

Residential Character Study

Terms of Reference

May 30 2017

**Town of Oakville
Residential Character Study
Terms of Reference**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In response to Council and public concern about redevelopment in the designated low density residential areas, the Committee of Adjustment and the site plan process, as well as the upcoming Residential Review component of the five-year Official Plan Review, staff have initiated a Residential Character Study to further examine the notion of residential character.

1.1 Background

The Livable Oakville Plan (2009 Town of Oakville Official Plan) applies to all areas south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407. It was adopted by Town Council in 2009 and approved with modifications by the OMB in 2011. It is intended to guide decisions around land use, development and growth in the community and sets out an urban structure, of which residential areas is one component.

Residential land use designations comprise the majority of the residential areas, and the land use policies of Section 11 of the Livable Oakville Plan apply to these residential designations. Section 11.1.9 of the Livable Oakville Plan establishes criteria for assessing development in all stable residential communities to ensure that the existing neighbourhood character is maintained and protected.

As an implementation tool, staff developed Design Guidelines for Stable Residential Communities to further illustrate how to apply the evaluation criteria to new development proposals to assist in achieving compatibility within the existing residential context. These guidelines were endorsed by Planning and Development Council on April 29, 2013 and are a component of the Livable by Design Manual. The research associated with developing the design guidelines also informed the inZone project, which resulted in Zoning By-law 2014-14.

Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to review their Official Plan every five years. The town's five-year Official Plan review was initiated on May 11, 2015 and a review of the residential area policies was identified as one of the components.

The Residential Character Study is intended to be an input to the upcoming Residential Review. It is also anticipated to provide potential direction for implementing documents such as zoning and urban design guidelines, as well as associated planning processes such as site plan approval.

1.2 Study Area

The study area generally includes all the residential areas south of Dundas Street.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to assess the existing character within the residential areas of the town and, with community feedback, establish residential character areas.

The study will:

- Investigate the pattern of subdivisions, built form, recent development, and streetscape in the residential areas
- Establish preliminary residential character types

- Seek input and feedback from the community through a series of engagement activities
- Refine the residential character types to identify and describe residential character areas
- Provide recommendations, as may be required, for improvements to policy, design direction, zoning and other processes based on the findings of the study

The study is not intended to change existing official plan policy, change existing zoning, change the existing urban design direction or change the existing site plan process. Assessing the existing character will provide a basis for the identification of residential character areas, which will support design direction and Official Plan policy.

3.0 APPROACH

The study is being undertaken by the Town of Oakville, under the direction of a project team steered by the Director of Planning Services.

3.1 Project Team

The project team will be responsible for authoring the Residential Character Study and conducting the associated public engagement activities. It will consist of:

Project co-leads:

- Carly Dodds, Planner, Policy Planning
- Dwight Ingalls, Urban Designer, Urban Design

Project team:

- Mark Simeoni, Director, Planning Services
- Gabe Charles, Senior Manager, Current Planning and Urban Design
- Christina Tizzard, Manager, Urban Design
- Diane Childs, Manager, Policy Planning and Heritage
- Shadi Adab, Urban Designer, Urban Design
- Kate Mihaljevic, Planner, Planning Services
- Kristen Flood, Heritage Planner, Policy Planning and Heritage

Advisory team:

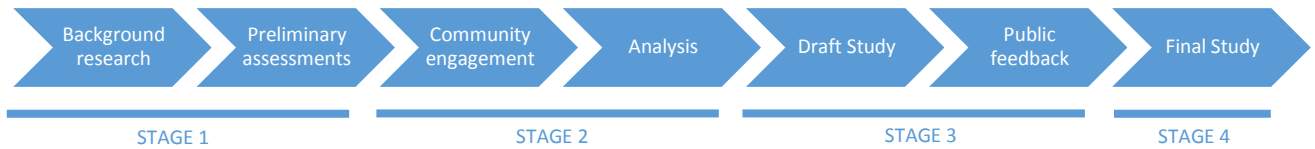
Representatives from Development Engineering (Urban Forestry and Stormwater Management), Building (Permits, Committee of Adjustment, Zoning), Communications (Public engagement, advertising, web), and Strategic Business Services (GIS and AMANDA) will be involved in the study as needed.

3.2 Community Engagement

Community engagement is an essential part of the Residential Character Study. The project will include a public engagement strategy that informs and seeks input from the public and key stakeholders on valued elements of character. Public feedback opportunities will be incorporated throughout the study process.

4.0 WORK PROGRAM

The work program is anticipated to occur in four stages, as identified below, and include a number of opportunities for public input and feedback.



4.1 Timing

The study was initiated in January 2017, and background work has commenced. It is anticipated that community engagement will occur over the summer, with the goal of a final study being completed by the end of 2017. The timing may shift into 2018, should additional consultation opportunities be warranted.

	Item	Timing (2017)			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
STAGE 1	Study initiation				
	Preliminary work				
STAGE 2	Community engagement				
	Analysis				
STAGE 3	Draft study				
	Public feedback				
STAGE 4	Final study				

★ Livable Oakville Council Sub-Committee – Oct 10 or Nov 6

★ Livable Oakville Council Sub-Committee – Dec 4

4.2 Deliverable

The deliverable is a study document that will identify general residential character areas south of Dundas Street, based on an initial character assessment and consultation with the public.

The study document is also anticipated to contain recommendations that may inform future studies/work related to policy and design direction, implementing regulations (i.e. zoning) and other planning processes (i.e. site plan).

The project is anticipated to include the following:

Stage 1 – Preliminary Work

- Conduct background research, including a best practices review based on other municipalities in Canada and internationally, and past research and urban design work completed by town staff
- Map chronologically and review:
 - Registered plans of residential subdivisions
 - Residential building permits for new construction and large additions

- Committee of adjustment applications for new residential construction and large additions
- Zoning by-law
- Identify preliminary character types based on the background review to guide further character area refinement and public engagement
- Develop a character assessment worksheet for data collection and analysis

Stage 2 – Community Engagement + Analysis

- Seek feedback from the public (town wide) on the aspects of character the community values
 - Potential tools: online survey, postcard questions, written submissions
- Conduct walkabouts with community stakeholders, discussing findings from background research and analysis
- Hold a public open house to present the preliminary character types and engage with the public to refine character areas
- Analyze feedback to:
 - Gain insight on whether the attributes identified in the worksheet align with the community
 - Understand if the values identified by the public are related/influenced by public or private space
 - Distinguish which elements have the most impact on the consideration of defining character
 - Identify character areas geographically

Stage 3 – Draft Study

- Prepare a draft Residential Character Study document based on the feedback and analysis compiled in Stage 2
- Within the draft study, describe and document the residential character areas, including identifying the elements and aspects which are understood as contributing to the character
- Seek public feedback on the study findings in an open house format and through online submissions
- Present the draft Study to the Livable Oakville Council Sub-committee

Stage 4 – Final Study

- Prepare the final Residential Character Study document, which is anticipated to include an assessment/description for each identified character area and recommendations
- Present the final Study to the Livable Oakville Council Sub-committee