



Town of Essex

# OFFICIAL PLAN

Your Community. Your Vision.

## Policy Directions Report

DRAFT

March 2023



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Essex is preparing a new Official Plan (OP) to guide its land use planning decisions for the next 25 years. The OP is a critical document for guiding the Town's growth, allocation of land for living, working, and playing, and ensuring that critical infrastructure and municipal services are available. This **Policy Directions Report** is the deliverable of Phase 2 (Background Issues Review and Vision) of the project work plan.

## 1.1 Project Context

The scope of project is to undertake a review and prepare a new OP for the Town of Essex: this allows the Town an opportunity to respond to Provincial, County of Essex policy changes and land use planning trends as well as establish new Town initiatives since the last major update of the OP in 2015. This review considers:

- > The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the health care system, economy, global supply chains, and migration patterns;
- > Housing affordability and attainable housing;
- > Global climate change including an understanding of the effects of global warming locally;
- > An aging population and demographic shifts;
- > Changing work patterns and trends in employment uses;
- > Traditional agricultural practices transitioning toward industrial food production while ensuring individual farmers' continued viability of working their farms through on-farm diversified uses

A work plan was prepared to allow for the project to be completed and the new OP adopted by Council by late summer 2023. The work plan was divided into four phases:

### Phase 1: Project Initiation

- > Project start-up meeting with consultant and Town project teams; preparation of a consultation and engagement strategy in May 2022 to guide engagement with stakeholders and the public on the development of the new OP; and a special meeting of Town Council in June 2022 to officially initiate the project under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

### Phase 2: Background Review

- > Consultation with the Community Stakeholder and Development Working Groups on high-level issues to be addressed through the new OP; a meeting with County of Essex staff to align the Town's work plan with the County's ongoing Official Plan Review; a background review of all applicable policy drivers at the Provincial, County, and Town level; and the **Background Review and Gaps Analysis (BRGA) Report** (January 2023).

### Phase 3: Policy Directions and Communication

- > Development of specific policy directions for the new OP based on the gaps and opportunities identified in the BRGA report; a second round of consultation with the Community Stakeholder and Development Working Groups; public consultation through three Focus Groups; and the final **Policy Directions Report**.
- > Phase Three also includes an update of the **Colchester Secondary Plan**, which will involve a review of land use and urban design policies, heritage and parking studies.

### Phase 4: New Town of Essex Official Plan and Project Completion

- > Drafting of the new OP policies and mapping, public consultation, and Council adoption of the new OP. Following adoption the new OP will be submitted to the County of Essex for approval.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Report

This Policy Directions Report (PDR) builds on the inventory of policy gaps and opportunities identified in the BRGA report and outlines specific policy directions in response to those gaps and opportunities. Many of the policy directions described in this report are required for consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and conformity with the updated County of Essex Official Plan currently underway.

The PDR is intended to accomplish several goals: an in-depth discussion of the issues to be addressed in the new OP, provide context and justification for policy directions for review and comment reviewed by Council, Town staff, the public, and key stakeholders, and provides a “road map” for the drafting of new OP policies.

The PDR contains the following sections:

- > **Section 1 (Introduction)** - provides context for the project and this report;
- > **Section 2 (Vision for the New OP)** – outlines a set of draft guiding principles for the new OP that have been developed based on consultation with stakeholders, technical staff, and Essex Town Council. These principles will be refined based on public consultation as part of Phase 3 of the project;
- > **Section 3 (Policy Directions)** – summarizes the key issues to be addressed in the new OP, providing context and justification for policy directions, and details about the policy directions themselves; and
- > **Section 4 (Next Steps)** – briefly outlines the next steps in the project following the finalization of the PDR.

Following the completion of this report, the project team will begin drafting the new OP.

### 1.3 Alignment with County of Essex Official Plan Review

It is important to note that per the requirements under Section 27 of the *Planning Act* the Town's new OP must conform to policies in the County of Essex's in-effect OP. As of the writing of this report, the County is undertaking a review of its OP, and the anticipated completion of the updated County OP is later than the planned adoption of the Town's new OP. Policy directions in this report have been developed based on direction from the PPS, and are anticipated to be in alignment with the County's forthcoming updated OP. Nevertheless, some minor amendments to the Town's new OP may be necessary to ensure alignment following the adoption of the County's updated OP.

Furthermore, a key element of the Town's new OP is the determination of where and how future population, housing, and employment growth will be accommodated within the Town. This work requires direction from the County through two growth management tasks:

- > The development of growth forecasts for population, housing, and employment for the County and its seven local municipalities, which were completed in October 2022; and
- > An assessment of land needs in each local municipality in order to accommodate forecasted growth, which is ongoing, and anticipated to be completed in Summer 2023.

Section 3 of this report details the growth forecasts for the Town of Essex, which help contextualize and inform the policy directions for the new OP, but it is important to note that the questions of where and how to grow will not be able to be fully answered until the County has completed its growth management exercise.

# 2 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

In Phases One and Two of the new OP project, the project team undertook several engagement activities as part of the overall background review work, which included the following:

- > Section 26 Council Meeting:
  - On June 6, 2022, a special meeting of Council was held as required under section 26 of the *Planning Act* to officially launch the project and provide Council with an overview of the project goals and work plan. Council received a presentation from WSP and supported the direction of the project.
- > Community Stakeholder Working Group Meeting #1:
  - On June 28, 2022, the first meeting was held for the Community Stakeholder Working Group (CSWG), an informal group representing stakeholder interests across various sectors within the Town, including business, heritage, accessibility, housing, and employment. WSP presented a short presentation to the group summarizing the goals of the new OP and the project's work plan, then led a discussion based on a series of community-based questions.
- > Development Working Group Meeting #1:
  - On June 28, 2022, the first meeting was held for the Development Working Group (DWG). As with the CSWG, this is an informal group which represents landowners, developers, and the builder community in Essex. WSP presented a short presentation to the group summarizing the goals of the new OP and the project's work plan, then led a discussion based on a series of development-based questions.
- > Technical Advisory Meeting:
  - On December 1, 2022, a meeting was held to discuss the initial findings of the draft Background Review and Gaps Analysis Report. Attendees included Town staff members and representatives from the County of Essex Infrastructure and Planning department and the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA).
- > Council Workshop:
  - On February 6, 2023, a Special Meeting of Council was held to facilitate a discussion with Essex Town Council on the preliminary findings and issues raised through Phase 2 of the project, and to introduce and discuss the project with Council including new members of Council elected in November 2022. WSP provided a short presentation and received feedback and ideas from Council on some preferred directions for the new OP.

## 2.1 Draft Vision and Guiding Principles

To provide high-level direction for the new OP, the project team has drawn on the feedback received through the consultation and engagement activities listed above to develop an overall vision for the Town 25 years from now. This vision is supported by several guiding principles around which the new OP will be anchored. The vision and guiding principles are preliminary suggestions, and will be refined and adjusted as necessary based on further public, stakeholder and Town Council consultation.

### 2.1.1 Vision

"Essex in 25 years will be a vibrant community with a diversity of people, industries and activities. The Town's economy will be anchored by the dual sectors of agriculture and industrial employment, with a thriving tourism industry in the south of the Town centred around wineries and the shores of Lake Erie. The Town's four settlement areas will be green, compact communities that are walkable and have easy access to opportunities for both work and play."

### 2.1.2 Guiding Principles

#### Building on our Agricultural Strengths

- > Continue to support traditional farming of cash-crops and livestock by preserving Prime Agricultural Lands and limiting conversion of those lands to non-agricultural uses;
- > Grow the tender fruit and viticulture industries and designate Specialty Crop Areas within the Town;
- > Ensure that small-scale farms remain viable by encouraging the diversification of on-farm uses and promoting agri-tourism the Town; and
- > Support the growth of commercial greenhouses on less valuable agricultural lands in the Town while protecting lands with the best soils for traditional agriculture and ensuring the health of the groundwater system;

#### Leveraging our Location for Employment

- > Take advantage of the expansion of Provincial Highway 3 between Windsor and Leamington and support employment uses in the northern part of the Town;
- > Provide for a diverse range of employment uses, including size and intensity of those uses, through a permissive policy framework;
- > Grow the tourism industry, particularly in the southern part of the Town, by supporting the expansion of the wine industry, provision of accommodation and services for visitors (e.g., hotels, restaurants); and
- > Participate in the broader agri-food network of the County of Essex by providing agricultural support services (e.g., storage, processing, and logistics) to nearby municipalities like the Municipality of Leamington and the Town of Kingsville;

#### Elevating our Unique Communities

- > Avoid a "one size fits all" approach to planning recognizing that the settlement areas of Essex, McGregor, Harrow, and Colchester have different roles to play in the Town;
- > Limit the outward growth of the four settlement areas and encourage compact, mixed-use development and intensification to transform them into walkable, complete communities where residents can live, work, play, and access essential services without having travel far;

- > Encourage the development of a range of housing types and unit sizes, including multi-story mixed-use buildings;
- > Support the provision of transit services in the Town in collaboration with the County and neighbouring municipalities; and
- > Foster a healthy and well-designed streetscapes and public realm.

#### A Sustainable and Resilient Town

- > Apply a climate change mitigation and adaptation lens to all infrastructure and land use policies for an integrated and holistic approach to addressing the climate emergency;
- > Set goals for greenhouse gas reduction in line with the Town's Climate Change Adaptation Plan;
- > Encourage the use of green infrastructure and low-impact development throughout the Town; and
- > Increase the forest cover in both the settlement and rural areas of the Town to improve carbon capture and help prevent erosion of soil.

# 3 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

One of the critical questions that the new OP should answer is “How does the Town of Essex want to grow and what will it look like?”. As noted in Section 1.3 of this report, much of this policy direction is driven by the ongoing growth management work being completed by the County of Essex. The County and determines the planned growth in population, housing, and employment for the Town for the next 25 years, and the land budget required to accommodate that projected growth.

### 3.1 Growth Forecasts

The County of Essex’s Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan (“County OPR”) is in the early stages as of the writing of this report. One of the primary tasks of the first phase of the County OPR was to develop growth forecasts of population, housing, and employment to the horizon of 2051. These forecasts follow three different scenarios: Low, Medium (sometimes called a Reference scenario) and High. These three scenarios provide additional flexibility for the County and local municipalities on their long-range planning, and are based generally on the assumption that Ontario’s economic growth, immigration to Canada, and Windsor-Essex’s local demographic trends will be lower than expectations (Low scenario), meet expectations (Medium scenario), or exceed expectations (High scenario). The County has not yet selected a preferred growth scenario.

In order to be in conformity with the County’s updated Official Plan, the Town’s new OP must include these population, household, and employment growth forecasts. This will be refined through ongoing discussions with the County as the County progresses through its OPR.

**Table 1** shows the population forecasts for the Town of Essex to 2051, including the Low, Medium, and High scenarios, and the annual rate of growth for both the Town and the County of Essex. **Table 2** shows the share of population growth within the County for each of the local municipalities.

**Table 1: Town of Essex Population Forecasts, 2016-2051 (Source: County of Essex/Watson & Associates)**

Year	Low			Medium			High		
	Town Pop.	Town Annual Growth (%)	County Annual Growth (%)	Town Pop.	Town Annual Growth (%)	County Annual Growth (%)	Town Pop.	Town Annual Growth (%)	County Annual Growth (%)
2016	21,100	-	-	21,100	-	-	21,100	-	-
2021	21,900	0.8%	1.3%	21,900	0.8%	1.3%	21,900	0.8%	1.3%
2026	22,700	0.7%	1.2%	23,100	1.1%	1.7%	23,300	1.3%	2.0%
2031	23,500	0.7%	1.2%	24,200	1.0%	1.6%	24,800	1.3%	1.9%
2036	24,400	0.8%	1.2%	25,500	1.1%	1.5%	26,400	1.3%	1.8%
2041	25,100	0.6%	1.0%	26,600	0.9%	1.3%	27,700	1.0%	1.5%
2046	25,600	0.4%	0.8%	27,500	0.7%	1.1%	28,800	0.8%	1.2%
2051	26,200	0.5%	0.8%	28,300	0.6%	1.0%	29,900	0.8%	1.1%

**Table 2: Share of County Population Growth, 2021-2051 (Source: County of Essex/Watson & Associates)**

Local Municipality	Percentage of 2021 County Population	Percentage of 2021-2051 County Population Growth	Percentage of 2051 County Population
Amherstburg	12%	12%	12%
<b>Essex</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Kingsville	11%	11%	11%
LaSalle	17%	17%	17%
Lakeshore	21%	19%	20%
Leamington	15%	18%	16%
Tecumseh	12%	16%	13%

The population forecasts shown in **Table 1: Town of Essex Population Forecasts, 2016-2051** (Source: County of Essex/Watson & Associates) above show that under the Medium scenario, the lowest annual growth rate for the Town of Essex is 0.6%, which is significantly higher than the growth rate of 0.2 % from the previous 20-year census period<sup>1</sup>. Thus, while lower than the rest of the County, the Town can expect to see higher rates of population growth in the coming decades than it has historically experienced.

**Table 3** shows the household forecasts for the Town of Essex to 2051, including the Low, Medium, and High scenarios. The household forecasts show that under the Medium scenario the Town will need to accommodate an average of 77 new housing units per year to the 2051 horizon.

**Table 3: Town of Essex Household Forecasts, 2016-2051 (Source: County of Essex/Watson & Associates)**

Year	Low		Medium		High	
	Total Households	Annual Growth (Number of households)	Total Households	Annual Growth (Number of households)	Total Households	Annual Growth (Number of households)
2016	8,090	-	8,090	-	8,090	
2021	8,380	290	8,380	290	8,380	290
2026	8,730	350	8,800	420	8,850	470
2031	9,065	335	9,195	395	9,310	460
2036	9,395	330	9,605	410	9,780	470
2041	9,720	325	10,015	410	10,245	465
2046	10,010	290	10,400	385	10,690	445

<sup>1</sup> See the Growth Analysis Report (October 2022) prepared by Watson & Associates for Phase 1 of the County of Essex Official Plan Review. <https://www.countyofessex.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/Essex-County-Phase-1-CR--Growth-Analysis-Background-Report---Final-FINAL-ua.pdf>

2051	10,305	295	10,780	380	11,145	455
Average Annual Housing Growth		63		77		87
<b>Total Change 2016-2051</b>		<b>2,215</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,055</b>

In addition to population and household forecasts, the County has also produced employment forecasts, i.e., the number of jobs that the Town needs to accommodate to 2051. These forecasts are shown in **Table 4** and are subdivided into the following employment categories:

- > Primary: resource-related industries such as agriculture, mineral aggregate extraction, and fisheries;
- > Work at Home: people working for employers remotely, or self-employed home occupations;
- > Industrial: manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, etc.;
- > Commercial/Population Related: retail and other service industries, office employment;
- > Institutional: education, health, social services, cultural and religious services; and
- > No Fixed Place of Work: jobs that require the employee to be in different places (e.g., a delivery driver).

**Table 4: Town of Essex Employment Forecasts, 2016-2051 (Source: County of Essex/Watson & Associates)**

Year	Total Employment	Primary	Work at Home	Industrial	Commercial /Population Related	Institutional	No Fixed Place of Work
2016	<b>6,700</b>	100	500	1,300	2,300	1,400	1,000
2021	<b>6,800</b>	100	600	1,400	2,300	1,400	1,000
2026	<b>7,500</b>	400	600	1,500	2,400	1,500	1,100
2031	<b>8,300</b>	500	600	1,700	2,500	1,500	1,100
2036	<b>9,000</b>	700	700	1,800	2,600	1,600	1,100
2041	<b>9,600</b>	900	700	2,000	2,700	1,600	1,200
2046	<b>10,000</b>	1,000	700	2,100	2,800	1,600	1,200
2051	<b>10,500</b>	1,000	700	2,200	2,800	1,700	1,200

Only the total employment forecasts above will be included in the new OP but the breakdown of the forecasts by sector is helpful for planning for a diversified employment base in the Town. Specific policy directions on employment can be found in Section 4.1.5 of this report.

# 4 POLICY DIRECTIONS

This section summarizes policy directions that are recommended to respond to gaps and opportunities identified through the Background Research and Gaps Analysis (BRGA) Report, as well as consultation with Town Council, staff, the community, and stakeholders.

Section 2.1 provides high-level context for key issues within the various themes that have been identified for the new OP through previous project work. Section 2.2 builds on this summary and outlines detailed policy directions and changes for the various sections of the OP. Each issue in Section 2.2. will identify how the current OP approaches the issues, where a policy driver provides specific direction on the matter, and how the new OP policies may better reflect this direction or the current priorities for the Town.

## 4.1 Summary of Key Policy Areas

This section provides context and brief discussion of the key issues to be addressed in the new OP, as background and justification for the specific policy directions outlined in Section 4.2 of this report.

### 4.1.1 General/Housekeeping

#### Land Acknowledgement and Indigenous Consultation

As part of the responsibility of municipalities in Canada to contribute toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and acknowledgement of the traditional rights and territories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, current best practice in Ontario is to entrench that responsibility in land use planning practice. In the Town's new OP, this can be implemented by including a territorial/land acknowledgement at the forefront of the OP that acknowledges that the Town is located on the traditional territory of the Ojibway/Chippewa and that the Town is committed to a path of reconciliation and partnership with Indigenous peoples<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 1). There is also an opportunity to include policies in the implementation chapter of the new OP that spells out the context and approach for the Town's consultation and engagement with Indigenous peoples. For an example of such policies, see Section 4.1.1 of the BRGA report.

#### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The new OP provides an excellent opportunity to ensure that the Town's land-use planning decisions are in the best interest of all residents of and visitors to Essex, regardless of race or ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, abilities, or socio-economic status. Planning for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) can be done through the inclusion of policy in the new OP that requires that the Town consider the needs of underrepresented people when deciding on a planning matter. For example, this could mean ensuring that public meetings for planning applications are held in

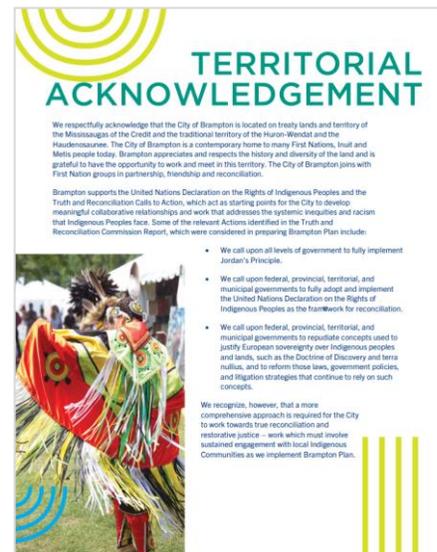


Figure 1: Example of a land/territorial acknowledgement from the City of Brampton's new OP (Source: City of Brampton/WSP)

<sup>2</sup> "Beyond territorial acknowledgements". āpihtawikosisān. September 23, 2016. <https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>

wheelchair-accessible spaces, or trying to locate affordable housing within easy walking distance of a grocery store.

### Accessibility Readability

As part of the commitment to DEI that can be taken in the Town’s new OP, the document itself should be as accessible and easy to read as possible. This means ensuring that the OP meets the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA), including reasonable font sizes, high contrasts of colour and shade, and other format considerations. Further, the new OP should follow current best practices, including but not limited to:

- Numbering all statutory policies and clearly distinguishing between them and non-statutory explanatory text;
- Breaking up text with images, infographics, and explanatory callout boxes;
- Including a list of definitions for key terms in the OP;
- Including a “How to Read this Plan” section at the beginning of the OP; and
- Ensuring that the digital version of the OP is easy to navigate on a computer or mobile device, using bookmarks and hyperlinks.

### 4.1.2 Housing and Complete Communities

In addition to managing growth, the Town’s new OP needs to provide clear direction on the amount and type of housing that will be planned for across the horizon of the OP. The provision of attainable and accessible housing is a critical issue facing all of Canada, and the Town of Essex is no exception.

#### Housing Supply

Section 1.4.1 directs that planning authorities must maintain at minimum a 15-year supply of land appropriate for residential development (first through intensification and then through greenfield development), and a three-year supply of land with servicing capacity for residential units. As with the certain growth management policy directions noted above, this identification of a residential land supply must be undertaken in concert with the County of Essex’s land needs assessment work. Nevertheless, in the interim, policies can be added to the new OP directing for the Town to maintain the 15-year and three-year supplies of land noted above.

#### Housing Mix

Section 1.1.1 of the PPS encourages municipalities to implement policy frameworks which allow for a wide variety of housing types to provide more affordable options for homes. Historically, the typical development scenario in the Town and Province-wide has been subdivisions of single-detached

### Complete Communities

“Complete communities” is a contemporary urban planning term that refers to settlement areas that have a density and mix of housing types and land uses, availability of services and jobs, and diversity of transportation options (especially walking and cycling) such that the basic needs of all residents are met, regardless of income level, age, gender, race, or any other defining demographic characteristic.

homes. This model, however, is rapidly becoming unsuitable for the changing needs of residents, due to several factors, including but not limited to:

- > Affordability – smaller unit sizes bring housing more in reach for lower-income households;
- > Age of resident – smaller unit sizes serve seniors who may be aging out of the need for large dwellings like single-detached, as well as young and/or single workers;
- > Sustainability – multiple dwelling types such as townhouses, multiplexes, small apartment buildings, or mixed-use buildings, are more energy efficient than single- or semi-detached dwellings;
- > Efficient use of land – the development of higher-density housing through a wider variety of unit sizes and housing types allows for the Town to accommodate more households within the same footprint, reducing outward pressure on the Town’s settlement area boundaries.

A more diverse housing supply throughout the Town would provide households with more options in terms of size, location, and affordability. It also facilitates the development of more socially diverse and inclusive neighbourhoods where families, seniors, persons living alone, people with disabilities, and other household types have options and can stay in their own communities even as their needs change.

Through the new OP, it is recommended that the Town expand housing policies to require that a specific proportion of new housing units in developments be dwelling types other than single- and semi-detached dwellings, such as townhouses, stacked townhouses, fourplexes, and multi-unit buildings. These policies can help address the problem of the “missing middle” (see **Figure 2**). The new OP should also strongly encourage mixed-use developments in the centres of settlement areas that feature apartment units in a range of sizes, and any existing OP policies that inhibit this kind of development should not be carried forward into the new OP.



Figure 2: Illustration showing the "missing middle" (Source: City of Vancouver)

### Additional Residential Units (Secondary Dwelling Units)

Further to adding to the variety of housing types in the Town, policies in the new OP can support the addition of “gentle density” to existing neighbourhoods through more permissions for additional residential units. Section 4.22 of the Town’s existing OP allows for additional residential units (called “secondary dwelling units” in the OP) in single- and semi-detached and townhouse dwellings, as well as in an accessory building. Updates to these policies will be required in the new OP to align with changes to the *Planning Act* made through the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23), which require municipalities to allow up to two additional units in a primary single-, semi-detached, or townhouse dwelling in serviced urban areas.

### Affordable Housing and Housing Tenure

In additions to the PPS’s requirement for municipalities to provide for a range of housing options and types, as noted above, Section 1.4 of the PPS also requires municipalities to provide for affordable housing. Section 4.2 of the Town’s existing OP contains policies related to affordable housing, notably, setting a goal of 20% of new housing stock being affordable. These policies should be carried forward into the Town’s new OP, and can be expanded upon by encouraging and supporting a wide range of tenures, including affordable ownership and rental, supportive/social housing, housing for seniors, and emergency shelters. Additionally, innovative housing tenure types, such as shared living and life-leases, can be supported, as can the location of affordable housing nearby community hubs, schools, and activities.

One of the most effective ways to achieve affordability of housing is by ensuring that a strong rental market exists in the Town. This can be supported in the OP by both encouraging the building of new rental units, but also by introducing more stringent criteria around the conversion or demolition of rental buildings.

#### 4.1.3 Responding to Climate Change

Climate change is one of the largest threats facing humanity, and must be addressed at every level of government. There are two ways to plan for climate change: mitigation and adaptation.

Mitigation of climate change requires a drastic reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions: the UN’s Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change has estimated that achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 will be required to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-Industrial levels. While much of the change required to achieve this goal needs to happen at a macro level (e.g., transitioning away from fossil fuel extraction), there are many areas in which municipalities are well-positioned to effect

### Additional Residential Units

“Additional residential units” is the term used by the Province of Ontario for dwelling units which are subsidiary to the primary dwelling on a property, located either in the primary dwelling itself (e.g., a basement apartment) or in an accessory or ancillary building.

### Life Lease Housing

Life lease housing is a type of tenure wherein a person purchases interest in a property that gives them right to live there for a period of time (usually for their lifetime). The buyer does not own the property, but does pay property taxes and maintenance fees.

Life lease housing developments are often built by non-profit or charitable organizations and offer a more affordable form of home ownership than freehold, particularly for seniors looking to downsize.

change<sup>3</sup>. This includes lowering energy consumption by creating compact and walkable communities, requiring or encouraging the use of sustainable building materials and techniques, and improving carbon uptake and storage by retaining and increasing forest and vegetation cover.

Adaptation to climate change involves planning for the impacts of climate change, including but not limited to the following:

- > Resiliency to natural disasters – as climate change worsens, the impacts of climate change will be felt through increased volatility of natural weather events, such as flooding and wildfires;
- > Food security – climate change impacts (e.g., increased temperatures or the migration of pests outside their historical habitat) may threaten the viability of the parts of the world where much of our food is grown. Maintaining the ability to produce a sufficient supply of food at a local level is imperative;
- > Migration – if climate change progresses to the point where certain parts of the world become uninhabitable, there may be a massive migration of people to more hospitable climates. The Town of Essex is located in an area that scientists believe would be more resilient to climate change than average, meaning that should this migration happen, the Town could expect to see in-migration far above what would be expected based on typical growth planning.

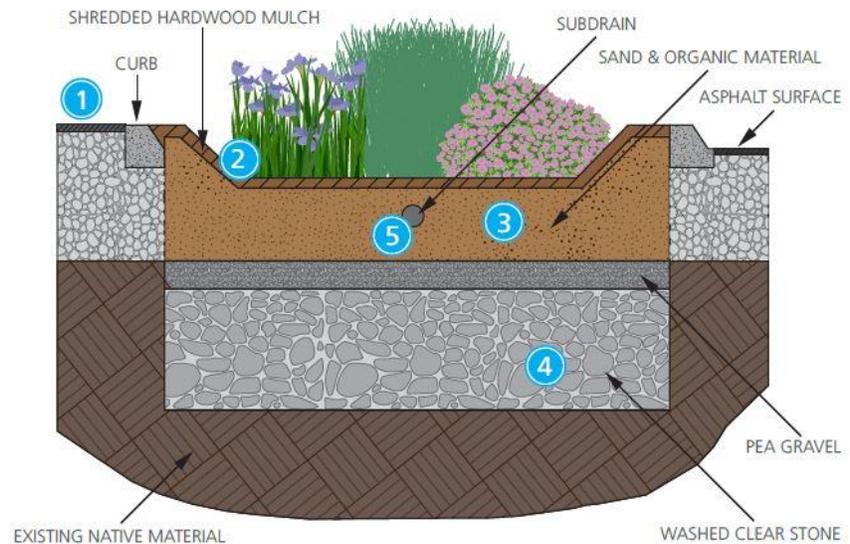
It is recommended to implement the following policy directions into the new OP to respond to climate change:

- > Acknowledging and committing to work toward the Canadian Federal government’s target of a 40% reduction of national GHG emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050;
- > Incorporating climate-related commitments made through the Town’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan committing to regular review and update of those commitments;
- > Implement policies around natural hazards that consider the impacts of climate change;
- > Introduce a Town-wide “climate lens” to the Implementation policies of the new OP that will apply to the review of planning applications, policy decisions, asset management planning, and maintenance of infrastructure. This should include requirements for low carbon in municipal procurement and construction practices to reduce GHG emissions;
- > Expand on green infrastructure policies in the Towns’ existing OP to more strongly encourage or require the provision of green infrastructure and low-impact development (see **Figure 3**);
- > Support the expansion and retention of the urban forest within the Town’s settlement areas; and
- > Strengthen policies supporting the expansion of active transportation opportunities in the Town, especially around the use of active transportation for daily life, not just recreation.

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<sup>3</sup> “The evidence is clear: the time for action is now. We can halve emissions by 2030.” Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change. April 4, 2022. <https://www.ipcc.ch/2022/04/04/ipcc-ar6-wgiii-pressrelease/>

**Figure 3: Cross-section of a rain garden in the municipal right-of-way as an alternative to a typical storm drain (Source: City of Hamilton)**



#### 4.1.4 Agriculture and Food

Agriculture is and will continue to be the largest economic driver and use of land in the Town. While the agriculture sector is well-established, there are many opportunities to implement policies in the new OP to further protect prime agricultural lands, support the continued viability and diversification of small-scale farming, and more specifically plan for specialized crops in the Town, such as grapes and tender fruits.

##### Agricultural System

Section 2.3 of the PPS encourages municipalities to utilize an **agricultural system** approach in their land use planning.

Policy 2.3.2 of the PPS further directs municipalities to designate prime agricultural areas and specialty crop areas according to Provincial guidance. Section 5.4 (Lands Designated “Agricultural”) of the Town’s existing OP acknowledges that all the agricultural land in the town is classified prime agricultural, and sets a goal of preserving prime agricultural land for agricultural purposes. There is, however, an opportunity to go further with the new OP through the following actions:

##### Agricultural System

As per the PPS, the agricultural system is made up of two components:

- a) A contiguous agricultural land base, made up of soils of varying capabilities for supporting crop growth; and
- b) The agri-food network, made up of all the supporting infrastructure and processes needed for a viable agri-food sector, such as transportation corridors, on-farm buildings, and processing, markets, and distribution.

- > Renaming the Agricultural land use designation as Prime Agricultural Areas;
- > Adding policies which specifically prioritize prime agricultural lands in order of Canada Land Inventory soil capability class, to enable more specific protection of the most viable agricultural lands in the Town; and
- > Creating a new Schedule exclusively for the agricultural system, showing CLI soil classes, specialty crop areas, and key aspects of the agri-food network (e.g., processing facilities, greenhouses).

More specifically delineating prime agricultural lands will provide a base for detailed planning for agricultural uses appropriate for those lands (see policy direction below on greenhouses).

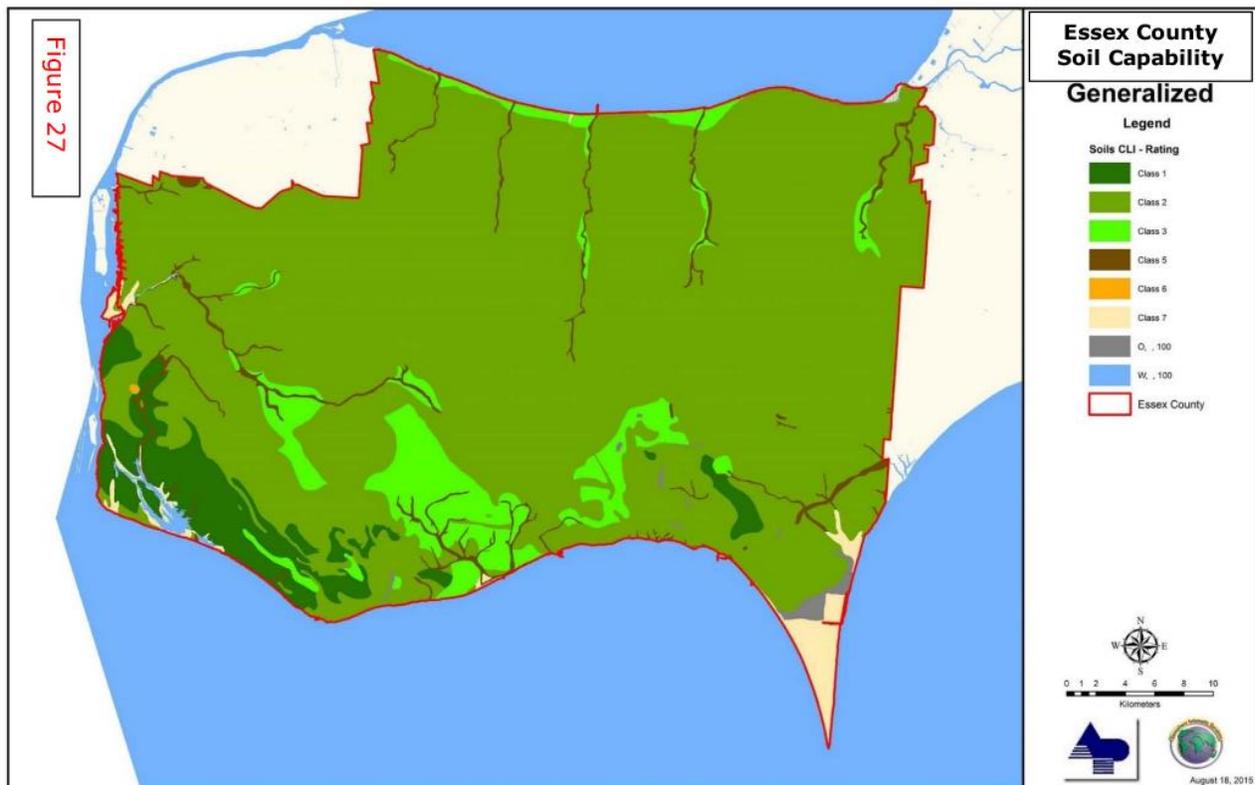


Figure 4: Map of soil capability in Essex (Source: County of Essex)

### Specialty Crops

As noted above, Policy 2.3.2 of the PPS directs that municipalities designate specialty crop areas, which the PPS defines as areas where tender fruits, grapes, fruits and vegetables (including greenhouse vegetables) and organic crops are predominantly grown, largely to due a combination of soil capability for those crops, farmers with skills in the production of those crops, and long-term investment of capital specifically to support the production, storage, and processing of those crops.

The Town of Essex is the site of a historically heavy concentration of grape and tender fruit production, and is the location of the highest number of wineries in Essex County. These uses are highly valuable for the Town, both in their uniqueness and the opportunity they offer for diversification and offshoot industries (e.g., winery tourism). The designation of specialty crop areas opens up several additional

policy options, most notably the prohibition of conversion of those areas to non-agricultural uses, even through a settlement boundary expansion.

### Greenhouse Industry

In the next thirty years, the greenhouse industry in Essex County is projected to grow by 15 million square metres of greenhouse development<sup>4</sup>. Most of this development will be occurring within the established greenhouse clusters in the Town of Kingsville and the Municipality of Leamington, but the Town of Essex is likely to see expansion as viable land in Kingsville and Leamington becomes harder to come by.

While technically an agricultural use, greenhouse growing has far different needs and land use impacts than typical crop or livestock production. Greenhouses are heavy users of water and energy, depending on the commodity being grown. This poses several potential issues for the Town: where greenhouses are established on municipal services, those services must be capable of supporting the greenhouse operation; where greenhouses are unserved, they draw on groundwater (subject to permission from the Provincial Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks), potentially threatening the health of underground aquifers; and greenhouses are large impermeable surfaces, potentially inhibiting the recharging of those same aquifers. Furthermore, the development of a greenhouse effectively negates the potential of the land it is built on for future non-greenhouse agricultural uses.

Thus, through the new OP, it is recommended that the Town delineate a specific policy approach for managing greenhouse development which guides greenhouses to the areas in the Town with the following attributes:

- Lands with Class 2 or Class 3 soils;
- Not within a Significant Groundwater Recharge Area or Highly Vulnerable Aquifer as delineated in ERCA mapping; and
- Served by a County Road.

### Agricultural Land Use Compatibility

Certain agricultural uses which create strong odours (e.g., livestock facilities) pose potential problems for compatibility with neighbouring uses. In order to mitigate the risk of nuisance complaints, the Province establishes certain distances between these uses through the PPS and the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document. The MDS document establishes formulae and guidelines for determining the required minimum distance, based on the intensity of the potentially odorous use (see Figure 5).

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<sup>4</sup> County of Essex Agricultural Lot Size Study. January 2017. [https://www.countyofessex.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/agricultural\\_lot\\_size\\_study.pdf](https://www.countyofessex.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/agricultural_lot_size_study.pdf)

Section 4.11 of the Town’s current OP outlines MDS requirements in great detail, however, these policies do not reflect changes made to the MDS formulae and guidelines by the Province in 2017. Thus it is recommended to carry forward these policies but update them to reflect the 2017 changes.

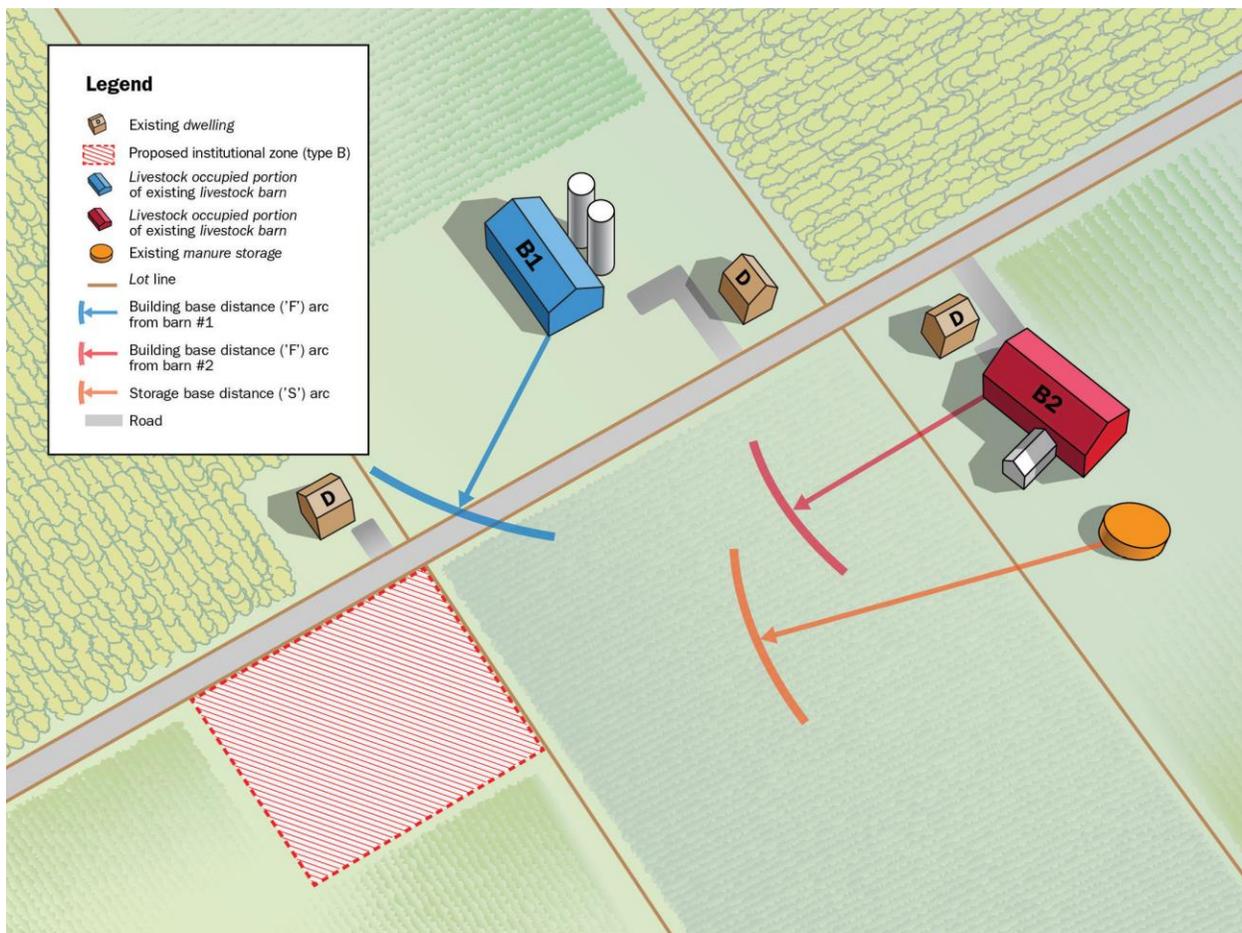


Figure 5: Example scenario for MDS requirements for a livestock operation (Source: Province of Ontario)

### Agriculture-related and On-farm Diversified Uses

Recent changes to the PPS have introduced a policy framework for increased flexibility of uses in agricultural areas, in order to respond to the changing landscape of farming in Ontario. As agricultural operations become larger and more commercialized, traditional smaller-scale farmers face increased competition and face pressure to sell their lands to larger operations or to speculators hoping to convert the lands to non-agricultural uses.

Allowing for a broader range of uses on farms supports the continued viability of agricultural uses and therefore adds protection for prime agricultural areas from conversion. Agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses support collaboration between nearby farms, support development of new and innovative farm products and can stimulate offshoot industries that strengthen the Town’s economy. Examples of both agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Examples of agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses (Source: Province of Ontario)**

Agriculture-Related Use	On-farm Diversified Use
Farmers' market selling products grown in the surrounding area	Value-added use (e.g. packaging facility for products from the area)
Grain dryer for farm operations in the area	Home industry (e.g., sawmill, welding or woodworking shop, small manufacturing/fabrication shop)
Winery using grapes grown in the area	Café/small restaurant/retail shop
Farm equipment repair shop	Agri-tourism use (e.g., bed and breakfast, petting zoo, corn maze)

### Agri-tourism

Agri-tourism is a rapidly growing component of the agriculture sector and broader economy within the Town. The Town's Agri-tourism Development Strategy, completed in 2021, found that on-farm experiences and winery visits make up the large bulk of agri-tourism offerings in the Town, while gaps exist for fruit and vegetable self-picking, experiences in fruit orchards, and on-farm accommodations. The Strategy outlined several recommendations that should be implemented through the new OP

- Streamline the definition for agri-tourism in all of the Town's planning documents, using the definition found in the Colchester and County Road 50 Community Improvement Plan; and
- Ensure that policies in the OP and Town Zoning By-law provide a supportive and enabling framework for the growth of agri-tourism in the Town.

Section 5.4 of the Town's current OP permits agri-tourism uses in the context of on-farm diversified uses; however, it is recommended that in the new OP, a subsection is added with expanded policies related to the support of agri-tourism and its relationship to other land uses and economic development within the Town.

### 4.1.5 Employment and Industry

As noted in Section 1, the Town should expect to see industrial employment grow by approximately 800 jobs between 2021 and 2051, an increase of 57%. This growth rate is significantly higher than the overall County industrial employment increase of 36% over the same period. The Town's location in the geographic centre of the Windsor-Essex region and along Highway 3 positions the Town well to see development of employment uses which support both large-scale industrial growth in Windsor (through smaller secondary and tertiary industries) and the agricultural industry in the broader County.

#### Growth of Employment Areas

The existing land supply for industrial uses in the Town has been mostly absorbed. This means that an increase in industrial employment will require:

- > an expansion of the Town's settlement areas and/or the redesignation of agricultural lands outside settlement areas;
- > the redesignation of undeveloped non-employment lands within a settlement area (which would be difficult given the need for residential lands); or,

- > the redevelopment or intensification of existing employment lands.

The process of identifying new employment areas should be undertaken in coordination with the County, which has indicated through the early phases of its OPR that it is considering the delineating of one or two “Essex County Industrial Parks” that serve all seven local municipalities, rather than separate employment areas in each municipality. Through its new OP, it is recommended that the Town implement a policy approach for the identification of these areas.

### **Diversified Employment**

Section 1.3.1 of the PPS requires municipalities to plan for a diversified economic base. Section 4.2 (Planning Principles) of the Town’s current OP aspires to provide a broad range of employment uses, and within lands designated Industrial, a broad range of uses is indeed permitted, including innovative industries like research and development facilities. Notably, some commercial uses are also permitted (subject to a zoning by-law amendment) provided those uses do not negatively impact nearby industrial uses or their ability to expand. It is recommended that these policies be largely carried forward into the new OP, but that more restriction is put on commercial uses in employment/industrial lands to prevent encroachment.

### **Tourist and Creative Industries**

Beyond activities and uses typically requiring land in employment areas, the Town can support uses that build on the strength of the Town’s tourism industry. As noted in Section 4.1.4, much of the growth in tourism in the Town can be achieved through encouraging on-farm diversified uses and leveraging opportunities for agri-tourism, particularly related to wine production and fruit-growing. Along with agri-tourism, the new OP can support tourism by encouraging retail and mixed-uses in its settlement areas (particularly in Colchester and Harrow) that are directly linked to the agricultural industry. These uses could include but are not limited to farm-to-table restaurants; outlet stores for wineries; micro breweries and micro distilleries; and bicycle rental operations.

Beyond the direct-service tourism industry, the Town should implement policies in the new OP to support creative industries that can leverage the presence of vacationers in the Town. This could include permitting and encouraging venues for performing arts and art galleries, as well as allowing for home occupations and home industries such as art studios, woodworking, and sculpture shops.

### **Industrial Land Use Compatibility**

Industrial employment areas are often producers of noise, odours, vibrations, or other contaminants that could be of nuisance or even potentially dangerous to nearby sensitive land uses. In order to reduce or eliminate conflicts between major industrial uses and sensitive land uses, the PPS provides direction for the separation of these uses, supported by specific policy directions in the Province’s D-series environmental land use planning guides.

The Town's existing OP contains policy directing for the minimization of potential conflicts between industrial areas and sensitive land uses, but this should be expanded in the new OP to ensure that the direction of the PPS and D-series guidelines are being implemented.

### Sensitive Land Uses

Sensitive land uses are buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where users conducting routine activities at normal and reasonable times could expect to experience adverse affects from a nearby major industrial facility.

Examples of sensitive land uses include:

- > A residence;
- > A day-care centre or school; or
- > A health facility.

#### 4.1.6 Water and Natural Heritage

As per the direction of the PPS, the Town's OP must contain policies providing for the protection of natural heritage and water resources. The implementation of this protection at a policy level involves a complex set of interconnected policy direction, data, and mapping from the Province, County, and ERCA. The Town's current OP already contains strong policies related to natural heritage protection, and policies bringing the OP into conformity with the Essex Region Source Protection Plan, which should be carried forward in the Town's new OP. There is, however, an opportunity to update the delineation and mapping of the natural heritage system in the Town based on up-to-date data from ERCA, and to consolidate the various existing OP policies on natural heritage into one cohesive section in the new OP.

#### 4.1.7 Mobility, Parks, and Recreation

##### Parkland Dedication

Provisions in Sections 42 and 51.1 of the *Planning Act* allow for Ontario municipalities to require, through a by-law, the conveyance of a certain amount of land to the municipality for parkland from developments or plans of subdivision (or to provide cash-in-lieu of land). Section 8.10 of the Town's existing OP contains detailed policies on parkland dedication, but since the adoption of the existing OP, several changes have been made to the *Planning Act* that should be reflected in the new OP, particularly from the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23). These include, but are not limited to the following:

- > A change in the alternative conveyance rate from one hectare of parkland per 300 residential units to one hectare of parkland per 600 residential units;
- > The exemption not-for-profit housing, affordable housing, and attainable housing from parkland conveyance requirements; and
- > Increased restrictions on the use of funds collected from cash-in-lieu dedication.

## Active and Sustainable Transportation and Complete Streets

The PPS directs that municipalities should plan for safe, healthy public streets and spaces that encourage the use of active transportation (i.e. walking or cycling, with or without mobility aids) and foster social interaction. Sections 8.8.1 (Complete Streets) and 8.8.3 (Active Transportation Initiatives) of the Town's existing OP contain policies aimed at achieving the objectives above directed by the PPS, which should be carried forward in the new OP.

There is opportunity, however, to delineate an implementation approach for active transportation and complete streets initiatives that aligns with other transportation and infrastructure planning. For example, the new OP can dictate that a complete streets approach be used whenever a Town-owned street or road is slated for reconstruction or rehabilitation.

### Public Transit

As of the writing of this report, neither the Town of Essex nor the County of Essex operates any public transit services in the Town. The Municipality of Leamington provides a bus service between Leamington and Windsor which stops in Essex Centre three times in either direction from Monday to Friday, or twice in either direction on Saturdays.

This relative lack of public transit options for residents of the Town limits the mobility of those who do not have access to a car. While the provision of transit is outside the realm of land use planning, the Town's new OP can include policies which support the eventual provision of public transit. This can include committing to studying transit options in partnership with the County, other local municipalities in the County like Leamington, and the City of Windsor. It can also include planning for intensification in areas of the Town that are good candidates for transit service. Existing policies around public transit in section 8.8 of the Town's existing OP will be carried forward and expanded as necessary.

### 4.1.8 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

The Town of Essex has a rich and varied history: the lands on which the Town are located are within the traditional territories of the Ojibway/Chippewa peoples, and European settlement in the area can be dated back to the late eighteenth century. Looking to the future, the Town must balance the need for development, growth, and housing with the need to preserve and respect cultural heritage and archeological resources in the Town.

Section 4.5 of the Town's existing OP contains policies which dictate requirements around cultural heritage and archaeology in the Town, including criteria for designation and the process for



**Figure 6: Aerial view of a complete street concept for a small town main street (Source: Niagara Region)**

development and site alteration on properties with identified heritage or archaeological resources. There is, however, need to expand on these policies in several areas:

- >
- > The *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23) made several procedural changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* which should be considered in the new OP. This includes a limit on the time that a property can be listed on a heritage register without being designated, and the increase of the number of Provincial criteria that must be met for designation to two from one;
- > There are no policies in the existing OP that commit the Town to consulting Indigenous Peoples and considering their interests on relevant cultural heritage and archaeological resources, as required by section 2.6.5 of the PPS; and
- > Policies on adaptive re-use can help the Town and private owners find innovative new ways of using heritage buildings which no longer serve their original purpose (e.g., the Colchester Schoolhouse).

#### 4.1.9 Implementation and Administration

##### Community Benefits Charges

Through the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019* (Bill 108), the Province amended Section 37 of the *Planning Act* to remove height/density bonusing and replace it with the Community Benefits Charge (CBC). In addition to parkland dedication and development charges, CBCs are the other primary method municipalities in Ontario have to cover the costs that come with growth and development. The Town's new OP should policies enabling the use of CBCs and directing for the preparation of a Community Benefits Charge strategy and by-law.

##### Community Improvement Plans

Section 7 of the Town's existing OP contains detailed policies on community improvement in the Town's communities, including criteria for the selection of community improvement project areas (CIPAs), recommended areas for consideration for community improvement plans (CIPs), goals and objectives for any CIPs to be developed, and the eligible for which the Town can provide municipal grants or loans.

These community improvement policies can be carried forward largely intact into the Town's new OP, however it is recommended that they be expanded to include policies related to affordable housing. CIPs are becoming widely used in Ontario to support the building of affordable or attainable housing, e.g., through development charges deferrals or tax increment financing.

##### Delegation of Authority

Through the *Supporting People and Businesses Act, 2021* (Bill 13) the Province made several changes to the *Planning Act* allowing for municipalities to delegate (through a by-law) certain minor planning decisions from Council to a committee of council or an employee or officer of the municipality. Delegation of the following is permitted:

- > Removal of a holding symbol on a property under Section 36 of the *Planning Act*; and

- > Enactment of a temporary use by-law under Section 39.

In addition, through the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23), the Province made further changes to the *Planning Act* to allow for the delegation of the granting of a consent under Section 53 from Council to a committee of council, an officer of the municipality, or a committee of adjustment.

Should the Town wish to make use of any of these powers of delegation, policies in the new OP should enable and reflect this.



## 4.2 Recommended Policy Directions

Table 6: Recommended Policy Directions lists the recommended policy directions for the Town’s new OP.

Table 6: Recommended Policy Directions

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<b>General</b>			
<b>Indigenous Consultation</b>	<p>Section 1.2.2 of the PPS requires planning authorities to engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.</p> <p>Section 2.6.5 further states that planning authorities must engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.</p>	The Town’s existing OP does not include policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.	Incorporate policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.
<b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)</b>	Current best practice in OPs in Ontario is to ensure that issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are addressed both in the guiding principles goals, and objectives in an OP, but also in the planning process that the OP directs for.	The Town’s existing OP does not contain policies related to DEI.	Include policies in the introductory section of the Town’s new OP that commit to DEI, and incorporate an equity lens into the planning process, to ensure consideration of DEI in planning-related decisions by the Town.
<b>Accessibility and Readability</b>	The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Under the AODA, the government is responsible for creating accessibility standards that organizations must follow. Implementing and enforcing these standards will help us work together towards the goal of	Accessibility guidelines have been updated since the release of the Town’s existing OP.	Ensure the new Official Plan meets and considers AODA standards such as providing it in a suitable format, using reasonable font sizes, high contrast and other format considerations. This includes incorporating all new accessibility guidelines and requirements into a new Official Plan that is easy to read and interpret, and will allow for frequent and new users alike to navigate and find information easily.

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	making Ontario more accessible and inclusive by 2025.		
<b>Growth Management</b>			
<b>Growth Forecasts</b>	<p>Through the first phase of its OPR, the County of Essex has developed growth forecasts of population, housing, and employment to the horizon of 2051. These forecasts follow three different scenarios: Low, Medium and High.</p> <p>In order to be in conformity with the County's updated Official Plan, the Town's new OP must include these population, household, and employment growth forecasts.</p>	The Town's current OP contains growth forecasts which are now outdated.	<p>Implement the Medium scenario growth forecasts in the Town's new OP.</p> <p>Ensure that policies direct growth at a high level to settlement areas.</p>
<b>Housing and Complete Communities</b>			
<b>Housing Mix</b>	Section 1.1.1 of the PPS directs that municipalities should seek to provide a mix of different housing types to allow for more affordable options.	<p>Section 4.2.(b) (Planning Principles): "to provide a broad range of housing forms and tenure types, employment and leisure opportunities for the increasing population in sustainable, affordable and energy efficient manner"</p> <p>Section 4.22: "...It shall be the policy of this Plan that, where the level of municipal services and public facilities permit, a minimum of 20 percent of new housing stock will be in the form of affordable semi-detached, townhome and multiple dwellings or a combination thereof with a priority placed on housing for the homeless, elderly, low income groups and people with disabilities."</p>	<p>The new OP can build on policies in the existing OP to strengthen and clarify the intent of the Town regarding a mix of housing typologies. While the connection between affordable housing and housing type will be retained, policies related to housing mix and affordable housing will be separated from each other for clarity.</p> <p>The targeted proportion of housing types of a higher intensity than single-detached homes will be increased to 25%.</p>
<b>Housing Tenure</b>	Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes the need for the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including	Section 4.2.(b) (Planning Principles): "to provide a broad range of housing forms and tenure types, employment and leisure opportunities for the	Encourage and support the Town-wide provision of a full range of housing options including ownership and rental housing, social housing, housing for seniors, supportive

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	<p>affordable housing, as a Provincial interest.</p> <p>Section 1.4.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents. This includes all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>increasing population in sustainable, affordable and energy efficient manner”</p> <p>Section 4.22: “It shall be the policy of this Plan that, where the level of municipal services and public facilities permit, a minimum of 20 percent of new housing stock will be in the form of affordable semi-detached, townhome and multiple dwellings or a combination thereof with a priority placed on housing for the homeless, elderly, low income groups and people with disabilities”.</p>	<p>housing, emergency shelters for women and families, accessible housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities and other types of housing that meets the needs of the Town’s diverse population.</p>
<b>Accessible Housing</b>	<p>The Ontario Human Rights Code, and Supreme Court of Canada, has made it clear that society must be designed to include all people. Housing providers, and other responsible parties, including government, should use the principles of universal design when they are developing and constructing the physical features of housing, and when they are designing housing policies, programs, and procedures.</p> <p>Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> states that the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters is a Provincial interest.</p>	<p>Section 2.1: “to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society”.</p> <p>Section 5.7 – Provisions (d): “in general, development will be free of barriers to persons with disabilities and will permit movement by pedestrians and bicyclists, the elderly and persons with special needs in a safe and efficient manner”.</p> <p>Section 5.13: “to promote accessibility to public spaces and buildings by persons with disabilities”.</p>	<p>Ensure universal accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities in the development of design guidelines and standards for new residential development. This includes encouraging and prioritizing the development of accessible and supportive housing options for people with special needs in areas that have access to community services, amenities and health care.</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<p><b>Additional Residential Units (Secondary Dwelling Units)</b></p>	<p>Bill 23 amended the <i>Planning Act</i> as it relates to official plans, zoning by-laws and appeal rights regarding additional residential units (ARUs) with the intent of permitting up to three residential units on a parcel of urban residential land. This may be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– two residential units within the principal building plus one in an ancillary building; or</li> <li>– three residential units in a principal building provided there is no residential unit in an ancillary building.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, municipalities may not require more than one parking spot per residential unit, nor may they prescribe a minimum size per unit.</p> <p>Based on the definition of “urban parcel of residential land”, introduced by Bill 23, the above-noted provisions appear to apply only within settlement areas with municipal sewer and water services.</p> <p>Bill 23 exempts ARUs from development charges and parkland dedication rates, including for ARUs included within new residential buildings.</p>	<p>The current OP includes policies related to ‘Secondary Dwelling Units’. The Official Plan does not include updated terminology or provisions related to Bill 23.</p>	<p>Implement policies aimed at increasing the rental housing supply, including both, purpose-built rental and additional residential units. This includes policies that specify the conditions for permitted secondary units and ARUs, including affordable rental units.</p> <p>The new OP will need to implement the provisions of Bill 23 related to ARUs.</p>
<p><b>Affordable Housing</b></p>	<p>Section 1.2.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities should coordinate economic, environmental and social</p>	<p>The Town’s existing OP does not note the need for ensuring the proximity to community hubs, schools and activities to affordable housing.</p>	<p>Promote the location of affordable housing within the Town’s settlement areas in proximity to community hubs, schools and activities.</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	<p>planning considerations to support efficient and resilient communities.</p> <p>Section 1.1.1 further emphasizes the importance of ensuring that necessary public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.</p>		
	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a Provincial interest.</p>	<p>Section 4.2.(b) (Planning Principles): “to provide a broad range of housing forms and tenure types, employment and leisure opportunities for the increasing population in sustainable, affordable and energy efficient manner”</p>	<p>Implement a Town-wide policy to encourage less expensive housing including secondary units, microhomes, purpose-built rental housing and medium and high-density apartments in areas that are well served by local amenities including transit, schools and parks.</p>
	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a Provincial interest.</p>	<p>The Town’s existing OP does not contemplate the notion of shared living.</p>	<p>Support the practice of shared living, including various iterations of innovative housing arrangements, by adopting a new definition for “housing options” consistent with the PPS.</p>
	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a Provincial interest.</p>	<p>Section 3.2 – Provisions(j): “Council will promote the reuse of existing buildings, where feasible, and encourage a mix of uses”.</p>	<p>Encourage built and cultural resource conservation through adaptive re-use for affordable housing.</p>

**Responding to Climate Change**

<p><b>Climate Change Lens</b></p>	<p>Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> requires the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1.4 of the <i>Planning Act</i> requires efforts to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>Section 4.1.1(c)(xiv): “Meet Provincial objectives and goals under the Ontario Climate Change Action Plan, Waste Free Ontario Act and such successive plans to improve agricultural resiliency and encourage carbon capture practices and to reduce waste, soil degradation, surface water contamination, air pollution, urban heat islands and greenhouse gas emissions”.</p>	<p>Implement a climate change lens in the review of development applications and infrastructure, to maximize resiliency of ecosystems and communities, manage the risks associated with climate change and provide sustainable natural environmental services for future generations. Considerations shall include, but are not limited, to climate change health impacts e.g., exposure to extreme heat; increase in vector-borne diseases, illness and injury from extreme rainfall events/flooding.</p>
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Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<b>Climate Change and Natural Hazards</b>	Section 3.1.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities must prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.	Section 4.1.1(c)(xiv): “Meet Provincial objectives and goals under the Ontario Climate Change Action Plan, Waste Free Ontario Act and such successive plans to improve agricultural resiliency and encourage carbon capture practices and to reduce waste, soil degradation, surface water contamination, air pollution, urban heat islands and greenhouse gas emissions”.	Implement policies that consider strategies to address the impacts of climate change on natural hazards.
<b>Sustainable Infrastructure Planning</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> notes the promotion of development should be designed to be sustainable as a Provincial interest.  Section 2.2.1 of the PPS states that planning for efficient and sustainable use of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality is a priority.	Sustainable infrastructure methods are not a component of the existing Town Official Plan.	Promote sustainable infrastructure for better water quality through water conservation and wastewater and stormwater management based on watershed principles part of new developments in the Town’s settlement areas. This includes integration of best practices to ensure tighter sewer systems that reduce infiltration and inflow into the sanitary systems.
<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	Section 1.6.2 of the PPS requires planning authorities to promote green infrastructure to complement infrastructure.	Section 4.1.1(c)(vi): “utilize green infrastructure, namely, the use of natural elements and features to enhance community livability, soil and water conservation and management, biodiversity and to help mitigate climate change”.	Implement sustainable urban design within the public realm, incorporating principles of green infrastructure where feasible.
<b>Urban Forest</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> requires the conservation and management of natural resources.  Section 1.8.1 of the PPS requires that municipalities prepare for and minimize the negative impacts to air quality and climate change and that planning authorities should maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.	Section 4.10: “It is the policy of this Plan to encourage restoration and tree planting”.	Promote sustainable growing environments for trees in urbanized areas by allocating adequate soil volumes and landscaped area through development, redevelopment, site alteration and infrastructure.

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<b>Agriculture and Food</b>			
<b>Land Use Compatibility</b>	The Province of Ontario implements the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document which provides formulae and guidelines for livestock facility and anaerobic digester odour setbacks.	The Town's existing OP includes the requirement for Minimum Distance Separation Formulae in Section 4.11.	Review and confirm the application of MDS to on-farm diversified and agriculture-related uses.
<b>Prime Agricultural Lands</b>	<p>Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> requires the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province.</p> <p>Section 2.3.1 of the PPS, 2020 states that prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.</p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) developed the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas, 2016. The Town's new Official Plan will need to consider these Guidelines as a large portion of the Town's land is comprised of prime agricultural areas.</p>	<p>Essex County is recognized as one of the most active agricultural areas in Ontario with 90% of the agricultural lands falling within the Province's definition of prime agricultural areas.</p> <p>Section 4.2(g): "to protect prime agricultural areas for agricultural, agricultural-related and supportive land uses".</p> <p>Section 5.4: "It is acknowledged that all of the agricultural land in the Town of Essex is classified prime agricultural."</p>	<p>Update policies related to the protection of prime agricultural lands consistent with Provincial policies.</p> <p>Add policies and supporting mapping prioritizing the protection of agricultural land</p>
	The CLI Soil Capability Classification system shows the Town of Essex as having a high concentration of Class 1, 2, and 3 soils within its boundaries, which are defined by the PPS as prime agricultural lands.	Section 2.1: "The Plan's purpose is...a) to ensure that prime agricultural lands, being Class 1, 2 and 3 soils, as established by the Canada Land Inventory, and specialty crop lands, are preserved and protected for agricultural use in areas designated 'Agricultural'..."	Establish policies further prioritizing Class 1 lands over Class 2 lands, Class 2 lands over Class 3 lands, etc. and delineate CLI soil classes on a new Schedule, as well as specialty crop areas.

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	<p>Section 2.3.1 of the PPS directs that municipalities should protect prime agricultural lands in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialty crop areas;</li> <li>• Class 1, 2, and 3 lands; and</li> <li>• Class 4 through 7 lands.</li> </ul>		
<b>Specialty Crop Areas</b>	<p>The PPS defines Specialty Crop Areas as “areas designated using guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time. In these areas, specialty crops are predominantly grown such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil, usually resulting from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;</li> <li>b) farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and</li> <li>c) a long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, infrastructure and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.</li> </ol> <p>The Province allows for the designation of specialty crop areas through municipal OPs through an Official Plan Review, and</p>	<p>The Town’s existing OP does not include policies or designations for Specialty Crop Areas.</p>	<p>The Town’s new OP should include a new Specialty Crop Area designation and accompanying policies.</p> <p>Identification of Specialty Crop Areas for the purpose of designation will require consultation with the County and the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, and may require agricultural studies. This is outside the scope of the new Official Plan project.</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	guidance from the Province specifically lists the tender fruit- and grape-growing areas in Essex County as historically-recognizes specialty crop areas.		
<b>Agri-tourism</b>	Section 1.1.4 of the PPS states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets.	Section 4.2(f): “to maintain and attract manufacturing and agricultural and agri-tourism activities that can provide employment opportunities to existing and future residents”.	Promote countryside tourism and agri-tourism opportunities that build on agricultural and/or natural heritage assets, while also protecting the integrity of these assets. This includes agricultural fairs, farmers markets and events.
<b>Rural Uses</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> requires the conservation and management of natural resources.  Section 1.5.1 of the PPS state the need to recognize Provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.	Section 5.3 – Policies (a): “the extent and diversity of natural features in an area and the natural connections between them should be preserved and, wherever possible, enhanced.”	Incorporate policies that maintain significant and productive rural areas to recognize the important role of the lands for agricultural uses, food production, rural uses, and in providing open space connections between natural areas for habitats.
<b>Agriculture-related and On-farm Diversified Uses</b>	Consistent with “Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas” per the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. us  Ensure consistency with updated Provincial policy definitions.	Section 5.4 of the Town’s existing OP contains policies guiding agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses.	Carry forward agriculture-related and on-farm diversified use policies in the new Town OP and ensure that they are up to date with the most recent version of the Provincial Guidelines.
<b>Agri-food Network</b>	Section 2.3.2 of the PPS states that planning authorities are encouraged to use an agricultural system approach to maintain and enhance the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network.	Section 4.1.1 – A Sustainable and Resilient Community (c)(ix): “increase access to healthy foods and improves the community scale local food infrastructure and related services”.	Policies should support opportunities for local food, urban and near-urban agriculture, and promote the sustainability of agricultural, agri-food and agri-product businesses through protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts.

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<b>Community and Urban Agriculture</b>	Section 1.7.1 of the PPS emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities to support local food.	The Town's existing OP does not put forth the notion of promoting community gardens and local food markets to promote access to local food.	Promote the use of community gardens, local farmers market and urban agriculture to support access to community involvement in producing and consuming local food.
<b>Employment and Industry</b>			
<b>Diversified Employment</b>	Section 1.3.1 of the PPS states that the Town must provide opportunities for a diversified economic base.	Section 4.2(b): "to provide a broad range of ... employment".  Section 5.16 permits a broad range of uses in Industrial areas, including innovative uses beyond traditional manufacturing and warehousing uses, such as research and product testing. Certain commercial uses are also permitted subject to restrictions.	Establish policies directed to attract a diverse labour force to accommodate the Town's businesses by ensuring a range of housing options, human and social services, cultural opportunities and parks and open spaces are provided.
<b>Employment Area Standards</b>	Section 1.1.1 of the PPS requires implementing standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs. At the time of an Official Plan Review, the Town is required to assess employment areas identified in local official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of the employment area.	The Town's Official Plan does not include policies to minimize land consumption and servicing costs related to employment areas.	Update employment area standards, including land use permissions and requirements for minimalizing land consumption and servicing costs.
<b>Brownfield Sites</b>	Section 1.7 of the PPS identifies promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites as key to the long-term prosperity of Ontario.	Section 4.21: "While no specific inventory of brownfield sites has been undertaken by the Town, it is generally known that such sites that do exist are scattered and of small size. As time permits the Town will undertake a formal inventory of brownfield sites, determine site condition and what remedial actions will be required and what are the potential redevelopment options within the land use designation they are situated. Such studies may also be undertaken as part of a Community	Encourage and support the remediation and reuse of contaminated lands and brownfield sites in employment areas

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
		Improvement Program initiative or through OPA/site specific rezoning."	
<b>Creative Industries</b>	Section 1.3.1 of the PPS states that the Town must provide opportunities for a diversified economic base.	This is not currently addressed in the Town's existing OP.	Promote creative industries as a key economic sector.
<b>Tourism Industries</b>	<p>Section 1.7.1 of the PPS states that providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development is key to long-term economic prosperity. Furthermore,</p> <p>Section 1.1.5.3 of the PPS emphasizes that recreational, tourism and other economic opportunities should be promoted in rural areas.</p>	Section 4.1(a): "Promote year-round tourism-related activities to create a sustainable tourism industry and support commercial businesses which cater to tourism activities. Recreational opportunities for skiing, ice-fishing, and skating, among others, should be considered".	Include policies that support and promote tourism and cultural attractions to enhance the quality of life for Town residents, from day-to-day activities to major events that are supported by local businesses.
<b>Employment Land Conversions</b>	Section 1.3.2.1 of the PPS details that planning authorities must plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.	The Town's Official Plan does not include employment conversion policies.	Implement employment land conversion policies and criteria to ensure sustained protection of employment lands.
<b>Land Use Compatibility</b>	The PPS defines "sensitive land uses" as buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby major facility. Sensitive land uses may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.	Section 3.5: "Careful attention must be paid to the development of industrial areas with good access and transportation links, appropriate sanitary sewage, stormwater, and potable water services, while minimizing potential conflicts with sensitive land uses and commercial areas".	Implement stringent and innovative mitigation options related to the protection of sensitive land uses.

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	<p>Section 1.2.6.1 of the PPS states that sensitive land uses must be planned and developed to avoid, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety.</p> <p>The policies of the PPS around land use compatibility are supported by the Provincial D-series Environmental land use planning guidelines, which provide specific direction and requirements for industrial land use, sensitive lands, sewage and water services, and private wells.</p>		
<b>Water and Natural Heritage</b>			
<b>Source Protection</b>	<p>The Essex Region Source Protection Plan identifies four different types of vulnerable areas that affect drinking water quality including:</p> <p>Highly Vulnerable Aquifers (HVA), which are areas underground that are highly saturated with water – enough water that it can be drawn for human use; and</p> <p>Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas (SGRA), which are areas on the landscape that are characterized by porous soils, such as sand or gravel, that allows the water to seep easily into the ground and flow to an aquifer.</p> <p>Intake Protection Zones (IPZ), which are the areas on the water and land</p>	<p>OPA 6 to the Town’s existing OP, adopted in 2017, added policies to bring the OP into conformity with the Source Protection Plan</p>	<p>Carry forward Source Protection policies from existing OP</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	<p>surrounding a municipal surface water intake.</p> <p>Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA), which are not applicable in the Essex Region, as no municipal drinking water systems are supplied by groundwater.</p>		
<b>Natural Heritage</b>	<p>Section 2.1 of the PPS provides direction on the protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural heritage features, including when and how development is permitted in natural heritage areas.</p> <p>Conformity with the updated County OP will require alignment of Town mapping with the County's identified Natural Heritage system.</p>	<p>The Town's current OP addresses natural heritage features in the Town through a Natural Heritage Overlay, and the Natural Environment and Wetland designations. These sections contain robust policies on permitted development within and protection of natural heritage features.</p>	<p>Update Natural Heritage system mapping based on data from ERCA and the Province, in the interim of the County's OPR.</p> <p>Carry forward existing OP policies on natural heritage and consolidate and strengthen where appropriate.</p>
<b>Mobility, Parks, and Recreation</b>			
<b>Active and Sustainable Transportation</b>	<p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.</p> <p>Section 1.8.1 further notes that the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas should be promoted.</p>	<p>Section 8.8.3 contains policies around active transportation, in particular a commitment to both on-road and off-road facilities, and directing that the town may require as a condition of development the conveyance of land for a multi-use trail.</p> <p>Section 8.8.1 commits the Town to the development of complete streets and outlines goals and objectives for complete streets.</p>	<p>Carry forward policies that support and enhance green, sustainable and active forms of mobility.</p> <p>Expand policies around complete streets to direct for an implementation approach that aligns with planning for road and street re-construction.</p>
<b>Parkland Dedication</b>	<p>Sections 42 and 51.1 of the <i>Planning Act</i> outline the provisions under which</p>	<p>Section 8.10 contains policies outlining the Town's parkland dedication framework, but requires</p>	<p>Carry forward and update parkland dedication policies in line with ss. 42 and 51.1 of the <i>Planning Act</i>.</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
	<p>municipalities can require land to be conveyed and dedicated for parkland from new development or redevelopment.</p> <p>Parkland dedication/conveyance is implemented through a municipal by-law; however OP policies must enable the framework.</p>	<p>updating to align with recent changes to the <i>Planning Act</i>.</p>	
<b>Cultural Heritage and Archaeology</b>			
<b>Demolition of Heritage Properties</b>	<p>Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> states as a Provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.</p> <p>Section 2.6.2 of the PPS states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved.</p> <p>Section 2.6.3 further states that planning authorities must not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.</p>	<p>The Town's existing OP does not have a process for discouraging demolition for properties not designated under the <i>Heritage Act</i>.</p>	<p>Discourage the demolition, destruction or inappropriate alteration or reuse of cultural heritage resource.</p>

Issue	Context/Policy Drivers	Existing OP Policy Characterization	Policy Direction
<b>Indigenous Consultation</b>	Section 2.5.6 of the PPS states that planning authorities must engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.	The Town's existing OP does not note policies regarding the role of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage.	Incorporate Town-wide policies directing that Council consider the interests of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.
<b>Heritage Streetscapes</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> states as a Provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.  Section 1.7.1. of the PPS recognizes encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes, as important to long-term prosperity.	Section 4.5: "Significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes will be identified, recognized and, where proper management of these resources is possible, efforts will be made to ensure their conservation".	Promote heritage streetscapes as important economic assets in Harrow and Essex Centre.
<b>Adaptive Re-use</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> states as a Provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.	The Town's existing OP does not include policies for adaptive re-use of cultural heritage resources.	Encourage the preservation of cultural heritage resources through the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and structures.
<b>Heritage Impact Statements</b>	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> states as a Provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.	Section 9.15 – Supporting Studies (b): "Built Heritage Impact Study to analyze the impact of the proposed development on designated or identified heritage resources and set out mitigative or alternative development approaches".	Enhance policies to require the completion of a Heritage Impact Statement for any development that has the potential to impact a cultural heritage resource.
<b>Planning Administration, Implementation and Interpretation</b>			
<b>Community Benefits Charges</b>	Section 37 of the <i>Planning Act</i> was amended in 2019 to replace height and	Section 6.4 of the Town's existing OP contains policy around density bonusing.	The Town's new OP should contain policies enabling the use of CBCs.

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	<p>density bonusing provisions with a new Community Benefits Charge (CBC) framework.</p> <p>O. Reg. 509/20 under the <i>Planning Act</i> contains additional direction for the implementation of CBCs.</p>		
<b>Community Improvement Plans</b>	<p>Section 1.4.3 of the PPS requires municipalities to plan for a variety of housing options, including affordable housing.</p> <p>Many municipalities are choosing to use community improvement plans (CIPs) to provide incentives, loans, and grants for the development of affordable housing.</p>	The Town's existing OP does not include affordable housing within the purview of CIPs.	Carry over community improvement policies from the Town's existing OP to the new OP but add policies that enable the use of a CIP for affordable housing incentives.
<b>Definitions</b>	The PPS and other Provincial documents include updated and/or new definitions.	The Town's existing OP does not include definitions.	A review of the definitions should be undertaken to ensure that they are clear, contemporary, contain accessible language and are in conformity with Provincial legislation and the Regional Official Plan. A substantial number of new definitions will also be added to the Official Plan.

# 5 NEXT STEPS

Following the completion of this report, the project will move into **Phase 4** with the drafting of the Town's new OP. This will include:

- > Drafting policies for the new OP;
- > Drafting maps and schedules for the new OP;
- > A Council workshop to present the first draft new OP to Town Council and receive feedback;
- > A statutory Public Open House to present the second draft OP to the public and receive feedback;
- > A statutory Public Meeting of Council to allow for debate on the new OP and for members of the public to make formal comments on the new OP; and
- > The final new OP, with any revisions required by Council following the Public Meeting, which will be presented to Council for adoption.