

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: May 7, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Garett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,
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PREPARED BY: Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7602

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 3

DATE OF REPORT: April 4, 2024

REPORT NO.: DSD-2024-193

SUBJECT: Hidden Valley Secondary Plan – Land Use Implementation Project
Draft Heritage Impact Assessment

RECOMMENDATION:

For information

BACKGROUND:

The Development and Housing Approvals Division is in receipt of a draft Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared by Archaeological Research Associates (ARA) Ltd. dated May 2023. The draft HIA was submitted to the City in 2023 and was requested as part of various technical studies being conducted to inform the Hidden Valley Secondary Plan. As part of the HIA, a specific portion of Hidden Valley Road was recommended to be evaluated to determine its cultural heritage value or interest and for it to potentially be considered as a "Heritage Corridor".

Hidden Valley Road currently has no heritage status under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It is not included on the Inventory of Historic Buildings, not listed as a non-designated property of cultural heritage value or interest on the City's Municipal Heritage Register and is not designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. However, the Road has been identified as a rural road Cultural Heritage Landscape (CHL) and has also been identified in the City's Official Plan as a potential cultural heritage resource. The draft HIA has concluded that Hidden Valley Road does have design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value. The HIA concluded that the entirety of Hidden Valley Road could be designated as a Heritage Corridor, or a portion of it could be designated as a Heritage Corridor. Staff will be moving forward with designating the north-south portion Hidden Valley Road as a "Heritage Corridor" in the Official Plan and recognizing the lower east-west portion of the Hidden Valley Road as a Cultural Heritage Landscape in the Official Plan. The "Heritage Corridor" is south of the proposed River Road realignment.

*** This information is available in accessible formats upon request. ***
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

The HIA is still in its draft form and has not yet been approved by the Director of Development and Housing Approvals.

REPORT:

Hidden Valley Secondary Plan Area

The Hidden Valley Secondary Plan will replace the existing Residential Hidden Valley Community Plan and the Industrial Hidden Valley Community Plan to implement the Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan. The proposed Master Plan study area is approximately 200 hectares in size, bounded by the Grand River, Wabanaki Drive, Highway 8, and Fairway Road (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Boundary of the Hidden Valley Master Plan (Draft HIA, 2023)

In general, the Master Plan proposed the development of:

- Low rise residential estates;
- Low rise residential detached dwellings on large lots;
- Medium rise residential buildings;
- High Rise residential apartments;
- Mixed-use urban corridors;

- Commercial urban corridors;
- Business Park for general and service employment opportunities;
- Major infrastructure and utility for public uses;
- Natural Heritage Conservation; and
- Open Spaces

The Master Plan also outlined that there might be impacts to Hidden Valley Road as The Region has decided on the revised River Road extension alignment and is proceeding with the design and construction phases. As a result, the existing Hidden Valley Road is proposed to be shortened and realigned into the River Road extension (Fig. 2). The Region has not started construction but anticipates it to take place between 2020-2027. It should be noted that the proposed Heritage Corridor is not included within this realignment and will begin just south of the realignment once it has been completed. There is also a potential Light Rail Transit Corridor that could be constructed through this area, affecting the northernmost part of the Hidden Valley Road.

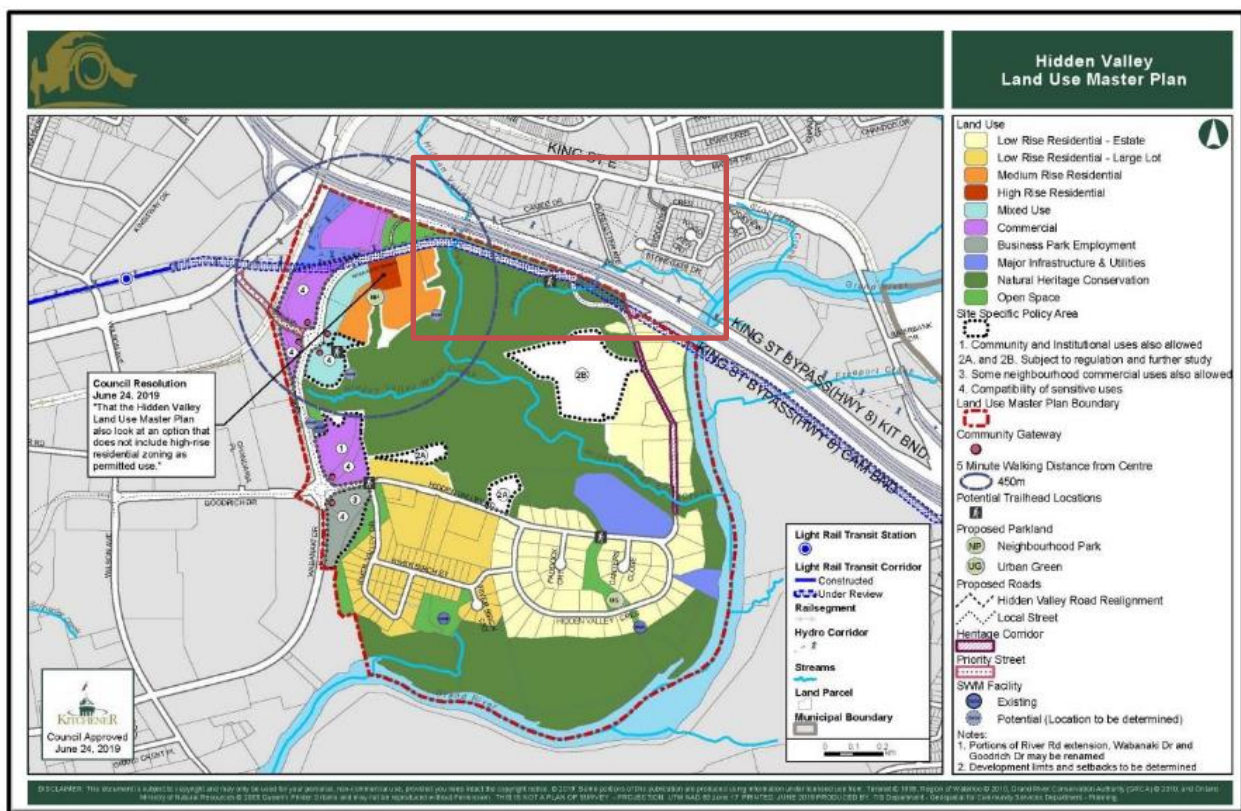


Figure 2. Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan. The proposed realignment (the dotted line) has been highlighted by the red box (City of Kitchener, 2019)

To implement the Master Plan, a HIA was requested as part of a broad range of technical studies, to determine whether Hidden Valley Road has cultural heritage value, and what, if any, mitigation impacts should be implemented as part of this realignment.

Hidden Valley Road

Hidden Valley Road is a remnant of a road that ran from Freeport to the settlement of German Hills. Like many of the roads in Township of Waterloo, Hidden Valley Road was not laid out in a geometric concession, instead becoming part of an irregular network of roads developed to meet the needs of early local settlers in accessing villages, settlements, markets, and other farms. The surrounding area remained agricultural until recently when these has been residential development in the area.

Today, it is a narrow two-lane road that runs in an irregular semi-circular loop through the Hidden Valley community in Kitchener (Fig. 3). The topography and setting of the area are described in the Master Plan as “The area is characterized primarily by rolling topography, including several agricultural fields, with large lot estate residential dwellings towards the river”. It is a tertiary road that connects the community to the adjacent areas through Wabanaki Drive to the west. Some portions of the road have curbs and some portions do not. The road is situated within a rural setting with some portions of the it in a more residential setting. The area within the looped road mainly consists of hilly areas with walking trails, forested lands, and agricultural fields. Hidden Valley Road also contains a variety of building sizes and architectural styles with varying setbacks. Natural vegetation and mature tree canopy are visible for the entire corridor. The eastern portion of the road has direct views of the forested areas and agricultural fields.



Figure 3. Proposed Hidden Valley Road “Heritage Corridor” (HIA, 2023)

Evaluation of Hidden Valley Road's Cultural Heritage Value

An evaluation of Hidden Valley Road according to the *Ontario Regulation 9/06* determined that the Road meets 3 out of 9 criteria, and is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values (Table 1).

Evaluation of Property	
Description	✓ Value Statement(s)
The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	✓ Hidden Valley Road was constructed in the late 1800s. The alignment of the road, along the Grand River, first appeared in the 1861 Tremaine's map of Waterloo County. The road assumed its current alignment, as a loop, sometime around 1916, as seen in the Topographic maps. Since those times, while undergoing minor realignments, the road has serviced the Hidden Valley community as a local, irregular, road loop. The road is lined with mature trees and a variety of vegetation. These types of older roads can be related to the irregularly laid rural roads observed as a characteristic of the City of Kitchener. They are not set according to fixed grids, which are now common in urban areas.
The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	Hidden Valley Road does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic value. It was constructed using common methods and materials for its construction period.
The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	Hidden Valley Road does not display a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. It was built using common construction techniques for its construction period.
The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	✓ Hidden Valley Road is part of a local road network that was laid out in the 1800s to connect early settlers in the southern part of the Township of Waterloo to access adjacent farms, markets, other villages, and mills in the Freeport and German Mills areas. It formed part of the Beasley's Old Survey and is associated with the development of German Mills for agricultural purposes in the 19 th century. The road has a direct association with the development of rural areas in southern parts of the Township of Waterloo.
The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	Hidden Valley Road contains some remnants along its route of rural life, but those do not yield or have the potential to yield information that contributes to the understanding of the rural community or culture.

The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.		Hidden Valley Road does not reflect the work or ideas of a significant architect, builder, artist, designer, or theorist who is significant to the community.
The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.		Hidden Valley Road was laid to meet the needs of the early settlers to gain access to neighboring villages, amenities, commerce, and such. Those rural characteristics of the Hidden Valley Community have since changed greatly from farmsteads to large estate residential lots. Although remnants of farm components and some agricultural fields are still found around the Hidden Valley Road, the basic character of the area has since evolved.
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓	Hidden Valley Road is physically and functionally linked to its surroundings. The road is set into the undulating and rolling topography of the Hidden Valley area and as such follows the rise and fall of the lands. It provides scenic views to the agricultural fields throughout various portions of the road, the Grand River to the east and forested areas to the north and southwest.
The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.		Hidden Valley Road, while acting as a connector for the Hidden Valley community, it is not geographically located in a prominent spot to be considered a landmark.

Table 1. Ont. Reg. 9/06 Evaluation for Hidden Valley Road (HIA, 2023)

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

According to the HIA, **Hidden Valley Road has physical value because it is a representative example of rural roads that were essential for the development of an area.** Hidden Valley Road was constructed around the late 1800s. The alignment of the road, along the Grand River, first appeared in the 1861 Tremaine’s map of Waterloo County. The road assumed its current alignment, as a loop, sometime around 1916, as seen on the Topographic maps. Since those times, while undergoing minor realignments, the road has serviced the Hidden Valley community as a local, irregular, road loop. The road is lined with mature trees and a variety of vegetation. These types of older roads are related to the irregularly laid rural roads observed as a characteristic of the City of Kitchener. They are not set according to fixed grids, which are now observed in most area.

Hidden Valley Road has historical and associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, and activity, that is significant to a community. Hidden Valley Road is part of a local road network that was laid in the 1800s to connect early settlers in the southern part of the Township of Waterloo to access adjacent farms, markets, other villages, and mills in the Freeport and German mills areas. It formed part of the Beasley’s Old Survey and is associated with the development of German mills for agricultural purposes in the 19th century. The road has a direct association with the development of rural areas in southern parts of the Township of Waterloo.

Hidden Valley Road has contextual value because it is physically and functionally linked to its surroundings. The road is set into the undulating and rolling topography of the Hidden Valley area and as such follows the rise and fall of the lands. It provides scenic views of the agricultural fields to the west, the Grand River to the east and forested areas to the north and southwest.

Heritage Attributes

Hidden Valley Road is a representative, example of a type of rural roads that were essential for the development of an area. The road contains the following heritage attributes that reflect this value:

- Narrow two-lane alignment
- No shoulders
- Variety of vegetation along the shoulders, including mature trees and shrubs
- Irregular road loop





Hidden Valley Road has direct associations with a theme, and activity, that is significant to a community. Hidden Valley Road is part of a local road network that was laid in the 1800s to connect early settlers in the southern part of the Township of Waterloo to access adjacent farms, markets, other villages, and mills in the Freeport and German Mills areas. The road contains the following heritage attributes that reflect this value:

- Direct view to the L-shaped barn on the roadside
- Remnants of farmsteads visible along the route
- Views to agricultural fields, open space and natural vegetation

Hidden Valley Road is physically and functionally linked to its surroundings. The road is set into the undulating and rolling topography of the Hidden Valley area and as such follows the rise and fall of the lands. The road contains the following heritage attributes that reflect these values:

- Scenic views to the surrounding areas and the Grand River
- Undulating topography

Some of the landscape features of Hidden Valley Road identified by the HIA can be seen below, however, this table does not include all the features that have been identified (Table 2).

Features (Adapted from Region of Waterloo Scenic Roads Data Sheet 2011)	Features of Hidden Valley Road	Description	Photo
Vegetation	Yes	<p>Diverse vegetation is found along the whole Hidden Valley Road. The north portion of the road, running parallel to Highway 8, is lined with forested land and agricultural fields towards the south of the road. Towards the north of the road are shrubs. The natural vegetation along this portion of the road does not appear to be maintained. The growth is closer to the road edges (Image 1).</p> <p>The portion of Hidden Valley Road, being proposed as a "heritage corridor", has diverse vegetation along the route. The roadway is lined with cedars, mature weeping willows and other deciduous trees among others. Apart from the trees a variety of bushes and shrubs line the west side of the road along the agricultural fields (Image 2). On the east side of the road on the residential properties the trees are planted with a setback and trees are closer to the edge of the road on the side with the agricultural fields. This creates an uninterrupted line of sight for the winding road culminating in one-point perspective views across the adjacent fields.</p> <p>The southern portion of Hidden Valley Road from Hidden Valley Creek to Wabanki Drive, contains a landscaped grassed area towards the north of the road and on the south is a tree-lined sidewalk (Image 3). Most of the trees found on this portion are deciduous trees.</p>	 <p>Image 1: North Portion of Road, Parallel to Highway 8 (November 9, 2022; Facing Northwest)</p>  <p>Image 2: East Portion of Road, Proposed as a "Heritage Corridor" (November 9, 2022; Facing Southeast)</p>
			 <p>Image 5: South Portion of Road, From Hidden Valley Creek (November 9, 2022; Facing East)</p>
Landform/Relief	Yes	<p>For the whole Hidden Valley Road, portions of the road follow the natural slope of the undulating terrain. It follows the rises in the hilly areas and turns following the landscape (Image 6). These ridges and valleys form vistas and viewpoints to the adjacent landscape.</p>	 <p>Image 6: Natural Hilly Terrain (November 9, 2022; Facing North)</p>



Water	Yes	The road runs alongside the Grand River on the east with views to it (Image 7). It runs parallel to the Grand River up to Hidden Valley Creek where the road loops back towards the Wabanaki Drive. Along the road smaller streams were also observed that eventually flow into the Grand River.	 <p>Image 7:View of Grand River on East (November 9,2022; Facing Southeast)</p>
Cultural Built Environment	Yes	Hidden Valley Road contains remnants of structures reflecting its historical use as a service road for farmsteads. One such example is of a farmstead located at 691 Hidden Valley Road. The barn visible at the road is an L-Shaped bank barn with a gambrel roof. It has rubble stone foundations with vertical wooden boards elevations (Image 8). Other such components also include wooden fences, and boulders lined along the roadside in various places.	 <p>Image 8:View of Adjacent Built Environment (November 9,2022; Facing West)</p>

Table 2. Some identified landscape features of Hidden Valley Road (HIA, 2022).

Potential Impacts to Hidden Valley Road due to the Proposed Development

The impacts to Hidden Valley Road due to the proposed development have been summarized in the table below (Table 3):

Type of Negative Impact	Applicable? (Y/N)	Comments
Destruction of any, or part of any, significant heritage attributes.	Y	The proposed development includes the realignment of portions of Hidden Valley Road and the incorporation of a portion of the road into the River Road extension.. The vegetation along the shoulders, including mature trees and shrubs may be removed due to the proposed development.
Alterations to a property that detract from the cultural heritage values, attributes, character or visual context of a heritage resource; such as the construction of new buildings that are incompatible in scale, massing, materials, height, building orientation or location relative to the heritage resource.	Y	The proposed new development introduces medium to large scale structures, a commercial business park at the northern and southern intersections of Hidden Valley Road and Wabanaki Drive and additional low rise residential – large lot. These changes would alter the overall natural and open landscape of the area along the looped road.
Shadows created that alter the appearance of a heritage attribute or change the viability of a natural feature or plantings, such as a garden.	N	The proposed site alteration will not create any shadows that would alter the appearance of a heritage attribute.

Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or significant relationship.	Y	The character of the road would be altered. Proposed development of potential high, medium and low rise residential – large lot and potential community/institutional uses of lands will isolate portions of the corridor from the natural and open landscape.
Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of built and natural features.	Y	The proposal for the addition of new medium and high-rise buildings in the Master Plan towards and around Fairway Road and Wabanaki Drive will result in direct obstruction of views to the agricultural fields in the northern section of the road. Low rise residential – large lot development and potential community and institutional uses in other portions of the corridor also may obstruct views.
A change in land use such as rezoning a battlefield from open space to residential use, allowing new development or site alteration to fill in the formerly open spaces.	N	The portion of the Hidden Valley Road in the north will become part of the River Road extension. As such, this portion will remain a road.
Land disturbances such as a change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect an archaeological resource.	Y	The proposed alterations include the realignment of the Hidden Valley Road. As Hidden Valley Road follows its historic alignment, this activity may create land disturbance which may adversely affect unknown archaeological resources. ARA has conducted a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment as part of the <i>Class Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design for Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pumping Station and Forcemain</i> . ARA determined there are areas of archaeological potential that require a Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment and as such, an archaeological assessment is required prior to alterations to Hidden Valley Road as alterations could impact unidentified archaeological sites.

Table 3. Impacts to Hidden Valley Road due to the proposed development (HIA, 2023)

Designation of Portions of Hidden Valley Road as a CHL and Heritage Corridor

It was determined through the HIA that the entire portion of Hidden Valley Road could be designated as a heritage corridor. However, certain portions of Hidden Valley Road, especially the lower portion that runs east to west, has undergone many changes, and is proposed to undergo other infrastructural changes in the future. Keeping these changes in mind but also recognizing the overall cultural heritage value of Hidden Valley Road, it has been determined that the entirety of Hidden Valley Road will not be designated as a Heritage Corridor. Instead, the north-south portion of Hidden Valley Road will be designated as a Heritage Corridor, and the lower west-east portion of Hidden Valley Road will be recognized as a Cultural Heritage Landscape (.

It should be noted that the designation of the north-south portion as a Heritage Corridor does not mean that the road is being designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, instead the heritage corridor will be recognized in the Official Plan, and any development on or adjacent to the corridor might trigger the need for certain technical studies, such as Corridor Enhancement Plans in case a development application has been submitted to ensure that the heritage attributes of Hidden Valley Road remain conserved.



Figure 4. Proposed Heritage Corridor (highlighted in green) and CHL (highlighted in orange).

Potential Mitigation Measures for the Heritage Corridor and CHL

The HIA proposed certain mitigation measures for the impacts that were identified as part of any future development to take place in the Hidden Valley Area. These measures include:

- Design Considerations – That the design of any new development and structures be sympathetic to the cultural heritage value of the Road, and that minimize any impacts through appropriate height, massing, and architecture.
- The requirement of a Landscape Plan for any new development, where appropriate to ensure that the natural and rural characteristics of the area remain conserved.
- The requirement of a Corridor Enhancement Plan for any new development to reduce impacts to the cultural heritage value.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2023*

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Draft Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)