

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee

DATE OF MEETING: January 27, 2025

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WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 3

DATE OF REPORT: January 6, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2024-292

SUBJECT: Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project – Official Plan Amendment OPA24/005/K/CM and Zoning By-law Amendment ZBA24/008/K/CM

RECOMMENDATION:

That City Initiated Official Plan Amendment OPA24/005/K/CM, for the purpose of implementing recommendations contained within the Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project, including amendments to mapping and text amendments, be approved, in the form shown in the Official Plan Amendment attached to Report DSD-2024-292 as Attachment 'A'; and,

That City Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA24/008/K/CM to amend Zoning By-law 2019-051, be approved in the form shown in the "Proposed By-law" attached to Report DSD-2024-292 as Attachment 'B'; and further,

That the Hidden Valley Residential Community Plan (as approved June 14, 1990) and Hidden Valley Industrial Community Secondary Plan (as approved October 19, 1981) be repealed in their entirety.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to recommend land use and zoning changes for the Hidden Valley community based on technical studies, the Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan, and community input. It is planning staff's recommendation that the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments be approved.
- There are no financial implications associated with this recommendation.
- Community engagement included:
 - Two Public Information Centres hosted in 2018 as part of the Land Use Master Plan;
 - Ongoing meetings with landowners and stakeholders throughout the Land Use Master Plan, Implementation Project, and concurrent Environmental Assessments, including site visits;

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

- Two Virtual Public Open Houses in 2021 as part of the Upper Hidden Valley Pumping Station and Forcemain Environmental Assessment;
- One Public Information Centre in October 2023 as part of the Hidden Valley Flood Risk Reduction Environmental Assessment;
- One Public Information Centre in May 2024 as part of the Land Use Implementation Project;
- Notice of the January 27, 2025, statutory public meeting published in the Waterloo Region Record on January 3, 2025; and
- Ongoing engagement and information shared via Engage Kitchener.
- This report supports the delivery of core services and 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan (the “2019 Master Plan”) was approved by Council in June 2019. The Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project (the “Implementation Project”) has since been undertaken to provide updated land uses and associated policies and zoning regulations to facilitate the development of a complete community within Hidden Valley.

The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments (the “proposed amendments”) are intended to guide new development that is appropriately phased, increases housing supply, protects important natural features and functions, provides housing options, will be transit supportive, and creates a more complete community. The intent is to implement policies, land uses, and zoning which proactively shape new development and protect significant amount of natural features rather than through ad-hoc reaction to specific development applications.

While the 2019 Master Plan has served as the foundation for undertaking the Implementation Project and preparing the proposed amendments, City staff have considered a series of new and emerging inputs in the 5 years since the 2019 Master Plan was completed. This includes completion of technical studies as part of the Implementation Project, aligning with Regional Official Plan Amendment 6 (ROPA 6), supporting Kitchener’s Housing Pledge target, and responding to various changes to new Provincial legislation, policies, and plans.

These inputs, community, and collaborator feedback, and the 2019 Master Plan have been considered through the Implementation Project and have shaped the evolution of the land use concept since 2019.

The 2019 Master Plan included five guiding principles intended to guide implementation, and which have been considered through the Implementation Project:

A More “Complete” Community

To foster the creation of a more complete community with a range of housing types, stores, and non-residential uses within proximity to each other, the proposed amendments reflect the following land use changes (**see also Table 1**):

- The 2014 Official Plan currently permits 67.2 hectares of the Study Area for residential and mixed-use development, primarily in the form of low-density residential uses. The proposed amendments would permit **80.5 hectares for residential and mixed-use development** – an increase of approximately 13.3 hectares, comprising:
 - **11.6 hectares for High Rise Residential** (compared to 1.0 hectares in the 2019 Master Plan – an increase of 10.5 hectares)

- **3.4 hectares for Medium Rise Residential** (compared to 5.2 hectares in the 2019 Master Plan – a reduction of 1.8 hectares)
- **60.8 hectares for Low Rise Residential** (compared to 50 hectares of Large Lot and Estate Residential Limited Service Residential in the 2019 Master Plan – an increase of 10.8 hectares)
- **4.8 hectares for Mixed Use** (compared to 3.8 hectares in the 2019 Master Plan – an increase of 1 hectare)
- The 2014 Official Plan does not designate any lands “Commercial” in Hidden Valley. The proposed amendments include 6.5 hectares of commercially designated lands.

Table 1 – Summary land use changes

Land Use	2014 Official Plan	2019 Master Plan	Change (2014-2019)	2024 Proposed	Change (2019-2024)
High Rise Residential	0.0 ha.	1.0 ha.	+ 1.0 ha.	11.6 ha.	+ 10.6 ha.
Medium Rise Residential	0.0 ha.	5.2 ha.	+ 5.2 ha.	3.4 ha.	- 1.8 ha.
Low Rise Residential	66.6 ha.	50.0 ha.	- 16.6 ha.	60.8 ha.	+ 10.8 ha.
Residential Total	66.6 ha.	56.2 ha.	-10.4 ha	75.8 ha.	+19.6 ha.
Mixed Use*	0.6 ha.	3.7 ha.	+ 3.1 ha.	4.8 ha.	+ 1.1 ha.
Commercial*	0 ha.	10.0 ha.	+ 10.0 ha.	6.5 ha.	- 3.5 ha.

*Both the Mixed Use and Commercial land use designations allow for residential dwellings. The proposed Official Plan amendment enables housing to be built on 87.1 ha of land within Hidden Valley.

Mix of Uses along River Road Extension

To enable a range of residential, mixed-use, and commercial uses in Hidden Valley that are focused along the River Road Extension, the proposed amendment introduces an “Urban Corridor” along the River Road Extension. Urban Corridors are located along existing or planned transit corridors and are intended to have strong pedestrian linkages and be integrated with neighbouring residential and employment uses. Urban Corridors enable the development of a mix of uses and a wide range of housing options, foster a more walkable community, and reflect the area’s proximity to existing transit services at Fairway Station and investments in the area’s transportation network. This mix of uses will benefit both existing and future residents in Hidden Valley by providing for shops and services within the community.

Sustainability

As part of the Implementation Project, three water-related studies have been completed including the Stormwater Management Strategy, Source Water Protection Assessment Study, and Flood Risk

Reduction Environmental Assessment. The proposed amendments introduce area-specific policies to Hidden Valley which reflect the detailed study recommendations unique to this community, while the 2014 Official Plan includes existing policies related to sustainability and climate consistent with all other areas of the city. The studies will help shape future development and guide infrastructure investments in the area, recognizing the environmental sensitivities of Hidden Valley.

In support of sustainable transportation policies and objectives, the proposed amendments permit a wide range of uses and housing types in locations best served by the transportation network – with particular focus on areas to be served by transit and active transportation.

Protect “the Jewel”

To ensure the conservation of the significant and sensitive Hidden Valley natural area and as recommended in the 2019 Master Plan, the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study led to refinements to the delineation of the natural heritage conservation land use designation. The proposed amendments apply the Natural Heritage Conservation designation to 95.3 hectares of land (approximately 47% of the Study Area), reflecting a net increase of protected lands of 1.6 hectares compared to the 2019 Master Plan.

Completion of the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study has also meant that 9.1 hectares of land shown as “Area 2A” and “Area 2B” – which had no assigned land use in the 2019 Master Plan, have now been assigned appropriate land use designations to facilitate future development and conserve the natural features.

Respect and Enhance Existing Areas

Today, Hidden Valley is characterized by rolling topography, with large estate lots with detached residential dwellings towards the river. To reflect and enhance the existing areas, the proposed amendments retain a Low Rise Residential land use designation and zoning on lands along Hidden Valley Road, with a gradual built form transition to Medium Rise Residential close to the future roundabout at River Road, as a transition to the planned Commercial block located at the intersection. The proposed land uses recognize the existing built form context of Hidden Valley, while providing greater built form flexibility in locations that are better served by the future transportation network.

Further, both the Heritage Corridor and the Cultural Heritage Landscape are proposed to be reflected on Map 9 and Map 11 and Policies 13.C.4.17 and 13.C.4.18 through the proposed Official Plan amendment, as recommended through the Heritage Impact Assessment.

In summary, the proposed amendments plan for a more complete community in an area of Kitchener which has long been planned for supporting transportation infrastructure and servicing for urban development beside the unique and beautiful Hidden Valley natural area and Grand River valley.

BACKGROUND:

The Hidden Valley Study Area (**Figure 1**) is a neighbourhood that comprises approximately 183 hectares of land in the east of the City of Kitchener, bounded by the Grand River to the east and south, Highway 8 and CN Rail Corridor to the north, and Wabanaki Drive to the west. Today, this community is characterized by rolling topography, including agricultural fields, with large lot estate residential dwellings towards the river.

The Study Area has been planned for some form of development since the 1980s as part of the former Hidden Valley Residential Community Plan (1990) and Hidden Valley Industrial Community Secondary Plan (1981), which planned for different residential and business park uses within the area. More recently, the revised alignment for the River Road extension was approved and the route of Stage 2 ION Light Rail Transit was confirmed by Regional Council.

Starting in 2018, the City conducted public engagement and technical studies to inform the Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan. At the time, community members identified environmental, transportation, and streetscape/placemaking as matters of importance. Staff further acknowledged the need for carefully designed water management systems, including flood risk mitigation.

Approved by Council in June 2019 (DSD-19-133 Neighbourhood Planning Review: Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan), the 2019 Master Plan provides recommendations to update policies and land use designations for the community, update zoning, identify cultural heritage resources, and provide recommendations on other technical considerations within the Study Area.



Figure 1 – Hidden Valley Study Area (shown within the dashed boundary)

The Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project has been undertaken to provide updated Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law regulations informed by the 2019 Master Plan and subsequent technical studies. The proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments are intended to guide future development that is appropriately phased, serviced, transit supportive, creates a more complete community than exists today comprising a wider mix of residential and non-

residential uses, conserves important natural features and functions, and contributes to the existing Hidden Valley community.

The existing context of the area has limited road access and partial municipal services with existing land uses in Hidden Valley which are predominantly low-rise, large lot/estate residential in nature. The City, Region, and Province have made and will be making significant infrastructure investments which will, in part, support future development in Hidden Valley, including the River Road extension, new municipal services, and connections to Highway 8. Alongside these investments, there is an opportunity to support a broader range and mix of uses than exists today on the portions of undeveloped lands, creating a more complete community.

While some portions of Hidden Valley have already been developed or have recently been approved for development, portions of land to the north of Hidden Valley Drive form part of Kitchener's "Designated Greenfield Area". These areas provide an opportunity to introduce new uses and a range of housing options in Hidden Valley, creating a more complete community.

REPORT:

What has changed since 2019?

While the 2019 Master Plan has served as the foundation for undertaking the Implementation Project and the proposed amendments, City staff have considered a series of new and emerging inputs in the 5 years since the 2019 Master Plan was completed. Specifically:

- The **technical studies** prepared as part of the Implementation Project provide a series of recommendations related to transportation, noise, conservation of natural environmental features and functions, cultural heritage and human health which inform the types of policies and delineation of land uses and zoning which are proposed.
- **Regional Official Plan Amendment 6 (ROPA 6)** provides stronger direction and basis for the creation of complete communities across Kitchener, particularly within designated greenfield areas. ROPA 6 also delineated the boundaries of the Fairway Station Protected Major Transit Station Area, which was shown conceptually in the 2019 Master Plan, and subsequently brought into Kitchener's Official Plan through adoption of Growing Together West (OPA 49, 50, and 133).
- In 2023, Council endorsed **Kitchener's Housing Pledge target** of 35,000 units by 2031 (DSD-2023-063), which has seen the City undertake many housing-related studies and initiatives with the goal of increasing housing supply and choice. Future development within Hidden Valley presents an opportunity for the City to achieve this target.
- On October 20, 2024, the **Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024)** came into effect, replacing the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019. The PPS, 2024, in addition to recent Provincial legislative changes, supports the creation of more housing as-of-right and complete communities.

These inputs, community and collaborator feedback, and the 2019 Master Plan have been considered through the Implementation Project and have shaped the evolution of the land use concept since 2019.

Implementation Project Overview

The Implementation Project began in 2021 to implement the findings and recommendations of the 2019 Master Plan through a range of technical studies. The technical studies have been used to inform the proposed land uses and associated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments. The studies were completed in collaboration with landowners, agencies, and City departments. The following technical studies have been completed:

- Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Water Management Studies
 - Environmental Assessment for Flood Risk Reduction
 - Stormwater Management Strategy
 - Source Water Protection Study
- Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pumping Station and Forcemain Environmental Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Transportation and Noise Impact Study

A summary of the technical studies completed as part of the Implementation Project, alongside relevant findings, are provided below.

Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study (Attachment D)

The Hidden Valley Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study (EIS) was prepared by LGL Environmental Research Associates, in accordance with an approved Terms of Reference consistent with Section 17.E.11 – Environmental Impact Studies in Kitchener’s Official Plan.

The Comprehensive EIS was one of the studies needed to determine land use – specifically, the extent of the Natural Heritage Conservation land use designation (based on the natural heritage system), as well as development limits and setbacks from natural features.

The Comprehensive EIS involved a review of existing information, collaboration with agencies and landowners, field surveys, and builds upon the significant amount of research that has been completed in the area over decades for the Region of Waterloo River Road extension and more recently the Stage 2 ION light rail project.

The Comprehensive EIS characterizes natural heritage features and functions that comprise the Natural Heritage System, potential enhancement areas, and recommends minimum buffers. The Comprehensive EIS also includes an impact and mitigation assessment which reviews the proposed land use plan and identifies mitigation measures. Mitigation measures include policies recommended to be included in the Official Plan amendment as well as identifying technical requirements for future development and related supporting studies.

The Comprehensive EIS identified that within the Study Area, the Natural Heritage System is comprised of:

Core Natural Heritage Features

- Wetlands (Provincially Significant Hidden Valley Wetland Complex and locally significant);
- Woodlands (regionally and locally significant);
- Valleylands (regionally Significant Valley associated with the Grand River and locally Significant Valleylands associated with Hidden Valley North, West and East Creeks and Hofstetter Creek);

- Environmentally Significant Valley Features adjacent to the Grand River (regionally significant);
- Regional Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas (ESPAs) No. 27 and No. 28, ESPA 27 (Hidden Valley / Bird Ridge) in the north-central part and ESPA 28 (Petrifying Spring) in the southwest corner;
- Significant Habitat of Endangered or Threatened Species; and
- Fish Habitat such as the Grand River, Hofstetter Creek, Hidden Valley North, West and East Creeks.

Supporting Natural Heritage Features

- Significant Wildlife Habitat (confirmed and candidate);
- Recharge and Discharge areas; and
- Natural Linkages and Corridors.

In accordance with the City of Kitchener Official Plan, the Hidden Valley Natural Heritage System (features and associated ecological functions and values) will be protected by policies that provide appropriate conservation prescriptions based on significance and sensitivity.

- The proposed Official Plan Amendment places Core Natural Heritage Features in the Natural Heritage Conservation designation, incorporated into the Natural Heritage System (Official Plan, Map 6) and Land Use (Official Plan, Map 4). The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment places these features in a Natural Conservation (NHC) zone which conserves these features, and their ecological functions and values over the long-term and promotes their enhancement.
- Significant Wildlife Habitat (confirmed and candidate) and Recharge and Discharge Areas are treated as an overlay to land use designations, requiring further studies to determine whether development within the feature is appropriate and if so, how it should occur.
- Natural Linkages and Corridors help contribute to the overall ecological integrity and connectivity of the Natural Heritage System. It is intended that these features and their functions will be conserved and enhanced.

Scoped Environmental Impact Studies will be required to support future development applications adjacent to lands designated Natural Heritage Conservation. These future studies will refine and survey the extent of the Natural Heritage System and determine the design of appropriate setbacks in consultation with the approval agencies having jurisdiction and outline how recommended mitigation measures will be implemented through new (or re-) development.

The updated natural heritage system was considered and was supported by the Climate Change and Environment Committee June 20, 2024 through [DSD-2024-268](#).

Transportation Impact Assessment & Preliminary Noise Analysis (Attachment E)

A Transportation Impact Assessment was completed by Egis Canada (formerly McIntosh Perry Consulting Engineers). The intent of the Transportation Impact Assessment was to confirm that the land use concept established by the 2019 Master Plan was supportable. The report found the land use concept supportable based on transportation demands anticipated, additionally, as the area develops, it recommends the following:

- Signal optimization in existing and planned intersections.
- Increased storage length in auxiliary turn lanes for the future King Street and River Road intersection.

- Additional connectivity to support active transportation including more sidewalks on existing and proposed roads, and a multi-use path (MUP) transecting the Study Area; and
- Re-routing GRT bus routes to circulate within the Study Area.

A Preliminary Noise Study was performed by Aercoustics Engineering Limited to review the acoustic environment. The Preliminary Noise Study was completed in areas expected to have the highest potential noise impact from future transportation and stationary noise sources to provide an indication of the worst-case future scenarios and provide an understanding of where incompatible uses may arise.

The Preliminary Noise Study expects that land use compatibility can be achieved based on the land uses identified in the 2019 Master Plan. It recommends that detailed noise impact study be conducted as a condition of future planning approvals in certain locations in Hidden Valley. It was noted that findings of future studies may require additional noise controls as a condition of development approval. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment applies a Holding symbol on lands requiring more detailed noise study.

Heritage Impact Assessment (Attachment F)

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was completed by Archaeological Research Associates Ltd., initially dated February 16, 2023, and revised June 26, 2023, to determine whether Hidden Valley Road has cultural heritage value, and what, if any, mitigation measures should be implemented going forward.

The HIA found that Hidden Valley Road met 3 out of 9 criteria for determining cultural heritage interest or value according to Ontario Regulation 9/06. Hidden Valley Road has been recognized for its physical, historical/associative, and contextual value:

- Hidden Valley Road has physical value and is a representative example of rural roads that were essential for the development of the area.
- Hidden Valley Road has historical and associative value because it has direct associations with the theme of early settlement in the Region of Waterloo. 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.
- 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 also provides scenic views of the agricultural fields throughout the various portions of the road.

The heritage attributes of Hidden Valley Road include:

- All elements related to the physical value of Hidden Valley Road including:
 - Narrow two-lane alignment
 - No shoulders
 - Variety of vegetation along the shoulders, including mature trees and shrubs; and
 - Irregular loop.
- 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
- All elements related to the contextual value of Hidden Valley Road including:
 - The location and orientation of Hidden Valley Road
 - Scenic views to the surrounding areas and the Grand River
 - Undulating topography

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, have undergone many changes, and are proposed to undergo other infrastructure changes in the future. Recognizing the overall cultural heritage value and expected changes along Hidden Valley Road, it is recommended that the north-south portion of Hidden Valley Road be designated as a Heritage Corridor, and the lower west-east portion of Hidden Valley Road be recognized as a Cultural Heritage Landscape.

Heritage Corridors are cultural heritage resources which have unique structural, topographic, and visual characteristics and are intended to be conserved. Due to the north-west portion still retaining most of its rural characteristics of cultural heritage value, designating this portion as a Heritage Corridor would offer a greater level of protection, and staff the ability to ask for any required technical studies in case of any proposed development adjacent to this portion of Hidden Valley Road.

A Cultural Heritage Landscape (CHL) is a defined area having cultural heritage value or interest by the community – including features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites, or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Designating the lower east-west portion of Hidden Valley Road as a Cultural Heritage Landscape serves a dual purpose:

- To recognize the cultural heritage value of this portion of Hidden Valley, even though this portion has undergone many changes and is proposed to go undergo further changes; and
- For staff to have the ability to require additional heritage studies such as Heritage Impact Assessments, Conservation Plans, and Corridor Enhancement Plans if there is development proposed adjacent to the CHL.

Designating this portion as a Cultural Heritage Landscape offers greater flexibility to undertake future projects for this portion, while at the same time recognizing and conserving its cultural heritage value in an appropriate manner.

Both cultural heritage resources (Heritage Corridor and the Cultural Heritage Landscape) are proposed to be reflected on Map 9 of the Official Plan through the proposed Official Plan amendment.

Future development along the Heritage Corridor may trigger the need for certain technical studies and resultant mitigation measures, such as Heritage Impact Assessments, Conservation Plans, and Corridor Enhancement Plans. Furthermore, heritage corridors have been identified under Section 13 of the Official Plan, which includes policies regarding how change should be managed for the City's identified Heritage Corridors. This includes but is not limited to regulating access to lands abutting Heritage Corridors, maintenance and surface treatment options, or providing the City with the ability to ask for other transportation related studies in case any proposed traffic changes will have an impact on the rural characteristics of Hidden Valley Road.

The HIA further recommended a series of mitigation measures that will be implemented through conditions of future planning approvals, such as design considerations, landscape plans, and requiring a Corridor Enhancement Plan to reduce impacts to cultural heritage value.

The Draft Heritage Impact Assessment was presented to Heritage Kitchener on May 7, 2024 (DSD-2024-193). Overall, there were no major concerns raised by the Committee regarding the proposed land uses, or designating portions of Hidden Valley Road as a Heritage Corridor and a CHL. There were some comments for the continued protection of the natural heritage areas surrounding Hidden Valley Road and the views that have identified as heritage attributes.

Stormwater Management Strategy (Attachment G)

A Stormwater Management Strategy (SWS) was prepared by Matrix Solutions Inc. in accordance with guiding documents (City of Kitchener Development Manual and the Ministry of Environment Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual) to assess the existing conditions (i.e., catchment characterization, peak flow assessment, and water balance) and hydrological impacts related to proposed development in Hidden Valley and to recommend mitigation strategies.

Like the Comprehensive EIS, the SWS involved a review of existing information, collaboration with agencies and landowners, and builds upon the significant amount of research that has been completed in the area over decades for the Region of Waterloo River Road extension and more recently the Stage 2 ION LRT project. Hydrologic model updates were completed to represent proposed development upstream of the Hidden Valley ESPA/PSW based on planning discussions coordinated with the City, the Region, private development interests and their consultants.

The stormwater planning undertaken as part of the SWS focused on comparing the hydrologic characteristics of existing and future land use conditions, and the effectiveness of Stormwater Management (SWM) controls at mitigating the hydrologic impacts. It is important that changes in hydrology typically associated with the development of land from a rural to urbanized landscape incorporate measures to mitigate potential negative impacts on the receiving natural or human caused systems. This is especially important for the Environmentally Sensitive Policy Area / Provincially Significant Wetland feature that is central to the Hidden Valley Study Area. Beyond natural heritage elements, the feature is also hydrologically significant as it relates to impacting instream flow / flood conditions through the receiving Hidden Valley Creek (“East,” “West” and “North” Creeks) system, and as a key groundwater recharge area within the Region’s municipal water supply system.

Matrix Solutions Inc. developed a strategy to mitigate impacts associated with the proposed land use changes. Strategies were developed with a focus on maintaining quality and quantity characteristics for both the surface water and groundwater receiving systems. The conceptual stormwater management planning for the Study Area has been completed by following industry-standard guiding documents. The primary goals and components of the SWS include:

- Infiltration – Maintain or increase existing infiltration volume upstream of the ESPA/PSW.
- Water Quality – Enhanced protection, equivalent to 80% long-term Total Suspended Solids (TSS) removal.
- Erosion (flow-duration) – Maintain existing erosion regime in the west and north tributaries.
- Peak Flow Rates and Flood Mitigation – Match proposed development peak flow rates to existing conditions peak flow rates in total discharge to ESPA/PSW.

Key control components of the SWS include:

- At-source controls including infiltration of the first 25 mm of runoff for all clean impervious and landscaped surfaces within the developing lands.
- Four new end-of-pipe SWM facilities providing quality and quantity control.
- Two at-source storage facilities and one underground storage facility providing peak flow reduction (quantity control) only.
- An expansion / retrofit to the existing North Wabanaki Stormwater Management Facility.

A Stormwater Management Report implemented through conditions of future planning approvals, in consultation with the appropriate public agencies having jurisdiction, will be required to support future development applications to ensure no negative impacts to groundwater recharge, wetlands, or watercourses.

Source Water Protection Assessment (Attachment H)

A Source Water Protection Assessment (SWPS) was prepared by Matrix Solutions Inc. to document the characteristics of the Source Water Protection (SWP) areas and related policies, assess the potential for impacts on existing systems associated with the implementation of the Secondary Plan, and to provide recommendations for impact mitigation.

Much of the Hidden Valley Study Area lies within existing or draft, unapproved source water protection zones associated with one or more of the three municipal drinking water supply systems local to the study area (Fountain Street and Parkway well fields and the raw water surface intake from the Grand River at the Hidden Valley weir).

Upon review, it was found that development in Hidden Valley should not represent a significant impact on the Region's nearby water supply sources. However, in the Parkway Well Field, which has identified sodium and chloride issues, groundwater and surface water systems may require further assessment throughout the development design, review, and approval processes. This is due to the high infiltration characteristics of both the potential development areas and the lower-lying environmentally sensitive area and wetland feature.

As is common practice, individual development applications will be required to prepare and implement a salt management strategy as a condition of approval. Proponents will be encouraged to adopt all innovations that could reasonably be shown to further mitigate associated impacts (i.e., heated pavement, increased vegetation, pavement overlays, or salt alternatives). Management activities are to be undertaken on all sites to reduce impacts of de-icing salts as part of a holistic strategy of shared responsibility by public and private sectors alike.

Flood Risk Reduction Environmental Assessment

The Hidden Valley Flood Risk Reduction Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by Matrix Solutions Inc. was completed earlier in 2024. The purpose of the EA was to identify alternative solutions to reduce the flood hazard in the vulnerable downstream reaches of the Hidden Valley Creek Subwatershed and assess potential impacts of the future development contemplated for the Hidden Valley community.

There are several flood vulnerable areas and erosion vulnerable areas in the downstream portion of the Hidden Valley Creek Subwatershed, close to Hidden Valley Road. The area downstream has experienced past flood and erosion impacts. These are related to specific rainfall or runoff events and the release of natural debris (e.g., beaver dams or natural debris jams).

Based on the results of the EA, the preferred design concept to reduce flooding risk and support future development includes replacing the existing culvert with a 3,900 mm span by 1,200 mm rise box culvert. Replacing the culvert will increase the conveyance capacity, lower the water surface elevation upstream, and reduce the frequency of floods overtopping the road. Further urban development within the catchment will not affect the flood and erosion vulnerable areas downstream of the natural area.

This Environmental Assessment was previously considered by Council through [DSD-2024-119](#).

Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pumping Station and Forcemain Environmental Assessment

The Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pump Station and Forcemain Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by MTE Consultants Inc. was completed in 2022. The purpose of the study was to define a sanitary servicing solution that would support responsible development in Hidden Valley.

Based on the results of the EA, it was recommended that a Sanitary Pumping Station (SPS) be constructed in the north part of the Study Area (south of the proposed River Road extension and ION tracks) and that the forcemain from the SPS should discharge to the trunk sewer at Wabanaki Road and Hidden Valley Road.

The SPS will service the developable area in the north and northwest part of the Study Area with the available capacity to service additional lands to the east (lands identified as 2B) in the future and that the developable areas in the western part of the Study Area will drain by gravity to the trunk sewer or to the River Birch Pumping Station.

This Environmental Assessment was previously considered by Council through [DSD-2022-392](#) and [DSD-2022-258](#).

Health Impact Assessment (Attachment I)

A Health Impact Assessment is a tool used to evaluate the potential health-related outcomes of an activity or development before it is built or implemented.

The City's Official Plan (Section 6: Public Health and Safety) directs that land use planning decisions need to promote and protect the health and well-being of people and achieve a complete and healthy community.

In accordance with the Official Plan, a Health Impact Assessment was completed by the City of Kitchener Planning and Housing Policy Division in partnership with the Region of Waterloo Public Health and Paramedic Services to ensure the proposed land uses support a complete and healthy community.

Recommendations with a health equity lens were developed to address enhancing positive health outcomes while preventing or mitigating negative health outcomes. They have been considered through the proposed amendments and will inform conditions of future planning approvals, in consultation with the appropriate public agencies having jurisdiction.

Overview of Proposed Amendments

The purpose of the proposed Official Plan amendment is to update the policy framework in Hidden Valley by:

- Updating the Urban Structure (i.e., adding an Urban Corridor along the River Road Extension, reclassifying Industrial Employment Areas to Community Areas, and minor refinements to the Green Areas to implement recommendations of the Comprehensive EIS) and applying updated land uses within the Study Area by redesignating lands with appropriate land use designations in the 2014 Official Plan to facilitate development of a more complete community;
- Amending specific policy area mapping and policies that apply specifically to Hidden Valley to implement the findings of Land Use Implementation Project;
- Amending natural heritage system, cultural heritage, and transportation system mapping within Hidden Valley to reflect the technical studies and changes since adoption of the 2014 Official Plan (e.g., alignment of the River Road extension).

The purpose of the proposed Zoning By-law amendment is to update the zoning framework in Hidden Valley and to bring the remaining lands into Zoning By-law 2019-051. The Study Area is predominantly subject to Zoning By-law 85-1, with exception of recently approved development applications in the area which applied By-law 2019-051 zones to facilitate development. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment:

- Carries forward existing site-specific regulations, where applicable;
- Applies new holding provisions to ensure continued consideration of water and sanitary servicing, noise study requirements, and permits required for species at risk where future development may occur;
- Applies a significant wildlife habitat (confirmed and candidate) overlay, which corresponds to changes as part of the proposed Official Plan amendment; and
- Applies applicable zones in Zoning By-law 2019-051 which align with and implement the proposed Official Plan amendment land uses.

PLANNING ANALYSIS:

The following section provides an analysis of applicable Provincial, Regional, and local plans, policies, and legislation.

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13 25

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* establishes matters of provincial interest and states that the Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, and the Tribunal, in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of provincial interest such as:

- a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features, and functions;
- c) the conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base
- d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historic, archaeological, or scientific interest;
- e) the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;
- f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;
- g) the minimization of waste;
- h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;

- i) the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities;
- i) the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing;
- k) the adequate provision of employment opportunities;
- l) the protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities
- n) the resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private interests;
- o) the protection of public health and safety;
- p) the appropriate location of growth and development;
- q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians;
- r) the promotion of built form that,
 - i. Is well-designed;
 - ii. Encourages a sense of place; and
 - iii. Provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive, and vibrant;
- s) the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.

These matters of provincial interest are addressed and are implemented through Provincial policy, the Regional Official Plan, and the City's Official Plan. The proposed amendments support the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features, and functions, through the application of the Natural Heritage Conservation designation, alongside the supporting water studies. A full range of housing options are permitted within Hidden Valley in locations that have been long contemplated for appropriate growth and development. Community and collaborators have been engaged, and necessary information provided, to support informed involvement in the Implementation Project, while having regard for the resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private interests.

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

On August 19, 2024, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing released the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024) which is the new integrated province-wide land use planning policy document. The PPS, 2024 replaces the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, with a singular Provincial Planning Statement which came into effect on October 20, 2024. In December, a Provincial decision was issued that determined that no matters would be "transitioned" to the new PPS, meaning any planning matters in progress are required to conform to the PPS 2024.

The PPS, 2024 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Section 3 of the Planning Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act.

The PPS, 2024 promotes efficient development and land use patterns, as well as accommodating an appropriate mix of affordable and market-based residential dwelling types with other land uses, while

supporting the environment, public health, and safety. Provincial policies promote the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification, and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.

Specifically, Section 2.2.1b) of the 2024 PPS promotes all types of residential intensification, and sets out a policy framework for sustainable, healthy, livable, and safe communities.

Managing Growth

To support effective growth, Policy 2.3.1.1 of the PPS, 2024 states that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Within settlement areas, growth should be focused on strategic growth areas.

Strategic growth areas are defined in the PPS, 2024 as being within settlement areas and can be in the form of nodes and corridors or other areas that have been identified for accommodating intensification and higher density. Strategic growth areas may include (but are not limited to) major transit station areas (MTSAs) downtowns, lands close to post-secondary institutions and underutilized commercially designated lands.

Policy 2.1.6 of the PPS, 2024 states that authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by:

- a) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses (including schools and associated childcare facilities, long-term care facilities, places of worship and cemeteries), recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;
- b) improving accessibility for people of all ages and abilities by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and
- c) improving social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.

Policy 2.4.1.2 further emphasizes this priority within strategic growth areas to support the achievement of complete communities through a range and mix of housing options, intensification, and more mixed-use development. These areas are intended to be planned as follows:

- a) to accommodate significant population and employment growth;
- b) as focal areas for education, commercial, recreational, and cultural uses;
- c) to accommodate and support the transit network and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit; and
- d) to support affordable, accessible, and equitable housing.

The PPS, 2024 states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment. Policy 2.3.1.3 directs planning authorities to support opportunities for intensification to achieve complete communities which include a range of housing options, the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities.

Policy 2.3.1.2 identifies that land use patterns shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- a) efficiently use land and resources;
- b) optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- c) support active transportation; and
- d) are transit-supportive, as appropriate.

Planning Authorities are encouraged through Policy 2.3.1.5 to establish density targets for designated growth areas based on local conditions – specifically that large and fast-growing municipalities are encouraged to target 50 residents and jobs per hectare.

Employment and Land Use Compatibility

Policy 2.8.1.3 of the PPS, 2024 directs that on lands within 300 metres of employment areas, development shall avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize or mitigate potential impacts on the long-term economic viability of employment uses within existing employment areas in accordance with provincial guidelines. Policy 3.5 further provides direction for land use compatibility between employment areas and sensitive land uses. Major facilities and sensitive land uses are required to be planned and developed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise, and other contaminants to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities.

Housing

Policy 2.2.1 of the PPS, 2024 states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities with the intent of supporting the needs of current and future residents. To achieve this, the policy directs planning authorities to:

- a) establish and implement minimum targets for the provision of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, and coordinating land use planning and planning for housing with Service Managers to address the full range of housing options including affordable housing needs;
- b) permit and facilitate:
 1. all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and wellbeing requirements of current and future residents, including additional needs housing and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and
 2. all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas) for residential use, development, and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment, which results in a net increase in residential units in accordance with policy 2.3.1.3 (*the support of general intensification and redevelopment to achieve complete communities*)
- c) promote densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation; and
- d) require transit-supportive development and prioritizing intensification, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations.

Cultural Heritage

Section 4.6 of the PPS, 2024 emphasizes the importance of conserving built-heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes. Policy 4.6.4 b) encourages planning authorities to develop and implement proactive strategies for conserving both built heritage and cultural heritage landscapes.

Natural Heritage

Policy 4.1.1 of the PPS, 2024 provides direction that natural features and areas are to be protected for the long term and Policy 4.1.2, states that the diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features.

Additionally, Policy 4.1.4 notes development and site alteration shall not be permitted in Significant wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E, and 7E and Policy 4.1.5, notes development and site alteration shall not be permitted, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions, in:

- b) significant woodlands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Mary's River).
- c) significant valleylands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Mary's River).
- d) significant wildlife habitat.

Policy 4.1.6 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in fish habitat and similarly Policy 4.1.7 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in habitat of endangered or threatened species, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

Furthermore, Policy 4.1.8 limits development and site alteration on lands which are adjacent to natural heritage features and areas, unless the ecological functions have been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.

Water

Policy 4.2.1 of the PPS, 2024 states that planning authorities shall protect, improve, or restore the quality and quantity of water by:

- a) using the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development;
- b) minimizing potential negative impacts, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts;
- c) identifying water resource systems;
- d) maintaining linkages and functions of water resource systems;
- e) implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration to:
 - 1. protect all municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas; and

2. protect, improve, or restore vulnerable surface and ground water, and their hydrologic functions;
- f) planning for efficient and sustainable use of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality; and
- g) ensuring consideration of environmental lake capacity, where applicable.

Additionally, Policy 4.2.2. restricts development and site alteration in or near sensitive surface water features and sensitive groundwater features such that these features and their related hydrologic functions will be protected, improved, or restored, which may require mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches.

Furthermore, Policy 4.2.3. encourages Municipalities to undertake watershed planning to inform planning for sewage and water services and stormwater management, including low impact development, and the protection, improvement or restoration of the quality and quantity of water.

Transportation and Servicing Infrastructure

Transportation systems are defined as a system of facilities, corridors, and rights-of-way for the movement of people and goods and includes all elements of associated infrastructure. Policy 3.2.1 states that transportation systems should be established which are safe, energy efficient and appropriately support the current and future demand. Policy 3.2.3 goes on to outline the importance of connectivity within and among transportation systems to maintain and improve the use and consider support across jurisdictional boundaries.

Regarding servicing, Policy 3.6.2 acknowledges that municipal sewage and water services are the preferred service option in settlement areas. The intent of this prioritization is to protect the local environment and minimize potential risks to human health. The policy notes that intensification and redevelopment shall be promoted where existing municipal services exist to optimize use.

Policy 3.6.1 identifies considerations that are to be made in planning for sewage and water services, including the following:

- a) accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing:
 1. municipal sewage services and municipal water services; and
 2. private communal sewage services and private communal water services, where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available or feasible;
- b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
 1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;
 2. is feasible and financially viable over their life cycle;
 3. protects human health and safety, and the natural environment, including the quality and quantity of water; and
 4. aligns with comprehensive municipal planning for these services, where applicable.
- c) promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- d) integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process;

Policy 3.6.8 outlines requirements related to stormwater management, including that stormwater management be integrated with other infrastructure, minimize, or prevent increases in contaminant loads, minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and mitigate risks to human health, safety, property, and the environment.

Alignment with the PPS

Planning staff is of the opinion that the proposed amendments are in alignment with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2024, because they will allow for the provision of a broad range and mix of residential and non-residential uses within Hidden Valley. The proposed amendments contribute to a complete community design, are compatible with the surrounding and existing community, help manage growth, are transit supportive, protect natural features and areas as well as surface water and groundwater features and will make use of the existing and proposed infrastructure.

The Hidden Valley Study Area is within Kitchener's existing settlement area and has been identified for growth in alignment with Policy 2.3.1 of the PPS, 2024. The Study Area is currently made up of predominately single detached estate residential style homes and some remaining portions of agricultural fields. Along the Study Area's western border, it is neighbored by a range of industrial and commercial uses. The proposed amendments achieve the strategic considerations identified in Policy 2.2.1 by supporting higher density forms of housing, commercial uses, and increased connection/integration into the broader community, while prioritizing planning and investment in infrastructure and service facilities to support this growth. The land use pattern as established through the proposed amendments has been designed to support connectivity for various forms of transportation, including active transportation and public transit. By facilitating growth in an area surrounded by existing development, the proposed amendments are intended to support the needs of current and future residents through the creation of a more complete community. The proposed amendments also support achievement of the City's density targets as required by Policy 2.3.1.5 of the PPS, 2024 through the introduction of low, medium, and high density residential land use designations in Hidden Valley.

Policy 2.3.1.8 and Section 3.8 provide direction for land use compatibility between employment areas and sensitive land uses, including residential uses. The proposed amendments apply a Holding (H) provision requiring noise studies as part of development applications within developable land use designations. These studies will recommend appropriate site-specific measures which address land use compatibility between sensitive uses and employment uses. Further, the proposed lands uses immediately adjacent to the employment area comprise commercial and mixed-use designations, which provide flexibility to develop non-sensitive land uses in appropriate locations, where needed.

Section 4.1 of the PPS, 2024 establishes the provincial priority for protecting the Hidden Valley Natural Heritage System. The proposed amendments respect the area's significant natural heritage and have been informed by a Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study which documents and characterizes the ecological features and functions in Hidden Valley. The proposed amendments have taken into consideration the policies outlined in Policies 4.1.4 through 8 of the PPS, 2024 to promote development and land use patterns which conserve natural biodiversity.

Section 4.6 of the PPS, 2024 emphasizes the importance of conserving built-heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes. The proposed amendments introduce new cultural heritage landscape and heritage corridor mapping to the Official Plan, informed by the Heritage Impact Assessment.

Development within Hidden Valley is closely aligned with the timing of the construction of the River Road extension, which will allow the community to be developed in alignment with the policies of the PPS, 2024, by providing a safe, efficient, multi-modal system to serve the community. Existing City

processes, including the use of Holding (H) Symbols and the Subdivision and Site Plan approval processes, provide City staff with an opportunity to request additional information related to environmental mitigation, engineering and other technical matters prior to any development occurring.

To support provincial interest of optimizing infrastructure, transit and active transportation, the proposed amendments facilitate a compact built form in the portion of the community closest to transit. The Study Area is near existing and future public transit options, including Fairway Station, and makes efficient use of the existing and planned transportation network. Lands along the River Road extension are proposed to be part of a new Urban Corridor, which will allow for a broader mix of uses and built forms supported by a multi-modal transportation system.

Hidden Valley has historically been serviced by a mix of private and municipal water and sanitary services. The Implementation Project included appropriate servicing studies and environmental assessments to extend municipal services to future development areas within Hidden Valley.

As it relates to water resources including both ground- and surface water systems, the proposed amendments contain a series of specific water management policies for Hidden Valley consistent with Section 4.2 of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. These policies were informed by the Comprehensive EIS, Stormwater Servicing Strategy, and Source Water Protection Assessment Study.

Based on the above, planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed amendments are in conformity with the PPS, 2024.

Regional Official Plan, 2022

The Regional Official Plan (ROP) establishes policies for growth and change across the Region. Regional Official Plan Amendment 6 (ROPA 6) was adopted by Regional Council on August 25, 2022, and approved by the Province on April 11, 2023. ROPA 6 updated the regional planning horizon to the year 2051, in which it forecasts Kitchener to grow to 409,200 residents and 170,500 jobs by 2051.

Chapter 2 – Where and How to Grow

The Region's urban system is the long-term framework for where and how the Region will accommodate growth. This includes:

- Meeting or exceeding the minimum density targets for designated greenfield areas.
- Accommodating growth by building complete communities, which are compact, well-connected places where people can meet their daily needs for good, services, and jobs within a short trip by active transportation or transit.
- Integrating land use and transportation planning decisions.
- Promoting a development which protects the Region's valuable water and natural heritage systems.
- Conserving and promoting cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities.

The proposed amendments for Hidden Valley contribute to Kitchener's ability to meet or exceed its designated greenfield density targets, help evolve the community into a more complete neighbourhood and build on significant transportation network investments in the area – all while conserving and promoting cultural heritage resources and protecting important natural areas.

Section 2.A – Managing Population and Employment Growth

Policy 2.A.3 directs most growth to occur within the Regional urban system. Policy 2.A.4 directs area municipalities to undertake integrated planning which implements the Regional urban system, supports planning for infrastructure, and provides direction for an urban form which optimizes infrastructure, particularly along the ION light rail transit corridor.

Portions of the Hidden Valley Study Area are Designated Greenfield Areas and others are Delineated Built-Up Area as shown on Map 2 – Urban System, reflecting the status of development in Hidden Valley at the time of the establishment of the Built-Up Area as part of the Province’s 2006 Growth Plan. The Stage 2 ION LRT corridor runs through the northernmost portion of the Study Area and is shown as a Regional Intensification Corridor.

Policy 2.A.4 provides direction for the integrated planning to phase and coordinate future growth by addressing climate change considerations, providing an urban form that optimizes infrastructure, particularly along the ION LRT corridor, to support the achievement complete neighbourhoods, and achieving the environmental and source water protection policies of the Plan.

Section 2.C – Urban Area

Policy 2.C.2.2 provides direction for area municipalities to establish official plan policies and implementing zoning by-law regulations to ensure that development within the Urban Area:

- a) implements the Regional urban system;
- b) advances the community’s transition into an energy-efficient, resilient, low-carbon community;
- c) is serviced by municipal water and wastewater systems;
- d) protects the natural environment, including the Grand River and its tributaries, and surface water and groundwater resources;
- e) provides a diverse range and mix of housing options;
- f) conserves cultural heritage resources;
- g) avoids development and land use patterns that may pose a risk to public health, safety, and the environment;
- h) improves accessibility for persons of all ages and abilities;
- i) ensures the development of high-quality urban form through site design and urban design;
- j) expands residents’ convenient access to a range of transportation options, public service facilities, greenspaces, and food options;
- k) considers the wellbeing and belonging of all children and youth; and
- l) expands residents’ convenient access to a range of transportation options, public service facilities, open space, trails, and parks, and healthy food options in neighbourhoods.

The proposed amendments contribute to the policies for the Urban Area as established by the ROP. Further, the overall policies of the 2014 Official Plan will also continue to apply to guide future growth and development.

Section 2.D – Strategic Growth Areas

Policy 2.D.2.4 encourages planning of lands adjacent to or near a Major Transit Station Area to support transit-supportive development and provide a broad mix of uses and activities. The proposed amendments contemplate Mixed-Use and High-Density Residential designations on Map 3 on lands adjacent to the Fairway MTSA to provide for transition to Hidden Valley and support the ROP objectives. Through ROPA 6, MTSA's were delineated and no longer apply within Hidden Valley.

Section 2.G – Designated Greenfield Areas

Section 2.G provides direction to build more compact greenfield communities and design these areas to function as complete communities. While Designated Greenfield Areas are typically located at the periphery of a municipality, Hidden Valley is uniquely located at the centre of Kitchener's urban area. The proposed amendments propose to allow a range of non-residential uses in the area and integrate Hidden Valley into the broader community through the introduction of new streets and municipal infrastructure. Over time, this will support the evolution of Hidden Valley into a more complete neighbourhood for the benefit of new and existing residents.

Section 2.H – Employment Areas

The Hidden Valley Study Area is not located within Employment Areas as shown on Map 3 of the ROP; however, Map 3 identifies Regional Employment Areas on the west side of Wabanaki Drive. Policy 2.H.1.8 provides direction to provide an appropriate interface between employment areas and non-employment areas to maintain land use compatibility. The proposed amendments bring forward a land use plan for the area that has Commercial and Mixed-Use land use designations adjacent to the Employment Area, which will allow for a transition of uses and opportunities to establish non-residential uses.

Section 2.I – General Urban Development Policies

Policy 2.I.1 directs that major facilities and sensitive land uses be planned and developed to avoid, or minimize or mitigate, any potential adverse effects from odour, noise, and other contaminants, to provide for the long-term operation and economic viability of major facilities. A Land Use Compatibility Study can be requested to support development applications and subsequent mitigation measures can be implemented through conditions of development approval.

Policy 2.I.2 provides direction for development of sensitive land uses in the vicinity of existing and planned Regional Roads and Provincial Highways. Any required noise mitigation measures (as determined through a Noise Study) will be implemented through the development review process.

Chapter 3 – Housing

The policies of Chapter 3 support a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.

Section 3.A – Range and Mix of Housing

Policy 3.A.6 directs that development applications proposing residential uses on a site one hectare or more in size will be required to provide at least 30% of new residential units in forms other than single-detached, semi-detached, and street townhouse units. The proposed amendments introduce Low Rise, Medium Rise, and High-Rise Residential land use permissions within undeveloped areas to promote a full mix of housing choice.

Section 3.G – Cultural Heritage

Policy 3.G.1 provides directions to ensure that cultural heritage resources are conserved. The proposed amendments identify portions of Hidden Valley Road as a Cultural Heritage Landscape and Heritage Corridor.

Chapter 5 – Addressing Waterloo Region’s Infrastructure Needs

Chapter 5 outlines policies to undertake infrastructure planning, development and asset management which optimizes the use of existing infrastructure, accommodates forecast growth, and promotes sustainability and a healthy population.

Section 5.A – Transportation Systems Planning

Policy 5.A.3 provides for the coordination between the Regional transportation network and development applications. The River Road extension is shown as a “Planned Regional Road” on Map 5B of the ROP. Development within the Designated Greenfield Area portions of Hidden Valley is largely contingent on the completion of the River Road extension, including future roundabouts and connections to Highway 8. Policies 5.A.27 and 5.A.28 provide for the timely coordination between planned Regional road projects and development. The Transportation Impact Assessment was predicated on the future River Road alignment and studied the impacts of future development on the area transportation network.

A Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Study was initiated by the Region of Waterloo in 2006 for the extension of River Road, providing a connection from King Street to Manitou Drive. The recommended design would incorporate a continuous centre median and multi-use trails on both sides between King Street and Manitou Drive along a 3.6 km road consisting of 4 lanes. The design would accommodate signalization of River Road at King Street and future River Road at Stonegate Drive / Highway 8 westbound ramps.

Analysis for intermediate horizons (2028 and 2033) indicate that the addition of the River Road extension will have a positive impact on network operation with all intersections operating with acceptable levels of service. At full build-out of the Hidden Valley area, which was assumed to occur in 2043, analysis of future conditions indicates that the network will continue operating with acceptable levels of service.

The proposed amendments reflect the approved and under-construction portions of the River Road extension both within the Study Area and along the entire corridor between Manitou Drive and King Street.

Section 5.B – Wastewater Treatment and Section 5.C – Water Supply

Policy 5.B.2 prioritizes the extension of servicing from a municipal wastewater system to support future development, while Policy 5.C.3 prioritizes the extension of servicing from a municipal drinking-water supply system. The Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pump Station and Forcemain Environmental Assessment provides direction for the extension of municipal wastewater services to the upper portions of Hidden Valley (i.e., the undeveloped portions north of the south leg of Hidden Valley Road). Municipal drinking water will be provided to all future development areas in Hidden Valley.

Chapter 7 – The Greenlands Network

Map 4: The Regional Greenlands Network includes a significant portion of the central Hidden Valley Study Area as Regional Core Environmental Features (CEF) including the Hidden Valley Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW), the surrounding Regionally Significant Woodland, Regional Hidden

Valley / Bird Ridge Environmentally Sensitive Policy Area (ESPA #27) and the significant habitat of Jefferson Salamander, a nationally and Provincially endangered species. Other CEFs in Hidden Valley are associated with the slopes of the Grand River valley; these are Regional Environmentally Significant Valley Features (ESVFs) and Regional ESPA #28 Petrifying Spring. As noted in Policies 7.C.9, development and site alteration shall not be permitted in Core Environmental Features. For development or site alteration contiguous to Core Environmental Features, Policy 7.C.10 requires the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement to ensure no adverse environmental impacts on the features and ecological functions of the CEF.

The Regional Greenlands Network also includes Landscape Level Systems (Section 7.B) and, in the study area, the Grand River Significant Valley, also recognized nationally as a Canadian Heritage River, is present. Scenic and cultural heritage values associated with this element are to be maintained.

The Comprehensive EIS identifies the location and extent of these CEFs and the Grand River Significant Valley, all of which form part of the Hidden Valley Natural Heritage System. All these elements are to be conserved and protected from future development and, therefore, designated natural heritage conservation land use.

Chapter 8 – Source Water Protection

Policy 8.A.2 provides direction to establish policies within an Official Plan to protect important drinking water resources across the Region. There are three municipal water supply sources near the Hidden Valley study area and the Region has established Source Water Protection Areas around these sources (Map 6A ROP) and policies to protect them. Specifically, Intake Protection Zones (IPZ) 1 and 2 for the Hidden Valley surface water intake at the Grand River are present in the study area, and the Wellhead Protection Sensitivity Areas (WPSAs) for the Parkway Wellfield and the Fountain Street Wellfield exist to the west and east of the study area respectively. Waterloo Region's Source Protection Plan (SPP) under the Ontario Clean Water Act also identifies, and protects through regulation, these same Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs).

The Source Water Protection Assessment Study (Matrix August 2024) confirms that the development of the Hidden Valley Secondary Plan area, in general accordance with the proposed land use plan, should not represent a significant impact on the Region's nearby water supply sources. Rather, Risk Management Plans, especially Salt Impact Assessments and Management Plans, will be required to support development applications and as conditions of approval. Section 8.B (ROP) establishes the requirements for such studies, with guidance for their completion provided in the Source Water Protection Guidance Document: Salt Impact Assessment (ROW, 2016). The City's Official Plan policies (Section 7.C.1) support the Region's requirements. It is recommended that such plans include mitigations such as the offsite removal of excess snow piles for storage and covered parking.

The Parkway wellfield / WPSA has historic water quality issues with respect to trichlorethylene (TCE), but, most significantly, both sodium and chloride from the use of de-icing salt. Any potential activities deemed to be a potential source of these contaminants warrants detailed consideration and an enhanced level of care and consideration at the planning/development approval and subsequent design stages.

While the general land uses being proposed for Hidden Valley should not represent significant impacts to water supply (Matrix August 2024), certain activities (e.g., commercial dry cleaning, automotive repair, gas stations) that may be permitted in a commercial zone will likely be prohibited in the (Updated) Parkway WHPA / WPSA. Further, the ROP includes underground parking garages as an identified land use activity of potential source water protection concern; early pre-submission consultation is recommended.

Analysis

The proposed amendments contain policies to guide future development within Hidden Valley to achieve the objectives and policies set out in the Regional Official Plan. This includes: promoting a more compact built form that will enable most trips to be made by active means of travel; contributing to the creation of complete communities; protecting drinking water sources; and leveraging existing and proposed infrastructure, including municipal water and wastewater systems and Grand River Transit services.

Future development within Hidden Valley presents an opportunity to comprehensively plan for development within Kitchener's Designated Greenfield Area within our existing urban boundaries, while concurrently achieving many other planning objectives. The proposed amendments consider the importance of effectively planning in the Designated Greenfield Area, maximizing the use of land within the Urban Area, within proximity to amenities, servicing, and transportation options.

The proposed amendments identify land use and zoning changes that conserve important natural features and provide a diverse range and mix of uses and housing options to meet the needs of all household sizes and incomes. Policies and zoning regulations are being proposed to protect water resources.

Policies and zoning regulations are being proposed to address land use compatibility and the continued function of the adjacent employment area.

Through the identification of the Cultural Heritage Landscape and Heritage Corridor, the proposed amendments conserve identified cultural heritage resources within Hidden Valley.

City of Kitchener Official Plan

The City of Kitchener Official Plan (2014) provides the long-term land use vision for Kitchener. The vision is further articulated and implemented through the guiding principles, goals, objectives, and policies which are set out in the Plan. The vision and goals of the 2014 Official Plan strive to build an innovative, vibrant, attractive, safe, complete, and healthy community.

Proposed Amendments

The purpose of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is to implement a thoughtful and updated land use vision for Hidden Valley through updated land uses, updates to the existing specific policy area, and mapping changes. The proposed amendments, alongside the existing policies of the Official Plan, will guide growth and development in Hidden Valley.

Accommodating and Managing Growth

Section 2.B.3 establishes the guiding principles for accommodating and managing growth in Kitchener. Principle #3 provides direction to protect, conserve, enhance, and wisely use our valuable land, air, and water resources. Principle #4 provides direction to optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support the growth of our city in a compact and efficient form.

The proposed amendments will provide sufficient opportunities to accommodate planned growth within the urban area boundary, while optimizing significant infrastructure investments being made in the area and protecting important natural features and their ecological functions.

City's Urban Area and Countryside

Lands within Hidden Valley comprise both Built Up Area and Designated Greenfield Area, as shown on Map 1. Section 3.C.1 provides several objectives for how growth should be accommodated including:

- **Objective 3.1.1.** To contain growth in the City's Urban Area and plan for appropriate locations to accommodate growth both in the Built-Up Area and in the Designated Greenfield Area.
- **Objective 3.1.2.** To meet or, when feasible, exceed Provincial and Regional minimum density targets and residential intensification targets.
- **Objective 3.1.3.** To locate mixed uses and medium to high density uses in appropriate locations within the Designated Greenfield Area.

Policy 3.C.1.14 establishes a minimum density target of 55 residents and jobs combined per hectare for the entire Designated Greenfield Area. Policy 3.C.1.16 directs the City to identify and designate locations for mixed use and density near and along existing and planned transit corridors in support of achieving the density target. Further, Policy 3.C.1.17 underscores the importance of considering natural and cultural heritage conservation and design when planning for development within the Designated Greenfield Area.

The proposed amendments comprehensively plan for growth within both the Built-Up Area and Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) and contribute to the City's ability to meet or exceed minimum density and residential intensification targets. The proposed land uses support a mix of uses, including residential, non-residential, and natural heritage conservation uses.

Urban Structure

The Official Plan establishes an Urban Structure for the City of Kitchener and provides policies for directing growth and development within this structure. Intensification Areas are planned throughout the City's urban area as key locations to accommodate and receive the majority of development or redevelopment for a variety of land uses. Policy 3.C.2.3. of the Official Plan identifies the Urban Growth Centre, Major Transit Station Areas, Nodes and Corridors as Primary Intensification Areas. Policy 3.C.2.6 permits the identification of new or expanded Intensification Areas subject to various criteria, including proximity to existing or planned transit. Policies 3.C.2.37 and 3.C.2.38 apply to Urban Corridors, which are located along existing or planned transit, and integrated with neighbouring residential and employment uses. With Urban Corridors, the applicable predominant land uses are contemplated to include Mixed Use and Commercial.

Lands within Hidden Valley currently comprise Community Area, Industrial Employment Areas, and Green Areas.

All the existing 'Business Park' lands, save and except for the City-owned parcel at the southeasterly corner of Hidden Valley Road and Wabanaki Drive, were identified in the City's Comprehensive Review of Employment Lands Study (2010) as 'lands under review' and were not included within the 'protected employment' category. The proposed amendments re-classify all 'lands under review' from Industrial Employment Area to Community Area on Map 3, facilitate residential, commercial, and mixed-use development on lands formerly only contemplated for industrial and employment uses.

Hidden Valley is also located adjacent to the Fairway Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA), which was delineated through ROPA 6 and Growing Together West. The proposed amendments include the introduction of an Urban Corridor on Map 3 along the west/north side of the River Road extension to reflect the area's connection to the Fairway PMTSA along a future Regional Road.

Land Use

The Official Plan currently applies a range of land uses within Hidden Valley on Map 3 – Land Use including Business Park Employment, General Industrial Employment, Low Rise Residential, Natural Heritage Conservation, and Major Infrastructure and Utilities.

The purpose of the Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan and implementation project was to review and update land uses within the Hidden Valley community to enable opportunities for more homes, the continued development of a complete community, and ensure the conservation of the significant environmental features in the area. As such, in addition to maintaining existing Low Rise Residential and Natural Heritage Conservation designated areas, the proposed Official Plan Amendment introduces new land uses and modifies the boundaries of others, within the Hidden Valley community including:

- Medium Rise Residential
- High Rise Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial

Policy 15.D.3.7 provides direction that residentially designated lands will be planned to achieve an overall minimum density target of 55 residents and jobs combined per hectare. The Low Rise Residential designation introduced through the proposed amendment permits a full range of low density housing types including single detached, semi-detached, street townhouse, and low-rise multiple dwellings (Policy 15.D.3.8).

The Medium Rise Residential designation permits a full range of medium density housing types including cluster townhouses and multiple dwellings (Policy 15.D.3.15). Policy 15.D.3.21 provides criteria for the application of the Medium Rise Residential designation in new community plans, which includes preserving natural features which may otherwise be compromised with more dispersed low density development, taking advantage of vistas, and being located within walking distance of nodes, corridors, and public transit stops and non-residential uses. The proposed amendment introduces Medium Rise Residential uses in close proximity to the future Urban Corridor along the River Road extension and adjacent to proposed Commercial Uses, providing a transition between existing Low Rise Residential uses in Hidden Valley.

The High Rise Residential designation permits high density multiple dwellings (Policy 15.D.3.22). Policy 15.D.3.26 provides criteria for the application of the High Rise Residential designation in new community plans, which includes preserving features which may otherwise be compromised with more dispersed low density development, taking advantage of views and vistas, constituting neighbourhood landmarks, being located within walking distance of nodes, corridors, and public transit stops and non-residential uses. The proposed amendment introduces High Rise Residential uses within the proposed Urban Corridor along the River Road extension and within an 800-metre walking distance of the Fairway MTSA located outside of the Study and a close walk to future transit services within Hidden Valley. Further, the development of higher density residential uses in this location of Hidden Valley will allow for more concentrated development, shared (and structured) parking facilities, and potential to reduce impermeable surfaces through site plan review in support of the environmental constraints of the area.

The Mixed Use designation is intended to be applied in part within Urban Corridors (Policy 15.D.4.1) and permits medium and high rise residential uses, alongside non-residential uses such as commercial, office, and personal service uses (Policy 15.D.4.3). The proposed amendment introduces the Mixed Use designation to lands adjacent to the Fairway MTSA, providing land use

transition to Hidden Valley and facilitating the introduction of non-residential uses within Hidden Valley in a location well-served by transit and having access to the future River Road extension.

The Commercial designation permits a range of retail and service commercial uses that cater primarily to the weekly and daily needs of residents within surrounding neighbourhoods (Policy 15.D.5.15). The permitted uses also include dwelling units, where located in an Urban Corridor (Policy 15.D.5.17). The proposed amendment introduces the Commercial designation to lands located in proximity (including by active transportation) to existing residential areas in Hidden Valley, helping evolve the neighbourhood into a more complete community with convenient access to retail opportunities closer to home. The location of commercial uses also assists with land use compatibility to the adjacent employment areas to the west of the Study Area.

The Natural Heritage Conservation land use designation as proposed will protect and/or conserve natural heritage features and their ecological functions as identified in the Comprehensive EIS (Policy 15.D.9.1) because this land use does not permit development or site alteration, Policy 15.D.9.2 only permits those uses that support conservation activities, forest, fish and wildlife management, or small scale, passive recreational uses and accessory uses such as trails, boardwalks, footbridges, and picnic facilities which will have no significant negative impact on natural heritage features or ecological functions of the Natural Heritage System.

The Major Infrastructure and Utilities designation is proposed to continue to apply to the water supply infrastructure lands within Hidden Valley (Policy 15.D.11.2). The Open Space designation is proposed to apply to existing parks and existing and future public works, including stormwater management facilities and transportation infrastructure (Policy 15.D.10.1).

Housing

The Official Plan emphasizes the need for an appropriate range, variety and mix of housing types and styles, densities, tenure, and affordability to satisfy the needs of our current and future populations (Policy 4.1.1). The proposed amendments contribute towards providing this range and mix of housing choices through permissions for more variety in form and density within Hidden Valley. While the current development pattern has historically supported single detached housing typologies, Policy 4.C.1.12 favours a land use pattern which mixes and disperses a full range of housing types and styles both across the city as a whole and within neighbourhoods. The proposed amendments provide options for medium and high rise residential and mixed-use development along the future River Road corridor and provide appropriate transition to existing neighbourhoods and surrounding non-residential land uses. Changes to the mix of residential land uses in Hidden Valley have added approximately 13.3 ha. for residential and mixed-use development when compared to today.

Public Health and Safety

Section 6.C.3 establishes policies to minimize and mitigate land use conflicts between sensitive land uses, and noise, vibration, and emission sources in accordance with all applicable Provincial, Regional, and City regulations and guidelines. A Land Use Compatibility Study can be requested to support development applications and subsequent mitigation measures can be implemented through conditions of development approval.

The Preliminary Noise Study expects that land use compatibility can be achieved based on the land uses identified. It recommends that a detailed noise impact study be conducted as a condition of future planning approvals in certain locations in Hidden Valley, specifically in locations close to existing Industrial Land Uses. It was noted that findings of future studies may require additional noise

controls for application approval. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment applies a Holding symbol on lands requiring more detailed noise study.

Source Water Protection

Section 7.C.1 sets out policies to protect existing and future sources of drinking water from incompatible land uses and prevent contamination. Upon review, it was found that development in Hidden Valley should not represent a significant impact on the Region's nearby water supply sources. However, in the Parkway Well Field, which has identified sodium and chloride issues, ground- and surface water systems may require further assessment throughout the development design, review, and approval processes. This is due to the high infiltration characteristics of both the potential development areas and the lower-lying environmentally sensitive area and wetland feature. As is common practice, individual development applications will be required to prepare and implement a Risk Management Plans and/or salt management strategies in support of a development application or as a condition of approval. See section on ROP above.

Natural Heritage System

Kitchener's Natural Heritage System is comprised of natural heritage features that maintain local (e.g. Locally Significant Valleylands and Wetlands in addition to higher order features discussed above), regional, Provincial, and national biological, hydrological, ecological, and geological diversity and functions, support viable populations of indigenous species, and sustain local ecosystems. See also ROP section above.

Section 7.C.2 establishes policies to ensure that all features of the Natural Heritage System are identified and protected within a comprehensive planning process and that criteria identifying the Natural Heritage System features are applied in a transparent and consistent manner.

Each feature in the system is subject to policies that provide appropriate protection based on the feature's significance and sensitivity. Features categorized as Core Natural Heritage Features are afforded the greatest level of protection and are designated Natural Heritage Conservation, which generally prohibits development. The features identified as Significant Wildlife Habitat, Significant Landforms and Ecological Restoration Areas also place limitations on development, requiring further studies to determine whether development within the feature is appropriate and how it should occur. Accordingly, the features identified as Significant Wildlife Habitat, Significant Landforms and Ecological Restoration Areas will be treated as an overlay to land use designations. Features identified as Supporting Natural Heritage Features, such as Natural Linkages and Corridors, help contribute to the overall ecological integrity and connectivity of the Natural Heritage System. It is intended that these features and their functions will be conserved and enhanced.

Areas identified as Core Natural Heritage Features on Map 6 are designated as Natural Heritage Conservation on Map 3 as part of the proposed amendments. Development, redevelopment, or site alteration will not be permitted on these lands, in accordance with Policy 7.C.2.20. Policy 7.C.2.21 restricts development and site alteration in habitat of endangered species and threatened species in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, subject to further study. Policy 7.C.2.23. requires an EIS for development, redevelopment or site alteration on lands adjacent to Core Natural Heritage Features, and for that EIS to investigate and confirm that the proposed activity would not result in adverse environmental impacts on the natural heritage feature or its ecological functions, before that activity is approved. The proposed amendments follow a consistent approach in terms of the delineation of the Natural Heritage System and application of the Natural Heritage Conservation designation across the city. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment introduces a Holding provision to require further site-specific permits as it relates to species at risk.

Parks, Open Space, and Community Infrastructure

Policy 8.C.1.3 provides direction to support and facilitate the provision of an appropriate mix and range of community infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and foster a complete community. Future development within Hidden Valley will be required to provide parkland in accordance with the Official Plan and Parkland Dedication By-law.

The City is undertaking a Parkland Acquisition Strategy to address the needs identified in Places & Spaces- Parks Strategic Plan. Spaces is the first part of Places and Spaces: A Parks and Open Space Strategy for Kitchener, it identified a local park provision of 10.1 sq.m. per person. Spaces identified the existing local park provision in the Hidden Valley community as 2.6 sq.m. per person which is below the desired local park amount. Further, Spaces identified that Hidden Valley as a “critical needs area” but a low priority as it is expected that the location and acquisition of future local parks within Hidden Valley will be achieved through consultation with city staff during future development processes.

Cultural Heritage Resources

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) concluded that Hidden Valley Road does have 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 are proposing to move forward with designating the north-south portion of Hidden Valley Road as a “Heritage Corridor” in the Official Plan and recognizing the southern east-west portion of the Hidden Valley Road as a Cultural Heritage Landscape in the Official Plan as shown on **Figure 2**. The “Heritage Corridor” is south of the proposed River Road realignment. Policies 12.C.1.12 and 12.C.1.26 of the Official Plan guided the preparation of the HIA.



Figure 2 – Heritage corridor (shown in green) and Cultural Heritage Landscape (shown in yellow)

As is noted by Policy 12.C.1.27, any conclusions and recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment and Heritage Conservation Plan approved by the City will be incorporated as mitigative and/or conservation measures into the plans for development or redevelopment and into the requirements and conditions of approval of development applications.

The proposed amendment to Map 9 – Cultural Heritage Resources would introduce the Heritage Corridor designation to the north-south portion of Hidden Valley Road and recognize the southern east-west portion of Hidden Valley Road as a Cultural Heritage Landscape.

Active Transportation, Transit Connectivity, and the Complete Street System

The Traffic Impact Assessment identified several transportation interventions to support long-term development in Hidden Valley, building on approved, under construction, and planned transportation works in the area. The Official Plan recognizes the relationship between transportation and land use and sets out objectives to develop and support an integrated transportation system which facilitates the convenient movement of people between homes, jobs, retail, and community facilities. Policy 13.C.2 provides direction to implement Provincial, Regional and City plans and initiatives. The proposed amendments implement the directions of the Cycling and Trails Master Plan, aligned Regional initiatives (e.g., Regional Transportation Master Plan, River Road extension, and Stage 2 ION LRT), and proximity to the expressway.

The proposed amendment to Map 11 – Integrated Transportation System would delineate the approved (and under construction) alignment of the River Road extension, which extends beyond the Hidden Valley Study Area boundary. This corridor is currently shown as a “Proposed Corridor” overlay, and the proposed amendment presents an opportunity to convert this to a “Regional Road – Planned” to guide future development in the area. The multi-use pathway network is further proposed to be refined in accordance with the City’s Cycling and Trails Master Plan both within and adjacent to the Study Area.

Servicing and Utilities

Policies 14.C.1.15 and 14.C.1.19 direct that all development, including lot creation, will be on municipal water and sanitary (wastewater) services, respectively.

The Upper Hidden Valley Sanitary Pump Station Class Environmental Assessment has identified a sanitary servicing solution for the undeveloped portions of Hidden Valley (i.e., generally located in the ‘upper’ portion of the Study Area, north of Hidden Valley Road). The proposed amendments direct growth in a manner that will promote the efficient use of servicing in accordance with the policies of Section 14.C.1. Future planning and development applications will be required to demonstrate the ability to be serviced by municipal water and wastewater services.

There are portions of existing development within Hidden Valley which are not within existing or planned future water and wastewater servicing areas. The proposed amendments do not compel existing uses to connect to future municipal services in the area. Policy 14.C.1.16 and 14.C.1.19 permits existing individual on-site water and sanitary services to continue.

Special Policy Areas

Policy 15.D.12.2 of the Official Plan outlines area-specific policies that apply within Hidden Valley (as shown on Map 5 – Specific Policy Areas). The proposed amendment introduces changes to Policy 15.D.12.2 to implement the findings of this Implementation Project.

Alignment

Based on the above-noted policies and planning analysis specific to the proposed amendments, staff is of the opinion that the proposed amendments represent good planning and recommends that the proposed amendments be approved.

Proposed Official Plan Amendment

In consideration of all the relevant Provincial, Regional, and local plans and policies, and the findings of the Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project technical studies, and community input, the proposed amendments have been prepared.

Urban Structure

City staff are recommending that lands identified as the “Lands subject to this amendment” on Schedule “A” be modified to support a mix of uses and implement the 2019 Master Plan (**Figure 3**). An “Urban Corridor” has been assigned on Map 2 – Urban Structure along the River Road extension to enable the development of a mix of uses, foster a more complete community, and reflect the area’s proximity to existing transit services at Fairway Station and future transit services in the area.

Further changes are proposed to place lands north of Hidden Valley Road and east of Wabanaki Drive within “Community Areas”, removing these lands from “Industrial Employment Areas”, enabling the application of non-employment land use designations within this portion of Hidden Valley.

Refinements to the “Green Areas” have been completed to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive EIS.

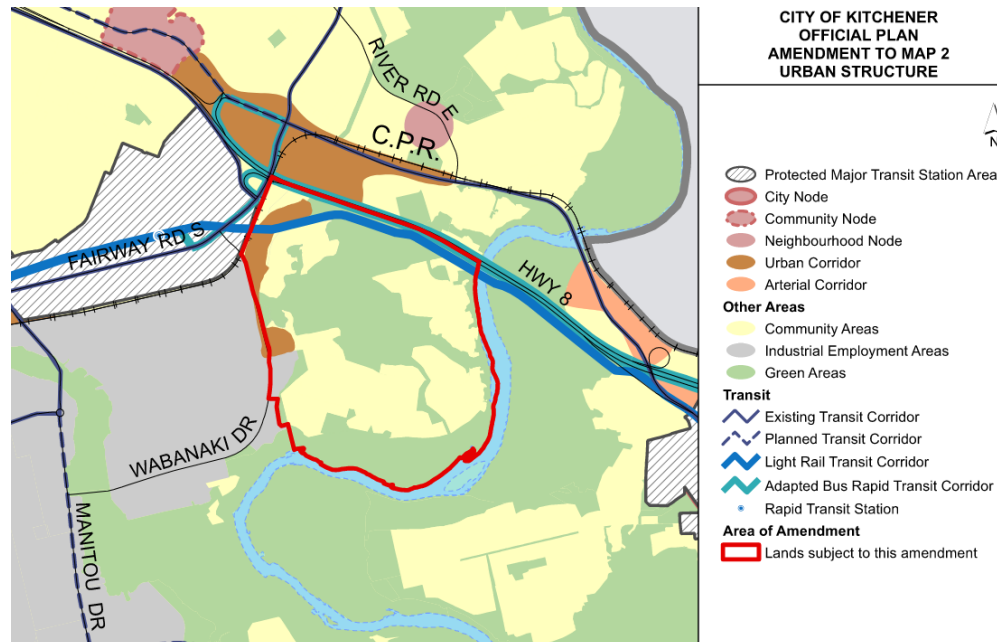


Figure 3 – Proposed Official Plan Amendment to Map 2 – Urban Structure

Land Use

City staff are recommending that lands identified as “Lands subject to this amendment” on Schedule “B” be re-designated as shown on Schedule “B”. The purpose of the recommended land use changes is to apply appropriate 2014 Official Plan land use designations to lands within the Study Area. The proposed land use changes are informed by the 2019 Master Plan and refinements resulting from the technical reports and consultation undertaken as part of this Study, including collaboration and consultation with landowners and the community. The proposed land use changes protect a significant amount of natural areas and features, while facilitating a significant amount of new housing and land uses in areas suitable for urban development.

Table 2, below, describes the key changes between the 2019 Master Plan (**Figure 4**) and the proposed amendment to Map 3 (**Figure 5**). **Table 3**, below, summarizes the evolution of land uses within the Study Area between the in-effect land uses, 2019 Master Plan, and proposed amendment to Map 3.

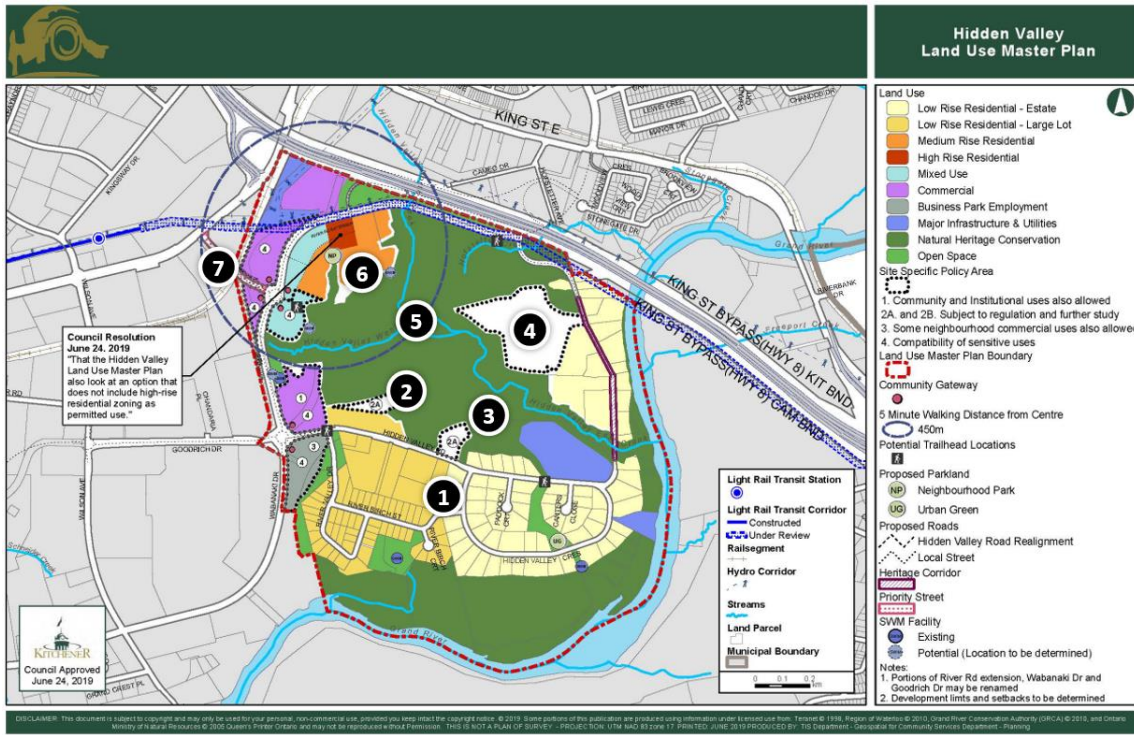


Figure 4 – 2019 Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan

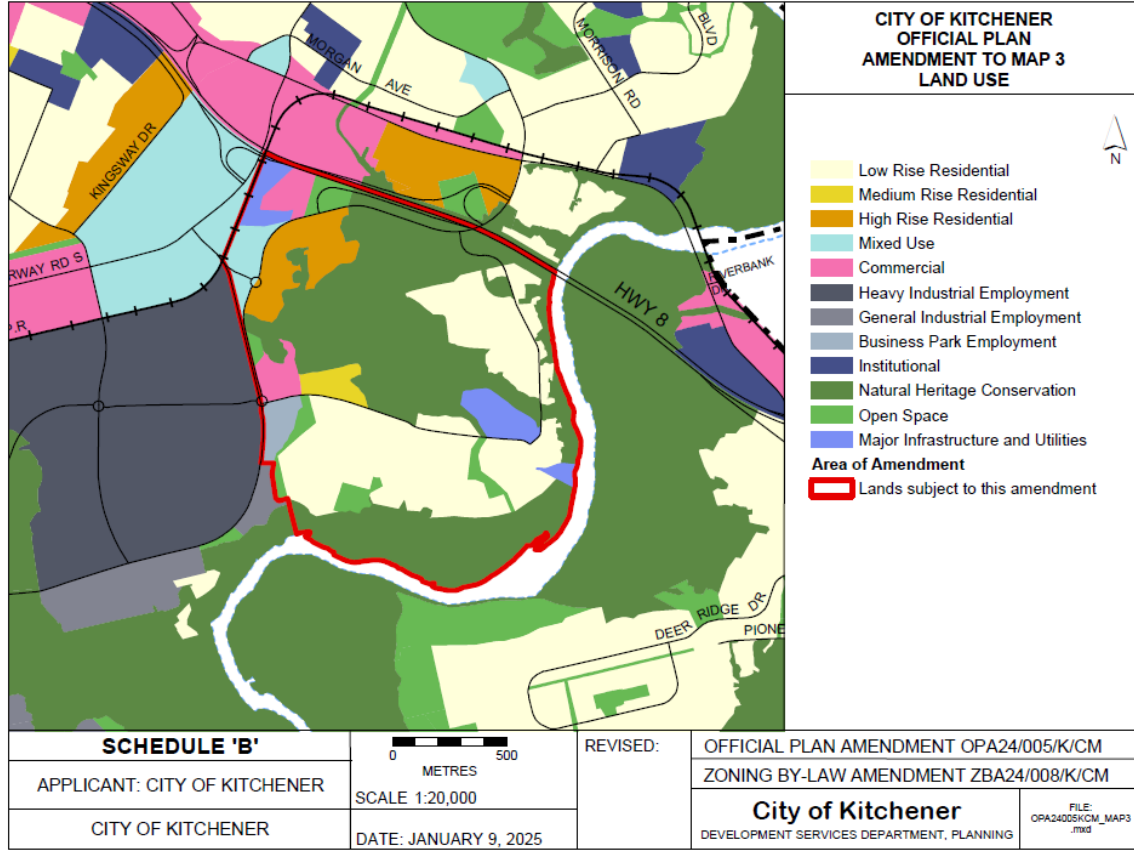


Figure 5 – Proposed Amendments to Map 3

Table 2 – Summary of Land Use Changes

Area / Location (Figure 4)	2019 Master Plan (Figure 4)	2024 Proposed Land Use (Figure 5)
1	<p>The 2019 Master Plan identified this area, located generally along Hidden Valley Road, as “Low Rise Residential – Large Lot” and “Low Rise Residential – Estate”.</p>	<p>The proposed Official Plan amendment relies on the existing land use designations in the 2014 Official Plan, which is “Low Rise Residential” in these locations in Hidden Valley. The proposed amendment retains the current Low Rise Residential designation in these lands and no longer distinguishes between “estate” and “large lot” areas. The proposed policies in the Specific Policy Area continue to reflect site-specific polices that exist today as they relate to larger lots required for on-site private wastewater servicing, including those recently approved by Council.</p>
2	<p>The 2019 Master Plan identified this area, located north of Hidden Valley Road, just east of River Valley Drive, as “Low Rise Residential – Large Lot” and “2A – area subject to further regulation and further study”.</p>	<p>The proposed amendment is recommending that this area be designated “Medium Rise Residential” to provide for a range and mix of housing types in the area, while providing for transition to existing development south of Hidden Valley Drive. The Comprehensive EIS has confirmed the delineation of surrounding natural heritage features.</p>
3	<p>The 2019 Master Plan identified this area as “2A – area subject to further regulation and further study” and did not propose a land use for this area.</p>	<p>The proposed amendment is recommending this area be designated “Natural Heritage Conservation” designation based on the limits of the natural heritage features identified through the Comprehensive EIS, including Regionally Significant Woodland and regulated forested habitat for Jefferson Salamander, a species at risk.</p>
4	<p>The 2019 Master Plan identified this area as “2B – area subject to further</p>	<p>The proposed amendment is recommending that this area be designated as “Low Rise Residential” following delineation of the</p>

Area / Location (Figure 4)	2019 Master Plan (Figure 4)	2024 Proposed Land Use (Figure 5)
	regulation and further study” and did not propose a land use for this area.	surrounding “Natural Heritage Conservation” designation based on the limits of the natural heritage features identified through the Comprehensive EIS, including significant wildlife habitat.
5	The 2019 Master Plan identified these lands as Natural Heritage Conservation based on the 2014 Official Plan.	The Comprehensive EIS recommended refinements to the delineation of the “Natural Heritage Conservation” designation.
6	The 2019 Master Plan identified a mix of High Rise Residential, Mixed Use, and Medium Rise Residential uses on the south side of the River Road extension. The High Rise Residential “block” was shown conceptually.	The proposed amendment is recommending that this area be designated as “High Rise Residential” based on findings of the technical studies. Specifically, the water management studies support higher density residential uses in this location given its proximity to sensitive natural heritage and water resources features, allowing for at-source infiltration, and encouraging buildings that include structured parking which minimizes the need for salt application.
7	The 2019 Master Plan identified lands on the north side of the River Road extension as Commercial.	The proposed amendment is recommending that these areas be designated as “Mixed Use”. Mixed Use development is appropriate in this location to provide transition between the Strategic Growth Area land use designations which will be applied through Growing Together East. These lands are within walking and rolling distance to Fairway Station.

Table 3 – Summary land use changes

Land Use	Land Use Change (2014 Official Plan compared to Proposed Amendment)	Land Use Change (2019 Master Plan compared to Proposed Amendment)
Business Park Employment	- 28.0 ha.	No change.
Commercial	+ 6.5 ha.	- 3.6 ha.
High Rise Residential	+ 11.6 ha.	+ 10.5 ha.
Medium Rise Residential	+ 3.4 ha.	- 1.9 ha.
Mixed Use	+ 4.2 ha.	+ 1.0 ha.
General Industrial Employment	- 3.9 ha.	N/A
Heavy Industrial Employment	- 1.8 ha.	N/A
Low Rise Residential	- 5.8 ha.	+ 60.8 ha.
Low Rise Residential – Large Lot	N/A	- 31.0 ha.
Low Rise Residential – Estate Lot	N/A	- 18.8 ha.
Natural Heritage Conservation	+ 6.5 ha.	+ 1.6 ha.

Natural Heritage System

City staff are recommending that lands identified as “Lands subject to this amendment” in Attachment “A” be re-designated as shown on Schedule “C” within Attachment “A”. The purpose of the recommended changes is to implement the findings of the Comprehensive EIS prepared by LGL Consulting which confirmed the delineation of the Natural Heritage System within the Study Area.

Focused Discussion – Area 2A and 2B, 2019 Master Plan

Pearl Valley Development Corporation (PVDC), owners of much of the undeveloped lands within the Hidden Valley study area expressed concern with the delineation of the Natural Heritage System at five locations throughout their lands. Meetings and site visits were held with City and Regional staff, environmental consultants, and the landowner, but there remain two areas of concern with the City’s recommended natural heritage system delineation – Area 3 (2A on the 2019 Master Plan) and Area 4 (near 2B on the 2019 Master Plan), shown on **Figure 6**.

Area 3 is included in the Natural Heritage System as part of the proposed amendments as it contains Regionally Significant



Figure 6: Areas 3 and 4 shown on the 2019 Master Plan

Woodland and regulated forested habitat of an endangered species (Jefferson Salamander). Area 3 is subject to a draft plan of subdivision (30T-88045) draft approved in 1991. The plan (subject to conditions) is for fourteen residential lots, a development block, and park block. To date, no development has occurred, and the biophysical habitat has changed over the years. The proposed changes on the western portion of the draft plan of subdivision (including Area 2) are not being disputed by the landowner. Prior to development proceeding in accordance with the proposed land use plan, the existing draft plan of subdivision will need to be rescinded or allowed to lapse. The area of disagreement is isolated to the five lots (proposed cul-de-sac) to the east, approximately 4.11 ha (10.16 acres) in size.

Area 4 is approximately 0.27 ha (0.67 acres). Area 4 is included in the Natural Heritage System as part of the proposed amendments as it contains Regionally Significant Woodland and regulated habitat of an endangered species (Jefferson Salamander). Additionally, it is understood that this portion of the Regionally Significant Woodland was being managed in accordance with a Good Forestry Practices permit under Region of Waterloo By-law 08-026 (Conservation of Trees in Woodlands). Regardless of any tree removal, it would not result in the area being removed from the Regionally Significant Woodland designation, but instead result in the need for natural woodland regeneration and/or active restoration to occur in this area. The conservation of this woodland link is important in maintaining ecological connection among wetland components, woodland patches and the regulated woodland habitat of an endangered species (Jefferson Salamander).

Current conditions have been accurately reflected by the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) mapping prepared by LGL. Planning authorities across southern Ontario, including Kitchener, use the Provincial ELC approach, to identify and then protect important natural areas. The ELC framework helps municipalities meet their obligations under the Provincial Planning Statement.

As per the PPS, 2024, the 2014 Official Plan, and in both City and Region staff's professional opinion, it is appropriate to designate Area 3 and Area 4 (as shown on **Figure 6**) Natural Heritage Conservation and zone them Natural Conservation. This approach is consistent with how the Natural Heritage Conservation designation has been applied throughout the Study Area and across the city.

Cultural Heritage Resources

City staff are recommending that the north-south portion of Hidden Valley Road be designated as a "Heritage Corridor" and the southern west-east portion of Hidden Valley Road be recognized as a "Cultural Heritage Landscape" as identified through the Heritage Impact Assessment. The Draft Heritage Impact Assessment was presented to Heritage Kitchener on May 7, 2024 (DSD-2024-193).

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 to support future development on or adjacent to the corridor certain technical studies, such as Corridor Enhancement Plans may be requested to ensure that the heritage attributes of Hidden Valley Road remain conserved.

Integrated Transportation System

City staff are recommending that Map 11 be updated to reflect the Regional Council approved alignment of the River Road extension. This would replace the "Proposed Corridor" overlay with a "Planned" road alignment. The proposed changes to Map 11 extend beyond the Hidden Valley Study Area to address adjacent transportation connections (e.g., the River Road extension runs between Manitou Drive and King Street East). Modifications to the multi-use pathway and on-road connection network are also proposed to align with the Cycling and Trails Master Plan and updated environmental studies in the area. The transit corridor shown on Map 11 is further proposed to be

aligned with Map 2 – Urban Structure Plan, which reflects the approved alignment of Stage 2 ION Light Rail Transit (LRT).

Proposed Area Specific Policy Modifications

City staff are recommending that the boundary of the Hidden Valley Area Specific Policy (shown as Area 2 on Map 5) be updated to reflect the Study Area boundary of the 2019 Master Plan. This involves minor adjustments to the boundary along Wabanaki Drive.

Policy 15.D.12.2 contains area specific policies that apply to the Hidden Valley area, providing more detailed and specific policies for the area. The policies in this section were carried forward from the 1994 Official Plan into the 2014 Official Plan and have been modified over the years to provide direction for specific residential developments in the area. To implement the findings of the technical studies and Implementation Project, the proposed amendments modify and add to Policy 15.D.12.2, providing area-specific policy for Hidden Valley, while relying on the 2014 Official Plan overall to provide direction for development, as would be the case in most other areas of the city.

The proposed amendment to the area specific policies recognizes the existing residential lots that are not on full municipal services and reflects requirements for additional studies as recommendations by the Implementation Project technical studies. Further, it recognizes the importance of water management in this area (such as managing flood risk, source water protection, and stormwater management), including specific management required through development and introduction of urban land uses.

The following provides a summary of changes to this section:

- **Low Rise Residential** – existing development permissions have been carried forward, with minor modifications to reflect the completion of the Implementation Project.
- **Natural Heritage Conservation / Open Space** – policies have been refined to implement the findings of the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Study.
- **Water Management** – policies have been introduced to implement the recommendations of the Source Water Protection and Stormwater Management Studies.
- **Transportation** – a policy has been added to reflect the proximity of Hidden Valley to Highway 85 and requirements for a Ministry of Transportation permit.
- **General Industrial Employment** – these policies have been removed as no lands are proposed to be designated General Industrial Employment in Hidden Valley.
- **Business Park Employment** – these policies have been reviewed as only one parcel is designated Business Park Employment and the policies of the parent Official Plan will continue to apply to these lands. These policies are no longer required following completion of the Implementation Project.

Proposed Policy Modifications

City staff are recommending modifications to Policies 13.C.4.17 and 13.C.4.18 under Section 13.C.4 – Street System – Heritage Corridors to reflect completion of the Heritage Impact Assessment. Policy 13.C.4.18.i) has been added to include Hidden Valley Road as a specified heritage corridor and to implement the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment. Policy 13.C.4.17 has been amended to remove Hidden Valley Road from the list streets having potential cultural heritage value or interest, as this street has now been studied through the Heritage Impact Assessment.

Conclusions

Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed Official Plan Amendment represents good planning as it will allow for a broad range of housing types and densities and helps introduce new non-residential uses in support of a more complete community. The proposed Official Plan Amendment achieves a balance between the retention of low-rise residential uses that allow for missing middle “gentle density” housing options on lands designated low-rise residential and accommodating high-rise residential uses along the River Road Extension, within the new Urban Corridor and Community Area. Lands within the Natural Heritage System will be protected through application of the Natural Heritage Conservation designation. The proposed Official Plan Amendment achieves the planned function of Urban Corridor by accommodating residential, commercial, and institutional uses without requiring that each property be subject to site-specific policies.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment is consistent with Provincial plans and the intent of the Official Plan including the Region of Waterloo Official Plan. Planning staff recommend that the proposed Official Plan Amendment be approved as shown in Attachment “A”.

Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment

The purpose of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is to bring all properties within Hidden Valley into Zoning By-law 2019-051 from Zoning By-law 85-1, as shown on Appendix A in Attachment B. The existing zoning in Hidden Valley includes a range of residential, employment, and natural conservation zones. The proposed zoning includes the application of appropriate zones contained within Zoning By-law 2019-051 to implement the proposed Official Plan Amendment.

Residential Zones

Proposed residential zones in Hidden Valley include the application of the RES-1: Low Rise Residential One, RES-5: Low Rise Residential Five, and RES-7: High Rise Residential Seven zone categories. The RES-1 zone permits limited dwelling types in areas with an estate character and/or limited municipal services. The RES-5 zone permits the widest range of low density dwelling types. The RES-7 zone permits high density dwelling types and a range of complementary non-residential uses in high rise residential areas. The RES-1 and RES-5 zones limit buildings to a maximum height of 3 storeys and 11.0m. The RES-7 zone permits multiple dwellings and a range of non-residential uses.

Policy 15.D.3.8 of the Official Plan states “The Low Rise Residential land use designation will accommodate a full range of low density housing types which may include single detached dwellings, additional dwelling units, attached and detached, semi-detached dwellings, street townhouse dwellings, townhouse dwellings in a cluster development, low rise multiple dwellings, special needs housing, and other forms of low-rise housing.”

The RES-1 zone has been applied to existing development parcels generally located along Hidden Valley Road, including the existing subdivisions south of Hidden Valley Road. The RES-5 zone has been applied to the larger vacant parcels on the north and west side of Hidden Valley Road to support a broader mix of residential uses, while providing transition to adjacent existing residential areas. The permitted residential uses identified in the RES-1 and RES-5 zone categories are consistent with the range of low density housing types identified in Policy 15.D.3.8 of the Official Plan. The RES-5 zone permits a range of missing middle housing forms, including street townhouses, cluster townhouses, and multiple dwellings. The RES-1 zone permits single detached dwellings.

Policy 15.D.3.22 of the Official Plan states “The High Rise Residential land use designation will primarily accommodate high density multiple dwellings and special needs housing to achieve a high intensity of residential use.”

The application of the RES-7 zone category is proposed on lands with a High Rise Residential land use designation, generally located near the future roundabout along the River Road Extension, which is proposed within the new Urban Corridor. The permitted residential uses identified in the RES-7 zone category is consistent with the range of high density multiple dwellings identified in Policy 15.D.3.22 of the Official Plan.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment creates opportunities for increased housing supply by permitting a broad range of low rise residential and high rise residential uses. The proposed amendment allows for greater flexibility in the residential uses permitted on lands within Hidden Valley and introduces further missing middle “gentle density” housing options consistent with the recommendations and directions within the Master Plan and Missing Middle and Affordable Housing Study.

Commercial Zones

Proposed Commercial zoning in Hidden Valley includes the application of the COM-2: General Commercial zone. The purpose of this zone is to accommodate retail and commercial uses within the City’s Urban Corridors and Community and City Nodes. The proposed application of the COM-2 zone in Hidden Valley is within the proposed Urban Corridor amendment to Map 2 Urban Structure of the Official Plan. The COM-2 zone permits a range of commercial uses. The COM-2 zone also permits a “Dwelling Unit”, provided that: the dwelling unit be located within a mixed-use building containing at least one other permitted use and shall not be located on the ground floor; and the maximum floor space ratio for the dwelling unit use is 2.0.

Policy 15.D.5.15 of the Official Plan states “Lands designated as Commercial are intended to provide for a range of retail and service commercial uses that cater primarily to the weekly and daily needs of residents within the surrounding neighbourhoods.”

Policy 15.D.5.17 of the Official Plan states “in addition to Policy 15.D.5.16, the permitted uses on lands designated Commercial and identified as a Major Transit Station Area, City Node, Community Node or Urban Corridor on Map 2:

- a) will include retail and may include retail commercial centres where they are permitted in accordance with the applicable policies in Section 3.C.2; and,
- b) may include dwelling units, where appropriate, provided that they are located in the same building as compatible commercial uses and are not located on the ground floor to a maximum Floor Space Ratio of 2.0.”

The proposed amendment provides for a commercial function to be introduced in Hidden Valley on lands designated Commercial in the Official Plan within an Urban Corridor. The proposed amendment also provides a path for dwelling units to be introduced on lands with a commercial land use designation, subject to Policy 15.D.5.17 of the Official Plan

Mixed Use Zones

Proposed Mixed Use zoning in Hidden Valley includes the application of the MIX-2: Mixed Use Two zone. The purpose of this zone is to accommodate a variety of uses within mixed use buildings and developments at a medium density within the City’s Urban Corridors. The proposed application of the MIX-2 zone in Hidden Valley is within the proposed Urban Corridor amendment to Map 2 Urban

Structure of the Official Plan, on the west/north side of the River Road Extension. The MIX-2 provides a transition to the adjacent Fairway Major Transit Station Area and permits a wide range of residential and non-residential uses.

Policy 15.4.3 of the Official Plan states that Mixed Use lands will support a broad range of uses, while Policy 15.4.5 notes that Mixed Use areas will be transit supportive, walkable, and integrated and interconnected with other areas of the City.

Policy 15.D.4.2 permits medium and high-rise residential uses and Policy 15.D.4.3 permits a range of commercial uses, personal service, office, social service, and artisan-related uses.

The proposed amendment provides for a mixed-use function to be introduced in Hidden Valley on lands designated Mixed Use in the Official Plan within an Urban Corridor. The proposed amendment provides for a transition to the Fairway Major Transit Station Area which is subject to future amendments through Growing Together East, providing for a walkable location to transit service and further helping evolve Hidden Valley into a more complete community.

Natural Conservation Zone

Proposed Natural Conservation zoning in Hidden Valley includes the application of the NHC-1: Natural Conservation zone category. The purpose of the NHC-1 zone is to protect and/or conserve natural heritage features and their ecological functions. Further, it is intended to prevent the aggravation of existing natural hazards and/or the creation of new ones. The NHC-1 zoning applies to properties where there are already restrictions or conditions on development within, or in the buffer to, the natural feature on the property. This includes flooding hazards, slope erosion hazards, and significant wildlife habitat (confirmed and candidate) and landforms.

Significant Wildlife Habitat Overlay

To implement the findings of the Comprehensive EIS, the Significant Wildlife Habitat (confirmed and candidate) and Landforms overlay has been applied within the Study Area. This overlay regulation requires completion of an Environmental Impact Study or other appropriate study prior to development.

Holding & Special Regulation Provisions

As part of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment, planning staff recommend retaining three (3) existing Special Regulation Provisions currently in effect in Zoning By-law 85-1 and introducing four (4) new Holding Provisions. Special Regulation Provisions 407, 408, and 409, as shown in Attachment B, are existing special regulation provisions in Zoning By-law 85-1 specific to previous development applications and are proposed to be carried forward in Zoning By-law 2019-051.

Planning staff are recommending the following new Holding Provisions as part of the Zoning By-law Amendment:

Holding Provision (88H)

The purpose of this holding provision is to require confirmation of availability of municipal sanitary services on lands, which are currently not serviced, prior to development.

Holding Provision (89H)

The purpose of this holding provision is to require confirmation of availability of municipal water services on lands, which are currently not serviced, prior to development.

Holding Provision (90H)

The Noise Impact Analysis completed as part of the Implementation Project identified the need for a transportation and stationary noise study on lands in Hidden Valley. As such, this holding provision requires completion of such study prior to the introduction of residential uses.

Holding Provision (91H)

The purpose of this holding provision is to require the completion of an Environmental Impact Study prior to development or site alteration which addresses impacts to endangered or threatened species in Hidden Valley in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

Holding Provision (102H)

The purpose of this holding provision is to require a Notice of Source Protection Plan Compliance (Section 59 Notice) pursuant to the *Clean Water Act*, issued by the Risk Management Official, prior to development, redevelopment, or site alteration which addresses drinking water protection.

Conclusions

Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment represents good planning as it will allow for a broad range of housing types and densities and helps introduce new non-residential uses in support of a more complete community. The amendment also brings all remaining properties within Hidden Valley into Zoning By-law 2019-051 from Zoning By-law 85-1. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment achieves a balance between the retention of low-rise residential uses that allow for missing middle “gentle density” housing options on lands designated low-rise residential and accommodating high-rise residential uses along the River Road Extension, within the new Urban Corridor. Lands within the Natural Heritage System will be protected through appropriate natural conservation zoning and overlays. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment achieves the planned function of Urban Corridor by accommodating residential, commercial, and institutional uses without requiring that each property be subject to site-specific zoning regulations.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the proposed Official Plan amendment. Planning staff recommend that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment be approved as shown in Attachment B.

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 – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project was informed by various community, collaborator, and First Nations engagement events, building on engagement from the 2019 Master Plan. **Table 4** provides a summary of the date and type of engagement that was completed:

Table 4 – Summary of engagement

Date of Engagement	Engagement Type
June 2018	Master Plan Public Information Centre (Open House 1)
November 2018	Master Plan Public Information Centre (Open House 2)
Ongoing through 2018/2019	Master Plan 1:1 Stakeholder Meetings
December 2020 – December 2022	Virtual and In-Person Meetings with PVDC
November 4, 2021 February 17, 2021	Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Upper Hidden Valley Pumping Station and Forcemain – Virtual Public Information Meetings
September 29, 2023	Virtual meeting with Six Nations of the Grand River
October 12, 2023	Hidden Valley Flood Risk Reduction Environmental Assessment Public Information Centre
April 4, 2024	Heritage Kitchener Meeting
May 30, 2024 (Comment Deadline June 19, 2024)	In-Person Public Open House
May 16, 2024 June 20, 2024	Climate Change and Environment Committee Meetings
July 10, 2024	Site walk with PVDC, Consultants, City and Region staff
August 29, 2024 September 24, 2024 November 26, 2024	Meetings with PVDC to review proposed amendments and discuss comment submissions
Ongoing	Engage Kitchener Webpage, Email Correspondence

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the Council / Committee meeting. Notice postcards were sent to approximately 225 households in advance of the statutory public meeting. Notice of the Statutory Public Meeting was posted in the Waterloo Region Record on January 3, 2025, and is attached as **Attachment C**. Emails were sent out to the Hidden Valley EngageWR subscribers in advance of each community engagement event, when the draft materials were made publicly available, and in advance of the statutory public meeting. The City’s social media accounts were used to raise awareness of the project, provide information regarding community engagement events, and provide a link to the project EngageWR webpage.

CONSULT – Members of the public have been engaging with City Staff throughout both the Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan and now the Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project since 2018. The initial Master Plan Public Information Centres (PIC) found residents were primarily concerned with flood risk, transportation infrastructure, absence of amenities and public spaces, and the preservation of the natural heritage system.

Through the Hidden Valley Flood Risk Reduction Environmental Assessment, two Public Information Centres were hosted to provide insight into the process and considerations being made in support of the Implementation Project. These events in June and July of 2022 involved City and Pearl Valley Development Corporation consultants and discussed detailed densities and flow rates, as they would inform recommendations for future development.

Through the Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Upper Hidden Valley Pumping Station and Forcemain, two virtual Public Information Centres were hosted to present the project, the assessment of alternatives, and identify the preferred alternative. Engagement with First Nations was completed as part of the EA process. Engagement with PVDC was completed in Summer 2022 to discuss planned densities in Hidden Valley and the appropriate flow range necessary to design the pumping station and forcemain.

In May 2024, City staff held an in-person public open house at the Kitchener Operations Facility (**Figure 7**) to share updates on the plan's development, including initial findings from the supporting studies, and provided attendees with the opportunity to comment on two land use concepts. Notice was sent to approximately 225 households and the session attended by 31 residents and collaborators. General feedback from those in attendance was in support of providing a mix of uses in the community as access to shops and services along Fairway Road is challenging. Attendees generally supported the mix and range of housing types encouraged by the revised land use concepts shared at the meeting.



Figure 7 – Attendees at the May 2024 public open house

A project-specific email address (secondaryplans@kitchener.ca) was setup to manage correspondence and receive input through the Implementation Project. City staff received 14 emails and provided informative responses or accepted comments where appropriate.

The City of Kitchener website and Engage Kitchener platform have been used throughout the project, including the Master Plan, Supporting Studies, and the Implementation Project. The webpage for this stage of the project was launched in April 2024 and was used to share materials and solicit community feedback as part of the Implementation Project. The comment period on the draft land use, zoning, and study materials was open until June 6, 2024. Planning staff received written responses and correspondence, which are attached as **Attachment J**.

COLLABORATE – Throughout the Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project and its associated studies, staff have worked with consultants, public agencies, and landowners including Pearl Valley Development Corporation who is the primary landowner for the proposed development area. This collaboration has been through various forms including email, virtual/in person meetings, and site visits.

Specifically, meetings were held with Pearl Valley in May, August, and November 2024 to walk through recommendations from technical studies, proposed land use concepts, and discuss comments or questions.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Municipal Act*, 2001
- *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13
- Provincial Planning Statement, 2024
- Regional Official Plan
- City of Kitchener Official Plan, 2014
- City of Kitchener Zoning By-law 2019-051
- DSD-19-133 – Neighbourhood Planning Review: Hidden Valley Land Use Master Plan.
- DSD-2022-258 - Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Upper Hidden Valley Pumping Station and Forcemain
- DSD-2022-392 – Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Upper Hidden Valley Pumping Station and Forcemain – Update
- DSD-2024-119 – Hidden Valley Flood Risk Reduction Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
- DSD-2024-193 – Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project – Draft Heritage Impact Assessment (Heritage Kitchener)
- DSD-2024-215 – Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project – Technical Studies
- DSD-2024-268 – Hidden Valley Land Use Implementation Project – Natural Heritage System

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ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Proposed Official Plan Amendment

Attachment B – Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment

Attachment C – Waterloo Region Record Notice, January 3, 2025

Attachment D – Environmental Impact Study

Attachment E – Transportation Impact Assessment & Preliminary Noise Study

Attachment F – Heritage Impact Assessment

Attachment G – Stormwater Management Strategy

Attachment H – Source Water Protection Assessment

Attachment I – Health Impact Study

Attachment J – Public Comments