

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Wednesday, April 15, 2026
Subject	Statutory Public Meeting Report, 210, 214 and 222 College Avenue East, Proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments File: OZS26-003 Ward 5

Recommendation

1. That report 2026-116 regarding proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by GSP Group Inc., on behalf of EM Guelph Developments Limited Partnership, to permit the development of a 10-storey, 153 dwelling unit, purpose-built post-secondary student rental apartment building on the lands municipally known as 210, 214 and 222 College Avenue East, and legally described as Part of Lot 5, Concession 2, Division 'G' City of Guelph as in ROS157850, ROS524942, & ROS666478, from Infrastructure, Development and Environment dated April 15, 2026, be received.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide planning information on the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted for the subject lands. The Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments are required to facilitate the development of a 10-storey, 153 dwelling unit, purpose-built post-secondary student rental apartment building. This report has been prepared in conjunction with the Statutory Public Meeting for the applications.

Key Findings

Key findings will be reported in the future Infrastructure, Development and Environment recommendation report to Council.

Strategic Plan Alignment

This report aligns with the priority of City Building in the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. The review of this development application will include an assessment of its conformity with 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. The Public Meeting for the proposed development applications provides the opportunity for City Council, residents, and community groups to learn more, ask questions and provide comments on the proposed development.

Future Guelph Theme

City Building

Future Guelph Objectives

City Building: Improve housing supply

Financial Implications

Financial implications will be reported in the future staff recommendation report to Council.

Report

Background

Applications for an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment have been received for the lands municipally known as 210, 214 and 222 College Avenue East from GSP Group Inc., on behalf of EM Guelph Developments Limited Partnership. The applications were received by the City on January 19, 2026, and deemed complete on February 19, 2026.

Location

The subject site is made up of three separate parcels known municipally as 210, 214 and 222 College Avenue East. The overall site is approximately 0.39 hectares in size and is rectangular in shape with approximately 61.6 m of frontage along College Avenue East. The site currently consists of three single detached dwellings and vegetation.

The surrounding land uses include:

- To the north, the Cutten Fields Golf Course. Further north is the Eramosa River and Radial Line trail;
- To the east, is a secondary parking area for Cutten Fields. Further east are the University of Guelph Arboretum lands which include a research plot, the Morwick G360 Groundwater Research Institute and the Guelph Turfgrass Institute, G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre;
- To the south, is the University of Guelph's main campus which includes Varsity Field and a parking area; and,
- To the west, is a two and a half storey single detached dwelling. Further west is the Cutten Fields indoor recreation dome, the Cutten Fields Club House and a parking area for Cutten Fields and the University of Guelph campus.

Existing Official Plan Land Use Designation and Policies

The Official Plan land use designation that applies to the subject lands is "Low Density Residential". This land use designation permits detached, semi-detached, duplex dwellings, and multiple unit residential buildings such as townhouses and apartments.

The subject lands are located within the delineated built-up area of the city, as such a maximum height of three stories is permitted. Furthermore, as the subject lands are located on an arterial road, a maximum net density of 60 units per hectare is permitted.

Further details on the land use designation and policies are included in Attachment-3.

Proposed Official Plan Amendment

The purpose of the proposed Official Plan Amendment application is to change the land use designation of the subject lands from "Low Density Residential" to "High Density Residential". The "High Density Residential" land use designation requires a minimum height of 3-storeys and permits a maximum height of up to 10-storeys. Furthermore, it requires a minimum net density of 100 units per hectare and permits a maximum net density of 150 units per hectare.

However, in addition to the land use designation change, a site-specific policy is requested to permit a maximum net density of 425 units per hectare for a "Post-Secondary School Residence."

Details of the proposed land use designation are included in Attachment- 4.

Existing Zoning

The subject lands are zoned "Low Density Residential 1 (RL.1)" in Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended. The RL.1 zone permits single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, small multi-unit residential buildings, on-street townhouses and other similar uses.

There is also a Holding Provision (H1) on the lands municipally known as 222 College Avenue East. The purpose of Holding Provision (H1) is to ensure the lands are not intensified until the owner has addressed certain servicing-related conditions to the satisfaction of the City.

Details of the existing zoning are included in Attachment-5.

Proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment

The purpose of this Zoning By-law Amendment application is to remove the Holding Provision (H1) from 222 College Avenue East and change the zoning for the overall lands from the current "Low Density Residential 1" (RL.1) Zone in Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended to a "Specialized High Density Residential" (RH.7-XX) Zone.

The following specialized regulations have been requested to facilitate this proposal:

- Permit a "Post-Secondary School Residence" as an additional permitted use, that is defined as: "Post-Secondary School Residence" shall mean the whole of an apartment building consisting of dwelling units primarily intended for post-secondary school students.
- Increase the maximum density from 150 units per hectare to a maximum of 425 units per hectare for a "Post-Secondary School Residence".
- Reduce the minimum front yard setback from 6 m to 4.3 m.
- Reduce the minimum interior side yard setback along the east side from 7.5 m to 5.5 m.
- Reduce the minimum rear yard setback from 7.5 m to 5.5 m.
- Permit a retaining wall 0.2 m from the rear lot line and east interior side lot line.
- Reduce the minimum buffer strip along the east interior side lot line from 3 m to 0.2 m.

- Permit a transformer and retaining wall within the buffer strip, whereas a transformer or retaining wall are not permitted to be located within the buffer strip.
- Increase the maximum floorplate size from 1,200 m² for the 7th and 8th storey to 1,600 m² for the 7th storey and 1,280 m² for the 8th storey, and from 1,000 m² for each storey above the 8th storey to 1,100 m² for the 9th storey.
- Reduce the minimum building setback to 2 m for all portions of the building above the 7th storey facing a street, whereas a minimum building setback of 3 m is required for all portions of the building above the 6th storey facing a street.
- Reduce the minimum tower setback from 12 m to 5.5 m for the east interior side lot line and rear lot line, and to 9.5 m for the west interior side lot line, measured perpendicularly from the exterior wall of the 6th storey.
- Reduce the minimum number of active entrances required from one active entrance for every 30 m of street line for the portion of the building facing the street (two active entrances required), to one active entrance.
- Reduce the minimum common amenity area requirement from 20 m² per dwelling unit to 16 m² per dwelling unit.
- Increase the maximum angular plane adjacent to an RL.1 zone from 30 degrees to a maximum of 61 degrees.
- Permit a minimum parking space dimension of 2.75 m x 5.5 m.
- Apply a minimum parking rate of 0.42 parking spaces per dwelling unit for a "Post-Secondary School Residence", inclusive of resident and residential visitor parking spaces, with a minimum of 20% of the required parking spaces being reserved for the exclusive use of visitors.
- Permit a drop-off/ pick-up parking space within the front yard and setback 1.65 m from the front lot line, whereas parking spaces are not permitted in the front yard and are required to be setback a minimum of 3 m from a lot line.
- Permit a driveway/ ramp to be setback 0 m from the building, whereas a minimum 3 m setback is required from a surface driveway to a building wall.
- Permit exterior stairs to project 4.10 m into the required front yard and be setback a minimum of 0.2 m from the front lot line, whereas exterior stairs are permitted to project 1.5 m into the required front yard and be setback a minimum of 0.8 m from the front lot line.
- Permit a barrier free access ramp to be setback a minimum of 0.1 m from the front lot line, whereas a minimum setback of 0.8 m is required.

Please note the proposed "Post-Secondary School Residence" use and specialized regulations have been requested by the applicant without staff input at this time. Staff are reviewing the proposed use and specialized regulations and will include an analysis and recommendation in a future report to Council for the proposed applications.

Details of the proposed zoning are included in Attachment-6.

Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of a 10-storey, purpose-built post-secondary student rental apartment building, containing a total of 153 dwelling units. The development includes a mix of 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom units, with approximately 529 bedrooms.

The principal building entrance is located along College Avenue East, with two secondary accesses located along the west side of the building.

A vehicular access driveway is provided on the east side of the site and provides access to a pick-up/ drop-off parking space at the front of the site, as well as access to the on-site loading area and underground garage.

The proposed development includes a total of 65 parking spaces within an underground garage, 13 of which are proposed to be provided as visitor parking spaces, including two accessible parking spaces.

In addition to vehicular parking, 194 long-term bicycle parking spaces are included in the second level of the underground garage, and 16 short-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided near the principal building entrance.

The proposed development also includes a total of 2,477 square metres of indoor and outdoor common amenity space. Indoor common amenity areas will be provided throughout the building, and outdoor common amenity areas will be provided within a ground floor courtyard, as well as along the westerly interior side yard, and on a 10th floor terrace.

Staff would like to note that the proposed "Post-Secondary School Residence" use and specialized regulations have been requested by the applicant without staff input at this time. Staff will be reviewing the proposed use and specialized regulations and will include an analysis and recommendation in a future recommendation report to Council for the proposed applications.

The proposed site concept plan and building rendering are shown in Attachment-7.

Supporting Documents

The following information was submitted in support of the applications and can be found on the City's website under Current Development Applications:

- Architectural Plans (Site Plan, Parking Level Floor Plan (Entry), Parking Level Floor Plan (Low), Common Amenity Area Plans, Elevations and Angular Plan Diagrams), prepared by 5468796 Architecture Inc., dated January 2026;
- Planning Justification Report, prepared by GSP Group, dated January 2026;
- Urban Design Brief, prepared by GSP Group, dated January 2026;
- Pedestrian Wind Comfort Assessment, prepared by RWDI, dated January 2026;
- Shadow Study, prepared by 5468796 Architecture Inc., dated January 2026;
- Energy Study prepared by EQ Building Performance, dated January 2026;
- Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan Report prepared by Jackson Arboriculture Inc., dated December 2025;
- Landscape Concept Plan, prepared by Shift Landscape Architecture, dated January 2026;
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared by CVD Engineering, dated March 2025;
- Geotechnical Investigation prepared by CVD Engineering, dated January 2026;
- Preliminary Scoped Hydrogeological Assessment prepared by CVD Engineering, dated January 2026;
- Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Report prepared by MTE Consultants Inc., dated January 2026;
- Property Survey and Report, prepared by Genesis Land Surveying Inc., dated July 2025;
- Utility Locate Report, prepared by Infrastructure Intelligence Services Inc., dated December 2025;

- Engineering Plans (Existing Conditions Plan, Functional Site Grading Plan and Functional Site Servicing Plan), prepared by MTE Consultants, dated January 2026;
- Noise and Vibration Impact Study prepared by RWDI, dated January 2026; and
- Transportation Impact Study prepared by BA Consulting Group Ltd., dated January 2026.

Staff Review

The review of these applications will address the following issues:

- Evaluation of the proposal for conformity and consistency with the Planning Act;
- Evaluation of the proposal for conformity and consistency with Provincial policy and legislation, including the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement;
- Evaluation of the proposal's conformity with the Official Plan, including Official Plan Amendment criteria;
- Evaluation of the proposal's conformity with Zoning By-law (2023)-20790, as amended, including the review of the proposed zoning, including the need for any additional specialized zoning regulations;
- Review of the proposal's land use compatibility with adjacent and established land uses;
- Review of the proposed site layout, built form, parking, pedestrian connections and site servicing;
- Review of supporting documents submitted in support of the applications;
- Review how the proposed development addresses applicable sections of the Community Energy Initiative update;
- Review alignment with the City's Affordable Housing Strategy; and,
- Address all comments and issues raised during the review of the applications.

Once the applications are reviewed, a report from Infrastructure, Development and Environment with a recommendation will be considered at a future meeting of Council.

Financial Implications

Financial implications will be reported in the future staff recommendation report to Council.

Consultations and Engagement

A combined Notice of Complete Application and Public Meeting was emailed on March 3, 2026, to local boards and agencies and City service areas and mailed to property owners within 120 metres of the subject lands on March 3, 2026. Notice of the Public Meeting was also advertised on the City's website and in Guelph Today (City Information Section) on March 26, 2026. Notice of the applications has also been provided by signage on the subject lands and all supporting documents submitted with the applications have been posted on the City's website.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Location Map and 120m Circulation

Attachment-2 Aerial Photograph

Attachment-3 Existing Official Plan Land Use Designation and Policies

Attachment-4 Proposed Official Plan Land Use Designation

Attachment-5 Existing Zoning

Attachment-6 Proposed Zoning

Attachment-7 Proposed Site Plan and Building Rendering

Attachment-8 210, 214 and 222 College Avenue East, Public Meeting Staff Presentation

Departmental Approval

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