



# Density by Design

*Mid-rise and Tall Building Policies*

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**Climate Change Symposium**  
**January 16, 2020**



# The Project

**The purpose of this work is to rethink the location and design of tall and mid-rise buildings in order to best address the Climate Emergency & other important City priorities.**

## Density by Design

- Relates to buildings 4 storeys +
- Council authorized the work in March 2019
- Staff partnering with Brent Toderian on project
- Will result in new Official Plan policies and zoning framework

# DBD Project Lenses



1. Link between land use planning, transportation & building design and the Climate Emergency
  - Land use planning and transportation
  - Green building design
2. Affordability and market choice
3. Approaches to “sense of place” & neighbourhood character
4. Ease of development in the most important places
  - Land economics and financial feasibility

# Linking Land Use Planning and Climate Change

- “In Canada, over half the nation’s emissions flow from energy consumed in our buildings and **vehicles...there is no doubt that sustainable land use planning has to be part of the solution to climate change**” (Ray Tomalty, OPPI ‘Y Magazine’ Q2, 2019)

Oil and Gas	29%	<b>Electricity</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>26%</b>	Heavy Industry	11%
<b>Buildings</b>	<b>13%</b>	Agriculture	11%

Government of Canada (2017 emissions)

- “**Reducing emissions and preparing for the unavoidable impacts of climate change requires a drastic shift in the way our communities are built and function.** Climate change planning includes the mitigation of future climate change, primarily by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adaption to existing and projected environmental changes, and disaster risk reduction measures.”  
(Canadian Institute of Planners, 2018)

# Linking Land Use Planning and Climate Change

- **“Land use planning is one of the most effective processes to facilitate local adaptation to climate change”** through existing planning tools, such as: Official Plans; Local plans on special matters (i.e. Climate Action Plans); Zoning By-laws; Land Subdivision and Development Controls; Covenants and Easements; and Design Guidelines; Environmental Review of Development Projects (Government of Canada, 2012)
- Policy for **urban development** and **infrastructure** has the potential to **commit CO2 emissions for decades** given the long-term nature of the assets. “Construction of new urban buildings and transport systems brings an important opportunity to avoid locking in inefficient pathways and, instead, **deploy the most-efficient technologies and urban design**” (Stockholm Environmental Institute, 2015)

# Why This Work is Critical

- We're in a Climate Emergency! This is a **call to strategic action**
- The actions we have taken have enabled us to focus on getting development done **'right' and 'fast'**
- There's a lack of clarity for everyone on expectations for tall and mid-rise building design
- We've widened the scope to **include locations for height and density**

This is **what is needed** to walk the talk on the City's commitment on the Climate Emergency.

# We are growing and must strategically manage future growth

- Kingston census metropolitan area (CMA) was the **seventh fastest growing CMA in Canada** with a population change of 2.2% from July 2017 to July 2018 (Statistics Canada)
- City of Kingston population and housing forecast 2016-2046:
  - Total population growth : **29,014**
  - Student population growth: 10,400
  - Total housing units growth: **13,730**
  - Student housing growth: 3,340
- We need to allocate this growth in **a strategic and orderly way** to address **housing needs** and **climate change goals**

# Kingston's Housing Supply

Year		Single detached	Semi detached	Town house	Multiple	Subtotal	Total
2017	Pending	1,111	741	587	4,408	6,847	10,713
	Committed	1,342	198	814	1,512	3,866	
2019	Pending	79	22	363	5,065	5,529	10,620
	Committed	1,371	235	810	2,675	5,091	

- We have a temporary Housing Supply shortage - our vacancy rate increased from 0.6% to 1.9% in 2019
- In 2019 - **973 residential units went to construction**
- There are currently **5,091 approved** housing units to get us to our 2022 goal of 3,000 new units and a 3% vacancy rate
- **We need to continue to add to the housing supply in a strategic way to meet our 2046 needs.**

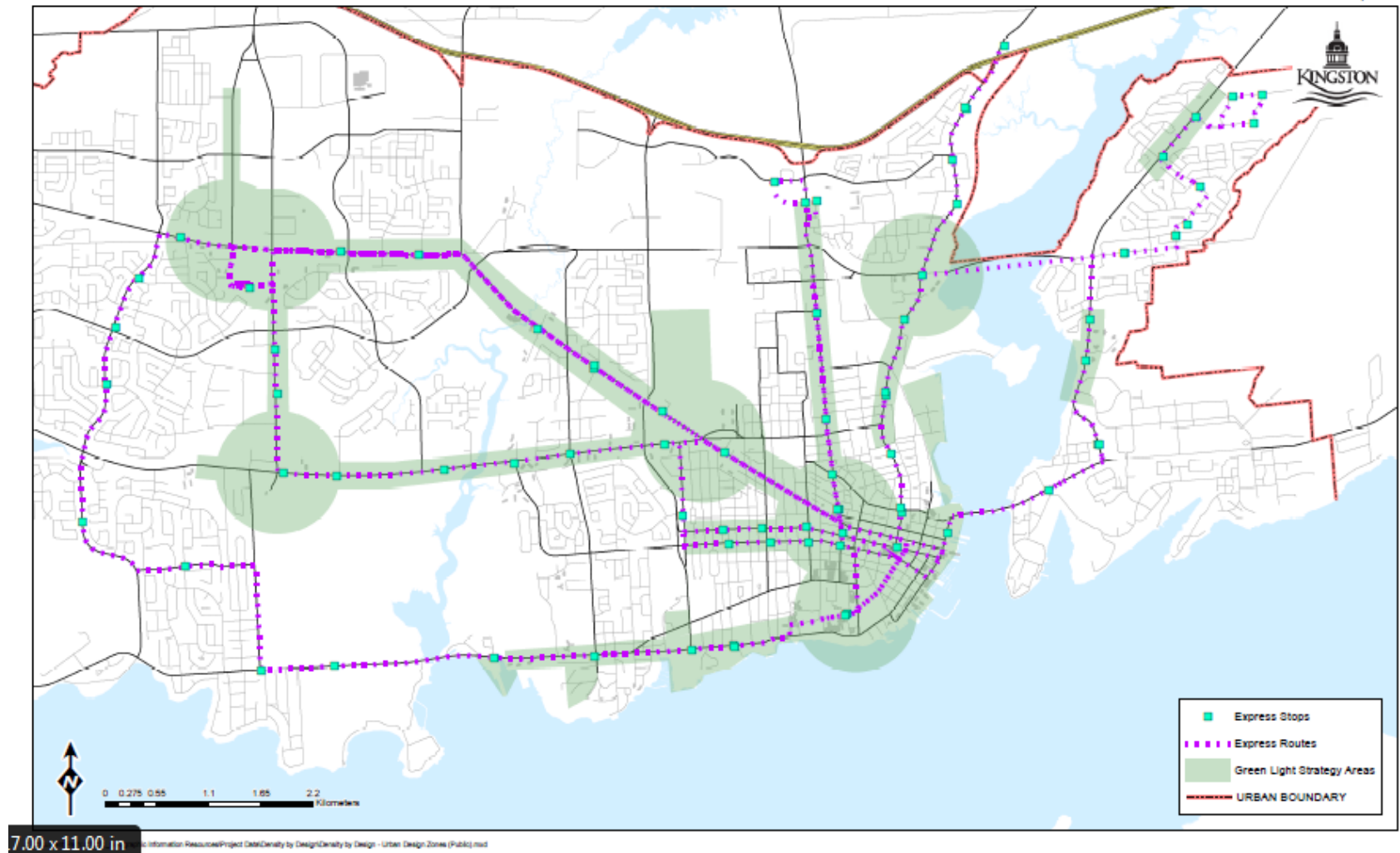
# DBD Critical Actions on the Location of Density

1. **Rethink the 40% infill target** in the Official Plan (plus define and differentiate better and worse infill)
2. **Tighten policy and criteria** currently allowing high density/tall buildings in car-dependent areas
3. **“Green Light”** faster realization of allowable density and height in smart, strategic areas through incentives/facilitation & the removal of barriers. This aligns with Council’s strategic priorities

# What Is the Green Light Strategy?

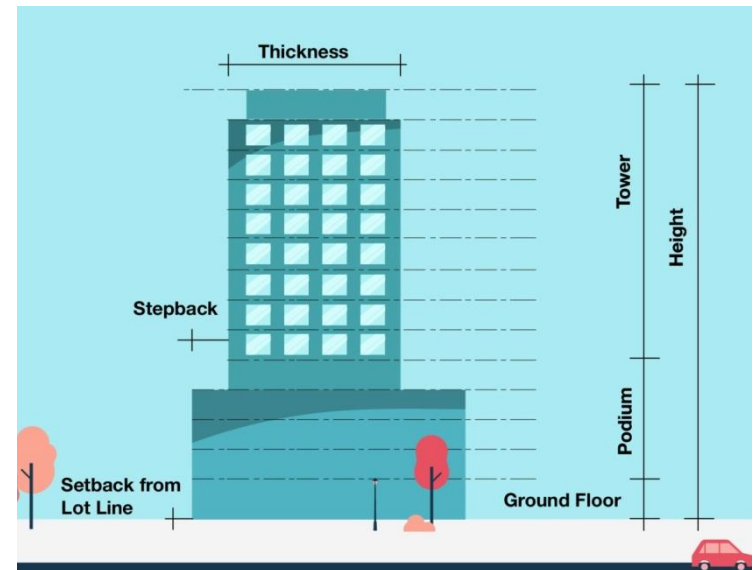
- It is **not** a new policy that increases density and/or height on its own, nor does it change where high density/tall buildings are allowed
- It **is** a strategy that identifies & implements ways to facilitate, incent and remove barriers to well designed development - that is permitted by the existing Official Plan policy
- This could include proactive pre-zoning, tax or fees-related incentives, prioritization of applications, education/facilitation for property owners, etc.

# Green Light Strategy



# Issues and Options Report – Design considerations

- Building height
- Defining mid-rise and tall buildings
- Policy area contexts
- Building width / floor plate size
- Width, height and angular plane – Williamsville
- Upper floor building stepbacks
- Building setback and orientation
- Tower separation
- Ground floor / streetwall design
- Above grade parking screening
- In-building active transport supports



# We are not at a decision point

Density by Design

Kingston's Mid-Rise and Tall Building Policies

Issues and Options Report

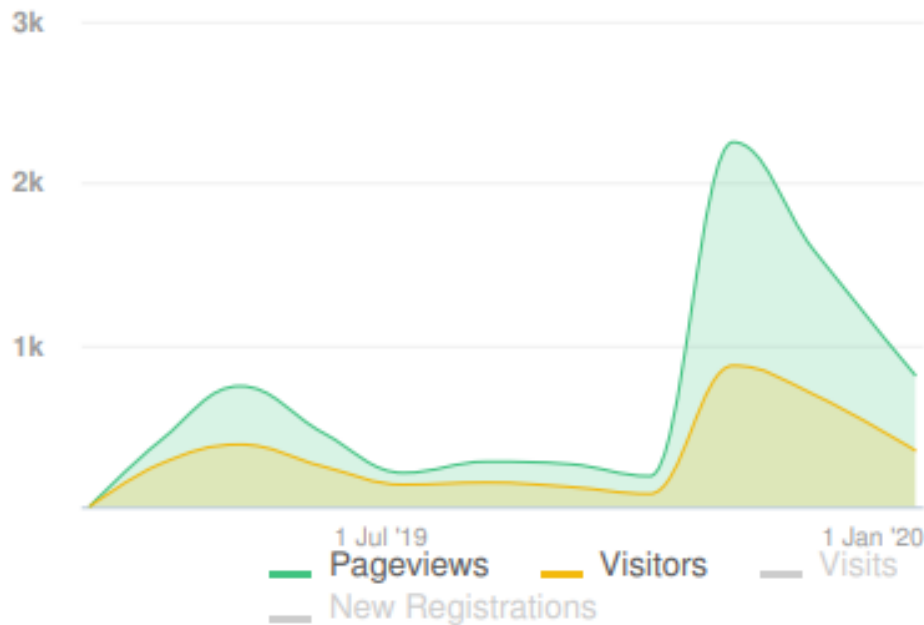


At this project milestone we are:

- Sharing detailed analysis
- Providing options and **preliminary** recommendations for further discussion
- Hearing from the Mayor and Council, residents and stakeholders on whether we have it right before proceeding to next steps
- **We need input** on the Issues and Options Report before we move forward

# Robust Online Public Engagement for Density by Design

*An online platform to complement in-person engagement.*



Using 4 tools:

- Forum
- “Ideas” board
- Q&A
- Interactive height map

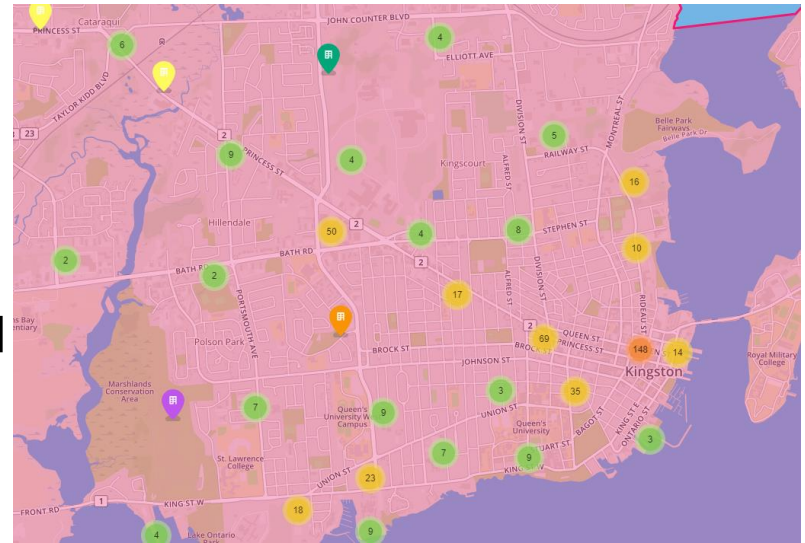
To date, 2.6 thousand visitors to the page:

- 990 interacting with content
  - 137 participating, using a tool
  - 232 downloads of the Issues and Options Report

# Height Mapping Exercise

A complex project, but resident input is important. These design guidelines will contribute to streetscapes that are shared by all residents.

- **Where do residents want density?**
- Since launching in Dec., we've seen:
  - **1.2K visitors;**
  - **78 contributions;**
  - **568 pins dropped on the map; and**
  - **27 new registrations**



This demonstrates that we've identified a tool that residents are finding comfortable to engage on important city planning matters.

It provides an outlet to build collective understanding while providing meaningful input.

# How to Get Involved:

- **Information Booth:** Climate Change Symposium
- **Upcoming Focus Group:** January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m., INVISTA Centre
- **Get Involved Kingston:** Density by Design  
[GetInvolved.CityofKingston.ca/tall-midrise-buildings](http://GetInvolved.CityofKingston.ca/tall-midrise-buildings)
- **Email:** Andrea Gummo at [agummo@cityofkingston.ca](mailto:agummo@cityofkingston.ca)
- **Mail to City of Kingston:** ATTN: Density by Design, 216 Ontario St K7L 2Z3
- **In person:** 1211 John Counter Blvd.

# Questions or comments?





# THANK YOU

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