

# HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOODS STRATEGY

Neighbourhood Profile  
June, 2010

*People led planning for Barrie's older neighbourhoods*

## Downtown

### Residents' vision of the future Downtown...

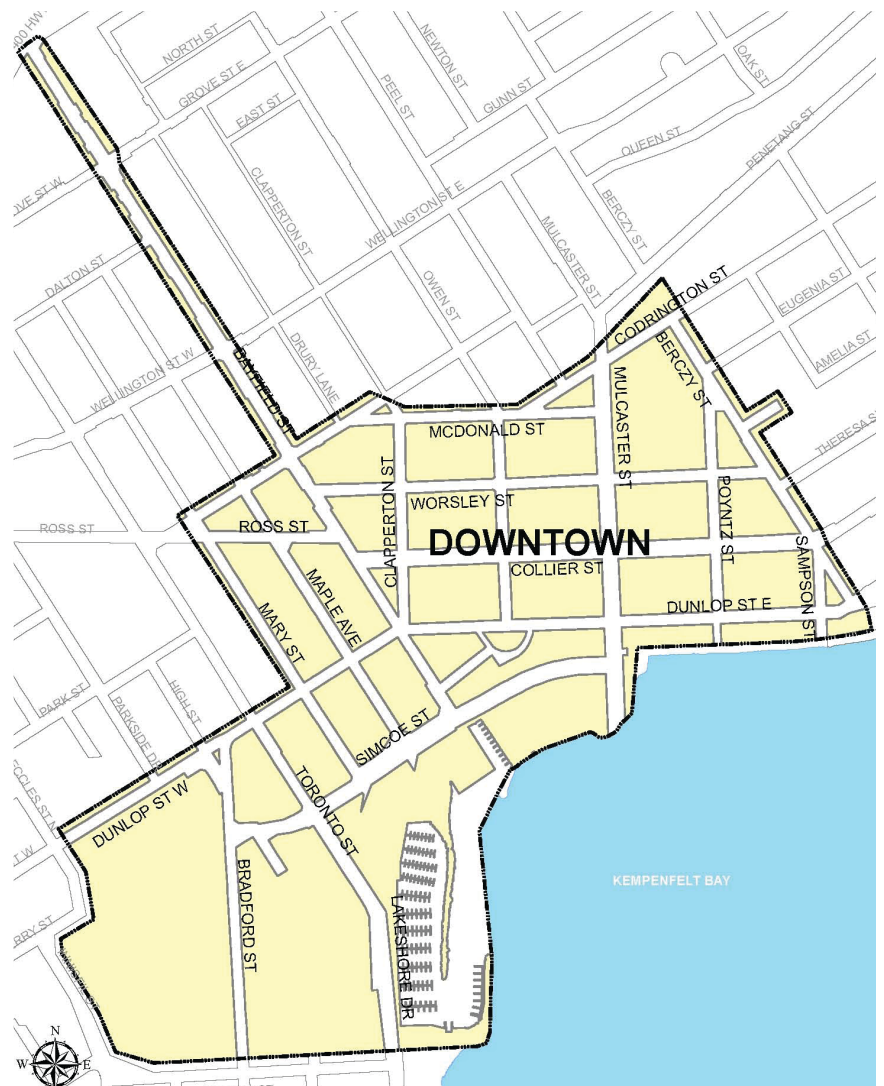
Downtown is a thriving neighbourhood with an abundance of essential retail services such as grocery, pharmacy and hardware stores, as well as public primary and secondary schools. It is attractively landscaped with a lush canopy of trees and well kept parks, which are appealing to everyone and readily accessible.

Historic street signs and lamp posts, comfortable benches, good lighting, an array of planters with seasonal flowers and flags line the well-lit Downtown streets. The resident population has grown significantly spurred by new construction, as well as renovations of older buildings, resulting in a mix of building types and a blend of new services and residential units.

State-of-the-art office accommodation has attracted the creative, technological and corporate sectors to locate in Downtown, enhancing employment opportunities and supporting higher paying jobs.

Visitors enjoy Downtown's incredible waterfront with boat slips, retail shops, restaurants and public spaces overlooking the water. Businesses benefit from the revenue tourism brings to the neighbourhood and year-round festivals offer tourists another reason to travel to Barrie's downtown.

Downtown is a thriving cultural centre—art galleries, theatre, cultural spaces, restaurants, public art installations, buskers, open air amphitheatre, public squares, a convention centre, recreational facility to support stadium/audience and a large performing arts centre—appealing to residents and visitors alike.



## What residents most enjoy about Downtown...

- Convenience of being able to walk to the lake, naturalized green spaces, shops, restaurants, gallery, library, retail and grocery store
- Mature trees and naturalized green areas that are safe and accessible
- Heritage homes and buildings that are well maintained
- Diversity of residents, housing, shopping and entertainment opportunities
- Proximity to neighbourhood schools



Barrie Public Library

## What residents would like to see changed in Downtown...

- Proactive enforcement of quality of life by-laws including the noise by-law, property standards by-law and boarding, lodging and rooming-house by-law
- Restrict the number of bars in the downtown and require owners to do daily sidewalk cleanup, especially on the weekends
- Enforce anti-littering by-law and provide notices about the by-law throughout Downtown, while also provide more refuse containers and maintaining them daily
- Keep public areas and sidewalks in excellent condition and encourage private business owners to do the same
- Increase the amount of free parking during the day to encourage visitors and support retailers
- Encourage, support and undertake high-quality festivals that support downtown retailers

## How residents would like to see Downtown grow...

- Encourage co-operation between all social agencies to provide more accessible care for those in need, preferably under one roof, in and also outside of the downtown core
- Ensure public schools remain in the downtown to encourage families with children to stay and locate in the neighbourhood
- Support development in vacant lots, in key busy intersections and along busy thoroughfares including Bradford Street where investment is needed
- Build a high quality recreation centre with community services, skating rink and a large performing arts centre to attract well known performers
- Attract and retain companies in the creative, technological and corporate sectors



Heritage Park



Downtown market



Historic jail



Rinaldi Salon and Spa

## Where residents envision future development...

The Downtown continues to support commercial opportunities and is host to a growing arts and cultural community. Interspersed throughout this bustling area of entertainment and services exists the most diverse residential neighbourhood found anywhere in the City. As the Downtown continues to evolve from its historic role as a shopping district into a destination, the neighbourhood will continue to evolve and accommodate growing numbers of future residents.

Downtown residents envision residential streets remaining primarily low-rise residential that is complementary to the existing inventory of homes and housing opportunities. Future growth can and should be accommodated along busy stretches of road and key intersections including Bayfield Street, Bradford Street and Dunlop Street West, where appropriate. Downtown residents are looking for good design standards to be adhered to for all new development and for proposals to be appropriate to the surrounding community in scale and height.

Most of this area of the City is subject to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan (CIP), offering financial incentives for redevelopment, renovations and upgrades to buildings. With a number of vacant or underutilized sites throughout the Downtown, residents are looking for the City to champion those incentives and support land owners to redevelop and invest in the community.

As part of the discussion around future growth opportunities, residents identified where differing scales of future development seemed to be most appropriate. Using neighbourhood maps with red, yellow and green streets, the following map was created to depict the type and location of future development residents expect in Downtown.



### Red Streets

**Character:** A primarily residential area that is expected to stay primarily residential in nature.

**Growth Expectations:** Significant change in the residential character of the area is not anticipated. Growth is expected to occur primarily through small-scale residential infill (e.g., new single-detached homes) and renovations/additions to the existing housing stock.

### Yellow Streets

**Character:** An area that is in transition with a growing mix of housing forms and a range of services.

**Growth Expectations:** Some growth in the area is anticipated, primarily along minor collector roads and at smaller intersections, on vacant lots and underutilized sites. Medium-scale infill is considered acceptable provided it adheres to good urban design standards and is complementary to the neighbourhood, particularly development that is directly adjacent to stable residential areas.

### Green Streets

**Character:** An area experiencing significant transition and in many parts is in need of significant investment to offset decline.

**Growth Expectations:** Growth in the areas is anticipated, primarily along major arterial roads and intersections, on vacant lots and underutilized sites. Medium-to-higher-scale development is considered acceptable provided it adheres to good urban design standards and is complementary to the neighbourhood, particularly development that is directly adjacent to stable residential areas.



## Neighbourhood Characteristics

The historic core of the City of Barrie, the Downtown neighbourhood, is a vibrant mixed-use community comprising a rich blend of specialty shops and services, as well as institutional and ceremonial community spaces. The neighbourhood is wrapped around a large section of the waterfront parkland, which offers some of the best views of Kempenfelt Bay to be found in the City.

Being part of the original settlement, the Downtown neighbourhood contains a rich variety of original



The Queens Hotel c 1868

historic homes and buildings. It offers the widest variety of housing types and building ages available anywhere in the City, with high-rise apartments and condominiums as well as single and semi-detached homes and row-housing.

A large number of multi-use buildings and multi-residential dwellings are located in historic buildings, many of which were historic residential dwellings.

The Downtown neighbourhood contains the original settlement area of the former Town of Barrie. This legacy has generated an inventory of buildings and sites that serve as reminders of the community's past. A number are still in use today including:

- Simcoe Hotel (c 1876), 31 Bayfield St.
- Sanders Block (c 1880), 72-74 Dunlop St.
- Queen's Hotel (c 1850), 94 Dunlop St. East
- John Pearson House (c 1840s), 16-18 Mary St.
- Dutton House (c 1874), 30 Mary St.
- Carnegie Library (c 1915), 37 Mulcaster St.
- County Jail (1840s), Mulcaster St.
- Commercial Building (c 1870s), 123 Dunlop St. East
- The Clarkson (c 1871), 130 Dunlop St. East
- 30 McDonald Street (c 1875)

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- 90 Mulcaster Street (c 1860s)
- 58 Collier Street (c 1845)
- Trinity Church (c 1864), 24 Collier Street
- 118 Collier Street (c 1847)
- 158 Dunlop Street East (c 1875)
- Collier Street United Church (c 1864), 112 Collier St.
- Baptist Church (c 1878) 35 Worsley St.
- St Andrews Presbyterian Church (c 1882), 47 Owen St.

With an eclectic mix of old and new buildings, the Downtown neighbourhood serves a wide variety of users both day and night. It offers a range of services for residents in need, including those found at the David Busby Centre, Salvation Army and the Barrie Native Friendship Centre, as well as providing recreational amenities such as Heritage Park, Barrie Marina and the North Shore Trail.

Most of Barrie's cultural, civic and ceremonial facilities are found in the Downtown, including the courthouse, City Hall, library, Downtown Community Theatre, MacLaren Arts Centre, cenotaph and the Farmers' Market. This is the locale of most of Barrie's festivals and events and includes a concentration of restaurants, bars, retail shops and entertainment opportunities.

The Downtown has recently made significant investments in Heritage Park and Lakeshore Drive including upgrades to the pedestrian pathways and spaces in and around the park. Additional parking and improvements to Lakeshore Drive, paralleling Dunlop Street, have also taken place, increasing the appeal of this area. Additionally, the City recently purchased, renovated and opened the Downtown Community Theatre at 5-points and is now looking to expand the facility.

## Questions or Comments?

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The City of  
**BARRIE**