



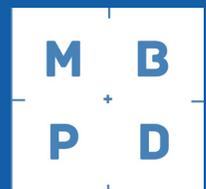
5688 MAIN STREET WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE, ONTARIO

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN JUSTIFICATION REPORT

JANUARY 2025

APPLICATION FOR OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT & ZONING BY-LAW
AMENDMENT

Prepared for:
Hyson Developments Inc.



I TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT	2
2.1	SITE DESCRIPTION	2
2.2	AREA CONTEXT	4
2.3	TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION	4
2.4	EMERGING BUILT FORM CONTEXT	6
2.5	TRANSPORTATION NETWORK	6
3.0	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	8
3.1	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION AND STATISTICS	8
3.2	SITE PLAN AND SITE ORGANIZATION	9
3.3	SITE ORGANIZATION	10
3.4	BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE	10
3.5	LANDSCAPE FEATURES	11
4.0	PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK	12
4.1	PLANNING ACT, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13	12
4.2	PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)	12
4.3	YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN (2022)	13
4.4	TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE OFFICIAL PLAN & COMMUNITY OF STOUFFVILLE SECONDARY PLAN	15
4.5	TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE OFFICIAL PLAN - DRAFT (2024)	16
4.6	COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-ALW 2010-001-ZO	17
4.7	COMMUNITY OF STOUFFVILLE RESIDENTIAL INTENSIFICATION URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES (2022)	17
5.0	SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS	19

II LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.0a - Rendering of Proposal	1
Figure 2.0a - Site Location	2
Figure 2.0b - Site Aerial	3
Figure 2.0c - Subject Site Facing Northwest	3
Figure 2.0d - Subject Site Facing Northeast	3
Figure 2.0e - Subject Site: Street View	3
Figure 2.0f - Northern Context: Palmwood Gare Immediately North	4
Figure 2.0g - Northern Context: 4-storey apartment building	4
Figure 2.0h - Eastern Context: Immediately east of Subject Site	5
Figure 2.0i - Eastern Context: 8-storey apartment building	5
Figure 2.0j - Southern Context: Immediately South	5
Figure 2.0k - Southern Context: 6-storey retirement building	5
Figure 2.0l - Western Context: Immediately west of Subject Site	5
Figure 2.0m - Western Context: 3-storey townhomes	5
Figure 3.0a - Site Plan	8
Figure 3.0b - Ground Floor Plan	8
Figure 3.0c - North Elevation	9
Figure 3.0d - East Elevation	9
Figure 3.0e - Landscape Plan	11

1.0 INTRODUCTION

M. Behar Planning & Design Limited (MBPD) has been retained by Hyson Developments Inc. to provide land use planning and urban design consulting services for the redevelopment of 5688 Main Street (the 'subject lands'), a parcel of land at the northwest corner of Palmwood Gate and Main Street, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The proposal seeks to redevelop the lands with a mixed-use building, consisting of a 13 storey mid-rise building, which includes a 6 storey podium. A private driveway will provide vehicular access from Palmwood Gate, with parking for the proposed development to be located below grade with 2 levels of underground parking. In total, 254 residential units are proposed in addition to retail uses at grade. The proposal will also feature landscaping and amenity spaces.

The report will provide planning and urban design justification in support of the proposed redevelopment and associated applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.

This Planning and Urban Design Report:

- Describes the subject lands, existing built form context, as well as emerging context.
- Describes the proposed development's characteristics and attributes, including Site Organization, Architecture, and Landscaping.
- Reviews and assesses the appropriateness of the development proposal against the applicable and emerging planning and urban design policy framework and standards, including:
 - The Planning Act R.S.O 1990
 - The Provincial Planning Statement (2024)
 - The Regional Municipality of York Official Plan (2022)
 - The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan (2023)
 - The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Draft Official Plan (2024)
 - Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-001-ZO
 - Community of Stouffville Urban Design Guidelines
- Provides summary and conclusions of the planning and urban design rationale for the proposed development.

This report demonstrates the suitability of the proposed development from a land use planning and urban design perspective based on the development's conformity with planning legislation. This development is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, and maintains the intent of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan and relevant Urban Design Guidelines.



Figure 1.0a - Rendering of Proposal

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Subject lands are located at the northwest corner of Palmwood Gate and Main Street in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The site is municipally known as 5688 Main Street and legally known as Part of lot 1, Concession 8, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Regional Municipality of York.

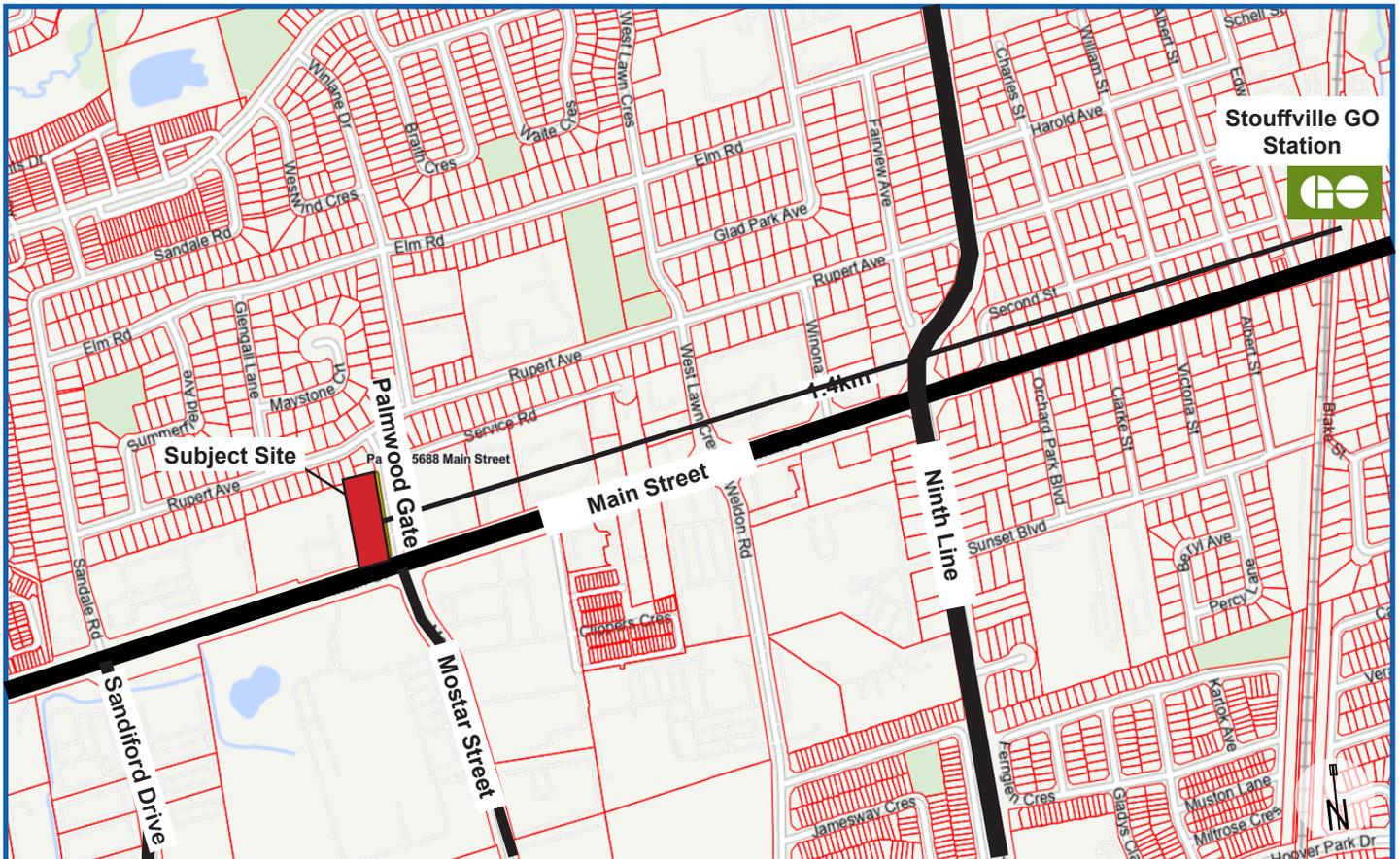


Figure 2.0a - Site Location

The subject lands are approximately 4,021.7 sq. m (0.99 acres) in area and is generally rectilinear in shape. The site has approximately 37.8m of frontage along Main Street with a depth of approximately 81 metres.

The site is currently occupied by a pool retail / commercial building and associated parking, service shop, and storage area. Pedestrian access is located at the south of the existing building, off Main Street as well as at the east of the site off Palmwood Gate. Vehicular access to the site is obtained through a private driveway off both Main Street and Palmwood Gate.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT



Figure 2.0b - Site Aerial



Figure 2.0c - Subject Site Facing Northwest



Figure 2.0d - Subject Site Facing Northeast



Figure 2.0e - Subject Site: Street View

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.2 AREA CONTEXT

The lands are located in an established part of the Community of Stouffville and forms a part of the Urban Area. The area is generally comprised of a mixture of commercial and retail uses along Main Street as well as residential uses.

Residential areas are characterized by low-rise dwellings, typically one- to two-storeys in height to the north of the site, and a mix of medium to high density townhouses and apartment buildings align Main Street ranging from 3-12 storeys.

Commercial areas are present along Main Street including multi-tenant shopping centres, strip malls, come of which are auto oriented, restaurants, and grocery stores. Cumulatively, the effect is a predominantly suburban style of development which prioritizes single-occupant vehicle trips and does not provide pedestrian-oriented street frontages.

The following provides a more detailed description of the existing built form context surrounding the subject lands:

North: Immediately north of the site is a low-scale residential neighbourhood, which typically consists of single-detached dwellings. Beyond this are 4-storey walk-up apartments and Madori Park.

East: To the east of the subject site, are commercial plazas including strip malls, restaurants, gas stations, and auto dealerships. Further east is two elementary schools, and Rupert Park and Stouffville GO Station.

South: To the south of the site is a commercial plaza containing various restaurants and a grocery store. Further south is a 6-storey apartment building, commercial / office buildings, an arena, Stouffville District Secondary School, and Oscar Peterson Elementary School.

West: Immediately west of the subject site is a York Region Affordable Housing 6-storey apartment building that is currently under construction. Further west are commercial and retail uses including restaurants and grocery stores, as well as 3-storey townhomes.

2.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND VEGETATION

The subject site is predominantly covered by the existing structure and related storage uses for the current tenants. The current use of the site does not provide for much vegetation to be present on the site. The surrounding topography is mainly flat throughout the subject site. Many of the properties along Main Street contain minimal vegetation, however, some street trees are present along the public boulevards.



Figure 2.0f - Northern Context: Palmwood Gate Immediately North



Figure 2.0g - Northern Context: 4-storey apartment building

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT



Figure 2.0h - Eastern Context: Immediately east of Subject Site



Figure 2.0i - Eastern Context: 8-story apartment building



Figure 2.0j - Southern Context: Immediately South



Figure 2.0k - Southern Context: 6-story retirement building



Figure 2.0l - Western Context: Immediately west of Subject Site



Figure 2.0m - Western Context: 3-story townhomes

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.4 EXISTING AND EMERGING BUILT FORM CONTEXT

This part of Whitchurch-Stouffville is currently evolving, with primarily infill and intensification. The emerging context surrounding the proposed development, and particularly along the Main Street corridor is comprised generally of mixed-use, medium to high density developments with street related townhouses and mid-rise apartment buildings.

Major development is characterized as projects that require an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and/or a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA). Recent proposed and approved development activity in the area is summarized in Table 1.

No.	Address	Application	Submission Date (Complete App.)	Proposal	Status
1	5991 Main Street & 12238 Ninth Line	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	October 22, 2019	12-storey residential building with 130 units.	Proposed
2	5945 Main Street	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	April 28, 2022	2 commercial buildings and 10-storey residential building	Under Review
3	5964 Main Street & 28 Fairview	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	January 19, 2023	12-storey mixed-use building with 210 units.	Approved
4	5917 Main Street	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	June 11, 2019	8-storey mid-rise residential building with commercial uses at-grade.	Under Construction
5	6052 Main Street	ZBA & Site Plan	November 28, 2019	Townhouse development with 8 3-storey townhouse units.	Approved
6	5827 Main Street	ZBA & Site Plan	July 4, 2017	Townhouse development with 75 units.	Under Construction
7	5676 Main Street	Site Plan	2019	6-storey mixed-use building with 97 residential units.	Under Construction
8	5472 Main Street	ZBA & Site Plan	February 23, 2018	Townhomes, Back-to-Back Townhomes & Live Work with 147 residential units.	Under Construction
9	5531 Main Street	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	November 12, 2019	18-storey mixed-use building with 309 residential units.	Proposed
10	5262, 5270, 5286, 5318 Main Street	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	March 23, 2018	5 apartment buildings ranging from 12-20 storeys with 800 residential units.	Proposed
11	6031 & 6037 Main Street	OPA, ZBA & Site Plan	May 27, 2024	8-storey residential building with 80 residential units.	Proposed

2.5 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Transportation and access are important considerations for the planning and development of new housing in existing neighbourhoods. These considerations are discussed below. A detailed analysis of the transportation context is provided in the Transportation Impact Study prepared in support of this application and provided under separate cover.

The subject lands are located at the northwest corner of Palmwood Gate and Main Street, in the Community of Stouffville. Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan Schedule F - Land Use and Transportation Schedule indicates that the subject site is located west of a regional GO Transit Station and rail corridor, providing connections to Downtown Toronto and other regional centres. The Stouffville GO Station is within 1.4km of the subject lands, which represents a 20-minute walk. Official Plan Schedule B - Land Use and Transportation Plan identifies Main Street as a Regional and Major Arterial road which serve inter-regional, regional, and local travel demands including goods-movement. The right-of-way width of Main Street is planned to be 30 metres.

The subject lands currently provide vehicular access via Palmwood Gate and Main Street. Pedestrian access is provided via the municipal sidewalk on Main Street and on Palmwood Gate.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.5.1 EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

The subject lands are serviced by existing higher-order public transportation and surface bus routes and facilities, providing accessibility throughout Stouffville, Markham, and beyond.

The subject site is located 1.4km west of the Stouffville GO Station, which is approximately a 20-minute walk. There are also bus stops located within a 2-5 minute walk both east and west of the subject site on Main Street. The station is part of the Stouffville line, which provides Regional GO Rail service from Union Station in Downtown Toronto, through Scarborough and continues to York Region with stops in Markham. The line stops at Stouffville GO before terminating at Old Elm Station. During weekday morning peak hours, GO Transit operates eight morning trains southbound from Old Elm to Union Station, with five afternoon peak trains northbound from Union, and an additional three trains in the late evening. During non-peak times, a two-way hourly service operates during the daytime and evenings between Union Station and Mount Joy in northeast Markham, seven days a week. Weekend service includes three trains departing from Old Elm in the morning at different intervals and returning late in the evening.

There is also Mobility On-Request (MOR) Stouffville, an on-demand transit ride service provided by York Region Transit (YRT), which allows travel from an address in the designated service area to one of the five select locations in Stouffville. The service operates on weekdays from 10am to 1:45pm and from 7pm to 10:45pm. Rides can be requested through the free MOR smartphone application at any time during service hours, at least 15 minutes before the desired travel time. Once requested, YRT will provide riders with a pick-up time and a marked YRT vehicle will pick-up riders from the selected address with direct service to the selected location.

The five selected locations include:

- Walmart Stouffville (Food and Fashion door) -1050 Hoover Park Drive (travellers may transfer to Route 9)
- No Frills (front door) – 5887 Main Street
- Stouffville GO Station (main entrance)
- Public Library and Leisure Centre – 2 Park Drive
- East End Corners Plaza (Shoppers Drug Mart front door)

In addition, to MOR Stouffville, YRT Route 9 - 9th Line operates between Cornell Bus Station in Markham and Glad Park Avenue / Millard Street loop in Stouffville, generally travelling in a north-south direction. Route 9 also provides service along Main Street and Hoover Park Drive before turning southbound.

2.5.2 EMERGING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The Stouffville line has been undergoing various improvements which will help support the future Regional Express Rail Service. As part of the Metrolinx GO Expansion, the line will receive electrified service within 15-minute frequencies in core areas. The frequent service will operate in both directions throughout weekday mornings, evenings, and on the weekend. GO Expansion improvements are underway along many portions of the Stouffville line, with an anticipated roll out in phases between 2025 and 2020.

The 2017 Transportation Master Plan outlined a number of capital works and infrastructure improvements to the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville transportation network. These include road improvements, active transportation improvements as well as transit improvements. Of relevance is the road widening of Main Street between Highway 48 and Ninth Line from two lanes to four lanes.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is currently studying transportation improvements as part of the initiated 2022 Transportation Master Plan, updating the 2017 TMO to identify long-term road and transportation infrastructure needs and servicing strategies to support growth to 2051. The expected outcome of the initiative is the recommendation of a phased capital work program based on strategic growth.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 SUMMARY DESCRIPTION AND STATISTICS

The proposal seeks to redevelop this underutilized site into a 13-storey, high-density and mixed-use building which will expand and diversify housing options and retail space and provide an appropriate architectural response for the location of the subject site.

The vision of the proposed development is to transform the existing 1-storey commercial building, parking lot, and outdoor storage area into a high-quality, efficient built form that positively contributes to the urbanization of Main Street and works in concert with the existing and emerging context of the area.

The proposal incorporates the following features and statistics:

- A maximum height of 45.0 m
- A Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 20,276 m, which represents a Floor Space Index (FSI) of 5.04
- A total of 254 residential units and 3 commercial unit
- 281 vehicle parking spaces which represent a parking ratio of 1.11
- Indoor amenity space of 332.53 sq. m.
- Front yard setback of 4.05 m
- Side yard setback (east) of 1.10 m
- Rear yard setback of 17.13 m
- Side yard setback (west) of 1.75 m

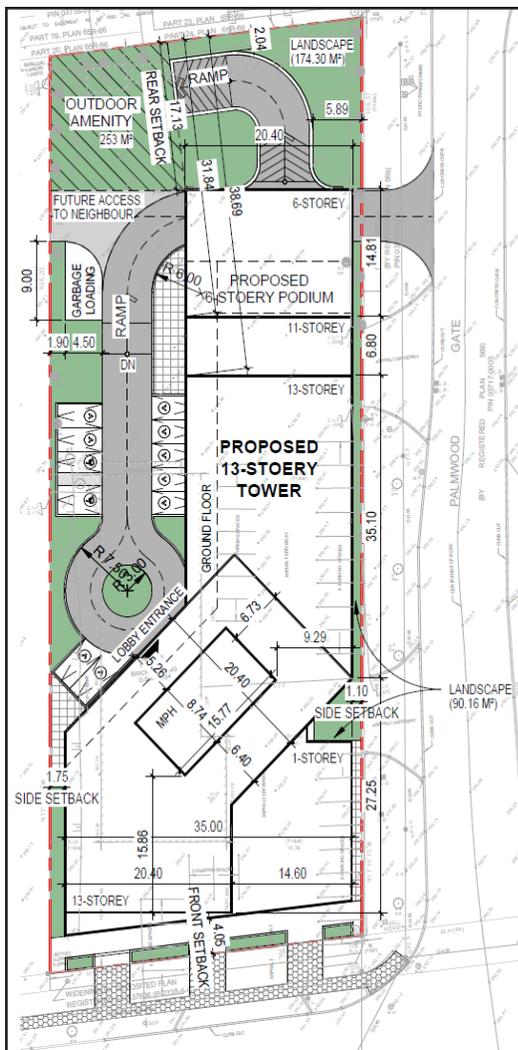


Figure 3.0a - Site Plan



Figure 3.0b - Ground Floor Plan

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.2 BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

The proposed tower and podium have been designed with a contemporary expression, which will provide a strong streetscape presence along Main Street. Each unit contains large windows to promote visual interest and permeability, as well as passive surveillance on common outdoor areas and the public realm.

While the architectural design features will be further elaborated at the Site Plan Approval stage, the general massing is further articulated by providing a clear 6 storey podium and layering the facades with ample fenestration and complimentary cladding materials.

The proposed height and massing provide a consistent street wall and comfortable sense of enclosure of the pedestrian realm along Main Street. An active frontage is further reinforced through the introduction of at-grade retail units, connected to the public sidewalk by a paved forecourt and enhanced landscape planting. These at-grade units will contribute to an 'eyes on the street' condition along Main Street.

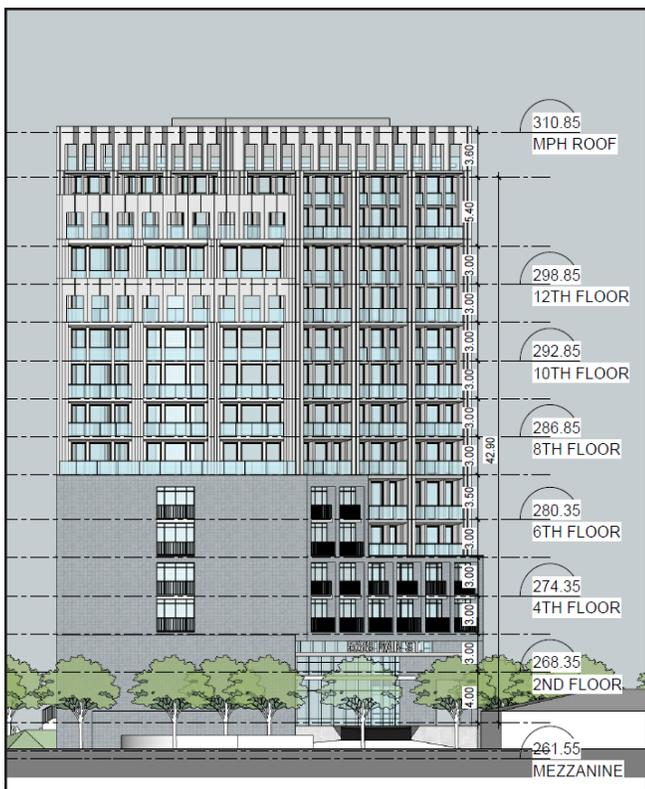


Figure 3.0c - North Elevation



Figure 3.0d - East Elevation

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.3 SITE ORGANIZATION

The proposal is comprised of a 13 storey mid-rise building, which includes a 6 storey podium and interfaces with both Main Street and Palmwood Gate frontages. The podium has been placed on the site to create a prominent base on which the upper portion of the building is located. This 6-storey podium has been oriented to address the Palmwood Gate and Main Street frontages, thereby providing a pedestrian supportive scale along the public street.

The north facade of the podium provides dynamic stepbacks at levels 7 and 11 to provide for appropriate transition to the low-scale residential neighbourhoods to the north of the site. A minimum setback of 17.13m is proposed along the north property line to aid in transitioning to the lower-rise neighbourhood.

The podium also complies with the 45-degree angular plane taking from the nearest residential property. Retail units have been incorporated into the podium design; this component positively contributes to an 'eyes on the street' condition of the public realm. Vehicular access to the site is proposed to be obtained at the east property line, through a private driveway from Palmwood Gate. The principal entrance as well as passenger pick-up/drop-off area has been incorporated on the east facade, near the southeast corner of the site, to allow for a sheltered waiting area, while maintaining a direct pedestrian relationship to Main Street.

The driveway continues along the east property line providing access to the loading area for waste collection vehicles as well as the ramp to the below-grade parking. All waste collection bins are intended to be stored internally and screened from the public view. The site configuration provides for 11 surface parking spaces along the east portion of the site as well as in front of the main entrance. These parking areas will be completely screened from the view of Main Street by the massing of the building, further enhancing the pedestrian-supportive environment.

The proposal is a sensitively configured development, which integrates with the emerging context of Main Street. In this regard, the proposal provides for a retail frontage along Main Street. A minimum south set setback of 4.05 metres is proposed to create an intimate forecourt connecting the retail to the public boulevard. These retail uses will further contribute to the pedestrian realm and strengthen the walkability of the immediate area and Main Street Stouffville.

3.3 BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

The proposed building has been designed to provide a pedestrian-supportive presence along Main Street and Palmwood Gate to help create and support an attractive and active streetscape. In this regard, the building has been placed in close proximity to the property lines. The street presence and consistent street edge condition is established which frames the street. Stepbacks at the 7th and 11th storey are located along the northern façade. These stepbacks further articulate the mass at the street level and in relation to the lower-scale dwellings to the north of the site.

A 4m high ground floor is provided emphasizing the at-grade retail uses.

The building is terraced at the rear with a 14.81m stepback at the 7th storey, the 11th storey is also stepped back from the north by 6.8m. These stepbacks help reduce the cumulative massing and shadow impacts.

The proposed development is inspired by contemporary architectural vocabulary. The base of the building is emphasized with brick that creates a discernable building base. The upper portions are delineated differently through the type and colour of materials used. A significant amount of vertical articulation has been provided through the use of symmetrical columns which are coordinated with window placements.

These design choices are enhanced through a significant amount of fenestration, with large and taller windows.

Further details will be provided at the Site Plan stage.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.4 LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The overall landscape design for the site respects and compliments the architectural vocabulary and built form established through the architectural design and massing. The landscape will be the fabric upon which the building sits bringing the public realm and the private realm seamlessly. Accent paving materials in a patterned design will provide for a clear and defined pedestrian network that meets with high level quality of this development.

The circulation system will provide users access to the development, commercial at grade shops, and to the public corridor. The development will also include for a green buffer to the adjacent residential land uses to the north and west. The development boasts an abundance of planting beds and tree plantings that will provide for texturally and colourful rich presence and foreground to the building as seen from the street.

Outdoor amenity provided on the 2nd, 7th, 11th, and 13th storey will provide residents with a refuge and a place to socialize and relax. This space will provide a variety of seating opportunities and planters to provide for a blend of soft and hard landscape elements.



Figure 3.0e - Landscape Plan

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 PLANNING ACT, R.S.O. 1990, C. P.13

The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, is the legislation that governs land use planning in Ontario and outlines how land is controlled, the roles of various levels of government and the public in regard to land use matters. Sections 22, 34, and 41 of the Planning Act contemplate the amendment of municipal Official Plans and Zoning By-laws, which may be amended provided that council receive the prescribed information and material, as well as Site Plan Control areas.

Section 2 of the Planning Act describes all matters of provincial interest that the Minister, the Council of a Municipality, a local board, a planning board, and the Tribunal must have regard to, when carrying out their responsibilities. The relevant provisions include:

- e) the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;
- f) the adequate provision and distribution and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage, and water services, and waste management systems;
- h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;
- i) the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health social, cultural, and recreational facilities;
- j) the adequate provision of a full range of housing;
- o) the protection of public health and safety;
- p) the appropriate location of growth and development.

Assessment:

The proposed development has regard for matters of provincial interest. The proposed development is an efficient use of both land and existing municipal infrastructure and optimizes those systems. The subject site is within an area where growth and redevelopment are to be directed, the proposal implements the planned function of these areas and contributes to orderly and safe development of communities while introducing additional housing opportunities for the area.

The proposal is indicative of a pedestrian and transit supportive development given the existing surface bus transit along Main Street and proximity Stouffville GO Station. Through appropriate massing and built form organization, the proposal results in a well-designed building that assists in framing the street and creating a pedestrian supportive scale along Main Street.

The proposal optimizes existing servicing, community infrastructure and amenities; provides appropriate intensification on underutilized lands within an established community; adding to the supply of housing in the area to accommodate the diverse needs of the population while supporting and facilitating the creation of healthy and safe complete communities.

4.2 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 is a province-wide land use planning policy framework that replaces the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 while building upon housing-supportive policies from both documents. The vision of the PPS emphasizes housing options through the establishment of complete communities by setting a policy direction for regulating the development and use of land, achieving the provincial goal of meeting the needs of a fast-growing province, and enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians.

Land use patterns should promote a mix of housing for all ages and abilities, employment, parks and open spaces, and transportation choices that facilitate pedestrian mobility and other modes of travel. In addition, cost-effective development standards are promoted to minimize land consumption and servicing costs. Municipal planning decisions are required to be “consistent with” the PPS.

Chapter 2.1 & 2.2 – Planning for People and Homes & Housing requires an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to be provided in order to meet the requirements of current and future residents in order to support the achievement of complete communities. Planning authorities shall promote densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure, public service facilities, and active transportation.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Chapter 2.3 – Settlement Areas states that these areas shall be the focus of growth and development within settlement areas and strategic growth areas including major transit station areas. Land use patterns within settlement areas shall effectively use land and resources; optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities; support active transportation; are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and are freight-supportive. Planning authorities shall support general intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities, including by planning for a range and mix of housing options and prioritizing planning and investment in the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities.

The objectives of Chapter 3 – Infrastructure and Facilities ensures that infrastructure and public service facilities are provided in an efficient, cost-effective manner that is financially viable over their entire life cycles while accommodating projected needs. Chapter 3.2 – Transportation Systems also emphasizes efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure that is safe, energy efficient, facilitates the movement of people and goods, addresses projected needs, and supports the use of zero- and low-emission vehicles.

Chapter 3.6 – Sewage, Water and Stormwater plans for the efficient use and optimization of existing municipal sewage, water, and stormwater services in a matter that can be sustained; is financially feasible over their life cycle; protects human health and safety and the natural environment and aligns with municipal planning for these services.

Assessment:

The proposed development is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, as it proposes a development form within an established Settlement Area of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville as it is indicative of a highly compact and efficient form that fits the area's emerging context of a mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented community.

The proposed development provides for a higher residential density, which optimizes the use of land and minimizes servicing costs. Additionally, the proposed development will support and optimize the existing and planned transit infrastructure. In keeping with Chapter 2, the proposal contributes to the housing supply/type along Main Street, and within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, by proposing a highly efficient built form to an area that contains a mix of residential and commercial uses. Thus, the proposal contributes to a complete community.

The proposed high-density development has been oriented towards Main Street and Palmwood Gate. The setbacks provided at rear walls of the building provides an appropriate transition from the proposed building to the lower-scale dwellings to the north of the subject site. The development proposes an appropriate amount of intensification for the subject site that efficiently utilizes the site for a compact and high-density mixed-use development, while utilizing existing infrastructure.

As per Chapter 3.6 of the PPS, and as noted in the accompanying Stormwater Management Report & Servicing Report prepared by TYLin, the proposal can be accommodated within the existing servicing network without undue expansion to those systems.

The proposed development is fully aligned with and significantly advances the Provincial policy objectives as set out in the Provincial Policy Statement.

4.3 YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN (2022)

The York Region Official Plan (YROP) was adopted by Regional Council on June 2022, and subsequently approved with modifications by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This Regional Official Plan updates the policy framework for economic, environmental, and community building decisions to manage and ensure sustainable growth within the Region. Development within the Region must conform to the policies of the York Regional Official Plan.

The subject site is located within the Community Area of Stouffville as per YROP Map 1 – Regional Structure. The subject lands are within the Built-Up Area as well as in proximity to a Protected Major Transit Station Area as per YROP Map 1b – Urban System Overlays. The Regional Official Plan Map 2 – Regional Greenlands System, designates the subject lands as Towns and Villages. These tightly knit towns and villages identify with main streets and places to live, work, and play. Each Town and Village in York Region has a role to play in accommodating growth. YROP Map 11 – Street Network, identifies Main Street as a Regional roadway, with a planned R.O.W of up to 36 metres.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy 2.2.1 requires that the population and employment forecasts as noted in Table 1 be used as the basis for planning new development. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville must achieve a population of 72,400 by 2041 and 91,700 by 2051.

Policy 2.2.2 stipulates that growth management be integrated so that land use, financial and infrastructure planning achieve compact development patterns, promote the development of complete communities, optimize investments that provide for environmental sustainability, and minimize land consumption and servicing costs.

Policies 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 state that communities shall be planned and designed as sustainable, healthy, vibrant complete communities walkable to most local amenities in addition to being planned in a comprehensive and coordinated manner using land efficiently and optimizing infrastructure with a compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and transit-supportive built form.

Moreover, policy 2.3.4 recognizes that well designed communities positively impact human health. In this regard, policy 2.3.13 stipulates that communities shall be designed to the highest urban design and green development standards and support walkable neighbourhoods which provide pedestrian scale, safety, and comfort; promote sustainable and attractive buildings; provide public spaces and attractive streetscapes that encourage active transportation; ensure appropriate transition to surrounding land uses; as well as apply best practices and guidelines to implement transit-supportive development.

Section 4.4 – Intensification calls for intensification to occur in strategic locations in the built-up area to maximize efficiencies in infrastructure delivery, human services provision, and transit ridership. These strategic locations are based on an intensification framework that recognizes that the highest density and scale of development will occur in the Regional Centres and around subway stations followed by MTSAs, Regional Corridors, and Local Centres and Corridors.

Policy 4.4.17 further establishes that development within strategic growth areas be of an urban form and design that is compact, accessible, mixed-use, oriented to the street, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly, and transit supportive. Moreover, Policy 4.4.47 states that Local Centres and Corridors serve as important neighbourhood focal points and main streets that provide a range of working, shopping, recreation, human services, and housing opportunities with appropriate forms and scale that complement the surrounding community.

Section 6.3 – Moving People and Goods, contemplates prioritizing opportunities for active transportation such as walking and cycling but also for interconnected public transportation to reduce vehicular traffic and provide efficient and convenient access to housing, jobs, and services. A compact, mixed-use built form will also encourage and support a higher level of transit service, while helping reduce the overall average trip length required for work, shopping, school, recreation, and other purposes.

Relevant urban design policies pertaining to the proposed development are specifically contained within Sections 2.2, 2.3, and 6.3. The general intent of these policies is: to encourage development proposals which provide pedestrian scale, safety, comfort, accessibility and connectivity; promote landscaping, public spaces and streetscapes; ensure compatibility with and transition to surrounding land uses; emphasize walkability and accessibility through strategic building placement and orientation; and create well-defined, centrally located urban public spaces.

Assessment:

The proposed development is in conformity with the York Regional Official Plan. The subject lands are located along a Local Corridor within the Community Area of Stouffville and within the Urban Settlement Boundary as per the Regional Structure Map and Urban Systems Overlays Map.

In keeping with Section 2.3, the design of the proposed development will support complete communities through a compact urban form, to maximize existing municipal services and reduce associated costs, while introducing a new built form and range of housing typologies and unit sizes on the subject lands. In this regard, the proposal will diversify the existing housing supply within Whitchurch-Stouffville, which primarily consists of single-detached dwellings, townhouses, and apartment buildings. Additionally, the proposal provides a mixed-use, pedestrian scaled and transit-oriented development that will positively contribute towards the planned function of Main Street as an urban main street where people live, work, shop, and play.

As per Section 4.4, the proposal represents an appropriate level of intensification and density on an underutilized site, in a strategic area to maximize efficiencies and maximize infrastructure investment, human services provision, and transit ridership. In addition, the site is within 1.4km of a Protected Major Transit Station Area which provides higher-order transit service, connecting to major destination centres throughout the GTHA, such as downtown Toronto and beyond, in accordance with Section 6.3.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposed development provides appropriate massing, height, and scale consistent with the character of the area. The proposed building has been organized to ensure compatibility with the detached residences to the north, by providing podium massing setbacks to appropriately transition downwards to the existing low-scale residential neighbourhood. The proposed building sites the tower component along Main Street to reduce shadow and overlook impacts, while maintaining a well-designed and scaled, pedestrian street wall with active frontages. Thus, resulting in an attractive and pedestrian friendly streetscape, strengthening the urban main street function of Main Street Stouffville.

The proposed development is in alignment with and significantly advances the regional policy objectives.

4.4 TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE OFFICIAL PLAN & COMMUNITY OF STOUFFVILLE SECONDARY PLAN

The Official Plan (OP) for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville establishes the general framework for planning by providing an overall vision, principles, objectives, policies, and implementation approaches to guide decision making by the Town.

The Secondary Plan for the Community of Stouffville establishes more detailed principles, objectives, and general policies as well as specific strategies with respect to community structure and character, natural environment, servicing, land use and transportation to guide the planning of the existing urban area and adjacent lands.

As it relates to the proposed development, the Secondary Plan provides general principles and associated objectives regarding Unique Community Character and Healthy Communities. These principles are generally intended to ensure good community design and the Community of Stouffville's unique character including the 'friendliness of the community'.

The subject lands are designated Western Approach – Mixed Use Area as per Schedule F2 – Land Use Plan Western Approach Area. The Secondary Plan does not identify any special provisions or site-specific policies of the subject lands. Main Street itself is identified as an arterial road and subject lands are located within 1.5km of the Stouffville GO Station as per Schedule F of the Official Plan.

5688 Main Street is also included within the Western Approach Area. This area of Stouffville has two key functions: developing as a mixed-use corridor and servicing as a secondary focal point for the community while also providing an extension of the Gateway Area at Highway 48 and Main Street.

The Secondary Plan stipulates that the Western Approach Area shall continue to provide opportunities for uses which are of a scale which is not appropriate for a location in the Community Core Area, and shall include not only commercial and employment development, but also residential uses. In this regard, new development should be designed to ensure a strong relationship between buildings and the street, recognizing that the character of this area is such that existing buildings do not abut the street, and consideration should be given to the location of parking areas to reduce their impact on the streetscape, as well as enhanced landscaping.

As per Section 12.7.18 of the Secondary Plan, the Western Approach – Mixed Use Area designation shall permit residential development in the form of; dwellings above at-grade commercial units; townhouses; quadruplexes and similar cluster housing; and apartment or condominium buildings served by a central entrance way. The Secondary Plan stipulates that this residential development shall be a minimum density equivalent to 30 units per net hectare and shall not exceed a density equivalent to 120 units per net hectare.

Moreover, Section 12.7.18.3 iv) indicates that Western Approach – Mixed Use Area development should promote; well defined and articulated street edges; high quality architectural design and façade materials, including significant glazing on all public frontages; quality and substantive landscaping that reinforce the architectural appearance of buildings; street intersections and gateways as significant elements through architectural design of "landmark buildings"; the screening of all loading and service areas from view of the adjacent road network and adjacent residential neighbourhoods; pedestrian linkages between buildings and safe pedestrian access from adjacent streets; adequate screening, separation distances and noise protection for adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

With regard to residential intensification, the Secondary Plan identifies the Western Approach Mixed Use designation as areas where residential intensification is permitted and encouraged.

Assessment:

The proposed development implements the intent of the Official Plan and the Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan by introducing a permitted built form contemplated by the Western Approach- Mixed Use designation. This contributes to the vision and function of the Western Approach Area as an additional focal point in the Town.

The built form presence and high-quality architectural design reflect the prominence of the site, while the density proposed supports the anticipated level of urbanism as well as the existing higher-order transit infrastructure that is in close proximity to the site.

The proposal is indicative of an efficient development by providing a transit oriented, mixed-use development within the urban area and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure, servicing, and community facilities. The proposed development ensures a pedestrian scaled street wall along Main Street, providing a well sited and articulated podium that provides appropriate transition to lower-scale neighbourhood dwellings to the north. The proposal maintains direct pedestrian access to the retail uses along Main Street as well as to the main building entrance, which assists in establishing a vibrant streetscape.

Ample landscaping has been provided throughout the site within both the private and public realms to help define public streets, delineate pedestrian walkways within the site, and clearly define pedestrian entrances. The development concept proposes a 7-storey tower atop a 6-storey podium, for a total height of 13-storeys and a density of 5.04 FSI, which is greater than the current allowances provided by the Secondary Plan.

The development concept proposes a height and density that is in keeping with recent provincial and regional policy changes.

The proposal and the Official Plan Amendment to the Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan implements the policy direction of the Stouffville Official Plan and is appropriate.

4.5 REIMAGINE STOUFFVILLE: TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE OFFICIAL PLAN - DRAFT (2024)

On May 15, 2024, Council enacted By-law 2024-057-OP to Adopt the Town's New Official Plan. The new Official Plan requires final approval from the Approval Authority and is not yet in force and effect. As such, the Town's Official Plan, 2004 continues to apply to formal planning applications prior to the approval of the Town's new Official Plan.

The New Official Plan requires final approval from the approval authority, being the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and is not yet in force and effect. As such, the Current Official Plan and the Secondary Plan continue to apply and remains in force. Under the Draft OP, Schedule A - Town Structure identifies the lands to be within an Urban Area, Schedule O - Transportation Plan classifies Main Street as a Town Arterial Road. Further more, the subject lands are designated Western Approach - Mixed Use Areas as identified by Schedule D-2.

Section 1.3.1.1.a stipulates that the Community of Stouffville will continue to be the primary focus of intensification for population and employment growth as it is an area the is evolving to be increasingly urbanized.

Policy 2.1.1.2.a stipulates that the Urban Area is where the highest concentration of growth is planned to occur on full municipal sewage and water services where the broadest range and intensity of uses are to be accommodated.

Policy 2.2.6.1 states that Strategic Growth Areas are the primary location for concentrations of higher density and mixed use, with the Western Approach Mixed Use Area being one of the Town's local centres and corridors.

Section 6.4.8 stipulates that the Western Approach is planned to evolve into a more intensive and diverse mixed-use corridor, with a vibrant and active streetscape that supports a pedestrian-oriented environment and enhanced public realm. New development within the Western Approach - Mixed Use Area is expected to transition to mid-rise and low-rise built forms, particularly where lands about the existing Neighbourhood Area designation on the north side of Main Street, and the Neighbourhood Area and Main Street Heritage Area east of Ninth Line. To assist in establishing appropriate land use transitions, Schedule D-2 identifies areas

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy 6.4.8.1 states that the Western Approach Mixed Use area shall permit residential development in the form of” Mid to high-rise mixed use and/or residential dwellings in the form of apartment buildings; and Low-rise residential dwellings in the form of various townhouse types, live-work units and similar low-rise apartment buildings.

Policy 6.4.8.3 stipulates that mid-rise and high-rise residential dwelling units and mixed-use development within the Western Approach Mixed Use Area shall be generally 12 storeys east of Sandiford Drive.

Assessment:

The proposed development conforms to the Draft Official Plan and is consistent with the available provincial policies and implements the policy direction of the Draft Official Plan by introducing a permitted built form contemplated by the Western Approach- Mixed Use designation. This contributes to the vision and function of the Western Approach Area as an additional focal point in the Town.

The Proposed Development provides the appropriate height for the Subject Lands. While the mid-rise overlay speaks to “generally 9 storeys”, the proposal at 13 storeys maintains the intent of the planned function of the Western Approach Area. A 13-storey building that is considered a mid-rise form provides appropriate transition and does not result in any undue impacts, and is therefore appropriate and conforms to the vision of the New Official Plan.

The Proposed Development maintains the planned function of the Western Approach Mixed Use Area as a mid-rise, mixed-use development. The 13-storey height provides a land use planning and urban design solution for the Subject Lands that balances the intensification of an important corridor with a mid-rise form while still transitioning down towards lower scale areas to the north.

The Proposed Development contributes to the appropriate urbanization of Main Street, providing a pedestrian supportive scale and active streetscape along both Main Street and Palmwood Gate.

The Proposed Development incorporates a significant amount of terracing and transitioning down in height in the northward direction towards the existing low-rise neighbourhood. In this regard, the Proposed Development generally complies with a 45-degree angular plane, specifically, terraces are provided at the 6th and 11th storeys.

4.6 COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW 2010-001-ZO

The subject lands are currently subject to Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-001 ZO. The subject lands are zoned CM2 – Commercial Residential Mixed – Western Approach. There are no site-specific policies or exemptions.

The CM2 zoning permits a wide range of commercial and residential uses with specific standards depending on lot size, frontage, and other site characteristics. The CM2 zoning permits Apartment Buildings; Combined and Connected Live Work Uses, Personal Service Establishments, Retail Store, Restaurant and Take Out Restaurant, as well as Street Townhouse Dwelling, and Stacked Townhouse Dwelling.

Assessment:

While apartment buildings are a permitted use in the CM2 zone, a Zoning By-law Amendment is required to facilitate the proposed development, including height, floor space index, and other site-specific provisions. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment aligns the development with the intent of the policies of the Town’s new draft Official Plan and the Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan as well as Regional and Provincial Policies.

4.7 COMMUNITY OF STOUFFVILLE RESIDENTIAL INTENSIFICATION URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES (2022)

The Community of Stouffville Main Street Built Form and Urban Design Guidelines for Residential Intensification was adopted by the Town Council in the summer of 2022. This document is intended to ensure that new development is consistent with the Town’s Development Vision and long-term vision for growth along the Main Street corridor.

The Main Street corridor is envisioned as the premier destination in the Community of Stouffville, which will evolve into a series of complete, vibrant, and sustainable neighbourhoods that are unique and are enjoyable places to live, work, and play.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Assessment:

The proposed development, through high-quality architectural design, enhanced landscaping, and public realm treatment communicates the significance of the site as it is located along the Main Street Corridor. While the site has been identified as a potential low- to mid-rise building typology, it is our assessment that the site is benefitting a high-rise building that provides appropriate transition to both the low-scale neighbourhood to the north of the site.

The proposed development implements many of the guiding principles of the Urban Design guidelines. Specifically, the proposal orients the massing to address both the Main Street and Palmwood Gate frontages through high-quality design and articulated facades.

In addition, the proposed development provides a transit and pedestrian oriented built form which introduces a retail use at-grade and a pedestrian scaled street wall along Main Street.

The proposal also maintains direct pedestrian access to the retail uses along Main Street as well as to the main building entrance, which assists in establishing a vibrant streetscape.

Landscaping has been provided throughout the site within both the private and public realms to help define pedestrian entrances to retail units as well as the residential lobby of the building.

The proposed development will be a positive addition to the Main Street West Character Area and will reflect the prominence of being located along the Main Street Corridor.

5.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

For the reasons set out in this report, the proposed development will be a high-quality addition to the Community of Stouffville and proposes a built form and density that better implements the Regional and Provincial policy frameworks.

In this regard, the proposed development will impart land use and built form attributes that will ensure that the development is:

- Is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement by providing a compact and efficient form of development within a settlement area, which can be accommodated within the existing servicing parameters;
- Complies with the York Regional Official Plan by providing residential intensification on an underutilized site within the urban boundary;
- Contributes to an appropriate amount of residential density required to sustain existing higher-order transit infrastructure and investment in the vicinity of the subject lands, including the enhancements to the Stouffville GO line as part of the Metrolinx GO Expansion program.
- Implements the intent of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan by proposing a permitted use within the Western Approach Area, through a high-quality built form that increases the supply of housing and diversify tenure in the area, while ensuring low-rise residential dwellings;
- Provides an appropriate fit with the existing and emerging built form contexts through the massing and siting of the physical form, complying with a 45-degree angular plane from the boundary of the Existing Neighbourhood area to the north;
- Implements the Community of Stouffville Residential Intensification Urban Design Guidelines by:
 - Providing a well-designed mixed use development with street oriented retail uses, which provides a pedestrian supportive scale along Main Street;
 - Providing a significant amount of façade articulation, fenestration, and architectural detailing to create a contemporary appearance and a fitting addition to the area;
 - Ensuring that the servicing and functional components of the development are contained and either located underground and are screened from the public realm; and
 - Demonstrating good site planning practices, including landscape buffering along all property lines.

We note that while the proposed development is permitted by the current Official Plan, an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment is sought to add site-specific exceptions to facilitate the proposal.

Therefore, it is concluded that in the context of this planning and urban design assessment, the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments and future Site Plan Approval application filed under separate cover for the proposed development are supportable.

Respectfully submitted,

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