armstrong

planning | project management

MIXED-USE BLOCK & DAIN CITY ECONOMIC CLUSTER

555 CANAL BANK DEVELOPMENTS GP INC.

DAIN WEST SUBDIVISION

Prepared For:

Niagara Region and City of Welland

August 28, 2020

August 28, 2020

Niagara Region
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

City of Welland
60 East Main Street
Welland, ON L3B 3X4

Attn: Lindsay Ear & Isaiah Banach, Niagara Region
Rachelle Larocque, City of Welland

Re: **Mixed-Use Block and Dain City Economic Cluster**
Dain West Subdivision

Summary

A land use change is proposed for 555 Canal Bank Street, Welland ON ('Dain West' or 'Site') from employment to a mix of uses (including residential, mixed-use, institutional, parks and open space, and stormwater management). This land use change must retain space for a similar number of jobs on site. At present, and for the last ten (10) years there have been limited to no jobs on the site. In 2008 when the site was last actively used for industry, there were 800 jobs on site provided through at least two shifts. The enclosed document provides a summary of how the proposed draft plan of subdivision accommodates up to 800 jobs on site. This document also outlines the rationale and explains the suitability of the proposed uses within the designated mixed-use block. The mixed-use block is proposed to become the Dain City Economic Cluster that will:

1. Serve as an anchor into the local community and gateway into Dain City;
2. Become a destination rather than a thoroughfare and attract community members and visitors to this development block through its' provided uses;
3. Strengthen the vitality of the economic hub day and night, during week days and on weekends; and,
4. Compliment surrounding uses including Dain City, the Welland Recreational Canal, future Canal Bank Park, and Dain East and West communities.

Overview

On behalf of our client, 555 Canal Bank Developments GP Inc. (the 'Applicant'), Armstrong Planning and Project Management has been retained to facilitate Draft Plan of Subdivision, Regional Official Plan Amendment, Official Plan Amendment, and Rezoning Applications to facilitate development of the Site which is the location of the former John Deere facility. The Site is proposed to be redeveloped as a complete community that encompasses a mix of uses including up to 870 residential dwellings, a mixed-use block, an institutional site, as well as supportive community uses including parks, open space and a stormwater management pond.

As part of the application process and in support of a complete application, regional staff requested that the applicant submit a framework outlining how space for a similar number of jobs will be provided on

site (as was existing when the site was an active manufacturing plant) as well as an outline of what sort of policy and zoning standards will be implemented to encourage the site to succeed. This letter report seeks to outline the proposed approach to providing employment opportunities on the Site. This report should be read in conjunction with other studies submitted in support of the development.

Proposed Development

The proposed development involves applications to redesignate lands from employment to urban area (Niagara Region Official Plan) and from employment to the mix of uses outlined above (Welland Official Plan). In order to change the land use designation as contemplated, it is understood that the land use change must retain space for a similar number of jobs on site. The meaning and intent of this policy is not clear; "similar number" is not described nor is the time frame in which the "similar number of jobs" applies which is important for this Site. It is unclear if jobs are to be calculated at historic rates of jobs on site, or current jobs on site; how long a site needs to be vacant before it is deemed to be providing zero jobs is not clear. Regardless, at this time, the subdivision plan has been designed to accommodate space for up to 800 jobs.

The subdivision is comprised of approximately 870 residential dwelling units anticipated to be made up of 668 single detached dwellings and 202 townhouses. This will generate a population of over 2,300 residents.[1] In addition, a 4.056-hectare mixed-use block is provided in the southwest corner of the plan area, and a 2.3-hectare institutional site is provided central to the plan area. Please refer to the draft plan of subdivision submitted with the application.

Within the larger community, 55 jobs will be provided within the institutional block and 45 jobs are expected to be created through work-from-home opportunities for the 870 residential units.[2] These are considered to be "community-based jobs". Directly east of and fronting on Canal Bank Street is the mixed-use block, also referred to in this report as the Dain City Economic Cluster, which accommodates approximately 280,000 square feet of designated mixed-use commercial, limited light industrial and retail area for employment and provides space for up to 700 jobs.[3] Note, that because of shift work and hours of operation, it is likely that the 280,000 square feet of space could support significantly more than 700 jobs. For the purpose of this report, the employment provided on-site is calculated to be approximately 800 jobs. Our strategy for achieving the jobs on the mixed-use block is explained in detail below.

[1] Based on Region of Niagara Development Charge Background Study, prepared by Watson & Associates (April 28, 2017), People Per Unit is calculated at a rate of 2.91 people per unit for singles and semi-detached dwellings, and 2.12 people per unit for multiples and rows.
[2] Based on Region of Niagara Development Charge Background Study, prepared by Watson & Associates (April 28, 2017), work from home is anticipated for 7% of the population. For the purposes of our calculation a more conservative number of 5% has been used.
[3] Based on City of Welland 2019 Development Charges Background Study & By-law, prepared by DFA Infrastructure International Inc. (June 5, 2019), 400 square feet is required per employee.

Mixed-Use Block, Dain City Economic Cluster Block Plan

We understand that development within this mixed-use block will require Site Plan Approval at a later date and that requirements and expectations may change. For now, a concept plan has been developed and thought and attention have been given to the layout of the buildings and types of uses anticipated to succeed in the City of Welland and more specifically the Dain City community. See page 1 of **Appendix A**: Dain City Economic Cluster Concept Plan. **Appendix A** to this report includes the Dain City Economic Cluster Concept Plan (subject to change), infographics explaining the types of uses proposed as well as conceptual images showing building design and style that we believe would compliment and enhance the existing community of Dain City. It is important to note that this document is meant to guide future development opportunities within the mixed-use block; it is not meant as a strict plan that must be followed.

Vision for the Mixed-Use Block, Dain City Economic Cluster

The overall vision for the Dain City Economic Cluster is to reimagine work and play steps away from the Welland Recreational Canal. Key principles and visioning were used to guide development of the block. The Dain City Economic Cluster block will:

1. Serve as an anchor into the local community and gateway into Dain City;
2. Become a destination rather than a thoroughfare and attract community members and visitors to this development block through its' provided uses;
3. Strengthen the vitality of the economic hub day and night, during week days and on weekends; and,
4. Compliment surrounding uses including Dain City, the Welland Recreational Canal, future Canal Bank Park, and Dain East and West community.

It is important to note that with over 2,300 new residents in the Dain West neighbourhood, there will be a need for community driven uses including retail, offices, personal service shops, day care centres, banks and medical offices. The Dain City Economic Cluster Concept Plan (refer to page 1 of **Appendix A**) has been designed to maximize retail frontage and restaurants along the Welland Recreational Canal and Canal Bank Street, and locate passive uses or destination driven uses (such as professional offices, medical offices, bank, commercial school, self-storage and warehouse) internal to the block. The massing of the buildings has been carefully planned to accommodate the desired amount of gross floor area, as well as provide transitions to adjacent proposed land uses including residential and institutional uses to the north and northeast.

In order to meet the demand for parking on site, the uses have been strategically combined and located within each building to offer flexibility during peak parking times and encourage sharing of parking during off hours. It is also anticipated that with the proposed development of the Dain West subdivision and draw of over 2,300 residents to the area, the Welland Public Transit system will extend its routes to this area, further reducing the need for surface parking. Although the planned approach is for shared surface parking, space for an above grade parking deck has been provided in the eastern portion of the plan area, should it be required. This will be determined through a Site Plan Application at a later stage.

Mixed-Use Block, Economic Cluster Block Building Program

As shown in the Dain City Economic Cluster Concept Plan the mixed-use block is currently comprised of five buildings (Buildings A, B, C, D and E) ranging in height from 2 to 4 storeys and are proposed to provide a diverse number of uses (refer to page 1 of **Appendix A**). Details of each building as currently envisioned (but subject to change) are provided below:

Building A and Building B

Building A and Building B are on the prominent street edge of the mixed-use block fronting Canal Bank Street. These buildings are designed to be 3 and 4 storeys tall. Building A is one of the tallest buildings on site and will step down to 3 storeys adjacent to Building B which will also be 3 storeys and may step down to 2 storeys to respond to the adjacent residential uses.

Building A *(refer to page 2 of* ***Appendix A****)*

Building A is proposed to provide space for retail and services to support the local community as well as visitors to the area. It will also support a small amount of office space on the upper floors.

We have proposed uses that support the recreational function of the future Canal Bank Park and existing Welland Recreational Canal, such as bicycle rental and repair, destination retail including water sport equipment rental and running equipment. In addition, uses to support the community and Economic Cluster are proposed including a Day Care Centre, adjacent to the stormwater management pond block, and additional destination retail such as medical devices, office supplies and dance wear. Professional offices are also intended within this building including the opportunity to provide co-working or shared office space.

In addition, a gallery, event space or boutique hotel may also locate within Building A as these uses would benefit from sightlines to the canal and/or stormwater management pond.

It is anticipated that the proposed uses will have differing demands for parking, as the professional offices will require daytime parking, the day care centre will require parking for drop-off and pick-up, and the retail uses will generate low and slow demand for parking at all hours of operation. For this reason, these uses have been placed together in Building A, and it is proposed that the uses share parking.

Building B *(refer to page 3 of* ***Appendix A****)*

Building B could support uses such as service-based retail and retail for the local community (such as a convenience store, coffee shop and other grab and go retailers). Professional offices are also intended within this building. Lastly, restaurant uses are proposed on the ground floor with direct access to possible patio fronting the park and on the second floor with a rooftop patio with views overlooking the canal. Restaurants are meant to serve residents, visitors, and 9-5 office employees.

In addition, as with Building A, a gallery, event space or boutique hotel may also locate within Building B as these uses would benefit from sightlines to the canal and/or stormwater management pond.

Certain uses in Building B will generate more parking demand during the day (professional offices) while others will generate parking need in the evening or during lunch for office workers and other onsite employees (restaurant), therefore it is proposed that these uses share parking. The service-based retail and retail uses are anticipated to generate low and slow demand for parking at all hours of operation and should be shared with each other.

Building C *(refer to page 4 of* ***Appendix A****)*

Located further east and central to the mixed-use block is a proposed 2 storey bank in Building C. Although 2 storey banks are not common they are emerging as a better use of space. An alternative is a single storey bank with ancillary uses on the second and/or third floor. Uses that compliment a bank may include insurance, real estate or mortgage brokers. It is anticipated that these businesses would serve the local community including residents and local businesses.

It is anticipated that a bank would generate a need for parking at a low and slow rate. Since this building is standalone, parking should be provided adjacent to the use and may be shared with other adjacent uses.

Building D *(refer to page 4 of* ***Appendix A****)*

Building D is located in the northeast corner, adjacent to future residential or a future school site and uses that directly service the residential and school community are proposed. It is anticipated that Medical Offices (doctor, dentist, therapy, hearing specialist etc.),and health related retail (pharmacy, optician etc.) will occupy the first floor. Uses that are supported by the adjacent school site could occupy the second floor. These uses may include tutoring, afterschool programs, private schools etc. We have also proposed commercial schools within this building (dance, karate, driving, art, music etc.).

It is anticipated that the medical offices and health related retail will generate parking demand during the day and on weekends. The commercial schools will require parking in the evenings and on weekends. As such, it is proposed that these uses share parking due to differing peak parking demands times.

Building E *(refer to page 5 of* ***Appendix A****)*

Building E is located in the southeast corner of the Dain City Economic Cluster, adjacent to the future stormwater management pond and the existing woodlot (which is to be preserved). Given its screened location, higher building height (3 – 4 storeys) and less service-based uses are proposed including a self-storage building. The self-storage building is meant to serve existing or new residents in Dain City and would also support small businesses and light industrial uses like custom workshop (metal fabrication, upholstery, and furniture) and small-scale warehouse

(plumbing, HVAC, electrical and building maintenance) also permitted within Building E. The latter uses will serve the community by supporting building renovations or improvements, new construction, design and development and other construction related uses. This building may also provide space for animal care and grooming such as a veterinary clinic, grooming etc. Lastly, this building would be suitable for supportive professional offices related to the workshop or warehouse uses, including small office for trades who commonly work off site such as a plumbing, HVAC, or electrical business. It is anticipated that these uses will not be obnoxious and will not require storage yards in order to be compatible with other existing and proposed uses. Light industrial uses will be controlled through standards proposed in the site-specific zoning by-law amendment included as part of this application.

These uses have been combined in one building to maximize shared benefits between the uses. The self-storage use has minima intermittent parking demands and fills a void often felt in new and established communities. The workshop, warehouse and professional office uses will generate parking demands during the 9-5 workweek. For this reason, parking is proposed to be shared.

Conclusion

The proposed land use change for the Dain West subdivision provides for up to 870 residential dwellings, a mixed-use block, an institutional site, as well as supportive community uses including parks, open space and a stormwater management pond block. The proposed land use change from employment to the mix of uses outlined above provides a positive change for the area. The enclosed strategy for providing space for a minimum of 800 jobs to be provided on site has been carefully considered, and the block plan has been strategically designed to ensure a functional and thriving Dain City Economic Cluster. The mixed-use block will drive employment opportunities to the area as well as provide a destination for community members and visitors to Dain City.

APPENDIX A:

CONCEPT PLAN

- DAIN CITY -
ECONOMIC CLUSTER

BUILDING C
Bank & Related Uses

BUILDING B
Grab & Go Retail,
Restaurants,
Professional Offices

BUILDING A
Destination Retail,
Daycare, Professional
Offices

BUILDING D
Medical Offices &
Commercial Schools

BUILDING E
Animal Care, Employment
& Ancillary

BUILDING A

Day Care Centre, Gallery, Bicycle Sales and Repair Shop, Watersport and Wintersport sales and Rentals, Educational Establishment, Home Furnishing Establishment, Laboratories, Pet Care Establishment, Pet Shop, Veterinary Clinic, Office, Laundromat, Professional Office, Athletic/Fitness Establishment, Small Scale Manufacturer Showroom, Co-working Space.

BUILDING B

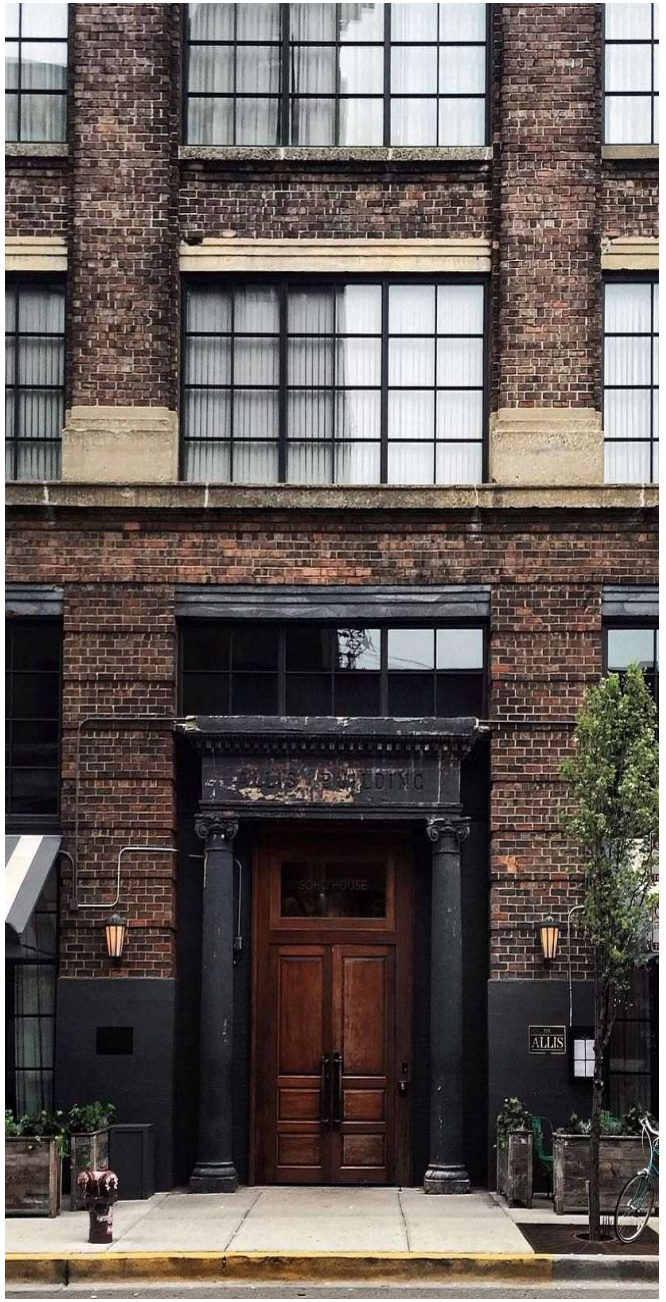
Restaurant, Coffee Shop, Grab & Go Retail, Gallery, Boutique Hotel, Event Space, Service Commercial (hair salon, nail salon, spa, barber shop, massage therapy), Convenience Store, Dry Cleaning Shop, Rooftop patio, Specialty Shops, Educational Establishment, Office, Professional Office.

BUILDING C&D

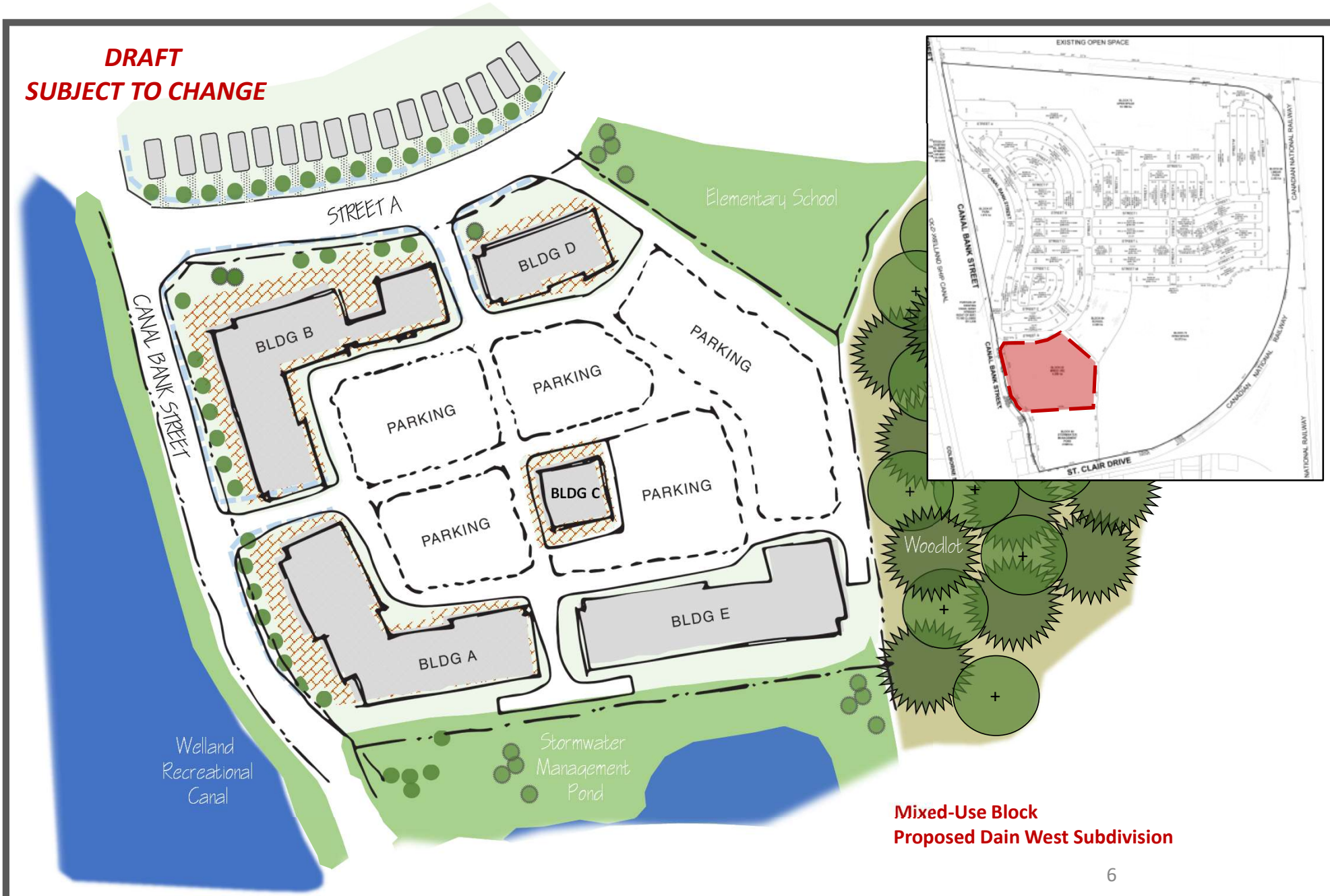
Bank, Mortgage Broker, Real Estate Offices, Insurance Provider, Financial Establishment, Medical Offices (doctor, dentist, specialist, therapist, optometry), Health Related Retail (pharmacy, medical devices, optician), Tutoring, After School Programs, Private School, Commercial Schools (Dance, Karate, Yoga, Art, Driving, Music).

BUILDING E

Veterinary Clinic, Pet Care Establishment, Pet Shop, Custom Workshops (fabrication, upholstery, furniture), Small Scale Warehousing (plumbing, electrical and HVAC supplies), Mini Storage, Self-Storage, Ancillary Retail, Professional Offices, Educational Establishment (trade school).



DRAFT
SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Mixed-Use Block
Proposed Dain West Subdivision

DRAFT
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SITE STATISTICS:

Building A (3-4 Storeys)	85,000 sqft
Building B (3-4 Storeys)	90,000 sqft
Building C (2-Storeys)	10,000 sqft
Building D (2-Storeys)	40,000 sqft
Building E (3-4 Storeys)	60,000 sqft
TOTAL	285,000 sqft

Mixed-Use Block
Proposed Dain West Subdivision