



**City of Kingston
Information Report to Council
Report Number 19-074**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff: Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services
Date of Meeting: March 5, 2019
Subject: Mid-Rise and Tall Building Policies

Executive Summary:

Intensification is a key component of future growth and development within the City in order to maintain the existing urban boundary, maximize investments in infrastructure and increase the City's tax assessment, resiliency and sustainability in the long-term. It is the intent of the City's Official Plan that 40 percent of new residential development and 10 percent of new non-residential development occur through intensification within the urban boundary.

Well-designed mid-rise buildings and high-rises, or "tall buildings", can contribute to the City's goal of achieving smart growth through appropriate infill and intensification. On July 10, 2018, Council authorized staff to retain the services of planning expert Brent Toderian to undertake the development of tall building policies for the City's Official Plan in coordination with Planning staff ([Report Number 18-071](#)). The tall building policies are intended to provide clear direction on the design of tall buildings in the City. Staff will expand this policy work to include mid-rise buildings as a proactive step considering the lack of policy direction in the Official Plan around the design of mid-rise buildings. It is not the intent of these policies to outline where mid-rise or tall buildings can be located in the City. Phase 2 of this work will follow in 2020 that further evaluates the appropriate location of these forms of development relevant to the Official Plan.

The purpose of this report is to outline the scope of work that will be undertaken for the mid-rise building policies in coordination with the tall building policies previously authorized by Council, the overall public engagement strategy related to the development of the mid-rise and tall building policies and to provide a revised timeline for the completion of this work.

Recommendation:

This report is for information purposes only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

**Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Deanne Roberge, Acting Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

The City of Kingston has recognized the need for intensification and smart growth within its existing urban boundary to maximize corporate investments in infrastructure and build a more sustainable and resilient community. The City's Official Plan identifies Centres and Corridors as the areas where intensification will be focused, and where greater densities of residential and non-residential development will be permitted. Centres and Corridors are areas of mixed use and mixed buildings, including employment, residential, commercial and supporting uses and facilities. The Official Plan also indicates that within the Urban Boundary, intensification through moderate increases in building height or density may be considered at the edge of neighbourhoods, provided that the development is adjacent to transit routes, community facilities, areas of open space, or mixed use Centres or Corridors. It is the intent of the City that 40 percent of new residential development and 10 percent of new non-residential development occur through intensification within the urban boundary.

The conversation about how intensification is implemented has primarily taken place through the five-year review of the Official Plan as well as major development applications. The City has been confronted with opportunities to greater intensify the urban core beyond what has been seen in the past, especially as it relates to high rises or "tall buildings". The location, context of existing built form, transportation considerations as well as architectural design requires careful contemplation in guiding the City's approach to intensification.

In order to provide clear direction on the design of tall buildings in the City, staff are working collaboratively alongside planning expert Brent Toderian to develop tall building policies for the Official Plan ([Report Number 18-071](#)). The scope of work includes the preparation of draft policies related to the floor plate, tower setbacks from the podium, public realm interface, podium height, articulation and arrangement of balconies on the tower, which will build upon key principles of urbanism achieved by cities who do 'density well', while being appropriate and sensitive to the Kingston context. Staff wish to expand this policy work to include mid-rise buildings as a proactive step considering the lack of policy direction in the Official Plan around the design of mid-rise buildings.

Both sets of policies are intended to provide specific design direction for mid-rise and tall buildings in the City. The Official Plan policies will be accompanied by a complementary user guide which will include visuals and graphics to explain the policy parameters. It is not the intent of these policies to outline where mid-rise or tall buildings can be located in the City. Phase 2 of this work will follow in 2020 that further evaluates the appropriate location of these forms of development relevant to the Official Plan.

This report outlines the scope of work that will be undertaken for the mid-rise building policies in coordination with the tall building policies previously authorized by Council, the overall public engagement strategy related to the development of the mid-rise and tall building policies, and provides a revised timeline for the completion of this work.

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Mid-Rise Building Policies

Mid-rise buildings represent a built form that is moderate in scale and which provides an appropriate transition between low-rise and tall buildings. Some municipalities define mid-rise buildings as being no taller than the width of the road right-of-way on which they are located.

In Kingston's context, the Williamsville Main Street Study already sets expectations around the height of mid-rise buildings within the Williamsville Main Street. Therefore, for the purposes of this work, mid-rise buildings are defined as those buildings that are between 4 and 10-stories.

Well-designed mid-rise and tall buildings can contribute to the City's goal of achieving smart growth through appropriate infill and intensification. In order to provide clear design direction in the Official Plan around mid-rise buildings and to ensure that such buildings are successful from an urban design and compatibility perspective, staff have expanded Mr. Toderian's scope of work to include mid-rise building policies. The policies will address the built form, scale and massing of mid-rise buildings, appropriate transitions, building placement on-site, the relationship of the building to the public realm (street level design) and façade articulation.

Public Engagement and Next Steps

Mr. Toderian's work related to the development of the mid-rise and tall building policies will include a public engagement strategy co-facilitated by City staff. Some of the key stakeholders include residents, neighbourhood associations, community organizations, the development community, representatives from post-secondary institutions, the Downtown Kingston BIA, the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce and internal City departments.

A multipronged approach is proposed to engage a wide cross-section of the community and reach as many stakeholders as possible. The public engagement strategy will include a combination of the following:

- Educational opportunities focused on urban design and building a "livable Kingston";
- Stakeholder/focused group sessions;
- Pop-up events;
- Open house;
- Consultation tools available through the City's online engagement platform, Get Involved Kingston;
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter);
- Postings on the blog maintained by the Director of Planning, Building & Licensing Services; and
- Project-specific website.

A public education and engagement plan will be prepared by the end of March in consultation with staff from the Communications & Customer Experience Department and posted on the project website. The proposed timeline for the completion of this work is included in Exhibit A. It is anticipated that the development of the draft mid-rise and tall building policies will be completed within the next six months, followed by the formal *Planning Act* process to amend the Official Plan.

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Existing Policy/By-Law:

City of Kingston Official Plan

City of Kingston Zoning By-Laws

Notice Provisions:

Not applicable

Accessibility Considerations:

Not applicable

Financial Considerations:

The contract related to the creation of the Mid-Rise and Tall Building Policies will be funded out of the existing approved budget.

Contacts:

Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services 613-546-4291 extension 3252

Sukriti Agarwal, Project Manager, Planning Division 613-546-4291 extension 3217

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Not applicable

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A Proposed Timeline

Proposed Timeline	Q1, 2019			Q2, 2019			Q3, 2019			Q4, 2019			Q1, 2020		
Mid-rise and Tall Building Policies	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
Finalization of the Public Education and Engagement Plan															
Interactive education sessions and public engagement opportunities															
Draft Issues Paper and Policy Options Report															
Development of Draft Mid-rise and Tall Building Policies															
Open house to present and seek feedback on Draft Policies															
Comment period															
Statutory Public Meeting (Official Plan Amendment)															
Comprehensive Report preparation															
Recommendation to Planning Committee															
Council approval and appeal period															