

FINAL REPORT

George Street
Redevelopment Study

PHB Project No: 2155

Prepared for:

City of St. John's
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Date: 13 February 2007

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A regular haunt for citizens of St. John's, George Street has become well known throughout Canada, and to a certain extent internationally. The bars, the parties and the music attract residents and visitors alike. George Street is part of the mystique of St. John's and an important economic generator for the City and the Province.

The section of George Street covered in this report stretches from the Convention Centre to Beck's Cove and includes some properties that extend through to Duckworth, New Gower and Water Streets. It has evolved from 1 or 2 bars in the early 1970s to approximately 40 at present. The "St. John's Retail Core Area Design Study" completed in 1985 organized and set the tone for development. Subsequently, there has been significant investment in infrastructure by the City, and in the buildings and businesses by the private sector.

Now, 20 years later it is becoming obvious that there is need for a new look at the area. The cultural and economic dynamics have changed, certain problems, both physical and operational have emerged and there are still unfulfilled opportunities for better development.

The City of St. John's, in conjunction with the George Street Association has recognized this need and has commissioned PHB Group Inc. to carry out a Design Study. The Study evaluates the issues and objectives, and develops a sense of direction for future development. Organizational and operational requirements as well as broad objectives for redevelopment as identified by various stakeholders have been addressed.

The effort is at a conceptual master planning level. Within the context of what is possible given the various economic, operational, and physical constraints, we have made some overall planning suggestions, as well as some schematic design possibilities, for selected components.



Looking East from Adelaide Street

2.0 ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

A number of problems and issues have been identified by the various stakeholders, as well as some general objectives for redevelopment.

BROAD ISSUES

- Single Use Area – Bars – especially late at night.
- On street maintenance
 - Quality of pavement and other surfaces.
 - It is dirty and hard to clean.
 - Prince Edward Plaza in particular is problematic.
- Proliferation of decks, styles and materials.
A lot of the properties are looking shabby.
- Public Spaces are not being well used.
- There are traffic concerns and safety issues with the taxi lay-bys and pick up areas.
- Safety, evacuation, and emergency vehicle access during large events is a significant concern.
- Barrier free accessibility for private and public spaces needs to be improved.



Looking East from Queen Street

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Change the “perception” of the street.
- Wider range of activities
 - Types of people, families, and older users.
 - Times of day – lunch, afternoon, early evening, weekends.
- Gathering place, cultural centre, part of Cultural and Heritage Tourism Strategy.
- More programmed activities.
 - Farmers market/Flea markets.
 - Concerts and small performances.
 - Children’s activities.
- Better definition and identification of the area.
- Affordable and efficient use of resources.
 - For the City.
 - For the businesses
 - For the users and public.
- Equitable and more physically accessible.

3.0 OBSERVATIONS

DISCUSSION AND CONTEXT

George Street, as an entertainment district, stretches from the east side of the Convention Centre to Beck’s Cove. Most of the businesses that are a part of “George Street” have frontage on George Street, a few run through to Water, New Gower or Duckworth Streets and there are several with frontages on Queen Street and Adelaide Street.

DISTINCT AREAS

There are two distinct areas. Queen Street to Adelaide Street has fewer but larger businesses and has several relatively large non-entertainment uses including the Post Office, City Hall Annex, and a private parking lot. It operates more as a regular street and although it is changing, there is less sense of on street vibrancy than the area to the east.

Adelaide to Beck’s Cove is the area that is more aligned with the popular image of George Street. It is almost all bars and restaurants. There are several outside sitting areas, more decorative infrastructure and several public open spaces. The street is narrower, sloped down to the east with a gentle curve. It functions as a pedestrian only street after noon.

ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS

Entrance to George Street is through a number of access points, Queen and Adelaide Streets, several laneways, and through three public spaces. When driving, people will generally try first for one of the few parking spaces on the west end of George, Queen, or Adelaide Street and then proceed to try and find the nearest opportunity. They will then use the most convenient passage

into the area. This may be from any direction. There is no single entry point, other than when controlled for festivals.

Pedestrian safety and exiting capacity is an issue for large special events, as is access for emergency vehicles.

TAXI REQUIREMENTS

The intersection of George Street at Adelaide Street at the present time serves not only as an entrance to George Street but also as the main interface to the taxi lay-bys in the area. On busy nights pedestrian safety is a big concern.

USE OF OUTDOOR SPACE

The public and private outdoor spaces need to be more useable, accessible, and welcoming. This includes marginal shoulder spring and fall seasons as well as during the summer.

When it is cold and/or wet and windy, which is a lot of the time, outdoor spaces are not comfortable. When it is warm, it is some times too warm. Still we really value the opportunity to sit or browse outside and it is one of the best features of George Street. Several businesses have responded with outside decks, and canopies, but not all have the space or opportunity.

There is very little shelter in the public spaces; consequently they can only be used as passageways except in the finest weather.

To accommodate one of the key objectives, a broader range of activities which will inevitably occur in the public spaces, more shelter for private and public spaces is required.



SENSE OF PLACE

At present, and except when closed off and organized for festivals, there is not a good “sense of place”. It is linear and feels more like a thoroughfare than a “square”. We think there needs to be more “place” making, smaller spaces within the overall space.

It needs to be a place with a priority for people, shaded and sheltered, and good for people watching. In particular it needs the ability to socialize spontaneously without having to buy anything.

BUSINESS SHOULD BE MORE OPEN TO THE STREET

At present most of the businesses are closed off to the street. Windows tend to be small and covered up, doors are solid.

There needs to be a breakdown in this wall between the public spaces and the private spaces. More windows, more transparent walls around decks and more of a sense of inside/outside transition at the doors. Owners should be encouraged to make buildings more accessible.

PROCESS AND REGULATIONS

In addition to physical upgrades and changes to private and public properties, there will need to be organizational changes such as Nfld Liquor Corporation Regulations to allow on street seating.

Implementation will occur at a number of levels with various players, the City, the George Street Association, the taxi industry and individual business owners. There needs to be a supportive and flexible approach to planning, and cooperation between stakeholders.

REBRANDING

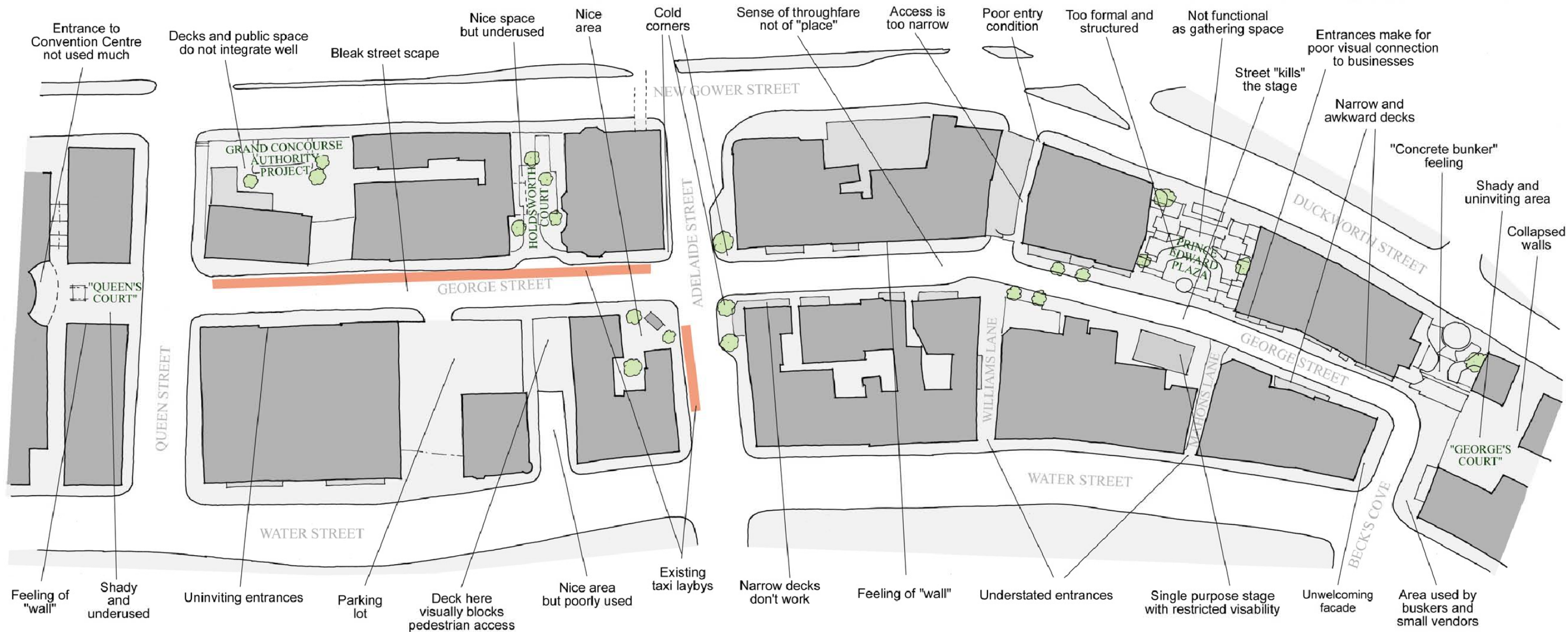
There will need to be rebranding and a marketing effort in parallel with physical and operational changes. The physical changes will be relatively dramatic and will attract attention that can be capitalized on in this effort.



Looking West from Adelaide Street



Looking West from Beck's Cove



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4.0 LONG LIST OF SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS

As a result of various meetings and preliminary design, a long list of suggestions and possible changes has been developed. Most can be incorporated in the concept plan.

4.1 IDEAS

- Remove curbs and sidewalks and make driving surfaces/sidewalks at same level.
- Close off the street, and relocate taxi lay-bys.
- Make the area more accessible.
- Allow tables on street/sidewalk. Wrought iron rails or chain bollards, will be acceptable separations.
- Places to sell local art, crafts, and produce.
- Underground wiring/servicing.
- Removable seats for Prince Edward Plaza.
- Remove bollards, remove the fountain.
- Standard deck and furniture styles.
- Use sidewalks and streets for outdoor sitting.
- Alternative uses for Bandstand, i.e. tables and chairs.
- Truck loading and unloading, including bands. Limit and specify the times. (This could be more flexible in bad weather)
- Get away from decks.
- “Satellite” food serving areas such as Prince Edward Plaza and other open spaces.
- Platforms for buskers.
- Better street and building lighting, and more decorative lighting and banners.
- Tents, canopies, and temporary shelters.
- Alternative performance areas.
- “Satellite” projection areas for concerts.
- Sound and video feed from stage into bars.
- Permanent and simple sound system for small groups.
- More soft landscaping – i.e. hanging baskets
- Develop the open area at east end for better use.

5.0 CONCEPT PLAN

OVERALL VISION

George Street, west of Adelaide, and George Street east of Adelaide have at present different characteristics. The area to the east and immediately around the intersection has more of the “George Street Image”; small buildings, bars, restaurants, and more on-street activity.

To the west, larger buildings, and more open areas, and more “destination oriented” establishments, and less pedestrian infrastructure, make the area feel more like a place to pass through rather than linger.

The overall vision is to build on the image of George Street strengthening the east end of the street, while extending the outdoor concept to the west. The pedestrian precinct will be expanded to the west and strengthened further in the east end. The range of commercial and public uses will be expanded, and there will be more activity during the daytime, early evening and weekends.

IDENTIFICATION AND GLITTER

The area needs to be more uniquely identified. We suggest that this can be done by distinctive and better lighting, more banners and distinctive infrastructure, and by strategic placement of signage and banners. The street should glitter with light and energy. Signage, banners and detail design should be coordinated with the rebranding strategy.

CIRCULATION

The Key recommendations are:

- The section of George Street, Adelaide Street to Beck’s Cove should become a pedestrian precinct. It needs to be primarily a walking area that can accommodate emergency vehicles and deliveries at prescribed times, as opposed to a street that is sometimes closed.
- Adelaide Street, and the west end of George Street should be closed to vehicular traffic and become a pedestrian precinct in the evenings.
- Taxis waiting areas should be moved from George and Adelaide Streets.

USE OF PUBLIC SPACES

There are two types of public spaces, the streets and sidewalks, and the open spaces such as Prince Edward Plaza. Infrastructure improvements in the open spaces should accommodate more programmed activity such as markets and small performances as well as passive sitting and browsing. The streets and sidewalks should be more than just thoroughfares, accommodating sheltered outdoor seating and programmed activity.

USE OF PRIVATE SPACES

It is possible to encourage a sense of vibrancy in the area by better use of public open spaces. This occurs mainly during fine weather. At other times this has to come from the businesses themselves. We strongly suggest more openness to the street with larger windows, entrances

should be more welcoming and decks more visible and open. Building facades can be more inviting by better lighting and more appropriate signage.

UTILITIES

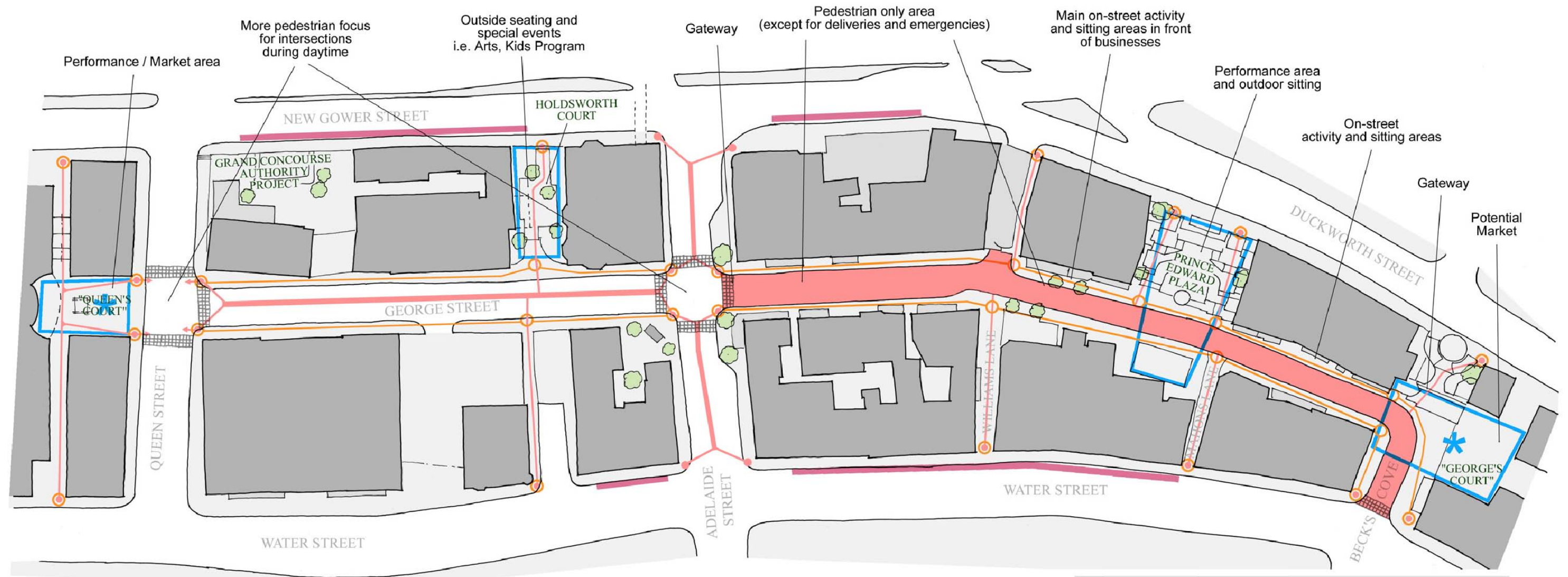
At present, the overhead wires are the worst visual clutter in the area. It is made worse by the narrowness of the street and the large number of small buildings, each requiring its own feed. Placing these utilities underground, while costly, will be essential for real improvement in the quality of space. The obvious time to do this will be in conjunction with the re-surfacing of the street, moving the bandstand and other improvements.

BARRIER FREE ACCESSIBILITY

Most of the existing businesses are at present meeting the regulations because of necessary exemptions for existing structures. However, as much as possible, the practical and private spaces need to be made more barrier free. While this is not feasible in all situations because of constrained grade changes, and changes in floor levels, significant improvements are possible.

Some examples:

- Along the street itself (the new profile of the street pavement will help).
- At entrances to the street, laneways leading to the street, and wherever there are stairs.
- At the entrances of buildings, as well as inside the buildings.
- In outdoor seating areas (Prince Edward Plaza and outside the bars and restaurants), and
- At the curbside, especially at wheelchair-accessible parking spaces and taxi lay-bys.



OBJECTIVES:

- Change perception of street
- Promote a wider range of activities and users
- Gathering place, cultural center
- Better definition
- More programmed activities
- Affordable
- Equitable
- Improved barrier free access

- Pedestrian Circulation Only from 6:00pm
- Pedestrian Circulation Only
- More Glitter
- Upgrade Public Spaces / More Programmed Activity
- Focal Point/ Sculpture
- Proposed Taxi Layby



CLIENT

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CONCEPT PLAN

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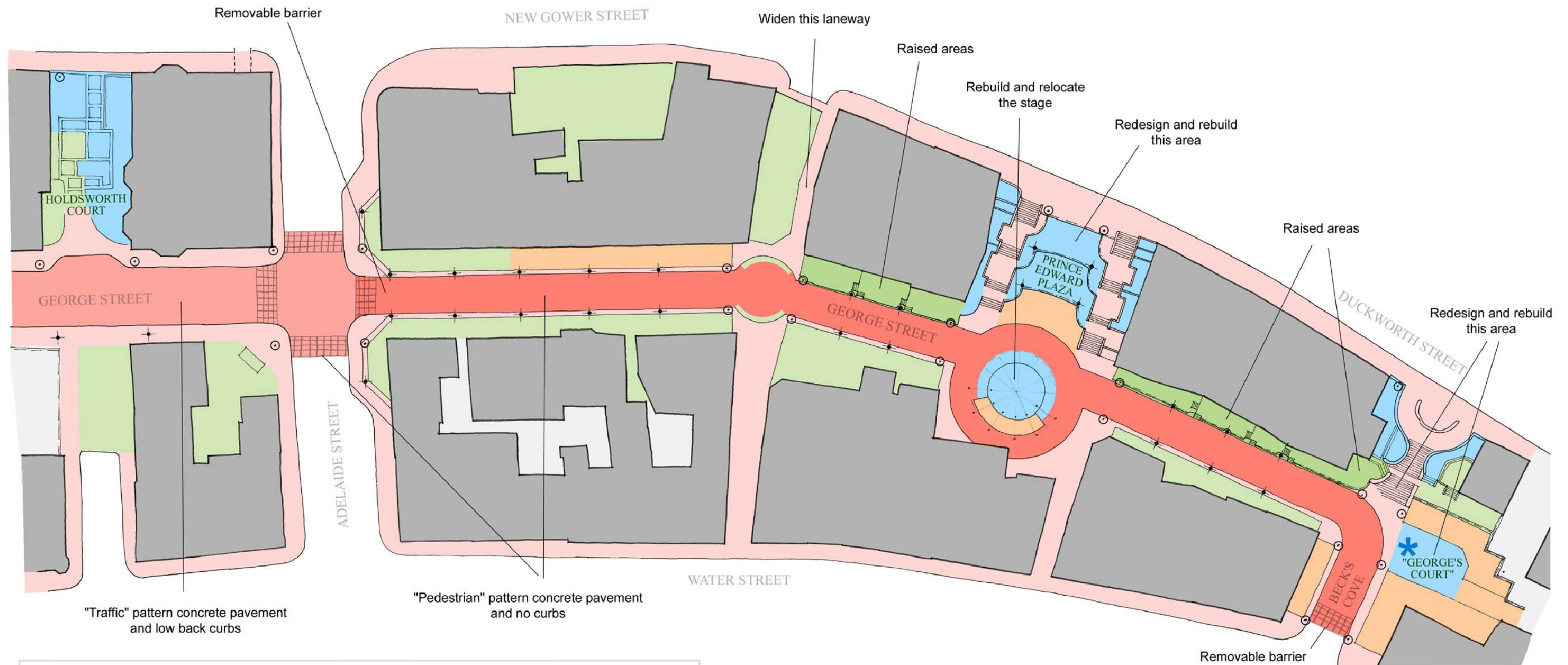
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GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Rebuild street from Adelaide to Becks Cove: remove curbs and sidewalks.
- Rebuild street from Queen to Adelaide Street: install low back curbs to sidewalks.
- Install underground utilities.
- Remove most of the existing on-street decks and rails and replace with new standard details.
- More on-street serving and sitting areas.
- Open up store fronts and entrances to be more visible.

- On-street Seating & Canopies by Businesses
- Buskers / Vendors / Market
- Public Outdoor Seating & Gathering
- Part-time Pedestrian Zone (from 6pm)
- Pedestrian Only Zone (Full-time)
- Sidewalks & Passages
- Main Lighting & Banner Poles
- Secondary Lighting & Banner Poles
- Focal Point



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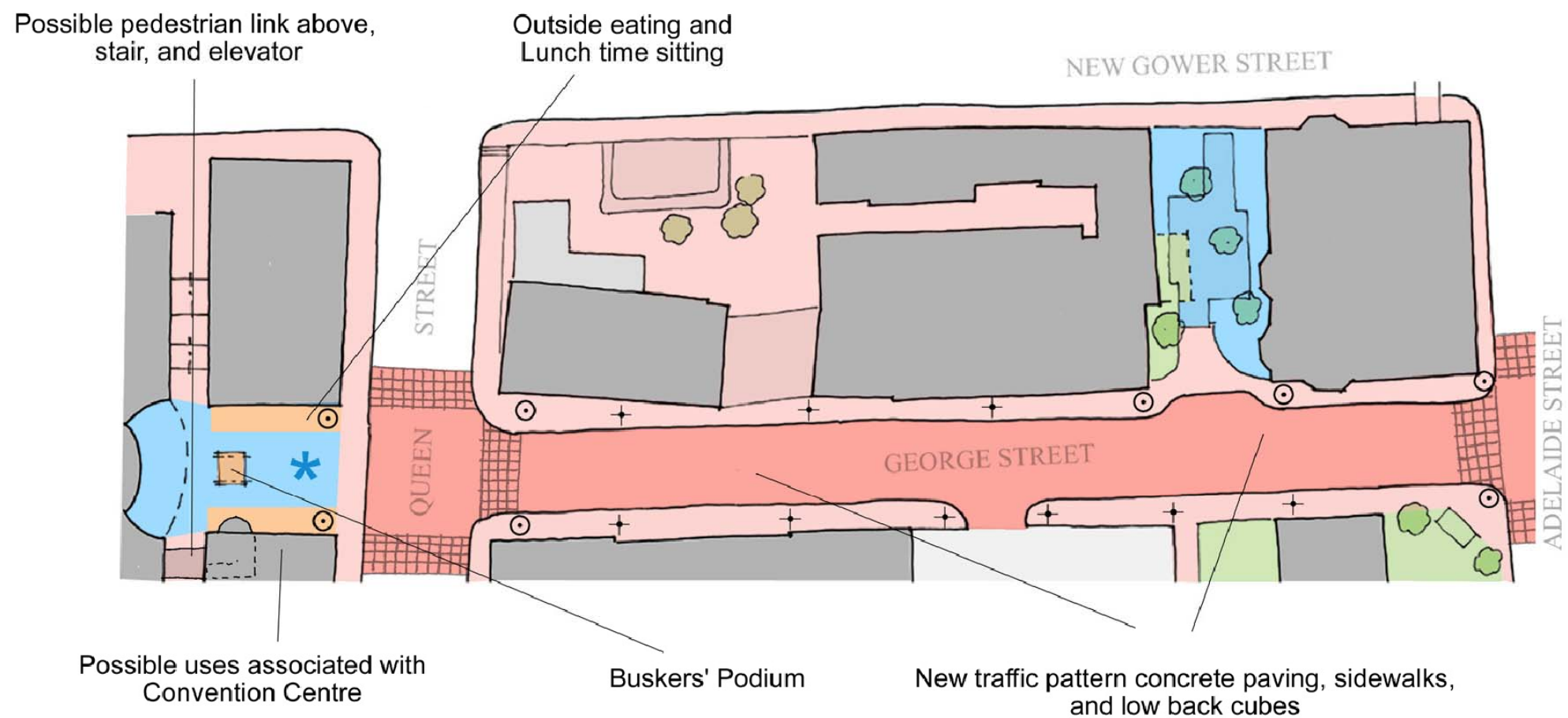
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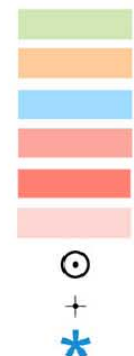
5-B



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6.0 PROJECT COMPONENTS

LIGHTING

At present, street and decorative lighting is based on the round fixtures that are standard in the downtown. These should be replaced for several reasons:

- A distinctive lighting fixture and style will help identify and brand George Street.
- The lighting levels should be increased for both a sense of security and to give the area more of a sense of place. The light should be directed down toward the street and sidewalk surfaces and to the lower part of the building facades.
- The round style of lamp is not the best choice for these requirements, even if brighter lamps are used, because they cause glare and light is disbursed in the wrong directions.
- Light colour is important to give a natural tone as opposed to the yellowish sodium vapour usually found in outside fixtures. We suggest metal halide, which produces a white light with good economy and maintenance characteristics.
- One or two styles of fixtures can be chosen as part of a system that can be used for public areas as well as for private outdoor spaces.
- In addition to the standard functional requirements for public area illumination, use of decorative lights, spotlights and strings of lights should be encouraged to add to the glitter and make areas more inviting.
- Existing lighting can be relocated and reused in other parts of the downtown.

FLAGS AND BANNERS

While lighting can add glitter and bring identity in the nighttime, flags and banners and a distinctive style of supporting structure are important for daytime use.

At present the area typically has no banners, except during special events. We suggest a system that can be used on a semi permanent basis.

- Lighting poles need to accommodate banners.
- The banners should be durable in the high wind conditions and not too big or obtrusive.
- They should be easily changed for different seasons, and for special events.
- During special events, additional banners can be installed.



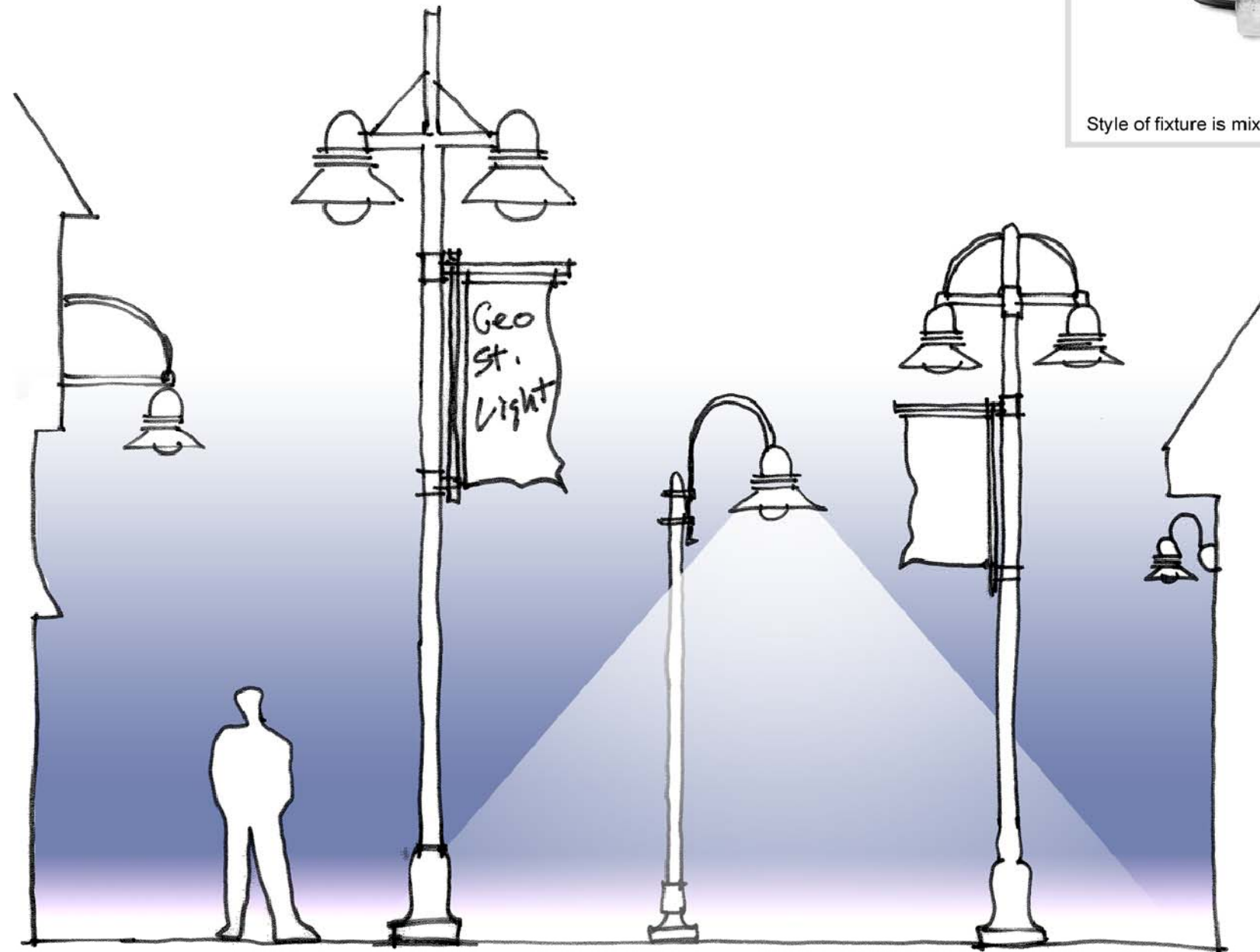
Good uses of building and street lighting.



Existing light standard and fixture.



Style of fixture is mix of traditional and contemporary.



Lamps on buildings

Large street lamps
with easily changed banners

Small street lamps
cast most light down
and some to side

Medium street lamps

STANDARD RANGE OF LIGHTING

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CANOPIES AND RAILINGS

A major thrust of this report is to encourage on street activity which will translate into more diverse business opportunities. We all know what the weather is like, and that no one is going to sit outside in February or for that matter on a really bad day in August. However, better outside shelter can expand the season by days each week and several months into the shoulder seasons of spring and fall.

Canopies are obvious, but they are not enough because of the wind. Lateral divisions and screens are also required. All must be robust to withstand windy conditions and easily retracted and deployed when necessary.

Canopies and portable shelters are appropriate for private properties as well as the public spaces. Standard designs and techniques will be more functional, cost effective and make the whole area look a lot better.

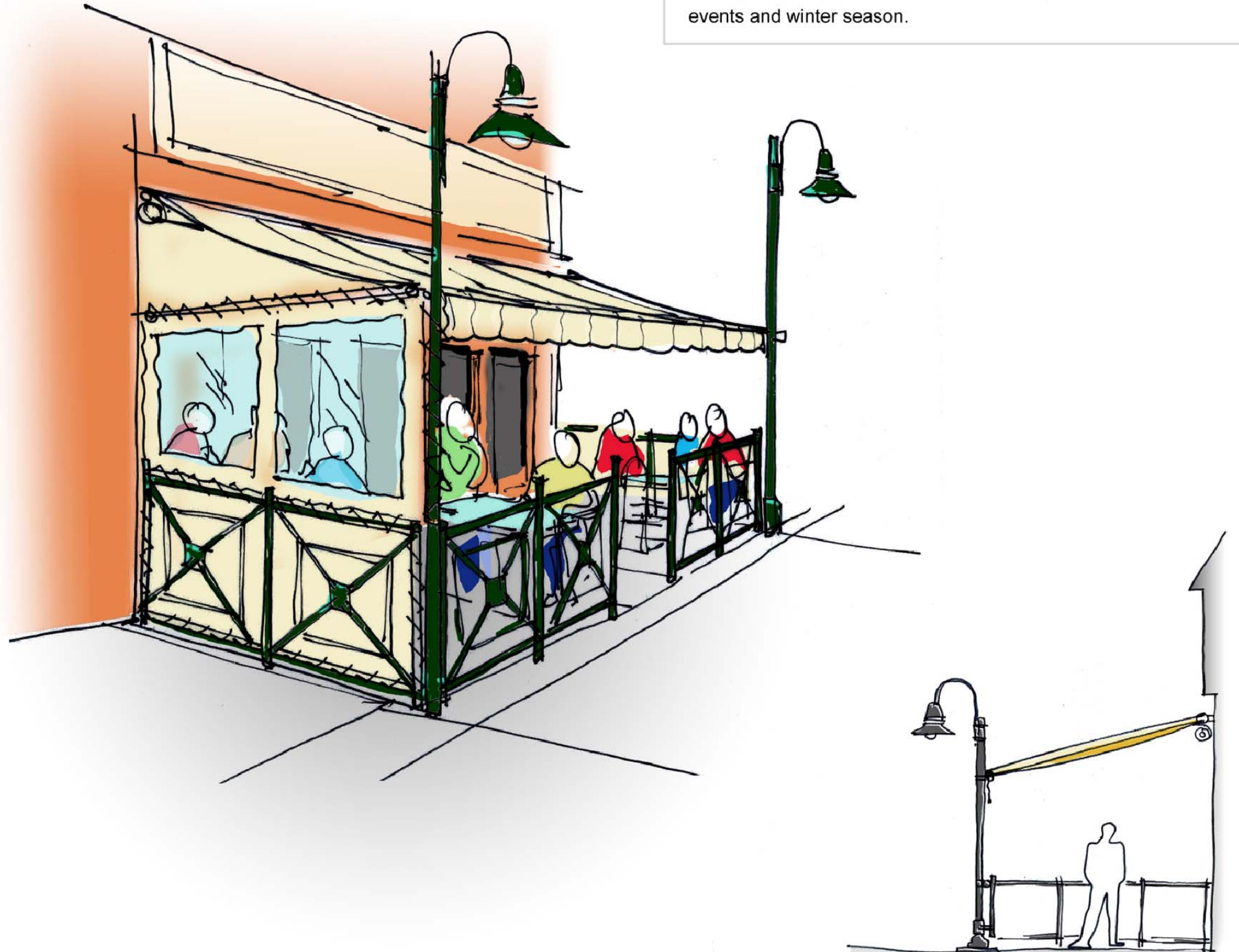
Railings are an integral part of the canopy and shelter system. They are essential for security and safety, play an important role in the visual appearance and can be used to create shelter.



Harbour Front in Toronto (top) and Byward Market in Ottawa (bottom)



Examples of railings and canopies.



- Railings will be required for on-street liquor lisencing.
- Canopies and screens will extend hours of outside seating.
- Railings and canopies will have to be easily removable for special events and winter season.

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STREET AND SIDEWALKS

One of the main recommendations in this report is to completely rebuild the street from Adelaide Street to Beck's Cove. This is the psychological heart of George Street. The key components will be:

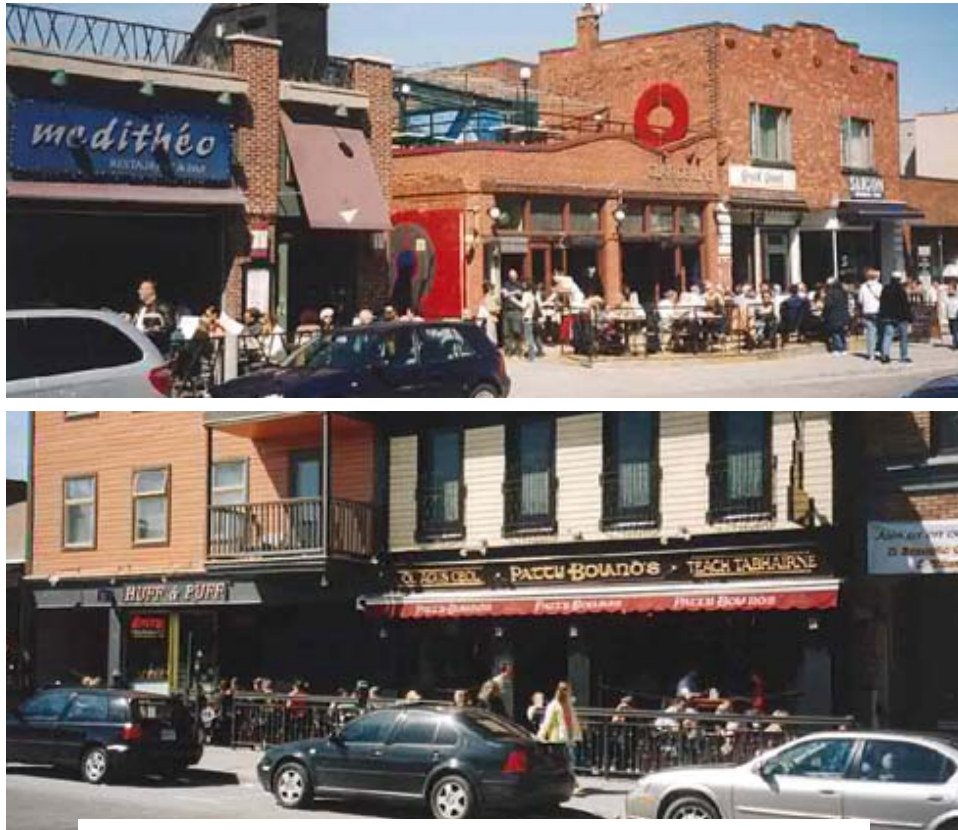
- Remove most existing decks and rails on the street.
- Remove poles and wires and install underground utilities.
- Rebuild the street as one surface, building to building across the street, and encourage on street seating instead of the present decks which are by and large not very functional.

The idea is to change the perception from being a street that is sometimes closed to traffic to becoming a pedestrian area that sometimes allows vehicles for deliveries and emergency.

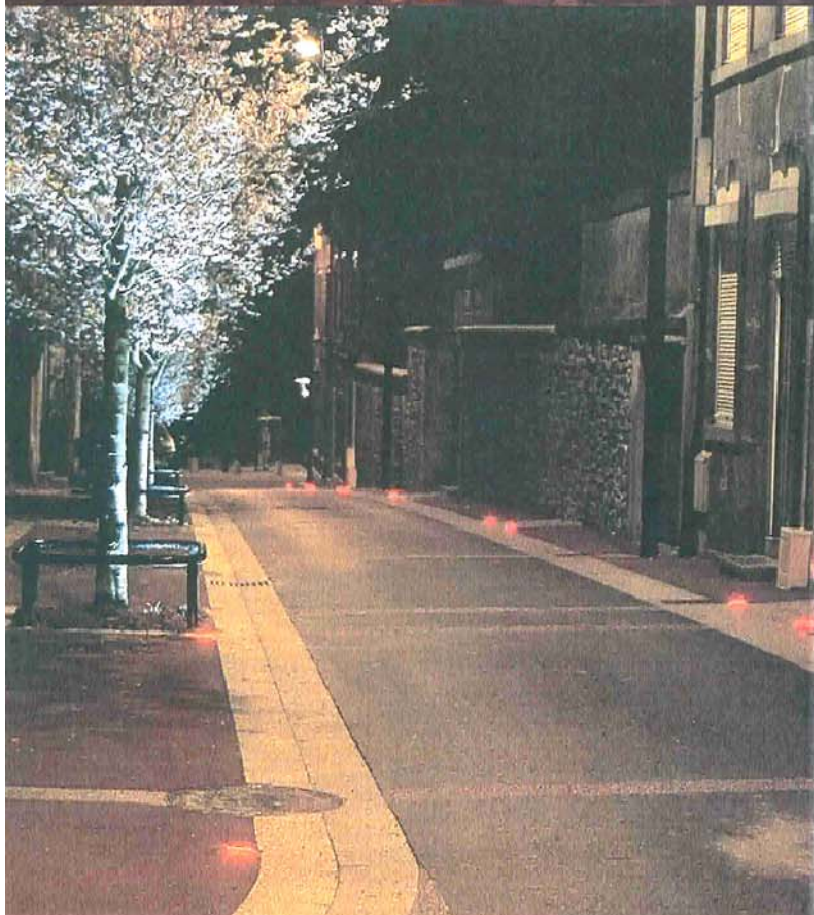
We are suggesting a 6.6m (22 feet) wide area that is available for the walking public, deliveries and emergency uses. The balance can be used by adjoining businesses or for spontaneous uses, such as vendors or buskers.

The most appropriate material appears to be concrete. Options for coloured and textured surfaces to create a pedestrian feeling are available. There needs to be a system of patterns and textures that will allow for repair and maintenance, that are easy to clean, and that do not show spills and chewing gum.

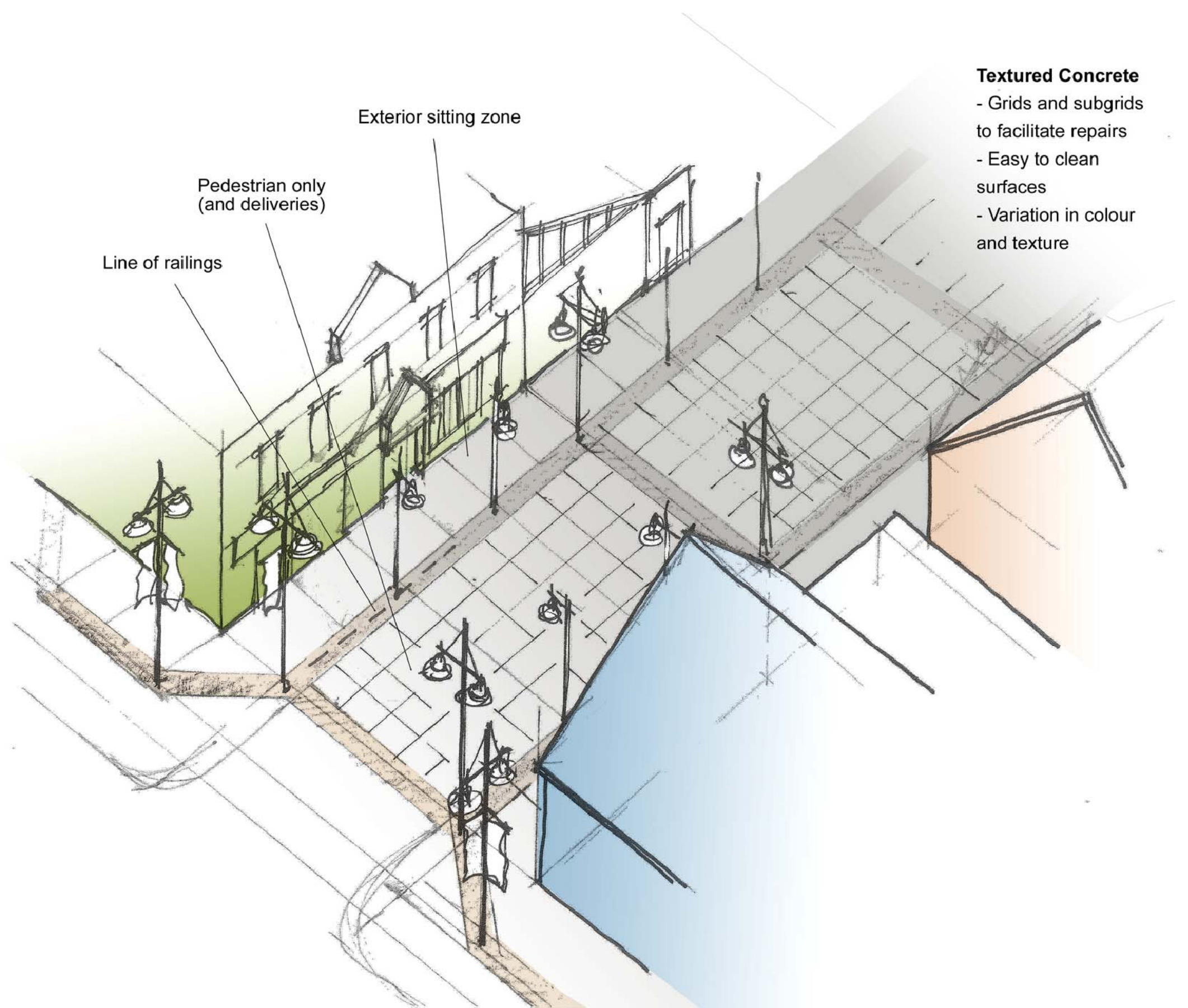
The area from Queen Street to Adelaide Street should also be re-configured with more pedestrian oriented textures and low back curbs. The area will remain accessible to vehicles during the daytime.



Streets near the Market in Ottawa



Examples of wall-to-wall surface treatments.



Textured Concrete
 - Grids and subgrids to facilitate repairs
 - Easy to clean surfaces
 - Variation in colour and texture

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7.0 SUGGESTIONS FOR PUBLIC SPACES

Schematic suggestions have been prepared for the key public spaces. The amount of work varies from area to area and it can be phased.

QUEEN'S COURT

The space on Queen Street at the west end of George Street, which we will call Queen's Court for now, leads into the Convention Centre. However it does not seem to be used much. It is a fairly strategic location in that it is at the end of the street and could be a focal point. The area is fairly uninviting at present with bleak facades to the south and the underused entrance to the Convention Centre to the west.

We suggest a sculptural focal point, banners and lighting, and encouraging surrounding businesses to open up their facades with outside sitting and canopies. There can also be more programmed activities, especially in conjunction with events at the Convention Centre.

The potential also exists to link Queen's Court to the Convention Centre through one of the adjoining buildings. For example, it would be possible to link from main floor and the upper level into the "Fanning" Building, 3 Queen Street. The benefits would be, commercial opportunities for the building owners, additional spaces, such as "break out rooms" for the Convention Centre and enclosed access from George Street and Water Street the Convention Centre.

HOLDSWORTH COURT

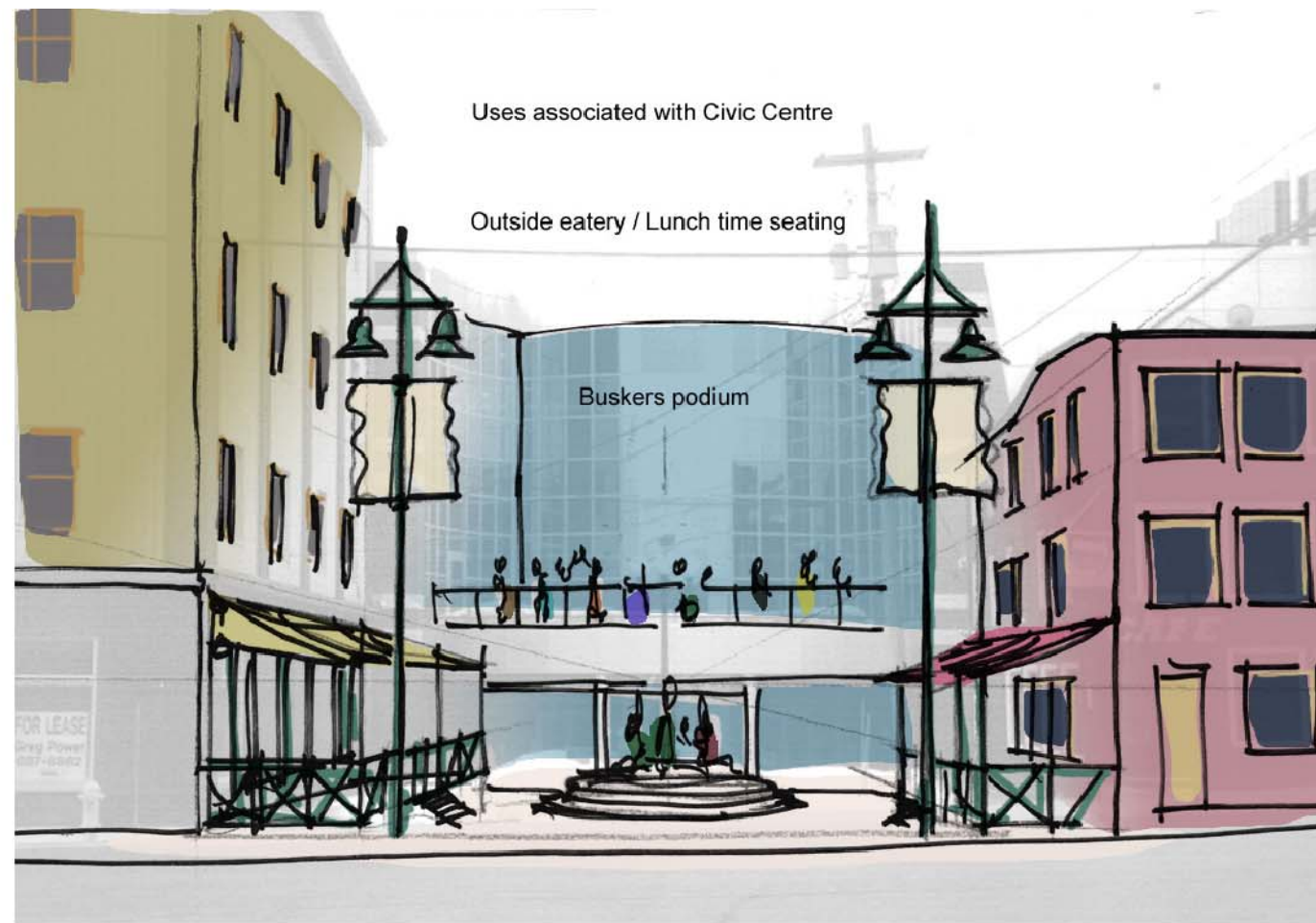
This area is actually quite nicely designed and laid out. We are not suggesting much change other than banners and lighting, more programmed activity and encouraging the businesses that face the court to set up outside seating and canopies in the court as opposed to in the street.



Queen's Court



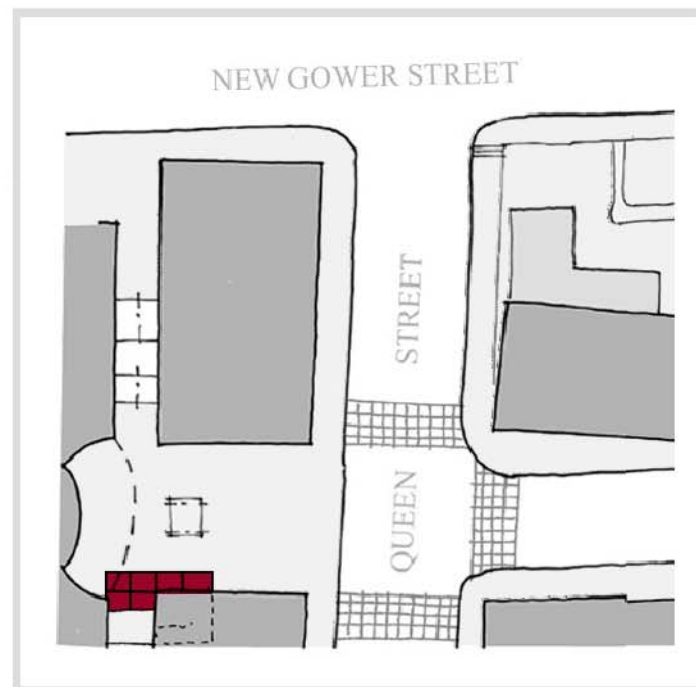
Holdsworth Court



Queen's Court



Holdsworth Court



Possible link to convention centre



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SHEET TITLE

**QUEEN'S COURT &
HOLDSWORTH COURT**

DATE

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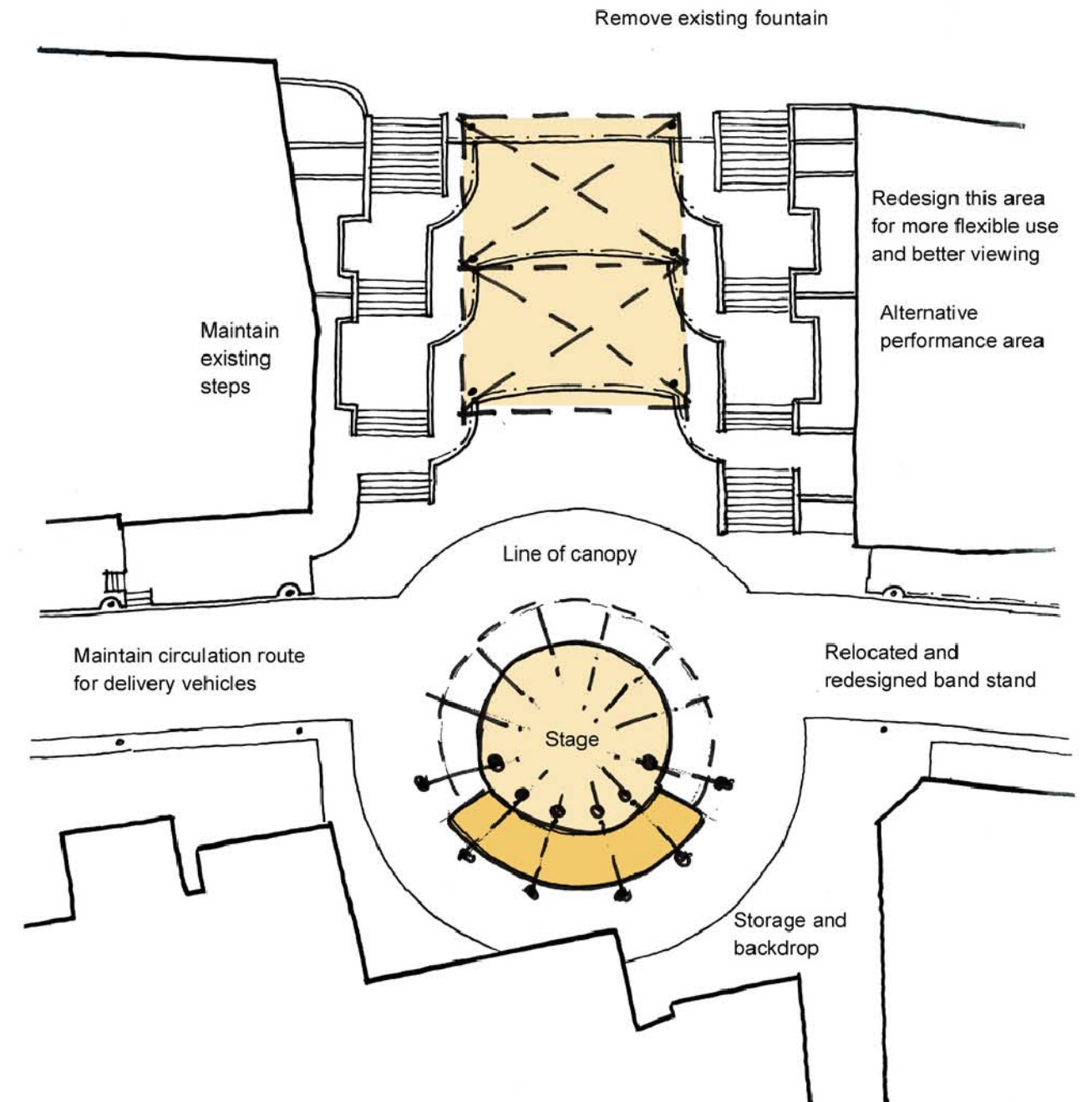
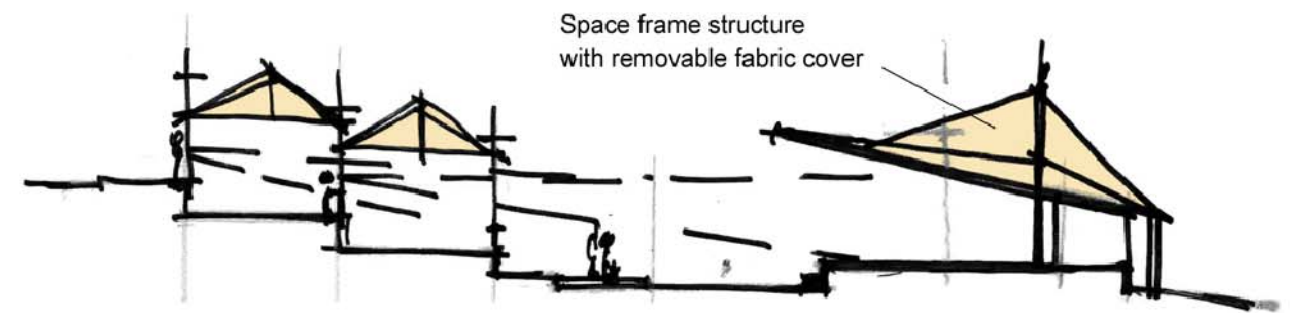
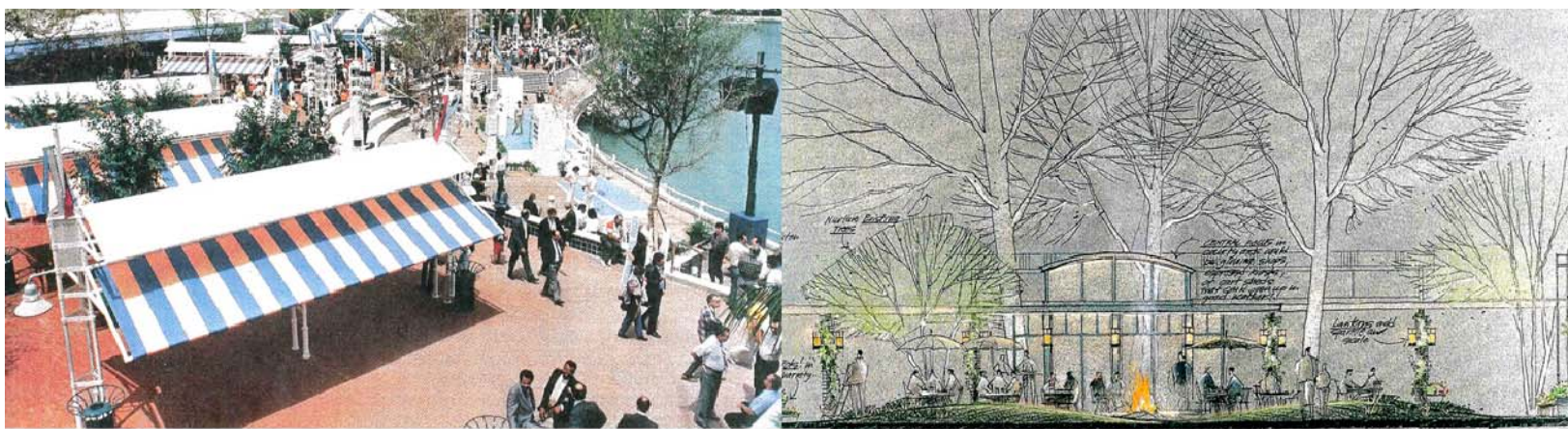
7.2 PRINCE EDWARD PLAZA

Price Edward Plaza and the bandstand do not work very well at present. The street is a real psychological separation between the stage and the Plaza. The Plaza itself is over developed with steps, walls, seats, and rails to the point that it limits the number of people who can use it and inhibits spontaneity. The bandstand has limited visibility.

We are suggesting redeveloping the Plaza with several key initiatives:

- Move and rebuild the bandstand so that it is more central and visible with a better connection to the Plaza.
- Redevelop the Plaza so that there is more open space, and the possibility for semi permanent sheltered spaces.
- Moving the bandstand will open up the backs of buildings such as the Fat Cat Bar, and help to create a sense of place as opposed to a thoroughfare on the street.
- Moving the bandstand will also allow pedestrian circulation behind the stand. This should be a major convenience and safety improvement during large events.





Lighting and Banner Poles can support temporary shelters.

	<p>CLIENT</p> <p>GEORGE STREET ASSOCIATION</p>	<p>PROJECT TITLE</p> <p>GEORGE STREET REDEVELOPMENT STUDY</p>	 <p>PHBGROUP INC. 7 Plank Road St. John's, NL Canada A1E 1H3 Tele 709.576.8612 Toll Free 1.888.576.8612 Fax 709.579.5163 e-mail: phb@phbgroup.com</p>	<p>SHEET TITLE</p> <p>PRINCE EDWARD PLAZA</p>		
				<p>DATE</p> <p>2006 11 02</p>	<p>SCALE</p> <p>AS NOTED</p>	<p>SHEET NO.</p> <p>7-B</p>

7.3 GEORGE'S COURT, MARKET

The area at the east end of the street, which we will for now call “George’s Court” is at present an undeveloped parking area. There are collapsed retaining walls, uprooted trees and a generally unkept appearance. The public steps leading up to Duckworth Street are steep and imposing. In general, the area which is a main “gateway” to George Street is cold, dark, and uninviting.

On the other hand, George’s Court is the most strategic opportunity to broaden the appeal and user base of George Street. The area can if organized properly function as a public market. We appreciate that there are challenges but there are also advantages. The fact that the area is not too large, it will hold about 20 stalls, and is fairly sheltered from the east is an advantage. Nearby uses such as NONIA, Auntie Crae’s and the Downhomer are appropriate for a market area.

The area can be set up as a multi purpose and weekend market to start. A suggestion is a Produce Market on Saturday and a Flea Market on Sunday. There can be semi permanent shelters to extend the season to at least 6 months. Most of the time, there will be room for buskers and other programmed events as well.

The entrance to the court would be a good location for a sculptural focal point, visible from George Street, Water Street and Duckworth Street.



The East End of George Street



Byward Market in Ottawa



Faneuil Hall, Boston (top) and Byward Market, Ottawa. Both function in bad weather with covered circulation areas.



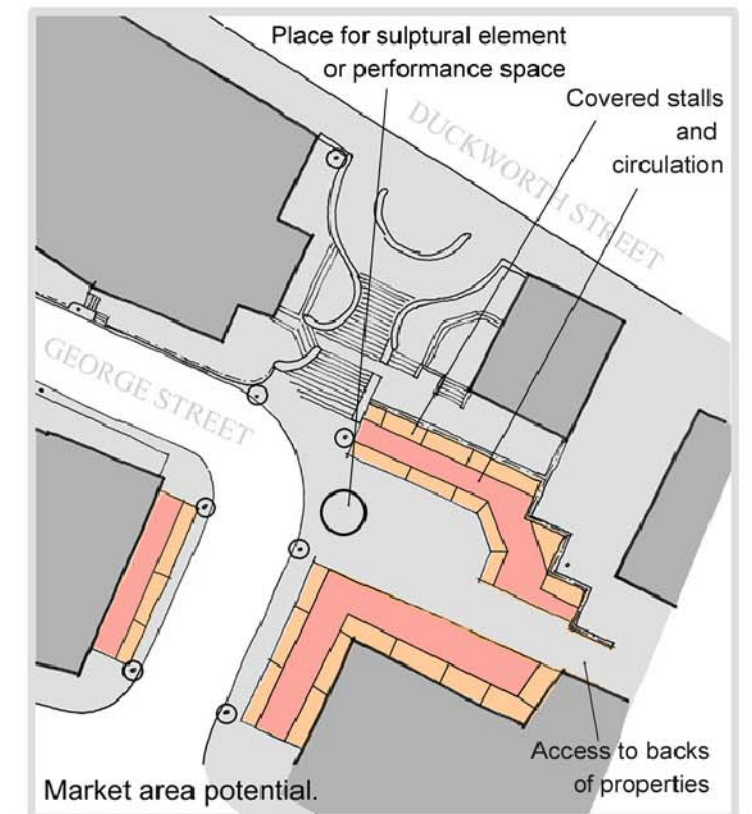
Sketch of potential market streetscape.



Existing condition of proposed area on George Street.



Faneuil Hall in Boston.



Market area potential.

	<div>CLIENT</div> <div>GEORGE STREET ASSOCIATION</div>	<div>PROJECT TITLE</div> <div>GEORGE STREET REDEVELOPMENT STUDY</div>	<div><div>PHBGROUP INC. 7 Plank Road St. John's, NL Canada A1E 1H3 Tele 709.576.8612 Toll Free 1.888.576.8612 Fax 709.579.5163 e-mail: phb@phbgroup.com</div></div>	<div>SHEET TITLE</div> <div>GEORGE'S COURT MARKET</div>	
			<div>DATE</div> <div>2006 11 02</div>	<div>SCALE</div> <div>AS NOTED</div>	<div>SHEET NO.</div> <div>7-C</div>

7.4 STREET SCAPES

Redevelopment of George Street will include changes to the infrastructure which will in turn make it possible for businesses to expand on a seasonal basis on to what is now the sidewalk or street.

A system needs to be developed that will allow for sheltered outside sitting areas with rails and canopies that can be easily removed for the winter and for special events.

Adelaide Street Looking East

The street in this area is fairly level. It should be possible to re-surface the street in a way that will allow outside seating, at or near floor level, on both sides. Barrier free access should be an objective during detailed design.

Beck's Cove Looking West

The floor levels of the buildings on the north side of the street are significantly higher than on the south. Direct access to the street for outside sitting will be difficult unless a raised barrier free platform is considered. The drawing shows a concept for this type of area.



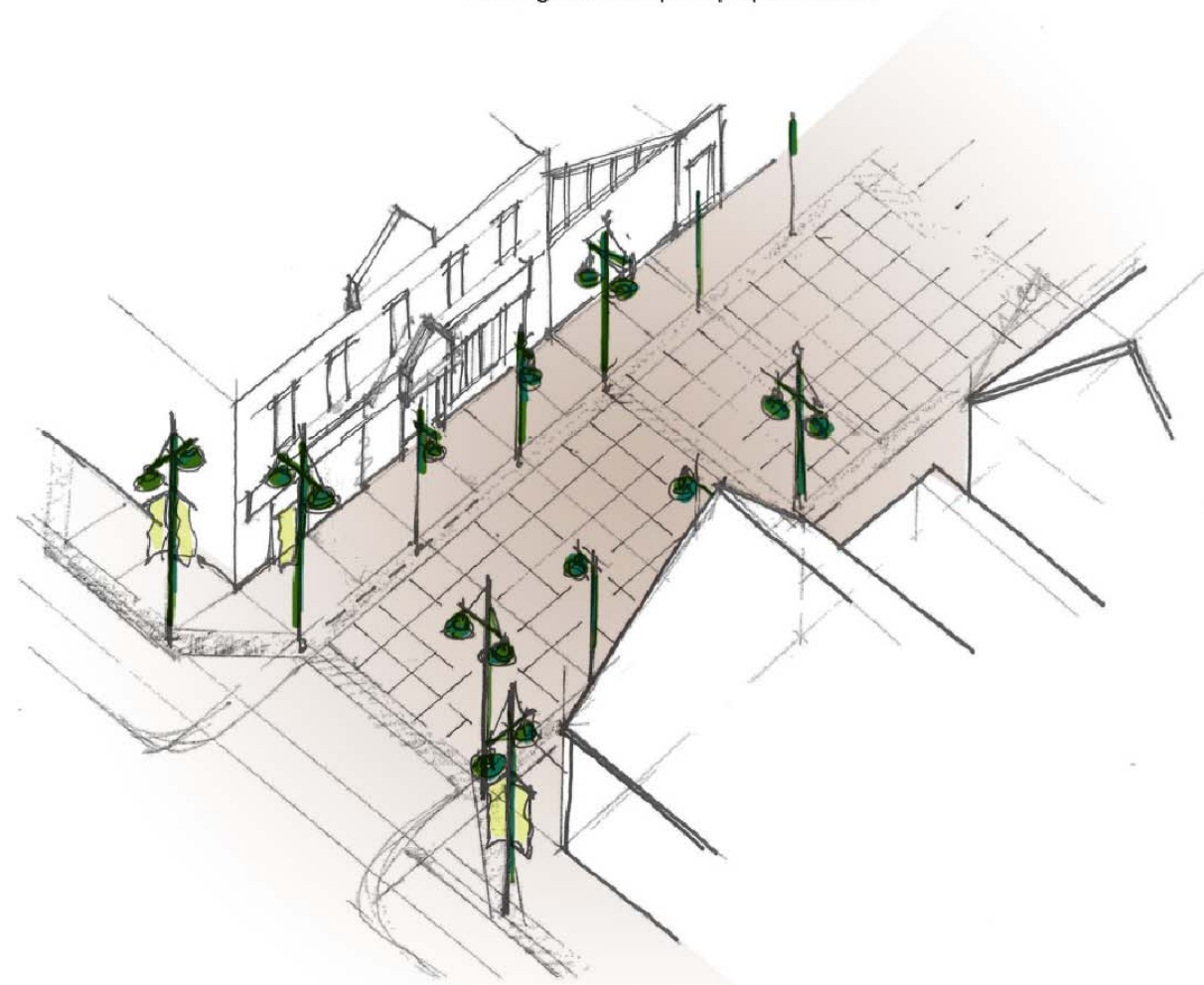
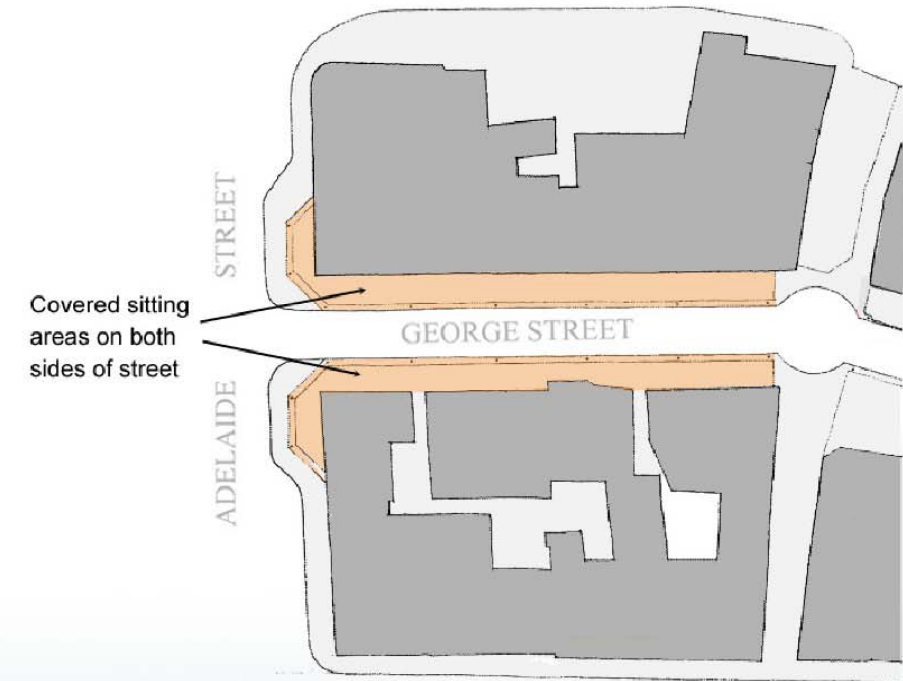
Looking East from Adelaide Street



Looking East toward Beck's Cove



Existing street scene in proposed area.



Street lighting and poles maintain street definition in wide areas.

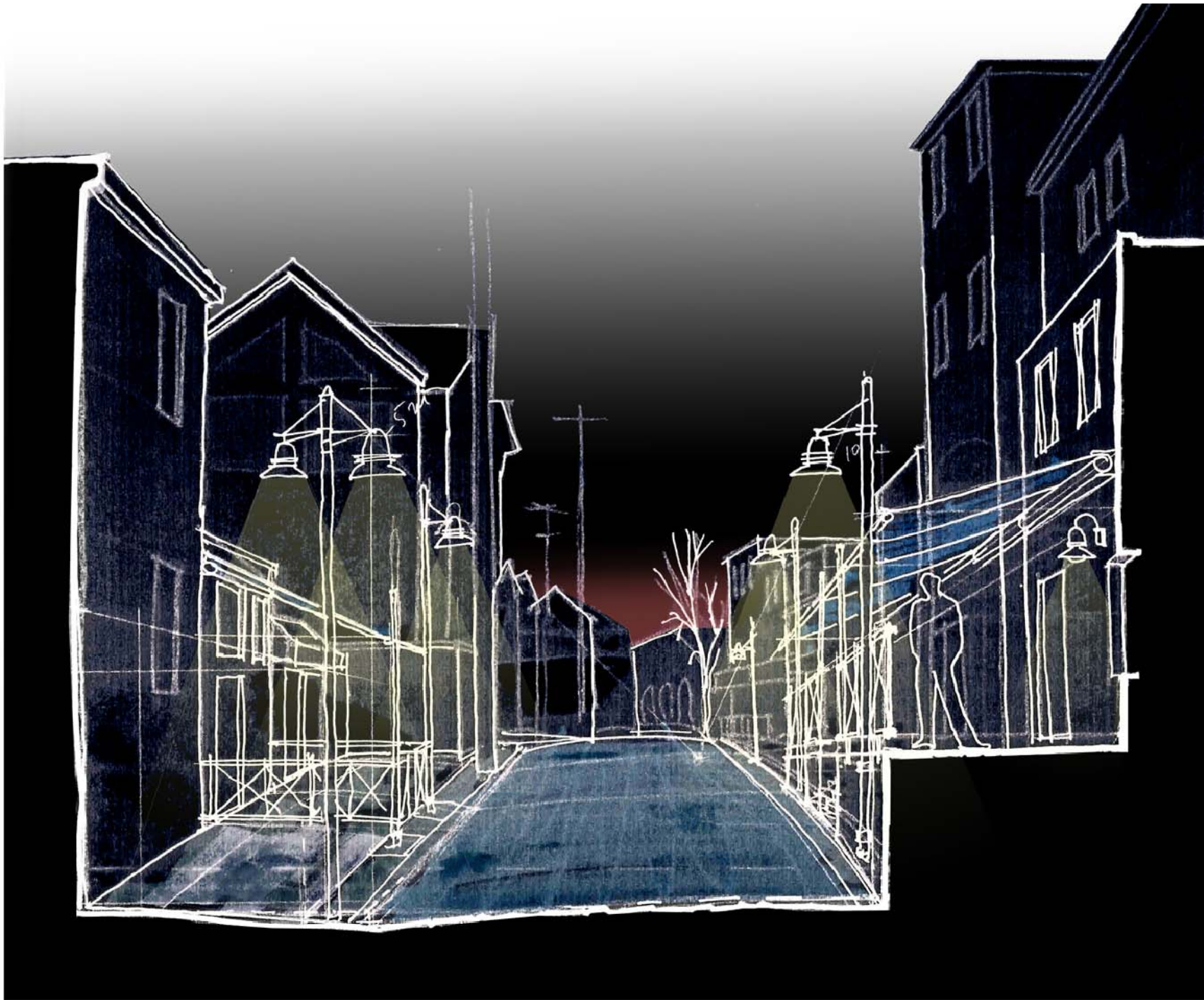


Sections of George Street where the street is fairly level side to side.

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				DATE 2006 11 02	SCALE AS NOTED	SHEET NO. 7-D



Images of existing raised sidewalks.



Beck's Cove looking West. Section drawing shows raised "sidewalk" for areas where floor levels are well above street level.

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				<p>DATE</p> <p>2006 11 02</p>	<p>SCALE</p> <p>AS NOTED</p>	<p>SHEET NO.</p> <p>7-E</p>

8.0 PRIVATE PROPERTIES

Most of the recommendations relate primarily to the public areas. However the surrounding businesses will be the main beneficiaries and it will be important for them to participate. This will include adoption of standards for decks, railing, lighting, signage and canopies.

While it is not the intention to suggest architectural controls other than those covered by the City of St. John's Heritage Regulations, it is obvious that a number of properties have been very sloppily renovated. They are neither good examples of heritage renovation nor a more eclectic style to which they might pretend.

Another key recommendation is to encourage the businesses to open up to the street. At present, entrances function as barriers and there are few windows. We encourage more and bigger windows and inviting doorways. This approach, which is actually happening on Water Street and parts of Duckworth Street will make George Street seems more “friendly” and active and will help reduce street vandalism, making people feel more secure.



Looking toward Prince Edward Plaza



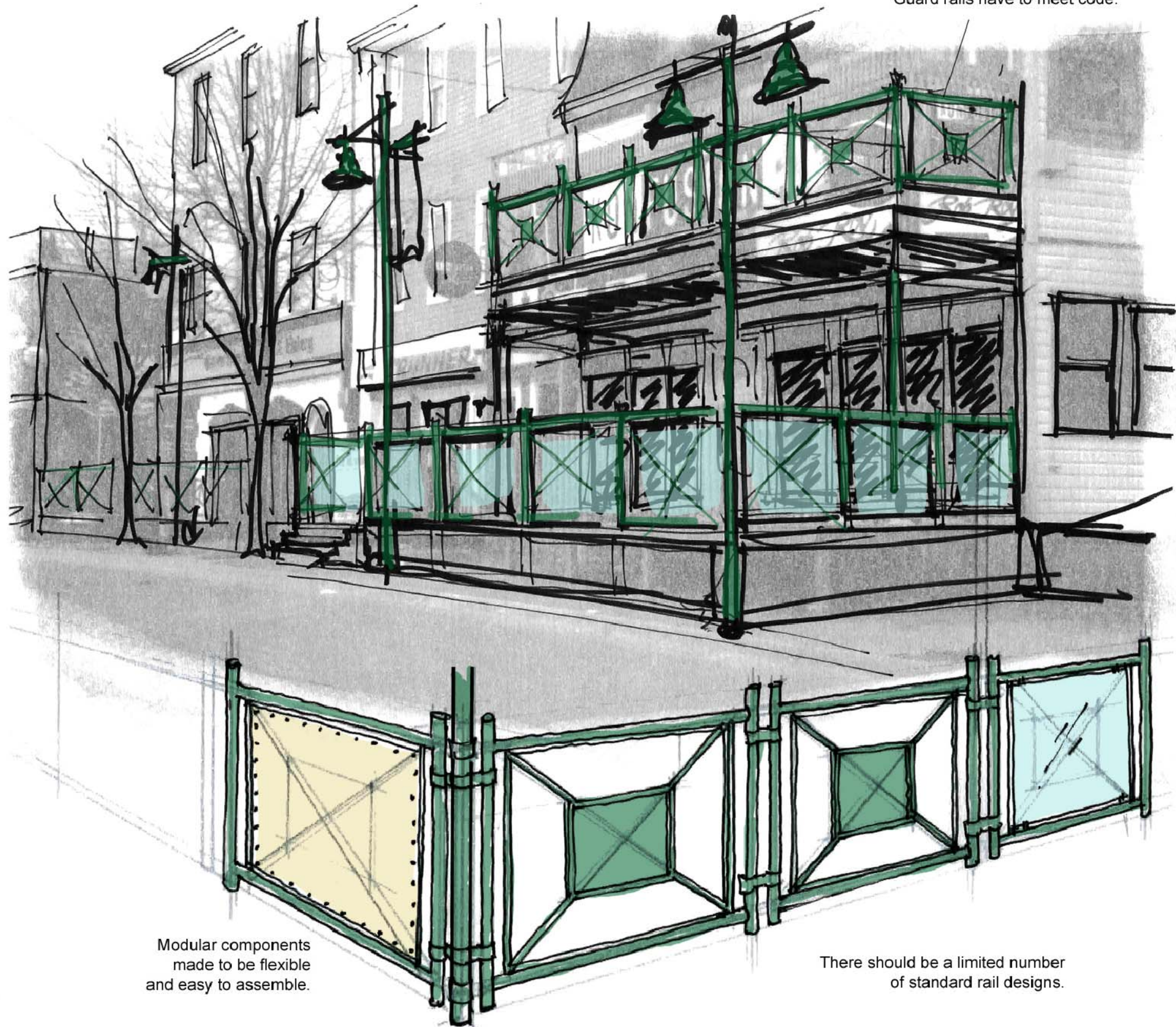
Incorporate more and bigger windows as shown above.



Summer condition.



Winter condition and when rails are removed to allow for special events.



Guard rails have to meet code.

Modular components made to be flexible and easy to assemble.

There should be a limited number of standard rail designs.



CLIENT

GEORGE STREET
ASSOCIATION

PROJECT TITLE

**GEORGE STREET
REDEVELOPMENT STUDY**



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SHEET TITLE

PRIVATE PROPERTIES

DATE

2006 11 02

SCALE

AS NOTED

SHEET NO.

8-A

9.0 OPERATIONAL ISSUES

While this report looks mainly at the physical improvements that can be undertaken, there are various operational and regulatory issues that need to be considered.

N.L.C. REGULATIONS

Liquor Regulations of the Newfoundland & Labrador Liquor Corporation will need to be amended to permit outside sitting areas at all times, not just during special events. Defining the areas with railings for regulatory and operational reasons will be necessary.

HOURS OF OPERATION

There appears to be a problem with late night and after hours operations, shifting usage patterns to later in the night. Hours of operation can be amended to help reverse this trend.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security will be improved with more on street activity, more windows opening on to the street and changing hours of operation. Proposed changes to the street surfaces will reduce potential for tripping and slipping.

A Life Safety Study prepared by R.J Bartlett Engineering Ltd. for the City of St. John's in 2005 looks at issues of crowd control and exiting from the Street in the event of an emergency. It is primarily related to large special events, and makes a number of suggestions, most of which relate to operational issues.

None of the suggestions in this proposal will reduce exiting capacity or impede crowd movement or emergency vehicle access. If anything, all of these will be improved.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

We recommend that the George Street area continue to be part of the St. John's Heritage Area as in the past. More leeway with design is allowed in the George Street area than elsewhere. This is acceptable in our opinion with the building architecture. However more stringent regulations will need to be implemented for decks, railings, canopies and outside fixtures

BARRIER FREE ACCESSIBILITY

Regulations do not require existing buildings to be accessible and it is very difficult to achieve total barrier freedom in all of the private and public spaces, however, an extra effort needs to be made during this initiative to achieve functional accessibility to the largest extent feasible.

10.0 IMPLEMENTATION

KEY PLAYERS

Key players in implementation will be the City of St. John's, the George Street Association, and in particular, individual business and property owners.

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COSTS

Preliminary Budgets for the various public components of the work are as follows:

Item	Cost
Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities George Street (Adelaide Street to Beck's Cove) - Removals and Demolitions - Underground Mechanical - Underground Electrical - Textured Concrete Surfaces - Raised Platforms and Guards - Light Standards and Fixtures - Banners and Signage <div> Sub Total 900,000 Soft Costs 10% 90,000 Contingency 20% 180,000 Total \$1,170,000 </div>	
Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities George Street (Queen Street to Adelaide Street) - Removals and Demolitions - Underground Mechanical - Underground Electrical - Textured Concrete Surfaces - Raised Platforms and Guards - Light Standards and Fixtures - Banners and Signage <div> Sub Total 500,000 Soft Costs 10% 50,000 Contingency 20% 100,000 Total \$650,000 </div>	

Queen's Court - Surface and Walls - Lights and Banners - Focal Feature <div style="text-align: right;"> Sub Total Soft Costs 10% Contingency 20% Total </div>	<div style="text-align: right;"> 43,000 4,300 8,600 \$55,900 </div>
Queen's Court Link to Convention Centre - Link and Renovations to Centre - Elevator and Stair in adjoining property <div style="text-align: right;"> Sub Total Soft Costs 10% Contingency 20% Total </div>	<div style="text-align: right;"> 280,000 28,000 56,000 \$364,000 </div>
Holdsworth Court - General Upgrade <div style="text-align: right;"> Sub Total Soft Costs 10% Contingency 20% Total </div>	<div style="text-align: right;"> 86,000 9,000 17,000 \$112,000 </div>
Prince Edward Plaza - Rebuild and Relocate Stage - Rebuild Sitting Area <div style="text-align: right;"> Sub Total Soft Costs 10% Contingency 20% Total </div>	<div style="text-align: right;"> 670,000 67,000 134,000 \$871,000 </div>
George's Court Market - Surfaces and Walls \$53,000 - Lights and Banners 45,000 - Market Infrastructure 210,000 - Focal Feature 17,000 <div style="text-align: right;"> Sub Total Soft Cost 10% Contingency 20% Total </div>	<div style="text-align: right;"> 325,000 32,000 64,000 \$421,000 </div>

Water Street, New Gower Street		
- Restructure for Taxi Lay-by		
	Sub Total	90,000
	Soft Cost 10%	9,000
	Contingency 20%	18,000
	Total	\$117,000
Private Components		
- Install Utility Hook-ups	\$10,000	
- Miscellaneous - will vary	\$ 5,000 – 50,000	
- Guardrail	\$ 400/m	
- Decorative Rail (On-Street)	\$ 275/m	
- Canopy & Frames	\$ 2,150/m2	

Soft costs include fees and miscellaneous expenses

PHASING

Phasing of the work will be essential for a number of reasons:

- To spread out the cost of the work, and to allow strategies that cause a minimum amount of interference with business. While it is not in the scope of this report to suggest detailed phasing, some of the principles are as follows:
- Keep all businesses open at all times, other than brief interruptions for hook-ups.
- Carry out particularly difficult work during slow business periods.
- There are several critical components that need to be coordinated, in particular the underground utilities and the street surfacing. One possible approach is to do one side of the street at a time.
- Some highly visible and easily accomplished projects need to be undertaken as early as possible.
- George's Court Market, in addition to being one of the most strategic projects in terms of changing use patterns and the image of George Street, is also one of the easiest to implement in the short term. The more detailed design work that will be required in terms of lighting, canopies, surfaces and so on will be beneficial and set the standard for subsequent components.

NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS INCLUDE:

- More discussions with potential funding agencies, regulatory authorities, business, and property owners.
- More detailed design and planning for key components, with emphasis on early phases.
- Development of updated regulations and design guidelines for decks, railings and canopies.
- Property acquisition, if required.
- The work will not only change the nature and pattern of George Street, but will also provide the opportunity for rebranding. A well-planned public relations campaign needs to be coordinated with the various phases of the work.

11.0 CONCLUSION

George Street in St. John's has become synonymous with entertainment and having a good time for visitors and residents. It has an international reputation and is a significant tourism and revenue generator. Unfortunately, as described in this study, the reputation is tarnished a bit and has become one-dimensional in its use patterns.

In this study, we describe how changes to the infrastructure and operational approaches can improve its appearance and increase the vibrancy with a wider range of activities earlier in the day and on weekends.

The key public elements include a rebuild of part of George Street, re-configuration of the public spaces, new lighting and banners and the establishment of a public market. Private owners will need to comply with the concept, open up more to the Street, and take advantage of the opportunity for on street activity. The concept will need to be embraced by the City of St. John's, by potential funding agencies, and most of all the business and property owners.

It requires a re-investment and re-capitalization that should in turn pay dividends for the individual businesses and for the City of St. John's through tax revenue. George Street will become more marketable, not only as a tourism generator, but, more importantly, it will be a pleasant place for all City residents both young and old to visit and enjoy.

It is important that activity and a sense of direction be established as soon as possible. George's Court Public Market would be most appropriate.