

PB-68-17: Appendix C: Summary of Public Consultation on the draft New Precinct Plan and Policy Directions

Downtown Mobility Hub Preferred Draft Concept

Draft New Precinct Plan Workbook – PIC #3 September 7, 2017

Please Notes: This is a living document and will be updated as feedback regarding the new draft Downtown Precinct System is received.

Introduction

On September 7th, 2017, the third round of public consultation on the Downtown Mobility Hub was held at the Art Gallery of Burlington. Members of the public were invited to attend and provide feedback on the draft New Precinct Plan and Policy Directions for the Downtown Mobility Hub. In June, public engagement sessions focused on two draft concepts which explored where potential growth could be accommodated in the Downtown. With that input, along with ongoing technical studies, a new draft Downtown Precinct System and updated policy framework were produced. The updated precinct system and policy framework were developed with the goal of achieving several objectives for the Downtown Mobility Hub, as listed on page 2 of the *Draft Precinct Plan Workbook*. Approximately 85 people attended the event.

The event was structured as a presentation and workbook session. The presentation included an overview of what the City heard to-date on the Downtown Mobility Hub, outlined main objectives of the new draft precinct plan and provided a description of the intent and key directions for each precinct in the plan. Following the presentation, workbooks were provided to all attendees which outlined the Objectives, Intentions and Key Directions for each of the proposed Precincts in the plan. Presentation materials and the workbook can be found at: www.burlington.ca/mobilityhubs. The feedback collected through the workbooks and comments received through other methods, such as email, is summarized in the following section.

Along with the formal public consultation, three drop-in open houses were held at City Hall that were open to the public, stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss their specific properties, interests or concerns with staff one-on-one. Feedback from these conversations and meetings are outlined in the following section.

Public Consultation Session – September 7, 2017

Below is a summary of the workbook feedback received during and after the public consultation session for the Downtown Mobility Hub held on September 7, 2017. The workbook provided explanation of the Objectives, Intention and Key Directions for each of the proposed precincts in the plan, and posed the following questions:

1. *Do you agree with the general intent of the Precinct?*
2. *Are there key elements of the precinct that you think are missing from the Intention Statement?*
3. *Are there any key directions that you think are missing?*
4. *Do you agree with the overall key directions for this precinct?*

An online version of the workbook was available on the City's website. Feedback received through completed workbook, online submissions and received through other methods such as email, are summarized below to include General Comments on the draft New Downtown Precinct System and key objectives, as well as feedback on each individual precinct.

General Comments

- Transportation along Lakeshore Road is now often difficult. With increased traffic, how will emergency vehicles get to hospital?
 - How will traffic volumes be accommodated?
- You keep on discussing cycling in a city with a large and growing senior population. What did you learn from Lakeshore east of Guelph?
- Towers will block the sun from shining on downtown.
- Development in the core needs to be highly restricted. If these areas become a forest of tall buildings made of steel, glass and concrete, it all becomes very antiseptic and cold. The uniqueness starts to disappear. The character and mix of the stores will change – migrating to coffee shops, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc. These are the services that are geared to a high number of people in the immediate vicinity. The restaurants will need to operate out of 'standard' building fronts – which in my mind is far less appealing and far more difficult to be different. In this forest view of buildings, it will be busy during the day and during the special park events, but a ghost town at night. The problem is that the transition would be slow – and people will adapt to it, as it becomes the new norm. When it is recognized as an issue, the critical mass will have disappeared and it will be too late.
- If we allow additional height, we must invest in a significant tree canopy.
- Once the plan is in place, the plan must be followed. Variances should not be considered. Felt positive about the direction of the policy framework.
- Sentiment that the plan shows the City is listening to the public; the new Precinct Plan represents a departure from what was seen in June, in a good way.
- Objective 5 misleading. Concentrating the tallest developments away from Lake Ontario is not how I would describe the outcomes as presented under the various Precincts; want to see much lower heights on buildings nearer the waterfront.

- Developers are willing to cooperate with other developers to maximize their return. One developer would accept big restrictions to help another get approval for an over intensification to improve their chances of getting an ever larger over intensification approved.
- The maximums that are outlined in the workbook must be set in stone and not negotiable if they are adopted, because many are higher than what exists now. They cannot be traded for greater height for Section 37 benefits.
- Concerns over the additional heights of building being offered near the waterfront. Concern about a “wall” of tall buildings along Lakeshore.
- No one spoke of noise pollution of tall buildings.
- Concern about implementation and the feel of new development as a pedestrian (spacing between buildings, open spaces, etc).
- Desire to keep things the way they were in the 1980s and questions about the need for tall buildings?
- Is Council serious about making the transit investment necessary to make this work?

Brant Main Street Precinct

- Yes, agree with the general intent of the Brant Main Street Precinct.
- Not in agreement with the general intent of this precinct - you are leaving out the development at the site of the hotel at Brant street and Lakeshore Road.
- Yes, agree with the general intent of the Brant Main Street Precinct.
- I have a concern with Special Policy Area and how liberal deviation from precinct policies will be allowed. I would prefer a defined limit to these deviations in terms of total building height, podium height and setbacks.
- Even with a set back along Brant Street there is still a possibility that Brant Street will lose its look and feel by become a tunnel of 3-4 storey properties with 11 storeys along John Street.
- Maintain mixed use for the area, eg. Ensure not all storefronts are bars and restaurants. Encourage uses that are functional for residents. Encourage independent retailers, not chains
- Sightlines on James Street and Brant Street should be defined at street level.
- Transportation Demand strategies should be city policies with development complying with those policies. TDM should include parking.
- Yes, agree with the overall key directions for this precinct.
- Yes, supportive of the key direction for Brant Main Street.
- Brant Street must be eclectic and unique, even within the same development to mimic the look of our existing downtown – that is what people find charming.
- Disagree with the Special Policy Area - At every single meeting residents have stated they do not feel any nearby building should be taller than our city hall. Yet this SPA does exactly that. It gives provisions to go even taller than the max for the precinct. Instead, it should state that the developments will be expected to contribute to the extension of Civic Square to the east side of Brant for the opportunity to go above 2 storeys with a max of 8. Your policy is not a good trade-off for the little amount of space given to public use.

- Agree with the 45° angle for buildings. In the King Street photo it works because the sidewalks are very wide and the street cafes are on the sunny side of the street.
- Supportive of the Brant Main Street Precinct, although some concern about John Street and how that will feel as a result of protecting Brant Street. Don't want to see a canyon on both sides.

Bates Precinct

- No, do not agree with the general intent of the precinct. Bates Precinct has the air of a historical district, which in my mind is undesirable. Individual buildings such as the Paroisse Saint-Philippe can be identified as historically significant on their own merit and preserved or relocated as necessary.
- Adding more visual appeal or greenery should be a key element of this precinct.
- I don't understand why Bates boundary line does not extend to Courtland.
- Consider Locust Street as the only street which can provide traffic relief to Brant St. directly from Lakeshore Road to Baldwin Street.
- Consider preferred building design along Brant Street have podiums facing streets opposite (John or Locust).
- If the intent of the Bates Precinct is to provide a buffer between Brant St. and the St. Luke's/Emerald neighbourhood, that buffer should be located on Hurd Ave.
- Agree with the key directions and think it is important to protect as much of our downtown heritage as is possible. I also believe it does not do justice to many of the historic buildings that are located on other streets in the Downtown Core Precinct that would not get this same protection. I am thinking of those lovely large homes on Elizabeth Street (west side) like Rosewater Spa and the house immediately north.

Public Service Precinct

- 421 John Street parking lot is already suffering from insufficient parking. Removing a downtown parking lot isn't necessarily a good idea.
- No, do not agree with the general intent of the Public Service Precinct. This element should be considered as services in general and not a precinct. These services should be available to all Burlington residents and not restricted to this mobility hub.
- Agree with the Key Directions of the Public Service Precinct.
- This element should include recreational facilities and might consider future professional sporting facilities. A need for museums and possibly a major art gallery.
- Key Directions should include services outside the boundaries but available to residents in the mobility hub such as: central park, music center, seniors center, central arena, Burlington Curing club, tennis and lawn bowling clubs, YMCA and the gymnastic club.

St.Luke's/Emerald Neighbourhood Precinct

- Absolutely agree with the general intent of the St.Luke's/Emerald neighbourhood Precinct, but it should include the area on the east and west side of Burlington Avenue at Lakeshore Road. Having a mid-rise building at the bottom of Burlington Avenue/Lakeshore Road across from Spencer Smith Park and the lake is not the place to have it. Keep this area in keeping with the St.Luke's neighbourhood - 2½ storey residential/townhomes/single homes.
- Agree with the key directions of the St.Luke's/Emerald neighbourhood Precinct. Every home is different and unique. That must be specified as part of the planning direction.

The Cannery Precinct

- This will affect how people will be living on coming downtown to enjoy – the lake and amenities.
- This area has already created a barrier between the downtown and the lake. The damage has already been done.
- I am concerned about the parcel at John Street/Brant Street/Lakeshore Road being 22 storeys. This does not accommodate an existing development and could dramatically change a key corner of the lakefront.
- Traffic concerns, hospitals, events, gas, grocery, Parking.
- A wider pedestrian area is a key element that should be added to the Intention Statement.
- Avoid a claustrophobic feeling in the Brant Street corridor.
- A Yonge/Toronto effect, is not what Burlington is all about.
- The terraced effect is an excellent proposal, but does not reflect pedestrian use.
- The city must place a height restriction on buildings and strictly enforce these restrictions.
- Key Directions for The Cannery Precinct should include more green, more pedestrian space, more walkable space to attract people downtown.
- City Council has made it clear there was to be only one landmark building on the waterfront and that was the Bridgewater development. Please do not destroy our downtown and waterfront by confusing a landmark location with greater height. Please do not try to introduce another tall building to this area. Landmarks are all about appearance and public enhancement, surely we could zone the block at the North-East corner of Brant and Lakeshore for something to suit those specifications.

Upper Brant Precinct

- Generally, agree with the general intent of the Upper Brant Precinct. Development in the Upper Brant Precinct is desirable considering its proximity to the Burlington GO Station. However, development on Brant Street only may not provide an area large enough to develop a community. Moreover, high rise development along Brant Street may have an undesirable impact on the residential community to the east of Brant Street.

- Reduce 25 storeys to 15-21 storeys.
- To the east of Brant Street, a roadway plus a strip of greenspace would be desirable as a buffer to the residential community. The roadway would offer traffic relief to Brant Street. These modifications would require property currently occupied by detached homes.
- Tower heights to the east of Brant Street should be restricted to 7 stories. Towers of 25 stories should be restricted to the west side of Brant Street.
- Need to establish the requirements in relationship between greenspace and height.
- Development plans should set aside an area for a public plaza.
- Office towers for employment space and/or institutional space should be encouraged.
- Area must provide adequate parking space, including above ground parking garages.
- The precinct should include an area at least one block east and at least two blocks west of Brant Street.

Downtown Core Precinct

- Agree with the general intent of the Downtown Core Precinct.
- The streetscape will be that of a major city; wish plan was more specific about the No Frills Plaza.
- Village Square is an underutilized public place. The city should encourage the development of Village Square as a downtown destination. The city might consider subsidizing an artistic community in the square.
- Precinct plan should consider building function as well as appearance.
- There is a need for parking including above ground parking structures. Locations along the Elgin Street pipeline are suggested.
- Buildings serving as office towers should be included. The city should encourage corporations to locate offices in the downtown core.
- TDM should be a city policy with development adhering to this policy.
- A dedicated transportation link between the downtown core and the Burlington GO Station must be developed.
- Generally agree with the Key directions for the Downtown Core Precinct.
- Ensure that a grocery store is retained and surface parking should be retained on the site.
- The KPMG building example picture is an example of what NOT to build. It could not be less imaginative.
- Do not create a tunnel effect at the corner of Lakeshore Road and Elizabeth Street.
- Village Square has a tower shown in the open space where the restaurant with the outside patio is currently located. This is a gem and needs to be protected, not built over. If you want a tower here, put it on top of the building with the gym inside on the north end of the block, but not in the center of the Square. We need these kinds of piazzas or courtyards for people to be able to gather in the open air, just like in European cities.

- Mitigate shadowing from new development to ensure sunny sidewalks and for people on patios – too much shadowing could affect restaurants' bottom line.

Old Lakeshore Road Precinct

- Do not agree with the general intent of the Old Lakeshore Road Precinct - height should be 4-5 storeys, not 8-15 as presented at the meeting.
- The city should consider development of this precinct as a major tourism destination.
- Surprised by the opening comments, that it will continue as mixed use mid-rise of primarily residential uses. That is not what is there now. It is office, commercial, and restaurants in low-rise buildings and former grand houses.
- Disagree with the proposal to permit modest tall buildings - for any purpose. Couldn't agree more with your first bullet on the need to review existing height and density maximums. They should be lower, not higher as they are near the lake. I suggest a max of 6 storeys with large gaps in between buildings and first floor being commercial.

Mid-Rise Residential Precinct

- Do not agree with the general intent of this precinct for the south part of St. Luke's precinct (Burlington Ave/Lakeshore Road). Middle of the Spencer Smith Park – last avenue to the lake - should be preserved at 2½ storeys for the entire St. Luke's down to Lakeshore Road. 11 storeys would change the look of Burlington Avenue dramatically and create construction/traffic issues sunlight impacting (shadowing).
- Agree with the limited height townhouses (condo or freehold) on Lakeshore Road with architecturally designs that complement St. Luke's.
- Agree with in-filling townhomes and permitting commercial activities at street level.
- Want to see protection from development for the existing treed areas on the east side of Martha Street. It follows a creek to the lake.

Tall Residential Precinct

- Agree with the key directions of the Tall Residential Precinct.
- Needs to specify that existing gaps between buildings along the waterfront (down to ground level not just between towers) must be maintained with any future redevelopment or in-fill.
- Require that for buildings along the waterfront, any additional heights must only be granted by providing public access to the waterfront by a public path along the top of stable bank with a route to get to it from Lakeshore Road.

Parks and Promenades Precinct

- Take advantage of opportunities to extend a walkway along the Rambo Creek floodplain extending from Lake Ontario to Fairview Street.
- Develop a walkway along the Upper Hagar Creek diversion channel.
- Enhance walkway on the Ontario Hydro property from Spencer Smith Park to Fairview Street and explore possibilities of extending this walkway north of the QEW.
- The 2 Hydro towers on the north side of Lakeshore Road (by the Art Gallery) should be removed/moved/buried when the Beach Boulevard towers are addressed. These are unsightly and will negatively impact your vision of a world class park as they can be seen from the park and the new Elgin St. Promenade.
- Develop a plaza (courtyard) near the Upper Brant Precinct. Plaza to be a gathering place with elements of hard surface and greenspace, surrounded by small shops and restaurants. Plaza to have below-grade parking and be serviced by a major transit stop.
- Consider widening James Street to allow a boulevard and a public art feature (fountain or statue) at Pearl or Martha Street.
- Agree with key directions of the Parks and Promenades Precinct.
- Need to add one to two parkettes to the Downtown Core Precinct on the east side of Brant Street south of James Street. With all the condos planned for the area, there is not a single park children could access without having to cross a busy street. This is a significant oversight that needs correction.
- Re-introduce the concept of cut-throughs on streets that are long and winding where pedestrians could use the short-cut to get to where they are going much faster. An example would be a cut-through on Courtland Place to Grove Tree Lane then through Ghent to Prospect. There are some informal ones that could be negotiated with land owners. Those long winding streets are designed for vehicles, not pedestrians. Not an issue for the grid of the small downtown.
- Extend the pedestrian pathway along Rambo Creek further north so it goes to the St John Schoolyard. There is lots of room as it goes behind No Frills and there is already an informal path used along the creek to the Courtland Drive condos.