



COUNTY OF LAMBTON

OFFICIAL PLAN

October 1, 2020 Office Consolidation

Adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the County of Lambton September 17, 2017 by By-Law No. 25 of 2017.

Approved with modifications March 21, 2018 by Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Declared by Local Planning Appeals Tribunal on April 4, 2019 to be in force and effect save portions under appeal.

Declared by Local Planning Appeals Tribunal September 18, 2020 to be in full force and effect.

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The Lambton County Official Plan

Chapter 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Political, Policy, and Legislative Framework

The County of Lambton is comprised of 11 local municipalities, ranging from highly urbanized to predominantly rural municipalities. Consequently, the County and its local municipalities face a wide range of planning issues.

The County of Lambton has a long history of County planning dating back to 1978 when the “Lambton County Planning Area” was established for the purposes of preparing a County-wide Official Plan and providing technical planning advisory services to the local municipalities. That first County Official Plan was adopted by County Council in 1981 and approved by the Province in September 1982, and was used to guide local municipalities in the preparation of local official plans. A second Official Plan was prepared in 1997, and adopted in 1998 along with a General Local Official Plan which was used to assist local municipalities in adopting new local official plans.

Since the approval of the last Official Plan Lambton County was restructured and 20 municipalities have become 11 municipalities, new Provincial Policy Statements have been issued, and the *Green Energy Act* was enacted. In addition, regular Official Plan reviews are required under Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* (RSO 1990 as amended). Various updates and additions have been made to the sections of this Plan so that the County Official Plan remains relevant to changing demographics, land use changes, and emerging topics in planning.

The 2016 updated County Official Plan provides a Lambton context for the application and interpretation of the Provincial Policy Statement by the local municipalities through their official plans. Once the updated County Official Plan takes effect, it will be deemed to be consistent with Provincial Policy, and any local planning documents and decisions which conform to this Plan must also be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Province has produced a number of documents, which provide guidance on how to interpret and apply various policies within the Provincial Policy Statement. These documents are therefore reflected in this Plan and are relevant to its interpretation. These documents include, but are not necessarily limited to the *Understanding Natural Hazards* technical guide, the *Natural Heritage Reference Manual*, the *Minimum Distance Separation Document*, and the *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas*.

This Plan's mapping also includes features identified by other sources which are provided as relevant information or in fulfillment of requirements under Provincial Policy or other legislation. These sources include but are not necessarily limited to the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC); the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES); the local source protection plans under the *Clean Water Act*; the Oil, Gas, and Salt Resources Library; the Ontario Geological Survey; the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), and the Canada

Land Inventory.

In addition to Ontario's *Planning Act*, there is a large volume of provincial and federal legislation that imposes land use restrictions or processes or is otherwise relevant to land use planning processes and decision making. This Plan attempts to incorporate or at least create awareness of the relevance of such legislation and its requirements. Relevant provincial legislation includes but is not limited to the *Aggregate Resources Act*, the *Building Code Act*, the *Clean Water Act* and source protection plans adopted pursuant thereto; the *Condominium Act*; the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its "Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" regulations; the *Drainage Act*, the *Endangered Species Act*; the *Environmental Protection Act* and its "Record of Site Conditions" and "Renewal Energy Approval" regulations; the *Municipal Act*; the *Oil, Gas, and Salt Resources Act*; the *Ontario Energy Board Act*; the *Ontario Heritage Act*; the *Ontario Water Resources Act*; the *Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act*; the *Safe Drinking Water Act*; and the *Wilderness Areas Act*. Relevant federal legislation includes but is not limited to the *Fisheries Act* and *Species at Risk Act*.

Lambton County has a two-tier planning system in which planning responsibilities are divided between the County and the local level. Under this system, the County Official Plan provides an overall County planning policy framework for the development of detailed local planning policies. These detailed local policies are necessary to recognize both the common and the unique circumstances, goals and aspirations of the various local municipalities within the County. While the traditional approach to preparing local official plans has recognized the uniqueness of individual local municipalities and has provided the necessary level of additional planning policy detail, it has also demonstrated a considerable degree of commonality between the policies of each local official plan.

1.2 Description of the Plan

The Official Plan for the County of Lambton is a policy document, adopted in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*. It is intended to provide a general framework for land use, economic, natural heritage, social, and cultural decision-making within the County. As a Plan that is the product of a process of public consultation and input, it is an expression of the interests and priorities of County Council and a wide range of interest groups including the residents and the local municipal councils within the County.

The Plan includes strategies, goals and policies that: 1) conserve the natural heritage system, significant natural areas and the agricultural land base; 2) direct the location of new development; 3) encourage economic growth in all of the County's local municipalities; and, 4) encourage the development of a strong cultural identity and a high quality of life.

1.3 Purpose and Effect of the Plan

The Lambton County Official Plan is a long range management plan which outlines County policy on a number of broad settlement and resource management issues of County or inter-municipal concern. It is a tool that can be used to encourage and direct change and growth for the benefit of the residents of Lambton County. The Plan provides strategies, goals and policies to guide public and private decision-making on economic, environmental, and social

issues, as well as generally guiding the use of land in the County. The Official Plan will be augmented by other strategies, plans and guidelines as well as local official plans and secondary plans. In the latter cases, the County Official Plan provides a context for more detailed planning by the local municipalities. In particular, it establishes the framework necessary to assist local municipalities in the preparation of plans and policies which reflect local needs and circumstances, in a manner that satisfies the *Planning Act* requirements regarding the Provincial Policy Statement.

Specifically, the Plan:

- expresses long term intentions on the extent of growth through a management strategy for Lambton County to the year 2031;
- protects agricultural lands and farming practices;
- provides a framework for maintaining and improving the natural heritage features and systems of the County;
- provides the terms of reference for public works and private initiatives, and functions as a standard against which the County evaluates the appropriateness of such initiatives in relation to the growth management strategy; and,
- provides an overall County planning policy context for the development of more detailed local planning policies.

1.4 Role of the County and Relationship with Local Municipalities

The County Plan is a document that sets out County and inter-municipal interests in a manner consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. Detailed land use policies and designations will be enunciated through local municipal official plans.

Lambton County Council was delegated the authority to approve local official plans and amendments upon approval of the 1998 Official Plan by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The County may make application to the province pursuant to section 17(10) of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990* for authorization to exempt by by-law any or all official plans or proposed amendments from County approval for one or more local municipalities, with the County simply retaining the right to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.

1.5 Basis of the Plan

Preparation of the Official Plan is based on the following:

- The 1998 Plan reflected the issues of the time when it was approved. Concerns such as water quality, forest cover, economic development, housing, natural heritage systems, cultural heritage resources, and waste management were significant topics and these issues remain relevant today. However, over the past several years other issues such as renewable energy, affordable housing, food access, climate change, cultural identity, and brownfield development among others, have also taken on a greater priority. Consequently, the County policy framework must be revised to reflect these changing issues.
- An updated Plan is required which establishes policy direction that reflects current issues, having regard for Provincial interests. In April 2014, a new Provincial Policy

Statement came into effect under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act*. These policies focus on key Provincial interests related to land use planning and the *Planning Act* requires that, in exercising any authority that affects planning matters, planning authorities "...shall be consistent with..." the Provincial Policy Statement. The County Plan must be consistent with Provincial policies by applying them in the context of matters of County and local interest.

1.6 Assumptions

The Official Plan for the County is based on a number of assumptions which set the framework for policy. Specifically the Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- The County population is expected to decrease to 111,367 persons by the year 2031, primarily as a function of an aging "baby-boomer" population.
- The total labour force in the County is expected to be approximately 55,000 people by the year 2031.
- Despite population trends, the need for housing has been stable or increasing. Infill and redevelopment will be encouraged, but are expected to contribute only to a minor extent. The majority of anticipated growth will occur in the west Lambton Area, which is described in Chapter 3, County Development and Growth Strategy. This area is the location of major employers, and the greatest concentrations of industrial and commercial activities in the County. Other serviced areas in the County will accommodate the next highest level of development, while the rural parts of the County are anticipated to experience the lowest levels of development.
- Changing demographic trends (e.g. the aging of the baby boom and the increase of non-traditional households) will have implications for the future growth of Lambton County.

1.7 Plan Preparation, Format and Interpretation

In 1995, a comprehensive planning program was initiated to prepare a new Official Plan for the County of Lambton. This program involved establishing a Public Focus Group (PFG) comprised of approximately 100 representatives from special interest groups and the general public. A Technical Advisory Group (TAC) was also established and included representatives from Provincial Agencies, Conservation Authorities, the City of Sarnia Planning and Development Department, and the Lambton County Clerks Association. Regular meetings were held with the PFG, the TAC and the Lambton County Clerks Association. Input from these groups was incorporated into the background research papers that were prepared in support of the 1998 Official Plan. The updated version of the Plan was commenced in 2011 with an initial public meeting, followed by the completion and circulation of background reports and issue papers on current topics needing to be addressed.

The list of background issue papers includes:

- No. 1 Provincial Policy Statement (2005), Relation to the Provincial Plan
- No. 2 Water: Source, Supply, and Use
- No. 3 Brownfields and Their Role in Community Development
- No. 4 Agriculture

Supplemental Report to No. 4 - Minimum Farm Lot Size

- No. 5 Economic Development
- No. 6 Renewable Energy
- No. 7 Telecommunications
- No. 8 Natural Heritage
- No. 9 Culture and Heritage
- No. 10 Climate Change
- No. 11 Affordable Housing
- No. 12 Population, Housing, and Employment
- No. 13 Subdivision Design, Condominium Design
- No. 14 Building Healthy and Active Communities

In addition to the updates recommended in the background reports, consistency with the 2014 version of the Provincial Policy Statement, released after the completion of the background reports, has also been incorporated into the process. The end result of this exercise has been the preparation of a comprehensive updated Plan for Lambton County which is organized in the following manner:

Chapter 1:

The introduction details the basis and assumptions underlying the Plan, and is provided for information purposes only.

Chapters 2 to 10:

These nine chapters provide the written policies of the County Plan. Each chapter in the Plan is introduced by paragraphs of explanation in italics followed by goals and policies. The paragraphs of explanation provide contextual background, facts, and assumptions to assist in the interpretation of the policies and to help clarify the general intent of the Plan.

Maps and Appendices:

Maps and Appendices are found at the end of the Plan. The maps, which form part of this Plan, provide an illustration of the overall growth strategy and natural heritage system for the County. The appendices define several terms used in the Plan and provide additional mapping of features the geography of which is relevant to the Plan but maintained by others external to the County.

Chapter 2

2. Quality of Life

Quality of life is considered by the community to be Lambton County's greatest strength. This chapter of the Plan promotes the improvement of the quality of life in the County, the fostering of strong healthy communities, and the creation of environments that support independence and personal development. There are strong links between urban form, the natural heritage system, the economy, and quality of life.

Quality of life indicators, which can positively affect the health of individuals and communities, include: the extent to which basic needs (shelter, food, transportation) are met; the level of economic security and the range of employment opportunities for residents; safety and security of residents; opportunities for education and skills development for older workers; well-being (social, emotional, physical) of individuals; the extent to which individuals feel that they are part of the community; a sense of cultural identity; and, the conservation of cultural and natural heritage features.

Culture is integral to community sustainability - developing a sense of place and community identity, and a major factor in quality of life and civic pride. These things are in turn necessary for economic and community development - making the community an appealing location for visitors and for attracting and retaining residents, business and industry. Culture is a combination of the attributes of human activity, heritage, and the unique natural and human qualities of a region. Integrated with the historic and physical, culture also includes modern and intangible aspects such as traditions, customs, local produce, art, stories, celebrations, festivals, events, values, clubs, public services and facilities, institutions, significant natural and built areas, clothing, heritage, history, artifacts, locally owned businesses, expression, literature, built form, programs, networks, education, opportunities, vision of the future, objectives, priorities, recreation and leisure, volunteerism, and interests.

Stable housing is a basic need for individuals on which to build and sustain a quality of life. Homelessness is a growing concern in the County with increases in the number of individuals and families seeking assistance with housing and independent living over the last number of decades. Land use planning can create a framework for the provision of housing including shelter and accommodations to those lacking the stability a safe home can offer.

The availability of a safe, reliable source of drinking water is also basic to quality of life. Drinking water source protection plans have been developed pursuant to legislation under the Clean Water Act. The source protection plans include policies that the Clean Water Act requires be implemented through the County and local official plans. The source protection plans, as well as provincial policy, include a requirement to identify intake protection zones, event based areas, and groundwater features, which has been done through the inclusion of Appendix Map A to this County Plan.

The possibility for climate and weather events to vary outside historic norms has implications for the built environment, infrastructure, service provision, natural heritage features, agricultural productivity, tourism, and other factors important to the local economy and quality of life.

Unnecessary carbon emissions deplete a finite resource and compromise air quality unnecessarily.

Planning policies that direct physical development have the potential to influence the indicators listed above. For example, ensuring that areas designated for residential development are contiguous to existing centres with a range of commercial and community services will increase the sense of being a part of a community for the residents of those new areas. The cost of providing public services (education, fire protection, etc.) can be influenced by development patterns. For example, school busing costs are increased in areas with a low density of development. Development forms can have a distinct influence on the costs borne by the entire community.

The Official Plan promotes patterns of new development which minimize disruption and protect the identity of established communities. Growth should be directed so as to maximize accessibility to and make efficient use of existing and future education, recreation, health care, social facilities and services, and housing, including affordable housing. New growth should be located contiguous to viable communities to allow a desirable level of social interaction for new residents.

2.1 Improving Quality of Life

Goals: To ensure that communities are places where people of all ages, backgrounds, and capabilities can meet their individual needs for human development throughout the various stages of their lives by providing opportunities for secure long-term housing, access to healthy food, employment, entrepreneurship, learning, culture, recreation, and physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being in a manner that is environmentally sound.

To emphasize the importance to quality of life of the County's built environment, natural heritage resources, agricultural land base, water supply, cultural resources, and archaeological resources, and to provide for wise use and protection of these resources over the long term.

To build capacity within Lambton's communities and neighbourhoods to identify and solve problems and to encourage greater self-reliance in the development of homegrown approaches to improving quality of life.

Policies:

- 2.1.1 The County encourages attitudes that elevate local citizens to co-producers of healthy communities rather than consumers of government programs and services, and attitudes that focus on protecting and improving existing community assets rather than focusing on perceived deficiencies.
- 2.1.2 Local citizens, neighbourhoods, and communities are encouraged to take responsibility to organize, develop relationships within the community, uncover hidden community assets and talents, identify problems and opportunities within their communities, and develop solutions and goals making use of the relationships, non-

government institutions, and assets within their community.

- 2.1.3 Government efforts and expenditures shall focus on delivering quality public services and building community capacity through empowering local people and non-government institutions to produce healthy communities and strengthening community assets. Such assets include municipal services and affordable housing, as examples.
- 2.1.4 This Plan promotes a built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place, and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive, and vibrant.
- 2.1.5 Patterns of development will be established so as to minimize disruption to existing and planned residential uses, protect the physical character and vitality of established neighbourhoods and communities, and to conserve cultural and natural heritage features and resources.
- 2.1.6 New development will be located to ensure the maximum use of existing and future public facilities and services, including education, recreation, health care, social services, cultural activities, and physical infrastructure. Areas designated as focuses for residential development should be contiguous to existing centres and contain a range of commercial and community services.
- 2.1.7 Growth will be managed so as to provide communities with a range of opportunities for work and recreation, and a choice of housing. A diverse range of activities, based on the needs of the community, including learning, health, arts, cultural, spiritual, and recreational activities are promoted by this Plan.
- 2.1.8 Local planning documents should encourage street design and building locations that create interesting and vibrant streetscapes, and encourage and reflect local culture.
- 2.1.9 Public spaces, including streets, parks, and buildings, should be designed to be accessible and safe for all members of the community, with locations that provide links to complementary land uses. School locations that favour walking and biking are encouraged. The location of public buildings should be supportive of the development and growth policies of this Plan. Accessibility to the largest concentrations of population will be a primary consideration in the planning for major facilities.
- 2.1.10 The County supports the development of a well trained work force through education and retraining; improving the competitiveness of local business, especially small and medium sized businesses; strengthening the economic base through diversification by capitalizing on the changing economy; establishing sources of financing for entrepreneurs and establishing business; improving the quality of life to improve the image of the County; establishing partnerships in the County for the purpose of advancing the strategy; and developing infrastructure that is supportive of economic development activities.
- 2.1.11 The County will be promoted as an educational centre of excellence.

- 2.1.12 To the extent possible, a full range of education services will be provided within the County to enable residents to meet the challenges of the workplace and to improve self-development. Educational facilities should be located and designed to be accessible and convenient to the general public.
- 2.1.13 Educational institutions and organizations are encouraged to provide opportunities for the development of lifelong learning skills, consistent with the needs of the people of the County.
- 2.1.14 In the process of reviewing official plan amendments and/or plans of subdivision regarding residential development, the Approval Authority will request comments from educational authorities with respect to the adequacy of existing schools to accommodate anticipated growth in enrollment, the possibility of alternatives to new school construction and requirements for new school sites.
- 2.1.15 In the process of reviewing official plan amendments and/or plans of subdivision regarding residential development, the Approval Authority will request comments from appropriate agencies with respect to the adequacy of human and protective services.
- 2.1.16 The County will support and promote cultural activities that serve the needs of the residents of the County. Of particular interest are those activities that support economic renewal and promote tourism.
- 2.1.17 Improvements to the delivery of health care for the residents of Lambton are encouraged, particularly in the area of prevention of disease and promotion of health.
- 2.1.18 The County encourages and supports efforts to ensure that existing and new health services are based on the needs of the population. Continued public involvement in planning future health programs is also encouraged.
- 2.1.19 The County recognizes the essential role of non-government institutions and volunteerism in building healthy communities.
- 2.1.20 The County encourages the efforts of public and private agencies that provide support and assistance to residents with disabilities. These efforts should address matters such as physical access, suitable work environments, transportation, education, and training programs for residents with disabilities.
- 2.1.21 Community-based residential facilities for residents requiring assistance to establish, regain and/or maintain independent living, for continuing care, and for rehabilitation purposes are promoted at appropriate locations. Where appropriate, local municipalities will include policies in their local official plans that provide for such facilities.
- 2.1.22 Actions to support the farming community will include: supporting existing senior government programs that provide an adequate and stable income for farmers and improve economic viability of the farming industry; promoting value added and food processing facilities on farm operations, and where it is not feasible to locate on the

farm, facilitate location in a nearby settlement or centre; encouraging local municipalities to include provisions in their official plans to facilitate the establishment of farmers markets and to promote fairs; and encouraging the creation of new farm units when both severed and retained parcels are of a size consistent with Provincial Policy Statement requirements.

- 2.1.23 The County encourages community-based programs for increasing safety and security and police protection, consistent with the needs of citizens in the County.
- 2.1.24 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop requirements to ensure that safety is considered in the review of new development proposals. Items such as lighting, visibility, building orientation, and other safety features should be evaluated.
- 2.1.25 The County will continue its active role in emergency planning, including the provision of 9-1-1 services and involvement with CVECO (Chemical Valley Emergency Coordinating Organization).
- 2.1.26 The County will assist in providing planning and other information to groups involved in identifying the best locations for needed police, fire, ambulance and health care facilities.
- 2.1.27 The County recognizes that the Natural Heritage System, open spaces, and parks contribute to the quality of life and improved human health in Lambton County. These features contribute to the overall design of urban and rural areas and provide opportunities for active and passive enjoyment of the natural environment.
- 2.1.28 The County recognizes that the Natural Heritage System contributes to the quality of life and improved human health through the conservation of watercourses and adjacent vegetation, natural areas, and through the protection and improvement of habitat for a diverse range of indigenous species of wildlife.
- 2.1.29 For significant developments or policy proposals, the County or local municipalities may wish to complete or require a proponent to complete a Health Impact Assessment aimed at assessing effects to determinants of health and subsequent effects to communities.

2.2 Culture and Heritage

Goals: To emphasize the importance of promoting and preserving both tangible and intangible culture and heritage in Lambton County.

To develop a strong, positive identity for the region and its communities based on its cultural and heritage assets.

Policies:

- 2.2.1 This Plan encourages the implementation of the recommendations contained in the County's Cultural Plan, completed in 2011.

2.2.2 Local municipalities are encouraged to use creative and comprehensive methods of developing and promoting local cultural identity.

2.2.3 The County encourages local municipalities to identify areas to develop into or reinforce as cultural nodes within their settlement areas.



Image Source (liveinlambton.ca, 2009)

2.2.4 Local municipalities are encouraged to make use of community improvement or secondary plans to attract, retain, and facilitate cultural activity and to preserve physical culture and heritage assets.

2.2.5 Municipalities are encouraged to develop and utilize online platforms to promote and improve local culture and connections.

2.2.6 Local municipalities shall ensure that their zoning provisions relating to home and on-farm businesses, for example, support a creative economy (creative, innovative, and knowledge-based jobs), local entrepreneurship, and a diverse local food sector.

2.2.7 Where significant cultural heritage features, including historical and architectural resources of cultural heritage value or interest, are known to exist, local municipalities are encouraged to designate these properties under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and adopt policies related to their conservation.

2.2.8 The County and local municipalities shall consider Aboriginal interests and engage Aboriginal communities in identifying and conserving cultural heritage resources.

2.2.9 The County will support municipalities where they wish to develop financial incentive programs and other efforts that promote private investment in preserving physical cultural heritage (archaeological, built heritage, and cultural heritage landscapes) resources and in improving cultural nodes. The County may participate in local incentive programs consistent with Section 5.1.14.

2.2.10 Local municipalities are encouraged to prepare and maintain comprehensive inventories of significant heritage resources, including significant built heritage and cultural heritage landscapes, as a basic tool for identifying and conserving these resources.

2.2.11 The design of urban spaces and new public and private buildings will use massing and scale sensitive to the character of existing streetscapes that have been identified as heritage resources and protect public sightlines to and from heritage resources.

2.2.12 Archaeological sites and areas considered to have archaeological potential exist within the County. Areas of potential shall be determined through provincial screening criteria and known archaeological records. The County should consider developing an

archaeological management plan of known archaeological sites and areas of archaeological potential, and means by which to address archaeology through land use planning.

- 2.2.13 Planning approvals affecting areas of archaeological potential or known or suspected to contain an archaeological site, cemetery, or burial site will be subject to the completion of an archaeological assessment by a licensed consultant in accordance with Ministry standards and the terms and conditions of the license. Development may include the conservation of significant archaeological sites in place.
- 2.2.14 Local municipalities are encouraged to appoint and fund Municipal Heritage Committees as provided for in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, to assist with cultural heritage matters.
- 2.2.15 Local municipalities are encouraged to ensure that any community improvement or secondary plans identify and conserve cultural heritage resources.
- 2.2.16 When a proposed development will impact a cultural heritage resource a heritage impact assessment will be required to guide mitigation of impacts to the resource. The County and local municipalities will ensure that cultural heritage resources are evaluated and conserved in public works projects, and where possible, restore, rehabilitate, improve, and maintain cultural heritage resources that they own.
- 2.2.17 Retrofits for energy efficiency will only be undertaken in a heritage building where it is demonstrated that it can be accomplished without compromising the heritage integrity of the building.
- 2.2.18 With respect to the provision of barrier-free County facilities, the County will endeavour to provide access solutions in a manner that respects any cultural heritage value or interest of a property. Each heritage property will require unique accessibility plans to ensure that alterations do not adversely affect the heritage attributes. This practice is encouraged for privately-owned heritage buildings that are open to and used by the public.
- 2.2.19 The County and local municipalities will promote the heritage aspects of the County through tourism development activities, on-line platforms, social media, school curriculum and programs, public information, events, and displays.
- 2.2.20 The County will work with local municipalities to develop indicators for measuring the success of cultural initiatives.

2.3 Housing

Goals: To ensure an active, healthy housing market that is able to provide a range of quality housing suitable to the needs and desires of the residents of Lambton County.

To ensure new housing development does not detract from the viability of

existing built-up areas.

Policies:

2.3.1 An adequate supply of housing will be ensured by:

- a) maintaining the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years through intensification and redevelopment, and if necessary, lands designated for residential development; and,
- b) maintaining a minimum 3 year supply of residential units available through lands available for intensification and redevelopment and draft approved and/or registered plans.



Image Source: (sarniathisweek.com, 2013)

2.3.2 The County encourages the construction of an adequate supply of dwelling units to meet the needs of the local housing market. This is expected to average 449 dwelling units per year in the beginning portion of the planning period.

2.3.3 The supply, production and affordability of housing will be monitored by the County in co-operation with the local municipalities to assess the effectiveness of these policies and to ensure an adequate supply of land, appropriately designated for housing, in accordance with Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2.

2.3.4 Local municipal official plans will include provisions that allow for a range and mix of housing forms, types, sizes and tenures to meet local and County housing needs.

2.3.5 Local municipal zoning provisions will be flexible enough to permit a broad range of housing forms, types, sizes and tenures, including accessory apartments where feasible.

2.3.6 Proponents of residential development are encouraged to provide a broad mix and range of lot sizes, dwelling types, and tenure choices suited to the needs and desires of the residents of the community.

2.3.7 This Plan supports the Lambton County Housing and Homelessness Plan - 2014-2023. The demographic projections contained in Chapter 3 and the possibility of future housing surpluses should be taken into consideration when determining land needs and desirable housing type and mix.

2.3.8 The County and local municipalities will consider the demographics and projected demographics of the local population as part of any application to designate, zone, or subdivide lands for residential purposes.

2.3.9 Future age distribution and the possibility of a decline in the demand for new dwelling

units towards the end of the planning period or even a surplus of housing stock shall be taken into consideration. Medium density and apartment development and dwelling unit types and designs that can be readily consolidated with other dwelling units or converted to other appropriate uses are encouraged.

- 2.3.10 Residential developments, including proposals that would result in the creation of affordable housing will be located to have access to community services and facilities including public transit facilities where available, and should be in proximity to downtown hubs and cultural nodes when possible.
- 2.3.11 Non-profit housing developments will be dispersed throughout the County, with preference for locations that provide accessibility to the employment opportunities, services and facilities necessary for the type of housing proposed.
- 2.3.12 Local municipalities are encouraged to provide opportunities for the intensification of housing. Techniques may include permitting second units in existing dwellings or detached accessory buildings, encouraging the creation of infill lots, directing housing to vacant lots in existing residential areas, the conversion of existing buildings for residential purposes, redevelopment of sites not previously used or underutilized for residential purposes, and higher densities in new development. Rooming, boarding and lodging houses may be permitted where appropriate. It is a goal of this Plan that 20% of the new housing units provided in the County be provided through intensification and redevelopment.
- 2.3.13 Municipalities should develop local policies and zoning regulations that establish criteria for infill lots to protect neighbourhood character and enjoyment of abutting properties.
- 2.3.14 Municipalities shall permit an accessory second dwelling unit in a residential area on a residential lot occupied by a single detached, semi-detached, or townhouse dwelling, or an accessory building if a second unit does not exist within the principal dwelling. Municipalities shall develop local policies and zoning regulations that establish appropriate standards, which protect neighbourhood character, public health and safety, and enjoyment of abutting properties without unduly restricting the creation of such dwelling units.
- 2.3.15 Local municipalities are encouraged to use the bonusing provisions of the *Planning Act* to facilitate the protection of the natural heritage system and features of cultural significance when considering development proposals.
- 2.3.16 Suitability for housing shall be considered first for any surplus County-owned land and/or buildings. Other levels of government are encouraged to take the same approach when considering disposing of surplus lands and/or buildings. The use of surplus lands for housing will only be supported at appropriate locations.
- 2.3.17 Housing for senior citizens or persons with disabilities, low mobility, mental illness, or special needs should be located in proximity to community services and facilities and constructed to a standard of accessibility suitable to the potential needs of the

intended occupants.

2.4 Affordable Housing

Goals: To acknowledge secure, long-term housing as a foundation for quality of life and the provision of affordable housing as an important component of community development.

To provide opportunity for secure, long-term housing for every individual and household in Lambton County and to lessen dependence on emergency transient services for the provision of shelter.

Policies:

- 2.4.1 Affordable housing proposals will conform to all relevant policies of this Plan, particularly the housing policies in Section 2.3.
- 2.4.2 Community education is encouraged with respect to creating awareness of the need for affordable housing and addressing potential stigmas. Community consultation is encouraged in order to identify needs for affordable housing.
- 2.4.3 Affordable housing, in the case of home ownership, means housing that costs at least 10% below average purchase prices in the regional market area or with annual accommodation costs not exceeding 30% of household income. In the case of rental housing, affordable housing means rent that does not exceed 30% of household income or that is no more than the regional market area average.
- 2.4.4 The development of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) is an encouraged means of implementing affordable housing plans in local municipalities.
- 2.4.5 To facilitate the provision of affordable and innovative housing by the private sector market, the County will support local municipalities who wish to evaluate and where appropriate adopt incentive programs and/or alternative site-development standards that reduce the cost of construction and maintenance of services. Such incentives include lower building and development charges when affordable housing is included in developments. The County may participate in local incentive programs consistent with Section 5.1.14.
- 2.4.6 The County encourages the creation of affordable housing provided by community based private non-profit and co-operative groups.
- 2.4.7 Municipalities may participate in partnerships or assist in the creation of affordable housing or the rehabilitation of housing for low or moderate income households.
- 2.4.8 Affordable housing shall be integrated within the existing community fabric and not segregated or concentrated with other affordable housing. Affordable housing shall be integrated in such a way as to minimize disruption and protect the physical character and vitality of established neighbourhoods.

- 2.4.9 Preference shall be for locations and communities that are accessible to municipal goods and services, healthy food retailers, commercial areas, employment, medical and health facilities, recreation, transit, and trails and non-motorized transportation. Locations within mixed use developments are encouraged. Affordable housing units shall take into consideration accessibility needs.
- 2.4.10 A range of affordable housing is encouraged in proximity to cultural nodes and downtown centres to increase residents' mobility and accessibility.
- 2.4.11 To address the need for affordable housing at entry level home ownership and tenancy, the County will encourage the construction of smaller apartment units and dwellings and/or the use of lower cost furnishings.
- 2.4.12 Municipalities shall consider ways in which to encourage affordable housing through the utilization of existing housing stock and intensification of existing residential areas. Owners of surplus housing stock, including farm houses, should be encouraged to consider the potential for conversion to affordable housing rather than demolition.
- 2.4.13 It is a goal of this Plan that affordable housing units be created by conversion and or new construction in a number equal to 30% of the total number of new housing units constructed in the County. Local municipalities are encouraged to have regard for the Lambton County Housing and Homelessness Plan - 2014-2023 when setting targets in their local official plan.

2.5 Drinking Water Source Protection

Goals: To protect and manage the natural water system in connection with human drinking water sources in order to provide for water quality and human health.

To implement and reiterate applicable policies of the local Source Protection Plans.

Policies:

- 2.5.1 As required by the *Clean Water Act*, municipal decisions made under the *Planning Act* and *Condominium Act* shall conform to the significant drinking water threat policies and have regard for low and moderate threat policies within the applicable Ausable Bayfield and Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan or Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Plan. The broader source protection policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014, shall also apply and should complement the specific policies of the Source Protection Plans. This includes a requirement to identify the features listed in policy 2.5.2, which has been done through the inclusion of Appendix Map A.
- 2.5.2 Vulnerable areas identified in the applicable Source Protection Plans that are relevant to the County include Intake Protection Zones (IPZs), Event Based Areas (EBAs), Highly Vulnerable Aquifers (HVAs), and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas (SGRAs) as identified on Appendix Map A. IPZs and EBAs are significant drinking

water threat areas. HVAs and SGRAs are low or moderate threat areas and are also vulnerable areas as defined by provincial policy. IPZs and EBAs are to be identified in local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. HVAs and SGRAs are to be identified in local Official Plans.

- 2.5.3 The County of Lambton will assist the Conservation Authorities to develop and implement education and outreach programs designed to increase the awareness and understanding of drinking water threats identified within the County and to promote best management practices. These policies shall address low, moderate, local and significant threats.
- 2.5.4 The County of Lambton will undertake a program regarding signage where County roads are located within Intake Protection Zones. The policies are to consider, but not be limited to: routing or rerouting, placement of signage so emergency responders and those engaged are aware that a spill may pose a significant drinking threat, policies for emergency response programs regarding containment, and review of water treatment plant response time and procedures and equipment.
- 2.5.5 The County of Lambton will encourage the use of applicable incentive programs regarding the protection of water quality and safe drinking water.
- 2.5.6 Any use or activity that is, or would be, a significant drinking water threat in the location it would occur is required to conform to applicable Source Protection Plan policies, which may prohibit, regulate, or otherwise restrict the use or activity.
- a) If a planning application is submitted:
- i) within an IPZ area for a non-residential land use or
 - ii) within an EBA for a commercial, industrial, or agricultural land use,
- the planning application shall not be deemed complete until the proponent provides a Section 59 Restricted Land Use Notice issued by the risk management official under the *Clean Water Act*, 2006. This requirement shall not apply if the land use is addressed through a screening policy established under Section 2.5.11.
- b) Specifically restricted land uses within Event Based Areas include handling and storage of commercial fertilizer of 46% nitrogen in amounts of 124,000 kilograms or more and fuel handling or fuel storage greater than 15,000 litres.
- 2.5.7 The protection, conservation and careful management of groundwater resources are necessary to meet both the present and future needs of residents, businesses and the natural environment. As groundwater and aquifer contamination is extremely difficult and costly to rectify, prevention of contamination is the most realistic strategy. Highly Vulnerable Aquifers and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas need to be protected across the County of Lambton to ensure a clean groundwater supply, as well as to provide base flows for surface water.
- 2.5.8 To protect aquifers from contamination (quality) or depletion (quantity), planning

authorities should consider the location of HVAs and SGRAs when making planning decisions. Planning authorities may restrict and/or direct development away from vulnerable areas, where there is a potential for contamination, depletion, or other negative impacts.

- 2.5.9 The County of Lambton shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration to protect all municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas; and protect, improve, or restore vulnerable surface and ground water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their hydrologic functions, pursuant to the Provincial Policy Statement.
- 2.5.10 The County of Lambton may require reports or technical studies to be prepared by a qualified professional as part of any planning application subject to County approvals to identify, assess, and mitigate any potential impacts within vulnerable areas. These studies may include, but are not limited to planning justification reports, chemical storage disclosure reports, hydrogeological studies and spill prevention, spill contingency, and emergency response plans.
- 2.5.11 In those municipalities required to have a risk management official, the municipality in consultation with the official shall prepare and implement a screening policy by which to minimize the number of developments referred to the risk management official while ensuring that prohibited, restricted, and regulated land uses do not become established within vulnerable areas except in compliance with the applicable Source Protection Plan.
- 2.5.12 The County of Lambton will encourage Municipal initiatives in support of the protection of water resources.
- 2.5.13 To reduce the risk to drinking water sources from septic systems in vulnerable areas where this activity is a low or moderate threat, the County of Lambton / local approval agency of septic systems may consider including these septic systems as part of the discretionary maintenance inspection program outlined in Ontario Regulation 315/10.
- 2.5.14 The County of Lambton encourages local municipalities to ensure spill prevention plans, spill contingency plans, and emergency response plans are kept up to date. The County will ensure emergency plans are updated for the purpose of protecting drinking water sources with respect to spills that could occur along highways or rail lines in all Intake Protection Zones.
- 2.5.15 The County of Lambton will endeavor to create a General Spills Awareness program in collaboration with municipalities and the Province (MOECC) regarding general spills awareness where threats to drinking water may occur.
- 2.5.16 As required under Section 27(3) of Ontario Regulation 287/07 of the *Clean Water Act*, the County and/or local municipality, as applicable, shall notify the applicable Source Protection Authority and Committee if a person applies to the municipality for activities in an Intake Protection Zone that may result in the creation of a new transportation

pathway or modification to an existing transport pathway.

- 2.5.17 Implementation of Sections 2.5 and 8.6 and the applicable Source Protection Plans shall take into consideration the existing impacts to ground water resources from historic and ongoing activities including the oil industry. New land uses with proportionately small impacts should not be unduly restricted when ground water resources are already impacted.

2.6 Food

Goals: To facilitate a healthy local food system and opportunities by all citizens to access an affordable, healthy food supply.

Policies:

- 2.6.1 The County endorses the Sarnia-Lambton Food Charter.
- 2.6.2 The County encourages greater local linkages in the food system including production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management.
- 2.6.3 The County supports greater food self-reliance as individuals and as a County, including increases in variety of locally produced products; increased local processing, storage, and distribution; and greater consumption of local food. The County supports the formation of a local food distribution hub.
- 2.6.4 Efforts to expand access to healthy food must not undermine the ability of existing providers to provide healthy food - i.e. through cannibalization of existing market shares.
- 2.6.5 Local municipalities shall develop policies that permit urban agriculture including backyard and community gardening in a way that respects the amenity of residential areas.
- 2.6.6 The County will support and facilitate education, promotion, and research that:
- a) builds food literacy - i.e. food skills in nutrition, growing, purchasing, cooking, preserving, and meal planning
 - b) identifies potential markets for locally grown food
 - c) identifies local food providers
 - d) explains the cost of food
- 2.6.7 The County shall encourage and support efforts to introduce courses and/or make food literacy, culinary arts, and home economics mandatory components of elementary and secondary school curriculum.
- 2.6.8 Forms of food access such as farmer's markets, farm gate sales, mobile markets, shuttles to healthy food retailers, and healthy food options within convenience stores, schools, businesses, and public places are encouraged, especially within areas identified as neighbourhoods that are underserved by healthy food retailers.

- 2.6.9 Transit routes should facilitate transportation between food deserts and healthy food retailers. Food delivery services for the elderly and those with low-mobility are encouraged in combination with the development of methods to buy groceries on-line.
- 2.6.10 The County encourages an organized system of community gleaning projects for the diversion of unused field and tree crops to shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, and others for whom food affordability is an issue.

2.7 Climate Change

Goals: To foster infrastructure, services, built-form, and communities that are adaptive and capable of functioning within or quickly recovering from climatic and weather conditions that fall outside of historic norms.

To support reduction of carbon emissions and energy losses that are unnecessary and locally-produced, where appropriate.

Policies:

- 2.7.1 This Plan promotes compact built-forms, structures of nodes and corridors, site layouts, and arrangements/mixes of land uses that avoid hazardous lands and facilitate active transportation, shortened commutes, decreased transportation congestion, and/or the use of transit, where transit exists or has potential to be developed. This shall include the promotion of home occupations and on-farm diversified uses where they comply with the policies respecting them in this Plan.
- 2.7.2 Subdivision and condominium approval, site plan approval, and other approval processes shall promote building orientation and site and neighbourhood layouts that provide appropriate opportunities to use alternative energy systems and maximize energy efficiency, including making use of solar heating and the use of vegetation to provide shade and windbreaks.
- 2.7.3 Development approval processes shall take into consideration the control of stormwater volumes, where required. In addition to on-site retention and restrictions on outflow, the use of permeable surfaces and collecting stormwater for on-site uses are encouraged.
- 2.7.4 Measures to protect against extreme weather events shall assess the added cost to the development against the incremental risk to life and property, the replacement cost of the development, and any benefits of the development to the quality of life of the community and the natural heritage system.
- 2.7.5 The County and local municipalities shall develop emergency management procedures for the provision of emergency and regular services during and following extreme weather events.
- 2.7.6 The County and local municipalities may develop incentive programs and/or participate in public outreach programs that encourage private businesses and

property owners to adopt practices or make property improvements that reduce unneeded carbon emissions or add protection against extreme weather events. Local municipalities may create Community Improvement Areas for this purpose.

- 2.7.7 The County may also adopt such practices and improvements to municipal facilities and infrastructure as section 2.7 encourages from private business and property owners.

2.8 Sustainability

Goal: To achieve long-term sustainability and energy conservation.

To encourage sustainable projects in an efficient manner and mitigate any negative environmental or social impacts.

- 2.8.1 The County promotes developments that employ green development standards and sustainable development. The County encourages the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards in new construction. Additionally, green retrofit options to existing public and private buildings are encouraged.
- 2.8.2 Municipalities are encouraged to implement green initiatives and energy efficient policies in building and landscape design (i.e. rain barrels, green spaces, green roofs, building orientation, porous pavements, etc.).
- 2.8.3 Local municipalities should employ measures of healthy communities and compact design, individually or in conjunction with other member municipalities, so they may consistently evaluate the current conditions of communities and potential health impacts of new developments.
- 2.8.4 Aesthetics/urban design standards that encourage and support energy-efficient buildings and multi-use development are encouraged. Using these standards the municipality may plan and develop greener, complete communities.
- 2.8.5 This Plan promotes and encourages the adaptive reuse of older existing building stock for the benefits of, among other things, reducing waste in the form of construction debris resulting from building demolition.

Chapter 3

3. County Development and Growth

The County of Lambton is comprised of diverse areas, including Agricultural Areas, the Recreation and Conservation Area along Lake Huron from Kettle Point to Grand Bend, and settlements including Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, and Secondary Settlements. Growth must be managed to minimize adverse effects on the natural heritage system, heritage resource features, and agriculture and be phased to coincide with the availability of appropriate types and levels of services. The protection of existing investments in infrastructure by maximizing their use, where possible, is desired. Accordingly, a development strategy has been prepared to manage growth in the County.

The development strategy in this Plan:

- anticipates that all areas of the County will grow commensurate with available infrastructure and community services;*
- creates a focus for development within established Urban Centres and Urban Settlements;*
- directs the majority of growth to areas with full municipal water and sewage services;*
- anticipates servicing with municipal water and private septic systems will only occur for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development in Centres and Settlements where municipal sewage services are not available and where designated groundwater and surface vulnerable areas can be protected and provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts.*
- anticipates servicing in areas outside of Centres and Settlements to be primarily by private sewage and/or water systems, provided designated groundwater and surface vulnerable areas can be protected;*
- encourages the maximum use of existing public services such as parks and recreation facilities, water and sewer systems and emergency services;*
- ensures the preservation of agricultural lands and the protection of resources and natural heritage features for their economic use and/or environmental benefits;*
- seeks to ensure the continued viability of existing industrial areas, commercial areas and mainstreets; and,*
- encourages a wide range and mix of employment, housing, and land uses*

It is the intent of this Plan to direct the majority of growth to the urban areas of the County. The Plan is committed to supporting agriculture, and other resource-based activities in the Agricultural Area, and promoting economic development and a high quality of life throughout the County. Local municipal official plans will define urban boundaries and Agricultural Areas, consistent with the overall County growth strategy.

The County has produced population projections to the year 2031 based on 2011 and earlier Census data. The projections take into consideration current age distribution and growth trends in various age groupings. Some municipalities, including the City of Sarnia show potential for growth; however, towards the end of the planning horizon, the aging of the baby-boomer

population is expected to contribute to some degree of population decline for most local municipalities and the County as a whole.

The following Table summarizes the projected 2031 populations for each municipality anticipated by this Plan, given as a range of likely to potential populations based on historic trends. The average yearly number of building permits anticipated/allocated by this Plan for new dwelling unit construction is also provided.

*The Lambton County population projections figures do not include Census "Indian Reserve" populations, which added another 3604 to the actual County population in the 2006 Census.

A workforce of 55,000 is projected for 2031. Average retirement age and workforce participation rates among seniors are both anticipated to increase as the baby-boomer population ages and the proportion of the population made up of seniors increases.

Given that projections are influenced by many factors, caution should be exercised in applying this information.

Demand for new housing units has continued despite recent trends in population growth. Decline in average household sizes has been a major contributor. A better understanding and monitoring of average household size, age distribution, and related demographics is needed to predict how potential population decline, a changing age distribution, and an established housing supply will interact.

Municipality	Dwellings Allocated Annually	Projected 2031 Population
Brooke-Alvinston	5	2028 to 2581
Dawn-Euphemia	5	1505 to 1963
Enniskillen	7	2099 to 2714
Lambton Shores	50	9307 to 11,595
Oil Springs	5	549 to 808
Petrolia	36	6410 to 7372
Plympton-Wyoming	42	6846 to 7830
Point Edward	5	1529 to 2058
Sarnia	230	66,005 to 74,045
St Clair	55	12,536 to 13,876
Warwick	10	2945 to 3579
Lambton County*	449	111,367 to 122,162

The majority of future urban growth will be directed to Urban Centres and Urban Settlements with full municipal services depending on the availability of sufficient municipal water and sewer services and community services. However, full urban services (the addition of municipal sewerage, including the use of municipal communal systems) will be a pre-requisite to development within any designated areas that is of a scale exceeding infilling and minor rounding out of development.

Local official plans provide general guidance for development. The designation of significant areas for urban development often results in a need for specific policies and the establishment of a preferred pattern of development. These policies should be set out in a comprehensive fashion, with appropriate public consultation accompanying their development. A comprehensive official plan amendment, which may take the form of a secondary plan, is recommended for setting out these policies and proposed development patterns.

Existing communities abutting Lake Huron have considerable tourism potential, and are desirable and well-suited for residential development due to their location on Lake Huron. Their importance in the County, the benefits of strengthening these communities by providing for more extensive commercial, institutional and community services, and the desirability of a phased and coordinated approach to development, create a need for a comprehensive planning approach.

The St. Clair River is an important commercial and recreational water transportation route connecting Lake Huron and Lake St. Clair, and it is a key element of the County Natural Heritage system. The river ferries operating at Sombra Village and Walpole Island provide international border crossings between Ontario and Michigan. The St. Clair Parkway, which runs next to the St. Clair River, is a significant vehicular and recreational land transportation route. It is lined with riverside parks which provide an important recreational resource for day trippers and day use recreation. The lands near the St. Clair River are substantially developed for residential purposes, with many large, treed lots. There are also areas of industrial development. The attraction to the river has proven itself over the years. Issues unique to the waterfront that need to be considered in decision-making include shoreline erosion and flooding, waterfront uses such as docks and boathouses, view concerns, shore protection, and land filling for construction.

The identification, management, decommissioning, and redevelopment of contaminated industrial and commercial sites is important for the social, economic, and environmental health of Lambton's communities, promotes compact built form, makes more efficient use of existing infrastructure, and promotes sustainable communities. Sites of potential contamination include sites used formerly for industrial, utility, waste disposal, and salvage yards. Contaminants accruing from the disposal of waste materials, raw material storage, residues left in containers, maintenance activities, and spills may be present on the site, in the soil, or within ground and surface waters, and may present health and safety risks. A site assessment may determine what site remediation is needed or may determine a brownfield site or portion is safe for a certain number of uses if developed under certain conditions even without complete site remediation.

3.1 Anticipating Growth

Goal: To ensure that planning for growth, including the designation of land and the provision and development of infrastructure and public service facilities, is based on sound planning principles.

Policies:

- 3.1.1 Population, housing, and employment growth will be monitored by the County in consultation with local municipalities. In particular, this Plan requires on-going monitoring of:
- a) age distribution and population growth trends in key age groups,
 - b) average household sizes and associated social and demographic trends,
 - c) building permit activity and land consumption rates,
 - d) intensification and redevelopment rates within built-up areas;

- e) average workforce age and participation rates, and
- f) the general effectiveness of projections and any apparent need to refine projection methodologies.

- 3.1.2 In order to effectively accommodate anticipated growth, local municipalities will ensure that adequate lands are designated and made available for development consistent with the overall County development strategy established by this Plan.
- 3.1.3 The County and local municipalities will endeavour to ensure that sufficient community facilities such as social, recreational, cultural and emergency services are provided to meet the needs of anticipated growth and demographic shifts.
- 3.1.4 Local municipalities will ensure that adequate uncommitted capacity exists in municipal water and municipal sanitary sewage treatment systems and municipal water distribution and municipal sanitary sewage collection systems to accommodate anticipated growth in Urban Centres and Urban Settlements.
- 3.1.5 The County of Lambton has adopted population, housing and employment projections for the planning period to 2031. The projections will be used to calculate sewer and water capacity needs, and to determine housing needs and corresponding land requirements. The projections can be used as a basis for other service and program planning within the County, and by industry and business to guide investment decisions.
- 3.1.6 Average household size, age distribution, and related demographic trends shall be taken into account in determining land needs and requirements, including but not limited to the number and type of dwelling units needed.
- 3.1.7 This Plan requires that population data and building permit statistics be monitored and projections and allocations updated at five year intervals. Dwelling unit allocations are based on historic building permit activity, but this Plan anticipates new dwelling starts will decline towards the end of the planning horizon.
- 3.1.8 Municipalities may designate up to a 20 year supply of employment lands, based on projected land needs, which provide for an appropriate mix and range of employment opportunities.
- 3.1.9 Municipalities that choose to update their own population projections must do so in coordination with the County, and such an update may result in the need to amend this Plan.

3.2 Growth Strategy

Goal: To provide direction for growth in Lambton County in order to strengthen communities, minimize costs, stimulate economic growth, and protect resources and natural heritage areas for their economic and environmental benefits.

Policies:

- 3.2.1 Map 1 shows and delineates a three level settlement hierarchy, consisting of (1) Urban Centres, (2) Urban Settlements, and (3) Secondary Settlements. The majority of growth will be directed to Urban Centres and Urban Settlements. The Urban Centre designation at the northwest part of the County (Sarnia and Point Edward) has the greatest service area and the greatest number of urban uses and employment opportunities.
- 3.2.2 Urban Centres contain a wide variety of residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial lands uses and cultural nodes including major public service facilities and a variety of major employers. This category of settlement offers residents most daily necessities and many other services. The travelling public, tourists, and/or residents of other settlements and surrounding agricultural areas regularly rely on the settlement to obtain the necessities and services provided. Development within Urban Centres will occur on full municipal services, except in substantially built up areas where full services are not practical or feasible, in which case very limited development may occur on municipal water and private septic systems subject to the conditions contained in Section 3.2.6.
- 3.2.3 Urban Settlements are settlements where it is the goal of this Plan to strengthen and/or develop land uses, services, and functions similar to Urban Centres although to a lesser scale and variety. This Plan seeks to support and improve Urban Settlements' role in providing necessities and services to surrounding settlements and agricultural areas. Development within Urban Settlements with municipal water and sanitary services will occur on full municipal services, except in substantially built up areas where full services are not practical or feasible, in which case very limited development may occur with municipal water and private septic systems subject to the conditions contained in Section 3.2.6. Urban Settlements without municipal sanitary services are Ipperwash, Port Franks, and the corridor between Port Franks and Grand Bend; development in these three settlements will be subject to the conditions contained in Section 3.2.6.
- 3.2.4 Secondary Settlements are existing built-up areas that are not to be focuses of growth. This is due to partial servicing, a limited variety of lands uses, and/or proximity to Urban Centres or Settlements that are to be focuses of growth. This is despite the possibility that the Secondary Settlement may have a variety of existing or planned uses or services or contain cultural nodes. Development in Secondary Settlements will be limited to infilling and minor rounding out of existing development within the boundaries of the existing designations. In Secondary Settlements without full services or where full services are not practical or feasible, development may occur with municipal water and private septic systems subject to the conditions contained in Section 3.2.6.
- 3.2.5 All lands outside of Centres and Settlements are located within the Agricultural Area, the Recreation and Conservation Area, or specific employment area designations as identified on Map 1. The Agricultural Area is a prime agricultural area characterized

primarily by agriculture, natural areas and clusters of existing development of insufficient size and variety of uses to warrant designation as settlement areas. The areas outside settlements may contain cultural nodes, but are characterized primarily by agriculture, natural areas and clusters of development of insufficient size and variety of uses to warrant designation as settlement areas by this Plan. Given the limited amount of development anticipated in the areas outside settlements, servicing will be by private water supply or municipal piped water and by private sewage disposal, provided that such development is consistent with the conditions of Section 3.2.6 c), d), and e) and does not significantly increase the overall density in areas outside settlements, or is to address failed individual on-site sewage services in existing development.

3.2.6 Where development is permitted to occur on municipal water in combination with either private septic systems or communal sewage systems within Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, or Secondary Settlements, it shall be conditional upon compliance with the following conditions:

- a) development must be limited to infilling, minor rounding out of existing development; or to address failed individual on-site sewage services in existing development;
- b) site conditions must be suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts;
- c) development must be consistent with natural heritage goals;
- d) designated groundwater and surface vulnerable areas must be protected, and where possible restored and/or improved; and
- e) municipal sanitary sewage services are not practical or feasible.

3.2.7 Any development proposed on communal, partial municipal, or individual on-site systems must be supported by studies which include, as a minimum, evaluations of soil percolation rates and impacts on designated vulnerable groundwater areas, impacts to groundwater quantity and quality, natural heritage features and area, ground water mounding, and adjacent water courses. Reserve areas for replacement systems will be required when the mode of sewage servicing is individual private sewage systems or private communal systems. Proponents may be required to submit soils, hydrological, and hydrogeological studies completed by qualified engineers or hydrogeologists with recognized experience in groundwater science and sewage and potable water system designs.

3.2.8 Private communal sewage systems are strongly discouraged. In the case of individual freehold residential development, such systems shall only be considered in order to service areas of existing development with failing private septic systems and/or environmental degradation and only where municipal sewage services are not viable. Use of private communal systems shall not be permitted without the support of the local municipality. The proponents of any proposed condominium or residential development to be serviced by a private communal system will require a legally binding municipal responsibility agreement with financial assurance to be in place in the event the private owner or communal owner of the communal works should ever

default on the operation of the communal system.

- 3.2.9 Land use designations and development policies contained in local official plans and/or secondary plans will reflect the growth and settlement policies of this Plan.
- 3.2.10 Sufficient land will be designated for settlement and employment purposes to meet expected growth during the planning period.
- 3.2.11 Development in Urban Centres, Urban and Secondary Settlements, and the Agricultural Area will promote an efficient and compact land use pattern to minimize land consumption, control infrastructure costs, and limit non-farm growth pressure in Agricultural Areas.
- 3.2.12 The Plan recognizes that the level of municipal services and range of land use activities may change during the planning period. Where a Secondary Settlement is designated as such only because of a lack of full services, and municipal sanitary services are provided subsequent to the adoption of this Plan, the policies for an Urban Settlement will apply to that settlement without a County Official Plan Amendment.

3.3 Local Planning

Goal: To allow local Planning processes to determine detailed Settlement boundaries and land needs within the parameters established by this Plan.

Policies:

- 3.3.1 Policies for the development of Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, and Secondary Settlements will be as provided by local official plans and/or secondary plans. The preparation of such plans should include, but may not necessarily be limited to:
 - a) identification of the municipality's share of overall county population growth, identification of areas of existing and desired growth within the municipality, sub-allocation of allocated growth amongst these growth areas, and determination of an appropriate settlement boundary, consistent with this Plan's Growth Strategy;
 - b) identification of the type, mixture, location and densities of future land uses;
 - c) identification of a development pattern, including major roads, park areas, cultural nodes, open space, natural heritage areas, stormwater management facilities, and similar features;
 - d) identification of the need to provide community facilities, including parks, schools, and other facilities;
 - e) site and subdivision design criteria;
 - f) municipal servicing requirements and development phasing if required;
 - g) erosion control measures;
 - h) local road access points to collector and arterial roads;
 - i) location of support facilities such as schools;
 - j) the integration with the County natural heritage system of corridors and local municipal natural heritage features;

- k) the linkage of the new development area to an existing community;
- l) the location of active and closed waste disposal sites;
- m) the location of sewage treatment works;
- n) aligning residential and food retailer development to provide opportunities to access healthy food; and,
- o) identification of a need to provide lands to provide for changes in the nature of employment land requirements or as part of strategies to create employment opportunities.

3.3.2 Development in Secondary Settlements will be limited to infilling and minor rounding out of existing development. A limited amount of institutional, commercial and industrial development may be permitted, subject to the policies of this Plan.

3.3.3 Development in the Agricultural Area will occur in accordance with the permitted use and land severance policies in Chapter 4, Agriculture.

3.3.4 Applications for development in partially serviced Secondary Settlements, the Recreation and Conservation Area, and the Agricultural Area will be required to demonstrate that septic systems will not adversely affect the quality and quantity of ground water, active wells operating in the general vicinity, and the quality of surface water courses, open drains, and water bodies in the general vicinity.

3.3.5 When converting population and new dwelling unit start projections/allocations into land needs, local municipalities shall consider:

- a) new dwellings that do not use up a vacant serviced building lot, including replacement dwellings and construction in Agricultural Areas,
- b) trends in the retirement of existing housing stock including changes in demolition, vacancy, and abandonment rates,
- c) shifts in demand for and surpluses and deficits of particular dwelling types,
- d) net changes in housing stock in the Agricultural Area, and
- e) the number of second and seasonal dwellings, especially in shoreline areas

3.3.6 Municipalities shall consider the housing policies of Sections 2.3 and 2.4, especially Sections 2.3.9 and 2.3.12 when determining the types and designs of housing that are promoted and permitted in local official plans and zoning regulations.

3.4 Mainstreets and Commercial Areas

Goal: To protect, improve and revitalize existing mainstreets and commercial areas in Centres and Settlements throughout the County.

Policies:

3.4.1 Local municipalities are encouraged to preserve and revitalize traditional mainstreets and commercial areas. The following criteria should be considered by local municipalities when developing policies for these areas:

- a) extent and locations of mainstreet areas and commercial areas should be defined;
- b) mainstreets and commercial areas should permit the highest concentration of and the greatest mix of uses within the local municipality including residential, institutional, retail, office and community services appropriate to the size of the community;
- c) mainstreets and commercial areas are encouraged to be developed in a way that fosters activities associated with a creative economy and strengthens these areas as cultural nodes;
- d) where feasible and the opportunity exists, mainstreets and commercial areas should be connected to natural heritage systems;
- e) local official plans will contain provisions that promote activities and events in the areas around mainstreets and commercial areas that do not detract from the viability of these areas;
- f) wherever feasible, heritage buildings and structures should be conserved, and any new development should complement the cultural heritage landscape of the mainstreet or commercial area;
- g) tourism and leisure related activities are encouraged to locate on mainstreets and commercial areas;
- h) an environment which promotes both vehicular and pedestrian circulation should be provided;
- i) policies and programs should encourage the renovation of abandoned second and third floor spaces in older commercial buildings for such uses as apartments, studios, and professional offices; and,
- j) revitalization strategies must conform with section 6.6 of this Plan.

3.4.2 The ongoing revitalization and reinforcement of downtown Sarnia as the most significant social, cultural and entertainment node of Lambton County is supported. Renewed investment is encouraged to continue in downtown Sarnia to support the retention and development of retail, personal service, office, entertainment, tourism, and specialty shopping activities to meet local, regional, and tourist needs. The viability of the downtown should be reinforced through continued efforts that provide a mix of commercial, residential, institutional, recreational, and community activities, and the development of the riverfront and downtown as a tourist destination.

3.4.3 The London Road/Lambton Mall and the Exmouth Street/Northgate commercial areas of Sarnia are recognized as high order commercial centres in Lambton County. The London Road/Lambton Mall area provides a wide range of commercial uses that meet specialized service and comparison shopping needs. The Exmouth Street/Northgate area is smaller in size than the London Road/Lambton Mall area and there is less emphasis on comparison shopping and specialized services.

3.4.4 The County supports the London Road/Lambton Mall and Exmouth Street/Northgate commercial areas in combination with downtown Sarnia as serving the comparison shopping and specialty shopping needs of Lambton County.

3.4.5 The County supports efforts to ensure the continued health and viability of the

mainstreets of towns and villages such as Petrolia, Forest, Watford, Wyoming, and others. These mainstreets provide a range of commercial, institutional, and community services that serve the needs of the community and surrounding Secondary Settlements and Agricultural Areas.

- 3.4.6 Existing neighbourhood and convenience commercial areas serve the daily shopping needs of nearby residents and to a lesser extent passing motorists. This Plan supports uses in these centres, which provide for the daily and convenience shopping needs of residents in nearby neighbourhoods.
- 3.4.7 Proposals for development of new or peripheral shopping areas will demonstrate that the viability of existing mainstreets and commercial areas will not be threatened. Existing mainstreets and commercial areas should be given first priority for development or redevelopment for commercial purposes.
- 3.4.8 The role of existing highway commercial areas has traditionally been to serve the traveling public. In recent years, this role has changed to include a greater emphasis on uses that serve the local community. Where this changing role has led to a decline of commercial businesses, reuse of these areas should be planned to encourage a broader range of compatible uses that will serve nearby residents, and to ensure the continued viability of these commercial areas. While a limited amount of retail activity may be considered, these areas are not intended to accommodate uses that are more appropriately located on mainstreets or within downtowns and high order commercial areas. The extension of highway commercial designations will generally be discouraged.
- 3.4.9 A high standard of building and site design in the development or redevelopment of mainstreets and commercial areas is strongly encouraged to improve the image of Lambton County municipalities as attractive and inviting communities.

3.5 Centre and Settlement Expansions

Goal: To ensure that urban boundaries are maintained to minimize the loss of prime agricultural land and natural heritage features, to control the cost of servicing development, and to minimize the cost of maintaining services.

Policies:

- 3.5.1 Map 1 shows the boundaries of Centres and Settlements. The Centres and Settlements are generally comprised of built up areas and areas historically designated for development in local municipal official plans. It is a requirement of this Plan that the local municipalities in their planning documents delineate boundaries between Centres and Settlements and the Agricultural Area, consistent with Map 1.
- 3.5.2 The County's long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depends on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns. On this basis, the establishment of new settlement areas and settlement area expansions may only be considered at the time of a comprehensive

review. Factors to consider as part of a comprehensive review include:

- a) the need for additional urban designations based on updated population, household, and employment projections, in the context of a maximum 20 year planning time frame;
- b) the need to minimize the loss of prime agricultural land and mineral aggregate extraction opportunities;
- c) potential negative environmental impacts and opportunities for integration with the natural heritage system including improvement;
- d) the potential impact on vulnerable and sensitive surface and groundwater and their quantities, qualities, flow regimes, and surface recharge/discharge areas including shoreline areas as necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the watershed;
- e) the supply of vacant land within each municipality for an appropriate range and mix of land uses in the context of a horizon of up to a 20 year planning time frame, including the achievement of housing targets;
- f) opportunities for a variety and mix of housing and the proximity of these to other activities such as transportation and employment;
- g) opportunities for intensification of development within the existing urban area;
- h) consultation with public service providers and the general public;
- i) consideration of planning approaches that encourage compact urban forms;
- j) the capital and operating costs associated with servicing new development areas, including the feasibility of providing and maintaining roads, stormwater management, potable water treatment and distribution, and sanitary sewage collection and treatment,
- k) existing and desired rates and patterns of growth within the municipality and sub-allocation of allocated growth among municipal growth areas;
- l) mitigation, to the extent feasible, of any impacts on adjacent and nearby agricultural operations;
- m) compliance with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae;
- n) the need to ensure extensions are located on the lowest priority agricultural lands and prohibited in specialty crop areas through an evaluation of all reasonable alternative locations; and
- o) any other matters of local concern.

3.5.2.1 In undertaking a comprehensive review, the level of detail of the assessment should correspond with the complexity and scale of the proposed settlement area boundary alteration.

3.5.3 Notwithstanding Section 3.5.1 and 3.5.2, nothing in this Plan shall prevent the continued designation of the Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport and surrounding lands for airport and airport-related commercial and industrial uses by the local official plan. The unique, low-density character of airport development and the desirability of the surrounding areas for compatible land uses is recognized.

3.5.4 Proposals to convert lands within an Employment or Industrial designation in a lower-tier Official Plan to another type of land use will be reviewed through a comprehensive

review as defined by this Plan. An amendment to this Plan will not be required to implement a conversion that is within an Urban Centre of Settlement in a lower-tier Official Plan. In considering a request to remove lands from an Employment or Industrial designation, it shall be demonstrated that:

- a) there is a demonstrated land need for the conversion; and
- b) the lands are not required over the long-term for the employment or industrial purposes for which they are designated.

3.5.5 This plan recognizes the need to accommodate industrial activities with large land base requirements. The preferred location is existing industrial lands within fully serviced Urban Centres or Urban Settlements or within the Petrochemical Industrial Land or Gas Compressor Station designations. Separations appropriate for the nature of associated activities are needed between a new industrial uses and existing and planned sensitive uses. In circumstances where an industrial use cannot be accommodated in such areas due to parcel size or separation requirements, any such industry may locate outside of an existing Urban Centre, Urban Settlement, Petrochemical Industrial Land, or Gas Compressor Station designation, by amendment to this Plan, provided that the following criteria are met:

- a) there is an identified need or demand for additional land to be designated to accommodate the proposed use;
- b) alternative locations have been evaluated and:
 - i) there are no reasonable alternative locations available within a Centre or Settlement or Petrochemical Industrial Land or Gas Compressor Station designation;
 - ii) there are no reasonable alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas; and
 - iii) there are no reasonable alternative locations with lower priority agricultural lands;
- c) the proposed location is not in a specialty crop area;
- d) the proposed location complies with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae;
- e) the proposed use is compatible with existing and anticipated future uses in the immediate area and any impacts on surrounding agricultural operations are mitigated to the extent feasible;
- f) the proposed use can be fully serviced with municipal water and can provide adequate sanitary sewage disposal and treatment
- g) the site is located in proximity to a major transportation corridor;
- h) the site should preferably be contiguous to existing industrial lands;
- i) the site is compatible with the Natural Heritage policies of this plan; and
- j) other matters of local interest.

3.6 Business Parks

Goal: To accommodate the demand for industrial land by firms that require relatively low-density sites with locational and other advantages, consistent with the

overall economic development strategy of the County.

Policies:

- 3.6.1 Local municipalities are encouraged to establish business parks, in areas with full municipal services, which allow prestige industrial and office-based uses to locate in a setting with uses of a similar quality and orientation.
- 3.6.2 The main function of business parks will be to accommodate the demand for employment lands and to improve the County's competitiveness in attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses.
- 3.6.3 Local municipalities are encouraged to permit a full range of manufacturing, construction, wholesale establishments, truck terminals, research and development uses and office development associated with these uses, as well as service type uses. Local municipalities should establish policies that provide detailed locational criteria for permitted uses within business parks to ensure that the quality of the overall development is not compromised. Within business parks, retail and service commercial uses intended primarily to serve the needs of the business park, such as banks, restaurants and professional offices, will also be permitted and should be grouped to ensure orderly development of the park.
- 3.6.4 The County encourages the development of advanced telecommunication systems to service business parks.
- 3.6.5 The County encourages the establishment of an airport area business park to attract firms that desire access to airport facilities.
- 3.6.6 Development in business parks should be integrated with the County natural heritage corridors or local municipal natural heritage features, where feasible.

3.7 Petrochemical Industrial Lands

Goal: To accommodate the demand for industrial land by major petrochemical companies that require sites with locational and other advantages, in keeping with the overall economic development strategy of the County.

Policies:

- 3.7.1 The location of the Petrochemical Industrial Lands is identified on Map 1.
- 3.7.2 Local municipalities are encouraged to retain the land use designations on lands which have been established to accommodate major petrochemical companies and other intensive industrial uses.
- 3.7.3 The main function of the petrochemical industrial lands is to accommodate existing and future large scale industrial uses that are inappropriate elsewhere. These industries require locations that are in proximity to a range of transportation corridors and the St. Clair River for docking facilities and water supplies utilized in their

operations.

3.7.4 Local municipalities are encouraged to permit other manufacturing, industrial, research and development uses, and office development associated or compatible with these uses. Local municipalities should provide policies that identify the type and locational criteria for permitted uses.

3.7.5 Agricultural uses are recognized as permitted uses and will continue to exist until the lands are required for industrial purposes.

3.7.6 Development in the petrochemical industrial lands should be integrated with the County natural heritage corridors or the local municipal natural heritage system, where feasible.



Image Source: (wikipedia.org/wiki/sarnia, 2012)

3.8 Highway 402 Service Centres

Goal: To provide opportunity for strategically located highway service centres and tourist oriented land uses adjacent to the Highway 402 corridor.

Policies:

3.8.1 The locations of potential Highway 402 Service Centre areas are identified on Map 1. In addition to the service centre locations identified on Map 1, the County encourages the development of service centres in appropriate locations within the Urban Centre designations.

3.8.2 The County will encourage the development of the potential Highway 402 Service Centre areas for land uses that are functionally dependent upon proximity to a controlled access highway, such as tourist information centres, truck stops, transport terminals, customs bonding houses, and vehicle refueling facilities. Uses that are secondary, or supportive, to such principal uses will also be permitted provided they are low sewage generators both at the time they are established and in the long-term.

3.8.3 The Province and/or its delegate will be consulted in connection with the provision of adequate water supply and sewage disposal systems.

3.8.4 Vehicular access to Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be located so as to ensure the safe movement of traffic, and to minimize the number of individual accesses. Continuous open access to a road will be discouraged and the sharing of access points, or the use of an internal service road, will be encouraged. All development must comply with the Ministry of Transportation's Highway Access Management Guidelines and are subject to all other provincial policies, standards, and permit

requirements.

- 3.8.5 All development will be subject to municipal site plan control. To improve the image of Lambton County and its municipalities as attractive and inviting communities, a high standard of building and site design will be required. Site plans will show that adequate area is available for any necessary future upgrade or replacement of private septic systems.
- 3.8.6 Development of Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be undertaken in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on farming activities and the natural heritage system.
- 3.8.7 Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be designated in the local municipal official plan and appropriately zoned. In this regard, the local official plan will define more precisely the boundaries of the Highway 402 Service Centre areas and the range of permitted land uses, consistent with the objectives for such areas, as established by this Plan. Local municipalities are encouraged to make use of 'Holding Zones' to establish the principle of development, and ensure that all design, servicing, and access issues are satisfactorily addressed before development proceeds. The "Holding Zone" will be removed only after the applicable approval authority under the *Ontario Building Code*, *Ontario Water Resources Act*, and/or *Safe Drinking Water Act* is satisfied with respect to private servicing.

3.9 St. Clair River Parkway Area

Goal: To ensure that the areas near the St. Clair River within St. Clair Township are developed in a manner that complements the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront and recognizes the inherent natural hazards associated with flooding and slope instability.

Policies:

- 3.9.1 The growth and development of the areas near the St. Clair River within St. Clair Township will be guided by local official plan policies that consider the following:
- a) the Natural Heritage Corridor role and function;
 - b) the need to define more precise physical boundaries for the Natural Heritage Corridor;
 - c) the need for lot sizes that complement the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront;
 - d) the need for appropriate erosion protection features that complement the natural heritage role and function along the shoreline;
 - e) the need for building setbacks that take into account the level of shoreline protection, the preservation of river vistas, slope stability, and roadway setbacks;
 - f) the need for appropriate regulations for boathouses, docks, and boat lifting devices;

- g) the establishment of a logical development pattern;
- h) provision of community services, including parks and recreation facilities; and access to the shoreline;
- i) the promotion of tourism;
- j) the promotion of cultural identity, locally and regionally; and,
- k) the effect on natural heritage features and functions, and the effect of natural hazards.



Image Source: (stclairtownship.ca/residents/general-information/photo-gallery/ 2017)

- 3.9.2 The St. Clair River shoreline is a natural attraction to residential development. The existing pattern of development is a linear form of residential that connects the communities of Corunna, Mooretown, Courtright, Sombra, Port Lambton, and Chenal Ecarte, with blocks of existing and proposed industrial interspersed. Local official plans will contain policies to strengthen the existing riverfront communities as local service centres with tourism potential. Residential development will be permitted in the connecting areas between these communities on the basis of infilling and minor rounding out of existing development within the Secondary Settlement designation on Map 1 and in accordance with the policies of this Plan.
- 3.9.3 Existing industries located along the waterfront use the river as a source of water for cooling purposes, and for transporting raw materials and finished products. The siting and design of buildings and structures, and the landscape treatment of sites will complement the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront and should incorporate naturalizing techniques, where possible.
- 3.9.4 Parks, and other facilities located along the St. Clair Parkway contribute to the scenic, cultural, and recreational attributes of the riverfront. Opportunities will be provided whenever possible to improve the scenic, cultural, and recreational amenities of the waterfront.
- 3.9.5 Waterfront development will occur in a manner that recognizes the natural hazards of the riverfront, while allowing its use and enjoyment for private and public purposes.
- 3.9.6 Opportunities to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, and increase the amount and variety of indigenous vegetation species will be encouraged.
- 3.9.7. Opportunities to incorporate recreational and tourism related pathways with potential for connecting municipalities within Lambton County and externally, including the Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the State of Michigan will be encouraged.
- 3.9.8 Development that is consistent with the Parkway and the Natural Heritage policies of this Plan is encouraged.

3.9.9 Section 3.9 applies to the areas near the length of the St. Clair River along the St. Clair Parkway as identified on Map 1 - Growth Strategy.

3.10 Sites with Potential Environmental Contamination

Goal: To ensure that sites possessing potential environmental contamination, e.g. brownfield and bluefield sites, are identified and addressed before their development commences.

To identify and promote opportunities for and encourage intensification and redevelopment of brownfield and bluefield sites as a means of economic development, environmental improvement, improved community presentation and improved sense of cultural identity.

Policies:

- 3.10.1 The redevelopment of former industrial and commercial (brownfield) and former institutional (bluefield) sites and buildings is encouraged, provided it has been demonstrated that there will be no adverse effects, as defined in the *Environmental Protection Act*.
- 3.10.2 Development or redevelopment on, abutting, or adjacent to lands or buildings with known or suspected environmental contamination will be permitted only after there has been a determination that known or suspected contaminants do not pose a health or safety risk. Appropriate Provincial agencies may be consulted in this regard. Approval of any proposal may require:
- a) documentation of present and past uses of the land and/or building and information on the types of contaminants that may have been used on the site;
 - b) analysis of the soils, surface water and ground water to determine the presence and extent of any contamination; and,
 - c) identification of potential health concerns.
- 3.10.3 Any land use change to a "more sensitive use" requires that a Record of Site Conditions (RSC) be filed pursuant to Ontario Regulation 153/04 under the *Environmental Protection Act*. The RSC must be filed following a Phase I and/or Phase II Environmental Site Assessment conducted by a qualified person.
- 3.10.4 If it is determined that contaminants exist at a level that exceeds acceptable limits for the land use proposed, the preparation and implementation of a remedial action plan may be required. The remedial action plan is to prescribe how the restoration of the property is to be carried out.
- 3.10.5 The remedial action plan is to be prepared by qualified persons, and before development, redevelopment or conversion of the property or building begins, the site shall be remediated to a standard suitable for the proposed development as specified in Ontario Regulation 153/04 under the *Environmental Protection Act*, Records of Site Conditions. Ongoing site monitoring shall be provided before and after development,

where required.

- 3.10.6 Prior to purchasing or accepting any lands for public purposes, including the dedication of parkland, the municipality may require the owner to provide confirmation that no environmental contaminants exist, for example in the form of a Record of Site Conditions.
- 3.10.7 Municipalities should seek to identify and preserve heritage buildings, if possible, as part of any planning approval and site remediation and/or redevelopment processes, in order to maintain community character and cultural assets. Municipalities may designate such sites and/or buildings under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- 3.10.8 Municipalities should develop an inventory of brownfield and bluefield sites and buildings. Such properties should be inventoried as opportunities for intensification and redevelopment and incorporated into local intensification targets. Development of such properties shall be encouraged over Greenfield development.
- 3.10.9 Remediation and redevelopment of such properties shall be incorporated into local plans for the creation of cultural nodes, economic development, environmental improvement, community improvement, the provision of community facilities, and the provision of compact built form and more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- 3.10.10 The repurposing of such properties for new uses, including mixed use developments, is encouraged where compatible with neighbouring land uses, character, function, and built form. The colocation of community facilities and services is encouraged.
- 3.10.11 Private sector remediation and redevelopment efforts or public/private partnerships are encouraged and generally preferred over public projects. The County will support local municipalities who wish to facilitate the development of Community Improvement Plans and to offer incentives (e.g. Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Program) for private site remediation and the preservation of buildings with cultural or aesthetic value. It is preferable for Community Improvement Plan development to be driven by local property owners and stakeholders.
- 3.10.12 The County will support the development or redevelopment of vacant, underused, brownfield, or bluefield sites. The County may participate in such developments through:
 - a) Capital investments in public infrastructure and community facilities;
 - b) Assisting in the development and administration of Community Improvement Plans and incentive programs;
 - c) Participation in local community improvement and incentive programs consistent with Section 5.1.14;
 - d) Assisting the public sector in developing projects and assessing their feasibility; and,
 - e) Assisting municipalities with development review processes.

3.11 Lakeshore Development Areas

Goal: To allow for the orderly development of certain land in proximity to Lake Huron.

Policies:

- 3.11.1 The locations of the Lakeshore Development Areas, consisting of LDA-1, LDA-2 and LDA-3, are identified on Map 1.
- 3.11.2 For lands identified as LDA-1, LDA-2 and LDA-3, in addition to all other policies of this Plan, except as set out below, the following policies shall apply:
- 3.11.3 Residential uses in LDA-1 shall be limited as follows:
- a) up to a maximum of 140 single detached dwellings, subject to the phasing policies of Section 3.11.6; and
 - b) up to an additional 65 single detached dwellings, subject to the phasing policies of Section 3.11.7.
- 3.11.4 Residential uses in LDA-2 shall be limited to a maximum of 300 single detached dwellings, subject to the phasing policies of Section 3.11.6.
- 3.11.5 Residential uses in LDA-3:
- a) shall be limited to a maximum of 25 single detached dwellings, subject to the phasing policies of Section 3.11.6; and
 - b) may be permitted to occur on municipal water in combination with private septic systems, subject to the submission of a planning justification report and a hydrogeological study to the satisfaction of the County and the Town of Plympton-Wyoming as well as satisfying all other regulatory requirements for the installation and use of such systems. Lots proposed to be serviced using municipal water and private sewage disposal systems shall have minimum lot areas of 0.81 hectares.
- 3.11.6 Commencing on the date of registration of the first plan of subdivision in areas LDA-1, LDA-2 and LDA-3 residential development shall be phased such that a maximum of 50 single detached dwellings may be constructed in any 12-month period within LDA-1, LDA-2 and/or LDA-3, in the aggregate, so that the total number of single detached dwellings constructed anywhere within the Lakeshore Development Area does not exceed 50 dwelling units within any 12-month period. However, any unused portion of the 50 units may be carried forward in subsequent 12-month periods, but in no circumstances may the total number of single detached dwellings constructed anywhere within the Lakeshore Development Areas within any 12-month period exceed 75 dwelling units. This phasing shall be secured through conditions of approval on any plan of subdivision within LDA-1, LDA-2 and LDA-3 requiring this limit to be included in all subdivision agreements registered against the land.

3.11.7 The dwellings units referenced in 3.11.3 b) may not be constructed any earlier than September 1, 2029. This shall be secured in the conditions of approval and subdivision agreement for any plan of subdivision within LDA-1. (LPAT Order)

Chapter 4

4. Agriculture

The agricultural industry and associated activities make an important contribution to the economy of Lambton County. Most rural land in Lambton is comprised of prime agricultural lands (Classes 1-3, Canada Land Inventory), including specialty crop areas that are suitable for the production of fruits and vegetables. All of rural Lambton is a prime agricultural area.

Socially, agriculture represents a way of life. Economically, agriculture drives our rural economies. Gross farm receipts in Lambton, which exceeded \$457,000,000 in 2010, provide large multiplier effects into the local economy. Continuing trends of consolidation of land among fewer operators and a decline in number and proportion of young farmers threatens this way of life and agriculture's multiplier effects for employment and the local economy.

The relative scarcity of prime farmland in Ontario (it makes up less than 5% of the Province's land base) makes it a valuable resource. Policies should protect the land base from incompatible uses that tend to limit the flexibility and viability of farm operations over time. The long-term conservation of prime farmland requires efficient and compact urban development.

Agricultural Areas contain the majority of the County's Natural Heritage Features and also host most land-extensive renewable energy facility projects. Environmental and energy policies are emerging issues with significant implications for rural communities, for agricultural practices and productivity, and for agricultural-dependent local economies.

Woodlots complement prime farmland and their preservation is important for environmental and long-term farming viability. Woodlots are also a renewable resource that can be managed to contribute to farm income.



Image Source: (ofa.on.ca, 2013)

4.1 Agricultural Viability

Goals: To ensure the continued viability of the agricultural industry, including farms, on-farm diversified uses, farm related businesses, and rural communities and to ensure that uses that would conflict with agricultural activities are not established in farming areas.

To prevent the loss of agricultural lands, to prevent the creation of competing and incompatible uses within prime agricultural areas, and to prevent farm fragmentation.

Policies:

4.1.1 The policies of this Chapter apply to the Agricultural Area of the County, as identified on Map 1. Agricultural Areas on Map 1 shall be identified in local municipal official plans.

- 4.1.2 This Plan will protect, maintain and improve prime agricultural areas for the long-term future of agriculture. Prime agricultural areas are predominated by prime agricultural lands (specialty crop areas and Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2 and 3 lands) and also include associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through 7 lands. The Thedford Marsh in Lambton Shores is a Provincially significant specialty crop area with organic soils that are suitable for the production of vegetables. Canada Land Inventory mapping is included as Appendix Map E.
- 4.1.3 Agricultural Areas will be designated in local municipal official plans.
- 4.1.4 Local municipalities are encouraged to designate locally significant specialty crop areas and to establish policies for their protection, maintenance and improvement. For example, in various areas throughout the County, old glacial lake shorelines, former lake bottoms, and sand deposits have the capability of supporting vegetable and orchard crops.
- 4.1.5 The County recognizes that normal farm practices create noise, dust, light, vibration, smoke, flies, and odours that are associated with livestock and heavy machinery. Early morning and late evening activities are also required, especially during planting and harvesting periods. The County supports the 'Right-to-Farm' concept and when applying the policies of this Plan, priority will be given to agricultural uses over other uses in the Agricultural Area.
- 4.1.6 The primary land use activity in the Agricultural Area will be agricultural uses of all sizes, types, and intensities. Agricultural uses include the growing of crops, including nursery, biomass, and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures including, but not limited to accessory farm dwellings, livestock facilities, manure storages, crop storage facilities, value-retaining facilities, and accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.
- 4.1.7 Agriculture-related uses means those farm- related commercial and industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.
- 4.1.8 Those agriculture-related uses that meet the following criteria should be considered accessory to normal agricultural use and be permitted uses in local municipal agricultural zone designations:
- a) the use is operated by a farm operation, and the product or service offered to the farm operations in the area is required by the farm operation itself because of the nature of the agricultural uses conducted with that farm operation;
 - b) the farm operation is not secondary to the use;
 - c) the use will be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations;
 - d) a minimum of land is taken out of agricultural production; and,

e) the severance of such uses is prohibited.

4.1.9 Additional agriculture-related uses, whether or not operated as part of a farm operation, may only be permitted in the Agricultural Area where:

- a) a site-specific local zoning by-law amendment is obtained specifically permitting the agriculture-related use;
- b) the nature of the use complies with any limits specified in the local official plan, particularly respecting the types of uses that shall qualify as agriculture-related uses;
- c) the use is not located in a specialty crop area;
- d) a minimum of land is removed from agricultural crop production;
- e) the use will be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations;
- f) the use would maintain the agricultural character of the area;
- g) the use will provide appropriate separations from residential and other sensitive uses;
- h) the use will not impact the natural heritage system negatively;
- i) an adequate potable water supply and sewage treatment and disposal system can be provided; and,
- j) the use complies with other matters of local interest.

4.1.10 Aggregate, oil and gas extraction and accessory uses thereto are permitted in the Agricultural Area in accordance with Provincial Policy and Legislation, and the Mineral Resource Policies of this Plan.

4.1.11 Additional residential structures required for farm help necessary for the operation of the farm will be grouped with existing farm buildings. The severance of such dwellings will not be permitted.

4.1.12 The following will be promoted as a strategy for slowing the decline in farm operator numbers and growing the agricultural sector, with the goal being to protect and improve the economic and employment spin-off benefits from the agricultural sector currently experienced in local economies, subject to the consent policies of the Agricultural Area:

- a) forms of agriculture that provides more employment on a per acre basis;
- b) identification and exploitation of non-traditional, non-local, and niche markets;
- c) on-farm and local processing and/or retail of agricultural products and byproducts;
- d) promotion of unique local foods;
- e) stronger linkages between local food producers and major local food distributors and consumers within settlements, including restaurants;
- f) agri-tourism; and,
- g) on-farm economic diversification.

4.1.13 On-farm diversified uses will be strongly encouraged in order to provide farmers greater opportunity to obtain additional sources of income and to promote

entrepreneurship, innovation, and business incubation. Such uses will include home-occupations, home-industries, agri-tourism, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products from the farm operation. Such uses are to be addressed in local official plans and zoning by-laws, and municipalities are encouraged to control their operation through policies which deal with the following:

- a) the protection of the rural character and the long-term agricultural viability of the site and area;
- b) the types and scale of the uses that are permitted, especially for uses not directly related to agriculture;
- c) the need to ensure that the activity is limited in area and secondary to the main farm operation or residence;
- d) the need to ensure the use will be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations;
- e) the desirability of ensuring that these lands should remain in the agricultural official plan designation;
- f) where the activity is to be permitted on the property;
- g) the criteria under which the activity will be allowed to expand or required to relocate to appropriate commercial or industrial areas;
- h) the need to ensure that the area occupied by the activity will not be severed from the existing lot;
- i) requiring size limits, separations from sensitive uses, and other appropriate restrictions in the local zoning by-law; and,
- j) other matters of local interest.

4.1.14 Agri-tourism uses mean farm-related tourism and commercial uses associated with and sited on a functioning farm operation or associated with a value-added business and conforming with section 6.1.8. Such uses shall be primarily rooted in activities promoting enjoyment of and/or education in farm operation, rural culture and economy, food and crop production, livestock, unique local foods, and/or agricultural history. Secondary activities may include recreational activities, promotion and education of local history, or passive enjoyment and education in natural heritage. Limited temporary lodgings such as bed and breakfasts may be offered. Local municipalities shall establish appropriate zoning provisions for their regulation, permitting some agri-tourism as of right. Other agri-tourism uses should be subject to a site-specific zoning amendment to assess the appropriateness of the site for the proposed uses and compatibility with neighbouring agricultural uses.

4.1.15 Land uses that do not require a location in the Agricultural Area and most non-farm development will be directed to Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, or Secondary Settlements in order to preserve agricultural land and to avoid conflicts between farm and non-farm uses.

4.1.16 Recreational, cultural, and open space uses are discouraged in the Agricultural Area, but may be permitted through site-specific local official plan amendments as "agricultural exceptions", provided it is demonstrated that all of the following criteria are met:

- a) there is an identified need or demand for additional land to be designated within the planning horizon to accommodate the proposed use;
- b) the proposed location is not in a specialty crop area;
- c) alternative locations have been evaluated and:
 - i) there are no reasonable alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas
 - ii) there are no reasonable alternative locations with lower priority agricultural lands;
- d) the use will have a minimal negative impact on farming activities and will be subject to the natural heritage policies of this Plan;
- e) the proposed use complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;
- f) an adequate potable water supply and sewage treatment and disposal system can be provided;
- g) the lands are designated in the local municipality's official plan and zoning by-law as a site-specific "agricultural exception" specific to the proposed use;
- h) the lands remain part of the Agricultural Area designation and the long-term intended use of the lands remains agricultural; and,
- i) other matters of local interest.

4.1.17 This Plan supports the extension of municipal piped water to Agricultural Areas because of the historical lack of potable water to service a viable agricultural sector. This should not be construed to mean that scattered development is encouraged in the Agricultural Area.

4.1.18 New land uses, including the creation of lots and new or expanding livestock facilities will comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae (MDS I & II) provided by the Province. Local municipalities will incorporate these formulae into their official plans and zoning by-laws and:

- a) shall require that MDS I apply to development on all existing lots of record, although local policies may describe criteria for minor variances or permit exceptions respecting the alteration or replacement of existing non-farm uses;
- b) may impose more restrictive setbacks on non-farm uses than the provincial MDS I calculation; and
- c) shall not modify the calculated MDS II distances except by minor variance.

4.1.19 Local official plans should rely on the minimum distance separation formulae to provide adequate separations between land uses rather than "restricted agricultural" designations. This Plan does not however require that such designations be deleted if they already exist in a Local Plan. Except for the prohibition of livestock, such areas shall be subject to the Agricultural Area policies of this Plan and protected for agricultural use in the long-term. This prohibition shall not imply such an area is intended, preferred, or held for urban use, nor exempt from meeting such criteria as apply respecting future settlement expansions.

- 4.1.20 Farm practices that are sensitive to the natural heritage system will be encouraged. Stewardship approaches for the conservation of natural heritage features are encouraged. These include “no till” methods of cultivation, the re-establishment of natural heritage features, proper woodlot management, and management practices that ensure that surface and ground water quality is protected. Natural heritage features will remain as part of the farm holding.
- 4.1.21 This Plan recognizes the importance of trees and woodlots to agriculture due to their wind protection and moisture holding capabilities. Existing woodlots will be protected in accordance with the natural heritage policies of this Plan and the County of Lambton Woodland Conservation By-law or any successor, which regulates the cutting of certain trees and woodlots. In accordance with the natural heritage policies of this Plan, new development in significant woodlands will not generally be allowed.
- 4.1.22 This Plan acknowledges effective surface and tile water drainage and efficient drain maintenance as critical to the viability of the agricultural industry.
- 4.1.23 In implementing the Agricultural policies of this Plan, local municipalities should have regard for the province's *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas*, especially respecting agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses, and agri-tourism uses.
- 4.1.24 With respect to environmental and energy policy, the County and local municipalities will:
- a) focus on policies, regulations, and activities with identifiable benefits and that consider the potential impacts to the agricultural community and an agriculture-dependent economy;
 - b) consult extensively with industry and the public to determine potential impacts to the public and to landowners when developing and prior to implementing policy or regulation;
 - c) avoid developing policies and regulations that add undue administrative costs and similar impacts on agricultural business productivity; and
 - d) advocate for other levels of government to follow this policy approach.

4.2 Severances

Policies:

- 4.2.1 Severances to permit the creation of residential lots in Agricultural Areas may only be permitted if:
- a) the proposed residential lot contains a residence surplus to a farming operation, meaning an existing habitable farm dwelling that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation (farm consolidation means the acquisition of additional farm parcels to be operated as one farm operation);
 - b) the construction of a dwelling is prohibited on the retained farm parcel; and
 - c) the proposed lot is located at the required MDS I setbacks from all livestock

facilities whether or not already located on a separate lot from each other.

A local municipality's official plan may impose more restrictive conditions for the creation of residential lots in Agricultural Areas or prohibit their creation altogether in defined parts or all of the Agricultural Area. Local municipalities are discouraged from altering their surplus residence policy except at the time of a 5-year review of the local official plan.

- 4.2.2 All non-farm lots will be limited in size so that a minimum of land is taken out of agricultural production and will be located on the least productive land where possible - e.g. where the location is consistent with this Plan's natural heritage and natural hazard policies. The lot size will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and expected current and future needs with respect to water supply and sewage disposal and should protect designated vulnerable groundwater and surface water features and their hydrologic functions.
- 4.2.3 Consent in the Agricultural Area may also be permitted for the following purposes:
- a) to create rights-of-ways or easements;
 - b) to enlarge existing farm lots, provided it does not result in the creation of an undersized farm parcel;
 - c) to consolidate farm holdings;
 - d) to allow minor boundary adjustments, having regard to Section 4.2.2 and including but not limited to minor boundary adjustments to increase the size of a non-farm lot where necessary to accommodate private services;
 - e) for infrastructure in compliance with Section 7.8 of this Plan; and,
 - f) to create farm parcels that, in order to discourage the unwarranted fragmentation of farmland, are not less than 38 hectares in the municipalities of Brooke-Alvinston, Enniskillen, Plympton-Wyoming and Warwick, and 30 hectares in the municipalities of Dawn-Euphemia, Lambton Shores, Oil Springs, Sarnia and St. Clair. A different minimum farm parcel size for local municipalities may be considered through an amendment to this Plan provided that a study is carried out by the local municipality with the guidance and assistance of the Province, to demonstrate that the different farm parcel size is appropriate for the type of agricultural uses common in the local area, yet is sufficiently large enough to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations. (LPAT Order)

Chapter 5

5. Economic Growth

Lambton County's economy has historically focused on chemical products and fuels and agriculture. Economic development in the County has reached an apex and requires an evolution into another growth cycle. The County needs to protect and improve its historically strong sectors while also diversifying the economic base.

The County contains many competitive advantages and assets towards economic development: proximity to a commercial border crossing; access to Highway 402; deep water ports; rail and air transportation infrastructure; natural gas and oil pipeline networks; highest quality agricultural lands; industrial infrastructure; a quality workforce with processing education; serviced industrial lands; major industrial buildings with potential for repurposing; Lambton College and Western-Sarnia-Lambton Research Park affiliated with the University of Western Ontario; and Canada's Bioindustrial Innovation Centre. The County is emerging as a key location for industrial bioproducts and biofuels.

Non-traditional forms of employment continue to become more common. These are often tied to a creative culture or knowledge creation, are internet based, allow self-employment, and/or do not have any specific location requirements in terms of proximity to a place of employment.

This Plan supports the Strategic Blueprint developed by the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership, which focuses on strengthening existing industry, attracting new industries that are growth oriented, improving and supporting entrepreneurs and innovation, and strengthening existing infrastructure.

Efforts need to continue to attract new business and industry and to provide the hard and soft infrastructure, services, and environment necessary for their attraction. Global competition however is intense, and the most likely and reliable source of economic growth and job creation is from within - through the strengthening of existing business and industry and the promotion of local entrepreneurialism and innovation. Identified areas of opportunity include:

- Oil, gas, chemical and biohybrid - fuels, materials, and research
- Cleantech industries associated with the "green" sector - including water technologies and services, generation, equipment, storage, and consulting
- High growth/high wage niche areas in business and professional services, i.e. information knowledge based and health care
- Food processing and value-added agriculture in niche and established sectors
- Opportunistic sectors including advanced manufacturing, automobile, commercial/retail, and institutional
- Entrepreneurship and small business

An important aspect of economic growth has to be the fostering of a high quality of life, sense of place, and cultural identity and making the County an attractive place to live and raise a family. This is necessary for both retaining existing population and attracting new individuals and business, especially those with flexibility in location.

This Plan wishes to foster a culture where local citizens take ownership of problems, opportunities, and solutions with respect to local economic growth. County and local governments and institutions should seek to facilitate citizen empowerment rather than impose institutional solutions.

The aging of the baby boomer population and their potential retirement from the workforce in the foreseeable future will have future implications globally and locally that will have to be monitored with respect to the size, composition, and capacity of the workforce to meet societal needs. Efforts are needed to retain and attract population.

5.1 Encouraging Economic Growth

Goals: To facilitate an environment in which County residents are able to pursue a reasonable livelihood for themselves and their families.

To strengthen and modernize traditional sectors of the economy and experience spin-off development in new sectors.

To diversify the County's economic base and attract new business and resources, especially those in non-traditional and emerging sectors.

Policies:

- 5.1.1 The County will organize its assets and efforts around the County's competitive advantages, assets, and emerging opportunities. The County will seek to attract and create the resources, assets, and people (including the knowledge and intellectual capital) that best position the County to exploit its competitive advantages, assets, and emerging opportunities.
- 5.1.2 The County of Lambton will promote itself as a location for a range of economic activities, with an emphasis on automotive, health care, software development, education, research and development activities, plastics, tourism, retirement living, natural heritage, recycling, transportation, renewable energy (subject to section 7.12.1), and agriculture including value-added agriculture based products.
- 5.1.3 The County, along with local municipalities, will work to maintain balance between residential, commercial, and industrial development in order to achieve a balanced and stable economy and tax base.
- 5.1.4 The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership (SLEP) is the lead economic development organization for the County. It will identify and strengthen economic resources, work to attract industry, and promote economic incentives. It will provide direction, leadership, and support to community-based economic development in conformity with the economic goals and strategies of this Plan. SLEP will facilitate the joint efforts of business, education, labour, First Nations, and local government as primary partners in problem solving and foraging for new opportunities in a way that establishes common vision and priorities, reduces duplication, eliminates silos, and leverages existing community resources and expertise. SLEP shall conduct ongoing

performance measurement.

- 5.1.5 The County, local municipalities, and SLEP should work with provincial and federal departments to identify and support new market segments locally.
- 5.1.6 The County supports development of the bio economy through collaboration between local industry, research, and all levels of government to accelerate the transfer and implementation of knowledge. The County will seek to attract commercial scale bio-based energy production facilities and energy technology laboratories.
- 5.1.7 The County will seek to reinforce the County as a hydrocarbon hub and seize opportunities associated with the Alberta Oil Sands and Marcellus shale gas feed stocks.
- 5.1.8 Improvement of the economic base of Agricultural Areas, including on-farm diversified uses and agriculture-related uses, is encouraged through local policies that are consistent with Section 4.1.12.
- 5.1.9 The County supports the diversification of local agricultural crops and value-added processing. The County and local municipalities should work to encourage and strengthen linkages between local food producers, distributors, and major consumers like restaurants and institutions. The County supports the establishment of a local food hub and other means by which to create and access local markets for locally grown foods. The County desires the establishment of local food processing and will work with senior levels of government to address regulatory hurdles.
- 5.1.10 The County will support Provincial programs which support rural economic development initiatives including agriculture, forestry, resource extraction, and other resource-based sectors.
- 5.1.11 The recreation and tourism industries are encouraged to be developed and promoted on a regional scale with co-operation amongst local municipalities and secondly with abutting Counties on both sides of the international border.
- 5.1.12 The County will pursue opportunities such as manufacturing and consulting in association with the development of renewable and alternative energy production. Consistent with section 7.12.1, renewable and alternative energy generation will be supported in appropriate locations when deemed socially and economically sustainable by the local municipality and where imposing no burden to local infrastructure.
- 5.1.13 This Plan acknowledges the need for economic development to proceed in a way that natural resources, such as air, soil, and water are available for human and environmental health in the long term. This Plan advocates however for the formulation and application of environmental policies in a reasonable way that recognizes an equal balance between environment, society, culture, and economy.
- 5.1.14 The County will provide assistance in the development and administration of local

community improvement initiatives and incentive programs.

5.2 Entrepreneurs and Innovation

Goals: To develop a social and economic environment that encourages entrepreneurialism, small business development, and innovation.

To introduce innovation into as well as diversify traditional economic sectors.

To build capacity within Lambton's communities and neighbourhoods to identify and solve problems and to encourage greater self-reliance in the development of local approaches to economic development.

Policies:

- 5.2.1 This Plan recognizes that the majority of economic growth and job creation is likely to come through expansion of existing business and industry, local entrepreneurialism, and local innovation, as opposed to the attraction of a major industrial employer.
- 5.2.2 The County will encourage emerging and established creative industries in the County. Local municipalities may choose to develop practices, policies, and zoning provisions that enable local entrepreneurs and facilitate business development and innovation.
- 5.2.3 Home-based work is an important component of the local economy that shall be encouraged as a source of local entrepreneurialism and business incubation.. Local municipalities shall ensure that land use regulations enable residents to operate appropriate, subsidiary businesses from their homes and farms within reasonable guidelines specified in local municipal official plans and zoning by-laws and consistent with Section 4.1.13. Home occupations must not unduly impact the character and amenity of residential areas and uses.
- 5.2.4 On-farm diversification shall be promoted where it does not unduly impede agricultural practices and productivity. This may take the form of value-added processing, agri-tourism, and other secondary uses. Local official plans and zoning by-laws shall set out appropriate guidelines.
- 5.2.5 The County will continue to support organizations such as the Business Enterprise Centre of Sarnia-Lambton, the Sarnia-Lambton Business Development Corporation, the Sarnia-Lambton Workforce Development Board, the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership, and Lambton College as they provide educational resources and other assistance to increase the success rate among local entrepreneurs.
- 5.2.6 The Research Park and Lambton College are encouraged to continue to develop innovations and provide services to local firms to improve productivity and add value through the creation of new products, the deployment of new technology, and expansion into new markets.
- 5.2.7 The County, local municipalities, and umbrella organizations shall work to build

relationships with local community groups and citizens to uncover hidden and unique community skills and assets. The County, local municipalities, and umbrella organizations shall work to facilitate and empower local citizens, associations, organizations, and institutions to organize, build relationships, identify community concerns, and develop solutions using the assets, skills, and capacity within the community.

- 5.2.8 Local municipalities are encouraged to facilitate the creation of local business associations. The County will support local municipalities in the designation of Business and Community Improvement Areas and in the formulation and implementation of Community Improvement Plans.

5.3 Quality of Life

Goals: To promote the County as a good place to live, work, and visit.

To retain existing population, particularly youth, and second, to attract new residents and visitors.

Policies:

- 5.3.1 This Plan acknowledges a high quality of life as necessary for retaining existing and attracting new residents, entrepreneurs, skilled labour, and business.
- 5.3.2 The County will improve and promote its high quality of life, affordability, recreational assets, arts and culture sector, and other features to maximize the economic benefits and spin-offs which may result. The County encourages major public investments in arts, cultural, and recreational facilities.
- 5.3.3 The County has engaged the community in developing a unique County image and will seek the community's assistance, particularly business, in communicating this image and key messages in a coordinated manor.
- 5.3.4 This Plan acknowledges the importance of population growth and retention. Youth retention and new resident attraction are areas the County believes it can influence. The County will construct, implement, and monitor resident retention and attraction strategies on an on-going basis. The County will build the social infrastructure needed to accommodate new residents including immigrants. A strong emphasis will be placed on retaining Lambton College students and attracting residents from other areas.
- 5.3.5 Municipalities should strengthen resources that encourage families and young adults to stay and/or return to the area. These resources include its culture and heritage assets, way of life, and other unique resources.
- 5.3.6 The County encourages the provision of soft infrastructure that provides a high quality of life to residents including, for example, hospitals and trails and access to the Lake Huron and St Clair River shorelines. The County will use technologies which improve access to County and other local services.

5.4 Growth-Ready Environment

Goals: To provide the services and infrastructure needed to support existing and new business and industry.

To provide locally, the components conducive to attracting targeted economic sectors.

Policies:

- 5.4.1 This Plan encourages the identification of economic trends and emerging sectors that are key to the County's economic future and the identification and provision of the designated lands, services, infrastructure, workforce, and economic environment needed to attract such economic growth to the County.
- 5.4.2 The County will work with local municipalities to ensure that the physical needs of business are addressed, which includes ensuring that:
- a) a diversity of zoned and serviced sites are available to support a range of industrial and service activities;
 - b) urban communities and employment areas are adequately served by telecommunication facilities; and,
 - c) industrial areas, including industrial and business parks, are well designed and have a high level of available amenities, including access to major transportation routes that are attractive to new investors.
- 5.4.3 The County will promote the maintenance and improvement of modern infrastructure systems including roads, railways, airports, harbours, bus services, pipelines, and telecommunications networks to service existing and future employment centres. Expansion of the linkages between the County and other areas is encouraged in order to strengthen the movement of people, as well as the trading of goods and services.
- 5.4.4 A high level of advocacy is necessary on an ongoing basis to maintain current levels of air, bus, and train service. Additional avenues for intercity and intra-County transportation services must be explored and pursued including an integrated bus and rail system.
- 5.4.5 The County supports the designation of the Bluewater Bridge and Highway 402 as one of the links in the Canada-United States-Mexico North America Free Trade Agreement superhighway system. The County will work in conjunction with the State of Michigan in promoting the link between Highway 402 and Interstate 94.
- 5.4.6 The County will encourage the creation, development, and support of technologies as necessary infrastructure for economic development, and as a means to expand the economic resource base.
- 5.4.7 The County encourages the provision of high quality and high speed telecommunications throughout the County, particularly cellular and internet services.

- 5.4.8 This Plan notes the needs for additional docks to move large fabricated products and for upgrades to hydro corridors to bring additional power into the community.
- 5.4.9 The County encourages training that provides the labour force with the skills needed to serve existing industry and attract targeted business and industry. The County will continue to work with the Sarnia-Lambton Workforce Development Board, Lambton College, and local school boards to maintain a high standard of education and skilled labour pool within the County. The County supports a new medical facility at Lambton College and increased university presence at the Research Park.
- 5.4.10 This Plan acknowledges that, with the aging of the baby-boomers, increased participation rates among seniors and youth will be an increasingly important component in providing the capacity the workforce will need to meet societal labour needs. These population segments also present significant potential for contributing to the creative culture, to innovation, and to entrepreneurialism.

5.5 Locations for Economic Development

Goal: To create a range of potential locations for economic activities across the County that support economic development.

To protect and improve the viability of existing areas of economic activity and employment.

Policies:

- 5.5.1 The County and the local municipalities must provide for a wide range of economic activity. The County encourages a diversity of available sites and locations, flexibility for different types of buildings and a mix of supporting uses.
- 5.5.2 The County encourages the development, redevelopment, repurposing, rehabilitation, and/or remediation of underused downtowns, mainstreets, and commercial districts; resource extraction areas; former institutional, industrial, and commercial sites; and brownfield sites and contaminated sites. Local municipalities must include guidelines for development of such sites in their Official Plans and may choose to develop incentive programs that encourage rehabilitation or remediation.
- 5.5.3 New land uses, particularly employment lands and major public facilities, will be located consistent with the growth strategy of this Plan. In particular, commercial and industrial activities not requiring an Agricultural Area location will be encouraged to locate within fully serviced employment areas within Urban Centres and Settlements and also Petrochemical Industrial Land, Highway 402 Service Centres, or Gas Compressor Station designations, in keeping with the intent of the growth strategy and agricultural policies of this Plan.
- 5.5.4 Home-based business shall be permitted in residential and agricultural areas as accessory to a private residence.

- 5.5.5 On-farm diversification in the form of secondary uses will be encouraged in accordance with Chapter 4's agricultural policies.
- 5.5.6 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop strategies for assisting home occupations and farm-based secondary uses that outgrow residential neighbourhoods and agricultural areas to find appropriate locations for their expanded activities.
- 5.5.7 New retail facilities will be designed and located to serve the needs of residents in support of existing or planned centres, mainstreets, downtowns, and the Growth Strategy of the Plan. Local municipalities or the County may require proposals for major retail facilities to include an impact assessment that addresses the following:
 - a) the impact on downtowns, mainstreets, and other existing and designated retail facilities within the County;
 - b) the manner in which the proposal is supportive of the County Growth Strategy and any local municipal commercial development strategies.
- 5.5.8 New retail uses should be grouped with existing commercial districts to contribute to or obtain mutually beneficial critical mass. Locations that create multiple, weaker, and/or competing commercial districts will be avoided. Local municipalities are however, encouraged to permit neighbourhood commercial facilities in close proximity to the local residents they serve. An emphasis shall be placed on design in such developments.
- 5.5.9 Business parks are encouraged in accordance with the policies contained in Section 3.6 of this Plan.
- 5.5.10 The County supports industry and commerce that will strengthen the local economy, provided new uses are compatible with existing development, utilize existing infrastructure where feasible, and do not detract from existing areas of economic activity within the region. New industry will be avoided where impacts to local infrastructure, long-term cost of providing services, or impacts to existing business exceed benefits in job creation and economic gain.
- 5.5.11 The County, together with the local municipalities, will monitor the location, type and characteristics of business and the supply of serviced lands for new business. The County will encourage inter-municipal co-operation in the location of new business, recognizing that the economic benefits of new business accrue to the entire County.

Chapter 6**6. Tourism and Promotion**

Lambton County, as a gateway port of entry into Ontario and Canada, presents a significant opportunity to become a “niche market” to strengthen Ontario’s tourism industry. Tourism is already the County’s third largest industry behind petrochemicals and agriculture. Lambton’s natural assets and cultural heritage are ripe for development. These assets must be developed in order for Lambton County to attract a greater volume of tourists and their dollars.

The Blue Water Bridges and Highway 402 are a major route for travelers entering Canada from the United States. Recent improvements have been made to make border crossings more efficient. Highway 402 is an important resource for economic development. Tourism development will give the traveler reason to leave this highway to venture into Lambton County communities.

The St. Clair Parkway system is key to tourism development. The St. Clair Parkway is an important tourism link. Facilities, marinas, and golf courses along the St. Clair River support public amenities, providing a broad range of tourism services and activities in communities extending from Point Edward, through Sarnia, Aamjiwnaang, Corunna, Mooretown, Courtright, Sombra Village, Port Lambton, Walpole Island and south to Wallaceburg, Mitchell’s Bay and Chatham.

International ferry boat services exist at Sombra Village and Walpole Island linking Lambton across the St. Clair River to the state of Michigan. VIA and AMTRAK passenger train service, through the St. Clair River Rail Tunnel, and the Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport have excess capacity to bring visitors to Lambton by rail and air. Greyhound bus lines provide bus stops in Sarnia on intercity and international bus routes.

Sarnia and Point Edward (the Bluewater Bridge) and St Clair Township and Walpole Island (by ferry) are the first communities encountered by visitors from the United States. These communities present great opportunity for tourism development, particularly along the waterfront. By introducing a broad range of entertainment, accommodation, restaurants and shopping opportunities, within historic downtown Sarnia and the area south of the Blue Water Bridge in Point Edward. This area has potential to become a regional tourism destination. Galleries, theaters, museums, and other leisure-entertainment or recreational facilities existing or yet to be developed in the downtown area and along the combined waterfront parks system are important people generators to support existing downtown commercial activity and revitalization of the area.

The Lakeshore Road along the Lake Huron shoreline leads to Forest and multiple lakefront communities in Lambton Shores. The beach oriented commercial developments in Grand Bend make it a major tourism destination. Other Lambton Shores communities benefit from their close proximity to the Lake Huron shoreline, Pinery Provincial Park and associated natural heritage areas. This major tourism anchor combined with facilities like golf courses, the Lambton Heritage Museum and Huron Country Playhouse present additional tourism experiences (particularly in the growing area of eco-tourism) to people traveling along the Lake Huron shoreline.

Inland lies the Oil Heritage District, home of the first commercial oil well in the world, the Oil Museum of Canada in Oil Springs, the Oil Heritage Conservation District in Oils Springs and Enniskillen, and the Petrolia Discovery in Petrolia. Lambton's oil heritage is poised to step to the next plateau of tourism development. Historic Petrolia with its Victorian shops, estate homes built by Lambton's oil barons and the restored Victoria Playhouse Theatre will benefit as the entire area develops.

Eco-tourism, accessibility tourism, agri-tourism, hunting, and sport fishing have potential to bring economic diversity to rural Lambton. These tourism sectors have potential to offer experiences to vacationers in agricultural and natural resource settings and will build on events such as First Fridays, Artwalk, Doors Open, Forest Film Festival, Silver Stick, Starbright Christmas, Celebration of Lights, Christmas in the Park in Petrolia, Alvinston Maple Syrup Festival, the Mackinac Race, migratory bird events, and community fall fairs.

To maximize the tourism potential of Lambton County, the people of its collective communities must seize the day and recognize that the County has only begun with tourism development. Lambton County is home to many things its local people take for granted: an international waterway at its doorstep; world heritage sites (the first commercial oil wells in the world and the Walpole Island Wetlands); internationally significant fossil areas; Pinery Provincial Park; internationally recognized environmental management; and the famous Lake Huron sunsets. As the mirror of Michigan across the St. Clair River, Lambton must recognize the desirability of safe, clean Canadian travel experiences to Americans and the tourism dollars the County will realize when these experiences are provided.

As Lambton takes tourism development to its next plateau, it is important to link the promotion of Lambton as a tourist destination with the development of a strong, positive regional identity based on cultural heritage. It is also important to resolve problems with other jurisdictions related to public access to beaches and other waterfront areas. Improved relations and reconciliation of these issues with First Nations, Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments will open the door to expanded tourism development which in turn will bring economic benefits, jobs, improvement of Lambton's image, and a renewed sense of community pride.

6.1 Tourism Development

Goal: To encourage the development of a strong, year-round, regional tourism industry in a variety of sectors as a means of job creation and economic development in a variety of locations throughout the County.

Policies:

- 6.1.1 The County will work co-operatively with tourist groups and operators to make Lambton the number one drive-to destination in Southwestern Ontario.
- 6.1.2 The County will encourage the development, implementation, monitoring, and updating of Sarnia Lambton strategic tourism development plans. Tourism operators, local officials and business leaders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with adopted tourism development plans and be actively involved in their development and implementation.

- 6.1.3 Municipalities are encouraged to develop positive and creative planning policies to accommodate tourism-oriented developments, including methods of expediting the approval of tourism-oriented developments.
- 6.1.4 Tourism businesses should work together to promote their facilities and the County's tourism industry.
- 6.1.5 The County encourages the development of commercial urban waterfront attractions on the Sarnia and Point Edward waterfronts. The development of the Point Edward waterfront, south of the Blue Water Bridge, as a multi-faceted destination is supported.
- 6.1.6 Public and private initiatives focused on leisure, entertainment and recreation "people-generators" in historic downtown Sarnia are supported by the County.
- 6.1.7 The County will promote the development of eco-tourism in natural heritage areas within their carrying capacity.
- 6.1.8 The County will promote the development of agri-tourism and will work with member municipalities and agricultural representatives to form a clear strategy for the development of local agri-tourism, including identifying strengths, unique local attributes, opportunities, and potential links with value-added agriculture, local foods, potential new product markets, local heritage, recreation opportunities, and natural heritage and identifying the facilities, infrastructure, and resources necessary to support an agri-tourism industry. The development of agri-tourism must not interfere with agricultural operations.
- 6.1.9 The County encourages the development of tourism attractions, especially those with capacity for year round use which will assist in developing Lambton County as a regional tourism destination.
- 6.1.10 The success in attracting tourism developments to the County should be monitored to assist in determining the types of developments which could be attracted in the future. Tourism development plans shall list annual targets. Sector champions should meet to track and measure progress.
- 6.1.11 Public and private programs improving customer service excellence by businesses involved in tourism are supported.
- 6.1.12 Municipalities are encouraged to investigate the potential to further improve and create parks and open spaces, conservation areas, and other recreation and parkland spaces.
- 6.1.13 Municipalities can strengthen County tourism with increased promotion and expanded focus areas, as well as servicing with supporting infrastructure.
- 6.1.14 Natural and cultural heritage facilities, initiatives, activities will be supported and surrounding resources will be preserved to encourage tourism.

- 6.1.15 Municipalities are encouraged to expand existing trail networks, improvement and improvement efforts, revitalization, conservation, and promotion of tourism sectors.
- 6.1.16 The maintenance, improvement, and promotion of tourism related services and accommodations are supported as long as they do not conflict with existing operations, or policies of this plan.
- 6.1.17 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop and promote festivals and events that support a strong regional and local identity.

6.2 Oil Heritage

Goal: To promote the significance of the discovery of oil in Canada and the development of the petro-chemical industry, and to use Lambton's prominent role in these achievements to promote tourism and regional identity.

Policies:

- 6.2.1 Where possible, the County will assist in promoting and further developing the Oil Heritage District as a regional attraction.



Image Source: (lambtononline.ca, 2008)

- 6.2.2 The County supports strong linkages between the features of the Oil Heritage District and signage to direct tourists to and around this area.
- 6.2.3 Suitable methods to enable the continued operation of historic oil operations at the Petrolia Discovery facility once the oil bearing strata is exhausted should be developed.
- 6.2.4 Modern technology providing interactive learning experiences where appropriate should be introduced into attractions of the Oil Heritage District.
- 6.2.5 The Plan encourages the development of a Petrochemical Interpretive Centre to promote Lambton's petrochemical heritage.
- 6.2.6 The County supports efforts to promote and designate the Oil Heritage Conservation District in Oil Springs and Enniskillen as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

6.3 Lake Huron and St. Clair River Waterfronts

Goal: To improve and promote the County's waterfronts and associated marine history for tourism purposes and development of a regional identity.

Policies:

- 6.3.1 Municipalities are encouraged to pursue programs and projects that rejuvenate their

waterfronts.

- 6.3.2 Municipalities are encouraged to consider private commercial developments that are oriented to their waterfronts, particularly those which include public access to the water's edge.
- 6.3.3 Lambton County's marine history should be delivered through facilities or amenities that share this information with people traveling to Lambton, especially features of Provincial, National and International significance such as the construction of the Blue Water Bridges, St. Clair River Railway Tunnels, ferry operations and the Historic River District.
- 6.3.4 In considering applications for waterfront development, cultural heritage resources both on shore and in the water shall not be adversely affected. Where partially or fully submerged marine features such as ships, boats, vessels, artefacts from contents of boats, old piers, docks, wharfs, fishing traps, dwellings, aircraft, and other items of cultural heritage value are identified and may be impacted by shoreline and waterfront developments, a marine archaeological assessment is required. Satisfactory measures to mitigate any negative impacts will be required.
- 6.3.5 Tourism in the form of leisure recreation which utilizes waterways such as fishing, boating, swimming, and diving, should be promoted.
- 6.3.6 Careful use and management of beaches, recognizing their importance to local and regional identity and to the tourism industry, is a priority.
- 6.3.7 The County and its member municipalities should work together to ensure that existing beaches remain accessible to the general public.
- 6.3.8 Existing public areas along the St. Clair River and the Lake Huron shorelines will be held in trust for future generations as they maintain attractive open space along these routes. Additional public lands should be acquired as they become available. Should these routes continue to be stripped by residential development, they will cease to exist as tourism generators.
- 6.3.9 Public agencies and local municipalities are encouraged to acquire waterfront properties where feasible along the Lake Huron shoreline and the St. Clair River to provide additional public access.
- 6.3.10 Municipalities are encouraged to improve those lands that provide access to the St. Clair River and Lake Huron shorelines and utilize the shorelines for cultural and tourism-oriented developments.
- 6.3.11 Opportunities to link public areas along the shorelines through parkland dedications, easements, and acquisitions should be pursued, where appropriate. Multi-use trails along the linked corridor should be developed for use by residents and tourists.
- 6.3.12 Water front development should be of a form and design which is attractive when

viewed from the water to encourage the boating public to visit waterfront tourism features.

- 6.3.13 The County supports the development of the Waterfront Trail in cooperation with local municipalities and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust as an opportunity to improve the growing cycle-tourism sector.

6.4 Highway 402 Interchanges

Goals: To accommodate tourism related businesses at Highway 402 interchanges.

To provide signage and information at Highway 402 interchanges that promotes a strong regional identity.

Policies:

- 6.4.1 Lands at Highway 402 interchanges that are appropriate for service centre development should be developed for uses oriented to the traveling public. Local official plans should include policies to guide development at the designated interchanges, including:
- a) lists of permitted uses that include such uses as gas stations, restaurants, and tourist information centres;
 - b) a requirement that the permitted uses are compatible with nearby land uses, including agriculture;
 - c) a requirement for the provision of adequate servicing, including potable water and sanitary sewage systems, to the site; and,
 - d) a requirement to ensure safe vehicular access to the site.
- 6.4.2 Site plan control should be used to ensure that development at Highway 402 interchanges is well-planned and attractive. Buildings, structures, signage and landscaping should be attractive to patrons and to traffic along the highway.
- 6.4.3 The Province will be consulted with regard to the introduction of signage regulations which allow businesses along the highway to effectively advertise their uses.
- 6.4.4 The travelling public, when it exits Highway 402, should be greeted by signage within road allowances and at private businesses that promotes strong regional and local identity and attractions. Such signage should be coordinated between interchanges.
- 6.4.5 Development in proximity to 402 Interchanges shall comply with the policies of section 3.8 of this Plan.

6.5 Physical and Marketing Linkages

Goals: To develop physical and marketing linkages connecting high quality cultural heritage, natural heritage, and recreational experiences throughout the County.

To develop a strong, positive identity for the region and its communities by which to market the region more effectively.

Policies:

- 6.5.1 The County has collaborated and will continue to collaborate with local municipalities and local cultural and economic organizations to develop and market a regional identity, based on culture and heritage resources as identified through extensive public involvement and consultation.
- 6.5.2 The County will map cultural points of interest, maintain appropriate web sites, and use social media and other on-line methods of promotion of the region and local communities and organizations. Local municipalities and organizations are also encouraged to share resources, technology, marketing, and funding and work collaboratively to maintain a quality on-line presence promoting local and regional identity and assets.
- 6.5.3 The County and local municipalities are encouraged to develop and maintain a variety of transportation corridors which physically link significant tourism events, sites and facilities.
- 6.5.4 The Plan supports efforts to develop transportation routes which accommodate alternative means of travel such as cycling and walking trails. These routes should link Lambton County with abutting municipalities, and the State of Michigan.
- 6.5.5 A quality and coordinated signage system along transportation routes to identify and promote a regional identity and major tourism attractions will be developed. Local municipalities should work with the tourism industry to clearly sign roads providing access to major attractions. The County supports tourism providers and municipalities in this regard.
- 6.4.4 The travelling public, when it exits Highway 402, should be greeted by signage within road allowances and at private businesses that promotes strong regional and local identity and attractions. Such signage should be coordinated between interchanges.
- 6.5.6 The Plan encourages the development of events and activities to market and promote the tourism amenities of Lambton County.
- 6.5.7 Tourism developments should be accessible where feasible with the specific intention of marketing Lambton as an accessible tourist destination.
- 6.5.8 The County will investigate partnerships with First Nations and other groups and organizations to coordinate events and share resources regarding tourism

opportunities.

- 6.5.9 The Federal Government is urged to expedite resolution of all native land claims in Lambton County to enable tourism development in areas of potential.
- 6.5.10 The County encourages the Federal government to ensure that the Customs and Immigration booths at the Blue Water Bridges are properly staffed to provide visitors with as timely an access into Canada as possible.
- 6.5.11 The County will work with agencies and industrial partners at continuing to improve the image of Lambton County with respect to air and water quality management. The County and tourism providers will encourage the involvement of these interest groups in the development of attractions that promote Lambton's environmental achievements and petrochemical heritage.
- 6.5.12 Local municipalities are encouraged to maintain and enforce appropriate property standards. The County encourages the restoration or removal of decrepit buildings especially in tourist areas and along major transportation routes, provided all efforts are made to preserve buildings of historic, architectural, or other cultural value, which may include establishing heritage property standards.

6.6 Revitalizing Commercial Areas

Goal: To ensure efforts and resources to revitalize downtowns and other commercial areas are allocated with a coordinated vision and stakeholder direction.

Policies:

- 6.6.1 In order to experience mutual benefits, local communities are encouraged to cooperate in developing the region as a tourist destination within a common regional identity.
- 6.6.2 If there is a desire to offer incentive programs aimed at redeveloping and/or marketing a commercial area, a prerequisite shall be the development of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) within the local municipality. The Community Improvement Area (CIA) must have a viable or potential commercial function and the boundary must not be so broad as to dilute the CIP's effectiveness.
- 6.6.3 The CIP must be led by local stakeholders, and have the formal commitment of the local municipal Council and all major stakeholders such as the local service clubs. Representation from local service clubs, a senior municipal staff person, and all other stakeholders is required in all consultations and committees. A municipal staff person may serve as CIP coordinator. Organizers must assemble all relevant policies and regulations affecting the commercial area. No further steps of CIP development shall commence until all components of the organizational structure are established.
- 6.6.4 The CIP must conduct an initial community assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and continually re-assess by survey. The CIP must develop

a brand by identifying what makes the CIA or broader community unique or how it can differentiate itself from other communities or regions. The brand must work with the regional identity.

- 6.6.5 The CIP must define its end goal. To be a destination community, the CIP must have capacity to provide primary activities in the CIA or broader community in proportion to how far visitors are expected to travel. Primary activities must be things visitors cannot get closer to home. Alternatively, a community may plan to be a support community, capturing traffic en route to another destination.
- 6.6.6 The CIP must develop one and five year action plans towards its goal, identifying problems and opportunities to be tackled one at a time, in order. Action plans must be reviewed and updated regularly.
- 6.6.7 The CIP must develop marketing plans and/or community design standards for improvements within the CIA. These must implement the branding and action plans and support common themes, key messages, and even color schemes. Design themes could be marketing or physical improvement oriented.
- 6.6.8 Marketing should be linked with and shared with other communities within the region and should also promote a common regional identity.
- 6.6.9 Municipal investments in the CIA must conform to the brand, action plans, and community design standards established by the CIP and may include one or more of:
 - a) capital expenditures to core visitor attractions within the CIA and broader community;
 - b) incentive programs/grants for storefront signage, community gateway signage, interpretive plaques, kiosks, façade improvements, awnings, street furniture, decorations, lighting, seasonal decorations, and anything else consistent with branding and action plans; and
 - c) advertising, promotional materials/ packages, and mapping of businesses, core attractions, and non-gated public attractions;
- 6.6.10 If offered, incentive and grant programs must not be offered until community design standards are in place and must not be granted to projects that do not conform to the standards.
- 6.6.11 Site plan approvals shall require that new development be consistent with the CIP's branding, action plan, and community design standards.
- 6.6.12 Primary activities and the product that has been branded must be in place before marketing commences.
- 6.6.13 Separate community champions, working in coordination, are needed to oversee the various components of the revitalization efforts, generally divided into:
 - a) the organizational structure in Section 6.6.3;

- b) community assessment and branding in Section 6.6.4;
- c) the strategy and action plan in Sections 6.6.5 and 6.6.6;
- d) design standards and marketing plan in Sections 6.6.7 and 6.6.8; and
- e) investments in Sections 6.6.9 and 6.6.10.

6.6.14 The County will support local efforts to revitalize a commercial area consistent with Section 6.6. Where providing inter-municipal benefits or contributing to regional identity especially, the County may also participate through capital improvements of County property or infrastructure and/or financial assistance consistent with Section 5.1.14.

Chapter 7

7. Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes road, rail, airport, natural heritage features (as described elsewhere in this Plan), water and sewer, electric, utility, waste disposal, drainage, energy generation, energy conserving, and telecommunication facilities operated by a variety of public and private sector agencies. These systems are vital to everyday life and economic competitiveness. Infrastructure that respects the integrity of the natural heritage system and promotes sustainable development and activity is critical to the growth and economy of the built environment.

The County of Lambton is in the desirable position of having access to major transportation facilities of every type. These include multi-lane controlled access highways, the Blue Water Bridge which is a high-volume international crossing, a major Canadian National Railways rail line and international tunnel, an airport offering a range of commercial aviation services including regional scheduled flights and customs services, and a harbour capable of docking lake freighters near the mouth of the St. Clair River at an important location on the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The road network within the County includes a system of roads and highways under the jurisdiction of the local municipalities, the County, and the Province of Ontario. At the present time the County maintains a network of roads, with a total length of about 700 kilometres, which primarily serve to link the various parts of the County. The Province and/or its delegate maintains Highways 402, 21, and 40.

A public transit system serves to reduce reliance on private automobiles, conserve energy, and ensure transportation services for the young, the elderly, the physically challenged and those who do not have access to a private vehicle. The City of Sarnia maintains the only regularly scheduled public transit system within the County. This system is funded by the City and the Village of Point Edward. Special transit services for the disabled are offered within the City and the County. In addition, rural transportation services are offered for seniors.

Cycling and walking trails can offer community benefits in terms of recreation and low-cost transportation alternatives. Abandoned rail corridors, natural heritage corridors, utility rights-of-way such as major storm sewer rights-of-way, stormwater management areas, and municipal parklands all offer significant opportunities for linking various parts of individual municipalities and the County as a whole.

The Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport offers scheduled flights to London and Toronto, customs facilities, and private and corporate aviation facilities. The Airport is located close to the major population and employment areas of the County and it is an important component of the overall transportation infrastructure. Its importance may increase in the future, particularly as a convenient terminal for air travel.

Lambton is located along intercity and international bus routes with stops in the City of Sarnia. Lambton is also home to a number of charter bus companies.

Lambton County has a number of deep water port facilities along the St. Clair River, as well as a number of recreational marinas along the river and the lakeshore. The port facilities are of importance to local industry and agriculture, while the marinas offer facilities for recreational boaters.

The Canadian National Railways mainline runs east-west across the centre of the County. This is a strategic route for CN that includes the St. Clair Tunnel, which provides a direct link to Port Huron and is an integral facility for the rail route leading to Chicago. Chicago serves as an important hub of the American railroad system.

The CSX operates a railway that runs from Holt Line south of Sombra to Sarnia, and parallels the St. Clair Parkway. The London to Windsor Canadian Pacific Railway line passes through the southeast portion of Dawn-Euphemia Township.

While most of the freight passing through the County originates outside of the County, a number of industries in the County use the railway for transportation of raw materials and finished product. Railway facilities are of considerable importance to the agricultural sector, as these also provide shipping of farm products to the elevator located at the Sarnia Harbour. Passenger service to London and beyond, and west into the United States (a Via Rail/ Amtrak link) is also offered. However, service has been curtailed over the years.

Utility corridors throughout the County provide for the transmission and distribution of electricity, natural gas, oil and petroleum products, and communications services. In addition to serving local needs, these corridors are essential to the County's economy, which is supported by electrical generation, petroleum refining, and natural gas storage, transmission and distribution, all of which rely on utility corridors.

The location of these corridors can have a significant effect on both the natural and man-made environments. It is important that the location and design of these facilities have a minimum visual impact on the surrounding area and that there not be a negative effect on existing communities and on the natural environment.

Lambton possesses a significant amount of natural gas storage that is critical to the Ontario provincial interest. This storage is integrated with natural gas pipelines and storage in North America. The compressor station in Dawn-Euphemia is a major regional hub for natural gas distribution and transmission. Additional compression stations including the Enbridge Gas Storage Operations in St Clair Township are located in the County. There is also significant underground storage of hydrocarbons in salt caverns storage for the petrochemical industry in the Chemical Valley. These salt caverns are integral to local petrochemical industry operations.

Telecommunications infrastructure is of increasing importance within the County, especially the provision and protection of quality internet access throughout the County. Wireless telecommunications infrastructure is regulated by Industry Canada and includes a public consultation process for the creation and modification of telecommunications towers.

Over 90% of Lambton County residents obtain their drinking water from water treatment plants. These plants draw water from Lake Huron inlets located at Sarnia, Bright's Grove, and Grand Bend. Potable water (safe for drinking) is pumped through a network of pipeline that extends

throughout much of Lambton County.

The population not served by pipelines relies on either shallow dug wells or deep drilled wells that tap the aquifer. The aquifer is a bed of sand and gravel, combined with the top few metres of weathered bedrock usually 3 to 5 metres thick, though in some places it is entirely absent. Throughout the County, water from the aquifer varies in quantity and quality. The mineral content of the water, such as iron, is generally high. In some places the water is contaminated by naturally occurring oil and gases, such as methane or hydrogen sulfide, which may require venting.

Public sewage treatment facilities in Lambton are operated by the local municipalities or contracted. In general, sewage treatment facilities in Lambton County have sufficient uncommitted reserve capacity to accommodate development on lands that are already designated for residential development.

Septic systems are employed for sewage disposal in most of the non-urban areas of the County, as well as in a number of settlement areas. These include small communities such as Warwick Village, the suburban residential area along the lakeshore within Sarnia, and the residential areas of the former Township of Bosanquet. The County of Lambton currently administers septic system approvals within the County.

Stormwater management is an integral part of piped services in Urban Centres and most Urban Settlements. Both quantity and quality of stormwater discharges from new development areas must be managed in accordance with best management practices and Provincial Regulations.

The County of Lambton is responsible for several aspects of waste management. These responsibilities include the disposal of municipal wastes. The provision of landfill facilities for the disposal of this waste is a County responsibility. Waste collection is the responsibility of each local municipality.

The County owns six landfills. Several privately operated landfills are also located in Lambton. The County designates which facility each municipality is to use for the disposal of its waste. The designated landfill may be either privately or publicly owned. The reduction of waste generated is in the best interests of the County and its member municipalities.

Provincial legislation promotes renewable energy facilities and generally removes municipal powers with respect to their establishment within the County. Renewable energy generation facilities have a variety of forms and new types of facilities may be developed in the future. Different forms and scales of facilities present varying land use issues and potential impacts to municipal services and infrastructure as a result of their development and operation.

7.1 Road Network

Goal: To ensure the continued provision of a safe, efficient, and high-quality network of roads that primarily meet the needs of traffic with origins and destinations within the County.

Policies:

- 7.1.1 Ongoing improvements to the County Road system will be undertaken. In recognition of the significant economic investment in the road system, an emphasis on restorative and preventative maintenance will be continued.
- 7.1.2 Where appropriate, road improvement plans will be supported by traffic studies, and undertaken in concert with land use planning efforts.
- 7.1.3 The County encourages the use of landscaping and other techniques that minimize the visual and noise impacts from roadways on adjacent residential development or in the immediate vicinity of existing or proposed arterial roads.
- 7.1.4 Where property fronts on a County road, conveyance of land may be required at no expense to the County for County road widenings as a condition of severance, plans of subdivision, or as a consequence of new development, under the provisions of the *Planning Act*.
- 7.1.5 Unequal widenings may be taken where topographic features, historic buildings or other cultural heritage resources, significant environmental concerns or other unique conditions necessitate taking a greater widening or the total widening on one side of an existing County road right-of-way.
- 7.1.6 The County will require a minimum width of 30 metres for all County roads. Right-of-way width requirements for a specific section of roadway may be reduced where special circumstances warrant and long-term requirements will not be affected.
- 7.1.7 New access points to County roads will be discouraged where development sites have suitable access to the local road system, in order to preserve the traffic carrying capacity and safety of County roads.
- 7.1.8 New accesses to County roads will only be permitted where traffic safety concerns related to sight lines at curves, hills, and intersections can be addressed.
- 7.1.9 Large development proposals that are likely to generate significant traffic volumes may require a transportation study so that their impact on County roads and surrounding land uses can be properly assessed.
- 7.1.10 Local municipalities shall adopt practices and official plan policies for the provision and maintenance of a local road network.
- 7.1.11 When undertaking road construction projects, the County and local municipalities should consider the need for and feasibility of accommodating a variety of

transportation modes, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and motorized vehicles. Such methods may include "road diets" and "complete streets".

- 7.1.12 This Plan supports efforts to reduce vehicle congestion at existing school locations and to align new streets and new school locations to reduce congestion and traffic hazards in proximity to schools.
- 7.1.13 All proposed development located adjacent to and in the vicinity of a Provincial Highway within the Ministry of Transportation's permit control area under the *Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act* will be subject to MTO approval. Early consultation with the MTO is encouraged to ensure the integration of municipal planning initiatives with provincial transportation planning. Any new areas in a municipality identified for future development that are located adjacent to or in the vicinity of a Provincial Highway or interchange/intersection within MTO's permit control area will be subject to MTO's policies, standards and requirements. Direct access will be discouraged and often prohibited. MTO policy is to allow only one entrance for each existing lot of record. Development is encouraged to utilize local roads and shared access wherever possible. New, altered or expanded land uses, parcels, signs, and entrances adjacent to Provincial Highways shall be subject to such approvals or prohibitions as may be required by the Ministry of Transportation.
- 7.1.14 The County and local municipalities should identify and protect historic transportation routes as heritage roads. As part of road maintenance and development including realignments and widenings, appropriate measures should be taken to mitigate negative impacts to the heritage features of heritage roads.

7.2 Transit Network

Goal: To maintain a system of public transportation that meets the needs of users throughout the County in a cost-effective manner.

Policies:

- 7.2.1 The continued operation of regularly scheduled public transit services is encouraged. The extension of such services is also encouraged where justified by a reasonable level of demand.
- 7.2.2 In light of the County's aging population, continued improvements to transportation services for seniors and the disabled are encouraged. In particular, efforts to improve the coordination of various transportation services are supported.
- 7.2.3 The County encourages efforts to improve access to international and intercity bus routes and provide improved and convenient bus stops within the County for those



Image Source: (wikipedia.org/wiki/sarnia, 2010)

visiting the County by bus.

7.3 Cycling and Walking Trails

Goal: To encourage the development of a network of cycling and walking trails throughout Lambton for the benefit of local residents, to improve the experience of visitors to the County, and to facilitate alternative transportation.

Policies:

7.3.1 Cycling and walking are recognized as important forms of transportation, particularly within urban communities. In addition, cycling and walking are recognized as important recreational activities, and the establishment of trails has the potential to encourage increased tourism.

7.3.2 The County encourages the conversion of utility corridors and abandoned railway corridors for public purposes and the establishment of bike lanes within the road network wherever feasible and appropriate.



Image Source: (lambtoncountytrails.com, 2010)

7.3.3 Wherever possible, measures will be taken to ensure the safety of the trail system, including the provision of appropriate road widths to separate bike and vehicular traffic. Concerns about conflicts with private property interests will be suitably addressed.

7.3.4 The establishment of trails along natural corridors throughout the County is encouraged, with the objective of creating a comprehensive network of recreational trails. Trails are encouraged within and linking natural heritage features where public access is achievable and would not negatively impact the natural heritage feature or its function.

7.3.5 The County may assist local municipalities in the preparation of a trail system Master Plan, where so desired.

7.3.6 The County encourages an interconnected trail system providing links between residential, commercial, recreational, and employment lands, schools and other institutional uses, and the natural heritage system.

7.3.7 The County supports the development of the Waterfront Trail through Lambton, in cooperation with its local municipalities and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, as a means of providing local residents and visitors with outdoor recreational opportunities, expanding tourism opportunities, and promoting improved health and well-being.

7.3.8 As part of the development review process, the County and local municipalities will

consult with development proponents regarding the need for and benefits of incorporating trails into new development. As a condition of development approval, lands may be required to be dedicated for trail purposes where appropriate.

7.4 Airport

Goal: To ensure the continued operation of the Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport and to protect it from incompatible land uses.

Policies:

- 7.4.1 Development in the vicinity of the Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport will be controlled to reduce the potential for land use conflicts and to ensure there will be no negative impacts on the long term function of the airport. Noise Exposure Forecasts approved by Transport Canada will be used in evaluating new development proposals in proximity to the airport. New development contrary to Provincial and Federal policy in this regard will be prohibited.
- 7.4.2 Retention of a full range of services, including Customs facilities, at the Airport is encouraged.
- 7.4.3 The retention and promotion of the Skyview airfield at Reeces Corners for its recreational and tourism potential is encouraged.

7.5 Water Transportation - Port and Marina Facilities

Goal: To ensure the maintenance of suitable port facilities that serve the needs of agricultural, commercial, and industrial interests within the County, and to encourage the continued operation of marinas for recreational boating.

Policies:

- 7.5.1 The retention of deep water port facilities as a component of the County's transportation infrastructure is encouraged.



Image Source: (maefield.ca, 2013)

- 7.5.2 Efforts to attract more ships to winter at the Sarnia harbour are encouraged as a means of generating local income from the maintenance and repair activities that benefit local companies.
- 7.5.3 The continued operation of marinas to serve local needs and to promote and encourage greater tourist traffic is encouraged. Marina expansions, or the establishment of new marinas, will be subject to the relevant policies of this Plan and the applicable local official plan.
- 7.5.4 The continued operation of St. Clair River ferries which provide an important connection between Ontario and Michigan at Sombra Village and Walpole Island is

encouraged.

7.6 Railways

Goal: To ensure the continued provision of railway services in Lambton County; to promote compatible uses in the vicinity of these corridors; and to encourage appropriate alternate uses of abandoned rail corridors.

Policies:

- 7.6.1 This Plan acknowledges the importance of rail infrastructure and its important role in long-term economic growth and efficient movement of goods and people. The County supports protection of rail corridor and yard viability and ultimate capacity. The County supports strategic infrastructure improvements including giving consideration for targeted grade separations. Railway operators are encouraged to maintain existing facilities and services within the County.
- 7.6.2 Sensitive land uses will not be encouraged adjacent or in proximity to rail facilities and will be prohibited within 300 metres of a rail yard. Noise studies will be required when such uses are proposed within 300 metres of a rail right-of-way or between 300 and 1000 metres from a rail yard. Vibration studies will be required when such uses are proposed within 75 metres of a rail right of way. Such studies will be completed to the satisfaction of the municipality in consultation with the railway. Where practical, development shall undertake appropriate measures to achieve appropriate sound levels in indoor and outdoor living spaces and to mitigate any adverse effects from noise and/or vibration that were identified, including alternative site layouts, attenuation measures, and notices on title (such as warning clauses or environmental easements). Flexibility and exemptions may be considered for new uses in areas of existing development.
- 7.6.3 Appropriate safety measures such as setbacks, berms, security fencing, and maintenance of Transport Canada sightline requirements shall be provided to the satisfaction of the municipality in consultation with the railway for all proposed development adjacent to railways.
- 7.6.4 The protection of abandoned railway rights-of-way for other uses is encouraged. Dissolving an existing right-of-way by conveying the land to abutting owners is discouraged, to ensure the availability of the right-of-way should rail transportation become important in the future.
- 7.6.5 The County will work with local municipalities in evaluating the potential use of abandoned rail corridors for recreation, transportation and/or utility corridor purposes. This could entail the preparation of a Master Plan which would be used to evaluate the eventual use and linkage of abandoned rail corridors. The evaluation of alternate uses for abandoned corridors will require consultation between the local municipality, the County, community groups, potential users, affected landowners, applicable utility companies or agencies, and other interested parties before any development of the abandoned railway corridor occurs. Formalized public consultation will be part of the

decision-making process, including public meetings, open houses, or other forms of obtaining public input.

- 7.6.6 The development of public trails on abandoned rail corridors is appropriate in certain communities and where the trail can provide a link between communities.
- 7.6.7 In some instances, it may not be appropriate or necessary to develop an abandoned rail corridor immediately. In such cases, the ownership of the corridor should remain with the municipality for the planning period of this Plan so that it is available for possible future recreation, transportation, and/or utility corridor purposes. If the corridor has not been developed for an appropriate alternate use in that time, the option of transferring the land to adjacent property owners may be considered. In the interim, the municipality may consider leasing parts of the corridor to adjacent property owners. This option would represent a short-term use of the corridor only.

7.7 Gas Compressor Station

Goal: To support the continued operation of natural gas compressor facilities associated with natural gas storage and transmission, to allow their expansion, and to allow the location of supporting and compatible uses.

Policies:

- 7.7.1 The location of a gas compressor station in former Dawn Township that is a major regional and international hub for gas distribution and another major compressor station in St Clair Township are identified on Map 1.
- 7.7.2 The following policies shall apply to the Gas Compressor Station designations:
- a) The primary activities permitted at the gas compressor station are those related to the storage, regulation of flow, and transmission and distribution of natural gas regionally and internationally;
 - b) Commercial, industrial, and office uses that are accessory to, support, are compatible with, or benefit from proximity to the gas storage and compressor facilities are also permitted;
 - c) Facilities shall be designed to minimize the amount of agricultural land taken out of production;
 - d) The local official plan shall establish criteria for expansion of the gas compressor station designation including the criteria in the provincial policy statement for locating non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas;
 - e) New or expanding uses shall be compatible with the natural heritage policies of this plan. Appropriate setbacks or mitigation measures should be provided with respect to existing residential and other sensitive uses; and
 - f) The local official plan shall contain criteria respecting the types of compatible industrial uses that may be permitted within the gas compressor station designation. Uses that would be incompatible with the gas compressor station uses or restrict their ability to expand shall be discouraged in proximity to the gas compressor station.

7.7.3 The local Official Plan shall develop specific policies for the development of other gas compressor station sites located within the County.

7.8 Utility Corridors: Electricity/ Pipelines/ Communications

Goal: To facilitate the provision of services that are important to the Lambton County economy, while ensuring that agricultural and natural heritage areas are protected and preserved and settlement areas are not adversely affected or put at risk by the proximity of utility corridors.

Policies:

- 7.8.1 Preferred routes for utility lines and corridors follow existing rights-of-way, property lines, existing easements and fence lines; avoid built-up and heavily populated areas; do not infringe on natural heritage features, including natural heritage corridors, and do not further fragment forested areas.
- 7.8.2 The minimization of impacts on woodlots and agricultural lands, should be the highest priority in determining a utility line or corridor route in rural areas.
- 7.8.3 Where woodlot locations cannot be avoided, tree cover removed will be replaced with twice the area of tree cover that is removed at a location specified by the affected land owner. Should the owner not have a suitable location, the County or local municipality will select it.
- 7.8.4 Measures to mitigate impacts on agriculture during and after construction should be followed including replacement of soils with top soil layers in their original condition and order; timing of construction to minimize crop losses; stripping, treatment, and disposal of surplus materials from trenching in a manner acceptable to the land owner and the local municipality; avoidance of prime agricultural lands when possible; repair of damage to natural soils, surface drainage, tile drainage and/or fencing to the satisfaction of the land owner; siting of towers or other fixtures adjacent to existing buildings, fence lines, hedge rows, or property boundaries where possible; use of narrow base towers on specialty crop lands for in-field locations, and for fence and property line locations on prime agricultural lands.
- 7.8.5 Access points to existing roads should be reviewed with municipal road superintendents or the County Public Works Department, depending on the ownership of the road.
- 7.8.6 Design, construction, site restoration, and maintenance should be carried out in accordance with relevant environmental guidelines regarding watercourses, sedimentation control, significant natural areas, natural heritage corridors, and agricultural lands.
- 7.8.7 Consideration will be given to ensuring that above-ground facilities or structures are aesthetically pleasing and visually harmonious with the surrounding area and/or screened or buffered.

- 7.8.8 The design, planning, and maintenance of the utility corridor will consider the effects on the natural heritage corridor framework and will implement restoration techniques consistent with natural heritage policies. The utility company will be responsible for the cost of repairing damage to municipal roads.
- 7.8.9 Consents for new utility corridors that fragment farm land are discouraged. Easements and co-location within existing corridors are encouraged for new utility lines rather than creating new separate and distinct lots.
- 7.8.10 The utility company will maintain and be ultimately responsible for the corridor, the decommissioning and/or removal of facilities, and any site remediation upon the abandonment of the utility line.
- 7.8.11 The primary use of utility corridors are the transmission and distribution facilities located therein, however secondary uses, such as agriculture, active and passive recreation, community gardens, other utilities, and uses such as parking lots and outdoor storage that are accessory to adjacent land uses, are encouraged on utility corridor lands, where feasible and compatible with surrounding land uses, and subject to such technical approvals as required by the utility. In particular, the County encourages the development of utility corridors for passive recreational uses including open spaces and trails. Corridors may also serve to provide separations between incompatible uses.
- 7.8.12 Local municipalities should endeavor to identify the locations of hydrocarbon transmission pipeline rights of way in planning documents, noting those that have greater than normal (200 metre from pipeline centerline) emergency response planning zones or setback requirements. Pipeline operators shall be responsible for providing land use planning officials this information.
- 7.8.13 Decisions respecting land uses changes and applications under the *Planning Act* shall consider implications to pipelines, such as potential requirements to upgrade pipelines. Where pipelines are located within a municipality, the official plan and/or zoning by-law shall contain provisions and consultation processes that take into consideration National Energy Board and Canadian Standards Association requirements. Generally, no permanent building should be permitted on or within 7m metres of a pipeline right of way.
- 7.8.14 Proponents of any development within 200 metres of a pipeline right of way (or such greater distance as may apply) shall be encouraged to consult early with the pipeline operator. Pipeline operators should be circulated all applications under the *Planning Act* respecting lands within 200 metres of a known pipeline right of way or within such greater distance as applies. Ground disturbances within 30 metres of the pipe centerline such as excavation, blasting, and movement of heavy equipment also require prior National Energy Board approval.

7.9 Telecommunications

Goal: To facilitate the provision of telecommunications services to Lambton County,

while protecting agricultural lands and uses, settlement areas, sensitive land uses, and natural heritage features.

Policies:

- 7.9.1 The County supports the provision of high quality telecommunications services within the County, especially high speed internet and cellular services, especially to rural communities.
- 7.9.2 High quality telecommunications service and improved coverage within the County's rural areas is seen as key to creating entrepreneurial and business development opportunities within rural areas.
- 7.9.3 The policies of section 7.8 of this Plan regarding the placement of utility corridors shall apply to telecommunications towers also, in addition to applying to "wired" telecommunications services.
- 7.9.4 Consents for telecommunication towers that would result in new parcels of distinct ownership shall be prohibited.
- 7.9.5 Recognizing that telecommunications towers are exempt from municipal Zoning By-laws and section 41 of the *Planning Act*, municipalities are encouraged to work with Industry Canada to develop local telecommunication tower siting protocols that:
- a) direct new telecommunications towers to industrial and agricultural land designations whenever possible.
 - b) require that tower placement not negatively impact any natural heritage feature or cultural or historic area or landscape and minimize the amount of land taken out of agricultural production.
 - c) prefer a minimum 250 metre setback from all residential designations and dwellings wherever possible, unless necessary to provide adequate service to such areas.
 - d) require that proponents provide notice and undertake public consultations where a facility is closer than either of 300 metres or six times tower height to a dwelling or residential designation, unless the facility is building mounted and does not exceed 25% of the building's height.
 - e) encourage co-location of multiple service providers' equipment on a single tower and strongly discourage new towers where there is an existing tower within 2000 metres.
 - f) prefer monopod or monopole towers over latticed and/or guyed, encourage attachment of facilities to existing buildings, where appropriate, and encourage blending facilities into surroundings through landscaping, buffering, or design.
 - g) require proponents to have a pre-consultation meeting with municipal and county staff and also meet with municipal and county staff to discuss how to address any issues arising through any public notification or consultation process.
 - h) require removal of deactivated, inactive, or abandoned towers.
 - i) require proponents enter into agreements for the purpose of addressing matters

of interest to the municipality.

7.10 Water and Sanitary and Storm Sewers

Goal: To encourage the development of Centres and Settlements on full urban services, to minimize development on private services, and to encourage expansions and improvements to distribution, collection, and treatment systems when required to accommodate new growth or to alleviate environmental concerns.

Policies:

- 7.10.1 Full municipal water and sewage services, including communal sewage treatment systems, is the preferred method for servicing except as provided in section 3.2, the Growth Strategy. Consistent with the County's Development and Growth Strategy, the majority of growth will occur on full municipal services. Use of private individual water and/or septic systems is permitted where full municipal services are not practical or feasible in which case very limited development may occur on municipal water and private septic systems provided site conditions are suitable for the long term provision of such services with no negative impacts, and only used for infilling, minor rounding out of existing development; or to address failed individual on-site sewage services in existing development, provided such development is consistent with natural heritage goals, provided vulnerable surface and ground water areas are protected and where possible restored and/or improved. The use of private septic systems for development within settlements shall only be permitted if the development is serviced by municipal water services and only in compliance with the conditions contained in Section 3.2.6.
- 7.10.2 In areas serviced by full municipal water and sewage services, approval of development applications will not occur unless there is adequate uncommitted reserve capacity available for water, sanitary, and storm water services. The calculation of this uncommitted reserve capacity will consider any allocations made to draft approved developments and designated lands that have not yet been constructed.
- 7.10.3 In accordance with Provincial Policy, the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and Section 3.5.2 of this Plan, no extension to an existing urban designation as shown on Map 1 will be approved unless an approved municipal or municipal communal sewage treatment system with adequate uncommitted reserve capacity exists to serve the new development area.
- 7.10.4 In recognition of the water quality and quantity problems that are experienced in much of the rural area, the extension of municipal water to serve existing rural development is encouraged provided:
- a) it is needed to address failed private services or to provide a more reliable quality and quantity of water; and
 - b) it is not being installed for the purpose of encouraging the establishment of new non-farm development in the rural area.

- 7.10.5 All development proposals will have regard for stormwater drainage and surface water infiltration on-site in direct relation to the scale of the development.
- 7.10.6 Local stormwater management policies that include storage for on-site use or the use of infiltration as a means to replenish groundwater supplies and minimize offsite flooding and erosion are encouraged, where feasible.
- 7.10.7 On-site erosion control and sedimentation techniques to minimize off-site effects prior to and during any development's construction phase will be required.
- 7.10.8 Local municipalities are encouraged to work together, where appropriate, in the provision of sanitary sewer and municipal water services to development.
- 7.10.9 The establishment of municipally owned and operated stormwater quality treatment facilities where feasible and practical, based on the findings of watershed and subwatershed studies, will be encouraged. Municipalities may require assessment of facilities before assuming ownership including, but not limited to, phosphorus and nitrate analysis.
- 7.10.10 The incorporation of stormwater quality best management practices and low impact development practices into land use restrictions and the design and long term maintenance of development proposals will be encouraged.
- 7.10.11 Development projects and associated stormwater outfalls adjacent to watercourses should incorporate naturalization techniques where appropriate to improve and maintain vegetation and habitat.
- 7.10.12 Local municipalities shall comply with recommended buffer separation guidelines as presented in MOECC's D-2 Guideline, or successor document, for compatibility between sewage treatment works and sensitive land uses and are encouraged to identify in their official plans and/or zoning by-laws the locations of municipal and communal sewage treatment works in Lambton County or adjoining Counties within 400 metres of sensitive land uses.

7.11 Waste Management

Goal: To ensure that waste generation and disposal in Lambton County is effectively managed.

Policies:

- 7.11.1 The Lambton County Waste Management Master Plan is the primary guide for waste management in the County.
- 7.11.2 In addition to waste diversion, the County encourages strategies that would reduce potential waste (e.g. packaging and advertising materials) from even entering households and places of business. The County supports a greater emphasis on maximizing value from waste. The reduction, reuse and recycling of waste are all

encouraged however, to extend the life of landfill sites.

- 7.11.3 Local municipal recycling programs are recognized as key efforts that have reduced the waste going to landfills.
- 7.11.4 Composting, including private household composting and municipal composting programs, are recognized as having potential to further reduce wastes going to landfills. Private commercial compost facilities are to be located on lands designated and zoned for such purposes.
- 7.11.5 Private commercial waste management facilities are to be located on lands designated and zoned for such purposes. An amendment to this Plan and the local official plan is required prior to the establishment of new waste management facilities or the expansion of existing facilities.
- 7.11.6 Any proposal for a new waste management facility or for the expansion of an existing facility must be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of this Plan and must comply with the provisions of the *Environmental Protection Act* and other Provincial legislation.
- 7.11.7 Any development, or change of use, on or within 500 metres of the perimeter of an active or closed waste disposal site, located in Lambton County or adjoining Counties, will be subject to consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change before any zoning by-law, zoning by-law amendment, official plan, official plan amendment, or other *Planning Act* approval is adopted or granted for such lands. A study may be required to be undertaken by a qualified professional that evaluates the presence and impact of environmental contaminants including but not necessarily limited to methane gas and leachate. The study will address the feasibility of mitigation measures if required. If it is found that a potential adverse effect or potential risk to health and safety does exist, development may be restricted and /or refused.
- 7.11.8 Where development, or change of use is proposed on a waste site, no zoning by-law, zoning by-law amendment, official plan, official plan amendment, or other *Planning Act* approvals will be adopted or granted until approval from the Province and/or its delegate for the proposed use is obtained in accordance with Section 46 of the *Environmental Protection Act*. After 25 years have lapsed since lands or lands covered by water have been used for the disposal of waste, the municipality or *Planning Act* approval authority may request the provision of appropriate technical studies that evaluates the presence and impact of environmental contaminants including but not necessarily limited to methane gas and leachate. The study will address the feasibility of mitigation measures if required. If it is found that a potential adverse effect or potential risk to health and safety does exist, development may be restricted and/or refused.
- 7.11.9 Local official plans will identify all known closed, abandoned and active waste disposal sites and provide policies for development in proximity to the sites.
- 7.11.10 With respect to food waste, means of accomplishing alternatives to disposal including

source reduction; diversion to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters; diversion to animal feed; use for fuel conversion and energy recovery; and composting should be explored, in that order of priority.

- 7.11.11 Local municipalities are encouraged to identify in their official plans and/or zoning by-laws the locations of all known active and closed waste disposal sites in and within 500 metres of the municipality.

7.12 Renewable Energy

Goals: To ensure local concerns are identified and addressed, particularly where local approvals are required and that the development and operation of renewable energy projects not negatively impact municipal services and infrastructure.

- 7.12.1 Lambton County supports the provision of a reliable electricity supply including generation, transmission, and distribution facilities and infrastructure. The County will support the development of renewable energy facilities where, in the County's opinion, they are compatible with the community and neighbouring land uses and where municipal services and infrastructure are not negatively impacted. County Council has passed a motion declaring itself an unwilling host with respect to industrial wind generation.

- 7.12.2 The County recognizes that legislation exempts renewable energy projects from official plan policies, zoning by-laws, and site plan control, however renewable energy proponents will be encouraged to attempt the highest levels of cooperation, consideration, and communication with the County, local municipalities, host property owners, and the local community during all phases of project development and operation, and will be encouraged to comply with the policies of this Plan (or required to comply, where the means exist to require compliance).

- 7.12.3 Renewable energy facility site locations, site layouts, and associated transmission and distribution infrastructure should, at minimum, address impacts to sensitive land uses, resources, and natural heritage features to the extent required through compliance with environmental assessment and other requirements of the Renewable Energy Approval Regulation, *Endangered Species Act (2007)*, and any other applicable provincial approval processes or requirements for obtaining contracts to produce and sell electricity.



Image Source: (blackburnnews.com, 2013)

- 7.12.4 Renewable energy facility proponents should, at minimum, provide the County and prospective host local municipalities with such background studies, project

specifications, and site layout information as the proponent is required to provide to the municipality under the Renewable Energy Approval Regulation at such time as required by the Regulation.

- 7.12.5 The County will require that proponents enter into agreements with respect to the use and crossing of County roads for the delivery or construction of project components and the long-term use of road allowances for transmission and distribution lines.
- 7.12.6 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop their own detailed standards for various types of renewable energy systems with respect to issues such as road use and restoration, municipal drains, public safety, and traffic management.
- 7.12.7 Local municipalities are encouraged to seek (or require as the case may be) agreements and/or securities with renewable energy proponents (as opposed to landowners) respecting things such as after-project site decommissioning and rehabilitation, emergency response, dispute resolution, road use (component delivery and infrastructure installation), municipal drains, and community commitment funds or securities for the provision of same.
- 7.12.8 The creation of new and distinct lots for renewable energy facilities will generally be prohibited.
- 7.12.9 The County acknowledges energy conservation and a switch to use of energy during off-peak hours as alternatives to increased energy generation. The County will support such programs where they do not impose unacceptable strains to local industry or the quality of life of local citizens and families.
- 7.12.10 The County may explore the potential to participate in programs for the development of small renewable energy generation facilities on County property and may explore ways to conserve energy use and/or switch use to off-peak hours in County operations.

Chapter 8

8. Natural Heritage

Lambton County has a wealth of significant environmental features representing rare ecosystems, unique species of plants and animals and sites valued by County residents for their physical beauty. The Natural Heritage Strategy relies on a network of natural heritage corridors which recognize the individual features, the functions they possess and their connections to one another. The County has an interest in maintaining and improving, where possible, these features and connections through the use of corridors for the “health” of the natural environment. Indicators of health are the variety of species (biodiversity) found within the various natural communities in the County and their ability to handle stresses (resilience) that are imposed on them. These areas are protected for many reasons including the conservation of soil, purification of air and water, flood control, preservation of biodiversity, waste management, nutrient circulation, the protection of significant woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, and for the protection, improvement, and restoration of sensitive surface water and groundwater features and hydrological functions. The ecosystems found within the County of Lambton are diverse and range from the fragile dune ecosystems along Lake Huron to the prairie grasslands found in isolated sites within the City of Sarnia and on Walpole Island.

The traditional approach to environmental management has relied on policies that can be implemented through regulations and by-laws. By-laws alone will not ensure that the natural environment is maintained and improved. Public policy should emphasize stewardship programs whereby land owners are assisted to understand the importance of natural habitat and are encouraged to protect and improve natural features as they manage their land through programs such as the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Plan, the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program, the Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program, or the Environmental Farm Plan. Under stewardship, the land owners become partners in environmental protection and programs proceed only with their permission and agreement.

The Natural Heritage System is the combination of significant natural areas, their functions, and the corridors that connect them. The system includes:

Group A features:

- *provincially significant wetlands*
- *provincially significant coastal wetlands*
- *locally significant wetlands*
- *locally significant coastal wetlands*
- *habitat of endangered species and threatened species*
- *fish habitat*

Group B features:

- *lands adjacent to Group A features and adjacent to certain Group B features as noted in these policies*
- *significant woodlands*

- *significant valleylands*
- *significant wildlife habitat*
- *provincially significant areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs)*
- *regionally significant ANSIs*

Group C features:

- *lands adjacent to other Group B features*
- *primary corridors, including core areas*
- *linkage features*
- *highly vulnerable aquifers*
- *significant groundwater recharge areas*
- *other surface water features*
- *woodlots other than significant woodlands*
- *other significant natural areas, including shrublands, meadows and prairies.*

These areas are not mutually exclusive features or functions. In many cases, these features overlap in a given geographical location and individual sites usually have values associated with more than one type of feature.

It is important to recognize that the habitat of endangered species and threatened species, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat are functions associated with habitat features such as wetlands, woodlands, ANSIs, valleylands, and watershed systems. Therefore, though a feature may not appear “significant” from a cursory standpoint, it could be critical in terms of these functions.

Both the Province and the County have an interest in conserving and protecting these components of the natural heritage system. Some components are a greater constraint than others when considering new land use planning applications.

These constraints are:

- *For Group A features, no development or site alteration is permitted, except that in the case of fish habitat and habitat of endangered species or threatened species, development may be permitted in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, and infrastructure may also be permitted in some circumstances in accordance with applicable legislation and regulations;*
- *For Group B features, development may be permitted if it can be demonstrated through an Environmental Impact Study that no negative impacts on the features or their associated ecological functions will result;*
- *For Group C features, local official plans will address general controls on development with the aim of improving the overall health of the natural heritage system including the improvement of linkages within corridors.*

The Natural Heritage System's intrinsic beauty and contribution to the region's landscape are also important components of cultural identity, human health, and quality of life. Lambton's natural heritage features, especially those that are unique or rare (e.g. Pinery Provincial Park), contribute positively to Lambton's regional identity. Features such as rich fossil deposits also

offer opportunities to develop local tourism.

Group C features tend to be conceptual or features for which a comprehensive set of policies have not been developed by this Plan. Group C features also include the spatial relationships between other features and key groupings of features (e.g. corridors and core areas), which is useful in establishing the relative importance and function of the other natural heritage features within them. Primary corridors are areas that generally possess features of a County interest. These corridors interconnect "Core Areas" - regionally important concentrations of natural heritage features and/or large, naturally vegetated, natural areas. Biodiversity also refers to the genetics of plant and animal populations. For many species, corridors and the linkages (or "stepping stones") within them are critical for maintaining gene flow, which is linked to their ability to handle stresses. Where the connecting function between features is weak, "linkages" such as "stepping stones" are encouraged. This framework of corridors, core areas, and linkages should be considered by local municipalities when making local land use planning decisions and in the preparation of local official plans and zoning by-laws.

Corridors and core area boundaries on Map 2 are schematic, shown for information purposes, and not to be construed as separate land use designations. Corridors show conceptually the interactions that already occur between natural heritage features and may be used to promote understanding and stewardship of the natural heritage system. Where there are opportunities for naturalization, Map 2 acts as a guide for where this would have the greatest benefit to the natural heritage system. While some connections could benefit more than others from improved linkages, uninterrupted naturalization of these areas is neither realistic nor desirable in the context of overall County development; it is also not necessary for adequate corridor function. Agricultural uses can be part of a functional corridor.

8.1 Natural Heritage System

Goals: To identify, map, protect, restore, and improve natural heritage systems within the County.

To promote and protect the biodiversity of species found within the ecosystems in the County.

To promote education and stewardship of the natural heritage system.

To ensure development results in no negative impacts to significant natural features or their ecological functions.

Policies:

8.1.1 The County Natural Heritage System is comprised of Core Areas, Primary Corridors and the other natural heritage features that are often located within and form the Linkages within these Core Areas and Corridors. Map 2 shows many, but not all, of the Natural Heritage System's features. (Map 2 includes a feature inventory that identifies the types of significant natural areas located within each feature.) Many of the features identified by this Plan require further work to identify, constitute sensitive information that cannot be displayed, are too small or numerous to specifically identify

on Map 2, or are features for which it is left to the discretion of the local municipality to identify and/or designate as a natural heritage feature.

- 8.1.2 Group A and B natural heritage features identified on Map 2 or otherwise identified by the Natural Heritage policies of Chapter 8 are to be considered as overlays to the designations on Map 1. Corridors and core areas on Map 2 are provided for information only and are not considered land designations. Despite the designation lands may have on Map 1 and the Growth Strategy, development of lands will be generally directed away from Group A and B features and/or subject to such evaluations and conditions as required by the Natural Heritage policies (see policy 8.8.3.8 also).
- 8.1.3 Primary Corridors generally represent the stronger existing connections between natural heritage areas, particularly core areas, and follow major watercourses and the lakeshore. Many corridors cross municipal boundaries and are locally and regionally important. Local municipalities should identify Primary Corridors in local official plans and zoning by-laws using Map 2 as a guide, having regard for policy 8.1.12.
- 8.1.4 Local municipalities will develop policies to protect and improve Group A and B features of the Natural Heritage System and should identify and protect Group C features and other features of local significance. Group A and B natural heritage features identified on Map 2 or specifically described in this Plan (e.g. significant woodlands) will be identified in local land use maps and schedules.
- 8.1.5 Natural Heritage System feature boundaries shown on Map 2 are schematic. The County recognizes that where Natural Heritage Corridors occur through urban communities, the corridor boundary will be more specifically defined in the local official plan and zoning by-law to reflect the natural hazards, natural heritage features, and land uses that exist along the corridors. In rural areas, natural hazards such as floodplains may not be defined as specifically as they are in the urban areas. The County will assist local municipalities in determining the extent of natural heritage corridors in these areas. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the local Conservation Authority may also assist where requested.
- 8.1.6 Natural heritage system planning should occur at the regional, watershed, and subwatershed level with appropriate cross-jurisdictional co-operation and communication. The County may participate in planning and management initiatives with adjacent Counties and other jurisdictions in connection with features that are ecologically linked to the County. The County recognizes that lands under Federal, Provincial, adjacent County, and Native Band Council jurisdiction identified as Core Areas on Map 2 are not governed by the policies of this Plan. However, the County may co-operate in projects with adjoining jurisdictions.
- 8.1.7 Local municipalities should develop approaches to re-establishing connections or Linkage features ("stepping stones") within the corridors and between the natural heritage features within the corridors shown on Map 2, having regard for policy 8.1.12. This may involve, but is not limited to, the use of buffer strips, lot line tree plantings,

conservation easements, gravel pit rehabilitation plans, *Planning Act* tools, creation of habitat/natural areas under an *Endangered Species Act* (2007) authorization, or land dedications through the development approvals process.

- 8.1.8 The County, in co-operation with local municipalities, may utilize site-specific techniques to maximize the protection and rehabilitation of the Natural Heritage System when development proposals or public works are considered. Recommendations for site-specific measures may be made by Environmental Impact Studies and may include, but are not limited to, recommendations for locating buildings, septic systems, or other site features, increases in density of development, revision of current development standards or adoption of alternative development standards, reconfiguration of uses, shared facilities, and public/private sector agreements to facilitate protection or rehabilitation.
- 8.1.9 The County and local municipalities may require development applications within or adjacent to lands designated as part of the Natural Heritage System to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Study, as set out in Section 8.8.3, to evaluate features and determine what impact that the development may have or is expected to have on Natural Heritage Features and their functions. Nothing in this policy is intended to contravene any provincial or federal requirements or permit development in a feature within which development is prohibited
- 8.1.10 Where an Environmental Impact Study has been completed, the Approval Authority must be satisfied that the evaluation demonstrates that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions, including whether impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated so that there is no net negative impact.
- 8.1.11 The County encourages stewardship programs by private and public groups that assist the landowner in the establishment, maintenance, and improvement of the Natural Heritage System, Corridors, and the information base that describes them within Lambton County. Landowners are encouraged to preserve and improve, where possible, the unique species and habitat found in natural heritage areas. The County may participate with other agencies in establishing, maintaining and improving a data base on Natural Heritage features.
- 8.1.12 Nothing in the Natural Heritage Policies is intended to limit the ability of agricultural uses to continue in these areas.
- 8.1.13 Where the Natural Heritage System is held in private ownership, nothing in this Plan requires that these lands be free and available for public use, and the identification of lands as part of the Natural Heritage System will not oblige the County or other public agencies to purchase these lands. Where the County does have opportunity to acquire land for the purpose of managing natural heritage features, preference shall be to acquire land associated with the most significant and sensitive features.
- 8.1.14 The County encourages the use of these areas, where appropriate, as part of strategic tourism plans and as suggested areas to focus the rehabilitation efforts of other

stewardship groups.

- 8.1.15 Land use policies and decisions must consider potential negative environmental impacts and opportunities for maintaining and integrating linkages and related functions among groundwater features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas, and surface water features including shoreline areas.
- 8.1.16 This Plan acknowledges that actively farmed lands, urban areas, resource extraction areas, and other "unnatural" areas can contribute positively to natural heritage system functions.

8.2 Significant Natural Areas

Goal: To preserve, protect, and, where possible, improve those features that are considered essential to maintaining the function of the natural heritage system of the County.

Policies:

- 8.2.1 Significant natural areas within the County natural heritage system include provincially and locally significant wetlands, including coastal wetlands; habitat of endangered species and threatened species; fish habitat; provincially and regionally significant areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs); significant woodlands; significant valleylands; Great Lakes system shorelines; highly vulnerable aquifers, significant groundwater recharge areas, and significant wildlife habitat. Other components of the natural heritage system that may be important include, but are not limited to, surface water features, meadows, prairies, and shrublands.
- 8.2.2 Despite the designation lands may have on Map 1, development and the creation of new lots will generally be directed away from Significant Natural Areas.
- a) For Group A features, development and site alteration will not be permitted within significant wetlands or significant coastal wetlands. Development and site alteration in fish habitat or the habitat of endangered species or threatened species will not be permitted except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.
 - b) Development proposals and site alteration within the Group B features described in the introduction to Chapter 8, including adjacent lands, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated through an Environmental Impact Study that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
 - c) Development within the Group C features described in the introduction to Chapter 8 will be subject to such provisions as contained in the local Official Plans.
 - d) Infrastructure may also be permitted in natural heritage features in some circumstances in accordance with applicable legislation.
- 8.2.2.1 Adjacent lands widths and the features to which they apply are described at sections 8.2.9, 8.3.3, 8.4.3, and 8.8.3.6.

- 8.2.3 Approximate boundaries of the Significant Natural Areas have been determined through various studies from other sources. Since recent verification of these Areas may not exist, specific delineation or clarification of the boundaries will be undertaken through Environmental Impact Studies or through periodic refinements by the County, local municipalities, the Province, and Conservation Authorities.
- 8.2.4 Significant natural areas shall include features and boundaries that are identified or evaluated as further studies or evaluations are completed subsequent to the adoption of this Plan, including features that have not been comprehensively assessed on a County-wide level such as significant valleylands, habitat of endangered species and threatened species, and significant wildlife habitat. Official plan mapping, both County and local, will reflect the most up-to-date information both when adopted and when formally reviewed under section 26 of the *Planning Act*.
- 8.2.5 Endangered species and threatened species and their habitat are protected by the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*. Delineations of these areas represent sensitive information and the Species at Risk in Ontario List is subject to change. These areas therefore are not shown on Map 2 and will include areas not specifically designated as natural heritage features in this Plan or local official plans and/or areas not known by the County or local municipality to be habitat of endangered species or threatened species. Where the County or local municipalities have reason to believe that proposed development will be located in or adjacent to the habitat of endangered species or threatened species, the proponent will be notified of the requirement to ensure their due diligence under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*, which should include consulting with the Province regarding the need for further investigations.
- 8.2.6 Fish habitat is not specifically designated on Map 2. Development within 120 metres of surface water features (excluding off-stream, man-made ponds) will be directed to the province for screening for fish habitat. Fish habitat will be protected from harmful alteration, disruption or destruction unless authorized under the *Fisheries Act*. In all cases, the guiding principle of no net loss of productive capacity will be utilized.
- 8.2.7 Significant valleylands are not specifically designated on Map 2. They are lands having a slope of 10 per cent or more over a sustained area. The County may develop criteria for identifying and mapping significant valleylands on a comprehensive basis.
- 8.2.8 Significant wildlife habitat is not specifically designated on Map 2, but may be coincident with other significant natural areas identified by this Plan. Specific wildlife habitats of concern may include areas where species concentrate at vulnerable times in their annual or life cycle or areas which are important to a species' migration or wintering. The MNR *Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide* must be used to identify and determine significant wildlife habitat on a site-specific basis when development or site alteration requires an environmental impact study. The County may also endeavour to map significant wildlife habitat on a comprehensive basis.
- 8.2.9 ANSIs are as identified by the province. For an ANSI, adjacent lands are lands within 120 metres of a life science ANSI and within 50 metres of an earth science ANSI.

8.2.10 Local official plans and zoning by-laws may contain policies and restrictions related to other natural heritage features for which this Plan contains no specific policies. Local municipalities may undertake their own comprehensive assessments of natural heritage features for which no such assessment has been completed on a County-wide scale. Natural features may be determined to be significant by local municipalities as a result of associated socio-economic or cultural value.

8.3 Wetlands

Goal: To maintain, restore, and improve existing wetlands and to increase the overall wetland coverage in the County.

Policies:

8.3.1 Local municipalities will designate provincially and locally significant wetlands, including coastal wetlands in their official plans as identified and delineated by the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES). References to wetlands throughout this Plan include coastal wetlands.



Image Source: (lambtoncountytrails.com, 2010)

8.3.2 Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in provincially significant wetlands. Development and site alteration will generally be prohibited within locally significant wetlands. Only infrastructure, utilities, and passive recreational uses may be permitted where it has been demonstrated there will be no negative impacts to the wetland and its functions.

8.3.3 Development and site alteration may be permitted on lands adjacent to wetlands provided there is no net loss of wetland function. Adjacent lands are lands within 120 metres of a provincially significant wetland and within 30 metres of a locally significant wetland.

8.3.4 An environmental impact study will be required in relation to development or site alteration within locally significant wetlands or on adjacent lands to a provincially or locally significant wetland. The relationship of wetlands to groundwater resources will be specifically considered. All potential impacts, potential mitigation techniques, and opportunities for protection, rehabilitation, and expansion of the wetland feature and its functions shall be evaluated as part of such evaluations.

8.3.5 The County supports the protection of wetlands, where possible, through land use designations and/or stewardship agreements and conservation easements with naturalist clubs or stewardship groups.

8.3.6 Development and site alteration within wetlands and adjacent lands is subject to regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Within a wetland, the regulations allow Conservation Authorities to prohibit development and site alteration that would

have a negative impact to either the ecological or hydrological function. On adjacent lands, Conservation Authorities may only prohibit development and site alteration that has a negative impact to hydrological function. Development and site alteration on adjacent lands that would have a negative impact to ecological function must be addressed through land use restrictions and planning approvals.

- 8.3.7 Municipalities are encouraged to use best management practices in consultation with the Conservation Authority for maintenance of existing drains in or near wetlands. New drains and ponds shall not be constructed in provincially significant wetlands and should not be constructed within locally significant wetlands.
- 8.3.8 The re-establishment and creation of wetlands will be encouraged where possible. Where land use changes impact wetlands, the principle of “no net loss” will be employed at minimum; net gain may be required depending on the significance of the feature and the results of studies.
- 8.3.9 The creation of engineered wetlands is encouraged where feasible in conjunction with development approvals, park dedications, aggregate pit rehabilitation, and the development of stormwater management facilities. No existing wetland however will be used as a stormwater management facility. Pre and post development monitoring of engineered wetlands will be required to determine if they can be added as an identified "wetland".

8.4 Woodlands

Goal: To protect the remaining forest cover of the County and encourage its rehabilitation and expansion through management and stewardship initiatives in conjunction with the Natural Heritage System, with specific focus on strengthening Primary Corridors and linkages.

Policies:

- 8.4.1 Local municipalities are encouraged to protect woodlots. Local municipalities will identify significant woodlands in their official plans and zoning by-laws using the criteria and mapping contained in the draft Lambton County Natural Heritage Study (2014).
- 8.4.2 Significant woodlands include any forested area that:
 - a) is 2 hectares or greater in size,
 - b) has woodland interior habitat (100 metres from all edges),
 - c) is the largest woodland patch by landform or soil type,
 - d) is the largest woodland patch occurring on a particular valleyland, or
 - e) is 0.5 hectares or greater in size and



Image Source: (soto.on.ca, 2013)

- i) is located within 30 metres of another natural heritage feature specifically identified in the Map 2 feature inventory;
- ii) provides linkage (a "stepping stone") between (is in a line between and within 120 metres of) two or more significant woodlands that are separated by more than 120 metres of each other;
- iii) is located on or within 30 metres of a surface water feature,
- iv) is located above a highly vulnerable aquifer or significant groundwater recharge area;
- v) has unique woodland diversity - i.e. contains target communities for Ecodistrict 7E-2 that help to conserve the biodiversity of the Great Lakes region of Ontario as identified by *The Great Lakes Conservation Blueprint (Henson et al. 2005)*;
- vi) has uncommon characteristics such as unique species composition; a rare vegetation community (NHIC provincial ranking of S1, S2, or S3); rare, uncommon, or restricted woodland plant species habitat; older woodlands, or larger tree size structure; or
- vii) has high socio-economic, cultural, historic, or educational value as identified in a local official plan.

8.4.3 Adjacent lands include any lands within 120 metres of any significant woodland that is coincident with a core area, Life Science Area, Carolinian Canada site, Crown Game Preserve, Wilderness Area, Environmentally Sensitive Area, or Special Appendix Area (as identified in the Map 2 feature inventory) or is known to meet criteria 8.4.2 b), d), or e) v) or vi).

8.4.4 Development will generally be directed outside of the dripline of significant woodlands and adjacent lands unless it has been demonstrated through an Environmental Impact Study that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features and their ecological functions.

8.4.5 The County recognizes that woodlots are a viable component of farming operations since they can improve soil conservation, improve crop yields, and support locally-based, wood processing industries. Woodlots are also recognized as being a renewable resource that needs to be improved and maintained through proper forest management.

8.4.6 The use of Woodlot Management Plans by landowners is encouraged. Such plans should consider the management of adjacent wooded lands, include measures to improve species diversity, and should provide for the enlargement of the interior forest portion of woodlots, if possible.

8.4.7 The cutting of trees is regulated by the provisions of the County of Lambton Woodlands Conservation By-law, or successor, as amended.

8.4.8 The County will review and amend the criteria implemented through the Woodlands Conservation By-law to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of the Official Plan. The amended criteria may include:

- a) consideration of whether the woodlot is located within a Significant Woodland or in a natural heritage corridor; as identified in this Plan;
- b) the use of Woodlot Management Plans that incorporate the multiple ownership of the entire woodlot area or patch;
- c) methods to increase indigenous species diversity,
- d) methods to increase use of indigenous species when reforestation is required; and
- e) the confirmation of significant wildlife and wildlife habitat within woodlots.

Assistance and input will be sought from public agencies and woodlot owner groups in determining these criteria.

- 8.4.9 New resource extraction operations, telecommunications towers, renewable energy projects, and utility corridors will be discouraged in significant woodlands.
- 8.4.10 Where forest cover has been removed and is to be replaced as a condition of an environmental impact study and/or development approval, the use of a variety of indigenous species of vegetation is encouraged. Restoration work should be required at a rate of twice the area of forest cover that was removed. Preference will be given to replacing the trees at the same site and/or within the same corridor in the Natural Heritage system. The replacement tree stock should consist of indigenous species where quality stock is available and be maintained by the proponent to the free to grow stage. Long-term management of these replacement trees will comply with the County Woodlands Conservation By-law.
- 8.4.11 Tree planting programs may be undertaken by the County and local municipalities using indigenous species where possible. This may include roadside plantings, urban boulevard tree planting as part of subdivision agreements and rural farm windbreak plantings as a condition of severance.
- 8.4.12 When considering development proposals including plans of subdivision, the Approval Authority may require that the owner enter into an agreement whereby:
 - a) only such trees that would directly impede the construction of buildings and services may be removed and, if so, they will be replaced with trees of similar species and of sufficient maturity to improve the appearance of the subdivision when complete;
 - b) a reasonable number of trees and/or other suitable vegetation per lot may be required regardless of the state of the area prior to being subdivided or developed;
 - c) existing trees which are not removed will be adequately protected during the construction process, and the roots protected to ensure continued growth; and,
 - d) where parking lots and other large open spaces are provided, and in open areas around Commercial and Major Institutional Uses and large buildings, the Approval Authority will encourage, and may require the provision of landscaping and tree planting sufficient to improve the physical appearance of the site and surrounding lands.

- 8.4.13 The County will continue the management of the Lambton County Heritage Forest near Port Franks as part of a unique dune ecosystem for the benefit of present and future generations. The County will continue to monitor and update the Heritage Forest Management Plan as necessary.
- 8.4.14 The County may develop a Forest Management Strategy consisting of policy, practices, programs, and regulations with the purpose of protecting existing forested areas, reforesting target natural heritage corridors, increasing forest cover, and defining complementary land uses for forested areas.
- 8.4.15 This Plan acknowledges the devastating effects of emerald ash borer on some woodlands and the impacts to some woodlands' natural heritage function. When dealing with specific woodlands whose natural heritage function has been significantly impacted by emerald ash borer, implementation of the policies in Section 8.4 shall apply an appropriate degree of flexibility.

8.5 Great Lakes System

Goals: To provide residents and visitors of the County with ecological, economic, scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural opportunities along the Lake Huron and St. Clair River shorelines.

To protect, preserve and improve the shorelines of Lake Huron and the St. Clair River with specific attention and consideration to the natural processes that act upon the shorelines.

Policies:

- 8.5.1 The County supports the implementation of the St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan and other efforts to improve the environmental quality of the river basin, noting significant progress in recent years. The measure of such action will be the delisting of the basin as an Area of Concern by the International Joint Commission, after which time the County notes there will be a need for supporting management plans to come into effect (e.g. a fish and wildlife habitat management plan).
- 8.5.2 The Conservation Authorities have prepared Shoreline Management Plans which recognize:
- a) that shoreline processes occur as part of a natural system and must be considered when reviewing land use decisions and practices;
 - b) there are specific public interests in shoreline features such as access for swimming, boating, and aesthetic enjoyment, both from a resident and tourist perspective;
 - c) the use of shoreline management principles that recognize the two distinct Lake Huron shoreline reaches of Grand Bend to Kettle Point; and Kettle Point to Sarnia.

The Shoreline Management Plans address the issues of flooding, erosion, storm

damage, dynamic beach instability, shore processes, and shoreline management options for shore protection. Through regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, Conservation Authorities regulate certain types and aspects of development within the shoreline management areas with respect to erosion and flooding hazards. Local municipal official plans should support implementation of the Shoreline Management Plans, addressing those aspects of development falling outside the Conservation Authorities' regulations, including natural heritage functions.

- 8.5.3 Dynamic beaches, as evidenced by sand dunes and described in the shoreline management plans prepared by the Conservation Authorities, will be identified in local official plans and conserved to safeguard the natural dune ecosystem, tourism potential, adjacent land uses, and related public safety. Development is not permitted within the limits of the dynamic beach hazard.
- 8.5.4 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop criteria in their respective local official plans that address the use, design, location, and repair of shoreline protection. These criteria will include factors related to the type, standards, and maintenance of protection, adjacent property impacts, environmental impacts, and consideration of access. Naturalization techniques as described in this Plan will be encouraged where feasible and appropriate.

8.6 Surface and Groundwater Protection

Goals: To protect and improve the natural attributes and functions of watercourses in the County in order to maintain and improve wildlife habitat and water quality.

To recognize adequate drainage of surface and tile water as critical to maintaining agricultural viability.

To protect headwater areas and groundwater resources from land uses that have the potential to degrade downstream watercourses and groundwater aquifers.

Policies:

- 8.6.1 The County encourages the continued monitoring of groundwater quantity and quality and supports programs undertaken by the Province and other agencies to improve groundwater quality.
- 8.6.2 The County requires adequate lot sizes that allow sufficient separation of private disposal systems from potable water supplies. Local municipalities should adopt policies to include adequate lot size provisions.
- 8.6.3 The County encourages the upgrading of sewage treatment where existing facilities are detrimental to water quality, in compliance with Provincial regulations, as well as the review of septic systems as part of land use planning approvals to ensure they are functional and legal systems.

- 8.6.4 The County supports programs undertaken by the Province and other public or private agencies aimed at improving water quality in urban and rural areas, including regulating the discharge of material that may impair the quality of surface water or groundwater.
- 8.6.5 The County promotes agricultural land and nutrient management practices, including best management practices that reduce and minimize the amount of topsoil, pesticides, livestock manure, and other nutrients entering watercourses in cooperation with the Province, farming associations and local municipalities. The County recognizes the positive influence, in terms of filtration, that tile drainage systems can have on the quality of water entering surface water features.
- 8.6.6 The County encourages the Conservation Authorities to implement their respective regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act* "Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" in a reasonable and expedient way. The County will support the Conservation Authority in improving the quality of flood mapping and the elevation data from which it is derived.
- 8.6.7 The County encourages the preparation of resource management studies which evaluate techniques addressing flooding, drainage issues, pollution control, habitat protection and improvement, soil erosion, groundwater protection and the identification and conservation of ecologically-sensitive landscapes. The County, through its development review and approval authority, may require the preparation of such studies to address the above noted matters.
- 8.6.8 Development that involves the alteration of a shoreline will incorporate naturalization techniques where appropriate to maintain and improve shoreline vegetation and habitat. Naturalization techniques include non-structural protection works such as bio-engineering approaches which incorporate vegetation to stabilize slopes.
- 8.6.9 Natural channel designs will be considered in all new drainage schemes in order to minimize maintenance costs, minimize water velocity, and maximize naturalization techniques to achieve both aesthetic and wildlife habitat improvement goals; however, in considering such options, regard shall be had for section 8.6.20.
- 8.6.10 Local municipalities are encouraged to promote vegetated buffers and/or other vegetated areas along all watercourses through both urban and rural settings, with the specific buffering requirements to be addressed in local planning documents. Such buffers may vary in width depending upon the size of watercourse, topography, and adjacent land uses. The County will assist in this determination to ensure that water quality issues are addressed. When cleaning municipal drains, municipalities are encouraged take measures to preserve any abutting vegetative buffer strips, whether natural or man-made, having regard for policy 8.6.20.
- 8.6.11 Appendix Map A shows areas designated as vulnerable in the local Source Protection Plans. Local municipalities will implement land use restrictions where necessary to protect municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas as shown

on Appendix Map A, and will, in land use decisions, protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by protecting, improving or restoring vulnerable surface and ground water, sensitive surface water features, and sensitive ground water features, and their hydrological functions.

- 8.6.12 Water wells that are no longer in use and inactive, unplugged oil and natural gas wells and associated works will be plugged and/or decommissioned to the satisfaction of the Province to avoid groundwater contamination and minimize the threat to public safety.
- 8.6.13 Local municipalities will address stormwater management through appropriate local official plan policies that are consistent with the Infrastructure policies of this Plan.
- 8.6.14 The County encourages the protection and/or restoration of natural heritage features as a means to improve and protect water quality and quantity.
- 8.6.15 Recreational, open space, naturalized areas, and other land uses that provide filtration and improve water quality are encouraged in areas of sensitive surface water and groundwater features and in areas upstream of such features, where they comply with other land use restrictions.
- 8.6.16 Land use planning and decisions should take into consideration surface and groundwater features at the watershed and subwatershed level and have regard for issues that cross jurisdictions.
- 8.6.17 Development should not be permitted that would adversely affect the quality or quantity of water with respect to existing wells, surface water, or ground water features. Specifically, development:
- a) must comply with the policies of Section 2.5 and the applicable Source Protection Plan,
 - b) must provide appropriate setbacks from water features both in terms of hazards, as regulated through the Conservation Authorities, and natural heritage functions,
 - c) must not fragment waterways, water corridors, or water bodies,
 - d) must not take water directly from natural sources unless there is a suitable supply that is not reserved for other uses,
 - e) must not take water from surface or groundwater sources in amounts exceeding 50,000 litres of water on any day unless a Permit To Take Water has been obtained from the Ministry of Environmental and Climate Change;
 - f) must not compromise groundwater recharge areas, as displayed through a detailed hydrological analysis, if necessary, and
 - g) must not impair the quality or quantity of groundwater and other water sources as designated in the applicable Source Protection Plan.
- 8.6.18 The *Lambton County Ground Water Study, 2004* has identified areas susceptible to groundwater contamination. Development within susceptible areas, such as those identified on Appendix Map A, may be subject to a groundwater impact assessment. New industrial or commercial uses which involve handling of toxic or other hazardous materials will not be permitted within susceptible areas.

- 8.6.19 Many groundwater features have already been impacted by past activities including the oil industry. When assessing the potential impacts of new development to a groundwater feature and making decisions with respect to implementation of this section, the relative impact of new development in proportion to the existing condition of a groundwater feature shall be taken into consideration. New development with minimal potential impact in proportion to existing impacts should not be unduly restricted.
- 8.6.20 This Plan acknowledges that works under the *Drainage Act* are not considered development under the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014. When making decisions with respect to this section, the critical role of adequate surface and tile water drainage to agricultural viability must be taken into consideration. Although naturalization of watercourses and maintenance of a buffer strip is encouraged, implementation of Natural Heritage policies must allow for effective surface and tile water drainage for farm fields and for efficient drain maintenance.

8.7 Natural Hazards

Goal: To prevent property damage and potential loss of life by preventing new development from encroaching into areas subject to natural hazards including areas prone to flooding, dynamic beaches, erosion, unstable lands and groundwater recharge areas.

Policies:

- 8.7.1 New development will generally be directed away from areas with known or suspected natural hazards. Natural hazards include:
- a) flooding, erosion, and dynamic beach hazards related to the Great Lakes System;
 - b) flooding and erosion hazards related to rivers and streams;
 - c) hazardous sites related to marine clay soils, organic soils, or unstable bedrock (karst);
 - d) high water table areas and groundwater recharge areas; and
 - e) hazardous forest types for wildland fires.
- 8.7.2 The County will assist local municipalities to develop policies that will not allow development and site alteration within:
- a) the dynamic beach hazard;
 - b) defined portions of the flooding hazard along the St. Clair River (the 100 year flood level plus an allowance for wave uprush and water-related hazards);
 - c) a floodway (except in Special Policy Areas).
- 8.7.3 Local municipalities will develop policies that address existing development on natural hazard lands and provide options to address the issues of building repair and maintenance, minor building additions and interior alterations, and the maintenance and repair of appropriate shore protection, where natural shoreline processes are not negatively impacted. Municipalities will do so in collaboration with the applicable

Conservation Authority with respect to natural hazard and associated lands regulated by the Conservation Authority. It is not the intent of the County Official Plan to unduly restrict these activities where natural hazards have been identified.

- 8.7.4 The County will assist local municipalities to develop policies that ensure that development and site alteration can occur on natural hazard lands and associated sites if all the following can be achieved:
- a) all policies are met with respect to any coincidental natural heritage features;
 - b) hazards can be safely addressed and development and site alteration is carried out in accordance with floodproofing, protection, and access standards and procedures such as those related to coastal and geotechnical engineering practices;
 - c) new hazards are not created and existing hazards are not aggravated;
 - d) no adverse environmental impacts will result;
 - e) vehicle and pedestrian access is available during times of flooding, erosion, and other emergencies (unless the site access is appropriate for the nature of development); and
 - f) the proposed use is not an institutional use, essential emergency services, or operations related to the disposal, manufacture, treatment or storage of hazardous substances.
- 8.7.5 Where detailed information regarding known natural hazards or their extent is not available, the onus will be on the proponent to provide suitable documentation to satisfy the conditions of development or site alteration in natural hazard lands.
- 8.7.6 Local municipalities will prepare appropriate zoning provisions for natural hazard lands that:
- a) prohibit uses other than agriculture, conservation, forestry and wildlife management;
 - b) prohibit buildings or structures except where they are intended for flood or erosion control or are normally associated with protection works, bank stabilization projects, transmission or distribution pipelines approved by the National Energy Board or Ontario Energy Board, or electricity transmission and distribution systems; and,
 - c) impose development setbacks in relation to the severity of existing and potential environmental hazards.
- 8.7.7 For development fronting on the Great Lakes System shorelines, the Conservation Authorities are encouraged to implement regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act* and require development setbacks that are based on the type and scale of development proposed and adequate to address flooding, dynamic beach, unstable lands, and erosion concerns.
- 8.7.8 For development fronting on the Great Lakes System shorelines, local municipalities as encouraged to establish policies and regulations that consider proximity to and

severity of a hazard as outlined in the applicable Conservation Authority's Shoreline Management Plan. In particular, local municipalities will address the types and scale of development permitted within the hazard limit. Within existing residential areas municipalities will develop policies for addressing development on vacant lots, renovation and replacement of existing dwellings, accessory uses, and lot creation.

- 8.7.9 The County encourages the implementation of regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act* with respect to development, interference with wetlands and alterations to shorelines and watercourses by the Conservation Authorities.
- 8.7.10 Development will be directed to locate out of flood plains defined by the Regional Storm event (a one zone management approach). If this is not desirable, Provincial policy allows development between the 1:100 year flood line and the Regional Storm line provided adequate floodproofing standards, protection works standards, and access standards are incorporated; development and site alteration within the 1:100 year and Regional Storm will not create a new hazard or aggravate existing hazards; no adverse environmental impact will result; and the approval of the Conservation Authority is obtained (a two zone concept). If neither approach is feasible and the economic well-being of the community is threatened, Provincial Policy allows for the development of Special Policy Areas in consultation with the applicable Conservation Authority.
- 8.7.11 New development will be required to locate outside of areas of long-term erosion and instability unless the nature of the problem has been recognized, remediation techniques employed, and the hazard addressed. The proponent is responsible for the completion of such investigations. The methods for addressing the hazards cannot create new or aggravate existing hazards or result in adverse environmental impacts.
- 8.7.12 With respect to areas of flooding and erosion hazards, the meaning of "development" shall include any new lot or lot boundary adjustment that would cause or is likely to cause a change or intensification of land use, the construction of buildings or structures (including accessory structures), or site alteration, any of which is not appropriate for and/or fails to address the hazard as required by the Natural Hazard policies. This could include doing so by reason of eliminating opportunities to locate or relocate uses to outside of hazard lands.
- 8.7.13 Development setbacks are encouraged as the preferred method for protecting new development in natural hazard areas as opposed to relying on structural or non-structural protection measures that require maintenance and upgrading over time.
- 8.7.14 The standard that will be used to identify areas subject to long-term erosion is based on 100 year erosion criteria plus an allowance for slope stability and an allowance to allow machinery access to the site.
- 8.7.15 The County may participate with other agencies in identifying possible locations along the lakeshore and river fronts where visual and physical access can be established for public enjoyment.

- 8.7.16 Development shall be directed to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for development due to the presence of hazardous forest types for wildland fire as identified by the Province and shown on Appendix Map D. Development may however be permitted where the risk is mitigated in accordance with wildland fire assessment and mitigation standards identified by the province.
- 8.7.17 The County contains a smaller part of a large area of inferred karst that covers a large section of the province, as identified by the province and shown on Appendix Map D. Although there is no direct field observation, bedrock is of a nature vulnerable or susceptible to karstification. The local municipality will develop policies for dealing with development in areas of inferred karst and areas where direct evidence of karstification is discovered. Policies may require assessment of and/or restrict large developments or land uses of significant weight, producing vibrations, or adding or drawing significant quantities of groundwater.
- 8.7.18 Implementation of the Natural Hazard policies of this Plan shall take into consideration the variability of weather and climate in the short and long-term and the possibility of their ranging outside of recorded norms.

8.8 Implementation Tools for Natural Heritage

8.8.1 Stewardship

Goal: To encourage new and ongoing voluntary land stewardship initiatives that contribute to the understanding of and the health of the County's Natural Heritage System.

Policies:

- 8.8.1.1 Stewardship is the most important method of maintaining, restoring, and improving the natural heritage system. The County supports a wide variety of stewardship options to assist and encourage landowners to manage their natural resources. These programs should be established in partnership with land owners, to meet their needs. These programs can include land owner contracts, conservation easements, land trusts, tax incentives, and rights of way to preserve, improve and access natural corridors.
- 8.8.1.2 The County encourages stewardship initiatives that strive to protect and improve significant natural features, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and increase the amount and variety of native vegetation species.
- 8.8.1.3 The County supports private organizations that offer programs designed to educate, assist, and give incentive to landowners and the community to undertake stewardship measures voluntarily.
- 8.8.1.4 This Plan supports the improvement of natural heritage features and functions located on lands owned by the County or other agencies and the creation of natural heritage features on surplus County-owned lands. Where landowners wish to donate lands containing natural heritage features, the County may acquire land or assist in locating

a willing stewardship organization. The County will generally acquire lands for stewardship purposes only if they contain exceptionally valuable and unique habitat or have exceptional social, economic, cultural, or ecological value.

- 8.8.1.5 The County encourages the development of procedures for assessing and monitoring the health of the natural heritage system and encourages the involvement of the public and non-municipal agencies in the identification and monitoring of significant natural features and functions (where right of access exists).
- 8.8.1.6 Landowners and others interested in restoration should direct their efforts to improving features and linkages within the corridors identified on Map 2.
- 8.8.1.7 The County supports measures to prevent unauthorized motorized vehicle access to natural heritage features and public trail systems.

8.8.2 Development Applications

Goal: To further overall Natural Heritage Goals through the development approval process.

Policies:

- 8.8.2.1 The County and/or local municipalities may develop guidelines for the evaluation of development proposals consistent with the natural heritage goals. The objective of such guidelines would include the protection of ecological form and function, the creation of new habitats, natural vegetation regeneration, the conservation of natural landforms and significant areas, the preservation and improvement of groundwater and surface water resources, and the promotion of environmental education and interpretation.
- 8.8.2.2 The County and/or local municipalities will develop tree saving policies/woodlot preservation plans to ensure the most effective means of protecting and rehabilitating woodlots.
- 8.8.2.3 The County and/or local municipalities will ensure that any land dedications that are accepted as public land are managed consistently with Natural Heritage Goals if they include any Significant Natural Areas.
- 8.8.2.4 An Environmental Impact Study may determine there is a need for a buffer or setback from a natural feature. Where suitable for park and open space purposes, local municipalities may request that adjacent buffer lands be dedicated into public ownership as part of the parkland dedication under the *Planning Act*. Lands dedicated for stormwater management facilities will not constitute a parkland dedication under the Act.

8.8.3 Environmental Impact Studies

Goal: To ensure that Locally and Provincially designated natural heritage features are protected and are rehabilitated, if needed through the land use planning process.

Policies:

- 8.8.3.1 Where an Environmental Impact Study is required in order to assess land development proposals for lands that encroach into or are adjacent to Provincially or Locally Significant environmental features, the study must demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the natural features or on the ecological functions for which the area is identified. The study may determine the need to incorporate a buffer or setbacks from the natural feature into the proposed development's site layout as a condition of proceeding.
- 8.8.3.2 This Plan does not intend to imply that all impacts are negative. Also, this Plan does not preclude the use of mitigation to prevent, modify, or alleviate anticipated impacts. An Environmental Impact Study must recommend whether a development should or should not proceed with or without alteration (redesign) or mitigation and must recommend any alterations (redesign) or mitigation measures that are necessary for a development to cause no net negative effect to the natural feature or its functions.
- 8.8.3.3 The Approval Authority must be satisfied that the Environmental Impact Study has been completed by a qualified individual and is thorough in assessing existing conditions and potential impacts. In this regard, the Approval Authority may use external agencies and groups to assist in the review of such studies.
- 8.8.3.4 Environmental Impact Studies will be guided by the following stages:
- Stage 1 - Review (a preliminary ecological site assessment) will be completed to verify the location and state of the environmental feature and its function and may subsequently refine the boundaries of components of the Natural Heritage System. MNRF should be consulted regarding the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* at this stage for an initial information request and Species at Risk screening. This stage of review is intended to confirm the feature and function and the need, if any, to proceed to subsequent stages of review.
- Stage 2 - Review will assess the potential impacts of the proposed development to the Natural Heritage System components by evaluating the sensitivity and overall condition of the Natural Heritage System component and the scale of development. This review stage is intended to be more comprehensive than Stage 1 and will require considerable more detail regarding the understanding of the Natural Heritage System. The result of this review will determine if development can occur in some form. Natural hazards will also be evaluated within this stage of investigation.
- Stage 3 - Review will provide alternative methods and/or measures for mitigation of potential environmental effects of the proposed development.

- 8.8.3.5 Where an equivalent environmental evaluation has been completed, as a condition of an Environmental Assessment process, for example, such evaluation will be accepted in lieu of an Environmental Impact Study.
- 8.8.3.6 An Environmental Impact Study will generally be required for development on lands adjacent to natural heritage features. Adjacent lands are those within 120 metres of an identified Group A or B feature unless an exception or alternative requirement has been given in this Plan from a specific type of feature (e.g. - Sections 8.2.2.1, 8.2.9, 8.3.3, and 8.4.3). Distances may also be reduced on a case by case basis based on the scale of the proposed development, the nature of the feature and the likelihood that there would be a negative impact on the feature. Adjacent land widths are derived from the Natural Heritage Reference Manual, the province's guidelines on how to apply the Provincial Policy Statement's natural heritage policies. In the case of wetlands, adjacent land widths are also derived from the Conservation Authority Wetland Policy.
- 8.8.3.7 No Environmental Impact Study will be required for development on adjacent lands where the planning authority determines that no negative impacts would be anticipated due to special circumstances. For example, development of a minor nature or with minor intrusion may not warrant an Environmental Impact Study in some circumstances, or development may not add to existing impacts from intervening or pre-existing development. Local municipalities may also establish policies and zoning provisions for adjacent lands that limit permitted uses to classes of uses, extensions of existing uses, and/or circumstances where no negative impact is anticipated, such that the need for an environmental impact study need only be assessed where a *Planning Act* approval is requested.
- 8.8.3.8 Notwithstanding that an environmental impact study or other evaluation may show no negative impacts, development must also comply with the policies of the applicable land use designation on Map 1.

8.9 Recreation and Conservation Area Designation

Goals: To protect and improve the County's largest concentration of natural heritage system features.

To allow for recreational and tourism opportunities and to strengthen the area's contribution to the County's cultural identity and tourism potential.

Policies:

- 8.9.1 Section 8.9 applies to the area designated as Recreation and Conservation Area on Map 1 - Growth Strategy.
- 8.9.2 The Recreation and Conservation Area is located outside of settlement and Agricultural Area designations, on a large contiguous area of land without agricultural capability. The Recreation and Conservation Area consists almost exclusively of natural heritage features and areas.

- 8.9.3 For clarity, the County's natural heritage system's features, areas, and functions are not limited to the Recreation and Conservation Area designation. The policies of Chapter 8 sections 8.1 to 8.8 apply to all natural heritage system components whether located inside or outside the Recreation and Conservation Area designation.
- 8.9.4 The Recreation and Conservation Area's primary purpose is the conservation and improvement of the natural heritage features and areas contained therein. New development will generally be directed to settlement areas in order to preserve natural features and avoid negative impacts to the natural heritage system.
- 8.9.5 However, new cultural, recreational, open space, and tourism uses shall be permitted provided they do not negatively impact natural heritage systems or features. Such uses are also encouraged in the adjacent settlement areas, particularly the corridor from Port Frank to Grand Bend.
- 8.9.6 Existing agricultural and single detached residential uses shall be recognized as permitted uses. These uses shall be governed by applicable Agricultural Area policies including with respect to home occupations, agri-tourism uses, and on-farm diversified uses being encouraged.
- 8.9.8 The local municipality may recognize other existing uses in the local official plan and zoning by-law where doing so would not negatively impact heritage features.
- 8.9.9 Development within the Recreation and Conservation Area will be subject to the same servicing policies as apply in the Agricultural Area.
- 8.9.10 Existing agricultural and single detached residential uses shall be subject to the lot creation policies applicable to the Agricultural Area. Consents may be permitted to facilitate the management and conservation of natural heritage features, permit cultural, recreational, open space, or tourism uses consistent with the goals of the Recreation and Conservation Area, or for minor lot boundary adjustments or technical reasons. In all other respects, lot creation is prohibited.

Chapter 9

9. Mineral Resources

Within the County, there are a limited number of non-renewable, sub-surface mineral deposits. These include oil and natural gas, salt and aggregate resources.

In Ontario, subsurface oil, gas and salt resources are regulated by the Province and/or its delegate under the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act and by the Ontario Energy Board under the Ontario Energy Board Act. The Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act deals with licensing, exploration, drilling, production and the storage of oil, gas and other hydrocarbons. Other matters include: the disposal of oil field fluid in geological formations; solution mining (brining) and the use and abandonment of salt caverns; and, public safety hazards and pollution of the natural environment. The County and local municipalities do not have the statutory authority to further regulate these matters. The County and local municipalities should, however, provide a policy direction for matters pertaining to surface land uses. The oil and gas industry is urged to place a high value on the importance of protecting and improving the natural heritage resources and features, as set out in this Plan. Comments to the Ontario Energy Board are to be based on the policies of this chapter and the Utility Corridors section of chapter seven.

Petroleum resources are an important aspect of Lambton's history. Oil was first discovered in North America in Oil Springs in 1858. Petrolia and Oil Springs were international leaders in the development of petroleum industrial technology. Today, the oil and gas industry continues to be an important sector of the local economy. Lambton also possesses a large share of the Province's underground storage capacity for natural gas and other hydrocarbons. The intent of this section of the Plan is to allow for the proper development of this resource and to ensure the compatibility of development.

The Province regulates the aggregate industry in Ontario through the Aggregate Resources Act. The purposes of the Act are to provide for management of aggregate resources of Ontario; to control and regulate aggregate operations on Crown and private lands; to require the rehabilitation of land from which aggregate has been excavated; and to minimize adverse impact on the environment in respect of aggregate operations. The purposes are achieved via a comprehensive licensing process and a robust compliance program administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Under the Planning Act, the County and local municipalities may deal with matters of land use such as the location where operations may occur, zoning and permitted uses. Although municipalities do not control the licensing process, they may establish criteria in official plans that are used to evaluate site plans during the licensing process.

Overall, the County is aggregate poor since only a limited number of areas possess sand or gravel deposits of a commercial quality and quantity and few areas of the County have bedrock resources of construction grade quality that are economically viable to access. For this reason, it is important to protect the resources that do exist since the availability of a local supply will help to reduce local construction costs. Since Lambton is a net importer of aggregates, it is also important to maintain port facilities along the St. Clair River that are used to receive aggregates that are transported to the County by ship.

The intent of this Plan is to protect the aggregate resources in the County for possible future extraction, to ensure the compatibility of land uses and to ensure the appropriate rehabilitation of extraction areas. Extraction is permitted in agricultural areas as an interim use, provided that the lands are rehabilitated to a similar agricultural capability. The removal of sizable, healthy woodlots or other significant natural environment areas for extractive purposes is strongly discouraged. These natural environment features, once lost, are very difficult to restore or recreate.

Aggregate resource areas and existing licensed areas are identified on Appendix Map B. This map identifies the location of the resource and guides the application of policy.

9.1 Oil, Gas and Salt Resources

Goals: To protect the County's petroleum resources, to ensure the compatibility of land uses, to control development near existing oil, (natural) gas, brine, and storage wells and over associated caverns and to enable new operations to be established.

To identify areas of petroleum resources where provincial information is available.

To promote rehabilitation planning and ensure that wells are properly plugged, abandoned and rendered safe in areas where new development is proposed.

To recognize the historic oil fields that are located in the County and to support their continued existence in accordance with Provincial legislation.

To encourage Lambton's oil heritage as part of the County's overall regional identity and its tourism and cultural strategies.

Policies:

- 9.1.1 The County supports the effective management of oil, (natural) gas and salt resources and will support exploration and extraction, subject to Provincial regulation and legislation, administered by the Province.
- 9.1.2 The County supports the subsurface storage of gas or other hydrocarbons. The County includes reservoir storage that is provincially significant including "designated hydrocarbon storage areas" as determined by the Ontario Energy Board. Designated hydrocarbon storage areas shall be protected from encroachment of incompatible development at the surface.
- 9.1.3 The County supports the Provincial Operating Standards which outline setbacks for new wells and outline distances that newly drilled wells must be set back from existing buildings, roads, shorelines, watercourses and lot lines. The Province is encouraged to give consideration to the prevalence of wells in some settlement areas in Lambton and the inability to plug wells on adjacent properties.

- 9.1.4 Planning decisions shall take into consideration the locations of oil, (natural) gas, and salt resources as identified on Appendix Map C. Resource locations on Appendix Map C may have relative inaccuracies including historical estimates of spatial locations. For sites with or near resource features, decision-makers and development proponents should reference the Ontario Oil, Gas, and Salt Resources Library for the most up to date information and specific feature details including estimated accuracy of well locations. The County and local municipalities will consult with the Province:
- a) where new development is proposed adjacent to or in areas of known oil or (natural) gas pools;
 - b) regarding new non-petroleum developments located less than 75 metres from existing wells. This setback should ensure adequate spacing around the well head to provide access for maintenance and general safety;
 - c) where development is proposed above former and potential salt solution mining operations and resources; and
 - d) where assistance is needed in the identification of well sites, in areas suspected of containing improperly plugged wells.
- 9.1.5 As a condition of approving development (severances, plans of subdivision), the County and /or the local municipality will require that improperly abandoned (plugged) wells that are known or discovered on the lands during development will be properly plugged, capped or otherwise made safe in accordance with Provincial requirements. Building locations should be examined for the presence of possible well sites using established standards and procedures. Areas where wells are located should be avoided when siting buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that development can safely occur. If possible, buildings should not be located over known abandoned or plugged wells.
- 9.1.6 The County encourages the use of technology, such as directional drilling for the exploration and production of subsurface resources from a well site that is located on lands adjacent to a natural heritage area.
- 9.1.7 New wells and associated works are generally prohibited from causing any surface or ecological disturbance to the natural heritage system. If there are no alternatives to a location in significant natural heritage areas, measures will be taken to reduce negative impacts. Where forest cover is removed it will be replaced with twice the area of forest cover that is removed at a location specified by the landowner whose forest cover was removed and should that owner not have a suitable location, then the replacement would occur at a location specified by the County or local municipality.
- 9.1.8 The County supports the proper disposal of oil field brines, in accordance with Provincial requirements.
- 9.1.9 The County recognizes and promotes Lambton's Oil Heritage District as part of the County's overall identity and tourism and cultural strategies, consistent with Section 6.2.

- 9.1.10 The County supports the joint agreement signed by the Province of Ontario and the State of Michigan which prevents drilling in Lake Huron. The County requests notification of and inclusion in any discussions to change the agreement.
- 9.1.11 Oil, (natural) gas, and salt extraction under agricultural lands shall be conducted so as to minimize disruption to agricultural uses, minimize the amount of land taken out of agricultural production, and prevent contamination of agricultural lands. Rehabilitation of exhausted or abandoned wells and oil fields must be compatible with the surrounding agricultural area and should be rehabilitated to appropriate standards for agricultural use unless specifically rehabilitated for another purpose.

9.2 Mineral Aggregate Resources

Goals: To identify and protect aggregate resource areas and existing extraction operations.

To promote comprehensive rehabilitation planning.

To support the conservation of mineral aggregate resources and aggregate recycling.

To support the strengthening of requirements for rehabilitation of aggregate extraction sites in specialty crop areas.

To minimize the negative impacts of the industry on the natural heritage system, to minimize the conflict between extractive and surrounding land uses and to promote proper rehabilitation.

To recognize the importance of natural heritage features and to provide a policy direction for areas where competing resource interests arise.

Policies:

- 9.2.1 Local municipalities will identify and designate mineral aggregate resource areas in their local official plans and provide policies for the location, zoning and accessory uses of pits and quarries. Policies should:
- a) recognize and provide for the continued operation of currently licensed pits and quarries;
 - b) protect aggregate resource areas from land uses and activities deemed to be incompatible with extraction operations;
 - c) permit aggregate extraction on agricultural lands as an interim use, provided that the lands are rehabilitated to substantially the same acreage and average soil capability, with rehabilitation to prime agriculture preferred where feasible;
 - d) consider the underlying or permanent designation of the lands when reviewing development applications, under the *Planning Act*, to determine whether the proposed use is appropriate;
 - e) permit wayside pits and quarries on a temporary basis without requiring an

- amendment to the local official plan or zoning by-law, except in natural heritage areas or adjacent to or in developed areas or settlements;
- f) establish criteria that are used for the review of licensing applications and site plans for new or expanding aggregate operations. Consideration should be given to the impact on adjacent residential and other land uses, the natural heritage system, cultural heritage resources, roads and points of access, as well as the nature and effectiveness of the rehabilitation proposed, including integrated rehabilitation between adjacent extractive operations and where feasible, the rehabilitation of prime agricultural lands to prime agriculture after extraction;
 - g) establish setbacks for proposed development from existing operations to prevent the encroachment of new development on existing operations. Criteria should be established that allow for a reduction in the setbacks, provided that siting and environmental concerns can be mitigated;
 - h) provide for a municipality to request that measures such as increased setbacks, berming, landscaping, environmentally friendly dust suppressants or other measures be included in a license to ensure compatibility, particularly for areas where extraction is proposed adjacent to existing or planned development;
 - i) require sequential extraction practices to be undertaken wherever possible that would allow for progressive rehabilitation; and
 - j) prohibit development and activities in known deposits of mineral aggregate resources or on adjacent lands if they would preclude or hinder access to resources and/or the establishment of new operations, unless:
 - i) resource use would not be feasible; or
 - ii) the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and
 - iii) issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed

9.2.2 The County discourages resource extraction in Provincially significant natural heritage areas shown on Map 2. The County discourages resource extraction in locally significant natural heritage areas and the removal of sizable, healthy woodlots for extraction purposes. Where extraction is permitted, it should be contingent upon rehabilitation plans that re-establish a comparable or improved natural heritage feature.

9.2.3 Where below water extraction is proposed on or adjacent to potential recharge areas for groundwater supply, a hydrogeological study assessing any adverse impacts on quality and/or quantity of the groundwater resource may be required, subject to Provincial requirements.

9.2.4 Rehabilitation to pre-existing agricultural capability is not required if agricultural rehabilitation is maximized but a substantial quantity of mineral aggregate warranting extraction is below the water table and the depth of planned extraction makes full restoration infeasible. In addition, in specialty crop areas, the mineral aggregate resource must be of high quality, or extraction that would not allow full rehabilitation to pre-existing agricultural capability is prohibited.

- 9.2.5 Where it is not feasible to return the lands to agriculture, priority should be given to assessing the feasibility of rehabilitation to a use which provides significant social and environmental benefits. The use should result in environmental improvement or net environmental gain. Features such as woodlots, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat areas, integrated water systems or passive recreational opportunities may be appropriate.
- 9.2.6 To ensure that extraction remains an interim activity, only those activities normally associated with aggregate processing such as crushing, screening, washing, and stockpiling should be permitted. Aggregate recycling should also be permitted at extractive operations as an accessory use wherever and to the extent feasible. Other uses of a more permanent nature would require a rezoning.
- 9.2.7 The County is supportive of maintaining waterfront port facilities for the handling of aggregates that are transported by ship.
- 9.2.8 Extraction shall be undertaken in a manner which minimizes social and environmental impacts.
- 9.2.9 When considering new or expanding extractive operations, approval authorities shall conserve cultural heritage resources by requiring satisfactory measures to mitigate any negative impacts on cultural heritage resources.
- 9.2.10 Measures to conserve and recycle mineral aggregate resources are encouraged including the utilization or extraction of on-site mineral aggregate resources prior to development occurring. Where site conditions are feasible such as being located on suitable roads, extractive operations are encouraged to include aggregate recycling facilities where the public, businesses, and/or municipal waste collection systems may deposit aggregates, stone, porcelain, asphalt, concrete, and similar substances for processing for reuse as aggregates.

Chapter 10

10. Implementation Mechanisms

This section is designed to provide direction and interpretation in implementing the policies of this Plan. Various mechanisms of implementation can be employed, including:

- *the review of development applications made under the Planning Act;*
- *co-operative efforts with all relevant stakeholders in finding mutually satisfactory solutions to managing development;*
- *capital works spending in County infrastructure; and*
- *continued policy research and monitoring of trends, particularly as required by this Plan.*

10.1 Financial Management

The implementation of this Plan must be achieved in a fiscally efficient and effective manner. The user-pay principle will be adhered to where appropriate; generally, the funds required to provide the necessary services for development will be paid in a fair and appropriate manner by the new development that directly requires and will benefit from these new or expanded services. The general tax base will not be unduly burdened by the costs of growth.

10.2 Development Approvals

In exercising its development approval authority the County will facilitate and expedite, in conjunction with the local municipalities and affected agencies, the development approval process by:

- a) investigating and implementing measures to eliminate duplication, consolidate responses, and reduce time delays;
- b) enforcing reasonable time deadlines;
- c) encouraging proponents of development proposals to meet with such staff and agency representatives as deemed necessary prior to the submission of applications; and,
- d) monitoring approval processes and setting time-frame targets for processing applications.

10.3 Committee of Adjustment

10.3.1 Local municipalities shall establish committees of adjustment to hear applications respecting minor variance, permission, and non-conforming uses under Section 45; consents under Section 53; and validation certificates under Section 57 of the *Planning Act*.

10.3.2 Committees of adjustment shall approve applications for minor variance where the tests described in Section 45(1) of the *Planning Act* and any additional criteria established by by-law by the local municipality are met. The County will assist local municipalities who wish to establish criteria for minor variance applications either generally or for specific types of applications.

10.4 General Severance Policies

10.4.1 Lots created by consent will meet the following requirements:

- a) all lots are to front on a public road;
- b) despite the foregoing policy, municipalities may develop specific local Official Plan policies to deal with infill development on existing private roads;
- c) the creation of a lot will not result in a landlocked parcel;
- d) the lot must be provided with adequate services, including the provision of a satisfactory sanitary sewerage system and a potable water supply;
- e) no consent will be granted for land that has a natural or human-made hazard;
- f) no consent will be granted which will have a negative effect on significant natural areas, including significant woodlands and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest;
- g) the lot and its intended use must conform to the local municipality's zoning by-law. Where necessary, the consent granting authority may require appropriate zoning amendments or minor variances as a condition of approval;
- h) lots created by consent should neither create nor contribute to ribbon development along roads where services or development does not exist;
- i) Compliance with Section 4.2 of this Plan is required when dealing with consents in Agricultural Areas:
- j) municipalities should consider when a plan of subdivision is a more appropriate process of lot creation than consents. The municipality should consult with the County in this regard; and,
- k) a local municipality's official plan should consider detailed policies dealing with lot creation.

10.5 General Plan of Subdivision Policies

10.5.1 Subdivision approval and development will only be permitted where in the public interest. Proposals that are premature in terms of market conditions should not be approved. Subdivisions will only be considered for approval when the municipality is able to provide the necessary services and sewage capacity without imposing increased service delivery costs to existing residents.

10.5.2 Subdivision land use patterns are to be designed in a manner that sustains the financial well-being of the Province and the municipality over the long term through designs that are appropriate for and efficiently uses available or planned infrastructure.

10.5.3 Subdivision land use proposals must provide an appropriate standard of streets. The road layout must properly integrate new development into the community and existing road network and avoid patterns that would prevent efficient future expansion. Ad hoc development is to be discouraged.

10.5.4 In making a decision or imposing conditions of approval, the County as the subdivision approval authority may also take into consideration matters including, but not limited to:

- a) the provision of water and sanitary and other services consistent with Section 3.2.6;
- b) the provision of stormwater quality and quantity management and potential impacts to drainage of abutting lands;
- c) provision of adequate access to lots within the plan without creating traffic hazards;
- d) the delivery of emergency services, including the provision of sufficient points of access;
- e) the conveyance of lands to the municipality for public use;
- f) linkages and walkways to parks, open spaces, or public gathering areas such as schools or commercial nodes where options exist;
- g) designs that facilitate healthy, active communities;
- h) taking into consideration accessibility needs and the needs of pedestrians and non-motorized transportation;
- i) appropriate standards of urban design and green initiatives;
- j) compatibility with adjacent land uses and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change D-Series Guidelines, or their successor;
- k) ensuring the presence of any natural or man-made constraints are avoided and addressed; and
- l) such conditions to the approval of a plan of subdivision that in the opinion of the approval authority are reasonable and have regard for the nature of the development proposed for the subdivision.

10.5.5 An approval authority may require that an applicant provide any information or material that the approval authority considers it may need.

10.5.6 Local municipalities are encouraged to make their preferences known with respect to subdivision design and approval through the adoption of detailed policies within the local Official Plans addressing the matters identified in Section 10.5.4 and such other matters as determined by the local municipality.

10.6 General Plan of Condominium Policies

10.6.1 The general plan of subdivision policies and requirements in Section 10.5 shall apply to plans of condominium, with necessary modifications.

10.6.2 The five types of condominiums in Ontario are the Standard Condominium, the Leasehold Condominium, the Phased Condominium, the Vacant Land Condominium, and the Common Element Condominium, as described in Appendix F.

10.6.3 A site plan agreement or development agreement with the local municipality will be a condition of all condominium approvals.

10.6.4 Decisions on applications for plan of condominium, conditions or approval, and agreements between the municipality and condominium corporation should have regard for:

- a) site plan control policies of this and the local Official Plans;

- b) the Plan of Subdivision policies in Section 10.4;
- c) impacts of greater densities onto the municipal infrastructure systems;
- d) provision of communal living areas, recreation areas, and amenities; and
- e) provision of necessary infrastructure, super mailbox areas, and a fire hydrant system;

10.6.5 Agreement between the municipality and condominium corporation must also establish:

- a) what infrastructure, if any, the municipality will outright assume;
- b) maintenance and scheduled inspections by the condominium corporation of any privately maintained infrastructure, especially fire hydrants;
- c) the separation and protection of municipal water systems;
- d) arrangements for metering and billing (normally a meter would be placed at the condominium property line with a single bill to the condominium corporation);
- e) whether snow removal and waste disposal will be provided privately or by the municipality; and
- f) financial assurances to the municipality under any "municipal responsibility agreement" in the event the condominium corporation should default in operating infrastructure (e.g. sanitary sewage collection and treatment, potable water treatment and distribution, or stormwater management).

10.6.6 Any private roads must have widths and turning radii sufficient to accommodate fire and other emergency vehicles and anticipated traffic flows. Private roads will be identified as "Lanes" for the 9-1-1 County addressing system. In the case of the dissolution of a condominium corporation, the municipality will not assume a private road unless it meets established municipal standards.

10.6.7 In form, the condominium development must be compatible and in keeping with the adjacent community. Local Official Plans should provide policies to ensure compatible densities and integration of developments and road networks into the community.

10.6.8 Condominium developments should not be permitted where they would disrupt existing or future streets or road networks, prevent the extension of urban areas, or create inaccessible areas within the immediate community.

10.6.9 Phased Condominiums will not be permitted where initial phases are functionally dependent on the completion of subsequent phases in terms of access, servicing, parking, or key amenities.

10.6.10 For Condominiums with dwelling units that share common foundations, walls, or other building components with a neighbouring unit, the condominium corporation must establish standards for private insurance, procedures for making alterations or doing work to such building elements, and rights of the corporation or an abutting unit owners to enter a unit to inspect or perform work to maintain or remedy any deficiencies in shared building elements.

10.6.11 Local Official Plans should include policies with respect to the conversion of residential

rental units into condominium units, especially in terms of ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing. Properties should be improved to an appropriate standard and inspected prior to final approval and registration of the condominium declaration.

10.7 Conformity of Local Municipal Official Plans

10.7.1 After the approval of this Plan by the Province, the *Planning Act* requires that the official plans of the local municipalities be brought into conformity with this Plan. Therefore, the County will consider the following criteria in determining conformity of local municipal plans to this Plan:

- a) general consistency with the provision/distribution of County population, employment and housing projections;
- b) general consistency with Urban Centre and Urban Settlement and Secondary Settlement boundaries and the criteria under which changes to those boundaries are to be evaluated;
- c) conservation, protection, and management of the County's natural resources, environment and heritage;
- d) efficient utilization of services for which the County has responsibility; and
- e) the Provincial Policy Statement.

10.7.2 The County Official Plan has been prepared consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. Therefore, once this Plan comes into effect under the provisions of the *Planning Act*, all local official plans which conform to this Plan will be deemed to also conform to Provincial Policy. Local official plan policies which do not have general consistency with this Plan, but which are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, may be deemed to conform to this Plan provided that the public consultation policies of Section 10.9 are adhered to.

10.8 Monitoring, Plan Review, and Updating

The objectives and policies of this Plan are based on situations and assumptions that are subject to change over time. Therefore, a monitoring system is required to:

- a) identify emerging trends and related issues;
- b) analyze the effectiveness of the Plan; and
- c) allow for adjustments and updating where required.

For this reason, a regular review of the Plan and the context in which it functions will be necessary. Regular information gathering and analysis to update the information assembled and developed in the Issue Papers that form the background to this Plan, combined with a formal report on the adequacy of the Plan every five years, will be essential.

10.9 Public Consultation

10.9.1 It is a policy of this Plan to ensure that the public is informed and consulted on proposed amendments or revisions to this Plan and plan of subdivision applications submitted for County approval by advertising, providing information, and holding public

meetings, open houses and similar events as appropriate to the nature of the proposed amendments or applications.

- a) A public meeting shall be held by the County for all official plan amendments and revisions.
- b) A public meeting will be held before the local municipal Council for proposed plans of subdivision.
- c) The County will hold at least one open house as part of any official plan review or amendment associated with Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, and may do so also for any official plan amendment with significant or County-wide implications.
- d) For proposed plans of subdivision and for official plan amendments of a localized area of influence, required notices will be provided by posting on the property and giving direct notice to affected and neighboring property owners.
- e) For official plan amendments or revisions with more significant or farther-reaching implications, required notices will be provided in one or more local newspapers, and may also be advertised through the County web site, social media, news releases, and other available forms of County advertising.
- f) Notices shall indicate how a person may obtain additional information, speak with County staff, and submit formal written or verbal comments.
- f) A copy of the proposed plan of subdivision or official plan amendment or revision and related information shall be kept at the Planning and Development Services Department for public viewing, and may also be posted on the County web site especially for official plan amendments with significant or County-wide implications.

10.9.2 The County does not grant consents under Section 53 or minor variances under Section 45 and does not pass zoning by-laws under Section 34 of the *Planning Act*. Local municipal official plans shall include descriptions of the measures and procedures for obtaining the views of the public in respect of amendments or revisions to local official plans, zoning by-laws, consents, and plans of subdivision, where they are the approval authority.

10.9.3 For direct notices required under the *Planning Act*, the County will generally provide notices by e-mail where the County has an e-mail address provided to the County or advertised publicly by the intended recipient. Where an e-mail is returned as undeliverable or not immediately received by the recipient, notice will be sent where possible by alternate means upon the County becoming aware of the failed or delayed notice.

10.10 Interpretation

10.10.1 The text, tables, and Maps 1 and 2 contained herein constitute the County of Lambton Official Plan. Appendix Maps represent mapping data maintained by others, do not form part of this Plan, and are provided for information purposes and context. Graphics and headings and map annotation are intended to be illustrative and are provided for information or reference only.

10.10.2 All policies of the Plan are intended to be read together to determine the conformity of

any proposal to the Plan. Individual policies are to be read and interpreted in their appropriate context.

10.10.3 Where designation boundaries on Map 1 or Map 2 are intended to correspond with an identifiable feature associated with the built or natural environment such as (but not limited to) lot lines, municipal boundaries, water bodies, designated natural heritage features, or road allowances or an area historically designated by a local official plan, the designation boundary shall be deemed to be that feature. The precise location of a designation boundary shall not be interpreted beyond what the resolution of the source data and intended scale of display allows for Map 1 or Map 2 and their component features (the source of which may be others).

10.10.4 In the case of a discrepancy between the text and a Map, the text will take precedence.

10.11 Amendments to the Plan

10.11.1 This Plan will be reviewed within the first ten years of adoption and every five years thereafter. Population projections, housing unit needs, land needs, building trends, and other demographic trends will be monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments made to the Plan as required.

10.11.2 Where a new County Official Plan is proposed or an amendment that would require approval by the Province, the County will provide the approval authority a copy of the Plan or amendment 90 days before providing notice of any public meeting or open house.

10.11.3 The consideration of any amendments to this Plan will be guided by the following:

- a) the need for the proposed change;
- b) the effect of the proposed change on the need for services and facilities provided by the County;
- c) the implications that the proposed change may have on other parts of the Plan; and,
- d) the effects that the proposed change may have on the ability of the County to achieve the goals, objectives and policies expressed in this Plan, or on other County policies, programs or interests.

Official Plan Map 2 – Natural Heritage System - Feature Inventory

Brooke-Alvinston

1. Brown Creek Woods and Wetland (ANSI, PSW, ESA)
2. Walnut Heronry Woods and Wetland (ANSI, PSW, ESA)
3. Brooke Township Sydenham Woods (ESA)
4. A.W. Campbell Conservation Area
5. Sydenham River Corridor (LS, ESA, CC, PC)

Dawn-Euphemia

6. Rutherford Woods (ESA)
7. Huffs Corners Forest (ESA)
8. Langbank Woods (ESA)
9. Oakdale Woods (ANSI, ESA)
(includes: - Shetland Heronry (ESA))
10. Dawn-Euphemia Forest (ESA)
11. Shetland Conservation Area
12. Grape Fern Woods Wetland (PSW, ESA)
13. Shetland Kentucky Coffee Tree Grove (LS, ESA, CC)
14. Fansher Woods (ESA)
15. McPhail Tract Wetland (LSW, ESA)
16. Euphemia #3 (*Cairo Wetland*) (PSW, ESA)
(includes: - Highway 79-Euphemia Woodlot (ESA))
17. McCready Woods Wetland (PSW, ESA)
18. Sydenham River Corridor (LS, ESA, CC)
19. Cairo Woods (ESA)
20. Cottonwood Swamp (ESA)
21. Bobcat Swamp Wetland Complex (PSW, ESA)
(includes: - County Line Woods (ESA))

Enniskillen

22. Bear Creek South of Wyoming (ANSI, ESA)
(includes: - Bear Creek Woodlot #1 (ESA))
23. Marthaville Habitat Management Area
24. L.C. Henderson Conservation Area & Wetland (LSW, ESA)
(includes: - Bear Creek Woodlot #2 (ESA))
25. Little Bear Creek (ESA)
26. Fox Creek Woods (ESA)
27. Black Creek (ANSI, LSW, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Black Creek Woodlot #1 (LS, ESA), Fox Creek Woods Wetland (LSW))
28. Black Creek Woodlot #2 (ESA)

Lambton Shores

29. Pinery Provincial Park Corridor (ANSI, LS, ESA, WA, CC, PC)
30. Thedford Marsh Floodplain
31. Kettle Point/Ipperwash/Port Franks Corridor (ANSI, PSW, LS, ESA, CC, PC)

(includes: - Ausable River Cut Conservation Area, Ipperwash Dunes Woodlot Complex (LS, ESA), Ipperwash Inner Dunal Complex (PSW), Ipperwash Provincial Park (ANSI, LS, ESA), Ipperwash Area (CC), Kettle Point (ANSI), Kettle Point Shoreline and Marsh Complex (LS, ESA, CC), Port Franks Wetland and Forested Dunes (ANSI, CC), Port Franks Wetland (PSW), Port Franks (LS, ESA))

32. Ausable River Cut (PC)
33. Thedford Swamp/Bog (PSW, LS, ESA)
34. Thedford Brickyard (ANSI)
35. Ravenswood Wetland Complex (LSW, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Jericho Creek Woodlot (LS, ESA))
36. South Kettle Point Lakeshore Marshes (ANSI, PSW, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Gustin Grove Marsh/Shashawandah Creek (ANSI, ESA), Shashawandah Creek Woodlots & Lakeshore Marsh (LS))
37. Ausable Disjunct Woods (ESA)
38. Ausable River Valley & Wetland (ANSI, PSW, LS, ESA, CC)
(includes: - Rock Glen Conservation Area)
39. Cedar Point, Dolmage & Rawlings Rd. Wetland Complex (PSW, ESA)
40. Esli G. Dodge Conservation Area

Petrolia

41. Bridgeview Conservation Area (LSW)
(includes: - Petrolia (Bridgeview) CA Wetland (LSW))

Plympton-Wyoming

42. Highland Glen Conservation Area (SAA)
43. Charles J. McEwen Conservation Area
44. Aberarder Creek Woodlot (LS, ESA)
45. Uttoxeter Swamp (LSW, ESA)
46. Camlachie Woodlot (LS, ESA)
47. Egremont Road Woods (ESA)
48. Spicebush Swamp (LSW)
49. Reece's Corners Gravel Pits (ESA)

Sarnia

50. Blackwell Railway Tracks (*Sarnia-Clearwater Nature Trail*) (LS, ESA)
51. Bright's Grove Sewage Lagoons (LS, ESA)
52. Wawanosh Conservation Area & Wetland (PSW)
53. Sarnia Landfill Swamp (LSW)
(includes: - Perch Creek Habitat Management Area)
54. Mandaumin Nature Reserve (SAA)
55. Aamjiwnaang First Nation (*Sarnia Indian Reserve*) (ESA, CC)

St. Clair

- 56. Stag Island Wetland (PSW, LS, ESA)
- 57. Lambton Landfill Wetland Complex (LSW)
- 58. Brigden Wetland Complex (PSW, LSW, LS, ESA, CGP)
(includes: - Bear Creek Woodlot #1 (LS), Bear Creek Woodlot #3 (LSW, ESA), Burton Drain Woodlot (PSW, LS, ESA), Crown Game Preserve (LSW, LS, ESA, CGP))
- 59. Ladysmith Wetland Complex (PSW)
- 60. Clay Creek Woodland (ANSI, PSW, CC)
(includes: - Bickford Oak Woods Wetland Complex (PSW))
- 61. Vulture Woods (LS)
- 62. Waubuno Woodlot (LS, ESA)
- 63. Plum Creek (ANSI, PSW, LS, ESA, CC)
(includes: - Plum Creek Woods Wetland (LSW), Plum Creek #1 (LS, ESA), Plum Creek #2 (LS, ESA), Plum Creek Upland Woodlots (CC))
- 64. Bear Creek Woodlot #4 Wetland (PSW, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Bear Creek Woodlot #4 (ESA), Bear Creek Woodlot #2 (LS), Moore Habitat Management Area)
- 65. Bear Creek Floodplain (ANSI, CC, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Bear Creek Clay Plain Forest (CC), Bear Creek Woodlot #3 (LS), Bear Creek Woodlot #5 (ESA))
- 66. McKeough Upstream Lands (PC)
- 67. Upper Clay Creek Wetland Complex (LSW)
- 68. Lower Clay Creek Wetland Complex (LSW)
- 68. Duthill Woodlots (ANSI, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Duthill Woodlot #1 (LS, ESA), Wilkesport Woodlot (LS, ESA))
- 69. McKeough Floodway & Conservation Area (PC)
- 70. Grant's Woodlot Wetland (LSW, LS)
(includes: - Duthill Woodlot (LS), McKeough Conservation Area)
- 71. Bray's Wetland Complex (PSW)
- 72. Duthill Woodlot #2 Wetland (PSW, LS, ESA)
(includes: - Duthill Woodlot #3 (LS))
- 73. Sassafras Woods (LS, ESA)
- 74. Marshy Creek Wetland (PSW, CC)

Warwick

- 75. Bear Creek Source Woodlot Wetland (LSW, LS, ESA)
- 76. Spicebush Swamp (LSW)
- 77. West Warwick Woods Wetland (LSW)
- 78. Warwick Conservation Area & Wetland (PSW)
- 79. Highway 402 Woods (ESA)

Walpole Island

Walpole Island (ANSI, ESA, CC)

(includes: - Walpole Island Indian Reserve (ESA), Walpole Island Prairie, Savannah and Marsh (CC))

Cross Municipal Features

- A. Lake Huron Shoreline (PC)
(Huron County / Lambton Shores / Kettle & Stony Point / Plympton-Wyoming / Sarnia)
- B. Ausable River Valley & Wetland (ANSI, PSW, LS, CC, PC)
(Lambton Shores / Middlesex County)
- C. Hickory Creek (PC)
(Warwick Twp. / Lambton Shores / Plympton-Wyoming Twp.)
- D. Perch Creek (PC)
(St. Clair / Plympton-Wyoming / Sarnia)
- E. St. Clair River (PC)
(Sarnia / Aamjiwnaang / St. Clair Twp. / Walpole Island / Chatham-Kent)
- F. Bear Creek (PC)
(Warwick Twp. / Plympton-Wyoming Twp. / Enniskillen Twp. / Petrolia / St. Clair Twp.)
- G. Black Creek (PC)
(Enniskillen Twp. / St. Clair Twp.)
- H. North Sydenham River (PC)
(St. Clair Twp. / Chatham-Kent)
- I. Sydenham River Corridor (LS, ESA, CC, PC)
(Brooke-Alvinston Twp. / Dawn-Euphemia Twp. / Middlesex County / Chatham-Kent)
- J. Bobcat Swamp Wetland Complex (PSW)
(Dawn-Euphemia Twp. / Middlesex County)
- K. Skunk's Misery Wetland Complex (ANSI, PSW, CC)
(adjacent to Dawn-Euphemia Twp. / in Middlesex County / Chatham-Kent)

Core Areas

- C1. Port Franks - Pinery Core Area
- C2. Ausable River Valley Core Area
- C3. Aamjiwnaang Core Area
- C4. Bear Creek - Black Creek Core Area
- C5. Bickford Oak Woods Core Area
- C6. East Sydenham River Core Area
- C7. Walpole Island Core Area
- C8. Skunk's Misery Core Area

Reasons for Designation Acronym Key:

ANSI	Area of Natural or Scientific Interest (Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry (MNR) & Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC))
CC	Carolinian Canada recognized
CGP	Crown Game Preserve (MNR)
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area (1979-80 L. Lamb Study)
LS	Life Science Area (NHIC)
LSW	Locally Significant Wetland (Ontario Wetland Evaluation System)
PC	Primary Corridor (County of Lambton)
PSW	Provincially Significant Wetland (Ontario Wetland Evaluation System)
SAA	Special Appendix Area (1979-80 L. Lamb Study)
WA	Wilderness Area (NHIC)

Appendix F

Definitions

Unless defined or suggested otherwise by the policy context within this Plan, the following words, terms, and phrases used within the Plan have the meaning as defined below:

Adjacent lands: for the purposes of Section 8 Natural Heritage, means those lands, contiguous to a specific natural heritage feature or area, where it is likely that development or site alteration would have a negative impact on the feature or area.

Area of Natural or Scientific Interest (ANSI): means areas containing natural landscapes or features of regional or provincial significance that have been officially identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study, or education. ANSIs are sub-classified as Earth and/or Life Science ANSIs. ANSIs are evaluated and identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and listed in the Natural Heritage Information Centre.

Carolinian Canada Sites (CC): means a site identified by the organization known as Carolinian Canada as a critical natural area within the Carolinian Life Zone and secured for conservation through public acquisition and/or private stewardship agreements.

Condominium, Common Elements: means a condominium with no conveyable units, only common elements. This allows common elements to be tied to other parcels of land. The practical application of this form of condominium is for a parcel of land like a golf course to be a common element owned and maintained by a condominium corporation composed of those persons who possess title to lots within a nearby subdivision.

Condominium, Leasehold: means a condominium consisting of units and common elements like a Standard Condominium that instead of the lands being owned by unit owners via the condominium corporation, the lands are leased. The land lease is legislated for a between a period of 40 to 99 years although the individual units may be sold at any time; however, at the end of the lease, if not renewed, the land and the condominium buildings become the property of the owner of the lands. The main purpose of leasehold condominiums is to allow institutions (universities) to lease surplus land until it is required for expansion purposes or as a means of encouraging affordable housing.

Condominium, Phased: means a Standard Condominium that is phased to allow a property to be developed in stages, allowing each phase to be incorporated into one condominium corporation with shared common elements, rather than separate condominium corporations with separate common elements. This form of condominium allows developers to adjust each phase to suit housing market conditions.

Condominium, Standard: means the traditional and most common condominium in Ontario and the only type permitted prior to amendments to the *Condominium Act*. The Standard Condominium consists of conveyable units and common elements - for example, multiple conveyable dwelling units in a building on a communal parcel of land affording the landscaping, yard setbacks, parking, internal traffic lanes, open space and servicing for the dwelling units.

Condominium, Vacant Land: means a condominium with conveyable units of vacant land on which dwelling units are built after registration of the condominium. A typical Vacant Land Condominium looks like a plan of subdivision however, road, water, sewer, sanitary, storm, and fire protection infrastructure services within the condominium are common elements of and maintained by the condominium corporation. There is typically a single water cut-off. Vacant Land Condominiums cannot be phased. Vacant Land Condominium fees include the establishment and maintenance of a reserve fund to provide for the future repair or replacement of components of the plan of condominium including roads, infrastructure and lighting over an approximate 30 year timeframe.

Crown Game Preserve (CGP): means a natural feature officially designated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry as a CGP. Crown Game Preserves were established to prohibit or regulate the hunting and trapping of wildlife in specific areas to restore local populations.

Development and Site Alteration, when referring to activities that may be subject to the assessment of either a hazard or a natural heritage feature or function, generally mean activities that require an approval under the *Planning Act*. Within this context, "development" and "site alteration" exclude activities that require no special permissions other than a permit under the *Ontario Building Code Act*. Activities within an applicable authority's jurisdiction that it exempts from hazard and/or natural heritage assessment are also not considered "development" or "site alteration" for these purposes. For example, pursuant to section 12.4 of the *Natural Heritage Reference Manual*, a local municipality may determine certain activities are of minimal or no consequence and permit them through the local zoning provisions. Any activities that this Plan indicates should not be subject to hazard and/or natural heritage assessments as well as any ongoing activities legally established prior to the effective date of this Plan are also not "development" or "site alteration" for these purposes. Notwithstanding the foregoing however, "development" and "site alteration" shall include any new or expanded activity that is specifically prohibited or subject to assessment under provincial or federal legislation or any other applicable law relating to hazards or natural heritage features or functions. Further, the foregoing does not apply to permit any activity that would contravene any provincial or federal legislation or other applicable law.

Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA): means a natural feature identified as being of importance through a study conducted in 1979-80 by the University of Waterloo Environmentally Sensitive Areas Study Team as summarized in the report *Lambton County Preliminary Environmentally Sensitive Areas Study* (editor L. Lamb).

Hydro corridor: means corridors used for the transmission and distribution of electricity.

Infilling and Minor Rounding out of Development: means development:

- a) that is located within existing designated settlement boundaries;
- b) that makes efficient use of existing municipal infrastructure through:
 - i) redevelopment of a previously developed parcel;
 - ii) development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas; or
 - iii) creation of a limited number of uses or lots on vacant road frontage between existing uses, provided the new lots do not constitute or extend ribbon development;

- c) that does not cause the municipality to assume the ownership or maintenance of piecemeal infrastructure;
- d) that does not constitute or extend ribbon development;
- e) that is not located on the opposite side of a natural development boundary, where the majority of existing development is located on one side of a natural boundary such as a road allowance, water course, natural heritage feature or other logical development boundary.

Life Science Sites (LS): means a natural feature designate by the Ministry of Natural Resources and listed on the Natural Heritage Information Center as a LS. A LS is not classified as an ANSI either because it has not been adequately evaluated or because it has been evaluated and determined not satisfy criteria for designation as an ANSI.

Locally Significant Wetland (LSW): means a natural feature classified and listed as an "other" wetland by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry through the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, meaning it has not yet been evaluated to determine its level of significance or has been evaluated and determined to be a wetland that is not of provincial significance.

Negative Impacts: means

- a) in regard to the use of individual on-site sewage and/or water services, degradation to the quality and quantity of water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their related hydrologic functions, due to single, multiple or successive development. Negative impacts should be assessed through environmental studies including hydrogeological or water quality impact assessments, in accordance with provincial standards;
- b) in regard to the quality and quantity of water, degradation to the quality and quantity of water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their related hydrologic functions, due to single, multiple or successive development or site alteration activities;
- c) in regard to fish habitat, any permanent alteration to, or destruction of fish habitat, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the *Fisheries Act*; and
- d) in regard to other natural heritage features and areas, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or ecological functions for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive development or site alteration activities.

Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW): means a natural feature evaluated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System and officially designated as a wetland of provincial significance.

Ribbon Development: means a succession of lots abutting or in close proximity to each other along one side of a collector or arterial road allowance (regardless of whether there is development on the opposite side of the road), especially but not limited to:

- a) where there is no built-up area to the rear or opposite to the lots;
- b) where the road allowance serves as a natural development boundary, the majority of existing development being on the opposite side of the road allowance and the near side of the road allowance and lands to the rear of the lots being dominated by natural

- heritage features or agricultural or undeveloped lands;
- c) where new or additional lots would leave undeveloped, vacant or agricultural lands to the rear of the new lots;
- d) where potential for a more comprehensive development in depth exists (possibly at a future date when additional designated lands may be justifiable);
- e) where servicing extensions or other infrastructure are required;
- f) where compromised development or servicing standards (e.g. stormwater control) would result compared to what would be required for a comprehensive development in depth; or
- g) where appropriate servicing standards would result in the municipality assuming ad hoc infrastructure and undue maintenance costs or liabilities unique or specific to the new lots;

Rural or Rural Area: generally means "non-urban", or areas outside of the larger urban areas. Depending on the context, "rural" may also include the smaller and/or isolated settlement areas and urban centres on Map 1.

Significant: means, in regard to natural heritage features and areas, ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system and specifically includes wetlands, coastal wetlands, and areas of natural and scientific interest identified as provincially significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Special Appendix Area (SAA): means a natural feature not specifically assessed, but identified in 1979-80 by the University of Waterloo Environmentally Sensitive Areas Study Team as warranting future assessment to determine its importance (refer to definition of ESA).

Wilderness Area (WA): means natural features regulated under the *Wilderness Areas Act* and established as WAs to preserve them in the natural state to protect flora and fauna. These areas are listed in the Natural Heritage Information Centre.