671 VICTORIA ROAD NORTH GUELPH, ONTARIO

URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

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INTRODUCTION 4

PART 1: 4

SITE'S PHYSICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT 4

1.1 Physical Context 4
Site Definition 4
On Site Attributes 5
The Site in Context 6

1.2 Response to Policy Context 14
Official Plan 14
Other applicable guidelines and documents 15
Urban Design Goals and Objectives Adopted form Official Plan 15

PART 2: 17

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND DESIGN SOLUTIONS 17

2.1 Development Concept 18
Site Design 18
Transitions 26
Public Views/Vistas 28
Parking 28
Access, Accessibility Circulation, Loading, Storage 30
Materials 30
Lighting and Signage 32
Architectural Treatment 32

Additional Information: High Density Development 34

Microclimate: Wind and Shadows 34

2.2 Integration with the Public Realm **46**
Integration with the Streetscape 46
Publicly Accessible Open Space and features 47

2.3 Sustainable Urban Design **48**
General Environmental Sustainability and Energy 48

3.0 SUMMARY **50**

Introduction

This Urban Design Brief has been prepared in support of a planning application to amend the Zoning Bylaw for the development of an empty land designated as Specialized Neighbourhood Commercial NC-9 Zone. The Design Brief has been based on the "Terms of Reference – July 14, 2011" for Urban Design.

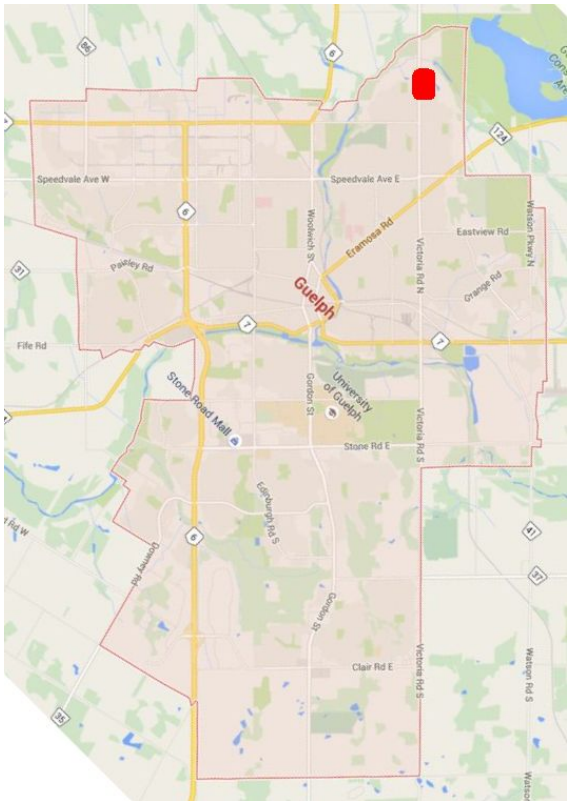
Part 1:

SITE'S PHYSICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 Physical Context

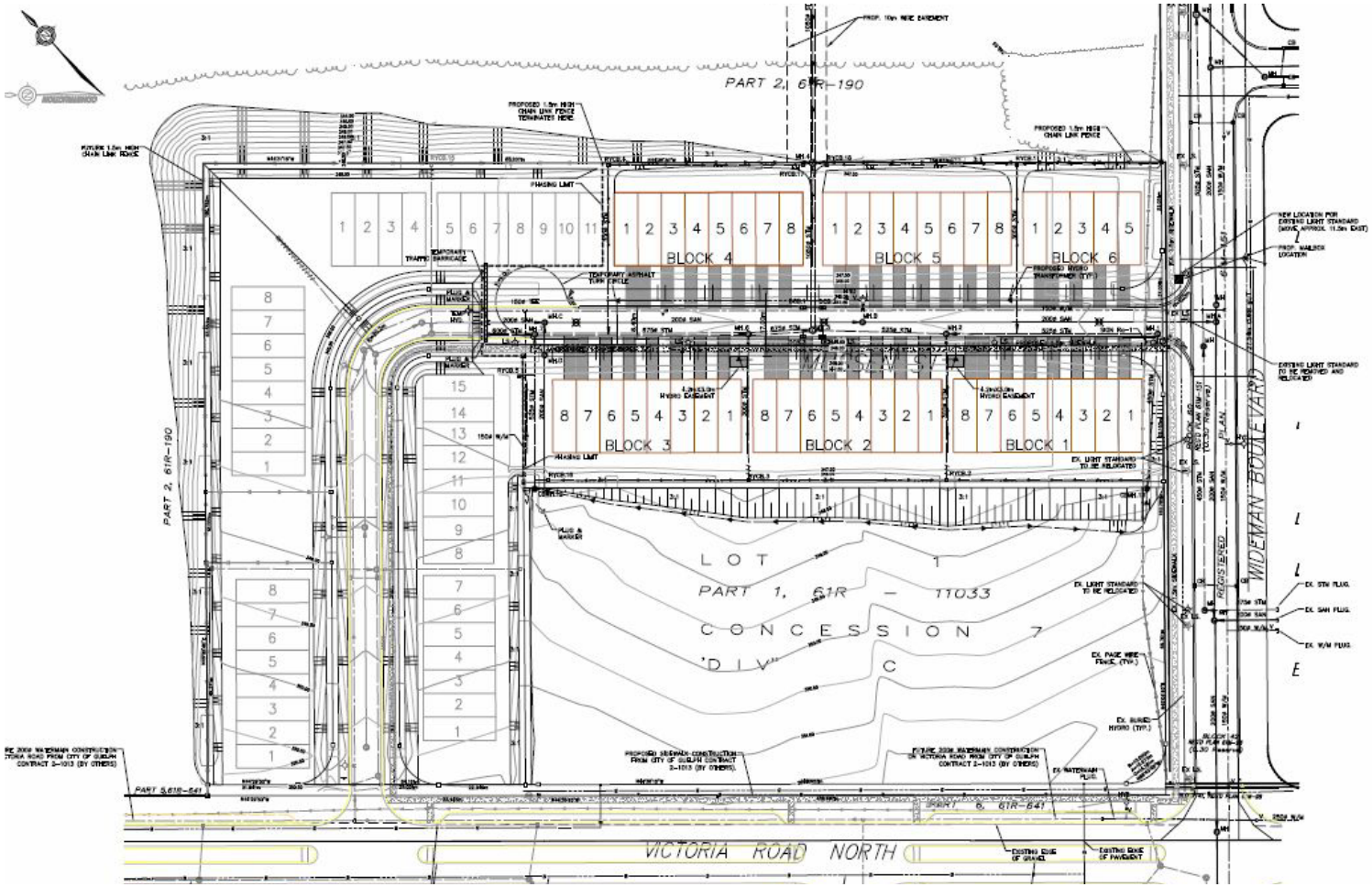
Site Definition

The site is located at the North East End of the City of Guelph, at 671 Victoria Road North, at the intersection of Victoria Road North and Wideman Boulevard.
The site is 76.80M X 162.91M
with an area of 12480 SM
(3.08386 Acres)
(1.248 Hectare)



On Site Attributes

The Subject Site is currently undeveloped and has no Vegetation, Buildings, Structures or Heritage Features. It has a mild slope of around 4.55% towards the North East side. Below is the current undeveloped site topography:

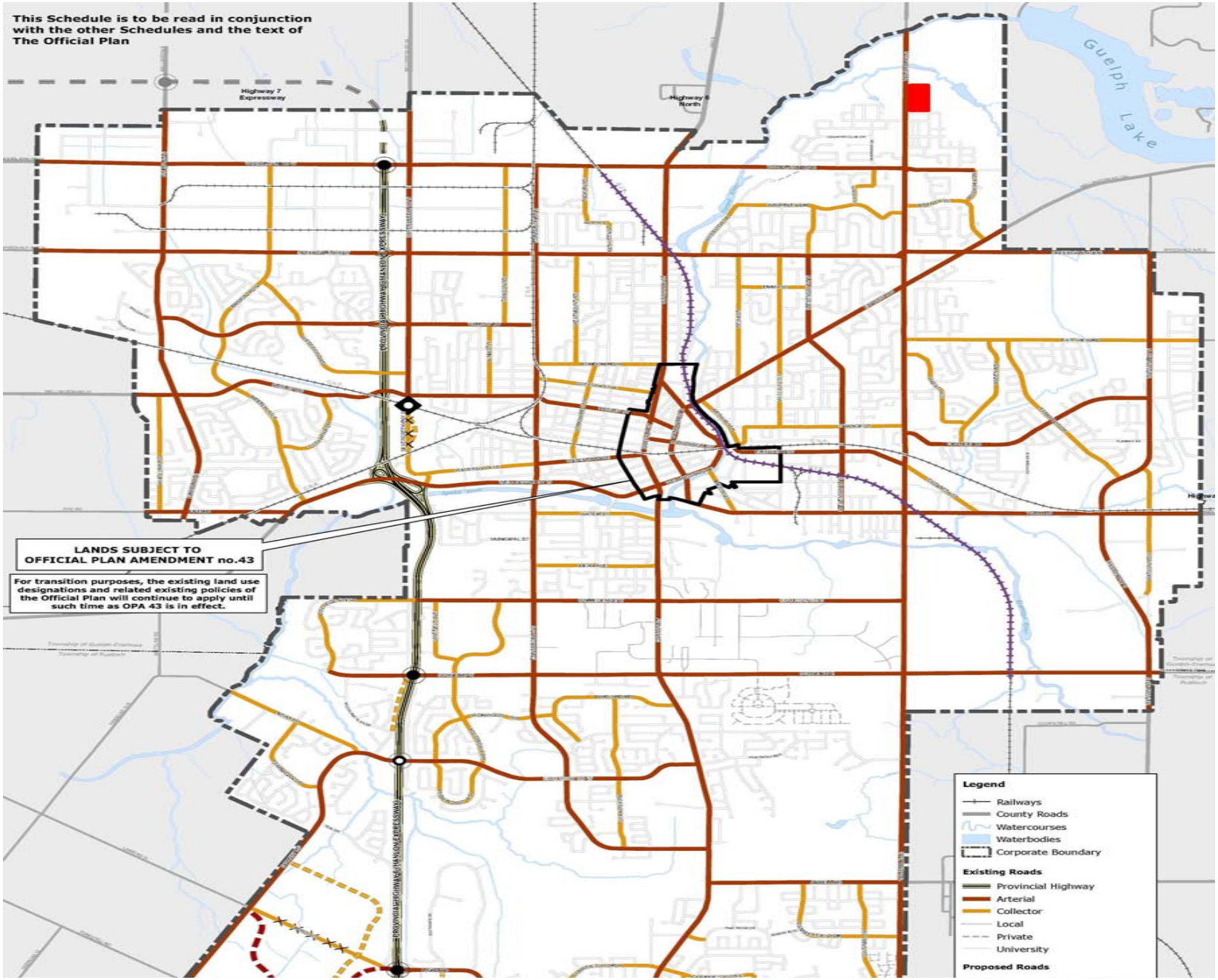


The Site in Context

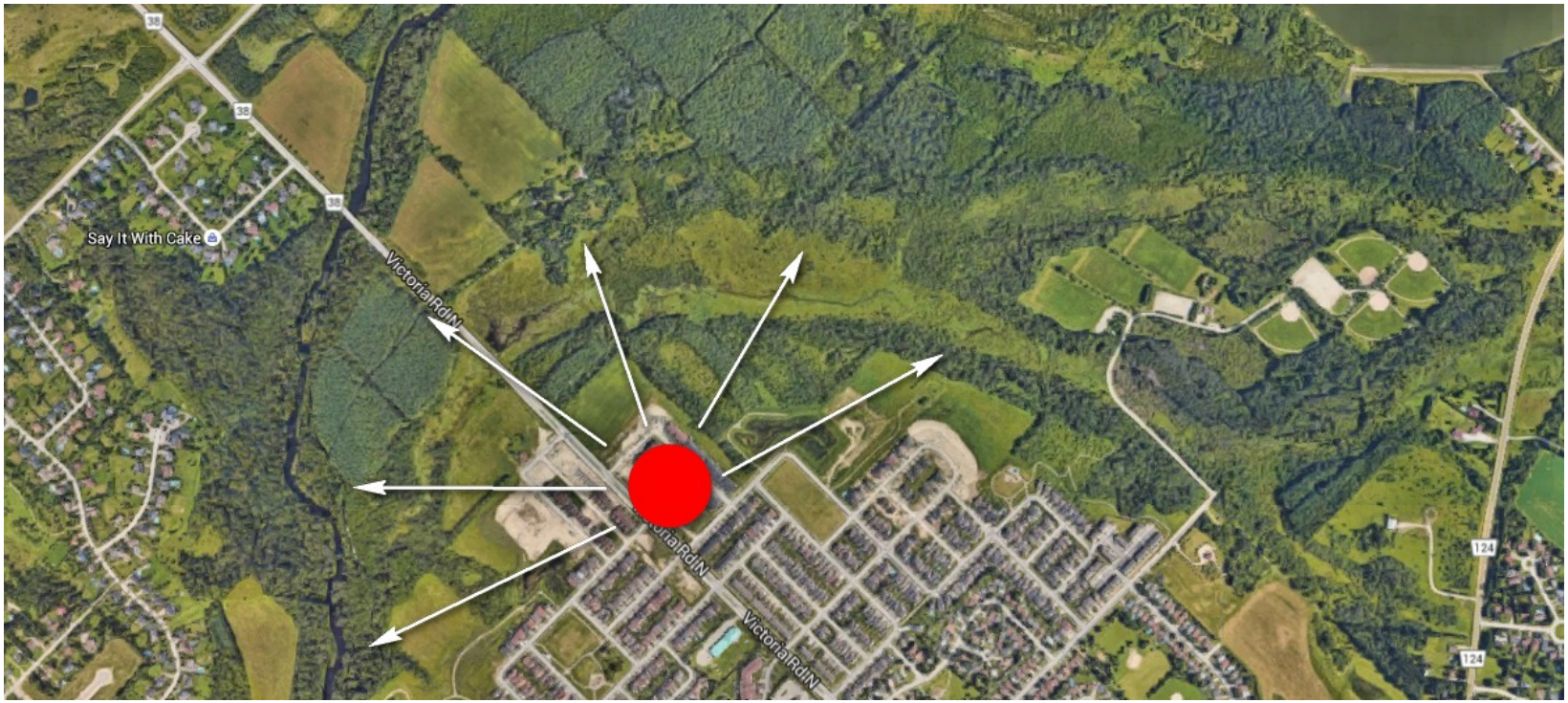
The subject site is at a corner lot on a main street and will serve as a Land Mark, it is also close to a Major City Gateway where Victoria Road North intersects with the City of Guelph North East Boundary. The Development will meet a high standard of design, recognizing its role as a Land Mark and as a Gateway and will be appropriately oriented to the public realm.

Moreover; as a Gateways to a new neighbourhood the buildings on this site will create a sense of entrance and arrival contributing to community image and identity utilizing trees and other landscaping, lighting and paving patterns.

Victoria Road North is a 4 lane Arterial Roadway, the part from Woodlawn Road towards North West (adjacent to the site) is a 2 lane road with a raised centre median. Other surrounding roadways are local in nature. These roadways have two-lane cross-sections and are laid out in a grid network. The site is also close to Woodlawn Road West which is another arterial roadway.

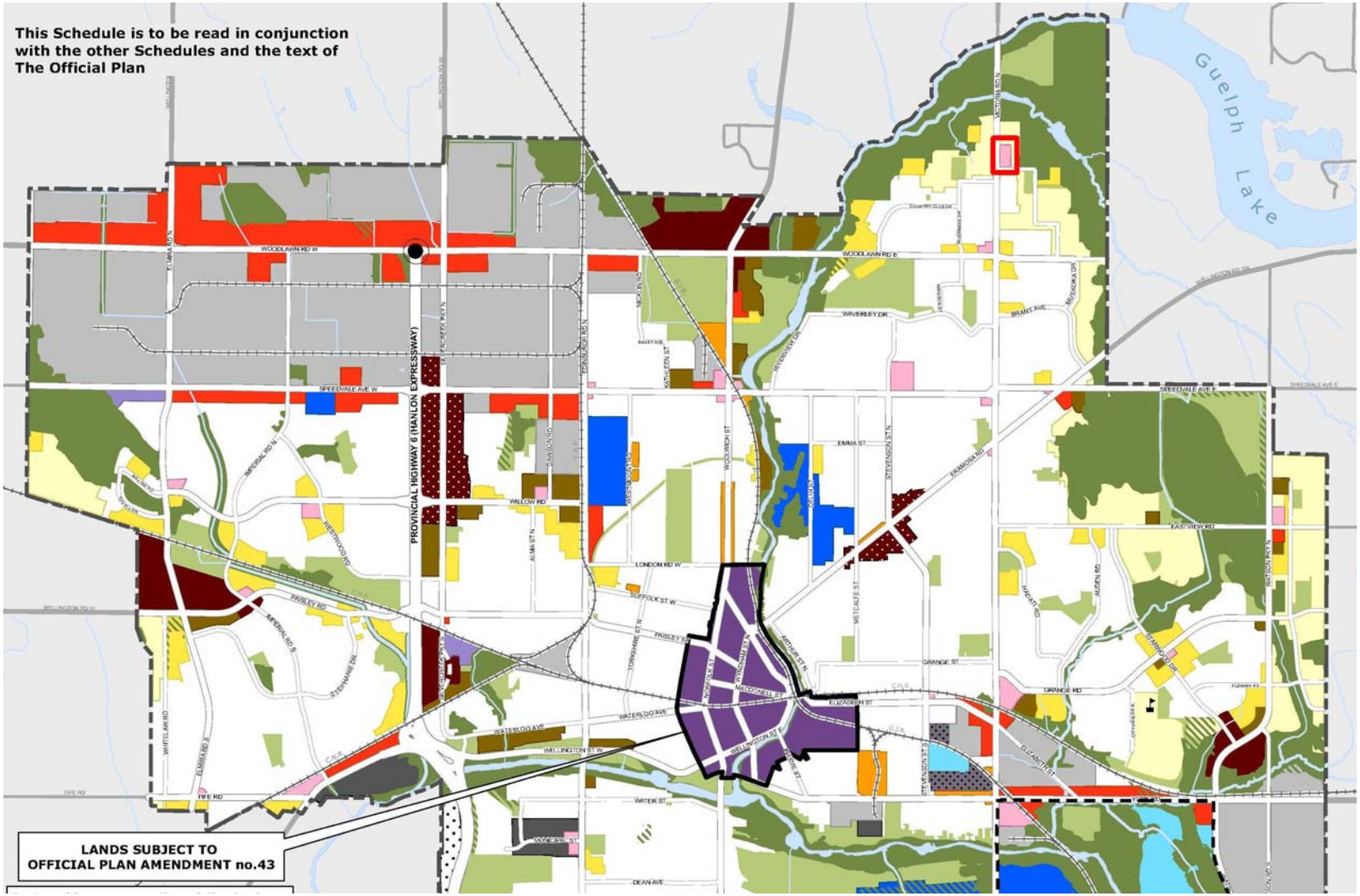

This Schedule is to be read in conjunction with the other Schedules and the text of The Official Plan
Highway 7 Expressway
Guelph Lake
LANDS SUBJECT TO OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT no.43
For transition purposes, the existing land use designations and related existing policies of the Official Plan will continue to apply until such time as OPA 43 is in effect.
Legend
Railways
County Roads
Watercourses
Waterbodies
Corporate Boundary
Existing Roads
Provincial Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Private
University
Proposed Roads

The site is close to the Guelph Lake Conservation Area, it is designated as Significant Natural Areas. This will make the site of particular importance and will have the opportunity of utilizing this feature as will be described later.



The subject land is surrounded by Low Density Greenfield Residential, a newly developed residential single family houses along Wideman Blvd, Mussen Street (in the form of row-houses) and also on the opposite side of Victoria Road. Beyond this area to the North, North East and North West is where the Significant Natural Area located.

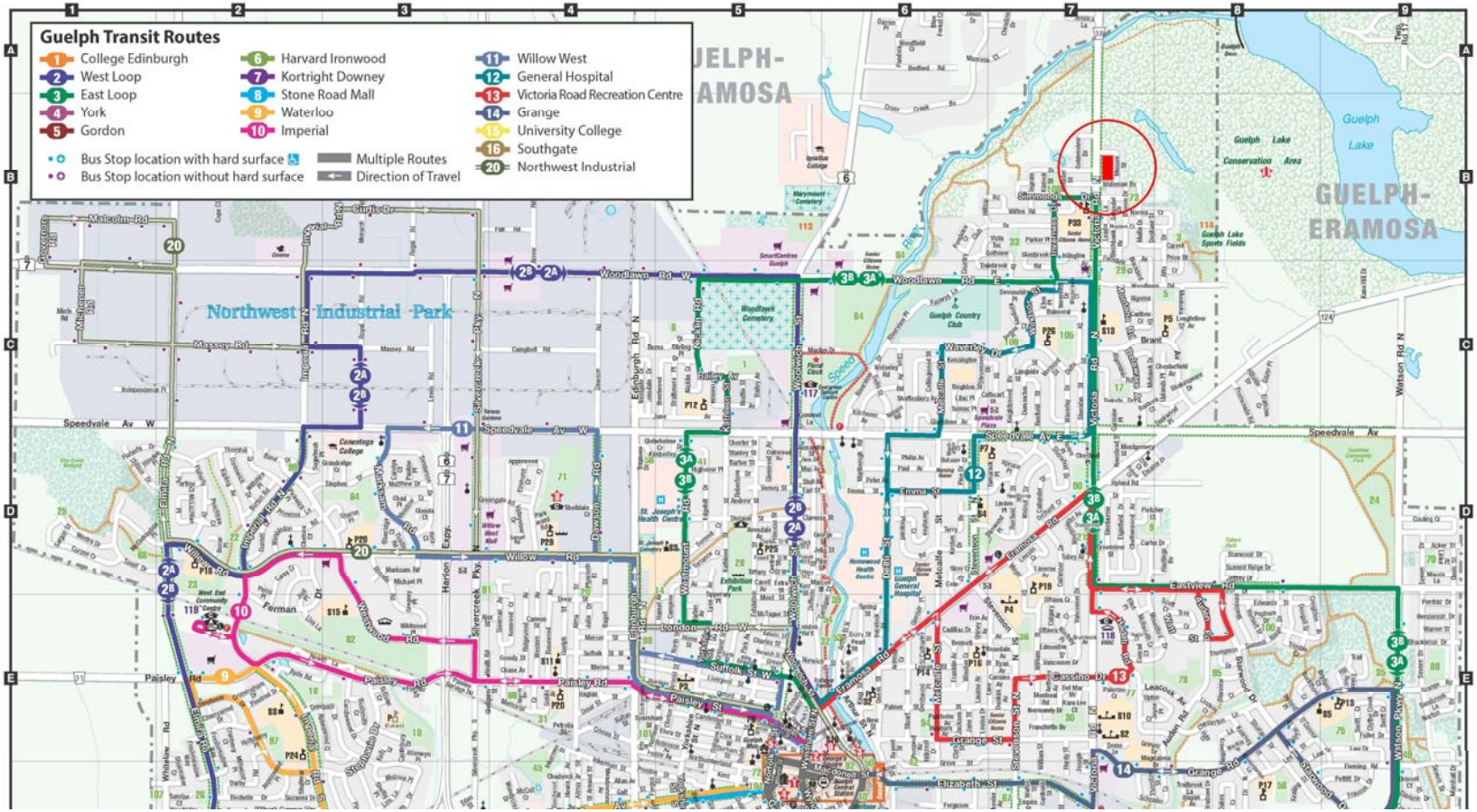
The adjacent houses on Mussen Street are separated by the Landscape Buffer on the perimeter of the site and by the houses backyards.



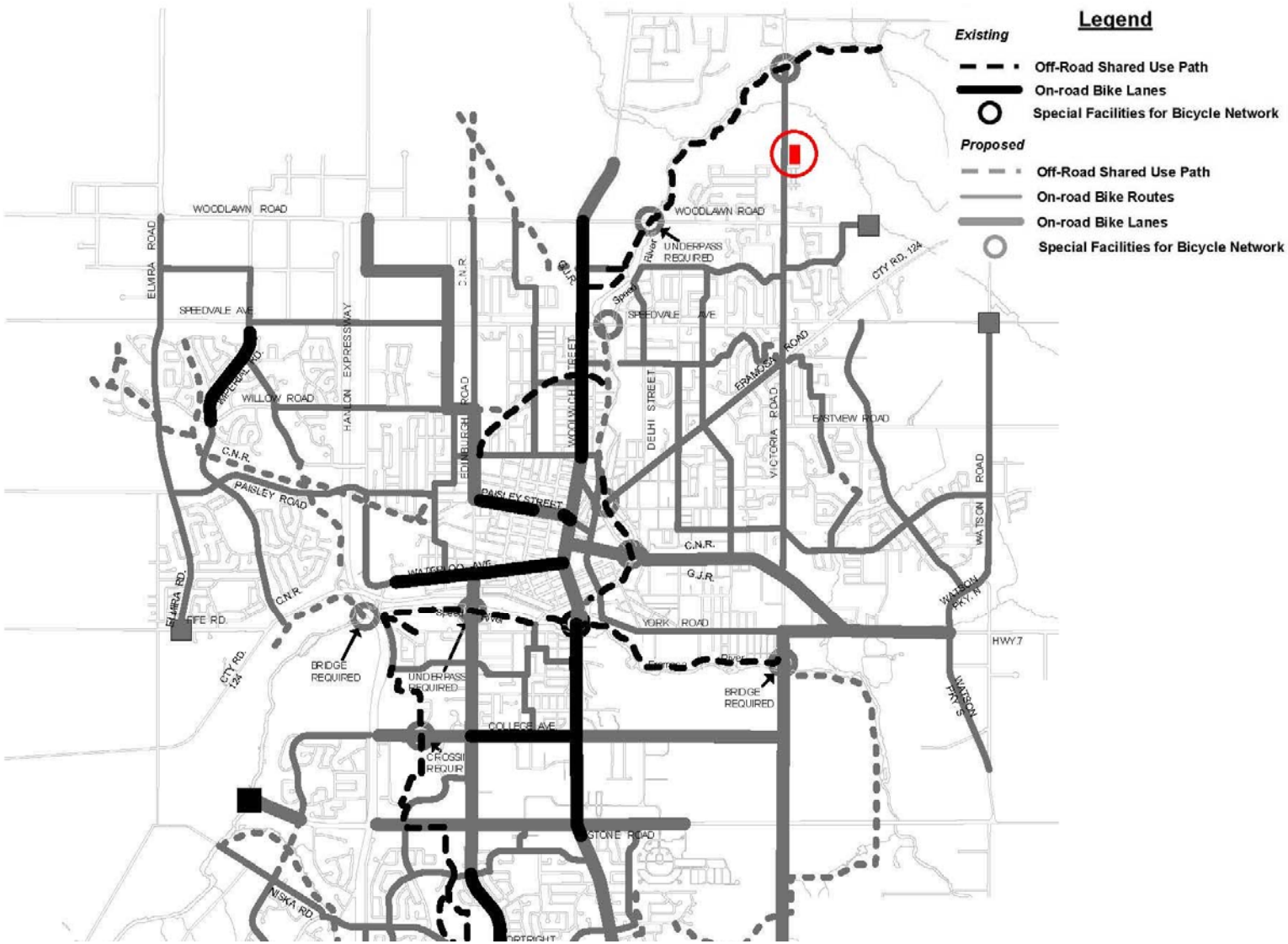
There are no barriers, within the site, HOWEVER; there are potential connections to Ingram Drive.

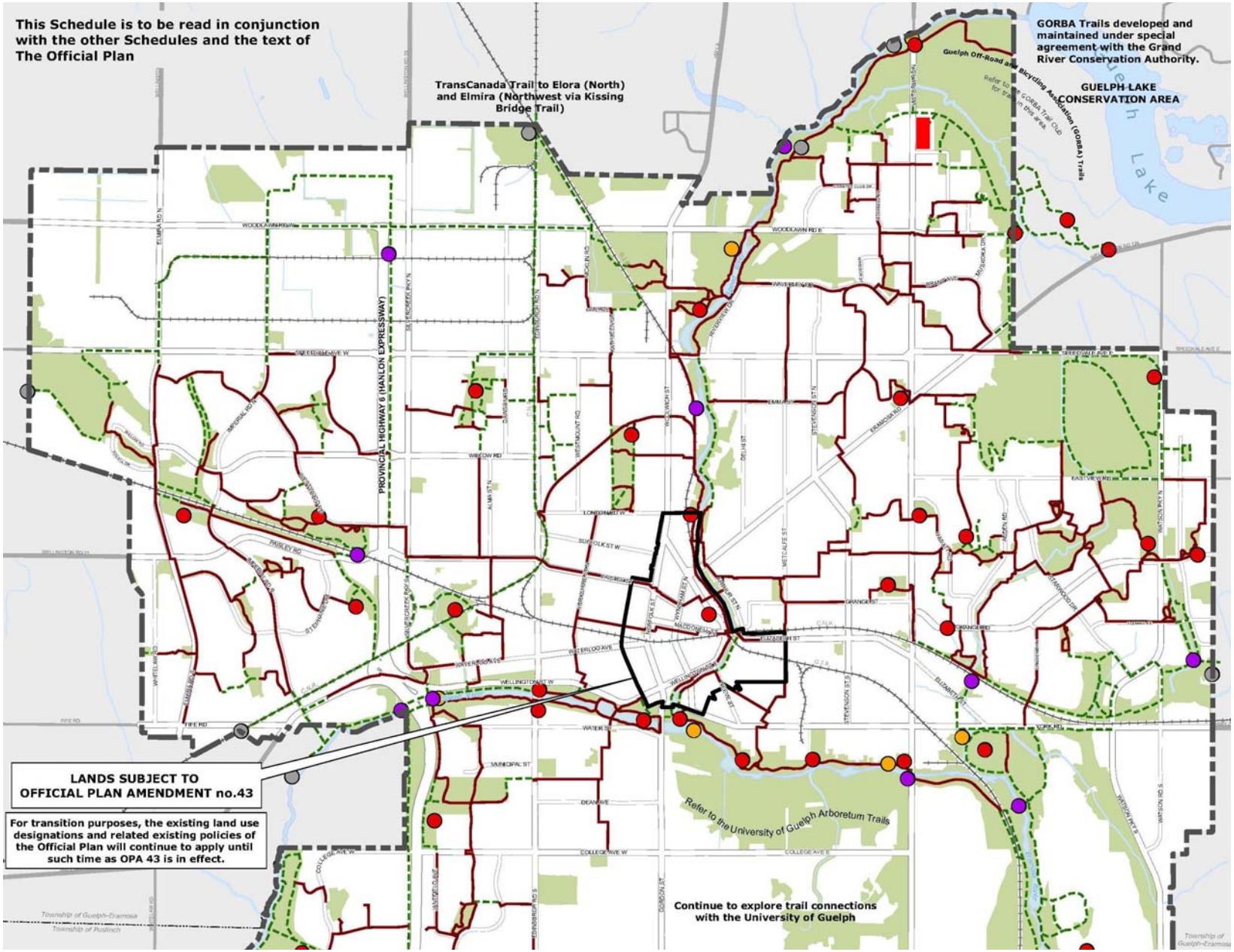
The Street Network surrounding the site was briefly explained earlier; obviously it is an automobile-oriented network. We will also show other available transportation Systems.

The map below is for Guelph Transit Routes, East Loop Route Number 3 is the closest route to the site, it runs up to Victoria Road North and Simmonds Drive.

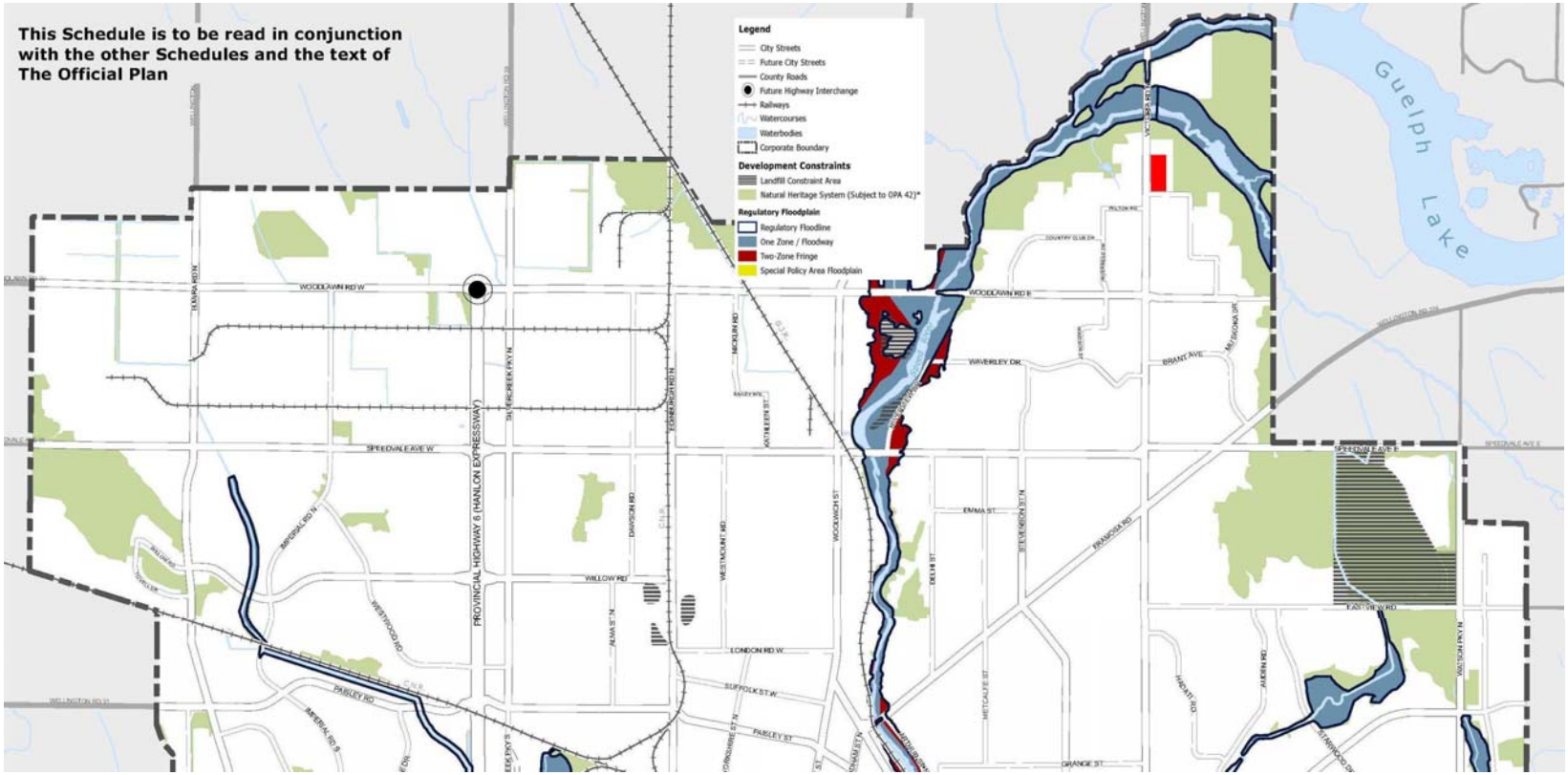


The map below is showing Existing and Planned Cycling Network




This Schedule is to be read in conjunction with the other Schedules and the text of The Official Plan
TransCanada Trail to Elora (North) and Elmira (Northwest via Kissing Bridge Trail)
GORBA Trails developed and maintained under special agreement with the Grand River Conservation Authority.
GUELPH LAKE CONSERVATION AREA
Guelph Off-Road and Bicycling Association (GORBA) Trails
PROVINCIAL HIGHWAY 6 (HANLON EXPRESSWAY)
LANDS SUBJECT TO OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT no.43
For transition purposes, the existing land use designations and related existing policies of the Official Plan will continue to apply until such time as OPA 43 is in effect.
Refer to the University of Guelph Arboretum Trails
Continue to explore trail connections with the University of Guelph

Beyond the single family houses adjacent to the site, there is a Natural Heritage System area to the North, North East and North West (see map below)



There are no adjacent heritage structures or elements near the site; the closest designated heritage building is at 414 Eramosa Road, around 3.3 KM away.

1.2 Response to Policy Context

Official Plan

This development will respond to applicable Urban Design Policies as listed and discussed below:

- City of Guelph encourages higher-density residential development to meet increasing demand for housing while preserving Guelph's natural, green spaces. Part of this Zoning Amendment Application is to increase the allowable Gross Floor Area, which will increase the intensity of the development and number of people living there.
- The development is a mixed-use commercial and residential, many occupants might live and work on the same place reducing the need for transportation and unnecessary pollution.
- The commercial services of this building (Health Care, Mercantile, Financial …etc) will serve all close by neighbourhoods within walking distance.
- This mixed-use development will serve the transit-supportive community concept.
- The designed buildings are oriented towards the street as recommended by the city Urban Design Guidelines.
- Façades and Elevations design will have horizontal mass and elements treatment which will better blend with the horizon and the street and movement direction which will mitigate the height effect.
- Underground parking was maximized to minimize surface parking.
- The use of materials quality and other fenestration and design elements to help elevate the overall quality of the building as being both a Gateway and a Landmark.

Other applicable guidelines and documents

1.3 Urban Design Goals and Objectives for the Site

Urban Design Goals and Objectives Adopted form Official Plan

- To build compact neighbourhoods that use land, energy, water and infrastructure efficiently and encourage walking.
- To create neighbourhoods with diverse opportunities for living and working.
- To engage in “place-making” - developing infrastructure, spaces and buildings that are permanent and enduring, memorable and beautiful, adaptable and flexible.
- To ensure that the design of the built environment respects the character of the existing distinctive areas and neighbourhoods of the City.
- To allow for a range of architectural styles and promote expressions that bring interest and diversity in urban form and architectural design while responding appropriately to the local context and achieving compatibility.
- To design space that is accessible to all, regardless of abilities.
- To improve conditions for greater personal security within publicly accessible spaces by designing them to be attractive and comfortable to the public, increasing the potential for informal surveillance and reducing opportunities for crime
- To preserve and enhance protected public views and public vistas of built and natural features.
- To design for a choice of mobility including walking, cycling, transit and driving.
- Is designed to maximize opportunities for solar gain while respecting the built form policies of this Plan.

- The design of site and building development will support energy efficiency and water conservation through the use of alternative energy systems or renewable energy systems, building orientation, sustainable building design, low impact stormwater infiltration systems, drought-resistant landscaping and similar measures.
- Preserve, enhance and protect the distinct character of the City and the sense of a community of neighbourhoods.
- Build a compact, mixed-use and transit-supportive community.
- Plan and design an attractive urban landscape that reinforces and enhances Guelph's sense of place and identity while encouraging innovative design and development opportunities.
- Lighting, parking areas, landscaping, trash containers, bicycle racks and signage will be coordinated to enable the continuity in character and function of the streetscape.

New development shall be designed to contribute to a pedestrian-oriented streetscape through strategies such as:

- Locating built form adjacent to, and addressing, the street edge;
- Placing principal building entrances towards the street and corner intersections;
- Maintaining or extending a continuous building façade or street wall along the street;
- Providing for active uses that provide an interface with the public realm that enhances the liveliness and vibrancy of the street (e.g. seating, cafés, patios, displays);
- Incorporating weather protection measures such as canopies, awnings, building projections;
- Ensuring that street elements are co-ordinated with those within the public street right-of-way;
- Ensuring that the placement of above-ground utilities do not visually detract from a cohesive streetscape through such strategies as clustering utilities in appropriate locations or containing them in other streetscape features;

Part 2:

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND DESIGN SOLUTIONS

2.1 Development Concept

Site Design

The site is located on a corner lot with the long side parallel to Victoria Road North and the short one on Wideman Boulevard.

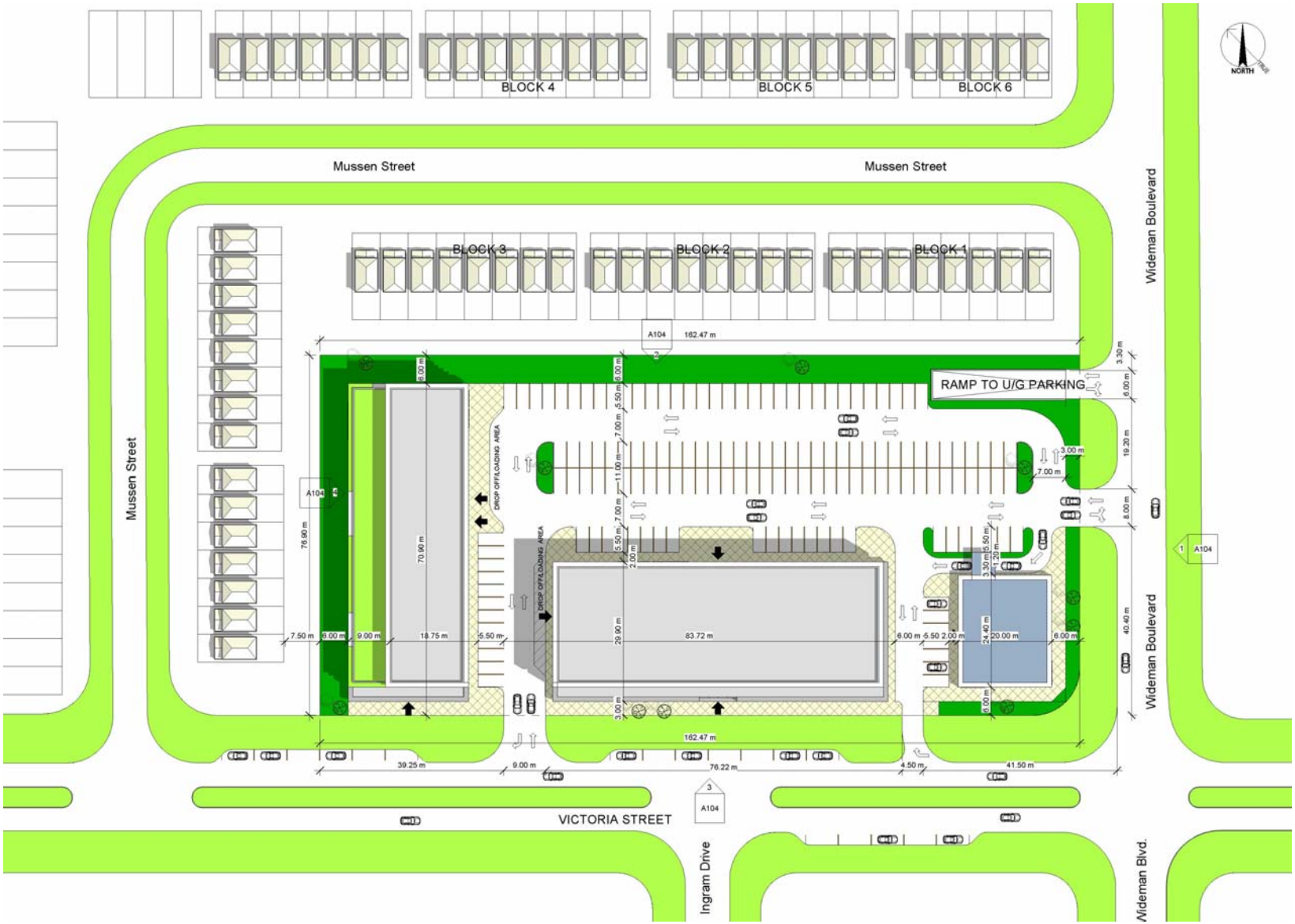
There will be three proposed building blocks:

The smallest is a One Storey Commercial Building located at the Victoria Road North and Wideman intersection.

The second will be a Six Storey Mixed-Use Building along Victoria Road North and will be located as close to the street as possible, separated by allowable setback, the main floor will be commercial and the other five floors will be residential with required amenity spaces.

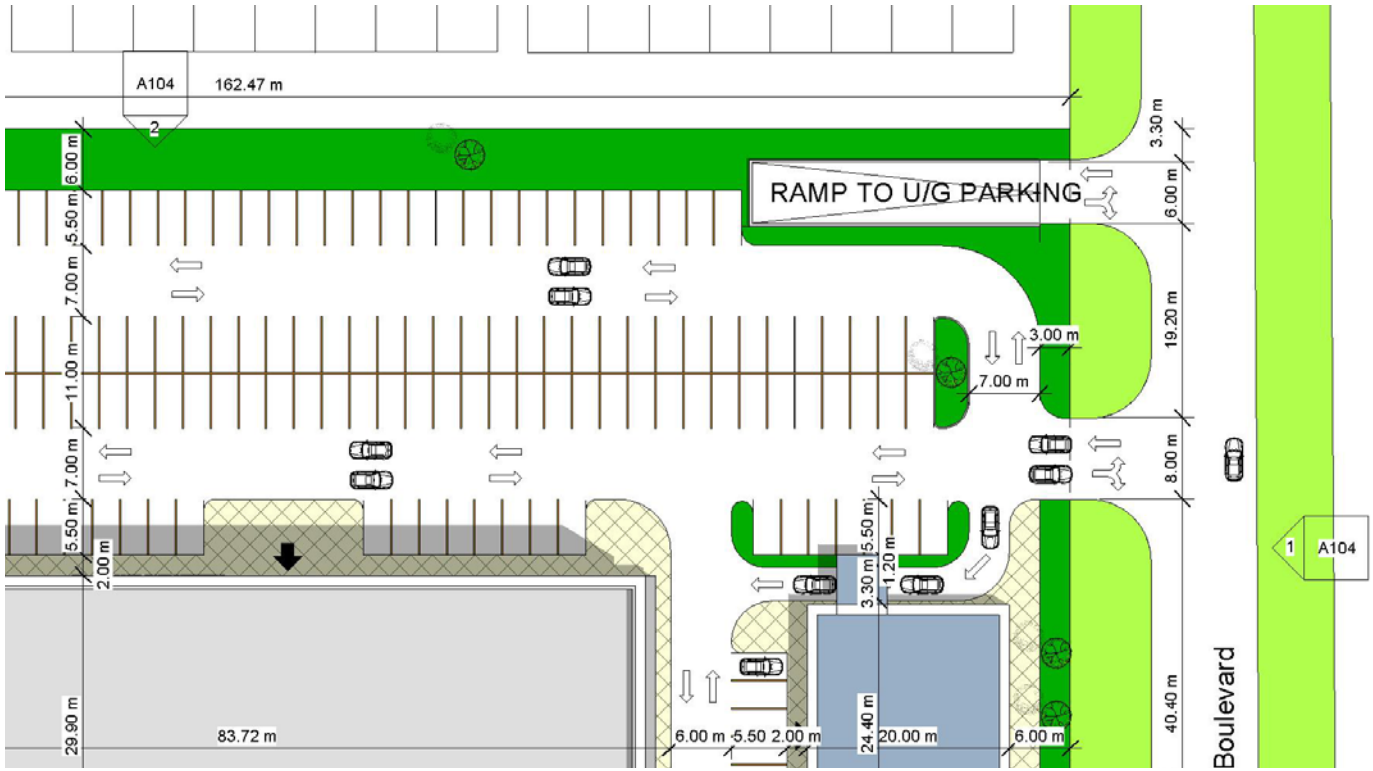
The third block will also be a Six Storey Mixed-Use Building perpendicular on Victoria Road and adjacent to the rear side separated by the required setback, the main floor will also be commercial and the rest are residential floors with required amenity spaces. The last two floors of this building are reduced in size providing additional set back of nine metres from the rear face for mass transition purposes.

Below is a diagram showing the proposed Site Plan:



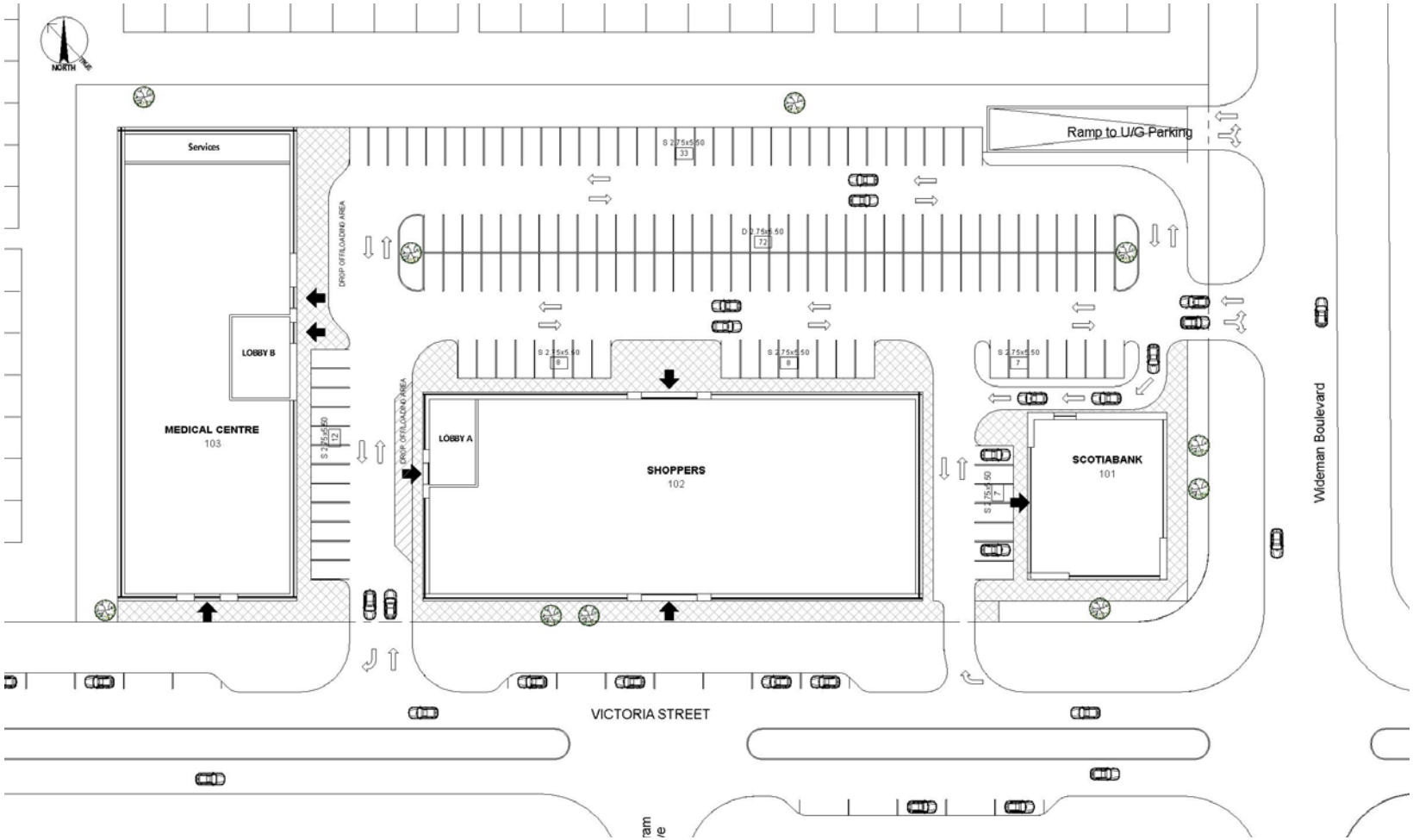
There are three access points (ingress/egress) to the site and one to the underground parking. One of the two ingress/egress points on Victoria Road is between the one storey building and the middle six storey building is right-in only, while the other which is between the two six storey buildings is right-in and right-out. The third access to the site is on Wideman Boulevard and is right-in, right-out and left-out, this is the only access that drivers can use to exit the site and go on Victoria Road south bound through the Victoria-Wideman intersection.

The separate access to the underground parking ramp is very important to eliminate the number of cars accessing the surface parking causing pedestrian safety issues, unnecessary noise and pollution.

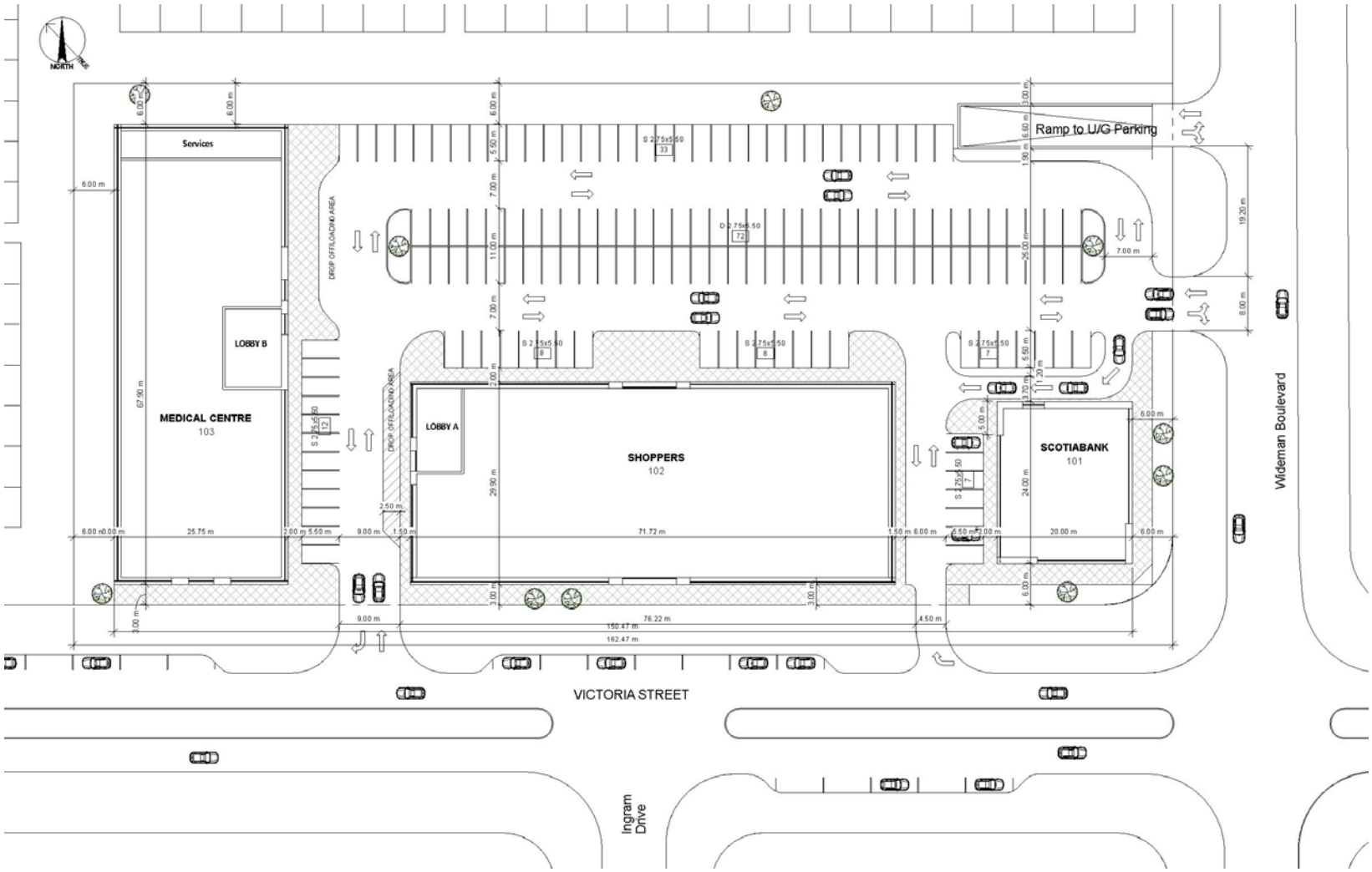


The main building is adjacent to the main street edge (Victoria Road North) and addressing it, this responds to city policy which help screening the surface parking.

Below is a diagram showing the entrances to different buildings

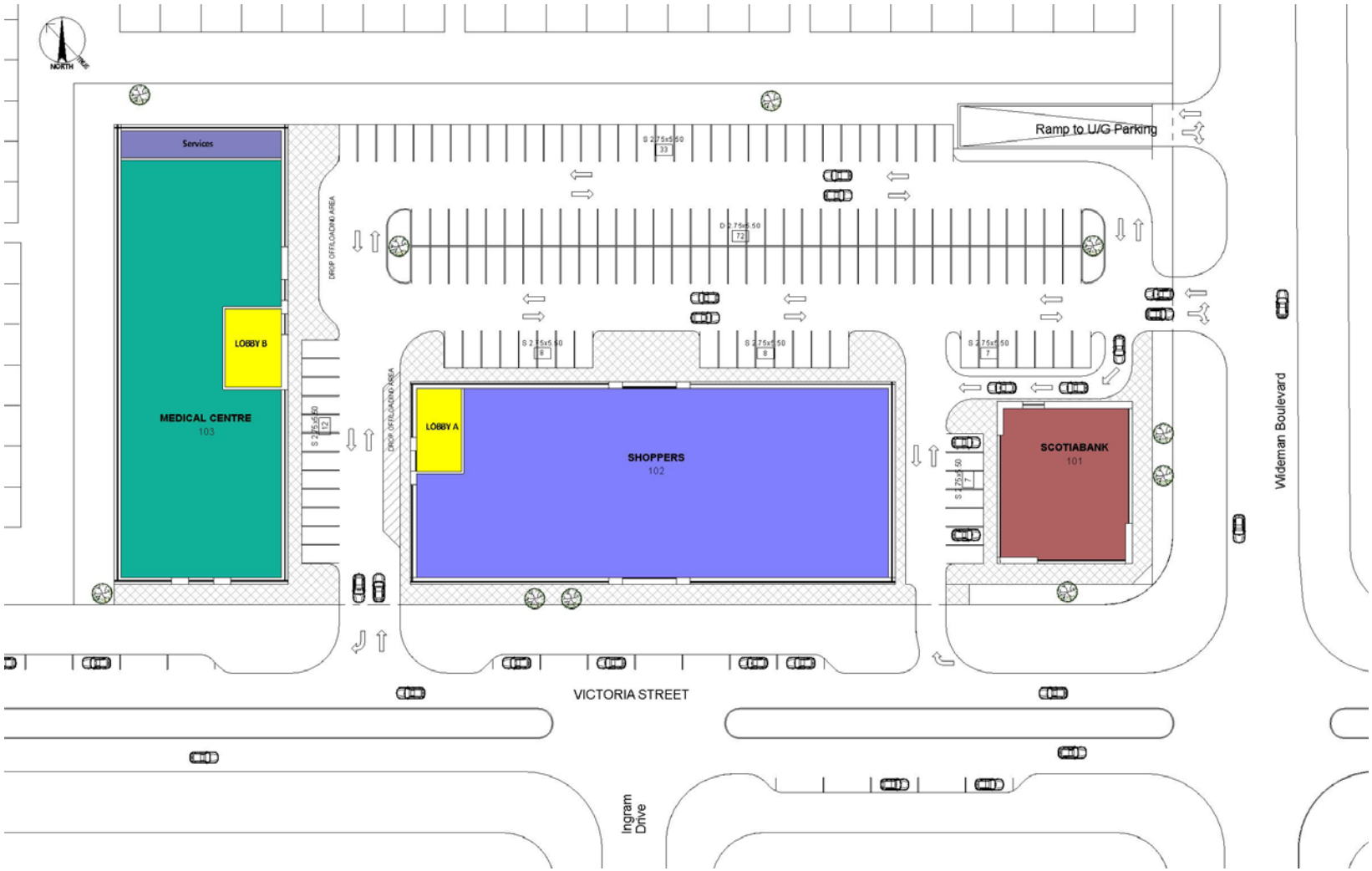


The diagram below shows the setbacks of buildings from all sides.



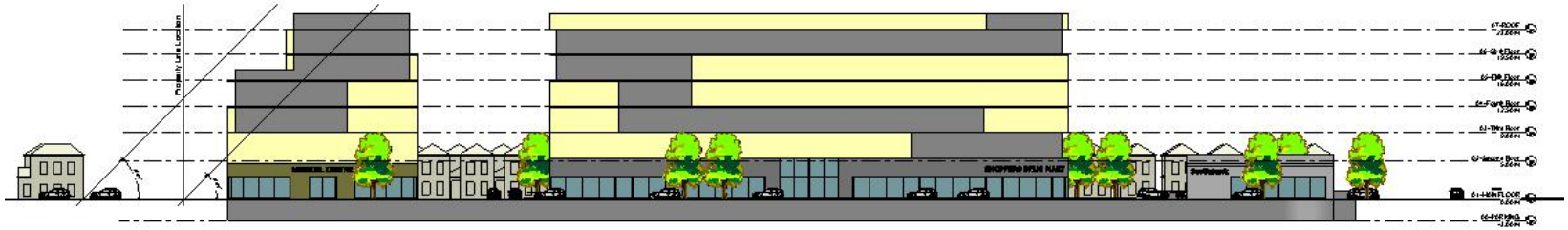
The adjacent houses on Mussen Street to the North and west of the subject site are separated by the Landscape Buffer on the perimeter of the site and by the houses backyards.

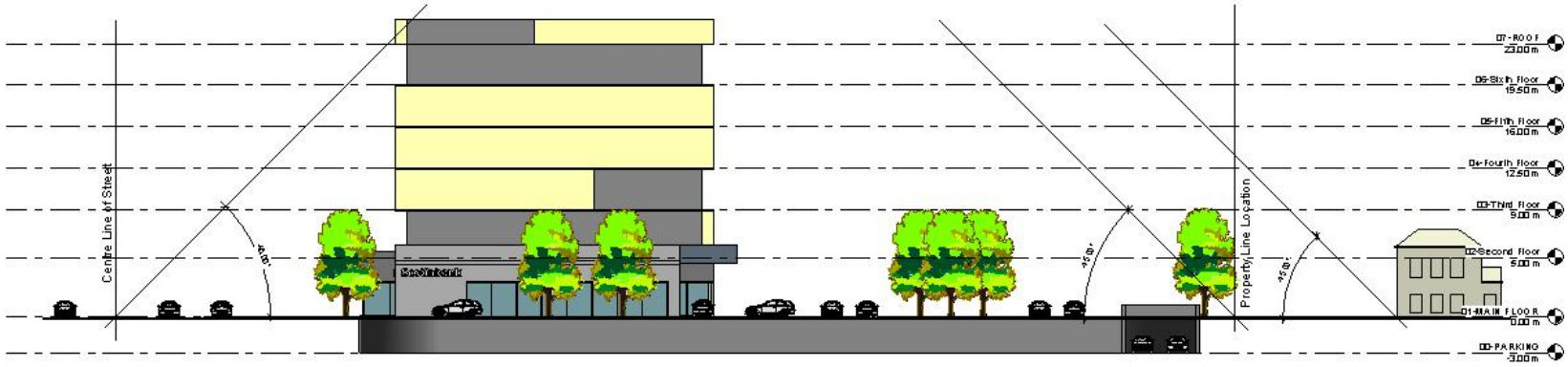
Below is a diagram showing the main floor, with parking area, the parking paved area and the access to it from the street has optimal slopes required for the storm water management.

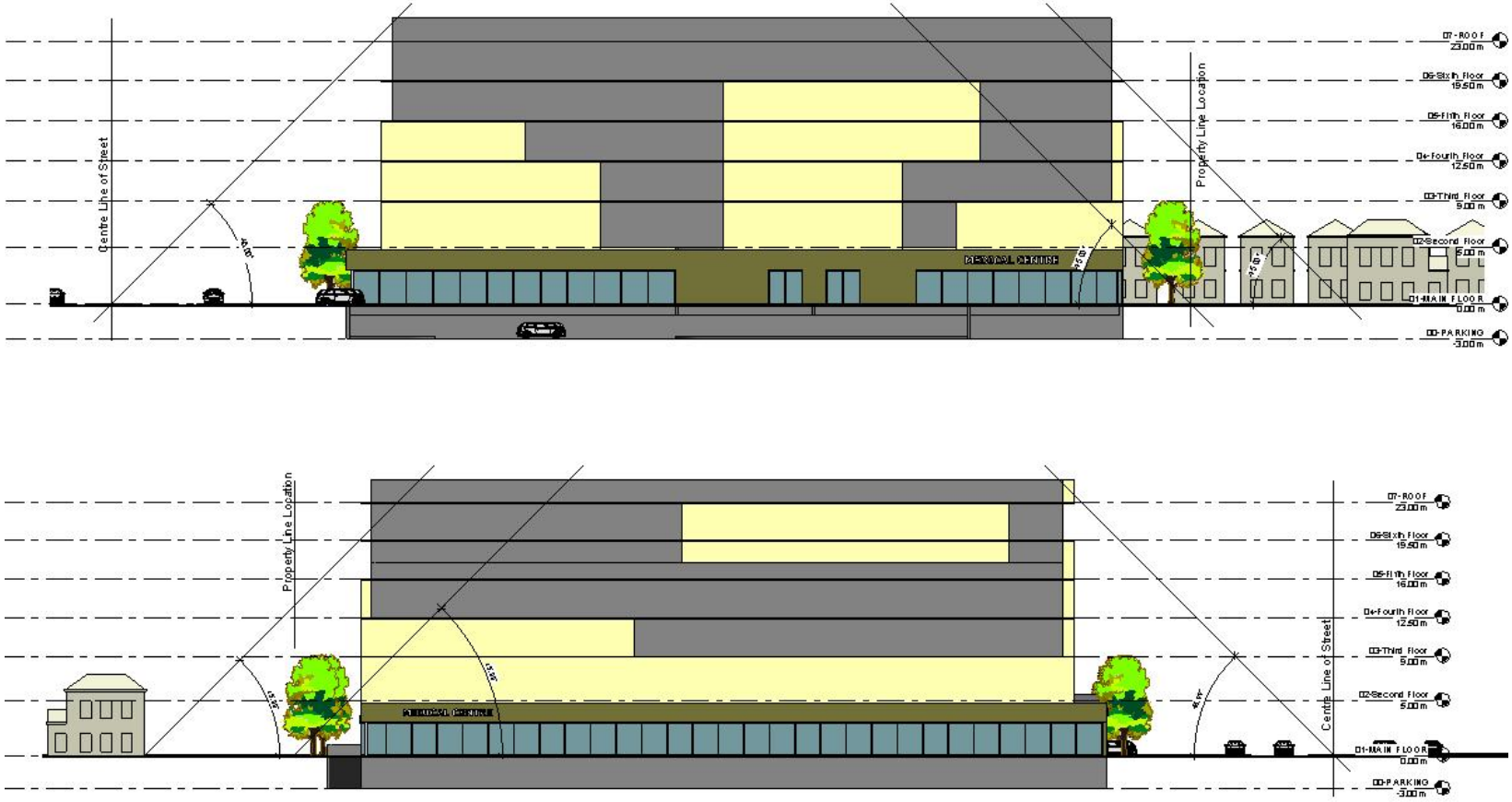


Transitions

Transition in built-form is an important aspect here because the site with the proposed six storey buildings is surrounded by two storey single family residential development, below are some diagrams showing transition conditions with 45 degree planes set from adjacent buildings, property lines and/or the adjacent houses.







Transition will be achieved in three different ways:

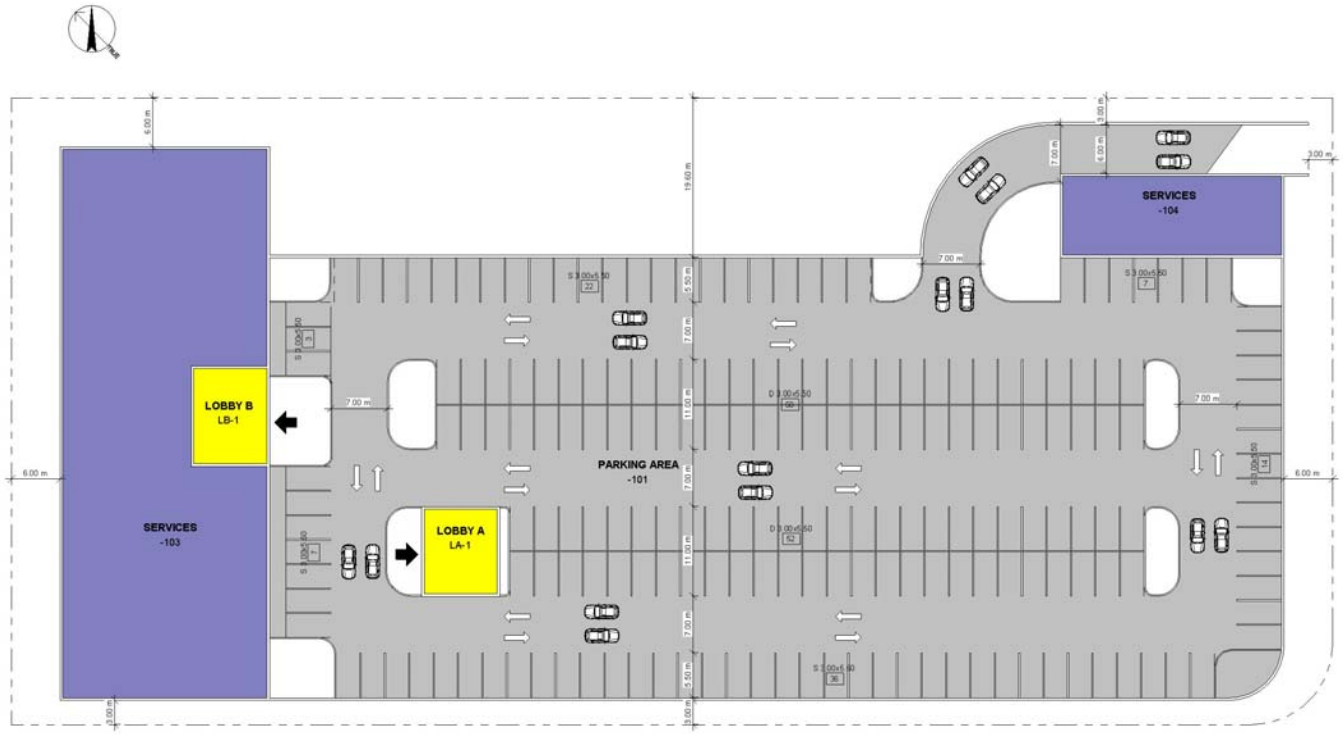
1. Staggering with Massing
2. Staggering with Façades Design and Material Treatment
3. Landscaping

Public Views/Vistas

Although there are no direct public views to the site, beyond the single family row-houses on Mussen Street to North there is the Guelph Lake Conservation Area, an area designated as Significant Natural Area. Starting from the fourth floor of the proposed project, there will different opportunities to view this natural area.

Parking

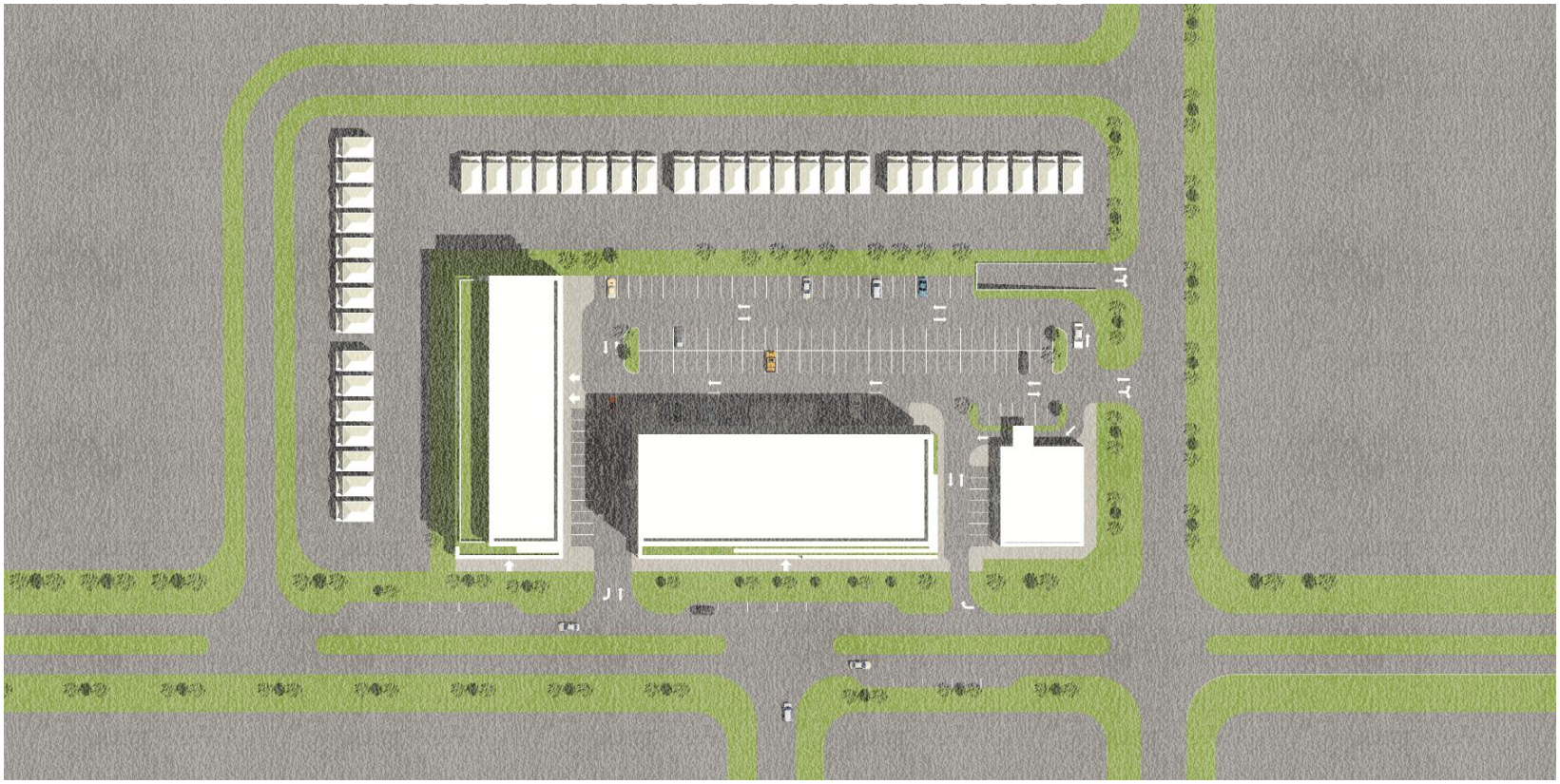
The current estimate for required parking spaces is around 300 spaces; the total provided will be 346, around 147 spaces will be surface parking, while 199 spaces will be provided underground, this also responds to city planning policies to minimize surface parking and maximize the underground spaces; moreover; as mentioned earlier, a separate access to the underground parking ramp was provided on Wideman Boulevard.



Surface parking will be screened by main building masses being closer to the main street providing visual separation, also there will be some landscape treatments to screen the rest of it.

Access, Accessibility Circulation, Loading, Storage

There are two main access points to the site, one on Victoria Road and the other on Wideman Blvd., loading areas to both buildings are closer the access point on Victoria Road North, please refer to site plan drawings.



Materials

Materials used for the buildings on this site will be based on the surrounding materials used around the site in particular, and materials used in major buildings in the city of Guelph in general.

At this preliminary design stage materials are still conceptual, the main three materials will be:

1. Stone or Brick
2. Stucco/EIFS
3. Pre-Cast Concrete
4. Anodized Aluminum for commercial use
5. Aluminum and/or Glass railings
6. Glazing

Stone or Brick will be used to enhance the quality of the building and to connect to the city of Guelph historical aspect.

Stucco, EIFS and/or precast concrete will be the other major building materials; it will be used as a “Background” to the elements with stone finish. Below are examples of materials for existing houses around the site.

Lighting and Signage

The commercial part of this project that will require signage is limited to specific companies, basically Scotia Bank and Shoppers Drug Mart; both companies have their own Visual Identity and are using specific lettering style, size and colours. The Medical Clinic signage will follow the Shoppers Drug MART logo fonts and size to stay in harmony. Available space for signage by the by the building architectural design will ensure that the signage will be consistent in design and height.

Exterior Lighting will be limited to areas only as required for safety and comfort, it will be pedestrian friendly, energy efficient yet provide required lighting level to the site without trespassing into adjacent properties. Lighting fixtures and components will be in modern style with some classic touch; this will be following the modern building façades treatment and classic touch given by the use of stone or brick.

Architectural Treatment

As this site is not surrounded by any multi storey buildings that have prominent architectural characteristics or styles, and as this site is located on a main street and a gateway point, it is an opportunity to explore new architectural styles that does not have to match or follow adjacent buildings. However; the architectural style will have to follow the urban design guidelines.

Also for the reasons above, we feel that the proper massing treatment of the multi storey buildings on this site has to be HORIZONTAL to blend better with the surrounding two storey residential buildings and with the streetscape and Horizon.

At the pedestrian level, the design will be kept neutral; the potential two main commercial clients (Shoppers Drug Mart and Scotia Bank) have their design standards that have to be adopted with proper modifications, the remaining commercial portion which is the medical clinics will have to follow the rest.

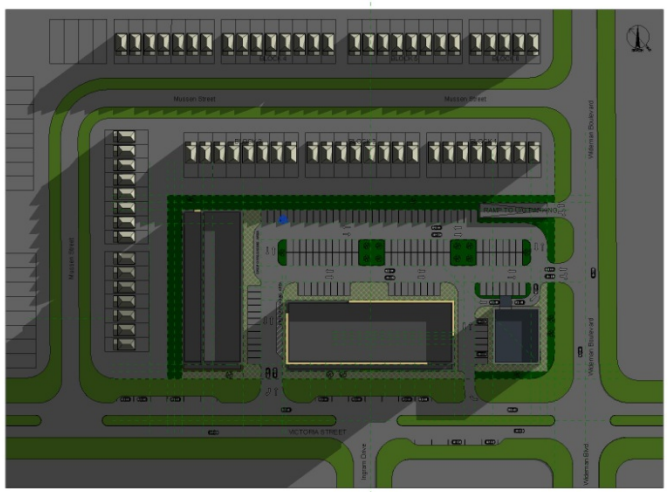
DRUG MART
Scot

Additional Information: High Density Development

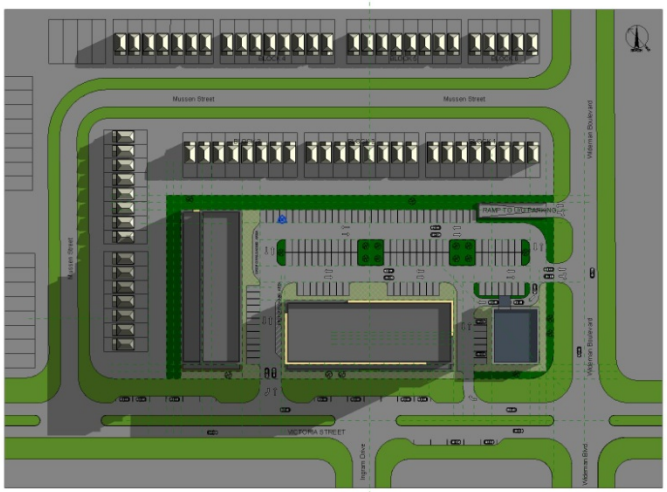
Microclimate: Wind and Shadows

Below are some diagrams showing shadows casted by the proposed buildings

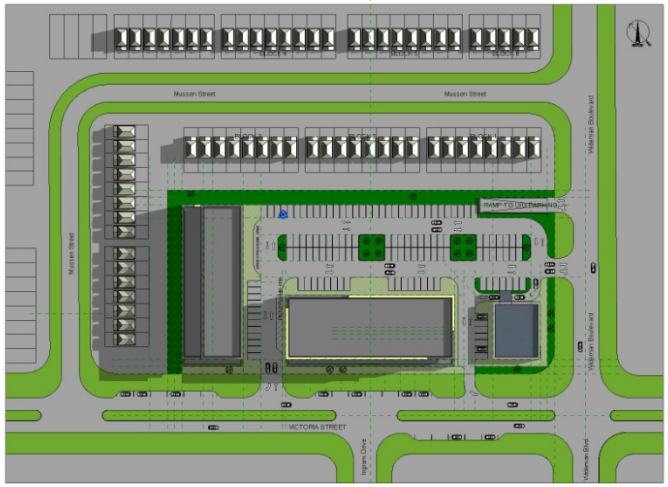
[1 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 07:00]



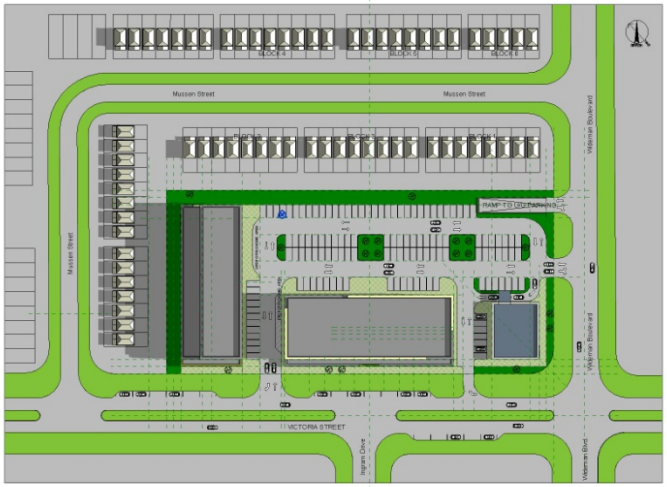
[2 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 08:00]



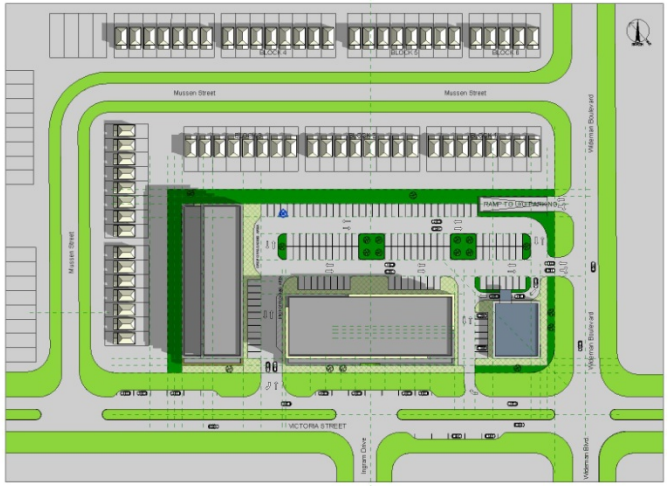
[3 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 09:00]



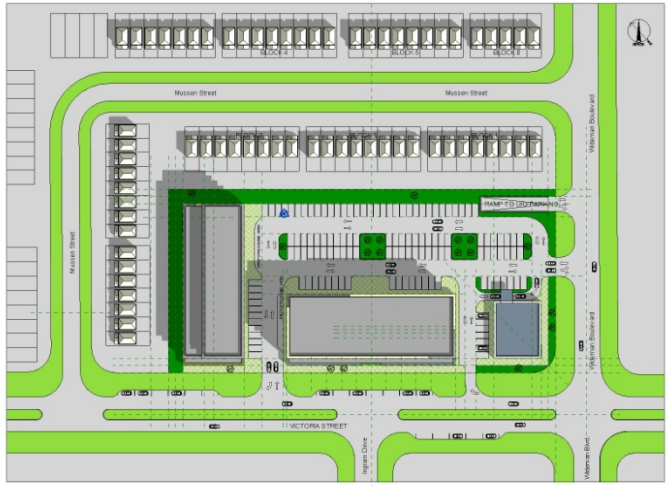
[4 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 10:00]



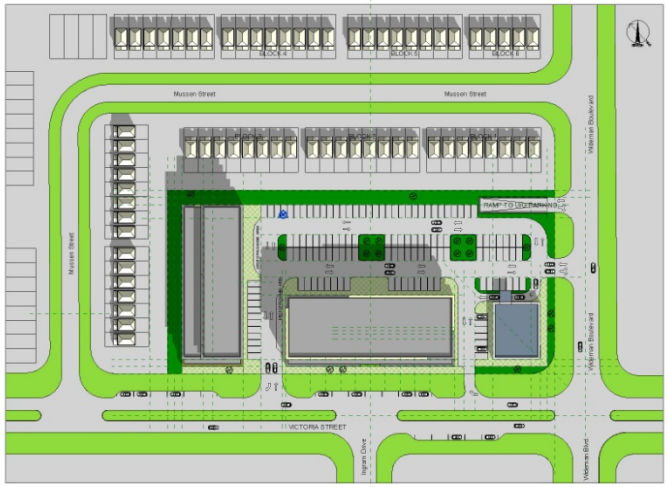
[5 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 11:00]



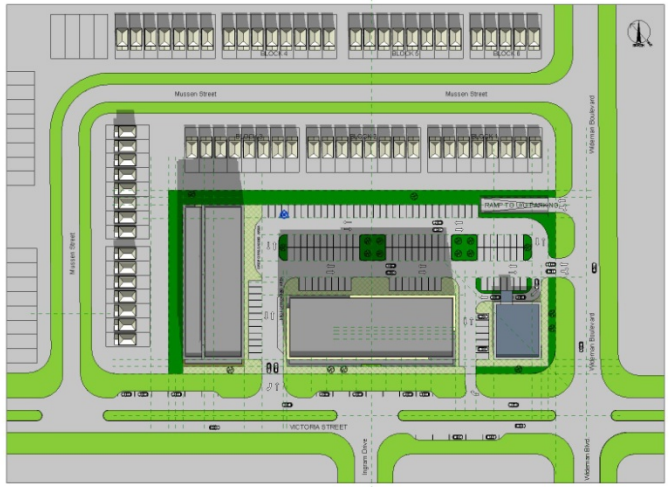
[6 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 12:00]



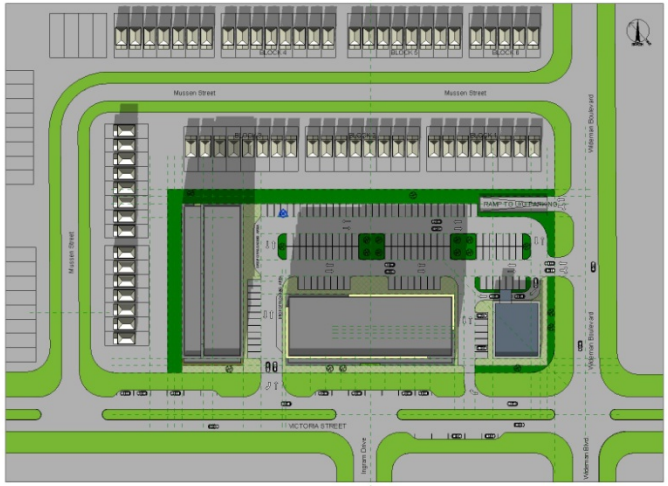
[7 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 13:00]



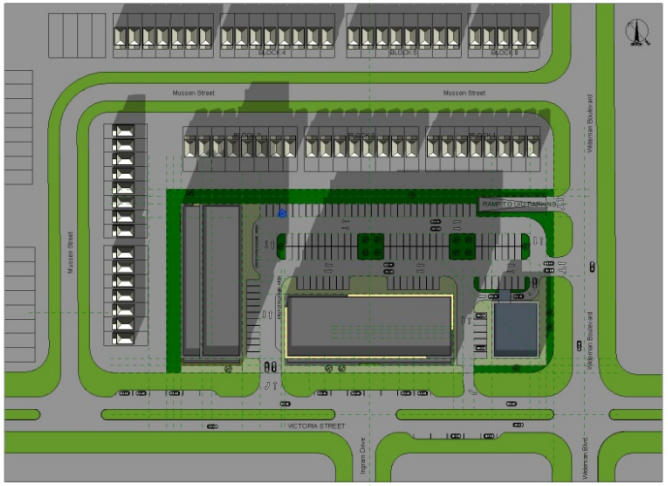
[8 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 14:00]



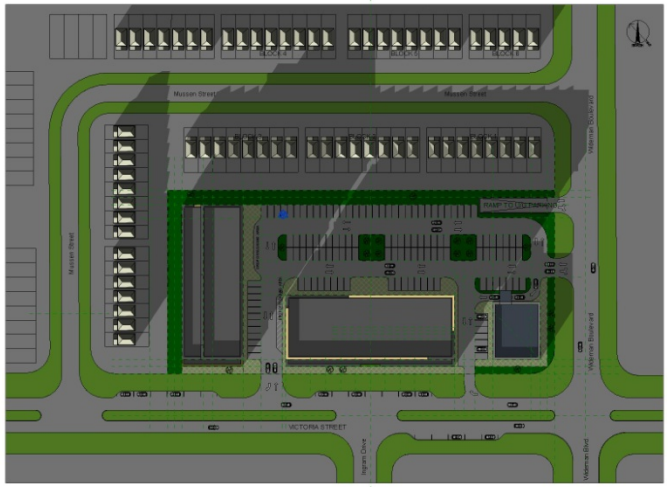
[9 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 15:00]



[10 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 16:00]



[11 of 12] [September 21, 2016 - 17:00]



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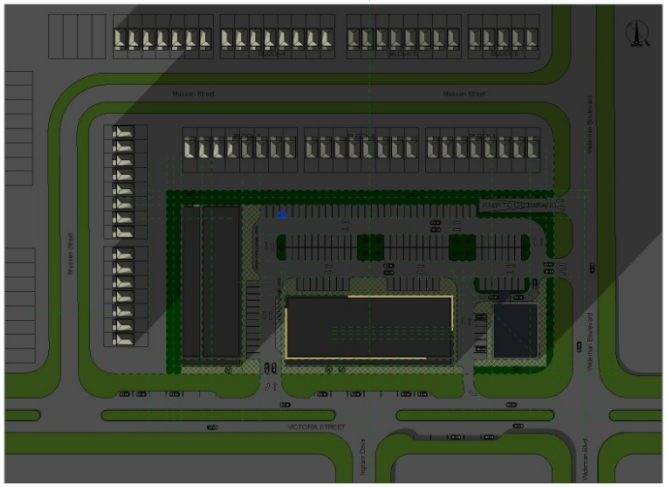

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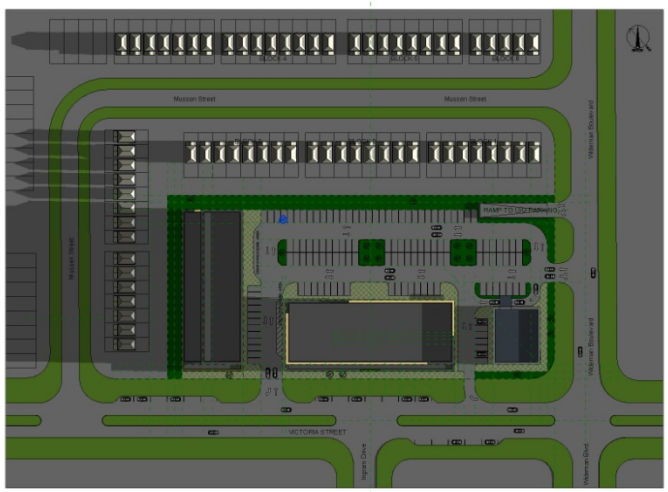

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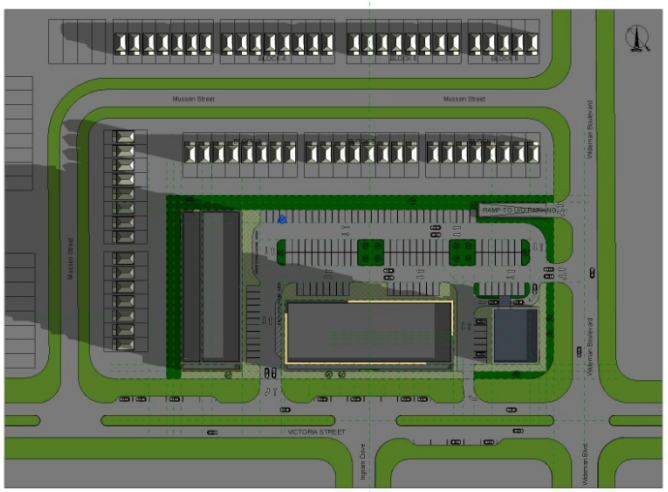

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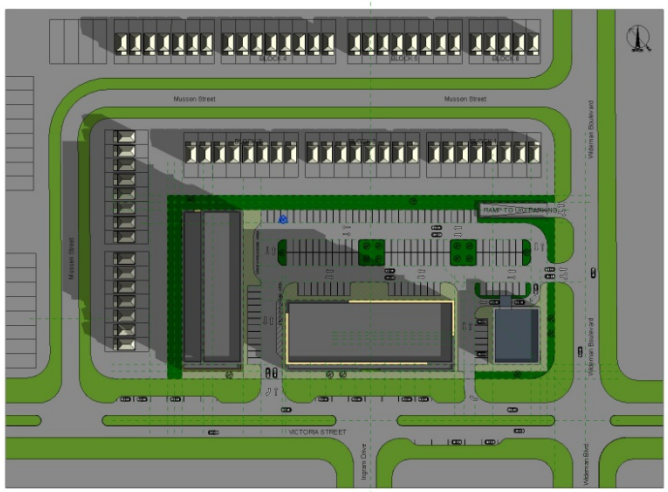

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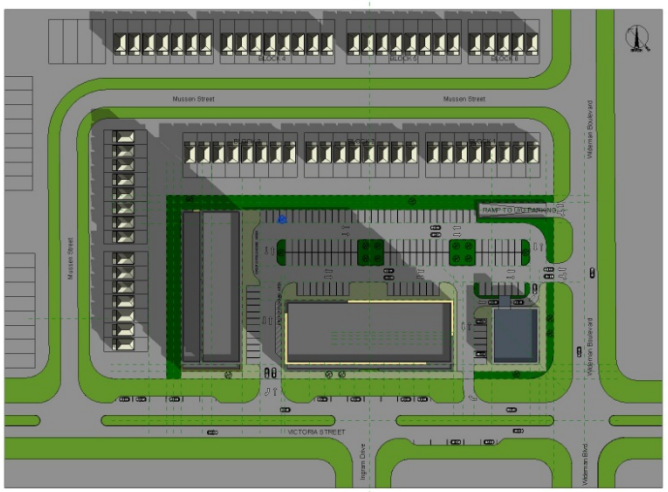

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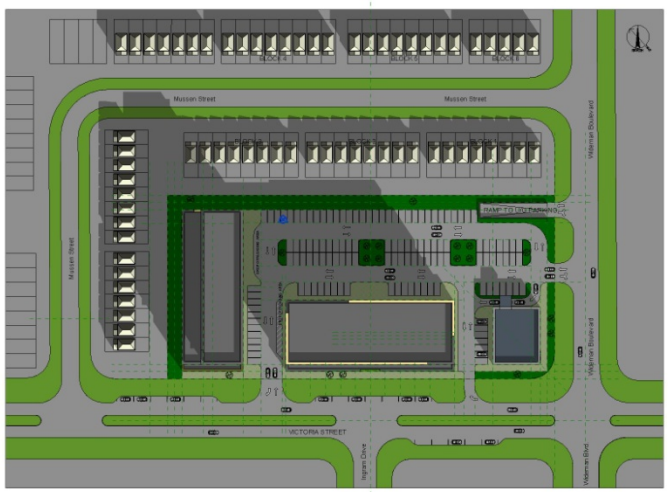

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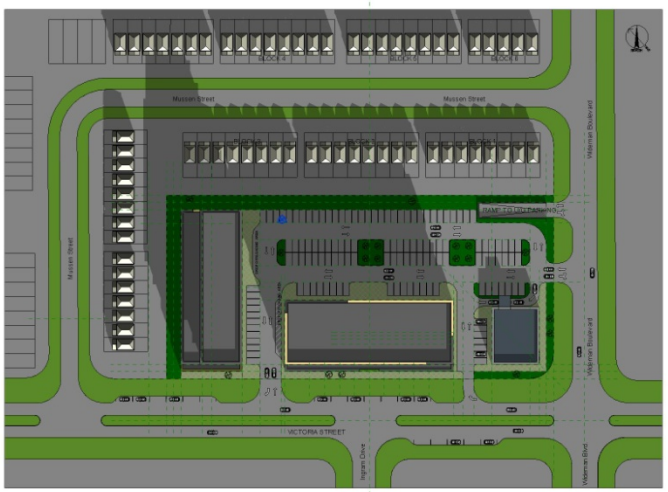

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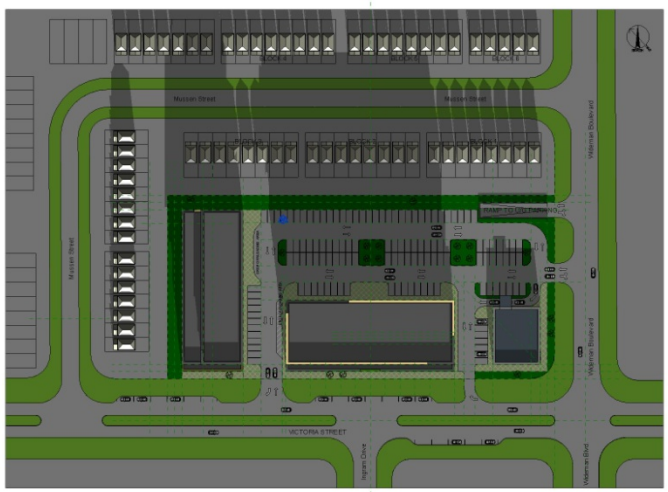

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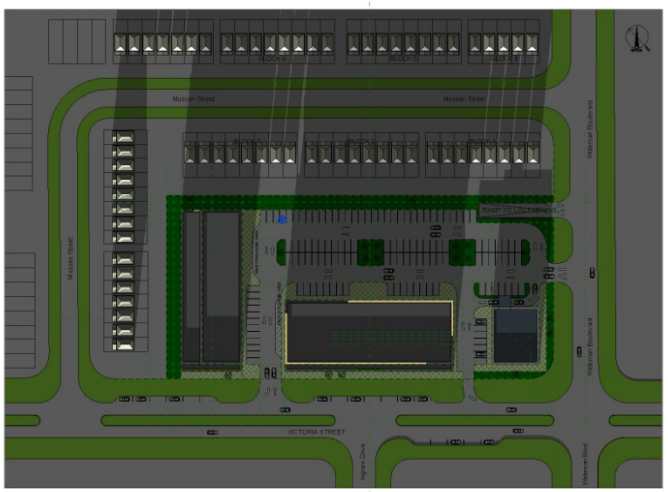

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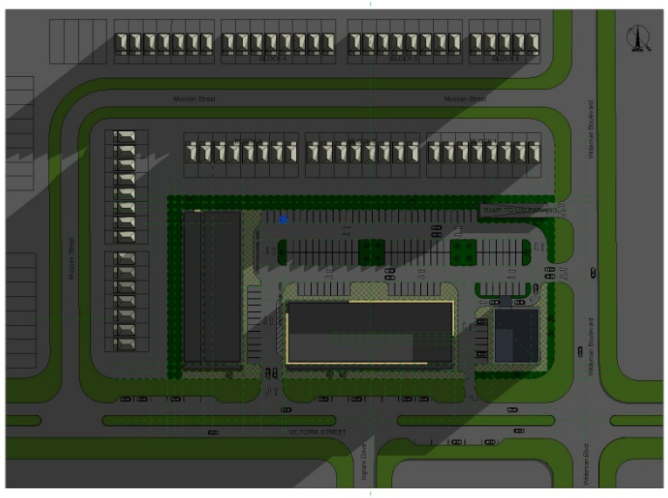

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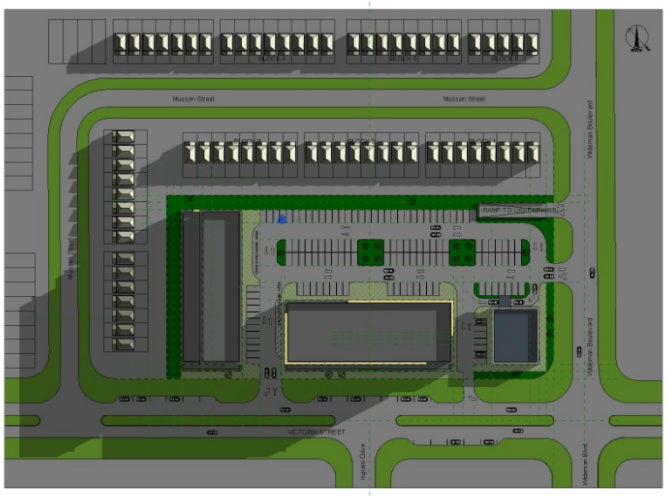

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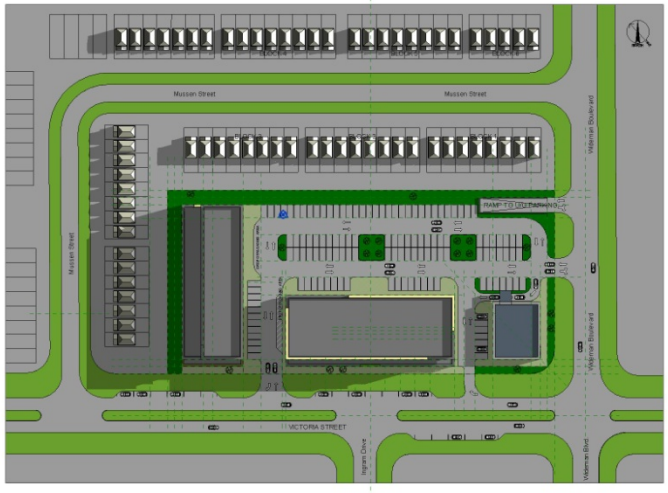

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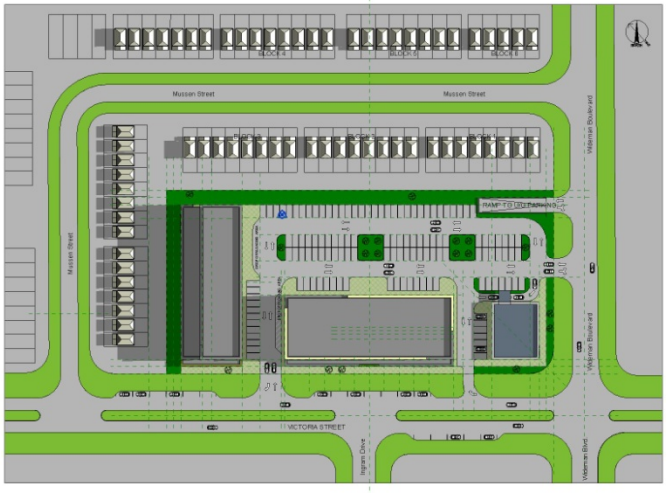

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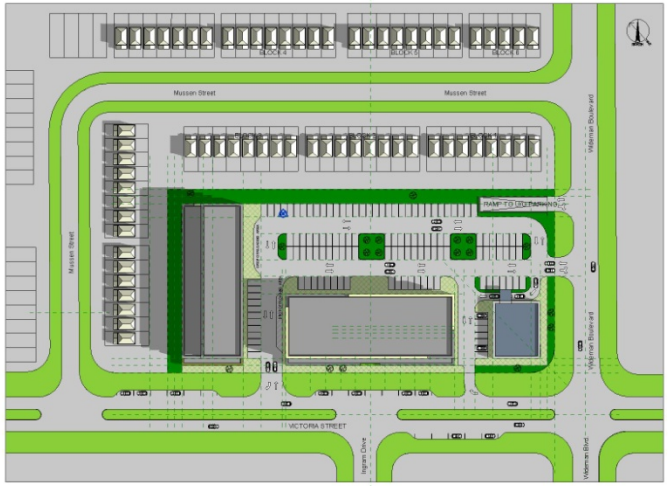

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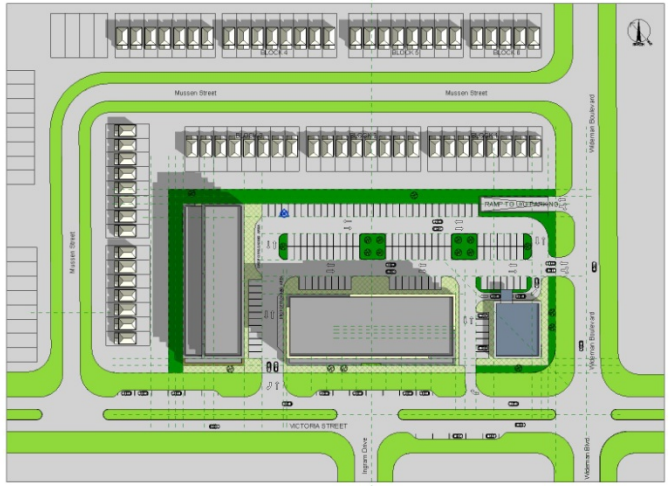

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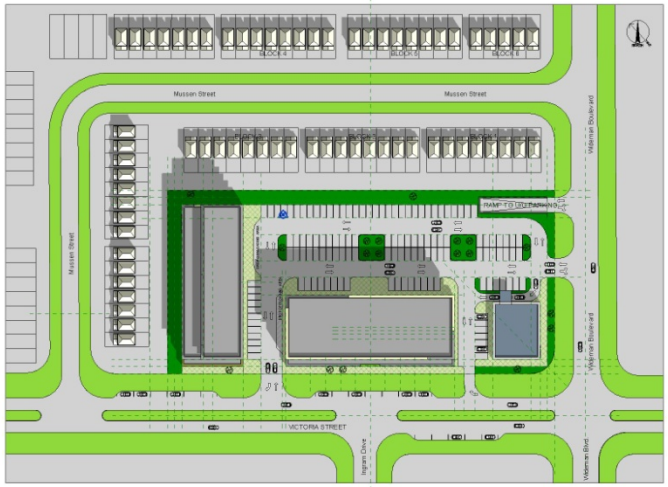

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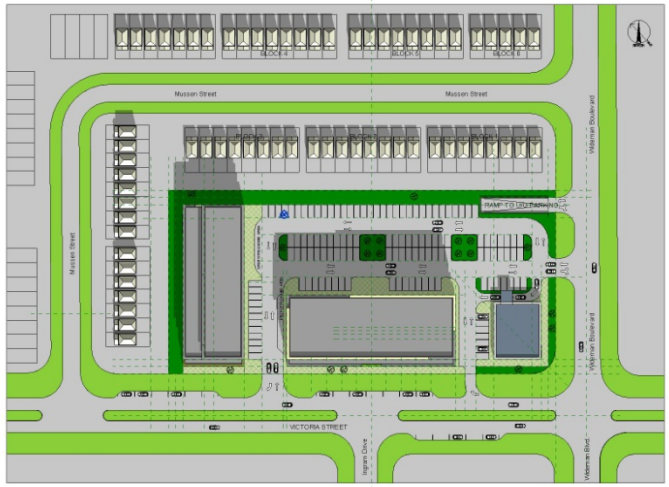

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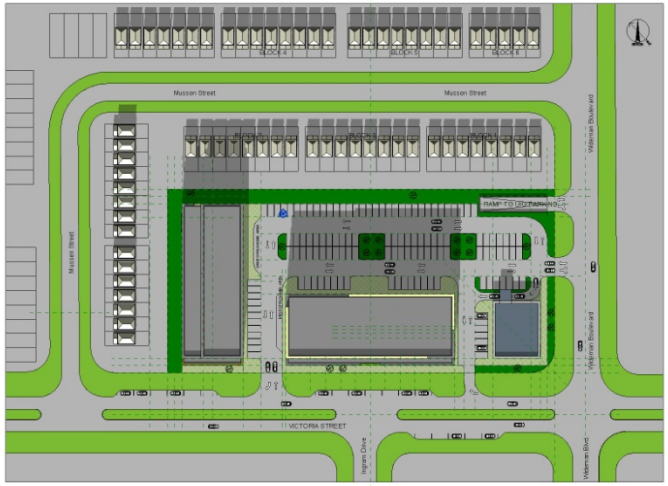

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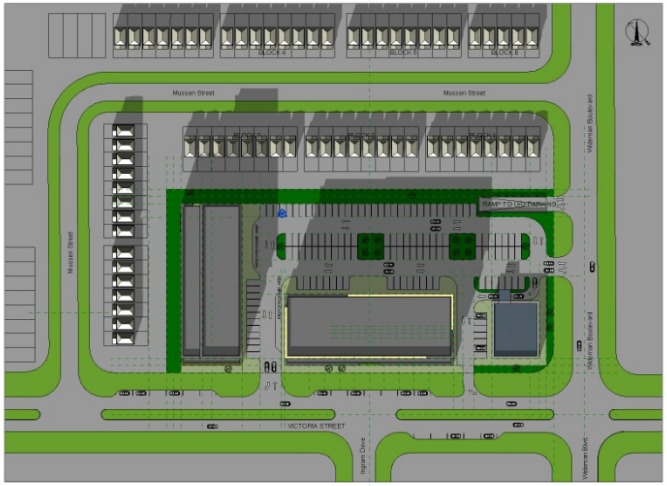

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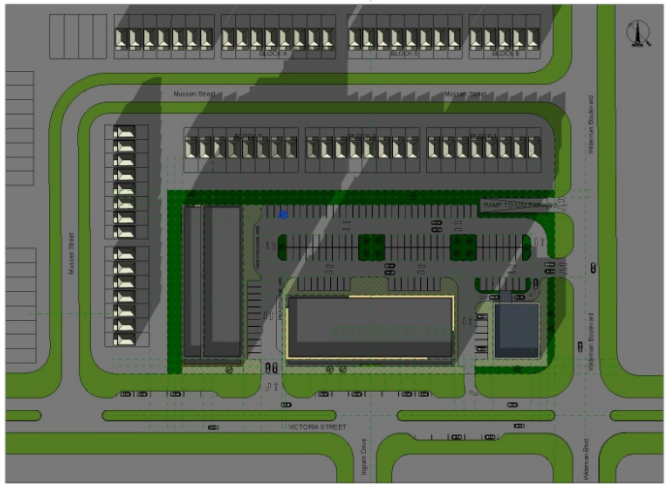

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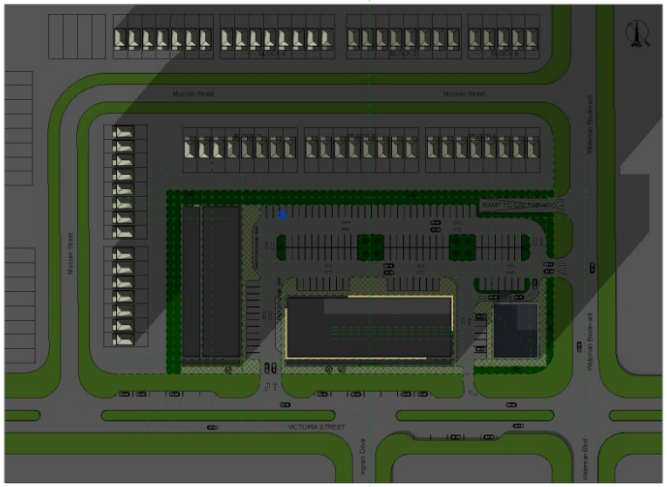

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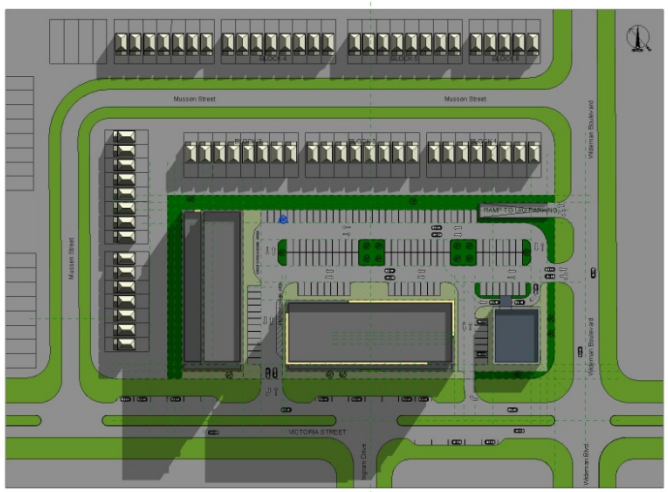

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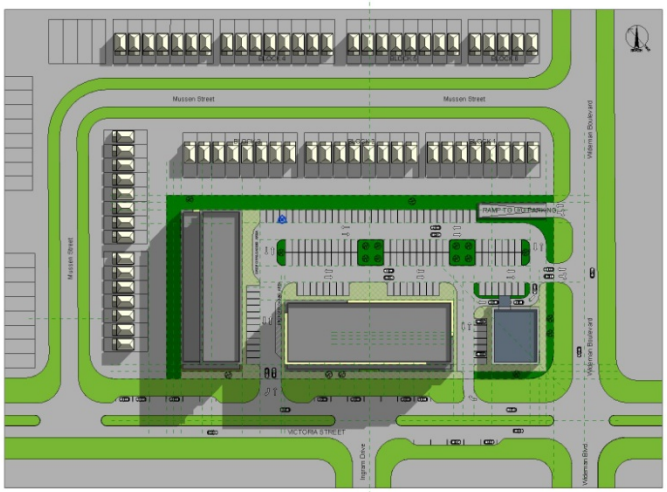

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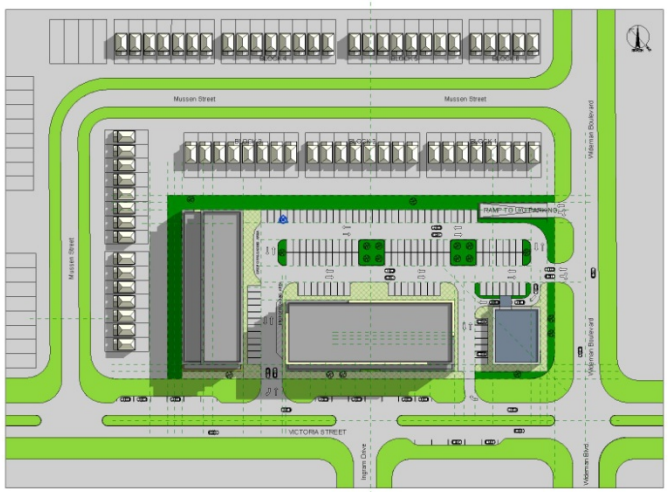

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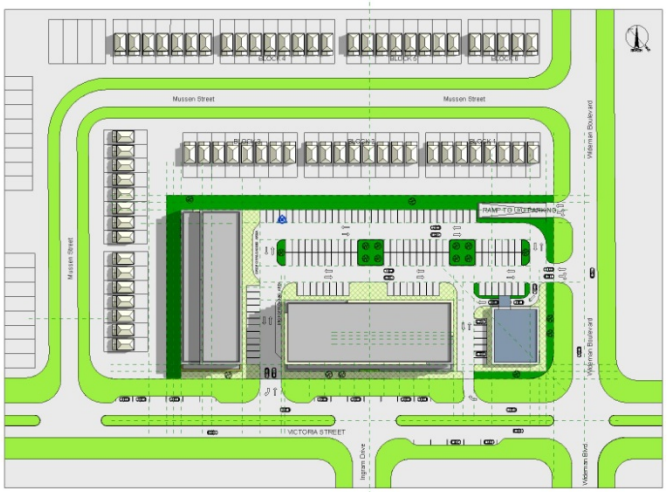

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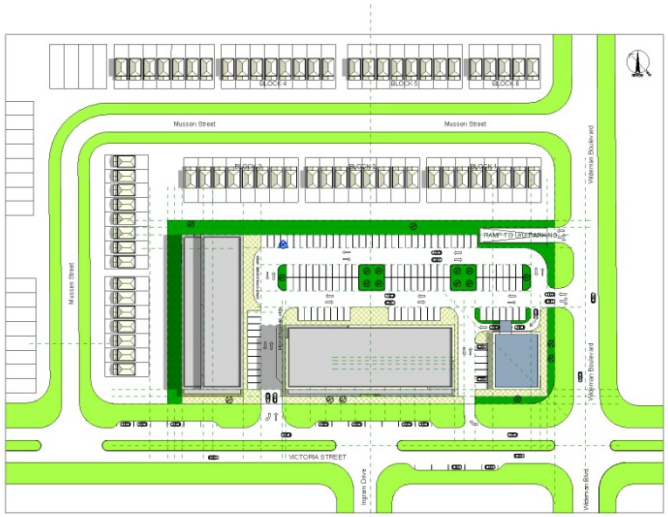

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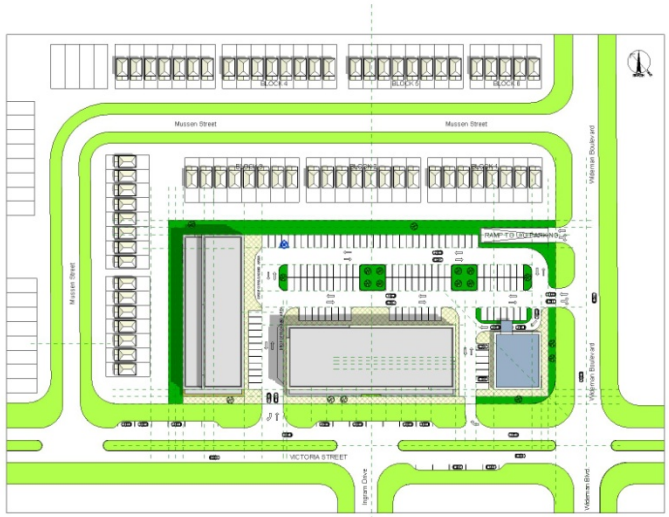

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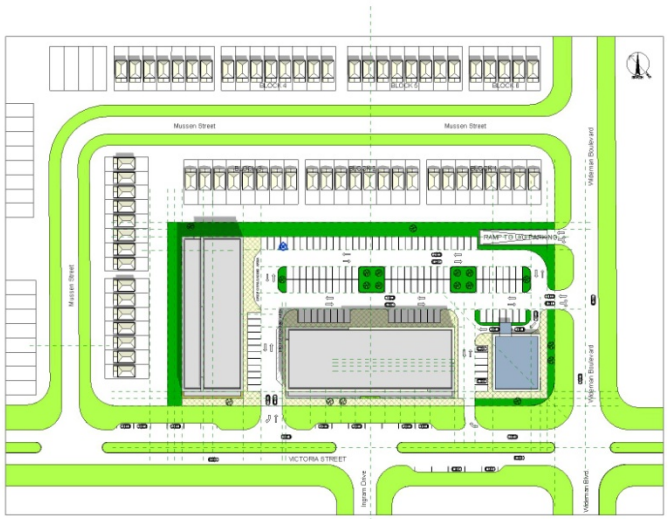

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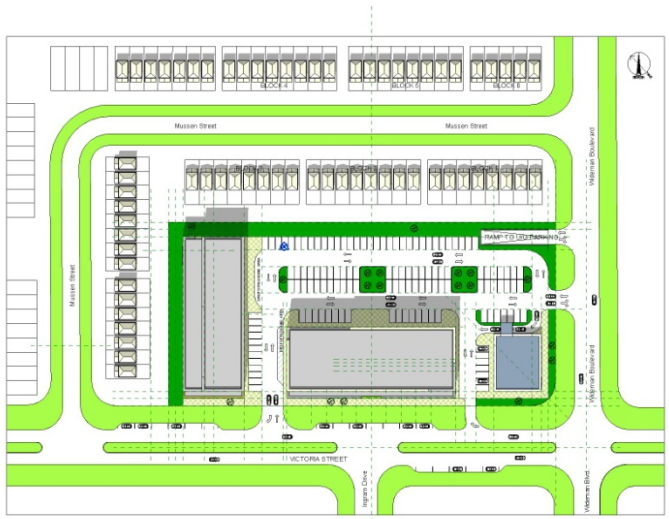

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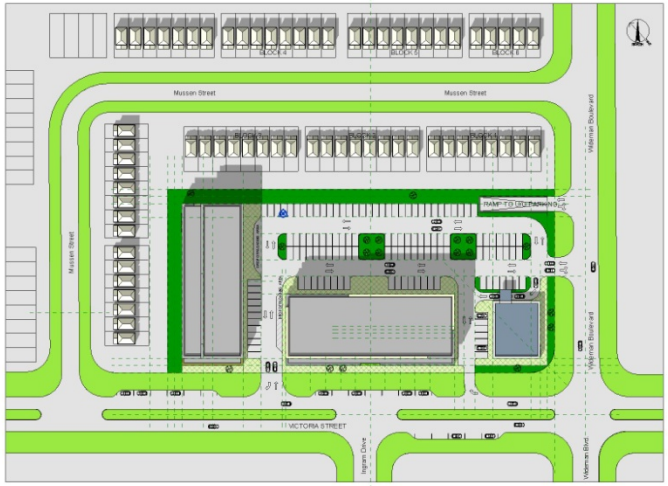

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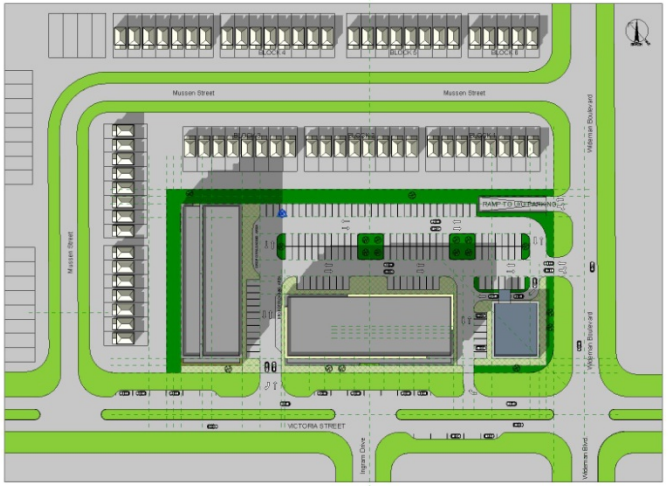

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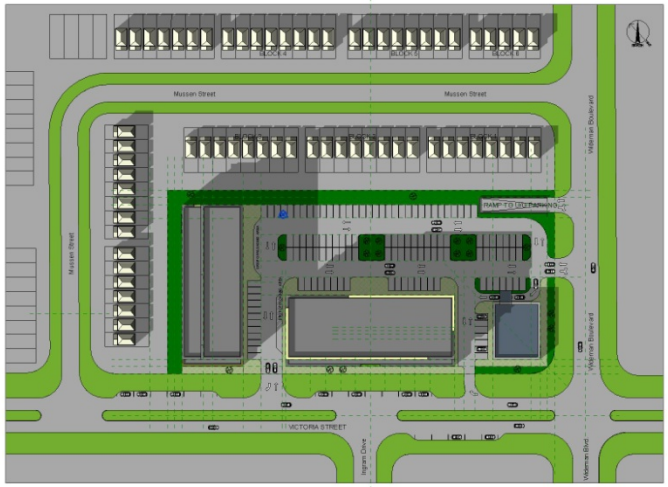

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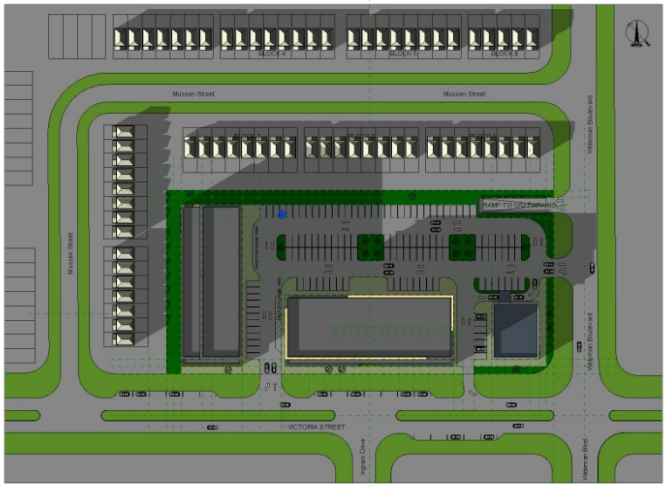

2.2 Integration with the Public Realm

Integration with the Streetscape

The façades of the Commercial Main Floor (pedestrian level) adjacent to Victoria Road will be neutral in architectural design character allowing natural landscape elements to have the main effect and feeling for people walking beside the buildings, it will also be mostly open with glazing that overlook the street, this will maintain the character of a safe and pedestrian friendly feeling.

As mentioned earlier, the surface parking areas will be screened from the street and from public view by the buildings location and with the use of attractive landscape and planters, and/or with rows of small trees and shrubs. Pedestrian walkways will be paved with different pavers that create different patterns to enhance human scale.

Publicly Accessible Open Space and features

Buildings at the pedestrian level will be surrounded by accessible walkways leading to main entrances, besides; the landscaped areas to the North and the West of the site will have landscape elements and will be accessible to the public attracting them during sunny and good outdoor weather conditions.

2.3 Sustainable Urban Design

General Environmental Sustainability and Energy

Sustainability is one of the important aspect of this project, increasing the building density of this development through the zoning amendment application is the first step.

although there is no plan to apply for LEED certification at this time, the plan is to have all units constructed to meet the following Energy Star standards:

- Efficient heating and cooling systems that use less energy and reduce indoor humidity
- High-performance ENERGY STAR windows, exterior and balcony doors
- Walls and ceilings insulated beyond what is required by the Ontario building code.
- A variety of ENERGY STAR products (appliances, lights, ...) which use less electricity by meeting strict technical specifications.
- Installation of heat or energy recovery ventilation system (HRV or ERV)

Water Consumption Strategies

- Low flush toilets
- Low flow faucets and showerheads
- Drain water heat recovery systems
- Water Efficient Landscaping

Other Strategies

- Minimizing Surface Parking Spaces
- Use of low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds)
- Use of Low-E Glass in Panels, Doors and Windows
- Construction materials will be locally sourced as possible to reduce transportation environmental impact

3.0 SUMMARY

- This Urban Design Brief is to support the Zoning Amendment Application for the property on 671 Victoria Road North in Guelph, Ontario. Architectural Design presented in this report is at conceptual stage, more detailed design consideration will occur through the site plan application process.
- The subject property is located on a main arterial roadway at the North West part of the city close to a Natural Heritage System area.
- The requested amendment will be in compliance with city policy for higher-density residential development and to build compact neighbourhoods with diverse opportunities for living and working that use land, energy, water and infrastructure efficiently.
- The proposed project will be a mixed-use development which will serve the transit-supportive community concept and encourage walking.
- Underground parking was maximized in order to minimize surface parking and outdoor pavement area
- The design of site and building development will support energy efficiency and water conservation through the use of alternative energy systems or renewable energy systems, building orientation, sustainable building design, low impact stormwater infiltration systems, drought-resistant landscaping and similar measures.