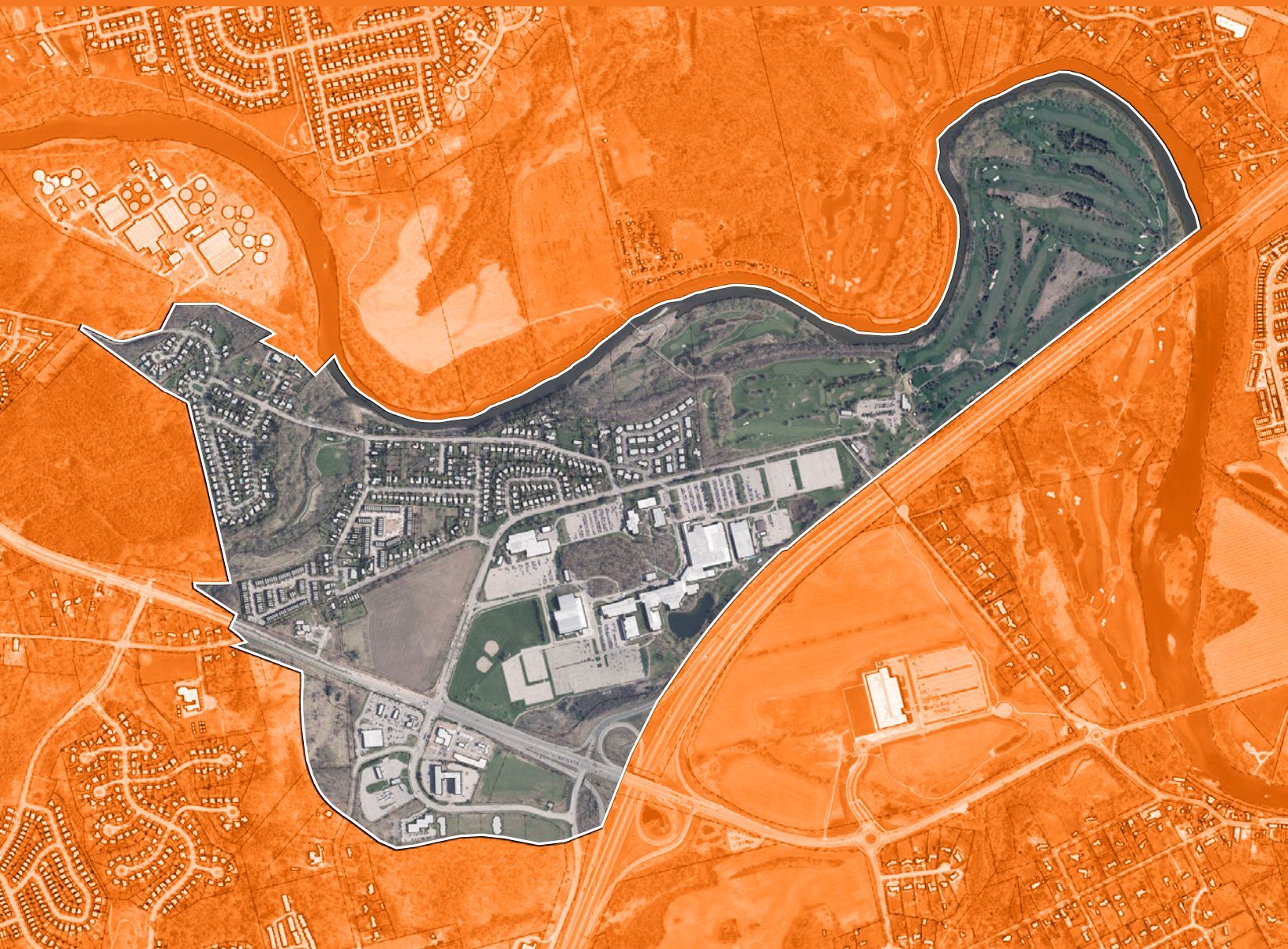


LOWER DOON LAND USE STUDY



Background Report

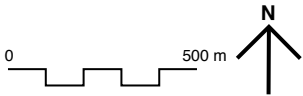
July 27, 2020

Contents

1 Introduction	 3
2 Consultation	 4
3 Existing Conditions	 6
4 Who Does What	 17
5 Issues	 24
6 Options to Consider	 40



Study Area for the Lower Doon Land Use Study



1 Introduction

The objectives of the Lower Doon Land Use Study are to:

- Review current issues, zoning and land use designations and policies for the Lower Doon and Conestoga College Node area.
- Examine the planning structure, land use mix and intensity for the lands identified in the study area
- Make recommendations to update the Official Plan Policies, Zoning bylaw regulations and any other planning tools as needed for the lands identified in the study area.

The study area extends from the Grand River, along the north side of Highway 401, to the east side of Homer Watson Boulevard, north along the edge of Homer Watson Park to the south side of the Grand River. The entire area is approximately 233 hectares (574 acres), and includes the Doon Campus of Conestoga College, Doon Valley Golf Course, Willow Lake Park, and has approximately 540 houses with some office/commercial uses. In the portion of the neighbourhood immediately adjacent to Conestoga College, there are 182 houses outside of the three existing townhouse developments that have 251 units.

The Planning Partnership team initiated the Study in October 2019 with a review of the City's background information, research on precedents of other near campus neighbourhoods in cities across Ontario. Members of the team had a site walk with residents, city staff and the Councillor (November 13, 2019) and had meetings with representatives from Conestoga College (December 9, 2019) and the City's Staff Steering Committee (January 8, 2020).

The Planning Partnership also conducted approximately 20 one-on-one conversations between November 2019 and January 2020. The first public consultation event was held on February 3, 2020.

A second public consultation will be conducted later in 2020 to review land use, urban design and planning options for the Lower Doon area.

2 Consultation

During November and December 2019 and January 2020, approximately 20 one-on-one conversations were held with residents, landlords and students. The conversations were used to understand the current issues related to housing in the Lower Doon neighbourhood. The following is a list of fifteen issues as synthesized from the conversations held in the initial stage of the Study:

- Rental units for students are not safe or legal
- Too many cars parked on driveways. Driveways are often widened too much
- Poor maintenance of houses used for student rental: garbage left out, lawns not mowed, sidewalks not shoveled
- Poor behaviour of students disrupt the neighbourhood (noise from parties, vandalism)
- Unethical and greedy landlords threaten students who complain about conditions
- Students retaliate to those who lodge complaints against them
- Too many buses and cars - clogs Conestoga College Boulevard and Doon Valley
- Heritage attributes/character of the neighbourhood is being affected by high number of student rental houses
- Addition of sidewalks will impact trees that contribute to the character of the neighbourhood
- Students are taking up all of the street parking
- Too many houses are used for student rental, there's no balance with owner occupied houses
- Not permitted to duplex houses or have lodging houses
- Conestoga should take more responsibility for off-campus housing
- City should take more control to manage off-campus housing
- It's too much work for owners who live in the neighbourhood to manage the issues of student housing

The first of two public consultation events was held on February 3, 2020. The consultation event was organized as a workshop with two time slots for people to register for the one that best suited their schedule. Approximately 100 people attended the workshop. The event began with a presentation to provide a full explanation of what the team had learned regarding who was doing what to provide and manage housing in the Lower Doon area, the issues as synthesized from the meetings, and the range of options that might be considered to address each issue. Following the presentation, attendees were invited to share their thoughts on options to address each one of the fifteen issues posted.

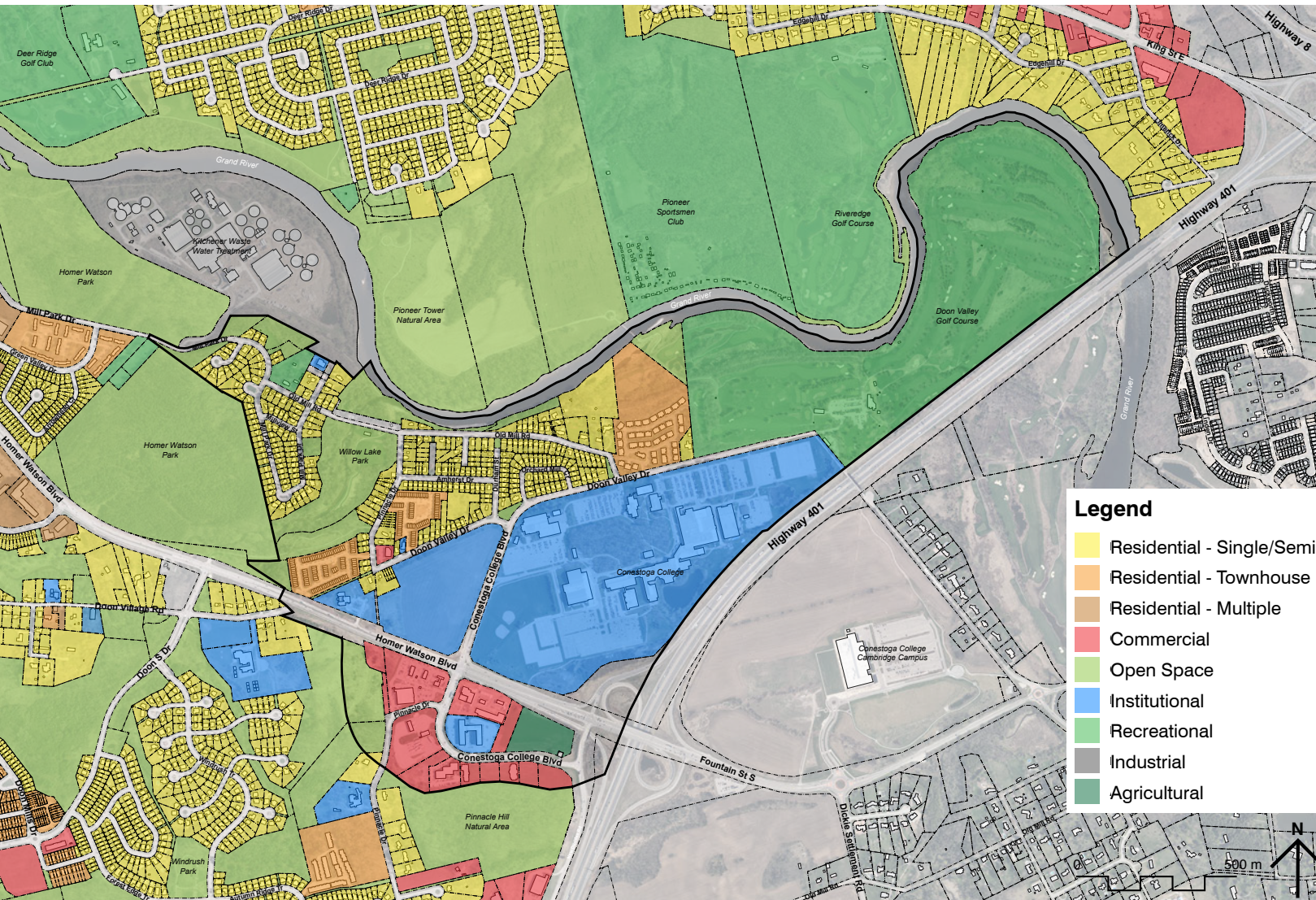


Public Consultation #1

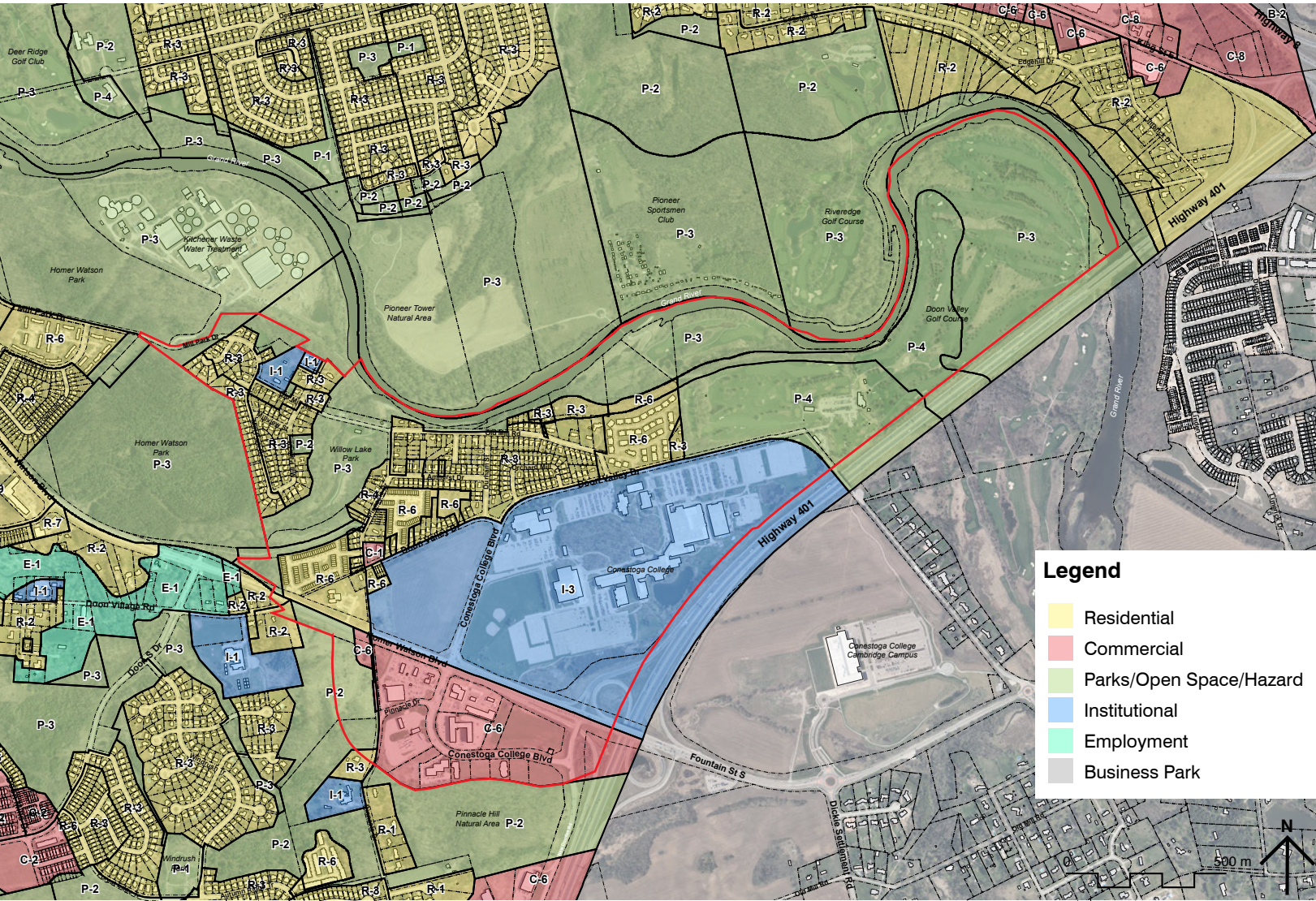


Public Consultation #1

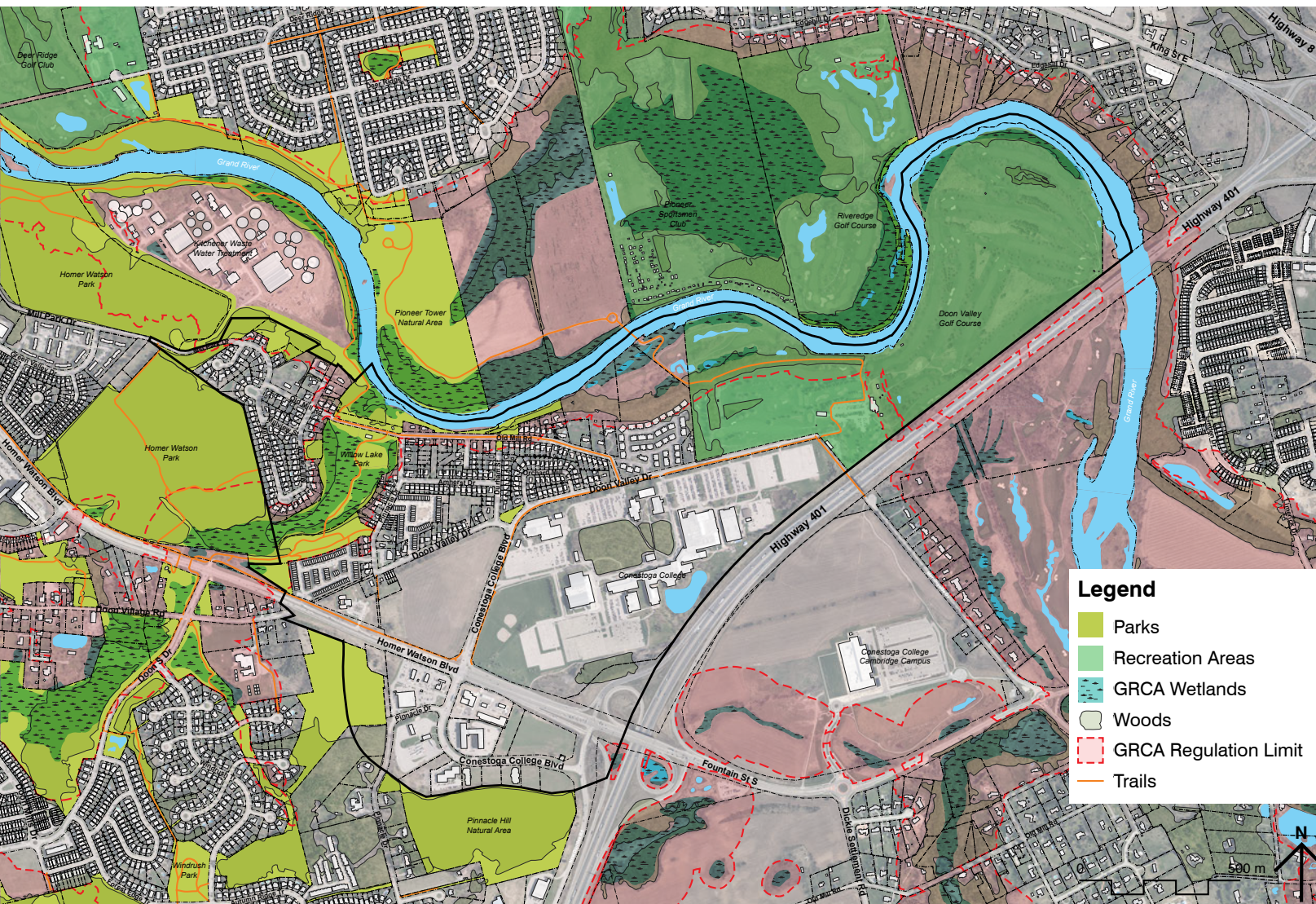
3 Existing Conditions



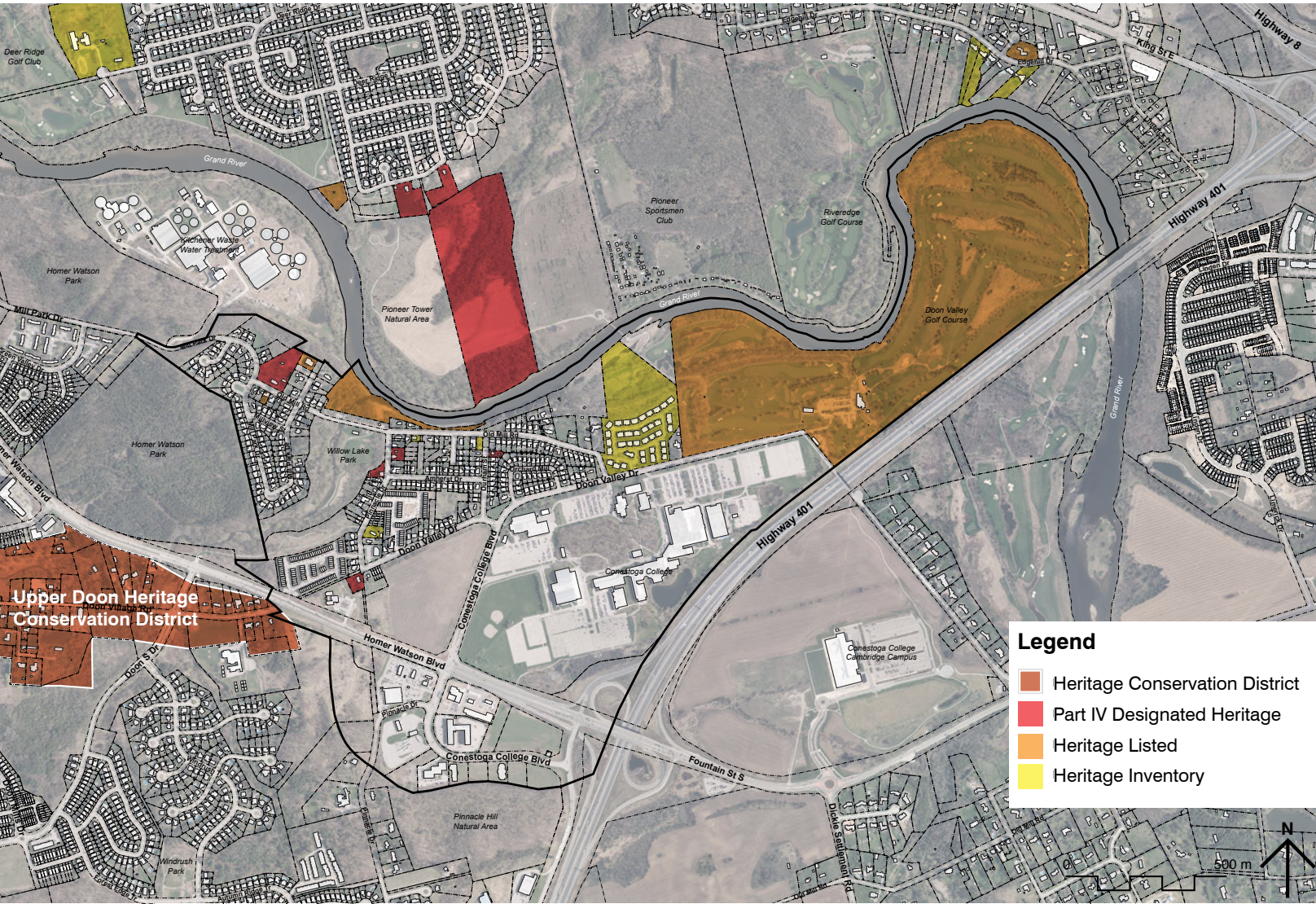
Official Plan Land Use Designations



Zoning



Natural Heritage



Cultural Heritage

Cultural Heritage

Determination of the Lower Doon study area as a cultural heritage landscape (CHL) is necessary to identify if, and what, conservation measures need to be integrated into the land use planning framework.

A Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was completed in 2014 to establish an inventory of cultural heritage landscapes across the entire City.

The Lower Doon area including Homer Watson Park was identified in the 2014 Cultural Heritage Study as an area that required additional research to determine if it is a significant cultural heritage landscape.

The City retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. to undertake this additional review through the Cultural Heritage Landscape Implementation – Additional Research to Determine if Lower Doon and Homer Watson Park is a Significant Cultural Heritage Landscape.

The additional review of the Lower Doon area, including Homer Watson Park, resulted in an inventory of 15 potential cultural heritage landscapes.

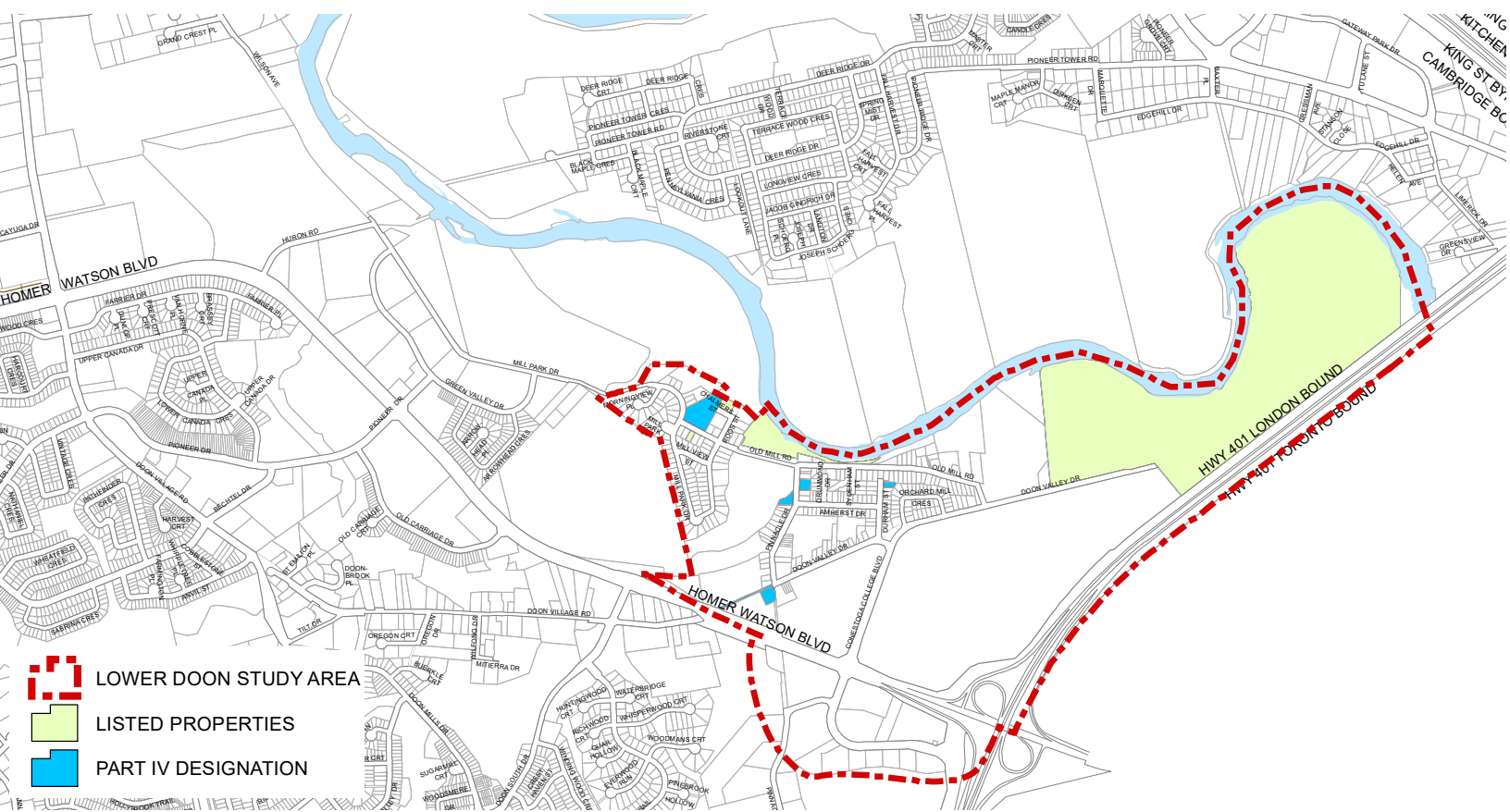
The landscapes inventoried and evaluated within the study area were predominantly parkland and suburban streetscapes.

Following evaluation of each of the potential 15 cultural heritage landscapes, it was concluded that the Lower Doon area is not a significant cultural heritage landscape, but 4 cultural heritage landscapes were identified.

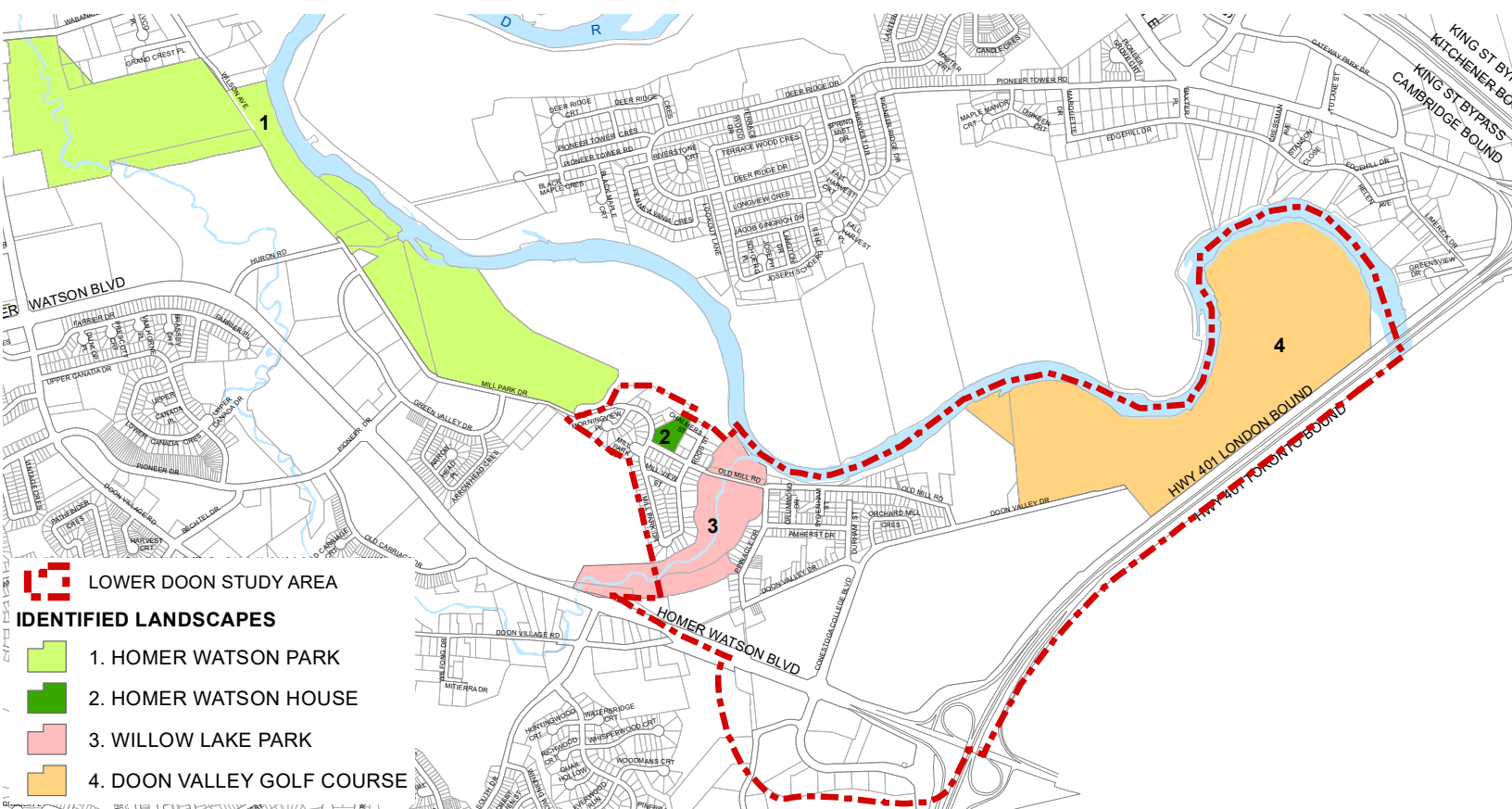
A Statement of Significance, including heritage attributes, was prepared for each of the 4 identified cultural heritage landscapes, along with a review of existing conservation measures and recommendations for further conservation measures.



Homer Watson House



City's Existing Heritage Resources map



City's Identified Cultural Heritage Landscapes map

Bray Heritage performed a review of the *Lower Doon and Homer Watson Park Candidate Cultural Heritage Landscape Evaluation* study prepared by Stantec (September 30, 2019). The study:

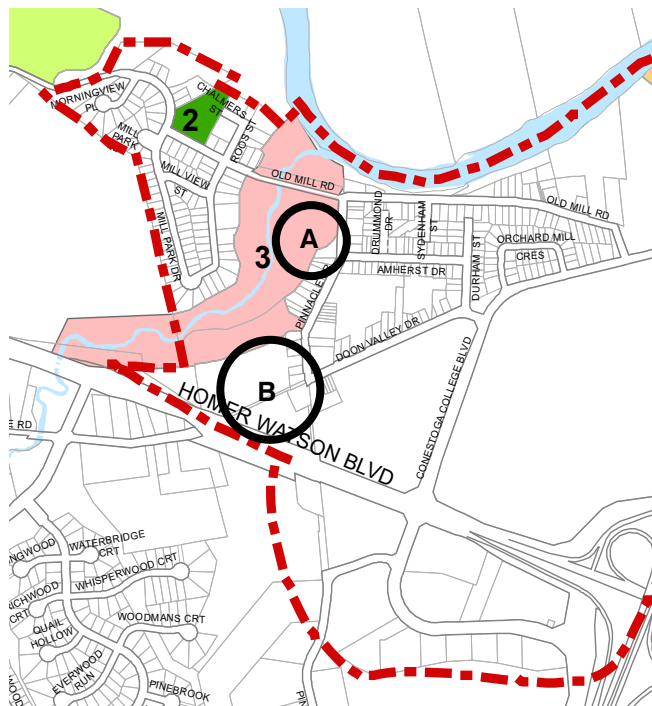
- Examined the Lower Doon area, including Homer Watson Park, identified by City of Kitchener as a potential cultural heritage landscape
- Inventoried and evaluated 299 properties and 15 landscapes within that area
- Following evaluation, 4 CHLs identified, 3 of which are in the Land Use study area:
 - Homer Watson House
 - Willowlake Park
 - Doon Valley Golf Course
- Statements of Significance prepared for each of these
- Recommendations for further conservation measures made

Following review of the Stantec study, Bray Heritage conducted a site visit and further research.

Carl Bray met City staff, Councilor Michaud and a local historian for a walking tour of Pinnacle Drive and Old Mill Road. During the tour, the group discussed potential cultural heritage resources that merited conservation. In addition, Bray Heritage met with City staff to discuss policy issues and identify sources of historical information relating to history of Doon Village and met with the Director of the Homer Watson Museum and Gallery and toured the property

Following the site tour, Bray Heritage re-assessed the Stantec study and reviewed information supplied by the City, local historian and Homer Watson Museum. This review resulted in the following recommendations:

- 1 Agree that Homer Watson House and Willowlake Park qualify as cultural heritage landscapes
- 2 Question Doon Valley Golf Course as a potential cultural heritage landscape (CHL)
- 3 Recommend adding Pinnacle Drive (from intersection with Amherst Drive north to Old Mill Road) to Willowlake Park CHL to include this representative streetscape from former village and interpret key aspects of local industrial and social history
- 4 Recommend identifying intersection of Pinnacle Drive and Doon Valley Drive as significant historical gateway to village, with potential for re-opening for access south
- 5 Recommend enhancement of views north from Pinnacle Drive to river
- 6 Recommend further research into village history to identify and conserve other potential cultural heritage resources in the study area



A Enhancement of views north from Pinnacle Drive to river

B Significant historical gateway to village



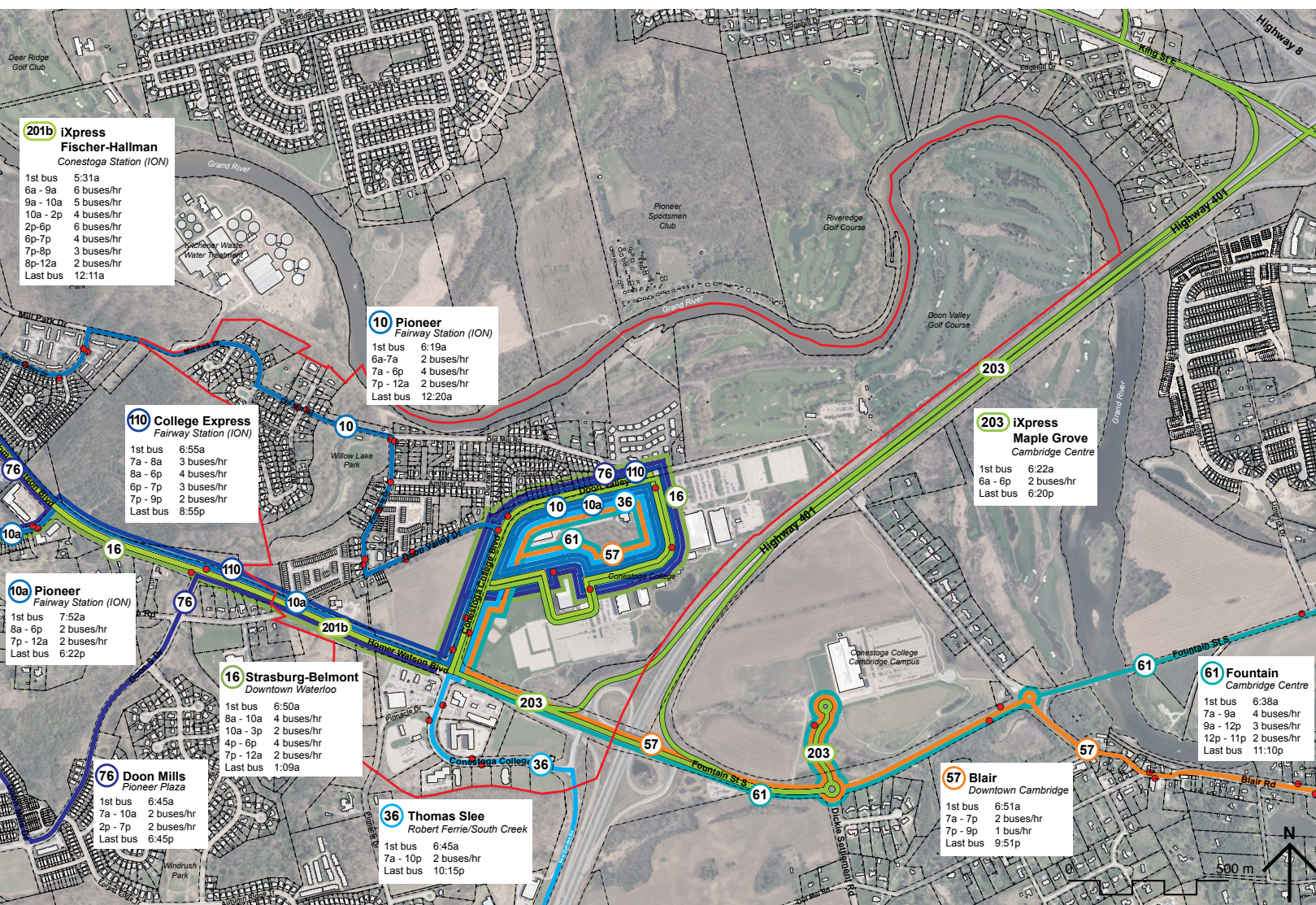
Excerpt of City's Identified Cultural Heritage Landscapes map



View north from Pinnacle Dr to river



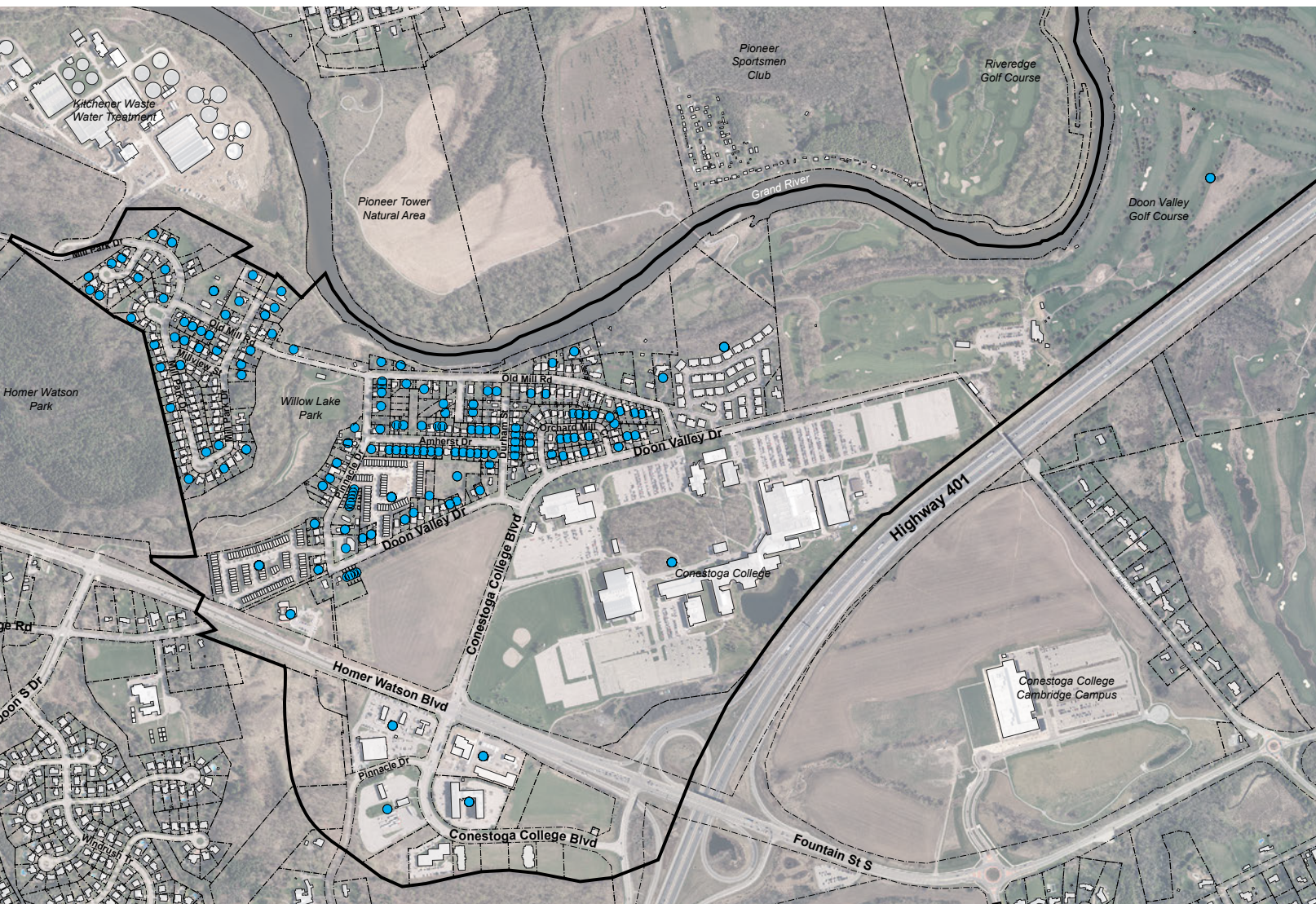
Gateway to village at Pinnacle Dr and Doon Valley Dr



Transit

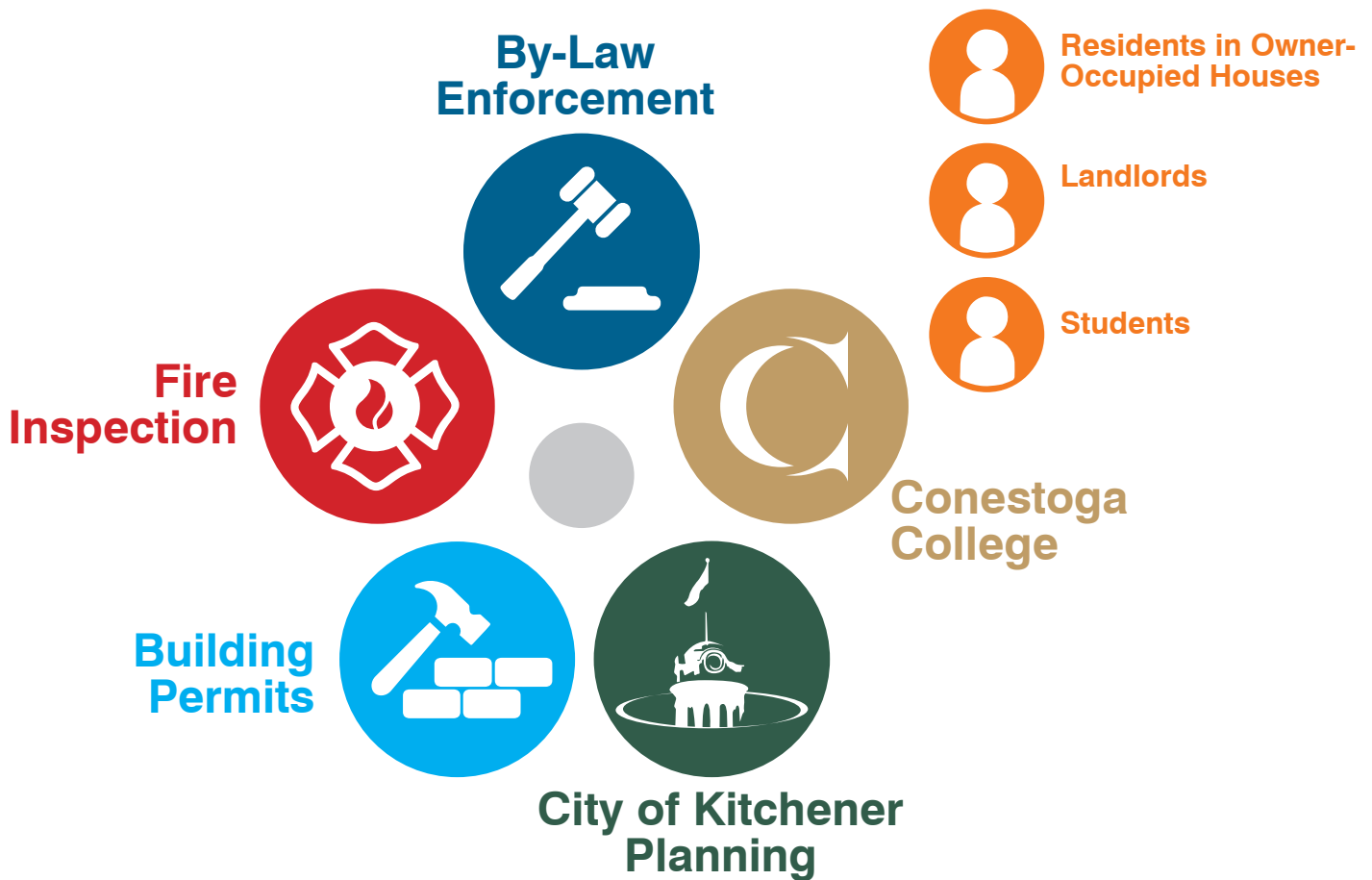


Housing



Building Permits issued since 1999

4 Who Does What



This section provides a summary of who's doing what now with respect to managing housing in the Lower Doon neighbourhood.



By-Law Enforcement

Complaints regarding property standards, lot maintenance, zoning

Outdoor complaints about weeds, snow and ice on sidewalks, garbage

Interior issues such as no hot water, no heat, plumbing, bed bugs, etc

2017 181 actions

2018 118 actions

2019 153 actions

By-law officers do not have authority to enter a house unless invited to enter by the tenants.

Only Fire Safety Inspectors have the authority to enter at any time.

Current proactive approach, not complaint based response

Since 2013, By-law officers have gone door to door every fall to introduce themselves to students and homeowners in Lower Doon to let them know what services are offered, make them aware of the by-law rules and provide the City's contact information.

By-law officers have host a Welcome Back BBQ for the past 11yrs.

By-law Enforcement is a member of the Town and Gown Committee

Since 2004 By-law officers work with the College on the student union run information event on living off-campus and offer inspection of housing for anyone who is interested.

Property standards

There are 6 property standards officers for the entire city.

Since 2009 Officers are in Lower Doon at least 3 days a week, often every day.

Noise

Since 2009 Officers are in Lower Doon every Friday and Saturday in the evening in September, October and April to deal with noise (and on days like St. Patrick's Day).

Noise complaints have decreased over the past few years. There were 24 noise related calls in 2019.

Officers have the authority to issue \$300 fines to each of the students in the house where excessive noise is occurring.

Parking

Since 2004 there is parking enforcement in the Lower Doon area every day.



Fire Inspection

Estimates:

2005 approximately 70 homes used for rental
2010 approximately 100 homes used for rental
2019 approximately 150 homes used for rental

Each of the City's four fire inspectors have been assigned 2 houses to inspect in Lower Doon.

To put it in perspective, the City has 55,000 residential properties. There are 182 properties in Lower Doon (excluding the townhouse and condo developments).

Each property requires research, preparation of the Order, appearance before the Fire Marshall and, if the decision is appealed, appearance before the Safety Commissioner.

Once the properties go through the process with the Fire Marshall and decisions have been rendered, the next round of houses are assigned.

Orders to comply

Orders have been issued for 16 houses to be converted back to their original approved design as set out in the building permit on file.

Otherwise, all rules and regulations are required to be met.

Fire

20 houses have installed the Direct Detect Fire. Houses in the Lower Doon neighbourhood account for about 0.003% of the City's houses.

Those 20 homes accounted for a call volume of 10% of approximately 1300 calls in 2019.



Building Permits

Since 2007, the City's By-law Department has led the **Town and Gown Committee** with representatives:

- Councillor
- City property standards, police, fire
- Region waste management
- Conestoga College
- College students
- Neighbourhood Association
- Landlords

Purpose of the Town and Gown Committee:

- Enhance relationships, communications and policies among College, students, City, police and the community
- Address issues of common concern

The committee meets 3-4 times a year to coordinate efforts and resources to address issue.



City of Kitchener Planning

1990s-2000

350 Doon Valley Drive condo development (The Mill Club), site plan and construction. Registered as a condo in 2002.

2001

Study of Lower Doon relating to housing for Conestoga College students.

2001

Interim Control By-law 2001-162 was passed to prohibit lodging houses and new duplexes. By-law was appealed to the OMB and was upheld.

2002

Working group formed with representation from City departments, College, residents, landlords and students from the Lower Doon area.

2002

The group developed several recommendations that were adopted by Council:

- Zoning By-law amendment (2002-161) and Municipal Plan Amendment (MPA 45) were approved to restrict duplexing in a defined area in Lower Doon.
- Public education, enforcement, parking regulation and establishing relationships among the City, the college and the neighbourhoods.

2004

Council report on actions: implementation of the Zone Change and Municipal Plan Amendment to prohibit new duplexes, review of parking regulations, daily enforcement of parking, working group, education information prepared by enforcement staff and Fire Prevention, liaison between enforcement staff and College.

2005

105 Pinnacle received site plan approval in 2005 and construction started in 2006.

2015

Official Plan Amendment/Zoning By-law amendment for 69 Amherst Drive to rezone to R-7 with special regulation provision to reduce rear yard setback & off street parking. OMB refused. Decision was appealed to the LPAT. A decision resulted in R-6 zoning which permits multiple dwellings and a special provision that prohibits lodging houses.

2016

Zoning By-law amendment - 50 Pinnacle Drive - rezone property from R-3 to R-6 - Approved.

2019

86 Pinnacle Drive - rezone to R-6 to permit development of a multiple residential dwelling – under review.

2019

Land Use Study for Lower Doon

"Providing safe and affordable housing for students at Conestoga College and Waterloo's two world-class universities is an important investment in the well-being and long-term prosperity of our community."

We welcome the city's planning study in Lower Doon and look forward to the introduction of a new framework that will provide support and protection for both long-term residents and students as Conestoga continues to grow to meet workforce needs."

John Tibbits, President, Conestoga College, Kitchener Waterloo Region Record, November 8, 2019

Enrolment (Doon Campus Pre-Covid)

		2016F Actual	2019F Actual	2021F Estimate
Full-Time		8,740	12,720	11,710
Total	Domestic	7,334	6,725	6,943
	International	1,406	5,995	4,767
Share	Domestic	84%	53%	59%
	International	16%	47%	41%

Table of Enrolment at Doon Campus

Parking & Transportation

- 3,825 parking spaces on the campus.
- Shuttle bus operates among campuses.
- 6,500 bus passes sold in the Fall term 2019.

Residence

520 beds in the Conestoga College Residence (at capacity in 2019).

Initiatives in Place

- Staff in the International Office are trained in providing direction regarding off campus living.
- Housing options on a webpage.
- Student union hosts a housing information night.
- Student union offers a legal service students can access for tenant and landlord rights.
- Provide 520 beds in Conestoga College Residence.
- Liaison with the City's By-law enforcement officers.
- Maintain information on student housing through surveys and analysis of the student information database.
- Member of the City's Town and Gown committee.
- Student Rights and Responsibilities Office for support.

Housing information gathered by International Transition Coordinators:

- provide housing information related to on-campus housing, off-campus housing and homestay.
- monthly tracking of available rental units near each campus. (e.g. a total of 220 rental units advertised near all campuses as of Dec 3).
- a Database of rental units (e.g. landlords/ apartment building contacts) for students to access.
- Housing Tip Sheets for International Students (translated to multiple languages).
- Housing Guide for talking to landlords.
- Housing videos, webinars and website information.

- Short-term Accommodation (e.g. hotels/motels near each campus) with special rate for Conestoga students).

Ways to share housing Information with international students:

1 Pre-arrival Communication

- Webinars (Cost of Living in Canada, Housing Search Strategies & Online Housing Search Coaching, Communicating with Landlords, Landlord and Tenancy Act, Pre-departure Preparation: Packing, Flight, Custom, etc.)
- Individualized email communication and assistance to students for housing
- Weekly pre-departure email communication
- YouTube videos & Social Media Communication

2 Airport Welcome Program (In collaboration with 25+ organizations/institutions across the province)

- Housing information available at airport welcome booth, Airport Welcome Mobile App

3 Emergency

- Posters for Housing Assistance Emergency Contacts, Area hotels, and taxi services at each Campus
- Preferred rates for Conestoga students negotiated with hotels in each campus area
- 24-hour contact for housing support and emergency (email and phone) during holidays.
- Security Services are provided with emergency housing information and contact
- Conestoga College Residence provides emergency housing information, contact and emergency bedding packages
- Reaching out homestay organization to explore further short term housing options for students.



HOUSING CHECKLIST

☐ EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT HOUSING IN CANADA.

WATCH OUR [PRE-ARRIVAL HOUSING VIDEO](#) FOR HELPFUL TIPS AND READ [THIS DOCUMENT FOR INFORMATION](#) ABOUT WHAT TENANTS (RENTERS) NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE LAW.

☐ DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET.

MOST ROOM RENTALS PERMITTING ONE OCCUPANT COST BETWEEN \$400 AND \$600 PER MONTH.

PLEASE NOTE THAT MOST LANDLORDS DO NOT PERMIT ROOM SHARING IN SINGLE ROOM RENTALS. FOR SHARED ROOMS, MOST TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENTS COST BETWEEN \$1100 AND \$1500 PER MONTH. TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENTS CAN OFTEN BE SHARED BETWEEN FOUR PEOPLE. WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU GET THE PERMISSION OF THE LANDLORD.

☐ FIND ROOMMATES.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A SHARED ROOM, FIND ROOMMATES THROUGH PERSONAL CONNECTIONS, THE ROOMMATE FEATURE ON [WWW.PLACES4STUDENTS.COM](#), OR SOCIAL MEDIA.

THE BRANTFORD CAMPUS HAS AN OFFICIAL FACEBOOK GROUP ADMINISTERED THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE - [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/INTERNATIONALSTUDENTSBRANTFORD](https://www.facebook.com/groups/INTERNATIONALSTUDENTSBRANTFORD)

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS THE ONLY FACEBOOK GROUP FOR CURRENT STUDENTS THAT IS MONITORED BY THE COLLEGE AND ALL OTHER GROUPS ARE RUN INDEPENDENTLY. PLEASE EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA.

☐ SEARCH FOR RENTAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUR BUDGET.

ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SINGLE ROOM RENTAL (NOT SHARED):

[WWW.PLACES4STUDENTS.COM](#) - SEARCH "CONESTOGA", THEN CLICK THE OPTION FOR YOUR CAMPUS. PLEASE NOTE THAT PLACES4STUDENTS.COM IS BEST FOR THOSE SEEKING SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY FOR \$400-\$550. MOST LANDLORDS ADVERTISING A SINGLE ROOM FOR RENT WILL NOT PERMIT SHARING BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.

ADVERTISEMENTS FOR APARTMENTS AND HOUSES:

[WWW.KIJJI.CA](#) - UNDER "ONTARIO", SELECT THE LOCATION OF YOUR CAMPUS, THE SELECT "REAL ESTATE" AND THEN "APARTMENTS" OR "HOUSE RENTAL". IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS USE KIJJI TO FIND SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS OR ROOM RENTALS.

☐ FIND LOCAL TRANSIT.

IN KITCHENER, WATERLOO & CAMBRIDGE YOU CAN USE THE [GRAND RIVER TRANSIT WEBSITE](#) AND [GOOGLE MAPS](#) TO FIND TRANSIT ROUTES. IN BRANTFORD, PLEASE NOTE THAT LOCAL TRANSIT IS AVAILABLE, BUT IT DOES NOT SHOW UP ON GOOGLE MAPS. [SEE A MAP OF BRANTFORD](#) FOR AVAILABLE TRANSIT ROUTES.

☐ CONTACT LANDLORDS.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:

"HELLO, I AM A STUDENT AT CONESTOGA COLLEGE AND MY FRIENDS AND I ARE INTERESTED IN THIS APARTMENT. I WOULD LIKE TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT TO VIEW IT, AND I AM AVAILABLE [INSERT DATES]. I MAY BE REACHED AT [INSERT PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL]."

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION. [INSERT NAME]"

☐ READ LANDLORD RESPONSE CAREFULLY.

THE LANDLORD WILL OFTEN OUTLINE AN APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INTERESTED TENANTS. A LANDLORD MAY ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS, BUT IT IS ILLEGAL FOR A LANDLORD TO ASK YOU CERTAIN QUESTIONS. FOR A LIST OF LEGAL AND ILLEGAL QUESTIONS FOR A LANDLORD TO ASK, [SEE THIS LIST](#). IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR YOU ARE NOT SURE HOW TO RESPOND, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO FORWARD THE MESSAGE TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSITION TEAM AT INTERNATIONALTRANSITION@CONESTOGA.CA FOR FEEDBACK.

☐ ARRANGE VIEWING APPOINTMENT.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU VIEW THE RENTAL UNIT IN PERSON, OR HAVE IT VIEWED BY A PERSON THAT YOU TRUST. IF A LANDLORD SAYS THAT THEY CANNOT SHOW YOU THE UNIT IN PERSON FOR SOME REASON (SUCH AS BEING OUT OF THE COUNTRY), THIS MAY BE A SIGN OF FRAUD OR A SCAM. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO AVOID SCAMS OR FRAUD, [READ THIS ARTICLE](#). IF YOU ARE VIEWING THE UNIT IN PERSON, TAKE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND BRING A FRIEND WITH YOU IF POSSIBLE.

☐ MAKE YOUR CHOICE.

WHEN VIEWING THE RENTAL UNIT IN PERSON, YOU MAY TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK THE LANDLORD QUESTIONS SUCH AS: WHAT UTILITIES OR APPLIANCES ARE INCLUDED? WHAT IS THE REQUIRED LENGTH OF THE LEASE? HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN THE RENTAL UNIT? IS LAUNDRY ON SITE? ARE THERE FUNCTIONING SMOKE DETECTORS (WHICH ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED FOR FIRE SAFETY)? DOES THE LANDLORD LIVE IN THE BUILDING?

IF THE LANDLORD LIVES IN THE BUILDING, WILL YOU BE SHARING A KITCHEN OR BATHROOM WITH THE LANDLORD? PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU SHARE A KITCHEN OR A BATHROOM WITH THE LANDLORD THAT YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS WILL BE LIMITED, AND THE LANDLORD COULD ASK YOU TO LEAVE AT ANY TIME.

☐ SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION.

IF YOU DECIDE THAT THE ACCOMMODATIONS ARE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU, FOLLOW THE APPLICATION PROCESS AS INSTRUCTED BY THE LANDLORD, USING YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT.

☐ IF APPLICABLE, SIGN A LEASE.

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL, THE LANDLORD WILL MOST LIKELY REQUIRE YOU TO SIGN A LEASE. READ THE LEASE CAREFULLY, SIGN IT AND SEND IT BACK TO THE LANDLORD. THIS PROCESS CAN BE DONE IN PERSON OR ELECTRONICALLY. IF YOU OR THE LANDLORD ARE NOT SURE ABOUT HOW TO DO THIS, PLEASE EMAIL KENDRA AT INTERNATIONALTRANSITION@CONESTOGA.CA.

☐ PAY LAST MONTH'S RENT. (NOT IN CASH, BUT WITH E-TRANSFER, CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER)

PAYING WITH E-TRANSFER THROUGH A BANK WILL REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF BEING SCAMMED. RENTAL SCAMS OFTEN INVOLVE WIRE TRANSFERS OR CASH PAYMENTS. ENSURE THAT YOU RETAIN A COPY OF YOUR LEASE.

☐ ARRANGE A TIME TO PICK UP YOUR KEYS AND MOVE INTO THE UNIT.

New Provincial Policy

Currently, the properties in study area that are zoned R-3 (319 U) have been prohibited from being used as duplexes since 2001 – this is contrasted with the rest of the City where duplexes have been permitted in all low density residential zones (except R1) since 1994.

The Planning Act has required all municipalities to permit one additional unit in the main building or an accessory building since 2016 (through Bill 73) – this has for the most part already been implemented in Kitchener, except Lower Doon.

More recently, the Planning Act was again updated through Bill 108 to require municipalities to permit another additional unit – such that three can be permitted.

While the Planning Act requires municipalities to permit up to three units on a parcel of land, it is up to municipalities to establish the rules under which these additional units can be permitted (such as number of pedestrian entrances permitted, minimum lot width and area and setbacks)

What is Kitchener doing in response to Provincial Policy

Kitchener has been working on updating its by-law for a number of years.

For the first additional unit, the only additional requirement will be that there is only one pedestrian entrance.

For the second additional unit (which can be in main building or accessory building) some of the proposed rules developed by the City include:

- minimum lot area shall be 395 square metres;
- minimum lot width shall be 13.1 metres; and,
- minimum landscaped area is 20%

The above rules can be applied in Lower Doon, thereby permitting up to three units on a lot, provided all regulations are met and Ontario Building and Fire Codes can be satisfied.

Ontario Regulation 299/19 under the Planning Act also states the following:

- A maximum of one parking space for each additional residential unit must be provided, which may be provided through tandem parking;
- Where a Zoning By-law requires no parking spaces for the primary residential unit, no parking spaces would be required for the additional residential units;
- An additional residential unit, where permitted in the Zoning By-law, may be occupied by any person, regardless of whether the primary unit is occupied by the owner of the property; and,
- An additional residential unit, where permitted in the Zoning By-law, would be permitted without regard to the date of construction of the primary or ancillary building.

5 Issues

The following is a summary of the input received at the first public consultation event for each of the 15 issues identified from the conversations held in the initial stage of the Study.

ISSUE 1

Rental units for students are not safe or legal

ISSUE 2

Too many cars parked on driveways
Driveways are often widened too much

ISSUE 3

Poor maintenance of houses used for student rental: garbage is left out, lawns not mowed, sidewalks not shovelled

ISSUE 4

Poor behaviour of students
disrupt the neighbourhood (noise from parties, vandalism)

ISSUE 5

Unethical and greedy landlords threaten students who complain about conditions

ISSUE 6

Students retaliate to those who lodge complaints against them

ISSUE 7

Too many buses and cars clogs Conestoga College Boulevard/Doon Valley Dr.

ISSUE 8

Heritage attributes/character of the neighbourhood is being affected by high number of student rental houses

ISSUE 9

Addition of sidewalks will impact trees that contribute to the character of the neighbourhood

ISSUE 10

Students are taking up all of the street parking

ISSUE 11

Too many houses are used for student rental, there's no balance with owner occupied houses

ISSUE 12

Not permitted to duplex houses or have lodging houses

ISSUE 13

Conestoga College should take more responsibility for off-campus housing

ISSUE 14

City of Kitchener should take more control to manage off-campus housing

ISSUE 15

It's too much work for owners who live in the neighbourhood to manage the issues of student housing

ISSUE 1

Rental units for students are not safe or legal

What We Heard

- Rental units are created without building permits. Many houses have never been inspected by fire or city staff
- Rental units do not meet fire and safety requirements. Many bedrooms have 2 or 3 students in them
- Fire inspectors stopped issuing safe housing certificates due to shortage of manpower to do inspections
- Student's lives are in danger
- Landlords operate in a lawless environment
- Some rental houses are well managed with clear rules
- Police help with evictions when necessary when student overcrowd
- Student housing – over funded fees for the screening and enforcement process
- Screening process funded by landlord
- Requirement for property manager if landlord not in country
Fee paid for by landlord
Screening process for property manager
Protocol for entry
- Tenant handbook
- Landlord accountability
- Landlord protocols to meet requirements - prevent license removal

Desired Outcome

- Create legal lodging houses – transparent rules/fair
- Duplexes – forced to meet code and requirements
- College provides more housing to their students (use a model re: 1st year students)
- Safe and affordable housing
- Support licensed lodging houses (landlord)
- Reduce current density
- Non-compliant landlords will eventually get caught
- Support licensing of rentals to give landlords ability to control tenants
- Where is the College's business plan being compared to what the City can support?

Land Use Planning

- Support duplexing as a way of lower # of units in houses
- Duplexing makes it safe
Not overcrowding kitchens – 2 level, 2 kitchens
Permits from fire department

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Post non-approved properties
- Legalize density
- Licensing of rental housing
- Licensing of rentals = overcrowding, safety

Other Comments

- Same regulations for Lower Doon as rest of City
- Zoning should permit higher densities across all properties eg. R6 for all

ISSUE 2

Too many cars parked on driveways Driveways are often widened too much

What We Heard

- Landlords do not control the number of cars parked in front of houses
- Students park haphazardly in front of houses detracting from the character of the neighbourhood
- Landlords widen driveways to accommodate more cars to make the rental units more desirable, detracting from the character of the neighbourhood
- Can't park on street

Other Comments

- Many (most) landlords see Lower Doon as a money making opportunity. The more the better. This ruins life for taxpaying residents. Not OK.
- There is a double standard in the way the City enforces Lower Doon and it's not fair to students. Parking tickets are issued to students who live on the other side of the bridge in the student areas but cars are parked in their area all day and never get parking tickets.

Desired Outcome

- Should be able to park as many cars as a legal driveway allows
- Streets too narrow if on-street parking – students drive too fast
- No on-street parking
- Keep existing zoning – students will park on street
- Restrict driveway size to restrict # of cars parked
- Enforcement for cars parking over the edge of sidewalks

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Planning consideration for # of cars when looking at approvals

Land Use Planning

- No backyard parking for lodging houses

ISSUE 3

Poor maintenance of houses used for student rental: garbage is left out, lawns not mowed, sidewalks not shovelled

What We Heard

- All landlords do not monitor their houses resulting in poorly maintained properties
- Students do not take in garbage, mow lawns or shovel sidewalks – they have no pride of ownership, they don't care about the neighbourhood
- Landlords have no repercussions for renters who do not take in garbage or shovel snow
- By-law enforcement regularly monitors and requests renters to take in/clean up garbage

Other Comments

- No comments recorded

Desired Outcome

- Higher standards for rental units e.g. Fan evacuation ratings, fire suppression systems

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- No absent landlord
- Legal lodging houses
- College to educate students on fire code/fire alarms, cooking
- Design principles for new builds (match neighbourhood)
- Non-renewal of student housing license if property standard infringements

Land Use Planning

- No comments recorded

ISSUE 4

Poor behaviour of students disrupt the neighbourhood (noise from parties, vandalism)

What We Heard

- Students are noisy and disrupt the quiet enjoyment of the neighbourhood
- Lower Doon is a party neighbourhood=
- Lack of street lighting
- Litter/garbage/vandalism (roger, bell boxes)
- Lack of consultation by the College with residents
- Lack of street lights
- Speeding, location of bus stops and lights on Doon Valley Dr./Homer Watson

- Set up a by-law booth, police and fire booth info for students
- Mental health booth for info

Other Comments

- Consider who you are dealing with. "Teen brain" drives behaviour until early 20's (girls) and mid-20's (boys) – you can't teach ducks to bark! Reduce numbers
- Code of conduct from College enforced by College

Desired Outcome

- No comments recorded

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Hold College accountable for noise on College property
- Street lights
- Traffic calming
- More accountability for landlords with a monetary impact
- Safe house for students for mental health issues, domestic abuse, etc.

Land Use Planning

- More garbage cans everywhere
- Adequate parking
- Annual street party by-law needs a booth
- Leave info at all houses

ISSUE 5

Unethical and greedy landlords threaten students who complain about conditions

What We Heard

- Landlords threaten students with eviction if they complain about the living standards in the house.
- Students are being forced to live in unsafe conditions
- Some landlords are very responsive to issues and take immediate action

Desired Outcome

- If landlords operate outside of the regulation of RTA lose the ability to have license
- Screening process for landlords – initial fee for this process
- Create safe, licensed living conditions
- Student Housing Fees (regulations re. licensing)
- Permit lodging houses

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Purpose built high density mixed use in appropriate locations

Land Use Planning

- No comments recorded

Other Comments

- No comments recorded

ISSUE 6

Students retaliate to those who lodge complaints against them

What We Heard

- Students vandalize the homes of those who lodge complaints about them
- Residents have no recourse when trying to make sure properties are well maintained and behaviour of students is neighbourly

Desired Outcome

- If damage occurs by students via vandalism – owner/landlord should be responsible for repairs within a specific time frame

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- No comments recorded

Land Use Planning

- No comments recorded

Other Comments

- No comments recorded

ISSUE 7

Too many buses and cars clogs Conestoga College Boulevard/Doon Valley Dr.

What We Heard

- The new bus hub on the campus is working well, why change it?
- Grand River Transit is adding new terminal and changing the routing, buses will go back and forth on Lower Doon, not through the campus
- Traffic is very heavy and challenging many times a day, especially in September
- Traffic is so heavy people can't get out of their driveways
- Traffic is causing noise and air quality concerns
- *If reduce student housing options in Lower Doon – Car dependency worsening traffic issues within neighbourhood*

Desired Outcome

- Do not increase vehicular traffic throughout the neighbourhood

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Permit on street parking in spring, summer, fall
- Need for a pedestrian bridge crossing on Homer Watson to make vehicular turning movement better
- More frequent bus service
- Make public transit more accessible/user friendly for all
- Roundabout at College entrance

Land Use Planning

- Speed notification signage
- Speed limit down on Homer Watson to 60k/h (City standard)
- Finding location for buses and cars that does not disrupt neighbourhood through increased community traffic
- Parking structure at Homer Watson and Conestoga
- Traffic calming and improved pedestrian environment
- Improved street lighting (at Amherst)

Other Comments

- Provide more daily amenities in neighbourhood (groceries) to reduce car dependency
- Focus on all community members, not just students

ISSUE 8

Heritage attributes/character of the neighbourhood is being affected by high number of student rental houses

What We Heard

- The Lower Doon neighbourhood has heritage value
- There are many houses of heritage value in the Lower Doon neighbourhood

Desired Outcome

- Acknowledgement of evolution of housing – small owner houses, village hotel
- Focus on pre-1900 historical building form
- Treescaped roads
- Raise profile of designated properties

Other Comments

- Interpretive plaques to commemorate character of neighbourhood and heritage
- Banners celebrating heritage
- City should explore purchase of property at end of Durham St. to be preserved as open space (adjacent to former Methodist Church)
- Increase neighbourhood beautification

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Protect existing character of Lower Doon; focus on the story
- Low rise
- Low density

Land Use Planning

- Design guidelines
- Diverse setbacks

ISSUE 9

Addition of sidewalks will impact trees that contribute to the character of the neighbourhood

What We Heard

- The sidewalks being constructed on the roads in Lower Doon will remove all of the mature street trees

Desired Outcome

- Move any sidewalk on Doon Valley to the side with the field at present
- Move proposed sidewalk to east side of Pinnacle (avoid trees and old residences) – 50 Pinnacle side
- No sidewalks – not enough space on Pinnacle – opposite of 50 Pinnacle
- Improved street lighting (safety) and pedestrian environment
- Doon Valley sidewalk should be on south side (no impact to properties and maintains street character and landscaping)

Other Comments

- Maintain the green space – ecosystems, diversity, etc. – build UP not OUT
- Municipal encouragement of native wild plants – diverse ecology – community driven initiatives
- Ensure new sidewalks AODA compliant and have minimal expansion joints which disrupt comfort level of scooter users

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Additional sidewalks located without disrupting mature trees (health)
- Narrow the roadways, not the properties

Land Use Planning

- Reconsider location for sidewalk
- Build up where buildings are now, not where green space is now

ISSUE 10

Students are taking up all of the street parking

What We Heard

- Students are parking on the local streets, leaving no room for residents of owner occupied houses to park
- No parking legally allowed on street today

Desired Outcome

- Structured parking structure at Homer Watson and Conestoga Road

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Permit parking
- More affordable parking at College
- No parking on Pinnacle or between 8am-6pm

Land Use Planning

- Enact street parking permitting system for Lower Doon
- Street parking permits per household

Other Comments

- No comments recorded

ISSUE 11

Too many houses are used for student rental, there's no balance with owner occupied houses

What We Heard

- There's simply too many students. The neighbourhood was originally built for families. It needs to go back to being a family neighbourhood
- It's not compatible to have student rentals with families
- The City should pass a by-law to ensure only owner-occupied housing.
- The City can have the houses converted back to houses for families

Desired Outcome

- Provide additional affordable housing options within neighbourhood
- Permit duplexes within a regulated framework
- Welcome proposals on vacant land to develop purpose-built student housing
- No duplexes
- No lodging houses
- These are not my desired outcomes - Taxpayer

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Meet and greet with landlords/students/ College and establish regulated standards and codes of behaviour
- Look to province to provide incentives to College to provide/build student housing
- College to acknowledge responsibility in creating pressure in housing for local

community and being proactive in the solution (also in parking lot related traffic)

Land Use Planning

- Respect existing Heritage and character of Lower Doon
- College to build housing for students
- "Better" balance of demographics – too many students now
- Support 4-6 storey rental apartments along edges of College and along vacant properties that don't overlook existing houses but not in the core of existing neighbourhood

Other Comments

- How do you (the City) ensure that existing houses are not being used as "lodging" houses?
- Land use study to be sympathetic to owner-occupied properties

ISSUE 12

Not permitted to duplex houses or have lodging houses

What We Heard

- The City does not permit duplexes or lodging houses in Lower Doon
- Lower Doon is the only area in the City where duplexes and lodging houses are not permitted
- If duplexes and lodging houses were permitted, the rental houses could be properly designed
- Without approval for duplexes and lodging houses, houses have been converted to 8+ bedrooms all sharing one kitchen
- Landlords have difficulty selling properties because they are not legal
- If the number of bedrooms is reduced, rental will go up making it not affordable for students

Desired Outcome

- Reducing the number of people in a lodging house
- Acknowledge the reality of the situation – students will live here

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- No more than 5 or 6 students per house
- License duplexes and third units as well
- Encourage College to build housing and take ownership

Land Use Planning

- Permit lodging houses but separate them so that they are not clustered
- Permit small purpose built housing in key locations

Other Comments

- Already many buildings operating as lodging houses
- What can you do retroactively?
- How to limit number of people in unit/ dwelling?
- Licensing for safety would help
- How to deal with tenant rights, landlord rights

ISSUE 13

Conestoga College should take more responsibility for off-campus housing

What We Heard

- Conestoga College does not care about where their students live
- Conestoga College does little to manage the housing supply for its students
- The problem will only get worse with more international students being admitted.
- The College is adding another 4,000 international students to their current enrolment of international students
- Students have limited funds forcing them to have to live in less than optimal conditions

Desired Outcome

- Conestoga should develop housing on their own land (the triangle).

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Ask College to build student housing or to lend-lease with private sector to build student housing

Land Use Planning

- City should consider whether parking should be permitted on streets

Other Comments

- City should not allow garages to be bricked over
- New development should respect character of neighbourhood

ISSUE 14

City of Kitchener should take more control to manage off-campus housing

What We Heard

- City of Kitchener does nothing to manage rental housing
- City of Kitchener should put policies in place to force owner occupied housing only
- The City has a “complaint-driven” approach to oversight of by-law infractions

Other Comments

- City should look at permissions at Homer Watson/401
- City should permit duplexes
- Region should extend LRT to College
- Should be a finite number of lodging houses and separated from each other

Desired Outcome

- People should live in a safe house
- Find the right ‘balance’ between student and non-student housing

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- City should consider lodging house permissions for licensing
- City should provide incentives to support construction of housing in area – across Homer Watson too

Land Use Planning

- City should use part of Golf Course for housing
- City should look again at Amherst property – can occur if owner re-applies to change zoning

ISSUE 15

It's too much work for owners who live in the neighbourhood to manage the issues of student housing

What We Heard

- Owner occupied residents do all of the 'policing' of student housing, the City does nothing

Desired Outcome

- Reduce/eliminate overcrowding
- Make the rules as clear as possible (driveway rules)

Other Comments

- Community improvement plan to provide basis for improving property
- Façade improvement plan – allow for grant to improve low rise
- City should build sidewalks to promote safety
- Encourage Conestoga to remove some parking and replace with housing

Possible Solutions

Manage of Housing

- Better manage of garbage removal
- City should also license duplexes so that there is some control over number of occupants (suggestion is maximum 8 per dwelling/lodging house)
- Conestoga should take more ownership
- Carpooling incentives by Conestoga
- Identify a designated household leader in lodging house – to volunteer hours

Land Use Planning

- Build more housing (Conestoga should) on other side of Homer Watson
- Provide additional access for cars so that they are not using one entrance – access Highway 401

6 Options to Consider

Overarching Issue

The issue is not necessarily the number of units, it's the number of people living in one unit, creating unsafe living conditions.

Options

The options for dealing with the number of people living in one unit in Lower Doon include leaving the regulatory framework as is, changing the By-law to permit lodging houses, or releasing the pressure through creation of a land use/design framework. The options will be explored at the second public consultation event planned for 2020.

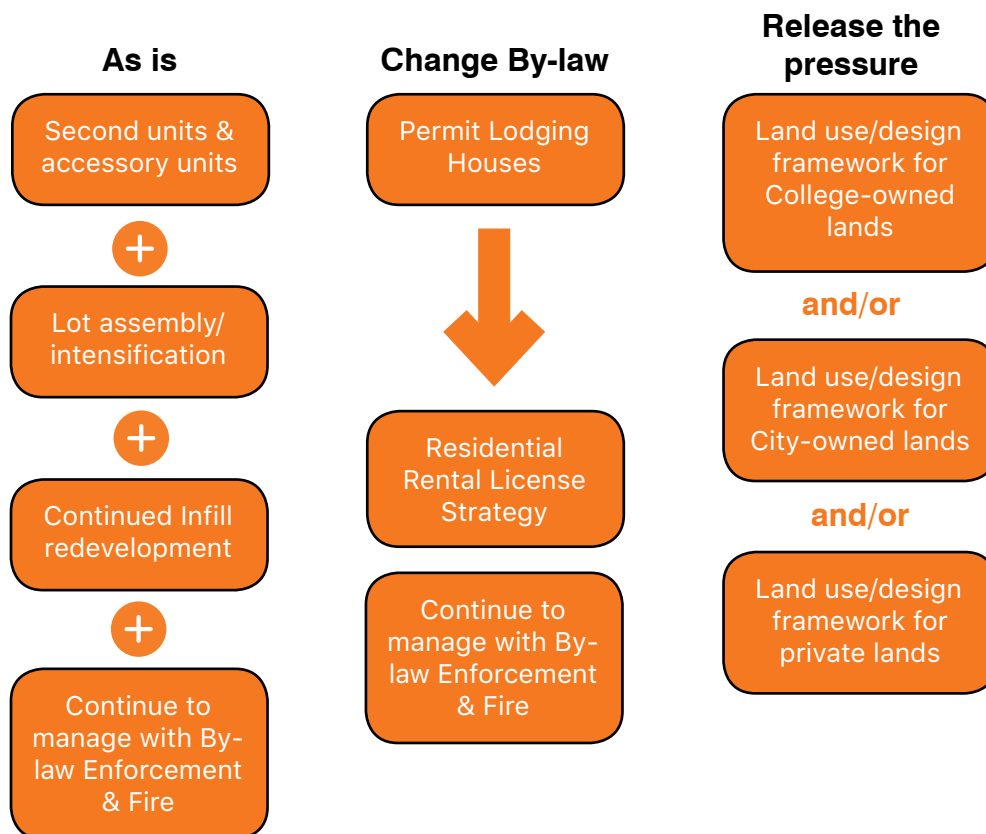


Diagram illustrating 3 options for dealing with the number of people living in one unit

LOWER DOON LAND USE STUDY

