



# Town of Huntsville Staff Report

**Meeting Date:** May 13, 2026

**To:** Planning Council

**Report Number:** DEV-2026-41

**Confidential:** No

**Author(s):** Kelsea Shadlock, Madalene Albano, Richard Clark,

**Subject:** OPA#10 and CPPA/08/2026/HTE - Height and Density Policy Updates

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## Report Highlights

Staff recommendation to Planning Council respecting Official Plan Amendment #10 (OPA#10) and Community Planning Permit By-law Amendment CPPA/08/2026/HTE.

## Recommendation

## For Information Only

## Background

In September 2023, Planning Council directed staff, through resolution PC90-23, to develop policies for mid-rise multiple dwelling residential buildings within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area. Staff have now completed a study of existing height and density policies and how increases can be accommodated in appropriate locations, with potential impacts mitigated. As a result, updates to the Town of Huntsville Official Plan (HOP) and Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97 (CPPBL), as amended, are proposed. These amendments will guide how such applications will be considered if proposed in suitable locations of the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area, subject to specific evaluation criteria. Official Plan Amendment #10 (OPA10) and Community Planning Permit By-law Amendment CPPA/08/2026/HTE detail these proposed policy updates.

## Purpose and Effect:

### Official Plan Amendment #10 (OPA #10):

The proposed amendment to the HOP updates policies respecting new development that propose to increase height and/or density beyond permitted limits. The amendment adds policies to protect significant views and hill crowns within Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area and encourages such developments in suitable areas only, and in consideration of criteria and guidance; that is further detailed in the CPPBL. The amendment also adds enabling provisions related to community benefits to be secured through Community Planning Permit applications and introduces definitions for terminology to be used in the policies, such as Hill Crown, Ridge Line, Significant View, and Tree Line.

### Community Planning Permit By-law Amendment CPPA/08/2026/HTE:

The proposed amendment to the CPPBL implements the policies in OPA#10 by adding Height and Density Suitability Mapping for the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area as an Appendix to the By-law; updating general provisions to include new performance standards for any developments within the Urban Settlement Area exceeding 11m (or three (3) storeys); addressing requirements for setbacks, amenities, and building and landscaping design; and introducing new provisions for community benefits and revised definitions. The amendment would also permit an increase in the maximum building height from 11m to 15m in highly suitable areas, as identified in the Suitability Mapping, within the Urban Residential – High Density (UR3) Precinct, Urban Mixed Use (UM) Precinct, and Central Business District (CBD) Precinct, provided that an appropriate community benefit is secured.

Both proposed amendments to the HOP and CPPBL apply to all lands within the Town of Huntsville Urban Settlement Area, as illustrated in Schedule B1 of the HOP. A map showing the lands subject to the proposed Amendments is included in Attachment #1 to this report. Drafts of the proposed Amendments are also contained in Attachments #2 and #3 respectively.

## Discussion

### Official Plan Amendment (OPA#10)

Amendments to the HOP are required to implement the updated Height and Density policies and to enable the proposed changes to the CPPBL. The key changes in OPA #10 include the introduction of new definitions; the addition of a Hill Crowns Appendix; enabling policies and performance standards for Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits; and updates and revisions to study requirements.

<p>Definition Additions</p>	<p>The term Significant View is to be added to the HOP to ensure the protection of the twenty-three (23) identified views and vistas when considering development with increased height, and to require that these views are evaluated through Landscape and Visual Impact Studies (LVIS). Definitions for Ridgeline, Hill Crown, and Tree Line are also proposed to ensure the protection of these landscape features and their review and consideration within the planning process.</p>
<p>Hill Crown Appendix</p>	<p>Hill Crowns are illustrated and proposed to be included as Appendix 8. This Appendix identifies the highest portions of prominent landforms within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area. The inclusion of this Appendix is important to protect these unique landforms, which are not currently addressed in the Town’s planning policies, and to ensure that increased building height is not considered in these locations.</p>
<p>Enabling Policy for Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits</p>	<p>A Land Economics Assessment was completed in March 2026 to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a fixed, proportional contribution rate for Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits (FSMCB) under the CPPBL. The assessment concluded that development feasibility is currently constrained by elevated construction and development costs. As a result, staff have included enabling provisions in the HOP that would allow for the implementation of a fixed proportional contribution rate for FSMCB at an appropriate future time, should market conditions improve.</p> <p>In addition, flexible provisions have been incorporated through the amendment to allow FSMCB contributions to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any such contribution must demonstrate a reasonable planning relationship to the proposed increase in height and/or density, including either a geographic relationship to the development or a clear connection to planning issues arising from the proposal.</p> <p>Integrating enabling FSMCB policies into the Height and Density policies is important to support future implementation should market feasibility improve. Once feasibility is</p>

	<p>demonstrated, staff may be directed to further investigate this option, recognizing that additional amendments to the CPPBL may be required.</p> <p>References to community benefit are also proposed to be revised to FSMCB to reflect the language within the Planning Act.</p>
Enabling Policy for Performance Standards	<p>The HOP currently identifies items that may be included in the CPPBL. These provisions include on-site amenities intended to enhance urban design; however, they do not reference amenities to support on-site recreation. As amenity requirements are included within the performance standards to improve on-site recreational space, additional language related to recreation has been added to the HOP to enable the implementation of these performance standards in the CPPBL.</p>
Updates and Revision to Study Requirements	<p>To support staff in the current negotiation of FSMCB, a Pro Forma Assessment has been added as a required study. This assessment will be used to determine an appropriate contribution rate based on the value uplift generated by the proposed increase in height and/or density.</p> <p>Visual Impacts Studies are currently listed within the study requirements under the HOP. The amendment proposes to update the requirement to LVIS to further understand and review development impacts to landscape character such as Ridgelines, Hill Crowns, and Tree Lines.</p>

### **Community Planning Permit By-law (CPPA/08/2026/HTE)**

Amendments to the CPPBL are required to implement the updated Height and Density policies. The key changes proposed through CPPA/08/2026/HTE include revisions to and additions of definitions; updated performance standards; the incorporation of suitability mapping; policies related to community benefits; implementation of the Height and Density Review Guide; and updates and revisions to study requirements.

Definition Revisions and Additions	<p>The terms finished grade, height and storey are proposed to be revised to ensure an accurate height calculation for the Height and Density policy updates. The terms Hill Crowns, Natural Grade, Multi-Residential Development Height, Landscape Buffer, Landscape Open Space, Mature Vegetation, Native Vegetation, Ridge Line, Significant View, Step Back, First Storey, and Tree Line. These terms have also been added to support the performance standards and the Height and Density Review Guide.</p>
Performance Standards	<p>The proposed Performance Standards are intended to provide clear, measurable criteria for incorporation into development proposals. These standards support built forms that integrate appropriately with adjacent properties, are compatible with the character and function of established neighbourhoods, and optimize overall development functionality. Where a proposal exceeds 11m (or three (3) storeys) within the UR3, UM, and CBD precincts, the Performance Standards would apply. The standards include provisions related to step-backs; landscape buffers; rooftop mechanical penthouses; parking areas and underground parking; windows and balconies; and amenity areas.</p> <p>Performance Standards are also proposed for all mixed-use developments that include multiple dwelling units. These standards would require only commercial uses to be located on the first storey and a maximum first-storey height of 4.3m, excluding properties within the CBD along Main Street East between Lorne Street and John Street.</p>

<p>The Suitability Mapping</p>	<p>Suitability Mapping was prepared to identify areas within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area that may be appropriate for development with increased height and/or density. The Suitability Map is intended to assist Town staff and Council in the review of proposals seeking increased height or density. Property owners, agents, and applicants are also encouraged to reference the map when considering such increases. The Suitability Map is proposed to be included as Appendix E to the CPPBL.</p> <p>The Suitability Map also includes the Hill Crown Overlay. The amendment introduces a provision stating that where development is proposed within a Hill Crown Overlay, no increase in building height beyond 11m shall be permitted.</p>
<p>Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits</p>	<p>As noted above, the Land Economics Assessment completed in March 2026 determined a fixed proportional contribution rate for FSMCM is not currently feasible. Therefore, community benefits continue to be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>References to community benefit are also proposed to be revised to FSMCB to reflect the language within the Planning Act.</p>
<p>Height and Density Review Guide</p>	<p>The Height and Density Review Guide is intended to provide background on the criteria contained in the CPPBL that applicable to applications for increased height or density; outline the locations where applications for increased height or density are appropriate; and clarify what plans and materials will be needed in support of these applications. The Guide includes an overview of the Suitability Mapping, Revegetation Guide or Landscape Buffer, LVIS and Significant Views, Performance Standards and FSMCB. Policies amendments are proposed to the CPPBL for the implementation of this Guide.</p>
<p>Updates and Revision to Study Requirements</p>	<p>A site-specific Proforma Assessment prepared by a qualified professional has been added to the list of Study requirement to establish an appropriate monetary value for the community benefits based on the lift value resulting from the increased height or density proposed in the development.</p> <p>Visual Impacts Studies are currently listed within the study requirements under the CPPBL. The amendment proposes to update the requirement to LVIS to further understand and review development impacts to landscape character such as Mature Vegetation, Native Vegetation, Ridgelines, Hill Crowns, and Tree Lines.</p>

**District Municipality of Muskoka Official Plan**

The subject lands are designated as Settlement Area. District staff have been circulated on OPA #10 and CPPA/08/2026/HTE; however, comments have not yet been received. It is anticipated that the proposed policy updates generally align with the District Municipality of Muskoka Official Plan, and any District comments will be addressed once they are provided.

**Provincial Planning Statement**

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) applies to the proposed Height and Density policy updates. The amendments would apply to areas designated as Settlement Areas under the PPS. Development within Settlement Areas is required to support general intensification and redevelopment to achieve complete communities (Policy 2.3.1.3). The PPS also requires that natural features and natural areas be protected for

the long term (Policy 4.1.1). The Height and Density policy updates support intensification while also preserving natural features and areas through the use of Suitability Mapping, which evaluates natural heritage features, significant views, and other land characteristics that influence the appropriateness of increased height and/or density within the Town's Urban Settlement Area.

### **Next Steps**

Staff are seeking Council direction on the proposed Community Planning Permit Bylaw Amendment and Official Plan Amendment policies, as well as feedback on the proposed Developer's Review Guide. Comments received from the Public Meeting will also be considered, reviewed and incorporated into any required changes. Once Council and Public input has been considered, and the proposed amendments updated accordingly, this matter will be brought back to Planning Council for consideration.

### **Relevant Policies / Legislation / Resolutions**

Provincial Planning Statement  
Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, cP.13  
District of Muskoka Official Plan  
Town of Huntsville Official Plan  
Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-92  
Town of Huntsville Downtown Community Improvement Plan, 2010  
Draft Urban Intensification Design Guidelines, 2019  
PC90-23  
DEV-2023-122  
DEV-2024-35, PC37-24  
DEV-2025-104, PC139-25

### **Council Strategic Direction**

- Balanced Growth-1.1: Review planning legislation and policies to support flexibility and optimize land use, including in rural areas, to address different community needs.
- Protected Natural Environment-1.1: Continue to apply best practices in maintaining our natural heritage features.

### **Attachments**

[Attachment #1: Location Map](#)  
[Attachment #2: Draft Official Plan Amendment](#)  
[Attachment #3: Draft CPP Amendment](#)  
[Attachment #4: Draft Height and Density Review Guide](#)  
[Attachment #5: Suitability Map](#)  
[Attachment #6: Public Comment Table](#)

### **Consultations**

The proposed amendment were circulated in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act.

A Public Open House was held on April 29th, 2026 in Partners Hall. Approximately twenty-one (21) attendees were present during the session and written comments were provided by some attendees.

Written comments were also provided by three (3) members of the public.

A Public Comment and Response Table has been prepared to document all comments received to date. Comments received can be grouped into the following categories:

The Public Comment Table is included as Attachment #6 which outlines 9 public comments received to this report.

**Respectfully Submitted:** Kelsea Shadlock, Madalene Albano, Richard Clark,

**Manager Approval (if required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Director Approval:** Kirstin Maxwell, Director of Development Services

**CAO Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Attachment #1: Location Map





**CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE**

**BY-LAW NUMBER 2026-xx**

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**(Town of Huntsville – Height and Density Evaluation Criteria)**

**Being a by-law of the Town of Huntsville to adopt  
Amendment No. 10 to the Huntsville Official Plan**

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**WHEREAS:** the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Huntsville finds it expedient to amend the Town of Huntsville Official Plan, as amended:

**AND WHEREAS:** the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Huntsville has fulfilled the requirements of Sections 17 and 21 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O., 1990, as amended (the "Planning Act").

**NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That Amendment No. 10 to the Huntsville Official Plan, consisting of the attached explanatory text, is hereby adopted;
2. That the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to affix the seal of the Corporation to Amendment No. 10 and to make application to the District Municipality of Muskoka for approval of the said amendment; and
3. That this by-law shall come into force shall come into force and take effect in accordance with Sections 17 and 21 of the Planning Act.

**READ a first, second and third time and finally PASSED** this XX day of MONTH, 2026.

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**Mayor** (Nancy Alcock )

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**Clerk** (Tanya Calleja)



**AMENDMENT NUMBER 10  
TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE  
TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE**

**(Height and Density Evaluation Criteria)**

**SECTION 1 TITLE AND COMPONENTS OF THE AMENDMENT**

- 1.1 Section 5 herein shall constitute Amendment Number 10 to the Official Plan of the Town of Huntsville and shall be entitled “Height and Density Evaluation Criteria”.
- 1.2 Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 herein do not constitute part of the formal Amendment but provide general information respecting the Amendment.

**SECTION 2 LANDS SUBJECT TO THE AMENDMENT**

- 2.1 Lands within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area of the Town of Huntsville, District Municipality of Muskoka will be subject to this amendment.

**SECTION 3 PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT**

- 3.1 The purpose of this Amendment is to make minor amendments to facilitate the implementation of the Height and Density Evaluation Criteria.

**SECTION 4 BACKGROUND AND BASIS**

- 4.1 The Town of Huntsville developed Height and Density Evaluation Criteria to address the growing demand for development with increased height and density within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area. The actions and recommendations outlined in the Evaluation Criteria are intended to guide such development in a way that supports balanced growth, protects Huntsville’s natural and urban landscapes, encourages the creation of affordable and market rental housing, and secures community benefits that have a reasonable planning relationship to the proposed increases in height and/or density.
- 4.2 Amendments to specific policy areas are being proposed to implement the Height and Density Evaluation Criteria to guide development with increased height and density.

**SECTION 5 THE AMENDMENT**

- 5.1 Section C3.2.9 shall be amended with the insertion of the words “including Significant Views” after the words “views and vistas.”
- 5.2 Section C3.2.10 shall be amended with the insertion of the words “Hill Crowns” after the words “skylines, ridgelines.”



- 5.3 Section C3.2 “Protecting Character” is hereby amended with the insertion of the following new Section immediately after Section C3.2.10 and renumbering the remaining Section accordingly:
- C.3.2.11 Hill Crowns within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area, as illustrated in “Appendix 8: Hill Crowns”, shall be protected from incompatible development and any new development proposed within or adjacent to them must demonstrate that the Tree Line and Ridgeline will remain undisturbed on Hill Crowns and the development can proceed without negatively impacting views and vistas, including Significant Views. Where a development includes increased heights on lands adjacent to Hill Crowns, the development shall be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Study and designed to ensure that Tree Lines and Ridgelines within the Hill Crown will be preserved, and no buildings or structures will project above the tree line.
- 5.4 Section C3.2.15 “Height” is hereby amended with the insertion of the following new Subsection immediately after Subsection 3.2.15.d):
- C.3.2.15.e) Within Hill Crowns within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area, as illustrated in “Appendix 8: Hill Crowns”, the maximum building height shall be detailed in the Community Planning Permit By-law and no development including increased heights shall be permitted.
- 5.5 Section C3.3.13 shall be amended by deleting the words “community benefits” and replacing them with the words “facilities, services and matters for community benefits.”
- 5.6 Section C3.3.13 shall be further amended by deleting the following “Such community benefits may include, amongst other matters, underground parking, provision of attainable housing, increased or specialized activity areas, recreational facilities, *community facilities*, cultural heritage preservation, public easements or conveyances of shoreline areas, or other public benefits.” and replacing it with the following “Facilities, services and matters for community benefits shall be provided in accordance with F1.4.23 and F1.4.24.”
- 5.7 Section C3.6.5 (c) shall be amended with the insertion of the phrase “as well as Significant Views” after the phrase “preserving views to the lake.”
- 5.8 The Background Statement for Height and Density Bonusing (F1.4.23) shall be amended by deleting the words “community benefits” and replacing them with the words “facilities, services and matters for community benefits.”
- 5.9 Section F1.4.23 shall be amended by deleting the words “community benefits” and replacing them with the words “facilities, services and matters for community benefits” in Subsection F1.4.23.(c).



5.10 Section F1.4.23 shall be further amended by deleting subsection F.1.4.23.(d) and replacing it with the following:

F.1.4.23.(d) provides facilities, services and matters for community benefits that bear a reasonable planning relationship to the increase in height and/or density such as having a geographic relationship to the *development* or addressing the planning issues associated with the *development*. A cash contribution in lieu of the community benefit may also be provided where appropriate. The Community Planning Permit By-law may establish a proportional relationship between the quantity or monetary value of the facilities, services and matters for community benefits and the increased height or density. The cash contribution in lieu may also be determined on a case-by-case basis through submission of a Proforma Assessment to determine an appropriate rate based on the value lift to be experienced as a result of the increased height or density.

5.11 Section F1.4.24 shall be amended by deleting the words “community benefits” and replacing them with the words “facilities, services and matters for community benefits”.

5.12 Section F1.4.24 shall be further amended by adding the following new subsection immediately after Section F1.4.24 k):

F1.4.24.(k). Cash-in-lieu contribution that bears a proportional planning relationship to the increase in height and/or density for specified facilities, services or matters. The cash contribution in lieu may be determined through submission of a Proforma Assessment to determine an appropriate rate based on the value lift to be experienced as a result of the increased height or density.

5.13 Section F1.6.1 d) shall be amended with the insertion of the phrase “provide amenities for recreation and” before the phrase “enhance the urban design.”

5.14 Section F1.9.4 gg) shall be revised with the insertion of the words “landscape and” before the words “visual impact study.”

5.15 Section F1.9.4 shall be amended with the addition of the following:

jj) Proforma Assessment

5.16 Section F2.2 is hereby amended by adding a definition for “Hill Crown” as follows:

HILL CROWN means the highest portion of a prominent landform within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area including the hill peak and all adjacent lands lying within a 10 metre vertical elevation of that peak, as illustrated in “Appendix 8: Hill Crowns”.



5.17 Section F2.2 is hereby amended by adding a definition for “Ridge Line” as follows:

**RIDGE LINE** means a natural crest of land that varies in topography in combination with multiple tree lines that create a continuous vantage of vegetation against the skyline when viewed from a distance.

5.18 Section F2.2 is hereby amended by adding a definition for “Tree Line” as follows:

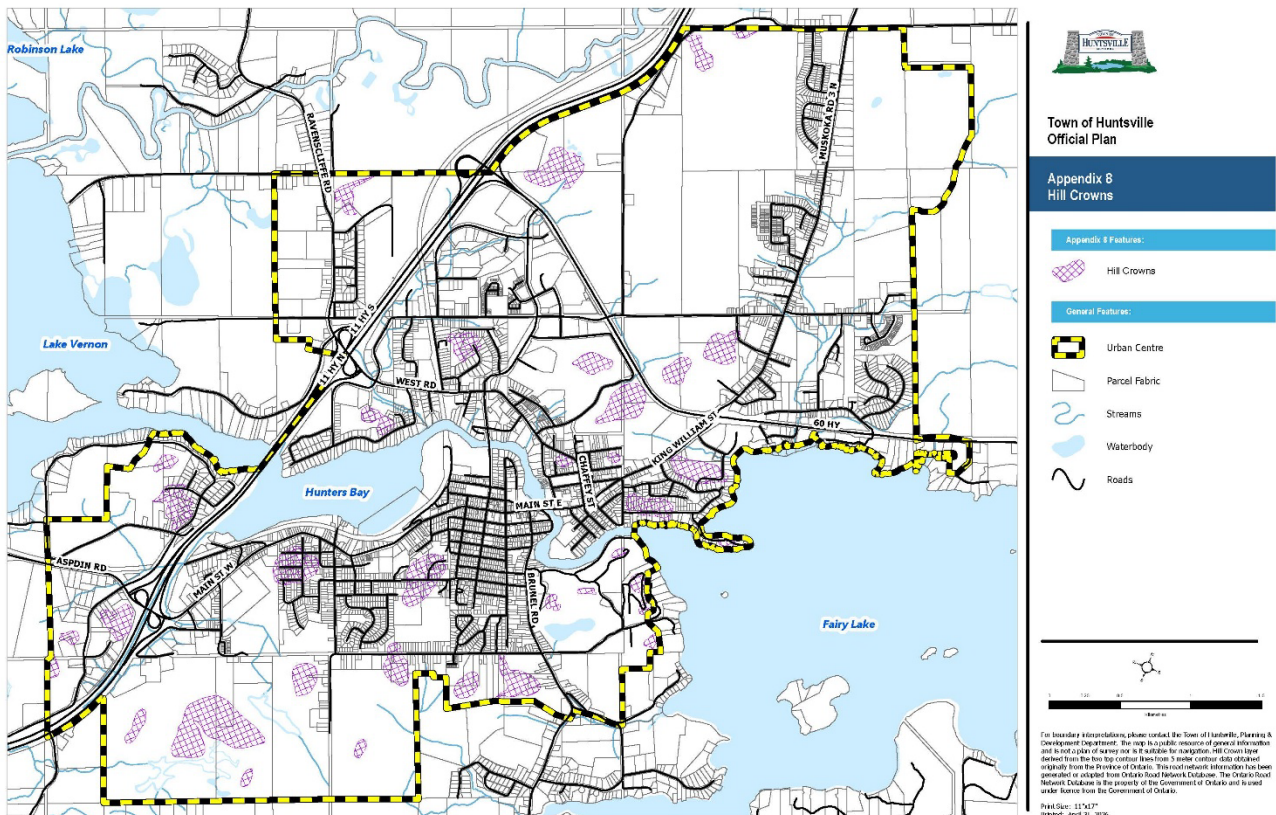
**TREE LINE** means the average height of undisturbed mature vegetation canopies. The tree line shall be determined by vegetation on an individual property, directly abutting, and within the immediate area surrounding a property.

5.19 Section F2.2 is hereby amended by adding a definition for “Significant View” as follows:

**SIGNIFICANT VIEW** means a portion of the landscape of collective value to Huntsville’s natural and built character that can be observed from a viewpoint accessible to the public including but not limited to travel routes, settlements, public use areas, tourism facilities, and parks.

5.20 Schedule “I” to this By-law is hereby included as “Appendix 8: Hill Crowns”.

### Schedule “I”





## **SECTION 6 IMPLEMENTATION**

- 6.1 The changes to the Official Plan of the Town of Huntsville, as described in this Amendment, shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of Section F of the Official Plan.

## **SECTION 7 INTERPRETATION**

- 7.1 The provisions of Section F of the Official Plan of the Town of Huntsville, shall apply with respect to the interpretation of this Amendment.

DRAFT



**CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE**

**BY-LAW NUMBER 2026-XX**

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**(Height and Density Evaluation Criteria)**

**Being a by-law to amend Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97  
as amended, of the Corporation of the Town of Huntsville**

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**WHEREAS** the council of the Corporation of the Town of Huntsville finds it expedient to amend Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97, as amended;

**AND WHEREAS** authority to pass this by-law is provided by Section 24 & 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O, 1990. c. P. 13 and amendments thereto;

**NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Section 2.5 – “Increased Height and Density” is hereby further amended by deleting the words “this Plan” and replacing them with the words “the Official Plan” in subsection 2.5.1.(a).
2. Section 2.5 – “Increased Height and Density” is hereby further amended by deleting the words “community benefit” and replacing them the words “facilities, services and matters for community benefits” in subsections 2.5.1.(c) and 2.5.1.(d).
3. Section 2.5 – “Increased Height and Density” is hereby further amended by adding the following after subsection 2.5.1.(d):
  - 2.5.1.(e) Demonstrates conformity with the Height and Density Review Guideline, as amended from time to time, where applicable.
4. Section 2.5 – “Increased Height and Density” is hereby further amended by deleting subsection 2.5.2 and replacing it with the following:
  - 2.5.2 A Height and Density Suitability Map, which illustrates lots that are Highly Suitable for increased height and density, is found in Appendix E to this By-law.

The following provisions shall apply to any new multiple residential or mixed use developments on a lot located within an area of High Suitability for increased height and density:

- a) The Multi-Residential Development Height definition shall apply to the calculation of building height;
- b) The maximum permitted building height shall be 15m; and
- c) Any building exceeding 11m or 3 storeys in height shall comply with the performance standards in the Sections 2.5.3 and provide facilities, services and matters for community benefits in accordance with Section 2.5.4.

2.5.3 Where any new multiple residential or mixed use development includes buildings exceeding 11m or 3 storeys in height, the following performance standards shall apply:

2.5.3.1 Step-backs:

Step-backs shall be provided in accordance with the following standards:

- a) A 3m step-back is required from the building façade for all additional storeys facing the front, exterior side, and interior side yards, except where the lot abuts an Urban Residential – Low (UR1) precinct of Urban Residential – Shoreline (URS) precinct;
- b) For lots abutting an Urban Residential – Low (UR1) precinct or Urban Residential – Shoreline (URS) precinct, a 1.5m step-back shall be required from the building façade for the third storey facing the interior side yard and a 4.5m step back shall be required from all other additional storeys facing the interior side yard; and
- c) In addition to a) and b), where a property abuts a defined top of bank of a steep slope, an additional step-back from the building façade for all additional storeys facing the steep slope shall be required as deemed appropriate in a Landscape and Visual Impact Study prepared to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services or designate.

#### 2.5.3.2 Landscape Buffers:

Landscaping shall be provided in accordance with the following standards in addition to the requirements set out in Section 2.12:

- a) Landscape buffers shall first be comprised of existing mature vegetation at a minimum width of 5m or such alternative width determined appropriate by a qualified professional in a Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan prepared to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services or their designate;
- b) Landscape buffers containing existing mature vegetation shall:
  - i. Provide visual screening;
  - ii. Consist of native species;
  - iii. Contain a mixture of trees and shrubs; and
  - iv. Include a minimum of 1 mature tree per 30m<sup>2</sup> of required buffer;
- c) Where existing mature vegetation is not present, abundant, or satisfactory, landscape buffers shall be double the minimum requirements as noted in Section 2.12;
- d) Where landscape buffers do not include existing mature vegetation, a privacy fence shall be installed along the full lengths of interior and rear property lines at a minimum height of 1.8m and provide continuous solid screening in accordance with the provisions outlined in Section 2.8;
- e) A Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan may be required where topography and site constraints warrant additional information; and
- f) No variation shall be granted for reduced landscape buffers along the interior and rear lot lines of a property

#### 2.5.3.3 Rooftop Mechanical Penthouses:

Rooftop Mechanical Penthouse or similar structures shall be provided in accordance with the following standards:

- a) Rooftop mechanical penthouses or similar structures shall be screened from public view through roof-top siting location, integration into the design of the building and/or enclosures clad in materials and/or colours that are consistent or complementary to the building;
- b) Rooftop mechanical penthouses or similar structures shall be set back a minimum of 3m from the building edge and in the centre of the building rooftop; and
- c) A rooftop mechanical penthouse shall not cover an area greater than 60 percent of the total floor area of the top storey and shall not exceed 3.5m in height.

2.5.3.4 Parking Lots and Underground Parking:

- a) Parking areas will not be located in front yards or between the building line and the street (lot) line.
- b) Underground parking areas that exceed 1.8m above finished grade shall be integrated into the design of the building and/or enclosure, and clad in materials and/or colours that are consistent or complementary to the building.

2.5.3.5 Windows and Balconies;

- a) Where a building has a commercial use on the first storey, no less than 75 per cent of the surface area shall be comprised of transparent windows.
- b) Where balconies face an interior side yard, the minimum interior side yard setback shall be 7.5m.

2.5.3.6 On site Amenities:

- a) For mixed use developments, a bicycle rack that can accommodate a minimum of 1 bicycle per commercial unit shall be provided abutting the public street.
- b) Bicycle parking/storage shall be provided at a rate of 0.2 spaces per residential unit.

- c) Bicycle parking/storage shall be 0.6m wide by 1.8m in length and can be provided horizontally, vertically, or stacked and be contained within the building.
- d) A combination of indoor and outdoor amenity areas for occupants/residents shall be provided at a minimum rate of 2.0m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit. Amenity areas shall not include areas within the dwelling units and areas of exclusive use.
- e) Indoor and outdoor amenity areas may include but are not limited to the following:
  - i. Accessible rooftop or terrace;
  - ii. Seating lobby area;
  - iii. Courtyard;
  - iv. Outdoor patio area;
  - v. Play area;
  - vi. Sports court;
  - vii. Fitness area;
  - viii. Event room or lounge; or
  - ix. Swimming pool

2.5.3.7 Variations to one or more of the performance standards noted in 2.5.3.1 to 2.5.3.7 will be subject to a Class 3 Community Planning Permit application.

2.5.4 Facilities, services and matters for community benefits that may be considered by the Town under Section 2.5.1.(c) and (d) and 2.5.2.(c) may include:

- a) smart value housing, special needs housing or social housing;
- b) conservation of cultural heritage resources contained within the Municipal Heritage Register;
- c) buildings that incorporate sustainable design features;
- d) energy and/or water conservation measures;
- e) public art;
- f) non-profit arts, cultural, or community or institutional facilities;
- g) public transit infrastructure, facilities, and/or services;
- h) public parking;
- i) land for municipal purposes;

- j) parkland and improvements to parks in excess of the Planning Act requirements;
- k) active transportation amenities, such as signage, seating, washrooms, lighting, parking and other facilities; or
- l) a cash contribution in lieu of a community benefit.

2.5.5 The proportional monetary value of the facilities, services, and matters for community benefits to be provided in exchange for increased height or density will be based on a broad Town-wide rate, where feasible, to be determined based on assessments of development related economic conditions in the Town of Huntsville conducted periodically by a qualified professional, or on a case-by-case basis through a site-specific Proforma Assessment prepared by a qualified professional to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services or designate. Such an assessment may establish an appropriate monetary value for the community benefits based on the lift value resulting from the increased height or density proposed in the development.

2 Section 4.2 – “Residential Precincts - Table 4.2.8 – Lot Requirements” is hereby further amended by adding the following “notes (f) and (g)” to the Building Height (Maximum) requirements in row (xxi) within the Urban Residential – High Precinct column:

Note (f) Where a property has been identified on Appendix E as being within an area of High Suitability for increased height and density, a maximum height of 15m shall be permitted provided facilities, services and matters for community benefits as outlined in Section 2.5.4 of the By-law are provided.

Note (g) Where development is proposed within a Hill Crown Overlay, no height increase beyond 11m shall be permitted.

3 Section 4.5 – “Mixed Use Precincts – Table 4.5.3 – Permitted Uses – Principal Uses” is hereby further amended by adding the following “note (c)” to the “Dwelling, Multiple” use in row (vii) within the Central Business District Precinct and Urban Mixed Use Precinct columns:

Note (c) For all mixed-use development that include multiple dwelling units, only commercial uses shall be permitted on the first storey of a building.

- 4 Section 4.5 – “Mixed Use Precincts – Table 4.5.5 – Lot Requirements” is hereby further amended by adding the following “notes (g), (h), and (i)” to the Building Height (Maximum) requirements in row (xiv) within the Central Business District Precinct and Urban Mixed Use Precinct columns:

Note (g) For all new mixed-use development, excluding the Central Business District (CBD) along Main Street East between Lorne Street and John Street, the first storey shall have a maximum height of 4.3m.

Note (h) Where a property has been identified on Appendix E as being within an area of High Suitability for increased height and density, a maximum height of 15m shall be permitted provided facilities, services and matters for community benefits as outlined in Section 2.5.4 of the By-law are provided.

Note (i) Where development is proposed within a Hill Crown Overlay, no height increase beyond 11m shall be permitted.

- 5 Where definitions are added or revised, all references shall be formatted in bold text throughout the Bylaw.

- 6 Section 5 – “Definitions – Grade, Finished” is hereby further amended by deleting the definition and replacing it with the following:

**GRADE, FINISHED** means the average elevation of the finished surface of ground around the perimeter of a building or structure, except localized depressions which do not exceed 20% of the width of the building or structure or 4m whichever is the greater, such as for vehicle or pedestrian entrances.

- 7 Section 5 – “Definitions – Height” is hereby amended by deleting the definition and replacing it with the following:

**HEIGHT** means, with reference to a building or structure, the vertical distance measured from the average finished grade on the side of the building facing the front lot line or exterior side lot line, whichever results in the greatest height measurement of the building or structure or from the side of the building facing the shoreline on a lot that abuts a watercourse to:

- a. in the case of a flat roof or shed-style roof, the highest point of the roof surface, or the parapet, but not including glass railings, whichever is the greater;
- b. in the case of the mansard roof, the roof deck line;
- c. in the case of a gable, hip or gambrel roof, the mean heights between the eaves and ridge, but in calculating the height of a building, any construction used as ornament or for the mechanical

operation of the building such as a mechanical penthouse or a chimney, tower, cupola or steeple is not to be included;

- d. 75% of the height of the roof ridge of an A-framed structure. For the purposes of this By-law, A-frame refers to the roof extending from the peak to where it meets the ground (finished grade or natural grade);
- e. in the case of combined roof styles, or a roof type not described above, the highest point of the roof surface;
- f. With reference to a building or structure partially or entirely on or over the water, height shall be measured from the elevation of the high-water mark.

- 8 Section 5 – “Definitions – Storey” is hereby further amended by deleting the definition and replacing it with the following:

STOREY means the interval between two successive floor levels or between a floor level and roof.

- 9 Section 5 – “Definitions” is hereby further amended by adding definitions for “Hill Crowns”, “Natural Grade”, “Multi-Residential Development Height”, “Landscape Buffer”, “Landscape Open Space”, “Mature Vegetation”, “Native Vegetation”, “Ridge Line”, “Significant View”, “Step Back”, “First Storey”, and “Tree Line” as follows:

HILL CROWN means the highest portion of a prominent landform within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area, including the hill peak and all adjacent lands lying within a 10 metre vertical elevation of that peak, as illustrated in “Appendix E”.

GRADE, NATURAL means the grade as determined by the natural topography that existed before alteration, as indicated by the best available historical data.

HEIGHT, MULTI-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT means, with reference to any mixed-use, townhouse, or multiple dwelling buildings or structures, the vertical distance measured from the lesser of either the natural or finished grade, level around the perimeter of the building or structure, whichever results in the greatest height measurement;

- a. in the case of a flat roof or shed-style roof, the highest point of the roof surface, or the parapet, but not including glass railings, whichever is the greater;
- b. in the case of the mansard roof, the roof deck line;
- c. in the case of a gable, hip or gambrel roof, the mean heights between the eaves and ridge, but in calculating the height of a building, any construction used as ornament or for the mechanical operation of the building such as a mechanical penthouse or a chimney, tower, cupola or steeple is not to be included;
- d. 75% of the height of the roof ridge of an A-framed structure. For the purposes of this By-law, A-frame refers to the roof extending from

the peak to where it meets the ground (finished grade or natural grade);

- e. in the case of combined roof styles, or a roof type not described above, the highest point of the roof surface;
- f. With reference to a building or structure partially or entirely on or over the water, height shall be measured from the elevation of the high-water mark.

**LANDSCAPE BUFFER** means portions of a subject property that is required to contain and preserve existing mature vegetation or revegetated areas. Where planting is required within these areas on a property, it shall be done so in accordance with the Revegetation Guidelines for Landscape Buffers included in the Height and Density Development Guideline Document.

**LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE** means open unobstructed space on a lot, which is suitable for the growth and maintenance of grass, flowers, bushes, trees and other landscaping and can include patio and seating areas at grade but does not include any walkway, driveway or ramp, curb, retaining wall or parking area. Landscaped open space may include a rooftop patio, green roof, blue roof or greenspace.

**MATURE VEGETATION** means plant species that have grown to reach their expected full height, canopy, or have filled in according to their expected characteristics and are showing signs of maturity.

**NATIVE VEGETATION** means plants that have naturally grown in a certain area or zone for an extended period of time, forming symbiotic relationships with surrounding flora and fauna. This type of vegetation contains benefits by being adaptive to the environmental growing conditions, winter climate, requires less water, lower maintenance, and provides habitat for local species. For the Muskoka Region, specifically Huntsville, native plants, suitable for Zone 4b according to Canada's Plant Hardiness Zones should be chosen for landscaping.

**RIDGELINE** means a natural crest of land that varies in topography in combination with multiple tree lines that create a continuous vantage of vegetation against the skyline when viewed from a distance.

**SIGNIFICANT VIEW** means a portion of the landscape of collective value to Huntsville's natural and built character that can be observed from a viewpoint accessible to the public including but not limited to travel routes, settlements, public use areas, tourism facilities, and parks.

**STEP-BACK** means a portion of a building that is horizontally set back from the building face immediately below it.

**STOREY, FIRST** means the storey closest to the finished grade and where the portion of a building has more than 1.8m or 50% of its height above average finished grade.

TREE LINE means the average height of undisturbed mature vegetation canopies. The tree line shall be determined by vegetation on an individual properties, directly abutting, and within the immediate area surrounding a property.

- 10 Appendix A – Study Requirement (hh) shall be revised with the insertion of the words “landscape and” before the words “visual impact study”.
- 11 Appendix A – Study Requirement shall be revised with the insertion of the following:  
  
(II) Proforma Assessment
- 12 “Appendix E – Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density” as shown in Schedule “I” to this Bylaw is hereby added.
- 13 Schedule “I” attached hereto, is hereby made part of this Bylaw.
- 14 That this By-law shall take effect on the date of passage and shall come into force in accordance with Sections 24 and 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990.

**READ a first, second and third time and finally passed** this XX day of MONTH 2026.

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**Mayor** (Nancy Alcock)

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**Clerk** (Tanya Calleja)

# Schedule "I" (Appendix E – Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density)



**Appendix E: Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density**  
**Huntsville Urban Area**

**Legend**

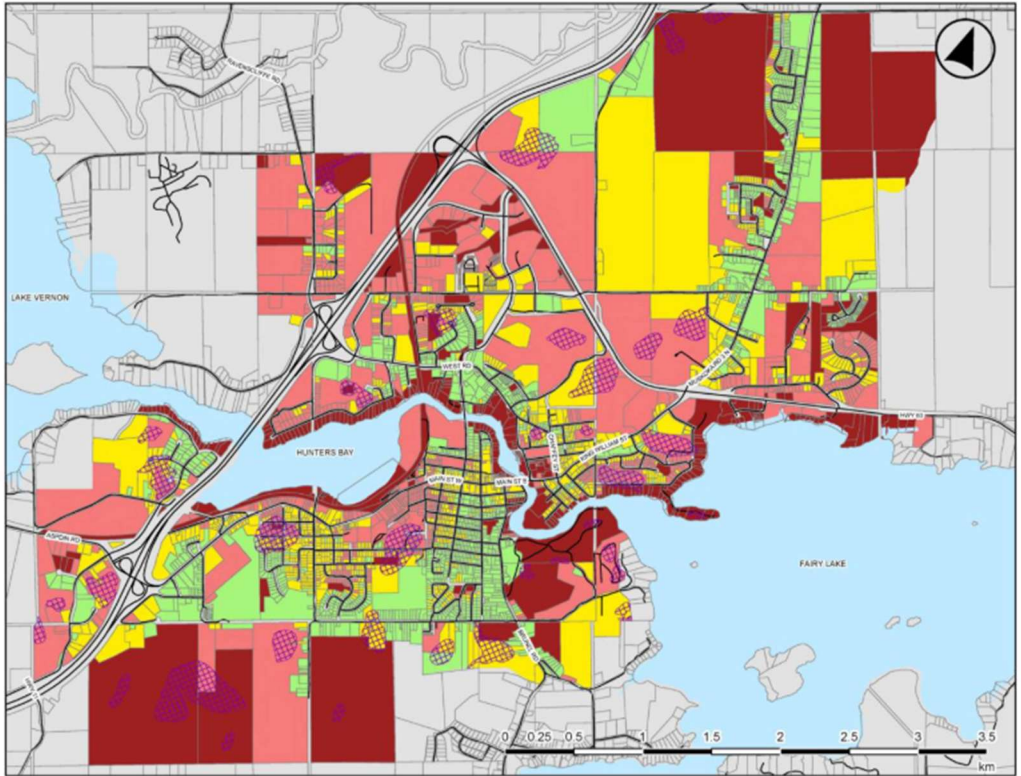
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Not Suitable
- Hill Crowns Overlay
- Roads Network
- Lakes
- Parcel Fabric

**Information**

Each item is weighted using the Analytic Hierarchy Process. Each is assigned a weight value and combined together for an overall score.

Data is provided from GIS files 2002-07 for analysis and Official Plan 2020 as amended.

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# Height and Density Review Guide

*For Development Applications with Increased Height and Density*

Prepared by the Huntsville Planning Department

Version #.# DRAFT  
2026



## Height And Density Review Guide:

This Guide is intended to assist proponents of applications where new development will result in height and/or density increases to prepare plans and supporting materials in accordance with appropriate standards/expectations. Such applications require a Community Planning Permit under Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97, as amended, (the “CPPBL”), and provisions within the By-law require preparation of such plans and other supporting materials in accordance with this Guide.

<p><b>Purpose:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide useful background on the criteria contained in the CPPBL that applicable to applications for increased height or density;</li> <li>• To outline the locations where applications for increased height or density are appropriate; and</li> <li>• To clarify what plans and materials will be needed in support of such applications.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Application and Use:</b></p>	<p>When new residential development proposes a building height and/or density that exceeds the maximum permitted standards as outlined in the CPPBL and trigger the requirement for submission of plans and supporting materials to demonstrate compliance with applicable performance standards, criteria, and guidance.</p> <p>This Guide outlines the Town’s expectations respecting the preparation of such plans and materials.</p>
<p><b>Supporting Documents:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97, as amended</li> <li>• The 2019 Town Huntsville Official Plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Version:</b></p>	<p>Version #.#   This version of the Guide was approved for implementation by Huntsville Planning on MMM, DD, 2026. <b>THIS IS A DRAFT VERSION</b></p>

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Context

The Community Planning Permit Bylaw (“CPPBL”) is a tool to regulate development throughout Huntsville. It prohibits new development from occurring within the Town until a Community Planning Permit is obtained, unless the development is of a class that is exempt from this requirement. The By-law combines elements of a zoning by-law, site plan control by-law, tree removal by-law, and site alteration by-law into one streamlined development control tool, consolidating the separate approvals required for each into one.

Similar to a Zoning By-law, the CPPBL details precincts (or zones) where certain land uses, buildings, and structures may be permitted and outlines the minimum and maximum standards that apply to developments in each. Height and density standards are two such standards, and the CPPBL details maximums for each.

Where an application proposes a development beyond the maximum standards outlined in the CPPBL, a variation from the as-of-right standards is possible through a Class 2 or 3 Permit. Additionally, there are policies in the Huntsville Official Plan (“HOP”) and the CPPBL that note that such applications can only be considered where a community benefit, in the form of services, facilities, or matters, are provided.

To ensure applications proposing additional height and/or density are focused to appropriate locations, and to provide staff and applicants alike with guidance on such applications, this Guide has been prepared as a companion to the provisions respecting such applications in the CPPBL.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Guide is to:

- Provide useful background on the criteria contained in the CPPBL that is applicable to applications for increased height or density;
- Outline the locations where applications for increased height or density are appropriate; and
- Clarify what plans and materials will be needed in support of such applications.

## 1.3 Application and Use

Use this Guide when new residential and mixed-use development proposes a building height and/or density that exceeds the maximum permitted standards as outlined in the CPPBL and triggers the requirement for submission of plans and supporting materials to demonstrate compliance with applicable performance standards, criteria, and guidance.

This Guide outlines the Town’s expectations regarding the preparation of such plans and materials. The Guide includes a brief explanation of the various items contained in Appendices detailing the intended application and use for each.

The Guide also helps readers understand the Suitability Map contained in Appendix E of the CPPBL and Appendix A1 of this document outlines how the map was developed.

## 2.0 Background

In September 2023, Planning Council directed staff to develop criteria for reviewing mid-rise residential buildings within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area. The goal was to make sure these types of buildings, especially rental apartments, can be built without negatively affecting important views or the natural and urban character of the area. Council also asked staff to explore ways to promote and maintain purpose-built rental development. This work supports broader community needs related to housing supply, affordability, and the guidance for intensification and compact growth.

To complete this work, staff prepared a three-phase project plan, which Council received in December 2023 (Report DEV-2023-122):

- **Phase One:** Review practices from other communities, assess Huntsville’s existing policies, and consult internal staff.
- **Phase Two:** Develop a Background and Directions Report.
- **Phase Three:** Use the findings from earlier phases to create a final set of Height and Density Evaluation Criteria.

In April 2024, staff completed Phase One and Two and presented a Background and Directions Report to Planning Council (Report DEV-2024-35). This report reviewed the current process for considering height and density increases, applicable legislation and policy, past planning and design studies, internal feedback, and the results of the jurisdictional review. From this work, staff were directed to prepare seven (7) deliverables as part of Phase 3 of the project, as outlined below.

1. Suitability Mapping
2. By-law Definition Changes
3. As-Of-Right Permissions, Maximum Variation Limits and Performance Standards for Increased Height and Density in Suitable Areas
4. Landscape and Visual Impact Study Terms of Reference
5. Landscaping Standards and a Revegetation Guide for Development Proposals with Increased Height and Density
6. Community Benefit Contribution Guidelines
7. Public Consultation Strategy

These deliverables were presented to Planning Council in October and November 2025 (DEV-2025-104). Based on Council’s direction, the Landscape and Visual Impact Study Terms of Reference, the Landscaping Standards and Revegetation Guide for Development Proposals with Increased Height and Density, and the Performance Standards for Increased Height and Density are to be applied to all development proposals seeking increased height or density. The Suitability Mapping is to be utilized as a tool when considering where to appropriately locate multi-residential and mixed-use projects with increased height and density.

Amendments to the HOP and CPPBL have been proposed to implement Council’s direction.

This Guide brings together these components of the Height and Density Evaluation Criteria into one document. It is intended to be reviewed and applied alongside all relevant planning policies and procedures.

This guide outlines the background and/or requirements for the following:

- Suitability Mapping
- Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers
- Landscape and Visual Impact Terms of Reference & Significant Views
- Performance Standards

### 3.0 Suitability Mapping

A Suitability Map was created to help identify areas within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area that are appropriate for development with increased height and/or density. To help implement updated height and density policies in the CPPBL, this Map has been included as Appendix E to the CPPBL and is contained in this Guide under Appendix 1. Also provided in this Appendix is a description of how the Suitability Map was developed.

<p><b>What is the Suitability Map?</b></p>	<p>The Map evaluates factors such as Significant Views, topography, natural heritage features, and proximity to parks, trails, and public transportation to generate a suitability score. This score helps staff and Council determine where additional height and density can be accommodated while minimizing impacts on Huntsville’s natural beauty and community character.</p>
<p><b>What lands are included in the Suitability Map?</b></p>	<p>Only those lands contained within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area, as illustrated in Schedule B.1 of the HOP, were included.</p>

**What information does the Suitability Map Provide?**

The Map is a visual representation of geographic areas sharing the following suitability scores:

1. High suitability
2. Medium suitability
3. Low suitability
4. No suitability

Highly suitable properties, shown in green, are areas with strong development potential and few or no policy constraints. These locations typically fall within the Intensification Corridor, are close to existing built-up areas, and are near bus stops, trails, and parks. Importantly, these areas are also outside Significant Views, or, if they fall within them, are not visible or are screened from view due to terrain.

Medium suitability properties, shown in yellow, are areas with few development constraints, moderate to low height constraints, and moderate to high opportunities.

Low suitability properties, shown in light red, are areas where development constraints exist and where properties fall within high constraint, low opportunity areas.

No suitability properties, shown in dark red, are areas where development constraints significantly limit or prohibit development.

**How to use the Suitability Map**

As noted, the Map is included in an Appendix to the CPPBL. It is also included in the Appendices to this Guide.

All properties within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area are shown in one of four colours, green, yellow, light red, or dark red, each representing a different suitability score.

The suitability score is intended to assist Town staff and Council when reviewing proposals that request increased height or density. Property owners, agents, and applicants should also refer to the suitability score when considering height or density increases, to ensure that applicable policy constraints, height constraints, and development opportunities are appropriately addressed.

Where a Hill Crown Overlay applies, development must also be limited and carefully located to respect prominent heights of land.

	<p>For multi-residential and mixed-use development within no, low, and medium suitability areas, the maximum permitted height is 11m.</p> <p>In high-suitability areas, the maximum height may be increased to 15m, provided an appropriate community benefit is secured.</p> <p>Consult the CPPBL for related development standards.</p>
<p><b>How was the Suitability Map developed?</b></p>	<p>To determine suitability, constraints and opportunities were identified. Constraints are factors that limit development potential, whereas opportunities are factors that support development potential. The suitability analysis considered Policy Constraints, Height Constraints, and Opportunities as the principal mapping components to determine suitability.</p> <p>The Map was developed using Geographic Information System (GIS) software and the Town of Huntsville’s Planning policies. The components to developing the overall Suitability Map have been further outlined in Appendix 1 of this Guide.</p>

#### 4.0 Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers

Known for its natural beauty, pristine lakes and waterfronts and its vibrant communities, the Town of Huntsville recognizes the value of its significant natural environment and forests, as well as the benefit of including high quality landscaping within the public realm.

With increased demand for height and denser developments, the Town must balance this demand with more specific landscaping standards to ensure these proposed developments preserve and enhance the quality of the landscaping provided.

Landscape buffers are included in the Height and Density provision of the CPPBL to mitigate impacts of development, enhance pedestrian scale outdoor spaces and streetscapes, and contribute to maintaining and establishing Huntsville’s tree cover.

Recommendations outlined in any technical documents prepared by a qualified professional and approved by the Town shall be implemented through a Community Planning Permit.

Section 2.5.3 of the CPPBL outlines landscape provisions to be implemented when building height increases are proposed and the Revegetation Guide in Appendix 2 to this Guide will provide additional assistance in this regard.

<p><b>What is the Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers</b></p>	<p>Section 2.5.3 of the CPPBL includes provisions for landscape buffers that are to be implemented when a development proposes increased building height. The Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers can guide a proponent’s landscape architect on preparation of landscape plan that will satisfactorily demonstrate appropriate landscape buffer plantings in accordance with these landscape buffer provisions.</p>
<p><b>What are the goals of the Town’s Revegetation Guideline?</b></p>	<p>The goals of the Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and enhance existing mature vegetation within urban and settlement areas,</li> <li>• Provide connected natural corridors and tree canopy coverage,</li> <li>• Soften the impacts of new and infill development,</li> <li>• Prioritize planting native plant species,</li> <li>• Outline parameters for sizes and quantities of plant materials; and</li> <li>• Create attractive outdoor spaces.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What outcomes is the Revegetation Guideline aiming to achieve?</b></p>	<p>The Revegetation Guide for Landscape Buffers was developed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly identify the Town of Huntsville’s expectations in regard to landscape design and development;</li> <li>• Increase the compatibility of new development through effective buffers and privacy screening;</li> <li>• Utilize a landscaping first approach;</li> <li>• Identify mature vegetation;</li> <li>• Reduce breaks in the Tree Line and Ridge Line to preserve views and vistas;</li> <li>• Require native plant material suitable for the Zone 4B Region as identified by Canada’s Plant Hardiness Zones, to be used;</li> <li>• Outline plant species, quantities, size parameters, preservation and planting standards</li> <li>• Identify and describe best practices for landscape construction to ensure the long-term success of landscape installations; and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the aesthetic appeal and livability of Huntsville.</li> </ul>
<b>Existing landscape buffer requirements</b>	The requirements of the Revegetation Guideline are in addition to the Landscape Buffer provisions contained with Section 2.12 of the CPPBL.
<b>How to apply the Revegetation Guideline</b>	<p>The Revegetation Guideline shall be applied to Landscape Plans required as part of submission materials for Community Planning Permit applications requesting increased Height and Density.</p> <p>Landscape plans are required to be prepared by qualified professionals and shall implement necessary measures from technical materials.</p>

## 5.0 Landscape and Visual Impact Terms of Reference & Significant Views

The Landscape and Visual Impact Study (LVIS) Terms of Reference contained in Appendix A3 to the Guide provides guidance for preparing Landscape and Visual Impact Studies required for developments exceeding 11m or 3 stories in height within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area.

The Terms of Reference also identifies the 23 Significant Views documented through the Significant View Survey, all of which must be considered as part of the analysis.

### **What is a LVIS**

A Landscape and Visual Impact Study (LVIS) is a technical study required to be submitted in support of a development application that proposes increase height.

Such studies must be prepared by qualified professionals and be submitted in order to demonstrate that a proposed height increase can be supported.

The purpose of an LVIS is to evaluate whether the location, massing, and height of a proposed development will affect important views and vistas, as well as the character of the surrounding urban and natural landscapes.

Preparation of a LVIS is required in the CPPBL where a development involving increased height is proposed.

<b>What is the purpose of the LVIS Terms of Reference?</b>	The Terms of Reference details steps in evaluating whether the location, mass, and height of a proposed development will affect important views and vistas, as well as the character of the surrounding urban and natural landscapes.
<b>What are Significant Views and how were they determined?</b>	The Significant Views were identified through a public viewshed survey, which asked members of the public to share information about their favourite views within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area. The survey responses were reviewed, and 23 Significant Views were identified.
<b>How Are Significant Views to be considered in development proposals?</b>	Significant Views, as further identified in Appendix A3, should be reviewed. Where a proposal for increased height and/or density is located within a Significant View, LVIS will be required to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development and to ensure that the view is not compromised.
<b>How to prepare a LVIS</b>	When an LVIS is required, it must be completed in accordance with the standards and methodologies outlined in the Terms of Reference provided in Appendix A3.

## 6.0 Performance Standards

When evaluating the impacts of taller and higher density development, it is essential to establish clear standards and guiding principles to help refine building design and mitigate potential effects. These considerations form a critical component of the Height and Density policy framework.

Performance standards to be complied with when a development involves a proposed height increase above 11m or 3 storeys in height are included in Section 2.5.3 of the CPP By-law.

<b>What is the purpose of Performance Standards?</b>	The Performance Standards have been developed to provide clear, measurable criteria for incorporation into development proposals. Their purpose is to support built forms that integrate appropriately with adjacent properties, are compatible with the character and function of established neighbourhoods, and optimize development functionality.
<b>Pillars of Performance Standards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building Design</li> <li>2. Site Layout</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Amenities</p> <p>When considering Performance Standards that contribute positively to the form and function of taller and denser buildings, three Pillars were identified. When combined, these Pillars work together to support well-designed community and public spaces and to achieve enhanced functionality. Within each Pillar, corresponding sub-categories have also been identified.</p>
<p><b>What Performance Standards are included in Section 2.5 of the CPPBL?</b></p>	<p>Performance standards relating to the following are included in Section 2.5.3 of the CPPBL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step-backs;</li> <li>• Landscape buffers;</li> <li>• Rooftop mechanical penthouses;</li> <li>• Parking lots and underground parking;</li> <li>• Windows and balconies; and</li> <li>• Amenity areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How to Apply the Performance Standards</b></p>	<p>Where a development proposal in the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area exceeds three (3) storeys in height, the Performance Standards within Section 2.5.3 of the Community Planning Permit will apply. A checklist in Appendix A4 outline the performance standards to be incorporated in site and building design.</p>

## 7.0 Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits

In exchange for increased development permissions, such as additional height, density, or other regulatory flexibilities, a CPPBL may require the provision of community benefits. These may include affordable housing, cash-in-lieu contributions, or other defined facilities and services that balance the benefits received from taller and denser developments.

The Town of Huntsville completed a Land Economics Assessment in March 2026, which reviewed the feasibility of establishing a proportional contribution rate for Facilities, Services, and Matters for Community Benefits (FSMCB) under the CPPBL. The assessment indicated that current development feasibility is significantly constrained by elevated development costs.

Under current market conditions, staff have included enabling provisions to implement FSMCB at an appropriate time, given market feasibility. Flexible provisions have also been included to allow FSMCB to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Such contributions

must bear a reasonable planning relationship to the increase in height and/or density, including a geographic relationship to the development or addressing planning issues associated with the proposed development.

**How to determine an appropriate FSMCB on a case-by-case basis?**

Community benefits can be provided outright or through a cash-in-Lieu alternative.

Determining an appropriate FSMCB on a case-by-case basis will require the submission of a site-specific Proforma Assessment prepared by a qualified professional. This assessment may be used to establish an appropriate monetary value for community benefits based on the lift in land value resulting from the proposed increase in height or density.

Community benefits provided should be proportional and address needs in proximity to the proposed development.

The type and value of FSMCB contributions will be determined through discussions between municipal staff and development proponents as part of the development review process, to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services.

**What are FSMCB that can be provided?**

FSMCB that can be provided for applications increasing height and/or density should be as follows;

- smart value housing, special needs housing or social housing;
- conservation of cultural heritage resources contained within the Municipal Heritage Register;
- buildings that incorporate sustainable design features;
- energy and/or water conservation measures;
- public art;
- non-profit arts, cultural, or community or institutional facilities;
- public transit infrastructure, facilities, and/or services;
- public parking;

- land for municipal purposes;
- parkland and improvements to parks in excess of the Planning Act requirements;
- active transportation amenities, such as signage, seating, washrooms, lighting, parking and other facilities; or
- a cash contribution in lieu of a community benefit.

DRAFT

# Appendices

## A1: Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density

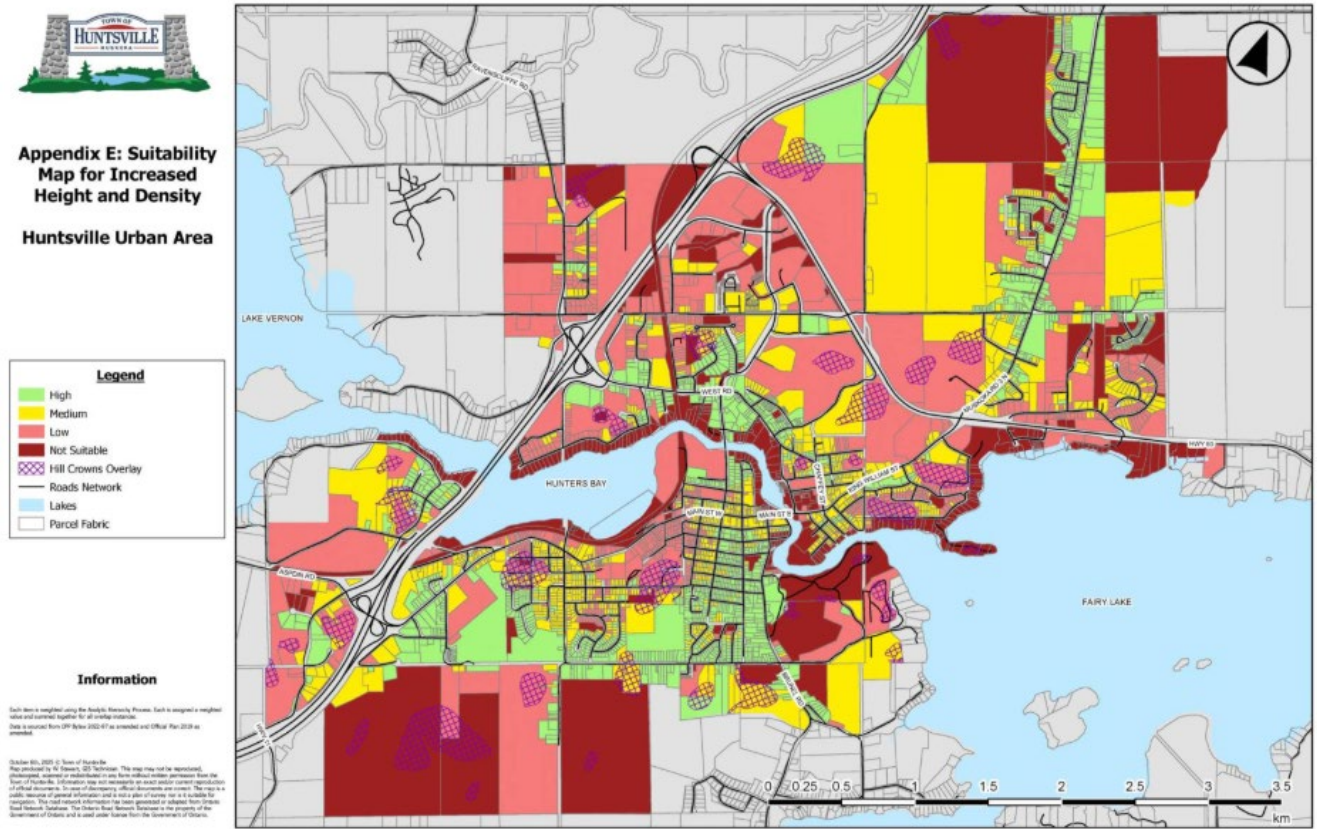


Figure 1: Suitability Map

### 1.0 What are the components of the Suitability Map?

To determine suitability, constraints and opportunities were identified. Constraints are factors that limit development potential, whereas opportunities are factors that support development potential. The suitability analysis considered Policy Constraints, Height Constraints, and Opportunities as the principal mapping components to determine suitability.

#### 1.1 Policy Constraints Component Map

##### Policy Constraints

The Policy Constraints component map reflects development constraints associated with planning policies contained within the Town of Huntsville Official Plan (HOP) and the Town of Huntsville Community Planning Permit By-law, as amended (CPPBL). The Policy Constraints component map is comprised of the following data layers.

**Layers within the Policy Constraints Component Map**

Absolute Policy Constraints	Other Policy Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetlands</li> <li>• Waterbodies and Watercourses</li> <li>• Type 1 Fish Habitat</li> <li>• Railways and Rail Yards</li> <li>• MTO Lands and 14m Buffer</li> <li>• TransCanada Pipeline and 7m Buffer</li> <li>• Extractive Industrial Use Lands</li> <li>• Floodplain &amp; Static Floodline Elevations</li> <li>• Conservation, Flood, and Open Space Precincts</li> <li>• Urban Shoreline Residential Designation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Buffers and Significant Wildlife Habitat               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Steep Slopes 15m Buffer</li> <li>○ Stratum 1 Deer Wintering Habitat</li> <li>○ Extractive Industrial Uses 100m Buffer</li> <li>○ Wetlands 30m Buffer</li> <li>○ Waterbodies, Watercourses, Cold Water Streams, Tributaries 20m Buffer</li> <li>○ Type 1 Fish Habitat 20m Buffer</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hill Crowns</li> <li>• Steep Slopes 30% or Greater</li> <li>• Land Use Designations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Business Employment</li> <li>○ Residential - Lookout</li> <li>○ Open Space</li> <li>○ Institutional</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Railway and Railway Yards 30m Buffer</li> <li>• Floodfringe</li> </ul>



**Policy Constraints  
Height and Density  
Evaluation Criteria**

**Huntsville Urban Area**



**Information**

City of Huntsville prepared this Policy Constraints map using data provided by the Huntsville Planning Commission and other agencies. All data is subject to change. The City of Huntsville is not responsible for any errors or omissions. The City of Huntsville is not responsible for any damages or liabilities resulting from the use of this map. The City of Huntsville is not responsible for any damages or liabilities resulting from the use of this map. The City of Huntsville is not responsible for any damages or liabilities resulting from the use of this map.

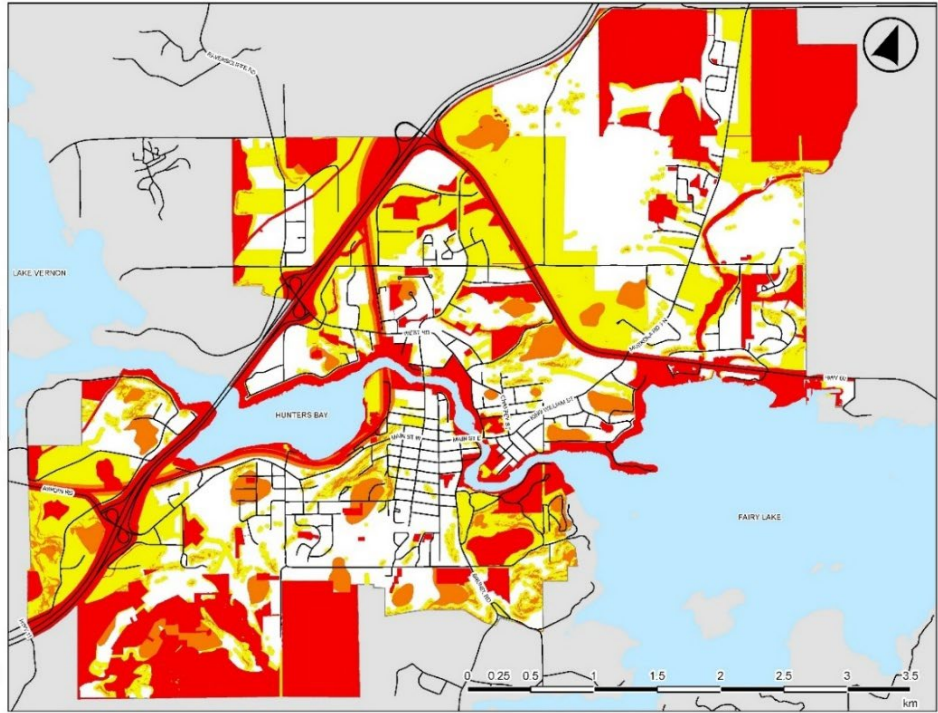


Figure 2: Policy Constraints Component Map.

**1.2 Height Constraints Component Map**

**Height Constraints**

The Height Constraints component map was created using a geospatial analysis that combined 3D terrain models of Huntsville with viewpoint data from the Significant Views Survey and the 23 identified Significant Views.

**Layers within the Height Constraints Component Map**

Individual Height Layers

- 0m (Visible)
- Building Heights Visible from 0-12m
- Building Heights Visible from 12-16m
- Building Heights Visible above 18m

**How was height constraint data generated?**

To generate the height constraints data, GIS software utilized a Digital Surface Model (DSM) and a Digital Elevation Model (DEM). A DEM is a digital model that shows what the ground looks like with everything removed, no buildings, trees, or other structures. A DSM shows the ground plus everything on top of it, like buildings, trees, and other structures, to see the height of land and these features.

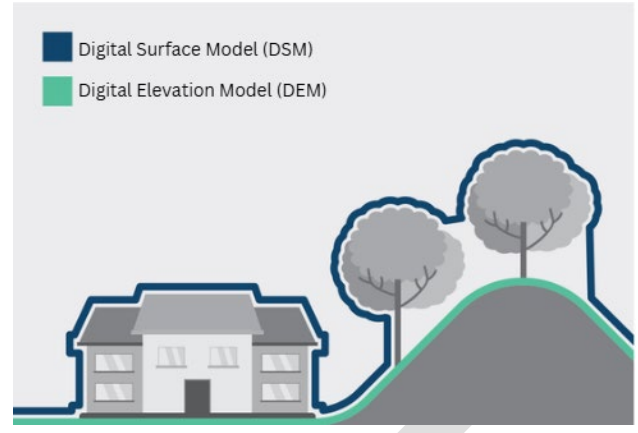


Figure 3: DSM vs. DEM Visual Graphic. DEM Visual Graphic. (Geoimage, 2025; <https://geoimage.com.au/products/digital-elevation-models>).

Using the Significant Views data, Town staff analyzed what is visible within the 23 Significant Views through DSM modelling. The 23 viewsheds refined the DSM, and the results were combined with the DEM to represent existing ground conditions. The Above Ground Level Raster tool was then used to calculate the height at which a structure would become visible within each view. This analysis was repeated for all 23 Significant Views. The resulting height values were translated into typical building storey equivalents (e.g., 12m ≈ 3 storeys; 16m ≈ 4 storeys) for the component map.

**Where are the Significant Views identified?**

The list of Significant Views can be found in Appendix A3 of this Guide.

Figure 4 of this Guide provides a visual of where the Significant Views are located.



### 1.3 Opportunities Component Map

#### Opportunities

The Opportunities component map integrates data layers that highlight areas with development potential from both height and density perspectives. It incorporates information from the HOP, the Town of Huntsville’s Community Services Master Plan (2022), approved Council initiatives, and analysis derived from the Height Constraints Map.

#### Layers Within the Opportunities Component Map

##### Individual Opportunity Layers

- Areas Outside the 18m Height Constraint
- Bus Stop Proximity
- High Density Clusters
- Intensification Corridor
- Parks and Trails Proximity

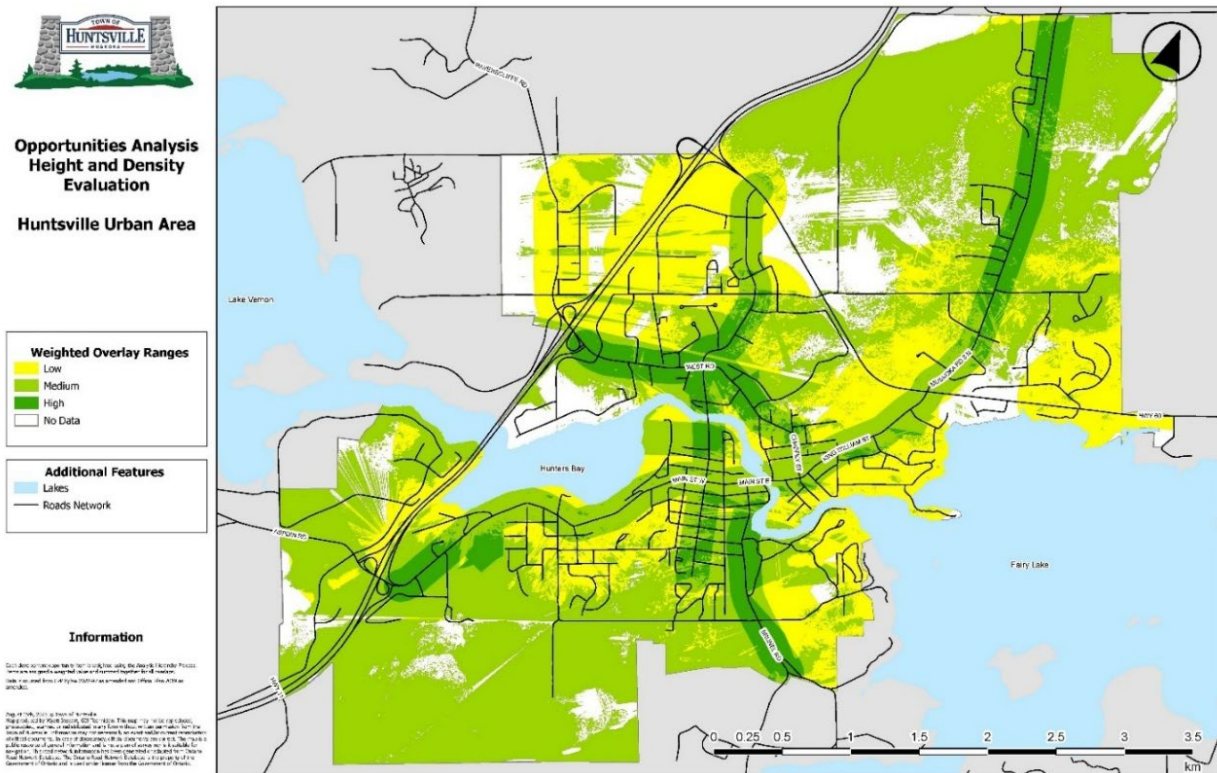


Figure 6: Opportunities Component Map.

1.4 Hill Crown Overlay Map

**Hill Crowns**

The Hill Crown overlay mapping was added to identify the tops of prominent hills and the land that sits within 10m of the hill's highest point. This overlay supports HOP policies that aim to protect important views, maintain natural skylines and ridgelines, and keep vegetation on visually prominent hilltops and cliff edges that have not been identified previously.

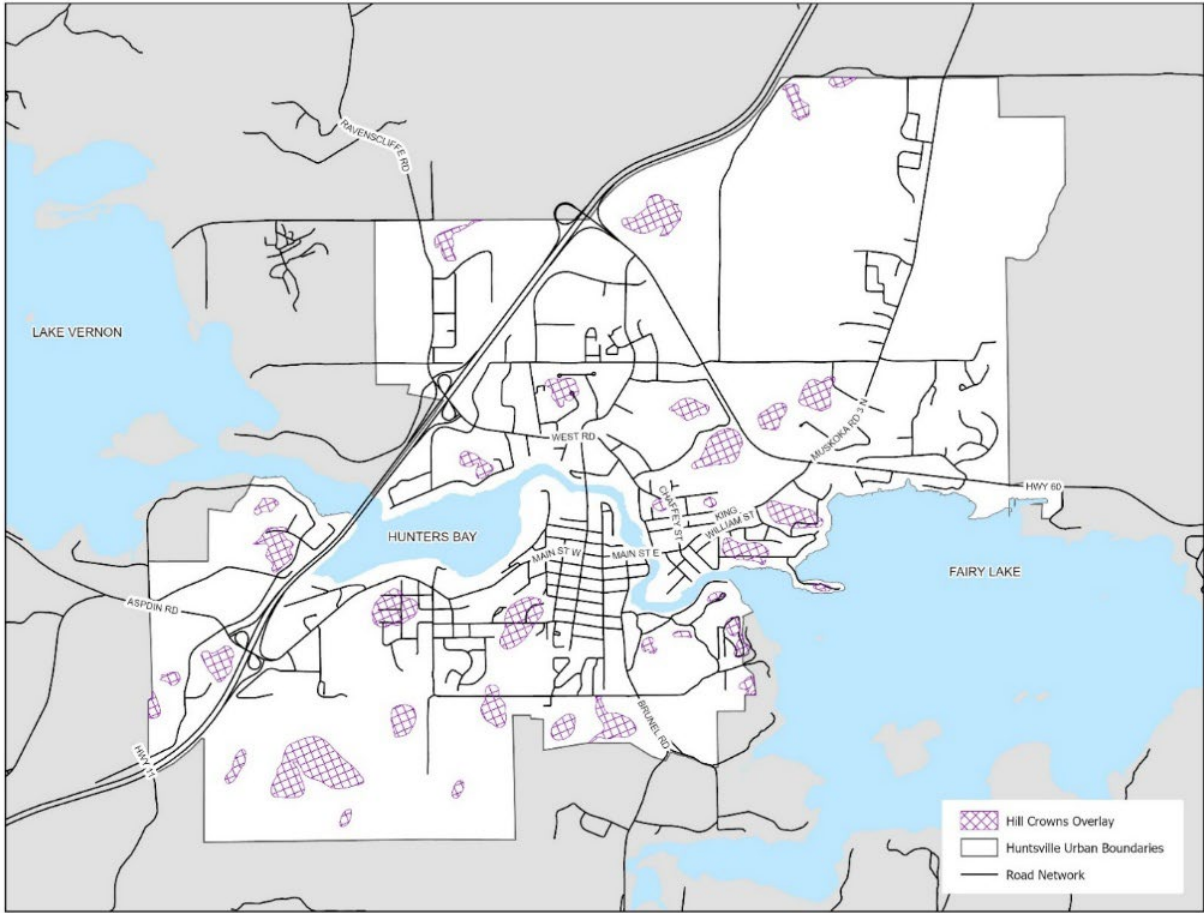


Figure 7: Hill Crowns Overlay Map.

## 2.0 How was the Final Suitability Map created?

To produce the Suitability Map, each layer within the three component maps was weighted based on its relation to the other suitability factors. To ensure the scoring was fair and consistent, staff used the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). The AHP method helps compare multiple factors by ranking them based on their relative importance.

Each location received a final Suitability Score based on the weighted sum of all the layers. In this calculation, Constraints were given positive weights (meaning they reduce suitability), and Opportunities were given negative weights (meaning they increase suitability).

Once all scores were generated, staff reviewed how the values were distributed and used Natural Breaks to group the scores into four categories: Unsuitable, Low, Moderate, and High suitability. To finish the analysis, each property was assigned an average suitability score based on the results of the study and this score was applied to every parcel in the Urban Area.

## 3.0 How to use the Suitability Map

Any property within Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area is shown in one of four colours, green, yellow, light red, or dark red, each representing a different suitability score. Highly suitable properties, shown in green, are areas with strong development potential and few or no policy constraints. These locations typically fall within the Intensification Corridor, are close to existing built-up areas, and are near bus stops, trails, and parks. Importantly, these areas are also outside Significant Views, or, if they fall within them, are not visible or are screened from view due to terrain.

The suitability score is intended to assist Town staff and Council when reviewing proposals that request increased height or density. Property owners, agents, and applicants should also refer to the suitability score when considering height or density increases, to ensure that applicable policy constraints, height constraints, and development opportunities are appropriately addressed. Where a Hill Crown Overlay applies, development must also be limited and carefully located to respect prominent heights of land.

For multi-residential and mixed-use development within no, low, and medium suitability areas, the maximum permitted height is 11m. In high-suitability areas, the maximum height may be increased to 15m, provided an appropriate community benefit is secured.

The following table outlines the colour and meaning of each Suitability Score. This should be cross referenced with the Suitability Map in Appendix E of the CPPBL and Appendix A1 of this Guide.

Suitability Map Colour	Suitability Score	Description
	No Suitability Scoring Areas	Includes areas with no suitability where development constraints limit or prohibit development
	Low Suitability Scoring Areas	Generally includes unsuitable areas where development constraints exist on properties within high constraint, low opportunity areas
	Medium Suitability Scoring Areas	Generally includes properties with few development constraints, moderate to low height constraints and moderate to high opportunities
	High Suitability Scoring Areas	Generally includes properties with few to no development constraints, low to no height constraints, and high opportunities

## **A2: Revegetation Guideline for Landscape Buffers**

### 1.0 Requirements for Landscape Plans

1.0.1 Any landscape plan for a development proposal with increased height and density should be prepared by a qualified professional in accordance with this Guideline and the following documents:

- Town of Huntsville Community Planning Permit Bylaw, 2022-97, as amended
- Town of Huntsville Official Plan, 2019
- Town of Huntsville Development Standards
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

### 1.1 Standard Information to Include on Landscape Plans

1.1.1 Landscape plans shall be prepared by an accredited professional Landscape Architect in good standing with the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA) or alternative qualified professional as deemed appropriate by the Town.

1.1.2 The following information, where applicable, shall be provided on all drawings:

- Name of proposed development
- Key map
- Professional seal of Landscape Architect on all relevant drawings
- Revision chart
- Drawing name, number, and date
- Applicable legends
- North arrow
- Metric scale
- Existing vegetation and conditions
- A list of existing and proposed plantings, which indicates the full botanical name, common name, quantity, quality, caliper, height, spread, and special remarks for each species
  - Existing trees should be shown at their current size and scale
  - Proposed trees must be drawn at minimum  $\frac{2}{3}$  the mature spread
  - Shrubs must be drawn to mature spread
  - Planting plan enlargements must be included for areas where a larger scale is needed to show the proposed landscaping accurately
- Proposed snow storage areas
- Proposed refuse collection facilities
- All proposed driveways, curbing, ramps, stairs, and paved areas
- Identification of all pedestrian hardscape areas and proposed material

- Identification of all proposed landscape elements such as fencing, retaining walls, site furniture, and their corresponding details
- All boundaries, property lines, and limits of the proposed development including easements and visibility triangles
- Adjacent and abutting streets, lanes, driveways, entrances, and boulevard trees
- Above and below ground services and utilities

1.1.3 Drawings shall be coordinated and consistent with all other drawing submissions (site plan, SWM detailed drawings, lighting plans).

## 2.0 General Guidelines

2.0.1 Generally, landscape submissions for site layout approval shall identify existing vegetation, make recommendations for preservation, protection and removal of existing trees, and provide sufficient detail to qualify the scope and intent of proposed landscaping. All site landscape design shall seek to:

1. Maintain and enhance existing vegetation whenever possible within each development;
2. Attempt to maximize existing mature vegetation;
3. Prepare planting lists with only native species;
4. Create pedestrian scale landscapes by softening dominant building masses;
5. Screen unsightly views and minimize the visual impact of parking and service facilities from adjacent properties and street frontages;
6. Create visual consistency between adjacent properties and streetscapes; and
7. Provide four-season interest specifically giving thought to providing vibrant fall foliage and coverage during both summer and winter seasons.

2.0.2 Sufficient soil depths and volumes in planting areas must be provided to support suitable growing conditions, plant survival, and to accommodate the landscaping intended for plant materials and ground cover.

2.0.3 Landscaping must integrate plant material that provides colour or interest throughout the year to enhance the appearance of the development during winter months.

2.0.4 Plant material must be:

- a. Native to the Huntsville area and Zone 4b;
- b. Be suitable for the site conditions;
- c. Meet the minimum size standards listed below in Section 3.5.

2.0.5 Species threatened by pests such as ash, elm and beech are discouraged and only permitted where approved by the Town.

2.0.6 Mitigation measures to protect existing vegetation or provide an adequate growing environment for required vegetation may include:

- a. References to practices and techniques as laid out in Section 3.2 below;
- b. Measures specified in a landscape or tree protection plan;
- c. Recommendations from an arborist or horticulturalist report; and
- d. Other similar measures.

2.0.7 Trees shall not be planted within visibility triangles. Shrubs can be planted within visibility triangles so long as they maintain a height less than 0.6m tall.

2.0.8 Landscape buffers along the front and exterior side lot lines shall consider impacts to the streetscape, public atmosphere, and vegetation on neighbouring properties.

### 3.0 Landscape Specifications and Design

The following sections describe best practices and standards that are required to maintain the integrity of proposed landscape buffers and ensure landscape design solutions are successful. These standards shall be applied for applications that seek increased height and density permissions within the Huntsville Urban Settlement Area.

#### 3.1 Identifying Existing Mature Vegetation

Planting efforts alone cannot replicate the benefits of mature trees. The essence of conserving mature trees lies in understanding their irreplaceable value and contribution to the character of a place. The Town is encouraging applicants to retain existing mature vegetation and incorporate it amongst their development proposals. This would allow for softer transitions, maintained buffers and privacy, and the character of the urban area to be retained and enhanced.

3.1.1 On-site consultation with staff can be utilized to determine areas where existing mature vegetation should remain. Consideration shall be made with respect to abutting land uses, tree heights, canopy coverage, and maintaining the tree line.

3.1.2 Mature vegetation shall be determined by a qualified professional and identified through an arborist report. The report shall identify the species, health, and characteristics of trees noted as being mature.

3.1.3 Generally, mature trees shall have a diameter at breast height of 0.2m or greater and be within 6m of a property line.

3.1.4 Maturity of a tree shall be identified by the species characteristics, where the plant species have grown to reach or almost reach their expected full height, canopy, or have filled in according to their expected characteristics and are showing signs of maturity.

3.1.5 When identifying mature vegetation to remain on site, consideration shall be given to the health and longevity of the tree.

3.1.6 A tree preservation plan shall be developed to ensure protection of the identified mature vegetation to be retained on the site.

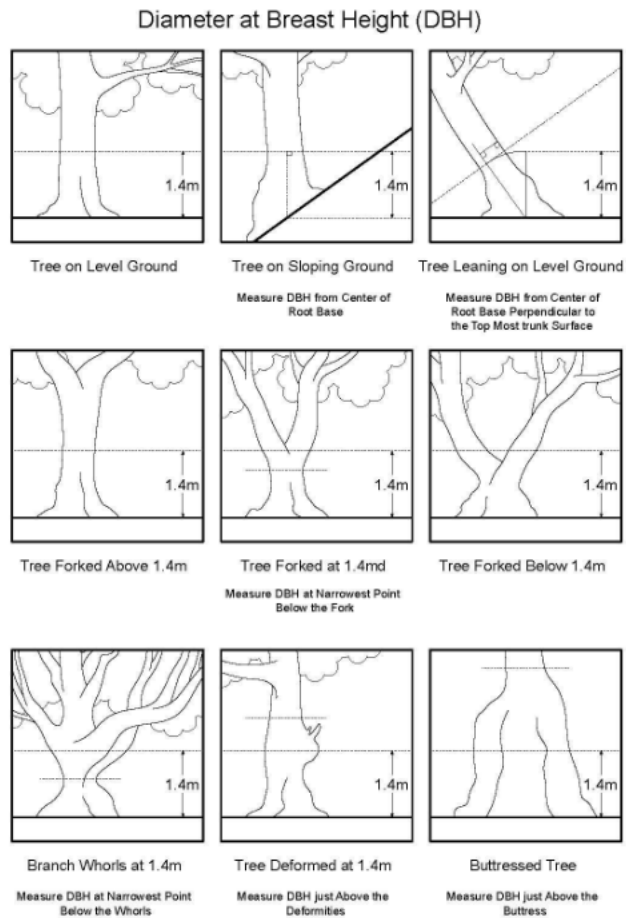


Figure 8: Tree Diameter at Breast Height.

### 3.1.7 Method to Determining Mature Vegetation:

An example of determining the average age of a tree is by utilizing the Growth Factor where the following steps can be followed:

1. Take the diameter of the trunk of the tree, measured at the Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), which is measured 1.4m from the ground.
2. Identify the species of tree to determine the Growth Factor.
3. The calculation will be as follows;
  - a. Diameter x Growth Factor = Approximate Tree Age

### 3.2 Tree Protection Measures

3.2.1 The following documents must accompany all applications where mature vegetation has been identified to be retained;

1. Arborist Tree Preservation and Protection Report\*
2. Mature Tree Inventory List
3. Tree Preservation and Protection Plan

3.2.2 Where a Tree Preservation and Protection Plan can demonstrate suitable measures, an Arborist Report may not be required.

3.2.3 A Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) is required and is determined as a setback required to maintain overall physiological health of the tree and the structural integrity of the tree's roots, based on generally accepted arboricultural principles.

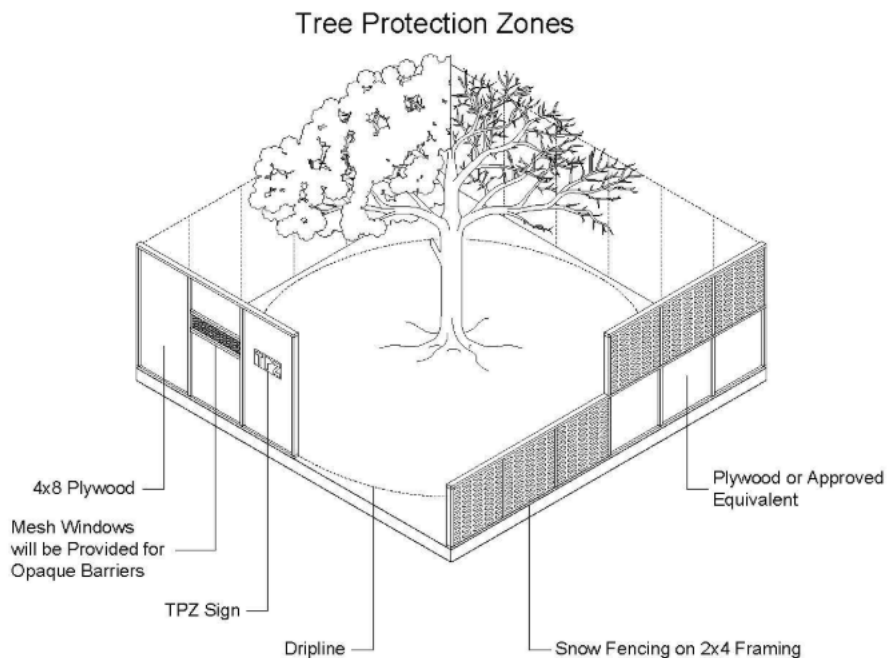


Figure 9: Typical Tree Protection Zones and Measures.

3.2.4 Once mature vegetation that will remain has been determined, Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) shall be determined and implementation measures identified through an arborist report which should reference:

- a. No construction activities including grade changes, surface treatments or excavation of any kind are permitted within the area identified on the Tree Protection Plan as a TPZ. No root cutting is permitted. No storage of materials or fill is permitted within the TPZ. No movement or storage of vehicles or equipment is

permitted within the TPZ. The areas identified as a TPZ must always be protected and remain undisturbed.

- b. It is the applicant's responsibility to discuss potential impacts to trees located near or wholly on adjacent properties or on shared boundary lines with their neighbours. Should such trees be injured to the point of instability, decline, or death, the applicant would also be required to replace such trees to the satisfaction of the Town.
- c. Tree protection barriers shall be installed to standards as detailed to the satisfaction of the Town.
- d. Where required, Tree Preservation Signs must be attached to all sides of the barrier.
- e. Prior to the commencement of any site activity such as site alteration, demolition or construction, the tree protection measures specified must be installed to the satisfaction of the Town.
- f. Once all tree/site protection measures have been installed, a letter of inspection prepared by a qualified professional shall be provided to the Town and if necessary, Town staff shall arrange for an inspection of the site. Photographs that clearly show the installed tree/site protection shall be provided with the letter for Town review.
- g. Where changes to the location of the approved TPZ, sediment control, or where temporary access to the TPZ is proposed, the Town must be notified to obtain approval prior to alteration.
- h. Tree protection barriers must remain in place and in good condition during demolition, construction, and/or site disturbance, including landscaping, and must not be altered, moved, or removed until authorized by the Town.
- i. All additional tree protection or preservation requirements, above and beyond the installation of tree protection barriers, must be undertaken or implemented as detailed in the approved arborist report and/or the approved tree protection plan and to the satisfaction of the Town.
- j. If the TPZ must be reduced to (temporarily) facilitate construction access, the tree protection barriers must be maintained at a lesser distance, the exposed portion of TPZ must be protected using a root protection method approved by the Town.
- k. Any root pruning indicated on this plan must adhere to protocol as recommended by an Arboricultural Consultant.
- l. Prior to site disturbance, the owner must ensure that the works are in conformance with all Acts including but not limited to the Migratory Bird Convention Act and that no migratory bird nests will be impacted by the proposed work.

### 3.3 Landscape Buffer Requirements

#### 3.3.1 Native Plants

Plants that have naturally grown in an area or zone for an extended period of time have greater rates of performance and success. With the goal of preserving and enhancing the quality of vegetation within Huntsville's urban and settlement areas, native plant species appear to be the solution. Landscaping with native plant species can provide the following benefits:

- Native plants require less maintenance.
- Native plants can withstand local climates.
- Native plants are less susceptible to disease and pests.
- Native plants are better suited to meet the needs of local wildlife.
- Native plants provide colourful blooms, berries, and fall foliage.
- Native plants stabilize soil, prevent erosion and are generally more efficient at filtering storm water

For the Muskoka Region, specifically Huntsville, native plants, suitable for Zone 4b according to Canada's Plant Hardiness Zones shall be chosen for landscaping.

#### 3.3.2 Minimum Plant Quantities, Sizes, and Ratios

##### 3.3.2.1 Plant Sizes

New trees and shrubs must comply with the following at the time of planting:

- a. Deciduous trees must have a minimum caliper of 10cm;
- b. Coniferous trees must have a minimum height of 2.5m;
- c. Deciduous shrubs must have a minimum height of 0.3m (5 gallon pot);
- d. Coniferous shrubs must have a minimum spread of 0.5m (5 gallon pot);

Applicants are advised to check with their nursery of choice to determine availability and variety of plants with these requirements.

##### 3.3.2.2 Planting Quantities

3.3.2.2.1 Existing mature vegetation shall provide 1 mature tree per 10m<sup>2</sup> of landscape buffer area.

3.3.2.2.2 New trees and shrubs shall be planted in the following densities;

- a. 1 tree per every 5m of landscape buffer length;
- b. 3 shrubs per every 15m<sup>2</sup> of landscape buffer area.

##### 3.3.2.3 Plant Ratios

Landscaping provided as part of a development application shall contain plant materials at a ratio of as close to 50:50 for coniferous trees and deciduous trees as reasonably possible throughout the site unless the consultant or developer can demonstrate that the species mix should be different to successfully integrate the proposed development with adjacent natural vegetation patterns.

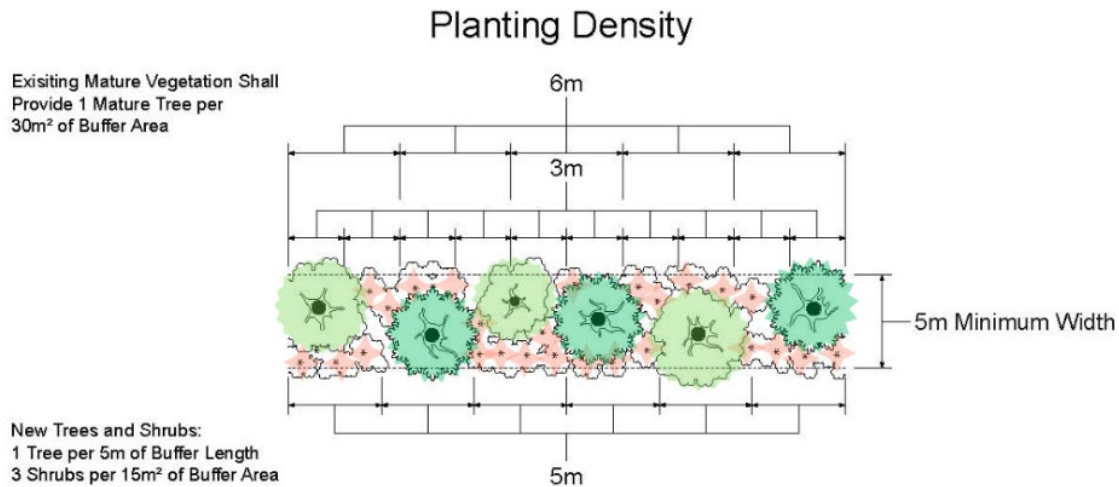


Figure 10: Landscape Buffer Plant Densities.

### 3.4 Fencing Requirements

Proposed fencing shall be located and installed in accordance with Section 2.5 and 2.8 of the Town of Huntsville’s Community Planning Permit Bylaw. The location, type, height, and material of all proposed fencing shall be included in the landscape plans. Details shall be provided for all proposed fencing.

- Fencing shall provide continuous solid screening and be made of consistent opaque material that shall ensure privacy between neighbouring lots is established or maintained.
- Where existing fencing does not meet these requirements, the fencing shall be updated to conform.
- A minimum of 1.8m high fencing is required along the rear and interior lot lines of the subject lands.
- Refer to appendices for standard Town of Huntsville fencing detail.

### A3: Landscape and Visual Impact Terms of Reference & Significant Views

A Landscape and Visual Impact Study (LVIS) shall be required in support of a development application for increased height to demonstrate that the location, massing, and height of a proposed building will not have a significant impact on Significant Views and vistas of urban and natural landscapes, as well as the landscape character. All LVIS submissions are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in this document. Submissions that do not meet these requirements may be assessed as incomplete or unsatisfactory.

#### 1.0 Legislative And Planning Context:

The Town of Huntsville Official Plan (HOP) recognizes the community’s distinctive landscape of lakes, granite hills, and forests, which shapes local character and enhances quality of life for residents and visitors. The HOP includes policies to ensure new development protects this character, noting that “views and vistas will be preserved and new ones created where feasible” (C3.2.9, C5.2.5, C6.2.5). Accordingly, new development should be reviewed for its impact on views and vistas.

#### 2.0 Significant Views

In 2024, the Town of Huntsville engaged the public in a Significant Views Survey within Huntsville’s Urban Settlement Area to develop Height and Density Evaluation Criteria. In the survey, members of the public plotted directional views on the map of the above areas, noted features within the view and their significance to the Town’s character. The Town received 235 survey responses which were reviewed, analyzed, and combined to identify 23 Significant Views. The identified Significant Views are listed below and are to be considered and reviewed in LVIS submissions.

View Number	View Name	Description
<b>VIEW 1</b>	The South-facing Historic Main Street View	East-facing view from River Mill Park across the Muskoka River toward John Street and Brendale Square. The view includes the Muskoka River, shoreline development, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 2</b>	The River Mill Park View	Southwest-facing view from River Mill Park toward Main Street East and Florence Street. The view includes Huntsville’s historic downtown area in the foreground and the Florence Street hillside with mature vegetation in the background.
<b>VIEW 3</b>	The Huntsville Swing Bridge View	North and south-facing views from the Huntsville Swing Bridge. The view includes the Muskoka River, River Mill Park and shoreline vegetation and development.

<b>VIEW 4</b>	The Algonquin Highlands View	Southwest-facing view from Yonge Street. The view includes mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 5</b>	The Bayshore Ridgeline View	North-facing view from Highway 11 and Muskoka Road 2 interchange. The view of the Bayshore Boulevard ridgeline, mature vegetation and urban development.
<b>VIEW 6</b>	The Centre Street Bridge	East and west-facing views from the Centre Street Bridge. The view includes the Muskoka River, historic railway bridge and shoreline vegetation, and development.
<b>VIEW 7</b>	The Conroy Park View	Southeast-facing view from Conroy Park. The view includes Conroy Park in the foreground and a hillside with mature vegetation in the background.
<b>VIEW 8</b>	The Earls Road Hillside View	Southeast-facing view from Highway 60 and Earls Road toward Huntsville District Memorial Hospital. The view includes the hillside behind the hospital and the mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 9</b>	The Silverwood Ridgeline View	North-facing view from Small Street and Capstone Lane toward Howland Drive and Highway 60. The view includes urban development in the foreground and a ridgeline with mature vegetation in the background.
<b>VIEW 10</b>	The Fairy Lake View	Northwest-facing view from Fairy Lake toward Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area. The view includes Fairy Lake, shoreline and urban development, Lion's lookout, hillsides and ridgelines, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 11</b>	The Lake Vernon Gateway View	West-facing view from Hanes Road and Centre Street toward Lake Vernon. The view includes Lake Vernon, urban development, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 12</b>	The Hwy 11 Gateway View	East-facing view from Highway 11 northbound. The view includes a cliff face and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 13</b>	The Hunters Bay Overpass View	Southeast-facing view from the Highway 11 bridge over Lake Vernon towards Hunters Bay. The view includes Hunters Bay, the Florence Street hillside, shoreline and urban development, the Hunters Bay Trail, Avery Beach, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 14</b>	The Lake Vernon View	East-facing view from Lake Vernon toward Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area. The view includes Lake Vernon, shoreline and urban development, hillsides and ridgelines, and mature vegetation.

<b>VIEW 15</b>	The Lookout View	North-facing view from Lion's Lookout toward Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area. The view includes the Muskoka River, Fairy Lake, shoreline and urban development, ridgeline and hillsides, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 16</b>	The East-facing Historic Main Street View	East-facing view from Main Street West and Lorne Street. The view includes Huntsville's historic downtown area, Town Hall, Lion's Lookout, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 17</b>	The West-facing Historic Main Street View	West-facing view from Main Street East and Brunel Road. The view includes Huntsville's historic downtown area and Town Hall.
<b>VIEW 18</b>	The Lookout Cliff Face View	East-facing view from Mary Street and Lorne Street South. The view includes Lion's Lookout cliff face and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 19</b>	The Forbes Hillside View	East-facing view from Forbes Hill Drive toward the Forbes Hillside. The view includes the Cann Lake, hillside, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 20</b>	The Hwy 60 Gateway View	Southeast-facing view from Highway 60 east bound lane toward Fairy Lake. The view includes Fairy Lake, urban and shoreline development, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 21</b>	The North Shore Hunters Bay View	North-facing view from the Hunters Bay Trail toward the north shore of Hunters Bay. The view includes Hunters Bay, shoreline development, and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 22</b>	The Shay Hillside View	Northwest-facing view from Highway 60 west bound toward Shay Road. The view includes the hillside and mature vegetation.
<b>VIEW 23</b>	The Entrance to Hunters Bay View	Southwest-facing view from the mouth of the Muskoka River towards Hunters Bay. The view includes Hunters Bay, the Florence Street hillside, shoreline and urban development, the Hunters Bay Trail, Avery Beach, and mature vegetation.

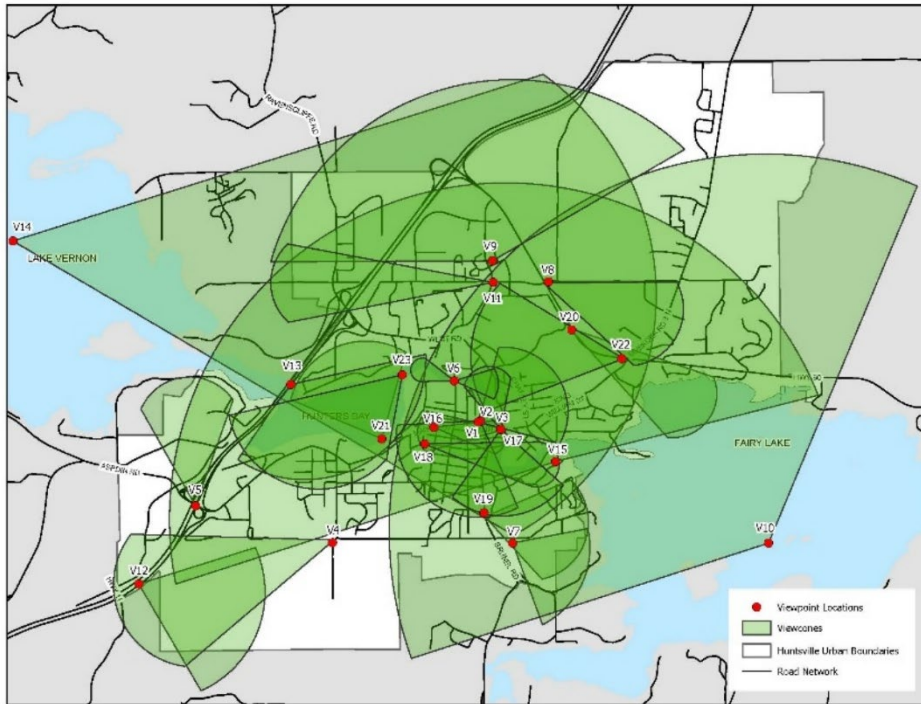


Figure 11: View Cone Map.

The HOP emphasizes the importance of protecting and/or restoring scenic landscapes, including ridgelines, tree canopies, natural features, and skylines. New development should be compatible with the character of the surrounding urban and natural landscape in terms of scale and should fit within the existing topography without projecting above the tree line (C3.2.15(d), C4.1.18(d), and C4.5.4(c)). Therefore, it is critical to consider potential impacts on the landscape and Significant Views when evaluating applications for increased height.

Section F1.9.4(a–g) notes that the Town of Huntsville may require a Visual Impact Study at the time of application. A Landscape and Visual Impact Study is also identified in Appendix A of Community Planning Permit By-law 2022-97, and Section 1.16.5.1 states that all technical reports listed therein may be required at the time of application, to the satisfaction of the Town.

### 3.0 Terminology

**Landscape** - all the natural, built and cultural elements that contribute to the overall appearance of a place.

**Landscape Character** - distinctive pattern of elements that makes one landscape different from another, considering both natural and built features.

*Landscape Character Assessment* – to determine the overall impact of a project or an area’s character and sense of place (what people think and feel about a place and how society values it, whether or not they are physically present within it).

*Landscape Impact* – a change to the existing natural, built and cultural elements that contribute to the overall appearance of a place.

*Magnitude* – The measurement of the scale, form and character of a development proposal when compared to existing conditions. Combined with sensitivity, magnitude provides a measurement of impact.

*Natural View* – a view valued for the prominence of natural beauty including but not limited to views of lakes, rivers, islands, vegetation and ridgeline.

*Sensitivity* – The sensitivity of a landscape or view and its capacity to absorb change of the nature of the proposal. Combined with magnitude, sensitivity provides a measurement of impact

*Significant View* – a portion of the landscape of collective value to Huntsville’s natural and built character that can be observed for a viewpoint accessible to the public including but not limited to travel routes, settlements, public use areas, tourism facilities, and parks.

*Urban View* – a view valued for the prominence of built, historic and cultural features including but not limited to views of architecture, infrastructure, landmarks and streetscapes.

*View* - a portion of a landscape seen by an observer.

*Viewpoint* - a specific location or vantage point from which a view can be observed, as well as the visual and landscape impact of a proposed development or change is assessed.

*Visual Character* – elements which make the view of the landscape unique.

*Visual Impact* - a change to the existing cultural and natural landscape from a viewpoint, usually associated with proposed development.

*Visual Impact Study* – to determine the day-to-day visual effects of a project on people’s views (what people see at a place, when they are there).

#### 4.0 Study Requirements

A LVIS shall be required for increased height and may be one of several studies required for the proper evaluation of an application. A LVIS may be required for any of the following applications:

- Application for a Community Planning Permit

- Application for a Community Planning Permit By-law Amendment

### 5.0 Qualified Professionals

A LVIS should be prepared by a Registered Architect, Landscape Architect, or a qualified consultant with experience in this field.

### 6.0 LVIS Study Steps

The following steps are required in the assessment of visual and landscape impacts:

1. Preparation of Term of Reference (TOR)
2. Review and approval of TOR by Town of Huntsville Staff
3. Preparation of LVIS:
  - Methodology
  - Regulatory and policy review
  - Context review
  - Documentation of existing conditions
  - Demonstration of the proposed physical change(s)
  - Evaluation of landscape and visual impacts
  - Recommendations of landscape and visual impact mitigation measures
4. Submission and review process

#### 6.1 Step 1 – Terms of Reference Preparation

Proponents must prepare a project-specific draft Terms of Reference (TOR) outlining the scope of the LVIS for the Town's review. Town staff will work with proponents to confirm that the study approach is appropriate and that relevant views and landscapes are identified.

The draft TOR must include, at minimum:

- Proponent information, including name and relevant professional expertise.
- Project description, outlining the proposed development (e.g., site plan, building heights, elevations).
- Draft study area, including identification of any Significant Views that intersect the subject lands.
- Draft view-location map, to scale, showing the proposed development, viewpoint numbers, and viewing directions on an air-photo base map where feasible.

Viewpoints should reflect land elevations and built and natural features to capture the most impactful views of the site. Significant community views must also be considered when selecting viewpoint locations.

The study area defines the geographic extent of the visual assessment and will vary based on the proposed development, scenic resources, topography, vegetation, and other physical conditions. For most applications, a radius of one (1) kilometre from the development site is appropriate; however, where long-range visibility is possible, a larger radius may be required.

*6.2 Step 2 – Terms of Reference Review and Approval*

Town approval of the LVIS TOR is required prior to the commencement of landscape and visual assessment work. Staff will review the TOR and approve in writing or request changes or additions.

*6.3 Step 3 - Study Separation*

Methodology	<b>The Methodology Used For The Impact Analysis.</b>
Regulatory And Planning Documents	A review of regulatory and planning documents and any applicable visual and landscape impact policies. The review shall include but not be limited to the District Municipality of Muskoka Official Plan (MOP), Town of Huntsville Official Plan (HOP) and Community Planning Permit By-law (CPPBL).
Context Review	The LVIS shall include a description of the surrounding area including land uses, built form, and any scenic landscapes or landmarks. The information should include a description of the physical environment, visual and landscape character and the nature and extent of human presence.
Documentation Of Baseline Conditions	The extent and condition of existing views and associated landscape resources is the baseline against which physical changes will be compared, and visual and landscape impacts evaluated. Viewpoints will be pre-selected in consultation with Town staff in the TOR review and approval process. All viewpoints must be investigated and documented with photographs to verify visibility of the proposed development. Site visits will be required to the subject lands, all roads and public lands within the study area. Upon field verification, views with predicted visibility may prove to have no visibility due to conditions not captured in the mapping. Photographic documentation of this finding is required. Viewpoints are stationary and should represent the worst-case scenario for visibility in each area. On roads or trails where there is

	<p>a series of viewpoints with similar visibility of the proposed development, it is acceptable to select and document a representative viewpoint. In this circumstance, provide a linear measurement for the length of travelled roadway with similar visibility of the proposed development.</p> <p>For the purposes of documenting existing viewsheds, the Proponent will provide the following items unless otherwise noted in the TOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewpoint locations map, to scale, showing proposed development, viewpoint numbers, and direction of view on an air photo base map, where possible</li> <li>• View photographs for all numbered viewpoints, panoramic images where applicable</li> <li>• GPS/survey coordinates of each viewpoint</li> <li>• Recommended viewpoints for demonstration of proposed development and analysis</li> </ul> <p>Note: Every LVIS will address views from public roads and public lands. Public lands include navigable waterways such as Fairy Lake, Lake Vernon, Peninsula Lake, and the Muskoka River.</p>
<p>Demonstration Of Proposed Physical Changes</p>	<p>Physical changes include the proposed built form and any associated changes to the surrounding landscape. For the purpose of demonstrating the proposed changes, the Proponent will provide the following items unless otherwise noted in the TOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site plan(s), to scale, showing the location and layout of all proposed development and including proposed site alterations, i.e., vegetation removal, grading, etc.</li> <li>• Architectural plans and renderings, where possible, showing the height of all built form, ground and finished floor elevations, window placement, building materials, colours, and exterior lighting</li> </ul> <p>Viewpoint photographs for selected viewpoints; label photos to indicate the location and extent of proposed development; indicate the direction of view and the distance to the proposed development; use flags and map bearings wherever possible to accurately locate the proposed development within the viewshed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photo simulation(s) for selected viewpoints</li> </ul>
<p>Evaluation Of Physical And Landscape Impacts</p>	<p>As defined in within the Terms of Reference, a <i>Visual Impact</i> is change to the existing cultural and natural landscape from a viewpoint, usually associated with proposed development. A <i>Landscape Impact</i> is a change to the existing natural, built and cultural elements that contribute to the overall appearance of a</p>

place. To evaluate the visual and landscape impacts on the scenic resources of Huntsville, the proponent will provide the following items unless otherwise noted in the TOR:

- Visibility analysis for each selected viewpoint (i.e., development is fully visible, partially visible, not visible) and the conditions impacting visibility (i.e., distance, deciduous roadside vegetation provides screening during leaf-on conditions)
- Landscape character analysis reviewing the landscape features in the selected viewpoint and potential impacts. The landscape features (Woodlands, tree line, waterbodies, ridgelines, landmarks, etc.) within the viewpoint are assessed (i.e., no change, low, medium or high) for landscape character sensitivity, magnitude of landscape change and magnitude of visual change
- Analysis of overlook and shadowing impacts
- Analysis of planning and regulatory policies and relevant background information
- Analysis of the visual impact during different seasons.  
Winter vs Spring/Summer/Fall

Analysis must account for viewer height, position, and distance. The viewing height of the average observer is between 1.5 to 1.8 meters above ground level. The viewer is assumed to be stationary and looking towards the proposed development in all circumstances. Posted speed limit, speed of travel, mode of travel, direction of travel, and level of traffic are not valid considerations because they do not impact visibility for a stationary viewer.

The immediate area in front of the observer and up to approximately one (1) kilometer from the viewpoint is considered the foreground of the view. In the foreground, landscape details can be easily discerned. The background of the view is the distant area that lies beyond the foreground. In the background, landscape patterns rather than details or features are seen. Even at over one (1) kilometer, structures that skyline above the horizon line of the landscape can be discerned as a distinct feature as they break the pattern of the landscape. Lands or structures hidden from view by topography or vegetation are in the visual shadow.

Recommendation  
Of Visual And  
Landscape  
Mitigation  
Measures

Certain mitigation measures can minimize the impact of development. Where visual impacts are identified, the LVIS will include the following:

- Description of proposed mitigation measures and how they address specific visual and landscape impacts;
- Description of the recommended Landscape Buffer Strip width along rear and side lots;
- Categorize the proposed mitigation measure. There are broadly three categories of mitigation.
  - Primary or design measures – that are developed through the design process and have become integrated into the proposal. Such primary measures may be generated by the professionals advising the project or in response to consultation with stakeholders. They typically include general site arrangements, retention of landscape assets such as trees or inclusion of key views onto and from the site. Building colour palettes and construction materials are also examples of primary design measures and should be considered in all instances.
  - Good construction practice – to keep the development as acceptable as possible during the construction phase but also protect natural assets such as trees so they remain as long-term features in landscape.
  - Secondary measures – those measures that are taken to address any residual adverse effects after the first two categories of mitigation. This could typically include hedge and tree planting or provision of alternative access arrangements.
- Design drawings illustrating proposed mitigation measures (e.g., architectural plans, landscape plans)

Note: Proposed mitigation measures are subject to Town review. Upon review, staff may require additional mitigation measures to be considered and/or request further examination of proposed measures through photo simulations.

#### 6.4 Step 4- Submission and Review Process

A LVIS submission will include the following information:

- Cover page outlining project name and location, author, submission/revision date;
- Written report outlining the proposed development, study area, study process, investigative methods, data, applicable policies, and findings;

- Table of recommendations in conclusions section of report.
- Maps, plans, and other graphics provided to-scale including a ratio and bar scale and a north arrow
- All materials provided in a non-proprietary and digital format (e.g., PDF file) at a resolution that can be viewed or printed in large formats and remain legible

To be considered complete, an LVIS submission must meet the criteria outlined in this document. An incomplete submission will require revision and resubmission to ensure that the criteria have been met.

Review of the LVIS by Town staff and other agencies will occur upon receipt of complete submission and can result in the following scenarios:

#### **6.4.1 LVIS is accepted**

The submission is complete, and Town staff accept the findings of the LVIS. The accepted LVIS contributes to decision-making on the application in concert with other studies. Critical details derived from the LVIS may be included in a Site-Specific Exception, Condition of Provisional Approval or Conditions of Approval for applications under The Planning Act or other legislation. These conditions or comments may include specifications for building height or location, the extent of built form, and/or specific requirements for vegetative screening.

#### **6.4.2 LVIS is not accepted**

The submission is complete; however, Town staff do not accept the findings of the LVIS. Alterations to the development proposal to further mitigate visual impacts may be requested. Additional assessment and resubmission may be required, with the Applicant's agreement. If no agreement can be reached, the differing conclusions on the LVIS will be provided to Planning Council for a decision on the application.

## A4: Performance Standards Checklist

The following performance standards have been inserted within Section 2.5 of the Community Planning Permit Bylaw (CPPBL) and have been summarized below.

Where a variation to two or more of the performance standards noted in 1 or 2 above are considered, a Class 3 Community Planning Permit shall be required.

### 1.0 Step-Backs

- A minimum Step-Back of 3m is required from the building façade for all additional storeys facing the front, and exterior yard;
- A minimum Step-Back of 3m is required from the building façade for all additional storeys facing the interior side yard except where a property abuts an Urban Residential – Low (UR1) precinct or Urban Residential - Shoreline (URS) precinct;
- A minimum Step-Back of 1.5m is required from the building façade for the third storey facing the interior side yard and a minimum 4.5m Step-Back is required from the building façade for all additional storeys where a property abuts an Urban Residential – Low (UR1) precinct or Urban Residential – Shoreline (URS) precinct; and
- A minimum Step-Back of 3m is required from the building façade for all additional storeys facing the top of bank of a steep slope.

### 2.0 Landscape Buffers

- Will be applied in addition to Section 2.12 of the CPPBL;
- A minimum 5m wide Landscape Buffer shall be required;
- Existing mature vegetation is to be maintained for the purposes of landscape buffers to providing sufficient visual screening;
- A minimum of (1) mature tree per every 10m<sup>2</sup> is required in the buffer;
- Where existing mature vegetation is not present, abundant, or satisfactory, Landscape Buffers will be double the minimum requirements as noted in Section 2.12, and will be planted in accordance with the Revegetation Guideline in Appendix B,
- Where landscape buffers need to be planted, a privacy fence will also be included along the full length of the lot lines to provide continuous solid screening in accordance with Section 2.8 of the CPPBL; and

- No variation shall be granted for reduced landscape buffers along the interior and rear lot lines of a property;

### 3.0 Rooftop Mechanical Penthouses

- Need to be screened from public view ;
- Need to be setback a minimum of 3m from the building edge;
- Preferably located in the centre of the building rooftop;
- Will not cover an area that is less than or equal to 60 per cent of the total floor area of the top storey;
- Will not exceed 4.5m in height;

### 4.0 Parking Lots and Underground Parking

- Surface parking areas will not be located in front yards between a building line and street lot line ;
- Underground parking areas that exceed 1.8m above finished grade will be required to integrate the space above finished grade into the design of the building and/or enclosures in clad materials and/or colours that are consistent or complementary to the building.

### 5.0 Windows and Balconies

- Where a building has a commercial use on the first storey, a minimum of 75 per cent of window surfaces are required to be transparent;
- Where balconies face an interior side yard, the minimum interior side yard setback is required to be 7.5m.

### 6.0 Amenity Area

- For mixed use developments, on site bicycle racks that can accommodate a minimum of 1 bicycle per commercial unit will be provided abutting the public street;
- On site bicycle parking/storage will be provided at a rate of 0.2 spaces per residential unit.
- On site bicycle parking/storage shall be 0.6m wide by 1.8m in length and can be provided horizontally, vertically, or stacked and be contained within the building;

- A combination of indoor and outdoor amenity areas for occupants of the development will be required at a minimum rate of 2.0m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling unit. Amenity areas do not include areas within the dwelling units and areas of exclusive use;
- Indoor and outdoor amenity areas may include but are not limited to the following;
  - Accessible rooftop or terraces;
  - Seating lobby areas;
  - Courtyards;
  - Outdoor patio areas;
  - Play areas;
  - Sports courts;
  - Fitness areas;
  - Event room or lounges; and
  - Swimming pools.

DRAFT

# Attachment #5: Suitability Map



## Appendix E: Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density Huntsville Urban Area

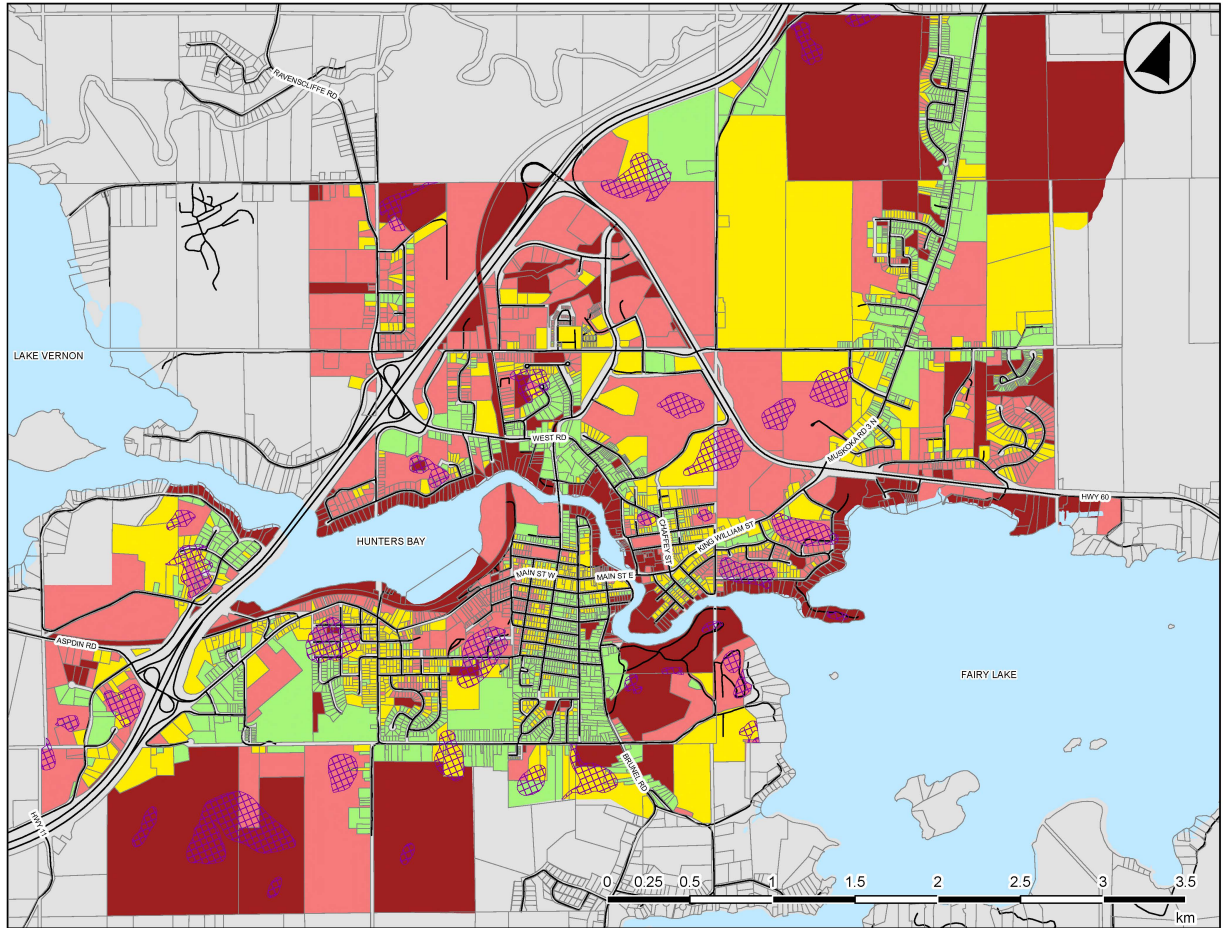
**Legend**

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Not Suitable
- Hill Crowns Overlay
- Roads Network
- Lakes
- Parcel Fabric

**Information**

Each item is weighted using the Analytic Hierarchy Process. Each is assigned a weighted value and summed together for all census tracts.  
Data is sourced from OPP Bylaw 2022-97 as amended and Official Plan 2019 as amended.

October 6th, 2025 © Town of Huntsville  
Map produced by W. Stewart, GIS Technician. This map may not be reproduced, photocopied, scanned or redistributed in any form without written permission from the Town of Huntsville. Information may not necessarily be an exact and/or current reproduction of official documents. In case of discrepancy, official documents are correct. The map is a public resource of general information and is not a plan of survey nor is it suitable for navigation. This road network information has been generated or adapted from Ontario Road Network Database. The Ontario Road Network Database is the property of the Government of Ontario and is used under license from the Government of Ontario.



**Attachment #6: Public Comment Table**

ID	Date Received	Method Received	Commentor	Theme(s)	Comments
1	27-Apr-26	Email	Mark Boekelman	Huntsville's Vision for Growth and Redevelopment	<p>I write as a political economist and a part-year resident of Huntsville of more than fifty-five years, to urge the Council and its planning staff to recognize that the Height and Density Policy now under deliberation is not only a question of building envelopes and setbacks. It is the instrument that will decide what becomes of the last significant waterfront brown site in this town, and with it, what kind of Huntsville we hand to the next generation. I make this submission as a serious request that the policy framework address that opportunity directly, before it is foreclosed by default.</p> <p><b>The Brownsite Opportunity at 37 Centre Street North</b>            In 2020 the Town of Huntsville purchased the former tannery at 37 Centre Street North for one dollar. The property is presently leased to Infra Pipe Solutions, but the lease will expire, and the land beneath it sits squarely between the downtown core and the Muskoka River and Lake Vernon waterfront. The pilings of the old steamboat docks remain visible from the shoreline — a quiet reminder that this strip of waterfront was once a working civic threshold between the town and its lake, before industry intervened and the connection was lost. The Height and Density Policy now under deliberation will govern what is permitted on that land when the lease comes to its end. A decision made in policy now, even in the absence of an immediate development proposal, will shape Huntsville for a generation. To leave the site unaddressed in the policy is itself a decision — one that defaults to whatever the market proposes, on the market's terms.</p> <p><b>The Precedent: Collingwood and Gravenhurst</b>            There is no need to speculate about what patient, publicly anchored brown site redevelopment looks like on a Canadian waterfront. FRAM+Slokker, the Dutch brown site developer, took Collingwood's former shipyard — contaminated industrial land directly on the water — and over twenty years delivered a mixed-use community of approximately 175 townhomes and condominiums, retail and commercial space, a public waterfront park, boat docking, and an amphitheatre. Roughly ninety-five percent of what the original 2001 master plan committed to the public was, in fact, built. Gravenhurst undertook a comparable rehabilitation of its own waterfront, with similar discipline. Both cases demonstrate the same lesson: when the public side of the master plan is anchored at the outset — written into the framework, not negotiated later — brown site redevelopment on waterfront land produces durable civic assets, and not merely private real estate gains. The discipline is in the policy, not in the goodwill of any particular developer.</p> <p><b>The Risk: The Fairy Lake Pattern</b>            Huntsville already has a cautionary example, and it is recent enough to be remembered. The Fairy Lake waterfront went, parcel by parcel, to a shopping plaza and to retirement housing. Public access to that water was foreclosed, and once foreclosed it does not come back. Lake Vernon, and specifically the 37 Centre Street North site, represents the last meaningful opportunity to avoid repeating that error within the downtown frame. The Height and Density Policy must therefore include an explicit requirement that any future development on this site provide public waterfront access as a non-negotiable condition of approval — not as an amenity to be traded away in exchange for height bonuses or density concessions. Once written as a tradeable amenity, public access is, in practice, traded away. The Collingwood lesson is that durable public outcomes come from policy commitments that are not on the negotiating table.</p>

The Demographic Context

The town to which this policy will apply is not the town of fifteen years ago. Between 2016 and 2021, the South Asian community in Huntsville roughly tripled, the Korean community more than tripled, the Filipino community nearly tripled, and the Latin American population nearly tripled as well. A town that was Anglo-Celtic and Protestant for most of its recorded history now has a Hare Krishna temple on Main Street and held its first multicultural festival in 2025. Civic infrastructure built today must serve the town that is arriving, not the town that is departing. A genuinely public waterfront on Lake Vernon — open, walkable, not gated by condominium frontage — is the kind of shared ground that serves all of these communities equally, because it asks nothing of them but their presence. It is the physical counterpart, on the lake side of the downtown, to what The Table Soup Kitchen Foundation is building on the Cann Street side.

Why This Is Also a Fundraising Question

I raise the next point not to mix files but because the two are, in fact, the same question seen from two angles. The Table Soup Kitchen Foundation, operating from The Table Plaza at 12 Cann Street, now carries annual operating costs of approximately one million dollars. It is supported by more than 165 volunteers and more than 600 donors, and it is currently turning away over thirty people a day from a waiting list it cannot absorb. Local fundraising — remarkable for a town of twenty thousand — has carried the organization to this point. But at one million dollars in annual operating cost, layered with a \$1.2 million capital request to the District of Muskoka for the expansion that includes a Warming and Cooling Centre, the funding base has to reach well beyond the local community. The arithmetic is not negotiable.

The Height and Density Policy is directly relevant to that arithmetic. If 37 Centre Street North is developed as public civic infrastructure on the waterfront — a park, a cultural and gathering place, a connective tissue between the downtown core and Lake Vernon — it produces the kind of Huntsville that attracts non-local philanthropic investment. Foundations in Toronto, Ottawa, and across the GTA, including immigrant-founded foundations within the Dutch Canadian, South Asian, Korean, Jamaican Canadian, and German Canadian communities, fund community infrastructure in places that demonstrate civic ambition. A Huntsville that visibly connects its downtown to its lake, and that pairs that public waterfront with an expanded food security and warming hub a few blocks away, is a Huntsville that can make a serious case to funders well outside Muskoka. The alternative — a Huntsville in which the last waterfront brownsite becomes private condominium frontage — is a Huntsville that tells those same funders a different and considerably less compelling story.

					<p>The Ask</p> <p>I respectfully request that the Height and Density Policy, as adopted, include three specific elements directed at 37 Centre Street North. First, an explicit public waterfront access requirement, written as a mandatory condition for any future development on the site rather than as an amenity available for trade against density. Second, a commitment to a public master plan process for the site, undertaken before the Infra Pipe Solutions lease expires, modelled on the Collingwood process that took meaningful public input in 2001 and delivered approximately ninety-five percent of it over the following twenty years. Third, that the planning framework explicitly recognize the social infrastructure value of public waterfront access in a town undergoing the demographic transition described above — that is, that the policy treat shared civic space on the lake as a public good in its own right, rather than as a residual after private development is accommodated. These are not radical requests. They are the discipline that allowed other Ontario waterfront towns to keep what Huntsville still has the chance to keep.</p> <p>What the Council decides about height and density at 37 Centre Street North is, in the end, a decision about whether Huntsville's relationship to its waterfront is a public relationship or a private one. The pilings of the old steamboat docks are still there. So is the choice.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,  Dr. Marinus (Mark) Boekelman  PhD Political Economy, University of Toronto; BA, MA, York University  Cottager and part-year resident of Huntsville, 1970–present  Toronto and Huntsville, Ontario · April 2026</p>
2	30-Apr-26	Email	Liz Behrens	Potential Impacts	<p>I attended the public meeting last night and have read the Draft Report. As a former Town of Oakville Councillor for 20 years, I find it curious that there is no mention of Storm Water Management requirement for High Density Development.</p> <p>Given the flooding that has taken place in Huntsville over the years and specifically the last month, is this an oversight or mentioned somewhere else in the current Official Plan. I don't see it as part of the application process either.</p> <p>The more we eliminate open spaces, we create more opportunity for flooding in the future in the downtown area.</p> <p>The Town of Oakville has a requirement for Storm Water retention ponds for large scale density developments.</p> <p>Just my thought on the planned amendment presented last night.</p> <p>Liz Behrens</p>
3	29-Apr-26	In-person	Shelby Behrens	Community Character	<p>Really well done. Im happy to see that were moving towards more opportunity to support liveable space in Huntsville.</p>

4	29-Apr-26	In-person	Ben Jardine	Impact to Development	Increased building height allows for more economical building to address housing shortages.
5	29-Apr-26	In-person	James Seifert	Open House Discussion	Both Bob Stone and Dan Armour were very informative. I look forward to the CPP Bylaw, May 13th Planning Council Meeting.
6	29-Apr-26	In-person	Mark & Sarah Flynn	Community Character	Amazing work by GIS/Planning Staff. This is a real positive & progressive step for developing Huntsville. All aspects of the plan are positive & significant. Keep in mind that we are drawn to Huntsville because of the environment - rocks, trees, water & sunsets - lets keep this vibe! Background work has been done thouroughly & the proposed guidelines are reasonable.
7	29-Apr-26	In-person	Joanne Tanake	Community Character	Great presentation of plan and good luck moving ahead. Lots of work was done to develop the proposal and thoughtful research into details of community character. Thanks.
8	29-Apr-26	In-person	Doug McKinnon	Open House Discussion	Very informative. Thank you! Dan Armour addressed my concerns. Bob Stone was very helpful. Cookies +++++
9	5-May-26	Email	The Planning Partnership (Brandon Simon and Jose Gamez)	Implications to the Height and Density policy updates to site specific approval.	On behalf of Acer Properties Corporation, the Owner of the properties municipally known as 13 Madeline Street and 0 Shay Road (the "Subject Lands), and the proponent of the Pailey Centre development project, The Planning Partnership ("TPP") respectfully requests the Town's considerations of the enclosed comments on Draft Official Plan Amendment No. 10 ("OPA 10") and Draft Community Planning Permit Bylaw Amendment No. 8 ("CPPA 8"). These proposed amendments include adjustments to the height and density permissions within the Town's urban settlement area, updated standards for urban residential and mixed-use development within the urban settlement area, and updated evaluation criteria for proposed height and density increases. The Subject Lands are subject to an existing site-specific Zoning Bylaw Amendment (Bylaw 2025-71), that was approved by Town Council on June 23, 2025, and Draft Approved Plan of Subdivision (S2007-11), that was amended by the District's Community Planning Services Committee on June 19, 2025. Together these approvals facilitate the development of approximately 26 hectares of vacant urban lands into a 600 unit mixed-density community, serviced by a new public road ("Paisley Avenue") connecting Centre Street North to Shay Road, featuring new public parkland, trails and retention of natural heritage features. Since obtaining approval of the updated Draft Plan, the Owner has continued to work with Town and District Staff to satisfy the draft approval conditions towards registration of Phase 1 of the Draft Approved Plan of Subdivision.

				<p>Draft Official Plan Amendment No. 10 Draft OPA 10 proposes to add "Appendix 8: Hill Crowns" to the Town of Huntsville Official Plan (the "Town OP") and corresponding land use policies C.3.2.11 and C.3.2.15e), which would add additional development criteria for lands adjacent to and within the "Hill Crowns Overlay". Proposed policy C.3.2.11 states: "<i>Hill Crowns within Huntsville's Urban Settlement Area, as illustrated in "Appendix 8: Hill Crowns", shall be protected from incompatible development and any new development proposed within or adjacent to them must demonstrate that the Tree Line and Ridgeline will remain undisturbed on Hill Crowns and the development can proceed without negatively impacting views and vistas, including Significant Views. Where a development includes increased heights on lands adjacent to Hill Crowns, the development shall be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Study and designed to ensure that Tree Lines and Ridgelines within the Hill Crown will be preserved, and no buildings or structures will project above the tree line.</i>" In addition, proposed policy C.3.2.15.e) states that within Hill Crowns, "the maximum building height shall be detailed in the Community Planning Permit By-law and no development including increased heights shall be permitted".</p> <p>Appendix 8 identifies a Hill Crown on the eastern portion of the Subject Lands overlapping Paisley Avenue and Residential Blocks 5 and 6, corresponding to Phase 2 of the Draft Approved Plan of Subdivision. Through the previously approved CPP By-law Amendment and Draft Plan Revision applications, Blocks 5 and 6 were confirmed as suitable locations for development as they are located outside of any natural heritage features or natural hazard areas, and will have direct frontage upon the new Paisley Avenue public road. The CPP By-law Amendment likewise maintained the existing height definition and provisions from the Town's CPP By-law, with the Town acknowledging that this approach would not require a Landscape Visual Impact Study in support of the development proposal.</p> <p>In our opinion, the proposed new policies would retroactively impose new, onerous planning application requirements on the Paisley Centre development even though these blocks are currently permitted for residential development under the existing CPP By-law.</p>
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					<p>The Hill Crown identified on the Subject Lands is not analogous to any natural heritage features or buffers delineated through the Environmental Impact Study, which were placed within the Conservation Precinct in Bylaw 2025-71 to exclude these areas from development. Moreover, the retention of existing vegetation and topography, and minimization of visual impacts is a key requirement of Bylaw 2025-71, which incorporated modifications from Town Staff to provide for the appropriate development of the Subject Lands, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The inclusion of 15-metre wide landscaped buffer along the southern boundaries of Blocks 1, 2, 3, and 4, promoting retention of existing vegetation;</li><li>• The inclusion of a 5-metre wide exterior side yard tree buffer;</li><li>• Maintaining the existing building height maximums for the Urban Residential – High Precinct (i.e., 11 metres for multiple residential dwellings);</li><li>• The addition of a 30-percent minimum soft landscaping requirement for Residential Blocks;</li><li>• Requirements for a range of detailed technical plans and studies to be submitted to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services prior to issuance of Community Planning Permits for development of Residential Blocks. Notably, a Visual Impact Assessment is only indicated as a requirement for Blocks along the south side of Paisley Avenue, and only if grading changes and/or vegetation removal are not minimized to the extent feasible. Tree Preservation Plans and Landscape Plans are required for all blocks (among other requirements).</li><li>• Enhanced environmental protection through the inclusion of approximately 14.08 hectares (54-percent) of the Subject Lands within the Conservation and Open Space Precincts. The Residential Blocks are enveloped by the Conservation Precinct along the north and south boundaries of the Subject Lands, providing for retention of existing steep slopes, the woodlot and the wetland, which in combination with soft landscaping provided on Residential Blocks themselves, will effectively screen development and minimize visual impacts. As such, we respectfully request that the Hill Crown Overlay located on the Subject Lands be removed from Appendix 8: Hill Crowns.</li></ul>
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					<p>Draft Community Planning Permit Bylaw Amendment No. 8 As with Draft OPA 10, Draft CPPA 8 also identifies a Hill Crown Overlay on portions of Blocks 5 and 6. Consistent with our comments on Draft OPA 10 above, we respectfully request that the Hill Crown Overlay located on the Subject Lands be removed from Appendix E – Suitability Map for Increased Height and Density. In addition, Draft CPPA 8 proposes to substitute the current definition for “Grade, Finished” with: “GRADE, FINISHED means the average elevation of the finished surface of ground around the perimeter of a building or structure, except localized depressions which do not exceed 20% of the width of the building or structure or 4m whichever is the greater, such as for vehicle or pedestrian entrances.” Draft CPPA 8 also proposes to add a new definition that would direct the calculation of Building Height for Multi-Residential Buildings: “HEIGHT, MULTI-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT means, with reference to any mixed-use, townhouse, or multiple dwelling buildings or structures, the vertical distance measured from the lesser of either the natural or finished grade, level around the perimeter of the building or structure, whichever results in the greatest height measurement...”. By contrast, under the existing definition of height within the CPP By-law, the height of a building corresponds to the vertical distance measured from the average finished grade facing the front lot line or exterior side lot line, whichever is greater. Town Staff had originally proposed that a new height definition be added as a site-specific provision to Bylaw 2025-71, which would apply to the Residential Blocks located on the south side of Paisley Avenue. While we agreed with the vast majority of staff’s comments on the By-law, we disagreed with this comment, and requested that Council direct staff to remove the proposed site-specific height definition, and instead retain the existing definition from the By-law. Ultimately, Council agreed to remove the site-specific definition, with the understanding that the existing definition would continue to apply. The proposed new height definition for multi-residential buildings is even more onerous than the site-specific provision that had been proposed, as it would measure height from the lesser of either the natural or finished grade. As such, this would effectively represent a retroactive height restriction following Council’s direction just last year not to apply a new height definition to the Paisley Centre development. It could possibly also preclude the development of 3 storey/11-metre tall “Multiple Residential” dwelling types, which are key to the success of the Proposed Development. In our opinion, there are a number of existing site-specific provisions already within the Bylaw that would ensure any development on the Subject Lands maintains a natural setting, effectively mitigates visual impacts, minimizes grading changes, and provides for the retention of vegetation on and outside the Residential Blocks. As such, we respectfully request that the existing definition for “Grade, Finished” and “Height” continue to apply to the Subject Lands. In addition to the site-specific comments noted above, Draft CPPA 8 proposes to add new requirements for any buildings exceeding 11-metres (3-storeys) in height. Specifically, they would need to comply with the performance standards of Section 2.5.3. The proposed performance standards include rigid requirements for step-backs, landscape buffers, rooftop mechanical penthouses, parking and amenities. In addition, any development exceeding the Bylaw’s height or density standards must demonstrate conformity with the Height and Density Review Guideline.</p>
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					<p>While we are generally supportive of the Town's progressive approach to permitting increased height and density, we believe that some of the associated requirements would be prohibitive towards the development of slightly taller than permitted multiple residential dwellings and so would function as a disincentive, when in fact the Town is seeking to promote such development. As an example, the blanket approach to minimum step-backs fails to consider individual site characteristics and local conditions. For example, building's providing generous setbacks and landscaping may appropriately limit planning impacts relating to shadow, overlook, perceived height without the application of minimum step-backs. In all cases, step-back requirements have the effect of reducing building floor area, reducing the depth and functionality of residential units, reducing building envelope efficiency, increasing construction costs, and reducing the number of units being built, all of which also impact affordability.</p> <p>Instead of the inclusion of the proposed rigid requirements, we recommend inclusion of guidelines within the Height and Density Review Guideline, with a requirement of the By-law being general consistency with the Guideline. This would require any applicant to either comply with the measures outline in the guideline, or demonstrate that they are not warranted in a specific case, to the satisfaction of Town staff and Council. This will increase flexibility and support a more nuanced evaluation of potential mitigation measures where increased height and density are proposed. Conclusion We look forward to continuing to work with Town Staff and to continue reviewing and commenting on Draft OPA 10 and CPPA 8 as they are revised and eventually brought forward to Town Council for consideration.</p>
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