

Attachment-6 Staff Review and Planning Analysis

City staff have identified the following major issues with the Block Plan that affect the ability of staff to recommend endorsement:

- Community Park Block is undersized;
- Re-designation of Employment Mixed-use 1 land without replacement;
- Locating the elementary school block in the Employment Mixed-use 2 land use designation;
- Location of a Cultural Heritage Resource in a Neighbourhood Park;
- No single-loaded road along the eastern edge of the development; and,
- Concerns with the design of Stormwater Management Facilities.

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

- The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024, came into effect on October 20, 2024. The PPS provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development and replaced both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 with a focus on housing-supportive policies. All planning decisions shall be consistent with the PPS.
- Section 2.1 “Planning for People and Homes” requires municipalities to plan for population and employment growth based on projections forecast by the Province.
- Policy 2.1.4 requires the City to maintain land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned.
- Policy 2.1.6 requires planning authorities to support the achievement of complete communities by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, and other uses to meet long-term needs.

The proposed block plan is located on land designated for future growth and represents an efficient use of land where services will be made available. The proposed block plan generally provides a range and mix of land uses, including housing and employment options, that will be served by some amenities and various transportation options.

The proposed block plan does not provide an appropriately-sized Community Park and does not provide enough Employment Mixed-use land which will impact the long-term employment needs of the Guelph Innovation District and the City of Guelph. Should the block plan be revised to address these issues, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan is consistent with these policies.

Due to provincial modifications to the Land Use Schedule of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, the population and employment targets for Block Plan Area 1 and 2 will need to change. According to calculations in the Planning Rationale Report submitted by the applicant, Block Plan Areas 1 and 2 are now planned to achieve 8,111 to 9,472 people and 3,673 jobs.

- Section 2.2 “Housing” requires municipalities to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet the projected needs of current and future residents. This is to be achieved by establishing and implementing minimum targets for affordable housing and permitting and facilitating a wide variety of housing options, including residential intensification of underutilized commercial and institutional sites for residential use [Policy 2.2.1 b)].
- Section 2.3.1 provides General Policies for Settlement Areas, and notes that settlement areas should be the focus of growth and development.
- Policy 2.3.1.2 specifies that land use patterns within settlement areas should be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:
 - Efficiently use land and resources;
 - Optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
 - Support active transportation;
 - Are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and
 - Are freight-supportive.

Section 2.4.1 provides General Policies for Strategic Growth Areas, notes that Strategic Growth Areas are encouraged to be the focus for growth and development and to support the achievement of complete communities, a range and mix of housing options, intensification, and more mixed-use development should be planned including:

- Accommodating significant population and employment growth;
- Focal areas for education, commercial, recreational, and cultural uses;
- Accommodate and support the transit network and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit; and
- Support affordable, accessible, and equitable housing.

The proposed block plan is located within the City of Guelph’s settlement area boundary and will provide a range and mix of housing options at various densities. As noted by the applicant, the block plan will achieve and exceed the minimum density target of 90 persons and jobs combined per hectare. The block plan will provide a development pattern that will support the future use of various transportation options.

The proposed block plan is located in part of a Strategic Growth Area and will accommodate significant population growth. Provincial modifications have changed the amount of Employment Mixed-use land which will impact the achievement of the forecasted employment growth for the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan. As such, further removal of Employment-Mixed Use land without replacement elsewhere in the Guelph Innovation District Blocks 1 and 2 is not appropriate and not supported by staff. Should the block plan be revised to include 16.48 hectares of Employment Mixed-use land, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan is consistent with these policies.

Section 2.8 provides employment-related policies. This section states that planning authorities are to:

- provide an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;
- provide opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;

- encourage intensification of employment uses and compatible, compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of complete communities; and
- address land use compatibility adjacent to employment areas by providing an appropriate transition to sensitive land uses.

Major office and major institutional development should be directed to strategic growth areas.

The PPS, 2024 also defines an “Employment Area” as follows: those areas designated in an Official Plan for clusters of business and economic activities including manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing, goods movement, associated retail and office, and ancillary facilities. An employment area also includes areas of land described by subsection 1(1.1) of the Planning Act. Uses that are excluded from employment areas are institutional and commercial, including retail and office not associated with the primary employment use listed above.

Due to the change in definition of an Employment Area in the Planning Act and in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, the Employment Mixed-use 1 and Employment Mixed-use 2 designations can no longer be considered an Employment Area, as defined by the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, because of the uses permitted in each respective designation. However, these designations are still employment designations in the City of Guelph Official Plan and can and should be planned to generate a significant mix of employment, including general and knowledge-based employment, especially in the form of office uses. In addition, the Employment Mixed-use designations can provide opportunities for a range and choice of suitable sites for a diversified economic base to meet the City of Guelph’s jobs target, especially as future businesses move to knowledge-based employment, provided there is enough land to meet the needs of that diverse economic base.

As reported through the City’s latest Employment Land Strategy (2020), a number of emerging sectors are anticipated to influence the demand for employment lands in Guelph including advanced manufacturing requiring integrated operations on larger sites in a “campus-style” setting. Market demand on employment lands has also been driven by growth in knowledge-based or creative class economies. As well, a large share of Guelph’s employment growth is anticipated to be accommodated through “employment land employment” which includes food processing and manufacturing, production technology, and automotive and in knowledge-based industry clusters including IT, environmental services, and business services. These growth sectors are strongly aligned with the uses permitted in the Employment Mixed-use designation, meaning having enough land in these designations will be critical to seeing this growth continue.

Therefore, the removal of Employment Mixed-Use 1 lands without effective replacement and the location of a school on the Employment Mixed-use 2 lands is not consistent with the employment policies of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. Should the block plan be revised to address this issue, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan is consistent with these policies.

City of Guelph Official Plan

The subject lands are currently designated as “Approved Secondary Plan” on Schedule 2 of the Official Plan. The subject lands are within the Greenfield Area and

Settlement Area Boundary on Schedule 1a of the Official Plan. Furthermore, the northern portion of the subject lands is designated as "Strategic Growth Area" on Schedule 1a of the Official Plan. The southern portion of the subject lands is designated as "Employment Areas" on Schedule 1b of the Official Plan. Due to Provincial modifications to the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, the Employment Area boundaries on Schedule 1b on the subject lands no longer align with the designation boundaries within the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan.

Section 2.3 outlines the strategic goals of the City's Official Plan. The strategic goals are focused on ecological, social, cultural, and economic sustainability in decision making. Of particular relevance to this application are the following goals:

- Ensure an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, local services, community infrastructure, housing including affordable housing and other land uses are provided to meet current and projected needs to the year 2031 [2.3.1 (b)].
- Provide for urban growth and land use patterns that support community needs and ensures efficient use of public expenditures and municipal financial sustainability over the long term [2.3.1 (c)].
- Promote opportunities for employment in the high-tech "knowledge based" sectors including environmental management and technology, advanced manufacturing and agri-food technology [2.3.1 (e)].
- Direct development to those areas where full municipal services and related infrastructure are existing or can be made available, while considering existing land uses, natural heritage systems, development constraints, fiscal sustainability, development costs and related factors [2.3.4 (b)].
- Ensure an accessible, connected open space, park and trail system and sustainable network of recreational facilities necessary to promote a physically active and healthy community that meets resident needs for active and passive recreation activities [2.3.5 (a)].
- Provide an appropriate supply and distribution of community facilities to meet the social, health and education needs of existing and future residents in a manner that maximizes accessibility [2.3.5 (b)].
- Ensure that an adequate supply, range and geographic distribution of housing types including affordable housing, special needs housing and supporting amenities are provided to satisfy the needs of the community [2.3.5 (d)].

The proposed block plan achieves some of the above goals, but in staff's professional opinion, revisions are required to address all goals. In particular, staff are recommending that the block plan be revised to demonstrate conformity with Policy 2.3.1 (b), 2.3.1 (e), and 2.3.5 (a). Policies 2.3.1 (b) and 2.3.1 (e) can be addressed by including 16.48 hectares of Employment Mixed-use land following Provincial modifications to the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan. This will ensure a more appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities by making more employment-dedicated land available in the Guelph Innovation District as well as promoting more opportunities for employment in high-tech "knowledge based" sectors, a key industry cluster poised for more growth in Guelph, as reported through the latest Employment Land Strategy (2020). Policy 2.3.5 (a) can be addressed by including a Community Park of 6.7 hectares at an appropriate location. This size of Community Park would meet the needs of all residents

projected for Blocks 1 and 2 of the Guelph Innovation District while following the amount of parkland dedication required for this development.

Section 3.6 outlines policies for development within Strategic Growth Areas. The Guelph Innovation District is classified as a Community Mixed-Use Node.

Section 3.7 outlines policies for development within the designated Greenfield Area.

The proposed block plan exceeds the density target for the Guelph Innovation District Community Mixed-Use Node and the minimum density target for the area of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan within the designated Greenfield Area. Generally, the proposed block plan achieves the vision of the Community Mixed-use Node through an urban village concept with a mix of uses in a compact urban form with a Main Street area and attractive private and public open spaces. The block plan provided also satisfies the requirement for a concept plan as noted in Policy 3.6.9 and 3.6.10.

Section 3.8 outlines general Employment policies for the City of Guelph.

Following Provincial modifications to the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, the proposed block plan will impact the City's ability to achieve a minimum of 116,000 jobs city wide by the year 2051 as 3,673 jobs are projected for Blocks 1 and 2 whereas the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan was targeting 4,200 jobs for Blocks 1 and 2.

The proposed block plan will still provide some mix of employment uses to meet some of the City of Guelph's long term employment needs. As described previously in this analysis, due to the change in definition of an Employment Area in the Planning Act and in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, the Employment Mixed-use 1 and Employment Mixed-use 2 designations can no longer be considered a defined Employment Area because of the uses permitted in each respective designation. However, these designations can and should be planned to generate a significant mix of employment as more general employment lands, including employment land employment and knowledge-based employment, especially in a campus-style format.

As reported through the latest Employment Land Strategy (2020), the competitiveness of Guelph's export-based economy is partly determined by the availability and quality of its developable employment lands. Further, market choice and potential for future expansion are key factors in the site selection process. Re-designation of Employment Mixed-use lands to non-employment uses without replacement elsewhere on the Block Plan further impacts the City of Guelph's ability to accommodate our employment growth forecast and limits the range of large suitable sites for employment uses. Should the Block Plan be revised to provide 16.48 hectares of Employment Mixed-use land, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan conforms to these policies.

Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan

The subject lands are located within the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan Area, specifically Blocks 1 and 2. The vision for the Guelph Innovation District is a "compact, mixed-use community" that "will serve predominately as the home of innovative, sustainable employment uses with an adjacent urban village connecting residential and compatible employment uses. The urban village is meant to be an

identifiable, pedestrian oriented space, with street-related built form that supports a mix of medium and high density commercial, residential and employment uses” (Policy 11.2.1.1). The Secondary Plan establishes the following Principles in Section 11.2.1.2:

- Principle 1: Protect What is Valuable;
- Principle 2: Create Sustainable and Energy Efficient Infrastructure;
- Principle 3: Establish a Multi-modal Pedestrian-focused Mobility System;
- Principle 4: Create an Attractive and Memorable Place;
- Principle 5: Promote a Diversity of Land Uses and Densities; and
- Principle 6: Grow Innovative Employment Opportunities.

The subject lands have a number of designations including Mixed-use Corridor (GID), Employment Mixed-use 1, Employment Mixed-use 2, Residential, Open Space and Park and Significant Natural Areas and Natural Areas in the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan.

The proposed block plan will impact the achievement of Principle 6, particularly the following objectives:

- a) Accommodate a significant share of Guelph’s employment growth.
- b) Create a setting that reinforces the GID as a high density employment area that attracts provincially, nationally and/or internationally significant employment uses.

Further proposed reductions in the amount of Employment Mixed-use land will limit the ability for the Guelph Innovation District to accommodate a significant share of Guelph’s employment growth, which will put further strain on Guelph’s employment land supply to 2051. In addition, changes to the definition of an Employment Area by the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 will also limit the availability of other sites in Employment Areas, as defined, across the City of Guelph to accommodate single, large office users.

By providing at least 16.48 hectares of Employment Mixed-Use land in the Guelph Innovation District Blocks 1 & 2, this will create more opportunities and a stronger setting for the Guelph Innovation District to be a high-density employment area that can attract significant employment uses to the City, including uses that are aligned with Guelph’s existing employment clusters and knowledge-based sectors, like Agri-Innovation in a campus style format. Should the Block Plan be revised to address this issue, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan conforms to these principles.

General Land Use, Built Form and Site Development Policies

Section 11.2.6.1 and 11.2.6.2 of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan outlines the general land use, built form, and site development policies of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan Area. The Guelph Innovation District will be comprised of a mix of land uses, housing and building types at a sufficient density. In order to achieve the City-wide population and employment projections and density targets, the entirety of Guelph Innovation District has been planned to achieve the following:

- 8,650 jobs
- 6,650 people

With provincial modifications to the Guelph Innovation District Land Use Schedule, these numbers are no longer accurate and will need to be adjusted. The Planning Rationale Report Addendum dated July 2025 states that based on the City of Guelph 2023 Development Charges Background Study, 3,673 jobs and between 8,111-9,472 people will be provided on the Guelph Innovation District Blocks 1 and 2. Based on Table 2: Block Plan Area Targets for the Guelph Innovation District, Blocks 1 and 2 were targeted to have a population of 4,600 and 4,200 jobs.

This would represent a population increase of 3,511 to 4,872 people and a loss of 527 jobs. In addition, there may also be a larger shift in the type of employment in the Guelph Innovation District Blocks 1 and 2 overall with more population-servicing employment (i.e. commercial and office) and less opportunity for knowledge-based industry than previously anticipated. Knowledge-based industry clusters are expected to represent the strongest export-based employment sectors in Guelph to 2051, as reported in the latest Employment Land Strategy (2020).

The topography, landscape and natural and cultural heritage features associated with the Eramosa River are unique to the Guelph Innovation District. Road alignment, siting and massing of buildings and design of development should enhance views of the Eramosa River valley and cultural heritage features associated with the Reformatory Complex as well as views of Downtown. In particular, a single-loaded local road is required on the table lands adjacent to the Natural Heritage System to allow public access to views of the Eramosa River.

The single-loaded perimeter road has not been fully provided on the applicant-submitted block plan, as there are some Residential blocks on the east side of Street G. The single-loaded road provides a public edge, opportunities for separated active transportation infrastructure and full public view and public vista opportunities and greater protection opportunities of the Eramosa River Valley. The single-loaded road could be provided by shifting portions of Street G to the west and moving the residential block currently on the east side of Street G to the west side, but this may impact the creation of trail connections along it.

The predominant character of built form within the Guelph Innovation District are to be mid-rise residential and employment buildings with a limited number of taller buildings at Nodes, as identified on Schedule C.

As per Schedule C: Built Form Elements of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, as modified by the Province, there are four nodes located within the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan Area. These nodes are located at the intersection of Victoria Road South and the Future Collector Road, at the intersection of Victoria Road South and College Avenue East, at the intersection of the College Avenue East extension and the Future Collector Road, and at the intersection of Victoria Road South and Stone Road East.

The applicant-submitted block plan generally maintains this node arrangement, with the exception of moving the node located at the intersection of Victoria Road South and the Future Collector Road to the intersection of Victoria Road South and Street B. Staff are generally supportive of this node arrangement as it will push taller buildings towards the employment mixed-use land, which will allow for higher employment density in this area and support achievement of the modified jobs target.

Mixed-use Corridor (GID) Policies

A portion of the subject lands, mainly along Victoria Road South and along the College Avenue East extension are designated as "Mixed-use Corridor (GID)". The Mixed-use Corridor GID designation will consist of a mix of residential, commercial, live/work, institutional, office and educational uses within a compact form of development that will contribute to the creation of focal points and transition areas. High quality urban and architectural design and a well-connected, pedestrian oriented public realm will define these areas.

The Mixed-use Corridor GID designation permits a variety of uses including commercial, office, entertainment, cultural and educational uses, institutional uses, hotels, live/work, and medium and high density multiple unit residential buildings and apartments. Schedule C of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan establishes the permitted heights, which range from a minimum of 3 storeys to a maximum of 18 storeys, as modified by the Province of Ontario. The maximum net density is 150 units per hectare and the minimum net density is 100 units per hectare.

Policy 11.2.6.3.2.5 states that the Guelph Innovation District will be anchored by a mixed-use urban village at the intersection of the eastern extension of College Avenue East and an interior north-south collector.

Generally, the Block Plan submitted by the applicant conforms to the objectives and policies for the Mixed-use Corridor (GID) designation. A northern portion of Mixed-use Corridor (GID) designation has been changed on the applicant-submitted block plan to Medium Density Residential. The applicant will need to provide sufficient justification for this land use change which will require an Amendment to the Secondary Plan land use schedule through the future Official Plan Amendment application. The applicant will need to demonstrate that they are still maintaining a minimum Floor Space Index (FSI) of commercial space to meet the needs of future residents within the GID.

Employment Mixed-use 1 Policies

A portion of the subject lands, located at the northeast corner of Victoria Road South and Stone Road East are designated as "Employment Mixed-use 1". The Employment Mixed-use 1 designation will include areas targeted for significant growth as a landmark area in the University-Downtown-GID trinity. These areas will permit a mix of uses focusing on higher density, innovation and sustainability which includes uses such as research and development, commercial, educational, and entertainment uses that will serve to support the role of the business area as a knowledge-based innovation centre.

The Employment Mixed-use 1 designation permits a variety of employment-related uses including office and administrative facilities, research and development, hotel and convention facilities, entertainment and recreational commercial uses, assembly and manufacturing facilities, and ancillary uses that complement a primary use.

The applicant-submitted block plan reduces the amount of Employment Mixed-use 1 designated land beyond modifications made by the Province of Ontario. This includes locating a Stormwater Management Block and the Community Park Block in lands designated for Employment Mixed-use 1.

This change without replacement of the Employment Mixed-use 1 designation on other lands in the Block Plan does not conform to the Vision, Objectives, and Policies of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan.

A lack of significant Employment Mixed-use land may mean that the Employment Mixed-use area does not become a landmark area in the University-Downtown-GID trinity and campus-form development cannot be achieved. In addition, uses that may require large sites such as research & development uses and assembly and manufacturing facilities may not be able to locate in this designation. As reported through the City's latest Employment Land Strategy (2020), a number of emerging sectors are anticipated to influence the demand for employment lands in Guelph including advanced manufacturing requiring integrated operations on larger sites in a "campus-style" setting. Having enough land for these sectors will be critical for achieving employment growth.

Overall, planning staff are recommending a modified Block Plan that provides a minimum of 16.48 hectares of employment blocks in GID Blocks 1 and 2, which conforms to the modifications made by the Province to the Land Use Schedule for the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan. Should the Block Plan be revised to address this issue, City planning staff would be satisfied that the proposed block plan conforms to these policies.

Employment Mixed-use 2 Policies

A portion of the subject lands, located just north of the Employment Mixed-use 1 designation, is designated as "Employment Mixed-use 2". The Employment Mixed-use 2 designation includes areas that will have a mix of uses including office, commercial, educational and institutional, and, to a lesser extent, entertainment uses that will serve to support the role of the employment area as an important component of the Guelph Agri-Innovation Cluster.

The Employment Mixed-use 2 designation permits a variety of employment-related uses, subject to the applicable provisions of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, including research and development, office and administrative facilities, cultural and education uses, institutional uses, entertainment and recreational commercial uses, and ancillary uses that complement a primary use.

The applicant-submitted block plan proposes to locate the elementary school required by the Upper Grand District School Board to service Blocks 1 and 2 in the entirety of the Employment Mixed-use 2 designation.

As a designation designed to support uses in Employment Mixed-use 1 land, the Employment Mixed-use 2 designation will provide land for uses that support the employment function of the larger employment area within the Guelph Agri-Innovation Cluster. For example, this could include smaller research and development facilities, education uses through partnerships with the University of Guelph or Conestoga College, and entertainment and recreational commercial uses that support a complete community and transition between employment uses and residential uses. While the elementary school will provide employment, that employment will be to serve the population from the residential areas of the Guelph Innovation District, rather than the population from the employment areas which does not conform to Policy 11.2.6.3.4.1 of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan. As already permitted by policy, it would be more appropriate for the needed

elementary school block to be located in the Residential designation, subject to the Upper Grand District School Board's sizing and phasing requirements.

Therefore, planning staff are recommending a modified Block Plan that moves the School Block to a Residential Block, subject to the Upper Grand District School Board's sizing and phasing requirements.

Residential Policies

The majority of the subject lands are designated "Residential" in the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan. The predominant land use in the Residential designation is medium density housing forms such as townhouses and apartments with a limited supply of low density housing forms such as single and semi-detached dwellings.

The Residential designation permits a variety of residential uses as well as residential-supportive uses including multiple unit residential buildings such as townhouses and apartments, detached, semi-detached and duplex dwellings, convenience commercial uses, live/work units, community services and facilities, child care centres, schools, and park space. Schedule C of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan establishes the permitted heights, which range from a minimum of 2 storeys to a maximum of 6 storeys. The maximum net density is 150 units per hectare and the minimum net density is 35 units per hectare.

Generally, the Block Plan submitted by the applicant conforms to the objectives and policies for the Residential designation in the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan.

Future Planning Act applications

Based on the Planning Rationale Report dated March 2025 submitted by the applicant, the applicant has indicated that at a minimum, they expect to submit an Official Plan Amendment application(s), Zoning By-law Amendment application(s), and Draft Plan of Subdivision application(s). A detailed review of site-specific policy changes, land use changes and specialized zoning requests will be completed through the review of these applications. Future development applications will also be subject to a further urban design review.

Although an Official Plan Amendment is not being approved through the Block Plan process, it's important to note that if Council were to approve the Block Plan as submitted by the applicant without any of the staff recommended modifications, Council would need to approve any future policy and land use changes to the Secondary Plan required to implement the current applicant-submitted Block Plan.

Engineering Review

Engineering staff have reviewed the third submission and have identified significant concerns relating to the three Stormwater Management (SWM) Facilities. An objective of the Block Plan review from an engineering perspective is to ensure that the proposed servicing, infrastructure and SWM requirements are planned appropriately and that sufficient land is planned to inform and guide the content of the subsequent development approvals. It is necessary for the applicant to address comments relating to SWM design through a revised Block Plan submission as changes to the SWM facilities could impact the overall layout of the Block Plan.

Engineering staff have identified concerns relating to SWM Facility inlet design, SWM Facility forebay sizing, the post-development Stormwater Management Hydrologic Model, Brentwood Storm Tank sizing and existing rail culvert capacity analysis. The current design strategy increases the number of structures within the SWM facilities, which increases the number of structures for the City to operate and maintain and complicates sediment management and cleanout logistics. The design also suggests more frequent cleanouts than what is achievable by the City.

Transportation Review

Transportation Impact Study

The revised Traffic Impact Study (TIS) submission dated July 16, 2025 presents adjustments to the trip generation analysis that reflect City Staff's input. The revisions were made to reflect the projected mode share targets noted in the 2022 Transportation Master Plan, the upcoming Stone and Victoria Roads Environmental Assessment process, and general policy direction from the TMP.

Further revisions are still required, including adding GID Phase 4 to background development, adjusting volumes at Victoria Road and Street A, and revising lane configuration assumptions at the Victoria/College/Main intersection.

The July TIS forecasts that GID Blocks 1 and 2 will generate 1,538 two-way vehicle trips in the a.m. peak hour and 1,817 new two-way trips in the p.m. peak hour. Key critical movements are summarized below.

Victoria at York Road: It is forecasted that Victoria Road at York Road will reach full capacity in the p.m. peak hour by 2036 under future total conditions (captures site trips and GID 3 and other future background traffic). By 2041, p.m. total traffic exceeds available capacity by 14%. It is anticipated that by 2046, the northbound left-turn, westbound left-turn and southbound through movements will exceed capacity and the overall intersection exceeds capacity by 15% in the p.m. peak hour. These overcapacities are expected to be worse than analyzed, as the analysis was carried out under the assumption that an unproved exclusive southbound right-turn lane would be in place by 2036.

Midblock traffic on Victoria Road: The projected midblock traffic volumes on Victoria Road exceed 4-lane road capacity.

Victoria at Street A: Staff recommend calibrating volumes at Victoria Road and Street A according to the volumes at Victoria Road and College Avenue/Main Street, not Victoria Road and York Road.

Victoria at College Avenue/Main Street: The eastbound left movement exceeds capacity by 11% in the p.m. peak hour under future background conditions in 2036. By 2041, the northbound through traffic projects very long queue lengths during the p.m. peak hour, exceeding 205 meters in 2036 and growing to 270 m by 2046.

Roundabout analysis: The revised TIS included analysis of a roundabout at College/Main to assess if this improves operations. Initial results are provided and require further analysis before a conclusion can be drawn.

Staff acknowledge that the development represents density and mixed land use that is very conducive for increased use of transit and active modes of transportation in alignment with the goals of the TMP. Congestion and delay is

expected as our City grows, and this, too, contributes to shifting the mode share in favour of active and public transportation as these become more efficient than driving.

Block Plan Review

The local road intersection spacing does not meet engineering standards and will need to be revised. Staff recommend adjustments to the lane configurations at Victoria Road and College Ave/Main Street to maintain operations and support an improved pedestrian and cycling environment.

Active Transportation components are not accurately reflected in the Block Plan per existing policies and need to be revised.

- The Block Plan shows some trails but does not show how the 'Active Transportation Links' identified in the GID Secondary Plan – mobility schedule will be provided.
- There is no indication of how the AT Link across the river will be provided to connect Block Plan Area 1 to Area 4.
- The planned Cycling Spine Network along Victoria and Stone Roads per the 2022 Transportation Master Plan is not reflected.

Environmental Planning Review

Natural Resource Solutions Inc. was retained by Fusion Homes to complete an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) in support of a proposed development of the Guelph Innovation Block Plan Areas 1 and 2. The EIS characterized natural features and identified their sensitivity, recommended appropriate buffers, and identified potential impacts of development along with necessary mitigation, enhancement, and monitoring.

Through completion of this EIS, the subject lands were found to contain Significant Woodland, wetlands, Significant Valleyland associated with the Eramosa River, candidate/confirmed Significant Wildlife Habitat, and candidate/confirmed habitats for Species at Risk, which are considered Significant Natural Areas in the Natural Heritage System. Habitat for (locally) Significant Species is also present, which is considered a Natural Area in the Natural Heritage System. These natural features were assessed and the layout of the proposed development considered with respect to these features. The vast majority of these natural heritage features are located within the woodlands, wetlands and valleylands that will be retained and buffered from development. A Tree Inventory and Preservation (TIPP) has been prepared by NRSI that identifies tree removal proposed as part of this undertaking and necessary compensation and tree protection measures. A number of habitats have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development footprint (e.g. habitat of SAR, HSS, etc.) and where possible, mitigation, enhancement and monitoring has been recommended to ensure impacts are minimized. In addition, indirect and induced impacts have the potential to occur to natural areas through increased human use as well as a result of the presence of buildings that pose a hazard to migratory birds. The mitigation measures outlined within this report are to be further evaluated at the detailed design stage in order to ensure that potential impacts are mitigated.

Environmental Planning staff had significant comments with the previous submissions of the proposed Block Plan. Environmental Planning staff have worked with the applicant to address many of the previously made comments and have

identified some comments that can be deferred until the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Bylaw Amendment applications. Based on a review of the revised application materials, the substantial changes to the block plan layout, and further information and analysis provided by the applicant, Environmental Planning is in support of the proposed Block Plan from an environmental planning perspective.

Parks Planning Review

A goal of the Guelph Official Plan (OP) is to ensure the City provides “sufficient open space system of parks and trails to meet the active and passive recreational needs of residents that is accessible to all residents” (OP Section 7.3 d)). To ensure that sufficient park space is provided, the GID Secondary Plan (11.2.5.3) indicates that two new park spaces are to be provided: a Neighbourhood Park and a Community Park.

Throughout the block plan process, staff have been receptive to alternative configurations for the park system but require the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed park system adequately serves the community and provides functional parks. To facilitate the analysis of a park system that significantly differs from what is approved in the Official Plan and GID Secondary Plan, staff have requested that the applicant demonstrate the functionality of each component of the park system through facility-fit plans. Facility-fit plans are schematic plans of proposed parks that include critical dimensions of all the required park amenities, including overall size and setbacks. These plans allow the City to evaluate whether the size and configuration of parks are sufficient to meet the recreational needs of the community, while ensuring that they are safe and well-integrated into the City's park system.

To date, the applicant has not demonstrated that the proposed park system will adequately serve the recreational needs of the community by providing functional park blocks. However, with the guidance provided herein, staff remain confident that the applicant can configure parkland throughout the GID in a way that more appropriately addresses community need by increasing the community park size, reducing neighbourhood park size(s), and re-configuring the shape of some proposed neighbourhood parks, all while maintaining the same overall quantity of parkland.

Of primary importance is that the City's Park Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified that there is demand for more sports fields as the city grows. As many parkland parcels that the City is acquiring are too small to accommodate future sports field needs, it is incredibly important that a community park of a size to accommodate sports fields is achieved in this block plan area.

The following comments outline the critical outstanding issues and revisions needed to demonstrate conformance with City policy.

Parkland Dedication

Blocks 1 and 2 lands are approximately 116.6 hectares with a net developable area of approximately 97.30 hectares.

- The applicant has outlined a minimum and maximum number of residential units for the site. In order to best serve the community and appropriately plan for the proposed population, parkland dedication is being calculated at the highest figure of the proposed population range. If the applicant proposes a lower population through future draft plans of subdivision, parkland dedication may be

adjusted accordingly at that time. If the applicant proposes a higher population through future draft plans of subdivision, the City will be seeking parkland dedication for the difference in the form of land, not cash-in-lieu.

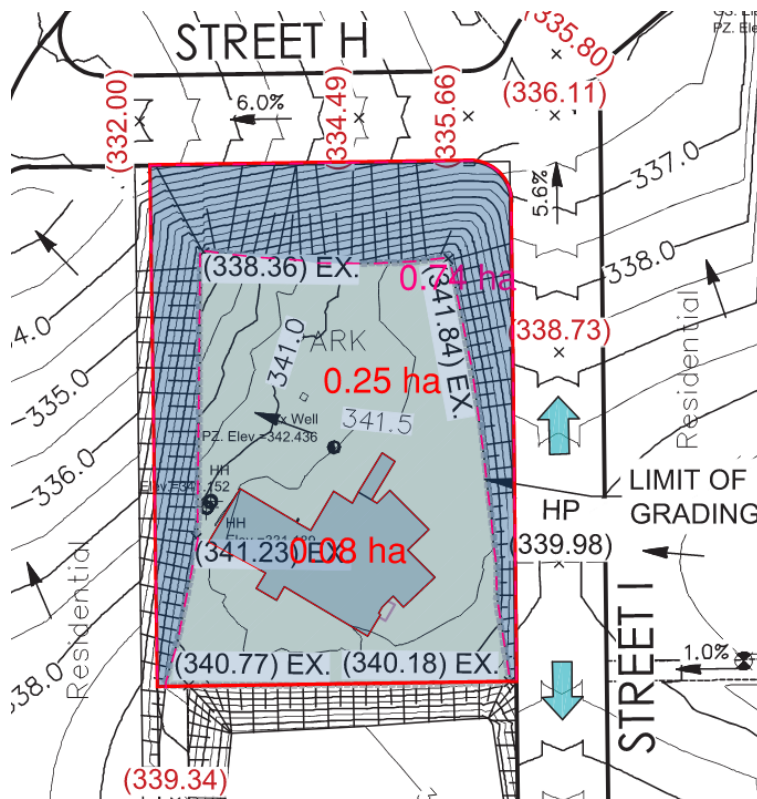
In accordance with the Planning Act s.51.1, the parkland dedication rate will be the greater of 5% of the land, or one hectare for each 600 dwelling units, up to a maximum of 15% of the land (for sites greater than 5 ha). For this development, the one hectare per 600 dwelling unit rate will apply. The City requires a minimum parkland dedication in the amount of 7.757 ha.

The City of Guelph Official Plan states that Neighbourhood Parks should be minimum 1 ha in size and community parks should be 10-20 ha in size. Given the size of the GID land area and a reasonable desire by the applicant to distribute parkland throughout the development, staff are willing to accept minimum 0.25 ha individual neighbourhood park(s), with street frontage of minimum 50 metres, as required by the City's Zoning Bylaw Section 12.3. Staff recommend that neighbourhood park(s) make up 1 ha total of the required parkland dedication, and that the community park makes up the remaining 6.757 ha of the required parkland dedication.

Outstanding issues with proposed park blocks

Neighbourhood Park Block 65

Figure 1: Block 65, measured to scale with staff mark-ups to support analysis below



Neighbourhood **Park Block 65** is not acceptable as proposed.

- The G.M. Frost building is a valuable heritage asset; however, Parks does not support it in a park block as it implies that the building is being conveyed to the City along with the costs of conservation, operation, and maintenance. The area associated with the Frost building does not satisfy parkland dedication

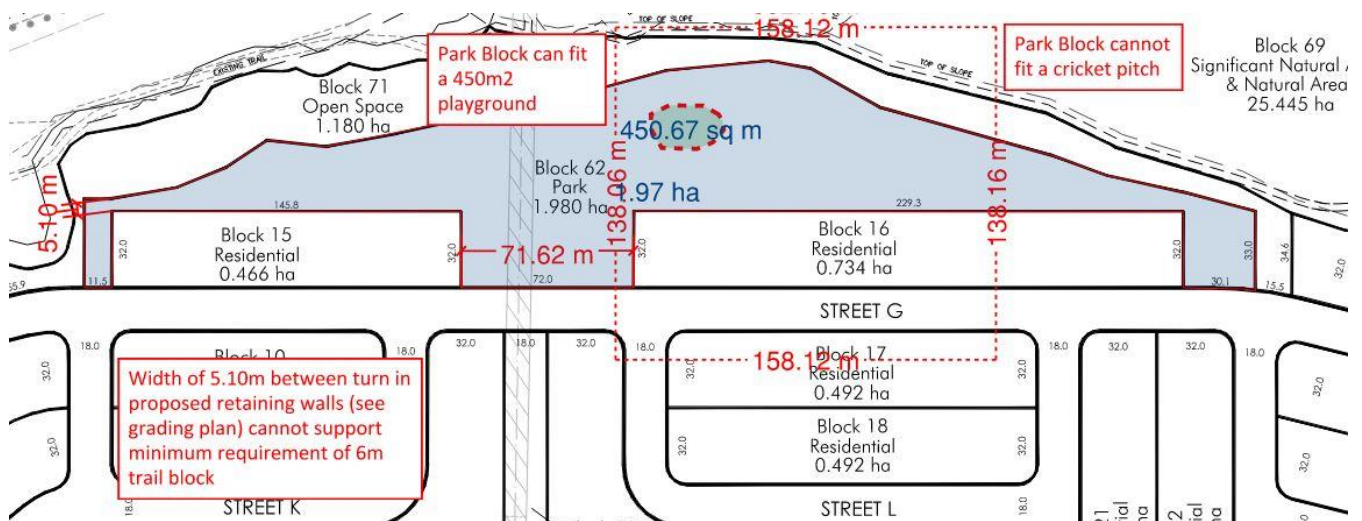
requirements, as it encumbers the recreational opportunity of the land. Staff recommend locating the Frost building in a residential block.

If Council were to endorse the applicant-submitted Block Plan, the following changes would be required to this park block:

- OP policy 7.3.5.5.ii. does not permit acceptance of parkland with steep slopes. The proposed slopes on all four sides of this park block are a significant barrier to access. The significant grade change of up to 4m along all property lines is unacceptable and does not foster functional and inclusive park design, nor does it integrate well with adjacent uses. The grading must be revised to offer a more functional and welcoming park for all ages and abilities.
- OP policy 7.3.2.4.v. requires that each park consists of at least 80 percent usable table land. The total area of this block is 0.74 ha. When inaccessible slopes (0.25 ha) and the Frost building footprint (0.08 ha) are removed from the total area, only 0.41 ha or 55 percent of the block is usable table land. The park block must be reconfigured to ensure it provides sufficient table land for recreational purposes.
- As per the approved Block Plan Terms of Reference, provide a facility-fit plan for the park block that demonstrates that the following Neighbourhood Park facilities can be accommodated with appropriate setbacks: playground area of 450 m²; open space; and pathways.

Neighbourhood Park Block 62

Figure 2: Block 62, measured to scale with staff mark-ups to support analysis below

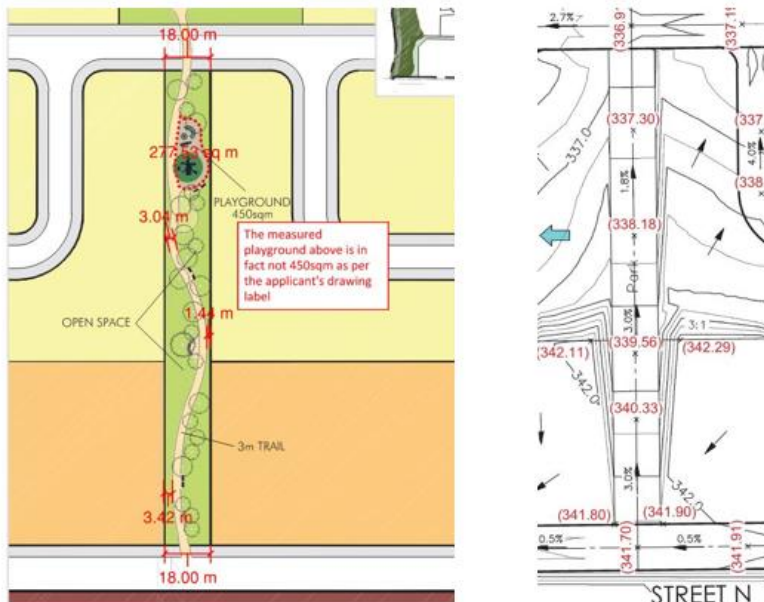


Neighbourhood **Park Block 62 is acceptable.** Though the applicant did not provide facility-fit plan, staff are satisfied that Neighbourhood Park facilities (playground area of 450 m²; open space; and pathways) can be accommodated in this block with appropriate setbacks.

In order for the north and south trail access points into the park from Street G to be functional, a minimum width of 6m is required.

Neighbourhood Park Block 63

Figure 3: Block 63 facility-fit plan and preliminary grading plan (by applicant), measured to scale with staff mark-ups to support analysis below



Neighbourhood **Park Block 63 is not acceptable** as proposed. Staff recommend deleting this park and increasing the Community Park size. To bring this park block into conformance with City policy the applicant would need to address the following comments:

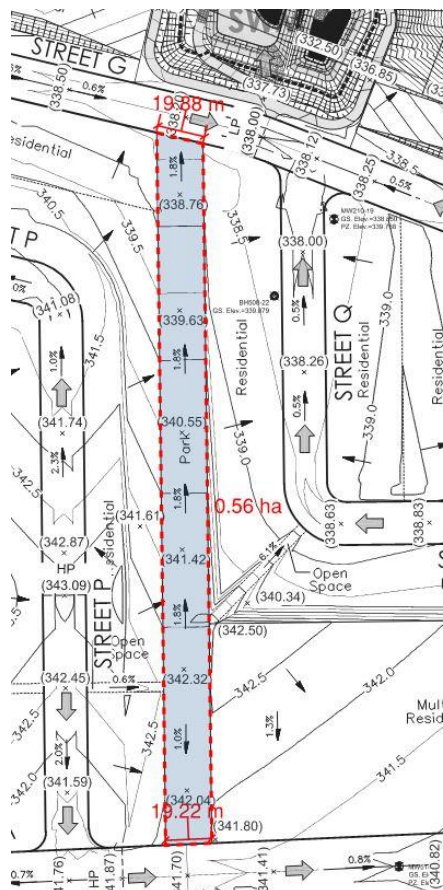
- Although the applicant has provided the above facility-fit plan, it does not adequately demonstrate that the required Neighbourhood Park facilities (playground area of 450m²; open space; and pathways) can be accommodated in this block with appropriate setbacks. The applicant's area calculations appear to be incorrect. The playground shown in the facility-fit plan appears to be approximately half the size required (277 m²), though it is labelled as being 450 m².
- The playground cannot have a zero-setback to the property line shared with the adjacent residential use. Best practice is for playgrounds to be offset a minimum of 10m from property lines. Trails should also be offset by a minimum of 3m from property lines.
- The City's Zoning Bylaw regulation 12.3.b. requires parks to have a minimum of 50m of road frontage. As proposed, park block 63 only has 36m of road frontage. The park block must be widened to meet the zoning bylaw requirement.
- As shown in Figure 3 above, the proposed preliminary grading plan appears to conflict with the Neighbourhood Park use. The grading plan shows a drainage path directly down the centre of this block, which is not compatible with park programming.

Given the challenges with meeting Zoning By-law requirements, meeting park programming requirements with appropriate setbacks, and the apparent conflict with stormwater design, the applicant may consider revising this block to an open space use that block to support site drainage and if possible, accommodate a future

trail connection to block 62. As this would not function as a park, it would not be considered parkland dedication.

Neighbourhood Park Block 61

Figure 4: Block 61 measured to scale with staff mark-ups to support analysis below



Neighbourhood **Park Block 61 is not acceptable** as proposed. Staff recommend deleting this park and increasing the Community Park size. To bring this park block into conformance with City policy the applicant would need to address the following comments:

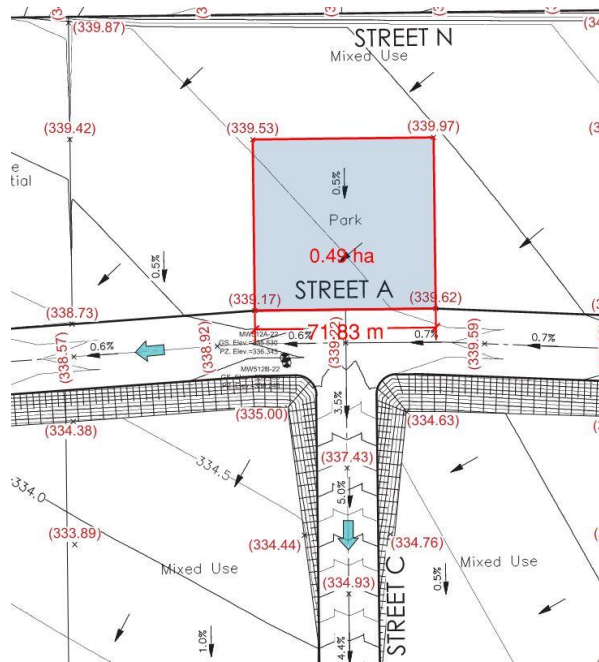
- Although the applicant did not provide a facility-fit plan, given this block's similar configuration to Park Block 63, staff anticipate that the required Neighbourhood Park facilities (playground area of 450m²; open space; and pathways) will not be able to be accommodated in this block with appropriate setbacks.
- The City's Zoning Bylaw regulation 12.3.b. requires parks to have a minimum of 50m of road frontage. As proposed, park block 61 only has 38 m of road frontage. The park block must be widened to meet the zoning bylaw requirement.
- The proposed preliminary grading plan appears to conflict with the Neighbourhood Park use. The grading plan shows a drainage path directly down the centre of this block, which is not compatible with park programming.

Given the challenges with meeting Zoning By-law requirements, meeting park programming requirements with appropriate setbacks, and the apparent conflict with stormwater design, the applicant may consider revising this block to an open space use that block to support site drainage and if possible, accommodate a future

trail connection to block 62. As this would not function as a park, it would not be considered parkland dedication.

Park Block 64

Figure 5: Block 64, measured to scale with staff mark-ups to support analysis below



Park Block 64 is acceptable. Though the applicant did not provide facility-fit plan, staff are satisfied that Neighbourhood Park facilities (playground area of 450 m²; open space; and pathways) can be accommodated in this block with appropriate setbacks. Staff caution that OP policy 7.3.5.4. does not allow urban squares and parks in private ownership to be considered parkland dedication. Throughout the application the applicant references this block as an urban square. This is acceptable if the intention is for this block to be conveyed to the City as a park.

pitch with two overlapping full-sized soccer fields; four tennis courts in a complex; washroom building; playground area of 625m², picnic shelter, parking to accommodate approximately 300 vehicles, and pathways. Although not specifically requested in the facility-fit plan, staff also advise that a splash pad will likely be needed in this park as well.

- As demonstrated in Figure 6, the required community park amenities cannot be accommodated in the park block as proposed. The applicant has only shown two tennis courts of the four required, and the cricket pitch, (defined by the dashed circle in Figure 6) overlaps almost all other park amenities including a washroom building, playground, parking lot, and tennis courts.
- Demonstrate that the Community Park grading can meet the requirements for sufficient table land (80% of the site being 2% or less) per Section 7.3.2.4.v) of the City of Guelph Official Plan.

Staff recommend that Phase 1 of development includes the Community Park. Therefore, by the time residential phases are implemented, the community park block will be established for residents to use.

Trails

Park and Trail Development staff acknowledge that trail requirements are generally satisfactory. Further comments on trails can be addressed through detailed design.

Heritage Planning Review

Block 1 of the Guelph Innovation District contains the former G. M. Frost Research and Information Centre, also known as the Turfgrass Institute. The Frost Building was built in 1990-1992 as a joint venture of the University of Guelph, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the private turfgrass industry. The Turfgrass Institute building had two functions: research for drought and pest control in turfgrass; and to provide rental meeting rooms.

In Heritage Planning staff's professional opinion, the Frost Building meets the minimum criteria to determine cultural heritage value and interest under the Ontario Heritage Act and have made public their intention to recommend designation.

Heritage Guelph passed the following motions at their meeting on March 6, 2025:

- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that the Frost Building at 328 Victoria Road South merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that the committee supports the heritage attributes for the Frost Building at 328 Victoria Road South as described in Heritage Planning staff's report in the revised agenda for the meeting of Heritage Guelph on February 6, 2025.

The designation of the Frost Building is also being considered by Council at the September 10 Council agenda.

The applicant submitted Block Plan proposes a Neighbourhood Park in the area that includes the former Frost Building. Both Heritage Planning and Parks Planning do not support a Neighbourhood Park in this area as it implies that the building is being conveyed to the City. Acquisition of the heritage building is not aligned with departmental needs and limits the ability to implement park amenities that are

needed. Staff recommend utilizing designation under the Heritage Act as the tool to conserve the heritage building, rather than parkland dedication.

City staff are recommending that the Block Plan be revised so that the Frost Building is not in a park block.

Location of School Block

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024, came into effect on October 20, 2024. The PPS provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development and replaced both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 with a focus on housing-supportive policies. All planning decisions shall be consistent with the PPS.

Policy 2.1.6 requires planning authorities to support the achievement of complete communities by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, and other uses (including schools) to meet long-term needs.

Policy 3.1.5 states that there should be consideration and encouragement “for innovative approaches in the design of schools and associated childcare facilities, such as schools integrated in high-rise developments”. This could include locating complementary employment uses, such as offices and administrative facilities above the proposed elementary school. However, this has not been provided on the applicant submitted Block Plan.

Policy 6.2.1 states that a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters which includes managing and/or promoting growth and development that is integrated with planning for infrastructure and public service facilities, including schools.

City of Guelph planning staff have concerns with locating the school block in the location proposed by the applicant and are recommending moving the school block to a Residential block, in accordance with the Upper Grand District School Board’s phasing and sizing requirements. This would allow for better integration with residential development while opening up more land for a mix of employment-related uses in the first phase of development.

As per Policy 11.2.6.3.4.1 of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, the Employment Mixed-use 2 designation is intended to be an important component of the Guelph Agri-Innovation Cluster. Although educational uses are listed as a permitted use in the Employment Mixed-use 2 designation in Section 11.2.6.3.4 of the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, permitted uses are “subject to the applicable provisions of this Secondary Plan” which includes the Vision, Principles, and Objectives of the Secondary Plan related to growing innovative employment opportunities that support the knowledge-based innovation sector.

In particular, Employment Mixed-use 2 areas will have a mix of uses “that will serve to support the role of the employment area as an important component of the Guelph Agri-Innovation Cluster.” (Policy 11.2.6.3.4.1) The proposed school will

support the Residential designation in the Guelph Innovation District, rather than the employment areas.

Locating the school in a Residential block in the first phase of development in Blocks 1 and 2 would also conform to Policy 7.1.5 of the City of Guelph Official Plan which encourages the provision of new schools within a reasonable time of the construction of new housing in the area.