

REPORT TO: Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee

DATE OF MEETING: August 11, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Garrett Stevenson, Director of Housing and Development Approvals, 519-783-8922

PREPARED BY: Brian Bateman, Senior Planner, 519-783-8905

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 1

DATE OF REPORT: July 11, 2025

REPORT NO.: DSD-2025-286

SUBJECT: Official Plan Amendment Application OPA25/004/L/BB
Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA25/009/L/BB
Address: Block 1, 58M-711 – Sandra Springs Subdivision
Owner: 2597316 Ontario Corp.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Official Plan Amendment Application OPA25/004/L/BB for 2597316 Ontario Corp. requesting to change the Land Use on Map 3 from 'Mixed Use' to 'Low Rise Residential', be approved, in the form shown in the Official Plan Amendment attached to Report DSD-2025-286 as Attachments 'A1', and 'A2'.

That Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA25/009/L/BB to change the zoning from 'MIX-1' to 'RES-5' be approved in the form shown in the 'Proposed By-law', and 'Map No. 1', attached to Report DSD-2025-286 as Attachments 'B1' and 'B2'.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to evaluate and provide a planning recommendation regarding Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications for the subject lands, described as Block 1, 58M-711, forming part of the Sandra Springs residential Subdivision in the Grand River North neighbourhood.
- Staff support the land use designation change from 'Mixed Use' to 'Low Rise Residential' to reinstate residential permissions for this block approved by Council in 2016 subsequently changed to 'Mixed Use' in 2019 and zoned 'MIX-1' in 2022, respectively.
- Community engagement included:
 - circulation of a preliminary notice letter to property owners and residents within 240 metres of the subject site;
 - installation of a large billboard notice sign on the property;
 - follow up one-on-one correspondence with members of the public;
 - Virtual Neighbourhood Meeting held on May 14, 2025;

- Postcard advising of the statutory public meeting was circulated to all residents and property owners within 240 metres of the subject site, those who responded to the preliminary circulation; and those who attended the Neighbourhood Meeting;
- Notice of the public meeting was published in The Record on July 18, 2025.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.
- The applications were deemed complete on April 4, 2025. The Applicant can appeal these applications for non-decision after July 3, 2025.
- It is planning staff's recommendation that the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Kitchener has received applications to amend the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law 2019-051 for Block 1, 58M-711. The amendments seek to reinstate residential land use permissions obtained through a Council decision in 2016. The residential land use designation was subsequently changed to mixed-use though implementation of Zoning By-law 2019-051 in 2022. The proposed applications do not propose any modifications to the subdivision and only seek amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Accordingly, these applications are technical in nature and staff are therefore recommending approval.

Background

The subject lands comprise a vacant block of land within the Sandra Springs Plan of Subdivision shown below in Figure 1 shaded in blue.

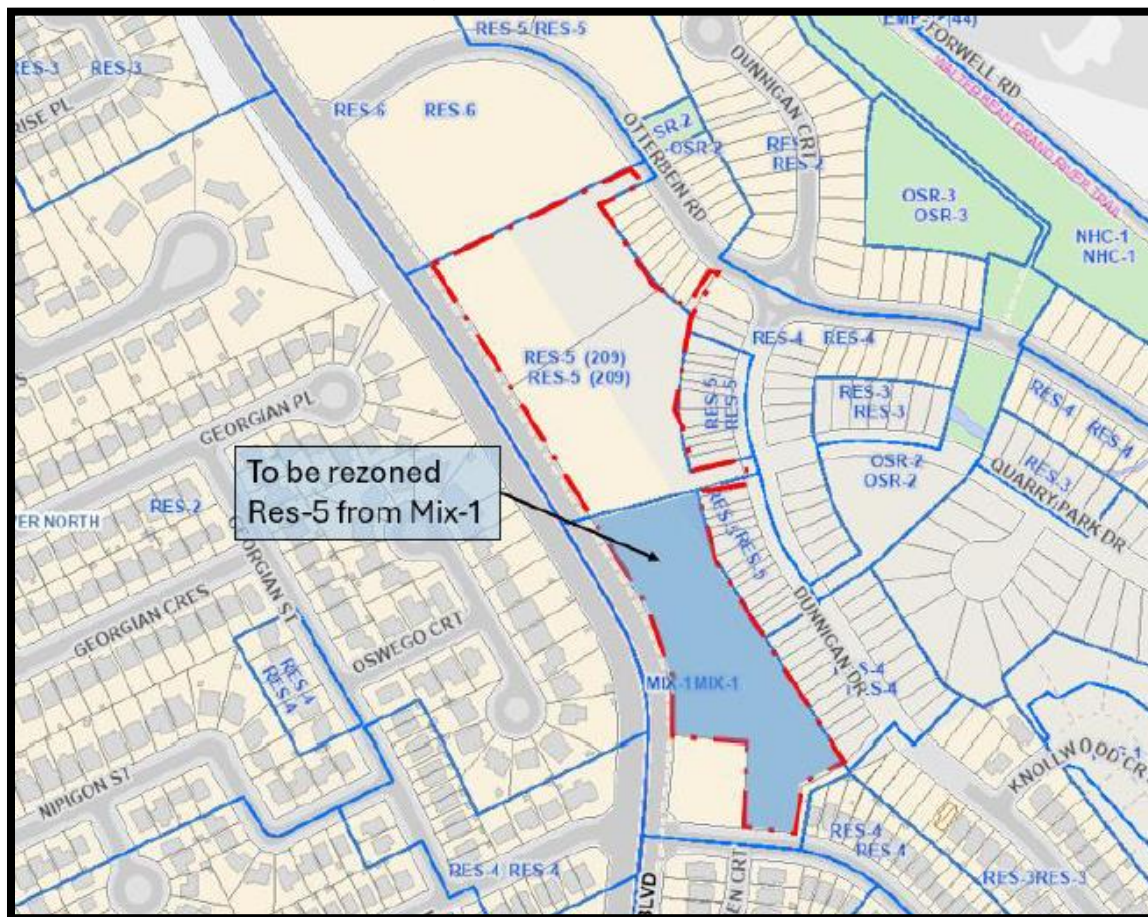


Figure 1 – Subject Block of Land

The subject block of land is described legally as Block 1, 58M-711. It has frontage onto both Lackner Boulevard and Keewatin Avenue. It forms part of a residential plan of subdivision consisting of by existing and proposed low rise residential land use in the Grand River North Planning Neighbourhood. At the time of the subdivision approval in 2016, staff interpreted that Block 1 was part of the Community Area and Low Rise Residential designation of the Official Plan. Accordingly, Block 1 was zoned R-6 in By-law 85-1 which allowed for low-rise residential building forms including multiples. The exception is a vacant block of land (Block 2, 58M-711– see Figure 2 below) situated at the northeast corner of Lackner and Keewatin of the subdivision. Block 2 is both designated and zoned for Mixed Use. It serves as the planned commercial block for the subdivision and corresponded with an interpretation made in 2016 that Block 2 was the Neighbourhood Node. Figure 2 shows Block 1 as being approved for ‘multiple residential’ and adjacent Block 2 for ‘commercial’. As noted previously, the applications seek to amend the City’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

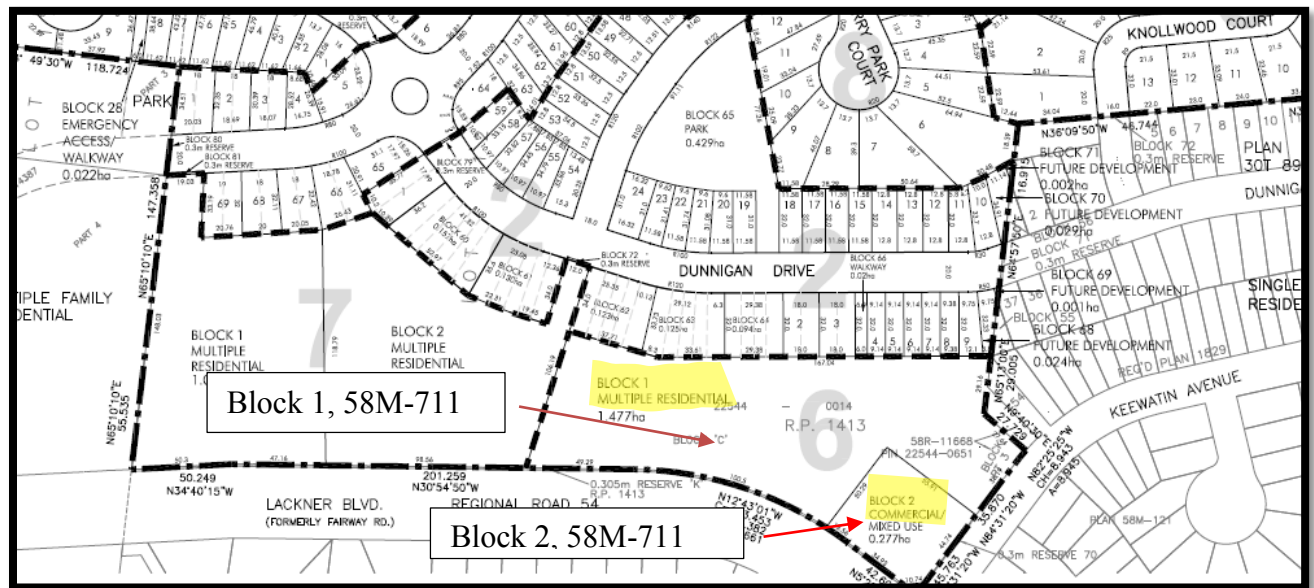


Figure 2 – Showing Lower Portion of Approved Plan of Subdivision (Note: Block 1, Stage 6, Multiple Residential and Block 2, Stage 6, Commercial)

Report

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024:

The PPS 2024 provides municipalities with the tools and flexibility they need to build more homes. Some examples of what it enables municipalities to do are; plan for and support development and increase the housing supply across the province; and align development with infrastructure to build a strong and competitive economy that is investment ready.

Sections 2.1.6 and 2.3.1.3 of the PPS 2024 promote planning for people and homes and directs planning authorities to support general intensification and redevelopment while achieving complete communities by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing options, transportation options with multimodal access, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses, recreation, parks and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs. Policies further promote, improving accessibility and social equity, and efficiently using land, resources, and existing infrastructure.

Planning staff is of the opinion that the requested amendments will facilitate the development of the subject property with a 'missing middle' form of housing that is compatible with the surrounding community, is transit-supportive, and will make use of existing infrastructure. Staff are of the opinion that the requested amendments are consistent with the PPS 2024.

Regional Official Plan (ROP):

The subject lands are designated "Urban Area" and "Built-Up Area" on Schedule 3a of the Regional Official Plan (ROP). Urban Area policies of the ROP identify that the focus of the Region's future growth will be within the Urban Area and the proposed development conforms to Policy 2.F of the ROP as the proposed development will support the achievement of the minimum intensification targets within the delineated Built-Up Area. Growth is directed to the Built-Up Area to make better use of infrastructure that can assist in transitioning the Region into an energy efficient, low carbon community. Furthermore, intensification within the Built-Up Area assists the gradual transition of existing neighbourhoods within the Region into 15-minute neighbourhoods that are compact, well-connected places that allow all people of all ages and abilities to access the needs for daily living within 15 minutes by walking, cycling or rolling. The Region of Waterloo have indicated they have no objections to the proposed applications. (Attachment 'D'). Planning staff are of the opinion that the applications conform to the Regional Official Plan.

The proposed development conforms the ROP, since the proposed development helps to achieve the planned intensification target. Moreover, the proposed built form provides a mix of unit types and is appropriately located along a corridor in which growth can be located close to transit and active transportation services and infrastructure. In addition, Chapter 3 of ROPA 6 establishes policies for housing in the region. The proposed development meets the intent of these policies.

City of Kitchener Official Plan (OP)

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 targeted throughout the Built-up Area in key locations to accommodate and receive the majority of development or redevelopment for a variety of land uses. Primary Intensification Areas include the Urban Growth Centre (Downtown), Major Transit Station Areas, City Nodes, Community Nodes, and Urban Corridors, per Policy 3.C.2.3 of the Official Plan. As per policy 3.C.2.4, Secondary Intensification Areas are Neighbourhood Nodes and Arterial Corridors. These areas may experience intensification at a smaller scale. Such intensification may be permitted provided that the planned function of the structure component is not compromised. At this location in Grand River North, a 'Neighbourhood Node' is identified (see Figure 3).

Neighbourhood Nodes are considered Secondary Intensification Areas in the City of Kitchener's Official Plan on Map 2 – Urban Structure. As per 3.C.2.4, Secondary Intensification Areas may experience intensification at a smaller-scale and include Neighbourhood Nodes, Arterial Corridors and other site-specific opportunities. Such intensification may be permitted provided that the planned function of the structure component is not compromised.

The planned function of a Neighbourhood Node is to serve the day-to-day commercial needs of surrounding residential areas and encouraged to be cycling and pedestrian friendly. Within an area identified as a Neighbourhood Node the applicable land use designations may include Mixed Use and/or Commercial. The implementing zoning may impose a minimum and/or maximum percentage or amount of floor space for residential and/or non-residential uses to ensure an appropriate combination of uses and to achieve the planned function of Neighbourhood Nodes.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment will not affect the planned function of the Neighbourhood Node. The size of the Node on Map 2 of the Official Plan is conceptual intended to illustrate a need for commercial/retail lands in the general location shown on Figure 3. This was the interpretation made at the time of subdivision approval in 2016. As such, Block 1, 58M-711 was considered part of the 'Community Area' and Block 2, 58M-711 was zoned Commercial/Mixed Use.

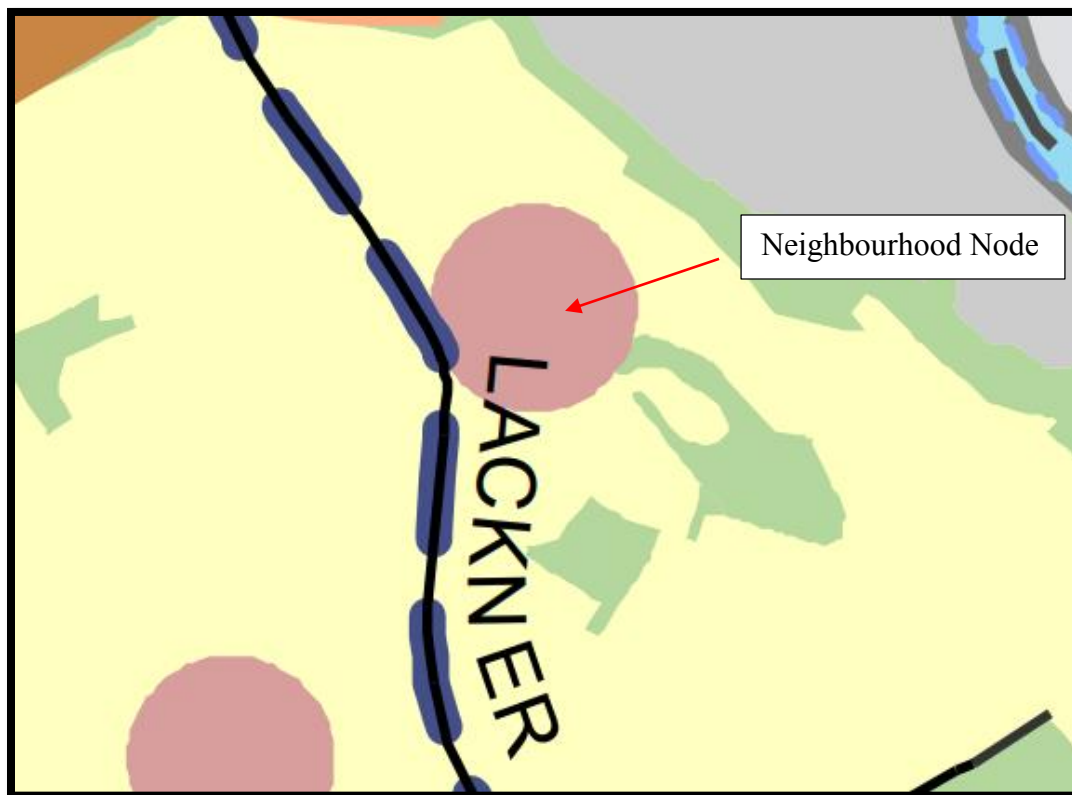


Figure 3 – Neighbourhood Node from Map 2, Urban Structure, Official Plan

Existing and Proposed Land Use Designation

The Official Plan designates the subject block as 'Mixed Use' The Mixed-Use land use designation is intended to be flexible and responsive to land use pattern changes and demands and permit a broad range of uses at different scales and intensities depending on the lands' geographic location and identification at the urban structure level. As such, an appropriate and compatible mix and range of commercial, retail, institutional and residential uses, at different scales and intensities will be encouraged and supported within lands designated Mixed Use depending on their location within the City's Urban Structure.

Block 1, 58M-711 is proposed to be redesignated 'Low Rise Residential' in the City's Official Plan (Map 3). Low Rise Residential areas are intended to accommodate a full range of low-density housing types including single detached, semi-detached, townhouse, and low-rise multiple dwellings. The Low Rise Residential designation states that the City will encourage and support the mixing and integrating of innovative and different forms of housing to achieve and maintain a low-rise built form. No buildings shall exceed 3 storeys or eleven (11) metres in height. This designation is consistent with the subdivision approval from 2016 and planned nature of the block of land in question. This change will not impact the Node as Block 2, 58M-711 is the planned commercial lands for the subdivision. Block 2 is being preserved to maintain the important function a commercial block plays in ensuring the achievement of complete communities. As such, it is staff's opinion the reinstatement of the residential land use is technical in nature enabling the developer to move forward in creating more housing as planned for the community.

Existing and Proposed Zoning

The subject block of land is currently zoned 'Mixed Use One Zone (MIX-1)' in the City of Kitchener Zoning By-law 2019-051 (Figure 3). The purpose of this zone is to accommodate a variety of uses within mixed use buildings and mixed-use developments at a low density and scale in Neighbourhood Nodes and certain other areas that are adjacent to low-rise residential zones. This zone permits a variety of commercial and residential uses providing either that residential is not located on the ground floor of the same building or if separate buildings are proposed it must include non-residential use. Building height is allowed up to 4 storeys and 14 metres.

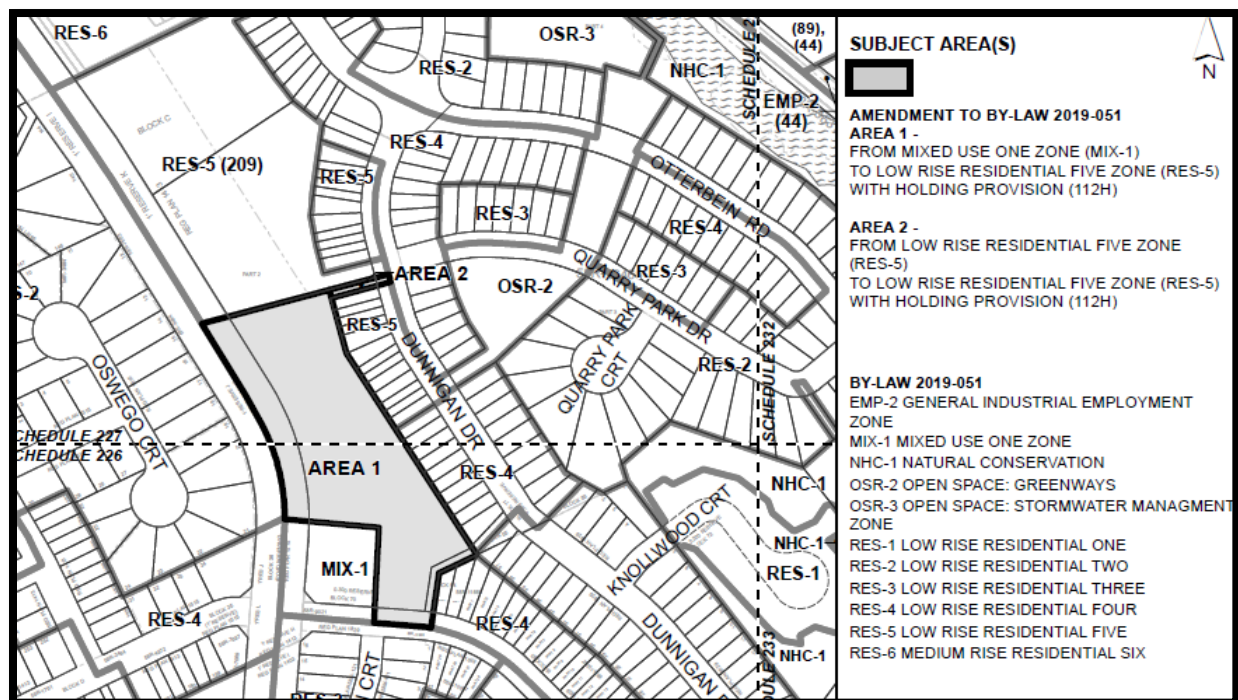


Figure 3 – Map Showing Zoning of Subject and Surrounding Properties

The proposed zoning is 'Low Rise Residential Five Zone (RES-5)'. As can be seen in Figure 3, 'RES-5' is consistent with the zoning of surrounding properties. The 'RES-5' zone permits a variety of low-rise residential building forms including multiple dwellings up to three (3) storeys in height and 11 metres. Although MIX-1 zone does permit similar

building forms to RES-5, non-residential use (i.e. commercial) must be provided either at grade or a separate standalone commercial building. RES-5, conversely, is a residential zone, which is key to the developer and in keeping with the spirit of original approval in 2016.

Through the application circulation, the Region of Waterloo has requested a Holding Provision (116H) placed on Block 1, 58M-711. It is for the completion and approval of a traffic noise study. 116H has to be lifted prior to residential development taking place on Block 1.

Staff is of the opinion that the proposed zoning to RES-5 is appropriate given the technical change to reinstate residential zoning permissions granted previously by Council in 2016 under Zoning By-law 85-1 for the plan of subdivision.

Department and Agency Comments:

Preliminary circulation of the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment was undertaken in April 2024, to applicable City departments and other review authorities. No concerns were identified by any commenting City department or agency. As noted in the zoning section of the report, the Region has requested a holding provision be added and staff have incorporated it as part of the Zoning By-law attached to this report. Copies of the comments are found in Attachment 'D' of this report.

WHAT WE HEARD



346 households (occupants and property owners) were circulated and notified



6 people/households provided comments by email or telephone.



A City-led Neighbourhood Meeting was held on May 14, 2025 and approximately 20 different users logged on.

The following report was considered as part of this proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications:

- Planning Justification Report
Prepared by GSP Group Inc.

Community Input and Staff Response:

Postcards were mailed to residents and property owners within 240 metres of the subject site. As a result of the circulation, staff received six (6) email responses included in Attachment 'E'. A virtual Neighbourhood Meeting was held May 14, 2025. Approximately

twenty (20) persons were in attendance. Majority of comments received were around a perceived increase in density because of the proposed change in land use that would lead to higher traffic volumes. Limiting vehicular access to Dunnigan Drive was suggested. One resident was concerned about the potential loss of commercial that would affect the plan from achieving complete communities' status.

As the subdivision builds out, more traffic is expected. That is typical and expected as the City grows. Staff does not foresee the proposed change increasing traffic significantly or in a manner that would have a significant negative impact. Mixed land use tends to generate consistent and elevated traffic volumes throughout the day whereas residential land use experiences higher volumes at peak hours of the day. Accordingly, the overall generated traffic volume would be similar. Block 1 (subject site) was planned for and assessed through the subdivision approval as a low rise residential multiple block of land and not mixed use.

In terms of accesses, Block 1 was designed through the subdivision process to have 3 points of access: one to Dunnigan, a second onto Keewatin and a third onto Lackner Boulevard. This was done to split and divert the traffic pattern to limit impact. This will remain unchanged. For these reasons, staff is confident the existing road network with multiple points of access is sufficient to handle traffic volumes as the subdivision continues to build out.

Regarding the loss of commercial lands, the plan of subdivision was planned to have a Mixed-Use Block (Block 2, 58M-711). This is not affected by this request. The Sandra Springs Subdivision provides a variety of low-rise building forms from single and semi-detached to cluster, street fronting townhouses and multiple dwelling units, in addition to open space (active and passive use) and commercial lands where residents can live, work and play.

Planning Conclusions:

In considering the foregoing, staff are supportive of the proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications to change the land use and zoning of Block 1, 58M-711. Staff are of the opinion that the subject applications are technical in nature to re-establish the land use and zoning permissions granted in 2016. Notwithstanding, the proposed changes will not compromise the existing planned commercial component of the approved subdivision and is consistent with policies of the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), the Regional Official Plan, and the City of Kitchener Official Plan and therefore represents good planning.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the Council / Committee meeting. A notice sign was posted on the property and information regarding the application posted to the City’s website in November 2024. Notice of the Public Meeting was posted in The Record on July 18, 2025 (a copy of the Notice may be found in Attachment ‘C’).

CONSULT – Postcards advising of the applications were sent to all occupants within 240 metres of the subject lands in April 2025. The Applications were advertised in The Record on April 25, 2025. Staff received six (6) written comments from the community in response to the circulation of the applications.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13*
- *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*
- *Regional Official Plan, as amended by ROPA 6*
- *City of Kitchener Official Plan, 2014*
- *Zoning By-law 2019-051*
- *CSD-16-01 - Modification to Draft Approved Plan of Subdivision 30T-91005 (Sandra Springs) Zone Change Application ZC07/23/L/JB
Lackner Blvd/Otterbein Road, Wm. J. Gies Construction Limited*

REVIEWED BY: Tina Malone-Wright – Manager, Development Approvals

APPROVED BY: Barry Cronkite, Acting General Manager of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachments A1, A2 – Proposed Official Plan Amendment and Schedule A

Attachments B1, B2 – Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and Map

Attachment C – Newspaper Notice

Attachment D – Department and Agency Comments

Attachment E – Public Comments