



Proposed Residential Apartment 310 – 316 Erb Street West Parking Justification Study

City of Waterloo

Prepared for:
Urban Legend Group

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1 Introduction

This Parking Justification Study has been prepared in support of applications for the lands on the north side of Erb Street West in the City of Waterloo municipally known as 310-316 Erb Street West. The proposal includes a 93-unit apartment building with 84 parking spaces for a parking supply ratio of 0.9 spaces per unit. The study was undertaken as a submission requirement in accordance with pre-submission consultation with City staff and is based on a site plan prepared by Edge Architects Ltd. A Site Location Plan and Site Plan are attached in Appendix A and Appendix B.

The primary purpose of this study is to review the transportation context of the site, the proposal itself including the planned transportation demand management (TDM) measures, the travel characteristics of the people who are likely to live in the building and to provide an overall justification for the proposed parking supply, which does not conform with the general Zoning By-law requirements.

The site is well suited to travel by transit and active transportation and a number of TDM measures are planned to be incorporated into the site. In addition, most of the units are small – less than 50 s.m. – and are meant to provide an affordable option for residents wanting to own a home in Waterloo.

2 Site Transportation Context

The site is located on the north side of Erb Street West just west of University Avenue West and Westmount Road. Erb Street in the vicinity of the site is a four-lane road with an urban cross-section under the jurisdiction of the Region of Waterloo. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street as well as on-street bicycle lanes in both directions.

Bus stops are located on Erb Street near the site both to the east and to the west. The stops to the east are between 55 and 95 metres from the site and a pedestrian refuge island is provided to assist in crossing Erb Street near Beechwood Manor and the bus stop on the south side of the road. To the west, stops are provided about 150 metres away at the Amos Avenue intersection, which is signalized and provides a protected pedestrian crossing of Erb Street. Both sets of stops provide access to local Grand River Transit (GRT) route 5, but the westerly stops at Amos Avenue also provide access to iExpress GRT route 202. A map showing the transit routing in the area is attached to this report in Appendix C and the service levels are described in the table below.

Table 1: Grand River Transit Nearby Service Levels

Route	Service Levels		
	Weekday	Saturday	Sundays and Holidays
5	6 AM to Midnight 30-minute service	7 AM to Midnight 30-minute service	10 AM to 6:16 PM 45-minute service
202	6 AM to Midnight 15-minute service during the day, 30-minute service in the evening	7:30 AM to 12:30 AM 30-minute service	8:00 AM to 12:30 AM 30-minute service

Transit service connecting to many destinations including The Boardwalk, Uptown Waterloo and the ION, the University district and Conestoga Mall is available from the site at 15-minute intervals or better during the weekday and at 30 minute intervals or better in the evenings and on the weekends in both express and local routing options.

Cycling infrastructure in the area provides good options for travel by bicycle. On-street bike lanes are available in front of the site on Erb Street West and on nearby arterial routes on Fischer-Hallman Road and on University Avenue West. These facilities provide connections to the many trails and other cycling facilities throughout the City and the Region as illustrated in the attached 2020 Waterloo Cycling Map (see Appendix D).

In addition, both the Region and the City have plans to improve the cycling network in the area as illustrated in the City's Proposed Ultimate Cycling Network (Appendix E) in their Draft Transportation Master Plan and the Region's 2041 Active Transportation Network (Waterloo) figure from their 2018 update to the Regional Transportation Master Plan (Appendix F).

Notable Regional projects include upgrading the Westmount Road, Fischer-Hallman Road and Erb Street corridors to provide continuous cycling facilities where there are currently discontinuities. Notable City projects include the development of a Priority Cycling Network and upgrading of the University Avenue corridor to provide continuous and improved facilities. All of the new facilities provide the same or better separation than the existing facilities in the key corridors. These projects together will result in a far more connected, continuous, protected and useful cycling network that makes cycling in the City of Waterloo and beyond more attractive.

The pedestrian infrastructure in the area around the site is mature and connected. Sidewalks are available on both sides of the roads in the area including Erb Street and, as mentioned previously, there is a pedestrian refuge island on Erb Street near the bus stops to the east and a signalized intersection at Amos Avenue near the bus stops to the west.

The site is located within walking distance of many commercial and community amenities. A neighborhood plaza is located about 200 metres away on the south side of Erb Street with an animal hospital, a variety store, several small restaurants and a neighborhood food store. Beechwood Centre at the Erb/Fischer-Hallman intersection and Westmount Place at the Erb/Westmount intersection are both within one kilometre walk of the site and provide access to a wide variety of commercial and community uses. Waterloo Park is just over one kilometre from the site and about a 15 minute walk. The Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex is about 1.5 kilometres from the site or about a 20-minute walk.

3 The Proposal

The application proposes a residential apartment building with 93 units of condominium tenure. The unit mix is made up of 78 one-bedroom and 15 two-bedroom units. The one-bedroom units have an average size of 48 s.m. and 70 of them are smaller than 50 s.m., categorizing them as small units in some nearby municipal Zoning By-laws, including the City of Kitchener. The intention of the developer is to meet the market need for owned apartments that are affordable to first-time home buyers.

84 parking spaces are proposed to serve the 93 units, or 0.9 spaces per unit. The parking requirements and justification for the lower provision are discussed later in this report.

4 Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

4.1 Site Context

The site is located in a mature and generally built-out area of the City of Waterloo, along a Regional road. Surrounding land uses are predominantly residential, however, nearby land uses include a mix of commercial, residential, institutional and community uses to the east and west.

As mentioned previously in this report, the site enjoys good transit access and active transportation infrastructure nearby. Residents living in the proposed building would have access to their day-to-day commercial needs within close walking and cycling distance. Longer trips can reasonably be made by transit.

In addition to transportation options and amenities available nearby, there has been a tremendous growth in recent years in options for both ride-hailing (like Uber) and delivery of a wide variety of items, including groceries, that support the ability of people to live in buildings like the one that is proposed without owning a car.

4.2 Proposed TDM Measures

Transportation demand management includes measures that encourage non-auto driver modes, providing choices for how to travel, as well as a means of reducing the number of trips that are needed and reducing the demand for parking. Several TDM measures are proposed as part of the site development as outlined below.

- The building has been oriented to the street with the main lobby oriented to Erb Street along with the frontages of several ground floor units.
- The sidewalks and landscaping around the site are planned to be retained or enhanced with a strong pedestrian connection to the adjacent pedestrian network.
- Bicycle parking for the project is proposed at 58 spaces including both indoor, secure bike parking spaces for residents and short term, outdoor spaces for visitors. 49 spaces will be Type A and nine (9) spaces will be Type B, exceeding the City's general Zoning By-law requirements.
- Parking spaces will be sold separately from the residential units.
- One of the visitor parking spaces close to the lobby door will be designated for short-term (15-minute) parking to accommodate deliveries of food and other items to residents.
- The site's location relative to commercial and community amenities will be highlighted in the marketing materials for the building as well as the transportation options provided by nearby transit services and active transportation infrastructure.
- Travel planning resources, including information on local transit and active transportation infrastructure nearby, as well as options for ride sharing and delivery of goods, will be made available to residents.
- A reduction in the number of required parking spaces is being sought through the planning applications for the site.

The many TDM measures that have been incorporated into the proposal will serve to encourage travel options by transit, walking and cycling for residents and visitors and support residents who choose not to own a car. There is the potential for a reduction in the parking demand as discussed in the following section of this report.

5 Parking Assessment

The Zoning By-law requirement for parking to support the proposed residential uses is 1.2 parking spaces per unit or 112 spaces for the 93 units. The current concept plan includes 84 parking spaces or 0.9 spaces per unit – a reduction of 25 percent. Both the Zoning By-law requirement for parking and the proposed provision include for 0.1 spaces per unit for visitors. The proposal includes a reduction in the resident requirement for parking from 1.1 to 0.8 spaces per unit.

As highlighted earlier in this report, the transportation context of the site includes good transit access along with good active transportation infrastructure and many commercial and community amenities nearby. In addition, a number of TDM measures are planned as part of the site development.

Many (75 percent) of the proposed units are considered small units at areas less than 50 s.m. There are some municipalities in Ontario that have adjusted their Zoning By-laws to require less parking for small units (less than 50 or 51 s.m.). In Kitchener, small units in the downtown or just outside the downtown require parking at a rate of 0.165 spaces per unit (versus 1 space per unit downtown and 1.25 spaces per unit just outside downtown). The Kitchener Zoning By-law provides for a reduction in required parking of 83 to 87 percent for small units. In downtown Hamilton, the first 12 units in a multiple dwelling building do not require any parking, but for units 13+, small units require 0.3 spaces per unit and other units require 0.5 spaces per unit for units 13 to 50 and 0.7 spaces per unit for units 51 and above. The Hamilton Zoning By-law provides for a reduction in required parking of 40 to 57 percent for small units. In Welland, small apartment units outside of downtown require parking at a rate of 0.3 spaces per unit versus 1 space per unit for regular sized units. The Welland Zoning By-law provides for a reduction in required parking of 70 percent for small units.

In 2014 the Urban Land Institute undertook a study to evaluate the market performance and market acceptance of micro and small units from multiple perspectives. The study, entitled “The Macro View on Micro Units” included an extensive survey of both conventional apartment renters and renters of micro units from across the US. One of the questions they asked renters was the importance of assigned parking and visitor parking. In the survey 72% of conventional renters ranked assigned parking and visitor parking as “important” (4 or 5 out of 5 in relative importance). By contrast, in the same survey, renters of micro units ranked assigned parking as important 32 percent of the time and visitor parking as important 21 percent of the time. For people who choose to live in micro apartments, parking is not as important as it is to people who choose to live in a conventional apartment.

There are a number of outside services, including delivery services and rideshare, to support people living in the building without owning a car. Delivery services have grown significantly in the last year, in particular for goods needed on a daily or ongoing basis like groceries. Grocery delivery is now available in most markets in southern Ontario from a variety of sources. In this area of Waterloo, grocery delivery is available directly from large retailers like T&T, Sobeys, Zehrs and Walmart, smaller local retailers like Vincenzo's, and through specialty delivery services like MrsGrocery.com, Mama Earth, instacart, Grocery Gateway, Uber Eats and Skip the Dishes. The availability of these services means that residents do not need a car to bring home their weekly grocery order and can also make smaller orders more frequently.

There are a number of ridesharing services in Waterloo with options for repeat or long-distance ridesharing like Ridesharing.com, GoTravelWise.ca and Poparide, and shorter term options like Uber and Lyft. Traditional taxi style rides are also available.

The owner of the site is an experienced developer in the area having been involved in many significant projects including Blackstone (255 Northfield Drive East in Waterloo) and Station Park (607 King Street West in Kitchener). The Blackstone project is more suburban than the subject site while the Station Park project is more urban and located very near the ION Central Station. Sales data from the two projects was reviewed in the preparation of this parking justification.

The sales experience for the Blackstone project suggests a resident parking demand of 1.08 spaces per unit. The sales experience for the Station Park project suggests a resident parking demand of 0.55 spaces per unit.

The midpoint between the demand at Blackstone and the demand at Station Park is 0.815, however, the subject site more closely reflects the transportation context of the Station Park site given its proximity to Uptown Waterloo and its high level of accessibility from a transit and active transportation perspective. Additionally, the proposed unit mix more closely aligns with Station Park with a high percentage of one-bedroom units. The Blackstone project includes a more even mix of one- and two-bedroom units. As a result, the parking demand for the proposal is likely to skew lower towards the parking demand at Station Park. This sales experience suggests that provision of 0.8 spaces per unit for residents will accommodate the demand for parking in the proposal.

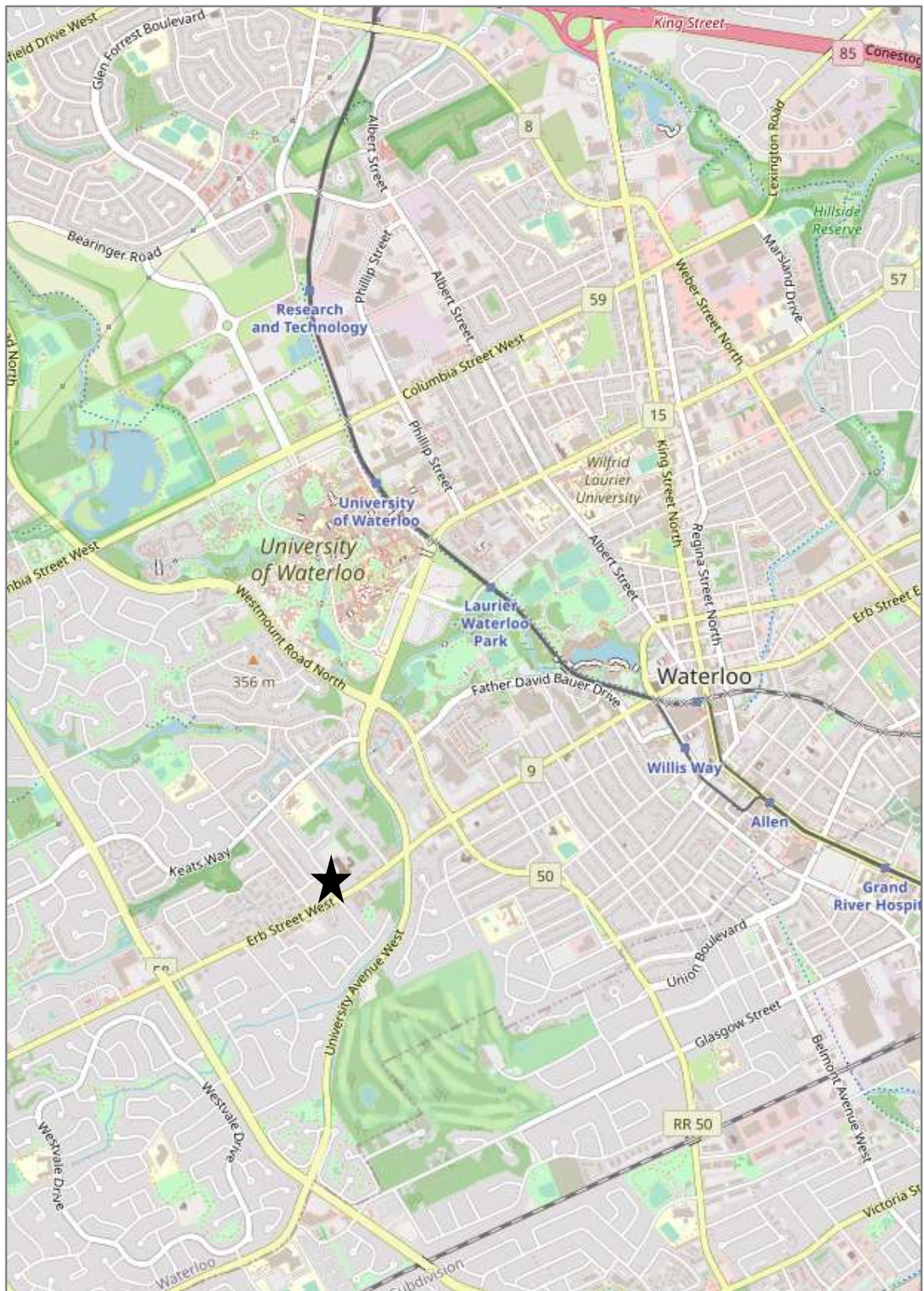
Given the proposed site plan, the transportation context of the site, the planned TDM measures and the availability of delivery, ridesharing and carshare options to people who would live at the site, the proposed provision of 0.9 spaces per unit including visitors is appropriate for the site. The resulting requirement for the proposal would be 84 parking spaces.

6 Summary and Conclusions

This Parking Justification has reviewed the transportation context of the site, the proposed TDM measures in the proposal, the proposal in the context of sales data provided for two comparable local projects, and services available to support people who do not own cars. It is the finding of this study that the proposed provision of 0.9 spaces per unit including 0.1 spaces per unit for visitors is appropriate on the following basis:

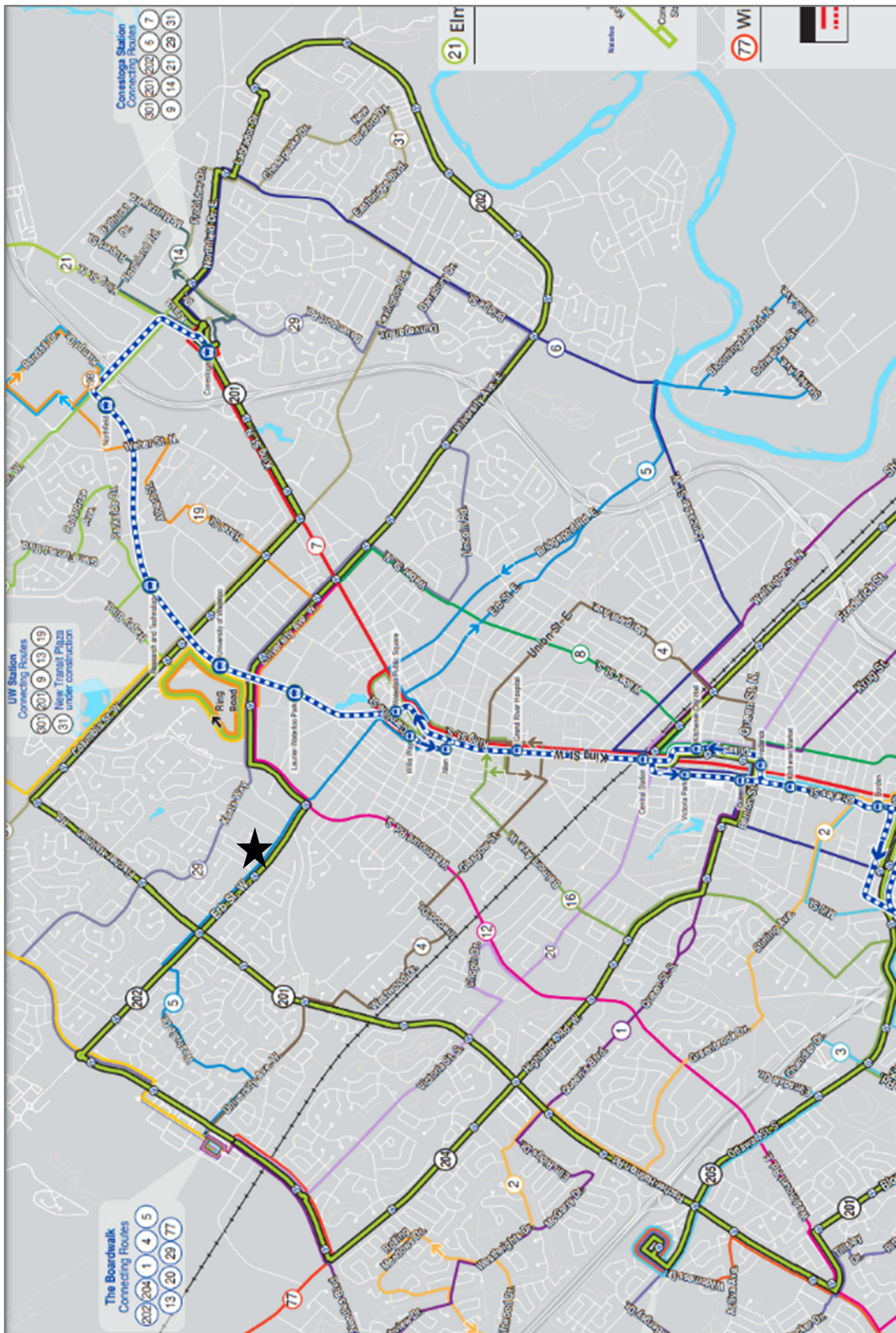
- Transit service connecting to many destinations including The Boardwalk, Uptown Waterloo and the ION, the University district and Conestoga Mall is available from the site at 15-minute intervals or better during the weekday and at 30-minute intervals or better in the evening and on the weekends in both express and local routing option.
- Cycling infrastructure in the area provides good options for travel by bicycle. Planned active transportation projects by both the Region and the City will result in a far more connected, continuous, protected and useful cycling network that makes cycling in this area of the City of Waterloo and beyond more attractive.
- The pedestrian infrastructure in the area around the site is mature and connected. The site is located within walking distance of many commercial and community amenities.
- The many TDM measures that have been incorporated into the proposal will serve to encourage travel options by transit, walking and cycling for residents and visitors.
- 75 percent of the proposed units are considered small units at areas less than 50 s.m. A 2014 study by the Urban Land Institute indicates that for people who choose to live in small apartments, parking is not as important as it is to people who choose to live in a conventional apartment.
- The smaller units are meant to provide an affordable option for residents wanting to own a home in Waterloo.
- There are a number of available outside services, including delivery services and rideshare, to support people living in the building without owning a car.
- The sales experience from the Blackstone and Station Park projects suggests that the provision of 0.8 spaces per unit for residents will accommodate the demand for parking in the proposal.

APPENDICES

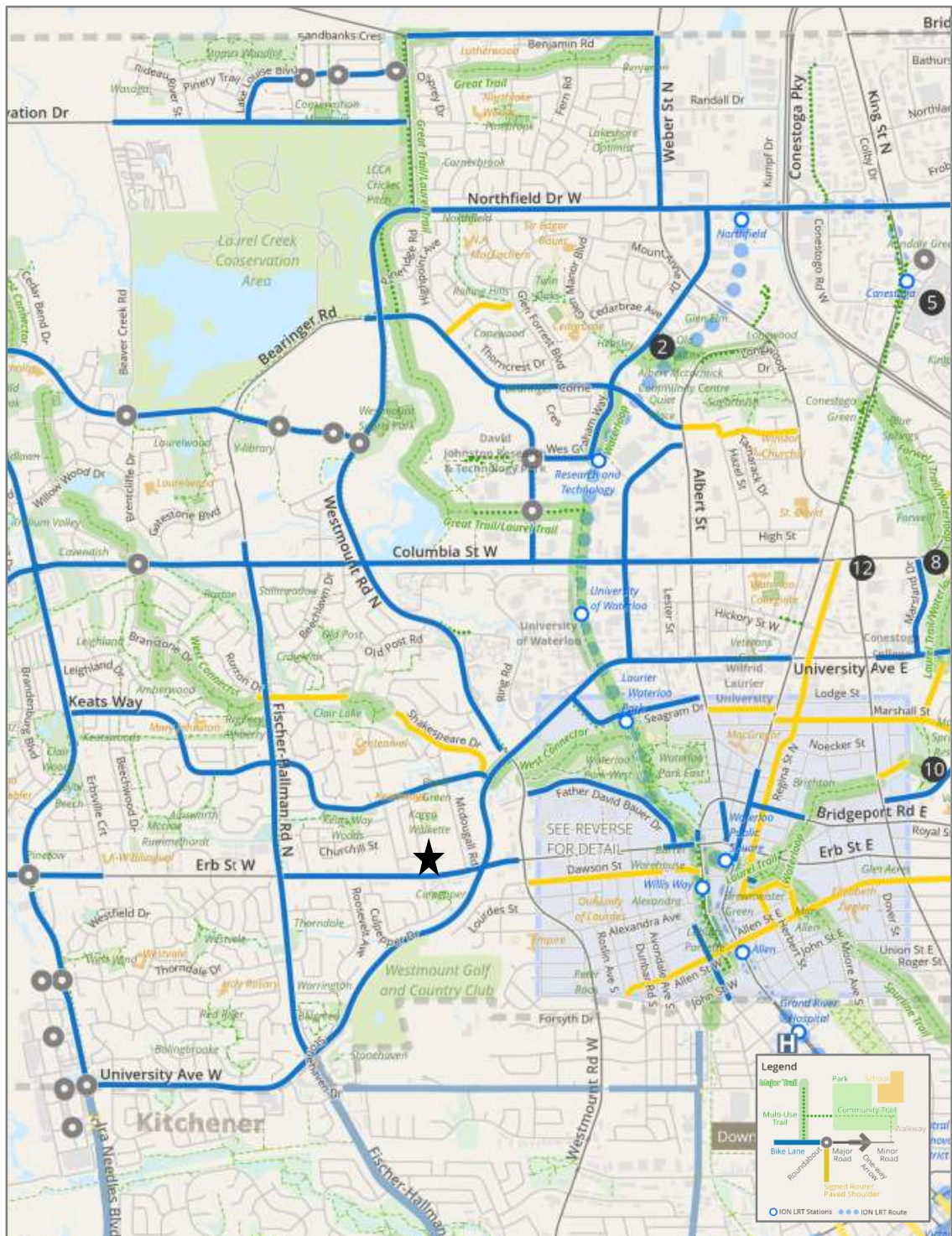


Appendix A: Site Location Plan

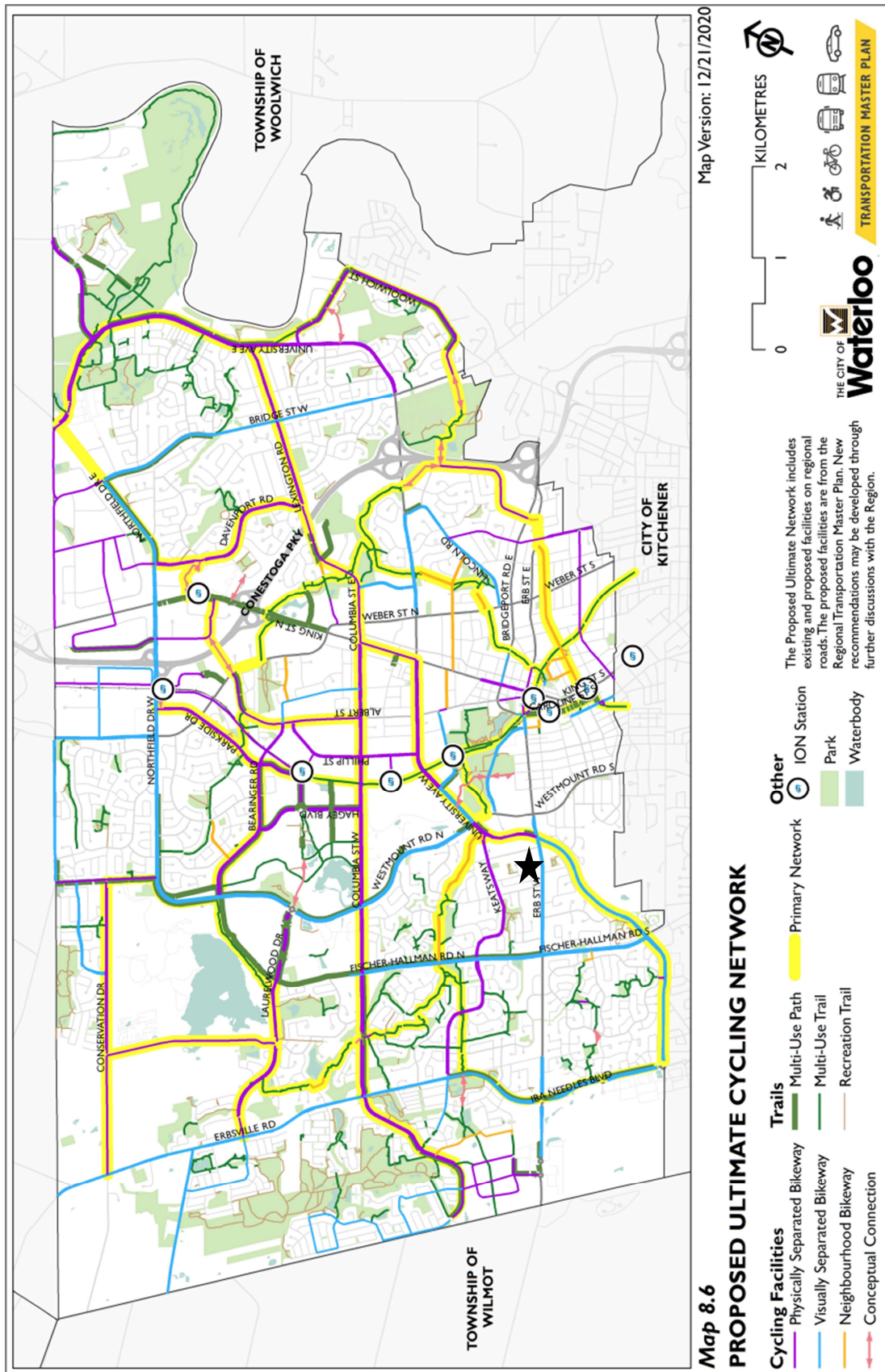
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Appendix C: Area Transit Map (GRT System Map)
www.grt.ca

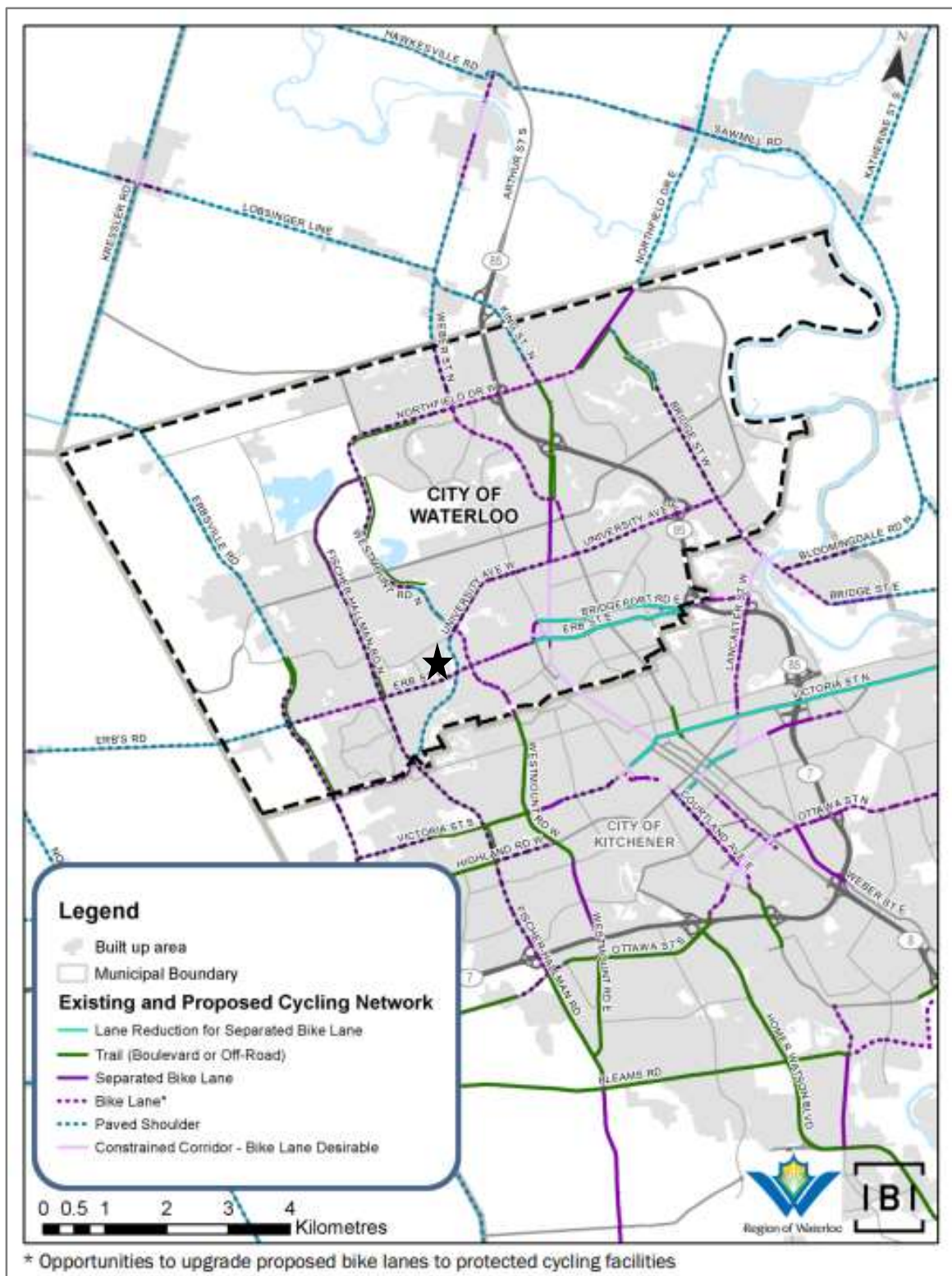


Appendix D: 2020 Waterloo Cycling Map
www.waterloo.ca



Appendix E: Planned Cycling Network (City of Waterloo TMP Update)

www.engagewr.ca



Appendix F: 2041 Waterloo Region Active Transportation Network (Waterloo)

www.regionofwaterloo.ca