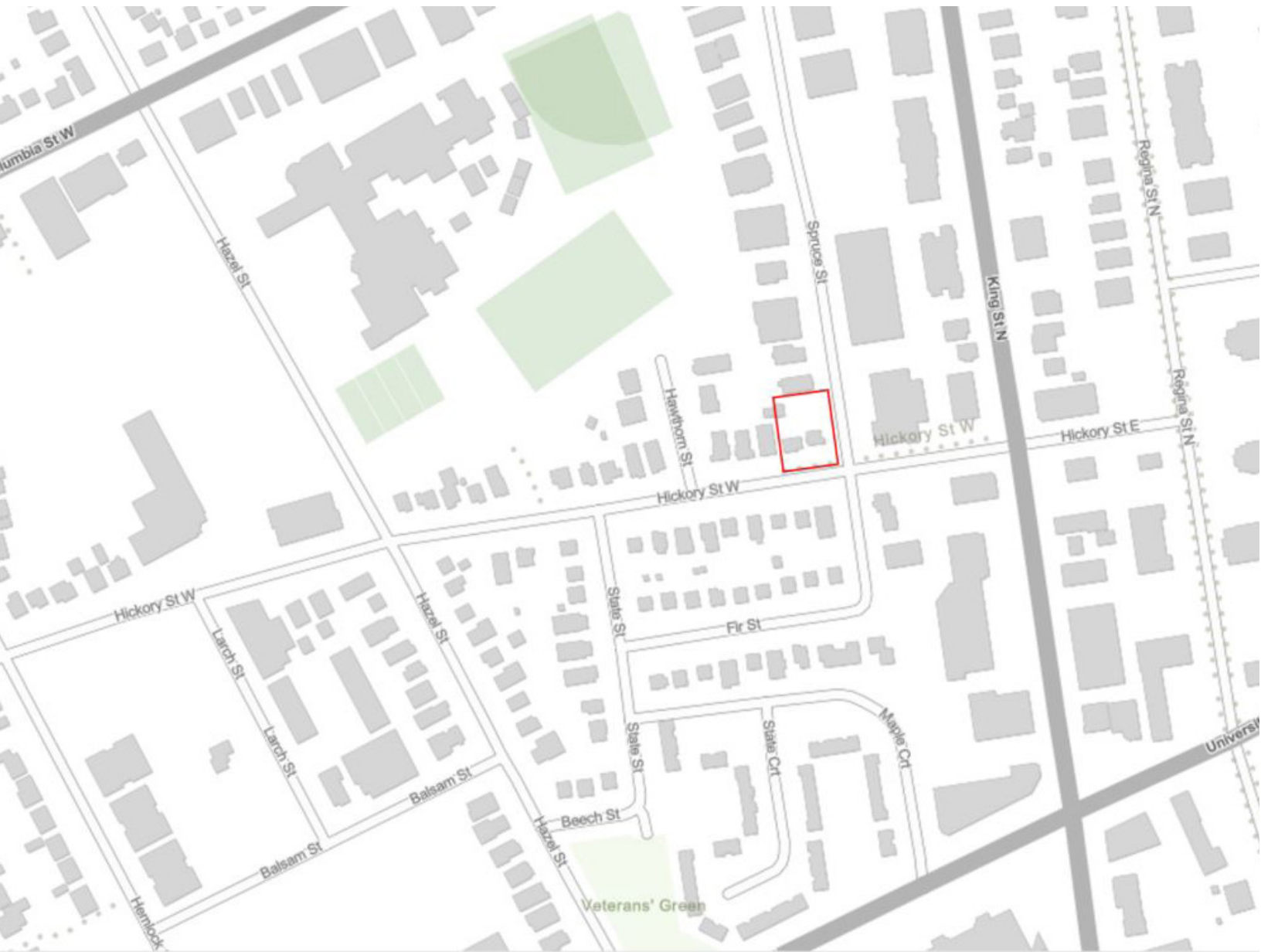




18 & 20 Hickory Street West

CITY OF WATERLOO

APPLICANT: 1000646156 Ontario Ltd.

APRIL
2024

URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

File No.2430A



PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN
& LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	5
2.0	Design Vision	7
3.0	Context Analysis	9
4.0	Policy and Context Analysis	14
5.0	Proposed Development	18
6.0	Response to Policy and Guidelines	29
7.0	Conclusion	32

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

McNaughton Hermesen Britton Clarkson Planning (MHBC Planning) has been retained by 1000646156 Ontario Ltd. to prepare an Urban Design Brief in support of the Zoning By-law Amendment prepared for property located at 18-20 Hickory Street West (the 'subject lands'), which are located in the Northdale Neighbourhood in the City of Waterloo. The purpose of this Urban Design Brief is to provide an overview of the Design Vision for the subject site, a review of the site and neighbourhood context, and an analysis and discussion regarding the applicable urban design policies.

The proposed development represents a low rise infill project with a total of 9 townhouse dwellings. The development also includes an outdoor amenity area and surface parking behind the units (with 9 spaces, including a barrier free space). To encourage active transportation, 9 bicycle parking spaces are also proposed.





2.0 DESIGN VISION

Design Vision

The Vision Statement for Northdale is: “By 2031, Northdale is revitalized and reurbanized into a diverse, vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood, integrated with educational, residential, commercial, cultural, heritage and recreational functions, and improved open space, pedestrian, cycling and transit networks.”

In consideration of the neighbourhood design visions, the project’s vision is to create a sustainable urban living environment, with ground related housing that is integrated with the existing neighborhood while creating a sense of community for residents.

- 1. Integration:** The townhouse dwellings will be designed to complement the existing streetscape of Spruce Street and Hickory Street West. The infill development will provide a transition between the high density uses on the east side of Spruce Street and the balance of the Northdale neighbourhood to the west and southwest.
- 2. Community:** The development will foster a strong sense of community by providing opportunities for social interaction in a common amenity space, as well as through direct pedestrian connections from the sidewalk into the units. The outdoor amenity space at the corner of Hickory and Spruce Street will serve as a focal point for communal gatherings, recreational activities, and relaxation.
- 3. Active Transportation:** The provision of bicycle parking spaces within the parking area encourages residents to embrace cycling as a viable transportation option, reducing dependence on cars.

3.0 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Context Analysis

The subject lands are located in the Northdale Neighbourhood of the City of Waterloo. This neighbourhood has been subject to significant change over the past 10+ years, from predominantly low-rise detached units to more intense housing forms, including mixed-use buildings along key streets within the neighbourhood.

The lands as they exist today house two single detached dwellings on standard sized lots. The lots are generally flat, with some grading that extends down towards the sidewalks along Hickory Street West and Spruce Street. A small retaining wall exists along the sidewalk edge on Spruce Street. There are some canopy trees that line the Spruce Street edge located on the subject lands and some other smaller shrub trees that line the rear property line. The site context is described in greater detail below.



above: image of two existing residential dwelling units on subject property (fronting onto Hickory Street West)

Source: Googlemaps.com



above: image showing subject property from Spruce Street frontage.

Source: Googlemaps.com

North: Spruce Street is characterized by multiple apartment buildings along the west side of the street, and a mixture of apartment buildings and parking garages on the east side of the street. Waterloo Collegiate Institute is located to the northwest, including its athletic field which is accessed from Hawthorne Street.



above: view facing north up Spruce Street

Source: Googlemaps.com

West: To the west of the subject lands are detached residential dwellings, many of which were constructed prior to the introduction of the new zoning regulations in Northdale. Further to the west are 4-6 storey residential buildings along Hazel and Hickory Street.



above: view facing west

Source: Googlemaps.com

South: To the south of the subject lands is a mix of development forms including low-rise development and the commercial plaza at King Street and University Avenue.



above: view facing south

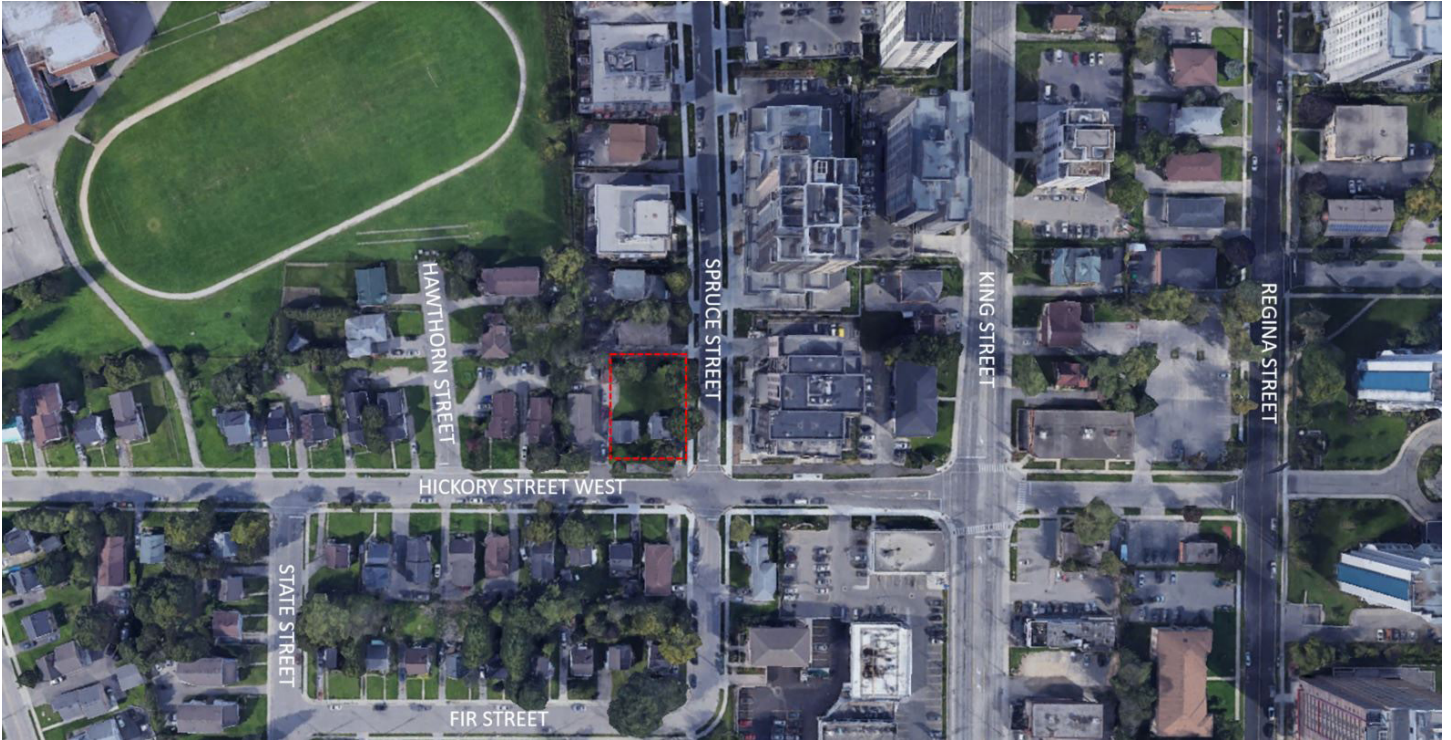
Source: Googlemaps.com

East: Lands to the east are generally developed with high-rise building that either front on Spruce Street or King Street, including a high-rise building directly across the street from the subject lands.

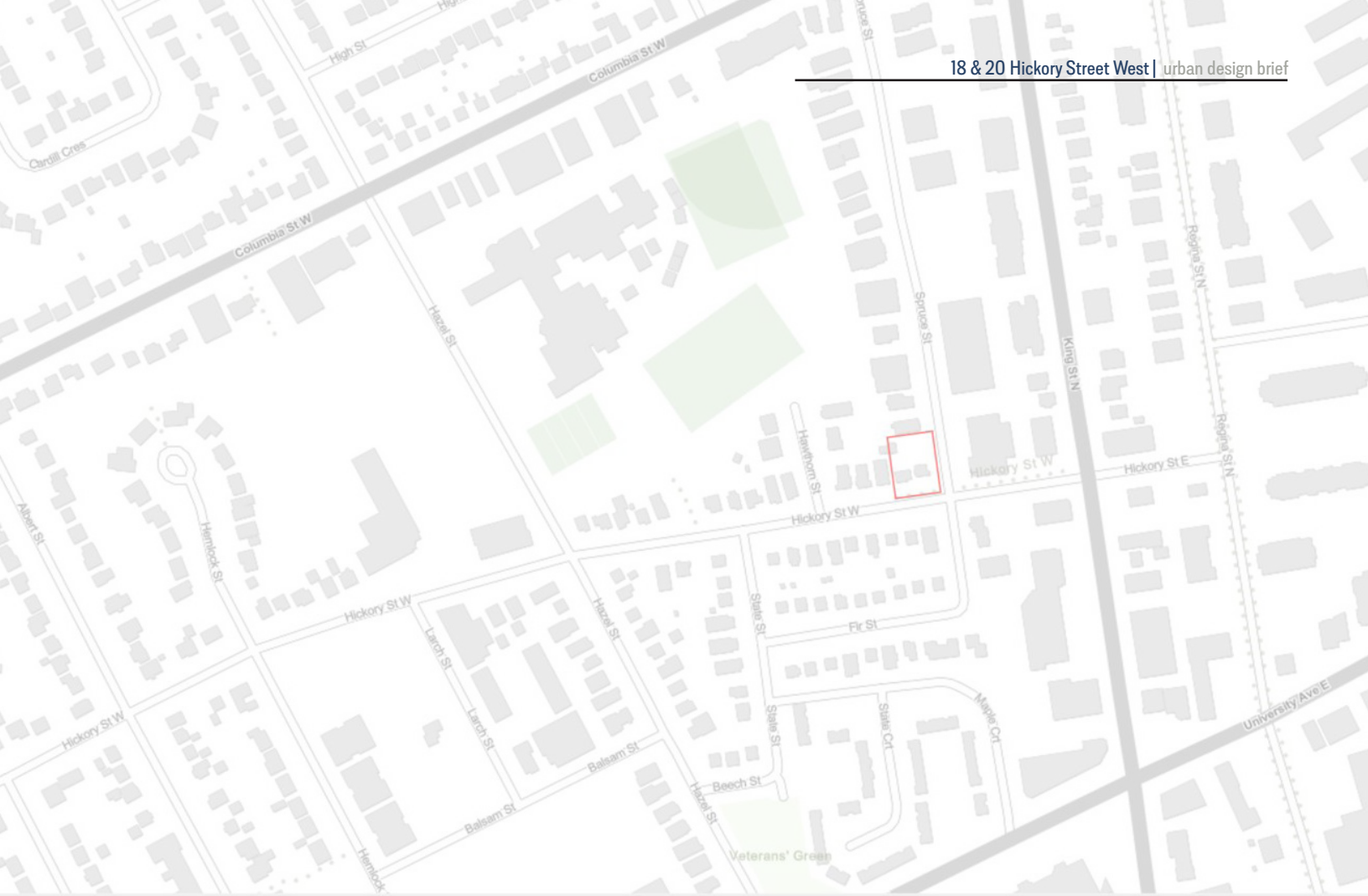


above: east view

Source: Googlemaps.com



3D Aerial Image of site location and surrounding building massing.
Source: GoogleEarth



4.0 POLICY CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

Policy Context and Analysis

City of Waterloo Official Plan

The accompanying Planning Justification Report provides a more detailed analysis of the existing policy framework and related land use designations. Further, the Planning Justification Report provides additional details and related analysis regarding the existing zoning for the lands, as well as the proposed amendments to certain regulations.

In addition to the land use policies discussed in the Planning Justification Report, the Official Plan includes general urban design policies in Section 3.11.1. The following sections provide an overview of the applicable policies, and how the proposed development aligns with their objectives.

4.4.1 Northdale Specific Provision Area 45 Policies

The Official Plan includes specific policies for the Northdale neighbourhood, which are intended to implement the Northdale Land Use and Community Improvement Plan Study, which was completed more than 10 years ago.

Northdale is a neighbourhood in transition and is anticipated to accommodate a significant portion of the City's future growth in the form of infill and intensification, specifically because of its central location within the City, excellent access to the City's two universities and college, the Major Node at King and University and as part of a Major Transit Station Area (UW ION Station). The Official Plan envisions that the area will become a complete neighbourhood, accommodate a diverse demographic, with a range of land uses, housing types and other uses. The area is intended to be supported by a network of pedestrian-oriented streets and pathways, cycling facilities that are supportive of active transportation and increased densities.

The proposed development supports the policies of the Northdale Neighbourhood by providing ground related townhouse units that both complement the existing housing forms, while offering choice in recognition of the significant new supply of apartment dwelling units. The townhouse development will contribute to the diversity of housing options for both students and non-students.

4.4.2 Street Typologies and Street Frontage Areas

The Northdale Specific Provision Area policies identify a hierarchy of streets types, intended to direct development and its relationship to the public realm. Schedule A45a (Street Frontage Areas and Streetscape Elements) designates Hickory Street as a Green Street and Spruce Street as a Residential Street.

Hickory Street – Green Street

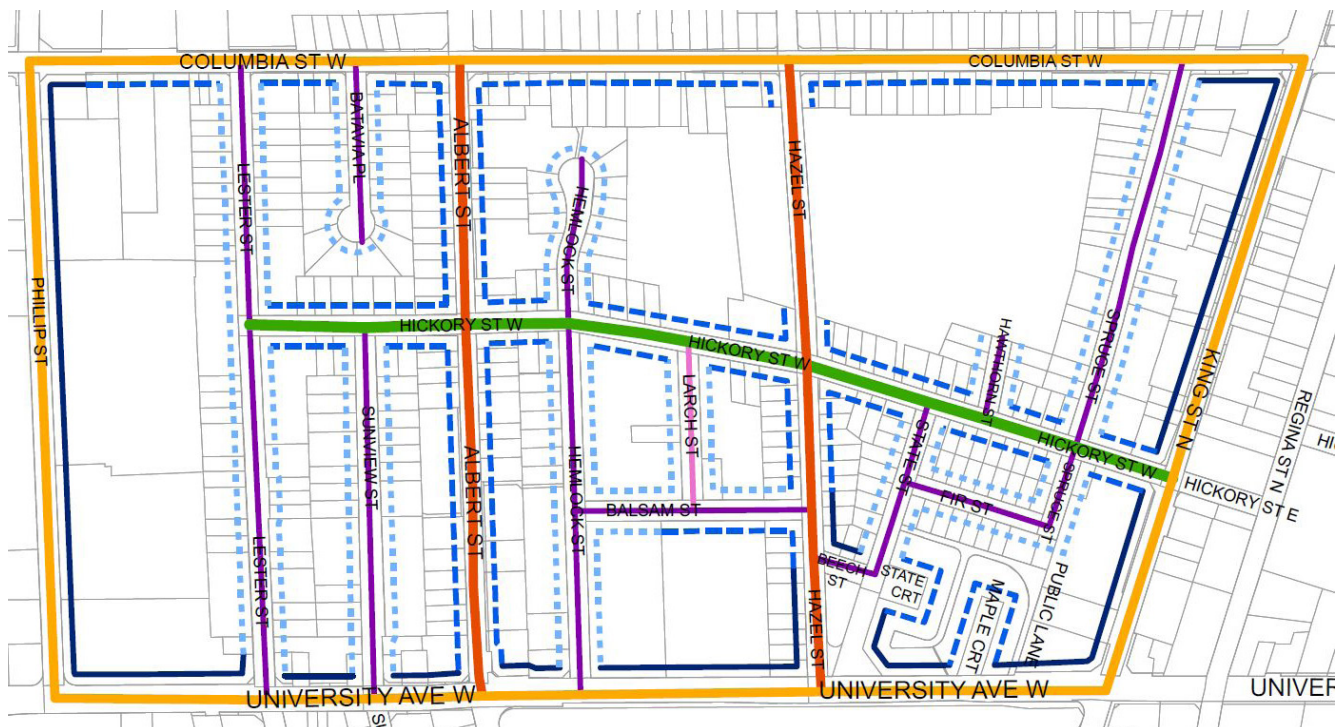
Green streets are envisioned to prioritize pedestrian circulation and foster connections to adjacent open spaces, thereby augmenting public open space within Northdale. Prominent design elements comprise expansive sidewalks, distinctive paving patterns accentuating the pedestrian realm, uniform street tree planting, and pedestrian-scale lighting.

The proposed development is strategically oriented towards both Hickory and Spruce Street, facilitating pedestrian access via entrances to sidewalks on both streets, allowing for pedestrian connections to the public parks further to the west.

Spruce Street – Residential Street

Residential streets will be designed to maintain or improve their residential feel, creating a cozier atmosphere. Key changes will include measures to slow down traffic, using different patterns on the ground to make pedestrian crossings and intersections stand out, planting trees along the streets, managing stormwater, and adding lights that are friendly for pedestrians.

The proposed buildings will face both Hickory and Spruce Street, with entrances facing the sidewalks. The residential nature of the development, which is ground related housing, is consistent with maintaining the residential feel of the street.



Source: City of Waterloo Official Plan - Schedule A45a

Legend		
City Boundary	Perennial Watercourse	Street Hierarchy
Railway	Intermittent Watercourse	Main Street
Road	Water Body	Mixed-Use Street
Hydro Easement		Green Street
		Residential Street
		Wooner/Shared Street
		Street Frontage Areas
		Active Frontage Areas
		Convertible Frontage Areas
		Neighbourhood Frontage Areas

Urban Design within Station Areas

The subject lands are located within the University of Waterloo Station Area Boundary (as identified in the Regional Official Plan). Section 3.11.4 of the City's Official Plan provides policy direction for the development of lands located within a station area boundary. Generally, the policies state that:

- place making shall occur by enhancing the public realm and creating vibrant, attractive, safe and public spaces.
- streets which are part of the transportation network should be designed as important public spaces.
- development should be pedestrian oriented, accessible and connected to the public realm transit stops.
- buildings should be oriented towards streets and walkways
- buildings should be located close to the street frontage to improve the pedestrian realm,
- glazing should be included on main floor to provide for passive surveillance.
- high quality materials should be incorporated into the design that are compatible with the surrounding build environment, and that provide for visual interest
- elements of sustainable design should be incorporated where possible.



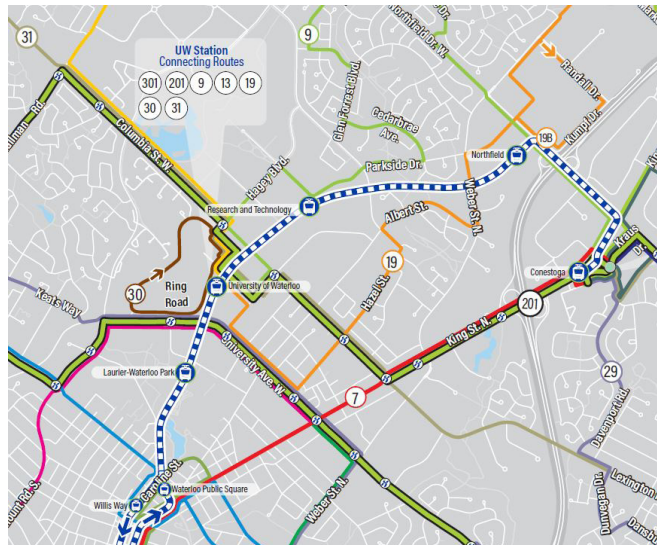
Above: University of Waterloo Ion Station

Source: wikipedia

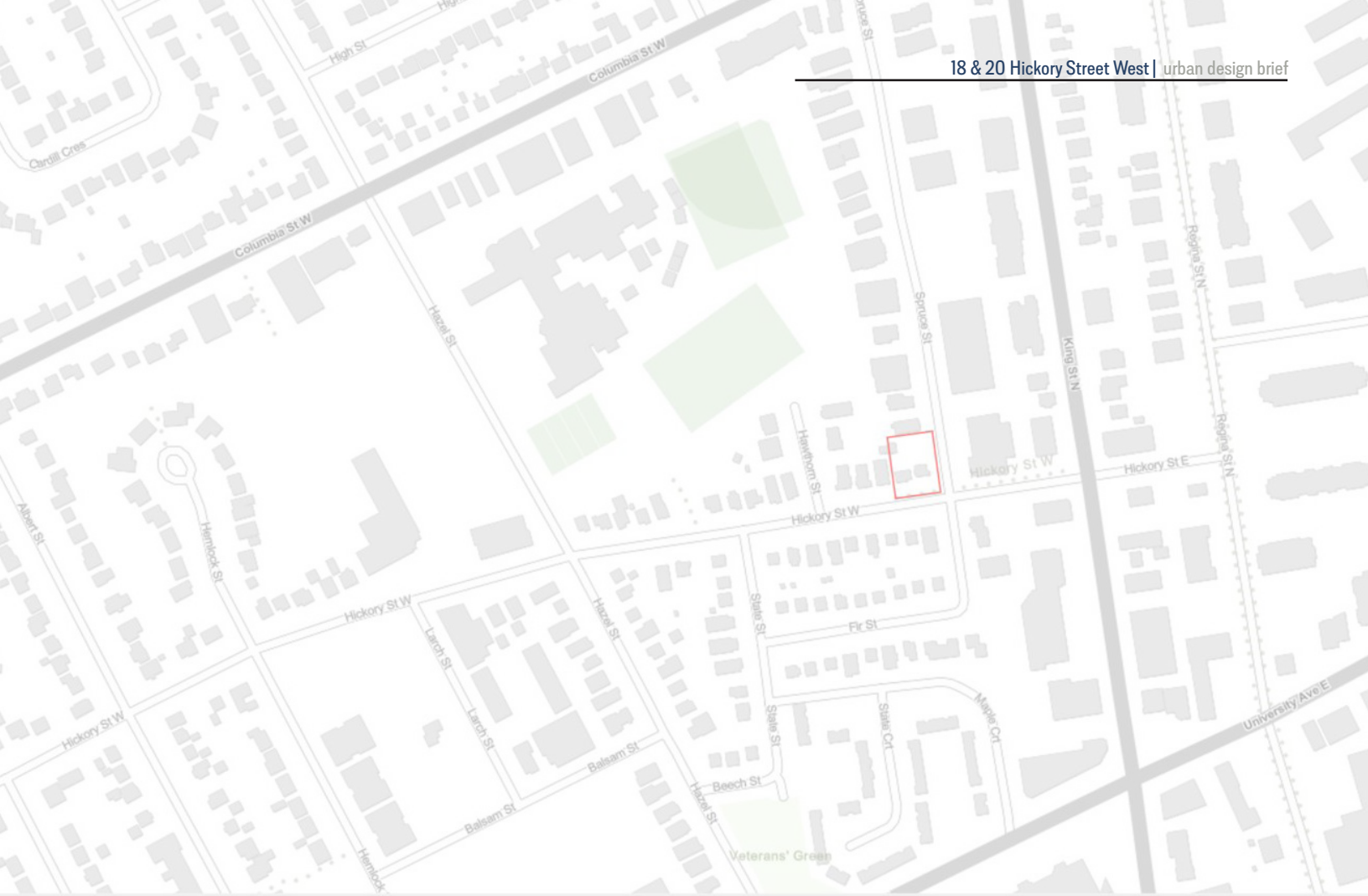


Above: University of Waterloo GRT Station

Source: wikipedia



Above: GRT/Ion Mapping



5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Development

The proposed development includes 9 townhouse dwellings situated along Spruce Street and Hickory Street West, offering a combination of 2 and 3-bedroom units totaling 26 bedrooms. Access for vehicles is facilitated via Hickory Street West, leading to a parking area accommodating 9 surface parking spaces, inclusive of 1 Type 'A' accessible space and 9 bicycle parking spaces. Outdoor amenity space measuring over 105 m² is planned for the corner of Hickory and Spruce Streets. Each townhouse unit features a balcony, providing residents with private amenity space. Waste management facilities are positioned at the northern property line, shielded from view. Strategic building massing serves to partially conceal the parking area while preserving a functional driveway entrance. As discussed earlier, each townhouse boasts an entrance accessible from the public sidewalk.



above: Architect's rendering of townhouse development (corner of Hickory Street West and Spruce Street)

Source: Kozlowski Architect



above: Proposed Site Plan
Prepared by Kozlowski Architect. Rendered by MHBC Planning



above: Architect's rendering of townhouse development showing units fronting onto Spruce Street.
Source: Kozlowski Architect



above: Internal perspective of rear units and parking area
Source: Kozlowski Architect



above: basement floor plan

Source: Kozłowski Architect



above: main level floor plan

Source: Kozłowski Architect



above: second level floor plan

Source: Kozlowski Architect



above: third level floor plan - showing bedroom layout and balconies.

Source: Kozlowski Architect



LEGEND

1. HORIZONTAL SIDING (WHITE)
2. HORIZONTAL SIDING (DARK GREY)
3. CONCRETE
4. METAL FASCIA (WHITE)
5. METAL SILL (WHITE)
6. METAL EAVESTROUGH (WHITE)
7. VINYL WINDOW (WHITE)
8. ASPHALT SHINGLES (DARK GREY)
9. TRIM/PANEL (WHITE)
10. TRIM/PANEL (DARK GREY)
11. METAL CANOPY (DARK GREY/WHITE)
12. METAL FLASHING (WHITE)
13. RAIN WATER LEADER (WHITE)
14. METAL FLASHING TRIM (WHITE)

Street Fronting Building Elevations with Building Materials list

Source: Kozlowski Architect



LEGEND

1. HORIZONTAL SIDING (WHITE)
2. HORIZONTAL SIDING (DARK GREY)
3. CONCRETE
4. METAL FASCIA (WHITE)
5. METAL SILL (WHITE)
6. METAL EAVESTROUGH (WHITE)
7. VINYL WINDOW (WHITE)
8. ASPHALT SHINGLES (DARK GREY)
9. TRIM/PANEL (WHITE)
10. TRIM/PANEL (DARK GREY)
11. METAL CANOPY (DARK GREY/WHITE)
12. METAL FLASHING (WHITE)
13. RAIN WATER LEADER (WHITE)
14. METAL FLASHING TRIM (WHITE)

Rear Building Elevations with Building Materials list

Source: Kozlowski Architect

City of Waterloo Official Plan

- Section 11.1.45 Specific Provision Area 45 (Northdale Neighbourhood)

The City of Waterloo Official Plan provides for a Specific Provision Area which helps provide the vision and design principles for the Northdale Neighbourhood. The City of Waterloo recognizes that the Northdale community is a neighbourhood in transition and that it will accommodate a large portion of the City's infill and intensification grown over the planning period of the Official Plan. The policies of the Official Plan support the reurbanization of Northdale as a vibrant, sustainable and mixed use neighbourhood. The principles for the Northdale Neighbourhood, as outlined in the Official Plan, are noted below. It is important to recognize that not all of the principles apply to a townhouse building, particular of a small scale such as that proposed. It is also important to note that the Planning Act does not require site plan approval for a development of this scale, with the recognition that small scale developments of this nature do not require the detailed review that occurs through the site plan approval process, and in an effort to speed up the delivery of housing.

1. Integrated
2. Diverse
3. Indefinable
4. Supported
5. Memorable
6. Interactive
7. Durable
8. Safe
9. Flexible
10. Collaborative

Neighbourhood Structure:

NS.1 The low-density, single detached house will no longer be the predominant housing form in the Northdale neighbourhood. Instead, the City will favour a vibrant, more intensive, mixed-use community.

The proposed development of 9 townhouse units provides for a move intensive use within the Northdale Community and activates both Hickory Street and Spruce Street.

NS.2 New development will be focused on mixed-use, mixed-density, transit and pedestrian supportive principles, allowing for a diversity of people and activities.

The increased density of site will provide for more potential users of Grand River Transit and the LRT. As discussed, each unit provides a direct connection to the public realm/sidewalk, which facilitates pedestrian movement to multiple community amenities and transit.

NS.3 Clear land use, urban design and built form policies, regulations and guidelines will guide future development. Building height and density will generally be greater on the periphery of the neighbourhood, and transition towards medium density forms in the interior of the neighbourhood.

The proposed development represents a low rise intensification within the Northdale community which is consistent with the land use designation in the Official Plan and the existing Residential Northdale Six (RN-6) Zone.

Buildings & Development:

BD.1 New buildings, enhancements to the public realm and related development elements should be constructed in a sustainable manner, conserving energy and resources, using durable materials and, where feasible and appropriate, achieving LEED® certification.

As a new development the building will be constructed in accordance with modern building code requirements, including those related to energy efficiency.

BD.2 Buildings will be brought to the street edge by establishing build-to lines, maximum setbacks and urban design/built form policies, regulations and guidelines to create a sense of street enclosure, limit breaks in the street wall, and maximize the principles of “eyes on the street”.

The buildings have been planned to address both street frontages in accordance with the related setback requirements in the Zoning Bylaw.

BD.3 Appropriate and compatible building design techniques will be used, including transition in building heights, step-backs and angular planes, and building articulation.

The proposed development is a ground related housing form – this directive is more relevant for mid and high rise buildings.

BD.4 The location of ground-floor windows, doors, and main entranceways will support visibility and transparency at grade, and access from the street.

The primary entrance to all units are located along the street frontage. In addition, large windows face are located on the first level offering transparency at grade and additional safety within the public realm.

BD.5 Indoor and outdoor common amenity areas will be encouraged for housing developments to promote a healthy social environment both within buildings and along the street. Outdoor elements could include porches; squares or patios adjacent to the street; roof gardens; and, on larger sites, internal courtyards connected to the public realm. Indoor common amenity areas may include recreational, study and living areas.

A common outdoor amenity space is planned at the corner of Hickory Street and Spruce Street. The outdoor amenity space plans for an interlock patio. The patio area proposes benches for passive recreation enjoyment.

BD.6 Generally, parking requirements will be minimized in Northdale, to recognize that the community is being planned to support rapid transit facilities and will continue to accommodate a large portion of students and University related faculty and staff, area business employees, and permanent residents, resulting in a walkable, mixed-use community that has exceptional access to transit. Parking areas will not be permitted in the front yard, and rear yard parking will be preferred. Underground or decked parking will be encouraged for higher density building forms.

Parking is provided in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw. No parking is proposed in the front yard.

6.0 RESPONSE TO POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Response to Policy and Guidelines

City of Waterloo Official Plan

As discussed, Section 3.11 of the Official Plan includes Urban Design policies to guide development. The following discussion details how the proposed development achieves the intent of the policies.

Intensification & Compatible Development

The townhouses are proposed at a height that ensures compatibility in terms of scale, design and material to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Character & Building Design

The corner lot offers a unique opportunity to enhance the character of the corner of Hickory and Spruce Street from an urban design perspective. The design provides for units that front and provide direct access onto both streets, while providing an active amenity space for residents at the corner/intersection to promote an active streetscape.

The deviations along roofline and changes in colour of materials help break up the small building mass along the street and give definition to each unit along the street frontage.

Streetscapes & Human Scale

The low-rise ground related development is at a human scale. Primary entrances to each unit are connected directly to the sidewalks on both streets.



Safety and Security

The design of the development has considered the safety, comfort and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists through universal design principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).

Natural Surveillance

The townhomes have been designed to maximize visibility from to public realm. The units provide direct overlook on to the street frontages providing natural surveillance to the neighbouring properties and streets. Windows are also planned on the rear of the units which overlook the surface parking area, which enhances security for residents and visitors parking on site.

Territorial Reinforcement and Access Control

Concrete pathways are planned off the public sidewalk providing direct access to the front door of each unit. Each unit will have lighting to clearly define the entry way. The defined entry points and overlook from the large windows provide for territorial reinforcement between the public realm (sidewalk and street) vs. front yard for each unit.

Maintenance and Management

The townhouse development will be maintained and managed by a property maintenance company. This will ensure regular maintenance of landscaping, lighting and repairs and create a sense of care and ownership which will discourage potential criminal activity.

Lighting

Lighting will be designed around the townhouse building, parking area and amenity space to enhance visibility and deter criminal activity. Individual lights will be planned at each unit entry and will be designed to minimize glare and light pollution.

Landscaping

Landscaping elements have been strategically planned to enhance natural surveillance. Canopy trees are planned to open up sightlines.

Site Circulation

The site has a single driveway entrance from Hickory Street consistent with the small scale of the development. Conflicts between the pedestrians and vehicles parking on site are limited at the driveway entrance as the majority of pedestrian traffic will circulate using the public sidewalk.

Transit-Oriented Design

The development is located within a Major Transit Station Area. The design promotes public transit and alternative modes of transportation by providing units with direct access to the public sidewalk and by providing dedicated bicycle parking. The neighbourhood has an extensive pedestrian and cycling network that provides access to key destinations, including GRT stops and the ION Station at UW.

Parking

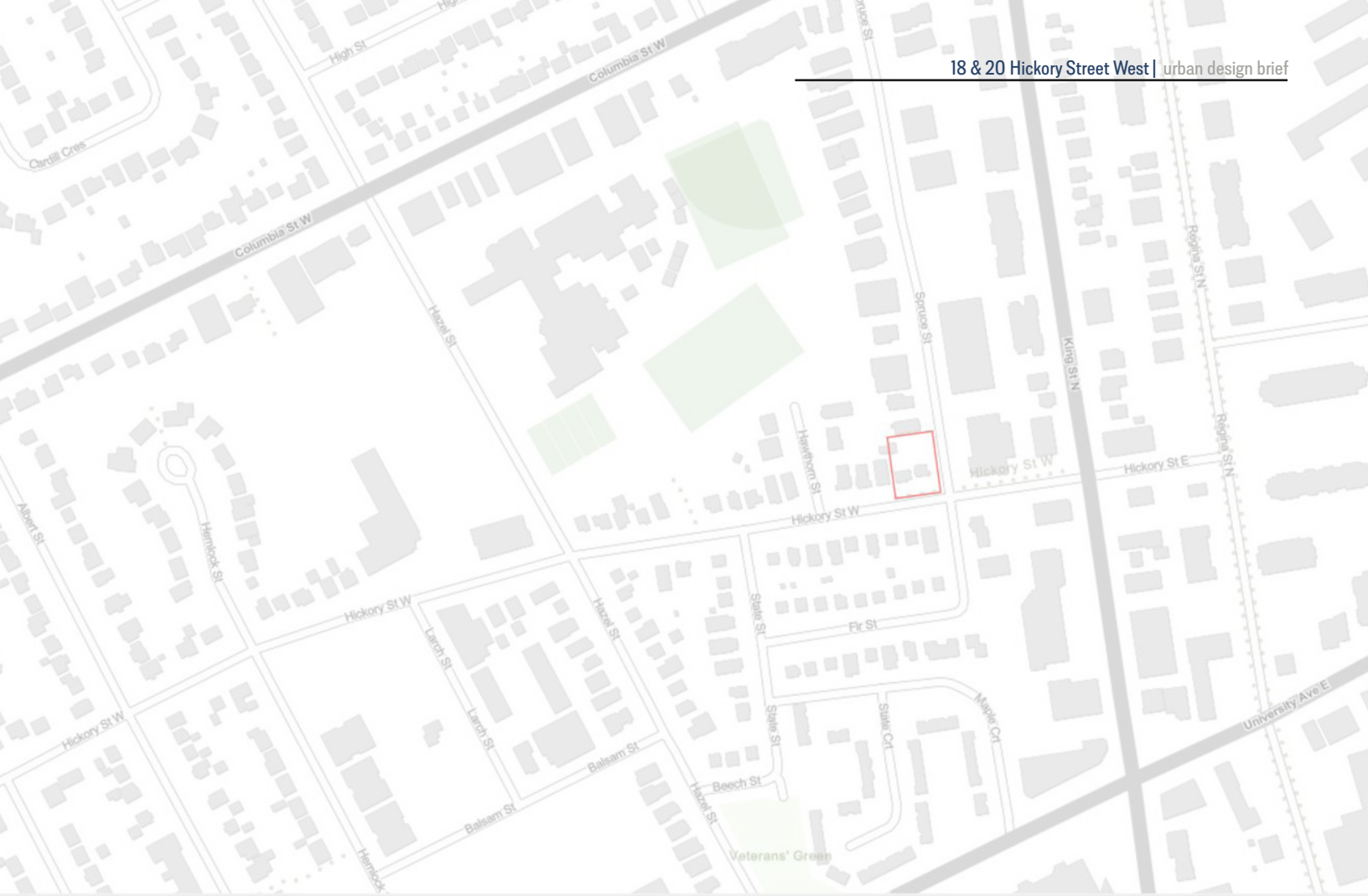
Parking is located to the rear of the buildings, shielded from view to the greatest extent possible by building massing.

Site Servicing Areas

The site servicing area is located at the north end of the property, which is screened from view of the street to the extent possible.

Landscape Design, Site Amenities and Sustainable Elements

A conceptual landscape plan is included, which provides for low maintenance elements and an emphasis on tree planting within the public realm to add texture and soften the street edge along Hickory and Spruce Streets.



7.0 CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The proposed development is a thoughtful approach to integrating a low-rise infill development within the Northdale Neighbourhood. The development aligns with the specific policies for the Northdale Neighbourhood, broadening the housing options and supporting the area's transition to a diverse, sustainable, and integrated community. Through careful consideration of urban design principles, the development maximizes the use of its corner location, activates both street frontages, and enhances the pedestrian experience with direct sidewalk access from each unit.



MHBC

PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN
& LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE