

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee

REPORT FROM: Tara Buonpensiero, Senior Planner – Policy, MCIP, RPP

DATE: May 30, 2018

REPORT NO.: PLS-2018-0043

RE: Destination Downtown Phase 4 Status Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PLS-2018-0043 dated May 30, 2018 regarding the Destination Downtown Phase 4 Status Update be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to continue to obtain public feedback on the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative;

AND FURTHER THAT Council to endorse the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative (as shown on Figure 8) in principle as the basis for the consultant team to undertake the detailed technical assessments and initiate preparation of the draft Secondary Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The previous report (No. PLS-2018-0027) on the Destination Downtown project was before Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee on April 30, 2018. The report provided a status update on Phases 2 and 3 of the project. Through the recommendations of that report, Council received the Draft Background Discussion Paper and endorsed in principle the Draft Vision and Guiding Principles for the study.

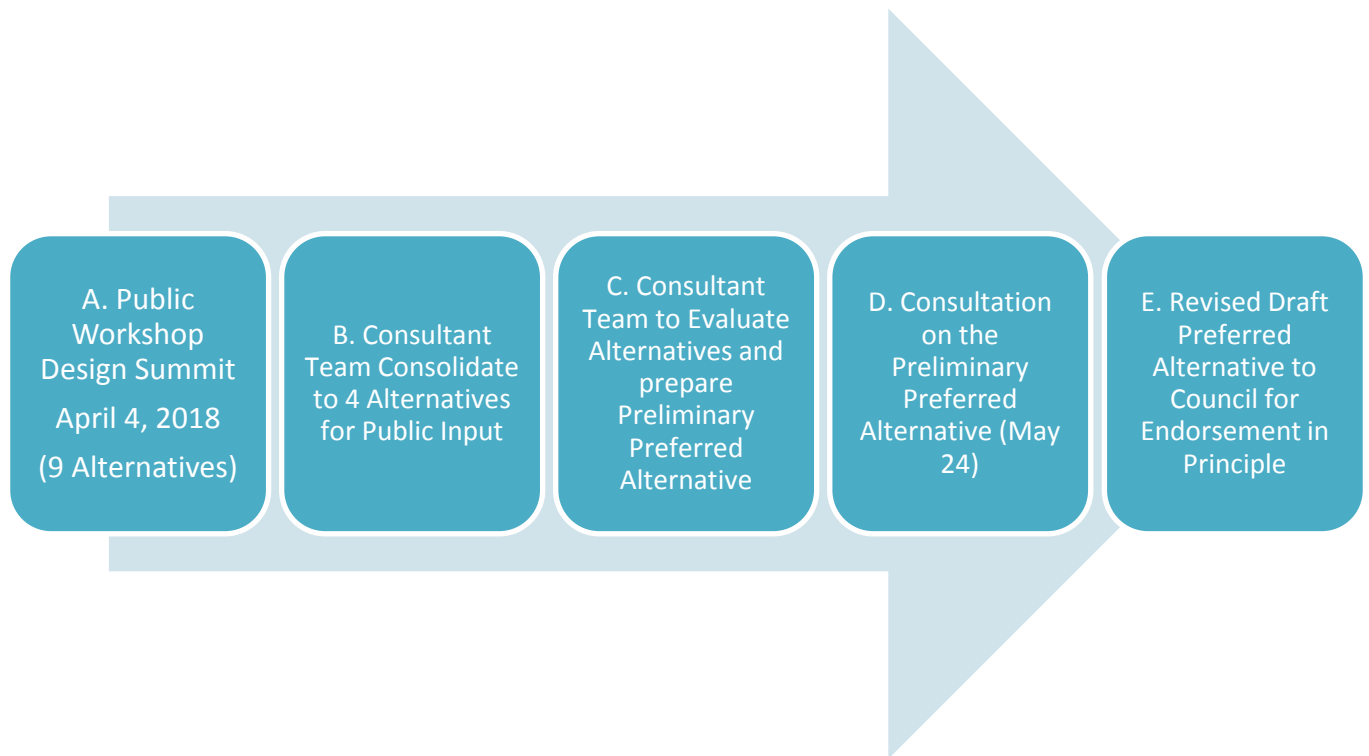
The project is being undertaken through six phases as outlined on Figure 1.

Figure 1: Six Phase Planning Process



The purpose of this report is to provide an update on each of the tasks undertaken in Phase 4 as outlined on Figure 2.

Figure 2: Detailed Breakdown of Phase 4 Tasks



COMMENTS:

A. Public Workshop Design Summit

The Design Summit, which was the second community workshop for the Destination Downtown project, took place on April 4, 2018 at Mold-Masters SportsPlex in Georgetown. Participants at the sessions included members of the public, and members of both the project Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee. There were two identical sessions held, one in the afternoon, from 3:00-5:30 pm, and one in the evening, from 6:30-9:00 pm. There were approximately 27 participants at the afternoon session and 47 participants at the evening session.

During each session, participants sat in groups with a member of the consultant team to prepare an alternative based on a specific design program as outlined on Figure 3. At the end of the evening there were two alternatives (one prepared in the afternoon, and one prepared in the evening) for each design program.

Figure 3: Design Programs for each Alternative

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Units	450	450	650	800
Built Form	Townhouses	Townhouses & Mid-rise	Mid-rise	All forms
Built Height	3	3-6	8	3-10+
Public Realm / Parks	Existing park	One central urban park	Urban square with each development	Parks and urban squares
Heritage	Conserved	Integrated	Integrated	Conserved
Main Street ROW	Shared 'ROW' Vehicles and bicycles share existing lanes	Dedicated Lanes 1 lanes for vehicles; 1 land for bikes and transit	Remove Street Parking Create enhanced bike lanes	Shared 'ROW' Vehicles and bicycles share existing lanes

The results of the Design Summit including each of the alternatives prepared at the session are attached to this report as Schedule A.

B. Four Draft Alternatives for Public Review and Comment

Following the Design Summit, the consultant team reviewed the alternatives prepared for each of the design programs as outlined in Figure 3, extracted the main themes from each and prepared one consolidated draft alternative for each program. The alternatives were then included in an online survey where people were encouraged to provide general comments on each alternative as well as provide their opinions by answering questions on buildings, public spaces and transportation for each alternative.

A link to the survey was on the destinationdowntown.ca

website, emailed to people on the notification list, and given to members of the Technical and Steering Committee meeting to complete and share. The survey was available until May 18, 2018 and there were 228 respondents.



The top responses from each of the following focus areas were:

Buildings

1. Locate the tallest buildings on Guelph Street.
2. Open a portion of Main Street to create a new urban square, surrounded by 3-6 storey buildings, with retail on the ground floor.
3. There should be 3-6 storey buildings built into the slope between Main Street and Park Avenue.
4. Establish a 3 storey height limit along Main Street stepping back to 8 storeys.
5. Establish a landmark building at the intersection of Main Street and Guelph Street.

Public Space

1. Expand Remembrance Park over the roof of a new parking structure on the Edith Street parking lot.
2. Provide an access at the end of Back Street into the greenlands/Silver Creek valley.
3. Provide a green space at the foot of Church Street, with a pedestrian connection from Main Street down to Park Ave.
4. Create an urban square connected to Main Street on the Back Street parking lot, and provide parking underground.
5. Include a public space in front of the historic post office on Mill Street.

Access

1. Designate bike routes through downtown on local streets parallel to Main Street, Market Street and Park Avenue.
2. Provide some parking adjacent to the proposed new urban square on the west side of the McGibbon development site.
3. Remove the Main Street landscaped centre median, and on street parking on one side of Main Street, to create wider sidewalks and space for outdoor patios.

The full results of the survey are attached to this report as Schedule B.

C. Consultant Team's Evaluation of Alternatives and Preliminary Preferred Alternative

The consultant team undertook an initial multi-disciplinary review of each of the four alternatives prepared as a result of the April 4, 2018 Design Summit.

The consultants review evaluated each of the alternatives considering the survey results, against the draft Vision and Guiding Principles which were established in conjunction with the community as a result of the public visioning session, as well through an initial technical evaluation. The draft Vision and Guiding Principles are outlined on Figure 4.

Figure 4: Draft Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision

Downtown Georgetown is a **vibrant destination** that serves the residents of Georgetown and Halton Hills and **draws visitors** from all corners of the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area.

Development will build on the **rich natural and cultural heritage** that makes Downtown Georgetown **unique** and so cherished by all who live there and visit.

Through **sustainable development** and **enhanced public realm** initiatives, Downtown Georgetown will continue to grow and offer an increasingly diverse range of places to **live, work, shop, be entertained**, and enjoy **community life** in a setting that artfully integrates old and new development into a picturesque landscape.

Guiding Principles

-  1 Ensure new development celebrates and protects the existing **built heritage character** of the downtown.
-  2 Establish a variety of beautiful **public gathering spaces** to support cultural events, festivals and community life throughout the year.
-  3 Create **vibrant, safe and comfortable pedestrian-oriented streets** that enhance mobility for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers and support existing and future transit.
-  4 Promote a **mix of uses** in a variety of **building forms**, including a range of housing types and opportunities for retail, commercial and community uses.
-  5 Protect and enhance **natural features** while broadening opportunities for public access, enjoyment, education and stewardship.
-  6 Demonstrate **high-quality design** in new development and incorporate best practices that respect and complement the character of Downtown Georgetown and its adjacent neighbourhoods.
-  7 Incorporate **sustainable development and construction** practices to maximize resource conservation.

A detailed analysis of the consultant team's assessment of the four alternatives was provided in the presentation given at the May 24, 2018 Public Workshop, which is attached to this report as Schedule C.

As a result of the analysis, the consultant team assembled the best elements of each alternative based on the technical analysis, implementation of the Vision and Guiding Principles, and public consultation, and developed a Preliminary Preferred Alternative as shown on Figure 5. Slide 41 through to slide 48 on the presentation attached as Schedule C provide details on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative as it relates to provision of parking, active transportation, walkability, the streetscape along Main Street, creation/enhancement of public spaces, conservation of heritage buildings, and conceptual location of new buildings, including proposed height ranges.

Figure 5: Preliminary Preferred Alternative (as presented on May 24, 2018)



D. Consultation on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative

Public consultation on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative for Downtown Georgetown was undertaken in the afternoon and evening of May 24, 2018. A meeting was held with the Technical Advisory Committee in the early afternoon, Steering Committee later in the afternoon and the public in the evening.

Technical and Steering Committee Comments

The Technical Advisory Committee is made up of staff representatives from various departments in the Town, Halton Hills Public Library and agency representatives from Credit Valley Conservation, the Region of Halton and Halton Hills Hydro.

The Steering Committee is chaired by Councillor Fogal, and includes Mayor Bonnette, Councillor Johnson and Councillor Kentner, representatives from the Georgetown BIA, and Chamber of Commerce, and representatives from committees of Council such as the Active Transportation Committee, Heritage Halton Hills, Town Sustainability Implementation Committee, and appointed residents/business owners in the Downtown.

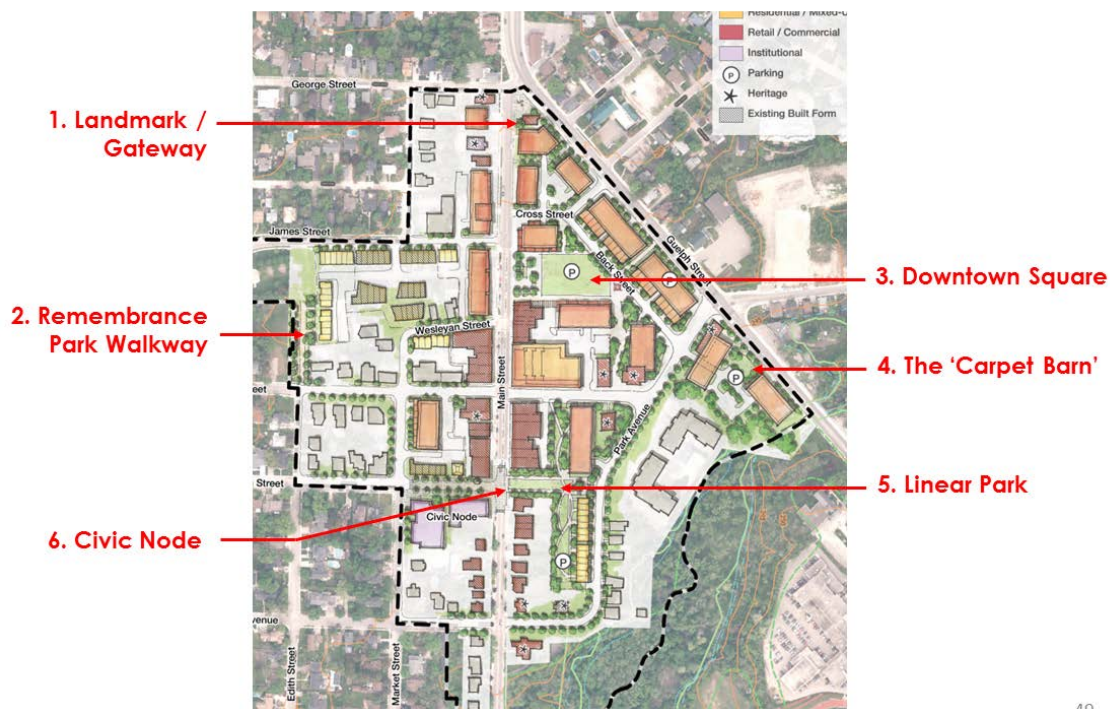
The main comments from the Technical and Steering Committee were as follows:

- Consider flexibility in the design of Main Street to allow for pilot projects to test out ideas (i.e. temporarily remove parking on one side to allow patio space).
- Cyclists need to be accommodated on side streets (considering topography) and on Main Street.
- Carefully consider the maximum building height permitted, and particularly heights greater than 6 storeys
- Carefully consider the design of a new Town Square, regarding dimensions, access points and exposure to sunlight.
- Suggest distributing parking facilities throughout downtown rather than concentrate parking in one or two locations.
- Clearly communicate that the Preliminary Preferred Alternative is a demonstration plan, which will be refined through the process to develop a more detailed Secondary Plan for the Downtown.

Public Comments

The public workshop on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative for the Destination Downtown project took place in the evening of May 24, 2018 at Georgetown District High School, beginning at 6:30 pm. There were approximately 30 public participants in attendance. After the consultant team provided a detailed presentation outlining how the Preliminary Preferred Alternative was developed, participants were asked to provide input on specific focus areas as shown on Figure 6.

Figure 6: Focus Discussion Areas for Public Workshop



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Overall there was support for the Preliminary Preferred Alternative as presented, however comments suggesting changes for each focus area are summarized below. The full results of the Public Workshop on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative are attached to this report as Schedule D.

1. Landmark/Gateway:

- Like the concept, however any development at the intersection of Main Street and Guelph Street needs to consider the traffic volumes, and therefore its' not likely a space people would want to walk to and visit.
- General comment that heritage buildings should be conserved if it is in good shape and makes sense, otherwise the plan should commemorate the history.
- Consider new restaurants and retail space behind the church heritage building (on Main Street), and along the south side of James Street by Main Street.
- Agree with a maximum height limit in this location of 4 storeys.

2. Remembrance Park Walkway:

- A direct path from Wesleyan Street to Remembrance Park would be preferred.
- Concern about parking being removed unless it is replaced.
- Consider keeping the parking and move walkway to vacant lot next door (outside the Downtown Area boundary).

- Concern about re-designating land for townhouses that are currently outside of the Downtown boundary.
3. Downtown Square:
 - Concern about the loss of retail on Main Street due to the opening up of the downtown square on to Main Street (i.e. proposed removal of buildings).
 - Agree with height limits in this location (maximum 4 storeys on Main Street and maximum 6 storeys on the Downtown Square).
 - Maximize the size of the Downtown Square as much as possible.
 - May not make sense to preserve the former theatre – may be better to commemorate the building in new development.
 4. The Carpet Barn:
 - Consider retail on ground floor of the building at Guelph Street and Mill Street.
 - Agree with heights proposed, but they could be staggered.
 - Have a trail connection welcoming pedestrians from Guelph Street.
 - A higher building (8-10 storeys) is acceptable at this one location (property adjacent to Carpet Barn on Guelph Street next to the Silver Creek valley).
 5. Linear Park:
 - Consider apartments in the location currently proposed for townhouses.
 - Consider retail on the ground floor.
 - Agree with the heights proposed.
 - Concerned about practicality and safety of proposal given the grade changes.
 - Park Avenue is not safe for cyclists.
 6. Civic Node:
 - Consider preserving the Legion building, but if the site is redeveloped it should include underground parking and public space.
 - If on-street parking is removed in front of the library/community centre, some parking should be retained for families and seniors.
 - Consider a pedestrian only street in front of the library/community centre, or conversion to a one way street.

E. Revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative to Council for Endorsement in Principle

As a result of the results of public input and input from the Technical and Steering Committee there are minimal revisions proposed to the Preliminary Preferred Alternative, compared to the version presented to the public on May 24, 2018.

Although there was generally support for the heights proposed in the Preliminary Preferred Alternative as shown on Figure 7, there are a number of factors that need to be considered when implementing height limits for a particular area. Some of these factors include:

- Understanding of the local context, including built form adjacencies and topography;
- Land parcel configuration and the potential/requirement for land assembly;
- Service infrastructure availability to support the development;
- Fiscal and market realities of various built forms and land uses;
- Opportunities for public/private partnerships;
- Existing development expectations identified through the current approved planning framework;
- Ability to achieve public benefits, such as structured parking, and acquisition and development of public spaces in a community; and,
- Implications of built form choices on the stable areas of the study area, targets for intensification, and the need to optimize the use of land.

Figure 7: Preliminary Preferred Alternative – Proposed Heights



For the purpose of proceeding to further evaluate the Preliminary Preferred Alternative through a detailed review of servicing, mobility, parking, market and fiscal implications, Town staff and the consultant team are recommending that the heights as proposed be maintained at this time and be re-evaluated once these assessments are concluded.

An additional consideration when implementing heights in the Downtown is that by permitting a range of different dwelling types and sizes (existing single detached and semi-detached dwellings, and townhouses, apartments and retirement homes) the opportunity is provided for a diverse mix of people to live in the area, including young people, families and seniors, with a range of incomes.

There have been two minor revisions proposed to the Preliminary Preferred Alternative which was presented at the May 24, 2018 Public Workshop. Those changes are as follows:

- The Downtown Square has been re-configured to maintain retail on Main Street, while still proposing that retail frame the Square, and providing multiple access points. While it remains an objective to maximize frontage of the Square on Main Street, opportunities to achieve this objective will be further considered as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative is refined and a detailed Secondary Plan is developed.
- A mapping update on the Library/Community Centre property to reflect the expansion undertaken in 2013.

The revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative is included as Figure 8.

F. Next Steps

Through the recommendations of this report, staff is seeking direction to continue to obtain public feedback on the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative, and Council is being asked to endorse this Preliminary Preferred Alternative in principle as the basis for the consultant team to undertake the detailed technical assessments on:

- Cultural Heritage
- Natural Heritage System (scoped)
- Market
- Fiscal Impact
- Servicing
- Mobility
- Parking
- Sustainability
- Urban Design

Following completion of these assessments, the consultant team will prepare the first draft of the Downtown Georgetown Secondary Plan (land use plan and policies.)

Figure 8: Revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative



It is important to note that while the Preliminary Preferred Alternative proposes redevelopment of municipal parking lots in the Downtown Area, the redevelopment proposed is based on the principle of replacing the lost parking, as well as providing additional parking to serve the new commercial and residential uses. As well, an analysis of parking will be an important aspect of the detailed evaluation in Phase 5 of the Study.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Although this Report is providing a Phase 4 status update, the overall Destination Downtown study relates to a number of the nine strategic directions outlined in the Town's Strategic Plan. Specifically the study relates extensively to the following Strategic Directions:

- Foster A Healthy Community
- Foster a Prosperous Economy
- Preserve, Protect and Promote Our Distinctive History
- Achieve Sustainable Growth
- Provide Sustainable Infrastructure & Services
- Provide Responsive, Effective Municipal Government

In particular, comments raised by the public so far in the Study reinforce the importance of the following Strategic Objectives:

- C.6** To maintain and enhance our historic downtowns and vibrant commercial areas to provide for shopping, services, cultural amenities and entertainment.
- D.2** To encourage the preservation and enhancement of the historical character of the Town's distinctive neighbourhoods, districts, hamlets and rural settlement areas.
- G.9** To ensure that new population growth takes place by way of identifiable, sustainable, healthy and complete communities and neighbourhoods that reflect excellence in urban design.
- G.10** To promote intensification and affordable housing in appropriate locations within the Town.

Halton Hills Council has also approved the 'Top Eight' 2014-2018 Strategic Action Plan priorities for the 2014-2018 Council term. The 'Top Eight' includes Strategic Action 3 – Planning for Growth, and the following sub-actions:

3. Planning for Growth

- B.** Promote the protection and adaptive re-use of built heritage resources as part of the planning of intensification and new development areas.

- C. Preserve the established character of stable neighbourhoods by focusing development in identified intensification areas, and utilizing ‘best practices’ in urban design for infill development.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Council has previously approved 2017 Capital Project No. 7100-22-1901 – Georgetown Downtown Secondary Plan with a budget of \$200,000.

CONSULTATION:

Technical Advisory and Steering Committee meetings were held to obtain input on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative. Input provided was considered when the consultant team prepared the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative included in this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

There have been three public workshops held on the Destination Downtown project to date. The first was a Visioning Workshop held on February 20, 2018. The results of this workshop were provided in a previous report to Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee.

A summary of the second and third public sessions, the Design Summit and the workshop on the Preliminary Preferred Alternative have been provided as part of this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

Sustainability is central to the Destination Downtown study. Sustainability implications will be evaluated in subsequent recommendation reports to Council.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Upon Council adoption of the recommendations of this report, it will be posted on the project webpage and stakeholders that have requested email notifications of project updates will be advised that the report is available online.

CONCLUSION:

Upon Council adoption of the recommendations of this Report, the consultant team will have direction to proceed to obtain public input on the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative over the summer, undertake the detailed technical evaluations and develop a draft Secondary Plan (land use plan and policies) using the revised Preliminary Preferred Alternative as the basis.

Reviewed and Approved by,