



Attachment D:

NEIGHBOURHOOD ANALYSIS



Neighbourhood
Observations



CONNECTIVITY



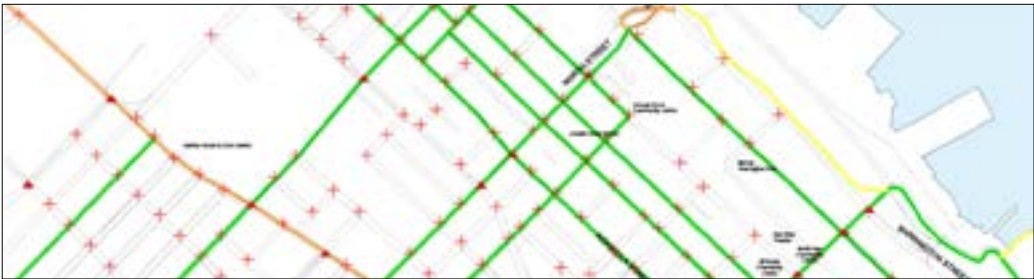
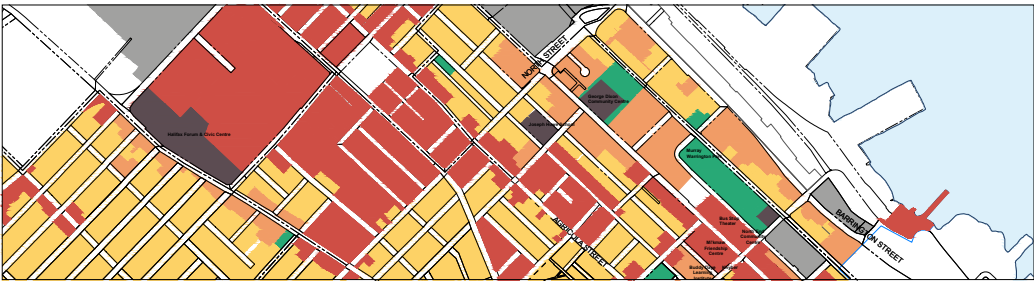
LAND USE & SCALE



ROAD HIERARCHY



STREET & TRANSIT
NETWORK





NEIGHBOURHOOD OBSERVATIONS

The North End of Halifax is well known for its colourful, diverse, artistic, walkable, young and vibrant characteristics. Many of the buildings in this neighborhood were built in 1950s & 1960s. Large commercial and industrial buildings have created a recognizable pattern of scale, age and building type throughout the area. The diversity of building styles, uses, and scale in the North End varies from one block to another. The following section of the report examines various factors of the North End neighbourhood including land use patterns, density, scale, connectivity and transportation networks. These factors were examined in order to better understand the type of development that is suitable for Midtown North site.

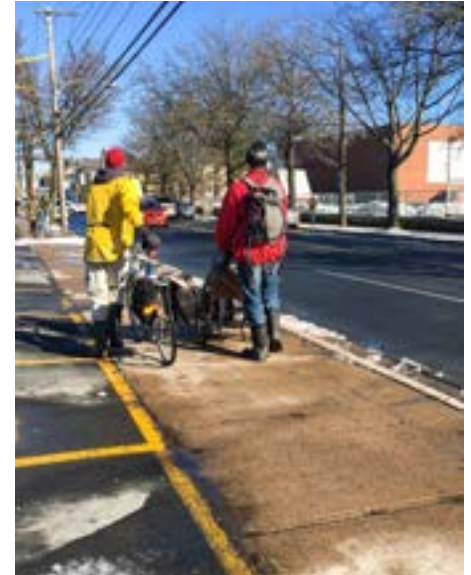
To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject site and its surrounding neighbourhood, the project team visited the area, took photos and observed how it is currently being used. We quickly learned that there are a variety of land uses in the community, some of which seem to have a positive impact, while others do not seem to be contributing to the creation of a vibrant urban place.





NEIGHBOURHOOD OBSERVATIONS

The series of photos below represent what we thought were some positive land uses that exist in the neighbourhood today. Community members who attended our first open house session in February 2016 also reiterated that these are positive aspects of the existing neighbourhood.





NEIGHBOURHOOD OBSERVATIONS

The series of photos on the following two pages represent uses within the neighbourhood that do not seem to have a positive impact. Again, the negative impacts of these uses were reiterated by community members at our first Open House event in February 2016.





NEIGHBOURHOOD OBSERVATIONS

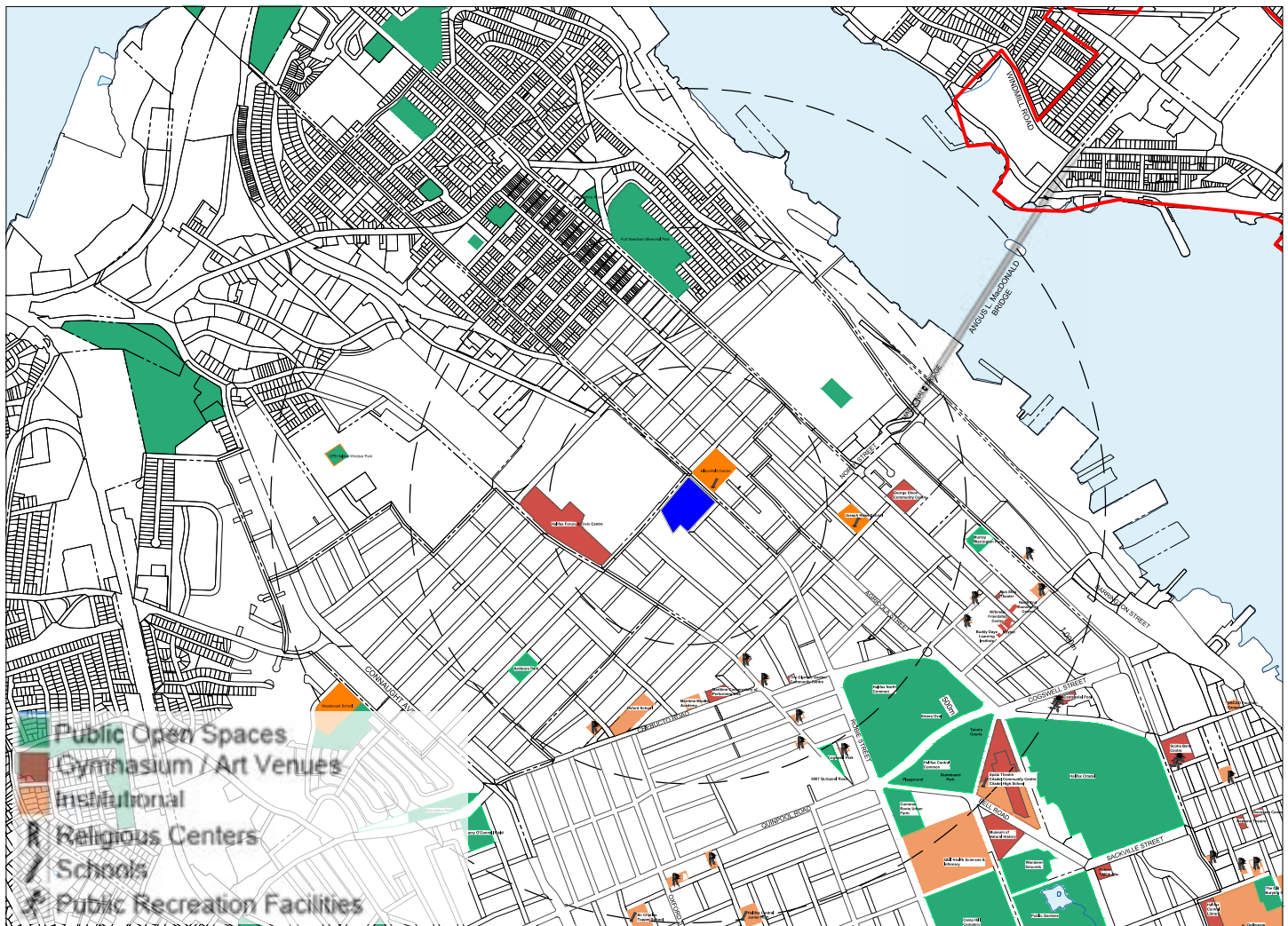




CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity refers to the extent to which urban spaces permit or restrict the movement of people. Connectivity can be addressed at a macro scale, which seeks ways to improve movement of people throughout a greater network. It can also be addressed at a micro scale, focusing on a specific site and how it can be designed to create seamless access and mobility within, which allows it to be easily integrated into a greater network.

The Midtown North site is located at the corner of Robie Street and Almon Street, an intersection of two prominent streets that run north/south and east/west across the Halifax Peninsula. The site is also within proximity to a variety of Halifax's prominent landmarks, including the Halifax Commons, Fort Needham Park and the Halifax Forum. Midtown North's prominent location presents an opportunity to create a meeting place or destination that can be easily accessed by all community members living across the peninsula. Future development of the site should respect its prominent location and enhance its role in the greater connectivity network by improving access to public transit, enhancing active transportation infrastructure and prioritizing pedestrian movement. This can be achieved by designing the site to allow for seamless mobility for pedestrians, in all directions, and creating multiple access points to Almon Street and Robie Street, which connect the site to other destinations within the greater network.





CONNECTIVITY

Enhancing the Grid System

One of HRM's planning goals to improve connectivity on the peninsula is to integrate new development into the grid street system. The project team has studied the existing street patterns from a larger scale and determined that there is an apparent break in the grid pattern around and within the Midtown North Site.

St. Albans Street, King Street and Clifton Street are local streets around the site that currently cause breaks in the street grid. This project presents an opportunity to re-connect these streets and activate the southern edge of the site by creating new north/south connections from Clifton Street and King Street through to Almon Street. The Bloomfield site is located directly west of the Midtown North site on the other side of Robie Street, which will eventually be redeveloped. This project presents an opportunity to connect to the adjacent Bloomfield development by creating an east/west thoroughfare that aligns with Bloomfield Street.

Creating these new connections within the subject site will improve access and help with long term connectivity goals for the Peninsula. These connections also create opportunities for social gathering spaces where north/south and east/west thoroughfares intersect.

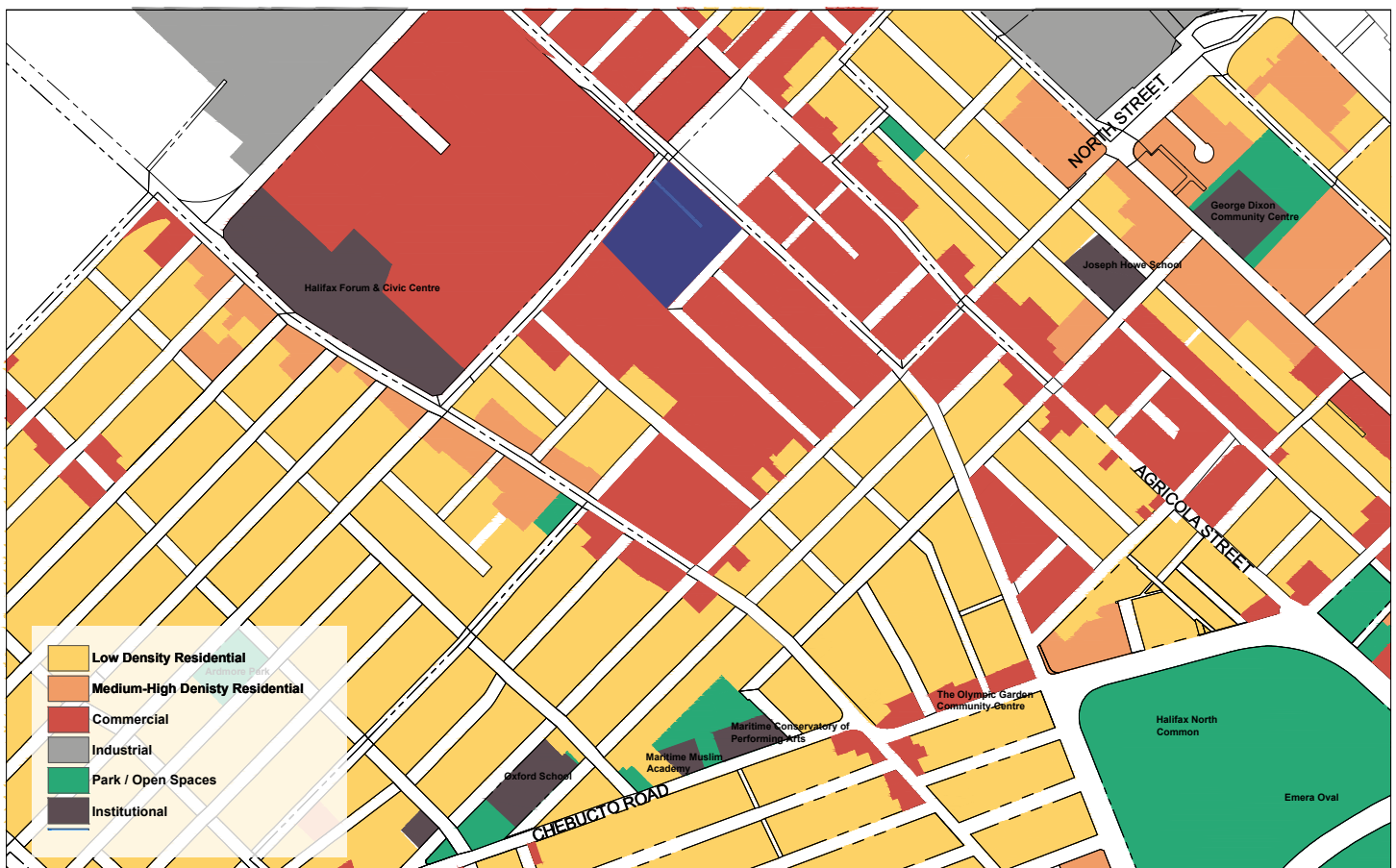




LAND USE & SCALE

The community that surrounds the Midtown North site is a vibrant and growing community that is supported by a variety of land use types (e.g. residential, commercial, institutional, industrial and parks/open spaces). Additionally, there are a variety of specific land uses within each of these land use types. For example, residential uses range from single family homes to 10+ storey apartment buildings and commercial uses range from locally owned shops to large scale building supplies stores.

While mixed use developments are becoming more common within the North End community, the commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses are generally separated from each other instead of being integrated. This separation suggests a need for a comprehensively designed mixed use development at the subject site that will respect and add to the existing character of the community.





RESIDENTIAL

There are a variety of residential uses of different scales located within the community that surrounds the Midtown North site.

- A concentration of multi-unit development is located to the west and southwest of the site, which includes the Gladstone Development.
- Smaller scale residential uses such as single family homes and row houses exist to the east of the site on the other side of the Robie Street corridor. There are also several mid-scale developments ranging from 5-8 storeys located east of the site that are either approved or built (e.g. St. Joseph's Square)
- Small scale residential uses are located to the south of the site along King Street and Clifton Street and to the south of North Street.
- Several large scale multi-unit development proposals are either approved, under construction or built to the north of the subject site (e.g. Point North & Monaghan Square)

When considering residential building footprints, block sizes and the intensity of uses in the surrounding community, the size and intensity generally decreases from west to east and from north to south. Following these patterns, a natural flow for the site would include larger buildings in terms of height, footprints and density on the western and northern portions with a smooth transition into lower heights and density with smaller footprints on the eastern and southern portions.





COMMERCIAL

There are numerous commercial uses located within the North End Community that vary in function and scale. The area immediately surrounding the Midtown North site was once the industrial heart of the city. It has since been converted into larger scale commercial uses such as the Rona, Shoppers Drug Mart and Canada Post. In other parts of the community, along Robie Street, Agricola Street and parts of Almon Street, smaller scale commercial uses exist that are mostly locally owned and operated. The subject site presents an opportunity to provide additional commercial uses that will enhance service to the surrounding community and the future residents of the proposed development. These new commercial uses should vary in size and type with smaller scale uses located along Robie Street and Almon Street in order to continue the existing trend of scale along these streets.



Offices:

The subject site also presents an opportunity to integrate more office space into the North End community. Currently, there are a number of small scale office uses dispersed throughout the community. A significant portion of which exist on the ground level of 2-3 storey buildings that contain residential units above. Young Tower, located approximately 500m north of the subject site, also provides thousands of square feet of office space in the more traditional office tower form. Introducing more office space into the subject site will increase opportunity for community members to live, work and play by creating an integrated land use pattern that provides access to all the amenities of everyday life.





INSTITUTIONAL & INDUSTRIAL

Institutional:

A variety of Institutional uses, including schools, churches, recreation facilities and community centres are all within proximity to the Midtown North site. The majority of these uses are within walking distance while others can be easily accessed using transit.

Industrial:

As mentioned prior, the Midtown North site is located within the former industrial heart of Halifax. As a result, there are still some industrial uses that exist within the site and surrounding area. These industrial uses are no longer compatible with the growing urban nature of the North End community. It is suggested that these uses at the site be removed and replaced with mixed use urban development that is compatible with growing nature of the surrounding community and in keeping with our cities future growth strategies. With that being said, the proposed development should include architectural elements that reflect the past industrial heritage of the area.





ROAD HIERARCHY

The Midtown North Site is bounded by two prominent streets that are suitable for higher volumes of traffic. Almon Street is a collector street that facilitates east/west connections between the North End Community and the West End Community. Robie Street is an arterial street that runs north/south through the heart of the Halifax peninsula. Future development of the subject site should be oriented towards and accessed via to these two prominent streets.

The remaining streets that surround the subject site are local streets that are not meant to support high volumes of traffic. Future development should encourage pedestrian and active transportation access to these streets while discouraging increased access for motor vehicles.



Robie Street



Almon Street

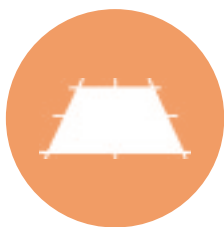


St Albans Street



Clifton Street





STREET & TRANSIT NETWORKS

The City has designated Almon Street, North Street and Agricola Street as suggested bike routes and Windsor Street currently has a dedicated bike lane. The suggested north/south bike route on Agricola Street and existing bike route on Windsor Street are 4-5 blocks apart. By creating an active transportation connection on Clifton Street through the subject site, there is an opportunity to increase access and fill in a gap within HRM's proposed cycling network.

The Halifax Commons is currently a suggested urban greenway and a popular destination to walk and cycle to. The north/south reconnection from Clifton Street to Almon Street will improve access for cyclists to and from the Halifax Common. As a result of this new connection, Robie Street can act as the main north/south thoroughfare for private vehicles and transit while Clifton Street can provide an additional north/south thoroughfare for active transportation and pedestrians.





STREET & TRANSIT NETWORKS

Robie Street, Windsor Street and North Street are thoroughfares within the existing public transit network that are within proximity of the Midtown North site. The site currently has direct access to Robie Street, which includes several prominent bus routes such as numbers 7, 42, 80 and 81. Access to public transit on Windsor Street and North Street can be improved by providing additional pedestrian connections throughout the site and between existing streets. The re-connection of Clifton Street to Almon Street will provide better access to the transit stops on North Street (Bus # 2, 4 and 52) to the south. Connecting the subject site to the adjacent Bloomfield development by creating an east/west thoroughfare that aligns with Bloomfield Street will also improve access to the transit stops on Windsor Street (Bus # 17, 18 and 82) to the west.

