1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Regional Investment in Transit

Waterloo Region is introducing the ION light rail and adapted bus rapid transit line system (the ION) connecting Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge along the Central Transit Corridor. It will influence the way in which the Region and the City grow and change over the coming decades. Investment in the ION is part of a larger regional strategy to direct growth and intensification along the Central Transit Corridor, improving transportation choice and connecting key destinations and jobs.

To support the ION, the Region is reconfiguring iXpress bus network to create a series of feeder routes connecting the Corridor to all corners of the Region. This positions ION stops as key points of access and transfer, where regional and local transit will converge. Twelve ION stops fall within Kitchener. The City has identified six “station areas” where station area plans will be developed: Central, Midtown, Rockway, Block Line, Fairway and Sportsworld. Some of these include a grouping of multiple ION stops. Each station area includes the lands within an approximate 10-minute walk of future ION stops.

These station areas are expected to experience significant change over time, presenting an important opportunity to capitalize on regional transit investment to not only improve mobility, but also to encourage public and private investment, advance placemaking, and support the creation of vibrant, transit-oriented, complete communities along the Corridor.

Map_ The ION rapid transit corridor will link the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, supporting new growth and investment along the line.
In response to the investment in rapid transit, the City of Kitchener has begun the multi-phased PARTS planning initiative to create a tailored policy framework for each of Kitchener’s six station areas. Previous phases of work involved identifying the six station areas, reviewing and compiling background information, and advancing a series of key corridor-wide initiatives. These first two phases laid the groundwork for the development of a station area plan for each of Kitchener’s station areas, as well as defining an overarching vision and goals to guide long-term growth:

- Manage growth and change
- Ensure a mix of appropriate land uses
- Enhance transportation choice and connectivity
- Enhance placemaking, safety and community design
- Guide public and private investment

PARTS Central was the first station area plan completed by the City of Kitchener in spring 2016. On May 16th 2016, Council approved the PARTS Central Plan and directed staff to move forward with the implementation measures.

The PARTS Rockway Plan has been developed concurrently with the PARTS Midtown Plan, representing the next phase of work under the PARTS process. Commenced in early 2016, the PARTS Rockway Plan has involved extensive community consultation involving residents, business and property owners and other key stakeholders. The resulting Plan establishes a vision for the station area, and provides an implementation strategy that will inform a series of amendments to municipal policy and planning regulations. This will include related Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments, Urban Design Guidelines and others. These updates to the policy framework for the station area will guide public and private investment over time to advance the Plan’s vision and objectives.

Section 2.0 Setting the Context describes the planning process undertaken for PARTS Rockway, including public consultation and stakeholder engagement activities.

Section 3.0 Vision & Objectives outlines the vision and more detailed objectives that have been developed for the Rockway station area, which have acted as a foundation to inform more detailed policy direction and the development of a preferred design concept for the station area.

Section 4.0 Station-Wide Strategies contains the core policy recommendations based on the preferred design concept for the Rockway station area.

Section 5.0 Land Use & Built Form contains key directions and strategies visualized through a conceptual 3D model of the preferred design concept, illustrating how their implementation could help to advance the overall vision and objectives for the station area.

Section 6.0 Mobility contains key directions and strategies visualized through a conceptual 3D model of the preferred design concept, illustrating how their implementation could help to advance the overall vision and objectives for the station area.

Section 7.0 Public Realm contains key directions and strategies visualized through a conceptual 3D model of the preferred design concept, illustrating how their implementation could help to advance the overall vision and objectives for the station area.

Section 8.0 The Preferred Plan contains a new land use framework for the station area and includes new connections and public realm amenities.

Section 9.0 Technical Considerations provides an overview of the technical analysis of the preferred design concept from a variety of perspectives, ensuring that it will appropriately advance the vision and objectives and not result in any unintended impacts.

Section 10.0 Implementation puts forward a series of recommendations on how the City can effectively implement the Plan’s key directions through Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, urban design guidelines, and other incentives, tools, projects and initiatives.
SETTING THE CONTEXT
The Station Study Area was identified in the first phase of the PARTS process, and is based on a number of factors. Walking distances, existing land use designations and built or natural barriers contributed to the identification of the Study Area boundary. In stage 2 of the PARTS Rockway process, this Study Area was refined through the evaluation of different alternative scenarios. This ensured the final Station Area boundary appropriately captured the areas surrounding the ION stops where growth and change should be directed, as well as nearby stable areas where the existing character should be preserved.

2.2 Existing Conditions

Today, the Rockway Station Area is an industrial employment area in transition with a strong balance between residents and jobs. Some industrial employment uses continue to provide important employment in the area; others have moved on, leaving large vacant and underutilized sites that present exciting opportunities for transit-oriented redevelopment. While Rockway’s live/work character has begun to evolve with changes in the employment market, a number of established neighbourhoods are closely interspersed between active employment uses and potential redevelopment sites. Rockway is a key entry point to Downtown Kitchener from Highway 8, acting as a gateway into the heart of the City.

The following series of images and station area statistics highlight key aspects of Rockway’s existing character, as well as important issues and opportunities in the station area.
The Rockway Centre provides important services for older adults, drawing people from beyond the station area.

The Mill Courtland Community Centre is also a key destination and community facility.

Vacant lots in the area contribute to real and perceived safety concerns, providing important opportunities for redevelopment and community improvement. Redevelopment can also provide opportunities to introduce a finer-grained pattern of streets, blocks and pathways to improve connectivity.

Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks are both important natural heritage features, with large portions identified as Ecological Restoration Areas in the City’s new Official Plan.

The Schneider Creek Floodplain affects critical areas of the station area and is a major consideration for redevelopment.

The PARTS Rockway Plan considers opportunities to create a central signature greenspace that can serve the area, contribute to the restoration of the valleyland, reduce flooding impacts, and unlock redevelopment potential.
2.3 The PARTS Rockway Process

PARTS Rockway was initiated in early 2016 and has followed the five stage process illustrated in the diagram to the right, and described in greater detail over the following pages. Public consultation events were held at every stage of the project to allow important opportunities for input and feedback throughout the process.

The PARTS Rockway process provided the following key benefits:

- Establishing a rigorous planning process, which involved identifying and evaluating alternative courses of action to arrive at a preferred scenario;
- Guiding public consultation activities and ensuring meaningful opportunities for input at each stage of the process;
- Facilitating the integration of land use and infrastructure planning within the station area; and
- Streamlining future evaluation and approval processes for new infrastructure improvements identified in the Plan.

Stage 1 _ February to June 2016
Understanding the Problems & Opportunities

Stage 2 _ June to October 2016
Exploring the Scenarios / Alternatives

Stage 3 _ October 2016 to April 2017
The Preferred Scenario

Stage 4 _ April to Fall 2017
Drafting the PARTS Plans

Stage 5 _ Post 2017
Implementation

Class EA Process

The PARTS Rockway plan was completed following an environmental assessment (EA) process under the Environmental Assessment Act. The EA process provided the following key benefits:

- Establishing a rigorous planning process, which involved identifying and evaluating alternative courses of action to arrive at a preferred scenario;
- Guiding public consultation activities and ensuring meaningful opportunities for input at each stage of the process;
- Facilitating the integration of land use and infrastructure planning within the station area; and
- Streamlining future evaluation and approval processes for new infrastructure improvements identified in the Plan.
2.4 Stage 1: Understanding the Issues & Opportunities

The first stage of work included a background review and public information centre (PIC 1 May 2016) where the Project Team presented initial findings and heard from participants about the key issues and opportunities for the station areas. This work was captured in a Summary of Existing Conditions, Issues & Opportunities report, which included a draft vision and objectives for the station area. The following are a representative set of statements heard through the consultation process.
The second stage of work involved the development of four alternative scenarios for each station area and criteria to evaluate them.

These scenarios included a status quo ‘do nothing’ scenario and three new alternative scenarios illustrating a range of different approaches including potential new streets and blocks, land uses, parks, open spaces and connections. The scenarios and evaluation criteria were presented to the public at PIC 2 (September 2016).

### Status Quo Scenario

The Status Quo scenario provides a baseline to compare the pros and cons of the three draft scenarios against what is currently planned for and permitted within the station area.

The current planning framework for the Rockway station area encourages mixed use development along Ring Street.

There are several large sites designated for general industrial, which permit industrial type employment uses and ancillary commercial and retail uses.

The station area has a number of residential areas, which are intended to remain stable. Some are adjacent to industrial employment lands, which can result in a challenging interface between the two land uses.

Central to the Rockway station area are ecologically significant lands surrounding Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks which are designated as Natural Heritage Conservation. This designation was based on floodplain mapping from 1994. Recent 2016 floodplain mapping supersedes this, and is shown in the ‘future floodway’ and ‘future flood fringe’ overlay.

### Maps Legend For Pages 14 & 15

- **Study Area Boundary**
- **ION & ION Stops**
- **Active Frontage**
- **Pedestrian Crossings**
- **Creek**
- **Streets/Connectivity Network (existing/proposed)**
- **Active Transportation Network (existing/proposed)**

### Land Use

- Mixed-Use High Density
- Mixed-Use Medium Density
- Mixed-Use Low Density
- Commercial
- Innovation Employment
- Institutional

### Estimated People & Jobs per Hectare

- 46 pj/ha (based on land-use assessment approach)
Alternative Scenario 1 assumed that areas within the floodway remained largely as is, with a focus of mixed-use and higher densities at the Borden stop, and medium density redevelopment of the former Schneiders site and adjacent areas.

Alternative Scenario 2 explored the potential for all existing buildings to be removed from the inner floodway, enabling the creation of a central open space to act as the focus for the redevelopment of surrounding areas.

Alternative Scenario 3 provided a hybrid approach to the candidate fringe block development opportunity with a focus of mixed use, higher densities at Borden and medium density redevelopment of the former Schneiders site and adjacent areas.
**Scenario 1** assumes that existing buildings and uses remain within the floodway. Therefore the floodway includes the entire candidate flood fringe. No new structures would be permitted in this area. There may be some potential for adaptive reuse of existing buildings, but this would be subject to Grand River Conservation Authority approval, and would be restricted to less intensive, lower-risk uses and risk mitigation (e.g., high risk uses such as residential cannot be permitted within the floodway).

**Scenario 2** assumes all existing structures are removed from the inner floodway to create a large green corridor. Therefore, the floodway shrinks, allowing the full candidate flood fringe to be re-designated as flood fringe. This would allow a full range of mixed use redevelopment opportunities, subject to current City and GRCA Flood Fringe policies and the considerations outlined in Table 4.1 of the Floodplain Mapping Study.

**Scenario 3** demonstrates what would happen if only larger properties remove structures from the floodway. Here, change is focused on consolidated lands in development blocks 5 and 7, showing how, on a block by block basis, if existing structures are removed from the floodway, the candidate flood fringe in these blocks can be re-designated as flood fringe to permit mixed-use development. In other development blocks where existing structures remain, they would be subject to the same restrictions discussed in Scenario 1.

Along with the recent floodplain study, a floodplain planning opportunity was identified. It is based on a development block system which can reduce the extent of the floodway and re-designate areas as flood fringe if existing structures are removed from the floodway, as doing so would improve flow conveyance and reduce the risk of damage to life and property. The updated 2016 mapping introduces a 'candidate flood fringe' zone. The candidate flood fringe is the outer portion of the current floodway that could be re-designated as flood fringe if existing structures are removed from the inner floodway.

The mapping to the right illustrates a series of development blocks. Within any given development block, if all the existing structures are removed from the red portion of the floodway, the yellow candidate flood fringe could be changed from floodway to flood fringe, unlocking redevelopment potential. Development would be allowed in the flood fringe in accordance with current City and GRCA Flood Fringe policies and the considerations outlined in Table 4.1 of the Floodplain Mapping Study.

The draft alternative scenarios explore different approaches to the floodplain, modeling how private landowners within the floodway may respond to the opportunities presented by the candidate flood fringe.
Based on public feedback and a formal evaluation, a hybrid draft Preferred Scenario was prepared, combining the best aspects of the alternative scenarios.

The draft Preferred Scenario formed the starting point for an interactive workshop held with key City staff, the consultant team, and invited stakeholders. Stakeholders included area councilors, major land and business owners, major institutions, community organizations, and neighbourhood associations. The focus of the workshop was to refine and detail the preferred scenario to inform the development of a draft PARTS Plan and related technical analysis.

Hybrid Draft Preferred Scenario

Hybrid Draft Preferred Scenario presented as a starting point for the Key stakeholder Workshop and Public Open House, December 2016.

Detailed three dimensional modeling of the preferred scenario and related technical analysis were completed over the winter and spring of 2017, feeding into the development of the draft station area plan.

The key directions and recommendations from the draft plan were shared with the public at PIC 3 in May 2017, providing a final opportunity for feedback and revisions to the plan. The plan will be sent to City Council for approval in the fall of 2017, and will inform a series of policy updates including an Official Plan amendment, Secondary Plan update, and Zoning By-law update.
3.0 VISION & OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

Based on observations about existing conditions in the station area, key issues and opportunities, and feedback received during consultation activities, the following Vision and Objectives have been developed for Rockway. The Vision and Objectives guided the development of a series of alternative scenarios, selection of the preferred design concept, and the development of key directions, strategies, and recommendations in the station area plan. Investment and new development in the station area should contribute to the realization of the Vision and Objectives over time.

3.2 Vision

The Rockway station area will evolve into a walkable urban village with a strong sense of identity and distinct character tied to the history of industry in the area. Strategies to maintain and attract new employment will be balanced with the redevelopment of former industrial sites and under-utilized lands. Redevelopment will help to re-stitch the area together, improving connectivity by introducing a new street network, providing a greater mix of diverse housing choices, and enhancing amenities with a range of new uses that meet the day-to-day needs of existing and new residents and workers.

The ecological restoration of the Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek corridors will help to establish a signature central open space for the station area, contributing to reducing flood impacts and setting the stage for higher-density development. While new housing and amenities will improve the attractiveness of the area for people of all ages, employers will be attracted by the area’s proximity to Downtown Kitchener, continued live-work environment and renewed urban setting.

3.3 Objectives

The following objectives clarify the intent of the Vision, and provide more detailed direction on how the Vision can be achieved. The Vision and Objectives provide high level guidance to guide growth and change in the station area, acting as a foundation for the Key Directions and Strategies contained in the following chapter of the Plan.

01 Optimize Investment in Transit by Positioning the LRT Stops as Key Gateways into the Station Area

To support the investment in transit, the areas immediately surrounding the Borden and Mill LRT stops should be positioned as focal points for development. This is where the highest intensity and greatest mixture of uses should be focused, supported by investment in new public spaces and public realm improvements to support multi-modal transfers and last mile connections.

02 Better Integrate the Mill Stop With the Broader Station Area

The Mill stop is tucked into the southeast corner of the station area, east of Ottawa Street along the rail corridor and within an employment area. Visibility and access to the stop is challenging due to the lack of road connections and the existing condition of surrounding uses backing onto the rail corridor. As redevelopment occurs, it will be particularly important to elevate the stop’s profile by improving its relationship with its surroundings and introducing new land uses and connections.

03 Transform King Street as a Gateway into Downtown Kitchener

For residents, visitors and workers entering the City from Highways 7 and 8, King Street in Rockway is their gateway into Downtown Kitchener. However, this portion of King presents a mix of underutilized retail uses and an auto-oriented streetscape. Investment in transit coupled with streetscape improvements can help to encourage private investment along this important stretch of King Street to improve its character and raise the area’s profile.

04 Conserve and Enhance Existing Residential Neighbourhoods

Rockway includes a number of established, stable residential neighbourhoods interspersed with both active and former employment uses. These neighbourhoods contribute to the station area’s live-work characteristic and will help to ensure a mix of housing choices over time. As Rockway experiences growth and change in response to the investment in higher order transit, these established neighbourhoods should remain stable.

05 Conserve and Celebrate Identified Cultural Heritage Landscapes and Assets

The Rockway station study area includes important Cultural Heritage Landscapes as well as listed and designated properties, including the Onward Avenue Neighbourhood, the St. Peter’s Lutheran Cemetery, the Iron Horse Trail, and the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium (The Aud). As new development and change occur, these identified heritage assets must be conserved. New investment can also create opportunities to celebrate and advance conservation objectives for heritage assets.

06 Support the Ecological Restoration of Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks

The Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks are important natural heritage assets that run through the heart of the station area. However, these creeks have been degraded and pushed into concrete channels and below-grade pipes in some places. Existing development has been built to the edge of the creeks in many locations, restricting the natural flow of water and exacerbating flooding issues. The LRT can act as a catalyst to encourage redevelopment that can create opportunities for existing uses to pull back from the creeks, creating space for long term ecological restoration initiatives and signature creek-side green spaces at the heart of the station area.

07 Integrate Sustainable Infrastructure & Design Practices

Rockway’s creekside setting presents an important opportunity to enhance the station area’s environmental performance, particularly in regards to managing the flow of water. As redevelopment occurs, incorporating best practices in sustainable design can contribute to enhanced stormwater management, reducing flood impacts and contributing to ecological restoration measures.
08 Encourage the Redevelopment of Former Industrial & Underutilized Lands
Rockway is an historic industrial area with a number of large vacant and underutilized parcels. In the context of major investment in higher order transit, former industrial and underutilized lands present a key opportunity to encourage the development of a higher density live-work environment with a greater mix of transit-supportive uses.

09 Establish a Finer-Grained Network of Streets, Blocks, & Trail Connections
Rockway has a number of large industrial blocks that limit connectivity through the station area. Redevelopment will present opportunities to establish a finer-grained network of streets and blocks to create frontage for new development and enhance connectivity to the LRT. The Iron Horse Trail also runs through the heart of the station area, terminating at Ottawa St. Opportunities exist to expand upon the existing trail system to enhance multi-modal connectivity between key destinations throughout the area, complementing new street connections.

10 Ensure Large Redevelopment Projects Are Supported With New On-Site Public Spaces
Rockway currently lacks centrally located parks and public spaces. The station area includes a number of large vacant or underutilized parcels that will likely redevelop over time in response to the LRT. Ensuring that these sites include adequate parks and public spaces is integral to meeting the increasingly diverse needs of residents and workers.

11 Support the Diversification of Rockway’s Housing Supply
Most of Rockway’s housing is currently located in established neighbourhoods, with a modest extent of peripheral low-rise multi-unit buildings. As the station area continues to urbanize, it will become increasingly important for the housing supply to meet the diverse needs of a broader demographic. New development should enhance the supply of multi-unit residential while protecting existing stable neighbourhoods, and should consider tenure, affordability, and opportunities to raise a family and age in place.

Rendering_ Illustration of how the 11 Objectives can work together to create a station area with expanded living and working opportunities, new amenities and improved connectivity.
4.0 STATION-WIDE STRATEGIES

4.1 Introduction

The introduction of LRT is only one part of a strategy to create a more vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community. To achieve the full benefit of the investment, it will be important that new development and other improvements contribute to the creation of a more attractive and vibrant place that not only supports transit ridership through higher densities but improves connectivity to and from transit services.

In Rockway, a history of industrial and manufacturing uses has resulted in a pattern of large blocks with limited pedestrian amenity. New development should establish a finer-grained street and block network capable of supporting improved mobility for pedestrians and cyclists. Higher densities and a greater mix of uses, particularly at the stations, will help to animate the area and make it easier for residents and workers to access services. New development creates the potential for improved streetscapes and parking arrangements that support a more active and pedestrian-friendly street environment.

Transitioning from lower density housing and employment to higher density mixed use will create a need for new and improved parks and open spaces. The re-naturalization and enhancement of the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek systems over time creates the potential to position these amenities as important focal points within the community. Opportunities also exist to establish a path and open space network to improve connectivity through the station area and between surrounding neighbourhoods.

The following considerations and strategies provide a set of general directions on how new development, streets and open spaces can work together to make the station area a more prosperous and sustainable community. To achieve the full benefits of these strategies, the recommendations contained in Sections 5, 6 & 7 of this Plan.

A balanced streetscape creating good places for pedestrians. Toronto.

4.2 Creating a Transit Supportive Development Pattern

Establishing a transit-supportive development pattern requires the combination of a number of different but complementary strategies which together help to ensure that transit emerges as a central organizing feature of new development.

STRAATEGIES

(a) Create a walkable and finer grained network of streets and blocks throughout the station area. Generally, the smallest block sizes should be closest to the LRT station and be between 95m and 200m in length along their longest edge.

(b) Support and enhance pedestrian and cycling connections to and from the station through mid-block connections, pedestrian linkages and an integrated cycling network that connect to the station, and when possible link with the existing street and trails network.

(c) Develop a mix of building types and locate higher densities closest to the LRT station to support transit access and a greater level of activity.

(d) Ensure buildings are scaled to integrate within their surroundings by locating taller elements closer to the transit stops. Create a smooth transition in height down to established neighbourhoods.

(e) Locate the greatest mix of uses closest to the LRT station to make it easier for transit users to access amenities and services, supporting more active station environments.

(f) Ensure that areas of greatest intensity and mix of uses are supported by the highest level of public amenity, such as wide sidewalks, street furniture and pedestrian scaled lighting.

4.3 Designing Streets as Places

Every transit user is a pedestrian, cyclist or even driver at some point of their journey. Therefore, providing a wide range of mobility options is critical when developing a transit supportive place. In addition to mobility, streets play an important role as places of activity and socialization. Ensuring that they are designed to support a more comfortable environment for users at all times of the year is important to developing more active places over time.

STRAATEGIES

(a) The space within the right-of-way should be allocated to balance and accommodate a range of movement options including pedestrians, cyclists, transit and automobiles. Where there is not sufficient space within the right-of-way, future development should be set back slightly to provide additional public realm space.

(b) Streets should be designed to make pedestrians feel safe and comfortable by providing generous sidewalks (no less than 1.8m in width), minimizing corner radii, reducing lane widths, and providing a planted landscape zone that acts as a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. This buffer should be wide enough to support street tree planting to enhance pedestrian comfort.

(c) Adopt street design techniques that support pedestrian safety. These include clearly marked pedestrian crossings, sidewalk bump-outs where possible, minimizing street turning radii, eliminating channelized right turn lanes and providing pedestrian walk signals at all signalized intersections.

(d) Streets along designated cycling routes should be designed for cyclist safety by incorporating dedicated and/or grade-separated cycling lanes where there is sufficient space within the right-of-way to do so. Within narrower right-of-ways, other strategies and short term solutions can include advisory bike lanes and sharrows.

(e) Adopt traffic calming techniques such as reduced lane widths, on street parking, increasing the number of signalized or all-way-stop intersections and introducing bump-outs where possible.

(f) Avoid the introduction of traffic circles which are more space consumptive, increase crossing distances for pedestrians and are more difficult for cyclists to navigate.

(g) Design more attractive and comfortable streets by providing a minimum 2m wide landscaped area capable of accommodating a consistent row of street trees. Where there is not sufficient space for a 2m landscaped area or where below-grade utilities preclude tree planting, ensure new buildings are stepped back to accommodate a consistent row of trees between the sidewalk edge and building.

(h) Streets should promote sustainable landscaping techniques by incorporating a range of vegetation within landscaped areas of the right-of-way, ensuring adequate growing conditions for street trees and maximizing opportunities for stormwater retention and infiltration.

(i) Where streets include utilities and infrastructure, seek opportunities to work with utility providers to minimize visual clutter caused by single use utility poles, lighting standards and excessive signage.
4.4 Create a Strong Park & Open Space Network by Improving Connections Between Exsisting Open Spaces & Providing a Range of New Open Spaces

Open spaces play a crucial role in the development of transit supportive environments. They can be used to enhance connectivity to and from transit while encouraging and accommodating greater levels of activity in and around stops. The provision of adequate and varied open space, capable of catering to a range of users, is also critical to support a livable and attractive environment for residents, workers and businesses along the corridor.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Ensure developments contribute to the provision of new parks or publicly accessible open spaces that enhance the identity and amenity of the station area.

(b) Design and locate new parks and open spaces to be focal points for new development and centres of community activity. This can be achieved by placing them at the heart of large redevelopment sites or in locations where they can act as connections between existing and new development.

(c) Actively seek to connect existing parks, open spaces and natural features with pedestrian trails, paths and special streets to develop an interconnected network of parks and open space. This can improve access to and from the stop and/or station area. It can be achieved by placing open spaces where they can accommodate pedestrian and/or cycling connections, reducing the walking/cycling time between destinations or to and from transit stops.

(d) Design and orient new open spaces to be visible and easily accessed from public streets.

(e) Enhance accessibility and support natural surveillance by orienting streets and lots so that new developments face onto parks and open spaces.

(f) Make the most of existing assets by pursuing opportunities to enhance, protect and restore existing trees, parks and open spaces.

(g) Introduce a variety of open spaces and ensure that open spaces are designed to reflect their location in the station area, their adjacent uses and range of potential users. Open spaces can include passive green spaces with lawn areas and generous tree canopy, recreational spaces sized to accommodate facilities such as playgrounds and/or playing fields, and more urban open spaces such as hardscaped plazas. Urban hardscaped plazas can be especially appropriate in close proximity to transit stops and mixed-use developments, where they can act as waiting area for transit riders, or accommodate spill out spaces for cafes and restaurant patios.

(h) Design plaza spaces to be comfortable spaces at all times of the year through the integration of trees and areas of plantings.

(i) Explore opportunities for public art as part of redevelopment and to improve existing conditions. This will create interest by helping to make spaces more attractive and liveable.

4.5 Designing Buildings That Support Placemaking & Deliver an Interesting & Varied Built Environment

The interaction between buildings, streets and their surroundings can contribute to a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience, while supporting an interesting and vibrant station area. The massing, height, orientation and articulation of the buildings should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment that promotes walking and cycling and a high level of pedestrian activity.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Buildings should generally be sited as close as possible to contribute to street enclosure and promote passive surveillance of the street. Ensure adequate setbacks between the street curb and adjacent development according to building typology and use to allow for a generous public realm. In commercial, institutional or mixed-use areas, large setbacks are generally discouraged unless they are intended to provide space for street level pedestrian activities such as sidewalk cafes and patios. Residential buildings should generally provide a minimum 3m setback to accommodate enough space for front doors and landscaping, while providing separation and privacy from the street.

(b) Introduce a maximum building length of 70m and design buildings so that frontages greater than 35m are articulated to break up the building’s massing, visually animating the street with varied frontages.

(c) All buildings and facades should be designed to enhance visual interest through variation in massing, material, colour and texture by promoting the use of elements such as generously proportioned windows, doors and other architectural features.

(d) Animate the street and enhance amenity for transit users, workers and residents by encouraging the introduction of active street level uses close to the transit station.

(e) Minimum 4.5m ground floor heights should be required for all mixed use and commercial buildings to allow for the introduction of grade-related retail or active uses over time.

(f) Where the ground floor of a building contains commercial or retail uses, it should be located flush with the street and incorporate extensive use of transparent glazing (suggest at least 80% of building length) to promote street life and provide visual interest for pedestrians.

(g) The primary entrance to buildings should be facing the street and designed to be clearly identifiable for pedestrians.

(h) Design for an attractive and pleasant building frontage by locating all air vents and mechanical equipment away from public streets, parks or open spaces.
While the introduction of LRT will help to support a much broader range of mobility, the automobile is and will remain an important part of the mobility mix. The development of more transit supportive places will therefore require that the location and design of parking is not detrimental to other modes of mobility or the establishment of active, higher density environments.

**4.6 Seamlessly Integrate Parking & Servicing Into a Pedestrian Friendly & Transit Supportive Environment**

While the introduction of LRT will help to support a much broader range of mobility, the automobile is and will remain an important part of the mobility mix. The development of more transit supportive places will therefore require that the location and design of parking is not detrimental to other modes of mobility or the establishment of active, higher density environments.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) No surface parking shall be permitted between the front of the building and the street. If required, surface parking and visitor parking should be positioned behind buildings in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and ensure buildings address the street.

(b) Reduce the amount of parking area by encouraging shared parking solutions with adjacent uses.

(c) Where feasible combine access and servicing between multiple developments to minimize the impact of driveways and parking entrances on the street.

(d) Reduce conflicts with pedestrian movement by locating surface and structured parking access, loading and servicing elements to the rear of the building or from a lane.

(e) Where direct street access to parking, loading and servicing areas is permitted, it should be located towards the edge of the site to preserve as much building frontage as possible for residential or retail activities that can contribute to neighbourhood street life and pedestrian interaction.

(f) Underground parking entrances and servicing elements such as garbage and utilities should be designed to integrate within the façade of the building.

(g) Structured parking should generally be between 2 and 3 storeys in height and positioned internal to the block to permit active uses along the street. Structured parking facades should be treated like frontage and designed to reflect the characteristics of more active building types, including clearly identifiable pedestrian entrances. When possible, the structured parking should be wrapped by active uses, and if that is not achievable in the short term, its ground floor shall be designed to accommodate changing ground floor uses over time.

(h) Surface parking on sites in close proximity to the LRT station should not be permitted. If interim surface parking is permitted on larger sites as part of a phased redevelopment strategy, it should be located to the rear of new buildings and away from the stop with a supporting plan demonstrating the ability of the site to intensify and replace interim surface parking over time.
The Rockway station area looking west toward the downtown.
Rockway is a transitioning industrial employment area with a strong mix of residential and employment uses. The significant majority of buildings in the area are three storeys or fewer, including low rise industrial buildings/warehouses, low-rise single detached housing, and a few small 4-8 storey multi-unit residential buildings (generally located at the periphery of neighbourhoods and along major streets). Some industrial employment uses continue to provide important employment in the area, while others have moved on leaving large vacant and underutilized sites.

The King Street Mixed Use Corridor is lined with low-rise standalone service and retail uses served by significant areas of surface parking. The Borden and Charles area surrounding the Borden stop is characterized by a mix of auto-related and independent service uses, as well as older manufacturing spaces including the large consolidated MTD site.

Schneider Creek runs through the heart of the station area, with smaller industrial employment type buildings clustered along the creek and dispersed amongst other uses such as residential. Historic industrial sites features low-rise manufacturing buildings, warehousing and a mid-rise office building. Another cluster of eclectic employment uses is located surrounding the Mill stop.

A number of established neighbourhoods are tucked between the various clusters of industrial uses throughout the station area. The station study area also includes important institutional and community assets including a Community Centre and other destinations within and near the area.

Parks and open spaces are in short supply. Aside from some informal open green spaces along the Iron Horse Trail, any formal parks and schoolyards available to members of the community are located at the very edges or outside of the station study area, including Knollwood Park, Kaufman Park, Mausser Park and Meinzinger Park.

The station area is quite large and has a range of older, primarily low density residential neighbourhoods in close proximity to active and former industrial employment uses. The area currently lacks centrally located services and amenities for area residents and workers, who instead rely on services and amenities offered primarily outside the station area.

Over time, the LRT presents an opportunity to encourage transit-oriented intensification and infill throughout Rockway to improve its often challenging interface between employment and residential uses, and to introduce new services and amenities to serve new and existing residents and workers. The following series of key directions and strategies provide more specific direction on how to appropriately integrate areas of stability and change, encourage the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels, introduce new and improved public spaces and focus a greater concentration and mix of uses, services and amenities near the LRT to drive transit ridership and enhance the area’s sense of place.
Support the Continued Viability & Evolution of the Concordia Club and Surrounding Area
Support the Redevelopment of the Lands Between Stirling Avenue & Madison Avenue
Encourage Long-Term Reinvestment on the Employment Lands Within the Mill Street & Stirling Avenue block
Establish a Focus Area Around the Mill Stop

Facilitate the Gradual Evolution of the Employment Uses Between Schneider Creek & Courtland Avenue & Ottawa Street to Borden Avenue
Facilitate Redevelopment of the Sydney, Charles, & Delta Block
Respect the Updated Schneider Creek Floodway and Work Towards a Future Vision

Conserve the Character of Established Neighbourhoods
Establish a Focus Area Near the Borden Stop
Encourage Reurbanization and Infill of the Lands on Ottawa Street Towards Weber Street
Transform the King Street Corridor as a Gateway to the Central Area

scale (approx) 400m
Rockway is an historical live/work area with low density residential neighbourhoods integrated throughout. These neighbourhoods allow residents to live in close proximity to the places they work and contribute positively to the character of the area.

While some of the employment uses around Rockway’s established neighbourhoods remain stable, other industrial lands are transforming. In response to this change, conserving established neighbourhoods is an important strategy which will help to ensure a broad mix of housing types for people of all lifestyles and ages.

While the growth and change of large industrial employment uses has created an interesting relationship with some of these neighbourhoods. In some cases, low density neighbourhoods are located on one side of a street facing onto major active or vacant employment uses on the other. In other cases, employment uses encroach into the established neighbourhood fabric.

Investment and redevelopment will create opportunities to improve these relationships by transitioning less compatible uses into more appropriate forms of development that integrate with and complement established neighbourhoods.

Conserve existing established neighbourhoods by focusing major change and redevelopment towards the LRT stations and on lands other than low-rise residential.

(a) Permit sensitive infill development within neighbourhoods, in keeping with existing built form, scale and massing characteristics.

(c) Ensure redevelopment of larger employment areas provides a sensitive transition in massing and scale down to lower density residential neighbourhoods.

Encourage the transition of less compatible uses within and at the edges of stable residential neighbourhoods towards more compatible building types and uses.

Support the gradual intensification of residential uses along key transit or major vehicular corridors over time through the introduction of appropriate townhouse, stacked townhouse, and 3-4 storey walk-up development.

(f) Provide for adaptability in the housing stock to meet long term demographic needs, such as encouraging secondary suites to support multi-generational living and first-time home buyers.

Preservation of existing established neighbourhoods is important to support the Rockway station area’s character.
Historically, the areas around the Borden stop were industrial/commercial lands with a mix of warehousing/manufacturing and service commercial uses (with a small amount of low rise residential). The LRT will help create opportunities to transform this area into a diverse live/work environment, taking advantage of the area's strong connectivity to the rest of the City and Region. While achieving a transit supportive pattern of development and land use throughout the station area is important, it is particularly critical in the areas immediately surrounding the LRT Stations. These areas can boost transit ridership by adding density and a mixture of uses in the areas most likely to generate transit ridership, while creating an attractive environment for transit users.

The area around the Borden stop is anticipated to see major mixed-use and residential intensification. Its relative separation from established neighbourhoods allows for greater heights and densities to be focused here, while still allowing for a sensitive transition to stable low-rise areas. As such, the Borden stop focus area captures potential medium and high-density properties where the greatest extent of change and intensification is expected.

Redevelopment of the lands in the Borden stop focus area should introduce a fine grain street and block network to support redevelopment and enhance connectivity. Redevelopment should also introduce a mix of uses surrounding the LRT stop, including higher density employment uses and retail at grade.

The regulatory tools that will implement the strategies of this plan should consider policies and approaches that further support the investment in transit within the Focus Area.
The Eastwood Square Plaza on the north side of Ottawa between King Street and Weber Street is a large site that serves an important role within the station area, providing access to goods and services for local residents. Auto-oriented sales and services are located on another large site just west of Eastwood Square on the north side of Ottawa. Together, these large sites are currently detracting from the image of the area due to large areas of surface parking and buildings that are set back from the street.

**Encourage Reurbanization & Infill of the Lands on Ottawa Street Towards Weber Street**

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Encourage intensification of the retail areas with new commercial and supportive uses that line the street and support a more pedestrian friendly environment along Ottawa.

(b) Establish a minimum 8.5m/two commercial storey streetwall height along Ottawa to better define the street, with retail uses located at grade. Buildings should not exceed 8 storeys, and should provide stepbacks at the 6th storey to mitigate the perception of height for pedestrians along the street.

(c) Ensure that building facades greater than 35 m are articulated to break up the building’s massing, and visually animate the street with varied frontages.

(d) In conjunction with redevelopment, consider extending the existing street network through the site to enhance connectivity and create additional frontage for new uses.

(e) Ensure that new development transitions in scale down to adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

(f) Reduce the impact of parking on the pedestrian environment by locating the majority of new residential parking below grade and retail parking to the rear of buildings, internal to the block.

(g) Redevelopment of these sites should incorporate a new public open space that serves the surrounding community and proposed new uses.

(h) Encourage intensification by introducing flexible land use designations. Consider introducing some residential permissions above the ground floor provide that the site maintains at least the existing amount of commercial gross floor area to ensure that these sites continue to provide key community oriented retail, services and jobs.

This area is strategically positioned between the Aud and the Borden stop along the iXpress Corridor on Ottawa. Proximity to a key regional asset and excellent transit service presents an opportunity to intensify these sites with new uses that can better define the street and provide additional amenity for residents and visitors of the area.
The King Street corridor today is characterized by an eclectic mix of standalone service and retail uses served by significant areas of surface parking. Some remnant housing is interspersed between these uses, contributing to the eclectic character. Whereas this portion of King Street provides a key point of entry into Downtown Kitchener, the current character of the street is challenged.

An opportunity exists over time to transform the image and character of the King Street corridor through new development that actively lines the street, improves the spatial definition of the corridor and contributes to a stronger sense of arrival into Kitchener’s urban core. In contrast to more retail-oriented parts of King Street, development here should incorporate slightly larger setbacks to facilitate more substantial greening of the street.

STRATEGIES

(a) Reurbanize the southwest side of King Street with high density mixed use development and the northeast side of King Street with medium density mixed use.

(b) Ensure that active frontages are provided in proximity to the Borden stop and provide standards in the zoning by-law and urban design guidelines for minimum ground floor heights (minimum 4.0m) along the King Street mixed use corridor to allow for the introduction of local services and amenities over time.

(c) New development along King Street should provide a minimum setback (approximately 2.0-3.0m) to support tree planting/landscaping, wider sidewalk and amenity/patio space.

(d) New buildings along King Street should establish a base building height range (approximately 3-6 storeys) to ensure new development frames the street, and then incorporate setbacks to reduced perceived scale and maintain the pedestrian experience.

(e) New development should transition in height and scale towards adjacent neighbourhoods. In such circumstances, shadow studies should influence built form transition in the rear yard with appropriate setbacks and stepbacks.
This large site has significant redevelopment potential and is located near the Rockway golf course amenity. An important consideration is that this site has a tight interface with the established residential neighbourhood on the opposite side of Sydney Street, and contains some remnant single-detached housing at the end of the site fronting Charles.

While this area is located further from the immediate area surrounding the LRT stops, it is still only approximately 400m from the Borden stop with good transit access. Given its size and proximity to transit, it is an appropriate candidate for transit-supportive mixed-use redevelopment. However, redevelopment on the site is constrained and must sensitively respond to its tight relationship with established neighbourhoods and existing residential uses.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Support redevelopment over time with a mix of uses and building typologies.

(b) Focus density away from low rise areas along Charles and Sydney Streets by having medium density along Sydney Street and high density further along Charles Street.

(c) Improve connectivity and walkability through the establishment of new routes within the block that connect to Maurice Street and that link Charles and Delta Streets.

(d) Redevelopment should provide new park space to serve new and existing residents.

Photo: Existing conditions at the intersection of Sydney St. & Charles St.
The lands along Schneider Creek are predominantly employment areas, with some smaller blocks of neighbourhood development. Historic permissions allowed for the eclectic mix of existing light industrial and warehouse buildings. Some of these have since been converted to other uses. Aside from the consolidated MTD site, the lands near the creek are mostly smaller parcels under fragmented ownership that are generally located either entirely or mostly within the floodway.

Over the long term, existing buildings within the floodway are to be removed due to the risk of damage to life and property from flooding. On larger sites located both within the floodway and candidate flood fringe, removing existing buildings within the inner floodway will unlock development potential in the candidate flood fringe. In many cases however, smaller fragmented parcels are located almost entirely within the floodway. Here public investment to acquire these lands should be considered to allow for the introduction of more significant creek-side green space and to create more meaningful opportunities to advance the long term ecological restoration of the creek.

Recognizing that the long term ecological restoration of the creek will require significant public investment, it is likely that many existing buildings on smaller sites within the floodway will remain there for the short to medium term. For these buildings, existing permissions to allow low-risk land uses should be continued to avoid contributing to vacant and/or blighted buildings in the heart of the station area. New and existing uses will be regulated by GRCA and City policy.
A cluster of small warehouses and employment buildings interspersed with some housing is located just southwest of the Schneider Creek floodway between Ottawa the Shoemaker Creek and Courtland. The close relationship between employment uses and residential housing results in compatibility issues and disrupts the broader neighbourhood fabric.

**PLANNING AROUND RAPID TRANSIT STATIONS**

**Land Use & Built Form**

**Key Direction #7**

Encourage the Gradual Evolution of the Employment Uses Between Schneider Creek & Courtland Ave. & Ottawa St. to Borden Ave.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Allow the area on either side of Bedford Road to transition from industrial uses to a mixture of uses over time. A medium density, mid-rise land use designation could help improve the built form and land use relationships in this area over time. Special zoning provisions may need to be considered with respect to the timing and appropriateness of introducing residential or other sensitive uses.

(b) Consider whether to allow existing, individual properties to introduce new uses or to require larger minimum parcel sizes before more significant mid-rise redevelopment is allowed.

(c) In the shorter term, support the adaptive reuse of existing buildings to more compatible, such as live-work spaces and studio space for creative uses.

(d) Redevelopment should achieve appropriate built form transitions between new and existing development.

(e) Encourage mixed use development along Courtland with a minimum streetwall height of 3 storeys to better frame the street.

(f) In conjunction with adaptive reuse, require improvements to the outward appearance of existing buildings, enhanced landscape and public realm improvements, and reductions in the extent of surface parking and paving to enhance the look and feel of the area.

In the context of broader investment in the station area in response to the LRT, this area should be encouraged to transform over time to improve built form relationships, land use compatibility, and enhance the overall image of the station area. Introducing a flexible mixed-use designation can create opportunities for more significant long term redevelopment. However, given the extent of redevelopment opportunities on larger consolidated sites and closer to the LRT, a flexible mixed use designation can also enable shorter term adaptive reuse to create affordable spaces for creative uses, live/work studio space, and neighbourhood services and amenities that are consistent with Rockway’s eclectic live work character.
Facilitate Reurbanization of the Former Schneiders’ Site

The former Schneiders’ site has played an important role in the evolution of the Rockway community. With the recent closure of this important facility, the site now represents a major redevelopment opportunity that will likely act as a catalyst and precedent for broader reinvestment within the station area.

The former Schneiders’ site presents a key opportunity to introduce a diverse cluster of jobs and housing, organized around a new street and block network and signature open spaces.

Given the scale of the site, redevelopment should provide a mix of housing types including high rise, mid-rise, and ground-related residential units. Due to the nature of the former employment uses on the site, there are limited opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing buildings. One such opportunity is the six-storey office building near the corner of Courtland Ave and Borden Ave, which could be used to maintain employment uses on the site for businesses looking to locate near Downtown Kitchener in a more affordable live/work environment.

- Mixed-use development should be focused along Courtland Avenue (and towards Stirling Avenue) where it can provide amenity for new and existing residents and should be in a mid-rise built form compatible with nearby established residential areas.
- Medium-rise residential uses should be located towards the Stirling Avenue edge of the site.
- Neighbourhood-scale, walkable commercial uses such restaurants, small retail and personal services should be incorporated into the site in either the mixed use or innovation employment areas to help serve the full redevelopment of the lands and the surrounding area. Locations near the centre of the site surrounding a park space could be ideal.
- Innovation employment uses should be focused at the Courtland Avenue/Borden Avenue corner of the site, where the location of existing employment buildings provides some initial opportunity for adaptive reuse and then longer-term redevelopment.

Through redevelopment, a significant new on-site park should be provided. The park should be designed and oriented to establish a connection between Kent Avenue and the Shoemaker Creek corridor, provide amenity for on- and off-site users, and help celebrate the history of the site.

As part of the redevelopment of the site, a logical network of streets and blocks should be provided. This may include the extension of adjacent streets into the site and connections via a logical network of public or private internal streets. Alternate right-of-way widths and standards may need to be considered as long as services, utilities and amenities can appropriately be provided.

Building height step-backs should be included in the zoning and design of buildings along Courtland Avenue, particularly for portions of buildings above four storeys. Attention should be given to the appropriate design of other mid-rise building areas on the site.

Any buildings nine storeys and above should conform to the City’s Tall Building guidelines and any related zoning regulations.

Locate parking below grade, and / or within structures at the back of the site (subject to flood fringe policy criteria). Require reduced and shared parking between different uses on the site. Some surface parking could be considered in certain portions of the site during the initial phases of development to support the feasibility of new employment uses (in addition to the existing surface parking facility on the side of Courtland Avenue).

Redevelopment should achieve a high standard of environmental (sustainability) performance and the feasibility of district energy should be studied.

The site should incorporate green infrastructure, including on-site urban stormwater management features.
Stirling Ave creates a challenging grade condition where it crosses the north/south rail corridor that runs between Courtland and Mill Street. This has resulted in some challenging remnant vacant industrial parcels on either side of the rail corridor between Stirling Ave and Madison Ave.

The Southwood Plaza is also located in this area, providing important retail and amenities to the community. The plaza is setback from Stirling and Courtland Avenues to accommodate surface parking, resulting in a poor relationship and visibility from these streets. Access to the Plaza is challenged by the change of grade along Stirling Avenue.

While these challenging sites are located further from the LRT, the anticipated redevelopment of the former Schneiders site should create an opportunity to support long-term redevelopment in this area, enabling it to better serve the station area and contribute to broader transit-oriented redevelopment.
The area southwest of the former Schneiders’ site (Stirling Avenue, Mill Street, rail line, Shoemaker Greenway) is predominantly an employment area featuring a mix of light industrial, manufacturing and service uses on mid-sized sites closer to the rail corridor. A series of narrower, deep parcels with auto related uses, small warehouse buildings and residential dwellings front onto Mill Street.

**Key Direction #10**  
**Encourage Long-Term Reinvestment on the Employment Lands Within the Mill Street & Stirling Avenue Block**

- **Strategies**
  1. Introduce a fine-grain street and block pattern to support access and enhance connectivity through the site, create a transition between residential and employment uses, and create frontage for new development.
  2. Introduce an innovation employment designation on the rear portion of the site to maintain employment uses within a flexible designation that allows less impactful employment uses that can coexist near residential uses.
  3. Introduce a medium density mixed use designation fronting Mill Street to permit a wide range of land uses and amenities for area residents and workers. The following specific built form guidance should be included in the planning framework:
     - Buildings fronting Mill should be stepped back 3m above the 4th storey to support transition to lower density residential uses on the other side of the street.
     - Introduce a maximum building length regulation (consider between 50m and 70m). Ensure that building facades greater than 35 m are articulated to break up the building’s massing, and visually animate the street with varied frontages.
     - Require minimum floor to ceiling heights at grade (consider 4.0m) to support the introduction of more active street level uses over time as market conditions change.
  4. Utilize minimum parcel frontage requirements to encourage lands in fragmented ownership to consolidate and redevelop in a more comprehensive manner over the long term.
  5. Ensure that new development establishes and/or contributes to the development of new park space along the Shoemaker Creek Greenway Corridor between the rail corridor and Mill Street.

This area is located at the edge of the station study area and is further from the LRT. However, given the importance of the adjacent former Schneiders’ site as a catalytic major redevelopment opportunity in the station area, this area should be encouraged to introduce more complimentary built form and land uses. Redevelopment should introduce low to mid-rise mixed use development along Mill Street and expansion of innovation employment uses along the rail corridor. A new street and block pattern should be introduced to enhance connectivity through the site, provide frontage for new development, and help to separate employment and residential uses. Utilize minimum parcel frontage requirements to encourage lands in fragmented ownership to consolidate and redevelop in a more comprehensive manner over the long term.
The Mill stop is in a challenging location; southeast of Ottawa Street and along the rail corridor, it resides within a cluster of smaller warehouses and employment uses.

The surrounding area also contains a series of low-density residential neighbourhoods along Mill Street and Ottawa Street. Existing buildings currently back onto the rail corridor, which, coupled with the lack of road connections to the stop, results in poor access and visibility.

The area around the Mill stop is constrained by its proximity to existing established neighbourhoods and has fewer opportunities for high density residential and mixed-use intensification. Maintaining (and evolving) some of the existing employment uses through an Innovation Employment designation should be encouraged. This can help drive transit ridership while creating a transition between established neighbourhoods and General Employment sites.

Redevelopment surrounding the stop will create opportunities to provide transit-supportive uses facing the LRT. Redevelopment should also introduce a new street and block pattern that improves connectivity and visibility to the stop. While higher densities should be encouraged, the stop’s proximity to existing low-rise residential means that taller buildings should be strategically located to achieve an appropriate transition in scale between areas of higher density development and low-rise residential areas.

The regulatory tools that will implement the strategies of this plan should consider policies and approaches that further support the investment in transit within the Focus Area.

STRATEGIES

(a) Introduce minimum density targets, and/or prohibit built form and land uses that would negatively impact the area’s ability to achieve these requirements.

(b) Introduce new mixed use land use permissions on lands immediately surrounding the station to support transit over time.

(c) Maintain some employment uses near the stop to encourage ridership. Allow for an evolution of industrial sites into innovation employment uses. Consider how these lands may fit in the context of redevelopment happening closer to the station.

(d) Introduce active uses at grade in new buildings adjacent to the station to enhance amenity and activate the station area. Require minimum ground floor heights of 4.5 m to facilitate conversion to retail/office uses over time.

(e) Ensure new development is designed to interface with the station in addition to adjacent streets and the public realm.

(f) Consider stricter parking regulations, such as prohibiting surface parking, lowering minimum parking rates, allowing greater shared parking between complementary land uses, and implementing transportation demand management strategies.

(g) New development surrounding the station must introduce and/or reserve new streets that can help to improve connectivity between the station and surrounding neighbourhoods, enhance visibility and create blocks for new buildings.

(h) As redevelopment occurs, work with private sector developers to secure public realm enhancements, such as public or private park space, wider sidewalks, tree plantings, seating, wayfinding, shelter and weather protection, and bike related infrastructure (bike parking, bike share facilities, and/or end of trip facilities).

(i) Introduce a minimum affordable housing target of 20%.
Concordia Club is located near the Mill stop at the southern edge of the station area. It currently provides wedding and event space, a restaurant, and annual Oktoberfest festivities that draw visitors from the broader region. A cluster of auto-service type employment uses is located between the Club and the LRT, and a cluster of mid-rise multi-unit residential buildings is located to its west, creating a transition back into the established neighbourhoods on the other side of Ottawa Street.

Over the longer term, land use permissions for the Concordia Club and surrounding area should be reconsidered to respond to the evolution of the Mill stop over time. In the interim, land use permissions should be maintained and enhanced to allow the evolution and gradual transformation of employment areas located between Concordia Club and the Station.

STRATEGIES

(a) Update the existing industrial land use for the Concordia Club site to an employment designation that also has some commercial use permissions.

(b) Maintain a balance of industrial employment with new innovation employment uses to begin the evolution of the area located near the highway, between the Concordia Club and the Mill stop.

(c) Encourage the provision of well lit, open and clearly signed mid block connections through these sites to enhance connectivity between the stop and the Concordia Club.

(d) Over time, once the area surrounding the Mill stop has seen some redevelopment, revisit remaining general employment and innovation employment designations on these properties.
   • Consider the potential for a wider range of land uses and densities, including the potential addition of residential uses where appropriate and compatible.
   • Introduce new streets and/or connections to enhance connectivity through this area.
The Rockway Station Area is served by a number of major roads, including King Street East, Charles Street East, Courtland Avenue East, Mill Street, Ottawa Street and Stirling Avenue South. Many of these roads are significant through routes and connected to destinations outside the area. The LRT route splits within the Rockway Station Area in that Borden Avenue has the Fairway bound route and Ottawa Street has the Downtown bound route.

The Iron Horse Trail runs along the Schneider Creek corridor through the centre of the Station Area terminating at Ottawa Street. It provides important off-street pedestrian and cyclist connections connecting the Station Area to Downtown Kitchener and surrounding destinations.

While established neighbourhoods in the Station Area are generally served by a fine-grained network of streets, this network is not continued through large non-residential blocks. Connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is further disrupted by the rail corridor that runs between Courtland and Mill from the Iron Horse Trail north of Madison south to the highway. There are a number of street connections over Schneider Creek which provides some existing connectivity.

The legacy of industrial manufacturing and warehouse uses in the Rockway Station Area has resulted in a number of streets being designed primarily for vehicular traffic, with little amenity for pedestrians and cyclists. Existing non-residential uses in the area are served by significant areas of surface parking, which further detracts from the pedestrian experience.

6.2 The Opportunity

Responding to the opportunity created by the LRT, coordinated mobility improvements can help to better position the Rockway Station Area as a transit-oriented and more urban place, improving connectivity, supporting the evolution of the area’s live/work character, and improving a portion of the area’s gateway function to Downtown Kitchener.

The following section outlines a series of key directions and detailed strategies to enhance connectivity, increase transportation choice, balance the needs of all users of the mobility system, and improve opportunities for redevelopment.

Photo_ Looking west from the Mill St. Station, at Ottawa St.
KEY DIRECTIONS

**The Mobility Framework Map Legend**
- Study Area Boundary
- Focus Area Boundaries
- ION Line & Stops
- Potential Street Connections
  Indicates possible public/private driveway/street connections to be further determined through a future process.
- Active Transportation Network (existing)
- Active Transportation Network (proposed)
- Bike Share Station (proposed)
  Indicates areas where the provision of bike share facilities over time could help to support travel between the LRT station and destinations within the station area.
- Priority Crossings
  Indicates areas where intersection improvements such as enhanced markings and reduced curb radii should be directed to enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists crossing the street.
The Rockway Station area evolved as a predominantly employment area with a strong live-work character, including large employment uses interspersed with neighbourhoods. This has resulted in a legacy of large employment blocks that create a real challenge for connectivity through the station area, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. This condition is evident at both LRT stops, forcing pedestrians to walk longer distances and take indirect routes.

The transformation of this area towards a greater mix of employment and higher density residential uses creates an opportunity to introduce a finer-grained network of streets and blocks. This can help to support connectivity to and from LRT stops and create an environment that is more supportive of pedestrians and cyclists. The introduction of new streets and blocks over time is also an important part of creating new addresses for redevelopment.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Require redevelopment to plan for and construct a finer-grained pattern of streets and blocks. This could be in the form of public or private streets/private connections but with public access and should be designed to connect into and extend the existing network of streets in the station area.

Photo: The former Schneider/Maple Leaf Foods site, looking north from the train tracks.
The Iron Horse Trail forms an important part of the pedestrian and cycling network, providing connections to the broader regional trail system to the north and west. However, there is a need to better connect the trail system to key destinations, including the Mill and Borden stops, former Schneiders' site, and areas to the south and east.

The City of Kitchener recently completed an Iron Horse Trail Improvement Strategy, which recommends a number of improvements to the existing trail including improved trail-road crossings, signage and wayfinding, seating and rest areas, trail width and surface treatments, garbage containers, landscaping and naturalization.

The following strategies work to complement these proposed improvements to the existing trail, as well as identify key opportunities to expand the trail system to improve multi-modal connectivity within the context of the LRT.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Extend the Iron Horse Trail from its current terminus south along Ottawa, Nyberg, Sydney, and Bedford to connect into existing trail connections further south along Courtland.

- Use the renaturalization of Schneider Creek to improve trail crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at both Ottawa and Kent over time.
- Introduce an improved crossing at Ottawa and Nyberg, including an enhanced surface or pavement treatment; clear wayfinding signage alerting drivers and trail users; pedestrian/cyclist activated signals; and/or tactile surfaces on either side of the crossing for trail users.
- Provide on-street connections utilizing clear wayfinding signage, pavement markings and sharrows to connect the Trail from Ottawa and Nyberg to Sydney and Bedford.
- Introduce an off-street multi-use path along Bedford, utilizing public land along the north side of the Rockway Golf Course to connect the Trail to Courtland, where there is the potential for longer-term Trail connections beyond the station area.
- Incorporate special crossing treatment and consider the introduction of a pedestrian/cyclists activated crossing at Courtland between Mill St & Bedford to enhance safety for crossing cyclists.

(b) Extend a new spur of the Iron Horse Trail from the western edge of the Station area to the Mill stop, utilizing the rail line that runs along the western edge of the former Schneiders site.

- Create a spur northwest of Madison Ave to connect the existing trail into the rail line to the south.
- Work with the rail operators to explore the potential to extend the Trail across Madison Avenue and underneath the Stirling Avenue bridge, following the rail corridor behind the former Schneiders site to Borden Avenue.
- Ensure redevelopment of the former Schneiders’ site provides space for the trail along the western edge of the site, including connections into and through the site to connect with the surrounding road network. A crossing of the rail corridor to connect into the Shoemaker Creek trail system should also be incorporated.
- Extend the trail from the terminus of Borden Avenue to the Mill stop, and integrate a well-designed trail crossing as part of the rework of the Ottawa and Mill intersection. This is a challenging Intersection where strategies should be employed to limit crossing distances for trail users, as well as introducing clear pavement markings, wayfinding signage, and activated signals for trail users.

(c) Introduce an on-street connection extending along Mill from the Mill/Ottawa intersection to Mill and Courtland, including sharrows, signage and wayfinding.
Kent Avenue is a key spine for pedestrians and cyclists, connecting the Borden stop (and the potential redevelopment of the MTD lands) to the future redevelopment of the former Schneiders site and the Shoemaker Creek corridor.

The introduction of LRT to Ottawa Street and Borden Avenue will restrict turning access in and out of larger sites and increase the importance of Kent Avenue as an alternate route since it has a less constrained right of way.

An opportunity exists to transform Kent Avenue into a "complete street". This street can help to fill an important gap in the cycling network by connecting the Iron Horse Trail to the Borden stop and supporting cycling access south through the former Schneiders site to the future Shoemaker Creek greenway trail system. It could also evolve into an important access point for the Iron Horse Trail and the Schneider Creek corridor.

Initiate a streetscape master planning exercise aimed at enhancing mobility on Kent Avenue to be a complete street that can better balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The exercise should examine opportunities to:

- Narrow vehicular lanes to incorporate dedicated bike lanes, and explore opportunities to widen the right of way as redevelopment occurs to enhance space for pedestrians and bikes. Other traffic calming strategies such as a special paving treatment for the vehicular portion should also be considered to slow traffic and contribute to the street’s distinct character.

- Improve the crossings of Kent Avenue between Charles Street and Courtland Avenue through improved pavement markings and pedestrian activated signals.

- Introduce specialized, wider crossings where Kent interfaces with the Iron Horse Trail. This can include enhanced surface or pavement treatment; clear wayfinding signage alerting drivers and trail users; pedestrian activated signals; and/or tactile surfaces on either side of the crossing for trail users.

- Integrate pedestrian oriented lighting along the length of the street to link the Borden stop to the former Schneiders’ site.

- Introduce a coordinated palette of street furnishings, including waste receptacles, bike parking, and seating.

- Introduce planted boulevards, including a continuous row of street trees to enhance canopy, shade and separate pedestrians from cars.

- Integrate public art such as sidewalk inlays, special artistic pavement treatments or a series of themed public art installations.
The Aud is an important destination near the station area, attracting people from across the region to attend hockey games, concerts, and other events, and to make use of the significant recreational facilities. Despite its role as an important destination, connectivity by transit is somewhat limited. The majority of the people that visit the Aud currently access it by car, which has resulted in large areas of surface parking and vehicular traffic in what is otherwise an established residential neighbourhood.

The Aud is located only a +/- 10-minute walk from the Borden stop. This is a walkable distance, but one that may be enough of a deterrent during colder seasons, evenings and for users carrying sport equipment, young families, or the elderly. An opportunity exists to enhance connectivity to transit through a series of targeted improvements to bridge the gap between the Borden stop and the Aud.

For the area along Borden Avenue between Charles Street (near the Borden stop) and the Aud, prepare a Streetscape Master Plan that should consider:

- Enhanced pedestrian crossings along this entire stretch of Borden, including clear pavement markings at all crossings and pedestrian activated signals at all major streets.
- Pedestrian oriented lighting along the entire route to improve safety at all times of day. Improved lighting should be designed to integrate sensitively with the adjacent residential neighbourhood.
- Improve the Weber and Borden intersection for pedestrians and cyclists
- Provide cycling infrastructure (such as advisory bike lanes).
- Introduce general wayfinding and signage to direct pedestrians, cyclists and transit users to use this improved route as a connection between the LRT and the Aud.
- Explore opportunities for bikeshare facilities located at both Borden stop and the Aud to minimize the travel time and bridge the last mile between the LRT and this key destination.

Photo: On approach to the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium from Borden Ave.
As a former industrial area in transition, Rockway has been designed to accommodate auto and truck traffic, often at the expense of the station area’s public realm. Area streets are often characterized by relatively narrow rights-of-way, which are primarily designed to support vehicular traffic with narrow sidewalks, minimal street furnishings, limited opportunities for tree planting and inadequate space to accommodate cyclists. Large industrial uses typically turn their backs on the public realm along major streets, resulting in a poor interface between public streets and built form. Where areas of retail exist, these are generally served by large areas of surface parking and front parking pads that similarly result in unfriendly conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

Aside from some informal open green spaces along the Iron Horse Trail and St. Peters Lutheran Cemetery, the area lacks public parks and public open spaces. Community-oriented parks and opportunities for recreation and play available to residents are located almost entirely at the edges or outside of the station study area, and there is very little open space amenity for workers in the area for relaxation and respite over the lunch hour or after work.

The LRT will act as a catalyst for redevelopment, bringing new residents and workers to the station area. This creates important opportunities to transform the station area’s public realm through a combination of public and private investment. Given existing deficiencies, addition of new residents and workers creates a significant need and opportunity to create a diversity of public parks and open spaces to serve both new and existing residents and workers in the station area. To facilitate transit ridership and multi-modal connectivity through the station, improvements to public rights of way to support pedestrians and cyclists are also particularly important. The following section outlines a series of key directions and strategies for the public realm including opportunities to create new parks and public spaces as redevelopment occurs, as well as targeting streetscape and public realm improvements along key corridors.

Photo: Green space at Mill St. & Ottawa St.
**KEY DIRECTIONS**

- Facilitate the Ecological Restoration of Schneider & Shoemaker Creek Corridors, along with Improved Stormwater Management.
- Develop a New Park Space / Urban Plaza at the Mill Stop.
- Introduce New Parks & Open Spaces as a Component of all Large-Scale Developments.
- Create Opportunities for Green Infrastructure Within Large Development Blocks, Parks & Open Spaces.
- Introduce Streetscape Improvements on King St. to Catalyze Redevelopment & Enhance its Gateway Function.
Throughout Rockway, Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek have been channelized and significantly degraded to the point where they primarily function as stormwater drainage channels. Due to fencing and existing buildings that back onto these creeks, they are difficult to approach and provide effectively no public or natural amenity. These conditions have also resulted in significant flood constraints, which impact redevelopment across significant portions of the station area.

An opportunity exists to reposition the Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek corridors as more naturalized ecological features within the Rockway station area. This could be done in a way to improve stormwater management, reduce flooding impacts and turn the creek into a natural, community asset and amenity that contributes to Rockway’s identity and sense of place.

STRATEGIES

(a) Establish an action plan for the ecological restoration of Schneider Creek and potentially parts of Shoemaker Creek.

- This may be combined with further Environmental Assessment or study of solutions to improve the existing flooding and stormwater management conditions.

- This should include a partnership between the City (including the SWM Utility), GRCA, Region of Waterloo and affected landowners.

- There should be an overarching vision and mechanisms to facilitate and support the implementation of the renaturalization of the creek(s).

- Future capital works and land acquisition may have to be included in the plan.

- A range of appropriate passive recreational uses should be considered in appropriate areas of the future creekside green space.
The Mill stop is located along an existing rail corridor and tucked behind existing development. This results in poor access and visibility from surrounding areas, and a public realm condition that offers little amenity to transit riders or residents and workers in the area.

An opportunity exists to create a new open space at the gateway to the Mill stop to enhance visibility and improve access to the station. A new open space in this location would also help to organize and provide amenity for new development and support multi-modal connectivity between the LRT, bus services and area cycling routes.

Develop a New Park Space / Urban Plaza at the Mill Stop

Photo: The development of a hard scaped plaza space with plantings such as this example from New York can help to improve access while supporting user comfort. Image source, James Corner Field Operations.
Rockway lacks public parks and open spaces, particularly towards the centre of the station area and near the LRT stops. While the renaturalization of the Schneider Creek corridor will provide an important new amenity for the community, it will primarily serve an ecological function with limited opportunities for passive recreation.

The LRT will act as a catalyst for transit-oriented redevelopment, adding new residents and workers to the area. This creates both an opportunity and a need to provide new public open spaces and amenities to serve both new and existing residents and workers. In particular, the abundance of large redevelopment sites creates important opportunities to secure new on-site parks and public spaces through the redevelopment process.

**STRATEGIES**

(a) As part of the redevelopment process for large sites, secure the provision of significant on-site public open spaces.

(b) Where large sites span multiple development blocks (areas bounded by major streets, with smaller local streets included within), ensure that each major development block includes a new public open space.

(c) New parks should include a range of amenities that respond to the character and needs of adjacent land uses and users. Depending on adjacent uses, this could include play structures, splash pads, skating areas, and more urban hardscaped plazas with seating and greenery.

(d) As large sites are redeveloped over time, coordinate the design of respective new parks and open spaces to ensure the provision of a diversity of spaces that strategically address various community needs.

(e) Ensure new parks are designed to have a primary frontage on a street, providing visibility and address.

(f) Encourage active street level uses, residential and office development to orient towards the park to provide animation and surveillance of these public spaces at all times of day.

**Photo:** Development oriented toward park space, Victoria Park, Kitchener.
There is a strong relationship between the Rockway Station Area and the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek systems. As such, issues of flooding are very important considerations for new development in the station area.

An opportunity exists to distinguish Rockway from other station areas along the ION corridor through the incorporation of more visible elements of green design and sustainable infrastructure. While these types of improvements are critically important to improve the environmental performance and sustainability of new development, they can also showcase best practices and leadership in sustainability and green design, contributing to Rockway’s distinct sense of place and ensuring a strong relationship between new development and the creek systems.

STRATEGIES

(a) Work with developers to incorporate visible elements of sustainability and stormwater management into the design. This could include green roofs, bioswales, rain retention and filtration systems, permeable paving or other techniques directed through the City’s Integrated SWM Master Plan or sustainable development objectives.

(b) For larger redevelopment areas, such as the area surrounding the Borden Station and the former Schneider site, explore the potential for interweaving green infrastructure in a way that provides amenity for area residents and supports linkages between the development and adjacent creek side areas.

(c) Make stormwater management and sustainable features visible to the public, through educational signage and opportunities to interact with green features.

(d) Where possible work to create green linkages between new and existing parks and natural features to support the flow of water, wildlife movement, and enhanced connectivity for natural systems and people alike.

Photo: The integration of stormwater management throughout Hammarby Sjöstad, Sweden helps to strengthen the connection between the development and natural environment while providing amenity for area residents and employees.
King Street is part of a broader mixed-use corridor that extends from Highway 8 through Downtown Kitchener, the Midtown station area, and into uptown Waterloo. For visitors, residents and workers approaching the Downtown from the east, it plays an important gateway function and provides a key regional connection through the City.

The portion of King Street within Rockway is currently characterized by narrow sidewalks that do not provide adequate width for street tree planting. The result is an auto-centric environment that does not support pedestrians, cyclists, or street-related retail.

In response to the LRT and broader changes anticipated within the station area, coordinated streetscape improvements along King can help to better balance the needs of all road users and green the street.

Public investment can also act as a catalyst for private sector redevelopment along King Street. This can help to encourage the introduction of transit-supportive density that better frames and relates to the street, with opportunities for grade-related retail and services near the Borden LRT stop. A combination of public and private sector development will help to support King Street’s gateway function, presenting a more inviting public face and entry into the City.

**Public Realm Key Direction 85**

**Introduce Streetscape Improvements on King St to Catalyze Redevelopment & Enhance Its Gateway Function**

**STRATEGIES**

(a) Undertake a streetscape master planning exercise to better balance the needs of all users, green and beautify the street, encourage private sector development and contribute to the street’s important gateway function.

- Narrow vehicular lanes to allow for wider sidewalks with generous planted boulevards, including a continuous row of street trees to enhance canopy, shade and separate pedestrians from cars.
- Integrate pedestrian-oriented lighting along the length of the street to enhance the pedestrian experience and safety at all times of day.
- Introduce a coordinated palette of street furnishings, including waste receptacles, bike parking, and seating.
- Improve crossings through improved pavement markings and pedestrian activated signals, particularly at Borden and Ottawa to enhance connectivity to the LRT.
- Integrate public art such as sidewalk inlays, special artistic pavement treatments or a series of themed public art installations that contribute to the street’s character and gateway function.
- While this portion of King has not been identified as a priority cycling route, consider how to best accommodate cyclists within the roadway, ideally with dedicated bike lanes where space exists.

Photo: King Street, between Borden Ave and Ottawa St, current conditions.
Rendering of Schneider Creek.
THE PREFERRED PLAN
8.0 THE PREFERRED PLAN

Key Characteristics
• A mix of office, residential and retail uses.
• Active uses at street level such as stores, restaurants and services.
• A mix of heights but including buildings taller than 8 storeys.
• Parking is accommodated underground.

Key Characteristics
• A mix of office, residential and retail uses.
• Active uses at street level such as stores, restaurants and services.
• Generally between 5 and 8 storeys in height.
• Parking is accommodated underground.

Key Characteristics
• A mix of office, residential and retail uses.
• Active uses at street level such as stores, restaurants and services.
• Generally between 3 and 4 storeys in height.
• Parking is accommodated underground or to the rear of the development.

Key Characteristics
• A mix of office, residential and retail uses.
• Active uses at street level such as stores, restaurants and services.
• Generally between 4 and 8 storeys in height.
• Residential at street level with larger setbacks than mixed-use buildings.
• Buildings oriented to line streets and open spaces.
• Parking is accommodated underground.

Key Characteristics
• Active uses at street level such as stores, restaurants and services.
• Includes commercial offices and employment.
• Parking is accommodated underground or to the rear of the development.

Key Characteristics
• Includes schools, hospitals and other institutional uses.
• Includes health related uses and residential care facilities.
• Larger buildings/uses meet demand for parking in structures or below grade.

Key Characteristics
• A broad range of industrial uses but not noxious uses (i.e. manufacturing).
• May require some buffering from sensitive uses.
• Potential for both small and large buildings.
• Often includes loading docks & large storage areas.

Key Characteristics
• Predominantly office and high-tech manufacturing.
• Potential for both large and small buildings.
• Opportunities for street related retail and restaurant uses to provide amenity.

Key Characteristics
• Includes schools, hospitals and other institutional uses.
• Includes health related uses and residential care facilities.
• Larger buildings/uses meet demand for parking in structures or below grade.

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Key Characteristics
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• Potential for both large and small buildings.
• Opportunities for street related retail and restaurant uses to provide amenity.
8.1 Land Use Plan

To support the implementation of the Key Directions and Strategies for built form and land use, a new land use framework has been created recommending new land use designations for the station area as well as showing new connections and public realm amenities. These land use designations should inform the development of a secondary plan for the station area, as well as related zoning by-law updates. A description of the intent of the different land use designations as well as an appropriate range of densities for each is provided on the opposite page.

Map Legend
- Study Area Boundary
- Focus Area Boundary
- ION Line & Stops
- Mixed-Use High Density
- Mixed-Use Medium Density
- Mixed-Use Low Density
- Commercial
- Innovation Employment
- General Employment
- Institutional
- Established Low-Rise Residential
- Low Rise Residential
- Medium Rise Residential
- High Rise Residential
- Parks
- Open Space
- Natural Heritage Conservation
- Two-Zone Policy Area (Floodplain)
- Overlay over land use designation.

Site Specific Policy Area
- Active Frontage

Scale (approx) 400m
The Grand River Conservation Authority's 'Update of Schneider Creek Floodplain Mapping & Two-Zone Policies, Stirling Avenue to Sydney Street (2016)' provides updated modeling of the floodplain that traverses the PARTS Rockway Plan station area. Through this update to the GRCA floodplain mapping it was identified that, although the extent of potential flooding may be greater in the existing condition compared to the past mapping, there may be an opportunity to establish a future scenario whereby some of the lands within the 'Floodway' could become 'Flood Fringe'. As a result these lands could go from a situation where nothing new could be developed to a situation where future development may be possible provided there are supporting studies and GRCA acceptance.

A 'Candidate Flood Fringe Scenario' relies, in one instance on the northeast side of the creek, on a single landowner potentially initiating the scenario (i.e. the MTD lands). In other instances, mostly on the opposite southerly side of the creek, it relies on either multiple landowners coming together, the City facilitating some option, or it may not materialize given the context of the properties. The above plan is intended to provide direction for potential land use should the 'Candidate Flood Fringe Scenario' occur. The intent is that historic industrial uses in close proximity to the creek could be re-urbanized with medium and high density residential (with supporting uses) on the northeast side of the creek and a range of different uses on the southerly side of the creek. Several strategies will need to be considered in order to potentially realize this planning opportunity. Additional direction is provided in the Technical Considerations and Implementation sections of this report, along with key directions and strategies related to the 'Floodway' and the ecological restoration of the creek(s).
The removal of buildings/uses within the Floodway is important, encouraged and should be supported, particularly those that would reduce safety hazards and those that would result in larger redevelopment blocks being ‘unlocked’. Resultant impacts to the floodplain would need to be further updated and confirmed with the GRCA.

Specific policy direction should be provided in the Secondary Plan related to the ‘Candidate Flood Fringe’ scenario and the resultant possible land uses and densities that could be considered. Land use changes may occur via landowner-initiated development applications on a block basis after the building/use removal from the floodway and supporting information is provided that the flood fringe criteria are met.

- For the MTD lands, the establishment of High Rise Residential, Medium Rise Residential and Park with an overlay of ‘Flood Fringe’ as shown on the ‘Candidate Flood Fringe Scenario’ could be appropriate pending further study or confirmation in consultation with the GRCA.
- For lands on the southerly side of Schneider Creek, there is a block of land on Borden Avenue (and potentially other lands in the vicinity) where the establishment of Innovation Employment with an overlay of ‘Flood Fringe’ as shown on the ‘Candidate Flood Fringe Scenario’ could be appropriate pending further study or confirmation in consultation with the GRCA.
- If lands on the northeast side of Schneider Creek are converted to ‘Flood Fringe’ with a development-related underlying land use, those lands should be added to the Borden LRT Focus Area and afforded the same policy/development framework (i.e. bonusing would apply).
- The City and partners should develop a strategy to facilitate the ‘Candidate Flood Fringe Scenario’, which may involve strategic investment to secure lands in public ownership (which may ultimately become part of the creekside green space).
9.0 TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Introduction

A technical evaluation of the preferred scenario was undertaken from a number of perspectives. This assessment has ensured that the Preferred Scenario will not result in unanticipated or unacceptable impacts, providing support from the various perspectives considered. Outcomes of the evaluation have helped to inform implementation recommendations and refinements to the preferred scenario and related key directions and strategies in this plan. The evaluation included consideration of the following:

- Market Conditions Analysis
- Transportation Impact Assessment
- Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Parks & Public Space Needs Assessment
- Environmental Impact Study
- Infrastructure Capacity Analysis
- Preliminary Noise Impact Assessment

9.2 Market Conditions

Cushman & Wakefield evaluated current conditions and trends in relation to the real estate market for office and residential development in the region and City. A summary of these considerations is provided below. A workshop was also held between Urban Strategies and Cushman & Wakefield to better understand the distinct character of the real estate market in the Rockway station area. Because obtaining data at the station area scale is challenging, this workshop provided an opportunity for Cushman & Wakefield to share their understanding of local market conditions in the station area based upon their experience working in this market. Local market characteristics at the scale of the station areas were discussed in the context of key considerations for the PARTS Plan. More specific key findings are provided below based on the outcomes of this workshop.

Summary of Regional Considerations

The Region of Waterloo is experiencing significant growth in both jobs and population. This growing market is supported by a strong labour pool and upwards spiral of technology office demand. This is in turn resulting in an increasing demand for higher density, more urban forms of living. Key regional considerations included in Cushman & Wakefield’s Office and Residential Market perspectives are summarized below.

Office

- Approximately 16,000m² of new supply per annum has been added to the Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge office market over the last four years. The majority of this space has been added to Waterloo, closely followed by Kitchener.
- The Region’s current and planned multi-modal transit access is anticipated to continue to support demand.

Residential

- The demand for both low-rise housing and apartments continues to be strong.
- Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo apartment demand (as measured by the number of starts) has shown significant growth over time. The market enjoyed fully 9% average annual growth over the past 5 years.
- The continued rise in demand for apartments has been driven by a number of factors, including more choice in housing types, a larger proportion of millennials and others in the market that have interest in this style of living, locational considerations, increasing prices for ground related housing, as well as underlying population and employment growth.
- Over the last five years, apartments represent almost 45% of the housing starts in the Region.

Summary of Municipal Considerations

Key municipal considerations included in Cushman & Wakefield’s Office and Residential Market perspectives are summarized below.

- Kitchener’s core office market has been more active than its suburban counterpart over the last four years. Approximately 3,000m² per annum has been built in the Core, compared to about 1,800m² per annum in suburban Kitchener.
- Importantly, the City of Kitchener has been and is benefiting from an upwards spiral of technology office demand. Major corporations (such as Google) have chosen to locate in Kitchener. The resulting increase in the overall technology labour force is feeding new business demand.
- New housing construction in the City of Kitchener has seen some significant peaks in 2 of the last 5 years to near record levels with a continued trend higher in apartments and also low-rise housing. Demand is strong, driven by both the growth of the Kitchener/Cambridge/Waterloo economy and the influx of people and families seeking a more affordable alternative to GTA housing prices.
- Over the last five and ten years, apartments represent almost 40% of the housing starts in the City, with the most recent year (2016) being about 30%. This ratio of multiple dwelling construction is consistent over the last 10 years.

Rockway Considerations & Conclusions

- The Rockway Station Area appears to be poised for significant new residential development, capitalizing on the opportunity created by the LRT and significant redevelopment opportunities related to vacant or underutilized industrial sites near the LRT. Current demand for new units appears to be a relatively even split between high, medium and low-density typologies.
- Attracting new office and innovation employment to the Rockway Station Area will be more challenging, and appears to be more realistic in the medium to long term along King Street and within major redevelopment sites and former large industrial employment areas. These uses will likely follow the introduction of residential redevelopment and related public realm improvements, services and amenities.
- Adaptive reuse and conversion of former industrial uses may present opportunities for innovation employment, tech and maker space, particularly as similar opportunities are exhausted and land values increase in Downtown Kitchener, making Rockway more attractive.
- Over time, if introduction of employment uses lags behind residential development, incentives could be considered to attract employment uses within new mixed use and innovation employment areas.

Photo: Existing office building on the former Schneiders’ site.
9.3 Transportation Impact Assessment

HDR Inc. conducted a detailed transportation assessment for the Rockway station area to understand how the Preferred Scenario may impact traffic conditions, as well as considering Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, in order to assist in the implementation of this Plan. To appropriately consider anticipated conditions approximately 20 years into the future, the future Preferred Scenario was compared to existing conditions and the 'Status Quo' scenario as baselines. This comparison accounts for changes in population and employment based on land use designations and permissions between these scenarios over time.

Traffic Analysis

One of the primary indicators that was evaluated was the level of service provided by signalized intersections based upon typical delays in seconds. Generally, level of service A, B, and C are considered acceptable, representing a delay of 35 seconds or less. Level of service D indicates that delays are more perceptible. Level of service E and F indicate notable delays but may be acceptable in urban contexts. These levels of service also indicate areas where transit priority measures will have the largest relative benefit for transit travel time reductions.

A traffic analysis of the Preferred Scenario yields the following key considerations:

• While the anticipated level of congestion in Rockway is not ideal, it is generally acceptable in an urban setting with transit priority.

• Traffic analysis of the Preferred Scenario reveals that 2031 traffic conditions reach level of service F at the Ottawa Street Intersections with both Charles and King. This means that significant delays in excess of 80 seconds are estimated to pass through these intersections on average. Despite the anticipated issues at these intersections, it is important to note that the Status Quo scenario encounters similar traffic congestion at these intersections and they are Regional road intersections.

• Given that the construction of LRT has reduced many turning movements and given that there will be future development and density in the area, new road connections should be introduced. In particular, the redevelopment of large blocks presents important opportunities to introduce new road connections and establish a finer-grained pattern of streets and blocks. This should include extending and connecting the existing grid of streets through these large sites where possible. This would provide additional benefit to have more route options, help reduce turning conflicts, and reduce the constraints on new development in the focus area for intensification. New street connections are recommended as part of the future redevelopment of: the former Schneiders’ site, the lands to the southwest of this site, and the large plaza on the northwest side of Ottawa Street N. The extension of Dundas Ave between Ottawa and Borden is also recommended to complete the existing street network in that area.

• If the lands surrounding the Borden stop are to further intensify and add further land uses in the future, the introduction of internal streets is recommended in order to reduce impacts to Charles Street, Borden Ave, Ottawa St S and Kent Ave, as well as reducing driveway conflicts and providing additional route options for those lands. With reduced turning movements on Borden and Ottawa, Kent will become an increasingly important connecting street; further improvements should reinforce this.

• The Mill stop is challenged by a lack of road connections to access the stop. A series of new road connections are recommended to be introduced through the redevelopment of surrounding lands to enhance access to the Stop for all modes of transportation, as well as enhancing visibility and servicing new transit-oriented development.

• Implementation of transportation demand management measures, including providing the broad mix of mobility options identified in the PARTS Plan should assist with managing future traffic levels.

• The Preferred Scenario provides the necessary types of uses, range of uses and densities that should contribute to the overall Regional Transportation Master Plan objective of increasing the modal split within the central area for transit, cycling and walking while reducing single occupant vehicles.

• Over time the City should continually monitor traffic conditions on City streets and intersections.

The traffic analysis considerations support the Preferred Scenario and are incorporated into the land use, mobility and public realm plans and strategies where appropriate.

Recommendations

(1) The following key directions related to the traffic analysis are recommended to be included within the mobility considerations of the PARTS Rockway Plan:

• Introduce a fine-grained street and block network to break up large sites

• Transform Kent Ave into a complete street as it is a key connection

(2) Continue to monitor traffic patterns over time and finalize site access locations through the development process.
Transportation Demand Management

HDR’s assessment notes that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) starts with how we create and connect the places in which we live, work and play. First and foremost TDM is supported by maintaining close proximity between a mix of destinations to make it possible for people to travel more sustainably via walking or cycling. Where travel needs to occur to further destinations, ensuring close proximity and connectivity to high quality transit is critical to facilitate more efficient longer distance travel.

Lack of active transportation infrastructure and large blocks that disrupt connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists are both major issues within the PARTS Rockway area currently. Construction related to the LRT has already begun to address gaps in the sidewalk network, and redevelopment of large sites presents additional opportunities to introduce new connections and public realm improvements to support pedestrians and cyclists. As the area further intensifies including future redevelopment of large former industrial blocks, and further adds to the mixture of land uses, it will be imperative to support the use of forms of travel other than the car through public realm improvements and the use of transportation demand management (TDM) practices.

There are a number of measures and incentives to help increase network efficiency by promoting more active transportation and transit use, discouraging automobile use at peak times, and strategically limiting supply of parking. The preferred land use, mobility and public realm plans for PARTS Rockway help support these objectives through the introduction of a greater mix of uses and improved active transportation networks and strategies.

Recommendations

Active Transportation Infrastructure

(1) Incorporate key directions related to specific locational improvements to the pedestrian and cycling network. These enhanced connections within the active transportation/mobility network should include:
- Extending the Iron Horse Trail Network to the southwest and introducing new off-street active transportation connections along the rail line between the Iron Horse Trail and Mill St.
- Enhance pedestrian safety and comfort along Borden Ave
- Improve pedestrian and cycling access along the Aud
- Prioritize completing the missing gaps in the sidewalk network with the Capital program.

(2) Implement the active transportation/mobility network through the development process and incorporating into the capital works program over time.

(3) Incorporate a key direction to improve mobility via more ‘complete streets’ for high priority locations within the Rockway Station Area, such as Kent Ave. This could be part of a Streetscape Master Plan which should include the introduction of bike lanes and distinct paving and sidewalk treatments to enhance the pedestrian and cycling experience along Kent.

(4) Provide wider sidewalks and boulevards along King Street.

Bicycle Facilities

(1) For lands within 250m of the LRT stop, consider bicycle parking at approximately the following rates:
- 1.5 stalls per residential unit
- 1 stall per 125m² Gross Floor Area for office

(2) Integrate end-of-trip facilities into both public spaces and private uses (including residential, institutional, employment and commercial) facilities may include external short term bicycle parking, internal secure longer term bicycle parking, showers and lockers. Key considerations include:
- Secure and accessible bicycle parking is critical for all uses in proximity to both LRT stops, particularly in areas that are envisioned to have higher commercial activity (King St and Charles St intersection; mixed use development surrounding the Mill LRT Station).
- Ensure on-site bicycle parking is provided via including requirements in the Zoning By-law and consider the provision of additional on-site cycling infrastructure beyond the minimum via development bonuses.

(3) Identify potential bike share locations as part of the mobility network and implement through a future program.

Wayfinding

(1) Implement signage and wayfinding for cyclists and pedestrians to navigate to the destinations and routes that are within and beyond the PARTS Rockway Area. Beyond including it at the LRT stop, other key decision-making points along the active transportation network or pedestrian routes should be considered such as along the Iron Horse Trail and for key destinations like the Aud.

(2) Integrate new wayfinding signage into the streetscape and via any streetscape master plans that are prepared.

(3) Work with local partners to develop and promote a wayfinding mobile app which provides mobility information specific to the Station Area.

Transit

(1) Provide real time information about transit routes, schedules and fares in common places, such as restaurants, coffee shops and building lobbies.

(2) Integrate GRT stops with the surrounding streetscape, providing shelter and increased user comfort to the riders.

(3) Implement TravelWise strategy for subsidized transit passes at significant employers or institutions in the PARTS Rockway area.

(4) Support active transportation recommendations which improve first and last-mile connectivity to transit - particularly bike share implementation and provision of bicycle parking on public and private lands close to the LRT stops.

Parking

(1) Ensure that maximum parking requirements along with reduced minimum parking standards, shared on-site parking and other TDM measures are incorporated into the land use planning tools (such as zoning). Apply reduced minimum parking requirements, more stringent maximum parking rates and limit surface parking in the focus area, for those TDM elements not incorporated into the planning tools, or in instances where a development may request alternative requirements, require a site-specific TDM Report/Checklist.

(2) Consider a minimum rate of 0.8 spaces per residential unit or dwelling units within mixed use buildings.

(3) New parking could be located below grade and in structures, especially near the LRT stop. Active uses at grade would help support pedestrian activity.

(4) Incorporate parking lay-bys for ridesharing into the design of apartments, employment uses, institutional uses and other appropriate developments.

The TDM considerations from the PARTS Phase 2 Corridor-wide TDM Strategy and HDR’s Assessment support and helped refine the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS: Midtown Plan.
Rendering View to the east from Kent Ave to Rockway Golf Course.
9.4 Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

During the first phase of the City of Kitchener’s overarching PARTS planning process, the City conducted a review of the heritage potential of every property within the PARTS station areas. While a formal study was not published, significant cultural heritage resources were identified that were either listed on the heritage register or designated. The City also completed a Cultural Heritage Landscape study in 2014, identifying significant neighbourhoods, streets, parks, cemeteries and other locations with cultural heritage value.

Urban Strategies prepared a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment to assess the Preferred Scenario for PARTS: Rockway to identify potential impacts on heritage resources, and to ensure that related recommendations and policies within this Plan appropriately identify and advance opportunities conserve heritage assets.

Cultural Heritage Approach in the PARTS: Rockway Planning Process

The Cultural Heritage assets identified by the City in each station area were reviewed in the first stage of the PARTS: Rockway planning process, including listed and designated properties, and Cultural Heritage Landscapes. Opportunities to avoid impacts and conserve, retain and celebrate these important assets were identified, helping to inform the development and evaluation of alternative scenarios in the second stage of the project. Through a formal evaluation, the preferred approach to avoiding impacts and appropriately addressing opportunities for heritage conservation was then carried forward within the hybrid preferred scenario developed in stage 3 of the project. Cultural heritage conservation has been recognized as a key objective within the Plan, and this objective has informed the final boundaries, as well as some land use designation recommendations and key directions and strategies within the Plan.

Impact Assessment

The preferred scenario for the PARTS: Rockway station was assessed to determine the potential for impacts to the identified heritage assets outlined below. The Preferred Scenario boundary within the Rockway station area includes a number of identified Cultural Heritage Landscapes, as well as listed and designated properties, including historic neighbourhoods, the First Mennonite and St. Peter’s Lutheran Churches, the Iron Horse Mission Church, and the Iron Horse Trail. The Plan works to establish a framework that not only avoids impacts, but also supports opportunities to advance cultural heritage conservation objectives. Identified opportunities to support conservation of identified resources within the Assessment are noted to the right.

Onward Ave & Central Frederick Cultural Heritage Landscapes

A key direction and implementation recommendations should be included to ensure the conservation of established neighbourhood areas, including neighbourhoods that are identified as cultural heritage landscapes and listed/designated properties within established neighbourhoods. The Plan’s key directions should focus new development in other areas, and include strategies to ensure an appropriate transition and integration between new development and these stable areas, establishing a framework that avoids impacts and promotes the conservation of these identified heritage resources.

First Mennonite Cemetery & St. Peter’s Lutheran Cemetery

The final boundary of the PARTS Plan was drawn to include the St. Peter’s Lutheran Cemetery to ensure it was appropriately considered within the Plan. Existing land use designations for both cemeteries are maintained to prohibit new development and support their continued presence in the station area. New development is encouraged to appropriately transition away from the cemeteries to avoid any potential impacts.

First Mennonite Church, Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, & Olivet Mission Church

The PARTS Plan maintains institutional land uses designations on these properties. This land use designation is intended to discourage any major re-development or change in use on the property that could impact the heritage attributes and values of historic buildings. It also supports the conservation of these resources by retaining their associative value and continued use for educational, religious, and/or other related community-oriented uses over time.

Onward Manufacturing (1027 King St E)

The PARTS Plan maintains a Mixed Use land use designation on the site, given its proximity to the Borden LRT station and location on the King Street Corridor. This land use designation provides opportunities for redevelopment of the site, consistent with its important location within the urban structure of the station area. If and when future development is proposed on or adjacent to this property, a Heritage Impact Assessment and Conservation Plan should be required to provide for the conservation of identified heritage attributes and values. This could include adaptive reuse of the existing building, or retention of its significant heritage attributes. Within the context of the protection afforded under the Ontario Heritage Act and Planning Act, no inappropriate impacts are anticipated.

Iron Horse Trail Cultural Heritage Landscape

The PARTS Plan recognizes the Iron Horse Trail as an important asset within the station area that should be retained and enhanced. Opportunities to enhance connectivity with the trail and create new green spaces along it are recommended, retaining its contextual value, supporting its long term use, and enhancing the character and interface with this important heritage asset. No negative impacts are anticipated.

Conclusion

The PARTS Rockway Preferred Scenario and related key directions and strategies in the Plan provide a framework to conserve and celebrate identified cultural heritage assets. Planned development and infrastructure are not anticipated to result in any negative impacts to identified heritage resources. Whereas the PARTS Rockway Plan provides an overarching framework to discourage impacts and encourage conservation of heritage resources, it should also be noted that where future development is proposed on or adjacent to an identified heritage resource, the City will use enabling tools under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) and Planning Act to achieve an appropriate level of conservation. This needs to include requiring heritage permit applications, Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Conservation Plans to ensure that any potential impacts are appropriately mitigated and that identified heritage attributes and values are conserved. The PARTS Rockway Plan will be implemented through a secondary planning process, which will provide opportunities to implement the directions of the plan as well as the enabling tools provided within the OHA and Planning Act.

The cultural heritage considerations from Urban Strategies’ Assessment support and helped create the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS Rockway Plan.

Recommendations

During the first phase of the City of Kitchener’s overarching PARTS planning process, the City conducted a review of the heritage potential of every property within the PARTS station areas. While a formal study was not published, significant cultural heritage resources were identified that were either listed on the heritage register or designated. The City also completed a Cultural Heritage Landscape study in 2014, identifying significant neighbourhoods, streets, parks, cemeteries and other locations with cultural heritage value.

Urban Strategies prepared a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment to assess the Preferred Scenario for PARTS: Rockway to identify potential impacts on heritage resources, and to ensure that related recommendations and policies within this Plan appropriately identify and advance opportunities conserve heritage assets.

Cultural Heritage Approach in the PARTS: Rockway Planning Process

The Cultural Heritage assets identified by the City in each station area were reviewed in the first stage of the PARTS: Rockway planning process, including listed and designated properties, and Cultural Heritage Landscapes. Opportunities to avoid impacts and conserve, retain and celebrate these important assets were identified, helping to inform the development and evaluation of alternative scenarios in the second stage of the project. Through a formal evaluation, the preferred approach to avoiding impacts and appropriately addressing opportunities for heritage conservation was then carried forward within the hybrid preferred scenario developed in stage 3 of the project. Cultural heritage conservation has been recognized as a key objective within the Plan, and this objective has informed the final boundaries, as well as some land use designation recommendations and key directions and strategies within the Plan.

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Conclusion

The PARTS Rockway Preferred Scenario and related key directions and strategies in the Plan provide a framework to conserve and celebrate identified cultural heritage assets. Planned development and infrastructure are not anticipated to result in any negative impacts to identified heritage resources. Whereas the PARTS Rockway Plan provides an overarching framework to discourage impacts and encourage conservation of heritage resources, it should also be noted that where future development is proposed on or adjacent to an identified heritage resource, the City will use enabling tools under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) and Planning Act to achieve an appropriate level of conservation. This needs to include requiring heritage permit applications, Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Conservation Plans to ensure that any potential impacts are appropriately mitigated and that identified heritage attributes and values are conserved. The PARTS Rockway Plan will be implemented through a secondary planning process, which will provide opportunities to implement the directions of the plan as well as the enabling tools provided within the OHA and Planning Act.

The cultural heritage considerations from Urban Strategies’ Assessment support and helped create the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS Rockway Plan.

Recommendations

The PARTS Rockway Preferred Scenario and related key directions and strategies in the Plan provide a framework to conserve and celebrate identified cultural heritage assets. Planned development and infrastructure are not anticipated to result in any negative impacts to identified heritage resources. Whereas the PARTS Rockway Plan provides an overarching framework to discourage impacts and encourage conservation of heritage resources, it should also be noted that where future development is proposed on or adjacent to an identified heritage resource, the City will use enabling tools under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) and Planning Act to achieve an appropriate level of conservation. This needs to include requiring heritage permit applications, Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Conservation Plans to ensure that any potential impacts are appropriately mitigated and that identified heritage attributes and values are conserved. The PARTS Rockway Plan will be implemented through a secondary planning process, which will provide opportunities to implement the directions of the plan as well as the enabling tools provided within the OHA and Planning Act.

The cultural heritage considerations from Urban Strategies’ Assessment support and helped create the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS Rockway Plan.

Recommendations
9.5 Health Impact Assessment

Urban Strategies prepared a Health Impact Assessment to assess the Preferred Scenario for PARTS Rockway in relation to potential impacts on public health. The Assessment also reviewed the key directions for the Plan and provided guidance and input to the strategies in order to ensure they appropriately identify and advance opportunities to implement public health-related policy objectives where possible. The City of Kitchener Official Plan provides policy direction to support a complete and healthy community and to prepare Health Impact Assessments. This Assessment assists with the Municipal Class EA process and considerations.

The introduction of higher order transit, public realm and mobility system improvements, and a land use framework that encourages transit-oriented development all generally support and advance public health objectives in the station area at a high level. The Preferred Scenario has been assessed against seven core elements with conclusions and recommendations related to each provided below:

- **Preserve Natural Heritage Systems & Provide Greenspace**
  - The Preferred Scenario appropriately works to preserve and enhance the natural heritage system (including the potential for ecological restoration of Schneider's Creek), promote low impact and innovative stormwater management strategies to reduce runoff and enhance water quality, and enhance the provision of green space.

- **Encourage Physical Activity**
  - The Preferred Scenario appropriately incorporates enhanced opportunities for physical activity by encouraging a modal shift away from the automobile, improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and connections, and new and improved parks and public spaces.

- **Ensure Physical Safety**
  - The Preferred Scenario appropriately works to ensure physical safety through recommended improvements to the mobility network and built environment.

- **Protect From Sun Exposure**
  - To further the ‘protection from sun exposure’ objectives, the following considerations are recommended for inclusion in the planning implementation tools for the PARTS Rockway Plan:
    - Tree canopy targets for new development across the station area to further enhance the tree canopy adjacent to public spaces and within publicly accessible private open spaces; and
    - Requirements for microclimate and shade structures or canopies in transit-priority areas, such as surrounding the LRT stop.

- **Support Personal Development**
  - At the scale of the PARTS Plan, the Preferred Scenario appropriately supports healthy personal development through proposed land use designations that encourage local employment, education and services, and improved wayfinding and connectivity to employment and services.

- **Facilitate Access to Health & Affordable Food Options**
  - The Preferred Scenario appropriately allows for the retention and provision of grocery and other food stores through the Mixed Use and Commercial land uses designations. The provision of medium and high densities helps support the market for food stores and the mobility strategies would help improve connectivity.

- **Promote Mental Health, Social Cohesion, & Well-Being**
  - The Preferred Scenario appropriately supports local provision of social and medical services, improved streetscapes, and a diversity of housing types.

- **Conclusion**
  - The Health Impact considerations from Urban Strategies’ Assessment support and helped create the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS Rockway Plan. Overall, the Preferred Scenario and its key directions and strategies appropriately addresses the core elements and objectives related to health and the built environment, providing considerable support for overall community health and well-being in both station areas. No specific concerns related to public health impacts were identified through the assessment.

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Photo: Greenery along the Iron Horse Trail.
Rendering  The former Schneider/Maple Leaf foods site, looking east.
PARTS

9.6 Parks & Open Space Assessment

Urban Strategies evaluated the Preferred Scenario to determine if the proposed provision of parks and open spaces will appropriately address the needs of existing and future residents. The assessment included a review of the City of Kitchener Official Plan and Parks Strategic Plan (PSP) to ensure the vision and objectives of these plans are appropriately integrated within the PARTS Rockway Plan. The provision, distribution, quality and connectivity of parks and open space were assessed. Potential future parkland dedication requirements were estimated to understand the extent to which new parks could reasonably be obtained through the development approvals process or if other additional strategies are needed.

The PSP includes City-wide targets for the distribution and provision of different types of parks. While these targets are not necessarily intended to be achieved at the scale of a station area, they were used as guidance in the evaluation.

Existing Conditions

Rockway was planned as an industrial area which is now in transition. Historic land use patterns have resulted in a chronic lack of parks and open spaces within the study area. With the introduction of the LRT and anticipated growth in the station area, providing adequate parks and open spaces to meet the needs of new and existing residents and workers in the station area presents a challenge.

The existing parkland provision level is 0 ha per 1,000 residents for neighbourhood parks and 0.05 ha per 1,000 residents for urban greens, as there are no neighbourhood parks and only a few small parkettes and greens in the station area. This is significantly below City-wide provision targets established in the PSP. When other open space is considered, the park and open space network within the station area is about 2.5 ha per 1,000 residents. While open spaces do not provide the same level of amenity, they do provide opportunities for passive recreation, such as the Iron Horse Trail and cemeteries in the station area.

This station area relies heavily on neighbourhood parks in the surrounding area. There are about 15.68 ha of parks and urban greens within a short walking distance (500m) of the edge of the station area; however, there are still many current residences in the station area that are further than 500m of a park or playground. For this reason, this general area is identified in the PSP as being underserved in regards to the distribution of Neighbourhood Parks.

Considerations

- The introduction of more residential uses and higher density employment uses in the area will require a significant investment in new public spaces to address the lack of parks in the station area today. This will be critical to respond to the growing needs of residents, workers and visitors over time. Parks and open space are important features, especially for livable medium and high density development.
- A range of different opportunities and approaches were explored through the alternative scenarios in order to help improve the existing provision and distribution of parks and open spaces.
- A Preferred Scenario was created to include new parks and open space in areas that are either under serviced, not within walking distance of a park and/or do not have any current park space but are areas of future density and development.

The Preferred Scenario is estimated to have a capacity to accommodate approximately 3,894 to 4,622 new residential units. As this new development occurs, over time this could generate a parkland dedication requirement approximately between 7.8 ha and 9.2 ha, based upon the current 1 ha per 500 units residential parkland dedication rate (note: depending on the nature of redevelopment, there may be a small portion of additional non-residential parkland dedication as well).

Rockway is an existing urban area where much of the development occurring will be adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and there are many small parcels where onsite dedication will be challenging.

The type or style of park space that should be provided may be different in different areas (i.e., urban plaza vs. green space).

If the candidate flood fringe opportunity is realized, additional parks and open spaces may be available to be achieved.

Conclusions

- There will continue to be reliance on the use of nearby park space and this may increase as new development occurs in the station area.
- In order to help address gaps in the provision of park space, new publicly accessible neighbourhood parks are needed. Several more hectares of park space is needed beyond that which is shown in the Rockway Plan. The areas that are planned to have the medium and high density residential and mixed uses should be high priorities (although it is noted that the existing underserved low rise residential areas should also be a priority). If a park space can serve both, that would be the optimum. These should be identified within the key directions and strategies of the public realm framework and reflected on the preferred Land Use Plan where possible.
- With future growth, it will be critically important for park space to be provided through new development, particularly on large redevelopment sites that have the capacity to provide physical parkland dedication.

In addition to parkland dedication provided through new development, the City should actively seek out other opportunities for more park and open space which could include partnerships to augment the size of new parkland provided through development or the outright purchase of land for a centrally located neighbourhood park.

A number of key directions and strategies should be included within the Plan to enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists across the station area, enhance opportunities for passive recreation and improve access to parks both within and beyond the station area.

Areas identified as ‘open space’ in the Preferred Scenario should have the necessary planning framework to ensure they are conserved.

 Lands that are within the Floodway should not be counted towards the provision of active park space.

 The Preferred Scenario will improve the provision, distribution and access to parks and open spaces.

The Park and Open Space Assessment supports and helped refine the Preferred Scenario for the PARTS Rockway Plan. A series of recommendations are provided to assist with implementation.

Recommendations

1. Establish a series of new publicly accessible parks / urban squares in areas that are near or within medium and high density residential and mixed use (particularly as part of major redevelopment sites). Those that would also provide space for nearby low rise residential would be of highest priority (see priority parkland acquisition areas, page 53).

2. Introduce an urban square at the Mill stop to enhance visibility and access to the stop, and provide amenity for new residents and workers surrounding the stop (high priority).

3. Include a new park and green space within the redevelopment of major sites that are transitioning from industrial to other uses (residential, innovation employment, mixed use, etc), such as the former Schneider's site and the MTD lands (high priority).

4. Establish a series of new publicly accessible parks / urban squares in areas that are near or within medium and high density residential and mixed use (particularly as part of major redevelopment sites). Those that would also provide space for nearby low rise residential would be of highest priority (see priority parkland acquisition areas, page 53).

5. Designate and zone land for parks and open spaces in accordance with the PARTS Rockway Plan where possible.

6. For large redevelopment sites, particularly within the Focus Area, consider providing suitably-sized park space that can serve both the development and a portion of the broader neighbourhood in order to assist with the park needs for the area. This may require use of the parkland reserve fund to complement on-site parkland dedication requirements or the utilization of bonusing.

7. Where necessary, pursue strategic acquisition of land in order to provide park space in needed areas. This should be considered in the context of the candidate flood fringe planning opportunity that was introduced with the GRCA's update of the two-zone floodplain planning policies for Schneider Creek. There may be synergies where the City, GRCA and/or Region can partner to purchase properties within the floodplain to advance ecological restoration objectives in the floodway, and create adjacent new park space within the flood fringe, capitalizing on the candidate flood fringe planning opportunity.

8. The City may need to pursue utilizing the Park Reserve fund to acquire land to be used as park space within the underserved area(s). At minimum, at least 5 ha of new parkland (beyond that shown in the preferred land use plan) may be needed in the long term to support large scale redevelopment of the area.

9. Continue to use a parkland dedication rate of 1 ha per 500 units for the PARTS Rockway area.

10. Ensure that Kaufman Park, and the accessibility thereto, is positioned so that it can evolve to serve the needs of the surrounding area over time, including as redevelopment occurs in the Rockway Station Area.

11. Design new parks to respond to high usage and diverse needs of a high density urban area.

12. In any future park master planning exercise, determine appropriate parkland provision ratios for intensification areas.
(Left) Areas within 500m of park space, current conditions. (Right) Areas within 500m of park space, preferred plan.
Both Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek are identified as ecological restoration areas in the City of Kitchener OP.

The direction of the Kitchener Official Plan indicates that ecological restoration of certain stream segments, especially in urbanized areas, should be considered where feasible, in order to enhance the diversity and connectivity to other natural heritage features and habitat. There are often other benefits (amenity space) or other considerations. In this specific instance, the restoration options should consider stormwater management and floodplain functions. The ecological restoration opportunities for Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks should be further explored and instituted over time. These include removal of concrete structures and improved daylighting of the creeks; naturalization of the channel, banks and riparian areas; creation of new aquatic habitat and restoration of the banks of both creeks; consideration of appropriate trail and passive recreational options; and an understanding of how the ecological restoration of this area relates to the restoration or water management activities upstream and downstream of this location (and the cumulative effect or impact), etc.

Naturalization and supplemental plantings along Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks would help with biodiversity, habitat and wildlife movement corridors. This will contribute to a number of the City of Kitchener’s objectives in the Strategic Plan for the Environment. In the existing daylighted reaches of both watercourses where there is existing aquatic habitat, riparian plantings will improve the quality by providing shade and food sources. Through improvement of the in-stream conditions and the riparian areas, water quality in Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks should be improved. This opportunity will contribute to achieving the City of Kitchener’s objective #2 in water resources in the Strategic Plan for the Environment which seeks to protect and conserve the natural hydrological and hydrogeological functions within the city.

The recommended restoration will provide opportunities to meet objectives of creating and enhancing existing aquatic and terrestrial habitat as well as strengthening corridors and natural linkages. Doing so will require additional feasibility study and consultation with a number of agencies including the Grand River Conservation Authority and provincial ministries. This additional study should be combined with, or connected to, consideration of flooding, stormwater management, and species habitat (i.e. are the existing underground watercourses habitat for any species at risk).

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The recommendation to transform and re-naturalize the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek corridors over time to enhance ecological integrity and provide other benefits. Connect with floodplain issues, fish habitat, stormwater management, valleyland ecology and other considerations. Identify improvements in the future Capital program (may involve development charge considerations for‘watercourse improvement’ or work with potential partners, such as the GRCA.

(1) Conduct a feasibility study to transform and re-naturalize the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek corridors over time to enhance ecological integrity and provide other benefits. Connect with floodplain issues, fish habitat, stormwater management, valleyland ecology and other considerations. Identify improvements in the future Capital program (may involve development charge considerations for‘watercourse improvement’ or work with potential partners, such as the GRCA.

(2) Introduce new open spaces as a component of large-scale redenvelopments.

(3) Support the habitat of select Species At Risk and Species of Conservation through enhanced Secondary Plan policies, and ultimately, through the redevelopment process.

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(3) Support the habitat of select Species At Risk and Species of Conservation through enhanced Secondary Plan policies, and ultimately, through the redevelopment process.
City of Kitchener Official Plan Part 2, Section 7: Natural Resources Management

The Rockway Preferred Scenario appropriately recommends that both Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek be designated within a Natural Heritage Conservation land use designation, and the key directions and strategies for these areas acknowledge the Official Plan’s identification of these areas as Ecological Restoration Areas. No new development is proposed in these areas, and related key directions and strategies work to create opportunities to reduce the flooding hazards and advance long-term ecological restoration opportunities in these areas, in keeping with the intent of the Official Plan.

City of Kitchener Stormwater Master Plan

The Master Plan provides information related to the existing condition of the watershed and stormwater management practices and options. New development should comply with the policies and recommendations of the Stormwater Master Plan, particularly within the Floodplain. If and when the extent of the Floodway and Flood Fringe change in relation either to the removal of existing structures from the inner Floodway as per the Candidate Flood Fringe opportunity identified by the GRCA, and/or future ecological restoration initiatives that may be undertaken for the two creeks, the Stormwater Master Plan should be revisited to reflect the extent of the future Floodway and Flood Fringe over time.

Conclusions

Key directions and strategies within the Plan recommend and protect for the long-term ecological restoration of the creeks, which may require public acquisition of properties within the inner Floodway, as well as identifying opportunities to improve the existing conditions in the interim. This approach allows for the Plan to make recommendations on how to best manage an interim condition over the lifespan of the Plan, while still protecting for the long-term ecological restoration of the creeks. In relation to managing an interim condition where some existing buildings remain within the inner Floodway, the Plan suggests mitigation opportunities to improve existing conditions and appropriately acknowledges that any activity within the Two Zone Policy area will be subject to related policies and GRCA approval. The short and long-term opportunities related to advancing creek ecological restoration and stormwater management appropriately respond to the policies and guidelines identified above.

Recommendations

(1) Protect and enhance the floodplain area of Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks by not allowing new development in the floodway.

(2) Create opportunities for green infrastructure within large development blocks to reduce the amount and increase the quality of stormwater runoff that in the floodplain area.

Ensure that the Plan includes key directions and strategies to inform potential future development in the Rockway Station Area. These include supporting the long-term ecological restoration of Schneider Creek, completing the Shoemaker Creek greenway corridor, and introducing new open spaces as part of new development.

Opportunities to implement low impact development related to stormwater management best practices within and surrounding the Schneider and Shoemaker creeks, roadway right-of-ways and development blocks should be utilized, consistent with the recommendations of the Plan and the City’s stormwater management plan/policy (as updated or amended by provincial requirements). These should include green infrastructure that incorporates natural vegetation, reduces runoff, improve water quality, enhance groundwater recharge and reduce stream erosion.

(5) Once a critical mass of floodplain space is created through implementation of the Candidate Flood Fringe planning opportunity, the City should proceed with initiating a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Schedule C study for Schneider Creek ecological restoration and stormwater management enhancement/flood reduction. This study could be timed with the redevelopment of the Candidate Flood Fringe lands on the northeast side of the creek.
The EA study should include the following key elements:

Phase 1: It is assumed that the work completed during the PARTS Rockway EA will already satisfy Phase 1 EA requirements, identifying the problem and opportunity of ecological restoration related to the Candidate Flood Fringe planning opportunity, anticipated transit-oriented redevelopment, and anticipated creation of new creekside greenspace. The EA study should build upon the Grand River Conservation Authority’s ‘Update of Schneider Creek Floodplain Mapping & Two-Zone Policies, Stirling Avenue to Sydney Street’, which establishes the Candidate Flood Fringe planning opportunity. It should also respond to the recommendations of the PARTS Rockway Plan, which identify at a high level the problem and opportunity of restoration through redevelopment surrounding the LRT stops, as well as responding to the specific problem and opportunity that may be created through potential future redevelopment, removal of existing structures from the inner floodway, and creation of new creekside greenspace.

Phase 2: the PARTS Rockway process considered three alternative scenarios related to the Candidate Flood Fringe opportunity, settling on a hybrid approach where it is anticipated that only some properties will provide new creekside green space through potential future redevelopment, while others will likely maintain existing uses in the inner Floodway indefinitely. Building on this work, Phase 2 of the EA should consider alternative solutions to creek restoration in more detail, including reconfiguration of municipal infrastructure, alternatives to the existing channelization of the creek, strategic acquisition of additional creekside lands to unlock additional opportunities for ecological restoration, and various alternatives to return the creeks to their ‘optimal ecological state’, as well as consulting with the public and other stakeholders to identify a preferred solution.

Phase 3: will consider alternative design concepts for the preferred solution to restore the creek, and consult with the public and other stakeholders to identify a preferred design concept.

Phase 4: will document the study findings in an Environmental Study Report (ESR) to be filed for review by the public and review agencies, and approval with the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. The ESR will also:

1. Consider existing uses entirely in the Floodway with no ability to redevelop, to inform potential strategic public acquisition of some or all of these properties to enable an optimal ecological restoration scenario.

2. Provide the City with the information and guidelines to advance site specific projects within the study area in relation to the acquisition of new creekside green space and ecological restoration investments, as well as re-establishing the limits of the Floodway and Flood Fringe in relation to the removal of existing structures and ecological restoration initiatives that may alter the Floodplain to ensure Flood Fringe Criteria are met.

3. Implementation phasing considerations should be identified by conducting floodplain modeling for at least one interim scenario where all currently known “soft sites” (site parcels that are most likely to be re-zoned) are redeveloped and/or acquired by the City, accounting for the removal of some existing structures and any recommended interim ecological restoration initiatives.

4. Phased ecological restoration design concepts should also be identified for both interim and ultimate scenarios.

- Provide information regarding the process to re-designate the Candidate Flood fringe when the inner Floodway in any block is cleared of buildings.

It is noted that Phase 5 of the EA process which generally includes detailed design and construction, is typically completed separately from the first four phases. This phase completes contract drawings and documents, and proceeds to construction, implementation and monitoring for adherence to environmental provisions and commitments.
9.9 Infrastructure Capacity Analysis

The City of Kitchener coordinated a review of existing infrastructure to evaluate the extent to which anticipated growth can be served by existing infrastructure, including consideration of storm sewer capacity, water capacity/fire flow analysis, and sanitary sewer capacity.

Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis

Aquafor Beech Ltd. provided a high level assessment of the Rockway station area to evaluate the Preferred Scenario’s potential impacts on the storm sewer system. The analysis modeled three scenarios to compare how each performed during a major 5-year, 4-hour storm event. The three scenarios included the following:

- Existing conditions
- Proposed conditions, as per the Preferred Scenario
- Proposed conditions, as per the Preferred Scenario, with 12.5 mm stormwater volume retention (as per the recommendations of the City’s 2016 Integrated Stormwater Management Master Plan)

The model results indicate a reduction in the surcharge state of the storm sewers within and adjacent to the station area boundaries for the Preferred Scenario, with a further reduction when implementation of the 12.5 mm volume retention criteria from the 2016 Stormwater Management Master Plan is included.

The assessment suggests that the Preferred Scenario provides an overall reduction of flows to the storm sewer system. The analysis recommends some storm sewer upgrades for all three scenarios. The costs and extent of future upgrades is reduced from the existing conditions to the Preferred Scenario (estimated at about $500,000 lower) due to its anticipated reduction in overall flows to the storm sewer system.

Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure Assessment

The City of Kitchener, in coordination with the Region of Waterloo, analyzed sanitary sewer capacity and fire flow in relation to the Preferred Scenario based on existing GIS watermain information. This included identification of a series of nodes across both station areas and identification of Average Day and Maximum Day water demands, as well as available fire flows at these nodes. This analysis indicates that existing infrastructure appears to have adequate capacity to support increased development and related demands based on the new land uses and densities proposed in the Preferred Scenario. It should also be noted that some sections of water mains were upgraded as part of the ION construction in anticipation of increased demand, which has not yet been incorporated into available GIS watermain information. These upgrades can be expected to provide better results than the modeling that was completed.

Recommendations

1. That the Stormwater Utility continue to model and evaluate the storm sewer system and any potential upgrades be considered in the future Capital program and/or through the development review process.

2. Create opportunities for green infrastructure within large development blocks to improve stormwater management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenarios Name</th>
<th>Length of Storm at Full Capacity or Surcharged (m)</th>
<th>Rockway Station Area</th>
<th>Full Capacity</th>
<th>Surcharged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Existing Conditions</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>1, 101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Proposed Conditions</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Proposed Conditions w/ 12.5mm Rainfall Volume Retention</td>
<td>173</td>
<td></td>
<td>719</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table illustrating the storm sewer capacity modeling results.

Water Capacity/Fire Flow Analysis

City of Kitchener Utilities, in coordination with the Region of Waterloo, analyzed water capacity and fire flow in relation to the Preferred Scenario based on existing GIS watermain information. This included identification of a series of nodes across both station areas and identification of Average Day and Maximum Day water demands, as well as available fire flows at these nodes. This analysis indicates that existing infrastructure appears to have adequate capacity to support increased development and related demands based on the new land uses and densities proposed in the Preferred Scenario. It should also be noted that some sections of water mains were upgraded as part of the ION construction in anticipation of increased demand, which has not yet been incorporated into available GIS watermain information. These upgrades can be expected to provide better results than the modeling that was completed.

Recommendations

1. To ensure appropriate servicing on a site by site basis, a fire flow analysis hydrant test should be required as part of the site plan process to further assess individual site needs and confirm adequate capacity.

Sanitary Modeling Analysis

The City of Kitchener Infrastructure Services Department completed modeling for sanitary sewer infrastructure in Rockway, which compared the existing condition and the Preferred Scenario at the maximum potential zoning density to determine any possible impacts to the infrastructure within the study area. It should be noted that at the time of this modeling exercise, new improvements to the infrastructure completed through reconstruction work for the ION were not available to be included in the model.

This modeling concluded that the impacts of the Preferred Scenario for the Rockway station area are very minor, namely that the length of pipe at capacity does not increase and that only one 36.8m pipe length results in surcharging at the maximum zoning density, without accounting for recent improvements from the ION reconstruction that should improve capacity beyond what was modeled. Given that it is unlikely that every single property within the station area would redevelop to its maximum zoning density, it can be concluded that the Preferred Scenario should yield negligible impacts to the City’s sanitary infrastructure. Should redevelopment for certain areas proposed densities that are higher than what is shown in the Rockway Plan, these may have to be assessed on a site specific basis.

Recommendations

1. For any development proposal that is above the maximum density provisions of the Rockway Plan, a servicing capacity analysis will be required.

2. That the City’s Engineering staff continue to model and evaluate the sanitary sewer system and if any potential location-specific upgrades arise, they should be considered in the future Capital program and/or through the development review process.
9.10 Preliminary Noise Impact Assessment

Golder Associates Ltd. conducted a Preliminary Noise Impact Assessment for the Rockway station area to review the existing and future potential noise environment. The Assessment looked at the feasibility of the land use concepts and identified any necessary revisions or mitigation measures to achieve the Preferred Scenario. The scope of work did not include an assessment of the noise, vibration or mitigation measures from the LRT system itself as that was completed as part of the previous Region-led EA process.

Assessment of Transportation Corridors

The methodology used to assess the potential noise impacts of the Preferred Scenario is based on a combination of MTO and MOECC Noise Guidelines and to an extent the FCM/RAC Noise and Vibration Guidelines. These guidelines consider noise levels from transportation corridors and stationary noise sources onto sensitive points of reception and they establish recommended noise limits. The potential traffic volumes (provided by HDR Inc) and rail traffic data (provided by Goderich-Exeter Railway) helped derive the expected noise levels. Noise prediction modeling was completed using the CadnaA software for King Street, Charles Street, Ottawa Street, Borden Ave, Stirling Ave, Courtland Ave, Mill Street, Weber Street, Conestoga Parkway (Highway 7) and the rail line. Six representative locations were identified and assessed as depicted on the noise contour map.

Analysis

Through a review of the noise modeling it is evident that a new Outdoor Living Area near the assessed roadways within the PARTS Rockway study area may require mitigation to demonstrate compliance with applicable noise limits. Noise levels associated with the various roadways should be within acceptable limits for indoor living conditions provided typical building treatments and materials are used in new development. In accordance with the Ontario Building Code. Any new residential uses (residential, day care facilities, etc.) should be carefully considered in proximity to railway operations. Potential noise and vibration impacts would restrict such uses to minimum setback distances of at least 30m from a Principal Main Line along with requiring a number of other mitigation measures and warning clauses.

Assessment of Stationary Noise Sources

The land use concepts were assessed as they relate to stationary noise sources. Given that there are some existing industrial operations in Rockway, the consideration of potential changes to the land use for the PARTS Rockway area should consider the status of existing uses. The general approach of utilizing an Innovation Employment designation as a buffer between new mixed use and residential, and existing employment uses is appropriate and should help to support land use compatibility. Where Mixed Use and Residential designations are anticipated in or near areas that are currently within a General Employment land use designation, the use of holding symbols and requirement to complete site specific noise studies to lift these in advance of permitting new residential uses in areas in transition should be considered.

Conclusions

- The land uses of the Preferred Scenario are appropriate and future development can occur within reasonable limits and utilizing appropriate mitigation measures.
- Any new sensitive uses that may be permitted within lands in proximity to existing employment uses that have associated noise would have to comply with the MOECC requirements and Environmental Compliance Approvals.
- Mixed Use and Residential designations are proposed on lands in proximity to the rail corridor and/or on lands currently within a General Employment designation. As part of the permission of new residential uses in these areas, the City should consider a requirement for further site specific noise and vibration analysis through the development approvals process to confirm any necessary mitigation measures that should be required.

Recommendations

1. For any new Outdoor Living Areas within 40m of the assessed roadways in the Rockway study area, passive noise mitigation measures should be utilized as a first priority for complying with applicable noise limits. This may include orienting the area away from the road noise source, incorporating features into the development to shield from the road corridor, establishing a buffer or other design solution. Physical attenuation via acoustic barrier should be considered as a last resort. A warning clause is recommended to be included in rental/lease or purchase agreements or registered on title of any such property in accordance with the wording provided in the NPC-300 guideline to notify the future owner/occupant. The City should require the design details be considered in the site design and mitigation measures further included as conditions of development approval.
2. For any new sensitive use in close proximity to a stationary noise source, a warning clause is recommended to be included in rental/lease or purchase agreements or registered on title of any property in accordance with the wording provided in the NPC-300 guidelines to notify the future owner/occupant. The City should require the design details be considered in the site design and mitigation measures further included as conditions of development approval.
3. Any additional proposed changes to the land use and zoning, particularly if a development is proposing a sensitive use / receptor in proximity to a transportation corridor or stationary noise source, should prepare a site-specific, detailed noise study.
4. As part of the implementing zoning for Mixed Use or Residential lands on lands currently within a General Employment designation, a holding provision should be considered to require the preparation and implementation of a detailed, site-specific noise study prior to any residential or acoustically-sensitive uses being permitted.
5. The City or landowners should work with the Region of Waterloo (as the regulating authority) to consider whether any of the land uses within the PARTS Rockway area should be identified as a Class 4 area, as per the MOECC NPC-300 guidelines, and implement any related mitigative measures.
Rendering: View of the Borden Stop.
PARTS: Rockway puts forward an ambitious long-term framework to guide public and private investment in the station area over time, capitalizing on the Region’s catalytic investment in the ION. Whereas the various lands along the ION corridor have historically developed as a series of disparate places, introduction of regional rapid transit creates an opportunity to reorient the station areas as connected destinations and focal points for growth, community-building and reinvestment.

As a historic industrial area in transition, the Rockway station area includes a number of underutilized areas with strong redevelopment potential, presenting an exciting opportunity for the station area to build upon its strong live/work character and establish a unique role and identity within the broader ION corridor. While it’s gritty, eclectic character could be seen as a challenge, it also presents a key opportunity for Rockway to become a haven for innovative and creative uses that will increasingly be pushed out of other gentrifying areas along the ION corridor. In combination with the investment in higher order transit, strategic public investment to improve the natural setting, public realm condition, and enhance connectivity can help to catalyze private sector redevelopment of large sites, attract new services and amenities, and encourage innovative and creative uses seeking the types of affordable spaces that are abundant in Rockway. This will require a long term commitment to implementing the Plan’s framework of key directions and strategies.

Progress will be incremental in nature, and will need to be supported by a number of implementation strategies including:

- Updates to the City's planning framework;
- Facilitation of future actions related to the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek corridors;
- Implementation of strategies related to land use and built form, mobility, public realm and technical considerations; and
- Collaboration with key partners and stakeholders.

As implementation progresses over time, it is important to note that the Plan’s key directions, strategies and supportive conceptual modeling are intended to identify a potential future, not a prescriptive one. Given the longer timeframe that will be required to achieve the vision, a degree of flexibility to respond to changing market conditions and strategic opportunities will be required.

10.2 Aligning Policy & Regulatory Framework

This PARTS Plan is a strategic master plan that is intended to align with and implement Provincial, Regional and City policy objectives and directions. This Plan provides a foundation to inform the preparation of a new or revised Official Plan/Secondary Plan policies, zoning, urban design guidelines, heritage resource conservation and other implementing tools.


The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (‘the Growth Plan’) provides provincial policy direction, beyond the Provincial Policy Statement, on how growth should be planned and managed in an area of Ontario that includes Kitchener and Waterloo Region.

Upper and lower-tier municipal Official Plans are required to conform to the policies of the Growth Plan. The process for preparing this PARTS Plan occurred under the Regional and City policies that are in effect and which implement the Growth Plan 2006.

Prior to the finalization of this Plan, the Province released an updated Growth Plan 2017, which took effect July 1, 2017. The new Growth Plan has a number of new and updated policies that Official Plans must conform to within 5 years.

Some of the new policy direction includes that Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs are locations within approximately 500 m of a transit station) will be delineated and planned for a minimum density target of 160 residents and Jobs per hectare for those served by light rail transit. Other key updates in relation to MTSAs include direction to plan and zone for a mix of uses, strengthened policies that prohibit land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of minimum density targets, planning and design that is transit supportive and supports active transportation, public/private collaboration, alternative development standards such as reduced parking and policy direction related to supporting transit and multi-modal connectivity.

Municipal decisions on or after July 1, 2017 that affect a planning matter must conform to the Growth Plan 2017. Although this PARTS Plan does not directly include an Official Plan Amendment or conformity exercise at this time that will be pending in the future to implement the new Growth Plan and its targets, once the approval is being considered by municipal Council after July 1, it was assessed against the relevant policies of the new Growth Plan and the potential planned capacity to achieve density was estimated.

The transit supportive Borden and Mill Focus Areas for the Rockway MTSAs are planned to have the capacity to achieve at least a minimum of 230 and 170 residents and Jobs per hectare respectively. The planning horizon of the Growth Plan targets may be different than the planning horizon used for this PARTS Plan under the existing Official Plan framework. The Preferred Scenario and key directions of the PARTS Rockway Plan help achieve the objectives and implement the policies of the Growth Plan, such as being transit supportive, improving active transportation, reducing parking standards and supporting multi-modal connectivity.

The Official Plan (2014) deferred updates to a number of Secondary Plans, including the Mill-Courtland Woodside Park Neighbourhood Secondary Plan, which generally shares geography with the Rockway station area, to allow the update of Secondary Plans to be informed by the PARTS process. While new policy and land use designation recommendations within the PARTS Rockway Plan have been informed by overlapping Official Plan policies and direction, the station area planning processes has also presented an opportunity to put forward a tailored vision and strategies that respond to the introduction of the LRT in Rockway.

Following approval of the PARTS Rockway Plan, an Official Plan Amendment to update the existing Secondary Plan and other relevant policies and mapping will be initiated to apply the preferred land use plan and integrate the relevant key directions and strategies into the Official Plan policy framework. This Secondary Plan review will be accompanied by updated zoning along with updated urban design and built form guidelines.

10.4 Official Plan

Recommendations

1. For any future Official Plan Amendment that may be needed to establish minimum density targets for the entire MTSAs priority transit corridor as per the Growth Plan 2017, consider delineating the Focus Areas and establishing a minimum target that is higher than 160 residents and Jobs per hectare given the potential capacity to accommodate growth in the PARTS Rockway Plan.

2. The Official Plan policy framework should include, among other things, the prohibition of land uses and built form that would adversely impact the station area’s ability to achieve the density target, allow for reduced parking standards, conserve cultural heritage landscapes and other significant heritage resources, and advance key directions and strategies that enhance multi-modal connectivity and support transit.

3. In areas where there is an interest in maintaining or growing employment, Secondary Plan policies should require that new development on employment lands replace or increase the extent of non-residential Gross Floor Area (GFA) on the site. Minimum non-residential GFA requirements could also be used in Mixed Use areas, and could be tied to targeted uses where applicable (e.g. targeting office/medical office uses near the hospital).

4. In areas where new retail, services, amenities and the vertical integration of a mix of uses are desired, such as the ‘active frontage’ areas near the two LRT stops and on the former Schneider’s site (as indicated on the preferred land use plan), Secondary Plan policies could prohibit residential uses on the ground floor, and/or require 4.5 m minimum ground floor heights.

5. To enhance opportunities for increased densities that support ridership, consider permitting residential uses within Innovation Employment designations, particularly within the Focus Area, conditional on any proposed redevelopment increasing the extent of non-residential GFA and/or jobs provided on the site and demonstrating land use compatibility between existing and proposed uses.
10.5 Zoning By-law

New zoning to implement the preferred land use plan for the PARTS Rockway area will be created with the Official Plan Amendment / Secondary Plan review and in consideration of the zoning being created as part of the City’s Comprehensive Review of the Zoning By-law (CRoZBy) and any other relevant initiatives. Building on and implementing the policy directions contained within the Official Plan/Secondary Plan, the Zoning By-law will regulate land uses and specify detailed development standards such as building heights, massing, orientation, and parking requirements among others. New zones for Innovation Employment and Commercial within a MTSA may be needed. The City has already begun to consider distinct parking regulations and other Transportation Demand Management measures for the PARTS areas through zoning and other tools.

10.6 Cultural Heritage

The conservation of built heritage resources located within the PARTS Rockway Area will be achieved through the preferred land use plan, key directions and strategies, implementation recommendations and the provisions under the Ontario Heritage Act and the Planning Act. Prior to the preparation of this Plan, the City listed or designated any significant cultural heritage properties on the Municipal Heritage Register. Although no additional resources are specifically recommended by this Plan, through the development review process, additional sites may be identified and considered from time to time. The City will continue to consider Heritage Permit Applications for proposed alterations, additions and development related to designated heritage resources and require Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Conservation Plans for planning applications made for listed and designated resources.

The conservation of identified cultural heritage landscapes (CHLs) is an important factor in the preferred land use plan and will benefit from the approval of the strategies in this Plan. The Secondary Plan will provide direction on appropriate and compatible development within specific CHLs through the implementation of the PARTS Rockway land use plan, as well as the introduction of zoning regulations and urban design guidelines directed towards conserving CHL character. Additional measures beyond this may be required to fully conserve the CHLs.

Recommendations

(1) Provide more specific detail within the Official Plan / Secondary Plan policies and mapping, zoning regulations, urban design and built form guidelines to conserve the character of cultural heritage resources, including cultural heritage landscapes.

(2) Confirm if any additional conservation measures are needed for cultural heritage landscapes and pursue the implementation of those measures if needed) in concert with the Official Plan / Secondary Plan review process.

Recommendations (con’t)

(6) For the PARTS Rockway Borden and Mill Focus Areas, a policy framework to allow density bonusing (under Section 37 of the Planning Act) should be established to incentivize development and should include community benefits such as:

- Affordable rental housing units
- Inclusion of space and facilities within the development dedicated to community or cultural uses
- Transportation Demand Management measures that are at least 25% above the minimum standards
- Provision of on-site or financial contribution towards off-site park or public realm space that is at least 25% above the minimum standards
- Provision of identified trail or street connections beyond the minimum requirements
- Upgrades to the public realm / streetscape above a certain minimum threshold
- Public art

(7) For the Candidate Flood Fringe, include special policies about the potential land uses that may be considered if the land is “unlocked” and further guidance on the process to do so. Identify the potential land use and density permissions, include requirements such as:

- Provision of identified trail or street connections beyond the minimum requirements
- Inclusion of space and facilities within the development dedicated to community or cultural uses
- Transportation Demand Management measures that are at least 25% above the minimum standards
- Provision of on-site or financial contribution towards off-site park or public realm space that is at least 25% above the minimum standards
- Provision of identified trail or street connections beyond the minimum requirements
- Upgrades to the public realm / streetscape above a certain minimum threshold
- Public art

(8) Incorporate policies to require a minimum amount of affordable housing be provided in the Borden and Mill Focus Areas.

Photos: Rockway features a wide range of uses, typologies and assets.
In support of GRCA policies, the Secondary Plan should include the areas identified in the Update of Schneider Creek Floodplain Mapping and Two-Zone Policies: Stirling Avenue to Sydney Street (2016). It should also include a policy to confirm that redesignation of the ‘candidate flood fringe’ to ‘flood fringe’ cannot occur until all existing structures are removed from the inner floodway within a given development block, subject to GRCA approval. The City should play a coordination role, directing landowners interested in this opportunity to work with the GRCA in the early planning stages for any projects that seek to implement this opportunity by removing existing structures from the inner floodway within a given development block. The City should direct land owners to contact the GRCA on a case by case basis to confirm and coordinate the timing of related requirements to enable the redesignation during the approvals process for related activities, including the demolition of existing structures, related alterations, and/or development approvals for potential new development that would be enabled by the redesignation of the candidate flood fringe.

The City of Kitchener Official Plan has identified the Schneider and Shoemaker Creek corridors as Ecological Restoration Areas. As removal of existing structures within the inner floodway and creation of creekside green space occurs over time, opportunities to realize Official Plan policy objectives related to the ecological restoration of the Creeks will be created. HDR Inc. has provided a detailed recommendation for how to advance an Environmental Assessment to further study, design and implement these opportunities over time (see Technical Considerations).

Given the fragmentation of ownership and numerous small parcels that are located mostly or completely within the inner floodway, it is likely that public acquisition of some of these lands will be necessary in the long-term to fully restore the creeks to their optimal ecological state and/or to provide improved stormwater management and reduced flooding risk.

In the interim, it is recommended that the current Existing Use (Zone E-1) permissions that apply to these lands be maintained. These permissions generally only permit the existing use and existing building on the site, prohibiting redevelopment or the construction of new buildings, and limiting any change in use to a use of the same type and/or a use that reduces the risk of damage to life or property. Any change in use, modifications to existing structures, and/or related alterations to the site are subject to GRCA approval and will only be considered by the GRCA on a case by case basis.

### 10.8 Urban Design Guidelines

The City has already prepared an Urban Design Brief during Phase 2 of the overarching PARTS Process to provide high level urban design guidance in advance of the completion of respective station plans along the corridor. To build on this brief, the City will develop a more detailed set of urban design guidelines which will assist with the implementation of the PARTS Plans and act as a complement to Secondary Plans and Zoning.

The key directions and strategies within this plan should be coordinated with and help to inform the development of these guidelines. The Station-Wide Strategies provided in Section 4 of this Plan provide a set of general directions to help achieve transit-oriented development. The key directions and strategies provided for Built Form & Land Use, Mobility, and the Public Realm can also help to inform the development of urban design guidelines, but are generally intended to provide more area-specific guidance. The considerations and recommendations related to cultural heritage resources, including cultural heritage landscapes such as neighbourhoods, should also be considered in the preparation of the guidelines. It is recommended that the City also consider the creation of a Design Review Panel, made up of respected experts in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture and urban design, as well as a related process for the panel to provide input on new development within the PARTS Focus Areas, through the development approvals process.

### Recommendations

1. Update the Urban Design Manual to include urban design and built form guidelines that are specific to the PARTS Rockway area (utilizing the station-wide strategies from this plan) and reflect the key directions and strategies of this Plan.

### 10.9 Streetscape Master Plans

Detailed Streetscape Master Plans should be prepared for the relevant streetscapes identified in the Mobility and Public Realm Key Directions of Sections 6.0 and 7.0, and added into the City’s Urban Design Manual to guide public and private investments in streetscape upgrades.

Streetscape improvements could occur through the Capital work program (such as Regional or City road reconstruction projects) or through some other funding mechanism (such as infrastructure grant programs or public/private partnerships). These may include features such as hard and soft landscaping, co-ordinated street furniture, transit stops, public art, wayfinding, street crossing treatments, patio delineation and cycling facilities.

The City of Kitchener will implement streets that are identified in the City’s Capital Budget forecast and will endeavour to guarantee that the City streets recommended for Streetscape Master Plans from this PARTS Plan into the future Capital work program as appropriate. In addition, the City will explore opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience in the area immediately surrounding the two LRT stops beyond what was provided during the ION reconstruction.

**King Street:** This location is an important gateway function into Downtown Kitchener, and is positioned as a key mixed-use corridor that extends through and beyond the station area. A Streetscape Master Plan and related capital improvements could be timed to coincide with redevelopment surrounding the Borden stop.

**Borden Avenue:** The link between the Borden LRT Station and the Aud should be enhanced to provide a better pedestrian and cycling experience. This could include enhanced pedestrian crossings, cycling infrastructure, potential bikeshare facilities, wayfinding, pedestrian lighting and other streetscape improvements.
10.10 Improvements to Parks & the Public Realm

Through the development process, the City will need to help ensure that the park and public space needs for the growing PARTS Rockway Area are met. This includes providing new urban squares, parks and green space. Publicly-owned park space is a first priority, although public/private partnerships (privately-owned publicly accessible spaces) may be explored. Prioritization of the needs and opportunities outlined in the key directions, strategies and technical considerations will be necessary and may include work programming and budgeting implications in the future. High priority locations include those where there could be new medium or high density redevelopment and areas that are at or around the LRT stations (i.e. a new urban square at the Mill stop). It will be important to identify and consider improvements to existing parks in the surrounding area and accessibility thereto (i.e. Kaufman Park).

10.11 Improvements to the Mobility Network

A number of opportunities and key directions are identified in the PARTS Rockway Plan for enhancing the mobility network. Specific strategies highlight new pedestrian, cycling or active transportation network connections or routes, potential bikeshare station locations, streetscape enhancements and a number of other recommendations through the technical considerations. These will need to be reviewed in the context of existing work and budget programs. Prioritization of the recommendations will need to be undertaken and integrated into future work and financial programming.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is an important tool that will help the PARTS Rockway Area to achieve the desired transit ridership and could help free up land towards increased densities near the LRT station. The PARTS Rockway Plan utilized the Phase 2 Corridor-wide TDM Strategy and further recommendations within the Technical Considerations Section in order to include appropriate directions, strategies and recommendations. These will be further enshrined through the implementation tools of this Plan.

10.12 Master Plans for Large Sites & Redevelopment Opportunities

Rockway includes some large sites that present strong redevelopment opportunities, such as the former Schneider’s site and larger employment blocks surrounding the Borden stop. Given the need to introduce new street and block patterns, parks, and other public amenities through a phased redevelopment process, the City should require applicants to prepare a comprehensive master plan as part of the development approvals process for large redevelopment sites. This requirement should be triggered at the outset of Plan of Subdivision, site-specific Zoning By-law Amendments and/or Site Plan Control applications for these sites. At minimum, a Master Plan should:

- Outline the location of new public and private connections through the site;
- Outline the location of new parks and open spaces;
- Outline the location, massing and density of proposed development; and
- Provide a phasing strategy that outlines the timing and delivery of all of these various elements

10.13 Sustainability and Resilience Metrics

The City has an interest in positioning the Rockway Station Area to exhibit leadership and advance best practices in the areas of sustainability and resilience. This could include requiring new development to achieve a certain performance standard, such as equivalent to LEED/LEED ND, or achievement of minimum sustainable development standards for Kitchener. This should be implemented through the development approval process.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that development in the PARTS Rockway Area is equivalent to achieving a minimum LEED/LEED ND - Silver rating or comparable sustainable development standard for Kitchener.

2. Conduct a Feasibility Study for district energy systems that can take advantage of the live/work character of the Station Area, such as the former Schneider’s site or other large redevelopment locations.

10.14 Involving Partners

The ION is a significant catalyst for shaping the built form, public realm and mobility of our community into the future. Additional strategic investments in the infrastructure and public realm in the areas beyond the immediate LRT line and the ION stops can potentially provide further amenities and leverage an area’s marketability and livability. Meeting the long-term objectives of the PARTS Rockway Plan will require coordination with many partners.

10.15 Council Resolution, December 11th 2017

The PARTS Rockway Plan was approved by the following Council resolution on December 11, 2017.

"THAT the PARTS Rockway Plan, attached as Appendix A to report CSD-17-100, be approved, subject to the following revisions:

- That the Shared Parking (proposed) Icon shown on the Mobility Map on page 47 be removed and the Legend updated accordingly to remove reference to Shared Parking (proposed) and

- That the Land Use Plan on page 65 be amended to revise the proposed land use identification for the properties at 531, 541 and 543 Mill Street from Innovation Employment to Mixed-Use High Density.

THAT staff prepare the appropriate Official Plan Amendment (i.e. incorporate an updated Secondary Plan), the corresponding Zoning By-law Amendment and related urban design guidelines, which will include additional public engagement and consultation, to implement the PARTS Rockway Plan; AND FURTHER THAT the mobility, public realm or any relevant technical and implementation recommendations identified in the PARTS Rockway Plan be prioritized as a part of future business plan, work plan and budget processes."