Cambridge Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee
Workshop
No. 01 – 21

AGENDA

Thursday, April 15, 2021
6:30 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Virtual Meeting

Meeting Called to Order

Disclosure of Interest

Delegations

Note: This meeting is a Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee Workshop. No delegations will be permitted and staff will only permit motions to receive information and provide direction.

Introduction and Overview

1. Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study

Note: ASI staff will provide a presentation

Discussion

Distribution:

Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee Workshop
Attachment 1, Technical Memo 1, Draft Area History, Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study
April 15, 2021

The following is an early draft document prepared for the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study for review. It should not be interpreted as finalized research.

The document has been prepared as a technical memorandum in order that the authors may receive early feedback on the findings before finalizing the research. The materials outlined below are intended to evolve as new information is made available. They are being provided at this time to the City of Cambridge Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee for comments as part of a workshop held on April 15, 2021. After receiving comments, a revised version of the area history presented below will be integrated as part of the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study Report.

Any questions or comments should be directed to

Abraham Plunkett-Latimer, Senior Planner - Heritage
Telephone: (519) 623-1340 ext. 4690
E-mail: plunkettlata@cambridge.ca
Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study
Technical Memorandum #1

Prepared for:
City of Cambridge
50 Dickson Street
Cambridge, ON N1R 8S1

ASI Project No. 20CH-195
February 2021

Draft Report
Project Personnel

Project Manager: Rebecca Sciarra, MA, CAHP
Lead Cultural Heritage Specialist: Kristina Martens, BA, Dip.
Heritage Conservation Research Lead: Annie Veilleux, MA, CAHP
Survey and Evaluation Lead: Laura Wickett, BA (Hon.), Dip.
Heritage Conservation Project Archaeologist: David Robertson, MA
Research Assistant – Survey and Evaluation: Meredith Stewart, MA, MSc, CAHP Intern
Research Assistant – Historical Research, Archaeology and Support for City and Public Consultation Meetings: Michael Wilcox, PhD
Geomatics and Database Specialist: Carolyn Nettleton, BA
Research Assistant – Survey and Evaluation: Ute Maya-Giambattista, MCIP, RPP, LEED AP, M.Pl., B.Arch
Planners and Urban Designers: Nathan Petryshyn, M.Pl, B.Fa
Evan Truong, BES, M.Pl
Conservation Architect: Kelly Gilbride, OAA, P. Eng., CAHP, LEED AP

Cover Image: Aerial view of Galt, looking northeast, 1984 (Cambridge Archives)
# Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

2.0 Purpose and Methodology ............................................................................................ 1

3.0 Research Gaps and Limitations ...................................................................................... 2

4.0 Review of Primary and Secondary Sources .................................................................. 3

4.1 Primary Sources ........................................................................................................... 3

4.2 Secondary Sources ....................................................................................................... 4

4.3 Studies and Reports ........................................................................................................ 4

4.4 Libraries and Archives Consulted .................................................................................. 4

5.0 Review of Historical Mapping ....................................................................................... 5

6.0 Identified Historical Themes .......................................................................................... 17

7.0 Historical Framework for the Galt Heritage Conservation District Study Area ................. 18

7.1 The Setting ................................................................................................................... 18

7.2 Paleo-Indian Period (11,000 B.C.E.-9,000 B.C.E.) ......................................................... 19

7.3 Archaic Period (9,000 B.C.E.-1,000 B.C.E.) .................................................................. 19

7.4 Woodland Period (1,000 B.C.E.-1650 C.E.) ................................................................ 19

7.5 The Early Contact Period (1620s-1784) ..................................................................... 20

7.6 Haldimand Tract (1784-1841) ...................................................................................... 21

7.7 Early Settlement Period – from Shade’s Mills to Galt (1810s-1830s) ............................ 24

7.8 Industrialization and Community Formation (1840s-1850s) ...................................... 28

7.9 The “Manchester of Canada”: Economic, Industrial and Social Developments (1860s-1914) 32

7.10 War and Inter-War Years (1914-1945) ...................................................................... 40

7.11 Postwar Developments (1945-1973) ........................................................................ 45

7.12 The New City of Cambridge (1973-Present) .............................................................. 48

8.0 Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 53

9.0 Works Cited .................................................................................................................... 54
**List of Figures**

Figure 1: Plan shewing the Lands granted to the Six Nation Indians, situated on each side of the Grand River, or Ouse, commencing on Lake Erie, containing about 674,910 Acres. Thos. Ridout Surveyor General, survey Gen. Office York 2nd February 1821 (Library and Archives Canada, Mikan 4129506) ................................................................. 23

Figure 2: Rough sketch of Shade’s Mills in the year 1820, looking northwest (City of Cambridge Archives) .................................................................................................................. 26

Figure 3: Absalom Shade (Idea Exchange) ........................................................................................................ 26

Figure 4: William Dickson (Idea Exchange) ........................................................................................................ 26

Figure 5: Laying the cornerstone for the Town Hall, Galt, 1857 (City of Cambridge Archives) .................. 30

Figure 6: Looking west on Main Street from Centennial Park plateau, 1858 (City of Cambridge Archives) .......................................................... 30

Figure 7: James Young (Idea Exchange) ........................................................................................................... 34

Figure 8: John Goldie (Idea Exchange) ........................................................................................................... 34

Figure 9: Hugh McCulloch (Idea Exchange) .................................................................................................... 34

Figure 10: The Cowan Company Foundry on Water Street North, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library) ................................................................................................................. 36

Figure 11: Factories along the Grand River, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library) ............................... 36

Figure 12: Gore Block at the corner of Main and Ainslie Streets, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library) .......................................................................................................................... 37

Figure 13: Corner of Water and Main Streets, 1910, view northeast (Toronto Public Library) ................. 38

Figure 14: Main Street looking west, 1910 (Toronto Public Library) ................................................................. 38

Figure 15: The Armoury upon its completion, 1914, extant (City of Cambridge) ......................................... 42

Figure 16: Procession through downtown Galt for designation of new city status (City of Cambridge Archives) .......................................................................................................................... 42

Figure 17: 111th Battalion CEF at their Farewell Parade, 1916 (City of Cambridge Archives) .................... 43

Figure 18: Flooding in downtown Galt, 1929 (City of Cambridge) ................................................................. 43

Figure 19: Aerial photograph of downtown Galt, 1945 (City of Cambridge Archives) ............................... 47

Figure 20: Aerial photograph of Galt, 1967 (City of Cambridge Archives) ..................................................... 47

Figure 21: Flooding at the Main Street Bridge, 1974 (Kitchener Public Library) ........................................... 50

Figure 22: Flooding in downtown Galt, 1974 (City of Cambridge) ................................................................. 50

Figure 23: Aerial photograph, 1984 (City of Cambridge Archives) ................................................................. 51
List of Maps

Map 1: Dumfries Township, 1822 (Archives of Ontario) ...........................................................................6
Map 2: Galt, 1851 (City of Cambridge Archives) ......................................................................................7
Map 3: Galt, 1861 (Tremaine 1861) ...........................................................................................................8
Map 4: Map of the Town of Galt, 1867 (City of Cambridge Archives) ......................................................9
Map 5: Bird’s Eye View of Galt, 1875 (City of Cambridge Archives) .......................................................10
Map 6: Galt Fire Insurance Plan, 1910 (City of Cambridge Archives) .....................................................11
Map 7: NTS Map, Galt Sheet, 1923 (Department of National Defence 1923) ...........................................12
Map 8: Galt Fire Insurance Plan, 1929 (University of Waterloo) ...............................................................13
Map 9: Aerial photograph of Galt, 1955 (City of Cambridge Archives) ...................................................14
Map 11: Aerial photograph of Galt, 2000 (City of Cambridge Archives) ....................................................16
Map 12: Galt’s early settlement period was characterized by the construction of mills, stores, civic institutions, and homes, most of which were built along the Grand River ............................................27
Map 13: This time period marked the beginning of industrialization and development of civic infrastructure in Galt, with industrial development focused along the Grand River and along the rail line ........................................................................................................................................31
Map 14: During this time period, the town of Galt expanded in all directions. Industrial development extended along the rail line and industrial and commercial development extended to the west side of the Grand River ........................................................................................................................................39
Map 15: Between WWI and WWII, a number of social spaces were constructed in Galt. This snapshot from 1929 shows that there were no parks within the study area boundary .................................................44
Map 16: Over the last fifty years, downtown Galt has lost many of its industries. The removal of some of the industrial buildings along the Grand River has led to the creation of new green space and park land ........................................................................................................................................52
1.0 Introduction

ASI, in collaboration with Fotenn and SBA, was contracted by the City of Cambridge to undertake a Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan in the downtown core of the former City of Galt, a unique community within the City of Cambridge. The Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area has a rich collection of nineteenth and early twentieth-century commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential buildings and land uses. The town site that was established on the Grand River in the early nineteenth century provides a picturesque setting for the unique stone and brick architecture. These qualities were recognized for their cultural heritage value and importance to the on-going vitality of Galt’s downtown core with the designation of the existing Main Street Heritage Conservation District. Dominant public buildings, including the City Hall, the Old Post Office, the Market, and the former Carnegie Library Building, and formal public spaces, such as Market Square, tell the story of Galt’s economic significance in the nineteenth century. The town grew into prominence through its industrial base which first took advantage of the Grand River for water-powered mills to serve the community’s need for flour and sawn timber. Industry later developed into specialized operations for engineering and textile works that reached national and international markets. This area has been identified as an important heritage area within the City of Cambridge for at least forty years.

The Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area encompasses Galt’s downtown core and is bounded by the Grand River to the west, Park Hill Road East to the north, Wellington Street to the east, and Concession Street to the south. Technical Memorandum #1 forms the first in a series of Technical Memoranda on specific topics for review and feedback by the City’s Project Manager. These memoranda will form the content of the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study and may be circulated internally or to the consultants working on concurrent studies. Technical Memo #1 is the deliverable for Task 1-1, History, Evolution, and Development of the Study Area.

The development of a historical framework is an iterative process and refinements are anticipated in further phases of the project. The information presented herein may evolve following communication with the City’s Project Manager, stakeholder, and public engagement, as well as following field survey and character analysis.

2.0 Purpose and Methodology

Any large-scale heritage study requires identification of significant historical themes within the specified area of focus and an understanding of how and where these themes have expressed themselves over time. Historical background research was undertaken to illustrate how the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area has physically, socially, and economically evolved over time, including development of its natural, built, and cultural features. A review of primary and secondary sources, including available historical mapping and images and aerial photographs was conducted to: identify historical themes and key dates and events that contributed to the establishment and development of Galt; understand the area’s historical and current land uses; and how these various impulses influenced the area’s built form, landscape composition and character over time.
This research provides the basis for identifying significant periods of development in Galt’s history. Identification of these significant periods helps to establish a historical framework that allows us to understand the area’s buildings, landscapes, and streetscapes in appropriate context. For each significant period identified, the historical framework provides a brief narrative outlining significant events and activities, a list of significant people that are known to have shaped the settlement and development of Galt, and a timeline of key dates and events. The resulting historical framework is not an exhaustive history of Galt. It is an organizing tool providing a basis for the project team to systematically assess, analyze, and evaluate the built features and cultural landscapes located within the study area.

Following a summary of research gaps and limitations (Section 3.0) and a review of the primary and secondary sources used to compile this document (Section 4.0), Technical Memo #1 provides a review and description of a series of historical maps and aerial photographs from 1822 to 2000 (Section 5.0) and historical themes and sub-themes determined to be important to the development of the study area (Section 6.0). Section 7.0 presents a historical framework for the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area, starting with a description of the area’s natural setting.

### 3.0 Research Gaps and Limitations

Research for Technical Memo #1 was conducted in January and February 2021, during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Research limitations resulted from public health measures and emergency orders enacted or recommended by federal, provincial, and local governments. Of particular impact were the public health measures and restrictions resulting from orders made pursuant to the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* on January 12, 2021. These orders have fully restricted public access to libraries and archives. The inability to retrieve books and documents has limited the number and variety of documents available for review. As such, this Technical Memo relies only upon internet resources, studies and reports already in the possession of ASI, and select digitized materials provided by the City of Cambridge. Abraham Plunkett-Latimer, Senior Planner – Heritage, and Dan Schmalz, Information and Archives Analyst, both from the City of Cambridge, graciously facilitated the provision of materials which contributed to the completion of this Technical Memo. The project team thanks them for their important efforts during this challenging time.
4.0 Review of Primary and Secondary Sources

4.1 Primary Sources

Data Received from the City of Cambridge

- Heritage Properties Map (GeoHub)
- Known historical information for properties on the Heritage Register
- Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data for properties on the Heritage Register

Historical Mapping

- 1822 Dumfries Township Map
- 1861 Tremaine Map of the County of Waterloo
- 1867 Map of the Town of Galt, County of Waterloo
- 1875 Bird’s Eye View of Galt
- 1881 Illustrated Historical Atlas for the County of Waterloo
- 1910 Galt Fire Insurance Plan
- 1923 National Topographic System (NTS) map, Galt Sheet
- 1929 Galt Fire Insurance Plan
- 1936 National Topographic System (NTS) map, Galt Sheet
- 1945 Aerial Photograph
- 1955 Aerial Photograph
- 1966 Aerial Photograph
- 1975 National Topographic System (NTS) map, Cambridge-Galt Sheet
- 2000 Aerial Photograph
- 2019 Aerial Photograph

Historical Records

- William Henry Smith, *Smith’s Canadian Gazetteer*, 1846
- Irwin & Burnham, Publishers, *Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Waterloo*, 1867
- C. Wilson, *Jubilee Souvenir of Galt*, 1897
- Jaffray Bros., *Picturesque and Industrial Galt*, 1902
4.2 Secondary Sources

- City of Cambridge, *Historical Evolution of Galt and Cambridge* (online)
- Jim Quantrell, *Time Frames: Historical Chronologies of Cambridge and Its Founding Municipalities*, not dated
- Waterloo Region Museum, *History of North Dumfries Township* (online)

4.3 Studies and Reports

- E.W. Presant and R.E. Wicklund, *The Soils of Waterloo County*, 1971
- Nicholas Hill, *A Heritage Conservation District Plan for the City of Cambridge (Galt)*, 1984
- City of Cambridge, *Dickson Hill Heritage Conservation District Plan for City Owned Lands*, 2005
- Archaeological Services, Inc., *Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment of the Cambridge Civic Administration Complex, Ainslie Street North and Dickson Street, City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Ontario*, 2006

4.4 Libraries and Archives Consulted

- Archives of Ontario
- City of Cambridge Archives
- Idea Exchange
- Kitchener Public Library
- McMaster University Library
- Toronto Public Library
- University of Waterloo Library
- University of Toronto Library
5.0 Review of Historical Mapping

A review of available nineteenth- and twentieth-century mapping, as well as aerial photography, illustrates the development of Galt over time. In addition, some of the individual maps provide useful information, such as: the name of early property owners (Map 1); the location of historical features of interest (Map 2 - Map 4 and Map 9 Error! Reference source not found.); architectural and construction details of individual structures (Map 5 and Map 7); and key layout and design features of the area, especially as they relate to topography and/or natural features (Map 6, Map 8, and Map 10).

Please note that street names and some street alignments have changed over time within the study area. This Technical Memo uses the modern-day street name except when it has been deemed necessary for the discussion and/or analysis of the map. The study area includes the following modern-day street name followed by its previous iteration:

- Park Hill Road East, formerly Queen Street
- Ainslie Street North, formerly King Street
- Thorne Street, formerly North Street
- Lutz Street, formerly Cooper Street
- Warnock Street, formerly Chapman Street
- Ainslie Street South, formerly Hawthorne Street/Mill Street
- Cambridge Street, formerly Market Street/Head Street
- Wellington Street, formerly Church Street
This map shows that lots and concessions have been delineated throughout the newly established township. Lots were generally laid out along a north-south axis and used the road network as an organizing principle. However, lots adjacent to the Grand River were laid out along an east-west axis. Only some of the lots have been allotted to individuals and most of the land appears undeveloped and unoccupied. Absalom Shade is the most prominent property owner in the vicinity of the study area. The Grand River is clearly identifiable, but Mill Creek is not shown. The emergent community of Shade’s Mills, which later became Galt, is also not featured. Two words at the bottom of the study area are indecipherable but may refer to a bridge crossing the Grand River or may be an annotation from a later period.
This 1851 map of Galt illustrates significant community development. A road network has formed along both sides of the Grand River, a commercial strip has developed along Main Street, and industrial activity has begun, particularly along Water Street North. Almost every built structure on the east side of the Grand River in Galt was within the study area boundary. The Mill Creek – which included ponds – is a prominent feature on the map. Important sites include the Town Hall on Dickson Street as well as churches and cemeteries.
This map illustrates Galt’s significant urbanization. Many roads have been laid out on both sides of the Grand River, though few structures have been erected east of the study area. Main Street is the most prominent thoroughfare, with commercial enterprises found especially between Water and Ainslie Streets. The Town Hall is a prominent landmark on Dickson Street. The area around Mill Creek shows industrial activity, including a distillery and the Halton Mills. Except for Goldie’s Mill just north of the study area, the industrial zone along Water Street North is not shown though several operations existed by this time and are visible in the 1851 map above. There are only two bridges crossing the Grand River, at Main Street and at Park Hill Road. It should be noted that the Great Western Railway is not illustrated on this inset map but does appear on the larger Tremaine Map, located along the eastern border of the study area south of Main Street and parallel with Mill Creek north of Main Street.
This map shows the rapid advancement and intensification of Galt’s built form. There are significantly more buildings and other infrastructural developments than what is visible on the 1861 map above. Among the most prominent developments are the foundries and factories found along Water Street North adjacent to the Grand River. The street layout remains largely the same as in 1861, although more roads have been laid out, especially to the east of the study area. The interplay between the two sides of the river is indicated by the addition of a third bridge located at the southwest corner of the study area and the growing number of commercial, residential, and industrial buildings on the west side of the Grand River. Main Street continues to be the dominant commercial area, though Ainslie, Dickson, North, and Water Street North and South are increasingly filled in. The Galt branch of the Great Western Railway is now shown running parallel with the eastern edge of the study area south of Main Street.
Map 5: Bird's Eye View of Galt, 1875 (City of Cambridge Archives)

Bird’s Eye View of Galt, 1875

This map shows several key buildings, including churches, railway depots, banks, schools, hotels, and industrial enterprises. Church steeples and factory smokestacks are noteworthy for their height, considerably taller than the surrounding buildings. Additionally, the map highlights various natural features, including the Grand River, Mill Creek, and the slopes and trees of the river valley. Both the Great Western Railway (G.W.R) and the Credit Valley Railroad (C.V.R.) are visible, with industrial activity adjacent to the G.W.R. Other concentrated industrial sites include factories and foundries in the area along Water Street North just south of Queen Street, and mills, a brewery, and factories along Mill and Concession Streets and along the railway corridor. Residential areas are visible throughout, though is significantly more concentrated within the study area than outside of it.
This Fire Insurance Plan showcases the stone commercial buildings along Main and Ainslie Streets and industrial enterprises along Water Street. Other stone structures are found sporadically elsewhere, generally indicative of buildings of prominence, such as the Town Hall and Methodist Church. Brick buildings are primarily large industrial operations or smaller commercial buildings and are principally found around the centre of the study area. The wood buildings are generally smaller in scale than the stone and brick counterparts and were most often residences or sheds. A notable change to the road network is that the combined Hawthorne and Mill Streets from previous mapping have been straightened and now form Ainslie Street South. Overall, the study area has filled in substantially, particularly with a new industrialized zone between Ainslie Street South and the railway.
This map illustrates intensification of buildings and neighbourhoods radiating out from the historical core. Residential areas in all directions from the study area have largely filled in, with forest and fields surrounding the urban core. Industrial sites continue to predominate around the railway line and along Water Street. Galt has also extended further west on the west side of the Grand River, with residential areas to the west and south of Grand Avenue and George Street. Grand Avenue itself was a prominent thoroughfare, with residential areas to the north and south and a central civic/institutional core around Queens Square. Four bridges cross the Grand River within the study area, including one Electric Railway bridge (later repurposed for a pedestrian bridge) which allowed workers to cross between their homes and workplaces such as the many industrial operations northwest of Grand Avenue and Cedar Street.
By 1929, the study area had grown to express an urbanized form and character, with few lots not occupied by a structure, whether that be residential, institutional, commercial, or industrial. There were no designated zones for these various land uses; instead, they tended to bleed into each other which was typical of early twentieth-century village and town development in Ontario. However, some degree of land use concentrations is evident with industrial operations along the railway corridor and along Water Street North; commercial activity along Water, Main, Dickson, and Ainslie Streets; and residences in the vicinity of Cambridge Street in the north of the study area and northwest of Concession and Ainslie Streets in the south of the study area.
Map 9: Aerial photograph of Galt, 1955 (City of Cambridge Archives)

Aerial Photograph of Galt, 1955

This aerial photograph from 1955 shows that the study area has been almost entirely filled in; there are few empty lots and/or unoccupied areas. In terms of vegetation, the northeast and southwest sections of the study area – the only areas that are primarily residential – have dense tree coverage while the commercial and industrial areas have none. Residential neighbourhoods in all directions outside of the study area have extensive tree coverage. Water Street North and close to the railway south of Main Street within the study area and north of Cedar Street on the west side of the Grand River are characterized by their industrial nature. With these manufacturing sites generally concentrated in the same location as they had been a century earlier, it showcases the stability and continuity of industrial areas within the study area.
This 1975 map shows several prominent structures both inside and outside the study area. Within the boundary are several churches, the Post Office at the corner of Dickson and Water Street North, City Hall, and the armoury. Outside the boundary are schools, factories, churches, and recreational sites. Mill Creek is not illustrated within the study area, though it appears north of Main Street adjacent to the rail line just east of the study area. Other than the Grand River to the west and the railroad to the southeast, no clear identifying markers separate the study area from its surroundings. This map also shows a change in topography, with the study area situated within the river valley with higher plateaus along Wellington Street in the northeast and along the railway corridor along the western boundary of the study area.
Aerial photograph of Galt, 2000

Taken in the year 2000, this aerial photograph shows a marked change from the 1955 aerial photograph included above. The industrial sites along Water Street North have been demolished and replaced with parkland and parking lots on the west side and a grocery store, office tower, and parking lots on the east side. The industrial strip east of Ainslie Street South has been demolished, replaced by parking lots and a bus station. Similarly, several small buildings southeast of Water and Main Streets have been demolished and replaced by a parking lot. The railway has been removed, as have several buildings that ran adjacent to it on either side.
6.0 Identified Historical Themes

Key themes related to the history, evolution, and development of Galt were established through research and analysis and may be refined through consultation with Planning staff at the City of Cambridge and based on the results of public engagement. Key themes have been identified, as well as a broad range of sub-categories and areas of discussion within these themes.

Theme: Natural Environment
- Grand River
- Mill Creek
- Influence of topography and physiography on settlement patterns
- Influence of topography on scenic views
- Geology which includes cream to buff limestone outcrops
- Glacial deposits of granite boulders used in stone masonry; clay deposits used to make bricks

Theme: Settlement
- Indigenous presence
- Haldimand Tract
- Surveying and early settlement, lot patterns
- Scottish settlement

Theme: Transportation
- Trails and roads
- Railways
- Commuter/public transit
- Bridges across the Grand River

Theme: Growth and Urban Development
- Land division, subdivision, and consolidation
- Incorporation as a village, town, and city
- Commerce and businesses
- Residential growth
- Formal land use planning

Theme: Industry
- Waterpower: concentration of water powered mills
- Mills and dams
- Miscellaneous industries and factories

Theme: Community and Culture
- Sports and recreation
- Institutional growth: libraries, post office, schools, halls, etc.
- Religion
- Social organizations
- Education
7.0 Historical Framework for the Galt Heritage Conservation District Study Area

This section presents a historical framework for the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area. It is presented in chronological order, from the earliest human occupation to the present, and is organized by time periods. For each time period, the historical framework provides a brief narrative outlining significant events and activities. A list of significant people that are known to have shaped the settlement and development of Galt, and a timeline of key dates and events, are also presented starting with Galt’s early settlement period. Key dates and events may reflect developments both within the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area and as part of the larger settlement of Galt.

7.1 The Setting

The story, and history, of Galt begins with the Grand River, a Canadian Heritage River. The Grand River, which forms the western boundary of the study area, is one of the most important regional features in terms of precontact and early Euro-Canadian land use patterns. It provided a rich biotic environment for subsistence and was the most important transportation route between Lake Erie and the interior of southern Ontario. Prior to urbanization, the warmer and dryer forest habitats along the spillway terrace were likely dominated by oaks and maples, with lesser contributions from pine, birch, and aspen. The warmer and wetter site classes tended to include red and silver maple as well as red and white ash, while wetter site classes with a more normal ecoclimate tended to include hemlock, yellow birch, black ash, white elm, eastern white cedar, with some white spruce and balsam fir. The Grand River floodplain and associated wetlands also would have offered a wide variety of resources, including foods such as roots, tubers, greens, and berries, as well as fibres and building materials, such as bark and cedar poles (ASI 2006:1–3).

In 1846, Galt was described as a village “prettily situated on the Grand River, in a valley surrounded by high hills” (Smith 1846). Galt is located within the Waterloo Hills physiographic region (Chapman and Putnam 1984:136) and is situated on one of the extensive alluvial terraces of the Grand River spillway system. The landscape of the area is primarily defined by the Grand River valley, but to the east and west it is further bisected by relict shorelines that provide high plateaus overlooking the river. The structure of these landforms, and the specific environmental features they contain, influenced land use in Galt throughout its history.

The bedrock underlying this area is of the Guelph Formation, which is characterized by cream to buff limestone. Outcrops of this bedrock are exposed along the Grand River south of Galt and north of Galt to Preston (Presant and Wicklund 1971:12). Glacial deposits in the area include granite boulders which were used in the distinctive stone masonry buildings in Galt by Sottish stonemasons. Clay deposits in the Preston area were used to make bricks (BRAY Heritage 2008:42). The soils of the glacial moraines just east of Galt are characterized by sandy and gravelly soils which were not ideal for farming. These sand and gravel deposits, however, became the sites of large gravel extraction operations in the twentieth century (Presant and Wicklund 1971:13 and 41).
7.2 Paleo-Indian Period (11,000 B.C.E.-9,000 B.C.E.)

Southern Ontario has been occupied by human populations since the retreat of the Laurentide glacier approximately 13,000 years ago (Ferris 2013). The Paleo-Indian period refers to an archaeological period in southern Ontario related to the arrival of the first hunting bands after deglaciation approximately 13,000 to 12,500 years ago. The environment at this time consisted of an open boreal parkland, similar to the modern sub-arctic, with large Pleistocene mammals such as mastodon, mammoth, as well as herds of elk and caribou. Paleo-Indian period groups would follow these herds and travel extremely long distances over the course of the year, seldom staying in any one place for a significant length of time. Combined with low regional population levels at this time, evidence concerning Paleo-Indian period groups is very limited. Virtually all that remains of this period are the tools and by-products of their flaked stone industry, the hallmark being large distinctive fluted spear points. Paleo-Indian period sites are frequently found adjacent to the shorelines of large post-glacial lakes (Ellis and Deller 1990).

7.3 Archaic Period (9,000 B.C.E.-1,000 B.C.E.)

By approximately 10,000 years ago, the environment had progressively warmed (Edwards and Fritz 1988) and populations now occupied less extensive territories (Ellis and Deller 1990). The Archaic period is commonly divided into three sub-periods: Early Archaic (circa 9,000-7,000 B.C.E.), Middle Archaic (circa 7,000-3,000 B.C.E.), and Late Archaic (circa 3,000-1,000 B.C.E.). The annual subsistence cycle of mobile groups during this period would have likely involved interior fall and winter micro-band hunting camps, which were situated to exploit nuts and animals attracted to mast-producing forests, with much larger spring and summer macro-band settlements situated near river mouths and lakeshores to exploit rich aquatic resources. The period is characterized by an expansion in the variety of tools produced, including ground-stone tools such as axes and adzes, and notched or stemmed projectile points, with an increased reliance on local chert sources for chipped stone tools. All these changes are also reflected in the increase in the numbers and sizes of sites (Ellis et al. 1990).

7.4 Woodland Period (1,000 B.C.E.-1650 C.E.)

The Woodland period is divided into three sub-periods: Early (1,000 B.C.E.-400 B.C.E.), Middle (400 B.C.E.-900 C.E.), and Late Woodland (900-1650 C.E.). The Early Woodland period is characterized by the introduction of ceramic technology into Ontario and an expanding network of societies that shared burial rituals such as the application of red ochre (ground iron hematite) to human remains and the inclusion of exotic grave goods. Burial mounds are also common to this period. During the Middle Woodland period, populations continued to practice residential mobility and to harvest seasonally available resources, including spawning fish. Exchange and interaction networks broaden at this time (Spence et al. 1990:136, 138) and by approximately 2,000 years ago, evidence exists for macro-band camps, focusing on the seasonal harvesting of resources (Spence et al. 1990:155, 164). It is also during this period that maize was first introduced into southern Ontario, though it would have only supplemented people’s diet (Birch and Williamson 2013:13–15). Bands likely retreated to interior camps during the winter. The Late Woodland period witnessed the beginnings of the intense utilization of
horticultural crops (particularly corn) which led to decreased mobility and increased populations. Sites from this period are characterized by intense occupation and a greater degree of internal spatial organization and are commonly located on terraces overlooking the floodplains of large rivers, such as the Grand River (ASI 1997).

From approximately 900 until 1650 C.E., lifeways became more similar to those described in early historical documents. During what is described by archaeologists as the Early Iroquoian phase (1000-1300 C.E.), the communal site is replaced by the village focused on horticulture. Seasonal disintegration of the community for the exploitation of a wider territory and more varied resource base was still practiced (Williamson 1990:317). By the second quarter of the millennium, during the Middle Iroquoian phase (1300-1450 C.E.), this episodic community disintegration appears to no longer be practiced with populations now communally occupying sites throughout the year (Dodd et al. 1990:343). During the Late Iroquoian phase (1450-1650 C.E.) this process continued with the coalescence of these small villages into larger communities (Birch and Williamson 2013). Through this process, the socio-political organization of the First Nations, as described historically by the French explorers who first visited southern Ontario, was developed.

7.5 The Early Contact Period (1620s-1784)

The Attawandaron or Neutral Nation

In 1626, the Recollet missionary Joseph de la Roche Daillon recorded his visit to the villages of the Attawandaron, an Iroquoian-speaking people who were called the “Neutral Nation” (Gens Neutres) by the French in reference to the fact that this group took no part in the long-term conflicts between the people of the Wendat Confederacy of Simcoe County and the Haudenosaunee in New York. Like the Wendat (Huron), Tionontaté (Petun), and the Haudenosaunee (the Five Nations Iroquois of the state of New York), the Attawandaron people were settled village horticulturalists. The Attawandaron territory included the Grand River area, but discrete settlement clusters also extended southeast into the Niagara peninsula, and north to the Hamilton area (Lennox and Fitzgerald 1990).

The supposed neutrality of these communities did not protect them from the intertribal conflicts of the seventeenth century that were exacerbated by the intrusion of Europeans, resulting in the dispersal of the three Ontario Iroquoian confederacies (the Wendat, Tionontaté, and Attawandaron). By 1650, the Attawandaron were involved in a full-scale conflict with the Seneca, who were assisted by the Mohawk. The villages of the Attawandaron were destroyed by 1651 and their territory came to be occupied by the Mississaugas, an Algonquian people whose subsistence economy was based on hunting, fishing, and gathering wild plants. The English government recognized the Mississaugas as the “owners” of the Grand River territory and negotiated the purchase of a tract of land from them along the Grand in May 1784. This purchase facilitated a survey of lands that were officially transferred to the Haudenosaunee by Proclamation on October 25, 1784 (Cumming and Mickenberg 1977:110; Lennox and Fitzgerald 1990).
The Haudenosaunee were historically situated in what is now the state of New York between the Hudson River Valley to the east and the Great Lakes to the west though their control and influence extended over large areas of northeastern North America. The Haudenosaunee, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy, the Iroquoian League, the People of the Longhouse, and the Five Nations Iroquois, formed in the late fifteenth century and comprised five independent tribes, the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca, bound by a central constitution and common set of laws. The Confederacy was a democratic system and was known for its politically stability. In 1722, the Tuscarora joined the Iroquois Confederacy to form the Six Nations. The Haudenosaunee allied themselves with the British during the American War of Independence and, in consequence, many of their villages were destroyed by rebel forces. At the conclusion of the war, the British government offered to protect the Haudenosaunee and give them land within their boundaries (Johnston 1964).

7.6 Haldimand Tract (1784-1841)

On August 8, 1783, Frederick North, or Lord North, instructed Governor Frederick Haldimand to set apart land for the Haudenosaunee and ensure that they carried on their hunting and fur trading with the British. On May 22, 1784, a tract of land along the Grand River was purchased by the British government from the Mississaugas who lived in the vicinity (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005). The land set apart is called the Haldimand Tract (Figure 1).

Joseph Brant led 1,600 Haudenosaunee loyalists to the Haldimand tract in 1784 and in the fall of 1784, Sir Frederick Haldimand formally awarded the tract to the Mohawks “and others of the Six Nations [Iroquois].” They were authorized to “Settle upon the Banks of the River” and were allotted “for that Purpose six miles [10 km] deep from each Side of [it] beginning at Lake Erie, &c. extending in the Proportion to [its] Head.” The precise boundaries of the grant were unclear as there was no survey; for example, the northern boundary of the original deed from the Mississaugas to the Crown stated that the line extended “from the creek that falls from a small lake into…the bay known by the name of Waghquata [Burlington Bay] … until it strikes the river La Tranche [Thames].” The 1790 survey by Augustus Jones intentionally failed to include the headwaters of the Grand, an action made all the more difficult to address given the unclear description of the extent in the original deeds (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

Brant regarded the territory as his own to manage on behalf of the Confederacy and interpreted the proclamation as tantamount to full national recognition of the Mohawks and fellow tribesmen. This interpretation was strongly denied by the British (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005). Appointed as Lieutenant Governor of the new colony of Upper Canada in 1791, John Graves Simcoe refused to permit the Haudenosaunee to sell or lease any part of their reserve because they were arranged independently of the Crown. Brant, on the other hand, argued for the Haudenosaunee’s need for an immediate assured income from land sales as they could no longer hope to survive by hunting exclusively. Simcoe thought that if such practices were permitted, it could lead to other Europeans attempting to seize control of the better part of the Haudenosaunee’s reserve by any means. It was therefore unresolved as to whether
the Haudenosaunee could dispose of their lands directly to whomever they chose (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

In the first few years, Brant, who had been described by some as a Europeanized entrepreneur, took the initiative and invited white friends and acquaintances to the tract and provided them with rough land titles. Over the next 25 years (1784-1810), a considerable number of Europeans and Americans obtained similar leases authorizing them (in Brant’s opinion) to occupy and improve lots overlooking the river (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

The subsequent Peter Russel administration (1797-1798), however, recognized the leases and the sales that Brant arranged with white settlers along the Grand River Valley. Trustees were appointed to act on the behalf of the Haudenosaunee with the authority to receive payment of purchases. On the other hand, some Haudenosaunee thought that the land sale practices violated the ancient principle that land was not a “commodity which could be conveyed.” Two Mohawk sachems even tried to take up arms to depose Brant because they did not agree with his ways. Their efforts were for naught and they returned to the Bay of Quinte where other Haudenosaunee, led by Sachem John Deseronto, had settled after the American Revolution (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

A formal investigation of the matter was launched in 1812 although leases were not set aside. Due to problems of white encroachment including squatters without titles, settlers who bought land from individuals or through other transactions with the Haudenosaunee, many of the leases were confirmed by the Crown in 1834-5. Unauthorized sales and agreements remained rampant (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).

In 1841, Samuel P. Jarvis (Indian Superintendent) informed the Haudenosaunee that the only way to keep white intruders off their land would be for them to surrender it to the Crown, to be administered for their sole benefit. With this plan, the Haudenosaunee would retain lands that they actually occupied and a reserve of approximately 8,094 ha. The surrender of land was made by the Haudenosaunee in January 1841. Today, this history and those surrenders are still contested and there are numerous specific land claims that have been filed by the Haudenosaunee with the federal government regarding lands within the Haldimand Tract (Johnston 1964; Lytwyn 2005).
Figure 1: Plan shewing the Lands granted to the Six Nation Indians, situated on each side of the Grand River, or Ouse, commencing on Lake Erie, containing about 674,910 Acres. Thos. Ridout Surveyor General, survey Gen. Office York 2nd February 1821 (Library and Archives Canada, Mikan 4129506)
7.7 Early Settlement Period – from Shade’s Mills to Galt (1810s-1830s)

In 1816, the Niagara-based merchant and lawyer William Dickson (Figure 4) purchased more than 90,000 acres of land that later formed the boundary of Dumfries Township. Surveys were quickly carried out, and a lot and concession system came into effect. Generally, the lotting pattern in the township ran along a north-south axis and took the road network as the organizing principle. However, along the Grand River, lots were laid out along an east-west axis. Dickson and his agent Absalom Shade (Figure 3) travelled the lands and ultimately selected the point where Mill Creek meets the Grand River for settlement and a town site. The combination of the lotting pattern and river juncture enabled a small community to grow. By the end of 1816, Shade began operating a grist mill and built a two-storey log house. Over the following few years, the community became known as Shade’s Mills and grew to include a distillery, blacksmith shop, tavern, and other mills and log houses. It was Shade, though, who quickly established himself as the most important figure in the community’s early development. Besides opening a new grist mill and a sawmill, he supplied most of the funds for the construction of the first bridge over the Grand River on Main Street in 1819 (Figure 2). Further, he became the primary merchant in the community when he opened his “Red” Store, which operated on credit, at the southwest corner of Main and Water Streets in 1824. Eight years later, he opened the “White” Store, which operated on cash, on the southeast corner of the same intersection. As such, he had a monopoly on trade goods in addition to his extensive landholding and milling operations (Quantrell n.d.; Quantrell 2015; Waterloo Region Museum 2015; City of Cambridge n.d.).

The fertile soil in the surrounding countryside, along with the availability of mill sites, made the location an attractive area for settlers, who began to arrive by 1817. Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, Dickson enthusiastically promoted Scottish settlement to the area, and many Presbyterian Scots arrived, including skilled labourers, artisans, and farmers. In 1825, the first post office opened, and Dickson named it Galt in honour of his friend John Galt, Commissioner of the Canada Company. The name for the settlement did not really take hold until Galt himself visited in 1827, when he came to work on connecting the community to the Canada Company’s new settlement of Guelph by a road (BRAY Heritage 2008; Quantrell n.d.; Waterloo Region Museum 2015; City of Cambridge n.d.). Throughout the late 1820s and early 1830s, Galt continued to grow. By 1834, the population was about 250 with the community serving the larger agricultural countryside. That year, a cholera epidemic hit Galt, with some estimates suggesting 20% of the population died from the outbreak which lasted more than a year. The community continued to thrive though, and by the end of the 1830s, Galt was home to a post office, mills, and stores, churches, a school, a debating society, a hotel, a subscription library, curling club, amateur band, and an agricultural society (Young 1880; Quantrell n.d.).

The settlement period came to an end when two notable projects occurred in the late 1830s. First was the construction of the Galt Dam and Mill Race Canal in 1837. Located on the Grand River just north of Park Hill Road, this endeavour provided waterpower for anticipated factories and helped propel Galt’s growth and economic development in subsequent decades. Second was the erection of the Township Hall in 1838. Built on the present site of Cambridge City Hall on Dickson Street, the hall was an important community meeting space, indicative of a maturity in the town’s overall development (Quantrell n.d.; Hill 1984; Jaffray Brothers 1902).
Key People

- William Dickson (1769-1862) – Niagara based lawyer who purchased what would become Dumfries Township in 1816 and was one of the founders of Shade’s Mills/Galt
- Absalom Shade (1793-1862) – One of the founders of Shade’s Mills/Galt and a prominent property owner, mill owner, merchant, postmaster, and politician in its early days
- John Galt (1779-1839) – Famous Scottish writer who became superintendent of the Canada Company and the man for whom the town is named

Timeline

- 1816 – William Dickson purchases more than 90,000 acres that later formed the boundary of Dumfries Township
- 1816 – Dickson and his agent Absalom Shade select where Mill Creek meets the Grand River for the settlement of what is first called Shade’s Mills
- 1819 – Shade completes construction of a new grist mill and sawmill
- 1819 – First bridge over the Grand River is built at what is now Main Street
- 1824 – Shade’s “Red” store begins operations
- 1825 – First post office opens and community’s name changes to Galt
- 1832 – Shade’s “White” store begins operations
- 1834-35 – Cholera outbreak in Galt
- 1835 – St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church is completed
- 1837 – Galt Dam and Mill Race Canal are built
- 1837 – Galt-Dundas Road is macadamized
- 1838 – Township Hall is built
Figure 2: Rough sketch of Shade’s Mills in the year 1820, looking northwest (City of Cambridge Archives)

Figure 3: Absalom Shade (Idea Exchange)

Figure 4: William Dickson (Idea Exchange)
Map 12: Galt’s early settlement period was characterized by the construction of mills, stores, civic institutions, and homes, most of which were built along the Grand River.
7.8 Industrialization and Community Formation (1840s-1850s)

The 1840s and 1850s marked the beginning of industrialization and development of civic infrastructure and community organization in Galt. Perhaps most important in this transformation was the emergence of foundries and industrial textile production in the early 1840s. Most notable were Duncan Fisher’s Galt Foundry and Machine Works (changed to Cowan & Co. in 1879), Dumfries Foundry (changed to Goldie & McCulloch Co. in 1859), and Dickson Mills (Quantrell n.d.; Jaffray Brothers 1902). Many of these operations were being built on Water Street North and South to capitalize on the production power of the Grand River. By 1846, Smith’s Gazetteer noted that “in milling and manufacturing, the place [Galt] is fast rising into prosperity; and already begins to assume the appearance of a town” (Smith 1846). The industrial presence continued unabated in the following decade, with factories, foundries, machine shops, distilleries, and mills producing a diverse array of products. Other professional, artisanal, and commercial enterprises were evident as well.

Given the diversity of employment opportunities, the town began to grow at a rapid pace. There were approximately 250 inhabitants in 1834, but in just over 15 years, Galt’s population had increased by 800%, reaching about 2,250 people when it incorporated as a village in 1850 (Young 1880; Quantrell n.d.). Indeed, Galt was a regional hub; in addition to the local population, people came from the surrounding countryside to participate in its economic and social opportunities and assets. Despite Galt’s notoriety and higher population, Berlin (Kitchener) was chosen as the County Town when Waterloo County was created in 1852. Soon thereafter, the Grand Trunk Railway was built, and it too opted to pass through Berlin rather than Galt. These developments allowed Berlin to industrialize and grow at a faster pace than Galt throughout the second half of the nineteenth century (Waterloo Region Museum 2015). Completed in 1855, the first railway to pass through Galt was minor in comparison, since it was only a branch line of the Great Western Railway.

Despite these events that redirected growth towards Kitchener, Galt continued to grow in the 1850s and by this time had a strong commercial stretch along Main Street. However, in 1851, 1856, and 1862, fires destroyed many of the wooden structures in this business district and contributed to the construction of stone block buildings in the 1860s (Quantrell n.d.). In 1857, Galt was incorporated as a town. That same year, several prominent buildings were erected, including the Farmers’ Market, Central School, and the Gore Bank. Furthermore, Concession Street Bridge provided a third option for people to cross the Grand River, leading to greater population growth and industrialization on the west side of town in the decades thereafter. A new stone Town Hall was begun in 1857 and completed in 1858 (Figure 5) (BRAY Heritage 2008; Quantrell n.d.). An 1858 view of Galt, pictured below, is one of the first images that shows this bustling community (Figure 6).

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1 Smith elaborated further, noting that there were: “Three physicians and surgeons, two lawyers, one apothecary, two grist mills (each containing four run of stones), two saw mills, two foundries, two carding machines and cloth factories, one brewery, two distilleries, one tannery, eight stores, one pail factory, one last factory, one chemist and druggist, nine taverns, two groceries, one veterinary surgeon, one printer, seven blacksmiths, one saddler, one watchmaker, five wagon makers, eight tailors, one cabinet maker, four shoemakers, three bakers, two chair factories, three tinsmiths, three butchers, two livery stables, four coopers, one gunsmith, one edge-tool maker, ten carpenters, one painter, one tallow chandler, one school.” Furthermore, there were stage coaches which ran daily to Hamilton and Guelph, and three times a week to Goderich.
Key People

- Adam Ainslie (1806-1896) – Important lawyer and politician in Galt and Waterloo Township
- James Ainslie (1821-1873) – Co-founder of the Galt Reporter and later founder of the Dumfries Reformer
- Andrew Elliott (1809-1890) – Prominent landowner, distillery owner, and the first reeve of the incorporated Village of Galt
- Morris Lutz (1806-1876) – Business entrepreneur who established a foundry and farm implement factory, first president of the Galt Mechanics’ Institute, and the first mayor of the Town of Galt

Timeline

- 1840 – A second bridge crossing the Grand River is built at Queen Street (Park Hill Road)
- 1842 – The first foundry, Duncan Fisher’s Galt Foundry and Machine Works, opens on Water Street North
- 1842 – Dickson Mills is established under Adam Ker’s management
- 1844 – Dumfries Courier newspaper is established by Ben Hearle
- 1844 – Dumfries Foundry is founded by James Andrews and James Crombie
- 1846 – Galt Reporter newspaper is established by Peter Jaffray and James Ainslie
- 1846 – Knox’s Presbyterian Church is completed
- 1847 – Dumfries Foundry moves to Grand Avenue on the west side of the Grand River
- 1850 – Dumfries Reformer newspaper is established by James Ainslie
- 1850 – Galt is incorporated as a village
- 1851 – Major fire destroys many businesses in the commercial district
- 1852 – Dumfries Township splits into North and South, with North Dumfries included as part of the new Waterloo County and South Dumfries joining the new Brant County
- 1852 – Galt Grammar School opens and is the forerunner to Galt Collegiate Institute
- 1853 – Mechanics Institute is established and merges with the Subscription and Circulating Library
- 1854 – Both the Main Street Bridge and Queen Street Bridge destroyed by flooding
- 1855 – A branch line of the Great Western Railway is the first railway to pass through Galt; the Galt and Guelph Railway extends the line to Preston (1856) and Guelph (1857)
- 1856 – Fire destroys many buildings along Main Street
- 1857 – Galt is incorporated as a town
- 1857 – First bridge crossing at Concession Street is erected
- 1858 – New stone Town Hall and Market Building is erected, designed by architect H.B. Sinclair
- 1859 – John Goldie and Hugh McCulloch purchase the Dumfries Foundry
- 1859 – Robert Turnbull founds the Turnbull Knitting Company
Figure 5: Laying the cornerstone for the Town Hall, Galt, 1857 (City of Cambridge Archives)

Figure 6: Looking west on Main Street from Centennial Park plateau, 1858 (City of Cambridge Archives)
This time period marked the beginning of industrialization and development of civic infrastructure in Galt, with industrial development focused along the Grand River and along the rail line.
7.9 The “Manchester of Canada”: Economic, Industrial and Social Developments (1860s-1914)

Spurred on by the arrival of the railway, Galt continued to grow rapidly in both population and geographic coverage. In 1861, the population was about 3,000, but grew to about 5,000 in 1877 – at which point it was still the largest town in Waterloo County – and by the end of this period, it had reached approximately 12,000 (Quantrell n.d.). A vibrant commercial core was concentrated near the intersection of Main and Water Streets (Figure 13 and Figure 14). Similarly, the town had grown in all directions from its concentrated hub around the study area. Schools, churches, and some smaller industries had moved away from the downtown core toward the new residential areas. Perhaps the most influential champion of Galt’s phenomenal growth was James Young, the newspaper owner, politician, and community leader widely referred to as “Galt’s most famous son” (Figure 7).

Around the 1860s, Galt started to become known as the “Manchester of Canada” (Young 1880; Quantrell 2015; City of Cambridge n.d.). This was an homage to the English city which had spawned the Industrial Revolution, and which continued to be a leading industrial and manufacturing centre. Galt had a diverse array of industry, including textile factories, edge-tool works, flouring mills, foundries, tanneries, and other varied sites (Waterloo Region Museum 2015; Young 1880). Leading industrialists in the second half of the nineteenth century included John Goldie and Hugh McCullough (Figure 8 and Figure 9). The town’s industrial might was contributing to its economic growth, and in 1867 Galt could boast as being among the wealthiest towns in the province. Many new banks were erected, as were insurance providers such as the Gore Mutual Insurance Company (Figure 12). Furthermore, new industries continued to get built throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Industry was especially concentrated on Water Street North and around Mill Creek (Figure 10 and Figure 11). Among the leading operations was the C. Turnbull Factory which used Galt’s first electricity-powered generating machinery at their new facility on Water Street North in 1890 (BRAY Heritage 2008; Quantrell n.d.). Large-scale water-works systems, as well as electrification, began two decades later, with power coming from Niagara. Another major addition to industry came in 1899 when Goldie Milling Co. purchased the Stockwell Mill from the Todd Milling Company near the corner of Bruce and Ainslie Streets. It became the Canadian Cereal and Milling Co. in 1910 (Quantrell n.d.).

Galt’s social and cultural life also flourished between the 1860s and the turn of the century. Among the most important developments were the organization of the Y.M.C.A., the introduction of a variety of sports leagues, the formation of a dramatics club and the philharmonic society, and the creation of lawn bowling and rugby associations. To help provide leisure space, Jackson Park was created in 1902 (renamed Soper Park in 1920) and Lincoln Park was established in 1905. Various women’s organizations were established, including the Silver Star Society (1891), the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (1903), and the Galt Women’s Institute (1906) (Quantrell n.d.).

Several major transit developments occurred in this period. In 1873, for instance, the Grand Trunk Railway completed an extension between Berlin and Galt. Six years later, the Credit Valley Railway was built. Both helped spur Galt’s industrial and economic development by facilitating greater distribution and access to trade goods. Finally, in 1894, the Galt and Preston Street Railway was established as an interurban electric railway; the line was extended to Hespeler in 1896 (Quantrell n.d.; Hill 1984).
Key People

- James Young (1835-1913) – Owner of the Dumfries Reformer, a town councillor, a federal and provincial parliamentarian, and a community leader
- Adam Warnock (1828-1902) – Merchant, factory owner, Vice President of the Gore Mutual Insurance Company, and founder and president of the Galt Knitting Company
- Charles Turnbull (1858-1924) – Owner of the C. Turnbull Company Limited which made woolen goods
- Fred W. Mellish (1860-1928) – Notable local architect who designed the Gore Mutual Insurance Co. headquarters, the Scott Opera House, the Galt General Hospital, Carnegie Library, Market building, the Hotel Iroquois, and the fire hall amongst others
- Adam Ker (1809-1879) – Important business leader, the first Town Clerk, and Mayor of Galt from 1868-74
- Elizabeth Gibson – Superintendent of Galt’s first hospital

Timeline

- 1865 – Grand Trunk Railway absorbs the Galt and Guelph Railway
- 1871 – Craigie Lea property belonging to Andrew Elliott shifts into building lots
- 1873 – Grand Trunk Railway officially opened, becoming Galt’s second railway
- 1876 – Cant, Gourlay & Co. (Galt Machine Works) opens after four years of construction; becomes MacGregor, Gourlay Ltd. in 1880
- 1878 – Empress of India paddle-wheel steamboat crash results in eight deaths
- 1879 – Credit Valley Railway established through the north end of town, with the largest iron bridge ever built in Canada to that point
- 1881 – Galt Knitting Co. is founded by Adam Warnock, and renamed Tiger Brand in 1954
- 1882 – Peter Hay Knife Co. (Galt Machine Knife Works) is established
- 1883 – Credit Valley Railway becomes part of the Canadian Pacific Railway network
- 1884 – Women vote in municipal elections for the first time
- 1885 – Post Office opens at 12 Water Street South and was designed by prominent government architect Thomas Fuller
- 1890 – Galt General Hospital opens
- 1894 – Galt and Preston Street Railway is established, operating an interurban electric railway; the line was extended to Hespeler in 1896 and the name changed to the Galt, Preston, and Hespeler Street Railway Company
- 1896 – Galt Reporter publishes a daily for the first time
- 1904 – Galt Football (Soccer) Club wins the gold medal at 1904 Olympics in St. Louis and the Galt Baseball Club wins the Canadian Baseball League Championship
- 1905 – Construction of the Carnegie Library
- 1907 – First Old Boys reunion is held to celebrate 50 years of Galt’s town status
- 1913 – Timber dam on the Grand River is replaced by concrete
Figure 7: James Young (Idea Exchange)

Figure 8: John Goldie (Idea Exchange)

Figure 9: Hugh McCulloch (Idea Exchange)
Figure 10: The Cowan Company Foundry on Water Street North, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library)

Figure 11: Factories along the Grand River, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library)
Figure 12: Gore Block at the corner of Main and Ainslie Streets, 1902, not extant (Toronto Public Library)
Figure 13: Corner of Water and Main Streets, 1910, view northeast (Toronto Public Library)

Figure 14: Main Street looking west, 1910 (Toronto Public Library)
Map 14: During this time period, the town of Galt expanded in all directions. Industrial development extended along the rail line and industrial and commercial development extended to the west side of the Grand River.
7.10 War and Inter-War Years (1914-1945)

This era begins with the onset of the First World War (1914-18) and concludes with the end of hostilities in the Second World War (1939-45). In between came both highs and lows, including the formation of the City of Galt in 1915 (Figure 16) and the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The onset of war contributed to several significant developments. Among the most important was the building of the Galt Armoury in 1914 (Figure 15), erected on the site of the first grist mill (Dumfries Mill). In 1915, the beginning of vast numbers of Galtonians began to leave for the war. Many joined the Highland Light Infantry of Canada or the “Galt’s Own” 111th Battalion (Figure 17). Three men, Frederick Hobson, Samuel Honey, and George Fraser Kerr won the Victoria Cross for valour, though Kerr was the only survivor (Quantrell n.d.). On the home front, devastation struck multiple times, with fire destroying the Imperial Hotel and the Grandstand at Dickson Park in 1916 and flooding wreaking havoc to the Main Street and Concession Street Bridges in 1918.

In the aftermath of the war, several important social, cultural, and athletic organizations were formed in Galt, both inside and outside of the study area. Chief among them were the Inter-County Baseball Association (1919), the Galt Amateur Athletic Association (1919), the Great War Veterans’ Association (1919), the Galt Council of the Knights of Columbus (1920), the Kiwanis Club (1921), the Galt Little Theatre (1923), the Galt Orchestral Society (1924), and the Royal Canadian Legion (1928). Other social and/or athletic infrastructure followed, including hockey arenas, baseball fields, and a new Grand Stand for Dickson Park, all of which are outside of the study area (Quantrell n.d.). The construction of the Capitol Theatre in 1930 was another important social development, and movies were so popular in the 1930s that there were three theatres in the City of Galt by the end of the decade.

Despite these developments, trials and tribulations were ever present. In 1929, for example, major flooding caused a quarter of a million dollars in damages (Figure 18). In the 1930s, the Depression led to several acquisitions and buyouts at manufacturing operations. At the same time, the Depression contributed to the development and completion of several infrastructure projects, including the modernization of the city’s waterworks and new bridges for Main Street (1931), Queen Street (1934), and Concession Street (1935) (Quantrell n.d.).

The onset of the Second World War spurred rapid development of organizations, infrastructure, and activities. The Galt Aircraft School was erected in 1939; there was a major salvage drive in 1940; the Galt War and Community Services formed in 1940; a naval section was added to the Aircraft School in 1941; and the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service (Wrens) formed in 1942 (Quantrell n.d.).
Key People

- Archie Crealock – Designed all three bridges that cross Grand River in study area
- Frederick Hobson, Samuel Honey, and George Fraser Kerr – Victoria Cross winners during the First World War
- Margaret Secord – First female councillor elected to City government in 1922

Timeline

- 1914-18 – First World War takes place
- 1916 – The Imperial Hotel is destroyed by fire
- 1917 – Bell Telephone building on Ainslie Street is built
- 1919 – Merchants Bank (later the Bank of Montreal) built at Main and Water Streets
- 1919 – Galt women vote in provincial elections for the first time
- 1923 – Merger of Goldie & McCulloch Company with Babcock & Wilcox
- 1929 – Major flooding causes significant damage
- 1930 – Galt War Memorial erected on the site of the former Scott’s Opera House
- 1930-39 – The Great Depression
- 1931 – The Main Street bowstring arch bridge opens
- 1936 – New Post Office building at corner of Dickson and Water St. North constructed
- 1939-45 – Second World War takes place
- 1943 – The first synagogue, the B’Nai Israel Congregation Synagogue, opens
- 1944 – Goldie Milling Co. mill bought by Phenix family who form Phenix Milling Co. Ltd.
Figure 15: The Armoury upon its completion, 1914, extant (City of Cambridge)

Figure 16: Procession through downtown Galt for designation of new city status (City of Cambridge Archives)
Figure 17: 111th Battalion CEF at their Farewell Parade, 1916 (City of Cambridge Archives)

Figure 18: Flooding in downtown Galt, 1929 (City of Cambridge)
Map 15: Between WWI and WWII, a number of social spaces were established in Galt. This snapshot from 1929 shows that there were no parks within the study area boundary.
7.11 Postwar Developments (1945-1973)

One of the most important postwar developments was the community’s significant population increase. Overall, Galt’s population rose from approximately 14,500 in 1940 to approximately 39,000 in the early 1970s (Quantrell n.d.). Of particular note was the arrival of Portuguese immigrants from the Azores Islands. That population growth was significant enough to warrant the formation of a Portuguese Club in 1960 and the erection of Our Lady of Fatima Church in 1966, both of which were outside of the study area, to serve this overwhelmingly Catholic population (Quantrell n.d.).

Coinciding with this population growth was the development of supporting institutions, including a substantial expansion in both elementary and secondary schools as well as churches, park facilities, and swimming pools, primarily outside of the study area. Many social organizations emerged, such as the Optimist Club, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Kinsmen Club, and the Galt Rotary Club. A wide variety of sports continued to be an important pastime for residents (Quantrell n.d.).

Even with the demolition and/or demise of some key industrial facilities such as the Cowan & Co. factory on Water Street North, manufacturing operations continued to be the most important form of employment in the post war period. In 1961, for instance, Galt had nearly 100 manufacturing establishments which employed almost 7000 people (Presant and Wicklund 1971). Galt’s textile industry, for one, was among the most important in Ontario during this period and remained an important industry within the study area. Dobbie Industries, Inc., owned by George A. Dobbie, combined the holdings of Newlands & Co., the C. Turnbull Co., Ltd., and Stauffer-Dobbie Ltd. to become the largest privately owned textile business in the country, employing approximately 1300 people in the mid-1960s (Quantrell 2015). Babcock and Wilcox Canada Ltd., which purchased the Goldie-McCullough Company in 1923, continued to be a major employer, and remains so today.

On the whole, though, this period marked the beginning of the decline of major industry within the study area boundary. Downtown factories were getting phased out here, as they were elsewhere in Ontario, and suburban factories emerged which could be served by both railways and transport trucks. Some of the major new industrial operations of this period included Canadian General Tower Ltd., Joy-Sullivan Ltd., Galtex Ltd., and Allen-Bradley Canada Ltd, all of which were found outside of the study area. Indeed, many of these new companies, as well as those that had been operating for generations, decided to open (or move) operations away from the downtown. While some opened to the south of the city, the majority have moved north, capitalizing on the area’s proximity to Highway 401, which opened in 1960. The disappearance of many of the large industrial buildings from the downtown core is visible in the contrasting aerial photographs from 1945 and 1967, below (Figure 19 and Figure 20).
Key People

- George A. Dobbie – Owner of Dobbie Industries Ltd., a major textile operation

Timeline

- 1954 – The Galt Knitting Company is reorganized as Tiger Brand
- 1955 – The electric rail system ends passenger services
- 1956 – Two C.P.R. trains collide leading to the collapse of a bridge over Water Street North
- 1957 – The old Cowan & Co. factory on Water Street North is demolished
- 1959 – Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip visit Galt as part of their Royal Tour
- 1960 – Highway 401 opens
- 1967 – Multiscreen Corporation Ltd founded in Galt (forerunner to IMAX Corp)
- 1970 – Stewart Fyfe’s report was released and recommended that the City of Galt be combined with the towns of Preston and Hespeler within the new Regional Municipality of Waterloo
- 1971 – Former head office of Gore Mutual Insurance Co. at Main and Ainslie is demolished and in its place is a new branch of Bank of Nova Scotia
- 1972 – Dobbie Industries Ltd. goes into receivership
Figure 19: Aerial photograph of downtown Galt, 1945 (City of Cambridge Archives)

Figure 20: Aerial photograph of Galt, 1967 (City of Cambridge Archives)
7.12 The New City of Cambridge (1973-Present)

In 1973, Galt, Hespeler, Preston, Blair, and parts of the Townships of North Dumfries and Waterloo amalgamated to form the City of Cambridge, now in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. Many residents still felt tied to their former communities and, as such, identity for Cambridge as a whole remains complex, shaped as it was by its historic communities. Efforts to embrace the distinct character of its historic communities coincided with efforts to carve out a vision for the future while also promoting the idea of a collective heritage, particularly by tying together the communities via the Grand River (BRAY Heritage 2008).

Since the 1970s, there has been significant development of organizations, resources, and buildings to service the growth and diversity in population. Houses, condominiums, apartment buildings, and seniors’ centres have been erected. Plus, many schools, libraries, and sports and leisure facilities have been constructed (Figure 23). In terms of the study area, perhaps the most significant item has been the redevelopment of the Old Town Hall site and reintegration of City Hall into that block. Also coinciding with the growth in population has been greater diversity in employment. The former City of Galt, like much of the rest of Canada, experienced economic stagnation and industrial decline in the 1970s and 1980s (Quantrell n.d.). While a few former industrial buildings have been repurposed for other uses, most of them have been demolished and, as such, the concentration of industrial buildings within the study area has disappeared.

One of the defining moments for the new City of Cambridge came early on in its history as the new municipal entity. In May 1974, a massive flood caused approximately $5 million in damages in the former Galt core (Figure 21 and Figure 22). This led the City of Cambridge, in association with the Grand River Conservation Authority, to engage in the redevelopment of the riverbank. First, in 1977, Mill Race Park was completed on former industrial lands; this development was followed by the introduction of flood protection measures such as earth berms, concrete walls, deepening the channel, and development restrictions in the 1980s (Martin 2014).

The amalgamation of the City of Cambridge, combined with immigration, has contributed to a significant population boom; in 1973, the population of Cambridge as a whole was approximately 65,000, but that number jumped to 100,000 around 1996 and to more than 130,000 by 2010 (Quantrell n.d.). As the population has grown, it has also become more diverse, with people from all over the world now calling Cambridge home. Also coinciding with the growth in population has been greater diversity in employment. The Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area is located within the Downtown Cambridge Urban Growth Centre. The Region of Waterloo’s Official Plan indicates that this area will be planned and developed to achieve a minimum gross density of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare by 2029 or earlier (Region of Waterloo 2015:22).
Key People

- Claudette Millar – First mayor of the City of Cambridge in 1973-74 and again from 1979-88
- Ralph Walker – Founder and president of the Huntington Society of Canada from 1973-98
- Ron Shaver – Professional figure skater and winner of the Canadian Men’s Figure Skating Championship in 1977
- Jane Brewer – Mayor of Cambridge from 1988 to 2000
- Max Saltsman – New Democratic Party Member of Parliament in the area from 1964-79
- Jack Etherton – Known as Mr. Theatre for his long-time service for the Galt Little Theatre

Timeline

- 1973 – Galt, Hespeler, Preston, Blair, and parts of the Townships of North Dumfries and Waterloo amalgamate to form the City of Cambridge, now in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo
- 1973 – Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip visit Riverside Park to a crowd of 4000
- 1973 – First mall opens on Hespeler Road
- 1974 – Major flooding spurs redevelopment efforts
- 1974 – Dundas Street overpass is completed allowing traffic to pass over the railway corridor
- 1975 – Iroquois Hotel is destroyed by fire
- 1976 – Formation of the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC)
- 1977 – Mill Race Park opens
- 1978 – New Concession Street Bridge opens
- 1978 – Capitol Theatre on Water Street South closes after 48 years and is demolished in 1995
- 1980 – National headquarters for the Kinsmen Clubs opens
- 1982 – Closure of the Canada Machinery Corporation, formerly Cant, Gourlay and Co.
- 1984 – Demolition of the Albion Hotel at Park Hill Road and Water Street
- 1985 – First Heritage Conservation District designation in Cambridge for the south side of Main Street between Water and Ainslie Streets
- 1988 – Toyota opens an auto manufacturing plant
- 1991 – Closure of the Woolco department store on Main Street
- 1993 – Cambridge Transit terminal opens on Ainslie Street South, formerly the site of the Newlands textile plant
- 2001 – The Cambridge Centre for the Arts opens
- 2002 – New Park Hill Road Bridge opens, replacing 1934 structure
- 2008 – New Cambridge City Hall opens
Figure 21: Flooding at the Main Street Bridge, 1974 (Kitchener Public Library)

Figure 22: Flooding in downtown Galt, 1974 (City of Cambridge)
Figure 23: Aerial photograph, 1984 (City of Cambridge Archives)
Map 16: Over the last fifty years, downtown Galt has lost many of its industries. The removal of some of the industrial buildings along the Grand River has led to the creation of new green space and park land.
8.0 Conclusion

The Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area is strongly defined by the Grand River. For thousands of years, the Grand River and its tributaries, including Mill Creek, influenced where and how people travelled, where people settled, and where people farmed or developed industries. Lots were laid out perpendicular to the river, in an east-west direction in this area, as opposed to a north-south axis throughout the rest of the Township. The point where Mill Creek meets the Grand River was selected by William Dickson and Absalom Shade as an ideal location for settlement in 1816. Nestled in the river valley with relict shorelines to the east and west, the early settlement of Shade’s Mills/Galt quickly grew as a town site, supporting the early settlers attracted to the fertile soil in the surrounding countryside. The Grand River and the construction of the Galt Dam and Mill Race Canal in 1837 provided waterpower for anticipated factories, setting the stage for Galt’s growth and economic development in subsequent decades.

Galt quickly established itself as an industrial town with a diverse array of industry, including textile factories, edge tool works, flouring mills, foundries, tanneries, and other varied sites, and was known for a time as the “Manchester of Canada.” The town’s industrial might contributed to its economic growth and social development between the 1860s and the turn of the century. During this time, industry was especially concentrated on Water Street North and around the railway corridor adjacent to Mill Creek, but Galt continued to grow rapidly in all directions from its historical core well into the twentieth century.

While some key industrial facilities closed in the post-World War II period, manufacturing operations continued to be the most important form of employment during that time. In particular, Galt’s textile industry remained an important sector within the study area. Overall, however, the post-war period marked the beginning of the decline of major industry within the study area boundary. Like elsewhere in Ontario, downtown factories were getting phased out and suburban factories emerged which could be served by both railways and transport trucks. Many industries decided to open or move operations north of the study area in proximity to Highway 401, which opened in 1960.

The City of Cambridge was formed in 1973 through the amalgamation of Galt, Hespeler, Preston, Blair, and parts of the Townships of North Dumfries and Waterloo. The former City of Galt, like much of the rest of Canada, experienced economic stagnation, and industrial decline in the 1970s and 1980s. As industry left the area, many industrial buildings were demolished but others were repurposed for other uses. The historical core of Galt still features a number of landmark civic and institutional buildings, as well as commercial and residential structures that are directly associated with that industrial past.

Through it all, the Galt Core Heritage Conservation District study area continued to be defined by the Grand River. Following a massive flood in 1974, many riverside industrial buildings were demolished and replaced by concrete walls, earth berms, and other flood protection measures. Mill Race Park was completed on these former industrial lands, on the site of the original Mill Race Canal. Today, Mill Race Park and the Grand River forms the backdrop to many social events and gatherings in Galt. The park is also the site of the official Grand River Canadian Heritage River Designation plaque.
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Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Study

City of Cambridge
Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting
April 15, 2021
Objective

• Provide an update of work completed to date

• Synthesize and present results of:
  • Historical research and study area evolution
  • Public consultation and property owner engagement
  • Survey and preliminary character analysis

• Facilitate discussion with MHAC to receive feedback and insights about:
  • Stand-out themes or characteristics within the study area that are unique to this area of Galt
  • Public and stakeholder perceptions of Galt’s historical core boundary
Project Status Update

**Completed to Date (January – March 2021):**

- Historical Research and Thematic Framework
- Historic Mapping Review, Secondary and Primary Source Research, and Study Area Evolution
- Public/Online Consultation
- Workshops with Property Owners
- Property and Streetscape Survey
- Policy Review

**To Be Completed (April – July 2021):**

- Public Open Houses to Provide Study Updates
- Character Analysis and Mapping
- Heritage Evaluation and Statement of Significance
- Boundary Delineation
- Public Information Session 2
- Recommendations to MHAC
- Recommendations to Council
The Grand River, which forms the western boundary of the study area, is one of the most important regional features in terms of precontact and early Euro-Canadian land use patterns. It provided a rich biotic environment for subsistence and was the most important transportation route between Lake Erie and the interior of southern Ontario.

As was the case in many parts of southern Ontario, the Grand River would have encouraged occupation by human populations, beginning 13,000 years ago.

Plan shewing lands granted to the Six Nations on either side of the Grand River, 1821

Smoking pipes dating to approximately 1280-1340 A.D, excavated near Water Street and Meyers Road.
The natural beauty of Galt and its surroundings, has been much admired, and seldom fails to arrest the attention of strangers. It can boast little, perhaps, of the grand or sublime in Nature, but its scenery may be described, nevertheless, as strikingly picturesque and pleasing. As Mr. Shade surveyed the scene stretched out before him during that July afternoon in 1816, it must have appeared infinitely grander than at the present time. The gently-sloping, oval-shaped valley at his feet, the waters of the Grand River* passing—like a broad band of silver—straight through its centre, the graceful hills encircling around, and the luxuriant profusion of summer foliage rising from the centre, tier above tier, until the highest peaks of the sombre pines upon the bluffs were reached—these peculiarities of the landscape, so suggestive of a vast natural amphitheatre, must have made up a striking and beautiful picture. It must have looked like an immense Coliseum in leaves!

Rough Sketch of Shade’s Mills, 1820

Excerpt from James Young’s 1880 Reminiscences of the early history of Galt and the settlement of Dumfries in the Province of Ontario
Downtown Galt Evolution

1816
William Dickson and Absalom Shade begin Shade’s Mills settlement

1819
Shade’s new grist mill and sawmill are completed

1825
First post office and name changes to Galt

1837
Galt Dam and Mill Canal are built

1842
First foundry opens on Water Street North

1850
Galt incorporated as a Village

Dumfries Township, 1822
Marcus Smith, Topographical Map, 1851
Downtown Galt Evolution

Galt as the “Manchester of Canada”

1860s-1914

Rapid intensification of Galt’s built form

1860s

Continued incremental growth of Galt’s built form including key Civic and Institutional buildings

1870s-1920s

Formation of the City of Galt

1915

Major flooding causes significant damage

1929

Corner of Water and Main Streets, 1910

Galt, 1910
Downtown Galt Evolution

1930s
Depression Era works projects modernize bridges crossing the Grand River

1950s-70s
Decline of industrial base while population of Galt more than doubles

1973
Galt amalgamates with other communities to form new City of Cambridge with Galt as civic centre

1974
Major flooding spurs redevelopment of the riverbank and Park land created on former industrial lands

2008
New Cambridge City Hall opens returning to original site

Aerial view of Downtown Galt, 1967
Public Consultation and Engagement

- Public Information Centre #1
  (February 8, 2021)

- Online Survey
  (February 9 to March 2, 2021)

- Property Owners Workshops
  (March 10, 2021)
Engagement Results:
Areas that Reflect Galt’s Historical Character

• The darker the shade of green reflects the areas that people have identified as reflecting Galt’s historical character
Engagement Results:
Areas that Detract From Galt’s Historical Character

• The darker the colour reflects areas that people have identified as detracting from Galt’s historical; character
Engagement Results: Edges and Limits of Historical Core of Galt

- 22 boundaries laid out
- The darker the colour, the more people suggested that area’s inclusion within a prospective boundary
- Concentrated areas of boundary alignment correspond to topographic patterns associated with the Grand River
Preliminary Character Analysis

- Historical information was collected for each property to record information about the history of each parcel and establish an approximate period of construction
- 272 properties with 251 buildings were surveyed and documented digitally
- Built Form Analysis and Streetscape Character Analysis conducted
- Change over time analyzed using historical research, thematic framework and historical mapping
Topography
Date of Construction, pre-1840-1879
Date of Construction, pre-1840-1919
Date of Construction, pre-1840-1959
Date of Construction, pre-1840 to the present
Lot, Street and Block Patterns
Current Land Use and Original Building Typology
Discussion Points for Tonight

- Questions or reactions to the material presented tonight and/or in Technical Memo #1.
- Residential areas to the north and south. What are their qualities? Are they different or similar?
- Are there City-wide events, uses, and/or community gatherings that happen in downtown Galt?
- Industrial operations were an important employment base in the 19th century. Were there other employment sectors of note? We have heard and reviewed some sources that discuss Galt as an ‘Insurance’ town.
- What smaller communities does Galt support and serve? Historically and presently?
- Reactions to how people are defining boundaries around Galt’s historical core.