

Downtown Renewal Update

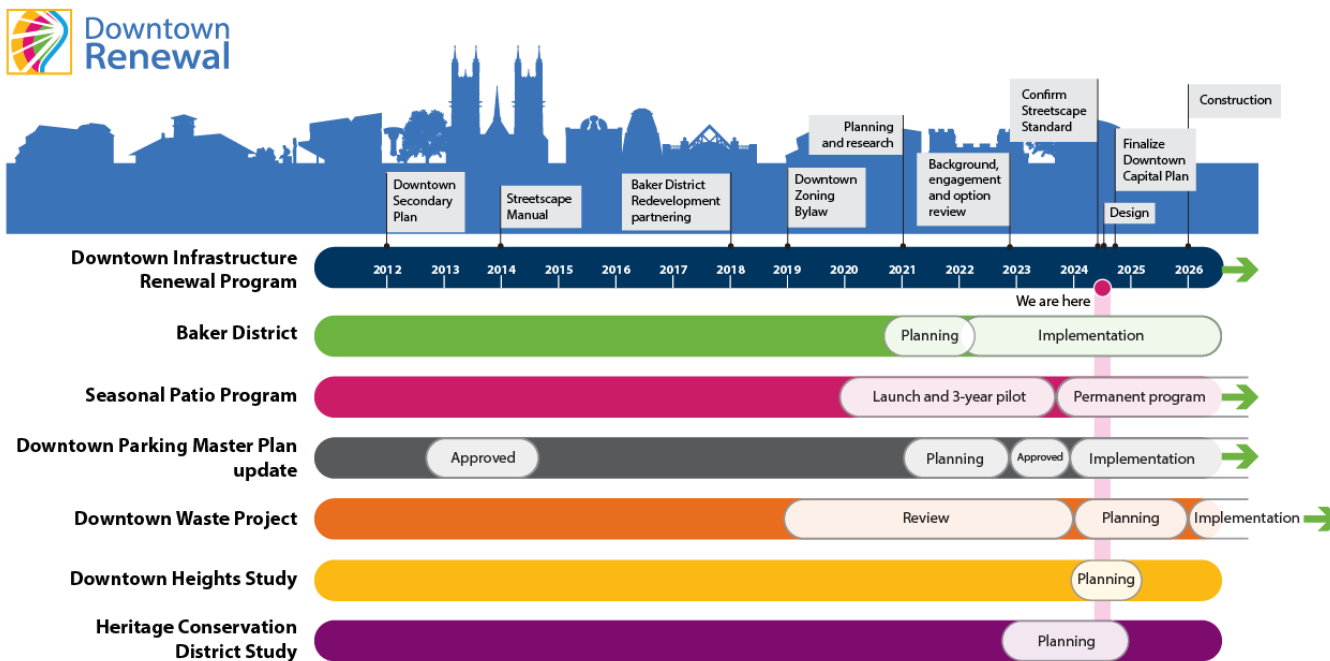


Committee of the Whole – September 4, 2024

Today's topics

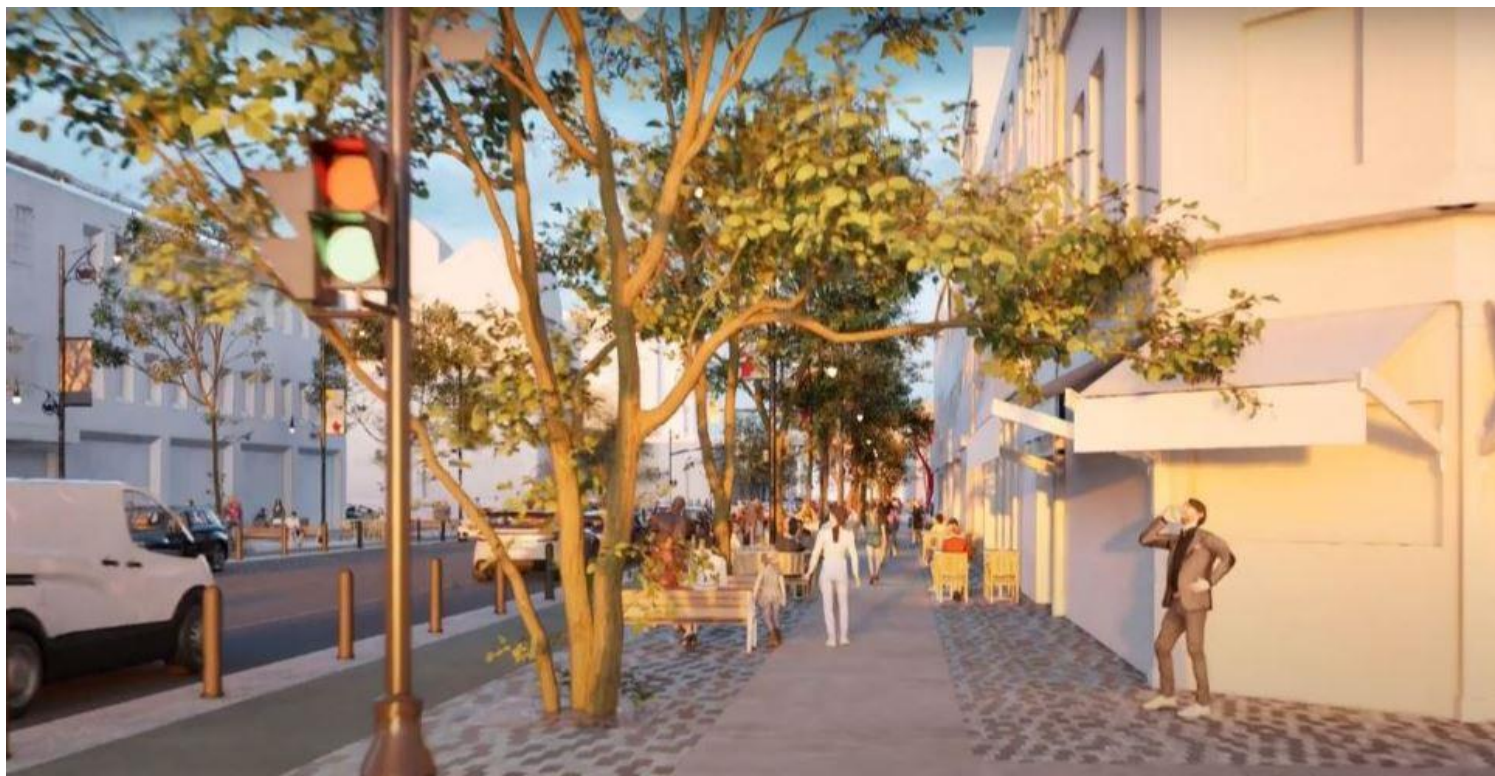
-  Solid Waste Resources Recycling Program Transition Audit
-  Downtown Collection Area Update
-  Downtown Infrastructure Renewal Program
-  Improving Access to Public Washrooms in Guelph
-  Downtown Guelph Heritage Conservation District Study

Downtown Renewal



- Additional projects**
- Drill Hall
 - Guelph Central Station proposed terminal building
 - Future Downtown riverfront park
 - Community Planning Permit System Pilot Project

Our future Downtown



[Wyndham Street Sidewalk Video](#)



Solid Waste Resources Recycling Program Transition Audit

Introduction



Value for Money (VFM) audits play a crucial role in ensuring **accountability, transparency, and efficiency.**



They assess whether programs and initiatives are achieving their intended outcomes **economically, efficiently, and effectively.**

Review objectives

The objective of these reviews is to:

- Provide an overview of the unit's work from a VFM perspective, and
- Enable Council to understand and assess the value to the community for the services provided.



Principles of VFM

The principles of **economy**, **efficiency**, and **effectiveness** are defined as follows

- **Economy** involves getting the right inputs, such as goods, services, and human resources, at an optimal cost.
- **Efficiency** involves getting the most from available resources, in terms of quantity, quality, and timing of outputs or outcomes.
- **Effectiveness** involves meeting the objectives set and achieving the intended results.

Risk Assessment

Identify high-risk areas:

Prioritize projects in sectors or programs with a history of, or future planned, higher operating and capital budgets, facing a major change to the delivery of services, or identified inefficiency.

Consider potential impact:

Assess the significance of the program or project in terms of its financial, social, and political impact.

2024 VFM Audits

Environmental Services: Solid Waste Resources (SWR) Recycling Program Transition

Solid waste resources are facing a large-scale alteration in their service deliverables with recent legislative changes to municipal recycling programs.

The review focused on resource utilization, operational efficiency, and adjusting service delivery to residents focusing on both pre- and post-optimization in preparation for the upcoming changes in service.

SWR Audit Summary of Recommendations



Overall SWR is managing the recycling program transition plan in a manner that demonstrates due regard for value for money principles by maintaining balance between economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the department.



It is recommended that in the interim period, existing recycling collection services be extended to the Downtown area for 2025 to avoid both disruption to customers and impacts to environmental performance strategic objectives and diversion targets.

SWR Audit Summary of Recommendations cont'd



Consideration should be given to exploring a full or partial user fee option and that timing be aligned with the completion of the Blue Box Transition process. The user fee review would apply to the public drop off depot, Downtown Collection Area, and other sources as determined by staff.



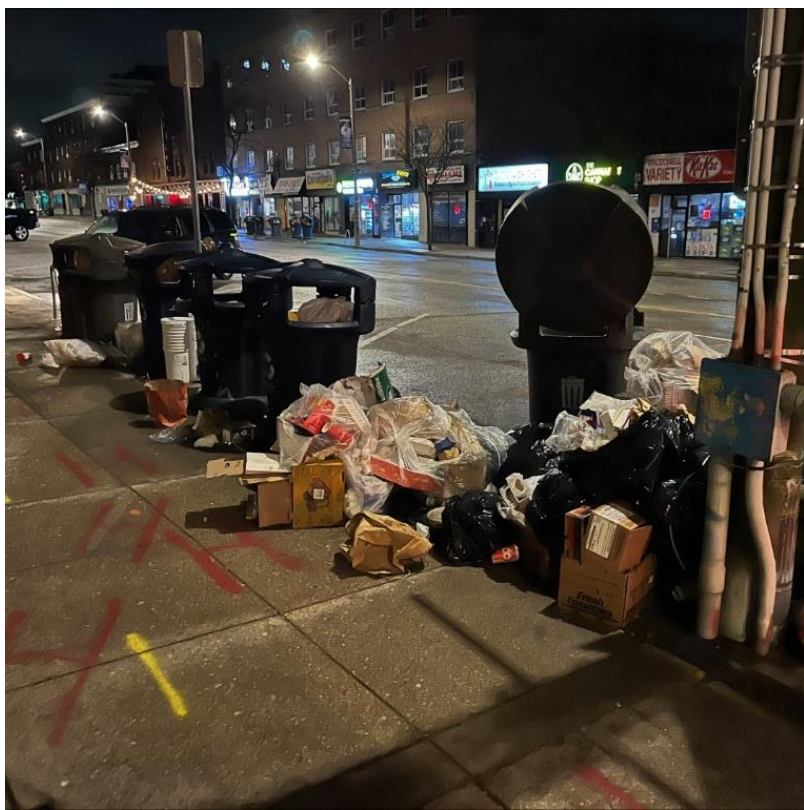
SWR should review and update the staff transition plan to formalize the overall departmental organizational structure and indirect role responsibilities post-recycling program elimination to affirm resource utilization and department level adjustments.



Downtown Collection Area Update



Defining the problem with Downtown waste

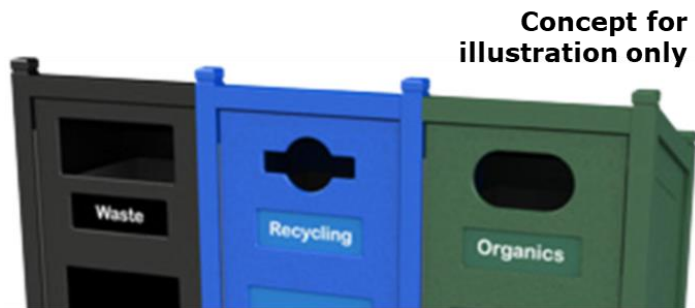


Downtown customers largely rely on public litter containers.

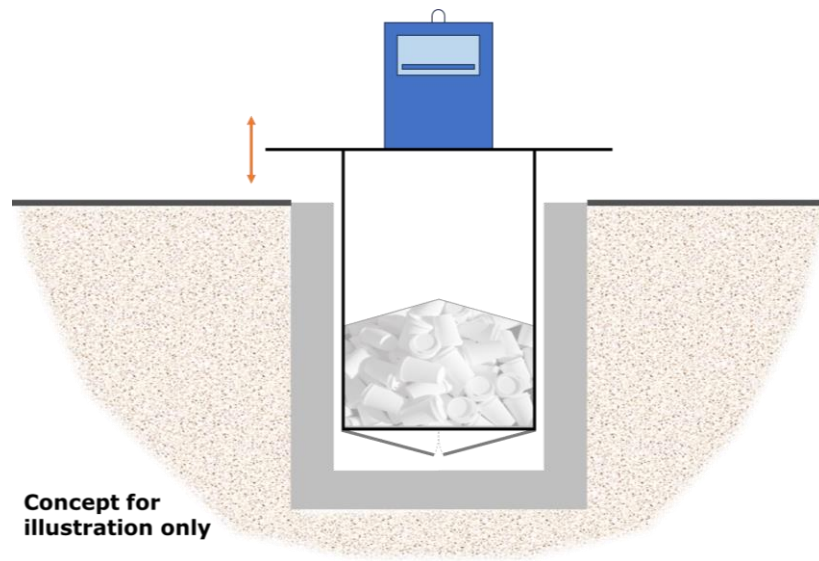
- Not suitable for high volumes of commercial, institutional, and residential waste
- Poor sanitation and waste reduction/diversion performance
- The Downtown Infrastructure Renewal Program presents an opportunity to install infrastructure with adequate capacity, resulting in enhanced visitor and resident experiences

Preferred solutions

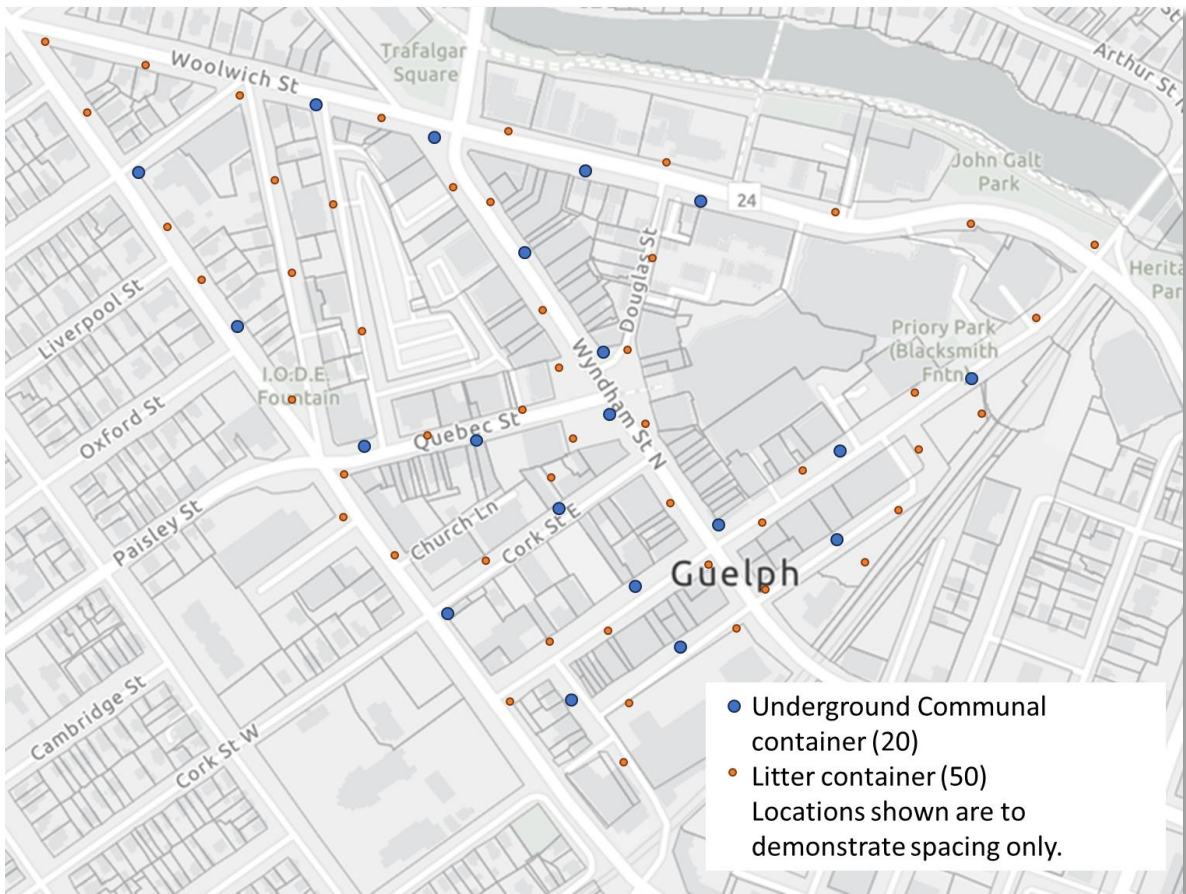
Updated litter containers for pedestrians



Underground communal containers for properties



Conceptual design



● **20 clusters of three underground communal containers (50-100 m walk)**

● **50 three-stream litter container stations (25-50 m walk)**

Cost estimate

Element	Capital Cost	Operation and Maintenance Cost
Litter containers	\$265,000	\$210,000
Underground communal containers system	\$755,000	\$200,000
10 Multi-Year Capital Budget Total	\$1,020,000	\$410,000

The user fee program recommended by the Recycling Program Transition Audit may mitigate impacts to tax levy, enhance waste reduction/diversion performance, and improve fairness and accountability.

Recommendation:



Approve an enhanced level of service for waste collection in the Downtown, including new public space containers and communal underground waste containers.



Downtown Infrastructure Renewal Program (DTIRP)



DTIRP: Main considerations



**Streetscape level
of service**



**Construction
pacing**

DTIRP: Streetscape



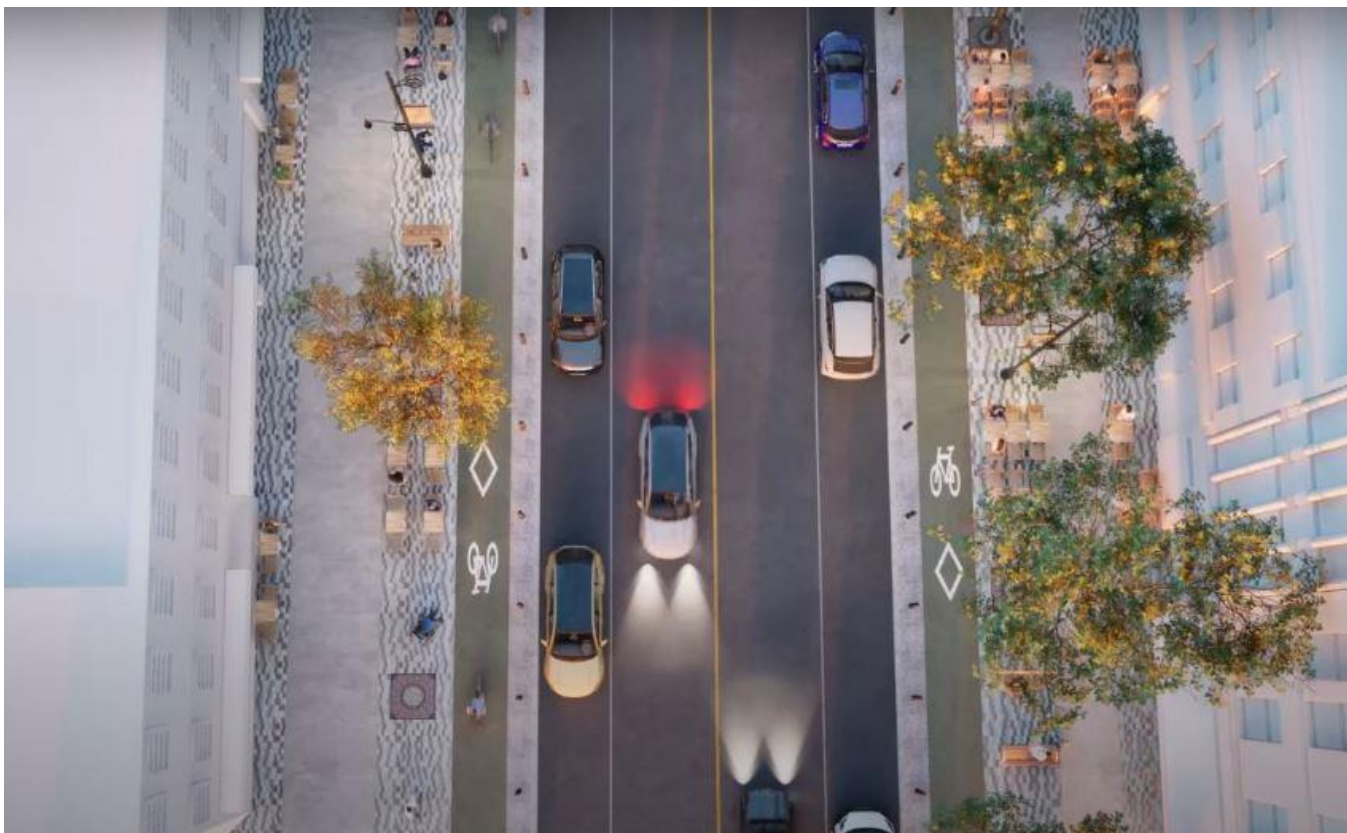
The 2014 Streetscape Manual adopted an enhanced streetscape level of service referred to as “Best”. A streetscape level of service above “Good” is not currently funded.



A Council Workshop was held on May 22, 2024, to review level of service options along Wyndham Street North and St. George’s Square (Phase 1 of DTIRP).



We will be creating a revised concept plan for St. George's Square regarding placemaking to satisfy Official Plan policy.



Wyndham Street View from Above Video

DTIRP: Streetscape cont'd

A streetscape and placemaking investment of \$7.5 million in Phase 1 achieves the priorities of:

- Improved tree canopy,
- Flexible streets,
- Public seating, and
- Paving stone to highlight areas.

Total streetscape investment in the 10-Year Capital Budget is \$17.1M.

Operating and maintenance costs are estimated at 4% of the capital investment.

DTIRP: Streetscape



For consideration:

Street trees in mix of modular soil cells and open planters, with flexible street design and highlight paving stone.



DTIRP: Streetscape

Recommendation:

That an enhanced level of streetscaping be approved for the Downtown Infrastructure Renewal Program, giving priority to improved tree canopy, flexible streets, public seating and paving stone, and a design that optimizes the public space for the most efficient operating budget, subject to the project budget increase (estimated at \$17.1 million) be adopted.



DTIRP: Construction pacing

Two general options for Phase 1:
Wyndham St. N. and St. George's Square

1. Expedited:

- Two construction years (2026-2027)
- All reasonable efforts taken to minimize closure of Wyndham St.

2. Slow-paced:

- Three stages over four to five years (2026-2029/30)

DTIRP: Construction pacing cont'd



Extensive list of enhanced mitigation strategies under review for implementation ahead of and during construction



The pace of construction is a key strategy that has disruption and financial impact implications



Opportunities exist to refine the pace and staging of construction with the Contractor



It's best to have clear direction now so businesses can be ready and to prepare robust construction mitigation and traffic management plans

DTIRP: Construction pacing cont'd

Results and feedback collected from the Council Workshop and from extensive community engagement indicate that the general preference is for **expedited construction**, which will allow for:

- Minimizing the cumulative construction timeline,
- Avoiding construction fatigue; and,
- Realizing economies of scale.

DTIRP: Construction pacing cont'd



Recommendation:

That City staff prepare the design and tender of Wyndham St. N. to expedite construction, with reasonable mitigation measures taken to minimize disruption and road closures.



**Somewhere to Go:
Improving Access
to Public
Washrooms in
Guelph**



Access to Public Washrooms

Public washroom access allows for:

- Preserved dignity for individuals
- People to be in public spaces for longer periods of time

Access to washrooms is a human right and is critical for human dignity.

Public washrooms in the Downtown

Public washroom access is particularly important in Downtown Guelph for the following reasons:

- There are numerous busy public spaces, events and nightlife,
- Many unhoused people access critical programs Downtown, and
- There have been instances of public urination and defecation in the Downtown, which reduces the appeal, poses a public health hazard, and creates additional strain for business owners and their employees, as well as City employees who have to clean it up.

Public washrooms in the Downtown cont'd



A minimum of two public washrooms that are accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week are recommended for Downtown, one of which specifically caters to the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

Public washrooms in the Downtown cont'd

To address immediate issues in the Downtown, the City should consider:

- A staffed washroom open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the Downtown, as soon as possible.
- Funding to keep a local drop-in centre open 24/7 with washroom access to specifically serve the needs of those people experiencing homelessness.
- A program for businesses to participate in the provision of daytime washroom access.
- Investigating the possibility of improved or extended use of portable washrooms, especially on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Public washrooms across the City

To improve access to washrooms throughout Guelph and over the longer-term, the City should consider:

- Winterizing park washrooms (to allow them to be used in the winter).
- Improving signage and information.
- Improving inclusion and accessibility.
- Planning ahead for more facilities.



Guelph Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study



What is a Heritage Conservation District?

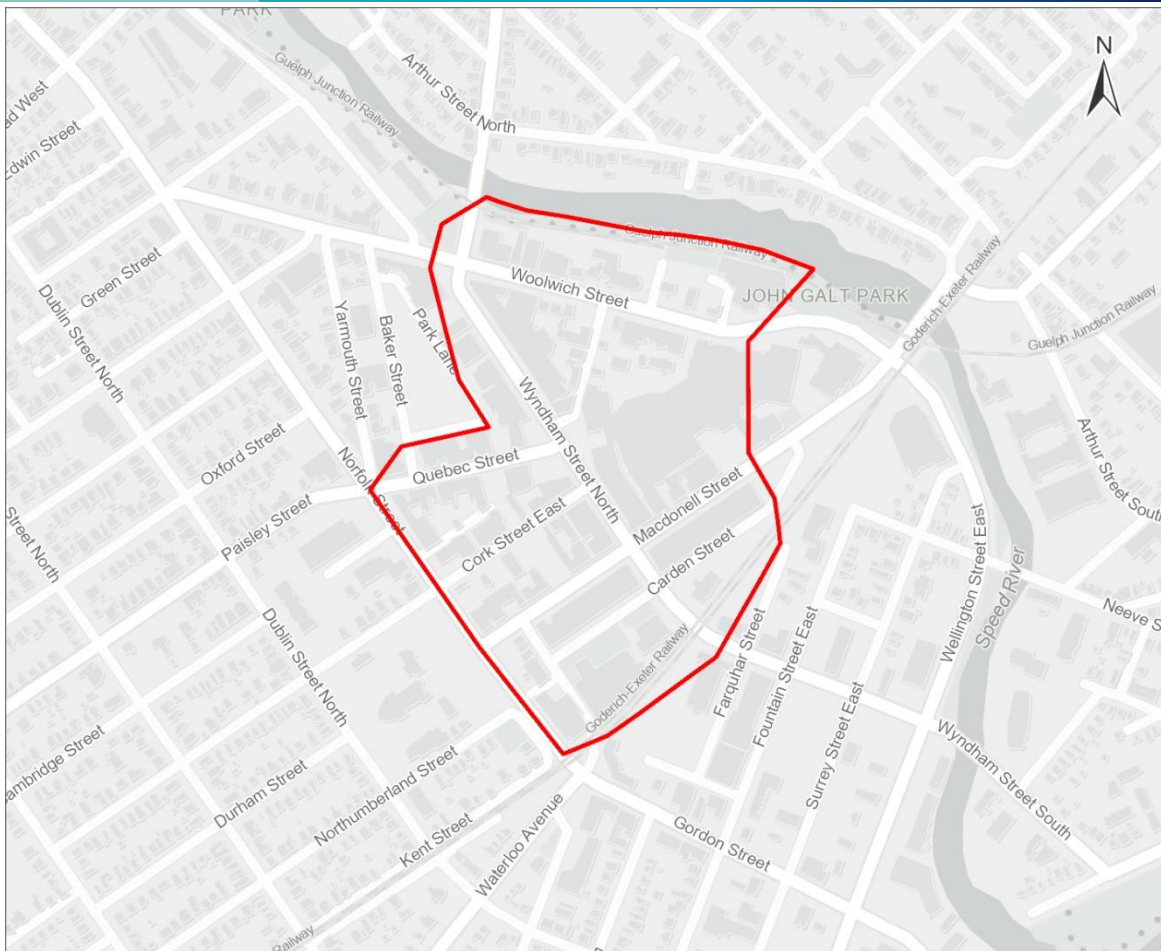
A **Heritage Conservation District (H.C.D.)** would protect significant buildings and landscape features and create a heritage-sensitive plan to guide future development.



Where we are in the project



The historic commercial core was studied



0 100
Metres

STUDY AREA

Who we talked to



Heritage Guelph

Downtown
Guelph Heritage
Focus Group

General Public

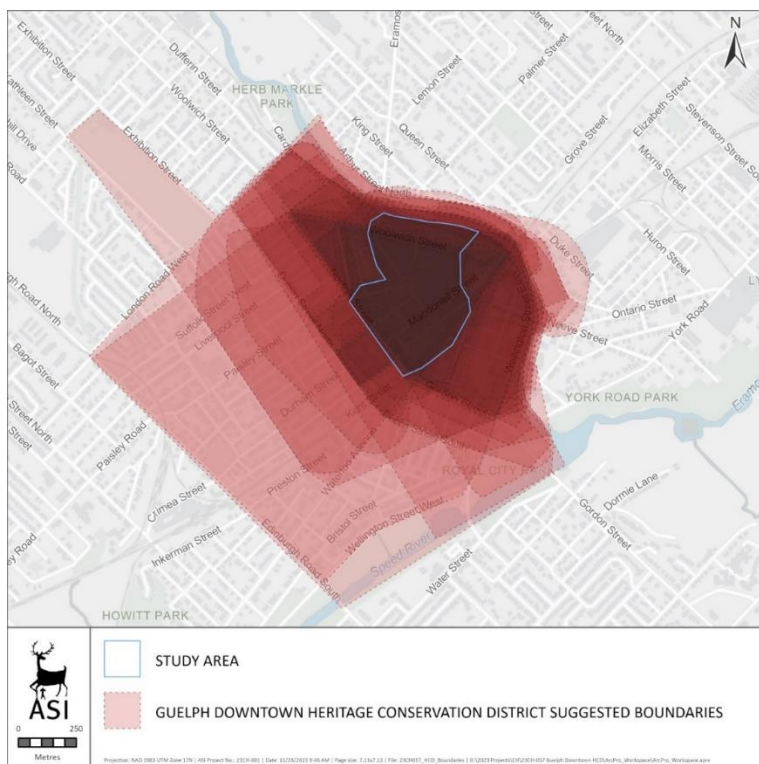
Downtown
Guelph
Business
Association

Mississaugas of
the Credit First
Nation

Six Nations of
the Grand River

What we heard:

Public open houses and online survey



Results of the HCD Boundary discussion showing 34 distinct boundaries, with darker areas receiving more mentions.

Feedback focused upon:

- How people experience the Downtown
- Community's character: iconic, landmark, unique, or representative places in the Study Area and buildings or streetscapes that disconnected from or inconsistent with historical surroundings
- Boundaries of the historical core of Guelph

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation of cultural heritage value of a prospective Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is based on the Ontario Heritage Act and guided by the Ontario Heritage Toolkit's *Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act*.

- ✓ A concentration of heritage buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use
- ✓ A framework of structured elements
- ✓ A sense of visual coherence
- ✓ A distinctiveness which enables districts to be recognized and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas
- ✓ Ontario Heritage Act Regulation 9/06 Criteria

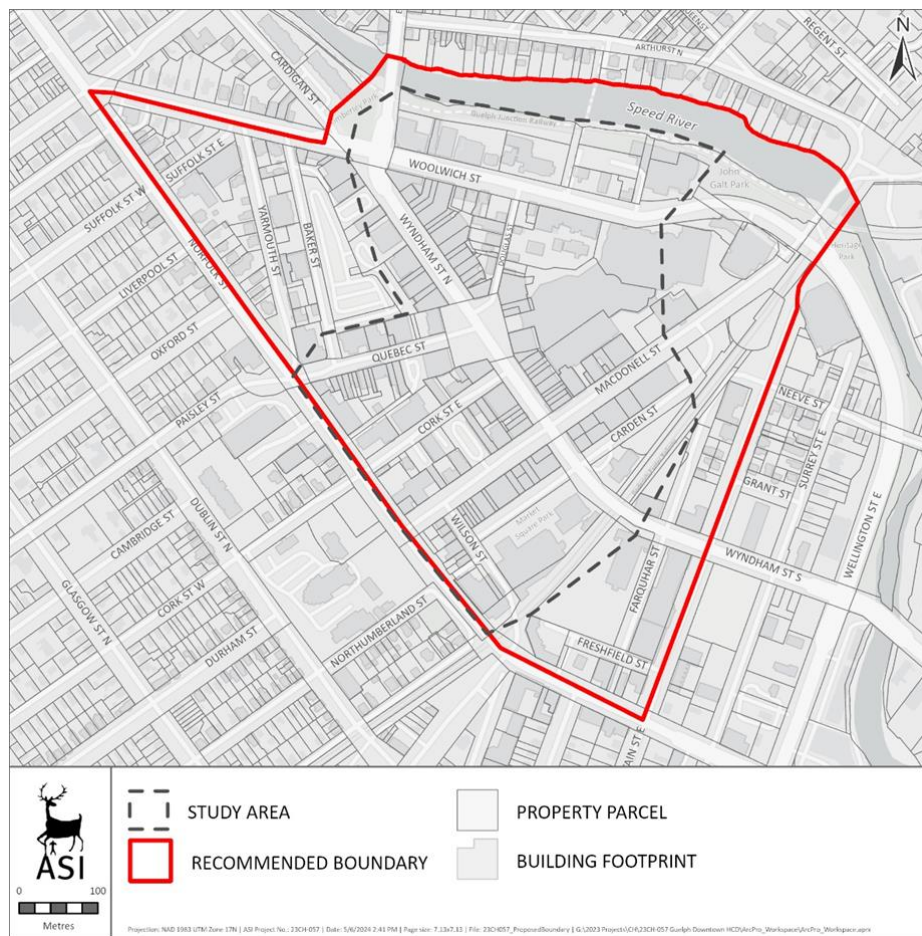
Study findings

- Downtown is visually distinct from surroundings.
- Encompasses nearly all of Galt's original 1827 Radial Plan.
- Includes an interconnected collection of historically significant and finely-executed buildings, streetscapes, and landscape features.
- Demonstrates evolution of Guelph to a thriving community and centre for industry and commerce in the heart of a highly productive agricultural region.



1828-1829 Plan of Guelph

Recommended boundary



Map showing study boundary and recommended boundary for HCD

Recommendations

- That the recommendations of the Downtown Guelph Heritage Conservation District Study Report (June 2024) be approved;
- That staff be directed to prepare a plan and guideline for the Downtown Guelph Heritage Conservation District in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.



Financial Summary

Budget process considerations

- Mayoral direction on budget increase
 - Accommodating new investment within the funding envelope as directed
- Council and Mayor procedural roles in budget process versus policy direction
 - Council's role as a director of policy but an amender of budget
 - Motion language for in-year policy decision that impact budget

Budget impact summary

Capital Budget: \$18.1 million increase over 10 years

- Not currently included in the Capital Budget

Operating Budget: \$1.09 million increase over 10 years

- Estimates only, design will prioritize operating efficiency to drive lowest budget impact

Recommendations to approve:



enhanced waste collection for Downtown including new litter containers and communal underground waste containers



the enhanced level of streetscaping giving priority to improved tree canopy, flexible streets, public seating and paving stone



the 'fast-paced' construction approach for Wyndham St. N. to minimize the length of time for disruption and road closures



recommendations to facilitate the future installation of public washrooms Downtown and throughout the city



•the Downtown Guelph Heritage Conservation District Study Report and direct staff to prepare a plan and guideline for the District.

Conclusion: Our future Downtown



[Wyndham Street Daytime Video](#)