

# Baker District Redevelopment

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## Committee of the Whole Baker District Redevelopment Project Update October 5, 2020





## Agenda

1. September 2019 Recap
2. Project Elements Update
3. Alternative Option
4. Recommendations
5. Conclusion



# September 16, 2019 Recap

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Summary of motions from council report IDE-2019-100 - Baker District Redevelopment – Update and Public Component Construction Costs:

- That the following public components be approved (estimated costs):
  - a) Site remediation, site servicing, and archaeological works - \$15 million.
  - b) Urban Square and streetscape - \$2.6 million.
  - c) Public parking - \$21 million
    - Direction for staff to report back on a strategy to address the financial impact through an updated Parking Master Plan Financial Model.
  - d) Public Library - maximum of \$67.1 million
    - inclusive of a capital funding strategy that requires an estimated 0.86% increase to the property tax levy.
- That staff with the Guelph Public Library and other partners to apply for funding from the Investment in Canada Infrastructure Program – Community, Culture and Recreation Stream (ICIP:CCRS)



# Project Elements Update

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- Public Engagement to date
- Urban Design Master Plan (UDMP)
- Library Schematic Design – Original Layout
- Parking
- Business Terms



# What We Discovered

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- A shared facilities agreement is complex considering Library access, security protocols, shared utilities and spaces, long term operation and maintenance agreements and establishment of easements
- Long-term implications of a freehold strata agreement of the north block building with the library, limit future flexibility
- Construction timing of the library is tied to the construction of the north block residential tower that requires units to be sold prior to being constructed
- Shared access agreements and strata agreements would also be required for the public parking.



## What We Discovered

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- Acquisition of additional property is significantly higher than anticipated and does not increase the overall property value of the Baker District.
- Potential bonusing issues with the land sale
- An institutional partner has not been secured for the south block building to date
- Overall project financial viability is a concern for the project moving forward



# Alternative Option

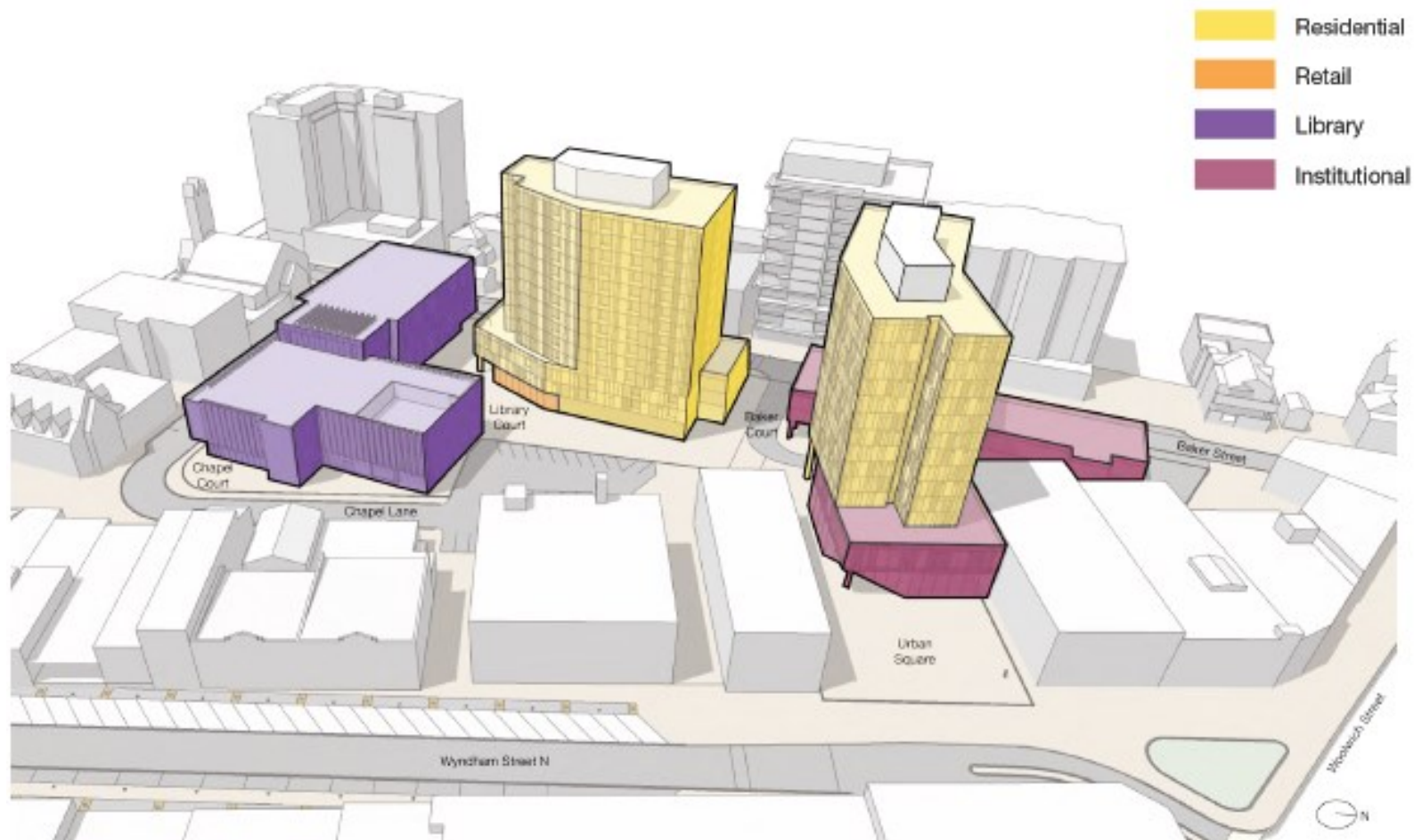
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- Move the library to the south block (where the institutional space was previously allocated)
- Move the institutional space to north block building to allow for more time to acquire tenant
- North building has flexibility for additional residential or retail space if no institutional tenant is found
- Library is an independent standalone building
- Two levels of underground parking remain





# Alternative Option







# Windmill



**Baker District Redevelopment  
Urban Design Presentation to City Council  
October 2020**



## Project Boundary

- Alternative project boundary reduces frontage on Wyndham Street North by half, triggering the following design responses:
  - Library Lane no longer feasible nor practical without removing Urban Square from Wyndham frontage
  - Library frontage on Wyndham no longer feasible or practical without removing Urban Square from Wyndham frontage
- Rethink of Baker District Redevelopment in light of alternative boundary led to the following changes:
  - The Library and the Institutional uses exchange locations so that the Library can be stand-alone facility with programming, financial and construction advantages
  - The institutional use is moved to within the northern podium where it can be more easily accommodated beneath the residential tower than the large open spans of the Library.
  - Wyndham Street frontage maintained as an Urban Square, with potential retail or institutional uses animating the space
  - Pedestrian porosity through the block maintained by a series of mews and open space connections



- Current UDMP Boundary  
Area: ±11,950sm  
(128,620sf)
- Alternative UDMP Boundary  
Area: ±10,700sm  
(115,160sf)



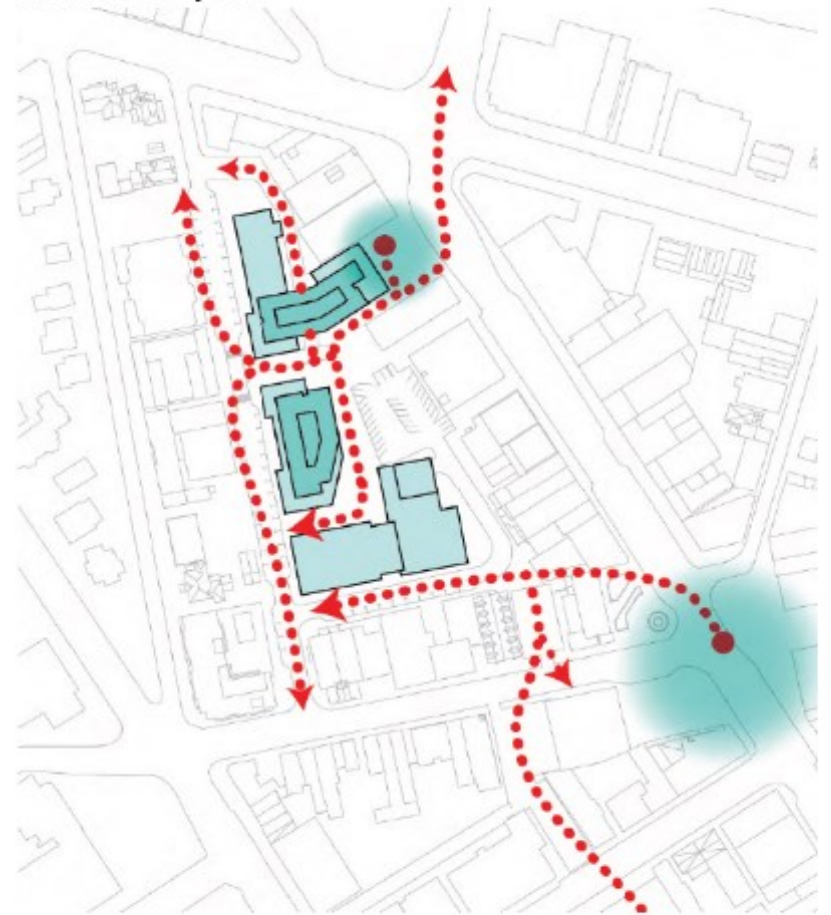
## Pedestrian Circulation and Porosity:

Pedestrian and cycling circulation priorities maintained + enhanced in the alternative layout

Original Layout



Alternative Layout



## Open Space Network:

Increased outdoor placemaking opportunities within alternative layout including Wyndham Square, Baker Court, Library Square and Chapel Court

Original Layout



Alternative Layout

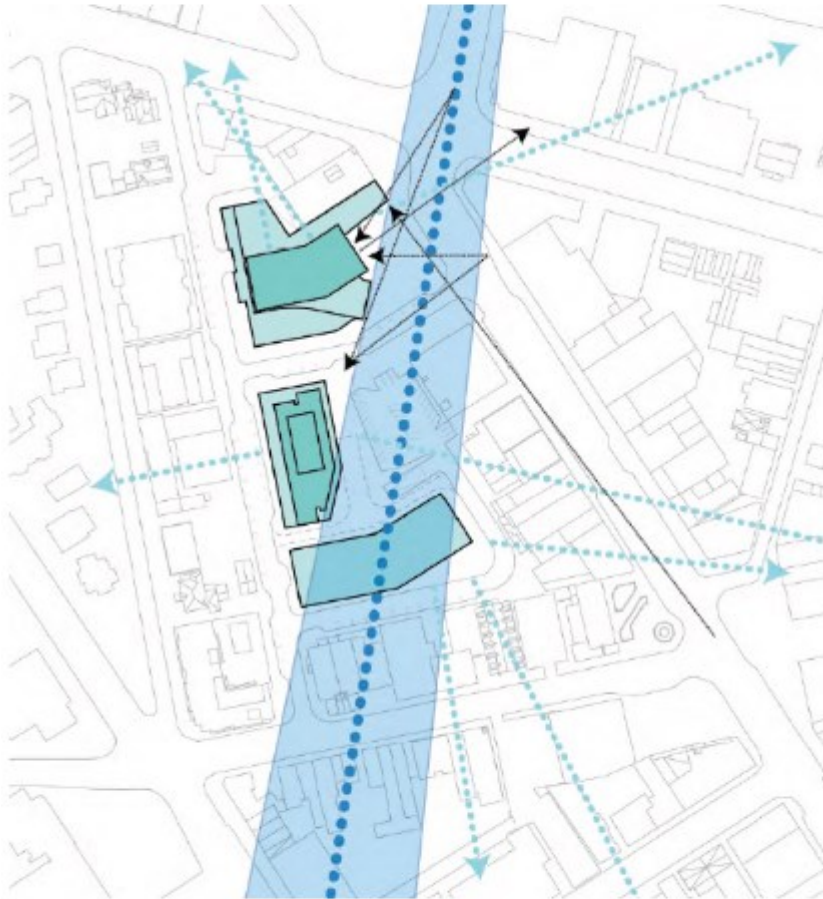




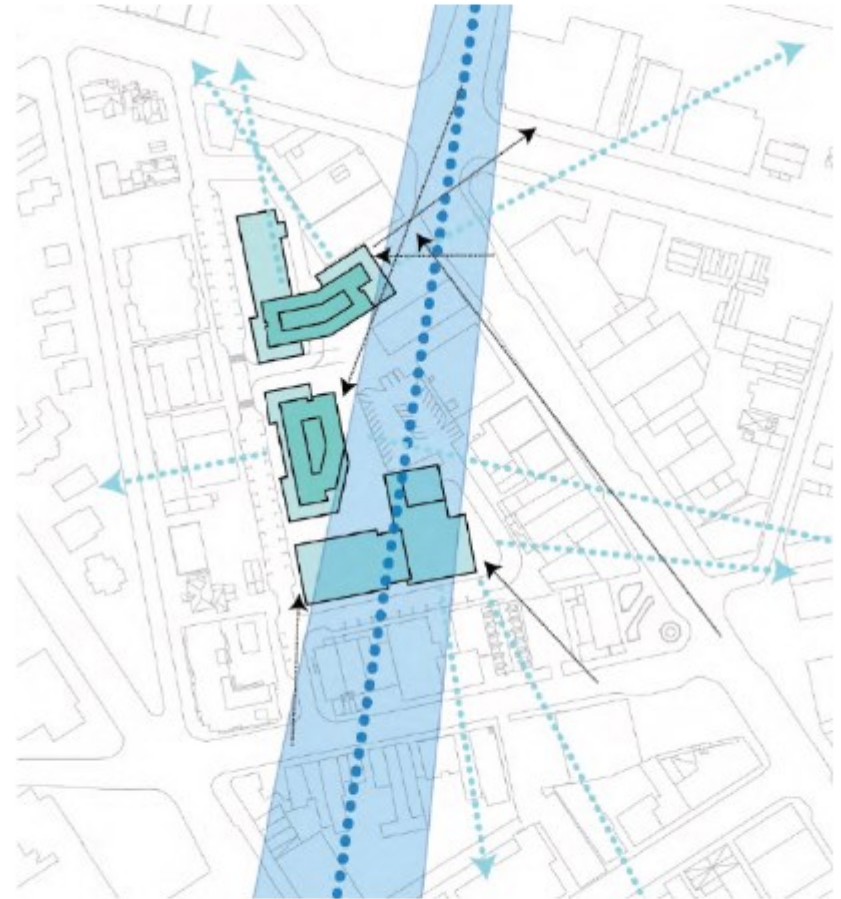
## Key Views and Vistas:

View corridor to Basilica of Our Lady maintained while Library provided direct Baker Street frontage, indirect St. George's Square frontage in the alternative layout

Original Layout



Alternative Layout





## Site Plan: Original Layout

- As per the submitted Urban Design Master Plan, the original layout anticipates three distinct buildings as part of the redevelopment, with two major open spaces (Urban Square and Baker Court), and one new publicly-accessible street (Library Lane) dividing the property into north and south blocks.
- The Landscape design anticipates a common language of pavers, seating and retaining walls, planting, lighting and street furnishings across the property.



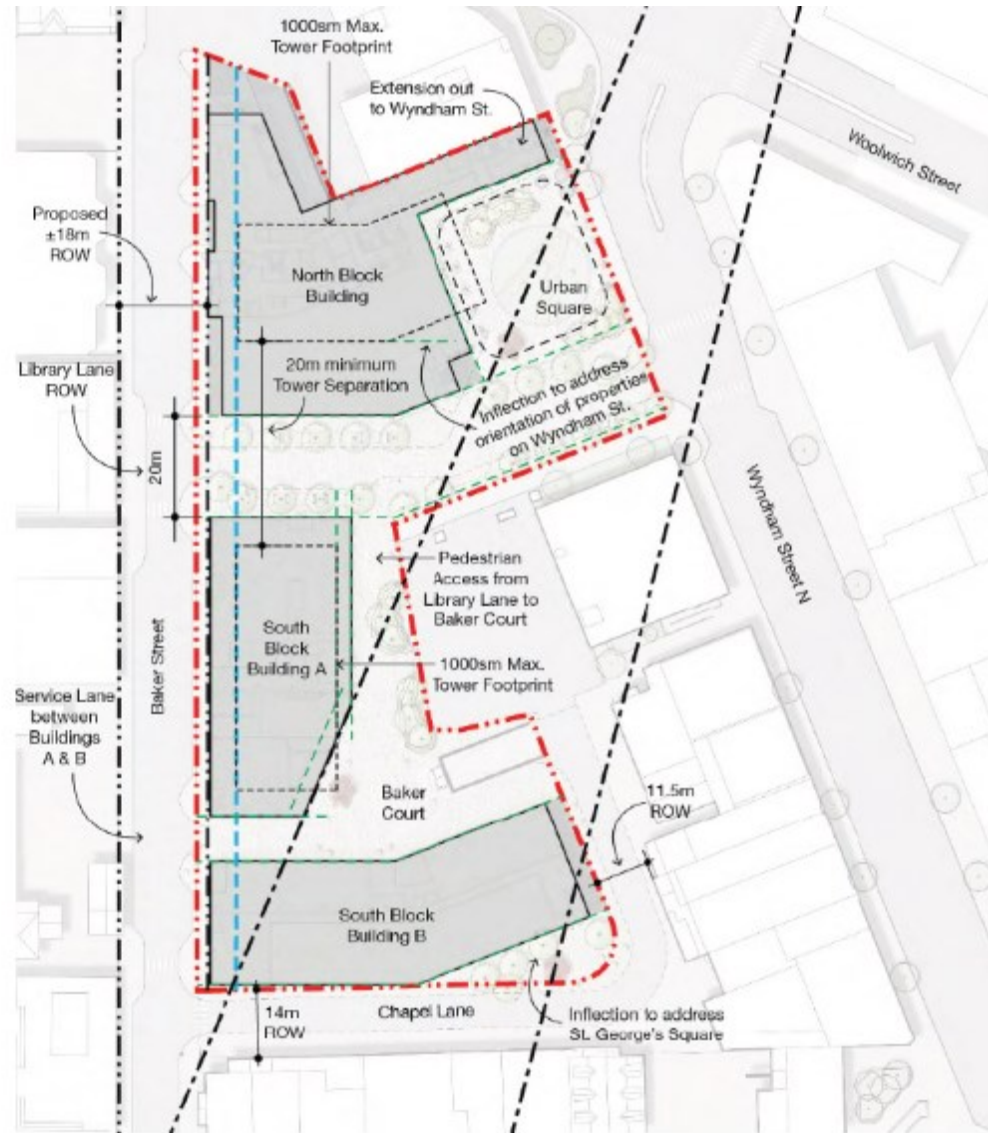
## Site Plan: Alternative Layout

- The alternative layout maintains many important elements of the original design, although reorganized to suit the new distribution of uses on the block.
- The site design features as a series of open spaces connected by pedestrian mews, allowing movement from north to south and Baker Street to Wyndham Street North, through a variety of routes
- A common ground-plane paving material is continued throughout the block in keeping with its “precinct” identity
- Seating elements and planting areas are distributed across the site supporting pedestrian comfort
- Screen walls (open/closed) are angled to break down the ownership boundary between the Baker District and the County property
- The north podium is planned to accommodate an institutional user; however, the footprint is flexible enough to accommodate residential uses in the event an institutional user does not materialize.
- The residential lobbies face one-another with a recessed collonade providing weather-protection



## Built Form Configuration: Original Layout

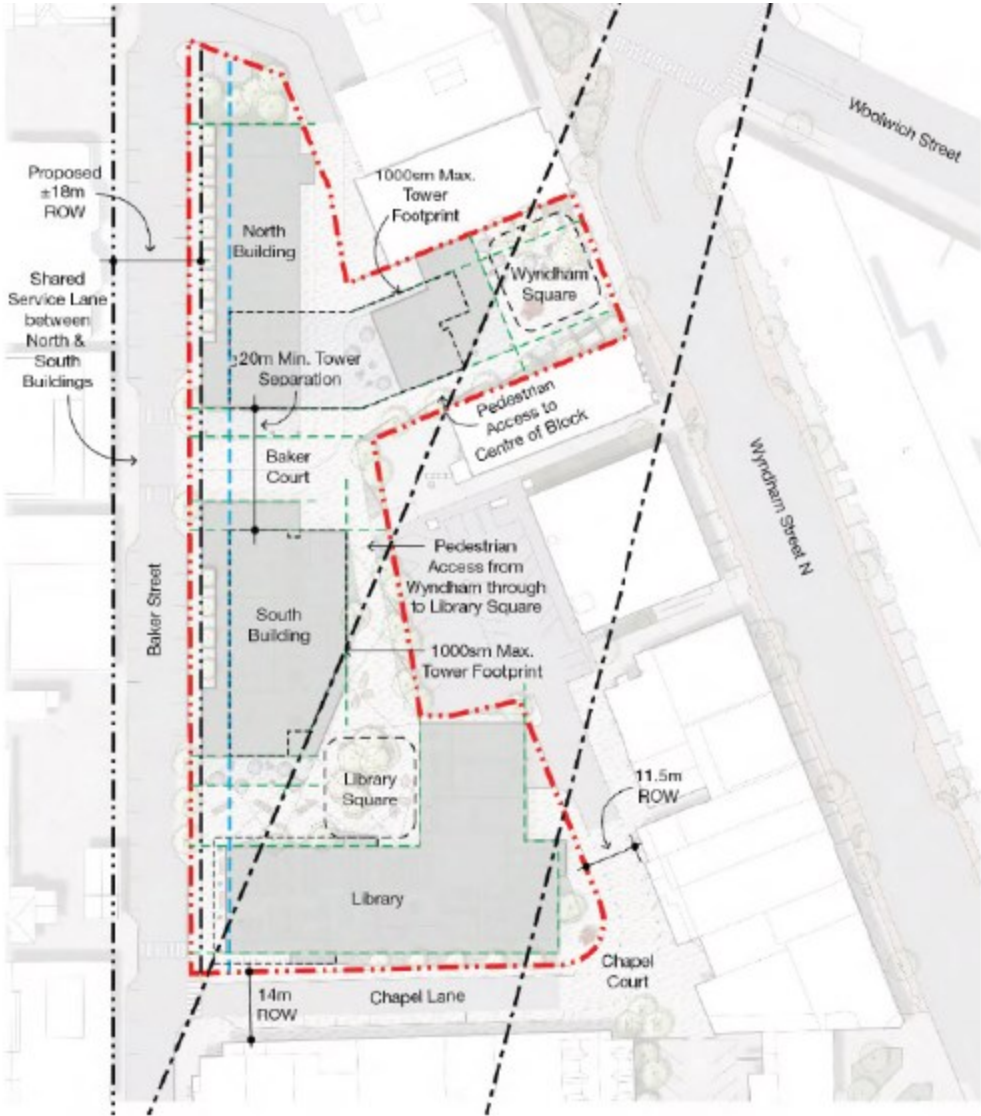
- The original layout includes two 15-storey buildings separated by Library Lane, each developed in a podium/tower form, with the north 4-storey podium accommodating the Library, and the south 1-storey podium accommodating retail uses.
- A stand-alone 3-storey institutional building at the southern end of the site flanks and frames Chapel Lane.





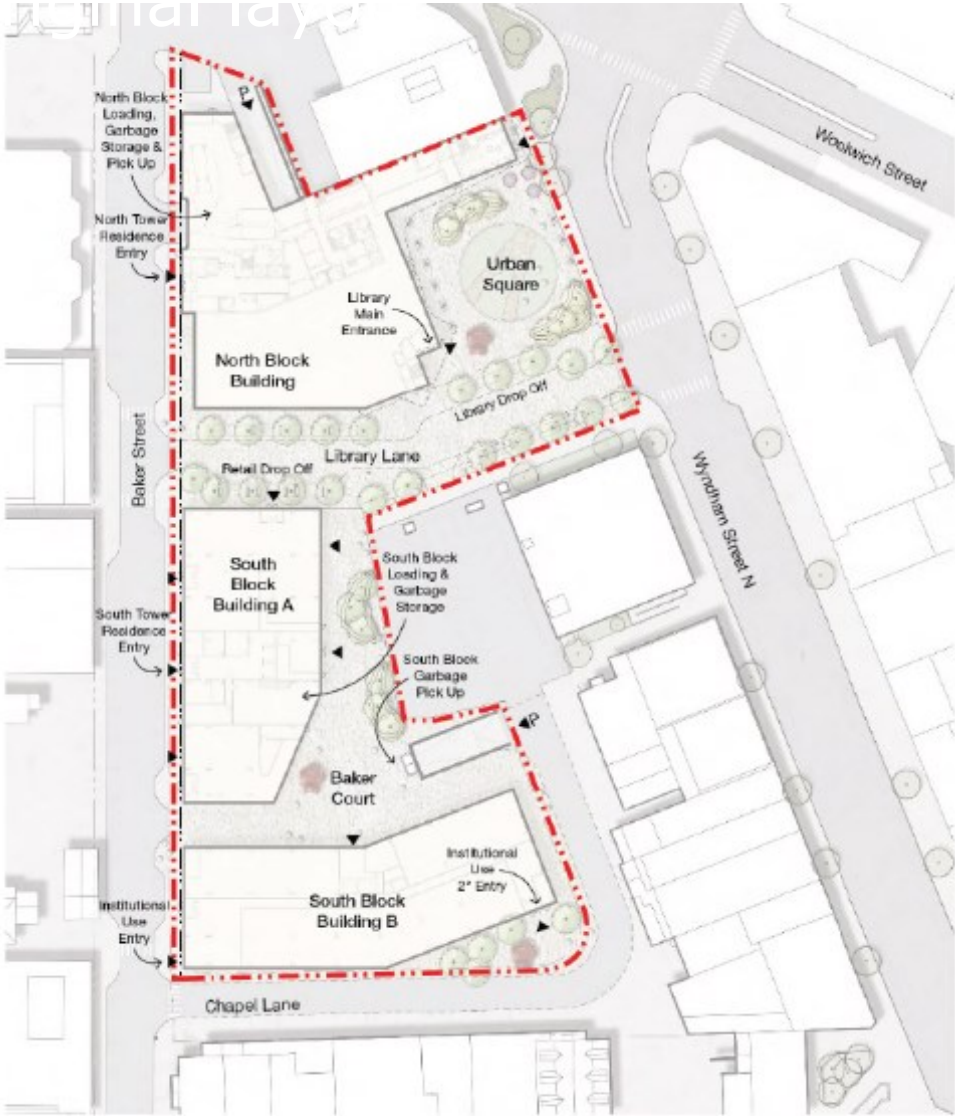
# Built Form Configuration: Alternative Layout

- The alternative layout again includes two 15-storey buildings in a podium/tower format, with both buildings now including more substantial 3-4 storey podiums accommodating institutional, retail and residential uses.
- The Library is accommodated within a stand-alone building at the southern end of the site, flanking and framing Chapel Lane.



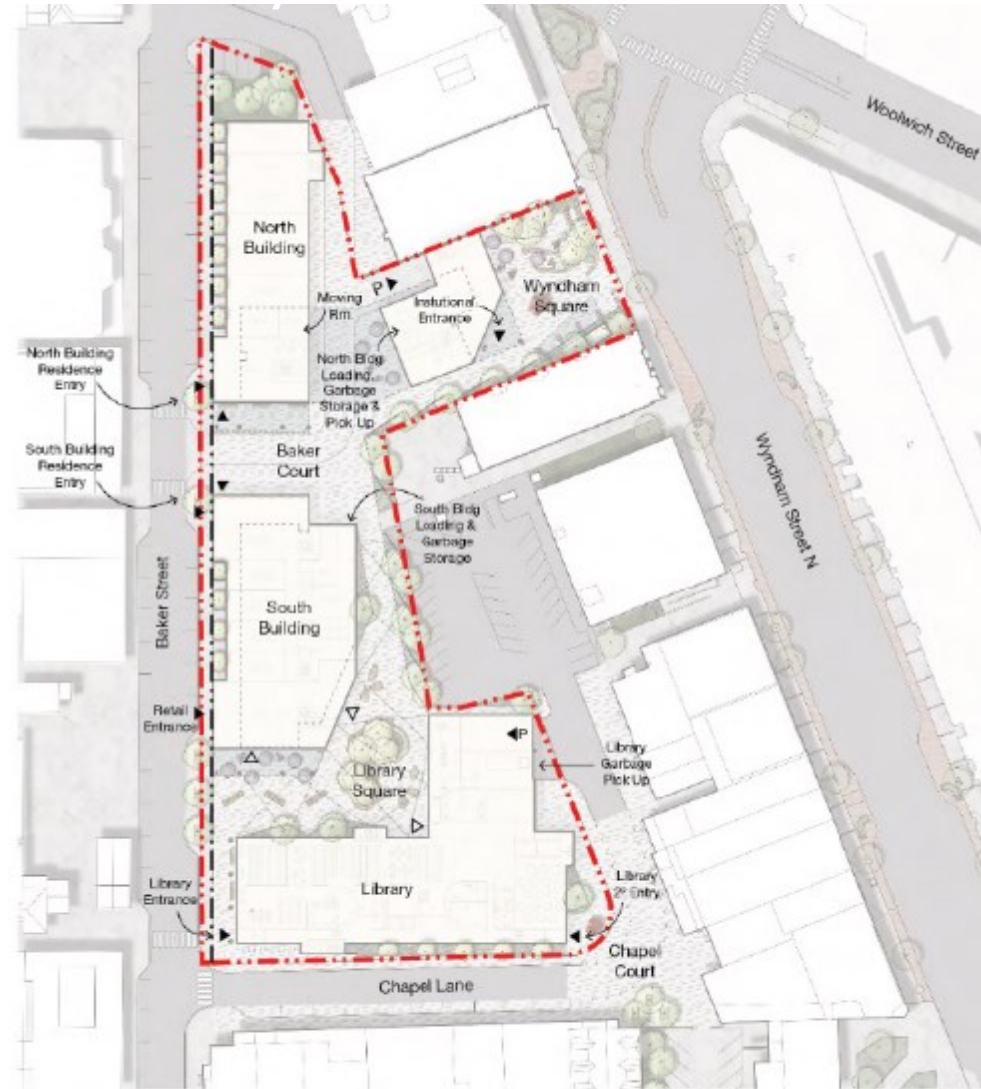
## Parking + Servicing: Original Layout

- Parking is currently organized predominantly within two underground parking levels access from both the north and south ends of the property. Two ramps provided access to all levels of parking - one behind the northern portion of the north block, and the second accessed from Chapel Lane.
- Some at-grade parking is provided along Library Lane and Baker Street, presumed to be converted to two-way traffic and improved as per the “flexible street” typology within the Downtown Streetscape Manual.
- Loading is provided to the north block via an internal loading area accessed from Baker Street, and for the southern block through a shared garbage and loading area contained within Building A and accessed via Baker Street through Baker Court.



## Parking + Servicing: Alternative Layout

- Parking access for the alternative layout is organized in a similar way to the previous design - two levels of underground parking accessed by two ramps located at opposite ends of the property.
- A dedicated Public parking area under the library and library court is proposed
- On-street parking is continued to be presumed along Baker Street.
- Instead of Library Lane, an internal parking and servicing roadway (designed as a curbless woonerf or shared street) encircles the northern block providing access to the northern parking ramp, garbage and servicing rooms for both residential buildings, as well as providing continued access to the adjacent rear properties on Wyndham Street.
- Loading for the Library is presumed to occur from Chapel Lane.





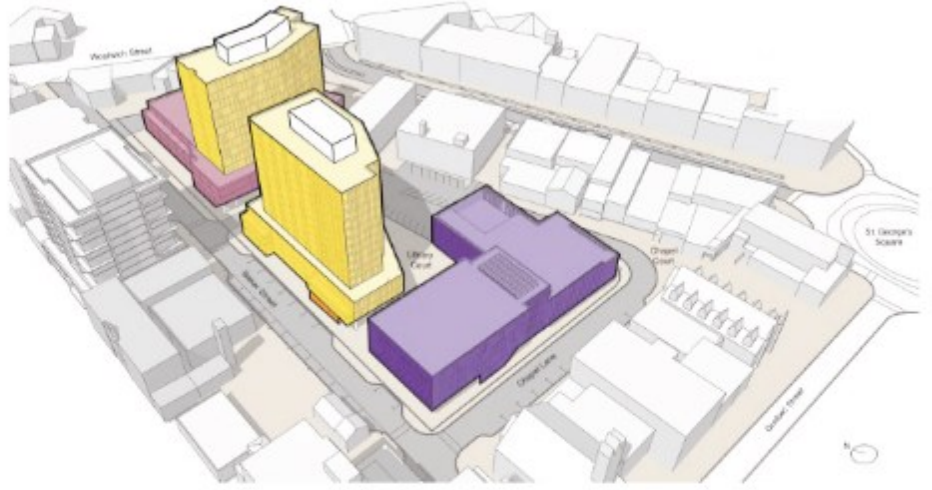
# Mix of Uses: Original Layout

- The original layout includes three buildings on the property with a mixture of uses, including a stand-alone institutional building at the southern-most end of the site.
- The Library is contained within the podium of the north block.
- Modest amounts of retail is provided within the base of Building A on the south block, flanking a central residential lobby.



# Mix of Uses: Alternative Layout

- The alternative layout simplifies the distribution of uses across the property, and takes advantage of the street frontages provided to position the most active and animating uses along those frontages.
- The North Building's podium and tower form is split in half at the lower levels by a service lane, allowing the portion of podium facing Wyndham Street North to have its own identity and more public/institutional use. The portion of podium facing Baker Street extends the institutional program from the Wyndam podium through to Baker Street or alternatively could be residential uses. A prominent residential lobby is positioned at the podium's southern end - facing the residential lobby of the south building.
- The South Building is primarily residential with retail at grade only on its southern edge, facing the Library. Ground floor uses are otherwise residential and setback from Baker Street, with a prominent residential lobby at the north end.
- The Library commands the southern end of the property in a stand-alone building, with entrances anticipated facing Baker Street, Chapel Lane, and Library Square.





## Perspective View: Wyndham Square



### Design Notes:

- A terraced garden and seating edges frame the space and GF retail / institutional use, stepping down to the street
- Informal small amphitheater potential
- Public art potential
- Walkway pergola with seating edge available to accommodate market stalls, stage cover
- Spatially open and inviting - a first stop along a series of mews connections to residential lobbies and Library
- Building responds at grade, inviting pedestrian passage and frames view through the block



## Perspective View: Library Square looking North



### Design Notes:

- Includes a stone island with two ledges and high clustering trees so as to provide a gathering / outdoor classroom space
- Additional limestone boulder erratics are proposed to be provided for climbing, speakers
- Overhead catenary lighting potential between buildings - creates a more welcoming and intimate space
- Retail use at southern edge of residential podium animates Library Square with patio / sheltered seating



## Perspective View: Baker Street looking North



### Design Notes:

- Baker Street upgraded to vibrant, pedestrian-friendly curbside flexible street
- Expanded public realm including street tree planting interspersed with parking and drop-off spaces
- Library given prominent address visible from Quebec Street
- Retail and residential frontages further north along Baker Street animate the street



## Perspective View: Baker Street looking North-East



### Design Notes:

- Entry point to Library Square from Baker Street flanked by Library entrance to the south (right) and retail uses to the north (left)
- High-degree of transparency lends to welcoming entrance to Library Court



## Perspective View: Chapel Court looking North



### Design Notes:

- Chapel Court acknowledges informal pedestrian connections to St. George's Square
- Secondary entrance to Library supports activation of Chapel Lane - paving, planting and roadway design prioritize pedestrian safety
- Servicing access to Wyndham Street properties maintained
- Library parking access at end of Chapel Lane



# Alternative Option

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- Improves overall financial viability of the project
- Significant savings from not acquiring additional properties
- Overall land value to increase as project simplifies
- Increased tax revenue over time approx \$5M over 50 years
- Allows for additional time to secure an institutional partner
- Simplifies legal agreements between City and Windmill
- Still achieves the original development objectives



# Alternative Option

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- Standalone library building has advantages:
  - Stronger identity with an independent asset, provides future flexibility
  - Simplified legal agreements
  - Lower construction costs, no shared services/spaces which simplifies security needs
  - Better control of operating costs/procedures
- No roadway puts focus on more active transportation and pedestrians
- Longer term potential to create alternative connections Wyndham St., St. Georges Square or Quebec St.



# Financial Implications

Baker District Project - City Costs	Original Design (in millions)	Alternative Option (in millions)
<b>Total estimated net land cost for the project for the City</b>	<b>\$16.2 to \$26.2</b>	<b>\$5.2 to \$10.2</b>
Library Construction Costs, Alternative option allows for a more cost effective stand alone rectangular design of approx. 88,000 sq ft.	\$67.1	\$62.0
Public Parking - Alternative layout with approx. 170 spaces and additional shared parking options	\$21.0	\$13.0
Additional costs related to the redesign of the Alternative Option	\$0.0	\$1.5
Urban square and public space	\$2.6	\$2.6
<b>Total estimated City capital cost of the project</b>	<b>\$106.9 to \$116.9</b>	<b>\$84.3 to \$89.3</b>

- The alternative option can achieve most of the existing goals of the Baker District with a potential cost avoidance of between \$17.6 million and \$32.6 million with the probable estimate of \$25 million in cost avoidance. This combined with additional annual revenue from taxation and lower overall operating costs for the library and parking make the alternative option financially viable.





# Capital Costs – Central Library

For 88,000 sqft main library	Alternative Option (in millions)	Funding Source
Replacement 40k sqft	\$28.2	Tax Infrastructure
Growth 20k sqft		
- 90% Development Charges	\$12.7	Development Charges
- 10% Reduction - Tax Growth	\$1.4	Tax Growth
Service Increase 28k sqft	<u>\$19.7</u>	Tax City building
Total Building 88k sqft	\$62.0	

- Includes all soft costs and FF&E
- Current library is 29k sqft, will require additional 11k sqft to meet basic accessibility standards for a total replacement of 40k sq ft and 20k sqft additional for growth requirements
- City Building funding of \$19.7M will require an additional \$1M annually from taxation through the budget for 20 years
- Calculated at \$705 per sqft



# Recommendations

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1. That the recommendation to proceed with the detailed development design for the alternative option site layout for the Baker District Redevelopment Project as outlined in this report be approved.
2. That \$16.6 million for site servicing, environmental & archeological remediation and the outdoor public space for the Baker District be approved and reflected in the 2021 budget.





# Recommendations

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3. That the construction of an 88,000 square foot library in the south block as presented as the alternative option in Report 2020-148, dated October 5, 2020, be approved at a cost of \$62.0 million, and Council approve an increase of 0.39% impact to the tax levy starting in 2021 and remain in place for 20 years, in order to fund the \$19.7 million of the library capital cost that is an enhancement to the current service level beyond that allowable by the Development Charges Act, with construction to begin in 2022 subject to updated design and service delivery reconsiderations as a result of COVID-19.



# Recommendations

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4. That staff be directed to maximize the number of public parking spaces in the south block and pursue sharing agreements for parking in the north block and seek budget approval as part of the 2022 budget process.
5. That staff be directed to phase-in the estimated annual tax supported operating cost of the public components of the Baker District, totaling \$3.5 million, as part of the 2021-2024 operating budget and forecast.
6. That the Guelph Public Library Board report back to Council with a detailed operating budget projection by June 2021 based upon updated design and service delivery reconsiderations resulting from COVID-19.



# Recommendations

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7. That staff proceed with revising the Urban Design Master Plan (UDMP), share a virtual presentation with the community to outline the changes and collect final comments for Council's consideration.





# Conclusion

