

281 Falconbridge Road, Sudbury

Presented To:	Planning Committee
Meeting Date:	October 7, 2024
Type:	Public Hearing
Prepared by:	Wendy Kaufman Planning Services
Recommended by:	General Manager of Growth and Infrastructure
File Number:	751-6/24-15

Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding an application to rezone a surplus institutional property to permit the existing building to be converted to a hotel or shared housing use.

This report is presented by Wendy Kaufman, Senior Planner.

Letter(s) of concern from concerned citizen(s).

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the application by 7055579 Canada Inc. to amend Zoning By-law 2010-100Z by changing the zoning classification from "I", Institutional, to "C2(S)", General Commercial Special, on lands described as PIN 73573-0201, Parcel 35323, Lot 12, Concession 4, Township of Neelon, as outlined in the report entitled "281 Falconbridge Road, Sudbury", from the General Manager of Growth and Infrastructure, presented at the Planning Committee meeting on October 7, 2024, subject to the following conditions:

1. That the amending by-law includes the following site-specific provisions:
 - (i) The only permitted uses shall be a hotel or shared housing use contained within the existing building;
 - (ii) That the location and height of the existing building be permitted; and
 - (iii) That Shared Housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road be permitted

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Climate Action Plans

The application to amend the Zoning By-law is an operational matter under the Planning Act to which the City is responding. The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan by providing opportunities to diversify the employment base. The application also supports business retention and growth by expanding the uses permitted at the site. The application contributes to the goals related to housing by

adding to the range and mix of housing available in this area. Overall, the application aligns with the Community Energy and Emissions Plan by supporting the strategy of creating compact, complete communities.

Financial Implications

If approved, staff are unable to estimate taxation revenues as the assessment value based on converted use would be determined by Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

Any additional taxation revenue will only occur in the supplemental tax year. Any taxation revenue generated from new development is part of the supplemental taxation in its first year. Therefore, the City does not receive additional taxation revenue in future years from new development, as the tax levy amount to be collected as determined from the budget process, is spread out over all properties within the City.

The amount of development charges will be based on final review of the property by the Building Services department at the time of permit issuance.

Report Overview

An application for rezoning has been received in order to permit a surplus institutional building to be converted to a hotel or shared housing use at 281 Falconbridge Road, Sudbury. Site-specific relief is requested to permit shared housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road, as well as the location and height of the existing building. The application is recommended for approval as described in the Resolution section.

Staff Report

Proposal:

The application proposes to amend By-law 2010-100Z being the Zoning By-law for the City of Greater Sudbury from “I”, Institutional, to “C2(S)”, General Commercial Special, to only permit the existing building to be converted to a hotel or shared housing use. Site-specific relief is requested to permit shared housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road, as well as the location and height of the existing building. A concept plan was submitted with the application which shows 120 hotel or shared housing units within the existing building, the driveway, landscaped areas and parking areas with 120 parking spaces.

The subject lands are the site of a surplus institutional building being the former Extendicare long term care facility.

The subject property was designated Mixed Use Commercial in the Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury at the time of application. At the time of writing this report, the lands had been redesignated to ‘Regional Centre’ through City-initiated OPA 119, which was adopted on August 13, 2024, but has not yet come into effect.

The following materials were submitted in support of the application:

- Concept Plan
- Confirmation of Sewer and Water Capacity
- Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Existing Zoning: “I”, Institutional

The uses permitted in the “I” zone include a group home, special needs facility, cemetery, day care centre, institutional use, library, museum, park, private club, recreation and community centre, and accessory uses.

Requested Zoning: “C2(S)”, General Commercial Special

The application proposes to only permit the existing building to be converted to a hotel or shared housing use. Site-specific relief is requested to permit shared housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road, as well as the location and height of the existing building.

Location and Site Description:

The subject property is described as PIN 73573-0201, Parcel 35323, Lot 12, Concession 4, Township of Neelon, 281 Falconbridge Road, Sudbury. The lands are located on the west side of Falconbridge Road, which is a primary arterial road, and are accessible via private driveway extending from Falconbridge Road. The lands are approximately 175 m north of the intersection of Falconbridge Road and Kingsway Boulevard.

The subject lands are the site of a surplus institutional building being the former Extendicare long term care facility, which is 4 storeys in height and 6000 sq m in size. The total land area is 16 ha, with 84 metres of frontage and approximately 266 m of depth. The existing building is situated on the easterly portion of the property and is surrounded by the parking area. There are amenity areas on the east and north side of the existing building. Three sheds are indicated on the drawing and were observed during the site visit. There is an open space area with existing vegetation on the westerly portion of the property.

The concept plan shows a screening fence being 1.5 m in height along the northerly property line and ending in the vicinity of the existing vegetated area on the westerly portion of the property.

The site is serviced by municipal water and sanitary sewer services, and there are transit stops on both sides of Falconbridge Road in this location.

Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject lands are in the vicinity of a key intersection of arterial roads and the surrounding land uses are predominantly commercial or industrial character in nature, with low density residential use to the north:

North:	low density residential development fronting on Barrington Street or Elmhurst Court
East:	commercial use in the form of an automotive sales establishment fronting on Falconbridge Road
South:	vacant land zoned M1-1 (formerly the Ambassador Hotel) at the corner of Falconbridge Road and Kingsway Boulevard
West:	industrial use in the form of a food processing plant

The existing zoning & location map indicates the location of the subject lands to be rezoned and the zoning in the immediate area.

Site photos show the site and the surrounding uses in this area.

Public Consultation:

The statutory notice of the application was provided by newspaper along with a courtesy mail-out to surrounding property owners and tenants within 122 m of the property on July 22, 2024. The statutory notice of the public hearing was provided by newspaper along with a courtesy mail-out on September 12, 2024. The applicant was advised of the City's policy recommending that applicants consult with their neighbours, ward councillor and key stakeholders to inform area residents on the application prior to the public hearing. As of the time of writing this report, the Planning Services Division has received six (6) phone calls or walk-in inquiries and two (2) written comment letter with respect to this application raising concerns with existing drainage issues and snow storage, the potential for traffic increases, loss of privacy, property standards/maintenance, concern that fencing along the northerly property line would obstruct access to the ditch and fire hydrants, and concerns with future tenants and increased trespassing on surrounding properties.

Policy & Regulatory Framework:

The property is subject to the following policy and regulatory framework:

- [2020 Provincial Policy Statement;](#)
- [2011 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario;](#)
- [Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury, 2006; and,](#)
- [Zoning By-law 2010-100Z.](#)

Provincial Policy Statements and geographically specific Provincial Plans, along with municipal Official Plans, provide a policy framework for planning and development in the Province. This framework is implemented through a range of land use controls such as zoning by-laws, plans of subdivision and site plans.

Provincial Policy Statement (2020):

Municipalities in the Province of Ontario are required under Section 3 of the [*Planning Act*](#) to ensure that decisions affecting planning matters are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

Several sections of the PPS are relevant to the application.

Policy 1.1.1 states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

- a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term; and
- b) accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs.

The lands are defined as part of a settlement area under the PPS. Section 1.1.3 identifies that settlement areas are to be the focus of growth and their vitality and regeneration is to be promoted. Land use patterns shall be appropriate for the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available. Policy 1.1.3.2 requires densities which efficiently use land, resources and infrastructure and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion. Development in this manner is intended to minimize impacts to air quality and climate change and promote energy efficiency, while supporting the use of active transportation and public transit.

Policy 1.1.3.4 states that appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification and compact form, and policy 1.4.3(f) directs the establishment of development standards for residential intensification which minimize the cost of housing and facility compact form while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

Section 1.3 of the PPS establishes policies for employment and requires planning authorities to promote economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment uses to meet long-term needs, and maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites, which take into account the needs of existing and future businesses.

Section 1.4.1 requires municipalities to provide an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet the needs of current and future residents. Forms of housing which meet social, health and well-being needs are to be encouraged.

Policies 1.7.1 (a) & (c) state that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness, and by optimizing the use of land and infrastructure.

Growth Plan for Northern Ontario:

Municipalities in the Province of Ontario are required under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* to ensure that decisions affecting planning matters conform with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario. Staff has reviewed the planning matters contained within the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario and is satisfied that the application conforms to and does not conflict with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario. The application is considered to conform to Growth Plan policies which encourages municipalities to support and promote healthy living by providing for communities with a diverse mix of land uses, a range and mix of employment and housing types, high-quality public open spaces, and easy access to local stores and services.

Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury:

The subject property was designated Mixed Use Commercial in the Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury at the time of application.

At the time of writing this report, the lands had been redesignated to 'Regional Centre' through City-initiated OPA 119, which was adopted on August 13, 2024, but has not yet come into effect.

Section 1.3.2 of the Official Plan regarding Economic Development acknowledges the link between planning, design and economic development, such as by providing a framework to reinforce the urban structure and achieve efficient urban form and use of infrastructure.

Section 2.3 of the Official Plan regarding reinforcement of the urban structure states that growth must continue to be directed to capitalize on existing investments, make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities, protect our rural and agricultural assets, and preserve our natural features and areas. Reinforcing the urban structure also creates a more energy efficient land use pattern and supports climate change mitigation. Section 2.3.2 directs that settlement area land use patterns will be based on densities and land uses that make the most efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, minimize negative impacts on air quality and climate change, promote energy efficiency and support public transit, active transportation and the efficient movement of goods.

Section 2.3.3 encourages all forms of intensification and establishes a 20% residential intensification target. Policy 9 establishes that the following criteria, amongst other matters, may be used to evaluate applications for intensification:

- a. the suitability of the site in terms of size and shape of the lot, soil conditions, topography and drainage;
- b. the compatibility proposed development on the existing and planned character of the area;
- c. the provision of on-site landscaping, fencing, planting and other measures to lessen any impact the proposed development may have on the character of the area;
- d. the availability of existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- e. the provision of adequate ingress/egress, off street parking and loading facilities, and safe and convenient vehicular circulation;
- f. the impact of traffic generated by the proposed development on the road network and surrounding land uses;
- g. the availability of existing or planned, or potential to enhance, public transit and active transportation infrastructure;
- h. the level of sun-shadowing and wind impact on the surrounding public realm;
- i. impacts of the proposed development of surrounding natural features and areas and cultural heritage resources;
- j. the relationship between the proposed development and any natural or manmade hazards; and,
- k. the provision of any facilities, services and matters if the application is made pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act.

Section 4 of the Official Plan regarding employment areas identifies these areas as lands where people presently work and lands where employment opportunities will be provided in the future. Section 4.3 regarding the Mixed Use Commercial designation describes that these uses are generally concentrated along certain stretches of Arterial Roads. Given the function and high visibility of these areas, special attention is to be given to sound urban design principles including supporting active transportation and transit.

Policy 4.3(1) states that all uses permitted by the Plan except Heavy Industrial may be accommodated in the Mixed Use Commercial designation through the rezoning process.

Uses permitted in the Mixed Use Commercial designation shall provide for a broad range of uses that serve the needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods at a lesser density and concentration than Regional Corridors. Policy 4.3(4) states that, subject to rezoning, new development may be permitted provided that:

- a. sewer and water capacities are adequate for the site;
- b. parking can be adequately provided;
- c. no new access to Arterial Roads will be permitted where reasonable alternate access is available;
- d. the traffic carrying capacity of the Arterial Road is not significantly affected;
- e. traffic improvements, such as turning lanes, where required for a new development, will be provided by the proponent;
- f. landscaping along the entire length of road frontages and buffering between non-residential and residential uses will be provided; and,
- g. the proposal meets the policies of Sections 11.3.2 and 11.8, and Chapter 14.0, Urban Design.

Policy 4.4(3), states that rezoning applications related to the conversion of surplus institutional buildings and the rezoning of vacant lands held by institutions will be considered based on the following criteria:

- a. the need for such lands or buildings for other public uses, and their long-term value to the community;
- b. the compatibility of the proposed uses with surrounding land uses and the intent of the policies in this Official Plan with respect to the proposed uses;
- c. for conversion to residential uses, the appropriateness of the proposed density; and
- d. the policies of Sections 2.3.2 (Settlement Areas), 11.3.2 (Land use policies to support transit needs) and 11.8 (Accessibility), and Chapters 13.0 Heritage Resources and 14.0 Urban Design.

Zoning By-law 2010-100Z:

Development standards for the requested 'C2' zone include a maximum height of 15 m. The minimum required rear yard to the west is 7.5 m, the minimum required interior side yard to the north is 3.6 m, the minimum required interior side yard to the south is 3.6 m, and the minimum required front yard to the east is 15.0 m. The maximum lot coverage is 50%. The maximum height is 15.0 m. The minimum landscaped open space required is 5%. The minimum building separation is 3.0 m. The maximum gross floor area is 50% of the lot area. Accessory structures are not permitted to be in any required yards. Parking is not permitted to be located within 3.0 m of Falconbridge Road or the northerly property line adjacent to the residential zone. A 3.0 m landscaped area is required along Falconbridge Road, and a planting strip is required along the northerly property line adjacent to the residential zone. Two loading spaces would be required for a hotel use.

Site Plan Control:

A site plan control agreement is required prior to conversion of the building.

Department/Agency Review:

Strategic & Environmental Planning, Conservation Sudbury, Infrastructure Capital Planning Services, Development Engineering and Transit have no concerns.

Development Engineering advises that a sewer and water capacity analysis was completed, confirming there is sufficient capacity for the proposed development to proceed. This development will be required to proceed through the Site Plan Control process. It was noted that the residential lots north of the development have historically had issues regarding stormwater generated from this site. Comments regarding lot grading, drainage, site servicing, stormwater management, etc. will be made at that the time of the review of the Site Plan Control application and will include a review specifically of the drainage along the north property limit.

Transportation and Innovation Support advises that site-specific concerns will be addressed through the site plan control process.

Building Services has no concerns with this application. However, the owner is to be advised of the following comments:

- 1) Ensure adequate parking is supplied as a 120-room hotel could require more than 120 parking spaces.
- 2) Applicant to ensure the Fire Route is labelled.
- 3) A building permit is required for any required renovations / change of use.

Planning Analysis:

Planning staff circulated the development application to internal departments and external agencies. The PPS (2020), the Growth Plan (2011), and Greater Sudbury Official Plan, and other relevant policies and supporting guidelines were reviewed in their entirety. The following section provides a planning analysis of the application in respect of the applicable policies, including issues raised through agency circulation.

The subject lands are currently designated Mixed Use Commercial and are zoned to permit institutional uses, and the application proposes to permit a hotel or shared housing use within the existing building, which represents a commercial or residential use.

The application complies with PPS and Official Plan policies that require development to be directed to settlement areas. Directing development to settlement areas will promote efficient development and sustain the financial well-being of the municipality as required by the PPS.

In terms of the principle of the use, staff is supportive of permitting commercial use in the form of a hotel at this site. In proposing a commercial use, the application aligns with PPS section 1.3 that requires planning authorities to provide for a mix and range of employment uses, and policy 1.7.1(a) which promotes opportunities for economic development. It also complies with the Mixed Use Commercial designation of the property, which establishes this as an area along an arterial road where employment areas employment opportunities will be provided in the future.

Staff is also supportive of the principle of permitting residential use in the form of shared housing at this site. Zoning by-law amendments to permit shared housing were implemented in [2018](#) as part of the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. These amendments are intended to strike a balance between facilitating affordable housing options including shared housing while also defining appropriate areas where such intensification should be located. Shared housing is permitted on parts of certain streets within the City, including Lasalle, Notre Dame, Kingsway, Barry Downe, Regent, Lorne and Paris. While this area of the Falconbridge Road wasn't contemplated for shared housing in 2018, the application complies with PPS policies that require municipalities to accommodate a range and mix of residential housing types to meet long-term needs. Residential use is permitted in the Mixed Use Commercial designation.

The shared housing use, as a higher density built form, aligns with intensification policies. The PPS as well as the Official Plan encourage all forms of intensification. Intensification and infill development also support goals related to emissions reduction, which can be achieved by promoting more dense or compact communities as articulated in the City's Community Energy and Emissions Plan. This application will also contribute to the City's 20% residential intensification target and support the City's Municipal Housing Pledge to achieve the target of 3800 new homes constructed by 2031.

The subject lands are an appropriate location for intensification. PPS section 1.1.3 requires land use patterns that are appropriate for the infrastructure and public services which are planned and available. There are full municipal services with adequate capacity available. The subject lands are located on Falconbridge Road which is a primary arterial road, and which is served by public transit. A sidewalk is available on both sides of Falconbridge Road. Employment opportunities and commercial areas are available along Falconbridge Road and the Regional Centre to the south at Kingsway and Barry Downe

Road/Second Avenue. The Porter Park Tot Lot and Minnow Lake Dog Park are near the subject lands. Staff recommends approval of the request to permit shared housing use on a lot fronting Falconbridge Road.

The proposed uses also align with the Regional Centre designation proposed for these lands. At the time of writing this report, the lands had been redesignated to 'Regional Centre' through City-initiated OPA 119, which was adopted on August 13, 2024, but has not yet come into effect. While this application is being reviewed as per the Mixed Use Commercial policies, staff notes that the proposed uses are permitted in Regional Centres which are intended to develop at a net density of 150 units per hectare; develop at transit-supportive densities; provide for a mix of housing types, tenures and affordability; and be designed to implement appropriate transitions of density to facilitate compatibility with surrounding lower-density neighbourhoods.

The Official Plan establishes criteria for the review of rezoning applications for intensification, for rezoning in the Mixed Use Commercial designation, and for rezoning to permit the conversion of surplus institutional buildings. Staff has reviewed these overlapping criteria as follows:

- Suitability of the site including parking: The concept plan demonstrates that the proposal will comply with the development standards typically applied to a hotel or shared housing use except for minor relief for the interior side yard setback (approximately 0.2 m). The PPS states that development standards to promote intensification are to be encouraged. Staff recommends approval of the request to permit the height of the existing building and the location of the existing building, which will address the deficient interior side yard setback. Adequate on-site parking, lighting, landscaping, and amenity areas can be provided, and will be further assessed through the site plan control process.
- Compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood: Staff is of the opinion that the previous long-term care facility use is like a hotel or shared housing use. Given the existing building is being re-used, staff has no concerns regarding compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of scale, massing, height, siting, setbacks, and the location of parking and amenity areas.
- The provision of landscaping to lessen any impacts on neighbourhood character: The concept plan demonstrates that the proposal will comply with the development standards for landscaping including the provision of a buffer strip adjacent to the northerly low density residential zone. Landscaping will be further assessed through the site plan control process.
- The availability of infrastructure and services: The site is presently serviced by municipal water and sewer services with adequate capacity.
- Impacts to the road network: A traffic impact study was not required to support this project given the expected number of vehicle trips per day. No impacts to the local road network are anticipated.
- Use of public transit and active transportation: There are transit stops and sidewalks on both sides of Falconbridge Road in this location.
- Sun-shadowing and wind impacts, impacts on natural features and cultural heritage, natural or manmade hazards: Given the existing building is being re-used, staff has no concerns regarding these considerations.
- The need for surplus institutional buildings for other public uses: The site is not required for other public uses.

- The appropriateness of the proposed residential density: For shared housing use the City has applied a conversion factor to the number of guest rooms based on a ratio of 1 dwelling unit equal to 1.25 guest rooms (first utilized for the rezoning of the Finlandia complex). In this case, the conversion results in 96 equivalent residential units (120 guest rooms/1.25), resulting in a density of 62 units per hectare (96 units/1.5691 ha) which generally aligns with the maximum density of 60 units per hectare permitted in the C2 zone.
- Principles of directing development to settlement areas while considering accessibility and urban design: The application complies with PPS and Official Plan policies that require development to be directed to settlement areas, which promotes efficient development and sustains the financial well-being of the municipality. Accessibility and urban design will be further assessed through the site plan control process.

Staff recommends that the requested C2 zone is appropriate for the site, which aligns with site's current Mixed Use Commercial designation in the Official Plan, and which provides development standards for both the proposed uses. The PPS states that development standards to promote intensification are to be encouraged. Further to rationale provided above, staff recommends approval of the requests for site-specific zone standards to permit the location and height of the existing building, and to permit shared housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road.

Conclusion:

The Planning Division undertook a circulation of the application to ensure that all technical and planning matters have been satisfactorily addressed.

The following are the principles of the proposed site-specific zoning by-law:

- To rezone the lands from "I", Institutional, to "C2(S)", General Commercial Special, to permit existing building to be converted to a hotel or shared housing use along with site-specific relief to permit shared housing on a lot abutting Falconbridge Road, and the location and height of the existing building.

The development of the subject lands complies with several policy directives including the promotion of economic development, the provision of housing types, and the conversion of a surplus institutional building. Staff has considered, amongst other matters, a full range of factors through a detailed review when forming the recommendation of approval for this application.

Staff is satisfied that the application is consistent with the PPS and conforms to the Growth Plan and the Official Plan. Staff is of the opinion that the proposed zoning by-law amendment is appropriate based on the following:

- The application complies with the principle of directing development to settlement areas to promote efficient development and sustain the financial well-being of the municipality.
- The application will provide an opportunity for economic development or support residential intensification targets and the City's Municipal Housing Pledge.
- The proposed location is appropriate for the proposed uses given the availability of municipal infrastructure and transit services, and proximity to commercial and amenity areas.
- The proposal is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and can be accommodated on the site.

Staff recommends approval of the application as described in the Resolution section on the basis that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, conforms to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, the Official Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury, has regard for matters of provincial interest and represents good planning.