



County of Brant Council Report

To: The Mayor and Members of County of Brant Council
From: Brandon Kortleve, Planner – Policy Planning Division
Date: October 8, 2024
Report #: RPT-0469-24
Subject: Downtown Paris Master Plan – Zoning Amendment
Purpose: For Information and Direction

Recommendation

That Report RPT-0469-24 be received as information.

That staff be directed to initiate a Zoning By-Law Amendment to implement the objectives and recommendations of the Downtown Paris Master Plan, adopted by Council in October 2019;

And that a staff recommendation and amending by-law be presented for Council consideration after a period of public and stakeholder engagement.

Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council direct staff to initiate a zoning by-law amendment for Downtown Paris. The amendment would review the current zoning and propose changes to implement the [Downtown Paris Master Plan](#) adopted in October 2019, ensuring that the County's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law ("CZBL") aligns with the recommendations of the master plan.

The amendment will address key issues such as building height, bulk and character, permitted uses, parking requirements, and floodplain mitigation measures. Public consultation will go beyond statutory requirements, involving various methods such as online feedback, notices to local residents and businesses, and a project page hosted on Engage Brant.

Following public and stakeholder engagement, staff will present an information report in November 2024 and intend to bring a recommendation and an amending by-law for Council's consideration in December 2024.

Strategic Plan Priority

Strategic Priority 1 - Sustainable and Managed Growth

Strategic Priority 3 - Economic Resilience

Impacts and Mitigation

Social Impacts

A CZBL shapes the built environment by outlining permitted uses with associated regulations based on the municipality's Official Plan objectives. The built environment, including buildings, transport networks, green spaces, and public areas, plays a critical role in shaping the community's physical, psychological, and social health. Downtown areas provide numerous benefits to the social wellbeing of residents and visitors alike.

Environmental Impacts

A CZBL can prohibit land uses that are not appropriate within a flood plain and direct land uses to areas where development will not pose a threat to public health and safety. The County's Special Policy Area, which applies to the floodplain in Downtown Paris, will play an important role during the zoning by-law amendment process.

Economic Impacts

A CZBL can set expectations for development potential, leading to incremental growth in the tax assessment base as development occurs. Downtown Paris has a tax assessment value of over \$30 million dollars (MPAC, 2024). Investment in additional commercial and retail opportunities will increase that value.

Report

Background and Planning Context

The Downtown Paris Master Plan ("the Master Plan") was developed between 2017 and 2019 with extensive public consultation and was adopted by Council in October 2019. The Master Plan aims to transform the downtown core into a vibrant, inclusive space while preserving its historic charm and community focus. The Master Plan focuses on public spaces, improved connectivity, and enhancing the town's relationship with its rivers. It includes recommendations about streetscape redevelopment, infill opportunities, green infrastructure, and improved pedestrian access. Further to the approval of the Master Plan, at a January 2024 Council meeting, increased residential and commercial density in downtown Paris was also approved in principle, which will be a key piece of maintaining a vibrant downtown core.

The proposed zoning by-law amendment will ensure that zoning standards align with the Official Plan and Master Plan policies, provide more clarity on increasing density, and improve the implementation of the policies from the 1987 approval of the Special Policy Area. Regarding density, the CZBL has the authority to regulate minimum and maximum density in specific areas. Adding provisions specific to density may be a beneficial tool for setting clear development expectations, ensuring public safety during flooding events, and maintaining a viable downtown mixed-use area. This project will not address whether density and development should occur—this has already been discussed by Council and supported in principle. Instead, it will focus on what the development and increased density could look like and identify the most suitable locations to support it.

With construction expected to begin on Grand River Street North in Spring 2025, this zoning project is being undertaken in advance to ensure that clear directions and standards are available when construction begins so that private investment projects can easily coordinate with the timing of the Downtown Dig. With respect to the Downtown Dig project, additional public consultation is being planned to present streetscaping designs and construction details.

Key Items for Consideration

This review will incorporate Council's directions and provide opportunities for additional public feedback on future development. The zoning by-law amendment will address:

- Building height, bulk, and character,
- Permitted uses and residential-to-commercial ratios
- Increased density,
- Parking requirements, and
- Implementation of the 1987 Special Policy Area (in coordination with the Grand River Conservation Authority)

Existing zones in Downtown Paris include Core Area Commercial (C4), Residential Singles and Semis (R2) and Minor Institutional (N1). There are also overlay zones that provide an additional layer of standards and include the Special Policy Area overlay (s-) and Heritage Area overlay (HA-).

Attachment 1 of this report shows the existing zoning as it applies in Downtown Paris and outlines the proposed area that will be considered for amendments as part of this process.

Next Steps

A public consultation plan has been developed to go beyond the minimum requirements of the *Planning Act* and ensure there are various opportunities for meaningful input. Public consultation for this project will include:

- Online feedback – Collected through a dedicated Engage Brant project page.
- Public notice – to meet the minimum standard of the *Planning Act*, this will be sent to all addresses within 120 metres of Downtown Paris (map included as Attachment 2).
- Information Poster - displayed in the Downtown Paris Customer Service Office with a QR code link to the Engage Brant page.
- Visualizations – To provide clear and tangible representations of what can be complex zoning requirements, the current and potential permissions will be visualized to assist with decision making and feedback.
- Public information meeting - to present potential amendments as information prior to a recommendation meeting and to fulfill the minimum requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Staff will also be regularly available at the Downtown Paris customer service office to meet with any residents or business owners who may have questions and wish to provide in-person feedback.

A draft zoning amendment will be presented in November for information and additional input. A recommendation report will then be brought to Council with the aim of having this completed before construction begins on Grand River Street North. It is anticipated that this report will come forward in December, but there is flexibility in this timeline depending on the input received and scope of desired changes.

Attachments

1. Proposed Area for Zoning By-Law Amendment (with existing Zoning)
2. 120m Notice Circulation Radius

Reviewed By

1. Alysha Dyjach, General Manager of Development Services
2. Jeremy Vink, Director of Planning
3. Adam Crozier, Director of Corporate Strategy

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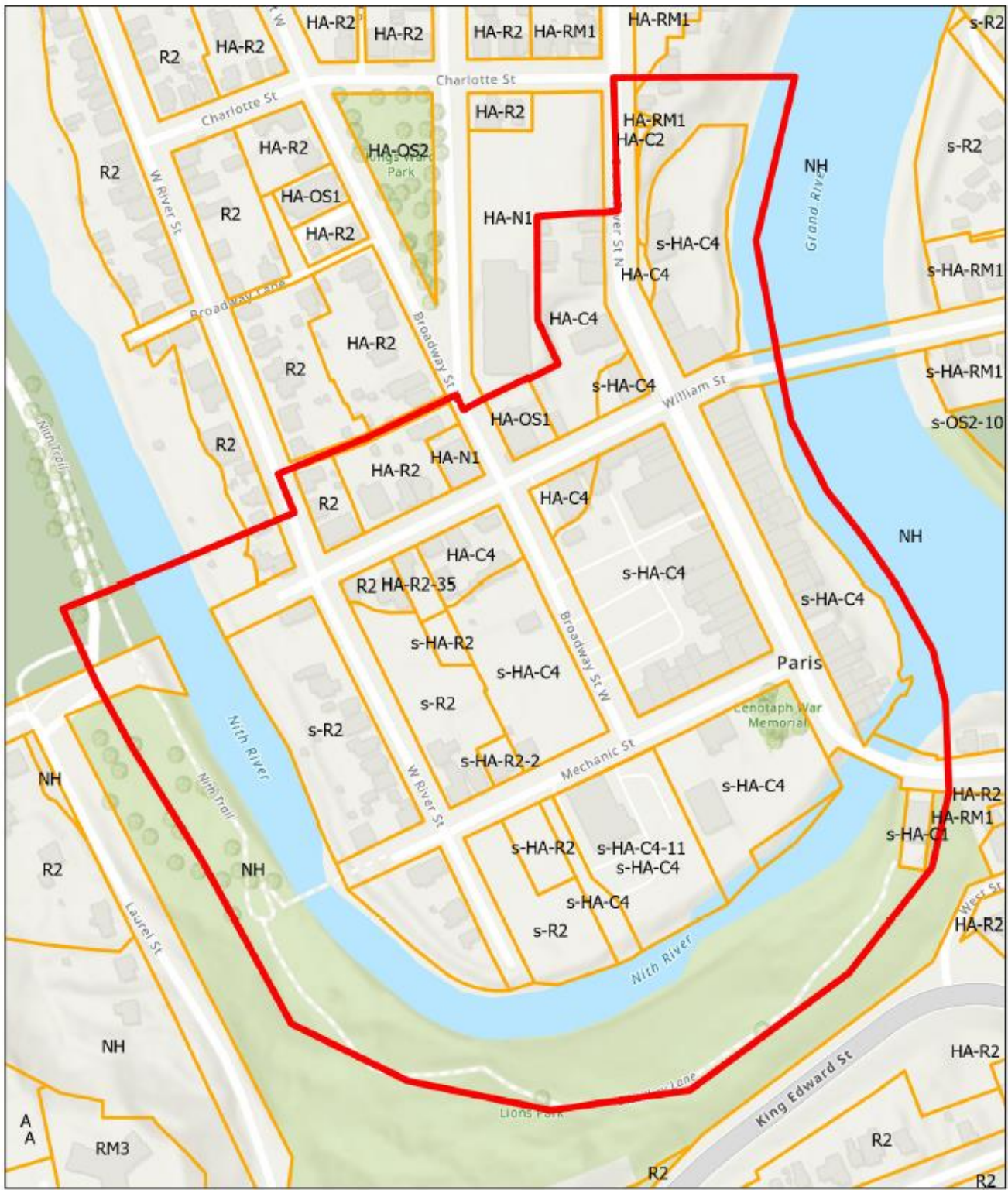
1. Senior Management Team
2. Sarah Dymont-Smith, Planning Administrative Assistant
3. Grand River Conservation Authority

By-law and/or Agreement

By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No

Attachment 1 – Proposed Area for Zoning By-Law Amendment

Proposed Area for Downtown Paris Zoning By-Law Amendment
Report RPT-0469-24 - Attachment 1
Downtown Paris Master Plan Implementation - Zoning By-Law Amendment



Attachment 2 – 120m Notice Circulation Radius

120m Notice Circulation for Downtown Paris Zoning By-Law Amendment
Report RPT-0469-24 - Attachment 2
Downtown Paris Master Plan Implementation - Zoning By-Law Amendment

