



# Urban Design Brief:

## 925 Main Street West

**Hamilton, Ontario**  
November 2024

**Prepared for:**  
**925 Main St. West (Hamilton) Ltd.**

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# Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1 Purpose of the Urban Design Brief                                    | 2         |
| 1.2 Site Context   | 2         |
| 1.3 Streetscape Context  | 4         |
| 1.4 Site Attributes & Limitations  | 6         |
| <b>2.0 MUNICIPAL POLICY REVIEW</b>                                       | <b>7</b>  |
| 2.1 The Urban Hamilton Official Plan, Urban Design Policies & Principles | 8         |
| 2.2 Transit-Oriented Corridor Mixed Use Density (Toc1) Zone              | 10        |
| <b>3.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| 3.1 Site Organization and Circulation                                    | 12        |
| 3.1.1 Site Organization  | 12        |
| 3.1.2 Pedestrian Circulation   | 13        |
| 3.1.3 Vehicular Circulation  | 13        |
| 3.2 Massing and Relationship to Context                                  | 14        |
| 3.2.1 Massing  | 14        |
| 3.2.2 Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses                           | 14        |
| 3.3 Architectural Design   | 15        |
| 3.4 Landscape Design   | 20        |
| <b>4.0 ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION</b>                                       | <b>23</b> |
| 4.1 Analysis of Proposal: Policy Reference and Design Response           | 24        |
| 4.2 Conclusion   | 28        |

# SECTION 1

Introduction



## 1.1 Purpose of the Urban Design Brief

This Design Brief has been prepared in support of an application for Site Plan control on behalf of 925 Main St. West (Hamilton) Ltd., the registered owner of the lands municipally known as 925 Main Street West in the City of Hamilton (referred to as “subject site”). Whitehouse Urban Design Inc has been retained to provide this design brief to address initial comments provided by the City, and the requirement to provide information to the Development Review Panel. The purpose of the Design Brief 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 100 km radius. This design brief has been prepared in keeping with the City of Hamilton’s guidelines regarding the same, the City’s Urban Design Policies and Principles November 2022), and the City’s initial Site Plan Submission comments.

## 1.2 Site Context

The subject site is 1.756 (1.938 with both site and parkette lands) hectares, irregularly shaped parcel with approximately 123 metres of frontage on Main Street West, and approximately 42 metres on Longwood Road South. The upper lands are currently designated as Neighbourhoods in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) and the lower lands as Open space, as “TOC1 and P5” in the City of Hamilton Zoning By-law No. 05-200. The lands are currently vacant. The subject site is proposed to provide 628 residential suites in two 25-storey towers connected by a 6-storey podium and 382 parking spaces in a 4-level underground parkade. The land is zoned Transit Oriented Corridor Mixed Use Medium Density (TOC1) and the lower lands are zoned Conservation/hazard land (P5) in the Hamilton Zoning By-law No. 05-200.

The Westdale South neighbourhood features a diverse range of uses and building types. Its eastern boundary extends to Highway 403, which includes medium- and high-density residential developments, single-family homes, and low- to medium-density commercial buildings. The western boundary is primarily dominated by single-detached homes and open spaces, bordering the eastern side of the McMaster University campus. Highway 403 forms the southern boundary of the Westdale South neighbourhood, which consists mainly of mixed-use developments with both commercial and medium residential developments. Main Street West serves as a primary corridor within the neighbourhood, featuring mixed-use, medium-density developments and a variety of amenities. This street connects Hamilton to Dundas and is a key route for travel to downtown Hamilton to the east or Dundas to the west. To the north, the Westdale South neighbourhood extends up to King Street West, comprising primarily low- to medium-density residential areas. The northern section is within walking distance to Churchill Park and various trail systems, most notably the Princess Point Trail. Churchill Park provides numerous recreational opportunities, including baseball fields, playgrounds, and soccer fields.



Figure 1 - Site Context Map



The Westdale South neighborhood is well-served by public transit. There are four bus stops conveniently located within 150 meters of the site, servicing both east and west along Main Street and north and south on Longwood. A key landmark within 1.8 kilometres of the site is the McMaster University Bus Terminal, located on the McMaster campus. This terminal connects riders to regional rail and bus services and is approximately a 25-minute walk or a 12-minute bike ride from the subject site. A proposed future light rail transit (LRT) line will run along Main Street West, connecting McMaster University to Eastgate on Centennial Road. This project will span 14

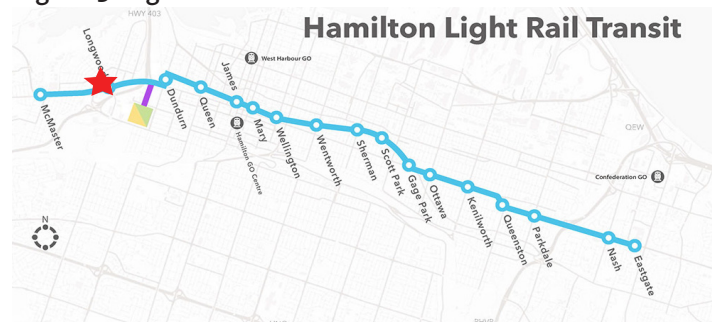
Figure 2: Hamilton Bus Routes



kilometers of efficient light rail service through Hamilton's downtown core. The modern LRT system is expected to link important areas, destinations, and institutions along Main Street, King Street, and Queenston Road, accommodating approximately 50,000 riders daily and supporting an additional 16,400 transit trips. Furthermore, the LRT will provide direct connections to GO Transit and HSR bus services.

A 1-kilometer radius is depicted in Figure 1, illustrating eight educational institutions and three public parks within this radius from the subject site.

Figure 3: Light Rail Transit Route





## 1.3 Streetscape Context

### Main Street West:

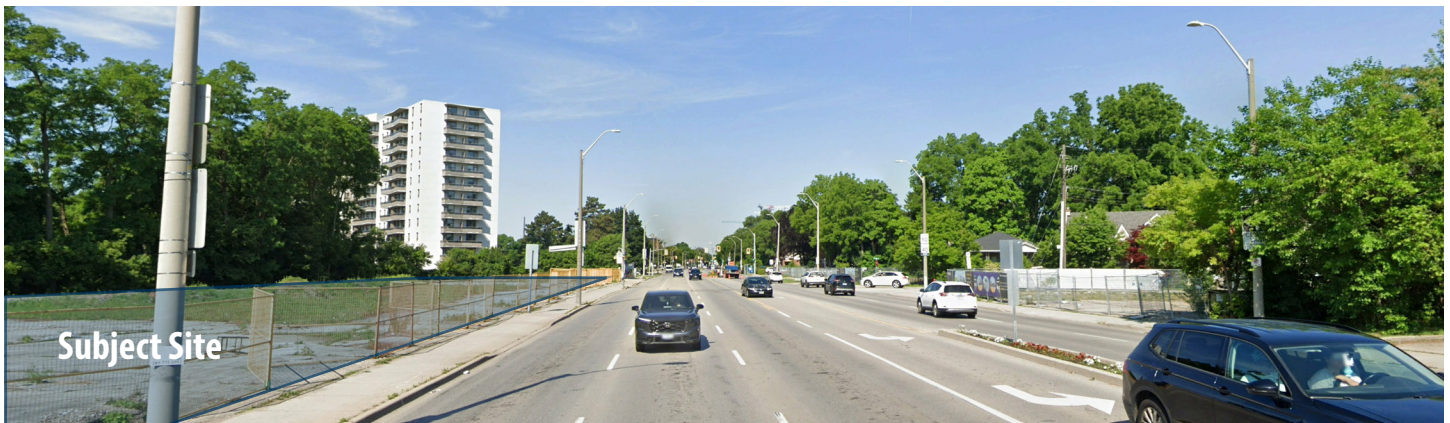
Main Street West runs east to west along the northern boundary of the site and is a two-way major arterial road that includes five lanes with no street parking. Three lanes travel east and 2 travel west with a designated left turn lane. The speed limit directly adjacent to the site is 40 kilometres per hour.

South of Main Street West mainly consists of mid to high-rise developments of both residential and commercial uses. North of Main Street West are mainly single detached dwellings with some institutional uses. The pedestrian realm is made up of sidewalks, sodded boulevards, and street trees.

View towards the East on Main Street West



View towards the West on Main Street West



**Longwood Road South:**

Longwood Road South runs north to south along the eastern boundary of the site. It is a two-way collector road that extends north into the Westdale North neighbourhood and south to Aberdeen Avenue, which provides access to Highway 403. Directly adjacent to the site, Longwood Road South features four lanes and has no on-street parking. The area north of Longwood Road primarily consists of single-detached homes and low to medium-density commercial buildings. In contrast, the area south of Longwood Road is designated as employment - business park, featuring various medium-density developments.

**View towards the North on Longwood Road South**



**View towards the South on Longwood Road South**





# 1.4 Site Attributes & Limitations

## Site Description and Location:

The site is in the Westdale South Neighbourhood, in the western area of Hamilton.

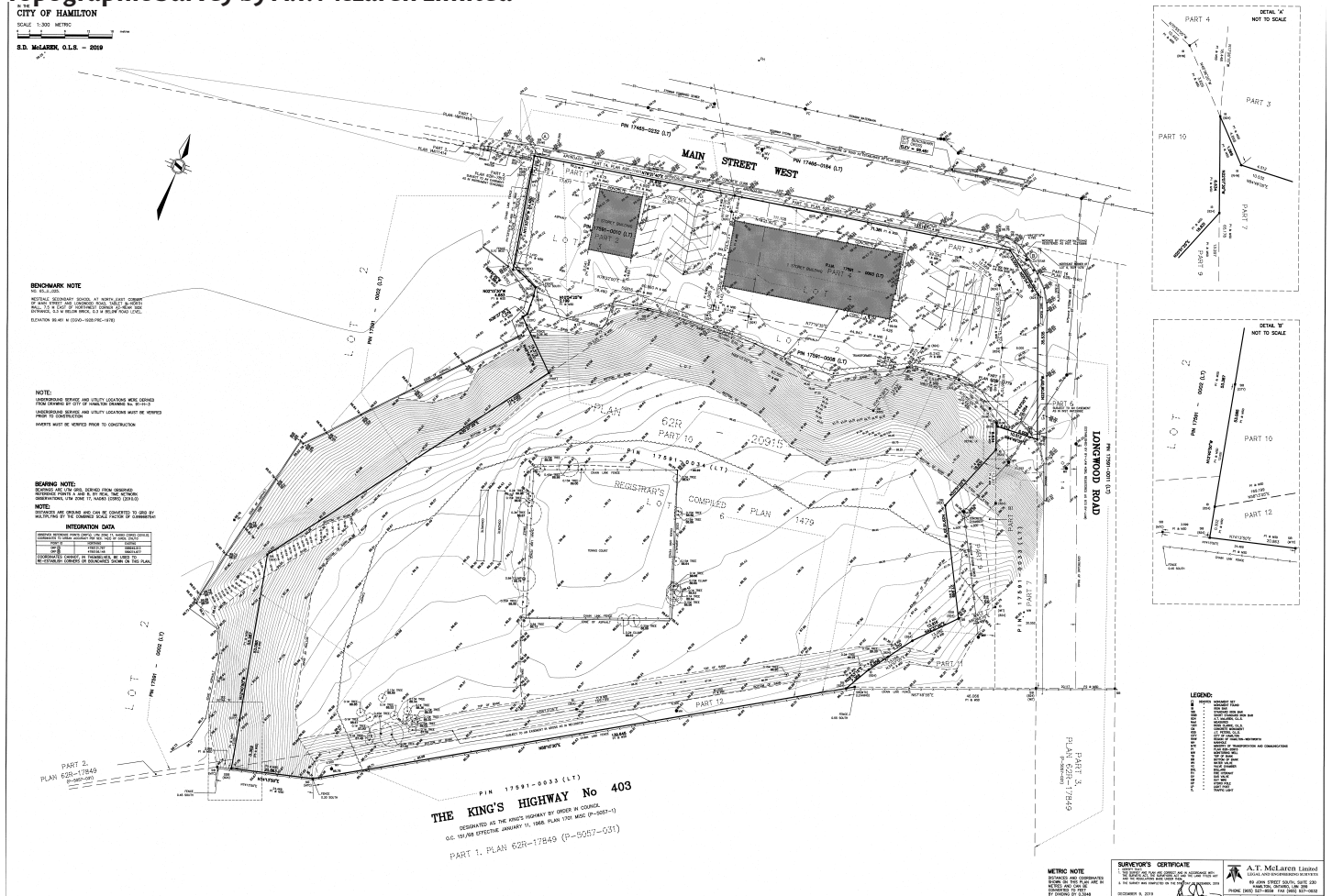
## Existing Buildings and Structures:

The land is currently vacant, with no buildings present on-site, only remnants from previous usage.

## Existing Topography and Vegetation:

As illustrated in the Topographic Survey provided by A.T. McLaren below, the existing grades generally slope from north to south, with the areas zoned P5 situated at a lower elevation, exhibiting a grade difference of roughly 10 meters. A steep slope surrounds the lower lands, with a gradient of 70%. These lower lands are covered by a tree canopy that extends from the top to the bottom of the slope bank. To improve site services access to the lower lands, re-engineering of slope, and overall aesthetics, much of the current material will be replaced with restoration planting zones.

## Topographic Survey by A.T. McLaren Limited



# SECTION 2

Municipal Policy Review



## 2.1 The Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP) Section B.3.3 - Urban Design Policies & Principles

The Urban Design principles for the proposed development, which apply to all development and redevelopment, are based on policies in B.3.3.2.3 through B.3.3.2.10 inclusive. These include:

- fostering a sense of community pride and identity;
- visually connecting the public and private realms;
- making places safe, accessible, connected, and easy to navigate;
- creating communities that are transit supportive and promote active transportation;
- creating places that are adaptable to future demographic and environmental changes;
- encouraging innovative community design and technology;
- enhancing the character of the existing environment; and
- promoting compatible intensification that makes appropriate and innovative use of buildings and sites.

### Urban Design Policies for Circulation, Site Organization, and Compatibility with Surrounding Context:

Urban Design Policies in Section B.3.3 applicable to **Circulation** accomplish the above principles through:

- connecting buildings and spaces through an efficient, intuitive, and safe network of streets, roads, alleys, lanes, sidewalks, pathways, and trails; (OPA 167)
- providing connections and access to all buildings and places for all users, regardless of age and physical ability;
- 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; and,
- Providing landscaped walkways that connect to pedestrian routes on site, particularly in areas with high levels of pedestrian traffic.

Urban design policies in Section B.3.3 applicable to **site organization** accomplish the above principles through:

- organizing space in a logical manner through the design, placement, and construction of new buildings, streets, structures, and landscaping;
- 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;
- creating places and spaces that are publicly visible and safe;
- complementing and animating existing surroundings through design and placement of buildings and pedestrian amenities;
- defining the street through consistent setbacks and building elevations;
- locating surface parking to the sides or rear of sites or building, where appropriate;
- using design techniques, such as building setbacks, to maximize sunlight to pedestrian areas;
- locating servicing and loading areas away from streets and screening them from view; and
- locating parking underground.

Urban design policies in Section B.3.3 applicable to **compatibility with surrounding context** accomplish the above principles through:

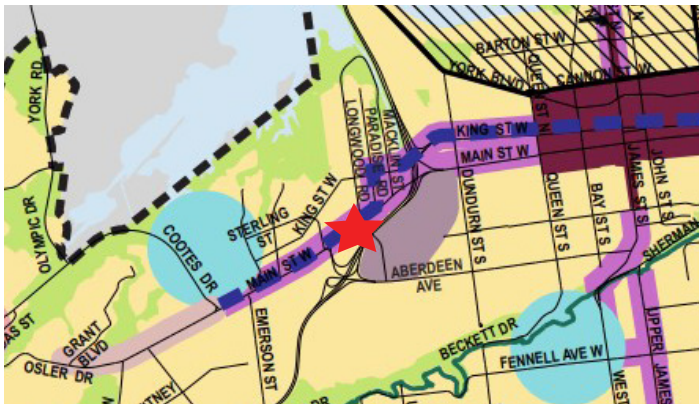
- relating to its role in the overall urban structure;
- respecting existing character, development patterns, built form, and landscape;
- promoting quality design consistent with the locale and surrounding environment;
- creating a continuous animated street edge in urban environments; and
- achieving compact development and resulting built forms.

**Urban Design Policies for Landscape Design:**

Urban design policies in Section B.3.3 applicable to **Landscape Design** accomplish the above principles through:

- contributing to the character and ambiance of the community through appropriate design of streetscapes and amenity areas;
- incorporating public art installations as an integral part of urban design;
- creating streets as public spaces that are accessible to all;
- including transitional areas between the public and private spaces where possible through use of features such as landscaping, planters, porches, canopies, and/or stairs;
- creating high quality, safe streetscapes, parks, and open spaces that encourage physical activity and active transportation;
- ensuring an equitable distribution of accessible and stimulating amenity areas, including the development of places for passive and active recreation and use;
- creating a streetscape environment that provides: adequate space for multi-modal use, continuous sidewalks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, pedestrian amenities, on street parking, public art, and gathering spaces; and
- including a quality landscape edge along frontages where buildings are set back from the street.

**Figure 4 - Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule E Urban Structure**

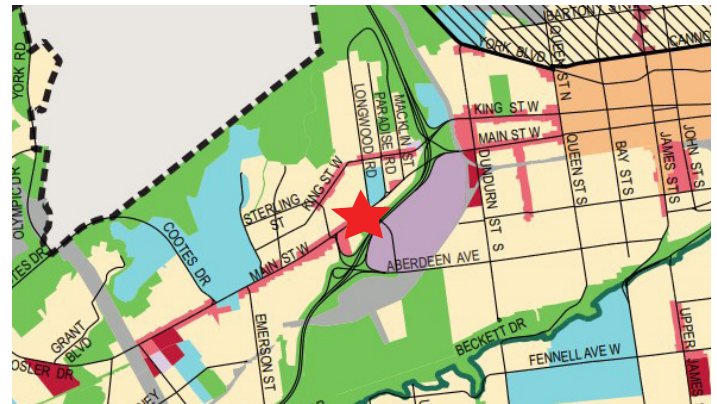


**Urban Design Policies for Architectural Design:**

Urban design policies in Section B.3.3 applicable to **Architectural Design** accomplish the above principles through:

- using materials that are consistent and compatible with the surrounding context in the design of new buildings;
- ensuring building entrances are visible from the street and promoting shelter at entrance ways; allowing built form to evolve over time through additions and alterations that are in harmony with existing architectural massing and style;
- complementing the existing massing patterns, rhythm, character, colour, and surrounding context;
- encouraging a harmonious and compatible approach to infilling by minimizing the impacts of shadowing and maximizing light to adjacent properties and the public realms;
- achieving compact development and resulting built forms;
- creating transitions in scale to neighbouring buildings;
- ensuring adequate privacy and sunlight to neighbouring properties; and,
- minimizing the impacts of shadow and wind conditions.

**Figure 5 - Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule E-1 Urban Land Use**



## 2.2 Transit-Oriented Corridor Mixed Use Density (Toc1) Zone

The TOC1 Zone is located along collector and arterial roads that function as higher-order transit corridors. The Zone provides for a mixture of service commercial, retail and residential uses in stand-alone or mixed-use buildings. The intent of the built form requirements is to create complete streets that are transit supportive and will provide for active, and pedestrian oriented streets.

# SECTION 3

Design Proposal

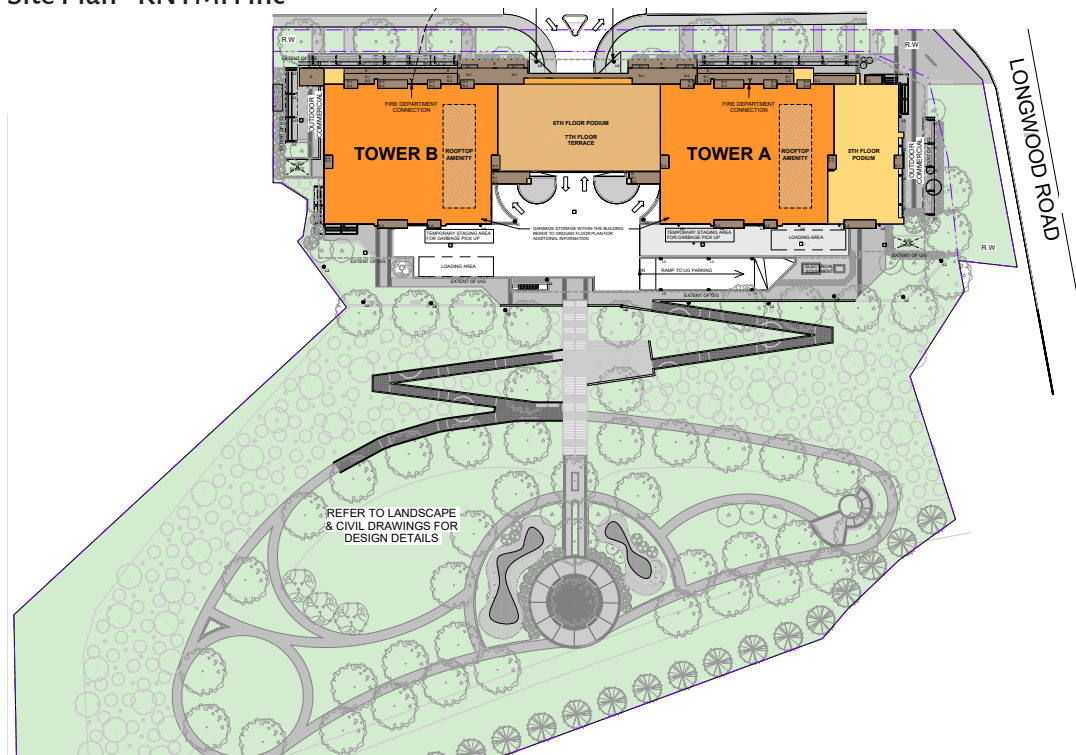
## 3.1 Site Organization and Circulation

### 3.1.1 Site Organization

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan encourages new developments to organize space in a way that animates its surroundings, visually connects the public and private realms, and promotes active transportation. The proposed development accomplishes these objectives and more through an intuitive site design that accommodates both pedestrian and vehicular circulation efficiently and safely.

The proposed development will feature a 6-storey podium and will include 628 residential suites. Outdoor amenity spaces will be available along the outer perimeter of the towers. Additionally, an at-grade amenity area will be located in the northern part of the site, along with spaces outside the commercial areas on both the east and west sides. 382 vehicle parking spaces are provided below grade, with access from Main Street West.

Site Plan - KNYMH Inc



### 3.1.2 Circulation

The proposed development prioritizes safe pedestrian movement by creating an internal layout that separates pedestrian traffic from vehicles. Walkways have been designed along all sides of the buildings, connecting Main Street West to the southern amenity space, and ensuring pedestrians remain separate from vehicular traffic. Vehicles can access the site from Main Street West, where they can drop off passengers at a designated drop-off loop or proceed directly to the ramp leading to the underground parking structure.

Pedestrians can enter or exit the site through the main doorway, which opens directly onto Main Street West, making it convenient for those using public transit. Designated loading and servicing areas are located at ground level behind the building. This placement helps screen these areas from the street, ensuring easier access to and from the site while providing ample room for maneuvering. Overall, this design facilitates smooth entry and exit from the site while offering sufficient space for movement.



### 3.1.3 Pedestrian Circulation

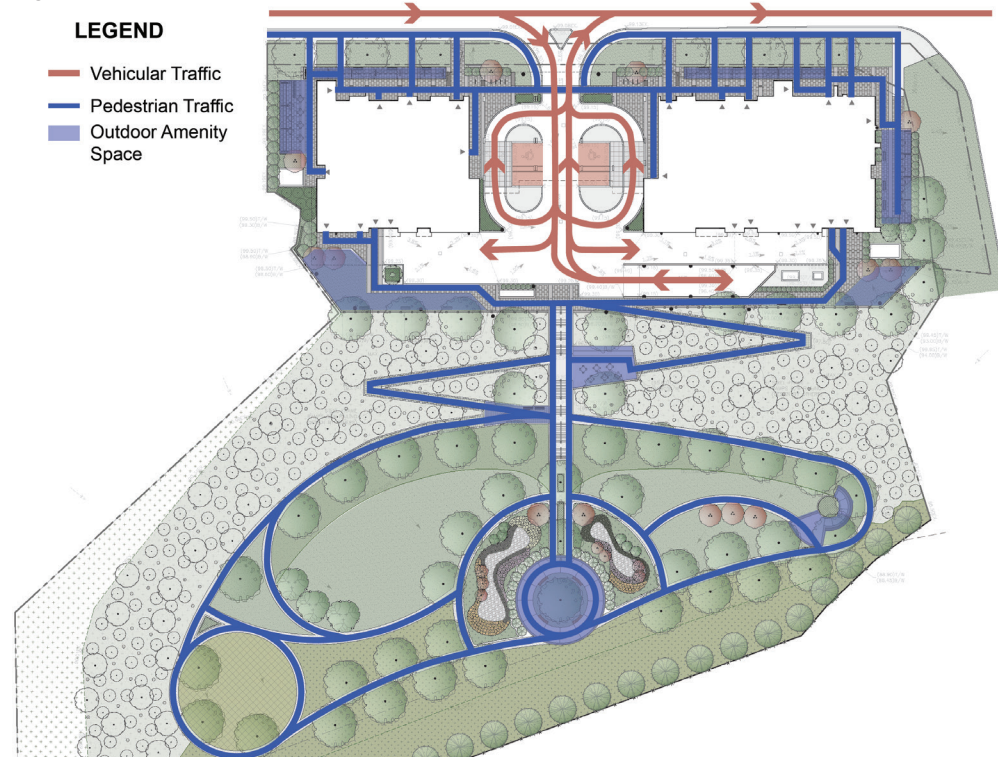
The design efficiently utilizes the parcel of land and maximizes the building envelope, ensuring straightforward and sensible pedestrian circulation throughout the site. The site can be accessed by foot from Main Street West providing direct connections to nearby bus stops. Pedestrians will enter the building through residential entrances located directly off Main Street West. These entrances are highlighted with contrasting paving materials and wider walkways that guide pedestrians safely to the main doors.

On the south side of the buildings, doors lead out onto pedestrian sidewalks that provide direct access to the rear amenity spaces and the parkette lands below. The parkette lands are separated from vehicular traffic, which is restricted to the upper lands. A central staircase, alongside winding ramps, ensures safe access from the building to the lower grades leading down to the parkette. This area features numerous walking paths and amenity spaces for leisure activities.

### 3.1.4 Vehicular Circulation

Vehicular traffic can enter the site from the west of Main Street West, making a right turn, and exit by making a right turn east of Main Street West. The majority of vehicular traffic will be directed to the underground parking or the loading spaces located directly behind the building towers. Upon entry, vehicles can either drop off or pick up passengers, park in the temporary parking area—which includes 2 accessible and 2 regular parking spaces—or continue straight to the ramp that leads down to the underground parking. The underground parking ramp is positioned directly behind the tower to keep it out of view from Main Street and Longwood. This location also ensures safe entry and exit on Main Street, facilitating smooth movement into and out of the site without obstructing the street front. Vehicles leaving the site can exit along the center drive aisle, which is the same route they used to enter.

Figure 6 - Site Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation





## 3.2 Massing and Relationship to Context

### 3.2.1 Massing

As shown in Figure 7, the proposed towers reach a maximum height of 25 Storeys and stepback after the 6th-storey podium to create visual harmony within the surrounding land uses.

### 3.2.2 Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses

The site, as illustrated in the accompanying figure, is situated along the main corridor of Main Street West. Both Official Plan policy and urban design principles strongly encourage intensification in areas surrounding important transportation corridors.

The proposed development is designed to complement the character of the neighbourhood. Its higher-density structure aligns with the relevant planning policies for the area and supports the city's goals for intensification along primary transportation routes. Furthermore, the site is within walking distance of various commercial and institutional services.

Figure 7 - Massing and Relationship to Context



### 3.3 Architectural Design

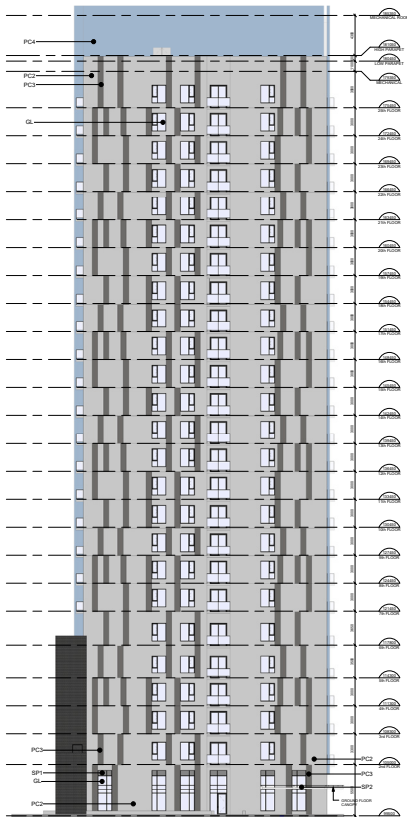
The proposed building features a contemporary design that integrates materials in harmony with the surrounding architecture. Its facade is visually appealing, utilizing a combination of brick, metal, glass, and precast concrete to create a diverse aesthetic.

To minimize the building's perceived mass, a thoughtful selection of colours and cladding materials is employed across the facade. The sixth-story podium is predominantly made of a darker brick in the colour Onyx, while the upper stories feature lighter shades of warm grays and utilizes various shades of blues as the accent colour for the development. This strategic use of colour and mass emphasizes the lower levels, enhancing the pedestrian experience along the building's front.

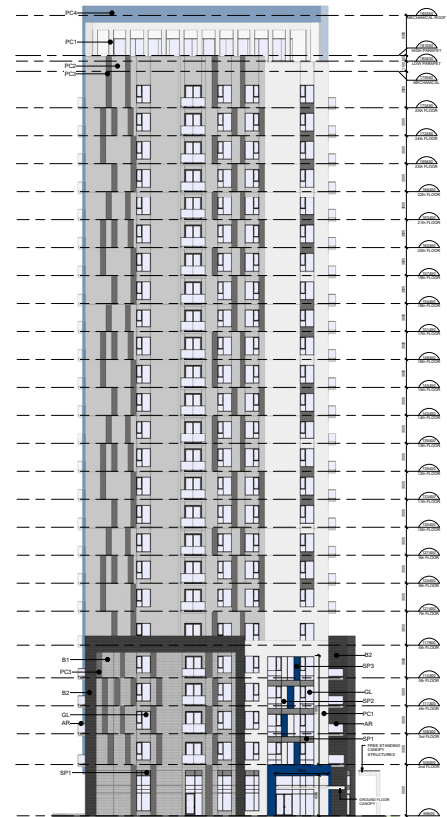
Glazing is uniform on all sides of the building. The service areas, located behind the facade, do not include glazing, while the ground-level design incorporates ample glazing to highlight the main pedestrian and vehicular entrances. Overall, the building's facade prioritizes architectural interest while ensuring that residential units receive plenty of sunlight and outdoor space.

#### West Elevation

Elevations provided by KNYMH Inc.

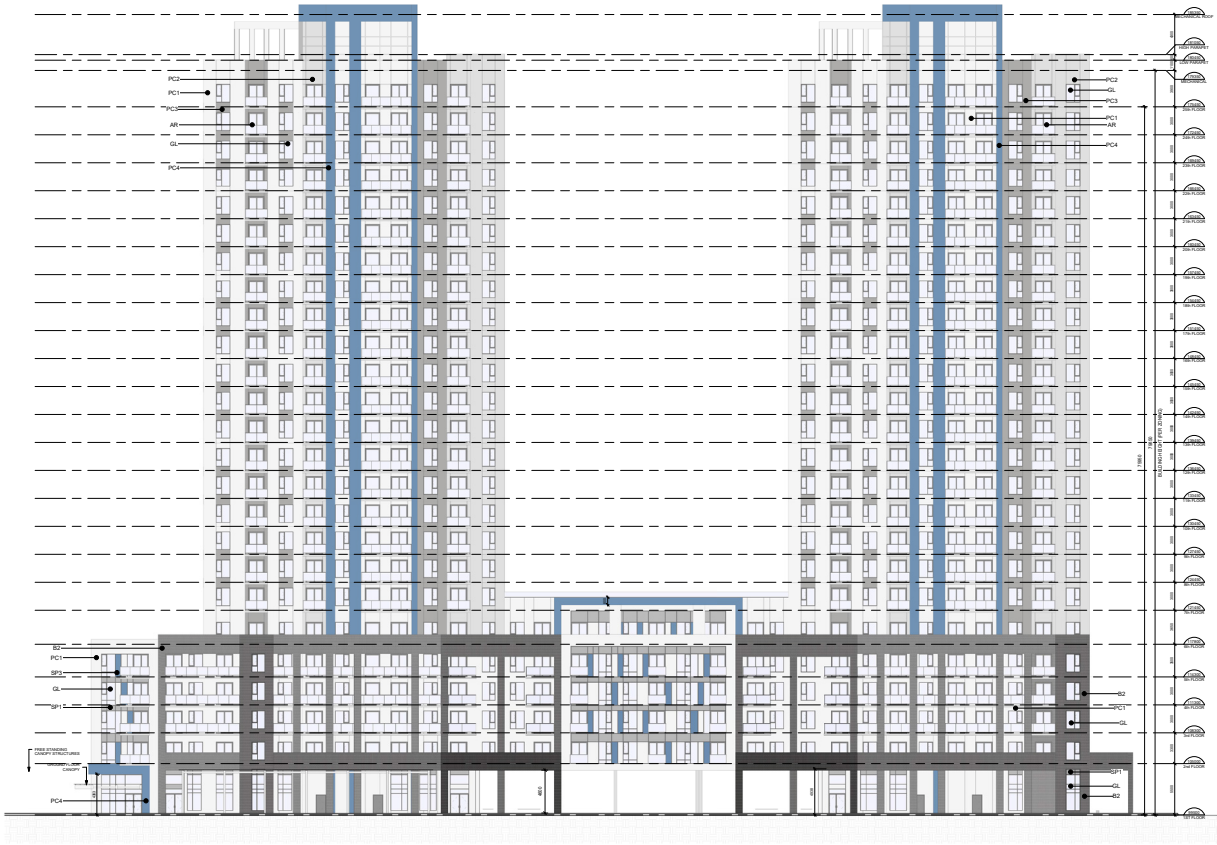


#### East Elevation

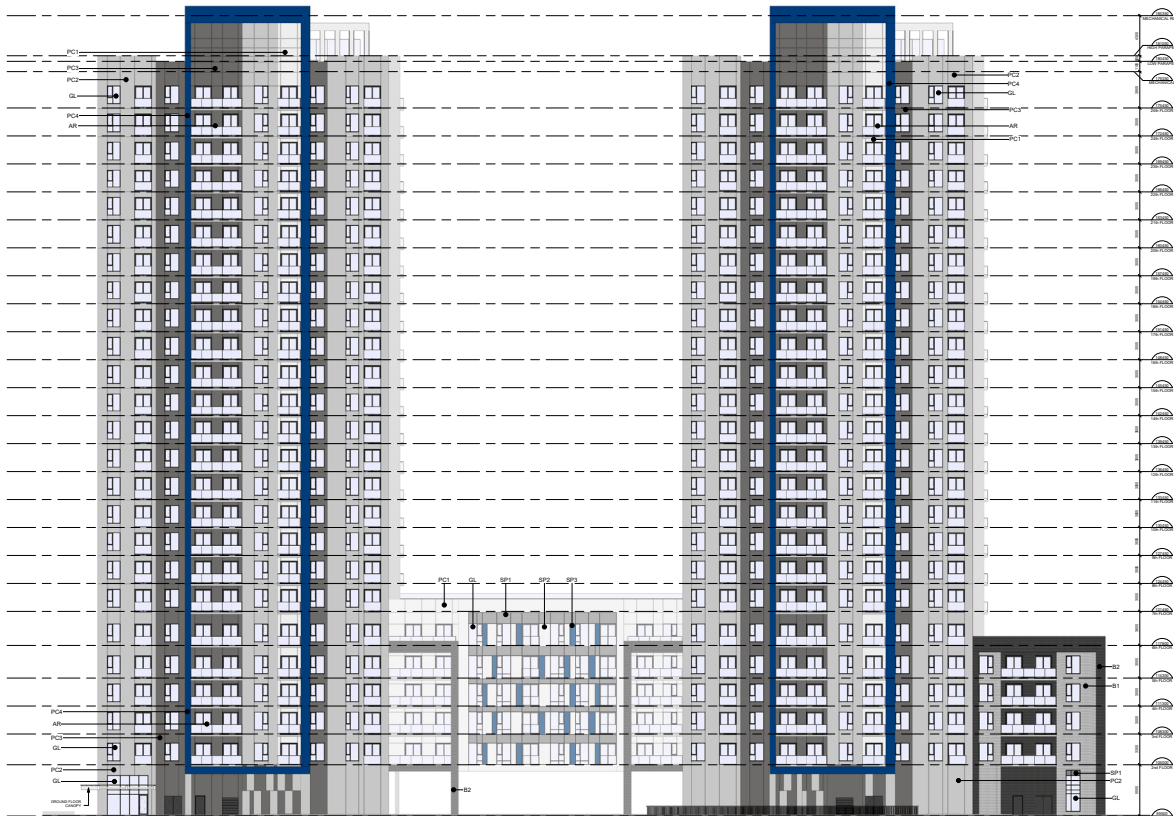


# North Elevation

Elevations provided by KNYMH Inc.



# South Elevation















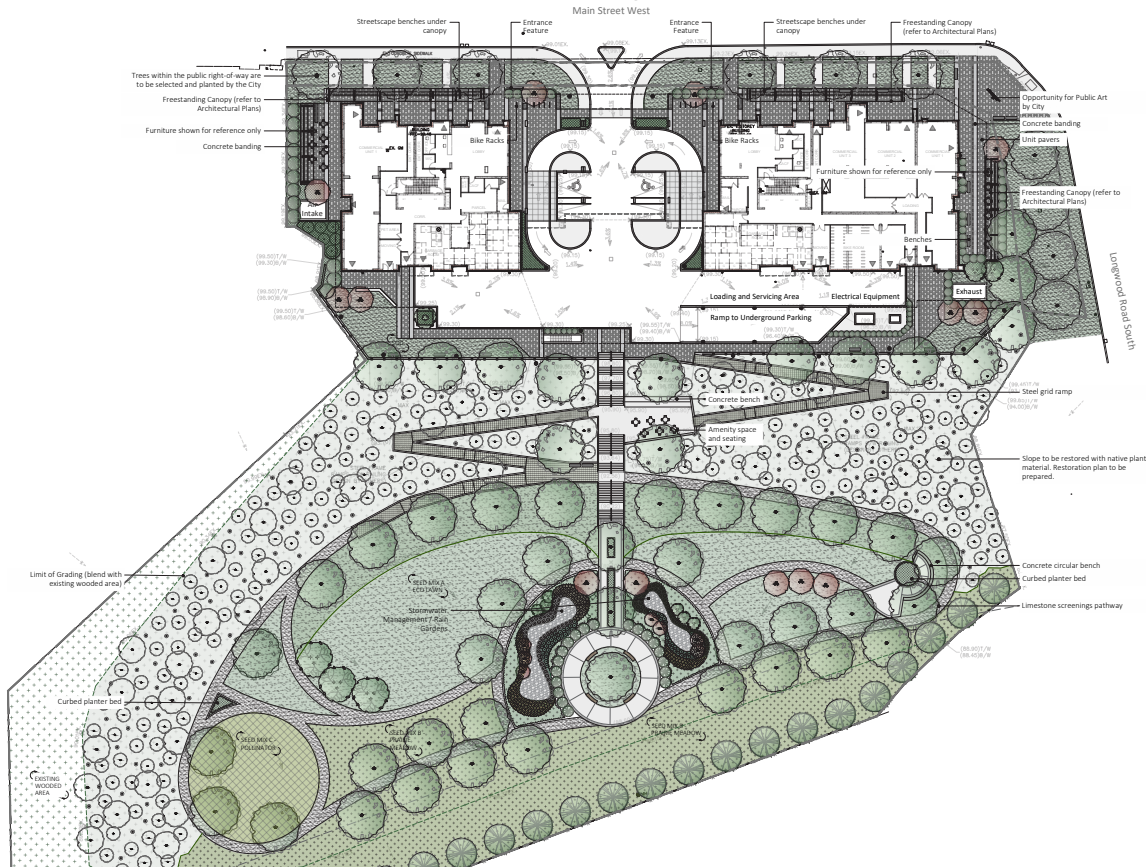


### 3.4 Landscape Design

The landscape design for the proposed development aims to encourage pedestrian connectivity in the public realm, promote accessibility, and ensure safe movement to and from the site. Plantings are utilized to create shaded areas, enhance privacy, and improve the overall quality of the landscape. The proposed planting scheme introduces a variety of coniferous and deciduous perennials, shrubs, and grasses, which contribute to diverse and vibrant textures throughout the year. Tree planting is consistent along Main Street West to buffer the municipal sidewalk from the building, creating a safe environment away from the roadway. Multiple walkways connect to the municipal sidewalk along Main Street West, providing alternative routes for foot traffic accessing the site from either direction while establishing direct connections to the commercial spaces at ground level on the east and west sides of the site. Outdoor amenity spaces are located on all sides of the building, adjacent to the lobby and commercial areas,

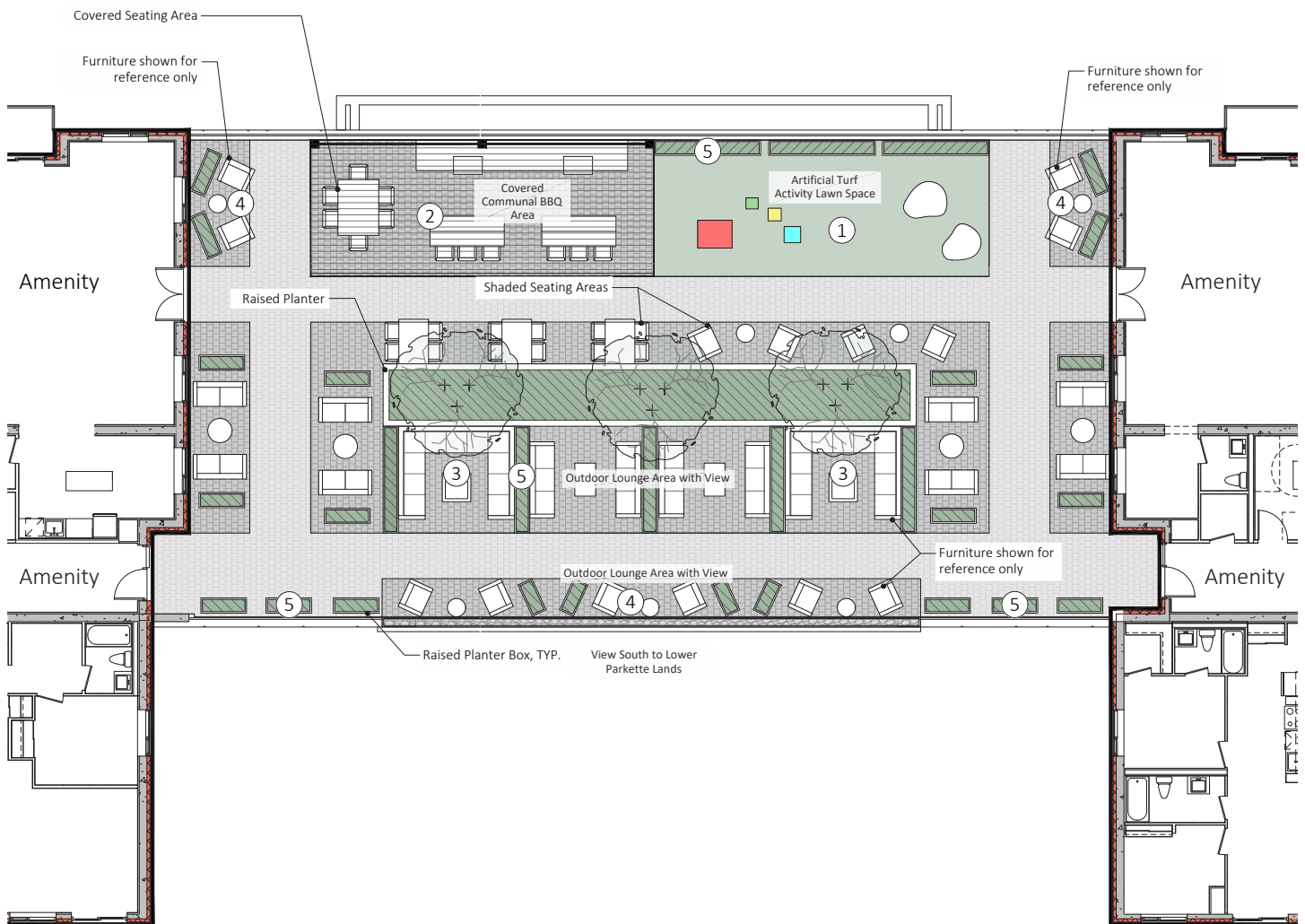
to encourage outdoor use. A staircase and ramp allow users to access the parkette portion of the site, offering pleasant views down to the lower lands. Landing spaces are incorporated at the halfway point of the staircase and ramp, allowing users to rest before continuing their journey to the parkette below. The staircase leads directly to a main amenity space, which features seating, native plantings, and rain gardens for stormwater management, creating a tranquil, enclosed area. Various types of furnishings, such as tables, chairs, and tiered concrete step seating, are provided. Benches are also placed throughout the lower lands to facilitate movement through the site and encourage users to explore the diverse planting and scenic qualities. Tree planting in the parkette further enhances the outdoor experience by providing shade and encouraging extended use of the space. A combination of fencing and tree planting is implemented along the southern border of the site to mitigate noise from the adjacent highway.

#### Conceptual Landscape Plan - Whitehouse Urban Design Inc.



Additionally, an outdoor rooftop amenity space is proposed on the seventh floor and is accessible to both towers. This space offers various seating options in both sun and shade, supporting multiple outdoor activities. The design presented here is conceptual and will be refined in subsequent stages of the design process.

**Conceptual Landscape Rooftop Amenity Plan with Design Intent Images - Whitehouse Urban Design Inc.**







1 Activity Space



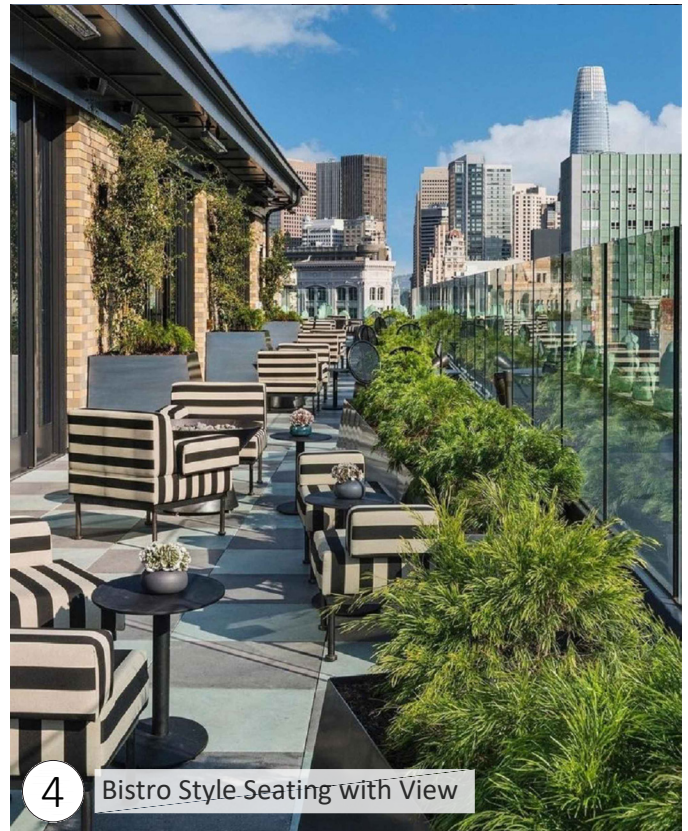
1 Activity Space



2 Covered BBQ Space Inspiration



3 Fire pit / Large Lounge Space



4 Bistro Style Seating with View



5 Planting Inspiration

# SECTION 4

Analysis and Conclusion

## 4.1 Analysis of Proposal: Policy Reference and Design Response

### 4.1.1 Design Theme: Circulation

**UHOP B.3.3.2.5 Places that are safe, accessible, connected and easy to navigate shall be created by connecting buildings and spaces through an efficient, intuitive, and safe network of streets, roads, alleys, lanes, sidewalks, and pathways;**

The primary building entrance for pedestrians directly connects to an existing sidewalk on the North side of the property fronting Main Street West. This road is a major corridor with numerous connections to active transportation servicing the City of Hamilton. Various connections are provided along the existing sidewalk on Main Street for access for residents or the commercial spaces at grade along the east and west sides of the site. To enter the parkette and rear amenity space, private walkways connect to the rear of the building providing access to private spaces near the doors or access to the stairs and ramp leading down to the parkette. This separate pedestrian access will establish a clear hierarchy for pedestrians coming to and leaving the site and overall provide connections between the public and private areas safely and effectively.

**UHOP B.3.3.2.5 Places that are safe, accessible, connected and easy to navigate shall be created by providing connections and access to all users regardless of age and physical ability;**

The site is designed with accessibility in mind, regardless of age or physical ability. As part of the design team's commitment to inclusivity, the plan includes alternative routes to ensure that all visitors can access all areas of the site.

**UHOP B.3.3.2.5 Places that are safe, accessible, connected and easy to navigate shall be created by integrating conveniently located public transit and cycling infrastructure with existing and new development; and**

The proposed development aligns with the city's goal of intensifying growth along major corridors, particularly in relation to the future Light Rail Transit (LRT) line along Main Street. This initiative aims to create a vibrant streetscape and promote active transportation for the proposed 25-storey development.



#### 4.1.2 Design Theme: Site Organization

**UHOP B.3.3.2.4 Quality spaces physically and visually connect the public and private realms. Public and private development and redevelopment should create quality spaces by organizing space in a logical manner through the design, placement, and construction of new buildings, streets, structures, and landscaping;**

The site has been organized to maximize pedestrian space on the ground level while directing majority of the vehicular traffic to the underground parking level. Vehicular access from Main Street West allows for easier navigation and maneuvering to and from the site. The outdoor amenities are designed for pedestrians and designed to cater to their needs. It offers a variety of seating options and has both hard and soft surfaces, including paving and sodding, to accommodate different activities.

**UHOP B.3.3.3.5 Built form shall create comfortable pedestrian environments by locating surface parking to the sides or rear of sites or building, where appropriate;**

Surface parking is located beside the towers, off the main drive aisle, ensuring safe access to and from the site while being away from the street frontage along Main Street.

#### 4.1.3 Design Theme: Compatibility with Surrounding Context

**UHOP B.3.3.2.1 The physical design of a site shall relating to its role in the overall urban structure;**

The proposed development enhances the urban structure by increasing density along the main corridor of Main Street and offering commercial spaces at ground level for multi-use purposes. This development is expected to contribute to a larger population along the main corridor, which will be further supported by the future LRT transit line. Additionally, it will promote local businesses, institutions, and the community by revitalizing the site and the main corridor of Main Street.

**UHOP B.3.3.2.4 Quality spaces physically and visually connect the public and private realms. Public and private development and redevelopment should create quality spaces by creating a continuous animated street edge in urban environments; and**

The proposed development includes a continuous street front with a landscaped buffer strip that separates the municipal sidewalk from the buildings, enhancing safety. The ground-level commercial units contribute to the streetscape and vibrancy of the area by offering outdoor seating options and attracting visitors, which helps to animate Main Street.

**UHOP 3.3.2.8 Urban design should promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, ability to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate now and in the future, and protect and enhance the natural urban environment by achieving compact development and resulting built forms.**

The proposed development aligns with the city's goal of encouraging compact growth along the main corridors. It will introduce 628 new residential units, enhancing development and vibrancy on Main Street.



#### **4.1.4 Design Theme: Architectural Design**

**UHOP B.3.3.2.5 Places that are safe, accessible, connected and easy to navigate shall be created by ensuring building entrances are visible from the street and promoting shelter at entrance ways;**

Through the use of pathways extending from the internal and external sidewalks, building entrances fronting onto the public Right-of-Way will be clearly visible through contrasting paving materials planting and lighting. Entryways feature architectural overhangs on upper storeys to promote shelter at entrance ways.

**UHOP B.3.3.2.8 Urban design should promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, ability to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate now and in the future, and protect and enhance the natural urban environment by achieving compact development and resulting built forms**

The proposed development supports the City of Hamilton goals for intensification along main corridors by promoting compact development along Main Street West and thereby reducing urban sprawl and promoting sustainable development.

## 4.1.5 Design Theme: Landscape Design

**UHOP B.3.3.2.9 Urban design plays a significant role in the physical and mental health of our citizens. Community health and well-being shall be enhanced and supported through creating high quality, safe streetscapes, parks, and open spaces that encourage physical activity and active transportation;**

To improve the public realm and provide more shaded areas on Main Street West, street trees have been proposed. By incorporating planting along the building and planting in front of the main entrance, the street front's overall aesthetic is enhanced, making it feel safer while maintaining views and keeping the sidewalk well-lit. Additionally, the outdoor amenity space offers a place for physical and leisure activity and promotes active transportation through the provision of bike parking at the main building entrance.

**UHOP B.3.3.2.9 Urban design plays a significant role in the physical and mental health of our citizens. Community health and well-being shall be enhanced and supported through ensuring an equitable distribution of accessible and stimulating amenity areas, including the development of places for passive and active recreation and use;**

The outdoor amenity area surrounding the building and the parkette offers opportunities for both active and passive recreation. The amenity spaces along Main Street West and next to the at-grade commercial areas are designed for passive recreation, while the parkette

provides opportunities for both passive and active recreational uses. The open lawn area can be used for physical activities like exercising, walking, and stretching, but it also includes a range of seating options for people of all ages and abilities who prefer more relaxed recreation. Therefore, the spaces provides areas for either active or passive recreation.

**UHOP B.3.3.3.5 Built form shall create comfortable pedestrian environments by including a quality landscape edge along frontages where buildings are set back from the street;**

The design proposes a consistent landscaped edge along the frontage of Main Street West. Planting has been selected in specific areas to maximize privacy and safety by providing a landscape buffer with street trees and walkways that extend to the existing sideway to provide safe pedestrian circulation within the site and to provide a beautified landscape strip from the development and the street.

## 4.2 Conclusion

From an urban design perspective, the proposed development complies with policies in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. The project relates to its role in the urban context by locating a beautiful high-rise building along a main corridor that provides access to a variety of amenities to support future residents. This development is expected to contribute to a larger population along the main corridor, which will be further supported by the future LRT transit line. Additionally, it will promote local businesses, institutions, and the community by revitalizing the site and the main corridor of Main Street.

Through the full Site Plan Review process, the details of the project design will be finalized, ensuring the implementation of the urban design policies in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan.