



P L A N N I N G  
J U S T I F I C A T I O N  
R E P O R T

PART N, PART LOT 11 DESIGNATED AS PART LOT  
4 ON 30R-9485, CONCESSION 9 (HWY-20-NS)  
TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN

OCTOBER 2024  
FILE #10498

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Weston Consulting has been retained as the planning consultant for the registered owner (the 'Applicant') of the subject lands legally described as Part N, Part Lot 11 designated as Part Lot 4 on 30R-9485, Concession 9 (HWY-20-NS) in the Township of West Lincoln (herein referred to as the "subject lands"). The Applicant is proposing to develop their lands with seven (7) townhouses blocks and two 6-storey apartment buildings as per the attached architectural site plan.

The proposed development requires Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications to facilitate the project. Future Site Plan and Plan of Condominium Applications will also be required for detailed design of the newly created blocks following registration of the draft plan of subdivision. The submitted applications are supported by the reports and studies outlined in the Pre-Consultation meeting held with staff in December of 2023 and constitute a complete application as described in Section 34(10) and 51(17) of the *Planning Act*.



## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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This Planning Justification Report (herein referred to as the “Report”) is submitted in support of the submitted Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications and provides planning analysis and justification as to why the proposed development represents good planning. This report evaluates and outlines the nature of the proposed development in the context of the existing and emerging policy framework. The Report evaluates the merits of the proposed development through consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (‘PPS’) and proposed Provincial Planning Statement (‘PPS’), conformity with A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the ‘Growth Plan’), conformity with the Niagara Region Official Plan, Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, West Lincoln Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan, and the Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70. This report provides the analysis and justification for the proposed development in accordance with good planning principles and provides the basis for the advancement of the development applications through the planning process.



## 3. SITE DESCRIPTION & CONTEXT

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### 3.1 DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT LANDS

The subject lands are currently a vacant lot located on the east side of Highway 20 (Figure 1), northeast of South Grimsby Road 6 in the Township of West Lincoln. The lands have a lot area of approximately 3.97 hectares (9.81 acres), with approximately 241.75 metres of frontage along Highway 20. Prior to the approval of OPA 62 and 63, only the southern portion of the lands were within the Smithville Urban Boundary. The portion of the lands that have been brought into the Urban Boundary will herein be referred to as the “northern lands” whereas the portion of the lands historically within the Urban Boundary will herein be referred to as the “southern lands”. This application seeks to amend the Zoning By-law for the entirety of the subject lands.

There are environmental features that bisect the subject lands including a watercourse, a wooded area, and karst features. The karst features are in the southwest corner of the subject lands. These features have been assessed in consultation with the Conservation Authority and the proposed development has been designed to protect them with the appropriate buffers.

The lands are legally described as:

PART LOT 11 CONCESSION 9 SOUTH GRIMSBY  
PART 4, PLAN 30R9485, SAVE AND EXCEPT  
PART 1, PLAN 30R15485 TOWNSHIP OF WEST  
LINCOLN



Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Subject lands

## 3.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT AND SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT

The subject lands are currently vacant and located on the north side of Regional Road 20 and are adjacent to a Canadian Pacific Rail corridor to the north. A residential subdivision exists to the south and east of the subject lands that includes single detached dwelling and the St. Martin Catholic Elementary School.

To the immediate east of the lands is an approved residential subdivision being development by Marz Homes known as *Thrive in Smithville West*. This subdivision is an approximate 10.3 acres that includes 217 residential units consisting of single detached, condominium and street townhouses, back-to-back townhouses, commercial blocks, park and trail blocks, and future development blocks. The proposed development of the subject lands contemplates the Marz Subdivision and includes an extension of their park and trail blocks. The proposed 20m ROW will also extend into the Marz subdivision's 'Street B' and a temporary cul-de-sac turning circle has been provided in the proposed development until such time connections to the adjacent Marz subdivision can be made.

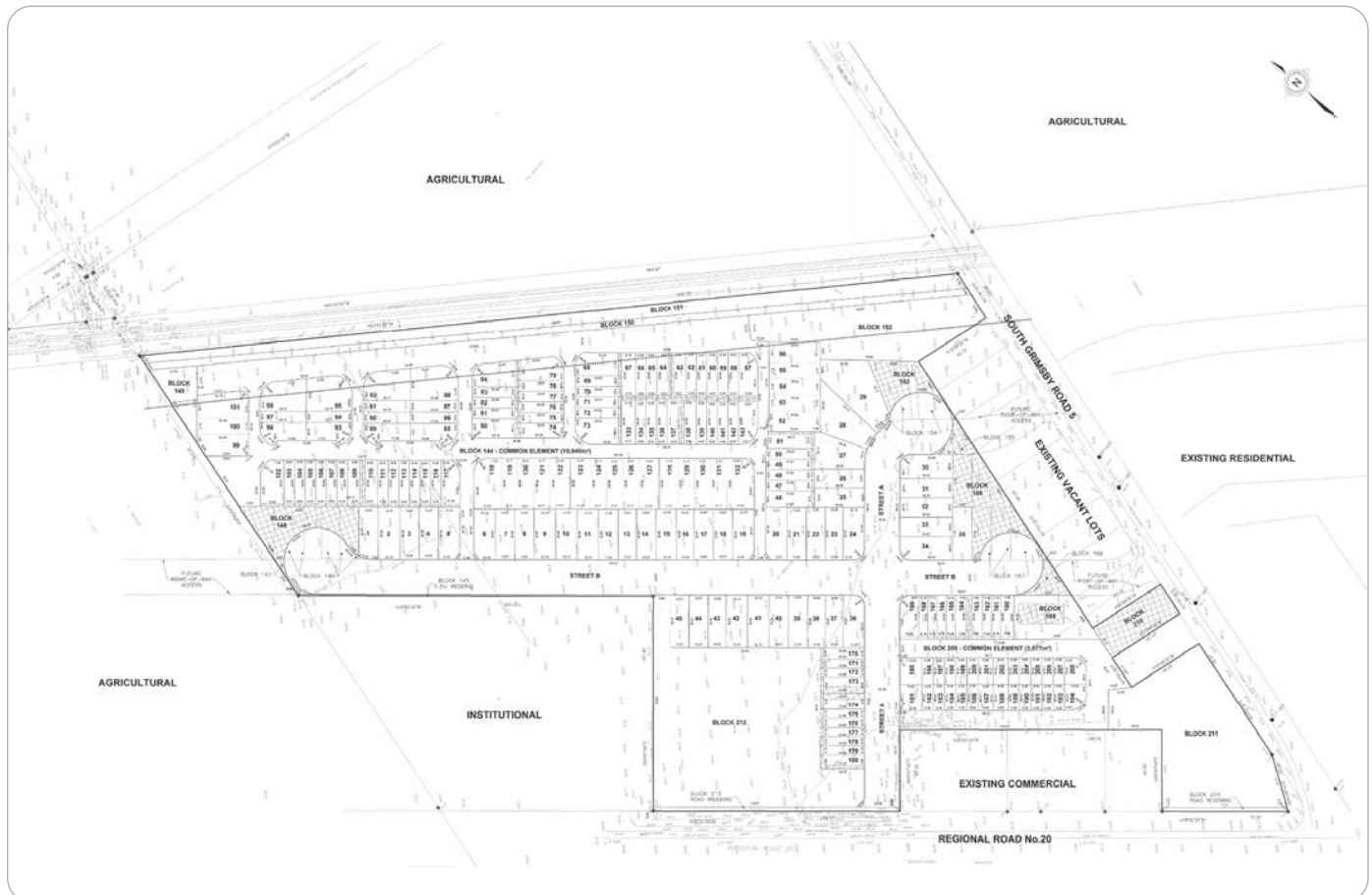


Figure 2: Marz Homes – Draft Plan of Subdivision

### 3.3 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Land uses surrounding the subject lands are as follows:

**North:** The subject lands are abutted by a CP Railway corridor to the north. Agricultural lands exist to the north.

**South:** South of the subject lands there is a residential subdivision consisting of single detached dwellings, St. Martin Catholic Elementary School, and low-density commercial uses. There is a roundabout at the intersection of Highway 20 and South Grimsby Road 6. Agricultural uses exist further south.

**East:** Directly east of the subject lands are currently agricultural space, with a Greek School to the southeast. Further southeast (east of South Grimsby Road Five) there is a residential subdivision consisting of single detached dwellings in addition to the West Lincoln Community Centre.

**West:** Agricultural lands exist to the west of the subject lands that have been brought into the Urban Boundary.

The subject lands are located along Highway 20, which provides key vehicular connectivity throughout the surrounding area. It stretches into the agricultural area to the west and cuts through Smithville to the east, extending towards Niagara Falls. The Township of West Lincoln Urban Design Manual designates the intersection of Highway 20 and South Grimsby Road 6 a Gateway Node. Gateway Nodes are intended to signal a sense of arrival and help create a cohesive community identity for Smithville. This intersection can be considered representative of an area with high development potential and significant transportation connectivity.

Niagara Region Transit offers OnDemand transit and specialized transit to West Lincoln residents, businesses and visitors. West Lincoln residents can be transported to a designated service area within Niagara or a designated transit hub located in Port Colborne, St. Catharines or Welland. Niagara Region Transit does not provide local transit within West Lincoln. Developments such as these are created with the future in mind, providing walkable pedestrian friendly connectivity and a densified urban environment where transit connections may make more sense in the future.



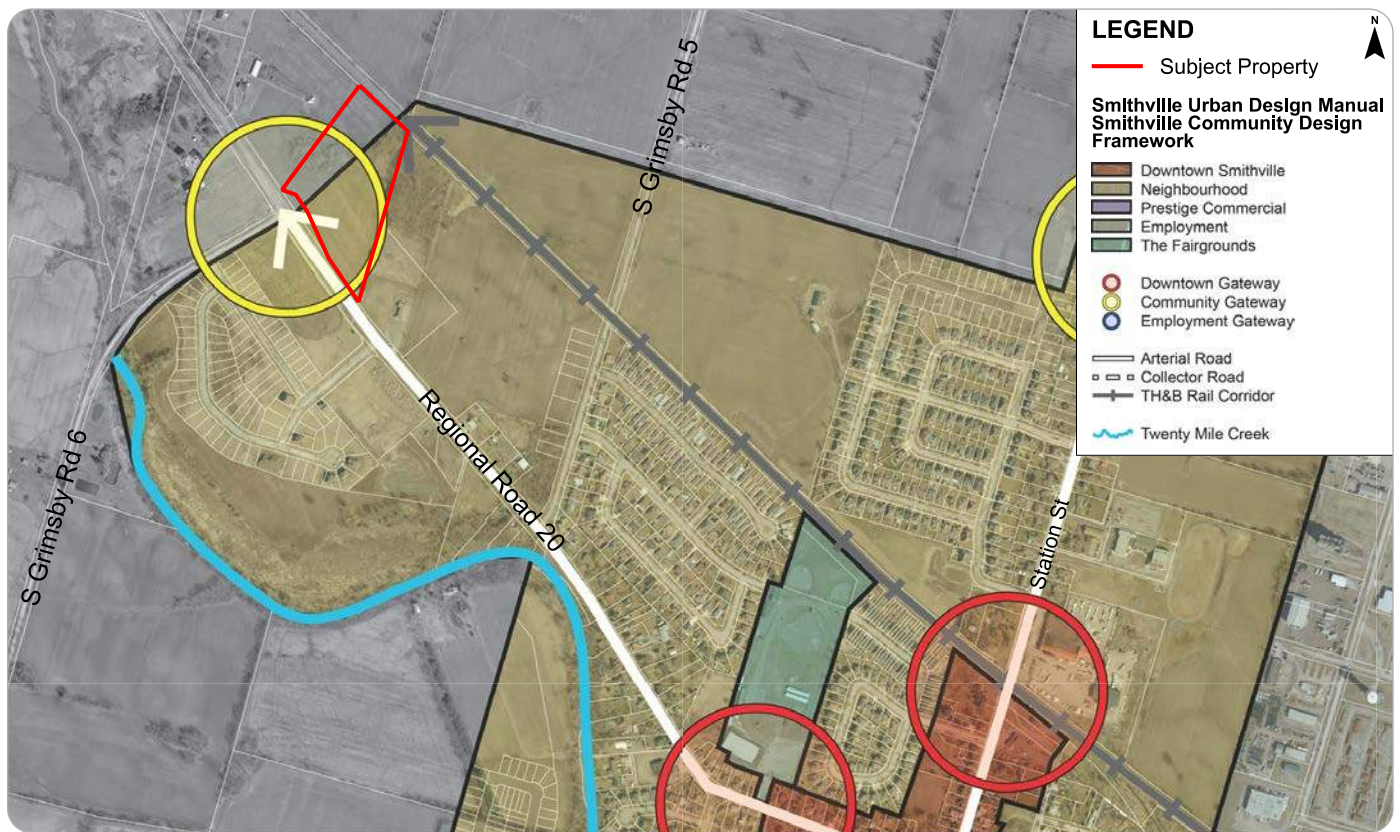


Figure 3: Smithville Community Design Framework

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## 4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development consists of seven blocks of townhouses, totaling 41 units, as well as two 6-storey apartment buildings that will consist of 176 residential units for a total proposed of 217 residential units. The two 6-storey buildings are proposed to be in the northeast corner of Highway 20 and South Grimsby Road 6 intersection roundabout, with six townhouse blocks to the immediate north and the remaining three further north. A new 20m local road running east-west is proposed that will connect the South Grimsby Road 6 northern extension with the approved residential subdivision east of the subject lands. It is important to note that refinement of these blocks will occur at the time of detailed design through site plan control.

The apartment block will contain two 6-storey connected apartment buildings that share a central drop-off and loading area. This phase of development (Phase 1) will also include 27 three-storey townhouse units. The apartment blocks will include 251 parking spaces which are proposed with 43 at-grade and the remaining 208 contained in one level of underground parking. This Block will contain outdoor and indoor amenity areas to be confirmed at detailed design. The apartment buildings have been situated to frame the streetscape along Highway 20 and include three pedestrian connections to ensure ample connectivity that penetrates through these Blocks to the internal road network and ultimately to the new park and east/ west trail system. More detail is shown on the pedestrian connectivity plan. The specific design of the apartment buildings will be determined at the Site Plan stage but will ensure that the buildings are appropriately designed with gateway feature as an entry focal point into Smithville.

The northern townhouse block will contain 14 three-storey townhouse units on a condominium road. Detailed design for both blocks, including building layouts and exterior designs, will occur through future site plan control applications following registration of the draft plan of subdivision.

A new park is proposed in the northeast corner of the subject lands that will feature an extension of the Southwest Rail Trail and will act as a buffer between the subject lands and the CP Railway corridor to the north. Internal pedestrian connections are proposed as shown on the enclosed Landscape Plan to connect this trail to the subdivision and ultimately the public via Regional Road 20.

The proposed development protects for the environmental features found on site which are identified as Block 8 – Environmental Protection on the submitted Draft Plan of Subdivision. This feature includes a watercourse, a woodlot, and karst features. Appropriate buffers to these features have been applied through consultation with the project's Natural Heritage consultant as per the attached EIS.

Due to Land Use policy considerations and the presence of environmental features, only development on the east side of the natural heritage features is being proposed at this time proposed. This area of the subject lands were brought into the Urban Boundary through OPA 62 and designated as Commercial through OPA 63. OPA 63 required these new lands to be comprehensively designed through a Block Plan process with adjacent lands; see Section 7.6 of this report for additional details. As such, development of these lands explored in in the future and are proposed to be rezoned to 'Future Development'.



Figure 4: Landscape Plan



## 4.1 ROAD CONNECTIVITY

The proposed development provides for a new 20m ROW connection to the future Marz subdivision east of the subject lands. This road extension will travel east/west then bend south to connect with Highway 20. This new road, Street “G”, is required per the Community Structure schedule of the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan. It should be noted that this schedule also illustrates South Grimsby Road 6 extending further north over the rail corridor to connect with South Grimsby Road 5. Through conversations with Town Staff and as part of the pre-consultation process, it was determined that the extension of South Grimsby Road 6 beyond where it is shown on the proposed development is not warranted given concerns and impacts to natural heritage.

Regional staff have also confirmed that Highway 20 is deficient in its required 35m ROW with. A road-widening has been requested and are shown on the draft plan of subdivision as Blocks 12 and 13. These blocks will be dedicated to the municipality free and clear as part of the registration process.

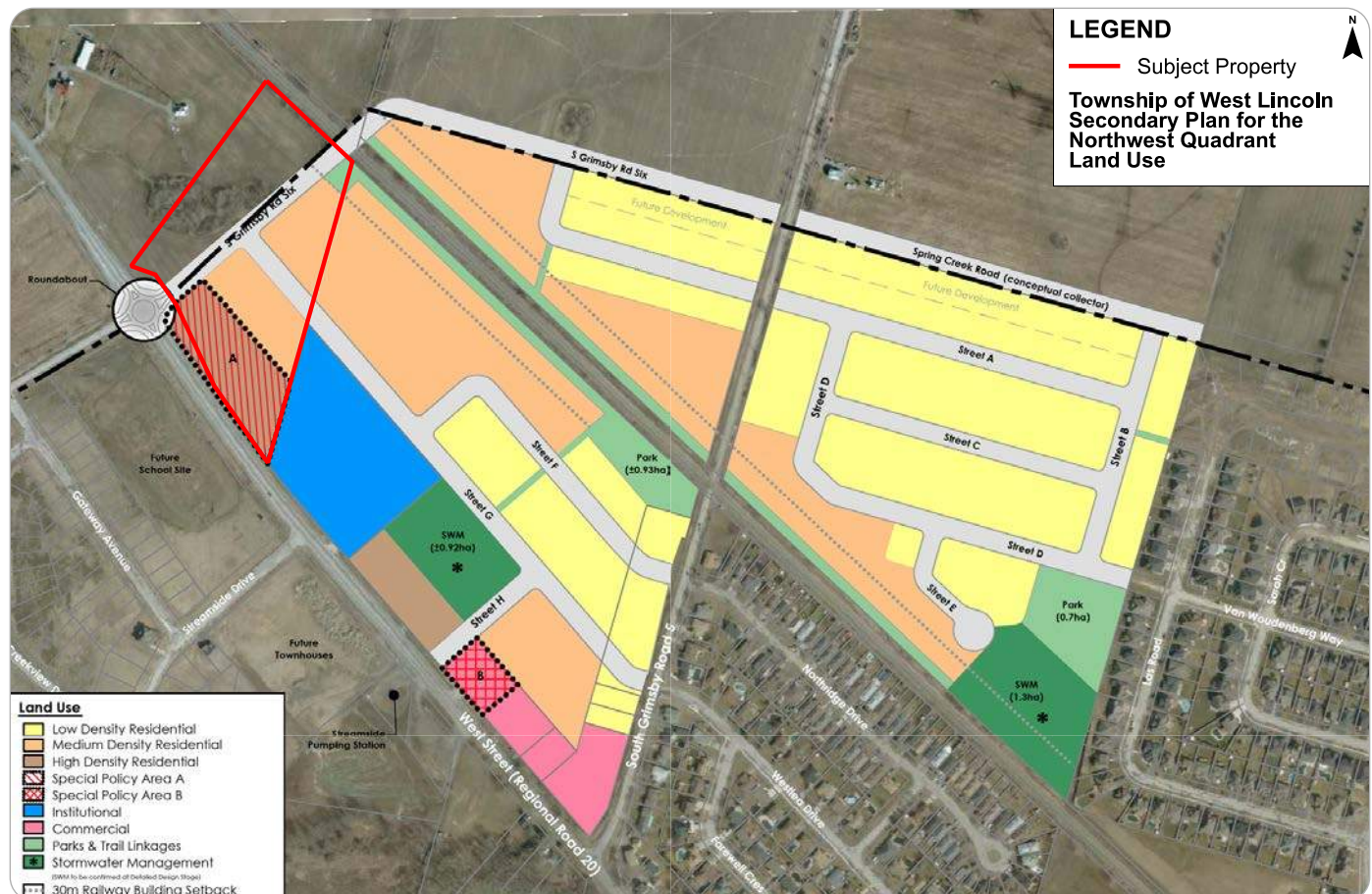


Figure 5: Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan Community Structure – Street G

## 4.2 PARKING AND VEHICLE ACCESS

The required parking rate for both apartment and townhouse dwellings, as identified by Zoning By-law 2017-70, is 1.75 per unit. With 217 total residential units proposed, 373 parking spaces are required to satisfy the parking rate. Parking within the proposed development is illustrated on the conceptual site plan will be split between a proposed underground garage beneath the apartment block (208 spaces), private garages and driveways (74) and surface parking areas (43 spaces) for a total of 325 spaces being provided.

The northern block of townhouses provides for two parking spaces per unit: one within a private garage; and one on the external driveway. This Block of the plan meets and exceeds the rate of 1.75 per unit. Similarly, the proposed townhouse in the southern apartment block has adequate parking to meet the required parking rate. Relief is being sought for the apartment dwelling at a reduced rate of 1.42/unit. This breakdown is provided within the architectural site plan enclosed within this submission. This design will be further refined as part of future Site Plan applications but is seeking relief on the zoning bylaw requirements due to constraints pertaining to the underground and market forces.

## 4.3 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Niagara Region waste collection occurs in all municipalities for single family houses and residential properties with two to six units, as well as apartment buildings with seven or more units with curbside garbage collection. The proposed townhouse units fit into the first criteria, and the two 6-storey apartment buildings will be designed in such a way that they comply with the second. It is the intention of the proposed development to utilize a public waste management strategy. Waste management for the apartment dwellings will be contained within the building at grade and the roadways have been designed with the turning radii to meet regional waste standards.

## 4.4 HOUSING

Neither the Township of West Lincoln nor the Region of Niagara has a specific Housing Strategy document outlining the desired housing stock of new residential developments. The policy review in Section 7 of this report includes policies that address housing stock and focus on providing a range of options to cater to the differing needs of Smithville, West Lincoln and Niagara Region.

## 4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

There are several environmental features present on the subject lands that include a watercourse and woodlot that bisect the subject lands and exist to the west and northwest of the proposed development. Buffers have been included in the proposal that ensures these environmental features are protected and any development is appropriately setback. There is also a karst feature identified on the lands which resulted in an environmental investigation. This investigation concluded that any development would not negatively impact the surrounding environment and that a 50m setback to development. This buffer has been included within the development plan.



## 5. DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

This report has been prepared in support of applications to amend the Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70 to facilitate the proposed development.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to rezone the subject lands from *Agricultural (A)* and *Development (D)* to the following zones: *Open Space (OS)*, *Environmental Protection (EP)*, *Development (D)*, and *Residential Medium Density 3 (RM3-XXX)* with site specific provisions.

In addition to the Zoning By-law Amendment application, a concurrent Draft Plan of Subdivision application has been submitted to facilitate the creation of development blocks and a new public road. Future Site Plan and Draft Plan of Condominium applications will be required for the detailed design of the apartment and townhouse blocks to facilitate the development.



## 6. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

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## 6.1 URBAN DESIGN BRIEF AND PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT PLAN

This Report is intended to be read in conjunction with the accompanying reports and drawings that have been submitted in support of the applications. This report relies on findings contained within these materials, which are summarized below for reference.

The proposed project represents a thoughtful development that aligns seamlessly with the neighboring planned context. By incorporating a well-integrated street network and designating taller buildings at the Gateway Node, the development creates a dynamic and welcoming entry point. Meanwhile, the inclusion of townhouse dwelling units at the rear facilitates an appropriate transition to neighbouring developments and environmental features. Environmental stewardship is prioritized through the protection of key natural features via an environmental protection area and appropriate setbacks. Additionally, the proposed northern park will enhance connectivity with the neighboring park, promoting a cohesive community space. Overall, the project makes a valuable contribution by offering diverse housing options, fostering active transportation, and preserving ecological integrity, thus supporting a vibrant and sustainable community.

Overall, the project makes a valuable contribution by offering diverse housing options, fostering active transportation, and preserving ecological integrity, thus supporting a vibrant and sustainable community.



## 6.2 PHASING PLAN

The attached Phasing Plan shows the order in which each portion of the proposed development will be constructed. The proposed Street “B” will be developed initially in Phase 1 along with the required infrastructure and dedication of the municipal park to the northeast of the subject lands. This will be followed by the development of the larger apartment block and 27 townhouses in Phase 2. Phase 3 will consist of the smaller townhouse block north of the new public road. Lastly, the Future Development (FD) blocks will be designed through a future Block Planning exercise.



Figure 6: Phasing Plan



## 6.3 LANDSCAPE PLAN

The Landscape Plan prepared by MSLA displays the landscape features included in the proposed development. There are several features identified throughout the Plan including bike parking; bench seating; concrete curb planters; fencing; and more. Additionally, new trees have been proposed throughout the development, specifically, surrounding each block and lining the proposed roads.

## 6.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (STAGES 1 & 2)

A Stage 1 and 2 Archaeological Study has been prepared for the southern portion of the lands. At the time of preparing this Report, the assessment of the northern portion was underway. A complete report of all the lands will be filed with the Town and Region once it is complete and will be submitted under separate cover.

It is important to note that the assessment for the southern portion concluded that the study area is considered to be free of archaeological material, and no additional archaeological assessments are recommended for this scoped area. It is expected that similar findings will be determined through this additional reporting.

## 6.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY – NORTHERN LANDS

The Environmental Impact Study was prepared by Palmer Environmental. The findings of their study were the result of a background review, field investigations and an analysis of data using a scientific understanding of the ecology of the area, as well as the current natural heritage policy requirements. They evaluated the environmental sensitivities and constraints of the subject lands. The natural features on the subject lands consist of a watercourse, deciduous forest, and two Headwater Drainage Features (HDFs), as well as a karst feature which has been evaluated by EXP.

Based on the results of the EIS, Palmer concluded that the proposed development is environmentally feasible and would not result in negative impacts to the natural heritage features provided that the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures described in this report are taken. Mitigation includes the implementation of appropriate 15 m buffer from the center line of the watercourse, which encompasses nearly all the deciduous forest. A 50m buffer is also provided from the Karst Feature to the development.

## 6.6 NOISE AND VIBRATION STUDY

DBA Acoustical Consultants Inc. has conducted a preliminary noise and vibration study for the proposed development concept. The purpose of the noise and vibration study was to determine the noise and vibration impact for ZBA approval of the nearby Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) Grimsby Subdivision Principal Rail Line and traffic volumes for Regional Road 20. No air quality concerns were noted for reporting at this time.

Vehicular traffic from local area roadways, other than Regional Road 20 (West Street), are not considered in the report due to low traffic volumes and distance separation from the proposed site. The study detailed noise and vibration impacts at the proposed development and recommended noise and vibration control measures necessary to meet Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) Publication NPC-300, Stationary & Transportation Sources-Approval & Planning and CP guidelines, while satisfying the planning requirements of the Town of West Lincoln and the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

## 6.7 FUNCTIONAL SERVICING REPORT, STORM WATER MANAGEMENT, GRADING, AND SERVICING PLANS

The Functional Servicing Report, prepared by EXP, finds that the proposed development can be adequately serviced. The report outlines various results, emphasizing that stormwater management can be provided with the proposed SWM measures outlined within the SWM report. The Stormwater Management Report, prepared by EXP, provides various recommendations based on the findings of their report. The overall conclusion of the report is that the proposed SWM strategy can meet the requirements of the Town of West Lincoln drainage criteria and NPCA standards. The full summary of the Report's results can be found in the submitted Stormwater Management Report.

## 6.8 KARST STUDY

The Karst Hazard Assessment was prepared by EXP and determined low resistivity zones in Smithville, indicating potential karst features and increased bedrock weathering. Flow rates at various sites were inconsistent, with some areas dry. It is recommended to establish a 50-meter protective buffer around the sinkhole, implement stormwater management practices with filtration, and conduct dye tracing to track downstream flow. If bedrock excavation is needed, a karst specialist should inspect the area for hazards. Contractors should follow a communication plan if new karst features are discovered. Recommendations are based on the current design and may need adjustment if the design changes.

## 6.9 GEOTECHNICAL REPORT

The Geotechnical Report includes an engineering discussion and recommendations regarding various civil engineering considerations such as grading, excavations, shoring, and soil corrosivity. Each consideration is evaluated, and specific recommendations are provided to ensure the proper treatment of the geotechnical conditions of the subject lands. The report finds that the proposed buildings can be found using conventional strip and spread footing or drilled pier type foundations supported on the undisturbed silty clay. Alternatively, caissons drilled into the bedrock may also be considered for the mid-rise structure. Conventional foundations in soil at different elevations should be located such that higher footings are set below a line drawn up at 10:7, horizontal to vertical from the near edge of the lower footing. This concept should also be applied to excavations for new foundations in relation to existing foundations or underground services.

In terms of shoring, earth-pressure coefficients of 0.25, 0.35, and 0.45 are provided based on ground movement conditions and follow the latest edition of the Foundation Engineering Manual (CEFM). Recommendations are also provided related to earthquake considerations, soil corrosivity, and pavement structures.

## 6.10 HYDROGEOLOGICAL REPORT

The Hydrogeological Investigation concluded that groundwater chemistry met regional discharge criteria, with the exception of an exceedance in dissolved iron levels. For construction dewatering, an estimated peak rate of 364,000 L/day is expected, requiring an EASR for discharge. Dewatering wells must be installed and decommissioned by licensed contractors. Regular maintenance of sub-drain systems is advised, as long-term flow rates are projected at 13,000 L/day for townhouses and 35,000 L/day for the condo building, with no Permit to Take Water (PTTW) needed. Elevated Total Suspended Solids (TSS) levels during construction may necessitate treatment methods, while post-development discharges are suitable without treatment. A discharge agreement with the Regional Municipality of Niagara is required, and all relevant documentation must be maintained on-site during construction. Changes to the construction plan must be promptly communicated to update the EASR.

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## 7. POLICY CONTEXT

## 7.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2020)

The following sections review the planning policies applicable to the proposed development and evaluate the proposal in the context of the existing policy framework. The following policies have been considered in this report:

- Provincial Policy Statement (2020)
- Provincial Planning Statement (Proposed)
- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- Niagara Region Official Plan
- Township of West Lincoln Official Plan including OPAs 62 and 63
- Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan
- Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-Law 2017-70

The updated Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020 came into effect on May 1, 2020, and provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development throughout the Province of Ontario. The PPS encourages sustainable development and directs policies on matters of provincial interest including public health and safety and the quality of the natural and built environment. All land use planning decisions shall be consistent with the policies of the PPS.

Section 1 of the PPS, “Building Strong Healthy Communities” outlines policies supportive of efficient land use and development patterns and is applicable to the subject lands. These policies encourage the establishment of sustainable communities and recognize that the Province’s long-term prosperity depends on land use planning that wisely manages growth through the efficient use of land and infrastructure. Intensification is promoted by PPS policies.

Section 1.1.1 of the PPS states,

*Healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:*

- a) Promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;*
- b) Accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs; and*
- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns.*

The policies in Section 1.1.1 provide guidelines to follow in maintaining healthy community development in Ontario. The proposed development represents significant intensification that utilizes land more efficiently than nearby developments. This will ensure that the long-term financial well-being of both the Township and the Province are sustained. The proposed development includes both Apartment buildings and townhouse units to provide a range of housing options in alignment with the policies of this section. The proposed development is in an area with key environmental features. As a result, the proposal was specifically planned to mitigate any negative impacts to these features by constructing only east of South Grimsby Road 6 and providing a significant buffer in the northern lands.

## Settlement Areas

Section 1.1.3 of the PPS provides direction on future growth and development within designated Settlement Areas and recognizes Settlement Areas as critical to the long-term development and prosperity of Ontario's communities. The PPS promotes efficient development patterns within Settlement Areas, which are locations where growth and development is to be focused. The following policies are relevant to the proposed development:

Policy 1.1.3.1 of the PPS states, *Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development.*

Policy 1.1.3.2 of the PPS states, *Land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:*

- a. *efficiently use land and resources*
- b. *are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion*

Policy 1.1.3.3 of the PPS states, *Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for transit-supportive development, accommodating a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.*

Policy 1.1.3.4 of the PPS states, *Appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.*

The subject lands are located within a Settlement Area and is immediately north of a small residential subdivision and Elementary School. Further northwest is a larger residential subdivision, the West Lincoln Community Centre and downtown Smithville. All nearby housing is in the form of single detached dwellings with primary connection to Smithville's downtown core through Regional Road 20. Directly east of the subject lands are a currently vacant lot on which a residential subdivision will be developed containing a mix of single detached dwellings, townhouses of varying heights (max 3-storey), and a 3-storey mixed use building. The proposed development contains appropriate housing types based on the approved adjacent development and the sections of this policy. The single detached dwellings, typical in the surrounding area, do not use land as efficiently as the apartment buildings and townhouses being proposed. The proposed development utilizes the existing available infrastructure by connecting residents mainly through Regional Road 20, similar to the surrounding residential developments. The buffers that have been included around the watercourse that cuts through the subject lands are intended to mitigate risks to public health and safety.



## Land Use Compatibility

Policy 1.2.6.1 states, *Major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.*

In the December 7, 2023, Pre-Consultation meeting, Township of West Lincoln staff identified that MDS setback requirements would need to be followed due to the proximity between the subject lands and a farm located at 6817 Highway 20. Following discussions with Township Staff, it was determined that the subject lands are already appropriately setback from this farm.

## Housing

The PPS encourages that a range and mix of housing types and tenures be provided in order to meet the needs of current and future residents. Based on the Region of Niagara's population allocation, West Lincoln's population is forecasted to double by the year 2041. The Smithville urban boundary expansion is expected to aid the Township in accommodating this growth, as will increased density within the boundary.

Section 1.4 includes policy direction related to housing and is applicable to the subject lands:

Policy 1.4.1 of the PPS states, *to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall:*

- a. *maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development; and*
- b. *maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.*

Policy 1.4.3 of the PPS states,

*Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:*

- a. *establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans. However, where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality in consultation with the lower-tier municipalities may identify a higher target(s) which shall represent the minimum target(s) for these lower-tier municipalities;*
- b. *permitting and facilitating:*
  1. *all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and*
  2. *all types of residential intensification, including additional residential units, and redevelopment in accordance with policy 1.1.3.3;*

- c. *directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs;*
- d. *promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed;*
- e. *requiring transit-supportive development and prioritizing intensification, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations; and*
- f. *establishing development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.*

The proposed development will contribute to further diversifying the housing stock and tenure within the Smithville urban boundary. The proposed development itself provides a range of housing options which can be considered appropriate both as a result of the increased demand for housing and the positioning of the subject lands within the Township. This includes new built forms, such as apartments, that are not found in the immediate area.

Being on the periphery of the urban boundary, the subject lands area that is to be developed is integral to the visual transition from rural to urban as one approaches Smithville's core. The proposed 6-storey apartment buildings will signify this transition but will not appear out of place as a result of the Elementary school across the street and 3-storey townhouses in the approved Marz subdivision to the east. The proposed townhouses follow the precedent set by the approved subdivision and can be considered an efficient use of land as more units are able to be developed than if single detached dwellings were proposed.

## Parks

Section 1.5 of the PPS sets out provisions for public spaces, recreation, parks, trails and open space within the Province.

Policy 1.5.1 of the PPS states, *Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:*

- a. *planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;*
- b. *planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources; and,*
- d. *recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.*

The northern lands have been allocated for open space in order to protect and conserve on-site environmental features. The buffer proposed on the southern portion accomplishes this goal as well. A new park is proposed in the northeast portion of the subject lands and is connected to the residential developments by an extension of the Southwest Rail Trail. This will allow residents to take advantage of the rich environment in the surrounding area. The proposed road connection to the approved subdivision to the east will also ensure that the two development projects are well connected, in alignment with the first policy of this section.

## Sewage, Water and Stormwater

The PPS provides direction regarding the efficient use of existing servicing and civil infrastructure. As outlined in Policy 1.6.6.2: “Municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas. Intensification and redevelopment within settlement areas on existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services should be promoted, wherever feasible”.

A Functional Servicing Report prepared by EXP, submitted to the Township of West Lincoln, identifies that the subject lands are serviced by municipal infrastructure, and that the proposed development can be accommodated by existing municipal water and wastewater services.

## Long-Term Economic Prosperity

Section 1.7 of the PPS encourages development within the province to consider its economic impact and sustainability over time.

Section 1.7.1 of the PPS states, *Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by*

- a) *promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness;*
- b) *encouraging residential uses to respond to dynamic market-based needs and provide necessary housing supply and range of housing options for a diverse workforce;*
- e) *encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes;*
- k) *minimizing negative impacts from a changing climate and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature;*

The housing supply included in the proposed development is more economically viable than the more common single detached dwellings in the surrounding area. Providing housing options in the form of apartment buildings and townhouses will densify housing in Smithville and allow more residents to move into the area. A greater number of consumers and working individuals in the area will have a positive economic impact on the Township as a whole. The proposed development will also encourage further developments characterized by dense housing which will support the economic prosperity of the Township for years to come.

Section 2 of the PPS “Wise Use and Management of Resources”, emphasizes the protection of biodiversity and the preservation of natural heritage features across the Province.

## Water

Section 2.2 of the PPS states, *Planning Authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by:*

- f. *implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration to:*
  - 1. *protect all municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas; and*
  - 2. *protect, improve or restore vulnerable surface and ground water features, and their hydrologic functions.*

The protection of the watercourse running through the subject lands was a priority in the development planning process. The buffer on the southern half and the lack of proposed development on the northern lands represent this prioritization and shall mitigate negative impacts to the environment as per the intention of this policy.

## 7.2 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)

### Natural Hazards

Policy 3.1.1 of the PPS states, *Development shall generally be directed, in accordance with guidance developed by the Province (as amended from time to time), to areas outside of:*

- b) hazardous lands adjacent to river, stream and small inland lake systems which are impacted by flooding hazards and/or erosion hazards;*

Despite the subject lands containing natural hazards, the proposed development is designed to mitigate any adverse impacts to the environmental features present on the lands.

### Summary

The proposed development provides for a compact form of intensification that can be considered compatible with the existing built form of the neighbourhood due to the approved subdivision east of the subject lands. Growth is supported by the municipal infrastructure and regional roads that surround the subject lands. The proposal provides density that will help the Region and Township meet their intensification targets, while preserving the natural environment and diversifying housing options for future residents. It is our opinion that the proposed development is consistent with the Provincial Policy

The Province has issued the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, which will come into effect on October 20, 2024. This will replace the existing PPS 2020 and Growth Plan, 2019. The changes to the PPS that are relevant to the proposed development are described below.

Section 2.2 of the 2024 PPS provides policy related to housing. Policy 2.2.1 says that *planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:*

- a. establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households, and coordinating land use planning and planning for housing with Service Managers to address the full range of housing options including affordable housing needs;*
- b. permitting and facilitating:*
  - 1. all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including additional needs housing and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and*
  - 2. all types of residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas) for residential use, development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment which results in a net increase in residential units in accordance with policy 2.3.1.3;*
- d. promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation; and*

## 7.3 A PLACE TO GROW: GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE

- e. *requiring transit-supportive development and prioritizing intensification, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations.*

The 2024 PPS also proposes to remove Section 1.7.1, which speaks to economic prosperity and is included in the policy analysis of the 2020 PPS.

### Summary

The 2024 PPS emphasizes that development should be encouraged on underutilized lands. The proposed development contemplates a dense residential use on vacant lands which is in alignment with these policies.

While the PPS provides the overall policy direction specifically related to matters of provincial interest, A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the “Growth Plan”) is intended to provide policy direction to support the development of strong, prosperous communities and assist in managing future growth. The current Growth Plan policies came into effect on August 20, 2020. The Growth Plan acts as the over-arching policy document that local municipality’s reference for guidance regarding complex land use issues and growth management. All planning decisions are to confirm to the Growth Plan.

The Province introduced a proposed amendment to the Growth Plan in June 2020. These changes include updates to the population and employment forecasts and the horizon years being extended to 2051. Regions and municipalities across Ontario are in the process of updating their Official Plans to conform with the updated policy direction provided by the latest version of the Growth Plan.

### Guiding Principles

Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan provides the guiding principles for development within the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The following are applicable:

- o *Support the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.*
- o *Support a range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.*
- o *Protect and enhance natural heritage, hydrologic, and landform systems, features, and functions.*



The proposed development conforms to the guiding principles of the Growth Plan by providing a compact form of residential development that will serve both existing and future residents of the local area. The proposal represents an efficient use of land, infrastructure, transportation networks, and provides for a different housing option which is compatible with the surrounding area and will add to the rental housing stock in the Township of West Lincoln.

## Managing Growth

Section 2 of the Growth Plan provides policies that direct where and how the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) will grow in order to create complete communities while accommodating forecasted growth.

Section 2.2.1.2 of the Growth Plan states, *Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:*

1. *The vast majority of growth will be directed to settlement areas that*
  - i. *have a delineated built boundary;*
  - ii. *have existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems; and*
  - iii. *can support the achievement of complete communities;*
2. *Within settlement areas, growth will be focused in:*
  - i. *delineated built-up areas;*
  - ii. *strategic growth areas;*
  - iii. *locations with existing or planned transit, with a priority on higher order transit where it exists or is planned; and*
  - iv. *areas with existing or planned public service facilities;*

## Delineated Built-up Areas

The southern portion of the subject lands where development is proposed is located within the delineated built boundary and are in the delineated Built-Up Area. The following policies of Section 2.2.2 are applicable and assert that:

1. *By the time the next municipal comprehensive review is approved and in effect, and for each year thereafter, the applicable minimum intensification target is as follows:*
  - a. *A minimum of 50 per cent of all residential development occurring annually within each of the Cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia and Peterborough and the Regions of Durham, Halton, Niagara, Peel, Waterloo and York will be within the delineated built-up area;*
2. *All municipalities will develop a strategy to achieve the minimum intensification target and intensification throughout delineated built-up areas, which will:*
  - a. *identify strategic growth areas to support achievement of the intensification target and recognize them as a key focus for development;*
  - b. *identify the appropriate type and scale of development in strategic growth areas and transition of built form to adjacent areas;*
  - c. *encourage intensification generally throughout the delineated built-up area;*
  - d. *ensure lands are zoned and development is designed in a manner that supports the achievement of complete communities;*
  - e. *prioritize planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities that will support intensification; and*
  - f. *be implemented through official plan policies and designations, updated zoning and other supporting documents.*

The above-noted policies require that all municipalities develop and implement strategies to achieve minimum intensification targets. The proposed development is in alignment with the intention of the above-noted policies which encourage intensification. The area in which development is proposed is within the boundary of Smithville's urban settlement area. The Provincial criteria for a Strategic Growth Area include lands located along a major/arterial road, however the lands are not regionally or municipally designated as being within a Strategic Growth Area. The subject lands can still be considered an appropriate location for intensified residential development in a delineated built-up area due to its proximity to Regional Road 20, a key arterial road.

Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan provides population and employment forecasts for managing and planning growth to 2051. The Region of Niagara is forecasted to have a population of 674,000 persons by 2051. The 217 residential units included in the proposed development will contribute to the regional housing supply and encourage future developments that will do the same.

## Housing

Section 2.2.6 of the Growth Plan provides policy direction for municipalities to meet and maintain growth targets through the development of a range and mix of housing. The following policies are applicable:

1. *Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, will:*
  1. *support housing choice through the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan by:*

- i. *identifying a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities, including additional residential units and affordable housing to meet projected needs of current and future residents; and*
  - ii. *establishing targets for affordable ownership housing and rental housing;*
3. *To support the achievement of complete communities, municipalities will consider the use of available tools to require that multi-unit residential developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes.*
4. *Municipalities will maintain at all times where development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units. This supply will include, and may exclusively consist of, lands suitably zoned for intensification and redevelopment.*

## Natural Heritage System

Policy 4.2.2.3, states, *Within the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan:*

- a) *new development or site alteration will demonstrate that:*
  - i. *there are no negative impacts on key natural heritage features or key hydrologic features or their functions;*

The proposed development does not include any development where environmentally features have been identified. Appropriate buffers from nearby features have been delineated and included within the development plan to ensure protection of these elements.

## 7.4 NIAGARA REGION OFFICIAL PLAN (2022)

The proposed development conforms to the housing policies outlined in the Growth Plan and will contribute towards the applicable population targets. A mix of unit types that range in size are proposed for this development which contributes to diversifying the overall housing stock and building a complete community. The addition of the proposed 217 units, provides significant intensification that the subject lands can readily accommodate.

### Summary

The proposed development provides new, high-quality housing options of a compact built form in a Settlement Area located within the delineated built boundary given the subject lands' proximity to a major or arterial road. The residential intensification caused by the proposed development will encourage the densification of the surrounding built-form and contribute towards regional and municipal intensification and density targets. The provision of new housing units in a variety of sizes will promote the achievement of the Province's housing and affordability goals, and ensure that a wide array of housing types and sizes are provided to accommodate housing demand in the community. It is our opinion that the proposed development conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Niagara Region Official Plan serves as a guiding document that outlines the long-term vision and policies for land use, development, and growth within the Region. Its primary purpose is to provide a framework for sustainable development and to ensure that future growth and land use decisions align with the goals and objectives of the region as a whole.

The policies in the ROP will help to direct and coordinate more detailed planning by local municipalities. In addition, it provides a framework for coordinating planning with adjacent municipalities, as well as other jurisdictions.

The Niagara Region Official Plan Schedule B designates the subject lands as a *Designated Greenfield Area* within the *Urban Area*.



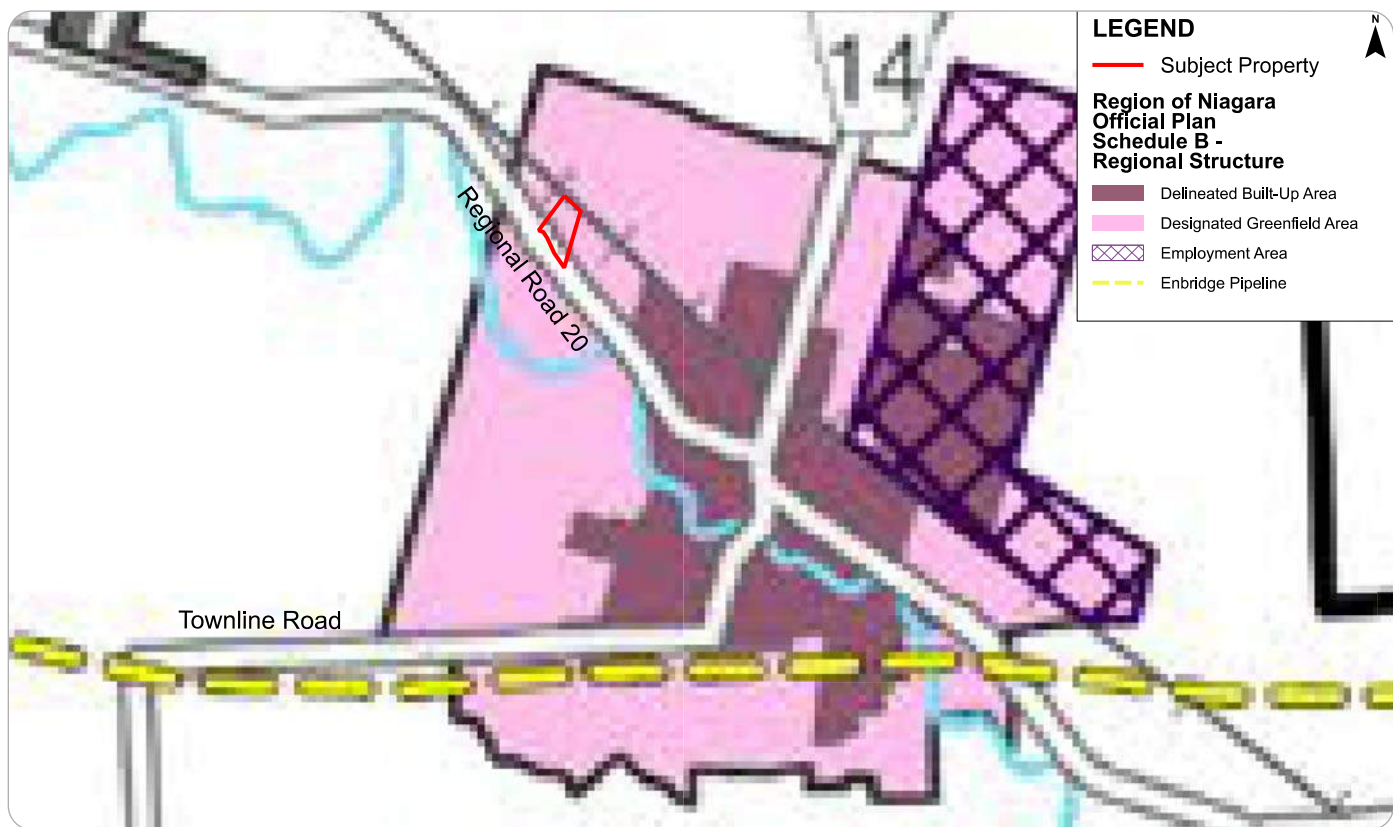


Figure 7: Niagara Region Official Plan Schedule B

## Forecasted Growth

As outlined in Section 1.1 of the Niagara Region Official Plan, the Region is aiming to accommodate significant population and job growth by 2051, with targets set at 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs. This entails effective management of housing, employment, and infrastructure to support the region's expansion. Local municipalities, including West Lincoln, are tasked with aligning their plans with these regional targets. Specifically, West Lincoln is expected to accommodate a population of 38,370 and 10,480 jobs by 2051.

These figures serve as benchmarks for land use planning and infrastructure development within the municipality, with periodic reviews to ensure alignment with regional objectives. While municipalities have some flexibility to plan for additional infrastructure and employment, they must adhere to guidelines outlined in the regional plan.

The proposed development includes 217 residential units within a compact built-form. The townhouses and 6-storey residential buildings contemplated in the proposal will increase the regional housing stock and positively contribute towards regional growth targets.

## Regional Structure

The regional structure outlined in section 2.2 focuses on directing anticipated growth towards designated settlement areas, encompassing both urban and rural settlements. Urban areas, including built-up areas and designated greenfield areas, are intended to accommodate the majority of development. Objectives include managing growth within urban areas, promoting strategic intensification, preserving rural settlement character, and ensuring infrastructure aligns with growth forecasts and management goals. Transit-supportive development is also encouraged to enhance community health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 2.2.1 of the Regional Official Plan outlines the regional strategy for managing urban growth. Development in the urban area should support the following:

- a. *the intensification targets in Table 2-2 and density targets outlined in this Plan;*
- b. *a compact built form, a vibrant public realm, and a mix of land uses, including residential uses, employment uses, recreational uses, and public service facilities, to support the creation of complete communities;*
- c. *a diverse range and mix of housing types, unit sizes, and densities to accommodate current and future market-based and affordable housing needs;*
- e. *built forms, land use patterns, and street configurations that minimize land consumption*
- l. *mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change by:*
  - i. *protecting natural heritage features and areas, water resource systems, and other components of the Region's natural environment system pursuant to Section 3.1;*

- ii. *promoting built forms, land use patterns, and street configurations that improve community resilience and sustainability, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and conserve biodiversity.*

Policy 2.2.2.23 states, *Designated greenfield areas shall achieve a minimum density of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare as measured across the entire region.*

Policy 2.2.2.24 states, *Local official plans are required to achieve the minimum greenfield density target in Policy 2.2.2.23 across the entire municipality, and are encouraged to exceed this minimum.*

Policy 2.2.2.25 states, *Designated greenfield areas will be planned as complete communities by:*

- a. *ensuring that development is sequential, orderly and contiguous with existing built-up areas;*
- b. *utilizing proactive planning tools in Section 6.1 and Section 6.2, as appropriate;*
- c. *ensuring infrastructure capacity is available; and*
- d. *supporting active transportation and encouraging the integration and sustained viability of public transit service.*

The proposed development contemplates a diverse intensified residential built-form that efficiently utilizes the subject lands and contributes towards regional growth targets. This will ensure that the development can accommodate current and future market-based needs. The environmental features located on the lands have been accounted for in the design, with buffers included to mitigate any potential damage. The development integrates the environment into the design and includes a park to ease the transition of built-form.

## Housing

Section 2.3 discusses the pivotal role of housing in enhancing overall quality of life and acknowledges the dynamic nature of housing needs over time. It advocates for a diverse range of housing options, encompassing various sizes, types, tenures, and support systems to cater to the diverse needs of communities. The outlined policies aim to support the provision of diverse housing options to foster complete communities and bolster the regional economy.

Section 2.3.1 outlines the importance of providing a diverse range of housing options to meet the needs of all individuals across different stages of life. It emphasizes the planning for various densities, lot and unit sizes, and housing types, throughout settlement areas. The policies in this section aim to ensure the availability of residential growth capacity for a minimum of 15 years and maintain a three-year supply of residential units through suitable zoning, land allocation, and residential intensification, where appropriate.

Policy 2.3.1.1 states, *The development of a range and mix of densities, lot and unit sizes, and housing types, including affordable and attainable housing, will be planned for throughout settlement areas to meet housing needs at all stages of life.*

Policy 2.3.1.4 states, *New residential development and residential intensification are encouraged to be planned and designed to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change by: a. facilitating compact built form;*

The proposed development includes diverse residential options in the forms of townhouses and apartment buildings. While the specific housing mix within the apartment building remains to be determined, it will ensure a range of housing options to cater to the different needs of the community.

The proposed development represents a more intensified form of residential use and utilizes the lands on which the development is planned in a more efficient way than existing surrounding residential development.

## 3.0. Sustainable Region

Section 3.1 of the ROP provides objectives and policies pertaining to the Regional natural environment system. Objectives associated with this section include identifying and protecting natural heritage and water resource systems, maintaining biodiversity and connectivity, mitigating climate change impacts, safeguarding wetlands and woodlands, protecting Great Lakes ecological health, and minimizing natural hazard risks.

Some key objectives within this section are as follows:

- a. *identify and protect a natural heritage system and water resource system which will form the natural environment system;*
- b. *maintain, restore, and enhance the biodiversity and connectivity of natural features and their associated ecological and hydrological functions;*
- g. *protect woodlands and their biodiversity, restore ecological functions, and enhance woodland cover through reforestation and restoration;*

Policy 4.1.9.2 states that, *Proposals for non-agricultural residential development on rural lands must meet the following criteria*

- d. *proposed developments must be appropriately separated and protected from:*
  - iii. *livestock operations and anaerobic digesters, in accordance with the minimum distance separation formulae;*

Policy 4.1.4.2 states that, *Major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with Provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.*

These policies were referenced in the Pre-Consultation meeting comments from Niagara Region. With the approval of OPA 62 and 63, the subject lands are no longer considered rural, so Policy 4.1.9.2 no longer applies. Regardless, discussions have been had with Municipal staff to confirm that the subject lands are in fact not within close enough proximity to the farm located at 6817 Highway 20 to trigger the need for an MDS 1 setback.

## Infrastructure

Section 5.2 of the ROP underscores the critical importance of well-planned and managed infrastructure in realizing the Region's vision for vibrant and resilient communities and achieving the growth targets outlined in the plan. The policies in this section are designed to ensure that both current and future development are supported by infrastructure that is integrated, efficient, and environmentally sustainable. Emphasis is placed on integrating infrastructure planning and development with climate change resilience, aligning with directives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address infrastructure risks.

Policy 5.2.2.4 states, *Prior to approval of development, the municipality shall ensure that required water and wastewater services and servicing capacity is available to support the development.*

The proposed development is supported by existing infrastructure, meaning that the subject lands can be considered an appropriate location for development.

## Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails and Open Space

Section 5.3 of the ROP highlights the importance of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational areas in promoting healthy lifestyles, tourism, and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. Objectives outlined in this section include planning for the inclusion of parks, open spaces, and trails within and between communities, recognizing the significance of the Niagara Escarpment as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and supporting the identification of cultural heritage landscapes.

A park is proposed in the northernmost portion of the subject lands, with an extension of the Southwest Rail Trail to the residential development to the south. With the introduction of new residents into Smithville additional public recreation facilities are needed to service the Town's growth.

## District Plans and Secondary Plans

Section 6.1 of the ROP outlines the importance of district plans and secondary plans in facilitating proactive and comprehensive growth management within designated areas of Niagara. Secondary plans offer detailed policies and guidelines, typically developed through community consultation, to direct development within specific areas of Local Area Municipalities. These plans serve as blueprints for managing growth in strategic areas, providing certainty for long-term development expectations. Analysis of the applicable Secondary Plan can be found in Section 7.7 of this report.

Policy 6.3.1.1 of the ROP states, *The Region shall support healthy communities by:*

- a. *creating built form that provides healthy living;*
- d. *encouraging integration of open space and parks that facilitate physical activity, social cohesion and support mental health;*



## 7.5 TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN OFFICIAL PLAN

The housing stock that the proposed development contemplates will satisfy these regional policies by integrating a walking trail and park to encourage social cohesion and physical activity.

Policy 6.4.2.1 states, *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved or the land has been investigated and cleared or mitigated following clearance from the Province. Schedule K of the ROP designates the lands as Areas of Archaeological Potential.*

An Archaeological Assessment (Stage 1 & 2) has been prepared for the subject lands and included within the submission package. This report concluded that there are no archaeologically concerning features present on the lands. Further details regarding the Archaeological Assessment can be found in Section 6.4.

### Summary

The Niagara Region Official Plan (2022) provides a comprehensive framework for sustainable development and growth management within the region. It emphasizes the importance of aligning land use decisions with regional objectives, including accommodating significant population and job growth by 2051. The proposed development contributes to these goals by offering diverse housing options and integrating with existing infrastructure. Moreover, the development respects environmental considerations and includes amenities such as parks and trails to enhance community well-being. Overall, the proposed development aligns with the objectives and policies outlined in the Niagara Region Official Plan, supporting the region's vision for vibrant and resilient communities.

The Township of West Lincoln Official Plan serves as a guiding document outlining the vision, policies, and strategies for sustainable growth and development within the municipality. Recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of West Lincoln, this plan sets forth a comprehensive framework to manage land use, infrastructure, and community services effectively. With a focus on fostering vibrant and resilient communities, the Official Plan aims to balance economic prosperity with environmental stewardship and social well-being. Through extensive community engagement and collaboration, the plan endeavors to shape a prosperous future for residents, businesses, and stakeholders while preserving the township's distinct identity and natural heritage.

Following the approval of OPA 62 and 63, both the northern lands and the southern lands are now within the Smithville urban boundary and are designated by the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan, the details of which can be found in Section 7.6.

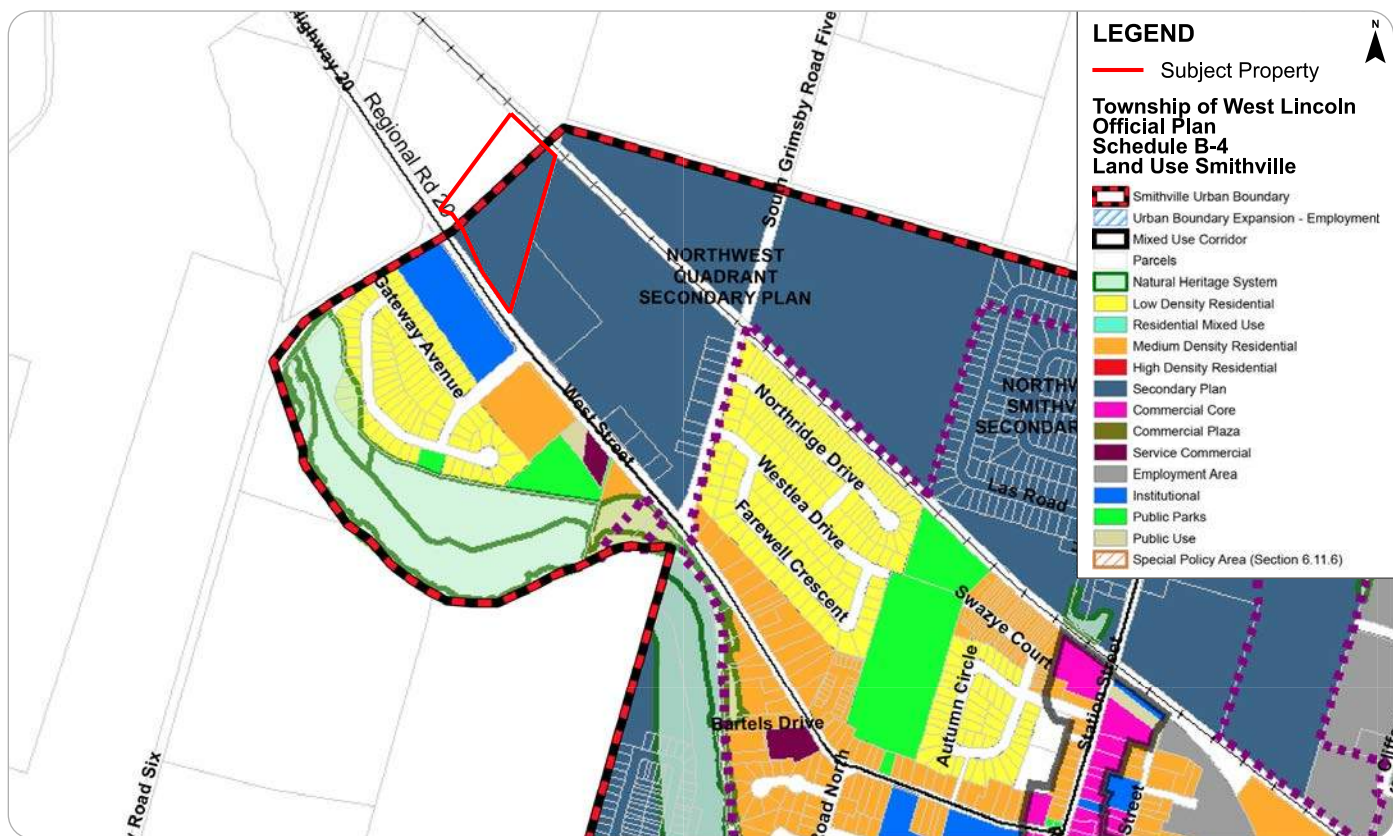


Figure 8: West Lincoln Official Plan Schedule B-4

## Growth Management

Section 5 of the West Lincoln OP outlines the growth management strategy for the Township, emphasizing the delineation of settlement boundaries to accommodate anticipated population and employment needs. Objectives include ensuring balanced community development, efficient land use, and infrastructure utilization, along with promoting employment opportunities consistent with the available labor force. Ensuring adequate municipal services in Smithville is prioritized, alongside encouraging redevelopment, infilling, and intensification within urban and hamlet areas.

Coordination between land use and infrastructure planning is emphasized to protect natural heritage systems and environmental features for present and future generations.

The population and employment forecasted for the Township of West Lincoln up to the year 2031 are outlined in Section 5.3 of the OP. The projected population for 2031 is 16,990 people, with the Smithville Urban Settlement Area expected to accommodate the majority of growth. Other objectives within the same timelines include achieving 1,890 new residents, 860 new households, and 1,150 new employees.

Section 5.4 provides housing growth projections and policies. The projected housing growth by unit type is provided, which serve as the foundation for the Municipality's long-term land needs (until the year 2031) and housing growth. Specifically, medium and high-density housing are expected to comprise of 9.1% and 9.5% of the unit mix, respectively.

As outlined in Section 5.5, the Township allows flexibility in housing mix targets based on specific site conditions, ensuring it doesn't hinder overall housing goals. Monitoring land supply annually, it designates separate land uses for low, medium, and high-density areas. Secondary plans prioritize infill with compatibility criteria to maintain neighborhood character. Collaborating with stakeholders, the Township aims for 30% of new housing to be affordable, offering reduced zoning requirements to support this.

Section 5.6 speaks to the structure of the Urban Settlement Area, which consists of the built-up area, intensification zones, greenfield areas, core natural heritage system, and transportation corridors. Smithville is identified as the key Urban Settlement Area in the Township and is where the majority of urban development is expected to take place. Intensification areas consist of lands within the built boundary which may be redeveloped to accommodate more intensified uses on the basis of servicing connectivity and other existing surrounding infrastructure.

While the intensification strategy outlined in Section 5.9 asserts that the majority of intensification is expected to occur within the designated area, intensified development is not restricted to the downtown core. Section 5.10 outlines the Greenfield Strategy which provides policies for development within designated Greenfield Areas. Development in these areas is intended to create more compact, multi-modal, mixed-use communities with a range of housing types. The Township requires a minimum gross density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare across all Designated Greenfield Areas.

Providing a more dense and compact built form represents a more efficient use of the lands and will contribute to the Municipality's growth targets. This development, and the approved residential subdivision to the east, will add to the Township's housing stock and encourage future development that will do the same and contribute to the eased transition between the agricultural uses present throughout West Lincoln's Natural Heritage System, and Smithville's urbanized core.

### **Design Policies for Residential Neighbourhoods (Smithville)**

As outlined in Section 6.6 of the West Lincoln Official Plan, the objectives of the design standards for residential neighborhoods in Smithville are to enhance livability, ensure adherence to Township design criteria, and create a built environment that integrates new development with existing structures. Design policies focus on ensuring compatibility with neighboring buildings, establishing appropriate setback and yard requirements, and maintaining visibility and accessibility of main entrances for safety. Development standards emphasize the importance of maintaining privacy, convenient access, and direct pathways to primary building entrances. Additionally, buildings adjacent to parks and open spaces are encouraged to provide visual opportunities for these features.

For townhouse developments, the design criteria focus on creating visual variation and unity within blocks. This includes incorporating diverse designs for elevations and roofs to break up massing, promoting architectural elements for integration with adjacent single/semi-detached dwellings, and ensuring garages are accessed from rear lanes or paired to maximize front yard green space. Additionally, visible side and rear elevations must have upgraded façade treatments, while corner units are encouraged to feature distinctive elements like wrap-around porches or bay windows. See the below applicable development criteria for townhouses as outlined in Section 6.6.6 of the Town of West Lincoln Official Plan.



- a) *The elevation and design of the townhouses shall provide variation between units and reinforces common characteristics that visually unite the block.*
- d) *Garages shall be accessed from a rear lane. Where they are not, garages are encouraged to be paired to allow for more substantial front yard green space. Garages shall not protrude beyond the main front wall or porch of the dwelling unit.*

For apartment buildings, specific development criteria ensure an attractive streetscape and integration with surrounding areas. Buildings must face public roads with appealing façade features, with a substantial portion fronting at a minimum setback. Entrances should also be oriented towards public roads, while parking and service areas can be located in side or rear yards. Rooftop mechanical equipment must be screened and comply with regulations, and on-site recycling waste storage must be provided. Building height near Low or Medium Density Residential areas is restricted, and applications for planning approval must include preliminary design plans to assess impact and streetscape design. See the below applicable development criteria for apartment buildings as outlined in Section 6.6.7.

- a) *Apartment buildings shall be oriented to front the public road with attractive façade features. A substantial portion of the building shall front the public road at a minimum setback.*
- b) *Entrances shall be located and oriented to public roads.*
- d) *Rooftop mechanical equipment shall comply with all applicable Provincial legislation and shall be screened with materials that are complimentary to the building.*

The design guidelines outlined in the Township of West Lincoln's Official Plan were followed throughout the planning of the proposed development. The proposed apartment buildings face Highway 20 and provide a façade that would fit into the surrounding landscape, especially considering the approved subdivision to the east.

The proposed townhouses include appropriate setbacks and were designed collectively. The proposed residential uses, through working with the Township's design guidelines, will visually enhance the corridor while preserving the natural environment and surrounding features. The Urban Design Brief submitted as a part of this application describes the proposed development's design details, with further details to be determined at the Site Plan application stage.

Section 6.11.5 of the OP describes the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan's intent and provides an overview of its policies. Section 7.6 of this report discusses the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan in greater detail.

## Parks

Section 9 of the West Lincoln Official Plan provides policies for parks within the Township. The Township emphasizes the importance of parks and their role as being a hub for interaction and recreation within neighbourhoods and communities. Some key policies regarding parks are as follows:

- a) *Parks within the Township shall be used for a wide variety of recreational areas or facilities, including passive and active areas, forestry, fish and wildlife management and conservation areas.*
- c) *The Township shall develop parks in conjunction with school sites and private parks wherever possible to meet the recreational needs of the community. Joint use agreements between the Township Council and Boards of Education shall be encouraged to maximize the use of recreational facilities.*

The park proposed in the northeast corner of the proposed development is intended to connect with the approved park within the Marz Subdivision to the east of the subject lands. The proposed park will allow residents to interact with one another and enjoy Smithville's natural environment.

The location of this park in close proximity to St. Martin Catholic Elementary School, south of the subject lands, creates an opportunity for a joint-use agreement to maximize the use of recreational facilities as described in the policies of this section of the OP.

## Natural Environment

Section 10 of the West Lincoln Official Plan describes the natural environment and focuses on creating a healthy landscape within the Township. Key policies within this section include:

- a) *Development should maintain, enhance or restore ecosystem health and integrity. First priority is to be given to avoiding negative environmental impacts. If negative impacts cannot be avoided, then mitigation measures shall be required.*
- b) *New development, including infrastructure, should be designed to maintain or enhance the natural features and functions of a site.*

While there are natural features present on the subject lands, the proposed development has been planned in such a way to mitigate any adverse impacts to them. The watercourse, woodlot, and karst feature are discussed in the Environmental Impact Study submitted with this application in greater detail.

## Infrastructure and Transportation

Section 14 of the Township's OP emphasizes the importance of adequate infrastructure and transportation systems for community health and efficiency. Objectives within this section include optimizing existing infrastructure, prioritizing stormwater management, coordinating efficient servicing for development, promoting active transportation, and encouraging water conservation. These objectives aim to ensure sustainable growth and a high quality of life for residents.

The residential uses being proposed are serviced by adequate infrastructure and are connected to Smithville, West Lincoln, and Niagara Region through transportation routes. Proper planning of the development has ensured that the objectives outlined in this section will be met. The civil engineering materials, including the Site Servicing Plan, submitted as a part of this application discusses the servicing and infrastructural connectivity of the proposed development in greater detail.

## Summary

The Township of West Lincoln Official Plan serves as a vital document guiding sustainable growth and development within the municipality. By prioritizing the protection of agricultural lands, promoting balanced community development, encouraging diverse housing options, and emphasizing infrastructure and transportation planning, the plan aims to foster vibrant and resilient communities while preserving the township's distinct identity and natural heritage. The proposed development aligns with these objectives by providing intensified residential development within designated areas, adhering to design standards, and ensuring adequate infrastructure support.

## 7.6 OPA 62 AND 63

The Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP) guides sustainable development in Smithville and integrates into the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan through Official Plan Amendments (OPA) 62 and 63. OPA 62 updates growth forecasts, targets, and the urban boundary for Smithville to align with Niagara Region's new Official Plan and adjusts the boundaries of the Township's Rural Settlement Areas. OPA 63 establishes policies and designations for land in the Smithville urban expansion area.

### OPA 62

OPA 62 amends the West Lincoln Official Plan to address population and employment growth forecasts provided for the Township of West Lincoln in the Niagara Region Official Plan projections to the year 2051 provided in the Growth Plan.

The Niagara Region Official Plan directs the Township of West Lincoln to plan for a total population of 38,370 people and for total employment of 8,730 jobs by 2051. The following growth targets are identified:

- b) *Population growth in the Township will be primarily accommodated within the Smithville Urban Settlement Area through the provision of a range and mix of housing types, as follows:*
  - ii. *Through the development of complete communities within designated Greenfield areas, by planning to achieve a target density of 50 people and jobs combined per hectare.*

The proposed development provides an increased density of residential uses that will contribute to the housing supply of Smithville. This is in alignment with the intent of OPA 62.

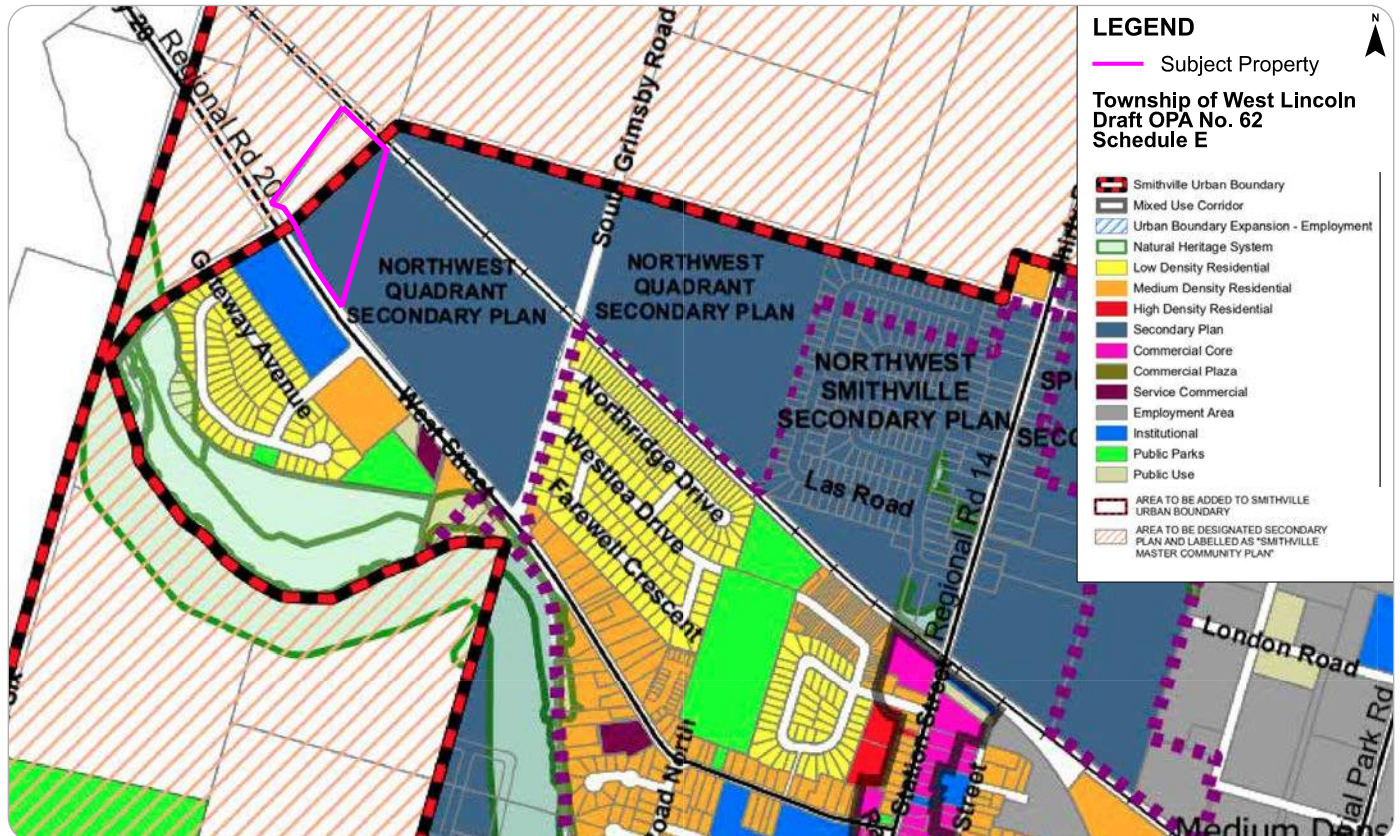


Figure 9: Schedule 'B-4' Land Use Smithville, OPA 62



## OPA 63

Schedule E-8 of OPA 63 designates the northern portion of lands as designated *Commercial* and *Natural Heritage System (NHS)*. Schedule E-8 also identifies a potential Karst feature on the subject lands.

The commercial designation contributes to the achievement of a complete community through providing a range of commercial uses and some residential uses in dwelling units above the first floor of buildings. The following uses are permitted within the commercial designation: a full range of retail commercial uses; office commercial uses; restaurants; hotels; cultural, recreational, and entertainment uses; community uses and institutional uses; and more. There are also certain uses that may be permitted under certain conditions, and others that will only be permitted following the approval of an amendment. Residential uses are not permitted within this designation. Policy 4 h) states that *No building or structure in the "Commercial" designation shall exceed a height of 3 storeys...*

Natural Heritage System Schedule E-12 of OPA 63 indicates that on the subject lands there is a Conceptual Buffer, a Linkage, and a Karst Feature.

Conceptual Buffers serve to protect Core Areas from nearby land uses and mitigate the impacts of development. The following policies apply to Conceptual Buffers:

- a) *All development in lands adjacent to a Core Area shall be required to provide a Buffer, within which no development or site alteration shall be permitted except passive recreation uses, provided that appropriate separation from the feature protected by the Buffer is maintained; forest management uses; conservation uses; and small-scale structures for recreational uses.*

- b) *The ecologically appropriate width for each Buffer associated with a proposed development shall be established through the completion of an Environmental Impact Study and shall generally be 30 metres.*

Linkages provide physical and functional connections between Core Areas. High-constraint watercourses that warrant the greatest protection generally require at least 30 metres on each side, resulting in a 60-metre-wide Linkage Area. Other policies associated with Linkage Areas are as follows:

- b) *No development or site alteration shall be permitted in, or within 30 metres of, a Linkage Area unless an Environmental Impact Study has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Township, Niagara Region, and any other approval authority, that there will be no negative impacts on the Linkage Area or its ecological functions. This requirement will be addressed through both the EIS required at the Block Plan stage and where a scoped EIS is required as part of a complete application for development.*
- c) *The uses permitted within a Linkage Area shall be limited to passive recreation uses and infrastructure to support such uses, such as trails and rest areas, provided that the overall ecological function of the Linkage Area is maintained; forest management uses; conservation uses; and small-scale structures for recreational uses.*

In order to protect the environmental features present on the subject lands, an appropriate buffer has been included in the proposed development. There is no development proposed within the buffer area, with its only function being to separate the development from sensitive environmental features.

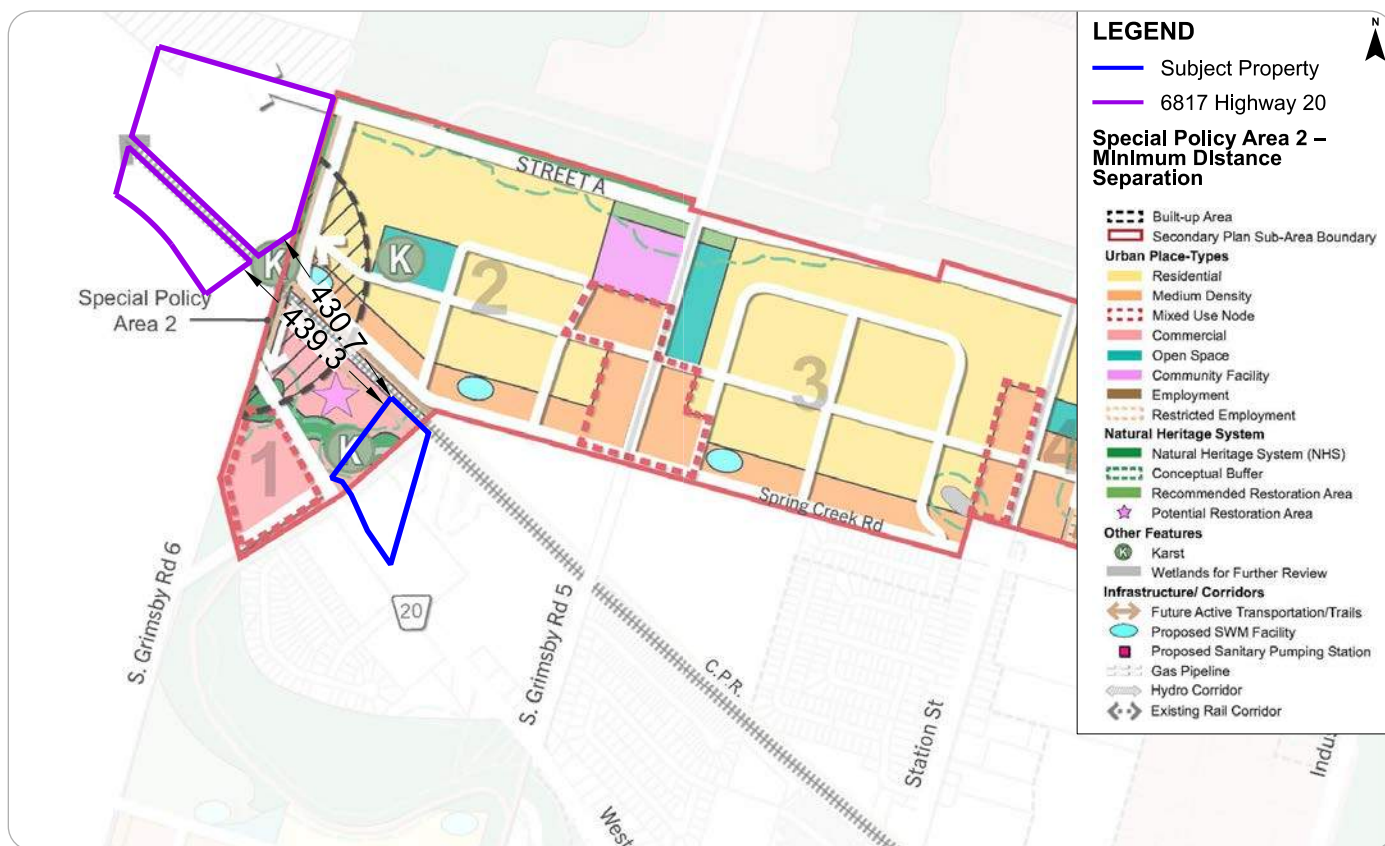


Figure 10: Special Policy Area 2 – Minimum Distance Separation

Weston Consulting met with Township Staff on August 16, 2024 to explore the rezoning of this lands within the subject application to a Commercial zone. It was confirmed that a rezoning at this time would not be supported without going through the Block Plan process. To accommodate this, this portion of the lands are proposed to be rezoned to *Future Development*. The Applicant will explore the Block Plan process at the appropriate time, but it is important to note that the propose development of the lands does not preclude the block planning that is anticipated for future.

Section 6.11.7.2.12 of OPA 63 speaks to Special Policy Area 2 which is in close proximity to the subject lands. Comments received from Staff at the December 7, 2023 pre-consultation meeting indicate that MDS 1 standards must be followed in accordance with policies from this section. However, Staff have confirmed that the subject lands are located approximately 500 metres away from the closest farm located at 6817 Highway 20 outside of the Special Policy Area 2 radius. As such, MDS 1 standards do not apply.

## 7.7 SECONDARY PLAN FOR THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT (2017)

The Township of West Lincoln Secondary Plan for the Northwest Quadrant provides a planning framework to guide the detailed planning and future development of Smithville's Northwest Quadrant over the next 20 years. The Secondary Plan builds on the policy framework of the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan and Provincial and Regional plans and policies in order to provide direction for the orderly development of the Northwest Quadrant community.

### Community Structure and Design

The Community Structure Plan for the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan area is presented in Section 4.1 and outlines a cohesive framework for future development. Organized around a central gateway node and interconnected road network, it emphasizes low and medium-density residential neighborhoods with limited high-density residential and commercial areas. With a focus on achieving density targets set by regional and provincial plans, the plan aims to create compact, mixed-use communities that efficiently utilize land and infrastructure. By providing a range of housing options and emphasizing multi-modal transportation, the plan seeks to accommodate the area's growth while fostering a vibrant and sustainable community.

The Community Design section of the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan establishes principles and policies aimed at creating a vibrant and livable neighborhood. Drawing from the Township of West Lincoln's Official Plan and Urban Design Guidelines for Smithville, the Secondary Plan emphasizes a complete community approach centered around safety, integration, housing diversity, open spaces, connectivity, and sustainable design. Key design principles include promoting pedestrian-friendly environments, establishing well-connected street networks, integrating parks and recreational spaces, ensuring compatibility with existing development, and fostering community identity through distinctive features and architectural elements.

Urban design policies emphasize adherence to accessibility standards, enhancement of streetscapes, creation of unique building typologies, and incorporation of stormwater management systems.

The Transportation Network outlined in section 4.4 of the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan outlines the road pattern and connectivity aimed at accommodating both automotive and active forms of transportation like cycling and walking. As noted previously, the potential extension of Grimsby Road 6 northward, necessitating a new railway crossing, which may be either at-grade or grade-separated will not be considered at staff's direction. We note that all roads and multi-purpose trails will adhere to the Township and Regional standards for design.

Prior to OPA 62 and 63 the subject lands were located on the periphery of Smithville's urban boundary, with the border splitting the subject lands in two. As such, the lands can be considered a key connector between Smithville and the future West Lincoln area. The roundabout in the subject lands' southwest corner is a planned future gateway node, which also contributes to the subject lands' positioning as a key gateway. The proposed development has been designed in coordination and consultation with the relevant design guidelines to ensure the visual interest of the environment is preserved.

### Land Use Policies

As outlined in Section 5.0, the portion of the subject lands that are within the Secondary Plan are split-designated *Medium Density Residential, Parks & Trail Linkages, and Special Policy Area A*.

The General Policies outlined for land use within the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan Area emphasize achieving a minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare, with support for proposals aiming for higher density. Residential lands will primarily feature low and medium density housing, with some areas designated for higher density residential, mixed-use, and local commercial purposes. To meet density goals and align with the Township's Official Plan, the neighborhood will be planned to accommodate diverse housing types, styles, and lot sizes.

The *Medium Density Residential* designation, outlined in Section 5.3, aims to accommodate various housing types, including townhouses, multiple dwellings, and communal housing, while allowing for compatible non-residential uses. The Township encourages innovative housing forms within this designation to maintain a medium density built form. Permitted residential uses include single detached, semi-detached, duplex, triplex dwellings, townhomes, low-rise apartments, and communal housing. Medium Density Residential areas have a maximum density of 45 units per hectare and a maximum building height of 4 storeys, with exceptions possible up to 5 storeys based on site-specific compatibility and adherence to urban design guidelines, subject to Site Plan Control. This designation applies to the 3-story townhouse portions of the proposed development. The proposed development provides a density of 39.36 units per hectare in the Medium Density Area.

Special Policy Area A, identified along Highway 20 adjacent to South Grimsby Road 6, is designated as a Gateway Node in the Township's Urban Design Manual. Given ongoing assessments for land use needs up to 2041, potential urban boundary expansions for Smithville may warrant mixed-use development on these lands. Consequently, the Medium/High Density Residential lands within Special Policy Area A could be developed accordingly, contingent upon compliance with Section 5.3 and 5.4 of the Secondary Plan.

Apartment buildings are permitted within both designations, but the Medium Density Residential designation permits a maximum height of 4 storeys and a density of 45 units per hectare, whereas the High-Density Residential designation permits a maximum height of 6 storeys with no maximum density. The proposed apartment building within the lands designated Special Policy Area A would be considered a High-Density development. The proposed development provides a density of 200 units per hectare in the Special Policy Area.

The Parks designation in the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan aims to provide accessible green spaces for residents. Parks will be developed according to Township guidelines, with trail connections, strategic location, and integration with stormwater management. The required park and trail have been provided within the proposed development to conform to the Secondary Plan.

The proposed development is permitted based on the permissions of the designations that the lands are subject to. Further, the intensified built form being proposed is encouraged by the policies within this plan. Providing a range of housing types will serve the community well and will contribute towards the future economic sustainability of the Township.



## Summary

The Secondary Plan for the Northwest Quadrant of the Township of West Lincoln provides a comprehensive framework for guiding the development of Smithville's Northwest Quadrant over the next two decades. Emphasising low and medium-density residential neighbourhoods, mixed-use communities, and efficient land and infrastructure utilization, the plan aims to create vibrant and sustainable neighbourhoods.

The proposed development aligns with these objectives, providing intensified residential development while adhering to design standards and promoting a range of housing types to meet the needs of the community. The positioning of the subject lands as a key gateway to Smithville's Urban Area means that the proposed development would appropriately contribute to the transition of built form between West Lincoln's rural landscape and Smithville's urban landscape.

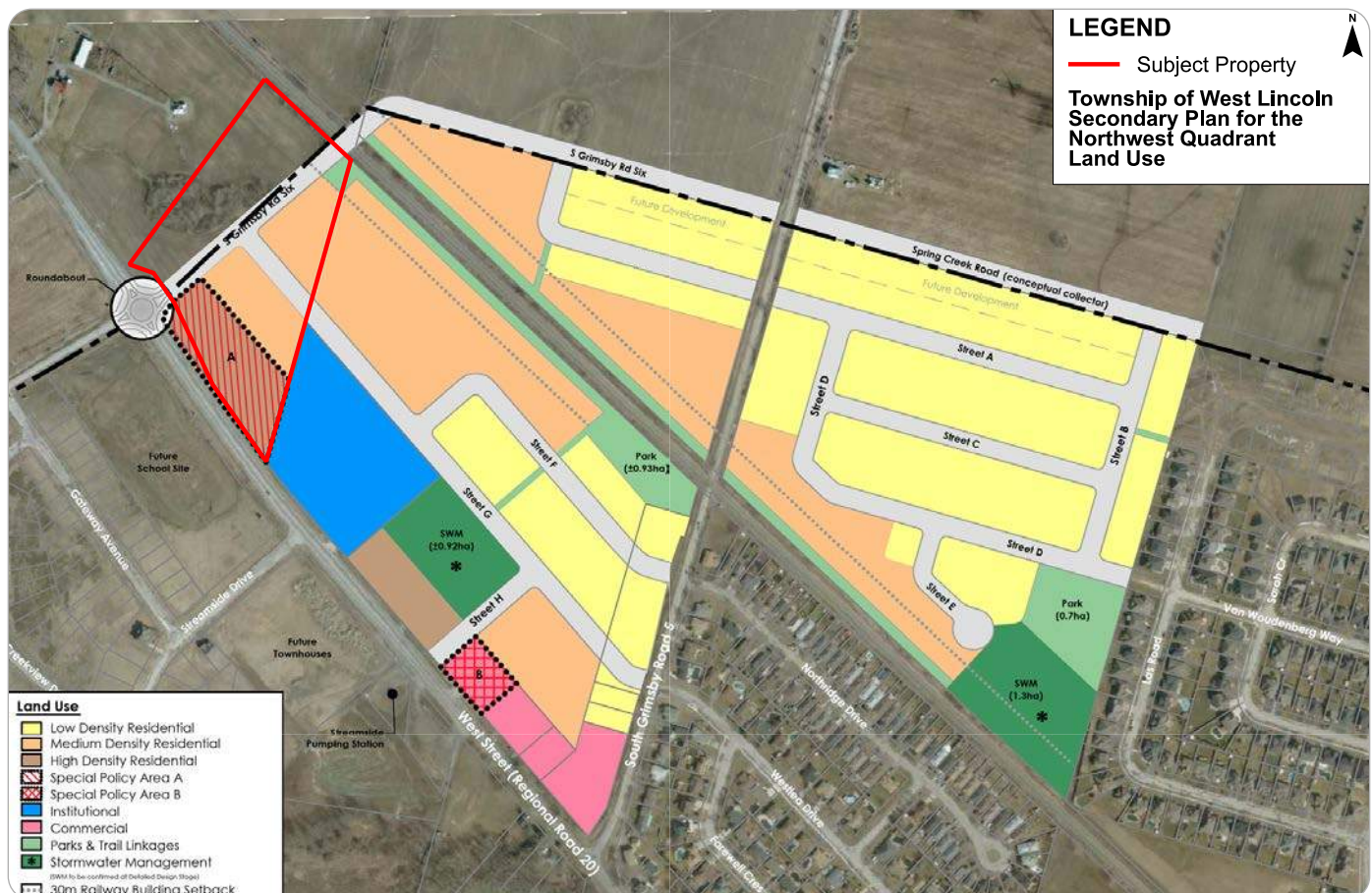


Figure 11: Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan Land Use

## 7.8 TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN ZONING BY-LAW 2017-70

The Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70, consolidated to Sept 26, 2022, serves as a comprehensive regulatory framework governing land use and development activities within the municipality. Enacted to ensure orderly and sustainable growth, the by-law outlines zoning regulations, land use designations, and development standards that guide planning decisions and shape the built environment across the township. The Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70 zones the lands historically outside of the urban boundary *Agricultural (A)* and the lands within the urban boundary *Development (D)*.

The permitted uses within the *Agricultural* zone include agricultural use; single detached dwelling; wayside pit or quarry, and a variety of accessory uses. The *Development* zone is a placeholder zone that allows for conservation use; public park for passive recreation; single detached dwelling on an existing lot of record. It is the intent of this zone to be rezoned in accordance with the Official Plan and Secondary Plan. The proposed residential uses are not permitted within the applicable Development zone, as such a Zoning By-law Amendment is required to facilitate the proposal.

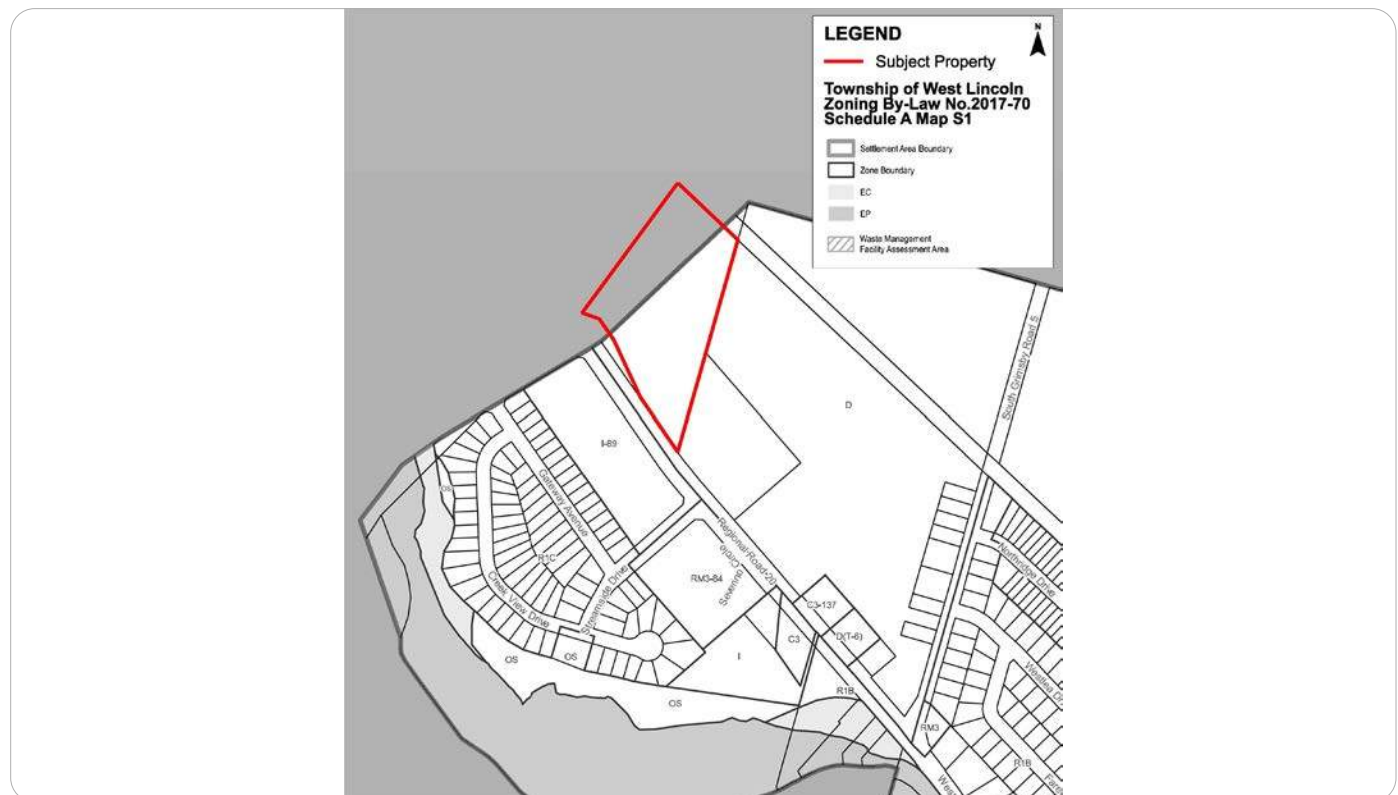


Figure 12: West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70 (cons. Sept 26, 2022)

The requested zones to support the proposed development include *Residential Medium Density 3 (RM3-XXX)*, *Open Space (OS)*, *Environmental Protection (EP)*, and *Development (D)* which are summarized below:

- **Residential Medium Density 3 (RM3-XXX):** The RM3 zone permits both apartment dwellings and townhouse dwellings as per Table 13 in Section 6.2. Site-specific provision will be required to facilitate the proposal. The details of the required site-specific provisions can be found in Section 8.1 of this Report.
- **Open Space (OS):** The OS zone permits a private or public park and is proposed for the future public park and Southwest Rail Trail.
- **Environmental Protection (EP):** the EP zone permits conservation uses in addition to a public park for passive recreation. This zone is proposed will apply to the natural heritage features and associated buffer on the lands.
- **Development (D):** The D zone is intended to signify that lands under its zoning category are expected to be rezoned at a later date to reflect anticipated development conditions from the time the lands are zoned. These lands are intended to be zoned Commercial as directed by OPA 63, however the block planning process outlined in Section 7.6 of this report needs to be completed prior to rezoning.

## General Provisions

Section 3.12 defines the requirements of parking and loading facilities. The following policies hold relevance for the proposed development.

- 1 Bicycle Parking Facility per dwelling unit must be provided for an Apartment dwelling as per Section 3.12.4.
- 1 Loading Space (9 metre length) must be provided for an Apartment dwelling containing 50 or more dwelling units as per Section 3.12.5
- 1.75 Parking Spaces per dwelling unit must be provided for an Apartment dwelling, townhouse dwelling, or stacked townhouse dwelling as per Section 3.12.6.
- 4% of the total number of parking spaces on the lot shall be barrier-free parking spaces when the proposed number of parking spaces is greater than 100 as per Section 3.12.6.
- For the purposes of meeting the parking requirements of this By-law, a private garage shall have a minimum garage width of 3 metres and a minimum depth of 5.5 metres with a maximum of one step having an allowable projection of 0.2 metre into this space as per Section 3.12.7 e).

Amendments will be required for both the number of Bicycle Parking Facilities provided for the apartment dwellings and the Parking Spaces provided per dwelling unit for the apartment dwellings along with other site-specific provisions as described below and shown in the attached Zoning By-law Amendment.



## 8. APPLICATION SUBMISSION SUMMARY

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## 8.1 CONCURRENT DRAFT ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT AND DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION

A Zoning By-law amendment is needed to facilitate the proposed development and to effectively implement the policy directions associated with the Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies for these designations.

The proposed Zoning By-law amendment proposes to rezone the lands from *Development (D) and Agricultural (A) to Residential Medium Density 3 – Site Specific Exception (RM3-XXX), Open Space (OS), Development (D), and Environmental Protection (EP)*. The RM3 zone permits both apartment and townhouse dwellings unit typologies and is the most appropriate zone for this development.

The proposed development does not entirely conform with the provisions associated with the RM3 zone. Site-specific provisions are needed to accommodate the proposed design. Amendments include relief related to Minimum Lot Area, Minimum Lot Frontage, Minimum Front Yard, Minimum Exterior Side Yard, Minimum Rear Yard, Maximum Height and Minimum Amenity Area, as well as amendments to Minimum Number of Parking Spaces and Minimum Bicycle Parking Facilities for Apartment Dwellings. Details of the Amendment can be found in the attached Zoning By-Law Amendment Text.

Table 1: RM3-XXX Site Specific Provision Table

Provision	Required (Zoning By-Law 2017-70)		Proposed
Minimum Lot Area (per dwelling unit)	Townhouse: 180 square metres		Townhouse: 135 square metres
Minimum Lot Frontage	Townhouse: 30 metres		Townhouse: 22 metres
Minimum Front Yard – Dwelling	4.5 metres		2.4 metres
Minimum Exterior Side Yard	3 metres		1.3 metres
Minimum Rear Yard adjoining any zone	1.2 metres		3.0 metres
Maximum Height	12 metres		25 metres
Minimum Amenity Area	3 or 4 Dwellings units on one lot	20 square metres per dwelling unit	Shall not apply for Townhouse Dwellings
	5 to 8 Dwelling units on one lot	40 square metres plus 10 square metres per dwelling unit	Shall not apply for Townhouse Dwellings
Minimum Number of Parking Spaces for Apartment Dwellings	1.75/unit		1.42/unit
Minimum Bicycle Parking Facilities for Apartment Dwellings	1/unit		0.30/unit



The Draft Plan of Subdivision application is being submitted concurrently with our Zoning By-law Amendment application. A breakdown of each block within the Draft Plan is provided below, as well as a visual representation of the Plan as shown in Figure 13.

**Block 1:** Residential comprised of 1.429 hectares. To be used for the proposed apartment buildings and townhouse blocks south of Street 'B'.

**Block 2:** Residential comprised of 0.307 hectares. To be used for the proposed townhouse blocks north of Street 'B'.

**Block 3:** Future Development comprised of 0.689 hectares. No development is currently proposed on these lands.

**Block 4:** Future Development comprised of 0.185 hectares. No development is currently proposed on these lands.

**Block 5:** Parkland comprised of 0.081 hectares. This block will be dedicated to the Township as a public park

**Block 6:** Parkland comprising of 0.003 hectares. This block will be used for the northern portion of the proposed park.

**Block 7:** Trail Dedication comprising of 0.003 hectares. This block will be dedicated to the Township as a recreational trail.

**Block 8:** Environmental Protection comprised of 0.784 hectares. This area contains environmental features and associated buffer. To be dedicated into public ownership.

**Block 9:** Future Development and Road Extension comprised of 0.028 hectares. This area is intended to be used to further extend Street 'B' and connect with the adjacent Marz Subdivision.

**Blocks 10 and 11:** Blocks 10 and 11 comprised of 0.002 hectares, respectively, as 0.3-metres reserves for Street 'B'.

**Blocks 12 and 13:** Blocks 12 and 13 comprised of 0.001 and 0.025 hectares, respectively. To be dedicated to the Township as road widening for Highway Road 20.



Figure 13: Draft Plan of Subdivision





## 9. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

To support this project, the following Public Consultation Strategy has been put forward:

- Once the applications are 'Deemed Complete', it is expected that the Township will post the application and supporting materials on their Development Application website to allow for public review of this material.
- At the appropriate time, Township Staff will schedule a Statutory Public Meeting where Weston Consulting and the Applicant will present the development proposal to Township Council and the Public to gather additional feedback. Notices will be mailed by the Township to landowners within 120m of the subject property.
- The Applicant will post a development sign on the subject property outlining the details of the proposal and the contact information to provide questions. Meeting date information of the above noted Public Meeting will be added to the development sign within 20 days of the meeting.
- At the appropriate time, Township Planning Staff will prepare a recommendation report to the Planning, Building, and Environmental Committee. Both Staff and the Applicant will provide additional information to the Committee and Public.
- Following the PBE Committee meeting, the recommendation endorsed by the Committee will be approved by Council. At this meeting, there is further opportunity for the Public to provide comments. Those who have provided written or oral comments for the application will be provided with written notice of the decision.
- In addition to the formal process outlined above, Weston Consulting will make themselves available to the Public to assist in answering questions and to provide updates.



## 10. PLANNING ANALYSIS

## 10.1 POLICY CONTEXT

The subject lands are located within an existing Settlement Area as well as within the delineated Built-up Area described in the Provincial Policy Statement. The subject lands are also located along Regional Road 20, which is classified as an arterial road. These conditions are conducive to the proposed development's residential density. The subject lands are uniquely positioned in lands considered a gateway to the urban area of Smithville. The provincial, regional and municipal policies outlined in Section 7 encourage intensification in lands such as these. As a result of these conditions, we believe the proposed development represents good planning practices.

## 10.2 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

The proposed development includes residential uses that are denser than what has previously existed in the area. The 6-storey apartment buildings are proposed along Regional Road 20, with townhouse blocks located to the north which support the transition of built-form. The policies that apply to these lands are supportive of this level of residential intensification in order to meet housing and population targets set by both the Region of Niagara and the Township of West Lincoln.

The approved Marz subdivision to the east of the subject lands has already set a precedent for denser residential uses within the Secondary Plan area. Connections to this subdivision is included in the proposed development which will integrate both projects for cars and pedestrians and allow all residents to interact with public spaces and park features more cohesively. The Marz subdivision was considered when selecting the zones that would be appropriate such as the Open Space zone for the park.

Beyond the provision of additional housing, the proposed development adequately protects for the natural environment. Buffers have been implemented to ensure the long-term protection of these features and to ensure appropriate transition into the built environment.

## 10.3 HOUSING

The proposed development includes 217 residential units in a compact built-form and is significantly denser than the single-detached dwellings in the surrounding area. The proposed development can be considered a more efficient form of housing and will contribute towards the accommodation of an increasing population in West Lincoln, which is projected to increase to 38,370 through OPA 62. OPA 62 also introduced a target of 50 people and jobs combined per hectare within Designated Greenfield Areas. The proposed development provides a density of 39.36 units per hectare in the Medium Density Area and 200 units per hectare in the Special Policy Area, which will contribute significantly towards achieving this target.

The need for more housing continues to be a priority for the Region in order to combat the everlasting housing crisis within Ontario and beyond. The proposed development would activate underutilized lands and increase the housing supply in an area primed for growth.

## 10.4 TRANSPORTATION & SERVICING INFRASTRUCTURE

In the Pre-Consultation comments provided by the Region of Niagara, the Region sought clarity on pedestrian linkages which are shown in the enclosed pedestrian movement plan. Also, the enclosed Vehicle Maneuver Diagram has been provided to demonstrate compliance with standards associated with waste and emergency vehicles. Any transportation concerns will also be addressed in greater detail at the Site Plan application stage.

The subject lands have access to nearby highways that provide connectivity to surrounding municipalities and beyond. Specifically, the lands are at the intersection of Regional Road 20, which connects to lands east and west, and South Grimsby Road 6 which extends south. The Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan considers an extension to South Grimsby Road 6 that was not incorporated into the proposed development. While limited public transportation infrastructure exists in the area, the increased residential units may create opportunities for future infrastructural development.

The proposed development will utilize both existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services in a manner that protects human health and the natural environment. Moreover, the proposed development will meet and conform to the provincial policies for servicing and stormwater management, further details are provided in the Servicing and Stormwater Management Report, which has been submitted in support of the Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications.

## 10.5 TRAFFIC, PARKING, PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR MOVEMENTS

As part of the materials submitted in support of the development applications, a pedestrian movement plan has been provided to illustrate planned circulation for residents and the public. Pathways and connections have been provided that connects the proposed development to planned public areas such as municipal right of ways, parks and trails. The proposed connectivity design will be refined through future site plan control applications, however appropriate connections have been planned for.

Similarly, vehicle movement plans have been provided to conceptually illustrate whether emergency and waste collection vehicles can safely enter and exit the site. The drawings provided confirm that there are no concerns with the design of both residential blocks. Like the pedestrian routing, as the block designs are refined during site plan control vehicle movement analysis will be updated to ensure proper access.

Phase 1 of the proposed development will be the smaller townhouse block consisting of 16 townhouse units. It is expected that traffic volumes created by these units can be accommodated via the controlled access at the Highway 20 turning circle. It is not expected that the new local road connecting to the Marz lands to the east will be available. As such, a temporary turning circle will be constructed until such time the Marz connection can be made to allow for the development of the larger apartment block. Once the extension is created, new transportation connections will be available to service the entire development. Through the Marz lands, traffic volumes can outlet to South Grimsby Road and relieve pressures from Highway 20. Details of future traffic volume can be provided in detail at the time of site plan approval. Through site plan control, the Applicant will be able to tailor a traffic assessment to the detail design of each residential block.

Parking for the proposed development has been assessed based on the individual built forms. The parking rate for townhouses is 1.75 spaces per unit. This requirement is met through the provision of two spaces per unit with one space within a private garage plus one in the driveway. For the apartment unit, a parking rate of 1.42 per unit is provided whereas 1.75 per unit is required; 251 spaces are provided whereas 308 are required. This reduction, a deficiency of 57 spaces, is attributed to the type of development proposed. It is acknowledged that there is limited transit availability within Smithville and West Lincoln, however development trends within the Region suggest that parking requirements are reducing as demand is falling. Examples of this include:

Towns of Pelham and Lincoln, like the Township of West Lincoln, does not have access to transit services. All three municipalities rely on regional OnDemand rideshare to service residents. The Apartment dwelling parking rate in Pelham and Lincoln is 1.25 per unit which is lower than the parking rate proposed for the subject lands.

Town of Grimsby Minor Variance application A20-23 where the Town supported a reduction in parking to 1.0 spaces plus visitor whereas 1.25 + visitor is required for apartments. The Town of Grimsby has a similar characterization as Smithville/ West Lincoln in that there is no Regional or local transit and Regional OnDemand services are used to supply transit options. The proposed 1.42 spaces per unit exceeds that was approved and required by the Town of Grimsby.

Based on the above, it is our opinion that there is adequate pedestrian, vehicular and parking services proposed to accommodate this development.



## 11. CONCLUSION



Based on our review of the site, context, planning policy and supporting materials, it is our opinion that the proposed development and associated applications for both Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision is based on good planning principles. The proposed development consisting of 217 residential units across two 6-storey apartment buildings and 41 townhouses will intensify currently underutilized land. The proposed development will bring a range of residential units which will contribute towards the accommodation of West Lincoln's growing population. The subject lands are well-connected by major arterial roads and municipal services and is a gateway to the urban area of Smithville. It is in our opinion that the proposed development and associated planning application should proceed through the process prescribed by the Planning Act.



WESTON  
CONSULTING

