We’re Growing in Place — Burlington’s Official Plan Review

Official Plan Review Commercial Strategy Study Workshop

Burlington Downtown Business Association
Board of Management Meeting
May 07, 2014
Presentation Overview

1. Burlington Official Plan Review Background
2. Commercial Strategy Study
3. Discussion and Feedback
4. Next Steps
Burlington Official Plan Review Background

- The Official Plan (OP) sets policies for growth and development over the next 20 years
- Review required every 5 years as per the Planning Act
- The review covers a wide range of policy areas
- Official Plan review scheduled for completion in Q4 2015
- A subsequent comprehensive Zoning By-Law review will then begin
Where are we in the OPR process?

Phase 1: “Gearing Up”
- Build a good foundation for the Official Plan review process
- Define the process
- “Soft Launch” of engagement strategy
- Understand the scope and questions

Phase 2: “Conversations & Analysis”
- “Full Launch” of engagement strategy
- Analyze issues, questions, opportunities
- Identify and assess emerging directions through “directions reports” to inform policy development

Phase 3: “Developing & Finalizing the Plan”
- Develop policy
- Develop Draft Plan
- Finalize Plan and obtain Council approval

Level of Community Engagement
- Inform/Consult
- Involve/Collaborate
- Inform/Consult
Downtown Initiatives

- OP Review
- Core Commitment
  - Mobility Hub Study
  - Public Engagement
  - Task Group Input (COMPLETE)
  - Research
  - Commercial Study
  - City-Owned Real Estate Review
- Employment Lands Study (COMPLETE)
- Parking Study Phase 2 (COMPLETE)
- Cultural Action Plan (COMPLETE)
- BEDC Downtown Employment District

We’re Growing in Place [Burlington’s Official Plan Review]
Commercial Strategy Study

- Consultants: urbanMetrics Inc. and The Planning Partnership retained by the City in Fall 2012

- Purpose: to undertake a review of the City’s commercial policy framework to better incorporate commercial land use planning with neighbourhood planning and urban design in the City and in the Downtown

- Study consists of 3 phases:
  - Phase 1 – Market Analysis and Background Policy Review Reports
  - Phase 2 – Policy Recommendation Report
  - Phase 3 – Design Guidelines for Commercial Uses in Mixed-Use Areas

- Phase 2 report includes recommendations for Downtown Burlington
Commercial Strategy Study

Study Considerations

• Are retail uses spreading too thin in Downtown?
• Is there a better way to address office uses?
• How much retail/commercial space can the market support in the downtown? (short and mid-term market potential)
Commercial Strategy Study Key Findings:

• Downtown serves a variety of functions both local and city-wide

• There is demand for additional uses that serve the surrounding neighbourhoods

• 63% of downtown visitors come from the Primary Trade area bounded by 403/QEW – Walkers Line and Lake Ontario

• Downtown boundary is sound – expansion further north on Brant expected over time
Commercial Study Market Forecast:

- 9,400 new residents and jobs added by 2031
- Forecasted demand to 2031:
  - 76,500 sq ft of additional non-food store space
  - 31,300 sq ft of additional food store space
  - 82,700 sq ft of additional services space, (includes liquor beer and wine stores)

TOTAL: 190,500 square feet of commercial space needed by 2031
Where should that space go?

Commercial Strategy Study Recommendations for the Downtown

- Remove retail and service commercial requirements from the Precinct-level policies
- Introduce new retail street policies along with a new Downtown Retail Street Overlay
- Size limits of commercial spaces depending on type of street
- Other:
  - Noise and vibration Study and Disclosure Agreements
  - Enhanced design guidelines for commercial uses in the Downtown
Commercial Strategy Study Recommendation: Retail Street Structure
## Recommendation: Retail Street Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Street Category Name</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Retail Type</th>
<th>Permission</th>
<th>Commercial Function</th>
<th>Gross Floor Area</th>
<th>Street Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Main Street Retail Street</td>
<td>Small-scale formats</td>
<td>Retail or service commercial uses</td>
<td>Shall be required at-grade</td>
<td>City-wide or Neighbourhood commercial function and may include specialty shops and restaurants.</td>
<td>up to 500 sq.m (up to 5,382 sq.ft)</td>
<td>Street-oriented development with narrow street frontage. Articulation of the storefront and frequent entries shall be required for large formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mixed Use Major Street</td>
<td>Small and large scale formats</td>
<td>Retail or service commercial uses</td>
<td>Shall be required at-grade, and may be permitted on the second storey of buildings.</td>
<td>City-wide commercial function</td>
<td>up to 5,600 sq.m (up to 60,278 sq.ft)</td>
<td>Street-oriented development with narrow street frontage. Articulation of the storefront and frequent entries shall be required for large formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. General Mixed Use Street</td>
<td>Small-scale formats</td>
<td>Retail or service commercial uses</td>
<td>May be permitted</td>
<td>Neighbourhood commercial function</td>
<td>up to 500 sq.m (up to 5,382 sq.ft)</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Convenience / specialty food stores</td>
<td>Small-scale formats</td>
<td>Retail uses</td>
<td>May be permitted</td>
<td>Neighbourhood commercial function located at least 500m (radius) away from another similar retail use</td>
<td>up to 150 sq.m.</td>
<td>Compatible with residential character and built form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
City’s Analysis
Primary Street
Retail or Service Commercial Uses “shall” be required continuously at-grade

What is being shifted in Policy?

• No change. This is what it is currently required.
Mixed Use Major Street
Retail, Service Commercial or Office Uses “shall” be required continuously at-grade

What is being shifted in Policy?
• Retail and Service Commercial are currently required. Office use is added to the list of permitted uses.
General Mixed Use Street
Retail, Service Commercial and Office Uses “may” be permitted at-grade

What is being shifted in Policy?

• Allow flexibility and adaptability over time.
  Retain offices as a permitted use.
Commercial Strategy Study Recommendation: Introduce caps on unit size

**Downtown Burlington Establishments**

- **Food Store Retail:** 2.6% (12 businesses)
- **Non-Food Store Retail:** 15.0% (70 businesses)
- **Services:** 63.6% (297 businesses)
- **Vacant:** 18.4% (86 businesses)
Commercial Strategy Study

Recommendation: Introduce caps on unit size

- **Main Street Retail Street**: up to 500 sq.m / 5,382 sq.ft
- **Mixed Use Major Street**: up to 5,600 sq.m / 60,278 sq.ft
  2,800 sq.m at grade / 30,189 sq.ft
- **General Mixed Use Street**: up to 500 sq.m / 5,382 sq.ft
Commercial Strategy Study
Recommendation: Introduce caps on unit size
City’s Analysis

- Small-scale commercial units provide animation and diversity to the street
- Downtown should be able to attract anchor-type tenants
- Large stores can implement design strategies
- Regional serving retail components will naturally evolve as the downtown grows
Comments/Feedback?
Next Steps

- **Consultant’s Commercial Recommendation**
- **Review and Analysis of Commercial Policies for the Downtown**
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
- **Detailed Downtown Commercial Policy Development**
- **On-going Stakeholder Engagement during policy development**
- **Zoning By-Law Review and Engagement**

We are here

**Official Plan Review**

**Zoning By-Law Review**
Thank you!

Contact Info
Hugo.Rincon@burlington.ca
905.335.7600 x7418