flow of ideas and conversation surrounding existing and new facilities. The large organizational ideas saw the industrial waterfront moved to the south. Th' YARC would move to a downtown location bringing life back to main street during evening hours. The addition of a Farmers/ Fish market, urban campus (NSCC) and mixed use condos to downtown were a few of the requested facilities. An ambulatory medical clinic, healthier restaurants and public art were also discussed.

1.4.4 Phase 4: Online Survey

An online survey was prepared by the consultants to further gather feedback in the process. Over a two month period, the survey yielded over 200 respondents interested in the future development of area. The full survey results can be found in Appendix A.

Response to the survey was exceptional. Upwards to 200 responses gave insightful thoughts into the workings of the community. The male to female ratio of respondents was split evenly, with the majority of respondents being in the 50-64 age category.

It was near an even split between those who lived within walking distance of downtown, and those who did not. Despite the proximity of over half the respondents to the downtown, almost 80% drove downtown rather than walk, and virtually nobody rode their bike. Those that do drive found that the availability of parking was acceptable but that directional and shop signage was only fair. The primary traffic and safety concern was transport trucks, the speed of vehicles, and loitering.

The majority of people responding were long time residents and shop downtown weekly - mostly in the afternoon. The majority of people find that very few storefronts are appealing, although most felt that the overall appearance of downtown was in fair condition. When asked their destination, banks, restaurants, and work were the top answers. The top three requested streetscape improvements were: benches, trash receptacles and street trees. As far as added services and businesses: healthy restaurants, women's clothing store and a cultural facility (Th'YARC) were the most popular suggestions needed for the downtown.



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T1.1 Community Voices Workshop Summaries

	Streetscape	Buildings	Social	Branding / Signage / Promotions	Operations / Administration	Waterfront	Open Space	Facilities
▼ Merchant Workshop August 5th, 2009 28 Participants	Greening Program for the Downtown	More people living in the DT.	Expose Yarmouth's diverse multi-cultural community.	Develop a theme for the Town. Logo, Tag line, wordmark	Snow removal on Main St. sidewalks should be responsibility of town with bobcats.	Present Cat ferry doesn't suit the image of the town		Bring the Farmers/Fish market to the DT.
	Thematic street furnishings	Find a way to access the 2nd stories.	Tap Yarmouth's rich music community	Promote Architectural heritage	Longer parking in the DT. 1hr on street, 2hr in lots.	Deep sea fishing and excursions/tours are business opportunities		Provide wireless internet access for all in the DT.
	Improve lighting. Quantity and quality	Incentives to the owners for improvements	Curb loitering	Signage and Wayfinding program.	More public washrooms DT	Expand the public waterfront		Internet cafe.
	Sidewalk cafes	Find new uses for the old courthouse and jail.	Increase RCMP presence in the DT.	Better promotion of the rails to trails	Enforce laws about wheeled vehicles on sidewalks	Find a better mix for the working waterfront and tourism.		Mixed use condos on the Waterfront
	Improve on connecting side streets between Water and Main.		Put local interests before tourists.	Develop business target strat for DT. to identify future business. Person hired to pursue entrepreneurial interests.	Uniform opening and closing times.	Expand working waterfront to the south, freeing up the north for more public uses.		Convention centre
	More bike racks downtown.		Residences and business need to be more cooperative.	Encourage merchant window displays	Identify missing specialty shops			Bring the YARC DT.
	Fix up public or green public parking lots.			Develop a mural program using local artists.	Stream line number of organizations DT.			Relocate NSCC campus DT.
	Need a DT public square.			Historic banner program				Find urban campus for the DT.
	Move from high pressure sodium lighting to mercury vapor. Better colour, warm and better visibility.			Community notice board				Improve YMCA
				Focus on sports team events rather than traditional tourism.				
▼ Public Workshop August 5th, 2009 62 Participants	Better Links from the Main street to Waterfront		Support/facilities for troubled youth	Signage from Stars road to the DT	Funding needs to be levied from entire town	Aquarium / touch tank on the Waterfront	Develop Bunkers Island	Improved public transportation throughout town and into DT
	Show history through the streetscape materials		Concentrate on the Locals before Tourists.	Signage from the hospital to the DT	More public washrooms DT	Pirate ship playground	Walking trail from Waterfront to Bunkers	Merge WDCL with the YDCL
	Sidewalk cafes		Need to get out of 'tourist' frame of mind. Visitors instead.	Interpretive signage throughout the town	Police on Bike patrol	Killams Wharf could be expanded to host events similar to Shakespeare by the Sea	Alma Square	Skateboard Park
	Need a DT public square.			Banner Program		Public Yacht club	Sand beach on Bunkers Island	Medical clinics in DT
	Tidal clocks			Brand needed for Yarmouth pamphlets and maps need.		Wadding pools for model boats		Outdoor theatre
	Areas for busking			Concerts at Milton Ball field		Fish market		Markets/ Farmers Market
	Improved window displays			Entry signage		Develop Lobster Rock wharf		Tea room
	More green/trees need in DT			Promote local artists.		Boundless playground for handicap.		Wireless internet DT
	Bike lanes and racks			Celebrate the 'Canadian Gateway'		Create, build upon a marine centre of excellence.		Security cameras in DT
	Redevelop block that contains Toots					Floating restaurant		Public Art
	Street vendors					Condos on the Waterfront		Healthier restaurants
						A tall ship on the waterfront		Trolley circuit
						Floating convention centre		Move industry from north to south.
						Dredge for more waterfront.		Trade school for Coast Guard
Stakeholders Interviews August 5th, 2009		Find a way to access the 2nd stories.	Put local interests before tourists.	Signage and Wayfinding program.				
	Greening Program for the Downtown	Incentives to the owners for improvements	Curb loitering	Develop business target strat for DT. to identify future business. Person hired to pursue entrepreneurial interests.	Snow removal on Main St. sidewalks should be responsibility of town with bobcats.			Public Art
	More green/trees need in DT			Encourage merchant window displays	Identify missing specialty shops			Find urban campus for the DT.
					Stream line number of organizations DT.			





2: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Although the population of The Town of Yarmouth was relatively unchanged between 1976 and 2001, it decreased by 406 people (5.4%) in 2006. The county as a whole also experienced a decline in population, although at a slightly lower rate than the Town.

Major employers in the Town include the Western Regional Health Centre (500+), Register.com, the Southwest Regional School Board; Yarmouth Sea Products; and Tidal View Manor.

2.2 MARKET ASSESSMENT

Based on our review of the market, we have made the following observations regarding the market for new space in Yarmouth:

RESIDENTIAL HOUSING

Housing and land prices in the Yarmouth area are fairly modest. As a result, housing starts are fairly modest, and concentrated mostly in the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth. It is our understanding that there has not been a new apartment building built in Yarmouth for several decades. There are currently no condominiums in the Town of Yarmouth.

The events of 2009 indicate that there is a housing crisis in Yarmouth. To summarize, several investors got over leveraged with about 200 apartment units, and when they couldn't pass along any increases in operating costs to tenants via higher rent, they forced tenants out of the buildings. The result is that many families are in need of affordable hous-



ing. Owners of older style motels have created a small amount of new housing supply by converting hotel rooms into residential rentals, however most of these units are considered sub-standard (i.e., the unit sizes are by definition small).

As identified in the Best Practices review of downtown revitalization, increasing the number of residents living downtown is one way to breathe new life into downtown, as residents outspend office workers 5 to 1 on basics such as food, hardware supplies, etc. Although conversion of second floor space into residential is one option that needs to be pursued, the creation of good quality rental housing downtown should be a first priority. This is a good opportunity to revitalize the public area of the waterfront (e.g., Corkum's Wharf), and other under-utilized land parcels in the downtown. One or more high quality apartment buildings with views of the harbour should be developed for tenants at the mid to upper price points. These units would provide a rental alternative to current homeowners wishing to downsize from a large older home. Rental housing provides all the benefits of condominium living (e.g., low maintenance, lower heating costs, the ability to "lock and leave" for a winter vacation down south, etc), without the risk associated with the condominium format. As multi-family housing becomes more a more popular housing choice, the demand for condominium ownership will likely increase.

OFFICE SPACE.

There are not a lot a large employers in the Yarmouth area involved in the service sector. Major employers include the school board, health authority and register.com. Demand for office space is a function of the growth of service sector, and in particular, the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE) sectors – law firms, accounting firms, insur-

ance companies, banks, etc. As a regional centre, Yarmouth has its fair share of this type of economic activity, but it is not expected to be a growth sector in the near future.

Regarding the supply of office space, many small local service companies (law firms, accounting firms, etc) either occupy space along Main Street, or own an old home which has been converted into office space. The latter option provides the benefits of ownership, without the risk associated with an office building (i.e., the building can always be sold for use as residential housing). In some cases, office space occupies the ground floor of buildings on main street, which is a sign that retail space is not doing well (i.e., retailers should be able to pay more rent than office tenants). There are a number of vacant locations that could currently support new office space, including the second floor of many existing buildings on Main Street, and the former Municipality of the District of Yarmouth offices. Although we suspect that any future demand will be modest (unless another internet related company or call centre chose Yarmouth as a base of operations), future demand for office space should be directed to these locations.

RETAIL.

In the current environment, there are two types of retailers: big box format stores, and boutique stores. As indicated previously, big box stores prefer suburban locations with inexpensive land; they are not an appropriate fit for downtown Yarmouth. Boutique stores however do fit the profile of those that are interested in locating in a downtown environment, and these types of users would be a good candidate for vacant storefronts on Main Street.

Unfortunately, the change in ferry passenger visitation patterns has eroded the viability of downtown retail. In addition, retailers cannot afford to build





facilities in the hope that customers will show up, as the carrying costs and overhead are too high. Therefore, Yarmouth needs to focus on creating a more conducive retailing environment downtown. To this end, a major focus should be placed on the creation of new activity downtown, including: residential housing; additional government related jobs, as well as a new cultural facility (i.e., Th' YARC). As this new activity is put in place, business owners will likely respond with expanded or new retail stores.

HOTEL.

Demand for hotel rooms is a function of the general economy (business travellers out of town on business); meetings and events; and vacation and leisure travellers. Within secondary communities in Atlantic Canada, room night demand has been

negatively affected by the global recession, high gasoline prices, and changes in immigration policy that require visitors to carry passports for travel between the USA and Canada. When taken as a whole, this changes have had a significant negative impact on the hotel industry.

In Yarmouth, the ferry schedule has a huge impact on the viability of hotel rooms. For example, the ferry used to leave Yarmouth at about 8am each morning, thus requiring most passengers to spend the night in Yarmouth. Recent changes now have the ferry leaving late in the afternoon, which eliminates the need to spend the night in the community. As a result, the number of room nights sold dropped immediately.

The meetings and convention business is another source of business for hotels, however in Yarmouth

this business is fairly modest.

As a result of these dynamics, many of the smaller hotels in Yarmouth have been converted to rental apartments. The poor state of the industry also means that hoteliers can't justify the expense of re-investing in their hotels, thus the quality of the local hotel stock is slowly eroding.

Colliers International Hotels indicates that we are at the end of a hotel build cycle in Canada, and that new hotel development will be greatly reduced during the next decade. Overall demand is down, and due to a construction boom over the past 5 to 8 years, most markets are overbuilt. Bank financing is also hard to come by as many lenders are no longer providing financing for hotels, and the one

bank that is still active has implemented more stringent underwriting criteria. As a result, we do not believe that there is a market for a new hotel in Yarmouth over the next five years. It is possible that an investor might propose and build a new mid market hotel in a waterfront location, however this would require a substantial amount of equity, and is a relatively low probability.



TOURISM.

Over the past number of decades, tourism has developed into a major industry in the Yarmouth area. Recognizing the importance of this industry, a Tourism Destination Plan was recently prepared for the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores area by The Tourism Company. The final report indicates that the region needs a “Star Generator” (i.e. a major tourism attraction that generates 50,000+ tourism visits per year) either adjacent to the Yarmouth Ferry Terminal, or on the Yarmouth Waterfront (possibly as part of a redevelopment of the existing Visitor Information Centre VIC). The report indicates that the theme for the attraction should be “shaped by the sea”, and that a marine discovery centre would be appropriate.

Based on our experience elsewhere around the Bay of Fundy, the Yarmouth Waterfront would be an excellent location to implement the Marine Eco Zone for a Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre. This marine centre would not only explain the science behind the Bay of Fundy (e.g., tidal patterns, currents, the lobster and scallop fishery) as well as entertaining stories about the Bay of Fundy (e.g., shipwrecks, rum running, privateers, etc). This centre would be linked to other major facilities around the Bay of Fundy, including the new Joggins Fossil Cliffs and Fundy Geological Centre in Parrsboro. Ideally, the centre would be co-located with the ferry terminal, thus allowing ferry passengers to visit the facility without risking missing the ferry. The centre could also be promoted while passengers are heading to Yarmouth from Portland or Bar Harbour. Adjacent restaurants could also promote lobster suppers as part of the overall experience, while others could promote whale watching and fishing tours.

Other amenities proposed for the Yarmouth Waterfront in the tourism study include:

1. A new state of the art ferry terminal
2. Mooring facilities for small cruise ships (Pocket cruises)
3. A day adventure centre (our interpretation) that offers water based recreation, including fishing, boat tours, sea kayaking, etc)
4. Outdoor performing arts spaces
5. Snack bars, restaurants and pubs



DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The focus of any new development in the downtown should be as follows:

1. Work with the Harbour Authority and/or Waterfront Development Corporation to plan for the redevelopment of the ferry terminal, and the integration of a new Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre. This proposed Centre needs to be immediately adjacent to the ferry terminal in order to capitalize on this captive audience.
2. Identify and assemble land that is suitable for mid to upscale rental housing. The target market is 12 to 18 unit apartment buildings catering to existing home owners that no longer want the hassle of home ownership. Over time, the demand for rental housing may shift to allow one or more condominium projects.
3. The town should advocate that any new government buildings (Federal, Provincial or Municipal) proposed for the area be located within the downtown. This could include a new amalgamated police department, provincial offices, etc.



YARMOUTH DOWNTOWN BLUEPRINT Draft Report

4. Create a new art, music and cultural centre in the downtown core. The facility could form the anchor of an Arts District for the downtown. The YARC would be the anchor for this project, but it could also incorporate the AGNS, and new music studios for youth.
5. Create a new location for a farmer's/fisherman's market near the waterfront. The ideal location would be the ground floor of the existing barn on Hawthorne at Forest Street. The adjacent parking lot could also be developed with outdoor structures that provide protection from rain (similar to those used in Annapolis Royal).
6. Work with the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth to re-use the former municipal offices at 403 Main Street. This is a spectacular old building that should be re-used as some sort of office space (e.g., administrative offices, police station, medical clinic, etc).



2.4 THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION: 12 STEPS TO REVITALIZING DOWNTOWN

The Brookings Institution is a nonprofit, public policy organization based in Washington, D.C. As one of Washington's oldest think tanks, Brookings conducts research and education in the social sciences, primarily in economics, metropolitan policy, governance, foreign policy, and global economy and development. In 2005, Brookings released a 12 step process to revitalize downtown (March 2005, "Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization", THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION).

The report (summarized below) outlines the chronology of steps required to turn a downtown around. A more detailed summary can be found in Appendix B. While some of the content applies to larger city centres, there is still applicability for Yarmouth.

STEP 1: CAPTURE THE VISION

A good starting point is to engage in a "visioning" process. The public sector can and should participate, both to have a stake in and to give legitimacy to the process. This will eventually give way to a private/public partnership, an intentional reversal of the way this phrase is usually stated.

STEP 2: DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic planning group should include neighborhood representatives, retailers, investors, developers, property owners, churches, the mayor and key city councilors, the heads of select city departments, non-profit organizations, artists, homeless advocates, and/or others. It is also crucial that the individuals be people who are interested in successful solutions, not narrow political gain. Two one-day sessions devoted to the strategic planning process, separated by about a month, are generally sufficient to crafting the strategy and implementation plan.



STEP 3: FORGE A HEALTHY PRIVATE/ PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

Successful downtown revitalizations are generally private/public partnerships, not the other way around. The key to the public sector's successful involvement in downtown redevelopment is to avoid making it overly political. City leaders must be absolutely committed to the process both in word and in deed, and be willing and able to do what it takes to help create the right environment for private sector development and investment.

STEP 4: MAKE THE RIGHT THING EASY

Often zoning and building codes of the past fifty years actually outlaw the necessary elements of walkable urbanism. In many cities, for example, often well-intended setback and floor-area ratio rules mean that new construction cannot maintain consistency with older historic structures. Also, excessive parking requirements can create large surface lots fronting once-lively streets, eroding the vitality of otherwise coherent places. Coupled with an emphasis on separation of land uses and limited densities, downtown revitalization becomes nearly impossible from a legal perspective.

STEP 5: ESTABLISH BUSINESS IMPROVE- MENT DISTRICTS (BID) AND OTHER NON- PROFITS

The BID's main leadership role is managing the implementation of the strategy, which must be constantly updated. The BID may be responsible, for example, for ensuring the various task forces charged with implementing parts of the strategy are motivated to complete their efforts.

The BID's operational role is usually (1) increasing the perceived and actual safety of downtown;

(2) making the place cleaner; (3) creating festivals and events to encourage suburbanites to come downtown, and; (4) improving downtown's image. The BID and other non-profits are a downtown's management team—ensuring its many complex elements work together to create a safe, attractive, unique, and well-functioning place.

STEP 6: CREATE A CATALYTIC DEVELOP- MENT COMPANY

Like many smaller markets within the Maritimes, the Town of Yarmouth does not have a major real estate developer that is active within the downtown, although there are smaller investors and builders in the community. This lack of development capacity has the effect of reducing the amount of risk that any one investor will take. In a town as old as Yarmouth, this is further compounded by the fractured nature of land ownership, with many small parcels and issues associated with ownership (Clear title), easements, and in some times contamination. Ideally, the public sector should only have to set planning policy, and allow the private sector to implement it, in some cases, a helping hand is required. Many communities chose to become a catalyst for new development in their downtowns by using a public entity such as a waterfront development corporation, or downtown development association, etc., In some cases, the municipalities get involved directly, without channeling new activity through a development corporation. In either scenario, the approach is the same. The town's role is to identify future development projects that have the potential to stimulate new private sector investment; this plan provides the necessary vision. The next step typically involves the town, or the development corporation, taking an active role in acquiring land. Then, taking all the steps necessary to ensure that the property has as few barriers to development as possible. This can include: rezoning (so that development is "as of right"), assem-



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bling land, addressing issues of clear title, contamination, etc. Once these barriers of development have been neutralized, the town can then make the property available to the private sector for development. Depending on the level of demand, it may be desirable to provide a second mortgage, allowing the developer to finance the project over a shorter period of time ie. 5 years.

STEP 7: CREATE AN URBAN ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

It all starts, as in any real estate development, with market demand. Understanding which of the many urban entertainment options that have the greatest potential for success is a crucial first step. This complexity gives all sorts of people a reason to come downtown, which is particularly important in the early years when downtown's image may not be positive. The most important benefit of entertainment is to get "feet on the street," especially at night. And just as a crowded restaurant is the best recommendation that it is a good place, crowded sidewalks recommend downtown, signaling a safe environment, and providing an excitement and spectacle that draws people to the area.

STEP 8: DEVELOP A RENTAL HOUSING MARKET

The initial urban pioneers looking to live within walking distance of the urban entertainment growing in downtown will tend to be young, often students and those in their 20's. This age group was probably raised in the suburbs, and probably doesn't have as negative an impression of downtown as their elders. The young also tend to rent, as they don't have the assets, income, or location stability required to buy a home. They are more flexible, tied only to the lease they have signed, probably for a year or less. Once an urban entertainment concentration begins to emerge, this group gener-

ally has both the propensity to move downtown, and the ability to make the move quickly.

Rental housing projects can be conversions of existing office, industrial, or institutional buildings or new construction. The renovation of existing buildings offers some of the most exciting new housing options, as they are unlike other rental products in the regional market.

STEP 9: PIONEER AN AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY

Like most things in life, turning around a downtown means good news and bad news. The good news is that if a critical mass of walkable urbanism is created, the rents, sales values, and land values will probably be the highest in the metropolitan area, rewarding those willing to take the risk, build high quality construction, and wait patiently for returns. The bad news is that the values will be some of the highest in the metropolitan area, meaning only the well-to-do can live downtown. To address this issue, an affordability strategy must be developed early-on in the revitalization process.

STEP 10: FOCUS ON FOR-SALE HOUSING

Following the establishment of urban entertainment and the initial "colonization" of downtown by urban pioneers who rent, for-sale housing can return to downtown. For sale housing appeals to a very different set of households than renters. They are generally older, not as adventuresome, and are prepared and able to invest in the largest asset of their personal net worth, their home.

Having an established for-sale housing market is the ultimate test of whether the downtown has achieved critical mass. Given the size of the for-sale housing market, it is crucial to the success of a

downtown turnaround. Bringing middle and upper-middle housing to downtown will provide the tax base so sorely needed by most cities, and members of these households will demand a level of service that will continue the upward spiral.

STEP 11: DEVELOP A LOCAL-SERVING RETAIL STRATEGY

Once downtown begins to be repopulated, the demand for local-serving retail will grow. Local-serving retail is a "follower" real estate product, i.e., the housing must be in place before a grocery store can build a store. While some of these stores will continue to thrive, as a group they are probably only part of the solution to downtowns' growing local-serving retail demands. The other part of the solution is finding ways to entice national "big box" retailers to integrate into a walkable landscape.

METROPOLITAN POLICY PROGRAM
The Brookings Institution

Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization

Christopher B. Lennig

"Though every downtown is different there are still common revitalization lessons that can be applied anywhere. While any approach must be customized based on unique physical conditions, institutional assets, economic demand, history, and civic interest, this paper lays out the fundamentals of a downtown turnaround plan and the unique 'private/public' partnership required to succeed. Beginning with mission and strategic planning to the reemergence of an office market at the end stages, these 12 steps form a template for restoring 'walkable' urban downtowns."

Introduction

Over the past 15 years, there has been an amazing renaissance in downtowns across America. From 1990 to 2000 the number of households living in a sample of 45 U.S. downtowns increased 13 percent. The fact that more downtowns have experienced such growth and development—in spite of rising taxes, sprawling suburban sprawl and real estate and financial industries that don't understand how to build and finance alternatives—is testament to the emotional commitment to our urban heritage and the post-up comeback demand for walkable, vibrant places in which to live and work.

The appeal of traditional downtowns—and the defining characteristics that set them apart as successful apart from their suburban competitors—is largely based on what can be summarized as walkable urbanism.

Since the time of cities 8,000 years ago, humans have only wanted to walk about 1500 feet until they begin looking for an alternative means of transport: a horse, a mule, a bicycle, or a car. This distance translates into about 100 acres—about the size of a super regional mall, including its parking lot. It is also about the size, plus or minus 25 percent, of Lower Manhattan, downtown Albuquerque, the Rittenhouse Square section of Philadelphia, the financial district of San Francisco, downtown Atlanta, and most other major downtowns in the country.

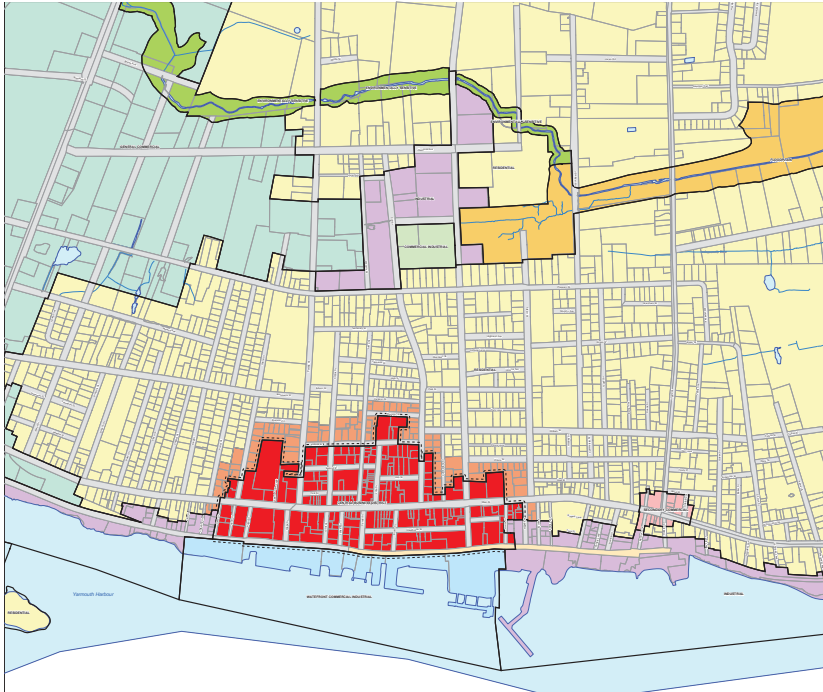
MARCH 2007 • THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION • RESEARCH BRIEF

2.1 The Brookings Institution Report





2.2 Generalized Future Land Use Map



STEP 12: RE-CREATE A STRONG OFFICE MARKET

As entertainment, housing, and retail are established downtown, the office market will begin to follow. As upper-middle income for-sale housing is built in downtown, there will gradually be a return of a healthy office market and the employment it houses. Once the bosses, who make the ultimate decision about office location, begin to live downtown, they will decide to bring their office there as well.

This step in the redevelopment process will probably only fill existing, vacant office space in most cities, due to the past overbuilding and the weak demand for office employment in the economy in general. However, it will be a tremendous benefit for city revenues and the employment prospects of other downtown and city residents.

quality development by providing an administrative framework for accommodating development proposals. Through the articulation of the goal, objectives, and policies outlined in the Municipal Planning Strategy, Council is setting the tone and intent for future development trends.

The stated goal of the Town of Yarmouth's Municipal Planning Strategy is:

1. To promote orderly development to ensure a high quality working and living environment while enhancing the health and vitality of the community by;
2. Promoting Yarmouth as a regional commercial, educational, industrial, and service centre;
3. Creating a positive climate for investment in the community;
4. Ensuring that development costs are minimized and fairly allocated between the public and private sectors; and,
5. Co-operating with surrounding municipalities in infrastructure development and service deliveries.



PLANNING CONTEXT

Several background studies informed the result of the Downtown Yarmouth Revitalization Plan. The topical issues relevant to this study are summarized below.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY (MPS)

The Yarmouth Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), adopted in 2007, provides Town Council and the general public with the planning framework for development and infrastructure decision making. The MPS facilitates Council's participation in directing

SWSDA BUSINESS PLAN (2009 - 2010)

The South West Shore Development Authority (SWSDA) is the agency charged with the leadership of the region's Community Economic Development agenda. This area of the province is culturally diverse and geographically widespread, including Shelburne County, Yarmouth County, and the Municipality of Clare.

The economic slowdown has impacted this region in a similar manner to the entire province, in relation to the natural resources and manufacturing sectors.



However, a positive outcome of past SWSDA initiatives has been a turnaround in the tourism industry.

The 2009-2010 SWSDA business plan outlines a number of strategy initiatives designed to support the continued economic growth of the region. The activities are referenced to the five-year strategy plan, and timelines and budget estimates are outlined.

SWSDA's Yarmouth-based initiatives for the 2009-2010 business plan include Port Expansion, Downtown Revitalization, Tourism Marketing, and the Farmer's Market.

PORT OF YARMOUTH MASTER PLAN (2009)

The Port of Yarmouth is one of the most significant transportation assets of south-western Nova Scotia, and acts as a key international gateway

to not only the province, but the entire country. Throughout the last twenty years, the role of the port has evolved, and will continue to develop, to meet changing needs of both the Town and the surrounding region. As a critical component of Canada's port and transportation system, the Port of Yarmouth's broader importance cannot be overlooked.

The Port of Yarmouth Master Plan articulates a long-term strategy to ensure the continuing development and enhancement of Port infrastructure, to meet current and future needs. Not only was the Port considered in terms of shipping and sea travel, but overall in the broader regional transportation context. The plan strikes a balance between the maintenance of the working waterfront, and the creation of new tourism and mixed-use development possibilities, and optimizes opportunities for the expansion of waterfront businesses and industry.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION PLAN (1991)

The Town of Yarmouth's Heritage Conservation Plan was created based on the provisions of the Provincial Heritage Property Act (R.S.N.S., 1991). The plan, and its accompanying Heritage Bylaw established the Collins Street Heritage Conservation District. The adoption of the plan by the Town provides the administrative provisions to promote the enhancement of the historic, cultural, and architectural values of the district. It provides a framework to guide growth within the area, ensuring that it occurs in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Council has recently endorsed undertaking a review of the conservation district plan and by-law.

PROPOSAL FOR THE REVITALIZATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF YARMOUTH (1980)

The 1980 proposal for the Revitalization and Redevelopment of Yarmouth was intended to be a dynamic and well articulated document that met

the ongoing development needs of an evolving community. Several key recommendations in both volumes one and two were made to be carried forward towards implementation, such as:

1. A private company be established to implement the proposed downtown and waterfront plans.
2. Downtown retail, office, and other space be upgraded and expanded in a co-ordinated manner.





2.3 'Missing Teeth' on the street



2.4 Outdated Signage



2.5 Deferred Maintenance



2.6 Missing Development Opportunities

2.6 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Given the previous discussion of current conditions, trends in downtown development, and context findings from the participation process, the following assessment of opportunities and constraints conveys the strengths and weaknesses of Yarmouth's downtown.

2.6.1 Opportunities

Authentic Waterfront. Yarmouth has an active working waterfront, which has been the cornerstone of the Town for 300 years. The fishing industry has been the life blood with a strong shipping industry and supporting foundries and mills. The waterfront and the activities that take place have presence in today's marketplace and add to the vibrancy of downtown. Keeping the waterfront active and authentic is important to the downtown.

GOOD BONES. BUILT FORM: The main street is free of power lines, a major expense for most downtown revitalization projects. Investment in the downtown and waterfront (street lighting and sidewalks, etc) have been made. There is a good stock of heritage buildings and new buildings.

PEOPLE. The core business community are determined and their efforts show. The community as it stands, has many talented and concerned people that care about the outcome and want to capitalize on the potential that they see.

ACTIVE DOWNTOWN. The downtown is already active and bustling with cars and people most days of the week (night activity is another story). All 5 banks are found in the downtown and planning restrictions for banks on Starrs Road have worked to keep the banks downtown.

LIVELY HUMANITIES. The arts community is alive and well in Yarmouth. The only branch of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia outside of Halifax is located in Yarmouth. The Yarmouth Arts Regional Council's (Th'YARC) Playhouse and Arts Centre, is another substantial contributor to the arts scene.

LOCOMOTION. Yarmouth has something that no other community in Nova Scotia has, the only international marine border crossing for road traffic to another country. Another unique link is the Yarmouth International Airport with daily flights to Halifax and Portland, Maine daily. These two important transportation connections are vital to community activity and its ability to operate on an international stage. This unique competitive advantage in terms of opportunities for growth and development is substantial and should not be underestimated.

HISTORICAL BRILLIANCE. Yarmouth is living and breathing history. The architecture is testament and account to the talented crafts people that settled in the port. Throughout the Town, stately homes and buildings are being restored to their original beauty. People can trace their roots through the museums and archives or learn from living decedents. There is a rich cultural fabric of people from all over the world in Yarmouth.



2.6.2 Constraints

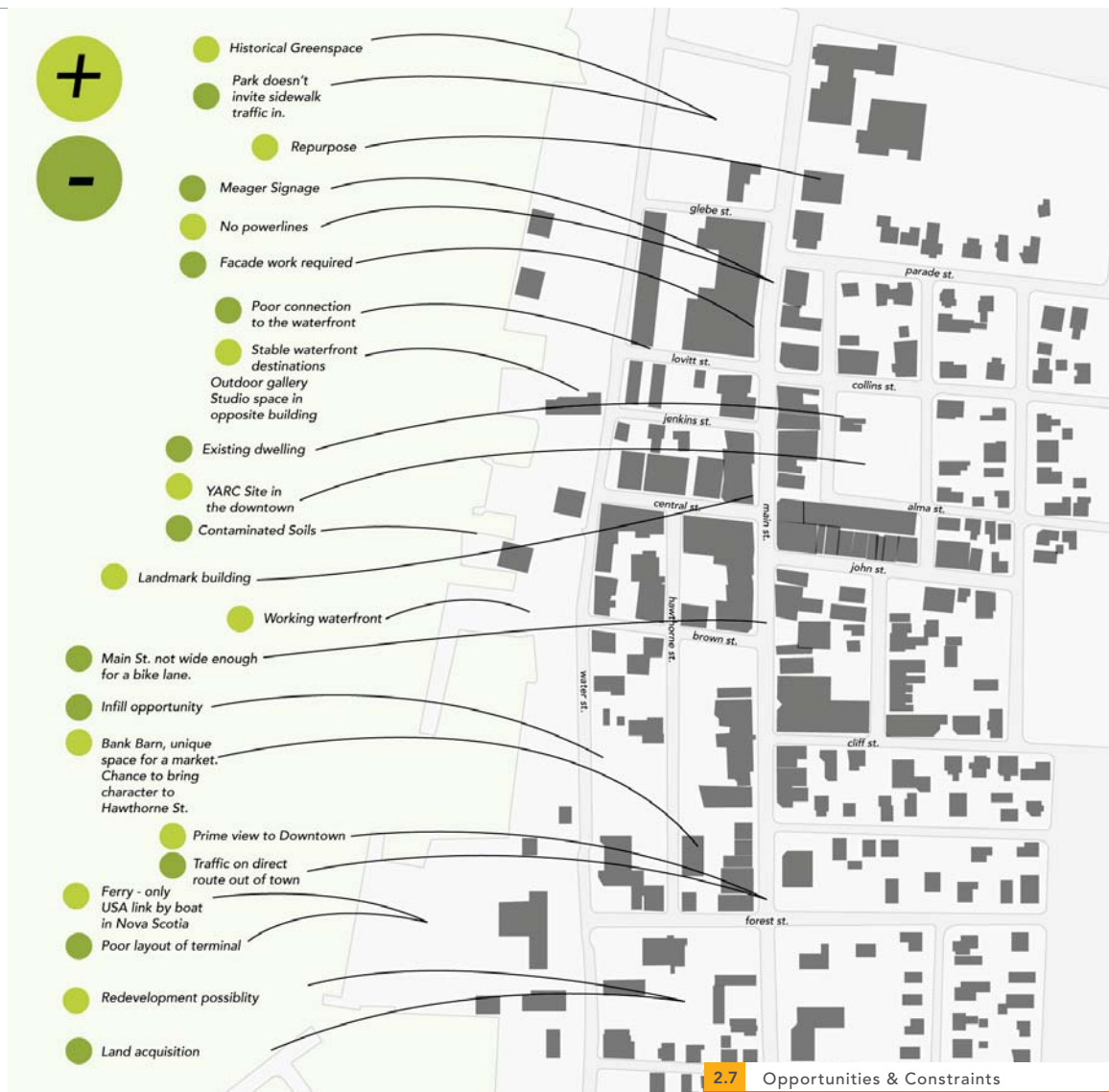
FRAGMENTATION. There is physical and visual disconnection between the waterfront and Main St. There are many gaps in the fabric downtown and, despite the presence of all 5 banks, there is a lack of attractors to the downtown.

PHYSICAL: The Main St. has gaping holes in the form of absentee landlords, empty lots, unused upper stories and empty buildings that need to be addressed. The quality of many buildings is extremely low for such a busy downtown. Portions of the waterfront are under-utilized and unsightly. Connecting streets are treacherous at times due to the conditions of sidewalks in all seasons. Signage is noticeably absent. There's a real lack of people living downtown and this can be a root cause for vandalism or perceived safety.

VISUAL: The downtown is lacking in directional and way-finding signage. Businesses and attractions are hidden and often missed by the unknowing. Sight lines between the Main St. and waterfront are important and an untapped asset. The visual quality of the downtown is looking dated and tired. Anecdotally, some visitors have been overheard on Starrs road commenting on it as being the main street.

FLEETING POPULATION. The population between 2001 and 2006 has dropped by over 5%. The tourist population is also on the decline. With changes to the CAT ferry schedule, people don't have to stay over night, they can wait it out in the parking lot. Boat traffic is driving directly out of Town without a sideways glance. In some ways, Starrs Road growth has come at the expense of the downtown.

FRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE. Structural elements of the waterfront are in need of upgrades, if not now, in the very near future. The streetscapes and urban spaces of downtown need serious investment.





3: THE BLUEPRINT

The plan outlined in this chapter will direct and focus the revitalization efforts in downtown Yarmouth over the next 20 years, bringing together the vision and intent of merchants, residents, and visitors with the best practices in downtown revitalization. While physical improvements are naturally part of the revitalization plan, the plan seeks to leverage economic and social revitalization in the downtown as well. To accomplish these lofty aims, the Blueprint is divided into physical improvements (changes to public and private space), policy improvements (changes to planning policy that will encourage revitalization) and administrative improvements (changes to how revitalization can be administered).



PROJECT VISION

Any vision for downtown Yarmouth must inspire and compel people to carry it forward while balancing the realistic practicalities of municipal governance. The Vision statement establishes the rationale for the Downtown Blueprint, to which all action plans, directions, and recommendations have been based.

This is a statement espoused by the public and reflects the desired outcome of this Plan. Future developments downtown will be reviewed for consistency with the Vision and Principles that follow.



VISION STATEMENT

In 20 years, Downtown Yarmouth will be a diverse and thriving community made up of people living, working and playing in a historic yet modern waterfront setting. For the people who live in this community, their day to day services are available and close by. For those living on the outskirts, downtown becomes a much more frequent destination for services, leisure and commerce.

This new community will include families, older and young adults, students, professionals, and empty nesters. Downtown Yarmouth will also be THE cultural hub of the western shore, a place where residents and tour-



ists alike come to experience culture and history, visit galleries, see a play, go to a restaurant, walk the waterfront, attend events, and shop at one-of-a-kind specialty retail stores. A major new creative sector anchor has been constructed in the downtown. It will be a place where the arts and creativity flourishes.

Heritage buildings will be restored and streetscapes will be lively and engaging. Missing buildings on the street will be infilled with high quality new mixed use developments. The waterfront will remain active and working but new developments on the waterfront will bring more people to the waters edge. Main Street will have a stronger ties to the waterfront. Downtown will be a place of distinction and diversity.

3.2 PLAN PRINCIPLES

The principles frame the components of the plan and are designed to help realize the vision.



Live 
Work 
Play 



1. DESTINATION

Downtown should be the premiere destination for people and business in the region

2. LIVABILITY

Downtown should be a place to work, live and play in the context of a livable community

3. DIVERSITY

Downtown should have a wide variety of things to do, places to see, people and cultures to meet. It should be vibrant at all times of the day and night.

4. SAFE

Downtown should be safe both day and night for residents and visitors.



5. RESPECTFUL OF HERITAGE

The built heritage is a legacy of our fore-bearers. It should be respected and preserved wherever possible.



6. WALKABLE

Downtown should be compact and walkable. Streetscapes should cater to pedestrians and cyclists as well as cars.





3.3 PHYSICAL REVITALIZATION

The 'physical' blueprint includes improvements to public and private space in the downtown consistent with the vision and principles. Some of these improvements can be made directly by the Town as they relate to public space and municipal land; some of them relate to policy changes to encourage private land owners to carry plan elements forward.

1. IDENTITY

Downtown should have a strong and identifiable image. The image should be positive and it should resound with the community.



8. HEALTHY

Downtown should foster healthy lifestyles and sustainable decision making.



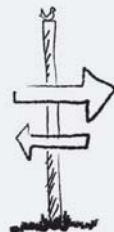
9. INCLUSIVITY

Downtown should cater to a wide range of age groups, lifestyles, uses, activities, living choices and cultures



10. NAVIGABLE

Downtown should be easy to navigate and find ones way around in.



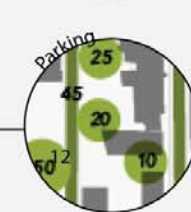
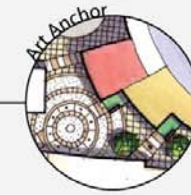
3.3.1 Conceptual Neighbourhood Plan

The conceptual neighbourhood plan considers the high level contextual issues which will help the downtown become a distinct neighbourhood and a true 'destination' downtown.

Key plan features of the conceptual neighbourhood plan include:

1. The 'leisure' waterfront is extended. Notwithstanding the importance of the working waterfront to Yarmouth, an opportunity exists to strengthen the leisure waterfront which currently includes Rudders Restaurant and Pub, and the Killam Brothers property. The Town should encourage the redevelopment of other under-utilized waterfront parcels (e.g., Corkum's Wharf north of Rudders) for mixed use type development with an active commercial ground floor and office or residential uses above.
2. The waterfront boardwalk is extended. With the extension of the leisure waterfront comes the opportunity to extend the waterfront open space network. Ideally, the boardwalk should also include destination elements such as art parks, playgrounds or water features.
3. Streetscapes are improved for pedestrians and cyclists. Sidewalk 'bump-outs' are created at every street corner and areas where parking is impractical. These bump outs can create pedestrian amenity areas and interpretive or wayfinding opportunities. Existing street lighting fixtures are raised higher to allow for festive banners and hanging planter arms. Sidewalk cafe's are incorporated into the street by forfeiting the occasional parking spot. Bike lanes are added to Main Street.
4. Streetscapes are greened. Street trees and select plantings are added wherever possible to every street downtown. Especially in the bump-out areas.

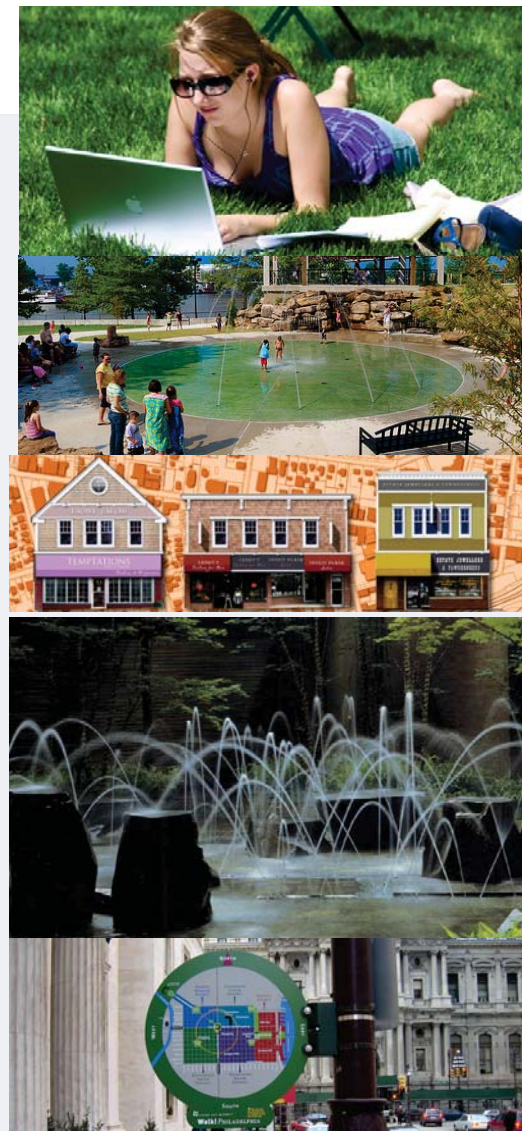






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5. Wireless Zone. Free wireless internet is provided downtown in conjunction with the Town and a local service provider.
6. Destination public spaces are created. A series of destination open spaces are created and designed to a high quality. These would include a water park, an art plaza by the AGNS, waterfront plazas, etc. Public pocket parks are added wherever possible on existing or future public lands.
7. Facade Improvement Program. A facade improvement program would be instituted on Main Street to create a public private partnership for improving private buildings.
8. A major creative sector anchor is added to the downtown. Th'YARC Playhouse and Arts Centre is relocated to the downtown creating a major new public destination for the downtown to rally around. This starts a cultural cluster that can be expanded over time, including the possible addition of music studios for youth.
9. A market is added to the downtown. A fish and farmers market complex is added to the Barn on Hawthorne Street. Temporary structures are also provided on the edges of the adjacent parking lots.
10. The waterfront is connected to Main Street. The side streets connecting the waterfront to the Main Street are upgraded for pedestrians to create better linkages between the two. Particularly in the leisure waterfront zone.
11. Civic and wayfinding signage is added. A civic signage strategy is created to aid in wayfinding and improve the brand identity of downtown.
12. Parking Lots are Upgraded. Parking lots are upgraded and made more environmentally friendly; wayfinding signage is also added.
13. Vacant lots are infilled. vacant lots along main streets are infilled with mixed use developments wherever possible. A mixed use development strategy encourages more rental and condo housing downtown.
14. Upper stories are filled. Upper stories of existing buildings are utilized for residential or office space.
15. Gateways into the downtown are created. Gateways into the downtown (from the ferry terminal, Starrs Road and Forest Street) are highlighted as gateways to the downtown.
16. A new ferry terminal is built which incorporates a "Fundy Discovery Centre" as a major waterfront destination.
17. YMCA Expansion. The YMCA is expanded to strengthen its destination appeal.
18. An urban campus is introduced. The Town should work with the NSCC to determine if an urban satellite campus can be located in the downtown. An ideal location would be either the former municipal building on main street, or for larger users, the Domtex building.
19. The working waterfront expands as outlined in the Port Plan. Select opportunities for incorporating tourism into the working waterfront are explored.
20. Frost Park is improved.
21. An Urban Forest Master Plan is created
22. An Active Transportation Plan is created.
23. Administration of the downtown is fine tuned.
24. Regular downtown events are hosted.
25. The Town becomes active in land assembly for redevelopment.



3.2 Downtown Infill & Green Space

- Infill Opportunity
- Green Space Possibility
- Existing Green Space



3.3 Main Street Missing Teeth



3.4 Strip Malls should not be permitted

3.3.2 Urban Infill

There are many candidate redevelopment sites in the downtown that would strengthen its destination and work-live-play appeal. Some of these are individual sites, while some will require land assembly and consolidation. The Town should be active in assembling parcels for redevelopment.

MAIN STREET INFILL.

Every effort should be made to create a street related, continuous commercial corridor along Main Street from the New courthouse at Commercial Street in the south to Starrs Road in the north, eventually extending to Starrs Road. Through this strip, zero lot line side yards should be encouraged to maintain the continuity of the commercial core. Large gaps in the street should be encouraged for redevelopment. Private street related parking lots should be discouraged wherever possible in favour of street related development. Strip mall development (parking between the building and the street with place-less cheap commercial spaces designed for generic infill) should be prohibited.

WATER STREET INFILL.

There are many excellent infill opportunities on both sides of Water Street.

On the water side, the Hartlin Trail should be a priority consideration for any future redevelopment. The working waterfront should be afforded every opportunity to thrive, however, every property owner should be mindful that the waterfront continues to be an important public destination and so the upkeep of properties and buildings should remain a high priority.

Corkum's Wharf should be a priority redevelopment site as a destination mixed use waterfront de-



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velopment. This site is ideal because it will continue the tone and texture of the more public waterfront development to the south. It also affords the opportunity to extend the waterfront boardwalk another 1/4 km, strengthen the Glebe Street corridor, and connect Frost Park to the waterfront in a more meaningful way. Figure 3.5 shows how a mixed use development could be accommodated on the site. The Glebe street view corridor to the waterfront is preserved, the waterfront boardwalk is extended and a new waterfront plaza (possibly a small water park) could be incorporated into the overall design. The town should acquire an option to purchase this property, and then issue an RFP to developers; this approach gives the Town some control over the quality of development, but does not require that they purchase the site.

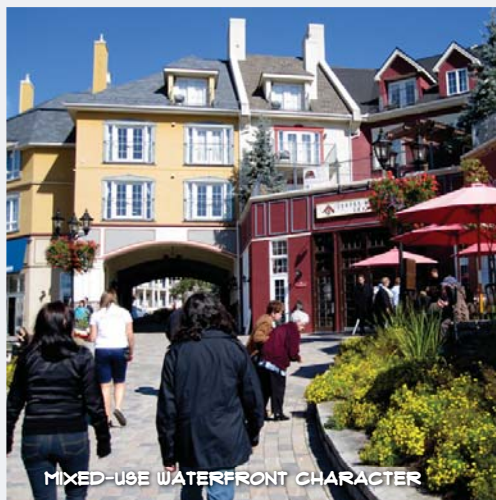
As the leisure waterfront develops in Yarmouth, waterfront land values will make surface parking on the waterfront less practical. Portions of the existing parking lots could and should be in-filled for additional development. This will put more pressure on the water street on-street parking stalls which are currently under-utilized. The policy for waterfront parking should consider reducing the prescriptive parking requirements in favour of a market driven parking requirement for the leisure waterfront (i.e., developers build based on what the market requires).

The Waterview Marine Works property (south of Killams Brothers) could be an important future destination mixed use development. All these developments should extend the waterfront boardwalk.

The parking lots on the east side of Water Street between Brown and Forest should be redeveloped. The challenge will be that many of these Water Street properties will have some form of environmental cleanup.

SIDESTREET REDEVELOPMENT.

Many of the side streets between Water and Main are spaced very tightly together and offer significant opportunities for redevelopment if some of the shallow lot properties can be purchased and one or more side street roads closed. This means less road to maintain for the Town and conversion from what is now a cost to a taxable property income in the future. Candidate sites include properties on Emins Lane, Pearl St., Haskell St., Horton St., South St., Store St., and Fifth St. Many of these side streets are challenging for parking lot redevelopment because of the steep grades, but they do afford significant redevelopment parcels should the Town be able to assemble this land into development blocks. Since many of these blocks contain single family homes, it will be important that residential capacity is not lost in the redevelopment. Any redevelopment scheme should ideally increase the number of people living in the downtown from what now exists.



MIXED-USE WATERFRONT CHARACTER



3.5 Corkum's Wharf Redevelopment

3.6 Downtown Parking Distribution



YARMOUTH LIBRARY INFILL

The land east of the library is a significant opportunity site for an infill project. As an old grave site there may be issues of archaeological consideration. The Town should purchase one of more of the properties on Parade Street as a secondary entrance or exit for this site (even if the buildings are maintained, a new road created for access, then the building is resurveyed and resold).

3.3.3 Parking

A detailed parking inventory was beyond the scope of this study but anecdotally, and as in most downtowns where merchant would say there's not enough parking, downtown Yarmouth seems to be well serviced with parking. Almost every street has on-street parking on both sides of the street and there are 3 large, strategically located, municipal parking lots which service the downtown. A rough parking count from the most recent satellite imagery shows the following:

1. 325 public Municipal spaces
2. 570 private parking spaces
3. 1080 on-street spaces.

These counts can be compared with the 1980 parking count which documented only 749 total parking spaces in the entire downtown. The 1980 plan proposed increasing parking to 1480 spaces. Since 1980, significant strides have been made in providing 2000 parking spaces downtown. That said, there are further improvements that can be made as noted below.



THE COLLINS STREET PARKING LOT.

Currently provides about 120 spaces and was assembled after the 1980 plan. This entire downtown block provides a central land assembly that is available for a significant civic downtown anchor development (e.g., the new Th'YARC). Ideally, council should look to purchase (as they come up for sale) any of the properties between this parcel and Main Street so that the development has frontage on Main Street. The parcel should be held as a parking lot until a significant anchor development can be created. The existing single family home currently in the parking lot should be purchased when it comes up for sale. As the redevelopment of the Collin's Street parking lot will reduce the existing supply of parking, the Town should continue to assemble other candidate properties for the creation of additional municipal parking lots. The creation of on-street parking on Hawthorne Street should create another 40 spaces in downtown.

THE FOREST STREET LOT.

The Forest Street Lot is part of the NS Visitor Information Centre and provides about 18 parking spaces and 8 RV spaces. Future improvements to Forest Street (between Water and Main) should be designed to accommodate 5 RV spaces on the street by removing the double sidewalk on the south side (one of which is stairs). The parking lot could then be reconfigured to provide an additional 8-10 vehicle spaces. This reconfiguration could also provide an additional entrance to Bruno's from the parking lot and a large destination plaza. Land to the south west of this parking lot should also be assembled for additional parking. The entire block is ripe for redevelopment.



3.7 Forest Street Lot & VIC Redevelopment



3.8 Brown Street Lot Redevelopment



THE BROWN STREET PARKING LOT.

Currently provides about 50 spaces, however, the lot should be redesigned to contribute a greater civic presence to Main Street. Loosing the central concrete island provides additional green space along Brown Street while making the lot much easier to flow in the winter. On the Main Street face, the plaza could be significantly enlarged to create a destination plaza and pocket park along Main Street. The Town should explore constructing several retail kiosks for this plaza for annual lease. A similar strategy was used by the Waterfront Development Corporation in Halifax to add commercial life to parking areas of the waterfront (about 12 kiosks were added).

ADDITIONAL SURFACE PARKING.

Between Parade Street and Albert Street there are no Town owned properties that could be used for downtown parking. The Town should consider several strategic acquisitions of properties between these blocks to assemble more land for future parking. One acre of land can accommodate about 100 parking spaces. The typical cost of a paved surface parking space is about \$1,400 (\$2009). So, with the cost of land, demolition and constructing a parking space, even a modest charge on a parking spot can make good economic sense for the Town.

MUNICIPAL PARKING GARAGE.

The cost of a modern structured parking garage is about \$25,000 per stall (\$2009). Even assuming free land, and free management, \$10 per day in parking revenue and an 80% occupancy (\$243 per month), it would take over 25 years to capitalize a parking garage. The practical economics of a municipal parking garage for Yarmouth are likely not feasible for the next 20 years. That said, there could be a large anchor development that may require



a parking structure which may have some partner opportunities for the Town to share parking (e.g., a layer of below grade parking on the Collins Street lot as part of the development of Th'YARC.

3.3.4 Provincial VIC lands

The Provincial VIC takes up a large portion of strategically located land in the downtown. With tourism visitation down, the building seems to be oversized for visitation. This site may be ideally suited for a mixed use or destination type development with a portion of the building leased out for the VIC. The Town should work with the Province to look at the opportunity of issuing a Development Expression of Interest for a mixed use VIC development. The Province has worked with HRM on a similar development for the Queens Landing complex on the Halifax waterfront.

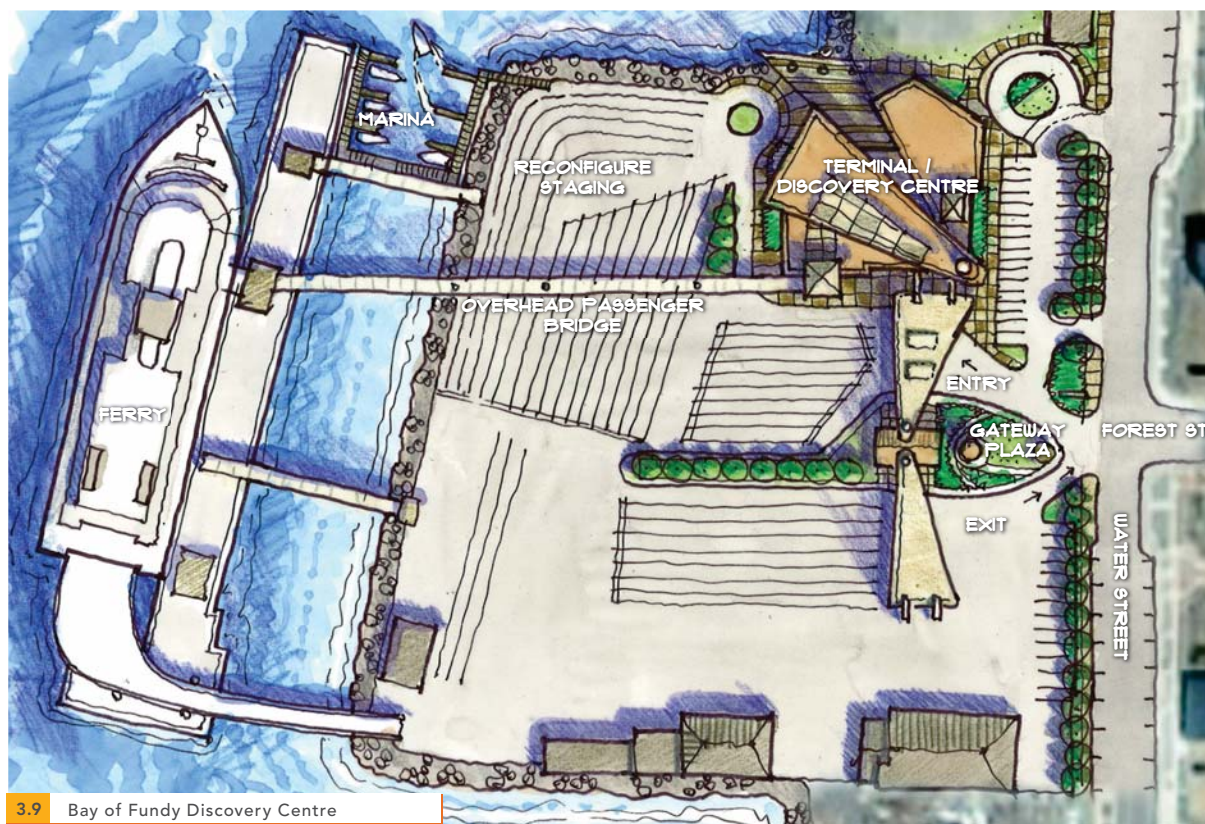
3.3.5 Integrating Tourism into the Working Waterfront

Working waterfronts and tourism have come a long way in the last 10 years. Fishermen have realized the significant benefits that can be realized by the community by incorporating some degree of tourism without compromising either safety or the ability of the working waterfront to function. Many active ports across the province are now looking for ways to integrate tourism into the business mix on the waterfront; Federal (DFO) divestiture funds can help with this transition. Tourism uses can include deep sea tours, fishing excursions, commercial kiosks, small interpretive centres, interpretive panels, restaurants, etc. The Town should work with the Port of Yarmouth and the YWDC to encourage a deep sea excursion kiosk with one or more local fishermen. Additional tourism opportunities should be identified with the Port which will not compromise the working waterfront.

3.3.6 Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre

The recently completed tourism plan for Yarmouth and the Acadian Shore recommends the creation of a Star Attraction adjacent to the ferry terminal. This report recommends that this attraction should be a Bay of Fundy Discovery Center – a place for

residents and visitors to learn about the Bay of Fundy marine zone. The facility would be a combination of a marine science discovery centre (e.g., understand how the Bay of Fundy was formed, why it has the highest tides in the World, etc) and an interpretive centre that tells stories about the Bay (e.g., how fisherman have adapted to the high tides, the lobster fishery, privateering, rum running, etc). If located within the ferry terminal parking lot, the value proposition to ferry passengers would be an easy sale (i.e., have fun while you are waiting for the ferry, with no risk of being left behind). Adjacent lands could provide development opportunities for kiosks, pubs, etc.





3.3.7 Urban Market

There is a clear need and desire for a fish and farmers market in the downtown. While there are a number of locations that could accommodate such a facility, the ground floor of the Barn at the corner of Hawthorn and Forest seems to offer all the right things for success. This location has ample space that could spill outside in the summer, lots of indoor room with the rustic character to look like a market, ample parking nearby, and it is currently vacant.

The Town, through YDC should look to sponsor the creation of the this farmers market working with Yarmouth Federation of Agriculture or another dedicated Farmers Market group through the Farmers Market Cooperative of Nova Scotia.

3.3.8 Th' YARC Playhouse & Art Centre

The Yarmouth Arts Regional Council (Th'YARC) has been planning the construction of a new 500 seat Playhouse for some time. Although the current site is available on Parade Street, this location would have little synergy with the downtown. Conversely, the Collins Street parking lot offers the potential for the new cultural facility to be integrated into downtown, with links to the AGNS, and support services such as restaurants and pubs nearby.

The consulting team has reviewed the study area and concluded that the Collin's Street Parking lot is worthy location. This site offers a number of real benefits.

1. The site is currently owned by the municipally. Steps are being taken to acquire additional lands around this property.



3.10 Downtown Market



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2. It is adjacent to the AGNS which creates synergies with customers and operations staff.
3. Half of the site need not be developed, thus providing access to existing parking to support the theatre. Additional parking is available at the Brown Street lot, and on-street parking within the district (over 100 on street within 1 block).
4. The Alma Street mall could be extended to Second Street to create a large Arts Plaza linking the facility directly to Main Street.
5. If one or more Main Street properties were picked up, Th' YARC could have a Main Street address.

One of the real opportunities for both the downtown and Th'YARC is the creation of an urban 'players' program in the summer much like the Charlottetown Confederation Players troupe (led by the Confederation Centre for the Arts). This program

hires student actors to work in the downtown as re-enactors. Large groups of tourists follow the players around the downtown to predesigned streetscape 'stages' where stories of the past are retold. The program gives young actors a venue and income to practice their trade while helping keep visitors in the downtown a little while longer. Th'YARC should pursue a similar program with assistance of the YDC and funding from other levels of government.

Figure 3.11 shows the potential configuration of a 2,600 square metre (footprint) facility on the site. If administration and offices can be placed on the second floor, the ground floor footprint could be maximized. The plan shows loading bay access from Second Street, parking for 95 cars, a drop-off at the front door of the facility, an outdoor signature performance plaza linked to the AGNS plaza, and potential redevelopment of the Alma Street facades into an Arts District uses like book shops, restaurants, cafe's, etc.



3.11 Th' YARC Playhouse



ALMA STREET PROPOSED



ALMA STREET EXISTING



ALMA STREET
ART DISTRICT

CONFEDERATION PLAYERS

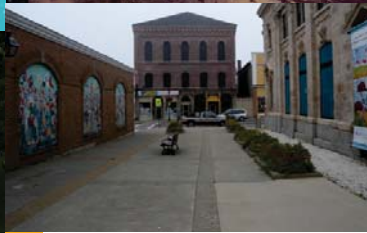


3.12 Frost Park

3.3.9 AGNS Art Plaza

The current plaza was created when Alma Street was shut down in 1980. This space provides an excellent opportunity for art to spill out into the plaza, and a performance space for live events (i.e., Th'YARC spills outside). The Town should work with the AGNS to create a high quality landmark plaza in this space. The Town should construct the plaza and the AGNS should ideally supply some of the art pieces that will populate the space. The space should have some capacity for small performance art as well. The unused space on Main street (due to no parking as a result of the fire hydrant) should be bumped-out to maximize the space and create a gateway into this important plaza.

If the plan for Th'YARC proceeds, this plaza should be extended all the way to Second Street to provide a valuable public space for the Playhouse, the AGNS and the downtown. In time, this space could house cafe's coffee shops, galleries, etc (i.e., the buildings on the South side of Alma street could open out onto this plaza) and become one of the most important spaces in the downtown.



3.13 AGNS Art Plaza

3.3.10 Frost Park

Frost Park was the original public burial ground for the Town until 1864. In 1887 it was developed into a park named Victoria Park in honour of the Queen and in 1958 was renamed Frost Park after Charles Sydney Frost, a distinguished native son who was president of the Bank of Nova Scotia. The grounds are designated as a Municipal Heritage Property.

While for the most part a gem for the downtown, Frost Park could benefit from some significant upgrades including:

- » reinstating the central path from Main Street and incorporating a wrought iron archway into the new entrance.
- » creating a special heritage brick pattern on the sidewalk that reinforces the park on the street and removing the grass strip along the street. Carry the detail across the street to link Frost park to the monument across the street.
- » Installing white outdoor Christmas style lights in the trees, which can be lit at night to provide visual interest, and to increase the safety of the park.
- » installing a custom bus shelter with a more heritage tone
- » replacing the 3 benches with an interpretive plaza near the bus stop
- » relocating the central 'island' trash receptacles with a better historic receptacle and move the corner entries of the park.
- » grubbing some of the dead stumps in the park
- » adding some unique details to the iron fencing around the park
- » creating themed planting beds
- » adding name tags to all species of plants in the park



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- » upgrading the fountain and fountain plaza. Consider traditional Victorian fountain details in the redesign (maintain the 3 tier fountain structure).
- » removing some of the overgrow cedar and Yew
- » adding details for wedding pictures (wedding arbour, wedding beds, etc.)
- » protecting the gravestones
- » creating some interesting interpretive features in the compass rose observation deck
- » Ensuring views of the water from the observation deck are maintained if Corkum's Wharf is developed.
- » creating an amphitheatre in the hillside on Water Street for the street performance program.

Ideally a park master plan should be prepared for Frost Park in conjunction with the plan for the War Monument.

3.3.11 Yarmouth Library

The Yarmouth Library is owned by the Yarmouth Public Library and Museum and was expanded in 1991. Currently there are no plans for further renovation. There are substantial changes emerging in the design and administration of modern libraries around the world. The libraries of the 21st century are no longer simply repositories for books. Libraries now provide an increasing range of different community services, using a multitude of different media to reach a broader audience than ever before. Modern libraries are considered to be important civic spaces (like Town Squares) with much consideration given to the spaces around the buildings. Many new and existing libraries are being retrofitted with retail considerations like internet cafe's in mind to act as lifelong learning centres.

The Yarmouth Library is a significant community anchor for the downtown. There are six ways to strengthen its offering to the downtown.



3.14 Yarmouth Cenotaph

1. The War monument and surrounding park should be significantly upgraded to create usable outdoor park space for the library. The current design favours the single purpose cenotaph. A new design would accommodate the cenotaph and ceremonies that accompany it but would also create seating and leisure and commemoration space in both the sun and shade. The library is also masked from the street by the Rodd Hotel and as such needs a much higher street presence. A library plaza at Main Street should give the library the prominence it deserves. The following conceptual design (Plan 3.15) shows a possible configuration.
2. Bump-outs should be created at Main Street for the War Monument plaza and Frost Park to link these key open spaces together and create an safer road crossing.
3. The gardens in the back of the library were taken out for security reasons years ago. The gardens should be restored as part of an 'Old Burying Ground' park concept to act as an extension of Frost Park from the library to the waterfront.
4. Future renovations should consider the changing nature of libraries as life-long learning centres. An internet cafe or other feature that would strengthen the library's destination appeal would be a welcome anchor for the library.
5. The library currently uses the parking lot of the old Court House. Parking needs to be assured over the long term regardless of the future uses for the Court House.
6. Depending on the results of an archaeological investigation, there may be some limited opportunities for infill development behind the library.







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3.3.12 Old Courthouse

The old Courthouse, owned by the municipality, is a significant opportunity for redevelopment. There has been talk of a Town police station which would be an ideal use but if that opportunity doesn't materialize, the County should consider issuing a development expression of interest for the buildings redevelopment. Provisions should be made to restore the heritage facade, remove the temporary rain gutters and leaders, reinstate the plaza and steps at the front with a high quality landscape, and complete the work to the satisfaction of the County within a predetermined period. Some arrangement for parking sharing with the library should be predetermined. Although desirable, it is unlikely that this building could be converted into residential space in a cost effective manner.

3.3.13 Urban Forest Plan

Yarmouth is one of the most challenging microclimates in the Province to grow trees despite the fact that it is a zone 6a (one of the most temperate in the province). Fog, salt and wind can play havoc with newly imported nursery grown vegetation. Because of the long time needed for trees to grow to an appreciable size, an urban forest management plan should be prepared and implemented to ensure maintenance and tree replacement occur on a timely basis.

The value of an urban forest is substantial in terms of real estate values, water quality, air quality, energy use, human health, etc. Many forward looking municipalities are now preparing an urban forest master plan to ensure the continued longevity of this most important civic investment. American Forests2 recommends an average 15% tree canopy for CBD's and downtowns. A satellite analysis of

Yarmouth's downtown shows a 2.2% canopy cover. Despite the microclimate challenges, 15% cover should be a goal of the Town.

The plan should aim to perpetuate the hallmark characteristics of the downtown forest, reduce conflict between trees and utilities, and maintain a healthy forest of trees of diverse age and species. The plan should articulate the pattern and species of trees to be planted to meet these objectives. Programs to promote timely tree replacement, planting on private properties and appropriate maintenance and management procedures should also be addressed.

Report recommendations should be based on results of a GIS inventory of public trees in the CBD Area. Existing gaps in the tree cover, and the future decline of the forest may be modeled to highlight priorities for replacement. Incentive programs and development regulations may help to ensure the development of that part of the urban forest that stands on private property.

A full time arborist should be brought on to the Town's work staff to lead the urban forest master plan.



3.16 Existing Yarmouth Canopy Cover (2.2%)

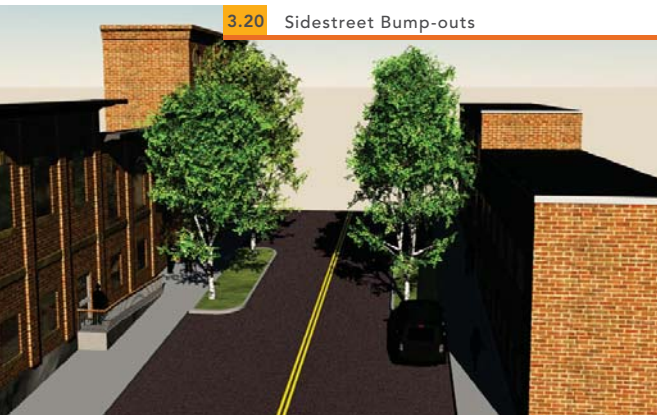




3.17 Sidewalk Cafe's



3.18 Main Street Bump-outs



3.20 Sidestreet Bump-outs



3.19 Mid-block Bump-Out



3.21 Existing No Parking @ AGNS

3.3.14 Main Street Streetscape Improvements

Many of the streetscapes in the downtown are looking tired and in need of reinvestment.

GENERAL STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The areas of pink stamped concrete are a first priority for improvement. While stamped concrete is often favoured for its cost, the colouring often fades and the end result is always a poor facsimile of what the stamp is designed to replicate. The Town should favour real, more permanent, materials wherever possible.

Most downtowns in Maine have moved to granite sidewalks because their life cycle costs are often much lower than concrete. Yarmouth should move towards granite sidewalks because they last 10 times longer than concrete but they only cost fractionally more to install. The use of brick or concrete favours should also be employed downtown in areas of low traffic like the 'amenity strip' or in special areas like bump-outs.

BIKE LANES

Bike lanes should be accommodated on Main Street as part of the sidewalk and road work. The Velo Bike standards for two-way streets with two lanes shows a 10.2-13.6 curb to curb cross section. The current road configuration averages about 12-13 m of cross section so bike lanes should not be an issue. Separate bike lanes should not be painted on the street.

BIKE PARKING

Additional bike parking facilities should be provided throughout Downtown, in a variety of configurations. The quantity of bike parking should vary based on the importance of the destination. The Library, Town Hall and all parking lots should have significant available bike parking in close proximity.

Bike parking should not be located in pedestrian travel zones or gathering areas. Along streets, bike racks should be located at regular intervals in line with other street furniture and street trees.

Individual bike racks are appropriate along all streets, and should be provided along retail frontages at a frequency similar to vehicle parking.

BUMP-OUTS

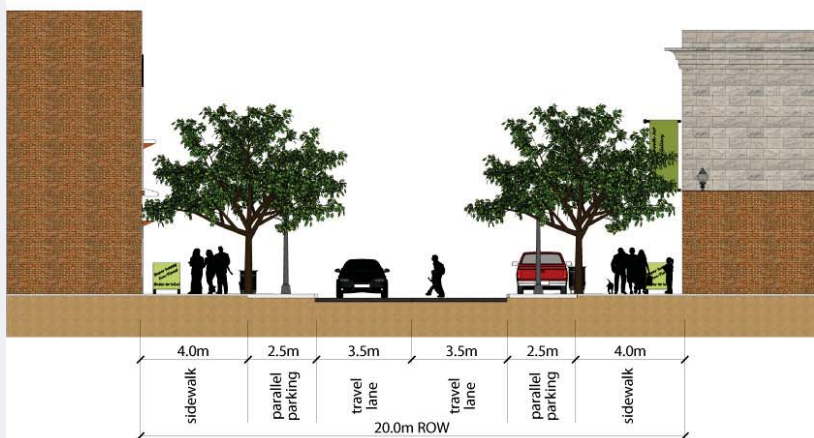
Bump-outs are ways to reclaim unused portions of the street for sidewalk use. Bump-outs should be explored:

- » for all street corners in the downtown that have onstreet parking
- » for all crosswalks, and
- » in areas that are designated as 'no parking' (e.g. fire hydrants like in front of the AGNS plaza) for more than 20' of length.
- » Outdoor sidewalk cafe's should be encouraged wherever possible downtown. There are 2 possible approaches for mid-block cafe bump-outs in the downtown.

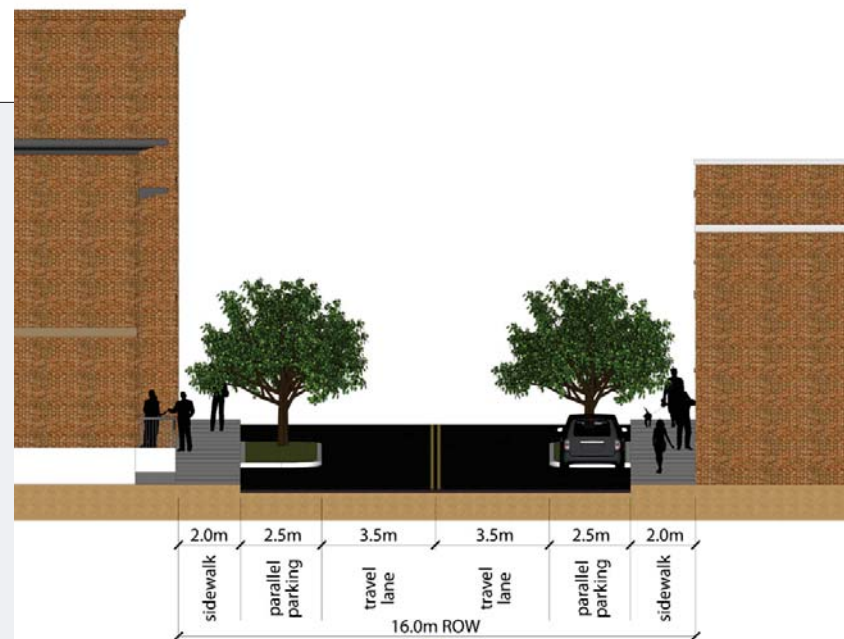
The first approach is to start a temporary sidewalk cafe program which would allow a temporary sidewalk cafe to take over one or more parking spaces. Sidewalk cafe guidelines would have to be created



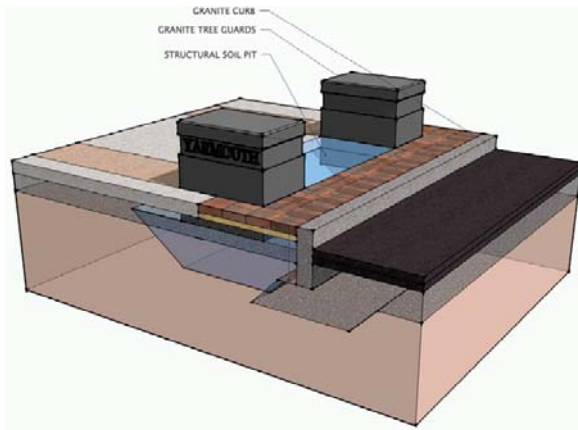
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3.22 Main Street Bump-out @ AGNS



3.23 Side Street Bump-out



3.24 Structural Soil Planting Pit



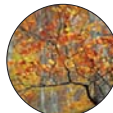
AESCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM

H. 50' W. 40'



FAGUS SYLVATICA

H. 60' W. 40'



FRAXINUS PENNSYLANICUM

H. 60' W. 40'



LABURNUM WATERERI

H. 15' W. 12'

3.26 Possible Yarmouth Street Trees

and the parking spaces would be 'leased' by the restaurant or bar owner from the city for the summer months. Most cities in Atlantic Canada have a similar sidewalk cafe program.

The second approach would be to create a permanent mid-block bumpout for restaurants or bars that have been in operation for 8 years or more. If the operation is financially stable, a sidewalk bumpout has good year round potential. The space would be leased for use from the Town by the business. The bump-out would be built as part of the regular maintenance improvements to the sidewalks.

STREET TREES

Main Street is very fortunate to not have overhead powerlines for much of its length. Street trees should be added wherever possible on Main street including in many of the bump-out areas. The sidewalk must have a minimum width clearance of at least 8'. All trees will need tree grates and should be designed in a 'structural soil' planter to maximize root performance. Since most tree grates are 4'-5' in dimension, sidewalks need to be at least 12-13' wide to accommodate street trees. The bump-outs will serve well to accommodate street tree wells.

An urban street tree policy should be developed and an arbourist hired (full or part time) to manage the urban forest.

A list of suitable street trees for a windy downtown like Yarmouth is provided in figure 3.26. The Norway Maples on Water Street should be replaced with a more hardy, suitable species.

3.25 Remove 'step' sidewalks



FURNISHINGS

Urban furnishings should be standardized for the downtown. These include benches, waste receptacles, phone booths, bus shelters, letter boxes, etc. The furnishings should convey a modern downtown sensibility. Furnishings should be strategically located in amenity strips and bump-outs. Future lumières should be at least 14' high from the base to the base of the lumières in order to provide clearance of at least 8.5' and banner arms of at least 4'.

3.3.15 Side-streets to Waterfront

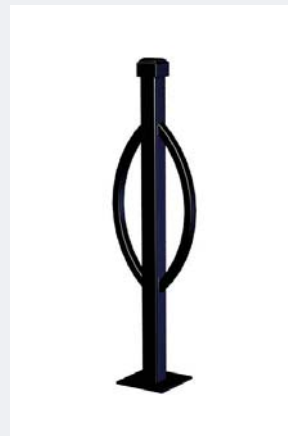
The side-streets to the waterfront (Glebe, Lovitt, Jenkins, Central, Brown, Forest) from Main Street will become increasingly important connectors as the waterfront develops. The side-streets should be developed to a very high standard with 2m min. sidewalk width on both sides of the street, street trees, street lights which match the Main Street standards (14' high poles), amenity areas with benches and furnishings wherever possible, and wayfinding signage on Main Street and Water Street. All 'inaccessible' step sidewalks should be removed including those on Glebe St. by the Town Hall and Forest St. by the Provincial VIC. Despite the steep grade on these streets, using steps for sidewalks is discouraged.

3.3.16 Water Street Improvements

Water Street is one of the more recent street upgrades in the downtown. While there is no immediate need for improvements, long term, as the waterfront develops, the street will need a number of important fixes.



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The sidewalk on the water side (the Hartlin Trail) is not wide enough and in many places there is only 3' of width between the tree pit and the edge of the sidewalk. The waterside sidewalk should have at least 6-8' clear width. The stamped sidewalk should be removed and the pattern should be consistent with the rest of downtown. The 6-8' wide travelways should not be textured. Tree grates should be added to stop the dangerous spread of pea gravel on to sidewalks.

The Norway maples are not doing well likely because of a combination of strong wind and too small a tree well. The canopies have been completely sheered from wind. Over time, the trees should be spaced wider apart (40-50' on centre compared to the 22' on centre) and the tree wells should be constructed with a structural soil pit to maximize root - air interaction while providing a stable sidewalk above. The Norway Maple canopy is far too dense for a waterfront that benefits from having a more transparent canopy. Likely candidates for replacement would be Green Ash, Hackberry, Horse chestnut, Laburnum or European Beech. In the short term, every second tree (spaced at 22' on centre) should be removed to create more sidewalk room.

The Rosa Rugosa hedge is holding up well but is encroaching on the sidewalk too much in places. Where it is above eye level, it is cutting off views of the waterfront. Screening off the industrial waterfront should not be a goal on Water Street. Instead, more diversity should be added to the shrub beds using Juniper, serviceberry, viburnum, hedge maple, and other species of salt tolerant rose.

The light standards need banner arms. Future standards should include them. While the concrete poles hold up better in the salt, future poles should be aluminum to better match Main Street standards.

Over time, the powerlines on the waterfront side should be shifted to the land side wherever possible.

Views to the waterfront from the side-streets approaching the waterfront should be maintained wherever possible. Several of the streets (Forest and Jenkins) have buildings at the foot of the streets. In the future, the Town should prevent buildings from being placed at the foot of any of these side streets. If the CAT terminal is ever rebuilt, careful consideration of the Forest Street view plane should be considered to ensure the view to the waterfront is maximized.

Parking lots on the east side of Water Street should be infilled with mixed use developments whenever feasible.

The Hartlin Trail has some interesting nodes and rest stops. The interpretive signage and site furnishings are now looking very dated. These rest stops should be overhauled and an interpretive signage added in line with the civic signage strategy.

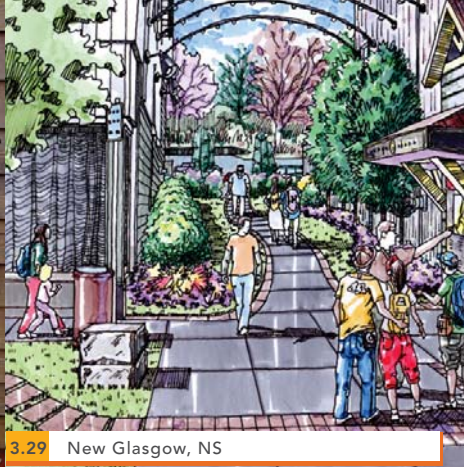
3.3.17 Hawthorne Street Streetscape Improvements

Hawthorne Street is currently a 'service' street for Main Street particularly between Brown and Forest Streets. Hawthorne should be constructed as a full street with on street parking, sidewalks and lighting during its next capital upgrade. With these improvements, ideally some of the rear lots (now used as parking and rear lot service) will be infilled with development.





3.28 Toots Alley



3.29 New Glasgow, NS



3.30 Saint John's, NFLD



As the longest block in the downtown (700'), provision should be made for a pedestrian connection between Main Street and the waterfront. If the Market goes ahead at the Barn location, ideally a pedestrian corridor should be preserved through the parking lot north of the Barn all the way to Main Street. The streetscape west of the Barn should be claimed for extra sidewalk space instead of on-street parking.

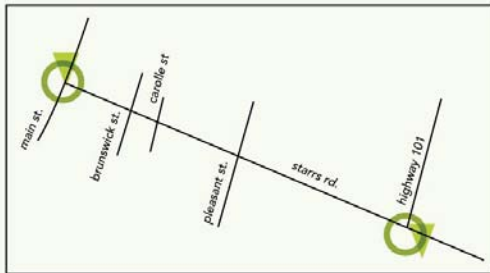
3.3.18 Mid Block Pedestrian Alleys

With most of the commercial activity on Main Street and most of the parking on rear streets, it is important to maintain high quality mid block alleys to connect parking lots with Main Street. These alleys should be well lit, well signed, and constructed with high quality streetscape standards. The most visible of these is the AGNS plaza between the Collins Street Parking Lot and Main Street, however, several

also exist between Hawthorne Street and Main Street, and Hawthorne Street and Water Street.

Mid-block connections should be designed to the same high standards as all other public spaces. Design considerations include:

- » Ensure sight lines from start to finish are clear. Avoid hidden or dead areas and blank façades.
- » Landscaping should not obstruct views.
- » Include wayfinding and signage and good high lighting.
- » Encourage store fronts on these spaces wherever possible.
- » These connections are often privately owned but the Town should partner to implement the pedestrian improvements. Ideally the Town should purchase and maintain some of the more important right-of-ways.



3.31 Signage Layout Plan



3.3.10 Signage and Wayfinding Strategy

Coordinating community signage is another aspect of reinforcing the downtown Yarmouth brand. A full detailed civic signage and branding strategy is beyond the scope of this report, however, the following pages hint at the elements that could become the basis for a future sign program for the Town. A more detailed schematic design phase will be needed at a later date.

The following hierarchy of signage is recommended for Downtown Yarmouth:

- » Gateway Signage
- » Directional Signage
- » Wayfinding Sign & Event Kiosk
- » Interpretive Panels
- » Banners

Like the civic landmark, it is important that the signage speak from the same design vocabulary. Since the Town of Yarmouth is well known for its impressive marine & nautical heritage, the signage theme picks up on naval details including wood, rope, cables, and canvas.





GATEWAY SIGNAGE

There are four primary gateways into downtown. Two are from Main Street (north and south) and one is from the water (ferry terminal) and the gateway into downtown from Forest Street. For the highway, Figure 3.34 (Gateway Sign) is suggested as a replacement to the current signage. A gateway arch across the north side Main Street / Forest intersection could go a long way towards capturing ferry traffic entering the Province. Similarly, a free standing gateway sign at the terminus to Starr Road at Main Street would be a welcome gateway into the downtown. There is enough room to create a plaza at this location that would incorporate the sign.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

The pedestrian Town wayfinding structure would be readily visible as an important landmark in the downtown. The iconic design plays to the family of other signs in the Town. The wayfinding structure would include a community map, possibly a keyed to a business directory and a list of important Town destinations. Half of the sign board could be dedicated to a community events board. The structures should be located in high traffic areas and highly visible locations.

INTERPRETIVE PANELS

An interpretive program should be developed throughout the Town to convey its rich history building on the system created for the waterfront. The panels would be located along the community greenway, in select areas downtown and in parks. Each panel should address one particular topic of relevance with a maximum of 150 words in French and English. A more detailed interpretive strategy for the Town should be developed following this report.



3.32 Downtown Brandmark



3.33 Downtown Street Blades



3.34 Gateway



3.35 Wayfinding & Information



3.36 Banners



BANNERS

A banner program should be developed for the main downtown streets. One of the current challenges with a downtown banner program now is the height of the existing light standards. The light standards are 12' to the top banner arm and 8-9' is needed for clearance leaving only 3-4' for the banner. Any future light standards should be raised to 14-15'. Ideally, banners should be created for various events. Typical banners cost about \$150 each. It may be possible to encourage businesses to buy the banner in front of their establishment.

DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

The eventual civic signage manual should consider directional signage for key public facilities:

- » parking locations (high priority)
- » parks & trails
- » downtown & waterfront
- » museums, Art centres, schools, library, police, VIC

3.3.20 Facade Incentive Program

A facade program provides some level of funding for facade improvements to building owners within the program area. The program usually provides matching funding (50 cent dollars) to building owners up to an upset limit (usually \$10,000-20,000). The funding is usually accomplished through a cost sharing arrangement between municipal, provincial, and federal programs.

The goal of this section is to provide some basic

considerations for a facade program if and when it goes ahead. Only two building facade sample designs were completed as part of this report employing the principles described herein. If a full facade program is to be implemented, property owners will need more detailed design work done on each building within the participating area and the Town will need to do a complete facade incentive program design manual.

The Facade Improvement Incentive Program will be likely managed by a project manager appointed by YDC. The project manager will work with a steering committee to select individual projects and award professional services as may be required during the program.

INCENTIVE DETAILS & PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

A key incentive for property owners to participate in the design process is the opportunity to access financial support to assist with implementation of the recommended facade improvements. The details of the funding arrangement have yet to be finalized, however, it is thought that participating property owners may be eligible for a grant equal to 50% of the cost of facade improvements up to a maximum which is yet to be determined (materials and labour). The project cap will be based on the number of participants and the extent of changes for each building. For corner properties on two streets, it is envisioned that the potential exists to access 50% funding (up to a maximum) on two facades with the same civic address. This funding only covers exterior facade improvements (like roofs, windows, doors, siding, etc) and professional fees (structural, architectural, electrical, etc.) which may be needed to implement the changes. Interior alterations are not eligible for this program even if the exterior alterations require interior modifications.

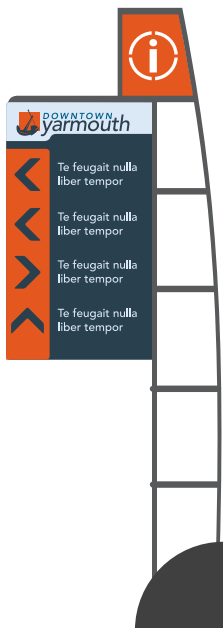
To be eligible for the funding, the property owners must follow the recommendations outlined in a full facade design report. Alterations to these plans must be submitted with the application to be checked by the YDC project manager prior to receiving approval for funding. The reason is to ensure a high standard of design and construction on the street. YDC will not fund 'improvements' which do not contribute to the overall image of the village character downtown. This requires a consistency in design and construction approaches. Vinyl siding, for instance, will not be considered as an appropriate siding material downtown. Vinyl windows will be acceptable above the first story, however, wood or metal windows will only be acceptable at the ground level. Applicants will need to fill in an application form and submit a drawing(s) of the proposed changes for consideration prior to receiving approval to proceed.

When the construction is complete, the owner must schedule a site inspection by the project manager to ensure the project is built as detailed in the drawings. Owners should note that deviation from the original design drawings may be grounds for not approving funding. Once the inspection is completed, the project manager will issue a letter of acceptance to the owner and will issue the funding directly to the contractor within 30 days of receipt of an invoice from the contractor and a signed and sealed letter verifying that the building owner has paid their share of the renovation costs.

SIMPLE DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING OWNERS

There are several considerations that should guide facade work on Main Street:

- » The authentic history and character of Main Street is its most valuable asset. If lost, this can not be



3.37 Directional



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replaced.

- » All eras are part of this history. No single period is more important than another.
- » Everything that is upgraded or renovated should be executed with the utmost care and respect. Main Street should look like everybody cares for it.
- » Customers on Main Street are not looking for an anonymous big box experience.

These basic ideas lead to six general recommendations:

- » If the original colour, detail, and materials are known, and if they meet modern fire safety requirements, use them.
- » Repair any damaged or failed finishes as soon as possible. The "first broken window" concept has restored mid-Town Manhattan in just six years.
- » Use the most durable, lowest maintenance material available. Maintenance costs will eclipse capital costs. Deferred maintenance will detract from the economic performance of the Street.
- » The basic structure of the building should be respected with any alteration. This means that building signs, like corner stones, should not be covered or removed. Columns should be retained in original materials. Cornice details and basic façade form should be retained.
- » Signs should be placed in areas originally designed for the placement of signs; in the sign band above the storefront, in windows, projecting from store fronts and on awnings.
- » Each facade should be completed using at least three colours. The body colour should relate to the architecture. Brick or stone should be left unless painting or covering is the only solution to deterioration. The secondary colour should relate to the body colour. The third colour should be a trim colour and should be used to highlight special

architectural features. Signs may introduce another, fourth, color.

The area of the storefront is where retail creativity can be unleashed. Within the space between the columns, the base and the sign you can do what is required to market your wares.

BUILT FORM THEME

The existing built form and natural setting of downtown Yarmouth combine to create a vernacular style unique to the community. The individual buildings that make up downtown Yarmouth are a mix of architectural styles (Maritime vernacular, Victorian, Industrial, Second Empire, bungalow, etc.) in a wide variety of physical conditions (run-down to new and modern). The goal of the built form theme will be to recognize the architectural style of each building and provide tools that allow the owners to build on that style. For instance, there are historic standards that speak to how commercial facade signage is handled for each commercial architectural style.

Providing guidance for building owners relating to recognition of their building type and the associated window styles, massing, sign styles, roof styles, building materials, paint colours, etc, is part of the built form theme that will be summarized in the report. Several facade improvement examples will be designed to illustrate this point. There may also be some urban design guidelines proposed to ensure that future infill, fits the context of downtown. This would be demonstrated with architectural design guidelines and signage guidelines which may or may not be incorporated into the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and zoning Bylaw in the future.

Material	Low Cost	High Cost
Cape Cod (or equal) Wood Siding	\$6.00 per square foot	\$8.00 per square foot
Hardie Plank Siding	\$8.00 per square foot	\$10.00 per square foot
Clay Brick Veneer	\$13.00 per square foot	\$18.00 per square foot
Concrete Brick/ Stone Veneer (Stonatile)	\$13.00 per square foot	\$17.00 per square foot
MDO Plywood sign w/ paint and trim	\$29.00 per square foot	\$47.00 per square foot
Aluminum Storefront Window	\$43.00 per square foot	\$65.00 per square foot
Aluminum Storefront Door (3'x7')	\$1300 each	\$1700 each
Vinyl Window (66" x 32" installed)	\$900 each	\$1100 each
Wood Window (66" x 32" installed)	\$1100 each	\$1500 each
Steel insulated pre-hung door (installed)	\$1000 each	\$1400 each
Wood door	\$1700 each	\$2500 each
Fabric back-lighted awnings (5' x 5' x 30"nose)	\$550 per linear foot	\$750 per linear foot
Light fixture (angled reflective storefront)	\$850 each, installed	\$1050 each, installed

	Required Step	Owner	DTP	Designer	RDA	Contractor
1	Façade program approved					
2	Advertise for contractors					
3	Approve contractors					
4	Application by owner					
5	Participation approved					
6	Select detail designer (if required)					
7	Prepare detail Plan (if required)					
8	Detail Plan approved					
9	Select Contractor					
10	Budget approval					
11	Obtain permits					
12	Construction					
13	Construction Inspection					
14	Progress Payment					
15	Funds transfer					

T3.1 Comparative Cost of Materials



3.38 Existing & Proposed Facade Upgrades





3.4 ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

The administration of the downtown is a critical factor in its future success. Beyond Town staff, there are a large number of groups and individuals needed to realize a successful downtown. While the groundwork for the administration is in place in Yarmouth, there may need to be some re-prioritization of individual mandates to carry the plan forward.

The following Table 3.2 shows the existing agencies in the Town, their mandate and how they might fit into some of the responsibilities for administering the downtown Blueprint. The idea is to clarify roles, minimize overlap of services, and establish responsibilities for key items of the plan. For instance, The Town should study the implications of merging the YDC and YWDC. The Town will no doubt clarify roles and responsibilities but this table provides a first step towards that aim.

Some additional administrative recommendations for downtown improvements are noted below.

3.4.1 Wireless Downtown: Town Responsibility

Recent advancements in Wi Max (with a range of many kilometres) will allow very cheap implementation of a downtown solution for Yarmouth. Fredericton's Fred e-zone is a wireless network for the entire downtown providing free wireless internet to all. The Town should look to partner with an Internet provider to install a trial system as soon as possible. Like Fredericton, Yarmouth should brand and advertise this network.

3.4.2 Programming the Downtown: Town Responsibility

Downtown needs to capitalize on regular events downtown to keep the focus on downtown. There should be at least 10 profile public events per year with 5 or 6 in the high tourist season. Over the last year, there has been no group in charge of event programming downtown. Clearly, the Town or YDC is best suited to undertake this initiative. Regular programming will continue to be an important approach to animating public spaces in the downtown. Town staff and budget resources must be allocated to ensure the spaces in the downtown are well programmed. It is particularly important during the first five to ten years of this downtown blueprint. The events need to focus on the resources that the downtown offers like the waterfront, a street festival, parades, arts festivals, music, food etc.

Partnering with volunteer groups, arts organizations and businesses is an effective way to extend resources and offer more and a greater variety of programming. As the residential population Downtown increases, the role of programming will become less important as a strategy for public space animation.

3.4.3 Bringing Life to Upper Stories: Town Responsibility

This is a common issue for many downtown's across Atlantic Canada. The issue is how to get second and third floors in downtown Yarmouth developed for residential or office use.

There are several issues and excuses that may now limit the use of second and third floors in Yarmouth.

- » Lack of demand for office space may limit the viability of the option.
- » Experience may limit interest of building owners for becoming residential landlords.
- » The building code may make some conversions unreasonable investments.
- » Fear of structural 'unknowns' when working with older buildings
- » Older tenants prefer elevators over stairs; however, the most likely tenants downtown will be younger people.
- » Yarmouth rental rates (\$600-1100 per month) do not make it financially viable to do anything but the least expensive conversions
- » Building owners don't want to use limited parking for upstairs tenants.

To deal with these issues there needs to be agreement that the development of these spaces is of concern to the community and not just the building owner, and as such the community will need to invest in some way to make this happen.

Everyone needs to agree that:

- » The viability of downtown Yarmouth is essential to area economic and cultural vitality.
- » Heritage conservation is essential to retain the identity and viability of downtown Yarmouth.
- » Economic use of second and third floors of existing buildings may be essential to long-term viability of downtown Yarmouth.

The following are tools available for Yarmouth to deal with the issues listed above:



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T3.2 Administrative Matrix

Organization	Mandate	Jurisdiction	Operating Budget	Recent Accomplishments	Assets	Future Role in Downtown Plan
Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC)	To develop and promote the downtown core of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia	The Business Improvement District in the Downtown	\$118,500	Mega Yacht Marine facility, downtown shopping promotions, Downtown Christmas promotion	\$500,000	Should be actively involved in encouraging infill development, downtown signage project, branding and promotions, event programming, marketing, developer recruitment, business recruitment, retail courses, façade program administration. Should actively identify candidate business opportunities for downtown.
Yarmouth Waterfront Development Corporation (YWDC)	Limited Company established October 15, 1993 to oversee the development of the Yarmouth waterfront area to "support tourism and the related economic benefits for the Town of Yarmouth and the surrounding area". The Town is its sole shareholder.	Bounded on the East by the Centre line of Water Street, on the North by Vancouver Street, on the South by the Town Boundary and on the West by Yarmouth Harbour. Recently permitted to engage in development projects east of Water Street.	\$100,000 plus projects	Mega-Yacht Dock Project, Coal Shed Project,		Formal mandate should include creating mixed use development on the waterfront and ensuring a 'public' waterfront edge. Should ensure view corridors from sidestreets to the waterfront are maintained. Should oversee development of Corkum's Wharf.
Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission (YAIC)	To promote and facilitate economic activity and job opportunities in Yarmouth County as well as broaden & strengthen the diversity of the county's economic base.	Yarmouth County (Municipality of Argyle, Municipality of Yarmouth & Town of Yarmouth	\$1.5 Million	Expanded Hebron Industrial Park, Register.com, CSC, Harbour South Medical Clinic, Pubnico Medical Clinic	\$19 Million	
Chamber of Commerce						Should help YDC market downtown to potential future businesses. Should bring guests to talk about downtown retailing solutions.
South West Shore Development Authority (SWSDC)	The authority's mandate, as the economic development organization for nine municipal units, is to lead the regional economic development process, support community partners, promote business investment and execute a strategic plan. Community consultations provide an annual business plan for the agency to follow.	The authority works within nine municipal units: five in Shelburne County, three in Yarmouth County and the Municipality of Clare in Digby County.	The base operating revenue for 2009-2010 is \$755,000.	hosting of major provincial and national events (Senior 35+ Baseball championships, NS International Air Show, NS Music Week, Chicks with Sticks Hockey Tournament, Creative Nova Scotia for 2009), new Multicultural Festival, new doctor recruitment initiatives, Mariners Centre upgrades and Business Retention and Expansion successes.	The authority maintains some assets on behalf of the municipal partners until they are ready for transfer to private or community organizations. The assets of the agency are limited to operating equipment and some restricted investments.	



MUNICIPAL TOOLS

1. The Town could freeze the assessment for 2-5 years for all investments that make use of vacant upper stories for buildings in the CBD.
2. Like the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) or like the Facade Incentive Program, the Town could provide grants for building improvements that make use of the upper stories.
3. The Town could provide dedicated off-street parking for upper storey tenants at a nominal rate in the downtown.
4. The Town could facilitate negotiations with adjacent property owners to create shared stairwells and other creative building code solutions.
5. The Town could hire a construction manager for a half time, 2 year position to assist building owners in renovating second and third storey spaces. This manager could assist in providing design help, contract management, and in the establishing agreements for cooperation with adjacent buildings. In Saint John, buildings have been economically redeveloped by linking with neighbours to avoid "deal breaking" renovation requirements.
6. The Town could host seminars and workshops on upper storey conversion by bringing in people who are experts in the development of similar unused spaces.
7. The Town, through the YDC, should inventory all possible upper storey space and create an online database for potential tenants. Staff could create a central registry where a business or potential tenant could be linked, and directed to, available space. The clearing house could also direct owners to apartment management companies to divest that requirement and

eliminate that issue. The clearing house could negotiate a reduced management fee for the downtown district apartments.

8. The Yarmouth permit and inspection staff could be proactive in promotion of the possible economic advantages of the alternate building code.
9. The development community could be asked to participate in a "downtown committee" with the mandate to create a specific number of apartment units downtown within a specified time frame. Other municipalities have found that one reason there was no interest in downtown development was that local developers had not examined the issue because it was not part of their suburban history of development activity.
10. Prepared Food and Beverage Tax - Many other jurisdictions, such as those in the States of North Carolina and Virginia, collect a Prepared Food and Beverage Tax. This fee is added to the before-sales tax bill of all prepared food and beverages sold for consumption either on or off the retail premises. For the purposes of this tax, food would be defined as any and all edible refreshments or nourishment, liquid or otherwise, purchased for consumption. The tax would be collected by retailers, and remitted monthly to the municipality. To offset the administrative costs of tax collection, some municipalities chose to permit retailers to retain 1-3% of the total tax they collect.

3.5 POLICY IMPROVEMENTS

The following policy review is intended to suggest broad changes or additions/deletions to existing municipal policy in order to cement the principles of the downtown plan into the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB). The MPS contains the general policy statements with regard to municipal intent (vision, principles, goals, objectives), while the LUB contains the specific policy 'rules' for managing land uses in the Town. The MPS and LUB are typically updated on a 5-10 year schedule as a full public process which is required by the Municipal Government Act (MGA). The existing MPS and LUB were adopted and accepted in 2007.

The following policy suggestions should be considered for future plan iterations.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The existing MPS is structured into broad land use groupings (residential, commercial, commercial industrial, industrial), social and cultural considerations, and infrastructure. A detailed policy review is beyond the scope of this project. The following general recommendations are suggested for future revisions:

1. Include a policy chapter on sustainability. Many municipalities, particularly with the need for integrated community sustainability plans (Yarmouth has a draft plan), have incorporated a dedicated chapter on sustainability policies



and objectives. The downtown plan emphasizes a compact, walkable, mixed use core in favour of suburban sprawl. The downtown plan also encourages significant growth in downtown residential development so that more people can work, live, learn and play within a self contained area. The sustainability chapter should also address AT-planning, bicycle friendly downtown, transit oriented development, urban forests, open space, etc.

2. Maintain the policy on restricting business and professional offices on Starrs Road. This single policy has prevented the out-migration of the service industry from the downtown.
3. Chapter 3, should consider adding the objective of encouraging residential development in the downtown in the form of mixed use development with commercial ground floors and residential above.
4. Chapter 4, Encourage mixed use development in the CBD. The existing MPS makes provisions for 'as-of-right' medium density (2-3 units per lot) residential mixed use development on but only allows high density residential development (greater than 4 units) by development agreement. The Town should consider the pros and cons of making higher density residential development an as-of-right consideration in the CBD.
5. Evaluate fire flows in CBD to determine feasibility of higher density development
6. Chapter 4, encourage bridging of CBD to the new Law Courts facility. Over time, the residential land between the CBD and the Law Courts (on Main Street) should extend the CBD southward by a few blocks.
7. Chapter 6, encouraged mixed use development on the Corkum's Wharf property. This development should extend the destination waterfront from the Killam Brothers and Rudders properties.

8. Chapter 6, require a public accessible waterfront for all non-industrial waterfront. A public boardwalk should be required for all developments in the destination waterfront (non-industrial).
9. Chapter 7, add downtown pocket parks to the list of recreational programming facilities.

LUB

The following general recommendations are suggested for future revisions:

1. WCI-5 Uses Permitted: add mixed use (ground-floor commercial with upper office and/or residential).
2. Drive-throughs should not be permitted in the CBD (except those grandfathered).



4: IMPLEMENTATION

This report describes both a long-term 20-year vision and achievable short-term 10-year plan for downtown Yarmouth. The plans and proposals are consistent with the objectives described in both the public consultation component of this project, and many previous studies and reports.

Initial priorities should be placed on making incremental streetscape improvements to Main Street (street trees, lighting, signage, furnishings, etc), marking the area with appropriate signage, and forging an organization alliance with merchants to facilitate the physical improvements. This will also ensure maximal benefit from marketing initiatives. Taking positive and visible small steps at the beginning is important to gather momentum for the larger vision.

Initiatives with a high profile and ease of implementation should be given the highest priority, especially where cost is not prohibitive. Larger and more complex projects will require time and further study to work out all the details required for implementation.

Setting priorities for implementation should be based on the following criteria:

Immediate economic impact

1. Best probable funding opportunity
2. Timeline for possible environmental, infrastructure, and land acquisition issues
3. Potential for greatest positive impact
4. Ability to link to other open spaces and sites
5. Status of land ownership or construction readiness
6. Opportunity for partnerships with the private sector
7. Coordination with other on-going municipal projects
8. Logical design and construction sequence.





4.1 BUDGET ESTIMATES

The implementation strategy illustrates how the recommended public projects may be completed in three phases. Assuming that funding is available, the work indicated should be able to be completed within the 20-year vision. These estimates also assume program budgets will be adjusted accordingly for inflation and other unexpected cost increases. The following table (Table 4.1) summarizes the total cost of implementation, and a breakdown of how these costs may be distributed over three phases.

The total implementation budget for the 20-year Downtown Yarmouth Revitalization Plan is approximately \$13,149,900 dollars (2010 dollars). If the Town and project funding partners were able to contribute approximately \$657,495 (2010 dollars) per year in capital or in-kind to the projects identified each year, all works could be completed within 20 years.

Some of the capital required may already exist within annual budgets for maintenance and renewal of the streets and other related infrastructure. We have included a 20% contingency to allow some flexibility during detailed design. We have also added 15% for design and project management costs however, these will vary from 8% to 18% depending on the size, nature and the level of project management required. Exact costs will depend upon detailed designs and bidding climate prevailing at the time of implementation. All projects require detailed design to facilitate quality implementation.

Materials and quantities were derived from measurements taken from the 1" = 200' geo-referenced base mapping. This level of accuracy is sufficient for general

planning; however, more accurate estimates will be required during the detailed design and construction stages before going to tender with proposed work. Actual costs may be plus or minus 20%. All quotes reflect Dec 2009 'installed' prices, not including tax. With recent ballooning petroleum prices, prices could increase rapidly in line with petroleum.

The budget estimate does not include costs for long-term easements, land purchases or private improvements. Miscellaneous items/costs are outlined in the various sub-area descriptions and these include allowances for grading, catch basin relocation and special features.

It is important to recognize that the drawings and designs in this document are conceptual only. A qualified design firm/team should be commissioned to prepare schematic and detailed design drawings and contract documents for each individual project. This additional cost has been accounted for in the cost spreadsheet.

The following budget summaries are broken down on an area by area.



YARMOUTH DOWNTOWN BLUEPRINT
Draft Report

		Costing			Phasing		
		Measure	Units	Unit Cost	Cost	Year 1 - 5	Year 5 - 10
2.1 - Public Improvements Main Street Streetscape	Public Lane - Glebe	117	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$351,000	351,000	
	Glebe - Lovitt	120	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$360,000	360,000	
	Lovitt - Jenkins	46	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$138,000	138,000	
	Jenkins - Central	68	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$204,000	204,000	
	Central - Brown	102	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$306,000	306,000	
	Brown - Forest	219	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$657,000	657,000	
	Forest - Albert	119	lin.m.	\$3,000	\$357,000	357,000	
	Glebe Street	105	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$252,000	252,000	
	Lovitt Street	111	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$266,400	266,400	
	Jenkins Street	115	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$276,000	276,000	
Side Streets	Central Street	126	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$302,400	302,400	
	Brown Street	138	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$331,200	331,200	
	Forest Street	133	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$319,200	319,200	
	Public Lane - Glebe	128	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$307,200		307,200
	Glebe - Lovitt	118	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$283,200		283,200
Water Street	Lovitt - Jenkins	48	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$115,200		115,200
	Jenkins - Central	67	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$160,800		160,800
	Central - Brown	101	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$242,400		242,400
	Brown - Forest	236	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$566,400		566,400
	Forest - Albert	113	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$271,200		271,200
Hawthorne Street	Central - Brown	94	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$225,600	225,600	
	Brown - Forest	219	lin.m.	\$2,400	\$525,600	525,600	
Frost Park Upgrades	Farmers Market Plaza	354	sq.m.	\$300	\$106,200	106,200	
	Entry Arch	1	ea.	\$45,000	\$45,000	45,000	
	Iron Fence Improvements	320	lin.m.	\$400	\$128,000	128,000	
	Fountain Upgrade	1	ea.	\$160,000	\$160,000	160,000	
	Plant Labels	80	ea.	\$60	\$4,800	4,800	
Cendaph Park Upgrades	Interpretive Signage	6	ea.	\$4,000	\$24,000	24,000	
	New walkway	35	lin.m.	\$160	\$5,600	5,600	
	Amphitheatre	1	ea.	\$120,000	\$120,000	120,000	
	Furnishings	8	ea.	\$2,000	\$16,000	16,000	
	New concrete walkway	216	lin.m.	\$160	\$34,560	34,560	
Parking Lots	New concrete plaza	790	sq.m.	\$110	\$86,900	86,900	
	New Plant Beds	186	sq.m.	\$90	\$16,740	16,740	
	Trees	16	ea.	\$1,000	\$16,000	16,000	
	Sign Wall & Steps	18	lin.m.	\$500	\$9,000	9,000	
	Furnishings	9	ea.	\$2,000	\$18,000	18,000	
Plazas & Midblock Alleys	Library Signage	1	ea.	\$12,000	\$12,000	12,000	
	Grading and Earthworks	1	lump sum	\$10,000	\$10,000	10,000	
	Brown Street Parking	1302	sq.m.	\$90	\$117,180	117,180	
	Brown Street Parking Plaza	860	sq.m.	\$110	\$94,600		94,600
	Forest Street Parking Lot	4462	sq.m.	\$90	\$401,580		401,580
Land Assembly	Forest Street Plazas	256	sq.m.	\$110	\$28,160		28,160
	Forest Street 5 RV Spaces	36	sq.m.	\$90	\$3,240		3,240
	AGNS Plaza	1314	sq.m.	\$200	\$262,800	262,800	
	Main to Hawthorne Public Alley	566	sq.m.	\$140	\$79,240	79,240	
	Year 1 - 5	5	years	\$150,000	\$750,000	750,000	
Signage & Interpretive Program	Year 5 - 10	5	years	\$170,000	\$850,000		850,000
	Year 10 - 20	10	years	\$190,000	\$1,900,000		1,900,000
	Starrs Road Entry Signage	1	ea.	\$25,000	\$25,000	25,000	
	Main Street Archway	1	ea.	\$130,000	\$130,000	130,000	
	Street Blades	50	ea.	\$150	\$7,500	7,500	
Waterfront Event Plaza	Information Kiosks	8	ea.	\$12,000	\$96,000		96,000
	Banners	150	ea.	\$150	\$22,500	22,500	
	Directional Signage	30	ea.	\$1,200	\$36,000	36,000	
	Interpretive Signage	15	ea.	\$4,000	\$60,000		60,000
	Waterfront Event Plaza	1	ea.	\$150,000	\$150,000		150,000
Waterfront Kiosks	Waterfront Kiosks	3	ea.	\$30,000	\$90,000		90,000
	Facade Incentive Program (1/4 municipal contribution)	0.25	percent	\$400,000	\$100,000	100,000	
	Market (1 person 1/4 time, 2 years)	1	ea.	\$40,000	\$40,000	40,000	
	Wireless Infrastructure	1	lump sum	\$5,000	\$5,000	5,000	
	Administration	1	lump sum	\$40,000	\$40,000	40,000	
2.2 - Additional Studies	Event Programming (1 person 1/4 time, 2 years)	1	lump sum	\$40,000	\$40,000	40,000	
	Urban Awards Program (1 person 1/4 time, 2 years)	1	lump sum	\$40,000	\$40,000	40,000	
	Downtown Business Prospecting (1 person 1/2 time, 2 years)	1	lump sum	\$80,000	\$80,000	80,000	
	Signage & Branding Schematic Design	1	lump sum	\$30,000	\$30,000	30,000	
	Urban Forest Plan	1	lump sum	\$40,000	\$40,000	40,000	
Total	AT Plan	1	lump sum	\$0	\$0		
	Frost Park and Library Master Plan	1	lump sum	\$25,000	\$25,000	25,000	
	Parking Strategy	1	lump sum	\$20,000	\$20,000	20,000	
				\$13,154,400	\$5,787,220	2,753,200	4,613,980



4.2 PHASING STRATEGY

This report describes the long term vision for downtown Yarmouth. Implementation of plan will occur over a 20 year build out period, and successful realization of the plan is integrally linked to a comprehensive and realistic phasing strategy. A successful approach will address any challenges that may arise and will implement the various elements of the plan in logical and cost-efficient manner. It is the intent of the phasing strategy to ensure that each phase of the build-out contains adequate development to fund it's infrastructure requirements.

Forecasting a year-by-year phasing strategy is difficult without a strong sense of annual budgets. Priorities set by the Steering Committee can be influenced by the opportunities that arise from unforeseen funding sources, new developments and private sector initiatives.

Phase One Priorities (Years 1-5)

New sidewalks with street trees, on street parking and new lighting are the highest priority in the core business area. These sidewalks, brand development and facade improvements are the first priorities.

Brand development will include the creation of devices that merchants can use in their advertising and signs to reinforce the identity of Downtown Yarmouth. A civic signage strategy should be implemented for the downtown.

The Town should continue to passively assemble strategic properties for future developments and parking lots.

Upgrades to Frost Park and the Cenotaph park would be included in this stage. The development of Hawthorne Street and the Urban market will also take place in this stage, building upon the activities and attractive elements of the downtown. Further creating a desirable place to live.

All proposed studies would also take place in phase on.

Phase 2 Priorities (Years 5-10)

These projects respond to improving the connections to and from the waterfront. The side streets will be easier to traverse with new sidewalks and better lighting. Information kiosks and interpretive signage will add to the existing narrative within Yarmouth. The town will continue to acquire land parcels.

Phase 3 Priorities (Years 10-20)

The third phase is essentially upgrades to Water Street, parking lots and creation of two plazas. Water Street upgrades would be left towards the latter portion of the project as it is in better condition than the other areas.

4.3 NEXT STEPS TO MOVE TOWARDS REALIZATION OF THE VISION

There are a number of important next steps required to move the elements of this plan forward. These include:

The Town

1. The Town should investigate the land use suggestions in this report and formulate policy to encourage the mixed use strategy outlined in this report.
2. The Town should continue to 'passively' assemble land (as strategic lots come up for sale, purchase them) for parking lots and anchor developments in the downtown as outlined in this report.
3. The Town should assemble the Corkum's Wharf parcel as a feature waterfront development parcel.
4. The Town should encourage infilling of vacant lots on Main Street and Water Street.
5. The Town should redevelop Hawthorne Street as a full street cross section.
6. The Town should develop an Urban Forest Master Plan.
7. The Town should develop an Open Space Master Plan.
8. The Town should develop an Active Transportation Plan.
9. The Town should look at the development potential of the library property (east of the library).
10. The Town should pursue the Facade Incentive Program with higher levels of government to determine the potential contributions. A further, more detailed facade study (above the recommendations of this report) may be required as part of this program once the details of the program are better defined.
11. The Town should develop and implement a detailed civic signage and wayfinding strategy in more detail than the concepts outlined in this report. A downtown branding strategy should be developed in association with the signage program.



12. The Town should commission detailed design drawings for the new streetscape design once funding priorities are investigated.
13. The Town should continue to facilitate the Th' YARC facility to find a home in the downtown. The Collins Street property offers the most immediate potential benefits.
14. The Town should work with the Province to pursue opportunities for an Expression of Interest for the redevelopment of the VIC property as a large mixed use development.
15. The Town should find a location for an urban market.
16. The Town should add bike lanes to Main Street, bump-outs on Main Street, mid-block alleys, and other streetscape enhancements as outlined in this report.
17. The Town should encourage a civic art strategy for the entire downtown to make Yarmouth one of the most memorable art communities in Atlantic Canada.
18. An interpretive program should be developed for the Town with interpretive panels or high tech podcasting tours. The program should highlight potential interpretive themes and topics, and interpretive approaches (panels, hands on exhibits, etc.).
19. The Town should develop additional marketing collateral around the proposed landmark outlined in this study. This would include stationary package, website, community walking maps, developer information package, commercial business information package, etc.
20. The Town should implement the public space physical improvements suggested in this report.
21. The Town should investigate the creation of an Entertainment Tax or a Transient Occupancy Tax (levied for the privilege of occupying a room or rooms or other living space in a hotel, inn, tourist home or house, motel or other lodging for a period of 30 days or less) to help fund downtown improvements.

The YDC

22. The YDC should actively meet with and pursue experienced mixed use developers and commercial prospects to increase downtown development.
23. The YDC should develop an event program for the downtown that includes at least 8 significant public downtown events per year during all 4 seasons.
24. The YDC should create downtown space clearing house or registry of potential properties for active marketing of downtown to infill developers.
25. The YDC should update its parking strategy.
26. The YDC should look into initiating an annual Downtown Awards Program for private land owners.
27. The YDC should work with the town in implementing a facade incentive program.
28. The YDC should develop a series of retailing and storefront design courses for its members.

The YWDC

29. The YDCL and Port Authority should implement the various components of the Harbour Plan.
30. The YWDC should continue improvements to Water Street.
31. The YWDC should oversee infill of Water Street vacant properties.
32. The YWDC should work to create a high profile public attraction/space on the waterfront.

The Yarmouth Port Authority

33. The YPA should continue to implement the Port Plan
34. The YPA should find ways to strengthen the working waterfront with the tourist waterfront.

35. The YPA should encourage harbour cruise or fishing kiosks in association with willing operators.
36. The YPA and Town should work together to redevelop the ferry terminal leveraging Federal and Provincial funding programs.

4.4 WAYS TO MEASURE DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS

Unlike more conventional planning exercises, which may have clear indicators of implementation and success, Downtown redevelopment often focuses on more abstract or complex solutions which can be harder to quantify. How can the success of a plan such as Centre First be measured? What tools exist for the Town of Amherst and its partners to track the progress of the various plan components as they unfold? Other municipalities have examined this question, and several categories for measurement and evaluation emerge as common indicators of Downtown redevelopment success.

- » Economic Indicators. A successful Downtown should be busy during the day and night. Economic Indicators include number and variety of businesses, and number and variety of housing options as well as the quality and quantity of office space. Residents should have a variety of restaurants to choose from, things to buy, services to enjoy, and housing options. Entertainment and cultural venues are also important generators of economic activity.
- » Vacancy Rates. Attracting new businesses to the Downtown increases revenues and gives

T4.2 Funding Programs

Program	Summary	Deadline	Amount
Canada's Economic Action Plan Communities Component	Targeting communities with a population under 100,000. Projects selected through application process. Safe drinking water, disaster mitigation, brownfield redevelopment, local roads and bridges.	Work must be completed within two years.	Projects cost shared. 1/3 Federal, 1/3 provincial, 1/3 municipal counterparts
ACOA-Business Development Program	Eligible applicants must be of a commercial, not-for-profit bases. Program designed to help modernize or expand your business, focusing on small and medium sized enterprises. Eligible activities include business studies, capital investment, training, marketing, quality assurance, not for profit activities that support business in the region.	unspecified	50% + 75% each level has individual criteria. Funds provided as an unsecured, interest-free loan. Loan is repayable on a time schedule tailored to your circumstances.
Community Adjustment Fund (CAF) Program	Eligibility given to projects such as science and technology initiatives, community transition plans that foster economic development and other measures that promote economic diversification. Funding priority given to projects in rural and single industry communities.	Must be completed in a 2 year timeframe and be able to start quickly.	up to 80% of eligible cost for non-commercial and commercial projects. Up to 50% of eligible costs for capital projects and 75% of eligible costs for non-capital projects
Innovative Communities Fund (ICF)	ICF focuses on investments that lead to long-term employment and economic capacity building in rural communities. Urban initiatives that stimulate the competitiveness and vitality of rural communities may be considered on a selective basis.	unspecified	unspecified
Cultural Spaces Canada Program	The Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program aims to strengthen organizational effectiveness and build capacity of arts and heritage organizations. It is comprised of four program components: Stabilization Projects, Capacity Building, Endowment Incentives, and Networking Initiatives.	unspecified	unspecified
Museums Assistance Program	The Museums Assistance Program (MAP) provides funding to Canadian museums and related institutions for projects that support federal objectives for museums to ensure that Canadians have access to and experience Canada's diverse cultural heritage.	certain projects due by December 22, 2009	unspecified
Arts and Culture	Arts Presentation Canada gives Canadians direct access to diverse, quality artistic experiences through financial assistance to arts presenters (such as festivals) or the organizations that support them.	unspecified	unspecified

patrons options for shopping and services. The more competitive commercial space is in the Downtown the more revenue can be drawn from the space. In order to be successful, businesses want to locate in places with high foot traffic. Vacant lots and spaces mean a town is missing out on potential revenue. Capitalizing on the space in the Downtown contributes to the vibrancy of the Downtown which will only attract more people and potential business opportunities.

- » Perception. Successful Downtowns have a variety of activities during the day and night. Good lighting, lots of people, and a subtle police presence all contribute to a perception of activity, safety, and vibrancy. What visitors and residents see in the Downtown contributes to their feelings and perceptions. Creating a positive experience encourages frequent interaction and allows residents to feel a sense of pride in their community, and be enthusiastic about their surroundings.
- » Community Involvement. Engaging the community in decisions about the Downtown and getting their feedback is also a good way to measure a successful Downtown plan. Participating in the planning process and attending community events shows that people have a vested interest in what goes on in their town. Also, providing activities for patrons, especially youth, reduces the amount of loitering and vandalism which has been expressed as a problem in Amherst.
- » Cleanliness. Keeping streets clear of refuse is important. Clean streets are more welcoming and frequent curbside garbage and recycling receptacles encourage and support a litter-free Downtown.
- » Prior to the implementation of any of the Centre First plan components or recommendations, the Town of Amherst should collect data for these categories (if it does not already exist), to use as a baseline for comparison. At the various implemen-

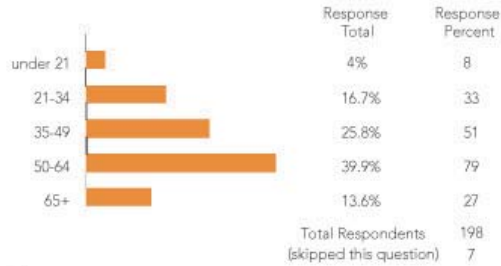
tation milestones, progress can be tracked to ensure that the plan stays focused on the end goals, and any adaptations can be made, as required.

4.5 DOWNTOWN FUNDING PROGRAMS

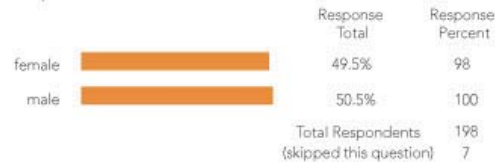
See Table T4.2

Appendix A

1. What is your approximate age?



2. Are you...



3. Do you live within walking distance of downtown?



4. Do you drive to the downtown more than you walk to the area?



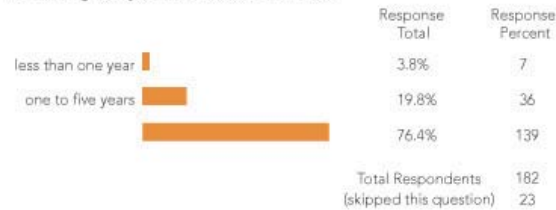
5. Do you work in the downtown area?



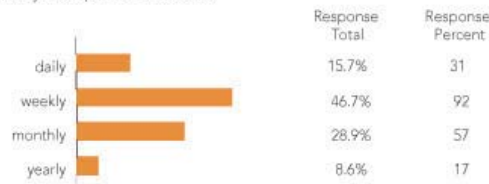
6. Do you live in the downtown area?



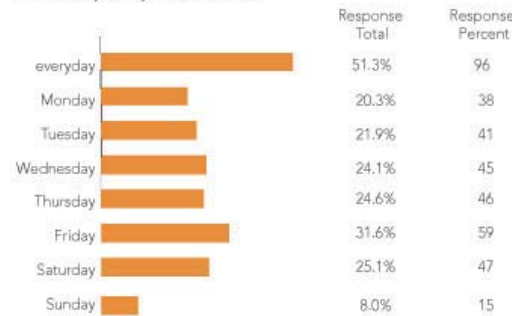
7. How long have you lived or worked in the area?



8. Do you shop in the downtown?



9. What day(s) do you use the area?



10. What time of day do you most frequently use the area?



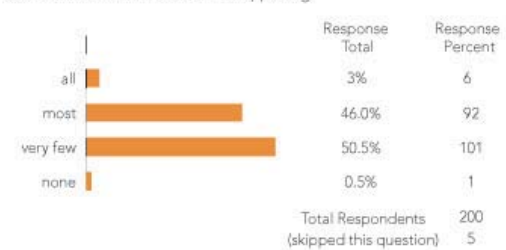
11. Do you regularly walk in the area?



11. Do you regularly bike in the area?



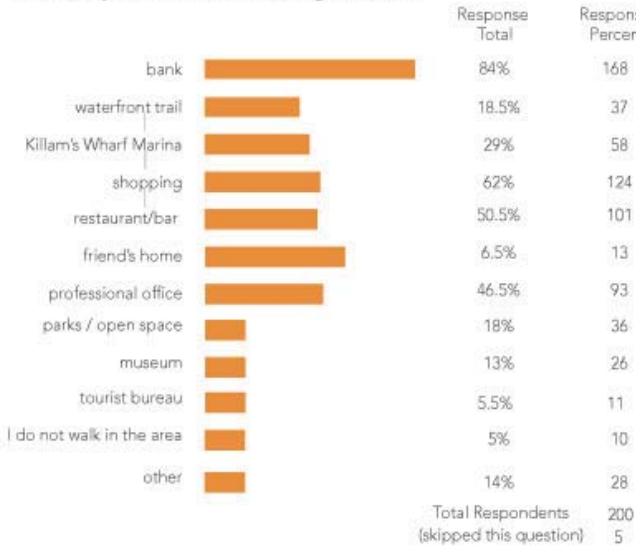
13. How many of the storefronts in the area, in general, in general, do you consider to be well maintained and appealing?



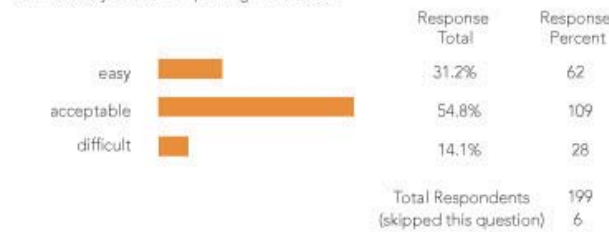
14. What is your overall opinion of the current appearance of the downtown area?



15. What is your destination when walking in the area?



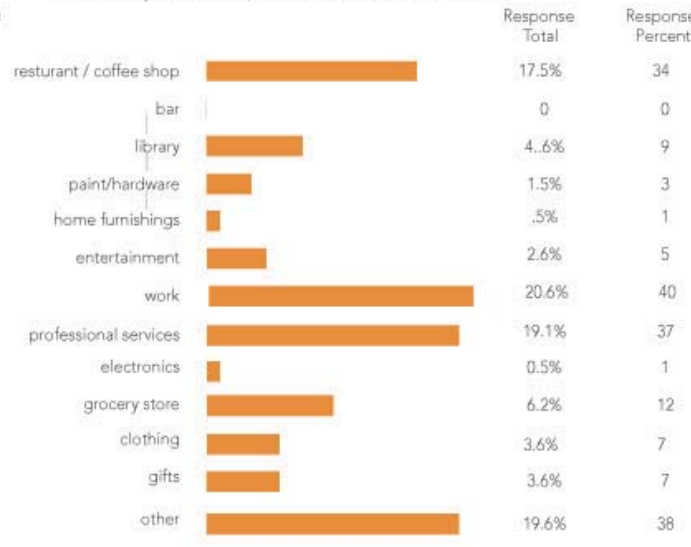
16. How easy is it to find parking in the area?



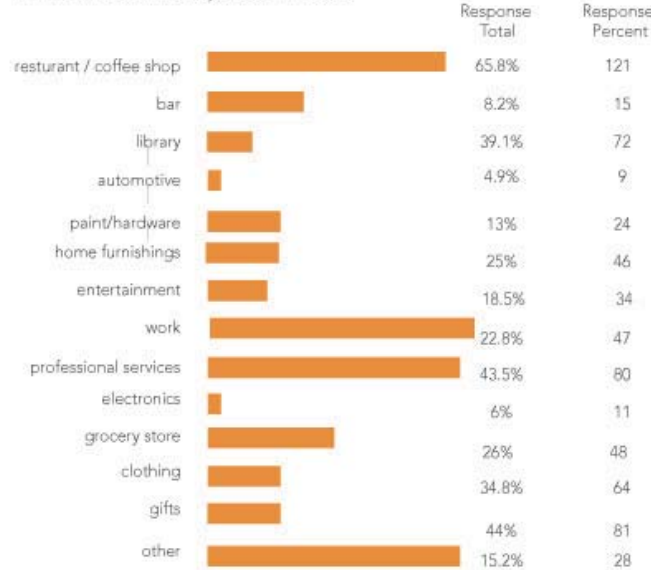
17. The current directional and shop signage is:



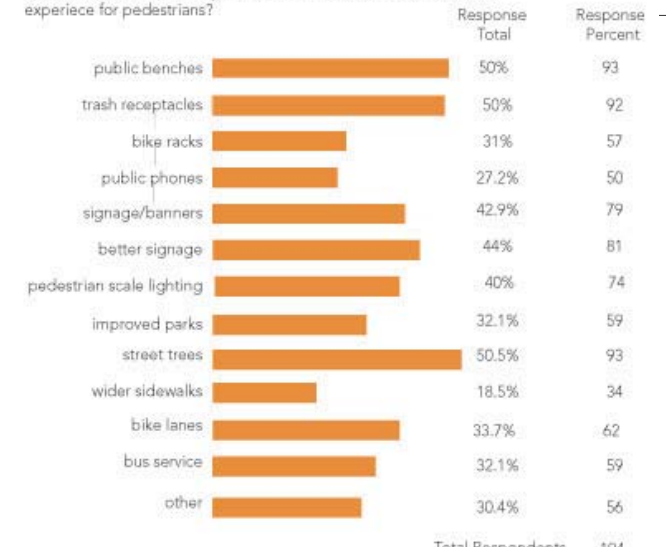
18. What is your most frequent destination when in the area?



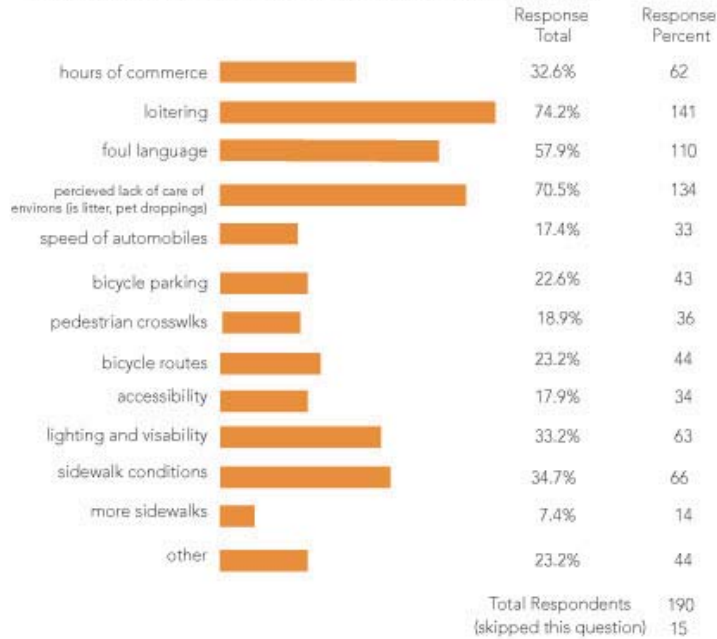
19. What other services do you use in the area?



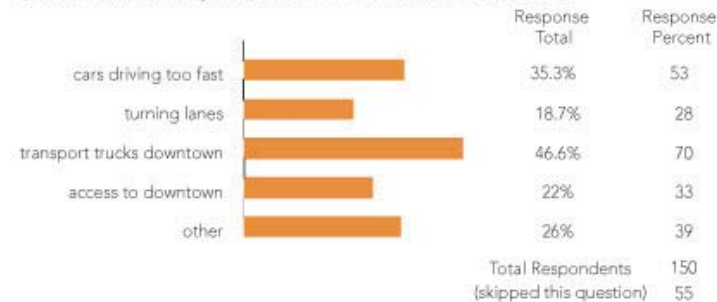
20. What amenities would you like to see added to create a better experience for pedestrians?



21. Which safety issues, in your opinion, need to be addressed in the area?



22. What traffic issues, in your opinion, need to be addressed in the area?



23. What services/ businesses would you like to see added downtown?

golf shop	vibrant restaurants
Theater	Anything pertaining to restaurants, bars, all types of retail speciality shoppes
Shops and cafés	Giftware
high quality shopping - outlet stores	fish market
retail stores	sidewalks fixed to be safer to walk on
Arts Center	DEPARTMENT STORE
Restaurants	an old fashion 'General Store'
arts & recreation center	retail gifts and apparell
farmer's market	Arts Centre for ALL artistic endeavours
Mid-income housing to replace the low-income housing	Not sure
Department Store (Giant Tiger etc)	Healthy food take out restaurant
The Yarc'	Good gift shops
small hardware store	Book Store
Large employer like register.com to add people to downtown core	Starbucks
General Merchandise Store	hardware store
farmers market	Police or security walking in the downtown area on a daily basis
hardware store	unsure
All Gov. offices	Retail Shops
More clothing shops	more shops, gifts,
museums/cultural or arts centers	coffee shops
restaurants	clothing stores
Irish style pub/cafe with sidewalk or terrace seating	arts center-farmers market
department store	Coffee Shop
Arts Centre	hardware store
more varied shops	bicycle rentals
Art Centre	Arts Theater
convenient parking	resturants
grocery store	gallery space
Kids shops	Internet Cafe
Cafe without liquor served.	Farmer's Market (permanent, year-round)
Long term retail stores.	record/CD store
GOOD Restaurant(s)/Bistro(s)	Art supplies, another bakery, fish store, local produce center, meat store,
arts centre	More stores
Clothing	Arts Center
live theater	tourism
Further Developement of the Waterfront	medical drop in clinic for all
more downtown housing on upper stories to increase numbers of people	Multi-Purpose Arts Center
restuarants	Th'YARC
women's clothing	Men's/Women's Clothing Store
better signage	The new YARC building should definately be located in the heart of the downtown
yarc	better police prescence
waterfront aquarium	arts center
the performing arts theatre complex	Arts And Theatre facility-
Services/ businesses needed by those with limited mobility	Youth centre
well maintained public washrooms	Retail/grocery stores
grocery - farmer market	Residential
arts centre	arts centre
Outdoor Cafes	medical centres/
healthier fast food	boutiques of any type
Boutiques	POLICING
grocery store in centre downtown	Clothing stores for women
arts center	supermarket
DEVELOPEMENT OF THE SOUTH END OF MAIN STREET	starbucks/espresso shop
department store	a green space where the old theatre used to be with a sitting area for people
upscale shops to interest tourists	a market of local goods
hardware store	arts center or other performance venue with meeting rooms ,etc
speciaty stores	Manufacturing plant. Create Jobs

Appendix B

Step 1: Capture the Vision

A good starting point is to engage in a “visioning” process. While denigrated by some for being “soft and fuzzy,” a visioning process not only determines if there is community support but it also uncovers the emotional, economic, and fiscal reasons for turning around the downtown. This process should be professionally managed, with money allocated to pay for it. It is best if the money raised starts the entire revitalization process off on the right foot; it should be primarily private and non-profit sector funded. The public sector can and should participate, both to have a stake in and to give legitimacy to the process. This will eventually give way to a private/public partnership, an intentional reversal of the way this phrase is usually stated.

Step 2: Develop a Strategic Plan

The process for determining the comprehensive strategy starts by bringing together an expanded version of the advisory group. The group should include neighborhood group representatives, retailers, investors, developers, property owners, churches, the mayor and key city councilors, the heads of select city departments, non-profit organizations, artists, homeless advocates, and others. Selecting the right composition is extremely important to ensure that no significant group feels left out. The group needs to be relatively small (less than 25 individuals), however, in order to both build a sense of trust and cohesion and, ultimately, to ensure the process stays focused on results.

It is also crucial that the individuals be people who are interested in successful solutions, not narrow political gain.

Two one-day sessions devoted to the strategic planning process, separated by about a month, are generally sufficient to crafting the strategy and implementation plan. Before the first day, a “briefing book” should be assembled to provide the group with a common set of data about the existing conditions downtown. This briefing book should include findings from the visioning process (technical and subjective portraits), market and consumer real estate research for all product types (office, hotel, rental housing, retail, etc.), data on the existing condition of the downtown infrastructure and public services, and other relevant information.

Step 3: Forge a Healthy Private/Public Partnership

Successful downtown revitalizations are generally private/public partnerships, not the other way around. The public sector, usually lead by the mayor or some other public official, may convene the strategy process but it must quickly be led by the private entities whose time and money will ultimately determine the effort's success. A healthy, sustained partnership is crucial to getting the revitalization process off the ground and building the critical mass needed to spur a cycle of sustainable development.

The key to the public sector's successful involvement in downtown redevelopment is to avoid making it overly political. Once it has been launched, it is essential for future politicians to “keep their hands off” to the maximum extent possible. Investors, developers, and volunteers helping to revive downtown are motivated by emotion, passion, long-term financial returns, and many other unique and personal reasons. A politician trying to advance his career can very easily quash this momentum and destroy the private/public partnership

in the process.

All this is not to say that the public sector should be completely laissez-faire. City leaders must be absolutely committed to the process both in word and in deed, and be willing and able to do what it takes to help create the right environment for private sector development and investment.

Step 4: Make the Right Thing Easy

If the downtown area around Santa Fe, New Mexico's much beloved and vibrant 400 year old Plaza burned to the ground, legally it would only be possible to rebuild strip commercial buildings, likely anchored by Wal-Mart Super Centers, Home Depots, and the other usual suspects.

In downtown Santa Fe and dozens of others around the country, zoning and building codes of the past fifty years actually outlaw the necessary elements of walkable urbanism. In many cities, for example, often well-intended setback and floor-area ratio rules mean that new construction cannot maintain consistency with older historic structures. Also, excessive parking requirements can create large surface lots fronting once-lively streets, eroding the vitality of otherwise coherent places. Coupled with an emphasis on separation of land uses and limited densities, downtown revitalization becomes nearly impossible from a legal perspective.

Step 5: Establish Business Improvement Districts and Other Non-Profits

The BID's main leadership role is managing the implementation of the strategy, which must be constantly updated. The BID may be responsible, for example, for ensuring the various task forces charged with imple-

menting parts of the strategy are motivated to complete their efforts.

The BID might also create a new signage program for downtown, work for the development and approval of the form-based code, and market the downtown to new developers.

The BID's operational role is usually (1) increasing the perceived and actual safety of downtown; (2) making the place cleaner; (3) creating festivals and events to encourage suburbanites to come downtown, and; (4) improving downtown's image. BIDs typically include a force of trained "safety ambassadors" who offer a friendly face on the street, are trained to handle quality of life infractions, and who are wired to the police. They also have permanent staff performing the cleaning, events, and marketing functions.

In short, the BID and other non-profits are a downtown's management team—ensuring its many complex elements work together to create a safe, attractive, unique, and well-functioning place.

Step 6: Create a Catalytic Development Company

Revitalizing downtowns have overcome the problem of attracting developers by establishing a "catalytic developer." This organization is formed to develop the initial projects that the market and consumer research shows have potential demand but above market risk. The catalytic development firm demonstrates to the rest of the development community and their investors that downtown development can make economic sense.

A catalytic development company can engage in varying activities in the development process. Among the possibilities are: undertaking land assemblage and

land development to prepare lots for new construction; financing the gap between conventional financing and the amount of money required to make the project happen; or developing a complete building from start to finish.

In the early years of the revitalization process, it is probable that the catalytic development firm will have to engage in complete building development. Eventually, once the market is proven, the catalytic developer can joint venture with other building developers, possibly providing land for deals. In a successful downtown, the catalytic developer will eventually work itself out of business as more developers come to understand the financial benefits of downtown development.

Step 7: Create an Urban Entertainment District

It all starts, as in any real estate development, with market demand. Understanding which of the many urban entertainment options that have the greatest potential for success is a crucial first step. These can include:

Arenas, performing arts centers, or stadiums. Since 1990, the vast majority of all new arenas, performing arts centers, and stadiums have been built downtown. They work better financially by having higher average attendance than their suburban competitors, and there is significant economic spin-off within walking distance.

Movie theaters. The new generation of movie theaters—mega-plexes with digital sound and stadium seating—also benefit from a downtown location, assuming large amounts of evening and weekend parking can be provided for free. They also spark significant restaurant demand.

Restaurants. A crucial part of any urban entertainment

strategy, downtown restaurants provide lunch for the office workers and dinner for the night-time crowd, broadening their appeal and financial success.

Specialty retail. Unique clothing, shoes, cosmetics, gift, and other specialty stores—as well as service providers such as day spas and design studios—can be attracted downtown. These will be mostly small, locally-owned retailers but will also include national chains.

Festivals. One of the initial urban entertainment concepts, street festivals can be introduced relatively quickly to a reviving downtown since there is little or no capital outlay.

Arts. The vast array of arts organizations, particularly music performers and visual artists, has a natural affinity for downtown. They are generally in the vanguard of urban dwellers. Arts festivals, galleries, museums, and workshops are among the best and earliest urban entertainment providers.

Night Clubs. Generally aimed at people in their 20's and 30's, night clubs also have a natural affinity for downtown; these venues tend to be loud and stay open late so there are constraints on where else they can locate in the region.

These urban entertainment concepts appeal to different clientele, yet can all be accommodated within walking distance. There can be a night club district a few blocks away from the performing arts center. There can be an arts district close to a movie theater and restaurants. An arena can be shoe-horned near office towers, double using the commuter roadways, transit, and office parking lots. This complexity gives all sorts of people a reason to come downtown, which is particularly important in the early years when downtown's image may not be positive.

The most important benefit of entertainment is to get "feet on the street," especially at night. And just as a

crowded restaurant is the best recommendation that it is a good place, crowded sidewalks recommend downtown, signaling a safe environment, and providing an excitement and spectacle that draws people to the area.

Step 8: Develop a Rental Housing Market

The initial urban pioneers looking to live within walking distance of the urban entertainment growing in downtown will tend to be young, often students and those in their 20's. This age group was probably raised in the suburbs, and probably doesn't have as negative an impression of downtown as their elders. They also look upon it as exciting and interesting, especially compared to where they were raised.

The young also tend to rent, as they don't have the assets, income, or location stability required to buy a home. They are more flexible, tied only to the lease they have signed, probably for a year or less. Once an urban entertainment concentration begins to emerge, this group generally has both the propensity to move downtown, and the ability to make the move quickly.

Rental housing projects can be conversions of existing office, industrial, or institutional buildings or new construction. The renovation of existing buildings offers some of the most exciting new housing options, as they are unlike other rental products in the regional market.

Though often a source of great challenge for developers, converting obsolete, sometimes decrepit buildings into attractive, active uses has ancillary benefits. This type of development also begins to take lower end, class C office buildings off the market, paving the way for the eventual recovery of the office market.

New construction of rental housing has its own unique trials. While construction costs are much better known up front, with fewer surprises than conversions, these new costs tend to be high. There is no existing steel or concrete structure frame, parking, or re-useable heating and cooling systems to recycle. Since apartment rents tend to have an absolute ceiling in any market, the cost of new construction must come in at a level that is financially feasible, which can be very difficult to do, especially early in the redevelopment process when rents are probably low.

Like suburban development, an initial downtown turn-around requires sufficient parking. Only after critical mass is reached will parking ratios begin to drop, as more of the residents are walking or taking transit for their daily needs. The majority of the parking for rental apartments typically needs to be on-site. While converted office or industrial buildings may have more than sufficient parking, new construction will likely require structured parking, which is approximately 10-20 times more expensive than surface parking to build. In either case, the amount of parking on the site will drive the number of units that can be built.

In spite of the obstacles, downtown can often achieve the highest rents in the metropolitan area. If you offer a unique rental product in a unique, walkable downtown that is on the way back, the rents are likely to float to the top of the market.

Step 9: Pioneer an Affordability Strategy

Like most things in life, turning around a downtown means good news and bad news. The good news is that if a critical mass of walkable urbanism is created, the rents, sales values, and land values will probably be

the highest in the metropolitan area, rewarding those willing to take the risk, build high quality construction, and wait patiently for returns. The bad news is that the values will be some of the highest in the metropolitan area, meaning only the well-to-do can live downtown. To address this issue, an affordability strategy must be developed early-on in the revitalization process.

The issue of affordability generally focuses on housing. Specifically, lower paid workers who are employed downtown will not be able to afford the newly converted or new construction rental or for-sale housing due to the basic cost to deliver the product, and the high demand generated for it. Federal government-sponsored affordable housing programs have recently been cut back and the red-tape is discouraging to some developers. And the community development corporations (CDC's) who specialize in affordable housing generally do not have the capacity to fill the need.

One of the usual approaches to affordability is to simply mandate it be addressed. Some downtown projects have a quota of affordable housing, such as 20 percent, particularly if the project had some form of government assistance. While this approach is required if federal housing tax credits are employed, it is counter-productive if they are arbitrarily used. In essence, the use of an affordable set-aside means the other 80 percent of the tenants or buyers must pay for the 20 percent being subsidized. So just at a time the downtown is struggling to come back, the very families they are trying to attract are "taxed" for pioneering the downtown revitalization. If all housing developments in the metropolitan area, or even in the city, had an affordable housing set-aside, that would be both fair and socially beneficial. Yet almost no affordable housing advocates have the will to take on the powerful suburban home builders. It is much easier to mandate

affordable housing program on developers willing to take on socially oriented development, like the revitalization of downtown.

Step 10: Focus on For-Sale Housing

Following the establishment of urban entertainment and the initial “colonization” of downtown by urban pioneers who rent, for-sale housing can return to downtown. For sale housing appeals to a very different set of households than renters. They are generally older, not as adventuresome, and are prepared and able to invest in the largest asset of their personal net worth, their home.

The natural markets for for-sale housing in a reviving downtown include young professional singles and couples and Baby Boomer empty nesters. These are typically childless households who likely demand less living space, and aren’t concerned about the quality of the schools. Still, far-sighted civic strategists responsible for downtown revitalization would be wise to include improving the downtown schools in their strategic plan. This would allow for the young professionals to stay in downtown if they eventually have children. In downtown Albuquerque, for example, the schools were a part of the strategy. There is a magnet elementary school serving downtown and in the fall of 2005, a charter high school with 200 students is moving into an old federal Building.

Another likely market to come downtown, though generally after the initial wave of for-sale housing, is retirees. The ability to access goods and services without the need for a car, coupled with close proximity to medical care in many cities, make downtown an ideal location for this group. This allows them to stay in

the same city near friends and family while maintaining their self-sufficiency, especially if they are not able to drive.

Having an established for-sale housing market is the ultimate test of whether the downtown has achieved critical mass. Given the size of the for-sale housing market, it is crucial to the success of a downtown turnaround. Bringing middle and upper-middle housing to downtown will provide the tax base so sorely needed by most cities, and members of these households will demand a level of service that will continue the upward spiral. These services—whether they be safety, cleanliness, or parades—will benefit all elements of the community, not just those who choose to make their home downtown.

Step 11: Develop a Local-Serving Retail Strategy

Once downtown begins to be repopulated, the demand for local-serving retail will grow. As new downtowners often come to realize, however, long-time inner-city households have had to drive to the suburbs for most of their daily shopping needs for the past 20 to 30 years. In the initial stages of redevelopment, the new downtown residents have to as well. There are two primary reasons why many of these urban areas are under-retailed, despite their high density of demand for goods and services.

First, the structure of retail has changed considerably over the past several decades, evolving into fewer and larger outlets. These larger outlets draw from a consumer radius that has become wider and wider, increasingly undercutting smaller retailers in the area in price and selection.

The mom and pop grocer had a three to four block consumer draw, A & P had a one to two mile consumer draw and Wal-Mart has a three to five mile consumer draw. Store sizes went from 5,000 square feet mom & pop stores to 20,000 to 40,000 square feet regional and national chains to 180,000 square feet super centers. More significantly, the 40,000 square foot grocery store had about five acres of land, 80 percent under asphalt for parking, while the super center has a need for about 20 to 25 acres of land, most of it used for parking. Finding five acres in or near downtown is difficult, and finding 20 to 25 acres is nearly impossible in many cities. As each succeeding generation of retailer’s stores and parking lots became geometrically larger in size, the obsolete retail space was abandoned or under-utilized, resulting in the miles of deteriorating strip commercial littering American arterial highways. The big retail boxes went further to the fringe to obtain the vast amount of land required for their “modern” concepts.

Second, local-serving retail is a “follower” real estate product, i.e., the housing must be in place before a grocery store can build a store. As a downtown redevelops, there are not enough households initially to justify the conventional grocery store. This is coupled with the fact they these stores have little or no experience in an in-fill urban location with parking challenges.

Of course, there are still locally-owned retailers who provide groceries, drugs, and hardware and offer the “in and out” convenience—especially for one and two item trips—that larger stores lack. Unfortunately, they have become a dying breed. These companies often have weak balance sheets and thus have difficulty obtaining financing from banks for new development. Only if a project has sufficient patient long-term equity

is it possible to lease or build space for smaller retailers with a shaky financial history. Thus while some of these stores will continue to thrive, as a group they are probably only part of the solution to downtowns' growing local-serving retail demands. The other part of the solution is finding ways to entice national "big box" retailers to integrate into a walkable landscape.

incomes. A growth in office development will address this imbalance, though it generally takes 15 to 20 years from the start of the revitalization process.

Step 12: Re-create a Strong Office Market

As entertainment, housing, and retail are established downtown, the office market will begin to follow. As upper-middle income for-sale housing is built in downtown, there will gradually be a return of a healthy office market and the employment it houses. Once the bosses, who make the ultimate decision about office location, begin to live downtown, they will decide to bring their office there as well. Why should they drive to the suburbs from downtown when they could walk to work or have a very short drive. This has happened in those downtowns that have been redeveloping the longest over the past generation, particularly Denver, Portland, and Seattle. Denver, for example, had a vastly overbuilt office market following the energy bust of the early 1980's, which left office vacancies over 30 percent. Due to the combination of the 1990s economic boom, the conversion of obsolete office space into housing, and the construction of new for-sale housing in downtown, office buildings were once again being built in the last few years.

This step in the redevelopment process will probably only fill existing, vacant office space in most cities, due to the past overbuilding and the weak demand for office employment in the economy in general. However, it will be a tremendous benefit for city revenues and the employment prospects of other downtown and city residents. With most new metropolitan jobs located in the favored quarter of the suburbs, they were hard to reach by city residents, especially those with lower

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