

February 7, 2025

Re: Amendment to City Plan – Downtown Building Height Study and Standards for Tall Buildings

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Members of City Council,

The City of Guelph's historic centre should be left alone. I understand the need to accommodate new housing to meet the needs of rising populations, that change is coming and so on, but can't two things exist simultaneously? Can a community have the autonomy to decide what deserves to be preserved, what makes it unique and what's worth standing for?

Increasing height restrictions will open up the Downtown to the irrevocable loss of its iconic buildings, limestone and other, the atmosphere of its streets, its views and skyline and ultimately its sense of community – its heart- will be hollowed out.

Towns and cities that have managed to retain historic hubs in our vicinity and throughout the world have flocks of people visiting and they do it because people like experiencing beautiful historic places and learn from it. What would the reason be to compromise our historic centre? Preserving and improving our Downtown's distinctive esthetic and essence makes sense. When beautiful buildings, objects and places are torn down and cast aside, they are lost to a community and history forever.

Please keep the height restrictions as they are in the Historic Downtown. Keep access to the river on Woolwich Street, where some of our oldest limestone buildings stand. Keep historic sites and quiet streets alive for the future. If towers have to be built, keep them out of the core, and not ridiculously high: the original plan was thoughtful in this matter. Don't sell our history; don't compromise our community's identity. Let's not set ourselves up to look back with regret at our shortsightedness. The opportunity exists here to preserve what's worth preserving and grow. Preserve it, please.

Sincerely,

Maria Case and Stuart Wren