

Staff Report



To City Council
Service Area Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date Tuesday, January 20, 2026
Subject **Decision Report**
55 Baker Street, 152 and 160 Wyndham Street North
Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment
File: OZS25-016
Ward 2

Recommendation

1. That the application from GSP Group Inc., on behalf of Baker Street Development Inc. (Windmill), for a Zoning By-law Amendment to change the zoning from "Site-specific Downtown 1" (D.1-28), according to Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended to a new "Site-specific Downtown 1" (D.1-xx) Zone, according to Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended, to facilitate the development of two mixed-use towers (with proposed building heights of 17 and 19 storeys), containing approximately 401 residential dwelling units with ground floor commercial, and underground and podium parking on the lands municipally known as 55 Baker Street, 152 and 160 Wyndham Street North and legally described as Firstly: Part of Lots 73 and 74, Part of Burying Ground and Part of Lane at the rear of Lots 73 and 74 (AKA Parklane), Closed by CS31228, Plan 8, Parts 1, 2, MS80255, Designated as Parts 6 and 7 Plan 61R21815, City of Guelph, and Part 4 61R21815, S/T & T/w ROS557919 and ROS573090; Secondly: Part Burying Ground, Plan 8 and Part Lane through Burying Ground, Plan 8, Closed by MS80255, Designated as Parts 6 and 7 Plan 61R21818, City of Guelph, be approved in accordance with Attachment-3 of Infrastructure, Development and Environment Report 2026-12, dated January 20, 2026.
2. That in accordance with Section 34(17) of the Planning Act, City Council has determined that no further public notice is required related to the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment affecting 55 Baker Street, 152 and 160 Wyndham Street North.

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This report provides a staff recommendation to approve a Zoning By-law Amendment application to facilitate the development of two, mixed-use 17-storey and 19-storey towers containing 401 residential dwelling units with ground floor commercial, and underground and podium parking.

Key Findings

Planning staff support the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment subject to the recommended zoning regulations in Attachment-3.

Strategic Plan Alignment

This report aligns with the Improving Housing Supply priority in the 2024- 2027 Strategic Plan. The recommended Zoning By-law Amendment aligns with the objective of City Building: improving housing supply. The proposed development application is in conformity with the City's Official Plan, which is the City's key document for guiding future land use and development. The Official Plan's vision is to plan and design an increasingly sustainable city as Guelph grows.

A review of how the proposal is in conformity with the City's Official Plan can be found in the Staff Review and Planning Analysis in Attachment-9.

Future Guelph Theme

City Building

Future Guelph Objectives

City Building: Improve housing supply

Financial Implications

Estimated Development Charges: Residential Development Charges \$12,732,000 and Non-Residential Development Charges \$188,000 (based on current rates)

Estimated Community Benefit Charge: \$397,500 (based on current rates)

Estimated Annual Property Taxes: \$600,000 to \$700,000 (estimate only, actuals may vary)

As outlined in the [Shaping Guelph Municipal Comprehensive Review: Fiscal Impact Analysis Memo](#), as the city grows, each new unit added in Guelph has a budget impact, and there are new operating and capital costs that are required to support this growth. Council should anticipate with each new residential unit or job created in the city in the short- to medium-term (10 to 15 years), that it will mean tax levy and rate pricing increases. This study demonstrates that higher-density growth mitigates tax and rate pressures over time, as this is the most cost-effective use of land and drives the highest taxation revenue per acre. There may be other social and economic benefits of the development to consider, and Council should continually weigh the potential City budget increase against the broader value proposition of any given development.

Report

Background

An application to amend the Zoning By-law was received for the lands municipally known as 55 Baker Street, 152 and 160 Wyndham Street North by GSP Group on behalf Baker Street Development Inc. (Windmill). The application was received by the City on September 12, 2025, and deemed complete on October 3, 2025. The Statutory Public Meeting for the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application was held on November 12, 2025.

The site was previously subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment which was approved by Council on December 12, 2023 (City file: OZS23-008). The approved design included two, 15-storey towers with two levels of underground parking, two public squares, and a future development block at the north end of the site intended to be stacked townhouses.

Since the approval of the Zoning By-law Amendment in 2023, the applicant has progressed their development plans which has resulted in modifications to the building design. During this time, the City completed the Downtown Heights Study. This study resulted in Official Plan Amendment 106 (OPA 106), which was approved by Council on April 8, 2025, and subsequently approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) on August 25, 2025. OPA 106 changed the permitted height for the mixed-use tower portion of the site from a maximum height of 15 storeys to 24-storeys.

The revised design includes two towers, a 17-storey North Tower, and a 19-storey South Tower. One level of underground parking, and one to three levels of podium parking above the ground floor are provided. Residential and commercial uses are maintained on the ground floor. The City's future Central Library is located on a portion of the site. The Central Library was Site Plan Approved on April 5, 2023.

While the subject application applies to the entire site, no changes are proposed to the library portion of the development which is currently under construction. Two public squares are also included as part of the proposed development and are being designed in conjunction with the two towers. The portion of the site containing the library and public squares will remain in the City's ownership, while the private tower portion of the site will be purchased by Windmill from the City.

Location

The subject lands are located on the south side of Woolwich Street between Baker Street and Wyndham Street North (see Attachment-1 Location Map and Attachment-2 Aerial Photograph). The subject lands are approximately 1.08 hectares in size and have frontage along Park Lane North, Baker Street, Wyndham Street North and Chapel Lane. The north portion of the subject lands is vacant, and the south portion is under construction for the City's Central Library proposed as part of the Baker Street Redevelopment project. Surrounding land uses include:

- To the north: a portion of Park Lane, beyond which is Woolwich Street and a mix of 1-2 storey commercial buildings, single detached residential, and apartment buildings;
- To the south: the future Guelph Central Public Library, and further across Chapel Lane is the Royal City Mission drop-in centre, Knox Presbyterian Church, and several commercial-residential mixed-use buildings;
- To the east: generally, 2-3 storey buildings with ground floor commercial and residential or office uses above; and,
- To the west: commercial-residential mixed-use buildings typically ranging in height from 9-12 storeys along Baker Street.

Downtown Secondary Plan Land Use Designation and Policies

The subject lands are designated as "Mixed Use 1" in the Downtown Secondary Plan. Permissible uses within this land use designation include retail and service uses, multiple unit residential buildings (such as apartments and townhouse dwellings) and institutional uses. The "Mixed Use 1" land use designation

encourages or requires the creation of active frontages by locating retail, service, and entertainment uses on the ground floor of buildings. Within this designation, the Zoning By-law establishes maximum and minimum setbacks from the street to help frame and animate adjacent streets. Building heights as approved through Official Plan Amendment 106 (OPA 106) are permitted to be a maximum of 24-storeys on the mixed-use tower portion of the site.

Details of the existing land use designation and policies of the Downtown Secondary Plan are included in Attachment-4.

Existing Zoning

The subject lands are currently zoned "Site-specific Downtown 1" (D.1-28), according to Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended. Details of the existing zoning are provided in Attachment-5.

Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment

The purpose of the Zoning By-law Amendment application is to add site-specific zoning regulations in Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended, to the previously approved D.1-28 zoning through a new "Site-specific Downtown 1" (D.1-xx) Zone that proposes the following additional provisions:

- To permit a building height of 24 storeys outside of the Protected View Corridor, whereas Table 9.4, Section 9.3(c) requires compliance with Schedule B-4 which outlines a building height of 3-6 storeys on northern and southeastern portions of the site, and 5-15 storeys on the central and southwestern portions of the site.
- To permit a floorplate length to width ratio of 1.9:1 for the North Tower, whereas Section 18.14.30.2.3 of the Zoning By-law permits a length to width ratio of 1.8:1 for the North Tower.
- That Section 9.4.2 (a)(i) of the Zoning By-law not apply to the site or only apply to podium of any building within the Downtown Exterior Finishes Overlay as shown on Schedule B-6, whereas Section 9.4.2 (a)(i) requires exterior facades to include coursed masonry and/or materials which replicate coursed masonry (except plain, uncoloured concrete).
- That Bicycle parking space design and location as outlined in Sections 5.8.1 (a)(iii), and 5.8.2 shall not apply.

While the applicant had originally requested an amendment permitting a structure (above-ground transformer) to be within a required sight line triangle, staff have determined the amendment is not needed to permit the proposed development. As per Table 9.3, Row A of the Zoning By-law, Section 4.6 for sight line triangles is not applicable to Downtown 1 (D.1) zoned lands such as the subject property. Therefore, this request has not been included in the recommended regulations.

The recommended zoning and specialized regulations are included in Attachment-3.

A review of the recommended zoning and specialized regulations is included in the Staff Review and Planning Analysis in Attachment-9.

Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of two towers connected by a podium bridge on floors 2-4. The proposed North Tower is a 17-storey mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space fronting Wyndham Urban Square off Wyndham

Street, and residential units on the ground floor and on floors 3-17. One level of underground parking is proposed with one level of podium parking on the second floor. A total of approximately 204 residential units are proposed within the North Tower including a range of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units. Units will be accessed via a shared lobby and hallways and connected through secured elevator lobbies to the parking levels above and below-grade.

Amenity space is shared between the North and South Towers. A portion of the podium bridge includes indoor amenity space. Additional indoor amenity space is located on the ground floor of the South Tower overlooking Baker Court, and the second floor of the North Tower overlooking Wyndham Urban Square. Outdoor amenity spaces are provided on the rooftop of the podium close to Wyndham Street and the podium bridge. Over 1,000 square metres of amenity spaces (indoor and outdoor) are provided for residents of the development.

The proposed South Tower is a 19-storey mixed-use building with residential and amenity spaces located on the ground floor and floors 5-19. One potential commercial space is also located on the ground floor adjacent to the Library Urban Square. One level of underground parking is proposed with three levels of podium parking on floors two through four. The South Tower will include approximately 197 units, including a range of studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units. Units will be accessed via a shared lobby and hallways and connected through secured elevator lobbies to the parking levels above and below-grade.

The underground and podium parking garage will exclusively serve the residents of the development. A total of approximately 205 car parking spaces is being provided for residents and long-term bicycle parking is being provided in the underground parking garage as well within a room at grade. One indoor bicycle parking space will be provided for each residential unit within the proposed development. Outdoor bicycle parking will be provided to serve visitors of the site.

The proposed site plan is included in Attachment-7 and the proposed building elevations are included in Attachment-8.

Financial Implications

As the city grows, there are new operating and capital costs that are required to support this growth. It is not possible for staff to identify the quantum and timing of these budget impacts at the time of development application, but it needs to be recognized, that as the city grows, so do the City services. As outlined in the [Shaping Guelph Municipal Comprehensive Review: Fiscal Impact Analysis Memo](#), Council should anticipate with each new residential unit or job created in the city in the short- to medium-term (10 to 15 years), that it will mean tax levy and rate pricing increases.

The following shows the revenue and cost implications for the addition of 401 new residential dwelling units and 625 square metres of commercial space. These are estimates only, based on current rates and assessment values. Actuals will vary.

Expenses

The City will be required to extend existing City services to these new residents and businesses at the time of occupancy. The City needs to account for the cost of providing these extended services and does so through the multi-year budget based upon forecasted estimated population growth. Each budget year, there is a

review of the actual demand on services and adjustments are made through the budget confirmation process. Further, the City has or will invest in the growth-enabling capital servicing infrastructure necessary for the decision before Council. Growth-costs are not fully funded by development revenue and have an impact on the City's budget. For more information on the cost of growth and how its funded, the City's financial Growth Strategy is provided on the [budget website](#).

Revenues

Estimated Annual Property Taxes: \$600,000 to \$700,000. This is the new tax revenue that the City can use to fund the new operating service and asset replacement costs required to serve this new population.

Estimated Development Charge impacts: Residential Development Charges \$12,732,000 and Non-Residential Development Charges \$188,000. Development charges may be subject to a number of Provincially legislated exemptions, discounts and reductions which require property tax and utility rate contributions to subsidize lost revenues.

Estimated Community Benefit Charge: \$397,500

Estimated Parkland Dedication or Parkland Payment in Lieu: Cash-in-lieu will be required and will be assessed through a valuation acquired at the time of building permit.

The above figures are approximations only based on the addition of 401 new residential dwelling units and 625 square metres of commercial space, and are based on current rates. The applicable development fees, exemptions, discounts, or other reductions will be determined at the time of building permit issuance.

Staff Review and Planning Analysis

The staff review and planning analysis for this application is provided in Attachment-9. The analysis addresses relevant planning considerations, including land use planning issues raised by Council at the statutory public meeting. Final comments on the proposal from agencies and internal City departments are included in Attachment-11. The staff review and planning analysis addresses the following:

- Evaluation of the proposal against the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement;
- Evaluation of the proposal's conformity with the Official Plan and Downtown Secondary Plan;
- Evaluation of the proposal's conformity with Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, including the review of the proposed zoning amendments and the review of requested specialized zoning regulations;
- Review of urban design and the overall site layout;
- Consideration of the applicable sections of the Community Energy Initiative (CEI) update;
- Review of supporting documents submitted in support of the application; and,
- Review of land use planning comments and issues raised at the public meeting and all comments received from circulated agencies and members of the public.

Staff Recommendation

Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement. The proposed Zoning By-

law Amendment conforms to the objectives and policies of the Secondary Plan and the specialized zoning regulations proposed are appropriate for the site. Planning staff recommend that Council approve the Zoning By-law Amendment subject to the specialized zoning regulations as outlined in Attachment-3 and that no further public notice is required in accordance with Section 34(17) of the Planning Act.

Consultations and Engagement

The applicant held an in-person neighbourhood information meeting on June 19, 2025 to inform the community about the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and revised Urban Design Master Plan and obtain feedback. A Community Engagement Report that summarizes public comments has been submitted with the complete Zoning By-law Amendment submission package.

A combined Notice of Complete Application, Public Meeting for a Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and Decision on Endorsement of the Revised Urban Design Master Plan was emailed on October 15, 2025 to local boards and agencies and City service areas. Notice of the Complete Application, Public Meeting and Decision on Endorsement of the Revised Urban Design Master Plan was also advertised on the City's website and in Guelph Today on October 16, 2025. Notice of the application has also been provided by signage on the subject lands and all supporting documents submitted with the application have been posted on the City's website.

The Notice of Decision Meeting was emailed on January 6, 2026 to interested parties who provided comments on the application or requested to receive further notice. The public notification summary is included in Attachment-12

Attachments

Attachment-1 Location Map and 120 metre Circulation

Attachment-2 Aerial Photograph

Attachment-3 Recommended Zoning, Regulations and Conditions

Attachment-4 Downtown Secondary Plan Land Use Designations and Policies

Attachment-5 Existing Zoning, Zoning By-law (2023)-20790

Attachment-6 Proposed Zoning, Zoning By-law (2023)-20790

Attachment-7 Proposed Site Plan

Attachment-8 Proposed Building Elevations

Attachment-9 Staff Review and Planning Analysis

Attachment-10 Community Energy Initiative Commitment

Attachment-11 Departmental and Agency Comments

Attachment-12 Public Notification Summary

Departmental Approval

Chris DeVriendt, MCIP, RPP, Manager of Development Planning

Report Author

Lindsay Sulatycki, MCIP, RPP, Senior Development Planner

Matthew Yu, Planner I

This report was approved by:

Krista Walkey, MCIP, RPP
General Manager, Planning and Building Services
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
519-822-1260 extension 2395
krista.walkey@guelph.ca

This report was recommended by:

Terry Gayman, P. Eng.
Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
519-822-1260 extension 2248
terry.gayman@guelph.ca