

Final draft Village Urban Design Guidelines

By Mark PavilonsEditor

A multi-year effort has resulted in King's draft Village Urban Design Guidelines. Councillors were presented with the final draft Monday night, but comments and input is still being accepted by staff until Oct. 13. The guidelines include a series of design criteria and graphics that outline the design features and elements that will shape development in King and its villages. Amalgamating the guidelines for all three main villages, the new framework was developed to align with the 2019 Official Plan. The three-phase effort began in the fall of 2021 and culminated this month. Consultant Bob Gauthier, project manager of WSP, noted the key drivers for the guidelines were supporting policies in King's new Official Plan, and outdated existing guidelines. The three main areas examined were village centres, established neighbourhoods and employment areas. A series of three virtual public open houses were held in October 2021 to seek feedback and comments from members of the public within each of the Township's three Villages of King City, Nobleton and Schomberg. The final Discussion Paper was circulated through the SpeaKING project page on March 23, 2022. The first draft of the Village Urban Design Guidelines were posted on the SpeaKING project page in September 2022. The final draft Village Urban Design Guidelines were posted on the SpeaKING project page on Sept. 12, 2023, and notice was provided to interested parties, on social media and in the King Weekly Sentinel. The release of the final draft Village Urban Design Guidelines was delayed due to legislative changes that resulted in amendments to the Planning Act and the provisions of the Planning Act related to where development applications can be reviewed for urban and exterior design. Staff noted the final draft Village Urban Design Guidelines respond to and incorporate feedback received at the past virtual public open houses, and respond to the changes in Provincial policy and legislation that have occurred since the first draft was published in 2022. Gauthier noted input from residents included safety, walkability, aesthetics, streetscaping, core improvements, maintaining heritage characteristics and infill homes. The consensus, he said, was to make new development less impactful. The guidelines are really a tool to help evaluate applications. Once it's finalized, council is looking to adopt the guidelines later this fall. A series of five open houses have been held, with more than 90 people attending. Since the project page was launched in September 2021 there have been over 1,300 visits to the page and over 550 documents have been downloaded. Through the open houses and public consultation, a number of questions and comments were received. Based on the input and feedback the following were identified as key community priorities:

- Clarification on where the guidelines are proposed to apply.
- Guidelines to address considerations for existing cultural heritage resources.
- Additional details on how the guidelines are proposed to be implemented.
- Desire for clear guidelines to addressing massing and transition for infill projects.
- Guidelines to support missing middle housing.
- Encouraging pedestrian oriented roads.
- Maintenance of existing vegetation and mature trees.
- Standards to respond to climate change.

Ensuring new development in the established neighbourhoods maintains the desirable attributes of the area. Based on these key priorities, updates have been made to the draft Village Urban Design Guidelines to ensure that the guidelines are clear, easily understood, and are responsive to the needs of the community. In particular, a new section has been added to the draft Guidelines to introduce additional guidelines for cultural heritage resources, and the 'Implementation' section of the draft Guidelines has been revised to include detailed recommendations to ensure the successful implementation of the Guidelines. Additional changes that have been made to the draft Guidelines as a result of the input received from the community is discussed further below. The Village Urban Design Guideline Review seeks to develop a new set of Village Urban Design Guidelines (VUDGs) for the Township's three Villages of King City, Nobleton and Schomberg, by focusing on the following three areas of each Village:

Village Centres, comprised of the Village Cores, Mixed Use Areas and Major Transit Station Area; Established Neighbourhoods, Employment Areas. To ensure that the Township continues to offer a high quality of life for all, staff noted there is a demonstrated need to balance growth with high quality urban design. The purpose of the VUDGs is to provide clear design guidelines for the above-noted areas, while ensuring that the following fundamental goals are met: Build upon the principles and policies of the Official Plan and other Township plans and studies to ensure that the villages grow and evolve in a manner that protects and enhances their

unique identities and attributes. Encourage new development, including reconstruction, renovations, redevelopment and infill in the villages to be compatible with adjacent development, respectful of the environment. Emphasize the creation of a strong sense of community. Through Bill 23 exterior design was removed as a matter subject to site plan control, and the Township's Site Plan Control By-law was subsequently updated to reflect these changes. Bill 23 also amended the additional residential unit provisions of the Planning Act. The Planning Act now allows for up to three (3) dwelling units in a building or two (2) dwelling units in a primary building and one (one) in an ancillary structure on any parcel of urban residential land (i.e., lands serviced by municipal water and sanitary sewers).