

COUNTY OF LAMBTON

OFFICIAL PLAN

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Chapter 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Political & Policy Framework

The County of Lambton is comprised of 20 local municipalities, ranging from highly urbanized to predominantly rural municipalities. Consequently, the County and its local municipalities face a wide range of planning issues.

The County of Lambton has a long history of County planning dating back to 1978 when the “Lambton County Planning Area” was established for the purposes of preparing a County-wide Official Plan and providing technical planning advisory services to the local municipalities. That first County Official Plan was adopted by County Council in 1981 and approved by the Province in September 1982, and has been used to guide local municipalities in the preparation of local official plans.

That first County Official Plan has remained in effect since its approval in 1982. Since that time, new local municipal Official Plans have been prepared, the City of Sarnia is no longer a separated city and has rejoined the County, major improvements have been made in servicing infrastructure, Provincial legislation has changed, and a new Provincial Policy Statement has been issued which affects both County and local planning decisions. In addition, the County of Lambton has been prescribed by the Provincial Government to prepare a new County Official Plan by December 31, 1997, pursuant to Ontario Regulation 154/95 issued under Section 17 (13) of the Planning Act.

The new County Official Plan will fulfill Provincial Regulation that prescribes its preparation, and will provide a Lambton context for the application and interpretation of the Provincial Policy Statement by the local municipalities through local official plans.

Therefore, once this County Official Plan takes effect, it will be deemed to have regard for Provincial Policy, and any local planning documents and decisions which conform to this Plan will also be deemed to have regard for Provincial Policy. The Province will assign responsibilities to the County and its municipalities, including planning and development functions. These changes are addressed in this Plan.

Lambton County has a two-tier planning system in which planning responsibilities are divided between the County and the local level. Under this system, the County Official Plan provides an overall County planning policy framework for the development of detailed local planning policies. These detailed local policies are necessary to recognize both the common and the unique circumstances, goals and aspirations of the various local municipalities within the County. While the traditional approach to preparing local official plans has indeed recognized the uniqueness of individual local municipalities and has provided the necessary level of additional planning policy detail, it has also demonstrated a considerable degree of commonality between the policies of each local official plan. Also, while the approach and content of the County Official Plan anticipates an additional level of planning policy detail, it is recognized that only the County is required to adopt an official plan. Local plans are optional depending upon the wishes of the local Council(s).

Therefore, in order to reduce duplication, streamline the development of local planning policy, and ensure a basic level of comprehensive planning policy throughout the County, it is intended that in addition to this new County Official Plan, a “General Local Official Plan” will be adopted by County Council to provide a common set of local planning policies. Once adopted by County Council, the local municipalities will have the option to vary the extent to which the General Local Official Plan policies will apply, in whole or in part, in their respective municipalities, to more precisely reflect their local circumstances and needs.

1.2 Description of the Plan

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

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

1.3 Purpose and Effect of the Plan

The Lambton County Official Plan is a long range management plan which outlines County policy on a number of broad settlement and resource management issues of County or inter-municipal concern. It is a tool that can be used to encourage and direct change and growth for the benefit of the residents of Lambton County. The Plan provides strategies, goals and policies to guide public and private decision-making on economic, environmental, and social issues, as well as generally guiding the use of land in the County. The Official Plan will be augmented by other strategies, plans and guidelines as well as local official plans and secondary plans. In the latter cases, the County Official Plan provides a context for more detailed planning by the local municipalities. In particular, it establishes the framework necessary to assist local municipalities in the preparation of plans and policies which reflect local needs and circumstances, in a manner that satisfies the Planning Act requirements regarding the Provincial Policy Statement.

Specifically, the Plan:

- expresses long term intentions on the extent of

growth through a management strategy for Lambton County to the year 2016;

- provides a framework for maintaining and improving the natural heritage features and systems of the County;
- provides the terms of reference for public works and private initiatives, and functions as a standard against which the County evaluates the appropriateness of such initiatives in relation to the management strategy; and,
- provides an overall County planning policy context for the development of more detailed local planning policies.

1.4 Role of the County and Relationship with Local Municipalities

The County Plan is a document that sets out County and inter-municipal interests, having regard for the Provincial Policy Statement. It is expected that detailed land use policies and designations will be enunciated through local municipal official plans. An option for the local municipalities in the preparation of the local official plans will be the General Local Official Plan, as described in Section 10.9 of this Plan. The use of the General Local Official Plan is intended to streamline the process of preparing local official plans in Lambton County.

Lambton County Council will be delegated the authority to approve local official plans and amendments upon approval of this Official Plan by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It is anticipated that some time after the County has received this delegated authority, local plans and amendments will be exempted from formal approval, with the County simply retaining the right to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. The effect of this further delegation of approval authority may result in a "community based approval" system, where local plans and amendments will come into effect immediately upon expiry of any required appeal period, where no appeals are filed.

1.5 Basis of the Plan

Preparation of the Official Plan is based on the following:

- The County is required, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 154/95 issued pursuant to the authority of Section 17 (13) of the Planning Act, to prepare a new Official Plan by December 31, 1997.
- The 1982 Plan reflected the issues of the time when it was approved. Concerns such as water quality, forest cover, and economic development were significant topics and these issues remain relevant today. However, over the past several years other issues such as housing, natural heritage systems, cultural heritage resources, and waste management, among others, have taken on a greater priority. Consequently, the County policy framework must be revised to reflect these changing issues.
- A new Plan is required which establishes policy direction that reflects current issues, having regard for Provincial interests. In March 1996, a new Provincial Policy Statement was issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act. These policies focus on key Provincial interests related to land use planning and the Planning Act requires that, in exercising any authority that affects planning matters, planning authorities “...shall have regard to..” the Provincial Policy Statement. The County Plan must have regard for Provincial policies by considering them in the context of matters of County and local interest.
- Related studies have been initiated within Lambton County. These studies include: A Strategy for Economic Renewal in Lambton County - Vision 2020, Shoreline Management Plans, and a draft Tourism Development Plan. The findings of these studies have implications for the growth and management of the County. In addition, new official plans have recently been prepared for a number of local municipalities in the County. Some of the

background research from these plans was utilized in the preparation of the County Plan.

1.6 Assumptions

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

- The County population is expected to increase to 142,000 persons by the year 2016.
- The total labour force in the County is expected to be approximately 73,000 people by the year 2016.
- All municipalities in the County are expected to grow, based on the availability of municipal sewer and water services and the availability of community services. Infill and redevelopment will be encouraged, but are expected to contribute only to a minor extent. The majority of anticipated growth will occur in the West Lambton Area, which is described in Chapter 3, County Development And Growth Strategy. This area is the location of the major employers, and the greatest concentrations of industrial and commercial activities in the County. Other serviced areas in the County will accommodate the next highest level of growth, while the rural parts of the County are anticipated to experience the lowest levels of growth.
- Changing demographic trends (e.g. the aging of the baby boom and the increase of non-traditional households) will have implications for the future growth of Lambton County.

1.7 Plan Preparation, Format and Interpretation

In 1995, a comprehensive planning program was initiated to prepare a new Official Plan for the County of Lambton. This program involved establishing a Public Focus Group (PFG) comprised of approximately 100 representatives from special interest groups and the general public.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAC) was also established and included representatives from Provincial Agencies, Conservation Authorities, the City of Sarnia Planning and Development Department, and the Lambton County Clerks Association. Regular meetings were held with the PFG, the TAC and the Lambton County Clerks Association. Input from these groups was incorporated into the background research papers that were prepared in support of the Official Plan.

The appendices do not form part of this Plan and are provided for information purposes only.

The list of background issue papers includes:

- No. 1 New Planning Framework for Lambton
- No. 2 Lambton's Changing Population
- No. 3 Agriculture
- No. 4 A Projection of Housing Demand
- No. 5 Housing Affordability
- No. 6 Residential Development Outlook
- No. 7 Industrial Land Supply
- No. 8 Lambton's Natural Heritage
- No. 9 Infrastructure
- No. 10 Mineral Aggregate Resources
- No. 11 Petroleum Resources
- No. 12 Community Development Strategy

The end result of this exercise has been the preparation of a comprehensive Plan for Lambton County which is organized in the following manner:

Chapter 1:

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

Chapters 2 to 10:

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

Maps and Appendices:

Maps and Appendices are found at the end of the Plan. The maps, which form part of this Plan, provide an illustration of the overall growth strategy and natural heritage system for the County.

Chapter 2

2. QUALITY OF LIFE

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

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

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

The Official Plan promotes patterns of new development which minimize disruption and protect the identity of established communities. Growth should be directed so as to maximize accessibility to and make efficient use of existing and future education, recreation, health care and social facilities and services. New growth should be

located contiguous to viable communities to allow a desirable level of social interaction for new residents.

2.1 Improving Quality of Life

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

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

Policies:

1. Patterns of development will be established so as to minimize disruption to existing residential uses, protect the physical character and vitality of established neighbourhoods and communities, and to conserve cultural and natural heritage features and resources.
2. New development will be located to ensure the maximum use of existing and future public facilities and services, including education, recreation, health care, social services, and physical infrastructure. Areas designated for residential development should be contiguous to existing centres and contain a range of commercial and community services.
3. Growth will be managed so as to provide communities with a range of opportunities for work and recreation, and a choice of housing. A diverse range of activities, based on the needs of the community, including learning, health, arts, cultural, spiritual and recreational activities are promoted by this Plan.

4. Local planning documents should encourage street design and building locations that create interesting and vibrant streetscapes.
5. Public spaces, including streets, parks, and buildings, should be designed to be accessible and safe for all members of the community, with locations that provide links to complementary land uses. The location of public buildings should be supportive of the development and growth policies of this Plan. Accessibility to the largest concentrations of population will be a primary consideration in the planning for major facilities.
6. The County supports the Council for Economic Renewal's strategy that emphasizes the development of a well trained work force through education and retraining; improving the competitiveness of local business, especially small and medium sized businesses; strengthening the economic base through diversification by capitalizing on the changing economy; establishing sources of financing for entrepreneurs and establishing business; improving the quality of life to enhance the image of the County; establishing partnerships in the County for the purpose of advancing the strategy; and developing infrastructure that is supportive of economic development activities.
7. The County will be promoted as an educational centre of excellence, consistent with the strategy for economic renewal.
8. To the extent possible, a full range of education services will be provided within the County to enable residents to meet the challenges of the workplace and to enhance self-development. Educational facilities should be located and designed to be accessible and convenient to the general public.
9. Educational institutions and organizations are encouraged to provide opportunities for the development of lifelong learning skills, consistent with the needs of the people of the County.
10. In the process of reviewing official plan amendments and/or plans of subdivision regarding residential development, the Approval Authority will request comments from educational authorities with respect to the adequacy of existing schools to accommodate anticipated growth in enrollment, the possibility of alternatives to new school construction and requirements for new school sites.
11. In the process of reviewing official plan amendments and/or plans of subdivision regarding residential development, the Approval Authority will request comments from appropriate agencies with respect to the adequacy of human and protective services.
12. The County will support and promote cultural activities that serve the needs of the residents of the County. Of particular interest are those activities that support the strategy for economic renewal and promote tourism.
13. Enhancements to the delivery of health care for the residents of Lambton are encouraged, particularly in the area of prevention of disease and promotion of health.
14. The County encourages and supports the District Health Council in its efforts to ensure that existing and new health services are based on the needs of the population. Continued public involvement in planning future health programs is also encouraged.
15. The County encourages the efforts of public and private agencies that provide support and assistance to residents with disabilities. These efforts should address matters such as physical access, suitable work environments, transportation, education and training programs for residents with disabilities.
16. Community-based residential facilities for residents requiring assistance to establish, regain and/or maintain independent living for continuing care and for rehabilitation purposes are promoted at appropriate locations. Where appropriate, local municipalities will include policies in their local official plans that provide

for such facilities.

17. Actions to support the farming community will include: supporting existing senior government programs that provide an adequate and stable income for farmers and improve economic viability of the farming industry; promoting value added and food processing facilities on farm operations, and where it is not feasible to locate on the farm, facilitate location in a nearby settlement or centre; encouraging local municipalities to include provisions in their official plans to facilitate the establishment of farmers markets and to promote fairs; and encouraging the creation of new farm units when both severed and retained parcels are viable farms, having regard for Provincial Policy.
18. The County encourages community-based programs for increasing safety and security and police protection, consistent with the needs of citizens in the County.
19. Local municipalities are encouraged to develop requirements to ensure that safety is considered in the review of new development proposals. Items such as lighting, visibility, building orientation and other safety features should be evaluated.
20. The County will continue its active role in emergency planning, including the provision of 9-1-1 services and involvement with CVECO (Chemical Valley Emergency Co-ordinating Organization).
21. The County will assist in providing planning and other information to groups involved in identifying the best locations for needed police, fire, ambulance and health care facilities.
22. The County recognizes that the Natural Heritage System, open spaces, and parks contribute to the quality of life in Lambton County. These features contribute to the overall design of urban and rural areas and provide opportunities for active and passive enjoyment of the natural environment.

23. The County recognizes that the Natural Heritage System contributes to the quality of life through the conservation of watercourses and adjacent vegetation, and through the protection and enhancement of habitat for a diverse range of indigenous species of wild life.

2.2 Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Resources

Goal: To emphasize the importance of cultural heritage and archaeological resources and to provide for their appropriate conservation.

Policies:

1. Where significant cultural heritage features, including historically and architecturally significant sites, are known to exist, local municipalities are encouraged to adopt policies related to the conservation of these features.
2. Local municipalities are encouraged to prepare and maintain comprehensive inventories of significant heritage resources, including buildings and spaces, as a basic tool for identifying and conserving these resources.
3. The design of urban spaces and new public and private buildings will be in character with existing streetscapes that have been identified as heritage resources.
4. The approval of plans of subdivision will include the conservation of sites with a significant degree of archaeological potential.
5. Local municipalities are encouraged to appoint and fund Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees (LACACs) as provided for in the Ontario Heritage Act, to assist with cultural heritage matters.
6. Local municipalities are encouraged to ensure that any community improvement or secondary plans identify and conserve cultural heritage resources.
7. The County and local municipalities will

ensure that cultural heritage resources are evaluated and conserved in public works projects.

8. The County and local municipalities will promote the heritage aspects of the County through tourism development activities, school curriculum and programs, public information, events, and displays.

2.3 Housing

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

Policies:

1. An adequate supply of land for housing will be ensured by:
 - a) maintaining an overall 10 year supply of land designated for housing in the County; and,
 - b) maintaining a minimum 3 year supply of draft approved and/or registered lots and blocks for housing in the County.
2. The County encourages the construction of an adequate supply of dwelling units to meet the needs of the local housing market. This is expected to average 400 dwelling units per year over the planning period.
3. The supply, production and affordability of housing will be monitored by the County in co-operation with the local municipalities to assess the effectiveness of these policies and to ensure an adequate supply of land, appropriately designated for housing, in accordance with Policies 1 and 2 above.
4. Local municipal official plans will include provisions that allow for a range and mix of housing forms, types, sizes and tenures to meet local and County housing needs.
5. Local municipal zoning provisions will be

flexible enough to permit a broad range of housing forms, types, sizes and tenures, including accessory apartments where feasible.

6. Proponents of residential development are encouraged to provide a broad mix and range of lot sizes, dwelling types, and tenure choices suited to the needs and desires of the residents of the community.
7. The County and local municipalities will consider the needs of the local population as part of any application to designate, zone, or subdivide lands for residential purposes.
8. The County encourages the creation of affordable housing provided by community based private non-profit and co-operative groups.
9. Residential developments, including proposals that would result in the creation of affordable housing will be accessible to community services and facilities including public transit facilities where available.
10. Non-profit housing developments will be dispersed throughout the County, taking into account need, accessibility to employment opportunities, services and facilities.
11. Affordable housing proposals will conform to all relevant policies of this Plan.
12. To facilitate the provision of affordable housing by the private sector market, local municipalities are encouraged to evaluate and where appropriate adopt alternative development standards that reduce the cost of construction and maintenance of services.
13. Local municipalities are encouraged to provide opportunities for the intensification of housing. Techniques may include permitting second units in existing dwellings, encouraging the creation of infill lots, the conversion of existing buildings for residential purposes, redevelopment of sites not previously used for residential purposes, and higher densities in new development. Rooming, boarding and

lodging houses may be permitted where appropriate.

14. Local municipalities are encouraged to use the bonusing provisions of the Planning Act to facilitate the protection of the natural heritage system and features of cultural significance when considering development proposals.
15. Surplus County-owned land and/or buildings may be considered for providing housing. Other levels of government are encouraged to take the same approach when considering disposing of surplus lands and/or buildings. The use of surplus lands for housing will only be supported at appropriate locations.
16. Housing for senior citizens should be located in proximity to community services and facilities.

Chapter 3

3. COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

The County of Lambton is comprised of diverse areas, including Rural, Rural Settlements, Urban Settlements and Urban Centres. Growth must be managed to minimize adverse effects on the natural heritage system, heritage resource features and agriculture and be phased to coincide with the availability of appropriate types and levels of services. The protection of existing investments in infrastructure by maximizing their use, where possible, is desired. Accordingly, a development strategy has been prepared to manage growth in the County.

The development strategy in this Plan:

- anticipates that all areas of the County will grow commensurate with available infrastructure and community services;
- creates a focus for development within established centres;
- directs the majority of growth to areas with full municipal water and sewage services;
- anticipates a limited amount of growth serviced primarily by private sewage and/or water systems in the Rural Area and, in some cases, in Centres and Settlements where full services are not practical or feasible.
- encourages the maximum use of existing public services such as parks and recreation facilities, water and sewer systems and emergency services;
- ensures the preservation of agricultural lands and the protection of resources and natural heritage features for their economic use and/or environmental benefits; and,
- seeks to ensure the continued viability of existing industrial areas, commercial areas and mainstreets.

It is the intent of this Plan to direct the majority of growth to the urban areas of the County. The Plan is committed to supporting agriculture, and other resource-based activities in the Rural Areas, and promoting economic development and a high

quality of life throughout the County. It is expected that local municipal official plans will define urban boundaries and rural areas in detail, consistent with the overall County development strategy.

The Official Plan anticipates that the County will reach a population of 142,000 persons and a work force of 73,000 persons by the year 2016. The Plan also anticipates the need for the production of an average of 400 dwelling units annually over the planning period to the year 2016.

For the purposes of this Plan, four growth areas have been identified. These are as follows:

1. West Lambton, comprised of the City of Sarnia, the Village of Point Edward, and the Townships of Moore and Sombra;
2. North Lambton, comprised of the Towns of Forest and Bosanquet, and the Villages of Grand Bend, Arkona and Thedford;
3. Central Lambton, comprised of the Town of Petrolia, the Villages of Wyoming and Oil Springs, and the Townships of Plympton, Enniskillen and Dawn; and,
4. East Lambton, comprised of the Villages of Watford and Alvinston, and the Townships of Warwick, Brooke and Euphemia.

Expected population and housing growth has been allocated among these four growth areas. To provide for a degree of flexibility, a range has been provided within these allocations. These allocations are as follows:

AREA	DWELLING UNITS	POPULATION
West Lambton	4,000 to 5,000	7,200 to 8,800
North Lambton	1,500 to 1,900	2,600 to 3,300
Central Lambton	1,000 to 1,400	1,900 to 2,300
East Lambton	400 to 600	750 to 950
TOTALS	6,900 to 8,900	12,450 to 15,350

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

Each planning area has Urban Centres and Urban Settlements with full municipal services. The majority of future urban growth will be directed to those locations depending on the availability of sufficient municipal water and sewer services and community services. Where there are areas of land designated for residential development on partial services, this Plan does not require the amendment of local official plans to remove these existing areas from the land inventory. However, full urban services (the addition of municipal sewerage, including the use of communal systems) will be a pre-requisite to significant development within any designated areas that are not the subject of an existing draft approved or registered plan of subdivision.

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

The Plympton and West Bosanquet areas, shown on Map 1 Growth Strategy, have considerable tourism potential, and are desirable and well-suited for residential development due to their location on Lake Huron. Their importance in the County, the benefits of strengthening these communities by providing for more extensive commercial, institutional and community services, and the desirability of a phased and coordinated approach to development, serve to create a need for a comprehensive planning approach. For these reasons, the Plympton and West Bosanquet Lakeshore areas are designated as the Lakeshore Policy Area by this Plan. This Plan will require more detailed study as “Lakeshore Policy Areas”.

The St. Clair River is an important commercial and recreational water transportation route connecting Lake Huron and Lake St. Clair, and it is a key element of the County Natural Heritage system. The

river ferries operating at Sombra Village and Walpole Island provide international border crossings between Ontario and Michigan. The St. Clair Parkway (County Road 33), which runs next to the St. Clair River, is a significant vehicular and recreational land transportation route. It is lined with riverside parks which provide an important recreational resource for day trippers and day use recreation. The Moore and Sombra area is substantially developed for residential purposes, with many large, treed lots. There are also areas of industrial development. The attraction to the river has proven itself over the years. However, conflicts and problems unique to the waterfront arise: shoreline erosion and flooding, waterfront uses such as docks and boathouses, view concerns, shore protection, and land filling for construction.

3.1 Anticipating Growth

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

Policies:

1. Population, housing and employment growth will be monitored by the County in consultation with the local municipalities.
2. In order to effectively accommodate anticipated growth, the local municipalities will ensure that adequate lands are designated and made available for development consistent with the overall County development strategy established by this Plan.
3. The County and local municipalities will endeavour to ensure that sufficient community facilities such as social, recreational, cultural and emergency services are provided to meet the needs of anticipated growth.
4. Local municipalities will ensure that adequate uncommitted reserve capacity exists in municipal water sewage treatment and distribution systems to accommodate

anticipated growth in Urban Centres and Urban Settlements.

5. The County of Lambton has adopted population, household and employment projections for the planning period to 2016. The projections will be used to calculate sewer and water capacity needs, and to determine housing needs and corresponding land requirements. The projections can be used as a basis for other service and program planning within the County, and by industry and business to guide investment decisions. The growth projections are not intended to be incorporated as a formal component of this Plan. Any changes to these projections resulting from ongoing monitoring will not require a formal amendment to this Plan.

3.2 Growth Strategy

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

Policies:

1. Map 1 shows a four level settlement hierarchy, consisting of Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, Rural Settlements, and the Rural Area. The majority of growth will be directed to Urban Centres and Urban Settlements. The Urban Centre designation at the northwest part of the County has the greatest service area and the greatest number of urban uses and employment opportunities.
2. Urban Centres contain a wide range of residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial land uses. Urban Centres generally have a significant number of major employers, and include major public service facilities. Development within Urban Centres will occur on full municipal services, except in substantially built up areas where full services are not practical or feasible, in which case

minor infilling and limited extensions of the built-up area may occur with municipal water and private septic systems, provided that such development is consistent with natural heritage goals and does not significantly increase the overall density of such areas.

3. Urban Settlements contain most of the same land uses and services of Urban Centres, but on a smaller scale. Urban Settlements function as service centres for the surrounding Rural Area. Development within Urban Settlements will occur on full municipal services, except in substantially built up areas where full services are not practical or feasible, in which case minor infilling and limited extensions of the built-up area may occur with municipal water and private septic systems provided, that such development is consistent with natural heritage goals and does not significantly increase the overall density of such areas.
4. Rural Settlements have a limited number of public facilities and commercial uses. Development of Rural Settlements in the County will occur within the boundaries of the existing designations, and may occur on partial municipal services where full services are not practical or feasible, provided that such development is consistent with natural heritage goals and does not significantly increase the overall density of rural settlements.
5. The Rural Area will include all lands outside of Centres and Settlements. The Rural Area is characterized primarily by agriculture, natural areas and clusters of development of insufficient size and variety of uses to warrant designation as settlement areas. Given the limited amount of development anticipated in the Rural Area servicing will be by private sewage disposal and water supply, or by municipal piped water, provided that such development is consistent with natural heritage goals and does not significantly increase the overall density in rural areas.
6. Full municipal sewage and water services are the preferred form of servicing in the Urban Centres, Urban Settlement Areas and Rural

Settlement Areas. The Approval Authority will recognize a hierarchy of servicing and may consider the use of municipally owned and operated communal systems, individual on-site private systems and partial municipal services in the Bosanquet Lakeshore Special Policy Area and the Suburban Residential Area in the City of Sarnia and Rural Settlement Areas. Any development proposed on communal, partial municipal or individual on-site systems must be supported by studies which include as a minimum, evaluations of soil percolation rates, impacts on ground water resources, ground water mounding and adjacent water courses. Reserve areas for replacement septic systems will be required when the mode of sewage servicing is individual private sewage systems or communal systems. Where new multi-lot clusters are proposed, proponents will be required to submit soils and hydrological studies completed by qualified engineers or hydrogeologists with recognized experience in sewage and potable water system designs.

7. Land use designations and development policies contained in local official plans and/or secondary plans will reflect the growth and settlement policies of this Plan.
8. Sufficient land will be designated for settlement and employment purposes to meet expected growth during the planning period, including an appropriate surplus to ensure land market competition within the Urban Centres and Urban Settlements.
9. Development in Centres, Settlements and the Rural Area will promote an efficient and compact land use pattern to minimize land consumption, control infrastructure costs, and limit non-farm growth pressure in Rural Areas.
10. The Plan recognizes that the level of municipal services and range of land use activities may change during the planning period. Provided that a municipality can meet the criteria associated with a higher level in the hierarchy, the policies for that level will apply without an Official Plan Amendment regardless of the

designation shown on Map 1.

3.3 Local Planning

Policies:

1. Local municipalities are encouraged to use the General Local Official Plan that accompanies this Plan as the foundation of local official plans.
2. Policies for the development of Urban Centres and Urban Settlements will be as provided by local official plans and/or secondary plans. The preparation of such plans should include, but may not necessarily be limited to:
 - a) identification of the municipality's share of overall county population growth and determination of an appropriate settlement boundary, in accordance with the ability to service the anticipated growth;
 - b) identification of the type, mixture, location and densities of future land uses;
 - c) identification of a development pattern, including major roads, park areas, open space, natural heritage areas, stormwater management facilities and similar features;
 - d) identification of the need to provide community facilities, including parks, schools, and other facilities;
 - e) site and subdivision design criteria;
 - f) municipal servicing requirements and development phasing if required;
 - g) erosion control measures;
 - h) local road access points to collector and arterial roads;
 - i) location of support facilities such as schools;
 - j) the integration with the County natural heritage system of corridors and local municipal natural heritage features;
 - k) the linkage of the new development area to an existing community;
 - l) the location of active and closed waste disposal sites; and
 - m) the location of sewage treatment works.
3. Development in Rural Settlements will be

primarily through infilling and extensions of the built-up area. A limited amount of commercial and industrial development may be permitted, subject to the policies of this Plan. Linear development will be discouraged in favour of development in depth.

4. Development in the Rural Area will primarily occur by way of severances, in accordance with the land severance policies in Chapter 4, Agriculture Strategy.
5. Local municipal official plans may designate existing clusters of development in Rural Areas where limited lot creation on partial services may occur in the form of infilling. Boundaries of these clusters will be defined in zoning by-laws. If the boundaries are not defined the land severance policies of Chapter 4, Agriculture Strategy will apply.
6. Applications for development in the Rural Settlements and the Rural Area will be required to demonstrate that septic systems will not adversely affect the quality of ground water and the water in active wells operating in the general vicinity.

3.4 Mainstreets and Commercial Areas

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

Policies:

1. Local municipalities are encouraged to preserve and revitalize traditional mainstreet and commercial areas. The following criteria should be considered by local municipalities when developing policies for these areas:
 - a) extent and locations of mainstreet areas and commercial areas should be defined;
 - b) mainstreets and commercial areas should permit the highest concentration of and the greatest mix of uses within the local municipality including residential, institutional, retail, office and community

- services appropriate to the size of the community;
- c) where feasible and the opportunity exists, mainstreets and commercial areas should be connected to County or local municipal natural heritage corridors;
- d) local official plans will contain provisions that promote activities in the areas around mainstreets and commercial areas that do not detract from the viability of these areas;
- e) wherever feasible, historic buildings and structures should be conserved, and any new development should complement the historic characteristics of the mainstreet or commercial area;
- f) tourism and leisure related activities are encouraged to locate on mainstreets and commercial areas; and,
- g) an environment which promotes both vehicular and pedestrian circulation should be provided.

2. The revitalization of downtown Sarnia as the most significant social, cultural and entertainment centre of Lambton County is supported. Renewed investment is encouraged in downtown Sarnia to support the retention and development of retail, personal service, office, entertainment, tourism, and specialty shopping activities to meet local, regional, and tourist needs. The viability of the downtown should be reinforced through continued efforts that provide a mix of residential, institutional, and community activities, and the development of the riverfront and downtown as a tourist destination.
3. The London Road/Lambton Mall and the Exmouth Street/Northgate commercial areas of Sarnia are recognized as high order commercial centres in Lambton County. The London Road/Lambton Mall area provides a wide range of commercial uses that meet specialized service and comparison shopping needs. The Exmouth Street/Northgate area is smaller in size than the London Road/Lambton Mall area and there is less emphasis on comparison shopping and specialized services.
4. The County supports the London

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

5. The County supports efforts to ensure the continued health and viability of the mainstreets of towns and villages such as Petrolia, Forest, Watford, Wyoming, and others. These mainstreets provide a range of commercial, institutional, and community services that serve the needs of the community and surrounding Rural Areas.
6. Existing neighbourhood and convenience commercial areas serve the daily shopping needs of nearby residents and to a lesser extent passing motorists. This Plan supports uses in these centres, which provide for the daily and convenience shopping needs of residents in nearby neighbourhoods.
7. Proposals for development of new or peripheral shopping areas will demonstrate that the viability of existing mainstreets and commercial areas will not be threatened. Existing mainstreets and commercial areas should be given first priority for development or redevelopment for commercial purposes.
8. The role of existing highway commercial areas has traditionally been to serve the traveling public. In recent years, this role has changed to include a greater emphasis on uses that serve the local community. Where this changing role has led to a decline of existing businesses, reuse of these areas should be planned to encourage a broader range of compatible uses that will serve nearby residents, and to ensure the continued viability of these commercial areas. While a limited amount of retail activity may be considered, these areas are not intended to accommodate uses that are more appropriately located on mainstreets or within commercial areas. The extension of highway commercial designations will generally be discouraged.
9. A high standard of building and site design in

the development or redevelopment of mainstreets and commercial areas is strongly encouraged to enhance the image of Lambton County municipalities as attractive and inviting communities.

3.5 Lakeshore Policy Area

Goal: To ensure that the Plympton and West Bosanquet Lakeshore Areas are developed in a manner that is consistent with the goals of this Plan, and in particular, in a manner that ensures the establishment of identifiable communities and centres of growth.

Policies:

1. The growth and development of the Plympton and West Bosanquet Lakeshore Areas will be guided by local official plan policies that consider the following:
 - a) the need to establish clusters of neighbourhoods as identifiable communities;
 - b) the likely demand for housing in these areas over the planning period, and the designation of a suitable inventory of development land;
 - c) the establishment of a logical development pattern;
 - d) phasing and staging of residential development;
 - e) provision of community services, including parks and recreation facilities; access to the shoreline;
 - f) the feasibility of full municipal services;
 - g) the promotion of tourism; and,
 - h) the integration with the County natural heritage system and local municipal natural heritage features.
2. Notwithstanding the Rural Settlement designation within the Town of Bosanquet Lakeshore Policy Area, and recognizing the ability of soils in the area to support septic systems, the following policies will apply.
 - a) Areas that are committed for development,

with draft approval or registered plans of subdivision, will be permitted to develop on partial services, provided that such services are considered consistent with natural heritage policies. Such developments will be required to connect to full municipal services if, and when, such services become available.

- b) Areas not presently subject of approved plans of subdivision will be developed on full municipal services.
- c) Notwithstanding Policy b) above, proposals constituting infill development may be approved for development on partial services in accordance with Policy 6, in Section 3.2 Growth Strategy.

3.6 Centre and Settlement Expansions

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

Policies:

1. Map 1 shows the approximate boundaries of Centres and Settlements. The Centres and Settlements are comprised of built up areas and areas designated for development in local municipal official plans. An amendment to this Plan to modify these boundaries will be required if an amendment to the local plan is of sufficient size to result in a need to construct major servicing extensions or improvements, and will create significant, identifiable new neighbourhoods with a mix of land uses.
2. It is a requirement of this Plan that the local municipalities in their planning documents delineate boundaries between Centres and Settlements and the Rural Area. Prior to the extension of boundaries, local municipalities will have regard to the following:
 - a) the need for additional urban designations

based on updated population, household and employment projections, in the context of a maximum 20 year planning time frame;

- b) the need to minimize the loss of prime agricultural land and mineral aggregate extraction opportunities;
 - c) potential negative environmental impacts and opportunities for integration with the natural heritage system including enhancement;
 - d) the potential impact on groundwater quantities, flow regimes, and surface recharge/discharge areas;
 - e) the supply of vacant land within each municipality and the achievement of housing targets, in the context of a horizon of up to a 20 year planning time frame;
 - f) opportunities for a variety and mix of housing and the proximity of these to other activities such as transportation and employment;
 - g) opportunities for intensification of development within the existing urban area;
 - h) consultation with public service providers and the general public;
 - i) consideration of planning approaches that encourage compact urban forms;
 - j) the capital and operating costs associated with servicing new development areas, including the feasibility of providing and maintaining roads, storm and potable water treatment and distribution systems; and,
 - k) any other matters of local concern.
3. Notwithstanding Policies 1 and 2 above, nothing in this Plan shall prevent the continued designation of the Sarnia Airport and surrounding lands for airport and airport-related commercial and industrial uses by the local official plan. The unique, low-density character of airport development and the desirability of the surrounding areas for compatible land uses is recognized.

3.7 Business Parks

Goal: To accommodate the demand for industrial land by firms that require relatively

low-density sites with locational and other advantages, consistent with the overall economic development strategy of the County.

Policies:

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

3.8 Petrochemical Industrial Lands

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

Policies:

1. The location of the Petrochemical Industrial Lands is identified on Map 1.
2. Local municipalities are encouraged to retain the land use designations on lands which have been established to accommodate major petrochemical companies and other intensive industrial uses.
3. The main function of the petrochemical industrial lands is to accommodate existing and future large scale industrial uses that are inappropriate elsewhere. These industries require locations that are in proximity to a range of transportation corridors and the St. Clair River for docking facilities and water supplies utilized in their operations.
4. Local municipalities are encouraged to permit other manufacturing, industrial, research and development uses, and office development associated or compatible with these uses. Local municipalities should provide policies that identify the type and locational criteria for permitted uses.
5. Agricultural uses are recognized as permitted uses and will continue to exist until the lands are required for industrial purposes.
6. Development in the petrochemical industrial lands should be integrated with the County natural heritage corridors or the local municipal natural heritage system, where feasible.

3.9 Highway 402 Service Centres

Goal: To provide opportunity for strategically

located highway service centres and tourist oriented land uses adjacent to the Highway 402 corridor.

Policies:

1. The locations of potential Highway 402 Service Centre areas are identified on Map 1. In addition to the service centre locations identified on Map 1, the County encourages the development of service centres in appropriate locations within the Urban Centre designations.
2. The County will encourage the development of the potential Highway 402 Service Centre areas for land uses that are functionally dependent upon proximity to a controlled access highway, such as tourist information centres, truck stops, transport terminals, customs bonding houses, and vehicle refueling facilities. Uses that are secondary, or supportive, to such principal uses will also be permitted provided they are low sewage generators both at the time they are established and in the long-term.
3. The Province and/or its delegate will be consulted in connection with the provision of adequate water supply and sewage disposal systems.
4. Vehicular access to Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be located so as to ensure the safe movement of traffic, and to minimize the number of individual accesses. Continuous open access to a road will be discouraged and the sharing of access points, or the use of an internal service road, will be encouraged. All access to designated areas will be subject to the requirements of the Province and/or its delegate.
5. All development will be subject to municipal site plan control. To enhance the image of Lambton County and its municipalities as attractive and inviting communities, a high standard of building and site design will be required. Site plans will show that adequate area is available for any necessary future upgrade or replacement of private septic systems.

6. Development of Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be undertaken in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on farming activities and the natural heritage system.
7. Highway 402 Service Centre areas will be designated in the local municipal official plan and appropriately zoned. In this regard, the local official plan will define more precisely the boundaries of the Highway 402 Service Centre areas and the range of permitted land uses, consistent with the objectives for such areas, as established by this Plan. Local municipalities are encouraged to make use of 'Holding Zones' to establish the principle of development, and ensure that all design, servicing, and access issues are satisfactorily addressed before development proceeds. The "Holding Zone" will be removed only after the Approval Authority under the Environmental Protection Act is satisfied with respect to private servicing.

3.10 St. Clair River Parkway Area

Goal: To ensure that the Moore and Sombra St. Clair River areas are developed in a manner that complements the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront and recognizes the inherent environmental constraints associated with flooding and slope instability.

Policies:

1. The growth and development of the Moore and Sombra St. Clair River areas will be guided by local official plan policies that consider the following:
 - a) the Natural Heritage Corridor role and function;
 - b) the need to define more precise physical boundaries for the Natural Heritage Corridor;
 - c) the need for lot sizes that complement the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront;
 - d) the need for appropriate erosion protection features along the shoreline;

- e) the need for building setbacks that take into account the level of shoreline protection, the preservation of river vistas and roadway setbacks;
 - f) the need for appropriate regulations for boathouses, docks, and boat lifting devices;
 - g) the establishment of a logical development pattern;
 - h) provision of community services, including parks and recreation facilities; and access to the shoreline;
 - i) the promotion of tourism; and,
 - j) the effect on natural heritage features and functions, and the effect of environmental constraints.
2. The St. Clair River shoreline is a natural attraction to residential development. The existing pattern of development is a linear form of residential, that connects the communities of Corunna, Mooretown, Courtright, Sombra, and Port Lambton, with blocks of existing and proposed industrial. Local official plans will contain polices to strengthen the existing riverfront communities as local service centres with tourism potential. Notwithstanding the Rural/Agriculture designation on Map 1, residential development will be permitted in the connecting areas between these communities on the basis of infilling within existing locally designated lands, in accordance with the policies of this Plan.
3. Industries located along the waterfront use the river as a source of water for cooling purposes, and for transporting raw materials and finished products. Because of these locational attributes, it is expected that there will be a continued demand for industrial land.
Waterfront industrial development will occur in a manner which will not create conflicts with other uses. The siting and design of buildings and structures, and the landscape treatment of sites will complement the aesthetic and natural setting of the riverfront and should incorporate naturalizing techniques, where possible.
4. Parks, and other facilities located along the St. Clair Parkway (County Road 33) contribute to the scenic and recreational attributes of the riverfront. Opportunities will be provided whenever possible to enhance the scenic and recreational amenities of the waterfront.
5. Waterfront development will occur in a manner that recognizes the environmental constraints of the riverfront, while allowing its use and enjoyment for private and public purposes.
6. Opportunities to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, and increase the amount and variety of indigenous vegetation species will be encouraged.
7. Opportunities to incorporate recreational and tourism related pathways with potential for connecting municipalities, both within Lambton County and the State of Michigan will be encouraged.
8. Development which is consistent with the Parkway and the Natural Heritage policies of this Plan is encouraged.

Chapter 4

4. AGRICULTURE

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

Socially, agriculture represents a way of life. Approximately 29% of the County population in 1991 was classified as rural, including rural farm and non-farm residents. Additionally, 60% of the farms were operated as individual or family holdings, meaning family farms. While the average size of farm holdings is increasing, a majority in Lambton continue to be operated as traditional family farms.

The relative scarcity of prime farmland in Ontario (it makes up only 9% of the Province’s land base) makes it a valuable resource. Policies should protect the land base from incompatible uses that tend to limit the flexibility and viability of farm operations over time. The long-term conservation of prime farmland requires efficient and compact urban development.

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

4.1 Agricultural Viability

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

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

Policies:

1. The policies of this Chapter apply to the Rural/Agriculture Area of the County, as identified on Map 1.
2. This Plan will protect, maintain and improve prime agricultural areas for the long-term future of agriculture. Prime agricultural areas are predominated by Class 1, 2 and 3 soils according to the Canada Land Inventory and include specialty crop areas. The Thedford Marsh in Bosanquet is a Provincially significant specialty crop area with organic soils that are suitable for the production of vegetables.
3. The Rural/Agriculture areas will be designated in local municipal official plans.
4. Local municipalities are encouraged to designate locally significant specialty crop areas and to establish policies for their protection, maintenance and improvement. The Blackwell Marsh in Sarnia is a locally significant specialty crop area with organic soils that are capable of supporting vegetable crops. In various areas throughout the County, old glacial lake shorelines and sand deposits have the capability of supporting orchard crops.
5. The County recognizes that normal farm practices create noise, dust, and odours that are associated with livestock and heavy machinery. Early morning and late evening activities are also required, especially during planting and harvesting periods. The County supports the ‘Right-to-Farm’ concept and when applying the policies of this Plan, priority will be given to agricultural uses over other uses in the Rural/Agriculture Area.
6. The primary land use activity in the Rural/Agriculture Area will be agricultural uses. Agricultural uses include the growing of crops, including nursery and horticultural crops; raising of livestock and other animals; aquaculture; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings

and structures including accessory farm dwellings.

7. Agriculture related uses means those farm-related commercial and industrial uses that are small scale and directly related to the farm operation and are required in proximity to the farm operation.
8. Aggregate, oil and gas extraction and accessory uses are permitted in the Rural/Agriculture Area in accordance with Provincial Policy and Legislation, and the Mineral Resource Policies of this Plan.
9. Additional residential structures required for farm help necessary for the operation of the farm will be grouped with existing farm buildings. The severance of such dwellings will not be permitted.
10. On-farm economic diversification will be encouraged to provide farmers greater opportunity to obtain additional sources of income. Such uses will include home-occupations, home-industries and industrial and commercial uses that produce value-added agricultural products from the farm operation. Such uses are to be addressed in local official plans and zoning by-laws, and municipalities are encouraged to control their operation through policies which deal with the following:
 - a) the types and scale of the uses that are permitted, especially for uses not directly related to agriculture;
 - b) the need to ensure that the activity is secondary to the main farm operation;
 - c) the desirability of ensuring that these lands should remain in the agricultural official plan designation;
 - d) where the activity is to be permitted on the property;
 - e) the criteria under which the activity will be allowed to expand;
 - f) the need to ensure that the area occupied by the activity will not be severed from the existing lot; and,
 - g) other matters of local interest.

11. Commercial and industrial uses which provide services to agriculture will be permitted in the Rural/Agriculture Area if they are essential to the agricultural economy and require a location in proximity to farm operations. Such uses are to be addressed in local official plans and must demonstrate:

- a) the need and demand for the proposed use at the proposed location;
- b) that the proposed use will not unduly affect the agricultural land base and farming activities;
- c) that the proposed use will not adversely impact the natural heritage system;
- d) that the proposed use is not more appropriate in a partially or fully serviced settlement;
- e) that the proposed use will be compatible with nearby uses;
- f) that an adequate potable water supply and sewage disposal system can be provided; and,
- g) other matters of local interest.

12. Land uses that do not require a location in the Rural/Agriculture Area and most non-farm development will be directed to Urban Centres and Settlements or Rural Settlement areas in order to preserve agricultural land and to avoid conflicts between farm and non-farm uses.

13. Limited non-farm uses will be permitted in settlements lacking municipal services or with partial municipal services in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) the uses must be located on lands which are zoned for the proposed use;
- b) an adequate potable water supply or sewage disposal system can be provided;
- c) the uses must be compatible with adjacent land uses;
- d) there must be no significant negative impact on the natural heritage system; and,
- e) other matters of local interest.

14. Limited recreational and open space uses may be permitted in the Rural/Agriculture Area provided that:

- a) there is a demonstrated need or demand for the use;
 - b) the proposed location is suitable for the use and there are no reasonable alternative locations available that would be more appropriate;
 - c) Class 1 to 3 soils are avoided, where possible;
 - d) where it is necessary to use Class 1 to 3 soils, the least productive agricultural lands should be used;
 - e) the use will have a minimal negative impact on farming activities and will be subject to the natural heritage policies of this Plan;
 - f) an adequate potable water supply and sewage disposal system can be provided;
 - g) the lands are designated in the local municipality's official plan and zoned for the proposed use; and,
 - h) other matters of local interest.
15. This Plan supports the extension of municipal rural piped water to rural areas because of the historical lack of potable water to service a viable agricultural sector. This should not be construed to mean that scattered development is encouraged in the Rural/Agriculture Area.
16. New land uses, including the creation of lots and new or expanding livestock facilities will comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae (MDS I & II) provided by the Province and/or its delegate. Local municipalities will incorporate these formulae into their zoning by-laws. Local exceptions to the MDS formulae may be considered if a suitable alternative approach can be developed with the support of the Province and/or its delegate. In addition to the MDS requirements, the Approval Authority will consider the provisions of the Land Use Compatibility Guidelines prepared by the Province and/or its delegate.
17. The County endorses the Guide to Agricultural Land Use, prepared by the Province and/or its delegate, as an aid to local farmers in the management of their operations.
18. Farm practices that are sensitive to the natural heritage system will be encouraged. Stewardship approaches for the conservation of natural heritage features are encouraged. These include "no till" methods of cultivation, the re-establishment of natural heritage features, proper woodlot management, and management practices that ensure that surface and ground water quality is protected. Natural heritage features will remain as part of the farm holding.
19. This Plan recognizes the importance of trees and woodlots to agriculture due to their wind protection and moisture holding capabilities. Existing woodlots will be protected in accordance with the Lambton County Tree Protection By-law, which regulates the cutting of certain trees and woodlots, and the natural heritage policies of this Plan. In accordance with the natural heritage policies of this Plan, new development in woodlots will not generally be allowed.

4.2 Severances

Policies:

1. Severances to permit the creation of residential lots in rural areas will only be permitted in the following situations:
 - a) An existing farm dwelling that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation (farm consolidation means the acquisition of additional farm parcels to be operated as one farm operation). One of two or more existing farm residences built prior to 1978 may also be severed as a residence surplus to the needs of the farm operation. Only 1 surplus dwelling is to be allowed per original farm lot.

- b) For residential infilling purposes where the creation of a residential lot between two existing non-farm residences which are on separate lots and which are situated on the same side of a road and are not more than 100 metres apart.

farming in the municipality or in that part of the municipality. The local municipality must be able to show evidence of support from the agricultural community for the smaller minimum farm lot size.

A local municipality's official plan must have regard for Provincial Policy in connection with agricultural severances, and may be more restrictive in the types of consents permitted for the creation of residential lots in rural areas.

- 2. All new non-farm lots will be limited in size so that a minimum of land is taken out of agricultural production and will be located on the least productive land where possible. The lot size and shape should be consistent with expected current and future needs with respect to water supply and sewage disposal.
- 3. Consents in the Rural Area may also be permitted for the following purposes:
 - a) to create rights-of-way or easements;
 - b) to enlarge existing farm lots or to bring an existing non-farm lot up to a municipality's development standards;
 - c) to consolidate farm holdings;
 - d) to allow minor boundary adjustments and,
 - e) to create farm holdings that are not less than 40 hectares (100 acres) in order to discourage the unwarranted fragmentation of farmland. It is not intended to prevent the creation of a limited number of smaller farm parcels required for the type of agriculture proposed, such as specialty crop production. Leasing of land should also be considered as an alternative to creating small farm parcels.
- 4. Notwithstanding Subsection 3 e) above, a local Official Plan may provide for a smaller minimum farm size than 40 hectares (100 acres) provided that a study is carried out by the local municipality to demonstrate that such smaller farm lot size is prevalent among the farm lots within the local municipality. The smaller lot size must represent a viable farm lot, given the characteristics and trends in

Chapter 5

5. ECONOMIC GROWTH

The document entitled “A First Step: A Strategy for Economic Renewal in Lambton County” released by the Sarnia-Lambton Council for Economic Renewal in November 1995, contains a strategic plan for revitalizing the local economy. The document contains strategic objectives for change and action plans for bringing about the change.

The document promotes economic development efforts that focus on:

- attracting new industry;
- fostering the growth of small business;
- community economic development;
- encouraging the development of tourism; and,
- agriculture.

The strategic objectives outlined in the strategy for economic renewal are:

- to establish strong community leadership for economic renewal;
- to establish a dynamic competitive economic area;
- to diversify the economic base;
- to develop an entrepreneurial community;
- to maintain and enhance the quality of life;
- to encourage the development of tourism; and
- to develop Lambton as an educational centre of excellence.

The document also cites sectors offering major opportunities for business development. The sectors promoted for special attention (and others cited by the Sarnia-Lambton Office for Economic Development) are automotive, health care, software development, education, research and development activities, plastics, tourism, retirement living, natural heritage, recycling, transportation, and value-added agriculture based products.

The components of future economic growth include agriculture, natural resources, tourism, manufacturing, business and retail commercial activities. In addition, community economic

development can be employed as a method of addressing local economic difficulties.

Community Economic Development (CED) is a term describing a strategic approach that involves assessing the strengths (local skills, resources, ideas, commitment) of the community and using these to make the community a better place to live. CED can take on a wide variety of forms. Examples include facilitating the establishment of small business, and identifying the need for and providing community services that are not provided by government. CED efforts are supported by this Plan.

5.1 Encourage Economic Growth

Goal: To encourage and accommodate economic activities that contribute to the diversity of the County’s economic base, in such a way as to enhance the County as a place to work, live, and visit.

Policies:

1. New investment and re-investment by existing industry and business, wealth creation, and prosperity are recognized as key policy directions of the Official Plan.
2. The County will work with local municipalities to ensure that the physical needs of business are addressed, which includes ensuring that:
 - a) a diversity of zoned and serviced sites are available to support a range of industrial and service activities;
 - b) urban communities and employment areas are adequately served by telecommunication facilities; and,
 - c) industrial areas, including industrial and business parks, are well designed and have a high level of available amenities, including access to major transportation routes, that are attractive to new investors.
3. The designation of new lands for industrial and commercial purposes will be done in such a way as to ensure the new uses are compatible

with existing development and do not detract from existing areas of economic activity.

4. The County of Lambton will promote itself as a location for a range of economic activities, with an emphasis on automotive, health care, software development, education, research and development activities, plastics, tourism, retirement living, natural heritage, recycling, transportation, and agriculture including value-added agriculture based products.
5. The County will promote the maintenance and improvement of modern infrastructure systems including roads, railways, airports, harbours, pipelines, and telecommunications networks to service existing and future employment centres.
6. New retail facilities will be designed and located to serve the needs of residents without detracting from existing or planned centres, mainstreets, and the settlement strategy of the Plan.
7. Home-based work is recognized as an important component of the local economy that needs to be better integrated into communities. Local municipalities are encouraged to ensure that land use regulations do not unreasonably limit the ability of residents to operate businesses from their homes.
8. Enhancement of the economic base of Rural Areas is encouraged through local policies that provide for a limited amount of suitable and compatible commercial and industrial activity.
9. The County, together with local municipalities and interest groups, will continue to explore opportunities to establish and promote recreation and tourism throughout the County.
10. The County supports the designation of the Bluewater Bridge and Highway 402 as one of the links in the Canada-United States-Mexico North America Free Trade Agreement superhighway system. The County will work in conjunction with the State of Michigan in promoting the link between Highway 402 and Interstate 94.

5.2 Locations for Economic Development

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

Policies:

1. Government, major institutional, major office, cultural and entertainment uses will be located to support the growth strategy of this Plan.
2. Commercial and industrial activities not requiring a rural location will be directed to fully serviced employment areas within Urban Centres and Settlements, in keeping with the intent of the growth strategy and agricultural policies of this Plan.
3. The County and the local municipalities must provide for a wide range of economic activity. The County encourages a diversity of available sites and locations, flexibility for different types of buildings and a mix of supporting uses.
4. This plan recognizes the need to accommodate industrial activities with large land base requirements. The preferred locations would be in existing industrial parks within fully serviced Urban Centres or Urban Settlements. In circumstances where a large scale industrial use with land base requirements of 40 hectares (100 ac.) or greater cannot be accommodated in the centre or settlement, any such industry may locate outside of an existing Urban Centre or Urban Settlement designation, without the necessity for an amendment to this Plan, provided that the following criteria are met:
 - a) there are no alternative locations of sufficient size available within the centre or settlement;
 - b) the proposed use is compatible with existing and anticipated future uses in the immediate area;
 - c) the proposed use can be fully serviced with municipal water and sewer connections;
 - d) adequate uncommitted reserve capacity

exists in the municipal sewage treatment system, or can be provided;

- e) the site is located in proximity to a major transportation corridor.;
 - f) the site should preferably be contiguous to existing industrial lands;
 - g) the site is compatible with the Natural Heritage policies of this plan; and
 - h) the proposal conforms to the local Official Plan and Zoning by-law.
5. Business parks are encouraged in accordance with the policies contained in Section 3.7 of this Plan.
6. The County, together with the local municipalities, will monitor the location, type and characteristics of business and the supply of serviced lands for new business. The County will encourage inter-municipal co-operation in the location of new business, recognizing that the economic benefits of new business accrue to the entire County.
7. The County encourages local municipal official plans to include policies which provide for opportunities to reuse vacant industrial buildings and the redevelopment of vacant industrial sites.
8. Local municipalities may require proposals for major retail facilities to include an impact assessment that addresses the following:
- a) the impact on existing and approved future retail facilities within the County;
 - b) the manner in which the proposal is supportive of the County Development and Growth Strategy and local municipal commercial development strategies.
9. Local municipalities are encouraged to plan for commercial facilities that serve local residents as integral parts of communities with an emphasis on design.

5.3 Community Economic Development

Goal: To encourage greater economic self-reliance through the development of local approaches to economic development.

Policies:

- 1. The County and local municipalities will support community economic development initiatives.
- 2. The County will assist in coordinating the promotion of local features to maximize the economic benefits and spin-offs which may result.
- 3. The County is a committed partner in the ongoing implementation of the Strategy for Economic Renewal in Lambton County as prepared by the Sarnia-Lambton Council for Economic Renewal.

 Chapter 6

6. TOURISM

The draft Sarnia-Lambton Strategic Tourism Development Plan, the existing County Official Plan, the Lambton County Tourism Development Study (1980), the Downtown Sarnia Report (1994) and Ontario's Tourism Industry Report (1994) were considered in the preparation of this chapter.

Lambton County, as a gateway port of entry into Ontario and Canada, presents a significant opportunity to become a "niche market" to strengthen Ontario's tourism industry. Tourism has been identified as one of seven key focus areas to expand the local economy. Lambton's natural assets and cultural heritage are ripe for development. These assets must be developed in order for Lambton County to attract a greater volume of tourists and their dollars.

Highway 402 is a major route for travelers entering Canada from the United States. With the opening of the second span of the Blue Water Bridge in July of 1997, Highway 402 is poised to receive many more American tourists. Highway 402 is an important resource for economic development. Tourism development will give the traveler reason to leave this highway to venture into Lambton County communities.

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

International ferry boat services exist at Sombra Village and Walpole Island linking Lambton across the St. Clair River to the state of Michigan. VIA and AMTRAK passenger train service, through the new St. Clair River Rail Tunnel, and the Sarnia Airport have excess capacity to bring visitors to

Lambton by rail and air.

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

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

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

Eco-tourism, agri-tourism, hunting and sport fishing have potential to bring economic diversity to rural Lambton. These tourism sectors have potential to offer experiences to vacationers in agricultural and natural resource settings and will build on events such as Egremont Road Heritage

Days in Plympton and the Apple Blossom Festival in Arkona.

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

As Lambton takes tourism development to its next plateau, it is important to resolve problems with other jurisdictions related to public access to beaches and other waterfront areas and obstacles to efficient border crossings at the Blue Water Bridge. Improved relations and reconciliation of these issues with First Nations, Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments will open the door to expanded tourism development which in turn will bring economic benefits, jobs, improvement of Lambton's image and a renewed sense of community pride.

6.1 Tourism Development

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

Policies:

1. The County will work co-operatively with tourist groups and operators to make Lambton the number one drive-to destination in Southwestern Ontario.
2. The County will encourage the implementation

of the Sarnia Lambton Strategic Tourism Development Plan. Tourism operators, local officials and business leaders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Tourism Development Plan and help ensure it is implemented.

3. Municipalities are encouraged to develop positive and creative planning policies to accommodate tourism-oriented developments, including methods of expediting the approval of tourism-oriented developments.
4. Tourism businesses should work together to promote their facilities and the County's tourism industry.
5. The Plan encourages the development of commercial urban waterfront attractions on the Sarnia and Point Edward waterfronts. The development of the Point Edward waterfront, south of the Blue Water Bridge, as a multi-faceted resort destination is supported. In this regard, the County will strive to obtain permission from the Province for a permanent casino at this location.
6. Public and private initiatives focused on leisure, entertainment and recreation "people-generators" in historic downtown Sarnia are supported by the County.
7. The County will promote the development of eco-tourism in natural heritage areas within their carrying capacity.
8. The County will promote the development of agri-tourism in the rural areas that does not interfere with agricultural operations.
9. The County encourages the development of tourism attractions, especially those with capacity for year round use which will assist in developing Lambton County as a regional tourism destination.
10. The success in attracting tourism developments to the County should be monitored to assist in determining the types of developments which could be attracted in the future. Annual targets

are listed in the Tourism Development Plan and sector champions should meet to track and measure progress.

11. Public and private programs improving customer service excellence by businesses involved in tourism are supported.

6.2 Oil Heritage

Goal: To promote Lambton County's prominent role in the discovery of oil in Canada and the development of a petro-chemical industry.

Policies:

1. Where possible, the County will assist in promoting and further developing the Oil Heritage District as a regional attraction.
2. The County supports strong linkages between the features of the Oil Heritage District and signage to direct tourists to and around this area.
3. Suitable methods to enable the continued operation of historic oil drilling techniques at the Oil Discovery facility in Petrolia once the oil bearing strata is exhausted should be developed.
4. Modern technology providing interactive learning experiences where appropriate should be introduced into attractions of the Oil Heritage District.
5. The Plan encourages the development of a Petrochemical Interpretive Centre to promote Lambton's petrochemical heritage.

6.3 Lake Huron and St. Clair River Waterfronts

Goal: To enhance and promote the County's waterfronts and associated marine history for tourism purposes.

Policies:

1. Municipalities are encouraged to pursue programs and projects which rejuvenate their waterfronts.
2. Municipalities are encouraged to consider private commercial developments which are oriented to their waterfronts, particularly those which include public access to the water's edge.
3. Lambton County's marine history should be delivered through facilities or amenities which share this information with people traveling to Lambton, especially features of Provincial, National and International significance such as the construction of the Blue Water Bridges, St. Clair River Railway Tunnels, ferry operations and the Historic River District.
4. Tourism in the form of leisure recreation which utilizes waterways such as fishing, boating, swimming, diving, should be promoted.
5. Careful use and management of beaches, recognizing their importance to the industry of tourism in the County, is a priority.
6. The County and its member municipalities should work together to ensure that existing beaches remain accessible to the general public.
7. Existing public areas along the St. Clair River and the Lake Huron shorelines will be held in trust for future generations as they maintain attractive open space along these routes. Additional public lands should be acquired as they become available. Should these routes continue to be stripped by residential development, they will cease to exist as tourism generators.
8. Public agencies and local municipalities are encouraged to acquire waterfront properties where feasible along the Lake Huron shoreline and the St. Clair River to provide additional public access.
9. Municipalities are encouraged to improve those lands that provide access to the St. Clair River

and Lake Huron shorelines and utilize the shorelines for tourism-oriented developments.

10. Opportunities to link public areas along the shorelines through parkland dedications, easements, and acquisitions should be pursued, where appropriate. Multi-use trails along the linked corridor should be developed for use by residents and tourists.
11. Water front development should be of a form and design which is attractive when viewed from the water to encourage the boating public to visit waterfront tourism features.

6.4 Highway 402 Interchanges

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

Policies:

1. Lands at Highway 402 interchanges that are appropriate for service centre development should be developed for uses oriented to the traveling public. Local official plans should include policies to guide development at the designated interchanges, including:
 - a) list of permitted uses such as gas stations, restaurants, and tourist information centres;
 - b) a requirement that the permitted uses are compatible with nearby land uses, including agriculture;
 - c) a requirement for the provision of adequate servicing, including potable water and sanitary sewage systems, to the site; and,
 - d) a requirement to ensure safe vehicular access to the site.
2. Site plan control should be used to ensure that development at Highway 402 interchanges is well-planned and attractive. Buildings, structures, signage and landscaping should be attractive to patrons and to traffic along the highway.
3. The Province will be consulted with regard to the introduction of signage regulations which

allow businesses along the highway to effectively advertise their uses.

6.5 Physical and Marketing Linkages

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

Policies:

1. The County and local municipalities are encouraged to develop and maintain a variety of transportation corridors which physically link significant tourism events, sites and facilities.
2. The Plan supports efforts to develop transportation routes which accommodate alternative means of travel such as cycling and walking trails. These routes should link Lambton County with abutting municipalities, and the State of Michigan.
3. A quality and co-ordinated signage system along transportation routes to identify and promote major tourism attractions will be developed. Local municipalities should work with the tourism industry to clearly sign roads providing access to major attractions. The County supports tourism providers and municipalities in this regard.
4. The Plan encourages the development of events and activities to market and promote tourism amenities of Lambton County.
5. The County will investigate partnerships with First Nations and other groups and organizations to coordinate events and share resources regarding tourism opportunities.

6.6 County Image

Goal: To ensure that Lambton County's qualities as an attractive tourist area are recognized and promoted.

Policies:

1. The Federal Government is urged to expedite resolution of all native land claims in Lambton County to enable tourism development in areas of potential.
2. The County encourages the Federal government to ensure that the Customs and Immigration booths at the Blue Water Bridges are properly staffed to provide visitors with as timely an access into Canada as possible. The establishment of commuter lanes may also assist in improving traffic flows across the bridges.
3. The County will work with agencies and industrial partners at continuing to improve the image of Lambton County with respect to air and water quality management. The County and tourism providers will encourage the involvement of these interest groups in the development of attractions which promote Lambton's environmental achievements and petrochemical heritage.

Chapter 7

7. INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure includes road, rail, airport, natural heritage features, as described elsewhere in this Plan, water and sewer, electric, utility, waste disposal, and telecommunication facilities operated by a variety of public and private sector agencies. These systems are vital to everyday life and economic competitiveness. Infrastructure is critical to the growth and economy of the built environment while respecting the integrity of the natural heritage system.

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

The road network within the County includes a system of roads and highways under the jurisdiction of the local municipalities, the County, and the Province of Ontario. At the present time the County maintains a network of roads, with a total length of about 558 kilometres, that primarily serve to link the various parts of the County. The Province and/or its delegate maintains Highways 402, 22, 21, 40, 79, and 80 within the County. It is anticipated that the length of Highways 22, 79, and 80 within the County will become part of the County road network in 1997.

A public transit system serves to reduce reliance on private automobiles, conserve energy, and ensure transportation services for the young, the elderly, the physically challenged and those who do not have access to a private vehicle. The City of Sarnia maintains the only regularly scheduled public transit system within the County. This system is

funded by the City and the Village of Point Edward. Special transit services for the disabled are offered within the City and the County. In addition, rural transportation services are offered for seniors.

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

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

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

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

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

While most of the freight passing through the County originates outside of the County a number of industries in the County use the railway for transportation of raw materials and finished

product. Railway facilities are of considerable importance to the agricultural sector, as these also provide shipping of farm products to the elevator located at the Sarnia Harbour. Passenger service to London and beyond, and west into the United States (a Via Rail/ Amtrak link) is also offered. However, service has been curtailed over the years.

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

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

Approximately 90% of Lambton County residents obtain their drinking water from water treatment plants. These plants draw water from Lake Huron inlets located at Sarnia, Bright's Grove and Grand Bend. Potable water (safe for drinking) is pumped through a network of over 250 kilometres of pipeline that extends throughout much of Lambton County.

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

Public sewage treatment facilities in Lambton are operated by the local municipalities or contracted. In general, sewage treatment facilities in Lambton

County have sufficient uncommitted reserve capacity to accommodate development on lands that are already designated for residential development.

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

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

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

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

The identification, management, and decommissioning of contaminated industrial and commercial sites is important for the social, economic, and environmental health of Lambton's communities. Sites of potential contamination include sites used formerly for industrial, utility, waste disposal, salvage yards, and agricultural sites. Contaminants accruing from the disposal of waste materials, raw material storage, residues left in containers, maintenance activities, and spills may be present on the site, in the soil, or within ground and surface waters, and may present health

and safety risks.

7.1 Road Network

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

Policies:

1. Ongoing improvements to the County Road system will be undertaken. In recognition of the significant economic investment in the road system, an emphasis on restorative and preventative maintenance will be continued.
2. Where appropriate, road improvement plans will be supported by traffic studies, and undertaken in concert with land use planning efforts.
3. The County encourages the use of landscaping and other techniques that minimize the visual and noise impacts from roadways on adjacent residential development or in the immediate vicinity of existing or proposed arterial roads.
4. Where property fronts on a County road, land may need to be conveyed at no expense to the County for County road widenings as a condition of severance, plans of subdivision, or as a consequence of new development, under the provisions of the Planning Act.
5. Unequal widenings may be taken where topographic features, historic buildings or other cultural heritage resources, significant environmental concerns or other unique conditions necessitate taking a greater widening or the total widening on one side of an existing County road right-of-way.
6. The County will require a minimum width of 30 metres for all County roads. Right-of-way width requirements for a specific section of roadway may be reduced where special circumstances warrant and long-term requirements will not be affected.

7. New access points to County roads will be discouraged where development sites have suitable access to the local road system, in order to preserve the traffic carrying capacity and safety of County roads.
8. New accesses to County roads will only be permitted where traffic safety concerns related to sight lines at curves, hills, and intersections can be addressed.
9. Large development proposals that are likely to generate significant traffic volumes may require a transportation study so that their impact on County roads and surrounding land uses can be properly assessed.

7.2 Transit Network

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

Policies:

1. The continued operation of regularly scheduled public transit services is encouraged. The extension of such services is also encouraged where justified by a reasonable level of demand.
2. In light of the County's aging population, continued improvements to transportation services for seniors and the disabled are encouraged. In particular, efforts to improve the coordination of various transportation services are supported.

7.3 Cycling and Walking Trails

Goal: To encourage the development of cycling and walking trails throughout Lambton for the benefit of local residents and to enhance the experience of visitors to the County.

Policies:

1. Cycling and walking are recognized as important forms of transportation, particularly within urban communities. In addition, cycling and walking are recognized as important recreational activities, and the establishment of trails has the potential to encourage increased tourism.
2. The County encourages the conversion of abandoned railway corridors for public purposes wherever feasible and appropriate.
3. Wherever possible, measures will be taken to ensure the safety of the trail system, and concerns about conflicts with private property interests will be suitably addressed.
4. The establishment of trails along natural corridors throughout the County is encouraged, with the objective of creating a comprehensive network of recreational trails.
5. The County may assist local municipalities in the preparation of a trail system Master Plan, where so desired.

7.4 Airport

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

Policies:

1. Development in the vicinity of the Sarnia Airport will be controlled to reduce the potential for land use conflicts and to ensure there will be no negative impacts on the long term function of the airport. Noise Exposure Forecasts approved by Transport Canada will be used in evaluating new development proposals in proximity to the airport. New development contrary to Provincial and Federal policy in this regard will be prohibited.
2. Retention of a full range of services, including Customs facilities, at the Airport is encouraged.

7.5 Water Transportation - Port and Marina Facilities

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

Policies:

1. The retention of deep water port facilities as a component of the County's transportation infrastructure is encouraged.
2. Efforts to attract more ships to winter at the Sarnia harbour are encouraged as a means of generating local income from the maintenance and repair activities that benefit local companies.
3. The continued operation of marinas to serve local needs and to promote and encourage greater tourist traffic is encouraged. Marina expansions, or the establishment of new marinas, will be subject to the relevant policies of this Plan and the applicable local official plan.
4. The continued operation of St. Clair River ferries which provide an important connection between Ontario and Michigan at Sombra Village and Walpole Island is encouraged.

7.6 Railways

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

Policies:

1. Railway operators are encouraged to maintain existing facilities and services within the County.

2. Noise, vibration, and safety issues will be addressed for new land uses adjacent to railway lines. In some instances, these issues may also need to be addressed for land uses at a greater distance from the railway line.
3. The protection of abandoned railway rights-of-way for other uses is encouraged. Dissolving an existing right-of-way by conveying the land to abutting owners is discouraged, to ensure the availability of the right-of-way should rail transportation become important in the future.
4. The County will work with local municipalities in evaluating the potential use of abandoned rail corridors for recreation, transportation and/or utility corridor purposes. This could entail the preparation of a Master Plan which would be used to evaluate the eventual use and linkage of abandoned rail corridors.

The evaluation of alternate uses for abandoned corridors will require consultation between the local municipality, the County, community groups, potential users, affected landowners and other interested parties before any development of the abandoned railway corridor occurs. Formalized public consultation will be part of the decision-making process, including public meetings, open houses, or other forms of obtaining public input.

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

property owners. This option would represent a short-term use of the corridor only.

7.7 Utility Corridors: Electricity/ Pipelines/ Communications

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

Policies:

1. Preferred routes for utility lines and corridors follow existing rights-of-way, property lines, existing easements and fence lines; avoid built-up and heavily populated areas; do not infringe on environmentally significant areas, including natural heritage corridors, and do not further fragment forested areas.
2. The minimization of impacts on woodlots and agricultural lands, should be the highest priority in determining a utility line or corridor route in rural areas.
3. Where woodlot locations cannot be avoided, tree cover removed will be replaced with twice the area of tree cover that is removed at a location specified by the affected land owner. Should the owner not have a suitable location, the County or local municipality will select it.
4. Measures to mitigate impacts on agriculture during and after construction should be followed including replacement of soils with top soil layers in their original condition and order; timing of construction to minimize crop losses; stripping, treatment, and disposal of surplus materials from trenching in a manner acceptable to the land owner and the local municipality; avoidance of prime agricultural lands when possible; repair of damage to natural soils, surface drainage, tile drainage and/or fencing to the satisfaction of the land owner; siting of towers or other fixtures adjacent to fence lines, hedge rows or property

boundaries where possible; use of narrow base towers on specialty crop lands for in-field locations, and for fence and property line locations on prime agricultural lands.

5. Access points to existing roads should be reviewed with municipal road superintendents or the County Public Works Department, depending on the ownership of the road.
6. Design, construction, site restoration and maintenance should be carried out in accordance with relevant environmental guidelines regarding watercourses, sedimentation control, environmentally significant areas, natural heritage corridors, and agricultural lands.
7. Consideration will be given to ensuring that above-ground facilities or structures are aesthetically pleasing and visually harmonious with the surrounding area.
8. The design, planning, and maintenance of the corridor will consider the effects on the natural heritage corridor framework and will implement restoration techniques consistent with natural heritage policies. The utility company will be responsible for the cost of repairing damage to municipal roads.
9. Any severance required for new utility corridors must not result in fragmentation of farm land. Easements should be obtained for new utility corridors rather than creating new separate and distinct lots.
10. The utility company will maintain and be ultimately responsible for the corridor and the decommissioning and/or removal of facilities upon the abandonment of the utility line.

7.8 Water and Sewers

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

Policies:

1. Full municipal water and sewage services, including communal sewage treatment systems, is the preferred method for servicing except as provided in section 3.2, the Growth Strategy . Consistent with the County's Development and Growth Strategy, the majority of growth will occur on full municipal services, with limited use of private individual water and/or septic systems in Rural Areas and Rural Settlements where full municipal services are not available and the development is considered environmentally safe.
2. In areas serviced by full municipal water and sewage services, approval of development applications will not occur unless there is adequate uncommitted reserve capacity available for water, sanitary, and storm water services. The calculation of this uncommitted reserve capacity will consider any allocations made to approved developments that have not yet been constructed.
3. In accordance with Provincial Policy, and the requirements of the Ministry of Environment and Energy, no extension to an existing urban designation as shown on Map 1 will be approved unless an approved municipal or communal sewage treatment system with adequate uncommitted reserve capacity exists to serve the new development area.
4. In recognition of the water quality and quantity problems that are experienced in much of the Rural Area, the extension of municipal water to serve existing rural development is encouraged provided:

- a) it is needed to address failed private services or to provide a more reliable quality and quantity of water; and
 - b) it is not being installed for the purpose of encouraging the establishment of new non-farm development in the rural area.
5. All development proposals will have regard for stormwater drainage and surface water infiltration on-site in direct relation to the scale of the development.
 6. Local stormwater management policies that include the use of infiltration as a means to replenish groundwater supplies and minimize offsite flooding and erosion are encouraged, where feasible.
 7. On-site erosion control and sedimentation techniques to minimize off-site effects prior to and during the construction phase will be required.
 8. Local municipalities are encouraged to work together, where appropriate, in the provision of sanitary sewer and municipal water services to development.
 9. The establishment of municipally owned and operated stormwater quality treatment facilities where feasible and practical, based on the findings of watershed and subwatershed studies, will be encouraged.
 10. The incorporation of stormwater quality best management practices into the design and long term maintenance of development proposals will be encouraged.
 11. Development projects and associated stormwater outfalls adjacent to watercourses should incorporate naturalization techniques where appropriate to enhance and maintain vegetation and habitat.

7.9 Waste Management

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

Policies:

1. The Lambton County Waste Management Master Plan is the primary guide for waste management in the County.
2. The reduction, reuse and recycling of waste is encouraged to extend the life of landfill sites.
3. Local municipal recycling programs are recognized as key efforts that have reduced the waste going to landfills.
4. Composting, including private household composting and municipal composting programs, are recognized as having potential to further reduce wastes going to landfills. Private commercial compost facilities are to be located on lands designated and zoned for such purposes.
5. Private commercial waste management facilities are to be located on lands designated and zoned for such purposes. An amendment to the local official plan is required prior to the establishment of new waste management facilities or the expansion of existing facilities.
6. Any proposal for a new waste management facility or for the expansion of an existing facility must be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of this Plan and must comply with the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act and other Provincial legislation.
7. Any development, or change of use, on or within 500 metres of the perimeter of an active or closed waste disposal site, located in Lambton County or adjoining Counties, will be subject to consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy before any zoning by-law, zoning by-law amendment,

official plan, official plan amendment, or other Planning Act approval is adopted or granted for such lands. A study may be required to be undertaken by a qualified professional that evaluates the presence and impact of environmental contaminants including but not necessarily limited to methane gas and leachate. The study will address the feasibility of mitigation measures if required. If it is found that a potential adverse effect or potential risk to health and safety does exist, development may be restricted and /or refused.

Where development, or change of use is proposed on a waste site, no zoning by-law, zoning by-law amendment, official plan, official plan amendment, or other Planning Act approvals will be adopted or granted until approval from the Province and/or its delegate for the proposed use is obtained in accordance with Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act, or from the Province and/or its delegate if more than 25 years has lapsed since the land ceased to be so used for waste disposal purposes.

8. Local official plans will identify all known closed, abandoned and active waste disposal sites and provide policies for development in proximity to the sites.

7.10 Sites With Potential Environmental Contamination

Goal: To ensure that sites possessing potential environmental contamination are identified and addressed before their development commences.

Policies:

1. Development or redevelopment of lands or buildings with known or suspected environmental contamination will be permitted only after there has been a determination that the contaminants do not pose a health or safety risk. Appropriate Provincial agencies may be

consulted in this regard. Approval of any proposal may require:

- a) documentation of present and past uses of the land and/or building and information on the types of contaminants that may have been used on the site;
 - b) analysis of the soils, surface water and ground water to determine the presence and extent of any contamination; and,
 - c) identification of potential health concerns.
2. If it is determined that contaminants exist at a level that poses unacceptable risk, the preparation and implementation of a remedial action plan may be required. The remedial action plan is to prescribe how the restoration of the property is to be carried out.
 3. The remedial action plan is to be prepared by qualified persons in accordance with the Ministry of Environment and Energy's "Guideline for Use at Contaminated Sites in Ontario" or its successor document before development, redevelopment or conversion of the property or building begins.
 4. Prior to purchasing or accepting any lands for public purposes, including the dedication of parkland, the municipality may require the owner to provide confirmation that no environmental contaminants exist.

Chapter 8

8. NATURAL HERITAGE

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

The traditional approach to environmental management has relied on policies that can be implemented through regulations and by-laws. By-laws alone will not ensure that the natural environment is maintained and enhanced. Public policy should emphasize stewardship programs whereby land owners are assisted to understand the importance of the natural habitat and are encouraged to protect and enhance natural features as they manage their land through programs such as woodlot and farm management plans. Under stewardship, the land owners become partners in environmental protection and programs proceed only with their permission and agreement.

The Natural Heritage System is the combination of significant natural areas, their functions, and the corridors that connect them. The system, portrayed in Map 2, includes:

Group A features:

- Provincially significant wetlands
- Significant portions of the habitat of threatened and endangered species

Group B features:

- lands adjacent to Group A features
- primary corridors, including anchors
- fish habitat
- significant woodlands
- significant valley lands
- significant wildlife habitat
- significant ANSI's
- locally significant wetlands
- other significant natural areas

Group C features:

- linkage areas
- secondary corridors

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

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

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

- For Group A features, no development is permitted;
- For Group B features, development may be permitted if it can be demonstrated that no negative impacts on the features or their associated ecological functions will result;
- For Group C features, local official plans will address controls on development.

The Natural Heritage Corridors are divided into primary corridors or areas that generally possess features of a County interest and secondary corridors which generally possess features of a more localized interest. These corridors interconnect with large, wooded, natural areas or “anchors”. Where the connection between these features requires rehabilitation, “linkages” are proposed. This framework of corridors, anchors, and linkages is proposed at the County scale through this Plan but is intended to be established in more detail at the local scale when municipal official plans and zoning by-laws are prepared.

8.1 Natural Heritage System

Goals: To identify, protect and restore the County’s Natural Heritage Corridors.

To recognize and protect Significant Natural Areas.

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

Policies:

1. The County Natural Heritage System is comprised of Primary Corridors, including Anchors and Linkages, and Significant Natural Areas as shown on Map 2. Development will generally be directed away from the Natural Heritage System.
2. Primary Corridors will generally follow watercourses and the lakeshore with their associated flood and erosion susceptible areas, unstable lands, steep slopes and other physical conditions that create hazards. Significant Natural Areas include Provincially Significant Wetlands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Significant Woodlots, and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs) which are shown as designations on Map 2.
3. Secondary Corridors generally follow the woodlots in the rural areas of the County. Local municipalities are encouraged to identify

potential and existing Secondary Corridors in local official plans and zoning by-laws using the Appendix Map A as a guide. Many of these corridors cross municipal boundaries and are locally and regionally important such as the Wyoming Moraine ridge.

4. Local municipalities will develop policies to protect and enhance the Natural Heritage System and are encouraged to identify and protect locally significant Natural Heritage Features. Areas shown within Primary Corridors on Map 2 will be identified with an environmental protection designation in local land use maps and schedules.
5. Natural Heritage System boundaries shown on Map 2 are approximate for both urban and rural locations. The County recognizes that where Natural Heritage Corridors occur through urban communities, the corridor boundary will be more specifically defined in the local official plan and zoning by-law to reflect the environmental constraints and natural heritage features that exist along the corridors. In rural areas, environmental constraints such as floodplains may not be defined as specifically as they are in the urban areas. The County will assist local municipalities in determining the extent of natural heritage corridors in these areas. Incorporation of these refinements will not require an amendment to this Plan.
6. The County may participate in planning and management initiatives with adjacent Counties and other jurisdictions in connection with features that are ecologically linked to the County. The County recognizes that lands under Federal, Provincial, and Native Band Council jurisdiction identified as Anchors on Map 2 are not governed by the policies of this Plan. However, the County may co-operate in projects with adjoining jurisdictions.

7. Local municipalities will determine the most appropriate approach to re-establishing corridor connections or Linkages shown on Map 2. This may involve, but is not limited to, the use of buffer strips, lot line tree plantings, conservation easements, gravel pit rehabilitation plans, or land dedications through the development approvals process.
8. The County, in co-operation with local municipalities, may utilize site-specific techniques to maximize the protection and rehabilitation of the Natural Heritage System when development proposals or public works are considered. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to, increases in density of development, revision of current development standards or adoption of alternative development standards, reconfiguration of uses, shared facilities, and public/private sector agreements to facilitate protection or rehabilitation.
9. The County and local municipalities may require development applications within or adjacent to lands designated part of the Natural Heritage System to be accompanied by an Environmental Evaluation of the impact that the development will have or is expected to have on Natural Heritage Features and their functions. Nothing in this policy is intended to contravene the required evaluations needed for development within or adjacent to Significant Natural Areas or development adjacent to Provincially Significant Wetlands.
10. Where an Environmental Evaluation has been completed, the Approval Authority must be satisfied that the evaluation has shown that it would not have an overall negative effect on the environmental functions, attributes, or linkages for which the lands were identified.
11. The County encourages programs by private and public groups that assist the landowner in the establishment, maintenance, and improvement of the Natural Heritage System, Corridors, and the information base that describes them within Lambton County. Landowners are encouraged to preserve and enhance, where possible, the unique species and habitat found in many privately owned woodlots. The County may participate with other agencies in establishing, maintaining and improving a data base on Natural Heritage features.
12. Nothing in the Natural Heritage Policies will limit the continuation of existing agricultural uses in these areas.
13. Where the Natural Heritage System is held in private ownership, nothing in this Plan requires that these lands be free and available for public use, and the identification of lands as part of the Natural Heritage System will not oblige the County or other public agencies to purchase these lands.
14. The County encourages the use of these areas, where appropriate, as part of the Tourism Strategy and as suggested areas to focus the rehabilitation efforts of other stewardship groups.

8.1.1 Significant Natural Areas

Goal: To preserve, protect, and enhance where possible existing Significant Natural Areas of the County. These areas include Provincially Significant Wetlands, Significant Portions of the Habitat of Threatened and Endangered Species, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs), Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs), Great Lakes System shorelines, Significant Woodlots, significant valley lands, significant wildlife habitat, prairie grasslands, Locally Significant Wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, nature reserves, and fish habitat.

Policies:

1. Development and the creation of new lots will generally be directed away from Significant Natural Areas. Development will not be permitted within Provincially Significant Wetlands or within Significant Portions of the Habitat of Threatened or Endangered Species.

2. Development proposals adjacent to or within Significant Natural Areas will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated through an Environmental Evaluation that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on the ecological functions for which the area was identified. Such an evaluation will also provide details of any mitigative measures that will ensure that the natural area is not adversely affected. Nothing in this policy is intended to contravene the required evaluations needed for development adjacent to Significant Portions of the Habitat of Threatened and Endangered Species, and Provincially Significant Wetlands.
3. Approximate boundaries of the Significant Natural Areas have been determined through various studies from other sources. Since recent verification of these Areas may not exist, specific delineation or clarification of the boundaries will be undertaken through Environmental Evaluations or through periodic refinements by the County, local municipalities, the Province, and Conservation Authorities. Incorporation of these refinements or boundary adjustments will not require an amendment to this Plan.
4. Fish habitat will be protected from harmful alteration, disruption or destruction unless authorized under the Fisheries Act. In all cases, the guiding principle of no net loss of productive capacity will be utilized.
5. This Plan recognizes that the primary role of the Bright's Grove Sewage Treatment Facility, shown on Map 2, is municipal sewage treatment and its role as a Significant Natural Area is secondary.

8.1.2 Wetlands

Goal: To protect all wetlands of Provincial significance and discourage development in wetlands which are Locally significant.

Policies:

1. Development will not be permitted in Provincially Significant Wetlands. Development may be permitted within 120 metres of such wetlands provided there is no loss of wetland function, as demonstrated through an Environmental Evaluation. Such an evaluation will utilize all opportunities for protection and rehabilitation of the wetland feature.
2. Local municipalities will designate Provincially Significant Wetlands in their official plans.
3. The County encourages the protection of Locally Significant Wetlands, where possible, through land use designations and/or stewardship agreements and conservation easements with naturalist clubs or stewardship groups.
4. The re-establishment and creation of wetlands will be encouraged where possible, and use of the principle of "no net loss" will be employed when dealing with land use changes that impact wetlands.
5. The relationship of wetlands to groundwater resources will be specifically considered when dealing with Environmental Evaluations.
6. The use of Environmental Evaluations is required to assess development proposed within Locally Significant Wetlands to ensure impacts and appropriate mitigation techniques are identified.

8.1.3 Woodlands

Goal: To protect the remaining forest cover of the County and encourage rehabilitation through management and stewardship initiatives in conjunction with the Natural Heritage Corridor System.

Policies:

1. Local municipalities are encouraged to protect woodlots. The County will assist local municipalities in identifying Significant Woodlots.

2. Significant Woodlots are those located in a Primary Corridor or Significant Natural Area designations, or any contiguous forested area that is 4 hectares, or greater in size.
3. The County recognizes that woodlots are a viable component of farming operations since they can enhance soil conservation, improve crop yields, and support locally-based, wood processing industries. Woodlots are also recognized as being a renewable resource that needs to be enhanced and maintained through proper forest management.
4. The use of Woodlot Management Plans by landowners is encouraged. Such plans should consider the management of adjacent wooded lands, include measures to improve species diversity, and should provide for the enlargement of the interior forest portion of woodlots, if possible.
5. The cutting of trees is regulated by the provisions of the County of Lambton Trees Act By-law as amended.
6. The County will review and amend the criteria implemented through the Tree Cutting By-law to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of the Official Plan. The amended criteria may include:
 - a) consideration of whether the woodlot is located within a Significant Woodlot or in a Secondary Natural Heritage Corridor; as identified in this Plan;
 - b) the use of Woodlot Management Plans that incorporate the multiple ownership of the entire woodlot area or patch;
 - c) methods to increase species diversity,
 - d) methods to increase use of indigenous species when reforestation is required; and
 - e) the confirmation of significant wild life and wild life habitat within woodlots.
7. New resource extraction operations and utility corridors will be discouraged in Significant Woodlots.
8. Where forest cover has been removed and is to be replaced as a condition of a development approval, the use of a variety of indigenous species of vegetation is encouraged. Restoration work should be required at a rate of twice the area of forest cover that was removed. Preference will be given to replacing the trees at the same site and/or within the Natural Heritage Corridor system. The replacement tree stock should consist of indigenous species where quality stock is available and be maintained by the proponent to the free to grow stage. Long-term management of these replacement trees will comply with the County Tree Cutting By-law.
9. Tree planting programs may be undertaken by the County and local municipalities using indigenous species where possible. This may include roadside plantings, urban boulevard tree planting as part of subdivision agreements and rural farm windbreak plantings as a condition of severance.
10. When considering development proposals including plans of subdivision, the Approval Authority may require that the owner enter into an agreement whereby:
 - a) only such trees that would directly impede the construction of buildings and services may be removed and, if so, they will be replaced with trees of similar species and of sufficient maturity to enhance the appearance of the subdivision when complete;
 - b) a reasonable number of trees and/or other suitable vegetation per lot may be required regardless of the state of the area prior to being subdivided or developed;
 - c) existing trees which are not removed will be adequately protected during the construction process, and the roots protected to ensure continued growth; and,
 - d) where parking lots and other large open spaces are provided, and in open areas

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

around Commercial and Major Institutional Uses and large buildings, the Approval Authority will encourage, and may require the provision of landscaping and tree planting sufficient to enhance the physical appearance of the site and surrounding lands.

12. The County will continue the management of the Lambton County Heritage Forest in Bosanquet as part of a unique dune ecosystem for the benefit of present and future generations. The County will continue to monitor and update the Heritage Forest Management Plan as necessary.

8.1.4 Great Lakes System

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

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

Policies:

1. The County supports the implementation of the St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan and other efforts to improve the environmental quality of the river basin. The measure of such action will be the delisting of the basin as an Area of Concern by the International Joint Commission.
2. The Conservation Authorities have prepared Shoreline Management Plans which recognize:
 - a) that shoreline processes occur as part of a natural system and must be considered when reviewing land use decisions and practices;
 - b) there are specific public interests in shoreline features such as access for swimming, boating, and aesthetic enjoyment, both from a resident and

- tourist perspective;
- c) the use of shoreline management principles that recognize the two distinct Lake Huron shoreline reaches of Grand Bend to Kettle Point; and Kettle Point to Sarnia.

The County supports local municipal implementation of the recommendations of the Shoreline Management Plans which address the issues of flooding, erosion, storm damage, dynamic beach instability, shore processes, and shoreline management options for shore protection.

3. Dynamic beaches, as evidenced by sand dunes and described in the shoreline management plans prepared by the Conservation Authorities, will be identified in local official plans and conserved to safeguard the natural dune ecosystem, tourism potential, adjacent land uses, and related public safety. Development is not permitted within designated portions of the dynamic beaches, except for situations of existing development as provided for in the Environmental Constraints policies of this Plan.
4. Local municipalities are encouraged to develop criteria in their respective local official plans that address the use, design, location, and repair of shoreline protection. These criteria will include factors related to the type, standards, maintenance, adjacent property impacts, environmental impacts, and consideration of access. Naturalization techniques as described in this Plan will be implemented where feasible.
5. Background information to address Provincial Policy related to shoreline management will be prepared for the West Bosanquet lakeshore area on an as-required basis by proponents of development in this area, as these lands have not been included in Conservation Authority shoreline management plans.

8.1.5 Surface and Groundwater Protection

Goals: To protect and enhance the natural attributes and functions of watercourses in the County in order to maintain and improve wild

life habitat and water quality.

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

Policies:

1. The County encourages the continued monitoring of groundwater quantity and quality and supports programs undertaken by the Province and other agencies to improve groundwater quality.
2. The County requires adequate lot sizes that allow sufficient separation of private disposal systems from potable water supplies. Local municipalities should adopt policies to include adequate lot size provision.
3. The County encourages the upgrading of sewage treatment where existing facilities are detrimental to water quality.
4. The County supports programs undertaken by the Province and other public or private agencies aimed at improving water quality in urban and rural areas, including regulating the discharge of material that may impair the quality of surface water or groundwater.
5. The County promotes agricultural land management practices, including best management practices that reduce and minimize the amount of topsoil, pesticides, and nutrients entering watercourses in cooperation with the Province, farming associations and local municipalities.
6. The County encourages the implementation of appropriate Fill, Construction, and Alteration to Waterway Regulations by the Conservation Authorities.
7. The County encourages the preparation of resource management studies which evaluate techniques addressing flooding, drainage issues, pollution control, habitat protection and enhancement, soil erosion, groundwater protection and the identification and conservation of ecologically-sensitive landscapes. The County, through its development review and approval authority, may require the preparation of such studies to address the above noted matters.
8. Development that involves the alteration of a shoreline will incorporate naturalization techniques where appropriate to maintain and enhance shoreline vegetation and habitat. Naturalization techniques include non-structural protection works such as bio-engineering approaches which incorporate vegetation to stabilize slopes.
9. Natural Channel Designs will be considered in all new drainage schemes in order to minimize maintenance costs, minimize water velocity, and maximize naturalization techniques to achieve both aesthetic and wild life habitat enhancement goals.
10. Local municipalities are encouraged to promote vegetated buffers along all watercourses through both urban and rural settings, with the specific buffering requirements to be addressed in local planning documents. Such buffers may vary in width depending upon the size of watercourse, topography, and adjacent land uses. The County will assist in this determination to ensure that water quality issues are addressed.
11. Local municipalities will consider the identification of groundwater quantities, flow regimes, and surface recharge/discharge areas and potential impacts on these features in land use decisions.
12. Water wells that are no longer in use will be decommissioned to the satisfaction of the Province to avoid groundwater contamination and minimize the threat to public safety.
13. Local municipalities will address stormwater

management through appropriate local official plan policies that are consistent with the Infrastructure policies of this Plan.

8.2 Environmental Constraints

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

Policies:

1. New development will generally be directed away from areas with Environmental Constraints. Environmental Constraints include:
 - a) flooding, erosion, and dynamic beach hazards related to the Great Lakes System;
 - b) flooding and erosion hazards related to rivers and streams;
 - c) hazardous sites related to marine clay soils, organic soils; and,
 - d) high water table areas and groundwater recharge areas.
2. The County will assist local municipalities to develop policies that will not allow development and site alteration within:
 - a) defined portions of the dynamic beach;
 - b) defined portions of the 100 year flood level along the St. Clair River;
 - c) a floodway (except in Special Policy Areas).
3. Local municipalities will develop policies that address existing development on Environmental Constraint lands and provide options to address the issues of building repair and maintenance, minor building additions and interior alterations, and the maintenance and repair of appropriate shore protection. It is not the intent of the County Official Plan to unduly restrict these activities where environmental constraints have been identified.
4. The County will assist local municipalities to develop policies that ensure that development and site alteration can occur in Environmental Constraint lands and associated sites if all the following can be achieved:
 - a) hazards can be safely addressed and development and site alteration is carried out in accordance with established standards and procedures such as those related to coastal and geotechnical engineering practices;
 - b) new hazards are not created and existing hazards not worsened;
 - c) no adverse environmental impacts will result;
 - d) vehicle and pedestrian access is available during times of flooding, erosion, and other emergencies;
 - e) the proposed use is not an institutional use, essential emergency services, or operations related to the disposal, manufacture, treatment or storage of hazardous substances.
5. Where detailed information regarding known environmental constraints is not available, the onus will be on the proponent to provide suitable documentation to satisfy the conditions of development or site alteration in Environmental Constraint lands.
6. Local municipalities will prepare appropriate zoning provisions for Environmental Constraint Areas that:
 - a) prohibit uses other than agriculture, conservation, forestry and wildlife management;
 - b) prohibit buildings or structures except where they are intended for flood or erosion control or are normally associated with protection works, bank stabilization projects or electric power structures; and,
 - c) impose development setbacks in relation to the severity of existing and potential environmental hazards.
7. For development fronting on the Great Lakes

System shorelines, local municipalities will establish policies and regulations that provide development setbacks adequate to address flooding, dynamic beach, unstable lands, and erosion concerns.

8. Development will be directed to locate out of flood plains defined by the Regional Storm event (a one zone management approach). If this is not desirable, Provincial policy allows development between the 1:100 year flood line and the Regional Storm line provided adequate floodproofing measures are incorporated and the approval of the Conservation Authority is obtained (a two zone management approach). If neither approach is feasible and the economic well-being of the community is threatened, Provincial Policy allows for the development of Special Policy Areas in consultation with the applicable Conservation Authority.
9. New development will be required to locate outside of areas of long-term erosion and instability unless the nature of the problem has been recognized, remediation techniques employed, and the hazard addressed. The proponent is responsible for the completion of such investigations.
10. The standard that will be used to identify areas subject to long-term erosion is based on 100 year erosion criteria plus an allowance for slope stability and an allowance to allow machinery access to the site.
11. The County may participate with other agencies in identifying possible locations along the lakeshore and river fronts where visual and physical access can be established for public enjoyment.
12. Development setbacks are encouraged as the preferred method for protecting new development in Environmental Constraint Areas as opposed to relying on structural or non-structural protection measures that require maintenance and upgrading over time.

8.3 Implementation Tools for Natural Heritage

8.3.1 Stewardship

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

Policies:

1. The County supports a wide variety of stewardship options to assist and encourage landowners to manage their natural resources. These programs should be established in partnership with land owners, to meet their needs. These programs can include land owner contacts, conservation easements, land trusts, tax incentives and rights of way to preserve, enhance and access natural corridors.
2. The County encourages stewardship initiatives that strive to protect and enhance significant natural features, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and increase the amount and variety of native vegetation species.

8.3.2 Development Applications

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

Policies:

1. The County and/or local municipalities may develop guidelines for the evaluation of development proposals consistent with the natural heritage goals. The objective of such guidelines would include the protection of ecological integrity, the creation of new habitats, natural vegetation regeneration, the conservation of natural landforms and significant areas, the preservation and enhancement of groundwater and surfacewater resources, and the promotion of environmental education and interpretation.

2. The County and/or local municipalities will develop tree saving policies/woodlot preservation plans to ensure the most effective means of protecting and rehabilitating woodlots.
3. The County and/or local municipalities will ensure that land dedications which include Significant Natural Areas are accepted as public land to be managed consistently with Natural Heritage Goals.

8.3.3 Environmental Evaluations

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

Policies:

1. Environmental Evaluations will be required in order to assess land development proposals for lands that encroach into or are adjacent to Provincially or Locally Significant environmental features. The evaluation must demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the natural features or on the ecological functions for which the area is identified.
2. The Approval Authority must be satisfied that the Environmental Evaluation has been completed by a qualified individual and is thorough in assessing potential impacts. In this regard, the Approval Authority may use external agencies and groups to assist in the review of such evaluations.
3. Environmental Evaluations will be guided by the following stages:

Stage 1 - Review will be completed to verify the location and state of the environmental feature or function and may subsequently refine the boundaries of components of the Natural Heritage System. This stage of review is intended to confirm the feature and function prior to proceeding to subsequent stages of

review.

Stage 2 - Review will assess the potential impacts of the proposed development to the Natural Heritage System components by evaluating the sensitivity and overall condition of the Natural Heritage component and the scale of development. This review stage is intended to be more comprehensive than Stage 1 and will require considerable more detail regarding the understanding of the Natural Heritage System. The result of this review will determine if development can occur in some form. Environmental Constraints will also be evaluated within this stage of investigation.

Stage 3 - Review will provide alternative methods and measures for mitigation of potential environmental effects of the proposed development.

Chapter 9

9. MINERAL RESOURCES

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

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

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

The Province regulates the aggregate industry in

Ontario through the Aggregate Resources Act. The Province and/or its delegate handles the licensing, operation and rehabilitation of pits and quarries regarding noise, vibration, water and related matters. Under the Planning Act, the County and local municipalities may deal with matters of land use such as the location where operations may occur, zoning and permitted uses. Although municipalities do not control the licensing process, they may establish criteria in official plans that are used to evaluate site plans during the licensing process.

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

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

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

9.1 Oil, Gas and Salt Resources

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

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

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

To encourage Lambton's oil heritage as part of the County's overall tourism strategy.

Policies:

1. The County supports the effective management of oil, gas and salt resources and will support exploration and extraction, subject to Provincial regulation and legislation, administered by the Province.
2. The County supports the subsurface storage of gas or other hydrocarbons, subject to Provincial regulations, but only if they do not adversely affect surface development rights as set out in this Plan.
3. The County supports regulations under Provincial legislation which specify the distances that new wells must be set back from existing buildings, roads, shorelines, watercourses and lot lines.
4. The County and local municipalities will consult with the Province:
 - a) where new development is proposed adjacent to or in areas of known oil or gas pools;
 - b) regarding new non-petroleum developments located less than 75 metres from existing wells. This setback should ensure adequate spacing around the well head to provide access for maintenance and general safety;
 - c) where development is proposed above former salt solution mining sites; and
 - d) where assistance is needed in the identification of well sites, in areas suspected of containing improperly plugged wells.
5. As a condition of approving development (severances, plans of subdivision), the County and /or the local municipality will require that improperly abandoned (plugged) wells that are known or discovered on the lands during development will be properly plugged, capped or otherwise made safe in accordance with Provincial requirements. Building locations should be examined for the presence of possible well sites using established standards and procedures. Areas where wells are located should be avoided when siting buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that development can safely occur.
6. The County encourages the use of technology, such as directional drilling for the exploration and production of subsurface resources from a well site that is located on lands adjacent to a natural heritage area.
7. New wells and associated works are generally prohibited from causing any surface or ecological disturbance to the natural heritage system, identified on Map 2. If there are no alternatives to a location in significant natural heritage areas measures will be taken to reduce negative impacts. Where forest cover is removed it will be replaced with twice the area of forest cover that is removed at a location specified by the landowner whose forest cover was removed and should that owner not have a suitable location, then the replacement would occur at a location specified by the County or local municipality.
8. The County supports the proper disposal of oil field brines, in accordance with Provincial requirements.

9. The County recognizes and promotes Lambton's Oil Heritage District as part of the County's overall tourism strategy.
10. The County supports the joint agreement signed by the Province of Ontario and the State of Michigan which prevents drilling in Lake Huron. The County requests notification of and inclusion in any discussions to change the agreement.

9.2 Mineral Aggregate Resources

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

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

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

Policies:

1. Local municipalities will identify and designate mineral aggregate resource areas in their local official plans and provide policies for the location, zoning and accessory uses of pits and quarries. Policies should:
 - a) recognize and provide for the continued operation of currently licensed pits and quarries;
 - b) protect aggregate resource areas from land uses and activities deemed to be incompatible with extraction operations;
 - c) permit aggregate extraction on agricultural lands as an interim use, provided that the lands are rehabilitated to substantially the same acreage and average soil capability, with rehabilitation to prime agriculture preferred where feasible;
 - d) consider the underlying or permanent designation of the lands when reviewing

- development applications, under the Planning Act, to determine whether the proposed use is appropriate;
 - e) permit wayside pits and quarries on a temporary basis without requiring an amendment to the local official plan or zoning by-law, except in natural heritage areas or adjacent to or in developed areas or settlements;
 - f) establish criteria that are used for the review of licensing applications and site plans for new or expanding aggregate operations. Consideration should be given to the impact on adjacent residential and other land uses, the natural heritage system, roads and points of access, as well as the nature and effectiveness of the rehabilitation proposed, including integrated rehabilitation between adjacent extractive operations and where feasible, the rehabilitation of prime agricultural lands to prime agriculture after extraction;
 - g) establish setbacks for proposed development from existing operations to prevent the encroachment of new development on existing operations. Criteria should be established that allow for a reduction in the setbacks, provided that siting and environmental concerns can be mitigated;
 - h) provide for a municipality to request that measures such as increased setbacks, berming, landscaping, environmentally friendly dust suppressants or other measures be included in a license to ensure compatibility, particularly for areas where extraction is proposed adjacent to existing or planned development; and
 - i) support sequential extraction practices that would allow for the rehabilitation of land first used for aggregate production.
2. The County prohibits resource extraction in Provincially significant natural heritage areas shown on Map 2. The County discourages resource extraction in locally significant natural heritage areas and the removal of sizable, healthy woodlots for extraction purposes. Where extraction is permitted, it should be contingent upon rehabilitation plans that re-

establish a comparable or improved natural heritage feature.

3. Where extraction is proposed on or adjacent to potential recharge areas for groundwater supply, a hydrogeological study assessing any adverse impacts on quality and/or quantity of the groundwater resource may be required, subject to Provincial requirements.
4. Where it is not feasible to return the lands to agriculture, priority should be given to assessing the feasibility of rehabilitation to a use which provides significant social and environmental benefits. The use should result in environmental enhancement or net environmental gain. Features such as woodlots, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat areas, integrated water systems or passive recreational opportunities may be appropriate.
5. To ensure that extraction remains an interim activity, only those activities normally associated with aggregate processing such as crushing, screening, washing, and stockpiling should be permitted. Other uses of a more permanent nature would require a rezoning.
6. The County is supportive of maintaining waterfront port facilities for the handling of aggregates that are transported by ship.
7. New aggregate extraction operations will not be permitted in settlement areas, significant natural heritage areas, or specialty crop areas.

Chapter 10

time-frame targets for processing applications.

10. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

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

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

10.1 Financial Management

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

10.2 Development Approvals

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

- a) investigating and implementing measures to eliminate duplication, consolidate responses, and reduce time delays;
- b) enforcing reasonable time deadlines;
- c) encouraging proponents of development proposals to consult with staff prior to the submission of applications; and,
- d) monitoring approval processes and setting

10.3 General Severance Policies

1. Lots created by consent will meet the following requirements:
 - a) all lots are to front on a public road;
 - b) despite the foregoing policy, municipalities may develop specific local Official Plan policies to deal with infill development on existing private roads;
 - c) the creation of a lot will not result in a landlocked parcel;
 - d) the lot must be provided with adequate services, including the provision of a satisfactory sanitary sewerage system and a potable water supply;
 - e) no consent will be granted for land that is an environmental hazard;
 - f) no consent will be granted which will have a negative effect on significant natural areas, including Environmentally Significant Areas, significant woodlots, and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest;
 - g) the lot and its intended use must conform to the local municipality’s zoning by-law. Where necessary, the consent granting authority may require appropriate zoning amendments or minor variances as a condition of approval;
 - h) lots created by consent should not create nor contribute to ribbon development along roads where services and/or development do not exist;
 - i) Section 4.1 of this Plan should be considered when dealing with consents in rural or agricultural areas;
 - j) municipalities should consider when a plan of subdivision is more appropriate process of lot creation than consents. The municipality should consult with the County in this regard; and,
 - k) a local municipality’s official plan should consider detailed policies dealing with lot creation.

10.4 Conformity of Local Municipal Official Plans

1. After the approval of this Plan by the Province, the Planning Act requires that the official plans of the local municipalities be brought into conformity with this Plan. Therefore, the County will consider the following criteria in determining conformity of local municipal plans to this Plan:
 - a) general consistency with the provision/distribution of County population, employment and housing projections;
 - b) general consistency with Urban Centre and Urban Settlement and Rural Settlement boundaries and the criteria under which changes to those boundaries are to be evaluated;
 - c) conservation, protection, and management of the County's natural resources, environment and heritage;
 - d) efficient utilization of services for which the County has responsibility; and
 - e) the Provincial Policy Statement.

The County Official Plan has been prepared with regard to the Provincial Policy Statement. Therefore, once this Plan comes into effect under the provisions of the Planning Act, all local official plans which conform to this Plan will be deemed to also conform to Provincial Policy. Local official plan policies which do not have general consistency with this Plan, but which have regard to the Provincial Policy Statement, may be deemed to conform to this Plan provided that the public consultation policies of Section 10.6 are adhered to.

2. The 'General Local Official Plan' policies, as referenced in Section 10.9 of this Plan, are intended as a tool to assist local municipal councils in the production of local official plans. Despite the adoption of the 'General Local Official Plan' policies by County Council pursuant to Section 17 of the Planning Act, the 'General Local Official Plan' policies will not be used in determining the conformity of local official plans (and plan amendments) to

the County Official Plan.

10.5 Monitoring, Plan Review and Updating

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

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

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

10.6 Public Consultation

It is a policy of this Plan to ensure that the public is informed and consulted on proposed amendments by advertising, providing information, holding public meetings, open houses and similar events as appropriate to the nature of the proposed amendments.

10.7 Interpretation

1. The text and Maps 1 and 2 contained herein constitute the County of Lambton Official Plan. Tables, graphics, and introductory text are intended to be illustrative and are provided for information only.
2. All policies of the Plan are intended to be read together to determine the conformity of any proposal to the Plan. Individual policies are to be read and interpreted in their appropriate context.

3. Boundaries and other markings shown on the Maps that form part of this Official Plan are to be considered as general locations, and exact boundaries are to be established in local municipal official plans and zoning by-laws, as necessary.
4. In the case of a discrepancy between the text and a Map, the text will take precedence.

10.8 Amendments to the Plan

1. Amendments, apart from the formal five year reviews, are discouraged. It is the intent of this Plan to ensure that the Provincial and County interests are adequately protected, and to permit maximum flexibility to local municipalities to provide for any development that is appropriate and beneficial in local situations.
2. The consideration of any amendments to this Plan will be guided by the following:
 - a) the need for the proposed change;
 - b) the effect of the proposed change on the need for services and facilities provided by the County;
 - c) the implications that the proposed change may have on other parts of the Plan; and,
 - d) the effects that the proposed change may have on the ability of the County to achieve the goals, objectives and policies expressed in this Plan, or on other County policies, programs or interests.

10.9 General Local Official Plan

1. The County Official Plan provides a regional context for the application of Provincial Planning Policy, deals with issues that transcend local municipal boundaries, and provides an overall County planning policy framework for the development of more detailed local planning policies.

These more detailed local policies are necessary to recognize both the common and the unique circumstances, goals and aspirations

of the various local areas within the County. While the traditional approach to preparing local Official Plans has recognized the uniqueness of individual local municipalities and has provided the necessary level of additional planning policy detail, it has also demonstrated a considerable degree of commonality between the policies of each local official plan.

Also, while the approach and content of the County Official Plan anticipate an additional level of planning policy detail, it is recognized that only the County is required to adopt an Official Plan. Local plans are optional depending upon the wishes of the local Councils.

Therefore, in order to streamline the development of local planning policy and ensure a basic level of complete planning policy throughout the County, it is intended that 'General Local Official Plan' policies will be adopted by County Council to provide a common set of local planning policies for use by the local municipalities as part of their local official plan.

2. Once adopted by County Council, it is intended that depending upon their individual needs, the local municipalities will, within the context of the overall planning framework established by the County Official Plan and Provincial Policy, create a local official plan by:
 - a) determining, by by-law, the extent to which the General Local Official Plan policies will apply in their municipality, to more precisely reflect their local circumstances and needs; and/or,
 - b) preparing and adopting, by by-law, a local 'Land Use Schedule'.

These by-laws would be passed under the provisions of the Planning Act, which require input and notice, and the resulting planning document (a consolidation of policies and schedules) will constitute the local official plan.

3. The ‘General Local Official Plan’ policies as adopted by County Council will not become operational in the local municipalities, until 1 year (2 years for Sarnia) after the County of Lambton Official Plan comes into effect to give the local Councils time to tailor these policies to their needs. At that time, the ‘General Local Official Plan’ policies as adopted by County Council, and as subsequently varied in their application by locally adopted by-laws under the Planning Act, together with the local “Land Use Schedule’, will become the local municipal official plan.
4. The local municipal option to determine the extent to which the ‘General Local Official Plan’ will apply in their municipality will continue to be available after the initial 1 year (2 years for Sarnia) phase-in period, provided this is done by locally adopted by-laws.
5. Any initial and/or subsequent changes, additions, and/or deletions made to the ‘General Local Official Plan’ by the local municipalities must, as required by Provincial legislation, conform to the County Plan and have regard for Provincial Policy. The General Local Official Plan is not to be used to determine official plan conformity.
6. During the initial phase-in period and at any time after this, local municipalities will retain the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, the ‘General Local Official Plan’, and the ‘General Local Official Plan’ will not restrict the right of local Municipalities to develop totally separate local official plans if they wish, subject to Provincially legislated requirements.
7. Once new local official plan policies come into effect, by way of the ‘General Local Official Plan’ or otherwise, the local Plan will be the principal land use planning policy document used to guide local land use planning and development issues.
8. Neither the County nor the local municipalities will gain or lose any of their participation, review, or appeal options as a result of this streamlining initiative. The streamlining initiative is designed to increase planning policy “production” efficiencies while concurrently maintaining local control of local official plans (e.g. traditional two tier day-to-day administration and implementation).
9. Wherever the word “Municipality” is used in the General Local Official Plan, it means, and can be replaced with, the name of any local municipality within the County of Lambton without the necessity for an Official Plan amendment.
10. As these policies are varied in their application by local by-laws, as part of the local official plan creation process, any necessary changes to ‘Section’ and ‘Policy’ numbering can be made without the necessity for itemizing the numbering changes in the adopting by-law.
11. Notwithstanding the initial 1 year (2 years for Sarnia) phase-in period, new local official plans created by way of the General Local Official Plan or otherwise, will come into effect sooner if they can be prepared in a shorter than anticipated time period.

APPENDIX C

Note: The appendices do not form part of this Plan and are provided for information purposes only.

DEFINITIONS

Unless defined or suggested otherwise by the policy context within this Plan, the following words are defined as follows:

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

Negative impacts: means in regard to natural heritage features and areas, the loss of the natural feature or ecological functions for which an area is identified.

Significant:

- i) means features and areas that are ecologically important in terms of natural features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. Criteria for determining significance may be recommended by the Province and/or as set out in this Plan; and
- ii) in regard to other matters, important in terms of amount, content, representation or effect.

SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS IN LAMBTON COUNTY

REFER TO OFFICIAL PLAN MAP 2 – NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM

BOSANQUET

- 1 Ausable Disjunct Woods
- 2 Ausable River Valley
- 3 Cedar Point
- 4 Gustin Grove Marsh
- 5 Ipperwash Dunes/Woodlot Complex
- 6 Ipperwash Military Reserve
- 7 Ipperwash Provincial Park
- 8 Jericho Creek Woodlot
- 9 Kettle Point Shoreline and Marsh Complex
- 10 Old Ausable Channel
- 11 Pinery Provincial Park
- 12 Port Franks Wetlands & Forested Dunes, Karner Blue Sanctuary, Watson Property, Lambton Heritage Forest.
- 13 Ravenswood
- 14 Rock Glen Conservation Area
- 15 Shashawandah Creek Woodlots and Lakeshore Marsh
- 16 Thedford Bog
- 17 Thedford Brick Yard
- 18 Thedford Conservation Area
- 19 Thedford Marsh Floodplain
- 20 BOS-3-D (a, b, c)
- 21 BOS-1-C (a, b)

BROOKE

- 1 Brooke Township Sydenham Woods
- 2 Brown Creek Woods
- 3 A.W. Campbell Conservation Area
4. Walnut Woodlot (McRae Woods)

DAWN

- 1 Huffs Corners Forest
- 2 Langbank Woods
- 3 Rutherford Woods
- 4 Oakdale Woods (Dawn/Euphemia)

ENNISKILLEN

- 1 Bear Creek Woodlot #1
- 2 Bear Creek Woodlot #2
- 3 Black Creek Woodlot #1
- 4 Black Creek Woodlot #2
- 5 Bridgeview Conservation Area (in Petrolia)
- 6 Chantos Tract Agreement Forest
- 7 Cochrane Management Area
- 8 Fox Creek Woods
- 9 Little Bear Creek
- 10 Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

- 11 Marthaville Wildlife Habitat Management Area (SCRCA)

EUPHEMIA

- 1 Cairo Woods
- 2 Cottonwood Swamp
- 3 County Line Woods
- 4 Dawn-Euphemia Forest (Euphemia/Dawn)
- 5 Fansher Woods
- 6 Grape Fern Swamp
- 7 Highway 79 – Euphemia Woodlot
- 8 Shetland Kentucky Coffee Tree Woods or Haggerty Creek Woods
- 9 McCreedy Woods
- 10 McPhail Tract Agreement Forest
- 11 Shetland Conservation Area
- 12 *Dr. Douglas Sinclair* Management Area
- 13 Skunk's Misery (mainly in Middlesex)
- 14 Bobcat Swamp

MOORE

- 1 Bear Creek Woodlot #3
- 2 Bickford Woods
- 3 Burton Drain Woodlot
- 4 Clay Creek Woodland
- 5 Crown Game Reserve
- 6 Plum Creek #1
- 7 Plum Creek Woods Heronry
- 8 Stag Island
- 9 Vulture Woods
- 10 Waubuno Woodlot

PLYMPTON

- 1 Aberarder Creek Woodlot
- 2 Camlachie Woodlot
- 3 *Eslie G. Dodge* Conservation Area
- 4 Egremont Road Woods
- 5 *Charles J. McEwen* Conservation Area
- 6 Highland Glen Conservation Area
- 7 Reeces Corners Gravel Pits
- 8 Uttoxeter Swamp
- 9 Spicebush Wetland (Warwick/Plympton)

SARNIA

- 1 Blackwell Railway Tracks
- 2 Brights Grove Sewage Lagoons
- 3 Mandaumin Nature Reserve
- 5 Sarnia Indian Reserve
- 6 Perch Creek Wildlife Habitat Management Area (SCRCA)

- 7 Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area
- 8 Mossy Marsh (Class 6 wetland)

SOMBRA

- 1 Bear Creek Woodlot #4 Sombra/Moore
- 2 Bear Creek Woodlot (#5) Floodplain & Tableland Woods
- 3 Duthill Woodlot #1
- 4 Duthill Woodlot #2
- 5 W. Darcy McKeough Floodway
- 6 Sassafras Woods
- 7 McKeough Lands (Sombra/Moore)
- 8 Wilkesport Woodlot
- 9 Walpole Island Prairie, Savannah, Marsh and Fens
- 10 Marshy Creek Marsh (Class 3 wetland)

WARWICK

- 1 402 Woods
- 2 Bear Creek Source Woodlot
- 3 Warwick Conservation Area (also see Spicebush Wetland – Plympton)

CROSS MUNICIPAL FEATURES

- Bear Creek
Hickory Creek (Plympton/Warwick)
Lake Huron Shoreline
Lake Warren Shoreline (Brooke)
Perch Creek (Sarnia/Plympton)
Sydenham River Corridor (Brooke/Euphemia)