



# URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Guelph Innovation District, Blocks 1 & 2

Block Plan, April 2024



# CONTENTS

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<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 Site Context</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Surrounding Context	6
2.2 Existing Site Conditions	9
2.3 Policy Overview	10
2.4 Vision Statement	11
<b>3.0 Community Structure</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Opportunities	13
3.2 Mixed Use Heart	16
3.3 Innovation Zone	17
3.4 Neighbourhood Districts	18
3.5 Public Realm & Open Spaces	19
3.6 Streetscapes & Circulation	21
<b>4.0 Design Guidelines</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1 Mixed Use Blocks	27
4.2 Medium Density Residential Blocks	28
4.3 Low Density Residential Blocks	29
4.4 Innovation Employment Blocks	30
4.5 Streetscapes & Circulation	31
4.6 Landscape Design & Open Spaces	32
4.7 Sustainable Design	33
<b>5.0 Implementation</b>	<b>34</b>





# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Guelph Innovation District (GID) is a proposed compact, mixed use community located in the City's east end. The GID is a combined urban village and sustainable employment hub that supports the University of Guelph and Downtown Guelph as innovation spaces. The GID is envisioned as a pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood with street-related built form that supports residential, commercial, and employment uses in low, medium, and high density forms. The GID is bisected by the Eramosa River and will protect this natural heritage resource while integrating it into the community.

The GID is broken up into four Block Plan areas, each with a unique identity. Blocks 1 and 2 are located in the northwestern quadrant of the GID, bounded roughly by Victoria Road South, Stone Road East, and the Eramosa River (see Figure 1.1). The Master Plan for the Site envisions a vibrant, mixed use development with a range of residential, commercial, employment uses, a network of integrated open spaces, and a fine-grained circulation network (see Figure 1.2).

This report provides a series of Urban Design Guidelines for Blocks 1 and 2 and includes the following topics:

- Overview of the existing site conditions and surrounding context, including built form, circulation, and natural heritage;
- Summary of the existing policy framework;
- Development of a vision statement and series of goals;
- Overview of the proposed Master Plan, including districts, built form, circulation, and parks and open spaces;
- Design guidelines for the various typologies and uses, including mixed use, medium density residential, low density residential, innovation employment, streetscapes, open spaces, and sustainability;
- Review of the implementation process.

This report is prepared as part of a complete Block Plan application and must be read in conjunction with the following studies and drawings.

- Planning Justification Report, prepared by MHBC Planning (dated April 2024)
- Sustainability Report, prepared by MHBC Planning (dated April 2024)
- Environmental Impact Study, prepared by Natural Resources Solutions Inc (dated April 2024)
- Engineering Master Servicing Plan, prepared by MTE (dated February 21, 2023)
- Traffic Impact Study, prepared by GHD (dated April 12, 2024)





Figure 1.1 - Location of Blocks 1 & 2 near the University of Guelph and Downtown Guelph (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





Figure 1.2 - The proposed Master Plan for Blocks 1 & 2 (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT



## 2.1 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

### Urban Structure & Built Form

The Guelph Innovation District is located at the City's eastern edge and forms an important part of the City's overall urban structure (see Figure 2.1). The Blocks have the potential to act as a prominent gateway to the City from the east. The GID's proximity to Downtown Guelph and the University of Guelph will help establish connections between these two urban anchors and contribute to innovation and growth within the City. The GID is closely linked with the existing natural heritage features, which provide

an essential open space framework that links the Site with the various nodes and neighbourhoods across the City.

The Site is surrounded by a mix of residential, employment, and open space uses. The lands immediately surrounding the Site are rural and open space in character, including the Eramosa River valley to the east and north, Guelph Arboretum lands to the east and north, Guelph Arboretum lands to the west, and existing rural residential and commercial to the south. Beyond these lands to the north and west

lie the urban area of Guelph, with an employment corridor along the existing rail corridors surrounded by residential neighbourhoods. The University of Guelph is located approximately 1.25km west of the Site along College Avenue East and Stone Road East. The lands beyond the Eramosa River to the east are occupied by employment uses and the former Guelph Correctional Centre, which comprises Block 4 of GID. The rural lands to the immediate south include GID Block 3, with additional natural heritage, open space, and agricultural uses beyond.

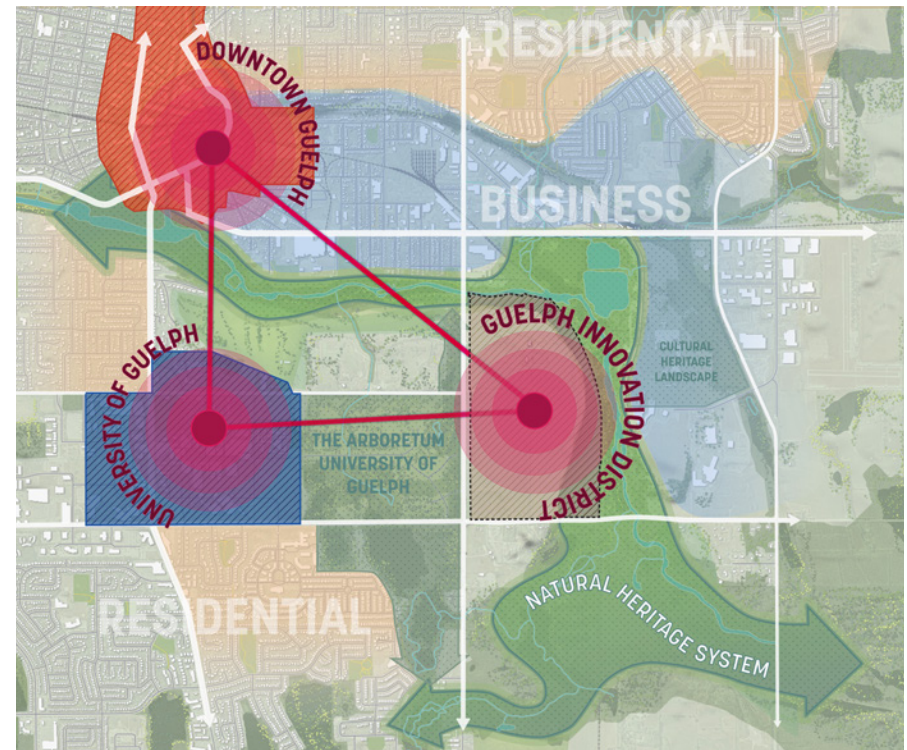
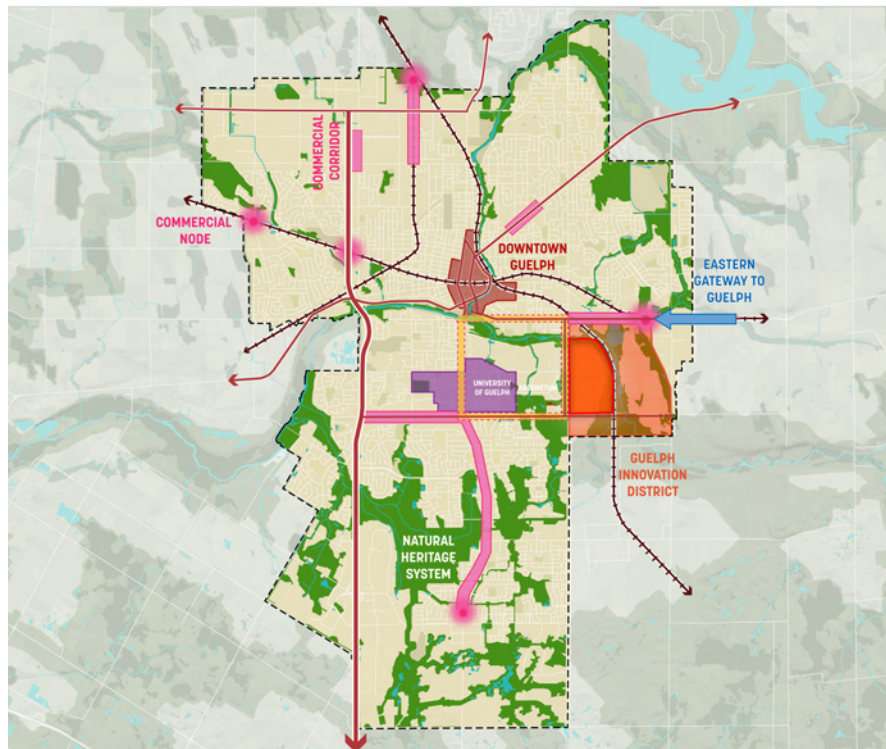


Figure 2.1 - The Site within the surrounding built form and broader urban structure (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



## Open Spaces & Natural Heritage

The Site is surrounded by a natural heritage system associated with the Eramosa River valley and its tributaries (see Figure 2.2). The river corridor has a defined valley edge and includes woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. The Guelph Radial Line Trail follows a former rail line through the valley and offers opportunities for recreation and nature appreciation.

The University of Guelph Arboretum, a publicly accessible open space, is located directly west of the Site across Victoria Road South. The Arboretum features over 160 hectares of gardens, walking trails, woodlands, wetlands, and meadows.

Across the river valley to the north lie two municipal parks, Eramosa River Park, and Royal City Jacees Park. Eramosa River Park is accessible from Victoria Road South and Florence Lane and features a large open space and shade structure for seating. Royal City Jacees Park sits along the Eramosa River and is a large open space that offers views of the river.

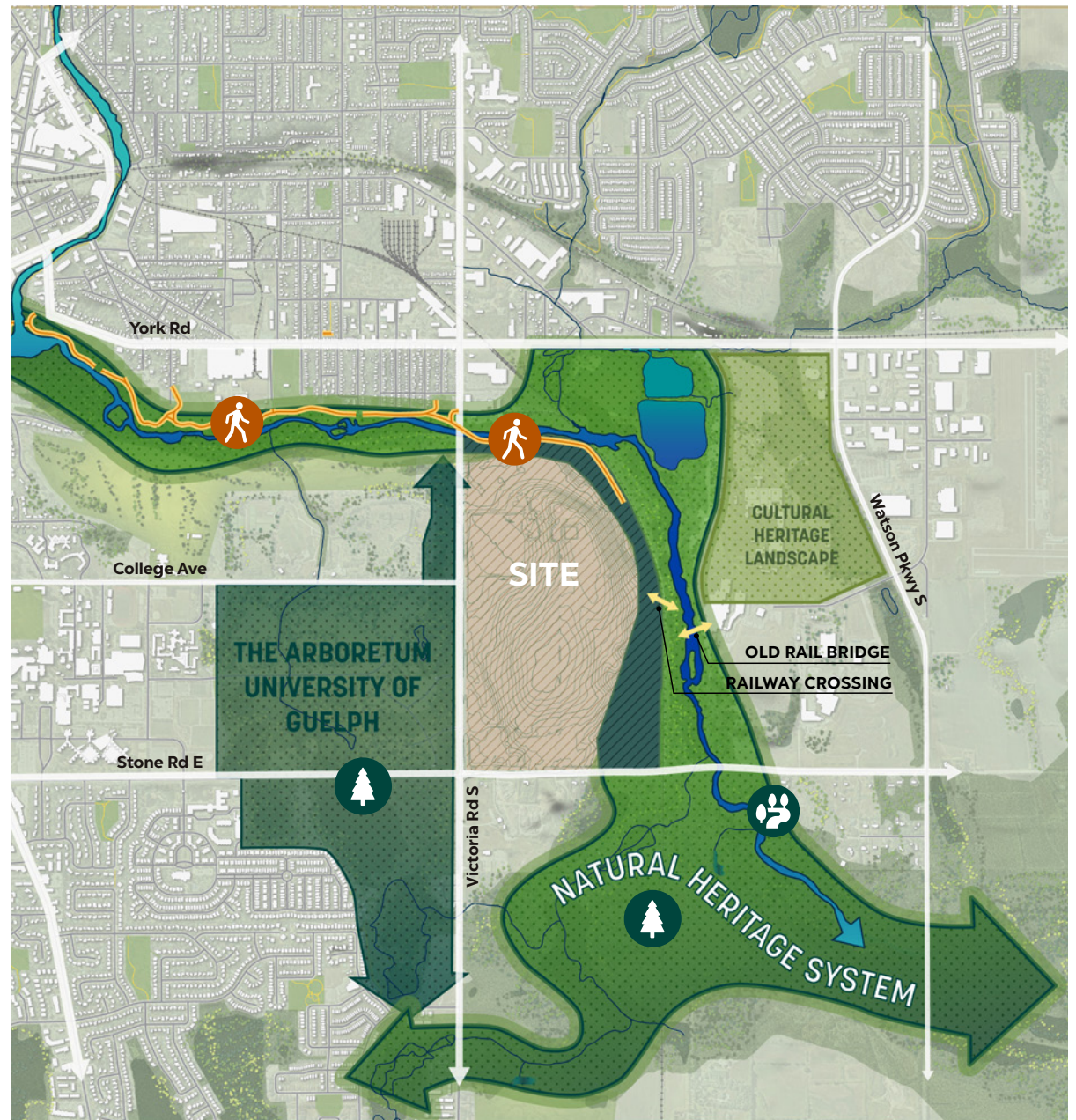


Figure 2.2 - Surrounding open spaces and natural heritage features (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



## Circulation

The surrounding roads retain the large block pattern of the original lot and concession layout (see Figure 2.3). Victoria Road South and Stone Road East are both arterial roads with four lane cross sections, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Stone Road East transitions to a two lane cross section to the east of Victoria Road South. College Avenue East is an arterial road with a two lane cross section that terminates at Victoria Road South. The GID Secondary Plan envisions the introduction of a street network connecting Blocks 1 to 3 to Stone Road East, Victoria Road South, and College Avenue East.

Guelph Transit service is provided on Victoria Road South and Stone Road East, offering direct connections to the University of Guelph, northeastern Guelph, and southeastern Guelph. The GID Secondary Plan proposes additional transit stops along Victoria Road South and Stone Road East where future roads intersect the arterials.

The surrounding active transportation network is mixed due to the location at the City's edge and lack of fine-grained street pattern. Both Victoria Road South and Stone Road East include painted bicycle lanes, with painted buffers to the north and west of the Site. Sidewalks are provided to the west and south, with no current connections to the Site beyond the intersection of Victoria Road South and Stone Road East. Accesses to the Guelph Radial Line Trail and Royal Recreational Trail are located northwest and southeast of the Site, where the trails intersect with Victoria Road South and Stone Road.

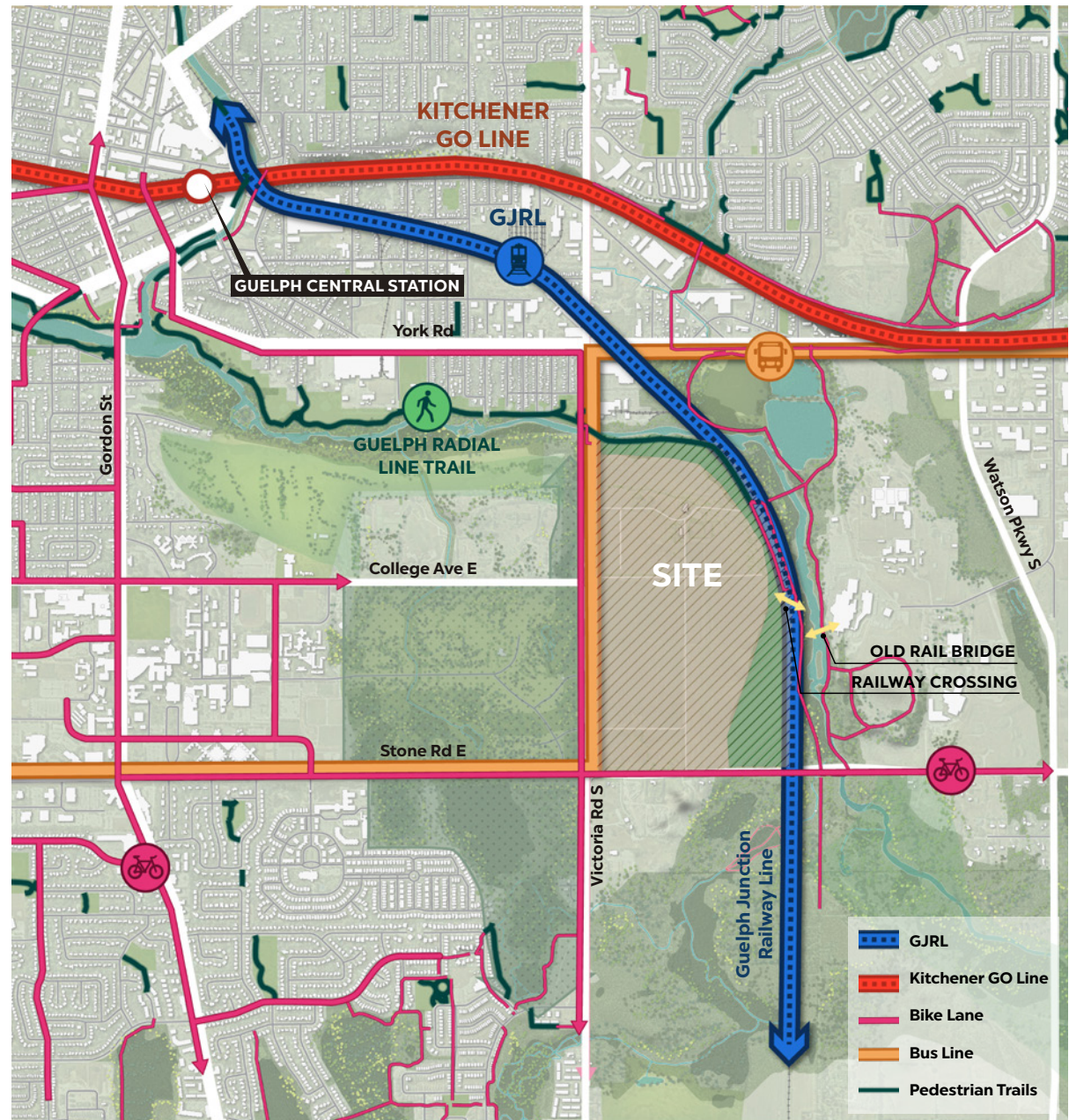


Figure 2.3 - Surrounding circulation network (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



## 2.2 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The Site has an irregular shape with a total area of approximately 116.6 hectares and a net developable land area of approximately 97.3 hectares. The Site is bounded by the Eramosa River to the north, Victoria Road South to the west, Guelph Junction Railway to the east, and Stone Road East to the south (see Figure 2.4)

The Site is the former location of the University of Guelph Agroforestry Research Site. Currently, the Site is occupied by low-impact farming uses, in accordance with an existing minor variance. The lands are occupied by planting rows and open areas with administrative and storage buildings located in the northern portion. The northern and eastern edges of the Site include the Eramosa River corridor and naturalized valley lands.

The Site is currently accessed through entrances on Victoria Road South and Stone Road East. An internal driveway system links the existing buildings with the various planting areas across the Site.

The Site has variable topography and is largely divided into the upland developable area and the river valley. The upland areas slope approximately 15m from Victoria Road and 10m from Stone Road East to high points at the Site's centre. These high points offer the potential for views of Downtown, the University, and surrounding natural heritage lands. The valley lands are marked by steep slopes of approximately 10-20m toward the Eramosa River and rail corridor.

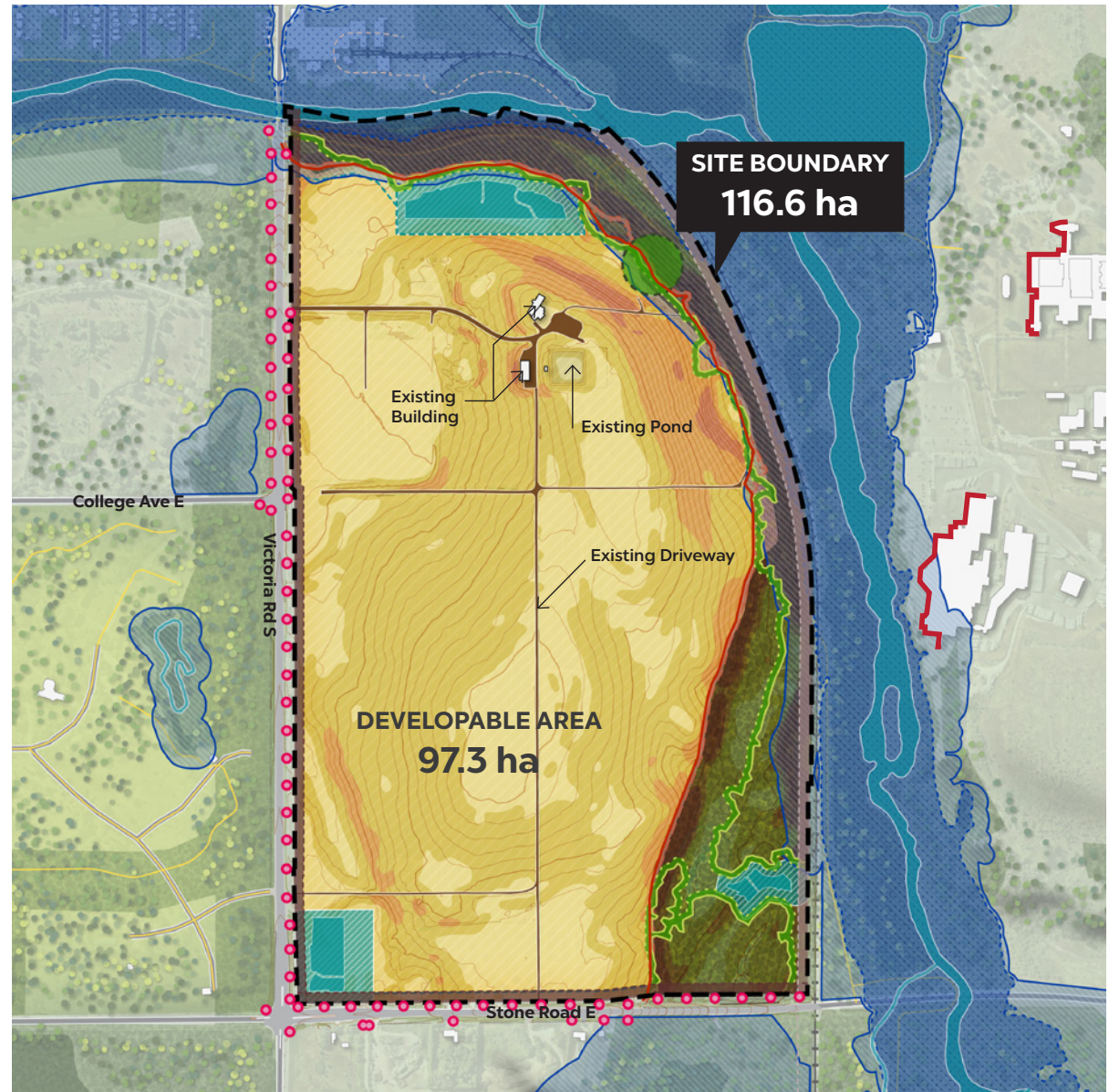


Figure 2.4 - Existing buildings and topography on the Site (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)

## 2.3 POLICY OVERVIEW

The City of Guelph has a wealth of policy and guidelines to inform the design of sites, buildings, streets, and landscapes. This section will provide an overview of each of the relevant documents that will inform the Block Plan's design as well as the development of the guidelines within this report.

### Official Plan

Chapter 8 of the City of Guelph Official Plan contains urban design policies to guide the development of complete communities. Specific policies relate to sustainable urban design, public realm, landmarks and public views, gateways, built form, transition, parking, circulation, signage, lighting, landscaping, safety, accessibility, urban squares, and public art. Specific direction surrounding land use, road networks, and open space systems are deferred to the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan.

### Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan

The Secondary Plan (Official Plan Amendment 54) establishes a detailed planning framework for the GID, including a vision, principles, objectives, policies, and schedules. Blocks 1 and 2 are located within the northwest quadrant of the GID. The six principles cover a range of topics that enable the vision of the GID as a compact, mixed use community that protects natural heritage resources. The principles are:

- Principle 1: Protect What is Valuable - Creating a place that respects the Natural Heritage System and cultural heritage resources, making citizens stewards of the resources for current and future generations.
- Principle 2: Create Sustainable and Energy Efficient Infrastructure - Building infrastructure that is efficient, focuses on renewable energy sources, and supports an integrated energy distribution system that enables a carbon free lifestyle.
- Principle 3: Establish a Multi-modal Pedestrian-focused Mobility System - Making connections that serve the community, allow current and future generations to walk or cycle to daily needs, and provide convenient transit services to access broader activities.
- Principle 4: Create an Attractive and Memorable Place - Creating meaningful places to bring people, activities, environment(s) and ideas together, creating a sense of arrival and inclusion.
- Principle 5: Promote a Diversity of Land Uses and Densities - Mixing it up to create vibrant, resilient, and efficient spaces that make it possible, practicable, and beneficial to reduce our ecological footprint.
- Principle 6: Grow Innovative Employment Opportunities - Grow innovative employment opportunities that support the knowledge-based innovation sector, within a compact, mixed use community.

In addition, Section 11.2 of the Secondary Plan provides a number of specific policies related to natural heritage, cultural heritage, energy, servicing, stormwater, mobility, the public realm, land use, and built form.

### Guelph Urban Design Manual

The Guelph Urban Design Manual implements the policy direction of the Guelph Official Plan by providing a set of specific urban design guidelines. Volume 2, Part 3 of the guidelines contains policy directions to be applied to developments city-wide, as well as specific policy direction for residential, mixed use, and commercial developments. Further, Volume 3C establishes standards for mid-rise and townhouse forms, including site design, mid-rise buildings, and townhouses.



## 2.4 VISION STATEMENT

The GID Block 1 and 2 Block Plan is a master plan community planned for innovative, sustainable employment uses, integrated with residential neighbourhoods and an urban village mixed use centre.

The goals of the Block Plan are to:

- Create a landmark community in Guelph that will act as a hub for innovation, exemplary urban design and sustainable mixed-use development. The GID Block 1 and 2 Block Plan envisions the Block 1 and 2 lands to be planned as a home for innovative, sustainable employment uses adjacent to an urban village composed of a mixed use heart and residential uses.
- Create a healthy community, which will allow future residents to live, work and play in their community with access to innovative jobs, retail and service commercial uses, and sustainable transportation and housing options. Buildings in the GID Block 1 and 2 plan area will be oriented towards the street with sustainable building design and high quality urban design elements, and will take various forms with a range of densities. The GID Block 1 and 2 lands are proposed to provide a range of housing options to provide a variety of levels of affordability and unit sizes for future residents. The Block Plan will provide opportunities for individuals and families to call GID their home through various life stages. Employment opportunities will be provided for GID residents and for Guelph at large, drawing in talent from beyond the City limits and increasing the range of employment opportunities in the City.
- Protect the natural and cultural environment. The development will integrate urban living and preservation of the natural environment by creating strong visual and physical links to the woodlands and Eramosa River Valley to the east. Views of the surrounding cultural heritage environment will also be maintained and show-

cased to anchor the innovative GID community within the broader City context.

Transportation connections are envisioned between the GID Blocks 1 and 2 and other areas of the City through active transportation connections, transit connections and road connections. The GID Block 1 and 2 lands are anchored by three nodes which act as gathering spaces and important aspects of the public realm, creating a clear identity for Block 1 and 2 of the GID through innovative urban design. Buildings are oriented towards the street, integrate sustainable building design and high quality urban design elements, and take various forms with a range of densities.

The vision and goals support the Secondary Plan vision, which is a compact, mixed-use community that serves as a hub for innovative, sustainable employment uses.

Vibrant Public Spaces



Innovative Employment



Mix of Uses and Typologies



Sustainability & Conservation





# 3.0 COMMUNITY STRUCTURE



## 3.1 OPPORTUNITIES

The Master Plan builds on a number of opportunities presented by the Site's location, connections, landscape, and topography (see Figure 3.1).

- College Avenue East is extended into the Site, acting as a gateway and linking the Site with the University of Guelph to the east.
- New buildings and small blocks will create a permeable urban edge along Victoria Street South and Stone Road East.
- The valley lands at the eastern edge of the Site are reserved for conservation purposes, with lower density development along the periphery.
- Connections to the existing trail network provide opportunities for recreation.
- Stormwater management locations are identified that accommodate the existing topography and provide open space linkages.

Together, these opportunities form the basis of the proposed Master Plan, which creates a vibrant, urban community with a Mixed Use Heart, Innovation Zone, Neighbourhood Districts, a variety of open spaces, and a fine-grained circulation network (see Figures 3.2-3.3)

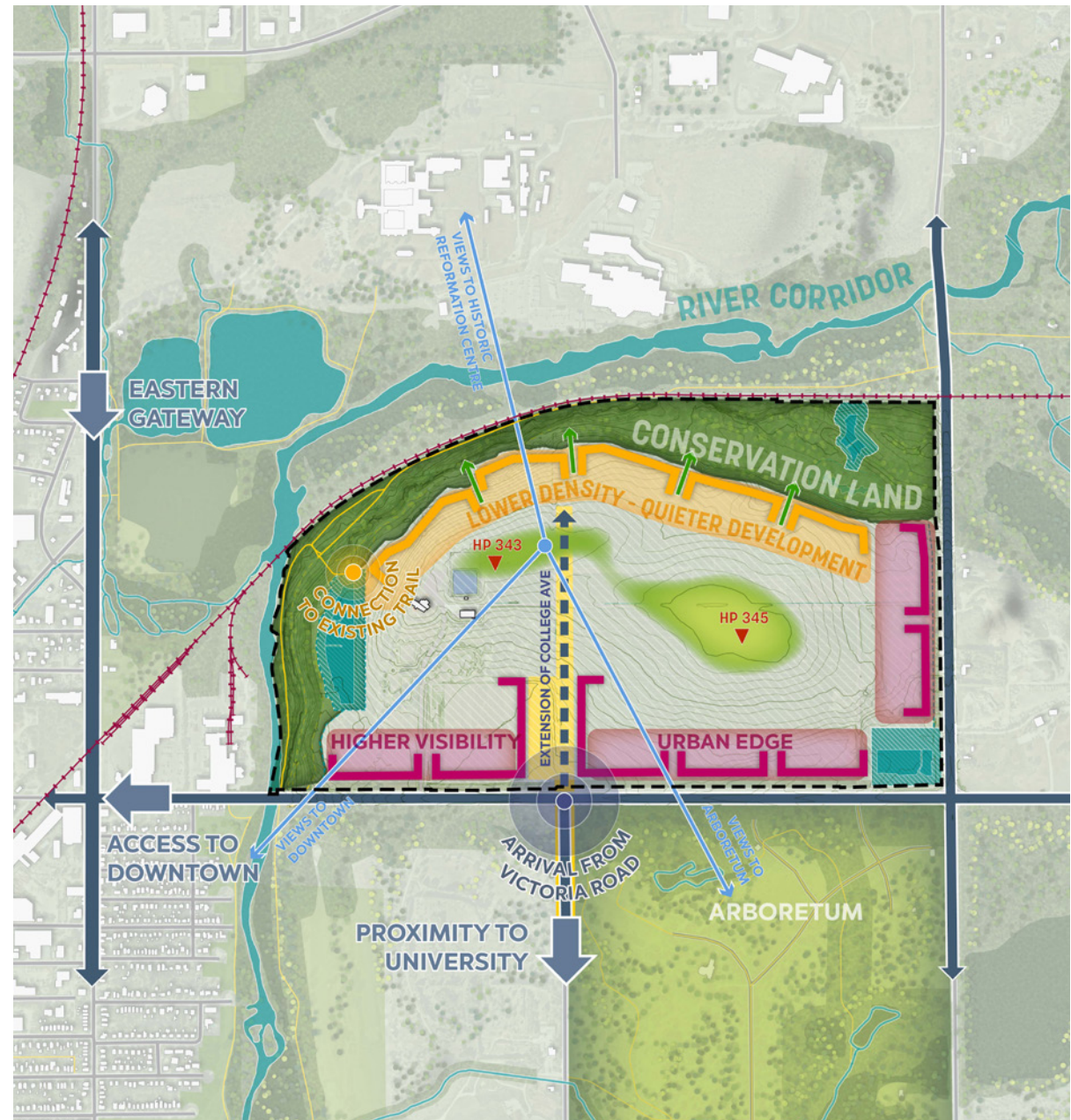


Figure 3.1 - Spatial opportunities inform the Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





Figure 3.2 - The proposed Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



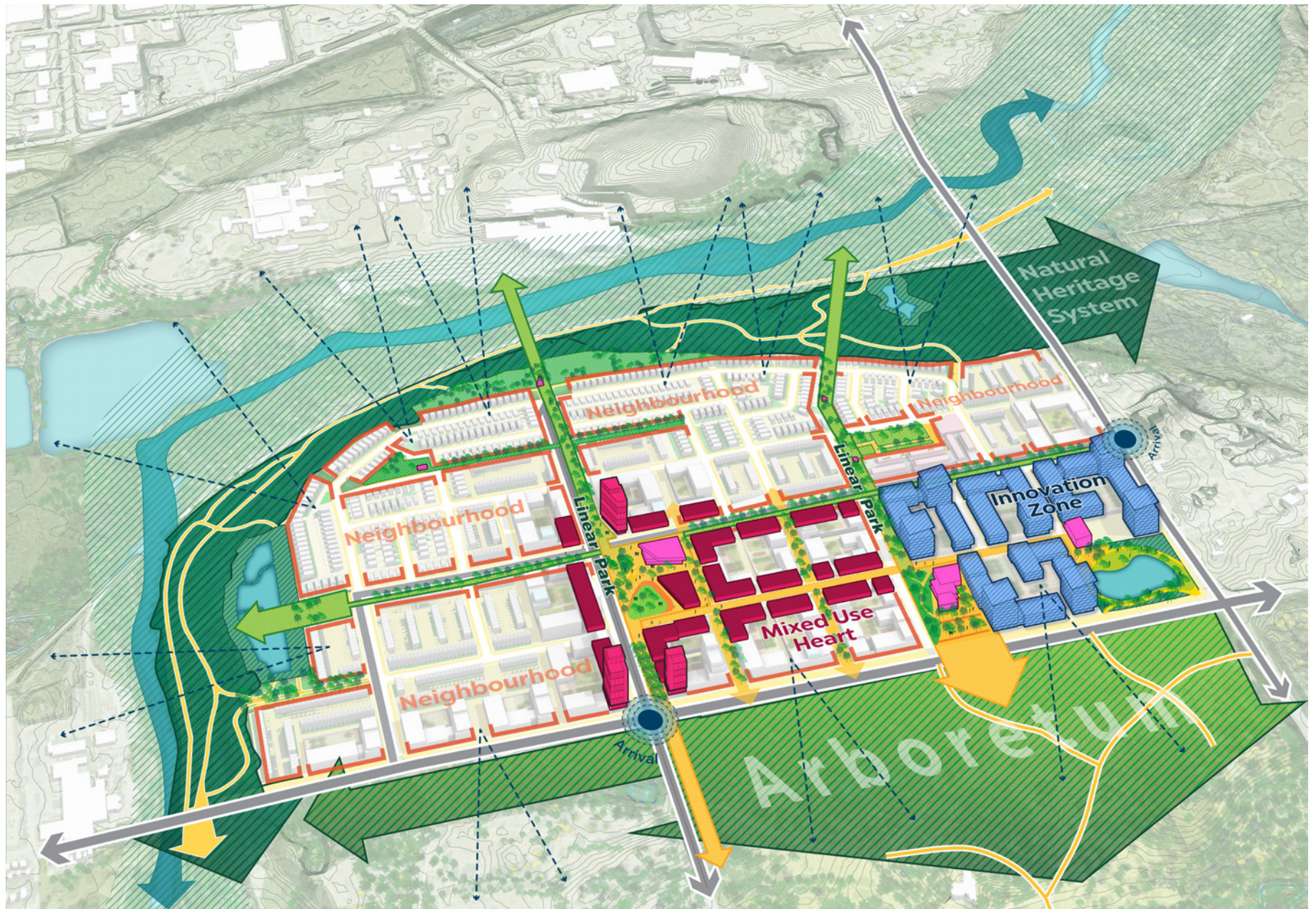


Figure 3.3 - The Master Plan conceptual framework (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



## 3.2 MIXED USE HEART

The Mixed Use Heart acts as the spatial and social centre of the Master Plan, focused around the new Downtown Plaza (see Figure 3.4). The plaza provides a space for flexible, year-round programming within the pedestrianized commercial core. Potential woonerfs are envisioned to connect the plaza to the high density mixed use areas, Victoria Road South, and/or the Innovation Plaza. New streets with wide

green boulevards will connect the plaza with the surrounding Neighbourhood Districts. Landmark towers define the gateways from the east and west and act as visual cues from the surrounding neighbourhood. The interior of the Mixed Use Heart is broken up into a grid of streets and blocks featuring mid-rise buildings and ground floor retail uses.

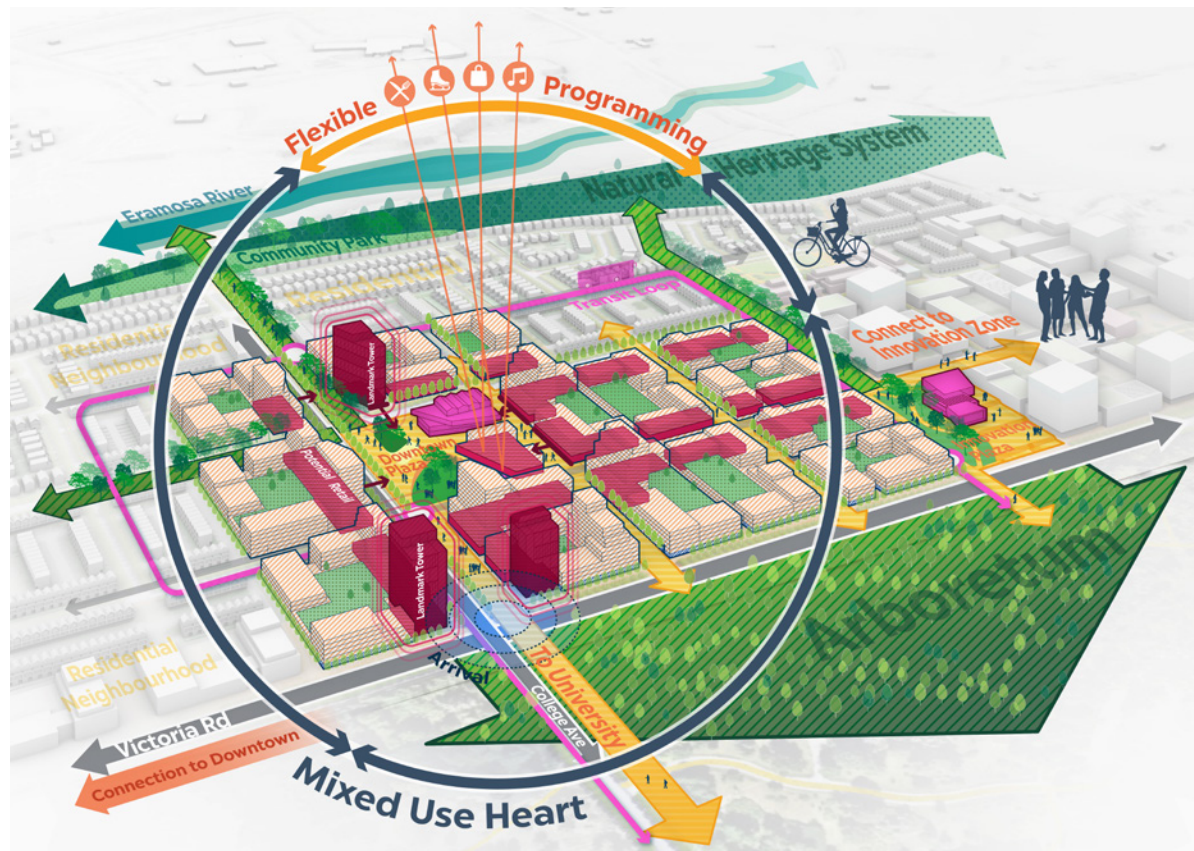


Figure 3.4 - The Mixed Use Heart at the centre of the Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





### 3.3 INNOVATION ZONE

The Innovation Zone at the southwest corner of the block creates an urban employment area within GID (see Figure 3.5). The Innovation Hub and Plaza acts as the anchor for the zone and offers opportunities for partnership between entrepreneurs, small business incubators, and the University of Guelph. The plaza is open to Victoria Road South to provide visibility into the zone and create an open, accessible atmosphere. The fine-grained block and street pattern and flexible building typologies will be de-

signed to suit the needs of specific employers and industries. A proposed stormwater management pond at Victoria Road South and Stone Road East brings the natural environment into the zone and provides visibility from the arterial roads. The proposed public school provides additional opportunities to support and collaborate with the new employment uses. The zone is linked to the Arboretum lands and natural heritage system through a green street corridor that defines its northern edge.

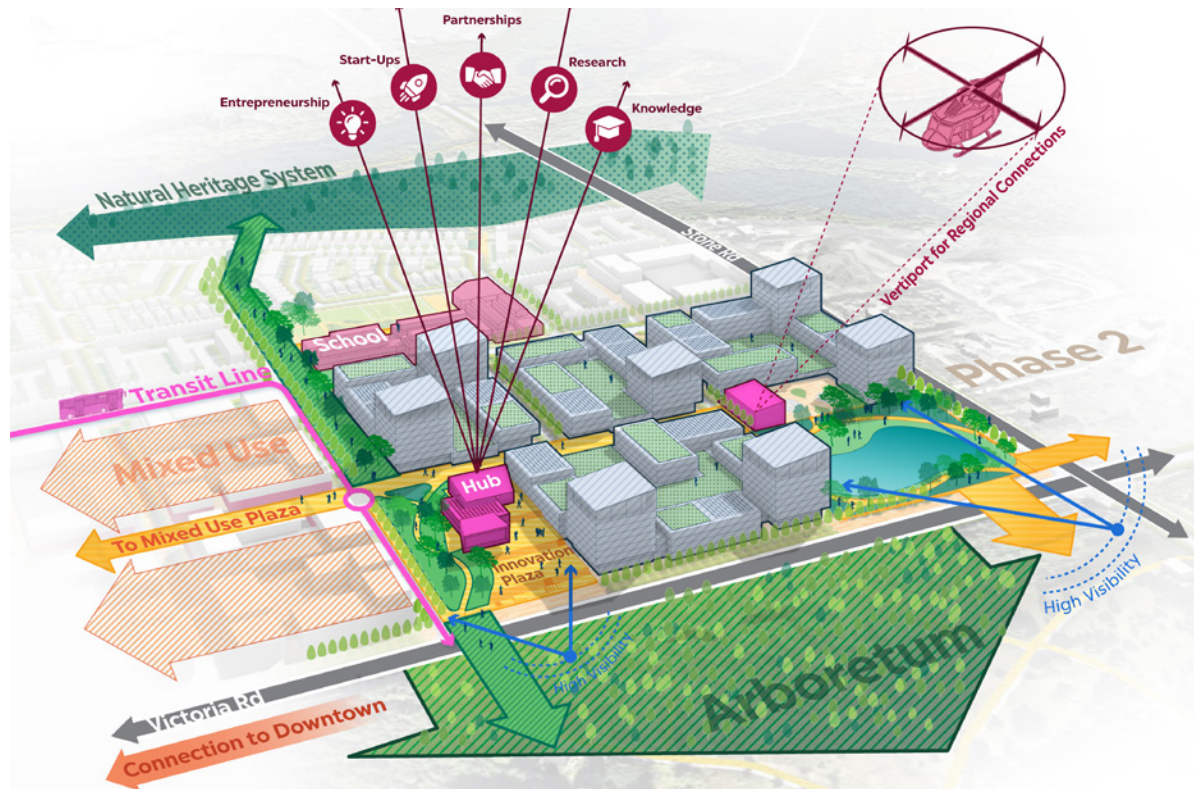
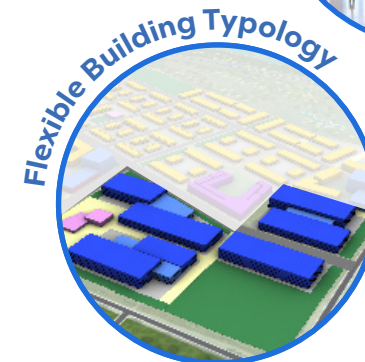


Figure 3.5 - The Innovation Zone as an employment anchor for the Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





## 3.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD DISTRICTS

Surrounding the Mixed Use Heart and Innovation Zone are four Neighbourhood Districts (see Figure 3.6). Each contains a mix of high-, medium-, and low-density blocks designed for apartment, live work, stacked townhouse, back to back townhouse, traditional townhouse, and single-detached typologies. Blocks facing the Mixed Use Heart also contain ground floor commercial uses to support the vibrancy of the Downtown Plaza and College

Avenue East corridor. The heights and densities transition down from the Mixed Use Heart and College Avenue East extension, with the lowest intensity uses adjacent to the natural heritage system. A number of neighbourhood parks are scattered throughout the districts, with the regular grid of streets and greenways providing pedestrian connections. A new school is proposed in District 4 to serve the new residents.

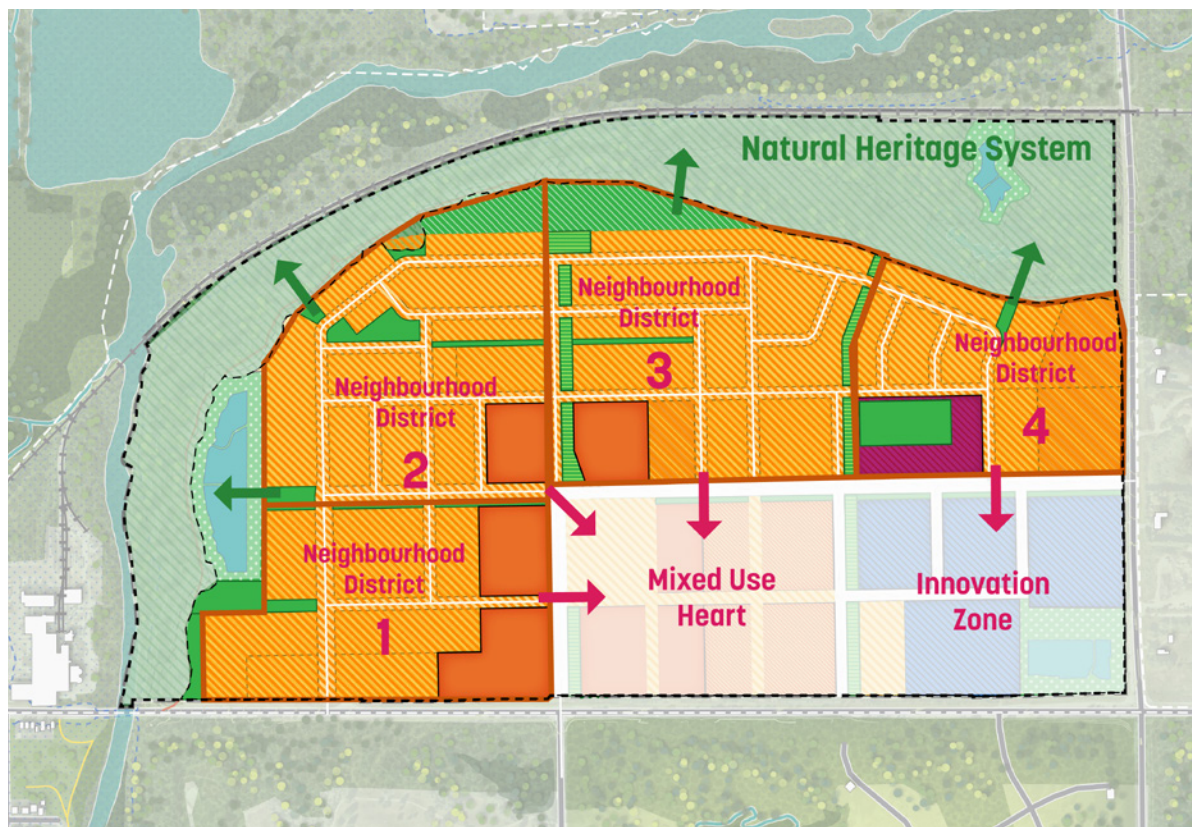


Figure 3.6 - The Neighbourhood Districts surrounding the Mixed Use Heart and Innovation Zone (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





## 3.5 PUBLIC REALM & OPEN SPACES

The Master Plan includes a hierarchy of open spaces with a focus on connectivity and the protection of natural heritage (see Figure 3.7). The Downtown Plaza and Innovation Plaza act as centrally-located urban gathering spaces for residents and workers. The large community park at the terminus of College Avenue East serves as the primary active recreational space, while smaller neighbourhood and pocket parks located within each district serve as local green spaces. The proposed parks and plazas are connected by a series of linear parks, green connectors, and promenades. These programmable linear connections, located along key east-west and north-south streets, extend the open space network

through the Master Plan and are intended to allow residents to cross the Site entirely through or adjacent to green spaces. The proposed conservation lands wrap around the Master Plan and protect the natural heritage features along the Eramosa River corridor. Stormwater management ponds are included within the valley lands and at the corner of Victoria Road South and Stone Road East. A network of trails is proposed to connect the Master Plan with the existing trails along the Eramosa River. The various open spaces are designed to accommodate a wide variety of active and passive programming. Figure 3.8 provides examples of potential programming within each of the Master Plan's open spaces.

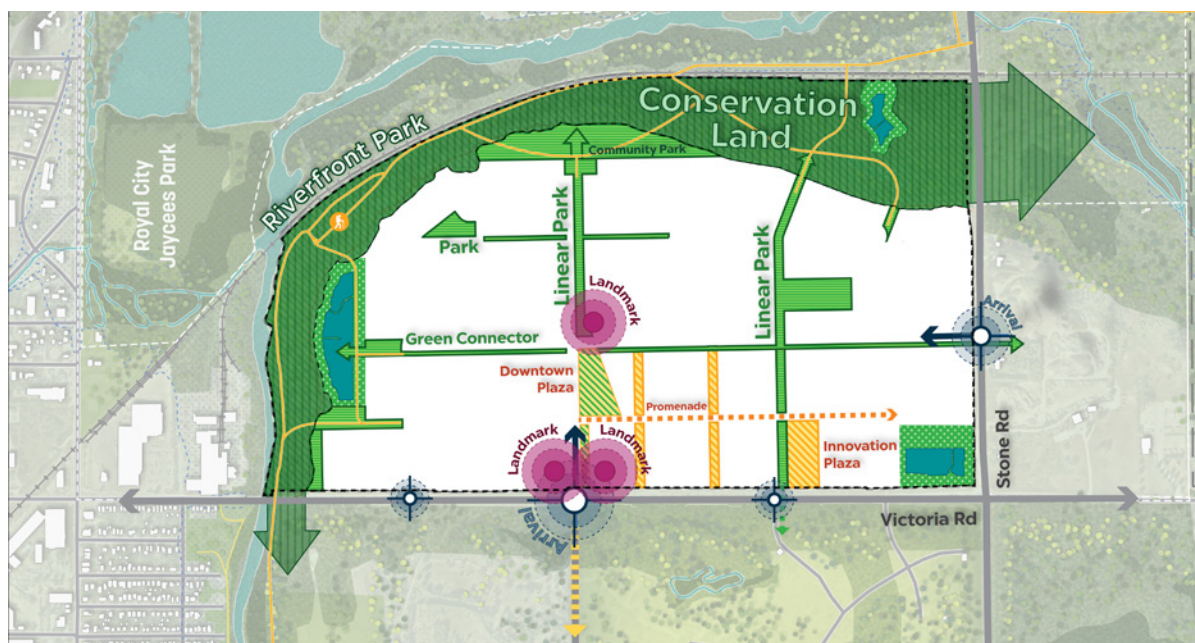


Figure 3.7 - The hierarchy of open spaces throughout the Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)









## 3.6 STREETSAPES & CIRCULATION

The Master Plan divides the Site into a regular grid of blocks through a hierarchy of road types (see Figure 3.9). The existing arterial roads, Victoria Road South and Stone Road East, are reimagined as urban boulevards. New collector roads are proposed through the centre of the Site, linking College Avenue East and the Block 3 lands to the south. A fine-grained local street grid creates blocks that are pedestrian-friendly and appropriate for develop-

ment. Woonerfs through the Mixed Use Heart create urban promenades that link together the primary open spaces and reinforce the urban identity of the Master Plan. Figures 3.10 to 3.13 provide conceptual cross sections for the proposed road types to demonstrate the potential uses and configurations. These designs will be refined in consultation with the City through subsequent design phases, including a future Environmental Assessment.

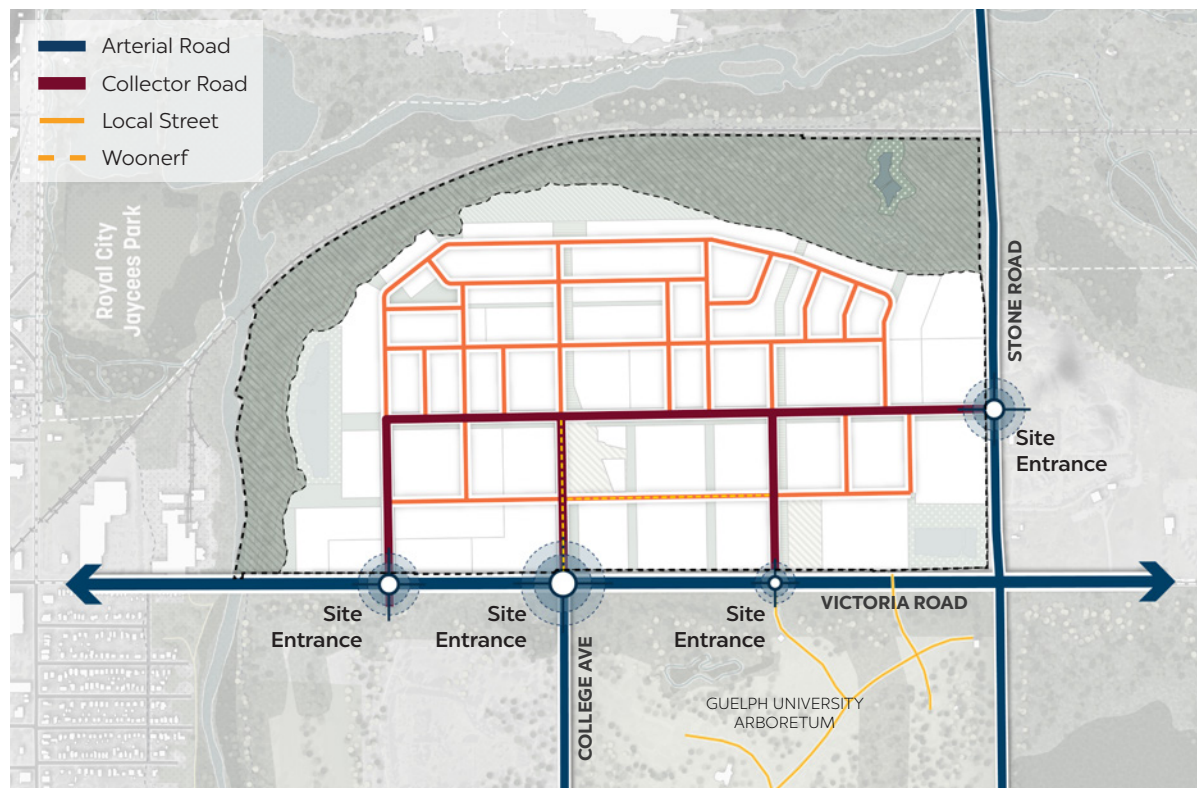


Figure 3.9 - The Site is broken up by a hierarchy of road types (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





The Master Plan proposes the reconfiguration of Victoria Road South and Stone Road East to balance vehicle movements, active transportation, and the environment. The conceptual design for Victoria Road South includes a four lane cross section with bicycle lanes and sidewalks (see Figure 3.10). The eastern portion of the right of way is reserved for a wide green corridor that will include low impact development planting and a multi-use trail. This easement zone will create a green edge for the Master Plan that transitions from the existing Arboretum lands to the planned urban community.

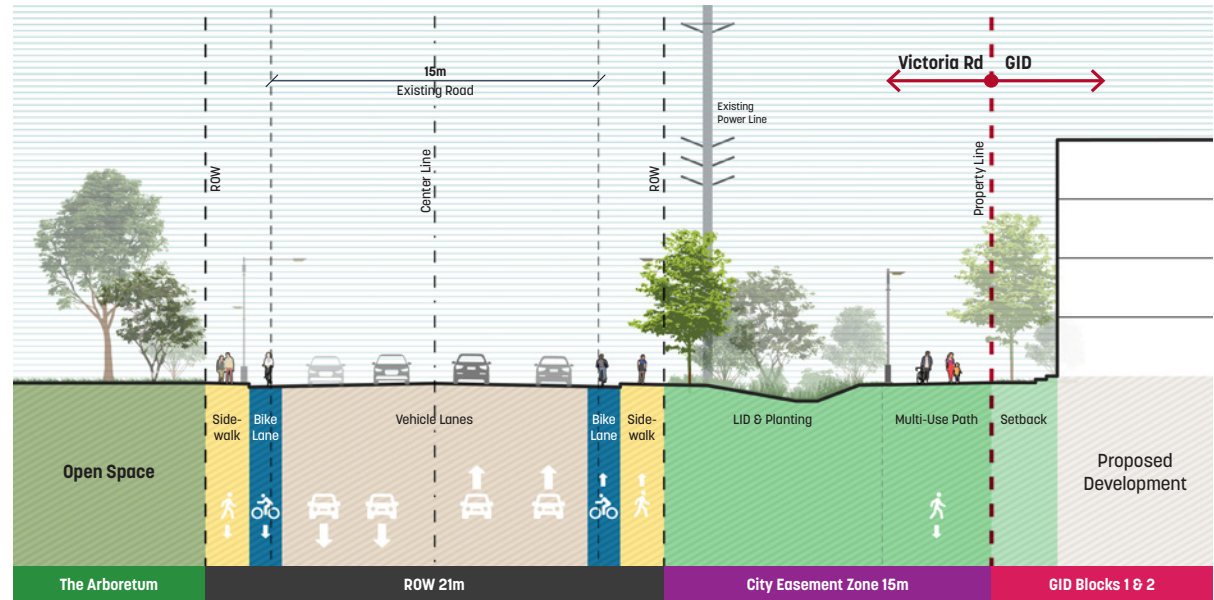


Figure 3.10 - Victoria Rd S typical cross section, facing north (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)

The conceptual design for Stone Road East includes a four lane cross section with wide sidewalks and planting zones (see Figure 3.11). Opportunities for bicycle lanes within the existing right of way will be investigated through the detailed design process.

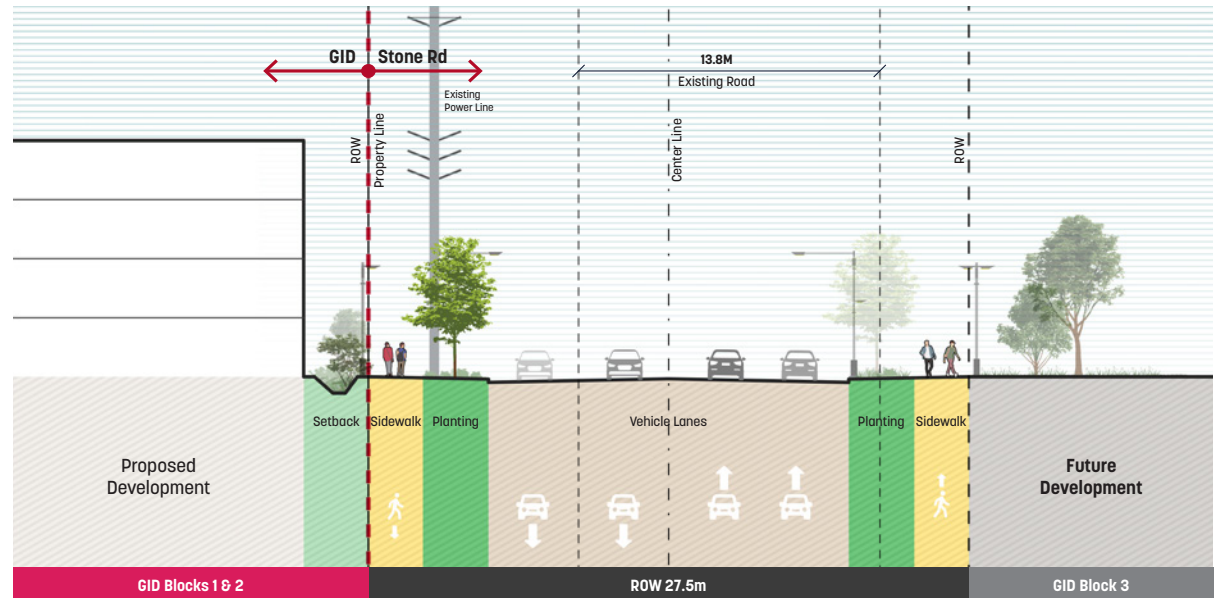


Figure 3.11 - Stone Rd E typical cross section, facing east (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



The conceptual design for the proposed collector roads utilizes a 26m right of way width to provide complete streets through the centre of the Master Plan (see Figure 3.12). The proposed cross section includes three vehicle lanes, on-street parking, buffered bicycle lanes, planting strips, and wide sidewalks. In addition to the 26m right of way width, a green boulevard is planned for one side of the collector roads to function as a network of linear parks. The boulevards are intended to vary in width between 8 and 18m wide and facilitate a number of recreational and placemaking initiatives. Retail uses fronting onto the green boulevards are envisioned with minimal setbacks to provide direct connections between ground floor uses and the public realm.

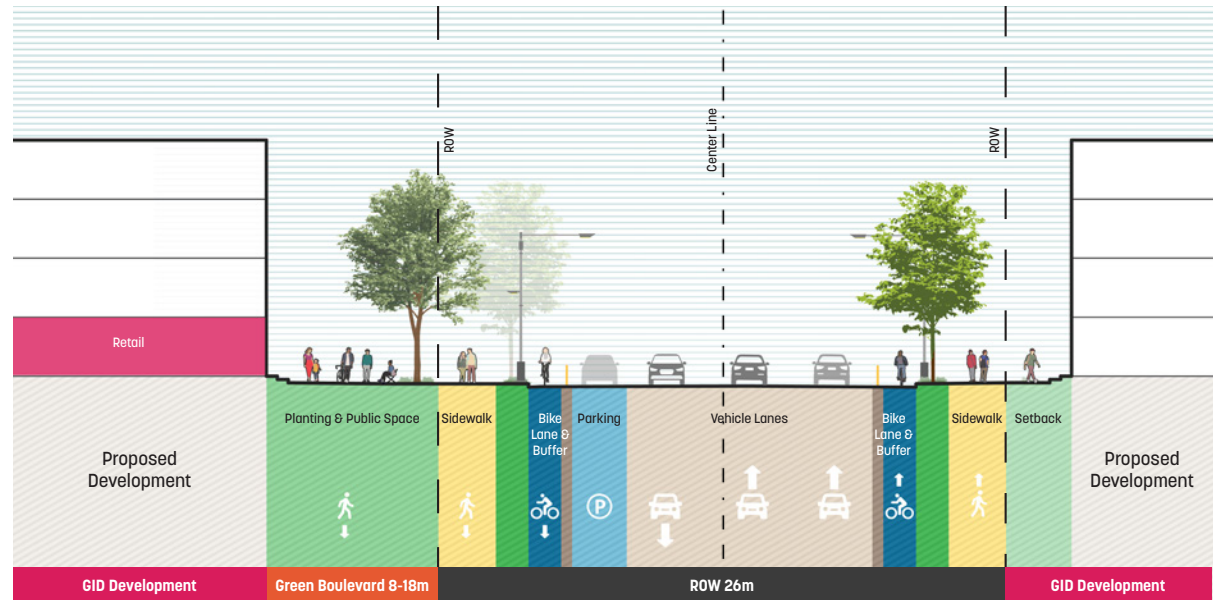


Figure 3.12 - Typical collector road cross section (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)

The remaining roads follow the conceptual 18m local street cross section (see Figure 3.13). These pedestrian-scaled streets will provide access to the individual properties and open spaces and include two vehicle lanes, on-street parking, planting strips, and sidewalks.

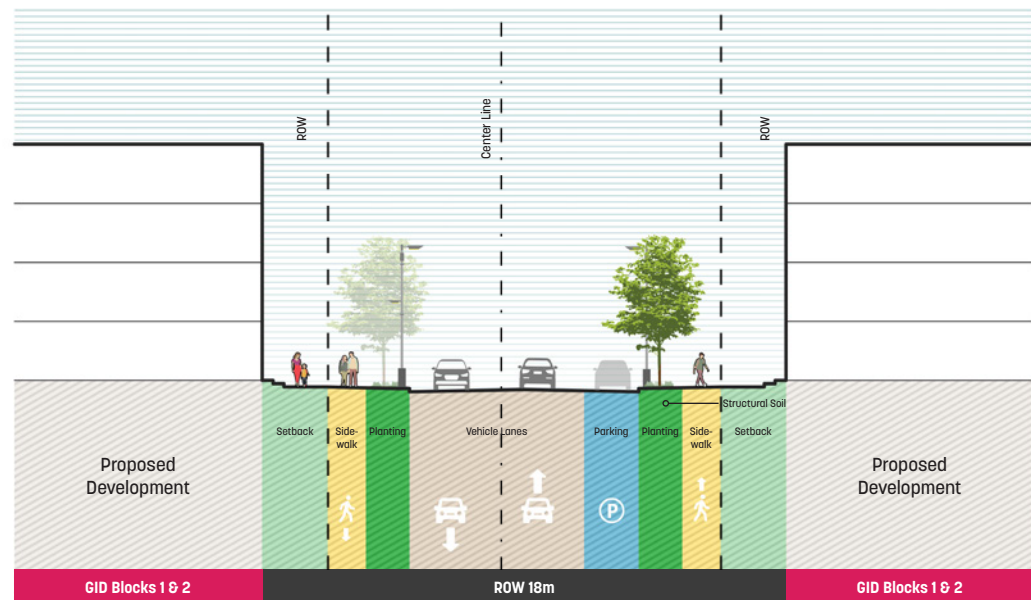


Figure 3.13 - Typical local street cross section (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



The proposed woonerfs will prioritize pedestrian movement and placemaking through a shared street design. Elements such as unit pavers, a lack of division between vehicle and pedestrian spaces, and curvilinear designs with physical barriers such as planters will create a shared space that functions as an extension of the public realm. The woonerfs will also include elements such as gates or bollards to allow the spaces to be closed for special events.

The proposed circulation network encourages active transportation through the fine-grained street network, street-fronting uses with minimal setbacks, and connections to the surrounding multi-use trails and bicycle lanes. The proposed commercial uses

and open spaces are located to ensure residents are within walking distance of features and amenities and live in a truly walkable community (see Figure 3.14).

The Master Plan is also designed to accommodate the extension of transit service through the Site. Figure 3.15 shows potential routing and stop locations through the Site to connect the Mixed Use Heart, Innovation Zone, and Neighbourhood Districts with Downtown and the University of Guelph.

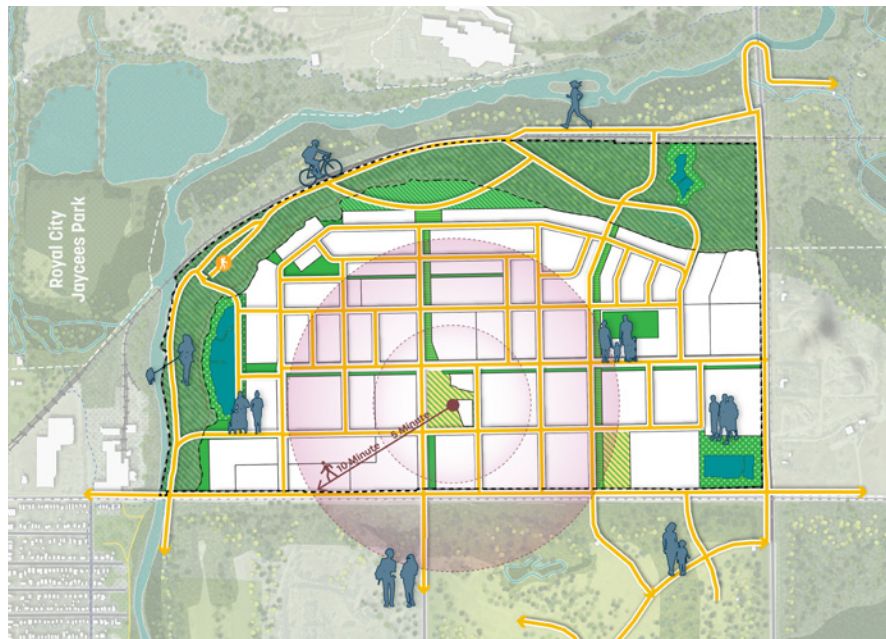


Figure 3.14 - Pedestrian circulation and walking distance from the Downtown Plaza (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)

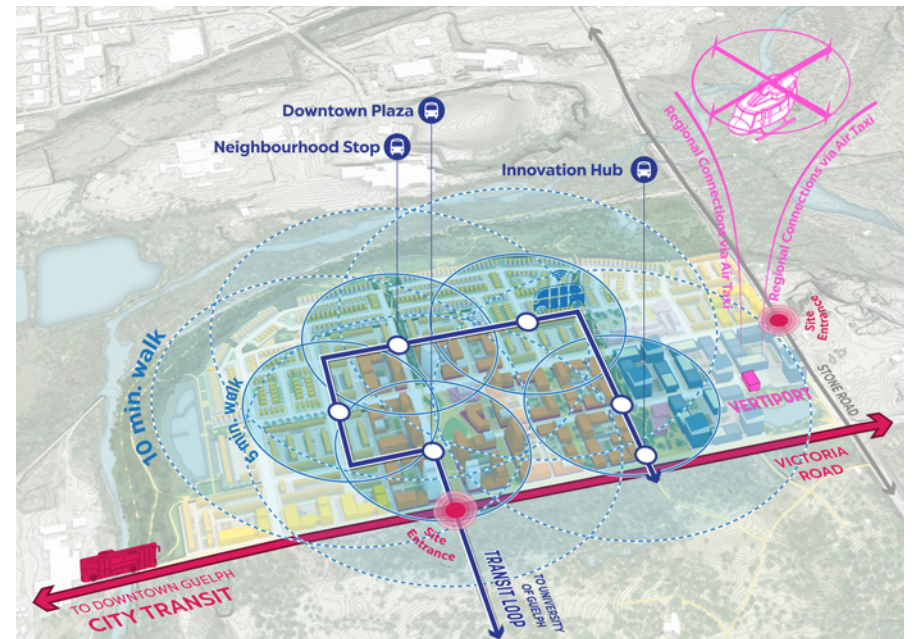


Figure 3.15 - Potential transit stops and walking distances (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)





# 4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES



The following sections will provide a series of design guidelines for each element that will guide the detailed design process and ensure the realization of the vision for Blocks 1 and 2 and the greater Guelph

Innovation District. These elements include mixed use blocks, medium density residential blocks, low density residential blocks, innovation employment blocks, streetscapes and circulation, parks and open

spaces, and sustainable design. Figure 4.1 shows the breakdown of blocks, open spaces, and streets by type.

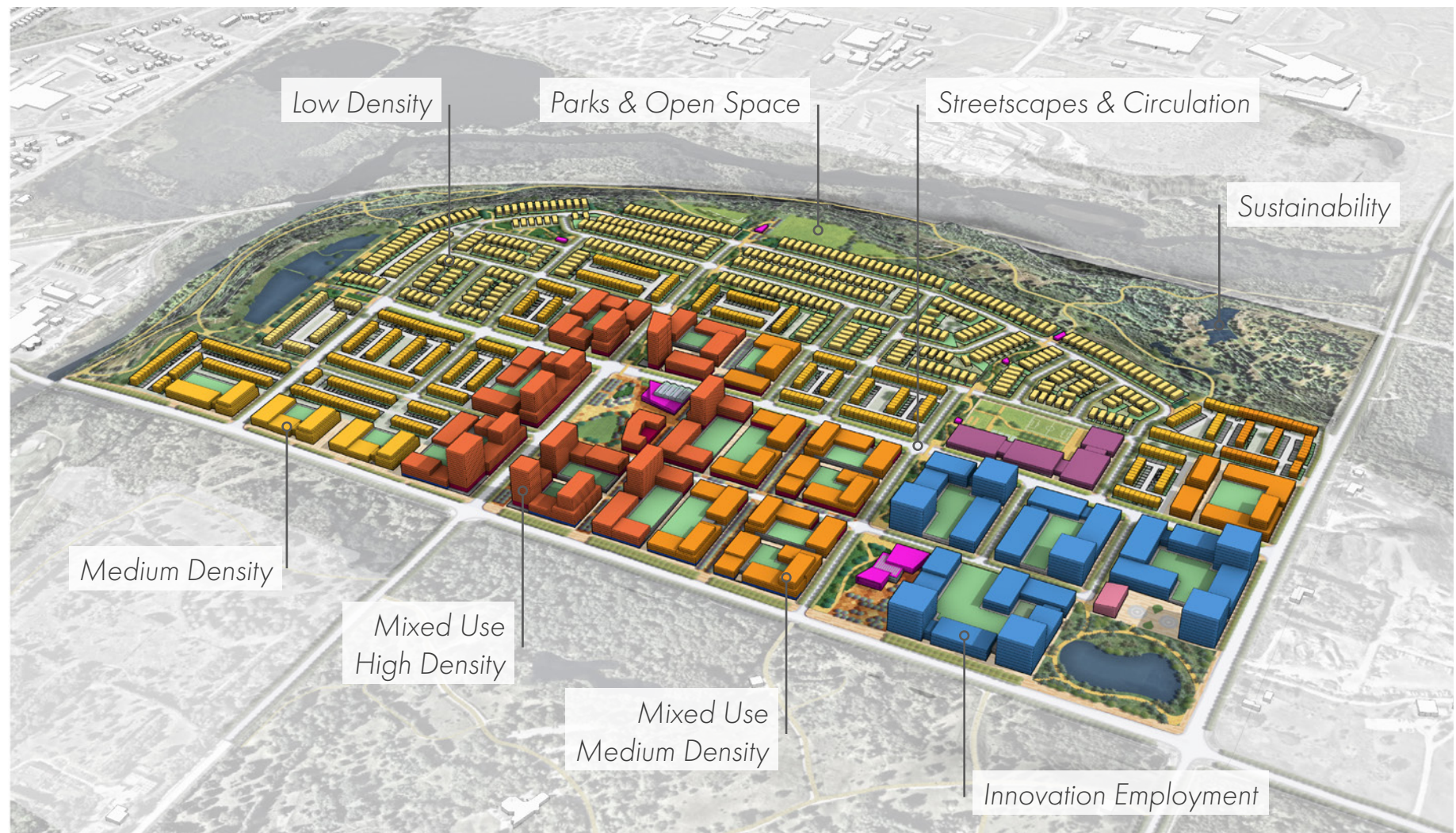
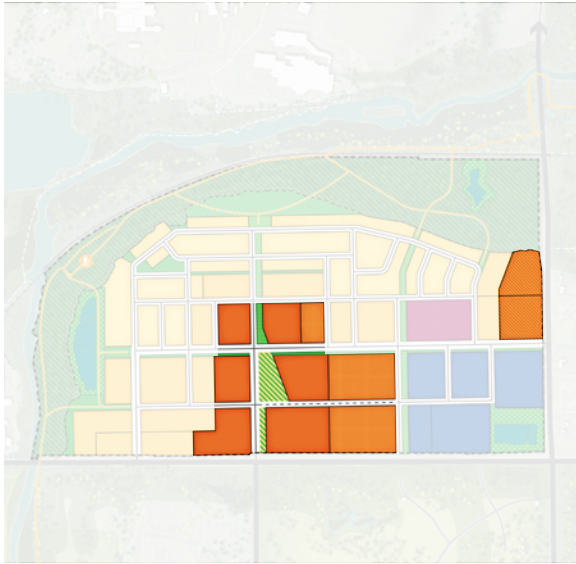


Figure 4.1 - Land uses and building typologies included within the Master Plan (Sasaki, April 10, 2024)



## 4.1 MIXED USE BLOCKS



The Mixed Use blocks form the core of the Master Plan. These blocks are intended for varied uses such as retail, commercial, office, and residential with a focus on mid and high-rise building typologies comprising podium and tower forms. The Mixed Use blocks are located within and adjacent to the Mixed Use Heart and along Stone Road East.

### Site Design & Massing

Locate the tallest buildings along the extension of College Avenue East to form a height peak at the Site's centre. Building heights should transition down from the height peak to the north, south, and east.

Tower podiums and mid-rise buildings should be a minimum of three storeys along the street edge. Step buildings back above the base to reinforce a pedestrian scale along the street edges.

Create an urban street wall condition through building orientation, articulation, and minimal setbacks.

Limit tower footprints to create slender building forms that minimize impacts on adjacent lands, including shadows and wind.

### Elevations

Employ high-quality designs, well-articulated façade treatments, contemporary materials that reflect the innovative design vision for GID, with a particular emphasis on terminating vistas, corners, gateways, and street-facing facades.

Divide buildings into clear base, middle, and top portions through materials, articulation, stepbacks, and datum lines.

Include active uses along street and park frontages, such as ground-oriented residential units and common amenity spaces. Avoid blank walls facing the public realm.

Utilize high levels of transparency and prominent building entrances to provide visual interest and natural surveillance.

### Circulation

Locate building entrances and bicycle parking areas along the street to encourage active transportation.

Locate vehicle parking underground or within building podiums. Podium parking is to be wrapped with active uses and screened from view of the public realm.

Locate vehicle access points on local roads and limit the number of driveway entrances from the street. Access driveways are not to cross linear parks or green boulevards to maintain the continuity of the open space network.

Loading, servicing, and garbage areas should be located inside building footprints and screened from view wherever possible, with entrances integrated into the building façade design.

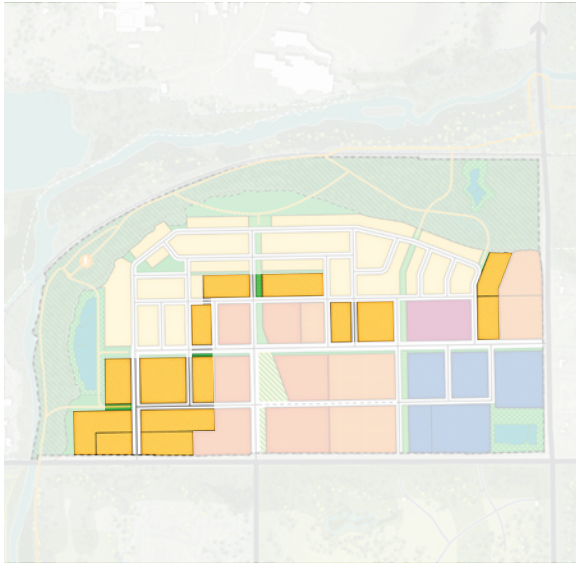
### Landscape & Servicing

Encourage well-landscaped rooftops, green roofs, and outdoor amenity spaces that enhance the functionality and visual appeal of development blocks.

Utility and servicing elements should be located and screened to be hidden from the public realm wherever possible.



## 4.2 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS



The Medium Density Residential Blocks encompass a blend of housing types including mid-rise residential apartments, stacked, back to back, and traditional townhouses, and live-work units. These uses surround the Mixed Use Heart and provide a transition in form between the highest and lowest densities.

### Site Design & Massing

Utilize a perimeter block design for all blocks with central courtyard spaces and street-oriented buildings. Varied building heights and configurations are encouraged within and between blocks to create a dynamic massing.

Create an urban street wall condition through building orientation, articulation, and minimal setbacks.

### Elevations

Employ high-quality designs, well-articulated façade treatments, contemporary materials that reflect the innovative design vision for GID, with a particular emphasis on landmark buildings, corners, gateways, and street-facing facades.

Include active uses along street and park frontages, such as ground floor commercial, ground-oriented residential units, community and institutional uses, and common amenity spaces. Avoid blank walls facing the public realm.

Utilize high levels of transparency and prominent building entrances to provide visual interest and natural surveillance.

### Circulation

Locate building entrances and bicycle parking areas along the street to encourage active transportation.

Locate vehicle parking underground or within building podiums. Podium parking is to be wrapped with active uses and screened from view of the public realm.

Locate vehicle access points on local roads and limit the number of driveway entrances from the street. Access driveways are not to cross linear parks or green boulevards to maintain the continuity of the open space network.

Loading, servicing, and garbage areas should be located inside building footprints and screened from view wherever possible, with entrances integrated into the building façade design.

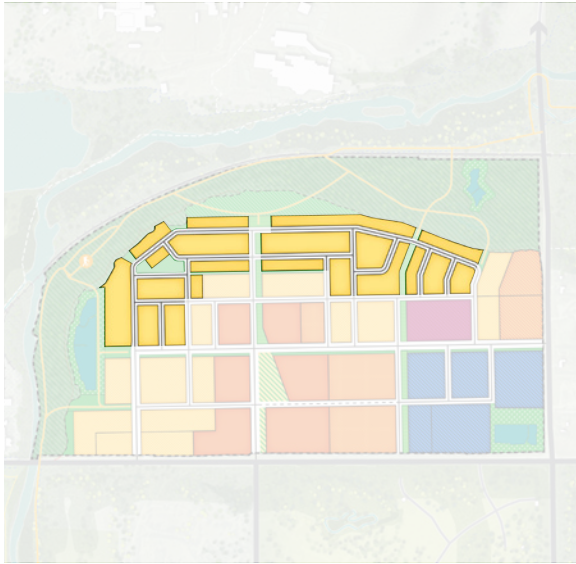
### Landscape & Servicing

Encourage well-landscaped rooftops, green roofs, and outdoor amenity spaces that enhance the functionality and visual appeal of development blocks.

Utility and servicing elements should be located and screened to be hidden from the public realm wherever possible.



## 4.3 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS



The Low Density Residential Blocks feature a mix of housing types including single-detached, semi-detached, and townhouse forms, as well as limited stacked townhouse and back to back forms. The diversity in housing types is intended to accommodate various lifestyles and family sizes within the community. These forms are located around the periphery of the Block Plan, adjacent to the natural heritage areas.

### Site Design & Massing

Design built form adjacent to natural areas to include gradual transitions, employing strategies that reduce ecological disruption and preserve the natural heritage system.

Minimize front and exterior side yard setbacks to create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

### Elevation

Ensure high-quality material and visually appealing design on priority frontages, such as corner lots, view termini, and park-facing locations. Buildings on corners or with multiple priority frontages should address all frontages through entrance placement, articulation, and materiality.

Use varied roof forms and heights to break up massing and add visual interest. Create architectural variety with distinctive façade elements, using contemporary styles to enrich the street view.

Utilize visible front doors, ground floor porches, and strategically designed front-facing rooms to promote a vibrant streetscape and provide natural surveillance.

Place garages behind building entrances. Garages should be designed as a cohesive part of the façade and reinforce the pedestrian-friendly character of the street.

### Circulation

Provide direct access from unit entrances to the public realm to encourage active transportation.

Surface parking areas are to be minimized and located behind buildings. Break up areas of surface parking with landscaped buffers that include trees and walkways.

Utilize rear lanes to minimize the number of driveways along street frontages. Access driveways are not to cross linear parks or green boulevards to maintain the continuity of the open space network.

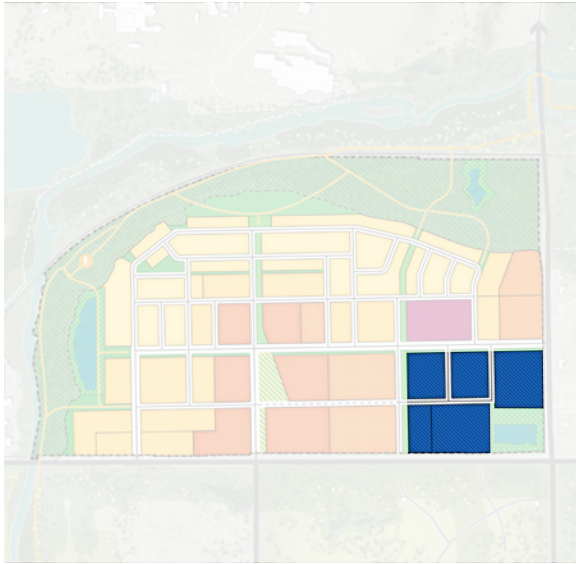
### Landscape & Servicing

Encourage well-landscaped rooftops, green roofs, and outdoor amenity spaces that enhance the functionality and visual appeal of development blocks.

Utility and servicing elements should be located and screened to be hidden from the public realm wherever possible.



## 4.4 INNOVATION EMPLOYMENT BLOCKS



The Innovation Blocks represent a vibrant technological hub within the GID. These blocks are characterized by low to mid-rise buildings with a minimum height of 2 storeys. The blocks will include a variety of traditional service and commercial uses, as well as more modern and innovative uses, such as research facilities, startups, and collaborative workspaces.

### Site Design and Massing

Utilize perimeter block designs that create an urban form and integrate with the surrounding mid-rise building typologies. Varied building heights and configurations are encouraged within and between blocks to create a dynamic massing.

Encourage flexible spaces that can adapt to a variety of tenants and needs over time.

Create an urban street wall condition through building orientation, articulation, and minimal setbacks. Step buildings back above the base to reinforce a pedestrian scale along the street edges.

### Elevation

Employ high-quality designs, well-articulated façade treatments, contemporary materials that reflect the innovative design vision for GID, with a particular emphasis on landmark buildings, corners, gateways, and street-facing facades.

Divide buildings into clear base, middle, and top portions through materials, articulation, stepbacks, and datum lines.

Include active uses along street and park frontages, such as ground floor commercial, building lobbies, meeting rooms, and communal spaces. Avoid blank walls facing the public realm.

Utilize high levels of transparency and prominent building entrances to provide visual interest and natural surveillance.

### Circulation

Locate building entrances and bicycle parking areas along the street to encourage active transportation.

Locate vehicle parking underground or within building podiums. Podium parking is to be wrapped with active uses and screened from view of the public realm.

Locate vehicle access points on local roads and limit the number of driveway entrances from the street. Access driveways are not to cross linear parks or green boulevards to maintain the continuity of the open space network.

Loading, servicing, and garbage areas should be located inside buildings and screened from view wherever possible, with entrances integrated into the building façade design.

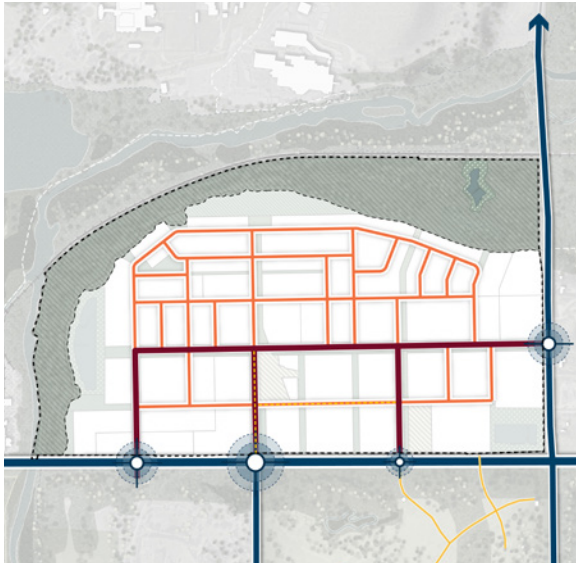
### Landscape & Servicing

Encourage well-landscaped rooftops, green roofs, and outdoor amenity spaces that enhance the functionality and visual appeal of development blocks.

Utility and servicing elements should be located and screened to be hidden from the public realm wherever possible.



## 4.5 STREETSCAPES & CIRCULATION



The Master Plan is designed around a framework of fine-grained streets with a hierarchy of arterial, collector, and local roads. The grid facilitates easy access throughout the Site and is supported by pedestrian-friendly features such as woonerfs, planting strips, multi-use trails, and bicycle lanes to achieve a “complete street” concept.

### Complete Streets

Streets should be designed for all modes of travel, with priority given to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Provide continuous pedestrian routes, wide sidewalks, highly visible crosswalk treatments, barrier-free paths of travel, and amenities such as benches, bicycle racks, and pedestrian-scale lighting.

Streets with retail and employment uses should adopt an urban main street character with minimal setbacks, active street frontages, and marketing zones to encourage retail spill out, particularly adjacent to green connectors. Buildings and street trees should create a sense of enclosure within the pedestrian realm.

Local streets should be designed with an urban residential character with abundant street trees, landscape boulevards, and direct unit access to public sidewalks. Garages and driveways on public roads should be avoided in favor of rear lanes and internal driveways.

Areas with high levels of pedestrian and bicycle trips, such as the Mixed Use Heart, should treat the entire right of way as a part of the public realm. Measures to prioritize pedestrian movement are highly encouraged, including woonerf treatments, raised intersections, bump outs, material changes, chicanes, and special event closures.

Unique gateway treatments are encouraged along Victoria Road South and Stone Road East to enhance the community identity and create a sense of arrival.

### Landscape and Furniture

Street trees should be spaced to encourage a continuous tree canopy with adequate soil volume to enable full canopy growth. Species should be chosen for hardiness and tolerance of urban conditions.

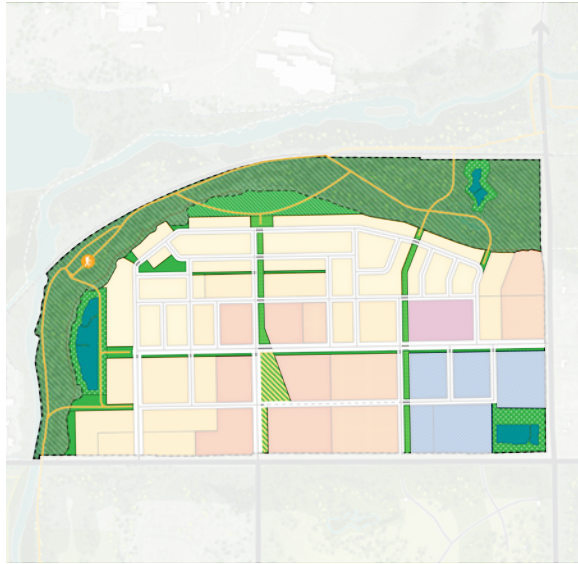
Low-impact development measures and naturalized boulevards are encouraged, including rain gardens and pollinator gardens.

Low-height plantings and pedestrian-scaled lighting should be used along walkways and sidewalks to ensure clear lines of sight and safe paths of travel. Barrier-free paths of travel should be included between sidewalks, building entrances, and accessible parking spaces with tactile cues to aid in navigation.

Street furniture must be coordinated between all GID blocks to create a cohesive identity. Furniture should employ a modern design to reflect an innovative character, including lighting, signage, seating, and waste receptacles.



## 4.6 LANDSCAPE DESIGN & OPEN SPACES



The Master Plan includes an integrated network of open spaces to enhance connectivity and preserve natural heritage. The Downtown Plaza, Innovation Plaza, and the community parks are key urban gathering spaces that should support active and passive recreation activities. The Eramosa River valley lands are protected and enhanced through conservation and sensitive development. These areas are connected by linear parks, green connectors, and promenades to enhance accessibility.

### Landscape Design

Work with the existing grading of the Site to create organic transitions between different elevations. Preserve natural features and terrain that enhance sight lines and view corridors.

Designs should integrate diverse plantings, hardscapes, and green spaces. Incorporate a mix of native, drought-resistant, and salt-tolerant plant species that offer seasonal color and variety. Ensure adequate soil volumes to support full canopy development.

### Natural Heritage

Designs for parks and open spaces will protect, maintain, restore, and enhance the existing natural heritage system in accordance with the Official Plan and relevant Environmental Impact Study. Designs should increase the biodiversity and urban tree canopy within the Master Plan area, where environmentally appropriate.

Access to sensitive natural heritage areas should be controlled through signage, trail design, and wayfinding to reduce impacts on flora and fauna.

Public views and vistas of the Eramosa River corridor should be protected and enhanced.

### Programming

Parks and open spaces should include a variety of active and passive programming to serve users of all ages and abilities, such as playgrounds, splash pads, community gardens, naturalized areas, trails, seating, and public art.

Design stormwater ponds to integrate with the natural landscape, incorporating native vegetation and topographical features.

Park designs should include active transportation linkages to other open spaces and natural areas to encourage walking and cycling within the GID, including connections to the Guelph Radial Line Trail and future developments within Block 3.



## 4.7 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The Master Plan emphasizes sustainable practices across site design, building design, and landscape design. The following guidelines will ensure future developments within the Blocks create a sustainable, resource-efficient, and human-centered community.

### **Sustainable Site Design**

Orient buildings to maximize natural light and passive solar gain to reduce energy consumption.

Provide parking within building footprints to maximize available green space and reduce urban heat island effects.

Enhance pedestrian and cyclist accessibility through safe and attractive walkways and bike lanes that connect the Site and surrounding neighbourhood. Include secure bicycle storage, rider amenities, and dedicated lanes to encourage cycling as a primary mode of transportation.

Provide public and private EV charging stations and transit stops within the community to promote sustainable transportation choices.

### **Sustainable Building Design**

Utilize recycled, reclaimed, and sustainably sourced materials in construction to reduce the overall carbon footprint. Consider recycling and composting programs during construction and operation.

Construct buildings with enhanced insulation, air sealing, and high-performance windows to minimize energy loss. Integrate solar panels and other renewable energy sources to offset traditional energy use.

Implement features like green roofs and walls to improve insulation, reduce the urban heat island effect, and manage stormwater.

### **Sustainable Landscape Design**

Preserve existing natural features of the Site by retaining mature trees, wetlands, and other native landscapes into the design. Utilize natural land contours for drainage and minimize energy use related to excavation and filling.

Use low-impact development measures, such as permeable materials, bioswales, and rain gardens to allow stormwater infiltration and reduce runoff to municipal infrastructure.

Design landscapes to create comfortable environments throughout the season, including shelter from wind in winter and shade from the sun during summer.

Explore partnerships with the community for local food production and engagement through shared gardens and urban farming initiatives.



# 5.0 IMPLEMENTATION



The GID Secondary Plan identifies that Block Plans are required to be developed and approved by the City of Guelph prior to the approval of development applications in the corresponding Block Plan area.

This report has been prepared according to the City's Terms of Reference and submitted as part of a complete Block Plan application. The report provides a series of guidelines to ensure the proposed neighbourhood meets the high standard of urban design required by the City of Guelph Official Plan, Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan, and applicable municipal urban design guidelines. Subsequent applications to the City for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and/or Site Plan Approval will be required to demonstrate conformity with the guidelines in this report, as well as the applicable urban design policies and guidelines mentioned above.

These guidelines are intended to be flexible and encourage best practices for the Block Plan's implementation. Future applications may deviate from these guidelines so long as the vision and general intent of the guidelines and a high standard of urban design is maintained. It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate the site-specific conditions that may warrant deviation from these guidelines and/or consideration of alternative interpretations.

## **Review Process**

Once accepted and approved as part of the Block Plan applications, these guidelines will form the basis of the review process for subsequent Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Draft Plan of Subdivision, and/or Site Plan Approval applications. For applications not requiring Site Plan Approval, including single-detached, semi-detached, and street-townhouse developments, MHBC will review the submitted documents and act as the approval authority. For the remaining applications subject to Site Plan Approval, MHBC will review the submitted documents and advise the municipality on the submission's conformity with the guidelines. In both cases, a letter and/or stamp will be issued certifying the review and conformity.

Drawings required to demonstrate conformity may include site plans, floor plans, elevations, material palettes, landscape plans, and others as deemed necessary by the municipality and MHBC.

Any disputes regarding guideline interpretation, required plans, or certification may be escalated to the municipality for resolution. The municipality will work with the affected parties to provide a fair and timely settlement that maintains the vision and intent of the guidelines.

The municipality may periodically review documents submitted to and certified by MHBC. Where inadequate compliance is evident, the municipality may cease to accept certification by MHBC and the applicant shall retain an alternative consultant satisfactory to the municipality.



**MHBC**  
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& L A N D S C A P E  
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