

January 3, 2023

Tyler Shantz  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Municipal Services Office - Western Ontario  
659 Exeter Road, Floor 2  
London, ON N6E 1L3

**RE: ERO 019-5981 City of Guelph – Approval to amend a municipality’s official plan**

On behalf of the Guelph Chamber of Commerce, we wish to comment on the City of Guelph’s Official Plan currently posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario for public comment. Specifically, we wish to comment on the secondary plans governing the lands known as the Guelph Innovation District. Fusion Homes, which purchased the Guelph Innovation District lands from the Province of Ontario, is seeking a change to the Official Plan and its designation of a portion of the site as Employment Lands. The change they seek is from Employment Lands designation to Mixed-Use. The Guelph Chamber fully supports this change for the following reasons:

- Our members have consistently identified that one of the top barriers to their growth and continued prosperity is attracting and retaining talent because of the high-cost and inaccessibility of housing. Fusion Homes sees an opportunity for “workforce housing”, which the city and surrounding region desperately need.
- We have reason to believe that a mixed-use designation may result in more employment for the Guelph Innovation District area than if it is left with a strict designation.
- The vision that Fusion has for this community and its proximity to the University of Guelph, suggests a neighbourhood that can and should achieve the vision of being a true live-work environment that has sufficient density to be walkable and mixes residential and commercial uses. A mixed-use designation for these lands offers the most flexibility to both the developer, the business community, the University and the broader community to realize this vision.

In short, we support an amendment to the Official Plan regarding the secondary plan for the Guelph Innovation District. Designating the land as “mixed use” will give the City of Guelph and Fusion the flexibility they need to build the best possible community for Guelph.

Sincerely,



Shakiba Shayani  
President & CEO, Guelph Chamber of Commerce