



Terms of Reference

Low Density Residential Development in Stable Neighbourhoods: Study and Design Guidelines

Low Density Residential Development in Stable Neighbourhoods: Study and Design Guidelines

Terms of Reference

Background

The Town of Oakville's new Official Plan, the Livable Oakville Plan, was approved with modifications by the Ontario Municipal Board on May 10, 2011 and is in full force and effect. With its design-based framework for creating a livable community, the Livable Oakville Plan's guiding principles and comprehensive policy direction endeavours to balance the preservation and enhancement of residential neighbourhoods with focusing of intensification to identified 'growth area' locations.

In implementing the new Livable Oakville Plan, staff have commenced a comprehensive review of the existing zoning by-law to ensure conformity with the new Plan. Concurrent with this review, staff have also begun drafting a foundational urban design directives document applicable to all lands south of Dundas Street, which will bolster the Plan's urban design policies (section 6) and offer key design direction that will inform the zoning review process.

Specific to residential neighbourhoods, the Livable Oakville Plan advocates the preservation, enhancement, and protection of the distinct character, cultural heritage, living environment and sense of community of neighbourhoods, by establishing evaluation criteria (section 11.1.9) for assessing development within all stable residential communities with the intent of maintaining and protecting the existing neighbourhood character. To implement this section of the Plan, staff determined that a separate design guidance document could further clarify and illustrate how to apply the evaluation criteria to new development proposals that will assist in achieving compatibility within the existing neighbourhood context. The residential infill design guidelines is a project component of the new urban design manual, which has been identified as a key initiative of Vision 2057 strategic direction under the 'Create It' banner.

Project Objective

The objective of the project is to identify, understand and assess issues related to current development in Oakville's stable residential neighbourhoods and to develop a design-based document to guide decision making related to assessing 'compatibility' in these neighbourhoods.

Project Applicability

The study and design guidelines will be applicable to the development of new dwellings and additions/significant modifications to existing residential buildings situated in stable residential neighbourhoods in Oakville (lands south of Dundas Street).

The project will not assess nor provide guidance for residential intensification projects (creation of more than one unit per existing lot) or for residential development outside of the identified stable residential neighbourhoods. Design guidance for these intensification projects will be contained within Part A of the Urban Design Manual, which is currently under development.

Project Team and Organization

The study and design document will be coordinated by a Project Team consisting of management and staff from the Urban Design, Current Planning and Long Range Planning sections in Planning Services. Staff from Heritage Planning, Building Services, Development Engineering Services, Engineering and Construction, By-law Enforcement, and Environmental Policy will be invited to participate and provide input into both project components.

Project Consultation – Stakeholders and Public

Consultation presents the opportunity for staff to launch the project, to provide information on the initial study findings, intended applicability, and desired outcomes, and to provide opportunities for various stakeholder groups to offer feedback on the content of the design document.

Staff will consult with the following stakeholder groups:

- homebuilder association(s) and other independent builders which have completed projects in Oakville within the last 5 years (names and contact information gathered from past applications and permits),
- architects and consultants associated with low-density residential development which have completed projects in Oakville within the last 5 years (names and contact information gathered from past applications and permits),
- representatives from resident associations and other agencies, and
- residential property owners and members of the public which have identified interest in the project (contact made via the website information and/or during other project meetings).

Staff determined 2 separate meetings are warranted, one with the builders/designers and one with the resident associations and general public. The draft and final reports and design guidance documents will be presented to the inZone Subcommittee and to Council.

Draft design document materials will be posted to the website in advance of consultations for information purposes.

Project Deliverable(s)

1. The study report is intended to:
 - assess issues related to current development in Oakville’s stable residential neighbourhoods,
 - canvass other municipalities on approaches to similar issues (successes, obstacles and process corrections) and methods of implementation, and
 - provide rationale for incorporating best practice review findings (trends, topics and illustrations) into the design document that will guide decision making related to ‘compatibility’.

2. The design document is intended to:
 - become a tool that will guide decision making related to assessing ‘compatible’ development in stable residential neighbourhoods and the immediate surroundings.

Project Timing

The study and the final design guideline document will be completed by December 2012, in conjunction with the release of draft zoning by-law sections and draft urban design directives for consultation.

Appendices

Appendix A sets out the detailed work program for the project

Appendix B sets out the timeline for the project phases and public consultation of the work program.

Appendix A – Project Work Program

Phase 1 – Project Initiation

- draft the project Terms of Reference
- identify core project team members and internal contributors
- identify and finalize project scope, intended deliverables and deadlines
- identify consultation modes/strategies
- identify key associations and linkages with other studies and current processes
- launch project commencement on UD webpage
- request inZone SubCommittee to receive project Terms of Reference (August 7, 2012)

Phase 2 – Background Research: Review and Analysis

- identify and explore current issues related to development in stable residential neighbourhoods
- analysis of current development application processes (Committee of Adjustment and Site Plan)
- assessment of Livable Oakville Plan policy direction and findings from related past studies
- identify existing processes from other Departments/Agencies that may contribute to achieving the desired end result or that regulate development (ie. permit systems and bylaws)
- best practice literature review for the creation of our design document
- discuss approaches to related development issues with other municipalities:
 - why they developed their process and design document (their prompts)
 - who they consulted with during their process
 - how their design document has been implemented
 - how effectively their process and design documents have been to implement

Phase 3 – Draft Design Guideline Document

- draft the design document based on best practice review and response to identified issues
- circulate draft document to immediate project contributors for initial feedback
- revised draft document posted on UD webpage for initial feedback

Phase 4 – Consultation and Finalize Study + Design Document

- workshop with local homebuilders and design consultants
- open house with representatives from resident associations and interested property owners
- workshop with Planning + Development Commission staff and Committee members
- incorporate feedback from workshops and coordinate final study and design document

Phase 5 – Obtain Approvals and Implement Design Guidelines

- present study and design document to inZone SubCommittee (targeting: December 3, 2012)
- Present study and design document to P+D Council (targeting : February, 2013)
- Launch document on Town’s Urban Design webpage
- Orientation sessions with Planning + Development Commission staff and Committee members (related to implementation)

Low Density Residential Development in Stable Neighbourhoods: Study and Design Guidelines -- Work Plan																																		
Tasks	2012																								2013									
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Phase 1: Project Initiation																																		
1	Draft project terms of reference																																	
2	Identify core team + internal contributors																																	
3	Finalize project scope, intended deliverables and milestones																																	
4	Identify consultation modes/strategy																																	
5	Identify linkages to other studies and current processes																																	
6	Launch project commencement on UD website																																	
7	Terms of reference to inZone SubCommittee																																	
Phase 2: Background Research: Review and Analysis																																		
8	Identify and explore current issues																																	
9	Analysis of development applications (trends)																																	
10	Analysis of Livable Oakville Plan policy direction																																	
11	Identify existing processes contributing to desired results																																	
12	Best practice literature review																																	
13	Consultations with municipalities (related issues)																																	
Phase 3: Draft Design Guideline Document																																		
14	Draft design document based on literature review + issues																																	
15	Circulate draft document to internal contributors																																	
16	revised draft document posted on UD webpage																																	
Phase 4: Consultation + Finalize Study and Design Document																																		
17	Workshop with local homebuilders + designers																																	
18	Open house with public + resident associations																																	
19	Workshop with staff + Committee of Adjustment members																																	
20	Incorporate feedback and finalize study and design document																																	
Phase 5: Obtain Approvals and Implement Design Guidelines																																		
22	Present study+guidelines to inZone Subcommittee (Dec. 3, 2012)																																	
23	Present study+guidelines to P+D Council (Jan. 14, 2013)																																	
24	Launch document on UD webpage																																	
25	Orientation sessions with staff and Committee members																																	
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