WILLIAM BAKER Neighbourhood

District Plan Bulletin Series

Retail/Service Commercial Uses

April 2020

Canada Lands Company
Société immobilière du Canada

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This is the third in series of Bulletins being produced by Canada Lands, with the support of their consultant team, to synthesize key topics discussed and respond to community questions from the first two phases of the consultation process.

Retail/service commercial uses are targeted within the mixed use areas at William Baker and are strongly advocated for by the community. Getting retail and service commercial right is a delicate art of good planning, urban design, density, market response and tenant selection. These neighbourhood-serving retail/commercial uses will play an important role in allowing local residents to live and shop in the same area and allow them an opportunity to depend less on their cars to make everyday purchases and outings (e.g. buy a bag of milk or carton of eggs; meet friends for a coffee; get prescription medications; etc).

This Bulletin includes information about:

- What informs the amount, type, and size of retail/ service commercial space a community can support;
- Attracting retail/service commercial uses to a new neighbourhood;
- Types of retail/service commercial options that the future William Baker Neighbourhood could likely attract and support
- The population typically required to support different retail/service commercial types

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What informs the amount, type, and size of retail/service commercial space a community can support?

The amount of retail/service commercial space supported within a given community is dependent on a range of different factors. Retailers will look at the supply and type of retail already available in the area, and will work to understand what the community needs are related to demographics such as age, ethnicity, income levels in order to understand what gaps need to be filled, or where to introduce new business concepts. William Baker will be establishing a retail mix to support the new and existing community, and to ensure there is a dynamic mix of retail / service commercial uses.
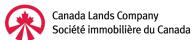
Attracting retail/service commercial uses to a new neighbourhood

There are a number of common factors that retailers consider when deciding where to locate their business, including the existing retail landscape, exposure/visibility, access, and future population changes, amongst others.

Retail/service commercial uses are generally more successful when they are highly visible and easily accessible within the community, such as along busy streets where vehicular traffic and/or pedestrian traffic is high. Design strategies that ensure retail storefronts and signage address streets, that store entrances are accessible, and that access and parking is reasonably convenient for retail reliant on pedestrian or vehicular traffic are important. In addition to employing these design strategies, Canada Lands and its consultant team are and will continue to seek input from the development community to ensure other local best practices for attracting retail uses are well understood to help inform the final District Plan.

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Within the William Baker Neighbourhood, the Keele and Sheppard intersection is one of the best locations for retail, based on the factors identified above. There will likely also be opportunities for retail along Keele Street, nearer to the TTC/GO transit hub in the north east area of the neighbourhood, and other more central areas in the neighbourhood.

Types of retail/service commercial options that the future William Baker Neighbourhood could likely attract and support

A residential neighbourhood of the size contemplated for William Baker (approximately 3,500 units / 6,000 – 7,000 people) would typically support a range of more local-serving/ neighbourhood retail and service facilities rather than large scale or significant concentrations of more regional-serving, "destination" type commercial offerings.

Some examples of local-serving, neighbourhood oriented retail service facilities are:

- Food Stores (e.g. convenience, small grocery stores, specialty food stores);
- Smaller scale general merchandise retailers (e.g. clothing store);
- Local-serving finance, insurance/real estate offices (e.g. banking, insurance, real estate);
- Healthcare practitioners (e.g. dentist, family doctors, etc.);
- Food-services and drinking places (e.g. restaurants, cafés, etc.); and
- Personal care services (e.g. drycleaners, pharmacies, etc.)

The population typically required to support different retail/service commercial types

Based on standard industry assumptions, the following provides an indication of the level of density required for different retail/commercial uses.

Retail/service commercial type	Approximate population required to support the type*
Larger grocery store / supermarket	10,000+
Small food store	6,000 – 8000
Coffee Shop / café	1,000 – 3,000
Restaurants	2,000 – 5,000+
Convenience store	1,000 – 3,000
Dry Cleaner or laundromat	2,000 – 4,000

*Additional retail/service market analysis may demonstrate slightly different numbers.

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