

CITY OF BRANTFORD

Oak Park Road Extension Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study

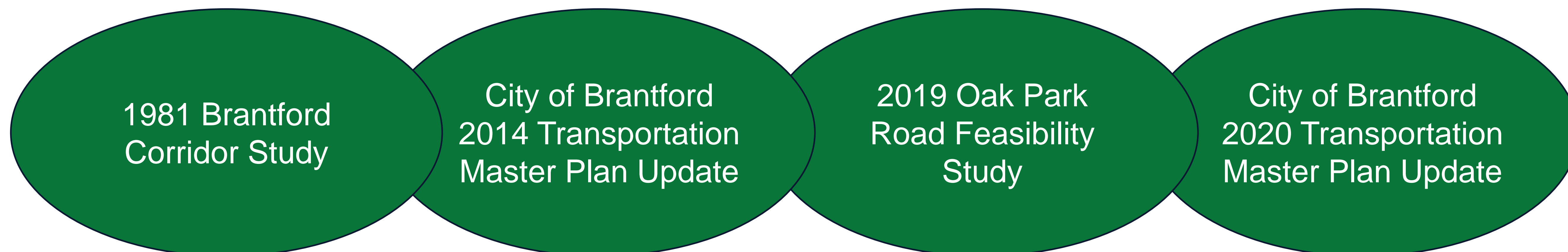
Virtual Public Information Centre #1

NOVEMBER 27, 2020

OVERVIEW

The City of Brantford is undertaking a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to study an extension of Oak Park Road between the Kramer's Way / Hardy Road intersection and Colborne Street West. This study will consider population and employment growth and overall transportation needs in the west side of the City of Brantford.

Studies which support this Environmental Assessment Study include:



This Environmental Assessment Study will:

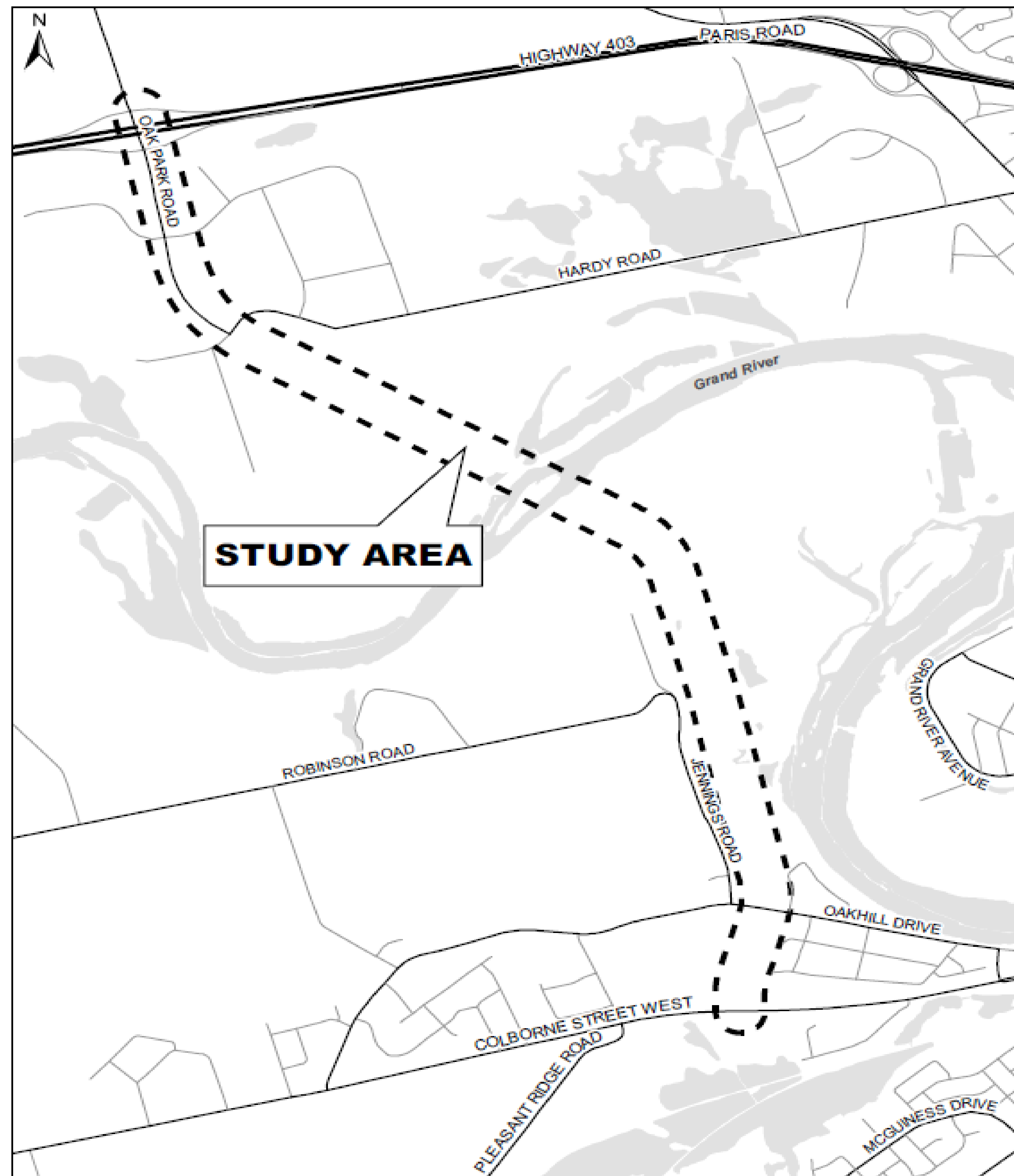
1. Assess and confirm the need and justification for an extension of Oak Park Road;
2. Identify and evaluate alternative solutions and design concepts; and
3. Develop a preliminary design and identify mitigation measures for future stages of design work.

PROJECT STUDY AREA

The Study Area for this Environmental Assessment includes Oak Park Road between the Kramer's Way / Hardy Road Intersection and Colborne Street West.

The Study Area includes the existing protected corridor established from the 1981 Brantford Corridor Study and will consider natural environment features including the Brant Conservation Area and sensitive environmental features along the Grand River.

The Transportation Analysis will review traffic operations on Oak Park Road at key locations including to/from Highway 403, Hardy Road, Oakhill Drive and Colbourne Street West.

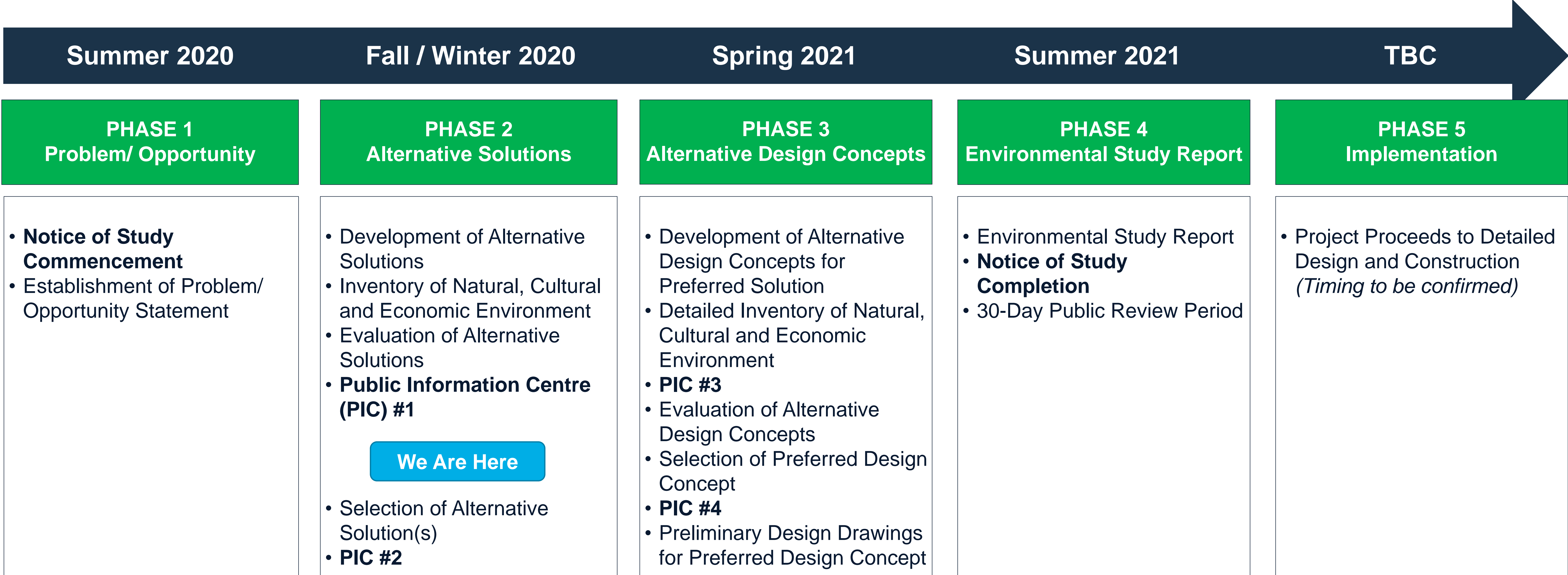


MUNICIPAL CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) is a mandatory process to be completed for major infrastructure projects such as road work and is an approved process under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*.

The MCEA is an assessment process which is designed to ensure compliance with the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*, which in turns allows for the protection of the physical environment, natural environment, social and economic environment. This project will be completing Phases 1 through 4 of the MCEA.

No plans or budgets for this project will be finalized until the completion of the Environmental Assessment study.



CONSULTATION

The City of Brantford will be hosting a total of four Public Information Centres (PICs) during this Environmental Assessment to provide an opportunity for the public to **review and comment** during project milestones.

Public Information Centre #1

- The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process being followed;
- The study background and existing conditions of the study area; and
- The preliminary evaluation of Alternative Solutions.

Public Information Centre #2

- The detailed evaluation of Alternative Solutions;
- The recommended Alternative Solution(s); and
- Next steps in the project.

Public Information Centre #3

- Alternative Design Concepts for the Preferred Solution(s); and
- Detailed inventory of natural, cultural, economic and environmental impacts

Public Information Centre #4

- The evaluation and selection of the Alternative Design Concept(s);
- The Preliminary Preferred Design Concept;
- Anticipated impacts and mitigation measures; and next steps in the project

The City of Brantford is considering feedback received to-date throughout the Environmental Assessment study process.

Engagement with Indigenous Communities

The City of Brantford will be working collaboratively with Indigenous Communities during this Environmental Assessment in order to assess and understand existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

To that end, the City of Brantford will meet regularly with Indigenous Communities, share reports and information and seek to incorporate input and perspectives into the evaluation of alternatives, development of environmental mitigation measures and design concepts.

FEEDBACK RECEIVED

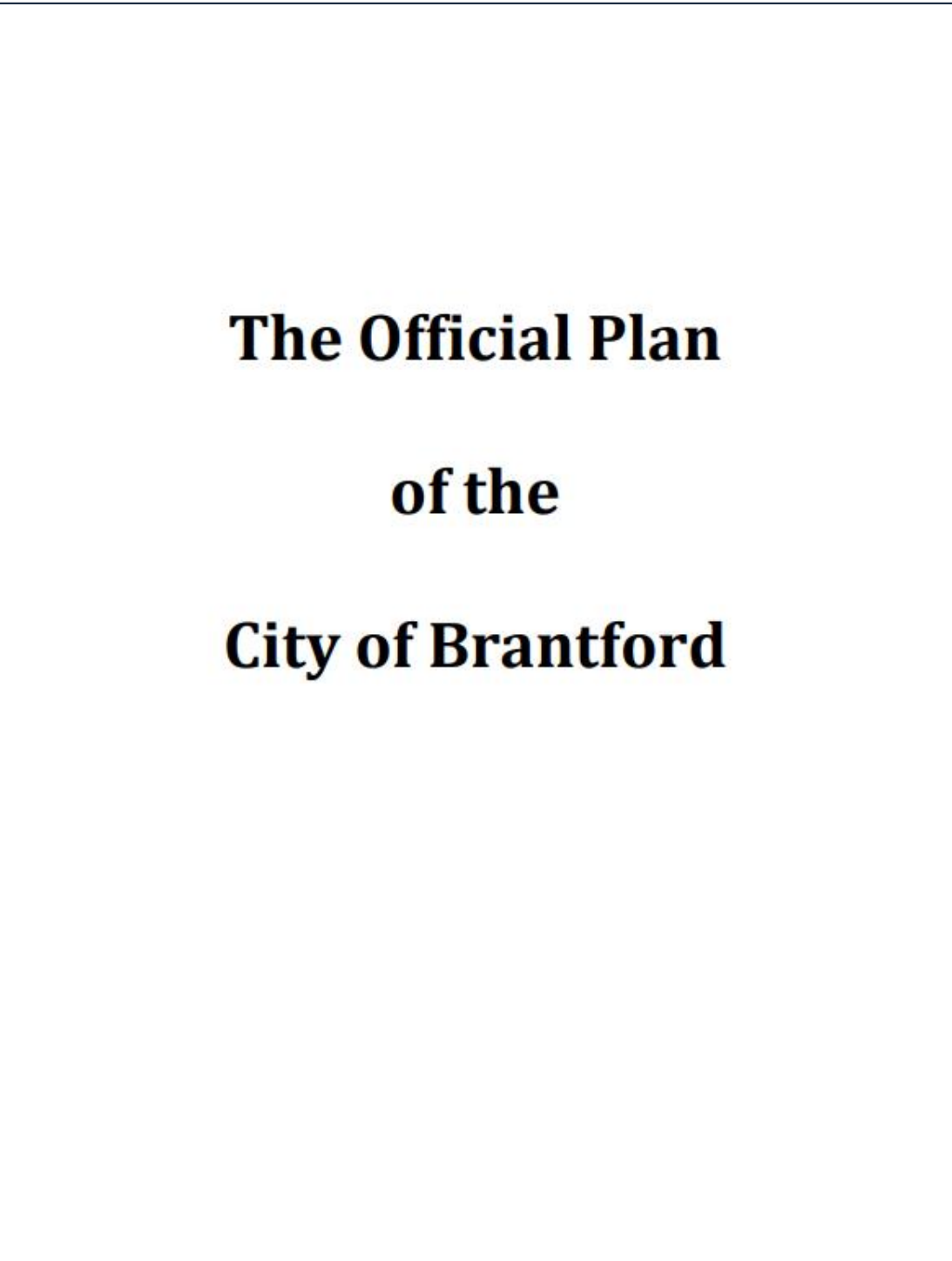
The City of Brantford continues to receive public comments regarding the Environmental Assessment Study and will consider input throughout all phases of the project.

To-date, comments received have noted:

- Concerns regarding increased traffic flow resulting from the extension and the overall improvements to traffic conditions in the City;
- Concerns with potential impacts to existing residential properties;
- Concerns with potential impacts to the natural environment and wildlife;
- Consideration of aboriginal and treaty rights;
- Consideration of project funding requirements; and
- General concerns related to noise, light and visual impacts, roadway drainage, and climate change considerations.

POLICY OVERVIEW

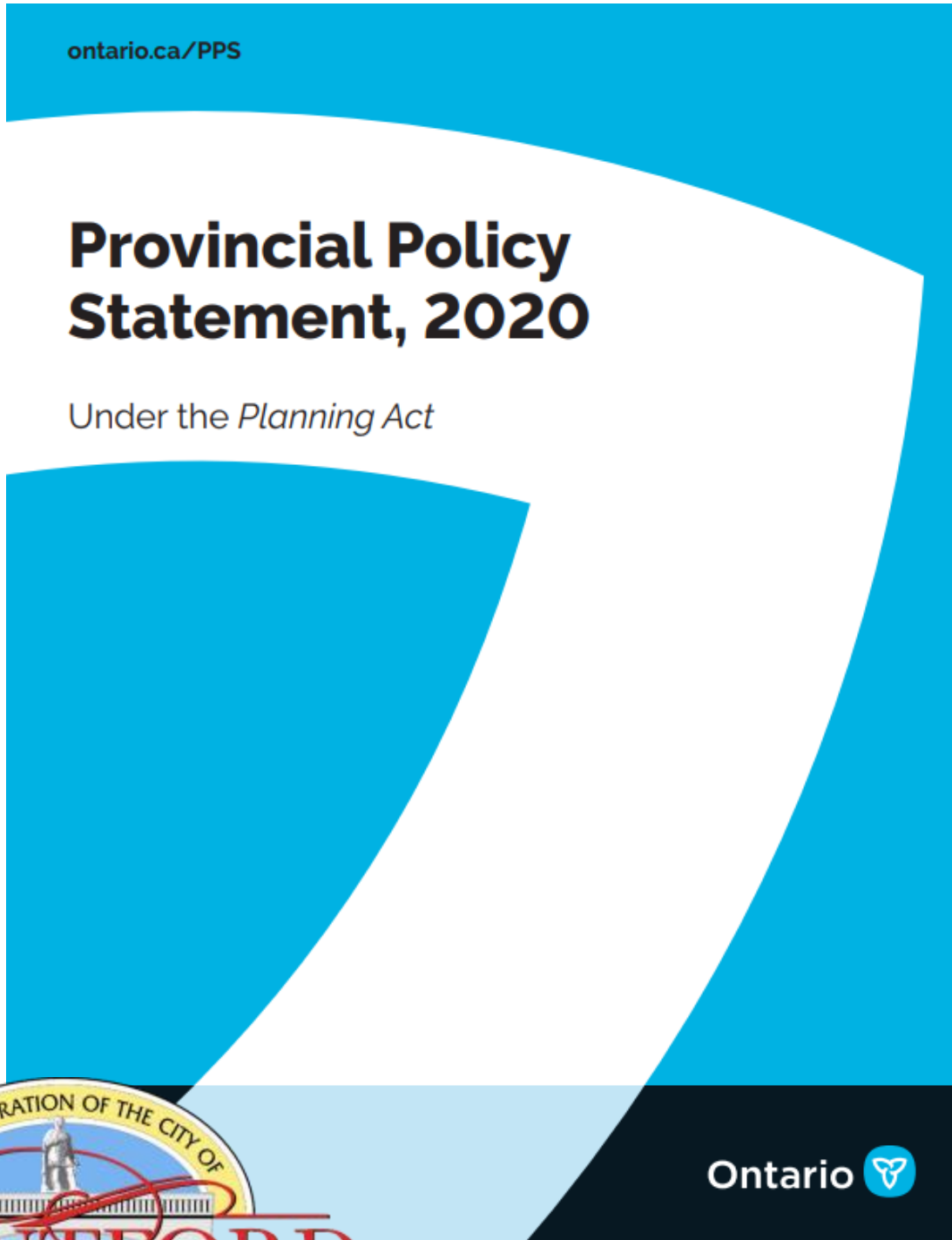
A number of policies are applicable to the long-term growth and development within the City of Brantford. These include the City of Brantford’s Official Plan, 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Some of the key objectives include:



City of Brantford Official Plan

The City shall “maintain an appropriate road network to accommodate commercial, industrial and private vehicular traffic, incorporating where possible and desirable provision for alternative modes of transportation”.

The City shall “make provisions for linkages in new development areas and where possible, provide similar linkages in developed areas and areas to be redeveloped.”



2020 Provincial Policy Statement

“Planning authorities shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for infrastructure, including transportation, transit and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems to meet current and projected needs.”

“As part of a multimodal transportation system, connectivity within and among transportation systems and modes should be maintained and, where possible, improved including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.”



POLICY OVERVIEW



2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Transportation System within the Greater Golden Horseshoe will be planned and managed to “provide connectivity among transportation modes for moving people and for moving goods” and “offer multimodal access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural, and recreational opportunities, and goods and services”.

In “planning for the development, optimization, or expansion of existing and planned corridors and supporting facilities”, the plan requires projects to:

- Ensure that existing and planned corridors are protected to meet current and projected needs in accordance with the transportation and infrastructure corridor protection policies in the Provincial Policy Statement;
- Demonstrate through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis as part of an environmental assessment, that any impacts on the Agricultural System have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized and to the extent feasible mitigated;
- Demonstrate through an environmental assessment, that any impacts on key natural heritage features in the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan, key hydrologic features and key hydrologic areas have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized and to the extent feasible mitigated; and
- For existing or planned corridors for transportation: consider increased opportunities for moving people.

1981 BRANTFORD CORRIDOR STUDY

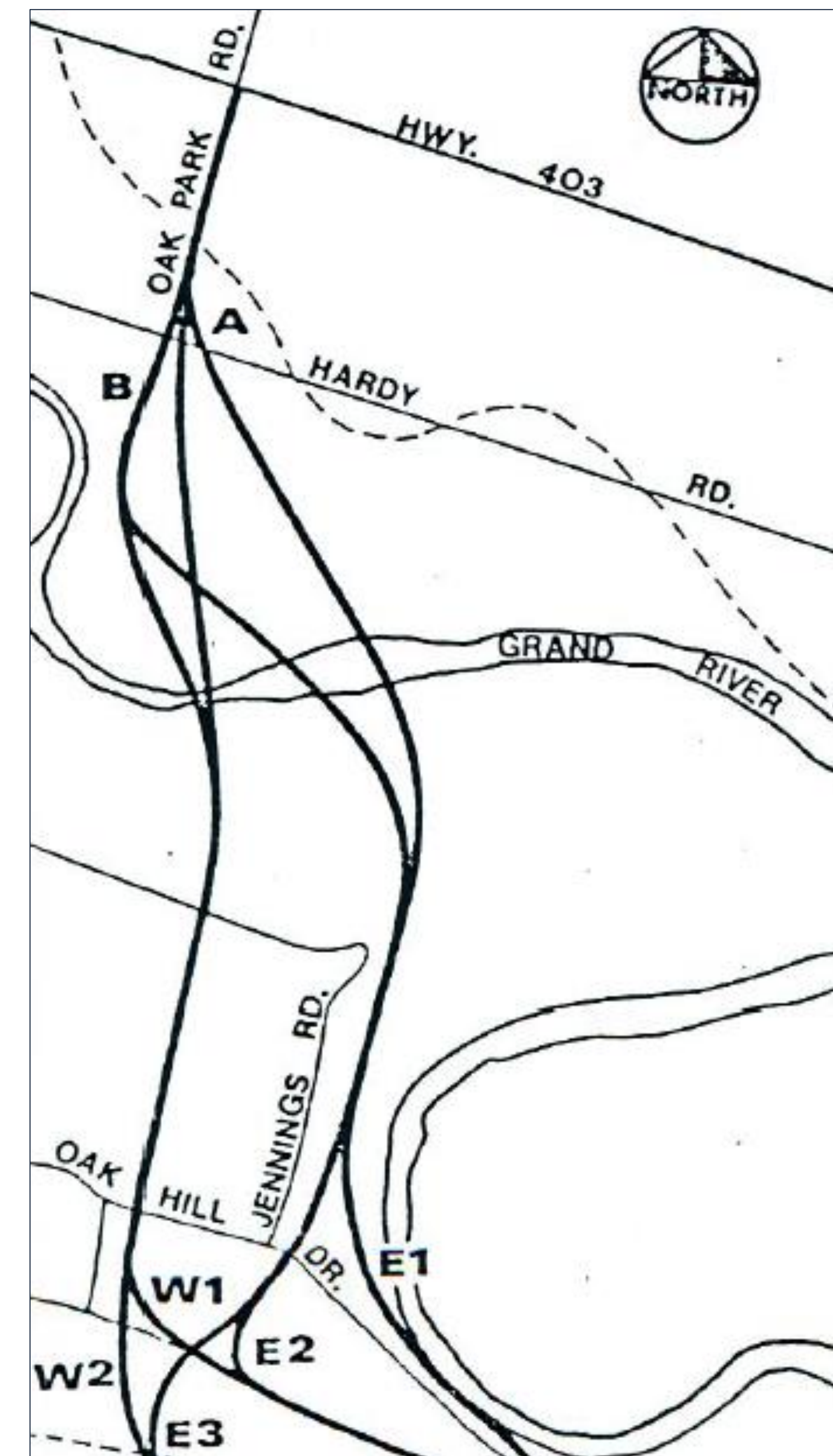
The 1981 Brantford Corridor Study was completed to recommend a preferred alignment for a future roadway connection in the west end of the City of Brantford.

The Report determined there was need for a future extension.

Ten potential alignment alternatives for the corridor were identified.

Based on the evaluation outlined in the 1981 report, it was determined that alternative extension “E3” was the preferred alternative. Following the recommendation, the City of Brantford began to designate lands along the preferred alignment for **long-term protection**.

Alignments Considered
in 1981 Corridor Study



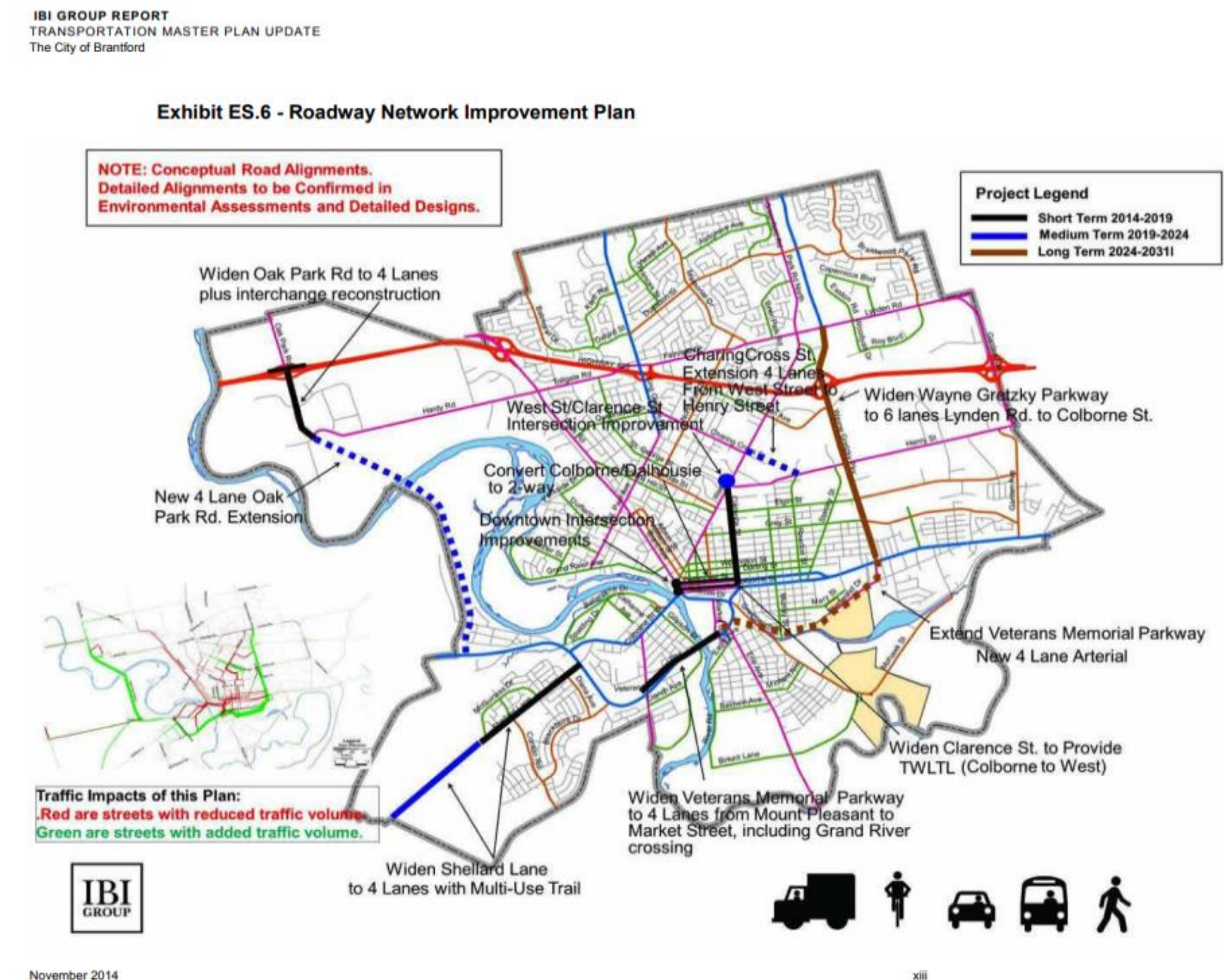
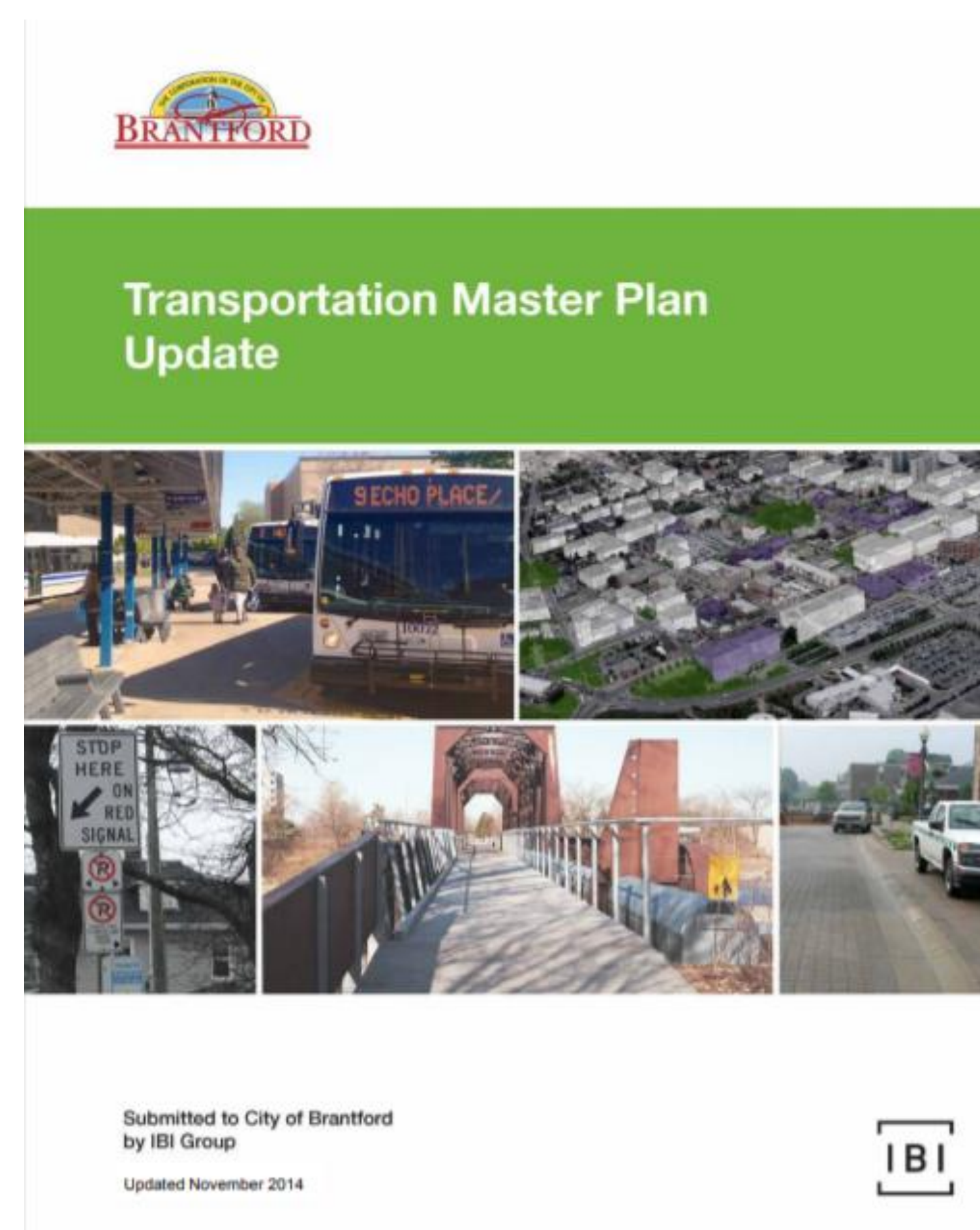
CITY OF BRANTFORD TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

The City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) identifies a range of transportation infrastructure improvements and supporting policies to accommodate growth, develop long term capital cost estimates, identify Environmental Assessment requirements and to facilitate early consultation with stakeholders.

The TMP provides strategies for transportation and active transportation networks; management of transportation demand, truck route management and transit improvements. The plan forecasts projects up to the year 2041 which are prioritized based on project need and required timing.

The 2014 TMP update identifies an **extension of Oak Park Road** from the existing Kramer's Way / Hardy Road intersection to Colborne Street West as an alternative to accommodate long term population and employment growth within the north-west and south-west quadrants of the City.

The draft 2020 Transportation Master Plan update identifies the Oak Park Road extension to be needed in the **medium term (2026 to 2031)**.

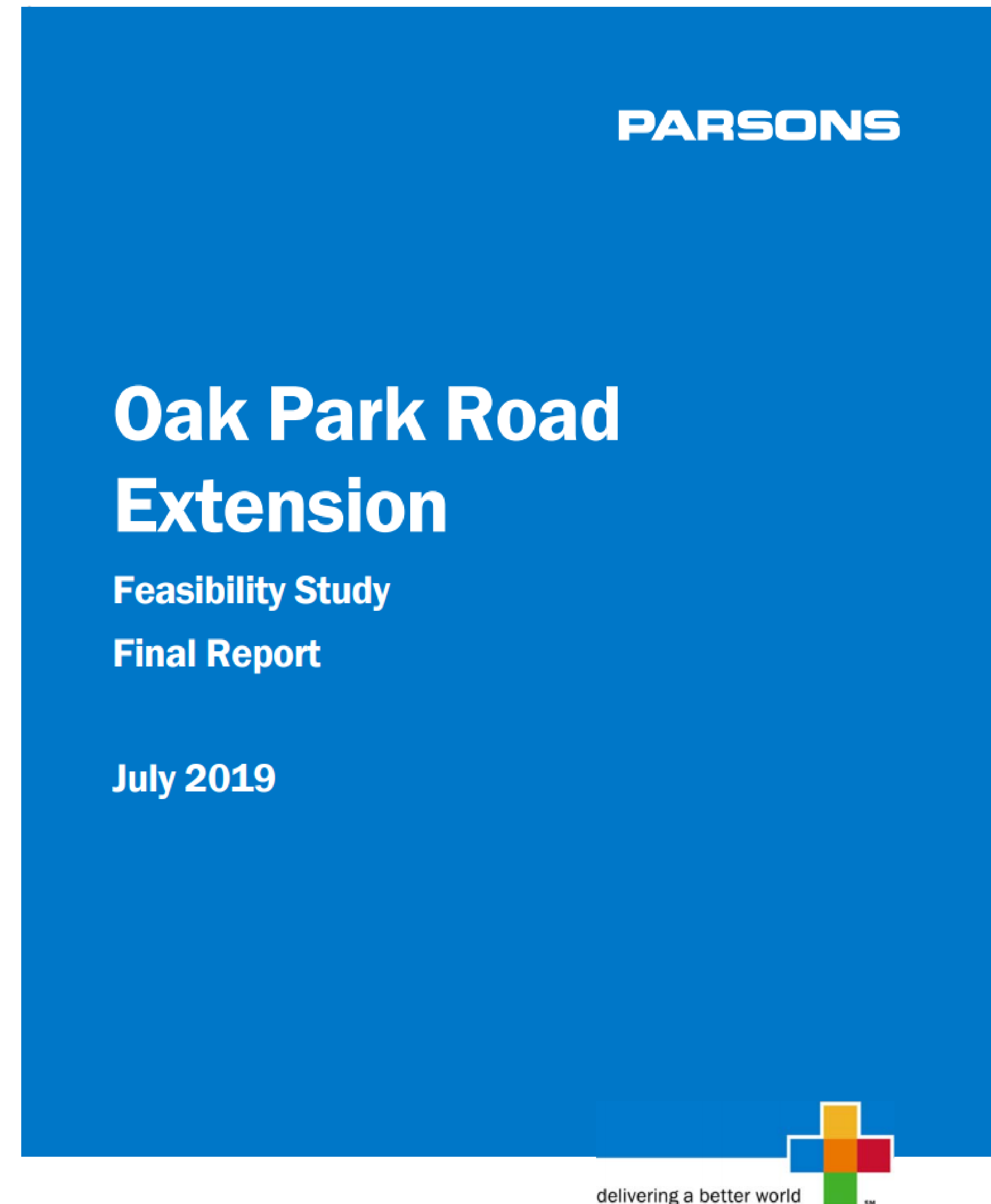


2019 OAK PARK ROAD FEASIBILITY STUDY

Building from the 1981 Brantford Corridor Study and 2014 Transportation Master Plan Update, Parsons completed a Feasibility Study in 2019 to determine cross-section requirements, preliminary alternatives and key constraints and challenges associated with an extension of Oak Park Road.

The Feasibility Study determined:

- Large quantities of fill may be required in some areas in order to implement the project;
- The use of engineered slopes and/or retaining walls should be considered to mitigate impacts to adjacent residential properties;
- It is not feasible to provide at-grade intersections at Oakhill Drive and the Oak Hill Cemetery. Structures should be placed at these locations;
- The new structure over the Grand River should be designed to minimize the environmental impact to the surrounding lands;
- Consideration should be given to the potential long-term removal of the existing Gordon Glaves Crossing pedestrian structure; and
- The proposed alignment should match into the existing design work already completed to the north of the Grand River.

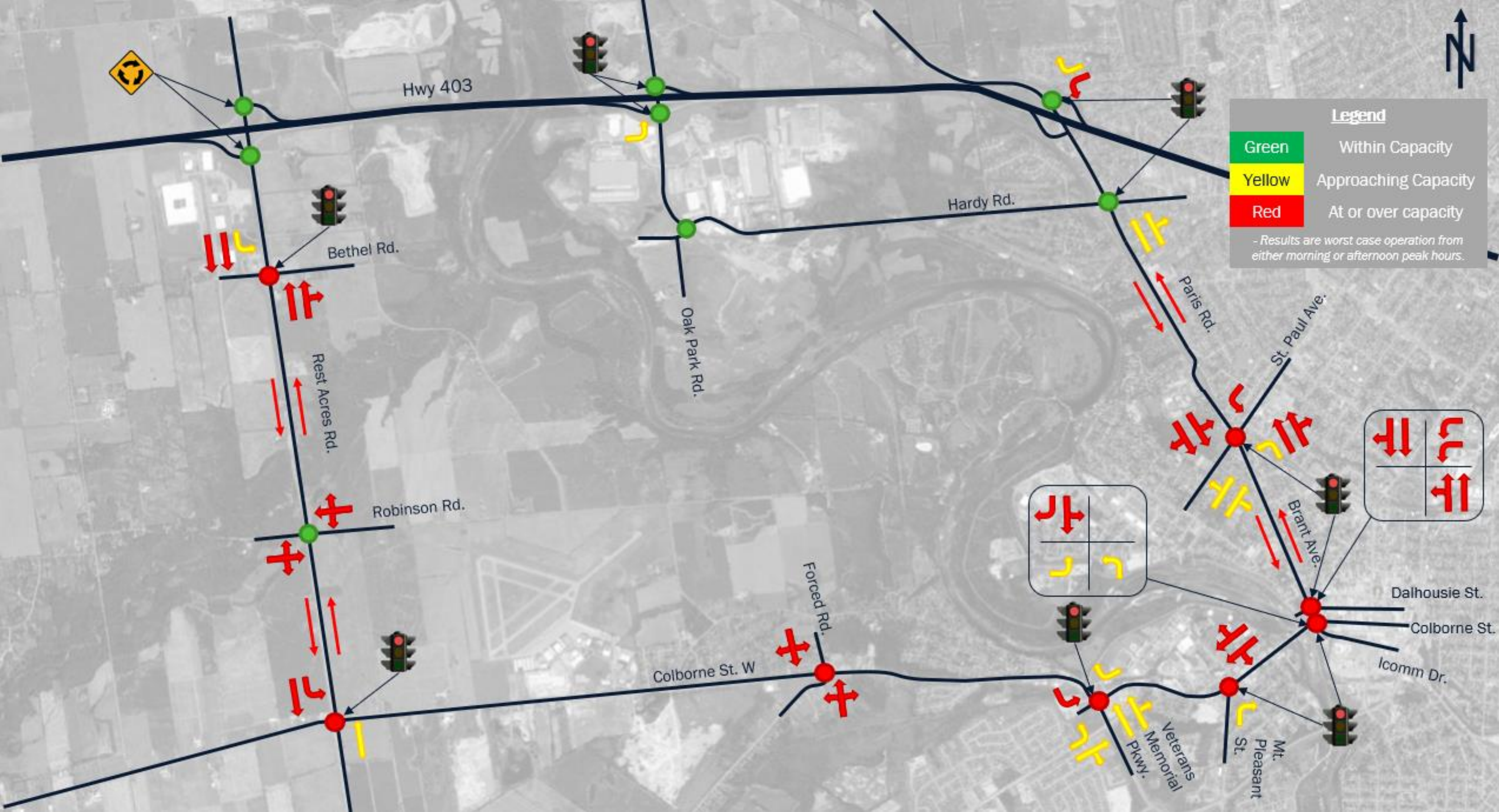


EXISTING (2019) TRAFFIC CONDITIONS



FUTURE (2041) TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

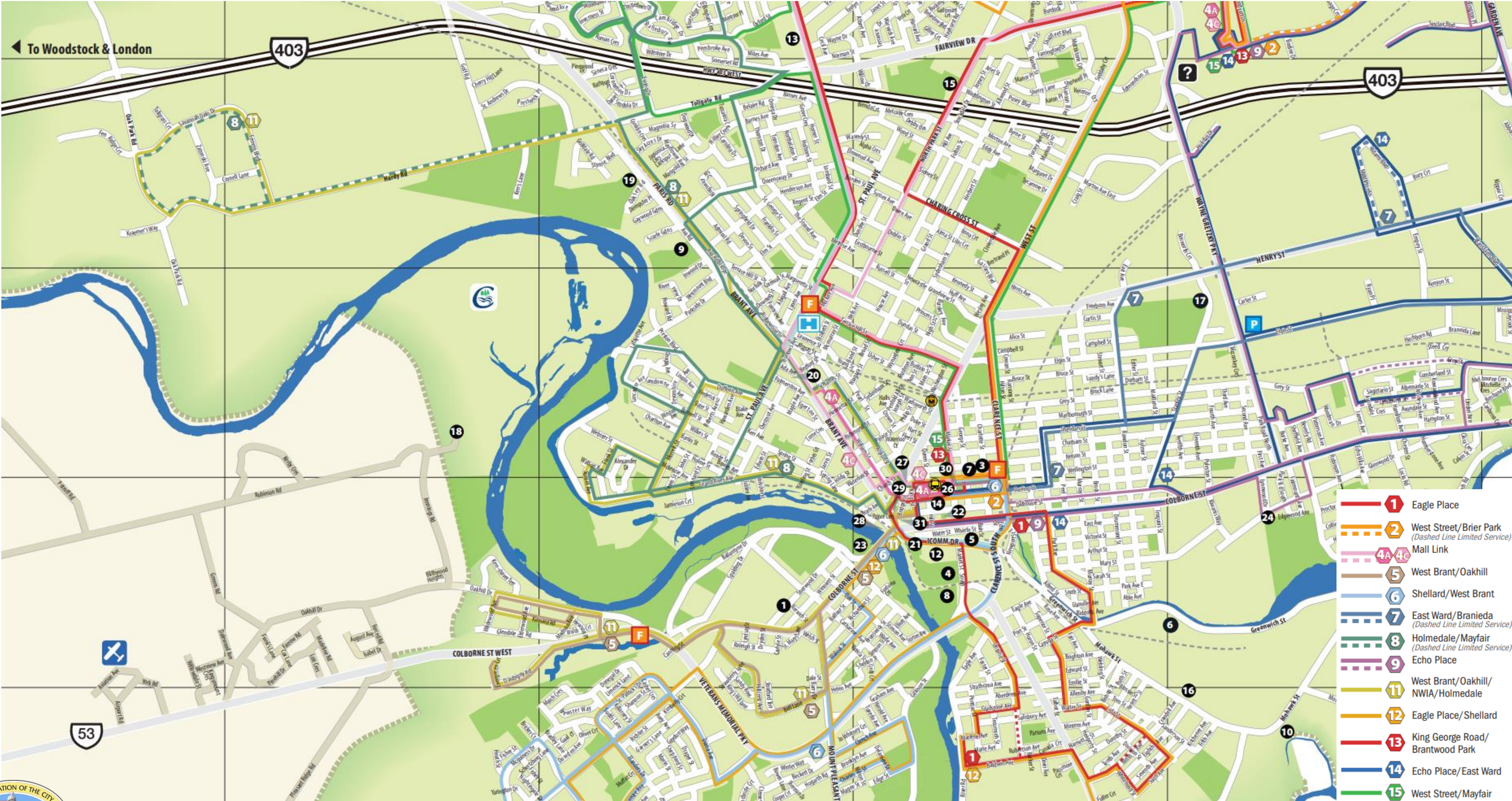
With the existing transportation network in place, several intersections and roadway segments are anticipated to operate at or over capacity in the future during peak periods (2041 analysis).



EXISTING TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE

The Study Area is in proximity to bus routes 8, 11 and 5.

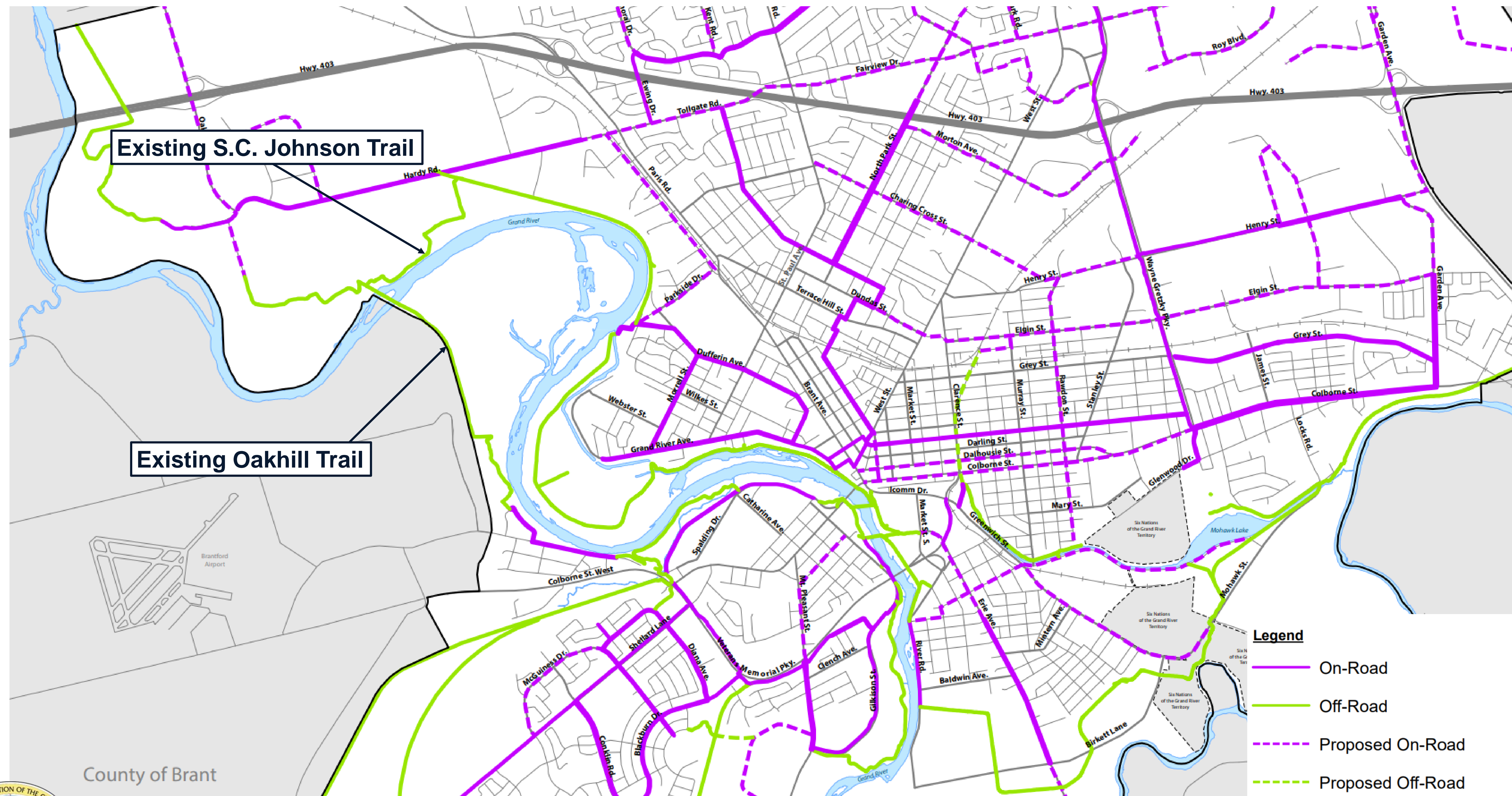
Existing Transit Routes



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The Study Area includes several Shared Use Trails including the Oakhill Trail and S.C. Johnson Trail.

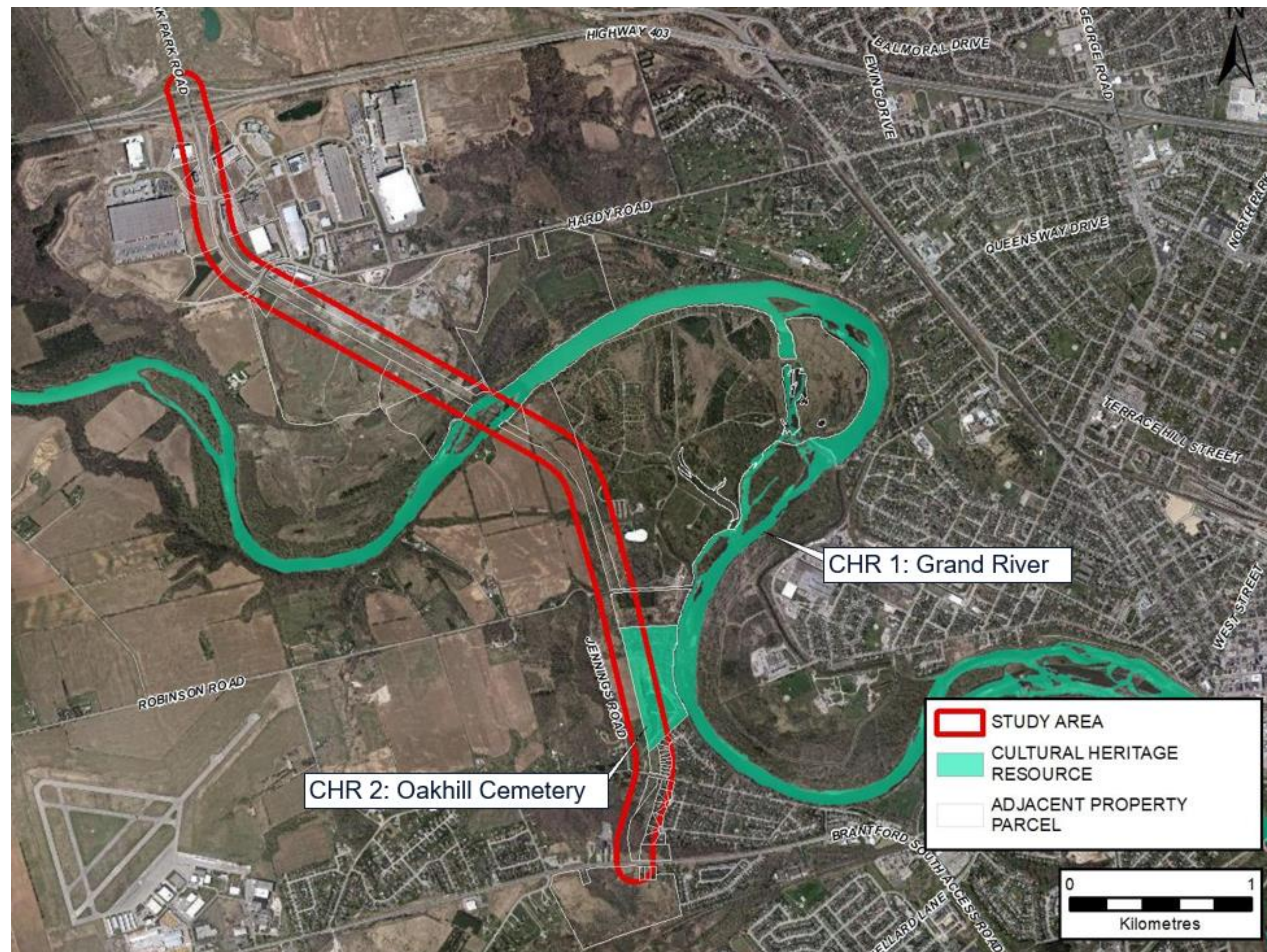
Existing and Planned Active Transportation Network (Draft 2020 Official Plan)



ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

A review of federal, provincial, and municipal registers, inventories, and databases revealed that there are two previously identified features of cultural heritage value within the Oak Park Road Extension study area which include the Grand River and Oakhill Cemetery.

Preliminary Cultural Heritage Resources



ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

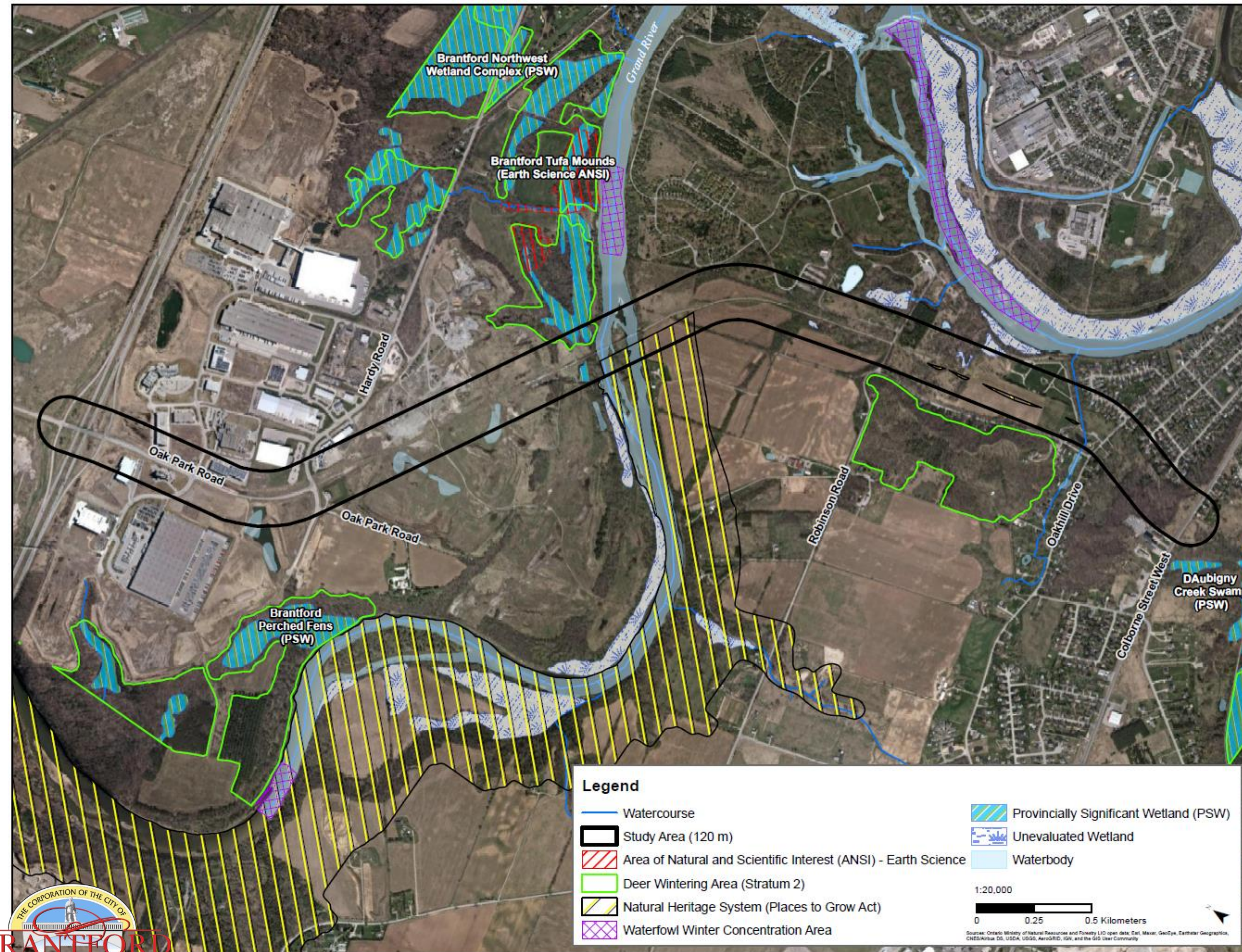
The study area is known to include very high archaeological potential which is subject to on-going investigations.

Preliminary Archaeological Potential (Stage 1 Investigation)



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FEATURES

A portion of the study area is within the **Natural Heritage System (NHS)** as identified in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow Act).



Natural heritage features within the study area include:

- Grand River with a tributary located near Oakhill Drive
- Unevaluated wetlands
- Brantford Northwest Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) Complex
- Deer Wintering Areas
- Woodlands
- Brantford Tufa Mounds Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)
- Potential significant wildlife habitat (SWH) for a variety of species
- Potential habitat for species at risk (SAR)
- Potential Environmental Areas within the City of Brantford Official Plan, Schedule 3-1 Natural Heritage: Environmental Areas.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FEATURES

The **Grand River** is a permanent warmwater thermal regime which is known to support:

- Warmwater sportfish habitat
- Freshwater Fish Species at Risk (SAR) habitat – Black Redhorse, Silver Shiner, Eastern Sand Darter
- Critical Habitat – Eastern Sand Darter
- Freshwater mussel SAR habitat – Wavy-rayed Lampmussel



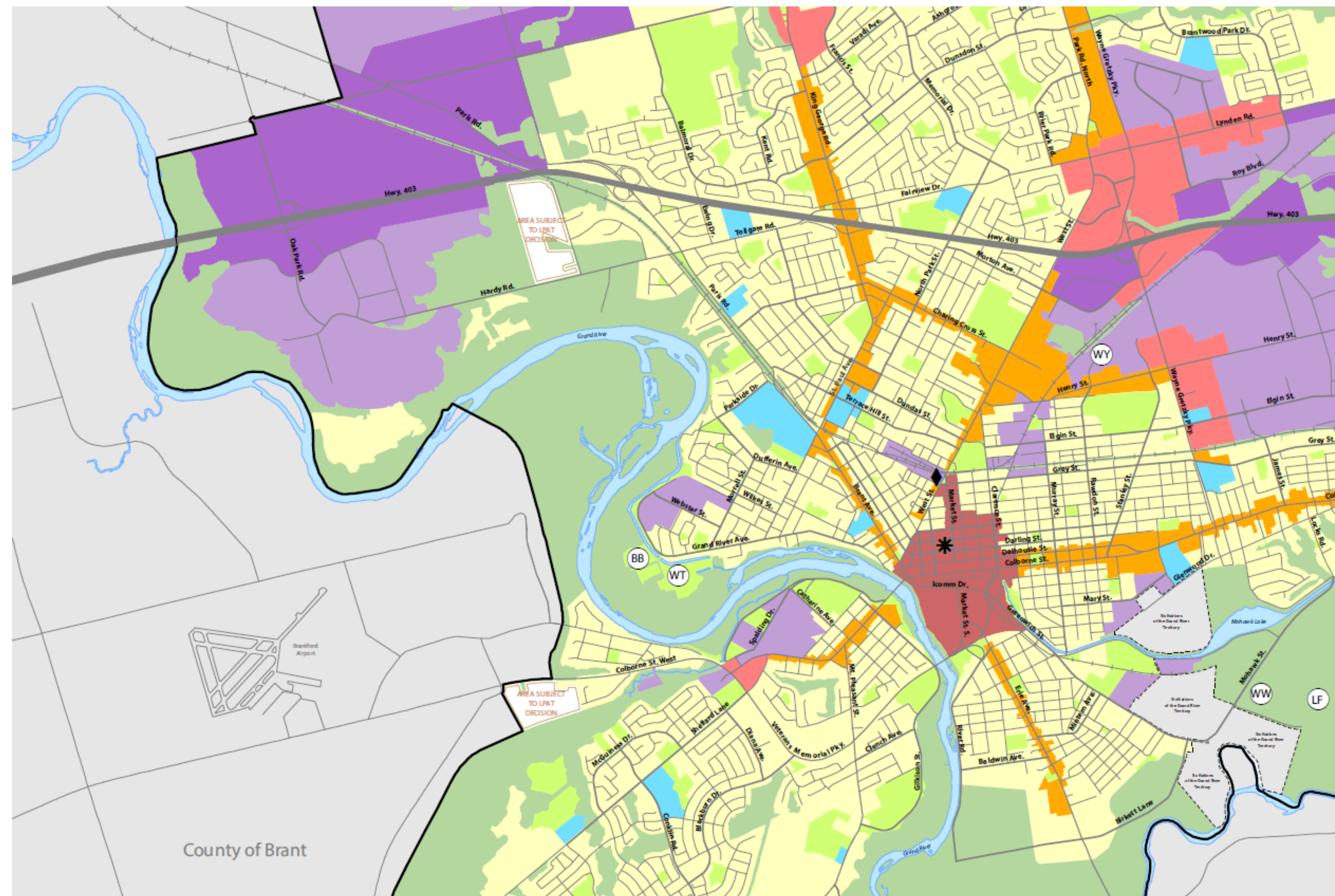
The inventory of natural heritage elements is on-going and will document potentially impacted terrestrial and aquatic habitats, Species at Risk (SAR) and mitigation measures.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND LAND USE

The City's draft 2020 Official Plan designates the following land uses within the Study Area:

1. Core Natural Areas
2. Residential
3. General Employment
4. Designated Greenfield

The Oak Park Road corridor is identified for **Long Term Corridor Protection** in the City's draft 2020 Official Plan.

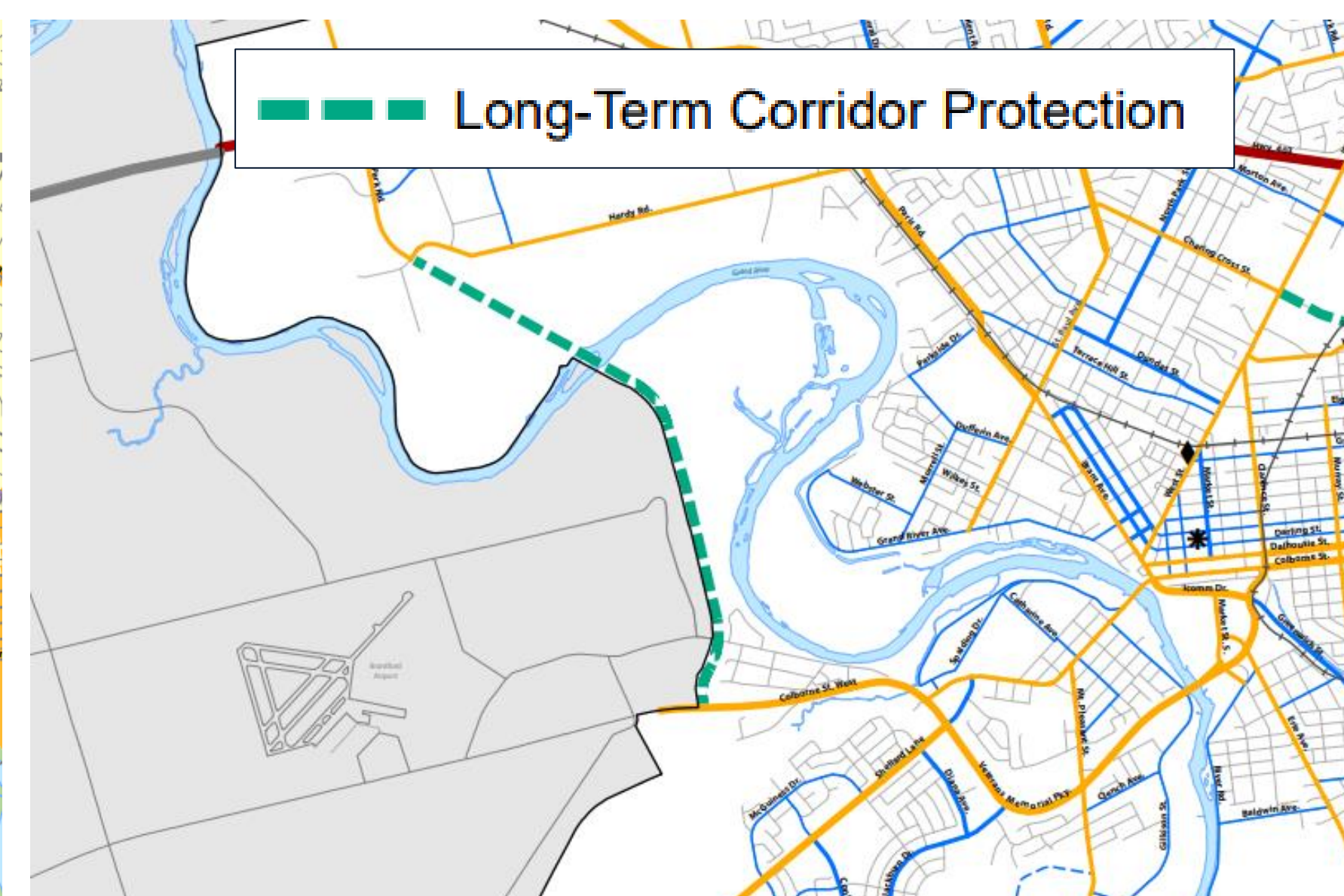
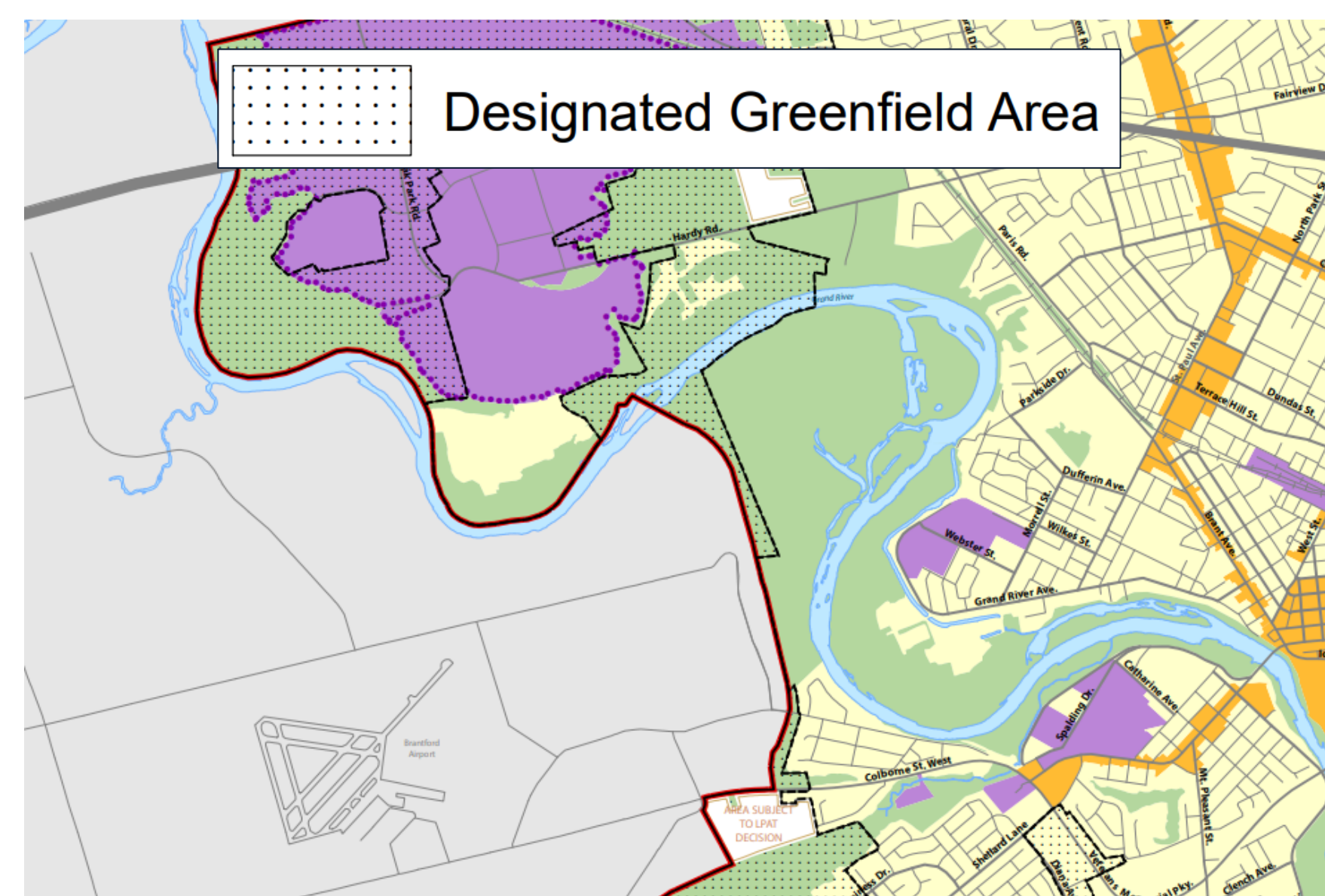


Legend

- Agricultural Designation
- Core Natural Areas Designation
- Neighbourhoods**
- Residential Designation
- Major Institutional Designation
- Parks and Open Space Designation
- Strategic Growth Areas**
- Downtown Urban Growth Centre Designation
- Major Commercial Centre Designation
- Intensification Corridor Designation
- Employment Areas**
- Prestige Employment Designation
- General Employment Designation

Symbols

- LF Sanitary Landfill Site
- WT Water Treatment Facility
- WW Wastewater Treatment Facility
- WY Municipal Works Yard
- BB Transit Bus Barns
- * Downtown Transit Terminal
- ◆ VIA Rail Station



PROBLEM / OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Phase 1 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process requires that a Problem/ Opportunity Statement be prepared, which identifies the problems and opportunities to be addressed by the Environmental Assessment Study and guides the selection and evaluation of the preferred alternative solutions and designs.

Problem / Opportunity Statement:

The City of Brantford's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update identifies alternatives to accommodate long term population and employment growth in the City including the Oak Park Road extension corridor. Traffic volumes generated by future growth in the City of Brantford to 2041 will cause an increase in traffic congestion in the downtown core and other roads in the City.

Opportunities exist to accommodate growth in the City of Brantford through exploration of a range alternatives for the study area. These include:

1. Enhancement of the City of Brantford's transportation system including regional and local movement of people and goods;
2. Addressing future travel demand associated with population and employment growth in the City, and provide additional roadway capacity and reduce travel times between West Brantford (West Brant), Northwest Brantford and the Highway 403;
3. Measures to support all modes of transportation (vehicular, active transportation, and transit) based on a Complete Streets approach; and
4. Consideration of the unique socio-economic, cultural and natural environments of the study area.

ALTERNATIVE PLANNING SOLUTIONS

During Phase 2 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, alternative planning solutions are developed to address the identified Problem/Opportunity Statement. The following are the alternative solutions under consideration for this project:

- 1 Alternative 1 – Do Nothing**

Maintain existing conditions. No change to the existing transportation network within the south-west quadrant of the City of Brantford.
- 2 Alternative 2 – Improve Transit, Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management**

Increase transit operations / level of service to increase transit modal share. Improve cycling and pedestrian facilities to increase active transportation modal share and implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce auto dependency such as carpooling, working from home or shifting work hours.
- 3 Alternative 3 – Implement Localized Intersection Improvements**

Implement intersection improvements within key intersections such as dedicated turning lanes, new facilities such as traffic signals and/or improvement of existing traffic signal timing to improve traffic operations.
- 4 Alternative 4 – Improve Alternative Roadways**

Improve parallel north-south corridors or provide alternative crossing of the Grand River. This could include improvements to corridors such as Rest Acres Rd, Colbourne St W, Brant Av, Hardy Rd or Phelps Rd.
- 5 Alternative 5 – Implement Localized Intersection Improvements and Improve Alternative Roadways**

Combination of Alternatives 3 and 4.
- 6 Alternative 6 – Limit Development of Surrounding Lands**

Implement planning policies which would limit population and employment growth in the south-west quadrant of the City of Brantford.
- 7 Alternative 7 – Construct New Roadway Crossing of the Grand River**

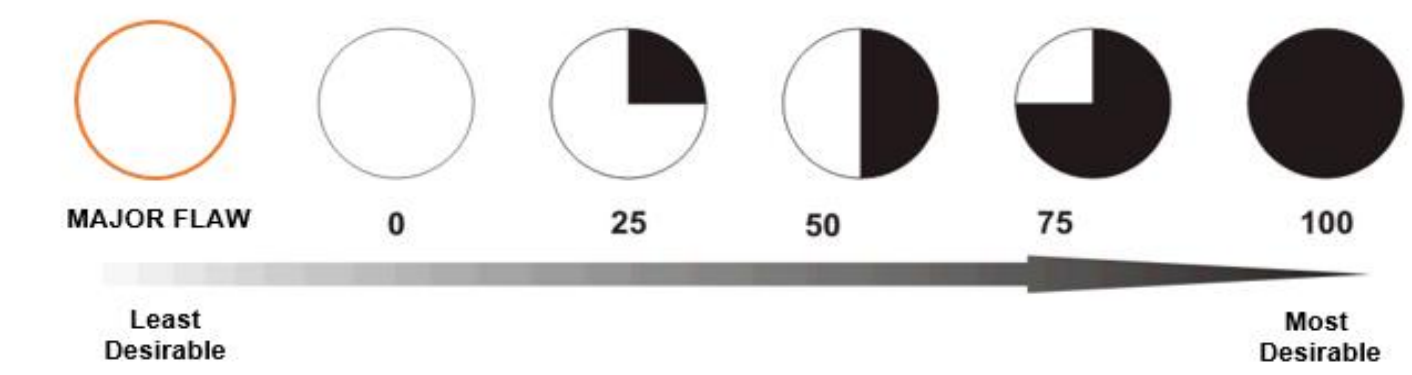
Implement an extension of Oak Park Road from the Hardy Road/Kraemer's Way intersection to Colbourne Street West as envisioned in the 2014 Transportation Master Plan Update.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

To evaluate the alternative solutions, in addition to feedback received, a number of criteria will be used to determine the recommended alternative solution:

Transportation	Land Use Planning Objectives	Natural Environment	Social Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing and Future Transportation Network Connectivity Active Transportation, Transit and Transportation Demand Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial Policies Local Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Habitat Terrestrial Habitat Natural Heritage Features Climate Change Surface and Groundwater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Communities Property Requirements Noise and Vibration Air Quality Aesthetics
Cultural Environment	Economic Environment	First Nation & Indigenous Communities	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological Resources Built Heritage Resources Cultural Heritage Landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing/Future Land Use Capital Costs Property Costs Maintenance Costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lands Treaty Rights Archaeological Sites Land Claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility Impacts Grading, Drainage and Stormwater Management Requirements Phasing and Implementation

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS



Category	Alternative 1: Do Nothing	Alternative 2: Improve Transit, Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management	Alternative 3: Implement Localized Intersection Improvements	Alternative 4: Improve Alternate Roadways	Alternative 5: Implement Localized Intersection Improvements and Improve Alternate Roadways	Alternative 6: Limit Development of Surrounding Lands	Alternative 7: Construct New Roadway Crossing Grand River
Transportation							
Land Use Planning Objectives							
Natural Environment							
Social Environment							
Cultural Environment							
Economic Environment							
First Nation & Indigenous Communities							
Other							

Draft Evaluation, November 27, 2020

Based on the preliminary evaluation of Alternative Planning Solutions, **Alternatives 2 and 7** currently score well across the 8 categories and for their ability to meet the needs identified in the Problem and Opportunity Statement. **We are looking for your input into this evaluation and the selected criteria used to evaluate the alternatives.**

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS (DETAILED)

Category	Alternative 1: Do Nothing	Alternative 2: Improve Transit, Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management	Alternative 3: Implement Localized Intersection Improvements	Alternative 4: Improve Alternate Roadways	Alternative 5: Implement Localized Intersection Improvements and Improve Alternate Roadways	Alternative 6: Limit Development of Surrounding Lands	Alternative 7: Construct New Roadway Crossing Grand River
Transportation	Does not address long term population and employment growth needs.	Does not adequately address long term population and employment growth needs.	Does not adequately address long term population and employment growth needs.	Somewhat improves the transportation network but does not improve access to Hwy 403 for SW Brantford.	Somewhat improves the transportation network but does not improve access to Hwy 403 for SW Brantford.	Does not address policy objectives which require accommodate of population and employment growth.	Would address population and employment growth in the SW area of Brantford including existing and future traffic needs.
Land Use Planning Objectives	Does not address existing policy objectives which support growth.	Does not adequately address existing policy objectives which support growth.	Somewhat consistent with existing policy objectives for transportation.	Somewhat consistent with existing policy objectives for transportation but does not fully address objectives.	Somewhat consistent with existing policy objectives for transportation but does not fully address objectives.	Does not sufficiently address existing and planned land uses as identified in the City of Brantford's Official Plan.	Consistent with policy objectives for transportation including the City's Transportation Master Plan
Natural Environment	No changes to the existing natural environment. Potential climate change impacts resulting from increased long-term congestion.	No significant changes to the existing natural environment. Moderate potential for climate change improvements resulting from fewer private vehicular trips.	No significant changes to the existing natural environment. Moderate potential for climate change improvements resulting from reduced idling; increased roadway footprint.	Potential for significant changes to the existing natural environment. Increased roadway footprint and induced demand would require mitigation of climate change impacts.	Potential for significant changes to the existing natural environment. Increased roadway footprint and induced demand would require mitigation of climate change impacts.	No changes to the existing natural environment. Potential for climate change improvements resulting from reduced carbon footprint of development.	Significant changes to the existing natural environment. Increased roadway footprint and induced demand would require mitigation of climate change impacts, although travel distance is reduced.
Social Environment	No impacts to private property.	No significant impacts to private property.	Potential for some impacts to private property.	Potential for impacts to private property including noise/vibration/aesthetics.	Potential for impacts to private property including noise/vibration/aesthetics.	Potential for impacts to developable lands.	Potential for moderate impacts to private property and noise/vibration/aesthetics depending on alignment. Travel distance and times are improved.
Cultural Environment	No impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources.	No significant impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources.	Potential for some impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources.	Potential for impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources.	Potential for impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources	No impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources	Potential for high impacts to built and cultural heritage or archaeological resources.
Economic Environment	No new capital or operational funding required, however potential for economic growth is limited.	Potential for a moderate amount of new capital and operational funding required.	Potential for a moderate amount of new capital and operational funding required.	Potential for a high amount of new capital and operational funding required.	Potential for a high amount of new capital and operational funding required.	No new capital or operational funding required, however potential for economic growth is limited.	High amount of new capital and operational funding required, however potential for economic growth is high.
First Nation & Indigenous Communities	No impacts to archaeological resources.	No significant impacts to archaeological resources.	Potential impacts to Archaeological resources.	Potential impacts to Archaeological resources.	Potential impacts to Archaeological resources.	No impacts to archaeological resources.	Potential impacts to Archaeological resources and crosses the Haldimand Tract along the Grand River.
Other	No impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	No significant impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	Potential impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	Potential impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	Potential impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	No impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.	High impacts to utilities, grading and drainage.

NEXT STEPS

Following this virtual Public Information Centre #1, the Project Team will:

- Review and address public comments received and consider in the detailed evaluation of alternative solutions;
- Complete detailed inventory of the natural, social and economic environment;
- Hold follow-up meetings with technical advisory committees and project stakeholders;
- Conduct the detailed evaluation of alternative solution(s);
- Confirm the preferred alternative planning solution(s); and
- Present the preferred alternative planning solution and next steps in the project at **Public Information Centre #2**.

We value your input and encourage you to stay connected throughout the Environmental Assessment. You may request to be added to the project contact list to receive updates and future public notices by contacting the project team members at the address below. Please provide your comments by **December 11, 2020** by the sending them to either of the following project team members:

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