



City of Guelph

Downtown Streetscape Manual & Built Form Standards

July 2014

City of Guelph
Downtown Streetscape Manual &
Built Form Standards

Section 1.0
Introduction

BrookMcIlroy/

Table of Contents

Study Overview	1
Study Area	2
Background	3
Public & Stakeholder Consultation Summary	4
Analysis	5
Streetscape Manual	7
Built Form Standards	8
St. George's Square Conceptual Design	9
Document Application	10

Study Overview

Introduction

The City of Guelph has retained a consulting team led by Brook McIlroy, in association with Unterman McPhail Associates and McCormick Rankin Corporation (MMM Group), to assist Planning Services in updating the Downtown Private and Public Realm Manuals. These updates incorporate current best urban design practices, aligns with the Downtown Secondary Plan (2012), and incorporates stakeholder and public input.

The documents, which have been re-titled the Downtown “Streetscape Manual”, “Built Form Standards”, and “Concept Design for St. George’s Square”, provide design direction for private development and City-run projects in

the Downtown, including road reconstruction. Special attention has been given to the long-term revitalization of St. George’s Square and the efficient operational management of the public realm.

These revised documents provide design direction to private investment and new development in the Downtown. The Built Form Standards also provide policy direction for future updates to the City’s Zoning By-law in implementing the Downtown Secondary Plan. In addition, the Built Form standards incorporate a complete Heritage Conservation Analysis of the Downtown.



View looking along Quebec Street.



Church of Our Lady Immaculate.

Study Area

The Streetscape Manual and Built Form Standards address all lands within the boundary of Downtown Guelph, as identified within the Downtown Secondary Plan (2012). The precise boundaries of the study area are delineated in the map below.



Map illustrating the study area boundaries.

Public & Stakeholder Consultation Summary

Engaging local stakeholders and the community in discussions about the future of downtown Guelph

A comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation exercise was conducted by City Staff and the consultants during the development of these reports. The study team hosted four public meetings, conducted numerous internal and external stakeholder interviews and posted update information on the City of Guelph website.

The first public meeting, a visioning workshop, was held in May 2013. The second public meeting, to review and interactively discuss streetscape options, was held in June 2013. The third public meeting, focusing on St. George's Square, was conducted in October 2013. The final public meeting, encompassing all draft recommendations, was conducted in June 2014. All of the public events held were well attended and valuable feedback was incorporated into the final reports.

The study team made considerable efforts to reach out to external stakeholders including the Downtown Guelph Business Association (DGBA), the Chamber of Commerce, business owners on St. George's Square, utility providers, emergency services, the University of Guelph, cultural organizations, community and social services, faith organizations and historical societies. External stakeholders were interviewed early in the project process to ensure the study team gained a detailed understanding of their perspective and priorities. As the study progressed, and with City Staff acting as liaison, external stakeholders were kept informed about study progress and additional meetings were conducted as requested. Much of the feedback received was incorporated into the final reports.

Throughout the preparation of this report a number of internal City departments were consulted, including:

- Planning, Building, Engineering and Environment (Engineering)
- Finance and Enterprise (Downtown Renewal)
- Community and Social Services (Culture)
- Operations, Transit & Emergency Services (Traffic and Parking, Public Works, Transit Services)

In addition, a staff Technical Committee and General Manager Committee from different departments has prepared and reviewed the material produced.



St. George's Square public workshop at City Hall in October 2013.

Background

Building on an impressive body of work to reinvigorate downtown

As a primary location for intensification, Downtown Guelph has the capacity and the historic character to develop into a unique cultural and tourist destination and expand its role as a local economic driver.

To guide intensification the City has carried out a Local Growth Management study, completed a major re-writing of its Official Plan (Council-adopted in June, 2012) and prepared a Downtown Secondary Plan (DSP) for the City's Urban Growth Centre (Council-adopted in May, 2012). The City is moving forward with the implementation of these documents.

In its lead-up to the DSP, the City of Guelph completed a number of background documents,

in particular the Urban Design Action Plan (2009). These documents are summarized in the DSP, undertaken by Urban Strategies.

This study, which updates the Downtown Private and Public Realm Manuals, has been coordinated with several initiatives, including:

- Baker Street Main Library and Redevelopment Plan;
- Downtown Parking Strategy;
- Downtown Guelph Implementation Strategy / Business Plan (Downtown Assessment);
- Guelph Urban Forest Management Plan and Tree Technical Manual; and
- Public art commission for the Market Square / Civic Precinct Area
- Cycling Master Plan.



Rendering of Macdonell Street, redesigned as a flexible and curbsless street.

Analysis

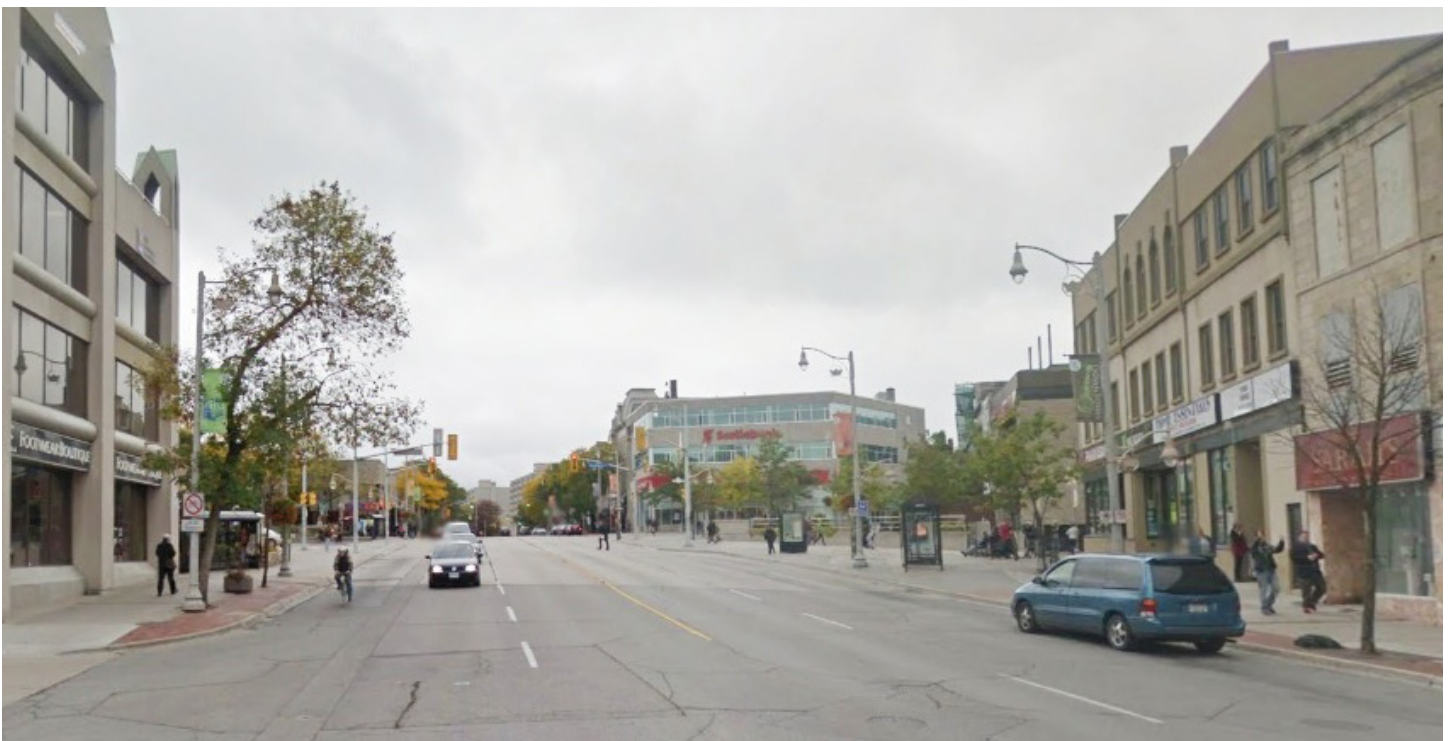
Existing Conditions

The Streetscape Manual and Built Form Standards address all lands within the boundary of Downtown Guelph, as identified within the Downtown Secondary Plan (2012).

Downtown Guelph is a major destination, serving as the centre for civic and religious institutions, offices, tourism, retail and entertainment, commercial and social services, and a range of cultural facilities.

Its major streets establish a compact and tightly knit urban fabric with buildings that reflect a human scale, organized around their topography, making them easy to understand and orient. Its intimate public spaces, which include St. George's

Square, reinforce a sense of civic identity. Its natural amenities, including the Speed River and John Galt Park offer a break in the urban fabric and escape from city life. Its cultural attractions, including the River Run Centre and the Sleeman Centre, play an important role in community life. Its significant inventory of beautiful Victoria Era buildings, cultural heritage features, and collection of significant landmarks including Old City Hall and the Church of Our Lady Immaculate, showcase Guelph's unique heritage, and enviable cultural and civic identity.



Existing view of Wyndham Street.

Future Conditions

Through the implementation of the Streetscape Manual, Built Form Standards, and the St. George's Square Concept Plan an opportunity exists to strengthen Downtown Guelph as the historic core of the city, and as a centre for commerce and culture. To accomplish this, population growth must be accommodated through residential intensification, allowing the downtown to evolve into a unique cultural and tourist destination that will increasingly serve as an attractive place to live, work, and play. New buildings and spaces will reflect a human scale, guided by Built Form

Standards which will enhance the public and private realm. Heritage conservation areas will help protect the City's historic buildings, and new development will enhance cultural heritage through respectful and complementary design measures.

Guelph's downtown streets are mixed in character, architectural quality and intensity. Enhanced public and private open spaces, pedestrian connections and linkages, continuous street trees and beautiful pedestrian areas will improve quality of life in Downtown Guelph.



Rendering of Wyndham Street, redesigned as a flexible and curbsless street.

Streetscape Manual

Section 2.0

Section 2.0 Streetscape Manual represents a comprehensive update to the City's Public Realm Plan and Streetscape Manual (2001). This update introduces current best urban design practices, aligns street design with The Downtown Secondary Plan (2012), expands the use of the flexible typology, and incorporates stakeholder and public input.

The Streetscape Manual explores in detail each street classification for downtown including: flexible streets, primary, secondary, and local streets as well as pedestrian mews (with an emphasis on streets which are planned for reconstruction in the short-term).

The Streetscape Manual updates the city's streetscape standards, including those for street furniture, street lighting, street trees, dimensioning, and material finishes. A detailed series of Design Guidelines offer guidance to City staff when undertaking detailed design exercises.

Finally, the Streetscape Manual discusses Implementation considerations, order of magnitude costings and presents a series of sample technical details which can be used as a template to redesign downtown's streets.



Rendering of Douglas Street, redesigned as a flexible and curbless street.

Built Form Standards

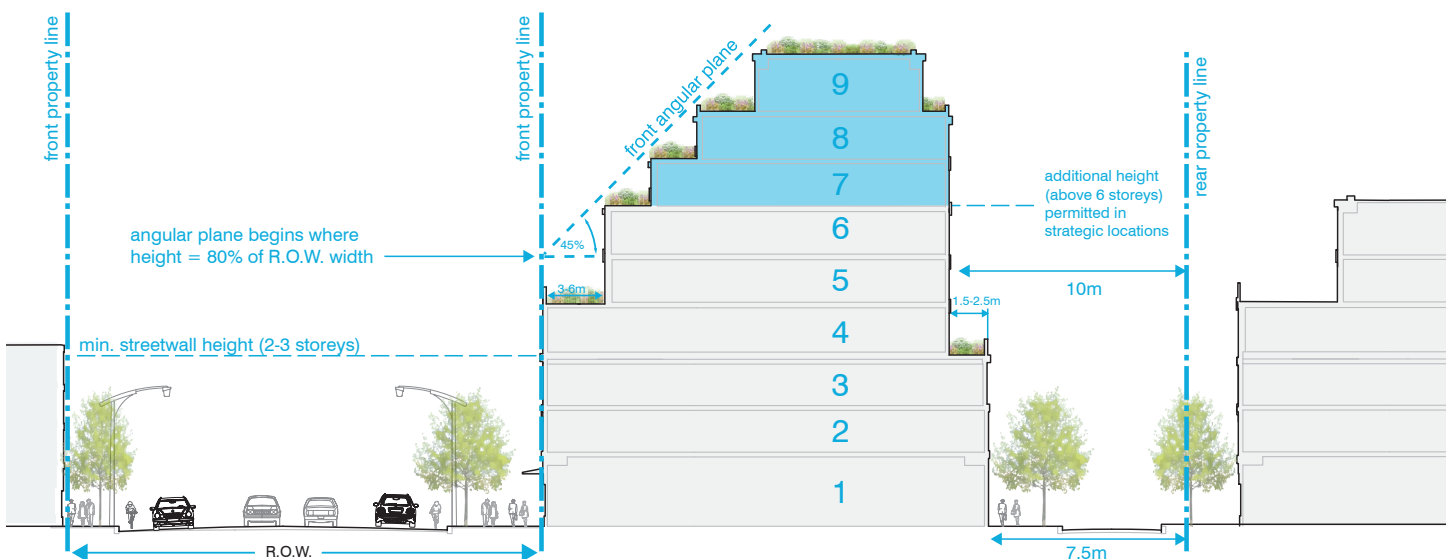
Section 3.0

Section 3.0 Built Form Standards represents an update to the City's previous Private Realm Manual (2001). This update also introduces current best urban design practices, aligns street design with The Downtown Secondary Plan (2012), and incorporates stakeholder and public input.

The Built Form Standards characterize the historic core of the City of Guelph in relation to its cultural heritage resources. This occurred through a Heritage Conservation Analysis undertaken by Unterman McPhail and Associates. The Built Form Standards provide clear direction for renovations and additions to heritage resources as well as new buildings and renovations and additions to contemporary buildings. The standards address the introduction of development within the

historic core of Downtown Guelph, as well as the area south of the CN Rail Tracks. The Built Form Standards provide direction pertaining to both site and building design, addressing such characteristics as building height, form, massing, orientation, setbacks, setbacks, ground floor conditions, mix of uses, entrance design, material use, awning and canopy design, cornice and parapet design, and signage and lighting design.

Through the implementation process, the Built Form Standards provide direction for Zoning By-law Amendments, other policy and process amendments, and parameters for the evaluation of Downtown Community Improvement Plan applications.



Sample illustration showing building height, massing, angular planes, setbacks, and setbacks.

St. George's Square Conceptual Design

Section 4.0

The Conceptual Design Plan for St. George's Square has been developed, in conjunction with the updated Streetscape Design Manual and Built Form Standards, to guide the redesign and redevelopment of St. George's Square.

The Conceptual Design outlines six guiding principles, objectives of the Plan, a description of the concept, an illustrated plan and rendered perspective, design guidelines, and a summary of resulting impacts on pedestrians, transit, traffic, and operations.

The report provides an overview of the implementation strategy associated with the redesign and redevelopment of St. George's Square. The Implementation Strategy includes an overview, a phasing strategy which considers both short and long-term strategies, and a summary of proposed order of magnitude costing.



Rendering of conceptual design for St. George's Square.

Document Application

How to use the four report sections

The document is intended to assist City Staff, land owners, developers, and the public by providing clear tools to guide the design of key streets, intersections, open spaces, and buildings within Downtown Guelph.

The document outlines best urban design practices in streetscape and built form design, and includes guidelines that may be implemented through future revisions to the Zoning By-law. As the best practices outlined in this document become common practice, they will evolve. The illustrative examples shown in the Streetscape Manual correspond to a set of design tools which are intended to guide the detailed design of key streets, intersections and open spaces. However,

the illustrative examples shown in the Built Form Standards provide examples of how the standards can be applied, and are not intended to exclude other interpretations that meet the intent of the standards. Through the Zoning By-law review process, updates and recommendations will be made that have the opportunity to influence or supersede these guidelines. For ease of use, this report has been divided into four main sections. Each section should be distributed separately or together to suit the user, as required. The four report sections are:

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Streetscape Manual
- 3.0 Built Form Guidelines
- 4.0 St. George's Square Conceptual Design



Rendering of Macdonell Street, redesigned as a flexible and curbsless street.

