

# Presentation to Cambridge City Council

Date: March 25, 2025.

Subject: Opposition to Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments – 229, 235, 239, 247 Royal Oak Road

From: Royal Oak/Cherry Blossom/Speedsville Neighbourhood

**Introduction:** We, the residents of the Royal Oak/Cherry Blossom/Speedsville Roads neighbourhood, urge the Cambridge City Council to reject the application for Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments regarding the properties at 229, 235, 239, and 247 Royal Oak Road.

## This request is based on the following concerns:

1. Current neighbourhood development and its capacity.
2. Safety and traffic risks associated with the proposed development.
3. Environmental impact on wells, drainage, and water resources.

## Key Concerns

### 1. Neighbourhood Development

The Royal Oak/Cherry Blossom/Speedsville neighbourhood already bears the burden of extensive development, surpassing other neighbourhoods in Cambridge:

- **Commercial Impact:**

- The neighbourhood accommodates **14,523 employees** from 11 major companies, representing **36% of Cambridge's total workforce**.
- This includes **3 of the top 5 employers** in the city or 60% of the workforce, making it a key commercial hub.

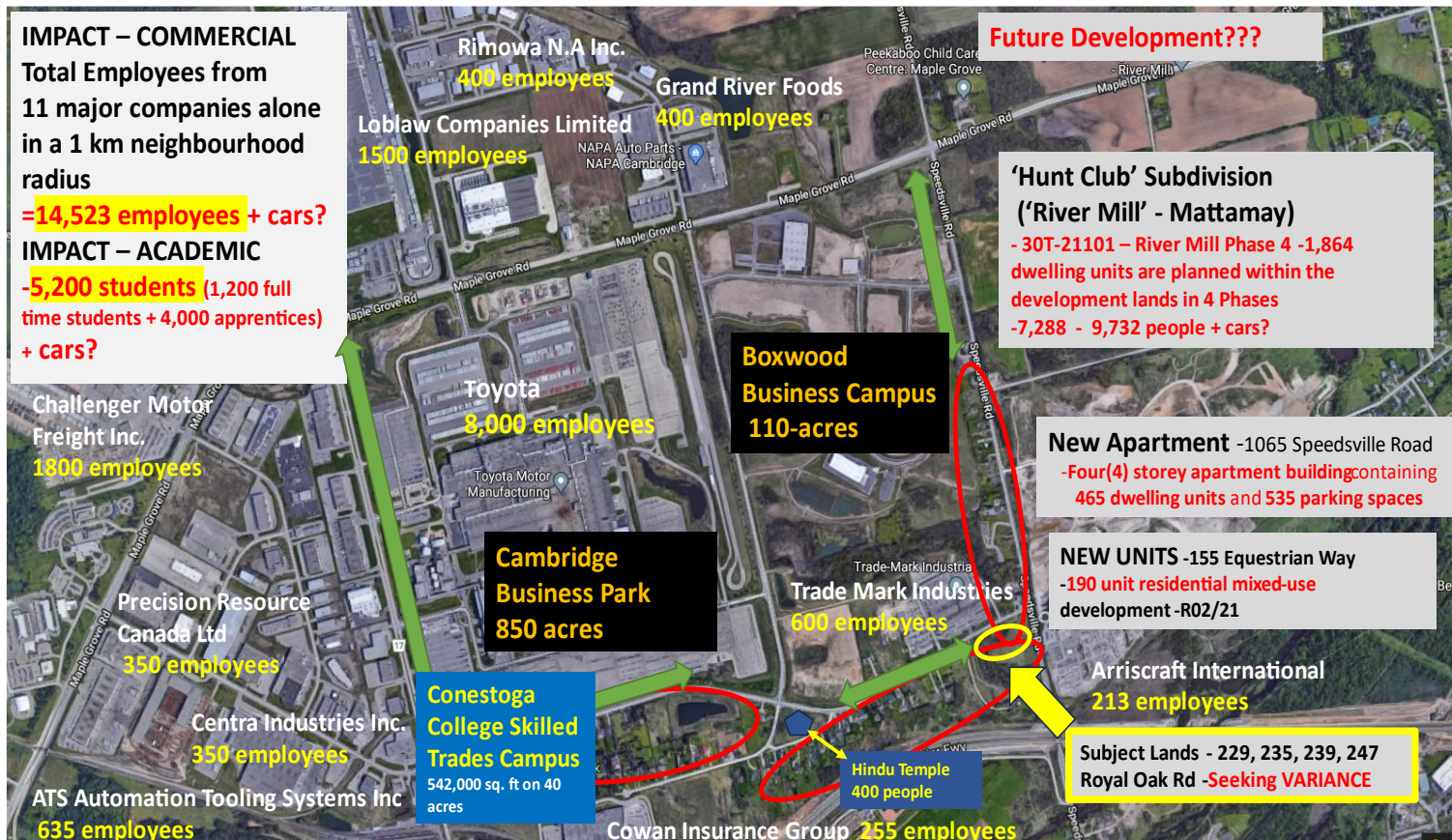
- **Academic Impact:**

- Over **5,200 students** attend Conestoga College on the street, including 1,200 full-time students and 4,000 apprentices, further straining local infrastructure.

- **Industrial Land Availability:**

(Slide 5)

- The current Official Plan designates industrial developments to the north of Royal Oak and Cherry Blossom Roads, where **400 acres in the Cambridge North Industrial Park** remain underdeveloped. Further, is there a



need for warehousing? i.e. **Commercial Spaces For Lease in Cambridge -221 Commercial Space Listings** and underutilised warehouses exist on -Allendale Road (3), Maple Grove Road (3), remain underdeveloped.

<https://www.realtor.ca/on/cambridge/commercial-space-for-lease>

- This alternative ensures industrial expansion without encroaching on residential areas.
- The applicant, having purchased residential properties over several years, would have been aware of the industrial/commercial zoning limitations outlined in the Official Plan. The properties could instead be redeveloped in alignment with residential zoning to address the ongoing housing crisis.

## 2. Safety and Traffic

The neighbourhood is already experiencing significant safety and traffic concerns that would be exacerbated by the proposed development:

- **Traffic Congestion and Speeding:**
  - While the applicant's study claims traffic will not exceed planned limits, local experience contradicts this.
  - Speed limits on critical roads (e.g. Royal Oak /Cherry Blossom/Speedsville Roads) have been reduced due to safety concerns. However, this has led to increased instances of drivers overtaking in no-passing zones, heightening risks of accidents.
- **Pedestrian Safety:**
  - A signalized pedestrian crosswalk was recently installed on Speedsville Road to address unsafe crossing conditions, yet risks remain high.
- **Transportation Master Plan Findings:**
  - The City's Transportation Master Plan highlights that roads in the neighbourhood are over, or are projected to reach overcapacity, under existing conditions. Adding further development will aggravate this issue.

-The **Applicant's study** claims traffic will not exceed planned limits.

**-a) City of Cambridge - Transportation Master Plan – Prepared for City of Cambridge - by IBI Group - June 6, 2019 -Editorial changes March 3, 2020 (p.34) –...**"Several factors were considered when assigning planning horizons. Firstly, and most-critically, planning horizons were influenced by anticipated future levels of traffic congestion. Using the travel demand model, the base network scenario was tested under existing conditions and under future conditions for years 2031 and 2041. **Projects on roadways identified as being already overcapacity (during**

EXHIBIT 5-8: ROAD PROJECT MAP KEY (PROJECT CODES)

CODE	STREET AND LIMITS	PROJECT TYPE	PLANNING HORIZON
1	Speedsville Rd (Kossuth Rd to Maple Grove Rd)	Corridor Widening	2026-2030
2	Beaverdale Rd (Kossuth Rd to Maple Grove Rd)	Corridor Widening	2031-2040
3	Blackbridge Rd (Baldwin Dr to Townline Rd)	Road Realignment / Bridge Widening	2031-2040
4	Allendale Rd (new N-S collector to Fountain St N)	Corridor Widening	2031-2040
5	Cherry Blossom Rd (Maple Grove Rd to Boxwood Dr)	Corridor Widening	2031-2040
6	Cherry Blossom Rd / Royal Oak Rd (Boxwood Dr to Speedsville Rd)	Corridor Widening	2019-2025
7	Groh Ave (Hespeler Rd Off-Ramp to Holiday Inn Dr)	Corridor Widening	2031-2040
8	Holiday Inn Dr (west of Cindy Ave to Franklin Blvd)	Corridor Widening	2026-2030
9	Langs Dr / Sheldon Dr (Trico Dr to Conestoga Blvd)	Corridor Widening	2026-2030
10	Bishop St N (Franklin Blvd to Can-Amara Pkwy)	Corridor Widening	2019-2025
11	Beverley St (Dundas St to Samuelson St)	Corridor Widening	2019-2025
12	Samuelson St / Clyde Rd (Beverly St to Franklin Blvd)	Corridor Widening	2019-2025
A	Winston Blvd & Franklin Blvd	Intersection Improvement	2019-2025
B	Sheldon Dr & Lingard Rd	Intersection Improvement	2026-2030
C	Dunbar Rd & Cambridge Centre access	Intersection Improvement	2026-2030
D	Saginaw Pkwy & ...		
E	Main St & Shade		
F	Main St & Bruce		

**Road Projects –Corridor Widening  
Cherry Blossom/Royal Oak/Speedsville  
Timing 2019-2025 (p.36)**



the afternoon peak hour) were typically assigned short-term planning horizons.”... Development Charges programs, projects were assigned one of three planning horizons: - **Short-Term (2019-2025)** - Medium-Term (2026-2030) - Long-Term (2031-2040) (Slides 15 – 20)

- b) **“It just makes sense”: Cambridge council recommended to drop residential area and school zone speed limits 10 km/h drop in speeds would be phased in over 2024 and 2025.**

By Bill Doucet Cambridge Times - Tuesday, March 28, 2023”

...“In addition, speeds are proposed to decrease on Allendale Road, from Fountain Street to Maple Grove Road, **from 70 km/h to 60 km/h; on Boxwood Drive, from Royal Oak Road to Maple Grove Road, from 70 km/h to 50 km/h; on Cherry Blossom Road, from Maple Grove Road to Royal Oak Road (eastern leg), from 60 km/h to 50 km/h; and on Royal Oak Road (eastern leg), from Cherry Blossom Road to Speedsville Road, from 60 km/h to 50 km/h.**”...

...“Hamilton said while the numbers show decreasing speed limits work to some degree, **it will take a behavioural change by experienced drivers. He said it may take some time for adjustment, but slower speeds will mean a drop in collisions, with a domino effect of a drop in vehicular injuries and fatalities.**”

- c) City staff recommended, and City installed pedestrian ‘signalled crosswalk’ on Speedsville Rd. since, it is too **unsafe to cross** unaided.

### Proposed Speedsville Road crosswalk in Cambridge over budget due to error in design process

By Bill Doucet Cambridge Times - Friday, July 14, 2023

...“Staff said, in a March report, the crosswalk was necessary as “concerns have been expressed by users of the Mill Run Trail that it is difficult to cross Speedsville Road due to the volume of traffic on the road

[https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/news/proposed-speedsville-road-crosswalk-in-cambridge-over-budget-due-to-error-in-design-process/article\\_fe08cf2f-f305-58f0-95a0-eec61e4a5dfb.html](https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/news/proposed-speedsville-road-crosswalk-in-cambridge-over-budget-due-to-error-in-design-process/article_fe08cf2f-f305-58f0-95a0-eec61e4a5dfb.html)



## 4. Wells and Drainage

-The proposed development poses a substantial threat to the water supply and drainage systems relied upon by the neighbourhood:

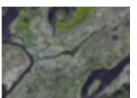
- **Aquifer Depletion:**
  - The 246,848 sq. ft. warehouse development, combined with parking lots, will introduce large impervious surfaces, reducing groundwater recharge and threatening the neighbourhood’s well water supply.
- **Runoff and Pollution:**
  - The steep elevation of the area increases runoff risks, potentially causing water contamination and flooding on adjacent properties.
- **Liability:**
  - Residents face significant concerns over who will be held responsible for the loss of potable well water, flooding, or reduced property values resulting from the development.
  - **PINCHIN study, “no warranty is expressed or implied....This report does not alleviate the contractor, owner, of other parties of their respective responsibilities. (p.13)”**

“Regardless of how exhaustive a geological/hydrogeological investigation is performed, the investigation cannot identify all of the subsurface conditions. In addition, this report is intended to be supplemented and updated with future, more extensive, investigations at the detailed design stage(s) of the Project. **Therefore, no warranty is expressed or implied that the entire Site is representative of the subsurface information obtained at the specific locations of our investigation and previous investigations done by others.**” ...” **This report does not alleviate the contractor, owner, or any other parties of their respective responsibilities. (p.13)** <https://www.cambridge.ca/en/build-invest-grow/resources/OR0123-229/2.-Hydrogeological-Assessment—Pinchin.pdf>



Preliminary Hydrogeological Assessment – Proposed Commercial Development  
229, 235, 239, and 247 Royal Oak Road, Cambridge, Ontario  
FNF Enterprises Inc.

December 28, 2022  
Pinchin File: 307242



(Slide 25)

## Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, we adamantly oppose the proposed amendments for the following reasons:

1. The **Official Plan** appropriately designates this land for residential use, balancing the neighbourhood's needs with broader city objectives.
2. Approving the amendment would exacerbate existing **traffic and safety challenges**.
3. The development poses an unacceptable risk to the **quantity and quality of water resources**, on which the neighbourhood depends.

We urge the City Council to reject the application and instead encourage the applicant to explore redevelopment options consistent with the residential zoning, which could alleviate the housing crisis.

Lastly, while Cambridge may face challenges in housing, the data does not suggest a shortage of warehouse space, with **221 commercial space listings available**.

**We respect the applicant's interest in development, potential jobs, and profitability but, the applicant's interests are economic– we ask for no more than anyone else would- to protect our greatest investment and, our welfare, and our homes.**

**We acknowledge the real concerns and the needs flowing from the housing crisis but, is there really a warehousing crisis in Cambridge that demands this variance/amendment?**

**We would say no and ask you to say no this application.**

**Thank you.**