

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF MEETING: June 24, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Rosa Bustamante, Director of Planning & Housing Policy/City Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7319

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WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 3

DATE OF REPORT: May 30, 2024

REPORT NO.: DSD-2024-237

SUBJECT: Growing Together East (Major Transit Station Area Land Use and Zoning Framework) – Project Launch

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to formally launch the “Growing Together East” project which will develop a land use and zoning framework for the three remaining Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) in Kitchener (the “Study Area”):
 - Block Line
 - Fairway
 - Sportsworld
- This report provides the background to Growing Together East and outlines the approach to community engagement and technical analyses that will be undertaken.
- Growing Together East will culminate with amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the proposed land use and zoning framework.
- There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- Community engagement is being planned to include in-person workshops, pop-ups, and walk-ins, as well as regular updates and virtual engagement methods on the EngageWR page, alongside communications to those within the Study Area.

This Report is one of many housing-related reports considered by Council since Council’s endorsement of Kitchener’s Housing Pledge in March 2023 as shown on **Figure 1**. The City has committed to completing Growing Together East by Q1 2025 as part of its Housing Accelerator Fund application.

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

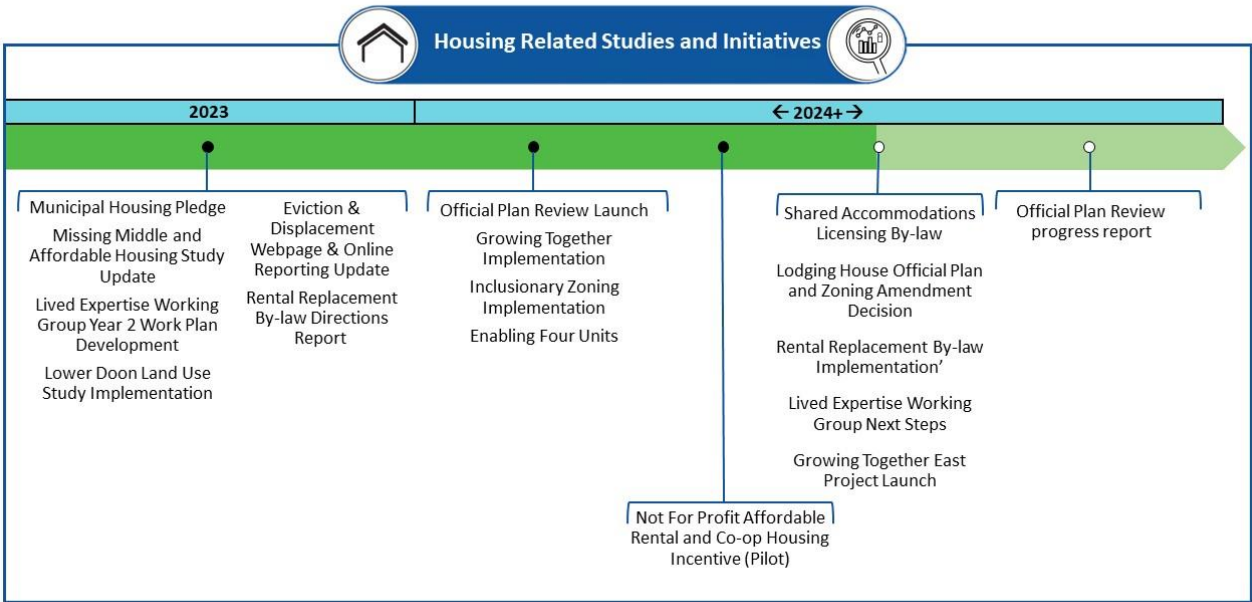


Figure 1 – Kitchener’s Housing Related Studies and Initiatives

BACKGROUND:

On March 18, 2024, City Council unanimously approved the first phase of Growing Together, referred to in this report as “Growing Together West”. This phase included Official Plan Amendments and Zoning By-law Amendments that established three new Strategic Growth Area land use designations and four new Strategic Growth Area zones and applied them within 7 of Kitchener’s 10 PMTSAs.

The study area for Growing Together West was guided by the original Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS) district plans for the “Central”, “Midtown”, and “Rockway” areas.

The boundaries for the 3 remaining PMTSAs (Block Line, Fairway, and Sportsworld) have now been delineated by the Region of Waterloo through Regional Official Plan Amendment 6 (ROPA 6) and through Growing Together West. These PMTSAs require an updated land use and zoning framework to shape future growth and development (**Figure 2**). Growing Together East will complete the work begun by Growing Together West for Kitchener’s PMTSAs.

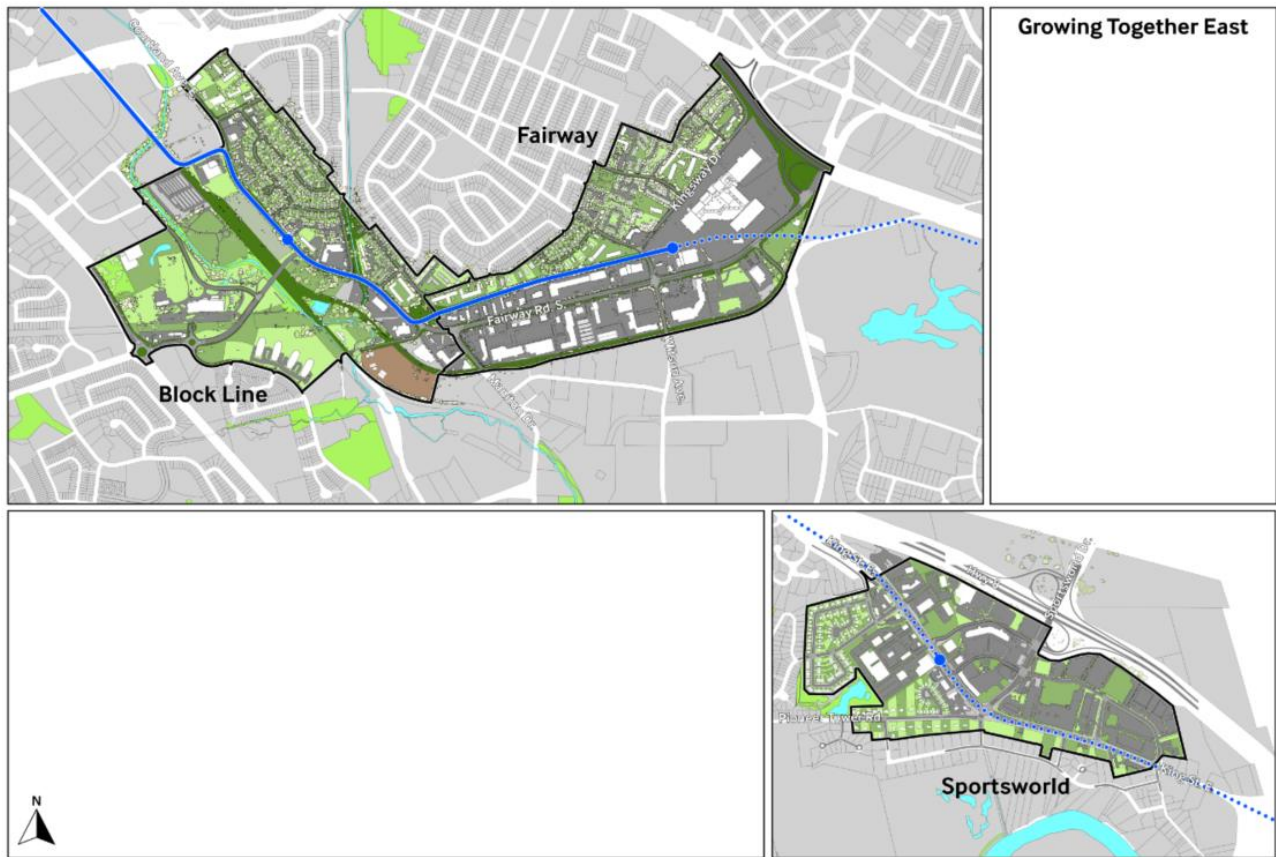


Figure 2 – Growing Together East Study Area

In addition to PMTSA boundaries, ROPA 6 has identified a minimum density target of 160 persons and jobs per hectare in the Sportsworld and Fairway PMTSAs (consistent with that for Growing Together West), while the Block Line PMTSA has a minimum density target of 80 persons and jobs per hectare. A reduced minimum density target for Block Line PMTSA has been established as development opportunities are constrained by natural heritage features, floodplain, and railway lands.

REPORT:

Growing Together East will continue and build on Growing Together West's equity-based and data driven process. Growth scenarios for these PMTSAs will be tested, analyzed, and modelled – together with community input, to ensure a broad range of perspectives are captured when guiding growth and change in these areas.

While the policy framework approved through Growing Together West (i.e., SGA land uses and zones) forms the foundation of Growing Together East, staff will evaluate the unique attributes and needs of the Block Line, Fairway and Sportsworld PMTSAs to inform specific policy recommendations or modifications.

Community and Collaborator Engagement

The award-winning approach to community and collaborator engagement developed through Growing Together West will be leveraged for Growing Together East. Community

engagement will begin in Summer 2024, with additional community and collaborator engagement planned in Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 following release of draft materials. Staff are currently planning to be out in the community to create awareness, introduce Growing Together East, and seek input through workshop activities to inform where growth may occur at the following times (subject to additions and changes):

- **General / City-Wide Events**
 - Multicultural Festival (Saturday, June 22) – Workshop Session
 - Kitchener Market (Saturday, July 13) – Workshop Session
- **Station Area-Specific Communications and Events**
 - Owner and Tenant Post Card Mailout
 - Fairway Station Area – Workshop Session (July 2024)
 - St. Mary’s High School – Workshop Session (June 2024)

Growing Together East does not benefit from the decade of community, staff, and industry engagement that informed the PARTS plans or the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning Reviews in Growing Together West. Additional materials, outreach methods, expectation setting, and education for this Study Area are being planned to engage the community through this process. This will also help address areas where greater equity considerations may be needed.

Although consideration of site or area-specific requests are more appropriately considered through application-initiated development applications, City staff expect that there may be merit in considering these types of requests based on a set of consistent criteria. It is expected that any development industry or collaborator requests will be considered using the same approach used in Growing Together West after the release of draft materials.

Technical Studies

The Study Area also presents unique considerations, which may differ from those existing conditions within Growing Together West, including:

- Redevelopment of existing large-format commercial buildings and large sites;
- In the Block Line Station area, significant natural heritage, floodplain, and railway lands constraints which limit redevelopment opportunities;
- An emerging mixed-use development context and missing elements of complete communities (such as parks and community facilities) and complete streets;
- Retention and creation of jobs which support population growth; and
- Land use compatibility with employment areas and major transportation facilities, including Regional Roads, Provincial Highways, and rail facilities.

Technical studies will therefore be completed for the Study Area which reflect the local contexts, which at a minimum include a:

- Noise and Transportation Analysis Study
- Market Analysis Study

The outcomes of these studies will inform updates policies and zoning regulations which are applied within the PMTSAs.

Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments

As part of “Building Kitchener Together” (Kitchener’s Housing Accelerator Fund initiatives), the City has committed to bring forward changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law by the end of Q1 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports **Building a Connected City Together: Focuses on neighbourhoods; housing and ensuring secure, affordable homes; getting around easily, sustainably, and safely to the places and spaces that matter.**

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – This project is funded from Planning Growth Studies and as part of Kitchener’s Housing Accelerator Fund with an approximate budget of \$450,000. There are sufficient funds to complete this work.

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

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 13
- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
- A Place to Grow: A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020
- Regional Official Plan
- City of Kitchener Official Plan, 2014
- City of Kitchener Zoning By-law 2019-051
- Growing Together – Protected Major Transit Station Area Land Use and Zoning Framework (DSD-2024-005 and DSD-2024-128)

REVIEWED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager, Policy & Research

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services