

# DEVELOPMENT PLAN



## St. Patrick's Alexandra School Site

Halifax, NS

Dalhousie School of Planning

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Finally, I wish to thank North Central Community Council and the community of St. Patrick's for their attempts in shaping the City by preserving the spirit of the community, which inspired me to do this project.

An aerial, grayscale photograph of a city street grid. Several tall, modern skyscrapers are visible in the upper half of the image. A baseball field is located on the left side. A church with a prominent steeple is on the right. A multi-lane highway runs along the top right edge. The text of the table of contents is overlaid in the center of the image.

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## Introduction

The City of Halifax is endeavoring to grow within the city core in order to form a vibrant and densely populated downtown where most of the city services are located. This attempt has targeted many old and underused buildings and sites for redevelopment in the city central area. Although implementation of the City Plan through new developments results in a more dynamic city, one result is potential displacement of residents and community spaces that have existed in these areas for many generations. Having a community oriented approach for new developments in the City not only preserves and improves the social function of existing communities, but will also provide more family oriented spaces that attract families to live in central areas. Community oriented development helps increase the sense of belonging to increase community interactions and promote wellbeing in neighborhoods.

One of the communities that is exposed to the threat of losing its identity through new developments is St. Patrick's Alexandra in North Central Halifax. Slowly but consistently new developments are taking place in the area. They bring more affluent residents in and force others from the area. One of the public sites that has become subject to new development is St. Patrick's Alexandra School site.

On behalf of the community, North Central Community Council (NCCC)\* has fought in court with the City and a developer to acquire the site to develop a community hub and affordable housing instead of luxury residential by a developer. Although the community didn't succeed in its attempt to possess the site, it insisted that its voice be heard by the City and anyone who will develop the site. The community has expressed its expectations for development of the site through community engagement sessions with the NCCC. Illustration of the community's vision for the future of the site and its submission to the City by the NCCC will serve as guidelines for the City to set up criteria in negotiation of any development agreement for the future of the site.

My aim is to illustrate the community's vision and I hope that the final outcome of the project helps the community's voice to be heard by decision makers.

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\*The NCCC is a collective consists of three non-profit organizations of North End Community Health Clinic, the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre and the Richard Preston Centre for Excellence that has a vision to create a thriving community in North Central Halifax.

## Summary

To achieve my goal to illustrate the community's vision and in order to propose a set of criteria for a community-oriented development to the City of Halifax for any development agreement for St. Patrick's Alexandra site, I will develop my ideas in the following order:

- Background analysis

Initially, I will study the site's profile including its location, existing elements, and history of the conflicts that the community has faced over the site with the City and developer. Secondly, after explaining the purpose of my project I will articulate the community's vision in accordance with outcomes of the community consultation sessions that the NCCC launched with the community where they have stated their requirements for the development of the site.

- Site analysis

In this section I will study the site built form and its surrounding urban area to identify the urban context. The built form study will include studying the open spaces and existing buildings in the site, and the street network that connects the site to its surrounding urban context. Next I will study the surrounding urban context in terms of connectivity, land use, density, street network and transit system, and existing open spaces. I will overlay the findings with the community's vision to introduce objectives, principles, and guidelines for designing the site that the City should consider in its development agreement.

- Design

Finally I will illustrate the introduced principles and guidelines in a sequence of workable design to propose one form of implementation of the guidelines and criteria for the site development.

Although the final outcome will reflect the voice of the community in form of design, it does not mean that it will determine the future design of the site. It will only be a form of proposed illustration of the criteria and design guidelines based on the community's requirements for the future of the site.



# Background Analysis

## Location and Profile

St. Patrick's Alexandra Site is located near Downtown Halifax and the North End. The site is known to local residents as "St. Pat's". St. Pat's site is in a city block between Brunswick Street and Maitland Street, which is connected to Gottingen Street as the main street in the neighborhood.

St. Pat's is located at 2277 Maitland Street in Halifax and takes its name from St. Patrick's Alexandra School. The lot measures 3.85 acres with frontage on both Maitland Street and Brunswick Street. The two buildings currently occupy the site. St. Patrick's Alexandra Elementary School was built in 1908. It measures 37,000 square feet and is a three-story brick building. Most recently the building was mostly vacant. Although this is not a registered heritage property, the elementary school building has a great deal of historic character. The other building was built and added to the elementary building in the 1970s.

## Site History

St. Patrick's Alexandra School was the education center to many children on the Halifax peninsula for generations. The Halifax Regional School Board declared both buildings surplus after the 2010-2011 school year. Since then the Municipality controls the property.

The Halifax Regional Municipality sold the St. Patrick's Alexandra School Site to a developer in 2011. According to Jono Developments Ltd.'s RFP (2012), the proposal for the St. Patrick's Alexandra site is for a mixed use development which will include, but not be limited to, residential, community and commercial uses. They declared that the final format and size of units will be determined through market.

Community groups made up of the MicMac Native Friendship Centre, the North End Community Health Association and the Richard Preston Centre for Excellence took the city's decision to sell this land to the developer to court.

Initially Nova Scotia Supreme Court sided with the community groups. But later the Nova Scotia Supreme Court of Appeal decided that the city acted properly in its initial sale to the developer. The community association wanted to send the case to the Supreme Court of Canada for reviewing the ruling by the Nova Scotia Supreme Court. Since the Supreme Court of Canada decided not to take the case, the site is still subject to possible development by Jono Developments Ltd or another developer that is willing to buy and develop the site. The map below shows the location of the site in Halifax.



# 1

## Purpose of Project

Since the future of the site will no longer be in hands of the community groups to develop it for the community purposes, I will consider all aspects of the community needs and objectives to illustrate the community requirements for developing the site. The final design product will be a test and illustration of the requirements. Illustration of design principles can help inform decision makers who will later set the requirements for a development agreement for redeveloping the site.

I hope the final outcome of my project becomes a tool for North Central Community Council (NCCC) to support the community's desire for further developments in the site.

The aerial photo shows location of the site in Halifax Peninsula.

Picture 1: Location of St. Patrick's Alexandra site in Halifax Peninsula





# Community's Vision

In 2014 the Cities & Environment Unit (CEU) worked with the community to develop a community-based redevelopment plan for the site. To have a clear understanding of the community's vision and desires for the future of the site, the NCCC hosted a public meeting on July 3, 2014. The Cities and Environment Unit collected the community's inputs from group discussions in the meeting to reflect them in site design principles.

## Community's requirements for the site

The CEU report articulates the community's initial requirements from the engagement session on July 3, 2014 as following:

### Celebrate Identity

Celebrate the physical and cultural identity of the community and provide residents with opportunities to express their individual identities. Existing buildings, history and memories should be considered assets that can be retained and built upon.

### Prioritize Universal Access

Ensure that universal access - physical, social, cultural and economic - guides decision making through all phases of the St. Pat's redevelopment. Specifically, housing will be designed for all physical capabilities and a diverse range of households and income levels; programming will be designed to include people of diverse ages, interests and schedules.

### Increase Connectivity

Integrate the St. Pat's site into the fabric of the surrounding community, both physically and through new partnerships for the delivery of programming. A high level of physical connectivity will allow for easy movement within the site and to nearby services and amenities.

## **Ensure Affordability**

Enable home ownership for community members through the provision of affordable housing designed to meet diverse needs. Affordable spaces will attract commercial and non-profit tenants, support entrepreneurs and stimulate local economic growth.

## **Environmental Leadership**

Design for energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and other green features that will enhance affordability and minimize the project's impact on the environment.

## **Value Public Spaces**

Integrate a diversity of human scale, safe, comfortable and beautiful outdoor parks, gardens and play spaces into the design of the St. Pat's site. Pedestrian-oriented design will result in a very walkable community.

## **Promote a Healthy Community**

Promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles through urban design, architecture and programming, including access to recreation facilities, priority for walking and cycling, support for food production and distribution, and provision of health care services.

## **Community's Vision for Design**

The CEU held a second meeting with the community to discuss the potential for developing the site based on the requirements established in the first community engagement and received feedback from the community for the future site design on September 8, 2014.

The principles established in the first meeting with the community provided background for small group discussions and activities in the second meeting where the community members worked on four major focus areas to articulate their requirements for each area. I will articulate the community's requirements for Housing, Open Space, Programming, and Phasing in illustration of design principles.

To assist the community in explaining their requirements for each area, the CEU staff provided the attendees with questions and guides to consider in their answers. The community's requirements for the focus areas are as following:

## Housing

### Design

- Family oriented houses suitable for families with children
- Ground oriented townhouses
- Modular housing; flexible and adaptable as family changes in size
- Housing appropriate for community families, not for students or individuals
- Design houses for family needs.
- Homes with backyards for children to play safely
- Apartments above town houses
- Smaller units for non-family, seniors and individuals with low and moderate income
- Possible to share semi private garden with few neighbors
- Private back yards for families with children
- Large enough for a family to live comfortably
- No need for much green space because of the adjacent park
- Landscaping the park and greenhouse
- If we want to bring back families with children, what about their school?
- Adaptable homes that can be easily reconfigured throughout the life of the family occupying them

## Public Space and Programming

### Uses

- Flexibility of programming
- Gymnasium as public space in winter (e.g. volleyball)

- Winter activities: hay rides, winter events, hot chocolate/soup events
- Gym for arts/music
- Build from Hope Blooms
- Planting – gardens, medicinal, nature species
- Thoughtful play space/garden
- Quiet space
- Educational public space
- Informal public space
- Make politics part of the site – social activities
- Community oven
- Programming for all ages/abilities
- Bike parking

## Design

- Visibility – make public space public
- Public space accessible to all
- Shadow studies on Hope Blooms
- Open/green space on roofs
- Warmth of color
- Incorporating history – St. Pat’s artifacts, statues
- Lighting quality
- Parking as open space

## Phasing

- Reusing the existing buildings for community activities (short term plan)
- Developing affordable housing (mid-term plan)



reinventing the **hub** of the north end



**HOUSING**

Site needs to accommodate roughly 300 units to be viable



**AFFORDABILITY**

Majority of units must be attainable for broader community



**FAMILIES**

Housing should be suitable for families and children



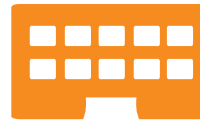
**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

communities must be involved in project in an on-going way



**EXISTING BUILDINGS:**

Must maintain and operate in the short-term



**OLD SCHOOL**

has heritage value must preserve this building.



**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre,  
Preston Centre of Excellence,  
North End Community  
Health Centre must be integrated



**OPEN SPACE**

public space or green space is important for the development

## North Central Community Council's vision for St. Patrick's Alexandra Site

The NCCC provided a proposal for acquisition of the site to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

Although the court refused the proposal, the NCCC's vision for St. Patrick's Alexandra School site was based on community preferences and needs. In the proposal NCCC aimed to work closely with local residents and organizations to turn the site into a neighborhood center, a new focal point for North Central Halifax - a hub for community activities, organizations and services that share the common goal of improving the quality of life for residents of North Central Halifax. The following are NCCC's proposal components for the site:

### Community Hub

The community hub would include:

- Incubator Space: The NCCC intended to create an incubator space on the site for local arts groups and other non-profit organizations to ensure the economic viability of the property in the short term and also to help the site have a lively and dynamic public use.
- A Home for the Richard Preston Centre for Excellence (RPCE)
- A new location for the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (MNFC)
- A new location for the North End Community Health Centre (NECHC)

### Housing

Part of the NCCC's holistic vision for the site was building a healthy community by developing affordably-priced mixed housing on the site that provides home ownership opportunities for residents who otherwise couldn't afford to purchase a home in the area.

### Alignment with HRM Priority Outcomes

The NCCC's plan for the site could help support HRM's goal of creating greater residential density on the peninsula in ways that are well planned and sustainable.

# The Site

## Built Form

The total area of St. Patrick’s Alexandra site is 3.85 acres with the two buildings that occupy 2.4 acres of the site. Residents and users of the nearby park and church use the open space of the site as parking space.

Picture 9: St. Patrick’s Alexandra Map and areal photo

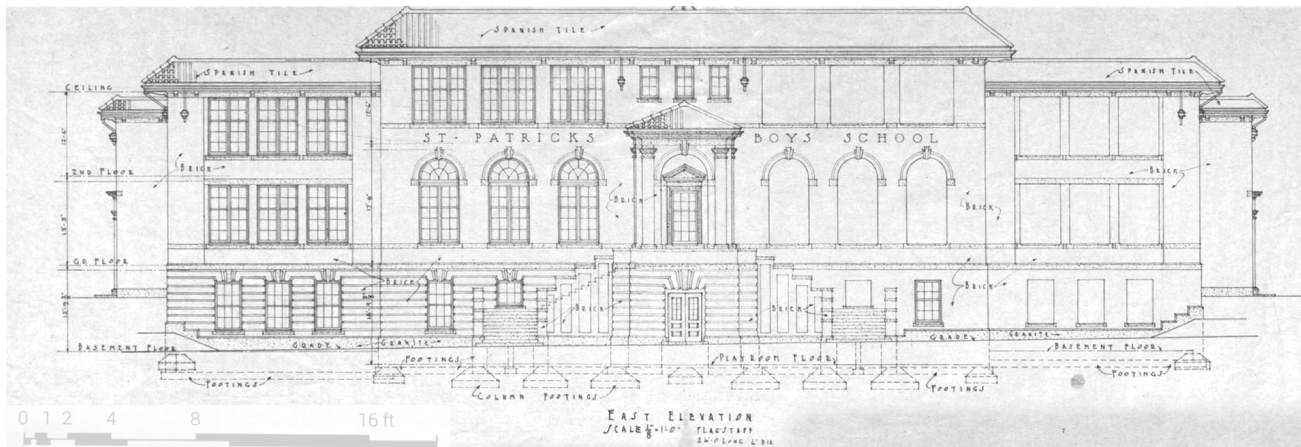


## Building Design

The original school structure known as the Cobb Building designed by Alexander Cobb is the smaller building that contains vaulted elevated ceilings, large doors, built in storage furniture and shelving, arched windows, brick and stone exterior veneers, typical of the mid to late 1900 construction periods.

The larger and newer structure is consistent with 1970 school architecture, primarily square box design, flat roof, standard smooth brick veneer in a minimalist brick architectural style. The structure is primarily brick fascia, masonry block construction with aluminum windows- typical of this era and style for the larger structure. The Cobb building would have contained wood windows originally. The existing aluminum windows were likely installed around 1970-1975.

Picture 10: The Cobb Building facade from 1940s



Picture 11: The existing Cobb Building



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>



Picture 12: The newer School (view from Maitland St.)



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

Picture 13: View from the stairway between the two buildings



Picture 14: The school gymnasium



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

## Building Condition

In 2013 to provide support for the earlier decision to sell the site, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) requested a building condition assessment on St. Patrick's Alexandra School to identify the areas requiring capital repair following the HRM project planning priorities. The building condition assessment declares that:

"The property ranges between 42 and 100 (approx.- actual unknown) years of age and showing signs of extensive wear, system failures, roof leaks, wall failures, mold growth and general disrepair. The major equipment has surpassed normal life expectancy and the cost for replacement is extensive. The overall structure is in poor condition requiring windows and door replacement, extensive masonry repairs, electrical and heating replacements, new ventilation, fire and security systems. The grade level surfaces like asphalt are greatly decayed and worn and require replacement. It is in our opinion the cost to repair these two structures will be at least \$ 15 million. The market/property value, in our opinion, does not justify such capital investments." (St. Patrick's Alexandra School Building Condition Assessment 2013. 20)

The NCCC arranged a new building assessment to be done on the school's buildings by a group of engineers.

The new assessment articulates that the buildings are still in a good shape and have the capacity to be repaired and reused with lower cost than what the HRM had declared.

The pictures from interior spaces of the both buildings demonstrate the second building assessment.

Picture 15: School's gymnasium

Picture 16: School's kitchen area

Picture 17: School's kitchen

Picture 18: School's library

Picture 19&20: Cobb building



15



16

Images Source: CEU Archives



17



18

Images Source: CEU Archives



19



20



# 2

## Open Space

Much of the open space on the site is inefficiently used as parking lots which lack a clear purpose and have no specific programming. There are many 'leftover' spaces between front of the Cobb building and Brunswick Street or between the school building and Warrington Park. Some of the shared open space is grass; however, a number of areas are dominated by paving.

Picture 21: The parking lot on Brunswick Street



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

Picture 22: The open space in front of Cobb and the newer building



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>



## Movement

### Traffic

St. Patrick's Alexandra is roughly bounded by four streets which include:

- Brunswick Street
- Maitland Street
- Prince William Street
- Gottingen Street

Brunswick Street is a 2-lane collector street running west-east approximately 2 km between North Street and Spring Garden Road. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street, a reserved bicycle lane on the street extends from the intersection of Sackville Street and Brunswick Street to the intersection of Cogswell Street and Brunswick Street. Time limited on-street parking is permitted on both sides of the street except between Sackville Street and Duke Street due to the bicycle lane and loading zones. Brunswick Street provides access to the parking from northern frontage of the site.

Picture 23: Brunswick Street (The site is on the right side of the picture)



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

Maitland Street is a two-lane local street that starts from Brunswick Street on the western side of St. Patrick's with approximately 210m along the south edge of the site. It provides access to the parking lot behind the Cobb building on the site. The street includes private parking and metered on-street parking spaces. There is a sidewalk on both sides of Maitland Street.

Picture 24: Maitland Street (The site is on the left side of the picture)



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

Prince William Street runs approximately 60m connecting Gottingen Street to Maitland Street, which ends to the main entrance of the St. Patrick's Alexandra school building. The western side of the street belongs entirely to a parking lot. The YMCA Halifax Enterprise Centre is located on the eastern side of the street. On-street parking is only allowed on the western edge of the street.

Picture 25: Prince William Street



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

Gottingen Street is a two-lane street and a major transit route in the North End. The street edges on the portion of the street that aligns with St. Patrick's Alexandra site are the commercial strips that serve the entire neighborhood. There are sidewalks and limited on-street parking on both sides of the street.

Picture 26: Gottingen Street



Image Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

## Transit

There are no transit routes on the side streets but the site is served by public transportation on Gottingen Street-located approximately 60m to the south-and Barrington Street-located approximately 200m to the north side of the site. Metro Transit operates Routes 1, 10, 7 and 61 that provide access to the site on Gottingen Street. Barrington Street provides access to Routes 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 53, 59, 68 and 61. The high levels of service are expected to continue following the roll-out of Halifax Transit's new plan resulting from a recent service study.

## Active Transportation

The site is accessible by active transportation (AT) modes, with good adjacent pedestrian and cycling links. Though the on-street bicycle lane on Brunswick Street terminates at the intersection with Cogswell

Street, the street itself serves as a well used unofficial off-street connection for cyclists traveling to and from the west, east and south. Brunswick Street is a potential candidate for a formal 'Local Street Bikeway' facility that could eventually incorporate treatments that give increased priority to cyclists including traffic calming features, access restrictions, and intersection modifications.

Maitland Street is also a relatively low volume local street on the south edge of the site, running west to Cogswell Street near the North Common.

## **The Surrounding Area**

### **Immediate Context**

#### **South**

Small scale (2 to 4 storeys) retail mixed use with high-rise residential as well as institutional services including a library and community centre characterize the vibrant Gottingen Street.

#### **West**

The immediate western context of the Site is Warrington Park and across from the park is Uniack Square that is a public housing complex including townhomes and low-rise apartment buildings. The building characters continue further west across North Street.

#### **North**

The high-rise residential complex of Harborview Apartments encircles the northern area of the site along with a row of low-rise townhouses and a church.

#### **East**

St. George Round Church is on the east side of St. Patrick's Alexandra and across from the church there are low-rise residential townhouses.

## Surrounding Context

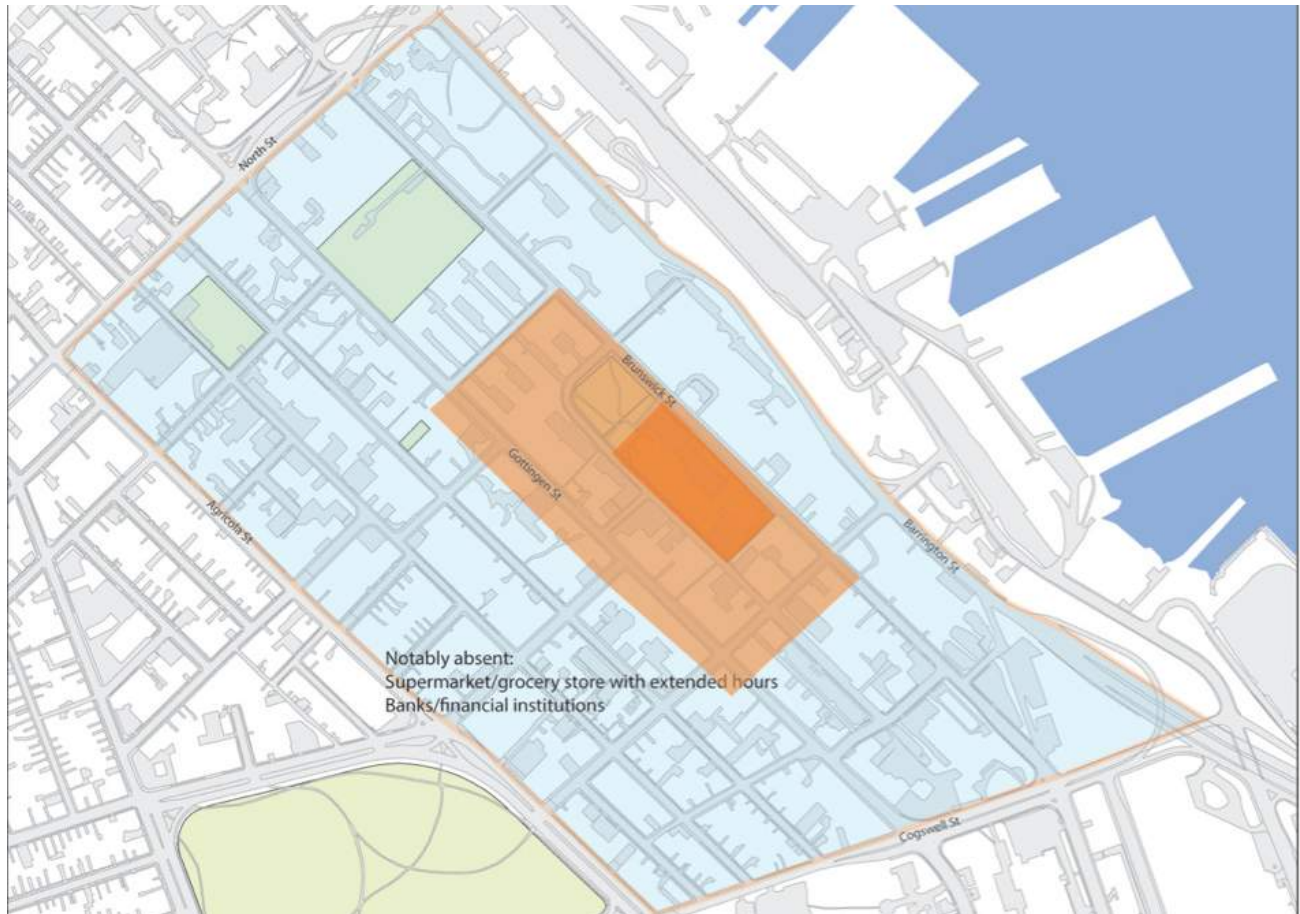
St. Patrick's Alexandra is surrounded by some of Halifax's most dynamic areas: Downtown Halifax, North End, Halifax Common and Centre of the Peninsula.

## Community Facilities

Several facilities that serve the community are located on the streets surrounding St. Patrick's Alexandra.

- The YMCA Employment Centre is located adjacent to St. Patrick's Alexandra. It is a charity that works with unemployed individuals in community-based settings in the areas of employment, personal and community enrichment.
- The Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Society located on Gottingen Street -Across the street from the site- is a non-profit, board governed organization that provides social programming for Urban Aboriginal People. It is a center for urban Aboriginal community functions and events.
- The North End Community Health Centre located on same block as St. Patrick's Alexandra supports the community of North End Halifax by offering leadership in primary health care through health services, education, community development, outreach and advocacy.
- The Halifax North Memorial Public Library that is located next to the YMCA Employment Centre allows residents to use the available digital facilities at the library to access the collections of the three former library systems.
- The George Dixon Community Centre on Brunswick Street holds community events and educational classes to serve the North End Halifax.





The large area on the map represented by light blue with maximum 10 minutes walk from the site includes: Women's shelter, Two homeless shelters, Engineering firms, Non-profits, ALIA institute, Ravensberg College, Staples, Two small grocery stores, Atlantic Filmmaker's cooperative, Joseph Howe School, NS Department of Education, Non-profit Housing organization, Furniture Bank, Centre for Community Living, Planning and Design firm.



The small area on the map represented by light orange with maximum 5 minutes walk from the site includes Dalhousie Legal Aid, MLA's office, Black Business Initiative Society, multiple Churches, Pharmacy, YMCA, Needle exchange, Youth drop-in centre, Hope Blooms garden, Food market, Regional Housing Authority, Library, North End Health Centre.

## Connectivity

The site is located near Gottingen Street, an important arterial street connecting North Street to the downtown core. It is also well connected to many of Halifax's prominent landmarks. This includes popular public spaces such as the Halifax Common, schools, universities, auditoriums, gymnasiums and other public and institutional uses.

Being located at the heart of Gottingen area provides this site an opportunity to become a meeting place, connecting north end and Downtown areas, and drawing local residents to the site. Any future development at the site should therefore respect the site location and its central role in the connectivity network of the Peninsula.



## Land Use

The surrounding community is a vibrant destination supported by active residential, local commercial, and institutional activities; however, there is no grocery store with long hours of operation around the site and in the neighborhood. Sobeys on Windsor Street is the closest 24-hour grocery store to the area on Windsor Street.

Nearby residents make up a large portion of the people using the services and amenities of Gottingen Street. The site is well situated in walking distance to Downtown Halifax, which is accessible through active transportation routes and public transit routes. The neighbourhood is also well located near major landmarks including Halifax Commons, Citadel Hill, Waterfront, historical district of Barrington Street as well as institutional uses such as hospitals and universities.

Commercial, residential, institutional and open spaces are generally separated along defined boundaries in the neighborhood. This separation suggests a need for a well designed, mixed use development in the site that becomes a center for the area to bring the community together and add to the existing character of the neighbourhood.

Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (2014) discusses the future development of the area “fronting onto the Citadel and interfacing with the existing historic neighbourhoods of the north end, this precinct will become one of the downtown’s most desirable residential neighbourhoods afforded with tremendous views of the Harbour and proximity to the Commons and the services and shops of Gottingen Street. Existing civic and recreational facilities will be integrated into new, mixed-use developments that frame the streets while providing architectural features to enhance important north-south view corridors from the areas to the north. The low to mid-rise buildings will provide interior courtyard gardens accessed through mid-block connections. Their massing and material quality will provide for a complementary transition to the distinct character of the neighbourhood to the north.” (2014.13)

The plan has a strong appetite and forecasts great success of mixed use developments in and around the Peninsula especially in neighbourhoods near downtown.





Data Source: HRM GIS database

## Density

The density of the neighborhood varies; however, the immediate areas around the north, east and west sides of the site are considered the densest blocks in the neighborhood. Dense residential areas require a variety of uses in future developments that provide community needs, which also align with the vision of Downtown Plan for providing more residential units especially family housing to increase the population of the peninsula. The density of new developments is at or above 250 persons per acre.



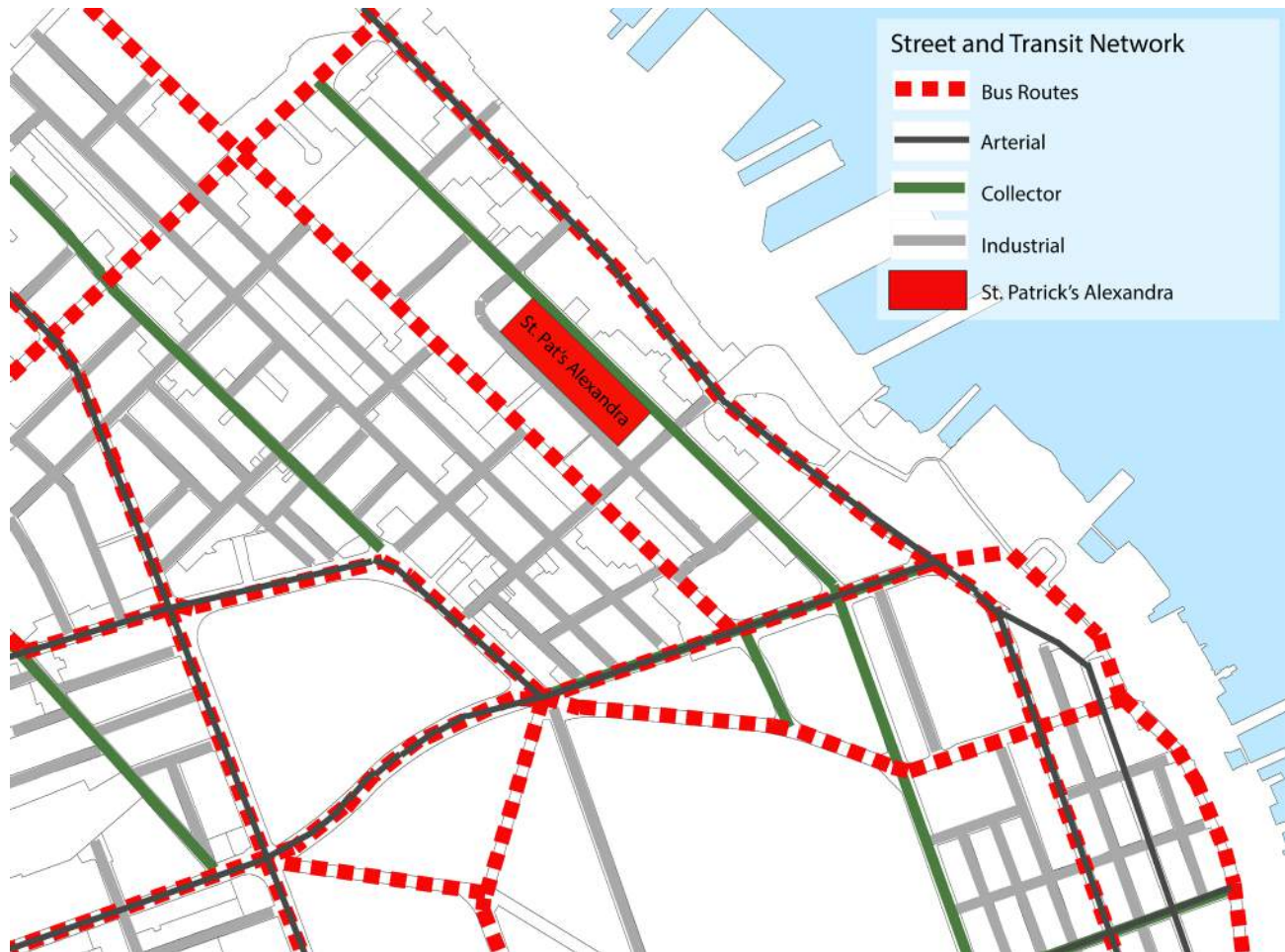
Data Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/>

## Street Network and Transit System

Gottingen Street is an arterial road and Brunswick Street is a collector street; both serve as west-east corridors that connect the west and north to the east and south of the peninsula. These two streets—one as a major transit corridor and the other one as a major collector—have important roles in



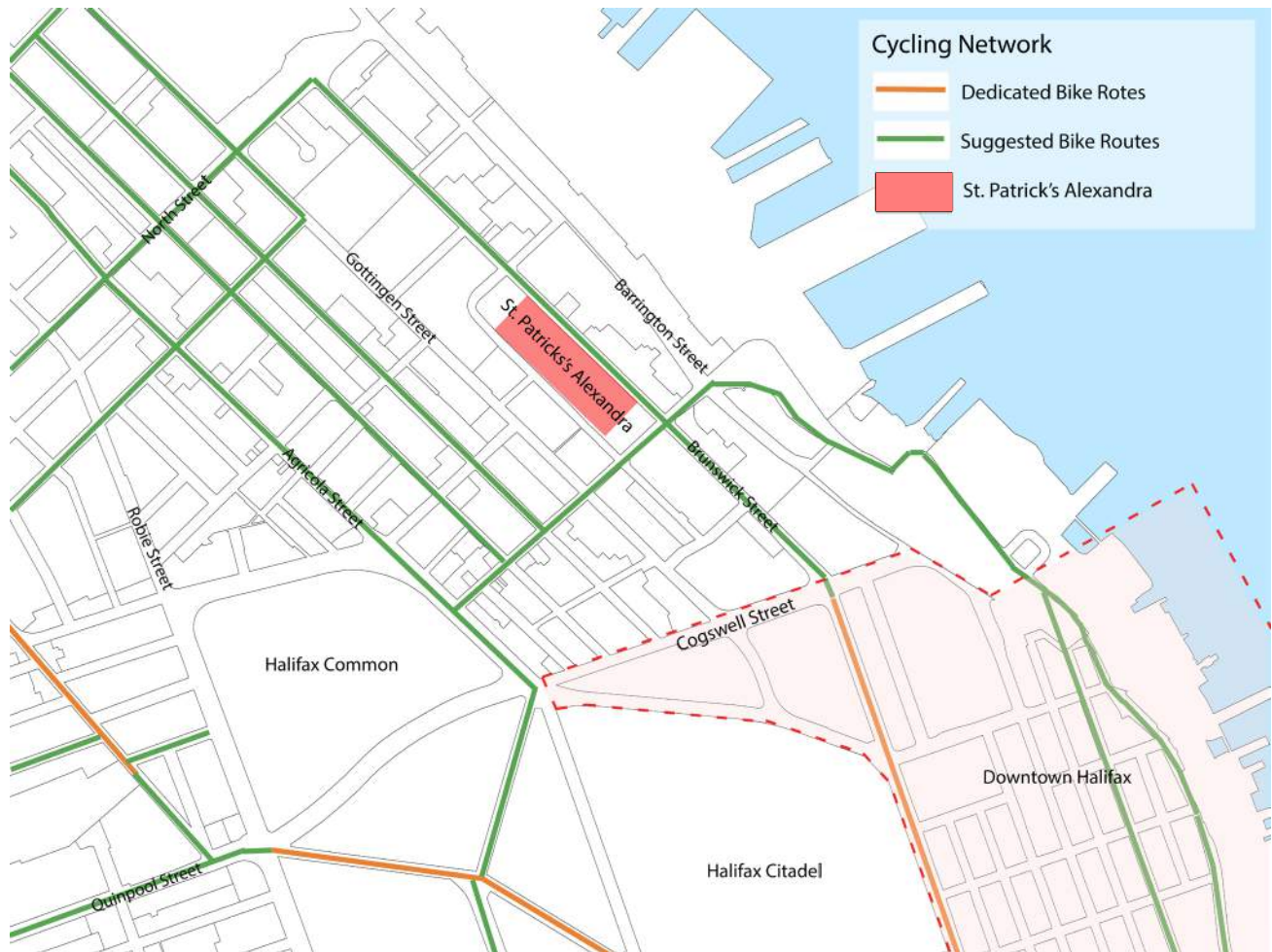
distributing vehicular traffic and bicycle traffic across the peninsula. The site is located between the roads. Transit services provide easy access to other parts of the city. The site is located near Barrington Street which plays an important role as a major arterial road for the City. As one of the entry points of the peninsula, Barrington Street distributes the traffic from MacKay and MacDonald bridges as well as Highway 111 and Bedford Highway to the downtown area.



# 2

Cycling is a favored mode of transportation for young people in the area who bike or walk to work and school. HRM is working to attract more residents to bike by expanding the bicycle route network across the City.

The site is in walking distance to the Common, Citadel Hill, downtown, and all the amenities and institutions in the peninsula. Overall, the site is accessible with all the existing commuting modes.





## Open Spaces

The site is located next to Warrington Park, a small local park. George Dixon Centre is located two blocks from the site.

Most of the peninsula's open spaces, which are mostly public are located in walking distance of the site. There is easy access from the site to large open and public spaces such as the Commons, Citadel Hill and Waterfront.

The site is zoned both open space and institutional.



## Design Objectives, Principles, and Guidelines

### Design Objectives

The Redevelopment Plan for St. Patrick's Alexandra envisions a neighborhood center for North Central Halifax - a hub for community activities to achieve the goal of improving the quality of life for residents of North Central Halifax and a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that relates to its surrounding urban context.

The principles and guidelines list factors and parameters both for the design of St. Patrick's Alexandra site and design evaluation of the St. Patrick's Alexandra community.

The Guiding Principles developed in the community engagement sessions demonstrate the vision for the site. It illustrates an urban design framework for Alexandra Park's private and public built and open spaces.

### Community Principles for Design

Design principles from the community meetings provide design guidelines for the site.

The following principles represent of the community's vision for the site:

- Celebrating the physical and cultural identity of the community
- Designing for all physical capabilities and a diverse range of households and income levels;
- Programming for people of diverse ages and interests
- Integrating and connecting the site into the fabric of the surrounding community, both physically and through programming
- Valuing public spaces and pedestrian-oriented design for the site
- Promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles through urban design, architecture and programming public spaces.

## Design Guidelines

Design guidelines provide parameters for developing the site as a center for the neighborhood and community activities.

### Proposing new uses for the site

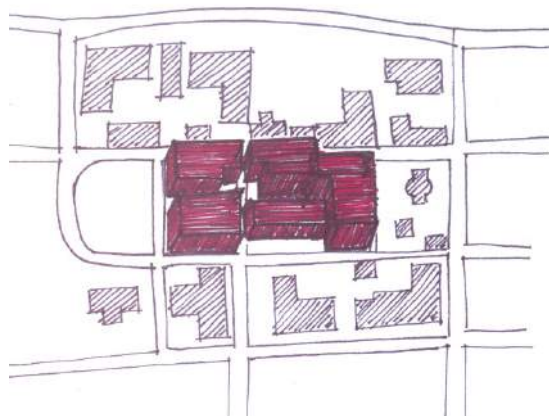
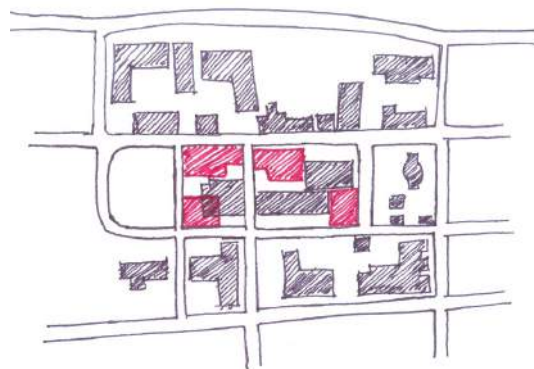
In order to redevelop the site as a neighborhood center, the land use must change from institutional to mixed-use. The community oriented nature of the project supports rezoning.

### Revitalizing and programming the existing buildings

The school buildings are built spaces that are prominent components of the neighborhood. The buildings not only have the structural capacity to be revitalized and reused but also represent the sense of community for many of the neighborhood residents who have studied in the school in the past. Revitalizing and programming the buildings for community activities can promote the sense of community.

### Proposing new buildings for future residential

Since the major preference for developing the site is increasing the number of affordable units for the neighborhood, proposing new buildings will focus on addressing this need and related requirements from





the community's point of view for new residential units such as family housing with private yards and smaller units on top floors.

### Programming open spaces

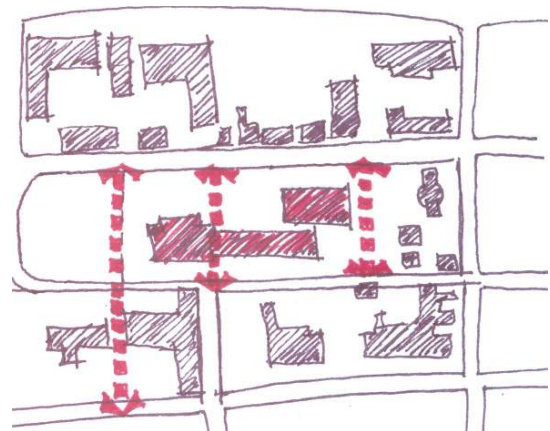
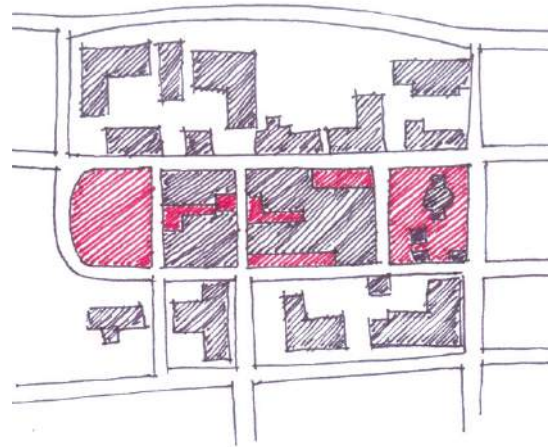
To enhance the sense of community in the site as a neighborhood hub, public spaces in the site must be programmed for community activities.

### Enhancing Warrington Park connection with the open spaces

Warrington Park meets the needs of future residents of the site for green open space. Any open space in the site must be connected to the park to promote the use of the park for the residents.

### Connecting the site with the surrounding urban context

The site is not well-connected to its surrounding urban context. The site occupies a long block and is located on hilly land. The newer building frontage on Maitland Street and its long structure acts as a wall across the site, which prevents access from Brunswick to Maitland Street. To enhance the site connectivity with the surrounding street network, new paths should be designed through the site in different points to turn the site to an inviting place. New paths create opportunities for an active transportation corridor in the site, which

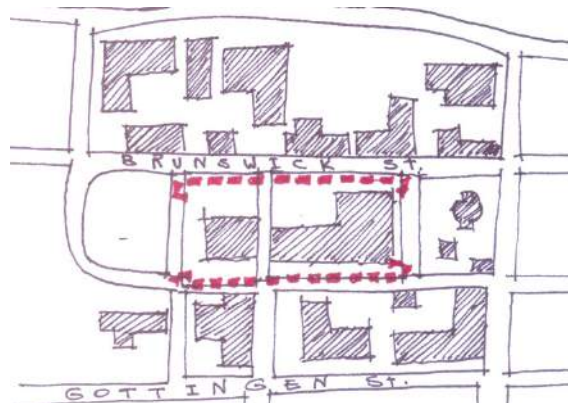


will connect the site directly to the existing and proposed bike lanes in the surrounding neighborhood.

### **Activating frontages on Brunswick Street and Maitland Street**

The site benefits from frontages along Brunswick Street and Maitland Street; however, these are not activated frontages and require attention.

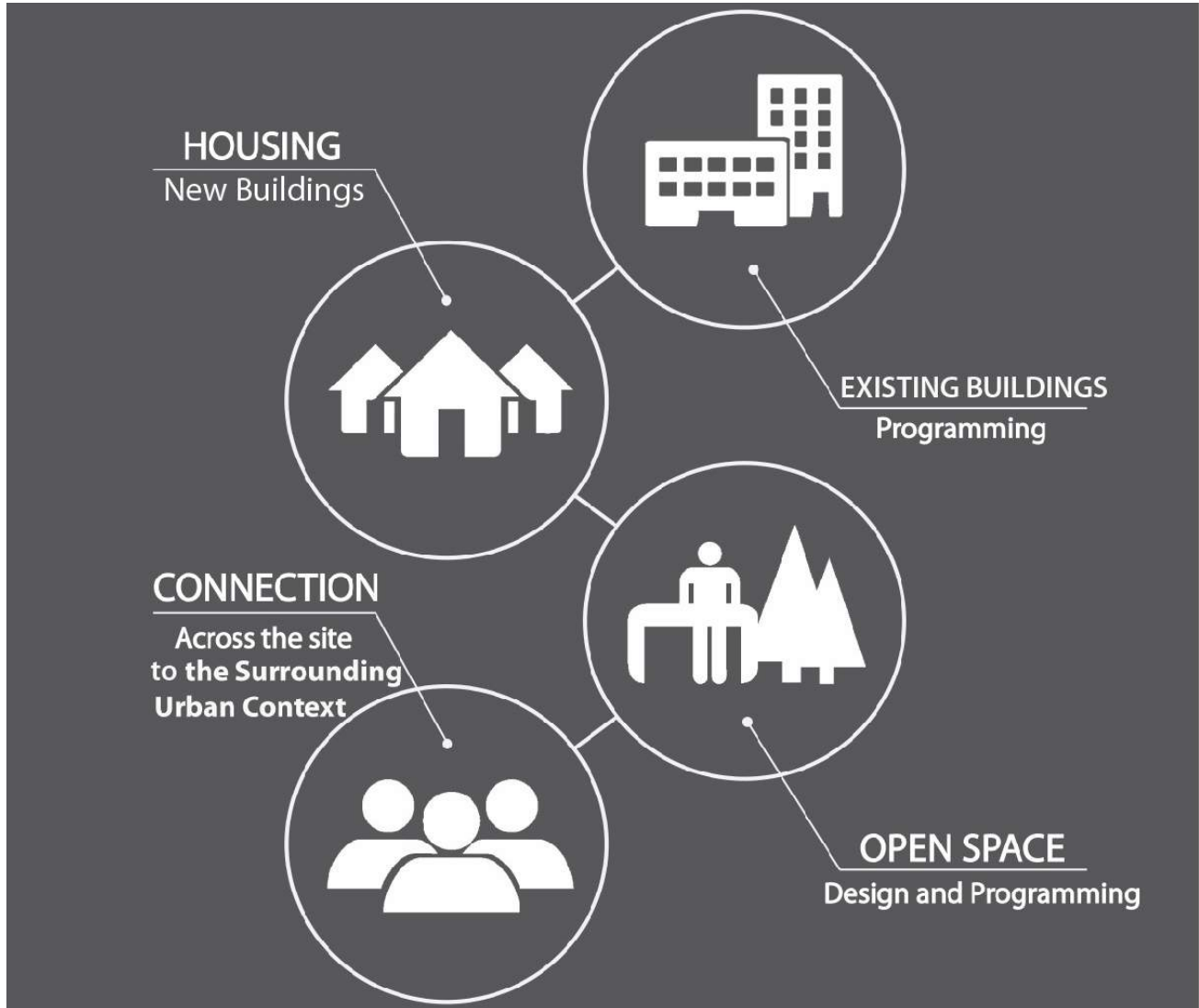
There is an opportunity to activate the frontage along Maitland Street and connect the site to Gottingen Street by creating a path across the site from the end of Prince William Street to Brunswick Street.



# 3

## Implementation of Design Guidelines

I illustrate the design principles and guidelines identified through the consultation sessions with the community. The diagram below reviews the main principles that the master plan should follow and encompass to reflect the community's preferences for the future development in the site.



## Connections

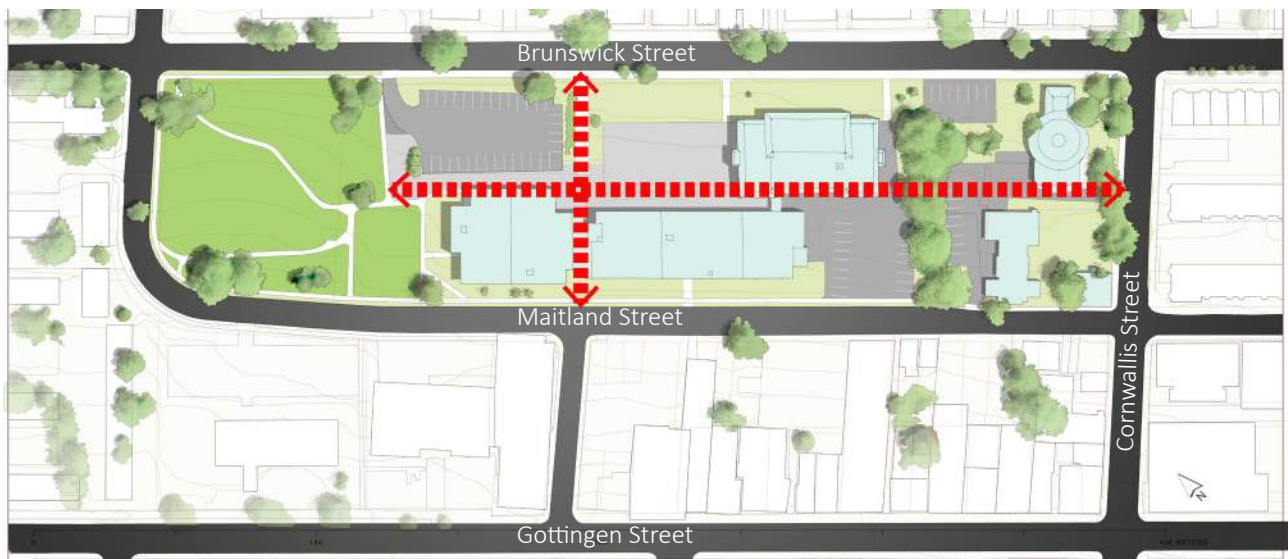
The location of the site and existing right-of-ways around the site allow us to connect the site to the surrounding street network as well as improving the connections across the site.

As the map below shows the existing buildings in the site and the surrounding urban context allow connectivity from within the site to the four directions.

Figure 1 shows a pathway across the site and between the existing buildings can connect the site from Warrington Park and through the Round Church area to Conwallis Street on the east side. The western-eastern pathway provides access throughout the entire block.

As figure 2 shows Prince William Street between Maitland Street and Gottingen Street as well as the two right-of-ways on the blocks on both sides of Prince William Street which provide connection possibilities across the site from Gottingen Street on the south side to Brunswick Street on the north side.

Having the site connected to its surrounding urban context through a network of pathways and connections will help highlight position of the site as an accessible community centre in the middle of the neighborhood.



Credit of the base map goes to the CEU.



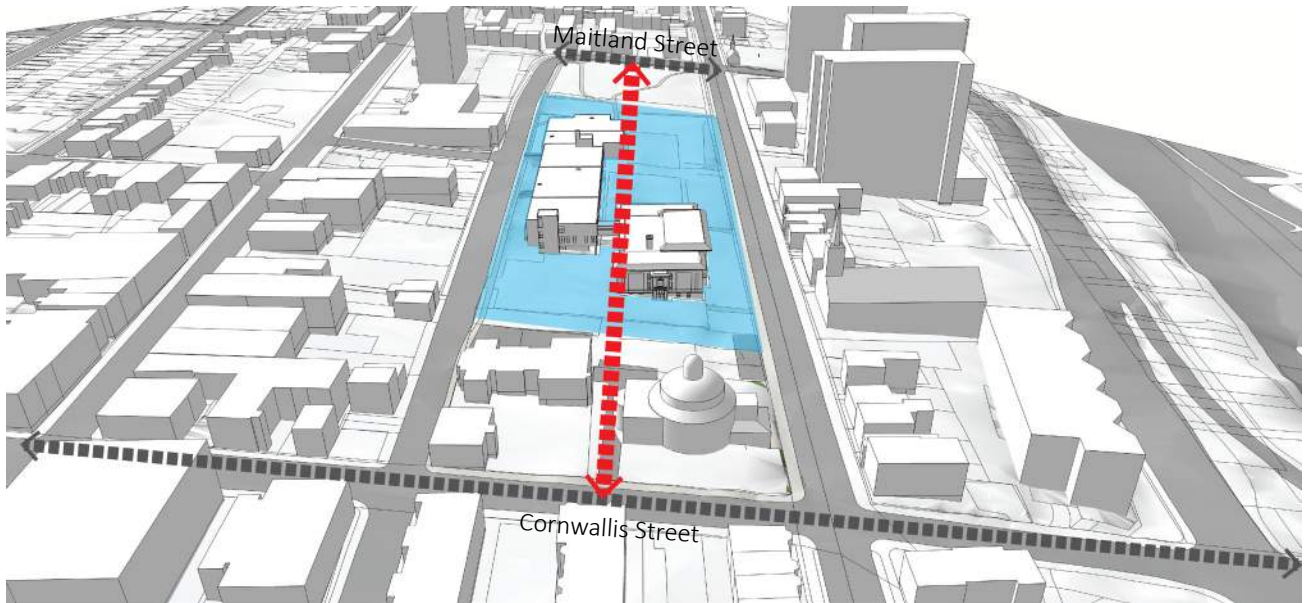


Figure 1: Eastern-western connection

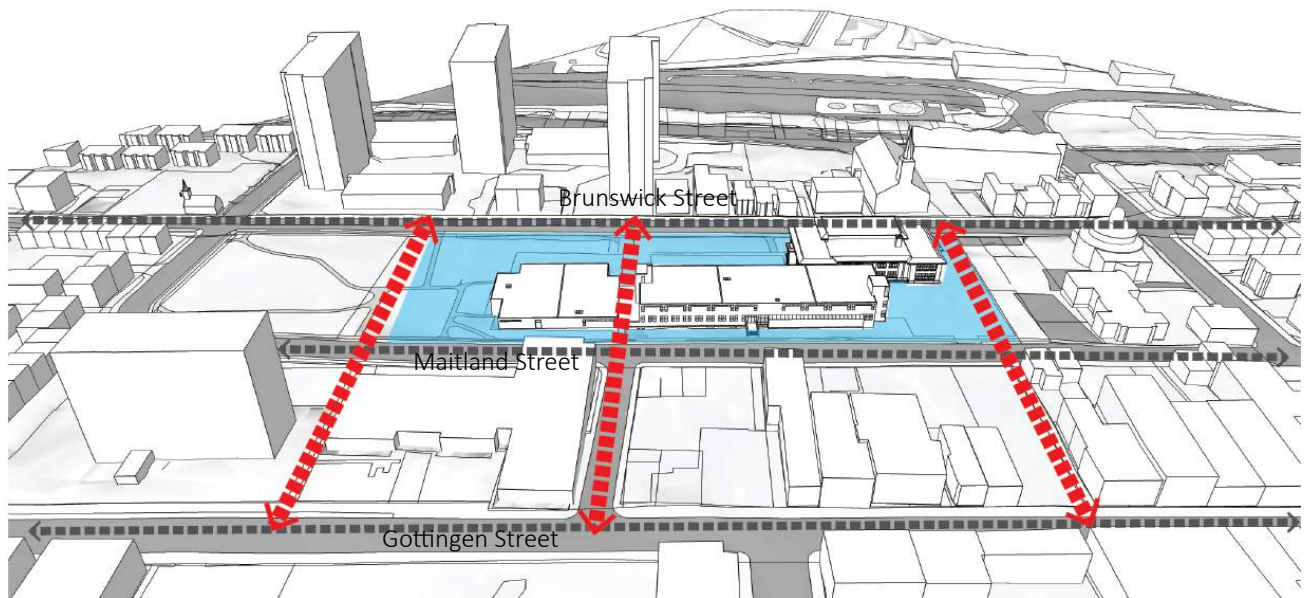
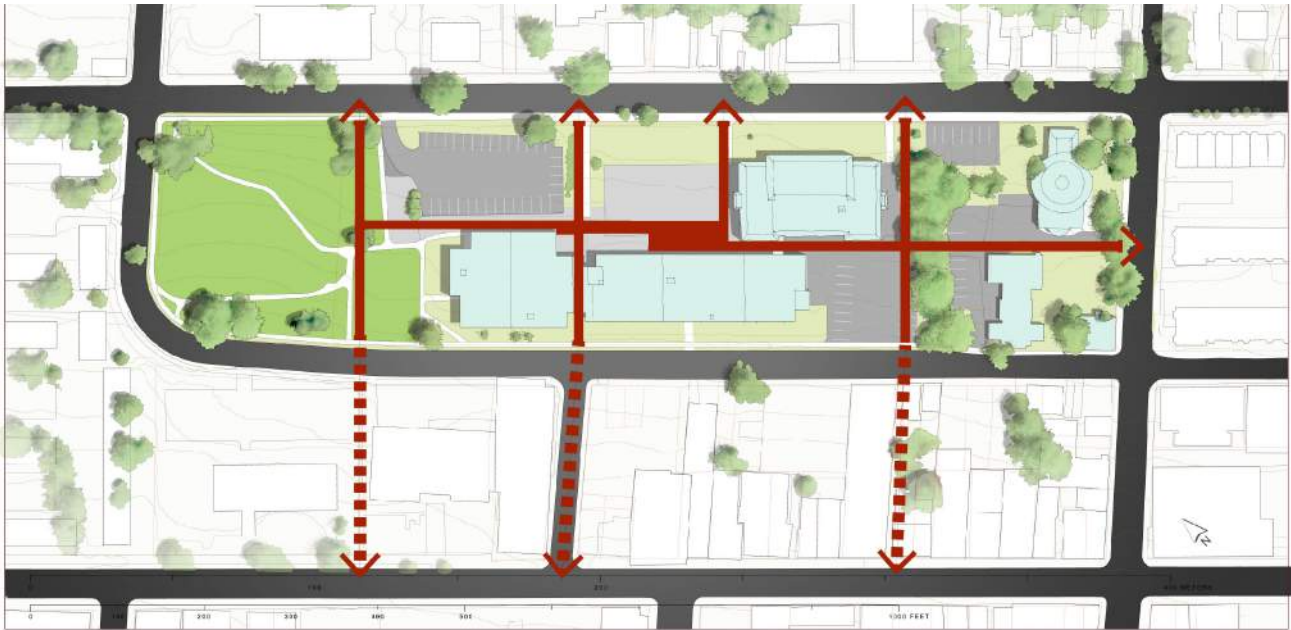


Figure 2: Southern-northern connections



Possible connections across the site to the surrounding streets



Possible areas for new developments in the site based on the possible connections

# 3

## Phasing the Future Development

Based on the community priorities for developing the site, the implementation of the master plan has a phased approach in four construction stages.

I have organized the master plan site layout and the distribution of phases in order to increase the maximum usage of the spaces in each phase.

The map below shows the order of construction phases in the site plan.





## Phase One

The first phase of the site development focuses on revitalization of the existing buildings in the site. Over the past hundred years, the Cobb Building and the newer school building were home to thousands of children and created an image of unity and common memory for the community.

Reusing and revitalizing the buildings for the community purposes will empower the community to seek their further preferences for developing the site through the next phases of development.

The map below shows the location of the existing buildings in the site and the area of phase one.

Landscaping the open space in front of the Cobb Building as a public space improves the site connection to Brunswick Street, provides an inviting access to the site and increases attention of the public to the Cobb Building as a heritage structure.





# 3

On the other side of the site, the slope between Maitland Street and the newer building has disconnected the building from the street. Adding new building masses with transparent façades to the building\* not only connects the building to the street and improves its old brick façade but also provides more interior spaces for the new uses. Figure 3 shows the difference that adding new masses to the building will make.

The other physical change in the newer building that increases connectivity of the site with the surrounding urban context is creation of a pathway through the building, between the gymnasium and the school's main building. The pathway will provide a pedestrian corridor from the end of Prince William Street and throughout the site to Brunswick Street. The map below shows where the changes in the phase one will happen in the site.



\* Credit of this idea goes to the CEU.



Figure 3: Additional spaces to the newer building shown in blue (Credit of the base model goes to Micheal Christian.)

## Programming the School's Buildings

The most important part of phase one is revitalization of the buildings. The primary division of the buildings' interior spaces as classrooms and studios for educational uses make the adaptation of the spaces to new communal uses manageable.

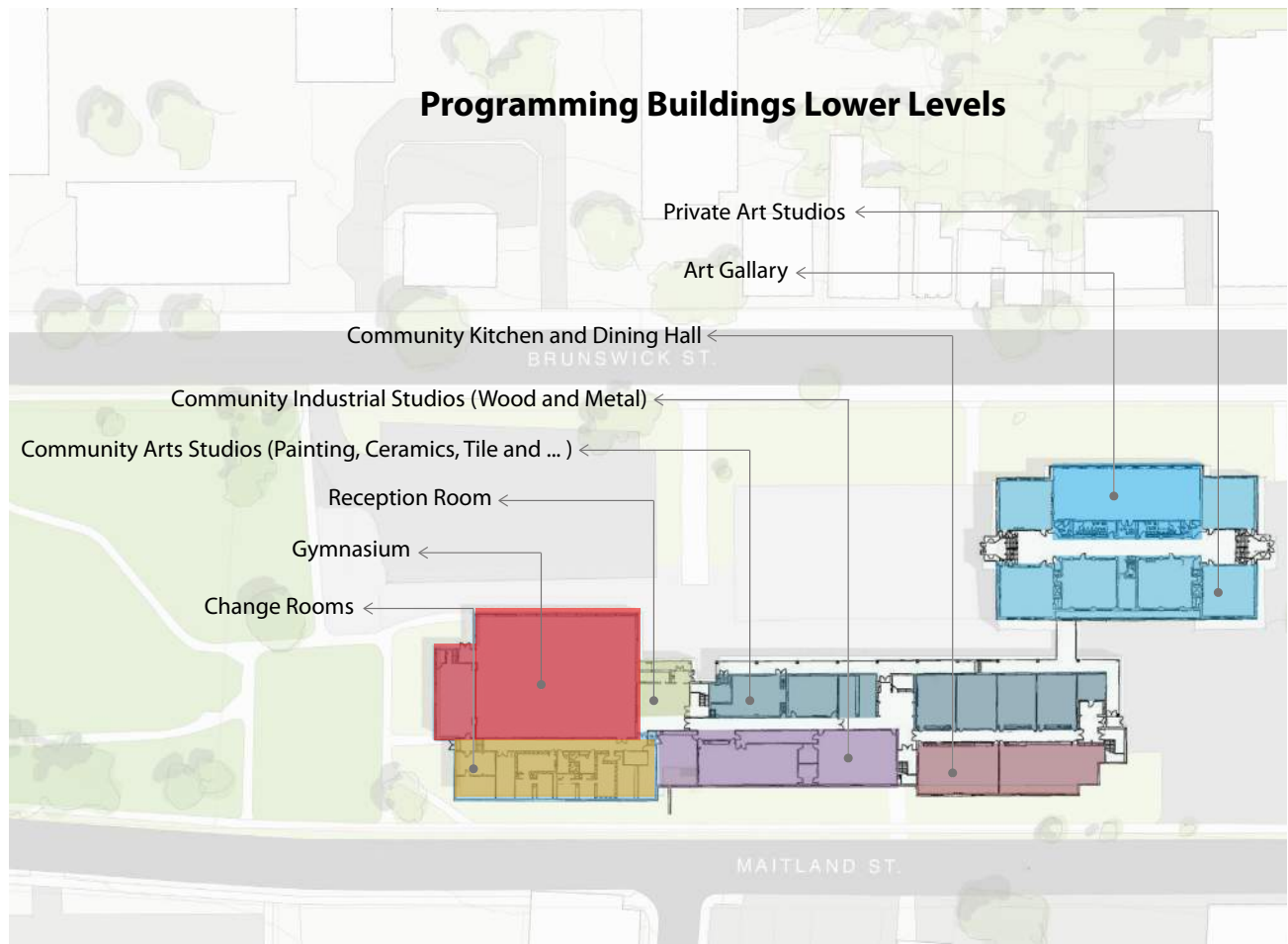
The buildings are three storeys and have enough space for creation of a community hub, commercial, and residential uses.

The lower and main levels of the newer building have proper distribution of spaces for a community hub with communal activities.

The original spaces in the lower level of the newer building are gymnasium, wood and metal workshops, kitchen, and classrooms. The community preference is to revitalize the gym, workshops, and kitchen as their original functions for the community members who want to learn new skills and spend time within their community. The community will use the kitchen and the space next to it as a community kitchen and dining room that work along with Hope Blooms, the community garden in Warrington

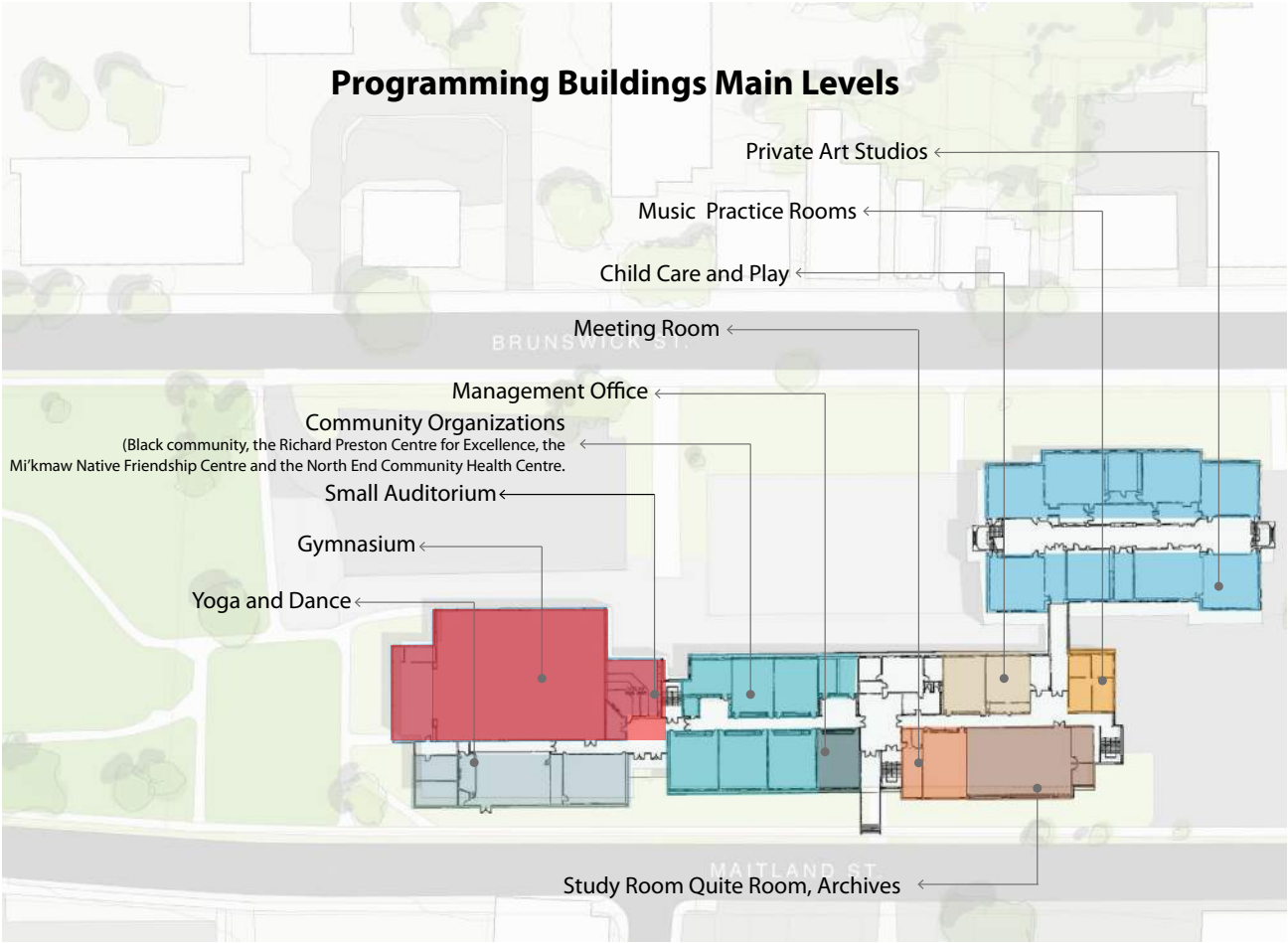
Park. Other spaces in the lower level of the newer building will have functions as art studios for educational purposes for the community.

The main floor of the newer building has classroom size spaces that are suitable for office uses for local organizations and other community activities such as study, music, childcare, and meeting rooms.



The upper level of the building includes classrooms and roof top of the gymnasium. Combining classrooms with slight changes in their spaces will create residential units and the gym’s roof top will be a green open space for the residential units.

The lower level of the Cobb Building has a properly large space with high ceiling to operate as an art gallery. The classrooms in the lower and the main level of the building can function as rental private art studios.



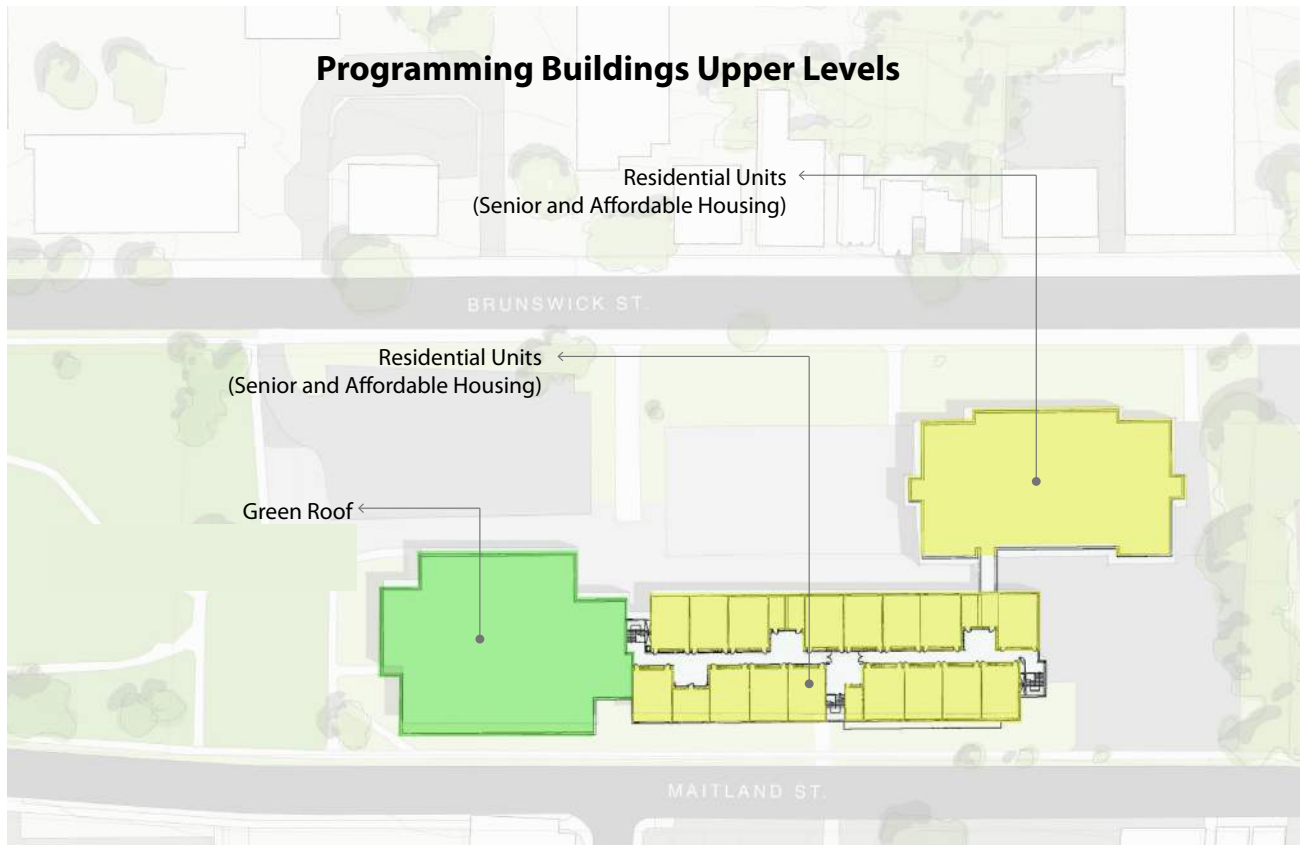


# 3

The large classrooms in the upper floor of the building are large enough to be reused as small residential units and possibly as affordable housing for seniors.

The historic characteristic of the Cobb Building with the size of its spaces and distribution of services in every floor facilitate the adaptation of the new commercial and residential uses in the building.

Completion of phase one in the site will establish an active Community Center to become a focal space for the people to participate in communal activities. The result of the center will empower the community and highlights its role in the next phases of the development.

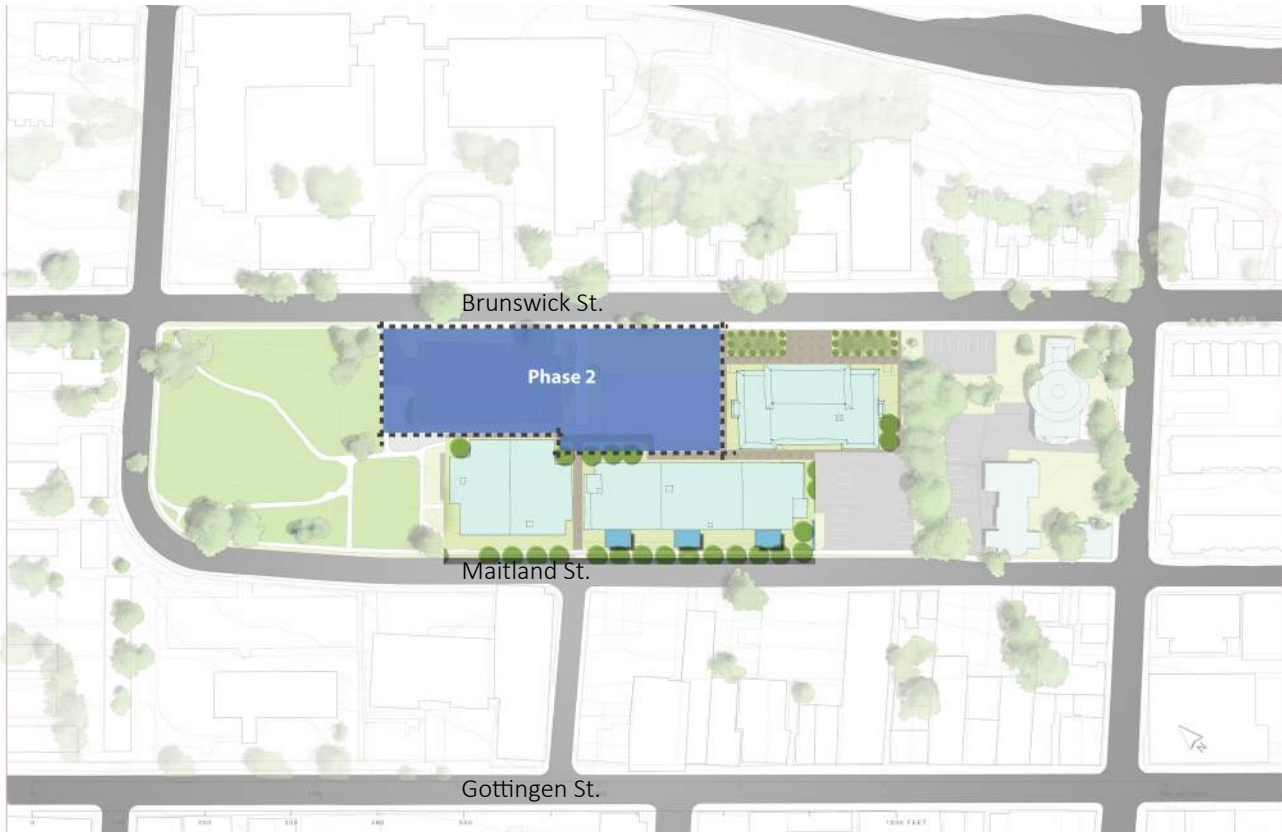


## Phase Two

After implementation of phase one and establishing a stable community center in the existing buildings the next phase will take place in the site.

Phase two will be developing the open area next to the Cobb Building and on Brunswick Street, which is currently a parking lot for the residents of the surrounding area. This is the largest open space in the site. Its size makes it the preferable space for the first new developments.

One of the design guidelines for the site development is adding new housing to the site. Adding new residential buildings in this part of the site will provide housing for the community and create open spaces between the new and existing buildings. It will also enhance the connections across the site. The map below shows where the new development in phase two takes place.



### 3

Building heights should not be higher than four-five storeys which is close to height of the buildings in the area. More importantly the new buildings' height in the site should not be higher than the Cobb Building, which is a respected historic building.

As the map below demonstrates, there will be open spaces in the middle of the site which will provide shared open spaces for the residential units where they will have play areas for children.

Figure 4 shows the site before the development of phase two. Figure 5 shows where the new buildings will be located in the site by the end of phase two.

I illustrate building envelopes for the new developments in phase two and three which represent where the new developments can take place in the site. Form of the new developments show how design of the building envelopes can prevent casting shadow over other buildings in the site and also provide enough space for open spaces among the buildings.



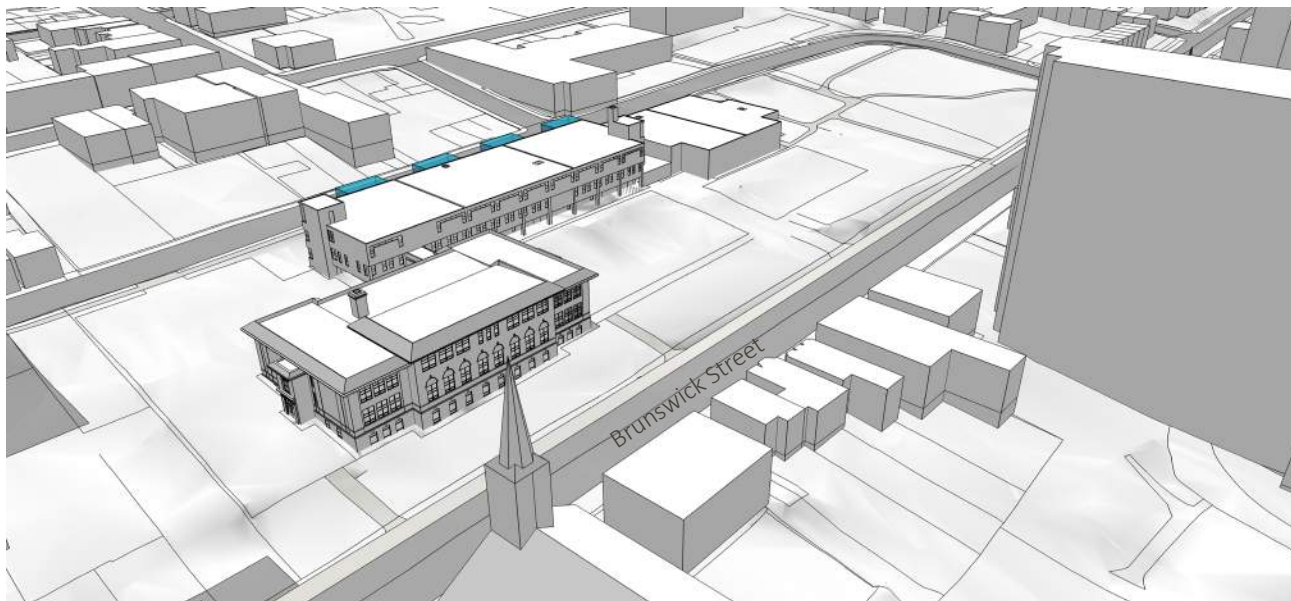


Figure 4: St. Pat's site before construction of phase two

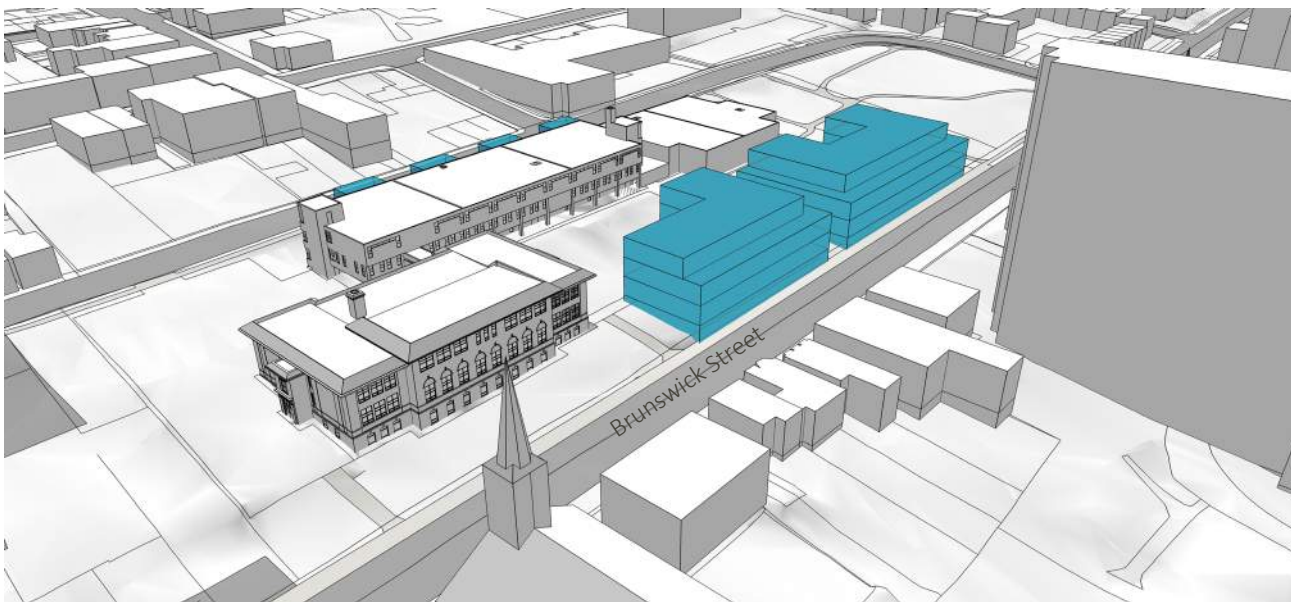


Figure 5: St. Pat's site after construction of phase two (New building envelopes shown in blue)



# 3

## Phase Three

Phase three will be the final phase of housing development. Phase three will fill the space between the school's buildings and the Round Church site on the east side and from Brunswick Street to Maitland Street. This area is the second large empty space in the site after the area used for phase two which makes it suitable for further development.

Creation of the new housing on this side of the site will form an open space between the new houses and the existing buildings that will function as shared open space for the residents.

This phase includes creation of the pathway from the east side of the Cobb Building where it connects Brunswick Street on the north to Maitland Street on the south. There is a right-of-way across Maitland Street from the pathway, which ends at Gottingen Street. Therefore this pathway connects Brunswick



Street to Gottingen Street through the right-of-way.

The other connection will connect the site through the Round Church site to Cornwallis Street.

The map in the previous page shows where the phase three takes place in the site and the map below shows where the new buildings, new pathways, and the open space will be located. Figure 6 on the next page shows the existing and new buildings in the site by the end of phase two and Figure 7 shows how the site will change by the end of phase three.

Although the new open spaces in the site are accessible to the public through the network of pathways, the buildings design can secure shared open spaces adjacent to the buildings and inside the public open spaces for the future residents. Figure 12 shows how separation of open spaces can happen through design in the site.

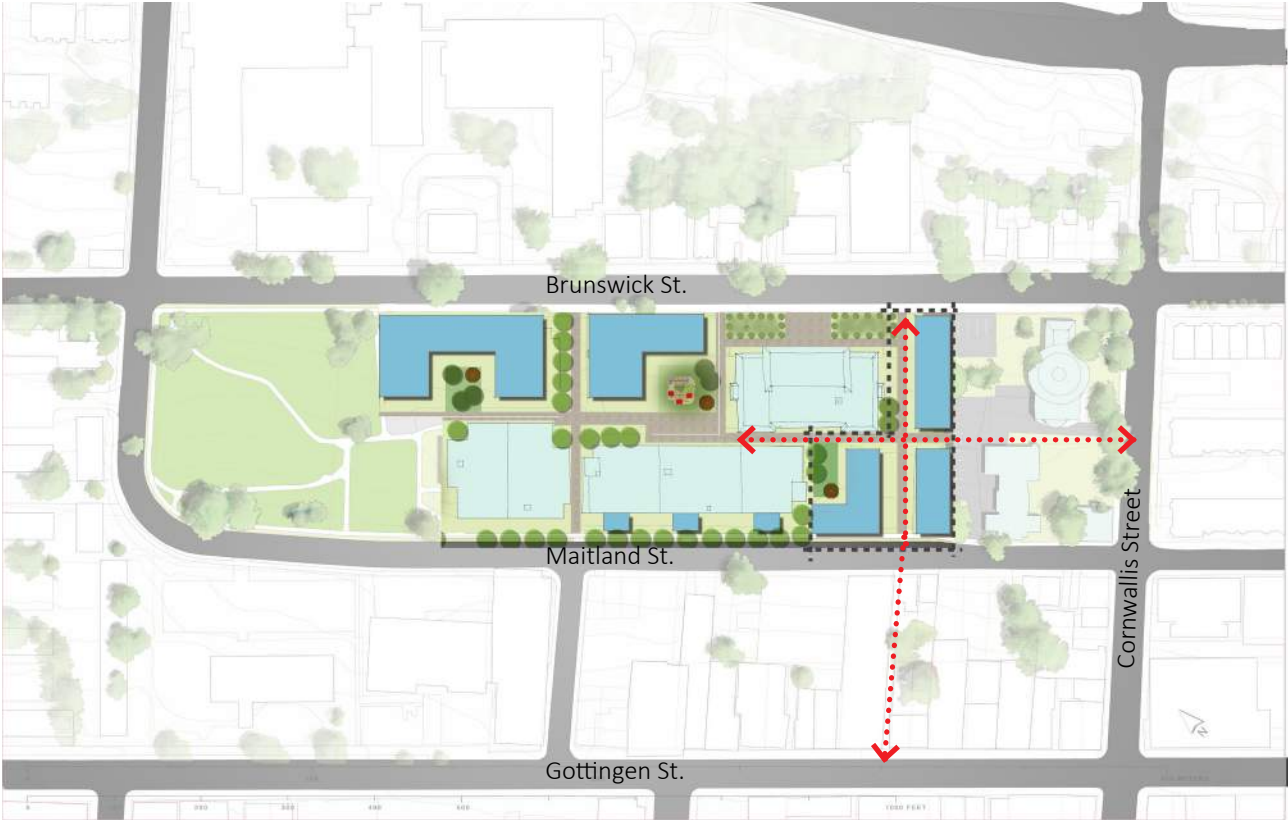




Figure 6: St. Pat's site before construction of phase three (New building envelopes shown in blue)



Figure 7: St. Pat's site after construction of phase three (New building envelopes shown in blue)

# Frontages on Brunswick Street and Maitland Street

By the end of phase three the new buildings on both sides of the site will connect and activate frontages of the site on Brunswick Street and Maitland Street. The Figures below and on the next page show how both sides of the site will change before and after implementation of phase two and three.



Figure 8: Frontage on Brunswick Street before development

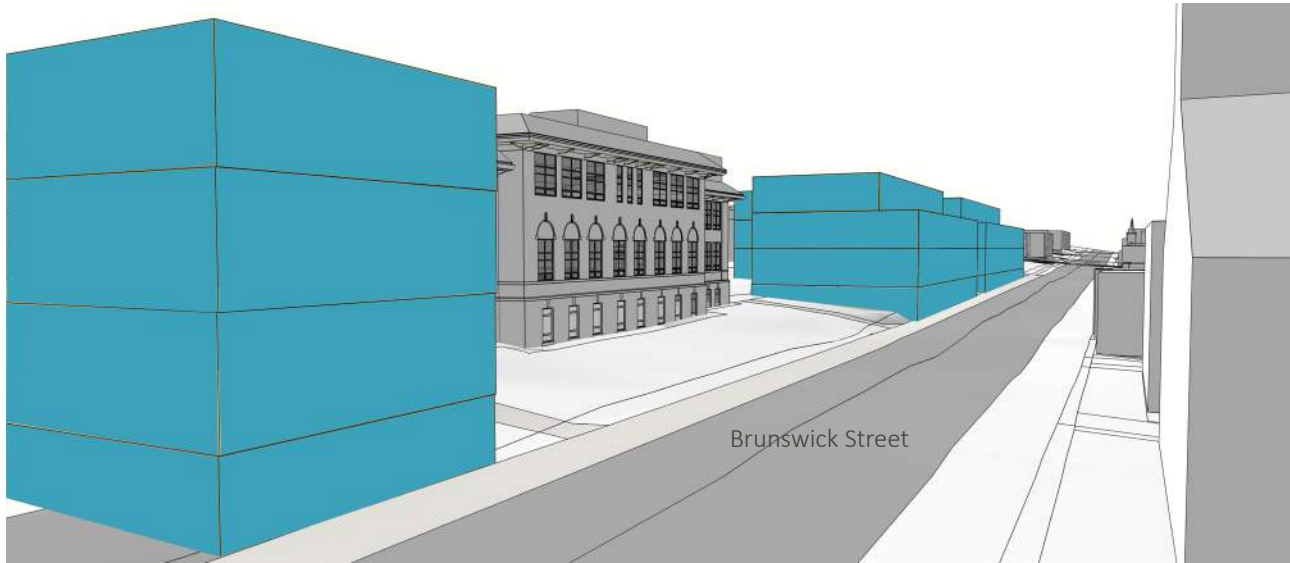


Figure 9: Frontage on Brunswick Street after development (New building envelopes shown in blue)





Figure 10: St. Pat's frontage on Maitland Street before development

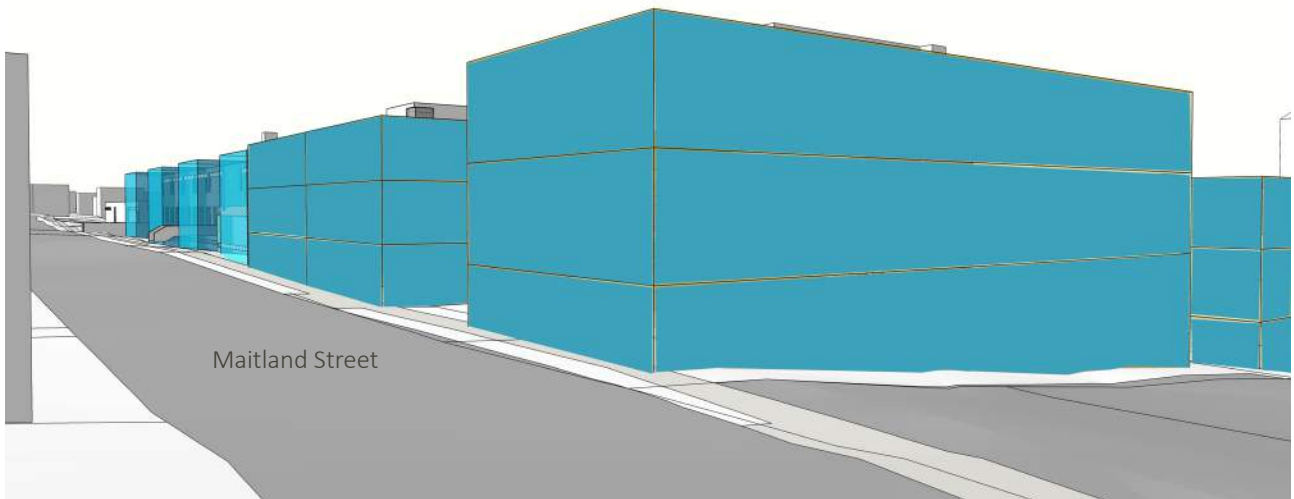


Figure 11: St. Pat's frontage on Maitland Street after development (New building envelopes shown in blue)



Figure 12: Possible buildings on the site  
with shared and public open spaces  
(By: Iyad Al-Halis - CEU)

# 3

## Phase Four

Phase four is the final phase of development. Once the other phases have been implemented, the residents have inhabited the residential buildings and the community hub is active, phase four takes place in the west side of the site. In the final phase the open space next to the gymnasium will have public programming which will enhance function of the open spaces in the site. The site gentle slope on this side is suitable for construction of a gathering place such an amphitheater where different events will bring the public together and complete the role of the community hub.

This phase includes creation of the other pathway on the western side of the site where it connects Brunswick Street on the north to Maitland Street on the south. There is another right-of-way across



Maitland Street from the pathway and along the library, which ends at Gottingen Street. This pathway creates the third connection in the site that connects Brunswick Street to Gottingen Street through the right-of-way.

In phase four the site east-west connection that started in phase three and connects the eastern side of the site to Cornwallis Street will continue across the site and reaches the west side of the site.

Connecting the site to the surrounding urban context through the proposed network of connections will enhance access to the community centre proposed in phase one, both for the future residents of the site, as well as residents of the surrounding areas.

The map on the previous page shows where phase four takes place in the site and the map below shows how the changes look at the end of this phase.





## 3

## Programming Open Spaces

Programming the open spaces in the site is part of phasing construction. The open spaces located between the buildings and the open space between the gymnasium and Warrington Park will be focal gathering places for the residents and public .

The figures below show different programming that can take place in the open spaces.



<http://www.costco.com/gazebos.html>



Source: <http://indianaeconomicdigest.com>

Source: <http://playatlanta.ning.com/profiles/blogs/great-play-at-trinity-school>



Figure 13, 14, 15: Different programming for the open spaces in the site.

### How can St. Patrick’s Site Development Plan be used?

The site master plan below demonstrates the completion of phasing development. By the end of phase four all the design components will take place in the site which will meet the community needs and requirements in a development plan for the site.

My project as an illustration of the community preferences for the future development in the site is a tool to convey the community’s message to the City. I will provide for the NCCC -that has initially attempted to secure a community oriented development in the site- my final report. I hope that the NCCC as the representative of the community presents my project to the City to consider it as a guideline to set up criteria in negotiation of any development agreement for the future of the site. I hope the final outcome highlights the importance of the community role in shaping the future of the City.











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