

Official Plan Amendment No. XX (OPA XX)

Format of the Amendment

The proposed amendment includes revisions to policies and schedules in the Official Plan, including the Downtown Secondary Plan. Sections of the Official Plan that are proposed to be added or changed are referred to as **ITEMS** in the following description. Existing policy is indicated with a heading titled **EXISTING POLICY**. Text that is proposed to be amended is indicated with a heading titled **PROPOSED AMENDMENT**. Unchanged text represents existing Official Plan policy that is being carried forward that has been included for context and does not constitute part of Amendment XX. New sections that are proposed to be added to the Official Plan are shown in standard font type with titles appearing in bold. Bolded font indicates defined terms. Italicized font indicates the name of a provincial act or title of a document.

Implementation and Interpretation

The implementation of this amendment shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act. The further implementation and associated interpretation of this amendment shall be in accordance with the relevant text and mapping schedules of the existing Official Plan of the City of Guelph and applicable legislation.

Amendment XX should be read in conjunction with the current Official Plan (February 2024 Consolidation) which is available on the City's website at **guelph.ca**, or at the Planning Services office located at 1 Carden Street on the 3rd Floor.

Details of the Proposed Amendment

ITEM 1: The purpose of **ITEM 1** is to amend Section 8.8.1 to revise policies, as written below.

Policy 8.8.1 is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

8.8 Built Form: Mid-rise Buildings

1. The following policies apply to mid-rise building forms, which generally means a building between four (4) and six (6) storeys:
 - i) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to frame the street they are fronting while allowing access to sunlight to adjacent properties;
 - ii) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to ensure that servicing and automobile parking are appropriately located and screened. Generally, this means that parking is provided underground or at the rear or side of the building;

- iii) pedestrian access shall be provided to the principal entrance from the *public realm*;
- iv) where buildings front onto a public street and are greater than 30 metres in length, building entrances should be located at regular intervals;
- v) where buildings are taller than four (4) storeys, building length may be restricted through the *Zoning By-law* to reduce impacts such as shadowing; and
- vi) shadow, view and microclimatic studies may be required to determine potential impacts arising from mid-rise buildings.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

8.8 Built Form: Mid-rise Buildings

1. The following policies apply to mid-rise building forms, which generally means a building between four (4) and eleven (11) storeys:

- i) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to frame the street they are fronting while allowing access to sunlight and adjacent properties;
- ii) mid-rise buildings greater than six (6) storeys in height shall be required to incorporate a stepback along the front facade. The exact location of this stepback is not prescribed but should generally fall between the second and sixth storeys of the building;
- iii) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to ensure that servicing and automobile parking are appropriately located and screened. Generally, this means that parking is provided underground or at the rear or side of the building;
- iv) pedestrian access shall be provided to the principal entrance from the public realm;
- v) where buildings front onto a public street and are greater than 30 metres in length, building entrances should be located at regular intervals;
- vi) where buildings are taller than four (4) storeys, building length may be restricted through the *Zoning By-law* to reduce impacts such as shadowing; and,
- vii) shadow, view and microclimatic studies may be required to determine potential impacts from mid-rise buildings.

ITEM 2: The purpose of **ITEM 2** is to amend Section 8.9.1 to revise policies, as written below.

Policy 8.9.1 is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

8.9 Built From: High-rise Buildings

1. The following policies apply to tall building forms, which generally means buildings above six (6) storeys:
 - i) to ensure tall buildings act as landmarks, they shall incorporate a distinctive bottom (e.g., a podium), middle and top. Interesting architectural features and roof treatments should be considered for all rooftops of tall buildings;
 - ii) parking should be provided primarily below grade with limited visitor surface parking. Structured parking above-grade may be permitted, where appropriate;
 - iii) built-form studies addressing building massing, shadows, views and microclimatic studies (e.g., wind) may be required to determine the potential impacts to the surrounding neighbourhood arising from tall buildings;
 - iv) floor plate sizes of the tower portion (e.g., storeys five (5) and above) of the building may be limited to encourage slender and elegant tall building designs; and
 - v) the tower portion (e.g., storeys five (5) and above) of the building shall be carefully placed to ensure adequate spacing between towers to allow for solar access and privacy.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

8.9 Built From: High-rise Buildings

1. The following policies apply to tall building forms, which generally means buildings above twelve (12) storeys:
 - i) to ensure tall buildings act as landmarks, they shall incorporate a distinctive bottom (e.g., a podium), middle and top. Interesting architectural features and roof treatments should be considered for all rooftops of tall buildings;

- ii) tall buildings shall be required to incorporate a stepback along the front facade; The exact location of this stepback is not prescribed but should generally fall between the second and sixth storeys of the building;
- iii) parking should be provided primarily below grade with limited visitor surface parking. Structured parking above grade may be permitted, where appropriate;
- iv) built-form studies addressing building massing, shadows, views and microclimatic studies (e.g., wind) may be required to determine the potential impacts to the surrounding neighbourhood arising from tall buildings;
- v) floor plate sizes of the tower portion (e.g., storeys five (5) and above) of the building may be limited to encourage slender and elegant tall building designs; and
- vi) the tower portion (e.g., storeys five (5) and above) of the building shall be carefully placed to ensure adequate spacing between towers to allow for solar access and privacy.

ITEM 3: The purpose of **ITEM 3** is to amend Section 11.1.2.1 to revise policies, as written below.

Policy 11.1.2.1 Vision is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

11.1.2.1 Vision

Downtown Guelph: a distinct and vital urban centre nestled against the Speed River, comprised of beautiful buildings and public spaces, and surrounded by leafy neighbourhoods, where people live, work, shop, dine, play and celebrate.

By 2031, Downtown Guelph will have developed beyond its historical pattern into a distinct urban centre that is Guelph's showcase for high-density, sustainable living. Several thousand people will live Downtown, in addition to the thousands who work there daily and visit routinely to shop, dine, enjoy culture and be entertained. Streets and squares that are lined with businesses will attract people and be bustling with activity throughout the day and evening.

Downtown Guelph will continue to be the cultural and civic hub for the City and larger region and home to a broad mix of jobs. Knowledge-based businesses will have filled old and new commercial spaces and a post-secondary institution will have established a home in the Downtown, helping to fuel innovation, the creative economy and overall economic vitality. Downtown will host more major festivals. An enhanced and more accessible farmers' market will anchor an expanded network of food-related enterprises.

In the historic heart of Downtown, the existing character will have been enhanced and taller buildings will have been strategically located at the periphery, where they have

minimal direct impacts on existing neighbourhoods. South of the CN tracks, new buildings will take a variety of forms while embodying the principles of permanence, adaptability and simple beauty reflected in Downtown's historic buildings. Redevelopment will also have created opportunities for renewable and alternative energy systems and excellence in environmental design.

The redevelopment of former industrial sites east of the Speed River will have compatibly integrated high-density living into the eclectic character of St. Patrick's Ward, adding diverse forms of housing, appropriate work opportunities, street and trail connections and open spaces.

The qualities of the public realm throughout Downtown will have been enhanced. St. George's Square will have been redesigned and programmed as a central gathering place that complements Market Square and other new open spaces. The main streets of MacDonell and Wyndham will have been made more beautiful and friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists. The extension of Royal City Park to the south side of Wellington Street will open up the riverfront to the city, establish a green gateway to Downtown and complete an important regional trail and natural corridor connection.

Improvements to transit facilities, streetscapes and trail connections have resulted in many more people choosing to take transit, walk or cycle to and within Downtown instead of driving. The new transit station has drawn more employers to Downtown as well as more residents seeking easy access to destinations throughout Guelph and cities beyond.

Through private development coordinated with strategic public investments, all guided by a shared vision and demonstrating design excellence, Downtown Guelph in 2031 is a thriving high-density urban centre and popular destination still minutes from the countryside.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11.1.2.1 Vision

Downtown Guelph: a distinct and vital urban centre nestled against the Speed River, comprised of beautiful buildings and public spaces, and surrounded by leafy neighbourhoods, where people live, work, shop, dine, play and celebrate.

Beyond 2031, Downtown Guelph will have developed beyond its historical pattern into a distinct urban centre that is Guelph's showcase for high-density, sustainable living. Several thousand people will live Downtown, in addition to the thousands who work there daily and visit routinely to shop, dine, enjoy culture and be entertained. Streets and squares that are lined with businesses will attract people and be bustling with activity throughout the day and evening.

Downtown Guelph will continue to be the cultural and civic hub for the City and larger region and home to a broad mix of jobs. Knowledge-based businesses will have filled old and new commercial spaces and a post-secondary institution will have established a

home in the Downtown, helping to fuel innovation, the creative economy and overall economic vitality. Downtown will host more major festivals. An enhanced and more accessible farmers' market will anchor an expanded network of food-related enterprises.

In the historic heart of Downtown, the existing character will have been enhanced and taller buildings will have been located and massed to limit their direct impacts on existing neighbourhoods. South of the CN tracks, new buildings will take a variety of forms while embodying the principles of permanence, adaptability and simple beauty reflected in Downtown's historic buildings. Redevelopment will also have created opportunities for renewable and alternative energy systems and excellence in environmental design. Mid-rise and tall buildings shall be strategically located throughout the Downtown, ensuring that new, context-sensitive higher-density development can be introduced to meet growing demand while ensuring the protection of significant existing cultural and heritage assets.

The Secondary Plan envisions peak heights of tall buildings in the immediate area surrounding Guelph Central Station, bringing people and jobs closer to higher-order transit and helping to support transit ridership and active transportation. Peak heights shall also be located at the eastern gateway of the Downtown, at the intersection of the rail corridor and Woolwich Street, and at the site of the existing shopping area north of Macdonell Street.

The redevelopment of former industrial sites east of the Speed River will have compatibly integrated high-density living into the eclectic character of St. Patrick's Ward, adding diverse forms of housing, appropriate work opportunities, street and trail connections and open spaces.

The qualities of the public realm throughout Downtown will have been enhanced. St. George's Square will have been redesigned and programmed as a central gathering place that complements Market Square and other new open spaces. The main streets of Macdonell and Wyndham will have been made more beautiful and friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists. The extension of Royal City Park to the south side of Wellington Street will open up the riverfront to the city, establish a green gateway to Downtown and complete an important regional trail and natural corridor connection.

Improvements to transit facilities, streetscapes and trail connections have resulted in many more people choosing to take transit, walk or cycle to and within Downtown instead of driving. The new transit station has drawn more employers to Downtown as well as more residents seeking easy access to destinations throughout Guelph and cities beyond.

Through private development coordinated with strategic public investments, all guided by a shared vision and demonstrating design excellence, Downtown Guelph in 2031 and beyond is a thriving high-density urban centre and popular destination still minutes from the countryside.

ITEM 4: The purpose of **ITEM 4** is to amend 11.1.7.2.1 to revise policies, as written below.

11.1.7.2.1 is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

11.1.7.2 General Built Form and Site Development Policies

11.1.7.2.1

Schedule D identifies building height ranges to be permitted within the Downtown Secondary Plan Area. In general, the predominant mid-rise built form of Downtown shall be maintained with taller buildings restricted to strategic locations, including gateways that act as anchors for key streets. Taller buildings in these locations will have minimal direct impacts to existing neighborhoods and the historic core of Downtown, and they will be outside protected public view corridors. In the height ranges contained on Schedule D, the lower number represents the minimum height in storeys for buildings and the higher number represents the maximum permitted height in storeys. The maximum heights recognize the Church of Our Lady's status as a landmark and signature building; it is the general intent that no building Downtown should be taller than the elevation of the Church. Exemptions from minimum height requirements may be permitted for utility and other buildings accessory to the main use on a site.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11.1.7.2.1

Schedule D identifies building height ranges to be permitted within the Downtown Secondary Plan Area. In general, the predominant mid-rise built form of Downtown shall be maintained with taller buildings restricted to strategic locations, including gateways that act as anchors for key streets. Taller buildings in these locations will limit direct impacts to existing neighborhoods and the historic core of Downtown, and they will be outside of protected public view corridors. Macdonell Street is recognized as a new protected public view corridor, with significant views identified from the eastern gateway of the Downtown (Woolwich Street) towards the Church of Our Lady. In the height ranges contained on Schedule D, the lower number represents the minimum height in storeys for buildings and the higher number represents the maximum permitted height in storeys. The maximum heights recognize the Church of Our Lady's status as a landmark and signature building which should continue to maintain visual prominence from public viewpoints; however, buildings are permitted to exceed the maximum height of the Church, provided the identified protected public view corridors are protected. Exemptions from minimum height requirements may be permitted for utility and other buildings accessory to the main use on a site.

ITEM 5: The purpose of **ITEM 5** is to amend 11.1.7.2.2 to revise policies, as written below.

11.1.7.2.2 is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

11.1.7.2.2

Notwithstanding Schedule D, the Zoning By-law may establish maximum building heights lower than those shown in order to maintain the protected long views to the Church of Our Lady, as generally identified in Schedule D.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11.1.7.2.2

Notwithstanding Schedule D, the Zoning By-law may establish maximum building heights lower than those shown in order to maintain the protected public view corridors to the Church of Our Lady, as generally identified in Schedule D.

ITEM 6: The purpose of **ITEM 6** is to amend 11.1.7.2.3 to revise policies, as written below.

11.1.7.2.3 is hereby amended as follows:

EXISTING POLICY TO BE AMENDED

11.1.7.2.3 Downtown Built Form

The following additional built form policies shall apply to all areas of Downtown:

h) The massing and articulation of buildings taller than six storeys shall moderate their perceived mass and shadow impacts, provide appropriate transitions to areas with lower permitted heights, and contribute to a varied skyline in which the Church of Our Lady is most prominent. Generally, the maximum floorplate of any floor above the sixth storey, where permitted, shall be 1,200 square metres. Furthermore, the floorplates of floors above the eighth storey, where permitted, generally shall be a maximum of 1000 square metres and should not exceed a length to width ratio of 1.5:1.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

11.1.7.2.3 Downtown Built Form

The following additional built form policies shall apply to all areas of Downtown:

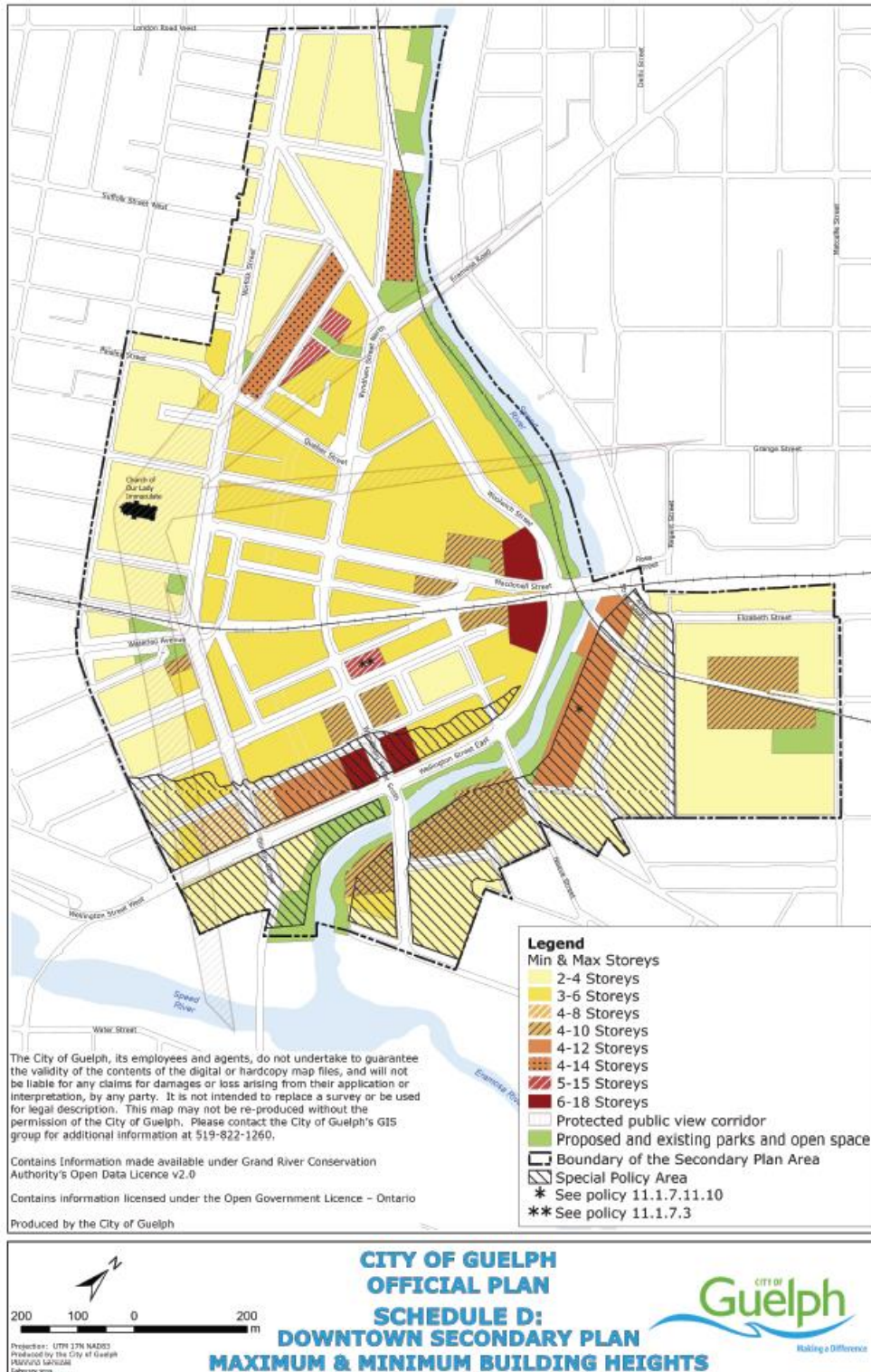
h) The massing and articulation of buildings taller than twelve (12) storeys shall moderate their perceived mass and shadow impacts, provide appropriate transitions to

areas with lower permitted heights, and contribute to a varied skyline in which the Church of Our Lady retains visual prominence. Generally, the maximum floorplate of any floor above the sixth storey, where permitted, shall be 1,200 square metres. Furthermore, the floorplates of floors above the eighth storey, where permitted, generally shall be a maximum of 1000 square metres.

ITEM 7: The purpose of **ITEM 7** is to amend Schedule D Protected Public View Corridor and Special Policy Area Building Heights in accordance with Figure 1 and Figure 2 to this Amendment.

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**Figure 1: Existing Schedule D: Downtown Secondary Plan
Maximum & Minimum Building Heights (Official Plan
Consolidation February 2024)**



**Figure 2: Proposed Schedule D: Downtown Secondary Plan
Maximum & Minimum Building Heights**

