

# Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown

Community Planning, Regulation, and Mobility Committee

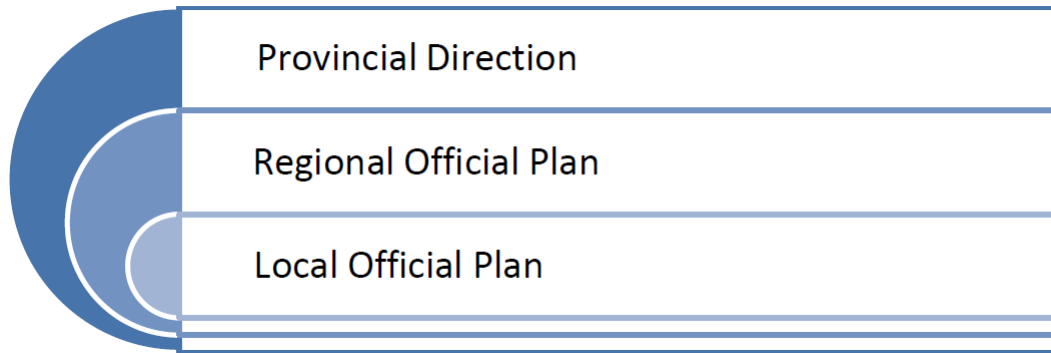
January 16, 2020

## Outline

- **Staff Presentation**
  - Policy Framework
  - Project Background
  - Process to date
- **SGL Presentation**
  - The Evaluation Process
  - Preliminary Preferred Concept
- **Staff Presentation**
  - Staff Position
  - Next Steps



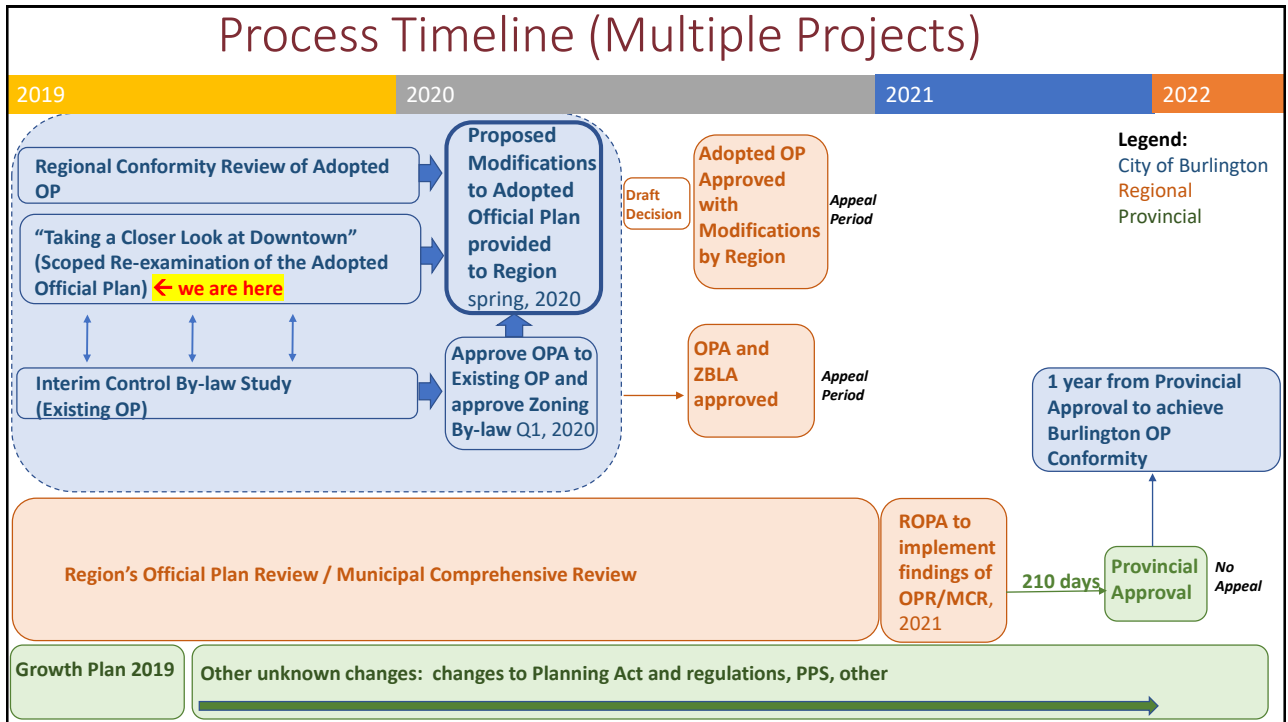
## Policy Framework



## Urban Growth Centre, Major Transit Station Area and Mobility Hub



Designation	Document	Process to modify / Decision Maker
<b>Urban Growth Centre</b>	A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; Legislation; Defined and mapped in Regional Official Plan.	Province amend Provincial Plan, amend Regional Official Plan
<b>Major Transit Station Area</b>	Defined in A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; Defined and mapped in Regional Official Plan	Province: Definition modification Regional Official Plan Review: Mapping
<b>Mobility Hub</b>	Defined and mapped in Regional Official Plan	Regional Official Plan Review: Definition and Mapping



## Background



- **Adoption of new Official Plan**
- **Notice of opinion of non-conformity**
- **February 2019 Motion**
- **March 2019 Council Workshop**
- **Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown**
  - Work plan, resources and timing
- **June Council Workshop on Engagement**

## Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown Policies in the Adopted Official Plan

### Public Engagement Plan



[getinvolvedburlington.ca](http://getinvolvedburlington.ca)

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**Burlington**

## Scope



### Out of Scope:

- Policies for areas outside Downtown
- Waterfront Hotel site, Old Lakeshore Road Precinct
- Changes to Downtown's status as a Urban Growth Centre, Major Transit Station Area, or Mobility Hub
- Developments that have already been approved
- Detailed design of private or public spaces
- Maintenance/operation of existing infrastructure
- By-law enforcement issues
- Construction management
- Economic development/business attraction strategies

### In Scope:

- Land use (residential, retail, office, service commercial, etc.)
- Built form (height, massing) of buildings
- What parts of downtown should be the focus of intensification
- Compatibility of new and existing developments
- Location of new/upgraded public spaces
- Defining and protecting Downtown's sense of place
- Options and trade-offs
- Different policy approaches

## Givens

Project Scope, Timing and Resources

Legislated Policy Requirements

City's Role and Authority

### Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown: What You Need to Know

August 2019



Prepared by:

**SGL**  
Strategic Growth  
Leadership

Prepared for:

**City of Burlington**



## Taking A Closer Look at the Downtown: Feedback Report

### Introduction

On February 7, 2019 Burlington City Council voted to re-examine the policies in the adopted Official Plan. The approved Council motion directs Burlington's Director of City Building to commence a process to re-examine the policies of the Official Plan in their entirety as they relate to matters of height and intensity and conformity with provincial density targets.

A Council workshop was held on March 18, 2019 to obtain further Council feedback on this direction. Council's further feedback resulted in focusing the work on the Downtown and on refinements to the Neighbourhood Centres policies.

A work plan for re-examining the Official Plan policies was presented by City Staff to Planning and Development Committee on May 21, 2019 and approved by Burlington City Council on May 27, 2019.

The outcome of this work will be modified policies for the Downtown supported by a Final Report prepared by SGL Planning Consultants retained by the City which will include the results of public engagement and finalized technical reports.

### Public Engagement Plan

In the summer of 2019 an [engagement plan](#) was developed by City staff to present a road map of the engagement activities that will take place over the course of the project, highlighting at which points in the process engagement will take place, who will be engaged and the level of engagement. The engagement plan outlines that public input, among other inputs, are required to inform the following decision:

**By March 2020, Burlington City Council will vote to endorse changes to the policies in Burlington's adopted Official Plan that guide development in the downtown until 2031, including the height and density of buildings.**

The engagement plan also clearly defines which aspects of the process that cannot be influenced: either because they are beyond the City's control, or because they are outside of the scope of the project as set out in the Council-approved work plan. Those given are established in the engagement plan.

The engagement plan identified that in the summer and fall of 2019, there will be two key opportunities for public engagement where input will directly influence a recommendation that will be presented to Burlington City Council in March 2020.

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DOWNTOWN: ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK REPORT

1

## Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown: Themes, Principles and Land Use Concepts

October 2019



Prepared by:

**SGL**  
A CITY OF BURLINGTON COMPANY

Prepared for:

**CITY OF BURLINGTON**

# Fall Engagement



- Fall Engagement activities based on SGL's Themes, Principles and Land Use Concepts
- Second Feedback Report
- Written Submissions

Appendix E to PL-02-20



## Taking A Closer Look at the Downtown: Second Feedback Report

### Introduction

On February 7, 2019, Burlington City Council voted to re-examine the policies in the adopted Official Plan. The approved Council motion directs Burlington's Director of City Building (now Community Planning) to commence a process to re-examine the policies of the Official Plan in their entirety as they relate to matters of height and intensity and conformity with provincial density targets.

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The engagement plan also clearly defines aspects of the process that cannot be influenced: either because they are beyond the City's control, or because they are outside of the scope of the project as set out in the Council-approved work plan. Those givens are established in the engagement plan.

The engagement plan identified that there would be two key opportunities for public engagement where input would directly influence a recommendation that will be presented to Burlington City Council in March 2020: one in August-September 2019, and one in October-December 2019. This report pertains to the October-December opportunity.

# Technical Studies



- Technical Studies completed to date are available on Get Involved Burlington
- To be further reviewed by appropriate agencies and refined, as needed.
- Initiate Technical Studies that rely upon Council-endorsed concept
- Completed studies will be transmitted to Council as part of the final report in the Spring of 2020.

# Evaluation Process



**Table 1: Evaluation of City of Burlington Downtown Precinct Concepts 1 and 2**

The following tables set out the evaluation of the two concepts by criteria and measures. The coloured legend indicates their evaluation in relation to the measures:

More Preferred	Equally Preferred	Less Preferred
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## Green Space, Open Space and Parks

The public's vision for the Downtown is to provide for a walkable, accessible, vibrant downtown. The public's vision also stresses the need to maintain and add new green spaces and trees, while providing additional space for year-round activities and festivals. The character of Brant Street as the 'retail main street' of Burlington with its eclectic mix of shops, meeting places and culture will be supported and enhanced. Lakeshore Road east and west of Brant Street will also be maintained as an important pedestrian precinct to ensure the Downtown's sense of place is preserved.

**Principle:** Create additional parks, trails and open spaces

**Principle:** Enhance and create safe inclusive public spaces

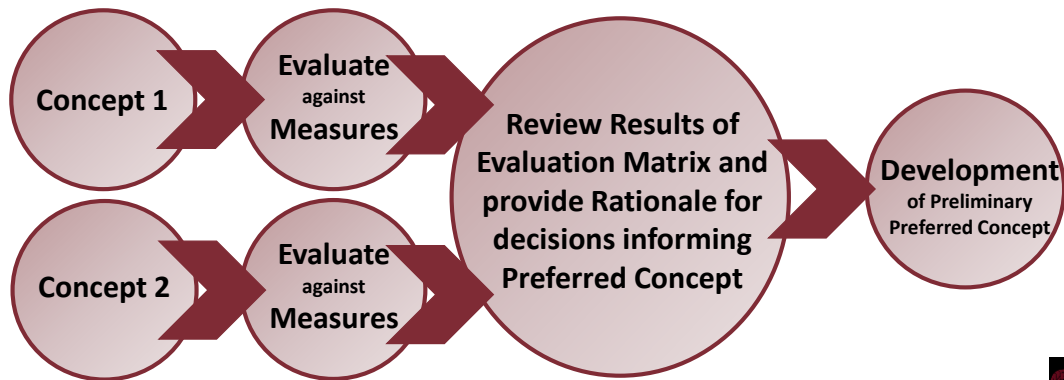
**Principle:** Create spaces for year-round activities and festivals in the public and private realms

## Criterion 1) Ability to incorporate new parks and trails into the existing urban fabric

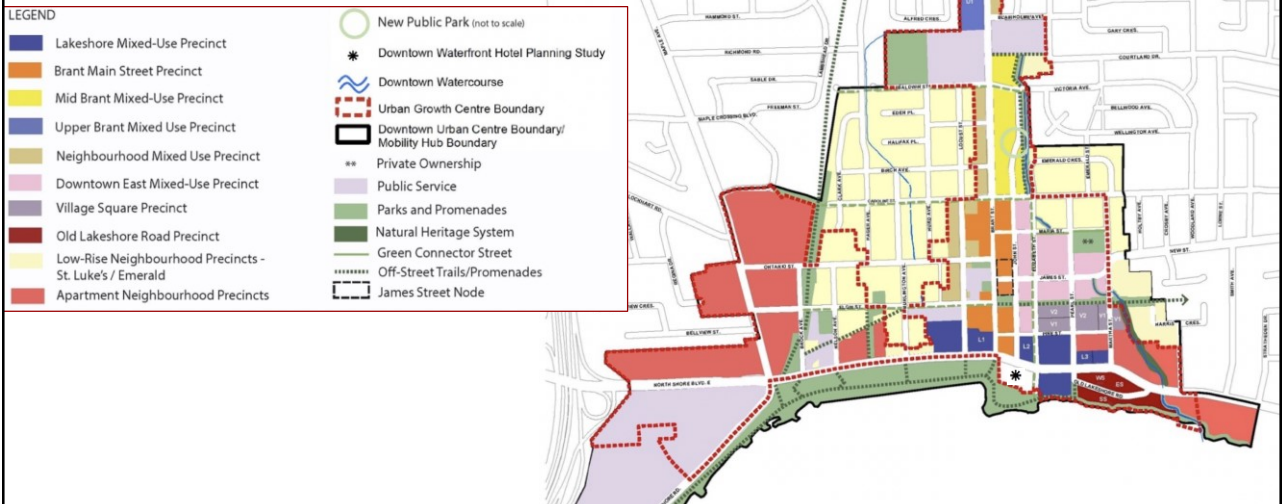
Measure	Concept 1	Concept 2	Rationale for Preferred Concept
1. Has new parkland, trails or open space been proposed?	A new park is proposed at the intersection of Brant and Ghent, as well as a central park within the No Frill's Plaza block. A trail is proposed along Rambo Creek from Caroline to north of Victoria.	A new park is proposed at the intersection of Brant and Ghent, as well as a central park within the No Frill's Plaza block. A trail is proposed along Rambo Creek from Caroline to north of Victoria.	Both concepts are based on the same precinct/land use plan and therefore both propose new parks and trails.  An on-street trail connection is proposed to link the Rambo Creek trail to the Elgin Promenade and south to the waterfront trail along Elizabeth Street.  A further detailed block plan study will be required to determine the size, specific location and configuration of the two new Parks.  An extension of Elgin promenade is further proposed to extend west of Brant Street to west of Burlington Avenue.



# Preliminary Preferred Concept Development



## Preliminary Preferred Concept



## Precinct Changes

1. Changed from Apartment Neighbourhood to Low Rise Neighbourhood;

2. Changed from Lakeshore Mixed Use to Brant Main Street;

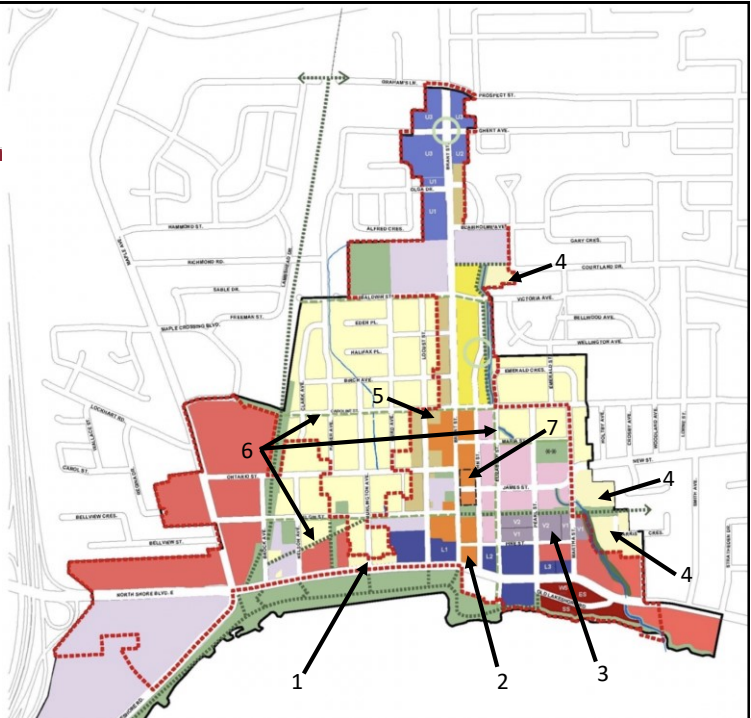
3. New Village Square Precinct;

4. Changed from Apartment Neighbourhood to Low Rise Neighbourhood to reflect the existing 2 and 3 storey built form;

5. Changed from Brant Main Street to Neighbourhood Mixed Use Precinct;

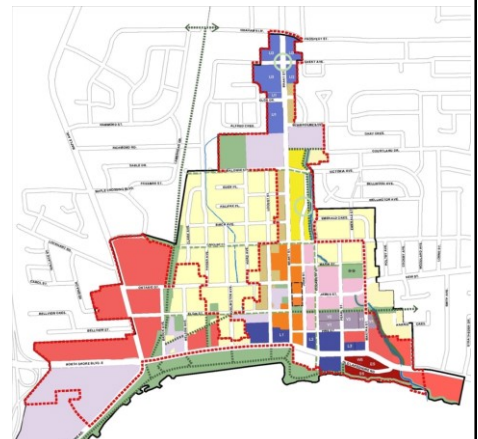
6. Additions to the Parks, Promenades, Trails and Green Connector Streets;

7. Addition of the James Street Node which denotes tall buildings under construction and approved.



## Preliminary Preferred Concept Creates a Defensible Land Use Plan

- Focal area for investment in commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses as required by the Growth Plan
- Serves as high-density employment centre as required by Growth Plan
- Accommodates significant population and employment growth as required by Growth Plan
- But not a free for all or one size fits all across the Downtown
- Built form in each Precinct is appropriate for its context and function.
  - Maintains the low rise character along Brant Street
  - Provides for transition to adjacent low rise neighbourhoods
  - Maintains existing low rise residential built form
  - Provides for mid-rise development in areas where lower scale buildings appropriate
    - Adjacent to Brant Street in Brant Main Street Precinct
    - In Village Square Precinct
    - As transition to adjacent low rise Neighbourhoods
  - Provides for Tall buildings but in limited areas
    - Fits within the existing and planned context
    - No impact to low rise neighbourhoods
    - Provides for employment function



## Brant Main Street Precinct

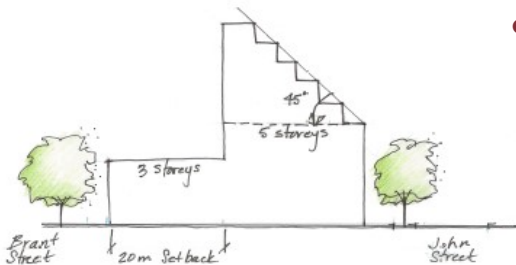
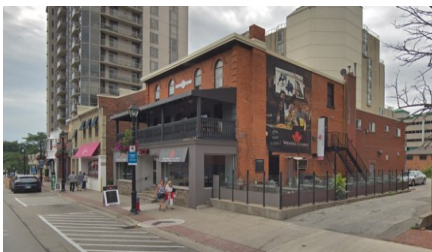


James Street Node

### Vision

- Serve as a unique shopping destination
- Priority retail main street
- Small retail shops
- Pedestrian Priority Street
- An improved large festival square
- Mixed use: retail and service commercial uses on ground floor and residential above
- James Street node reflects previous tall buildings approved

## Brant Main Street Precinct

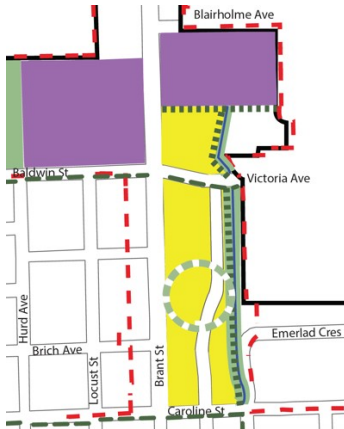


- Maximum 3 storey buildings within first 20 m of Brant Street
- Mid-rise (11 storeys) abutting John Street & Locust Street
- Mid rise – max. 11 storeys with a 45 degree angular plane above 5 storeys on John Street

# Mid Brant Precinct



## Vision

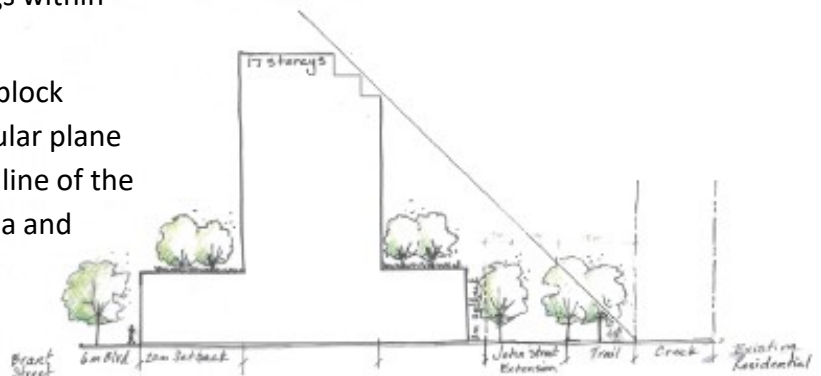


- Mixed use neighbourhood
- Major retail centre to serve shopping needs of Downtown residents
- Replacement of surface lots with underground parking
- Pedestrian Priority on Brant Street further supported with John Street Extension
- Provides increased separation to low-rise neighbourhoods
- Increased buffer along Rambo Creek
- A walking trail along the Creek
- A new public urban park

# Mid Brant Precinct



- Step down in height along the west side of the John Street extension
- 3 storeys abutting Rambo Creek
- Maximum 3 storey buildings within first 20 m of Brant Street
- 17 storeys in centre of the block subject to a 45 degree angular plane from the western property line of the creek block north of Victoria and south of proposed park
- South portion of block is proposed to be Mid-rise
- Extension of John Street to Victoria beside Rambo Creek



# Upper Brant Precinct



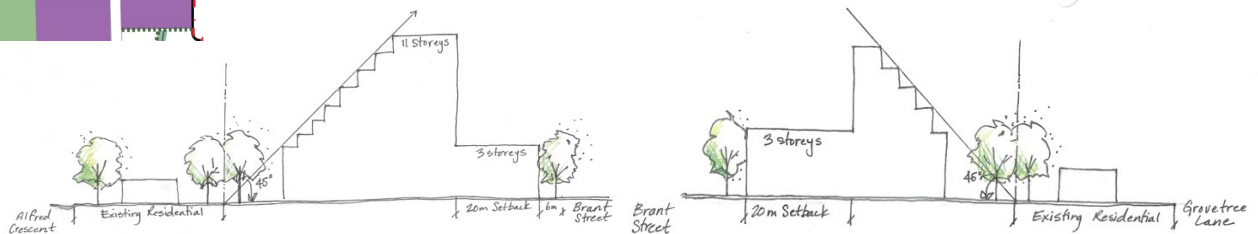
## Vision

- Accommodate variety of building heights and depths
- Transit, pedestrian and cycling oriented area
- Support at-grade commercial uses on Brant Street.
- Transition to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods
- A new public urban park

# Upper Brant Precinct



- U1 - Mid-rise maximum 11 storeys with 45 degree angular plane from the rear property line of existing low rise properties to the west
- U2 - Mid-rise maximum 11 storeys)with 45 degree angular plane from the rear property line of existing low rise properties to the east
- U3 – 25 storey maximum height
- Maximum 3 storey buildings within first 20 m of Brant Street



# Lakeshore Mixed-Use Precinct

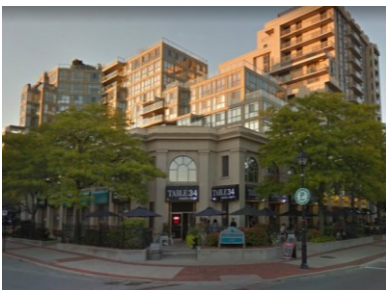


## Vision



- Gateway to the Waterfront
- Priority retail main street
- Mixed use: Primarily retail and service commercial uses on the ground floor and residential above
- Pedestrian Priority Street

# Lakeshore Mixed-Use Precinct



- L1 – low-rise – max 3 storeys permitted within the first 20 metres from Lakeshore Road then Mid-rise max 11 storeys
- L2 – low-rise – max 3 storeys permitted within the first 20 metres from Lakeshore Road then max 15 storeys with max floor plate of 750 m2 above 3 storeys
- L3 – Further analysis required to determine maximum height
- Permitted Maximum heights to be context specific for each block

# Village Square Precinct



## Vision



- Village Square character, scale, and sense of place will be maintained
- Vibrant retail streetscape with varied small retail shops
- proposed maximum width of retail storefronts
- Maintain Existing low-rise character along Martha Street north of Pine Street

# Village Square Precinct



- V1 – 3 storey maximum height
- V2 – mid rise with a 45 degree angular plane above 80% of the width of the street



## Downtown East Precinct



### Vision

- Destination for major office, post-secondary education institutions and residential uses
- Focus area for public parking
- Significant office or institutional employment uses will be required in new developments
- Transition of height is required adjacent to the low-rise neighbourhoods

## Downtown East Precinct



- 17 storey maximum height
- Max floor plate 750 m2 above first 3 storeys
- 45 degree angular plane applied from the centre line of Martha Street

## Neighbourhood Mixed-Use Precinct



### Vision

- Provide Transitions to the adjacent Low-rise Neighbourhood Precincts
- Maintain the existing character while permitting adaptive reuse for office, retail and institutional use
- Conserve the low rise character of the downtown along sections of Brant and Locust Streets

## Neighbourhood Mixed-Use Precinct



- 3 storey maximum height

## Apartment Neighbourhood



### Vision

- Only infill development that reflects the existing context within the precinct will be permitted
- Provide Transition to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods
- Height of new buildings to be based on surrounding context

## Staff Direction



*Direct the Director of Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility that, in planning the recommended concept for the downtown based on good planning principles and practices, consideration be given to reducing the heights in the Brant Street Corridor, downtown east side, Locust Street and the foot of Lakeshore Road/Burlington Avenue;*

*and that the overall densities more closely align with the minimum target of 200 people or jobs per hectare; and that the calculations of people/jobs per hectare (total and density) for the preferred concept be included in the final report, including estimations of Old Lakeshore Road and Waterfront Hotel (based on current Official Plan permissions).*

## Staff Position



- Addresses and responds to key themes
- Treats the existing and approved context of the Downtown appropriately
- Identifies further areas to protect and further areas that require more detailed policy guidance for transition
- Strives to acknowledge and retain existing built form
- Establishes potential for reasonable change more consistent with the public's vision for the Downtown

## Adopted OP Compared to Preliminary Preferred Concept



- Unique Areas
- Stable Neighbourhood Areas
- Parks, open space, connections to the Lake
- Key areas of height permission changes

## Recommendation

- **Receive the report titled “Taking a Closer Look at the Downtown: Preliminary Preferred Concept” prepared by SGL**
- **Endorse the recommended concept**
- **Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare detailed modifications to the adopted Official Plan to implement the recommended concept**

## Next Steps

### • **February/March**

- Develop Downtown OP policies
- Finalize technical reports
- Refine Downtown OP mapping

### • **April**

- Recommended policy to be adopted by Council
- Final Report prepared by SGL
- Council to forward Downtown OP policies and mapping to Region
- Draft Decision on the adopted Official Plan as a whole

