

# Staff Memorandum



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To	Mayor A. Nuttall and Members of Council
Subject	City-Wide Community and Sustainable Design Guidelines
Date	April 16, 2025
Ward	All
From	M. Banfield, RPP, Executive Director of Development Services
Executive Member Approval	M. Banfield, RPP, Executive Director of Development Services
CAO Approval	M. Prowse, Chief Administrative Officer

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The purpose of this memorandum is to advise members of Council of the final release of the City of Barrie's *City-Wide Community and Sustainable Design Guidelines* (referred to as "the guidelines" or "CSDGs" below).

**Community Design is the process of shaping buildings, streets, and open spaces to make the City more functional, sustainable, accessible and well-connected.** It considers how people experience places and ensures their surroundings support a healthy lifestyle with opportunities to thrive. It considers urban systems such as transportation, infrastructure, built form and open spaces, as well as community priorities to ensure the built environment is well-coordinated and responsive to local needs.

## **Purpose of the City-Wide Community and Sustainable Design Guidelines**

The purpose of the guidelines are to:

- Implement the design goals, objectives, and policies of Official Plan 2051 (May 2024) through new developments in the City.
- Communicate expectations for various building types in different areas of the City.
- Facilitate consistent application of design objectives.
- Foster design excellence and encourage creative and innovative design responses.
- Attract and enhance investment throughout the City.
- Encourage projects to be appropriate to context and climate.

## Document Development and Engagement History

City-Wide Design Guidelines were initiated during the development of the Official Plan and have also been developed in concert with the draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law, ensuring consistency between documents. As a result of this integrated project development, the CSDGs have been informed by a wide range of public and stakeholder engagement initiatives. Public releases of the first draft of the document in summer 2023, and a second draft in fall 2024, each had review and feedback periods with input from stakeholders, which has culminated in the Draft 3 document.

Through the development of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law, feedback from the development community has suggested that some of the zoning standards, related to provisions set out in Section 34.4 of the *Planning Act*, are not suitable for inclusion in the Zoning By-law. Instead, they have suggested that these standards would be more appropriate to include in the design guidelines. This approach will give private design professionals more control and agency in interpreting the design goals and objectives outlined in the Official Plan while striving for design excellence in all of their projects.

Consultation, engagement, and associated revisions to the Draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law are ongoing. The CSDGs may also be updated to incorporate the intent and directions of any standards that are removed from the Zoning By-law.

## Design Objectives and Priorities

The guidelines are based on the design objectives described in Section 3 of the Official Plan, and further developed supporting priorities for community design in Barrie:

- *Design for Excellence*
  - Priority 1: Contextual design
  - Priority 2: High-quality and innovative design and architecture
- *Design for the Human Scale*
  - Priority 3: Connected, walkable neighbourhoods
  - Priority 4: Human-scale design for livability
- *Design for Sustainability, Resiliency, and Adaptability*
  - Priority 5: Enhanced and protected Natural Heritage Network
  - Priority 6: Sustainable design and development
  - Priority 7: Buildings, infrastructure and open spaces resilient to the effects of climate change
- *Design for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity*
  - Priority 8: Safe, comfortable, and accessible buildings, streets and open spaces
  - Priority 9: Placemaking to enhance community identity

## Document Structure and Use

The target audience for the document is planning, design and land development professionals. The document has been structured and formatted for the convenience and usability of these end users. Guidance is provided based on **where** a subject site is located within the Community Structure (determined by “Map 1 – Community Structure” of the

Official Plan), and **what** type of buildings and uses are being proposed (determined by “Map 2 – Land Use” and associated policies of the Official Plan).

The document’s structure provides a framework to address the design of development at multiple scales, for various building types, and across different areas of the City. The document has 5 sections that work from general to specific guidance (i.e. objectives and priorities > site context and area-specific guidelines > site and building design):

<b>1. Introduction</b>		
<b>2. Vision &amp; Priorities</b>		
<b>3. Site Context</b>		
<b>4. Area-Specific Guidelines</b>		
Urban Growth Centre		
Strategic Growth Areas		
Major Transit Station Areas		
Historic Neighbourhoods		
Commercial Business Districts		
Neighbourhood Areas – Greenfield Developments		
<b>5. Site &amp; Building Design</b>		
General Building Design Guidelines		
Green Building Guidelines		
Residential & Mixed-Use		
<i>Infill &amp; Rowhouses</i>	<i>Low &amp; Mid-Rise Buildings</i>	<i>High-Rise Buildings</i>
Flex Buildings – Retail, Commercial and Industrial		
Flex Buildings – Community Hub		

*Table 1: Document Structure - City-Wide Community and Sustainable Design Guidelines*

## Next Steps

A staff report recommending Council's endorsement of the guidelines will accompany the adoption of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

**A copy of the draft guidelines can be found at [www.barrie.ca/communitydesign](http://www.barrie.ca/communitydesign)**

## Appendix:

Appendix A – Presentation: City-Wide Community and Sustainable Design Guidelines (April 16, 2024)

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**File #:**

Not Applicable

**Pending #:**

Not Applicable