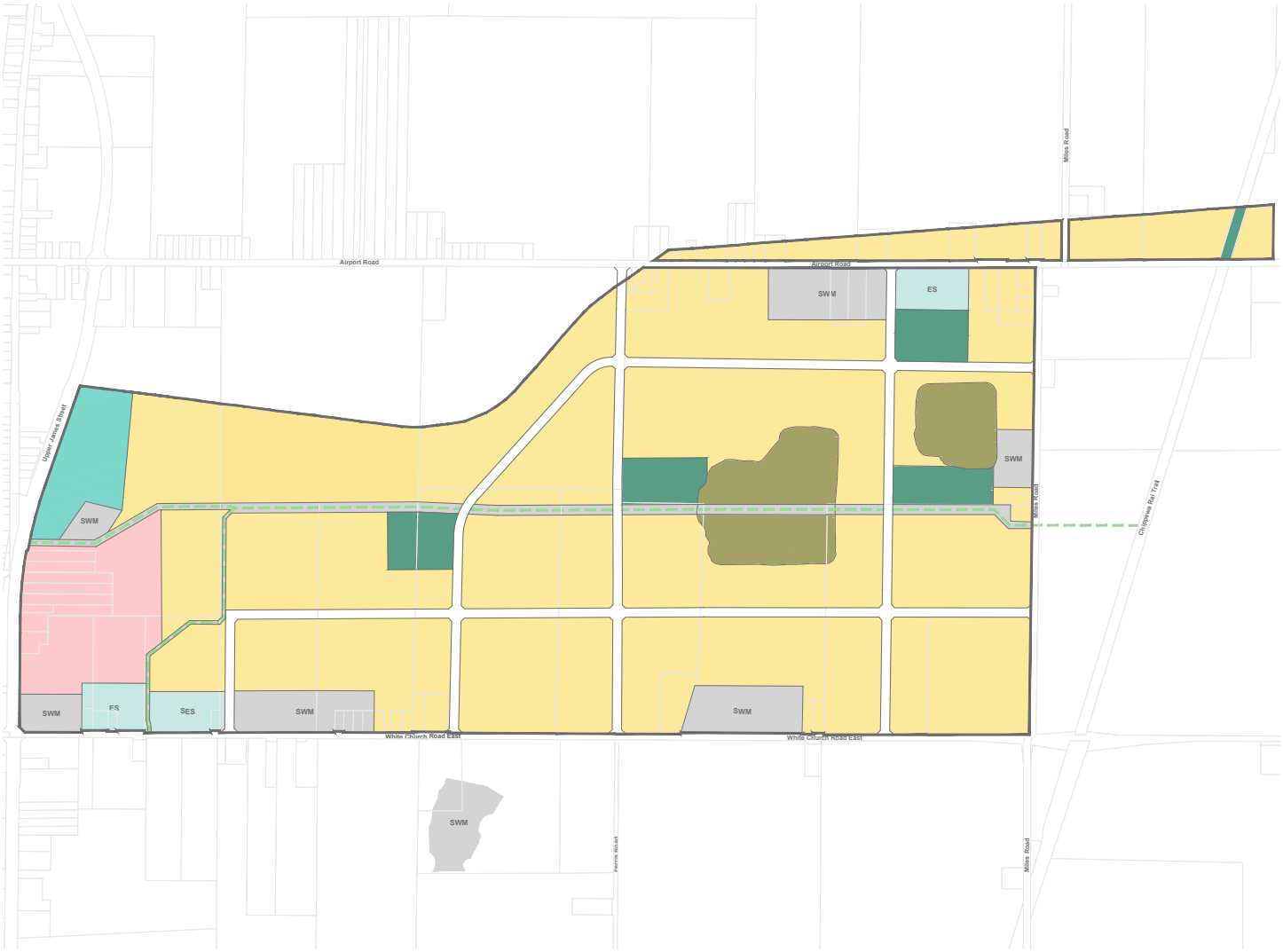


Urban Design Report and Guidelines: White Church Secondary Plan

White Church Road Urban Expansion Area
Hamilton, Ontario

WHITEHOUSE URBAN DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & URBAN DESIGNERS

Prepared for:
Wilson St Ancaster Inc and Penta Properties Inc.

Prepared by:

WHITEHOUSE URBAN DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & URBAN DESIGNERS
3 Studebaker Place, Unit 1,
Hamilton, ON L8L 0C8
T (905) 546-1087

Table of Contents

SECTION 1

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Urban Design Report

The Urban Design Report and Guidelines have been prepared in support of an application for Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment - Urban Expansion Area Secondary Plan at White Church Road Urban Expansions Area, in the City of Hamilton (referred to as "Subject Lands").

On behalf of Wilson St Ancaster Inc. and Penta Properties Inc., Whitehouse Urban Design Inc. has been retained to provide this design report and guidelines as set out by the City of Hamilton in their Formal Consultation Document (FC-23-040), as well as to support and guide the future development of the White Church Secondary Plan area. The purpose of the Design Report and Guidelines is to provide a concise summary of the City's applicable urban design policies and guidelines and offer a contextual analysis that addresses abutting properties, key destinations, and linkages within a two-kilometer radius. This includes how the proposed secondary plan will be developed to address growth targets, while considering sensitive transitions to the existing context. Urban design guidelines will also be provided in Section 3 of this report and have been prepared in keeping with the City of Hamilton's Urban Design Policies and Principles. This Report accompanies additional documents in support of the application within the subject lands, which is currently referred to as the White Church Secondary Plan.

1.2 Site Context

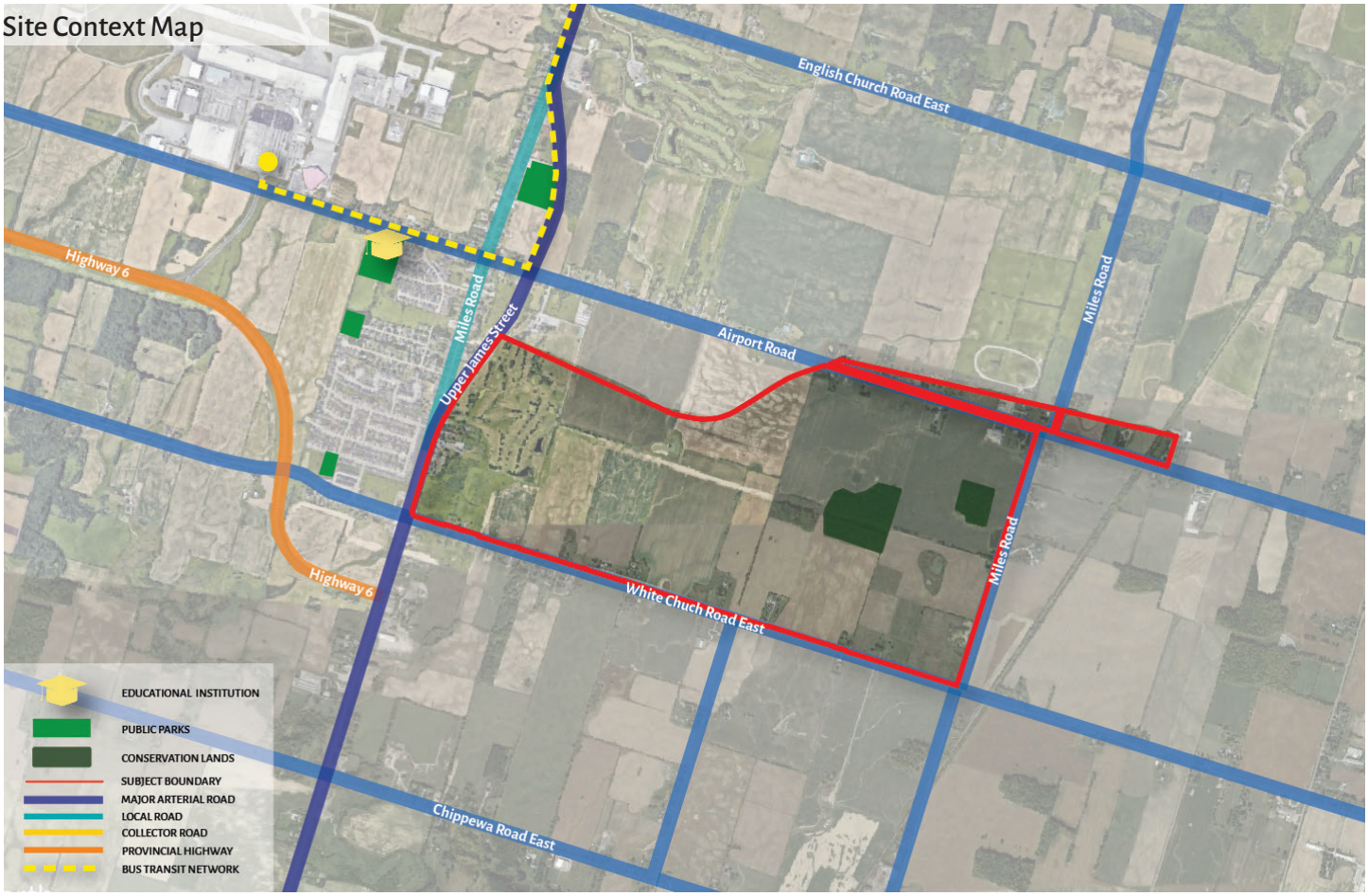
The subject lands are 326.26 hectares within the southwestern district of Glanbrook, within the City of Hamilton. The lands are currently subject to various zones, including the Open Space (P4) Zone, the Agriculture (A1) Zone, the Rural (A2) Zone, and the Conservation/Hazard Land - Rural (P6) Zone in the City of Hamilton Zoning By-law No. 05-200. Future modifications to Zoning By-law No. 05-200 would be required to reflect the proposed designations within the secondary plan concept.

The subject lands are bordered by Airport Road to the north, Miles Road to the east, White Church Road East to the south, and Upper James Street to the north. The north, east, and southern boundaries of the subject lands consist of agricultural and rural lands. Upper James Street borders the lands to the west and is zoned as both rural and open space. An existing golf course is located along the northwest edge of the lands along Airport Road and Upper James Street. Two conservation/hazard land–rural zones located close to the eastern boundary of the subject lands are proposed to be retained and protected.

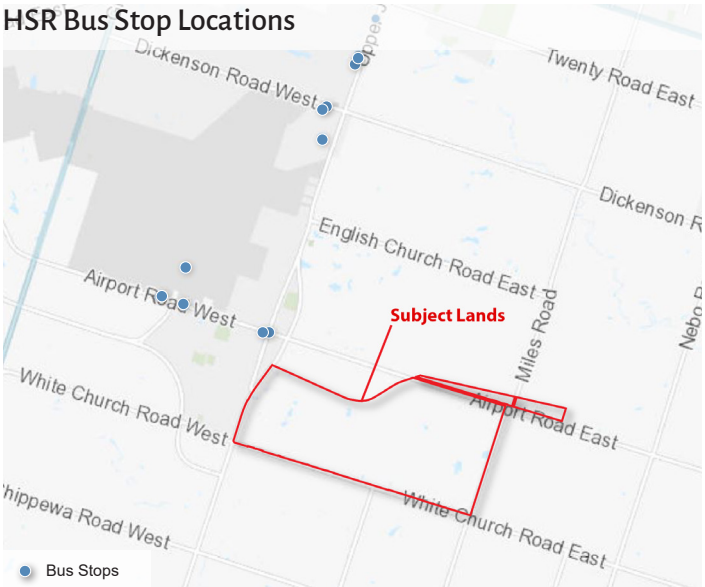
There are 2 existing bus stops within 200 meters of the subject lands, located at the intersection of Airport Road and Homestead Drive. The bus stops serve the full extent of James Street and provide connections to various amenity features north of the subject lands. Another notable transit system that is proposed for the city is the Hamilton Blast network, which is a rapid transit system that includes four rapid lines and the Hamilton Light Rail transit (LRT) line and is a part of Hamilton's 10 year local transit strategy. The Hamilton BLAST network aims to connect lower urban areas with Hamilton's core and is projected to support 236,000 more people and 122,000 additional jobs in the City of Hamilton by 2051.

There is 1 educational institution and 4 public parks within 500 meters of the subject lands.

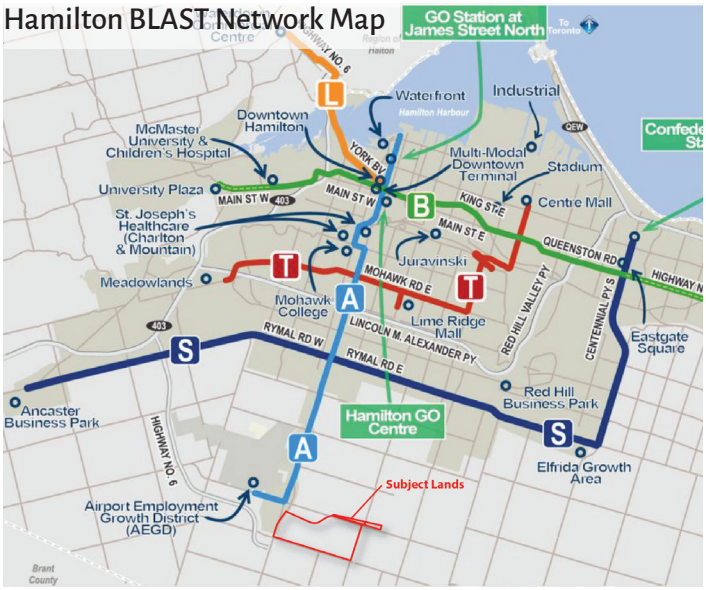
Site Context Map



HSR Bus Stop Locations



Hamilton BLAST Network Map



1.3 Streetscape Context

Miles Road:
Miles Road is a local road that runs north to south and has one lane for traffic in both directions. The road borders the lands to the east, and the majority of the land off of Miles Road is used for agricultural and residential use. Street trees line the road on both sides.

White Church Road East:
Whitechurch Road is a local road that runs east to west and has one lane of traffic in both directions. The road borders the lands to the south and the majority of the land off of Whitechurch Road is used for both agricultural and residential purposes. There are some single detached residential developments along the road. Street trees line the road on both sides.

View towards the East on Miles Road

View towards the West on White Church Road East

Upper James Street:
Upper James Street is a major arterial road that runs north to south and borders the lands along the western side. It has two lanes of traffic in both directions with residential developments fronting the road.

Airport Road:
Airport Road is a local road that runs east to west and has one lane of traffic in both directions. The road borders the subject lands along the north side and the majority of the development along airport road is either residential or agricultural.

View towards the North on Upper James Street

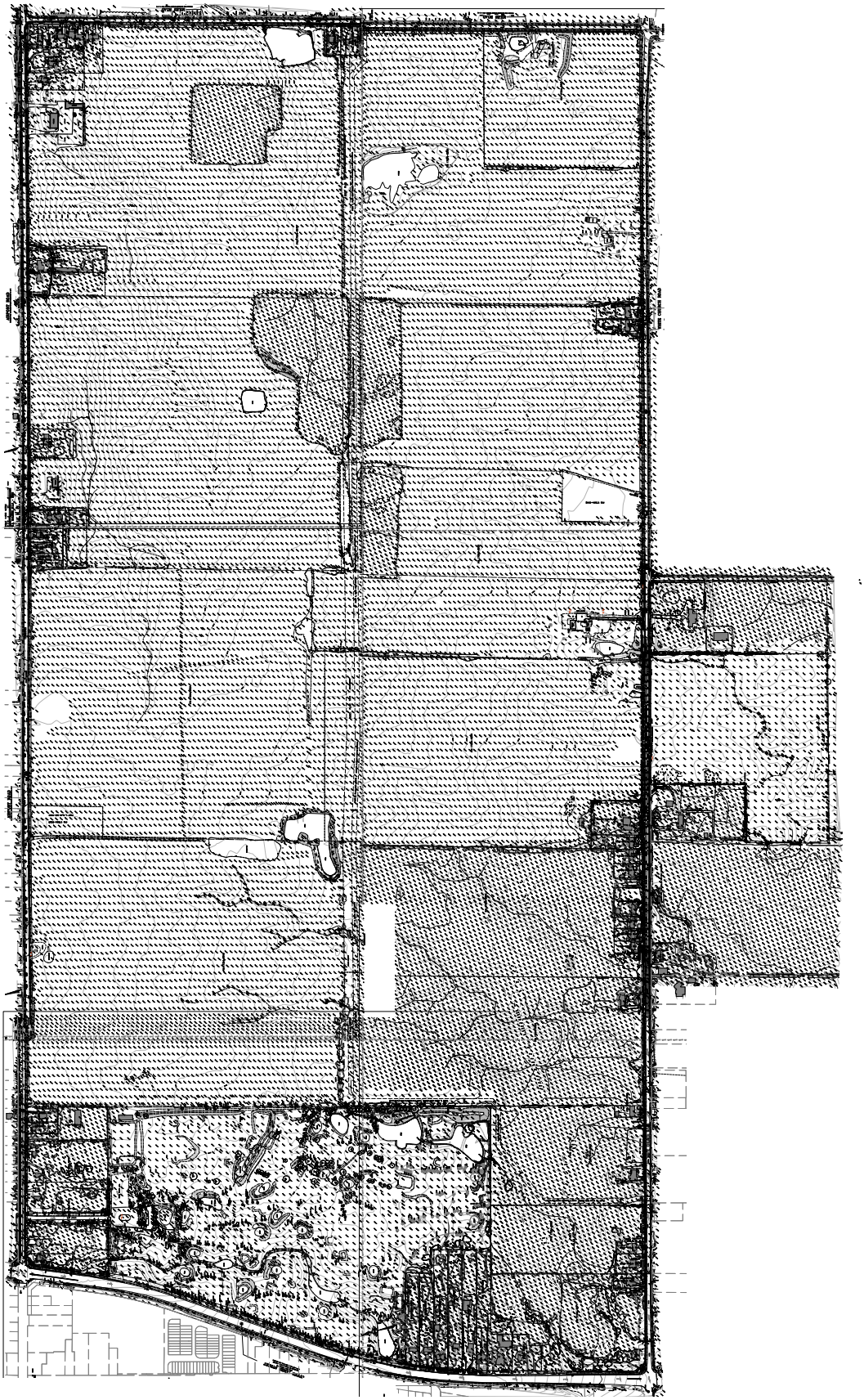
View towards the East on Airport Road

1.4 Site Attributes & Limitations

Existing Topography and Vegetation:
As shown in the topographic survey on the following page, the subject lands are generally flat and contain a variety of vegetation. The existing grades fall gently from southwest to northeast. Most of the existing vegetation is located either along the perimeter next to the road or near residential properties, or internally within the subject lands in wooded areas. The agricultural fields are lined with trees and dense shrubs, and the golf course has a considerable number of deciduous trees.

The Conservation and Hazard P6 zones located internally on the subject lands are completely covered by trees. The P6 Zone applies to all lands identified as an Environmentally Significant Area in the Rural Hamilton Official Plan. In addition, the P6 Zone is also applied to all lands identified as a Key Natural Heritage Feature outside of the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System, identified in the Rural Hamilton Official Plan. These areas within the subject lands are proposed to be protected and preserved.

Existing Buildings and Structures:
The existing buildings on the lands consist of residential, agricultural, or recreational uses. All residential buildings are single detached dwellings, while all agricultural buildings are one-story structures. The recreational buildings are situated outside of the boundary in the northwest corner and are located on an existing golf course. Existing structures within the subject lands have no heritage designation.



Topographic Survey by A.T. McLaren Limited, NTS

SECTION 2

Design Requirements and Policy Framework

2.1 Secondary Planning Guidelines for Urban Expansion Areas

The Secondary Planning Guidelines for Urban Expansion Areas can be found in Appendix "B" to Staff Report PED23144. This document provides clear guidelines for formulating a Secondary Plan in areas marked as "Urban Expansion Area" under the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. Secondary Plans supplement the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, providing detailed land use strategies to ensure a unified approach to urban development. Aligned with foundational directions from the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, this document emphasizes the city's commitment to sustainable growth and effective urban design. This document outlines the following 10 Foundational Directions for Secondary Planning:

Direction 1: Plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Direction 2: Encourage a compatible mix of uses in neighbourhoods, including a range of housing types and affordability, that provide opportunities to live, work, learn, shop and play, promoting a healthy, safe and complete community.

Direction 3: Concentrate new development and infrastructure within existing built-up areas and within the urban boundary through intensification and adaptive re-use.

Direction 4: Protect rural areas for a viable rural economy, agricultural resources, environmentally sensitive recreation and the enjoyment of the rural landscape.

Direction 5: Design neighbourhoods to improve access to community life for all, regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, income and spirituality.

Direction 6: Retain and intensify existing employment land, attract jobs in Hamilton's strength areas and targeted new sectors, and support access to education and training for all residents.

Direction 7: Expand transportation options through the development of complete streets that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit, and enhance efficient inter-regional transportation connections.

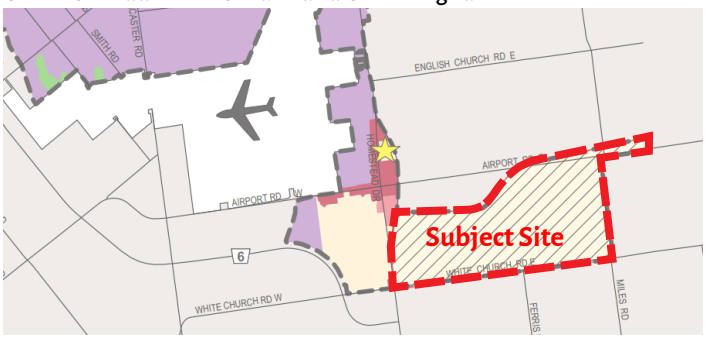
Direction 8: Maximize the use of existing buildings, infrastructure, and vacant or abandoned land.

Direction 9: Protect ecological systems and the natural environment, reduce waste, improve air, land and water quality, and encourage the use of green infrastructure.

Direction 10: Maintain and create attractive public and private spaces and respect the unique character of existing buildings, neighbourhoods and communities, protect cultural heritage resources, and support arts and culture as an important part of community identity.

2.2 The Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) Section B.3.3 Urban Design and Principles

UHOP Schedule E-1 - Urban Land Use Designations



Legend

- Urban Expansion Area - Neighborhoods
- Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use - Medium Density
- District Commercial
- Airport Employment Growth District

The purpose of the Urban Design Policies outlined in this document is to articulate a strategic framework aimed at the creation of compact, interconnected, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-supportive communities. The policies outlined in Sections B.3.3.2 through B.3.3.12 informs the Urban Design principles and guidelines for the proposed development, where applicable.

Section B.3.3.2 General Policies and Principles

Respecting Existing Context

- Respecting existing character, development patterns, built form, and landscape.
- Recognizing that every new building or structure is part of a greater whole that contributes to the overall appearance and visual cohesiveness of the urban fabric.
- Using materials that are consistent and compatible with the surrounding context in the design of new buildings.
- Promoting quality design consistent with the locale and surrounding environment.
- Recognizing and protecting the cultural history of the City and its communities.
- Conserving and respecting the existing built heritage features of the City and its communities.
- Conserving, maintaining, and enhancing the natural heritage and topographic features of the City and its communities.
- Respecting prominent sites, views, and vistas in the City.

Connectivity, Safety, Accessibility

- Organizing space in a logical manner through the design, placement, and construction of new buildings, streets, structures, and landscaping.
- Connecting buildings and spaces through an efficient, intuitive, and safe network of streets, roads, alleys, lanes, sidewalks, pathways, and trails.
- Providing connections and access to all buildings and places for all users, regardless of age and physical ability.
- Creating public spaces that are human-scale, comfortable, and publicly visible with ample building openings and glazing.
- Ensuring building entrances are visible from the street and promoting shelter at entrance ways.
- Integrating conveniently located public transit and cycling infrastructure with existing and new development.
- Providing pedestrian-scale lighting.
- Including urban braille components in streetscape improvements.
- Creating places and spaces that are publicly visible and safe.

Adaptive Design

- Allowing built form to evolve over time through additions and alterations that are in harmony with existing architectural massing and style.
- Encouraging a harmonious and compatible approach to infilling by minimizing the impacts of shadowing and maximizing light to adjacent properties and the public realm.
- Encouraging design that accommodates the changing physical needs of people and their lifestyles through all stages of their lives.
- Designing buildings, sites, and public spaces that can be used for a variety of uses in the future in response to changing social, economic, and technological conditions.

Future-Ready and Sustainable Design

- Encouraging energy efficiency in neighbourhood design and development as set out in Section B.3.7.1.
- Achieving compact development and resulting built forms that promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Integrating, protecting, and enhancing environmental features and landscapes, including existing topography, forest and vegetative cover, green spaces, and corridors through building and site design.
- Encouraging on-site storm water management and infiltration using techniques and technologies.
- Encouraging the use of environmental building rating tools and techniques.
- Encouraging the reduction of resource consumption in building and site development and avoiding the release of contaminants into the environment.
- Encouraging energy efficiency in neighbourhood design and development.
- Reducing air, noise, and water pollution through various measures.

Active Communities

- Complementing and animating existing surroundings through building design and placement as well as through placement of pedestrian amenities.
- Creating high-quality, safe streetscapes, parks, and open spaces that encourage social interaction, physical activity, and active transportation.
- Ensuring an equitable distribution of accessible and stimulating amenity areas, including the development of places for active and passive recreation uses.
- Incorporating public art installations as an integral part of urban design.

Active Streetscapes

- Amenities and spaces that encourage social interaction, pedestrian activity, and animate the streetscape such as public gathering places, patios, and sidewalk cafés.
- Adequate and accessible space for pedestrians, active transportation, as well as transit, other vehicles, and utilities.
- Continuous sidewalks.
- Landscaping such as street trees and landscaped boulevards.
- Pedestrian amenities such as lighting, seating, way-finding signage, and urban braille.
- On-street parking.
- Public art.

Section B.3.3.3 Urban Design Policies Related to Built Form

- New development location and organization should be aligned with existing or planned context.
- Minimizing Impact on Neighbouring Areas:
  - Creating transitions in scale to neighbouring buildings.

    - Ensuring adequate privacy and sunlight to neighbouring properties.
    - Minimizing the impacts of shadows and wind conditions.
- Respect Existing and Planned Street Proportions
- Define the street through consistent setbacks and building elevations per Design directions in Chapter E Urban Systems and Designations and Zoning By-law.
- Comfortable Pedestrian Environments:
    - Locating principal façades and primary building entrances parallel to and as close to the street as possible.
    - Including ample glazing on ground floors for visibility to and from the public sidewalk.
    - Including a quality landscape edge along frontages where buildings are set back from the street.
    - Locating surface parking to the sides or rear of sites or buildings, where appropriate.
    - Using design techniques like building step-backs to maximize sunlight to pedestrian areas.

Section B.3.3.4 Urban Design Policies Related to Gateways

- Gateway locations shall be established by the City at strategic locations within the municipality through secondary plans or other City programs and initiatives.
- Gateway intersections and entry points shall be designed to convey a sense of arrival and portray the community image and identity through:
    - Design of the built form.
    - Building orientation.
    - Street configuration.
    - Infrastructure items and projects.
    - Landscaping.
    - Recognition of significant views and vistas.
    - Signage.
    - Public art installations.
- Gateways to the City are special places requiring a greater level of scrutiny in terms of land use and design to achieve higher quality landmark buildings or built form.
- The City may undertake gateway studies to identify locations of gateway areas, establish design guidelines, and determine appropriate land uses within these areas.
- The City shall work with adjacent property owners, adjacent municipalities, and applicable governmental agencies with jurisdiction over road rights-of-way on the design and installation of appropriate gateway features.

Section B.3.3.5 Urban Design Policies Related to Views and Vistas

- The City shall undertake a comprehensive study to identify significant views and vistas across the City and recommend strategies for their protection and enhancement. In the absence of this identification, preservation, enhancement and/or creation of significant views can occur through secondary planning.
- Views and vistas shall be achieved through the alignment of rights-of-way, layout of pedestrian circulation and open space systems, and the siting of major features, public uses, and built form.
- The principal façades of public buildings and parks are encouraged to locate at the termination of a street or view corridor or at street intersections to act as focal points for views, except in situations where such building placement would compromise existing significant views or vistas.

Section B.3.3.6 Urban Design Policies Related to Urban Services and Utilities

- The City encourages urban services and utilities to be located underground along public roads to maintain a pleasant visual environment.
- Above-ground utility service providers are encouraged to cooperate with the City in identifying locations that minimize visual intrusions.
- Site and building services and utilities, including waste storage facilities, loading areas, air handling equipment, hydro, telecommunication facilities, and metering equipment, should be located away from and/or screened from public streets and adjacent residential areas or other sensitive land uses.

Section B.3.3.7 Urban Design Policies Related to Storage, Service, and Loading Areas

- Service and loading areas should be away from streets to minimize disruptions and conflicts, screened as necessary from public views.
- Buffering methods, such as berms, tree and shrub plantings, noise walls, and fences, should be used to reduce visual and noise impacts, especially near residential areas.
- Outside storage areas should be sited to minimize negative streetscape impacts and screened from public view.
- Paved surfaces in outside storage and loading areas are encouraged to reduce dust and promote improved air quality.

Section B.3.3.8 Urban Design Policies Related to Signage, Display Areas, and Lighting

- Signs should be designed as integral elements of site layout and building design.
- Signs should not dominate the overall character and should complement the site, architecture, and context.
- Signs on cultural heritage properties or within heritage conservation districts or cultural heritage landscapes shall be compatible with the architecture and character of the property or district.
- Outdoor display areas should positively contribute to streetscape and overall site development, well-defined through architecture and landscaping.
- Lighting of buildings and display areas should ensure safety without causing glare, and energy-efficient fixtures are encouraged.

Section B.3.3.9 Urban Design Policies Related to Access and Circulation

- Joint access driveways between adjacent sites are encouraged to minimize disruptions and maximize landscaping areas.
- Clearly defined internal driving aisles on large sites provide visual and functional definition, directing traffic and framing parking areas.
- Pedestrian walkways should differ from driving surfaces, promoting safety and prioritizing pedestrian traffic.
- Landscaped walkways shall be provided along buildings, particularly in areas with high levels of pedestrian traffic. Walkways shall be connected to other pedestrian routes on the site and linked to pedestrian entry points at the street, and where appropriate to adjacent developments.
- Pedestrian walkways shall be made continuous across driving aisles as well as across driveway entrances at the street where appropriate.
- Transit access enhancement includes connecting sidewalks, open space, and trails to transit stops, locating stops near building entrances, and ensuring amenities at each transit stop.

Section B.3.3.10 Urban Design Policies Related to Parking

- Discourage surface parking for safe, attractive streetscapes; encourage below-grade or structured parking.
- Promote shared parking facilities when appropriate.
- Align parking provision with design directions in Section E – Urban Systems and Designations.
- Place surface parking to sides or rear of buildings for continuous street edges and quality urban spaces.
- Connect parking areas to streets via safe, landscaped pedestrian walkways.
- Landscape perimeters of surface lots for visibility and aesthetics.
- Include landscaped islands in parking interiors for shade and visual relief.
- Pave parking lots with hard surfaces; encourage permeable pavements for stormwater management (OPA 167).
- Ensure well-lit parking lots for safety; internally orient lighting to prevent glare.
- Encourage diverse bicycle parking formats, such as sheltered racks and lockers, close to building entrances for both employees and visitors.

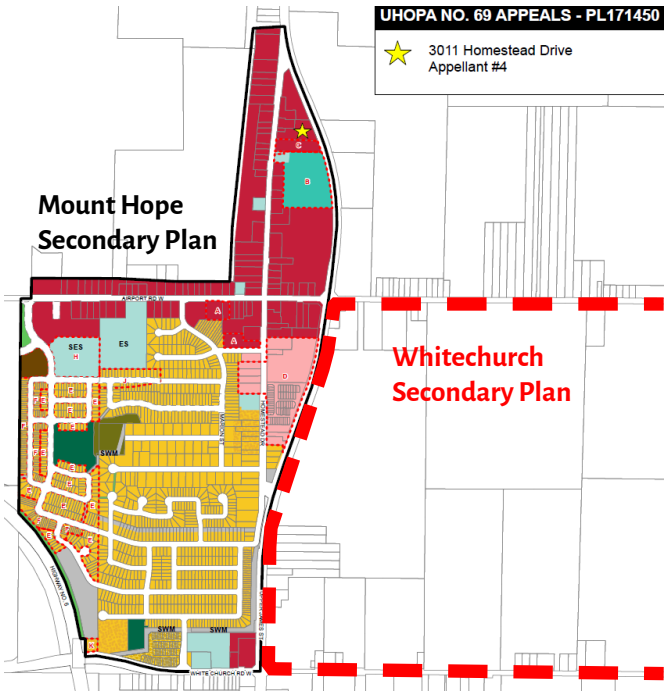
Section B.3.3.11 Urban Design Policies Related to Barrier-Free Access

- All publicly accessible spaces, whether City-owned or private, must adhere to these guidelines. This includes newly constructed or renovated facilities, parks, open spaces, and infrastructure.
- Barrier-free design is required wherever possible for private sector developments, enforced through site plan approval and compliance with the Ontario Building Code, provincial legislation, standards, and guidelines.
- The City will establish an urban braille network in key areas, promoting accessibility for visually impaired individuals. Urban braille may be mandatory for new developments, integrated through the site plan approval process.

Section B.3.3.12 Public Art

- Public art may include murals, sculptures, fountains, benches, walkway design, pavement designs and amenity design.
- Public art that fosters community identify through interpreting local history, traditions and culture is encouraged in all public and private spaces.
- The City shall pursue the installation of public art in public locations in accordance with the Public Art Master Plan.
- In addition to locations for public art identified in the Public Art Master Plan, locations for public art shall be identified through secondary planning, other planning processes, and initiatives, where appropriate.
- Private developments that include spaces attracting significant pedestrian traffic are encouraged to include public art in the design of the building and/or site.
- The City shall consider the inclusion and installation of public art as part of the following public infrastructure projects, where appropriate:
  - bridges;
  - roadway designs;
  - noise barriers;
  - transit stations, stops and facilities;
  - paving design;
  - street furniture; and,
  - other infrastructure that is highly visible from the public right-of-way.
- The City shall initiate partnerships with other public institutions in the development of public art projects on publicly assessable lands.

2.3 Mount Hope Secondary Plan



The Mount Hope Secondary Plan can be found in section 5.4 of the Glanbrook Secondary Plans, Volume 2 Chapter B. The Secondary Plan outlines several key policies aimed at guiding the development and growth of the area, the summary of which can be found below. The Mount Hope Secondary Plan guides the detailed development of the lands to the south of the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. Mount Hope Secondary Plan also abuts the west side of the proposed Whitechurch Secondary Plan. Compatibility with the Mount Hope Secondary Plan will be an important consideration in the development of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan.

General policies focus on prohibiting polluting and hazardous uses in the Mount Hope Urban Settlement area while encouraging the incorporation of existing significant vegetation into development plans. In terms of residential designations, a north-to-south pattern is encouraged for orderly, efficient, and well-planned development. Additionally, the integration of residential areas with parkland is emphasized to create a convenient, safe, visually pleasing, and healthy living environment.

Within the ***Low-Density Residential*** category (notwithstanding applicable Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies), specific policies are outlined for different designations:

- Low-Density Residential 2 primarily consists of single detached dwellings, duplexes, semi-detached, and triplex dwellings, with a maximum density of 25 units per net hectare,
- Low-Density Residential 2c allows for a variety of multiple dwelling unit types, including townhouse dwellings, with a density range from 26 to 40 units per net hectare,
- Low-Density Residential 3f primarily consists of low-rise apartments, with a density range from 40 to 60 units per net hectare.

The ***Medium-Density Residential*** 3 designation, subject to OPA 90, specifies a net residential density greater than 75 units per hectare and not exceeding 100 units per hectare.

The ***District Commercial*** Designation aims to serve existing and future residents, the surrounding rural area, the Hamilton Airport, and the Airport Industrial-Business Park. The plan encourages the redevelopment of lands with District Commercial designation, emphasizing coordination to limit the establishment of a continuous strip of individual developments. Permitted uses include the following:

- Retail and service commercial
- personal and business services
- recreational and entertainment facilities
- restaurants
- taverns
- hotels
- motels.

In addition, special attention is given to lands adjacent to Airport Road West and Homestead Drive, with an investigation into their potential designation as a Community Improvement Project Area. Lastly, provisions are made to ensure outdoor lighting in commercial areas is oriented away from residential areas and does not interfere with airport operations.

The ***Mixed Use – Medium Density*** Designation, governed by Section E.4.2 and Section E.4.6 of Volume 1, applies to specific lands in the plan area. Policies related to commercial, mixed-use, and medium-density designations ensure coordinated and well-designed development, emphasizing compatibility with adjacent residential areas.

The ***Institutional*** Designation recognizes existing institutional uses in the District Commercial designation, emphasizing the retention of important community assets like Mount Hope Elementary School, Glanford Community Hall, and others. The plan encourages that vehicular access be from the internal road network.

In terms of ***Parks and Open Space*** Designations, the plan emphasizes the incorporation of a diverse open space system, including Community Park, Neighbourhood Park, Natural Open Space, and General Open Space. Notably, preservation efforts are directed towards a 1.0-hectare wooded area at the western end of Aberdeen Avenue (Natural Open Space) and the retention of Mount Hope Park (formerly Gord Oakes Park), totaling approximately 3.1 hectares.

Utility Designation policies outline considerations for lands designated for utility use, emphasizing approvals from relevant authorities, and allowing for recreational uses subject to approval.

Transportation policies focus on creating an efficient and safe internal road system, with dedicated lands for new roads and intersections. Traffic studies are required before formal subdivision submissions.

The ***Noise and Other Airport Impacts*** section addresses potential negative effects from nearby airport and highway operations, emphasizing conformity to legislation, informing residents of potential noise, and implementing specific provisions for lands within defined contours.

Infrastructure policies highlight the need for connectivity in new developments, encouraging the replacement of private septic systems with municipal sanitary sewers, and compliance with storm drainage requirements.

Overall, these policies collectively form a comprehensive framework, addressing land use, development, transportation, environmental considerations, and infrastructure needs to ensure the sustainable growth and vitality of the Mount Hope Secondary Plan area.

2.4 The City of Hamilton Site Plan Guidelines

The ***City of Hamilton Site Plan Guidelines*** outlines the City's preferences and standards for site development though a set of design guidelines. These guidelines are designed to be flexible, offering participants broad guidance for the site planning process while recognizing the need to cooperatively achieve both municipal objectives and private development requirements. Section 1.2 outlines the general design objectives upon which the guidelines are built, as detailed below.

- Promote livability through pedestrian scale development and land use compatibility.
- Encourage environmental sustainability by retaining ecologically important features, integrating landscaping, and reducing stormwater runoff.
- Promote accessibility through safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and accommodate people with a range of abilities and impairments.
- Achieve high quality building design which enhances the public realm and creates an attractive streetscape.
- Create a sense of place by preserving significant heritage features and community character, protecting important views, improving the streetscape, and creating community landmarks.

The objectives and guidelines outlined in Sections 1 to 6 will be used as a foundation in the development of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan Urban Design Guidelines (Section 3 of this report).
The City of Hamilton Site Plan Guidelines is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 1** serves as the introduction, outlining the document's purpose, the City's development objectives, site plan approval processes, and instructions on usage.
- **Section 2** focuses on site context and public space considerations, covering topics like public realm, streets, Neighbourhood character, heritage conservation, and safety.
- **Section 3** delves into specific site planning components, including circulation, landscape design, grading, parking, lighting, signage, and stormwater management.
- **Section 4** provides guidance on building design, emphasizing the importance of integrating new structures with existing Neighbourhoods.
- **Section 5** addresses areas of special character, such as heritage conservation districts and historic town centers.
- **Section 6** focuses on specific building types, including business park and industrial buildings, drive-through restaurants, and various forms of multi-residential developments, providing guidelines for their design considerations.
- **Section 7** contains the glossary of terms.
- **Section 8** includes the Appendices.

SECTION 3

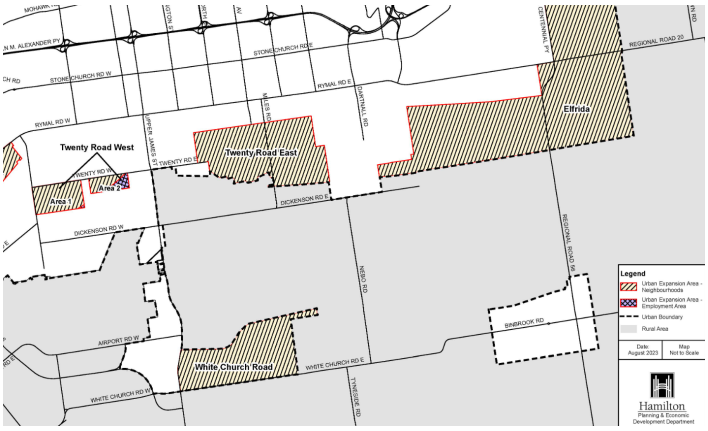
Urban Design Guidelines

3.1 Whitechurch Secondary Plan Background and Vision

3.1.1 Background

In June 2022, Council approved a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and updated long-term growth strategy (GRIDS2) for the City, aligning Official Plans with updated Provincial policies. The MCR implemented a growth strategy in the Official Plan without expanding the urban boundary. On November 4, 2022, a decision was made by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to approve an urban boundary expansion to accommodate growth to 2051. As part of this decision, six areas of land totaling approximately 2,200 hectares were added to the City of Hamilton's urban area.

Map of Urban Expansion Areas

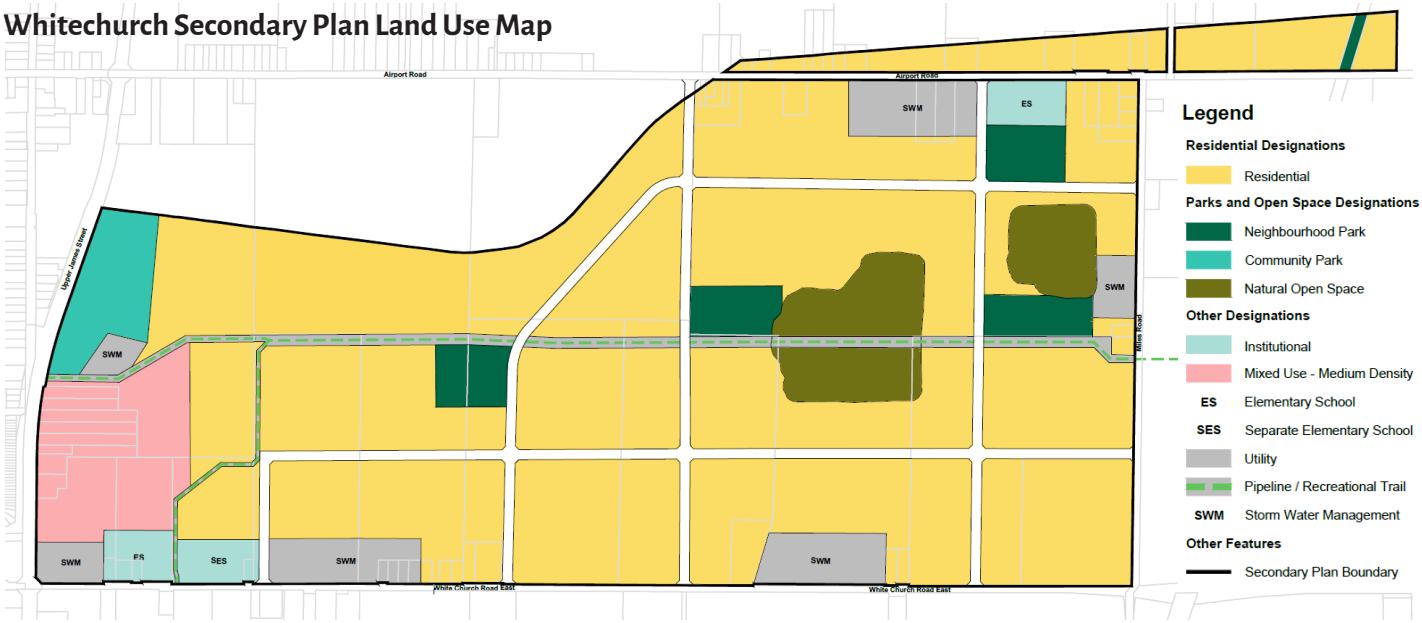


3.1.2 Vision

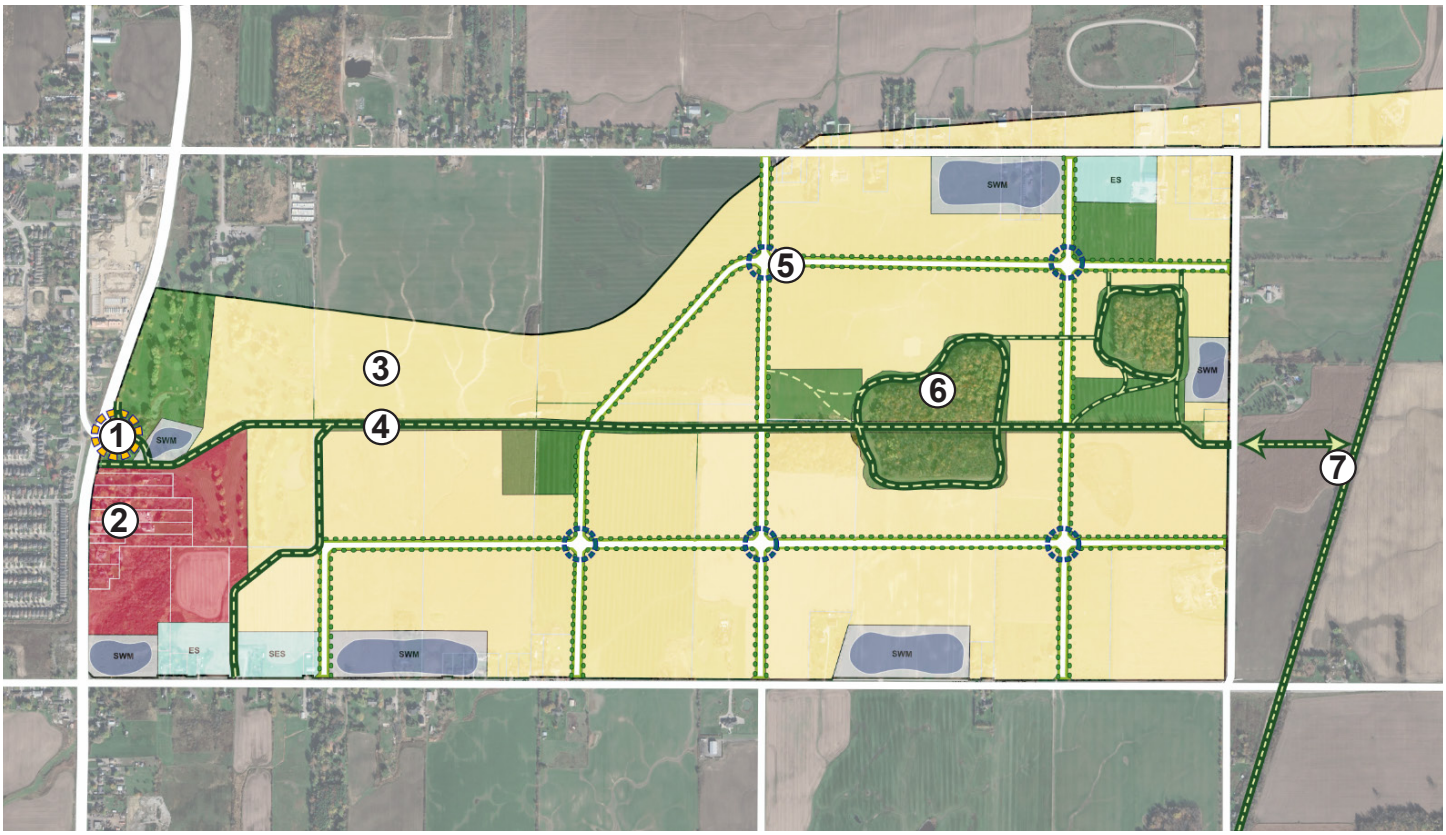
The vision of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan is to build a vibrant and sustainable community. Located adjacent to an airport hub, residential subdivision, and agricultural land, the planned community will evolve with a focus on practical and context-sensitive urban development. The vision prioritizes solutions that fit the local context and provide flexibility to meet growth targets and community needs.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan strives to integrate existing natural heritage systems seamlessly into its framework, providing opportunities to promote active transportation by developing a comprehensive trail network. The accompanying Urban Design Guidelines also encourages the development of arts and culture in contributing to the development of distinctive neighbourhood identities. In short, the Whitechurch Secondary Plan is about building a practical, sustainable, and flexible community that addresses growth challenges while preserving the local character of the community.

Whitechurch Secondary Plan Land Use Map



3.1.3 Whitechurch Secondary Plan Opportunities



1. A proposed new community park is envisioned at the northwest corner of the Secondary Plan boundary along Upper James Street. This strategic location capitalizes on the picturesque natural features of the existing golf course, converting it into a beautiful community park. Serving as a gateway to the extensive community trail network, the park is strategically positioned at the intersection of the commercial district and the convergence point of Upper James Street and Homestead Drive. This design not only maximizes the utilization of the area's natural charm but also ensures a central and accessible hub for recreational activities within the community.

2. The Whitechurch Secondary Plan introduces a strategically positioned mixed-use medium density node along Upper James Street, an important arterial route connecting to the Downtown Urban Growth Centre to the north (15 min drive) and Highway 6 to the south (1 min drive). The future Bus Rapid Transit network (BLAST) will further integrate this planned community into the broader cityscape. This node is designed to cater to the existing residential community to the west, the proposed future residential development to the east, and the airport employment growth district to the north. The proposal for mixed-use higher densities along Upper James Street aligns with urban design principles that recognize the benefits of intensified development along major transportation routes. This strategic approach enhances transit accessibility, optimizes infrastructure efficiency, and contributes to the establishment of lively, mixed-use urban environments.

3. In response to growing housing needs and provincial growth targets, it is important to establish a flexible new residential community that reconciles housing demand with the existing context. Situated between a residential subdivision, an airport, and rural land, the envisioned community bridges the gap between urban and rural elements. This strategic placement not only respects the character of the surrounding areas but also capitalizes on the diverse amenities each offers. Moreover, the community's close proximity to Highway 6 facilitates convenient access and connects residents to broader transportation networks, encouraging economic growth.

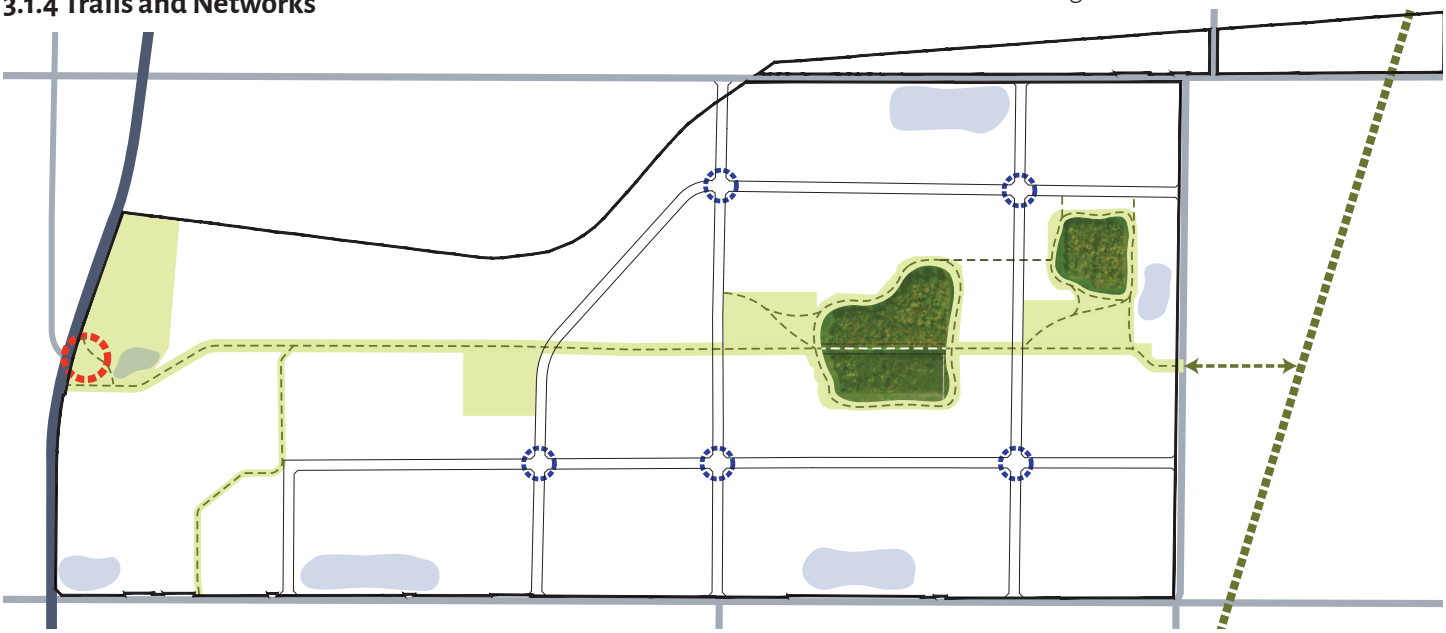
4. Whitechurch Secondary Plan strategically utilizes the pipeline corridor location to enhance the community's recreational infrastructure. The pipeline trail is planned to be a treed and naturalized corridor, offering opportunities for hiking and biking between the different parkettes and woodlots throughout the community. The outcome is a cohesive trail network that promotes outdoor activities and a walkable environment.

5. The proposed local roads in the Whitechurch Secondary Plan are envisioned to be lined with street trees and sodded boulevards on both sides, enhancing the visual appeal and environmental quality of the community. At key intersections, well-designed roundabouts are integrated to optimize traffic flow and contribute to a safer and aesthetically pleasing streetscape. This plan prioritizes the cultivation of a robust urban tree canopy. Both street trees along the roads and private trees along pedestrian connections are integral components of this initiative, ensuring a sustainable and green urban environment.

6. Whitechurch Secondary Plan prioritizes the safeguarding of natural heritage resources by seamlessly integrating them into the outdoor recreation network. Recognizing the intrinsic value of these ecological assets, the plan aims to strike a balance between preservation and community engagement. By strategically incorporating these areas into the recreation network, the intention is to encourage responsible usage by the community while concurrently fostering a sense of appreciation and stewardship.

7. The strategic placement of the trail network in the secondary plan aligns seamlessly with the potential to establish a connection to the existing Chippewa Rail Trail. By leveraging the existing Chippewa Rail Trail, the plan not only capitalizes on an established community asset but also contributes to the potential realization of a more extensive and accessible regional trail network.

3.1.4 Trails and Networks



3.2 Built Form Guidelines

Streetscape is the interplay between the built environment and public spaces, influencing how people interact with their surroundings. It encapsulates the visual character, functionality, and overall atmosphere of a street, making it a critical aspect of urban design. Hamilton's urban character hinges on the seamless integration of built structures and public spaces, as described in ***Section 2.2*** of the City of Hamilton's Site Plan Design Guidelines.

Built form is one of the cornerstones of streetscape aesthetics. To create attractive and pedestrian oriented streets, there needs to be a collaboration between buildings, streets, and landscaping to promote human use and interaction. This approach acknowledges the importance of designing streets not just as thoroughfares but as vibrant spaces that engage and connect people.

The achievement of street enclosure is a key objective, and it is realized through strategic building placement, massing, height considerations, and thoughtful landscaping along the street. By orienting buildings toward the street and maximizing mass along the street edge, a sense of enclosure is created, reducing the perception of the street width, and fostering a more intimate and pedestrian-friendly environment.

3.2.1 Hamilton Site Plan Design Guidelines related to Building Orientation (Section 2.2)

- Development should acknowledge and incorporate existing and historical patterns of built form and streetscape.
- Consideration should be given to both the built form and the space it defines to ensure their integration and the creation of positive, functional open space.
- Within urban areas, spatial enclosure of streets is encouraged by orienting building mass towards the street. All or part of the main building mass should be located close to the street to maximize the amount of building façade and activity along the street to enclose and animate the street space. Where buildings are discontinuous along the street, the street edge should be defined using street trees, walls, fences, trellises, or planting to extend the building plane along the street.
- Development along local and collector roads should be front lotted to create visually interesting streetscapes and pedestrian oriented streets.
- Development along arterial roads should be oriented to the street. Reverse lotting on arterial roads should be avoided, if possible. Design alternatives to reverse lotting include:
    - Siting less noise sensitive activity along the arterial road;
    - Single loaded local roads or cul-de-sac bulbs abutting the arterial road;
    - Maximizing collector road connections with the arterial road and orienting corner lot development to the collector road; and,
    - Using rear lanes to service development fronting onto the arterial road.
- Where reverse lotting is utilized along arterial roads, the boulevard should be landscaped to create attractive streetscapes and break up the continuous solid noise barrier or fencing, where present.
- Significant views and vistas should be preserved where possible. In the design of new development, consideration will also be given to the creation of new vistas, including views to public and private buildings, open spaces, natural features, landmarks and skylines.
- Opportunities should be considered to create community landmarks through road alignments, relationships with natural features and the siting of new buildings to provide visual reference points.
- Special street sections and unique streetscapes should be considered in areas of high pedestrian activity, entrances to neighbourhoods or special character areas.
- Minimum front yard setbacks, front porches, window bays and maximum glazing in the front elevation of buildings should be used to create social interaction on the street and enhance safety and security of the neighbourhood through informal surveillance.
- Safe, visible and direct connections should be provided from the public street to building entrances.
- Parking lots adjacent to public streets should be screened with low level fences, walls or shrub planting. The screening treatment should be low to maintain some visibility to promote safety.
- Hydro service and other utilities should be located underground, if possible, to minimize streetscape clutter. Where above ground services are required, consideration should be given to the location and design of structures.

3.3 Streetscape Design Guidelines

3.3.1 Pedestrian Zones

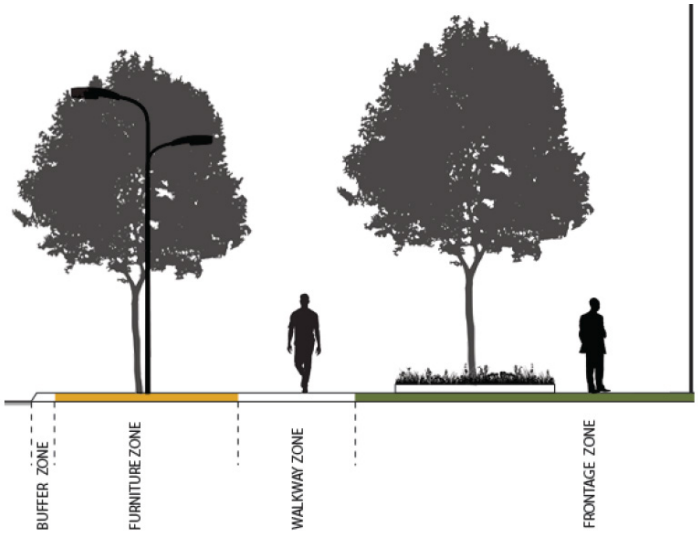
Streetscape right-of-ways are generally formed by a combination of pedestrian zones, which each serve different functions and can be adjusted or overlapped according to the individual requirements of the street. The illustration to the right shows the typical configurations that are suitable for a variety of streetscapes.

Buffer Zone (0.5m min): The function of the buffer zone is to provide a buffer between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. It is located adjacent to the roadway. A wider buffer can be used for snow storage if space permits.

Furniture Zone (1.85m min recommended): The function of the furniture zone is to allow for the provision of trees and street furniture such as transit shelters, benches, plantings, fixed objects, etc. This zone should be set back from intersections and walkways by approximately 2 meters. This zone can potentially be overlapped with the frontage zone.

Walkway Zone (1.5m min recommended): The function of the walkway zone is to provide an unobstructed clearway for pedestrian movement. The surface should be hard paved and there should be no overlap with any other zones. Providing this zone is the highest priority when space is limited.

Frontage Zone (0.5m min recommended): The function of the frontage zone is to provide a buffer and interface between the building edge and the public right-of-way. There is opportunity for some placement of street tree and street furniture in this zone, to be coordinated with the building frontage. This zone can potentially be overlapped with the Furniture Zone.



3.3.2 Guidelines for Street Trees and Urban Landscape Planting

- Where possible, provide 21 cubic meters of soil for individual trees and 16 cubic meters of soil for shared planting beds as per City guidelines.
- Align with the residential character and enhance tree health by planting trees in continuous landscape strips within the Frontage Zone or Furniture Zone, with a minimum width of 900mm.
- Tailor street tree locations to street conditions, considering setbacks from corners, utilities, driveways, bus stops, and building entrances. Align trees to minimize interference with building entries, driveways, lighting, utilities, and pedestrian pathways to the greatest extent feasible.
- When incorporating trees into an existing landscape, respond to existing lighting in the planting locations. Relocate movable site furnishings to facilitate street tree planting with appropriate spacing.
- Choose columnar form trees for narrower planting locations.
- Opt for medium-sized trees with light to medium density foliage on Neighbourhood residential and commercial streets.
- Space street trees 7-12m apart, adjusting based on the mature canopy size of the tree species and location of utilities.
- Utilize drought and salt-tolerant species for understory landscaping. Consider the benefits of deep-rooted native or drought-tolerant species, including tolerance to flooding and drought, with low or no irrigation needs once established.

3.3.3 Guidelines for Streetscape Benches

- Coordinate seating to match the space's geometry, including facades, routes, and trees, and align with pedestrian movement patterns.
- In bus stop areas, orient benches toward the road, and generally orient benches towards the walkway zone.
- Take into account sun, shade, and wind microclimate factors when placing benches.
- Ensure benches are located in highly visible areas to facilitate natural surveillance, adhering to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Permanently installed seating should consider potential conflict areas, such as building entrances and loading zones.
- Allocate an adjacent space of 1.1m x 1.2m for potential scooter, wheelchair, or guide dog usage.
- Include an arm at 2/3rds along the seat to deter 'over-nighting' on a public bench.
- Follow recommended setbacks for streetscape placement:
    - Maintain a minimum distance of 0.3m from the building edge.
    - Place benches between 0.45m to 0.6m from the walkway edge.
    - Ensure a minimum clearance of 0.45m from surrounding street furniture and other objects.
    - Keep a minimum distance of 1.5m from tree trunks and fire hydrants.

3.3.4 Guidelines for Waste and Recycling Receptacles

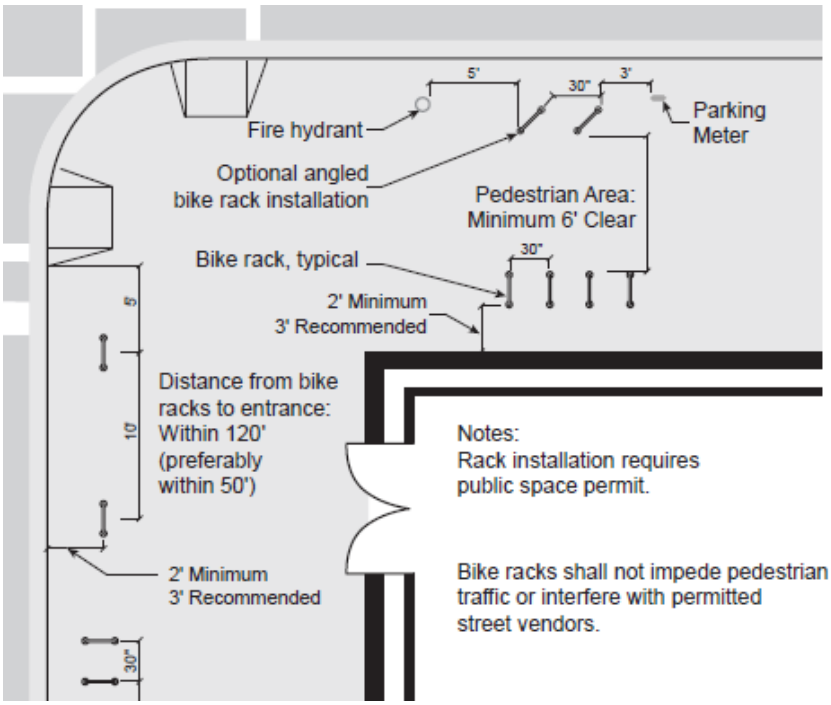
- Position waste and recycling receptacles to ensure clear access to the street, facilitating efficient disposal and maintenance.
- Place receptacles strategically near public entrances, bus stops, intersections, and other areas with higher activity.
- Avoid situating litter receptacles directly in front of building entrances, exits, or windows.
- Consider ease of access for emptying and ensure the receptacle door remains unobstructed.
- Ensure that receptacle mechanisms align with the current configurations of municipal waste and recycling pick-up.
- Adhere to recommended setbacks for streetscape placement:
    - Maintain a minimum distance of 0.5m from the edge of the curb.
    - Place receptacles at least 0.45m from the walkway edge.
    - Keep a minimum distance of 0.3m from the building edge.
    - Maintain a minimum clearance of 0.45m from surrounding street furniture and other objects.
    - Allow a clear space of at least 1.5m in front of litter receptacles for use and maintenance.
    - Keep a minimum distance of 1.5m from tree trunks and fire hydrants.

3.3.5 Guidelines for On-Street and Pedestrian Lighting

- Ensure that the design of light standards is visually cohesive with street furniture.
- Establish a consistent arrangement of lighting fixtures to enhance legibility and safety to the maximum extent.
- Avoid the creation of harsh shadows and strong contrasts between illuminated and unlit areas. Thoughtfully select lamp intensity to optimize light distribution and minimize glare.
- Introduce hierarchy and scale in lighting design to distinguish major and minor roads, paths, and use areas. This can be achieved by varying the height, spacing, and color of lamps.
- Maintain consistency in the scale and design of light poles and fixtures throughout a stretch of streetscape, changing only when necessary and at logical breakpoints, such as when entering a separate Neighbourhood. Ensure uniformity on both sides of the street.

3.3.6 Guidelines for Bicycle Acommodation

- Maintain a minimum 0.5m buffer between the bike lane and the road's edge wherever possible.
- Ensure that bike racks are oriented in a way that parked bicycles do not extend onto the walkway.
- Avoid situating bike racks directly in front of building entrances, exits, or windows.
- Secure bike racks onto a flat, firm, and stable surface
- Adhere to recommended setbacks for streetscape placement:
    - Maintain a minimum distance of 0.6m - 0.9m from the edge of the curb.
    - Place bike racks at least 0.6m - 0.9m from the walkway edge.
    - Keep a minimum distance of 0.6m -0.9m from the building edge.
    - Maintain a minimum clearance of 1.8m from surrounding street furniture and other objects.
    - Allow a minimum distance of 1.5m from tree trunks and fire hydrants.



3.4 Gateways and Roundabouts Guidelines

Gateways are important urban design features, acting as key entry points that define the character of a city or neighbourhood. These structures mark physical boundaries and reflect the identity of the community they represent. Gateways shape first impressions for both residents and visitors, influencing perceptions of a place's culture and atmosphere. Urban planners and designers design these entry points with consideration for the unique personality of the area. Enhancing gateways contributes to the overall aesthetic of the urban landscape, fostering pride and connection among residents. Gateways serve as invitations, prompting individuals to explore the diverse spaces beyond their boundaries.

Roundabouts offer a dynamic and efficient alternative to traditional intersections. Their design emphasizes a continuous, smooth movement of vehicles, reducing congestion and enhancing road safety. Additionally, roundabouts serve as adaptable canvases for landscaping and public art, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of neighbourhoods and doubling as miniature gateways.

3.4.1 Guidelines for Gateway Design

- Create a unique and recognizable design that sets the gateway apart from the surrounding areas. Consider local culture and history in the design.
- Use landscaping to enhance the aesthetics of the gateway, including well-maintained greenery, flowers, and trees. Landscape design establishes a connection with the natural environment.
- Consider implementing lighting to highlight architectural features and enhance nighttime visibility.
- Include pedestrian-friendly pathways and crossings to encourage walking and cycling.
- Install amenities like benches, bike racks, and pedestrian-friendly lighting to create inviting gathering spaces. These amenities collectively establish a welcoming environment, encouraging people to linger, socialize, and enjoy the unique character of the primary gateway.
- Designate small public spaces or plazas at strategic locations to foster community interaction. These designated areas can serve as communal hubs.

3.4.2 Guidelines for Roundabout Design

- Incorporate unique and visually striking design elements, such as special paving, that distinguish the roundabout as a minor gateway.
- Implement landscaping at the roundabout. Use low-maintenance and drought-resistant vegetation to ensure long-term attractiveness. Plan for seasonal plantings to ensure year-round visual appeal.
- Consider installing clear and well-designed signage to indicate the entry point to the residential area.
- Provide safe and well-defined pedestrian crossings with appropriate signalization. Pedestrian crossings should be clearly marked with visible crosswalks and appropriate signage to alert both pedestrians and drivers. Features such as pedestrian refuge islands and curb extensions also contribute to a safer crossing experience.
- Ensure that the aesthetics of the roundabout and signage are cohesive with the surrounding community. Consider the architectural style, color palette, and materials used in nearby developments.
- Avoid elements that may obstruct visibility.

3.5 Site Circulation Guidelines

Effective urban design relies on a well-organized circulation system, which encompasses the network of pathways guiding how people and vehicles navigate urban spaces. This system is crucial for a city's functionality, accessibility, and overall livability. Careful planning of roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transit routes not only ensures smooth traffic flow but also influences the social and economic dynamics of a community. Circulation also plays a key role in fostering connectivity, encouraging social interactions, and improving the overall urban living experience. Urban planners and designers contribute significantly to vibrant and inclusive urban environments by prioritizing efficient, safe, and accessible circulation routes.

3.5.1 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Vehicular Circulation (Section 3.2)

- Mutual or shared driveways are encouraged, especially along collector and arterial roads, to minimize the number of driveways. Office buildings with shared driveway
- Parking areas on abutting commercial properties should be connected to provide movement between lots without having to use the adjacent public street.
- The distance between site driveways and intersections should be maximized to create safe turning movements.
- Where there is more than one entrance on the same site, the distance between each entrance point should be maximized.
- Driveways should be located to provide ease of access and egress for staff, visitors, delivery vehicles and emergency services.
- Main driveways should be designed (width, curb radii, surfaces) to accommodate delivery and emergency vehicles as per City standards.
- For large commercial development and shopping centres, there should be no internal access to internal parking aisles from the main driveway for a distance of 40 metres from the municipal road allowance. Internal parking aisles located deep in parking lot
- The driveway system should provide for ease of access to buildings for fire trucks in accordance with the Ontario Building Code.
- Parking, loading and delivery drop off areas should be clearly identified through site signage.
- Driveways should be located opposite existing or proposed driveways and streets to avoid offset intersections and traffic difficulties.

3.5.2 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Pedestrian Circulation & Cycling Facilities (Section 3.2)

- A well defined and continuous pedestrian system should be developed on each site with connections to the public street, parking areas, surrounding buildings and pedestrian amenity areas. Primary pedestrian connections should be distinguished from secondary pedestrian connections through such measures as differing sidewalk widths and paving materials.
- Primary pedestrian connections should be barrier free, and should be provided directly from the public street sidewalk to the principal building entrances and parking areas.
- There should be at least one primary pedestrian connection from the site to an abutting street frontage.
- Sidewalks should be provided between transit stops and building entrances. Building entrances should be coordinated with transit stops to minimize walking distance and provide weather protection.
- Secondary pedestrian connections (on-site sidewalks) should be barrier-free, link major activity areas, provide a pathway through large parking areas, and a pathway between parking areas and building side yards.
- Pedestrian walkways should be separated from vehicular traffic wherever possible. Where walkways cross vehicular circulation routes, the use of alternative hard surface materials is encouraged. Other features, such as landscaping treatments, signage and bollards, may be used to delineate pedestrian crossings. Large commercial projects should incorporate wider walkways, particularly at the main building entrance.
- Sidewalk surface treatments should provide for safe movement under all weather conditions and be of low maintenance materials. Textured concrete with score lines and banded edges of other paving

materials is encouraged given concrete's durability and neutrality.

- Major pedestrian routes should be easily identifiable through the use of bollards, trees, continuous paving materials, signage and lighting.
- Bicycle racks or indoor bicycle storage should be provided near the entrances to major buildings and service commercial uses, and along major commercial streets.
- Bicycle parking areas should not impede pedestrian circulation.
- The rack element should support the bike upright by its frame. Comb, toast and other wheel bending racks that provide no support for the bicycle are not recommended.
- The number of bicycle parking spaces should be evaluated on a site-by-site basis based on the use and location.

3.5.3 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Parking (Section 3.2)

- Parking areas should be near building entrances and provide an easily identifiable pathway to the building entrance. Barrier-free and visitor parking spaces should be close to the main entrance.
- Parking areas should generally be located behind the building mass at the side and rear of buildings. This will allow buildings to be located closer to the street and reinforce the City's objective of creating attractive, pedestrian-oriented streets.
- When parking cannot be located behind the building mass or is required in the front yard for small commercial developments, front yard parking should be limited to single or double loaded aisle of parking.
- For large parking areas, rows of parking spaces should be aligned perpendicular to the facility to minimize the number of pedestrian aisle crossings.
- Buffer strips and landscaping should be provided around the perimeter of parking areas and laneways. Buffer strips will vary in width and extent and should generally be a minimum of 3 metres in width, depending on site characteristics, streetscape, grades, and adjacent uses.
- Parking areas should be adequately screened from view using landscaping, berms, fences, and

screening. Low level screening of shrubs, hedges, or screen walls along with street trees should edge parking lots next to public streets. Tall and dense screening such as wood fences, brick walls and coniferous trees should be used in rear and side yards adjacent to residential properties.

- Curbed landscaped islands should be utilized at the end of parking lot aisles along major vehicular routes. Islands should also be used to visually divide large parking lots. The provision of islands and internal landscaping should be of a scale relative to the size of the parking lot and be 2.5 to 3 metres in width to sustain tree planting. Additional guidelines are provided in Section 3.3, Landscaping Design.
- Parking lot plant material should be salt and drought tolerant, provide ease of maintenance and be hardy and strongly branched. Hardy ground covers, stone mulch or similar materials, should be used in parking lot landscaped islands.
- Parking lot lighting levels should be uniform across the lot.
- Well-drained snow storage areas should be located adjacent to parking areas and away from catch basins, if possible, if snow will not be trucked off-site.
- Generally, permanent parking lots should be curbed and paved with an appropriate strength of asphalt or equivalent hard surface material.

3.5.4 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Loading (Section 3.2)

- Loading bays, and other service areas should be oriented away from public street views and preferably screened from the street by building mass.
- Landscaping and walls can be used to screen loading areas from the street and adjacent residential areas where they cannot be screened by buildings.
- Landscape and building materials utilized to screen service areas should be consistent with the overall building design and materials.
- Continuous sources of noise and odour should be oriented away from adjacent sensitive uses. Particular attention should be given to major commercial areas and industrial with 24 hour loading requirements.
- Noise attenuation may be required for service areas to ensure compatibility for adjacent sensitive uses such as residential or healthcare facilities.
- Commercial and industrial areas with significant shipping/loading requirements should have separate truck access on the site.
- Signage should be placed to clearly identify loading and service areas.
- Truck access to service and loading areas should be designed with sufficient space so that truck movements will not disrupt other vehicular and pedestrian access. On-site circulation for trucks should avoid reversing or maneuvering on public streets.
- Provision of loading and service areas in the downtown area should be flexible having regard to the built form and streetscape of the area.

3.5.5 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Storage Areas (Section 3.2)

- Goods should be stored within the main building structures wherever possible.
- Outdoor storage areas should be located in the side and rear yards and not adjacent to public streets.
- Permitted outdoor storage should be screened from public views. Techniques may include berming, fencing and landscaping.

3.5.6 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Utilities (Section 3.2)

- Utilities should be located underground, where possible, to improve the appearance of the development. Where aboveground utilities are necessary, ensure their design is integrated and compatible with other site elements.
- Screen utility areas and mechanical equipment from public view having regard for maintenance and access practices.

3.6 Architectural Guidelines

Architectural design guidelines serve as a framework that defines the look and feel of buildings and structures within a designated area. By offering clear directives on aesthetics, scale, materials, and spatial organization, these guidelines ensure a cohesive and harmonious visual language that contributes to the overall identity of a Neighbourhood. As a result, they can help preserve the unique charm and cultural heritage of a locale and also foster a sense of continuity and community pride. The importance of architectural design guidelines lies in their ability to balance creativity and functionality, laying the groundwork for sustainable, visually pleasing, and culturally rich urban environments.

3.6.1 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Massing and Building Design (Section 4.4)

- The principal building facades should be oriented toward the public street and not the parking lots or other areas.
- Building designs should typically incorporate the concept of base, middle and cap to create visual interest at grade and reduce the scale of taller buildings. The architectural style and scale of the building should be considered and appropriate design strategies created.
- The main facades should have sufficient translucent glazing to provide casual surveillance of outdoor areas.
- The main entrances to a building should be emphasized using canopies and other treatments that will provide both visual identification as well as weather protection for pedestrians.
- Tall buildings located close to the street should have their upper floors stepback beyond the base floors to allow sunlight to reach the street, minimize shadow impacts and reduce the scale of the building as perceived along the street.
- Building design should break up large building facades at street level and avoid flat or blank walls. Where large sections of blank wall are unavoidable, architectural techniques such as modulation, display windows, textures and colour changes can be used to enhance the elevation.
- In urban neighbourhoods with buildings close to lot lines, buildings that abut lower or higher scale buildings should be designed to ensure a transition of scale. Building size and the location of elements such as windows, cornices and roofs can be used to scale and proportion buildings that transition with adjacent structures.
- In urban neighbourhoods, designs that compliment the more elaborate existing buildings in the degree of complexity and detailing are encouraged.

3.6.2 Guidelines for Architectural Detailing

- Architectural detailing should be compatible with the architectural styles prevalent in the Neighbourhood, as well as the historical, cultural, or contextual influences of the area.
- Ensure cohesive use of materials, styles, forms, and other architectural elements throughout the building to create a seamless and integrated appearance.
- Consideration should be given to the size, dimensions, and visual weight of individual design elements in relation to the overall size and massing of the entire building.
- Prioritize quality over quantity, incorporating ornamentation and decorative elements selectively to enhance the design without overwhelming the visual composition.
- The selection of materials for architectural detailing should align with the overall design scheme, both in terms of color palette and texture.
- To enhance the visual interest and avoid monotony, strategically incorporate architectural detailing to break up extensive wall expanses. This involves thoughtful placement of features such as moldings, trims, or other decorative elements to introduce texture, depth, and visual complexity.
- High-quality craftsmanship should be prioritized in the execution of architectural details.
- Ensure that detailing materials are durable, weather-resistant, and suitable for the local climate. Consider the long-term impact of detailing choices on the building's maintenance requirements.
- Avoid features that may create obstacles for pedestrians or individuals with disabilities. Consider incorporating tactile or visual cues for elements like stairways or ramps.
- Explore incorporating materials and practices that reduce the overall ecological impact of the structure. For example, selecting locally sourced and renewable materials, utilizing recycled or upcycled materials, integrating shading devices or natural ventilation systems, or incorporating green roofs or walls.

3.6.3 Guidelines for Main Entrances

- Design main entrances to serve as focal points, drawing attention to the building's primary access. Incorporate architectural elements that distinguish the main entrance from secondary entrances, such as an ungraded doorway, canopy, or unique materials.
- Ensure clear and well-defined pedestrian pathways leading to the main entrance. Avoid obstacles or unnecessary diversions along the approach.
- Consider features like planters, trees, and flowers to enhance the main entrance. This touch of nature will soften the architectural lines and frame the focal points, directing attention toward the main entrance.
- Integrate architectural canopies or porticos over main entrances to provide shelter and define the entrance area.
- Illuminate main entrances effectively to promote safety and ensure visibility during day and night.
- Design main entrances in compliance with AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) to ensure that these spaces are usable by people of all ages and abilities.
- Integrate glass elements to enhance visibility into the building from the main entrance.
- Visually distinguish residential entrances from commercial entrances at mixed-use buildings.

3.6.4 Guidelines for Porches and Porticos

- Consideration should be given to the size, dimensions, and visual weight of porches and porticos, in relation to the overall size and massing of the entire building.
- Choose materials, finishes, and details that integrates seamlessly with the overall design of the building. Ensure design consistency is achieved for the roof, columns, supports, railings, balustrades, and flooring.
- Integrate lighting fixtures that enhance visibility and security.
- Enhance the porch/portico with landscaping elements such as planters and potted plants.
- Design porches and porticos in compliance with AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) to ensure that these spaces are usable by people of all ages and abilities.
- Design porches/porticos to provide adequate protection from adverse weather conditions. Consider adding features like overhangs or vestibules for additional shelter.

3.6.5 Guidelines for Wall Cladding

- Consider using durable materials for wall cladding to withstand environmental stressors such as sunlight, rain, wind, and temperature fluctuations. Common durable materials include brick, stone, metal, fiber cement, and certain types of wood.
- Consider a variety of materials, such as natural stone, brick, metal, wood, or composite materials, to add visual interest and integrate diverse textures and tones into the overall architectural composition.
- Ensure that the selected materials complement the architectural style and character of surrounding buildings.
- Avoid oversized or undersized cladding components that may disrupt visual balance.
- Maintain consistency in the choice of wall cladding materials across different facades of a building. Avoid abrupt transitions between different materials that may disrupt the overall design cohesiveness.

3.6.6 Guidelines for Garages

- If possible, avoid oversized garages that dominate the visual field and disrupt the balance of the streetscape.
- Place garages at the rear of the property or within the building footprint whenever possible to maintain a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- Design garage doors and structures to complement the architectural style of the main dwelling and the surrounding context. Select styles, materials, and structures that align with the prevailing architectural elements.
- Consider the use of garage doors with windows or architectural detailing to add visual interest. Thoughtful architectural detailing aligns the garage design with the main dwelling and elevates the overall aesthetic coherence of the property.
- Provide safe and well-designed pedestrian access to the garage
- Implement appropriate exterior lighting around the garage area to enhance safety and security.

3.6.7 Guidelines for Windows

- Integrate windows into the building's overall architectural style and composition. Maintain consistency in window design and placement across different facades of the building.
- Avoid excessive fragmentation or irregular window placement that may disrupt the visual coherence of the facade.
- Align windows horizontally and vertically to establish a sense of order and symmetry. Additionally, thoughtful consideration of window alignment with neighbouring buildings will help establish a harmonious streetscape.
- Enhance the aesthetic appeal of windows by incorporating architectural framing and molding.
- If required, consider incorporating shading devices, such as awnings, louvers, or overhangs, to control sunlight and reduce glare.
- Optimize window placement to maximize natural light. Strategic positioning based on sun exposure and microclimate allows for the maximum infusion of daylight into interior spaces.
- Prioritize energy-efficient window systems to enhance sustainability and reduce environmental impact.
- Ensure that window designs accommodate the local climate and seasonal variations. Considerations may include features like double glazing to improve insulation.

3.6.8 Guidelines for Roofs

- Ensure that the roof design aligns with the overall architectural style of the building and surrounding structures. Maintain consistent roof heights within a block or streetscape to create a harmonious skyline.
- Consider local climate conditions and the durability of materials to ensure longevity.
- Determine the appropriate roof pitch based on architectural style, climate considerations, and zoning regulations. Different architectural styles may call for specific roof pitches to maintain design cohesion, while climate considerations, such as heavy snowfall or frequent rainfall, may influence the pitch to optimize drainage and prevent structural issues.
- Consider variations in roof forms, such as gabled, hipped, or flat roofs, to add visual interest.
- Explore opportunities for green roofs or solar panels to promote sustainability and energy efficiency.
- Consider the visual impact of rooflines when viewed from different vantage points such as the street, neighbouring properties, or elevated viewpoints.
- Consider incorporating architectural details and ornamentation on roof edges or dormers to add character. Avoid excessive ornamentation that may overwhelm the overall design.
- Establish a visual hierarchy by varying roof heights to create a sense of depth and interest. Use taller roofs for prominent structures and lower profiles for subordinate buildings.
- Designate accessible and safe areas for rooftop access where applicable.
- Explore opportunities for rooftop gardens, terraces, or other functional uses.
- Be mindful of the impact of roof designs on views and sightlines.

3.6.9 Guidelines Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Natural Surveillance:

Design buildings and public spaces with clear sightlines to maximize visibility, making it easier for residents, passersby, and law enforcement to observe activities.

Territorial Reinforcement:

Establish and communicate clear boundaries between public and private spaces, reinforcing a sense of ownership and territorial control by legitimate users.

Natural Access Control:

Design entrances and pathways to control and guide the flow of people, discouraging unauthorized access and enhancing the perception of safety.

Target Hardening:

Implement physical security measures, such as adequate lighting, fencing, and landscaping, to deter criminal behavior and enhance the security of properties.

Defensible Space:

Create spaces that residents feel a sense of ownership over, making them more likely to monitor and maintain, which in turn discourages criminal activity.

Proper Lighting:

Ensure adequately-lit public spaces, walkways, and parking areas to enhance visibility and reduce hiding spots, contributing to a safer environment.

Clear Design:

Simplify the layout and design of spaces to reduce confusion and enhance wayfinding, making it easier for users to navigate the environment safely.

Maintenance and Upkeep:

Encourage regular maintenance of public spaces, buildings, and infrastructure to prevent physical decay and disorder, which can attract criminal activity.

3.6.10 Guidelines for Commercial and Mixed-Use Properties

Prominent Entrances:

- Position commercial entrances to face main thoroughfares for maximum visibility.
- Ensure easy access for pedestrians and design drop-off points for customer convenience.

Pedestrian Flow:

- Create pedestrian connections that lead customers seamlessly through the commercial area. Design outdoor seating areas to encourage social interaction.

Vehicular Access:

- Optimize vehicular circulation for easy access to storefronts and parking areas.
- Design drop-off zones for quick customer loading and unloading.

Commercial Scale:

- Tailor the scale of commercial buildings to the surrounding context, maintaining a balance between a vibrant commercial presence and compatibility with neighbouring structures.
- Consider setbacks and articulations to break down massing and create an engaging streetscape.

Distinctive Entrances:

- Design entrances with architectural features that distinguish commercial properties from other building types.
- Use awnings, canopies, or signage to highlight entrances and improve wayfinding.

Brand Expression:

- Encourage businesses to express their brand through the façade while maintaining a cohesive overall design for the commercial area.
- Consider a unified color palette or material theme to tie the area together.

Efficient Parking Layout:

- Design parking areas for optimal use of space, considering shared parking agreements between businesses.
- Integrate landscaping and greenery to enhance the visual appeal of parking lots.

Aesthetic Screening:

- Screen parking areas from public view using landscaping, decorative fencing, or architectural features.
- Consider incorporating public art into screening elements for added visual interest.

Discreet Service Access:

- Designate well-defined service areas that are discreet yet efficient for deliveries.
- Use landscaping or architectural elements to screen service areas from public view.

Clear and Consistent Signage:

- Establish guidelines for clear and cohesive signage that promotes individual business identity while contributing to the overall character of the commercial area.
- Ensure readability and visibility from a distance.

Pedestrian-Friendly Lighting:

- Install pedestrian-scale lighting to enhance the nighttime ambiance and safety.
- Illuminate signage effectively without creating excessive light pollution.

3.7 Landscape Guidelines

Landscape plays a pivotal role in shaping the physical and experiential aspects of a city or neighbourhood. Green spaces, parks, and thoughtful landscaping provide essential breathing room amidst their concrete surroundings, fostering a healthier environment and enhancing residents' well-being. In addition to their ecological benefits, landscapes offer opportunities for community gathering, recreation, and social interaction. The strategic inclusion of nature within urban design not only creates visually appealing environments but also promotes a sense of place, identity, and well-being. The importance of landscape lies in its capacity to transform sterile urban settings into vibrant, livable spaces that cater to the diverse needs and desires of the community.

3.7.1 Hamilton Site Design Guidelines related to Landscape Design (Section 3.3)

- Landscaping should consider, reflect and/or improve established neighbourhood landscape character. Front yard landscaping should be compatible with adjacent properties along the street where applicable and result in a positive impact on the street.
- Existing site features should be incorporated into the landscape design, where practical. The landscape design should take advantage of on-site conditions such as slopes, view corridors, or existing trees.
- The scale and function of landscape materials should be appropriate for the site and its structures and to maintain a pedestrian scale. Trees should be selected and placed according to the height and spread they will achieve at maturity.
- Trees and shrubs should be selected having regard to their characteristics and those of the proposed locations. Considerations include soil type, sun, root spread, growth rate, density of canopy, salt tolerance and others. Native and non-invasive plant species are encouraged.
- Both hard and soft landscaping solutions and materials should be considered in the design process.
- Landscape treatments such as planting beds, hedges, fences, and architectural screening walls should be incorporated to distinguish private and semi-private spaces.
- Street trees should be planted to enhance streetscapes and contribute to Hamilton's urban forest. Street trees should be spaced relative to their mature size, and the location of utilities in the right of way. Tree spacing may vary depending on the type of tree, land use and adjacent properties.
- Irrigation is recommended for major commercial and multi-residential developments. Locations can include plantings adjacent to the street, raised planters, tree pits in paving, main entrance areas and interior landscaped planting areas in parking lots.
- Street trees should be planted along the street line in a continuous linear row, generally spaced 7-12 meters apart depending on tree maturity size. Street trees may be planted in combination with other plant materials, particularly at site entries and to improve the streetscape.
- Deciduous trees should be planted at all properties in a continuous linear row, or in groupings appropriate to the site size and configuration. Tree spacing may vary depending on the type of use, and adjacent properties.
- Trees planted in walkways or plazas should be in individual tree pits, or linear planting beds. Individual tree pits should be large enough to accommodate tree growth, with a range of 16-21 cubic meters of growing medium where possible.
- Trees, shrubs and plant material should be grouped to frame building elevations, add visual interest to blank building facades, accentuate building entrances and screen service areas.
- Plant materials should be used to provide colour and decoration having regard for seasonal changes and Hamilton's climate.
- Special landscape treatments can be used to mark street intersections, site entries and building entrances
- Native plant materials should be considered, especially for use in stormwater management areas and adjacent to natural areas. The use of invasive plant species must be avoided within 300m of natural areas.

- Traffic islands and planting areas should be used to break up large parking lots. Traffic islands should be raised and designed for low maintenance with salt tolerant plant material. Landscaped islands should be at least 2.5 metres in width. All hard surfaces within islands should be a material other than asphalt
- Landscaped strips adjacent to parking areas should be planted to screen parked cars from the abutting street or adjacent properties. Landscaped strips are non-paved surfaces and should be 2.5 to 3 metres in width, with tree planting and shrubs.
- Landscaping should be used to screen and buffer service areas (i.e. waste disposal and loading areas) and open storage areas. Screening may consist of a wall or fence, a landscaped screen, dense landscape planting, landscaped berm or a combination of these features.
    - Low screening priority: provide definition between properties with medium to low level mass planting, (max. 1.2m ht.), low rail fencing, or berming in combination with planting, maintaining open site lines.
    - Medium screening priority: provided by fencing, planting or a combination of both to delineate site functions, and provide visual interest.
    - High screening priority: Use of wood screen fencing, masonry walls or a solid coniferous screen which may include chain link fencing to provide an impervious edge.

3.7.2 Guidelines for Parks and Open Space

- Design parks with versatile zones to accommodate various recreational activities, such as sports, picnics, and relaxation, in keeping with the City's parkland classifications.
- Provide a mix of recreational facilities, including playgrounds, sports courts, and fitness zones. Provide ample seating throughout the park, ensuring comfort and relaxation. Provide shaded and well-equipped picnic areas with seating and amenities for community use. Allocate specific areas for active and passive uses to cater to diverse community needs.
- Designate areas suitable for community events, performances, and gatherings.Incorporate amphitheaters, plazas, or open lawns that can accommodate various community activities.
- Consider integrating barbecue facilities and/or designated spaces for food trucks.
- Prioritize pedestrian pathways to ensure safe and convenient access throughout the park. Consider bike lanes and other alternative modes of transportation to encourage eco-friendly commuting.
- Connect park entrances to nearby Neighbourhoods and transit nodes to enhance accessibility.
- Ensure that pathways are accessible to individuals with disabilities, promoting inclusivity.
- Design landscapes that prioritize the use of native plants to enhance biodiversity and adaptability.

Integrate a variety of plant species to provide an attractive natural environment. Plan for year-round use and visual interest by incorporating plants with varying seasonal attributes.

- Include shaded areas with trees and/or pergolas for relief during hot seasons.
- Consider the demographics and preferences of the community when selecting amenities. Integrate amenities for all age groups, including playgrounds for children and fitness zones for adults, as per City's parkland classifications.
- Establish a regular maintenance schedule to ensure the ongoing safety and functionality of recreational amenities.
- Where possible, integrate sustainable water features such as ponds and rain gardens. Incorporate water-wise landscaping to promote efficient water usage. Implement sustainable irrigation practices to minimize water consumption.
- Consider amenities such as dog parks to accommodate pet owners.
- Utilize energy-efficient lighting solutions such as LED fixtures and solar-powered lighting where applicable to reduce environmental impact.
- Ensure well-lit pathways and open spaces to enhance visibility and safety. Trim vegetation and plan for open sightlines to prevent concealed areas.
- Integrate public art installations to enhance the cultural appeal of the park. Collaborate with local artists and communities to create meaningful and relevant artworks.
- Designate accessible routes for emergency services and ensure clear wayfinding signage.
- Implement safety measures, including first aid stations and emergency contact information.
- Seek input from the community or stakeholders when designing parks and open space. Foster a sense of community ownership by involving residents in the decision-making process.

SECTION 4

Analysis and Implementation

4.1 Analysis of Proposal: UHOP Policy and Design Response

4.1.1 Respecting Existing Context

In the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, emphasis is placed on preserving the existing context by respecting character, development patterns, and landscapes. New structures should prioritize visual cohesiveness with the existing urban fabric using materials that are compatible with the existing context. Quality design tailored to the locale is promoted, recognizing each building as part of a greater whole. Cultural history and built heritage are respected, and efforts extend to conserving natural heritage, maintaining topography where possible, and being aware of prominent city sites, views, and vistas.

In response to growing housing needs and provincial growth targets, Whitechurch Secondary Plan establishes a new residential community that aligns with the principles outlined in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. Situated between a residential subdivision, an airport employment growth district, and rural land, the envisioned residential community is positioned to seamlessly integrate urban and rural elements. First, the development proposal establishes continuity with the Mount Hope residential subdivision, creating a transition that is sensitive to the existing neighbourhood fabric. Second, this proposal fosters economic synergy with the airport employment growth district, as well as the major transportation corridors along Upper James Street. These corridors include the future Bus Rapid Transit network (BLAST) to the north, as well as Highway 6 to the south. Upper James Street is a major arterial road, where the Mixed-Use Medium Density node is proposed. Furthermore, the proposed development demonstrates a thoughtful approach in its adjacency to rural land by considering the scale and intensity of development while respecting existing natural heritage features. This community is poised to become an integral part of a cohesive whole, ensuring a positive contribution to the established City and neighbourhood fabric.

4.1.2 Connectivity, Safety, and Accessibility

Urban Hamilton Official Plan policy prioritizes efficient space organization through logical design and construction of buildings, streets, and landscaping. Connectivity is created through safe networks that accommodate users of all abilities. Urban design policies also encourage accessibility through integrating public transit and cycling infrastructure, along with pedestrian-friendly lighting. The intent is to create places and spaces that are publicly visible and safe.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan promotes connectivity, accessibility, and logical design within multiple elements of its development proposal. First, the implementation of a grid network for local roads generates efficient circulation through the site, creating effective navigation and reducing traffic congestion by dispersing traffic evenly. Second, the plan incorporates a network of trails weaving through the subdivision blocks, enhancing accessibility and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists. Third, the development proposal incorporates roundabouts at the intersections of the local road network, reflecting a commitment to efficient traffic flow, improved safety, and an aesthetically pleasing streetscape. The Section 3 Urban Design Guidelines provide additional framework for connected, human-scale and visible spaces at a site design level. These guidelines emphasize the importance of integrating active transportation modes, promoting connectivity between streets and buildings, and making spaces accessible for individuals of all abilities.

4.1.3 Adaptive Design

Urban Hamilton Official Plan policy supports the evolution of built form over time through additions and alterations that are compatible with existing architectural massing and style. It encourages harmonious and compatible infilling by minimizing shadowing impacts and maximizing light for adjacent properties and the public realm. Additionally, the design promotes versatility, accommodating changing social, economic, and technological conditions by creating buildings, sites, and public spaces suitable for a variety of uses in the future.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan promotes versatility and adaptive design by establishing an efficient road network coupled with a land use framework capable of accommodating various residential housing types, densities, and mixed-use structures. It proposes higher densities and a mix of uses along Upper James Street, a key arterial route. This is supported by urban design principles because higher-density development along major transportation corridors enhance transit accessibility, promotes efficient use of infrastructure, and contributes to the creation of vibrant, mixed-use urban environments. The areas that surround the local roads are designated "neighbourhoods" while respecting preserved natural heritage features and allowing for parkettes along the trail network. The plan's intentional flexibility allows individual applications to be assessed based on their contextual fit, ensuring that development aligns with existing surroundings while managing growth in a managed and planned way. This adaptability enables the community to respond effectively to changing conditions within a resilient framework for sustained relevance and suitability.

4.1.4 Future-ready and Sustainable Design

Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies prioritize sustainability by promoting energy efficiency in neighbourhood design, advocating for compact development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The approach integrates, protects, and enhances environmental features and landscapes through thoughtful building and site design, emphasizing on-site stormwater management. Additionally, the guidelines encourage the use of environmental building rating tools and techniques, urging a reduction in resource consumption and the prevention of contaminant release during building and site development.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan effectively addresses sustainability through several key measures. Notably, the plan retains natural heritage features such as wooded areas where possible, incorporating them into the recreational trail network. This approach aligns with sustainable land use practices, preserving critical ecosystems within the community. Additionally, the plan integrates effective stormwater management systems, addressing an important aspect of environmental resilience. At a site design level, the accompanying Urban Design Guidelines explicitly recommend incorporating street trees where possible, creating an urban canopy, utilizing native plant materials, and using sustainable methods and materials. This reflects a comprehensive strategy to minimize environmental impact. By incorporating these sustainability measures, the Whitechurch Secondary Plan seeks to ensure the responsible development of the community, considering both ecological preservation and long-term environmental health.

4.1.5 Active Communities

Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies actively promote the vibrancy of the public realm by strategically placing buildings, enhancing pedestrian amenities, and creating high-quality streetscapes, parks, and open spaces. These design elements aim to not only foster social interaction but also encourage physical activity and support active transportation. To ensure inclusivity, the guidelines promote an equitable distribution of accessible amenity areas, catering to both active and passive recreational needs. Public art is also encouraged.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan promotes the development of vibrant and engaged communities by developing a robust circulation network alongside comprehensive guidelines that prioritize generating activity in the public realm. The integration of trails, gateways, parks, woodlots, and an efficient network of local roads combine to create a community-oriented environment that encourages social interaction and promotes physical activity. The accompanying guidelines emphasize human-scale built forms with 'eyes on the street'. Recommendations for streetscape enhancements, including street trees, benches, and plazas, aim to create inviting public spaces that encourage social interaction. Moreover, pedestrian features such as transparent glazing, proper lighting, and well-designed walkways contribute to an activated streetscape. In combination, these elements within the Whitechurch Secondary Plan work cohesively to lay the foundation for the development of active and interconnected communities.

4.1.6 Active Streetscapes

Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies prioritizes designing active and animated streetscapes using features such as public gathering places, patios, and sidewalk cafés. Emphasis is placed on providing adequate and accessible space for pedestrians, active transportation, transit, vehicles, and utilities. Key elements include continuous sidewalks, landscaped boulevards with street trees, and pedestrian amenities like lighting, seating, way-finding signage, and urban braille. On-street parking and the integration of public art further contribute to a well-rounded and engaging urban environment.

The Whitechurch Secondary Plan Urban Design Guidelines promote well-designed and active streetscapes by providing comprehensive recommendations across various elements, such as street trees, vegetation, furniture, cycling features, and lighting. Furthermore, the guidelines address built form, glazing, and spatial enclosure , recognizing that the combination of these elements is key to creating well-designed, active, and inviting streetscapes.

Section 3 also provides information on dimensions, setbacks, and includes practical examples. This ensures that the streetscapes, including different pedestrian zones like buffer zones, furniture zones, walkway zones, and frontage zones, are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. These zones can be combined in various configurations to accommodate diverse needs and street types. The suggested setbacks for various streetscape elements will facilitate the seamless integration of all these elements.

4.2 Implementation

4.2.1 Design Review Process

Development within the Whitechurch Secondary Plan will undertake all applicable planning review processes as required by the Ontario Planning Act. This includes obtaining approvals from the City of Hamilton regarding Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-Law Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision or Condominium, Site Plan Approval, and Building Permits.

The design review process typically involves preliminary discussions between applicants and planning authorities for project understanding and feedback. Following formal submission, planning staff reviews the application for completeness and compliance with the policies of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Applicants may be required to seek feedback and consultation from the public and Municipal review panels. The planning authority then decides to approve, deny, or conditionally approve the application based on a technical review of applicable policies. Appeals, if applicable, are heard by the Ontario Land Tribunal. If approved, the development proceeds to the implementation phase, obtaining building permits and adhering to approval conditions.

Additional reports and studies will also be required throughout the development application process, such as Environmental Impact Assessments, Functional Servicing Reports, Stormwater Management Reports, Shadow Studies, and other relevant information as required by the city. Site-specific requirements will be addressed through the Site Plan review process; and where applicable, draft conditions of approval will be provided by the City.

Any future planning applications to facilitate the development of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan area will be evaluated by the City of Hamilton against the Urban Design Guidelines to ensure proposed architectural designs and landscaping are consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines. Further, the City's Design Review Panel may also evaluate future development proposals against the Design Guidelines if required by the City of Hamilton Development Review staff.

4.2.2 Design Architect

To ensure smooth implementation of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan Urban Design Guidelines, a design architect is recommended to facilitate the approval of plans and drawings prior to the issuance of building permits. The design architect is typically retained at the owner or applicant's expense.

The design architect is expected to provide a clearly articulated statement of design intent. This includes formulating a design vision and establishing principles, goals, and objectives for both the larger neighbourhood or area and specific aspects related to detailed building design. The design architect further addresses the integration of the community structure with the surrounding context, employing methods and approaches to create distinct neighbourhoods that harmonize with the overall urban fabric. Noteworthy examples of this design guidance include criteria for community areas, ensuring diversity and compatibility in dwelling types and massing. This encompasses variations in façades achieved using different materials, porch designs, and strategic placement of garages and driveways. Specific architectural design criteria are also outlined, contributing to the overall community character by ensuring variations in dwelling facades, architectural detailing, design of main entrances, exterior wall articulation, roofs, grading conditions, and the placement of utilities and service elements.

4.2.3 Control Architect

During the development review process, City staff may require the applicant to retain a control architect to ensure compliance with the Whitechurch Secondary Plan Urban Design Guidelines. The control architect ensures compliance with Architectural and Urban Design Guidelines, reviewing the design of each lot, including

siting, built form, materials, colors, and landscaping. They act as a mediator in design-related disputes among builders, escalating issues to the Planning Division if necessary. Additionally, the control architect certifies all drawings for each lot or block, guaranteeing adherence to guidelines before building permit issuance, ensuring consistency and quality throughout the project. By meticulously reviewing plans and construction progress, a control architect safeguards the integrity of the Urban Design Guidelines, maintaining consistency and quality throughout the development.

The control architect will require licensure from the Ontario Association of Architects, demonstrating professional understanding of architectural principles and regulations. Additionally, relevant experience in overseeing and certifying diverse development projects enhances the control architect's credibility. A control architect's qualifications should reflect a comprehensive understanding of urban design, zoning regulations, and dispute resolution processes to effectively fulfill their role in ensuring the successful implementation of design guidelines.

4.2.4 Periodic Review

To ensure the effectiveness of the control architect, the City of Hamilton may undertake periodic reviews of certified drawings to ensure compliance with the Architectural and Urban Design Guidelines. If compliance is insufficient, the City of Hamilton has the authority to stop accepting certified drawings from the control architect. In such cases, the owner is required to engage another control architect who meets the approval of the Director of Planning and Chief Planner. Evaluating the effectiveness of a control architect involves assessing various aspects of their role and performance within the context of a development project. Key criteria to consider are listed below:

- Evaluating the extent to which the control architect ensures compliance with Architectural and Urban Design Guidelines.
- Assessing the control architect's effectiveness in mediating and resolving design-related disputes among builders.
- Verifying that the certification aligns with the approved architectural guidelines and occurs before building permit issuance.
- Evaluating the timeliness and clarity of the control architect's communication, particularly in conveying disputes to the Planning Division and providing feedback to builders.
- Soliciting feedback from various stakeholders involved in the development process.

4.2.5 Advisory Notes

This document incorporates photographs of design inspirations that are meant to convey the conceptual vision of this plan. It is important to note that these images serve illustrative purposes exclusively and are not intended for construction use. Consequently, they may not accurately depict the final product that will be constructed. Their primary function is to provide a conceptual overview rather than to serve as precise representations of the eventual built outcome.

4.2.6 Coordination

Development of the Urban Design and Architectural Guidelines shall be coordinated with other City Staff and relevant agencies to ensure compliance with City wide policies and practices where possible.

4.3 Conclusion

In summary, the Whitechurch Secondary Plan, accompanied by the Urban Design Guidelines within this report, serves as a robust framework that aligns seamlessly with established urban design policies. The land use proposal showcases a well-considered transition between urban and rural elements. This thoughtful approach considers the plan's positioning within an urban context, situated amidst a residential subdivision, an airport employment growth district, and rural land.

The promotion of higher densities along major arterials and neighbourhoods along local roads reflects an understanding of functional and contextual needs. The proposal not only aligns with the Urban Hamilton Official Plan but also fosters economic synergy with the adjacent employment district, showcasing a holistic approach to urban development. Whitechurch Secondary Plan's grid network for local roads, incorporation of trails, and implementation of roundabouts at intersections underscore a commitment to efficient circulation and traffic flow.

Furthermore, the Urban Design Guidelines encourage human-scale built forms and streetscape enhancements such as street trees, benches, and plazas. These guidelines provide detailed recommendations for how to develop inviting public spaces that actively promote social interaction. Attention to pedestrian features like transparent glazing, proper lighting, and well-designed walkways adds an extra layer of functionality, safety, and engagement to the public realm. The architectural design guidelines also provide direction on architectural styles, materials, building proportions, and other design elements. These guidelines will support and maintain the overall character, identity, and quality within a community.

The implementation framework of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan is structured around a thorough design review process that adheres to the requirements of the Ontario Planning Act. The integration of a design architect or control architect may help ensure compliance with Urban Design Guidelines. In summary, the implementation framework incorporates multiple layers of oversight to ensure the successful application of the Whitechurch Secondary Plan's Urban Design Guidelines.