



Approaches to Growth

Overview

We're exploring different ways to grow!

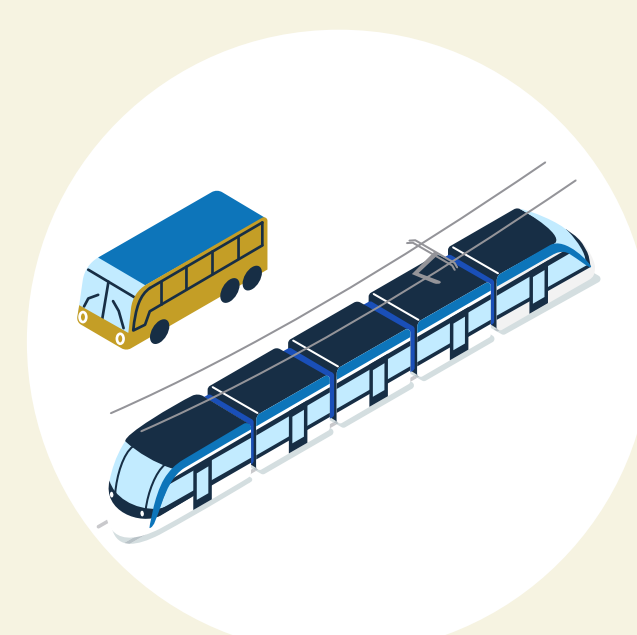
Just as they always have, Kitchener's neighbourhoods are growing to meet the changing needs of our community members, both existing and new. Responsible and equitable ways to accommodate growth will lead to a more vibrant and sustainable Kitchener with more to offer, including homes, shops, services and community spaces that can meet all our needs.

This means directing most of our future growth toward areas of the city with a higher concentration of buildings and infrastructure, in support of our collective objectives for Kitchener, as reflected in our Strategic Plan and Kitchener 2051 Community Values.

Doing so will:



Help limit sprawl and protect farmland and natural areas.



Make public transit more accessible to more people.



Create more opportunities to shop locally, and allow people to spend more time in more vibrant spaces in all our neighbourhoods.



Enable more housing choice, with the goal of providing a home within every neighbourhood that meets the needs of our diverse and diversifying community.

Why are we doing this?

Kitchener is forecasted to grow by approximately 150,000 residents and 57,000 new jobs by 2051.

Prior to the early 2000s, the City focused on growing outwards in new suburbs. Starting in the early 2000s, City Planners created the "Kitchener Growth Management Strategy" to shape growth within the existing built-up area. This informed the City of Kitchener's 2014 Official Plan which focuses on new growth in "nodes" such as major intersections or commercial areas, and along "corridors" being streets served by transit.

Now, Kitchener 2051 is exploring ways to complement this approach by allowing different types of housing growth and directing civic investment in other parts of the city in support of our collective objectives.



Did you know...

The Kitchener 2051 Approaches to Growth build on the work of the Growing Together project for Kitchener's Major Transit Station Areas – the areas surrounding the ION Light Rail Transit line. Growing Together prioritizes housing supply and choice in low, mid and high-rise forms, with carefully designed regulations to ensure that all kinds of housing are viable. It also broadly enables a mix of uses to bring more shops and services to all neighbourhoods, helps boost new small businesses, and creates more opportunities for innovation. Kitchener 2051 is exploring ways to apply lessons learned through Growing Together to other areas of the city outside of our Major Transit Station Areas.

How are we doing this?



Background Analysis

In Phase 1 and 2, we undertook background research to understand how we grow today and options for the future, amongst other topics.

We also developed a set of Community Values based on what you told us was important for the future of Kitchener.

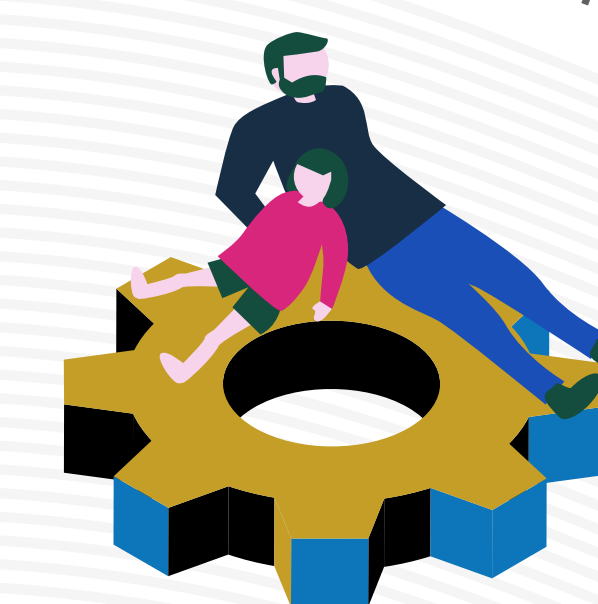
Both of these elements have informed the Approaches to Growth.



Approaches to Growth

Based on the background research and community values, City Staff modelled 3 ways that Kitchener could grow to accommodate our forecasted population and jobs. These were rooted in a set of core assumptions.

A set of criteria to evaluate the scenarios, based on climate, transportation, water, wastewater, and financial considerations, and community parameters evolved from the Values.



Analysis & Evaluation

We are currently analyzing each approach to growth based on a set of evaluation criteria to identify opportunities or constraints needing to be addressed.

This evaluation, along with your input on the Approaches to Growth, will be brought together to determine a preferred growth scenario.



Preferred Growth Scenario

The Draft Official Plan and its policies will be informed by both the Preferred Growth Scenario, which are expected to have elements of each approach.

The Draft Official Plan will also be shaped by the Big Ideas and Emerging Directions.



Draft Official Plan

Regular Council and Cross-Divisional Collaboration.
Community Engagement (including First Nations & Local Indigenous Engagement).



Core Assumptions

Through Phase 2 of Kitchener 2051, the City has developed and modelled three different approaches to growth. These potential approaches will be evaluated based on the community's input as well as a set of technical evaluation criteria to reach a preferred approach. Each of the approaches being assessed through Kitchener 2051 will achieve the following objectives.

Be Future Focused

- Accommodate a future population of 446,000 residents and 180,800 jobs by 2051.

Maintain Growth within the Existing Urban Area Boundary

- Accommodate the projected number of residents and jobs within the existing urban area boundary.
- Direct at least 60% of new growth to already built-up areas.
- Plan for more compact greenfield development, primarily within southwest Kitchener.



Did you know...

The City is also completing a separate project to plan for a new community in southwest Kitchener, known as the Dundee Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan will provide a road map for new urban uses over the long-term such as homes, parks, natural areas, shops, and schools – connected by trails, transit, streets, and sustainable infrastructure. As part of the Dundee Secondary Plan, an additional new urban centre is being envisioned to benefit this growing part of Kitchener.

Plan for Change Across the City Neighbourhoods

- Plan for at least 5,000 units of future residential growth within Kitchener's existing low-rise neighbourhoods.

Greater Integration of Places, Systems, and Networks

- Connect more people and jobs to mobility networks such as transit, trails and complete streets.
- Accommodate significant growth within our Major Transit Station Areas (~500-800m around ION station stops) by carrying forward the Growing Together planning framework.

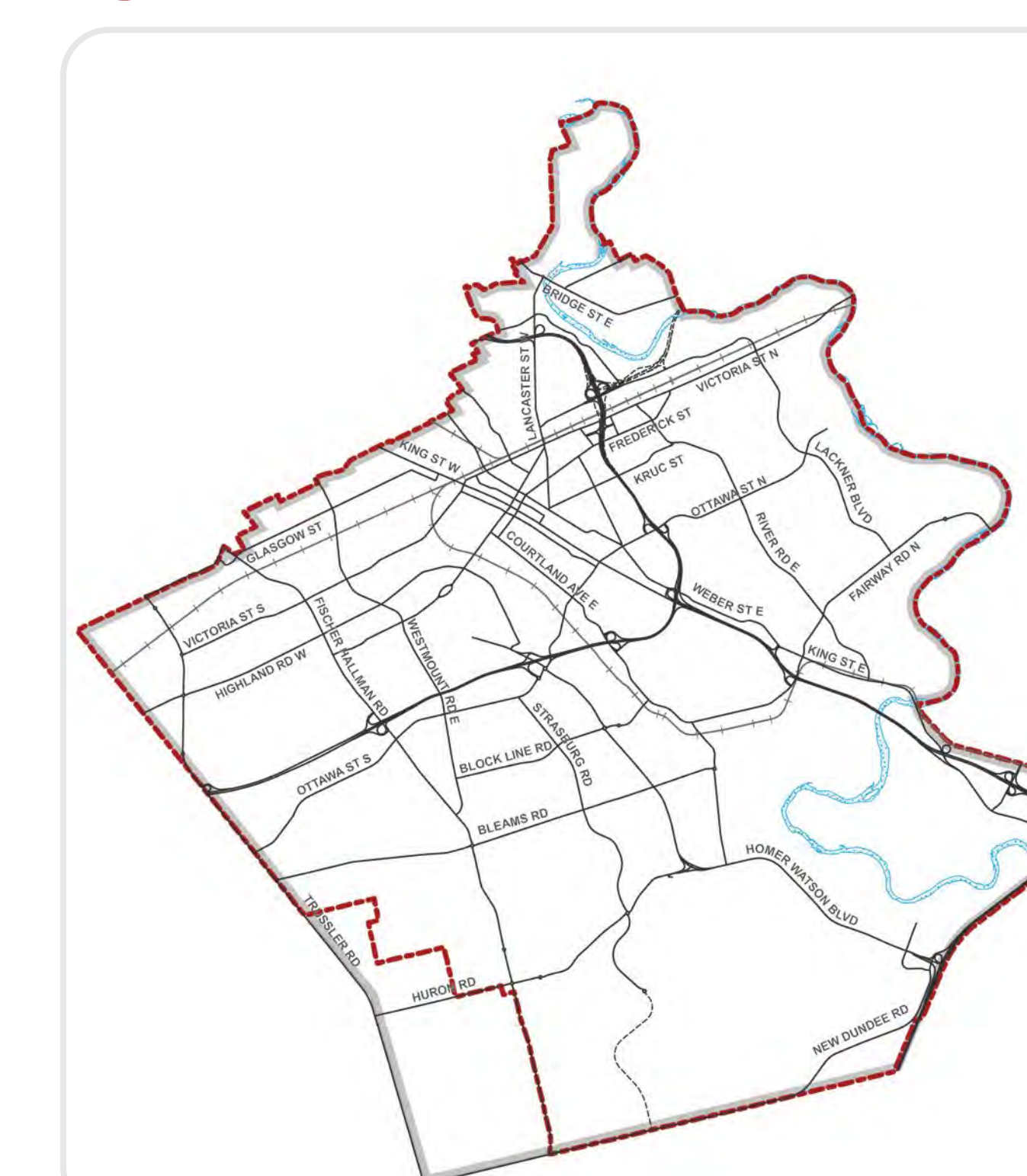
Conserve and Protect the Natural Heritage System

- Carry forward the current Official Plan's Natural Heritage System and Floodway mapping.

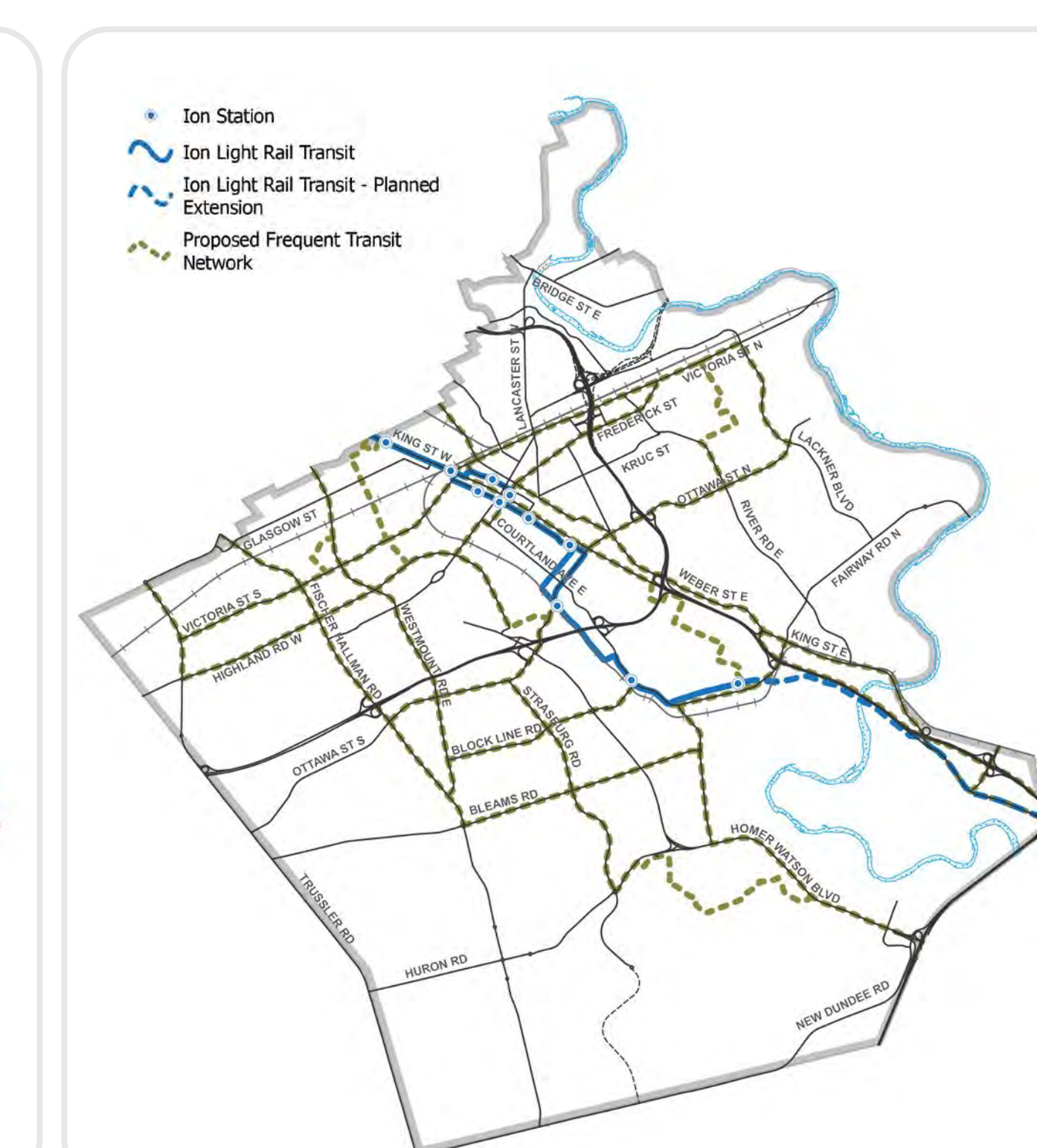
Support Kitchener's Economy

- Protect and plan for new jobs within Kitchener's Employment Areas by assuming at least 20% growth in these locations.
- Foster economic development by supporting job growth outside of employment areas.

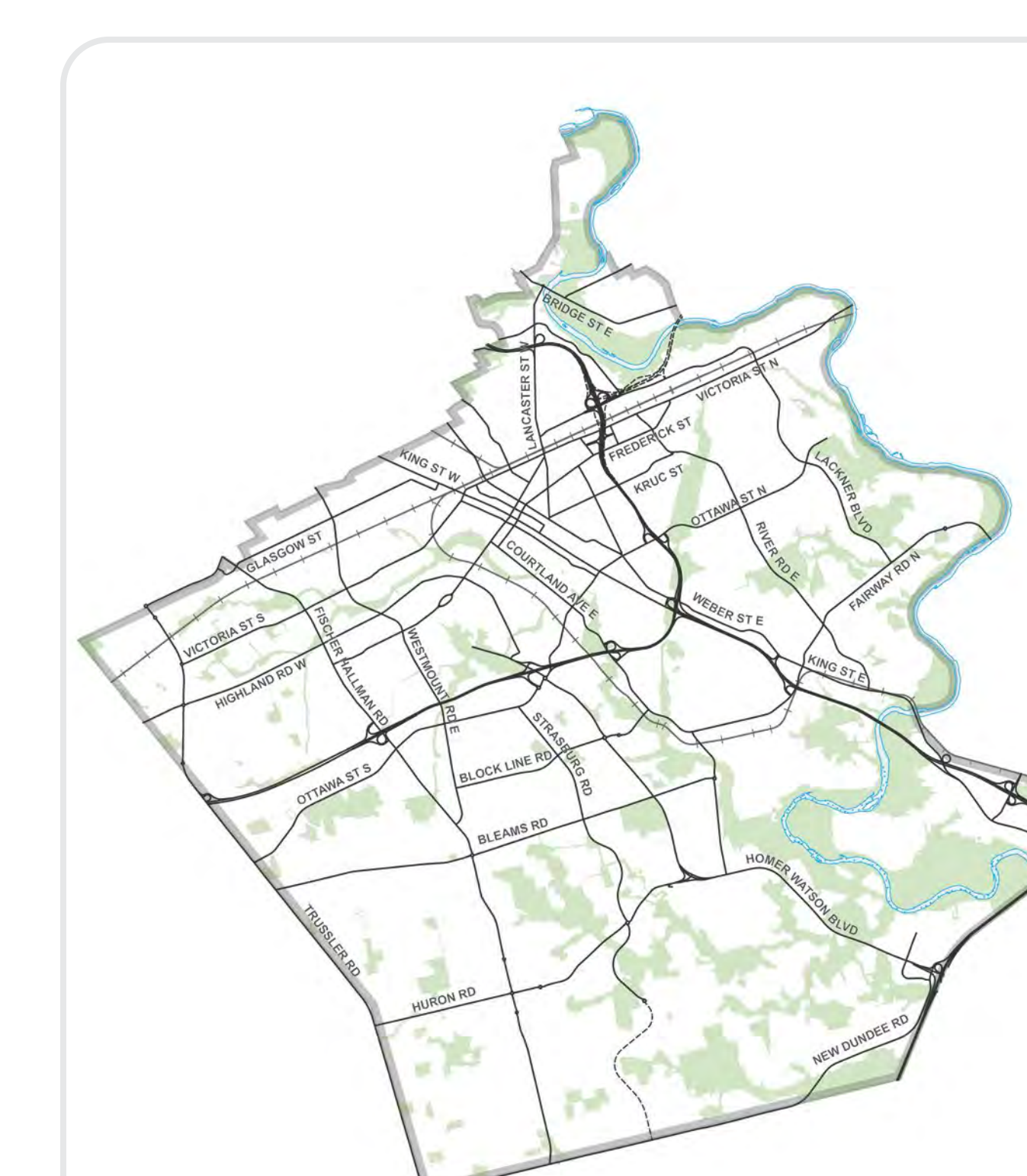
Urban Area Boundary



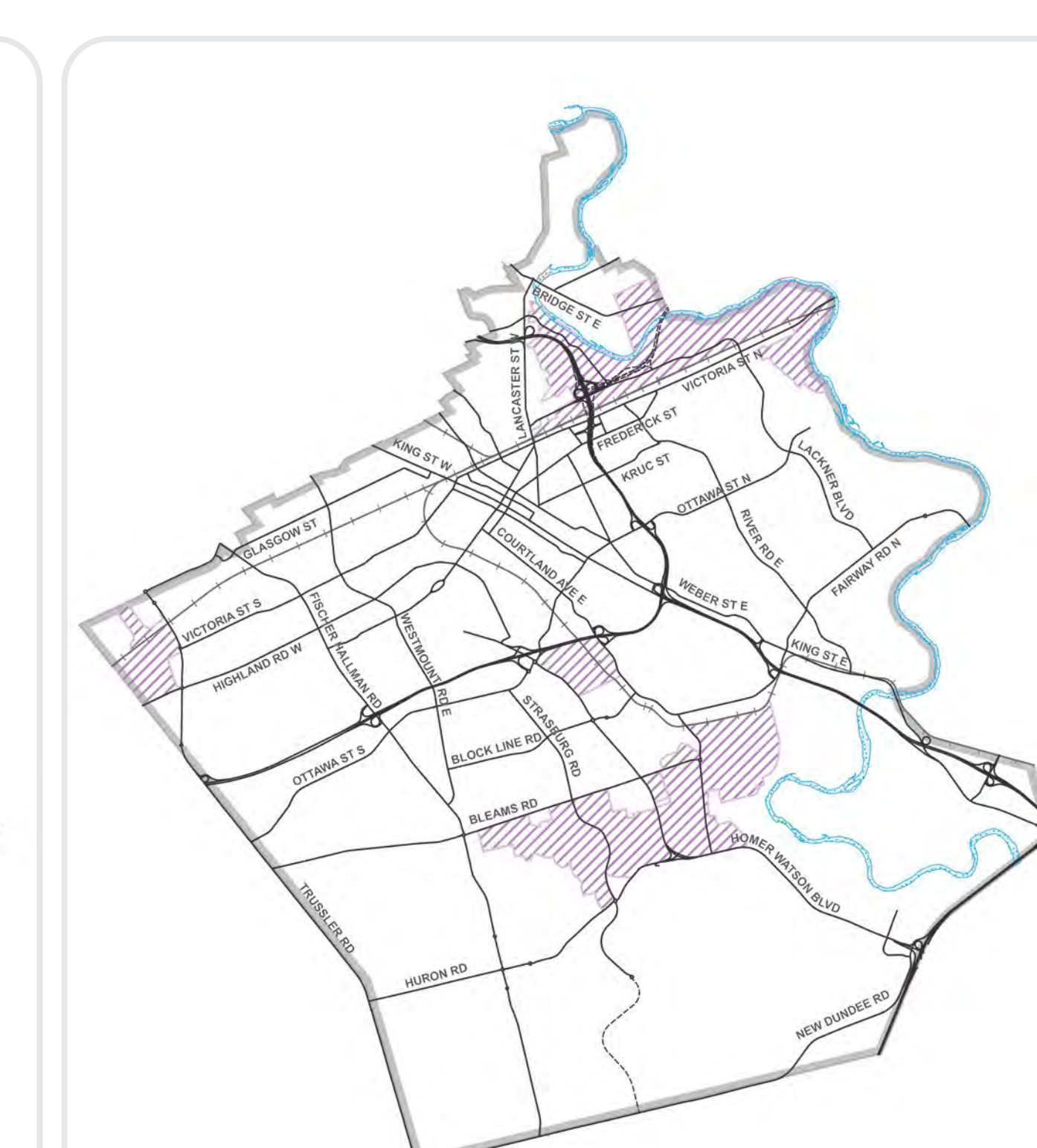
Transit



Natural Heritage Conservation



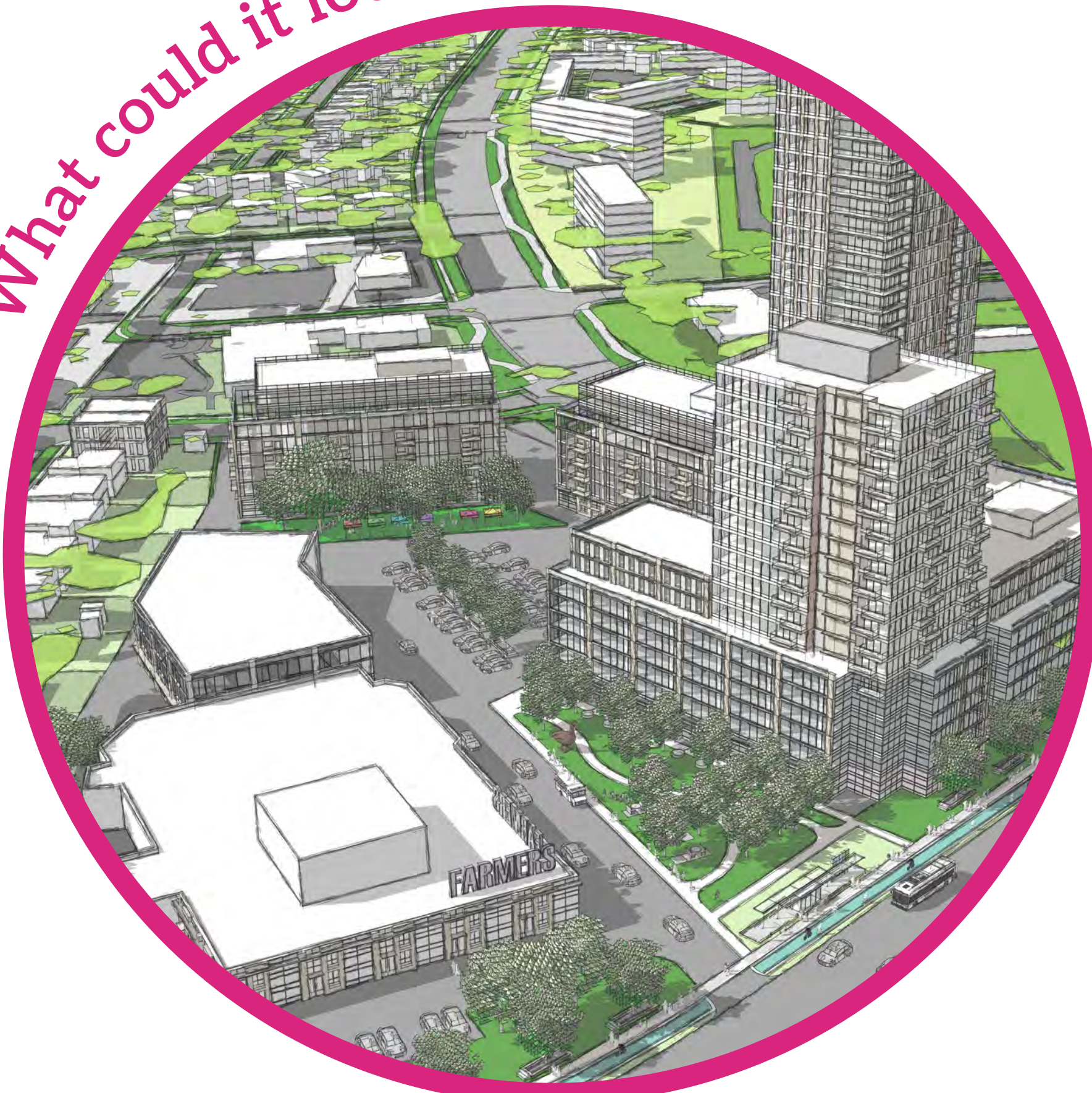
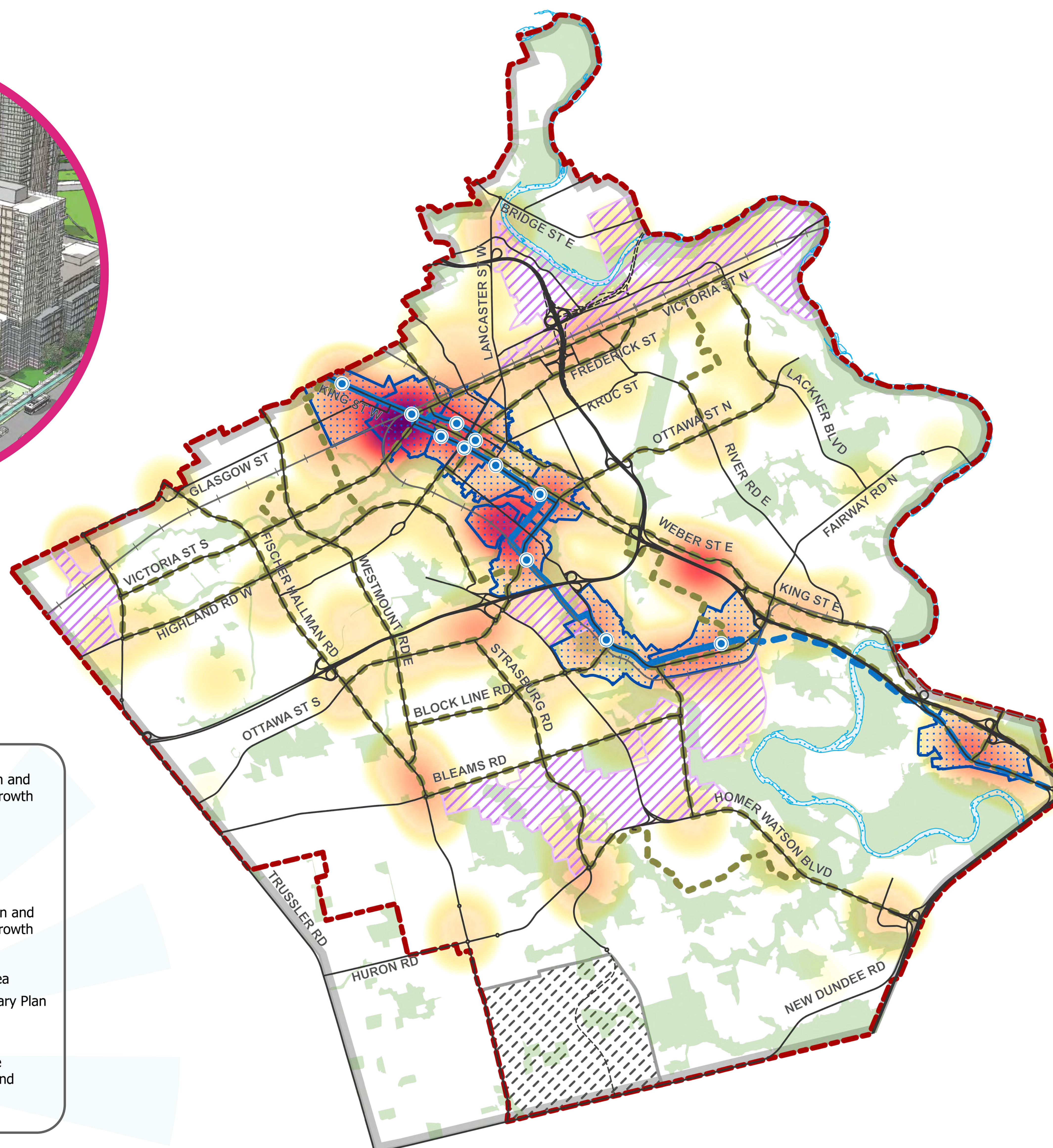
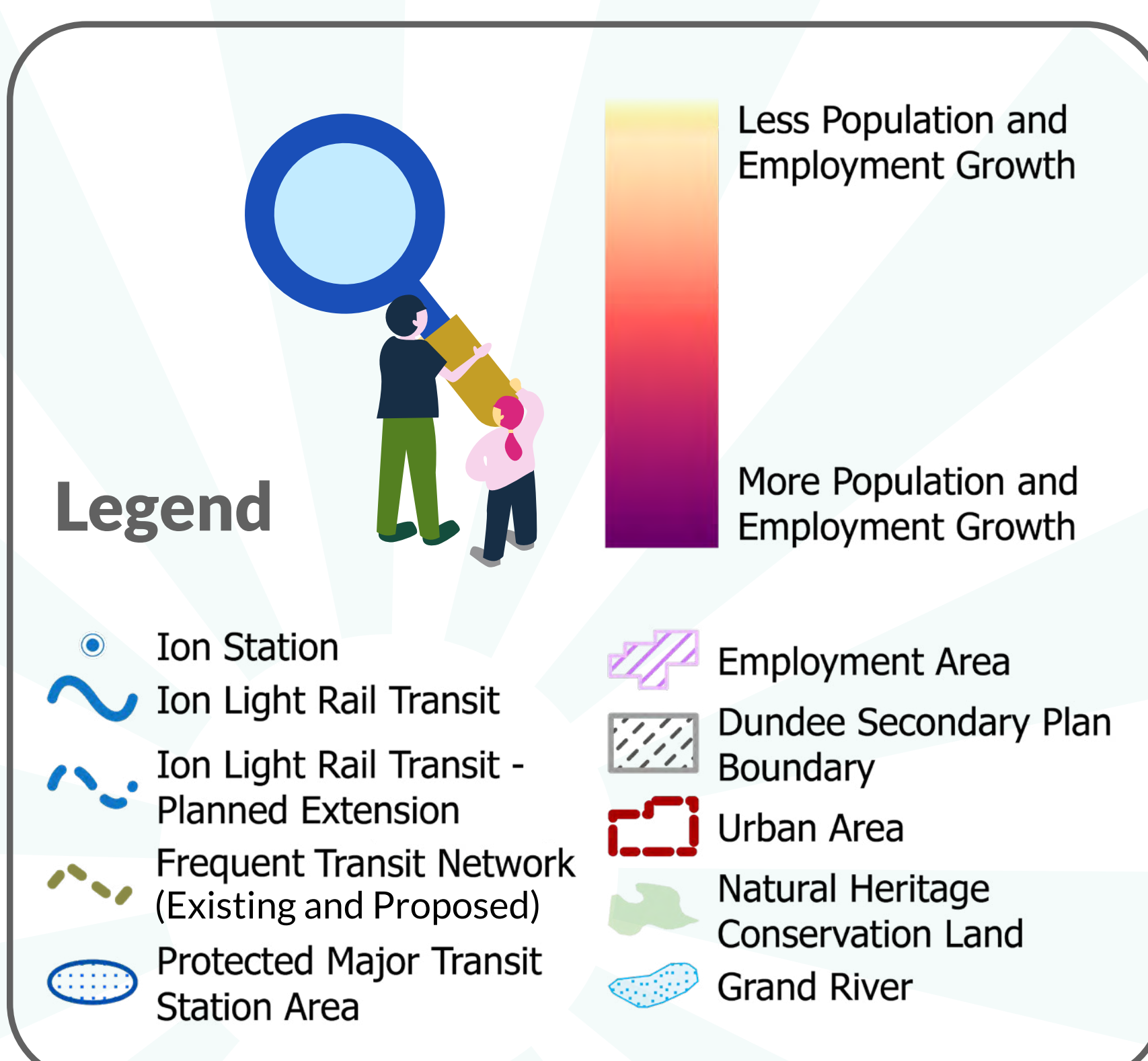
Employment Lands





Approach Nodes and Corridors

What could it look like?



Approach

What if your local retail strip plaza could be transformed into a neighbourhood hub? This approach focuses new homes, businesses and community amenities along major bus routes like Ottawa Street, Fischer-Hallman Rd. and Homer Watson Blvd. (corridor). Key intersections are also focuses for growth (nodes). Commercial plazas in these nodes and corridors will evolve over time to provide housing opportunities in addition to remaining a central location for shopping and community gathering.

This would mean new buildings with more housing and jobs, new restaurants and shops, and more of the things you need and want, closer to where you live. Adding more homes is critical, because without it, shops, services and better transit just aren't viable. It also means new public spaces for you to spend your time outside of your home or job, connect with your neighbours, and attend local events and celebrations. And better access to frequent and reliable public transit that connects you to other neighbourhood hubs, downtown Kitchener, and beyond, alongside a network of bike routes and trails, for all ages and abilities.



Key Features

This approach would:

- Emphasize growth generally within the City's existing Mixed-Use Nodes & Corridors structure from the 2014 Official Plan.
- Update development permissions within these Nodes & Corridors to promote more housing supply and choice, support a greater variety of uses, and better match what is being built today.
- See low-density commercial properties to evolve over time into higher-density neighbourhood focal points.

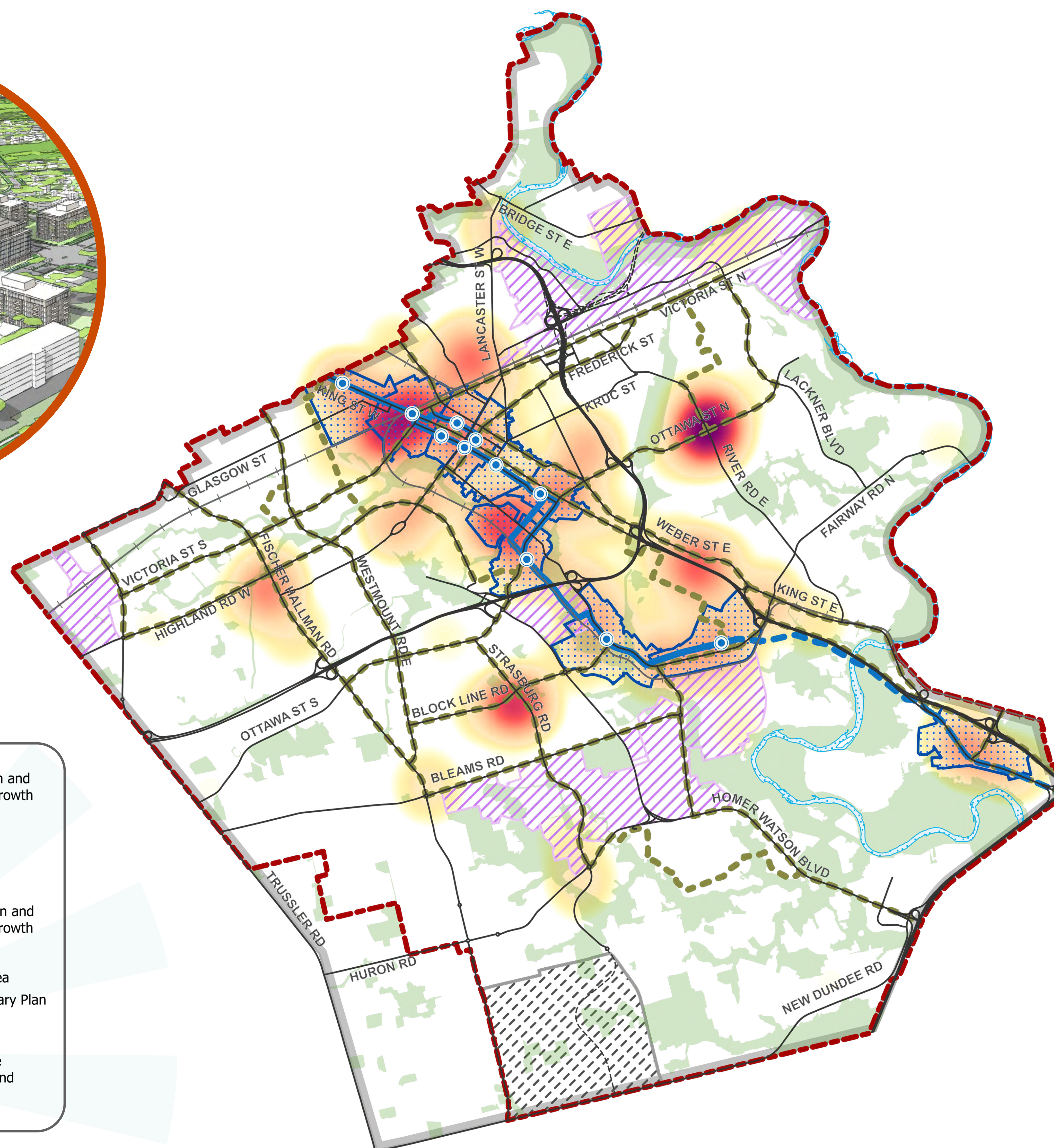
Trade-offs include:

- Some change in several neighbourhoods
- A larger number of small, less active community and public spaces
- Moderate public transit and active transportation options serving several neighbourhoods
- More neighbourhood retail a key intersections and along corridors



Approach New Urban Centres

What could it look like?



Legend

-  Ion Station
-  Ion Light Rail Transit
-  Ion Light Rail Transit - Planned Extension
-  Frequent Transit Network (Existing and Proposed)
-  Protected Major Transit Station Area
-  Employment Area
-  Dundee Secondary Plan Boundary
-  Urban Area
-  Natural Heritage Conservation Land
-  Grand River



Approach

What if you could spend time on a new main street in Stanley Park? And another in Country Hills? And one in Forest Heights? This approach brings new urban centres to different areas of the city. It is similar to the 'Nodes and Corridors' approach but would concentrate more growth within a smaller number of locations.

It means adding more housing and jobs around important existing amenities, so that more people have more equitable access to parks, libraries and community centres. It would focus investment in these areas, benefiting everyone who uses them.



Key Features

This approach focuses on growth within new urban centres. The following areas were chosen based partially on the predominance of large surface parking lots and underutilized sites that can be redeveloped, as well as their proximity to important community features such as parks, trails, frequent transit (e.g., iXpress routes), schools, community centers and libraries.

- Ottawa St. N. & River Rd. E.
- Strasburg Rd. & Block Line Rd.
- Highland Rd. W. & Fischer-Hallman Rd.

This approach also examines growth in transit-supportive neighborhoods generally within Kitchener's central neighbourhoods north and west of the expressway, and in growing main streets already seeing new mixed-use development, such as near Weber St. E. and Franklin St. N.

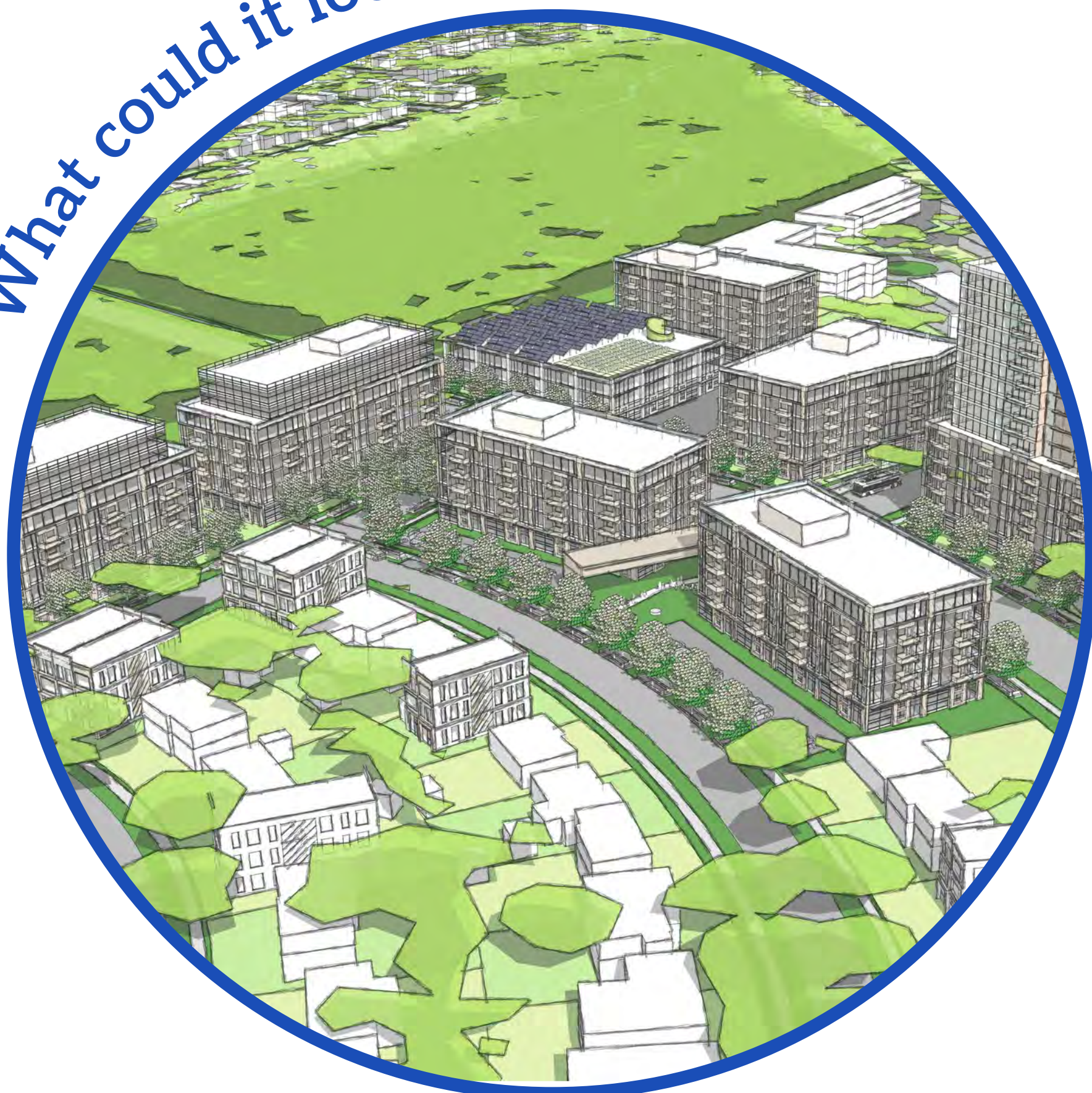
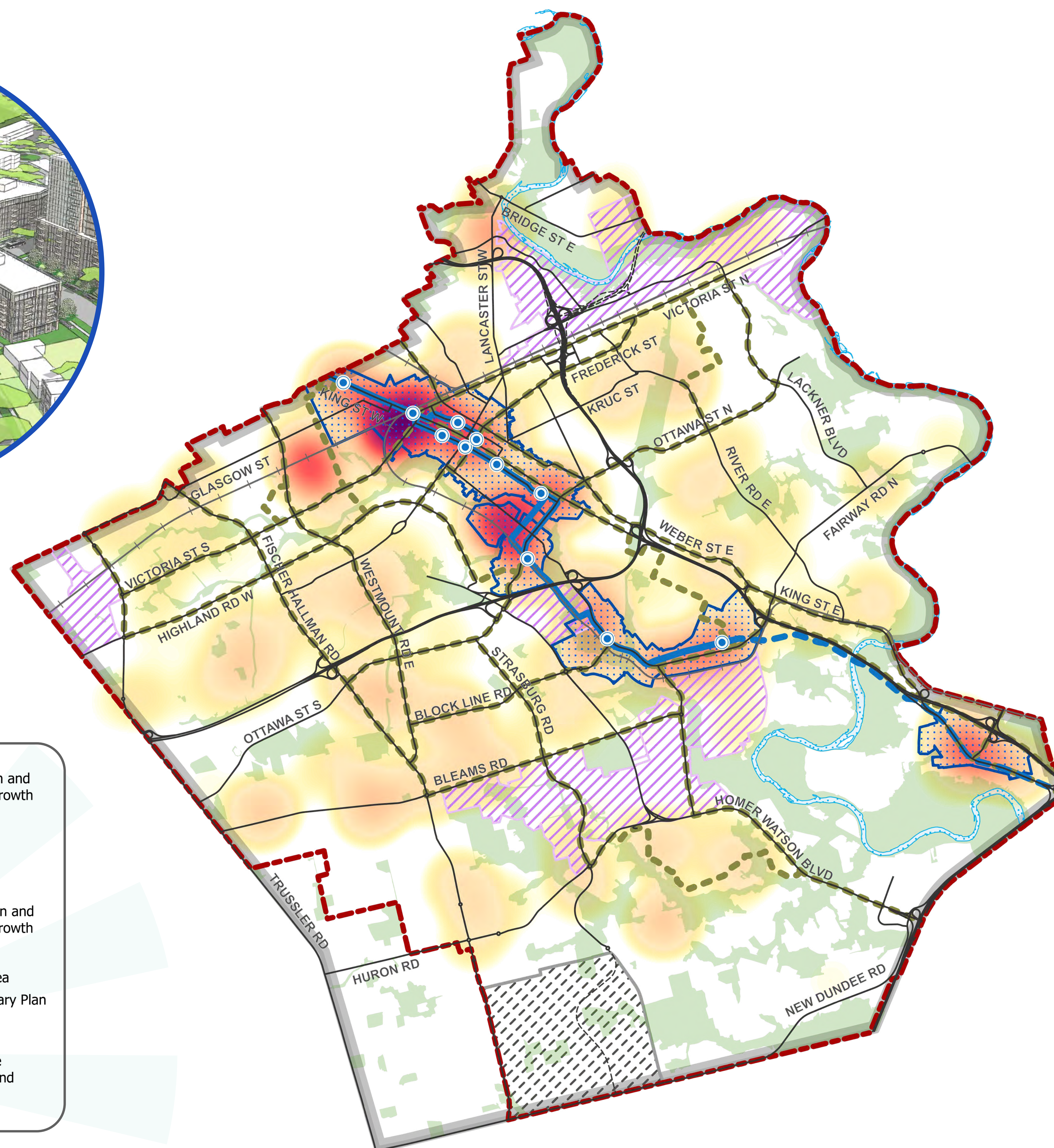
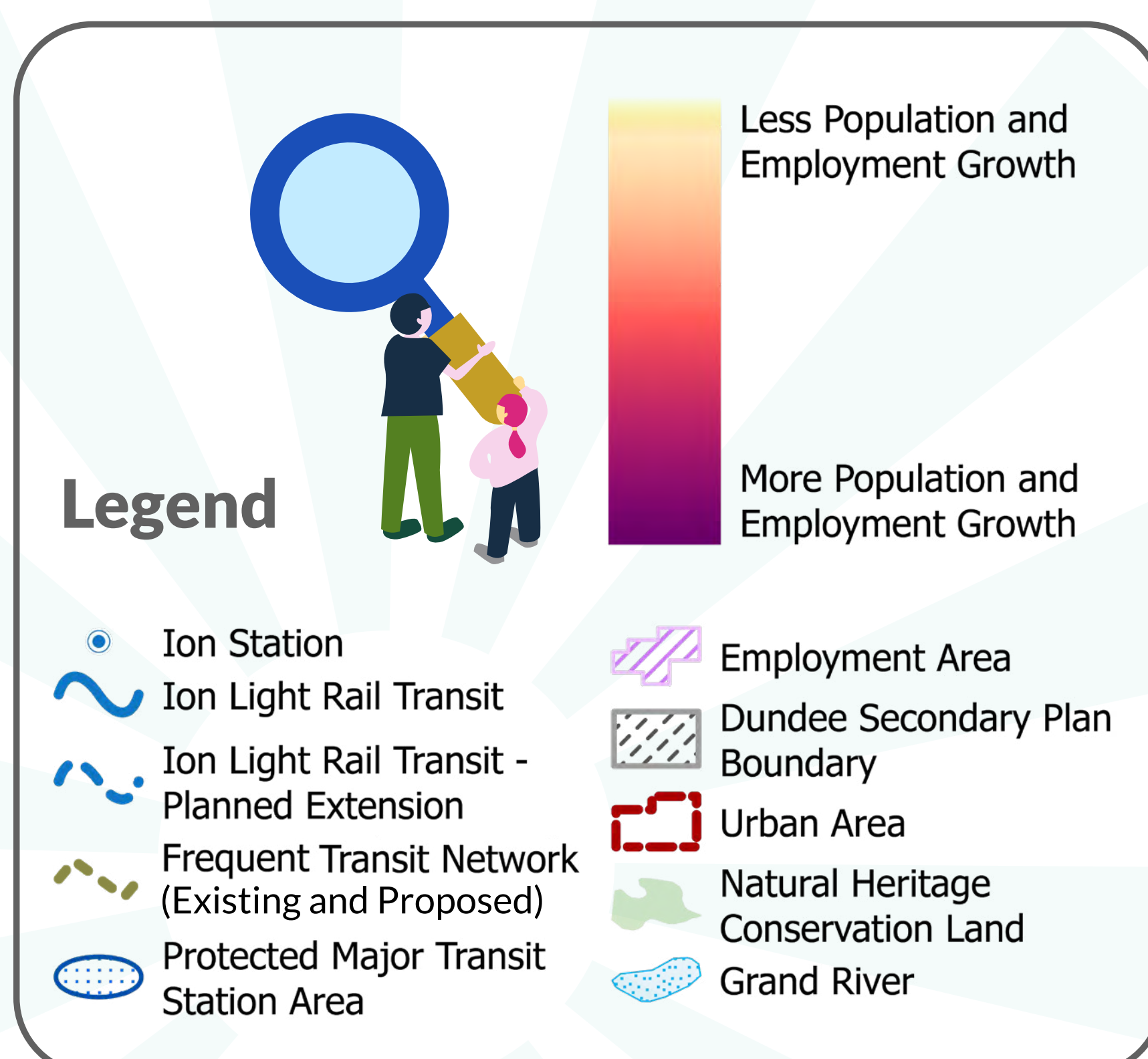
Trade-offs include:

- More change in a small number of neighbourhoods
- A smaller number of large, more active community and public spaces
- Higher frequency, better service of public transit and active transportation infrastructure serving a smaller geographic area
- More neighbourhood retail in specific locations



Approach Evolving Neighbourhoods

What could it look like?



Approach

What if a diversity of homes, shops and services were found more evenly throughout Kitchener's neighbourhoods? This approach adds different types of homes, as well as jobs, shops and services to all areas of Kitchener, rather than focusing growth in specific Centres or Nodes.

It means that all of Kitchener's neighbourhoods will have more housing options that are suitable for all stages of life. This will provide future generations with more equitable access to neighbourhoods across Kitchener where they can enjoy parks, schools, and community resources. Inviting more residents into neighbourhoods will also help support the gradual addition of community services, shops and business within these areas which will benefit all.



Key Features

This approach enables more homes and small scale businesses on properties within neighbourhoods where it can fit comfortably from a built-form perspective and without the need to assemble too many lots to make a new buildings happen.

Examples include:

- Large parking lots that can offer opportunities to more business and homes, including affordable or supportive housing.
- Commercial plazas, (but at a smaller scale than under approach #1 - Supporting Transit).
- Development opportunities in wider and/or deeper residential lots.

Trade-offs include:

- Less change, but spread across all neighbourhoods
- Community and public spaces largely depend on evolution of sites with existing community infrastructure (e.g. places of worship)
- Lower public transit and active transportation service levels spread across all neighbourhoods
- Some change to neighbourhood retail across all neighbourhoods