
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 11, 2006
File No.: 6530-18
To: City Manager
From: Director of Planning and Corporate Services
Subject: C7 Design Guidelines
Report Prepared By Patrick McCormick

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse the design guidelines for the C7 Zone attached to the Planning and Corporate Services report dated January 11, 2006;

AND THAT staff be directed to use the C7 Design Guidelines as a basis for evaluation and discussion regarding Development Permit applications pertaining to any property zoned C7 or proposed for re-zoning to C7;

AND THAT pending workloads in 2006, staff be directed to adapt the proposed C7 Design Guidelines to properties zoned C4.

BACKGROUND

Allowable building heights in the C7 zone were increased in 2002. This change has necessitated an update of the existing *Downtown Façade Guidelines (November, 1995)* to address the form and character of larger buildings, as the 1995 guidelines do not address buildings taller than three storeys.

While the proposed guidelines are consistent with the spirit and intent of the existing guidelines, they build on the *Downtown Façade Guidelines* by emphasizing ways in which buildings can enhance retail occupancies within the C7 zone, in recognition of the role that retail plays in enhancing streets and making Urban Centres vital pedestrian precincts.

DISCUSSION

The form and character of buildings can have an enormous impact on the aesthetics of urban environments and on their appeal as places to work, shop, and live. Moreover, the form and character of buildings can impact perceptions of Urban Centres as community focal points.

Recognizing this impact, the Local Government Act gives municipalities the ability to formulate design guidelines towards influencing the form and character of commercial and multiple-family buildings to help achieve desired outcomes.


Consultation

The proposed guidelines (Attachment 1) were drafted with the input of Current Planning staff. The draft guidelines were circulated to local building designers and architects, as well as to sign and awning designers. A draft document was reviewed by the Urban Development Institute and the Downtown Kelowna Association. The proposed guidelines were also supported by the Community Heritage Commission.

Urban Design Principles

The guidelines are founded on urban design principles. That is, they look at projects in terms of how they relate to the public realm. The over-riding consideration is whether or not buildings project an inviting and welcoming face to the street. The elements and features that contribute to this impression are outlined in the guidelines document.

Intent of Design Guidelines

The guidelines are intended as the s for discussion between the City of Kelowna and property owners and their design consultants about the elements of quality project design.

The guidelines are extensive and cover all aspects of building and site design. However, it is not expected that every proposed project meet all the guidelines. Rather, it is expected that the project generally meet the intent of the guidelines to create pedestrian-oriented streets.

Document Layout

The first four sections of the document provide background regarding use of the guidelines. Aspects of those portions of buildings up to fifteen metres are then discussed in Section 5.0. Portions of any building beyond that height are addressed in Section 6.0.

Other sections of the document are devoted to buildings in the Downtown Heritage Area, large lot developments, buildings within the Cultural District, parking structures, and buildings without commercial space at grade, as these projects all have special considerations that set them apart slightly from the considerations addressed in Sections 5.0 and 6.0.

A glossary and a checklist are included to aid applicants in using the document.

The attached draft will be illustrated with photos or hand-drawn illustrations pending Council's approval of the text.

Façade Grants

Incentives to improve facades of existing buildings often take the form of grants to business and/or property owners. Discussion regarding such grants took place at an Urban Centres Implementation Committee meeting in 2005. However, provincial legislation does not allow municipalities to make grants to business. Such grants could be offered through a business improvement association.

Application of Design Guidelines to Other Areas of Kelowna

All properties currently zoned C7 and any properties that would be supported for re-zoning to C7, are within the City Centre.

However, recent discussions with Rutland residents and business and property owners indicate that the Rutland community would support the application of the C7 zone to a specified area of the Rutland Urban Centre. In this regard, Planning staff have forwarded a recommendation to Council and the matter will be considered at a public hearing on January 24, 2006. If ultimately supported by Council, the C7 guidelines outlined herein would be applicable to properties for which the City would support re-zoning to C7 within the Rutland Urban Centre.

Additionally, the C7 Design Guidelines could be readily modified to apply to C4-zoned properties, as the underlying principles are applicable. To this end, staff recommend that, pending staff workloads, design guidelines be prepared in 2006 for the C4 commercial areas.

SUMMARY

The attached Design Guidelines are recommended as a tool to evaluate and influence the form and character of future projects within the C7 zone.

Signe Bagh, MCIP
Manager, Policy, Research, and Strategic Planning

PJM/pm

Approved for inclusion

R.L. (Ron) Mattiussi, ACP, MCIP

ATTACHMENT 1: