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SAINT JOHN

## **NEW COMMUNITY VISION UNVEILED FOR K-8 SCHOOL IN THE SAINT JOHN CENTRAL PENINSULA**

*--Transformative Community School is a Game-Changer for the Neighbourhood--*

**September 5, 2019 - SAINT JOHN, NB**— Develop Saint John, on behalf of the Anglophone South District Education Council (DEC), is pleased to invite the public to the unveiling of the community's vision for a new K-8 school in the Central Peninsula of Saint John, New Brunswick. The Open House event will take place on September 17, beginning at 5:30 pm at St. John the Baptist/King Edward School, 223 St. James Street in Saint John.

Heather Chase, Chair of People United in the Lower South End (P.U.L.S.E) and a member of the Central Peninsula School Task Force, whose mission is to bring the community's vision to life, says, "It's been over 30 years since a new urban school was built in New Brunswick. We now have an opportunity to create both a new school and an integrated and accessible year-round community hub that everyone can use. It's a real game-changer for the entire central peninsula community. It will help us reach our goals for our residents, our city, our province, and our future."

The task force retained HMFH Architects to engage community stakeholders in generating ideas for the new school and bringing the community's vision to life. This included working with key stakeholders at an input session last summer as well as spending time in the community to listen to what people had to say. HMFH has been the recipient of numerous North American and international school design awards and has a track record of designing urban schools to transform communities struggling with poverty. An HMFH-designed school will energize the efforts to establish the central peninsula as a vibrant, mixed-income neighbourhood.

"The design is driven by student needs and educators' goals," Chase says. "The school will be a magnet for families. A first-of-its-kind in our province, the new school will offer learning environments that encourage contemporary, collaborative thinking within the school and extend to embrace and transform the entire neighbourhood. It's a giant leap forward that will reset Saint John as a leader and economic driver for our province. This isn't just a school - it's so much more."

Steve Carson, CEO of Develop Saint John, says, "We are very pleased that the DEC has reconfirmed this project as the number one priority for the District. The ultimate decision on when the project will proceed and its exact location rests with the Provincial Government." He continues to explain how a thoughtfully designed school can transform urban areas and change people's lives, "It will be a source of community pride for our neighbourhood and our region. It will attract new families, new students and new investment to the area. And it will help build a vibrant mixed-income neighbourhood in the central peninsula."

Made up of community leaders, Develop Saint John and City of Saint John representatives, and elected officials, the Central Peninsula School Task Force also includes senior officials from the Anglophone South School District, Living SJ, and the Chairs of both Parent School Support Committees: Theresa Rogers from St. John the Baptist/King Edward and Christina MacLennan from Prince Charles.

"This is all part of a larger effort to improve educational outcomes, reduce poverty and revitalize the neighbourhood," explains Rogers, who is also the co-chair of Living SJ.

MacLennan supports the sentiment, further stressing the exciting opportunity to influence the programming and design vision. “Kids learn in different ways, so I’m excited to see the vision capture design spaces for different types of students and ways of learning – from active, hands-on activities, to small teams, and nooks for quiet study.”

EY was consulted to build the business case for the school, which also includes partner-supported services for preschool, after school and other finishes designed to address community needs. This partner support means that the provincial investment for the enhanced school is still comparable to other traditional schools. The EY report estimates that over the fifty-year life of the building, annual social savings could be as high as \$26.5 million as a result of such things as improved health, graduation and employment rates as well as significant tax revenue as the neighbourhood transitions to a mixed-income community. This innovative school approach would effectively pay for itself, making a very powerful return on investment for the province.

A representative from HMFH Architects will share the programming and design vision for the Central Peninsula Community School at the Open House event on September 17, beginning at 5:30 pm at St. John the Baptist/King Edward School, 223 St. James Street in Saint John. All are welcome to attend.

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#### **ABOUT THE CENTRAL PENINSULA COMMUNITY SCHOOL VISION**

- The Central Peninsula Community School Task Force was formed to represent the needs of the community, the City of Saint John and the School District, and to help build support for the project within the community. It is made up of representatives from the Living SJ network such as BICAPI, Horizon Health, Parent School Support Committees, municipal government, Develop Saint John, Anglophone South School District, and Anglophone South District Education Council (DEC).
- In 2017, DEC recommended the consolidation of Prince Charles and St. John the Baptist/King Edward schools with the intention of constructing a new school in the Central Peninsula
- In 2018, more than 60 stakeholders attended a workshop led by HMFH Architects to capture the community’s vision for the new school
- A new urban school in the Centre Peninsula of Saint John remains the #1 priority for the DEC
- K-8 school, 113,000 square feet
- 550 student capacity, with 30 classrooms
- Year-round innovative shared community and learning commons
- Early French Immersion program
- 80 licensed preschool spaces
- 5,000 square feet of community programming space, including program rooms, a community kitchen, and shared offices
- A pilot school for introducing new best practices in school design



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**ABOUT DEVELOP SAINT JOHN** [WWW.DEVELOPSAINTJOHN.COM](http://WWW.DEVELOPSAINTJOHN.COM)

Develop Saint John's mission is to grow the tax base in Saint John by relentlessly creating and seizing strategic real estate opportunities and getting deals done. Its mandate is to grow the City's tax base and improve the quality of life for citizens. It is led by a volunteer Board of Directors made up of government, community leaders and private sector representatives.



HMFH Architects' rendering of the community's design vision for a new K-8 *Central Peninsula Community School*, driven by educators' goals and student needs to maximize community benefit through the process of urban development. Concept presents the front view.



HMFH Architects' rendering of the Community Learning Commons in the *Central Peninsula Community School*, combining the library, space for community gatherings and a cafeteria into one flexible, welcoming and naturally-lit learning and programming environment.

CENTRAL PENINSULA COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
Saint John, New Brunswick

HMFH ARCHITECTS