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### 1.1 Physical Context

## Site Definition

The subject site is a 6.44 ha site bounded by the existing residential development to the north, Watson Parkway North to the west, Watson Road North to the east, and existing open spaces (stormwater management pond and Natural Heritage System) to the south. The subject site is located in the north-east area of the City of Guelph, approximately 6 minutes drive from the Guelph downtown area, and situated just north of York Road and the existing Railway route, and abutting the intersection of Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North. For more details, please refer to Figure 1: Site Location and Figure 2: Site Context within the City of Guelph.

## Site Attributes

The subject site is currently a Greenfield Area, predominantly vacant with some vegetation. There are no structures or heritage features on site. Adjacent along the southern edge of the site is a SWM pond and an existing open space containing a woodlot and a watercourse, which extend west, past Watson Parkway North and east, past Watson Road North. The existing woodlot acts as a buffer for the proposed development, reducing the noise and visual presence of the Railway corridor and an arterial road (York Road) to the south. The existing terrain within the site is relatively flat. Steeper areas are found along the Railway, outside of site's boundaries. An existing high-rise residential development defines the northern edge of the site.

## Site Context

As per the City of Guelph's Official Plan, Schedule 1: Growth Plan Elements, the subject site is designated as a Greenfield Area and a part of Watson Parkway North/Starwood Community Mixed Use Node. Official Plan Schedule 2: Land Use Plan identifies the subject lands as predominantly Commercial Mixed-use Centre with a small portion to the south designated as Significant Natural Areas and Natural Areas.

The site is surrounded by a mix of residential, industrial, commercial and open space land uses, as seen in Figure 1.

Guelph Public Library (East Side Branch) is located north of the subject site, at the corner of Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North. New highrise residential development is being developed adjacent to the northern edge of the site, at the corner of Watson Road North and Watson Parkway North. Existing low-rise neighbourhood and woodlot areas extend further north and west of the site. Existing industrial and commercial uses extend south of the site along York Road.


Figure 1: Site Location

abucu Subject Site

- City of Guelph Boundary
|- Railway
- Existing watercourses

O Existing bus stops

1. Existing Industrial /

Commercial
2. Guelph Public Library

East Side Branch
3. $\mathrm{O}^{\prime}$ Connor Lane Park
4. Royal City Jacees Park
5. Guelph AirPark
6. Downtown Guelph
7. William C Winegard

Public School
8. Holy Trinity

Catholic School
9. Ken Danby Public School

Figure 2: Site Context within the City of Guelph
mbtw Hai

## Surrounding Street Network

A network of arterial and collector roads surrounds the subject site and provides great connectivity and several access routes to the proposed development. As shown in the Official Plan Schedule 5 (Figure 3), Watson Road North is a collector road extending along the eastern edge of the subject site, while an arterial road, Watson Parkway North, extends along the western edge of the site and continues south to intersect with another arterial road - York Road. South of the site, an existing railway route travels parallel with York Road. Watson Parkway North and Watson Road North intersect just north of the subject site. The key element of the surrounding street network is the intersection of a collector road, Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North that occurs at the western edge of the subject site and represents primary access point to the future development. More details about this intersection and the concept of the Main Street located along Starwood Drive and envisioned to extend east of Watson Parkway North (into the subject site) is presented within Section 1.2.4 Urban Design Manual: Volume 3 "Community Nodes".



Figure 3: City of Guelph Official Plan Schedule 5: Road and Rail Network

## Public Views and Vistas

There are several existing public views and vistas towards and through the site. The primary view into the site occurs from west, where Starwood Drive intersects with Watson Parkway North. The western and the eastern edge of the site can be seen along Watson Parkway North and Watson Road North. Due to the existing woodlot, the southern edge of the subject site is not highly visible from surrounding public roads. The adjacent high-rise residential development partially blocks the view to the site from the north.

## Surrounding Land Uses

The subject site is surrounded by a mix of land uses, including established low to medium density and new high density residential neighbourhoods to the north and west. From southwest, south and east, the site is surrounded by Natural Heritage System - existing open spaces, SWM pond, watercourses and woodlot. Existing industrial uses and commercial uses extend to the south, past York Road (see Figure 4 - Land Use Context).

## Barriers and Connections

The existing Natural Heritage System (woodlot, watercourse and SWM pond) located along the eastern and the southern edge of the site require a sensitive approach for any future development. In response to this condition, the proposed development envisions an adequate landscaped buffer for the built form to account for a flood line and protect the existing Natural Heritage System. Furthermore, the proposed design envisions a park along eastern edge of the site to provide connection and an appropriate transition from the new development to the surrounding open spaces within Natural Heritage System. The new residential development north of the site as well as the proposed design for the subject site provide sidewalks along Watson Parkway North, therefore, contributing to a complete, pedestrian-friendly and safe streetscapes and enabling pedestrian connectivity to the surrounding community.


View along Starwood Drive towards the intersection with Watson Parkway North and into the site


Intersection of Watson Parkway North and Watson Road North: view of the site from the north, partially blocked by the new residential building


View of the site from the southwest and Watson Parkway North: SWM pond and woodlot along the southern edge of the site


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1 Guelph Public Library at the corner of Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North


2 Industrial / Commercial buildings, south of York Road


Figure 5: Surrounding Site Context

## Surrounding Transportation, Open Space, and Natural Heritage Systems

The subject site is conveniently located between several arterial and collector roads and within walking distance from the existing public transit network and surrounding open spaces.

Watson Parkway North bounds the subject site to the west, enabling several key connections to a wider city road network. Public transit is easily accessible through the existing bus routes that extend along Starwood Drive, Watson Parkway North and Watson Road North with numerous bus stops located within 5-10 minutes walk from the subject site (as shown in Figure 2).

As envisioned in the Cycling Master Plan (Figure 6), a proposed bike lane is envisioned along the western edge of the site on Watson Parkway North continuing along York Road and Starwood Drive towards the city wide cycling network. The subject site is surrounded by the proposed City trails system and adjacent to the Natural Heritage System (SWM pond, woodlot and watercourse) to the south and to the east, as per Official Plan, Schedule 6: Open Space System: Trail Network (Figure 7).

The proposed development envisions a Park connecting directly to the adjacent open spaces and trails system, creating a buffer for the new development and an appropriate transition to surrounding Natural Heritage System.

## Heritage Elements

Designated buildings, structures and cultural heritage landscapes are protected by a heritage designation bylaw under the Ontario Heritage Act, or have been deemed to have Provincial significance. As per the City of Guelph Heritage Planning list and the Designated Heritage Properties map, there are no designated heritage properties near the subject site.


Figure 6: Cycling Master Plan, Schedule 1: Proposed Cycling Network


Figure 7: City of Guelph Official Plan Schedule 6: Open Space System - Trail Network


Image of the existing woodlot south and east of the site along Watson Road North


Image of an existing bus stop on Watson Parkway North


Image of an existing bus stop on York Road

### 1.2 Response to Policy Context

### 1.2.1 Official Plan (OPA 80, July 2022)

The vision outlined in the Official Plan is: "The integration of energy, transportation and land use planning will make a difference in the environmental sustainability, cultural vibrancy, economic prosperity and social well-being of Guelph." (Policy 2.1)

The subject site is identified as being a Greenfield Area and a Community Mixed-Use Node according to Schedule 1 - Growth Plan Elements. As per Schedule 2, Land Use Plan, the lands are designated as predominantly Commercial Mixed-use Centre with a small portion to the south designated as Significant Natural Areas and Natural Areas.

Community Mixed-Use Nodes will be planned for higher density mixeduses including residential and employment uses, as well as a wide range of retail, service, entertainment, recreational and commercial uses that serve the local and wider community.

The Community Mixed-Use Nodes:

- are intended to realize, in the long term, an urban village concept through a mix of uses in a compact urban form with a Main Street area and attractive private and public open spaces, such as urban squares; (Policy 3.6.7, OPA 80).
- will evolve over the Plan horizon and beyond through intensification and redevelopment to provide a compact built form; (Policy 3.6.8, OPA 80).

The designated greenfield area will be planned and designed in a manner which will contribute to the City's overall vision for the achievement of diverse and complete communities. Development within the greenfield area must be compact and occur at densities that support walkable communities, cycling and transit and promote live/work opportunities. (Policy 3.7.1, OPA 80)

The proposed development is consistent with the City's vision and has proposed a mixed-use development comprising various residential options, commercial / retail spaces at-grade and an open space (park), which will contribute to creating a sustainable and vibrant community.

As described in Section 2.3 - Strategic Goals of the Official Plan, following policies are relevant to the proposed development:
" 2) Protecting what is Valuable:
(b) Protect, maintain, enhance and restore natural heritage features and functions and biodiversity of the City's Natural Heritage System and water resource system to the greatest extent possible and support linkages between and among such systems and features within the city and beyond. (Policy 2.3.2 (b), OPA 80).
6) Urban Design:
(a) Preserve, enhance and protect the distinct character of the city and the sense of a community of neighbourhoods.
(b) Build a compact, mixed-use and transit-supportive community.
(c) 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.
(d) Encourage intensification and redevelopment of existing urban areas that is compatible with existing built form."

The following identifies the relevant objectives and policies for the proposed development with regards to urban design:

## Objectives

(a) To create neighbourhoods with diverse opportunities for living, working, learning and playing.
(b) To build compact neighbourhoods that use land, energy, water and infrastructure efficiently and encourage walking.
(c) To showcase natural attributes as defining features that are an integral component of the City's image, and character and Indigenous heritage by making them highly visible and accessible, especially lands along the Speed and Eramosa Rivers.
(d) To engage in "place-making" - developing infrastructure, spaces and buildings that are permanent and enduring, memorable and beautiful, adaptable and flexible, and valued.
(h) To establish a pattern of interconnected streets and pedestrian networks in which buildings frame and address public spaces.
(i) 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.
(k) 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.
(m) To design for a choice of mobility including walk, cycling, transit and driving.

## Section 8.2 Public Realm policies:

(1) A clearly identifiable public realm should be established in all residential areas consisting of an interconnected network of streets, parks, school sites, community trails and open spaces.
(2) New residential developments shall be designed to be integrated and connected to surrounding existing neighbourhoods; providing full pedestrian and vehicular access including access to transit.
(3) Development proposals shall extend, establish or reinforce a modified grid-like street network that:
(i) connects with the existing urban fabric of streets, open spaces and developed areas:
(ii) is highly interconnected;
(iii) responds sensitively and creatively to natural and other established features;
(iv) integrates with pedestrian and bicycle networks.
(4) Block lengths shall be reasonably short especially within Community Mixed-use Nodes and Intensification Corridors and shall optimize connectivity for pedestrians and encourage walking. Longer blocks shall have adequately sized mid-block pedestrian links.
(6) Reverse lotting and 'window roads' should be avoided.
(7) Road design will balance the provisions for a safe, accessible, functional and attractive pedestrian-oriented environment with an acceptable level of motor vehicle traffic.
(17) New development shall be designed to contribute to a pedestrianoriented streetscape.

### 8.5 Built Form: Low Rise Residential Forms

(2) Dwellings should be sited with a consistent setback to provide human scale streets. Designs should incorporate features such as prominent entrances and front porches to encourage social interaction and allow for views along the street.
(3) To ensure garages do not dominate the streetscape in new development and to promote "eyes on the street" the Zoning By-law shall limit their width such that garages do not generally exceed half the width of the house. Furthermore, the Zoning By-law shall limit garage door projection so that most garage doors are recessed and do not project ahead of the front wall of the house.
8.6 Built Form: All Built Forms other than Low Rise Residential Forms
(1) New buildings shall address the street. Buildings will enhance the rhythm and frequency of the immediate vicinity, and where appropriate will have entrances and windows that face the street.
(2) The principal entrances of commercial and mixed-use buildings shall be oriented toward and/or visible from the street and provide direct user entrances from adjacent streets and walkways. Blank facades facing a street, open space or park shall not be permitted.
(4) Corner buildings shall address both streets by providing two articulated façades facing the street.
(5) Buildings adjacent to the street edge and at sites with high public visibility shall be designed to take into account their high public visibility by incorporating elements such as increased height, roof features, building articulation and high quality finishes and windows.
(6) Intersections of major streets shall be emphasized by placing buildings in close proximity to the intersection and ensuring that building entrances are visible from that intersection
(7) Buildings will be designed to completely screen roof-top mechanical equipment from public view.
(8) Long building facades that are visible along a public street will incorporate recesses, projections, windows or awnings, colonnades and/or landscaping along the length of the facade to reduce the mass of such facades.
(9) The design of all commercial buildings and storefronts shall be in keeping with the character and identity of the community and its immediate context. This may require alternative or enhanced standard of corporate or franchise design. Buildings shall reflect the community and immediate context through features such as facade articulation, massing, architectural style, vertical windows, appropriate signage, building materials and exterior finishes.
(10)Where appropriate, a building's first storey shall generally be taller in height to accommodate a range of non-residential uses.
(17)Large buildings will incorporate architectural elements which will reduce the visual effects of flat roof lines.

### 8.8 Built Form: Mid-rise Buildings

(1) The following policies apply to mid-rise building forms, which generally means a building between four (4) and six (6) storey:
(i) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to frame the street they are fronting while allowing access to sunlight to adjacent properties;
(ii) mid-rise buildings shall be designed to ensure that servicing and automobile parking are appropriately located and screened. generally, this means that parking is provided underground or at the rear or side of the building;
(iii) pedestrian access shall be provided to the principal entrance from the public realm;
(iv) where buildings front onto a public street and are greater than 30 metres in length, building entrances should be located at regular intervals;
(v) where buildings are taller than four (4) storey, building length may be restricted through Zoning-By-law to reduce impacts such as shadowing; and
(vi) shadow, view and microclimatic studies may be required to determine potential impacts arising from mid-rise buildings.

### 8.9 Built Form: High-rise Buildings

(1) The following policies apply to tall building forms, which generally means buildings above six (6) storey:
(i) to ensure tall buildings act as landmarks, they shall incorporate a distinctive bottom (e.g. a podium), middle and top. Interesting architectural features and roof treatments should be considered for all rooftop of tall buildings;
(ii) parking should be provided primarily below grade with limited visitor surface parking. Structured parking above-grade may be permitted, where appropriate;
(iii) built form studies addressing building massing, shadows, views and microclimatic studies (e.g. wind) may be required to determine potential impacts to the surrounding neighbourhood arising from tall buildings.
(iv) floor plate sizes of the tower portion (e.g. storey five (5) and above) of the building may be limited to encourage slender and elegant tall building designs; and
(v) the tower portion (e.g. storey five (5) and above) of the building shall be carefully placed to ensure adequate spacing between towers to allow for solar access and privacy.

## Section 8.12 Parking states:

(1) Building placement in combination with landscaping shall be used to screen surface parking areas.
(2) Underground or structured parking is encouraged to reduce or eliminate the need for surface parking.
(3) Surface parking areas shall not be permitted immediately adjacent to the corners of an intersection.
(5) Large surface parking areas should be divided into smaller and defined sections through the use of appropriately-sized landscaped strips, islands and/or pedestrian walkways.

## Section 8.17 Landscaping and Development states:

(1) Landscaping shall:
(i) create visual interest
(iii) complement built form
(iv) contribute to creation of a high-quality public realm
(2) The selection of plant material:
(i) shall provide seasonal interest
(v) adjacent to Natural Heritage System, should be indigenous and non-invasive to help prevent the degradation of the existing ecosystem through unwanted seed dispersal;
(viii) is encouraged to provide shade where appropriate.
(3) Where possible existing trees should be retained on-site and where appropriate suitable new trees should be planted on-site, in the street right-of-way or in other City-approved locations.
(4) Where appropriate, trees should be used to help define the image of neighbourhoods, streets and parks.

## Section 8.18 Safety states:

(2) New development should be designed in a manner that:
(i) Provides opportunity for informal surveillance of outdoor spaces, including public parks, streets and parking areas.

## Section 9.4.3 Commercial Mixed-use Centre states:

(i) To promote Commercial Mixed-use Centres as areas that support a mix of uses including concentrations of commercial, residential and complementary uses serving the immediate neighbourhood and the wider community.

Commercial Mixed-use Centres are strongly encouraged to incorporate Main Street type development in strategic locations. Main Street areas, as identified through concept plans as per Section 3.6, will be planned and designed to reflect the following:
(i) multi-storey buildings fronting onto the main street;
(ii) ground floor retail and service uses are strongly encouraged;
(iii) office uses at ground floor should be limited;
(iv) residential uses should be provided primarily above commercial uses in addition to some free-standing residential buildings;
(vii) on-street parking.


### 1.2.2 Urban Design Manual Volume 1: Urban Design Vision

Guelph's city-wide urban design vision is "Guelph is growing and changing in response to local, regional, and demographic trends. Urban design is fundamental to building a great city and can help shape this change." (page 10)

Basic urban design principles based on Official Plan objectives are as follows:

1. Create neighbourhoods with diverse opportunities for living, working, learning and playing.
2. Build compact neighbourhoods that use land, energy, water and infrastructure efficiently and encourage alternative modes of transportation.
3. Showcase natural attributes as defining features of the City's character by making them highly visible and accessible.
4. Engage in "placemaking" - developing infrastructure, spaces and buildings that are permanent and enduring, memorable and beautiful, adaptable and flexible, and valued.
5. Conserve and celebrate the City's cultural heritage resources through the reuse of built heritage and cultural heritage landscape assets and ensuring that adjacent development responds to and respects these assets.
6. Create a diversity of inviting and accessible gathering places that promote a full range of social, cultural and economic interaction.
7. Design for a choice of mobility including walking, cycling, transit and driving.
8. Establish a pattern of interconnected streets and pedestrian networks in which buildings frame and address public spaces.
9. 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.
10. Ensure that the design of the built environment respects the character of the existing distinctive areas and neighbourhoods of the City.
11. Design space that is accessible to all, regardless of abilities.
12. 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.
13. Preserve and enhance protected public views and public vistas of built and natural features.


### 1.2.3 Urban Design Manual Volume 2: Urban Design Action Plan (2017)

The Urban Design Manual Volume 2: Urban Design Action Plan consists of three parts; part 1 identifying opportunity areas, part 2 focusing on how the City can activate and animate its public spaces and part 3 speaks to urban design policy directions.
"The purpose of the updated Urban Design Action Plan is to shape urban design in Guelph moving forward based on the City's Official Plan." (page 3)

Opportunity areas identify areas for change and include the urban growth centre/downtown, community corridors and community nodes. The subject site is identified as a community mixed-use node. The Urban Design Manual envisions to "transform Guelph's five major community mixed-use nodes into distinct urban villages with mixed-use, high-density housing, transit, cycling and pedestrian-friendly features that provide balanced livework opportunities." (page 12)

The proposed development aligns with the principles identified in the Urban Design Manuals by developing a mixed-use, compact community with opportunities for living, working and playing within a community mixed-use node. The proposed development establishes a network of interconnected streets and pedestrian networks and provides a choice of mobility, including walking, cycling, transit and driving. In addition, the development integrates natural attributes and public views into the proposed park design, which represents inviting and accessible gathering places for the community.

### 1.2.4 Urban Design Manual Volume 3: Community Nodes

The City of Guelph has created urban design concept plans for community mixed-use nodes to support the evolution of key areas within Guelph and illustrate the City's vision for higher density mixed-use areas.

Nodes are central or connecting points in a neighbourhood that have a mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings, such as shopping areas, community centres, libraries and medium to high density housing.

The subject site is located within The Watson/Starwood mixed-use node. Following Urban Design Concept Plan Principles apply:

1. The Main Street area (see policy 9.4.2.6 of OPA 48) for the Node will be located along Starwood and extend east of Watson and terminate in an open space feature (e.g. an Urban Square) that will also provide an attractive, and accessible pedestrian connection to the Natural Heritage Trail System.
2. The commercial focus of the Main Street Area will generally be in the vicinity of the Starwood/Watson intersection.
3. An attractive on-street Transit Node will be developed (i.e. generally bus bays) near the intersection of Starwood and Watson Parkway North including upgraded amenities for transit users.
4. Taller buildings will generally be located at or near the intersection of Starwood and Watson Parkway North.
5. Buildings heights, massing and uses will provide an appropriate transition to the adjacent single-detached dwellings.
6. Introduce a modified grid road pattern that creates adaptable urban blocks and that promotes connectivity and pedestrian/cyclist movement. Road cross-sections will also be designed to ensure comfort for cyclists/pedestrians.
7. Capitalize on the public views/permeability towards the Natural Heritage System.
8. Establish convenient and accessible connections between the Natural Heritage Trail System and the pedestrian circulation system within the node.
9. Introduce a neighbourhood oriented open space/park feature in the vicinity of the residential development near the northwest corner of Starwood/Watson Parkway North. This space will contain features such as a children's playground, informal play area and seating area with shade structure.
10. On-street cycling facilities will be established along Starwood and Watson Parkway North.


Figure 8: City of Guelph Urban design Manual Volume 3 - Community Nodes: Urban Design Concept Plan for The Watson/Starwood mixed-use node


Figure 9: City of Guelph Urban design Manual Volume 3 - Community Nodes: Urban Design Concept Plan for The Watson/Starwood mixed-use node

### 1.2.5 Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses (2018)

The Built Form Standards are "informed by policy direction from the City's Official Plan, and support compact future growth, while achieving high quality, sustainable development, and a strong pedestrian realm" (page 4). The Built Form Standards also aim to ensure that the future development and design of mid-rise and townhouse forms are contextually appropriate and consider contemporary urban design practices.

The Built Form Standards include a number of key recommendations for Mid-Rise and Townhouse forms with regards to building massing, scale and transitions; ground floor and street edge design; and articulation, façade design and materials. The standards also provide guidance with regards to the public realm and speak to outdoor amenity areas, landscaped open space, tree-planting, mid-block connections and lighting.

The proposed development responds to the City of Guelph's documents, by proposing townhouse, mid-rise and mixed-use typologies which contribute to providing a mix of residential and commercial uses. The proposed built form is appropriate to its context and provides animated streetscapes that contribute to the city's vision of transforming the designated major community mixed-use node into a distinct urban village. The proposed development contributes to creating an attractive, pedestrian-oriented streetscape by positioning built form to address the street and ensuring the entrance to mixed-use blocks and apartments are easily accessible from the street. In addition, the proposed development envisions a neighbourhood park, creating a connection to adjacent Natural Heritage System and extending the city-wide trail system. The proposed site layout and built form promotes walkability, active transportation connections and open space for future residents.

### 1.2.6 Guelph Commercial Built Form Standards (2019)

The Commercial Built Form Standards for the City of Guelph provides clear directions and criteria for the design of commercial development across the City, with the exception of the Downtown, which is subject to the Downtown Built Form Standards. The Standards consider opportunities associated with Main Street Buildings, Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings, Vehicular Oriented Uses, and Large Commercial Sites, and provide recommendations related to best practices in built form and public realm design.
The Built Form Standards include a number of key recommendations for Commercial forms with regards to site organization \& design; massing, scale and transition; ground floor and street edge design; and articulation, façade design and materials.
Main Street Buildings are multi-storey buildings fronting a street, and typically contain retail or service uses on the ground floor. Urban design standards for a main street area intend to create a continuous street wall which is achieved by locating buildings between 1.5 metres and 3.0 metres from the front property line. Furthermore, wide sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, and landscaping within the right-of-way create a pedestrianfriendly urban condition. Public entrances are located along the main street in a regular rhythm, while servicing, loading and back-of-house uses are provided at the rear of the building.

The proposed development implements these standards and aims to create the envisioned Main Street by proposing a centrally located complete street as an extension to the existing Starwood Drive. Proposed built form further supports this vision by placing high-rise mixed-use buildings with commercial/retail uses at-grade and residential uses above at the intersection and along the Main Street and Watson Parkway North. Stepbacks in massing, facade articulation and material treatment, and orientation of entrances create a strong and active street edges that encourage walking and provide visual interest.

### 1.3 Urban Design Goals and Objectives for the Site

The design of the subject site has been guided by the City of Guelph's vision to create a distinct urban village and through the following urban design goals and objectives:


Introduce a mix of uses and a variety of housing typologies that provide a place to live, shop and play.

Create a green network that celebrates and enhances public views and access to existing natural features.

Design a Main Street that features commercial activities and connects to the wider City's trails network to emphasize focal points and gathering places in the community that promote a full range of social, cultural and economic interaction.


Create a connected street network that provides mobility choice including walking, cycling, transit and driving.


Develop a well defined street edge and public realm through high quality architecture, landscaping and urban design that is mindful of the adjacent Natural Heritage System and the existing streetscapes bounding the site.


Urban Design Brief | 115 Watson Parkway
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### 2.1 Development Concept

The subject site is being developed as a part of The Watson/Starwood mixed-use node. The proposed development at 115 Watson Parkway North is envisioned as a distinctive, compact, mixed-use development offering a variety of residential units, indoor amenity and retail spaces and comprising a park and a landscape buffer to properly transition and connect to the adjacent Natural Heritage System.

The proposed development introduces back-to-back townhouses, conventional townhouses, a 10 -storey residential apartment building, two 12 -storey mixed-use buildings and a 14 -storey mixed-use building, while promoting a walkable community with places to live, shop and play. This is also achieved through the introduction of a network of interconnected streets and access to active transportation facilities.

## Site Design

The proposed site consists of three development blocks with approximately a total of 197 townhouse units and 873 apartment units, split as follows:

- Block 1: one 10-storey residential apartment building (A) + one 12 -storey mixed-use buildings (B) with a total of 456 apartment units and 959.4 sqm of retail space at-grade.
- Block 2: one 12 -storey mixed-use buildings (C) + one 14 -storey mixeduse buildings (D) with a total of 417 apartment units and $1,858.8$ sqm of retail space at-grade.
- Block 3: 37 on-street and 160 back-to back townhouse units (2-3 storey).
The design of the development is influenced by the proposed Urban Design Concept Plan for the Watson/Starwood mixed-use node, as well as by the existing conditions: the arterial road (Watson Parkway North) bounding the site from the west, the collector road (Watson Road North) bounding the site form the east and the Natural Heritage System (SWM pond, woodlot and watercourse) bounding the site from the south.

The site design was also inspired by a vision for the Main Street, which is proposed to happen east of Watson Parkway North, as an extension of Starwood Drive, terminating in the central portion of the site where highdensity blocks transition into the proposed townhouse blocks.
To support the creation of the Main Street within the Watson/Starwood mixed-use node, the proposed development introduces a road lined with sidewalks and high-rise mixed-use buildings, which also extend along Watson Parkway North. Even though the Main Street concept only refers to the proposed high-rise blocks, the proposed road continues east extending sidewalks to maintain the continuity of pedestrian movement and enable easy access to the adjacent Natural Heritage System.
The edge along Watson Parkway North is defined by four buildings atop of a shared podium. At the intersection of Watson Parkway North and the proposed Main Street, the podium will feature commercial/retail uses at grade with residential apartment buildings above (Buildings B and C). These mixed-use buildings frame the primary entrance to the site and establish a street edge along the proposed Main Street, creating a sense of enclosure and providing active frontages that will animate the street front. The proposed shared podium features residential units at-grade under the Building A which is closer to the existing open spaces, and extends commercial uses at-grade under the Building $D$ which is adjacent to the existing high-rise development north of the site.
The proposed buildings are designed to address the streets and public open spaces by ensuring that buildings front onto the street and that there is a consistent street edge achieved through appropriate building setbacks.
Townhouse blocks comprise the central portion of the site and extend to its southern and eastern boundary, adjacent to the NHS and Watson Road North, respectively. The proposed neighbourhood park can also be viewed and accessed from Watson Road North.
Please refer to Figure 10 for the proposed development site plan.


Figure 10: Proposed Site Plan, created by Turner Fleischer (dated: 04 October 2023)


Figure 11: Proposed First Floor Plan, created by Turner Fleischer (dated: 04 October 2023)

## Transitions

Through the appropriate use of setbacks, stepbacks, separation distances and height distribution, the proposed development provides adequate height transitions externally, towards the surrounding developments and existing open spaces and internally, between different proposed built forms. The tallest mixed-use buildings are located along the western edge of the site along Watson Parkway North, to continue the high-density character from the adjacent development to the north and more importantly, to emphasize the intersection of Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North and frame the entrance to the proposed segment of the Main Street.

The proposed low-rise built form comprises on-street and back-to-back townhouse units, 2-3 storeys in height, with a front yard setback ranging from 5.4 m to 6.0 m . Townhouse units are predominately located within the central, southern and eastern segment of the site with rear yards abutting the existing open spaces, which provides a more sensitive transition to the proposed neighbourhood park and the existing Natural Heritage System.

The proposed shared podium for the high-rise buildings has a 2 metre front yard setback along Watson Parkway North and a 5.8 metre front setback along the proposed Main Street, which contributes to the creation of a consistent streetwall. The apartment and mixed-use blocks have ample separation distances to allow for solar access and privacy.

The proposed development has also accounted for appropriate transition to the SWM pond, watercourse and woodlot to the south by providing enough setback from the established floodline for the proposed townhouse blocks and strategically placing the proposed neighbourhood park to extend the open spaces into the site.

## Views and Vistas

While there are several existing views and vistas towards and through the site, the primary view into the site occurs from the west, where Starwood Drive intersects with Watson Parkway North. The proposed development will enhance views along Watson Parkway North and Watson Road North. New sight lines will be introduced and will focus on the Main Street, the proposed neighbourhood park and the visual connection to the existing adjacent Natural Heritage open spaces to the south


Figure 12: Proposed Design vignette and key Views and Vistas


Figure 13: Proposed massing model, created by Turner Fleischer (dated: 04 October 2023)

## Parking

Parking for apartment and mixed-use buildings will be accommodated through surface parking lots in addition to two levels of underground parking. A total of 778 underground parking spaces is being proposed along with 257 surface parking spaces. Both back-to-back and freehold townhouses are provided each with one tandem parking space for a total of 197 spots.

Where possible, surface parking lots will be located at the rear or side of the building and will be masked by built form to minimize exposure to primary streetscape. Surface parking lots will also be screened through landscaping.


Precedents of landscaping and screening of surface parking lots

Visitor parking is envisioned in several location across the site, contributing to the overall accessibility of the proposed uses for visitors. Accessible parking is being proposed at surface level as well within underground parking levels to a total of 26 accessible parking spaces.

To support active transit, approximately a total of 983 bicycle parking spaces is provided within the site, 97 of which are to be outdoors.


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Figure 14: Proposed Underground Parking Level 01, created by Turner Fleischer (dated: 04 October 2023)


Figure 15: Proposed Underground Parking Level 02, created by Turner Fleischer (dated: 04 October 2023)


Figure 16: Vehicular Circulation Network


Figure 17: Active Transportation Network
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## Access, Accessibility Circulation, Loading, Storage

All proposed roads are private and the proposed layout envisions three vehicular accesses to the site. Primary access occurs at the intersection of Starwood Drive and Watson Parkway North where Starwood Drive extends into the site via the proposed Main Street. Additionally, the site can be accessed from the west where the proposed private road intersects Watson Parkway North, as well as from the east where the proposed private road intersects Watson Road North. The proposed Main Street and the proposed private road it continuous into, represent a key connectivity spine, running west-east through the site, intersecting proposed north-south private roads.

Pedestrian circulation will be accommodated through a series of sidewalks as well as pedestrian walkways, as shown in Figure 17. The proposed sidewalk network is logical, follows the street layout and connects all main entrances to the proposed residential and retail units. Two pedestrian walkways are proposed along the southern edge of the site, providing direct pedestrian access to the proposed Park and the existing Natural Heritage System.

Loading and storage for the residential and mixed-use buildings will be proposed at the ground floor and will be screened from public views by situating them at the rear of the buildings and through appropriate landscaping. Ramps for accessing the proposed underground parking levels are also envisioned at the back or side of the buildings and screened by landscaped areas.

As previously mentioned, there are several bus stops less than a 15 minute walk from the site, allowing for transit route connections to the rest of the City.


Precedents of pedestrian-friendly environments enabling circulation throughout the site

## Materials

The choice of materials and colours will be cohesive in design and sensitive to the surrounding context. A range of materials for façade design are encouraged to promote visual diversity in texture and colour, reflecting varied built form materials used within Guelph, including brick and stone. Architectural variation within development blocks is encouraged to reduce sameness in design. Design components should be complementary within the development as a whole. For mixed-use buildings, design building façades to express individual businesses through building elevation, recesses and projections, entrances, signs and canopies.

The material specifications and colour palettes will be determined at a later stage through detailed design.

## Lighting and Signage

Street lights and signage will be provided where required, and locations will be determined at site plan stage.
It is envisioned that an emphasis on lighting will be provided along key streetscapes: Watson Parkway North, Watson Road North, the proposed Main Street and the proposed private road, as well as along the proposed park edges. Lighting that features warmer, yellow tones will be used. The use of bright, blue tone lights is discouraged. Accent lighting to emphasize built forms and landscape elements is encouraged. Adequate pedestrianscaled lighting to major walkways, steps, ramps, transit stops and other features should be provided. Pedestrian-scaled lighting can be located within the boulevard or transition zone if they are attached directly to building.
Additional ground floor lighting will be provided for mixed-used buildings and surface parking lots as recommended through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.


Precedents of solar street lights


Precedents of enhanced architectural treatment and landscaping on the ground floor

## Architectural Treatment

Architectural styles and building materials will be determined at a later stage. The proposed development envisions cohesive and complementary architectural designs.

Enhanced architecture treatment will be proposed for the building façades facing the Watson Parkway North, the proposed Main Street and the proposed private road, the proposed Park and the existing adjacent Open Spaces. Special attention will also be given to the ground floor treatment of mixed-use blocks to ensure they are easy to navigate and accessible. Tall buildings will act as landmarks, incorporating a distinctive podium, middle and top. Architectural features will aim to create façades that will contribute to creating visual interest and a sense of place.

Building shaping is also affected by the results of the Pedestrian Wind Assessment study. Steps and setbacks along building facades and at building corners are significant for wind reduction. They are expected to reduce the winds downwashing off the building height. Some additional strategies for wind reduction include considerations for the preferred locations of building entrances and outdoor amenity spaces as well as architectural treatments such as chamfering of building corners and landscaping features such as canopies, screens, trellises, trees and planters at key pedestrian areas on and around the development site. They also reduce the wind accelerations around building corners and along the gaps between buildings.

Key takeaways for the buildings design are

- Ensuring building entrances are located at regular intervals;
- Restricting building length;
- Ensuring adequate spacing between buildings;
- Ensuring upper-storey building floorplates are limited; and,
- Limiting the amount of surface parking.

The key takeaways are based on the Wind Study which found the conditions within the proposed development are acceptable.

### 2.2 Integration with the Public Realm

## Integration with the Streetscape

The proposed development will demonstrate thoughtful design and coordinate the streetscape plans to seamlessly integrate with the proposed built form. Generally, the streetscape design along Watson Parkway North and the proposed Main Street will be enhanced to create and emphasize the complete street character. Streetscape design within and surrounding the proposed neighbourhood park will be designed to enhance the pedestrian realm while providing defined public and private spaces. Streetscaping at the ground-floor of mixed-use apartment blocks will also consider enhancing the public realm through landscaping and street furniture. For detailed urban design guidelines for Mid-rise and High-rise Buildings, please refer to sections 8.8. and 8.9 of the Official Plan (also presented in Section 1.2.1 of this Brief).

## Urban Design Guidelines for Townhouses

The proposed development includes approximately 197 townhouse units. All townhouses have a front yard driveway with garage access. The proposed architectural design envisions recessed garage entrance plane comparing to the main entrance elevation, therefore reducing the visual impact of the car and the garage by removing them from primary focus along streetscapes. A total of 37 conventional townhouses are distributed along outer edges of the site towards the proposed park and the existing Natural Heritage System, while the proposed back-to-back townhouse blocks compose the central segment of the proposed development.


Precedents of through lots

The guidelines applicable to the townhouse units include:

- Architectural detailing and materials of garages shall complement the house design;
- Buildings shall be sited to create a consistent street edge and pedestrian-friendly scale;
- Units flanking the proposed Main Street and the proposed private road should be architecturally enhanced;
- Main entrances shall be emphasized through architectural detailing as to create visually interesting streetscapes;
- Varying architectural treatments of townhouse units shall complement the overall style of the block, while avoiding a monotonous streetscape;
- Unit entrances shall be paired to enhance their presence within the streetscape;
- Buildings on low traffic local roads shall be well-articulated using windows, balconies and wall projections, as to animate the local road;
- Townhouse units fronting or backing onto the neighbourhood park and Natural Heritage System shall feature enhanced architectural treatment of visually exposed elevations;
- Townhouse units fronting the neighbourhood park shall be designed to provide a visually interesting built form edge with increased fenestration to foster casual surveillance; and
- Where possible, utilities shall be screened from public view.

In addition to the above general design guidelines, the proposed built form of the townhouse units will adhere with Built Form Standards for MidRise Buildings and Townhouses (2018);

## Urban Design Guidelines for Mixed-use Buildings

To create livable, functional and visually attractive mixed-use buildings, the following general design guidelines shall be considered:

- Buildings shall address the public realm with active facades, at-grade entrances and massing that reinforces the street edge;
- Corner buildings shall address both sides of the streets with active ground floor facades;
- Surface parking shall be located at the rear of the property;
- Landscaping shall be provided to enhances walkways, public sidewalks and provide buffer towards adjacent open spaces;
- Shared driveways and parking lots shall be considered to reduce access points and conflicts with pedestrians;
- At-grade retail uses shall provide entrances from public right-of-ways to maintain accessibility and create interest along main streetscapes;
- Underground parking shall be provided in mixed-use buildings with residential units. Driveway access is located to reduce pedestrian conflict and minimize impact on streetscapes.


## Main Street

The proposed east-west private road represents the key vehicular connection within the site and aims to implement the Main Street concept, as envisioned in the urban design concept plans prepared by the City for the Watson/Starwood mixed-use node. Main Streets will provide a safe, functional and attractive pedestrian, cycling and transit-oriented environment that is balanced with an acceptable level of motor vehicular traffic. These streets reflect their planned function as focal points for shopping, offices and community interaction and will be develop based on the adjacent land use context.
The proposed section of the Main Street envisions a 2.0 m sidewalk on both sides and a 3.8 m setback to mixed-use buildings and a 1.5 m sidewalk with a 4.5 m setback to townhouses allowing for a strong row of street trees along both sides of the street to support pedestrian friendly public realm. The proposed development layout provides active retail frontages along the Main Street and a visual focal point as the proposed Main Street terminates at walkway block leading to Natural Heritage System.


Figure 18: The proposed Main Street cross-section

The rest of the proposed vehicular network within the site consist of 8.5 m right-of-way private roads which support light traffic loads as they provide immediate access to residential dwellings.
A 1.5 m sidewalk is proposed on one side of all 8.5 m private roads. The following guidelines apply to private roads:

- Provide a continuous row of canopy street trees on both sides of the road;
- Private roads should be scaled for pedestrian comfort and activity; and
- Private roads should be designed to promote traffic calming and neighbourhood safety.



## Shadow Study

Several key criteria was considered to make sure that shadows cast from the proposed buildings allow for the most optimal use of surrounding outdoor places throughout the year. It was concluded that the proposed development will not produce adverse shadow and will not negatively impacts the future or existing neighbourhood. For detailed criteria and development response, please review the submitted Shadow Study.

## Publicly Accessible Open Space and Features

The proposed development introduces a variety of open spaces and outdoor amenity areas including: publicly accessible neighbourhood park, several outdoor amenity areas at grade, as well as at the top of the shared podium and at the roof levels of the proposed towers, and additional pedestrian walkway connections to the existing Natural Heritage System.

The neighbourhood park will feature active and passive recreational areas providing opportunities for socializing for all ages. Pedestrian paths are envisioned to extend throughout the park and connect to the proposed sidewalk network. The proposed development envisions connecting the park by way of a pedestrian walkway to the Natural Heritage System to the south.


Figure 19: Proposed Park landscape concept design, created by MBTW

### 2.3 Sustainable Urban Design

## General Environmental Sustainability

Although the project is not applying for green building certifications, it is designed with sustainability in mind. Sustainability measures for the proposed development include:

- A Walkable Complete Community
- The proposed development has been planned at higher densities with mixed-uses transitioning to low-rise residential uses surrounding green parkland. It is envisioned as a walkable community with places to live, shop and play.
- Low Impact Development
- The recharge and infiltration of the rainwater on the community will be infiltrated to meet pre-development levels and create a water balance as much as is possible.
- As outlined in the Official Plan (8.1), site design and building development should support energy efficiency and water conservation. Furthermore, sustainable site design can assist in planning for resilience in extreme weather events. All designs must be in accordance with the City of Guelph's sustainability objectives, including those outlined in the following documents: Stormwater Management Master Plan (2012); and Community Energy Plan (2007).
- Building location and orientation should maximize exposure to natural light and consider microclimate effects.
- A focus on consolidated landscaped areas that support a mature tree canopy is required.
Further low impact development (LID) measures to be discussed at Site Plan stage.



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## (f) in $\because$


[^0]:    Figure 4: Land Use Context

[^1]:    Precedents of building entrances and public realm design for the mixed-use built form

