

Attachment-14 Peer Review Memo for Proposed Parking Reduction



July 3, 2023

Lindsay Sulatycki
Senior Development Planner
The City of Guelph
City Hall, 59 Carden Street
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 3A1

RE: Baker District Redevelopment – Review of Proposed Parking Supply Reduction

Dear Ms. Sulatycki:

This letter has been prepared to briefly summarize our review of the proposed parking supply reduction for the captioned development as described in the “Baker Street Mixed-Use Development Parking Study Update” prepared by WSP in May 2022. This follows our earlier draft letter dated March 21, 2022 which reviewed the original parking study that was prepared in May 2021.¹

We understand the latest development plan includes 353 apartment units in two buildings with ground floor commercial space. The development will be located on the former City owned and operated Baker Street public parking lot. A total of 267 spaces are proposed including 259 regular sized spaces and 8 compact size spaces that will require a variance for reduced size dimensions.

The existing City of Guelph zoning by-law requires the provision of 1.0 space per unit for the apartment residents and 0.05 spaces per unit for apartment visitors, a total of 371 spaces. Parking is not required for the commercial development in this location of the downtown. The 267 parking spaces proposed represents a supply rate of 0.756 spaces per unit or 28% less than the by-law requirement including the eight compact spaces.

A new Central library will also be constructed on the former parking lot immediately adjacent to the proposed apartment buildings. The new library will replace the existing facility located a short distance away but will be considerably larger and likely generate significantly more customer activity than the existing facility. Approximately 154 public parking spaces will be provided in a garage beneath the Library compared to the 240 public parking spaces that were previously available on the Baker Street municipal lot, a decrease of approximately 86 spaces.

Other recent apartment building development approvals by the City in the Downtown include:

- 5 Arthur Street Phases 1 & 2 at 1.30 spaces unit (above by-law rate)

¹ Baker Street Redevelopment Parking Study prepared by WSP, dated May 17, 2021.

- 148-152 MacDonell Street – 1.45 per unit (above by-law rate)
- 150 Wellington Street – 1.41 per unit (above by-law)
- 5 Gordon Street – 0.96 spaces per unit (below by-law)
- 55 Yarmouth Street - 0.75 spaces per unit
- 45 Yarmouth Street – 0.80 spaces per unit
- 75 Farquhar/ 70 Fountain Street – 0.81 spaces per unit for residents (OLT approved)

The WSP Parking Study Update responds to the comments in our March 2021 letter by providing more details regarding an enhanced TDM Plan that would include the following initiatives:

- Unbundling parking stall sales from the unit sales with a maximum limit of one space per unit;
- One free transit pass for one year for units without parking;
- One \$300 mobility voucher for units without parking;
- Three car share service vehicles and eight shared e-bikes;
- Resident bike parking at one space per unit, in excess of the 0.70 per unit by-law requirement;
- A bike repair station;
- Multi-modal marketing and information packages to encourage walking, cycling and transit use;
- Real time on-demand transit, weather, cycling/walking path information.

These are important TDM initiatives that will enable some residents to live without the need to own a car, thereby reducing the demand for parking spaces.

We provide the following comments for your consideration regarding the Baker Street Parking Study Update:

1. Unbundled parking pricing is the most powerful TDM initiative available that would provide a considerable price incentive to consider living without a car and ensure that people who do not purchase parking are not subsidizing those that do purchase parking.
2. The developer should agree to provide detailed information for the unbundled sale of parking spaces, including the price, unit type and size, and indicate if any units were not offered the opportunity to purchase parking. They should also provide a breakdown of parking space sales that were made to purchasers that are investors.
3. The developer should agree to work with the City to conduct research surveys of apartment purchasers regarding their travel characteristics and the influence of TDM initiatives on their purchase decisions, especially parking spaces. The developer should also agree to conduct post occupancy surveys of parking demand including any use of off-site spaces, using a mutually agreed upon methodology. These surveys should be conducted separately for the first and second phases if they are developed consecutively.
4. The Enhanced TDM program should be secured by requiring the developer to make a payment in lieu of the reduced parking requirement if the TDM program is not implemented or the car share service is discontinued.



5. If the enhanced TDM program initiatives described above and in the Parking Study Update are implemented, a reduction in the **resident** parking supply requirement from 1.0 space per unit to 0.75 spaces per unit should be granted. This reduction should also be contingent on the unit mix including 65% one bedroom/bachelor and live-work units with an average size of 650 sq.ft. or less.
6. We understand that the developer is investigating the potential of providing approximately 12% of the units as affordable housing. We suggest that a 50% reduction in the 1.0 space per unit zoning by-law requirement or 0.50 spaces per unit be provided for each unit that meets the City's definition of affordable housing.
7. The project will not be providing the on-site visitor parking requirement of 0.05 spaces per unit or 18 spaces, relying instead on the use of the municipal public parking supply. Given this situation, the developer should make a payment in lieu (PIL) of providing parking to the City for the 18 spaces at 50% of the estimated cost to the City of providing the parking in the area.

If the resident travel and parking utilization surveys described above provide *robust* evidence of reduced resident demand less than 0.75 spaces per unit, a future variance could be sought to use surplus resident spaces to meet some or all of the visitor parking requirement and a refund of the appropriate amount of visitor PIL payment could be made.

We stand ready to discuss our comments in more detail should you so desire or to review any additional information the developer might provide to support a reduced parking supply rate.

Sincerely,
BA Consulting Group Ltd.



Ralph F. Bond
Principal