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I am now coming to you live from the Ward 2 Town Hall. It's in this building  from 6 to 8 pm if you're nearby, otherwise you can follow these tweets.



Looks like we're about to get started. There are between 25 and 30 people tonight. We're going to begin with a presentation about downtown renewal, then a densification incl. fourplexes, and then open Q&A.

Cllr Goller asks everyone to be kind.

Reg Russwurm, Manager of Design and Construction, will lead the presentation on renewal. He notes that this is a massive undertaking, making significant investments to make downtown a stronger cultural and economic hub and create foundation for future prosperity.

Right now, the focus is on area north of the Metrolinx tracks plus the Wyndham corridor to Wellington. Macdonell and Allan Dam Structure EA, capital implementation plan, Wyndham N, and water work at Wyndham/Wellington all coming.

Can this wait? No. DT has 100 year old infrastructure in some places, and we will see failures if no action is taken. It does offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to make changes downtown.

Capital implementation is a road map for how the work will be completed with a check in at every phase to make sure the plan still makes sense, and support economic development and

growth. Russwurm says that this is not a typical project, and will come with unique comms challenge

Downtown is workable, playable, livable! Get ready to see that message around in the weeks/months to come.

Phase 1: Upper Wyndham and St. George's Square. EA complete so there's a vision on how to proceed. Constriction begins in spring 2026 and will continue through 2028. Engagement will be ongoing this year, and impacts include utilities getting ready and field work.

Wyndham South and Wellington will go to construction in 2025 to improve the water infrastructure to replace the trunk system. Work will begin in 2025 but it will mostly involve lane closures, no street closures. More info coming in the fall.

City is reviewing mitigation strategies that worked (or didn't work) in other communities while coping with large construction. They'll be asking downtown businesses about what mitigation efforts then want to see. Some storefronts will be pedestrian access only, transit effects.

The City will be adding signage and having specific logistics for the needs of businesses, plus economic incentives.

Pacing? Fast means extending hours, extra crews, incentives in the contract like staging in St George's. Contractor flexibility lowers costs. Slow? Means small footprint, doing less at any one time. Could cost more in the long run.

Fast: shut it all down, 1 contractor, and get it down in 2 construction season.

Slow: phase it out, 3 contractors or more, and it gets down in 5.

Russwurm says that that keep looking for best practices and are looking for feedback from the people and businesses downtown. He notes that tomorrow at a council workshop they'll discuss streetscaping options.

There are four options: Good, Better 1, Better 2, and Best. The budget covers Good, but there are three other options if council chooses to pursue them.

Question: What's the life cycle of new infrastructure under the roads? About 70-80 years easy, but 100 not unusual.

So we're going to have DT ripped up for the 200th? Yes, but cultural heritage is aware of that, and they're looking at the possible re-opening of St George's Square for the bicentennial.

Will Macdonell and Carden be open? Yes, just not at Wyndham, though they are looking at passes for transit (both GO and Guelph).

Who decides which model and when? Staff are getting input and they're hearing a mixed bags. They're also pre-qualifying contractors to show the City the available options. They should be able to then put a dollar on slow and fast, which will be presented to DT Steering Comm.

Terry Gayman, head of engineering, says that from the steering committee, the final report goes to council in terms of financials. Presently, there's no report on the potential impact on businesses, and the data is apparently thin.

How does this interface with Baker? Russwurm says ideally they will cut the ribbon on the library and the start work on Wyndham.

Difference between Good and Best? About \$10 and \$20 million.

How will construction in other parts of downtown impact the project (Windmill, Co-operators)? Russwurm says that those developments are being kept in the loop, but one of the things holding projects back is the condition of pipes under DT too.

What levers do they have to prevent delays? Russwurm says that the City went through a lot of reflection and created project management office to keep a tighter lid on things. Contractors held responsible to meet milestones. Also set up steering committee.

When was the last time the numbers were updated? Russwurm says he has project managers do an annual review (City has about 200 projects on the go at any given time) this was reviewed during 2024 budget process. "We are as confident as we can be" but there's still 20% variance.

Russwurm says that if the put a project out for tender and it comes back 5-10 per cent off he's forced to wonder what they did wrong.

Is the sewer under Wyndham maxed out right now? Russwurm says that in some areas it is.

Moving on now to fourplexes. Cushla Matthews, Development Advisor, will present though she is recovering from pneumonia.

There are about 4,000 ADUs in Guelph registered right now across a whole variety of types. Right now, 3 units permitted as of right, though there are still a number of checks you have to go through. Only 9 in Guelph right now out of 3,600 lots have 3 units.

A lot of what we're reviewing right now was covered at this recent planning meeting of council:



LIVE BLOG: City Council Meeting for April 9, 2024

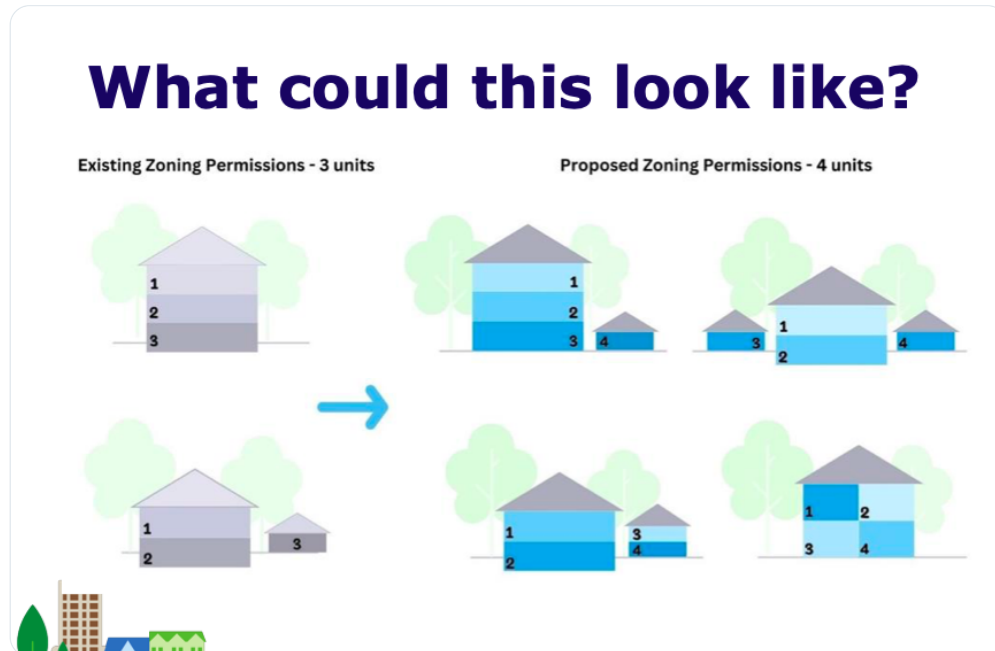
Gentle density is the name of the game at this month's planning meeting. You can click here for the amended agendas from City Hall, and you can click here for the Politico preview. For the co...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2024/04/09/live-blog-city-council-meeting-for-april-9-2024/>

Feedback from 5 public sessions:

- more simplification
- openness to reducing parking requirement
- greater variety of unit configuration

Katie Nasswetter, Project Manager of Policy Planning, shows us what the possibilities look like.



Still got to use the same building envelope, no change to lot size or frontages, max setbacks, max height, driveway width or green space. Will need new definition, limited to RL1 and RL2 zones, 3 spaces instead of 4, otherwise need to meet all other regs.

There have been some changes proposed by ONgov through Bill 185 that might have an impact on this plan, so it's not coming back to council in June. The project is on pause till fall once staff understands full impact. Next year, five or more as of right will be explored.

Questions? Any exploration about how each reg adds to the cost of the project? Nasswetter says that's a good point so the consultant is pricing out the zoning recommendations and that will be part of final report.

Is City working with feds on template for process? Matthews say yes, but they've just started that work in the last few weeks so there won't be anything firm till later this year. is a good tool to show what homeowners can do. rehousing.ca

One woman says that she recommends gentle density. Created some vibrant communities in and around downtown Victoria even though it can be messy.

Any considerations to the look? Nasswette says they don't control how buildings look in the city, someone can build something garish next you and as long as it meets zoning you can't say "boo". (Heritage conservation districts excepted.)

Comment: It's imminent, there are four properties in his neighbourhood that tried to join together and listing says that one property can be split in two for 8 dwellings. What protections does he have as a homeowner?

Engineer staff are reviewing servicing capacity in different neighbourhoods. The fact of the matter is that not all areas may be able to service four units on one lot. Issues with servicing is one of the things we addressed in downtown redevelopment.

Question: Why keep ADU to 80 sq feet? Nasswetter says it was to keep impact limited and trying to create a standard building envelope.

How many of these units might we get in 2, 5, or 10 years? Nasswetter say they've had that debate, but it's market driven and there's also precedent. About 290 ADUs in 2021, @ 300 in 2023. Should be 15-20% make-up of homes in G. This is one tool in a box, Matthews says.

One man warns about undoing parking restrictions too quickly. We're a driving society and parking creates neighbour conflict. (Doesn't have to be that way, another person retorts.)

Any chance people using ADUs as AirBnB? Nasswetter says that's never come up, but Goller notes that there are licensing on short term rentals.

Can these bring in more property tax revenue? Nasswetter says that's true, more units = new assessment. Also, there will be an on-street parking study coming in the next few years. So City will be examining that.

One woman notes that one of the quickest way to slow down traffic is to allow on-street parking.

How much housing is needed? Matthews doesn't have the hard numbers but there was a housing need report published recently, and the City is currently updating the Affordable Housing Strategy.

One man who owns a couple of properties thinks that it's best to let the developer decide how to best use a site. Of course, he's speaking as someone that lives in the area so it more responsive to his neighbours concerns.

Have you talked to the U of G at all? Largest landowner in Guelph, they bring 30k to city, why they not in on this convo? Matthews says that they are and have even been even more involved. Also Bill 185 directs cities and post-secondary to work more closely.

We're now going to have a little open mic.

Question: Concerned about a trailer cutting the locks and IMICo and squatting there? She wants this dealt with b/c it is City property and it's contaminated. They also have "two vicious dogs". Goller says it's a concern, presently city is embroiled in legal \$#!t around it.

Internet voting, coming at the end of the month still? Goller says yes, he and Klassen voted in favour though staff did not the security concerns.

Question if an owner gets a tax break because of empty commercial building? (Meaning Robusta) That's not offered any more but it looks the City is going to be doing the work to see about commercial vacancies.

What about giving people tax breaks during downtown construction? Apparently this counts as bouncing, which is barred in the Municipal Act. The City can offer incentives though.

Allan Dam review, does that include the walking bridge that was cancelled. Klassen says the company that did the EA wasn't equipped to tackle some part of the review so the decision was made to address the area holistically.

I raised the suggestion that the condo owner had the project pulled because they didn't want people downtown to have easy access to their property. Goller, Klassen and staff say they never heard that.

There's a project called Gateway, which is a placemaking for the Allans Dam area. The person running this project didn't come b/c they're sick tonight, but you can get in touch with @carlyklassen if you want to learn more.

@carlyklassen There will be another Ward 2 town hall in September, in advance of the budget, which will hit on October 1. Why so early, apparently the mayor directs it so.

@carlyklassen That's a wrap! Thanks for following!!



@carlyklassen @threadreaderapp unroll please!

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