

Urban Design Brief

**13 Mountain Street &
19-23 Elm Street**
Town of Grimsby

Prepared For
Woolverton Holdings Corporation

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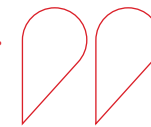
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This Urban Design Brief has been prepared by Bousfields Inc. on behalf of Woolverton Holdings Corporation in support of Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications to facilitate the redevelopment of the lands municipally known as 13 Mountain Street and 19-23 Elm Street, in the Town of Grimsby and Regional Municipality of Niagara.

The proposal contemplates the redevelopment of the subject site with an 8-storey mixed use building that retains and incorporates the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings and introduces open space elements and an enhanced public realm along each of Mountain Street and Elm Street.



1

Introduction

This Urban Design Brief has been prepared by Bousfields Inc. on behalf of Woolverton Holdings Corporation (the “Owner”) in support of Official Plan Amendment (“OPA”) and Zoning By-law Amendment (“ZBA”) applications to facilitate the redevelopment of the lands municipally known as 13 Mountain Street and 19-23 Elm Street (the “subject site”), in the Town of Grimsby and Regional Municipality of Niagara.

The 4.5-hectare subject site is generally located south of the Main Street commercial core in the downtown area and north of the Niagara Escarpment, at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mountain Street and Elm Street. Most notably, it is currently developed with a former church building at 19 Elm Street that was previously converted for commercial use and subsequently adapted for community uses (“Woolverton Hall”) and a 2-storey former residential dwelling at 13 Mountain Street that is currently used for commercial and residential purposes (“Woolverton House”) with surface parking areas interspersed between these and other structures. Both Woolverton Hall and Woolverton House are heritage-designated buildings.

The proposal contemplates the redevelopment of the subject site with an 8-storey mixed use building that retains and incorporates the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings and introduces open space elements and an enhanced public realm along each of Mountain Street and Elm Street (the “Proposal”).

The purpose of this Urban Design Brief (“UDB” or “Brief”) is to describe the vision and design rationale for the form and pattern of development proposed for the subject site, and how the Proposal fits within the existing and planned physical context and applicable policy framework. The Brief provides an inventory and analysis of the existing condition of the subject site and surrounding context and outlines the urban design approach for the Proposal that is supportive of the intent of the Town of Grimsby urban design policies and objectives.

From an urban design perspective, this Brief reviews the architectural design concept prepared by Studio JCI Architects and the landscape design concept prepared by SvN Architects + Planners. In doing so, this Brief addresses the urban design policies of the Region of Niagara Official Plan and the Town of Grimsby Official Plan, as well as the Regional Municipality of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines and the Downtown Grimsby Design Guidelines which outline urban design principles and objectives that will guide the development to ensure it is delivered in a cohesive and complementary manner.

This Brief concludes that the proposed development is in keeping with the urban design framework established by the applicable policy and guideline documents and has appropriate regard for the existing and emerging built form context. From a built form and urban design perspective, the Proposal will establish and reinforce an urban structure that is supported by the applicable policy framework and surrounding buildings, in particular by maintaining the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings and introducing complementary contemporary new built form. The incorporation and adaptive re-use of the existing onsite buildings responds to the traditional character of the area. The Proposal will also animate the streetscape along each Mountain Street and Elm Street with active uses at grade and publicly accessible landscaped areas. Architecturally, the development will establish a new contextually appropriate building that will revitalize a largely vacant, underutilized property with a visually attractive building along a Regional Arterial Road within the Downtown Intensification area. The Proposal is appropriately massed and compatible with the existing and planned context and results in limited and acceptable built form impacts.

2

Vision & Objectives

2.1 Vision Statement

From an urban design perspective, the Proposal strives to urbanize the subject site and at the same time maintain and enhance the existing onsite heritage-designated buildings by introducing new development on the underutilized portions of the site.

As such, the vision for the subject site is to support the preservation and improvement of the existing buildings onsite while providing new architecturally interesting built form that promotes a pedestrian-scale streetscape and focuses on strong, compatible built form relationships to the street and surrounding area.



(Rendering courtesy of Studio JCI)

2.2 Urban Design Objectives

The vision described above is achieved through the careful siting and orientation of building massing, as well as through the introduction of landscape elements complementary to the existing onsite built form and surrounding streetscape.

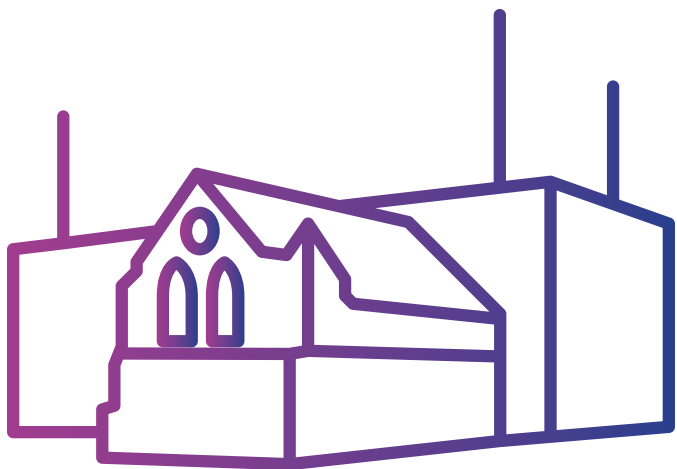
The following urban design objectives have informed the design of the Proposal for the subject site:



Develop and re-use the existing heritage-designated buildings onsite, and thoughtfully incorporate them into the new building massing in a manner that is sensitive and practical.



Create an animated, pedestrian-friendly appearance along street frontages that is complementary to the existing surrounding Downtown character through the incorporation of active at-grade uses.



Situate building elements to emphasize the corner location of the subject site, reinforce the scale of the streetscape, and establish a strong street edge.



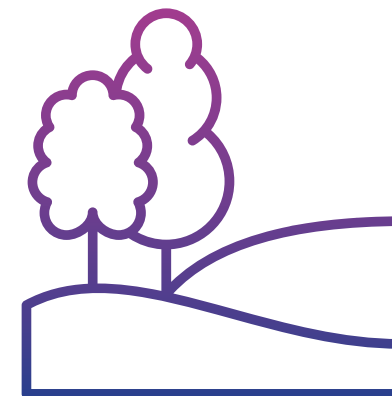
Enhance the public realm by integrating high-quality hard and soft landscape elements along street frontages.



Organize taller built form elements to minimize visual impact on the surrounding streetscape and to be respectful of existing view corridors.



Design parking and servicing to be screened from public view, internally within the building and/or below grade.



Incorporate sustainable building and landscape principles in the Proposal design to promote a green and sustainable community.

3

Site & Surrounding Context

3.1 Subject Site

The subject site includes the properties municipally addressed as 13 Mountain Street and 19, 21, and 23 Elm Street. The subject site has a gross area of approximately 4,513.5 square metres, with a frontage of approximately 62 metres on Mountain Street and 63 metres on Elm Street.

The subject site is currently occupied by five low-rise buildings with paved surface parking and driveway areas interspersed. These include:

- Woolverton Hall, a heritage-designated 2-storey former Baptist Church, that has been converted into a Motorcycle Shop (19 Elm Street);
- Woolverton House, a heritage-designated 2-storey former single-detached dwelling currently occupied by office uses on the ground floor and residential uses on the second floor (13 Mountain Street);
- a small 2-storey building that contains a retail store and music school (13 Mountain Street);
- a 2-storey house-form building converted for office uses on the ground floor and residential uses above (21 Elm Street); and
- a 2-storey single-detached house form (23 Elm Street).

Vehicular access to the subject site is provided via several driveway entrances off each adjacent street. One entrance off Mountain Street leads to the surface parking area at the rear of the property at 13 Mountain Street. Woolverton Hall at 19 Elm Street takes vehicular access from each Mountain Street and Elm Street, leading to the rear surface parking area. Both 2-storey buildings located at 21 Elm Street and 23 Elm Street have vehicular access points from Elm Street, which provide access to parking in the rear of each property.

With respect to topography, there is a moderate increase in grade from the north end to the south end of the subject site. As such, there is an existing retaining wall that runs along the south property line of 13 Mountain Street between 19 and 21 Elm Street.

In terms existing vegetation, there are several existing trees and shrubs on the subject site, generally located adjacent to the south façades of the existing structures and along the east property line of 13 Mountain Street and 19 Elm Street. Additionally, mature trees exist in the front yards of 21 and 23 Elm Street.

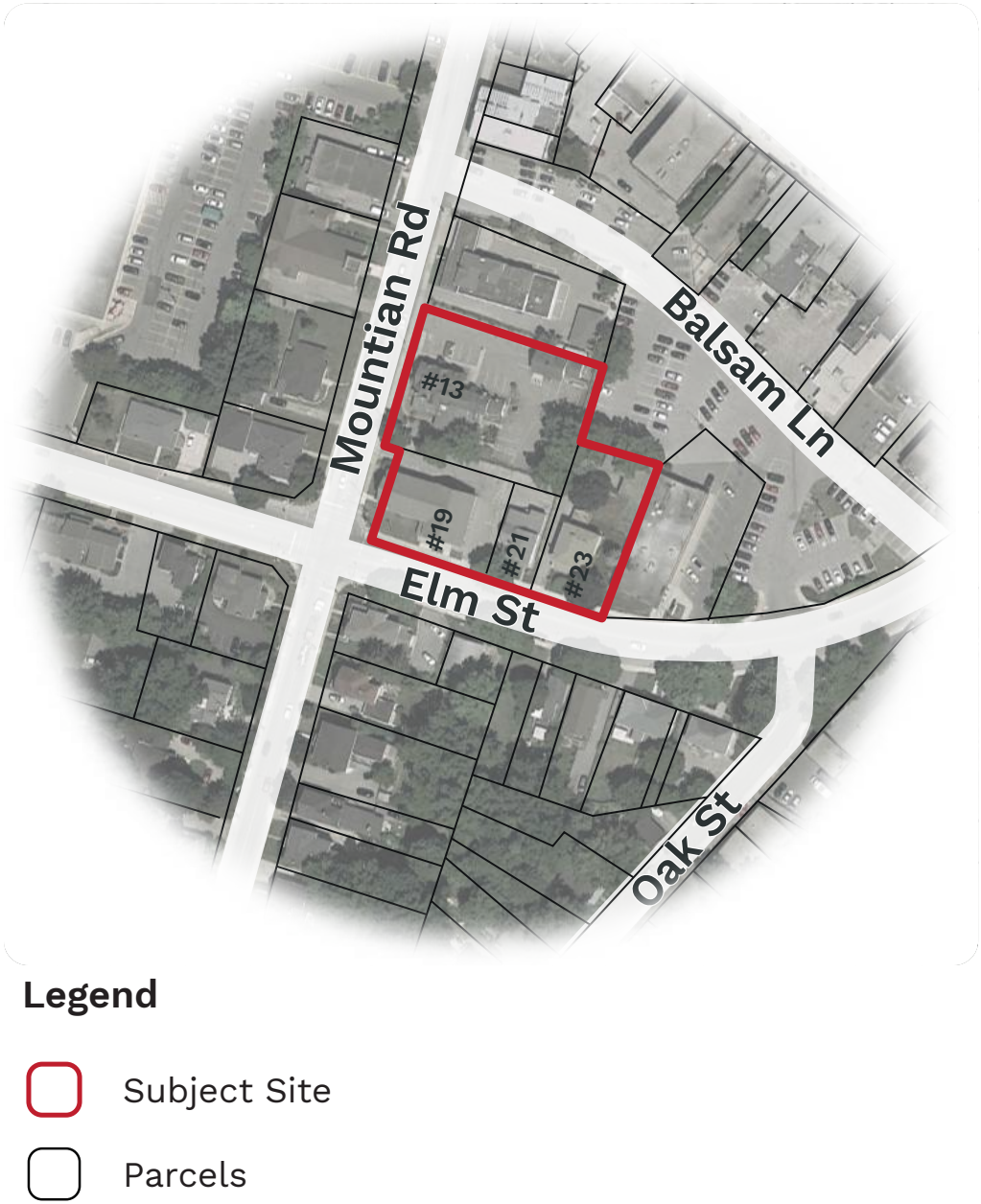


Figure 1 - Aerial Subject Site



Figure 2 - Aerial View of Subject Site Looking Northwest



Figure 3 - Aerial Immediate Context

3.2 Surrounding Context

The Town of Grimsby is located along the southern shore of Lake Ontario, at the northwest corner of Niagara Region, just east of the City of Hamilton. The boundaries of the Town extend from Lake Ontario in the north to Mud Street East in the south, with the Niagara Escarpment (the “Escarpment”) providing a natural division between the Town’s urban areas north of the Escarpment and rural lands to the south. The Queen Elizabeth Way (“QEW”) Expressway further divides the Town, with primarily residential neighbourhoods to the north of the QEW and a mix of employment, residential and commercial uses to the south.

Central to the Town’s urban area and south of the QEW, is Downtown Grimsby. The subject site is located within Downtown Grimsby, a mixed use area that generally extends from the CN rail line to the north to the south side of Main Street East/Elm Street in the south, from Nelles Boulevard to Robinson Street North. Within the boundaries of the Downtown District, are a variety of commercial, institutional, civic, cultural and residential uses, as well as natural areas along Forty Mile Creek, which bisects the Downtown.

The historic Main Street remains the commercial centre of the area, and the traditional main street character has been carefully maintained with a generally consistent streetwall condition, with buildings occupied by commercial, restaurant, and service uses at grade. Main Street West (which transitions to Main Street East at its intersection with Elm Street), is the central commercial corridor within Downtown Grimsby. Starting at Mountain Street, Main Street West assumes a tradition retail “main street” character with one-and two-storey buildings lining the street and active retail, service and restaurant uses at grade. On-street parking is provided along both sides of the street, as well as intermittent street trees, street furniture and generous sidewalks. Generally, buildings are located close to the street, with surface parking provided at the rear and accessed via adjacent laneways. This character continues to the east towards Elm Street, at which point, commercial uses continue but the character transitions to a more “highway commercial” type form, where buildings are generally stand-alone, with surface parking between the buildings and also between the buildings and the street.

There have been limited significant redevelopments advanced within the Downtown District in recent years; however, construction is now underway for a four-storey mixed use building located at 21-23 Main Street East and 6 Doran Avenue which was approved by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (the “LPAT”) in 2021.

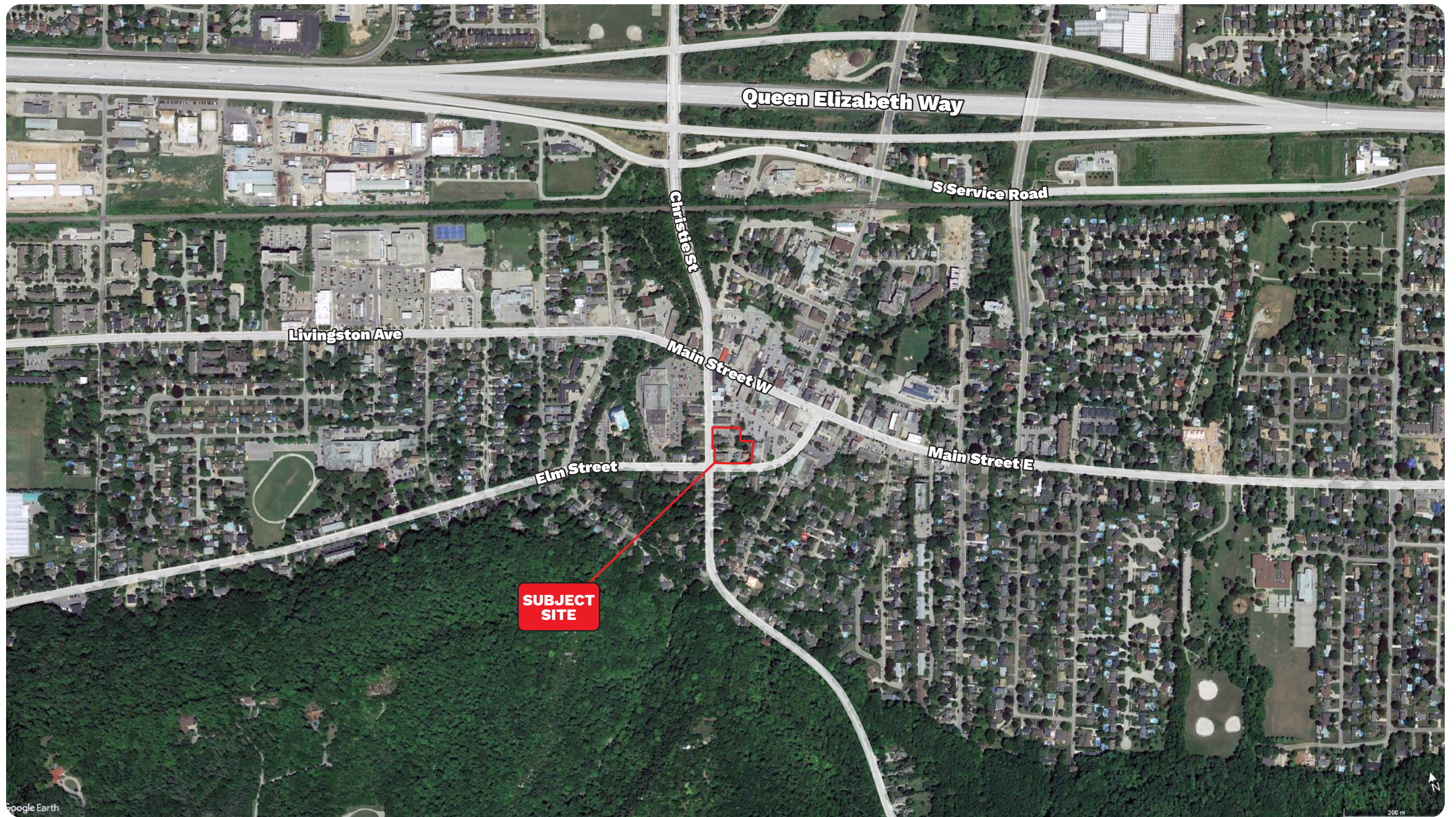


Figure 4 - Aerial Greater Context

With respect to the surroundings of the subject site, the following comprises its adjacencies and surrounding context:

- To the **north** of the subject site is a two-storey funeral home (11 Mountain Street) and associated driveways, surface parking and a small outbuilding at the rear. To the north of the funeral home is Balsam Lane, a narrow right-of-way that primarily serves as an access route to a number of surface parking lots that serve the businesses of the Downtown. North of Balsam Lane are a series of 1- and 2-storey buildings fronting onto Mountain Street that contain a range of restaurant, retail, office and service commercial uses at grade, with residential units on the second floors, where applicable (1, 3 and 5 Mountain Street). These commercial and mixed use buildings continue towards the intersection of Mountain Street and Main Street West.
- To the **south** of the subject site, at the southeast corner of Elm Street and Mountain Street, is a 2-storey former single-detached house form fronting onto Mountain Street that has been converted into a medical office/counselling centre (18 Elm Street), as well as several 1- and 2-storey single-detached house forms fronting onto Elm Street towards Oak Street. Similar house forms, some of which have been converted to commercial and/or office uses, are located at the southwest corner of the intersection and continue along the south side of Elm Street towards the southerly extension of Main Street West. To the south of the subject site, along both sides of Mountain Street are 1- and 2-storey single-detached house forms, which continue south towards the base of the Niagara Escarpment.
- To the **east** of the subject site, fronting onto Elm Street, is a single-storey brick building that is occupied by an LCBO store (25 Elm Street) and an associated surface parking lot. To the rear of the property, and east of the subject site, is a large surface municipal parking lot that is bounded to the north by Balsam Lane.
- To the **west** of the subject site, fronting onto Mountain Street are two 1-storey single-detached house forms (12 and 15 Elm Street) with substantial landscaping and mature trees at the rear. To the north of these dwellings is St. Johns Presbyterian Church (10 Mountain Street) and a 1-storey Bell Canada service building (8 Mountain Street). To the rear of these properties along Mountain Street is a large commercial plaza known as the Village Inn Centre (63 Main Street) that is anchored by a Food Basics grocery store, and also features several restaurants, retail stores and service commercial uses. This plaza, which extends the full length of the block between Elm Street and Main Street West, is well set back from the adjacent street frontages with significant surface parking, and is bounded to the rear by Forty Mile Creek.



Legend

- Subject Site
- Downtown District Boundary - Major Intensification Area¹
- Main Street Character
- Commercial Plaza
- Community Resource / Institutional Character
- Residential Character
- Parks & Open Space

Development Context

- 21-23 Main Street & 6 Doran Avenue
Typology: Mixed-Use
Height: 4 ST

1 - As Per Town of Grimsby Official Plan
Schedule A - Municipal Structure

Figure 5 - Street / Block Character



- Legend**
- Subject Site
 - Park
 - Natural Green Space

Figure 6 - Parks and Open Space



- Legend**
- Subject Site
 - Topographic Contours (10.0m intervals)¹
 - Niagara Escarpment Plan Boundary²
 - Greenbelt Plan Area - Protected Countryside²
 - Provincially Significant Life Area of Natural & Scientific Interest²
 - Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Regulated Area³
 - Natural Heritage System⁴
 - Significant Woodland²
 - Streams²

Figure 7 - Natural Features

1 - As Per Town of Grimsby Public Interactive Map
 2 - As Per Town of Grimsby Official Plan Appendix 2 - Natural Features
 3 - As Per Town of Grimsby Official Plan Appendix 3 - NPCA Regulated Area
 4 - As Per Town of Grimsby Official Plan Schedule A - Municipal Structure

3.3 Transportation Context

The subject site is served by Niagara Region Transit’s on-demand “MicroTransit” ride-share service. This program provides direct travel from starting locations in Grimsby to any other location within Grimsby, Pelham, Lincoln, West Lincoln, and Wainfleet. Outside of these zones, the MicroTransit system can be used to the nearest Direct Access Point for connections to conventional bus routes; these include St. Catharines Bus Terminal, Welland Bus Terminal and Port Colborne City Hall.

In terms of broader regional public transit, the subject site is located approximately 3 kilometres (or a 6-minute drive) to the future Grimsby GO Train Station at the intersection of Casablanca Boulevard and South Service Road. Originally announced in 2016, the Province reaffirmed its commitment to the project in January 2025 when it was announced that the contract for the third-party delivery of the design and construction of the station will be awarded in Spring 2025. Until such time as the new GO Station is operational, Grimsby continues to be served by GO Bus Route 12 which provides service between the Niagara Falls Bus Terminal and the Burlington GO Station and GO Bus Route 11 which provides service between Brock University and Aldershot GO Station.



Figure 8 - Transit Context

4

Policy Context

4.1 Niagara Region Official Plan, 2022

The Niagara Region Official Plan is the Region of Niagara’s long-term, strategic policy planning framework for managing growth, and the policies of the NROP will guide land use and development in Niagara until 2051 and beyond. The NROP was adopted by Regional Council in June 2022 and was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (the “Minister”) with modifications in November 2022 (the “NROP”).

From an urban design perspective, the NROP policies relevant to the subject site and Proposal are included in Section 6.2 of the document where the stated urban design objectives for the region are:

- to commit to excellence in urban design;
- to enhance the public realm and promote active transportation; and
- to identify and establish tools for urban design implementation.

Section 6.2.1 provides direction on excellence in urban design, including the following:

- Excellence and innovation shall be promoted in architecture, landscape architecture, site planning, streetscape design, and overall community design to ensure built environments are attractive, walkable, accessible, diverse, and functional.
- Areas strategically identified for intensification, including strategic growth areas, local growth centres and corridors, shall be designed to be pedestrian oriented with vibrant mixed uses incorporating, where feasible, public gathering areas and public art.
- Revitalization and redevelopment within downtowns and community cores shall be promoted to enhance their existing character.
- The public realm shall be enhanced through urban design and improvements, and investment that contributes to safe, attractive complete streets and desirable communities.
- Active transportation shall be promoted through the cohesive and collaborative design of streets, building interfaces and public spaces.
- Sustainable design principles shall be applied to the public realm, infrastructure, public service facilities, development and streets.

- The Region shall promote:
 - the creation of liveable and vibrant urban areas and streets;
 - community design that offers a range of transportation options, including public transit and active transportation; respects the complete streets approach by creating safe and attractive interconnected streets; and encourages a mix of land uses, a vibrant public realm and compact built form;
 - well-designed buildings, high quality streetscapes, and attractive public spaces that create neighbourhood character and strengthen community identity and diversity;
 - the integration of views of built and cultural heritage features, landmarks, and significant natural heritage features to enhance a sense of place;
- The Region will consider place-making elements in coordination with Local Area Municipalities along Regional Roads at major entry points to communities to foster unique, authentic, memorable and vibrant places.

Section 6.2.2 establishes direction for public realm and active transportation, including the following:

- Alternative road designs that balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and motorists, and prioritize road safety will be considered to support complete streets;
- Innovative and sustainable design elements are encouraged in the design, construction, and refurbishment of Regional Roads;
- The burial of overhead utilities and the co-location of utilities underground is encouraged in areas strategically identified for intensification including strategic growth areas, and local growth centres and corridors.
- The creation of an enriched urban design experience along Regional Roads will be encouraged by supporting:
 - a consistent wayfinding strategy;
 - pedestrian and transit-supportive facilities, such as street trees and street furniture;
 - public art in key locations;

- The Region shall support the design of Regional Roads within downtowns and community cores to:
 - function as flexible spaces to support place-making, temporary community events and initiatives to support complete communities;
 - encourage the creation of seasonal outdoor patios and seating areas;
 - improve accessibility;
 - include pedestrian and cycling infrastructure;
 - give priority to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure where sufficient street parking can be provided.
- Streetscapes should be designed to create a seamless transition with the public space; and
- The mitigation of microclimate impacts, such as wind, shadowing and seasonal factors, should be considered regarding the impact of development on the public realm.

Section 6.2.3 sets out policies for the implementation of urban design tools, indicating that the Region shall:

- require development, public works projects and public service facilities to use the Region’s Model Urban Design Guidelines in the absence of Local municipal urban design guidelines, as applicable;
- provide terms of reference templates reflecting good design practices for use in the preparation of urban design guidelines and other design studies, as required by the Local Area Municipalities to support development;

- apply best practices in accessible design and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (“CPTED”) principles to the design of development and the public realm; and
- ensure that updates to the Region’s Model Urban Design Guidelines include transitions to fringe lands, such as between settlement areas and rural/agricultural areas, along with other special opportunity areas, and provide design guidance for intensification with respect to compatibility with and transitions to the surrounding community context.

Cultural heritage policies are outlined in Section 6.5 of the NROP. Policy 6.5.1.1 provides that significant cultural heritage resources shall be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities. Policy 6.5.1.6 states that development and site alteration on protected heritage property or adjacent lands shall not be permitted, except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated through a heritage impact assessment, and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.

A detailed description of the NROP and its implementation can be found in the Planning Justification Report forming part of the applications in support of the redevelopment of the subject site.

4.2 Town of Grimsby Official Plan, 2012

The Town of Grimsby Official Plan (the “Grimsby OP”) was adopted by Council in 2009 and approved by the former Ontario Municipal Board in 2012, replacing the former 1988 Official Plan for the Town, as amended.

In terms of municipal structure, Schedule A of the Grimsby OP identifies the subject site as being within an Urban Settlement Area, as well as a Major Intensification Area associated with the Downtown, and the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area. In terms of land use, Schedule B-2 of the Grimsby OP designates the subject site as *Commercial Core – Intensification*, while Schedule B-3, further designates the subject site as *Downtown – Intensification*. The lands to the immediate north, east, and west are similarly designated on Schedules B-2 and B-3, while the lands further north along Main Street East are designated *Commercial Core – Main Street* and *Downtown – Main Street*, and the lands on the south side of Elm Street are designated *Commercial Core – Transition* and *Downtown – Transition*.

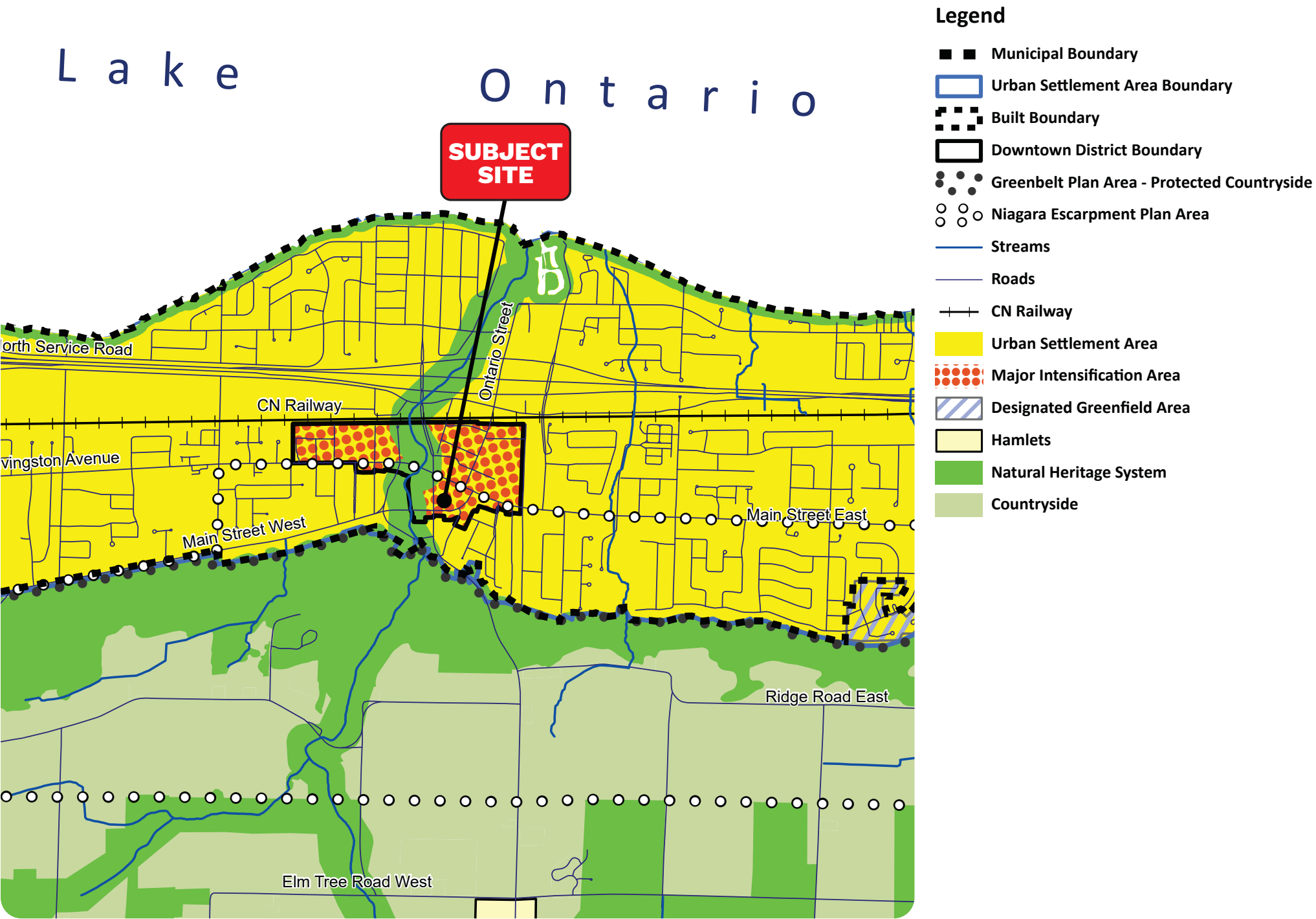


Figure 9 - Grimsby Official Plan: Schedule A – Municipal Structure

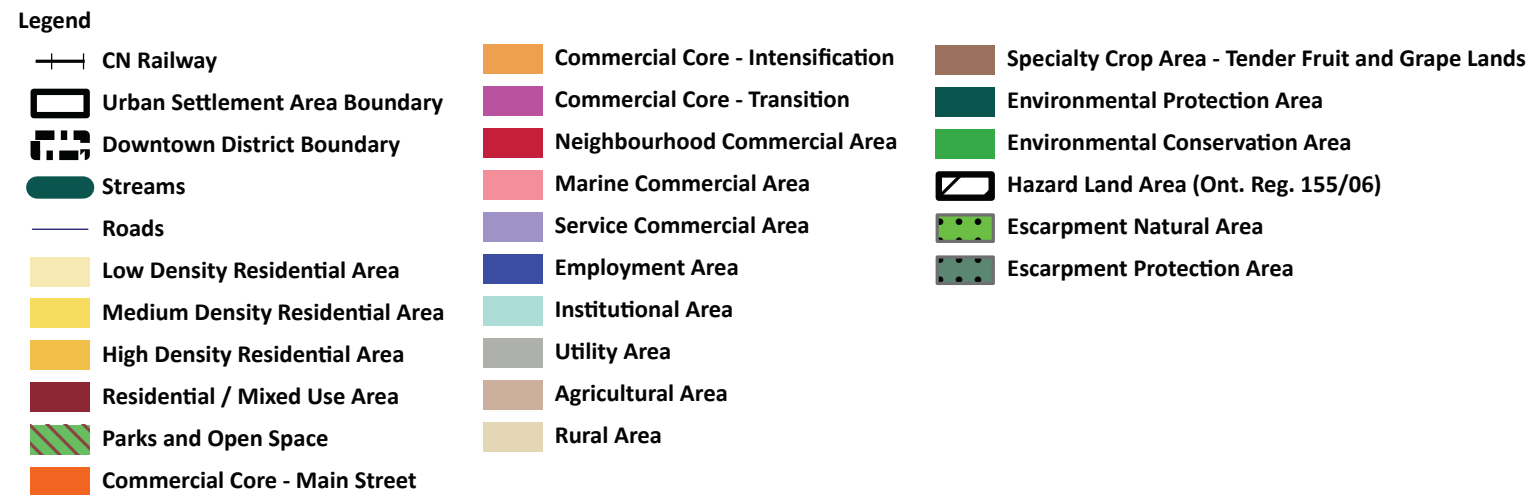


Figure 10 - Grimsby Official Plan: Schedule B-2 – Land Use - Urban Settlement Area (East)

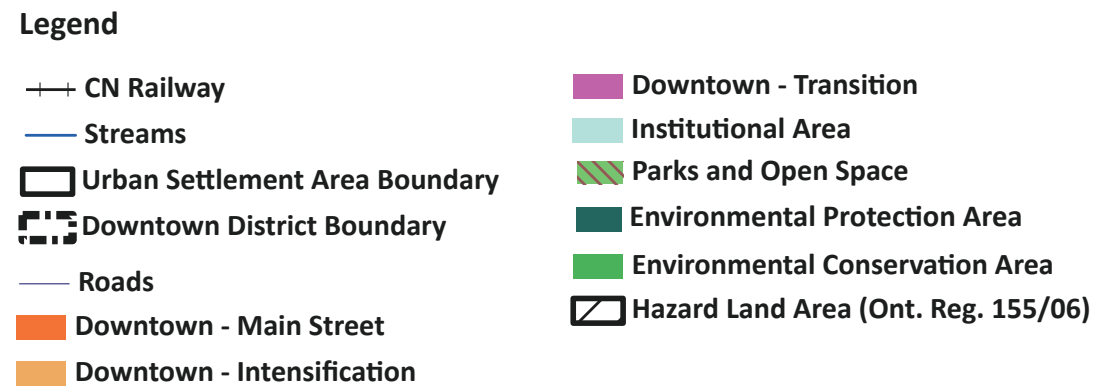
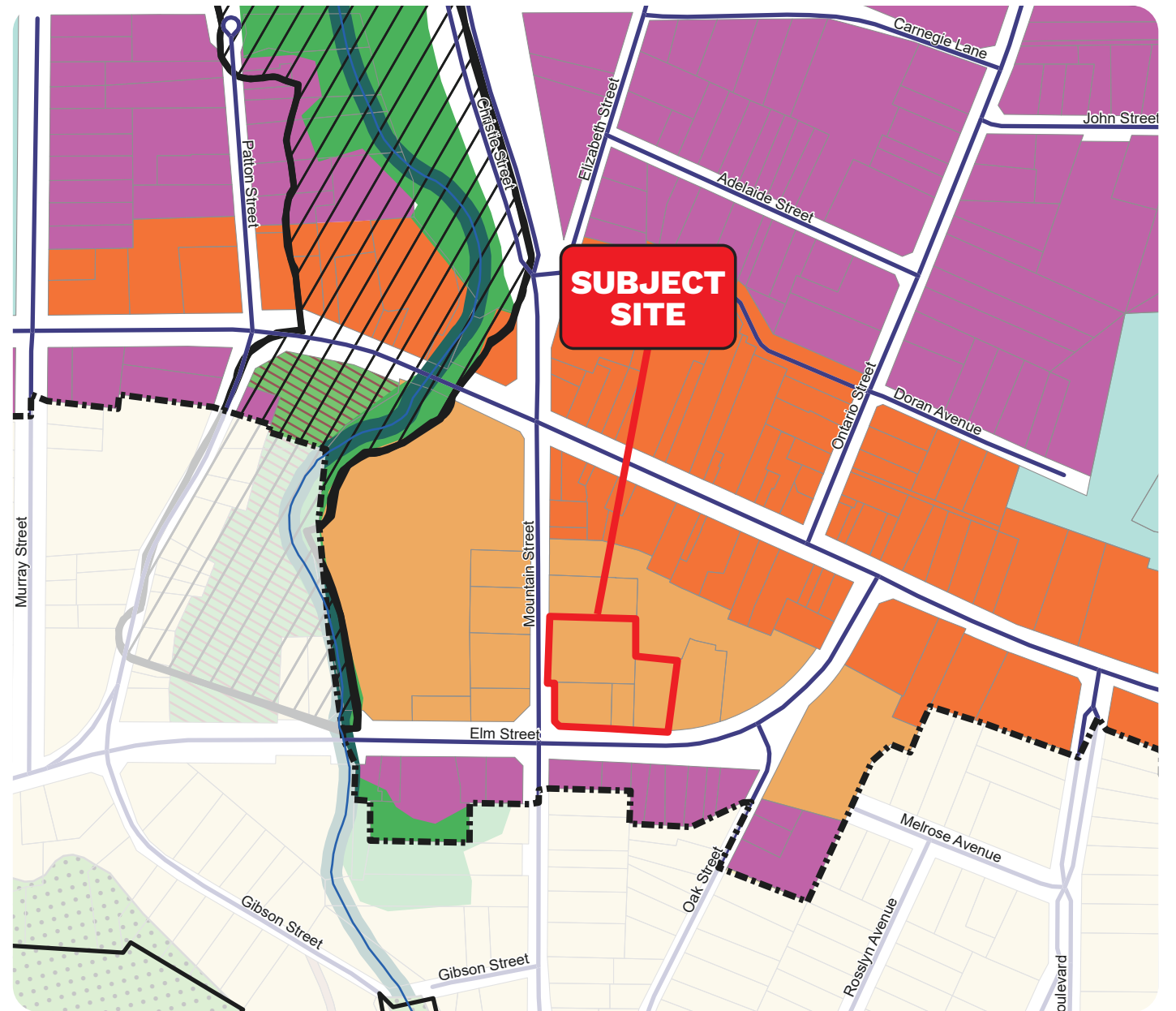


Figure 11 - Grimsby Official Plan: Schedule B-3 – Land Use – Downtown District

Section 3.5 of the Grimsby OP sets out policies with respect to the Downtown District. With respect to urban design, 3.5.6 provides general design policies for the Downtown District, which apply to the *Downtown – Intensification* designation as indicated by Policy 3.5.5.11. The Town’s objectives for urban design within the Downtown District are:

- To enhance the livability and physical appeal of the Town through the quality, layout and attractiveness of its public and private spaces and buildings;
- To provide development proponents with an understanding of the design intent of the Town; and
- To create a built environment, which provides: visual diversity, interest and beauty; a well-defined public realm, including an interconnected open space network; sensitive integration of new development with existing development; a transit supportive and pedestrian oriented development pattern; and a road system which recognizes and preserves the historic character of the Downtown District.

Policy 3.5.6.2 describes the characteristics of the four distinct street types within the Downtown District. As they are applicable to the subject site, this includes:

- *Arterial Roads*: Mountain Street is identified as an Arterial Road on Schedule C, having a distinct identity and characteristics that should be enhanced with streetscape improvements making it enjoyable, safe and walkable. In retail areas, the sidewalks should be located from the back of the curb all the way to the adjacent storefronts providing space for outdoor cafes and spill-out retail. Alternative materials should be considered for pedestrian paving including concrete unit pavers, brick pavers and high quality poured in place concrete. In addition, on Arterial Roads, trees should be located along the curb edge. Pedestrian scale decorative lighting should illuminate the sidewalks. Where space permits, planted boulevards should line the streets, separating pedestrians from vehicles.
- *Collector Roads*: Elm Street is identified as a Collector Road on Schedule C, being characteristically narrower than Arterial Roads and considered to be a lower order road. Collector Roads should be walkable, tree-lined, safe, and well-lit at night. Generally, the sidewalks should be located adjacent to the curb and be continuous on both sides of the street. In some cases, a narrow sodded boulevard separates the sidewalk from the road. Standard streetlights should illuminate the vehicular and pedestrian realms.

In terms of open space, Policy 3.5.6.4(a) provides that Downtowns typically require smaller park spaces, distributed strategically throughout the entire district to enhance adjacent development. It is the intention of the Town to promote public open space features as key aesthetic and functional components to complement the anticipated redevelopment activity. Policy 3.5.6.4(b) goes on to provide that the open space system of the Downtown District should continue to be focused on the interconnected system of streets, parks, and Village Squares.

As set out in Policy 3.5.6.4(c), Village Squares should be widely distributed throughout the Downtown District to ensure easy access and multiple opportunities for rest, relaxation, and visual interest. Village Squares should be sited to encourage the development of building frontages that extend the street wall around the edges of the publicly accessible space. Building entrances, lobbies, windows, and balconies should provide a direct visual connection into the building’s interior spaces. It is understood that some Village Squares will cater to primarily a local resident population, while others will have a broader range of users and activities.

In establishing Village Squares, Policy 3.5.6.4(d)(ii) provides that for lands within both the *Downtown – Transition* and *Downtown – Intensification* designations, all development applications on sites greater than 0.2 hectares in size shall include a location for a Village Square. Village Squares are intended as formal pedestrian spaces, in support of the adjacent higher density, mixed use development. Policy 3.5.6.4(d)(iii) requires that Village Squares be sized and located to the satisfaction of the Town, be designed and built to Town standards, and include frontage abutting the public sidewalk system where possible. Policy 3.5.6.4(d)(v) provides that Village Squares be designed to reinforce a high-quality formalized relationship with adjacent building use and streetscape.

In terms of ensuring compatible development, Policy 3.5.6.5(a) states that it is a fundamental principle to avoid and/or mitigate any inappropriate interface between buildings and/or uses. As such, the concept of compatible development is of paramount importance throughout the Downtown District. All development applications shall be reviewed with respect to their compatibility with existing and/or approved developments.

Policy 3.5.6.5(b) provides that all new development and redevelopment within the Downtown District shall demonstrate sensitivity to the existing architectural styles, building materials, and scale, with the exception of the existing suburban style plaza developments. The design and selection of materials used for proposed

additions, alterations, and new buildings shall also have regard for the style, both volumetrically and materially, of existing buildings to strengthen themes of existing character in the vicinity.

Policy 3.5.6.6(c) further provides that all development and redevelopment shall respect the character of existing development, with the exception of the existing suburban style plaza developments, through compatible and complementary building massing (i.e., building height and scale), building design principles, landscaping, and streetscape elements. New buildings shall be designed at a height and scale, which is compatible with the surrounding area and in conformity with the policies of this Plan. Specific consideration shall be given to massing options that establish an appropriate relationship to the surrounding built form.

Policy 3.5.6.6(c) sets out a series of principles for all new development in the Downtown District, including that:

- Building design shall be barrier free;
- Permitted uses can be in a stand-alone or in mixed use buildings;
- Continuous streets of monotonous and repetitive façades shall be avoided. A more textured architectural quality can be achieved by introducing variation in certain elements of the façade treatment;
- All new buildings shall create a street space scaled to the pedestrian and organized to present an appropriate façade to all adjacent streets to provide interest and comfort at ground level for pedestrians. Primary pedestrian entrances shall provide direct and universal access to the public sidewalk;

- Ground floors of all buildings shall be designed with windows and doors opening onto the street or public open spaces to provide “eyes on the street”;
- A pedestrian weather protection system including awnings, canopies, colonnades, or front porches along the sidewalk edge of important pedestrian streets and adjacent to the Village Squares are also encouraged at the entrances to buildings;
- Variation in three-dimensional elements, such as balconies, bay windows and porches, cornices, window trim, entrances and the articulation of the building mass, shall be used to create a dynamic façade;
- Variation and articulation in the building such as a step back at the upper storeys, shall be established in the implementing zoning by-law. A typical multi-storey building will include a 2-storey podium, a step back, and then a taller component;
- Any visible mechanical equipment should be screened and located in a manner that has a minimal physical and visual impact on public sidewalks and accessible open spaces;
- Transformers and other above ground utilities, should be located underground, where feasible, within the building, or in other locations which are screened from public view; and
- An interesting architectural feature/treatment is encouraged on all rooftops of buildings over 4 storeys to prevent typical box shaped building forms.

As it relates to the development of corner sites, Policy 3.5.6.6(d) states that the advantages of better visibility, light, and view make corner sites good locations for landmark buildings. Consequently, prestigious buildings often occupy corner sites. In addition to all the other design policies for development in the Downtown District, corner sites shall:

- Articulate and define the intersection at which the building is located by enhancing its presence at each corner;
- Include an architectural feature, such as an additional storey, greater than abutting buildings;
- Turn the corner, for example, the building should have primary, articulated façades towards both streets and should be visually different from adjacent development; and
- Have the highest level of architectural detailing and a distinct architectural appearance.

Policy 3.5.6.7 sets out an angular plane requirement where a new apartment or mixed use building is proposed that is either abutting or across a public street right-of-way from the Medium Density or Low Density Residential designations. As the abutting lands and those across the street from the subject site are all within the *Downtown – Intensification* and *Downtown – Transition* designation, this angular plane requirement does not apply.

In terms of the locations of new buildings on a lot, Policy 3.5.6.8(a) recognizes that a relatively consistent building edge adjacent to the street is important to provide spatial definition and containment to the street. Build-within zones essentially set both a minimum and maximum setback. This semi-public space of the front yard and exterior side yard creates a buffer zone between the public and the private domains, which enhances the visual appearance of the street edge, the level of privacy, and provides outdoor spaces for casual social interaction.

On this basis, Policy 3.5.6.8(b) provides that for all development within the Downtown District where the at-grade use is not residential, the following build-within zone policies apply except as set out in Section 3.5.5.5(g):

- The build-within zone is located between 0.0 and 3.0 metres from the front and/or exterior side lot line;
- All buildings shall be generally sited parallel to the street and along the edges of parks and open spaces. The public faces of these buildings are to align with neighbouring buildings in a manner that establishes a consistent building face lining the street; and
- The lands in front of buildings shall include an appropriate hard surface and other landscape features that are complementary to the adjacent streetscape in the build-within zone to ensure ease of access to the building from the public sidewalk.

Finally, to achieve a consistent street wall condition Policy 3.5.6.8(d)(iii) requires that a minimum amount of building wall must be located within the identified build-within zone. Within the *Downtown – Intensification* designation, the minimum built frontage of all block faces abutting a public street shall be 50 percent.

In terms of the design of parking, access and service facilities, Policy 3.5.6.9 provides that, among other things:

- Parking within the remainder of the Downtown District (other than the *Downtown – Main Street* designation) shall meet the parking requirements set out in the Town’s Zoning Bylaw;
- In order to reinforce streets as primary public spaces, the locations of parking, driveways and service entrances and loading areas need to be carefully considered and coordinated with the locations for pedestrian entrances. As such, public parking facilities, service access points, loading areas and any visible garbage containers and/or mechanical equipment are to be located in a manner that has a minimal physical impact on sidewalks and accessible open spaces. Shared driveways, service courts at the side and rear of buildings are encouraged to provide for these functions; and
- Pedestrian connectivity between rear yard parking lots and the street is encouraged through the establishment of pedestrian linkages via side lot walkways.

Finally, streetscape design policies are set out in Section 7.0 of the Grimsby OP, the goal of which is to create a pedestrian comfortable environment and to enhance the character of the Town through streetscape design. Importance is placed on providing a grid of arterial, collector, and local roads and associated open spaces that organize development, are pedestrian friendly, and are highly connected, as well as ensuring that the road and street pattern establish development blocks that achieve an orderly pattern of development and visual diversity. Relevant general policies in Section 7.1 include:

- In new developments within the Urban Settlement Area, all utilities shall be located underground, where feasible. Where components of utilities must be located above ground, they should be clustered or grouped where possible to minimize visual impact and be located either in a rear lane or along the street tree planting line, to the extent possible, to minimize clutter and disruption of the road’s character. The Town encourages utility providers to consider innovative methods such as containing utility services on or within streetscape features such as gateways, lamp posts, transit and shelters (Policy 7.1.2).
- New developments within the built boundary shall maintain existing street trees and maintain and enhance the existing pattern of landscaping, tree planting and lighting along the street (Policy 7.1.4).

- Adjacent to parks, parkettes and natural areas, sidewalks and bike lanes shall provide a strong connection to the pedestrian and cycling networks within those areas (Policy 7.1.5).
- All new development shall provide for coordinated tree planting within the street allowance and where setbacks permit within the front yard (Policy 7.1.6).
- Surface parking lots adjacent to the street rights of way should be screened through landscaping, and other means to reduce the visual presence of the parking lots (Policy 7.1.7).
- Non-residential and mixed use developments shall provide clearly defined pedestrian routes from the building entrances and parking areas to the street to allow for safe movement of pedestrians (Policy 7.1.8).

With respect to Town Arterial and Collector Roads, Section 7.2 provides that:

- Boulevards on both sides of the pavement should be of a minimum width to accommodate a grass verge with a single row of street trees and sidewalks on both sides (Policy 7.2.1).
- Individual direct access to any development site shall be limited to minimize disruptions to traffic flow, maximize safety, and improve the attractiveness of the road (Policy 7.2.2).

- Buildings that abut Town Arterial or Collector Roads shall present a façade with architectural detailing and landscape features that address the road frontage. Reverse frontage development shall not be permitted adjacent to any Town Arterial or Collector Road (Policy 7.2.3).
- Dedicated cycle routes should be incorporated into the roadway wherever the right-of-way permits (Policy 7.2.4).

A detailed description of the Grimsby OP and its implementation can be found in the Planning Justification Report forming part of the applications in support of the redevelopment of the subject site.

4.3 Regional Municipality of Niagara – Model Urban Design Guidelines

In 2005, Niagara Regional Council and all 12 local area municipalities endorsed the Model Urban Design Guidelines (the “MUDG 2005”). The Model Urban Design Guidelines have since been used to promote best practices for urban design features that are characteristic of Niagara, with a focus on smart growth principles. The guidelines are intended to establish local urban design policies and guidelines, develop district plans and secondary plans, inform the design of development projects subject to the *Planning Act*, and be a reference for good urban design practices in the absence of local design guideline.

Since 2005, however, Provincial planning policies and urban design in Niagara have shifted to focus on complete communities, resiliency, and sustainability and the Region’s urban design guidelines are being reconceptualized, with a revised set of guidelines currently in draft form (i.e., the “draft MUDG 2024”). In the absence of endorsed updated guidelines, both the endorsed MUDG 2005 and the draft MUDG 2024 are considered herein.

MUDG 2005

The MUDG 2005 identifies several key smart growth principles, including a number of relevant urban design related principles such as:

- *Create a mix of land uses:* A mixture of building forms and types contributes to a more vital, attractive neighbourhood character;
- *Promote compact built form:* Compact built form is accommodated within a range of development types including low-rise, mid-rise, and higher rise built form;
- *Offer a range of housing opportunities and choices:* Different housing forms are designed with appropriate massing and height transitions to reduce shadow, microclimate, and privacy impacts, where mixed use buildings can include retail at grade with offices and/or apartments above;
- *Produce walkable neighbourhoods and communities:* All roads are designed to support transit and pedestrian activity through villages, towns and city neighbourhoods, where buildings have minimum, regularly spaced setbacks to aid in the comfort and safety of the streetscape realm;
- *Foster attractive communities and a sense of place:* Streetscape and building design are developed as the primary framework of the public realm where opportunities for infill and conversion respect the original community fabric;

- *Direct development into existing communities:* Guidelines assist in ensuring that new buildings fit in the existing fabric and contribute to the creation of walkable, visually attractive and vibrant neighbourhoods; and
- *Provide a variety of transportation choices:* All guidelines that assist in the creation of walkable neighbourhoods can also contribute to enhancing the viability of transit by making trips to and from stops more comfortable and convenient.

The MUDG 2005 provides guidance in the areas of the public realm and the private realm. The former deals with neighbourhood structure, roads, sidewalks and streetscaping, parks and open space, natural heritage, multi-use trails, stormwater management and environmental sustainability. The latter deals with residential uses, main street/street commercial uses, large-format commercial uses, high-rise development, industrial uses, off-street surface parking, and environmental sustainability.

Of relevance to the Proposal for the subject site is Section 4a.9 which provides guidance for apartment and mixed use buildings, highlighting the following:

- The impact of tall buildings on open spaces and adjacent properties should be minimized through adequate height and mass transition, separation, and landscaping.
- Buildings should have a strong relationship to the street, both by use and form.
- Mixed use buildings with retail located at grade are encouraged within the neighbourhood centre or other appropriate locations. Mixed use buildings should be at least 3 storeys in height.
- Higher density development at major intersections should be developed to reinforce the prominence of these locations through appropriate massing, building projections, recesses at grade, pedestrian-scale buildings, and open space treatments.
- High-quality pedestrian infrastructure should be provided on all public streets and public spaces adjacent to apartment development to support vibrant street environments, pedestrian access, and comfort.

- Ground floor units should have individual at-grade access where possible. Upper floor units should be emphasized through articulations of the exterior wall plane and roof, and the use of pronounced building elements including bay windows, balconies, and dormers.
- Primary building entrances should clearly address the street with large entry awnings and provide visibility to interior lobbies to allow for safe and convenient arrival and departure from the building.
- Pedestrian entrances to parking and service areas within the principal building should be combined with exposed communal areas such as exercise areas or meeting rooms to provide casual surveillance opportunities.
- Outdoor amenity areas should be provided wherever possible, either at the front, side, or rear of the building. Outdoor amenity space is preferably located adjacent to indoor recreation space, in view of residential units, and at a location that receives direct sunlight.
- Outdoor amenity areas may be provided as an external garden area, rooftop terrace. Roof terraces require planting, screening, and wind shelter to promote comfort and safety.
- Rooftop mechanical equipment and vents should be incorporated as an integral part of the building design wherever possible. Roof top units and vents should be set back from the roof edge and screened using materials complementary to the building.

Section 4a.10 provides guidance for the design of parking areas of apartment buildings, providing the following:

- Parking areas as part of apartment building development should be located underground, integrated within the building, or structured parking.
- Access to underground or structured parking should be provided at the interior of the lot, not at the corner.
- Where structured parking fronts onto a public street or space, commercial retail units should be provided at grade.
- Surface parking must not be located between the public ROW and the front of the adjacent primary building.
- Vehicular ramps for underground or structured parking should not exceed 40% of the street frontage
- Parking within a structure should be screened from view at sidewalk level, and the street-level wall should be enhanced by architectural detailing, artwork, landscaping, or similar treatment that will add visual interest.

Section 4d.10 deals with high-rise buildings, with design principles included in Section 4d.2 as follows:

- *Human Scale*: The human scale should be reinforced through appropriate building height, mass, and architectural design.
- *Minimum Impact*: The impact of high-rise buildings on open spaces and adjacent properties should be minimized through adequate height and mass transition, separation, and landscaping.

- *Relate to Street*: High-rise buildings should have a strong relationship to the street, both by use and form.
- *Mixed Use*: Retail Commercial uses are encouraged at grade, especially for buildings with a total height of 5 storeys or greater. Office and/or Residential uses are encouraged above at-grade commercial.
- *Environmentally Sustainable*: High-rise buildings should be designed to achieve a high degree of environmental sustainability and address opportunities for solar orientation and water runoff minimization.

More detailed guidance following these principles is outlined, including:

- *General location and orientation of massing*:
 - Generally, high-rise buildings should be located at major road intersections or neighbourhood ‘nodes’, and preferably adjacent to public open space, to reinforce the prominence of these locations through appropriate massing, setbacks, building design, and open space treatments.
 - Active facades and ground level uses, such as retail commercial or habitable living areas, should be provided. Entrances should be oriented directly to the street and be accessible from public sidewalks, and, where high-rise buildings are on corner sites, entrances should be provided on both adjoining streets.

- *Facades and pedestrian interfaces*:
 - Building facades should be articulated with architectural features. Facades facing a public street or public area should incorporate 60% glazing at grade and the first two storeys to encourage pedestrian interaction and safety.
 - Facades facing a public street or public area should incorporate weather protection for the comfort of the pedestrian and articulation of building facade.
 - Blank facades should be avoided and must not face a public street or public space.
- *Building height, mass, and transition*:
 - The design of high-rise buildings should respect potential negative impacts on adjacent properties, including overshadowing, overlooking, and wind tunnel effects.
 - Nodes and major intersections are the appropriate locations for the tallest/highest buildings.
 - Wherever possible, high-rise buildings greater than 5 storeys should extend vertically with small footprints and include a base height of 3 to 5 storeys.
 - The base height should generally be no greater than 2 storeys above adjacent property height.
 - New developments should be designed to provide a height transition to lower scale developments and public spaces to minimize impacts of taller buildings.

- Step backs of upper storeys should be provided so that building bulk is minimally perceived from the vantage of a pedestrian on the street. Step backs should be considered for buildings above 3 storeys. The step back distance should be a minimum of 2.0 metres.
- *Open space and landscaping*:
 - Private communal open space should be designed to provide a range of recreational opportunities.
 - Spaces between structures not occupied by permitted access drives or paved pedestrian routes should be landscaped as usable open space, and accessible to pedestrians.

Guidance for parking areas for high-rise buildings in Section 4d.6 is comparable to and reflective of that outlined for apartment buildings in 4a.10 above.

Draft MUDG 2024

To be used where local design guidelines are not available, the intent of the draft MUDG 2024 is to clarify the Region’s expectations for the promotion of high-quality architecture and places for people, which is similar to that of the MUDG 2005. In this regard, the guiding principles detailed in the draft MUDG 2024 are as follows:

- New development will respect and enhance the unique character of Niagara’s communities.
- Walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented communities will support a healthy Niagara.
- Development of urban areas will help protect and preserve agricultural land and natural resources.
- Development and open spaces will be sustainable and resilient.
- Compact built form will optimize use of land and resources.
- A mix of uses will support vibrant and complete communities.
- A range of housing opportunities will support affordability and families.

The draft MUDG 2024 is structured differently than the MUDG 2005, providing design guidance at a variety of scales, including the community, the block, the site, and the building.

Specifically, at the scale of the site, Section 5.0 of the draft MUDG 2024 provides that sites should be designed in a manner that respects existing and planned built form and open spaces adjacent to properties and should ensure positive interfaces and transitions. Key elements of comprehensive site design include:

- Publicly accessible and private amenities improve the well-being of residents and visitors and support the existing community.
- Thoughtful orientation, location, and building massing ensures privacy and positive micro-climates on the site its surroundings.
- Transition between buildings is respectful of adjacent sites and fits within the block.
- Unobtrusive access to the site for parking, loading, and servicing.

At the scale of the building, Section 6.0 provides that buildings should be constructed in a contemporary manner and should be complementary to adjacent planned and existing land uses and built forms. Buildings should be designed in a sustainable manner that integrates well with the surrounding area. Key elements of high-quality buildings include:

- Functional building layouts and space allocations to meet the needs of occupants or building users.
- Visually appealing proportions, scale, harmony, and balance with high-quality materiality.
- Natural light, ventilation, acoustics, and thermal comfort to promote well-being and enjoyment of building spaces.
- Secure buildings with appropriate amenities.

Developments may include any combination of low-rise, mid-rise, and tall building components, guidelines for each of which are outlined. Relevant to the subject Proposal is Section 6.4 which deals with mid-rise buildings, specified by the Region as buildings between 3 and 10 storeys. This section highlights the importance of simple, climate responsive building forms; green and human scale lower building design; upper building design to reduce building mass, screened service and loading areas; and site design to activate the street and on-site outdoor areas. To support these areas of focus, guidelines with respect to ground floor, streetwall, setbacks, stepbacks, separation distances, height, and projections are provided.

Finally, Section 7.0 also provides guidance for different building types, with those for mixed use buildings set out in Section 7.4. The draft MUDG 2024 indicates that, of all building types, mixed use buildings have the greatest degree of interaction with the public realm and there should be a high degree of coordination between the building design and site design when planning for mixed use buildings. Key guidance with respect to mixed use buildings includes:

- Minimum building height of 2 storeys to promote compact development;
- Ground floors of mixed use buildings should primarily include non-residential uses that are open to the public and contribute to an active public realm;
- Minimum ground floor height of 4.5 metres;
- Where an existing streetwall has already been established, lower floors should follow the existing datum;

- Mixed use buildings with active ground floor uses should express a consistent streetwall edge that encourages interaction with the public realm. Opportunities for commercial retail units to spill out into the public realm by way of increased setbacks or the provision of POPs are strongly encouraged;
- Non-residential ground floor units should utilize a high proportion of transparent material to allow for views between the interior and exterior;
- Multiple small commercial retail units are preferred along main streets to promote more porosity between the sidewalk and building uses, and to increase visual interest from the sidewalk;
- Where a mixed use building is located on a corner lot, or adjacent to a POPs or public space, the residential lobby may be accessed from the secondary façade;
- Residential and non-residential ground floor building entrances should provide weather protection to allow people to adjust to/from outdoor conditions;
- Public outdoor bicycle parking should be located in prominent, highly-visible areas in proximity to building entrances;
- The majority of on-site visitor, employee, and resident parking should be provided underground. Surface parking should be limited to short-term convenience parking and should be located at the rear of the building away from the primary façade; and
- Indoor secured bicycle parking with controlled access is strongly encouraged within mixed use buildings for resident, employee, and other long-term users.

4.4 Downtown Grimsby Design Guidelines, 2010

The Downtown Grimsby Design Guidelines (“DGDG”) is a section of the Downtown Master Plan which was produced as part of the Community Improvement Plan (“CIP”) process. It outlines a series of recommended design guidelines for urban design elements including buildings, streetscapes, utilities, parking, gateway features, signage, and heritage assets, among other things. The intent of the DGDG is to protect the existing pedestrian scale and traditional character/style of built form and streetscapes within the Downtown core area while providing design guidance for proposed improvements and new development.

The DGDG provides guidance on four principal components including:

- *Building form*: relating to the scale and positioning of buildings on a property;
- *Façades*: relating to the elements and features that comprise the front façade of the exterior of a building;
- *Site Planning*: relating to the organization and function of all elements on a property; and
- *Façade Improvements*: relating to improvements that are made to an existing building façade.

With respect to building form, the guideline objectives outlined in Section 2.0 include achieving:

- A low-rise profile form of development characteristic of a main street environment;
- A consistent building-to-street edge throughout the downtown;
- The creation of a continuous building façade wall that frames the street and facilitates a strong pedestrian environment;
- New buildings that match the scale and massing of the historic main street environment; and
- Additions to existing buildings that complement the heritage character of the area.

As related to facades, the Core District in Downtown Grimsby provides the façade design cues for new development and infill development throughout the area. In this regard, according to Section 3.0 of the DGDG, the overall goal for façades within Downtown Grimsby is to enhance, and restore where necessary, the fine-grained, pedestrian-scaled façades of the Core District while ensuring that new construction in the surrounding Districts is complementary to the character of the heritage block. Guidance is provided with respect to materials, colour, storefront elements, awnings, upper storey windows, signage, rooflines, and murals. It is highlighted that complementary does not mean new buildings are to replicate a particular existing building or style but instead are to follow the general façade scale and proportions while allowing creativity for things like materials, colours, and specific details.

DGDG Section 4.0 deals with site planning, with the following objectives outlined:

- Provision of a visually interesting and attractive interface between buildings and the street edge;
- Inclusion of design treatments that are durable and easily maintained;
- Incorporation of structural site elements that are in keeping with the character of the downtown;
- Creation of a safe and secure pedestrian environment on a site for all users;
- Incorporation of green treatments and activity that liven the streetscape;
- Provision of appropriate transitions between properties within and outside the downtown; and
- Minimization of the extent, visual appearance, and impacts of parking and service areas.

In this regard, guidance is provided with respect to parking, plantings, fences and walls, site lighting, service areas and equipment, and sidewalk cafes/patios.

Finally, Section 5.0 provides guidance on façade improvements to existing heritage buildings, with the objective of enhancing the pedestrian-orientation and the visual appeal and identity of the area.

4.5 Downtown Grimsby Reimagined – Urban Design Guidelines Public Realm Update, 2023

In 2021, the Town of Grimsby initiated a project to update the vision for Downtown Grimsby. In the spirit of planning for an enhanced streetscape and atmosphere in Downtown Grimsby, the project has been named “Downtown Reimagined”. The purpose of Downtown Reimagined is to build upon the Downtown Grimsby Master Plan and the Downtown Grimsby Design Guidelines outlined above and re-engage the public and stakeholders to develop a new vision. The result of the Downtown Reimagined consultation and work is the 2023 Urban Design Guidelines Public Realm Update which applies to the Downtown Core area, including Main Street West between Mountain/Christie Street and Ontario Street and Main Street East between Ontario Street and just east of Elm Street. The subject site is not included in this area, but falls within what is referred to as the ‘Area of Influence’ where the expectation is that any new development and redevelopment within this area will be informed by and seek to support the intent and guiding principles for the Downtown as expressed in the updated guidelines.

In this document, the updated vision for Downtown Grimsby is described as follows:

Downtown Grimsby is the core of the community and a destination for residents and visitors. The Downtown is designed to prioritize pedestrian activity, social interaction, commerce, and public events. Vehicular traffic is calmed in the Downtown in favour of a safe and inviting environment for pedestrians. A sense of place and celebration of the community’s history is embedded in the design of public and privately-owned public spaces through public art, landscaping, lighting, and commemoration of those that came before us.

Downtown Reimagined guiding principles include:

- activate the street by prioritizing pedestrians and enhancing the pedestrian experience;
- incorporate sustainability and innovation into all elements of design;
- create an inclusive, multi-modal friendly Main Street;
- develop a holistic and multipronged parking strategy; and
- sustained economic vibrancy.

More specific urban design guidance is provided with respect public-private interface and public realm design, with relevant elements described as follows:

- New development should respect and be sensitive to the heritage character and built form of the Downtown, natural setting of the escarpment, and the Reimagine Grimsby vision for a thriving, welcoming Main Street.

- Building Design should sensitively respond to the overall composition of the Downtown including built form scale, proportion, massing, and skyline. Buildings in prominent locations such as the terminus of important view corridors, at gateways, or street intersections are to be designed as ‘landmark’ buildings that are visually notable with distinctive features.
- Redevelopment or development of private frontages should be designed to enhance the pedestrian experience and opportunities for socialization through the provision of seating, landscaping (planters, trees, shrubs, flowers), consistent paving, and public art.
- Site and building design should present attractive treatments on all sides, including rear areas, and in particular where these areas are publicly accessible or visible from public spaces.
- Level access is to be provided to building entrances, include main entrances onto Main Street as well as secondary entrances to the side or rear of buildings, in all feasible conditions.
- Where a building is set back from the property line along Main Street, the area in front of the building should be designed as a ‘semi-private’ extension of the public realm.
- Façades should be designed to animate the public realm with consideration to pedestrian experience during daytime and evening hours and throughout the winter. This may be achieved by using warm colours, strategic lighting, and bright accents to enliven building features.
- Façade design should contribute to mitigating harsh winter conditions and supporting an outdoor public environment that is safe and comfortable in all seasons.
- The use of landscape features as externalized façade treatments and within the ‘spill-out’ space for noise and weather protection is encouraged. This may include features such as raised planters and vegetation that provide shelter from the sun or wind, but do not impede access to storefronts.
- Wide sidewalks are envisioned for both sides of the street, designed to meet or exceeding applicable municipal standards and current best practices in accessible design, maintaining a minimum 2.1-metre clear width for sidewalks to accommodate unhindered pedestrian circulation. 3.0 metres is preferred where space allows, and where 2.1 metres is not available due to existing conditions, a minimum clear width of 1.8 metres is to be maintained.
- Where sidewalks intersect with driveways, the conflict zone should be designed to clearly indicate pedestrian priority over vehicles to minimize confusion.
- Sidewalks should be offset from the street by a curbside landscaped furnishing zone which may be primarily hard surfaced, with seating areas, and space for spill-out uses.
- In key locations, unique furniture elements (such as public art) may be used as landscape and/or landmark features. Site furniture may include elements such as benches, seatwalls, seating and tables, picnic tables, bicycle racks, newspaper boxes, waste and recycling receptacles, bollards, and access control.
- Site furniture is provided to improve user experience and facilitate increased levels of activity for longer periods of time, and should be aesthetically pleasing, made from durable, ethically sourced materials where possible, be modular for ease of upgrades and repairs, and meet or exceed accessible design standards, incorporate sustainability, among other things.
- Laneways and alleyways are to be pedestrian and cyclist-accessible routes. They may be designed as shared surface areas with clear delineation and/or protection to pedestrian areas as appropriate for safety of users.
- Short-term bicycle parking is intended to be located throughout the Downtown and especially near the edges of the Downtown Core to connect to cycling routes.
- To achieve healthy, mature growth it is important that all trees and plantings have abundant soil volume, of good quality tree soil, and are planted in accordance with best practice demonstrated to improve viability in the urban environment.
- With respect to soft landscaping, there is a preference for plant material to be native or naturalized and representative of the local Southern Ontario plant communities. Invasive species are not to be used. Plant material should be urban-tolerant (salt, compaction, and drought tolerant), and selected for year-round interest.

5

Proposal & Urban Design
Strategies

5.1 Proposal

In its prominent corner location at the gateway to the Downtown, the Proposal provides for the redevelopment of the subject site with a new mid-rise residential mixed use landmark building designed with visually distinctive features. It thoughtfully integrates most of the original forms of the Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings, incorporates publicly accessible open space along the Mountain Street and Elm Street frontages, animated by new residential, commercial and community uses, and enhances the surrounding area through placemaking elements like landscape and streetscape improvements and feature signage atop the building.

In this respect, the Proposal is for an 8-storey building with a measured height of 34.0 metres (inclusive of a 4.5-metre-tall mechanical penthouse) that includes a total gross floor area of approximately 13,200 square metres, consisting of 12,472 square metres of residential space, 279 square metres of at-grade commercial space and 449 square metres of community hub space.

At grade, the Proposal features a mix of uses to activate each street frontage and provide animation within the adjacent public realm. These uses include the residential lobby at the northwest corner of the site fronting Mountain Street, two commercial spaces along Elm Street, residential indoor amenity space within the retained Woolverton House, and the community hub area located within the existing Woolverton Hall space, with a smaller community hub space located facing the existing Balsam Lane parking lot. This smaller community space consists of a ground floor entrance lobby with dedicated elevator access to a space of approximately 199 square metres on the upper ground floor level.

Additionally, along the Mountain Street and Elm Street frontages, publicly accessible open spaces reflective of the “Village Squares” (identified in Grimsby OP policy 3.5.6.4) are situated to enhance and complement the proposed uses onsite, reinforce a high-quality formalized relationship with the streetscape, and contribute to community gathering spaces within the Downtown District. The proposed publicly accessible open spaces include a forecourt at the primary entrance to the residential lobby, a plaza along Mountain Street between Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall, and a courtyard between the two proposed commercial

spaces on Elm Street. Each of these open spaces will be landscape focused and will incorporate hard and soft landscaping, tree plantings, and coordinated seating and furnishings to create a comfortable and welcoming environment within the public realm. Stone features with integrated bench seating are proposed to enhance the functionality of each of these spaces. The Mountain Street plaza incorporates a proposed water feature, while the Elm Street courtyard includes a stone feature wall as a backdrop to the open space, envisioned as a fragment of the Escarpment to connect the Proposal to the broader natural heritage surroundings.

Together, the proposed active uses and proposed publicly accessible open spaces are strategically located to wrap the internalized parking garage that extends both below and above grade. In this regard, parking is provided on one level below grade, internally at grade level, and on one level above grade. Vehicular access to the internalized parking garage and at-grade loading area is provided from Mountain Street through a single 6-metre-wide driveway parallel to the north property line abutting 11 Mountain Street.



Figure 12 - Northeast View to Subject Site from Mountain - Elm Intersection (Prepared by Studio JCI)



Figure 13 - View East to Subject Site from Mountain Street (Prepared by Studio JCI)



Figure 14 - View North from Subject Site from Elm Street (Prepared by Studio JCI)



Figure 15 - View Southwest to Subject Site from Balsam Lane (Prepared by Studio JCI)

To further support the development of a vibrant public realm around the subject site, the new built form introduced as part of the Proposal is set back from each lot line to provide opportunities for enhanced streetscaping. The Proposal continues to allow the forms of the Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall to define the streetscape along Mountain Street, with the new building massing connected to the rear of the two existing forms. After the proposed Mountain Street right-of-way widening conveyance, the new building has a minimum ground floor west setback of 9.2 metres at the northwest corner at the location of the primary residential entrance to the building. Between Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall, the new building is set back approximately 16.0 metres from Mountain Street to accommodate the proposed plaza and allow it to be framed by the substantial retention of the two buildings. Along the Elm Street frontage, the new building has a minimum setback of 3.0 metres, with a further setback of 8.3 metres provided to the rear of the courtyard between the two commercial spaces to frame the publicly accessible open space. A minimum setback of 2.0 metres is provided to the east property line abutting 25 Elm Street. At grade, a 2.0-metre setback is provided to the east property line abutting the Balsam Lane parking lot. To the north, the building is set back a minimum of 1.5 metres to the north property line abutting 11 Mountain Street and 1.2 metres is provided to the adjacent Balsam Lane parking lot.

To ensure pedestrian circulation around the subject site, a 1.6-metre north-south walkway along the east property line and a 1.7-metre east-west walkway along the north property line are proposed. These walkways are intended to provide pedestrian connection from Mountain Street and Elm Street to the community space fronting the Balsam Lane parking lot and to the proposed community space fronting onto this parking lot.

Finally, beyond the boundaries of the subject site and outside of the scope of the Applications, the Owner has been working in collaboration with the Town of Grimsby to animate and activate the portion of the Balsam Lane parking lot directly abutting the subject site with a flexible “market square”. The flexible market square would feature upgraded paving and landscaping elements to allow this space to be utilized alternately for parking and as a community event space. Recently, a pop-up winter holiday market was held in this space to test the concept. The proposed community space within the Proposal has been strategically located to complement the Balsam market square concept.

Above grade, the proposed built form takes an inverted ‘U’-shape with two north-south wings connected by an east-west wing. The built form begins to step back to provide an appropriate streetwall height that is compatible with and complementary to Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall, as well as the surrounding context.

Further, the stepping and articulation introduced provides that the built form is experienced at a pedestrian scale and that the perceived visual impact of building mass is minimized. In this regard, a proposed 3-storey streetwall height defines the building scale along Elm Street, while Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall define the streetscape along Mountain Street with the new 3-storey building elements acting as a backdrop beyond the historic, retained buildings.

At Level 2, a stepback along the north façade results in a minimum setback of 3.0 metres to the north property line abutting the property at 11 Mountain Street. Along the west and south façades, the minimum setbacks are as described above. At this level along the Elm Street frontage, however, an elevated private courtyard amenity space is proposed between the two north-south wings. The separation distance between the wings containing residential units fronting onto this amenity space is 17.5 metres at Levels 2 and 3.

At Level 4, the built form along Elm Street steps back approximately 3.5 metres from the façade of the lower levels, creating the 3-storey streetwall definition, while the new façade along Mountain Street steps back 0.8 metres from the lower levels. Stepbacks are also provided at this level to the east property line abutting 25 Elm Street and to the north property line abutting the Balsam Lane parking lot, resulting in minimum setbacks of 4.2 metres and 2.2 metres respectively. At the wings flanking the courtyard amenity space facing Elm Street, a 0.8-metre stepback is provided at Level 4 and above, increasing the separation distance of the two wings to 19.2 metres.

Additional stepping and an overall reduction in the building mass are incorporated at Level 8. From Mountain Street, the building steps back an additional 1.5 metres, resulting in a minimum setback of 18.4 metres. From Elm Street, the building steps back an additional 2.0 metres, resulting in a minimum setback of 8.5 metres to Elm Street. Stepbacks of 1.5 metres are provided along both the east and west building façades fronting the courtyard amenity space, further increasing the separation distance between north-south wings to 22.2 metres.

Further stepping at Level 8 along the north and east frontages result in a minimum setback of 6.0 metres to the east property line abutting 25 Elm Street, a minimum setback of 2.0 metres to the east property line abutting the Balsam Lane parking lot, a minimum setback of 7.7 metres to the north property line abutting 11 Mountain Street, and a minimum setback of 2.3 metres to the north property line facing the Balsam Lane parking lot.

Above Level 8, the mechanical penthouse is well set back from each building face to reduce its appearance from within the surrounding public realm, while still being incorporated into the overall design of the Proposal. In this regard, the mechanical penthouse is set back a minimum of 18.4 metres to Mountain Street, 38.4 metres to Elm Street, 2.0 metres to the east property line facing the Balsam Lane parking lot, and 7.7 metres to the north property line abutting 11 Mountain Street. Finally, atop the mechanical penthouse rooftop, feature ‘Woolverton’ and ‘Grimsby’ signage is proposed, representing an important placemaking element of the Proposal and supporting the landmark nature of the development within the Downtown.

Legend

- Subject Site
- Conveyed Land
- Existing Building
- Commercial
- Indoor Amenity
- Residential Lobby
- Community Hub
- Parking
- Bike Parking
- Public Plaza
- Residential Forecourt
- Public Courtyard
- Main Residential Entrance
- Commercial Entrance
- Community Hub Entrance
- Vehicular Access
- Feature Wall

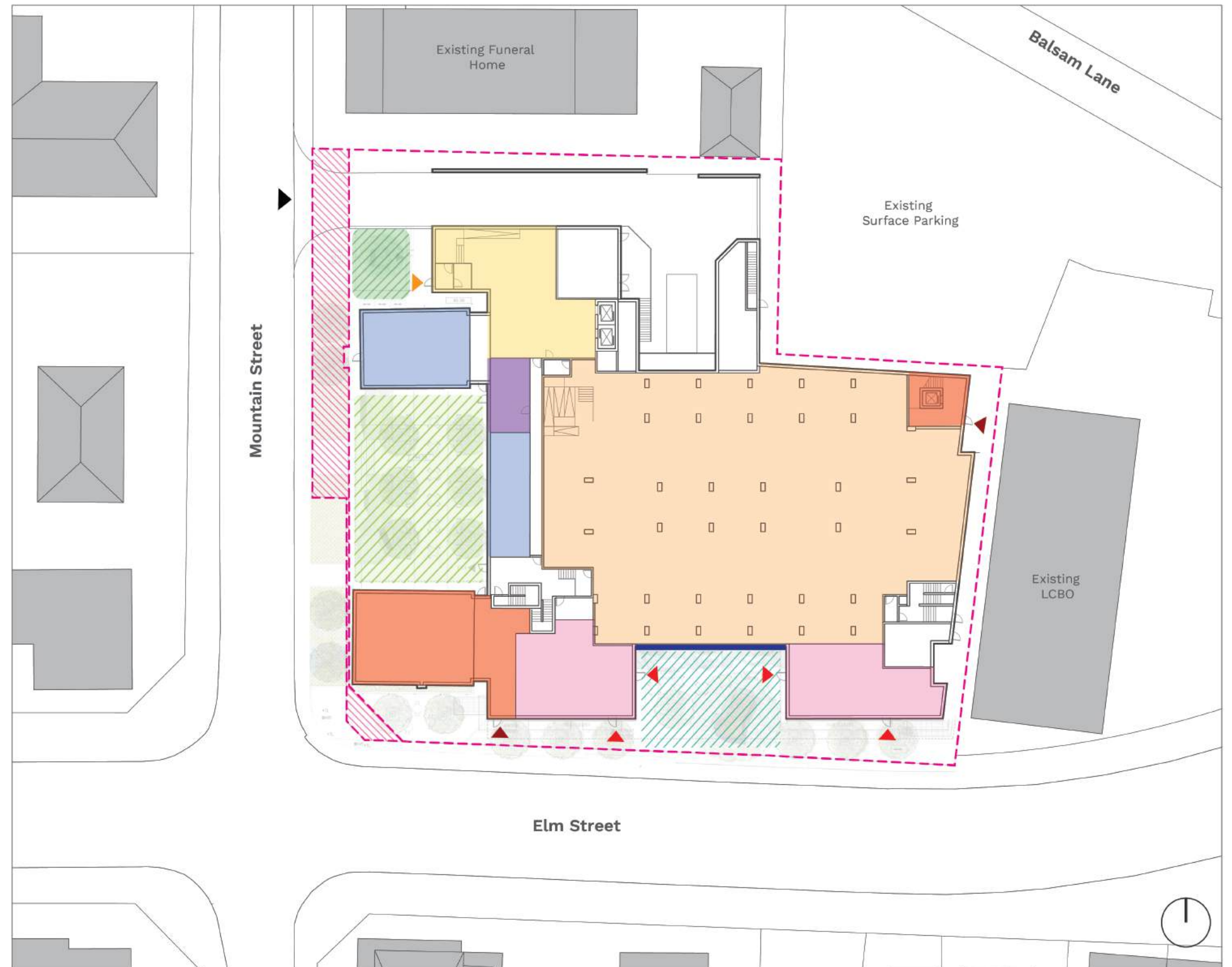


Figure 16 - Ground Floor Use

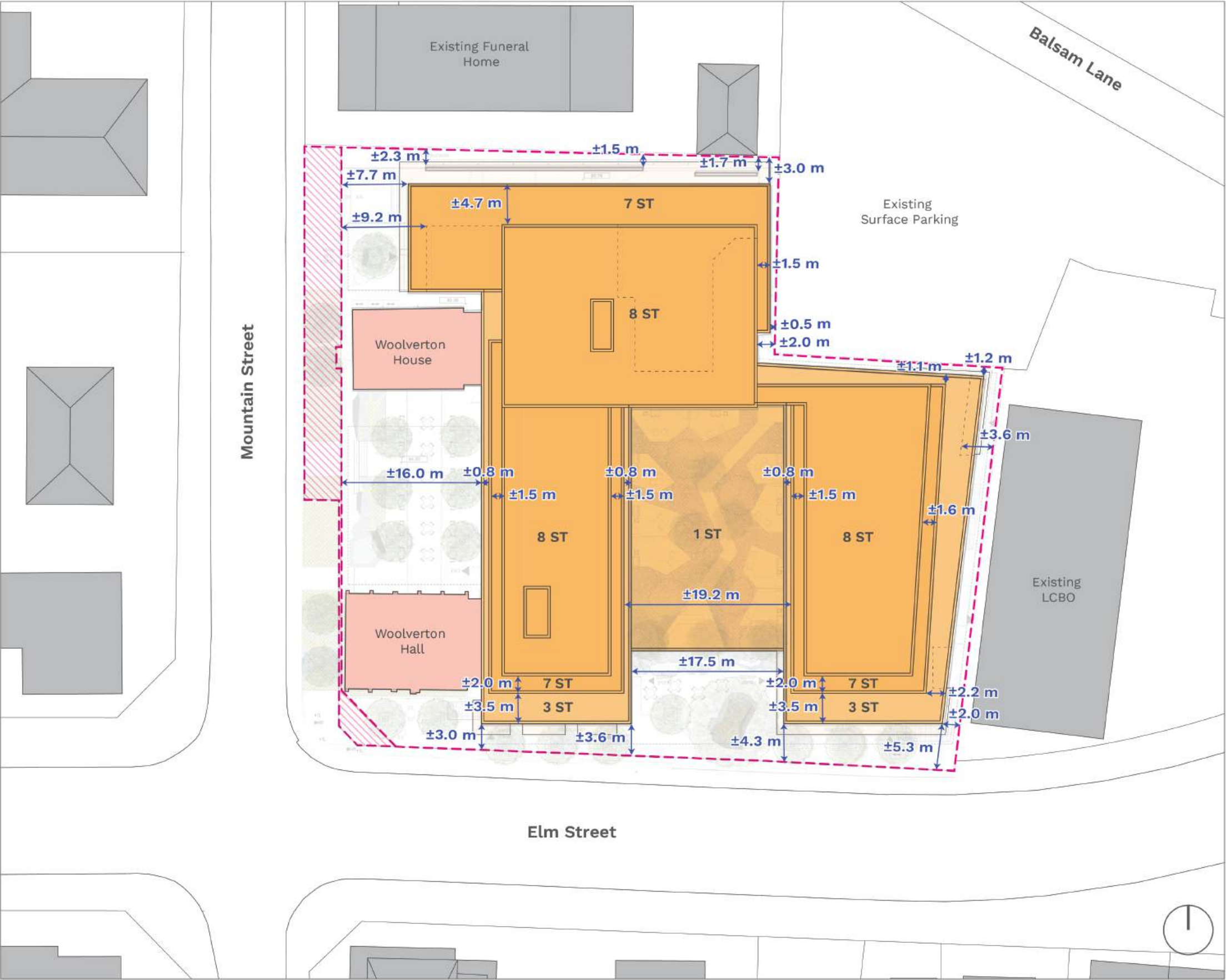


Figure 17 - Site/Roof Plan with Setbacks & Separation Distances

5.2 Urban Design Strategies

5.2.1 Site Organization

The site organization of the Proposal comprises three distinct elements oriented to the adjacent public street frontages: the existing historic buildings which are proposed to remain and be integrated into the development, the new 8-storey contemporary mixed use massing, and the series of publicly accessible open space elements along the street frontages. In the organization of the site, these elements are key components in maintaining the established streetscape character, animating the public realm, and improving the pedestrian experience around the site.

To allow the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings to continue as defining elements within the streetscape, the contemporary infill portion of the Proposal is set back from Mountain Street behind the retained historic buildings. In this location, the new building mass creates a sense of enclosure between the two historic buildings and acts as a backdrop to the proposed landscaped plaza along Mountain Street. Similarly, along Elm Street, the two proposed north-south wings step down to a 3-storey streetwall and provide a comparable condition where a new open space in the form of a landscaped courtyard is framed by pedestrian-scaled building mass. As a backdrop to the Elm Street courtyard, a visually interesting stone feature wall provides a sense of enclosure to the new open space while concealing the internalized structured parking within the building.



Figure 18 - Site Organization

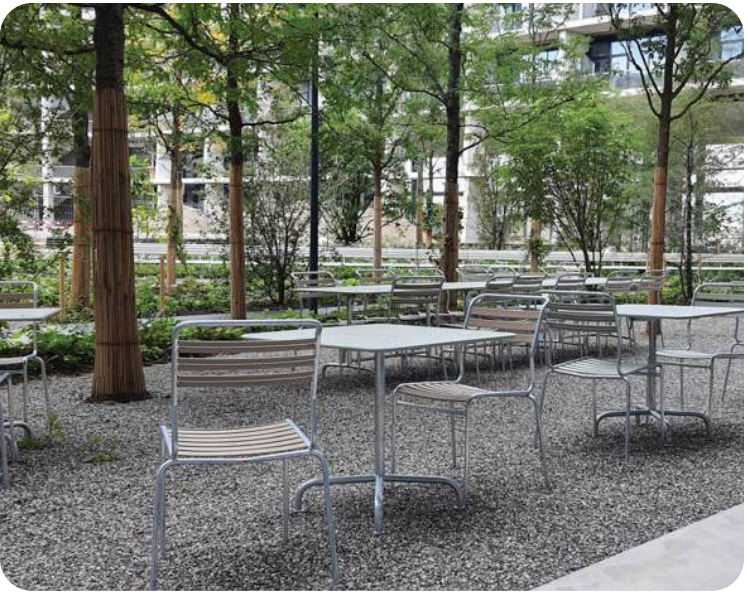
5.2.2 Public Realm and Landscape Design

The public realm and landscape design strategy for the subject site is to foster the existing historic character surrounding natural features of the area and complement it through the introduction of attractive and welcoming publicly accessible open spaces, connected by expanded and enhanced pedestrian connections.

The proposed publicly accessible open spaces include a landscaped forecourt at the primary residential entrance to the building, a landscaped plaza along Mountain Street between Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall, and a landscaped courtyard between the two proposed commercial spaces on Elm Street.

The open space elements will animate the streetscape in a manner that is visually interesting and welcoming to pedestrians. They will be directly adjacent to and accessible from the public sidewalk, establishing a comfortable and attractive pedestrian environment along each street frontage. Streetscape improvements will be introduced within each open space, such as coordinated decorative unit pavers and hardscaping, new street trees and planters with softscaping, and coordinated and integrated street furniture and feature lighting. Further, the Proposal provides space for commercial spill-out activities along the Elm Street frontage, and in particular within the courtyard between the proposed commercial spaces. This provision of publicly accessible open space will complement the proposed uses on site, create additional community gathering spaces within the Downtown District, and contribute to the introduction of spaces reflective of the “Village Square” as directed by the Grimsby OP.

In addition to the publicly accessible open spaces, the Proposal incorporates the elevated private courtyard amenity space for building residents along the Elm Street frontage. The design of this private amenity space incorporates trees in softscaping and wood decking leading to an area with stepped bleacher seating, framed by stone feature walls overlooking the courtyard below on Elm Street.



Precedent Imagery from SvN Landscape Concept

Legend

- Subject Site
- Conveyed Land
- Proposed Development
- Existing Heritage Building
- Existing Building
- Main Residential Entrance
- Commercial Entrance
- Community Hub Entrance
- Active Residential Frontage
- Active Non-residential Frontage



Figure 19 - Public Realm and Landscape Design

5.2.3 Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation

Pedestrian access to the building is provided in a variety of locations to access the different uses proposed. The primary residential entrance to the building is provided at the northwest corner of the site, north of Woolverton House. A landscaped forecourt and entrance canopy give prominence to this location, signifying its importance within the streetscape as an entry location.

Access to the proposed Woolverton Hall Community Hub is provided within the new built form along Elm Street, minimising changes to the existing retained facades. To its east, access to the proposed commercial spaces is provided from Elm Street, as well as on either side of the inset public courtyard between the two spaces. Facing Balsam Lane at the rear of the site, access is provided to the second community hub area. This entrance can also be accessed using the walkway provided along the northern extent of the site. Each of these entrances are clearly identifiable through the incorporation of entrance canopies and/or overhangs which also serve to provide pedestrian protection from inclement weather.


















Vehicular access to the subject site is provided from a single access point off Mountain Street via a 6-metre-wide driveway parallel to the north property line abutting 11 Mountain Street. This proposed driveway is in the same location at the existing Woolverton House driveway access, while the existing driveway access for Woolverton Hall is proposed to be removed. The Proposal includes an integrated canopy structure that encloses the majority of the driveway leading to the parking garage entrance and loading space.

The proposed driveway extends east across the site to an entrance to the internal and underground parking garage areas, enclosed with an overhead door. It leads further east to the proposed loading and staging area, adjacent to the waste collection room. Included internally within the building is turnaround space so trucks can exit the site in a forward motion and limit potential unsafe interactions with pedestrians.

Parking for the Proposal is provided in an integrated parking garage that utilizes the existing grade change on the subject site to accommodate one level below-grade, one level within the ground floor and one level between the ground floor and Level 2. The above-grade parking levels are predominately wrapped with active uses or landscape features along all street frontages.

In addition to the proposed vehicular parking, the Proposal provides for residential bicycle parking internal to the building, as well as convenience bicycle parking within the surrounding public realm. The residential bicycle parking is provided in a storage room located on the ground floor of the building adjacent to the main residential lobby, accessed at the northeast corner of the proposed plaza, south of Woolverton House. Alternative bicycle parking is provided exterior to the building within the setback at grade along Elm Street near to the entrance to the easternmost commercial space proposed.

Legend

-  Subject Site
-  Conveyed Land
-  Existing Building
-  Parking
-  Bike Parking
-  Bike Rack
-  Vehicular Access
-  Structured Parking Entrance
-  Loading Entrance
-  Main Residential Entrance
-  Commercial Entrance
-  Community Hub Entrance
-  Bike Parking Entrance
-  Vehicular Circulation
-  Pedestrian Circulation
-  Crosswalk
-  Signalized Intersection

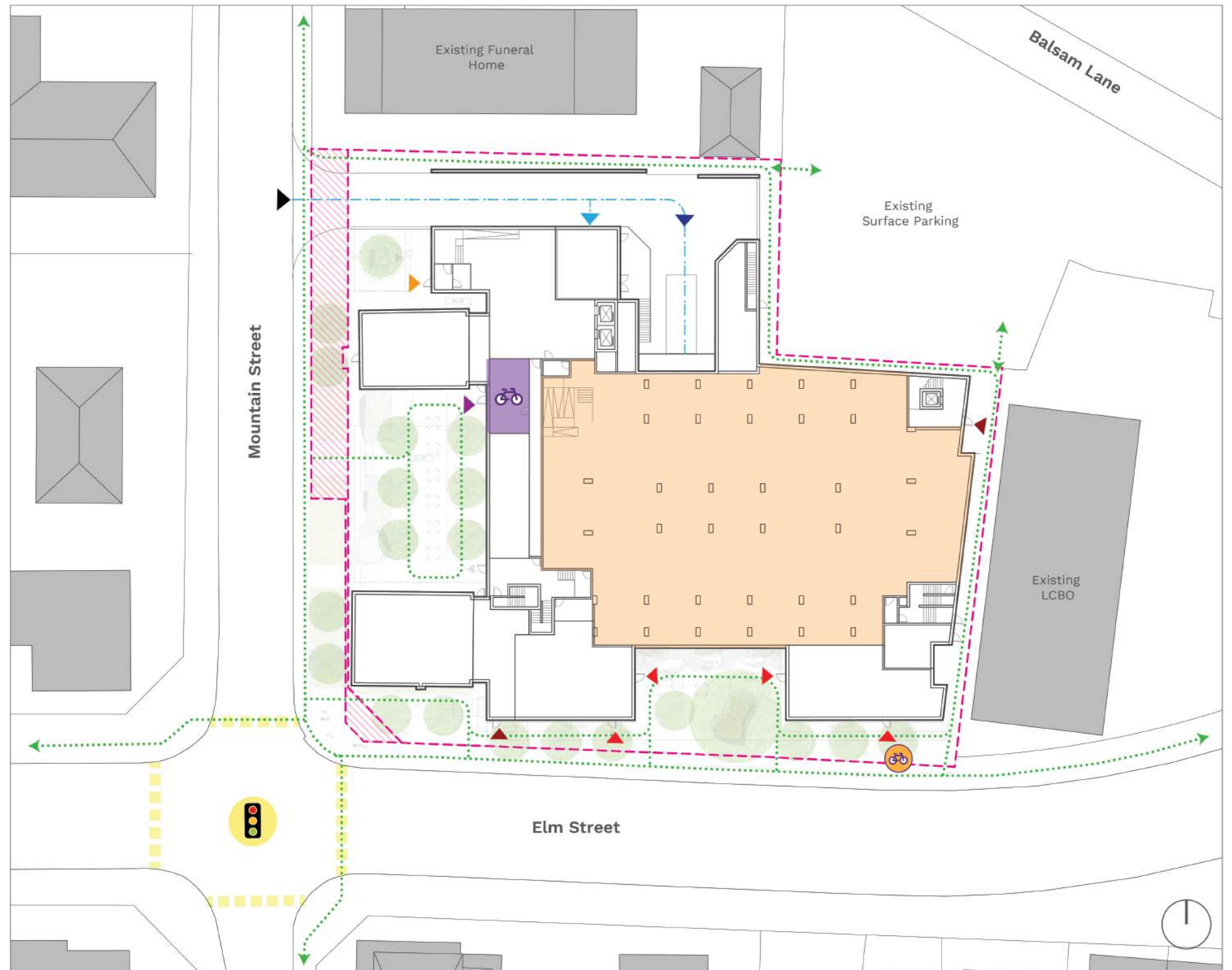


Figure 20 - Site Circulation

5.2.4 Built Form and Massing

The proposed building will support an appropriate and pedestrian-friendly scale along the adjacent public streets, while establishing the mid-rise character envisioned for the *Downtown – Intensification* designation. The orientation and siting of built form allows for the exiting historic buildings to retain their prominence within the streetscape and provides for an appropriate location of height and density centralized within the broader block, away from the street frontages. Further, it allows for the expansion of the public realm into portions of the subject site, creating an improved pedestrian experience along each Mountain Street and Elm Street.

The building massing has been thoughtfully sited and articulated to fit well within the existing and planned built form context along both street frontages, while also acting as a gateway into Downtown Grimsby, which is further accentuated by the landmark signage proposed atop the roof. The contemporary 8-storey building mass has been strategically designed and massed to limit built form impacts and achieve an appropriate relationship with the surrounding uses, public realm, and retained historic buildings.

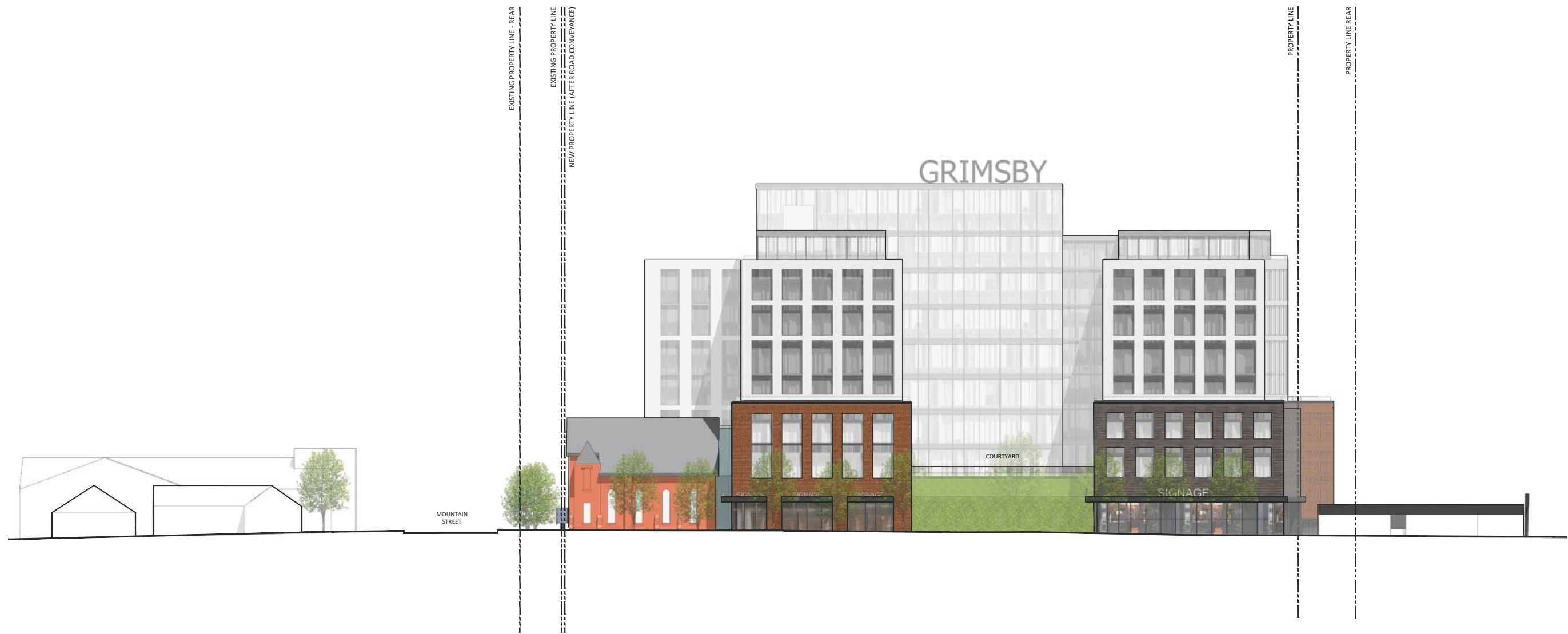


Figure 21 - Streetscape Elevation Elm Street (Prepared by Studio JCI)



Figure 22 - Streetscape Elevation - Mountain Street (Prepared by Studio JCI)

Through their incorporation and adaptive re-use, the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall will continue to anchor the subject site within the surrounding context, while the proposed 8-storey massing will be set back from the street frontages, in particular along Mountain Street. While this strategy directly responds to the continuation of the traditional character of the area and the maintenance of the existing historic buildings onsite, it also minimizes the amount of impact on the surrounding context. Although this configuration was not anticipated by the built form and design policies of the Grimsby OP, it is our opinion that the proposed design will support the desired pedestrian-oriented character along Mountain Street through the incorporation of animated grade-related uses and the incorporation of the publicly accessible plaza between the retained buildings. Further, the proposed stepping at Levels 3, 7, and 8 along the west façade of the 8-storey element will further support the adjacent pedestrian realm by providing variation and articulation of the building massing to create visual interest and comfort at grade.

Along Elm Street, the proposed built form setback is intended to create a stronger, more defined streetwall in alignment with the existing building to its east. Due to the curved nature of the Elm Street right-of-way in the vicinity of the subject site, the resulting setback to Elm Street varies between 3.0 metres and 5.2 metres. Within this setback, a paved forecourt with street trees is proposed between the street and the new commercial spaces, with the landscaped courtyard space carved out between the commercial spaces, reflecting the “Village Square” type-space envisioned in the Grimsby OP. From a pedestrian perception perspective, the built form along Elm Street is stepped back above Levels 3, 7, and 8 to ensure that the building mass is not overwhelming from within the surrounding public realm. This massing strategy responds to the Grimsby OP policies which encourage massing options that establish an appropriate relationship to the surrounding built form while creating a street space scaled to the pedestrian. The 3-storey streetwall along Elm Street also responds to the existing scale of the retained portion of Woolverton Hall, with a comparable height to the roof peak, creating a generally consistent volume and scale defining the streetscape.

Legend

-  Subject Site
-  Conveyed Land
-  Existing Building
-  Streetwall / Pedestrian Scale Building Mass
-  Building Mass / Upper Levels

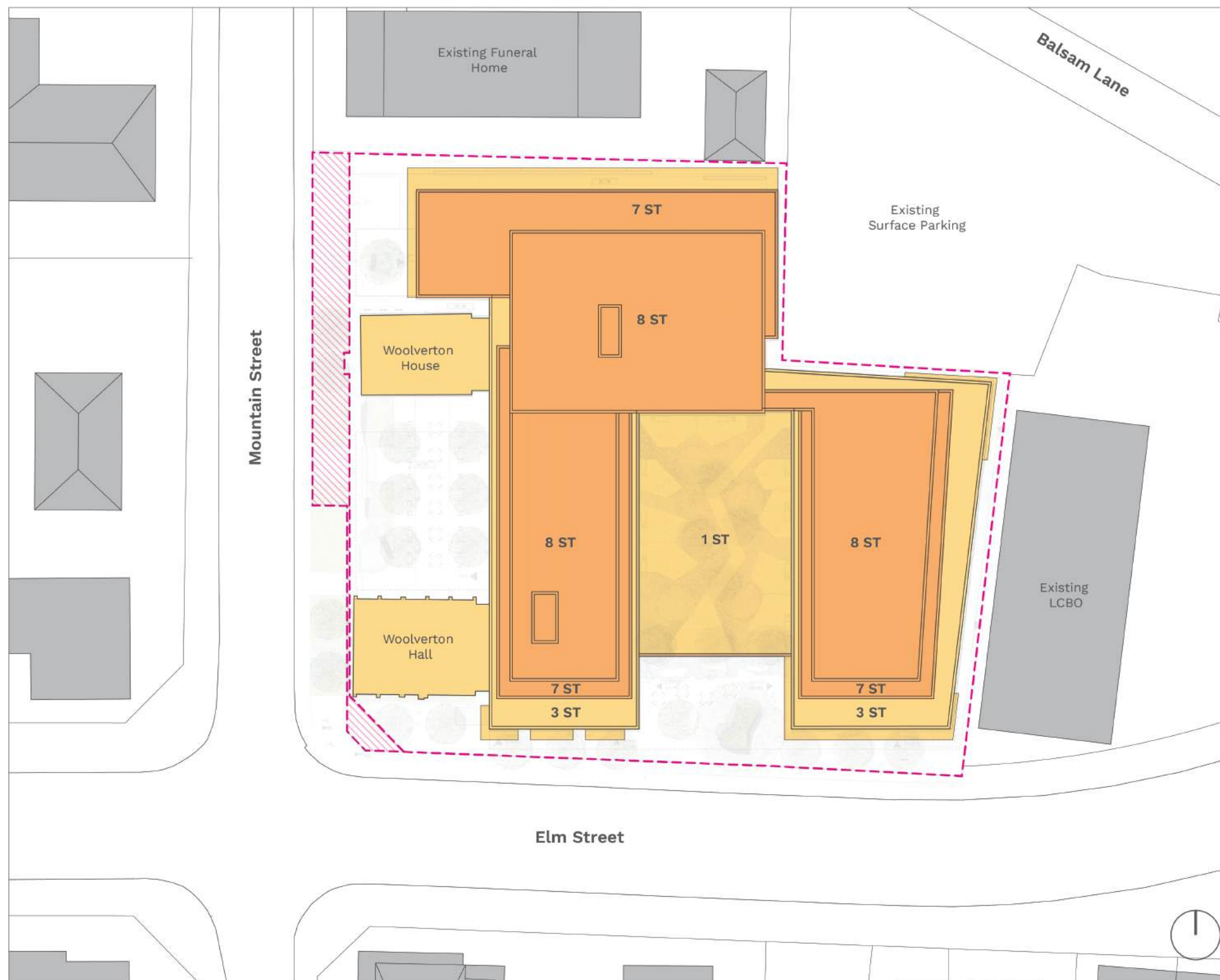


Figure 23 - Streetwall and Built Form

Finally, with respect to the overall building height and built form impacts, the Grimsby OP Policy permits buildings of up to 6 storeys in the *Downtown-Intensification* designation subject to the undertaking of a Visual Impact Assessment to demonstrate that views of the Escarpment are not detrimentally impacted. As outlined in Section 5.5 of the accompanying Planning Justification Report, a Visual Impact Assessment has been completed for the Proposal, and while the Proposal will have impacts on certain views of the escarpment, the overall view of the Escarpment landform will remain prominent without being detrimentally impacted from several viewpoints.

With respect to shadow impacts, as also summarized in Section 5.5 of the Planning Justification Report, the Proposal will not result in any shadow impact onto the adjacent public realm along Elm Street. The Proposal will result in some shadowing onto the adjacent public realm along Mountain Street for a period of two to three hours throughout the year. Further, shadows from the Proposal will impact Main Street and Ontario Street in the late afternoon on March 21st/September 21st, with impacts beginning earlier in the afternoon on December 21st. There will also be shadow impact from the Proposal on Balsam Lane from midday onwards throughout the year, recognizing though that this area is primarily for vehicular circulation and not prolonged pedestrian use.

With respect to nearby parks, open spaces and natural heritage areas, at no times of the year will the Proposal cast shadows onto the nearby green spaces including the Coronation Park, Grimsby Lions Community Pool, the field area at St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School or the conservation land along the Niagara Escarpment.

In our opinion, the above noted shadowing is acceptable and adequacy limited considering the built-up character of the surrounding area, recognizing that all streets will continue to receive several continuous hours of sunlight throughout the year. In addition, it is noted that these impacts are generally comparable to those resulting from the as-of-right massing demonstrated in the Shadow Study prepared by Studio JCI. Overall, it is our opinion that the shadows cast from the Proposal have been adequately limited, and that the proposed massing has been designed to minimize shadows to the greatest extent possible through the incorporation of setbacks, stepbacks, and an appropriate overall building height.

5.2.5 Building and Architectural Design

The architectural design of the Proposal balances the integration and adaptive re-use of the existing Woolverton Hall and Woolverton House buildings onsite with contemporary architectural expression, both in its form and materiality. While not consistent with the existing historic building fabric, the ordered architectural character and geometric language of the new 8-storey element is compatible with the existing area character and traditional house form style of Woolverton Hall and Woolverton House.

The variety of materials proposed also enhances the built form and architectural expression. The application of warm-toned masonry within the lower floors of the building and cool-toned aluminum paneling on the upper floors provides for a complementary architectural response to the historic character of the two retained buildings. The juxtaposition of the traditional masonry forms with the more varied linear architectural expression of the taller building mass ensures visual interest when viewing the Proposal from the surrounding public realm.

5.2.6 Sustainability

The Proposal supports sustainable design initiatives, with the following potentially being considered as part of the preliminary site and building design:

- *Adaptive Re-use*: The re-use and integration of Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall supports the minimization of the embodied carbon footprint of the Proposal.
- *Compact Built Form*: The higher density of the new building will seek to reduce the embodied energy per resident through a compact development footprint.
- *Green Roof and Stormwater Management*: To enhance the building's energy performance, the application of green roofing is being considered. In this regard, soil and plants will function as an extra layer of roof insulation, which in turn will reduce heating requirements in the winter and cooling requirements in the summer. Plants selected for the roofs (and those surrounding the buildings at grade) should be native and/or drought tolerant species. As part of the stormwater management plan, these plants will assist with quantity control by retaining stormwater and promoting evapotranspiration. The green roof also improves stormwater runoff quality by acting as a natural filter for rainwater.
- *Alternative Modes of Transportation*: Infrastructure which supports the use of alternative modes of transportation, such as bicycle parking within and around the building, will be provided. Further, two car-share spaces are proposed to provide more transportation-related options for new building residents, supporting decreased reliance on personally owned automobiles. A shuttle is also proposed which will provide residents of the building with access to key locations across Town, including the future Grimsby GO Station. The convenience of cycling and the ease of use of public transit will reduce car dependency and greenhouse gas emissions.
- *Green Construction Materials*: Further along in the detailed design process, the building materials that will be selected will be evaluated for durability and embodied carbon implications. Wherever possible, lower embodied carbon materials will be considered for use.
- *Bird-Friendly Design*: At the more detailed design stage of the building envelope, with the safety of bird wildlife in mind, bird-friendly window applications and building and site lighting will be considered.
- *Heat Island Mitigation*: To mitigate heat island effects, high albedo light-coloured roofing and hardscaping materials, integrated with green and/or white roofs and shade trees at grade, will be considered where possible.
- *Green Infrastructure*: Green infrastructure and stormwater management strategies, like permeable pavement and bioswales will be considered as part of the overall streetscape and public realm design where appropriate and as feasible.
- *Biodiversity and Plant Selection*: To the extent possible, the use of plant species that are low-maintenance, hardy, and native will be prioritized to provide value to the overall ecological function for the landscape and offer seasonal interest to the community. For street plantings, when specified, salt and drought tolerant trees, shrubs, and will be selected.
- *Soil Volume*: Appropriate minimum soil volumes per tree will be provided to support mature tree growth.

6

Urban Design Policy
Analysis

The Proposal for the subject site is supportive of the policy directions related to urban design in the NROP and the Grimsby OP, and it appropriately addresses many of the applicable design guidelines, as outlined below.

6.1 Niagara Region Official Plan

In our opinion, the Proposal conforms with the NROP and has been designed in accordance with the policies in Section 6.2. The Proposal is of high quality architectural and landscape design, promoting a site and streetscape design that contributes to an attractive, walkable, accessible, diverse, and functional community as set out in Policy 6.2.1.1. The subject site is an appropriate location for intensification in the Town’s Downtown, and the Proposal enhances and complements the existing character of the subject site and surrounding area through its pedestrian oriented approach and landscape focus. The building is oriented to its two street frontages, introducing a mix of active uses which are accessible from the public sidewalk to animate the public realm. The streetscape elements have been designed to create connection between the public realm and publicly accessible private space onsite. In this regard, the Proposal creates a comfortable, safe, and welcoming pedestrian environment along its street frontages. Feature elements within the proposed public realm

and at the publicly accessible open spaces enhance a sense of place and reflect the importance of the natural heritage features in the context, taking inspiration from the Niagara Escarpment. Further, the Proposal reuses and integrates the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings to marry the existing historic character of the site with a contemporary and visually interesting architectural design. In accordance with Policy 6.2.2.7, the Proposal creates an enhanced urban design experience along each Mountain Street and Elm Street, introducing pedestrian, cycling, and transit supportive facilities, such as convenient bicycle parking near to building entrances, street trees, varied hard and soft landscape treatments, and a variety of integrated and coordinated street furniture. Overall, as directed by the NROP, the Proposal contributes to developing a strong and memorable sense of place and supports the development of a complete community.

6.2 Town of Grimsby Official Plan

An Official Plan Amendment is being sought to permit the proposed building height of 8 storeys as the *Downtown – Intensification* designation policies of the Grimsby OP limit the height of new buildings to 4 storeys, or 6 storeys where a visual impact assessment demonstrates no detrimental impact on the views of the Escarpment. Recognizing the additional height contemplated for the subject site, and to ensure an appropriate built form relationship with the surrounding area, the Proposal has been designed with careful consideration for the urban design and public realm related policies in the Grimsby OP.

Section 3.5.6 sets out the Town’s objectives for urban design within the Downtown District, which include enhancing livability and physical appeal of the Town through the quality, layout and attractiveness of its public and private spaces and buildings, as well as to create a visually diverse, interesting, attractive, well-defined and interconnected built environment, among other things. In this regard, the Proposal appropriately addresses the urban design related policies applicable to the Downtown District in accordance with Section 3.5 as follows:

- The Proposal incorporates visually interesting and welcoming open space elements on each street frontage, each directly adjacent to and accessible from the public sidewalk. These spaces and the public realm connecting them establish a comfortable and attractive pedestrian environment through the introduction of streetscape improvements such as coordinated and/or decorative unit pavers and hardscaping, new street trees and planters with softscaping, and coordinated and integrated street furniture. Further, the Proposal provides space for commercial spill-out activities along the Elm Street frontage, and in particular within the publicly accessible courtyard between the proposed commercial spaces.
- The Proposal provides building entrances that are physically and visually connected to the adjacent streetscape.
- Because of its prominent corner location, the proposed built form is designed to be visually interesting along both street frontages and from a variety of vantage points, incorporating a well-articulated façade comprising a variation of complementary materials. The building mass also incorporates stepbacks and setbacks to allow for the retained Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall buildings to continue to define the streetscape.
- Canopies and overhangs at building entrances are incorporated into the Proposal design to ensure pedestrian weather protection and comfort, as well as to signify entry points into the building.
- The proposed mechanical penthouse is set back and well-integrated into the overall design of the building, reducing its visual impact from within the surrounding public realm.
- The building setbacks at the north and east ends of the Proposal provide for a general alignment with the existing adjacent buildings in an effort to establish a more consistent building face lining each street.
- Proposed parking, loading, and service areas are situated internally within the building in a manner that screens such uses from public view and minimizes their visual and physical impact on the surrounding area.
- Vehicular access is proposed via a single driveway entrance at the northwest corner of the subject site, minimizing interaction between vehicles and pedestrians and creating a comfortable, safe, uninterrupted pedestrian environment along the majority of the street frontage around the site.
- To support the prominence of the corner gateway location of the subject site, the Proposal has been designed to incorporate visually distinctive components, including feature ‘Woolverton’ and ‘Grimsby’ signage which is an important placemaking element that supports the landmark nature of the development within the Downtown.

The Proposal has also been designed to appropriately address the streetscape design policies in Section 7.0 as follows:

- The Proposal establishes a comfortable pedestrian environment through the introduction of enhanced streetscape elements and landscaping, including new street trees as well as tree plantings within the publicly accessible open spaces along each street frontage.
- All parking is internalized within the building and screened from public view, minimizing its visual presence within the surrounding streetscape.
- The proposed building is oriented to the adjacent street frontages, where entrances to the residential lobby on Mountain Street and the commercial spaces along Elm Street are clearly visually defined by canopies and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.
- To minimize disruptions to traffic flow, maximize safety, and improve the comfort and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment, a single vehicular access is proposed.

More specific and detailed information relating to the design elements proposed will be established through the Site Plan Control process at a later stage of the development application process. As pertaining to the proposed OPA and ZBA, based on the foregoing, it is our opinion that the Proposal has appropriately considered and addressed the existing urban design direction set out by the Grimsby OP.

6.3 Regional Municipality of Niagara – Model Urban Design Guidelines

The design of the Proposal has appropriate regard for the Region’s Model Urban Design Guidelines 2005, which focuses on smart growth principles, and the draft MUDG 2024, which puts a greater emphasis on complete communities. The Proposal addresses key elements of both documents as follows:

- The Proposal includes a mix of residential, commercial, and community uses to serve the community, increasing its vibrancy and creating a strong relationship to the surrounding streetscape through the introduction of an animated and active public realm around the site.
- The Proposal is situated on a corner site with high visibility within the Downtown District, and incorporates visually distinctive elements, such as the proposed landmark rooftop signage, befitting of a gateway location. Reinforcing the prominent location of the site, the Proposal makes efficient use of land, roads, utilities, and community services and facilities.
- The Proposal offers additional housing choices within the existing surrounding community, introducing greater variety of housing options for a wider range of residents.
- The Proposal is well integrated into the surrounding context, with clear connections between building entrances and the public sidewalk network, expansion and enhancement of pedestrian space, and in proximity to a variety of other commercial, community, and open space uses.
- The proposed 8-storey building represents a compact built form that responds to its surroundings by stepping down in height towards the street frontages and adjacent properties where appropriate, providing a highly articulated built form, locating the building mass centrally within the site, and limiting built form impacts on the area surrounding the subject site.
- The Proposal provides a thoughtful public realm and landscape design that establishes a strong sense of place through the integration of existing built form, new contemporary construction, landmark rooftop signage, and open space elements that are reflective of the broader natural heritage features in the area.
- The Proposal is situated well with respect to the existing cycling network along Mountain Street and Main Street, as well as the Bruce Trail hiking network. Through the provision of cycling infrastructure, such as bicycle parking within the public realm and within the building, the Proposal is supportive of the development of a walkable/bikeable community.
- Private indoor and outdoor amenities are provided as part of the Proposal, enhancing and improving the well-being of residents.
- A singular vehicular access point leading to internalized parking, loading, and servicing areas provides for a safe, attractive, and continuous pedestrian environment around the site with limited interaction between pedestrians and vehicles.

6.4 Downtown Grimsby Design Guidelines, 2010

In developing the design of the Proposal, appropriate regard has been given to the Town’s 2010 Downtown Design Guidelines which generally focus on principles related to built form, façades, site planning for new development, as well as the improvement of existing building facades, in particular as part of a historic main street environment. It is our opinion that the Proposal maintains the intent of the DGDG as follows:

- The proposed built form frames adjacent streets at a pedestrian-friendly proportion, with the 3-storey streetwall defining the streetscape along Elm Street and the existing Woolverton House and Woolverton Hall continuing to define the Mountain Street streetscape.
- The Proposal thoughtfully incorporates the existing historic buildings onsite and provides new built form that is complementary to the character of those existing buildings through its massing, orientation, and proposed material treatment. In this regard, the Proposal will also ensure the good condition of the existing historic building facades will be maintained and improved as part of the development.
- The proposed landscape program and open space elements provide for a visually interesting and attractive relationship between the buildings and the street, enhancing the streetscape and establishing an improved pedestrian experience around the subject site.
- The visual impact from the proposed parking and servicing areas has been minimized because of their location internal to the building and being screened from the surrounding public realm.

6.5 Downtown Grimsby Reimagined – Urban Design Guidelines Public Realm Update, 2023

While the specific details set out in the “Downtown Reimagined” document are targeted towards public-realm improvements along Main Street, the guiding principles are identified as applying to “all public and private development and redevelopment within the Downtown”. In this regard, the Proposal has appropriate regard for the intent of the Downtown Reimagined document by:

- Establishing an animated streetscape along Mountain and Elm Streets through the introduction of active grade-related uses and several publicly accessible open space elements with enhanced landscaping and materiality;
- Providing a mix of uses within the development, including residential, commercial, community, and open space uses, to contribute to the vibrancy of the surrounding community;
- Incorporating sustainable elements into the overall building and landscape design;
- Contributing to the creation of memorable places within the Downtown District through the complementary design of the pedestrian-oriented built form and enhanced and coordinated landscape elements that provide opportunities for socialization and passive recreation;
- Taking inspiration from the natural setting of the Escarpment to develop a landscape program that thoughtfully links the open spaces onsite with their broader surroundings;
- Supporting the development of a walkable/bikeable community through the provision of cycling infrastructure, such as bicycle parking within the public realm and within the building, on a site with good access to existing cycling routes and trails;

- Introducing built form that is respectful of and sensitive to the existing historic buildings onsite and the broader surrounding area through its setbacks and stepbacks and the creation of special places adjacent to the retained buildings;
- Ensuring that the Proposal is visually interesting along each street frontage and from various viewpoints by incorporating a well-articulated façade comprising a variety of complementary materials;
- Incorporating visually distinctive design elements, including feature ‘Woolverton’ and ‘Grimsby’ rooftop signage, which represent an important placemaking opportunity that supports the landmark nature of the development within the Downtown;
- Orienting the built form to the adjacent street frontages, with entrances that are clearly visible and directly accessible from the public sidewalk, while also incorporating canopies and overhangs at building entrances to ensure pedestrian weather protection and comfort;
- Locating parking, loading, and service areas internally within the building to minimize their visual impact; and
- Providing vehicular access at a single driveway entrance at the northwest corner of the subject site to limit potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment around the site.

7

Conclusion

An architectural rendering of a modern, multi-story building with a light-colored facade and large windows. The building features prominent signage on its upper levels, including 'WOOLVERTON' and 'GRIMS'. The rendering is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey box containing text. Below the main text area, there is a smaller, more detailed rendering of a street scene showing a white car, pedestrians, and a crosswalk.

WOOLVERTON GRIMS

Overall, the Proposal for the subject site will contribute positively to Grimsby’s Downtown District through the introduction of a new and distinct building of high-quality design incorporating new residential uses, commercial, and community space, as well as attractive and welcoming publicly accessible outdoor spaces.

The Proposal will result in a contextually appropriate building given the location of the subject site along a Regional Arterial Road within Grimsby’s Downtown Intensification area. Further, the subject site is of an appropriate size and location for an 8-storey gateway building leading into the Town’s Downtown. The Proposal incorporates visually interesting materiality and distinctive design elements, such as the feature rooftop signage, which supports the prominence of the development as a landmark within broader surrounding area. The incorporation and adaptive re-use of the existing heritage-designated buildings responds to the traditional character of the area, and the proposed geometric contemporary built form acts as a backdrop to Woolverton Hall and Woolverton House, allowing those forms to continue to be defining features within the streetscape. The new built form incorporates appropriate setbacks that encourage an enhanced pedestrian environment, complemented by new publicly accessible open spaces that expand the public realm along each street frontage. The sidewalk zones along each Mountain Street and Elm Street are animated with active grade-related uses, creating further interest within the streetscape. The Proposal is appropriately massed and compatible with the existing and planned context and does not result in any unacceptable built form impacts.

This report concludes that the Proposal for the subject site is supportive of the policy directions related to urban design in the NROP and the Grimsby OP, and that it appropriately addresses many of the applicable design guidelines. The Proposal will maintain the intent of the applicable policy and regulatory framework, namely implementing the objectives of the design policies in the Grimsby OP by introducing new high quality private spaces that will enhance the livability of the Downtown and support a pedestrian-friendly scale along the public streets.

In summary, it is our opinion that the proposed development represents good urban design, and accordingly, we recommend approval of the requested Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.

(Rendering courtesy of Studio JCI)

