NORTHWEST WELLAND

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

August 2020

SGL
Planning & Design Inc.

SGL PLANNING & DESIGN INC.

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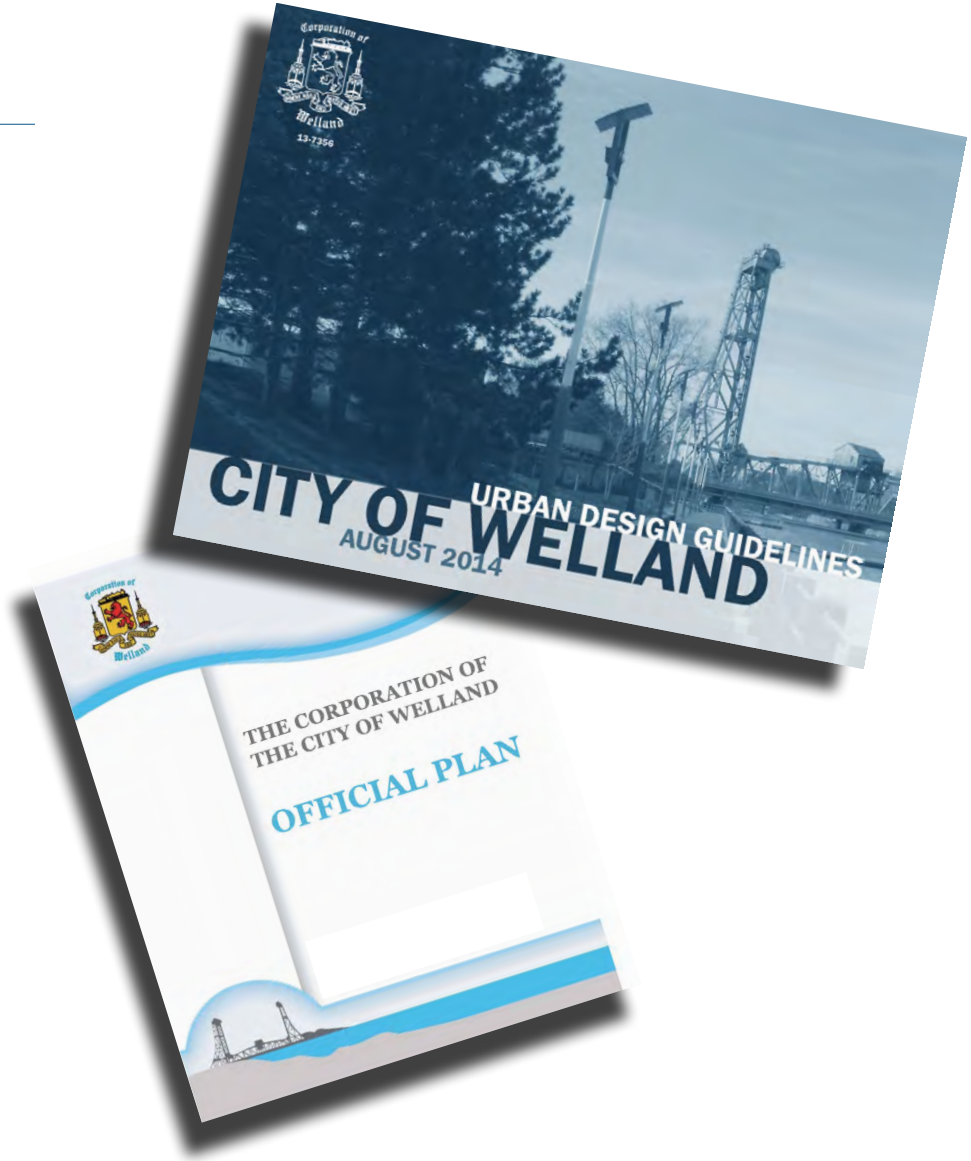
1 INTRODUCTION

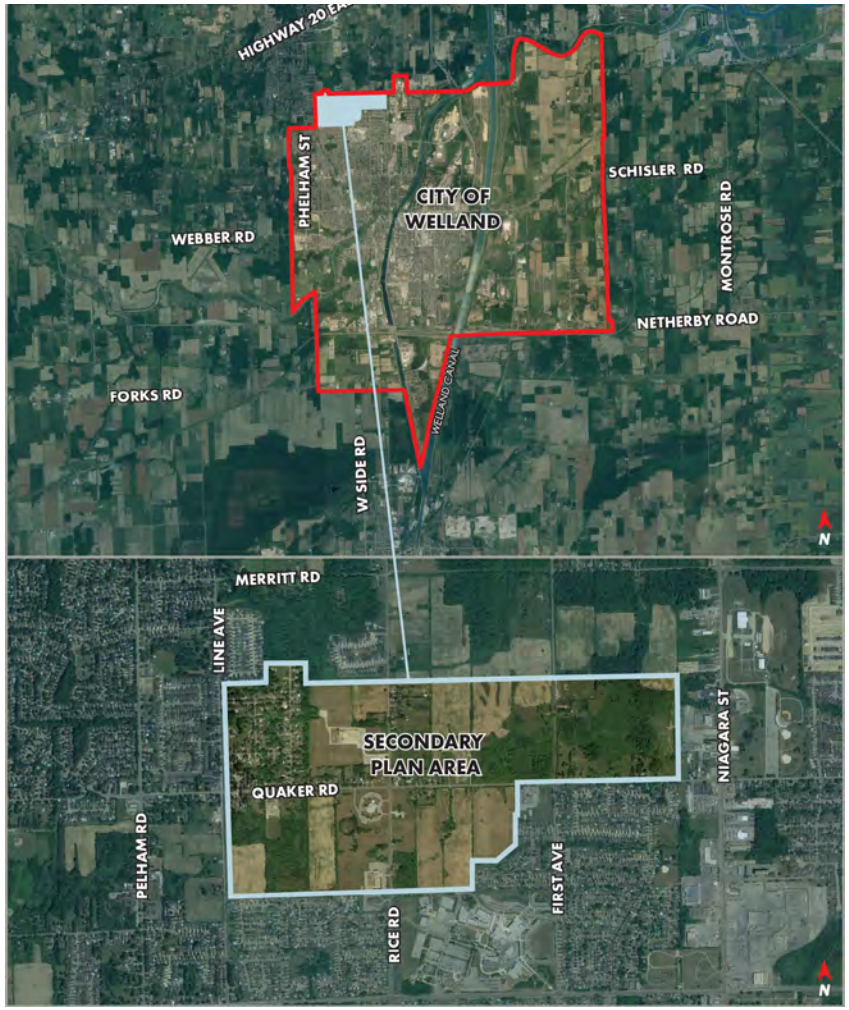
1.1 PURPOSE

The Northwest Welland Secondary Plan Area is intended to accommodate future urban growth within the City through designated Greenfield Area development as well as infill development in the Built Up Area. The Northwest Welland Urban Design Guidelines (the Guidelines) support the vision and objectives of the Secondary Plan included within the Welland Official Plan and are intended to provide further direction to help guide design and development within Northwest Welland.

These Guidelines are an addendum to the City of Welland's existing city wide Urban Design Guidelines dated August 2014 (the City-wide Guidelines). The Guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the City-wide Guidelines and provide further design direction specific to areas within the Secondary Plan to establish a design framework that encourages the creation of a successful and sustainable urban community. The policies of the Secondary Plan must also be referenced when proposing development.



1 INTRODUCTION



Northwest Welland Location and Surrounding Context

1.2 LOCATION

The Northwest Welland Secondary Plan Area covers approximately 190 hectares within Welland's Designated Greenfield area along Quaker Road, and is generally bound by:

- the Town of Pelham and City of Thorold to the north;
- the Niagara College Welland Campus to the south;
- the rear lot lines of properties abutting Niagara Street to the east; and
- Line Avenue and Clare Avenue to the west.

With the exception of existing low density residential areas and a few institutional buildings, the Secondary Plan Area consists almost entirely of agricultural land to be developed and a natural heritage system that is to be protected and maintained.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.3 GUIDELINE STRUCTURE

This document is organized to provide guidance for each community structure element of the Northwest Welland Secondary Plan. This includes the plan's established and new greenfield residential low rise neighbourhoods, new medium density residential areas, the mixed use node, as well as parks, trails, and the natural heritage system.

Each of these different sections within the Guidelines describes the vision and intent of each community structure element and outlines a series of guidelines that direct site planning, built form, access, and landscape design within each area. Where applicable, each section also directs which sections of the City-wide Guidelines should also be referenced.

Supporting illustrations and photographs shown throughout this document demonstrate examples of how the Guidelines can be applied and are not intended to exclude other designs that meet the intent of each community structure element within Northwest Welland.

1	**INTRODUCTION:** Describes the structure and purpose of the Guidelines and introduces the design context, vision, and objectives for Northwest Welland.
2	**COMMUNITY STRUCTURE:** Provides an overview of the community structure elements of the plan and outlines how the plan is envisioned to develop as the area evolves.
3	**LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL:** Provides design direction for low density residential areas.
4	**MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL:** Provides design direction for medium density residential areas.
5	**MIXED USE:** Provides design direction for the development of the mixed use node.
6	**PARKS, TRAILS, & THE ENVIRONMENT:** Provides direction for the development of parks and trails, and the design of development adjacent to, and surrounding, the natural heritage system.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.4 VISION

Over time, Northwest Welland is envisioned to evolve into a complete community that will accommodate future growth and development in a manner that respects the existing character and built form of the area, as well as the natural environment.

New low density residential areas will develop as extensions of existing established neighbourhoods within the community, and new medium density residential growth will serve to intensify Quaker Road to the east of Rice Road, providing for a more walkable, transit supportive community close to parks, trails, and schools.

The area's centralized mixed use node located at the intersection of Quaker Road and Rice Road will provide intensified residential and commercial growth to help achieve a balanced community where residents can live, work, learn, and play.

1.5 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. **Protect** and **enhance** natural heritage features, areas, and corridors.
2. Promote a **continuous** and **connected** open space system.
3. Cultivate a **unique** and **inclusive** community identity while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding built and natural environment.
4. Develop a **compact**, **safe**, **connected**, **walkable,** and **diverse** public realm.
5. Provide a **balanced** road network supportive of active transportation and public transit.
6. Establish **appropriate** built form through **compatible** and **visually interesting** architectural styles and designs.

2 COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

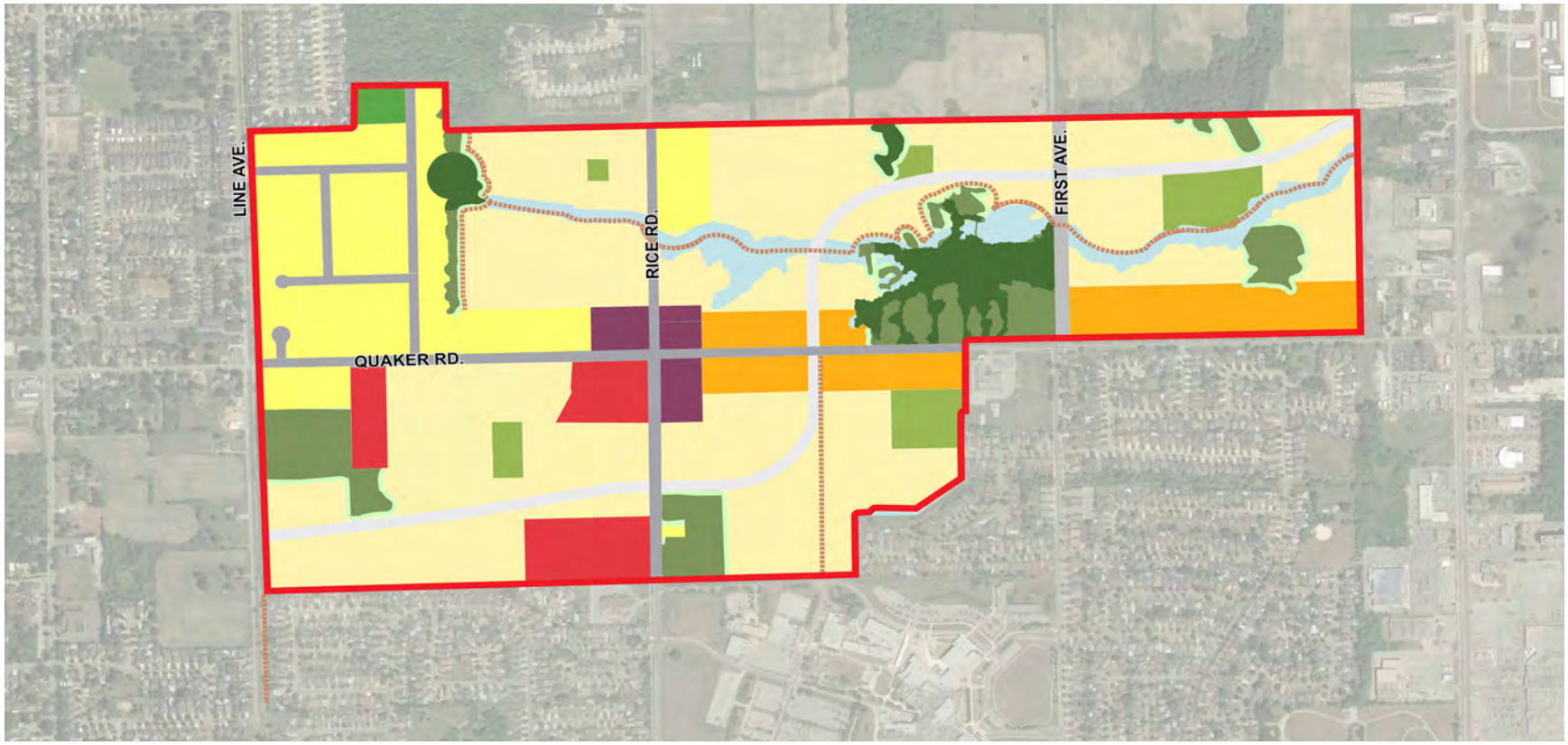
The Northwest Welland plan introduces a mix of low and medium density residential development, integrated to respect the area's existing natural heritage system, as well as a mixed use node located at the core of the Secondary Plan Area. This node is intended to foster a vibrant public realm, provide access to daily needs for the community, and accommodate the highest densities of the area.

An integrated trail system spans across the Secondary Plan Area, acting as a spine for active transportation, with access to the natural heritage system and parks to the north, and to Niagara College to the south. It is the intent that sidewalks, multi-use paths, and bike lanes be integrated as part of the streetscape design for Quaker Road, Rice Road, and First Avenue.

A number of new neighbourhood parks are located within walking distance from all new residential areas, two directly adjacent to natural heritage features, one located to the south of the medium density residential area, one located within a low density neighbourhood, and one central park located adjacent to an easterly school site. The area's existing institutional and school sites provide educational and employment opportunities for the area and should be maintained.

Each community structure element of the secondary plan should follow the vision, intent, and specific guidelines of each section provided throughout this document to follow.

2 COMMUNITY STRUCTURE



Northwest Welland Secondary Plan Community Structure

3 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

3.1 VISION & INTENT

Low density residential neighbourhoods make up the largest part of Northwest Welland and are intended to include a full range of low density residential development including single detached, semi-detached, duplex and triplex dwellings, as well as townhouses. Existing residential areas should continue to evolve and mature as modest infill and intensification occurs, and new neighbourhood areas on vacant and designated lands are intended to develop as extensions of existing residential areas, building on the existing character and identity of these areas.

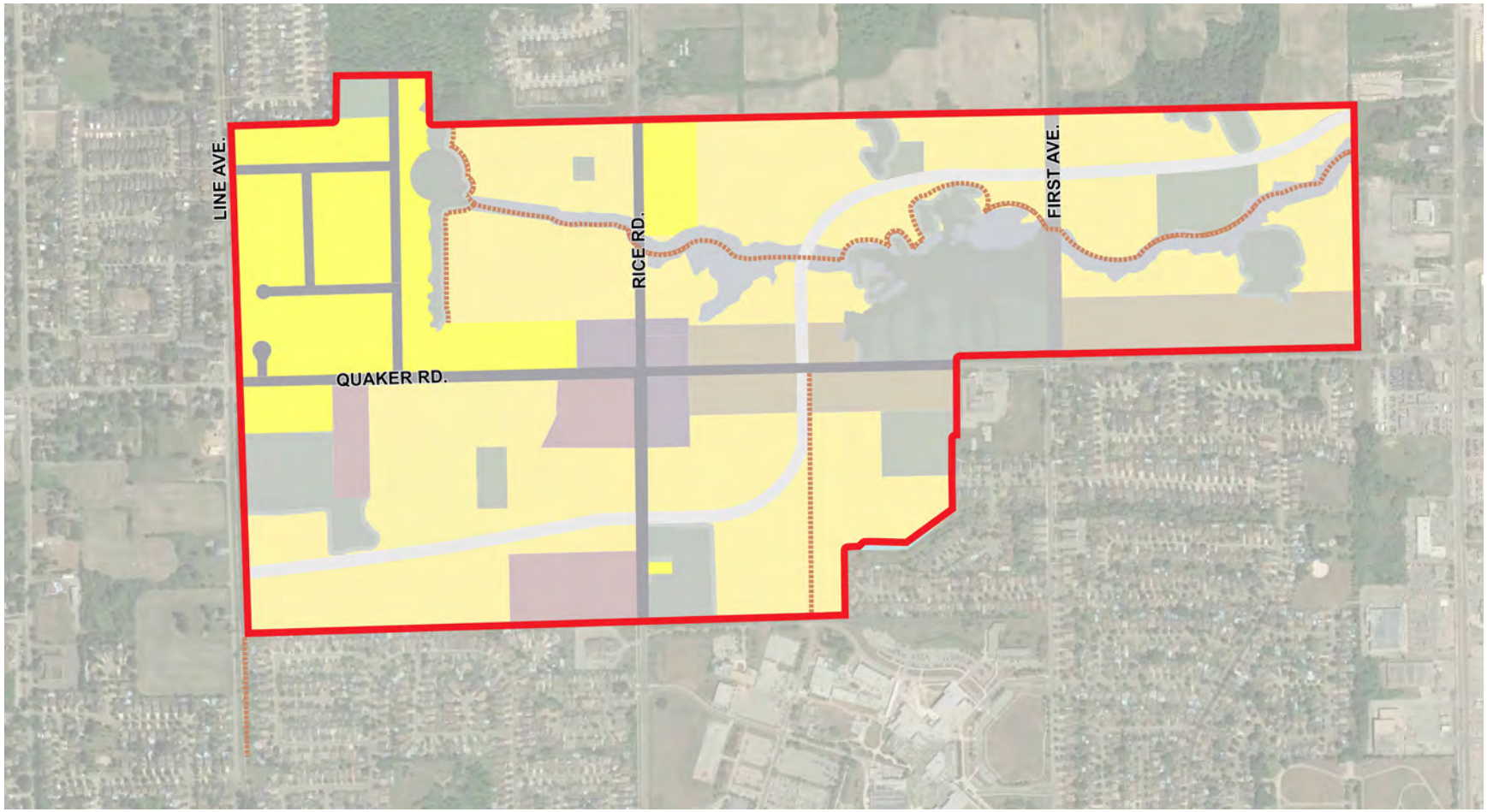
The density and design of new residential development should be planned to respect surrounding land uses and the existing character of surrounding neighbourhoods, taking into consideration appropriate transitions in height, massing, setbacks and built form details.

3.2 CITY-WIDE GUIDELINES

The City-wide Guidelines currently provides thorough direction for the development of low density residential built form within Welland's neighbourhoods. In addition to the guidelines outlined in this section below, the following sections of the City-wide Guidelines should be referenced when proposing development within areas designated as Existing Low Density Residential and Greenfield Low Density Residential within Northwest Welland:

- **Site Planning Guidelines:** **3.1.2.1** Low Density
- **Building Design:** **4.2.2** Residential Areas
- **Service Areas:** **4.3.2** Residential Areas; and
- **Landscape Guidelines:** **4.4.1** Residential Areas.

3 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL



Low Density Established Residential **Low Density Greenfield Residential**

Northwest Welland's Low Density Residential Areas

3 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

3.3 SITE PLANNING GUIDELINES

- Low density residential dwellings are encouraged to front onto public streets, trails, parks, and the natural heritage system. Dwellings should not back onto any of these elements, and alternatives such as rear laneways, single loaded streets, and double fronted lots are encouraged.
- Where backlotting onto parks, trails, or the natural heritage system is unavoidable, the façade of the dwelling facing the feature should be designed to match or exceed the quality of the front façade.
- Well designed garages should complement dwellings and improve the quality of streets and lanes. Their design should be coordinated with the main dwelling through similar massing, colours, materials, windows, and entrances.
- Dwellings located along arterial or collector roads, including Quaker Road, Rice Road and First Avenue should be sited to front the street. Vehicular access to individual dwelling units from these roads should be provided from a rear lane or public street behind the dwellings.

Dwellings should front onto parks and public streets and are encouraged to be accessed from rear laneways

Lane accessed garages help minimize the impact of vehicles within the public realm and should be well articulated to enhance the lane

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

4.1 VISION & INTENT

New medium density residential growth within Northwest Welland will serve to intensify Quaker Road to the east of Rice Road, which will function as a connective spine leading to and from the future mixed use node located at Quaker Road and Rice Road.

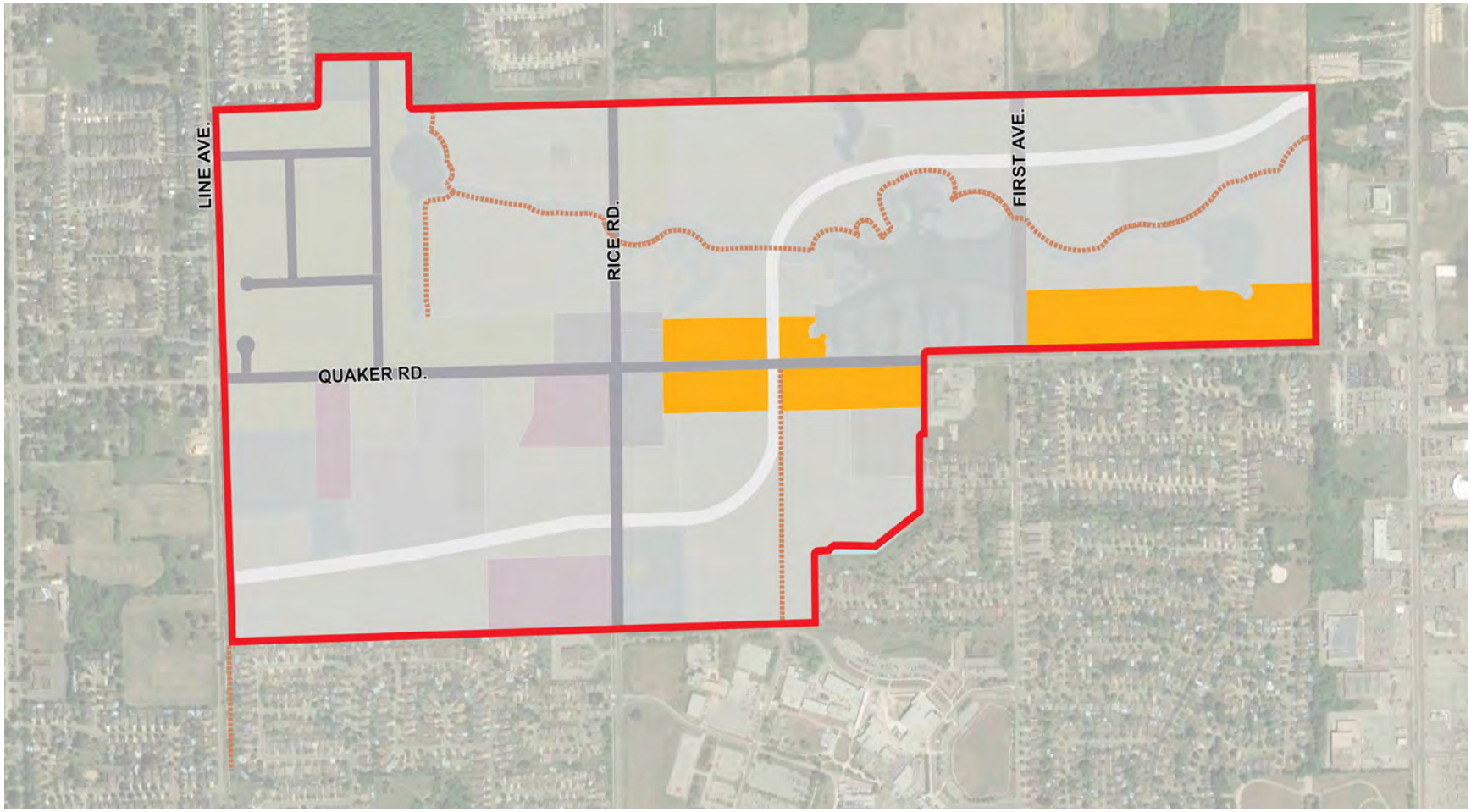
Medium density development in the form of townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings is intended to support a more walkable, transit supportive community close to parks, trails, and schools. Development should be designed to animate the street edge and provide for a safe and comfortable public realm.

4.2 CITY-WIDE GUIDELINES

In addition to the following guidelines specific to lands designated as Medium Density Residential in Northwest Welland, the design and development of these areas should also follow direction provided in the following sections of the City-wide Guidelines, where applicable:

- **Massing and Built Form:** **4.1.2** Residential Areas
- **Building Design:** **4.2.2** Residential Areas
- **Service Areas:** **4.3.2** Residential Areas; and
- **Landscape Guidelines:** **4.4.1** Residential Areas

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL



Medium Density Residential

Northwest Welland's Medium Density Residential Areas

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

4.3 SITE PLANNING GUIDELINES

- Dwellings should be oriented to front and define the street edge by siting them at or close to the minimum front yard setback to provide for pedestrian-friendly scale and a sense of public realm enclosure.
- Dwellings are encouraged to front onto trails, parks, and the natural heritage system. Dwellings should not back onto any of these elements, and alternatives such as rear laneways, single loaded streets, and double fronted lots are encouraged.
- Where backlotting onto parks, trails, or the natural heritage system is unavoidable, the façade of the dwelling facing the feature should be designed to match or exceed the quality of the front façade.
- Where located adjacent to a low density residential neighbourhood, buildings should be massed and oriented to provide an appropriate built form transition in order to maintain the low rise character and scale of the abutting streetscape and area.

Dwellings should front the street and form the edge of the public realm through setbacks, landscaping, and built form articulation

Common amenity areas are encouraged to be accessible from all units and framed by buildings that are sited to face these spaces

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- Common or shared outdoor amenity areas are encouraged between and within townhouse blocks, such as parkettes or other open areas where appropriate. These areas should be in a prominent location with exposure to sunlight, that is visible and easily accessible from all units.
- Dwellings should be designed and sited to create comfortable living conditions with access to sunlight, privacy, natural ventilation, and open space areas.

Accessible shared outdoor amenity areas should be highly visible and provide exposure to sunlight

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Building facades should be highly articulated, using massing features and architectural articulation that will creates an attractive streetscape

Individual units should be designed to complete the identity of the block and adjacent townhouse blocks should be compatible

4.4 BUILT FORM & BUILDING DESIGN

- Townhouses should be 3 to 4 storeys, and low-rise apartments may be developed up to 6 storeys in height, with the highest buildings located closest to the mixed use node and along Quaker Road in order to provide appropriate transitions to low density neighbourhoods.
- Building facades should be highly articulated and designed to create a positive streetscape appearance with attractive built form.
- A variety of compatible designs are encouraged between adjacent townhouse blocks within a streetscape.
- Within each development, coordination of massing features and architectural articulation is encouraged to foster a distinct identity. The design of individual units should be compatible with the overall identity of the building, while providing for distinct features that define each unit.

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- Dwellings along Quaker Road should be pedestrian scaled and designed to establish a harmonious main street streetscape appearance. This may be achieved through complementary, but not identical, massing, architectural detailing, and landscaping.
- For corner lot buildings and units, both street frontages should be addressed in an appropriate and consistent manner, with a similar level of architectural treatment on both sides. This is achieved through incorporating massing, wider end units, architectural detailing, windows, wall/roof line articulation, doors, and/or porches to animate the façade.

Dwellings should be designed to establish a continuous appearance between buildings along the street

All frontages should be architecturally addressed and animated through massing and articulation

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

4.5 VEHICULAR ACCESS & PARKING

- Driveways, garages, and parking areas should be designed to minimize their impact on streetscapes.
- Wherever possible, dwellings should integrate vehicular access and parking to the rear of the building.
- For dwellings located along arterial or collector roads, including Quaker Road and First Avenue, vehicular access is encouraged to be provided from a rear lane or public street behind the dwelling. Front driveway access for individual dwelling units will not be permitted from these roads.
- Well designed garages are encouraged to complement dwellings and improve the quality of lanes and streets.
- Where common parking areas are provided, they should be screened from surrounding residential areas and streetscapes through landscaping or built form features to mitigate safety and visual impacts.

Dwellings should integrate well articulated vehicular access and garages to the rear of the building that are appropriately screened

Rear garages should be paired and designed to compliment the main dwelling

4 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Paired driveways are encouraged and should be no wider than the garages they serve

Where front entrance garages are provided, they should be recessed into the building, with built form features above such as balconies that minimize their impact on the public streetscape

- On local streets, consolidated vehicular access points, paired driveways, and shared parking areas are encouraged in order to minimize the number of vehicle and pedestrian interactions and free up boulevard space for landscaping and on street parking.
- Where parking is located in front of a building, driveways should be no wider than the width of the garage to increase boulevard space for street trees and on-street parking opportunities and to minimize interactions between pedestrians and vehicles.
- Attached garages should be set behind or further back from the façade of a building. Entry features such as porches, front doors, or other architectural elements should be provided to reduce the visual dominance of the garage.
- For townhouse end units, driveways should be located away from the exterior side wall wherever feasible.

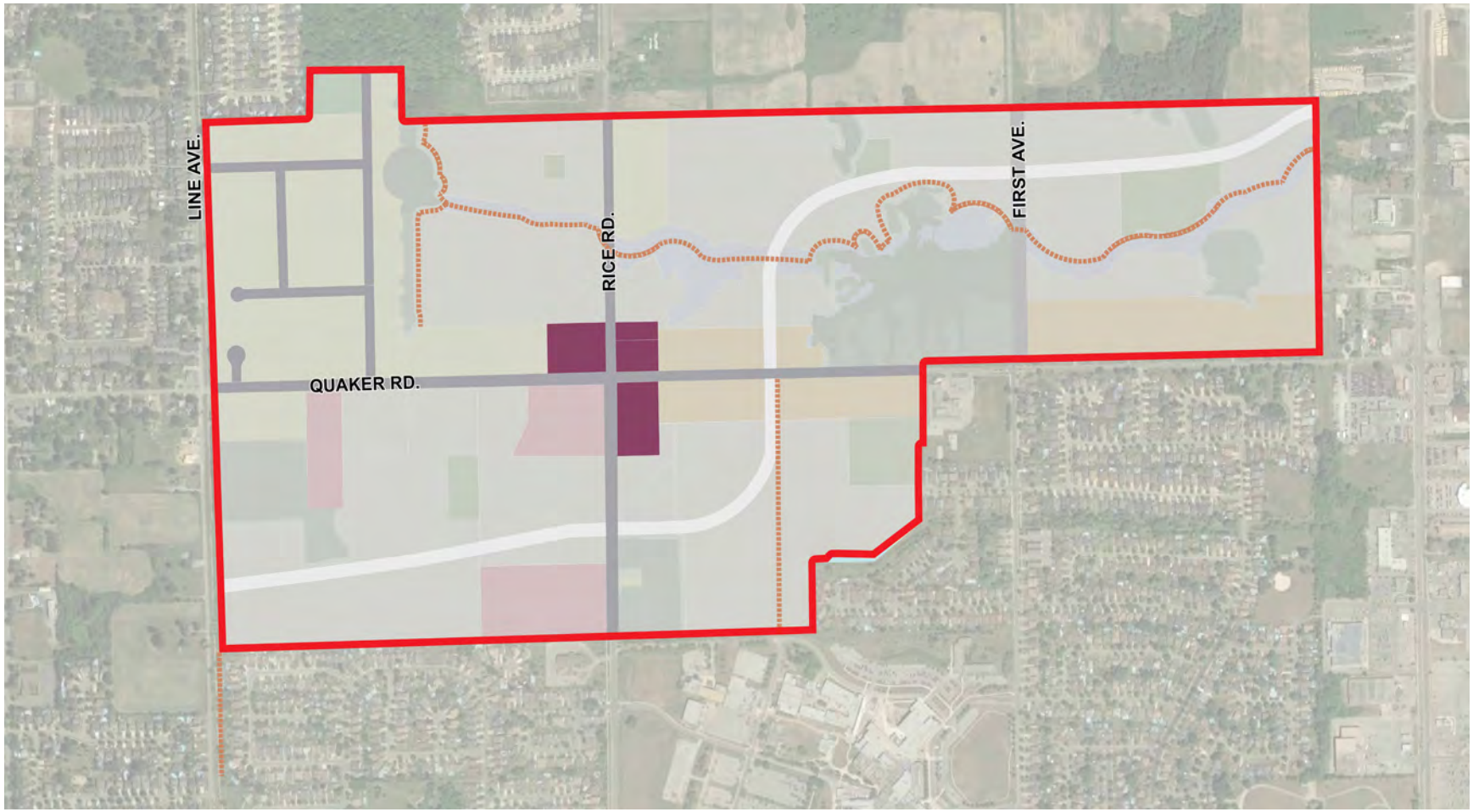
5 MIXED USE

5.1 VISION AND INTENT

Northwest Welland's centralized mixed use node located at the intersection of Quaker Road and Rice Road is envisioned to provide a variety of retail opportunities and residential housing options to help achieve a balanced community where residents can live, work, and play. Retail and service commercial uses should include a diversified mix of shopping facilities, small grocery stores, restaurants, cafes, and personal services. The components of this area should be designed and configured to provide an attractive and comfortable public realm experience in a pedestrian and transit oriented manner that contributes as positive visual presence in the community.

The node is envisioned to have a mix of building types including mixed use buildings and higher density residential development designed to foster intensive street-related activity that is supportive of walkability and transit usage. Sites should accommodate a mix of two or more land uses. The building forms may include a variety of townhouse types, low rise apartment buildings, live-work buildings, and/or pedestrian oriented commercial buildings. The following guidelines support the development of a livable and attractive mixed use node.

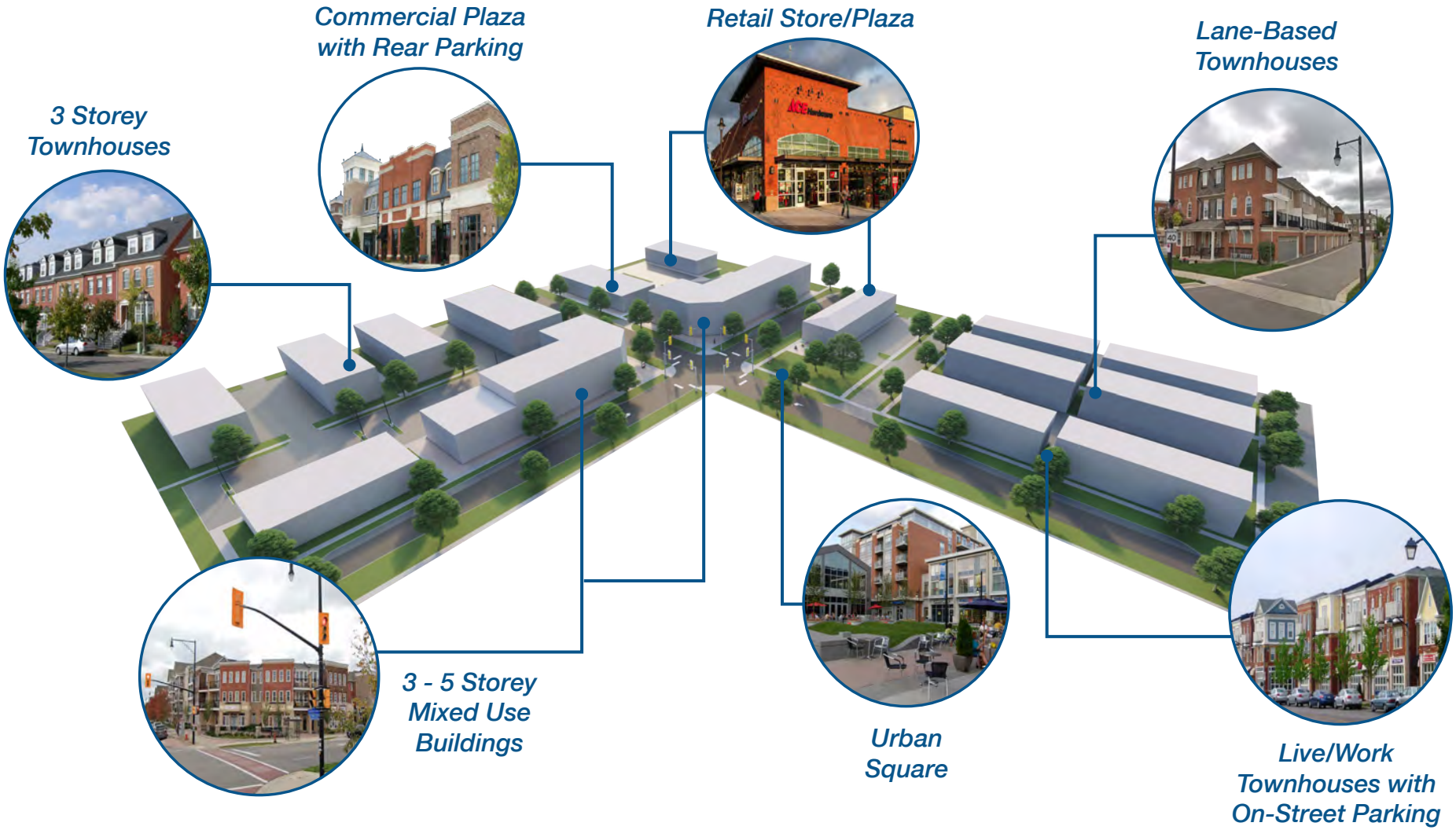
5 MIXED USE



Mixed Use

Northwest Welland's Mixed Use Node

5 MIXED USE



Example Mixed Use Node Structure and Elements

5 MIXED USE

5.2 SITE PLANNING GUIDELINES

- A mix of two or more uses should be integrated within a site, either within the same building or as separate buildings.
- Mixed use buildings should be located closest to the intersection of Quaker Road and Rice Road. Where stand-alone commercial or medium density residential buildings are proposed, they should be located furthest away from the intersection of Quaker Road and Rice Road within the node.
- Along the frontages of Quaker Road and Rice Road, buildings should be oriented towards the street, with minimal setbacks to create a strong street edge and comfortable public realm for pedestrians.
- Variation in setbacks between buildings and along building facades and the street may incorporate public open space, outdoor seating areas, patios, mid-block pedestrian walkways, and/or entrances.

A mix of medium density uses are encouraged within buildings that are oriented to provide for a strong edge along the pedestrian realm

5 MIXED USE

Outdoor patios, spill out retail areas, covered entrances, lighting, and displays help animate the streetscape

Buildings and sites should be pedestrian scaled and oriented to encourage walkability

- Where internal open spaces or plazas are provided, buildings should define the edges of these spaces through active windows and entrances and a well-articulated side facade that matches the front.
- Outdoor patios are encouraged to be located adjacent to the street to help activate the streetscape and foster social interaction. Where patios are considered, a minimum 3.5 metre setback from the property line should be provided.
- For buildings with active at-grade uses, a minimum 1.5 metre setback from the property line should be provided as a transition area to the building to provide space for spill-out retail, decorative displays, covered entrances, plantings, seating, high quality lighting, and signage.
- Sites should be designed to provide clear and distinct separation between vehicular and pedestrian traffic through landscape and street furniture buffers, as well as clear pedestrian routes and crossings across roads and driveways.
- Secure and accessible bicycle parking and routes should be integrated within development. Parking areas should be highly visible, located outside of main entrances and covered wherever possible.

5 MIXED USE

5.3 BUILT FORM & BUILDING DESIGN

- Mixed use buildings should range in height from 3 to 8 storeys and are encouraged to have active uses at the ground level such as retail, restaurant, and service commercial uses, with residential uses situated on the floors above.
- The height of commercial ground floors should be a minimum of 4.5 metres to provide sufficient retail space and flexibility in future building uses.
- Buildings should enhance the public realm through a harmonious and cohesive streetscape design, with complementary, but not identical, massing and architectural detailing, as well as canopies/awnings, window treatments, and colours.
- Buildings should be designed with high quality architecture in keeping with the character of the area by incorporating different colours and materials such as brick, natural stone, and wood.

The design of mixed use buildings should establish a cohesive main street appearance with sufficient heights and entrances for active at grade uses, and well-articulated residential floors above

Variation in decorative elements, signage, street furniture, and entrances help enhance and animate the public realm

5 MIXED USE

- Building facades fronting the street or public areas should incorporate large, well-proportioned clear areas of glazing to create active frontages and promote a sense of visual interaction between the building and public realm. A minimum of 70% glazing should be provided at the ground floor of a building's frontage, and a more residential scale of windows should be used for residential uses above.
- Buildings with long frontages should be designed to visually express individual commercial or residential units, or provide for the appearance of smaller units, through the use of façade articulation and distinct architectural detailing including entrance and window design, projecting or recessing wall surfaces, changes in material or plane, signage, lighting, and landscaping.

Facades should incorporate appropriate areas of glazing with distinct architectural unit detailing that provides visual interest to large buildings

5 MIXED USE

- Where residential uses are incorporated in mixed use buildings, separate entrances should be provided that are easily differentiated through the use of projecting or recessed surfaces, façade materials, awnings or canopies, and/or signage.
- For mixed use buildings, the transition from the first floor commercial base to second floor residential uses should be defined through architectural detailing such as cornices, signage, porches, and/or changes in materials or colours.
- For corner lot buildings and units, both street frontages should be addressed in an appropriate and consistent manner, with a similar level of architectural treatment on both sides. This will assist in animating both street facing facades and is achieved through incorporating changes in massing and architectural detailing.
- Utility and service facilities should be integrated within the overall design of buildings, either enclosed or appropriately screened from public view and private properties. Design should ensure that noise is attenuated, and pedestrian conflicts are mitigated.

Buildings should address all street frontages and provide defining elements that differentiate active at grade uses from residential floors

5 MIXED USE

Parking areas should be located behind buildings and are encouraged to incorporate pedestrian-scaled landscaping and lighting

The use of rear laneways frees up boulevard space for on-street parking, which should take the form of landscaped parking bays

5.4 VEHICULAR ACCESS & PARKING

- Parking areas should be located behind or between buildings. Where parking is located between buildings, a 3 metre landscaped area adjacent to the boulevard should be provided.
- Vehicular access, parking, and loading and servicing areas are to be located at the rear of buildings and are encouraged to be accessed from rear laneways or local roads in order to not disrupt the commercial pedestrian-oriented function of both Quaker Road and Rice Road.
- Parallel on-street parking provides convenient, short term access to public and private spaces and can improve the pedestrian realm at the street edge by providing a buffer to moving traffic. Parking bays are encouraged which include a curb-extension at the beginning and end of the parking area. These should be landscaped with street trees or low level ground cover and street furniture.

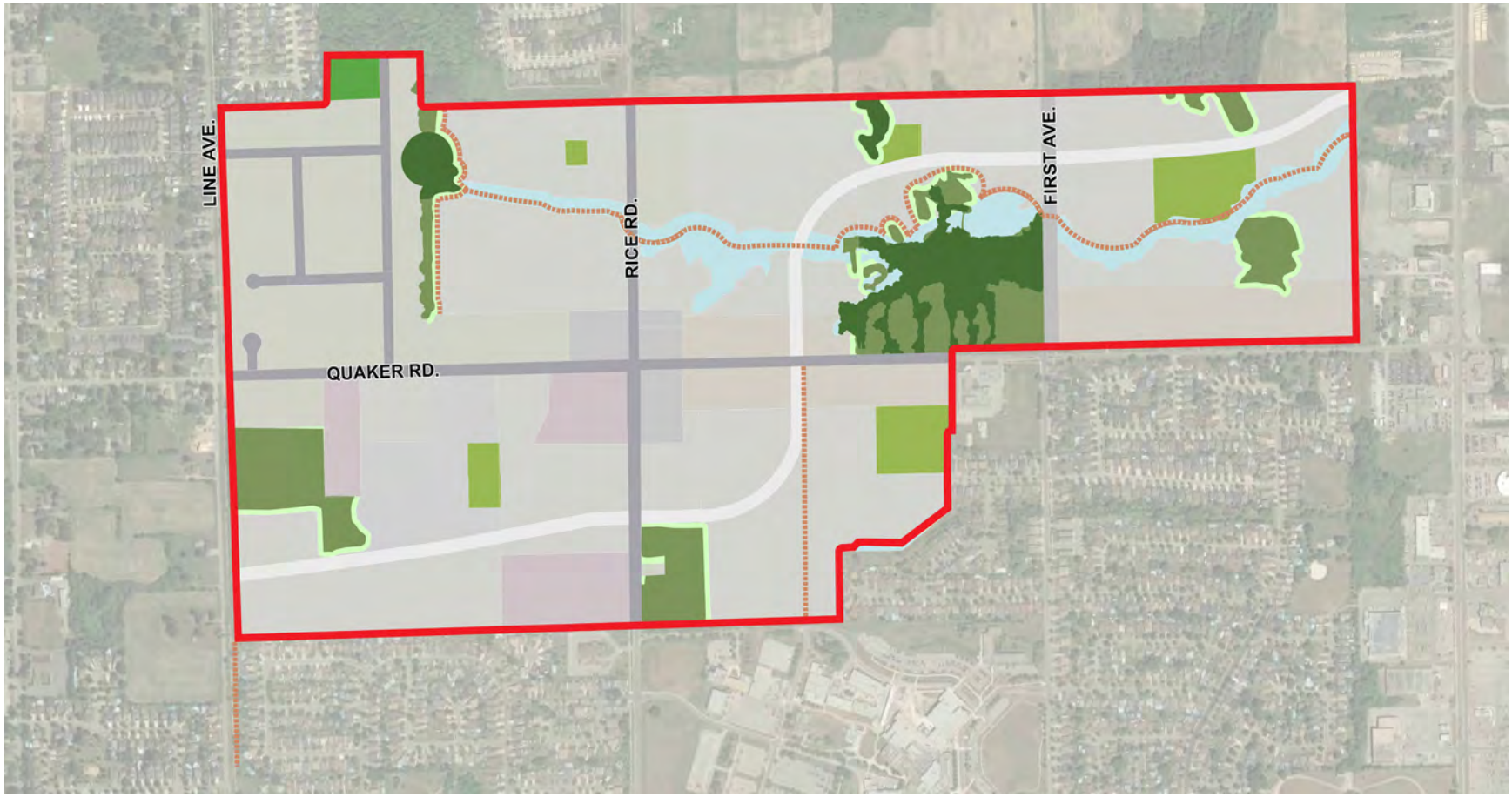
6 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT

6.1 VISION AND INTENT

As the community evolves, Northwest Welland's parks, trails, and integrated natural heritage system will contribute to the area as a valuable resource and important life quality element. The development of new neighbourhood parks and open spaces, as well as the enhancement of existing areas, should be designed to encourage recreation opportunities, provide access to nature within the community, and enhance the character of neighbourhoods. Where new development occurs adjacent to these areas, it should leverage this relationship by providing strong visual and physical links, while protecting and enhancing natural heritage features.

The planned community structure for Northwest Welland delineates both existing and proposed park areas, which should be developed as larger open space areas to serve new neighbourhoods. In addition to these neighbourhood parks, smaller parkettes should also be developed within the new neighbourhoods of Northwest Welland in order to support increased green space access for residents within a shorter walking distance than neighbourhood parks.

6 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT



Northwest Welland's Parks, Trails, and Natural Heritage System

6 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT

6.2 GUIDELINES

- Parks and open spaces should be designed as focal points for neighbourhoods. To maximize public access, views, and safety, the perimeter of these spaces should be bound mostly by local streets and buildings.
- Trails should be designed to accommodate a range of users and abilities and should be barrier free where appropriate, with multiple access points visible from the street or public areas. Pedestrian-oriented features should be provided such as plantings, seating, lighting, trash cans, and signage, at entrances and regular intervals throughout the network.
- New development should have a positive interface with the natural heritage system, both minimizing any adverse impacts and maximizing views and linkages though the appropriate placement of roads and the location, height, facades, and orientation of buildings located adjacent to natural areas.

Parks should be framed by strong built form edges and streets

The integration of trails and the road network, as well as the orientation of development, should provide views and access

6 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT

Views of, and access to, the natural heritage system should be provided from parks where possible

Neighbourhood parks should provide opportunities for unstructured play, public art, and social interaction

- The backlotting of buildings and parking areas onto parks, trails, and the natural heritage system is discouraged. Where backlotting is unavoidable, a publicly accessible pedestrian connection should be provided every 200 metres to connect to any trails or parks where they exist.
- Neighbourhood parks should provide opportunities for active and passive recreation for surrounding residents within a 5 to 10 minute walk (400 – 800 metre distance) and may include elements such as play structures, small recreational fields, tennis courts, informal playgrounds, seating, hard surface areas, shade trees, landscaping, lighting and pedestrian walkways.
- On-street parking along public streets should be provided adjacent to parks, and pedestrian and bicycle access should be clearly defined, along with secure bicycle parking areas.

6 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT

- In the development of new neighbourhoods, parkettes are encouraged to be located within a 200 to 400 metre walking distance (3 to 5 minutes) of the neighbourhood they serve. These smaller areas should be approximately 0.3 to 0.6 hectares in size and accommodate facilities such as play structures, open informal play areas, seating and shade opportunities, pedestrian pathways, and lighting.
- The development of one or more privately-owned publicly accessible urban squares is encouraged at the intersection of Quaker Road and Rice Road, to act as a central element of the mixed use node. This space is envisioned to provide an internal focal point for the area and function as a public gathering space.
- Commercial uses adjacent to urban square spaces are encouraged to be integrated and front upon the square, including patio extensions and retail windows, which should be easily accessible and highly visible to the public. The square should contain hard landscaping, seating amenities, landscaping, plantings, and public art.

Parkettes can accommodate play structures and informal play areas

Urban squares should provide additional opportunities for mixed use buildings to animate the public realm through large windows overlooking the areas, the extension of patios, seating, and public art

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