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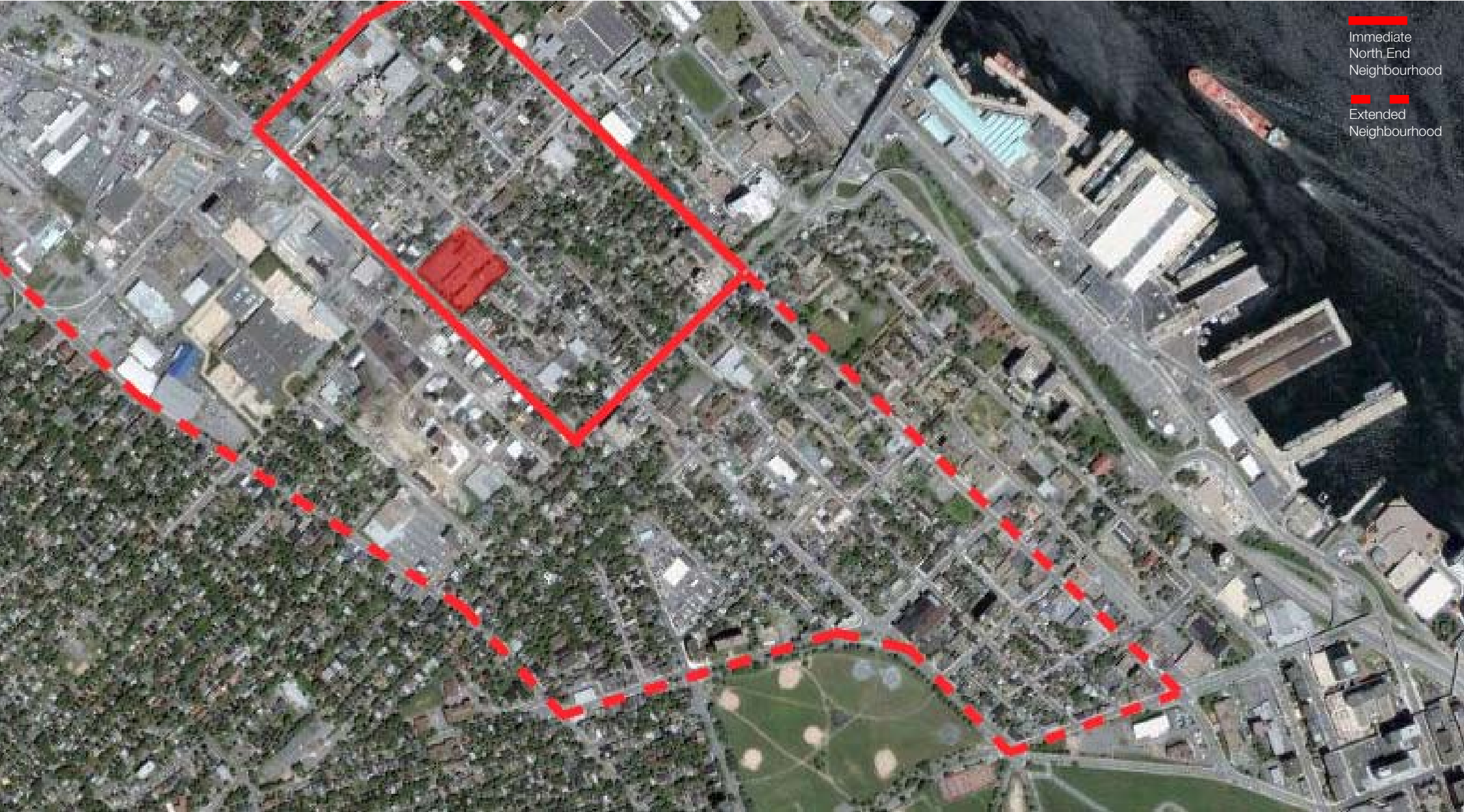
Community participation

MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple
Architects Limited

2188 Gottingen Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
B3K 3B4
t (902) 429-1867
f (902) 429-6276

email: info@mlsarchitects.ca
www.mlsarchitects.ca





Prime location

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Rich North End fabric

Introduction

Halifax’s North End is the most culturally diverse community in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). It serves the city as an incubator for social, commercial, and cultural enterprise. The distinctive urban fabric of this neighbourhood is currently being both enriched by sensitive investment and eroded by incompatible development. The four acre Bloomfield school site occupies a significant place in the history of this community. The public debate regarding the future of this community resource has been long and sometimes contentious. The initiation of the Bloomfield Masterplan process represents the recognition by the HRM of its role in insuring a community-building future for the site.

For purposes of comparability of alternative schemes, this study maintains an economic assumption of a zero-sum game, where public, community uses are balanced economically with private market uses for the

site. Council may choose to subsequently alter this economic assumption. This is a form-based or urban design study which builds on urban planning principles. Therefore, it is neither a detailed architectural study, nor an exhaustive study of management models for the site. These will be the focus of further study, and will be based on a clear urban design foundation articulated by this study. We are honoured, as consultants, to be involved in this collaborative process with the community and HRM staff on what promises to be a model urban development; at a moment when all things are possible moving forward.

Process

Public engagement, through interviews with community stakeholder groups, and through participatory design workshops on the topics of ‘good uses’ for the site and ‘good form’ for development, has been a central component in the Bloomfield Masterplanning process. A community advisory committee representative of community interests and a broad steering committee composed of HRM staff have also directed our efforts.

Planning principles that have guided the design process include: diversity, community-building, publicness, accessibility, authenticity, engagement, environmental responsibility, creativity, adaptability, and beauty. Precedents have been studied for adaptive reuse of heritage properties and for streetscape and public space making strategies.

The public engagement process has led to considerable consensus on several important

issues. For example, it is widely agreed that the development of the Bloomfield site must contribute to the public good as a community center in both the social and cultural sense. It is well understood that private, market development on the site can be compatible, enriching, and enabling to this end. Both the existing Commons and Fielding buildings are recognized as valuable architectural heritage assets (at-risk), which should be sensitively reused. Strategies for environmental sustainability were widely recommended, such as geothermal heating, encouragement of public transportation alternatives to automobiles, green roofs, and LEED certification for all buildings. The need for density was recognized as essential for a rich urban experience, economic viability, and sustainability. As a model development, the maximum mix of uses, and social and economic diversity are required.

Design

As a result of the public engagement process three distinctive urban design options were explored, driven by alternative approaches to key variables: density, creation of public open space, and retention of existing buildings. Evaluation of these options guided by stated community and urban planning goals led to the design of a preferred option. This scheme optimized the quality and quantity of both exterior and interior public space, architectural heritage retention, and economic viability.

The recommended scheme begins with the extension of two new pedestrian streets through the site (Bloomfield Street and Fern Lane), thereby enhancing the public accessibility of the site. A large central public green square is created called “Bloomfield”, contributing to the city’s network of public spaces. This results in the creation of the dense mixed-use perimeter development of the site comprising of a rich mix of

commercial and residential types; creating vibrant streetscapes and positive interfaces with the surrounding neighbourhoods in terms of both scale and use. The public character of the development is further enhanced by the creation of community and arts oriented buildings along the new Bloomfield Street, and surrounding a new public square. Both the commons and fielding buildings are recommended for retention, creating a heritage precinct. The existing 1970’s school building is recommended for removal due to its minimal structural value, and it’s position on the site which precludes the creation of quality public open space or quality interfaces with residential uses, and eliminates the possibility for necessary density and any underground parking; thereby radically reducing the social, economic, and sustainable value of the site.

Implementation

Continued public ownership of a considerable portion of the Bloomfield site (current scheme +/- 80%) is necessary to ensure long term community benefit (public accessibility, community uses, and programming). This approach reserves a clear envelope for a rich mix of private market uses along the perimeter streets (Robie Street, Agricola Street, Almon Street), at a density which enables financial viability.

No zoning framework exists currently under which this innovative type of development can be considered. As a result a development agreement process will be required, together with a plan amendment. A development amendment process will ensure continued community engagement in considering the merits of proposed projects for the site. It is also a tool which effectively favours and rewards good architectural design.

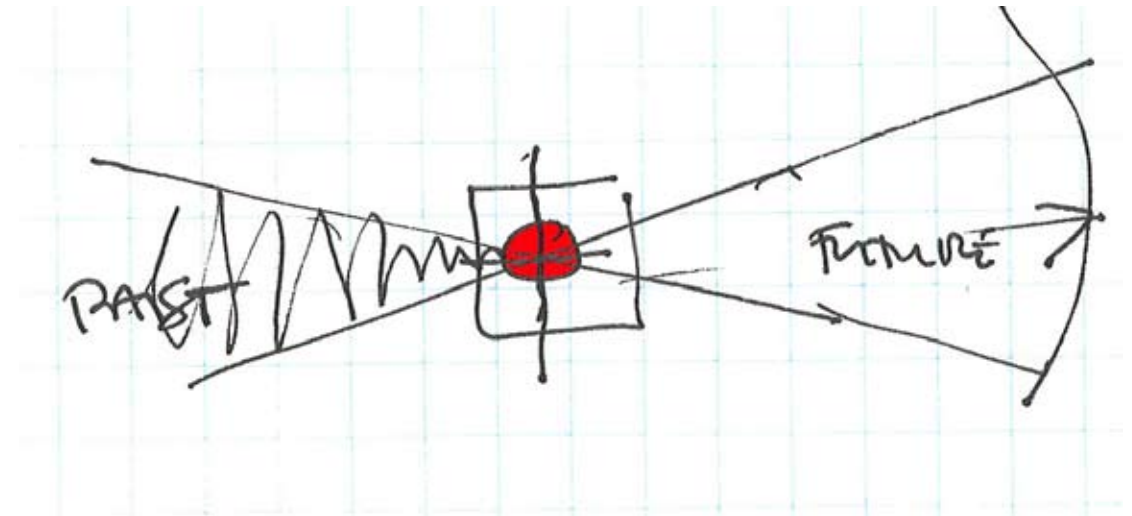
An RFP process will be initiated by HRM to select development and community partners and to explore the attendant management models. It is currently envisioned that all buildings will be constructed by private developers. Community use facilities will be managed by community groups. Market use buildings will be managed by developers according to the community values articulated in the Masterplan. The HRM will continue to offer public programming and manage the public urban spaces for the benefit of the community.

The proposed urban design and property ownership pattern enables the alignment of both public and private initiatives on the site. A successful mix of publicly owned and market driven development will result in a vibrant, mixed-use development and support community programs and quality public space.



Historic Fielding Building

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- 2.1 Master Plan Scope and Process
 - 2.2 Historical Overview
 - 2.3 Neighbourhood Context
 - 2.4 Existing Site Use
 - 2.5 Community Infrastructure
 - 2.6 Planning Context
 - 2.7 Market Analysis
 - 2.8 Public Engagement
 - 2.9 Consensus
 - 2.10 Precedents



Now things seem possible...

2.1 Master Plan Scope and Process



The Bloomfield Master Plan outlines a physical redevelopment and programming strategy for the adaptive re-use and enhancement of the 3.75 acre municipally-owned property in the North-end of Halifax. The Bloomfield Master Plan follows two earlier phases of study for the property which began in 2002. The multi-phased review process has pragmatically and strategically explored the reality of the future use and development of the site in order to rationalize ongoing municipal investment and programming of the facilities. The old school buildings and dated infrastructure have outgrown useful life and required short-term decisions with respect to capital investment. The Master Plan presents a collective vision, goals and objectives to guide future investment in the property either by the municipality or development partners. It is shaped by solid urban design, community development, and economic principles which are considered to be key to successful

implementation and delivery.

Due to its location in one of the fastest-developing urban areas in HRM the Bloomfield property is understood to be a strategically important public asset which, if developed carefully, can generate spin-offs for the local economy, the citizens of the North-End and the larger community. If properly redeveloped, the Bloomfield site will be a catalyst that reinforces and builds upon the unique character and profile of the North End community while attracting new businesses and residents and expanding social and cultural opportunities for the neighbourhood and the broader community. The redevelopment of the site also seeks to position the site as a destination on the Halifax Peninsula and to create a link between the North and South-ends of Halifax and the Downtown core.

This Master Plan explores the needs and context of the broader neighbourhood and the impacts that a redeveloped site will have on the community. At the foundation of the Plan is growth management, cultural planning, and community development objectives. This is demonstrated through the mixed-use development concept, form-based development, and arts and culture programming strategy.

The Master Plan establishes a future built form and use scheme based on a comprehensive examination of a range of issues and opportunities pertaining to the future use of the site and the development of the neighbourhood around it. The scope of study conducted through the planning process includes:

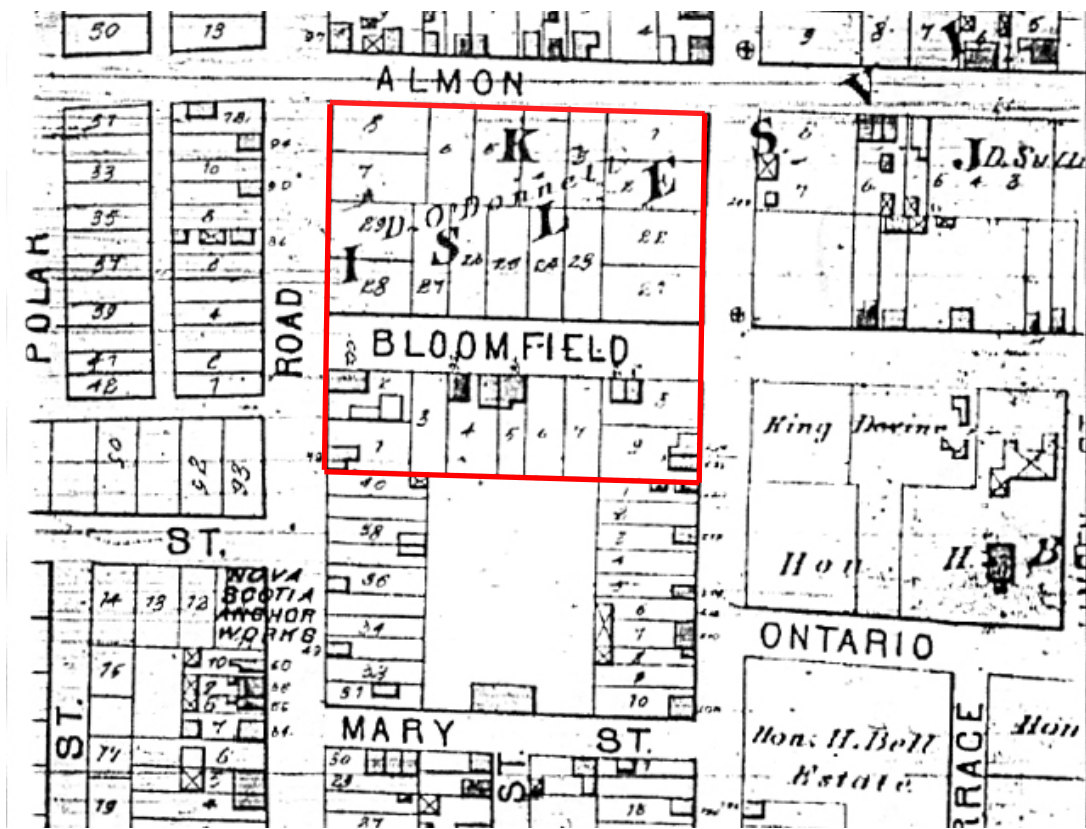
I. An exploration and analysis of community, neighbourhood, and planning and development context

- ii. an interactive public and stakeholder engagement program*
- iii. exploration and analysis of built form and programming options*
- iv. a financial analysis of redevelopment and transition options*
- v. an iterative design process that considered*
 - the distribution and relationship between buildings, spaces, pedestrian circulation, public realm, and community spaces*
 - how streets, pathways, open spaces, and the surrounding neighbourhood are connected*
 - relationship between the built form and level of social exchange*
 - the animation and programming of public and community spaces and infrastructure*
 - the intensity, massing, height and density of built form*

The Master Plan is conceptual in design but focused in intent and will serve as a guiding

framework for future development on the site. The Plan does not prescribe floor-plates or assign specific uses to predetermined spaces; instead, it proposes a careful mix of public, private and community uses within a robust built form that will best achieve the desired balance. While the Master Plan sets a clear development vision for future decision-making, it is not a rigid blueprint. As development trends, community needs, and opportunities shift the master plan should be flexible enough to adapt to change but strong enough to maintain its core vision and objectives.

2.2 Historical Overview



1878 - Hopkins Atlas

Nova Scotia Public Archives, Microfilm #958, page 77

The Bloomfield Site has undergone many changes throughout the years. For a comprehensive review of the evolution of the site, please consult the July 2006 HRM report entitled [Bloomfield Review Project Phase II](#), which provided the material for the following historical overview.

The first Bloomfield School was built in 1887 on the site bounded by Almon, Agricola, Bloomfield and Robie Streets. Robie was called Kempt at that time and Bloomfield extended through to Robie.

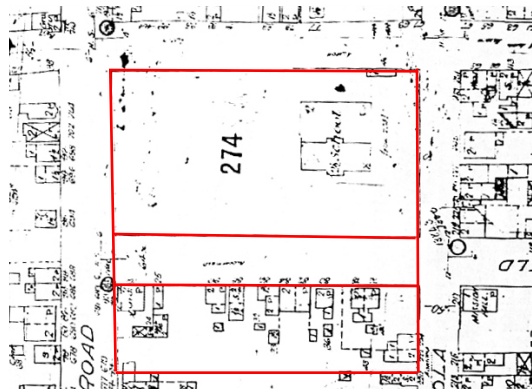
Prior to 1887, as shown on the Hopkins Atlas of 1878 (left) the school site was divided into lots but not built upon. The surrounding area was only partially developed, with clusters of small houses separated by areas of vacant lots and larger houses on the remains of larger estates. The 1878 map also shows a school house on Agricola, just south of Mary

and Fern, a precursor to the first Bloomfield School.

The 1895 Insurance Plan (right) shows the first Bloomfield School situated on the eastern half of the Bloomfield Site. By 1895 the surrounding area had become much more developed as more surrounding lots were built upon. In 1913 a decision was made to construct a new high school - the "Bloomfield Academy" - to the west of the original school.

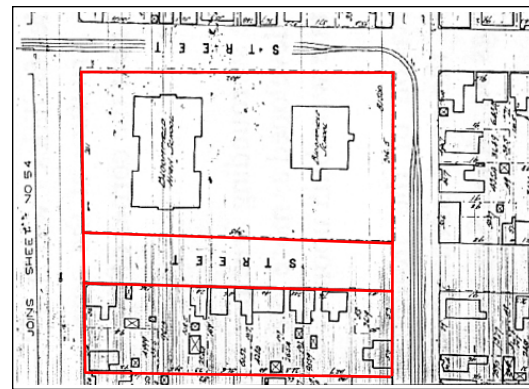
In December 1917, both schools were damaged in the Halifax Explosion, which destroyed much of the North End. The original school was replaced in 1922.

The 1918 Assessment Plan (right) shows streetcar tracks turning the corner of Almon and Agricola, indicating that the streetcar system extended to the Bloomfield district by this time. In 1919, the school site was expanded



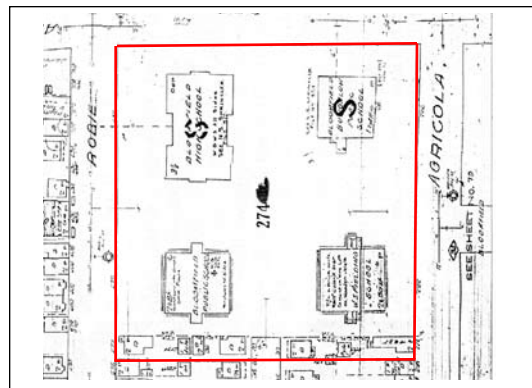
1895

Source: N.S. Public Archives



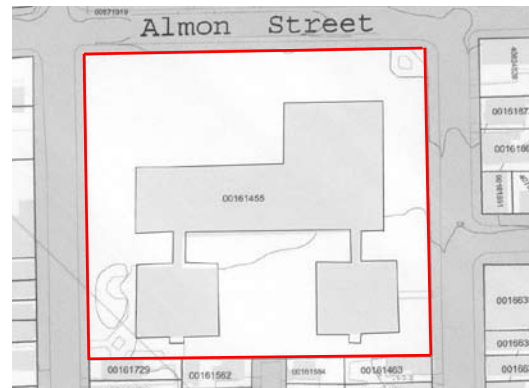
1918

Source: N.S. Public Archives



1951 - 4 Pavilions in field

Source: N.S. Public Archives



1971 to Present

to encompass the extension of Bloomfield Street and its abutting properties, and to make way for a new “Common” school, which still stands today. With the elimination of the Bloomfield thoroughfare through the site, the new pattern in the neighbourhood of “public buildings on the green” was established in the midst of a consistent North End residential urban fabric - a pattern which exists to the present day.

In 1922, a new, single storey, wooden school, known as “Bloomfield Bungalow” was constructed on the site of the original 2 ½ storey school. The Bungalow remained standing until 1971 when it was demolished along with the Academy to make way for the large modern school that still stands.

In 1929, the W.S. Fielding School was built, making a total of four buildings on the site (see 1951 map, left). The four old Bloomfield

schools occupied the site in their 1929 configuration for more than forty years until 1971, when the Academy and the Bungalow were demolished to make way for a new Junior High School which was closed in 1988 and since then has been used by community and non-profit organizations. The Junior High School was, and still is connected by pedways to the two remaining older buildings – the Common School and the Fielding Building.

This brings us to the present day and the current Master Plan, in which the scale and configuration of the Bloomfield block and its surrounding streets are to be re-examined.

2.3 Neighborhood Context



Photos courtesy of Peter Bigelow

Form

The neighbourhood context surrounding the Bloomfield Site is fine-grained and exhibits a variety of people, places and experiences. Residential housing abuts the property and is characterized by small lots, mixed use buildings, single-family dwellings, and homes converted into multi-unit flats.¹ The form of the neighbourhood and its constituent parts engender this diversity. Many structures are built right up to the street, with minimal or zero lot lines. This arrangement not only increases the density of the neighbourhood, but also strengthens the identity and sense of ownership for each home/business owner by providing a “front door on the street.”

The low-rise “townhouse” building type, often containing ground floor shop space with residential space above, is historically rooted in the North End, and not only exemplifies a deep-seated cultural ethic of simplicity and pragmatism, but also underscores the

importance of strong community identity and engagement for the continued vibrancy and diversity of the neighbourhood. Any and all future development considered for this neighbourhood must be rooted in the formal history and reality of this site and positively contribute to the continued vibrancy of the neighbourhood.

1. HRM Bloomfield Review Project Phase II Report, July 2006, p. 10



Photos courtesy of Peter Bigelow

Commerce

All cities depend on commerce for their betterment and, indeed, for their very survival. Healthy, vibrant, and diverse neighbourhoods depend on the presence of commercial enterprises and small businesses.

One strength of the North End is the existence of a good number of neighbourhood small businesses. Many of these are specialty businesses recognized for their high quality and unique product mix and regarded as destinations, not only for surrounding neighbours, but for people from all over the HRM.

The identification of a neighbourhood as a Destination or Unique District results in the influx of capital directly back into the neighbourhood. It also acts as a catalyst for future business development.

The Bloomfield Site has been identified as a

prime opportunity to help further strengthen the robust North End small business community and neighbourhood.

Surrounding Bloomfield is a blend of retail and commercial outlets including a bank, a newly constructed Shoppers Drug Mart, small retail shops and a distinct number of antique stores. There has been some interest expressed by local businesses in the formation of a local business association, perhaps extending from Agricola Street to the Hydrostone area (a neighbourhood with heritage significance). ²

2. Ibid.



Photos courtesy of Peter Bigelow

Culture

Many areas in the North End have developed into robust arts and culture neighbourhoods.

Historically, artists have often played a key role in the enhancement and improvement of urban neighbourhoods worldwide.

The development of a strong Arts and Culture district on the Bloomfield Site in order to enhance the existing neighbourhood and complement an already strong arts community has been identified as a major priority by the public and by HRM, and is addressed in greater detail further on in this Master Plan.



Photo courtesy of Peter Bigelow



Photo courtesy of Peter Bigelow

Change

One thing is clear: the North End is changing. Change in and of itself is neither good nor bad. It all depends on how change is managed.

When proposing new urban design solutions, much about the existing regulatory context makes it difficult for true positive change to occur. For example, the existing R-3 zoning which typifies much of the North End produces forms better suited to the suburbs. The large setbacks from the street do not conform to the formal development of the surrounding buildings and result in a lot of “useless green” - front and side yards which are underutilized - and in a shift from dense, street-oriented neighbourhoods to a neighbourhood comprised of ill-defined spaces with objects in the middle.

Successful change confronts the issues raised by gentrification on both a regulatory



Current zoning destroys neighbourhood fabric and formal level. Successful change also benefits from a recognition of strategic initiatives in other parts of the city - HRM By Design being a fine example. Finally, successful change is predicated on sound investment opportunities for developers and neighbourhood home-owners alike.

The Bloomfield Site offers an amazing opportunity to enact true positive change for not only the residents of the immediate neighbourhood and the North End, but for the citizens of the HRM at-large.

2.4 Existing Site Use

The past and current use of the Bloomfield property is generally community recreational in nature which is reflective of the parks and institutional zoning on the site and its former use as a public school. Like many former schools, the municipality (under the former City of Halifax) acquired the property when Provincial school operations ceased on the site. While the buildings have served an important role over the past decade in providing accessible and affordable community space, the facilities are no longer economically or functionally sustainable in their current condition. The poor condition of the buildings and closure of two facilities has influenced the recent use of the property and its pending re-development. Like the indoor facilities the outdoor space is under-used and in poor condition. Public amenities on site include a tennis court, playground equipment and 170 parking spaces, some of which are partially rented to local business. The

configuration of buildings on the site and their original institutional design are not conducive to community use, neighborhood gatherings or social interaction.

The Bloomfield Community Centre is currently managed and used by Community Recreation Services to deliver recreational programs and services to the neighborhood and broader HRM community. Community Recreation Services currently provides 7 direct programs that focus on art programs for adults and seniors. Total enrollment is 117 adult and senior participants.

CRS also provides reoccurring room rentals for community groups and organizations who provide self directed programs and services. CRS direct programs and reoccurring room rentals currently utilize the gymnasium, multi purpose room, seniors lounge and class rooms 108, 117 and 208.

Based on the 2008/2009 class statistics CRS has 255 rental contracts and 696 bookings. Uses include art, fitness, dance, meetings, sports, social events, community events, training and educational opportunities. A weekly average of 1,384 individuals participate in programs and services offered at the Bloomfield Community Centre. A majority of individuals would be considered adults and senior citizens and the weekly average of individuals participating in programs and services drops significantly during the summer months. The Fielding Building has been used for film and photography shoots.

There are seven community tenants and four are aligned with HRM's Community Developments Mandate: Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures, Canadian Mental Health Association, Northern Lights Senior Citizens Club and Ecology Action Centre Bike Again

and one tenant has been aligned with council discretionary interest Manna for Health Food Bank and have been given the option to renew their leases over the long-term. Community tenants will be considered under the future community centre model. The other two leases Knights of Colombus and the Independent Living Resource Centre leases will expire August 31,2009. There are various HRM tenants in the main building include Community Recreation Services,Youth Advocate Program, Community Relations and Cultural Affairs, Community Grants and Volunteers Services.

In 2007 a review of tenancy found that the majority did not fall within HRM's programming mandate or were informally occupying space without a contract. It was determined that only six of the previous twenty-four tenants had formal leases. A number of artists were accommodated in

the Commons building, however, few had a formal lease. Further study of the facility determined that there was mold in the building which resulted in the closure of the building in 2006. It can be said that past tenancy issues were largely a result of an ineffective Municipal leasing strategy.

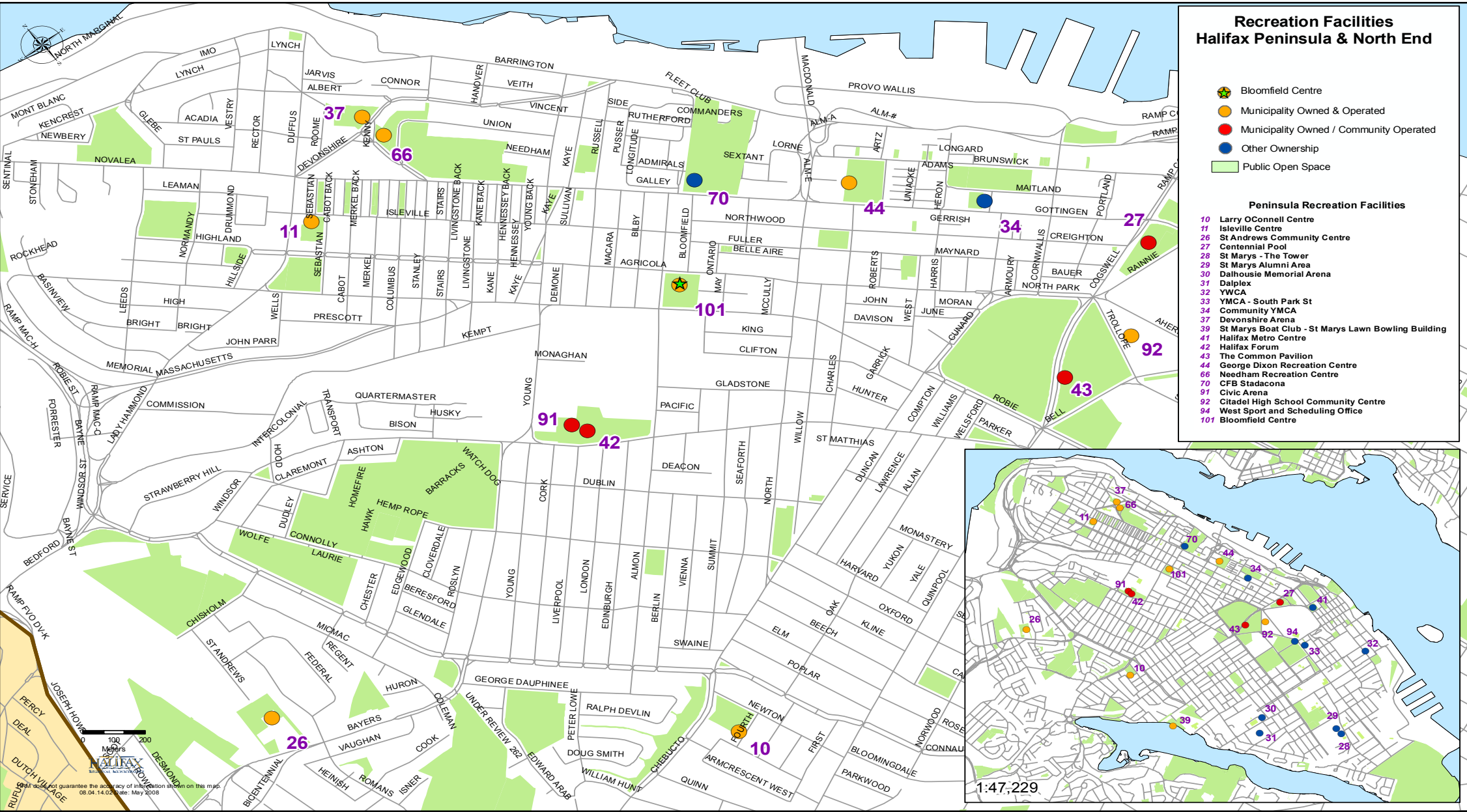
In 2007 an interim tenancy plan was approved by HRM Council as a means of providing a short-term strategy for the operation of the facilities. Following the tenancy review significant efforts were made to relocate many tenants to neighboring Recreation facilities and those that were not in alignment with HRM's program mandate were given notice and have since found alternate space. The remaining community tenants will be considered under the future community centre model.

The two older facilities, the Fielding building

(c. 1929) and Common building (c. 1919) are currently not in use with the exception of 1200 square feet of short-term leased space in the basement of the Fielding building. Of the total 60,000 square feet of space in the main building, occupying the existing Bloomfield Centre, approximately 10,000 square feet is leased by community tenants and 13,000 square feet is managed by HRM (including bookings for the gymnasium and multi-purpose rooms). In preparation for the strategic master planning and redevelopment of the site, tenancy and programming has been reduced. This has meant that the Bloomfield Centre is operating below capacity. This has also meant that there has been an annual operating deficit of over \$200,000.

The Bloomfield Centre is under the general management of HRM's Community Recreation Services. Unlike other community

recreation centres the Bloomfield facilities are not directly programmed by HRM meaning there are no municipally-delivered community programs. Bookings for gymnasium and multi-purpose space, reception and janitorial services are provided by the HRM and all other programming and activities are delivered and coordinated by community groups. There are various HRM tenants in the building including recreation staff, the Community Art Program and Volunteer Resource Centre operations and Community Development Staff. The current operating model for the Bloomfield Centre is temporary pending the implementation of this master plan.



2.5 Community Infrastructure

For the purposes of this report community infrastructure is defined broadly as built and outdoor facilities and spaces that provide recreational or cultural programs and amenities to HRM citizens and the neighborhoods they serve. The HRM has an established mandate to deliver recreation services and programs and has either owned and operated facilities or entered into operational partnerships with community groups. HRM-owned and operated facilities are staffed and programmed by HRM's Community Recreation Services whereas community operated facilities are managed by a board of directors and run by community staff. The policy guiding HRM's recreation service delivery is the "Recreation Blueprint" which focuses on principles of affordability, entry-level access and priority needs including children and youth. Recreation program delivery is meant to fill gaps in community service delivery thereby avoiding duplication

of services. Cultural facilities and program delivery is a more recent HRM mandate, however, the need to fill gaps in arts and culture facilities is quickly becoming a priority. The ongoing alignment of HRM's Recreation and Cultural mandates will be critical in delivering community-level cultural programs. This is reflected in the recommended programming strategy for the Bloomfield Centre redevelopment and in HRM's Community Facility Master Plan.

The HRM's classifies Recreation Facilities into seven categories:

- Category 1 - Community Centres*
- Category 2 - Multi-District Hub Facilities*
- Category 3 - Indoor Sport Facilities*
- Category 4 - Event Facilities*
- Category 5 - University and Military Facilities*
- Category 6 - Non-Profit Facilities*
- Category 7 - Private Facilities*

These categories represent the network of facilities which work together in meeting the recreational and community-cultural needs of citizens. Whether publicly, community or privately owned it is understood that a strong network will serve basic community needs and a range of skill levels through a functionally and geographically balanced system of facilities. The HRM plays a key role in meeting facility needs and is committed to strategically planning and developing community recreation and cultural infrastructure to foster a healthy, vibrant and creative community. Currently the HRM owns 67 recreation facilities across the region, the majority of which fall into the Community Centre Category, many of which are decommissioned schools with gymnasium and multi-purpose spaces. Both direct and indirect municipal program and service delivery are important in achieving the HRM's facility development goals. However,

the municipality is committed to exploring more community-based models of facility management recognizing that a partnership approach can be a more efficient and effective service delivery model.

Recreation Facilities: Halifax Peninsula

Within a 1-3 km radius of the Bloomfield Centre property the HRM owns and operates five recreation facilities. Four of these facilities are classified as community centres including Needham Centre, George Dixon Centre, St. Andrews Centre and Citadel Community Centre. The Bloomfield Centre is not directly programmed by HRM recreation and is therefore different in nature than these four centres. Community Centres typically have a gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms and programming space as well as various office facilities for staff and in some cases community groups. The Halifax Forum

complex is also located within a 1-3 km radius.

With respect to community centres the Peninsula North area is well served. The past location of recreation facilities on the Peninsula has been influenced by the above-average concentration of public housing. Census data also shows that these neighborhoods have a higher number of immigrant families and lower income families⁴. In addition to HRM-operated facilities the North-end neighborhood is also served by other facilities including the YMCA, Halifax Regional Library, and military facilities at Stadacona base.

Whereas the Bloomfield Centre has undergone a site specific master planning process the future capacity and strategic

4 Halifax Regional Municipality Bloomfield Review Project: Phase II Report July 2006

use of other HRM recreation facilities in the area will be reviewed through a broader Halifax Peninsula Facility study. The role and relationship between community centres and larger multi-district facilities and demographic needs will be an important aspect of this work.

With respect to a multi-district facility serving the urban core population the Peninsula is currently under-served⁵. The need to develop this level of facility on the Peninsula has been recognized as a priority under the HRM Community Facility Master Plan and the Halifax Forum Complex has been identified as a desirable site for this type of development. The siting of new facilities and enhanced community usage and access to existing facilities is key. An example is the recently-built Citadel Community Centre located at the

5 Halifax Regional Municipality Community Facility Master Plan 2008

Citadel High School which has increased the availability of gym time on the Peninsula. Like the Bloomfield and Forum sites, the Needham Center and Centennial Pool facilities will undergo analysis and study to determine their future use.



Cultural Facilities & Spaces: Halifax North-End

The Bloomfield and surrounding North-end neighborhood is characterized by a concentration of arts and culture spaces (See Map, previous page). This has been shaped by the relative affordability of the North end in comparison to other areas of the urban core with respect to housing as well as direct accessibility to the Downtown. This has attracted artists and students who come to the inclusiveness and cultural character of the community. This area can be described as having “organically” developed over time into an eclectic cluster of creative business, artists studios and spaces and cultural activities. The community has attracted many self-employed artists and entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs who are concentrated in the Bloomfield, Agricola, Gottingen and Cunard Street area. The number of artists who were

formerly working from the Bloomfield Centre is reflective of this creative community and the need for affordable studio and production space. Annual cultural events like the Northern Lights Lantern Festival, GoNorth Community Arts Festival and North End Community Festival also highlight the unique cultural vibe and sense of community in this part of the City.

Currently HRM owns six cultural facilities or buildings across the region which are programmed largely for arts and culture uses. None of these buildings are operated by the HRM instead the approach has been to have community organizations manage and program the facilities. Most of these facilities focus on social heritage programming, including heritage museums, and others focus on visual arts and theatre. Only one of the HRM’s cultural facilities, the Khyber Arts Centre in Downtown Halifax, is situated

on the Peninsula. While several of HRM’s community recreation facilities offer arts and culture programming, it is generally secondary to programming. The HRM-owned and operated Isleville Centre is used for summer preschool programs, children’s summer day camps, art classes, yoga classes, community events and recurring room rentals.

Most of HRM’s cultural facilities are housed in heritage buildings which reflects the municipality’s focused mandate to protect built heritage. However, while heritage buildings are cultural assets in themselves and have significant value in their own right these spaces are not always appropriate for certain kinds of arts and cultural programming which can require more purpose-built space and specialized infrastructure. The heritage buildings on the Bloomfield site have been identified for community-level arts and culture programming whereas new facilities are

recommended on site to support other arts and culture industry uses.

It is recognized that there is a facility gap at the municipal level and within the arts and culture sector more broadly and that more investment in cultural infrastructure is needed. Clustering of creative spaces and facilities, arts-based community facilities and civic cultural spaces such as a municipal museum or cultural center have been identified as facility needs. Other infrastructure gaps that have been identified through public engagement include small to mid-sized performing arts facilities, affordable studio space and affordable live-work housing space for artists.

Facility Trends

More partnerships are being developed between the municipality and community

organizations to operate municipally-owned facilities. In 2007 HRM adopted a program which gives community groups access to financial assistance and capacity-building in the form of board development and organizational management. The goal is to build capacity for community to operate facilities and programming in a cost effective and sustainable manner with less reliance on core public funding.

Public access to schools across the HRM also plays an important role in providing accessible and affordable recreation and leisure spaces. The HRM has worked closely with the Halifax Regional School Board to improve community access to public school facilities during evening and weekend hours. This effort will continue and will be critical in improving broad community access to school gyms and multi-purpose classrooms. These spaces are often the most central recreation

spaces in communities and their joint use is key.

The Halifax Regional School Board has recently carried Phase One of a multi-phased planning process to look strategically at consolidating or retiring school facilities. Assumptions are made that this will result in certain school closures on the Peninsula including some which are in the direct vicinity of the Bloomfield Centre. Ongoing collaborations between the HRM and the school board will be key in ensuring that any facility closures are aligned with broader planning objectives and projections for increased population growth on the Peninsula. Should any of these school facilities fall under the ownership of the HRM in future it will be important that their use be considered within the context of the HRM's Community Facility Master Plan. Along with the opportunities that come with

these facilities for community use comes the reality that purpose built school buildings., many of which are aging and in need of significant capital investment, may not be suited for programmed community use. The Bloomfield Centre property is an example of this dilemma.

As demographics change the needs and preferences for community programs and services will evolve. This has had an effect on HRM's recreation and cultural program mandate and has shifted emphasis toward more aligned programming. The need for accessible space for community-level arts and culture programming and activities is growing. The Municipality is responding by investing more resources in arts and culture facilities and delivering more direct arts and culture programs. There is more demand for programs like community art for youth and creative skills development and more of

these kinds of programs are being offered through HRM's recreation centres. An aging population will continue this trend as will more involvement from youth in arts and culture programming. The HRM does not benefit from a strong arts curriculum, in the public school system, therefore, the Municipal and community role in offering these services is critical.

Public Open Space

The network of parks, gardens and informal open spaces that surround the Bloomfield neighborhood are an important element in the overall network of community infrastructure. The majority of these open spaces can be characterized as smaller green spaces or pocket parks with the exception of Fort Needham Memorial Park which has a large green space, gardens, sports fields, visitor amenities such as benches and interpretive

signs and a memorial to those who lost their lives in the Halifax Explosion. The Hydrostone heritage district just north of the Bloomfield Centre was designed by the world-famous urban designer Thomas Adams in the 1940's. His signature green street boulevards have made this neighborhood stand out as one of Halifax's most unique urban communities. Directly in front of the Hydrostone commercial market is a small urban park which is also typical of the character of smaller more informal open spaces in the area. The HRM's Active Transportation Plan identifies Agricola Street as a key opportunity to support a trail corridor connecting the North and South ends of the City. This would provide an important AT connection across the span of the Peninsula and help to break down a geographical and social barrier that has existed between the North and South Ends for decades.

2.6 Planning Context

Bloomfield Property Review Project

In 2002 the HRM initiated a three-phase process to review the use and condition of the Bloomfield Centre property. Poor condition of the three buildings on the property and outdated infrastructure created a situation that was no longer affordable or sustainable. A long period of deferred maintenance and capital investment meant that a more strategic planning exercise was required to justify the Municipalities future use of the site. A recurring operating deficit with respect to the use of the site as a municipal community recreation centre and vacant and under used facilities was simply not sustainable.

Information on the nature and frequency of community use of the facilities determined that both the gymnasium and multi-purpose spaces were underused. A review

of occupancy was also conducted to better understand which tenants fell within the municipal mandate with respect to community program and service delivery. It was determined that many of the 56 tenants occupying permanent space were not aligned with the HRM’s mandated areas of service delivery. Some of these tenants did not have formal leases and sub-leasing between tenants was happening in certain cases. The municipalities lack of monitoring or management of leasing in the building was facilitating the situation.

The circumstances and the timing were right to look strategically at the future use of the property. Earlier phases of the Bloomfield property review process resulted in an understanding among HRM staff and Council that there was significant opportunity for the strategic redevelopment of the property as a catalyst for neighbourhood and community-

wide development and rejuvenation.

The findings from early phases of the Bloomfield property review have been used to develop the Master Plan scope and help shape the recommendations. Key directions from the Phase I, II, and III review have been incorporated into the Master Planning process.

Planning and Development Guidelines

- *Incorporate Regional Planning mixed use development principles*
- *Incorporate strong urban design objectives*
- *Incorporate Cultural Plan priorities*
- *Incorporate Community Facility Master Plan directions*
- *incorporate historical and cultural values and assets*
- *Encourage Sustainable Design and Greening of the site*

- *Programming to be determined by HRM’s program and service mandate, Council and Corporate priorities and infrastructure and asset management objectives*
- *Maximize public-private and community partnerships*
- *Encourage community-based facility operating models*
- *Incorporate Council-approved direction under Bloomfield Interim Tenancy Plan*
- *Avoid duplication of programs and services offered within the community*
- *Project must be economically feasible and achieve maximum cost recovery*

The HRM has also adopted various Municipal Planning Strategies and Functional Plans that form the foundation for the Master Plan with respect to regional and urban growth management, urban design, open space and public realm development, cultural planning and development, transportation

planning and community facility planning and investment. Several policy directions and planning objectives under the HRM’s planning framework have been carefully considered within the context of the Bloomfield Master Plan with special emphasis on the following policies:

HRM’s Municipal Planning Framework

Peninsula North Secondary Planning Strategy

All new development in the Peninsula North planning area falls under the policy and regulatory framework of the Peninsula North Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use-By-Law. In recognition of the unique mix and character of neighborhoods in the North-end the overall planning objective is “To create a lively and interesting environment in Peninsula North with a mixture of land uses and a

physical environment that is aesthetically pleasing, safe, and well-maintained”. The future development of the Bloomfield property will be evaluated against the Peninsula North MPS policy and all future development decisions of Council must be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Plan. It is recognized, however, that the Bloomfield re-development described in the Master Plan will require an MPS policy amendment to change the zoning on the property to allow the mix and nature of uses that are recommended. The existing Bloomfield property is zoned Park and Institutional and the surrounding properties are zoned primarily medium density residential or major commercial.

In undertaking a future planning amendment process for the site the following key policy objectives under the Peninsula North Secondary Planning Strategy will be considered:

Policy Emphasis:

- *encourage a variety of housing types to meet a diversity of income and demographic groups*
- *encourage a variety of commercial uses and facilities to support the local neighborhood and larger Peninsula*
- *site institutional uses so they coexist in harmony with surrounding land uses and discourage large concentrations of institutional uses*
- *increase and improve the variety and usability of recreational land and facilities and encourage small open spaces including neighborhood-scale and community parks*
- *emphasize intensity of use and a variety activities on municipally-owned lands*
- *consider using public right of ways including public or private lanes and local streets for neighborhood open space, and pedestrian and cycling pathways*
- *use energy-efficient design on municipally-*

- owned land in new residential projects*
- *implement tree-planting and streetscape improvement programs to enhance the user experience*
- *use the development agreement process for developments over four units to encourage broader site-planning and urban design considerations*

Regional Municipal Planning Strategy

The Municipality’s first Regional Planning Strategy was adopted in 2006 and forms a solid basis for decision-making over a 25 year horizon. Since municipal amalgamation development across the region had been largely uncoordinated resulting in development sprawl and inefficient investment in infrastructure and services. The Regional Plan addresses the reality that the fundamental quality and character of HRM’s urban, rural and suburban

communities is at risk without an integrated growth management strategy. The Regional Planning Strategy puts critical emphasis on managing a development environment that is more predictable and aligned with environmental, economic, community, and heritage and cultural values of HRM's citizens and Council. The integration of land-use and transportation planning is a fundamental component of the Regional Plan as are core urban design principles such as building complete communities that are walkable and connected.

Policy Emphasis:

- *build diverse, vibrant & livable urban settlements*
- *encourage growth in compact and transit-oriented mixed-use centres*
- *reinforce established neighborhoods and stimulate local investment*
- *protect and build on local character,*

heritage & cultural identity

- *develop a network of open spaces and public realm amenities*
- *allow for a range of housing options to respond to income levels, lifestyle needs and preferences*
- *support sustainable development practices and preserve environmental health*
- *support development growth in the Regional Centre and urban core*
- *boost economic growth through strategic public investments and partnerships*
- *improve transit systems and usage and active transportation options and networks*
- *adopt urban design guidelines and principles for creating vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods*
- *build more efficient servicing and infrastructure*

Urban Design Strategy - HRM-by-Design

Currently underway is the development of HRM's first Urban Design Strategy - HRM-by-Design. The strategy focuses on Downtown Halifax and addresses a number of key objectives for building healthy, livable and sustainable communities and urban neighborhoods. The urban design strategy will set a clear vision for a distinct and unique City using universal principles of good urban design. The planning framework developed through this work will be used in other parts of the HRM toward the goal of incorporating urban design principles and guidelines into development in communities across the Region.

Policy Emphasis:

- *enrich urban living by repopulating, repairing and revitalizing neighborhoods and districts*

- *focus development toward in-fill properties and underused lands*
- *enhance and preserve architectural and cultural heritage*
- *nurture arts and culture and build creative environments*
- *build a connected, compact and human-scaled urban fabric with streets, blocks and buildings*
- *build cohesive, walkable and mixed-use neighborhoods*
- *provide for enhanced residential and commercial development in established districts*
- *build active transportation infrastructure and networks*
- *invest in quality public open spaces and networks*
- *adopt design guidelines to improve the design of buildings and spaces*
- *provide incentives for good design and development*

Cultural Plan

The HRM's Cultural Plan establishes policy direction for development and enhanced investment in arts and culture. The need for affordable, quality arts spaces and facilities is a clear policy direction under the Cultural Plan as a means of supporting the professional arts sector and cultural industry. Growing the HRM as a Creative City that supports its artists and cultural sector includes development of clusters of arts and culture spaces and support for creative neighborhoods and communities. Nurturing creative talent and cultural participation at the grass-roots community level is a key direction of the Plan including stronger alignments between HRM's cultural and recreation program delivery mandates. Attracting and retaining creative talent and growing creative and cultural industry will support the local and regional economy and build a more dynamic

economic base.

- *develop arts and culture hubs by aligning recreation and culture spaces, building multi-use community spaces, and clustering arts and culture spaces and uses*
- *maximize development of cultural facilities and spaces through HRM's real property planning and development and community facility programming*
- *develop community-based partnerships for the operation, management and programming of cultural facilities and spaces*
- *enhance cultural awareness and participation through affordable and accessible programs and spaces and resources in support of community cultural organizations*
- *protect and showcase built, natural and social heritage assets*
- *support the creative and cultural sector through public art investment, arts funding,*

and infrastructure planning and investment

Community Facility Master Plan

In 2008 the Community Facility Master Plan was adopted by Council as an update to the HRM's Indoor Recreation Facility Master Plan developed in 2004. Since the original facilities plan was developed the issues surrounding community facility development have broadened including the need to look at community cultural spaces in the context of recreation facility planning and the inclusion of outdoor facilities. The CFMP will guide the planning and development of new infrastructure and shape decisions regarding the rehabilitation or decommissioning of existing facilities. The Plan considers the broader policy context under which facilities are developed including growth management priorities, transportation investments, community programming priorities and

demographic trends. The need to balance community demand for facilities with economic efficiencies and planning objectives is key. The CFMP documents that several of the HRM's existing community facilities, many of which are former schools, are aging and in some cases are nearing their life span. Like the Bloomfield Centre many of these facilities are not being utilized to their full potential and may be competing with similar facilities nearby. The Plan considers various categories of facilities and makes recommendations for how they can best serve the demands of the current and future population.

Policy Directions:

- *new facilities and expansion of existing facilities must be analyzed against Municipal Planning policy*
- *new facilities or expansions will have significant population to support the activities and will not compete with existing facilities or*

services

- *new recreation facilities will be located on highly visible sites and on transit routes*
- *community management models and partnerships will be developed for the operation and programming of facilities*
- *stronger alignment and compatibility of multi-district and community centres*
- *consolidation, closure, or strategic redevelopment of overlapping or underused community centres*
- *complete a facility review and feasibility study recreation and community facilities on the Peninsula*
- *incorporate community arts and culture spaces and programming into new and renovated facilities*

Active Transportation Plan

Investment in active, non-motorized transportation options is a priority for the

HRM and a fundamental direction under the Municipal Regional Growth Management Strategy. In 2006, an Active Transportation Plan was adopted and several priority investments are underway including a more efficient transit system, bike lanes and cycling amenities, and ongoing investments in trails and pedestrian corridors. Council’s priorities around active transportation as well as a growing emphasis on developing more compact and complete communities are key to the development vision for the Bloomfield property. In consideration of the Active Transportation Plan emphasis is placed on pedestrian circulation and key connections between the Bloomfield neighborhood and surrounding nodes. The notion of developing Agricola Street (bordering the Bloomfield property) as a primary transportation route linking the north and south Peninsula has been considered through the contextual planning review. The surrounding street

infrastructure is also key including opportunities to better link the Bloomfield neighborhood with surrounding communities and the downtown. The Almon-Robie Street intersection, for example is recognized as having good East-West connectivity. Parking needs have also been considered in a manner that can achieve a dense built form and efficient use of valuable urban land.

Policy Directions:

- *Invest in an active and safe transportation network including Interconnected streets and sidewalks that connect to transit, community infrastructure, and commercial and residential nodes*
- *build linear parks & open-space networks*
- *cluster uses and build compact communities to support sustainable and active transportation*
- *implement HRM’s Blueprint for a Bicycle friendly HRM*

- *provide recreational destinations for neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle trail systems*
- *creatively design and integrate parking into developments so that the needs of pedestrians are balanced with drivers*

2.7 Market Analysis

The Bloomfield Master Plan is founded on a high-level analysis of the development potential of the Bloomfield School site. The intent of this analysis is to provide an order of magnitude valuation of the options being considered so that it can provide a feedback loop to the proposed design. In this way, the design process results in a proposed scheme that is correctly sized and economically viable from its inception, rather than a scheme which is later determined not to be feasible or in need of major revisions.

The following existing market factors and assumptions underlie the Bloomfield Master Plan:

- *The proposed project site is very well located, mid peninsula, and near grocery stores, Hydrostone market, bus routes, employment centres, recreational facilities, etc.*

- *The nearby Gladstone Ridge project has a similar amount of density in two towers, and did not encounter any difficulty being absorbed into the market.*

- *Housing demand projections for HRM indicate future demand of about 2,500 units per year, with an increasing percentage allocated to multi-family housing units. Although 1,000 multi-family starts has been the norm in the past, we expect this number to increase slightly over time as residents look for central locations to minimize their commute. At an average unit size of 1,000 SF, a mid-rise housing tower would include 150 units of housing; this is about 15% of the total demand for one year, and can be realistically absorbed without adverse financial impacts.*

- *A critical mass of residential development will be critical for the long-term financial*

viability of any proposed commercial or community space. This is very important, as this is one of the prime reasons that the Alderney Landing project (Dartmouth Waterfront) failed in the mid 1990s. Without the necessary critical mass of retail development, the area cannot establish itself as a destination, and the large amount of community space required would put the project in a perpetual state of fund raising. This must be recognized when making any decisions with respect to the Bloomfield Site.

- *From the outset, the majority of stakeholders in the process has voiced a strong desire for affordably-priced office space and residential housing. Therefore, the Master Plan has assumed that 20% of all residential units shall be set aside as affordable housing to households at 70% to 80% of median income. This is not social housing, which provides housing for*

unemployed households or households with social problems (abuse, etc). This is inexpensive housing for the working poor - people who have a job, but are spending more than 30% of their income on shelter. A land value has not been assigned to these units, as this subsidy will likely be needed in order to entice the developer to build these units

- *It is assumed that one historic building (the Commons or Fielding building) may be considered as affordable space for nonprofit groups. Affordable is defined as just paying the cost of operating expenses (heat, lights, maintenance), but no net return to the landlord to cover the cost of the investment in the building.*

2.8 Public Engagement



Participatory Design at work

Introduction

Meaningful public engagement is at the heart of the Bloomfield Master Planning process. From the outset, the Design team has acknowledged the value and assimilated the substantive material from all previous HRM and Community studies, of which there have been several (two particular reports which were studied and are worth mentioning are the July 2006 HRM Bloomfield Review Project Phase II Report and Imagine Bloomfield’s Imagining a New Bloomfield) and has sought to paint a comprehensive picture of the desired Bloomfield Vision through the input of a number of key stakeholders.

The design team solicited meaningful input for the master plan development in a number of ways: interviews with various community and business groups, regular meetings and consultations with the HRM Bloomfield Steering

Committee and Bloomfield Community Advisory Committee, and two public workshops. Notwithstanding some previous disagreements and conflicts which had clouded the Bloomfield site’s recent history, something extraordinarily positive began to happen the more we talked with the community: we began to see a consensus emerge regarding the future of the Bloomfield site. Commonly-shared aspirations and principles began to coalesce - principles which drove the master planning process quickly and confidently towards a robust, inclusive, attainable vision for the Bloomfield site.

Interviews

The Design Team scheduled meetings with several groups identified by HRM to discuss the broad spectrum of past, present and future issues pertaining to the Bloomfield Centre. Before actually tackling the future potential of

the site and discussing what people desired from the site, a considerable amount of time was spent listening to frustrations about past site and asset management, past communications and liaisons with the municipality, past planning shortfalls, and a perceived lack of discipline in maintaining and nurturing the positive aspects of the Bloomfield Centre.

The groups varied considerably in their make-up and backgrounds, with agendas and priorities that often reflected that diversity. The list of interviewees is as follows:

- *Imagine Bloomfield Society*
- *Bloomfield Neighborhood Resident’s Association*
- *Commons North Business & Cultural Association*
- *Ward 5 Neighborhood Association*
- *Ecology Action Centre*
- *Performing Arts Lodge (PAL)*

- *Independent Living Resource Centre*
- *Art & Culture Interests Focus Group*
- *North End Community Health Centre*
- *Halifax Green Cohousing Association*
- *CB Richard Ellis*
- *Raphael Steinberg Construction Inc.*
- *I Nova Credit Union*

A comprehensive record of all interviews with the stakeholders mentioned above appears in Appendix A at the end of this document. However, several key themes emerged from the interviews which were ultimately developed by the Community Advisory Committee into a list of “Guiding Principles” (See “Vision”, Section 3.1) These themes included:

- *Site Ownership - Who owns the site?*
- *Management Models - Wow is the site best managed and by whom?*
- *Programming - What is the appropriate programming mix for the*

site

- *Housing - What is the appropriate housing mix for the Bloomfield site?*
- *Diversity - How can the propose master plan be diverse and inclusive?*
- *Affordability - How can the benefits of the Bloomfield site be within everyone’s reach?*
- *Viability - How can this project become a reality?*

Workshops

The Design Team believes strongly in the ability of participatory design to elicit positive change. Two public workshops were tailored to further engage the community and to empower them to give form to their vision for a new Bloomfield. As with the interviews, a comprehensive summary of all groups’ contributions from both workshops can be found in Appendix A.

What follows is a brief description of the two workshops - the first focusing on Program, and the second on Form.

Each workshop ended with a representative from each group presenting his or her group’s scheme, highlighting the major issues. Plenary discussions sought to distill commonly held priorities and principles from the various schemes with the hope of shaping consensus moving forward. The highlights from both plenary discussions conclude this section and serve as a transition into the “Vision” of the Bloomfield Master Plan.



Diversity

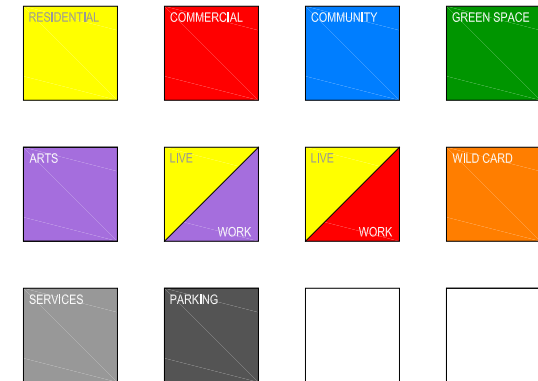
Use Workshop

May 21, 2008
6:30-9:00 pm

From the outset, The Bloomfield Master Plan process has acknowledged the importance of participatory design and transparency throughout every aspect of the Master Plan Process. A key component of the participatory design process is the Public Workshop. Two workshops were held during the preparation of the Master Plan - a Use Workshop and a Form Workshop.

Comprehensive material from both workshops are included in Appendix A at the end of this document for those interested in a detailed review of the issues raised during both workshops.

The Use Workshop was held to begin to answer the question *“What is the best use for the Bloomfield Site?”*



Playing Cards

The evening started with a Powerpoint presentation which laid the groundwork for the workshop, examined some precedents, and explained the “game” to be played.

A group of approximately 100 community members were then divided into 14 smaller groups and were given site maps (“gameboards”) and various paper pieces (“playing cards”) representing various potential programmatic uses. Each group was asked to examine either a low, medium, or high density development scenario and to design a scheme using the gameboards and pieces which illustrated a mix of desired uses, and how those uses could be arranged on the site.

All groups were then asked to appoint a representative to present each group’s scheme, and a plenary discussion of the issues raised concluded the workshop.



Robust public domain

Form Workshop

May 24, 2008
1-4 pm

The second workshop was held to study issues of urban form in the context of the Bloomfield site.

As in the first workshop, the afternoon began with a Powerpoint presentation which explained urban design concepts involving form and examined a series of historical urban precedents from around the world - a series of "good cities."

After the presentation, the group of around 70 community members were divided into 9 smaller groups and given a box of "building blocks" with which to build their vision(s) of the future Bloomfield development. The pieces varied in size and colour and represented various programmatic "uses."



As in the first workshop, groups were asked to focus on either a low, medium, or high density development.

As in the first case, detailed results of the workshop, including every group's proposed scheme, are included at the end of this report.

Once again, a plenary discussion concluded the workshop.

Perhaps the biggest discovery to emerge from the workshops is that, despite the wide-range of viewpoints and perspectives represented at the workshops, what emerged at the end of the process was a surprising amount of consensus surrounding key aspects of the proposed project. One concrete example of this was the ready acceptance by the majority of groups of a high density project to enable widest range of community and arts/cultural functions.

2.9 Consensus

Use Workshop

The following consensus emerged from the workshop and served as guiding principles for the further development of master plan options:

- *Provide mixed-use development*
- *Emphasize Diversity*
- *Provide Community Space (Recreation, Arts, Gathering)*
- *Respect and Maintain Heritage Buildings*
- *Explore Green Roofs and sustainable initiatives*
- *Provide quality open space and pedestrian greenways through the site*
- *Support Alternate forms of transportation and safely accommodate pedestrians*
- *Develop a rich, vibrant perimeter along Robie, Almon and Agricola.*
- *provide a viable mix of for profit & not for profit development.*

Participants of the Use Workshop were also provided with a list of possible uses for the Bloomfield Centre site and asked to allocate a total of 100 points between the program items. The goal was to identify the most (and least) important uses for the project according to the 14 groups involved in the workshop. The results are tabulated in the chart (opposite page) and may be summarized as follows:

- *All Arts related uses combined make Arts a total of 270.75 - 40% more than Community Gathering Space.*
- *Program items 1-10 were listed by the architects as possible uses for the Bloomfield Centre site.*
- *Program items 11-18 were added by the workshop participants.*
- *6 of 14 groups added to the list of uses.*
- *2 groups scored 'Community Gathering Space' as most important program requirement - it ranked most important overall.*

- *4 groups scored 'Recreational Facilities' as most important - it ranked 2nd most important overall.*
- *Although no group rated it as most important, 'Arts Performance Space' ranked 3rd overall.*
- *1 group scored 'Affordable Office Space' as most important - it ranked 4th overall.*
- *1 group scored 'Market Housing' as most important - it ranked 5th overall.*
- *Although 'Market Housing' ranked 5th, 4 of 14 groups choose to leave it out of the program entirely.*
- *Although ranked 7th, 13 of 14 groups felt 'Retail Space' should be included in the program.*
- *1 group scored 'Market Office Space as the most important - it ranked 9th overall.*
- *4 groups added 'Childcare Facilities' to the list of uses for the Bloomfield Centre site.*

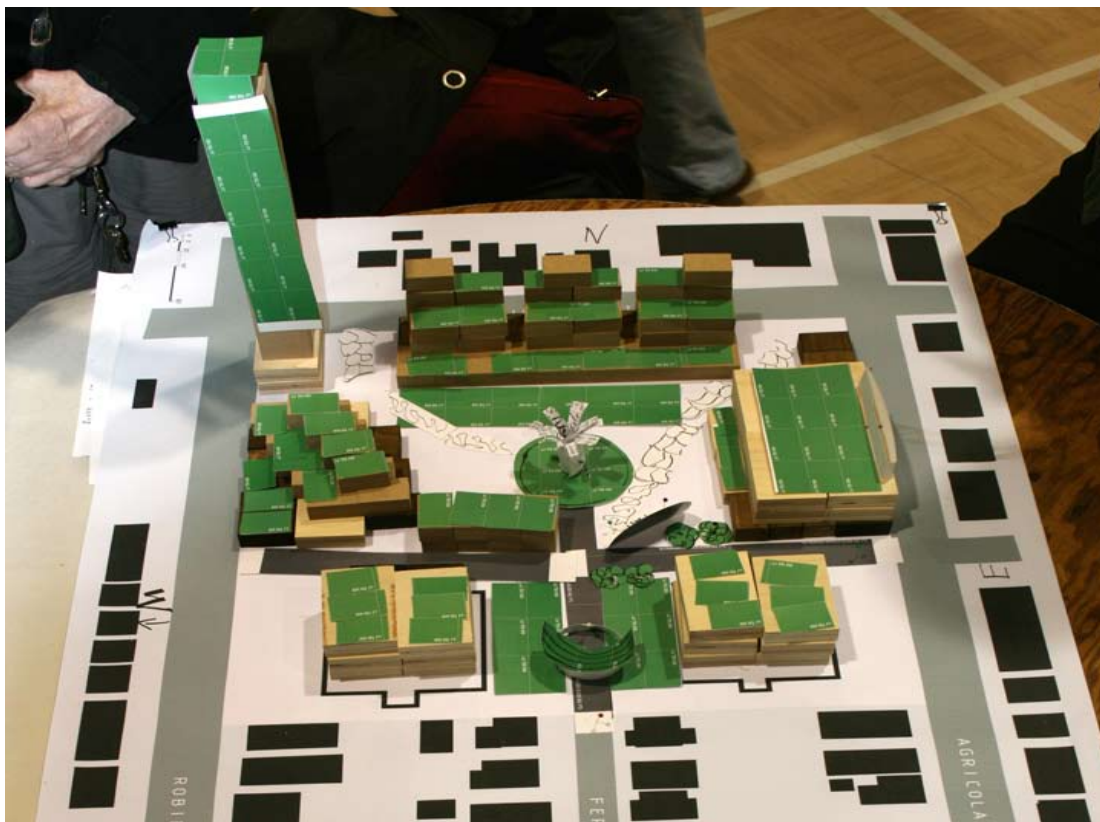


Making the case



Plenary Discussion: Finding common ground

	Uses	group 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Totals	Rank
1	Community Gathering Space	50	10	10	20	7.5	15.00	16.7	10	12	0	10	0	10	20	191.17	1
2	Recreational Facilities	20	15	10	10	7.5	21.25	16.7	10	6	0	5	0	20	25	166.42	2
3	Arts Performance Space	10	5	0	5	7.5	6.25	16.7	10	0	20	10	20	10	5	125.42	3
4	Affordable Office Space	5	10	0	5	10	7.50	0	13.33	12	5	15	20	10	10	122.83	4
5	Market Housing	0	10	5	10	10	7.50	40	0	12	15	5	0	7	0	121.50	5
6	Artists' Studio Space	0	10	5	10	10	15.00	0	13.33	10	20	10	0	7	10	120.33	6
7	Retail Space	10	10	10	5	10	8.75	0	10	10	15	5	10	7	5	115.75	7
8	Affordable Housing	0	10	5	5	10	5.00	10	10	8	15	10	20	7	0	115.00	8
9	Market Office Space	0	10	5	10	20	7.50	0	13.33	12	5	10	10	7	0	109.83	9
10	Open Space	5	10	10	15	7.5	6.25	0	10	6	5	10	0	15	10	109.75	10
11	Childcare / Preschool			10	5					6		5				26.00	11
12	Non-profit Creativity Space												20			20.00	12
13	Educational Facility														15	15.00	13
14	Seniors' Non-credit Academic Learning			10												10.00	14
15	Office Space for Non-Profit Groups			10												10.00	14
16	Public Transit									6						6.00	15
17	Adult/Senior Care			5												5.00	16
18	Arts Rehearsal Space			5												5.00	16
Total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	95	100	100	100	1395.00	



Density drives form

Form Workshop

It was agreed by all present that the Bloomfield site has the potential to become a model for sustainable, urban community development, and that the success of the development relies, in large part, in the selection of a robust, appropriate urban form.

The following consensus was reached regarding the key formal aspects to be considered in the further development of the Bloomfield Master Plan:

- *Develop a fine-grained, mixed-use perimeter*
- *Create large, vibrant green spaces*
- *Provide sufficient density to ensure economic viability*
- *Develop a rich Open Space Strategy with clear delineation of public and private zones.*
- *Re-introduce former streets through project*
- *Locate parking underground*
- *Employ sustainable design principles and*



massing

- *Preserve and reuse the Common and Fielding buildings*
- *Adequately address the scales of Robie and Agricola Streets*

While the entire public engagement process resulted in a wealth of valuable site-specific material, the Design Team simultaneously stressed the importance of looking outward, as well as inward, for answers to the fundamental design questions revolving around the Bloomfield Centre Master Plan.

Real-world precedents already had found their way into the Bloomfield Discussion. The 401 Richmond redevelopment, for example, served as a major inspiration for the Imagine Bloomfield report. The next section introduces a few precedents - all in Canada - which deal with many issues which are relevant to the Bloomfield Centre Master Plan.

2.10 Precedents



Image from www.401richmond.net

401 Richmond Toronto, Ontario

As with all of the following precedents, it is important to emphasize that they all exist in urban contexts with sometimes very different characteristics than that of the existing Bloomfield School site. As such, none of the precedents in and of itself offers a comprehensive solution for Bloomfield.

The 401 Richmond project is noteworthy for its ability to foster working connectedness amongst its parts and with the surrounding neighbourhood, its ability to build a strong community, and its overall affordability, which has resulted in tenant stability.

Quick Facts:

- *Building built in 1899 by MacDonald Manufacturing Co.*
- *President/Owner/Architect - Margaret Zeidler*
- *Zeidler family purchased building for \$9 per sf @ 200 000 sf = approximately 1 800 000*

- *FAR of approximately 4*
- *40% occupancy at time of purchase*
- *Partnerships with commercial enterprises provided opportunity and support for the not-for-profit or for-profit cultural and social sectors*
- *Boundaries between the private & public sectors are in question today because the cultural sector is renegotiating its relationship to the state (no longer a source of guaranteed support) + to the private sector (no longer “the enemy” by definition)*
- *401’s management borrowed heavily from the “street level” theory espoused by Jane Jacobs, which states a need for mixed primary uses, small blocks, and aged buildings*
- *Also reflects the ideas of writer/critic Richard Florida from his book The Rise of the Creative Class that creative capital is the key to growth and cities should attract creative professionals who possess the human capital*



Image from www.travelandtransitions.com

The Gooderman & Worts Distillery District Toronto, Ontario

This project is relevant to the Bloomfield Master Plan for its mix of old and new development, its re-use of heritage buildings and by the introduction of mixed-use, high density buildings on the site

Quick Facts

- 13 acre site in downtown Toronto
- Founded in 1830's - in use until 1990
- Made up of many buildings separated by streets and squares
- Largest distillery in Canada (for a while the largest tax payer in Toronto)
- Made up of many special purpose buildings
- Sustained a large farm - mash was fed to cattle that was not used in production of alcohol
- originally powered by windmill
- All buildings sat intact until 1990
- Owner developed a master plan for site in 1990's to maximize \$
- Heritage groups resisted anything being

done to site - wanted museum

- Led to 5 year fight and \$4 million in consultant fees
- City agreed to large development
- Heritage protection was established to allow new construction in development
- Worked closely with City of Toronto to develop a master plan to accommodate specific needs and create opportunities of growth
- Artscape was consulted and two buildings were offered at reduced rents for 20 years to attract and encourage pioneer residents to kick-start the residential growth of the projects



Image from www.google.com

The Belgo Building Montreal, Quebec

This development was studied due in part to the Arts-driven regeneration of the site and surrounding neighbourhood, its use of flexible heritage space, its facilitation of positive growth and its ability to attract a mix of tenants. The resulting diversity of use enriches the entire project and increases its resiliency.

Quick Facts

- *Formerly a textile factory built in 1912*
- *Initially a run-down space occupied by struggling Artists*
- *Currently considered one of Montreal's most important Arts spaces*
- *Primarily Arts-related uses; 20 galleries, various businesses, and dance studios*
- *Offers below-market value studio spaces*
- *Current tenant make-up has expanded to include designers, architects, and art dealers*
- *Original use (textile factory space) provides open flexible spaces suitable for variety of uses / businesses*

These precedents all teach valuable lessons, but in the end are only valuable insofar as these lessons are appropriately understood and applied to the existing Bloomfield Site.

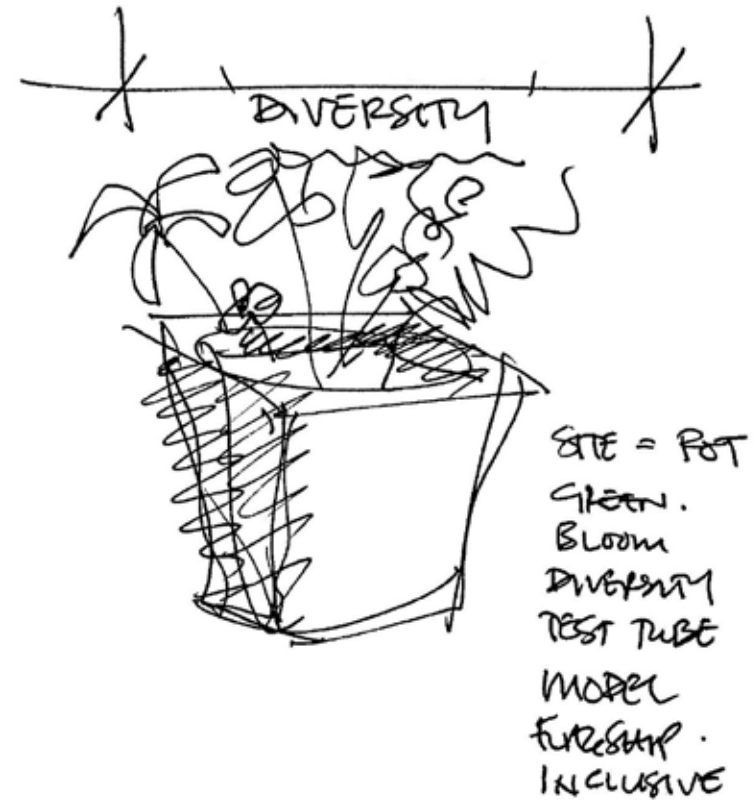
The next section proposes a Vision for the Bloomfield Centre which builds upon the background material heretofore presented, and draws upon current HRM planning initiatives, as well as a rich, world-wide history of urban design principles which are appropriate to the continued development of the "Good City" and are especially relevant to the development of Bloomfield Centre as a model of good, sustainable urban development.



Northern Lights Festival

Image from www.flickr.com

- 3.1 Planning Vision
- 3.2 Urban Design
- 3.3 Arts and Culture
- 3.4 Heritage
- 3.5 Sustainability
- 3.6 Economics



3.1 Planning Vision

The Bloomfield Master Plan lays a framework for urban form and programming to shape future development and use of the site. Alignment with the Municipality's broader urban design, community development, and cultural planning objectives is integral to the Plan. Existing planning policy and growth management priorities of the HRM form the foundation of the Bloomfield Master Plan. By applying sound urban design principles and a robust and innovative built form scheme to the site the HRM will facilitate and shape the development of a vibrant arts and culture district. The planning mechanisms and administrative approach used to deliver the Plan will also be key in creating the right conditions to achieve the built form and programming objectives for the site. Following Council's approval of the Master Plan an inter-departmental effort will begin to launch the redevelopment process including the municipal planning amendments which are

required to permit the development scheme on the site. These amendments will address the necessary evolution of the property from its current institutional and parkland designation to one that will allow the mix of uses and densities that are recommended.

More and more developers are in tune to the growing economic potential of building in the north-end of Halifax. As a result, the north-end is a community in flux. This evolution brings growth opportunity to the community in terms of services, amenities and an influx of new residents to support local business. However, along with new urban development comes the concern of neighbourhood gentrification, a development phenomenon that is difficult to control. However, the Bloomfield property presents an opportunity to invest in a strategic public asset with an aim of balancing economic and market realities with community and public

needs. The proposed arts and culture district addresses this needed balance and aims to not only provide neighbourhood-level services and enhancements but also seeks to address broader policy objectives for the development of the arts and culture community across HRM.

The Master Plan uses strong urban design principles and guidelines to respond to urban development trends and community needs within the context of the Bloomfield neighborhood. An integrated and cross functional neighborhood which also responds to a specific need within the broader arts and culture community will be achieved by combining urban design, municipal planning priorities, and programming policy with respect to arts and culture and community recreation. This approach is poised to demonstrate a range of planning objectives in one development and set an example

for future development projects led by the Municipality and its partners.

3.2 Planning Principles

This section outlines the planning principles, the five components of the planning vision; Urbanity, Heritage, Sustainability, Culture, and Economics, and concludes with the visual, and content based recommendations for the Master Plan.

Inclusive

Inclusiveness should fundamentally guide decisions throughout all planning and implementation phases to enhance opportunity for cultural, social, economic, and housing diversity to attract a balance of people and investors to the Bloomfield community

Community Building

The Bloomfield site should foster community within the district while acting as a catalyst for social, cultural and economic vitality for the surrounding neighborhood and city.

Public

Pedestrian-oriented, attractive, safe and animated spaces, programs, services and amenities will reinforce Bloomfield as an inviting public place for visitors and residents alike.

Accessible

The principle of access: socially, culturally, economically and physically, will influence the Bloomfield site’s form and function through design, programming, and capital investment.

Authentic

The Bloomfield redevelopment will reinforce the unique cultural identity and character of the site, surrounding neighborhood and community through thoughtful planning, design, and programming.

Engaging

Ongoing public participation and community input into the planning and strategic development of the Bloomfield site will help guide future policy development and decision-making.

Environmentally Responsible

Environmental leadership should be demonstrated throughout all aspects of the plan and its implementation through green design, appropriate adaptive re-use, community programming, and public and private investments

Creative

Bloomfield will be a community that incubates creativity: socially, culturally, and economically and fosters creative synergies and innovation at all levels

Adaptable

A plan and redevelopment approach that responds to evolving community needs and opportunities and is flexible enough to enable creative and innovative development options

Beautiful

The planning and development of the site should be inspired by urban design principles and the artful design of spaces and buildings that showcase architectural quality and beauty.

3.3 Urban Design



Extending public space network

The Bloomfield Master Plan is rooted in urban design principles which underlie many successful urban models throughout history. The “Good City” depends on a robust network of open spaces, good streets and buildings which define and enhance them both.

The Bloomfield site offers a prime opportunity to establish a model for future urban development.

The form-based approach to the Bloomfield Master Plan is not only a proven historical model for the development of urban form, but is also consistent with the direction of other urban design and planning initiatives in the HRM, such as HRM By Design.

The following text from the HRM By Design website clearly illustrates a shared commitment with all stakeholders in the

Bloomfield Master Plan:

Halifax Regional Municipality's recently adopted Regional Plan embraces urban design as a necessary tool in building healthy, livable communities.

The Regional Plan mandates the initiation of a Regional Centre Urban Design Study - a project now known as “HRMbyDESIGN”. HRMbyDESIGN intends to articulate an urban design strategy that:

- *Establishes a clear and compelling vision for our city's future.*
- *Fosters high quality, sustainable development and vibrant public spaces.*
- *Brings clarity and predictability to development review processes.*
- *Introduces new design guidelines.*
- *Establishes incentives for good design and development.*



Local precedent: build to the street

Street-making

Streets are a significant public space and support social exchange in the city. Well-made streets enhance public life and display the following qualities:

- *security supported by density of residents (Jane Jacob's "eyes on the street")*
- *diversity of use (shops, professional services, and other public amenities)*
- *connectivity of indoor and outdoor public spaces (outdoor performance space, playgrounds, green/park space, Theatres etc).*

The Bloomfield Master Plan promotes the development of good streetscapes by employing several tried-and-true urban design strategies.

Dense development of the perimeter of city blocks with minimal setbacks create street-oriented buildings that allow for the centers of



Street oriented shop

blocks to be developed into courts and public open spaces.

The proposed Bloomfield development draws upon the variety of good streetscapes in the surrounding North-End neighbourhood and recognizes that vibrant, diverse streetscapes are key to the success of any future development.



Halifax: high density, low rise townhouses



Pedestrian oriented streets
Image from www.polyvore.com



Edinburgh: density supports urbanity

Image from ?



Paris: finest example of street-oriented architecture



Dublin: front doors on the street



Bologna: arcade on the square

Image from Bernard Rudofsky, *Streets for People*, p. 103



Paris: significant public space defined by dense urban fabric

Image from www.corbis.com

Court-making

Courts are framed and defined by buildings and are accessed via city streets.

There are different types of courts in the city. A “Square” is often hardscaped, while a “Park” usually consists of greenscapes.

Courts facilitate formal and informal public gathering, enable the social exchange and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation.

Courts may be private, semi-public, or public. Clear boundaries help define an urban space, and access into these spaces must be carefully designed in order to promote the desired level of porosity into the space and promote its potential use. A very open space with easy access from multiple access points suggests a public space that is meant for all people to enjoy equally, such as Central Park in New York City.

Fresh air, natural light, and scenic views are also essential qualities of an inviting courtyard and promote public health and well-being.



Street-oriented buildings support court-making



Stage for public life

Image from Renzo Piano Building Workshop



Georgian Edinburgh: linked green public rooms

Image: Scotland From Above



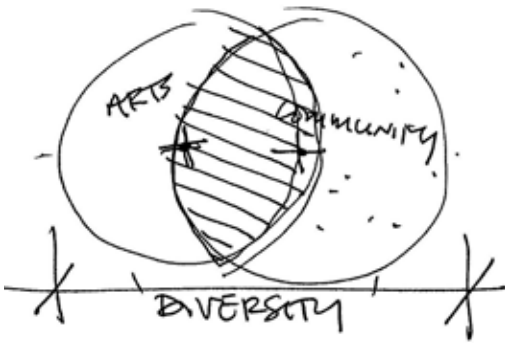
Public art in the square

Image from Design Research Lab - Architectural Association

3.4 Arts and Culture



Street art: supporting the Visual Arts



An Arts and Culture District shaped by a mixture of complementary land uses and focused community and creative industry programming is the essence of the Bloomfield redevelopment. The goal of building spaces and facilities that support and nurture creative and social exchange, arts and culture incubation, and commercial exchange is integral to the built form and programming scheme for the property. The proposed development scheme stresses a concentration and cluster of activities and spaces that support these creative activities. This cluster will facilitate an exchange and support system between artists, cultural industry, community groups and the surrounding neighborhood. A larger clientele will also support the Bloomfield District as consumers of programming and services on the site.

Nurturing the Creative City

Arts and culture are good for communities and the healthy development and sustainability of regions. They foster public dialogue and awareness, life-long⁴ learning, and build community capacity and leadership. They are inherently connected to the well-being of communities and the quality of life of citizens. The case for public investment in arts and culture has gained considerable momentum in recent years and local governments are shifting policy priorities to respond to gaps in infrastructure and programming.

HRM already has many of the critical ingredients required of a dynamic and globally successful creative city. Its unique assets include an enviable base of talented and

4 Creative City Network, Making the Case for Culture: Arts and Positive Change in Communities, 2005



Resident talent: Supporting the Performing Arts

creative workers, a level of cultural diversity, and a strong reputation as a safe, socially harmonious city of high livability. HRM's regional economy boasts a wide array of creative industry that form a key part of its economic base. But more needs to be done at the public sector level to sustain arts and culture as a critical and integral part of HRM's identity and well-being. In recognition of the need to plan more strategically for the development of arts and culture in the HRM, Regional Council has endorsed an operational strategy and funding that will help advance the arts and culture agenda. The Bloomfield property redevelopment is recognized as a key component of delivering that strategy.

Nurturing Creative Neighbourhoods

The current neighborhood mix of businesses, home-owners, renters, community sector and social enterprise, creative industry,



artists and entrepreneurs is an identity that the Bloomfield Master Plan aims to develop. In response to the unique cultural identity of the community and the concentration of creative industry and artists living and working in the area the Bloomfield Master Plan seeks to reinforce the existing nature and development of the community over time. The neighbourhood surrounding the Bloomfield site is a diverse and creative community and the site itself is in the vicinity of several art and design studios and galleries, antique shops, artisan and craft shops and local restaurants and cafes.

There is a notable concentration of arts and creative industry uses in the area making it one of the most unique and dynamic communities in the Region. The map on page 22 shows the arts and culture facilities and spaces in the Bloomfield vicinity and the wider north-end neighbourhood. Because of the

character and affordability of the community and its vicinity to the Downtown the area continues to be a desirable destination for artists, small business and creative industry entrepreneurs. The Downtown location of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and its supporting facilities makes the north-end an obvious choice for students and graduates. Statistics Canada data from 2001 shows that the north end of Halifax has over 3 times the national average for concentration of artists living in a geographic district.⁵ HRM also has the tenth highest concentration of artists in Canada among 92 municipalities.⁶ The arts sector is growing strongly and between 1991 and 2001 the number of artists in Halifax grew by 34%, over 4 times the growth of the

5 Hill Strategies Research Inc., Artists by Neighborhood in Canada, October 2005
6 Ibid

overall labour-force.⁷ The growth of the arts and culture sector is expected to continue at a positive rate which will increase demand for accessible and affordable spaces and facilities.

The Bloomfield Arts and Culture Programming Strategy

The Bloomfield redevelopment presents a unique opportunity to develop, promote and sustain the Bloomfield site as a creative arts and culture district and mixed-use community. The arts and culture district concept is rooted in the understanding that arts and culture is inclusive and has been proven to break down boundaries that can prevent communities of interest from coming together. The Bloomfield arts and culture district will support programming and services that appeal to the diverse population of people living in the neighborhood while providing a concentration

7 Ibid

of spaces and services in support of HRM’s arts and culture sector and community sector. The Plan recommends the adaptive re-use and renovation of two heritage buildings on the property into highly functioning spaces that support community and cultural activities as well as complimentary market uses.

The implementation of the community programming strategy will require innovative partnership and management models and partners that are aligned in principle through the vision and objectives of the Master Plan. A community partnership approach to facility development and program delivery will be explored and is in alignment with HRM’s preferred approach to operating community facilities and delivering services. The HRM-owned-community operated facility model will be determined through an engagement process which will secure community operating partners to deliver programming

and services which complement the vision for the district. A private-sector partner will be retained through a second RFP process to physically develop the site and to secure commercial and residential tenants. Opportunities will be maximized through the future planning process to achieve broader objectives of the master plan including affordable housing and community amenity space. The master plan will guide all of the various development components and act as the common thread between implementation phases.

Arts & Culture Programming Objective

To direct public, private and community investment toward the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, and the development and programming of new multi-purpose and purpose-built space that can adapt to community and arts and culture sector needs over time.

With respect to the kinds of spaces the district could support, there should be a balance of purpose-built spaces to accommodate professional and emerging arts activities, purpose-built spaces to accommodate amateur and community arts activities and multi-functional spaces to encourage creative and social exchange and community cultural development.

As a foundation, these spaces should:

- *support art production, exhibition and audience development*
- *exist in relation to one another as a means of critical exchange across media and discipline*
- *foster creative expression, learning, and community involvement*
- *be affordable and accessible*

The Master Plan does not prescribe an exact formula in terms of the nature of programming

space and its delivery, instead it identifies a desired balance of community-level and professional-level space and objectives for their cross-fertilization and exchange. The HRM will look to potential developers and community partners to design and develop the programming mix and the preferred model for its delivery. The role of the municipality is to facilitate future development of the site guided by master plan objectives.

Aligning HRM's Recreation & Cultural Mandates

Recreation and arts and culture are the two primary areas where the Municipality has a mandate to deliver community-level programming. The HRM's policies for recreation service delivery are built on the understanding that parks, recreation, sport, fitness, art and culture are essential to personal and community well-being. With this understanding the HRM's role is to facilitate

and deliver quality, inclusive and innovative recreation and leisure programming with a focus on entry-level service to encourage equity and accessibility.

Whereas recreation program delivery has been a long-term direct mandate of the Municipality the support to develop arts and culture programming has been evolving. The adoption of the Municipal Cultural Plan in 2006 puts a policy framework in place to enable enhanced cultural programming and investment. The Bloomfield redevelopment presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the myriad benefits of investing in arts and culture infrastructure. Toward this joint programming goal the Bloomfield Community Centre will be redeveloped into a specialized niche for community-level arts and culture programming.

The Bloomfield Arts and Culture District

supports the HRM's broader creative spaces framework which will guide decisions regarding future investment in "creative spaces". The HRM's creative spaces framework places emphasis on:

- *Multi-purpose neighborhood or community centres in which cultural activities are integrated with other social and recreational services*
- *Single-purpose arts facilities*
- *Multi-discipline arts and cultural centres, such as municipal arts centres, community arts centres, or cultural centres housing a broader range of cultural activities*
- *Mixed-use facilities that provide space for many social and community development groups and activities (including arts and culture)*
- *Cultural districts, campuses or complexes that house cultural production and activities in a spatially concentrated facility, area or district*

- *Arts and culture incubators that offer space and infrastructure in one location for several related cultural and supporting activities, to promote organizational development, creativity, and innovation*
- *Creative convergence centres that bring together the creative sector with other business and interests to incubate innovation and exchange*

The Bloomfield Arts and Culture District concept represents several, if not all of the focus areas under HRM’s creative spaces framework. However, there are two strategic areas of creative and community space development that are highlighted for implementation through the Bloomfield Master Plan.

Strategic Direction #1: Spaces in Support of Community-Level Arts & Culture

Community Arts & Culture Center

Program Objective:
Facilitate the development of unique and accessible cultural spaces and programs that foster social and community vitality through creative expression, arts development and cross cultural exchange

Through community and stakeholder engagement, analysis of recreation and cultural trends, and an understanding of demographic profile, a unique opportunity for an arts and culture programming niche on the site has emerged. This niche, with respect to community-level access, can be developed by way of a community arts and cultural centre which merges community grass-roots and focused arts and culture programming

into one facility.

The community arts centre could be budgeted and developed during Phase I implementation and would acting as a catalyst for shaping the overall development of the arts and culture district. Phased investment in the facility and the connected public open space will raise investor and community confidence and jumpstart further development on the site.

There are key assumptions that will shape an operating strategy for the Community Arts and Culture Centre including:

- *the current gymnasium on-site will be retired with the removal of the main school building and a transition strategy will be put in place to relocate gym users*
- *the heritage Fielding Building on-site will be*

renovated and adaptively re-used to house the Community Arts and Culture Centre

- *Community access to professionally designed and delivered arts and culture programs will be the key mandate of the Centre with emphasis on amateur-level programs and cross-cultural exchange. Regular exchange between participants of this and other facilities on-site will provide cross-fertilization between community-level and professional level arts programming and services.*

- *A community-managed, community-operated model will be developed for the facility.*

- *A minimal amount of direct-delivered HRM programming will be offered through the Centre with emphasis on arts and culture programming. This could include an artist in*

residence program and programs in support of community and public art. The Centre will be inclusive and open to all ages and backgrounds with special focus on children, youth and seniors

- A percentage of leasable space for community tenants with a strong program alignment to the vision and mandate of the Centre will be incorporated into a business plan. Existing tenants of the Bloomfield Centre will have the option of renewal*
- The facility will serve both the local neighborhood and the broader community*
- Multi-purpose space including community meeting facilities, gathering/social space, and shared administrative space will be incorporated into the Centre*

Public Open Space

In addition to built facility space the quality and distribution of public open space on the site is critical. Broad public access to green space and passive leisure areas, and interactive outdoor space is a fundamental design principle of the master plan and of the arts and culture district concept. With respect to programming and community participation the synergies between indoor and outdoor public space are emphasized. A network of connected public open spaces encourage social and community exchange and accommodate year-round programming.

Opportunities for programming outdoor space within the Bloomfield arts and culture district include:

- art exhibitions and performances*
- interpretation of heritage and cultural*

elements on-site

- temporary and permanent public art installations*
- neighborhood gatherings and events*
- arts and culture festivals and celebrations*
- interpretive gardens and landscaping*

**Strategic Direction #2
Spaces in support of the Arts & Culture Sector**

Arts & Culture Incubator

Program Objective:
Enhance and broaden access to facilities and spaces for creative industry, artists and cultural practitioners

Engagement with arts and culture sector stakeholders and the local community support the development of arts and culture facility space on the Bloomfield Site as an

incubator for arts and culture practitioners and the audiences they serve. The Arts and Culture Incubator model provides infrastructure and amenities required to facilitate the convergence of creative industry, artists, cultural workers and the community.

The provision of cultural spaces is the one of the most critical elements in supporting the arts and culture industry. Toward that goal the Bloomfield arts and culture district will include purpose-built and multi-purpose facilities for arts incubation, production, exhibition and key space for the arts and culture sector. This facility is conceptually designed through this master plan, however its detailed design would occur through further engagements with the arts and culture sector and future operating partners.

With a goal of providing infrastructure in one location for several related arts and

culture activities and organizations a building envelope four stories in height is proposed. The building could accommodate either four regular stories or two double-height stories according to the needs of its operators.

Initial consultation with arts and culture stakeholders identified a range of possible uses for these facilities including:

- *A small performing arts and theatre space*
- *Art Gallery & Exhibition Space*
- *Visual Art Studios*
- *Cooperative Workshop & Studio Space*
- *Event Plaza and/or Venue*
- *Storage Areas*
- *Resource Library*
- *Meeting Rooms*
- *Rehearsal/large group multi-use space*
- *Administrative/printing/area*

- *Events Lobby*
- *Office Space for cultural organizations*

Specific programming of these facilities will be determined through additional market analysis and focused engagement with the arts and culture sector to identify cultural space gaps and priorities. This analysis will be a short-term implementation priority and will be followed by an engagement process to establish operating partners.

3.5 Heritage

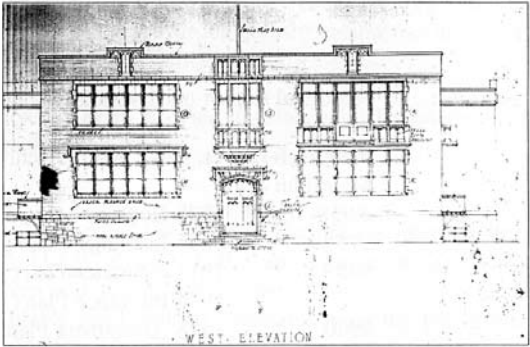


Adaptive Reuse



The Bloomfield site has the unique opportunity to embody the kind of positive growth that the community needs and desires. The rich history of the site includes the first playground in Nova Scotia and the Fielding and Common Buildings, the maintenance of which bridges that past and future of Bloomfield, where the community can build in a supportive and cumulative way on the past. We are able on this site to embrace new development at an Urban Design scale, while still respecting and including important parts of the urban cultural landscape.

The following heritage reports on the Bloomfield Schools have been reviewed: ‘The Bloomfield School Evolution of the Site Referenced to Historic Maps’, the ‘Bloomfield Schools Heritage Value: The Fielding Building’, and “Bloomfield Schools Architectural Value: The Commons Building’



Common School (1919) - Front (West) Elevation

These documents provide an accurate description of the understood heritage values of the site, and the proposed Bloomfield Master Plan strongly supports the maintenance and adaptive reuse of the heritage structures on site.

Proposed development on the Bloomfield site is not precluded by the current status of the Common and Fielding Buildings. Possible additions would be in keeping with the past evolution of the school buildings and consistent with necessary modern upgrades. The addition of a new link structure would be a great opportunity to update accessibility for the two buildings and to provide new space for mechanical services, universal washrooms, vertical circulation, and a barrier free entrance.

School buildings from the early 1900’s make great candidates for adaptive re-

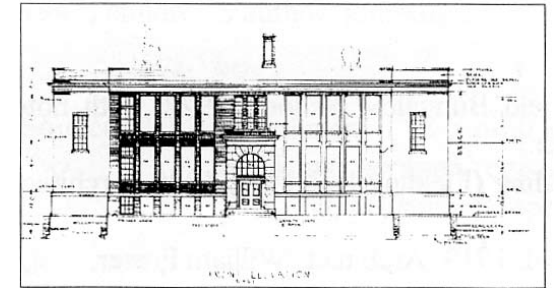


Architectural merit



use, especially when considering a ‘loose fit’ program. The robust orthogonal plan, generous ceiling height, and large north and south facing windows make for incredibly flexible space whether for marketable rental units, or not for profit/community programming. Possible program suggestions include leased office space, restaurant, café, artist live/work residences and studio space, gallery, library, community meeting rooms, day-care, and adult learning facilities.

The proposed program designation for the Commons and Fielding buildings are understood to be commercial and community uses. The structuring of the new tenant occupant relationship should be financially viable, whereby the commercial activities can support the community functions to be housed in these buildings. The opportunity also exists for mixed-use, live/work residential lease space in order to bring long-term



W.S. Fielding School (1929) - Front (East) Elevation

tenancy with consistent rental income. Community and occupant stewardship of the heritage buildings is recommended.

The 2005 Sperry Partners Architects Building Condition Reports for the Fielding and Commons Buildings have been reviewed and have been found to be thorough; however ,they require some correction regarding the upgrading of the heritage buildings. The costing was done on a square footage basis, whereas typically heritage conservation repairs are priced on an elemental basis. The testing and assessments of these reports is also now out of date, as there will be more severe damage caused by the leaky roofs. The Sperry Partners estimates generally seem low, which could be a reflection of local trade and market conditions or the pricing of inexpensive upgrades (e.g. PVC windows). The condition assessment and fee proposal was prepared before the



Valuable heritage resource at risk

buildings were designated in 2007. Upgrades and conservation methods appropriate for Heritage-status buildings were likely not considered in some of the options priced by Sperry Partners.

This Master Plan recommends that a detailed condition assessment be executed for each building, assessing damage and areas of immediate work needed. An elemental cost breakdown of repairs, heritage conservation work and upgrades would be the best way to move towards the complete rehabilitation of these buildings. Upgrades should be considered based on phasing of the project, future programming options and the long-term integrity of the heritage value for the Bloomfield Schools. In order to assess a productive phasing of the project, a suitable program for each building should also be decided upon by the steering committee. At this point the assessment of the potential for

additions or a link structure should also be strongly considered.

The on-going redevelopment of the North End of Halifax is a partnered relationship between community and commercial user groups. Allowing for the Commons and Fielding buildings to continue as community spaces is a positive move towards the preservation of an important heritage asset for the North End neighborhood and City of Halifax at large.

3.6 Sustainability



Image from www.google.com

The necessity of designing and building a sustainable Bloomfield development is acknowledged by all stakeholders. Indeed, this project has the opportunity to establish itself as a model for future sustainable development.

Siting and Massing

A holistic view, comprehensive understanding, and balanced approach to all factors at work in the project are critical to any successful sustainable strategy.

Two very important aspects of any sustainable design are the siting and massing of the project. They deeply affect the success and feasibility of passive solar heating strategies, natural ventilation, and daylighting.

Density

Density is critical to the sustainability of the Bloomfield Master Plan. A high site density

results in a smaller, more efficient ecological footprint, both by taking advantage of economies-of-scale for many sustainable systems, but by reducing the number of commuters and shortening the distance between consumers and the goods and services being consumed.

Green Space

As previously mentioned, the construction of dense perimeter buildings allows for the possibility of green open spaces which provide not only healthy spaces for people to work, live and play, but also may act to reduce surface water run-off and heat-island effects.

Cultural Sustainability

The local availability of goods and services recognizes the sustainability of local supply chains and may support new, greener ways of living in the city. Vernacular culture and



Green Roof

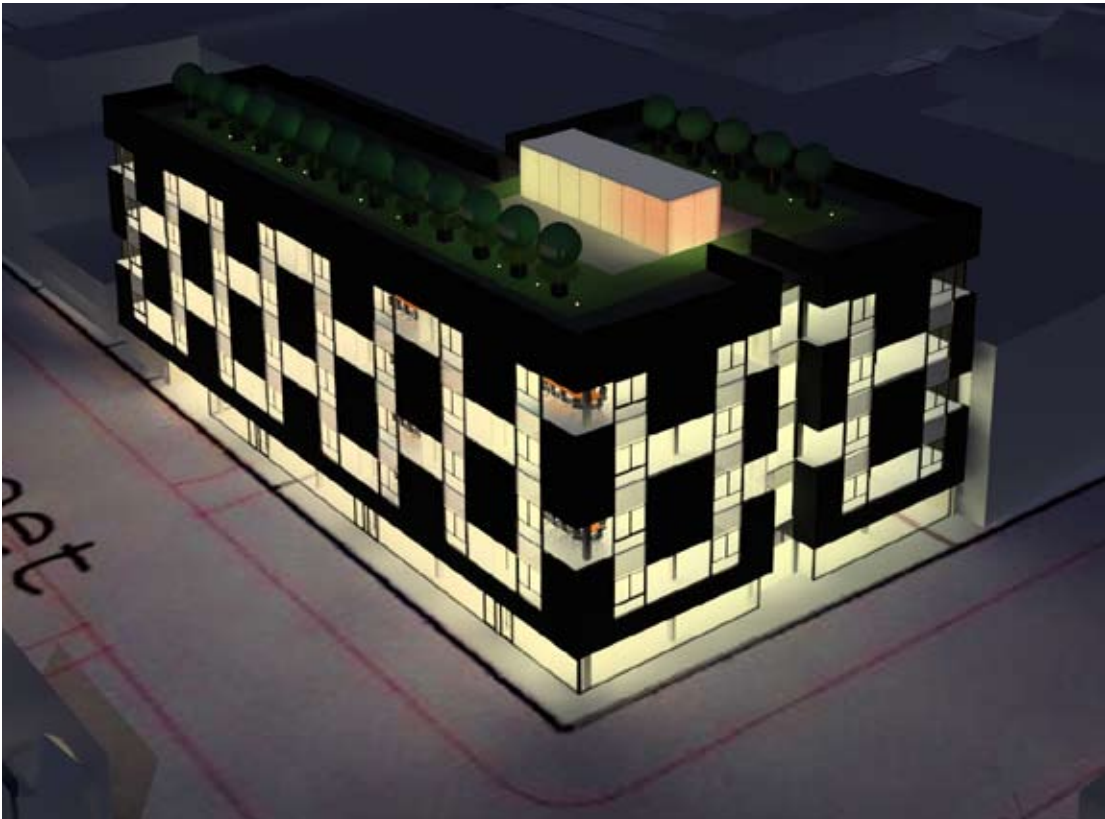
historical precedent should also inform the building materials and methods selected for the Bloomfield site. These local methods and materials have a dual benefit - they are proven to work in this particular cultural and physical context and, since many are locally available, act to reduce the embodied energy of the project and inject capital into the local and regional economy.

Technology

There is a technological dimension to any serious sustainable proposal. There are several emerging technologies and many that have been in use for decades which may be employed to minimize or eliminate many negative environmental impacts of the Bloomfield project. While a comprehensive analysis of the available technologies is beyond the scope of this report, some technologies worth considering include geothermal heating and cooling, green roofs, and green power.

It is important to understand, however, that technology on its own is no substitute for sound sustainable design from the beginning.

3.7 Economics



Neighbourhood growth

The current Bloomfield Master Plan supports a vision for the development previously articulated by the Imagine Bloomfield Society that includes strong representation from the arts, culture and recreation communities. Their vision is to create a community centre that promotes the development and operation of these three sectors, while at the same time stabilizing the North End community by including affordable housing and other community-based amenities. While the public appears to support this vision, the question has been asked about the financial viability of this approach. This section argues that the vision is viable, and in fact is the most responsible approach for HRM Council.

HRM Regional Council has previously approved a cultural plan for the municipality, as well as a policy on affordable housing. The work of Dr. Richard Florida (the Creative Class) indicates that a strong cultural sector

can generate many economic benefits beyond the direct funding that it receives. Dr. Florida argues that many creative industries (i.e., designers, software companies, etc) are attracted to cities that have strong cultural sectors, and demonstrate a wide range of cultural diversity. As we enter the 21st Century, city-states will rise and fall based on their ability to attract labour and immigrants increases. The promotion of a strong cultural sector is one way that HRM can prepare itself for this challenge.

The Bloomfield project provides an opportunity to implement key portions of these strategies at minimal cost to the taxpayer. This is made possible by leveraging the economic capacity of the private sector. The consultants have concluded that there continues to be strong demand for high quality housing sites on the Halifax Peninsula, and very few locations are large



Retail Podium with Tower Above

enough to support a project of the scale that is being envisioned for the Bloomfield site. The proposed plan intentionally provides a sufficient level of density so that the profit generated by market rate housing can be used to write down the cost of affordable housing and/or nonprofit and other community space. This is a proven approach that is used elsewhere across North America.

In addition to the immediate benefits that this approach will bestow on the Bloomfield site, the effects of this approach will be magnified throughout the community.

The potential exists to stabilize a large region around the site, including under-utilized property from Gottingen to Windsor, and from North to Lady Hammond Road. This will help HRM with the implementation of another key goal from the regional plan: the re-population of the Halifax Peninsula.

HRM Regional Council has a number of possible options for the redevelopment of the Bloomfield site. One option would be to sell the site off to a developer for the highest price. While it could be argued that this approach might be the best use of the taxpayer's money, we disagree. From the work conducted in this study, the consultants recommend an alternative approach, where the site is put out for tender to the private sector, but with performance criteria included in the proposal call (e.g., minimum number of units of affordable housing, minimum square feet of space for the cultural sector, etc). In this way, Council gets to harness the creativity of the private sector, while at the same time providing space for affordable housing and the cultural sector.



Building blocks

- 4.1 Option A
- 4.2 Option B
- 4.3 Option C
- 4.4 Economic Analysis
- 4.5 Evaluation

The Bloomfield Master Plan studied three development scenarios of varying densities.

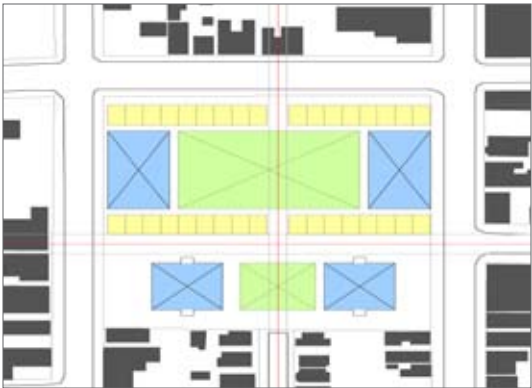
The formal and economic consequences of each scheme have been studied and, in conjunction with the data from the interviews and workshops, form the basis for the proposed scheme for the Bloomfield site.

The desire for the rehabilitation and reuse of heritage buildings on site, for robust and lively public space, and for ample community amenities underlie the evaluation of all options.

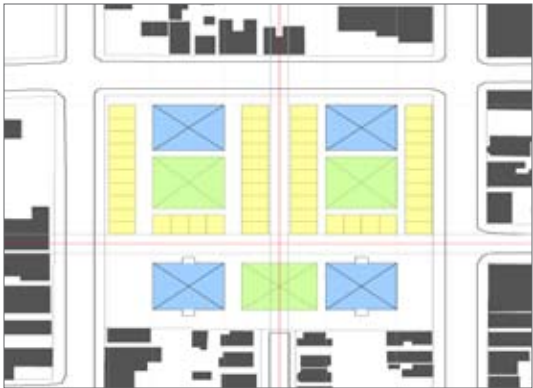
4.2 Option A

Characteristics

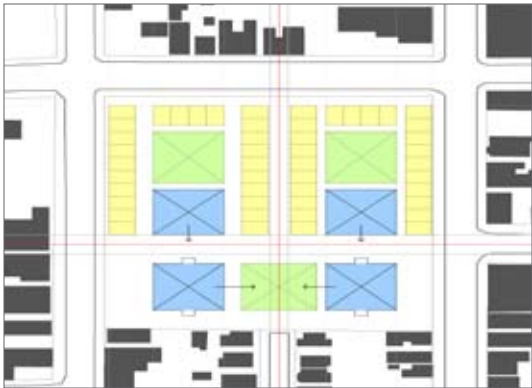
- Establishes single large “Bloomfield Green Space”
- Maintains all low rise structures
- Places Arts & Community Buildings along Bloomfield
- Establishes Arts & Community district identity
- Links Green Court between Heritage buildings to Arts & Community district
- Facilitates approximately 280 parking spaces below grade
- Includes ability to add dance performance space (250 seat - 6000 sf)
- Includes ability to add 2 multi-purpose rooms (2 x 3000)
- Includes ability to add theatre performance space black box (4000 sf)
- Includes ability to add gallery (2000 sf)
- Includes some flexible program – public scale space
- Offers moderate # of affordable housing/ subsidized office units



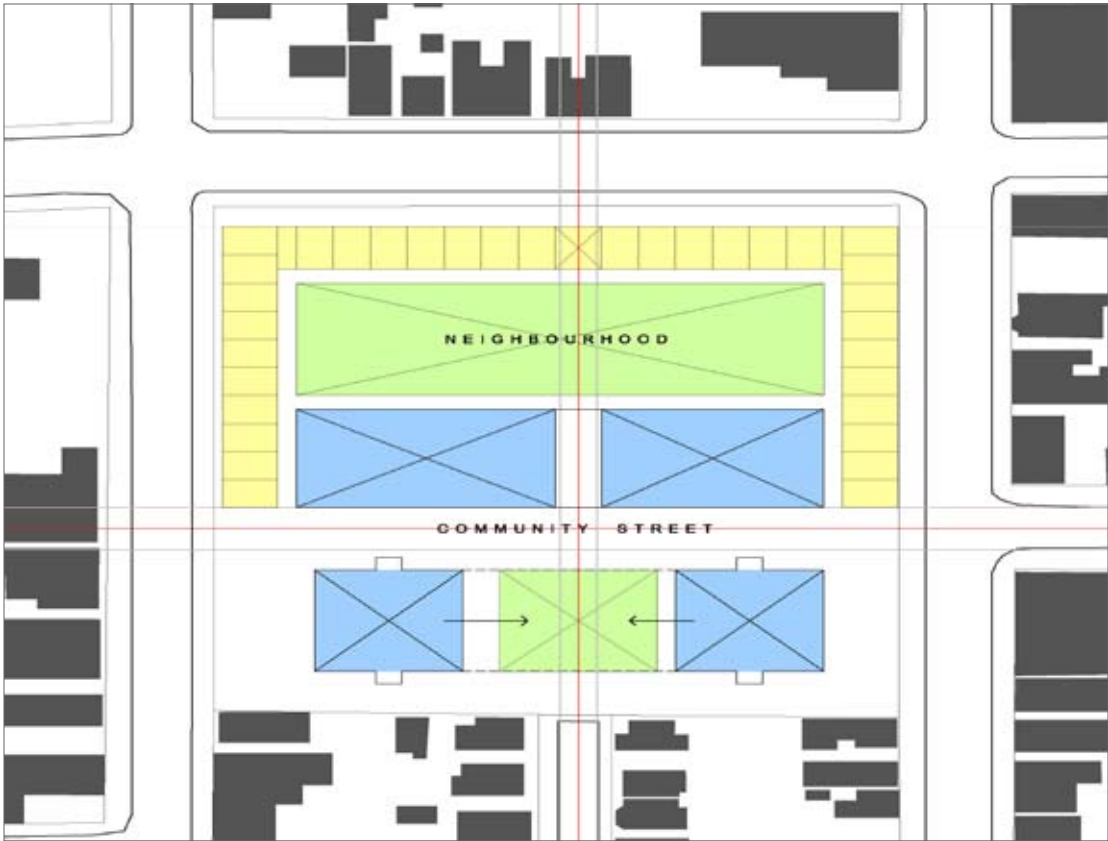
Medium Density Variation A

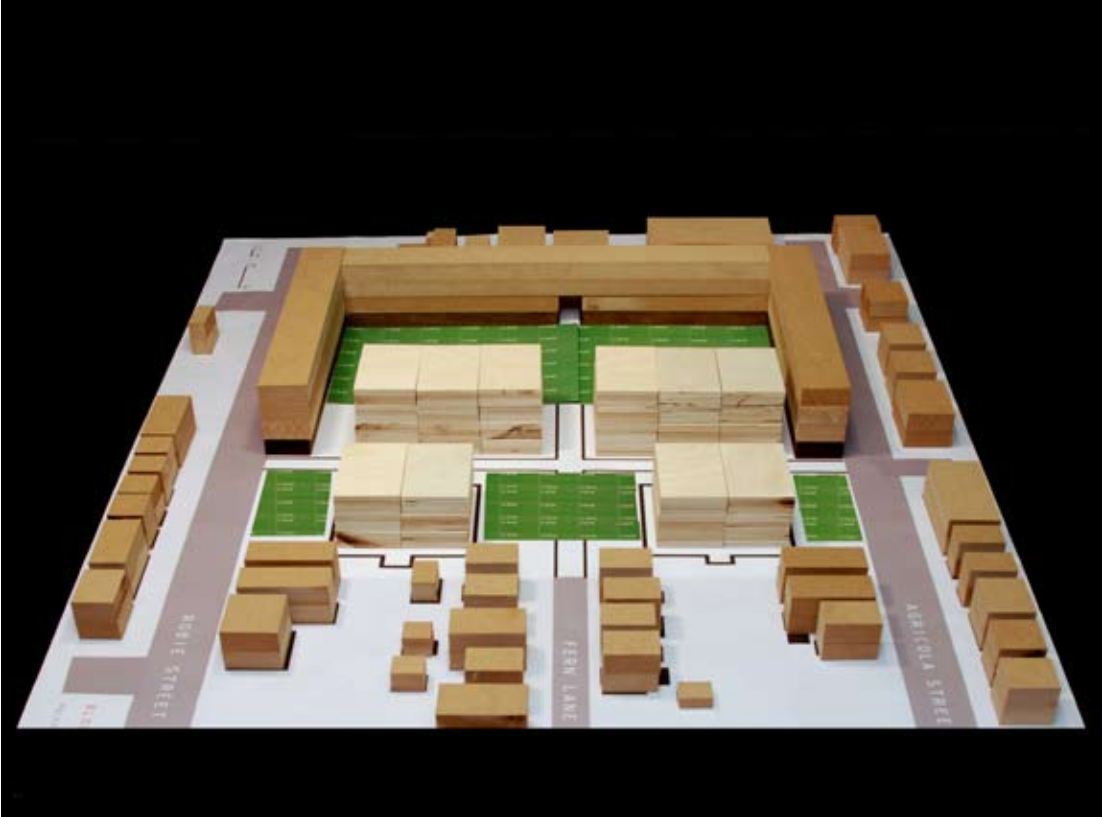


Medium Density Variation B



Medium Density Variation C





Medium density

Statistics

1. 33 shops

19,800 sf
2. 102 residential/commercial units (20' x 30' townhouse)

61,200 sf
3. 42,000 sf new community space

42,000 sf
4. 45,000 sf existing/renovated heritage space

45,000 sf
- + 270 parking spaces

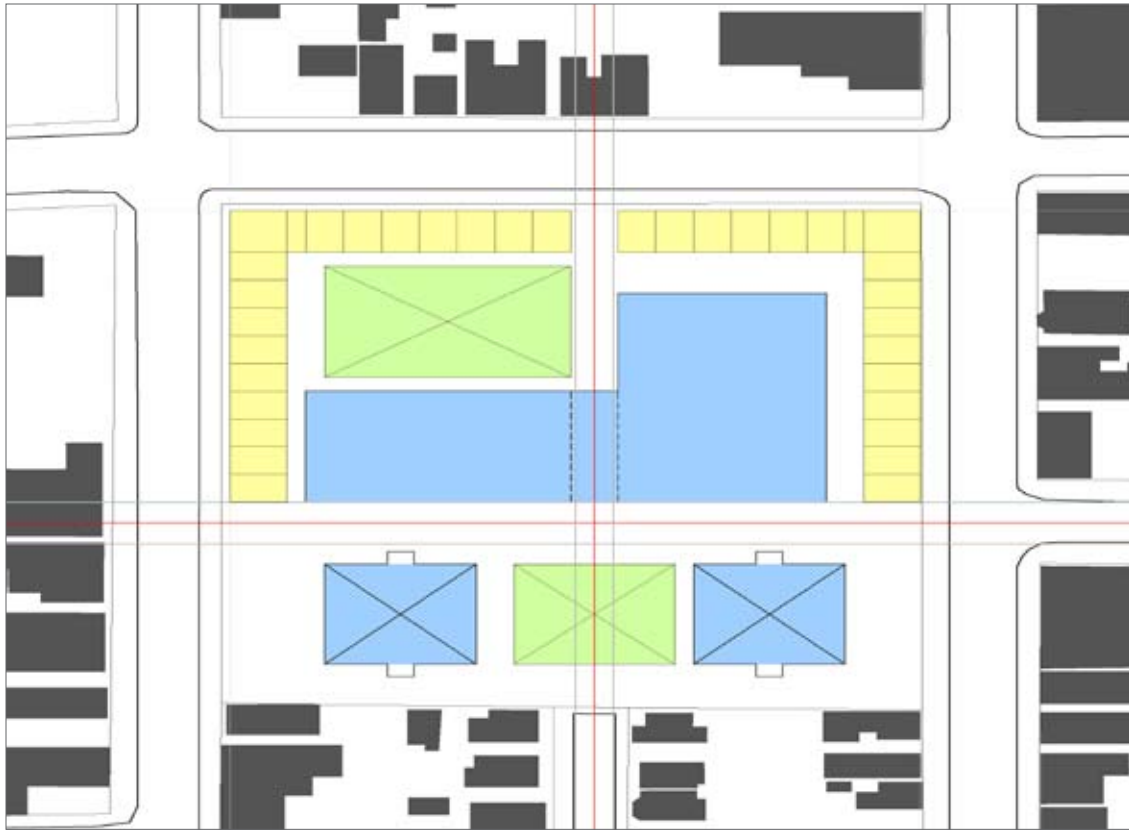
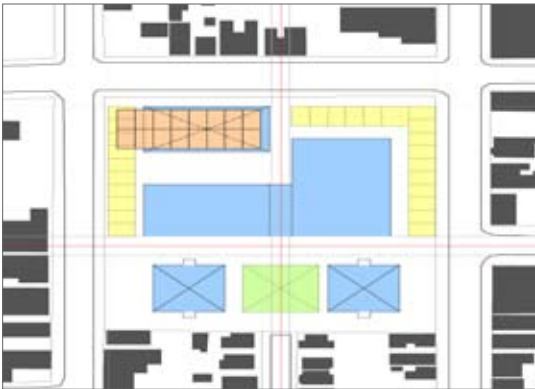
Total Built Area (incl. Heritage space)

168,000sf

4.1 Option B

Characteristics

- Keep all existing buildings (+ tower option)
- Isolates North court from other public space
- Imposes use of poorly fenestrated building
- Low levels of natural light.
- Occupies/consumes site – too many units back onto school
- High density not possible (1 tower only), resulting in a low number of affordable housing/subsidized office units
- No heritage value in Main building
- Does not allow parking on site *
- Keeps Main building





Low density

Statistics

1.	33 shops	19,800 sf
2.	99 residential/commercial units (20' x 30' townhouse)	59,400 sf
3.	45,000 sf existing/renovated heritage space	45,000 sf
4.	58,000 sf existing/renovated community space – Main building	58,000 sf
		<hr/>
		182,200 sf
		<hr/>
w/ tower		
1.	add 80 residential units (tower)	48,000 sf
2.	add 28,000 sf new community space	28,000 sf
3.	subtract 8 shops	(-)4,800 sf
4.	subtract 24 residential/commercial units (20' x 30' townhouse)	(-)14,400 sf
		<hr/>
* No parking		
Total Built Area (incl. Heritage space)		<hr/>
		239,000sf

4.3 Option C

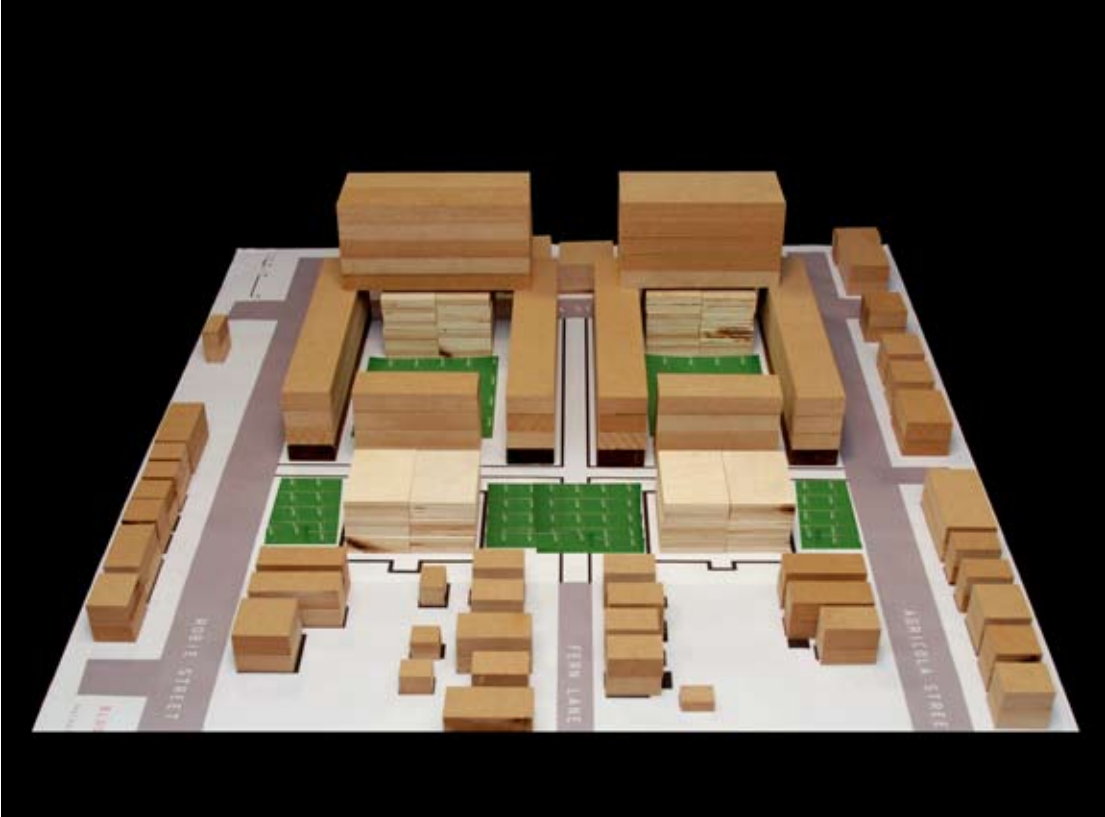
Characteristics

- Includes ability to add dance performance space (250 seat - 6000 sf)
- Includes ability to add 2 multi-purpose rooms (2 x 1500)
- Includes ability to add theatre performance space (4000 sf)
- Includes ability to add gallery space (2000 sf)
- Remaining space could be market space
- Remove the Main building
- Create “community uses” in Heritage buildings and at Almon
- Places towers to North side of site
- Divides block into two typical North end blocks - finer grain
- Offers highest # of affordable housing/ office units



High Density Variation A





High density

Statistics

1.	48 Shops (townhouse @ grade)	28,800 sf
2.	86 residential/commercial/arts unit equivalents (townhouse)	86,400 sf
3.	90 unit equivalents (tower)	90,000 sf
4.	28,000 sf new community (large scale) space	28,000 sf
5.	45,000 sf existing/renovated heritage space	45,000 sf

+ 270 parking spaces

Total Built Area (incl. Heritage space)	278,200 sf
---	------------

4.4 Economic Analysis

This section provides a high level analysis of the development potential of the Bloomfield School site. The intent of this analysis is to provide an order of magnitude valuation of the options being considered so that it can provide a feedback loop to the proposed design. In this way, the proposed development can be right sized from its inception, rather than the design prepared and adopted, only to determine at a later date that it is not feasible, or needs revision.

1.1 Assumptions

For the purposes of this analysis, we have made the following assumptions:

1. All cost estimates prepared by Sperry & Partners are considered valid, but have been inflated by 5% per year to account for construction inflation.
2. The Imagine Bloomfield Vision indicates a design for affordably priced office space and residential housing. Therefore, we have assumed that 20% of all residential units are set aside as affordable housing to households at 70% to 80% of median income. This is not social housing, which provides housing for unemployed households, or households with social problems (abuse, etc). This is inexpensive housing for the working poor; people who have a job, but are spending more than 30% of their income on shelter. We have not assigned a land value to these units, as this subsidy will likely be needed in order to entice the developer to build these units.
3. We have also assumed that at least one old building (the Commons or Fielding building) is retained as affordable space for nonprofit groups. Affordable is defined as just paying the cost of operating expenses (heat, lights, maintenance), but no net return to the landlord to cover the cost of the investment in the building.

1.2 Redevelopment Costs

The following table summarizes the costs associated with the three scenarios. These costs include the renovation of existing buildings, demolition of the main school (for the scenario that includes this option), and the construction of new multi-purpose space and outdoor parks and art.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options
Summary of Public Amenity Development Costs
Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple
August 15, 2008 - Version 3.1

Description	Quantity	Units	Price	Sub-Total	Inflation 3Yr at 5%	2008 Estimate (Rounded)	Option A Medium Density,	Option B: Low Density, Keep School	Option C: High Density
BUILDING RENOVATION									
Commons Building Renovation	22,500	SF		\$ 2,450,600	1.1576	\$ 2,840,000	\$ 2,840,000	\$ 2,840,000	\$ 2,840,000
Fielding Building Renovation	22,500	SF		\$ 1,629,375	1.1576	\$ 1,890,000	\$ 1,890,000	\$ 1,890,000	\$ 1,890,000
Main Building Renovation	58,470	SF		\$ 3,154,000	1.1576	\$ 3,650,000		\$ 3,650,000	
Main Building Demolition	58,470	SF	\$ 5.00	\$ 292,350	1.1576	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000		\$ 340,000
NEW CONSTRUCTION									
Combined Multi-Purpose Space	16,800	SF	\$ 300	\$ 5,040,000		\$ -	\$ 5,040,000		\$ 5,040,000
Parks and Openspace	Lumpsum	1		\$ 250,000		\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
Outdoor Art	Lumpsum	1		\$ 250,000		\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED FOR DEVELOPMENT							\$ 10,610,000	\$ 8,880,000	\$ 10,610,000

The least expensive option involves the retention of all three existing buildings at just under \$9 million. The cost of options A and C is \$10.6 million. Major project costs include the renovation of the Commons and Fielding Buildings, as well as the construction of the new multi-purpose space. All renovation estimates have been inflated to 2008 dollars. These costs do not include any private sector space (e.g., residential housing, for profit commercial space, etc).

1.3 Comparison of Three Design Options

The following table provides a comparison of three design options considered for the site (Options A,B and C). The intent of this analysis was to assist the design team in understanding the relative density of the three options, and whether or not they could meet realistic development design criteria.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options
Comparison of Three Development Options
Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple
September 25, 2008

Description	Option A: Medium Density,	Option B: Low Density, Keep School	Option C: High Density
SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM			
Community Space			
Fielding Building (HRM Programming) SF	22,500	22,500	22,500
Existing Bloomfield School		58,470	
New Community Building			20,040
Total Community Space	22,500	80,970	42,540
Commercial Space			
Commons Building	22,500	22,500	22,500
Storefront Retail & Office	19,800	19,800	46,800
Additional Flex Space (Market)	32,000	-	16,320
Total Commercial Space SF	74,300	42,300	85,620
Residential			
Divided by Average Residential Unit (900 SF)	61,200	59,400	277,700
Total Estimated Residential Units	900	900	900
Less 20% Affordable Housing	68	66	309
Equals Estimated Market Rate Housing	(14)	(13)	(62)
	54	53	247
SUMMARY OF PARKING			
a Parking Accommodated on Site Per Scheme	280	35	420
Parking Requirements by Use			
Commercial /Community Parking Spaces (X per 1,000 SF)	1.5	(145)	(185)
Residential Parking Spaces (X per unit)	0.7	(48)	(46)
Visitor Parking		(25)	(25)
b Sub-Total Required Parking		(218)	(256)
		(218)	(433)
:=a-b Parking Surplus (Deficit)			
		62	(221)
			(13)

Key points to note include the following:

1. Option C produces more than four times as much housing as options A and B. This helps create neighbourhood vitality. In fact, Option C creates almost as much affordable housing as the total housing in the other two options.
2. Option B (keeping all three existing buildings) creates the most community space 80,970 SF), although HRM staff indicate that this amount of space is way in excess of their current needs, and as such, they had concerns about the operating costs associated with such a large facility.
3. Option B is virtually non functional in terms of parking, with only 35 parking spaces available after the development of the site. Based on the need for 1.5 spaces per 1,000 SF of commercial and community space, and 0.7 parking spaces per residential unit, Option B is 221 spaces short of the desirable amount of parking. This makes the viability of this scenario extremely questionable. Options A and C provide parking via underground facilities (Option A assumes one layer of parking, while Option C assumes 1.5 layers of parking). Option C provides 420 parking spaces, but has a projected requirement for 433 spaces (i.e., there is a 13 stall deficit). This deficit can likely be addressed through cross utilization of spaces by off-peak users (i.e., commercial and residential users need parking at different times).

1.4 Option C Detail of Development Program

The following table provides a detailed description of the amount of residential, commercial and community space provided in Option C.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options

Detail Development Quantities - Option C

Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple

September 25, 2008

Description	Residential	Commercial	Community	TOTAL
SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM				
Townhomes				
Robie Street Townhomes	19,800	6,600	-	26,400 SF
Agricola Street Townhomes	19,800	6,600	-	26,400 SF
Fern Lane Pavillion	-	-	1,000	1,000 SF
Sub-Total	39,600	13,200	1,000	53,800 SF
Tower 1 (Robie and Almon)	151,700	18,200	-	169,900 SF
Tower 2 (Robie and Agricola)	86,400	15,400	-	101,800 SF
New Community Buildings				
Building 1 NW on Bloomfield St. Extension			19,040	19,040 SF
Building 2 NE on Bloomfield St. FlexSpace		16,320		16,320 SF
SUB-TOTALS	277,700	63,120	20,040	360,860 SF

The design program includes 53,800 SF of townhomes, with ground floor commercial and upper level residential. The two residential towers each have commercial space on the first (retail) and second (office) floors. The two towers also provide 238,000 SF of residential housing (278 units at an average size of 1,000 SF each).

1.4.1 Is The Proposed Density Realistic?

The planning and design process has tried to strike a balance between good urban design form, and the density needed in order to make the project economics work. Some concern has been expressed that as the tower at Robie and Almon Street got higher, that it would be too big for the market to absorb. We do not think that this will be an issue for the following reasons:

- The project is very well located, mid peninsula, and near grocery stores, Hydrostone market, bus routes, employment centres, recreational facilities, etc.
- The nearby Gladstone Ridge project has a similar amount of density in two towers, and did not encounter any difficulty being absorbed into the market.
- Housing demand projections for HRM indicate future demand of about 2,500 units per year, with an increasing percentage allocated to multi-family housing units. Although 1,000 multi-family starts has been the norm in the past, we expect this number to increase slightly over time as residents look for central locations to minimize their commute. At an average unit size of 1,000 SF, the Robie Street tower will include 150 units of housing; this is about 15% of the total demand for one year, and can be realistically absorbed without adverse financial impacts.

1.5 Aggregate Purchasing Power

The purchasing power of the new residents will play an important role in the support of new commercial space. Simply put, the more residential density that goes on the site, the greatly the likelihood of new commercial businesses on site being successful. The following table provides an assessment of the projected economic impact of the three options.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options
Assessment of Purchasing Power - Future Residents
Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple
September 25, 2008

Description		Option A: Medium Density,	Option B: Low Density, Keep School	Option C: High Density
AGGREGATE PURCHASING POWER OF DEVELOPMENT OCCUPANTS				
	Household Income			
Market Rate Ownership	\$ 65,000	\$ 707,200	\$ 686,400	\$ 3,213,600
Market Rate Rental	\$ 50,000	\$ 2,176,000	\$ 2,112,000	\$ 9,888,000
Affordable Ownership	\$ 54,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Affordable Rental	\$ 32,000	\$ 435,200	\$ 422,400	\$ 1,977,600
		\$ 3,318,400	\$ 3,220,800	\$ 15,079,200
Percentage of Baseline (Option 3) Scenario		103%	100%	468%

Based on these calculations, the residents of Option C will have an aggregate household income of \$15 million per year. This is more than four the household income of Options A and B. Assuming 20% of household income is available for the purchase of food, clothing, merchandise, etc, and that a store requires sales of \$275 per SF per year to be economically viable, then the residents of Option C can support 11,000 SF of commercial space. This is five times the amount of space when compared to options A and B, and 18% of the total commercial space proposed for this development. While it is true that residents of the Bloomfield site will not spend all of their disposable income downstairs, it does provide an indication of the potential viability of the proposed development.

1.6 Calculation of Future Property Taxes

The following table provides a projection of the property taxes for the three options.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options

Estimate of Property Taxes at Buildout

Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple

September 25, 2008

Description					Option A: Medium Density,	Option B: Low Density, Keep School	Option C: High Density
ECONOMIC IMPACT - PROPERTY TAXES							
Assessed Value of Residential Housing	Percent						
Market Rate Condominium	20%	Value Per	\$ 240,000	\$ 2,611,200	\$ 2,534,400	\$ 11,865,600	
Market Rate Rental	80%	Value Per	\$ 150,000	\$ 6,528,000	\$ 6,336,000	\$ 29,664,000	
Affordable Condominium (80% Market)	0%	Value Per	\$ 192,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Affordable Rental (80% of Market)	100%	Value Per	\$ 120,000	\$ 1,632,000	\$ 1,584,000	\$ 7,416,000	
Sub-Total Market Value				\$ 10,771,200	\$ 10,454,400	\$ 48,945,600	
Assessment to Market Ratio				90%	90%	90%	
Total Residential Assessment				\$ 9,694,080	\$ 9,408,960	\$ 44,051,040	
Times Residential Tax Rate per \$100 of Assessment				\$ 1.38	\$ 1.38	\$ 1.38	
Annual Property Taxes				\$ 133,778	\$ 129,844	\$ 607,904	
Assessed Value of Commercial Development							
Fielding Building (HRM Programming)		Value per SF	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Commons Building (Market Rate)		Value per SF	\$ 90	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000	
Storefront Retail and Flexspace		Value per SF	\$ 200	\$ 10,360,000	\$ 3,960,000	\$ 12,624,000	
Sub-Total Market Value				\$ 12,385,000	\$ 5,985,000	\$ 14,649,000	
Assessment to Market Ratio				90%	90%	90%	
Total Residential Assessment				\$ 11,146,500	\$ 5,386,500	\$ 13,184,100	
Times Commercial Tax Rate per \$100 of Assessment				\$ 3.75	\$ 3.75	\$ 3.75	
Annual Property Taxes				\$ 417,994	\$ 201,994	\$ 494,404	
Total Combined Annual Property Taxes				\$ 551,772	\$ 331,837	\$ 1,102,308	
PV of Future Property Taxes	7.00%			\$ 7,882,458	\$ 4,740,534	\$ 15,747,259	

In total, Option C generates just over \$1.1 million per year in property taxes once the site has been built out. This is double the taxes generated in Option A and more than triple the taxes generated in Option B. The net present value of the Option C taxes over the life of the project exceeds \$15 million.

1.7 Calculation of Required Subsidy

The final table calculates the total revenue likely to be generated by for profit development on the site, and then deducts the development costs as outlined earlier. This calculates the total amount of subsidy required in order to make this development viable.

Bloomfield School Redevelopment Options

Calculation of Required Development Subsidy

Colliers International (Atlantic) Realty Advisors, in association with MacKay Lyons Sweetapple

September 25, 2008

Description					Option A: Medium Density,	Option B: Low Density, Keep School	Option C: High Density
VALUE OF LAND IN DEVELOPMENT OPTION							
Market Rate Residential	Residential	Per Unit	\$ 22,500	\$ 1,224,000	\$ 1,188,000	\$ 5,562,000	
Affordable Residential	Residential	Per Unit	\$ 1	\$ 14	\$ 13	\$ 62	
Market Rate Commercial	Land	Per SF	\$ 20.00	\$ 1,036,000	\$ 396,000	\$ 1,262,400	
Value of Commons Building	Building	Per SF	\$ 90.00	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000	\$ 2,025,000	
Value of Fielding Building	Building	Per SF	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Estimated Value of Development				\$ 4,285,014	\$ 3,609,013	\$ 8,849,462	
Less Cost of Public Amenities (See Above)				(10,610,000)	(8,880,000)	(10,610,000)	
Subsidy Required for Development				(6,324,986)	(5,270,987)	(1,760,538)	

Based on these calculations, Option C will generate about \$6.8 million in revenue from the sale of land, this is three to four times the amount generated in Options A and B. We have assumed that the Commons building is rented at market rates, and is worth \$2 million once renovated (i.e., this is roughly equivalent to the cost of renovation).

Once the cost of development of public infrastructure is deducted (this was detailed earlier on in this chapter), Option C requires the least subsidy, at \$1.76 million, while Options A and B require \$6.3 to \$5.2 million in subsidy. Given that Option C also generates the most property taxes (over \$1.1 million per year), this is the most fiscally desirable option for HRM, as the subsidy can be made up with less than 2 years property tax revenue.

1.8 Summary

Based on the previous analysis, it is clear that Option C is the only realistic option for HRM to pursue for the redevelopment of the Bloomfield School site. The following points summarize this argument.

1. Option C creates the self contained community of over 780 people (assumes an average of 2.4 people per unit) living and working in the heart of the Halifax Peninsula. When the new commercial and community space is included, it is clear that this has the critical mass to establish itself as a unique live/work environment within HRM.
2. The critical mass of residential development will be critical in the long term financial viability of any proposed commercial or community space. This is very important. Without the necessary critical mass of retail development, the area could not establish itself as a destination, and the large amount of community space has put the project in a perpetual state of fund raising. This has to be recognized when HRM is making decisions with respect to the Bloomfield Site.
3. Option C generates the most revenue to the municipality, as well as the most property taxes, and is the only option that is financial viable from a development perspective.

4.5 Evaluation

Value

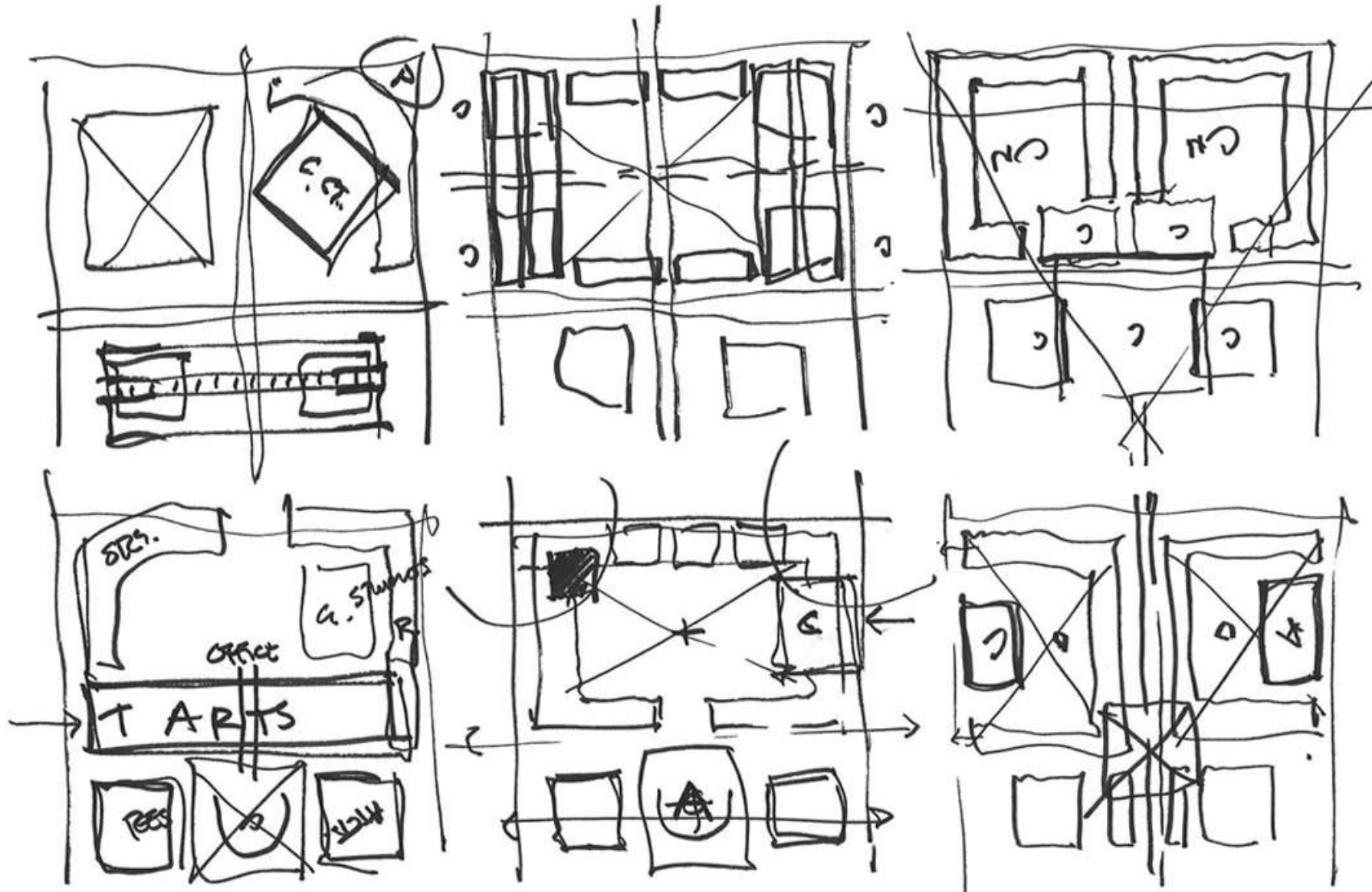
Adaptive Reuse

Exchange

Porosity

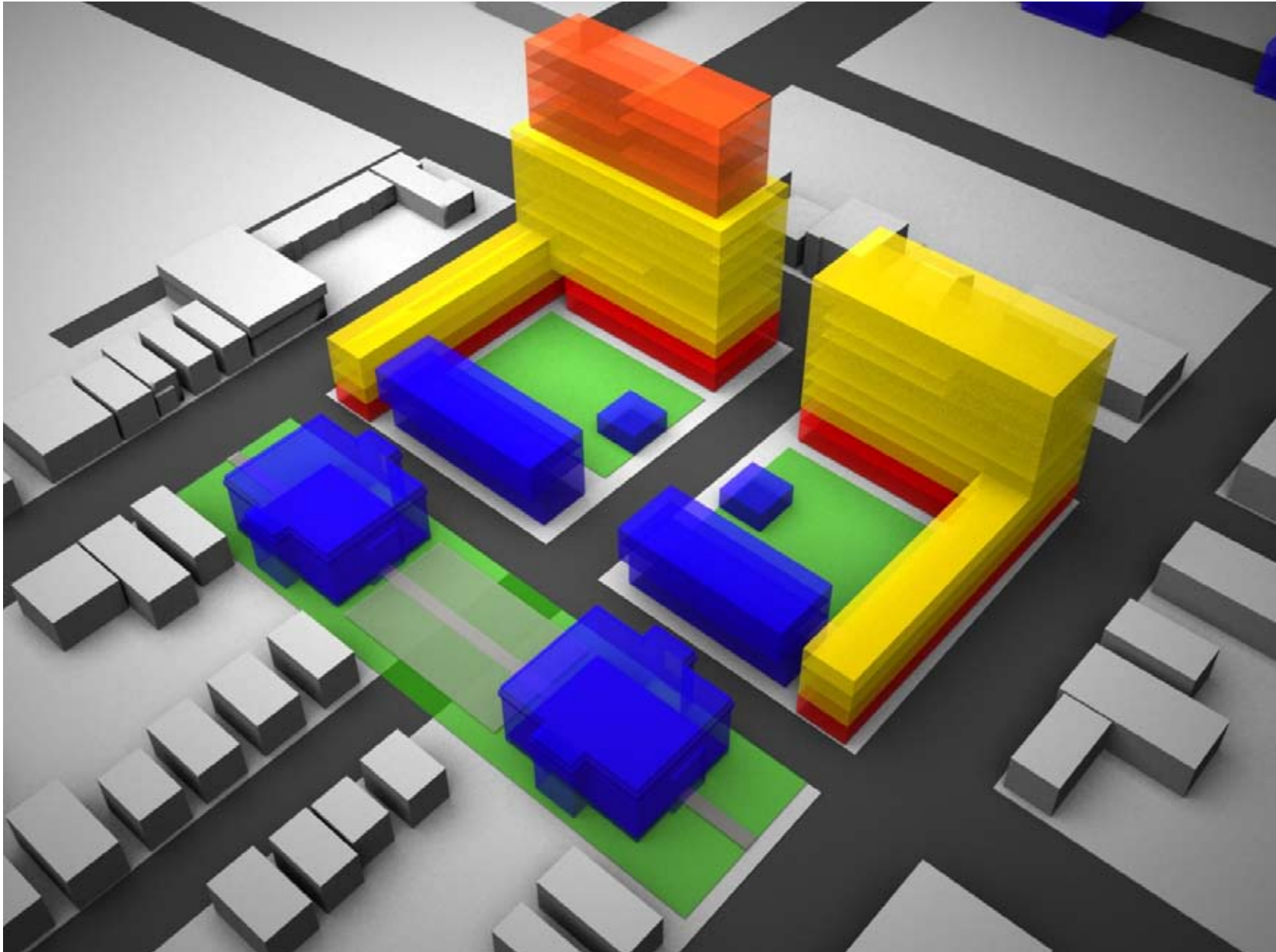
Intensity

Gathering



Notes gleaned form public consultation

-
- 5.1 Recommended Option
 - 5.2 Analysis
 - 5.3 Places
 - 5.4 Uses
 - 5.5 Envelope Guidelines
 - 5.6 Streetscape Guidelines

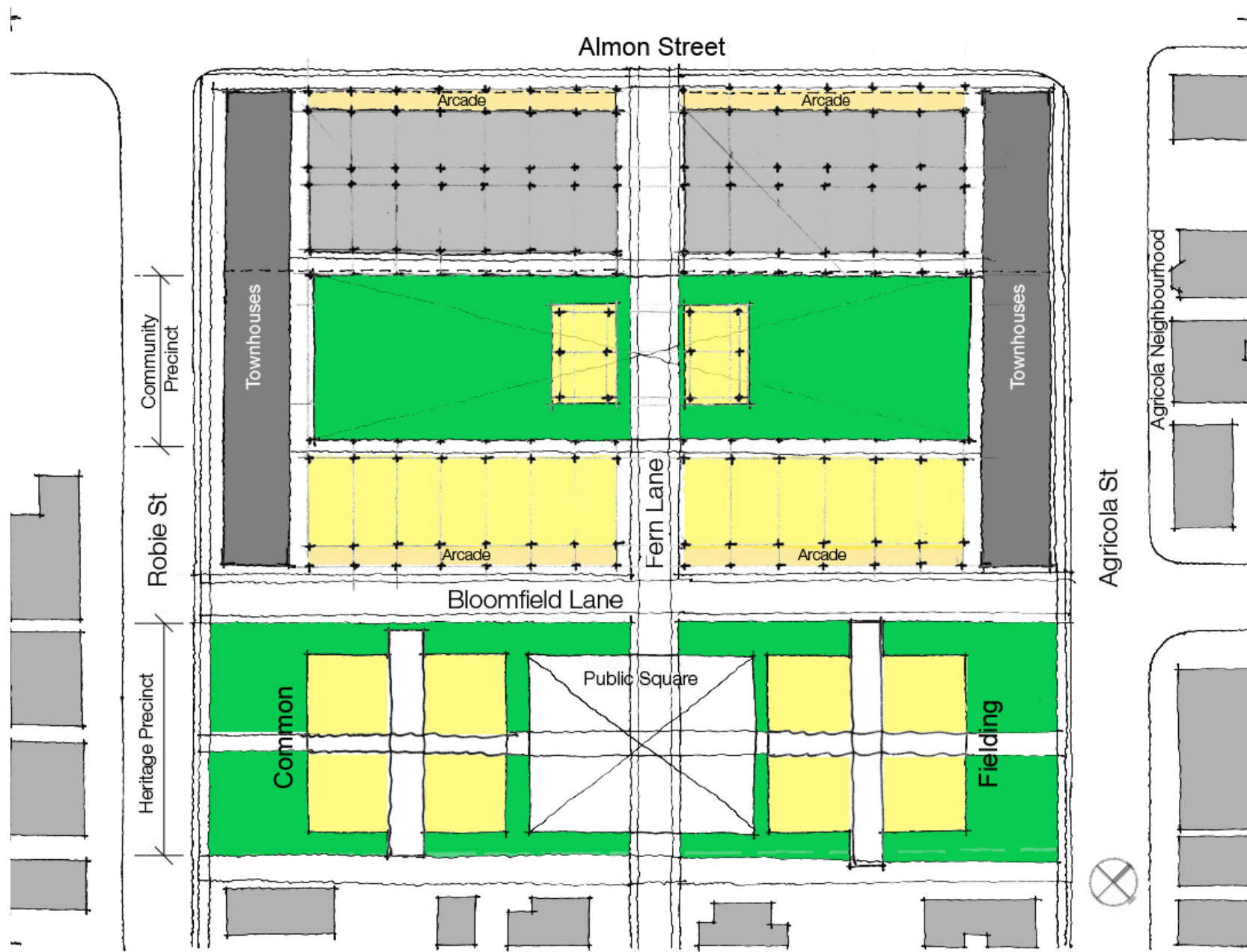


5.1 Scheme

Recommended Option

The selected scheme for the Bloomfield Master Plan produces as much as four times the housing as other options, which enhances neighbourhood vitality and economic viability. In fact, the recommended option creates almost as much affordable housing as the total housing in the other two options.

The recommended option includes 53,800 SF of townhouses, with ground floor commercial and upper level residential. The two residential towers each have commercial space on the first (retail) and second (office) floors. The two towers also provide 238,000 SF of residential housing (278 units at an average size of 1,000 SF each).



Quantitative Data

Tower 1

- 15 storeys (Robie and Almon)
- 1st & 2nd flr. each @ 130' x 70' = 9,100 sf
- 3rd & 4th flr. each @ 140' x 80' = 11,200 sf
- 5th-10th flr. each @ 160' x 80' = 12,800 sf
- 11th-15th flr. each @ 150' x 70' = 10,500 sf

Total = 169,900 sf (includes 9100 sf retail @ ground + 9100 sf office @ 2nd floor)

Tower 2

- 10 stories (Agricola and Almon)
- 1st & 2nd flr. each @ 110' x 70' = 7,700 sf
- 3rd & 4th flr. each @ 120' x 80' = 9,600 sf
- 5th to 10th flr. each @ 140' x 80' = 11,200 sf

Total = 101,800 sf (includes 7700 sf retail @ ground and 7700 sf office @ 2nd floor)

Townhouses (Robie)

- 4 storeys
- Total=26,400 sf (includes 6600 sf shops/retail @ grade)**

Townhouses (Agricola)

- 4 storeys
- Total=26,400 sf (includes 6600 sf shops/retail @ grade)**

Public use pavilions (Fern Lane – East and West)

- 1 storey
- Total=1000 sf**

Large Scale Community Space Building 1 – North - West on Bloomfield extension

- Double height space @ grade + 2 storeys above):

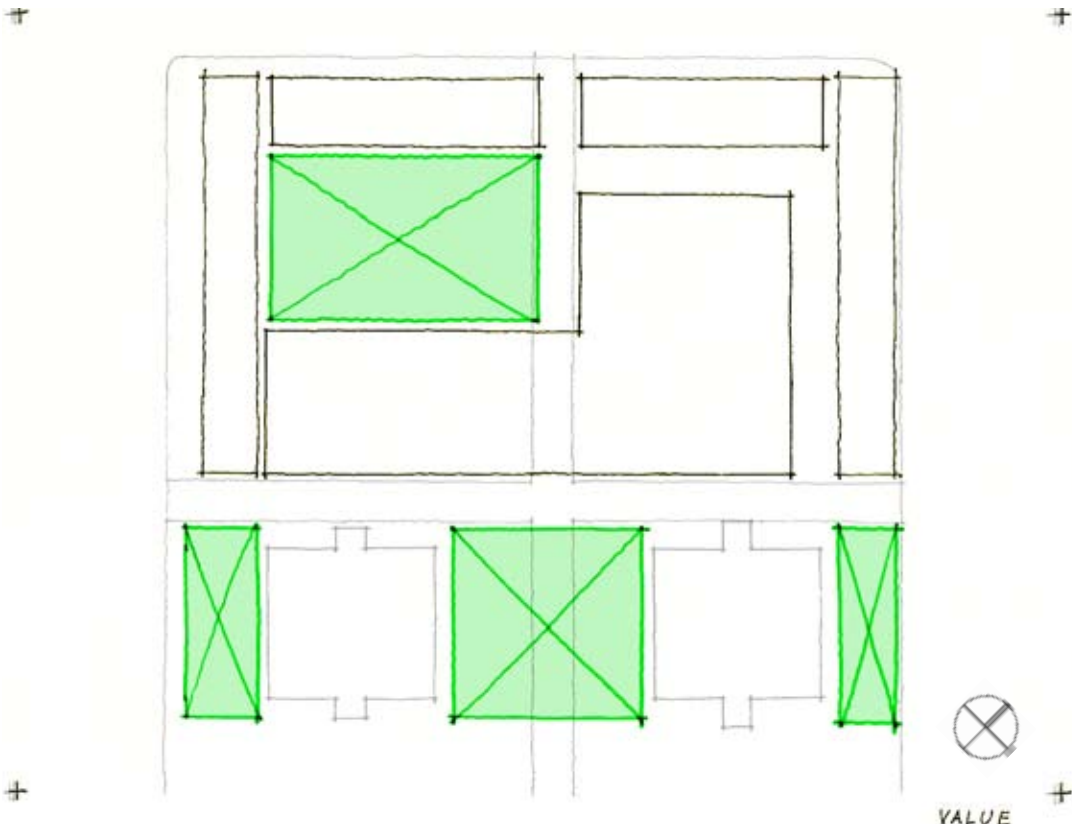
Total=19,040 sf

Large Scale Space Building 2 – North - East on Bloomfield extension

- Double height space @ grade + 2 storeys above):

Total=16,320 sf

5.2 Analysis



Retention of main building compromises existing value of public space

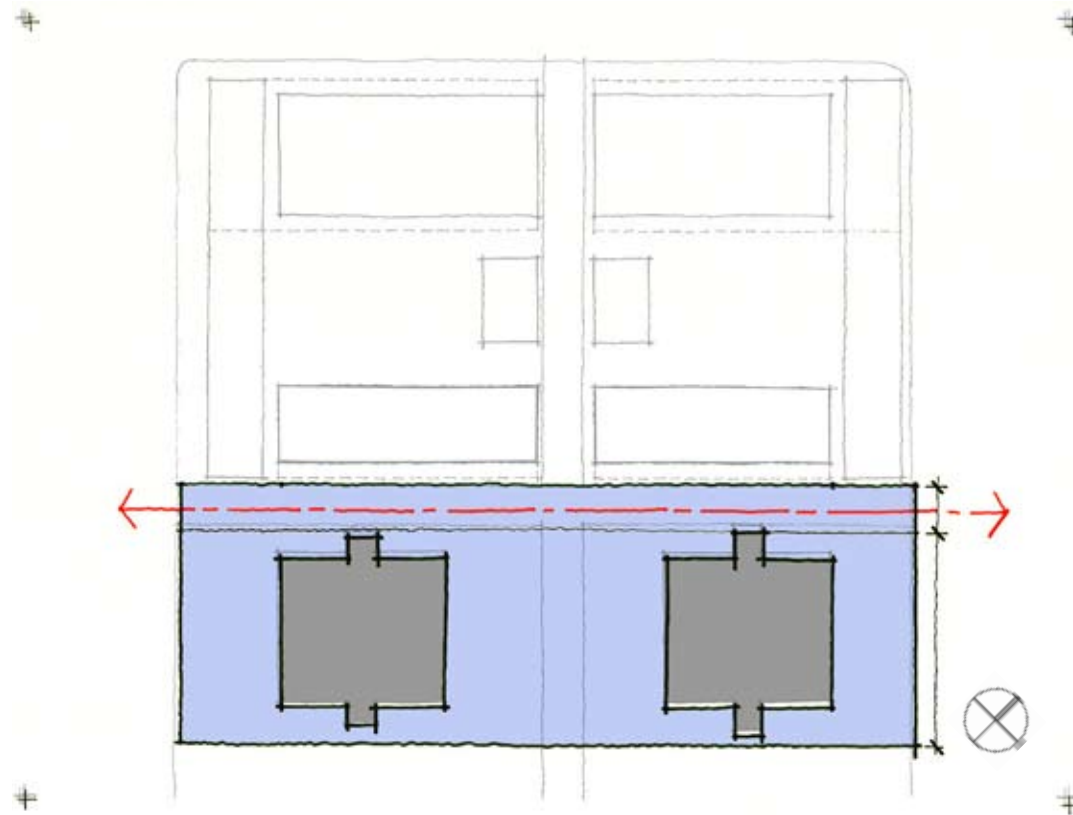
Value

The Bloomfield site is an extremely valuable parcel by virtue of its size and location. As such, any successful site strategy maximizes site potential.

Maintaining the current site configuration fragments public space and retains dead-end conditions for Fern Lane and Bloomfield Street, which hampers connectivity with the neighbourhood fabric.

The scale and siting of the most recent Bloomfield school building results in poor quality backyards for any residential units proposed for the perimeter of the site.

The resultant low density also limits economic viability and severely limits opportunities for on-site parking.



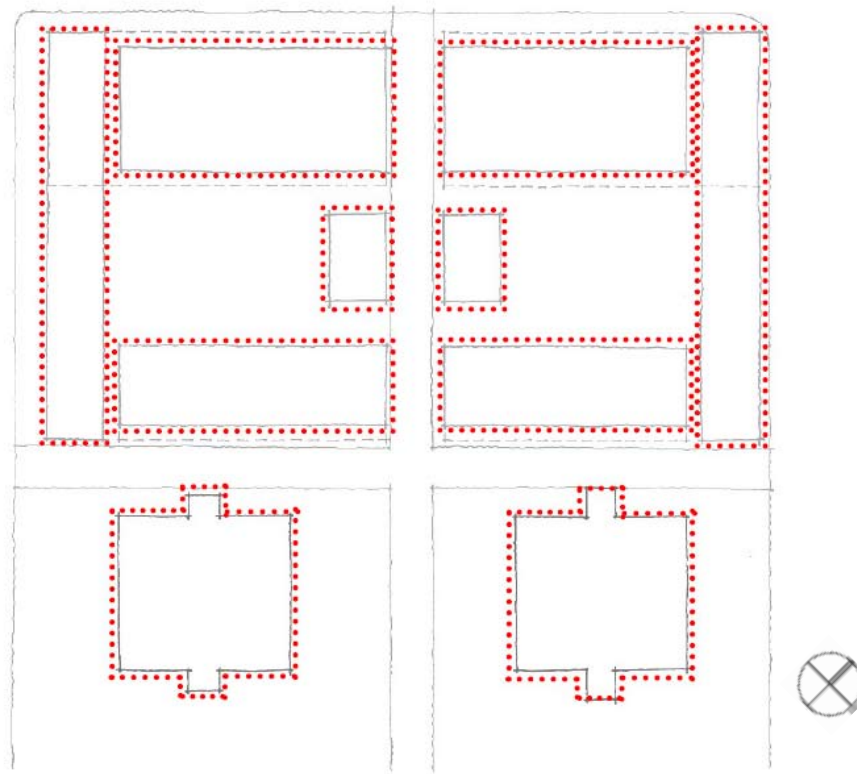
Public consensus in arts and culture theme

Adaptive Reuse

The extension of Bloomfield Street as a pedestrian thoroughfare through the site and adaptive reuse of the historic Commons and Fielding Buildings allows the creation of an arts and cultural “heart” on site.

This acknowledges the existence of a vibrant Arts community, builds on its character and taps into its potential.

The space is enlivened with visual arts and performance spaces, and supports public gatherings of various types - creating a vibrant new center for the North End.

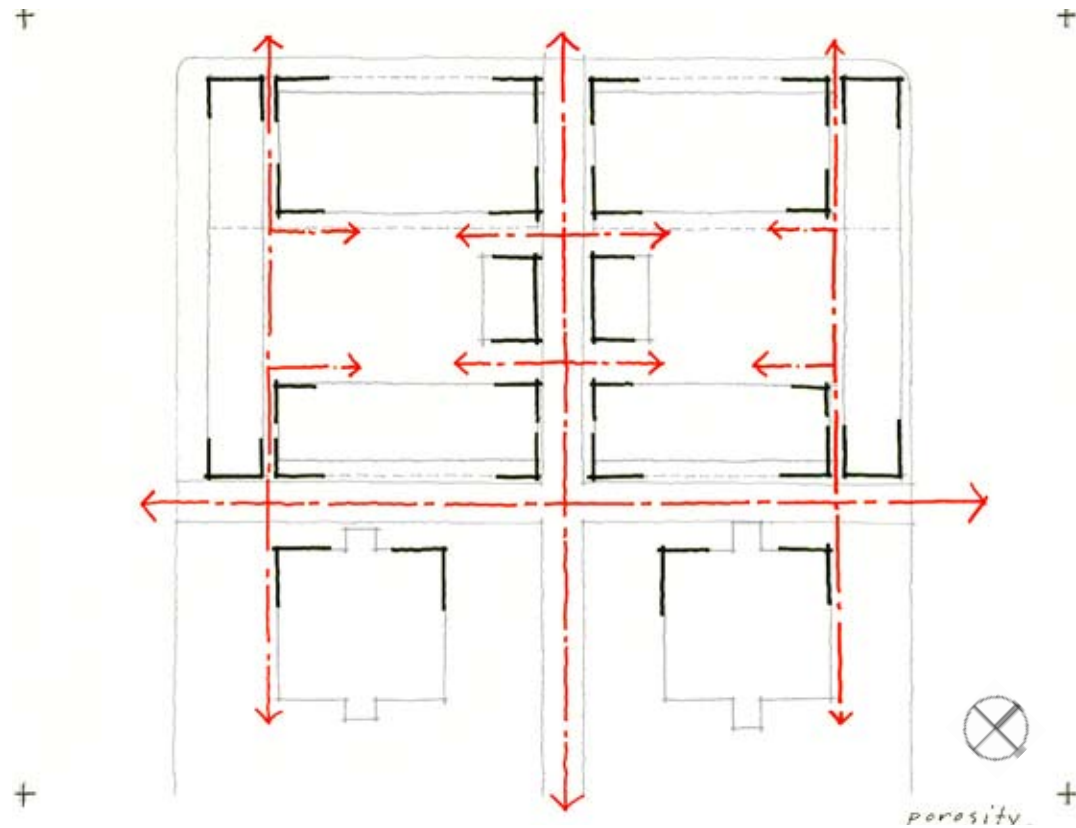


Exchange

Increasing the amount of overall street frontage on the site accomplishes two important things; first, it brings the scale of the blocks in line with the typical block size of the north end, and second, it follows a clear and consistent example set by the great cities of the world - more surfaces for exchange - social, commercial and otherwise - result in diverse, vibrant, safe city streets and neighbourhoods



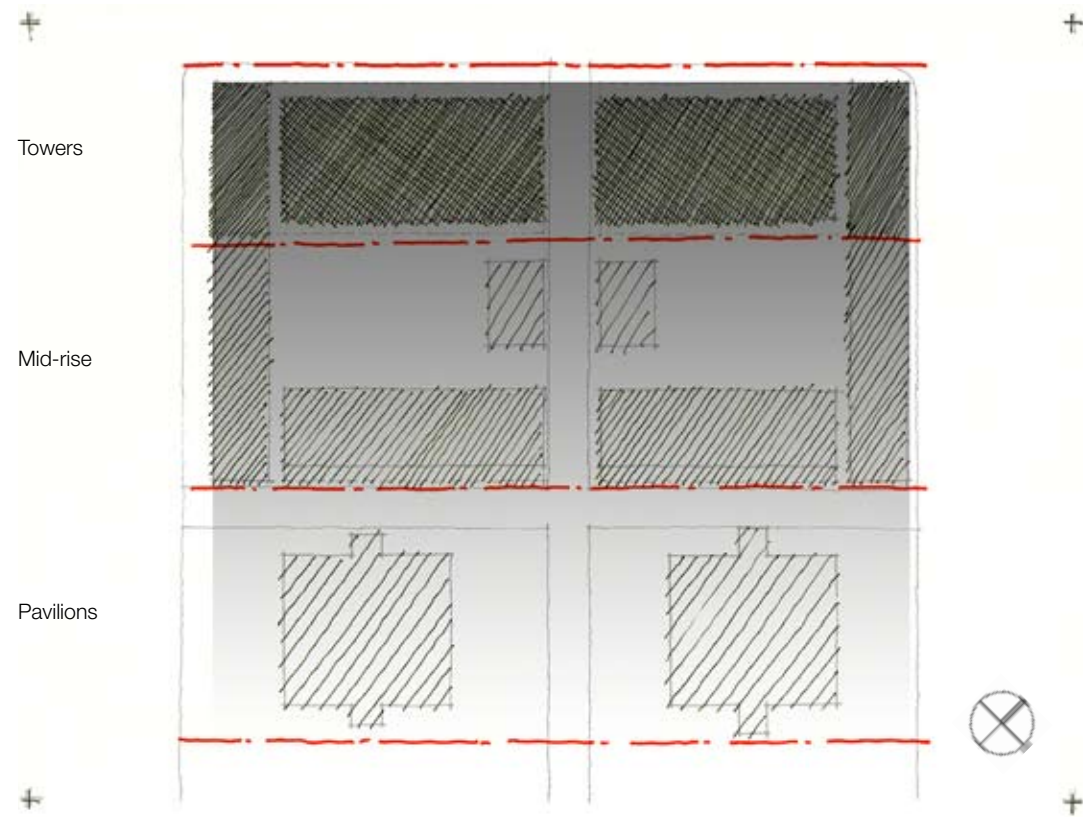
Maximize surface for exchange, for urbanity (osmosis)



Accessibility is key to effective public spaces

Porosity

The porosity of the scheme is important to provide ample access to the open spaces on the site and to designate these areas as truly public ones.



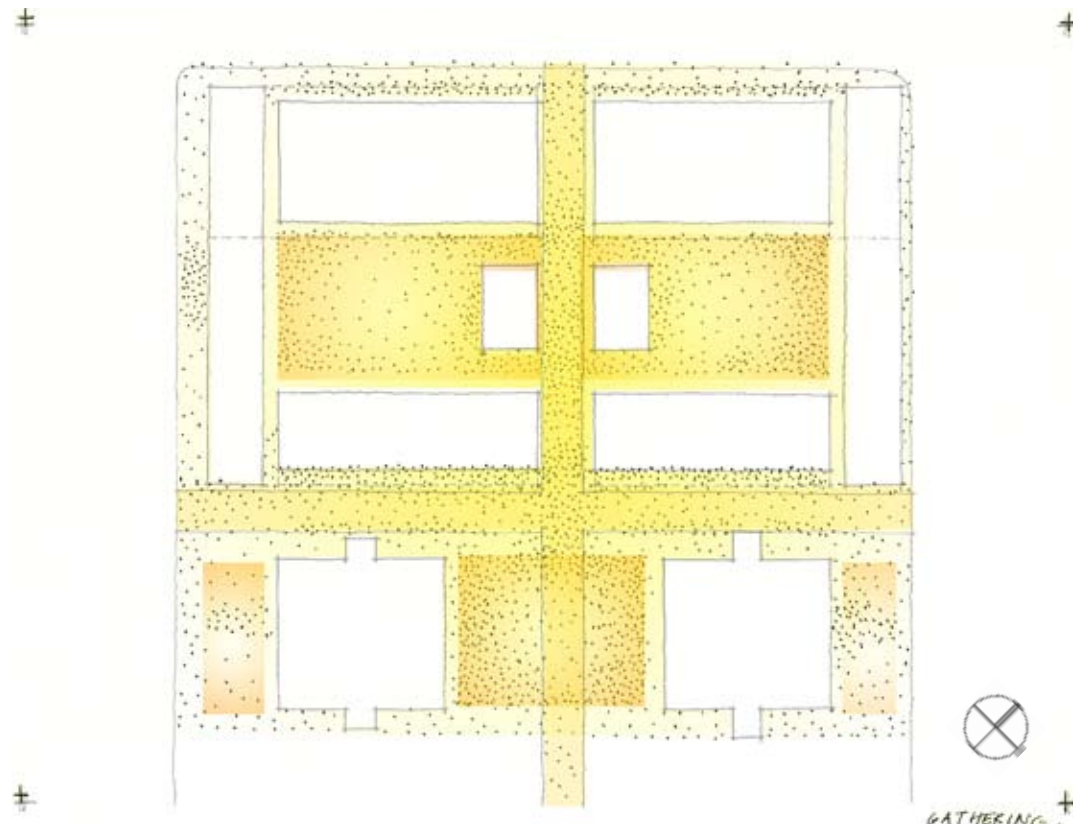
Strategic density supports 24 hour public life

Intensity

Site density and good urban design result in an intensity of life on site and can foster 24/7 street life, enhancing commercial viability and quality of life.

Strategically increasing the on site density from south to north places the density where it wants to be from an urban design perspective.

The south-to-north buildup results in maximum sun exposure and clusters the maximum development at the harshest edge, preserving the neighbourhood scale at the other edges.



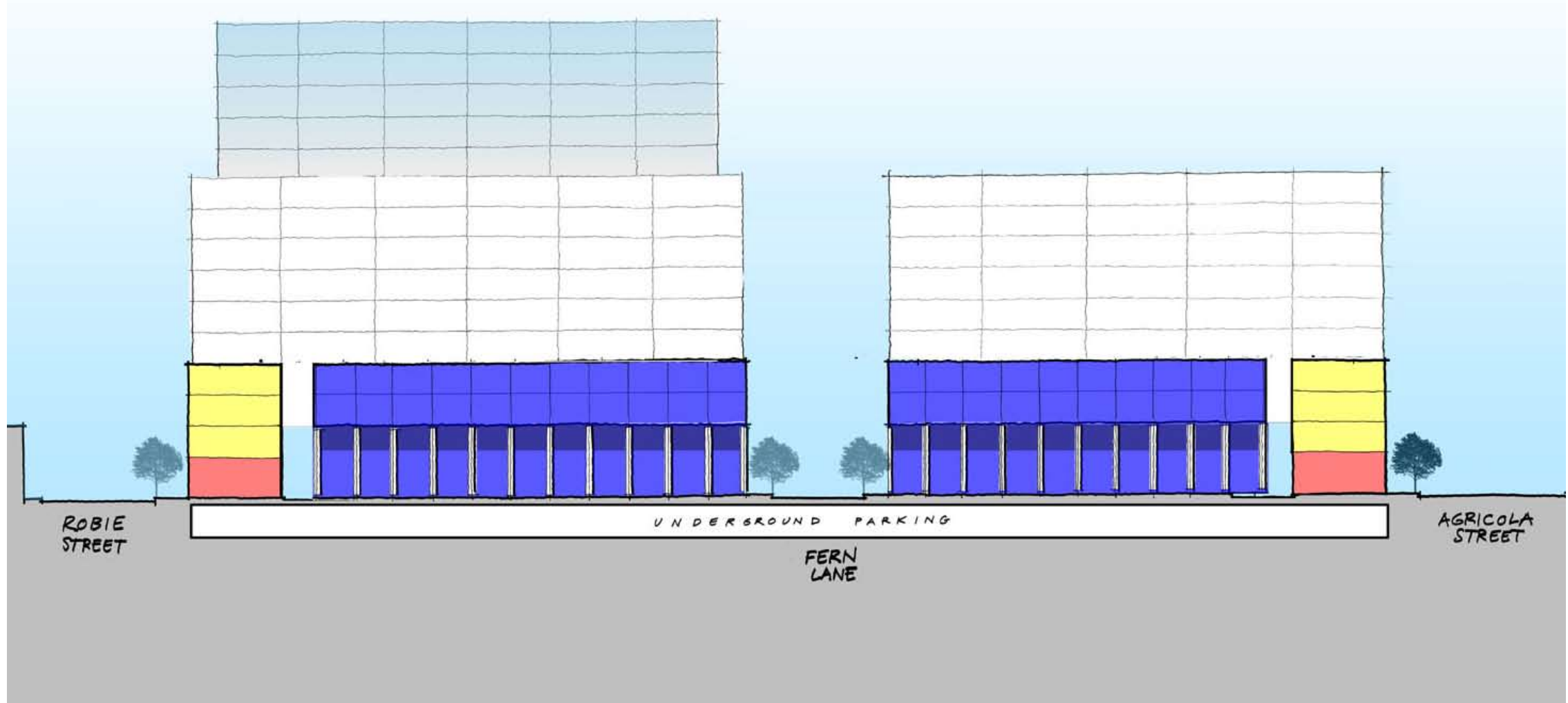
Contiguous public domain

Gathering

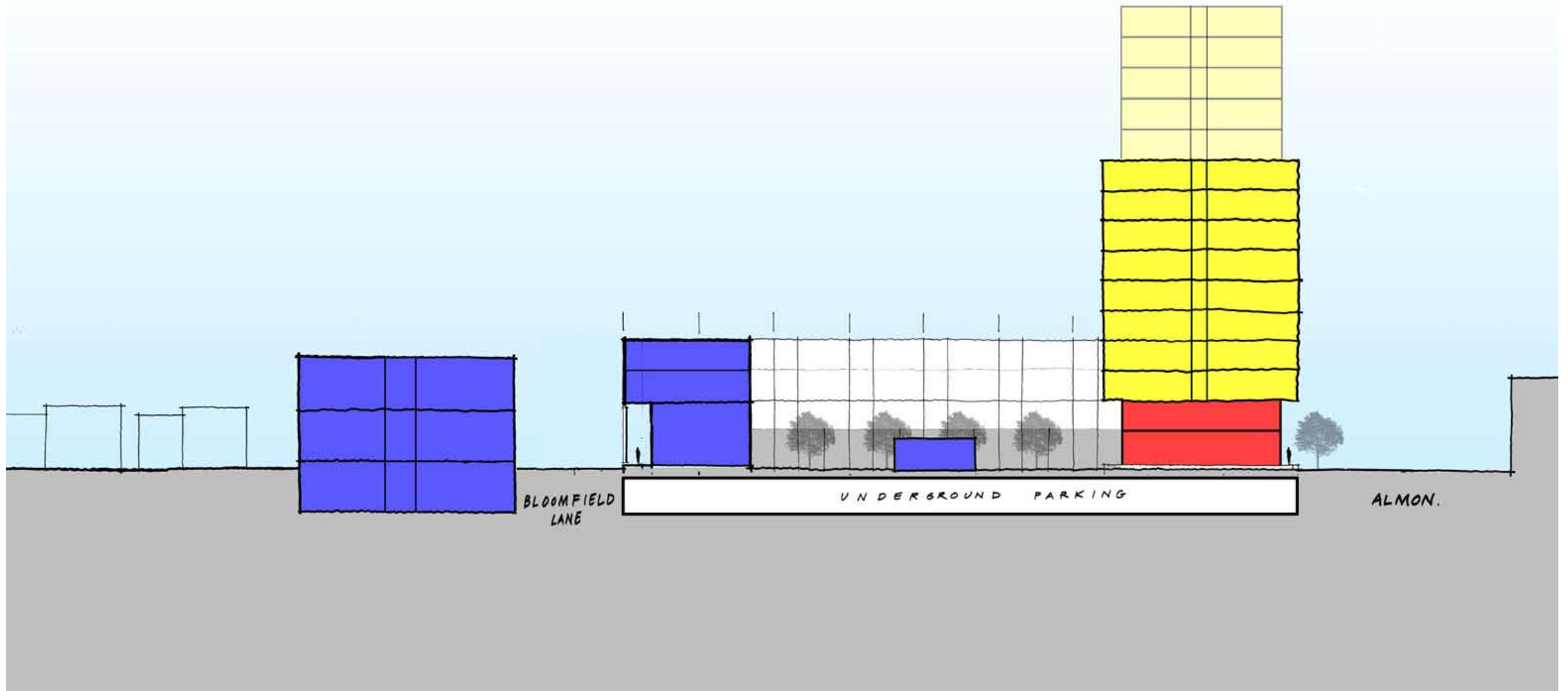
Spaces for public gathering and discourse - once essential components of all good cities - are rapidly disappearing from the modern city, and have been for some time.

The humanist architect and thinker Charles Moore, in his seminal 1965 article entitled "*You Have to Pay for the Public Life.*" in the Yale journal *Perspecta* lamented the fact that the rich urban life that once took place on the streets and in the squares had been relegated to private domains.

The Bloomfield Master Plan proposes to create new spaces for gathering and re-establishing the public realm.

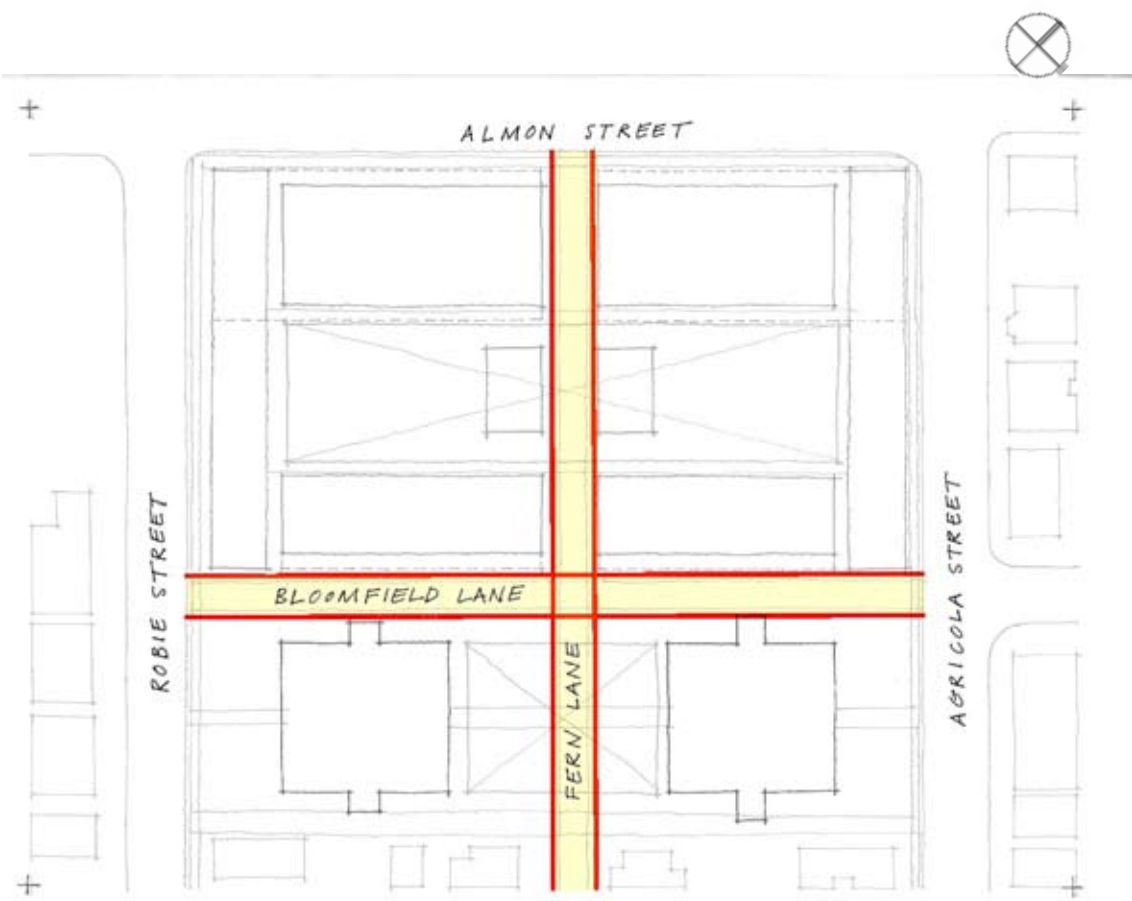


Section thru Bloomfield Lane extension looking north towards Almon



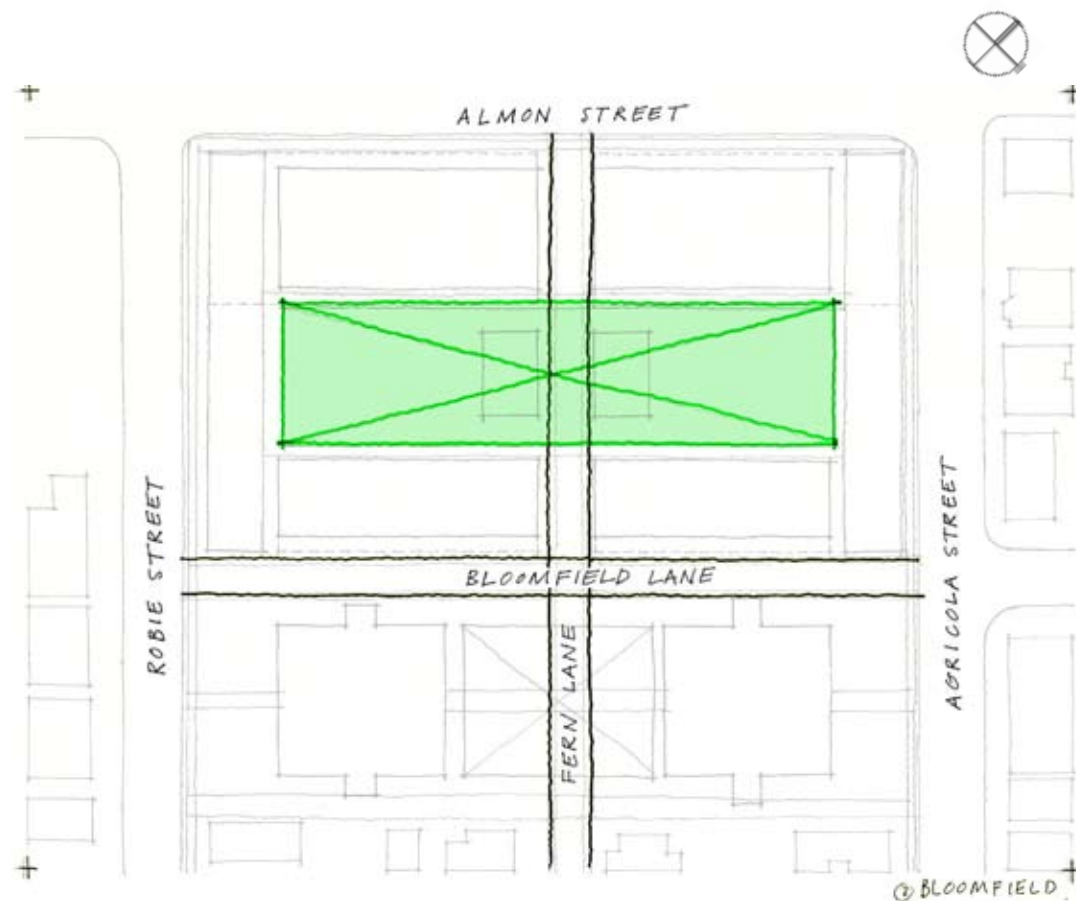
Section thru Fern Lane extension looking west towards Robie

5.3 Places



New Pedestrian Streets

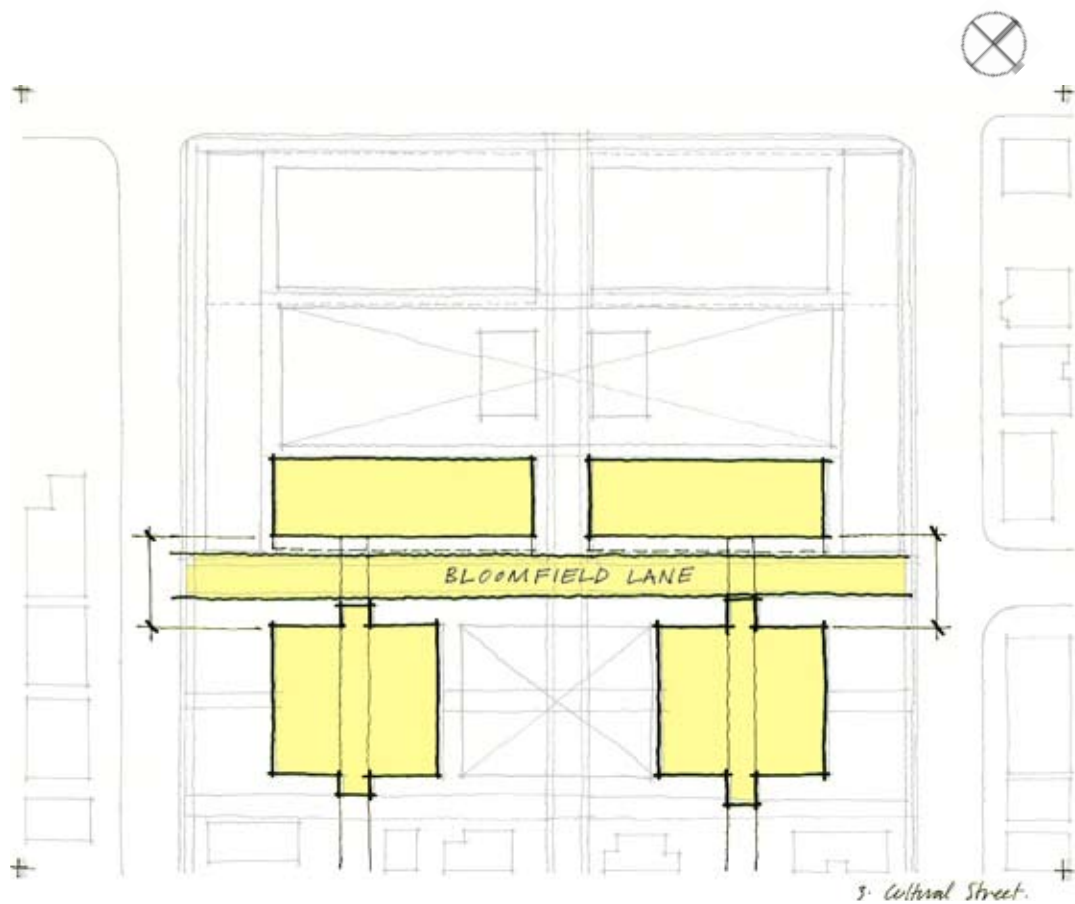
The extension of Bloomfield Street and Fern Lane through the site as narrow pedestrian streets results in four blocks of a similar scale to those in the surrounding North End neighbourhood, increasing not only the surfaces for social and commercial exchange, but also the public's access into the resulting courtyards.



Bloomfield

The courtyard created to the North of the Bloomfield Lane extension by the surrounding buildings is separated free of vehicular traffic. This new grand public space is accessed via several generous openings and establishes a new “Bloomfield” at the heart of the neighbourhood.



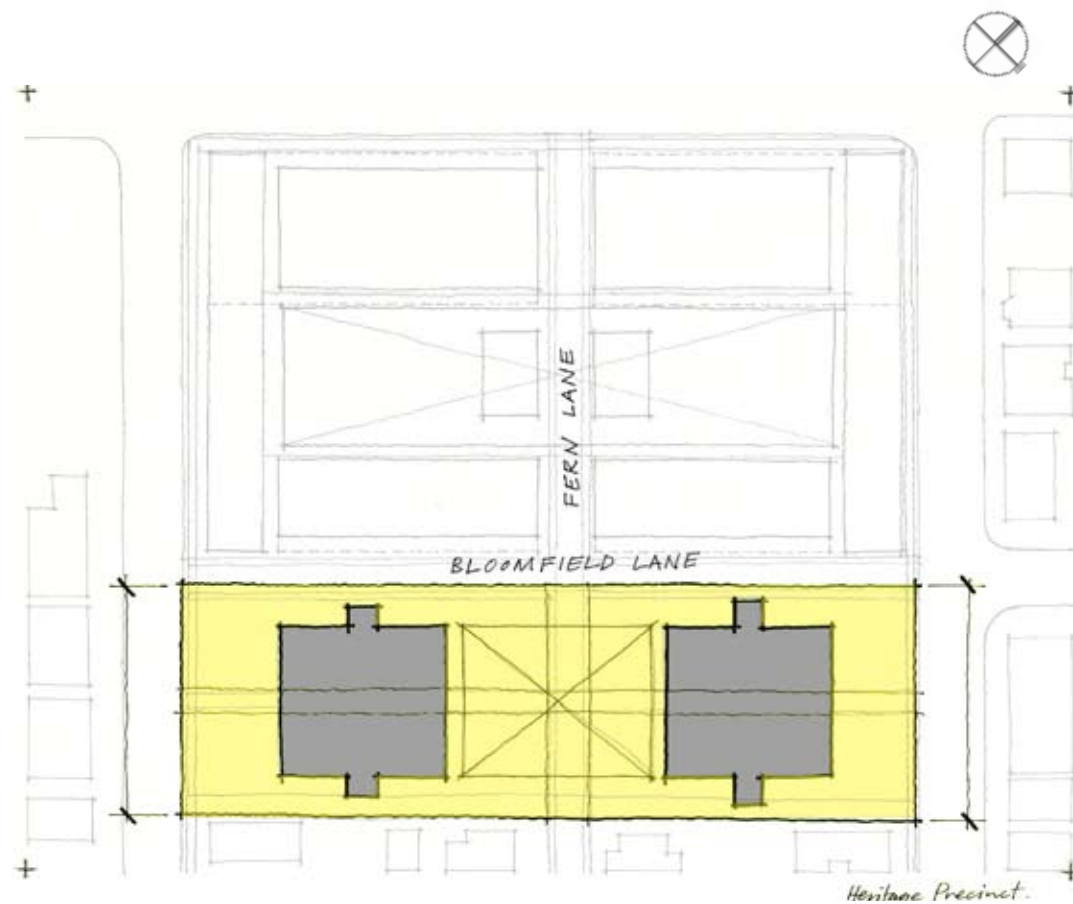


Cultural Precinct

As previously mentioned, the reintroduction of Bloomfield Lane as a pedestrian street helps acts as a catalyst for a new Arts and Culture District. The buildings along the North edge of the promenade further define this District and offer a grand scale arcade which runs the length of the street - increasing the connectivity between exterior and interior public space.

The community has expressed a clear desire for Cultural, Arts and Community uses on the site, and this district serves not only the surrounding neighbourhood, but the city-at-large, and makes this a true destination spot.





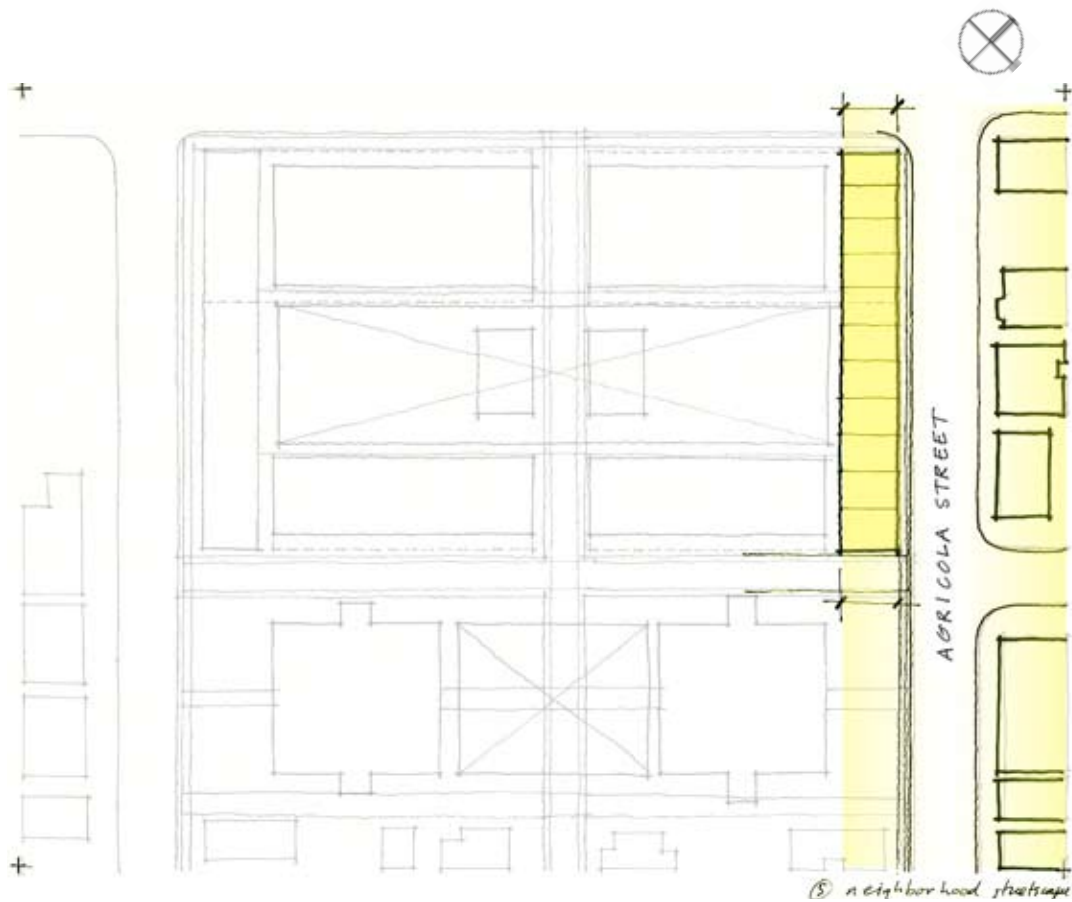
Heritage Precinct

The Commons and Fielding Buildings define this district, which overlaps the Arts and Culture district.

The Fielding and Commons buildings are to be restored for Community, Cultural, and Arts based uses. They frame a Public court between them which holds great potential as a public art and performance space. Each building also fronts onto a street-side green space.

These buildings are meaningfully linked into the site by the Fern Lane and Bloomfield Street extensions.

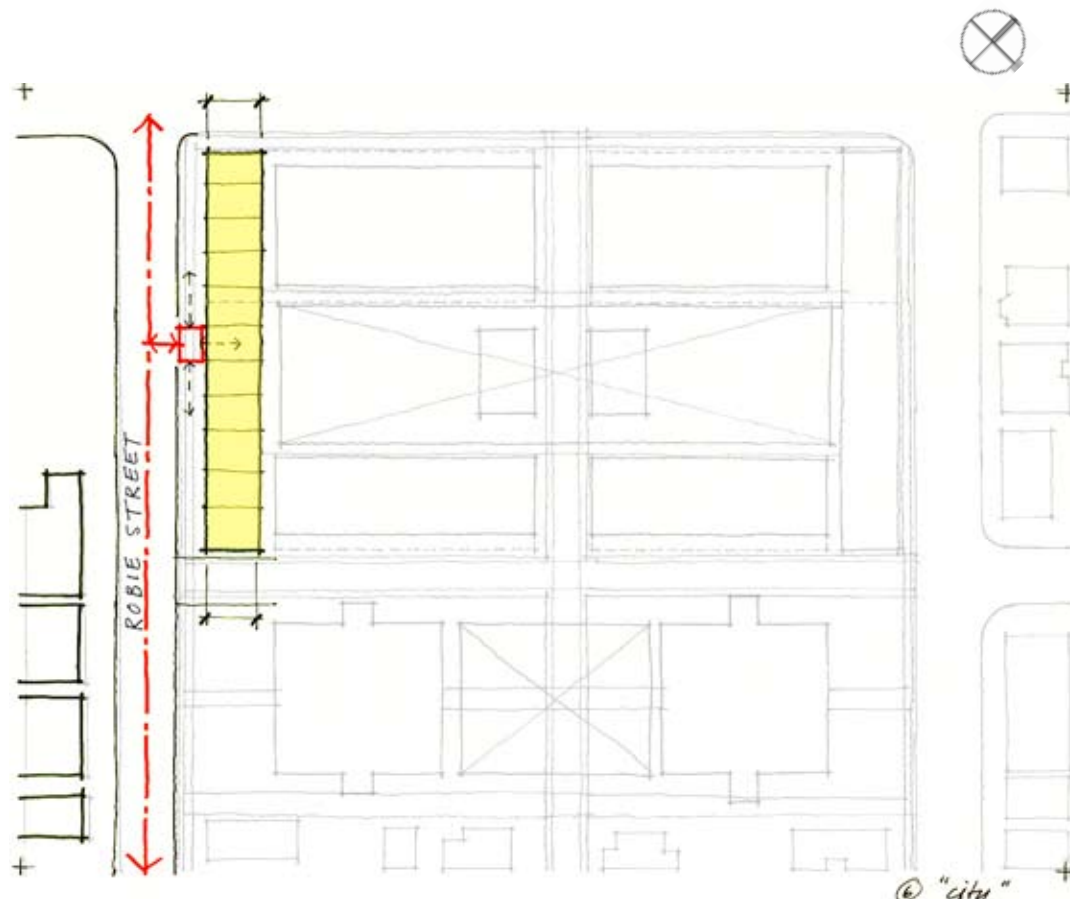




Neighbourhood Streetscape

The Agricola Streetscape is very different in character from the Robie Streetscape. Agricola is neighbourhood-scaled street which easily supports townhouse retail and residential development. These townhouses may be arranged closer to the street with minimal to no setback, fronting on to a sidewalk and landscape strip.

This edge supports pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

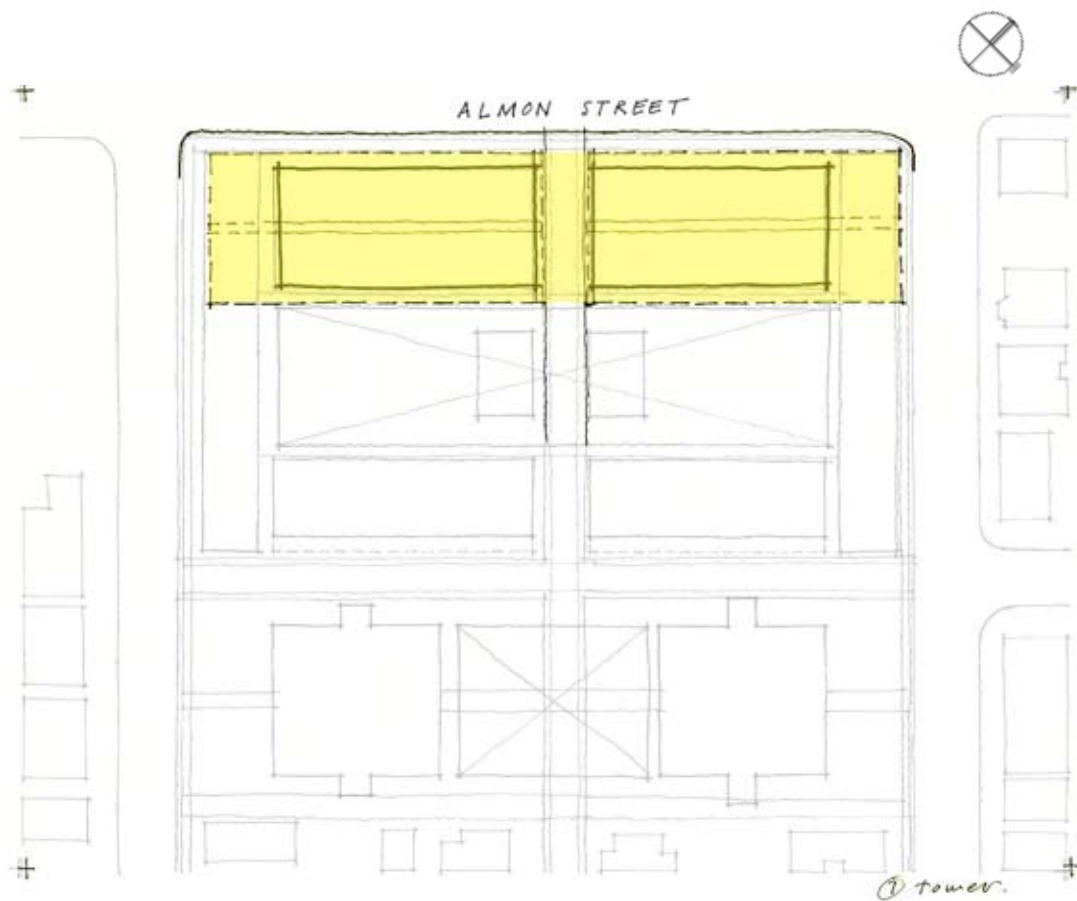


City Streetscape

Robie Street experiences much more vehicular traffic than Agricola and also serves as an important transit link between the peninsula and the rest of HRM.

As such, the character of Robie shall be slightly different than that of Agricola. Streetscape guidelines for all streets are included in this report in a later section.

The character of the Robie Street businesses may be slightly different from those on Almon and Agricola. Businesses which tap into and support commuter traffic would be a good fit for this area.



Tower Zone

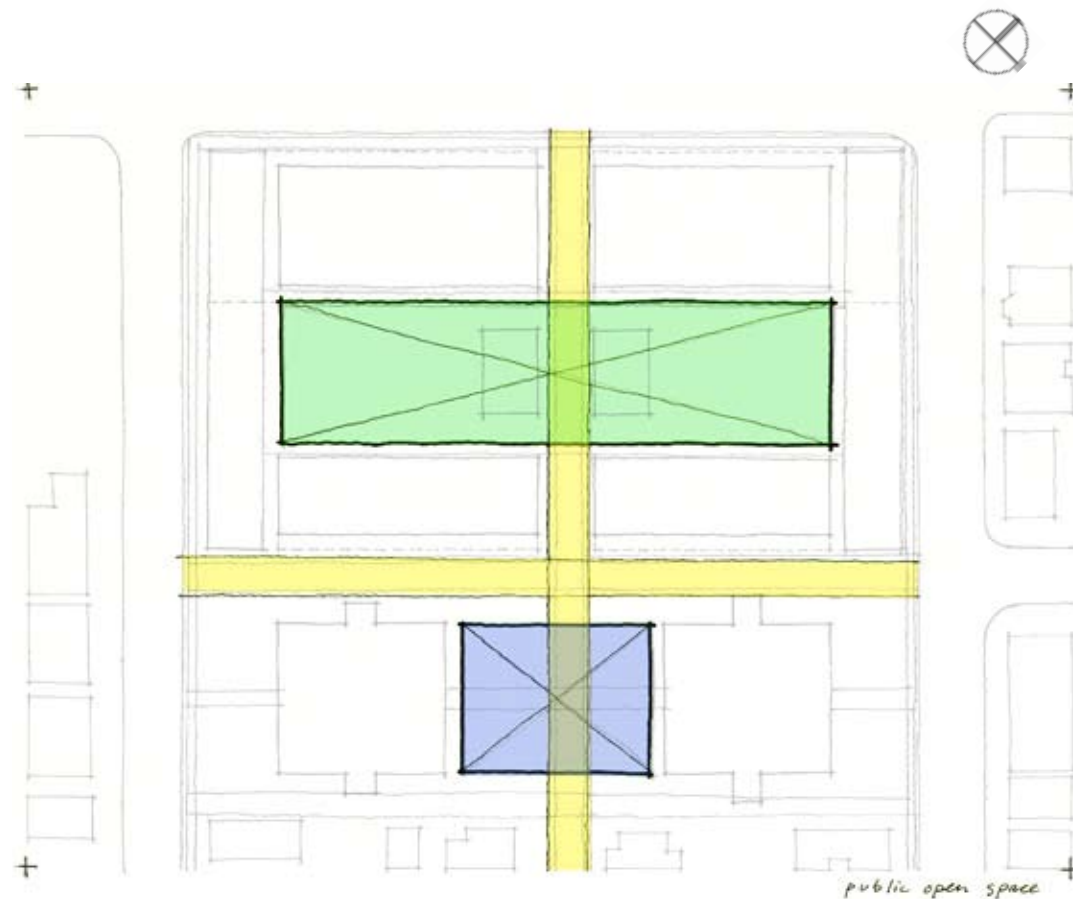
The buildings along Almon Street represent the highest density development on site. Their position at the north edge of the site is based equally on community consensus and sustainable design principles.

Maximum sunlight penetrates the entire site from the south.

The influx of new residents into these towers established a critical mass of people and capital to support the high level of community amenity called for by the public.

These towers are catalysts for the entire development and enable Public Good.

5.4 Uses



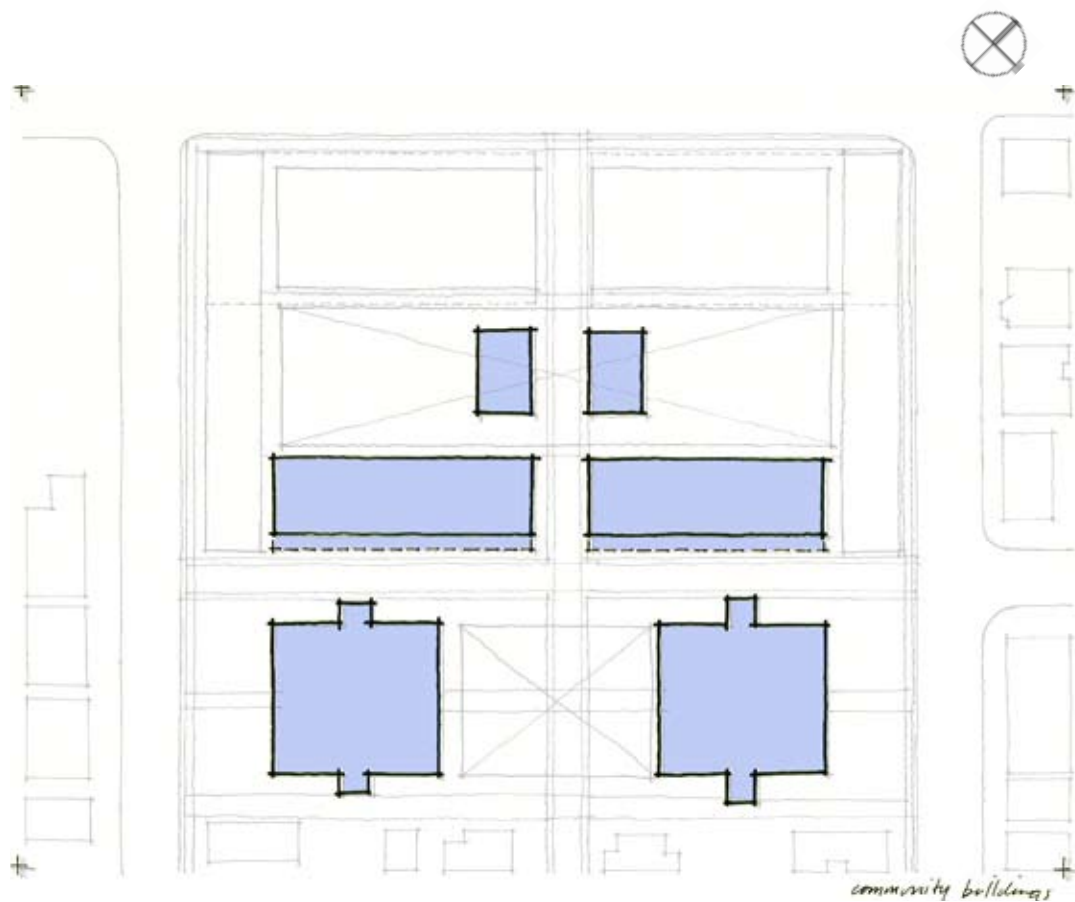
Public Open Space

Two new public spaces are created in the proposed Master Plan, each with a distinct character which complements its surrounding uses.

“Bloomfield” is the large public green space which lies at the heart of the new Bloomfield development. Flanked by highly public commercial, community and arts spaces, this space offers the public beautiful, adaptable public space for a host of uses

The other major public space is the Public Arts and Culture Court flanked by the heritage buildings. It is here that the Arts and Culture community may stage exhibits, sales, and events. It also provides a wonderful space for the display of large-scale public art and the staging of concerts and performances.

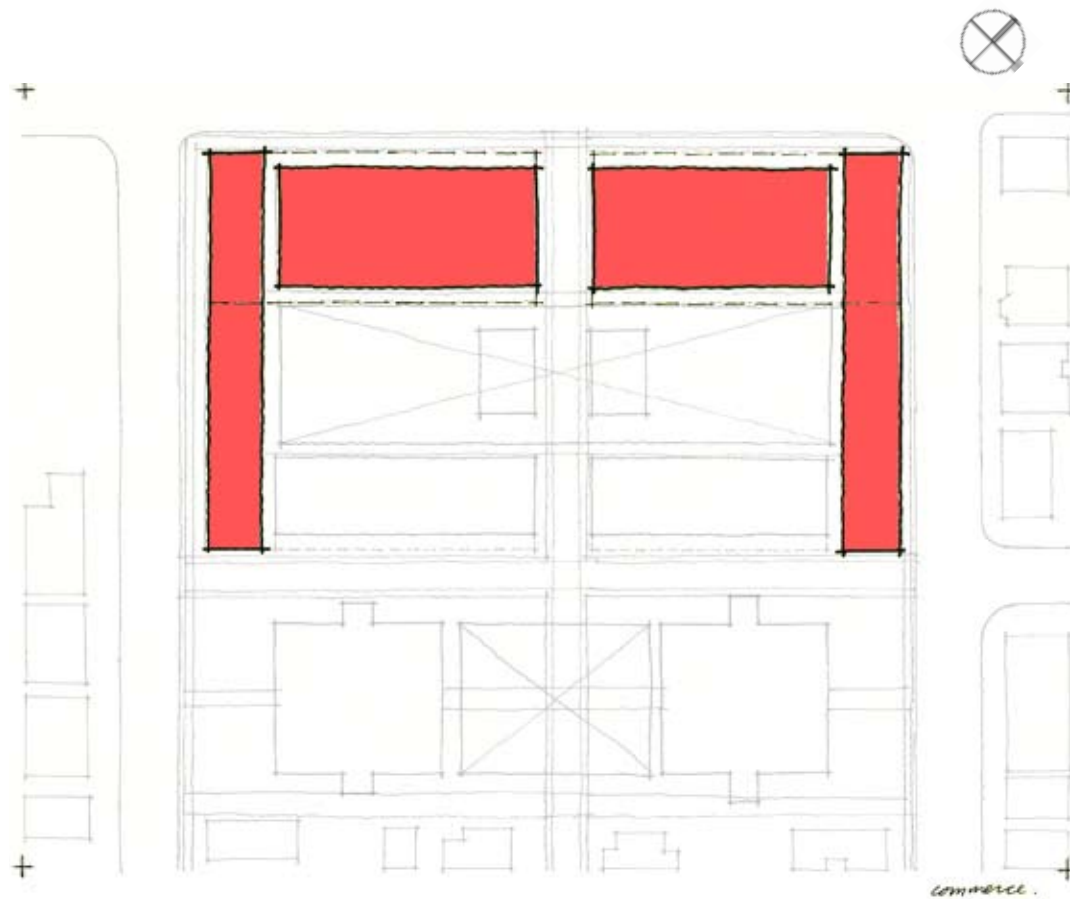




Community Buildings

All of these buildings contain public uses on the street and house the Arts/Culture and community-use components of the Bloomfield program.

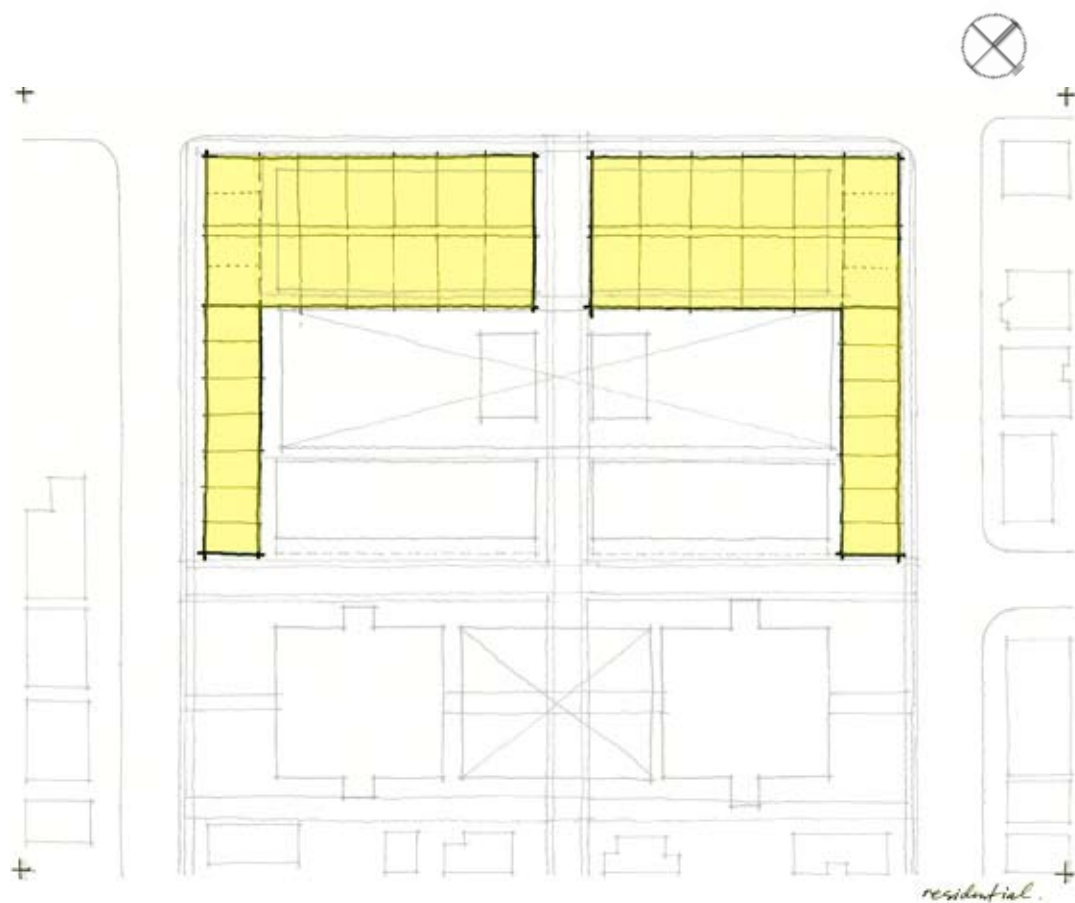
The Fielding and Common buildings could be used either to satisfy municipal programming or various market/rental uses. An example of market use could be organizations who have expressed a high degree of compatibility with organizational operations and objectives with the Bloomfield site, such as connectivity to the right clientele and to the extended neighborhood.



Commerce

Two towers are being proposed along Almon Street. These towers have a two-storey glass base which houses commercial and office spaces. The towers flank the Fern Lane extension and offer a major public entrance into the public green space.

The street level storey of the Robie Street and Agricola Street townhouses also contains retail space, effectively creating a commercial zone which is meaningfully engaged with the street around the entire perimeter of these buildings.



Residential

It is an acknowledged fact that in order for the Bloomfield site to sustain the level of community amenity called for by the neighbours and stakeholders, a dense development of residential units will be called for.

The site can support the level of density required with the introduction of towers. The third through tenth stories of both towers are residential floors with a variety of unit sizes, some of which may be affordable units.

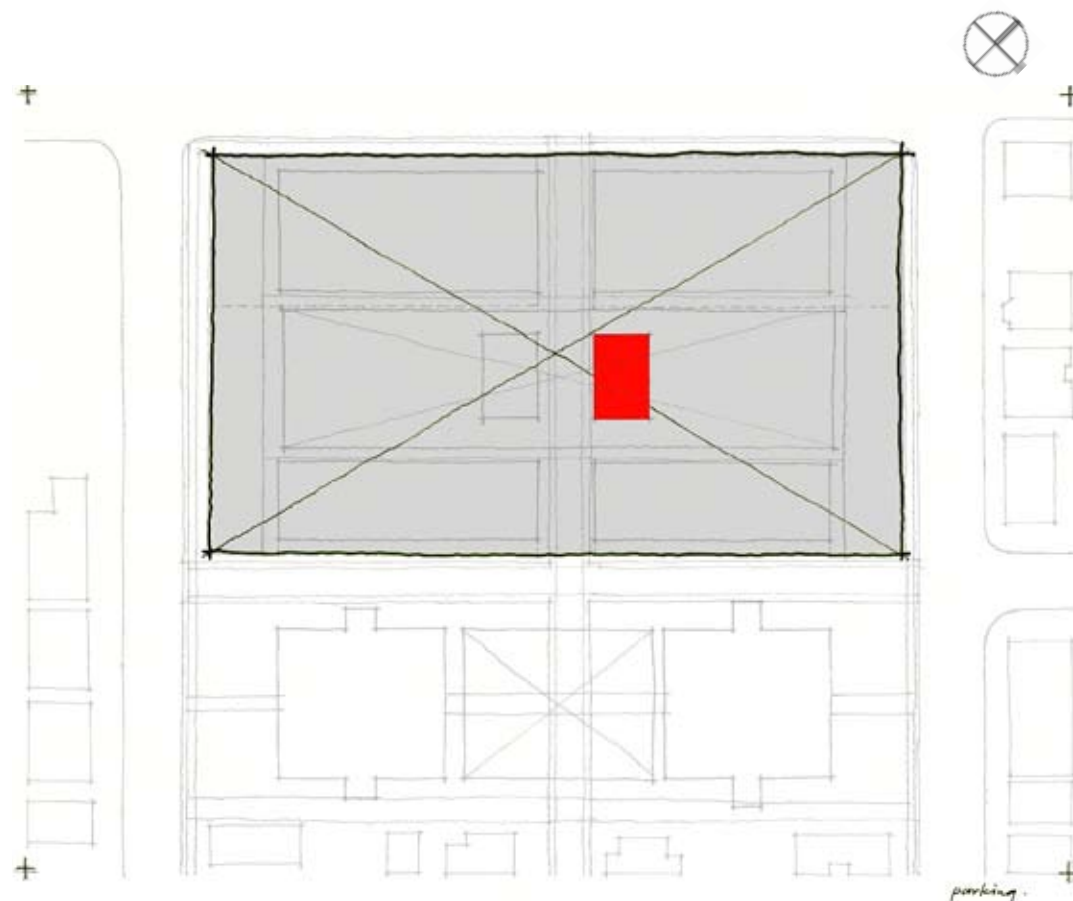
For the Robie and Almon tower, we propose adding an additional five stories of residences. This additional volume of units will contribute significantly to the overall capacity of the scheme to build affordable residential and/or office units as well as the community and arts related uses desired.

It is also important that the residential

development offers a suitably diverse mix of housing types, including artists' studios, live-work studios, townhouses, apartments and condos. A rule of thumb for the generation of the proper mix is that 80% of the housing shall be market-rate while the remaining 20% shall be affordable.

Finer-grain detail regarding the distribution of the housing types can be found in the economic study contained in Appendix B of this Master Plan.

Parking, as elsewhere on the site, would be below grade.



Parking

Parking for the site is housed almost completely below grade. One accesses the parking structure from one of the pavilions in the center of the public green space (shown at left in red)

The proposed scheme provides 420 parking spaces, but has a projected requirement for 433 spaces (i.e., there is a 13 stall deficit). This deficit can likely be addressed through cross-utilization of spaces by off-peak users, as commercial and residential users usually need parking at different times) and potentially by introducing parallel parking along Almon Street.

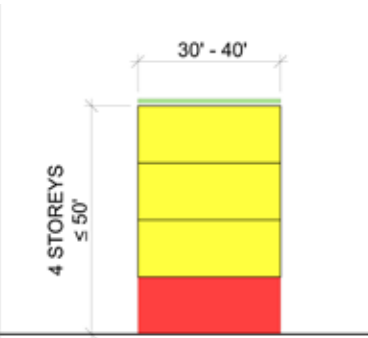
5.5 Envelope Guidelines

Robie Street and Agricola Street

The mixed-use, low-rise buildings along Robie and Agricola Street are proposed to be townhouses with a ground level glass base supporting a more solid, three-storey mass of residences above.

The height of the buildings is kept low to transition from the neighbourhood scale at the south to the higher density development proposed along the northern edge of the site, and also to allow for maximum daylight penetration into the center of the site.

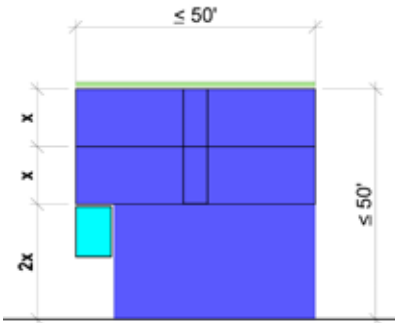
The roofs are proposed as green roofs, minimizing storm runoff, and increasing insulation value and longevity of the roof. This will also provide a more pleasing view for those in the upper levels of the towers to the North.

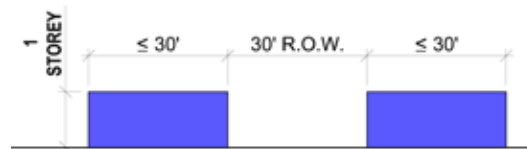


Bloomfield Lane

An arcade runs the length of the southern face of the buildings along the Bloomfield Lane extension. Each of these two new buildings has a double-height glass base containing Arts Performance space and/or community gathering space, on top of which rests two storeys of community/cultural office and program space in a double-loaded configuration.

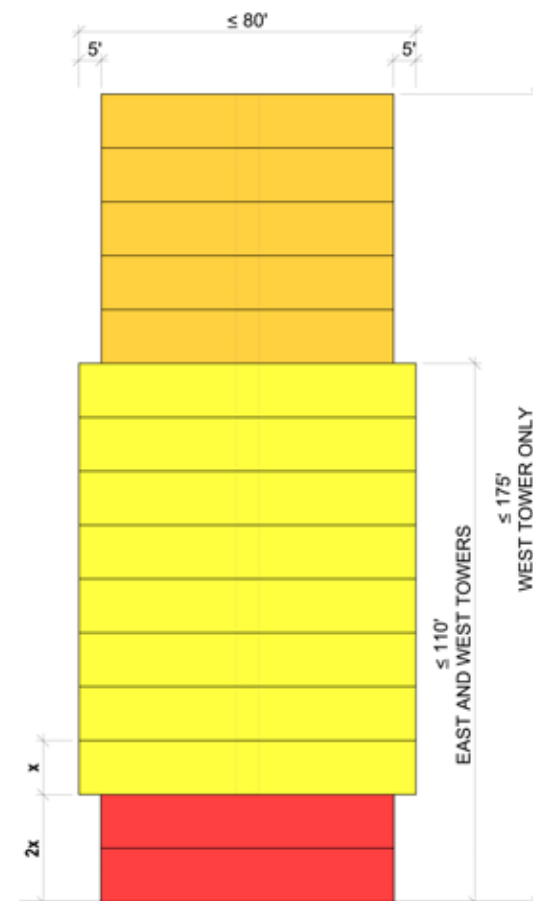
As in the case of the Robie and Agricola townhouses, the height of this building is kept low to ensure maximum daylight penetration in the center of the site.





Fern Lane

The two one-storey “pavilions in the park” flank the Fern Lane Extension and house a day care and access to the underground parking facility. These buildings should be as transparent as possible, taking full advantage of their prime location in the new “town green.”



Almon Towers

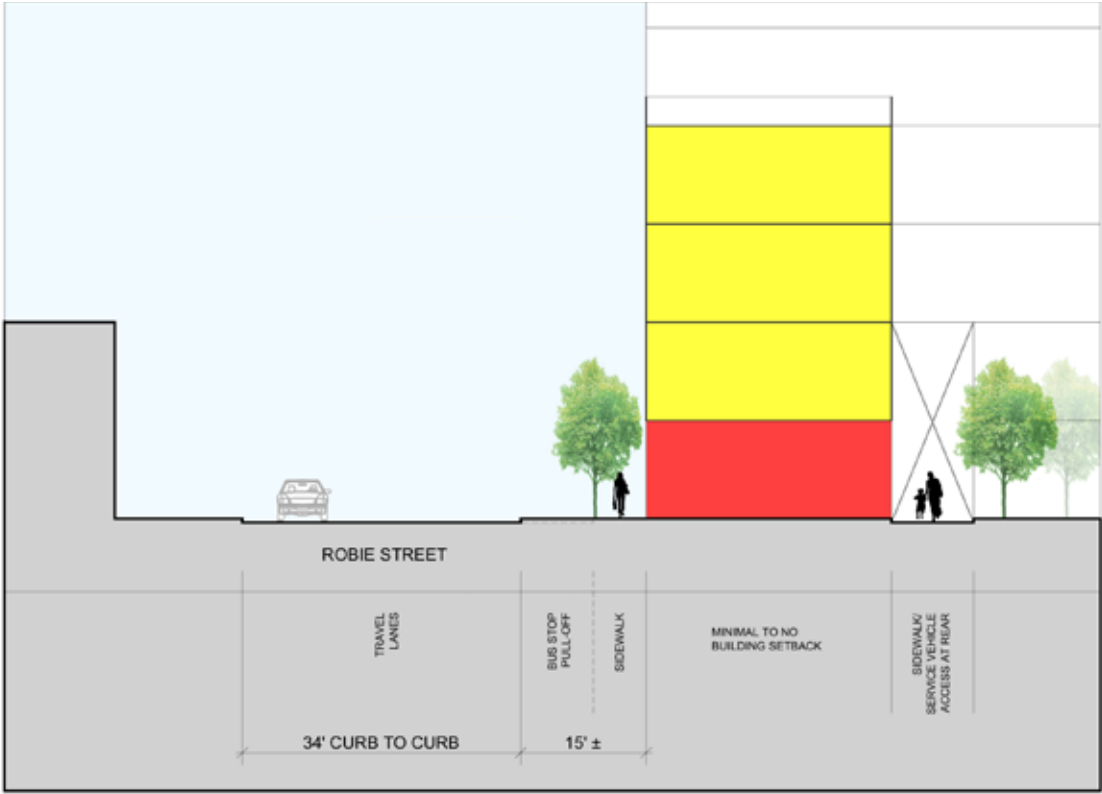
The taller building masses should be located at the northern edge of the site, with the tallest building, at a maximum of 15-storeys, located at the northwest corner of the site, bounded by Robie and Almon. This location was identified throughout the process by both the public and the design team as the best place for a tower.

The towers along Almon Street both have a 2-storey glass base, the north and south sides of which are set back to articulate the masses above and to allow for arcades along Almon and the inner courtyard.

The northwest tower also contains an additional five storeys of residential units with five-foot setbacks around the perimeter to add visual interest. These floors may be more transparent than the eight floors below, resulting in a glass cube or “beacon” for the site.

5.6 Streetscape Guidelines

Robie Street



As Robie Street experiences a greater volume of traffic than Agricola Street, the streetscapes will, by necessity, differ slightly.

A greater distance shall be provided from the curb to the building along the length of Robie to accommodate a northbound bus-stop pull off lane. This increased width also accommodates the number of off-peninsula commuters cycling through the site.

As this edge is ideally suited as an enhanced transit hub, streetscape amenities such as bike racks / storage lockers, trash/recycling containers should be integrated. The retail businesses located at street level could serve the needs of the urban commuter.

All streetscapes would benefit greatly from a comprehensive analysis and implementation of existing HRM traffic planning and urban design initiatives, such as HRM By Design's

Public Realm Handbook, the 2006 *HRM Active Transportation Plan* and the *HRM Blueprint for a Bicycle Friendly HRM* to name a few. Additionally, all streetscapes shall be accessible and safe for disabled persons.

Reasonable effort should be made to retain the trees which currently exist along Robie. Should it not be possible to retain them, new trees should be planted where possible to help to mitigate, not only the traffic noise, but to improve the local air quality and to provide shade for waiting commuters.

Safe Entry and Exit from the underground parking structure shall be carefully studied so as to minimize disruption to traffic flow on Robie. Conflicts with on site pedestrian traffic shall also be minimized.

Finally, service and delivery access to the first floor retail spaces shall be provided.

Agricola Street



Agricola Street experiences lower traffic volume and speed than Robie, and the denser, mixed-use neighbourhood fabric contributes to its pedestrian character.

The townhouses along Agricola, therefore, should be sited much closer to the curb than those on Robie, effectively extending the existing neighbourhood fabric to the south, which enhances retail opportunities and results in greater social exchange.

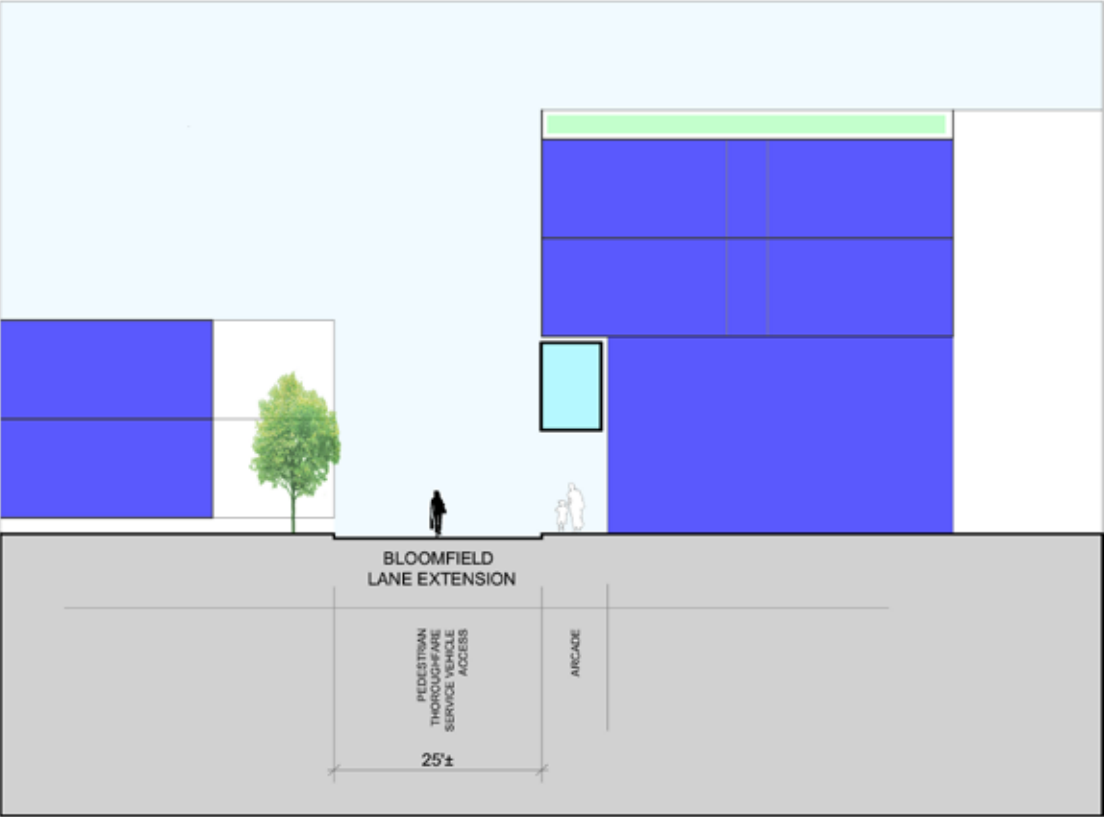
As on Robie, existing trees should be maintained when possible and replaced if removed.

Agricola Street in particular has been identified as an important “active transportation” connection with the HRM. Accommodation of bicycle traffic would enhance Agricola’s ability to serve as a link in the North End to South End connector, as well as providing potential opportunities for small businesses along the Agricola Street retail spaces which cater to bicyclists, joggers, and “active” commuters.

Extending a pedestrian-friendly edge has the potential to result in the incubation of more “destination” specialty businesses.

Agricola Street should also be studied in the context of the entry to and exit from the proposed below-grade parking on the Bloomfield site.

Bloomfield Lane



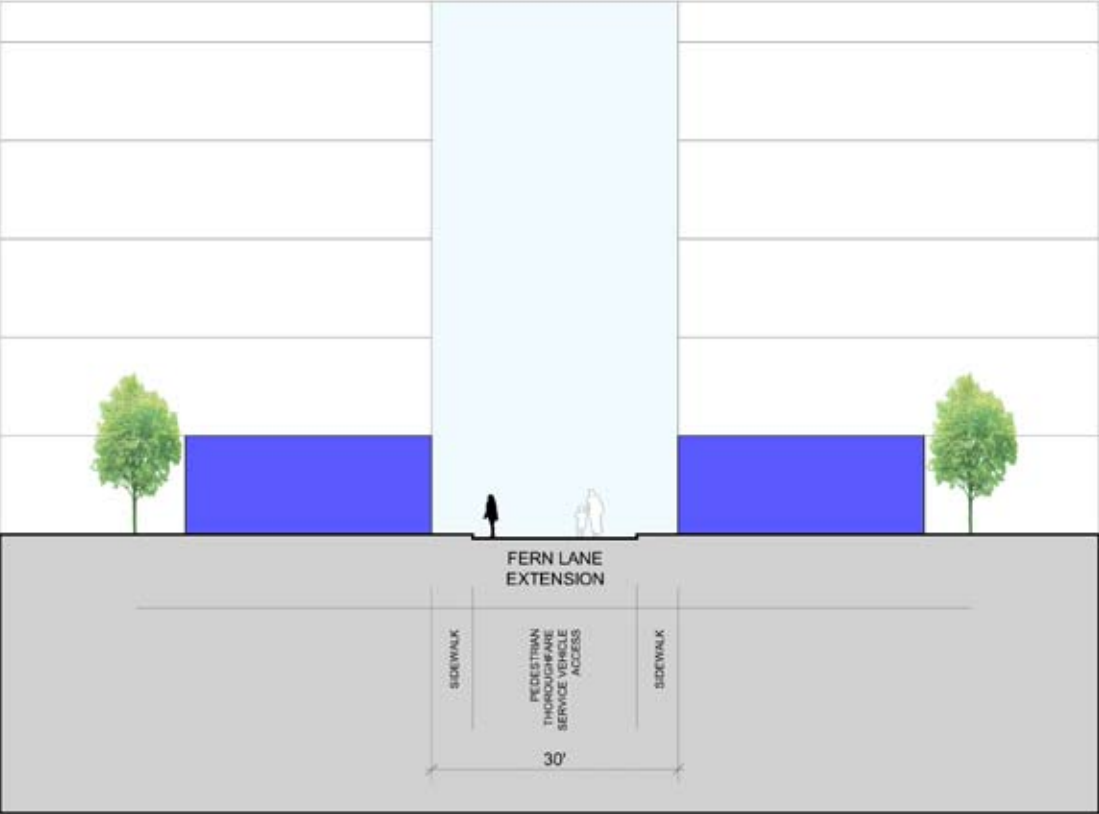
The extension of Bloomfield Lane through the site returns the site to its original condition. The Bloomfield Lane Extension acts as the main pedestrian connector through the newly-created Arts and Culture District.

The quality and character of the Bloomfield Lane streetscape shall be commensurate with the ambitions of the new District and support the proposed activities. A durable, quality paving surface shall be selected to accommodate high volumes of pedestrian traffic during anticipated public events and street fairs. Planters and benches should be provided along the edges.

The arcade along the length of Bloomfield Lane shall be designed and developed to take full advantage of this new public thoroughfare and shall accommodate “spill-out” activities such as patios, street performances, public art, etc.

The Bloomfield Lane extension may be required to act as a vehicular service entrance, depending on future development of the Bloomfield Center on-site traffic plan. A system of removable bollards or street furniture could accommodate pedestrian and vehicular uses.

Fern Lane



The Fern Lane extension, much like the Bloomfield Lane Extension, extends through the site, creating smaller, neighbourhood-scaled blocks and increasing “surfaces for social exchange.”

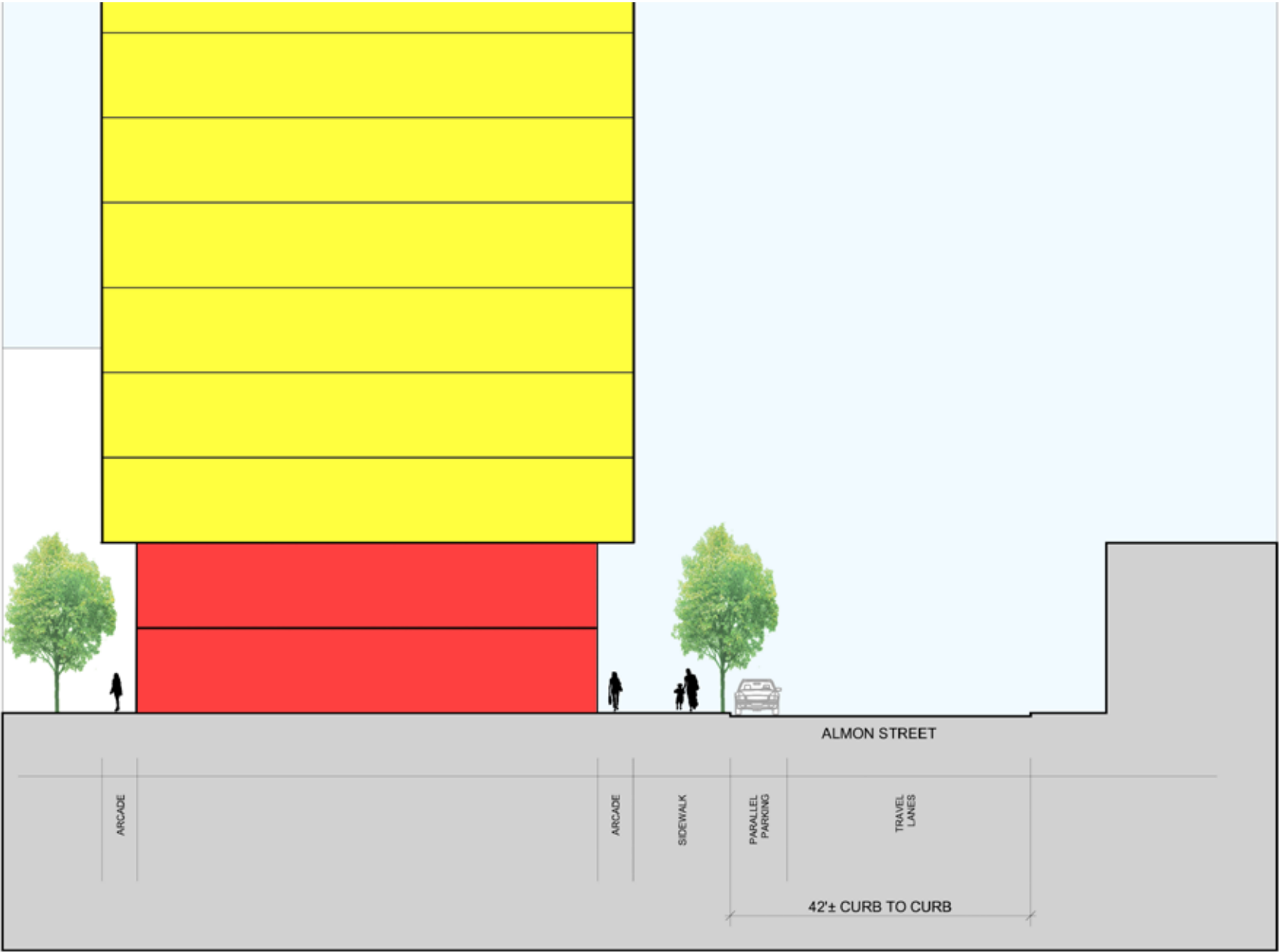
The character and quality of the Fern Lane Extension shall be similar to that proposed for Bloomfield Lane - a high quality, durable, pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

Special attention shall be paid to the intersection of Bloomfield and Fern Lanes, which provides a great opportunity for a public art “focal point” for the new Arts and Culture District.

Also, the space between the proposed daycare pavilion and parking pavilion shall be designed with an eye towards safety and a degree of containment.

The perimeter of these structures should be articulated in such a way to take full advantage of their prominent position at the center of the new “Bloomfield” green space. Play areas, seating areas, bicycle storage, stroller parking, and safe restrooms should all be integrated into the surrounding streetscape.

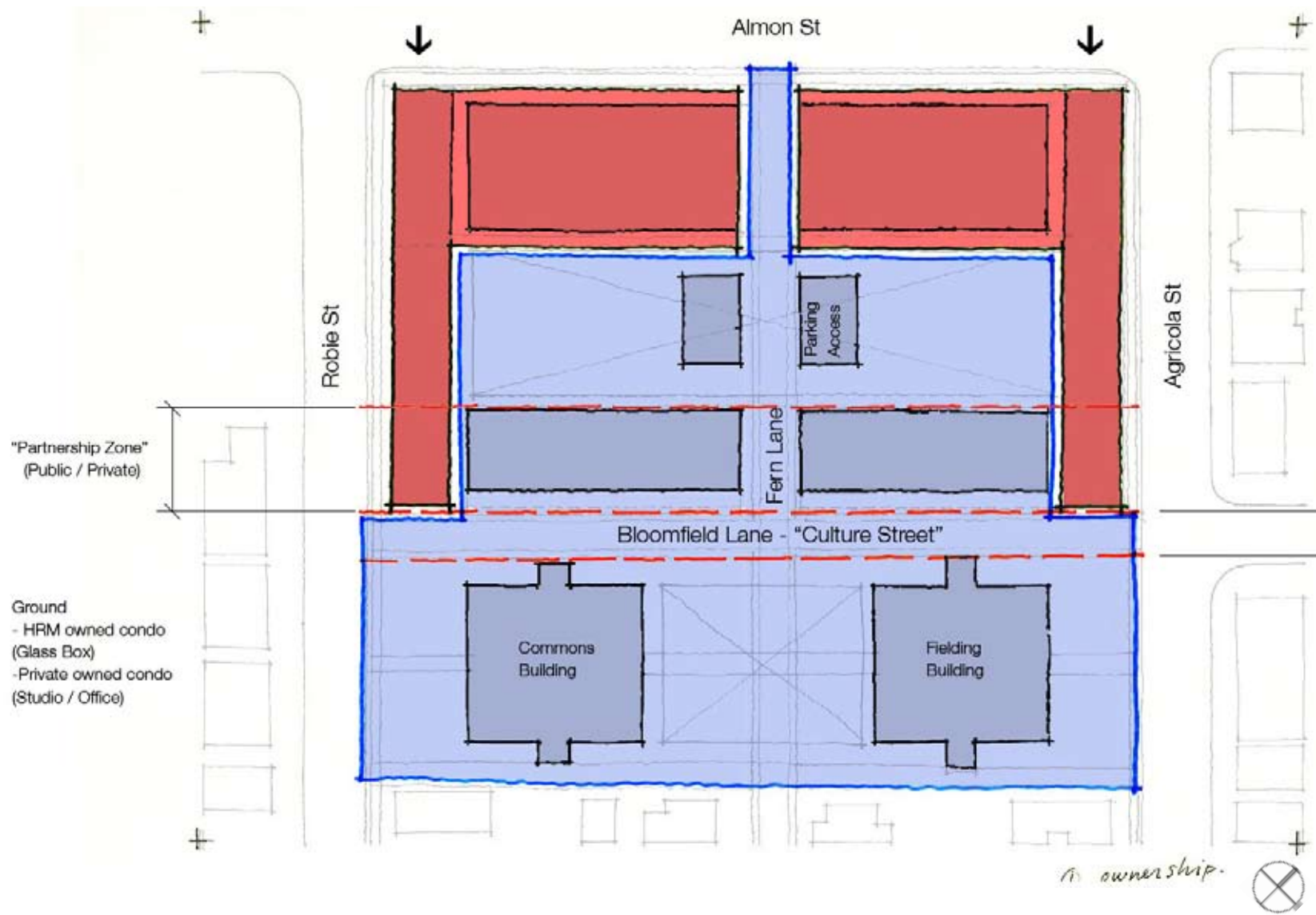
Almon Street



The highest density and tallest buildings are proposed for the Almon Street edge, so a more generous sidewalk zone and arcade shall be provided along this edge. A parallel parking / drop off / delivery lane should be considered for the south side of Almon, should space permit. The mature oak trees that line Almon should be retained if at all possible.



-
- 6.1 Introduction
 - 6.2 Planning Recommendations
 - 6.3 Site + Facility Development Strategy
 - 6.4 Management Models
 - 6.5 Urban Design
 - 6.6 Space Programming
 - 6.7 Project Phasing



6.1 Introduction

The time for action is now. It is clear that the community need, HRM commitment and the political will intersect at the present moment for a new and revitalized Bloomfield. One clear conclusion of the Master Plan study is that true public space and community amenities are inextricably linked to robust market development and a strong public and private partnership.

What this means for implementation is clear: the regulatory framework needs to be in place, the multiple community and HRM initiatives must be aligned, the proper development teams must be selected, and the next phase must begin immediately, as the process moving forward is a lengthy one. The following recommendations are made in support of these goals.

Diagram illustrating potential Bloomfield Site Ownership - HRM-Owned areas are shown in BLUE and developer-owned areas are shown in RED

6.2 Planning Recommendations

No existing zoning framework currently exists for the type of mixed-use development being proposed for the Bloomfield Site. The form-based approach selected for the Bloomfield Master Plan is, in fact, antithetical to the current land-use-based zoning. Careful consideration must be given to the present regulatory realities and how they affect the proposed Master Plan.

Development agreements can be useful in promoting good design and respond well to particular site conditions, as they are judged on their merits. However, they may be perceived as risky by the development community.

Plan amendments are another option but are time intensive.

- The Planning Recommendations are as follows:
- 6.2.1 *That a recommendation be made to Regional Council to direct staff to initiate a planning amendment and development agreement process to be completed by HRM as a key condition of the development process*
 - 6.2.2 *That the Bloomfield Master Plan Report be used as the guide in developing planning policy and development conditions for the site*
 - 6.2.3 *That the future planning policy and development framework consider mechanisms to enable a percentage of affordable housing units on the Bloomfield property including opportunities for artist live-work housing units, resulting in a high-level recommendation for potential developers*

6.3 Site and Facility Development Strategy

A successful site and facility development strategy to implement the Master Plan will be key. This includes a successful partner engagement process and identification of priority actions that will ensure the momentum to move forward with development is maintained.

What we do know is that the majority of project stakeholders recognize that alignment of public and private initiatives and complementary HRM programs is critical to success.

The Master Plan advocates an HRM-Owned and Community-operated model for programming - the content and delivery of which is not controlled by HRM. The guiding principle is one of entering into partnerships with community groups and private-sector partners to build a development and operate the site in a manner commensurate with

several of HRM’s policy objectives and strategic priorities, such as the Cultural Plan and the Regional Plan. HRM’s role in the case of the Bloomfield Centre is that of facilitator of successful and sustainable partnerships.

The market portion of the development, which may be either long-term leased to or owned outright by developers, shall be managed by them within the framework initiated by this Master Plan and built upon by the recommendations which follow. (See diagram on facing page)

A successful mix of HRM-owned and Market-driven development will ultimately result in a vibrant mixed-use development and support both community programs and quality green space.

It is therefore recommended:

- 6.3.1 That an interdepartmental team be established to lead the redevelopment process.
- 6.3.2 That an updated detailed condition assessment and capital cost assessment be completed for the renovation of the Fielding and Commons Building
- 6.3.3 That an arts and culture facility development consultant be retained to build internal capacity and provide direction with respect to best practices around multi-sector partnerships and facility management and operating models
- 6.3.4 That a partner and developer engagement process be initiated for the development of the property including:

Stage 1: an expression of interest process to seek potential developer

and community partners for the development and operation of the site

Stage 2: an RFP process to select development and community partners including the detailed design and build of the site, the renovation of the existing Fielding and Common buildings, the development of outdoor public space and amenity space, and the programming and operation of community and market space

- 6.3.5 That a programming strategy and business plan be developed in partnership with a selected community organization for a Community Cultural Centre (with consideration for the Fielding Building) with the following development principles:

1. an HRM-owned/community operated model will be used for the detailed design and operation and management of the facility.

2. an effective cost-recovery model for the long-term sustainable operation of community facilities and infrastructure will be required as part of any successful business plan.

3. a minimal amount of HRM direct-delivery programming may operate from the facility and shall be in accordance with the community partnership and leasing agreement.

4. a designated amount of administrative space will be provided for community organizations that are aligned with the business plan and programming strategy including any existing Bloomfield Centre

tenants that have an agreement with the municipality for longer-term leasing

- 6.3.6 That a transition plan be developed to address the closure of the Bloomfield gymnasium considering existing and potential inventory to accommodate current and future gymnasium usage on the Peninsula.

- That a detailed cultural spaces inventory and gap analysis for the Peninsula North area be completed to assist in the evaluation and selection of community operating partners.

- That multi-sector financing strategies be encouraged for the development of community facilities on the Bloomfield site.

6.4 Management Models

This Plan does not recommend a specific management model for the Bloomfield development; However, a range of innovative and successful partnership models has been identified for further study and consideration, both by various community groups and by the design team members.

It is our recommendation:

- 6.4.1 That an ownership scheme be developed for the entire site, clearly demonstrating HRM-owned parcels and privately-held parcels, with special attention paid to the management and maintenance of shared (i.e. open) public space.
- 6.4.2 That the following list of management models be studied in parallel with the site ownership boundaries and comprehensively reviewed for their potential applicability to the proposed Bloomfield Master plan scheme:

1. Co-op
2. Not-for-Profit (e.g. Artscape)
3. Performing Arts Lodge (PAL)
4. Long-Term Lease
5. Co-housing

- 6.4.3 That an RFP be developed to solicit proposed management models from private interests and community-based management teams.

6.5 Urban Design

A Form-Based approach to urban design was utilized for the development of the proposed scheme. The form-based approach is antithetical to the current land-use standards which apply to the Bloomfield site, which is why a comprehensive planning review is recommended to occur in parallel.

It is our recommendation:

- 6.5.1 That mixed-use buildings be constructed with minimal setbacks along the entire perimeter of the site and along the two new pedestrian streets proposed.
- 6.5.2 That the planning regulations be modified to support the construction of taller buildings, to a maximum of 14 storeys, along the Almon Street edge.
- 6.5.3 That the allowable site density be modified to support the density required to

generate the required revenue to ensure a viable project, provide for on-site amenities, and allow for the creation of a large, public open space at the center of the Bloomfield site

- 6.5.4 That the townhouses proposed for the Robie and Agricola Edges are in keeping with the scale of the neighbourhood and provide for an accessible retail ground floor.
- 6.5.5 that the height of the buildings rise from south to north so that the maximum amount of daylight penetrates to the center of the site
- 6.5.6 That streetscapes contribute to a lively, safe public realm and support complementary, ongoing HRM initiatives.

6.6 Space Programming

This Master Plan proposes a scheme with a high-level program, with the goals of satisfying known spatial requirements and ensuring economic viability. The resultant scheme was developed to be robust and flexible.

As the parallel planning and site / facility programming initiatives are developed, a finer-grain programming exercise should be undertaken.

It is our recommendation:

- *6.6.1 That, once the issue of site ownership is determined, a consultant team is retained to engage in a finer-grain programming exercise for the commercial, residential, and community components*
- *6.6.2 That a public/private open space program is developed*

6.7 Project Phasing

Ultimately, the project phasing is contingent upon the final decision regarding site ownership (i.e. HRM-owned property versus privately-owned or long-term leased property) and the selection of the appropriate management model(s).

However, if one assumes that quality public and community-use space is enabled by an appropriate amount of market development (an assumption borne out by the economic analysis and in line with community understanding and expectations), then private developers should build both market-rate retail/office/housing and community programming space at the same time.

The remediation of the Common and Fielding Buildings should be part of the proposal for development services.

From a construction perspective, knowing

that a single level below-grade parking structure over the majority of the site will be required to adequately address the parking requirements for the proposed density, it would make the most sense to proceed with the construction of the entire project at one time, which would call for the demolition of the existing Bloomfield School, site preparation, the construction of the parking garage, the construction of the residential/ retail component (to begin realizing profit to help “fund” the community development, and finally the construction of the community buildings. Remediation of the heritage buildings should occur in parallel and should commence at the outset so as to stave off any further deterioration.

Depending on the capacity of the local labour force to construct roughly 300,000 square feet of new development, the project could be phased in two main phases. As

the master plan is symmetrical for all intents and purposes, the “Robie Half” of the development and the “Agricola Half” of the development could happen separately. Each half would contain the necessary mix of market and not-for-profit spaces to sustain the project upon completion.

If the Two-Phase approach is selected, the “Robie Half” should be constructed first, as it makes accommodations for a taller tower, and thus more market-rate units. Should there be a deficit of community programming space after construction of Phase One, it is possible that short-term leasing arrangements could be made in some of the proposed retail and office space until Phase Two is complete.

Interviews and Workshops



Interviews

Imagine Bloomfield Society

- Interested in knowing HRM’s long term position in terms of site ownership.
- Indicate 30% social space is desired for space (consistent with their report)
- Indicate a desire for both indoor and outdoor community space.
- Indicate a desire for co-op/not for profit management of site.
- Indicate a desire for the following housing mix as component of project;
 - Affordable
 - Condo/market
 - Artist co-living
 - Rent to own (to attract young families)
 - Starter home (to attract young families)
- Support creating housing and commercial along Agricola and Almon Streets.
- IB sees Gladstone as feeder community for Bloomfield site.
- Community involvement and mix of people

and uses is important.

- IB expressed need for HRM to consider competent not-for-profit management model.
- IB expressed a desire to keep all three buildings (primarily for environmental reasons).

Bloomfield Neighbourhood Residents Association

- Program diversity is important
- Advocate spirit of Imagine Bloomfield report
- Interest in Housing, Community Space and Recreation
- Retention of ownership of the property is desired
- Timeline of process is important (how long to wait for execution)
- Interest in Co-housing, Performing Arts Lodge, Affordable housing, mixed use, Commercial, NGO’s
- Could be a Centre for Innovation
- Heritage Status of Fielding and Common Building important

Commons North Business & Cultural Association

- Residents are the key to the health of neighbourhoods
- Interest in branding of site/neighbourhood
- Should be world class Community Development
- Diversity is essential quality
- Clear need for Public space (indoor and outdoor)
- Important to engage passion of business owners about what the community is
- Important to be proactive about growth, future shaping of city
- Specialization of merchants is an existing pattern to expand upon (services not available elsewhere)

Ward 5 Neighbourhood Association

- *Maintain Diversity of Centre*
- *Need*
- *Use during the week and on the weekend*
- *Expressed the fact that social need is great*
- *Food Bank*
- *Provide mentoring cooperatives*
- *Bloomfield should remain a place of and for the more vulnerable people of the community*

Ecology Action Centre

- *Involvement of Community is important*
- *Sustainability is important*
- *Ultimate Management Structure for project should have the following elements*
 - *Community involvement*
 - *Community board members*
 - *Experienced management team*
 - *Transparency of Operation*
 - *Cross pollination*
- *Bicycle and pedestrian-oriented site*
- *EAC has interest in becoming future tenant*
- *Important to keep services that are presently provided in the Main building*
- *Mixed-use and Diversity are essential*
- *Good outdoor green space*
- *Aesthetics are an important issue*
- *Low-cost meeting space*
- *Interest in having a demonstration component of the site*
- *Systems diversity - mixed use environment - diversity breeds resilience*

Performing Arts Lodge (PAL)

- *mix of units desired - 1 and 2 bedroom options and guest space*
- *Accessibility important*
- *Other P.A.L. - Toronto - mix of market and affordable units with some communal space and some performance space*
- *Diversity is essential*
- *Management model options: Societies (Imagine Bloomfield - not best fit); Co-op (Farmer's Market - best fit) always a business, allows individual and corp. members - Limited by Guarantee - Incorporated*
- *Inclusivity important for project*
- *Maintaining Public Ownership (Municipal) of site/buildings desired*
- *Whatever management model - hiring a good property management company is important*
- *Live/work artists' studios desired*
- *Temporary production office (eg. Film industry) that can be used short term by wide variety of tenants*

Independent Living Resource Centre

- *Indicate support to keep main building*
- *Mainly provide administrative support from Bloomfield location with minimal programming on site*
- *The Bloomfield location is excellent due to;*
 - *accessibility*
 - *transportation*
 - *close to high population density*
- *ILRS is supportive of mixed use - diversity enhances inclusivity*
- *Bloomfield is not a neighborhood centre it is regional*
- *ILRS has mission to support people w/ disabilities living independently;*
- *ILRS has 8 staff members and does not need large spaces - offices, meeting room, and reference room*
- *Express desire to have shared resources w/ others*
- *Express desire to be a part of a Centre of Excellence*

Art & Culture Interests Focus Group

(Andrew Terris)

comprised of:

ARTS NOVA Consulting, Atlantic Filmmaker’s Coop, Theatre Nova Scotia, Lukas Pearce – independent musician, SMU Art Gallery, Collideascope Digital Productions, NS Designer Craft Council, Genesis Consulting, Live Art Dance Productions, Visual Arts NS

- There is need for performance space - both dance and theatre performance (250 and 100 seat) - there are 280 evenings of usage needs -of these 146 are local dance company uses and 133 theatre uses (95 performance and 38 technical)*
- Flexible space w/ appropriate technical support can satisfy multiple uses.*
- Dance space needs are most demanding from technical perspective*
- Film screening/usage can work in space created for dance, theatre, and music performance*

- Music performance should be able to happen in many locations (small, large, indoor, outdoor, formal, and informal)*
- Affordability of space is important need*
- A 250 seat (moveable seats) is approximately 5000 - 6000 square feet + removable floor (roll-up)*
- Visual arts can use separate space or one integrated to other uses - partnership for programming important consideration*
- Clear articulation of narrative of arts experience*
- Visual arts have need for studios - light industrial (loading dock) and high ceilings*
- Live/work artist studio space desired*
- Cultural tourism a key quality with potential to be exploited in new centre*
- Mixed-use affordable housing is desired*
- Performing Arts Lodge model used as example for desired occupancy component of project*
- Artscape identified as a possible management*

model approach to project

- There is a wide range of Arts related businesses that would be drawn to an arts cluster centre (e.g. Collideascope)*

North End Community Health Centre

- Potential for providing satellite service to site*
- Interest in proximity/relationship with other like-minded organizations such as CMHA*
- Relationship of site/project with community development related issues important*
- Advocate affordability and general accessibility to various elements of project*

Halifax Green Cohousing Association

- Interest in portion of site being considered for cohousing
- Social spaces of dwelling are communal
- This approach minimized eco footprint
- Affordability and accessibility are important and facilitated by co-housing approach
- Density is important for success of project - co-housing increases density of residents
- Optimum size for co-housing module is between 20 and 35 households
- Creation of neighbourhood important
- Shared outdoor space, kitchen, and dining facilities + guest facilities
- Must have day care - must be child-oriented to be anchor
- Owner-occupied units important for success in general (not just for co-housing)
- Choice and diversity important elements
- Young parents want more time w/ kids and less time working to pay for child care

CB Richard Ellis

- Long term lease would be acceptable to development community - provided lease was long enough (75 - 99 years)
- Project more desirable to private financing/development if sold outright (or portion of site sold)
- Envelope guidelines/well defined project parameters important to solicit clear & competitive bidding

Raphael Steinberg Construction Inc.

- In process of developing health focused office condos at south end of block at McCully street
- Consider extended neighbourhood as having great energy and diversity - location is very appealing to development community
- Interested in use mix and density considered for site
- Site is seen as having synergistic potential for McCully Development

I Nova Credit Union

(discussed theoretical site partnership - commitment would require closer review of timing etc.)

- Interested in project as having potential for relocation
- Project has great potential as cluster with social agenda
- Community based site and project align with INCU's MO
- Identified Heritage building as good location
- Consider market rate appropriate for space in new Centre
- Interest in co-locating with other complimentary agencies
- Growing and interested in ability to grow in location

Workshops

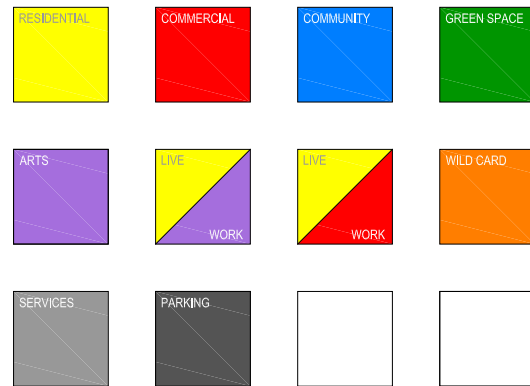


Workshop 1 - Program/Site Uses

May 21, 2008
6:30-9:00 pm

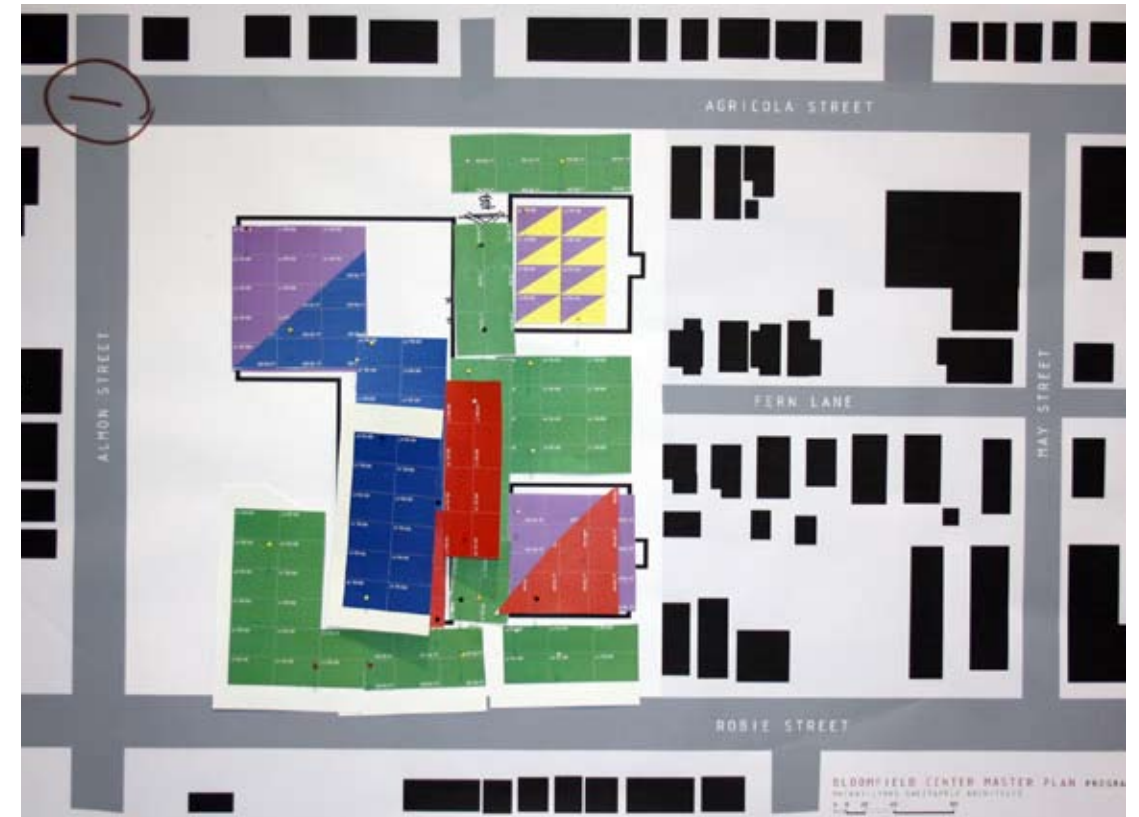
This workshop included about 100 community members in 14 groups who worked on the master plan program looking at low, medium, and high density scenarios for use potential of the site.

The following illustrates the individual group results of Workshop 1.

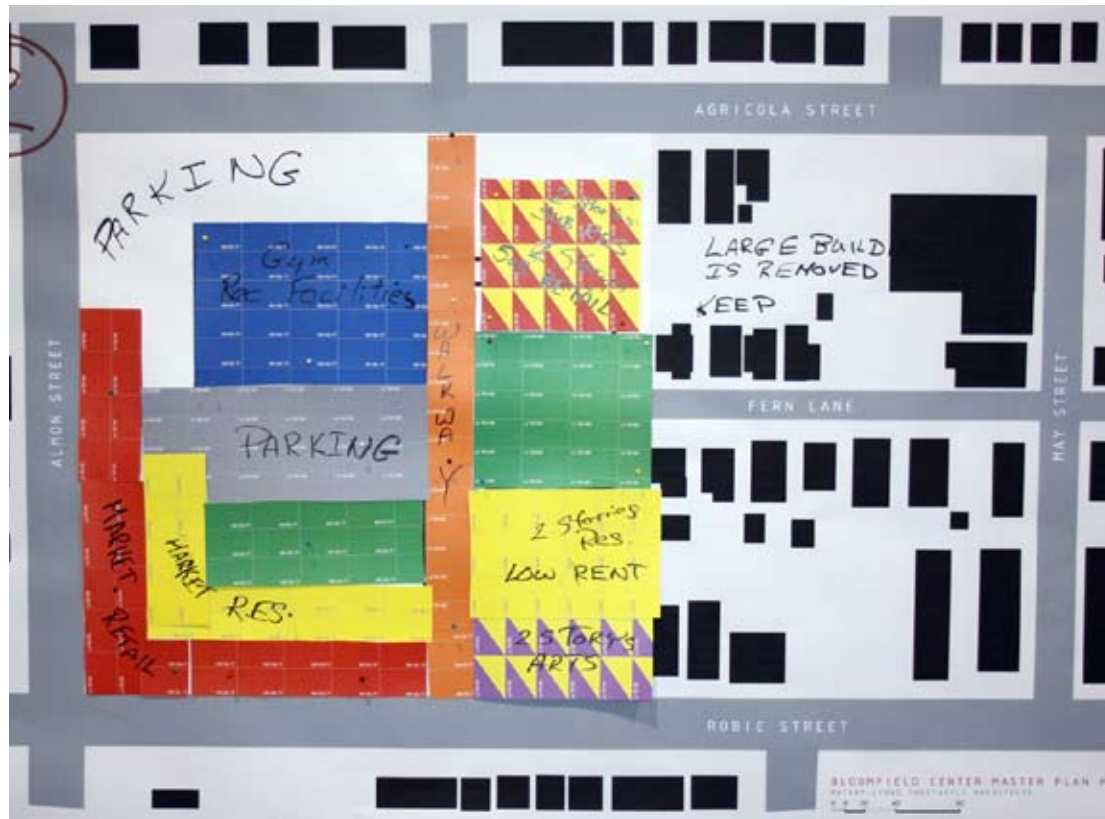
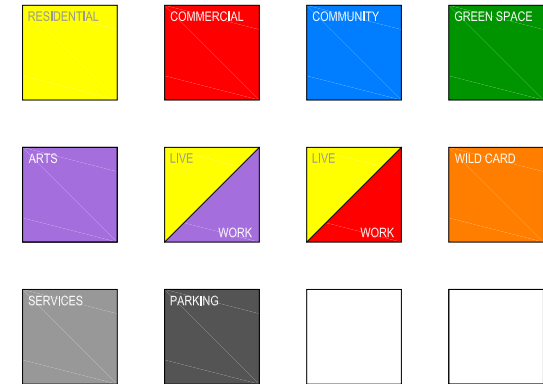


Group 1

- Courtyard between heritage buildings
- Some support to restore buildings
- Disadvantaged groups important
- Promote public transit
- Retail space to include cafe, gallery and farmer's market



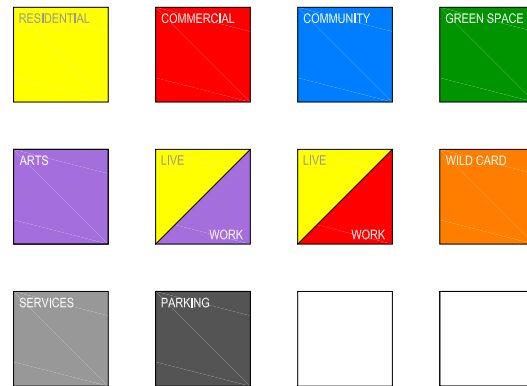
Group 1 - Plan.



Group 2

- Vision: Distinct, Alive, Affordable, Comfortable and Welcoming
- Create Environmentally sustainable, diverse and supportive community
- Facilitate keeping all former tenants
- Keep two heritage buildings, add 2 levels for business and subsidized housing
- Create arts facility
- Green space important
- Business and condo along Robie and Almon Streets
- Bloomfield Street extended as pedestrian Street
- Public Square between two heritage buildings

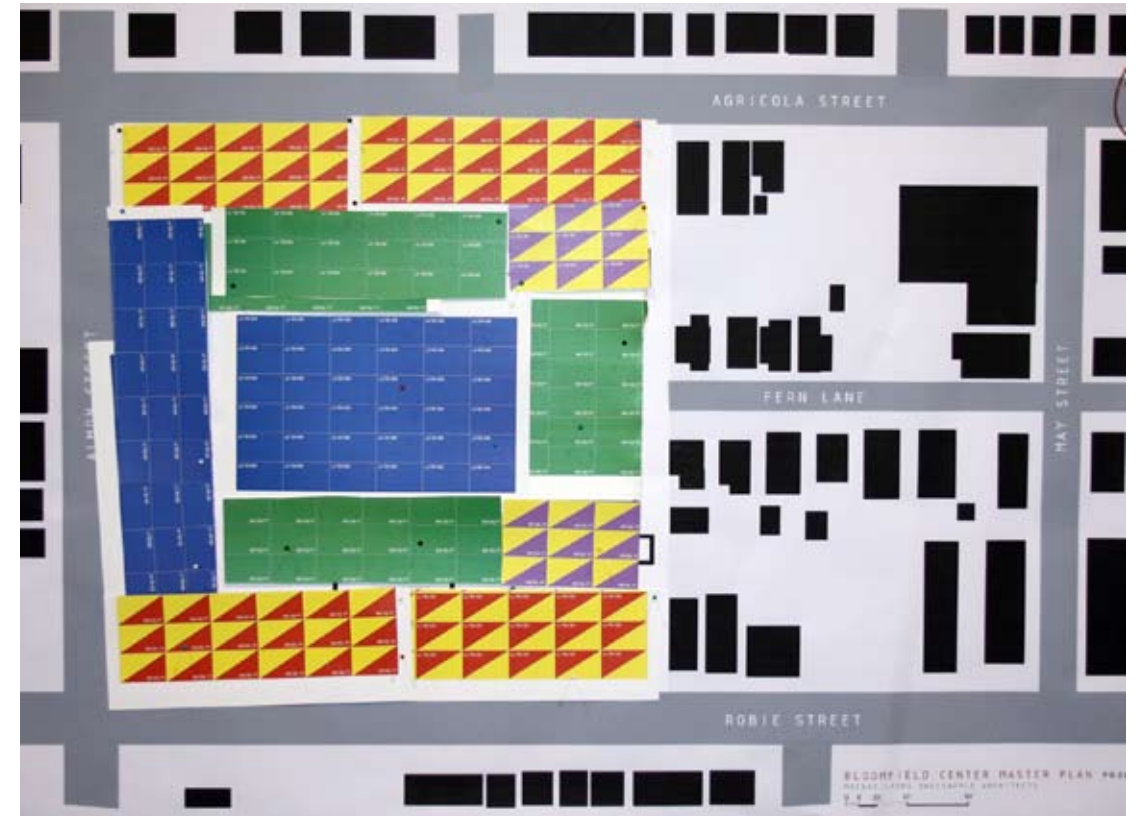
Group 2 - Plan.



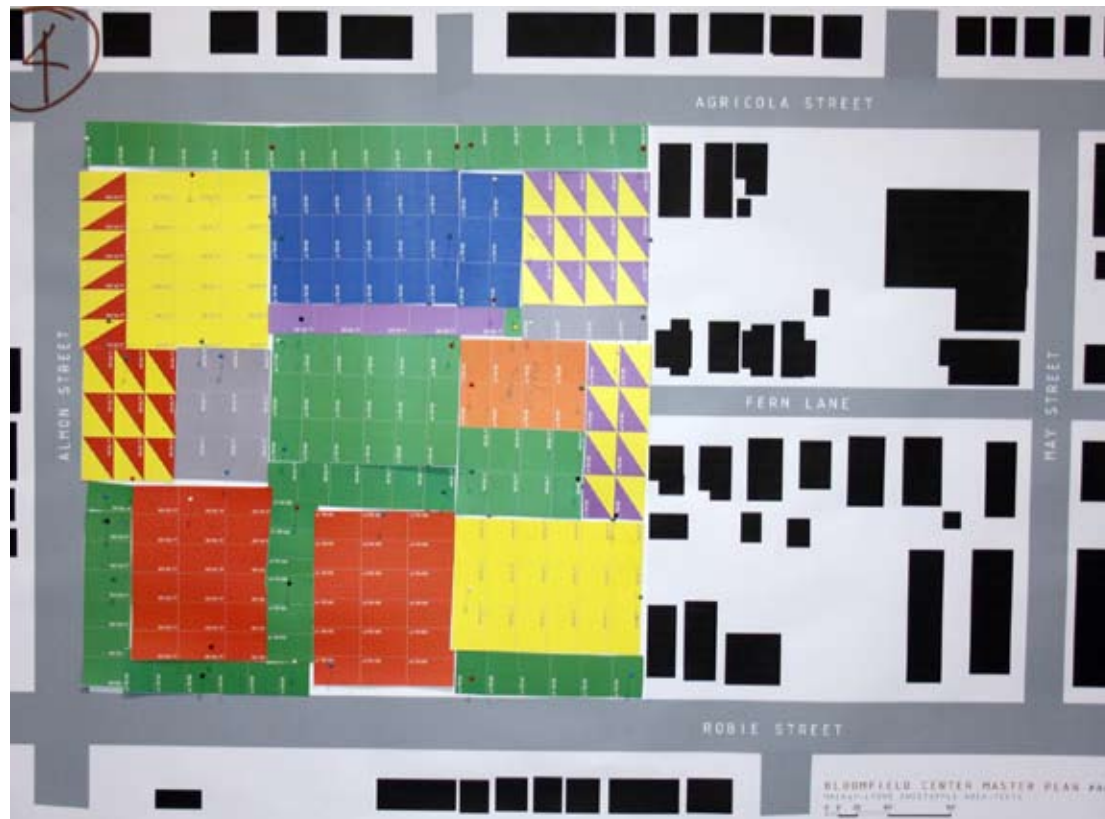
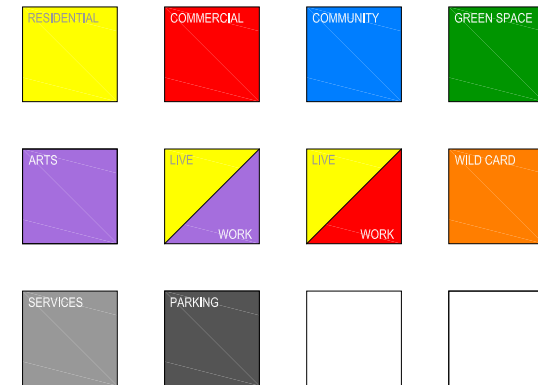
Group 3

Vision: Active Living, Community, Multi-purpose, Accessible, Eclectic focus locus

- SCANS - Seniors' Non-credit Academic Learning
- Day care facilities and respite for adult/senior care givers
- Non-profit office space
- Arts / rehearsal space
- Green space for community activities
- Agricola and Robie Mixed use streetscapes /revenue generating



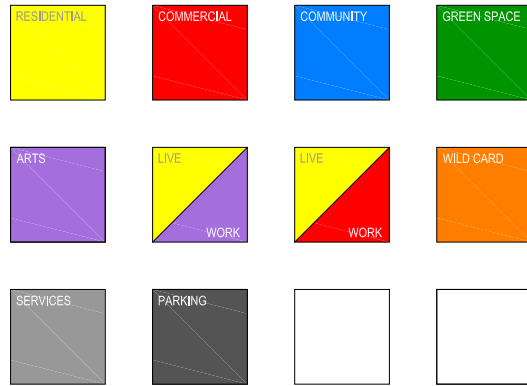
Group 3 - Plan.



Group 4

- Community Focus
- Beautiful Green Space
- Mixed use, viable and sustainable
- Management model - private / public partnership
- Underground parking

Group 4 - Plan.

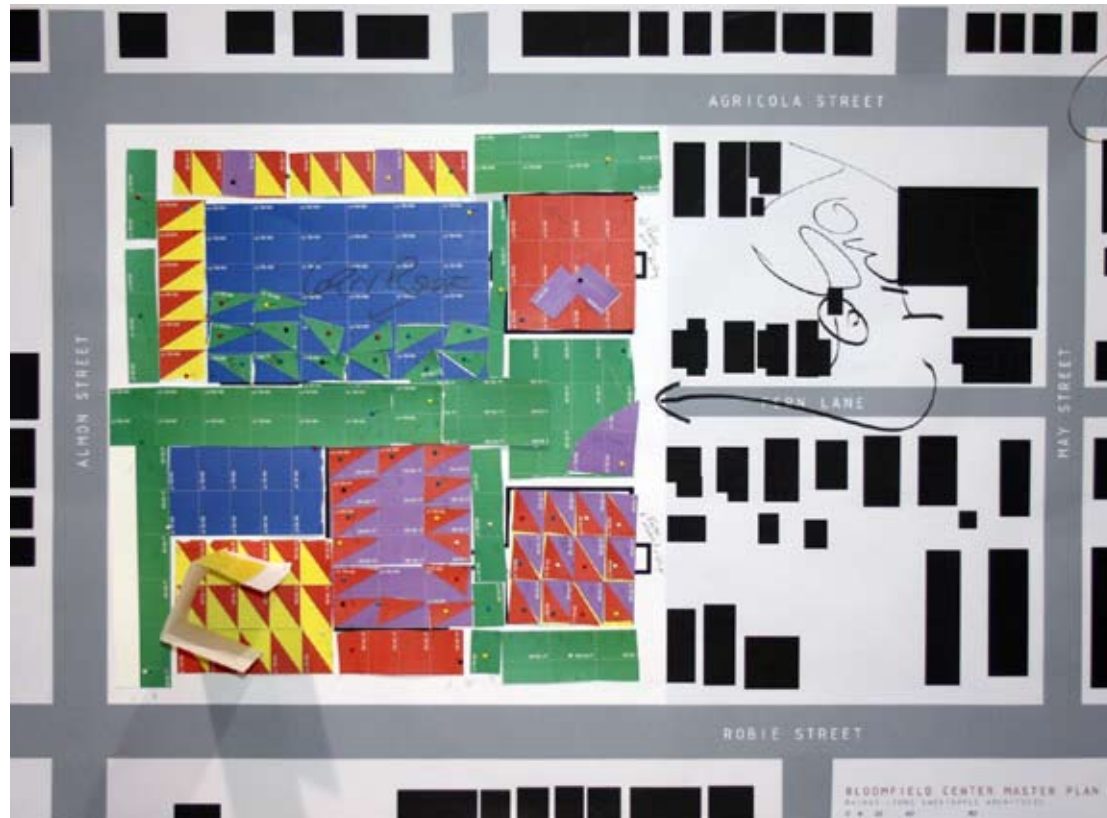
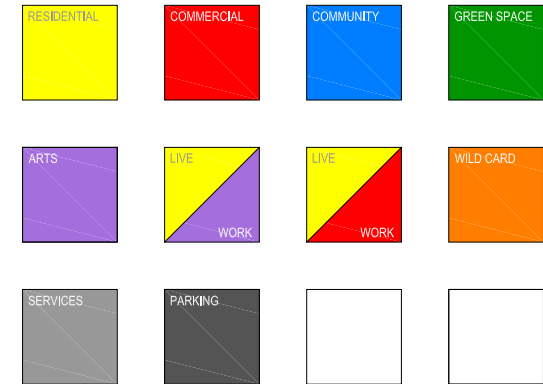


Group 5

- Community / Arts / Social
- Live/work - Combine housing with commercial
- Arts and cultural associatives must thrive
- Restore Bloomfield Street as pedestrian way and introduce Fern Lane (pedestrian also)
- Create an axis through site
- Diversity important

Group 5 - Plan.

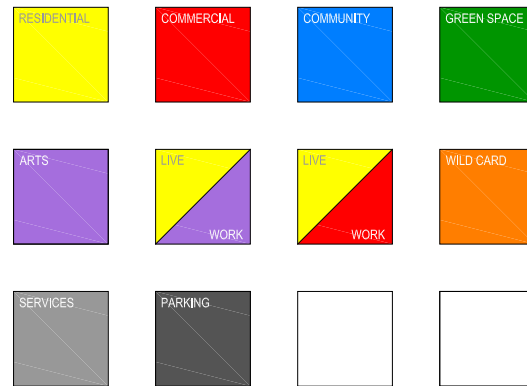




Group 6

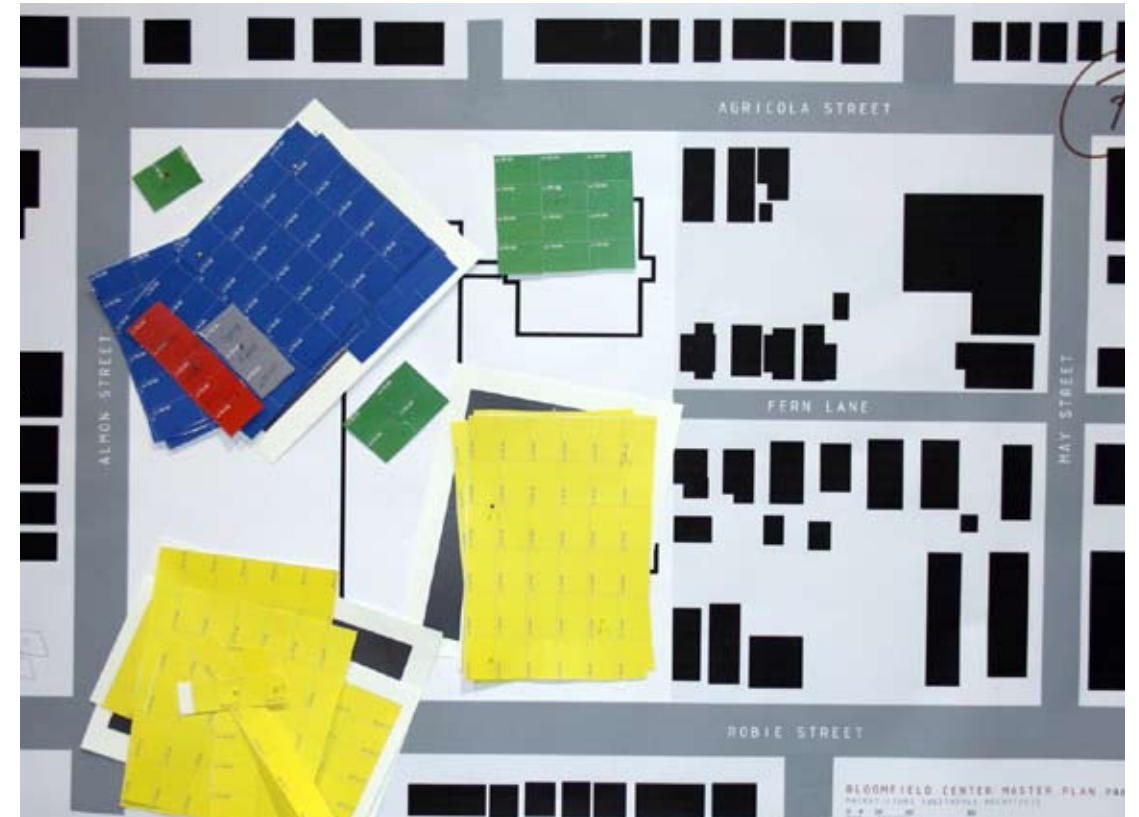
- Create a 'town square'
- Multi-use
- Underground parking
- Retail 'ring'
- 'Green belt' along Almon Street
- Relocate original park/playground
- Green roofs
- Take a 'Start Fresh' approach
- Ensure environmental sensitivity
- Housing to be live/work

Group 6 - Plan.

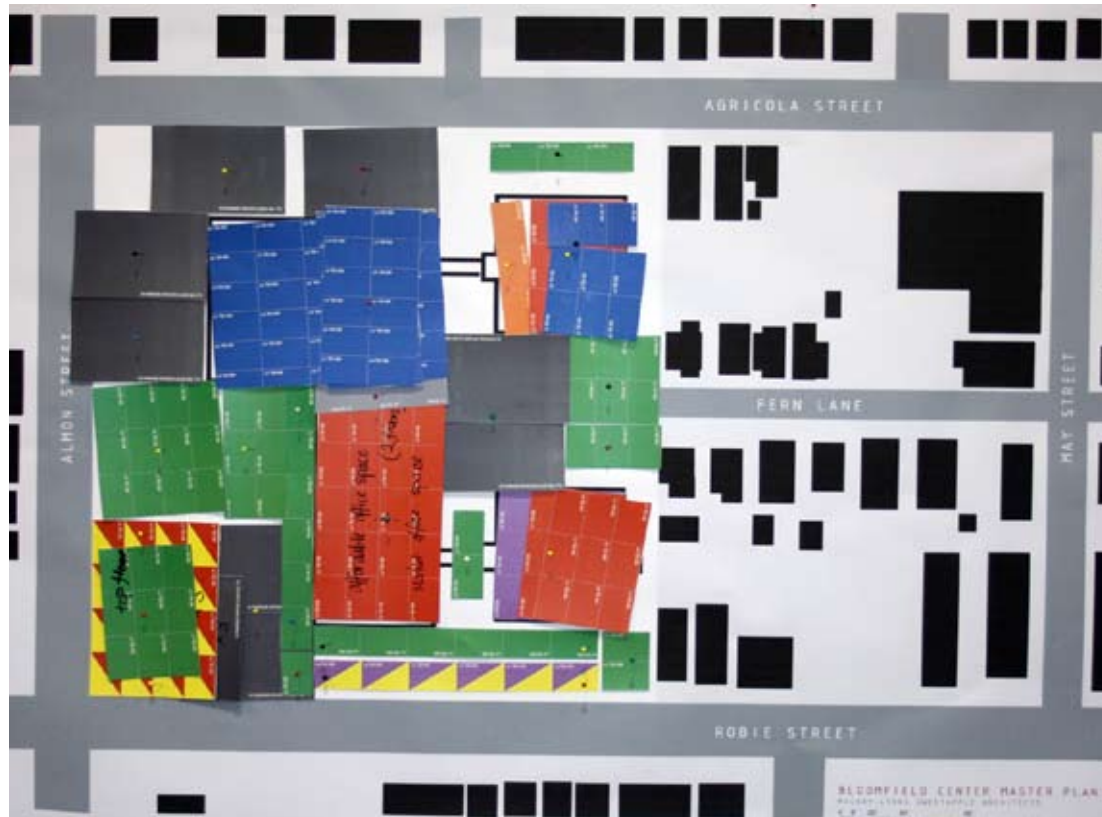
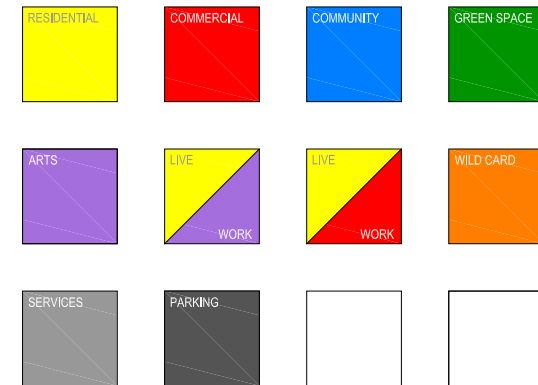


Group 7

- North End centerpiece
- Non-profit use (Bike Again)
- 5-6 storey community buildings
- 3 storey residential buildings
- Create large green space
- Keep parking underground
- Accommodate challenged community members
- Take advantage of the views (perhaps higher community centre)
- Density
- 216 housing units - mix of affordable and market



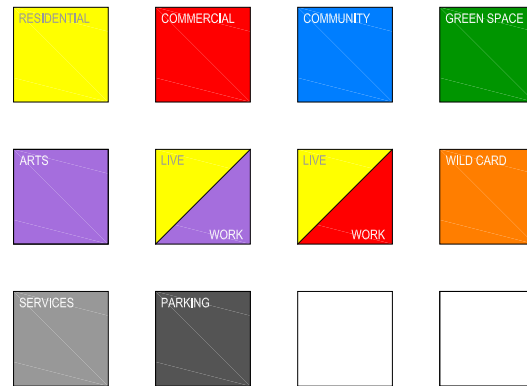
Group 7 - Plan.



Group 8 - Plan.

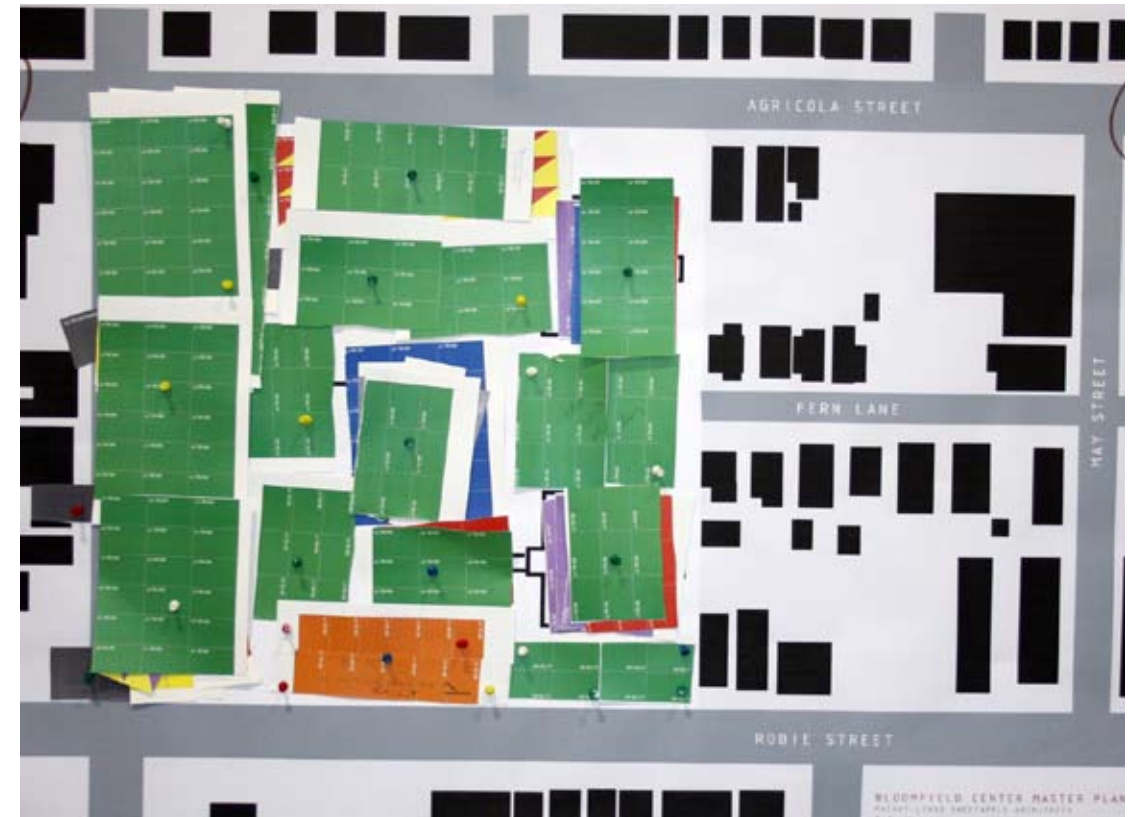
Group 8

- Preserve what exists
- Multi-use development
- Arts groups: performance and rehearsal space
- Affordable office space
- Day care facility
- Multi-storey commercial residential at Robie and Almon

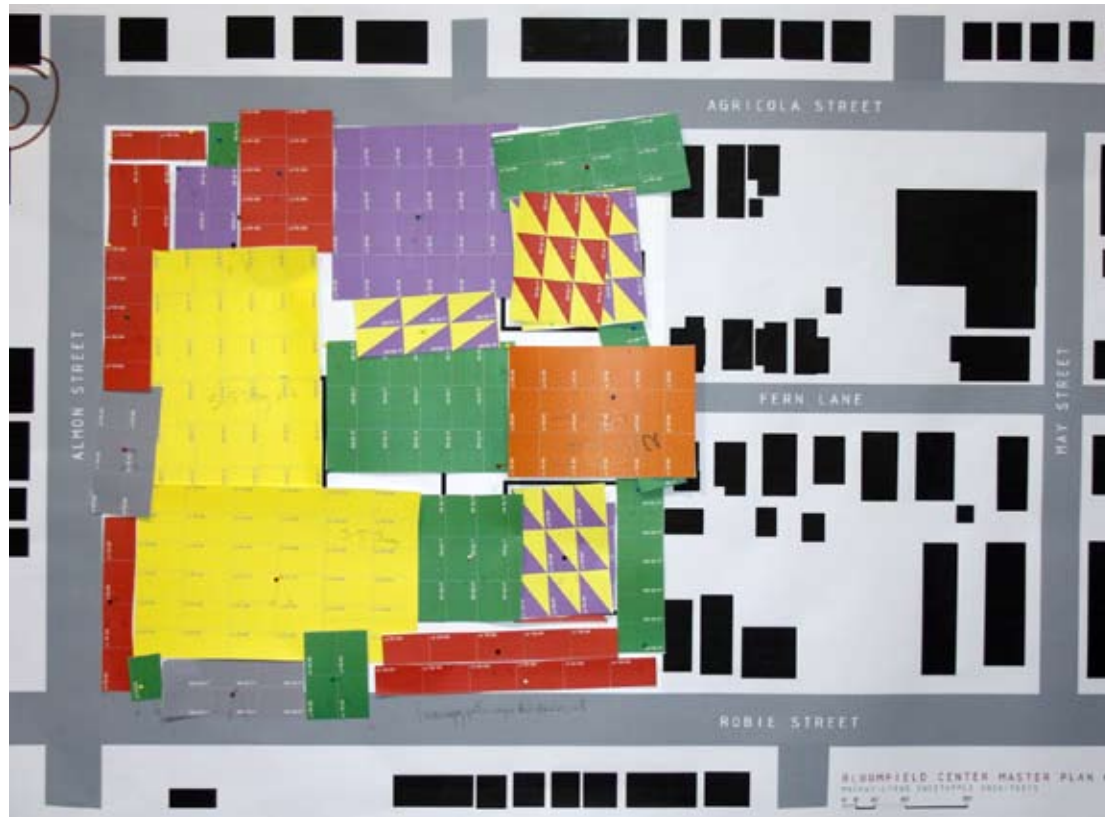
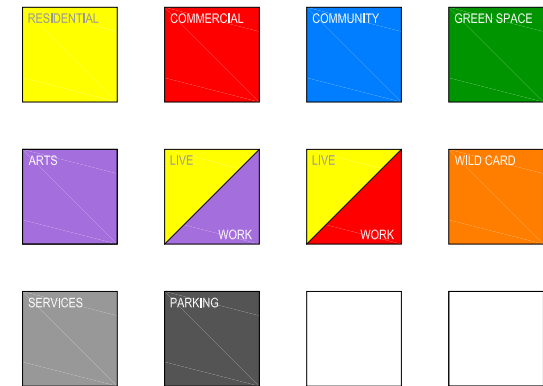


Group 9

- Magnetic Hub
- Environmental, Social and Financial Responsibility
- 34% High Revenue, 36% Moderate Revenue, 30% Subsidized
- Governed by a community based, non-profit development board
- Combine housing, retail, commercial, non-profit
- Residential / artists' studios
- Green Roofs
- Transportation hub
- Provide bike storage and facilities to shower
- Accommodate commuters - car pools
- Childcare facility



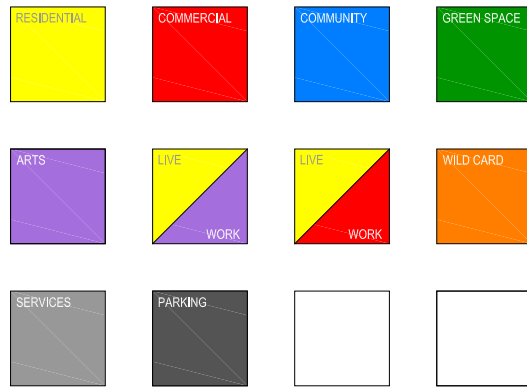
Group 9 - Plan.



Group 10

- Brand: Community, Urban, Hub, Bridge, Culture, Accessible (Physically and Financially), Inclusive and Sustainable
- Art community focus
- Provide affordable housing for artists
- Balance not-for-profit with revenue generating uses
- 20% for performing arts, 20% for studios
- 100 seat theatre space - could also be used as community gathering space
- Interior and exterior community gathering space

Group 10 - Plan.

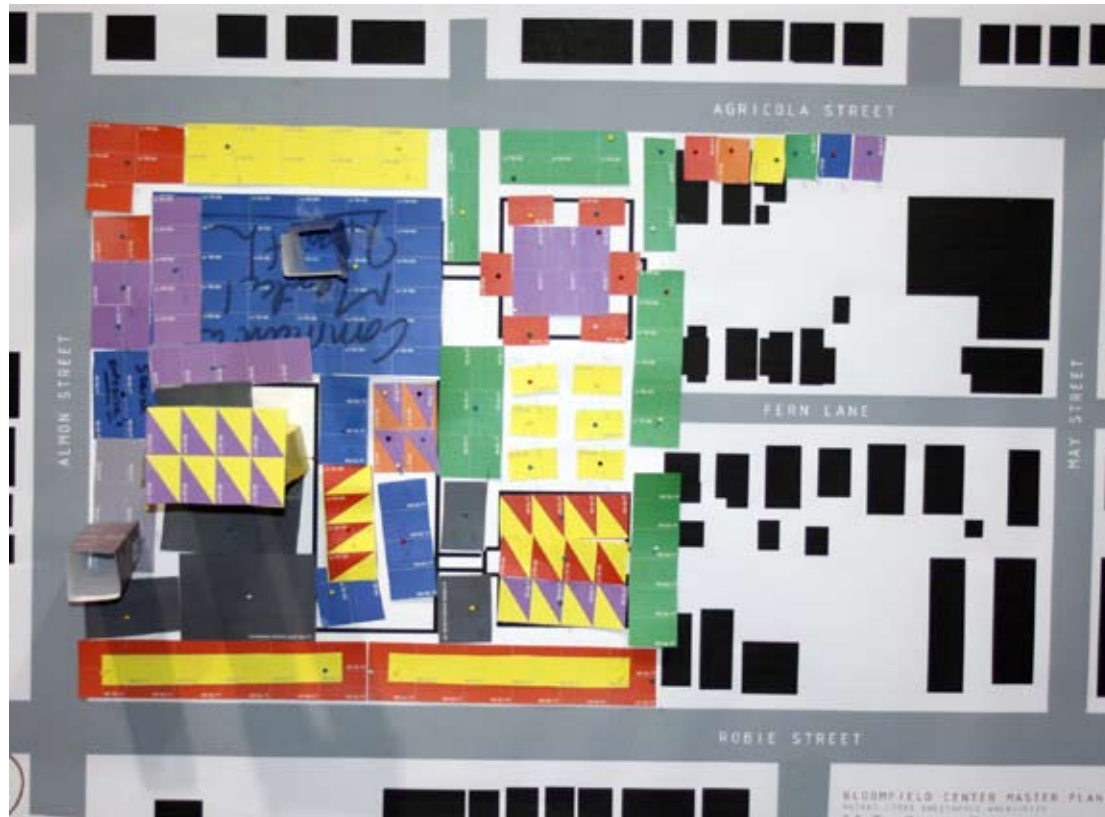
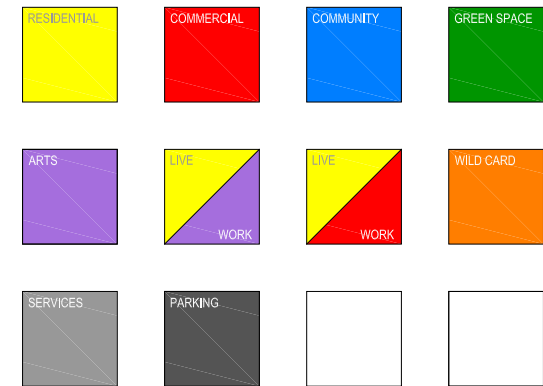


Group 11

- Vibrant, compact city space
- Include gymnasium, art park, daycare, residential (market to pay for community)
- Do not include parking
- Programming for youth
- Replacement for North End Pub
- Multi-purpose facility (like Hydrostone Market)
- Podium and tower scheme (Ground level arts community, 2 storey live/work townhouses, tower above)
- More housing if multi-level
- Community building space (Bike Again, community kitchen, community garden)
- Subsidized daycare centre
- 7 storey limit



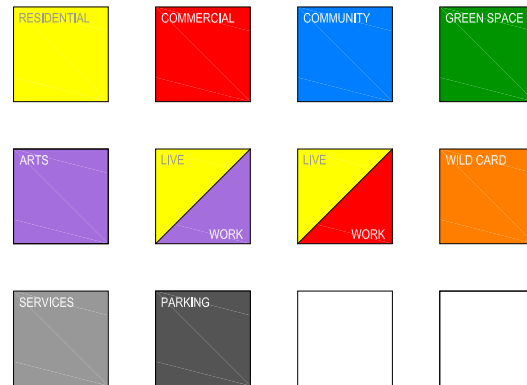
Group 11 - Plan.



Group 12

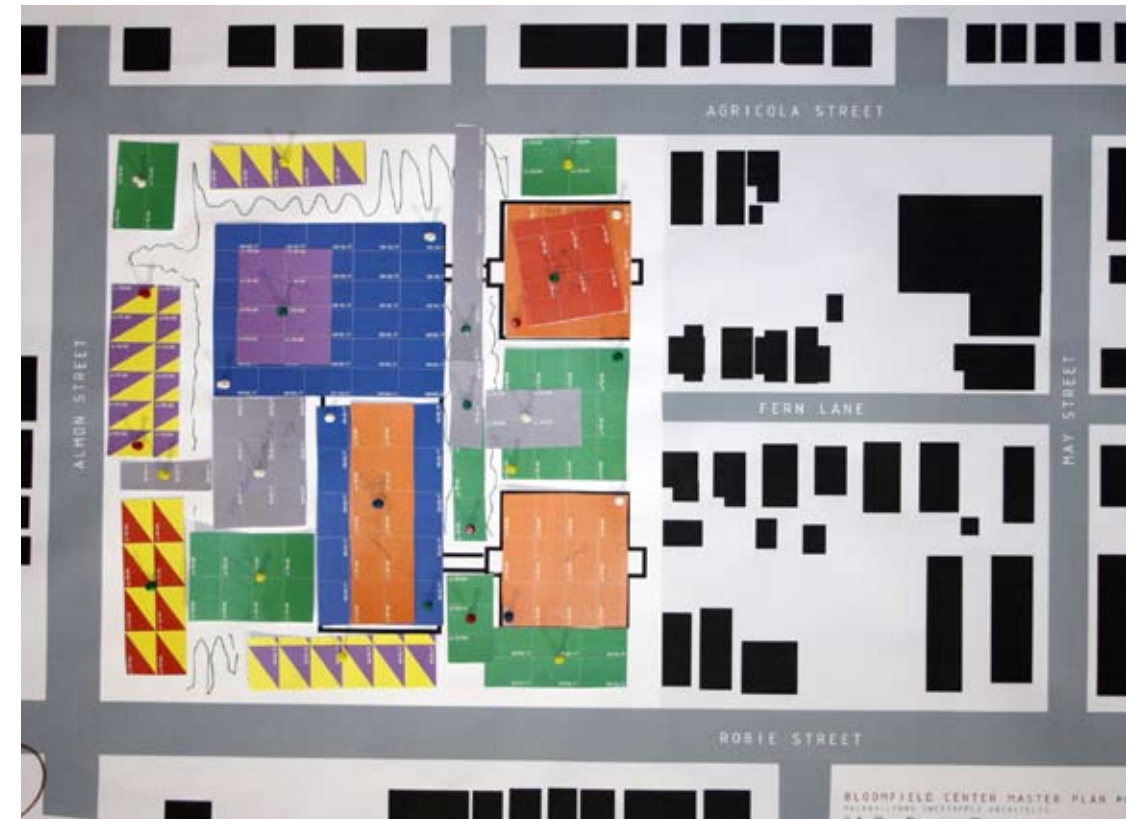
- Create diversity (multi-use)
- Commercial along Agricola and Almon
- Arts space
- Medical centre
- Commercial and housing on Robie
- Live/work for artists
- Community and commercial
- Non-profit performance space, office space, artists' studios, housing and creativity space

Group 12 - Plan.

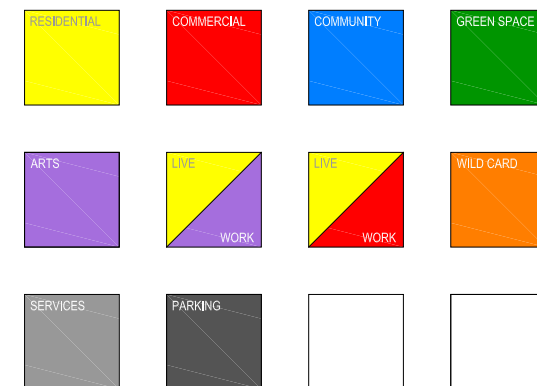
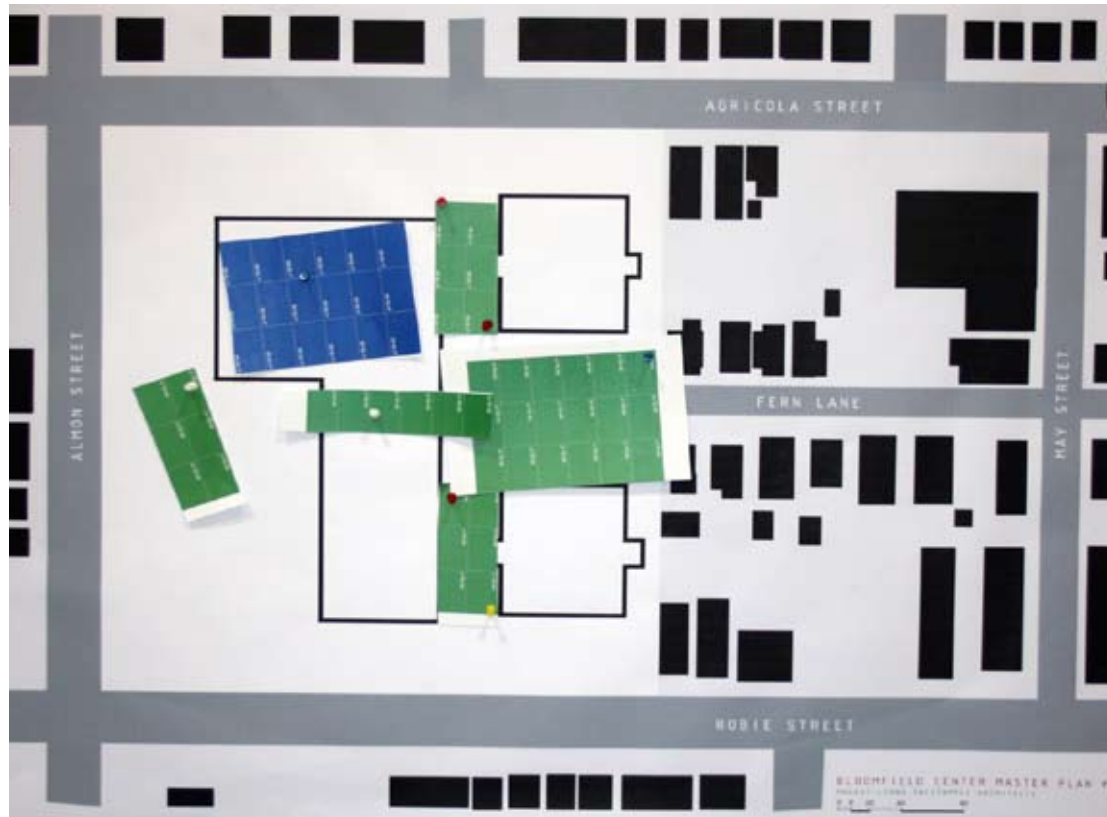


Group 13

- Brand: 'Renaissance of Spirit'
- 'Renaissance' not 'Redevelopment'
- Good community spirit
- Museum on Robie
- Educational and commercial on Robie
- Disadvantaged groups to be accommodated
- Green space is important - keep existing trees
- Community market
- Include parking



Group 14 - Plan.



Group 13

- Vision: Community Centre, Meeting Place, Accessible and Welcoming
- Keep 'community'
- Make accessible
- Keep heritage buildings but remove Main Building
- Recreational and educational use only
- No housing



Workshop 2 - Form

May 24, 2008
1-4 pm

Workshop #2 included about 70 community members in 9 groups who worked on the master plan program looking at low medium and high density scenarios for form potential of the site.



The following illustrates the individual group results from Workshop 2.



Community Gathering Space/
Arts Performance Space



Retail/Office Commercial
Space



Residential/Office/Studio
Space

Group 1

- Community centre
- multi - storey tower anchor on west corner
- Multiple ownership
- Mixed use row houses - sold as private
- Pedestrian street and service lane
- Park / public space
- Clear visual paths both directions
- Little to no parking on surface





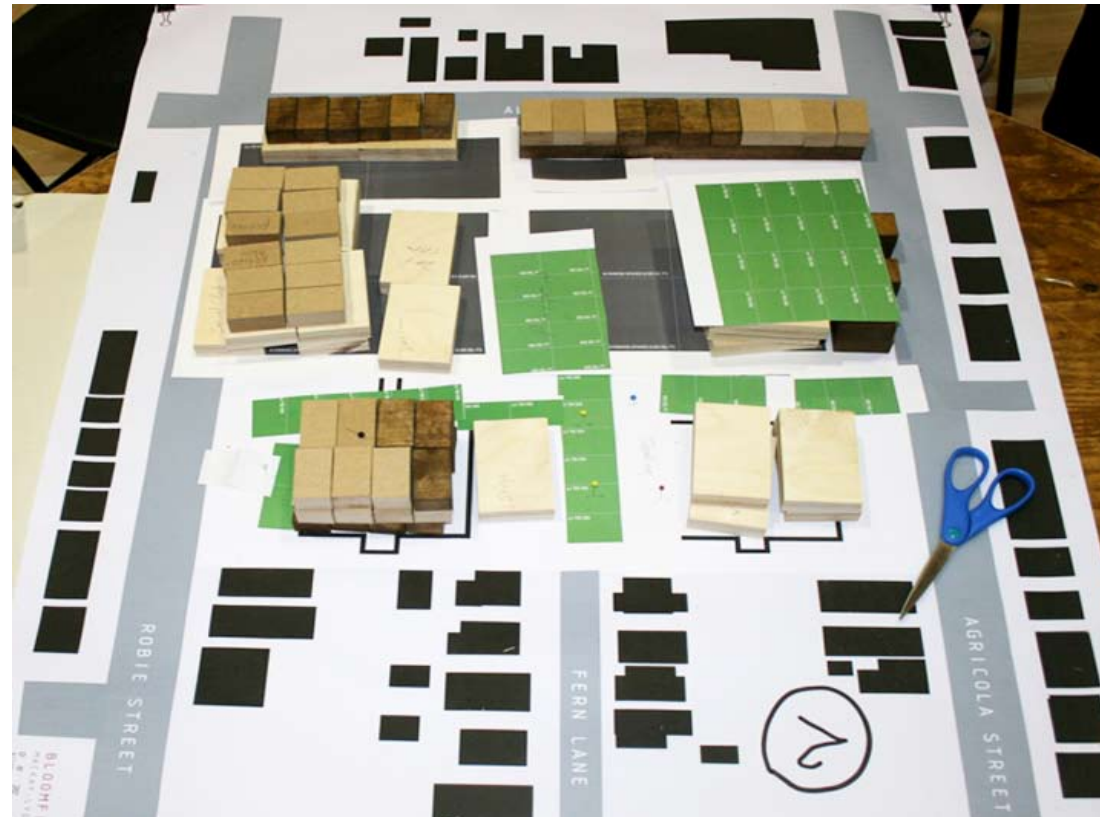
Community Gathering Space/
Arts Performance Space



Retail/Office Commercial
Space



Residential/Office/Studio
Space



Group 2

- Medium density - keep gym
- Library, Medical Office, not for profit
- Affordable housing
- Day care and playground
- Mix of 2-storey housing and commercial along Almon
- Green roof



Community Gathering Space/
Arts Performance Space



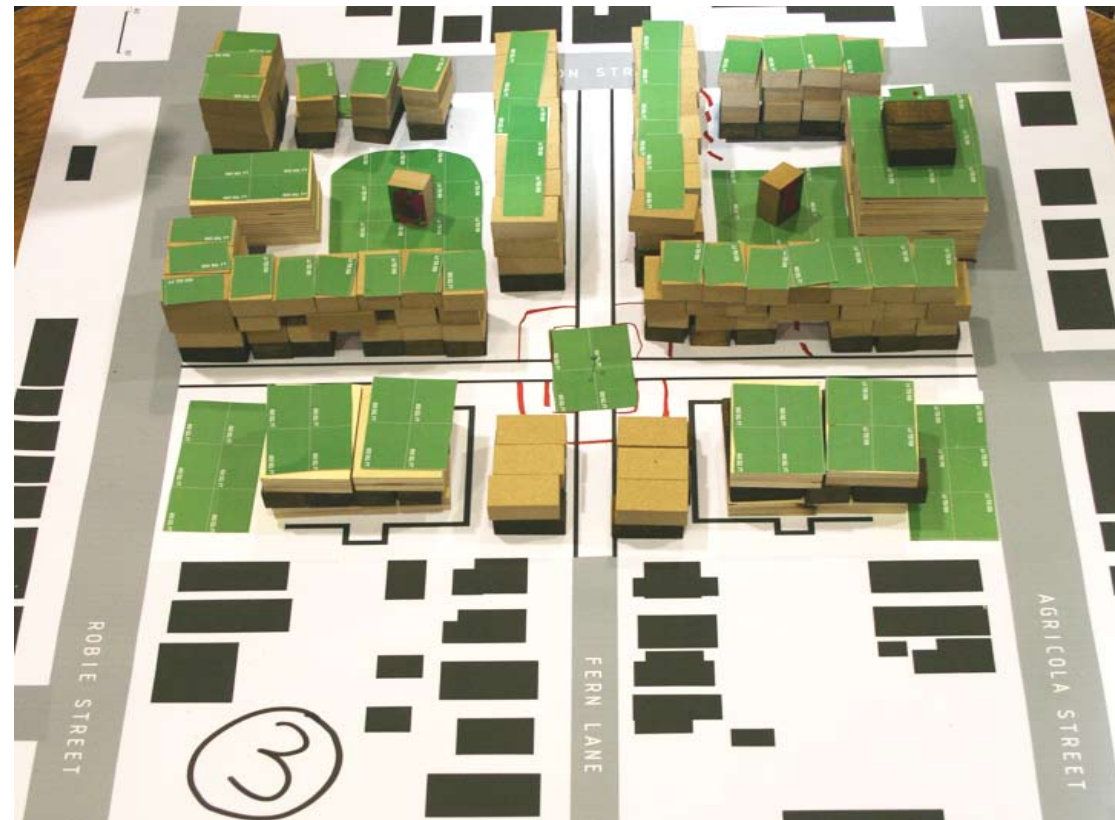
Retail/Office Commercial
Space



Residential/Office/Studio
Space

Group 3

- Public Square
- High density
- Green roofs
- Pedestrian Streets
- 2 courtyards
- Mixed use - mostly 4 storey
- Mix of social and market uses
- Recreational facility
- Underground parking
- Keep Commons and Fielding





Community Gathering Space/
Arts Performance Space



Retail/Office Commercial
Space



Residential/Office/Studio
Space

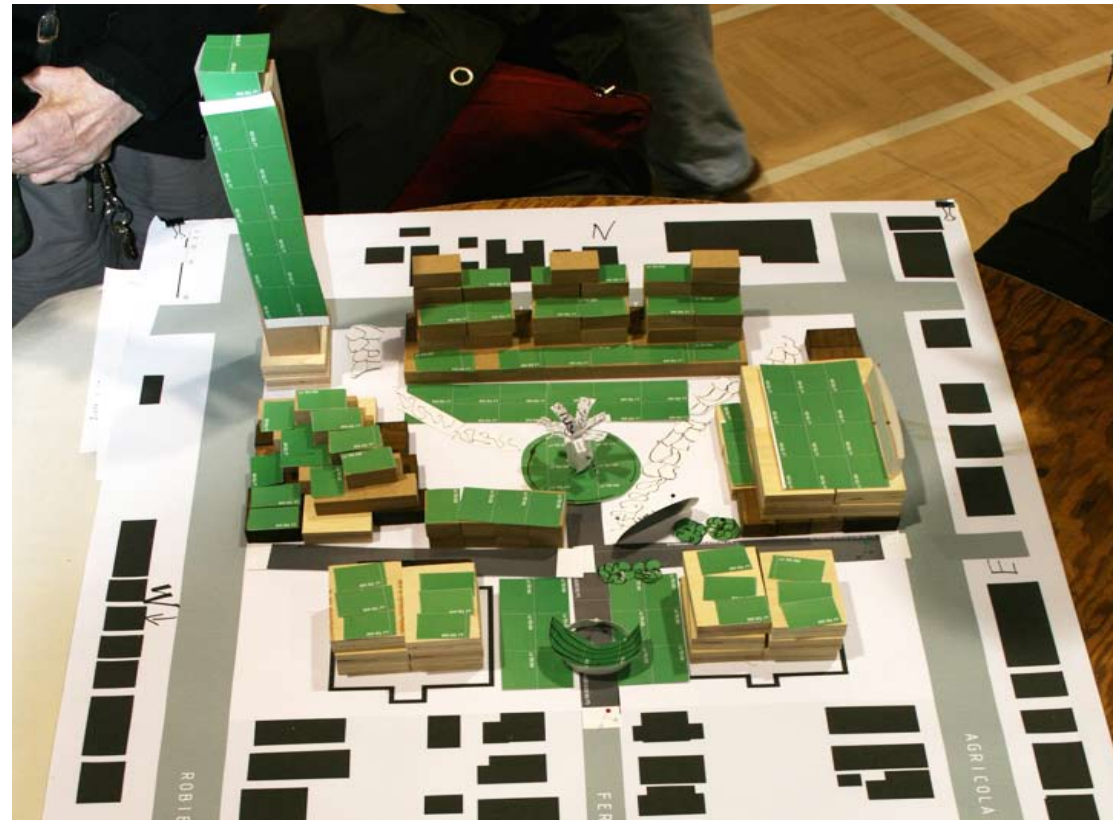


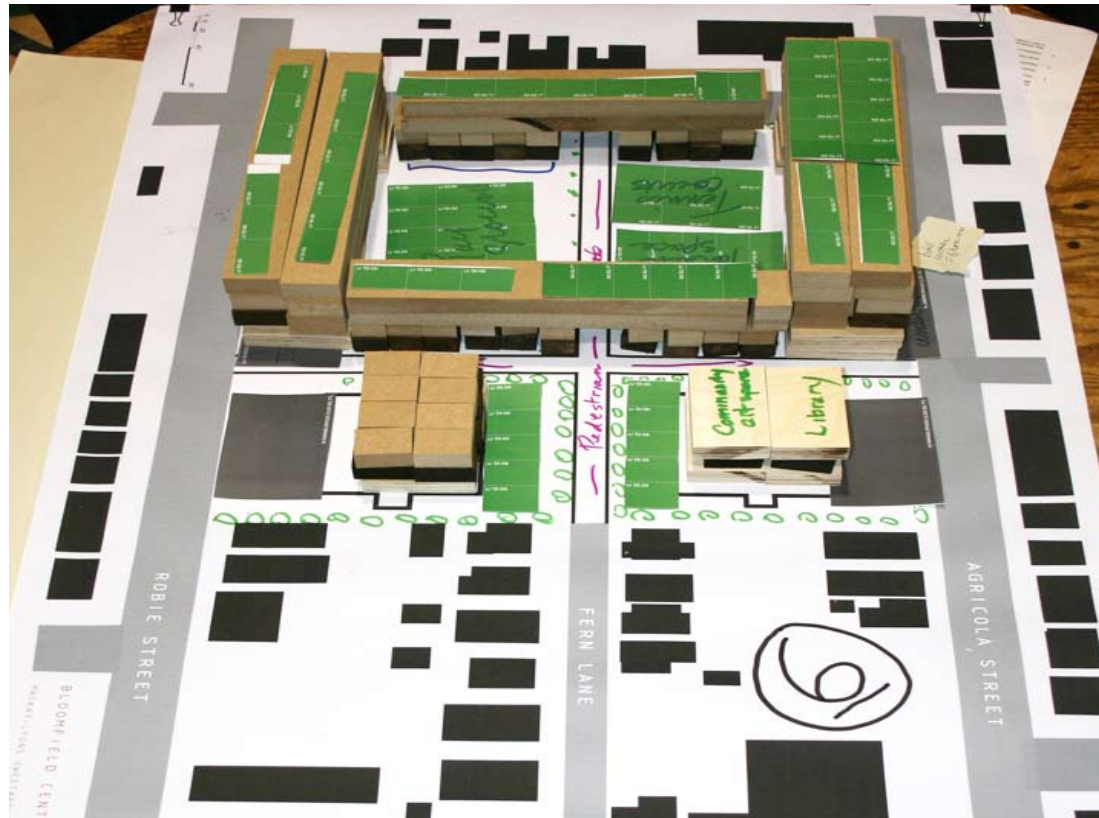
Group 4

- Community space
- Keep all 3 buildings
- Similar to Group 1 scheme
- Pedestrian access through Bloomfield and Fern (extend both)
- Increase height on West corner
- Parking below grade
- 2 storey mixed use along Agricola and Almon

Group 5

- Optimal solar orientation
- Economics - Density important
- High rise tower on West corner
- Community based interest / control
- Reuse material from existing building
- Green roofs
- Mixed use
- Amphitheatre
- Passive solar benefits
- Garden city (trees)
- Usable green space on rooftops
- Childcare facility
- Pedestrian space
- Jane Jacobs, 'eyes on the street' - The Death and Life of Great American Cities (density important)
- Human scale spaces





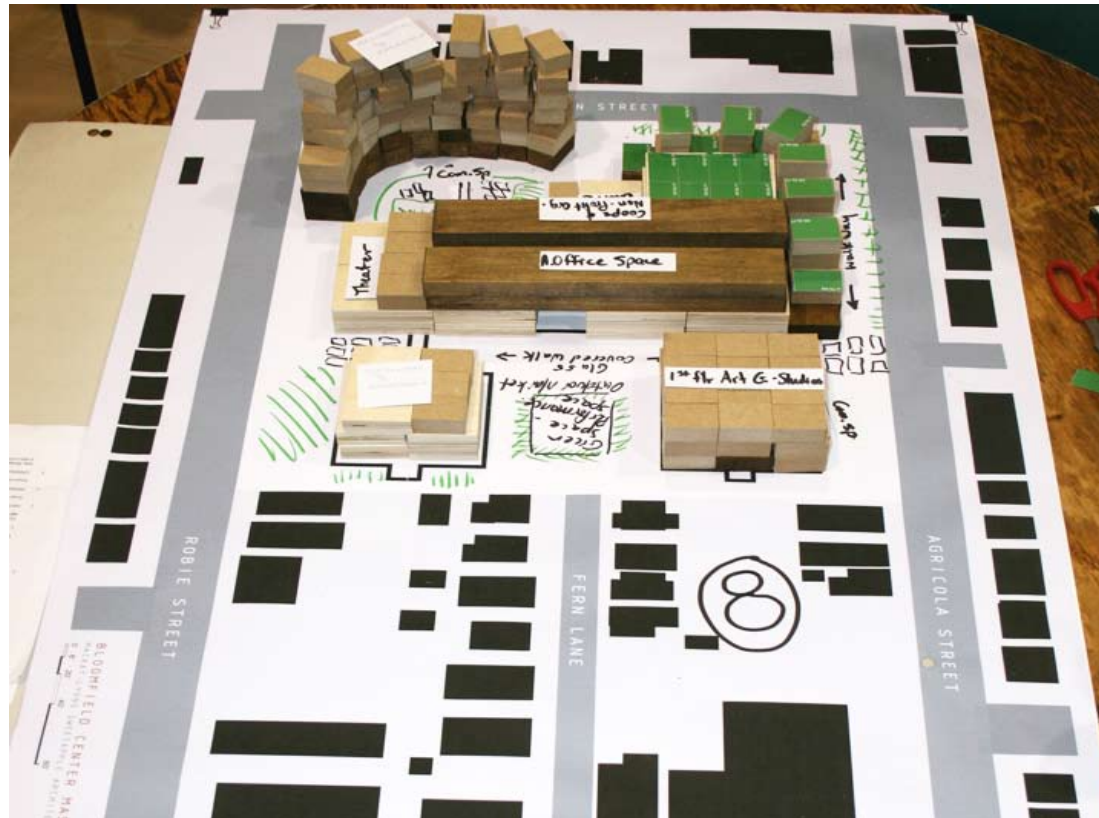
Group 6

- High density
- Pedestrian walkways
- Some parking next to Heritage buildings
- Parking below grade
- Community space on Agricola and all corners
- Perimeter areas have mixed use - 4, 5 and 6 storeys
- Green Roofs
- Safe, enclosed courtyard
- 'Bloomfield' Courtyard green space
- Community centre and library

Group 7

- Courtyard between 2 heritage buildings
- Community buildings at the corner of Fern and Bloomfield
- Mixed use 3 storey commercial residential along Agricola
- Commercial 3, 4 and 5 storeys along Robie
- Underground parking
- 3 storey mixed use along new Fern





Group 8

- Housing & commercial, not for profit
- Live / work - artists' studio with gallery on ground floor
- affordable and market housing, accessible, subsidized
- 8 Storey West corner (rounded), 2 storeys of commercial space, 6 storeys of residential above
- Daycare and community centre
- Playground
- Affordable office space
- Retail with artists' studios (coops) above on Agricola
- Keep existing gymnasium
- Green roofs
- Theatre
- Community courtyard, outdoor performance space between heritage buildings
- outdoor market
- No parking
- Retail at street level

Group 9

- Pedestrian streets
- High density
- Keep 2 existing heritage buildings
- Underground parking
- Arts space
- Green roofs
- Rounded 3 storey at Agricola and Almon
- Building enclosed atrium between 2 heritage buildings
- Increase height for community based building, surrounded by mixed use housing on Almon
- Welcoming & Inclusive



