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# 1 Introduction to the Region of Waterloo

Located in southwestern Ontario, the Region of Waterloo is comprised of seven area municipalities: the cities of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge, and the townships of North Dumfries, Wilmot, Wellesley and Woolwich.

The region has an area of 138,420 ha, of which 82.4 % is cleared land. High quality class 1 and 2 soils cover much of the region. The central and southeast portions are occupied by the large urban centres of Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge. The region is roughly bisected from northwest to southeast by the Grand River.<sup>1</sup>

Waterloo is a two-tier municipality. The region has responsibility for transit financing and system development, and it also provides guidance to area municipalities in land-use planning through the articulation of a regional vision. The individual area municipalities are responsible for implementing zoning provisions, streetscaping, public space and other elements of land-use planning. Their views on regional growth and direction can be divergent, and not always consistent with either the regional or local vision.<sup>2</sup>

The population of the region has grown steadily due primarily to an exodus of population from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and ongoing immigration of individuals into Canada. Declining family size has also contributed to an increase in the number of households within the region.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Summary adapted from D.M.Fraser and B.P.Neary 2004, *The State of Greenlands Protection in South- Central Ontario* (Toronto: Neptis Foundation), pg.56.

<sup>2</sup> Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist in City of Waterloo, Interview on October 13, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 9.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

**Table 1: Region of Waterloo — Population and Employment Figures<sup>4</sup>**

Municipality	1996 Population	2016 Population	1996 Employment	2016 Employment
Waterloo	79,830	109,901	46,489	75,667
Kitchener	175,969	233,602	84,831	117,608
Cambridge	101,631	133,198	53,373	87,536
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>357,430</b>	<b>476,701</b>	<b>184,693</b>	<b>280,811</b>
North Dumfries	7,901	10,023	3,056	4,570
Wilmot	13,687	22,337	4,833	7,399
Wellesley	8,812	10,147	2,688	4,111
Woolwich	17,095	24,664	8,891	13,813
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>47,495</b>	<b>67,171</b>	<b>19,468</b>	<b>29,893</b>
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>404,925</b>	<b>543,872</b>	<b>204,161</b>	<b>310,704</b>

Between 1998 and 2003, the population increased by 8% to approximately 460,000 persons, thus making it the fourth largest urban area in the province. By 2016 this number is expected to increase by a further 80,000 persons with growth concentrated in the region's cities.<sup>5</sup>

The Regional Official Policies Plan (ROPP) sets out the region's land-use planning goals, as well as projected regional economic and social changes to 2016. For purposes of this report, the December 1998 Consolidation was used; the region is in the process of drafting a new ROPP for 2006.

The cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo have been identified as urban growth centres within the province's proposed growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area.<sup>6</sup> Analyses developed for the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal indicated that aggressive growth management policies promoting more compact development patterns on the province's part are likely to have the effect of accelerating population growth in Waterloo Region.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Transportation Master Plan*, p. 3-2.

<sup>5</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, July. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal. 2005. "Urban Growth Centres in Greater Golden Horseshoe",

<sup>7</sup> Hensen Consulting Ltd., 2005. *The Growth Outlook for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Toronto: prepared for Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal).

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## 1.1 Regional Growth Management Strategy

A Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) was adopted in 2003. The region hopes to have its official plans, transportation master plans, and zoning by-laws consistent with the provisions of the RGMS within the strategy's implementation period (2005–9).<sup>8</sup>

The RGMS has focused its development priorities on building healthy, pedestrian-oriented and cycling-friendly urban centres, as reflected in the strategy's six goals:

- Enhancing Our Natural Environment
- Building Vibrant Urban Places
- Providing Greater Transportation Choice
- Protecting Our Countryside
- Fostering A Strong Economy
- Ensuring Overall Coordination and Cooperation<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1.1 Changing Attitudes

While the region is facing significant growth pressures, such as traffic volumes, similar to those of a mid-sized urban city, each of the cities is striving to retain a small town feel.<sup>10</sup>

The RGMS reflects a change of direction from previous regional planning practices to incorporate smart growth principles. A variety of influences led to the region's current articulation of a smart growth approach, including recognition of limited land-use development options within current urban boundaries, amalgamation of area transit services into one regional transit service, decisions for reinvestment in transit, as well as a designated champion to lead the process for transit demand management (TDM) programs. In addition, it became evident that protective measures were required as regional development moved closer to groundwater sources of most of the region's water

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<sup>8</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy — Implementation Update Report*, 26 February. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>9</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, July, p. 4. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>10</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

supply.<sup>11</sup> The latter point is evidently the most crucial for the region; dependence on groundwater for its water supply sets the region apart from other provincial jurisdictions as development activities have the potential for significant region-wide impacts.

Within this context, the community is also questioning the ability of the region's ecosystem to support proposed population and employment growth as there are significant concerns about the carrying capacity of the regional environment.<sup>12</sup>

### **1.1.2 Measurable Results**

An element of the development planning process that sets the Region of Waterloo apart from other regions across Ontario is its reference to measurable results. The region incorporates its results into its planning documents and welcomes the participation of all regional stakeholders in decision making. Incorporating the contributions of area municipalities and the public in easily accessible language, the region's planning documents are important tools for public engagement.

A limitation of this study is that the planning documents of the individual area municipalities were not reviewed.

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<sup>11</sup> Graham Vincent, Director of Transportation Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 4, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. "Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein," 24 March.

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# 2 Review of the Region of Waterloo Plans and Actions against Smart Growth Assessment Criteria

## 2.1 Development Location

<p><b>Smart Growth Principle: Development location</b></p>
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<p>Infill (brownfields and greyfields) versus Urban periphery (greenfields).</p>
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<p><b>Official Plan</b></p>
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<p>Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 2: “Compact development, mixed land use and increased residential densities are essential to reduce the need for growth at the urban fringe, reduce impacts on natural resources such as Prime Agricultural Areas, wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas, and support the more efficient use of transit and other municipal infrastructure services.”</p>
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### 2.1.1 Context for Development Location in Region

Local demographics and an influx of population into the region have resulted in continual outwards expansion; as the region spreads it presses on existing boundaries. When the ROPP was first drafted, the majority of new development was concentrated in the cities and townships, thus taking advantage of existing urban infrastructure.<sup>13</sup>

In particular, Policies 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 of the ROPP provide that development in urban areas will be confined to city urban areas (CUA) and township urban areas (TUA) whose designations are outlined in each area municipality official plan. The designation of these areas is open for re-evaluation during the plan review process or when changes in land-use requirements are proposed. Evaluative considerations for such decisions include existing land uses, population forecasts, additional land requirements, and alternative development policies such as increased development densities, impacts on the natural

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<sup>13</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 9.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

environment, and the cost of additional regional infrastructure necessitated by the expansion.<sup>14</sup>

The region's current build-up urbanized area covers 50,200 acres of the region's total 340,900 acre area. An additional 27,900 acres of the region's lands designated for future urban development.<sup>15</sup> These areas are identified in the following map developed by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal:<sup>16</sup>

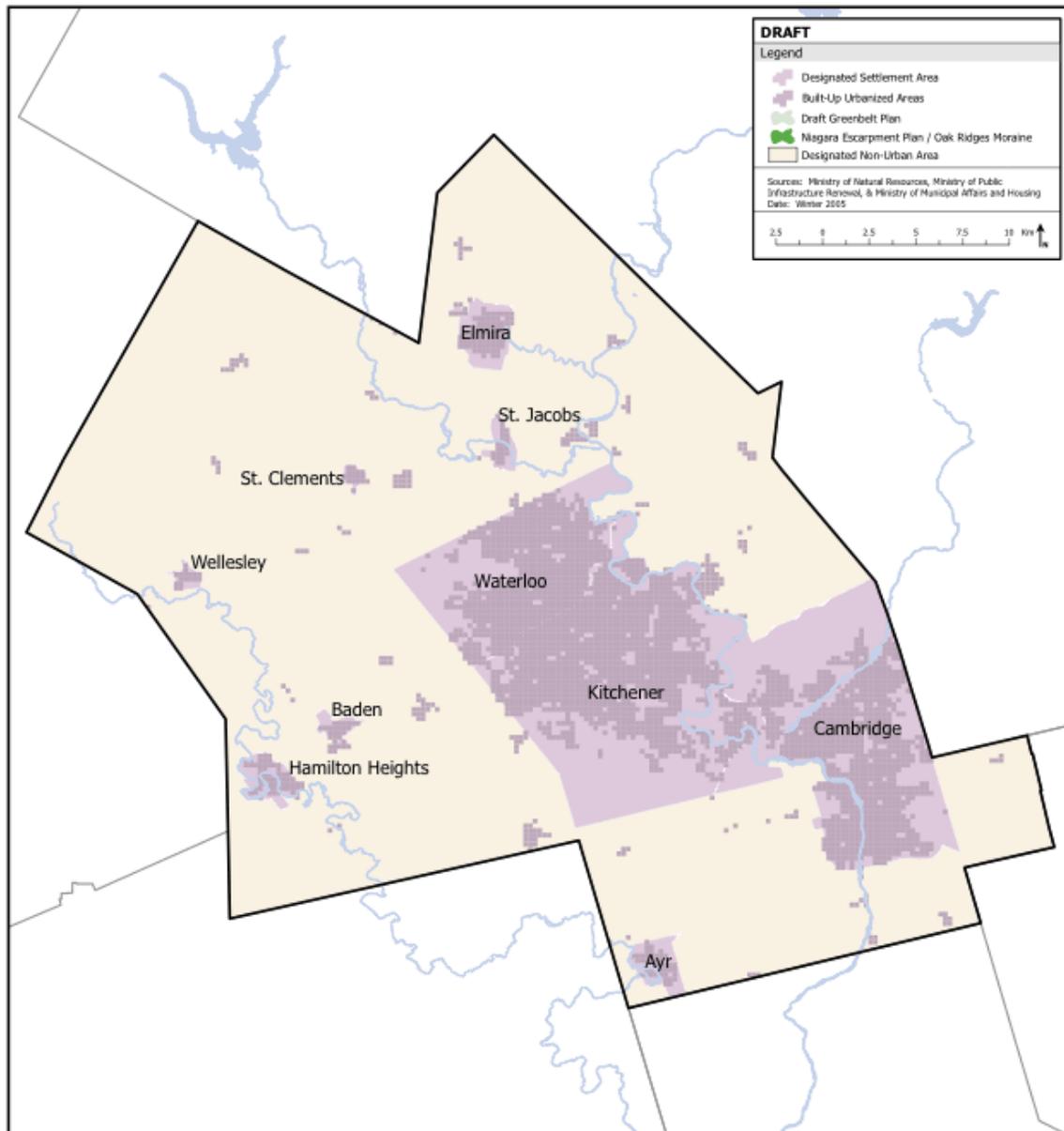
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<sup>14</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 77–80.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>15</sup> Ontario Growth Secretariat, 2005. *A Current Assessment of Gross Land Supply in the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Toronto: Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, pg. 29).

<sup>16</sup> Ontario Growth Secretariat, 2005. *A Current Assessment of Gross Land Supply in the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Toronto: Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, pg. 29).

**Map 1: Region of Waterloo: Gross Land Supply Winter 2005.**



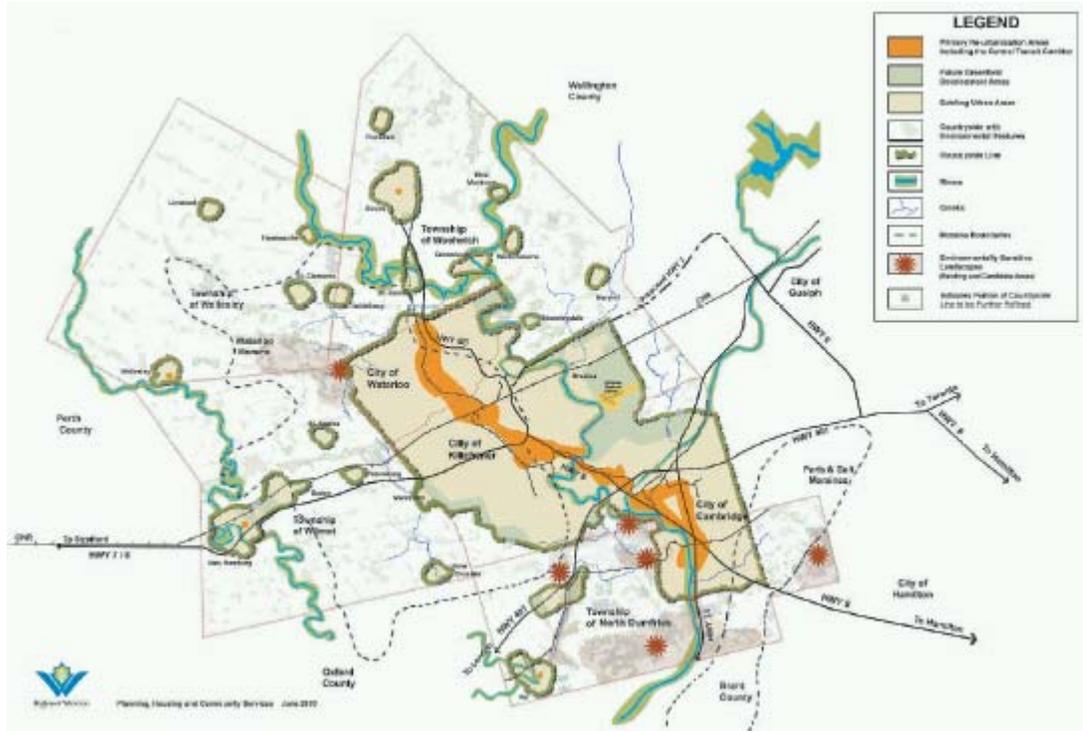
The boundaries displayed in the map above are draft and illustrative only and should not be read to scale. They do not claim to accurately reflect approved land-use and planning boundaries. For more information on precise boundaries of Settlement Area, Towns, Villages and Hamlets, the appropriate municipality should be consulted.

The 2003 Regional Growth Management Plan would establish a permanent ‘countryside line’ to provide a distinct demarcation between rural and urban land uses, and help to ensure the rural area’s continued use for agriculture.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, however, the

<sup>17</sup> Region of Waterloo, 2003, *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy*, Goal 4, Immediate Actions 1 and 2.

plan also provides for the development of the east side of the Grand River, particularly in the area of Waterloo Airport, for employment and economic development purposes.<sup>18</sup>

## Map 2: Region of Waterloo: Regional Growth Management Strategy Overview<sup>19</sup>



Community representatives have suggested that the type of economic growth welcomed by the region in the form of high-tech firms and large manufacturers and distributors is detrimental both socially and environmentally. It puts significant stress on available land, limiting denser land use as well as fostering economic inequalities without additional incentives to encourage varied employment growth and development.<sup>20</sup> This contrasts with the perspectives of the Chamber of Commerce, which favours proposed greenfield development elsewhere in the region and suggests there is a shortage of land available for industrial development “as industries are expanding, larger industries are entering the market place and municipalities are not the only ones offering industrial lands.”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Region of Waterloo, 2003, *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy*, Goal 5.

<sup>19</sup> Region of Waterloo, 2003, *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy* pp.10-11.

<sup>20</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. “Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein,” March 24.

<sup>21</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Planning and Works Committee Meeting*, 21 September. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/36d5fa476bc17db585256f190054dfcd!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/36d5fa476bc17db585256f190054dfcd!OpenDocument)

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## 2.1.2 Urban Boundary Expansions

The current ROPP states that future population growth will be accommodated within existing city and urban boundaries to 2016 with provisions for residual growth in rural settlement areas and industrial commercial areas.<sup>22</sup>

However, despite these provisions for development within urban boundaries, there has been a series of boundary expansions over the past five years that have re-designated areas from being prime agricultural land to non-prime agricultural land, and, in so doing, facilitated residential and industrial growth beyond existing urban boundaries. Examples of these expansions include the following.

- Expansions to the township urban area (TUA) of Elmira and St. Jacobs were made to accommodate future industrial development. Amendment 14 approved by Council provided for a combined total of 8.23 gross hectares to be re-designated.
- In the eastern area of the City of Waterloo, rural land was already being utilized for estate residential development and open space associated with the Grand River Floodplain. Amendment 15 of the ROPP was approved by Council to provide 67 hectares of land to accommodate projected industrial land needs and to recognize existing uses through an expansion of the existing city urban area (CUA).
- The CUA on the west side of Kitchener was expanded to accommodate projected growth requiring 257 gross hectares for industrial purposes. This involved the drafting of new policy 7.3.1.5 as approved by Amendment 16.
- The City of Cambridge increased its CUA boundary to include approximately 88 hectares of land on the south side of Highway 401 for purposes of developing a business park. Amendment 17 was approved by Council.
- The settlement boundaries of Baden and New Hamburg were expanded to include 183 gross hectares of undeveloped land. The land would be divided among new residential development (47 hectares), new industrial development (60 hectares), open spaces (56 hectares) and major recreational purposes (20 hectares). Amendment 18 was approved by Council and policies 7.3.3.1–7.3.3.3 were revised accordingly.

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<sup>22</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 7–12. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument) Further details of the criteria are provided in Annex 1.

Amendments 8 and 11 approved by Council in 2000 re-designated land in Baden/New Hamburg to provide for future development based on regional population forecasts. The re-designation of 106.7 hectares in total would facilitate construction and accommodate 959 to 1,079 of the estimated 2,400 households required to meet projected growth to 2016. It was expected that densities would range from 9.9 to 10.8 gross units per hectare. An important note to this amendment is that a public delegation from the Baden and District Association for Responsible Growth noted that there was sufficient undeveloped land within the township to accommodate growth to 2010 and that the re-designation was not required.<sup>23</sup>

These expansions resulted in ROPP amendments. Given the clearly stated provisions of the RGMS to establish a firm urban boundary line,<sup>24</sup> and expectations that it will limit further development on rural land and protect agricultural resources, it is surprising that as recently as spring 2004, an amendment to expand the boundary was approved by Regional Council.<sup>25</sup> The explanation lies in the definition of countryside line. New communities are considered as the outside edge of regional development; it is expected that future development will occur within this natural boundary line created by the surrounding natural ecosystem.

While a significant number of boundary lines have been re-designated to provide for additional development within the urban area, 29 acres of land in the Town of Wellesley have been re-designated back to their original agricultural use as they are no longer required for development. According to the Region of Waterloo, “Based on the results of the Regional Growth Management Strategy, significant portions of the Future Township Urban Area lands surrounding the Village of Wellesley are no longer required nor considered the best location for the future settlement growth.”<sup>26</sup> The proposal to re-designate the land was carried at Regional Council May 12, 2004.

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<sup>23</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2000. *ROPP Amendment 8 and ROPP Amendment 11*. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>24</sup> While the countryside line appears to be recognized as the development boundary in the region, there is no firm urban boundary established within the ROPP. The region has spent some time reviewing the official plan policy and planning frameworks in other jurisdictions to assist in the identification of an appropriate model for the Region. (Region of Waterloo. 2004. *RGMS — Implementation Report*, September, p. 7).

<sup>25</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *ROPP Amendment 18*. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument); and Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Council Meeting Minutes*, 25 February. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/8d7fc666929e8e3485256e5c0072d0f9!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/8d7fc666929e8e3485256e5c0072d0f9!OpenDocument)

<sup>26</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Planning and Works Committee Meeting*, 6 April. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/e942815961e6ee2f85256e6f006ddd81!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/e942815961e6ee2f85256e6f006ddd81!OpenDocument)

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### 2.1.3 Redevelopment and Infill

The region established a target that 5% of all new dwellings be in existing developed areas (ROPP Policy 7.6.1.4). Currently 20–25% of development is classified as infill, reurbanization or brownfield; this rate is expected to continue to increase.<sup>27</sup> The region estimates that over the past five years, nearly 20% of new housing has been provided through reurbanization, and that, with the implementation of its transit plans, it will be able to achieve the provincial target rates of 40%.<sup>28</sup>

Area municipalities have been encouraged to adopt similar targets that of the Region of Waterloo for infill, conversion and redevelopment. However, the ROPP states that area municipalities are to “provide opportunities for residential intensification such as conversion or infill, *except where infrastructure is inadequate or there are significant physical constraints*, and redevelopment.” (emphasis added). This exception appears to provide a rationale for non-compliance; it is perhaps an area that the region should re-examine.<sup>29</sup>

#### 2.1.3.1 Core Redevelopment

The region is promoting development of underused urban spaces through policies of reurbanization in an effort to prevent further encroachment on greenfields. The RGMS suggests that access to public transit, pedestrian-friendly streetscaping, and urban open spaces as well as ongoing communication with stakeholders are important elements of defining the redevelopment.<sup>30</sup>

Strategies proposed for reurbanization include increasing residential densities within built-up areas of Waterloo, and providing incentives to achieve planning objectives in Kitchener and facilitate redevelopment of older industrial areas in Cambridge. In combination, these strategies are designed to focus growth within the central transportation corridor (CTC) and along other nodes and corridors.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy – Implementation Report*, September.

<sup>29</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 93. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>30</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy – Implementation Update Report*, February 26, 2004, p. 12. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>31</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, July, p. 9. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument); Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy – Implementation Report*, September, p. 12.

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### 2.1.3.2 Brownfields Redevelopment

One of the means by which vacant or under-utilized land can be developed is through the promotion of brownfield development throughout the region. However, there are existing barriers that limit the extent of brownfield development including the cost of land reclamations. To encourage investment, area municipalities such as Kitchener and Cambridge are using financial incentives such as tax increment financing (TIF) and the Business Water Quality Resource Program to assist developers and promote remediation.<sup>32</sup>

One example of brownfield development is located within the City of Waterloo downtown core on an abandoned industrial site. Twenty-nine acres were remediated to create Luther Village, a senior citizen's residential complex, as well as accompanying commercial facilities and a community recreation centre. The development necessitated the clean-up of the environmental contamination within the constraints posed by the Grand River Conservation floodplain, as 82% of the site fell within the floodplain boundary, as well as meeting requirements for environmental assessments of roadways, expanded community facilities, financing and neighbourhood fit.<sup>33</sup>

Additional regeneration projects in Waterloo include the redevelopment of former industrial lands owned by Labatt Breweries of Canada and Joseph E. Seagram & Sons. These contaminated sites were remediated and then built upon, situating a senior citizen's residence and townhouse complex on the Labatts lands, and condominiums and commercial space in renovated existing buildings on the Seagram's lands. Further infill projects have created student off-campus housing. While the core is increasingly repopulated by the elderly, students and professionals, there is little residential infill development in the downtown core with which to attract and promote family settlement. Downtown schools are under continued threat of closure due to lack of students while new schools are being built in suburban areas to meet the needs of a growing population.<sup>34</sup>

### 2.1.3.3 Development Charges and Financial Incentives

Developers are currently exempt from paying development charges on new development within the region's downtown cores. Potential exists for implementing a system of "graduated" charges to encourage development in specific areas such as brownfields,

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<sup>32</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

<sup>33</sup> Canadian Brownfields Network. Luther Village – Featured *Waterloo Case Study*, 2004. [www.aboutremediation.com/caseStudies/cs\\_waterloo.asp](http://www.aboutremediation.com/caseStudies/cs_waterloo.asp)

<sup>34</sup> Robert Gibson, Professor of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo, Interview on October 12, 2004.

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along nodes, and corridors outside of the core areas. Developing areas closer to the downtown core would support reurbanization and could possibly qualify for reduced charges.<sup>35</sup>

## 2.1.4 Greenfield Development

The region's growth patterns have been very predictable, following cyclical development patterns that result in little greenfield development in down periods and significant greenfield development in high periods. New residential development averaged 3,500 units over the last five years, of which 2,600 single detached homes were developed in greenfield space.<sup>36</sup>

One of the locales in the region where the pressures of sprawl are most evident is the west side of the City of Waterloo where proposed subdivisions and supporting infrastructure will have significant impact on the Waterloo Moraine. The Moraine, an environmentally sensitive area also located in Waterloo's west side extending beyond the City of Waterloo and Waterloo Region, is an important recharge area for the aquifer supplying the region's drinking water. A contested extension of Columbia Street over an environmentally sensitive stretch of land was approved by local Council to service the new subdivisions. According to environmentalists, with no public transit to the area it is estimated that upwards of 18,000 cars daily will travel the roadways servicing the new development, thus polluting the moraine and, in turn, the region's groundwater.<sup>37</sup>

Development of these rural lands has been under pressure for over a decade. The Laurel Creek Watershed Study (LCWS) was initiated in 1991 as a joint project of the City, the Region, surrounding municipalities, Grand River Conservation Authority and the provincial ministries of Natural Resources and Environment and Energy. The study's key conclusions stated that the existing watershed system had "little resiliency to accommodate land use changes" and management of the watershed required the adoption of more proactive environmental approaches.

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<sup>35</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, p. 9. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>36</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Terry Pender. 2004. "Columbia extension gets the green light." *The Record, Kitchener*. 30 June, p. B1.

The Ministry of Environment has denied a request for an environmental assessment of the proposed subdivisions in Vista Hills, Greyerbiehl and Activa-Gies subdivisions along Wilmot Line on the sensitive groundwater recharge areas on the Moraine.<sup>38</sup>

#### 2.1.4.1 Source Water Protection

Amendment 12 to the ROPP provides protection for future water point sources and directs non-residential development to areas where business activities will have little impact on municipal water sources. As the region gets 75% of its water from groundwater sources, it has established controls on land re-designations in wellhead protection areas to control risks of groundwater contamination.<sup>39</sup> Water is a key limiting factor on regional growth. Several water conservation initiatives have been pursued. Some regional interests are advocating for a pipeline to Georgian Bay or Lake Huron, which would be problematic for several reasons, not the least of which would be fostering even greater inattention to local sources.<sup>40</sup> Community organizations are also concerned that the regional ecosystem may not be able to sustain the intended population growth.<sup>41</sup>

## 2.2 Land-use Density

### **Smart Growth Principle: Land use density**

Higher density, clustered versus Lower density, dispersed.

### **Provisions of the Region of Waterloo Official Plan**

Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 1: “Settlement area boundaries will be used to define the areas for future growth within the planning horizon of this Plan.”

Chapter 8. Economic Vitality — Principle 4: “Viable Community Core Areas in the City and Township Urban Areas are important as continuing focal points for community identity and economic development.”

<sup>38</sup> The Rabble.ca Discussion Forum. 2004. “Waterloo, ON moraine and drinking water”, June–October. [www.rabble.ca/babble/ultimatebb.php?ubb=get\\_topic&f=5&t=001237](http://www.rabble.ca/babble/ultimatebb.php?ubb=get_topic&f=5&t=001237); Canadian Environmental Network (CEN) Listserve, Waterloo Moraine – Threatened by Residential Development. March 1, 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2000. *ROPP Amendment 12*. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>40</sup> Robert Gibson, Professor of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo. Email correspondence March 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. “Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein,” 24 March.

## 2.2.1 Density Policies in the Region

The region's planning policies are premised on the view that until 2016 the majority of the region's development needs can be met within the existing urban boundaries.<sup>42</sup> Core community areas as areas of future growth will be defined by area municipalities in their official plans and will promote regional objectives by ensuring the provision of:

- a mix of residential, employment (retail, commercial and compatible industrial), and institutional uses that enable people to live and work in close proximity
- enhanced transportation opportunities for pedestrians, bicycles and transit
- medium- and high-density developments and land-use patterns supportive of transit service where available or where planned to be available
- a variety of housing types.<sup>43</sup>

Policy 7.6.1.1 provides that the area municipalities will work with the region to develop “municipal-wide urban area minimum net residential density targets” with supporting policies in their official plans. Municipal targets are consistent with regional projections that 5% of all new housing units will be built in existing areas.<sup>44</sup> The region's actual density rates have increased from 6 to 8 units per hectare net in the late 1980s to 20 units per hectare today.<sup>45</sup>

As the Region moves from low-density residential community development to higher density along its nodes and corridors of the Central Transportation Corridor, it is expected that buildings of six to 25 stories along the CTC could support development of 100–250 units.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 73. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>43</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 82. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>44</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 93. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>45</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

<sup>46</sup> Hallett, Doug. 2004. “Future of city is now.” *Guelph Tribune*, 1 October. [www.cambridgetimes.ca/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=fairway/Layout/Article&call\\_pageid=1069421795639&c=Article&cid=1096668609659](http://www.cambridgetimes.ca/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=fairway/Layout/Article&call_pageid=1069421795639&c=Article&cid=1096668609659)

## 2.2.2 Higher Density Greenfield Development

Net density rates in the Region have nearly tripled over the last ten years, in part due to the environmental protection of 30-50% of the surrounding land thus encouraging increased density development on available land.<sup>47</sup>

## 2.3 Land-use Mix

### Smart Growth Principle: Land use mix

Well mixed versus Homogeneous, not mixed.

Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 2: “Compact development, mixed land use and increased residential densities are essential to reduce the need for growth at the urban fringe, reduce impacts on natural resources such as Prime Agricultural Areas, wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas, and support the more efficient use of transit and other municipal infrastructure services.”

Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 4: “A full range of housing types and densities must be available throughout each Area Municipality to maximize accessible and affordable housing opportunities within the region.”

### 2.3.1 Regional Policies

In developing their community core areas, area municipalities will encourage mixed use community development including residential, employment and institutional uses. Mixed development provides the opportunity to live in close proximity to employment (Policy 7.4.1.2). The importance given to mixed land use is further emphasized in Policy 7.4.1.4, which provides that the region’s cities will identify these lands as nodes, priority areas of mixed-use development.<sup>48</sup>

### 2.3.2 Affordable Housing

Policy 7.6.2.1 states that area municipalities will establish policies to provide for a “full range of housing types and densities to meet the needs of current and future households” as well as “innovative lot configurations and housing designs.”<sup>49</sup> These policies will

<sup>47</sup> Kevin Eby, Director of Community Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 21, 2004.

<sup>48</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 82. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>49</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 93. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

contribute to the provision of affordable housing while Policy 7.6.3.1 specifically provides that a minimum of 30% new housing will be “single detached, semi-detached, plexes, townhouses and apartments” on smaller lots.<sup>50</sup>

### 2.3.3 Transit and Land-Use Linkages

The region’s planning documents recognize the link between urban land-use planning and transportation needs. Intensification includes conversion of industrial lands to mixed-use and residential properties as well as adaptive re-use of vacant and under-utilized land along the CTC and other corridors, anchored by a high-order transit system.

However, in moving to develop the CTC with its mixed-use nodes, there has been some concern raised by the community about the potential for gentrification within the core resulting from the expected increase in housing prices along the corridor. There are concerns that low-income persons and families who are significant users of the transit system will no longer be able to afford to live in the downtown core and will thus move outside the core to suburban areas where transit does not operate as intensively.<sup>51</sup>

### 2.3.4 Big Box Retail

The ROPP describes in some detail the development of large tracts of land for power centres and regional shopping centres.<sup>52</sup> Centres of this size have transportation needs that cannot all be met by public transit and that can create significant bottlenecks due to excess traffic volumes. While emphasized in the ROPP as a contributor to the economic vitality of the region, shopping centres were not mentioned in more recent documentation including the RGMS.

## 2.4 Scale of Development

### Smart Growth Principle: Scale

Human scale. Smaller buildings, blocks and roads. Attention to detail as people experience the landscape up close, as pedestrians versus Larger scale. Larger buildings, blocks and roads. Less

<sup>50</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 94.

[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>51</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. “Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein,” 24 March.

<sup>52</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 103.

[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

attention to detail as people experience the landscape at a distance, from cars.

**Official Plan**

Chapter 8. Economic Vitality — Principle 3: “It is important to balance the changing land use and servicing requirements of new businesses with environmental concerns, development priorities, and the need for a safe and healthy community.”

Policy 8.3, Regional Commercial Structure, identified the development and expansion of new and existing regional shopping centres as an important element of commercial development in the region. While this type of commercial development was highlighted in the ROPP, it was not evident in more recent planning documentation and has, perhaps, been de-emphasized by the region.<sup>53</sup>

Although human scale development is an important element of community reurbanization in supporting the development of vibrant urban places, there are limited details in the strategy about how this will be accomplished.<sup>54</sup> At the municipal level, Kitchener has taken a proactive approach to human scale development by promoting walking as a means of encouraging the population to engage with the landscape up close. In recognition of its desire to increase pedestrian use, the city has adopted a ten-year plan to upgrade its sidewalks, budgeted at between \$1 and 2 million.<sup>55</sup> Further regulation of the scale of development remains the jurisdiction of area municipalities.

## 2.5 Public Service Location

**Smart Growth Principle: Public services**

Local, distributed, smaller. Accommodates walking access versus Regional, consolidated, larger. Requires automobile access.

**Official Plan**

Chapter 9. Human Services — Principle 1: “Human service needs should be considered early and comprehensively in the land use planning process to ensure that human services are planned and delivered in a coordinated and effective manner.”

Human services include police services, social assistance, pre-employment services, child care programs, homes for the aged, health care programs and planning for community services as well as infrastructure services such as roads, water and wastewater treatment.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 101–4. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>54</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, p. 9. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>55</sup> Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist in City of Waterloo, Interview on October 13, 2004.

<sup>56</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 105. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

Policy 9.1 describes guidelines for the location of human services to be developed by area municipalities and suggests that, by locating the services in shared buildings, these services will be more accessible and integrated into the community. Regional health and social services will be located close to transportation facilities and within shared facilities such as businesses, schools and civic buildings where possible.<sup>57</sup> As the region continues to move further ahead in the implementation of its growth management strategy, it will be linking the strategy with complementary human service planning initiatives.

At present, RIM Park, a large sports complex boasting multiple ice rinks and soccer fields located on the outskirts of Waterloo amidst estate developments, remains as an example of publicly funded services that remain inaccessible by public transit.<sup>58</sup>

## 2.6 Transportation Policies

### **Smart Growth Principle: Transportation**

Multi-modal supports walking, cycling and public transit versus Automobile-oriented, poorly suited for walking, cycling and transit.

#### **Official Plan**

Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 2: “Compact development, mixed land use and increased residential densities are essential to reduce the need for growth at the urban fringe, reduce impacts on natural resources such as Prime Agricultural Areas, wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas, and support the more efficient use of transit and other municipal infrastructure and services.”

Chapter 11. Transportation Opportunities — Principle 1: “Opportunities for using a variety of transportation modes should be available to all residents.

Principle 2: “Appropriate transportation linkages need to be developed in order to provide efficient movement of people and goods to areas both within and outside the region.

Principle 3: “Existing transportation infrastructure should be used efficiently before new transportation infrastructure is constructed.

Principle 4: “Fiscal partnerships with other government agencies and the private sector may offer significant opportunities for the funding of new transportation infrastructure.

Principle 5: “The long-term impacts on population growth, land use, public finances and the environment are important considerations in decisions regarding transportation improvements.

Principle 6: “Abandoned rail corridors should be protected to provide opportunities for uses that would benefit from the linear characteristics of these corridors.

Principle 7: “The development approval process provides opportunities to improve transit, walking and cycling facilities while minimizing the impact of new development on road efficiency.”

<sup>57</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 106–8.

[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>58</sup> Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist in City of Waterloo, Interview on October 13, 2004; Robert Gibson, Environmental Planning Professor, University of Waterloo, Interview on October 12, 2004.

## 2.6.1 Existing Conditions

Composed of a variety of public and private facilities, the transportation system in the region includes “roads, transit facilities, an airport, rail lines, sidewalks, pedestrian trains and bicycle facilities.”<sup>59</sup>

Overall, a number of elements stand out and provide a broad context for the discussion of regional transportation needs.

A defining factor in the region’s planning documentation is the recognition of the important links between transportation needs and land-use planning, which are acknowledged throughout the region’s planning documentation. For example, development of the CTC is discussed within the context of reurbanization and land development throughout the RGMS. The goal is to shape the urban form using transit, rather than solving existing transportation problems with transit; this is a fundamental mind shift in transportation planning. It is the region’s goal to enable citizens to live in the region without being vehicle dependent.<sup>60</sup>

Another contributing factor to the discussion of regional transportation is the provincial interest in developing economic corridors for the movement of goods specifically a GTA East-West Corridor<sup>61</sup> from Brampton to the Guelph- Kitchen-Waterloo Region.

The region has also identified some emerging trends that are likely to affect its transportation planning, including “telecommuting, aging population, increased interest in cycling, HOV [high-occupancy vehicle]/ transit priority measures and other technological advancements,” each of which changes the parameters for measuring transportation demand. The region has initiated a reassessment of its transportation needs along a 20-year horizon assuming a broader, regional scope for review rather than one based on individual local improvements.<sup>62</sup> There have also been long-standing transit linkage problems between Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 127. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>60</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>61</sup> Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal. 2004. *Places to Grow: Planning Document for the Greater Horseshoe Area*, p. 32–3. [www.pir.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/cma\\_4\\_35657\\_1.html](http://www.pir.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/cma_4_35657_1.html)

<sup>62</sup> Region of Waterloo. “Transportation Master Plan Background.” Accessed September 2004 at [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/F2241F2E205DD9F785256B750070553E?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/F2241F2E205DD9F785256B750070553E?OpenDocument)

<sup>63</sup> Robert Gibson, Professor of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo. Email correspondence March 2005

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## 2.6.2 Roads

Policy 11.1.7 outlines criteria for defining how improved transportation services will be developed with public transit as the focus.<sup>64</sup> The emphasis on transit as an alternative mode of transportation is a key component of smart growth planning.

At the region's request, the Ministry of Transportation will prepare regional level transportation studies to assess new infrastructure development. As outlined below, the region is already involved in a number of transportation studies to assess the need for road widening and expansion. These studies highlight the ongoing challenge faced by the region in juggling the existing demands for road improvements with the need to integrate walking, cycling and transit more completely into its planned transportation improvements.

### 2.6.2.1 Highway 7 Expansion

An environmental assessment (EA) process has been under way since 1997 for the construction of a four-lane controlled access freeway between Kitchener and Guelph, running north of and parallel to the existing Highway 7. While the initial EA review was completed in 1998, municipal and community concerns led to a request for deferral by the Ministry of Transportation.

MTO completed additional studies and submitted an amendment to the EA for review and approval. The Ministry of the Environment issued a notice of completion of government review for the amended EA in February 2005. The public comment period was open until March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005.<sup>65</sup>

The proposed highway extension, which is planned to be constructed through wetland areas, has triggered much frustration within the community. The EA process took 12 years to complete, involved little community input or consultation, and was opposed to by the City of Guelph until 2002.<sup>66</sup> The project has been criticized as facilitating and promoting urban sprawl in Guelph and Kitchener–Waterloo regions.

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<sup>64</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 129. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>65</sup> Ministry of Environment. Undated. *Environmental Assessment Activities: EA Project Updates*, [http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env\\_reg/ea/english/EAs/hwy7\\_amend.HTM](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/ea/english/EAs/hwy7_amend.HTM).

<sup>66</sup> Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist in City of Waterloo, Interview on October 13, 2004.

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### 2.6.2.2 South Kitchener Transportation Corridor Study

The purpose of the South Kitchener Transportation corridor is to provide easy east–west road transportation through south Kitchener. As noted at the public consultation in May 2004, there is a need to revisit the proposed new roads in light of “current environmental policies and traffic conditions.” The proposed roadway was originally approved in the 1980s as a means to connect the growing community in the southern quadrant of Kitchener with the existing Highway 8. However, as the corridor would run through an Environmentally Sensitive Policy Area (ESPA), the proposal requires a new EA process.<sup>67</sup>

### 2.6.2.3 Detailed Transportation Network Review of Cambridge

The City of Cambridge has what has been referred to as a ‘complicated’ transportation system, in part because Cambridge is an amalgamation of three smaller, once separate cities – Galt, Preston and Hespeler – with their own centres and structure. Numerous studies over the past ten years have produced a series of recommendations including building a ring road and additional bridges across the Grand River. Among the proposed improvements are road widenings from four to six lanes and the construction of new roads, as well as ramp access and interchange construction to Highway 401.<sup>68</sup>

The Mayor of Cambridge is actively promoting the construction of Highway 424, which would connect Cambridge to Guelph, Brantford and Hamilton, while also supporting the development of a light rapid transit (LRT) line, which would connect Cambridge to Kitchener–Waterloo. According to Mayor Craig, “We will talk to them (the province) about the building of a road network outside of the GTA, a road network we feel needs to be constructed.”<sup>69</sup> The construction of a road network will cement the use of the automobile as the dominant means of transportation into this portion of the region, and conflicts with the regional strategy to promote transit as a viable alternative means of transportation.

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<sup>67</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *South Kitchener Transportation Corridor Study: Public Consultation Centre 1*, 27 May. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/97dfc347666efede85256e590071a3d4/26d8264529ef00ab85256e9700544e61!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/97dfc347666efede85256e590071a3d4/26d8264529ef00ab85256e9700544e61!OpenDocument)

<sup>68</sup> Region of Waterloo, Planning, Housing and Community Services, Transportation Planning Department. 2004. “Memo to Chair Wideman and Members of Planning and Works Committee, Re. Detailed Transportation Network Review of the Cambridge Area Phase 2 Study Report,” 15 June, p. 4–8. Link to Planning and Works Committee Report at [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/080c986352cdf0f285256c7700736505!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/080c986352cdf0f285256c7700736505!OpenDocument)

<sup>69</sup> Cambridge Times Staff. 2004. “Mayor has big plans for city.” *Cambridge Times*, 30 September. [www.cambridgetimes.ca/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=fairway/Layout/Article&call\\_pageid=1069421795639&c=Article&cid=1096582209123](http://www.cambridgetimes.ca/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=fairway/Layout/Article&call_pageid=1069421795639&c=Article&cid=1096582209123)

### 2.6.3 Modal Split

In 1996, the modal split for transit for all trips during the morning peak was under 5%, as illustrated in the following table for area municipalities:

**Table 2: Mode Share Summary – 1996 AM Peak Hour (Trips – all purposes)**<sup>70</sup>

Municipality	# of Person Trips: All Modes	# of Person Trips: Transit	% Trips by Transit	
			1996	2016 <sup>71</sup>
Waterloo	20,360	900	4.4	7
Kitchener	40,300	2,940	7.3	10
Cambridge	22,260	470	2.1	5
Rural	9,350	20	0	2
Total	92,270	4,330	4.7	7.3

While these figures were expected to increase from 5 to 7 % up to the 2016 planning horizon, identification of funding sources and the need to retain a balanced transportation infrastructure determined the extent to which the goal of increasing the portion of trips by transit would be reached.<sup>72</sup> Since these figures were calculated, transit services have been amalgamated into one regional service. Provincial and federal funding sources have been identified that will contribute to the development of the transportation system.

While it is hoped that the development of a more integrated transportation system will translate into an increase in transit modal share, this goal, measured over the long term, can only be achieved through the combined efforts of area municipalities and the region.

### 2.6.4 Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Policy 11.1.8 encourages area municipalities to use traffic management techniques to reduce congestion and to promote transit, walking and cycling as alternate means of transportation.<sup>73</sup> Area municipalities are given primary responsibilities as outlined in Policy 11.2.3 for promoting increased transit ridership where there are facilities.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-22.

<sup>71</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-27.

<sup>72</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-27.

<sup>73</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 130.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>74</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 131.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

These policy guidelines have become more focused with the drafting of the Transportation Master Plan in April 1999. Based on public consultation and feedback, the region adopted an automobile reduction strategy that seeks to double transit use and decrease total automobile trips by 7% by 2016. A transportation demand management (TDM) program focuses on public transit enhancements, establishing walking and cycling programs and improved facilities, and supportive land-use planning and site design.<sup>75</sup>

**Table 3: Mode Share Summary: AM Peak Hour (Excluding work at home component)<sup>76</sup>**

Mode	Person Trips 1996 Existing		Person Trips 2016 Forecast	
	#	%	#	%
Auto (driver + passenger)	64,920	84	85,388	77
Transit	3,864	5	7,763	7
Pedestrian	7,729	10	14,416	13
Cycle	773	1	2,218	2
Other	370	0	1,109	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,286</b>		<b>110,893</b>	

While the public in Waterloo region tend to rely on the automobile for transportation and rarely use public transit,<sup>77</sup> their feedback during the consultation process demonstrated their support for a variety of alternative means of transportation. Education and employer partnership programs, and transit service enhancements are two of the ongoing initiatives from the RGMS aimed at providing greater transportation choice.<sup>78</sup> A third initiative is a pilot programme at Wilfrid Laurier University that will supply bus passes with university registration. This could also be done at the University of Waterloo, significantly increasing the base ridership and facilitating a student shift from cars to transit.<sup>79</sup>

## 2.6.5 Transit

As described in the ROPP, area municipalities and the region will jointly develop a Transit Strategy that will assess opportunities for transit system expansion, improvements in ridership levels, and public/private funding partnerships (Policy 11.2.2).<sup>80</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-14 to 3-16.

<sup>76</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-41.

<sup>77</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 3-10.

<sup>78</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy – Implementation Update Report*, 26 February, p. 12. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>79</sup> Robert Gibson, Professor of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo. Email correspondence March 2005

<sup>80</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 131. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

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### 2.6.5.1 The Central Transportation Corridor

The Transportation Master Plan (1999) identified the development of a CTC from south Cambridge to north Waterloo as a means of increasing transit usage throughout the region using light rail.<sup>81</sup> The proposed route for the corridor is shown in Map 2.

A feasibility study initiated in January 2002 for the 33-kilometre route calculated expected ridership levels, potential technology mixes and possible routes. Two public consultation meetings were held. Using some of the same detailed study of routes and technologies as did the feasibility study, the region must now complete an individual EA for the corridor development as well as a series of technical studies. This work is under way with \$2.5 million in support from the federal and provincial governments.<sup>82</sup>

The CTC, using LRT as the preferred transportation option, connects a series of nodes along its length; corridor development has been facilitated by the region's purchase of the rail lines.<sup>83</sup> Based on comparisons with the City of Calgary's downtown LRT system, it is evident that the region's population base using transit will have to increase if the project is to be viable. Links to the rest of the transit system, convenience, and an established city infrastructure have been identified as additional key requirements for a viable system.<sup>84</sup>

The region was recently selected by Transport Canada for participation in its Urban Transportation Showcase Program (UTSP). The Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Service will be developed with \$3 million from the program, and represents the first phase of corridor development. As a demonstration project, it will facilitate the evaluation of an urban transportation strategy in situ as well as the impact on other urban realities including smog and traffic congestion. The resultant information will contribute to developing a greenhouse gas emission reduction strategy for urban centres across Canada.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> The TMP is currently being revised in line with the RGMS. This reference is to the current TMP completed in April 1999. Region of Waterloo. 2004. *South Kitchener Transportation Corridor Study: Public Consultation Centre 1*, 27 May. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/97dfc347666efede85256e590071a3d4/26d8264529ef00ab85256e9700544e61!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/97dfc347666efede85256e590071a3d4/26d8264529ef00ab85256e9700544e61!OpenDocument)

<sup>82</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy — Implementation Update Report*, September, p. 8–9.

<sup>83</sup> Graham Vincent, Director of Transportation Planning, Region of Waterloo, Interview on October 4, 2004.

<sup>84</sup> Robert Gibson, Professor of Environmental Planning, University of Waterloo, Interview on October 12, 2004.

<sup>85</sup> Region of Waterloo. "Central Transit Corridor Express Bus Project." Link updated March 2005. <http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/0/9a55c7fe3c82698985256d7c006b6aed?OpenDocument>

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### 2.6.5.2 Express Bus Service

The regional plan to introduce express bus service in September 2005 provides for:

- “A high quality, higher speed, express bus service, serving a central transit corridor that links a majority of major trip generators across the entire region (e.g., major university, regional hospital, regional shopping malls, and downtown areas). It would travel 33.4 kilometres from Conestoga Mall to the Ainslie St. Terminal in downtown Cambridge. The weekday service will operate every 15 minutes during peak periods and every 30 minutes at other times.
- Greatly improved customer information, through real-time next bus departure information, improved signage at the stations, and through a new web-based trip planned system that will be attractive to the emerging generation of computer-literate commuters.
- Service that is highly integrated with all other transit services, and linked to other sustainable modes of travel, including improved pedestrian and cycling amenities such as bicycle racks on all bus rapid transit (BRT) buses.
- An innovative community-based social marketing program that will be supported by a variety of municipal policies and practices such as traffic signal and physical priority on the streets, and TDM initiatives with major employers in the corridor.”<sup>86</sup>

The region’s transportation goal is to provide an increased number of transportation choices to the public through greater modal integration, improved cycling facilities, pedestrian-friendly environments, and increased road efficiencies. Programs and policies to achieve this goal are being incorporated into revisions to regional transportation planning documents. One step in this direction is Regional Council’s approval to purchase 16 clean diesel engine buses using emission-reducing, continuously regenerating technology.<sup>87</sup>

### 2.6.6 Cycling

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<sup>86</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy — September Implementation Plan*, p. 16. It was noted at the Planning and Works Committee Meeting on September 21, 2004 that the express bus project was under way. Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Planning and Works Committee Meeting*, 21 September. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/36d5fa476bc17db585256f190054dfcd!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/36d5fa476bc17db585256f190054dfcd!OpenDocument)

<sup>87</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Council Meeting*, 28 April. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/a9b1be246d763f8b85256e8d0063124d!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/a9b1be246d763f8b85256e8d0063124d!OpenDocument)

According to Policy 11.3, Bicycles and Walking, there are regional guidelines for developing a cycling policy. Bicycles are part of the region's transportation network and have been integrated to some extent with transit services.<sup>88</sup>

Since the implementation of the Cycling Master Plan in 1994, the region has developed 229 kilometres of on- and off-road cycling facilities that link neighbourhoods and key destinations along a core network running east–west and north–south in a series of corridors. The region has established a goal of doubling the percentage of cycling trips to 2% by 2016. Contributing to the achievement of this goal, the Regional Cycling Advisory Committee (RCAC) has worked with local employers to promote bike-to-work programs, and area municipalities have developed their own cycling networks to complement the regional level network.<sup>89</sup>

The region has implemented a Bus 'n' Bike program that enables cyclists to travel by bus using the attached bike racks on the three routes linking Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge. In addition, bikes may be brought on board the buses if the exterior bike racks are full and space exists inside the bus.<sup>90</sup> Council approved the motion that the region purchase 110 bike racks in 2004 to be installed on Grand River Transit buses.<sup>91</sup>

A Class EA study was initiated jointly by the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and the region for the construction of a separate pedestrian/cycling bridge over Highway 401. The RCAC has lent its support to the building of a separate bridge as a means “to create a link between communities and break down a significant barrier, Highway 401, to pedestrians and cyclists.” It does not, however, support moving the existing bike routes from the designated cycling corridors to the bridge. The Regional Council voted its support for the bridge based on equal funding contributions from Kitchener and Cambridge.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 132–3. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>89</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Cycling Master Plan 2004 Update*, p. 6 and 31. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/893efb641decaa3d85256b7b004d321d!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/c56e308f49bfeb7885256abc0071ec9a/893efb641decaa3d85256b7b004d321d!OpenDocument)

<sup>90</sup> Grand River Transit. Bus 'n' Bike Program. Accessed September 2004 at [www.grt.ca/web/transit.nsf/DocID/6A24334E452B5D7385256C2500685AEA?OpenDocument](http://www.grt.ca/web/transit.nsf/DocID/6A24334E452B5D7385256C2500685AEA?OpenDocument)

<sup>91</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004 *Regional Council Meeting*, 15 September. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/e4dd23b61bdec67585256f190056b87d!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/e4dd23b61bdec67585256f190056b87d!OpenDocument)

<sup>92</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Planning and Works Committee Meeting*, 1 June. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/11b84580d9e1859885256ea9004b2d57!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/11b84580d9e1859885256ea9004b2d57!OpenDocument); Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Council Meeting*, 9 June. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/3f4d9d850edb6b2b85256eb70057b058!OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/8ef02c0fded0c82a85256e590071a3ce/3f4d9d850edb6b2b85256eb70057b058!OpenDocument)

## 2.7 Connectivity

### **Smart Growth Principle: Connectivity**

Highly connected roads, sidewalks and paths, allowing direct travel by motorized and non-motorized modes versus Hierarchical road network with many unconnected roads and walkways, and barriers to non-motorized travel.

### **Official Plan**

Chapter 11. Transportation Opportunities — Principle 2: “Appropriate transportation linkages need to be developed in order to provide efficient movement of people and goods to areas both within and outside the region.”

Policy 11.1.7 states that the regional road system will provide an efficient link between the community core areas and other regional nodes. Vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians will be able to move efficiently throughout an inter-connected system.<sup>93</sup> This is supported by provisions in the TMP to improve transit, integration and intermodal connections throughout the region.<sup>94</sup>

The greenway network is being developed by the region in conjunction with stakeholders, including community, government at multiple levels, conservation authorities and the private sector. An interconnected trail system is an example of one element in the network that will link area municipalities and communities.<sup>95</sup>

Community representatives have sought further information to develop a greater understanding of the impact of regional development plans based on forecasted population and employment growth.<sup>96</sup>

Area municipalities are encouraged to develop a network of sidewalks, pedestrian trails, and bicycle facilities for access to transit corridors as well as use road pattern design to minimize walking distance to transit stops (Policy 11.2.3).<sup>97</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 129. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>94</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan – Final Report*, p. 4–5.

<sup>95</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 133. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>96</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. “Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein,” 24 March.

<sup>97</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 131. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

## 2.8 Streetscapes

### Smart Growth Principle: Streets

Designed to accommodate a variety of activities traffic calming versus Designed to maximize motor vehicle traffic volume and speed.

### Official Plan

Chapter 11. Transportation Opportunities — Principle 1: “Opportunities for using a variety of transportation modes should be available to all residents.”

The region undertakes to maintain the regional road system available to multi-modal transportation (Policy 11.1.7).<sup>98</sup> The region will encourage area municipalities to adopt TDM techniques as a means of reducing traffic congestion and promoting alternative transportation (Policy 11.1.8).<sup>99</sup>

According to Policy 11.5.1, regional roads will be designed to facilitate safe pedestrian movement<sup>100</sup> with area municipalities encouraged to consider development design that is consistent with providing pedestrian and transit access where development is in close proximity to regional roads (Policy 11.5.3).<sup>101</sup>

The region will employ a variety of means including the adoption of traffic control devices to regulate traffic flow. Furthermore, road design and reconstruction must take into account the needs of multiple modes of transportation, not only vehicular traffic but also non-vehicular traffic such as bicycle and horse and buggy (Policy 11.5.4).<sup>102</sup> Particular attention has been paid to the Mennonite community and the TMP includes provision for their safe transportation.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 129. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>99</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 130. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>100</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 135–6. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>101</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 137. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>102</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 137. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>103</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1999. *Regional Transportation Master Plan — Final Report*, p. 4–9.

## 2.9 Planning Process

### Smart Growth Principle: Planning process

Planned/coordinated between jurisdictions and stakeholders versus Unplanned/little coordination between jurisdictions and stakeholders.

### Official Plan

Chapter 7. Regional Settlement Patterns — Principle 3: “Comprehensive community planning is necessary to address the broad range of development issues in a streamlined manner.”

Chapter 12. Implementation and Monitoring — Principle 1: “Public participation is an important element in the preparation, adoption, implementation and monitoring of Regional planning policies and decisions.”

### 2.9.1 Public Consultation

Policy 7.4.2.2 encourages area municipalities to incorporate comprehensive community planning in areas of potential new development.<sup>104</sup>

Policy 12.1 describes a process of public participation in decision making, both at regional and area municipality levels, and integration of public comments into the policy development.<sup>105</sup>

The region’s planning documentation appears more user-friendly than most. The language and descriptions make the documentation accessible to the public. The RGMS, in its summary form, is one example of a document that presents its goals and objectives in a straight-forward manner.

As outlined in a recent report on strategy implementation, the region has initiated communication activities with a range of stakeholders including regional staff, area municipalities, the Grand River Conservation Authority, the Regional Homebuilder’s Association, the Waterloo Region District School Board, the Greater K–W Chamber of Commerce and the public. Through these varied contacts, the region will ensure greater understanding of the strategy and its impacts.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 83. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>105</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 146. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

<sup>106</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy — Implementation Report*, September.

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Despite the readability of the region's strategy documents, the Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition argues there has not been enough consultation in the development of the region's growth management strategy. In their opinion, the process was "rushed" and the public did not have "enough meaningful input on the RGMS, partially because there has been inadequate detail for the public to comment on." The coalition is anxious to see the strategy more closely reflect the visions for regional growth developed by the area municipalities. The coalition is particularly concerned about regional sustainability and the impacts of potential growth, issues which it has raised with the region.<sup>107</sup>

Public consultation in the City of Waterloo has been facilitated in part through the efforts of the Public Health Unit through its outreach programs on issues such as air pollution.

A public consultation meeting held on the region's submission to the UTSP included participation from transportation specialists from the region's universities, the Halt Highway 7 project, Transport 2000, and others. Although the participation was wide-ranging and diverse, community representatives expressed some concern at the lack of follow-up to these meetings.<sup>108</sup>

## 2.9.2 Measuring Results

One element of the development planning process that sets the Region of Waterloo apart from other regions is its reference to measurable results. The region incorporates its results into its planning documents and recognizes the participation of all regional stakeholders in decision making, including the contributions of area municipalities and the public.

Since the region released the RGMS in July 2003, it has published two implementation reports, which are publicly available. The detailed reports describe the ongoing work of regional staff and their achievements to date in reaching the milestones identified in the growth strategy's work program. These reports provide an effective means for community and staff alike to regularly evaluate regional achievements.

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<sup>107</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. "Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein," 24 March.

<sup>108</sup> Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist in City of Waterloo, Interview on October 13, 2004.

## 2.10 Public Space

### **Smart Growth Principle: Public space**

Emphasis on the public realm (streetscapes, pedestrian areas, public parks, public facilities) versus Emphasis on the private realm (yards, shopping malls, gated communities, private clubs).

Under the jurisdiction of area municipalities. It is their responsibility to design public space and ensure that development reflects public needs for human scale streetscaping.<sup>109</sup>

## 2.11 Natural Heritage Conservation

### **Smart Growth Principle: Natural Heritage Conservation**

Protection of key natural heritage, source water features, with strong connectivity versus Fragmentation/development of natural heritage, source water features with poor connectivity.

Chapter 4. Natural Habitat Network – Principle 2: “Interconnections among significant natural areas should be recognized, maintained and enhanced to prevent further fragmentation and degradation of the ecological integrity of the landscape.”

Chapter 6. Heritage Conservation – Principle 2: “It is important to give a high priority to the protection of heritage resources in their surrounding context and to minimize the extent to which they are affected by development.”

### 2.11.1 Greenlands Strategy

The OP designates the establishment of a network that includes environmentally sensitive areas including wetlands, valleylands, groundwater areas, woodlands, significant wildlife habitat and fish habitat. The preservation of natural corridors is an important element of protecting the regional landscape with all stakeholders to work together to establish protective policies. The region and area municipalities will identify natural and ecological features in the Grand River Corridor and develop appropriate policies and mapping to protect and conserve such features.

The region is seeking to develop a Greenlands Strategy that would identify and protect natural ecosystems surrounding the region, such as moraines which contribute to the health of the Grand River watershed and on which the region relies for its water source. A Greenlands Strategy would help define the Greenland Network, develop policies to

<sup>109</sup> Waterloo Region Healthy Communities Coalition. 2003. “Letter to Regional Council regarding the Regional Growth Management Strategy and the assumptions therein,” 24 March.

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protect natural ecosystems, define Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes (ESLs) and guide development within major river valleys.<sup>110</sup>

The proposed Greenland Strategy has two goals: “a) to ensure lands having environmental or ecological significance are appropriately protected, enhanced or restored and b) to forge a dynamic partnership consisting of government, the private sector, and the voluntary sector to develop creative means of implementing the Greenlands Strategy”. A discussion paper has been circulated to area municipalities and community representatives for comment.<sup>111</sup> There is increased concern over proposed urban expansion onto the Moraine. (see Section 2.1.4)

The Neptis Foundation has identified 17.6 % of the region’s lands as being environmentally significant, of which only 3.6 % are fully protected. The region’s greenlands and their protection are show in the map below developed by the Neptis Foundation.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2003. *Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy 2003*, p. 4 and p. 6–7. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument); Region of Waterloo. 2004. *Regional Growth Management Strategy — Implementation Update Report*, 26 February, p. 5–6. [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/DocID/71DC3804F65AFA9485256B1A0062B956?OpenDocument)

<sup>111</sup> Region of Waterloo. 2004. Planning and Works Committee Meeting, October 5. <http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/0/a02fe6b09ef41d7285256f27004a9163?OpenDocument>

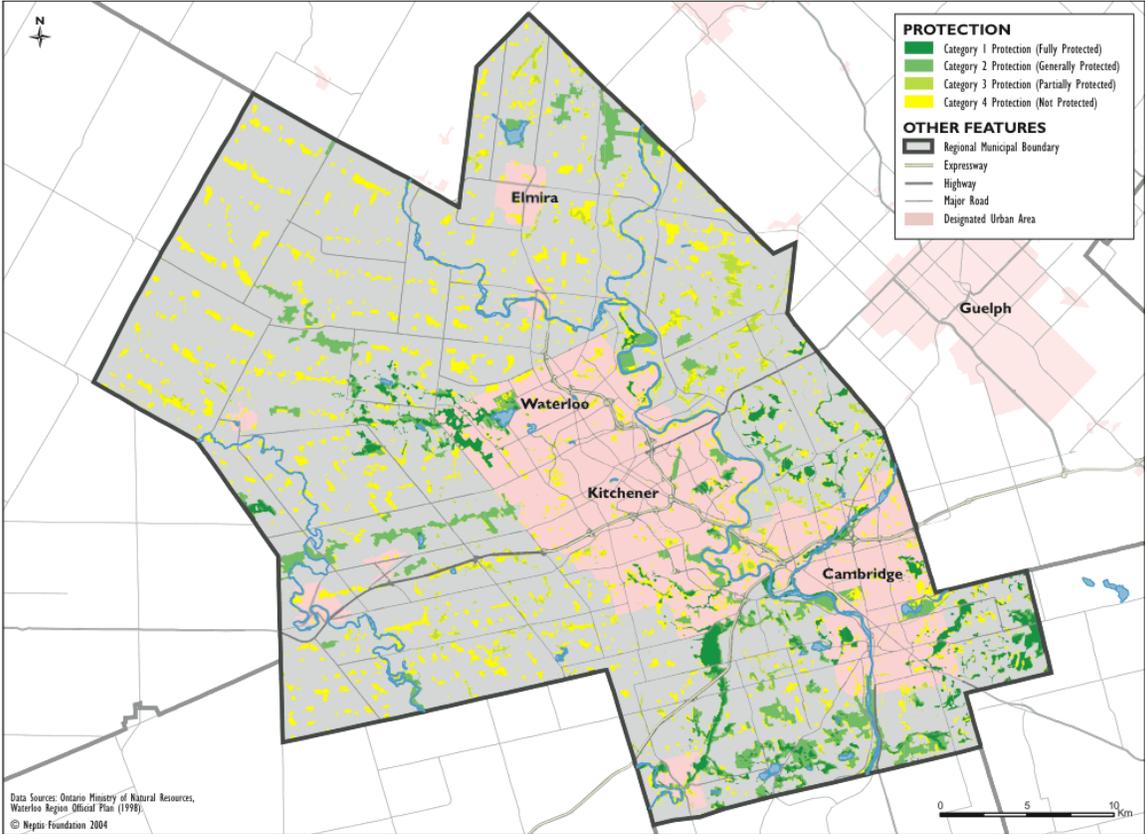
<sup>112</sup> D.M.Fraser and B.P. Neary, 2004. *The State of Greenlands Protection in South-Central Ontario* (Toronto: Neptis Foundation) pp.56-58.

## 3 Overall Observations

The Region of Waterloo has made a significant effort to incorporate growth principles into its planning initiatives. The region's official plan indicates that there is no need for expansions of the region's urban boundaries until 2016. Future development is to be focused in city and township urban areas, particularly along the proposed CTC, which is to be a higher density mixed-use area serviced by LRT. Modified development charges and tax increments are being employed to promote redevelopment of brownfields and downtown areas. Transit services are being expanded, with the intention of increased modal share, and there is an active cycling plan as well. Overall density and redevelopment rates appear to be on the rise.

However, incremental expansions of urban boundaries are continuing to occur, particularly for industrial uses, and the 2003 RGMS includes provisions for substantial employment land development of the east side of the Grand River. There are also pressures from area municipalities for extensive road and highway expansions, partially as a result of past sprawling development with poor or no transit service. In addition, a number of provincial initiatives, such as the proposed GTA East West Corridor and Guelph to Kitchener–Waterloo corridor, have the potential to undermine local efforts to contain urban sprawl and promote more transit-focused transportation patterns. The adoption of stronger growth management policies by the province may also have the impact of accelerating population growth in the region.

Map 3: Regional Municipality of Waterloo



## Annex 1

“The six elements of a Sustainable Regional Community are defined as:

- a) Environmental Integrity: to maintain and enhance the natural environment in order to protect the life support systems of soil, air and water, conserve the presence of wildlife and plants native to the region, and to strive for the sustainable use of natural resources;
- b) Planned Growth: to proactively plan, co-ordinate and stage the use of land and provision of services in order to efficiently and effectively use the region’s resources;
- c) Economic Vitality: to diversity and strengthen the economic base in order to increase jobs and income generated in the region;
- d) Partnerships: to encourage partnerships and co-ordination among Federal and Provincial Ministries, the Region, Area Municipalities, the Grand River Conservation Authority, other government agencies, the private sector, and the community;
- e) Public Participation: to encourage the meaningful participation of a broad cross-section of the regional community in developing and monitoring public policy; and
- f) Safe and Healthy Communities: to enhance the well-being and quality of life of the residents of this region, and to recognize that planning is about people at the individual, neighbourhood and community level.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Region of Waterloo. 1998. *Regional Official Policies Plan*, December 1998 Consolidation, p. 7.  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/Region.nsf/vwSiteMap/297822CA308E1ED985256E4000697FA3?OpenDocument)

## **Annex 2**

### **Interviews and/or email communication:**

Kevin Eby, Director, Community Planning, Region of Waterloo

Robert Gibson, Professor of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo

Kathy Mortimer, Community Activist (Halt Highway 7 Project)

Graham Vincent, Director, Transportation Planning, Region of Waterloo

Marc Xuereb, Public Health Planner, Region of Waterloo

**Summary Table: Region of Waterloo**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Official Policy</b> (e.g., OP, Infrastructure, Growth Management, Transportation Plans)	<b>Implementation</b> (what's happening on the ground).
<b>General Comments</b>	Regional Growth Management Strategy and Central Transportation Corridor initiative strongly transit oriented. Major focus on redevelopment of existing urban areas.	Funding for CTC implementation unclear. Province and federal government have provided funding support for planning and environmental assessment.  Conformity of area municipalities with RGMS directions uncertain
<b>Development Location:</b>  <b>Boundary expansions and new development</b>	Development in urban areas to be confined to designated City Urban Areas and Township Urban Areas.  Regional Growth Management Plan seeks to establish permanent countryside line to limit urbanization.  ROPP indicates development needs can be met without urban boundary expansions until 2016.  Greenlands strategy to identify and protect moraine, environmentally sensitive landscapes and major river valleys.  Protection of future water sources. Region gets 75% of water from ground sources.	Community concerns re: zoning for industrial development while Chamber of Commerce claims shortage of land.  Boundary expansions and agricultural land re-designations from prime to non-prime occurring.  Bulk of urban boundary extensions in the past 5 years are primarily for industrial development.  Of avg. 3500 units built over last 5 yrs, 2600 single detached homes on greenfields.  Concerns re: continues low- density auto-dependent sprawl on the west side of Waterloo. (Laurel Creek Watershed Study)
<b>Development Location (b) Intensification</b>	Strong emphasis on redevelopment of underused urban spaces  Tax increment financing to encourage brownfield redevelopment, Development-charge exemption for downtown core redevelopment.  CTC to be focus for mixed-use, higher density development	Over past five years, 20% of new housing through reurbanization well beyond 1998 regional target of 5%.  Expected that transit plans will facilitate redevelopment at provincial target rates of 40%.
<b>Land Use Density (a) Specific targets</b>	Core community areas to be focus of growth, including promotion of medium- to high-density developments	Net density rates increasing: 6-8 units/ha in 1980s; now 20 units/ha.
<b>Land Use</b>	Expectation CTC will support development of 100-250 units per ha.	Regional density rates tripled overall in last 10 yrs to 20

<b>Density (b) Increased density</b>		units per hectare net in large part due to re-designations.
<b>Land use Mix (a) Mixed Use</b>	Area municipalities will encourage mixed use community development.	
<b>Land Use Mix (b) Big box</b>	ROPP includes provisions for Power Centres and regional shopping centres.	Shopping centres de-emphasized in more recent Regional Growth Management Strategy.
<b>Land Use Mix (c) Transit/Land Use</b>	Development along CTC to be characterized as mixed-use, residential development in close proximity to transit.  Strong recognition of importance of mixed land use to reduce growth impacts and increase efficient transit use.	CTC is key to implementation of mixed use properties as development is anchored in higher order transit.  Criticism of core redevelopment lacks residential infill to attract family settlement.
<b>Land Use Mix (d) Affordable Housing</b>	Mixed land use promoted in community core, recognizing link between land-use planning and transportation needs.  Policies for accessible/affordable housing through provision of full range of housing types. Specific targets (30%) for affordable housing	Recent development in some areas (e.g., Cambridge) single use residential with poor/no transit service.  Community concern that development of central transportation corridor will reduce affordability of housing in core.
<b>Scale of Development</b>	ROPP recognizes need for balance between changing land use, environmental concerns, dev.priorities, and need for safe, healthy communities.	Few details at regional level, remains jurisdiction of area municipalities.  Kitchener initiated \$1 million-plus campaign to upgrade city sidewalks and promote walking.
<b>Public Services</b>	Human service needs considered early in land--use planning process. Location in shared buildings improves accessibility and community integration.	RIM park example of major publicly funded facility with no transit access.
<b>Transportation (a) Transit</b>	Recognition of links between transportation needs and land-use planning and goal to increase transportation choices to public.  Stated goal to shape urban form using transit.  Targets for increase in transit modal share to 7.3% by 2016 from 4.7% in 1996.  Central Transportation Corridor central to transit expansion plans  City has Cycling Master Plan and Bus'n'Bike program with goal of doubling cycling trips by 2016.	Education and employer partnership programs to encourage transit usage.  \$2.5 million federal and provincial funding in place for planning and environmental assessment of CTC.  Plans to introduce express bus service, has expanded bus fleet.  Bus'n'bike funding, and council support for cycling/pedestrian bridge over Highway 401.

<p><b>Transportation (b) Road expansion</b></p>	<p>Regional policy seeks to improve transportation services by focusing on transit.</p>	<p>Municipal and local concern led to deferral of proposals for 400 series highway parallel to Highway 7 between Kitchener and Guelph. Highway 7 project moving ahead.</p> <p>Public concerns re: implications for Waterloo Moraine of road expansions to serve new subdivisions on west side of Waterloo and proposed south Kitchener Transportation corridor.</p> <p>Pressures from area municipalities for road and highway expansions, particularly City of Cambridge (e.g., Highway 424 construction)</p>
<p><b>Transportation (c) Funding</b></p>	<p>CTC involves significant investment in transit services, including possibility of light rail.</p>	<p>Federal and provincial funding in place for planning CTC totally \$2.5 million.</p> <p>Plans to introduce express bus service with \$3 million in funds from Transport Canada's UTSP; has expanded bus fleet</p>
<p><b>Connectivity</b></p>	<p>Recognition of need for transportation linkages and aim to create interconnected system throughout the Region.</p> <p>Interconnected trail system promotes connectivity between communities and area municipalities.</p> <p>While there are provisions for minimizing the distance to transit access, there are no specific distance requirements as per Ottawa</p> <p>Maintain regional road system available to multi-modal means of transportation.</p> <p>Encourage area municipalities to adopt TDM techniques and to promote alternative transportation.</p> <p>No specific policies re: arterials, mainstreets as per Ottawa or York.</p>	<p>Area municipalities encouraged to incorporate transit access into development design.</p>
<p><b>Streets</b></p>	<p>References to community up front in comprehensive planning process.</p>	<p>Implementation in hands of area municipalities.</p>
<p><b>Planning Process</b></p>		<p>Accessible documentation and communication with range of stakeholders e.g., RGMS.</p>

	<p>Public participation and integration of input into policy development.</p> <p>Strong emphasis on measurement of results.</p>	<p>Community group concern about consultation processes of RGMS and urban transportation showcase program (UTSP).</p> <p>Release of implementation reports detailing ongoing work.</p>
<b>Public Space</b>	<p>Jurisdiction of area municipalities</p>	
<b>Natural Heritage</b>	<p>Regional Greenlands Strategy under development</p> <p>Greenlands strategy potentially important in terms of connectivity of natural heritage areas.</p> <p>17.6% of region's lands identified as environmentally significant.</p>	<p>There is increased concern over proposed urban expansion onto the Waterloo Moraine.</p> <p>Only 3.6% of region's lands fully protected from development.</p>