



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Planning Committee

FROM: Malcolm Hunt, Director of Planning and Development Services

MEETING DATE: May 11, 2009

**SUBJECT: Report PLPD09-026
Adoption of the Central Area Master Plan**

PURPOSE

A report to recommend the adoption of the Central Area Master Plan as an amendment to the Official Plan for the City of Peterborough.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report PLPD09-026 dated May 11, 2009, of the Director of Director of Planning and Development Services, as follows:

That Section 4.8.B of the Official Plan, being the Regional Centre/CBD Area Master Plan be deleted in its entirety, and that Section 10 of the Official Plan be amended to establish a Central Area Master Plan in accordance with the draft amendment attached as Appendix "A" to Report PLPD09-026.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget and financial implications arising out of the adoption of the recommendation. Over time, capital and operating budgets will be impacted as Council acts upon the policy directions of the Central Area Master Plan. Expenditure decisions, however, will be established through the annual budget process according to council priorities and in consideration of other requirements such as health and safety issues, risk management, and infrastructure needs.

BACKGROUND

At the Council Meeting held on March 2, 2009 the following recommendations of Planning Committee were adopted:

- a) That the Draft Central Area Master Plan, dated December 15, 2008, be received; and*
- b) That Staff be authorized to initiate an Official Plan Amendment process including the issuance of public notice to adopt the new Central Area Master Plan into the Official Plan.*

On Wednesday, April 14, 2009 the full text of the proposed amendment was published in the Peterborough Examiner. In accordance with established procedures the Public Notice was distributed by mail to all commenting agencies.

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the Central Area Master Plan, as an amendment to the City's Official Plan. Adopting the Master Plan as an amendment to the Official Plan carries with it the obligation of the City to implement the policies of the Plan. The Central Area Master Plan replaces the Regional Centre/CBD Master Plan adopted in 1991. The Regional Centre/CBD Master Plan has been the guiding force behind the City's comprehensive downtown streetscape program, the renewal of the Downtown waterfront, and many other positive enhancements to the vitality of Downtown.

The Central Area Master Plan is not starting over; rather it builds upon and makes current the planning strategies that have long-guided the planning traditions of Downtown Peterborough. The Central Area Master Plan refreshes the municipal priorities through the planning horizon to 2020. This Master Plan reflects the land use diversity and planning opportunities of the broader Central Area as depicted on Schedule "J" of the Official Plan.

This report focuses on the activities of the planning process since the formal release of the Draft Master Plan on December 18, 2008, in particular the modifications to the proposed policies arising out of the consultations and public notice period.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

The following table identifies the milestones in the consultation program:

DATE	ORGANIZATION
December 18, 2008	Master Plan Public Release
January 8, 2009	Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee
January 12, 2009	Joel Parkes on Behalf of the Chamber of Commerce
January 27, 2009	Town Ward Town Hall Meeting
February 6, 2009	Peterborough and the Kawartha Association of Realtors
February 6, 2009	Peterborough Homebuilders Association
February 12, 2009	Peterborough Museum and Archives Advisory Committee
February 17, 2009	Planning Committee
February 18, 2009	Canadian Canoe Museum Board of Directors
March 2, 2009	AON Inc.
March 6, 2009	Peterborough Square
March 10, 2009	Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee
March 12, 2009	Management Team – County/City Health Unit
March 18, 2009	Downtown BIA Breakfast Meeting
March 20, 2009	Trent Centre for Community Based Education
March 24, 2009	Downtown Action Committee
March 25, 2009	Festival of Lights Board
April 8, 2009	Formal Public Notice under the Planning Act Issued
May 6, 2009	Library Board Meeting
May 11, 2009	STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING AND ADOPTION

The release of the Draft Central Area Master Plan at this time has proven to be an effective tool to explain the philosophy of the Provincial ***Places to Grow*** plan and the implementation of it. The Master Plan has been received with enthusiasm across the community and through the consultation phase many organizations have found their place in the overall strategy and are expressing a willingness to be counted in the implementation phases.

The Draft Master Plan was not perfect and through the consultation phase excellent comments were received. Some comments have prompted staff to propose alternative wording to the draft policies while some comments will be articulated in the narrative that accompanies the Master Plan.

Issue No.1: The Relationship of the Master Plan to Retail Development.

At various stages in the consultation program, participants questioned why the master plan did not specifically promote Downtown retail development and restrict retail development elsewhere. The Master Plan is intended to complement the Commercial Land Use policies of the Official Plan, not contradict them. The Master Plan cannot deny legitimate opportunity made possible through the Official Plan affecting other areas of the City. Similarly, the Master Plan cannot be construed as a city-wide Commercial Policy review. The Master Plan is a planning strategy to animate the potential of the Central Area as envisioned by the Official Plan. In that regard the Master Plan is all about retail – about the enhancement of Central Area retail activity by creating a more vibrant Downtown experience and the attraction of new retail growth to support a growing resident population base.

Section 10.5.3 of the Draft Master Plan states that an objective of the Master Plan is “to stabilize and strengthen the retail function of the Central Area, in particular, food, services and convenience shopping for residents of the Central Area.” In addition, the proposed section 10.5.4.1 states “Entertainment and Cultural Uses, Major Office Uses, and Institutional Uses are considered to be priority functions of the Central Area. In addition, a healthy retail sector is regarded to be important to the multi-functional nature of the Central Area”. The Master Plan then identifies a number a strategies that reinforce this objective.

The Draft Master Plan has been modified to reflect a greater tie between the anticipated population growth of the Central Area pursuant to *Places to Grow* and the need for more commercial activities that directly support the planned growth. This now becomes an important consideration in the geographic assignment of the warrants for future retail expansion. This is also a recommendation of the recently released Retail Analysis prepared by urbanMetrics.

Issue No.2: The “Downtown First” Philosophy for Public Investment in Cultural and Entertainment Facilities.

If there was one Master Plan Strategy that touched many nerves, it was the strategy that directs the City to promote the downtown for cultural and entertainment uses. The strategy was embraced by many and resisted by a few. The arguments presented for or against the strategy were reasoned and passionate.

Planning strategies, however often involve difficult choices. In this situation the choice is really differentiated by a “facility-building perspective” verses a “community-building perspective”. The facility-building perspective tends to promote the opportunity of a location for what it can do for the long-term vitality of the institution or facility. The community-building perspective, advocated by the Draft Master Plan, promotes the opportunity of location for what it can do for the long-term vitality of the community or in this case, the cultural sector. Both perspectives are valid, however from a community planning perspective staff are compelled to promote the latter.

The strategy, as originally written in the Draft Master Plan dated December 15, 2008, promoted two outcomes: securing a permanent off-street venue for a downtown Farmer’s Market and a downtown location **alternative** for the Peterborough Museum and Archives. The narrative behind the strategy promoted a “Downtown First” mindset as a precondition to the investment in municipal cultural facilities. This philosophy would also embrace the Canadian Canoe Museum and Art Gallery.

Having completed the consultation activities, planning staff are convinced that the adoption of the “Downtown First” philosophy is not only the right strategy for this planning horizon but also has the potential to be a transformational strategy for all time. The draft policy did not effectively capture the potential. It placed undue reliance on the Peterborough Museum and Archives to fulfill the policy. Accordingly the policy has been modified as follows:

- b) The promotion of a “Downtown First” philosophy for public investment in municipal cultural and entertainment facilities, evidenced by:*
 - i. The pursuit of a permanent off-street venue for a downtown Farmer’s Market, initially in the Public Square.*
 - ii. The pursuit of a downtown location alternative for the Peterborough Museum and Archives in order to enhance the critical mass required for a more successful tourism offering.*
 - iii. The active encouragement of more central Downtown locations for the Canadian Canoe Museum and an expanded Art Gallery.*

Issue No.3: Elaborating on the Priority Functions of the Central Area

Although the narrative of the Master Plan addressed the unique opportunity for Peterborough presented by the presence of two post-secondary institutions in the City,

the policies of the draft Master Plan were silent. Consistent with the priority functions of the downtown, worthy of protection, and recognized in the Official Plan, the proposed policy has been modified to specifically recognize Trent University and Fleming College as follows:

- c) *The active promotion, in cooperation with Trent University and Fleming College, of a Downtown solution for expanded or modified academic programs, or as institutional facility issues change.*

Issue No. 4: Strategy 5 – The Public Square

In order to avoid unnecessary controversy over the use of the term 'Civic Square' to define the multi-purpose outdoor venue for gatherings and community celebrations of Strategy 5, the proposed policy has been modified to refer to the venue as a 'Public Square'. Through the consultation phase it was reasoned that the city's Civic Square is the long established precinct defined by City Hall, The Armoury, the former YMCA site, PCVS and Confederation Park. Staff are in agreement.

The narrative of the Draft Master Plan identifies two candidate locations for the Public Square; the Louis Street Parking Lot and the open north-west corner of Peterborough Square at Water Street and Charlotte Street. The plan acknowledges that the Louis site leads the list for consideration for many reasons. During the consultation phase staff met with the owners of Peterborough Square to clarify the intent of the proposed strategy, particularly as it impacts the Peterborough Square site. This location was advanced for consideration given that a considerable amount of creative energy was applied about 5 years ago to explore the potential to expand the existing seasonal farmer's market into this space. However, with the passage of time Peterborough Square has formulated other plans for the space and have requested that the narrative of the Master Plan not include the Peterborough Square site. This modification will be made.

Issue No.5: The Industrial Conversion Area

The Industrial Conversion Area of Strategy 14 is exceptionally well-positioned to become a longer-term focus of intensive residential growth. With the convergence of many potential trail corridors centred on the Industrial Conversion Area and the proximity to the Waterfront, staff recommend that the proposed policy be modified to acknowledge the residential potential of the area. The proposed strategy will now read:

- b) *The proactive planning of the Industrial Conversion Area for long-range and intensive redevelopment purposes, and residential uses in particular.*

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure: The Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure has commented that the Draft Central Area Master Plan supports the implementation and achievement of key Growth Plan policies including intensification within the built-up area and the promotion of vibrant, liveable urban growth centres. When commenting on the Draft Master Plan the Ministry had not yet received the draft Official Plan policies under the Growth Plan conformity exercise. Having also reviewed that document the Ministry has advised that there are no outstanding issues with the Central Area Master Plan.

The Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee: The Committee's comments are generally very supportive of the Draft Master Plan, in particular, the "Downtown First" strategy and the promotion of alternative methods of transportation. The Committee presented the following concerns:

- Valuable cultural collections should not be moved to the Downtown if it means moving them into a flood plain.
- More consultation on the nature of a downtown cultural anchor is required.
- Avoid the introduction of new at-grade, surface parking in the downtown; well designed parking structures are a better use of land.
- The Master Plan does not emphasize as strongly as it might the importance of heritage resources, and cultural and recreational tourism to the economy of Peterborough.

Architectural Conservancy – Peterborough Branch: The Architectural Conservancy is generally very supportive of the Draft Master Plan, particularly the clearly stated goals of stimulating creativity and promoting the quality of life in Central Area neighbourhoods. The Conservancy presented the following concerns:

- Peterborough already has a Civic Square but other outdoor venues are encouraged provided they are not allowed to detract from the civic priority of Confederation Park.
- The Master Plan should not promote more downtown parking.
- The Master Plan does not speak to Peterborough's grid of one-way streets. Anti-social traffic policy (one-way streets) will continue to degrade Central Area neighbourhoods.
- As an alternative to the Louis Street Lot for an off-street venue for the downtown Farmer's Market, the Conservancy promotes the east bank of the Otonabee River, in the vicinity of the Hunter Street Bridge and the adjoining public spaces.

The Canadian Canoe Museum: The Canadian Canoe Museum has expressed its strong support for the overall direction laid out in the plan, and particularly the vision of Peterborough's downtown as a vibrant, culturally-rich area of the City. The Museum is highly supportive of a downtown location for the Museum, particularly a water-based location.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing: The Ministry has asked that the City circulate the Draft Master Plan to the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Conservation Authority given the presence of Jackson Creek. This has been done.

Peterborough Museum and Archives: The Museum and Archives Advisory Committee recommends that the boundary of the Central Area be expanded to include the Lift Lock, Ashburnham Memorial Park, and the Museum and Archives site. Further, the Advisory Committee recommends that this expanded area be considered as part of the Gateway initiative of Strategy 3. The expansion of the Central Area Boundary is an excellent suggestion but is beyond the scope of the Master Plan. This can be considered as part of the ongoing Official Plan Review.

The Social Planning Council: The Social Plan Council applauds the directions of the Central Area Master Plan as the plan commits the City to build a strong and vibrant downtown. The Social Planning Council noted the 13 indicators of quality of life in their 2007 Quality of Life Report and has advised that the Master Plan addresses at least 9 of these indicators. The Social Planning Council supports, in particular, the consolidation of the arts, culture, heritage and recreation into a downtown location, the intensification of urban space as responsible public policy and as a viable means to financially deliver services, the action to sustain downtown schools, the plan's promotion of economic enhancement for downtown businesses, and the initiatives supporting pedestrian-friendly infrastructure development.

The Library Board: The Library Board fully supports the Master Plan strategy to enhance the Aylmer/Bethune Corridor. The Board encourages the City to give further consideration to property in the vicinity of the Library as an opportunity to fulfill the Master Plan objective to cluster cultural institutions in the Downtown. The Board specifically cited the demographic and growth implications of the Master Plan and the Growth Plan as a potential impact on service delivery.

The written agency comments are included as Appendix B.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Planning Division received six written submissions from businesses and members of the public. Five of the submissions were from members of committees or agencies who took the time to prepare individual submissions, often elaborating on matters raised during the consultations conducted prior to the issuance of Public Notice early in April.

One letter was received in response to the published notice. The response did not offer any support for the Master Plan and specifically did not consider the strategies dealing with additional parking in the Café district, the development of a “Downtown” brand, the development of a downtown-specific tourism development strategy, and the creation of a public square to have any merit.

SUMMARY

While the preparation of the Central Area Master Plan has taken much longer than originally intended, the timing of its release has proven to be fortuitous. While good planning is always the right thing to do, success is often a matter of timing. It has been years since a Peterborough planning initiative has captured the attention of so many diverse interests groups and organizations. The consultations conducted between the release of the Draft Master Plan in December and the issuance of Public Notice were all unsolicited. The community has found a level of excitement about the Master Plan that staff find hard to explain. Perhaps the shared vision of what the Central Area means to the spirit of Peterborough has come of age.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:
Appendix A – Central Area Master Plan Policies
Appendix B – Agency Comments

APPENDIX A – Central Area Master Plan Policies

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

10.5 CENTRAL AREA MASTER PLAN

10.5.1 General

The Central Area, as outlined on Schedules I and J, is the multi-functional centre of the City, where the combination of diverse activities and places combine to fulfill the **central place functions** of the City and Greater Peterborough Area.

These central place functions are reflected in the retail, service, government, residential, and cultural activities of the traditional central business district.

These central place functions are also reflected along the gateways that bring people to the downtown. Accordingly, the George Street South, Park Street, Charlotte Street West and Hunter Street East Business Districts are important components of the Central Area.

These central place functions are represented in the Industrial Conversion Sub-Area and Transitional Uses Sub-Area; an expansive zone around the traditional core area that contains a diverse mix of land uses, including stable residential neighbourhoods. These sub-areas contribute to the central place function today and provide the practical expansion capacity for more intensive development activity over time.

10.5.2 Purpose

The Central Area Master Plan is intended to complement the Commercial Land Use policies of the Official Plan. The Master Plan is a planning strategy that adds policy depth and clarity to the strategic direction for the Central Area found in Section 2.3 and the detailed land use policies of Section 4.3.2. The intent of the Central Area Master Plan is to identify a number of specific planning strategies that will assist the Central Area achieve its full potential during this planning horizon (to 2020).

10.5.3 Objectives of the Master Plan

The goal of this Master Plan is to promote the continued growth and development of the Central Area. The specific objectives are as follows:

- a) To confirm that the priority functions of the Central Area, worthy of protection, are Entertainment and Cultural Uses, Major Office Uses, and Institutional Uses;
- b) To stabilize and strengthen the retail function of the Central Area, in particular, food, services and convenience shopping for residents of the Central Area;

- c) To encourage new residential development, particularly in higher density or mixed-use forms, that will add to the vitality of the Central Area and create an expanding local market for retail growth;
- d) To promote the quality of life in Central Area neighbourhoods;
- e) To foster pedestrian connectivity throughout the Central Area particularly the completion of linkages to the Otonabee River, Little Lake and Jackson Creek, new trail and walkway development, and the further development of the Otonabee River Trail.
- f) To continue the program of improvements to municipal infrastructure including streetscapes and storm water management systems;
- g) To promote the unique function of each Sub-area within the Central Area through targeted economic development strategies.

10.5.4 Program of Central Area Enhancements

In order to achieve progress on each objective identified in section 10.5.3, the City will, as can be reasonably accomplished through annual budget allocations, pursue a program of Central Area enhancement. The program of enhancement is identified in sections 10.5.4.1 to 10.5.4.7 and addressed in detail in the Background Study to the Master Plan. The specific strategies are unique to this planning period and do not preclude the continuation of established and successful initiatives that are not yet complete.

10.5.4.1 Strategies to Confirm the Priority Functions of the Central Area and Strengthen the Retail Function.

Entertainment and Cultural Uses, Major Office Uses, and Institutional Uses are considered to be priority functions of the Central Area. In addition, a healthy retail sector is regarded to be important to the multi-functional nature of the Central Area. The following strategies form part of the Master Plan:

- a) The creation of a Public Square, a multi-purpose outdoor venue for gatherings and community celebrations.
- b) The promotion of a “**Downtown First**” philosophy for public investment in municipal cultural and entertainment facilities, evidenced by:
 - i. The pursuit of a permanent off-street venue for a downtown Farmer’s Market, initially in the Public Square.
 - ii. The pursuit of a downtown location alternative for the Peterborough Museum and Archives in order to enhance the critical mass required for a more successful tourism offering.

- iii. The active encouragement of more central Downtown locations for the Canadian Canoe Museum and an expanded Art Gallery.
- c) The active promotion, in cooperation with Trent University and Fleming College, of a Downtown solution for expanded or modified academic programs, or as institutional facility issues change.

10.5.4.2 Strategies to Promote the Quality of Life in Central Area Neighbourhoods

Over time the Transitional Uses Sub-area represents the logical and practical expansion area for the Commercial Core. During this planning period the residential neighbourhoods in and at the fringe of the Central area are worthy of planning measures to ensure the quality of life for current residents and new residents anticipated due to residential intensification initiatives. The following strategies form part of the Master Plan:

- a) The preparation of neighbourhood plans for distinct residential areas in the Transitional Uses Sub-area.
- b) The development of an enhancement strategy for the Aylmer/Bethune corridor to promote a positive environment for investment and a safe interface between the Downtown Commercial Core and the Transitional Uses Sub-area. As a component of the enhancement strategy, establish a future for the Bethune Street right-of-way.

10.5.4.3 Strategies to Encourage New Residential Development

- a) The commitment to advocate for a change in Provincial school funding policy so that local School Boards have the financial capacity to retain midtown schools in Peterborough.
- b) The proactive planning of the Industrial Conversion Area for long-range and intensive redevelopment purposes, and residential uses in particular.

10.5.4.4 Strategies to Foster Pedestrian Connectivity

- a) The assignment of priority to the completion of the Otonabee River Trail connections to Downtown.
- b) The establishment of a north-south walkway/cycling corridor serving the Central Area connecting the Trans Canada Trail at Brock Street and Bethune to the Extension of the Crawford Trail at Townsend Street and Bethune, as part of the refreshed Bethune Street right-of-way.

10.5.4.5 Strategies to Improve Municipal Infrastructure

- a) The assignment of priority to the renewal of the Charlotte Street right-of-way from Water Street to Park Street.
- b) The resolution of a sustainable municipal funding solution for an appropriate level of maintenance and safety.
- c) The implementation of the conclusions of the Jackson Creek Flood Reduction Environmental Assessment on an accelerated basis.
- d) The expansion of the municipal off-street parking supply in the Hunter Street East Business District (Village BIA Area).
- e) The investigation of opportunities to establish additional off-street parking supply in the new Café District (Hunter Street).

10.5.4.6 Strategies to Promote Economic Development

- a) The comprehensive pre-zoning of all properties in the Central Area to fulfill the full opportunity envisioned by the Official Plan.
- b) The implementation of a program to refresh the “Downtown” brand.
- c) The development of a Downtown-specific Tourism Development Strategy.
- d) The completion of an urban design program to celebrate the gateways to the Central Area.
- e) The establishment of a developer/staff task team to identify the barriers to downtown development and a program for regulatory reform.
- f) The adoption of a Community Improvement Plan for the Central Area.

10.5.4.7 Strategies to Promote Sound Planning and Quality Development

- a) Refresh existing Implementation Plans in the following areas to account for the physical expansion of the “Downtown” to the “Central Area”:
 - Site and Building Design Guidelines
 - Residential Intensification Study
 - Streetscape Design Guidelines
- b) Develop new Implementation Plans in the following areas to support the growth implications of “**Places to Grow**”:
 - Servicing Capacity and Constraints Study
 - Open Space Needs Analysis

- c) Respond to the Findings of Parallel Planning Initiatives including:
- The Transportation Plan Update
 - The Peterborough Policy Response to Places to Grow
 - The Little Lake Master Plan
 - Municipal Cultural Plan
 - Heritage Conservation Plan