

URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

428 LITTLE AVENUE

CITY OF BARRIE



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1.0 Purpose

Peter Higgins Architect Inc. has been retained by 428 Little Inc. to prepare this Urban Design Brief to address the various guidelines and policies developed to direct urban design within the City of Barrie. The guidelines and policies have been reviewed against the proposed development concept to demonstrate that the proposed built form is consistent with the intent and objectives of the City's direction for Urban Design. This brief is part of a submission for Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Approval applications.

2.0 Content

This brief will review the city's Urban Design Guidelines relative to the proposed development of the subject property and its inclusion within the general area. The scale and design of the proposed development will increase the range and type of housing options and increase the stock of more affordable units to an area that is currently comprised primarily of low density residential uses, effectively meeting the long-term needs of the community. The proposed development will create a comfortable yet compact form of housing in keeping with the intensification objectives of the City of Barrie and the Province of Ontario.

This Urban Design Brief relative to 428 Little Avenue addresses issues of urban design relating to:

- Land use
- Urban built form, housing types and densities
- Building placement
- High quality design and materials
- Streetscape and landscaping
- Pedestrian scale and walkability

2.1 Contextual Analysis

The subject property is located at 428 Little Ave, between the eastern terminus of Foster Drive, on the north side of Little Avenue, extending parallel to the Metrolinx Rail Line to the east and beyond that, Hurst Drive.

This linear property has a total area of approximately 2.04 ha (5.04 acres) and is adjacent to seven single detached dwellings and Highland Park, all fronting onto Maclaren Avenue to the west. A new proposed pedestrian walkway will provide direct access to the existing parkland (Highland Park) promoting green spaces.

The lands to the east of Hurst Drive are zoned Multi Family Residential RM2 and are developed as the Tollendale Village Retirement Facility. The Retirement Facility consists of several buildings including nursing care and multi-storey retirement buildings as well as single storey bungalows. The lands to the south are vacant and zoned as Residential Hold. A key map is provided in Figure 1 in the Appendix.

The site is currently vacant with tree vegetation generally along the eastern edge flanking the Metrolinx Rail Line. The topography of the site slopes moderately from the east to the west to the degree of approximately 3 metres.

A topographic survey of the property has been completed by Rudy Mak Surveying Ltd.

Full municipal services are available to the property including: sanitary, watermain, storm sewers, including municipal fire hydrants on Little Avenue and Maclaren Avenue. The proposed development is situated close to many local and intercity transit routes. Access to City of Barrie Public Transit routes 4A & 48B is available along Hurst Drive while access to route 8A & 8B is located along Yonge Street, approximately 500 metres west of the site. These routes provide access to various locations throughout the City including Georgian College, the Downtown Bus Terminal, Allandale and South GO Stations; as well as interacting with all other transit routes in Barrie.

Schedule D – Roads Plan to the City of Barrie Official Plan identifies Yonge Street, Hurst Drive and Little Avenue all as arterial roadways.

The proposed development is located within a ten-minute walk of major commercial amenities readily available along the Yonge Street corridor - specifically a major retail plaza located at the northeast corner of Yonge Street and Minet's Point Road. A number of commercial uses are located within walking distance of the subject lands including a pharmacy, a number of eateries and restaurants, financial institutions, grocery stores, convenience stores etc.

Beyond the above, other important uses nearby include but are not limited to the following: Yonge Street Go Station, Assikinack Public School (1.3 km), Painswick Branch of the Barrie Public Library, Minet's Point Park along Kempenfelt Bay and trails associated with Lovers Creek.

2.2 Site Design – Development Concept

The proposed multi-residential development consists of fifty townhouses in five blocks (Blocks A to E) plus six affordable stacked townhouse units in Block F. The 50 townhouse units will consist of three to four bedrooms and the affordable stacked units will consist of two bedrooms. This development equates to a density of 27.3 units per hectare. Each block consists of 10 townhouse units to be 3 storeys in height including one full level of at grade parking per building averaging 187 square metres per unit. The six affordable units are approximately 80 square metres per unit.

Access to the proposed development will be by a private condominium roadway, connecting Foster Drive to the north and Little Avenue to the south. This condominium road shall provide convenient vehicular access to each of the fifty units' private garage parking together with private driveway parking and an additional 35 visitor parking spaces, 7 of which are barrier free, totaling 135 parking spaces for the whole development.

A two metre road allowance along Little Avenue will also be deeded to the City of Barrie should the applications be approved. This will include infrastructure improvements on Little Avenue including a sidewalk on the north side of Little Avenue connecting to Hurst Drive for accessibility, to allow pedestrians to access the signaled crossings at Little and Hurst and to utilize existing bus stops on Hurst Drive.

A stormwater management area is located adjacent to the vehicular entrance off of Little Avenue with flow directed to Lover's Creek.

A 720 square metre amenity space has been allocated at the northern tip of the property adjacent to the entrance from Foster Drive; well over the 672 square metre (12 m² per unit) required by the City of Barrie within the RM2 zone. This amenity area shall provide a central meeting place for future residents to gather and engage in leisure and recreational activities. Several mature trees are currently positioned within this area and will be maintained as part of the proposed development. In addition, a new 1.5 metre wide walkway is proposed to access the existing Highland Park. A significant central sidewalk has been provided which connects Foster Drive to Little Avenue, conveniently located adjacent to the condominium road for easy pedestrian movement.

The design of the townhomes is contemporary and similar in nature and will utilize high quality building materials such as brick and stucco to ensure a façade and structure that promote a distinctive urban character. The west side of the development is setback 7.0 metres from the west property line. This area is well treed and the facades along this side are 2-storey in height which, together with the required closed board privacy fencing, will provide an integrated and sensitive design with no loss of privacy or impact to the seven existing single detached homes. The design and orientation of the development also focuses the front of each unit towards the centre of the site towards the east side. The east side of the development is 3-storeys high and faces a large treed area flanking the Metrolinx Line. The townhouses are set back 30 metres from the rail line in accordance with Metrolinx requirements. In addition, a retaining wall and 1.83 metre high chain link fence will be constructed next to the rail line.

Three garbage enclosures have been provided adjacent to the visitor parking area. This system allows the garbage enclosures to be appropriately screened from view while allowing for convenient pick-up. A snow storage area will be identified west of the visitor parking area.

3.0 Urban Design

The City of Barrie's Urban Design Manual was revised in 2014 and provides direction for many design elements within urban developments. The proposed concepts attempt to incorporate many of the design directives found within this document specifically relative to: the physical environment and building siting, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, site servicing, architectural design, and public transit accessibility.

3.1 Physical Environment and Building Siting

- 3.1.1** The proposed townhouse built form and associated densities are considered appropriate for the subject lands given their location towards the periphery of the intensification node while satisfying the intensification objectives and locational criteria for intensification outside of intensification areas.
- 3.1.2** The proposed development conforms to all of the zone standards of the Multi-Residential RM2 zone, that is, there are no exceptions being requested to yard setbacks, building height or lot coverage and therefore respects the existing scale and setbacks of the neighbourhood.

- 3.1.3** The proposed units create a pedestrian scaled area incorporating landscaping features both existing natural features.
- 3.1.4** The number of parking spaces provided is above the requisite 84 spaces and is internal to the site.
- 3.1.5** Windows and entrances on buildings fronting onto the private condominium road will be oriented towards the street and centre of the site to enhance surveillance (eyes on the street).
- 3.1.6** The units' front and rear elevations face east and west, respectively, allowing for maximum sunlight throughout the year.
- 3.1.7** The proposed large amenity area has been positioned at the northern tip of the property providing for maximum privacy from both the adjacent single detached homes to the west and the proposed townhouses.
- 3.1.8** The proposed townhouses will include canopies above the front door for weather and sun protection.
- 3.1.9** Architectural design will include low E window systems.
- 3.1.10** The proposed townhouses provide no shadow casting on adjacent properties and outdoor uses due to the two-storey height of the built form on the west side and sloped topography on the site.

3.2 Site Circulation

- 3.2.1** The internal roadway has been designed such that it is suitable for emergency and garbage disposal vehicles.
- 3.2.2** A main internal sidewalk connecting the two ends of the development for ease of access to public transit use as well as block to block access, visitor parking, including 5 Barrie-Free parking, Canada post community mailbox (fronting on Foster Drive) and waste disposal enclosures.
- 3.2.3** A 1.5 metre wide walkway connects the proposed townhouses to existing Highland Park.

3.3 Site Services

- 3.3.1** A garbage enclosure area is provided.
- 3.3.2** All utilities are currently proposed to be located underground.
- 3.3.3** Vehicular areas have been designed to negate the possibility of cars reversing/maneuvering on public streets. All required vehicle movements would be conducted within the internal site.

3.4 Lighting

- 3.4.1** Lighting plan will be provided during Site Plan Application that accentuate amenity areas, support pedestrian scale and ensure they are compatible with architecture and neighbourhood.

3.5 Fencing

- 3.5.1** Closed board fencing is proposed along the rear yards of the 7 existing and abutting single detached dwellings.
- 3.5.2** A retaining wall and 1.83 high chain link fence will be provided next to the rail line.
- 3.5.3** Tree screening – both existing and new – will minimize visual monotony. Landscape Plan will be provided during Site Plan Application.

3.6 Architectural Design

- 3.6.1 Townhouses will promote a strong urban streetscape with high quality architectural design.
- 3.6.2 Each Townhouse will have a minimum of one (1) integral parking space per unit in addition to one (1) driveway parking space accessed from the internal condominium road.
- 3.6.3 Each Townhouse shall possess front and rear yards for outdoor amenity and enjoyment of residents.
- 3.6.4 The building facades will be comprised of a minimum of two different brick colours, along with stucco finish on exterior upper floor walls, providing an excellent and high level design to be viewed from Little Ave.
- 3.6.5 Roof design will be slope in nature as per neighbourhood vernacular.
- 3.6.6 Certain design elements such as porches, cantilevered canopies, large windows, etc. have been incorporated in order to create an appealing, pedestrian scaled neighbourhood encouraging interaction with residents.
- 3.6.7 Overall, the architectural design, style, massing and material selection will contribute to the high design of the proposal. Further details will be provided during the Site Plan process.

3.7 Transit

- 3.7.1 The site is situated in an ideal location for access to regional and local transit options.
- 3.7.2 The site located within 4 kilometres of the Barrie South Go Station and 3 kilometres of Allendale Station.
- 3.7.3 An existing bus stop is located at Little Avenue and Hurst Drive.

4.0 Summary and Conclusions

The proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment aims to facilitate 50 unit townhouses as well as 6 stacked affordable townhomes and to conform to all the zoning standards of the Multi-Residential RM2 zone. As such, no exceptions have been requested to yard setbacks, building height or lot coverage. Furthermore, the proposed development allows for the efficient use of land and infrastructure, representing logical and appropriate development of lands designated for residential use and provides affordable housing units. It is intended that the additional residential units will offer the land use framework that will be the incentive for further employment, commercial and residential uses within the surrounding area. With a sensitive and strong urban streetscape, coupled with high quality design and aesthetics as required by the City's Urban Design Guidelines, this development proposes a pedestrian oriented structure that makes use of landscaping features, proximity to transit stops. It is our professional opinion the development is consistent with the intent and objectives set forth in the Urban Design Guidelines and is poised to become a functional component of the urban fabric of the existing and planned neighbourhood.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

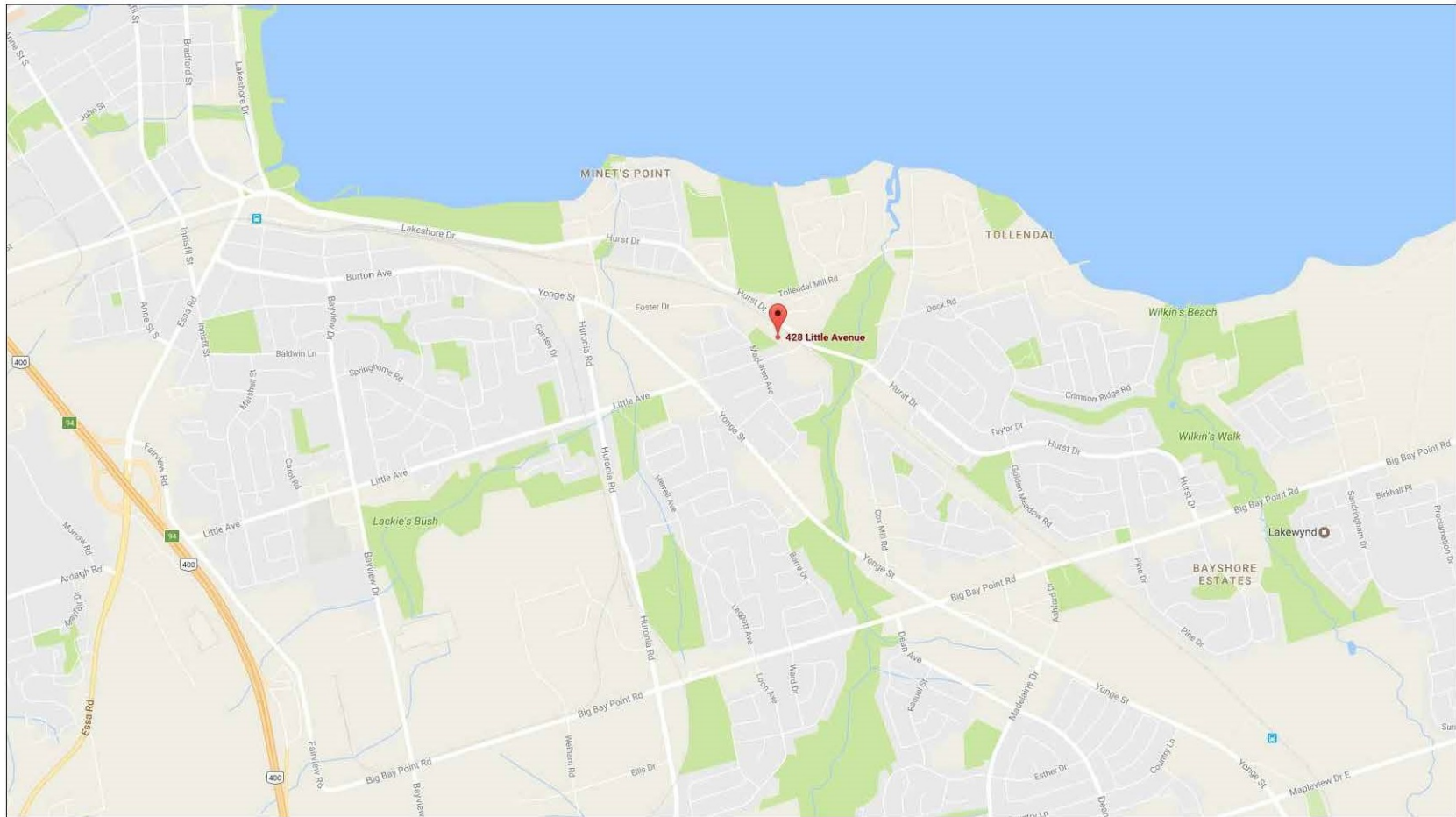


Figure 1: Key Plan

