

Report to Committee of the Whole January 17, 2011



Waterloo Region
District School Board

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Director of Education

SUBJECT: AD HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS RE: SECONDARY BOUNDARY REVIEW INTERIM REPORT: REPORT # 1

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

PURPOSE:

To present initial recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee with respect to the short term recommendations contained in the Interim Secondary School Boundary Review Report dated May 10, 2010.

BACKGROUND:

In response to issues and concerns identified with respect to secondary boundaries, secondary school size and community balance the Board approved, on November 23, 2009, the retention of a consulting firm to undertake a comprehensive boundary review of the Board's secondary schools during the 2009-2010 school year. Phase 1 of the study was completed and presented to Board on May 17, 2010. This interim report presented secondary school boundary recommendations for consideration from a short, medium and long terms needs perspective and was guided by key principles developed in consultation with staff;

- Secondary school boundaries should, to the extent possible, reflect a natural boundary that maximizes the number of walkers, serves a local population around the school and supports the delivery of core program;
- Only when there is no natural boundary for a community or school should 'satellite zoning' be used to relieve overcrowding or supplement core school populations.
- The use of specialized programs, such as magnets, to supplement core school populations should be considered in lieu of physical boundary changes.

The consultant also recognized Board Policy 4013 - Secondary School Size in drafting the recommendations.

In addition to receiving the report on May 17, 2010, the Board also directed the appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee to study the interim report and its recommendations and report back to the Board by January 2011.

The Short Term recommendations contained in the consultant's report are intended to address the immediate (1-5 year time frame) enrolment, boundary and facility concerns. In the short term the report recommended boundary changes between Huron Heights Secondary School and Preston High school, Preston High School and Jacob Hespeler Secondary School, and between Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School and Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate Institute.

Huron Heights/Preston

The existing boundaries for Huron Heights Secondary School and Preston High School were set by the Board in February 2005 prior to the opening of Huron Heights Secondary School in September 2006. The initial proposal was for the Huron Heights boundary to include the area of then proposed residential development immediately west of the school now known as Huron Village and Huron Woods in the school catchment keeping the Doon area at Preston High. Ultimately, however the boundary was set to include the Doon area in the Huron Heights catchment and the as yet undeveloped Huron Woods/Village community at Preston High School.

The short term recommendations in the consultants report for Huron Heights Secondary School involve a boundary change with Preston High School whereby the area of south west Kitchener currently bused to Preston High School would be directed to Huron Heights Secondary School. This change aligns with the principle of 'natural boundaries', and community schools that maximize 'walk-in' students.

Huron Heights Secondary School has a built capacity of 1,131 pupil places. As of October 31, 2010 the enrolment at the facility was 1,220.4 FTE, which necessitated the placement of three portables on site this past summer. The Huron Woods and Huron Village communities represent few secondary students at this time, due to the relatively young age of the developments. However, as the developments proceed and other relatively young existing residential neighborhoods within the current catchment mature, the Board can expect further enrolment growth at the facility. In the short term these students could be accommodated through the reconfiguration of existing internal space, and/or temporary accommodation (portables). Longer term, the Interim Report suggests that the additional and future enrolment in south west Kitchener may be able to support a new secondary school. This is an area which requires further investigation.

Preston/Jacob Hespeler

The Interim Secondary Boundary report has identified Jacob Hespeler Secondary School as a school very much in line with the organizing principles of the study. It is a school with a well defined community/natural boundary and has a large 'walk in' population, as only 10% of the school's enrolment requires transportation. The consultant did however identify a small boundary consideration. Jacob Hespeler's boundary currently includes a small residential area bounded by highway 401, Hespeler Rd., Pinebush Rd. and Townline Rd. This area is the only residential area south of the 401 attending Jacob Hespeler, and is transported due to lack of pedestrian infrastructure to cross the highway. The interim report recommended that consideration be given to a boundary change between Jacob Hespeler and Preston whereby the portion of Jacob Hespeler Secondary Schools boundary south of the 401 would be directed to Preston High School. This boundary change would parallel the recent secondary boundary change between the two schools as part of the Silverheights/Ryerson/William G. Davis elementary school boundary change that saw the nearby Mattamy/Townline Rd. community directed to Preston High; however, in this case no elementary boundary changes have been proposed. This would result in a split feed to secondary school for this area as it would be the only portion of Hespeler and Centennial Public School's attendance area that would feed to Preston High School. It should be noted that the community would require transportation to either secondary facility, so the issue is really one of the relationship this small area has to the Hespeler community.

Sir John A. Macdonald/K.C.I.

The interim secondary boundary report suggests consideration be given to a boundary change between Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School and Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate Institute. Recent and continuing development, coupled with a Fast Forward program has filled Sir John A. Macdonald to capacity. The school has a built capacity of 1548 pupil places and an enrolment of 1537 FTE. The facility currently has three portables on site. Projections are indicating that further residential development in the boundary will see enrolment increases, potentially increasing enrolment to 1700-1800 students within 5-7 years. Meanwhile the enrolment of nearby Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate institute is projected to decline resulting in surplus space.

The report recommends a boundary change between the two schools for the Westvale neighbourhood. The Westvale neighbourhood currently exists outside the walking distance policy of both facilities and has no natural connection to Sir John A. Macdonald with respect to the organizing principles of this study. The neighbourhood historically attended K.C.I before the opening of Sir John A. Macdonald.

The Ad Hoc Committee has been meeting this fall. Members include; Executive Superintendent of Education Mary Lou Mackie, Enrolment Manager Nick Landry, Planning Manager Chris Smith, Senior Planner Nathan Hercanuck, Manager of Capital Projects Ron Dallan, Secondary Program Consultant Kim Keena, W.C.I. principal Jennifer Shortreed, K.C.I. principal Lila Read, P.H.S. principal Stuart Cross, school council representatives Michelle Lewis, Susan Reid, Jen McLelland, Jane Bennett, Linda Roechner, and Chis Patton, Cambridge Trustee Cindy Watson, Kitchener Trustee Mike Ramsay, Waterloo Trustee John Hendry, student Trustees Natalie Wennyk and Brett Crowley and Chaired by Executive Superintendent of Business Marilynn Marklevitz.

This report is the first feedback from the committee and is for consideration for early implementation.

STATUS:

The Ad Hoc Committee to study the Interim Report and Preliminary Recommendations has reviewed the short term recommendations presented by the consultant. The committee has agreed that the recommendations in principle are logical and in keeping with the organizing principles of the study. To further investigate the considerations in the report and develop recommendations the Committee undertook community consultation on two of the proposed boundary changes for implementation in September 2011 and has resolved to undertake community consultation on the third next school year.

Huron Heights/Preston

Response from the community on the proposed Huron Heights Secondary School/Preston High School boundary change at the January 10 public meeting was very supportive. Most respondents felt the change would address the concerns regarding community schools and the use of transportation as a long term solution for student accommodation. However, some respondents also raised concerns with how the increased enrolment at Huron Heights would be accommodated in the longer term.

Preston/Jacob Hespeler

Conversely, response received at the January 10th public meeting on the proposed Jacob Hespeler Secondary School/Preston High School boundary change was not supportive. Respondents indicated that regardless of the separation by Highway 401 the neighbourhood felt more of a connection to the Hespeler community via the feed from the senior elementary program at Hespeler Public School.

Sir John A. Macdonald/K.C.I.

Compared to the other proposed short term secondary boundary considerations in the Interim Report the Sir John A. Macdonald/K.C.I considerations are significantly larger in scope. The proposed changes, while not as large in geographic scale as the Huron Heights/Preston piece will affect a larger existing current student population. As a result the Ad Hoc Committee felt that community consultation for this proposal would be better achieved through a more thorough process next year for potential implementation in September 2012.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The full Interim Secondary School Boundary Review Report as presented to the Board on May 17, 2010 is posted on the Waterloo Region District School Board website along with the consultant's accompanying presentation.

Notice of the open house public meeting on the Huron Heights/Jacob Hespeler/Preston proposed Secondary School boundary changes held on Jan. 10, 2011 was distributed via mail outs to the affected communities and advertised on the Board website.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No financial implications at this time. Costs for flyers, notices, etc., have been included in the Planning budget.

SYSTEM SUCCESS PLAN:

This report relates to the day-to-day operations and facilities planning of the Board, which provide the foundation for the System Success Plan's areas of learning, caring, and connecting with students, staff and the community at large. It also relates to the area of Caring contained within the Board's Strategic Plan, which encompasses the belief that the community supports safe and secure learning environments.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended:

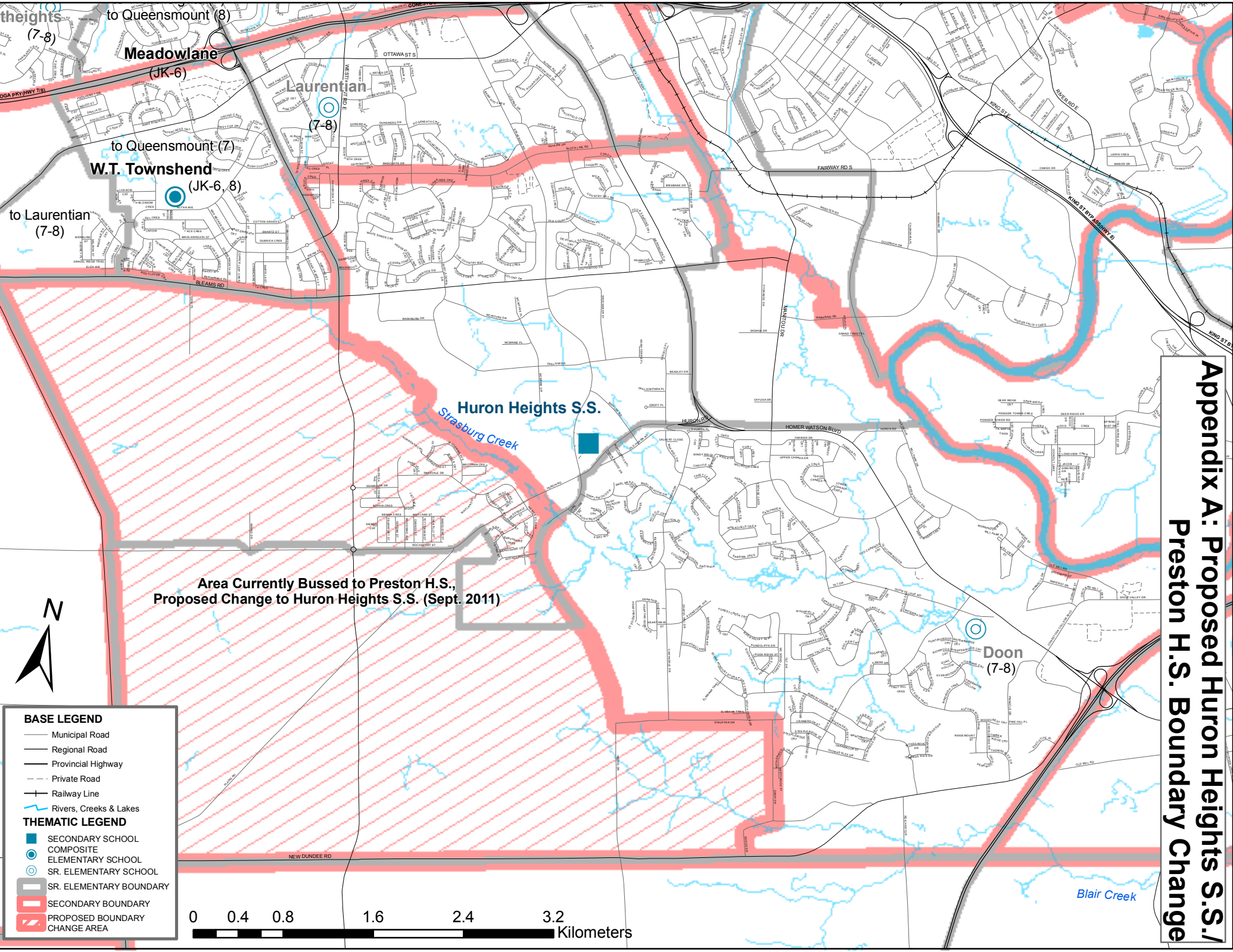
That the Waterloo Region District School Board change the Secondary School boundaries between Huron Heights Secondary School and Preston High School so that the area of south west Kitchener bounded by Trussler Rd., New Dundee Rd., Bleams Rd., Stauffer Dr., Groh Dr., and Strasburg Creek as illustrated on Appendix A currently designated to attend Preston High School be directed to Huron Heights Secondary School effective September 2011;

And that existing students currently attending Preston High School from the affected area be granted the option to be grandparented to Preston High School and transportation be provided for those students to complete their diploma up to a maximum of four years;

And that the Waterloo Region District School Board not change Jacob Hespeler Secondary School's boundary so that students residing in the area south of Highway 401 continue to attend Jacob Hespeler Secondary School as illustrated on Appendix B effective September 2011;

And that the Waterloo Region District School Board undertake during the 2011/2012 school year, community consultation with respect to the proposed Secondary School Boundary changes between Kitchener Waterloo Collegiate Institute and Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School identified in the Interim Secondary School Boundary Report originally presented to Board May 17, 2010.

Appendix A: Proposed Huron Heights S.S./ Preston H.S. Boundary Change

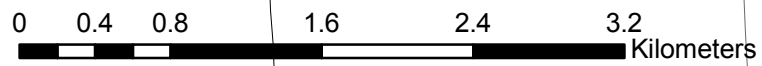


BASE LEGEND

- Municipal Road
- Regional Road
- Provincial Highway
- Private Road
- Railway Line
- Rivers, Creeks & Lakes

THEMATIC LEGEND

- SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPOSITE
- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- SR. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- SR. ELEMENTARY BOUNDARY
- SECONDARY BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGE AREA



to Queensmount (8)
Meadowlane
 (JK-6)

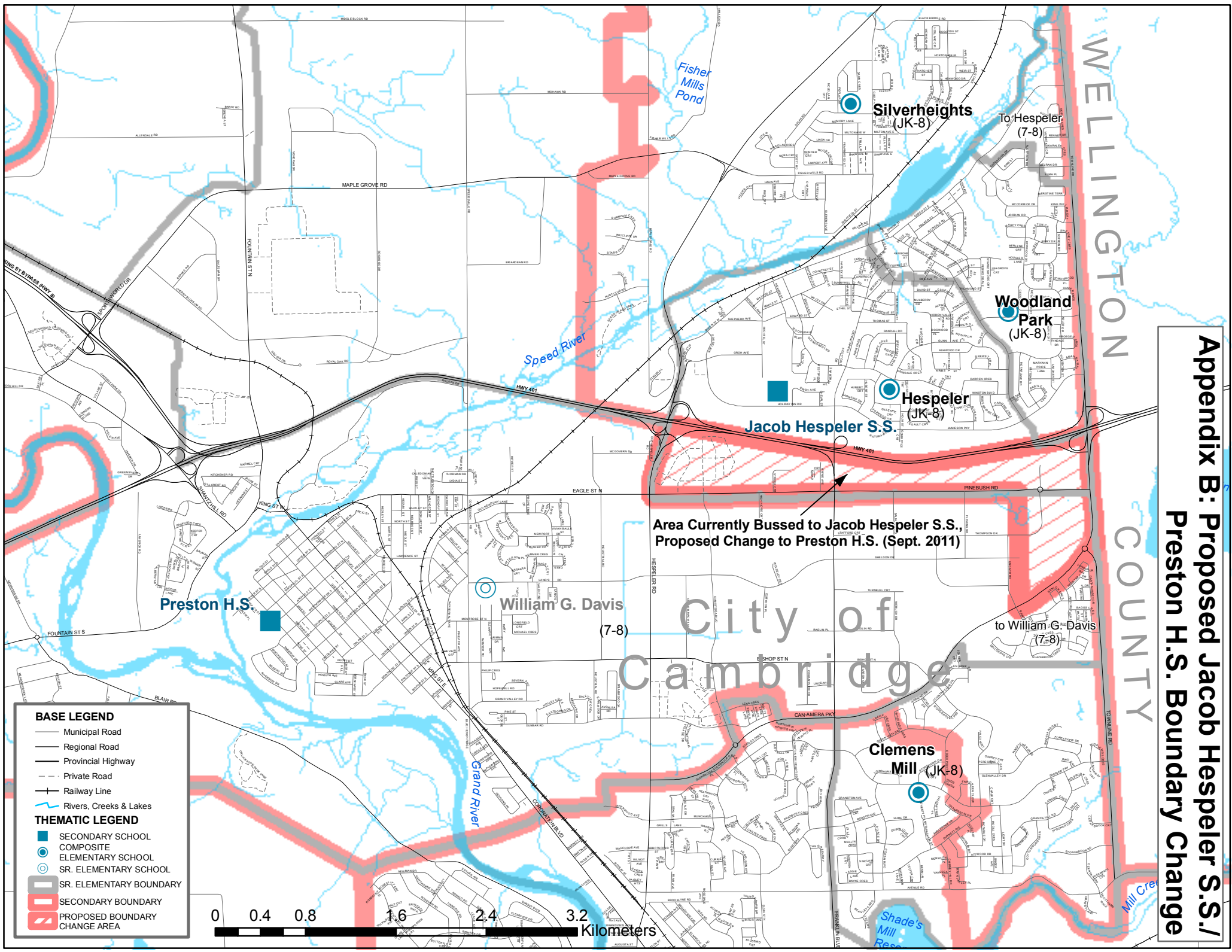
to Queensmount (7)
W.T. Townshend
 (JK-6, 8)

to Laurentian
 (7-8)

Huron Heights S.S.

Doon
 (7-8)

Blair Creek



Appendix B: Proposed Jacob Hespeler S.S./ Preston H.S. Boundary Change

- BASE LEGEND**
- Municipal Road
 - Regional Road
 - Provincial Highway
 - - - Private Road
 - + Railway Line
 - ~ Rivers, Creeks & Lakes
- THEMATIC LEGEND**
- SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPOSITE
 - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
 - SR. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
 - ▭ SR. ELEMENTARY BOUNDARY
 - ▭ SECONDARY BOUNDARY
 - ▨ PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGE AREA



Area Currently Bussed to Jacob Hespeler S.S., Proposed Change to Preston H.S. (Sept. 2011)

WELLINGTON COUNTY

City of Cambridge