

TOWN OF Tecumseh

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Tecumseh New Official Plan Process

Housing and Residential Intensification Discussion Paper

March 2015




Prepared By:
Planning and Building Services Department
Town of Tecumseh

This report has been reviewed by senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the CAO.

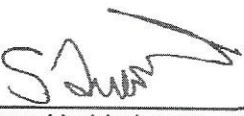
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Attachment(s): 1. Tecumseh New Official Plan Process, Housing and Residential
Intensification Discussion Paper, March 2015

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Report 04-15 - Council Receipt of Housing and Residential Intensification Discussion Paper, March 2015.docx)

Implementation and annual reporting to the County on meeting this target will be the responsibility of the local municipalities.

The County will permit intensification and redevelopment within Secondary Settlement Areas to assist in meeting the target provided it occurs on full municipal sewage services and municipal water services.

Where possible, new development in older established areas of historic, architectural, or landscape value shall be encouraged to develop in a manner consistent with the overall character of these areas.



3.2.8 Affordable Housing

The County supports the provision of affordable housing for low and moderate income households through the following policies:

- a) **The County requires that each local municipality achieve a minimum affordable housing target of 20 percent of all new development.**
- b) Affordable housing should be focused within Primary Settlement Areas which offer residents easy access to existing services, facilities and infrastructure.
- c) The County encourages local municipalities to waive (in full or in part) municipal fees to encourage the development of affordable housing.
- d) The County encourages each local municipality to prepare a housing strategy that outlines opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing consistent with the Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan.
- e) The County discourages the demolition or conversion of affordable rental housing in order to maintain the rental housing stock.
- f) The County generally permits second dwelling units within all single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwelling units where a residential unit is not permitted in an ancillary structure to those house types on the property. If the principle residential dwelling on the property contains only a single residential unit, then an accessory structure may contain the second dwelling unit on the property.



Local municipal Official Plans and implementing Zoning By-law will contain detailed policies and provisions relating to second dwelling units which generally support their creation, including but not limited to the following:

- i) Areas of the municipality where second dwelling units would be inappropriate such as floodprone areas or areas with inadequate servicing.
- ii) Minimum unit size, access and parking requirements.

Council will work with both private and public sector developers, builders and agencies so that sufficient market-oriented and assisted housing is produced to meet the existing and anticipated future needs of family, senior and non-family households.

The forms of shelter and housing types that the town recognizes as being affordable, and which it will encourage to construct to ensure that at least 25 percent of all new dwelling units meets the provincial definition of affordable housing include:

(a) Low Density Single-Unit Detached Dwellings

- on conventional lots (60' frontage) with a total floor area not exceeding 1,300 square feet;*
- on small lots (50' to 55' frontage) with a total floor area not exceeding 1,300 square feet;*

(b) Low Density Attached Dwellings

- single-unit attached dwelling units;*



(c) Medium Density Multi-Unit Dwellings

- individual dwelling units in a duplex/triplex dwelling;*
- low-rise ground-oriented townhouse and/or apartment buildings (1 to 3 stories in height);*



(d) High Density Multi-Unit Dwellings

- townhouse dwellings;*
- mid-rise apartment buildings (3 to 7 stories in height);*
- apartment units located as part of a mixed-use residential/commercial building.*

Affordable housing will be permitted in all areas designated for residential purposes, in accordance with the specific land use policies as set out in this plan.

Council does not consider the provision of affordable housing to be a requirement for each and every new residential development. Instead, the town will (through individual plan review/approval and the monitoring of residential development activity) encourage that at least 25 percent of the annual municipal housing target shall consist of dwelling units that are considered to be affordable in nature (as per the applicable provincial guidelines)."

St. Clair Beach OP

- "4.2.2 b) Council, in reviewing residential development proposals, will encourage the provision of a minimum of 25 percent of the units as affordable housing in the context of the Provincial Policy Statement on Housing. However, it is believed that affordable housing will have to be a medium density form because of the price of land in the Village.*

Accordingly, the Village will encourage more than 25 percent of medium density housing to be affordable housing so that 25 percent of all new housing, single and medium density, will be affordable. Affordable housing is encouraged to be distributed throughout the entire designation. A monitoring program, designed to review the municipality's annual residential development activity and to update its affordable housing policies, will be implemented to ensure that the intent of the Provincial Housing Statement is maintained."

Sandwich South OP

The policies pertaining to lands designated Medium Density Residential encourage the provision of sufficient residential land in order to satisfy future housing needs in terms of type, tenure, size location and cost, taking into account household size and income in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement, and are intended to provide for a wide range and mix of housing types. There are no affordable housing policies for lands designated Low Density Residential.

3.4.3 Residential Intensification

Tecumseh OP

"3.3.8 In the Town of Tecumseh, Council will encourage both public and private sector landowners, developers and builders to undertake small-scale infilling type residential intensification activities that make the most efficient and cost-effective use of existing municipal infrastructure and services. Infilling means the residential development of a similar scale, density and use on vacant lots or undeveloped lands in the built-up area of the municipality, to create additional dwelling units.

Council will also encourage owners of existing commercial buildings located in the core commercial area of the town to add second storey apartment units, in order to increase the supply of affordable rental accommodations for existing and future residents of the community.

When reviewing individual requests for residential intensification initiatives, Council will have regard to the following:

- *the height, size, and density of the new dwelling unit(s), and the compatibility of such unit(s) with the surrounding neighbourhood;*
- *the physical suitability of the site;*
- *the proximity of the site to public transit and commercial retail areas;*
- *access to and from the site;*
- *availability and proximity of community services such as community and day care centres, schools, parks, and leisure activities, and health care services;*
- *adequacy of municipal infrastructure to service the new unit(s)."*

St. Clair Beach OP

The St. Clair Beach OP does not contain policies specifically addressing residential intensification but it does recognize the limited residential land supply and encourages the provision of medium density

★ residential housing on remaining undeveloped parcels. Criteria are established for reviewing the appropriateness of applications to amend the zoning by-law to permit medium density residential uses.

Sandwich South OP

The Sandwich South OP divides lands into Low Density and Medium Density designations. Within the Low Density designation, which is primarily in the Tecumseh Hamlet and accounts for the vast majority of lands currently designated for residential purposes, intensification is discouraged in the face of a policy that encourages large lots and low density development. The low density character of the existing developed areas of the Tecumseh Hamlet is protected through a special policy restriction that establishes a minimum lot area of 929 square metres (10,000 square feet) and a minimum lot frontage of 22.8 metres (75 feet). Accordingly, it has the effect of limiting infill lots to generally match the size/scale of those that currently exist.

Greenfield areas, located in the Manning Road Secondary Plan Area (MRSPA) are subject to the Low Density and Medium Density Residential Designation that permits new development to proceed at higher densities of 18 and 30 units per gross hectare, respectively. These are significantly higher densities than existing built-up area of the Tecumseh Hamlet which has developed at a density of approximately seven units per gross hectare. It should be noted that there is only a limited amount of land currently designated Medium Density (8 hectares or 20 acres) in the MRSPA and it is located adjacent the Sylvestre Industrial Park.

There are lands currently designated Hamlet Development within the Tecumseh Hamlet that are the subject of a Secondary Planning process currently being undertaken by the Town and scheduled to be completed in late 2015. The preliminary draft of the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan envisions these lands being developed in a mixed use, compact, transit-oriented, walkable fashion at a much higher density and with a greater mix and range of housing than the developed portion of the Hamlet.”

3.4.4 Policy Gaps

The current Official Plans, though permitting and encouraging some diversity in housing form and density, do not contain the breadth of policies related to intensification, density and affordability that is required by the PPS and the County OP.

Although intensification and affordability are encouraged to some degree in the current Official Plans, there are specific targets established in the County OP to which the Town's new Official Plan will have to conform. There are a number of policy options available to assist with meeting these objectives.

In accordance with the Planning Act, secondary units are now to be permitted as of right. There are currently no policies to address these types of units. Areas for their inclusion will need to be identified and guidelines established to guide their development.

The following section discusses these issues in greater detail and provides possible policy approaches for each.

important planning objectives in the PPS. The PPS defines residential intensification as a net increase in residential units or accommodation within a given property, site or area and includes:

- a) redevelopment, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
- b) the development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c) infill development;
- d) the conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial and institutional buildings for residential use; and
- e) the conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation, including accessory apartments, secondary suites and rooming houses.

Residential infill and intensification are currently encouraged to varying degrees within the policy environment of the three existing Official Plans for the Town. While the current policies provide some recognition and direction, they do not adequately reflect **the elevated level of importance that the new PPS and County OP applies to residential infill and intensification.**

An increased level of infill and intensification activity can raise concerns about impact on the character and stability of existing neighbourhoods. It is therefore important to ensure that this type of development is **sensitive to the surrounding land use pattern** and that potential issues arising from infill and intensification activity such as increased density, traffic, parking, privacy, noise, streetscape design and related matters are addressed. Appropriate policies and guidelines will be needed to ensure that residential intensification occurs in suitable locations and the standard of residential amenity of the area is maintained or enhanced.

The intensity of land use relates to the density of dwelling units that is achieved on an individual property or over a community as a whole, as well as the mix of housing types that are accommodated. Housing types considered to be low density are single unit detached and semi-detached dwellings. Medium density housing includes low-rise multi-residential housing types such as townhouses while high density includes apartments and other multi-unit residential housing forms.

One of the ways to create **vibrant, compact and complete communities**, which utilize resources and infrastructure efficiently is through intensification. These communities are envisioned to be a collection of inter-connected attractive, healthy and safe neighbourhoods which sustain mixed use nodes that will reduce reliance on the automobile by locating the majority of homes, jobs, shops, institutions and services in close proximity.

Intensification efforts must consider how development **fits within and enriches the existing context**, not only the increase in total dwelling units. The primary objective of urban design is to guide built form and the space between buildings and to influence and enhance the quality and character of the public realm. Attempting to meet the intensification targets established by the County of Essex and the Town through tall buildings exclusively is neither a suitable nor desirable solution.

Good urban form is composed of many building types with a range in both size and character of public spaces. Appropriate intensification involving a variety of building typologies that embrace a **human scale** is needed. New development should **respect the local context and contribute to it** in a positive way. There are numerous ways to configure the same density on a site, with a wide range of building types and height – towers, townhouses, single unit detached and so on. Creating human places that

assist in meeting intensification targets will add to a **sense of place** that is specific to and appropriate for Tecumseh.

Achieving intensification will also require a commitment to improve the **quality and frequency of transit services** and a corresponding commitment from the Province to fund transit infrastructure. At low densities, transit services – if they are available – operate with very low ridership levels and at low frequencies (note: it is primarily for this reason that the Tecumseh Transit does not serve the Tecumseh Hamlet). Accordingly, they require high subsidies to operate.

Both service frequency and ridership levels are tied to the number of people that live and/or work within easy access to transit stops – **the lower the densities the less effective the transit service**. Studies have shown that even standard bus operation with 15-minute service require at least 37 units per hectare along the route, while rail based rapid transit requires even higher densities over a wider area with high concentrations within a 10-minute walking radius of the station.

The Town of Tecumseh has significant amounts of Greenfield land available for residential development. Nevertheless, efforts will need to be made to ensure a portion of residential development takes place in the form of intensification. The more densely these develop, the longer the Town's Greenfield lands will be available to accommodate the projected population growth without the need to further extend expensive infrastructure and expand the Town's urban boundaries into valuable farmland and natural heritage resource areas.

The County of Essex OP establishes an **intensification target of 15 percent** of all new development for each lower-tier municipality but recognizes that not all areas may be suitable for intensification and different locations can sustain varying scales of density.

★ In general, intensification efforts should be **focused in areas** that: have existing **municipal services** with residual capacity; are close proximity to **shopping and employment areas**; are in close proximity to **transit routes**; are within **walking distance to schools**; can accommodate **greater density** while respecting the **character of the surrounding area**. ★

The Town has a number of characteristics that will constrain where and what type of intensification can take place. For example,

- ★ • Existing infrastructure capacity, especially in older neighbourhoods, may not be able to manage significant increased growth without upgrades; ★
- ★ • Constrained site access, limited community services, existing adjacent uses, and uncertain market response may provide complexity for certain sites to redevelop in the near future; ★
- Fragmented ownership makes it difficult to consolidate lands necessary to make a development project feasible (e.g. this is an issue along the Tecumseh Road corridor in the traditional main street area).

The exploration of where intensification should occur, and how much density should be attributed to various sites, will form an important aspect of the intensification analysis. This analysis will be based on appropriate criteria for determining the reasonable capacity of sites to accommodate various