



Downtown Moncton Development Vision **Implementation Strategy**



CITY OF / VILLE DE
MONCTON



DOWNTOWN
MONCTON
CENTRE VILLE

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Downtown Moncton Development Vision

i. What is this document? How to use it?

The Downtown Moncton Development Vision is a document commissioned in 2006 by the City of Moncton and Downtown Moncton Centre-Ville Inc. (DMCI).

The Downtown Moncton Development Vision is a high level vision document intended to give direction to development and investments in Downtown. The Development Vision is most effective when it can compel, inspire and bring about the intended outcomes. To do so, it is rooted in the realm of possibilities, is prepared for a broad spectrum of users, and provides clear and concise direction for decision-makers. To be plausible, the Development Vision has been substantiated through technical analysis, is a product of a well documented public consultation process, and succinctly defines the appropriate tools and or mechanisms for implementation.

The Development Vision for Downtown Moncton has been divided into three documents to make it manageable and easily referenced. These are:

The Background Report

The Background Report provides the documentation of the analysis and process that is the basis of the Development Vision. This document provides a summary of the outcomes of the research, analysis and consultation that supports the vision contained in the Development Vision and the potential strategies that bring it to fruition.

The Development Vision

This is the long term physical plan and concept for Downtown. It presents the intended physical structure that will guide decisions regarding the character of uses, open spaces, and the built form over the next 25 years. Of the three documents, the Development Vision will have the most longevity, given that it describes a vision for the Downtown.

This will be the most useful for residents, land owners and developers as well as the public sector, by guiding investments, directing planning policies and public improvements, by functioning as an economic development tool, and acting as a reference to assess development applications.

The Implementation Strategy ← *this document*

This is the implementation plan and recommended actions. It sets out potential projects, programs, policies and strategies to move the plan towards its realization. With an emphasis on initial capital improvement projects, this document addresses the current conditions of the Downtown by defining the necessary actions that will advance the long-term vision presented in the Development Vision.

The Implementation Strategy document will be most useful in guiding the City and Downtown Moncton Centre-Ville Inc. (DMCI) in defining programs, setting priorities, allocating finances and assessing achievements. Over time, this section of the Development Vision should be revisited and updated to ensure that the strategies remain relevant and current to the Downtown as it evolves.



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1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Development Vision for Downtown Moncton

– Make it happen

The Downtown Moncton Development Vision has emerged from the involvement of hundreds of Moncton citizens. The implementation of the Vision will require nothing less.

The Vision provides an image of the place that Downtown aspires to be, and the place where Monctonians desire to live, work and play. The Implementation Strategy provides a road map - a series of steps and priorities - to make the Vision happen. The implementation of the Vision is as much about achieving specific goals and objectives as it is about capitalizing on the momentum generated through the consultation process.

The Vision outlines 10 Big Moves. These 10 initiatives, which are of the highest priority, embody the Vision and will function as catalysts for the integrated realization of other initiatives. While a full description of these Big Moves is provided in the Development Vision document, they are worth restating at the outset of the Implementation Strategy. They are:

1 Support the long term environmental and economic viability of Downtown

This is a move intended to permeate all projects and decision Downtown. Every initiative should be tested by its ability to support Downtown, now and in the future, both economically and as an environment that can sustain a high quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

2 Pedestrians first

A quality pedestrian realm is a priority that must permeate all aspects of development, public investment, policy, and even programming. From paving and streetscapeing, to orienting buildings towards the sidewalk, to enhancing open space connections throughout Downtown.

3 Re-introduce the fine grain grid network of streets and blocks

The Vision enhances the existing fine grid network of streets and blocks, extending it south such that the area between Main Street and the Riverfront becomes integrated into the city as a whole.

4 Trees, Trees, Trees

This city will be fundamentally transformed through the planting of 5,000 additional trees in the downtown core over the next...years.

5 Re-connect with the Petitcodiac River and Hall's Creek

All development will shift to "face" the water, redefining the orientation of the city towards its largest natural asset.

6 Introduce a significant residential population Downtown

The vibrancy and animation the Vision calls for hinges on a strong residential population living Downtown. Implementing this idea will require a broad range of strategies, from promoting secondary units, to capitalizing on opportunities for infill, to developing new neighbourhoods.

7 Enhance and increase public spaces Downtown - Church Street Plaza, Train Station Plaza, Market Square

Three key new public spaces Downtown will be created to anchor the new grid system and enliven the pedestrian environment.

8 Build upon the unique existing cultural and landscape heritage through the creation of heritage districts

Institute a Heritage Area Study in a series of areas including Main Street and the area around the Aberdeen Centre.

9 Grand Avenues

Develop Assomption Boulevard and Vaughan Harvey Boulevard as grand streets that are characterized by wide sidewalks, landscaped medians, mid-rise buildings that are built-to the edge of the street, and commercial uses at-grade.

10 Let downtown be Downtown

Downtown is different from any other area in Moncton. It should be treated as such. The Vision entails focusing on Downtown as a city and region-wide asset and resource.

1.2 Keys to Implementation

1

One high quality, high density project can turn Downtown around.

Quality matters, in as much as it determines whether a project will serve as an inspiration. Seminal projects must emphasize quality – in both materials and design. The first project following the adoption of the Vision by City Council must articulate the quality expected by the municipality.

It must also be defining. First projects serve as precedents, and often need to “lead” the market (i.e. being ahead of its time, a traditional market analysis will not be useful). Understanding the financial viability of such projects will require vision!

Density matters too. Adding a residential community to increase the number of pedestrians on the street, in the shops, and making use of various amenities is a central component of the Downtown Vision.

2

A university presence can be the catalyst for change.

Other successful downtowns, and specific projects within them, seek out university or college projects as part of their revitalization. In most instances, this involves a targeted lobbying of the institution.

The opportunity exists to establish a partnership for growth between Downtown and the Université de Moncton that extends well beyond simply locating an ancillary use in Downtown. Ideas to consider: providing student housing in the heart of Downtown; a formalized partnership between the University and the City; generating Provincial leadership and investment in this idea.

3

Leverage heritage assets to create value.

Existing heritage stock is irreplaceable – its defining qualities already create an authentic sense of place. A deep respect for heritage buildings and landscapes, and the implementation of Heritage Area Studies, is fundamental to the future success of Downtown Moncton.

4

Your First Project will be the hardest – you will have to resist doing what is “easy”.

First projects are by far the most difficult. At times it will be challenging to maintain the planning vision, and there will be conflicting opinions with respect to what constitutes respect for the Vision. Downtowns must become a unique environment with a sense of identity – it does not, and it should not, look like every other place. In attracting development, it will at times be challenging to resist types of development that are not in keeping with the Vision (i.e. large format commercial), but doing so will result in a Downtown that is spectacular.

5

You will encounter resistance.

Every pioneering project does, either from residents, politicians or bureaucrats. Expect resistance and be prepared to work through it.

6

You can significantly change Downtown in a relatively short period of time.

If your first project is a huge success, and many of these critical success factors are honoured, change could happen quickly. Downtowns in other cities have experienced significant transformations in periods as short as 5 years. Moncton has the growth to suggest this is possible.

7

Private investment is needed.

It is imperative to create the conditions necessary to attract development that is in keeping with this Vision. Some of the largest impacts Downtown will result from the private investment of landowners.

8

You will need to recruit developers who buy-into the vision.

Cities that are proactive in seeking out the kind of development that they want are distinctly unique in form. This is not always an easy task – it involved tenacity, and many meetings with the Downtown Vision in hand.

9

Use the Vision as a symbol for change, to entice the development industry.

Developers understand that at a basic level the Vision is about generating value. The Vision must be shared extensively in order for the cumulative effect of the higher built form standards to be understood. The first project could become this symbol, which is why it is so imperative to get it right.

10

If you pioneer, as the Vision demands, you will have false starts.

Innovative projects have false starts that require regrouping, reevaluating, and shifting either the course of the project, the players, or the policy context in order to learn how to succeed. Valuable knowledge will be acquired— knowledge that will be further instrumental during implementation.

11

Success will depend on a variety of initiatives unfolding simultaneously.

Having the right policy framework is important, but it is only a piece of a larger puzzle. For example, implementation could be dependant on the combination of the policy framework and the aggressive recruitment of developers.

12

Collaboration is required across sectors.

This can be one of the most challenging aspects of downtown Master Planning. It is imperative to have a comprehensive approach to implementation that integrates a diversity of perspectives and needs: social services, engineering, detailed design, the needs of both children and the elderly. For this reason, it is imperative to continue to check-in with many of the stakeholders who participated during the Visioning process.

13

Keep the vision present and monitor success.

The Vision for the Downtown needs to be available and understood, and one way to achieve this is to monitor it on a yearly basis, evaluating implementation.

14

Successfully revitalized downtowns have cheerleaders!

A cheerleader, whether the Mayor, the City Manager or the Economic Development Department, is essential to keep Downtown on the front of the municipal agenda and ensuring that funding is allocated towards Downtown projects.

2

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

2.0 Implementation Recommendations

The following recommendations provide a framework for the implementation of the *Downtown Moncton Development Vision*. The recommendations offer a road map - a course of action that can, and should, be pursued.

Many of the following recommendations emerged through consultation with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, and yet the implementation of the Vision is not limited to them. New courses of action will be identified as the Vision begins to take shape.

The recommendations are presented as they relate to each of the Vision principles.

2.1 Identity and Culture

	Actions
B uild on a strong sense of identity. Landscapes, the building stock and the multi-layered history of Moncton are its inherent resource and should be a continuous source of inspiration. Crafting a sense of identity also includes looking into the future, towards what Moncton strives for - its hopes and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize and celebrate the history of Moncton's natural landscape and human settlements through urban design, cultural programming and heritage markings.• Identify distinct identities and cultural settings for different parts of Downtown (e.g. an artist district).• Foster bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism as part of Moncton's historical identity.
	Actions
E ncourage community interaction. Year-round active programming will support a strong public realm by bringing people to the Downtown and providing them with opportunities to engage and interact with one another. Programming should reflect Moncton's unique identity, heritage and location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce winter programming to celebrate Moncton's climate, ensuring that the Downtown remains active and vibrant in all seasons.• Create a strategic plan related to Winter Programming that identifies initiatives, governance/management and funding sources.

Actions

Make downtown attractive to young entrepreneurs, professionals and families.

Attracting young professionals to the Downtown will help create the critical mass necessary to support the different services and activities, which in turn will attract new businesses to locate in the area.

- Foster arts and culture (e.g. public art, programming, art based enterprises).
- Create a business incubator specifically designed to support independent artists. For example, the provision of a resource centre offered for use at a subsidized cost.
- To significantly increase the number and variety of housing options, conduct a feasibility study to understand the ways in which the City of Moncton can support the creation of a diverse housing stock.

Actions

Maintain and enhance a strong civic purpose and presence. Downtown must sustain its role as the location for civic functions.

Ensuring that Downtown remains a centre with a strong civic purpose and presence helps create multiple generators in the Downtown. The Downtown must appeal to a diverse range of interests through the role and function that it plays.

- Existing civic functions should remain in Downtown; new civic functions should be encouraged to locate Downtown.
- Encourage a sense of shared identity and pride in Downtown through the creation of an awareness campaign that connects suburban populations to Downtown amenities.
- Foster regional and national visibility by recruiting regional and national services and enterprises to locate Downtown.

Actions

Promote downtown as a life style choice.

The downtown should provide a different choice from the development choices available in suburban environments (e.g. big boxes and extensive parking lots). A healthy downtown will position Moncton as relevant in the contemporary economic arena. The complex interaction of uses and users will increasingly attract the young and the creative.

- Develop downtown as a shared amenity, so the broader community can value and support Downtown.
- Promote a mix of uses throughout Downtown.
- Recognize through the approval process that some types of development do not support the downtown environment, and should be either re-designed or disallowed.

2.2 Heritage

Maintain the inventory of heritage structures.
The existing inventory of heritage structures is an important tool to ensure that Moncton's built heritage is protected, but will also act as a mechanism to inform the public about heritage resources and to promote heritage building stock.

Actions

- Build on the work done to date to ensure the protection of heritage structures.
- Ensure that the inventory is maintained and updated on a regular basis.

Undertake an inventory of structures that contribute to the heritage character of the Downtown.

In some cases, the heritage character extends beyond individual buildings and encompasses a whole area: a district. Districts can be shaped by a collection of structures, open spaces, streetscapes, landscapes and cultural landscapes. This heritage character should be understood, nurtured, and where relevant, protected.

Actions

- Study the option of creating Heritage Area Studies, including:
1) developing an understanding of the heritage character;
2) defining an area to which it applies; and 3) creating guidelines that manage and support the development of the area in keeping with its unique character.

2.3 Environment

Create a firm urban growth boundary to better utilize existing infrastructure through the encouragement of infill development Downtown.

A firm urban growth boundary will ensure that Moncton uses its resources efficiently by directing growth to areas where the services and infrastructure are already in place thereby reducing car dependency by creating more transit supportive compact communities and preserving open spaces.

Actions

- Define and adopt an urban growth boundary.
- Create a 'smart growth' strategy for the City of Moncton that will define where density should go and what roles various communities will play in that growth.
- Introduce a requirement for a needs assessment to be undertaken when rezoning to commercial, to prevent speculative rezoning.

Promote sustainability and an efficient use of municipal resources.

'Leap-frog' development requires new infrastructure to be put in place by the Municipality, placing unnecessary strain on limited resources. Areas that already have the infrastructure in place have the capacity to handle the anticipated growth in population, resulting in a more efficient use of the existing infrastructure.

Actions

- Create incentives for investment Downtown; phase out the inadvertent subsidization of suburban development.
- Adopt environmental benchmarks that encourage property owners to upgrade the environmental quality of existing buildings and to construct new buildings to a higher environmental standard.
- Promote LEED standards by offering qualifying courses to Moncton professionals and creating an incentive program for meeting LEED.
- Improve Downtown infrastructure capacity where necessary.

Increase residential density – support what exists, and attract new residential development.

To start building the critical mass of people that is needed to maintain a healthy and vibrant Downtown and to attract and retain young professionals, there needs to be a diverse range of housing options available. Older housing should be maintained and enhanced, and new development should be directed to under-utilized and infill sites.

Actions

- Promote adaptive reuses of existing non-residential structures for housing.
- Set targets for increases to the Downtown residential population and generate specific strategies to meet these targets. Include a variety of tenures.
- Promote construction of new housing as complete neighbourhoods in order to offer a new housing/lifestyle choice.
- Encourage student housing.
- Create neighbourhood design guidelines that are mindful of permanence, access to amenities, privacy, and natural light and include neighbourhood conveniences within walking distances.

Increase the urban tree canopy.

Increasing the urban tree canopy not only makes Downtown more visually appealing, but it also promotes pedestrianism. A street that is well landscaped makes the pedestrian feel safer by creating a buffer between the pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Safety is one of the primary factors in determining whether a person will walk or not. Street trees also provide shade during the summer months and mitigate wind impacts during others.

Actions

- Prepare and implement a Tree Strategy that prioritizes certain avenues and locales for planting.
- Create a Campaign: 5000 New Trees in Riverfront Park and seek sponsorship from businesses, community organizations, universities and public schools.
- Develop tools and guidelines to help protect existing urban forests.
- Generate a marketing strategy that incorporates four key groups of players to enhance the urban forest: corporations, foundations, volunteers, and professionals.
- Explore a "Save-a-Tree Program" (to protect and relocate existing trees).
- Encourage tree gifts and memorials – with corporations, foundations, individuals, and businesses.
- The City of Moncton should provide urban forestry training, as needed, and seek to broadly educate about the value of trees in Downtown.
- Encourage property owner participation through a targeted Urban Forest program. Local property owners can participate in creating design criteria and priority sites for planting.
- Celebrate the planting of trees on an annual basis through an outdoor public Tree Planting Event.
- Include standards that require landscaping on surface parking lots.

Support a sustainable transportation system.

The long-term livability of Downtown is linked to the ability of people to circulate efficiently. A sustainable system begins by reducing the need to travel long distances, by creating self-sufficient neighbourhoods and supporting a pedestrian environment. Priorities also include accommodating active transportation, enhancing transit and integrating the street grid.

Actions

- Support existing residential neighbourhoods and develop new mixed-use complete communities within Downtown.
- Develop strategies to reduce car dependency Downtown.
- Enhance the street grid by extending it to be in keeping with the Vision.

Actions

Enhance evening and winter use of Downtown.

Downtown is best used during the summer. The challenge is to animate Downtown in such a way that it continues to be a major hub of activity and the preminent destination in all seasons and hours.

- Create an annual program of winter activities including a 'festival of lights' for all buildings.
- Enhance a sense of safety through lighting, buildings that frame open spaces and the street (eyes-on-the-street), and well connected pedestrian routes.
- Ensure that all indoor uses relate to the outdoors and streetscapes.
- Consider plantings that maintain foliage in all seasons.

Actions

Better connect Jones Lake to the Downtown.

Unlike a community centre that serves the immediate vicinity, Downtown Moncton serves the region and should be easily accessible to all. The stable residential neighbourhood of Jones Lake can help provide the critical mass to support Downtown services, but improved connections are required.

- Create a Master Plan for Jones Lake, to include a context analysis that presents better connections to Downtown.

2.4 Movement

Actions	
<p>Commit to the Active Transportation Plan and promote multi-modal transportation.</p> <p>A commitment to the Active Transportation Plan through initiatives such as clearly defining pedestrian and cycle routes, will not only improve the health and well-being of residents but will also alleviate some of the traffic congestion on major streets in Moncton.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an Awareness Campaign to better inform the public of the merits of the policy direction espoused in the Active Transportation Plan. • Create an annual review of the Active Transportation Plan; submit a one page report card to report back to City council. • Enhance connections to Université de Moncton through clearly defined pedestrian + cycle routes, and include student bus passes for all students with student (a U-Pass).
Actions	
<p>Connect the street network.</p> <p>A well connected network of streets will provide people with options regardless of mode of travel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict the sale of any city owned rights-of-way. • Restore the street and rail rights-of-ways as part of the street grid, where applicable. • Require the extension of the street grid through all new large developments. • Establish mid-block pedestrian connections, as applicable.
Actions	
<p>Endorse a Parking Strategy consistent with the Downtown Vision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation, Transit and Parking Study already underway.

Actions

Create street standards consistent with this Vision.

Establishing standards for street right-of-way widths that correspond to a street classification system will provide clarity on what type of development is desired in the area. For example, creating standards that encourage narrower street-right-of way widths will make streets safer. Motorists drive slower on narrower streets than wider ones.

- Create street standards to accommodate narrower street right-of-way widths.

2.5 Connectivity

Actions	
<p>Promote 'complete' neighbourhoods that support all aspects of daily life (within walking distance) through a mix of uses and a fine grain urban pattern.</p> <p>'Complete' neighbourhoods meet the daily needs of the people who work and live there within walking radius. A Downtown with a series of different 'complete' neighbourhoods creates multiple destinations throughout the Downtown, giving people a reason to walk between different destination points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses in Downtown, such that people can engage most aspects of their everyday life by walking. Amend the Zoning By-law where necessary.• Encourage the growth of a residential population downtown that includes affordable housing. Seek out a developer to lead the way with a large scale first project that will act as an impetus to further development and demonstrate what is possible. Establish incentives for this development to precede, and expedite the planning process.• Develop multiple traffic generators within short walking distance (i.e. keep destination uses spread out enough that they generate movement between them, but close enough that they can be reached by walking).
Actions	
<p>Nurture an urban form that facilitates a pedestrian life style.</p> <p>The 'look and feel' of a street determines whether people will walk on it. Streets need to give clues to pedestrians that they are welcome. Buildings along a street need to be a 'comfortable' scale for pedestrians (i.e. ground floor articulation, height setback) and the streetscape should be well landscaped and lit so the pedestrian feels safe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement the block pattern contained in the Vision.• Create a Streetscape Strategy that includes a typology for all Downtown streets. Emphasis will be on designing streetscapes that are safe, well lit, and comfortable at all times and during all seasons. Design guidelines should be created that direct redevelopment of streets.• Enhance the visual experience of the street through the development of guidelines for terminus treatments and landmarks.

2.6 Partnering

Actions

Foster a development environment focused on quality.

Recognize that quality will beget quality... for everyone. Compromised quality, on the other hand, will lower expectations, deter further investment, and be a long-term burden.

- Recruit a development partner who will demonstrate the vision with a signature project.
- Create a list of 'first projects' so the public is able to make a link between the new projects that have been guided by the Development Vision.
- Develop a campaign to promote and communicate the Vision, particularly among land owners.
- Lead by example. Consider investing in demonstration projects through private public partnerships.
- Show the concept plan widely to a broad audience.

Actions

Be the incubator.

Downtown is an ideal location for independent businesses, new business and entrepreneurs. The built form affords a number of unique spaces, and opportunities for networking and collaborations, unlike anywhere else.

- Recruit knowledge based industries and the creative economy by spreading the word that Moncton has an excellent quality of life and low cost of living.
- Actively promote the clustering and integration of independent businesses by providing unique spaces with shared amenities that are subsidized.
- Meet with regional post secondary institutions to identify opportunities for the integration of university functions into Downtown. Establish a strategy (i.e. partners, funding, location, key programming) for a first project.

Actions

Keept the momentum going.

Cooperation among stakeholders is required. The vision will be implemented through a variety of initiatives unfolding simultaneously.

- Maintain an open and on-going mechanism for public participation, particularly related to demonstration projects.
- Create an annual event to showcase the various events unfolding in Downtown. Institute awards called the Downtown Initiatives Awards that recognize a broad range of activities that are seen to be in keeping with the implementation of the Vision.
- Foster civic pride and involvement in Downtown through programming such as festivals, events and Downtown initiatives. Consider the establishment of a specific department that oversees Downtown programming.

	Actions
<p>Enhance the viability of retail.</p> <p>The capacity for Downtown to sustain retail will be dependant on achieving critical densities, both with respect to residential and employment uses. Both are fundamental. As densities increase, and Downtown will grow as a regional destination, and it will be better able to sustain unique retail opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the work of DMCI and Enterprise Greater Moncton. Seek opportunities for collaboration. • Develop a marketing campaign aimed at the regional population. • Encourage specialty retail to concentrate in specific areas of Downtown. • Develop a wayfinding strategy. • Accommodate larger format retailers in compatible forms, but only in strategic locations. • Generate waterfront tourism and capitalize on it through strong pedestrian connections to Downtown. • Support local businesses and promote their growth.
	Actions
<p>Help the entertainment and the art scene thrive- they are a driving market segment.</p> <p>Arts and cultural activities add animation to Downtown beyond working hours. The City of Moncton will benefit from growth in this sector and should seek to find ways to support initiatives that reinforce the Acadian identity in Moncton.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract additional cultural enterprises (e.g. dance and theatre companies, galleries, studios) through a targeted strategy. • Promote Arts Districts (e.g. around Aberdeen Park and/or the East End) by defining these areas, determining their niche, and establishing governing bodies to promote their flourishing. • Develop a comprehensive and coordinated Public Art Strategy and consider imposing a mandatory 1% contribution program for large developments. • Enhance year-round programming linked to cultural institutions (e.g. festivals and events).
	Actions
<p>Nurture neighbourhoods.</p> <p>A strong neighbourhood is the base for a healthy downtown that is well used at all times of the day, during all seasons. In Downtown there is a need to both support the well being of existing neighbourhoods, and the unique opportunity to establish entirely new neighbourhoods (such as in the West End).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better integrate existing residential neighbourhoods within walking distance to Downtown functions through improved corridors and a strategic program of enhancing amenities. This will need to be sequenced. • Enhance the pedestrian connections to the west end neighbourhoods identified in the Vision, as a first priority. • Ensure all new development areas can function as complete neighbourhoods by assessing their relationship to amenities and public transportation. Create a Complete Neighbourhood Evaluation assessment that is required for new developments Downtown.

Encourage improvements to private property.

In existing built out areas of Downtown that will not see significant transformation through the implementation of the Downtown Vision, improvements are required, and should be sought. These initiatives could happen immediately, and could serve to mitigate negative existing conditions. For example, expanses of parking lots could be edged with landscaping that mitigates the visual impact of parking and beautifies the street edge.

Actions

- Create a template of building typologies for infill (e.g. "granny flats", secondary units).
- Provide technical assistance and expertise to direct improvements to private property. Provide a brochure that demonstrates improvements and desired conditions and encourage landowners to seek technical assistance from City staff to ensure changes are in keeping with the Vision.
- Create a coordinated strategy that includes considering one block at a time. Involve property owners in the creation of this strategy.
- Encourage/initiate collaboration between property owners.

Focus on post-secondary education as a key to retaining youth.

The value of local educational institutions needs to be better understood, evaluated and elevated. These institutions bring a vibrancy and cultural energy to Downtown that needs to be recognized and further encouraged.

Actions

- Emphasis on post-secondary education opportunities for Anglophones, by partnering with Université de Moncton or by seeking other post secondary institutions to develop English speaking programs (as recommended in the City of Moncton Economic Development Strategy).
- Encourage educational facilities to locate within Downtown (e.g. colleges, teaching centres).
- Encourage the location of uses and amenities that support a resident student base.

Promote citizen involvement in maintaining the quality of the public realm & built form environment.

The implementation of the plan will be carried by many players, not the least of whom are the public. The public should be encouraged to hold Council accountable to this Vision.

Actions

- Advertise the Vision and continue to find opportunities, such as press events, to link Downtown improvements to the implementation of the Vision.
- Create citizen awards that recognize one-off initiatives that are in keeping with the intent of the Vision. Celebrate these awards with a high profile public event on an annual basis.
- Find ways for High School and University Students to participate in City building. As a first step, present the Vision in high schools throughout the City. Invite students to identify ways in which they can impact their immediate environments in ways that support Downtown.

2.7 Role and Function

	Actions
<p>Nurture the public realm.</p> <p>The extent to which public spaces big and small are attractive, people will flock to Downtown for recreation and for living. Small retail and businesses profit from the proximity to quality public spaces (e.g. Main Street, plazas, streetscapes, parks). Quality public spaces are the necessary setting for public events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of an Open Space Master Plan (as initiated). • Develop an “Adopt an Open Space” Program, to coordinate volunteer effort and direct participation. • Identify a “first project” for public investment that will demonstrate the implementation of the Vision. • Identify 20-25 sponsorship legacy projects that business and members of the public who would like to make a financial contribution to the Vision can support. • Incorporate art into existing buildings.
	Actions
<p>Focus on building form.</p> <p>By focusing on elements such as the relative size, shape, disposition, shadow, visual impact and design of buildings, spaces and landscapes, it is possible to understand the real impact of a building form to the urban experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Zoning By-law to be based on form-based Zoning. • Develop Urban Design Guidelines to ensure the protection and enhancement of the public realm.
	Actions
<p>Promote integration of uses.</p> <p>An integration of uses is essential in creating an environment that promotes pedestrianism. A range of different uses creates an environment that is active at all times of the day. A place where people are able to work, live and play will ensure that it is safe by having people on the streets even after businesses have closed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt maximum standards for the width of commercial frontages (to encourage small retail frontages and the integration of large floorplates mid-block). • Adopt a minimum two floor height on main streets (e.g. Main Street, St. George and Vaughan Harvey) to encourage mixed-use developments, and to prevent underutilization of important sites.

2.8 Quality Matters

Actions

Focus on quality urban design and architecture.

With every decision, with every application, prioritize pedestrian-oriented environments that are car supportive – make Downtown a great place to walk. To do so, it will be necessary to foster a fine grain mix of uses and a variety of attractions within walking distances, as per the Downtown Vision Concept Plan. A high quality public realm, including streets, public spaces and architecture, will dictate the look and feel of the City.

- Create Urban Design Awards that are celebrated as part of the Downtown Initiatives Awards, and advertise the winners of these awards through a widely distributed brochure sponsored by the private sector.
- Use professional administered design competitions, especially for public projects, to attract world class thinking.
- Facilitate citizen-led maintenance and rejuvenation of downtown through innovative one-off, well advertised projects such as “clean up days”.

2.9 Process

Actions	
<p>City Council must make downtown its number one priority.</p> <p>The public sector must lead the initiation of the Vision by implementing the policies and initiatives that will inspire change and demonstrate that the Vision is directing development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a mechanism (i.e. a check sheet) to ensure that the impact of all decisions affecting Downtown are evaluated and clarified. This could be as simple as requiring staff to comment in every staff report on the impact of any decision on Downtown and whether or not it supports the Downtown Vision. A check list should be provided with development applications as well.
Actions	
<p>Consider governance.</p> <p>The downtown is significant enough that it requires focused leadership with a mandate to implement the Downtown Vision; evaluate and expedite quality development; be a steward of the public realm; and organize, sponsor or promote public activities and events in the downtown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider mechanisms or structures with strong political leadership, within the City or arms-length to it, dedicated to Downtown (e.g. a Downtown Development Review Group focused singularly on Downtown, with the mandate of both raising the bar and expatiating quality development). • Establish a mechanism for ongoing public participation.
Actions	
<p>Provide Clarity.</p> <p>The Downtown Vision will establish development parameters and clarity for land owners, businesses, developers and residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate the Vision in a variety of forms targeting different audiences (e.g. developer packages, posters, flyers). • Provide a coordinated package of tools and materials for marketing and generating investment interests that can be used by a variety of interests.

Provide commercial uses on St. George Street a mechanism to manage development and improvements.

The DMCI provides a vital service to businesses in the core at a higher level than what any individual business can achieve. Businesses on St. George Street do not have such a joint advocacy body.

Actions

- Expand DMCI's boundaries to include St. George Street.
- Create a strategy for the development of St. George Street on a block by block basis that includes significant residential infill.

Create a Priority Plan for Capital Improvements.

Following the recommendations presented in this Implementation Strategy, a review of the City's current Capital Improvements Plan should match the new priorities and establish mechanisms to realize goals simultaneously. For example, as roads are repaired, new proposed streetscapes can be advanced.

Actions

- Identify priority capital projects consistent with the Downtown Vision.

Steamline the Development Approval Process.

A streamlined development approvals process provides clarity with respect to policies and applications for the developer so that the process provides the intended outcome without having to commit a significant amount of time and energy on the process itself.

Actions

- Establish a planning policy regime that facilitates quality redevelopment.
- Establish criteria for assessing Projects and Programs.
- Pre-Zone lands in conformity with the Downtown Vision and future Precinct Plans.

Enhance Financial Incentives.

The public sector must be the leader of the Vision. A significant way to enact this leadership is through the creation of incentives to private ventures that embody the principles and guidelines expressed in the Vision. Financial incentives can have a significant impact in the realization of the Vision. However, that which is a financial incentive to a developer, may or may not have financial implications for the City. For example, an expedited approvals process can present savings to both the private and public sectors.

Actions

- Development Cost Reductions (reduce Development Charges/Taxation Rates).
- The Municipality should seek ways to reduce risks for developers

2.10 Metro Context

Actions	
<p>Forge links between Moncton Dieppe and Riverview.</p> <p>There needs to be recognition that If one City prospers, the entire Region prospers. Moncton, Dieppe and Riverview need to work in concert with each other to achieve the goals and objectives of the region while respecting and enhancing their own distinct identities. Physical linkages between the three Downtowns will create a visual connection between the three, an example of which would be the creation of a waterfront trail that connects the three communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider enhancements of the waterfront trail as a first demonstration project.• Create a Master Plan for both sides of Hall's Creek to ensure that development is compatible on both sides of the river and both Dieppe and Moncton are working towards the same goals and objectives for the area.

Actions	
<p>Let downtown be Downtown.</p> <p>Downtown is a city-wide and regional asset – it needs to be understood and used as such. Much more than a regular neighbourhood Downtown has the potential to be a centre for civic pride, a true economic engine and a showcase of what Moncton stands for. It is the first point of arrival for tourists, the obvious location for events and festivals, and the most appealing environment for youth and creative entrepreneurs. As Downtown thrives so will Moncton.</p>	

3

PHASING

3.1 The immediate: priorities and catalysts

Priority actions will be enabling catalysts to further the implementation of the Vision. They will:

- lead by example, helping initiate other projects, by demonstrating the Vision through quality and visibility;
- can be first projects in terms of sequencing. For example, they do not depend on other actions; and
- function as a first step that enables other projects and initiatives.

These immediate actions should be implemented as soon as possible to take advantage of the enthusiasm generated during the public consultation process. They will help sustain that momentum.

- 1 Focus on the regulatory framework**
Changing the regulatory framework should proceed immediately and signify change.
- 2 Plant 5,000 trees**
Develop a planting strategy to increase the tree canopy in Downtown, starting with the Riverfront and connecting Downtown streets.
- 3 Streetscape the connections between Main Street and the Riverfront**
This will both encourage development and announce a commitment in the public realm, and a shift in orientation Downtown towards the Riverfront as an important Open Space.
- 4 Focus development within the Downtown core on the North side of Assumption Boulevard**
This will centre a critical mass of planning and development energy in an area that will reconnect the Downtown to the Riverfront.

- 5 Beautify important arteries**
Improve the streetscapes of important streets such as Vaughan Harvey and Assumption Boulevard. Redesign these streets as grand boulevards
- 6 Construct gateways on Main Street**
Create visual markers at strategic entry points to Main Street to signify the importance of this area in Downtown.
- 7 Introduce up-lighting**
Up-light churches and other important architectural structures at night to enhance the district and draw attention to important buildings.
- 8 Create Heritage Area Studies**
Study the viability of Heritage Study Areas, designate these areas, and reinforce them with tax incentives and grants to help property owners restore buildings/properties, to be in keeping with the Heritage Area Character.
- 9 Make the Aliant (NB Tel) Tower a landmark**
Incorporate landscaping and different architectural elements to enhance the tower and to acknowledge the important visual role it plays in the City.
- 10 Partner with CN Rail to design a pedestrian trail along the rail line**
- 11 Find the right developer for a Downtown mixed use residential project**
Demonstrate the Vision with an outstanding first project that captures the principles and intent of the Vision in a way that captivates the imagination of the public.



3.2 Short, Medium and Long Term

As implementation of the Vision unfolds additional projects, initiatives and opportunities for capital improvements will be identified. These should be evaluated according to their cost, the value they generate, and the extent to which they enhance the overall Vision. An assessment and prioritizing of projects, initiatives and programs should include the following criteria:

Financing criteria

- project will generate funds to cover portions of development costs (e.g. direct revenue, fees, income, taxes)
- project will leverage investment from other sources (public or private)
- funding programs are available to cover portions of development costs
- project fits within a larger capital improvements project (e.g. changing sidewalks when the street is scheduled for re-paving)
- funding for maintenance is considered
- lands required are under the appropriate ownership or control, or can be acquired with reasonable effort
- adequate administrative support is available
- project yields significant results and value for the level of investment

Location criteria

- is located Downtown
- is highly visible
- is linked to other priority projects

Public benefits criteria

- project will provide a direct benefit to local residents
- project will provide a direct benefit to Downtown users (e.g. people who work and shop Downtown) and visitors from Greater Moncton and beyond
- project will serve multiple users

Relationship with other projects criteria

- project will connect to existing public improvements (e.g. The Riverfront)
- project will enhance existing improvements and not cause other desired improvements to become obsolete
- project sets the stage for other future public improvements

Priority and catalyst criteria

- project is a demonstration of the Vision
- project will increase awareness and enthusiasm for the Vision
- project will help raise the quality of subsequent projects

The actions identified in Section 2 have been sequenced in this section to guide implementation based on when projects or initiatives might reasonably be undertaken. However, projects that may be listed in the short-term because they can be initiated immediately, may need to evolve over the long-term.

The following chart seeks to recognize that some actions must precede others, and therefore a logical unfolding is proposed.

A body to manage the implementation of each initiative has been identified from the following list:

- Council
- Planning Commission
- Economic Development
- Engineering
- Heritage officer
- Recreation, Parks, Tourism and Culture (RPTC)

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Identity and Culture

Identify distinct identities and cultural settings for different parts of Downtown.

Planning Commission

Expand an awareness campaign that connects suburban populations to Downtown amenities.

Economic Development

Foster regional and national visibility, recruiting enterprises to locate Downtown.

Economic Development

Expand art based programming and awareness of existing art venues.

Planning Commission

Create a business incubator specifically designed to support independent artists.

Economic Development

Develop art venues infrastructure oriented to support artistic activities.

Planning Commission + RPTC

Heritage

Study and adopt (if appropriate) Heritage Area Studies.

Heritage officer

Provide incentives for the renovation of heritage structures and landscapes.

Heritage officer

Develop the identity of Heritage Area Studies through streetscapes, landscapes and architectural projects.

Heritage officer + Planning Commission

Build on the work done to date to ensure the protection of heritage structures; Ensure that the inventory is maintained and updated on a regular basis.

Heritage officer

Incorporate heritage markers for cultural landscapes and heritage buildings.

Heritage officer + Planning Commission

Develop gateways to denote heritage districts.

Heritage officer + Planning Commission

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Environment		
Study and adopt a firm urban growth boundary or greenbelt for the Greater Moncton Area.	Create a 'smart growth' strategy for the City of Moncton	Implement the 'smart growth' strategy.
Council + Planning Commission	Planning Commission	Council + Planning + Engineering
Create incentives for investments Downtown; phase out the subsidization of suburban development.	Adopt environmental design benchmarks and standards.	Consider adopting LEED standards, including LEED-ND.
Economic Development + Planning	Planning Commission	Planning Commission
Promote adaptive reuse for housing.	Create a strategy to increase the residential population Downtown. Include a variety of tenures. Establish targets.	Review housing strategy on a regular basis.
Planning Commission	Planning Commission	Council + Planning Commission
Promote infill developments with a residential component. Encourage student housing.	Promote construction of new housing as complete neighbourhoods (e.g. The Core and Assomption Boulevard).	Promote construction of new housing as complete neighbourhoods (e.g. Downtown West and the East End)
Economic Development + Planning	Economic Development + Planning	Planning Commission
Prepare and implement a Tree Strategy that prioritizes certain avenues and locales for planting. 5,000 + trees!	Develop and implement standards for tree canopies in new developments.	Continue to expand and diversify the tree canopy.
Planning Commission + RPTC	Planning Commission	Planning Commission + RPTC

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Movement

Commit to the Active Transportation Plan and promote multi-modal transportation.

Council + Planning Commission

Create an annual review of the Active Transportation Plan; submit a one page report card to report back to City council.

Planning Commission

Review the Active Transportation Plan on a regular basis (approximately every 5 years).

Planning Commission

Connect the street network. Restore right-of-ways in the Core. Implement the block pattern contained in the Vision.

Planning Commission

Connect the street network. Extend the street grid through new development areas.

Planning Commission

Connect the street network. Enhance connectivity throughout the grid.

Planning Commission

Enhance open space connections to the central riverfront and Hall's Creek

Planning Commission + RPTC

Enhance open space connections to the entire riverfront, Dieppe, Jonathan Creek, the University and all neighbourhoods.

Planning Commission + RPTC

Enhance open space connections to all new development areas.

RPTC

Connectivity

Promote a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses Downtown, such that people can engage most aspects of their everyday life by walking. Amend the Zoning By-law where necessary.

Planning Commission

Seek partners to develop larger properties as 'complete' neighbourhoods.

Economic Development

Develop multiple traffic generators within short walking distance.

Economic Development + Planning

Create a streetscape strategy that includes a typology and guidelines for all streets Downtown.

Planning Commission

Implement the streetscape strategy as part of the Capital Improvements Plan. Starting at the Core, along Assomption Boulevard and north of Main Street.

Council + Planning Commission

Implement the streetscape requirements in all new developments.

Council + Planning + Engineering

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Partnering

Continue to engage and inform the public about the Vision. Advertise the Vision and continue to find opportunities, such as press events, to link improvements Downtown to the implementation of the Vision.

DMCI + Economic Dev. + City Manager

Establish long-term mechanisms for public engagement. Create an annual event to showcase the various events unfolding Downtown.

Economic Development + Planning

Review the Vision on a regular basis (approximately every 5 years).

Economic Development + Planning

Recruit a development partner who will demonstrate the vision with a signature project.

Economic Development + Planning

Lead by example. Consider investing in demonstration projects through private public partnerships.

Economic Development

Provide long-term leadership in partnering with private initiatives.

Economic Development

Recruit knowledge based industries Downtown.

Economic Development

Promote the clustering and integration of independent businesses by providing subsidized spaces with shared amenities.

Economic Development

Develop incubation centres for artist and young entrepreneurs.

Economic Development

Meet with regional post-secondary education institutions to identify opportunities for the integration of functions Downtown.

Planning Commission

Establish a strategy (i.e. partners, funding, location, key programming) for the first Downtown project with the University.

Economic Development + Planning

Enhance the long-term presence of the University Downtown, and other graduate and post-graduate education facilities.

Economic Development + Planning

Consider expanding the boundaries of the DMCI to include St. George Street.

DMCI

Incorporate or create new Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) for existing and emerging commercial districts.

Economic Development

Use the BIAs as a mechanism to create awareness and implement parts of the Vision.

Economic Development

Attract additional cultural enterprises (e.g. dance and theatre companies, galleries, studios) through a targeted strategy.

Economic Development

Promote an Arts Districts (e.g. around Aberdeen Park and/or the East End).

Planning Commission

Develop supportive infrastructure and venues for artistic partners.

Economic Development

Create a template of building typologies for infill (e.g. "granny flats", secondary units) of private properties.

Planning Commission

Provide technical assistance and expertise to assist in improvements to private property.

Planning Commission

Create a coordinated strategy that includes considering one block at a time. Involve property owners in the creation of this strategy.

Planning Commission

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Role and Function

Support the development of an Open Space Master Plan (as initiated).

Identify a "first project" for public investment that will demonstrate the implementation of the Vision.

Identify 20-25 sponsorship legacy projects that business and members of the public who would like to make a financial contribution to the Vision can support.

RPTC

Economic Development + Planning

Economic Development + Planning

Develop Urban Design Guidelines and Precinct Plans.

Review Zoning By-law to be form-based Zoning.

Review the Vision on a regular basis (approximately every 5 years).

Planning Commission

Planning Commission

Economic Development + Planning

Quality Matters

Use professional administrated design competitions.

Create an Urban Design Review panel.

Foster a culture of design quality. Establish a planning policy regime that facilitates quality redevelopment.

Planning Commission

Planning Commission

Council

Create Urban Design Awards.

Recognize initiatives (large developments and individual citizen participation) that have an impact on the Vision.

Promote new quality development nationally as part of an improved quality of life in Downtown Moncton.

Economic Development + Planning

Planning Commission

Economic Development

Short term

Mid term

Long term

Process

Make Downtown your number one priority.

Council

Make Downtown your number one priority.

Council

Make Downtown your number one priority.

Council

Create a mechanism (i.e. a check list) to ensure that the impact of all decisions Downtown are evaluated and clarified.

Planning Commission

Consider mechanisms or structures with strong political leadership, within the City or arms-length to it, dedicated to Downtown (e.g. a Downtown Development Review Committee).

Planning Commission

Provide long-term leadership from Council towards the ongoing implementation of the Vision.

Council

Identify priority capital projects.

Planning Commission

Implement a Capital Improvements Strategy alongside the implementation of the Vision.

Planning Commission

Ensure all capital improvements Downtown are coordinated with the Vision.

Engineering + Planning + DMCI

Identify financial opportunities to attract quality developers.

Economic Development

Enhance financial incentives for developments that embody the Vision.

Economic Development + Planning

Ensure the long-term support of quality development as a strategy to create overall value Downtown.

Council + Economic Dev. + Planning

Metro Context

Forge links between the three downtowns of Moncton, Dieppe and Riverview. Consider enhancements to the waterfront trail as a first demonstration project.

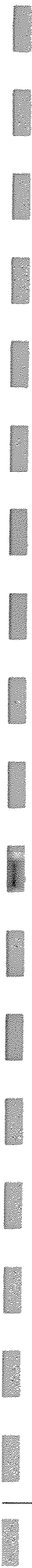
Council

Create a Master Plan for both sides of Hall's Creek and Jonathan Creek.

Planning Commission

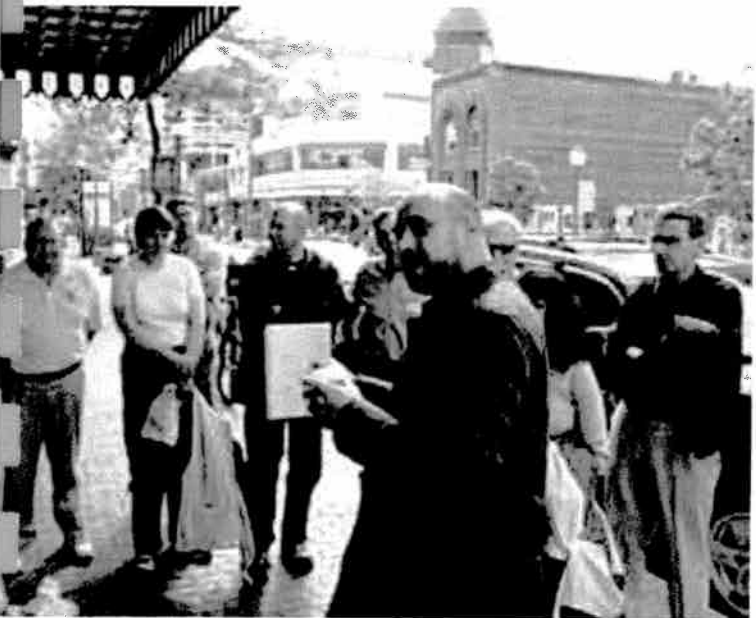
Develop Downtown Moncton as a regional asset and destination.

Economic Development + Planning



4

IMPLEMENTING THE VISION



Photographs on this page by Ben Champoux taken during the Downtown Moncton Development Vision Symposium, June 2006

4.1 Ownership of the Vision

4.1.1 Partners in the Vision

While the Municipality and the Greater Moncton District Planning Commission will be the steward of the Vision, the implementation belongs to residents, developers, property owners, businesses, and all people who are interested in the quality of life and success of Downtown and the fulfillment of the Vision.

The Development Vision is an encompassing umbrella document. It needs to be read and understood by a broad public, and by other sectors engaged in initiatives related to Downtown. Effort should be made to ensure that all other initiatives– from projects spearheaded by economic development, to heritage preservation, to social ventures, to environmental endeavours – are consistent with this overall vision.

To do so, it is imperative that the Vision is widely shared and widely known. It should be distributed to all policy makers at all levels of government that have jurisdiction in or over Downtown. Presentations should be made to all key players – agencies, organizations, businesses, city staff, landowners – to ensure that the Vision is recognized and understood.

Currently, a number of important initiatives are underway, including:

- 5 year Strategic Plan (Enterprise Greater Moncton)
- 2006-2007 Strategic Plan (Downtown Moncton Centre-Ville Inc.)
- Economic Development Strategy (Economic Development, City of Moncton)
- Vision 2010 : Corporate Strategic Plan (City of Moncton)
- Policy initiatives (i.e. Infrastructure Development Policy)

As the implementation of the Vision moves forward, new initiatives will emerge, new opportunities will be identified, and new people will become involved. In every instance, the Development Vision should be used as a tool to direct growth.

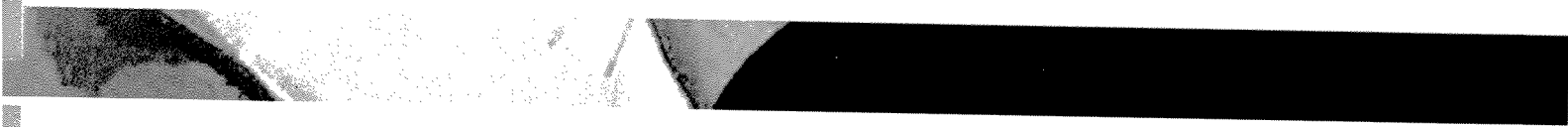
4.1.2 Governance

A Downtown Planning Group should be created to incorporate the inputs of various municipal departments with jurisdictions related to Downtown. This group, reporting to the City Manager's office, will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Vision through a coordinated approach to Downtown initiatives.

4.1.3 A Stream-lined Development Approvals Process

The City of Moncton and the Greater Moncton District Planning Commission should continue to streamline the development approvals process. Development applications that conform to the Municipal Development Plan and supporting zoning by-laws should be supported by the municipality and should be reviewed through an expedited site plan review process.

The Municipality should minimize additional detailed study of development applications that are consistent with the Vision. Rather, the Municipality can assist the process by conducting the necessary site specific engineering analyses required, in cases where a development application Downtown is in conformity with the municipality's objectives, policies and regulations.



Photograph on this page by Ben Champoux taken during the Downtown Moncton Development Vision Symposium, June 2006





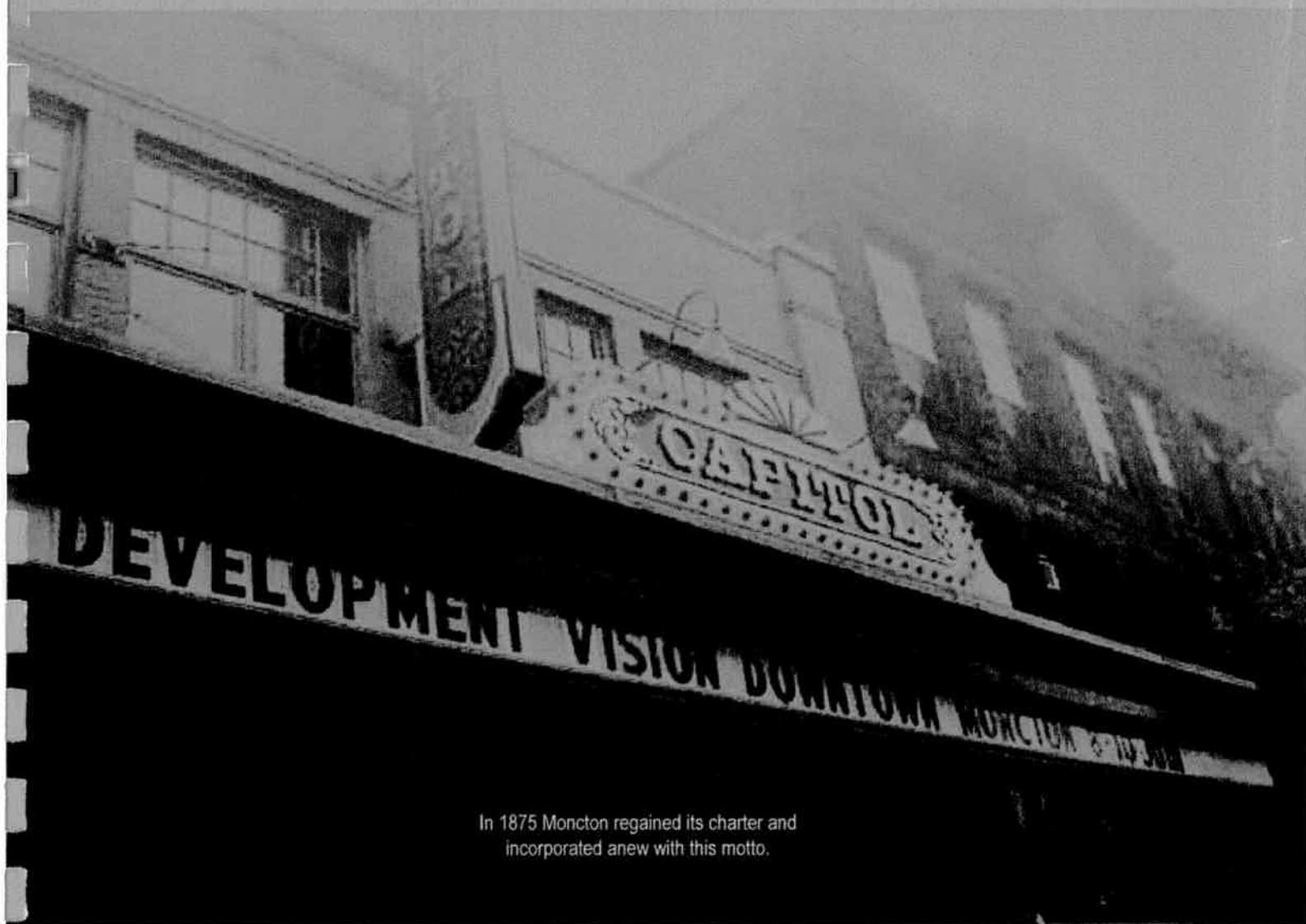
For further information about the Development Vision, or to obtain a copy of the Background Report and/or Implementation Strategy, visit:

<http://www.moncton.ca/search/english/cityhall/downtown/downtown.htm>

or contact:

Corporate Planning and Policy Development
Planification corporative et élaboration des politiques
City of / Ville de MONCTON
506-853-3459

'resurgo'
(I rise again)



In 1875 Moncton regained its charter and
incorporated anew with this motto.