TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Chad Jeffery, MA, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Planning Services/Senior Planner
DATE: April 7, 2015
DATE TO COUNCIL: April 14, 2015
SUBJECT: Town of Tecumseh New Official Plan
Urban Design Discussion Paper, April 2015
OUR FILE: D08 TNOP

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Planning and Building Services Report No. 06/15 and the document attached thereto entitled “Tecumseh New Official Plan Process, Urban Design Discussion Paper, April 2015”, as prepared by the Planning and Building Services Department, be received; and


BACKGROUND

As part of the development of the Town’s new Official Plan, Council received and endorsed a report entitled “Tecumseh 2030, New Official Plan Process: Planning Context and Issues Report”. That report was the first in a series of discussion papers that will form the basis for and guide policy development in the new Official Plan. It provided background and contextual information and identified relevant issues and emerging trends that would need to be addressed.

The attached Discussion Paper, “Tecumseh New Official Plan Process, Urban Design Discussion Paper, April 2015”, is the seventh in the series of discussion papers and follows the Housing and Residential Intensification Discussion Paper that was received by Council in March of 2015.

COMMENTS

Background on Urban Design

Urban design is the art of shaping cities and towns. It is about creating stimulating, thriving, vibrant spaces for people, establishing relationships between buildings and the public realm, between people and buildings, between people and public space and enhancing each of these.
It involves the arrangement and design of buildings, public spaces, transport systems, services, and amenities. It is the process of giving form, shape, and character to groups of buildings, to whole neighborhoods, and the city. It is a framework that orders the elements into a network of streets, squares, and blocks.

Urban design is an inter-disciplinary subject that unites all the built environment professions, including urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, civil and municipal engineering. As a result of its inter-disciplinary nature, urban design draws together the many strands of place-making, environmental stewardship, social equity and economic viability into the creation of places with distinct beauty and identity.

Urban design contributes to the Town by creating places in which people want to live and visit, fostering an environment that cultivates innovation, creativity and cultural exchanges while celebrating heritage and the arts.

In order to develop urban design principles for incorporation into the Town’s new Official Plan, the Urban Design discussion paper:

- describes the notion of urban design and the contribution it can make to the Town;
- describes the existing policy context at the various levels of government;
- describe the principles of urban design; and
- fosters public participation through the creation of discussion questions aimed at generating public dialogue.

Elements of Urban Design

In general, the elements of urban design can be categorized as either community-wide design principles or element-specific design principles.

Community-Wide Design Principles are urban design principles that are universal in nature in that they apply to all areas of the municipality. These principles include:

- Compatibility
- Connectivity/Street Network
- Adaptability
- Intensification
- Edges and Gateways
- Preservation
- Legibility
- Sustainable Urban Form
- Quality Public Realm
- Streetscapes
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Accessibility

Element-Specific Design Principles are elements within the urban environment that may be found in limited exposure and not across the whole of the municipality. These elements require policy that encourages and supports their specific nature because of their contribution to and/or potential effect on the Town’s urban environment. These specific elements include:

- Public Views and Vistas
- Built Form
- Landmarks
- Public Buildings and Infrastructure
• Parks, Squares and Plazas
• Public Art

The discussion paper also addresses automobile-oriented uses which can adversely affect the objectives of urban design. Although it is understood that the automobile will continue to influence community design, efforts should be made to place a greater emphasis on creating a vibrant pedestrian environment or at least to soften the impact of the automobile on the built form and aesthetics of the community.

Finally, the paper discusses a sub-discipline of urban design - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). This discipline utilizes the principles of urban design to reduce the fear and incidence of crime and disorder. This, in turn, leads to an improvement in the overall quality of life within the community.

Summary

The existing policy environment in the Town’s Official Plans does not address urban design issues or the direction in which the Town seeks to evolve. There is a lack of direction in terms of addressing different building forms and the responsibility of both the Town and the development industry in creating great public spaces. The new Official Plan needs to include policies on urban design to guide the built form and public space areas to achieve the best possible quality of private development and civic initiatives. In short, the new Official Plan needs to include clear policy direction which establishes the Town’s expectations with respect to the built environment and the public realm.

Along with the necessary policy enhancements in the new Official Plan, an overall urban design strategy is needed to link the various initiatives within the Town with the goal of creating a sustainable and vibrant urban environment.

An Urban Design Strategy should contain objectives and approaches which include:

• educational sessions and materials;
• collaboration with the private sector to promote excellence in development and urban design;
• a Site Plan Manual to inform applicants of the process and expectations;
• landscape guidelines;
• sustainability policies;
• consideration of the use of outside design professionals for guidance (i.e. Design Review Panel);
• the integration of urban design goals with civic undertakings, new capital projects and maintenance thereof (i.e. ensure urban design is part of the RFP process and better integrated into Environmental Assessment processes);
• the development of standards for the interface of the public realm and private projects;

• the integration of heritage preservation with the urban fabric;

• urban design standards for corridors within the Town; and

• a wayfinding signage program.

Public Consultation

As an integral component of the Tecumseh New Official Plan process, the aforementioned discussion paper will be posted on the Town’s website and be made available to the public and local stakeholders. Once the remaining discussion papers are received by Council, an open house will be held to consider the range of issues identified and to receive stakeholder input into the formulation of the new Official Plan. In addition, a statutory public meeting will be held in accordance with the Planning Act. The public process/open house sessions will help confirm the relevancy of the issues identified in the discussion papers and will provide an opportunity to consider any other issues that are important to the community.

CONSULTATIONS

Public Works and Environmental Services

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

LINK TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Identifying and facilitate development of appropriate public and private lands to support growth, assessment and changing needs has been identified as a strategic priority.
This report has been reviewed by senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the CAO.

Prepared by:

Chad Jeffery, MA, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Planning Services / Senior Planner

Reviewed by:

Brian Hillman, MA, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Building Services

Recommended by:

Tony Haddad, MSA, CMO, CPFA
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment(s):

File Name (R:\TECUMSEH 2030, NEW OFFICIAL PLAN\NEW OFFICIAL PLAN DISCUSSION PAPERS\Planning Report 06-15 - Council Receipt of Urban Design Discussion Paper, April 2015.docx)
# Tecumseh New Official Plan Process

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Tecumseh New Official Plan Process

Urban Design Discussion Paper

April 2015
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Land use planning within the Town is currently governed by three separate Official Plans pertaining to the three former municipalities (the Town of Tecumseh, the Village of St. Clair Beach and the Township of Sandwich South) that amalgamated in 1999 to form the new Town of Tecumseh. These Official Plans reflect the land use objectives of their respective former municipalities. Many of the policies are dated and, in some cases, are no longer relevant. A new, town-wide Official Plan is needed to articulate a clear, cohesive vision for the amalgamated Town.

The following series of discussion papers will form the background and basis for the new Official Plan:

- Growth Management/Structure Plan
- Community Improvement Planning
- **Urban Design**
- Natural Heritage Features
- Commercial Development
- Housing and Residential Intensification
- Industrial/Employment
- Agricultural and Rural Issues
- Parks and Recreation
- Transportation
- Sustainability

These discussion papers will be presented to the public for consultation, deliberation, sharing of ideas and articulation of a desired policy direction for the future. The discussion papers and the related public consultation process will provide the basis for and guide the development of the new Official Plan. The resulting Official Plan will be a combination of policy direction from the top-down (Province/County) and local input from the ground-up, identifying the challenges, opportunities and goals for the Town over the 20-year planning horizon.

This discussion paper addresses the topic of **Urban Design** and its role in creating vibrant and sustainable communities. Urban design considers the function, use and relationships of visible components of the Town to create an attractive, safe, transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly and memorable environment.
The intent of the Urban Design Discussion Paper is to identify and articulate the Town’s directions for the built environment with the objective to enhance and create special places within Tecumseh. Urban design can contribute to the Town by creating places that people want to visit, fostering an environment that cultivates innovation, creativity and cultural exchanges while celebrating heritage and the arts.

In order to develop urban design principles for incorporation into the Town’s new Official Plan, this discussion paper will identify and examine the key elements of urban design and their importance to the Town.

1.2 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this discussion paper is to:

- describe the notion of urban design and the contribution it can make to the Town;
- describe the existing policy context at the various levels of government;
- describe the principles of urban design; and
- pose questions and invite input from the public and stakeholders.
2.0 WHAT IS URBAN DESIGN?

Urban design is the art of creating and shaping cities and towns. It is about creating stimulating, thriving, vibrant spaces for people, establishing relationships between buildings and the public realm, between people and buildings, between people and public spaces and enhancing each of these. Urban design involves the arrangement and design of buildings, public spaces, transport systems, services, and amenities. It is the process of giving form, shape, and character to groups of buildings, to whole neighborhoods, and to the entire community. It is a framework that orders the elements into a network of streets, squares, and blocks.

Urban design is an inter-disciplinary subject that unites all the built environment professions, including urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, civil and municipal engineering. As a result of its inter-disciplinary nature, urban design draws together the many strands of place-making, environmental stewardship, social equity and economic viability into the creation of places with distinct beauty and identity. It draws these and other strands together creating a vision for an area and then deploying the resources and skills needed to bring the vision to life.
3.0 GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2014

The Planning Act outlines the purpose of land use planning, the tools and the power that may be exercised by municipalities, and the various restrictions and procedures that must be followed by municipalities in the process of developing land and changing land uses.

Updates to the Planning Act, through Bill 51, have given municipalities more authority over urban design matters. Urban design policies are not prescribed, however the Act recognizes that design can be controlled to some extent through regulating massing and conceptual design of buildings, relationship to adjacent buildings, streets and exterior public areas as provided under Section 41 – Site Plan Control.

Section 41(4) now allows municipalities to address “matters relating to exterior design including, without limitation, the character, scale, appearance and design features of buildings, and their sustainable design, but only to the extent that it is a matter of exterior design, if an official plan and zoning by-law passed under subsection (2) that both contain provisions relating to such matters are in effect in the municipality”. This revision to the Act provides municipalities with an opportunity to play a more meaningful role with respect to the urban design of identified areas throughout the Town.

The Provincial Policy Statement 2014 (PPS) is a high level policy document addressing matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development and is a key component of the Provincial policy-led planning system. Any decision made by planning decision makers “shall be consistent with” the PPS.

The PPS does not deal directly with matters of physical design and development quality, but recognizes the complex interrelationships among economic, environmental and social factors in planning. It supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning and recognizes linkages among the various policy areas.

Under the new PPS, strong emphasis is placed on promoting intensification, brownfield revitalization, compact development form, and mixed uses to enable more efficient use of land and infrastructure and to support transit-oriented development. This will, in turn, contribute to better environmental planning and conditions including improvement of air quality and more efficient use of energy through the reduction in travel demand and private automobile use.

With respect to energy conservation, the role of design is highlighted. The policies promote design and orientation which maximize the use of alternative or renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy, and the mitigating effects of vegetation.

3.2 County of Essex Official Plan

The County of Essex Official Plan is the primary long-range strategic land use policy document for the County. It sets the regional context for more detailed planning to occur at the local level.
by protecting the environment, managing resources, directing growth and setting the foundation for providing regional services in an efficient and effective manner. The Town’s new Official Plan will have to conform to the County’s Official Plan, although with respect to urban design, the County OP contains no specific policies.

3.3 Local Official Plans

As with the County OP, the three local Official Plans contain no explicit policy pertaining to urban design. There are related policies that address issues such as intensification, which is a key element of urban design, but the concept itself is not directly addressed.

The new Official Plan should incorporate a section on Urban Design principles and how they can be applied in the Town. The following section identifies and explains these principles.
4.0 **URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

In general, the elements of urban design can be categorized as either community wide design principles or element specific design principles:

**Community-Wide Design Principles**

- Preservation
- Compatibility
- Connectivity/Street Network
- Legibility
- Sustainable Urban Form
- Adaptability
- Quality Public Realm
- Intensification
- Streetscapes
- Edges and Gateways
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Accessibility

**Element-Specific Design Principles**

- Public Views and Vistas
- Landmarks
- Built Form
- Public Buildings
- Parks, Squares and Plazas
- Landscaping
- Public Art

4.1 **Community-Wide Design Principles**

The following are urban design principles that are universal in nature in that they apply to all areas of the municipality:

4.1.1 **Preservation**

Preservation is the art of capitalizing on the historical or natural significance of a community feature and enhancing the feature such that its story is continued through the evolution of the Town. This can occur in a variety of ways and applies to the built, cultural and natural environment. It encompasses the preservation of views, important places and landmarks. It also extends to the creation of new ones.
The preservation and enhancement of these features provides context and guidance for new development and allows the continued enjoyment of a place for generations. It facilitates compatibility between old and new elements in the Town’s landscape, provides visual interest and a level of urbanism that could otherwise be lost. It is important to celebrate these community assets.

4.1.2 Compatibility

Appropriate design solutions identify how new projects will integrate with the existing context and how necessary sensitivities will be ensured. Simply maintaining the status quo does not capture the essence of compatibility. Compatibility does not mean the same. This notion of “sameness” limits the potential for new development to invigorate a neighbourhood and provide a balance of land uses and development options. It also undermines other important community planning objectives such as intensification.

Proper urban design policies provide guidance for creating new development which can coexist in harmony with established development and complement the diversity of community functions.

4.1.3 Connectivity and Street Network

As outlined in the Growth Management and Urban Structure Discussion Paper, the Town of Tecumseh is composed of “surfaces” (typically Agricultural Areas, Residential Areas and Employment Areas) and “points/clusters” (typically centres of features containing identifiable buildings, services and/or functions, such as the historic downtown/civic centre) connected by “corridors” (providing for the movement of people and goods) and “linkages” (providing for the movement of plants, animals and/or water). These corridors represent a critical opportunity for the Town in terms of ensuring distinct, multi-modal and accessible avenues of connection for the Town’s citizens and visitors.
Connectivity has to occur at all levels – from the regional and community level to the neighbourhood, block and site level. It must go beyond just building roads for automobiles. Proper urban design ensures that there is adequate permeability between blocks and neighbourhoods by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. Areas should be easily accessible within a reasonable walking distance and should be barrier free.

How the pedestrian or cyclist accesses commercial nodes, schools, transit, parks and natural systems in a safe and comfortable manner must also be considered. New development can play a critical role in augmenting and enhancing connectivity by enhancing circulation systems and providing additional linkages.

The street network is one of the major defining elements of the physical structure of a community. As a network, it is an interwoven web that connects the various components of the community.

Interconnected networks of streets should be designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips and conserve energy. The street network has to support pedestrians and cyclists. To accomplish this, new development needs to continue to support a strong, well connected street network through a grid or modified grid road system.
The street grid should be based on block lengths that support walkability and redundancy (typically in the range of 150 metres to 250 metres).

Design can also play a critical role in creating linkages between urban areas and natural areas. Incorporating natural areas within urban settings has been found to provide a number of benefits including greater aesthetic appeal, a healthier environment and opportunities for recreation.

In recent years, the Town has begun to identify and further enhance linkages between its environmental features, parks, open spaces and trail networks. As the Town urbanizes, there is an opportunity and need to continue to improve access and further enhance the connection between environmental features and recreational facilities and activities in order to experience the Town’s landscape in a diverse and more integrated manner.

As a greater proportion of the Town’s population begins to live in a more compact, urban environment, the importance of and demand for access to and linkages between natural areas and recreational areas will increase.

4.1.4 Legibility

Legibility involves establishing an understanding of place and wayfinding for residents and visitors. An urban environment which is safe, easy to navigate and encourages public interaction can only be created when that environment is legible and understandable to its users. It is important to ensure the built environment is human-scaled and avoids monotony.

Legibility is created when there is a clear hierarchy of spaces and districts within the built environment. To be legible, development must enhance the utility of a space for patrons. This can be accomplished by:

- Communicating the visual character and identity of the community;
- Incorporating natural and built landmarks and focal points;
- Establishing views and corridors;
- Creating gateways and edges;
• Reinforcing visual connections along routes and between spaces and at landmark locations with appropriate landscaping, lighting and wayfinding signage;
• Enhancing the uniqueness of place through the provision of public art;
• Contributing to a coherent streetscape that involves clear and navigable routes; and
• Creating comfortable and welcoming public spaces that are discernible.

4.1.5 Sustainable Urban Form

Sustainability means meeting the environmental, economic and social needs of a community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is the overlapping of these community elements that makes places liveable. Sustainability is one of the tenets of a community official plan. Policies that encourage compact development and alternative transportation help reduce automobile dependency and its associated problems are examples of sustainable development.

Urban design contributes to this narrative by promoting a more sustainable urban form. From a community design perspective, sustainability means policies that address:

- Enhancing and establishing a grid or modified grid street system to allow for efficient pedestrian movement, transit operations, cycling and automobile trips (LEED-ND certification);
- Creating places that are pedestrian-friendly through strategies that address streetscape design, include public art, promote active uses at grade and a high quality built environment;
- Creating transit-oriented development that makes transit practical and efficient;
- Reducing parking standards and changing parking policies to reinforce the walkability and transit-oriented nature of the growth centres;
- Promoting high-quality design through appropriate building massing, preserving views and vistas and creating public gathering places;
- Promoting alternative energy forms; and
• Encouraging an evolution in building and landscape design which subscribes to the principles of sustainable architecture (i.e. LEED certification)

4.1.6 Adaptability

It is important that buildings and spaces can respond to changes in technology, market conditions and living circumstances. This quality is known as ‘adaptability’ and enables buildings and spaces to have a long life thereby contributing to a flexible and sustainable environment.

Provision for changing lifestyles and community needs enhances the future social and economic sustainability of a community.

A place that can change easily provides for:

• Flexible uses;

• Possibilities for gradual change;

• Buildings and areas adaptable to a variety of present and future uses; and

• Reuse of historic buildings and spaces.

Development proposals and layouts for extensive areas (such as the Tecumseh Hamlet) must be capable of accommodating the changing and future needs of society. For example, the network of roads and primary infrastructure should be designed to accommodate all modes of transportation including private vehicles, transit, pedestrians and cyclists. The layout of street blocks should be able to accommodate a range of different land uses and densities. Provisions should be made for connectivity to future development lands. Open spaces should be designed to accommodate different recreational, leisure, cultural and social activities and events.

The image on the following page is an illustration of both adaptability and sustainability. It demonstrates how a rectangular block of low-density, single unit dwelling housing can evolve to accommodate a variety of household types and needs, various modes of transportation including transit and walking, alternative energy sources such as rooftop solar and a commercial node to eliminate the need to travel by automobile for certain daily needs. This transformed neighbourhood is socially, environmentally and economically more sustainable.
Living
20 Years time

Example of future intensified block illustrating potential mix of building typologies.

We've lived here for years and I've put a lot of work into the house so I don't really want to move. I like the way this area has moved on though. You didn't used to be able to walk to the shops which are great because I don't like drive too much anymore.

The houses are pretty big - bigger in fact than others around here as they're over two stories high. That was a major factor in us deciding to move here, along with the garden, garage and community facilities in the courtyard. There's a barbecue area, allotments and a safe place for the kids to play and mix it with others their own age. It’s a great way of getting to leave your neighbors!

Sustainability and Adaptability

We had a house on a huge plot which was far too much land for us to maintain. The new government policy and incentives to subdivide our property was perfect for us as our house was pretty old and in disrepair. We built two houses and we rent one out and live in the other which is great for our finances.

It's our first time buying. We really wanted to get a place in the city center and couldn't afford the prices. This is the next best thing though as there are shops, bars and cafes with everything we need. The transport is really good into the city so we don’t need to worry about saving for a car right away, if at all.
4.1.7 Quality Public Realm

The public realm consists of public buildings, open spaces, streets, parks, plazas and squares. These assets bond people and places together and help establish the character of an area. In an effort to enhance the liveability of the Town, it is necessary to emphasize the continued evolutionary design of these assets through appropriate Official Plan policy. Although the Town has taken some strides toward creating a high quality public realm through investments in trails, parks and improved streetscaping, there has been less emphasis placed on other forms of public elements.

The transition from the public to private realm is important to consider in order to make it more seamless. The more divisive this transition, the less cohesive the public realm. The delineation between the private and public realms should be clear but be treated as an extension of one another (i.e. street/boulevard/sidewalk – front lawn – front porch – home). To accomplish this, the Town must be able to deliver the physical infrastructure of the community in an appropriate form.

4.1.8 Intensification

As noted earlier in this report, the PPS and the County of Essex Official Plan identify intensification as an important growth management initiative. Intensification is the process of creating more compact and complete communities through the redevelopment of underutilized sites that optimize existing services and infrastructure in an efficient manner resulting in a reduced impact on the environment.

Properly planned and designed intensification contributes significantly towards the
revitalization and rejuvenation of the community. The new Official Plan should incorporate policy that distinguishes the various forms of redevelopment including infill and intensification.

To successfully incorporate intensification within the context of the Town, consideration must be given to how development fits within and enriches the existing context, in addition to the consideration of development density itself.

Urban design factors that need to be addressed when considering new development are site context, edge conditions, built context, height, scale, sustainable design, building massing, landmarks, views, gateways, stepped setbacks, transition areas and skylines.

It is also important to consider how buildings relate to the streets and other open spaces. This relationship is critical to creating the rich, varied public life that we enjoy in our urban environment – one that is safe, comfortable and accessible for residents and visitors alike.

Streets should provide safe connections within the Town and adequate space for amenities to support social activity. In areas accommodating intensification, the distance a person will need to travel will be minimized and a balanced street design will increase opportunities for, and attraction of, active transportation choices such as walking and cycling. If designed with the pedestrian in mind, streets will become places for civic engagement and recreation, support local retail and improve the overall health of the community.

To successfully incorporate new development through intensification in Tecumseh, urban design should consider the following:

- respect for the local context and the benefits to the existing community;
- the creation of human-scale places that assist in meeting intensification targets that will add to a sense of place that is specific to and appropriate for Tecumseh;
- the appropriateness of a wide range of building typologies and forms;
- the quality of the built form design and the relationship of buildings to the public realm (typically represented by the sidewalk and the street);
- contemporary styles of architecture need to be sensitive to adjacent buildings;
- appropriate transitions to existing residential neighbourhoods and existing built up areas;
- environmental impacts; and
- the impacts of new development on light, sky views and skyline (i.e. shadow effect).

Official Plan policy can provide only a finite amount of direction, beyond which a compendium document may be needed to help users understand the range of issues to examine and consider when contemplating an intensification project. A compendium document can provide clarity on such matters as: the orientation of buildings, the rhythm and design of building massing, improvements to streetscapes, minimizing overlook conditions, maintaining access to daylight, transition of scale, appropriate buffering, relationship of entrances, building height and cornice lines, fenestration styles, roof styles, use of local building materials, detailing, texture, colour and door forms, parking location, setbacks and maintaining heritage/historical characteristics.

### 4.1.9 Coherent Streetscape

The development of coherent streetscapes is integral to the development of the community as it reinforces the overall hierarchy of the street network, communicates image and character, and directly affects the daily experience of the residents and users of the environment. Streets are also public spaces and meeting places for the community and their design should recognize and celebrate this function.

The streetscape is a combination of the following elements:

- pavement width and function;
- boulevard width;
- street trees;
- lighting;
- street furniture;
- signage;
- built form;
- paving materials; and
- landscaped features

In this context it is easy to see how urban architecture and landscape design significantly influence the physical space along streets and within public areas and create places of shared use. The design of the streetscape should create an enriched public space for residents and
visitors and be pedestrian scaled. In essence, it should create an “outdoor room” for the user which is comfortable and convenient to use and navigate.

Buildings need to properly relate to the width of the street and incorporate pedestrian protection in the form of canopies, arcades, colonnades and podiums.

With respect to pedestrian-scale, streetscaping is primarily concerned with how a building addresses the sidewalk and creates visual interest. Along more urban streets, the built form needs to support the pedestrian experience and engage passersby through the liberal use of transparency for first and second floor windows, encouraging the right mix of uses at-grade, minimizing pedestrian and vehicular conflicts and employing appropriately scaled signage and streetlighting.

The streetscape needs to ensure safety and security through visual surveillance from buildings on the street; adequate lighting and spaces which provide visual interest (avoid blank facades). It should also be designed to provide comfort through elements such as awnings and trees to shield from the elements as well as places to sit.

4.1.10 Edges and Gateways

Edges and gateways provide the means to understand a community at its boundaries, reveal the community’s image and the character of different neighbourhoods and spaces for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Edges and gateways provide a clear boundary and definition from one physical space to another.

Gateways represent significant opportunities to mark and announce the entrance into neighbourhoods, communities, centres, districts and the Town itself. Gateways can be expressed through a combination of elements such as landmarks, building mass, use of high quality architectural materials, landscaping, upgraded sidewalk treatments, wayfinding signage, special lighting, gathering areas, seating and public art. The scale and character of the gateway treatment needs to maintain the context of the area which it is introducing.

Edges are located adjacent to areas which form the boundary to a neighbourhood and allow a transition
to occur, through a variety of means, from one area to another. Clearly defined, visually consistent and easily visible edges help define spaces and therefore assist people in wayfinding as they move through different parts of the community. For example, a woodlot, when preserved and flanked by a single loaded road, can be an amenity that acts as an edge treatment providing definition to a neighbourhood.

4.1.11 Pedestrian and Transit-Oriented Development

Designing great places for the comfort and enjoyment of the pedestrian is one of the most important aspects of urban design. Being able to walk to a mix of shops, restaurants, newsstands, coffeehouses and open-air markets within pedestrian-focused neighborhoods and work centers delivers the highest quality of life, and adds great variety and vitality to an area.

Pedestrian oriented design promotes and supports pedestrian activities in the built environment. Communities that encourage healthy and active lifestyles also heighten social connections and reduce traffic, travel costs, crime and environmental impacts.

In order to support transit investment, greater concentrations of people need to live in closer proximity to one another in a mixed use setting. It requires a holistic approach to planning at the earliest stage and must be supported by land use, physical design, process and incentives.

Characteristics and features of pedestrian and transit oriented design include:

- **Encouraging intensification** and a mix of higher density uses along transit routes particularly at critical nodes;
- **Elements that add to the safety of an area** including streetlights, traffic calming features and opportunities for natural surveillance;

- **Connectivity of streets and sidewalks** providing route options and permeability leading to a final destination. Greater routing options result in a dispersal of traffic such that one route does not become congested and hostile to both drivers and pedestrians;

- **Mix of land uses in close proximity** allows for individuals to access destinations by walking or cycling. This, in turn, increases opportunities for socializing and enhances the safety of an area;

- **Adequate infrastructure** such as sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, bus stops, signage and benches; and

- **Aesthetics** such as landscaping, street trees and street furniture can add to the texture of a street and provide visual interest thereby encouraging people to walk. It also can add to the comfort level of the street and/or public realm across various seasons.

### 4.1.12 Accessibility

Providing accessibility means creating a barrier-free community that affords all individuals greater mobility. A barrier free community identifies, prevents and eliminates physical barriers to ensure there are equal opportunities for all citizens, including people with disabilities, seniors, children and youth, as well parents with strollers. Barriers might include things such as stairs or curbs, inadequate drop-off and pick-up areas for transit users, sidewalk width, or even inadequate lighting for safety.

Good public spaces are planned and designed from the beginning with accessibility in mind. Accessibility by design can provide people with disabilities with more opportunities to work, shop, travel and play independently.
As the population ages, the need to create and maintain an accessible community will increase as a growing number of people will develop mobility challenges. In an effort to address this challenge the Provincial government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The AODA establishes, among other things, Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment which focus on removing barriers in buildings and public spaces.

To this end, Ontario’s Building Code has been amended to include enhancements to accessibility in buildings. As of January 1, 2015, new construction and renovations are subject to updated accessibility requirements. The standard for the design of public spaces only applies to new construction and major changes to existing features.

Following are the highlights of what the standard covers:

- recreational trails/beach access routes (i.e. meet minimum requirements for trails by establishing clear widths and posting signs with specific information at the start of trails);
- outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas (i.e. provide a minimum number of accessible tables);
- outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds (i.e. consult with people with disabilities to help to incorporate accessibility for children and caregivers with various disabilities into play spaces);
- outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals (i.e. meet minimum requirements for sidewalks by establishing clear widths and installing accessible pedestrian signals at intersections);
- accessible parking (on and off street) (i.e. make at least four percent of spaces accessible in new lots with 1-100 parking spaces);
- service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas; and
- maintenance and restoration of public spaces.

The Town must be in compliance with the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – Design of Public Spaces Standard by January 1, 2016.

4.2 Element-Specific Design Principles

There are elements within the urban environment that may be found in limited exposure and not across the whole of the municipality. These elements require policy that encourages and supports their specific nature because of their contribution to and/or potential effect on the Town’s urban environment. The following are urban design principles that are element-specific in nature:
4.2.1 Public Views and Vistas

Prominent public views can be found throughout the Town. These can be compromised over time with the introduction of new development, infrastructure and landscape features that are not sensitive to preserving these public views.

Views and vistas are primarily formed along streets but can also occur within other parts of the public realm such as along trail corridors. These form a critical part of the visual journey through a community. Examples of important views or vistas are over Lake St. Clair, church spires in the distance, a terminated vista defined by a significant building or public open space.

It is necessary to incorporate views and vistas early in the design analysis, particularly when in proximity to parks, community facilities and open space links. The strategic location of these view corridors provides points of orientation and plays a role in distinguishing neighbourhood and community identities.

Enhancing existing public viewsheds and creating new ones can be achieved through the careful placement of new buildings, the strategic alignment of road rights-of-way, the layout of circulation and open space systems, the exposure of the edges of natural heritage systems and features and the siting of major features and public uses.

The new Official Plan should include policy that encourages view termini in the public and private realm oriented toward a prominent feature such as a significant building or park space.
4.2.2 Landmarks

Landmarks are important places that incorporate the Town’s heritage to create places that are both well used and memorable. They can include civic buildings, historical sites and structures, new private buildings with specific architectural treatment and public squares and other facilities. Existing landmarks within the Town include St. Anne’s Church, St. Mary’s Church and Village Grove Golf Course among others.

4.2.3 Built Form

The design of new buildings in the Town needs to be carefully considered and evaluated since buildings become the backdrop of the public realm and provide a multitude of functions beyond simply providing shelter. Buildings along public roads and space have the effect of defining that space and create what are commonly referred to as “outdoor rooms”. Therefore, their height, shape and mass combined with their relationship to the road and other public spaces needs to be given very careful attention.

The most likely form of multi-unit buildings within the Town will be the mid-rise residential building. Mid-rise buildings are usually 4-10 storeys in height and will most likely be found along or in close proximity to corridor areas of the Town with good transit access and higher order roads. These buildings present an opportunity to define a strong public realm with an appropriate relationship to the street edge.

Building design needs to:
• have a clear base, middle and top;
• incorporate appropriate terracing to define building height as well as accommodate roof-top amenities;
• have clear articulation with vertical or horizontal elements;
• locate parking appropriately; and
• consider rooflines and roofscapes.

The desirability of these features needs to be reinforced in the new Official Plan.

4.2.4 Public Buildings and Infrastructure

The quality of the public realm is a key component to an area’s functionality and how the community experiences it. Design that is context sensitive is critical to the overall enjoyment and experience that is felt in that environment.

Public buildings play an important part in the understanding of a municipality since they are accessible to the public and are often located in prominent locations. As important components of the built form, they should be designed to meet the following objectives:

• to enhance the visual quality of the public domain;
• to promote the character of the community;
• to encourage sustainable design initiatives;
• to communicate civic identity; and
• to demonstrate leadership with respect to sustainable building design.

These buildings can include civic and sport centres, institutional buildings, fire halls, libraries, parking structures, schools, and community centres. They should function as a centralizing feature of the community, be designed to a high quality and in a sustainable fashion and have more than a singular purpose. Similarly, quasi-public and institutional uses such as schools and places of worship are also important civic and visual features in the community and have the potential to act as landmarks.

Buildings which occupy such an important part of the public realm need to be located prominently, such as at a terminating vista, and include opportunities to engage the public realm by employing open-air gathering and meeting places in the form of public squares and/or plazas.
The other component of the public realm is the presence of infrastructure such as: bridges, stormwater management facilities, pumping stations, transformer vaults and roundabouts, among others. These structures and facilities are necessary in the public realm but require better integration and, in some cases, greater screening to mitigate their visual presence. This can be accomplished through better design or the strategic placement of landscaping, street furniture, lighting or other streetscape elements, or by locating them in less prominent areas of the public realm (i.e. rear alleys).

4.2.5 Parks, Squares and Plazas

Spaces used for gathering that are open to the public play an equally important role in defining the public realm as buildings. People need opportunities for passive enjoyment of the outdoors throughout the day and night and during all times of the year. These places provide a degree of sociability – establishing places where civic engagement can take place; places for people to gather and meet; increasing the understanding and interconnectedness of the different cultures in the community.

In a more urban environment, these facilities take on a different texture in that plazas are typically hardscaped. The design of these places needs to work seamlessly between the public and private realms and function as an extension of both as one transitions to the other. Further, there is an opportunity for the built form, which acts as a
backdrop to these spaces, to play an integral role by fronting these spaces and creating the “public room”.

4.2.6 Landscaping

Landscaping has historically been treated as an afterthought and used to screen visual clutter. Policy is needed that directs the use of landscaping as a unifying and highlighting mechanism which adds to the texture and vibrancy of the urban environment.

The Manning and Tecumseh Roads commercial district has the benefit of a unifying landscaping treatment along the road edge and is an example of how such features can add greatly to the public realm and placemaking. Landscaping can also contribute to achieving an urban forest canopy within the Town through the introduction of trees along street boulevards and adjacent to trails. There are a variety of landscaping features (formal or naturalized) that can lead to the vibrancy and quality of the urban environment.

4.2.7 Public Art

Public art enriches the public realm, creating visual interest, instilling civic pride and creating a sense of place. Opportunities for public art can range from the integration of ideas into the streetscape, open space and built form designs to the creation of stand-alone sculptures and simple structures such as creative bike stands.

To assist with achieving a greater contribution of public art in the Town, the municipality could employ the following strategies:

- creating a Public Art Program;
• requiring a certain percent of a development pro forma be utilized for public art; and
• developing a public funding program.

It is also prudent to identify where in the Town it would be appropriate to encourage public art such as: gateway locations, within public squares and spaces and at visual termini. Public art should be encouraged as part of all significant public and private development.

4.3 Automobile-Oriented Uses

As with most towns and cities throughout North America, Tecumseh is currently, and has traditionally, been dominated by and oriented toward a design paradigm that is intended to facilitate the automobile. A number of initiatives are underway to reduce this dominance and create a more balanced approach, however there will always be a need to accommodate the automobile and to include Official Plan policy that directs its treatment in everything from road capacity to parking and access locations.

While the core objective of creating a usable, functional urban environment is to encourage pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive development, there remains a need to maintain a certain level of automobile-oriented design considerations in the face of current realities. It is appropriate to consider where automobile-oriented development is more appropriate and acceptable and to what standard it should be designed.

Conversely, there needs to be consideration for areas where automobile-oriented designs and uses are not desirable in the face of other objectives striving to achieve vibrant, pedestrian-oriented environments.

Official Plan policy needs to address issues of compatibility in terms of use, scale and character. It also needs to provide direction with respect to the mitigation of conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles to ensure efficient and safe movement for all users.

Automobile-oriented features and uses include:

• parking lots and garages;
• driveways, site service and loading areas;
• drive-throughs; and
• service stations.

4.3.1 Parking Lots and Structures

Proper location and scale of parking areas contributes to creating a pleasant urban environment. Surface parking lots need to be designed to be secondary to the prime use of real estate – the built form.
Open parking lots require appropriate screening and access and need to provide pedestrians with direct connections from the parking areas to buildings with maximum safety and minimal conflict.

The softening of parking lots can be achieved through landscaping and plantings. These aesthetic features can provide the added benefit of reducing storm water runoff and cooling the immediate environment through shading.

4.3.2 Driveways, Site Service and Loading Areas

Site servicing includes uses ancillary to a business operation or residential use such as: loading, driveway access, refuse bins and passenger pick-up/drop-off areas. These amenities, while necessary, do not need to be prominent in new development and should be screened and incorporated into the design of buildings/sites.

4.3.3 Drive-Throughs

With the advent of drive-through facilities, a new level of conflict between pedestrians and automobiles was created. The increasing popularity of drive-throughs has further cemented the automobile culture that has come to dominate over the past few decades. This can adversely affect the quality of the urban design and character of an area.

Official Plan policy is needed to provide direction as to where drive-throughs may be acceptable in the Town and how they are to be designed. For example it may be appropriate to prohibit them in certain areas where a compact pedestrian form is being sought (i.e. the Tecumseh Hamlet Secondary Planning Area and Tecumseh Mainstreet CIP Area) but allow them along Manning and on Tecumseh Road east of the VIA tracks.

The development of properties with drive-throughs needs to respond more appropriately to the surrounding context. It needs to reinforce street edges and contribute to a high quality public realm and streetscape through a combination of site planning, landscaping and built form. Pedestrian consideration must still be designed into these properties. The issue of drive-throughs is more thoroughly addressed in the Commercial Issues Discussion Paper.
4.3.4 Service Stations

The development of service stations has become more complex for municipalities over time due to the increased property sizes desired by the proponents and the range of uses located on these sites. In addition to the pump islands, signage and access drives, there are now convenience stores, car washes, garages and sales display areas. With all these facilities competing for space, and the large volume of vehicular traffic attracted to these sites, pedestrians are often over-looked as potential users.

Official Plan policy can assist in guiding the location and development of these facilities in terms of their scale and pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

4.4 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is defined as:

“the proper design and effective use of the built environment, leading to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime and disorder. This in turn leads to an improvement in the overall quality of life of a building, space or area.”

Besides reducing the incidence of crime, good design can decrease its social and psychological impact and reduce the costs associated with the pursuit of criminals and court proceedings. Most importantly, CPTED improves the livability and safety of urban places, which benefits communities and society as a whole.

CPTED is based on the following three overlapping strategies or principles:

- Natural Surveillance;
- Territorial Reinforcement; and
- Natural Access Control.

Natural Surveillance is achieved by placing windows and other spaces (i.e. porches) in locations that allow intended users to see or be seen while ensuring that intruders will be observed as well (i.e. “eyes on the street”). Surveillance is enhanced by providing adequate lighting and landscaping that allow for unobstructed views.

Territorial Reinforcement is defined by sidewalks, landscaping, porches and other elements that establish the boundaries between public and private areas.
Natural Access Control uses doors, shrubs, fences, gates and other physical design elements to discourage access to an area by all but its intended users.

Some examples of CPTED strategy activities are:

- provide clear border definition of controlled space;
- provide clearly marked transitional zones which indicate movement from public to semi-public to semi-private to private space (i.e. street/boulevard/sidewalk – front lawn – front porch – front door);
- relocate gathering areas to locations of natural surveillance and access control – away from the view of would be offenders;
- place safe activities in unsafe locations to bring along the natural surveillance of these activities (to increase the perception of safety for normal users and risk for offenders);
- place unsafe activities in safe spots to overcome the vulnerability of this activities with natural surveillance and access control of the safe area;
- redesignate the use of space to provide natural barriers to conflicting activities;
- improve scheduling of space to allow for effective use and appropriate “critical intensity” (i.e. alternating school bus drop-off times);
- redesign or revamp space to increase the perception or reality of natural surveillance;
- overcome distance and isolation through improved communications.

Good neighbourhood design is compatible with design concepts encapsulated by CPTED. Good neighbourhood design places the human scale at the forefront; fosters communication amongst neighbours and creates a sense of ownership and responsibility. CPTED creates communities whose property owners and residents know one another and recognize outsiders. Streets, lots and homes in a neighbourhood are laid out so that it is possible to distinguish between public and private property. Window, lighting and landscaping allow observation on, to and from individual parcels.

Changing values and social structures have caused us to modify the way that we design homes and neighbourhoods, often resulting in an environment that undermines CPTED objectives. A prime example is the shift from a front porch/front yard community to a patio/back yard
community. In the process, homeowners have relinquished “ownership” of the front yard and the street, making this territory available for ownership by outsiders.

More recently, however, planning movements, such as New Urbanism, that call for narrow front setbacks, fences and front porches are helping to reclaim ownership of the street. These design elements also define the transition from public street and sidewalk to semi-public front yard to semi-private front porch to the privacy of the home – a prime objective of CPTED.
5.0 CONCLUSION

The existing policy environment in the Town’s Official Plans does not address urban design issues or the direction in which the Town seeks to evolve. There is a lack of direction in terms of addressing different building forms and the responsibility of both the Town and the development industry in creating great public spaces. The new Official Plan needs to include policies on urban design to guide the built form and public space areas to achieve the best possible quality of private development and civic initiatives. In short, the new Official Plan needs to include clear policy direction which establishes the Town’s expectations with respect to the built environment and the public realm.

The concept of urban design at various scales has been considered and endorsed by Town Council through the adoption of the document titled “Healthy Places, Health People - Smart Choices for the Windsor-Essex Region of Ontario” (see Appendix A). This statement of principles, developed and signed by the planners of the region, addresses elements of urban design at various scales – the region, city, town, villages, neighbourhoods, town centres, employment districts, corridors, blocks and streets. These principles have often been cited as rationale for sound planning decisions in the Town.

Along with the necessary policy enhancements in the new Official Plan, an overall urban design strategy is needed to link the various initiatives within the Town with the goal of creating a sustainable and vibrant urban environment.

An Urban Design Strategy should contain objectives and approaches which include:

- educational sessions and materials;
- collaboration with the private sector to promote excellence in development and urban design;
- a Site Plan Manual to inform applicants of the process and expectations;
- landscape guidelines;
- sustainability policies;
- consideration of the use of outside design professionals for guidance (i.e. Design Review Panel);
- the integration of urban design goals with civic undertakings, new capital projects and maintenance thereof (i.e. ensure urban design is part of the RFP process and better integrated into Environmental Assessment processes);
- the development of standards for the interface of the public realm and private projects;
- the integration of heritage preservation with the urban fabric;
• urban design standards for corridors within the Town;
• a wayfinding signage program.
Questions for Discussion:

1. Is there a public space in Tecumseh in which you like to spend time? What attributes make it appealing?

2. How can both public and private spaces be made more identifiable and memorable?

3. What types of amenities would entice you to walk or bike more often to meet your daily needs?

4. Do you experience accessibility or mobility challenges when walking, cycling, driving or taking the bus in Tecumseh?

5. What features within Tecumseh do you think provide it with its identity and character?

6. Would you be willing to pay higher taxes to live in a community that has a higher standard of urban design?

How to Provide Input

Send your comments by regular mail, phone, fax, e-mail or by visiting the Town’s website.

By mail:
Att. Urban Design Discussion Paper
Town of Tecumseh Planning Department
917 Lesperance Road
Tecumseh, ON, N8N 1W9

By phone: (519) 735-2184 ext. 123

By fax: (519) 735-6712

By e-mail: cjeffery@tecumseh.ca

Go to: www.tecumseh.ca/townhall/departmental-services/planning/newofficialplan

to register your comments using the on-line form. Register your contact information at the same time to receive notification of upcoming consultation events.
APPENDIX A

Healthy Places, Healthy People
Smart Choices for the Windsor-Essex Region of Ontario

Community planning professionals across this region have come together to prepare and sign the following statement of principles to guide public policy, to stimulate informed public debate, and to build a coalition of like-minded professionals in all sectors of the community including the engineering, architecture, health care, education and public administrative disciplines, to improve the quality of life for inhabitants of our region and for future generations.

The region, city, towns, villages and the countryside

1. The health and well-being of the inhabitants of the Windsor-Essex Region of Ontario requires strategic decision-making with respect to land use, transportation, infrastructure, growth management, natural heritage, social, economic and environmental planning.

2. The Windsor-Essex Region of Ontario, comprising the city, towns, villages and the surrounding countryside, cities and towns, represents an important economic, social and environmental asset that must be planned, formulated public policy, developed and implemented strategies and make decisions in a coordinated and comprehensive manner that will improve the health and well-being of all citizens of this region.

3. Economic viability, healthy environments and community stability requires re-investment in our existing urban centres; the re-development of vacant or under-utilized property; the creation of new urban residential, commercial and industrial areas; the preservation and enhancement of our natural and built heritage features as components of future decision-making; and a regional/sub-regional approach ensuring the quality of our air and water resources.

4. We have a responsibility to our children and grandchildren to take a lead role in working with decision makers, community leaders, and a broad range of stakeholders, to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, in our region, by promoting settlement patterns, built form, and transportation systems that create more sustainable, healthy and livable communities.

5. Financial resources and revenues need to be shared more cooperatively amongst the municipalities of this region to avoid the destructive competition for property location and the corresponding decisions that lead to wasteful and unsustainable development patterns, loss of natural features and productive agricultural lands. To efficiently utilize available resources and effectively compete with other economic regions, a cooperative governance model is required to advance economic development objectives that benefit all inhabitants of the Windsor-Essex Region.

Neighbourhoods, city and town centres, employment districts, corridors and streets

6. Mixed use, compact, pedestrian-oriented neighbourhoods and city and town centers designed for people, are the building blocks of healthy, active and vibrant communities. Parks, schools, places of worship, compact pedestrian-oriented shopping and entertainment areas, and other essential services should be located closer to people living in these areas.

7. Neighbourhoods should be diverse in use and population, with a broad range of housing choices being available for residents from all cultural, social and economic backgrounds.

8. Public places that foster a sense of community pride and well-being and create a sense of place should be maintained within all neighbourhoods. Schools are important public places that should be sized and located within neighbourhoods to enable children to safely and conveniently walk, bike and/or walk to and from home.

9. Neighbourhoods, city and town centres and employment districts should be provided with a highly interconnected road network and a balanced transportation system that is designed and built for pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles.

10. Shorter block lengths, a finer grain of block sizes, sidewalks, streets, trails, bikeways and five-minute walking distances to neighborhood activity centers and to transit stops should be provided to encourage healthy active lifestyles, to reduce energy use, and to provide greater independence for those who cannot or choose not to drive automobiles.

11. Appropriate residential densities and land uses should be located near transit stops, enabling public transit to become a more viable option for mobility within our region.

12. Within each community in our region, clearly defined, compact, pedestrian and transit friendly city and town centers need to be maintained, created and enhanced. These city and town centres are intended to serve as focal points for civic, commercial, entertainment, and cultural activities. A broad range of employment, housing, civic, shopping and leisure activities should be available in a compact, attractive, pedestrian-scale environment.

13. Public investments need to be made in these city and town centres to support private sector investment and to create and maintain the public realm, streetscapes and amenities that will cater to and attract ongoing patronage from residents, business clientele and visitors.

14. Natural lands should be protected, enhanced, and incorporated with planned greenway systems, and given prominence for the benefit of all inhabitants in the surrounding neighborhoods and in the broader region. The essence of a greenway is a linear system of open space corridors connecting natural habitat to each other, other open spaces, to other natural areas, to other greenways, to other major transportation corridors, in such a manner as to be effectively served by appropriate modes of transportation including public transit.

15. Transportation corridors need to provide viable choices and options that equally accommodate automobile, transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

16. The design of a community's street system, as well as the configuration of lots and the size of lots, is an essential part of a community's character. High-rise/mixed use development systems within our city, towns and villages, incorporating pedestrian streets, on-street parking, landscaped boulevards, appropriate illumination and signage, should be designed and built to create and maintain safe, livable, and healthy places.

17. Streetscapes should be designed to encourage walking, neighborhood interaction and community safety.

18. Buildings should be designed in the context of the street and block on which they are situated, and should incorporate appropriate energy efficient components, structural elements and landscape features. Local architecture, climate, history and building practices should guide and influence the design and construction of new buildings within our region.

19. Historical buildings, neighborhoods and districts should be preserved, enhanced and passed on to future generations as a legacy of past accomplishments and associated with the Windsor-Essex Region.

As professional planners, we have a responsibility to provide elected officials, decision-makers, community and business leaders, and the public at large with sound public policy options and to recommend action strategies that will improve the quality of our natural and built environment. By signing this document, the community planners whose names appear below are committing to uphold, promulgate and put into practice this statement of principles that are so important to future well-being of the inhabitants of the Windsor-Essex Region.