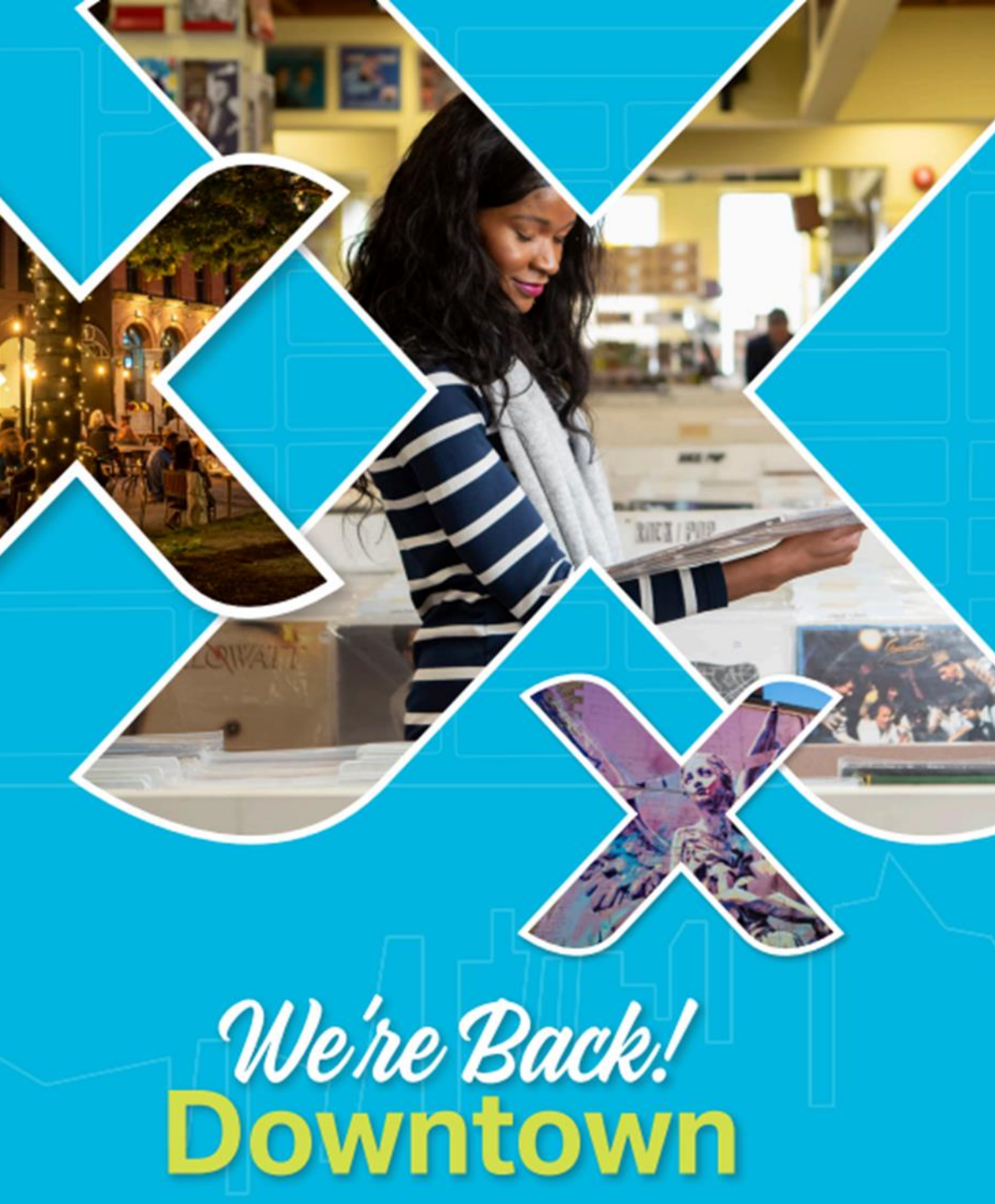




HRM Standing Committee on Community Planning and Economic Development
January 2025





We're Back!
Downtown

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS COMMISSION HALIFAX

- Voted into being as a Business Improvement District (BID) in 1987
- Largest BID in Atlantic Canada, and one of 500 across Canada.
- 1,600 members, 24,000 employees
- Annual budget of \$2m
- Four functional areas: Advocacy, Marketing + Communications, Membership Engagement, Placemaking
- CEO: Paul MacKinnon (since 2002)
- Board Chair: Ashwin Kutty (WeUsThem)
- Board of Directors: 15 business owners, 1 representative from HRM

**DOWNTOWN
HALIFAX**

2020



New York



London



Rome



Tokyo



Halifax

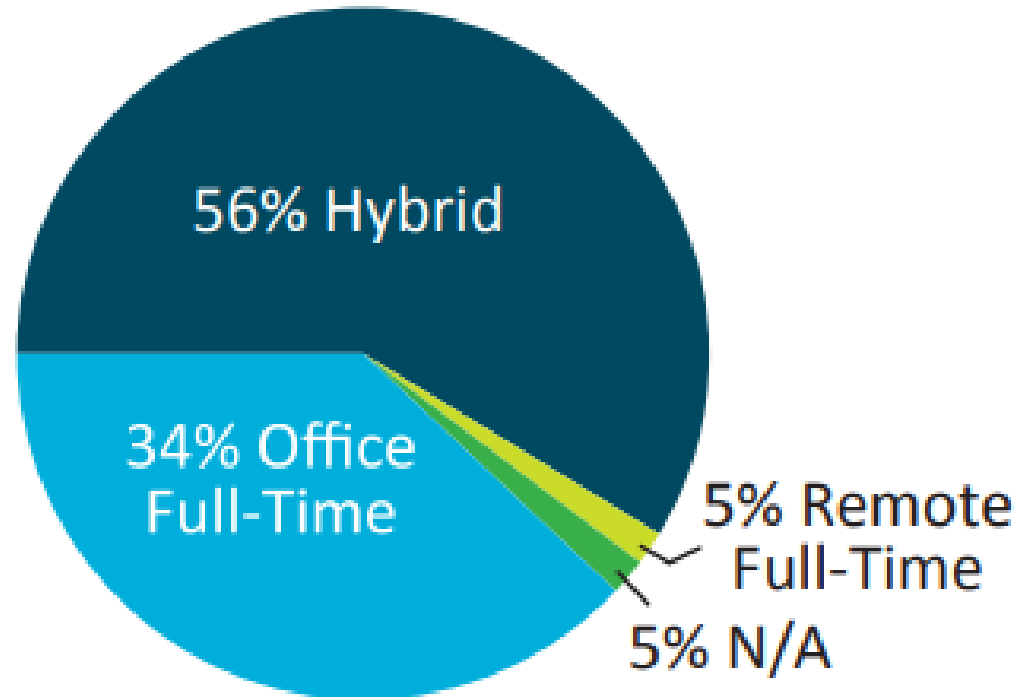


STATE OF THE DOWNTOWN

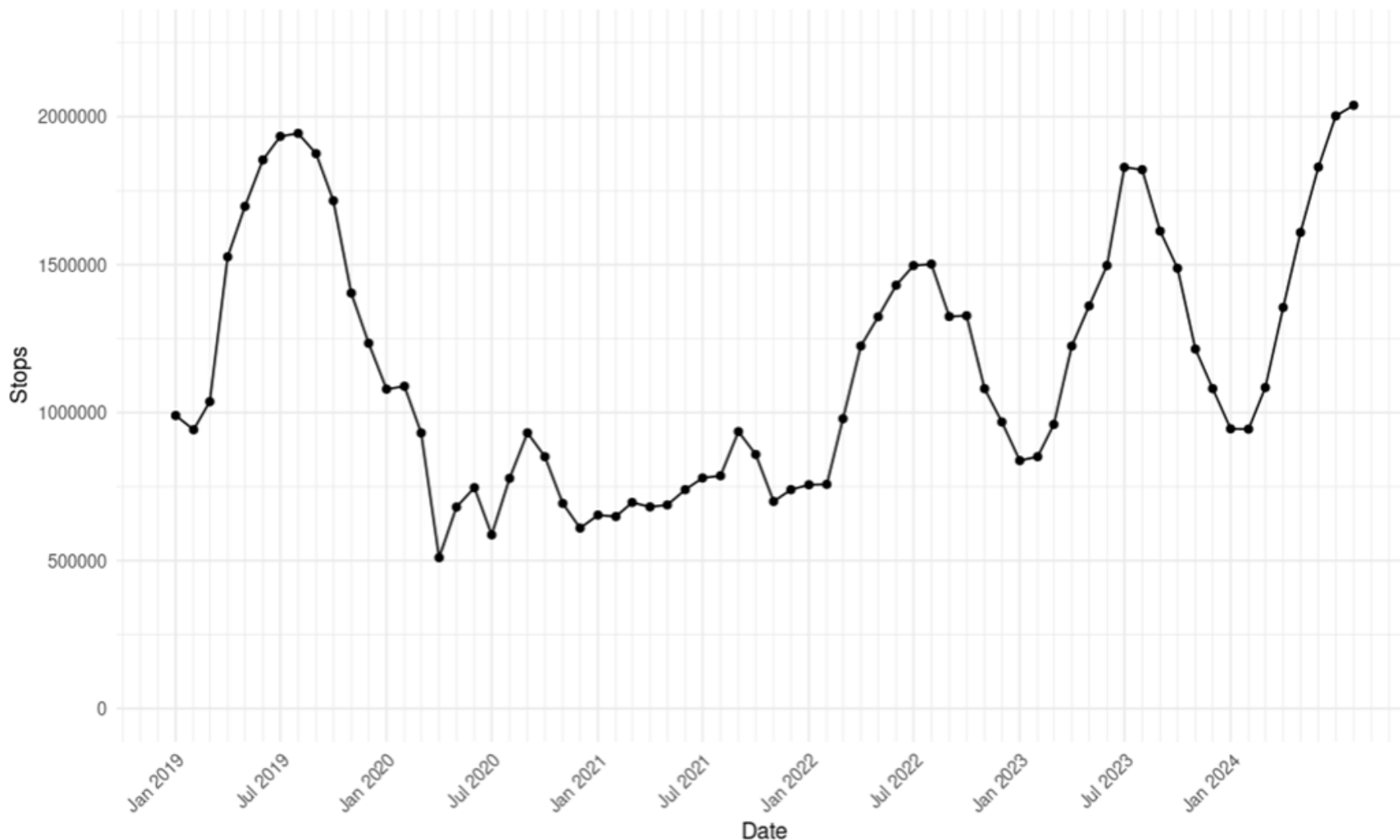
2024

Impact of Hybrid

Over 22,000 Employees



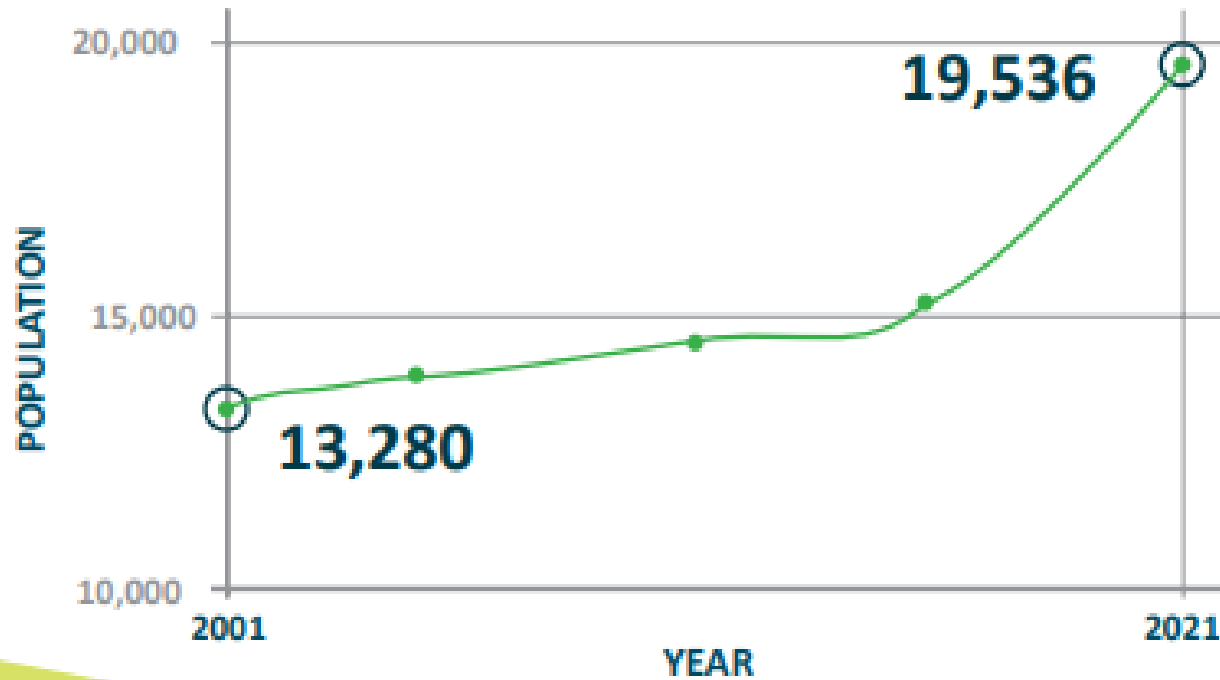
Monthly Visits to Downtown



City	% Change
Halifax	11.70%
Calgary	10.52%
Edmonton	7.93%
Quebec	6.59%
Winnipeg	4.68%
Vancouver	-0.04%
Toronto	-1.29%
Ottawa	-5.99%
London	-7.64%
Montreal	-11.61%

DOWNTOWN POPULATION: 2001 - 2021

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data



THE
Signal

Produced by King's Journalism students.

News

Arts & Life

Sci-Tech

Sports

Business

Audio

Video

Longform

The Climate Disaster Project

This article is more than 2 years old.

Halifax's downtown population growing at fastest pace in Canada

2021 census also shows overall HRM population grows close to 10 per cent in five years

Feb. 09, 2022 | 6:01 p.m.

By Adam Inniss



DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS COMMISSION **HALIFAX**

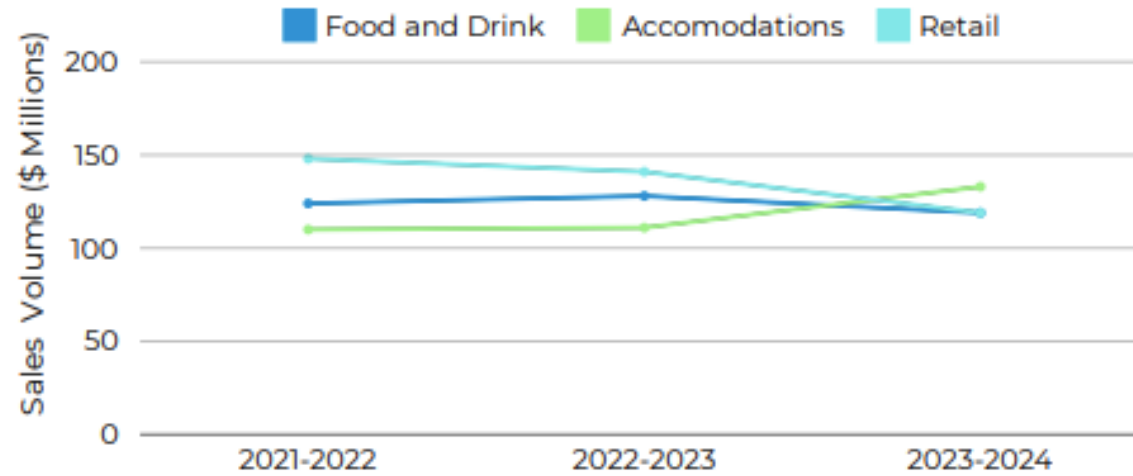


20 private developments
7 public investments

www.downtownhalifax.ca/developmentmap

DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS COMMISSION **HALIFAX**

Sales



Ground floor sales:

Food & Drink and Retail are below 2022 levels.
Hotel sales are on the rise.

Category	Sector	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change* *Rounded
Number of Businesses	Food and Drink	131	128	-2%
	Accomodations	14	18	+29%
	Retail	72	69	-4%
Sales Volume	Food and Drink	\$128M	\$119M	-7%
	Accomodations	\$111M	\$133M	+20%
	Retail	\$141M	\$119M	-16%

RATINGS OF BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

Index (-100 to +100) and Share of Business Owner Respondents, Halifax, 2013 to 2024

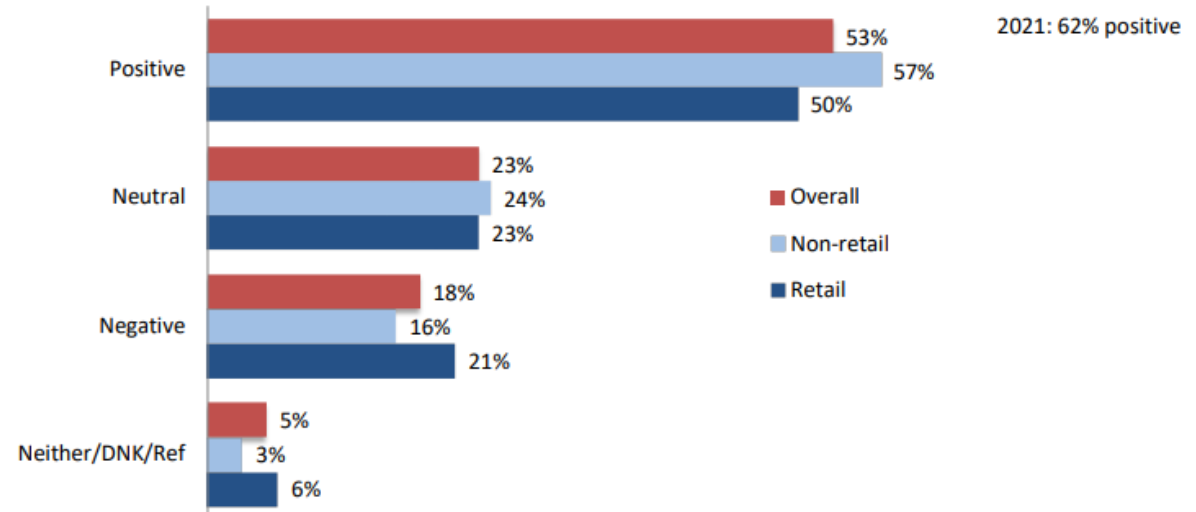
Year	BCI	Rating Halifax as a Place to Do Business			
		Above Average	Just Average	Below Average	Don't Know/No Answer
Spring 2013	24.6	19.0%	59.0%	18.0%	4.0%
Spring 2014	20.2	14.0%	66.0%	17.0%	4.0%
Spring 2015	21.1	15.0%	61.0%	19.9%	4.1%
Spring 2016	28.1	25.7%	55.3%	13.9%	5.2%
Spring 2017	29.1	23.1%	60.2%	12.3%	4.4%
Spring 2018	32.9	27.0%	57.3%	12.4%	3.3%
Spring 2019	32.8	26.3%	60.8%	9.7%	3.2%
Spring 2020	34.9	31.5%	55.0%	9.8%	3.7%
Spring 2021	37.5	39.5%	52.3%	6.5%	1.6%
Spring 2022	42.0	39.4%	50.2%	6.6%	3.7%
Spring 2023	30.4	28.8%	55.0%	12.5%	3.6%
Spring 2024	25.0	25.0%	56.7%	14.9%	3.4%

Source: Narrative Research, Business Confidence Survey (Various)

3.15 Outlook for Downtown

Just over one-half (53%) of members describe the prospects for the Downtown Halifax area over the next five years as 'positive'. This is the second consecutive survey in which positive outlooks have declined (down 9-points from 2021, and down 17 from 2016).

Q. And thinking about the outlook over the next 5 years, how do you feel about the future of Downtown Halifax?



CREATING THE VISION

Downtown Halifax Business Commission is the go-to organization on Downtown vitality. This comes from the expertise of the Board and staff, as well as DHBC's 30-year active involvement in the International Downtown Association (IDA), which has created connections with downtowns around the globe. This Vision was initiated and curated by DHBC, with the assistance of a steering committee and consultant group, MIG. Halifax boasts a wealth of urban expertise across many individuals and organizations, and the recommendations in this document are the result of extensive consultation with those diverse groups and individuals.

From September 2023 to April 2024, DHBC consulted with key stakeholders, urban experts, policymakers, business owners, and the public to help us answer the question:

What are the big moves needed to ensure our Downtown is vibrant and prosperous in 2030 and beyond?

The consultation process involved:

- 10 2-hour engagement sessions, with over 100 stakeholders.
- Numerous one-on-one meetings with key community leaders and government officials.
- A public, open-ended questionnaire that produced hundreds of pages of comments.



EVERYBODY'S
NEIGHBOURHOOD

MOVE
SMART

HARBOUR
365

ENTERTAINMENT
CENTRAL

A DESTINATION • INCLUSIVE • IMAGINABLE • PROSPEROUS • SAFE • CONNECTED • SURPRISING • VIBRANT • TIME-HONOURED





DOWNTOWN HALIFAX
VISION 2030

MOVE 
SMART

Getting to and moving around
Downtown Halifax is easy.



MOVE SMART

- **Bus Rapid Transit**
- **Downtown Loop**
- **Pedestrian-First Design**
- **Bike Network**
- **Transportation Hub**





DOWNTOWN HALIFAX
VISION 2030

EVERYBODY'S *NEIGHBOURHOOD*

Downtown Halifax is a place where
everyone feels welcome.



EVERYBODY'S NEIGHBOURHOOD



- **Neighbourhood Study**
- **Office Conversion Incentives**
- **Urban Parks Strategy**
- **District Strategy**
- **Barrington Street Revitalization**
- **Public Safety Investments**



DOWNTOWN HALIFAX
VISION 2030

HARBOUR 365

Downtown Halifax maximizes its
greatest asset year round.



HARBOUR 365

- **Free and Fast Ferry**
- **George St Gateway**
- **Harbour Plan**
 - **Future Land Use**
 - **Islands Access**
 - **Events**
 - **Water Transportation**
 - **Placemaking**
 - **Sea Level Rise Mitigation**




DOWNTOWN HALIFAX
VISION 2030

ENTERTAINMENT *CENTRAL*

Downtown Halifax is a nationally renowned destination for arts, culture, and entertainment.



ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

- **New Venues**
 - **Art Gallery**
 - **Permanent Outdoor Events Space**
 - **1,500+ Seat Performing Arts Centre**
- **Year Round Events**
- **Cultural District Designation**

4 TRANSFORMATIONAL MOVES

EVERYBODY'S NEIGHBOURHOOD

Downtown Halifax is a place where everyone feels welcome.

Conduct a study that determines the ideal ingredients for a complete neighbourhood:

- population
- amenities
- business & residential mix
- historic building protection
- cultural diversity

Incentivize turning unused office space into homes.

Create an Urban Parks Strategy that optimizes existing green space and reveals gaps.

Establish a District Strategy for designation, design, and promotion for Downtown's Districts.

Revitalize Barrington Street.

Increase investment in public safety initiatives.

HARBOUR 365

Downtown Halifax maximizes its greatest asset year-round.

Improve the Dartmouth-Halifax ferry service by increasing frequency and making it free.

Establish George Street as Downtown's gateway to the water and enhance other key connection points.

Create an updated Harbour Plan that includes:

- events
- waterfront land use
- harbour islands access & activation
- water transportation
- placemaking
- sea level rise mitigation

ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

Downtown Halifax is a nationally renowned destination for arts, culture, and entertainment.

Build new venues:

- art gallery
- 1500+ seat performing arts centre
- permanent outdoor public event space

Create a year-round event strategy that includes attraction & retention, facilitation, and organization.

Designate a Cultural District.

MOVE SMART

Getting to and moving around Downtown Halifax is easy.

Build a bus rapid transit (BRT) system that prioritizes the Downtown lines.

Invest in a high-frequency Downtown connector loop.

Prioritize pedestrian-first design on all streets, including crosswalks, sidewalks, and directional signage.

Establish a complete network of protected bike lanes.

Create a connected hub for bikes, ferries, and buses.

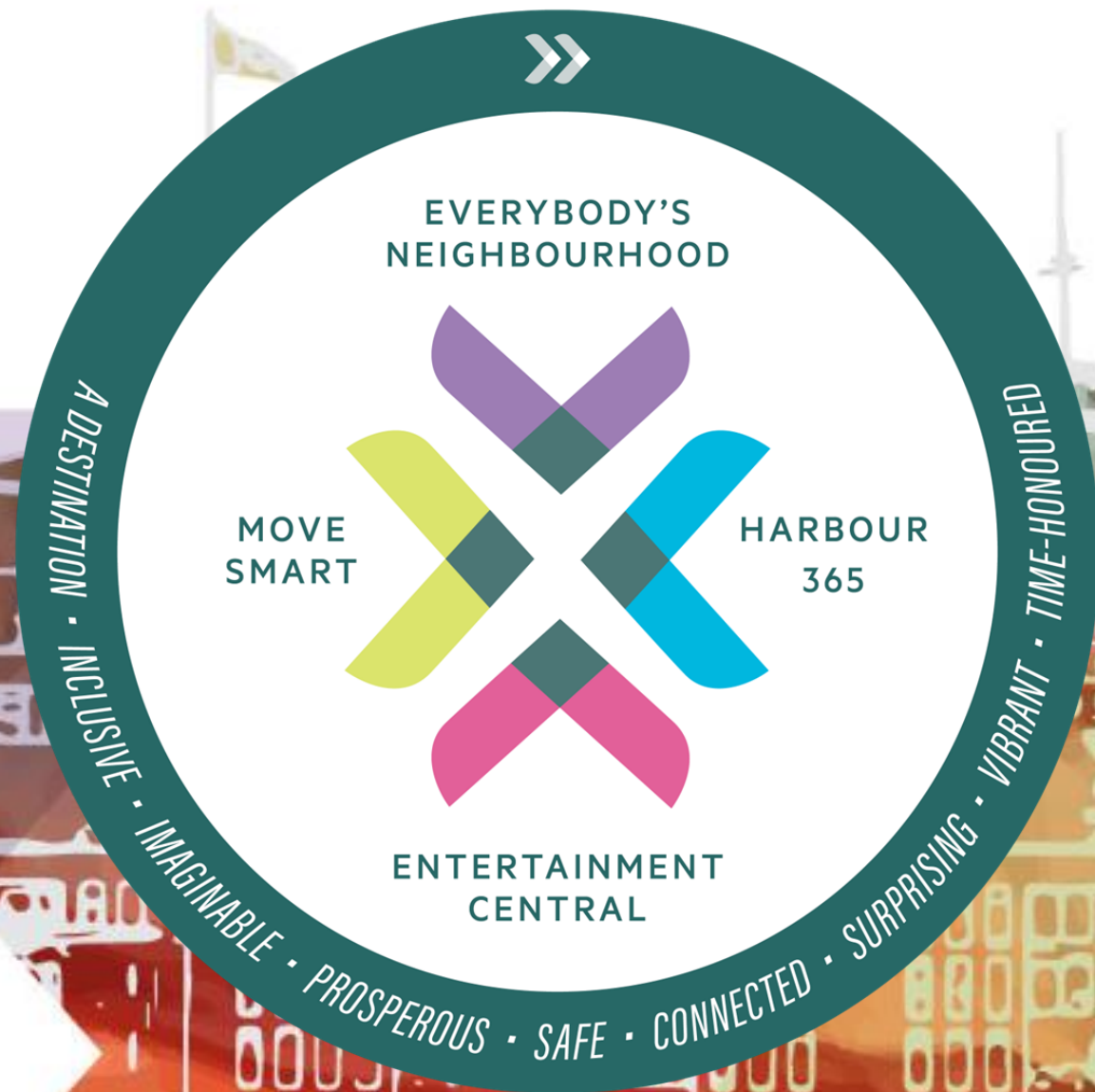
Learn more and download the full report here:

downtownhalifax.ca/vision2030



What's Next?

- Sharing the Vision with stakeholders
- Investigating stewardship models
- Formulating request to HRM Council



www.downtownhalifax.ca/vision2030