



SUBJECT: Waterfront Hotel Planning Study Update

TO: Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Planning and Building Department

Report Number: PB-67-17

Wards Affected: 2; All

File Numbers: 560-01

Date to Committee: November 28, 2017

Date to Council: December 11, 2017

Recommendation:

Receive and file planning and building department report PB-67-17 providing an update on the Waterfront Hotel planning study.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the status and progress of the Waterfront Hotel Planning Study. The report also transmits a summary of feedback received from the consultation on the Waterfront Hotel Planning Study process thus far and outlines the next steps in the work plan moving forward.

The Waterfront Hotel Planning Study aligns with the following directions from the Burlington Strategic Plan 2015-2040:

A City that Grows

- Intensification
- Focused Population Growth

A City that Moves

- Increased Transportation Flows and Connectivity

A Healthy and Greener City

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Environmental and Energy Leadership

An Engaging City

- Good Governance

Background and Discussion:

In 2006, the City approached the landowner to consider redevelopment of the site and explored the advancement of a joint planning study process for the Waterfront Hotel. A framework for the redevelopment of the site was developed, in the context of previously adopted design guidelines and strategic objectives, and approved by Council in fall 2006. A site-specific policy was included in the Official Plan requiring that a planning study process be completed prior to any redevelopment of the site. This policy is referenced in the current Official Plan as the Foot of Brant Street and set out under Part III, Section 5.5.9.2 I), which provides that:

“...the lands along the Lake Ontario shoreline, at the foot of Brant Street...represent a significant opportunity for mixed use development linking the Downtown with the waterfront. Any further development on these lands shall provide a high quality of urban design reflecting the **landmark** nature of this site and shall be contingent upon the completion of a master plan to the satisfaction of City Council. This master plan shall address the integration of these lands with the publicly owned lands to the south and west and the private development to the east, and shall address other matters such as preservation of lake views and enhancements to the public realm.” [emphasis added]

The current Official Plan defines landmark as “a natural feature or man-made structure used as a point of orientation in locating other natural features or man-made structures, or a structure of noteworthy aesthetic interest.”

It is important to note that this is the only policy within the current Official Plan that makes reference to a downtown site being a landmark.

In 2008, the property was sold. The current landowner expressed his interest in pursuing a redevelopment of the entire site including demolition of the existing hotel.

In 2015, Burlington City Council approved staff report DID-1-15, which outlined the proposed process and set out the Terms of Reference for the Waterfront Hotel Planning Study.

In 2016, the landowner initiated this city-led planning study process, including providing the financial resources in trust.

In January 2017, Staff undertook a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process to retain a consulting team to assist with the development of a master planning study for the subject site, with the goal of establishing a strategic framework to guide the development and redevelopment of the subject site (municipally known as 2020 Lakeshore Road), and develop and evaluate alternative redevelopment concepts.

Planning Context

The study area falls within Downtown Burlington, which is identified by the Growth Plan (2017) as an Urban Growth Centre. The Growth Plan recognizes urban growth centres as regional focal points for accommodating population and employment growth. The continued revitalization of urban growth centres as meeting places, locations for cultural facilities, public institutions, and major services and transit hubs with the potential to become more vibrant, mixed-use, transit-supportive communities is particularly important.

The Growth Plan mandates that Downtown Burlington be planned to accommodate a minimum density target of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

The subject site is designated as an “Urban Area” in Halton Region’s Official Plan. Generally, urban areas are locations where servicing is, or anticipated to be, available to accommodate future development. The Regional Official Plan provides that permitted uses shall be in accordance with the Local Official Plan(s) and Zoning By-law(s) and other policies of the Regional Official Plan.

The site is located within the Wellington Square Mixed Use Precinct of the Downtown Mixed Use Centre Land Use Plan (Schedule E of the current Official Plan). This part of the downtown is designated for taller, high density development and is intended to help meet Provincial Growth objectives and support greater transit use. A high standard of urban design is required in order to provide a sense of place, compatibility with existing development and a sense of pedestrian scale and comfort.

The current height limit in the Wellington Square Precinct is 8-storeys as of right with the opportunity to consider 14-storeys as a rezoning that provides compatibility with surrounding uses and a sense of pedestrian scale and community amenity contributions. The maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in Wellington Square is 5:1, except where greater height is being considered through a rezoning in which case a higher FAR may also be considered. The Official Plan specifies that properties on the south side of Lakeshore Road shall maintain a certain amount of road frontage as unoccupied in order to maintain public view corridors through to Lake Ontario; provide at-grade commercial/retail uses continuously along public streets; prohibits surface parking (except for loading and emergency vehicles); and, requires buildings be constructed to the street line. Notwithstanding these general precinct policies, this site is subject to a site-specific policy that requires the preparation of a Master Plan (Planning Study) prior to any redevelopment. The study shall address issues such as: the integration of the site with the parkland to the south and west and the private development to the east, the preservation of lake views, and enhancements to the public realm.

The site is currently zoned “DW” (Downtown Wellington Square Mixed-Use Zone). The DW zone permits a wide range of commercial/retail uses, office, community institution, hospitality, entertainment and recreation uses. The DW zone also permits dwelling units in a commercial/office building, apartment/condominium building, and retirement home with a requirement that the ground floor of any building within 15 metres of a public street shall be used only for commercial/retail uses.

The DW zone permits a minimum building height of 2-storeys (each storey at a minimum linear height of 4.5 metres), maximum height of 8-storeys (29 metres) and maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 5:1. A number of additional performance standards (regulations) are set out under the DW zoning that directly relate to the general Wellington Square Precinct Official Plan designation.

The following is an example of the type of built form that could potentially be constructed, subject to site plan approval, under the current as-of-right zoning permissions (see fig. 1 and 2 below).

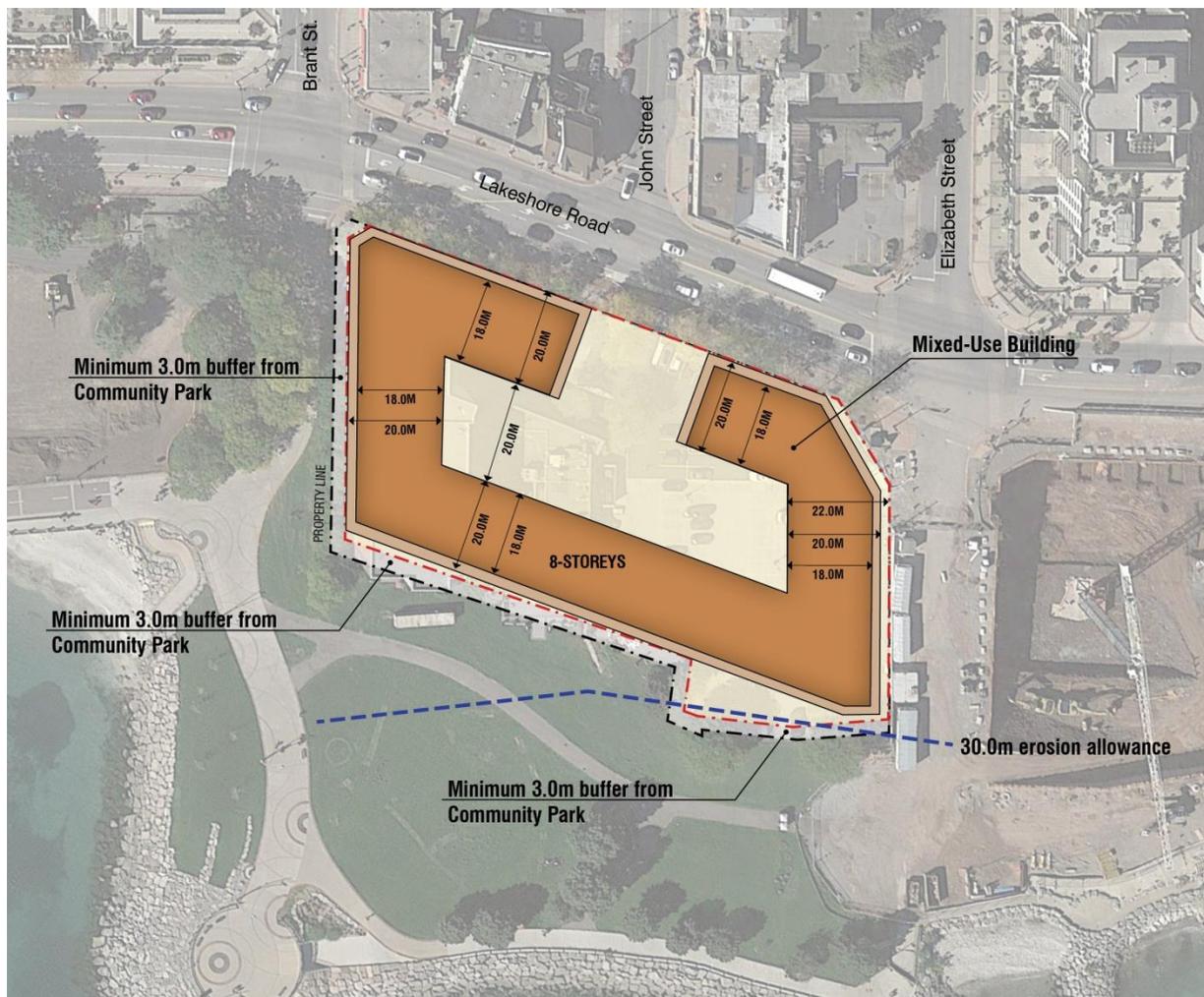


Figure 1: Potential Building Envelope – Existing Zoning Permissions (Lot Coverage 66%)

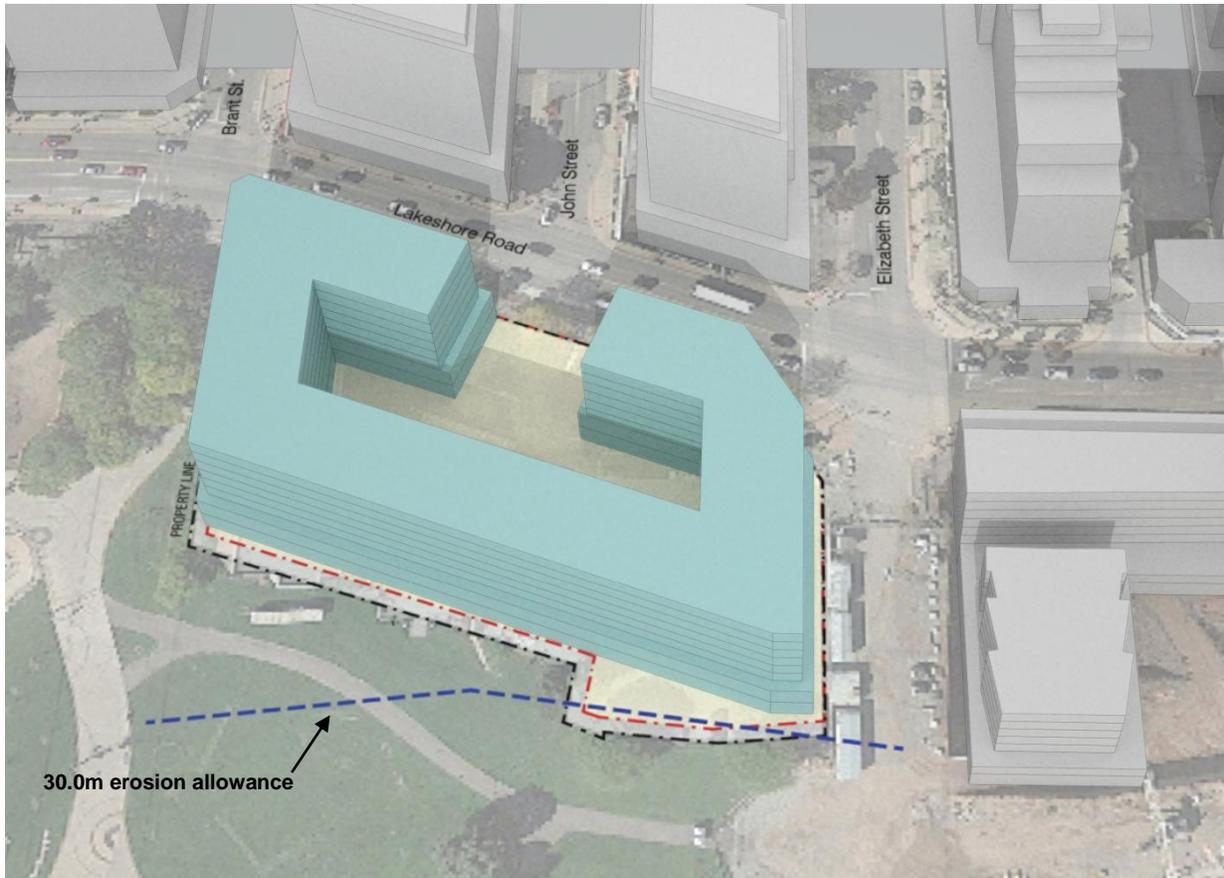


Figure 2: Potential Massing Scenario – Existing Zoning Permissions (max. 8-storeys)

Conservation Halton (O. Reg. 162/06)

The 2006 regulation established new development setbacks affecting 2020 Lakeshore Road and the adjacent waterfront park. Conservation Halton has accepted a development setback that is determined based on a 30 metre erosion allowance measured from the long term stable slope of the shoreline. The development setback limit cuts across the southeast corner of the parking lot – this is shown conceptually on the above diagrams as a dashed blue line.

Any redevelopment of 2020 Lakeshore Road must take the Conservation Halton setback limit into account. The setback applies to both above ground and below ground works.

Waterfront Hotel Planning Study

Study Area

The Study area encompasses the subject property, as shown on the graphic below (see fig. 3), and includes Spencer Smith Park to the west and south, the Bridgewater development site to the east, and lands on the north side of Lakeshore Road between Locust and Pearl Streets.

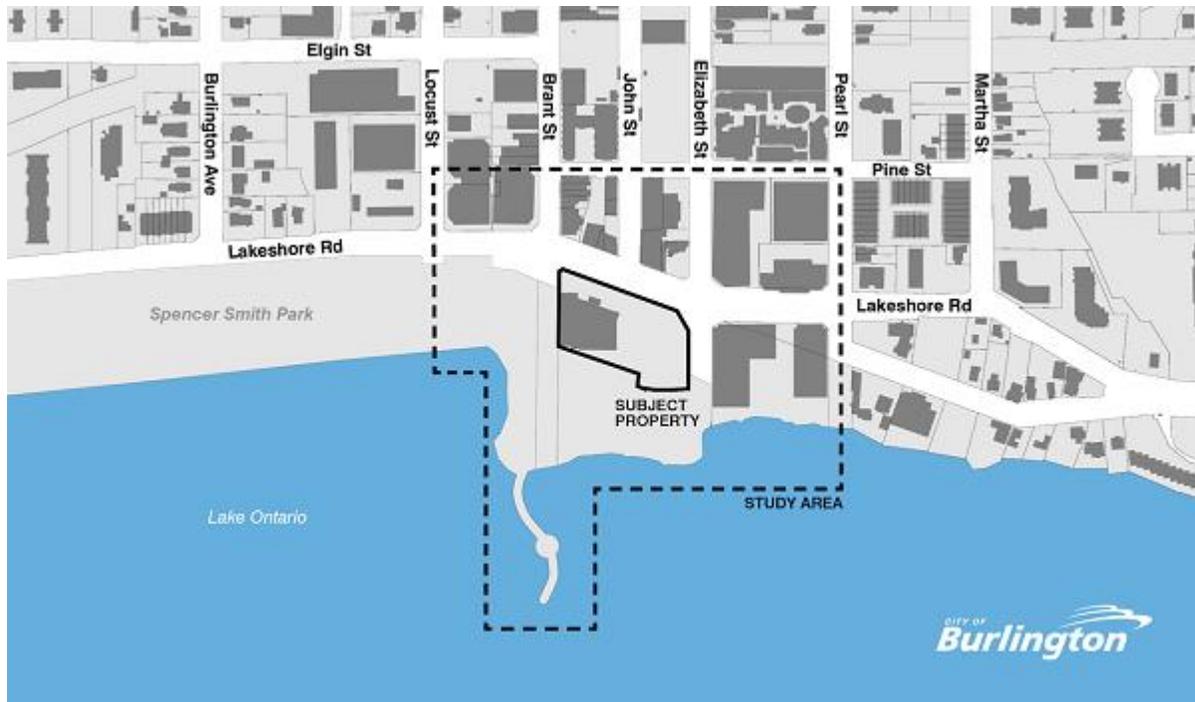


Figure 3: Study Area and Subject Property Boundaries

Subject Property

The subject property, municipally known as 2020 Lakeshore Road, is located on the south side of Lakeshore Road at the foot of Brant Street and is approximately 0.76 hectares (1.9 ac) in area. Current uses include a hotel (122 guest rooms, restaurant, 5,000 sf of event space) and surface parking. Adjacent uses to the property include city-owned parkland, and mixed-use developments including existing and planned building heights ranging from 1- to 22-stories.

In terms of topography, the site slopes gently from east to southwest with a grade difference between Lakeshore Road and the water's edge of approximately 4 metres.

Scope of Work

The study is meant to assess the development capacity of the subject property while achieving the broader city building objectives of urban design excellence and growth management. Additionally, the study is looking at opportunities to enhance the public realm including the adjacent public space and waterfront.

Procurement Process

In January 2017, Staff undertook a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process to retain a consulting team to assist with the development of a master planning study for the subject site, with the goal of establishing a strategic framework to guide its development and redevelopment, and to develop and assess alternative redevelopment concepts.

The Planning Partnership Limited (TPP) was retained as the successful candidate in March 2017. A kick-off meeting for the study was held later that month.

TPP has previously been involved in consultation-led waterfront development projects and master plans. The firm has completed similar planning and urban design studies in Kingston, Milton, Mississauga, Oakville and Toronto.

Consulting Team

The selected consulting team consists of principals and senior level TPP staff who have expertise in planning, urban design, communications and landscape architecture. Also part of the consulting team is SCS Consulting Group to address land development engineering, Thompson Ho Transportation Incorporated to assess transportation impacts and Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin Inc. to evaluate pedestrian level wind impacts.

Work Plan and Study Process to Date

The project has been divided into five phases, over the course of ten months.

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Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Background Information Collection and Analysis	Opportunities and Constraints Analysis	Development and Evaluation of Alternative Concepts	Report and Recommendation of Preferred Concept	Official Plan Policies, Zoning Regulation, and Urban Design

To date staff has held public meetings for the Waterfront Hotel Planning Study in May, July, and September of 2017.

Public Engagement	Topic	Estimated Attendance
May 24	Visioning Workshop	Session 1 100+
		Session 2 85
July 5	Design Day	Session 1 30+
		Session 2 30+
September 14	Concepts Workshop	Session 1 48
		Session 2 29

Community Workshop 1 – Visioning

The visioning workshop held in May explored public aspirations for the redevelopment of the subject property as well as key themes for foundational design principles that were organized into three categories: Land Use/Built Form, Public Realm, and Access/Mobility. The feedback collected at the visioning workshop helped to development a vision statement and design principles for the redevelopment of the subject property.

Community Workshop 2 – Design Day

On July 5, 2017, a design workshop was held to further explore opportunities for redevelopment of the subject property. The explorations were guided by four different sets of design parameters to consider under the following frameworks: Land Use/Built Form, Public Realm and Mobility/Access. The parameters are outlined in the table

below. The intent of providing the different design parameters was to ensure a full range of options would be considered and evaluated for the site.

	Exploration 1	Exploration 2	Exploration 3	Exploration 4
Land Use/ Built Form	(2) 8-14 Storey Mixed-Use Buildings: Residential, Commercial at grade	(2) 12-20 Storey Mixed-Use Buildings: Residential with Commercial at grade	(2) 20-30 Storey Mixed Use Buildings: Residential, Commercial and Hotel/ Convention Centre	(1) 30-40 Storey Mixed Use Building: Residential, Commercial and Hotel/ Convention Centre
Public Realm	Central Open Space	East Open Space, adjacent to Bridgewater development	West Open Space, adjacent to Spencer Smith Park	West Open Space, adjacent to Spencer Smith Park
Mobility/ Access	Maintain existing Brant Street driveway access Underground Parking access from Lakeshore	Maintain existing Brant Street driveway access Underground Parking access from Lakeshore	Remove Brant Street driveway access Narrow Lakeshore Road at Brant Street Underground Parking access from Elizabeth Street extension	Remove Brant Street driveway access Narrow Lakeshore Road at Brant Street Underground Parking access from Elizabeth Street extension

Draft Concepts Survey

The input from the design workshop has assisted the consulting team in preparing three draft concepts. These three concepts represent and combine the workshop explorations and take into consideration the broader community objectives for placemaking and creating a walkable, transit-supportive, and vibrant downtown.

Concept 1



This concept merges explorations 1 and 2, which share similar design parameters.

Concept 2



This concept represents exploration 3.

Concept 3



This concept represents exploration 4 illustrating the tallest buildings.

Community Workshop 3 – Concepts Evaluation and Emerging Preferred Concept

The third and final public workshop took place in September 2017, where the consultant team provided a re-cap of the process and information presented to date. The workshop presentation included a reminder of the vision statement and design principles for the study and a summary of the various inputs to the evaluation of concepts including:

1. Results of public survey (919 respondents);
2. Comments from City staff;
3. Comments from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee; and,
4. Technical evaluation of sun/shadow, wind, and transportation impacts, and urban design.

Based on an evaluation of the above inputs, an Emerging Preferred Concept was prepared and presented at this workshop. This concept is set out below (see fig. 4) and includes the following key directions:

- Building heights from 14- to 25-storeys stepping down to the Park and the Lake;
- A central open space at the foot of John Street connecting through the site to the waterfront;
- Open space at Elizabeth Street and a gateway to the lake at foot of Brant Street;
- Retail and amenity space along the west podium facing Spencer Smith Park; and
- Vehicle access from Elizabeth.



Figure 4: the Emerging Preferred Concept presented at the Sept. 14 Public Workshop

Some of the key themes in the feedback provided at the September workshop included:

- Promote an iconic/landmark building;
- Maintain the downtown character;
- Limit impacts from taller buildings;
- Protect views to the lake;
- Protect and where feasible enhance surrounding green/open space by connecting it to the existing park; and
- Enhance the public realm by providing safe pedestrian and cyclist connections to the parks, the downtown, and waterfront.

Although there was some support for redevelopment of the site at the scale of what was presented in the Emerging Preferred Concept, most workshop participants felt that the suggested buildings were too tall and that there was not enough open space. Most workshop participants felt that the height of the existing hotel building was appropriate even though it is less than what is permitted under the current as-of-right zoning. Additionally, there was strong preference for leaving the west portion of the property undeveloped, as open space to augment Spencer Smith Park and to create opportunities for wide sweeping views to the lake.

An Alternative Emerging Preferred Concept (Emerging Preferred Concept 2)

Given these preferences from workshop participants for site arrangement and buildings, a second Emerging Preferred Concept has been developed to address some of the concerns raised during the workshop. This alternative concept is set out below (see fig. 5) and also contains two tall buildings, but it moves them farther to the east of the site and creates a large open space adjacent to Spencer Smith Park and at the foot of Brant Street. The buildings consist of a 14- to 18-storey tower and a 20- to 25-storey tower sitting atop a 4-storey podium that includes mixed-uses at grade. In this scenario, the portion of podium located at the foot of John Street is envisioned to be a 3- to 4-storey glass atrium that allows for views through the building to the lake.

The suggested building height of 25-storeys takes into consideration the existing 22-storey tower on the neighbouring Bridgewater development as well as the 22-storey building height limit suggested for the 'Cannery Precinct' as identified in the Downtown Mobility Hub study, and presented at the Committee of the Whole Workshop on September 28, 2017. Although the suggested height recognizes these precedents, it also recognizes the potential to create a taller building on this landmark location within the downtown.

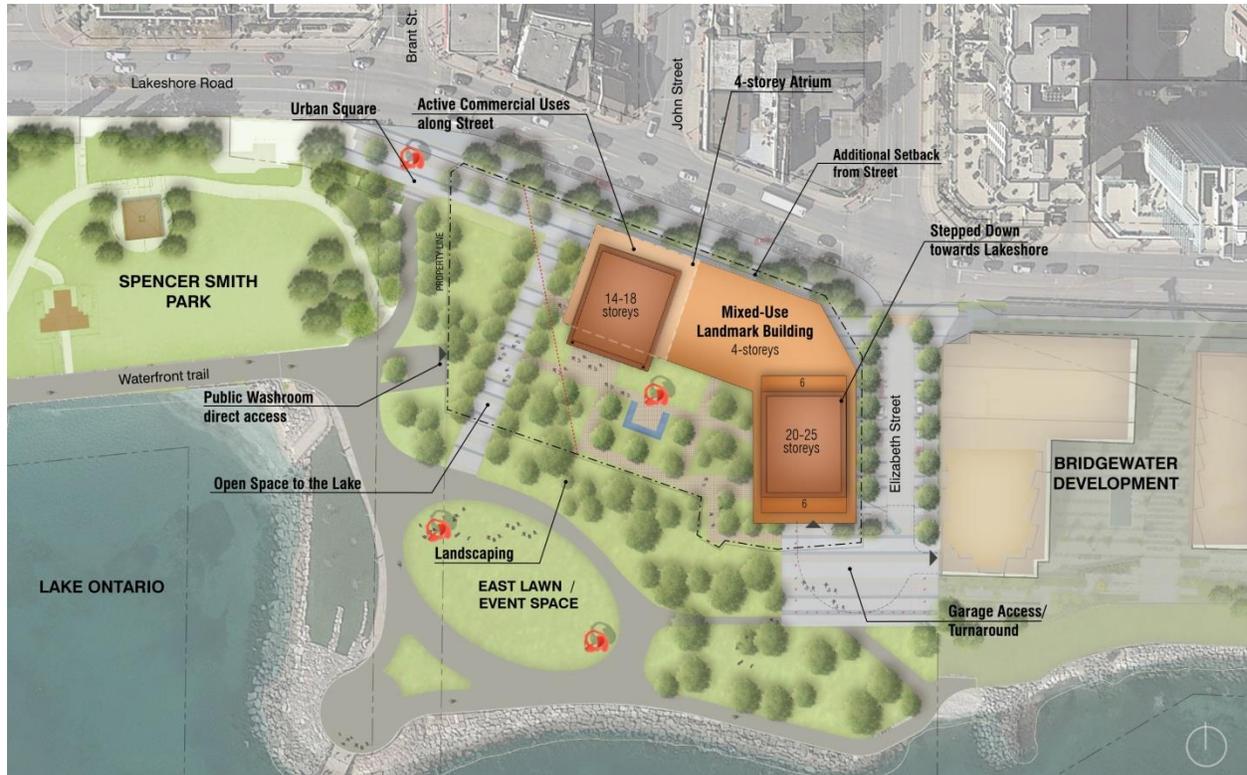


Figure 5: Alternative Emerging Preferred Concept (Emerging Preferred Concept 2)

Resulting from a preference to close the Brant Street access, the need to ensure that access to development was also expressed in the comments by workshop participants. Primary access to future development will be from Elizabeth Street. The Emerging Preferred Concept 2 illustrates a large turnaround at the foot of Elizabeth Street where access to underground parking may be located. Unlike the Emerging Preferred Concept, this alternative concept shows the turnaround shifted north, to allow for more open space while still accommodating vehicular movements. Additionally, a lay-by area (that maintains the existing trees in the boulevard) has been identified along Lakeshore Road to allow pick-up/drop off, service, short term parking and delivery functions.

It is important to note that both emerging concepts respect the City's Tall Building Guidelines by maintaining a minimum tower separation distance of 25 metres and tower floorplates under 750 square metres, among other criteria.

Moving towards a Preferred Concept

The two emerging concepts have been posted on the City's web site for further review and comment. Staff and the consultant team are continuing to collect public feedback on the Emerging Preferred Concepts through the end of 2017, while working towards the delivery of the Preferred Concept to City Council for endorsement in Q1 2018.

This will be followed by a site-specific Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Design Guidelines in Q2 2018.

Financial Matters:

The Waterfront Hotel Planning Study is funded by the landowner and administered by the City of Burlington.

Connections:

The Waterfront Hotel Planning Study, once complete and approved, will form part of the City's New Official Plan and provide a strategic framework to guide the redevelopment of the subject property.

There is an important connection between this Study and the City's New Official Plan, the Downtown Mobility Hub Area Specific Plan, the City's Transportation Plan, Cycling Master Plan, Community Trails Strategy, the Integrated Transit Mobility Plan and the Downtown Streetscape Guidelines, all of which are necessary to ensure that redevelopment of the subject property meets the City's urban design and growth management goals, as well as enhances the adjacent public space and waterfront.

Public Engagement Matters:

Public Engagement To-Date

Two committees were set up to administer the Waterfront Hotel Planning Study. A Steering Committee (SC) was formed to oversee the consulting team to ensure steady progress and to discuss any questions that might arise. A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) consisting of other key City departments, the Mayor, Ward 2 Councillor, Halton Region, Burlington Downtown Business Association, citizen's advisory committee representatives, and the landowner was also established. The SC and SAC have been involved through out the consultation process and have met prior to each of the public workshops.

Public Survey – From August to September, an on-line survey was posted on the City of Burlington's website to obtain public input about the draft three concepts. A total of 919 people completed the survey. Results of the survey as well as other public input to date have been posted on the project web page in the form of "What We Heard" documents prepared by the consulting team.

Ongoing Public Engagement

A preferred concept must balance the needs and concerns of a diverse set of stakeholders including residents of the downtown, the landowner, city staff, developers, local businesses, and the general public.

Comments on the two emerging concepts are being requested by mid-December 2017. Once this further input has been collected, staff will evaluate the emerging concepts through further technical analysis and deliver a final preferred concept for council's considering in Q1 2018.

Conclusion:

Staff is recommending that Council receive staff report PB-67-17 for information.

Public consultation is an essential component of the development of a master concept plan for the Waterfront Hotel site. An assessment of public and stakeholder input on the two emerging concepts is currently underway in order to support the development of a final preferred concept.

Staff will report back to Council in Q1 2018 with a recommendation on a final preferred concept followed by preparation of the supporting site-specific policies (Official Plan Amendment), regulations (Zoning By-law Amendment), and design guidelines in Q2 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Evershed, MCIP, RPP

Special Business Area Coordinator

905.335.7600 x 7870

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.