

1.0 Introduction

Welcome

The Commercial Built Form Standards will provide clear directions and criteria for the design of commercial space across the City, with the exception of Downtown, which is subject to the Downtown Built Form Standards.

The standards will consider opportunities associated with neighbourhood commercial, main street commercial, large commercial sites, mixed use development and vehicle oriented uses, and will provide recommendations related to best practices in built form and public realm design. They will provide solutions to ensure that new development is compatible with the local context. The standards will also be tested through the creation of demonstration plan concepts.

The estimated completion date for the Commercial Built Form Standards is late 2019.

Participate in the online conversation at haveyoursay.guelph.ca from March 8 through March 25.

For additional information, please visit the City of Guelph Website:

<https://guelph.ca/city-hall/planning-and-development/community-plans-studies/urban-design/commercial-built-form-standards/>

Examples of Commercial Developments in Guelph



Commercial Site Development at 40 Wellington Street West (City of Guelph)



Service Station at 587 York Road (Google Maps)

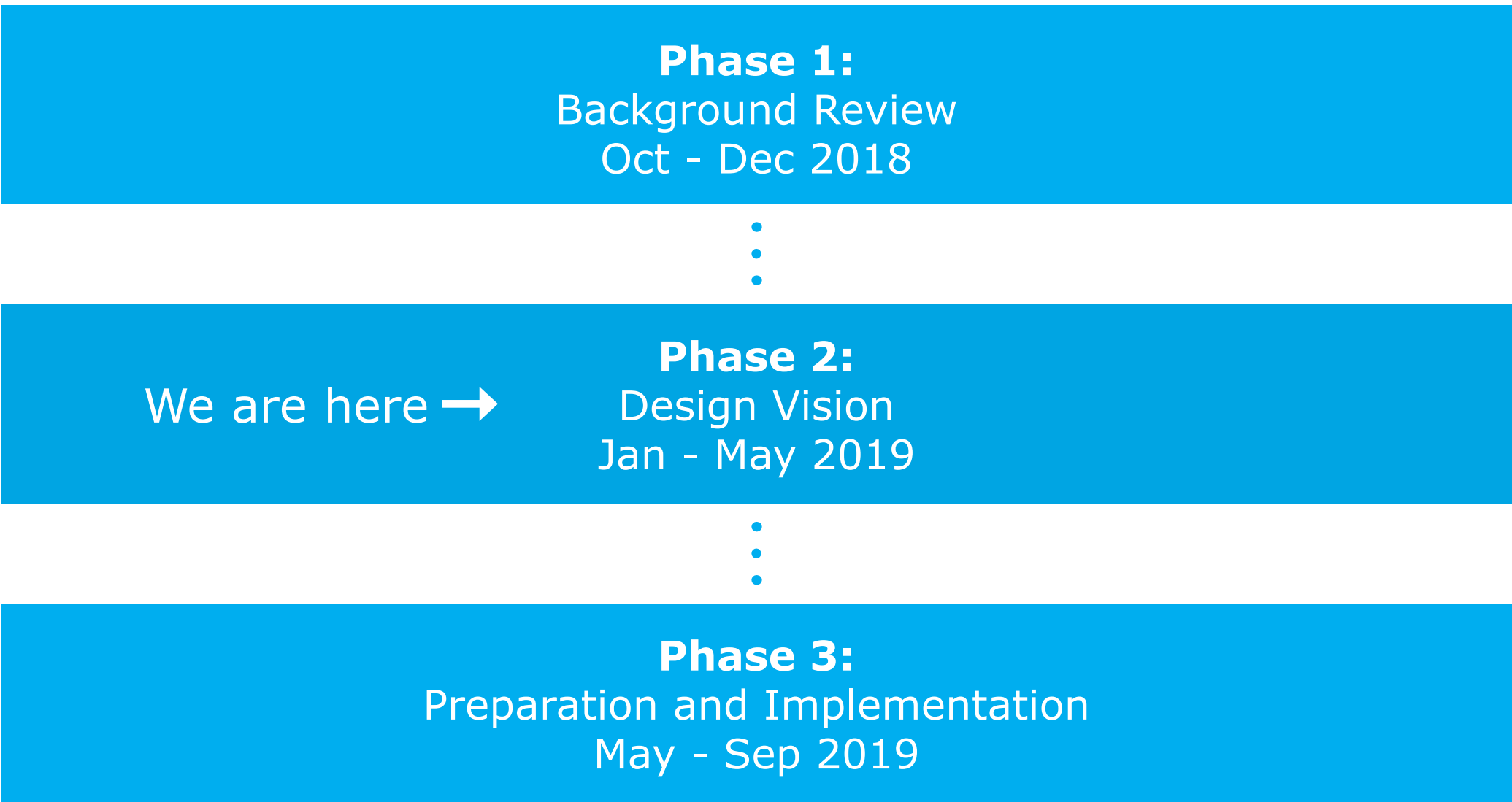


Mixed Use Development at Waterford Dr & Frederick Dr (City of Guelph)



Large Commercial Site Development at 190 Clair Road East (Google Maps)

Study Timeline



2.0 Draft Directions

Site Organization & Design

Site organization relates to the location and organization of components on a site, including buildings, parking, access and circulation, storage and loading, and landscaping. Site organization contributes to the overall function of the site and its integration with the surrounding community, including:

- Strengthened connections to streets and trails, parks and open spaces.
- An enhanced public realm through a well-defined street edge with amenities such as street trees, seating, and active uses such as restaurant patios and public spaces.

Sustainable Site Design

Objectives:

- Maximize natural light and consider microclimate effects.
- Integrate Low Impact Development (LID) into site design.
- Reduce energy consumption through measures such as green roofs or white roofs.
- Integrate indigenous plant species into landscaping.

Parking, Access & Circulation

Objectives:

- Encourage alternative modes of transportation in site design, including pedestrian pathways, bicycle facilities, and the integration of transit on larger sites.
- Minimize the impact of parking on the public realm.
- Ensure site access does not inhibit traffic on adjacent streets.
- Ensure site design on commercial sites accommodates accessibility needs.

Servicing, Storage Areas & Loading

Objectives:

- Reduce impacts of servicing, storage areas, and loading for pedestrians, vehicles, and adjacent uses.
- Minimize the impact of servicing, storage areas and loading on the public realm.

Landscaping

Objectives:

- Integrate landscaping on commercial sites to create an attractive public realm.
- Trees should be integrated into site design in key areas. The preservation of existing trees is encouraged where possible.
- Use landscaped buffer strips to screen surface parking from adjacent site uses.



Semi-permeable paving used to slow surface runoff and public realm amenities including street trees and public seating (Brook McIlroy)



Greened pedestrian walkway in surface parking lot, Gordon Street and Clair Road East, Guelph, ON (Google Maps)



Vegetated landscape buffer that contributes to an attractive public realm (Brook McIlroy)

3.0 General Standards for Commercial Buildings

Commercial Buildings are intended to provide a range of retail, office and commercial uses to meet daily needs in a variety of building formats, including along main streets, embedded within neighbourhoods, and within larger site developments. Commercial buildings should encourage alternative modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and the use of public transit. They should contribute to a vibrant public realm through active uses along the street.



Street oriented patio, Leaside Village, East York, Ontario (Brook McIlroy)



Fine grain, mixed use developments fronting a public street (Brook McIlroy)



Commercial main street development fronting landscaped public space (Brook McIlroy)

Building Massing, Scale, & Transitions

Building massing and **scale** relates to the bulk, height and shape of a building. **Transitions** refer to the relationship of a building to adjacent land uses to ensure appropriate access to light, view and privacy for existing uses.

Objectives:

- Provide transitions in height and massing to adjacent lower rise built form or other sensitive land uses.
- Design buildings to reduce their visual impact on the public realm.
- Address interface between commercial development and residential development

Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

The design of the building façade or face contributes to the character of communities. Elements of **articulation** and **façade design** include the use of specific materials, colour palettes, and design elements such as doors, windows, and canopies to emphasize key areas of the building. Façade design should be compatible with the local context and contribute to urban design excellence.

Objectives:

- Reflect the existing character of the area through appropriate façade design, material use, and building articulation.
- Vary the rhythm of buildings through design elements such as front doors, front canopies, overhangs, and patios.

Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Ground floor and **street edge design** refers to the relationship of building uses along the public street. The relationship between built form and the street should contribute to a vibrant public realm through appropriate ground floor uses and public amenities.

Objectives:

- Ensure accessibility and visibility of commercial entrances from public streets.
- Encourage active building edges with pedestrian amenities including landscaping and seating.

Interior Building Layout

Interior building layouts for commercial uses should contribute to a vibrant public realm. The design of the interior building layouts should allow for visibility and accessibility from the public realm.

Objectives:

- Encourage publicly accessible interior commercial spaces, entrances, and windows adjacent to public streets and boulevards.
- Where appropriate, encourage the display of 'back of house uses' such as commercial kitchens or hallways in commercial and mixed-use buildings.

4.0 Draft Directions

Main Street Areas & Neighbourhood Scale Commercial



Vibrant main street condition at CF Shops at Don Mills, Toronto, Ontario (Cadillac Fairview)



Public plaza with seating and landscaping, 300 Ashland Place, Brooklyn, NY (Two Trees Management)



Commercial main street with patio uses and active frontage, Vancouver, BC (CBRE)

Main Street Areas

Main Street Areas are areas that contain multi-storey buildings fronting a public street, and typically contain retail or services uses on the ground floor. Office or retail uses may be located on upper building levels. Main Street Areas should contribute to a vibrant public realm (Official Plan, 9.4.2.6).

Objectives:

- Create a tight knit fabric of commercial streetfront entrances to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Encourage spill over retail, patios, seating, and other public spaces along the street.
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation to Main Street Areas.
- Discourage surface parking between buildings and the public boulevard.



Main Street Area with pedestrian seating and street trees, Cambridge, ON (Brook McIlroy)

Neighbourhood Scale Commercial

Neighbourhood Scale Commercial buildings provide retail and service uses within a convenient walking distance of residential areas. Uses provided in these buildings should serve the daily needs of residents (Official Plan, 9.4.4 and 9.4.6).

Objectives:

- Provide a mix of retail and service uses for residents.
- Develop with compatible architectural character from adjacent built areas.
- Provide appropriate built form and landscaping transitions to adjacent sensitive areas, including neighbourhoods.
- Provide direct safe pedestrian connections from the street to building entrances.
- Discourage surface parking between buildings and the public boulevard.



Neighbourhood Scale Commercial with patio (Rowland Design)

5.0 Draft Directions

Vehicle Oriented Uses



Service Station integrated into mixed use development, Rainbow Plaza, Whistler, BC (Ronmor)



Landscaped buffer for drive through facility (Gordon Civil Engineering & Landscape Architecture)



Appropriately screened drive-through stacking lane (Yao)



Landscaped buffer for drive through facility and stacking lane (Cross 2 Design Group)



Car dealership with active frontage (Rowland Design)

Vehicle Oriented Uses include uses that facilitate the use and storage of private automobiles, such as vehicle service centres, vehicle repair and sales facilities, service stations, and drive-through facilities (Official Plan, 8.10).

Objectives:

- Provide appropriate transitions to adjacent sensitive uses, including neighbourhoods.
- Ensure pedestrian safety and access within and to the site.
- Buildings should address the public realm and reinforce the street edge.
- Car Washes and Drive Throughs should not be located along the public street edge.
- Ensure pedestrian connections do not conflict with drive through stacking lanes.
- Integrate signage into architectural and/or landscape design.



Car dealership with landscape buffer and pedestrian access (Google Maps)

6.0 Draft Directions

Large Commercial Sites & Mixed Use Development



New public seating and open space
(ASPECT Studios)



Mixed use commercial with additional landscape buffering, Uptown Market, Markham, ON (Times Group)



Mixed Use Commercial Development, Excelsior and Grand, St Louis Park, Minnesota (Connor Group)

Large Commercial Sites

Large Commercial Sites have the capacity to accommodate more than one building on a site and typically contain a mix of buildings fronting the public right-of-way and those internal to the site. These sites may be part of a new development or may involve the redevelopment of existing lands. Large sites should be designed as a cohesive development, and consider how site design, building design, landscaping and connections work together, on the site as well as how it fits into the adjacent context.

Objectives:

- Create appropriate building transitions between different buildings on a site, as well as transition appropriately to adjacent uses, including neighbourhoods.
- Prioritize safe pedestrian connections and access to and within the site.
- Incorporate pedestrian amenities to improve the public realm.
- Ensure compatible building design and material use within the site.



Patio and street at CF shops at Don Mills, Toronto, ON (Cadillac Fairview)

Mixed Use Development

Mixed Use Buildings contain diverse uses, which may include a mix of retail, service, office and residential uses in one building.

Objectives:

- Use tall ground floor heights to accommodate a range of uses over time.
- Ensure compatible building design and material use within the site.
- Locate entrances along the public street.
- Encourage underground or structured parking where possible.



Mixed use development integrated onto existing heritage structure, Toronto, ON (Brook McIlroy)

7.0 Next Steps



Next Steps

- Refine draft directions
- Create sample diagrams to test key recommendations for site and building design
- Create draft Commercial Built Form Standards
- Create draft zoning directions
- Finalize Commercial Built Form Standards and supporting policy directions

Contact Us

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