

# DOWNTOWN IS IMPORTANT!

## THE HEART OF THE CITY

Fort St. John is at an important crossroad. Because the city is rapidly growing, now is the time to plan this growth so we achieve community goals well into the future. **Downtown is the centre piece of our community's overall growth management strategy.**

A successful downtown is a community's most important feature. Successful downtowns result in:

- A place that attracts and maintains people, **especially young families.**
- A **vibrant and diverse local economy** to make Fort St. John the service centre of Northern B.C.
- Being **ready for future growth** by using land and infrastructure more efficiently, encouraging walking and transit, and supporting other community wide sustainability goals.

Our downtown is key to improving the quality and livability of our community for current and future residents.

## PLANNING FOR ACTION

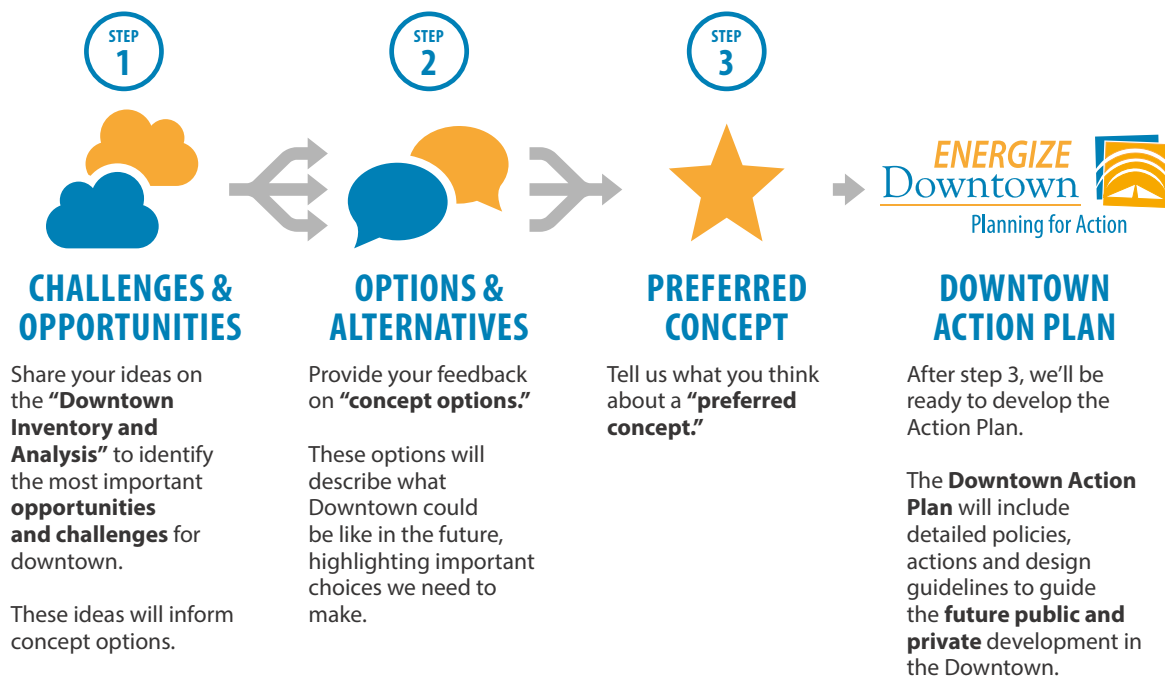
Energize Downtown is "Phase 2" of a community planning process to develop an Action Plan for the Downtown. This process acts on City Council's priorities to develop and implement a plan to enhance the downtown as the economic, social, and cultural heart of the community, as outlined in the 2011 Official Community Plan (OCP).

Building on the vision and goals established by the 2011 OCP and the detailed technical and background work completed in Phase 1, Phase 2 of the **Energize Downtown will identify a range of development, design concepts, and priorities for both public and private realms.** This will form the foundation for development tools and incentives, downtown design guidelines and standards, and detailed policies for action in Phase 3.

Phase 3 will result in a clear roadmap to guide the City, developers, business owners, and more to create a high quality and livable downtown. **We need your help to create this roadmap to revitalize and enhance our downtown as the heart of the community.**

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Phase 2 of Energize Downtown: Planning for Action has three steps:



# THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

## PLANNING CONTEXT

The Official Community Plan (OCP) establishes the City's future vision, including policies and guidelines for land use and development. The OCP was adopted by Council in 2011 after public consultation.

The **OCP vision** for downtown is summarized to the right. The OCP directs downtown development to:

- **Improve the appearance** and design of streets and buildings;
- Direct **housing and business growth to Downtown Fort St. John**;
- Encourage **more shops and restaurants** downtown;
- Reach at least 75% **pedestrian-oriented retail** in the ground level of buildings;
- **Build on vacant lots**; and,
- Increase the **variety of housing choices**.

The Downtown Action Plan will implement the OCP by providing policies and actions that the City and others can take to reinvest in and enhance our downtown.



## THE CITY'S ROLE

The City's role is to create regulations, policies, and standards so that future development follows the OCP.

The Downtown Action Plan will contain:

- **Standards** that describe how City infrastructure downtown should be built, such as the quality and character of roads and sidewalks.
- **Guidelines** that shape private development, such as building height, how "bulky" buildings feel, and how far buildings are away from the street.
- **Priority investments** that the City can take on streets and City land can encourage reinvestment in downtown.
- **Pre-zoning and selling land** is a low-risk way for the City to shape development.

## THE OCP VISION FOR DOWNTOWN:

A COMPACT, MIXED USE,  
PEDESTRIAN & TRANSIT ORIENTED  
URBAN PLACE THAT IS THE  
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC &  
CULTURAL HEART  
OF THE COMMUNITY AND WHERE THERE ARE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOWNTOWN LIVING.

## DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA

Energize Downtown focuses on the core area defined by a 500 metre (5 minute walk) from 100th Street and 100th Avenue, as outlined in red below. The process will also look at impacts in the context area, outlined below in black.

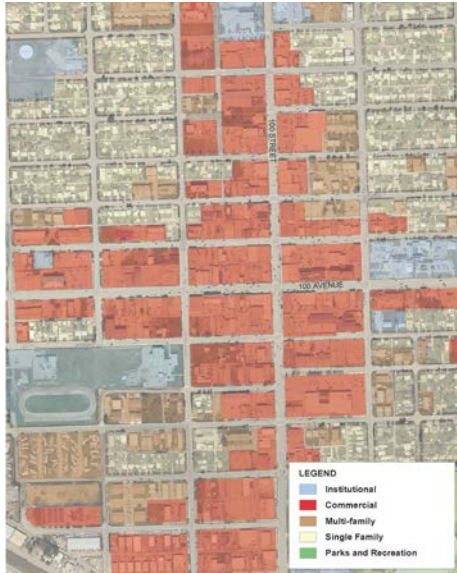


## WANT MORE?

See Chapter 2 "Background" in the Urban Inventory and Analysis Report.

# INVENTORY & ANALYSIS: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

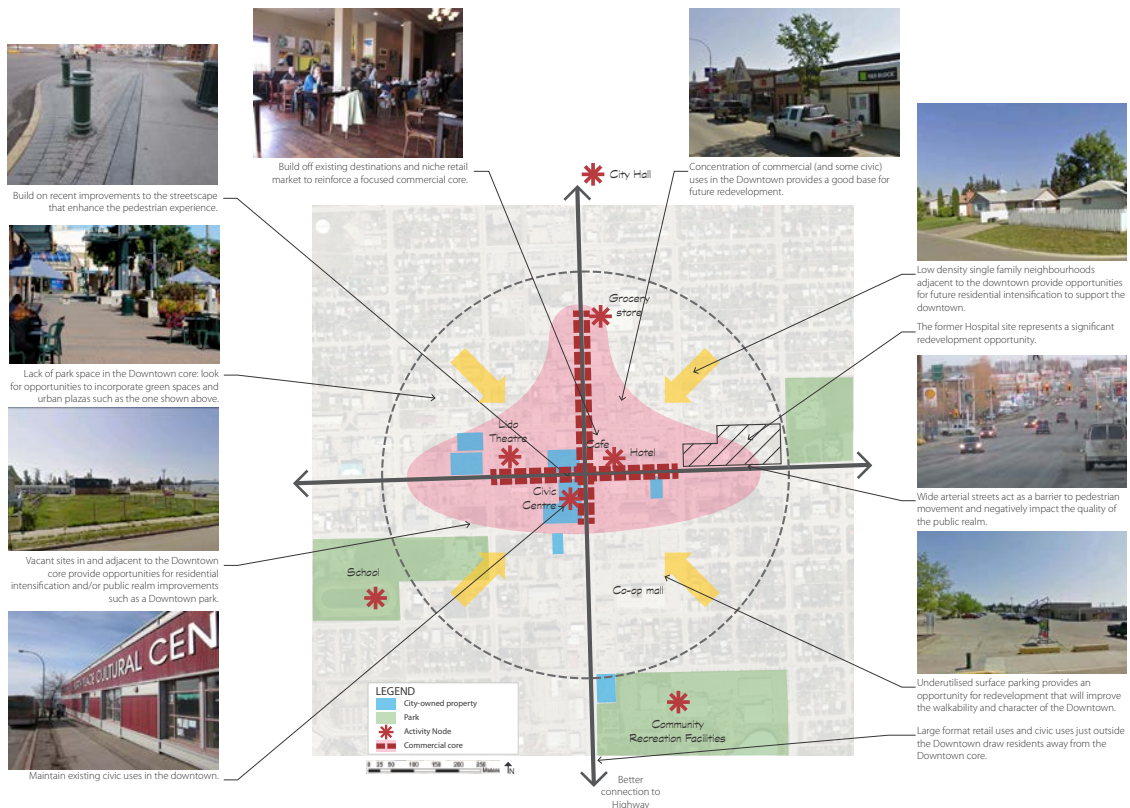
## EXISTING LAND USES



## CITY OWNED AND VACANT LANDS



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OVERVIEW



## WANT MORE?

See Chapter 3 "Urban Design Inventory and Analysis" in the Urban Inventory and Analysis Report.