

Planning Justification Report

Southside Construction Management Ltd.

3234-3274 Wonderland Road South

City of London



April 28, 2023



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Zelinka Priamo Ltd., on behalf of Southside Construction Management Ltd., has submitted a Zoning By-law Amendment to the City of London relating to the lands known municipally as 3234-3274 Wonderland Road South (the “subject lands”) to expand the range of permitted uses on the lands.

The purpose of this Planning Justification Report is to evaluate the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment within the context of existing land use policies and regulations, including the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, The London Plan (the 2016 City of London Official Plan), and the City of London Zoning By-law Z.-1.

2.0 SUBJECT LANDS

The subject lands are located at the southeast corner of the Wonderland Road South and Bradley Avenue West intersection (Images 1-3). The subject lands are comprised of two rectangularly-shaped parcels with a total area of approximately 6.61ha; a frontage of approximately 164.6m; and, a depth of approximately 388.0m. The subject lands abut Bradley Avenue West to the north; a municipal drain (Pincombe Drain) to the east; commercial recreation uses to the south; and, Wonderland Road South to the west. A wide range of land uses surround the subject lands, including low and medium density residential, commercial, community facilities, shopping centers, light industrial, and open space.

The subject lands are currently vacant, but were formerly occupied by a car dealership. Vehicular access to the lands is provided in the form of two driveways from Wonderland Road South. Pedestrian sidewalks are located on both sides of Wonderland Road South and Bradley Avenue West, and cycling lanes are adjacent to the easterly and northerly property lines. The subject lands are serviced by existing public transit services (Route #12), providing connections throughout the City.

The subject lands are within the “*Shopping Area*”, “*Neighbourhoods*”, and “*Green Space*” Place Types along an “*Urban Thoroughfare*” street classification in The London Plan; are designated “*Wonderland Road Community Enterprise Corridor*”, “*Medium Density Residential*”, and “*Open Space and Environmental Review*” in the Southwest Area Secondary Plan (SWAP); and, are split-zoned, west to east, “*Associated Shopping Area Commercial (ASA8(17))*”, “*Light Industrial (LI1, LI7)*” with an *h-17* holding provision, “*Environmental Review (ER)*”, and “*Open Space (OS4)*” in the City of London Z.-1 Zoning By-law.

It is noted that only the westerly portion of the lands, bound by the *Shopping Area* Place Type and *ASA8(17)* zone (the “application lands”), are being considered for development and are to be subject to the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application (Figure 1). The remaining lands, zoned *h-17*, *LI1*, *LI7*, *ER*, and *OS4* are to remain unchanged. The application lands have an area of approximately 3.6ha; a frontage of approximately 164.6m; and, a depth of approximately 210.8m.

Image 1 – Subject lands (looking east from Wonderland Road South)

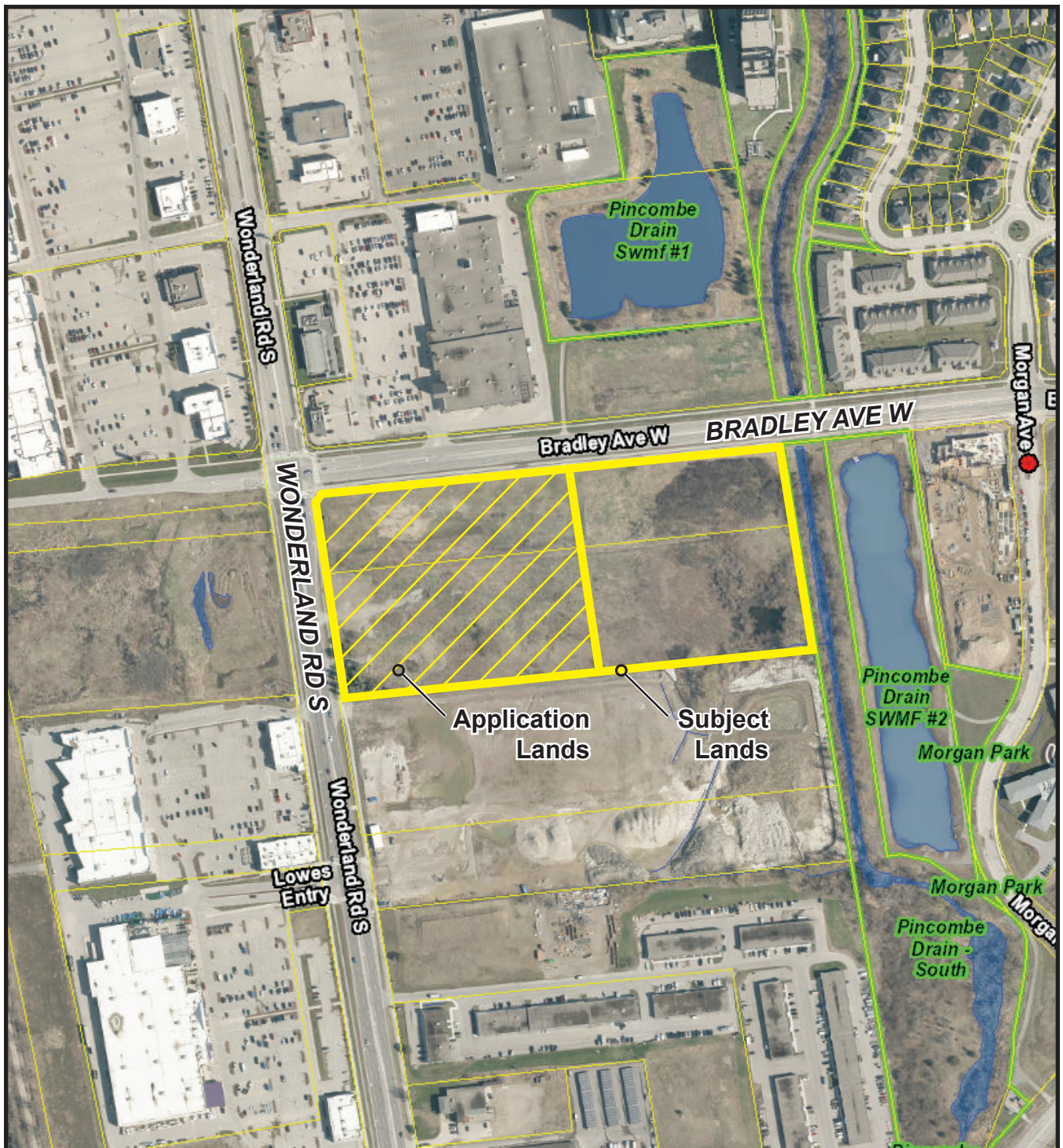


Image 2 – Subject lands (looking southeast from the Wonderland Road and Bradley Avenue intersection)



Image 3 – Subject lands (looking south from Bradley Avenue)





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FIGURE 1 - LOCATION

image retrieved from London City Map

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3.0 SURROUNDING LAND USE CONTEXT

The existing streetscapes within the immediate vicinity of the subject lands consist of a commercial setting with stand-alone commercial buildings, generally 1- to 2-storeys in height. The built-form of Wonderland Road South, both north and south of the subject lands, generally consists of small-scale commercial buildings positioned close to and facing the street frontage, often with a single row of parking between the building and the public right-of-way, with the large-format structures towards the rear with surface parking in-between (Images 4-7).

This portion of the Wonderland Road South right-of-way prioritizes the movement of vehicles. The vehicular portion of the right-of-way consists of two northbound lanes and two southbound lanes, with turning lanes where necessary and a central concrete median limiting access points to right-in/right-out only. Pedestrian sidewalks are provided on both sides of the right-of-way, and a signalized intersection at Wonderland Road South and Bradley Avenue provides for safe pedestrian movement. Some portions of the right-of-way have dedicated cycling infrastructure adjacent to the sidewalks.

The portion of the Bradley Avenue right-of-way, adjacent to the subject lands, consists of two eastbound lanes and two westbound lanes, with turning lanes where necessary and a central concrete median limiting access points to right-in/right-out only. Pedestrian sidewalks are provided on both sides of the right-of-way. Dedicated cycling infrastructure is located on the south side of the right-of-way only, adjacent to the sidewalk.

The subject lands are generally surrounded by commercial and residential uses. The land uses within a 400m and 800m radii of the subject lands, representing an approximate 5-minute and 10-minute walking distance respectively, are shown in Figure 2.

The existing land uses within a 400m, 5-minute walk radius of the subject lands are as follows:

North: Land uses north of the subject lands consist of a variety of commercial uses (i.e., retail stores and restaurants) and their associated surface parking areas.

East: Adjacent to the subject lands to the east is a municipal drain (Pincombe Drain). Further east are vacant lands zoned for high-density residential development.

South: The subject lands about vacant lands zoned for commercial recreation uses to the south. Located further south are light industrial uses and commercial uses (light industrial parks, storage units, and retail stores) and their associated surface parking areas.

West: Opposite the subject lands, on the west side of Wonderland Road South, are lands zoned for commercial uses which includes lands owned by the applicant.

Lands within an 800m, 10-minute walk radius are generally comprised of a range of low-rise commercial uses and residential uses, from low-density to high-density, such as single detached dwellings, townhouses, and apartment buildings. Some open space uses are located east and northeast of the subject lands. Vacant lands zoned *Urban Reserve* are located to the west of the subject lands.

Image 4 – Built-form along Wonderland Rd S (north of the subject lands)



Image 5 – Built-form along Wonderland Rd S (north of the subject lands)

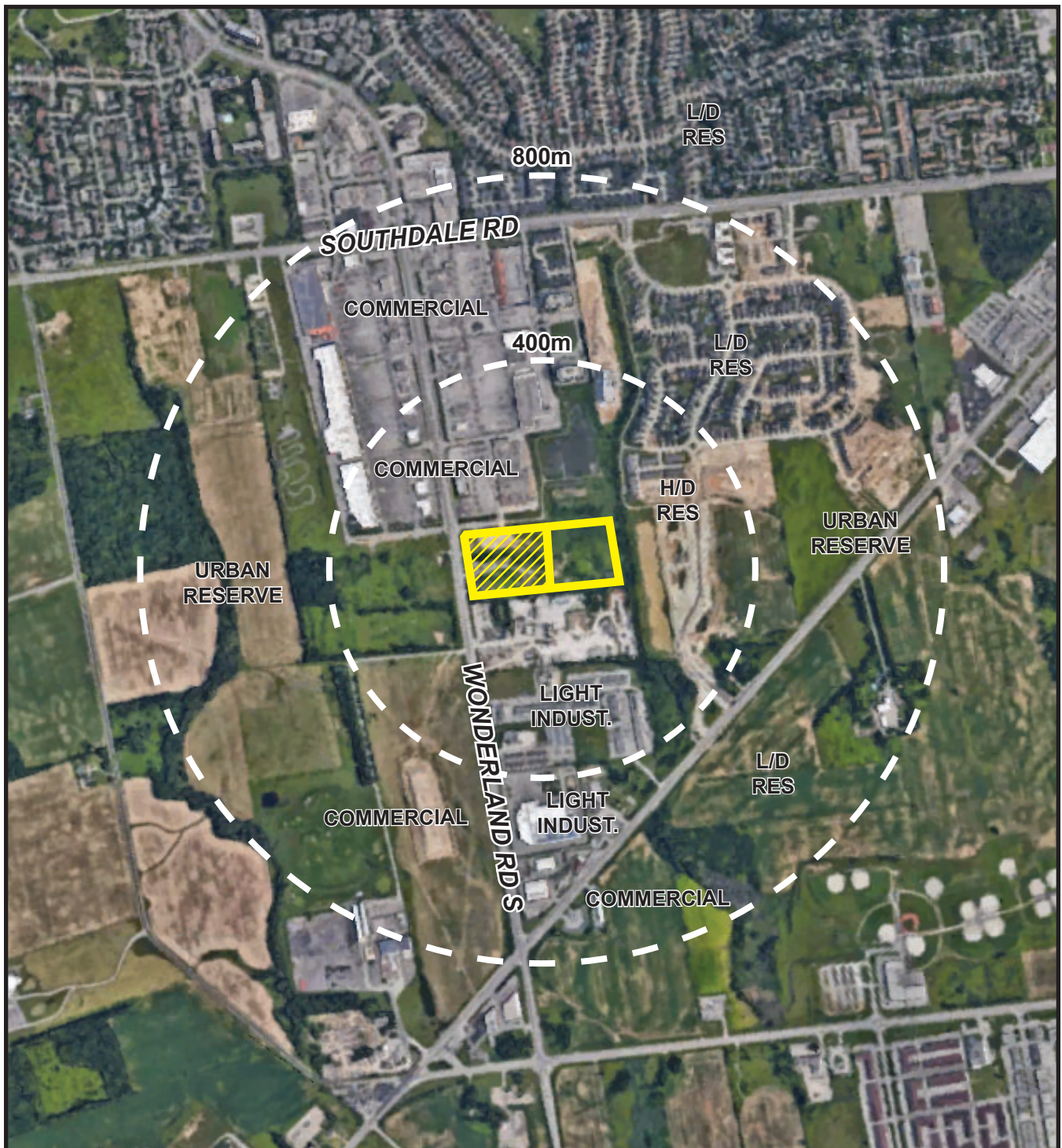


Image 6 – Built-form along Wonderland Rd S (south of the subject lands)



Image 7 – Built-form along Wonderland Rd S (south of the subject lands)





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FIGURE 2 - SURROUNDING CONTEXT

image retrieved from Google Earth

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4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

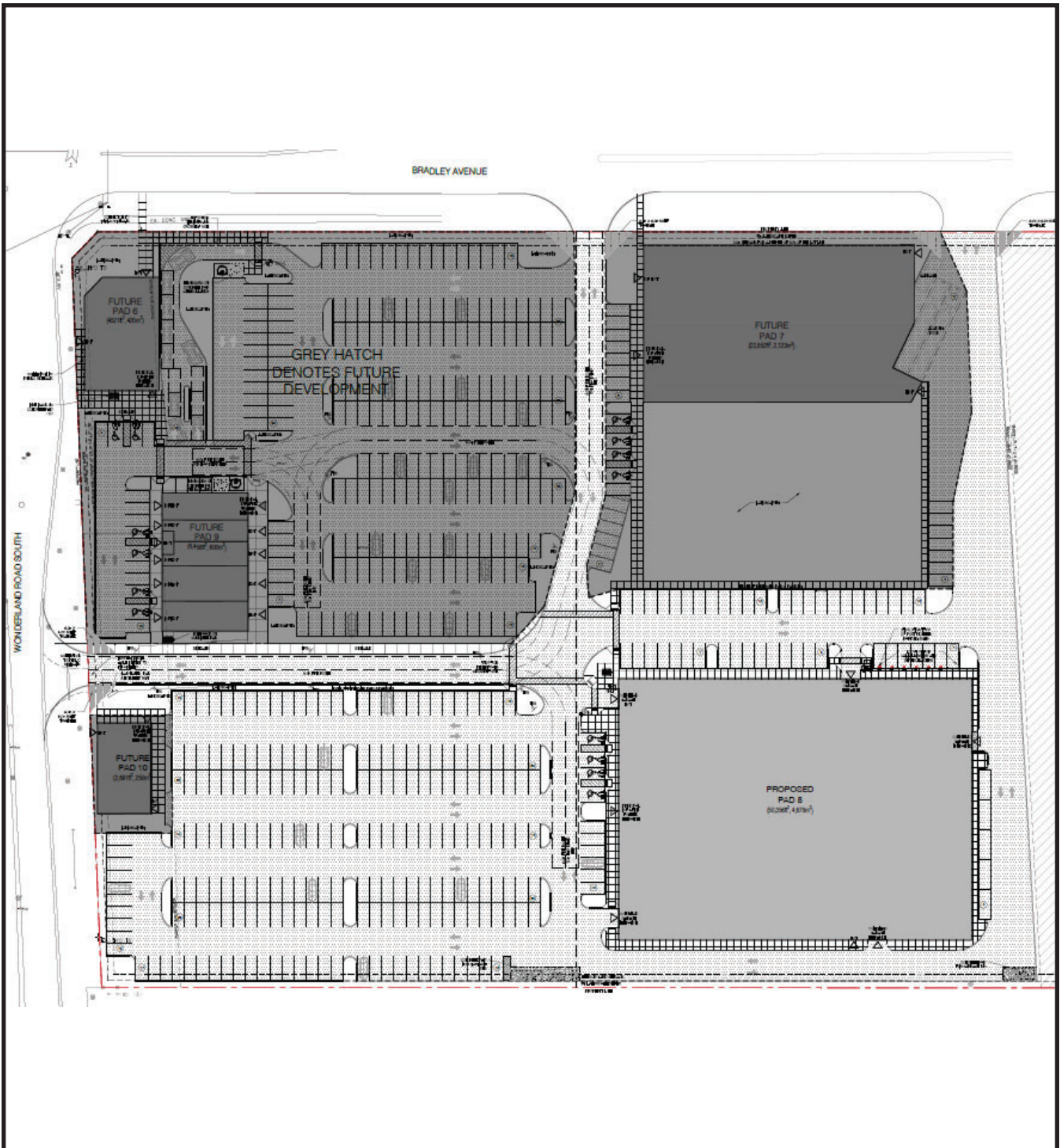
The proposed development of the application lands consists of five individual building pads and surface parking areas, as shown on the Conceptual Site Plan (Figure 3). The three westerly pads along the Wonderland Road South frontage, and the pad located at the northeast corner of the application lands, will host future commercial tenants. The pad located at the southeast corner of the application lands is intended to be occupied by an automobile sales and service establishment (a car dealership).

The application lands are proposed to be accessed by the existing driveway central to the Wonderland Road South frontage, which is anticipated to be updated to current and appropriate development standards. Two new access points are proposed from Bradley Avenue West. A total of 486 surface parking spaces are provided, including 14 barrier-free spaces and 4 loading spaces. A total of 40 short-term bicycle parking spaces are provided.

5.0 PROPOSED ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

To expand the range of permitted uses on the subject lands, a Zoning By-law Amendment is required. The application lands are proposed to remain zoned “ASA8(17)” with an additional special regulation to include “automobile sales and service establishment” as an additional permitted use.

At this time, no site-specific special regulations have been identified as necessary; however, site-specific special regulations may be identified through the planning process.



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FIGURE 3 - CONCEPT PLAN (excerpt)
prepared by Agar Architects

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6.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

The following sections of this report provide analysis on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application with respect to applicable policy and regulatory documents.

6.1 Provincial Policy Statement (2020)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act, “provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning” in order to ensure efficient, cost-effective development and the protection of resources. All planning applications, including Zoning By-law Amendment applications, are required to be consistent with these policies. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the PPS for the following reasons:

- The proposed amendment promotes efficient development expanding the range of permitted uses, providing an opportunity for intensification on underutilized lands within a settlement area, being within the built-up area of the City of London (1.1.1a, 1.1.3.1, 1.1.3.2a);
- There is sufficient existing infrastructure capacity to service the subject lands through full municipal services, avoiding the need for unjustified and uneconomical expansion (1.1.3.2b, 1.6.6.2);
- The subject lands are serviced by pedestrian sidewalks and cycling infrastructure via the Wonderland Road South and Bradley Avenue rights-of-way, supporting the use of active transportation; and, are situated along an existing transit route, supporting existing transit opportunities (1.1.3.2f);
- The existing zoning on the subject lands provides for appropriate regulations, including lot requirements, building setbacks, lot coverage, and parking that are established as appropriate for the subject lands. There are no anticipated risks to public health and safety from the proposed application (1.1.3.4); and,
- The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment provides an opportunity to establish a broader mix of uses on the subject lands to meet long-term employment needs (1.3.1a).

Given the above, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application generally conforms to the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement.

6.2 The London Plan (City of London Official Plan, 2016)

The London Plan is the policy framework for all planning in London. It emphasizes growing inward and upward to reduce the costs of growth, creating walkable communities, revitalizing urban neighbourhoods and business areas, protecting farmlands, and reducing greenhouse gases and energy consumption.

The application lands are identified as being within the “*Shopping Area*” Place Type (Figure 4) along an “*Urban Thoroughfare*” Street Classification (Figure 5) in The London Plan.

Section 871_ states that the *Shopping Area* Place Type will constitute an important part of London’s complete communities, providing commercial centres with a wide range of retail, service, business, recreational, social, educational, and government uses within an easy walking distance for neighbourhoods and that, over time, many of these centres will re-format to become mixed-use areas that include retail, service, office, and residential uses. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is generally consistent with the purpose and intent of The London Plan for the following reasons:

- The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment requests an expanded range of uses, allowing for flexibility in use and intensification on an underutilized site than can accommodate commercial uses (876_2);
- The proposed range of uses encourages the intensification of underutilized lands and takes advantage of existing services. As such, land is used more efficiently and the need for outward expansion is reduced (876_4, 880_);
- The proposed range of uses are compatible within the surrounding context of residential and retail uses (877_3); and,
- The proposed development places small-scale commercial uses towards the Wonderland Road Frontage with their primary entrances facing the street to create a pedestrian-oriented street wall, with larger-scale uses towards the rear of the application lands (879_3).

Given the above, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the planned function of the *Shopping Area* Place Type.



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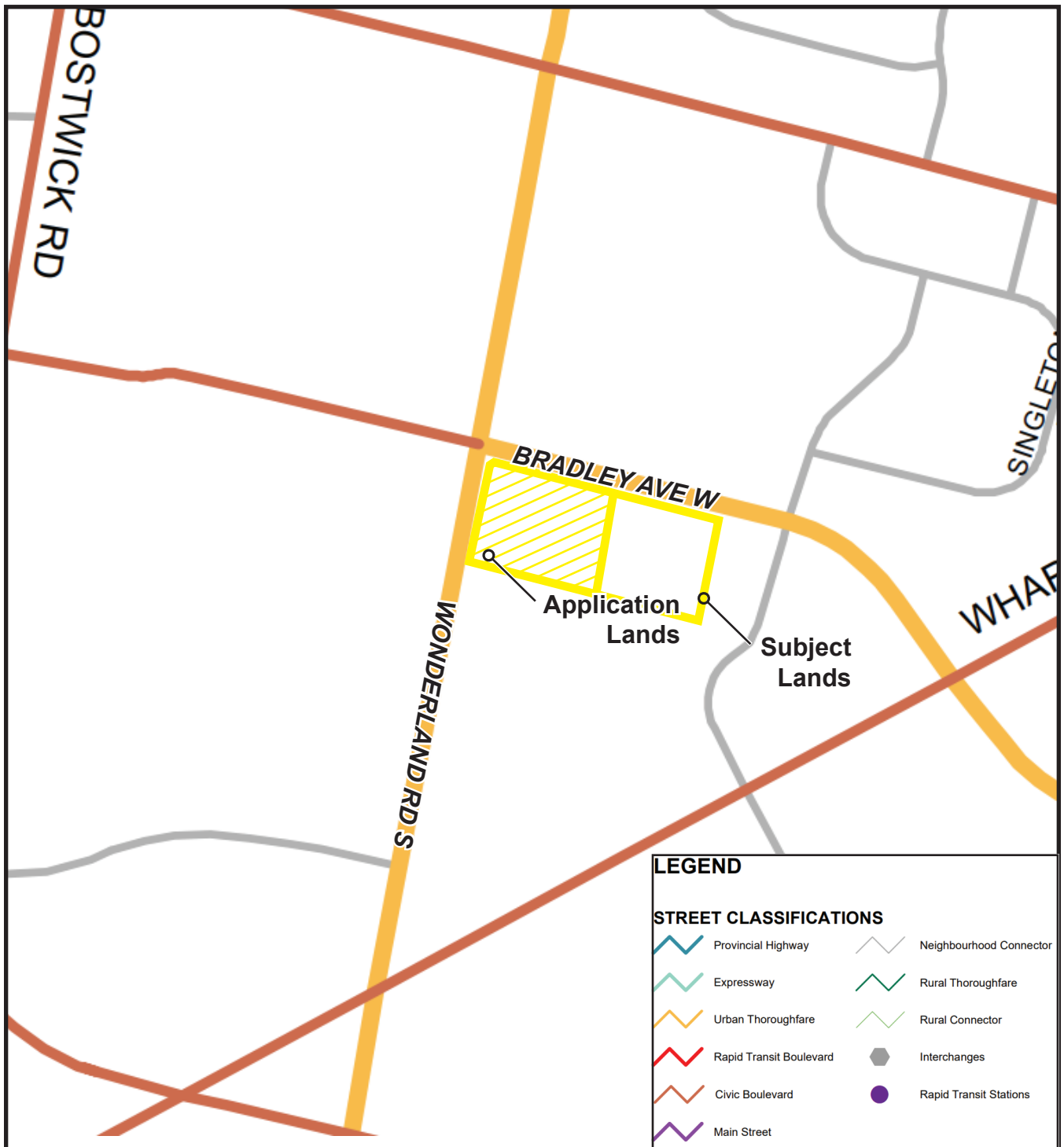
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FIGURE 4 - THE LONDON PLAN
 MAP 1: PLACE TYPES

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FIGURE 5 - THE LONDON PLAN
MAP 3: STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

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6.3 Southwest Area Secondary Plan (2019)

The purpose of the Southwest Area Secondary Plan, 2019 (SWAP) is to establish a vision, principles and policies for the development of the Southwest Planning Area as a vibrant community in the city which incorporates a significant gateway into the city, elements of mixed-use development, an increased range and density of residential built form, sustainability, preservation of significant cultural heritage resources, walkability and high-quality urban design. The SWAP provides a greater level of detail than the general policies in the City Official Plan, and the SWAP is organized around identified Neighbourhoods.

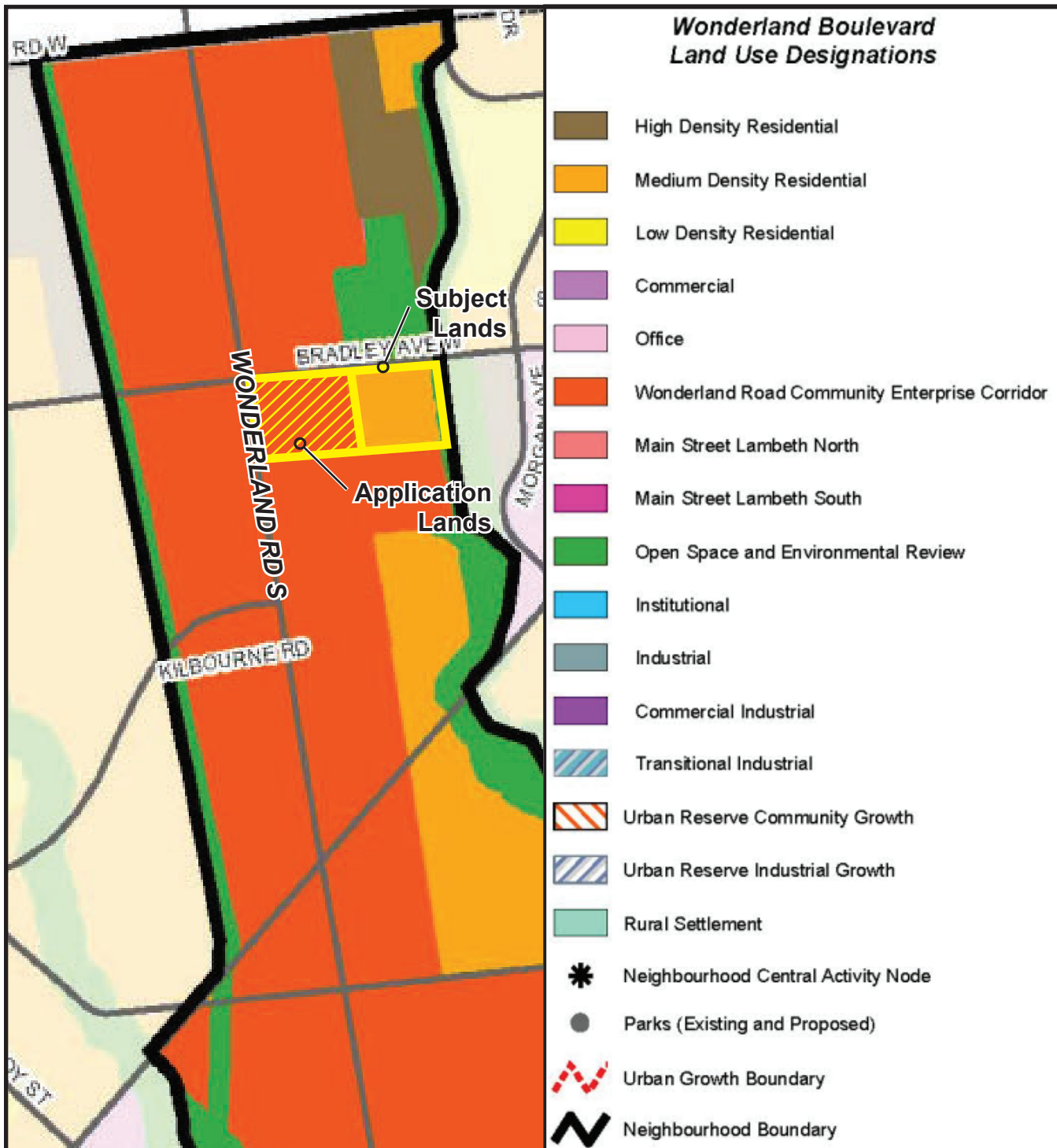
The application lands are designated “*Wonderland Road Community Enterprise Corridor*” within the Wonderland Boulevard Neighbourhood of the SWAP (Figure 6).

Section 20.5.6.1(i) states that the *Wonderland Road Community Enterprise Corridor* designation is intended to provide for a wide range of commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses in low- to mid-rise built forms, with both stand-alone and mixed-use developments permitted. A broad range of retail, service, office, entertainment, recreational, educational, institutional, and residential uses are permitted within the designation and, uses that are not compatible with residential and retail uses will not be permitted. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is generally consistent with the purpose and intent of the SWAP for the following reasons:

- The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment requests a broader range of uses, providing increased opportunity for employment uses (20.5.1.4(iii)(b));
- The proposed development provides multiple, small-scale commercial buildings along the Wonderland Road frontage with primary entrances oriented to the street to create a pleasant, pedestrian shopping environment (20.5.3.9(iii)(a));
- The proposed large-format structures are located at the rear of the commercial development block with the smaller stores oriented to the streetscape (20.5.3.9(iii)(g), 20.5.6.1(vi)(c));
- The proposed parking areas are generally screened from view from Wonderland Road due to the careful consideration of placement of the small-scale commercial buildings (20.5.3.9(iii)(g)); and,
- The proposed development will integrate well, and is compatible with, existing development in the area as it can reasonably be considered to be extension of the development to the north along Wonderland Road South by providing a nearly identical built-form and range of uses (20.5.6.1(iv)).

Given the above, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the planned function of the *Wonderland Road Community Enterprise Corridor* designation. The proposed automobile sales and service establishment use (car dealership) is generally considered to be appropriate within a commercial land use setting. Notably, the proposed development provides a development

pattern and built-form that is consist with the development of lands both north and south of the subject lands, with small-scale commercial buildings towards the street frontage, with a single row of parking between the buildings and the street, and larger-format structures towards the rear with surface parking in-between.



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**FIGURE 6 - SOUTHWEST AREA SECONDARY PLAN
 SCHEDULE 5**

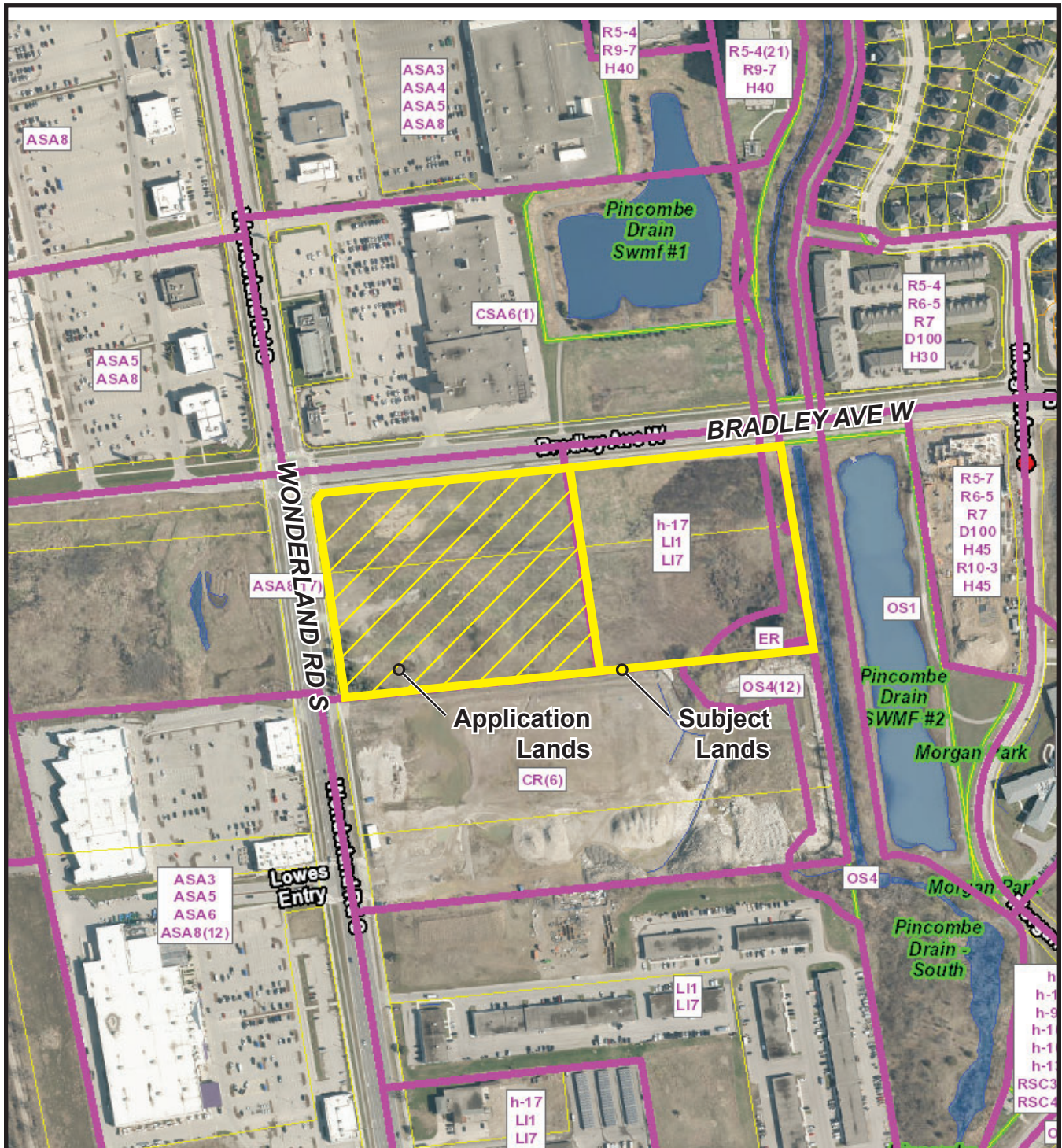
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6.4 City of London Zoning By-law Z.-1

The application lands are zoned “*Associated Shopping Area Commercial (ASA8(17))*” in the City of London Zoning By-law (Figure 7).

The ASA8 zone variation generally allows for large format retail uses. However, the ASA8(17) special regulation notes that the permitted uses shall include all uses permitted within the ASA3, ASA4, ASA5, and ASA8 zones which generally allow for office uses; community facility uses; and, automotive uses in addition to the previously-noted large format retail uses. Notably, the proposed automobile sales and service establishment is not a permitted automobile use. The site-specific, special regulation also includes additional regulations relating to commercial floor area, building setbacks and orientation, and parking aisles, which the proposed development is in compliance with.

No other site-specific regulations, including lot requirements, yard setbacks, or parking reductions, are proposed. The proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment application can then be regarded only as a minor change of the permitted uses, recognizing that the form, scale, massing, and intensity of the proposed buildings is already permitted on the lands. No undue unacceptable adverse impacts on adjacent lands are anticipated as a result of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment. As such, and as noted throughout this report, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to permit an expanded range of uses on the subject lands is appropriate.



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FIGURE 7 - CITY OF LONDON ZONING BY-LAW
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7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to expand the range of existing uses on the application. The application lands represent a good opportunity for the development of vacant and underutilized lands which have access to existing municipal services and, the location of the subject lands, being along a major arterial road in the City, provides the lands with good access to the general public.

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to expand the range of permitted uses on the subject lands is appropriate as the proposed amendment conforms with the general intent of The London Plan and the Southwest Area Secondary Plan, and poses no undue unacceptable adverse impacts on surrounding land uses.

Based on the above, and as detailed throughout this Planning Justification Report, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is consistent with the intent and policies as set forth in provincial and municipal planning legislation. As such, the proposed amendment is considered appropriate and represents good land use planning, and is in the public's interest.