

**Report to Committee of the Whole  
November 18, 2013**



**Waterloo Region  
District School Board**

*John Bayart* **Director of Education**

**SUBJECT: Elementary Schools Boundary Study Report - Elmira**

**ORIGINATOR:** This report was prepared by Marilyn Allen, Executive Superintendent of Business and Financial Services and Treasurer, Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, in consultation with Executive Committee.

**PURPOSE:**

To request Board approval of changes to the grade structures for John Mahood, Riverside and Park Manor Public Schools, and capital projects to construct additional capacity for John Mahood and Riverside Public Schools as a result of the Elmira Elementary Schools Boundary Study.

**BACKGROUND:**

On May 14, 2012, a boundary study for the Town of Elmira area was initiated. The purpose of this study was to examine boundary and grade configuration options for John Mahood, Riverside, and Park Manor Public Schools considering the planned replacement and relocation of Riverside Public School.

The study area encompasses the Town of Elmira (see Appendix A). Riverside and John Mahood Public Schools are JK-5 organizations that feed Park Manor Public School (6-8) for the senior elementary program. Recent residential development within the Town has pressured the elementary school facilities such that utilization is 136% of the permanent capacities of the schools (See Table 1).

**TABLE 1: Elmira Boundary Study Current Enrolment/Capacity**

School	Site Size (acres)	Built Capacity (OTG <sup>1</sup> )	Temporary Capacity <sup>2</sup>	Enrolment Sept. 2013	% Capacity
John Mahood P.S.	6.35	381	6	411	108%
Park Manor P.S.	8.83	271	4	300	110%
Riverside P.S.	3.62	95	11	302	318%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>136%</b>

<sup>1</sup> On-the-ground (OTG) capacity represents the calculated capacity of the permanent structure of the school

<sup>2</sup> Temporary capacity includes portable and porta-pak units

Over the next ten to fifteen years additional enrolment is expected from two planned residential developments in the Town; one development in the current Riverside Public School Boundary, representing approximately 1400 residential units, and one in the current John Mahood Public School Boundary, representing approximately 350 residential units. The Board, recognizing the inability of the current Riverside Public School facility and site to accommodate the anticipated growth from the new development within its boundary, negotiated the purchase of a new school site within development for a replacement Riverside Public School. The new school site is 6.83 acres, and adjacent to a municipal park. The site was 92% Education Development Charge (EDC) eligible and the Board received \$370,000 in top up funding from the Ministry of Education to cover the balance. A replacement Riverside Public School was approved by the Board as its number one capital priority at the October 21, 2013 Committee of the Whole meeting. The business case requesting funding from the Ministry of Education for the replacement Riverside Public school was submitted to the Ministry of Education on October 31, 2013.

A Working Group made up of parent representatives from each of the schools, the school Principals and Waterloo Region District School Board Planning staff, was established to discuss issues and develop the objectives and accommodation options for students in the study area. The first meeting of the Working Group was held on April 19,

2013 and the Group met a total of ten times throughout the study. Feedback from the broader public was solicited at two public meetings held on June 11, 2013 and October 22, 2013.

The objectives for the Elmira Elementary Schools Boundary Study include:

- To determine the size and program configuration of the replacement Riverside PS, having regard for Board Policy 3002: Elementary School Size and Configuration
- To develop a transitional accommodation plan for elementary school enrolment in the Town of Elmira while awaiting the completion of the replacement Riverside PS.
- To establish boundaries that are long-term (approx. 10 years) that consider:
  - Walking distances (community/neighbourhood-level schools)
  - Efficiency of transportation
  - Capacity of schools
  - Current and future population density and demographics
  - Proximity to other schools
  - Impact on feeder and surrounding schools
- To minimize the impact on students where changes are proposed (consideration for grandparenting, phasing, transitions, etc.)

**STATUS:**

Facilities and Program

All three facilities require the use of temporary accommodation to serve their current student enrolments. Riverside and John Mahood Public Schools implemented the Full-Day-Kindergarten (FDK) program this fall (September 2013). John Mahood Public School received a 4 classroom addition to accommodate the program. Riverside Public School underwent a renovation converting three standard classrooms to two FDK rooms. Additional portables were brought on site to accommodate the displaced standard classrooms.

Development Activity in the Town of Elmira

Woolwich Township Planning Staff have identified two residential developments in the study area that are expected to proceed within the next five years. The larger of the two, known as ‘Lunor’ in the Riverside Public school boundary, is expected to register its first phases this fall, while the smaller, known as ‘Birdland’ in the John Mahood Public school boundary, is expected to register within two to three years. Combined, these developments are expected to increase the elementary enrolment in the Town above 1350 students (See Table 2).

**TABLE 2: Elmira Boundary Study Status Quo Enrolment Projections**

School	Built Capacity	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
John Mahood P.S.	381	411	394	394	396	404	403	431	441	449	452	443
Park Manor P.S.	271	300	306	332	362	378	403	393	414	414	436	428
Riverside P.S.	95	302	365	411	442	478	480	478	472	470	472	486
<b>Total</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>1065</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>1302</b>	<b>1327</b>	<b>1333</b>	<b>1360</b>	<b>1357</b>

Scenarios

Over the course of the boundary study process the Working Group evaluated nine scenarios for the accommodation of elementary students within the Town of Elmira. A range of possible boundary and grade configurations were examined. Common amongst all of the options explored was the construction of a replacement Riverside Public School and a change in school organization from JK-5/6-8.

In the end, the Working Group settled on Scenario 1 as their preferred accommodation strategy for the Town of Elmira as they felt it best met the Objectives established at the outset of the study.

Scenario 1 would see the reconstruction of a replacement Riverside Public School at 557 pupil places on a new site within the ‘Lunor’ subdivision to open in September of 2016. Scenario 1 proposes to maintain the existing boundaries but also grade organization changes that would see Riverside and John Mahood Public schools change from JK-5 to JK-6, and see Park Manor Public School change from 6-8 to 7-8.

The construction of a replacement Riverside Public School within the new ‘Lunor’ subdivision will address the existing and anticipated elementary enrolment pressures within the Riverside Public School boundary. At 557 pupil places, enrolment projections indicate that, the school would open at approximately 89% capacity (2016) and reach full capacity two years later (see Table 3), as residential development proceeds.

**TABLE 3: Elmira Boundary Study Scenario 1 Enrolment Projections**

School	Built Capacity	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
John Mahood P.S.	519 <sup>1</sup>	411	426	461	480	468	469	481	509	508	525	514
Park Manor P.S.	271	300	306	332	230	254	265	269	269	277	287	286
Riverside P.S.	557 <sup>1</sup>	302	333	344	490	538	552	552	549	548	548	557
<b>Total</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>1065</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>1302</b>	<b>1327</b>	<b>1333</b>	<b>1360</b>	<b>1357</b>

<sup>1</sup>Proposed new capacities of school facilities

As previously mentioned, the registration of the initial phases of the ‘Lunor’ subdivision is expected this fall. With the opening of the replacement Riverside Public School not expected until September 2016, enrolment from this development would place additional pressure on an already over capacity Riverside Public School. In recognition of the limitations of the Riverside Public School facility and site, the Working Group examined a number of options to limit enrolment pressure at the facility until the replacement school is constructed.

It was determined that the least disruptive option to limit enrolment growth at Riverside Public School would be to temporarily direct the ‘Lunor’ subdivision to John Mahood Public School until the replacement Riverside Public School could open. While this option would place additional pressure at John Mahood Public school temporarily, it was felt that the John Mahood Public School facility and site could better handle the initial phases of the ‘Lunor’ development. Once the replacement Riverside Public School opens (estimated 2016) the ‘Lunor’ subdivision would transition back to Riverside Public School.

For the students in the 2015/2016 grade five cohort from the ‘Lunor’ subdivision, the transition to the replacement Riverside Public School would cause a situation where the students would attend three different schools within three years; John Mahood Public School for grade five in 2015/2016, Riverside Public School for grade 6 in 2016/2017, and then Park Manor Public School for grade 7 in 2017/2018. To mitigate this transition the Working Group has proposed that the 2015/2016 grade five cohort from the ‘Lunor’ subdivision be given the option to remain at John Mahood Public School for grade six so as to avoid a school transition the year prior to graduating to Park Manor Public School.

It should be noted that while the temporary direction of the ‘Lunor’ subdivision to John Mahood Public School would reduce enrolment pressure at Riverside Public School enrolment at the facility is expected to continue to increase, likely requiring two additional portables before the replacement school is constructed.

John Mahood Public School currently utilizes 6 portables to accommodate its enrolment. The temporary assignment of the initial phases of the ‘Lunor’ subdivision will necessitate the addition of approximately two more portables in the short term. Longer term, the addition of grade six to the facility (September 2016), and enrolment from the ‘Birdland’ development is expected to increase enrolment at John Mahood Public School past 500 students. The Working Group is recommending that the Board approve the construction of a 138 pupil place (6 classrooms) addition to accommodate the enrolment.

Park Manor Public School utilizes four portables to accommodate its current enrolment. The proposed school organization changes would see the relocation of grade six to John Mahood and Riverside Public Schools in September 2016. The removal of grade six from the facility will better match the enrolment of the school to its capacity eliminating the need for portables at the site in the longer term.

#### Implementation and Timing

Should the Board receive approval and funding from the Ministry of Education for the replacement Riverside Public School, the earliest the school could be ready for occupancy is September 2016. It is recommended that the changes in school organization from JK-5/6-8 to JK-6/7-8 not occur until this time. The addition of an extra grade (grade 6) prior to the completion of the new facility would place additional enrolment pressure on the existing Riverside Public School site and facility. Similarly, the addition of an extra grade at John Mahood Public School would impede the schools ability to handle enrolment from the initial phases of the ‘Lunor’ subdivision.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Public Meetings were held on June 11, 2013 and October 22, 2013, to inform the broader community about the study, and to present accommodation options. Notices for the public meetings were sent home to each of the students in the study area, as well as published in the local newspapers and on the Board's website. A link on the Board's website was also set up to provide access to all relevant materials to the boundary study.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Ministry of Education's capital funding benchmark for the new Riverside Public School (at 557 pupil places) is \$10.72M. The capital funding benchmark for the addition at John Mahood Public School (138 pupil places) is \$2.69M.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The six strategic directions that are used to guide the work of the Board are:

- Engaging students, families, staff and communities
- Fostering wellness and well-being
- Pursuing student achievement and success for all
- Embracing diversity and inclusion
- Championing quality public education
- Promoting forward-thinking.

This report relates to the following strategic directions:

- Engaging students, families, staff and communities
- Pursuing student achievement and success for all
- Promoting forward-thinking

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the construction of a 557 pupil place replacement Riverside Public School on a site to be purchased by the Board within the Draft Approved Plans of Subdivision known as 30T-07702 and 30T-07703 ('Lunor'), tentatively scheduled to open September 2016, pending Ministry of Education approval and funding; and**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve a change in the school organizations of Riverside and John Mahood Public Schools from JK-5 to JK-6 upon the completion and occupancy of the replacement Riverside Public School; and**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve a change in the school organization of Park Manor Public School from 6-8 to 7-8 upon the completion and occupancy of the replacement Riverside Public School; and**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the construction of a 138 pupil place addition to John Mahood Public School pending Ministry of Education approval and funding; and**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board designate the Draft Approved Plans of Subdivision known as 30T-07702 and 30T-07703 ('Lunor') as a "development area" allowing staff to assign each registered phase of development to a school that has space to accommodate the projected enrolment until a permanent solution can be established; and**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve a 'grandparenting' provision allowing students from the 'development area' in grade 6 the choice to remain at their holding school or attend their home school the year the replacement Riverside Public School opens.**

# Elmira Boundary Study - Scenario 1

