

# Urban Design Report

321-325 Courtland Avenue East, 230 & 240 Palmer Avenue, 30 Vernon Avenue  
Mixed-Use Redevelopment - Former Schneiders Site



Official Plan Amendment, Zone Change, Draft Plan of Subdivision  
321-325 Courtland Avenue East, 230 & 240 Palmer Avenue, 30 Vernon Avenue  
321 Courtland Developments Inc.



**GSP**  
group



TURNER FLEISCHER

# Urban Design Report

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230 & 240 Palmer Avenue  
30 Vernon Avenue

Former Schneiders Site

City of Kitchener

Official Plan Amendment  
Zone Change  
Draft Plan of Subdivision

April 2019

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# Introduction

## 1.1 Background

321 Courtland Ave. Developments Inc. is redeveloping the former Schneiders' site in Kitchener (referenced as the "site" in this report). The site is a 10.36-hectare assembly of multiple properties situated on the south/west side of Courtland Avenue between Stirling Avenue and Borden Avenue (for the purposes of this report, Courtland Avenue is referenced as north, Stirling Avenue as west, Borden Avenue as east, and the CNR rail line as south). This industrial complex consisted of six buildings although certain buildings have been demolished.

The site is currently designated for general industrial uses as part of the Courtland Mill-Woodside Park Secondary Plan in Kitchener's 1994 Official Plan. The City of Kitchener Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations ("PARTS") initiative related to new ION stations, however, builds on Regional and Provincial policy direction and the new 2014 Kitchener Official Plan concerning transit-oriented development and mixed-use intensification and redevelopment. The approved PARTS plan for the Rockway Station Area sees the Rockway area redeveloped in a mixed, compact, connected and balanced nature.

The proposed project is a large scale, mixed-use redevelopment that will transform the site and integrate it within the surrounding neighbourhood. New public street extensions into the site will integrate the site with the surrounding street fabric and break down the large block into smaller development areas. The residential mix will include a varied composition of mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, stacked townhouses, and mixed-use buildings. Adapted and new employment floor space will be provided in retained and repurposed buildings and is meant to contribute to a new complete district within the existing neighbourhood. An integrated series of open spaces will include both a public park, a publicly-accessible urban plaza, and outdoor private terraces and patios.

## 1.2 Proposed Applications

321 Courtland Ave. Developments Inc. is proposing applications for an Official Plan Amendment, Draft Plan of Subdivision, and Zoning By-law Amendment for the site. The Official Plan Amendment will redesignate the site from the "General Industrial" designation to special mixed-use, employment, residential, and park designations. The Draft Plan of Subdivision will establish new public streets and smaller development blocks. The Zoning By-law Amendment will rezone the site from the existing "General Industrial (M2) Zone" to special mixed-use, residential and park zones corresponding to the proposed Official Plan designations.

## 1.3 Report Purpose

This Urban Design Report establishes a long-term urban design vision for the site's redevelopment. It assesses and demonstrates how the proposed development and its design fits with City policies and guidelines. It bridges the gap between the design-related Official Plan policies and the detailed design stage through additional, more specific design guidance for future development of the streets, spaces and buildings on the site.

The Report provides the general expectation of the development's form and character moving forward in the development process. Section 2 provides a description and assessment of the site's existing conditions and its context within Kitchener and the immediately surrounding neighbourhood. Section 3 summarizes the applicable design-related policies and relevant guidelines. Section 4 outlines the design vision and objectives established as the basis for the design of the site. Section 5 outlines the overall Site Master Plan for the proposed development together with supporting site-level design guidelines. Section 6 outlines detailed block plans and design guidelines for each of the specific development blocks within the Site Master Plan. And Section 7 summarizes and concludes the Report.



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## Conditions & Context

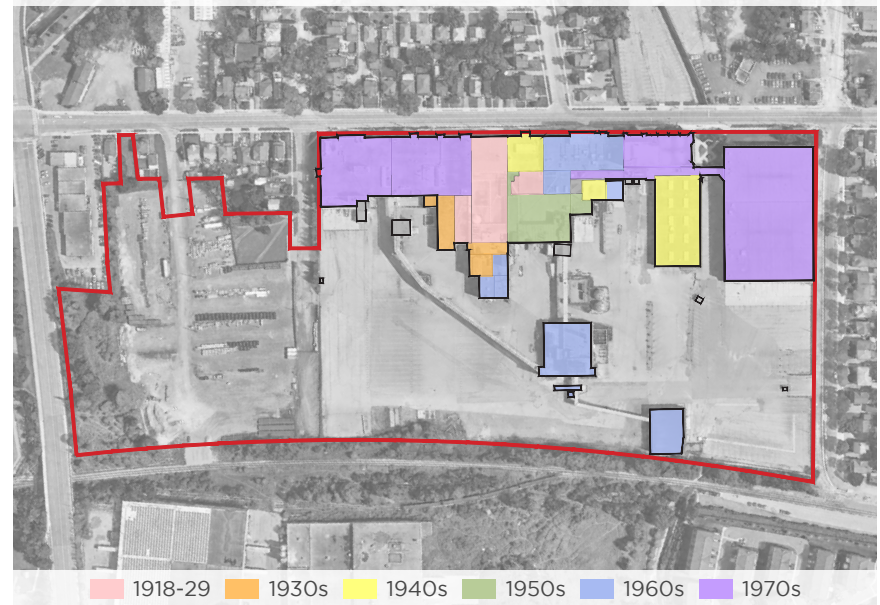
## 2.1 Site Location

Located in the Mill-Courtland Neighbourhood of Kitchener, the site is situated on the south side of Courtland Avenue between Stirling Avenue and Borden Avenue. The site is 10.36 hectares in size with approximately 343 metres of frontage on Courtland Avenue and 241 metres of frontage on Borden Avenue. It is bounded by Stirling Avenue South to the west, Courtland Avenue to the north, Borden Avenue to the east, and a CNR rail line to the south. The site comprises nearly all the land contained by this boundary, except for a series of smaller properties fronting onto Courtland Avenue between Palmer Avenue and Stirling Avenue or fronting directly onto Palmer Avenue. It is an assembly of six separate parcels: the 321-325 Courtland Avenue parcel comprising most of the site that contains the Schneiders' factory complex; the parcel that constitutes what would be the extension current Palmer Avenue (formerly Prince Albert Avenue right-of-way); 230 and 240 Palmer Street on the western side of Palmer Street; and 30 Vernon Street at the western end of the site.

## 2.2 Site History

The former Schneiders complex is made up of structures and additions of various size dating from 1918 to 1976. The plant was originally constructed in 1924 to serve as the meat processing facility for J.M. Schneider's fledgling sausage company. The plant and company grew substantially in the following years, becoming a mainstay in the community and contributing to the city's nickname of "busy Berlin". After peaking at 4,000 employees in the 1970s, global competition caused the company to decline. The Schneider family eventually sold the company to American firm Smithfield Foods in 1997. Maple Leaf Foods acquired the company from Smithfield in 2001 and closed the plant in 2014 as part of its modernization efforts.

Building Construction Timeline







## 2.3 Existing Site Conditions

The former Schneiders factory complex occupies the site, although demolition has occurred on much of the site. Pre-demolition, the complex contained approximately 69,900 square metres (752,000 square feet) of industrial floor space within six buildings, some of which were inter-connected. The former Plant building, recently demolished, extended along most of the site's Courtland Avenue frontage and consisted of the original factory and various additions from 1918 to 1976 that together contained approximately 52,000 square metres (562,000 square feet) of space over five floors. The six-storey Office building is connected to the east side of the Plant along Courtland Avenue as a distinct addition constructed in 1976 and contains approximately 6,410 square metres (69,000 square feet) of floor space. The one-storey Garage building sitting behind the Office building was constructed in 1948 and contains approximately 1,960 square metres (21,100 square feet) of floor space. The one-storey Distribution building sitting at the corner of Courtland Avenue and Borden Avenue was constructed in 1971 and contains approximately 6,465 square metres (69,600 square feet) of floor space. The Powerhouse and Water Treatment buildings, both recently demolished, were a two-storey and one-storey building, respectively, situated to the rear of the site near the CN Rail corridor.

The site's existing topography generally drops from high points near Stirling Avenue and the bridge over the CN Rail corridor, intermittently from Courtland Avenue and Palmer Avenue, and from the embankment along Stirling Avenue. The low-lying area extending south from the intersection of Stirling Avenue and Courtland Avenue is currently in the flood fringe. There is an additional low area where the Shoemaker Creek corridor runs through the site, contained within an underground box culvert before it emerges to the south and north of the site. This culvert runs through the area between the Office, Garage and Distribution buildings which will be retained as part of the proposed site redevelopment.



Former Plant Building on Courtland Avenue East



Existing Office on Courtland Avenue East



## 2.4 Surrounding Context

### Context within City

The site is located centrally within Kitchener in the Mill-Courtland Woodside neighbourhood that forms part of the broader ring of neighbourhoods that surround Downtown Kitchener. Downtown Kitchener's core and its focus of retail, restaurants and employment activities is within 1,500 metres of the site. Courtland Avenue offers connections to Downtown and the Highway 7/8 corridor and Ottawa Street offers higher order east-west connections. The site is within a short walk or ride to the Iron Horse Trail, connecting people to Downtown Kitchener and Uptown Waterloo. The neighbourhood contains several significant parks and recreational facilities, including the Mill-Courtland Community Centre, Rockway Golf Course, and Kaufman Park.

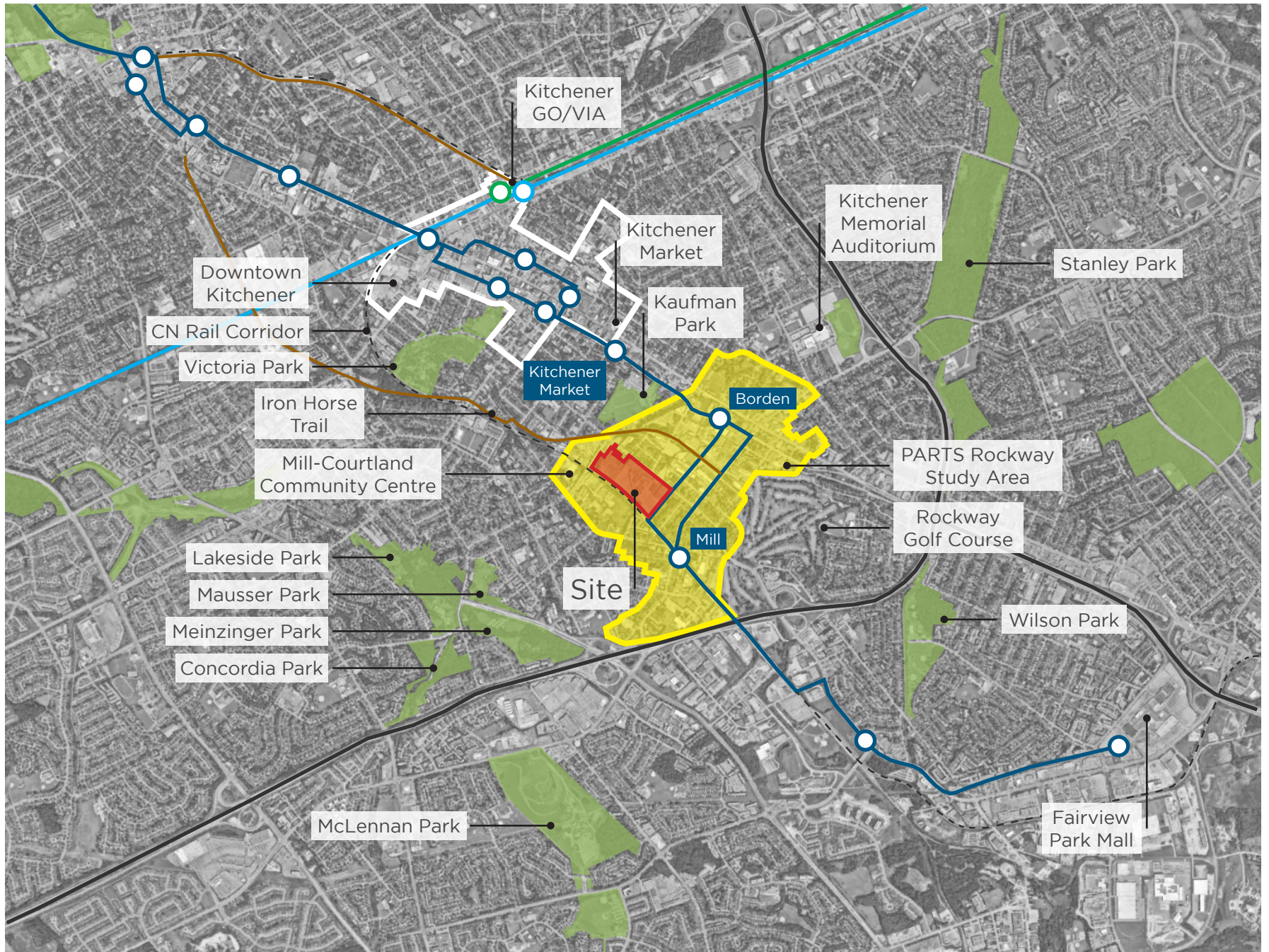
The higher frequency Route 205 iExpress runs across Kitchener along the Ottawa Street corridor with a northbound stop at Ottawa and Courtland and a southbound stop at Courtland and Borden both with stops at the Mill and Borden ION Stations. Within the new Rockway Station Area as part of the ION LRT system, the site is within a short walk of two ION stations that will provide higher frequency east-west travel through Waterloo Region, connecting Downtown Kitchener, Uptown Waterloo and the universities to the west and Fairview Mall to the east.



Courtland Avenue East Streetscape (pre-demolition)



Borden Avenue South Streetscape





Automobile Sales and Service on Courtland Avenue East facing the Site



Commercial Uses and grade change at Courtland Avenue and Stirling Avenue



Mill Street ION LRT Station



Mill-Courtland Community Centre at Corner of Mill Street and Stirling Avenue



Single Detached Residential on Courtland Avenue East



CN Rail Corridor and Townhouse Block abutting the south side of the Site



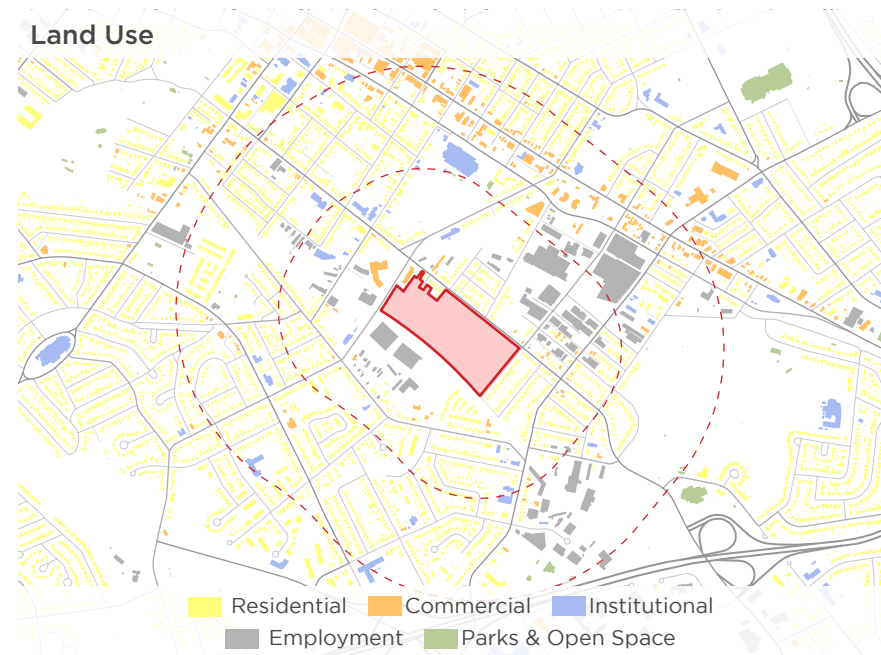
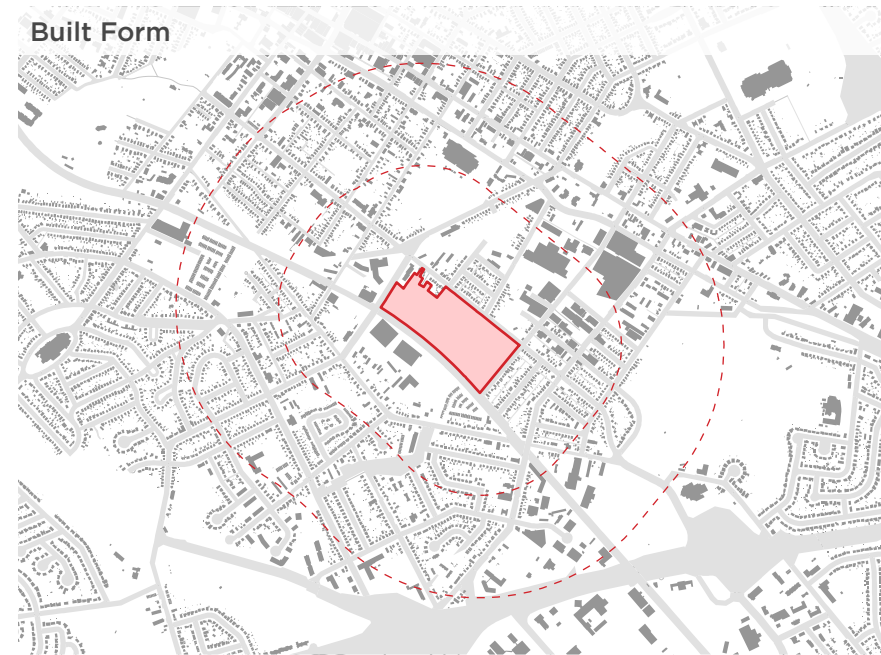
Single Detached Residential on Borden Street South facing the Site

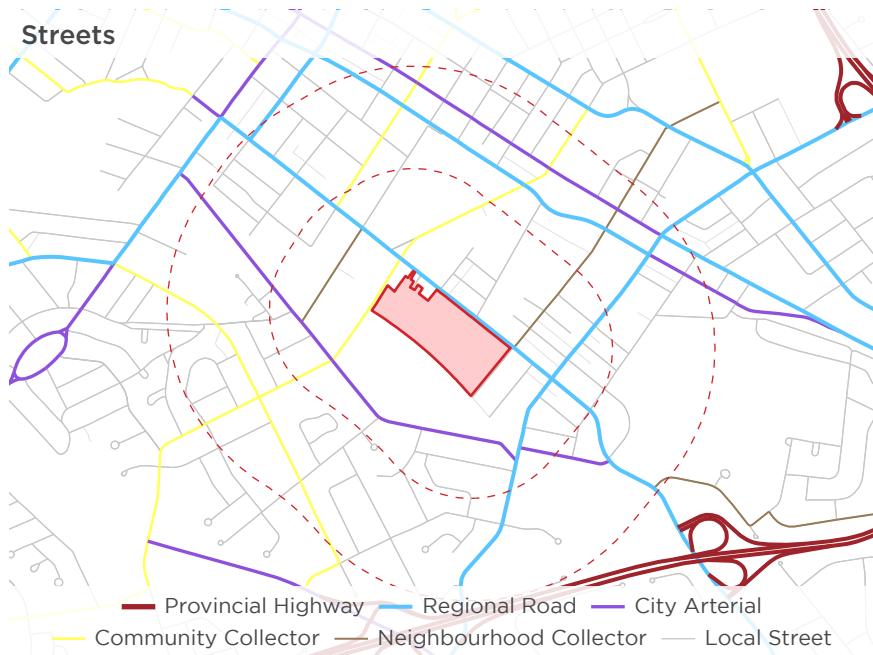


Residential lots on Palmer Avenue facing/abutting the Site

## Land Use and Built Form

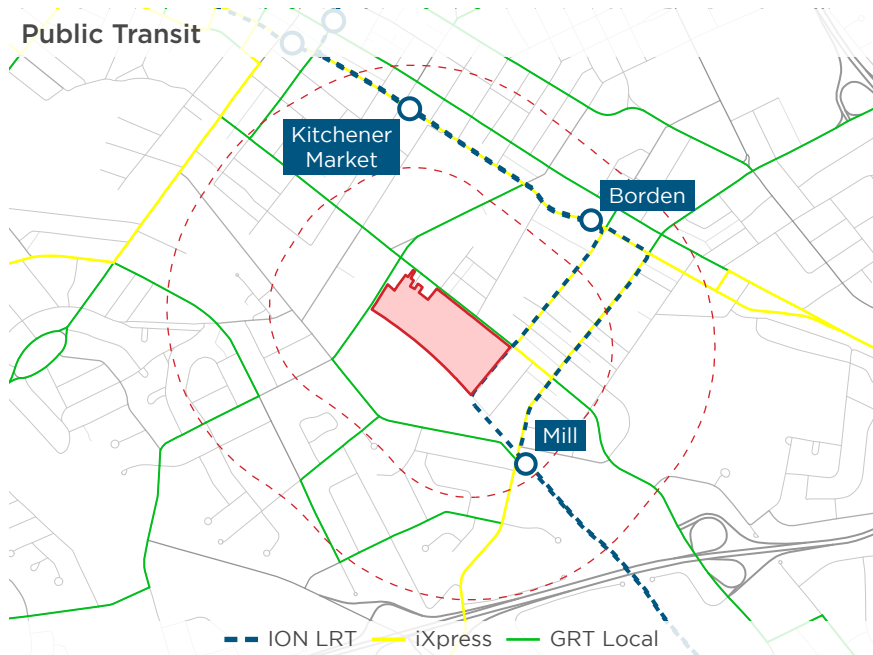
The site's immediately surrounding context within 800 metres features a mixed land use pattern. Detached dwellings are primarily situated to the immediate southeast, east and north of the site. A recent three-storey townhouse development ("Joy" townhouses) sits immediately to the southeast of the site across the CNR rail line corridor. There is a small commercial plaza at the corner of Stirling Avenue and Courtland Avenue comprised of retail and service commercial uses. There is a smaller area of mixed industrial/employment uses to the southwest of the site across the CN Rail corridor and a larger area to the northeast centred on the Borden Avenue corridor extending from Courtland Avenue to Charles Street, the latter comprised primarily of warehousing, packaging, sales, and other light industrial uses.





### Street Pattern

The neighbourhood as a mixed street pattern with a tight grid of streets in the pre-war residential areas, a curvilinear street pattern in the post-war residential areas, and a more open grid with large parcels in the employment areas. Courtland Avenue is a “Regional Road” with an existing 18 metre right-of-way containing two vehicle lanes with intermittent cycling lanes along its length. Borden Street is a “Local Street” with an existing 23 metre right-of-way containing two vehicle lanes and the southbound ION track. Borden Street ends at the CNR rail corridor at the southern edge of the site, transitioning into a small public laneway. Stirling Avenue is a “Major Community Collector” with a 26 metre right-of-way containing a four-lane cross section. The street grid is interrupted by the large existing industrial parcels, the Shoemaker Creek corridor, and the rail corridor. Kent Avenue currently terminates at Courtland while Palmer Avenue extends into the site.



### Railway Corridor

The CNR rail corridor abuts the entirety of the site’s southern boundary. This rail line is a “Principal Branch Line” per CNR, which requires a minimum 15 metres separation distance to dwellings and attenuation fencing and berming. “Crash walls” as part of buildings are considered by CNR in respect to safety protection measures.

### Public Transit

The neighbourhood is well-served by existing and planned transit services. Both the Mill and Borden ION stations are within a 10-minute walk (800 metres) of the site. The Mill ION Station is accessed by either Kent Avenue or Borden Avenue from the site and the Borden ION Station from either Courtland or walkways along the rail tracks from the terminus of Borden. The higher frequency Route 205 iXpress runs crossown along the Ottawa Street with a northbound stop at Ottawa and Courtland and southbound stop at Courtland and Borden, as well as at the Mill and Borden ION Stations. The local Route 8 runs along Courtland with existing stops at Palmer, Kent and Borden.



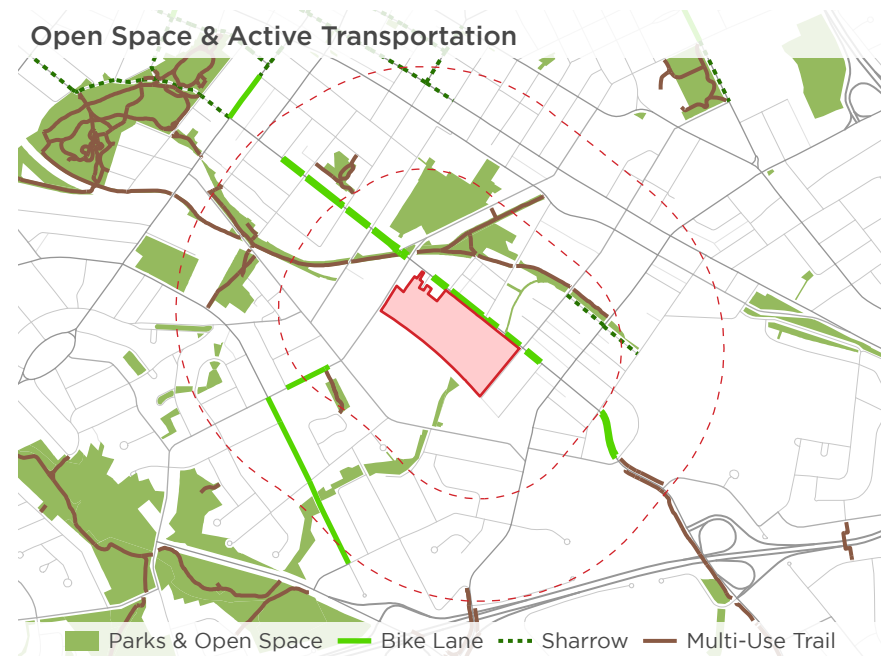
## Parks and Open Space

There are several major parks and recreational facilities in the surrounding neighbourhood, including the Mill-Courtland Community Centre, Rockway Golf Course, and Kaufman Park. The Shoemaker Creek passes through the site within an underground culvert, extending from Meinzing Park and Mausser Park near Homer Watson Boulevard to the Schneider Creek, a short distance to the south of the site. While there are several major park facilities within walking distance of the site, there are no smaller neighbourhood level parks in the immediate vicinity.

The Iron Horse Trail provides immediate walking and cycling options within the surrounding neighbourhood, connecting to Downtown and Uptown Waterloo to the west and Fairview Park Mall to the east. There is an intermittent bike lane on Courtland Avenue as well as planned bike lanes on Stirling Avenue and Ottawa Street, which will provide a connection to the broader cycling network. There is also a planned pedestrian connection from the southern corner of the site at Borden Street and the CNR corridor to the Mill ION Station.

## Watercourses and Floodplain

The site is located within the Shoemaker Creek and Schneider Creek subwatersheds. Most of the site drains to Shoemaker Creek to the north with the remainder draining to Schneider Creek to the north/west. Running underground through the site, the Shoemaker Creek floodway is contained within a large closed concrete box culvert, which transitions at the downstream side of Courtland Avenue as an open concrete channel. Shoemaker Creek converges with Schneider Creek approximately 250 metres downstream of the site. No stormwater management controls exist for the Schneiders complex. The Schneider Creek and Shoemaker Creek Regulatory Floodplain limits on the site are defined as flood fringe only.



Iron Horse Trail



Stirling Avenue South Streetscape



Schneider Creek Culvert north of Courtland Ave E

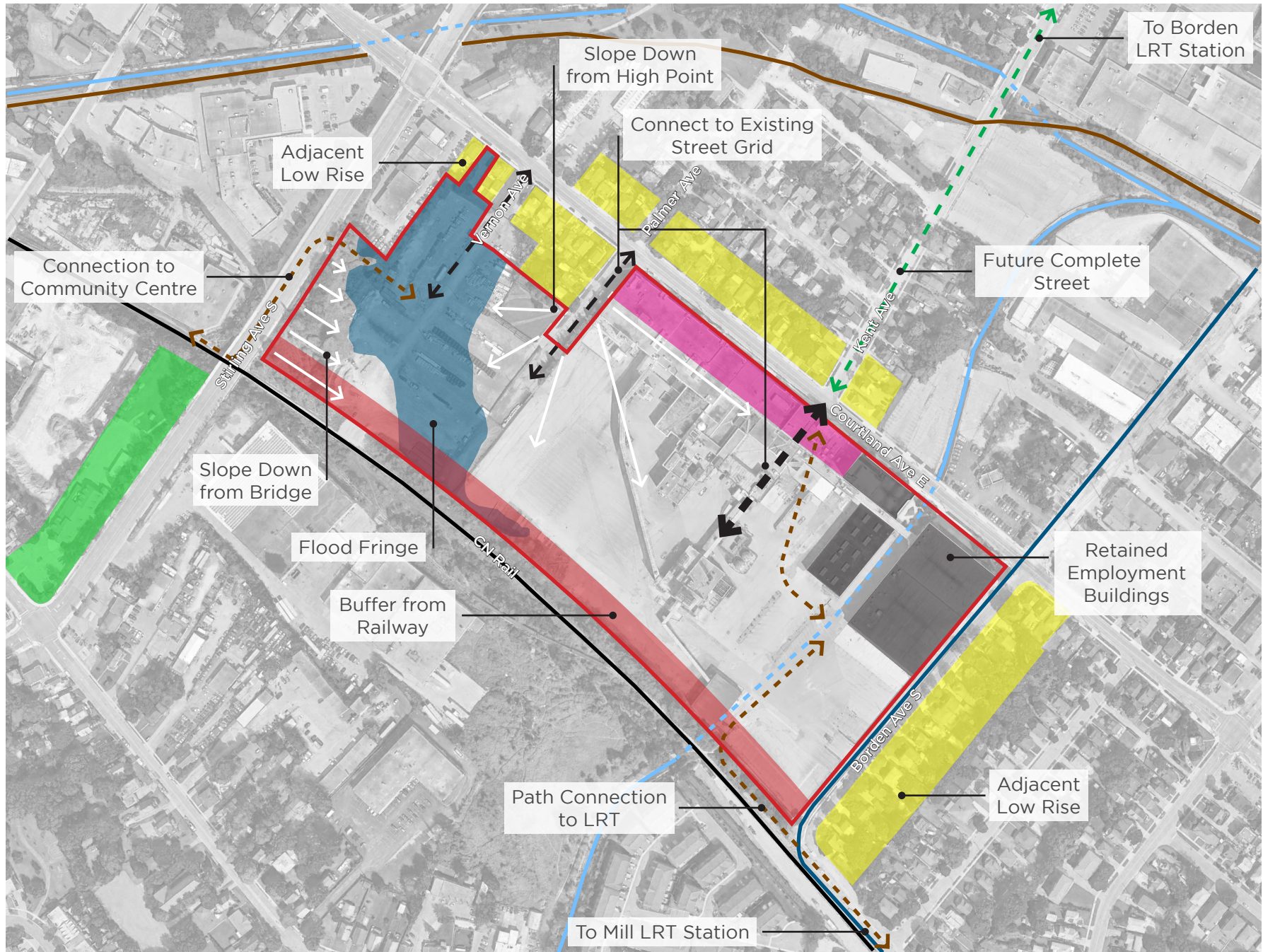


Palmer Avenue Streetscape



Schneider Creek Culvert south of CN Rail Corridor

# Existing Site Constraints and Opportunities



## Site Demolition Underway





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## **Policy & Guideline Basis**



### 3.1 Official Plan

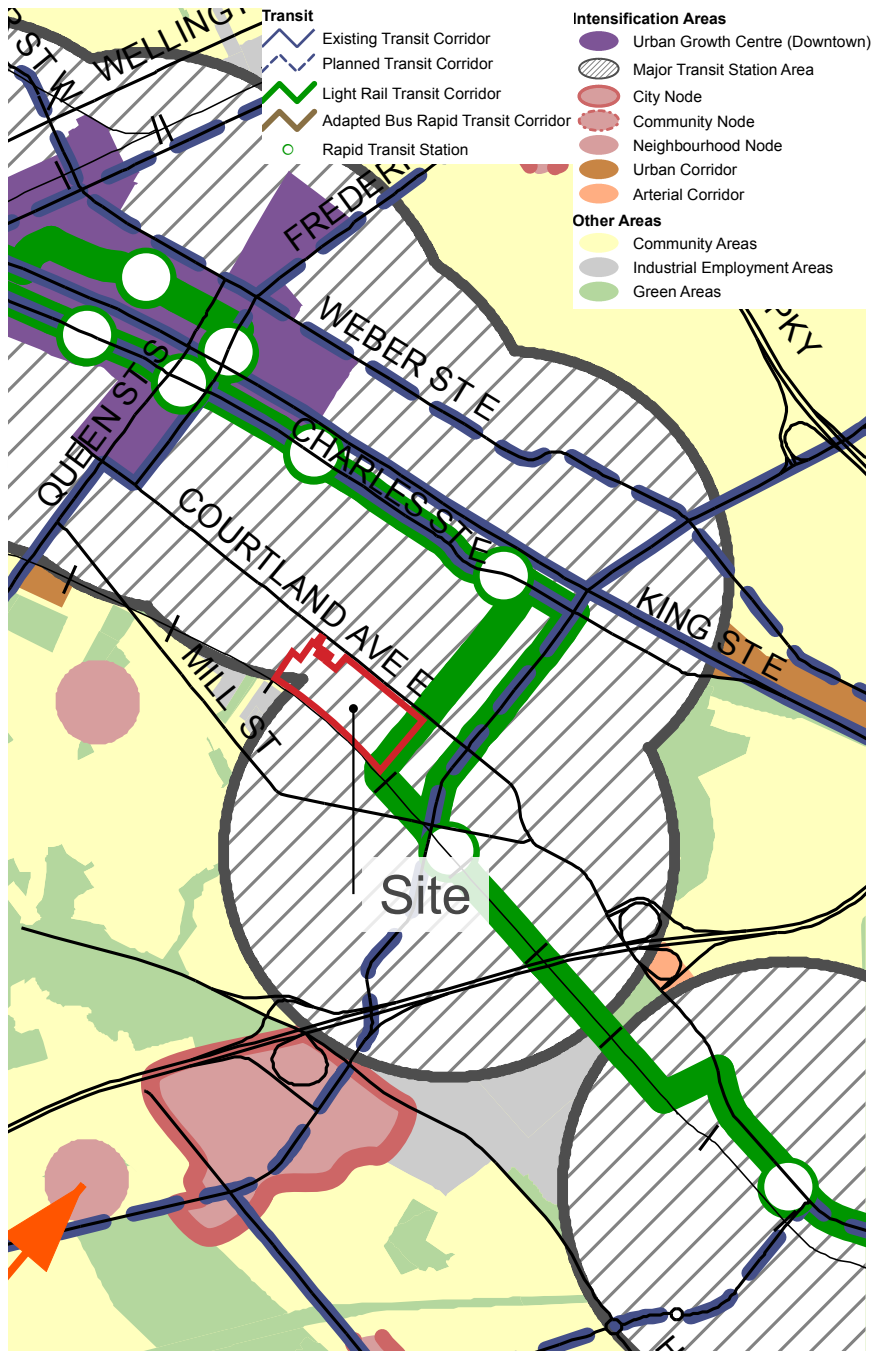
The new City of Kitchener Official Plan (the “2014 Kitchener Official Plan”) was adopted by Kitchener City Council in 2014 and approved with modifications by the Region in November 2014. The following design-related sections are relevant to the site’s design.

#### Land Use Structure

The site is part of the “Major Transit Station Area”, the planned function which are detailed through Station Area Planning exercises. Generally, Major Transit Station Areas are to provide a focus for growth and development to support transit service levels, provide connections for various transportation modes to the transit system, achieve a mixture of uses, and have pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented streetscapes and buildings. Sections 3.C.2.18 and 3.C.2.19 identify that the City will prepare Station Area plans to direct future development and redevelopment in these areas.

#### Urban Design

Section 11 contains the general urban design policy direction for Kitchener. At the neighbourhood level, Section 11.C.1.28 directs that development or redevelopment within Kitchener’s Central Neighbourhoods is to be compatible with the existing neighbourhood. At the site level, Section 11.C.1.29 intends that existing sites are redeveloped and community infrastructure is *“planned to enhance the site, buildings, open spaces and the streetscape”*. Section 11.C.1.31 intends that ensure new buildings are designed and existing buildings are reworked to *“enhance pedestrian usability, respects and reinforce human scale, create attractive streetscapes and contribute to rich and vibrant urban places”*.



## Sustainability

Section 7.C.4. provides the policy direction for sustainable development. Section 7.C.4.1 provides the general direction indicating that the City “will ensure that development and redevelopment strives to be increasingly sustainable”. This includes encouragement, support and potentially requirements of compact development and efficient built form, environmentally responsible design and construction practices, integration and enhancement of natural features and landscapes, reduction of resource consumption associated with development, and transit-supportive development and greater use of active transportation modes. Section 7.C also contains a series of other sections and policies related to promoting and encouraging supporting sustainable development matters, including water conservation, energy conservation and efficiency, alternative energy systems, waste reduction and management, and air quality.

## Parks and Open Spaces

Section 8.C provides the policy direction for parkland within Kitchener. Per Sections 8.C.1.13 and 8.C.1.15, the Parks Strategic Plan provides the direction for the requirements for open space and public parks in each neighbourhood including where future parkland is required. In respect to site selectin, Section 8.C.1.15 further indicates that the City will “select suitable sites, and plan for the complete integration of these sites with the integrated transportation system, the public transit system and multi-use pathway network”. Complementing the public spaces, Section 8.C.1.21 identifies that on-site recreation facilities and usable greenspace will be required in multiple housing development and affordable housing developments. Section 8.C.1.23 identifies that the City will encourage “useable and accessible semi-public spaces in private developments that provide linkages and/or support arts, culture, recreation and leisure opportunities for its residents”. Section 8.C.1.34 directs that “[p]rivately built urban squares and parks held in private ownership will not be considered part of parkland dedication”.

## Streets

Courtland Avenue is identified as a “Regional Road”, which are principally meant for higher capacity *“people and goods movement within, through and between municipalities”*. Regional Roads are generally to have sidewalks on both sides of the street and dedicated on-street cycling facilities where appropriate, and new access points is to be regulated to maintain these streets’ traffic carrying capacity. Borden Avenue, Palmer Avenue and Kent Avenue are all identified as a “Local Street”, which are meant to *“provide access to abutting properties and are not intended to carry high volumes of through traffic”*. Local Streets are to have sidewalks on both sides of the street and shared on-road cycling facilities.

## Active Transportation

Section 13.C.1.2 supports pedestrian and cycling environments that provide *“opportunities to walk and cycle for convenient travel, recreational, health, environmental and economic reasons”* through such means as *“integrating pedestrian and cycling facilities into existing, expanded and new development areas”* and *“providing pedestrian and cyclist connections to transit stops”*. Section 13.C.1.13 requires *“new, multi-unit residential, commercial, industrial, office and institutional developments”* to provide secure bicycle parking and encourages the provision of shower and change facilities for commuters. Section 13.C.1.6 encourages a mix of land uses to accommodate opportunities for walking to work and services without the need for driving or transit. Section 13.C.1.4 identifies that pedestrian-friendly streets will be designed by providing sufficiently wide sidewalks, minimizing conflicts with vehicular traffic through street design, and providing for more attractive, comfortable and safe streetscapes.

A “Planned Secondary Multi-Use Pathway/Connection (Type 2)” runs through the site’s eastern portion. This is meant to provide a three-season north-south connection between Mill Street and Iron Horse Trail, following the alignment shown in the Multi-Use Pathways and Trails

Master Plan for the design, development and operation of the multi-use pathway system per Policy 13.C.2.1. Development applications are to reflect the Multi-Use Pathways and Trails Master Plan per Policy 13.C.2.2, although Section 13.C.2.3 does allow changes to the location and alignment to reflect on-the-ground conditions and opportunities with the need for an Official Plan Amendment.

## Transit

Section 13.C.3.1 identifies the City *“will ensure that all development and/or redevelopment proposals in areas serviced or planned to be serviced by public transit support the provision of an efficient, convenient and safe public transit service”*. Section 13.C.3.2 directs that the City strive to *“ensure an arrangement of development and streets whereby the maximum walking distance to a planned or existing transit stop will not exceed 450 metres for 95 percent of residences, places of employment and community facilities”*. Section 13.C.3.12 identifies that the City will apply the relevant TOD provisions of the Regional Official Plan for the consideration of development and redevelopment applications sites served by rapid transit or higher frequency transit.

## Transportation Demand Management

Section 13.C.7.1 establishes the City’s support for the Region’s TDM policies and initiatives. Specifically, Section 13.C.7.3 identifies *“the incorporation of Transportation Demand Management measures”* may be required and Section 13.C.7.4 contemplates *“reduced parking requirements for development and/or redevelopment in accordance with Policy 13.C.8.2 where a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management Report is submitted to the satisfaction of the City”*. Section 13.C.8.6 specifically identifies that the City will develop a parking reduction strategy for land within Major Transit Station Areas to recognize and encourage rapid transit use.



## 3.2 Rockway PARTS Plan

The PARTS Plans provide a more land use and design direction for each of the ION Station Areas within Kitchener. They are meant to further the policy direction of the Regional and Kitchener Official Plans concerning Major Transit Station Areas. The PARTS Rockway Plan was approved by City Council in December 2017 but has not yet been implemented through Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments.

### Station-Wide Strategies

The PARTS Rockway Plan was formulated based on a series of “Station-Wide Strategies” that sets the framework for capitalizing on the LRT investment in terms of land use and development patterns. This basis includes the following five strategic themes, each of which has nested series of specific strategies. The five themes include:

1. Creating a transit-supportive development pattern.
2. Designing streets as places.
3. Creating a strong park and open space network by improving connections between existing open spaces and providing a range of new open spaces.
4. Designing buildings that support placemaking and deliver an interesting and varied built environment.
5. Seamlessly integrating parking and servicing into a pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive environment.

### Key Directions

A series of “Key Directions” provides a general direction for land use and built form within the PARTS Rockway Plan. For the site, Key Direction #8 calls for the “*reurbanization of the form Schneiders site*” as higher intensity mixed-use development of residential and non-residential uses. Key Direction #8 for the site provides a set of eight area-specific land use and design strategies for the ultimate form of development, as follows:

- a) *Implement a framework of new land use permissions on the site to accommodate a mix of housing, innovation employment and supportive commercial uses.*
- b) *Through redevelopment, a significant new on-site park should be provided. The park should be designed and oriented to establish a connection between Kent Avenue and the Shoemaker Creek corridor, provide amenity for on- and off-site users, and help celebrate the history of the site.*
- c) *As part of the redevelopment of the site, a logical network of streets and blocks should be provided. This may include the extension of adjacent streets into the site and connections via a logical network of public or private internal streets. Alternate right-of-way widths and standards may need to be considered as long as services, utilities and amenities can appropriately be provided.*
- d) *Building height step-backs should be included in the zoning and design of buildings along Courtland Avenue, particularly for portions of buildings above four storeys. Attention should be given to the appropriate design of other mid-rise building areas on the site.*
- e) *Any buildings nine storeys and above should conform to the City’s Tall Building guidelines and any related zoning regulations.*
- f) *Locate parking below grade, and / or within structures at the back of the site (subject to flood fringe policy criteria). Require reduced and shared parking between different uses on the site. Some surface parking could be considered in certain portions of the site during the initial phases of development to support the feasibility of new employment uses (in addition to the existing surface parking facility on the side of Courtland Avenue).*
- g) *Redevelopment should achieve a high standard of environmental (sustainability) performance and the feasibility of district energy should be studied.*
- h) *The site should incorporate green infrastructure, including on-site urban stormwater management features.*

## Preferred Land Use Plan

The preferred land use plan in the PARTS Rockaway Plan calls for the mixed-use redevelopment of the former Schneiders site, including employment, multiple residential, and mixed-use buildings. Four land use designations apply to the site: “Innovation Employment”, “Mixed-Use Medium Density”, “High Rise Residential”, and “Mid-Rise Residential”. The intent is that these designations would form the basis for the future City-initiated Official Plan Amendment implementing the PARTS Rockway Plan.

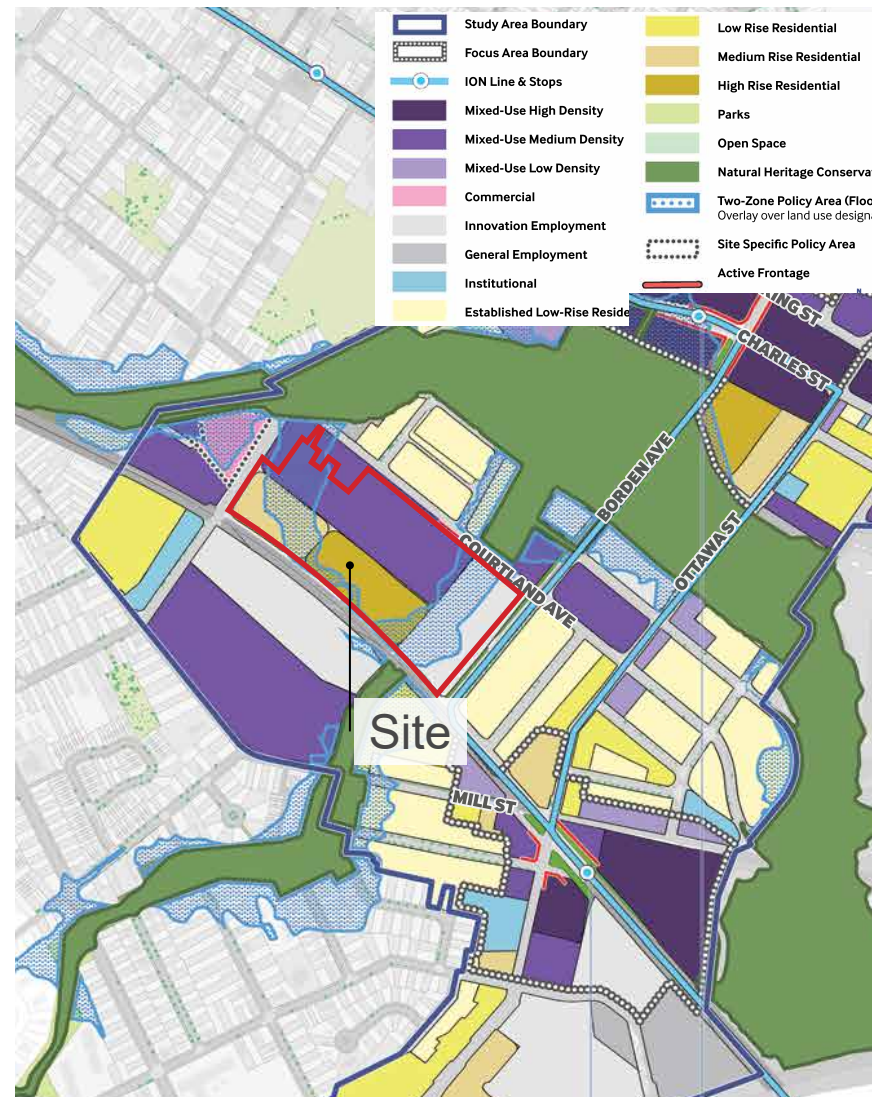
(a) The Innovation Employment designation applies to the area around the Courtland and Borden intersection and extending along Borden to the railway. This designation is intended predominantly for office and high-tech manufacturing, including both large and small buildings, as well as opportunities for street related retail and restaurant uses to provide amenity. The Floor Space Ratio is meant to be between 0.6 to 2.0 and the maximum building height is 6 storeys.

(b) The Mixed-Use Medium Density designation lines the remainder of the site’s frontage portion along Courtland Avenue. This area is intended for a mixture of office, residential and retail uses with active uses at street level in a general form between 5 and 8 storeys in height, with parking in underground garages. The Floor Space Ratio is meant to be between 1.0 to 2.0 and the maximum building height is 8 storeys.

(c) The High Rise Residential designation is on the eastern portion of the site’s southern boundary shared with the CNR Railway edge, located away from the Courtland frontage. This area is intended for taller residential buildings greater than 8 storeys, building bases oriented to line streets and parks, and parking in underground garages. The Floor Space Ratio is meant to be between 2.0 to 4.0 and there is no maximum building height.

(d) The Mid-Rise Residential designation is located to the west of

the High Rise Residential designation, along the boundaries with the CNR Railway and Stirling Avenue. This area is intended for mid-rise residential buildings with buildings between 4 and 8 storeys in height, buildings oriented to line streets and open spaces, and parking in underground garages. The Floor Space Ratio is meant to be between 1.0 to 2.0 and the maximum building height is 8 storeys.



### 3.3 Urban Design Manual

#### General Guidelines (Part A)

Part A includes the following general themes:

- Site Design Guidelines: address considerations of ensuring safe and functional site circulation; screening of site servicing components; providing landscaping that enhances the overall project and the streetscape; providing site signage that does not clutter the streetscape; providing adequate light levels and minimizing intrusion of light; minimizing emergency response time; and arranging groups of buildings to create safe, secure and usable internal spaces.
- Building Design and Massing Guidelines: promote individual architectural expression, rather than prescribing architectural styles, colours or materials, and generally seek attractive buildings forms, façades and roof designs that are compatible with surrounding buildings, complementary to neighbourhood character and existing built fabric, and that minimize microclimate impacts through building design.
- CPTED Guidelines: identify physical design measures to proactively prevent crime through site and building design. There are specific guidelines for different land use typologies and built form typologies.

#### PARTS Design Brief (Part B)

The Design Brief for the PARTS Station Areas is meant as a interim design direction for certain Station Areas surrounding ION Stations, including the Mill and Charles Station. The Design Brief provides general corridor-wide design guidelines for all Station Areas. The general goals of the guidelines are to:

- *Manage Growth and Change: focusing and directing growth within Station Areas reinforces and optimizes public infrastructure investments, builds compact, sustainable and complete communities and encourages transit use.*
- *Ensure a Mix of Land Uses: the type and mixture of land uses within the Station Areas will help create a sense of place and encourage a shift towards more sustainable modes of transportation and movement. Station Areas will contain different land uses.*
- *Enhance Transportation Choice and Connectivity: the success of the rapid transit system and station study areas will be influenced by many factors including the provision of a range of inter-connected transportation options that are efficient, convenient, enjoyable, safe, easily navigable, continuous and barrier-free. Transportation Demand Management measures will be critical.*
- *Enhance Placemaking, Safety and Community Design: New places, spaces and neighbourhoods will emerge and be shaped in areas around the rapid transit stations. To ensure that each of these is successful and vibrant, the design of station study areas must carefully integrate matters of built form, architecture, public realm, streetscape, place making, safety and universal design.*
- *Guide Public and Private Investment: Light Rail Transit is a significant catalyst for shaping the built form and streetscapes of our community into the future. Additional strategic investments in the infrastructure and public realm in the areas beyond the immediate LRT line and stations stops can potentially provide further amenities to leverage an area's marketability and livability.*

## Tall Building Design Guidelines (Part B)

The Kitchener Tall Building Guidelines are meant as an addition to the Urban Design Manual to guide the design of tall buildings in the city, defined in the Official Plan as buildings over 9 storeys in height. The Guidelines are meant to be read in conjunction with the policies of the Official Plan and guidelines of the Urban Design Manual and are meant to be applied on a case-by-case basis. The key themes of the Draft Tall Building Design Guidelines include the following:

- Building bases: that are sized and massed to support pedestrian spaces, with taller ground floors that are active, transparent, and weather protected, balconies/amenity area for street-facing elevations, and at-grade parking structures that are hidden.
- Building towers: that have a compact footprint preferably with design measures that break up the visual mass of the tower (materials, articulation, minimum step-backs from building base, balconies, and floor plate design) and transitions in height to lower rise through sensitive design in form. For consideration of multiple tower developments, additional considerations include variation in tower height between buildings, physical separation between towers determined by the building's height and tower length, and limited overlook on surrounding towers, through mitigating design techniques as necessary
- Building tops: that have a quality expression with integrated mechanicals and usable space, and different massing, materials, and step-back changes to provide distinction.
- Safety and Security: buildings designed to maximize natural surveillance opportunities on streets and spaces with active ground floor uses, generous wall transparency, and upper storey windows and balconies
- Open Spaces: a mixture of public and private spaces, that may vary in the nature type, location and design to provide outdoor amenity area for residents.

- Public Realm: a human-scaled, varied, visually appealing and landscaped treatment within the public realm with consideration for lighting, access, seating, and weather protection elements.
- Connections: incorporation of direct, logical, and continuous publicly-accessible mid-block connections through larger sites.
- Views: tall buildings that maintain, enhance and create view corridors and vistas.
- Compatibility of built form: compatibility through heights, scale, massing, and materials, taking design cues from surrounding context, setbacks and step-backs, and contemporary styles.
- Compatibility with heritage: respect of existing heritage resources through the scale, form, character, siting of new buildings, including considerations of designing the base to respect scale, setbacks, proportions and materials of adjacent built heritage.
- Sustainability: employ design choices in design, materials, and construction, including considerations for building materials, roof design, landscaping, stormwater management, energy efficiency and generation, lighting, and waste management.
- Bird-friendly: design considerations of lighting and surfaces regarding safety for birds.
- Micro-climate: minimization of shadow and wind impacts, with mitigation through the building as warranted.

## Design Standards (Part C)

Part C contains design standards that provide specifications on technical details. Many detailed design standards sections are applicable to this development, but are better implemented at the Site Plan approval stage.



# 4

## Design Vision & Objectives



#### 4.1 Development Vision

321 Courtland Ave. Developments is proposing a compact, mixed-use redevelopment of the site. It will be a true mixed-use addition to the neighbourhood, including a range of low, mid and high-rise housing options; street-fronting retail spaces; and opportunities for employment uses. The non-residential uses will include opportunities for retaining and re-purposing some of the existing buildings on the site to create distinct, vibrant commercial spaces. Public streets will extend onto the site in a fashion that connects the existing neighbourhood fabric and breaks up the large site into smaller development blocks. These new urban streets will set the basis for a tree-lined public realm accommodating walking and cycling through the site. Complementing the public streets, a publicly-accessible series of parks and plazas that run north-south through the development will be a public realm focal point for the development and the surrounding neighbourhood. Collectively the development would be tied together with sustainable approaches and green infrastructure as it concerns site and building design.

## 4.2 Design Objectives

The following core design objectives reflect the achievement of the above development vision for the site. These objectives adapt the general intent of the Kitchener Official Plan, Urban Design Manual and PARTS Rockway Plan tailored to the site. The objectives form the basis for the Site Master Plan and supporting design guidelines informing the components that make up the development. Collectively, the proposed design strives for:

1. A true mixed-use addition to the Rockway community that incorporates a mix of employment spaces for creative and innovative industries, varied housing choices in different forms, supporting retail, service and food spaces, and recreation and amenity spaces.
2. A series of attractive, active and pedestrian-oriented public streetscapes for both existing bounding public streets and new internal public streets on the site, achieved through building positioning, at-grade use and orientation, and supporting design elements and features.
3. A connected street network and circulation pattern on the site through extensions of new public streets that break up the site into a finer-grained fabric that is complemented by mid-block circulation routes, providing for a balanced vehicular and active transportation through the site.
4. A pattern of building massing and orientation that reinforces public street frontages with an intimate relationship between building and streetscapes, achieved through both building positioning close to the street edge and ground floor use, design and exterior articulation.
5. A pattern of building scale and transitions that knits the development with the surrounding neighbourhood's fabric through a street-related mid-rise form along Courtland and Borden and transitions into the site to taller building forms.
6. A design of the taller buildings along the site's southern property edge with a particular attention to sculpt and articulate the upper mass of the buildings to add variety throughout the block and provide for an attractive and distinct addition to Kitchener's skyline.
7. An emphasis on structured parking as the predominant parking supply through the site ultimately, with on-street parking spaces to assist with providing short term needs and surface parking and loading areas away from public views.
8. An architectural character that creates a contemporary approach to the overall development through a balance of "re-skinned" existing buildings and new buildings that embrace an architecture and materiality providing an integrated project expression moving forward.
9. An encouragement of sustainable development choices and initiatives (further to the broad achievements through transit-support, urban intensification, and building re-purposing) that promote environmental sustainability within the Rockway community as part of the redevelopment of an industrial brownfield into a vibrant new neighbourhood.
10. A landscape scheme that softens and helps define streets and circulation routes, public and private open spaces, and buildings with plantings and features, the latter with opportunities to incorporate reflections of the site's industrial past.







# 5

## Site Master Plan & Guidelines

