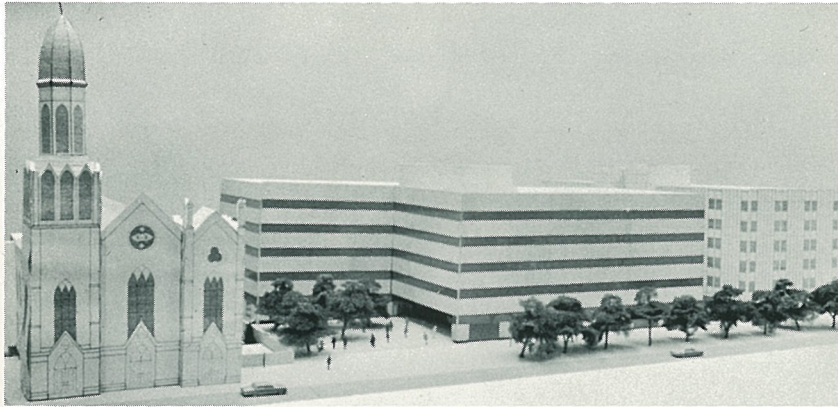


New Brunswick **TOMORROW**

DOWNTOWN RENEWAL PLAN

as presented by

**I. M. PEI & PARTNERS,
Architects and Planners**



INTRODUCTION

New Brunswick Tomorrow has established two priority objectives for the revitalization of the City -- economic development and neighborhood preservation.

To help guide the economic development phase of this effort, New Brunswick Tomorrow commissioned the internationally acclaimed architect and urban planner, I. M. Pei.



Mr. Pei and his associates have proposed a conceptual land-use blueprint for the revitalization of the New Brunswick downtown business district.

The comprehensive plan includes all the essential components required to seize what Mr. Pei has described as "major development opportunities in the New Brunswick downtown area for substantial growth and revitalization."

The \$150 million plan calls for commercial office building construction, revitalized retail activity, a new in-town

residential community, expanded governmental office space and cultural center, improved traffic circulation and parking facilities. Completion of the Route 18 extension is a critical element of the plan.

At completion, the bottom line for the entire community would be as many as 5,000 new jobs, as much as \$25 million in additional retail sales in New Brunswick and substantial additional local tax dollars.

Highlights of the proposed downtown revitalization plan are:

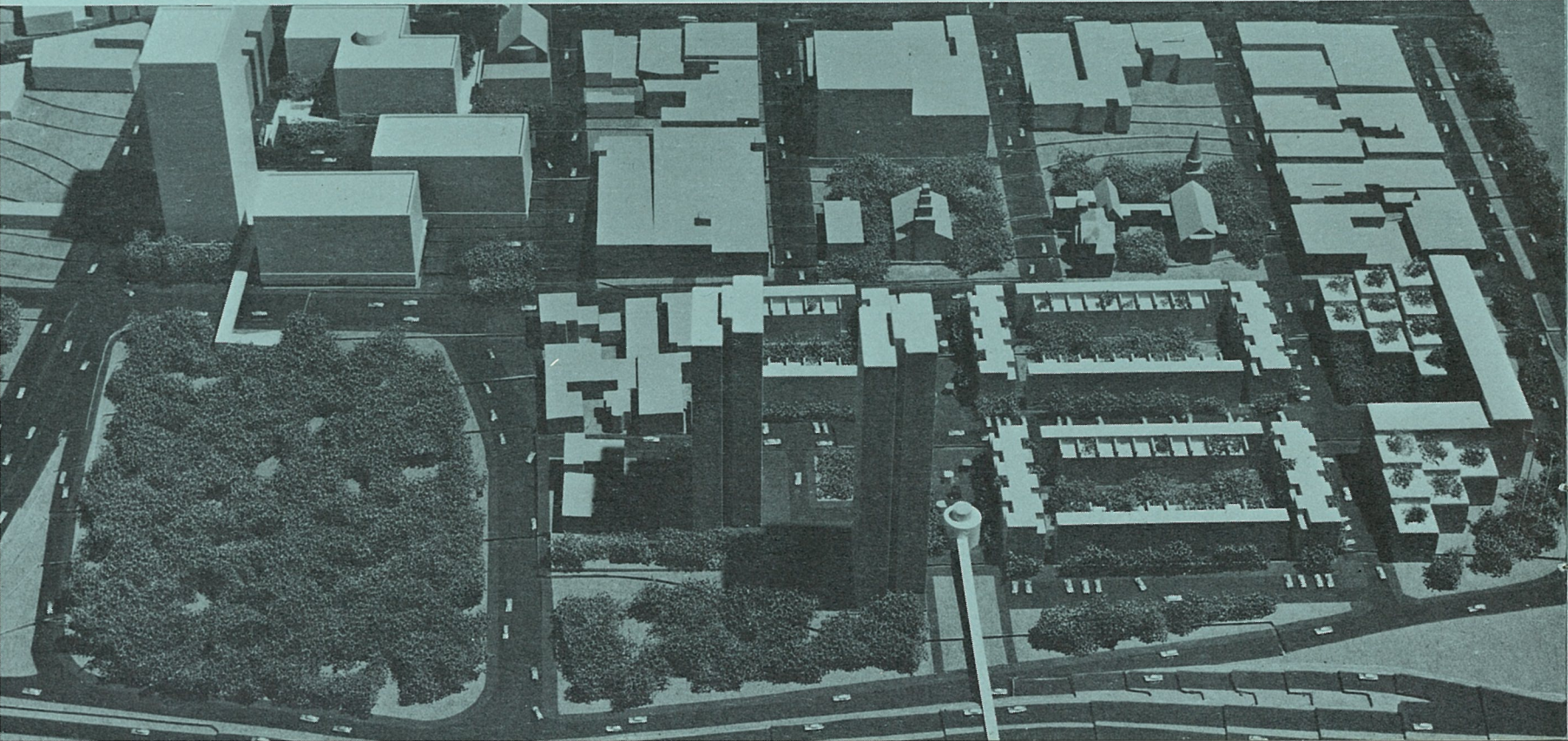
- * Construction of four new office buildings with a total of 525,000 square feet of space.
- * Revitalization of the George Street and Railroad Plaza retail areas for both daytime and nighttime activities.
- * Transformation of Albany Street (Route 27) into a tree-lined boulevard.
- * Construction of new housing in the Hiram Market area of the downtown business district.
- * Development of traffic arteries to ease congestion and of three nodes of downtown parking.

In working toward the goal of city-wide revitalization, New Brunswick To-

morrow also has established priority neighborhood action areas. This assures that, even as economic development advances in the downtown core, the momentum of progress involves plans and programs to improve and stabilize the physical and social qualities of life in residential sectors of the community.

THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

These are the major components of the framework for redevelopment action --- immediate, short-range and longer-range --- presented by I. M. Pei to New Brunswick Tomorrow.



COMMERCIAL PLAZA



The two-block, 8.5-acre development area in the southeast corner of the downtown core, cleared in the 1960s under urban renewal, is now a vacant and gaping hole in the urban fabric of downtown New Brunswick. However, the tract also represents an important immediate-action opportunity for redevelopment and is the most appropriate place to begin the process of downtown revitalization.

The first stage will be a five-story office building on George Street. The structure will close the "open wound" on

George Street and will trigger other downtown redevelopment. It will be of unique design, with a landscaped plaza area and a glass-enclosed lobby to serve as a pedestrian pass-through to other components of the Plaza site.

The second stage calls for construction of three additional office buildings on the Commercial Plaza tract. Two would be "low" structures similar in scale to the first stage building. The third would be a multi-story building. The three second-stage buildings would provide total floor space of 400,000 square feet.

HIRAM MARKET DEVELOPMENT

A new residential community would be created in the 10-acre, four-block Hiram Street area where New Brunswick began. The community would include new low-rise construction spaced between buildings of architectural and historic significance that can be preserved. The area, bounded by Neilson, Church and Richmond Streets and Memorial Parkway (Route 18), would help maintain New Brunswick's strong tradition of in-town living.

The proposed plan would strike a

balance between environmental concerns and economic feasibility, with two alternative approaches:

1) A "low" alternative to provide 375 units in clusters of town houses and row houses of five stories. There would be terraces, interior courtyards and landscaped plazas.

2) An alternative would be a maximum of 650 units by combining town houses with other unique architectural concepts around a town plaza, beneath which two parking levels would be built. Under this alternative, more land would be left as open space.

An essential element would be a heavily landscaped green buffer area be-

tween the new Hiram residential community and Route 18 for noise protection and privacy. To reunite downtown New Brunswick with the Raritan River, a pedestrian crossing of Route 18 would lead into a proposed riverfront park, which would include a public marina and amphitheater. New Brunswick Tomorrow is developing a strategy for expanding both the size and use of Boyd Park, which runs along the River.

Hiram Street, itself, would be a pedestrian place filled with shops, cafes, kiosks and trees.

GEORGE STREET AREA

New Brunswick is a city in transition as a retail center. Accordingly, plans call for downtown New Brunswick to consolidate and strengthen its role as a specialty retail and activity center.

The revitalized retail activity area would be concentrated on a 1,500-foot stretch between Albany and New Streets. To maintain an "intimate pedestrian environment," the existing low scale of buildings would be retained rather than large-scale office or retail construction. Specialty shops and pedestrian walkways would be encouraged.





George Street

The ultimate goal is to de-emphasize vehicular traffic on George Street, enhance bus transit and give more space to the pedestrian. This would include narrowing George Street and using the additional footage on each side for new trees, benches and fountains. However, the goal of utilizing George Street basically for pedestrians and shoppers is not possible until the Route 18 extension and other traffic improvements are completed to relieve traffic pressures.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

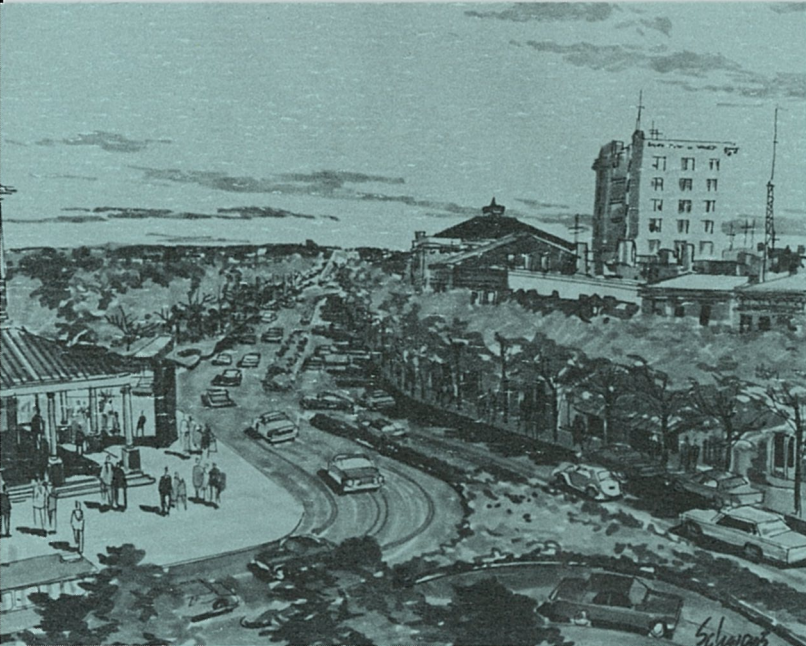
The New Brunswick street system has evolved as a strong pattern of radial spokes converging at a single point, the downtown core. The problem is that downtown streets can no longer absorb this traffic from all points. A new system is required to redistribute vehicles by intercepting radial streets leading downtown. Further analysis is required to determine the best solution to the problem.

Mr. Pei describes Route 18 as "vital to the future of New Brunswick" and a key element in creating a rational traffic pattern for the central business district. Steps proposed to make Route 18 serve downtown more effectively include appropriate entrance and exit ramps.

ALBANY STREET CORRIDOR

Albany Street (Route 27) is now congested, confusing and ineffective as a traffic arterial and physically is blighted. The transformation of Albany Street can set the stage immediately for a host of downtown revitalization projects and is a prerequisite for the regeneration of the entire northern half of the downtown core.

The plan would substantially widen



Albany Street

the right-of-way of Albany Street from the bridge to the railroad station, mainly on the north side. This would allow for widened sidewalks and a landscaped median that would be constructed to separate lanes of opposing traffic. Trees would be planted and landscaping done on both sides of the street.

RAILROAD PLAZA - HOTEL COMPLEX

The "greening" of Albany Street would enhance the Railroad Plaza area as one gateway to New Brunswick. The Railroad Station, described by Pei as a

pleasant and attractive building, would be rehabilitated.

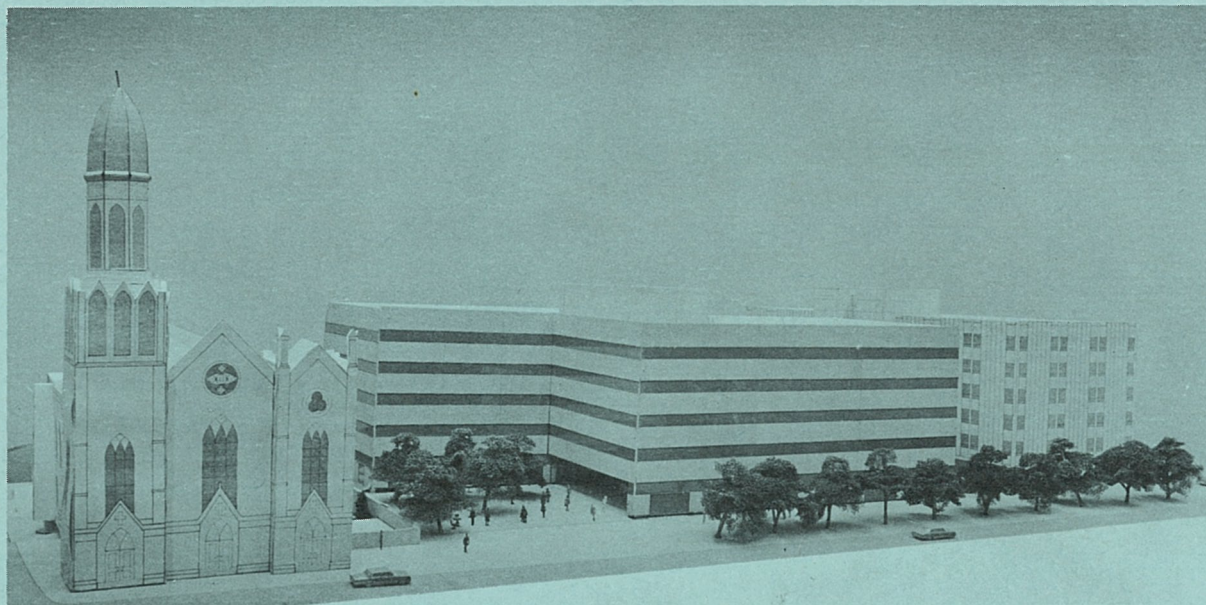
A new quality downtown hotel is recommended on the south side of Albany, between Neilson Street and Memorial Parkway, one of the gateways to downtown. Market projections indicate a 200-room hotel is feasible, with future expansion to 300 rooms. Conference facilities would be a feature of the hotel, which would be of unique design.

New park, retail and entertainment uses would be developed east of the Station along Albany and George Streets, including cultural-recreational facilities, restaurants and cafes.



Railroad Plaza

First Stage,
Commercial Plaza
Development



PARKING

Three major reservoirs or nodes of downtown parking are proposed to intercept traffic and provide long-term parking before cars get to the center of downtown. High-turnover, short-term parking would take place in smaller lots, garages and on-street spaces within the downtown core.

The first node would be the lower block of Commercial Plaza, where surface parking would meet the demand for

several years. As commercial and residential growth takes place, structured parking would become feasible.

The second node would be in the northeast quadrant of the downtown core, directly accessible to the downtown traffic loop on Hamilton and Water Streets. It would serve office development in the area. The third node is a longer range possibility located on the western edge of the core.

NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

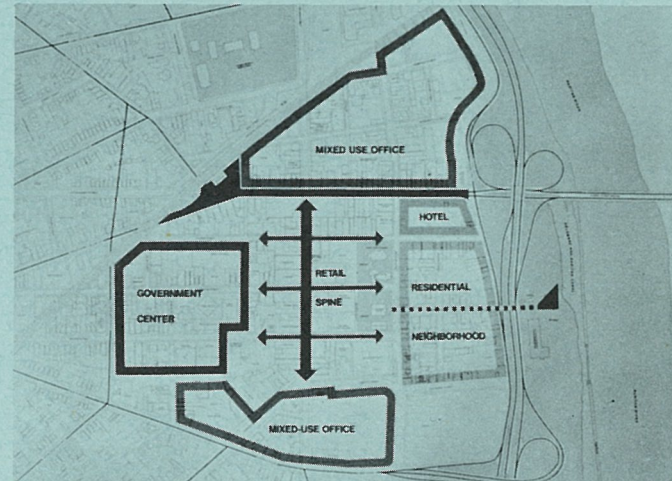
The downtown concept is concerned with adjacent neighborhoods on two levels -- the nature of major arterials leading into the downtown area and the interface of developments in the business district as they affect immediately adjoining residential communities.

Lower George Street between New Street and the Douglass campus is an emerging neighborhood spine. A greater bus transit emphasis on George Street will benefit this neighborhood. The first Commercial Plaza building will close the gap between neighborhood and downtown. The proposed U. A. W. housing development at New and George Streets, and the proposed adjacent community center will further create a strong and healthy link to the core area.

Livingston Avenue is the grandest boulevard of New Brunswick and a major gateway to the downtown. The gateway point itself offers several splendid sites for future office and mixed-use redevelopment. Livingston should retain its public and city-wide aspects as exemplified by its many churches, library and other institutions.

French Street (Route 27) is a major commercial thoroughfare. It is healthy and an economic asset to the city. As the downtown portions of Route 27 along Albany Street are redeveloped for new office and related uses, a portion of this highway-oriented commercial usage could be relocated to French Street.

Somerset is a dual-use street. It is a major arterial by virtue of its size and capacity. It is also the center of New Brunswick's Hungarian community with its concentration of restaurants, churches and organizations. With improved signalization and more efficient use of the roadway, the street can function well for both vehicular and community use.



**New
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