ST. JOHN'S

# University Area

## Neighbourhood Plan

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Chapter 1

# Introduction

# 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the University Area Neighbourhood Plan is to guide future redevelopment and improvements, from the types of uses and the shape of buildings, to streets and park upgrades.

The Plan builds upon the direction and policies in the Envision St. John's Municipal Plan and provides more specific direction tailored to the local context and needs of the University Area neighbourhood.

This plan includes direction for:

- The future desired mix of land uses
- Appropriate heights and density for new development
- Investments in transportation infrastructure
- Programming and priorities for parks and open spaces
- Protection of natural and cultural heritage features

# 1.2 Plan Area

The boundaries of the University Area are Freshwater Road on the south, Prince Philip Drive and Pippy Park to the north, Allandale Road, Bonaventure Avenue, Newtown Road and Parade Street along the eastern edge of the plan area (shown in Figure 1 on the following page). The University Area is located near the centre of St. John's, backing on to Pippy Park  (Figure 1 inset).

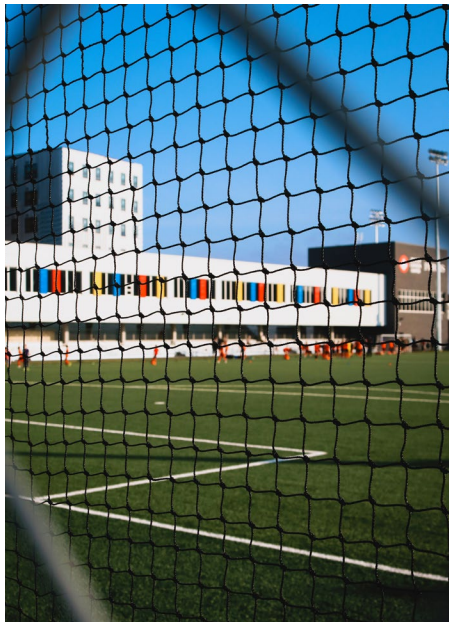
**Figure 1. The University Area neighbourhood is outlined here, with its location in the broader City of St. John's marked on the inset.**

# 1.3 Neighbourhood Context

## The University Area is a neighbourhood made up of several distinct communities.

From historic Rabbittown to Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) , the plan area covers a range of different urban development eras. The University Area includes a mix of housing types, commercial shops and amenities, institutional and healthcare uses, and recreational and cultural services focused around the University campus.

The University Area's most defining feature is its collection of institutional uses, including MUN and the Health Sciences Centre, supplemented by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). It is also home to a significant number of New Canadians and students. This creates a more mobile, lower income, and younger neighbourhood relative to the rest of St. John's. These demographics present opportunities and a necessity to focus on the unique needs of residents in this neighbourhood, including the increased reliance on transit and missing amenities such as grocery stores.



# 1.4 Vision & Objectives

The vision and objectives provide the overall framework for the plan. All the policies, strategies, and actions of the plan implement the vision and objectives.

## Vision

**Anchored by its rich history, institutional hub, and community spirit, the University Area will be reinforced as a unique and cherished part of the City's urban fabric, and will become an even more connected and livable neighbourhood for all with access to jobs, diverse housing choices, education, daily needs, local and regional parks, and transportation options.**

## Objectives

The following objectives guide the future growth and development of the University Area neighbourhood:

1. **Open Spaces & Trails:** The University Area's network of open spaces and trails is further connected and enhanced, providing new and expanded opportunities for recreation by allowing residents to more easily access MUN, the Health Sciences Centre, the Mental Health and Addictions Centre, Pippy Park, and other neighbourhood parks by using active transportation.
2. **Growth Areas:** A new neighbourhood centre is established around Paton Street and Elizabeth Avenue to centralize future density and encourage local commercial development.
3. **Neighbourhood Character:** The distinct residential character and walkable commercial form of Rabbittown are protected and reinforced, supporting the continued success of local businesses and the vibrancy of the community.
4. **Mobility Options:** All communities within the University Area benefit from new north-south active transportation links to expand access to Downtown and enhance the overall shared-use path network.
5. **Housing Options:** A diverse range of market and non-market housing choices are provided in strategic locations to meet changing demand.
6. **Adapting to Change:** University Area neighbourhoods grow and evolve in ways that respect their existing identity while balancing changing housing demands.

ELIZABETH AVE
STOP

Figure 2. The six individual strategic moves that collectively comprise the overall neighbourhood strategy for the University Area.

# 1.5 Neighbourhood Strategy

There are six strategies that outline how the neighbourhood will accommodate growth and achieve the overall vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### 1. Emerging Neighbourhood Centre

The Paton Street, Anderson Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue intersection is identified as the core focus area for commercial and residential growth, creating a priority area for attracting additional amenities for the neighbourhood.

### 2. Focused Central Growth

New zoning is proposed for main corridors through the centre of the University Area, including Elizabeth Avenue, Newtown Road, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation lands. These corridors will support increased building heights and densities closest to MUN, the Neighbourhood Centre, and along shared-use paths, best leveraging these mobility infrastructure investments while strengthening connections to Downtown.

### 3. Neighbourhood Mixed-Use Areas

Highway-oriented commercial developments along Freshwater Road are encouraged to redevelop into mixed use centres over the long-term, providing more commercial and housing choice to the neighbourhood.

### 4. Reinforce Rabbittown Character

The Rabbittown community is home to the University Area's oldest commercial businesses, and this compact neighbourhood commercial character should be encouraged to expand while retaining its unique and valuable heritage.

### 5. Neighbourhood Park Improvements

Improved connections from Rabbittown to Kelly's Brook Park and from the wider University Area to Pippy Park support ongoing investments and empowerment of residents to enhance and activate neighbourhood parks.

### 6. Expanding Shared-Use Paths

A series of shared-use paths will be developed in the University Area, including Newtown Road, responding to the University Area's high rates of walkers and wheelers and creating a complete network of maintained and well lit paths throughout the neighbourhood.

# Chapter 2

# Land Use

This land use concept considers emerging market demand, servicing constraints, funding requirements, established local context, and City investments in mobility infrastructure to provide an overarching vision for how the University Area should evolve over the coming years. Guidance is provided for the overall community and specific focus areas where the most growth and change are anticipated.

# Current Context

Recent developments, such as the apartment buildings on Lambe's Lane, point to a new form of development that meets the emerging needs of students, healthcare professionals, and New Canadians.

At the same time, the neighbourhood's established communities and Heritage Area requires special consideration for how growth and change can be accommodated sensitively and intentionally. Market analysis has identified that most housing demand for the University Area over the next 10 years will be for apartment-style housing, primarily for smaller one- and two-bedroom households. This supports direction from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation to enable development up to four storeys near MUN. Some demand is also expected for missing middle housing such as triplexes and townhouses. There is expected to be very little demand for new single-family, duplexes, and semi-detached houses in the area.

Additional local commercial uses such as grocery stores are needed in the University Area. The introduction of new residents will help to support future grocery and neighbourhood businesses in the University Area, enhancing the community for all by providing access to daily needs close to home.

Throughout the University Area, wastewater capacity exists to support anticipated development over the next 15 to 20 years. Stormwater, however, may require on-site management for all redevelopment and new development.

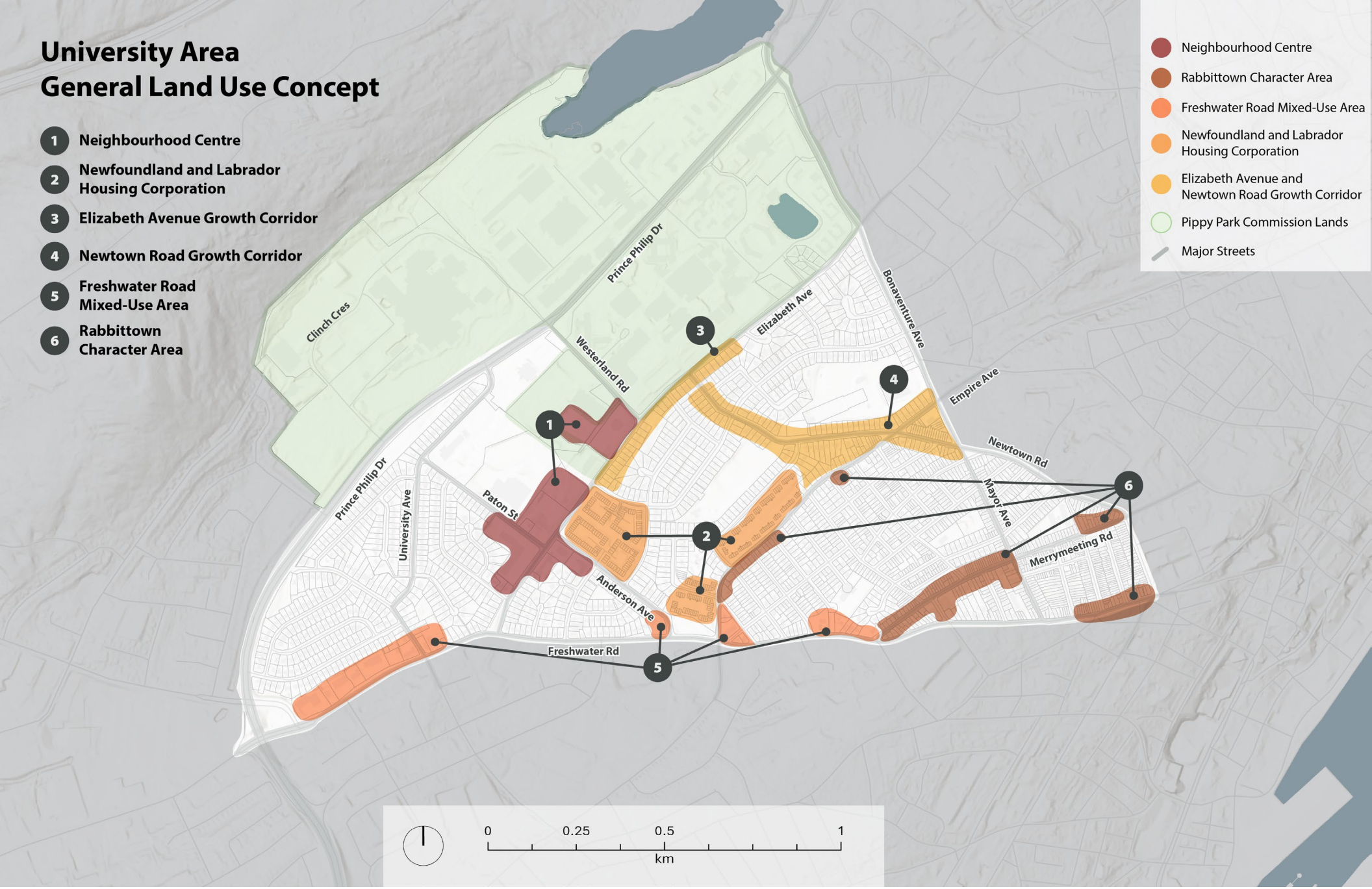



Figure 3. The General Land Use Concept for the University Area, identifying the six key focus areas.

# 2.1 General Land Use Concept

## Intent

The University Area land use concept provides future guidance for five locations in the neighbourhood. These locations are identified on the map in Figure 3 and discussed individually in the following pages. The overall intent of this concept is to focus development in targeted locations, leveraging the historic development patterns (for areas like the Neighbourhood Centre and Rabbittown Character Area), and to support civic investment in municipal infrastructure including parks, shared use paths, and transit service (such as Newtown Road, Elizabeth Avenue, and Freshwater Road).

For areas not identified on the concept, it is still anticipated that modest evolution of the community will occur over time as properties are renovated, improved, expanded, or otherwise redeveloped. For that reason, the following policies are intended to support neighbourhood growth and development throughout the University Area. They aim to preserve and enhance existing community character while responding to demand for additional provision of housing and amenities.

## Policies

1. Support development applications that are consistent with this land use concept.
2. Prioritize highest-density developments in the Neighbourhood Centre.
3. Create a transition in height and density from the Neighbourhood Centre in accordance with the Development Regulations.
4. Prioritize higher-density development along Freshwater Road, Elizabeth Avenue, and Newtown Road rather than internal roads.
5. Respect existing community character by considering sensitive transitions to lower-density areas.
6. Encourage lot consolidation to support comprehensive redevelopment.
7. Ensure new development contributes to road crossing improvements at nearby major intersections.
8. Support affordable housing operators to enable the development of affordable housing.
9. Support developments that request reduced parking rates when located near active transportation infrastructure and transit options.
10. Ensure new development is in accordance with the Development Design Manual, with regard to wastewater, sanitary, and storm sewer requirements.

# 2.2 Neighbourhood Centre

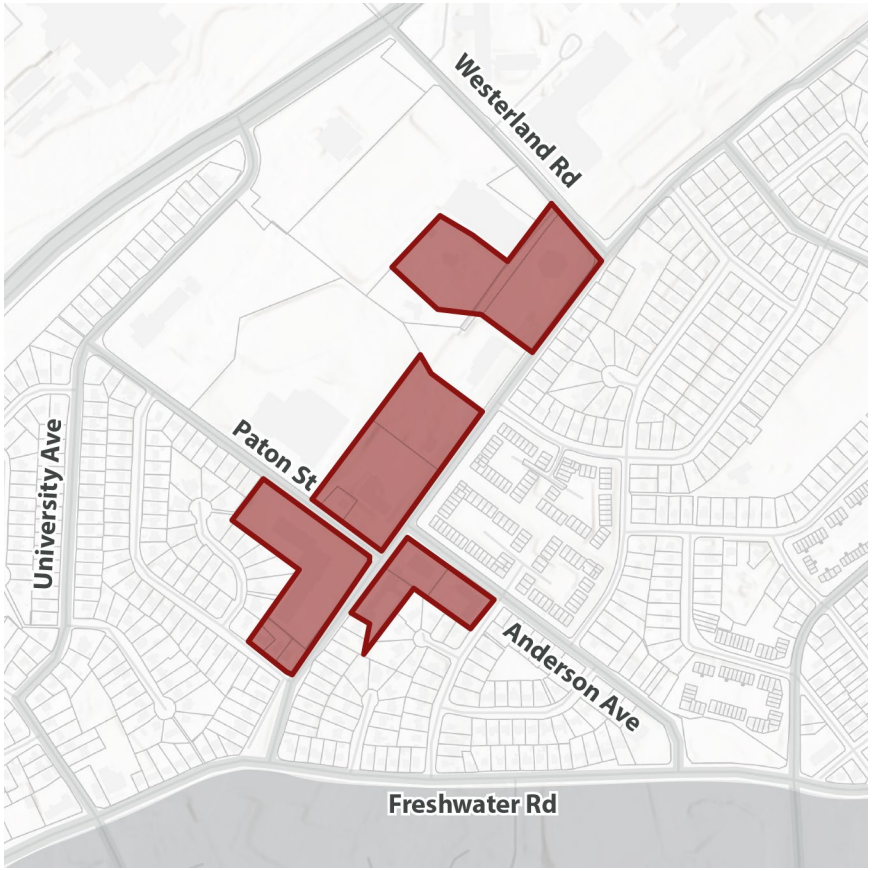



**Figure 4. Location of the Neighbourhood Centre lands in the University Area.**

## Intent

The Neighbourhood Centre is intended to be a mixed-use hub for the University Area. By concentrating the highest density housing and enabling the greatest range of commercial uses, it is envisioned that this area develops over time into the heart of the University Area, providing additional services and amenities.

Developing the Neighbourhood Centre reinforces the original plan for this part of the City as established in the 1964 Land Use Plan for St. John's. The 1964 Land Use Plan focuses development at the intersection of Paton Street, Anderson Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue. Development intensity is intended to gradually decrease as you move eastwards along Elizabeth Avenue, particularly on the south side of the street, away from the Neighbourhood Centre. This approach also allows for existing institutional anchors of the neighbourhood to remain long-term while providing them with additional development.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section is aligned with Neighbourhood Strategy 1 as it promotes commercial and residential growth in the Neighbourhood Centre.**

# Policies

## Uses

1. Prioritize greatest building height and highest residential densities at the north-east corner of Elizabeth Avenue and Paton Street in accordance with the Development Regulations.
2. Encourage the development of a grocery store in the Neighbourhood Centre.
3. Encourage other commercial development to provide smaller footprint commercial spaces.
4. Support the continued use of properties in the Neighbourhood Centre for their existing purposes until time of redevelopment.
5. Support the development of higher-density development without commercial uses around the edges of the Neighbourhood Centre.
6. Require an active commercial use at street level to encourage a vibrant pedestrian experience.

## Mobility

7. Ensure new development on the north side of Elizabeth Avenue and east of Paton Street contributes to the long-term connection of Lambe's Lane to Paton Street.
8. Require new development to contribute to improved vehicle, walking, and wheeling circulation within the Neighbourhood Centre by connecting existing roads and trails through the block.
9. Encourage new development to provide vehicle access and parking from the rear of the building, where possible, minimizing the visual impact of vehicle circulation and parking on the Neighbourhood Centre.
10. Support vehicle parking reductions for higher-density development close to Memorial University of Newfoundland.

## Amenity Space

11. The City will redesign the Paton Street, Anderson Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue intersection into a focal point and community gathering space for the University Area.
12. Leverage new developments to contribute towards the ongoing transformation of the Paton Street, Anderson Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue intersection into a focal point and community gathering space for the University Area.
13. Provide space for outdoor seating and patios oriented towards the Neighbourhood Centre at the Paton Street, Anderson Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue intersection.

## Pippy Park and MUN

14. Work collaboratively with the Pippy Park Commission and Memorial University to encourage development on their lands in a manner that contributes to the comprehensive development of the full block between Paton Street, Elizabeth Avenue, Westerland Road, and Prince Philip Drive.

# 2.3 Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

Figure 5. Location of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation lands in the University Area.

## Intent

The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) lands have long played a key role in the University Area by providing affordable housing in several areas. The following policies aim to support the continued use of these lands for that purpose, while enabling redevelopment that responds to the evolving needs of current and future residents.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategy 1 and 2 as it provides NLHC with the tools necessary to ensure ongoing redevelopment and investment in their University Area properties.**

This will allow NLHC's housing in the area to continue to meet the needs of their residents even as demographic trends change. This ensures that a core residential development remains anchored near the Neighbourhood Centre, providing density and critical mass to help support local businesses.

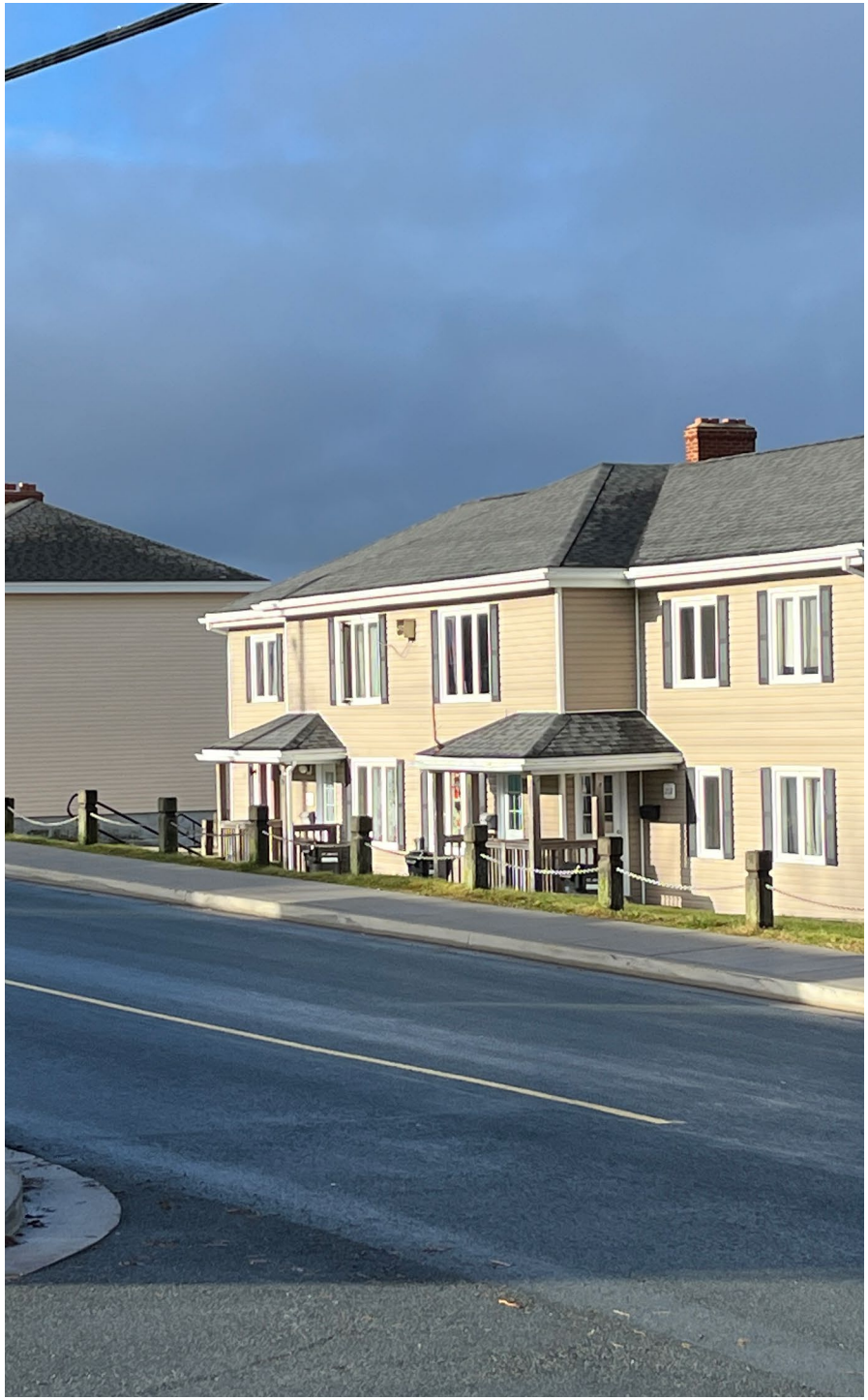
# Policies

## Uses

1. Enable the redevelopment of existing housing to support the evolving needs of NLHC's residents, including smaller household sizes.
2. Enable sensitive residential infill development (i.e. appropriate height and massing) on NLHC lands.
3. Support rezoning applications to enable a mix of housing options such as apartments, duplexes, and townhouses across the NLHC lands in the University Area.
4. Support rezoning applications to enable the development of community support uses on NLHC lands where their primary clientele are residents of the University Area NLHC lands.

## Mobility

5. Collaborate with NLHC to encourage mobility connections to the NLHC lands to support all modes of transportation including cycling, walking, wheeling and transit.



# 2.4 Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor

**Figure 6. Location of the Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor in the University Area.**

## Intent

The Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor is intended to be a mixed-use residential area directly adjacent to MUN. This approach supports investment next to the new shared-use path along Elizabeth Avenue and enables much-needed housing to develop around MUN. Development will be concentrated between the Neighbourhood Centre and Halliday Place, decreasing in height closer to Allandale Road. This approach ensures the greatest concentration of future higher- and medium-density developments are closest to the Neighbourhood Centre, supporting the overall Neighbourhood Strategy. By enabling the transition of the area over time to residential buildings up to approximately four storeys in height, it is also envisioned that this corridor will help deliver currently unmet local demand for smaller-unit housing.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategies 1, 2, and 6 as it actively promotes the ongoing evolution of Elizabeth Avenue into an important corridor for new housing types and choices.**

The emphasis of greatest density west towards the Neighbourhood Centre also facilitates a transition of density from the Neighbourhood Centre east towards Churchill Park, ensuring most growth and change in the neighbourhood is strategically located closest to the Neighbourhood Centre. This section also aligns with the desire to prioritize density along shared-use paths, complementing these mobility investments with more nearby residents to use them.

# Policies

## Uses

1. Enable medium-density residential development to expand the diversity of housing options in the neighbourhood.

## Mobility

2. Encourage parking to be located behind or beside buildings rather than between the building and Elizabeth Avenue.

## Public Realm

3. Encourage  a building design that reflects the existing neighbourhood character.

# 2.5 Newtown Road Growth Corridor

**Figure 7. Location of the Newtown Road Growth Corridor in the University Area.**

## Intent

The Newtown Road Corridor is a residential corridor intended to a new shared-use path from MUN to downtown along Newtown Road. The corridor extends from Elizabeth Avenue to Mayor Avenue and provides an opportunity to encourage different forms of housing development along Newtown Road that reflect the traditional built form and densities of this corridor's eastern extent in Rabbittown. By encouraging greater densities along Newtown Road, it is envisioned that this area will develop over time to include a range of medium density building types, such as duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategies 2 and 6 as it promotes greater housing choices and opportunities along the length of Newtown Road.**

This section also aligns with the desire to prioritize density along shared-use paths, complementing these mobility investments with more nearby residents to use them.

# Policies

## Uses

1. Enable medium-density residential development in accordance with the Development Regulations.
2. Through the rezoning process consider allowing higher density residential development, such as apartment buildings, where several lots have been consolidated and appropriate height transitions to lower density residential uses can be provided.

## Mobility

3. Encourage lot consolidations for developments along the shared-use path side of Newtown Road, so that over time the number of driveways that cross the path is reduced.
4. Consider higher rates of bike parking in new developments on the Newtown Road Corridor.

# 2.6 Freshwater Road Mixed-Use Area

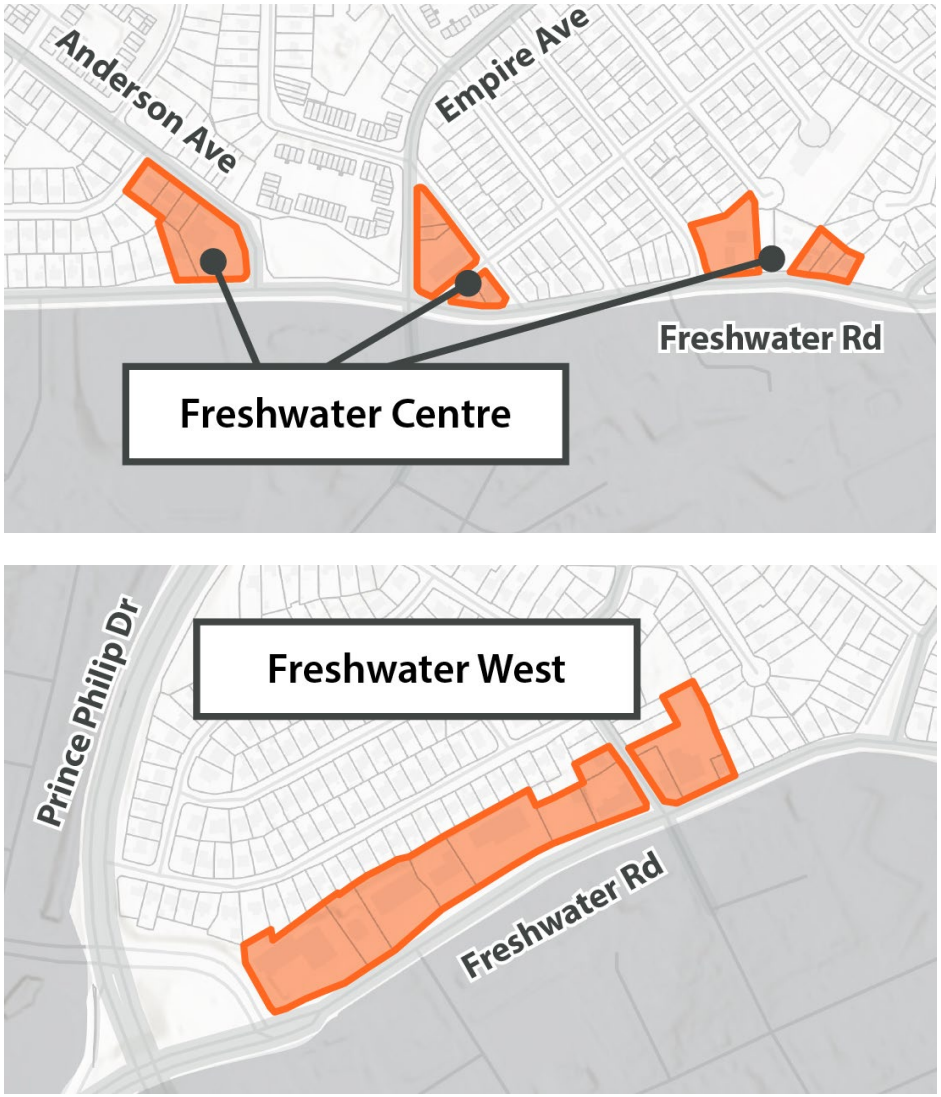



Figure 8. Location of the Freshwater Road Mixed-Use Area in the University Area.

## Intent

The Freshwater Road Mixed-Use concept provides future guidance for two distinct areas of Freshwater Road: Freshwater West, and Freshwater Centre. These areas are identified on the map in Figure 8. The following policies are intended to enable the redevelopment of Freshwater Road over time from highway-oriented commercial developments into a mixed-use corridor. This will support active modes of transportation and provide additional multi-unit residential and commercial space to residents in the area.

This approach to redevelopment will ensure that commercial uses remain on Freshwater Road and are accessible to nearby residents . It will also enhance and support mixed-use development and maximize opportunities for landowners looking to redevelop their land.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategy 3 by encouraging the gradual change of Freshwater Road's existing commercial buildings into more complete developments that provide additional housing choice in the community alongside more local businesses.**

# Policies

## Uses

1. Enable mixed-use development along Freshwater Road in accordance with the Development Regulations.
2. Commercial uses shall be located at street level. Residential uses will not be permitted at street level.
3. Within mixed-use buildings, residential uses shall be located above the commercial uses.
4. Encourage an active commercial use at street level to encourage a vibrant pedestrian experience.
5. Encourage lot consolidation along Freshwater Road to enable more efficient development forms.
6. Redevelopment must use existing driveway access or consolidate driveway access points on Freshwater Road.
7. Allow for properties adjacent to the Freshwater Road Mixed-Use to be incorporated into the development when appropriate.

## Freshwater West

8. Enable development with medium density and heights to locate in Freshwater West, in accordance with the Development Regulations.
9. Consider allowing higher density and heights at street corners to act as a visual anchor, where an appropriate stepback is applied adjacent to lower density residential uses, in accordance with the Development Regulations.
10. New development and redevelopment along Freshwater Road shall have smaller front setbacks to activate the streetwall.
11. Redevelopment should locate parking areas behind the buildings rather than adjacent to streets to create a better interface with the street.

## Freshwater Centre

12. Encourage new development to complement the nearby intensification area.
13. Enable development with lower density and heights to locate in Freshwater Centre, in accordance with the Development Regulations.

# 2.7 Rabbittown Character Area

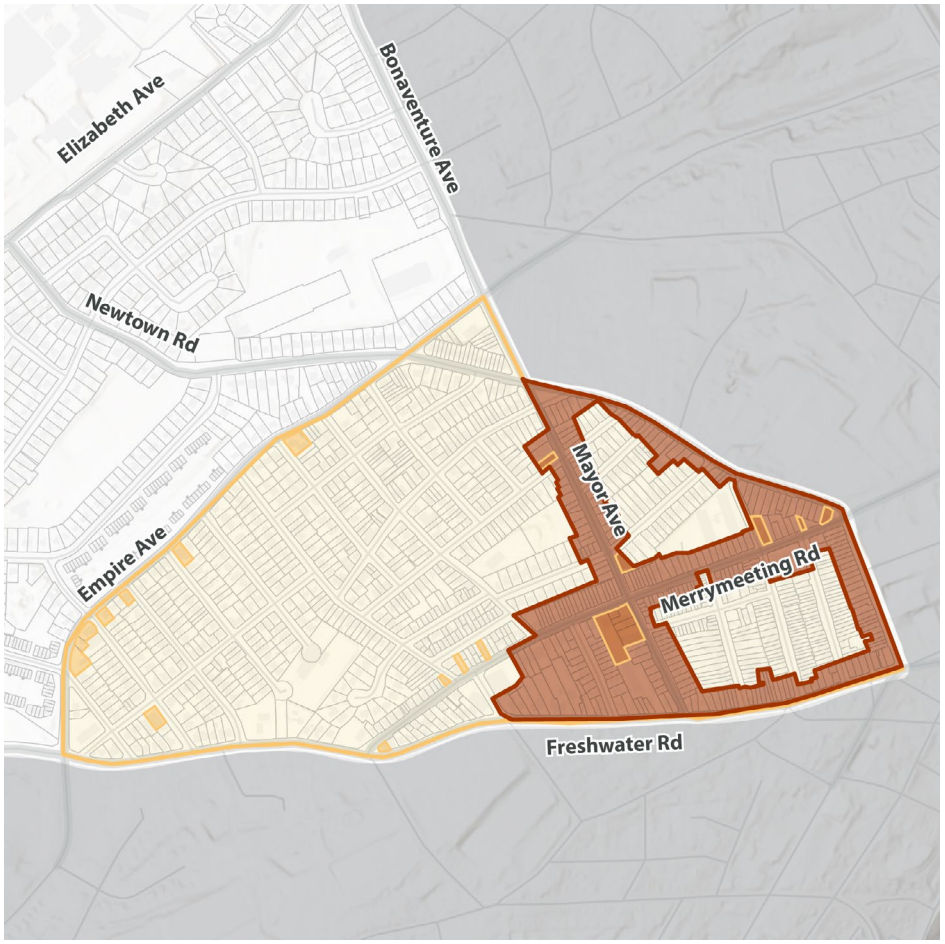



**Figure 9. Location of the Rabbittown Character Area in the University Area.**

## Intent

Rabbittown is the University Area's oldest, most historic neighbourhood. Because of this, it also has the highest residential density and greatest proliferation of local businesses in the University Area. This unique character has created a strong sense of community and a highly walkable area. It is the intention of this section to help recognize and legitimize the legacy commercial businesses located throughout the area, and to further strengthen and support the existing community and heritage character in Rabbittown.

The following policies reinforce the neighbourhood commercial uses in Rabbittown, supporting residents' ability to access local commercial businesses close to home. The following policies also recognize that Rabbittown's density provides a living example of how other parts of the University Area could sensitively densify over the coming years. Opportunities to preserve and protect this density, particularly in the Heritage Area, should be encouraged.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Links

**This section supports Neighbourhood Strategies 3 and 4, supporting existing local businesses and recognizing the desirable historical development pattern of Rabbittown's housing and neighbourhood commercial buildings.**

# Policies

## Uses

1. Support medium-density redevelopment that respects the established residential character of Rabbittown outside of the Heritage Area.
2. Enable the continued operation of existing businesses and establishment of new commercial uses where appropriate.
3. Enable small-scale neighbourhood commercial uses (i.e. cafes, bakeries, corner stores) in the Rabbittown Character Area.

## Heritage

4. Maintain and periodically review the existing Heritage Area, recognizing Rabbittown's unique context as a transition area of built forms and architecture between the historic downtown and more contemporary post-World War I housing.
5. Enable preservation of the residential character of Rabbittown through built form while supporting commercial businesses in accordance with the Heritage By-Law.

## Mobility

6. Leverage redevelopment in Rabbittown to improve pedestrian connections and access to transit stops, when appropriate.
7. Support the pedestrian environment with street improvements such as lighting, public art, wayfinding, and seating along key pedestrian routes.

## Public Realm

8. Consider initiatives by local businesses to provide parklets, patios, or shared outdoor seating areas adjacent to their frontages to enhance and activate the streetscape.

# Chapter 3

# Mobility

Mobility describes the different ways people move around their neighbourhood and the broader city. Providing many transportation options helps to meet everyone's needs and connects residents to the locations they need to get to as part of daily life.

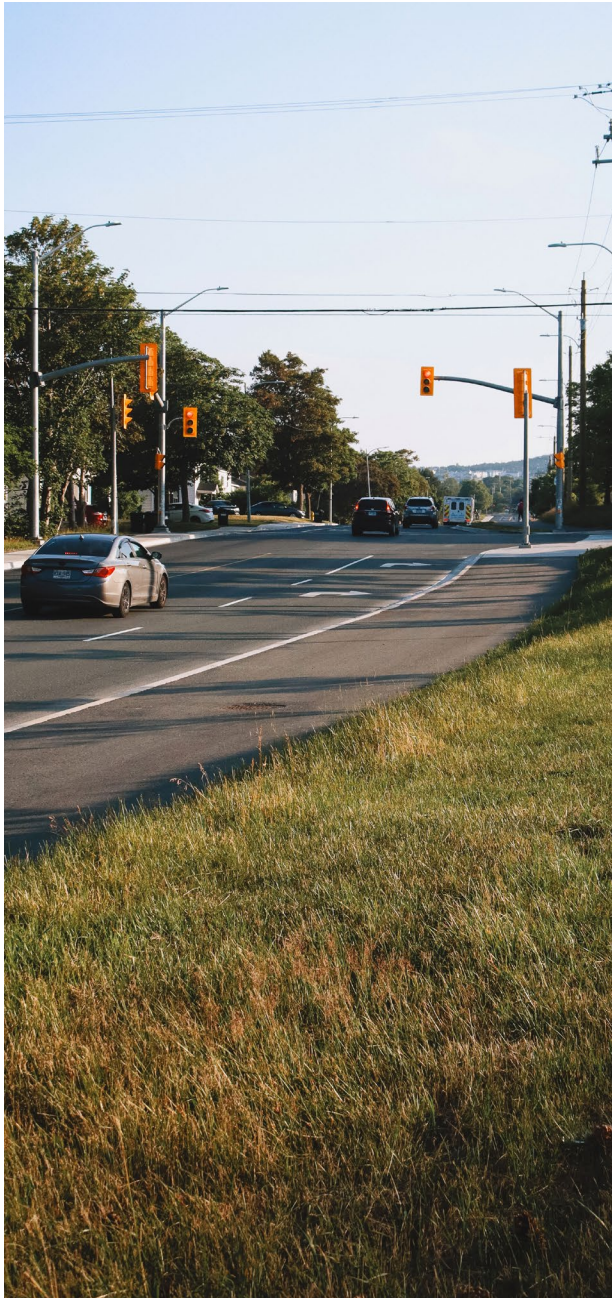
# Current Context

## Mobility in the University Area is unique amongst neighbourhoods in St. John's.

With one of the highest rates of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit-users, the modal split here is more focused on active modes of transportation than most the rest of the city. In fact, less than two-thirds of residents commute by car in the University Area, in contrast to a city-wide average of 90%.

The University Area's demographics play a large part in understanding these statistics, with higher than average rates of post-secondary students and new Canadians. However, the density of jobs close to the neighbourhood and proximity to Downtown also help explain these higher rates of walking and transit use.

Given this unique context, continued investments in transportation infrastructure that support the needs of pedestrians and transit-users will help enhance mobility of residents in the University Area for people using active modes and driving. Expansion of shared-use path infrastructure will help to ensure the mobility network is maintained throughout all four seasons, while enhanced crosswalks will improve road crossings at key intersections throughout the neighbourhood.



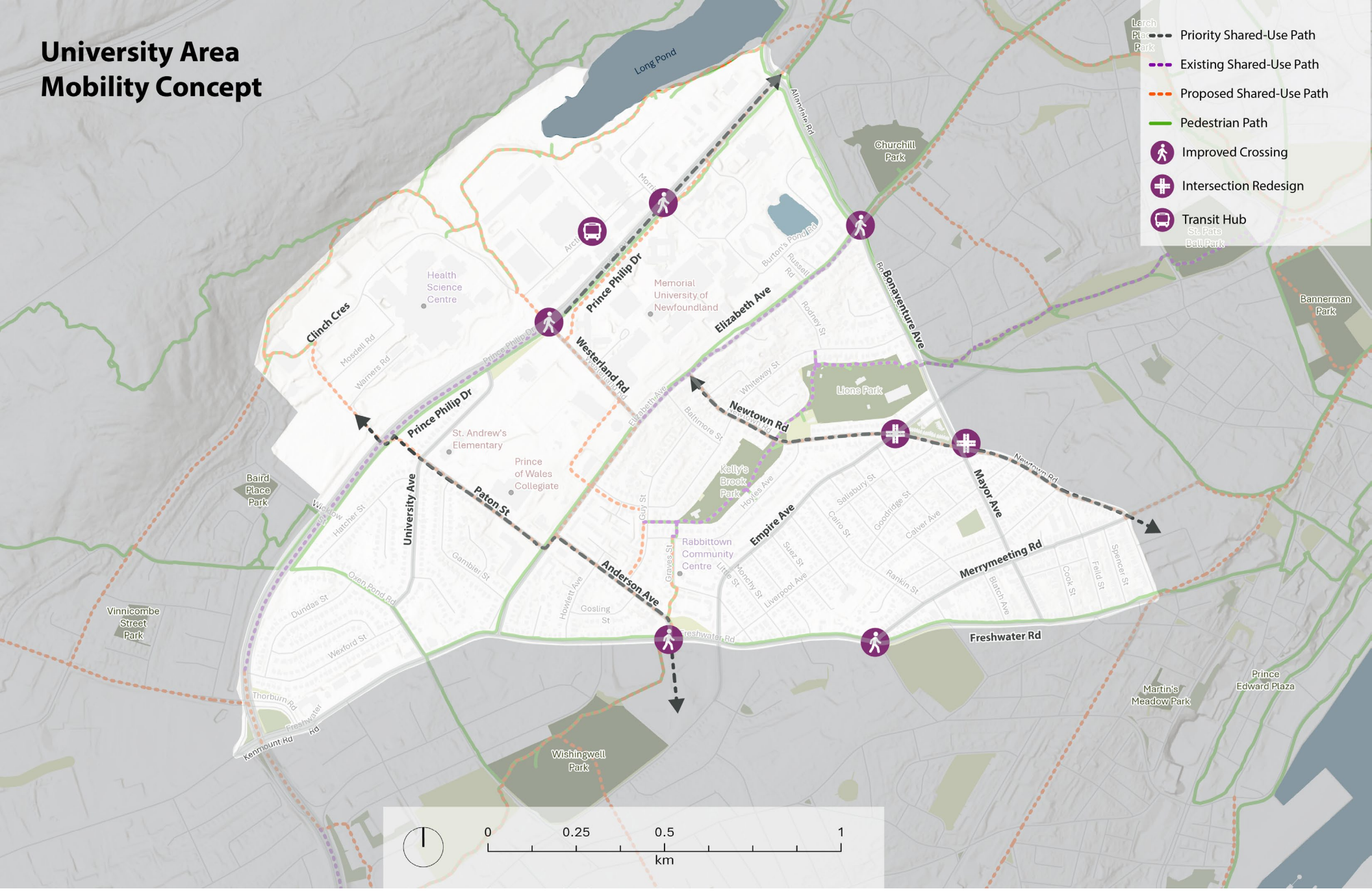



**Figure 10. The overall Mobility Concept for the University Area, identifying key focus areas for investment and infrastructural improvements.**

# 3.1 General Mobility Policies

## Intent

Future growth in the University Area will bring new residents closer to transit and jobs, further enabling and empowering residents to choose methods of transportation other than driving. The mobility concept (Figure 10) focuses on delivering outcomes that prioritize key focus areas where the greatest benefits can be achieved. Outcomes pertaining to street design, pathway design, connectivity, and supporting mobility through the neighbourhood are discussed throughout this chapter, collectively supporting continued mobility choice for all.

## Policies

1. Implement future investments in walking, cycling, and transit infrastructure in areas experiencing the greatest growth and change from new development.
2. Continue to develop the shared-use path network as shown in Figure 10 to support both recreational and commuter walking and wheeling connectivity throughout the neighbourhood and to surrounding areas.
3. Implement traffic calming and crosswalk upgrades at key intersections identified in Figure 10, according to City programs and the Traffic Calming Policy.
4. Provide bike parking at key destinations through the University Area to support active transportation.
5. Support advocacy groups focused on encouraging active transportation uptake and investment in the University Area and beyond.
6. Integrate wayfinding and signage throughout the neighbourhood to identify and promote active transportation connections.
7. Explore opportunities to establish small public spaces along active transportation routes, with amenities such as seating, public art, landscaping, and water fountains.
8. As part of active transportation improvements, consider reducing vehicle lane widths as a traffic calming measure and to increase room for active modes.

# 3.2 Shared-Use Paths

## Intent

Constructing a new shared-use path along Newtown Road from MUN to Downtown will provide a key north-south active modes link that is currently missing from the University Area. Subsequent shared-use paths along Prince Philip Drive, Paton Street, and Anderson Avenue will also improve active modes of travel throughout the University Area.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Link

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategy 6 that specifically identifies investment in the expansion of shared-use paths as a priority for the University Area.**

The long-term delivery of all three identified shared-use paths will complete a backbone network of shared-use paths that further enhances travelling by walking and wheeling throughout the University Area at all times of year.

## Policies

1. Investigate Newtown Road as a one-way street to support the new shared-use path.
2. Integrate the following improvements wherever possible along all newly developed shared-use paths:
    a. Buffers for pedestrians and cyclists from vehicle traffic, such as a landscaped boulevard or physical barrier;
    b. Wayfinding signage to show connections to other shared-use paths; and
    c. Redesigned intersections identified in Figure 10 to facilitate street crossings that minimize disruption to the shared-use path.
3. Encourage future development along roads with shared-use paths to concentrate access points, reducing vehicle crossings of the shared-use path.
4. Prioritize the development of shared-use paths in the following order:
    a. Newtown Road from Elizabeth Avenue to Downtown;
    b. Prince Philip Drive from Clinch Crescent to Allandale Road;
    c. Anderson Avenue to Paton Street to Prince Philip Drive.
5. Notwithstanding policy 2.2.4, when appropriate and feasible leverage redevelopment in the Neighbourhood Centre to deliver portions of the Paton Street-Anderson Avenue shared-use path.

# 3.3 Roads

## Intent

As a major regional and provincial destination, vehicle travel to, from, and through the University Area should be managed in a way that reflects the need to effectively move vehicles to and from their destinations efficiently. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure improvements to vehicle mobility do not negatively impact area residents or those moving through the neighbourhood by active modes. Ensuring that streets and intersections are accessible and welcoming to people of all ages and abilities is essential to supporting active transportation.

The following policies aim to improve pedestrian crossings by prioritizing accessibility, and connectivity while reflecting community input and evolving best practices in street design. Figure 10 identifies priority intersections for improvements, particularly along Prince Philip Drive, Freshwater Road, Allandale Road, Bonaventure Avenue, and Elizabeth Avenue, but wherever roadwork is being done on intersections in the University Area, the following policies should be considered.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Link

**This section aligns with Neighbourhood Strategies 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 as they all relate to travelling through the University Area and to key destinations in the University Area by walking, wheeling, and driving.**

The road intersections included in this Neighbourhood Plan were identified as some of the least comfortable to cross in the University Area, and contributing to their ongoing improvement will enhance many components of the overall Neighbourhood Strategy.

## Policies

1. Reassess traffic signal timings at key intersections to mitigate through-cutting of University Area neighbourhoods at red lights.
2. Study the possibility of implementing advance greens or turn signals at Freshwater Road and Oxen Pond Road alongside future redevelopment at that intersection.
3. Incorporate accessibility features into all street and intersection upgrades, such as:
    a. Tactile paving;
    b. Audible signals;
    c. Curb ramps;
    d. Lighting; and
    e. Seating.
4. Incorporate pedestrian improvements at intersections where possible such as:
    a. Extend curbs at the corners of the intersection and provide curb cuts and crosswalks at 90-degree angles to the road to create more direct pedestrian crossings;
    b. Ensure pedestrian crossings are provided on both sides of streets for all intersections crossing Prince Philip Drive; and
    c. Remove slip lanes that require pedestrians to make multiple road-crossings wherever possible when reconstructing intersections.

# 3.4 Transit

## Intent

As home to one of the city's three transit hubs, as well as one of the highest rates of transit use in St. John's, improving transit infrastructure in the University Area will benefit a wide range of users, from daily commuters to visitors and students. These improvements will help ensure that transit remains a practical, attractive, and inclusive option for the entire community year-round.

## Policies

1. As part of any investments to the MUN transit hub, work with Metrobus, MUN, and the Pippy Park Commission to integrate improvements to the transit hub, such as:

    a. Improved pedestrian connections to the hub, particularly across Prince Philip Drive;
    b. Improved bus circulation into the hub;
    c. Improved active modes access from the hub to Pippy Park trails; and
    d. Improved lighting and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) features.

2. Support the redevelopment of the MUN transit hub in a location more easily accessible to residents of the University Area along a suitable Arterial Street.

3. Prioritize winterization of transit stops and bus shelters at the highest usage stops throughout the University Area to support better year-round transit ridership.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Link

**Investment in transit is aligned with Neighbourhood Strategies 1, 2, 4, and 5 as it will contribute to greater access to the University Area's emerging Neighbourhood Centre, provide greater transit options to residents of the neighbourhood, and be supported by intensification and infill development along key transit corridors.**

Kelly's
Brook
Trail

Chapter 4

# Parks and Recreation

# Current Context

The University Area is framed by a "green belt" of interconnected parks and open spaces stretching from Quidi Vidi to Wishingwell Park.

Rooted in the 1964 Land Use Plan that established Churchill Park as Newfoundland and Labrador's first planned suburb, this green belt concept shaped much of the University Area's suburban form, though historic areas like Rabbittown pre-date this development. Today, parks like Pippy Park, Kelly's Brook Park, and Lions Park provide ample space for recreation, while MUN's facilities add to the area's wealth of sports and wellness opportunities. However, while the University Area has substantial recreational resources, improving connections to community parks and amenities is key to ensuring easy access for all.

**Figure 11. The overall Parks Concept for the University Area, identifying key opportunities for investing in and improving parks and recreation access for residents of the University Area.**

# 4.1 General Parks and Recreation Policies

## Intent

The University Area parks and recreation concept focuses on three key areas: General Policies, Community Parks, MUN, and Pippy Park. Common themes are threaded across all these areas of focus, including improving access to parks and recreation amenities, empowering residents to make parks spaces that work for them, enhancing livability and community well-being. This concept works at multiple scales, addressing gaps in neighbourhood park provisions while leveraging nearby neighbourhood- and regional-scale parks for the benefit of all University Area residents.

## Policies

### Community Use

1. Encourage community members to take an active role in programming and activating their neighbourhood parks.
2. Encourage community and Indigenous involvement in park planning, design, and stewardship through outreach and collaborative design processes.

### Connectivity

3. Leverage parks and recreation amenities to enhance pathway connections and linkages that expand access to Pippy Park, Kelly's Brook Park, and Lions Park for residents in the University Area.
4. Explore opportunities to improve connections between existing parks in the University Area.
5. Encourage integration of University Area parks into the Riverdale-to-Mundy Pond Walk network to support regional connectivity and access to parks.
6. Provide clear and highly visible signage by all park entrances to ensure public awareness of park locations and access points.

### Landscaping & Environment

7. Support the use of indigenous landscaping and plantings when improving naturalized areas in parks.
8. Enable the development of community gardens throughout the University Area.

# 4.2 Community Parks

## Intent

Kelly's Brook Park and Lions Park are the two largest and most heavily-programmed parks in the University Area, and are identified as Community Parks in the City's Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan. With a variety of amenities available, they are centrally located and accessible to most residents by walking or wheeling, though driving is also possible. Recent improvements to the shared-use path connecting both parks to the broader regional active transportation routes has made the parks more accessible than ever, and has also helped improve visibility with night-time lighting along the paths.

Over the coming years it is intended that these parks continue to serve as the heart of the University Area for parks and recreation, and that they will continue to evolve with the changing demographics of the community to ensure they meet community needs. Importantly, while Lions Park is largely fully programmed with recreational amenities and multiple operators, Kelly's Brook Park remains flexible to accommodating future needs.

Beyond these two parks, future projects such as the Newtown Road shared-use path may create further opportunities to deliver even more park space. The proposed conversion of Newtown Road to one-way vehicle traffic will result in redevelopment of these two identified intersections. It is possible that the re-engineered intersections may include small leftover pieces of public land that could be programmed or activated in ways that benefit the community.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Link

**Policy related to Community Parks is aligned with Neighbourhood Strategies 5 and 6, reflecting the need to properly leverage investments in shared-use path infrastructure, as well as improving and expanding accessibility of community parks to all residents of the University Area.**

# Policies

These policies establish an overall framework for how community parks in the University Area could leverage community involvement, be further activated, and support community well-being.

## General Policies

1. Prioritize major investments in Kelly's Brook Park, recognizing it has greater capacity and space to accommodate more parks and recreation infrastructure investment than Lions Park.
2. Identify appropriate locations for community gardens within the major parks, considering compatibility with surrounding park uses.
3. Encourage partnerships with local organizations and residents to steward maintenance and care of community gardens.
4. Where emerging sports such as disc golf, pickleball, or others bring their own funding, work collaboratively to investigate opportunities for integrating required infrastructure to support their activities into the major parks.
5. Investigate opportunities to provide covered structures for sun and storm protection, gathering, and social activities to occur in both parks.

## Kelly's Brook Park

6. Collaborate with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) to develop a formal pathway connection from Rabbittown to Kelly's Brook Park through the NLHC lands between Hoyles Avenue and Empire Avenue.
7. Periodically connect with the Association for New Canadians to ensure resident amenity needs and emerging park space demands are being met for this important demographic.

## Lions Park

8. Leverage investments in park infrastructure to consolidate parking in Lions Park so that parking supply is increased and upgraded, while reducing overall park space, where feasible.

## Newtown Road Intersections

9. Prioritize the creation of usable public space over a central island of greenspace (such as a roundabout island).
10. Prioritize the creation of one larger public space on any corner of these intersections over fragmented smaller spaces split across several corners.
11. Engage local residents in the planning and programming of these future public spaces should they be developed.
12. Incorporate Indigenous public art, indigenous plants, and indigenous design into future public spaces developed at these intersections where appropriate.

# 4.3 Pippy Park and MUN

## Intent

The intent of the following policies is to improve resident access to recreational opportunities at Pippy Park and Memorial University. Both Pippy Park and MUN offer substantial recreational opportunities across both indoor facilities and outdoor park space. Seeking opportunities to leverage these spaces for residents of the University Area will improve their access to recreation and overall community well-being.

## Neighbourhood Strategy Link

**This section is aligned with Neighbourhood Strategy 5 which focuses on improving connections for University Area residents to Pippy Park and MUN.**

# Policies

**The policies for Pippy Park and MUN focus on further enhancing the existing relationships between the Pippy Park Commission, MUN, and the City, with a focus on improving quality of life and access to recreational and parks amenities for nearby residents.**

## General Policies

1. Strengthen partnerships for programmed recreational opportunities between the City, the Pippy Park Commission, and MUN.
2. Continue advocating for provincial funding that allows the Pippy Park Commission and MUN to continuously improve parks and recreation infrastructure on their lands.

## Pippy Park Access

3. Collaborate with the Pippy Park Commission to improve pathways and connections between the University Area and Pippy Park.
4. Ensure wayfinding in the University Area highlights hiking and walking trail connections from the University Area to Pippy Park.
5. Seek opportunities to promote the recreational amenities available within Pippy Park to University Area residents.

## MUN Recreation Access

6. Explore opportunities to partner with MUN to raise awareness amongst University Area residents around how they can access recreation amenities at MUN.

# Chapter 5

# Implementation

This Neighbourhood Plan works in alignment with the Municipal Plan to serve as the City's blueprint for future growth in the University Area neighbourhood. It provides the structure to guide City investment, development, and community activation throughout the neighbourhood, helping achieve the established goals and objectives. Arising out of this Plan, several ongoing actions are required to support successful implementation of the Plan:

- Effective ongoing administration;
- Appropriate investment in infrastructure; and
- Revision of Development Regulations.

## 5.1. Neighbourhood Plan Review

a. Review of this Plan should be undertaken concurrent to and as part of any broader Municipal Plan review as outlined in section 9.1 of the Municipal Plan.

b. Amendments to this Plan should be considered with the criteria outlined for Municipal Plan amendments in section 9.1 of the Municipal Plan and with the overall Neighbourhood Strategy outlined in section 1.5 of this plan.

## 5.2 Neighbourhood Plan Investment

a. Future investments in municipal infrastructure as outlined in this Neighbourhood Plan will be coordinated and implemented in alignment with applicable master plans (e.g. Bike St. John's Master Plan; Parks and Open Space Master Plan).

b. Future updates to the plans outlined in 5.2.a should consider the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan to ensure effective and coordinated implementation.

## 5.3 Development Regulations

a. The City will endeavour to review and implement amendments to the Development Regulations that enable effective implementation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

## 5.4 Development Review

a. Where rezoning applications are made within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary, consideration for whether the proposal is in conformity with the intent of this plan must be given along with all other considerations outlined in section 9.5 of the Municipal Plan.

# Glossary

This Glossary is intended to assist in the interpretation of this Plan and is not intended to be legal definitions. If there is a conflict between these terms and definitions included in the Development Regulations, the definitions in the Development Regulations prevail.

**Active Commercial Façade**

Ground-level portions of commercial buildings designed to engage with and attract pedestrians, promoting activity and vibrancy on the street.

**Active Transportation**

Modes of travel, including walking, cycling, and other human-powered mobility options (e.g. skateboarding, rollerblading, and the use of mobility devices like wheelchairs or scooters).

**Affordable Housing**

Non-market housing that is provided by not-for-profit operators.

**Amenities**

The features, services, or facilities that enhance the comfort, convenience, attractiveness, and overall quality of life in a community or public space. Examples include parks, private shops and services, community centres, public art and activities.

**Built Form**

The physical shape, structure, and arrangement of buildings and spaces within an urban environment. Features include building height, size, setbacks, and architectural style.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

A multidisciplinary approach to crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments.

**Green Street**

Roads that include natural landscaping (trees, shrubs and grasses) to collect and clean rainwater runoff along streets.

**High Density**

Areas that have a large number of dwelling units per building and area, typically in the form of apartment buildings.

**Intensification Area**

Areas in the city that are identified in the Envision St. John's Municipal Plan that are well suited for high density developments.

**Low Density**

Areas that have a small number of dwelling units per building and area, typically ranging from single-detached houses to townhouses.

**Medium Density**

Areas that have a moderate number of dwelling units per building and area, typically ranging from townhouses to apartments.

**Mixed Use**

Developments that have a mix of land uses, such as residential, commercial or office within one building.

**Mobility Options**

A range of transportation modes, such as walking, biking, taking transit, or driving.

**Mode Split**

The distribution of passengers among different transportation modes, such as walking, cycling, taking transit, or driving.

**New Development**

Development that occurs following the approval of this plan.

**Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Park Space**

Accessible park space that is open to the public but owned privately.

**Redevelopment**

Construction of new buildings on a property that had existing buildings already.

**Setback**

The distance between the property line and the building. Also known as the "Building Line".

**Shared-Use Path**

A pathway that supports a variety of active transportation modes, such as walking, biking or using a wheelchair.

**Streetwall**

The continuous or nearly continuous line of building facades that define a street edge.

**Subsidiary Dwelling Units**

A separate Dwelling Unit that is located within the structure of a main Building and which is subordinate to the main Dwelling Unit.

**Transit Oriented Development**

Development that is located near transit hubs that feature higher levels of transit service to support greater densities nearby.

**Traffic Calming**

Road design features that are intended to slow down vehicle traffic.

**Walkability**

The features that support and encourage more trips being made by walking or active transportation modes. Notable features include a mix of land uses and convenient sidewalks and pathways.

**Winterization**

To weather proof a space for winter conditions, such as by providing a fully enclosed and heated bus shelter or waiting area.

ST. JOHN'S

# University Area

## Neighbourhood Plan