
**Provided on behalf of the Public School Boards:
Greater Essex County District School Board & Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board**

September 19, 2024

Robert Auger
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Electronic Copy

**Re: School Board Comments
Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan Area**

Dear Robert Auger,

On behalf of the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) and the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board (WECDSB), we acknowledge receipt of the proposed official plan amendment to incorporate the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan (THSP) land designations within the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan Area (THSPA), dated August 29, 2024.

The buildout of the THSPA is expected to include approximately 4,300 units, which will significantly impact school enrolment in the area. In response to these proposed amendments, we submit the following comments for consideration:

General Comments:

The boards support the designation of schools as **5. Community Facility** sites within the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan (THSP), particularly the policies promoting the co-location of schools with parks and other public amenities. This approach aligns with the boards' shared objectives of compatibility with surrounding land uses and fostering multi-use spaces that serve both educational and community functions.

We note that **Policy 5.4.2(ii)**, which encourages schools to be utilized as multipurpose facilities for leisure, recreational, educational, and community-sponsored events, complements both boards' established **permit processes** for allowing community use of school facilities outside of regular hours. These processes enable the broader community to benefit from school spaces during off-school times, further supporting the vision of schools as central community hubs.

The boards support **Policy 5.4.2(iii)**, which encourages **joint-use agreements** between the Town, public agencies, boards, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders. Both boards are open to collaborating with the Town in exploring and implementing these agreements to enhance the well-being and enrichment of the Tecumseh community.

The boards support the **6.3 Open Space Framework** policies outlined in the plan, particularly the emphasis on enhancing active transportation connections. Co-locating schools with open spaces will leverage these connections, providing valuable recreational areas for students and serve as natural extensions of school grounds, thereby enriching opportunities for physical education and extracurricular activities. Both boards are committed to working closely with the Town to ensure that parks, trails, and green spaces are seamlessly integrated with school facilities, fostering a cohesive and accessible environment that benefits students and the wider community.

The boards support the **6.4 Movement Framework** policies, particularly the emphasis on safety features such as clearly marked crosswalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and separated cycling lanes. These measures are essential in reducing conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, enhancing safety for all road users, especially in areas around current and future school sites. The integration of these networks with adjacent parks and community amenities further strengthens the role of schools as community hubs, providing students with safe, accessible routes to outdoor spaces and reinforcing active transportation options.

The school boards support the focus on active transportation as outlined in **Schedules H-13 and H-14**. The well-planned pedestrian and cycling networks provide critical connections between residential areas, existing schools, and community facilities, ensuring safe and accessible routes for students and staff. The inclusion of mid-block pedestrian connections, multi-use trails, and dedicated cycling lanes aligns with the boards' priority to promote pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and encourage active modes of transportation for students.

The school boards support the **8.3 Development Phasing** policies of the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Plan. The clear alignment of development phasing with the delivery of essential municipal infrastructure – such as water, wastewater, and stormwater services – is crucial for ensuring that school sites can be developed in tandem with new residential areas.

We acknowledge that while **Policy 8.3(ii)(c)** recommends a north-to-south development phasing pattern, **Policy 8.3(iv)** has been thoughtfully included to allow for the flexibility of school development to proceed at any time, provided that servicing infrastructure and other municipal requirements are met. This flexibility is crucial to ensuring that schools can be delivered in a timely manner to meet the needs of growing communities. We commend the plan's commitment to supporting all phases of development with the necessary community infrastructure, including schools, to ensure the educational needs of the population are adequately addressed.

Additionally, the phasing strategy outlined in **Section 8.3(v)**, which requires school boards to confirm their capacity to accommodate student needs before the approval of development applications, aligns well with the boards' long-term planning objectives. This approach will help ensure that educational facilities are appropriately timed and available as new residential communities are established. We believe this coordination is key to maintaining the quality of education for future generations.

Greater Essex County District School Board:

The THSPA falls within the current attendance boundaries of:

- Tecumseh Vista Academy Elementary School (JK-8)
- Tecumseh Vista Academy High School (9-12)

Tecumseh Vista Elementary School currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the existing student population. However, with the full buildout of both the Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary which encompasses both the THSPA and the Manning Road Secondary Plan Area (MRSPA), Tecumseh Vista Academy Elementary is anticipated to be oversubscribed.

At the secondary level, Tecumseh Vista Academy High School has adequate capacity to accommodate students from both the THSPA and MRSPA. This can be achieved through either temporary accommodation or on-site capital improvements, as required.

Based on projected demand from the proposed residential developments in Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary, the GECDSB anticipates the need for two (2) additional elementary school sites – one (1) within the THSPA and one (1) within the MRSPA – to accommodate the full buildout of the Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary.

Windsor Essex Catholic District School:

The THSPA falls within the current attendance boundaries of:

- St. Peter Catholic Elementary School (JK-8)
- St. Anne Catholic High School (9-12)

St. Peter Catholic Elementary currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the existing student population. However, with the full buildout of both the THSPA and MRSPA, St. Peter is anticipated to be oversubscribed.

At the secondary level, St. Anne Catholic High School has adequate capacity to accommodate students from both the THSPA and MRSPA. This can be managed through either temporary accommodation or on-site capital improvements, as needed.

Based on projected demand from the proposed residential developments in Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary, the WECDSB anticipates the need for one (1) additional elementary school site, located within either the THSPA or MRSPA, to accommodate the full buildout of the Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary.

Site Selection Principles:

The selection of future school sites should be guided by the following key principles to ensure they effectively serve the community and support high-quality educational outcomes:

- **Infrastructure Access:** School sites must be strategically located to provide convenient access to essential infrastructure, including well-connected road networks, utilities, and public transportation. This will ensure safe and efficient access for students, staff, and the broader community.
- **Traffic Impact and Student Safety:** The selection and development of school sites must prioritize traffic safety and the efficient management of traffic flow. This includes the provision of well-designed drop-off and pick-up zones, clearly marked pedestrian crossings, and adequate parking facilities. School sites should be strategically located away from high-traffic-generating areas, such as entrances or exits to high- or mid-rise residential developments, commercial or industrial zones, or other schools, to ensure pedestrian safety and smooth traffic circulation.

Preference should be given to controlled intersections over roundabouts near school sites to enhance pedestrian safety, as controlled intersections are typically easier to staff with crossing guards. Additionally, measures should be implemented to mitigate traffic congestion in the surrounding areas, anticipating pick-up and drop-off patterns, to ensure a safe and accessible environment for students, staff, and the broader community.

- **Site Characteristics, Size, and Design:** Elementary school sites should ideally encompass 2.43 ha (6.0 ac) with a rectangular configuration and minimal cross-slope. The site should feature two road frontages, with at least one frontage measuring 140m or more, and be located proximal or adjacent to a collector road. The primary frontage should align with potential street intersections, and driveways should be carefully placed to avoid direct alignment with the school's main entrance. Sites must also be free from known encumbrances, such as environmental or cultural heritage constraints, and should not be subject to environmental hazards, including floodplains or unstable or hazardous soil conditions, which could hinder or delay construction.

Furthermore, school sites must be of sufficient size to accommodate all necessary facilities, such as playgrounds, sports fields, and green spaces. The site design should provide flexibility for future expansions and evolving educational needs. Where land assemblage is required, it should involve as few landowners as possible, ensuring that all parcels are made available within the same phase of development to avoid delays.

- **Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:** School sites should be compatible with adjacent land uses, such as residential, recreational, and community facilities, to ensure harmonious integration within the broader community. Ideally, school sites should be centrally located within planned developments to maximize walkability and be positioned adjacent to public parks or community facilities, such as libraries or other community facilities. Additionally, it is essential to avoid proximity to industrial zones or high-traffic areas to ensure a safe, conducive, and supportive environment for students and staff.

Ongoing Monitoring and Future Consultation:

We will continue to monitor development growth in the Tecumseh Hamlet Settlement Area Boundary which includes both the THSPA and MRSPA on behalf of both the GECDSB and WECDSB as it relates to the cumulative impact on local schools. The GECDSB and WECDSB also request notification of any modifications, community consultations, appeals, or notices of decision related to this secondary plan.

Please note that further to the comments provided, the GECDSB and WECDSB reserve the right to revise their position as needed without further notice. Should you require additional information regarding these comments, please contact.

Sincerely,



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