

DOWNTOWN WINDSOR ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN





Approvals

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

The downtowns of contemporary cities are often multi-functional places because they provide places and opportunities for people to shop, work, live, visit, and play. Many downtowns also function as the civic, cultural and entertainment hub for the community, and because of the diverse opportunities presented by downtowns, they are what visitors remember about a particular city, or how residents feel about the city that they live in.

Downtown Windsor is a prime example of many of these special characteristics and functions coming together to form a special place in the community. The built form and mix of uses in the downtown core is typical of main street developments across the country with buildings built at a human scale, a balanced mix of uses, and a more walkable public realm compared to traditional suburban developments. It is also a cultural and entertainment hub that attracts visitors from across the entire region, including the USA.

Downtowns across North America, including Windsor, have seen their share of economic decline, decentralization and physical degradation over time. Many cities have begun to reverse this trend by planning and strategically investing in their downtown cores. They have come to realize how important a vibrant and viable downtown is to the overall health and vitality of the entire city. For this reason, it is important for governments to focus significant resources at addressing the issues and challenges facing downtowns across the country.

A healthy and vibrant downtown is often associated with the overall vitality of the city. This has been especially true since modern-day homogeneous suburbs and big box national brand retailing formats have been duplicated across the country, making it impossible to distinguish one city from another. Downtowns are where cities show their individual character. This individual character can have a powerful and

lasting effect on the visitors, residents and business investors attracted to the city. So, in order to achieve positive economic and population growth, the unique ‘character’ must be embraced, developed and marketed. The potential benefits are why the revitalization and reinvestment in the downtown core often ranks very high on the municipal policy agenda.

Windsor is no different! Significant amounts of public investment have been made in Downtown Windsor over the past decade following a blueprint that was first put in place with the adoption of *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study: A New Vision for the Heart of Windsor* in 1994, and led through the subsequent decades by City Council’s that understood the importance of investing in the heart of the city. However, it is time to reflect on the *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* to reconfirm and reconcile the vision and implementation activities promoted by the plan with the significant changes that have occurred in downtown Windsor since 1994.

As such, City Council initiated the development of this comprehensive plan for downtown in March of 2015 with the purpose of creating an updated vision, strategy, and action plan to guide, leverage, and expand on the ongoing revitalization efforts and investments occurring in Downtown Windsor.

At the highest level, this plan will develop a goal oriented “Vision for Downtown Windsor,” which in turn will be supported by a number of specific Objectives and Guiding Principles that align with the defined Vision. It will be these Objectives and Guiding Principles that will serve as the guideposts as the focus shifts from the high level strategy component to the more detailed analysis and recommendations that will follow in this plan. This plan will also become the foundation for a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) in accordance with the *Planning Act*. The CIP will be an important component to the revitalization of downtown Windsor as this plan is implemented moving forward.

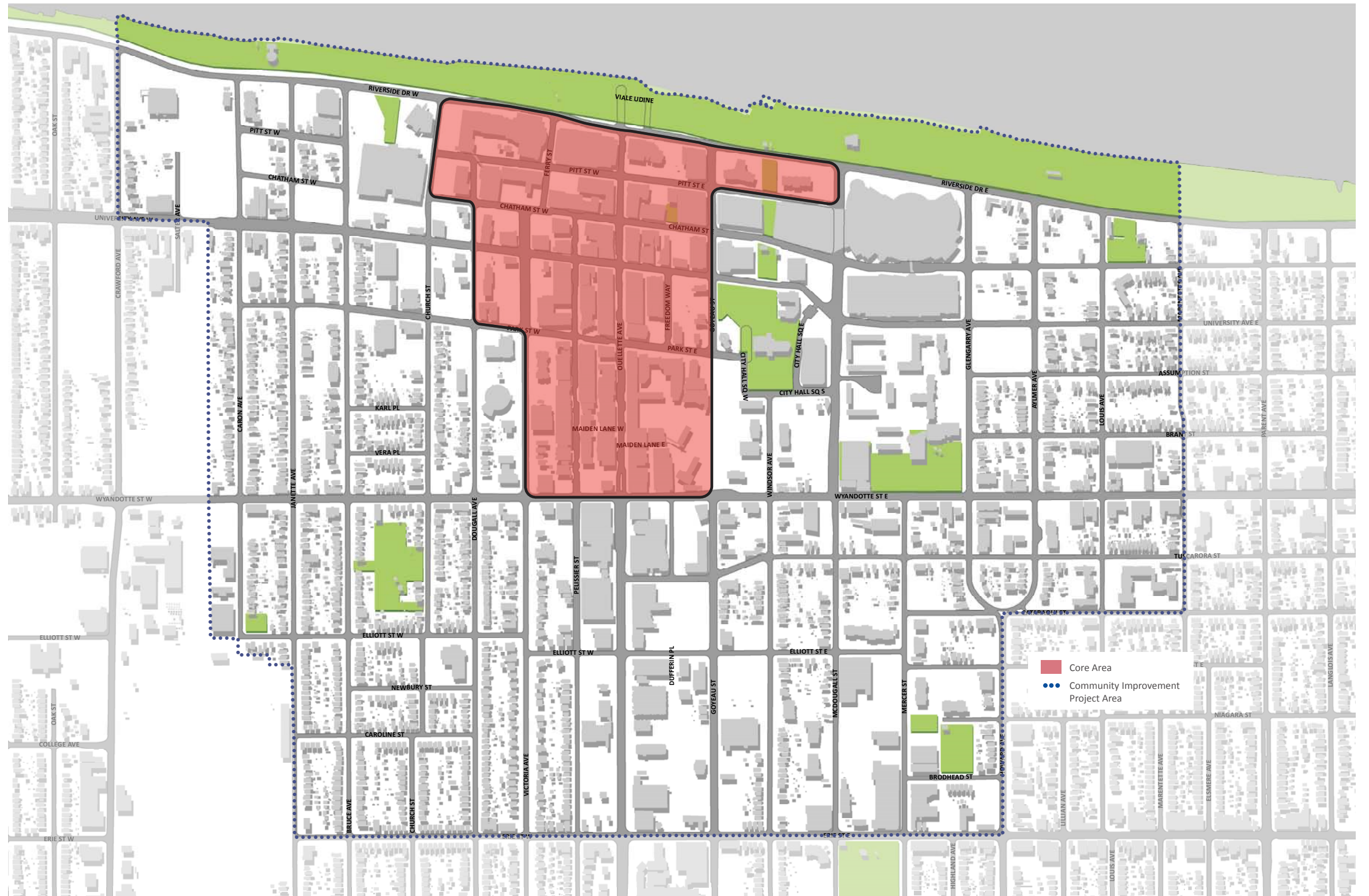
1.1.1 Downtown is a Smart Municipal Investment

Not only are downtowns the iconic symbol for the cities, many municipalities are beginning to understand that a strong downtown can be a major stimulator for economic growth, potentially a key revenue generator for the city, and a smart investment of municipal dollars. It is often the wealth generated by a thriving downtown that contributes to community wide prosperity, which in turn pays for schools, libraries, community centres and other municipal amenities that contribute to strong neighbourhoods across the entire city.

A study prepared by The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI), called *The Value of Investing in Canadian Downtowns*, found that Canadian downtowns often take up as little as 1% of citywide land area, but attracted between ten to twenty times that in terms of contributing to the City's assessment base and generating property tax revenues. (Canadian Urban Institute, 2012) Furthermore, this 1% of citywide land has also attracted an average of 20% of city-wide construction value over the past decade. (Canadian Urban Institute, 2013)

The study area for this plan accounts for 1.5% of the total city wide area and represents 5.8% (\$982,321,445) of the citywide assessment (\$16.8 billion). The actual property taxes collected for these areas amounts to \$11,188,298 (2.9% of all citywide property taxes) for the core area shown on the map and \$28,492,175 (7.3% of all citywide property taxes) for the study area. The smaller core of Downtown Windsor accounts for 0.2% of the total city wide area, while having an assessed value of \$335,066,366, which represents approximately 2% of the total assessed value for the entire city. This 2% represents a declining portion of the City's assessment base, having decreased from 4% of the city-wide assessment between 2008 and 2012. (Canadian Urban Institute, 2013)

Downtown Windsor Study Area vs. Core Area



Downtowns representing a declining portion of the City’s assessment base has become a concerning trend in a number of Canadian downtowns, including Windsor’s. However, while the proportion of the overall tax base has shrunk over the years, downtowns still remain a sound investment for municipal spending, particularly if it is viewed on a per acre basis and compared to the rest of the city. The following real life examples demonstrate this point:

including lower density close-in neighbourhoods. The per acre assessed value of the study area is \$1,790,685, which is \$541,224 more than the Big Box development and \$1,286,507 more than the large manufacturing facility. The taxes per acre for the study area amount to \$51,939, which is \$6,789 less than the Big Box, but \$20,589 more than the manufacturing facility.

- One additional example will demonstrate the financial impact of the increased density and greater mix of uses found in the downtown core. The downtown core area (as shown on the Downtown Windsor Study Area vs. Core Area map) has an assessed value of \$4,519,891 per acre, which is \$2,729,206 more than the study area, and \$3,270,430 and \$4,015,714 more than the Big Box and manufacturing uses respectively. The annual property taxes collected also paints a similar picture with the downtown core area coming in at \$150,925 per acre, far exceeding the study area at \$51,939, Big Box at \$58,728 and manufacturing at \$31,350.

Investing in downtown is an efficient form of investment for cities because development in the core costs less to service with existing infrastructure than new

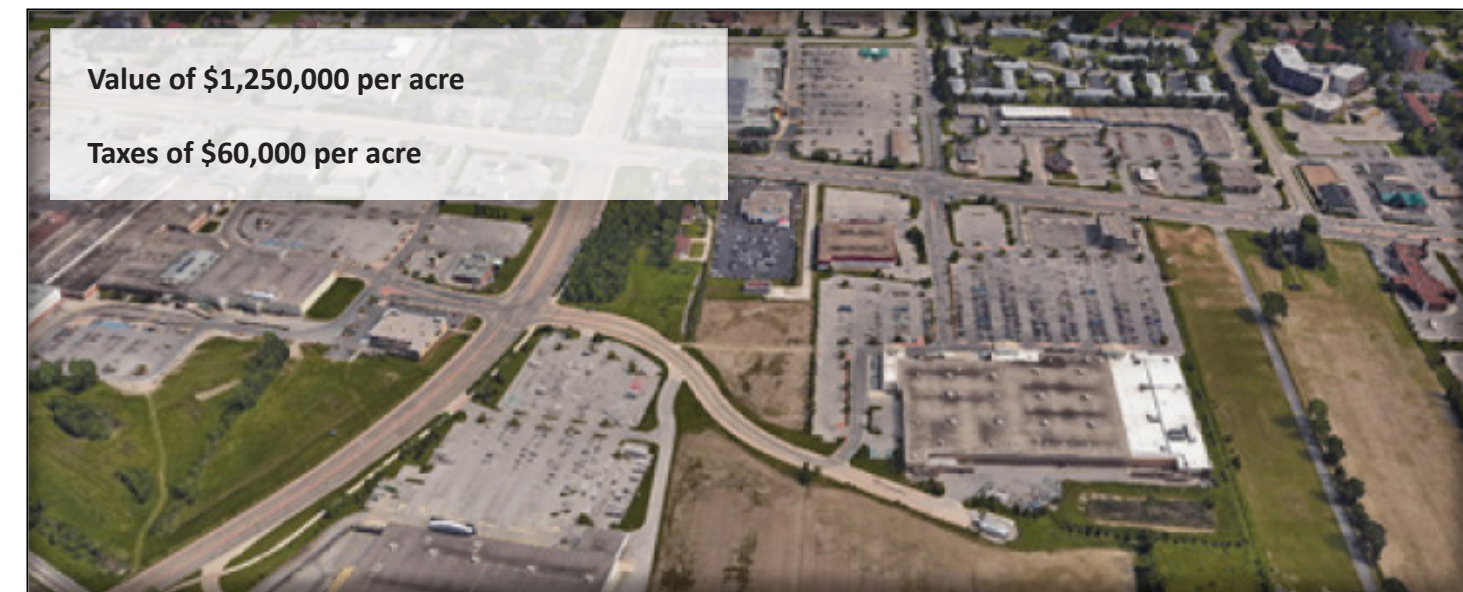
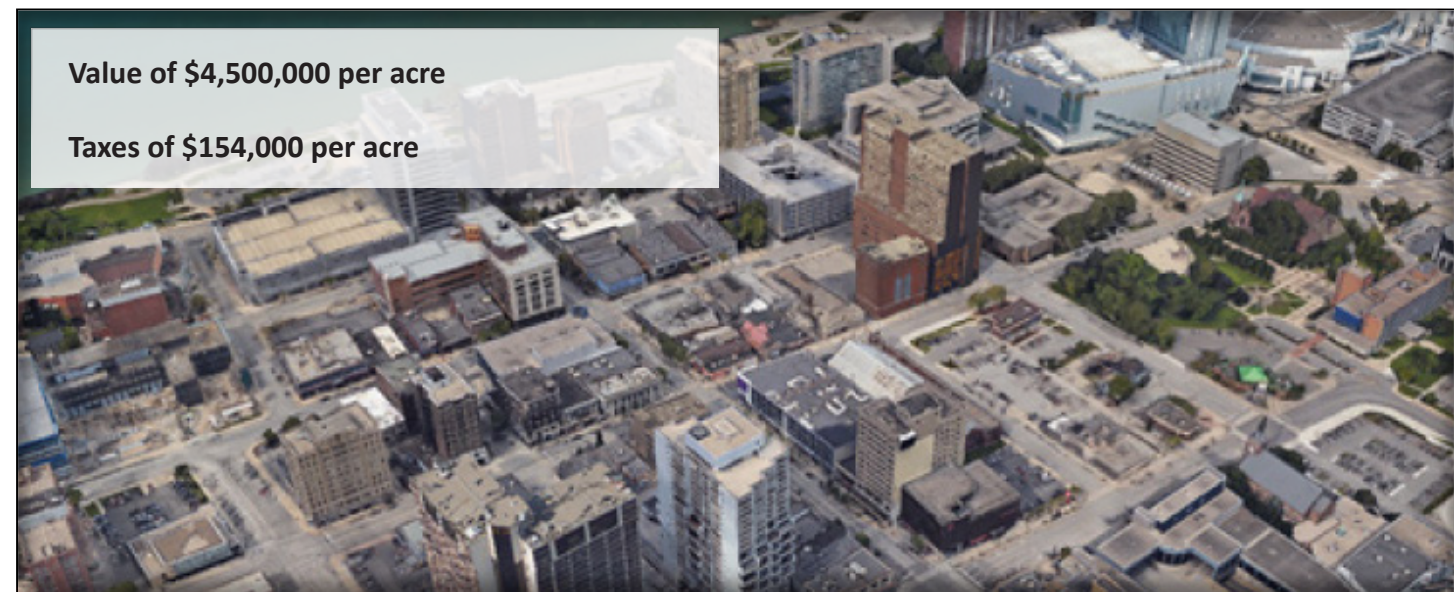
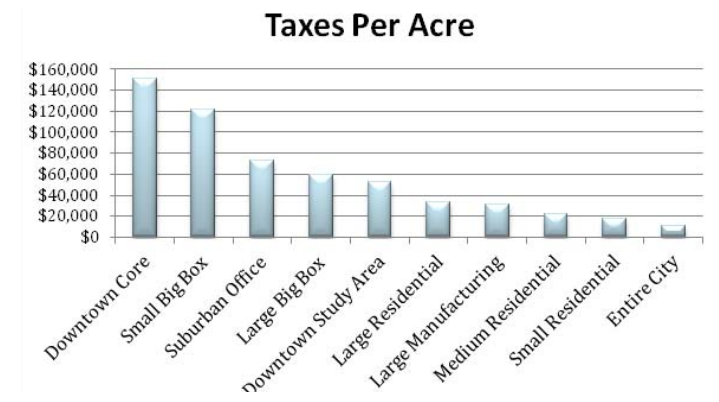
**A TYPICAL ACRE
IN MIXED-USE
DOWNTOWN
WINDSOR YIELDS
BETWEEN \$92,197
AND \$119,575 MORE
IN TAX REVENUE
TO THE CITY THAN
AN ACRE OF BIG
BOX STORES OR
MANUFACTURING
PLANTS.**

- An actual 58,000 ft² Big Box development in the city has an assessed value of \$20,964,000 and pays \$985,364 in taxes annually (2016 rates). This Big Box development is situated on a 16.8 acre (+/- 6.8 ha.) site resulting in a per acre assessed value of \$1,249,461. The per acre taxes collected on the same development is \$58,728.
- A large scale manufacturing property is assessed at \$75,000,000 and makes a sizable annual contribution of \$4,663,616 in taxes. Spread this over the entire 149 acre property and the per acre assessed value comes in at \$504,177 and taxes at \$31,350 per acre.
- By contrast, the downtown study area is comprised of 549 acres of a wide range of uses,

greenfield development, making downtowns economically and geographically efficient investments and desirable places to absorb and attract new growth. Arguably there is nowhere else in the city that municipal investment can be focused and see such a high rate of return on that investment. The more concentrated area (74 acres for the downtown core) for investing municipal dollars provides the opportunity to strategically target investment and incentives in order to maximize the benefits derived from the investments made.

The primary goal for municipal intervention will be to make public investments in the things that have the most potential to spur additional private sector investment. This plan will include recommendations for municipal investments aimed at enticing the private sector to invest. These investments may come in the form of capital projects, financial incentive programs, and strategic and operational improvements that make downtown Windsor an attractive environment for investment, resulting in increased property values, higher returns on investment (higher rents and sale prices) and assessment growth for the City.

The City of Windsor has a solid track record with providing financial incentives that result in significant private sector investment. For example, the Windsor Economic Revitalization and Brownfield Redevelopment Community Improvement Plans have resulted in approximately \$8 of private sector investment for every municipal dollar offered in incentives. The municipal investment often comes in the form of forgone taxes that would not have likely materialized had the incentives not been in place.





1.1.2 A Brief History of Downtown Windsor

Historical context is important to understand the current development patterns in the downtown area. Additionally, understanding the historical context of downtown Windsor can assist in understanding the unique characteristics that can be drawn upon for future development and revitalization efforts.

French settlers chose the location along the Detroit River as it was strategically located along the narrowest point across from Fort Ponchartrain in Detroit on the north of the Detroit River. The settlement on the north shore of the Detroit River was the largest population centre in the region.

Along the south shore where downtown Windsor is currently located was originally developed by French farmsteads that built their homes close to the river for access to the water. In typical fashion, ‘ribbon farms’ were created by the French settlers, meaning long rectangular plots were laid out with the narrow portion along the river. This allowed the most number of farms to have access to water, and a large amount of land stretching miles inland.

This pattern has largely impacted today's street networks as many of the north/south roads run along a french farmstead, and also explains why there is limited east/west connections in some areas of the city.

ABOVE: Downtown Windsor circa 1963. An aerial view showing areas identified for redevelopment.

The evolution of Downtown Windsor as an economic centre began around the introduction of the commercial ferry in 1820. The first ferry dock was located at the end of what is currently known as Ferry Street and the second at the end of what is currently known as Ouellette Avenue. Development centered around these locations and the small community officially became known as Windsor in 1836. Around this time, Windsor was developing with residential and commercial activity in close proximity to each other in order to minimize walking distances. This pattern of development, that is convenient for pedestrians, has stayed true in the downtown area since its inception.

The next phase of large scale development downtown started in 1854 when the railroad was introduced. Great Western Railway terminated its tracks at the ferry docks making Windsor a transportation hub. The area grew as a result of goods and people using the rail and ferry service. This generated new commercial activity and warehouses, and residential homes to accommodate the workers attracted to the area.

Business were clustered along the waterfront and streets parallel to the waterfront. Residential areas developed in the form of modest housing, for the rail and dock workers, around Aylmer and Glengarry Streets. More substantial middle-class homes were built east and west of the main business area, with Victoria Avenue being the most prestigious due to the requirement for large residential building lots. Small urban parks were located with civic buildings such as the Armouries Building and City Hall Park.

In 1871, a fire destroyed much of Windsor, requiring the town to be rebuilt. The rebuilding of the town set a precedent that set the stage for the next 80 years of development. The following characterizes the typical development seen today:

- Buildings built to the sidewalk instead of set back from it;
- Building heights scaled for pedestrian comfort and compatibly;
- Ground floors of the buildings slightly taller than upper stories, with comparatively larger windows allowing views inside;
- Architecturally defined sidewalk entrances, often sheltered from the weather with canopies over the sidewalk or by being inset into the building; and,
- A variety of architectural treatments, following the same basic rules of expressing the building base, mid-section and cap through cornice lines, proportional relationships, texture and hierarchy of materials.

Industrialization took place from 1892 to 1929 which saw Windsor emerge as a regional centre for commerce. Other communities along the south shore were now almost continuous. The population of the communities

bordering the Detroit River in 1909 was 20,000 and by 1930 it grew to 150,000.

Major routes were established as major thoroughfares with the development of the streetcar, such as present day Riverside Drive, and remained as major thoroughfares even after automobiles became more prevalent.

The economic boom that resulted from the ferry and railway ended in 1929 with the start of the Great Depression. Except for public works projects like the Federal Building on Ouellette Avenue, virtually no investment occurred in the downtown area during this era.

The southern border was dotted with other towns adjacent to Windsor. These towns had their own economic centres or mainstreets with residential components. In 1935, the towns of Windsor East (Ford City), Walkerville and Sandwich chose to amalgamate to address debt and social demands brought on by the Great Depression.

This era also significantly shaped the focus of downtown development as the Ambassador Bridge was completed in 1929 and the tunnel was completed in 1930. The ferry struggled for business and eventually was not viable. Thus the



The structural elements of the train ferry loading platform are the last remnants of heavily industrialized waterfront that has since been converted to one of the crown jewels of Windsor's park system.



growth was no longer directed to the riverfront, and started to expand south along Ouellette Avenue. In 1939, the electronic streetcar system ceased operations when buses were introduced as the new form of public transportation.

After the World War II, automobiles became widespread, with residents no longer needing to live close to transit routes for convenient access to work, shopping, and entertainment. This resulted in residential and commercial development in suburban areas outside of Windsor's downtown.

In the 1950's, the downtown still contained a mix of small, medium, and a few large scale buildings. The comparatively dense historical pattern of development didn't leave room for the expanding use of the automobile which required conveniently located parking. As a result, buildings were demolished, streets were widened to accommodate traffic flows and on-street parking was added, resulting in the quality of the pedestrian experience being diminished.

Also, during the late 1950's, riverfront property north of Riverside Drive was converted to park land, and continued the entire span of the waterfront from the Ambassador Bridge to Hiram Walker distillery once the CN railway was removed after 1991.

In the 1960's the focus of redevelopment was on 'urban renewal' projects which proposed large scale demolition to 'start from new'. The urban form changed to modernist principles which promoted 'towers in a park' instead of traditional mainstreet development, further eroding the pedestrian experience downtown.

However, the downtown was still a shopping destination until 1972 when Devonshire Mall opened its doors. As a response, Ouellette Avenue streetscaping was undertaken to create 'Ouellette Avenue Mall' in the early 1980's.

The Ontario Government opened Ontario's first casino in Windsor at a temporary location along Riverside Drive in the former art gallery building (brewery before that) in 1994. The casino was a huge success and a casino riverboat was added as an interim measure until a permanent location could be built. In 1998, the permanent location was completed on Riverside Drive on the east side of downtown from McDougall Street to Glengarry Avenue. The casino was expanded to include a second hotel tower and a 5,000 seat entertainment space in 2008 and was re-branded as Caesars Windsor.

When the casino was announced, the Provincial government and the City undertook a planning exercise for downtown Windsor. *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study: A New Vision for the Heart of Windsor* was developed to plan for the casino, revitalize downtown and to mitigate the potential impacts of the casino. Operationally, Caesars Windsor is largely a self-contained, inwardly focused building that has minimal interaction with the surrounding streets. As such, the casino doesn't tend to generate a significant amount of pedestrian street traffic, and has resulted in the land to the east being purchased by speculators who have used the land for surface parking lots.

In the late 1990's and early 2000's, Windsor experienced an influx of visitors from the U.S. that frequented entertainment lounges and bars. The visitors were younger, mainly under the age of 21, from Michigan to take advantage of Ontario's lower drinking age. This created a negative reputation as downtown only catering to the younger crowd and not being safe for families. This activity has decreased due to tighter border security after 9/11 and less favourable dollar exchange for American visitors.

The more recent additions to downtown will be discussed throughout this plan. Today, downtown is still a destination for government services, cultural activities, and entertainment and leisure. Ideally, it will regain the prominence that it once had as a vibrant shopping district and desirable neighbourhood to call home.



ABOVE: Historic postcard of Downtown Windsor looking North on Ouellette Ave.

1.1.3 Secrets to Success

It is important to set the stage for this plan by looking at some of the characteristics, attributes and elements that are widely acknowledged to be present in most of the successful and vibrant downtowns across the globe. Doing so will help to paint the picture of what a vibrant downtown looks like, but more importantly, the commitment it takes from all stakeholders to achieve success.

The items on the list below are a range of key ingredients, physical attributes and management approaches that have been compiled as a non-exhaustive list of things that are typically found in successful downtowns. The items on the list are not mutually exclusive. There is a significant amount of overlap and interdependence between the items on the list, meaning in some cases that you can't really have one without the other.

The importance of compiling a list like this is that this plan can start to determine some effective revitalization strategies by calling on the successes of others and tailoring them to the Windsor context. Windsor has the good fortune of having some of these attributes that can be built on and refined. Not surprisingly, many of the items on the list will emerge as themes, discussion points or approaches that are explored throughout this plan.

The following characteristics are typically found in healthy and vibrant downtowns:

- **Have a clear vision:** There should be an aspirational description of what downtown will look like upon the successful implementation of the steps identified to achieve the vision. Ideally it is formally documented, but in some cases it may be an informal understanding that acts as a guide for stakeholder actions and decision making. A clear vision for downtown acts as a unifying force, which can be motivating and inspiring to those working towards the vision. Without a vision, actions and decisions regarding downtown revitalization may end up being disjointed and less effective at achieving the desired outcome.

- **Understands its economic realities:** The vision and revitalization activities of successful downtowns are grounded in the economic realities of the regional circumstances. Implementation of strategies that are market-based stand a much higher chance of being successful over the long run. This means evaluating the retail, office, and residential potential of downtown within the broader regional market that the downtown is in competition with. Understanding the current economic conditions of downtown from a supply and demand perspective, and how these are changing over time requires sound research and analysis, but will provide the economic 'reality check' necessary for revitalization efforts.

A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN IS KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY

- **Encourage public/private partnerships:** Many stakeholders have an interest in the ongoing vitality of downtown, but few are capable of acting independently to effect real change, particularly over the longer term. Successful downtowns have the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors actively engaged in the effort to revitalize downtown. The public sector, specifically the local municipality often sets the table for reinvestment by providing clarity around the vision, certainty to the private sector through a fair and transparent regulatory system, and financial inducements and incentives, all in an effort to promote private sector investment in downtown. There are also numerous examples of the local municipality playing an active role in land/real estate transactions that contribute to the revitalization of downtown.

- **Strong leadership and management:** Downtown needs champions. It could be an individual or organization that advocates on behalf of downtown. Support from an active Business Improvement Association (BIA) provides clear leadership and a collective voice for individual businesses. BIAs also perform a number of functions ranging from managing and coordinating ongoing operational and maintenance items, organizing special promotional events, to actively pursuing new businesses and investment.

- **Needs to be safe:** First and foremost, successful downtowns need to be safe places to visit and live. Sometimes concerns about downtown being unsafe



are overstated; however, even the perception that the downtown is unsafe can have a lasting negative impact on the image of downtown and on people's willingness to visit or live downtown. Successful downtowns develop and implement strategies to address either real or perceived safety concerns and actively promote a positive image of public safety.

• **Downtown is multi-functional:**

Downtowns need people to thrive. Vibrant downtowns are multi-functional places that have activities that provide a diverse range of people a variety of options to live, work and play downtown. The most successful downtowns have people doing all three. The more functions a downtown can serve, the more people it engages on some level to meet their needs. Nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd, which makes the presence of activity critical to the ongoing vibrancy of downtown.

• **Distinct and authentic:** Successful downtowns offer an authentic experience that is distinct from the rest of the community, and from other cities. People want to experience an environment that is authentic to the character, history and evolution of downtown. This authenticity is most often embodied in the built form, since this is where the economic, social, and cultural changes that have occurred over time are most visibly captured. Successful downtowns demonstrate an understanding and commitment to the bond between people and place or setting.

This 'sense of place' or experience of a person in a particular environment may be aesthetic, tactile, or emotional.

• **Embrace their heritage:** Successful downtowns treat their older buildings, particularly ones of heritage significance, as valuable assets that should be enhanced and preserved. The contribution of these buildings to the authenticity and distinctiveness of downtown is enormous, at the same time as helping to visualize the evolution of downtown over time. Restoring and preserving historic buildings has economic and environment benefits. Many successful downtowns have implemented strategies that encourage the rehabilitation of existing buildings, reuse of historic buildings through conversion to new uses, and construction of new infill buildings that are complementary to the historical context of downtown.

• **High quality design:** Successful downtowns exhibit a design of buildings and public realm that is to the highest quality

possible, and at a scale that relates to the size of a person (i.e. human scaled). High design buildings that are better suited to their context and more attuned to the environment, while also being architecturally exceptional send a positive message to potential investors and are desirable places to be in. Furthermore, the mass and height of buildings also have an impact on how people perceive and relate to the built environment. The scale of buildings and the spaces between them should also relate to the surrounding built form. It is not a coincidence that many of the most successful downtowns have readily identifiable skylines.

• **Walkable and pedestrian friendly:** Successful downtowns have a high degree of walkability, where people can safely and easily walk to many of the areas that they need or want to go. Walkability has been linked to many health, environmental, and economic benefits. Walkability is heavily influenced by the built environment, with factors such as the quality of sidewalks with buffers from moving traffic, pedestrian crossings, surrounding building aesthetics, parks and gathering spaces, nearby destinations, and street furniture, to name a few. Many of the cities that are pleasant downtowns to walk have begun to think about their streets differently. They are adopting a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained in a manner that enables safe, convenient and comfortable travel for all users regardless of their preferred mode of transportation.

• **Convenient, readily available parking:** Although one of the more practical items on the list, the importance of convenient and readily available parking should not be dismissed. Customers of both retail and service

businesses enjoy the convenience of parking close to their destination. Parking demands vary widely based on the mix of uses and activities, and time of day. Successful downtowns have an ample supply of both on-street and off-street parking available, which creates an atmosphere that encourages continued business growth. Not only is supply important, successful cities treat downtown parking as a fundamental component of downtown infrastructure and manage it accordingly.

• **Understands that the little things matter:** It is often the little things that shape the perception about a place. Sometimes they are too small to believe that they warrant much attention. They may seem inconsequential on the surface, but they are the things that most affect the day-to-day lives of the people, and the many little things add up to be BIG things. If the little things, or details, are not attended to, it sends a message that the bigger things may not matter either. If it is clear that the little things do matter, the message is much more positive. Cities that have successful downtowns have found an effective way to identify and respond to these issues.

• **Downtown should be connected to the waterfront:** The draw of water should not be underestimated, and the downtowns that take advantage of having access to a body of water often reap the benefits from it. Public access and clear pedestrian linkages are the most important characteristics of successful downtowns that truly leverage the natural benefit of having waterfront access.



LEFT: Art Gallery of Windsor is a high quality building with a distinct and authentic design.



1.2 THE BENEFITS OF DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The significant investments being made by cities across North America are not to be taken lightly. Cities are investing millions of dollars in their downtown cores with the hope of realizing significant economic, social and environmental benefits. Some of the more noteworthy benefits realized by cities that are successfully revitalizing their city cores include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- **Curbing sprawl:** The redevelopment of the urban core is an effective tool in combating additional urban expansion into greenfields surrounding the existing urban area of cities. Additional growth and expansion is accommodated on land that is currently within the built up areas of cities versus undeveloped land on the urban periphery;
- **More efficient use of infrastructure:** Infill development and intensification take advantage of existing infrastructure and reduce the requirement to expand infrastructure into new growth areas. This is a significant benefit, given the deterioration of infrastructure emerging as a major challenge facing Canadian cities;
- **Increased property values:** Successful downtown revitalization will lead to increases in property values in the downtown area. Suddenly, buildings and property that at one time were not sound financial investments become a financially viable option for potential investments. Existing property owners also become more willing to make often long overdue investments in their properties, leading to a better quality and more attractive buildings in the downtown core;
- **Increase in tax revenue:** Increased property values and investment activity provides a direct benefit to the local municipality's budget in the form of additional tax revenues;
- **Increase in retail opportunities:** Downtown revitalization, especially efforts to attract more residents, may help to establish a competitive advantage for many downtown retailers. An increase in retail options will in turn become part of the attraction of visiting and living downtown;

BELOW: Maiden Lane looking West



Maiden Lane is a mid-block connection between the shopping corridors of Pelissier and Ouellette Ave.

It is also a popular space that attracts people and events.

- **Increased demand for transit services:** Compact development often leads to increases in transit use. The financial realities of higher land prices in the city core necessitate more compact development in order to recoup investment. This often translates into less parking supplied and higher demand for transit services, which is good for the environment and the transit operator;
- **A more positive image of the city:** Successful downtown revitalization leads to a downtown that is more vibrant that attracts potential residents, investors and visitors. As discussed in the Introduction, a city's downtown is where a city shows its individual character. If downtown shines, the overall image of the city is often perceived in a better light; and,
- **Downtown becomes a tourist destination:** If the city portrays and promotes its positive image and provides interesting attractions and destinations, it is highly likely that people from outside the city will take notice and consider visiting that particular city. Downtowns often are the centralized location of many of the attractions and destinations that visitors wish to visit and if downtown presents a positive image to visitors they are more likely to have a pleasurable experience and return, or recommend that experience to others.

This quick, non-exhaustive summary of possible benefits from downtown revitalization efforts is intended to present the range of benefits that municipalities hope to realize through their efforts and significant investments in their city cores. However, this summary in no way touches on the magnitude of possible payback that a city could realize from the strategic decision to invest resources into efforts that will lead to a more vibrant and prosperous downtown.

1.2.1 Trends in Downtown Revitalization

With some of the potential benefits highlighted, the next logical question to answer is: How are cities going about revitalizing their downtowns? There are many documented approaches or strategies for downtown revitalization and redevelopment from cities across North America, including:

- Building cultural facilities (Windsor, London, Kitchener, Cleveland, Ottawa);
- New or expanded convention centres (Grand Rapids, Kansas City);
- Downtown sports facilities (Windsor, London, Guelph, Winnipeg, Detroit);
- Urban park development (Dallas, Chicago, Toronto)
- Centralizing government facilities (Windsor, Kitchener, Guelph);
- Revitalized housing and supporting retail (Kitchener, Hamilton, Burlington);
- Entertainment districts (Toronto, Cleveland, Austin);
- Constructing casinos in, or in close proximity to, downtown (Windsor, Detroit, Niagara Falls);
- Relocating or building institutional complexes such as universities and hospitals (Windsor, Kitchener, Brantford, Cambridge, Burlington);
- Planning for and building rapid transit systems (Kitchener-Waterloo, Detroit, Cleveland, Dallas); and,
- Developing waterfront parks and destinations (Windsor, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago).



“M-1 RAIL is an unprecedented public-private partnership and model for regional collaboration.”

ABOVE: The new Q Line in Detroit provides reliable public transit along the Woodward Avenue Corridor, and has become a catalyst for additional economic activity along the corridor.



LEFT: The St. Clair College Centre for the Arts was the first significant investment made in creation of a downtown post-secondary campus.



RIGHT: The School of Social Work is the first of the University of Windsor buildings in its downtown campus.

Some of these approaches have met with great success, particularly when they are filling a much needed gap or niche in the community. Others have resulted in minimal contributions to the revitalization of their respective downtown cores. Rarely does a city commit to only one approach. The success of downtown revitalization often hinges on the balanced implementation of more than one of these approaches working together to reach a critical mass that gains momentum. The sequencing of the approaches may also have as much of an influence on the success of downtown revitalization as the actual approaches used. The successful implementation of one approach will set the stage or be the building block for the success of subsequent approach(es) implemented. This being said, it is not realistic or feasible to adopt all of the approaches because of a wide range of constraints and limitations.

The fact that there are so many approaches to the very complex challenge of downtown redevelopment suggests that it is as much an art as it is a science. The one thing that downtown practitioners across North America can agree on is that it is worth doing something to revitalize and/or ensure the ongoing vitality of downtown.



1.2.2 Recent Contributions to Downtown Revitalization Efforts

Recent investments in Downtown Windsor at the municipal level and by the education sector have provided different destinations and uses for the downtown.

The Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre (WIATC) is a major municipal investment providing state-of-the-art aquatic training facilities for swimmers and divers. The site also hosts Adventure Bay which is an indoor destination water park for families. The site also provides services for the local community such as a gym and recreational swimming.

Significant investments have been made by St. Clair College and the University of Windsor in creating downtown campuses. St. Clair College established the *St. Clair Centre for the Arts* at the former Cleary Convention Centre and Chrysler Theatre and their *Media-Plex* building at the corner of University Street and Victoria Avenue.

The University of Windsor has recently completed the School of Social Work in the renovated former Windsor Star building. The work the University has completed is a significant contribution to the downtown by adaptive reuse of a heritage building and by bringing students and faculty downtown. The City donated the former Armouries building and made a sizeable cash contribution to the University for the redevelopment of the Windsor Armouries, former Windsor Bus station and the Chatham Street Parkette. The University has also undertaken the redevelopment of the former Tunnel BBQ site across from the Armouries for an expansion of their School of Creative Arts (SoCA) facilities.

RECENT PROJECTS



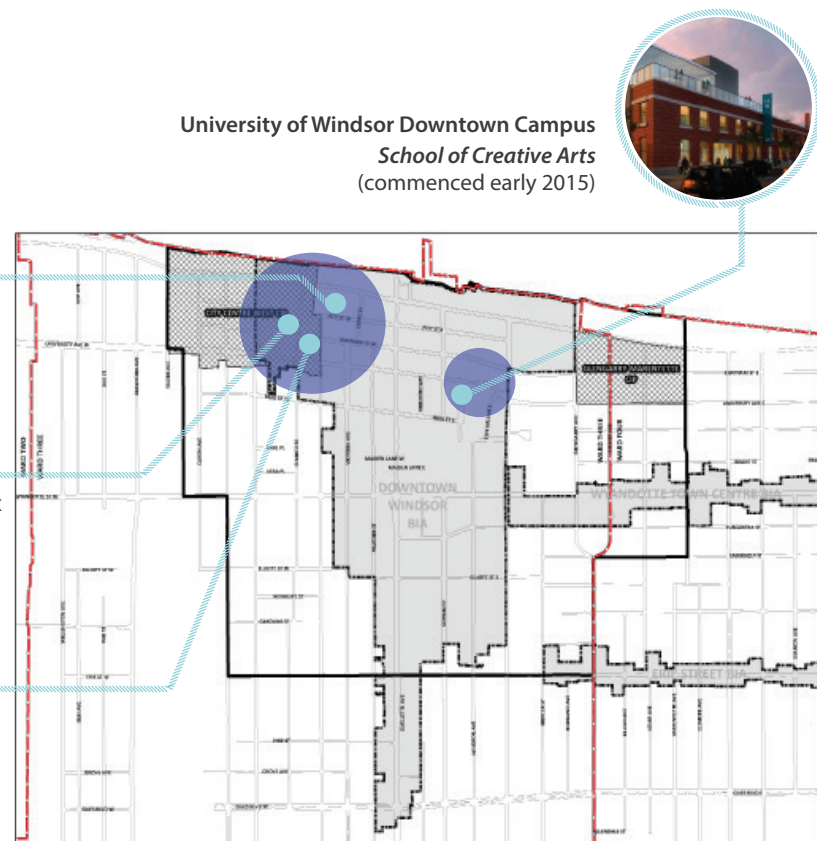
St. Clair College Centre for the Arts & MediaPlex
(2007-2009)



Windsor Family Aquatic Complex
(2014)



University of Windsor Downtown Campus
(commenced 2013)



1.2.3 Previous City Centre Studies

In 1978, the City of Windsor completed a plan for the central planning district. The purpose of the review was to:

Provide a comprehensive statistical base, in terms of land use and market potential upon which to formulate and assess policy relating to downtown Windsor; outline many of the significant factors which have influenced the present form and character of the Windsor downtown area; to assess public opinion relative to the downtown area; and, to outline conceptual design schemes for the downtown area and the central planning district.

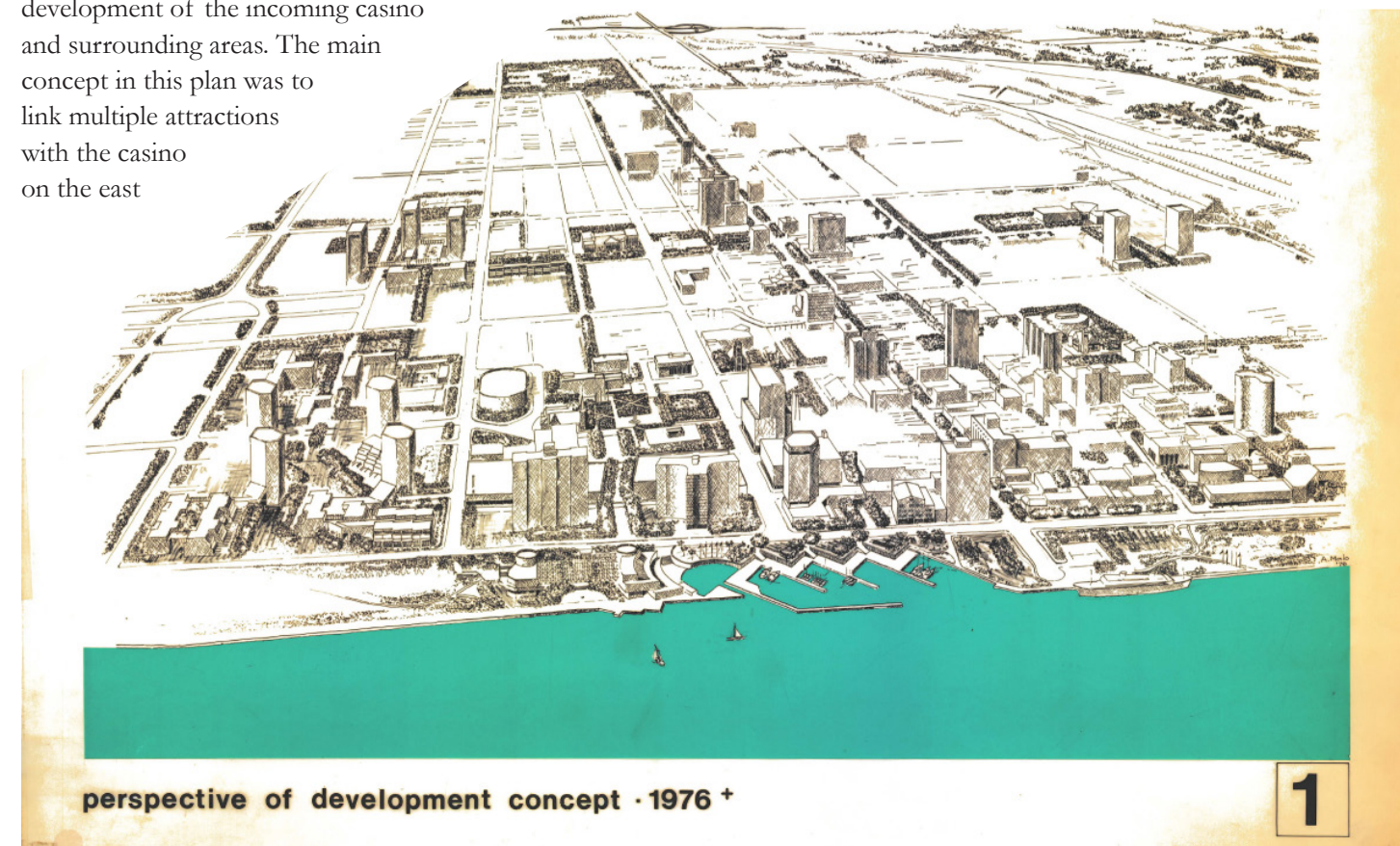
Due to the age of the report and the significant changes that have taken place since its adoption it is not relied on for the drafting of this document; however it is of interest to view the 1976 perspective of development concept. This gives a glimpse into the planning principles and built form styles of the time.

Subsequently, *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study: A New Vision for the Heart of Windsor* was completed in 1994 to plan for the development of the incoming casino and surrounding areas. The main concept in this plan was to link multiple attractions with the casino on the east

side of downtown and a multi-use site (now the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre & Adventure Bay) on the west side of downtown. This was commonly referred to as the Super Anchor concept.

The *City Centre West Urban Village Community Improvement Plan (CIP)* put some of *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* into action by providing incentives for the development of an urban village. This plan is relatively recent and the vision for a majority of the area will be reflected in this current plan. The incentives offered by the City Centre West CIP were tied to detailed urban design guidelines and built form performance. Those incentives and guidelines were performance based and will be simplified through this plan to encourage development that achieves the vision.

The *Glengarry Marentette Waterfront Village CIP* does not offer financial incentives. The primary purpose of this document was to deal with the illegal surface parking lots in the Glengarry Marentette neighbourhood.



2 BACKGROUND

2.1 POLICY DIRECTION

2.1.1 Provincial Policy Statement

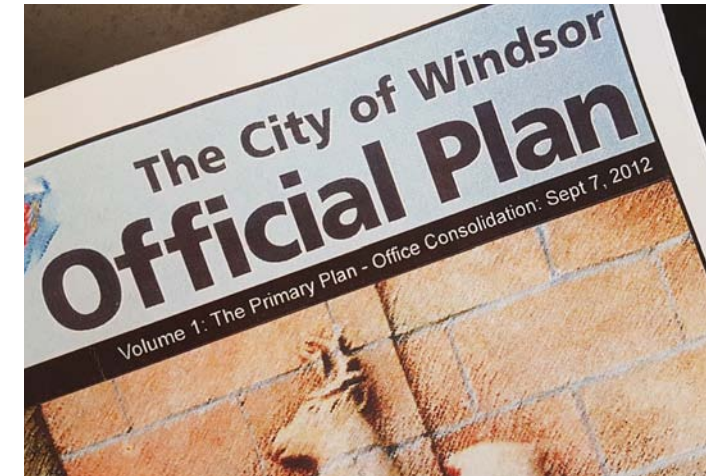
Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that, “decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act”. These policy statements are consolidated in most recent version of the Provincial Policy Statement (the “PPS”) that took effect on April 30, 2014.

The provincial policy directions aligned with the main purpose of this CIP include:

- Supporting the long-term economic prosperity by maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets (Section 1.7.1.c);
- Encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes (Section 1.7.1.d);
- Promoting opportunities for intensification and redevelopment taking into account existing building stock, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities (Section 1.1.3.3);
- Providing an appropriate range of housing types and densities that accommodate current and future users (Section 1.4.1);
- Planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity (Section 1.5.1a);

- Promoting a land use pattern, density and mix of uses that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support current and future use of transit and active transportation (Section 1.6.7.4);
- Promoting economic development and competitiveness by encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support livable and resilient communities (Section 1.3.1.c); and,
- Conserving and protecting significant built heritage and cultural heritage resources (Section 2.6.1).

2.1.2 Official Plan Policies



The Official Plan (OP) provides guidance for the physical development of the municipality while taking into consideration important social, economic and environmental matters and goals. Additionally, the Official Plan provides a significant amount of policy direction on the matters addressed by this CIP.

Downtown Policies

The City Centre Planning District is given special consideration and attention within Windsor. As the focus of major economic, social and cultural activities, the City Centre is the heart of Windsor. In addition, its function as an international gateway contributes to the City Centre’s role as a welcoming arrival point for visitors.

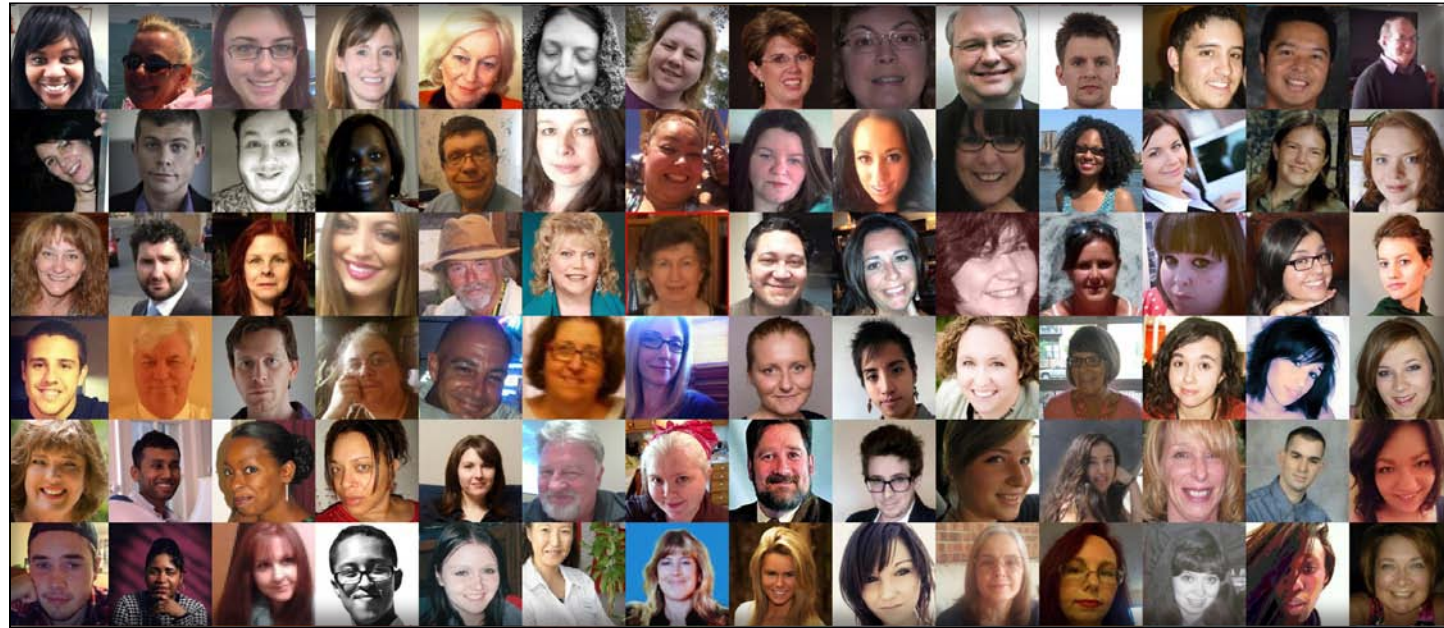
To ensure that the City Centre prospers, Council will manage development to promote a diverse mixture of businesses, cultural venues, major government offices, residential neighbourhoods and entertainment venues. To this end, the OP states:

The City Centre will continue to be the major focus of cultural, social and economic activities. The City Centre is and will remain the heart of Windsor, serving as the visual symbol of the entire community. A diverse mixture of businesses, cultural venues, major government offices and entertainment destinations will strengthen downtown as a major economic centre. The heart of our community will also provide a livable residential environment for a variety of people and be a welcoming arrival point for visitors (Section 3.2.2.2).

The Official Plan contains a number of specific objectives that support this vision for downtown Windsor, including:

- To encourage a concentration of government institutions, entertainment and retail uses, cultural venues, residences, business headquarters and related offices in the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.1);
- To foster livable residential neighbourhoods close to employment, shopping and entertainment opportunities (Section 6.11.1.2);
- To enhance public and open spaces within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.3);
- To promote the conservation and adaptive reuse of buildings within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.4);
- To establish design guidelines to create an attractive and memorable City Centre (Section 6.11.1.5);
- To enhance views and vistas of the waterfront, Detroit skyline and key civic and heritage buildings within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.6);
- To enhance the City Centre as a pedestrian friendly district (Section 6.11.1.7);
- To facilitate the development of a number of distinct sub areas, each with its own identity and character within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.8);
- To designate key streets as pedestrian oriented theme streets and provide appropriate streetscaping (Section 6.11.1.9);
- To enhance pedestrian, cycling and public transportation access to and within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.10); and,
- To strengthen the role of the City Centre as a major international gateway and tourism destination (Section 6.11.1.11)

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



2.2.1 Data Collection and Accuracy

The demographic data used in the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan is taken from the 2011 Canadian Census National House Survey (NHS) that was conducted by Statistics Canada. An important consideration that is unique to this census year (2011) is that the data collected is considered differently than previous years due to the elimination of the mandatory long form survey, and it instead being replaced with a voluntary long form survey. The questions included on the short form survey and NHS were intended to replace the questions of the long form survey; however, the data is not comparable to previous years due to discrepancies in questions and collection methods. Furthermore, the elimination of the mandatory long form survey may mean that some Canadians have been underrepresented in the 2011 Census if they did not complete a long form survey.

The Planning Department also purchases short form data, therefore it can be used for the DWPS Boundary. Due to the problems with the collection methods, the City did not purchase all NHS data at a small geographic level. Therefore, some of the data referenced for the plan is only available at

the Census Tract level. As a result, the data is not completely reflective of the DWPS Boundary since there is additional areas included in each Census Tract. Due to this issue, it was determined that the data should not be amalgamated and instead be represented for each Census Tract. Therefore, in some areas of the report, four different figures are given to represent each Census Tract.

Despite the potential problems with the data, it was determined that it is still viable and useful to understand the general population characteristics in the DWPS area.

2.2.2 Total Population

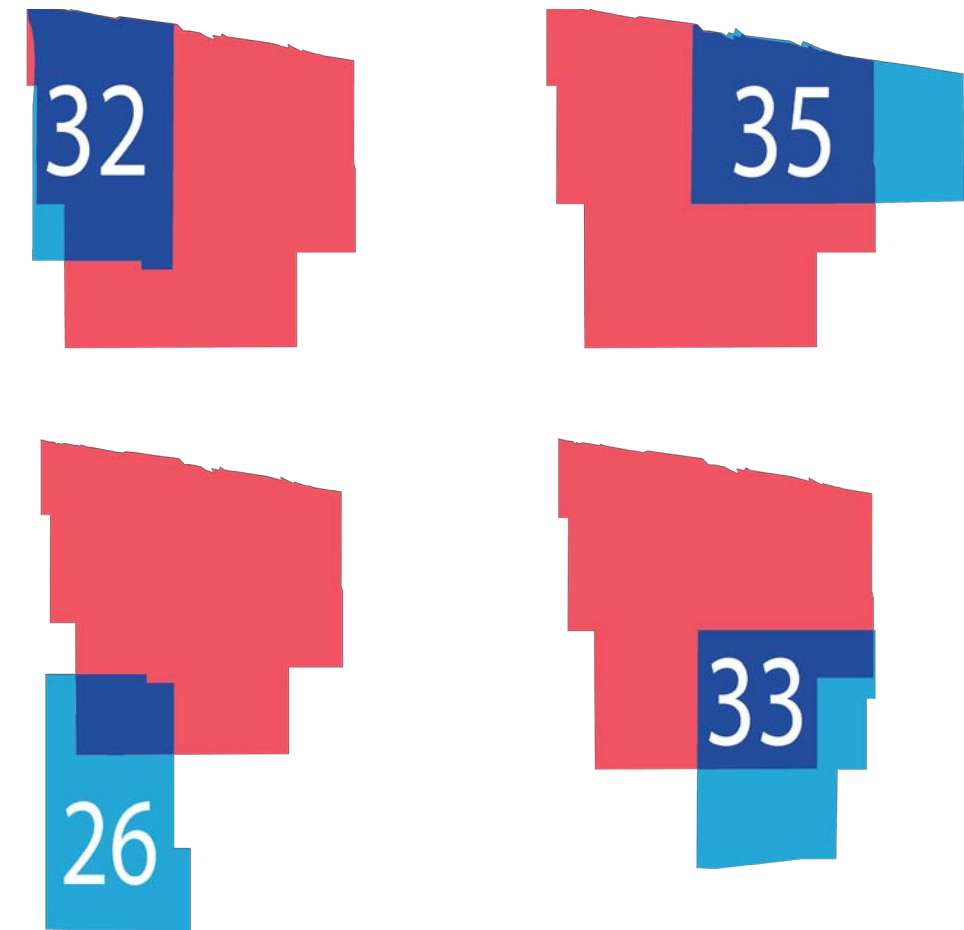
The total population of Windsor's downtown as of 2011 is 9,852 which is a 5.6% decline in population since 2006. The trend in data is similar to that of the City as a whole, which experienced a decline in population of 2.6% since 2001. However, given that the population of downtown is much smaller than the City, the decline in population in downtown is more significant. Therefore, there are far less people who are living in downtown in 2011 when compared to 2006.

However, the GNR typically only skews the data when it is above 50%. Census Tract 33 has a population of 4520 and has a GNR number of 26.1%. Census Tract 26 has a population of 3545 and has a GNR 43.9%. Census Tract 32 has a population of 3915 a GNR number of 35.5%.

Since there is a variation in the total population of each Census Tract, using Census Tract data in comparison with other each other, percentages of phenomena occurring will be used rather than exact numbers. Although percentages are not a perfect comparison, they are easier to understand the magnitude of an occurrence and compare with each other.

2.2.3 Census Tract Populations

The four Census Tracts do not have the same population. Within Census Tract 35, there is a total population of 3370 people. The global non-response (GNR) rate for the Census Tract is 33.9%, indicating that up to 33.9% of people in the Census Tract did not participate within the survey.



2.2.4 Population Characteristics

Age and Gender Distribution

The number of male and female residents of Downtown is almost equal with 51% of the population being male and the other 49% female. The gender distribution is quite similar to that of the entire City of Windsor, as 49% of the City's population are male and 51% is female. Overall, the population of both genders has declined since 2006, but there has been a more noteworthy decline in Downtown's female with a drop of 8.2%. The decline in the female population may be explained by the higher number of females aged 75 and older living in the Downtown area compared to males in 2006. These women may have passed away or moved into an assisted living facility between 2006 and 2011.

The population distribution for Downtown is similar to the overall population distribution for Windsor; however, there are more pronounced numbers of the 40-60 and 20-29 cohorts in comparison to the rest of the population. These cohorts may look more pronounced due to the relatively small number of people under 15 living in downtown. Typically, downtown attracts the 20-29 cohort.

Another significant population within in the downtown is people over the age of 65. People over 65 may chose to live in downtown over other areas of the City due to its greater walkability, access to transit, and typically smaller sized houses and apartments, as well as access to medical services and facilities in the core.

Overall, the average age of residents in Downtown in 43.8 and the dominant age group is 50-54 year olds, making the population slightly older than the City's average population of 40.2 and dominate age cohort of 45 to 49 years.

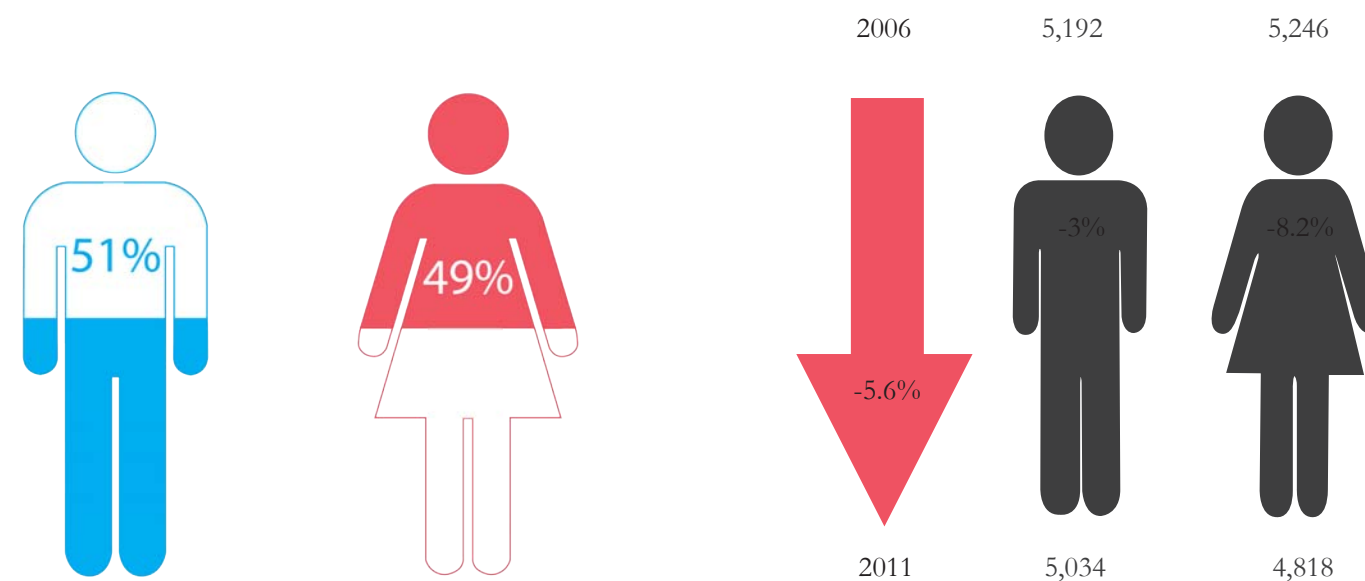
Population Change from 2006 to 2011.

STUDY AREA	WINDSOR (CY)		
	2006	2011	% CHANGE
TOTAL POPULATION	10,438	9,852	- 5.61
MALES	5,192	5,034	- 3.04
FEMALES	5,246	4,818	- 8.16

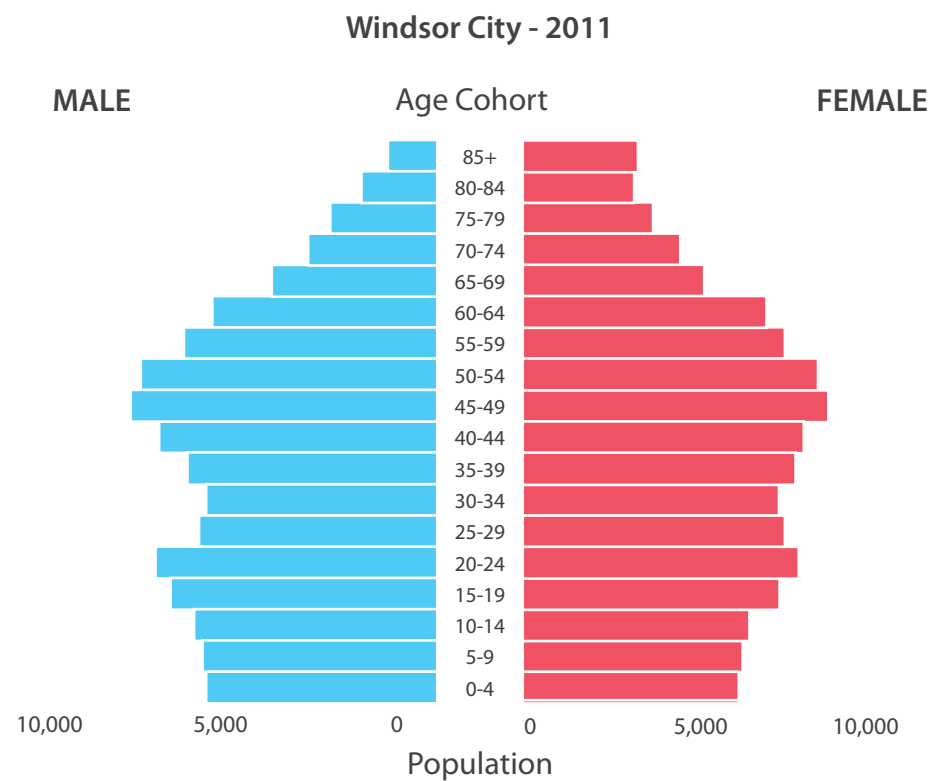
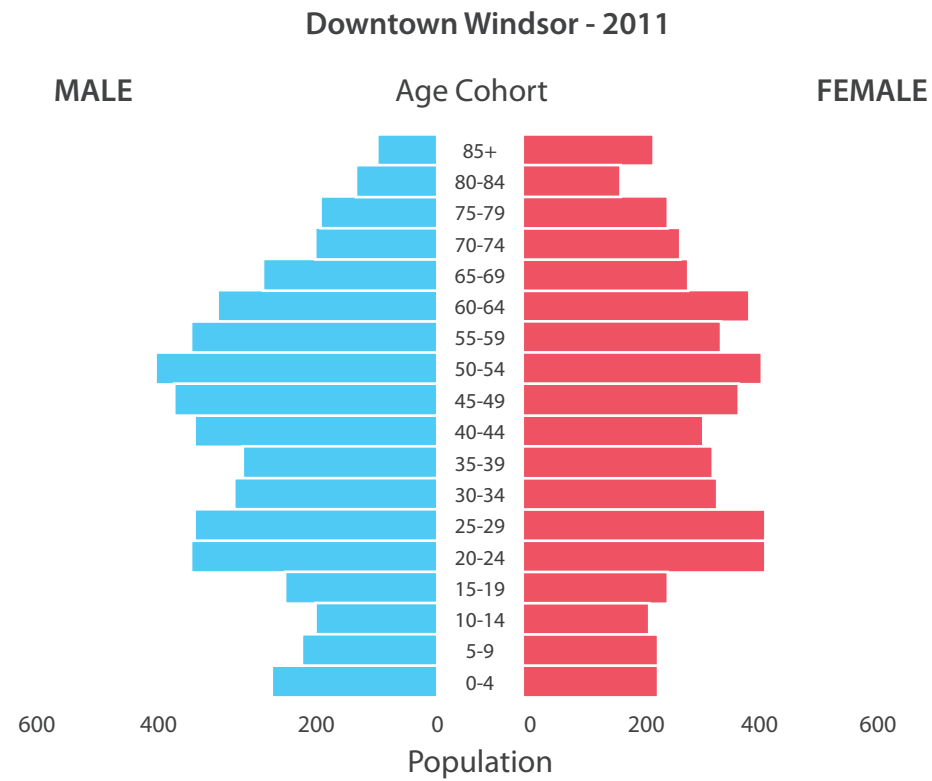
Total Population and Age Cohort in Windsor for 2011.

STUDY AREA	%	WINDSOR (CY)	%
TOTAL POPULATION	9,852	210,875	
0-4 years	460	11,845	6
5-9 years	420	11,980	6
10-14 years	382	12,425	6
15-19 years	435	13,865	7
20-24 years	746	14,675	7
25-29 years	738	13,295	6
30-34 years	604	12,940	6
35-39 years	580	13,795	7
40-44 years	647	14,830	7
45-49 years	731	16,115	8
50-54 years	794	15,715	7
55-59 years	682	13,665	6
60-64 years	682	12,440	6
65-69 years	517	9,280	4
70-74 years	427	7,655	4
75-79 years	402	6,390	3
80-84 years	277	5,200	2
85 years and over	335	4,865	2

Gender Distribution in Downtown Windsor and Windsor City in 2011



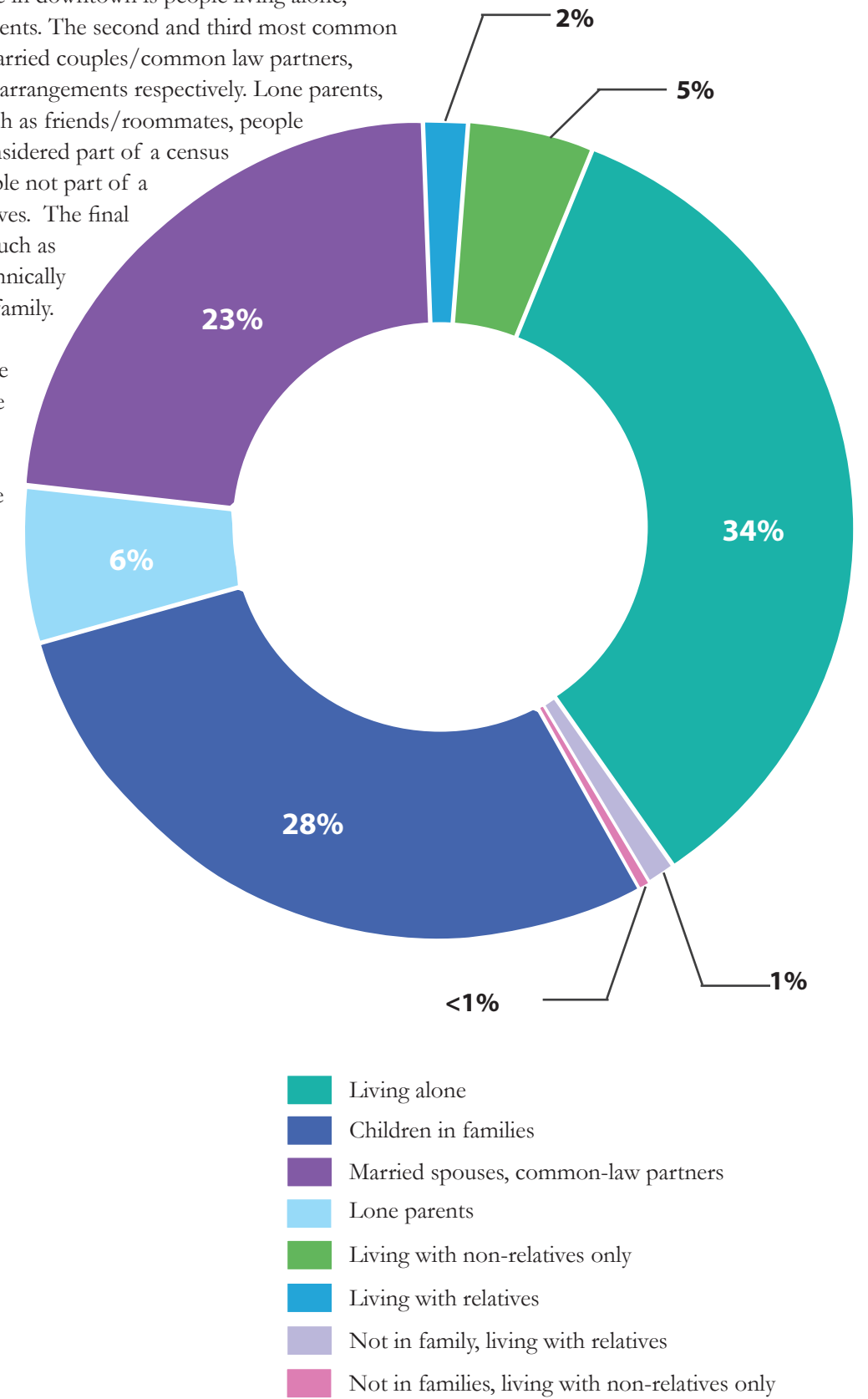
Population distribution in Downtown Windsor and Windsor City in 2011



Family Structure

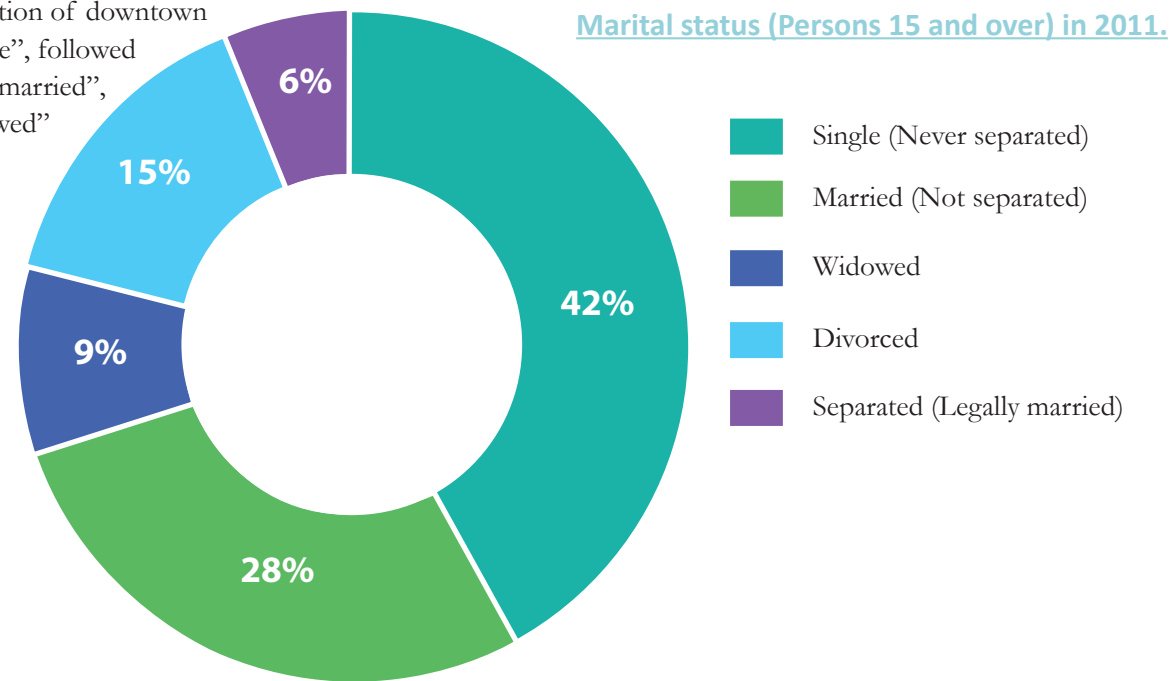
The most common family structure in downtown is people living alone, making up 34% of living arrangements. The second and third most common are children in families and then married couples/common law partners, making up 28% and 23% of living arrangements respectively. Lone parents, people living with non-relatives such as friends/roommates, people living with relatives, people not considered part of a census family living with relative, and people not part of a census family living with non-relatives. The final two definitions refer to situations such as children in foster care, who are technically not considered part of the census family.

In contrast to the data for the entire City, which has only 14% of people living alone, downtown has over twice the percentage of people living alone. As a result, the average household size is considerably lower at 1.7 people in downtown compared to 2.4 people on average for Windsor.



Marital Status

The largest proportion of downtown residents are “single”, followed by those who are “married”, “divorced”, “widowed” and “separated” in that order. This is similar to the City as a whole, with the exception of a higher percentage of single people and less married people.

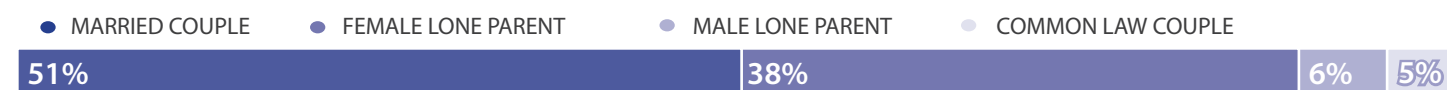


Children within Families

Most children within downtown live with a married couple, making up just over half of all living arrangements for children. The second largest living arrangement is living with single mothers, making up 38% of children’s homes. There are also small percentages of children living with single fathers or with a common law couple.

In comparison to the rest of the City, downtown has a far higher proportion of single parents making up 44% of children’s living arrangements compared to 31% for the rest of the City. Higher numbers of single parents may chose to live in downtown over other areas in the City due to more affordable housing options and greater transit access.

Family Structure with Children in Downtown in 2011.



Family Structure with Children in Windsor in 2011.



Visible Minorities

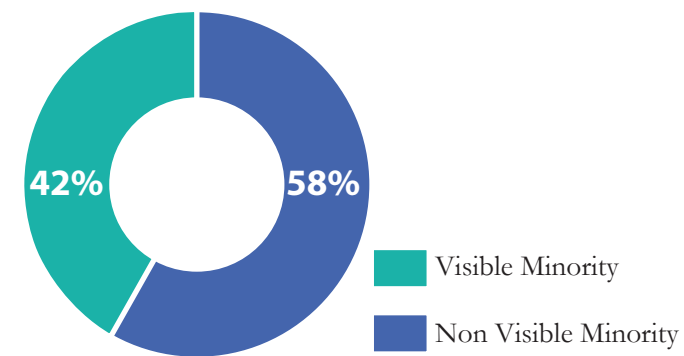
A visible minority is any person who is not of European or aboriginal decent. In Windsor’s downtown, there are a large proportion of people who are of visible minority status, nearing 50% in some areas. The high number of people who are a visible minority speaks to the high level of diversity within the area.

Within the population of people who are a visible minority, Black people make up 20-27% of the population in all Census Tracts in the downtown. Arab, Chinese, Southeast Asian and Filipino people also represent significant populations in most of the Census Tracts, although percentages tend to vary widely. There is no majority-minority within the census tracts, meaning that there is not a large portion of any single group that dominates by making up over 50% of the visible minority population in downtown. The makeup of visible minorities strongly suggests that downtown is highly diverse.

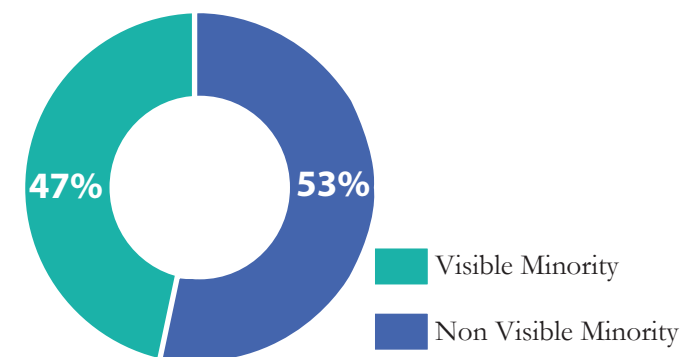
Non-Official Languages

The diversity of the area is reflected in the number of speakers of non-official languages in downtown, with 42% of people identified as speaking a language other than English or French, and 26% speaking one of the top 5 non-official languages. In comparison, only 26% of residents of the entire City speak a non-official language.

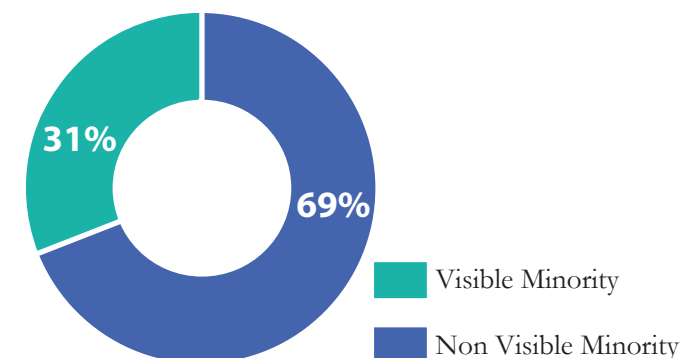
Percent of Visible Minorities in 2011 (CT 32).



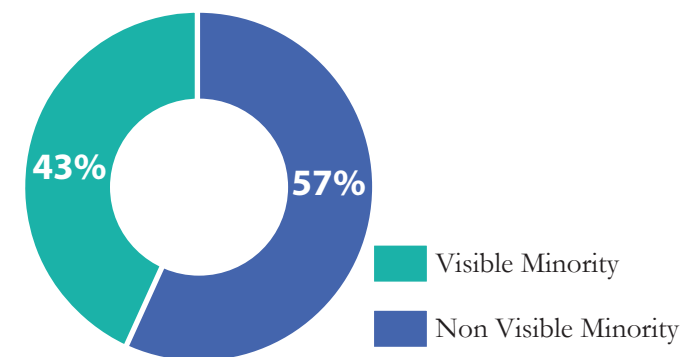
Percent of Visible Minorities in 2011 (CT 35).



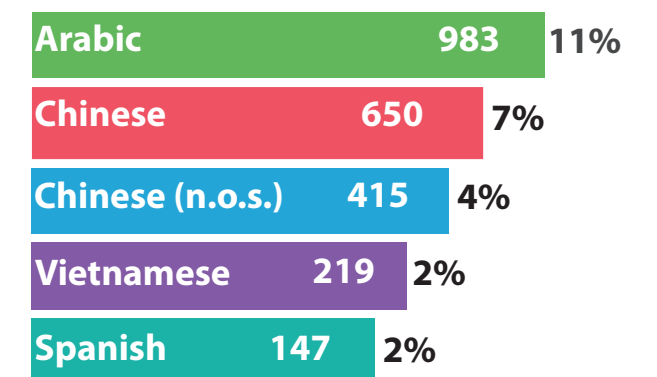
Percent of Visible Minorities in 2011 (CT 26).



Percent of Visible Minorities in 2011 (CT 33).



Top 5 non-official languages spoken in Downtown Windsor.



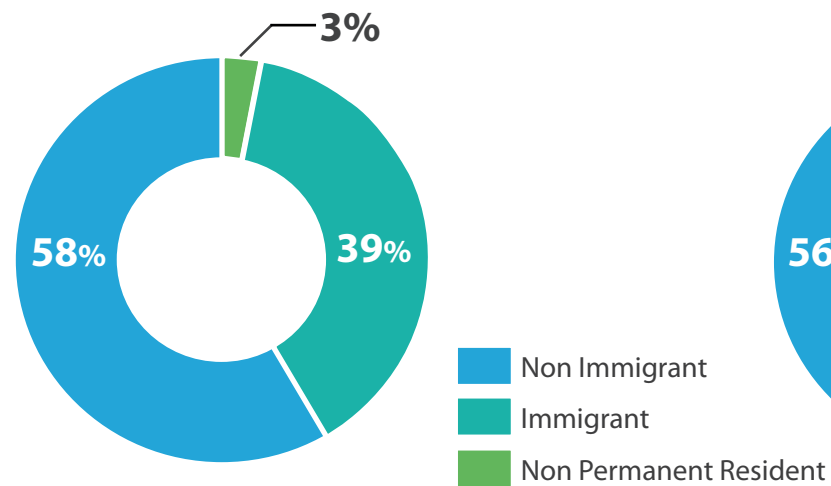
Immigration

An immigrant is defined as any individual who has moved to Windsor from a country outside of Canada and has successfully become a citizen or permanent resident. Whereas a non-permanent resident is an individual who has a temporary work, student, or tourist visa or is a Temporary Resident Permit Holder which permits them to remain in Canada.

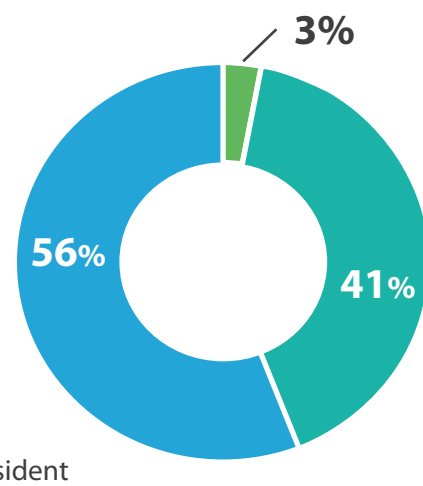
Within Windsor's downtown, there is a high population of immigrants, making up between 29% - 41% of the total population of the four Census Tracts. Non-permanent

residents have a much smaller presence in all areas, making up only 2% - 3% of the population. Most immigrants within downtown are recent immigrant, having immigrated within the last 20 years. Overall, over 50% of all immigrants living in downtown arrived between the years of 1991-2011. The large number of recent immigrants in downtown may be a contributing factor to the high degree of diversity in the area. Presently, immigrants are mainly arriving from Asia as opposed to Europe, which was the most common continent of origin in previous decades.

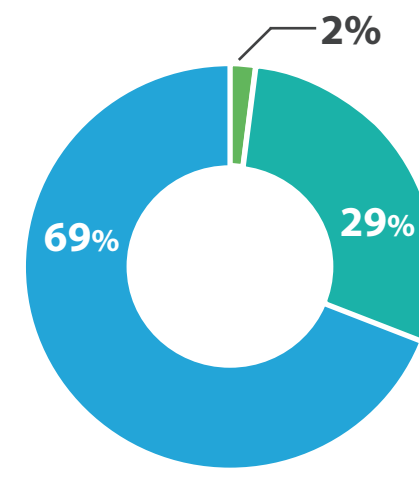
Immigrant Population (CT 32).



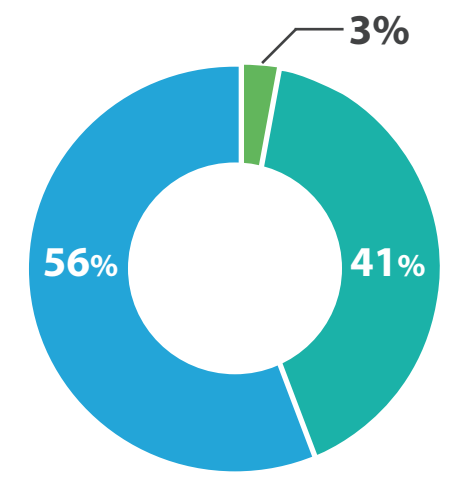
Immigrant Population (CT 35).



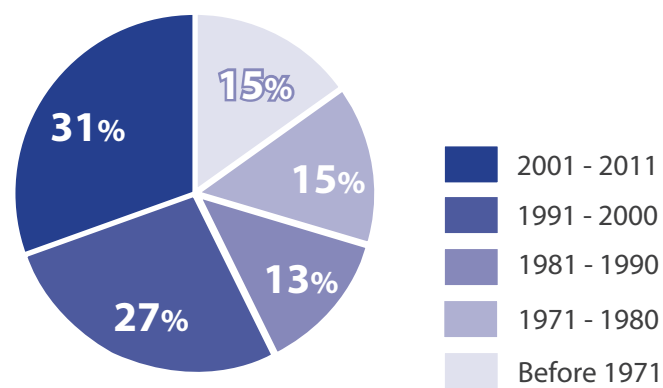
Immigrant Population (CT 26).



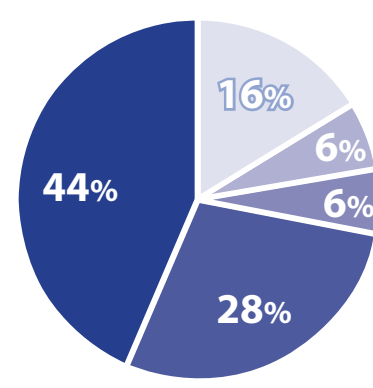
Immigrant Population (CT 33).



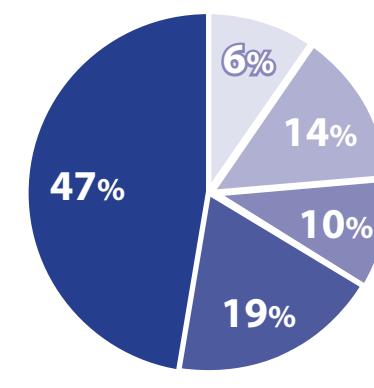
When Did Immigrants Arrive? (CT 32).



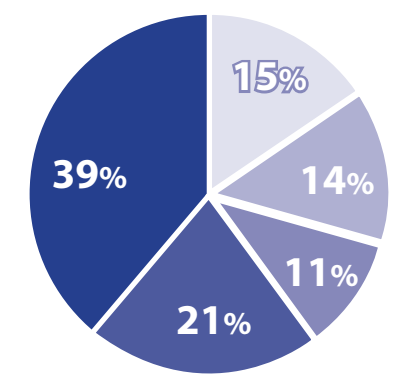
When Did Immigrants Arrive? (CT 35).



When Did Immigrants Arrive? (CT 26).



When Did Immigrants Arrive? (CT 33).



2.2.5 Financial Characteristics

Housing Costs

The average value of shelter across the four Census Tracts range from \$117,318.00 to \$137,295.00, and the average cost of monthly rent ranges from \$553.00 to \$678.00. The highest cost for monthly rent appears in the same Census Tract as the highest value of home, and the lowest values also correlate. Compared to the City as a whole, where the average value of a home is \$169,799.00 and rent is \$695.00, costs for shelter in downtown are lower.

Annual Income

The average household size in downtown is 1.7 people, making families of two the best representation of the average family in the area. In 2011, the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) was set at \$19,872 for a family of two. The average and median income for each census tract was above the LICO for families of two. However, it is also shown by the graphs that there are many people in all census tract that are earning less than \$20,000 per year, indicating that there is a strong presence of low income people in the area. Additionally, there are some high income households in the downtown core as well, with all but census tract 35 having residents reporting household incomes \$150,000 and over.

The Census Tract with the greatest divisiveness in terms of income equality is census tract 26. Census Tract 26 has both the greatest number of households making \$125,000 – \$149,000 and households making over \$150,000 annually. However, this Census Tract also has the highest amount of households making between \$10,000 – \$14,000 and households making less than \$5000 annually.



CT 32:
Average Value of Dwelling:
\$133,177

Average Cost of Monthly Rent:
\$668



CT 35:
Average Value of Dwelling:
\$117,318

Average Cost of Monthly Rent:
\$553



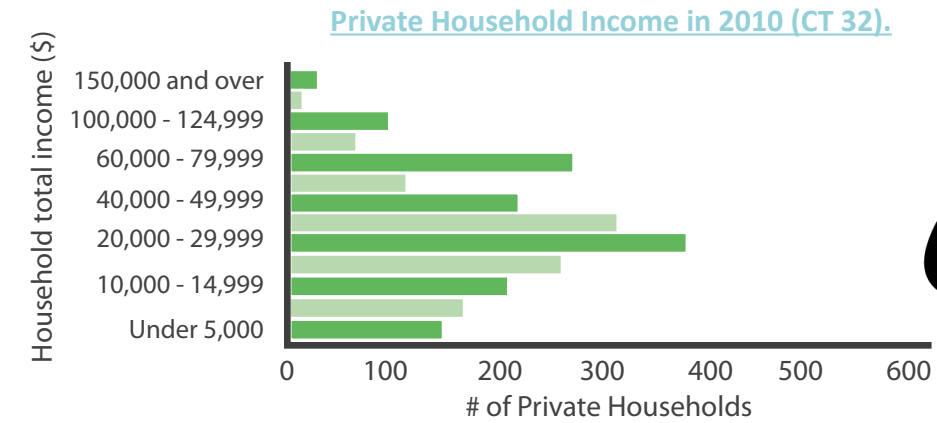
CT 26:
Average Value of Dwelling:
\$137,295

Average Cost of Monthly Rent:
\$678



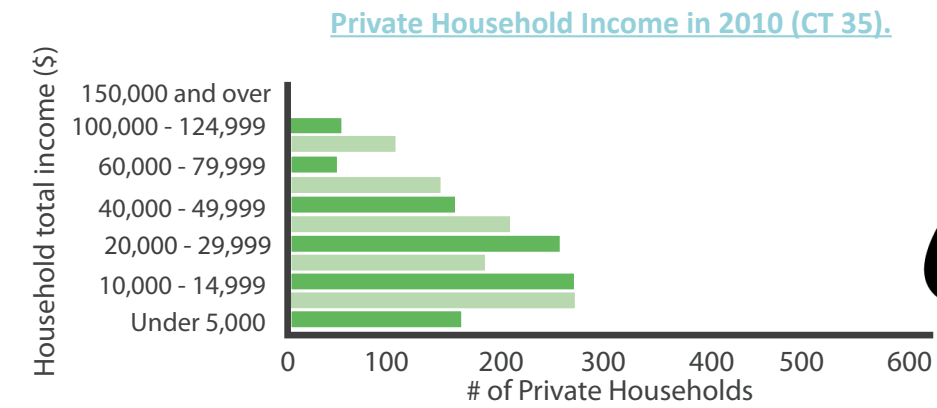
CT 33:
Average Value of Dwelling:
\$129,006

Average Cost of Monthly Rent:
\$558



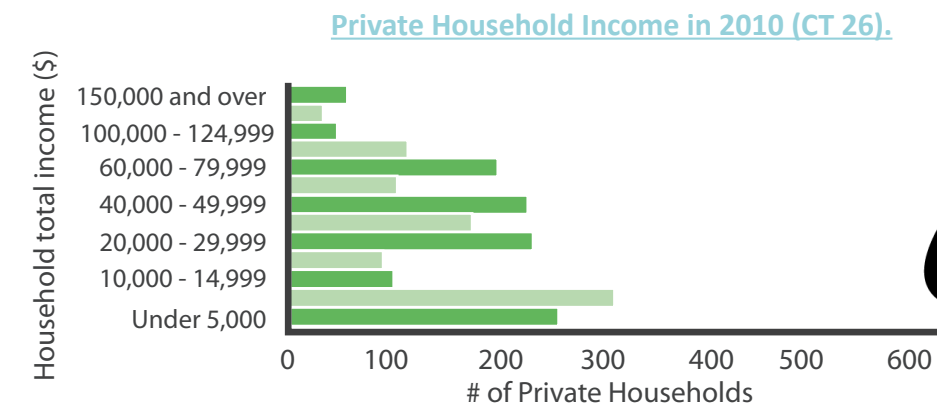
CT 32:
Average Income:
\$39,734

Median Income:
\$28,732



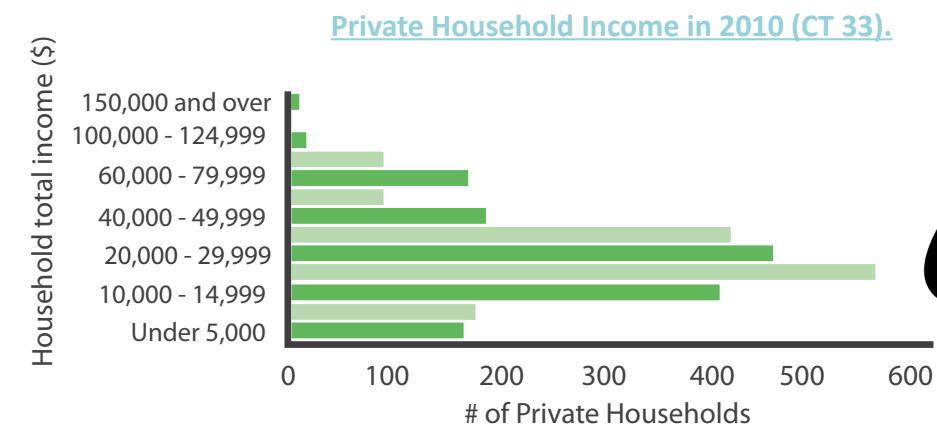
CT 35:
Average Income:
\$21,546

Median Income:
\$27,169



CT 26:
Average Income:
\$50,246

Median Income:
\$41,316



CT 33:
Average Income:
\$29,539

Median Income:
\$21,159



Employment

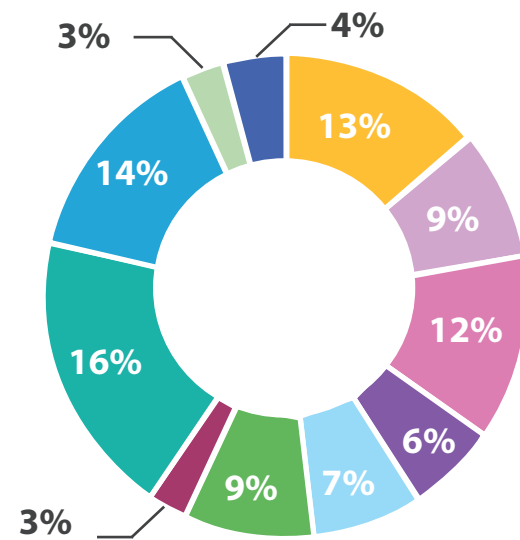
Residents of Windsor’s downtown are employed in a variety of professions. No profession in particular dominates with over 50% of workers employed in that field; however, sales and services is consistently the highest percentage of people working for all Census Tracts. This figure is also consistent with the City of Windsor, as sales and services is also the most common employment sectors.

Business; finance and administration and Trades; transport and equipment operators and related fields are also significant employers with percentages ranging from 20% - 7% across all Census Tracts. Fields such as Management, Natural and applied sciences and related, Health, Education; law and social; community and government services, Manufacturing and utilities generally ranged from approximately 10% - 5% for all census tracts.

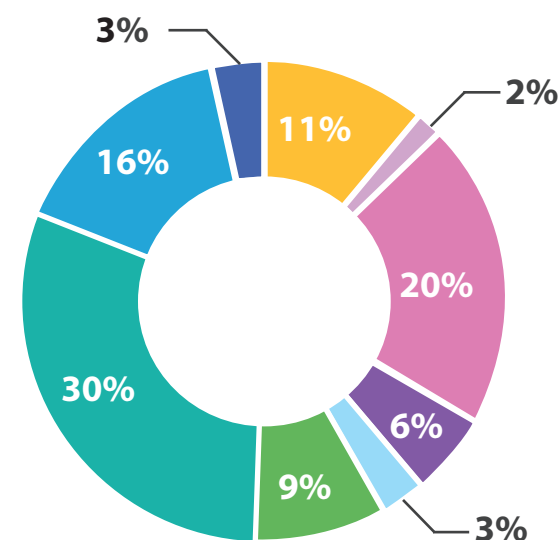
Occupations in Natural resources; agriculture and related production and Art; culture; recreation and sport had no to a very small percentage of people employed in these sectors. Given that the study is examining downtown, the small presence natural resource and agriculture related professions is unsurprising due to the lack of proximity to these industries. The result of the small percentage of people employed in these professions is consistent with the rest of the City, where these fields have the smallest proportion of workers overall.

Finally, between 5% -13% of residents reported having professions that did not fall within one of the nine other categories, so unfortunately there is no other data on what professions these residents are employed.

Employment by Industry (CT 32).

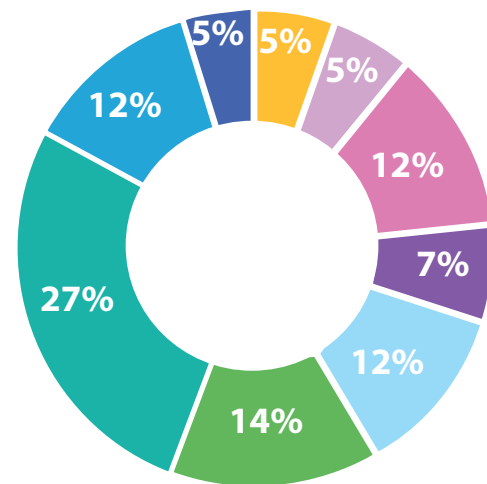


Employment by Industry (CT 35).

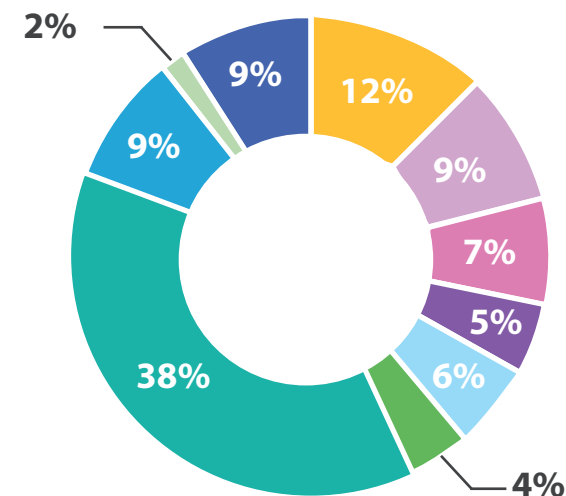


- Non applicable occupation
- Management
- Business; finance and administration
- Natural and applied sciences and related
- Health
- Education; law and social; government services
- Art; culture; recreation and sport
- Sales and service
- Trades; transport and equipment operators
- Natural resources; agriculture and related production
- Manufacturing and utilities

Employment by Industry (CT 26).



Employment by Industry (CT 33).

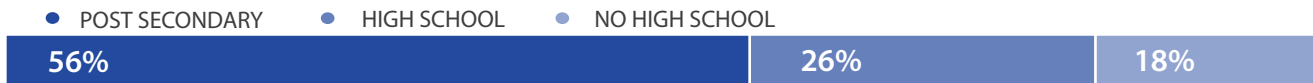


2.2.6 Education

Across all census tracts, an average of 4.75 out of 10 people have some form of completed post-secondary education, which could be at a university, college, or trade/vocational school. This is slightly less than the city average, as 6 out of 10 people have post-secondary education.

Holding a post-secondary certificate; diploma or degree is the most common level of education across all Census Tracts. In Census Tract 35 and 33, the percentage of people without a high school diploma is higher than the City's average of 20%.

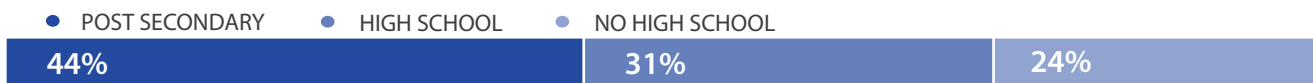
Highest Level of Education Completed for Residents 25 and Over (CT 32).



Residents Aged 25 and Over with Post-Secondary Education (CT 32).



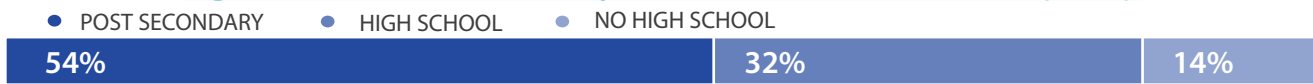
Highest Level of Education Completed for Residents 25 and Over (CT 35).



Residents Aged 25 and Over with Post-Secondary Education (CT 35).



Highest Level of Education Completed for Residents 25 and Over (CT 26).



Residents Aged 25 and Over with Post-Secondary Education (CT 26).



Highest Level of Education Completed for Residents 25 and Over (CT 33).



Residents Aged 25 and Over with Post-Secondary Education (CT 33).



2.2.7 Housing Characteristics

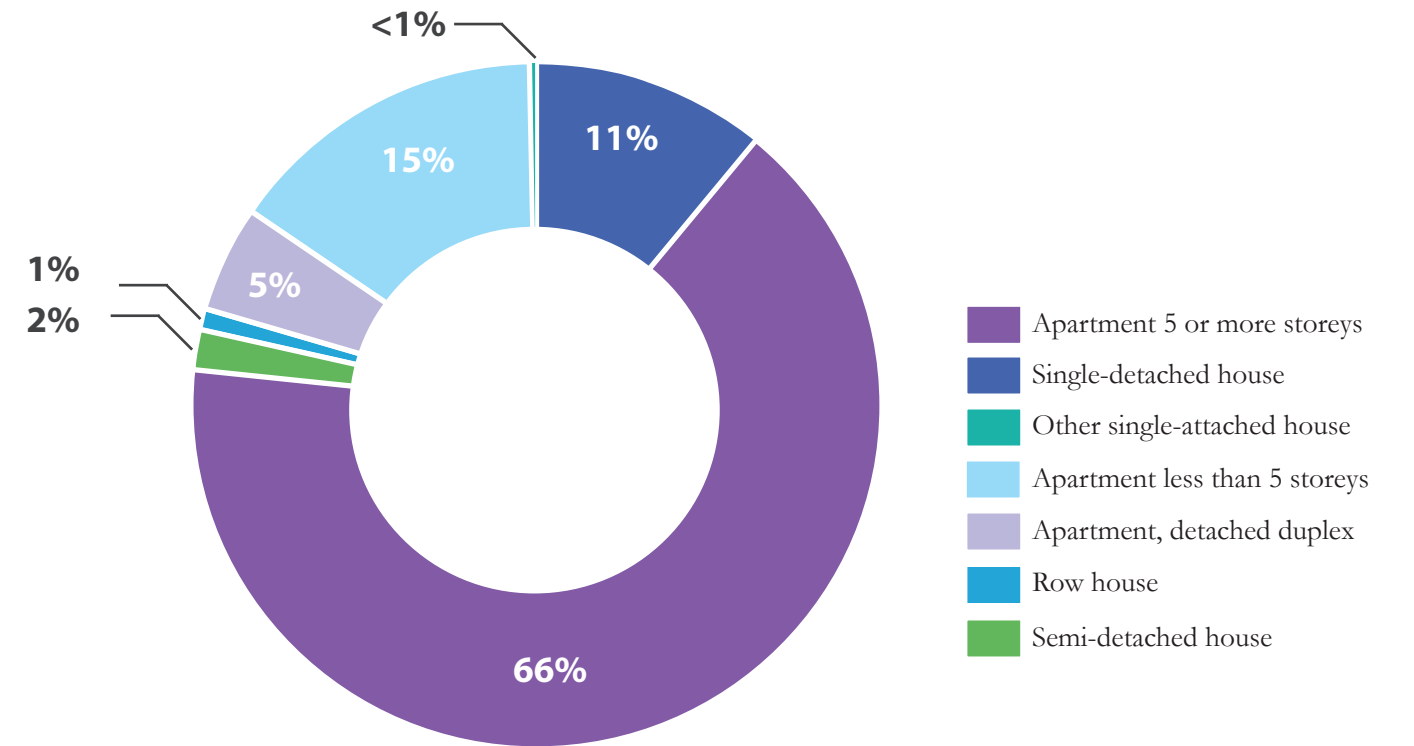
Dwelling types

Apartment buildings represent the largest group of housing types within downtown. Apartments over 5 storeys make up 66% of all dwellings and apartments under 5 storeys represent 15% of all homes, together representing 81% of all dwellings. With single-detached homes only making up 11% of homes, it can be inferred that downtown housing is typically higher density. In comparison to the City as a whole, where single detached houses make up 62% of all dwellings, downtown is far more dense.

people in the City as well, making up 63% of households, downtown still has a far higher proportion of people living either alone or with only one other person. Therefore, while living quarters may be more dense than the City's average, living arrangements are not.

Despite the more dense living arrangements, most people in downtown live alone or live with only one other person, with these two groups representing 83% of private household sizes. While these groups are also the highest number of

Occupied Private Dwelling by Structure Type in the Downtown (2011).



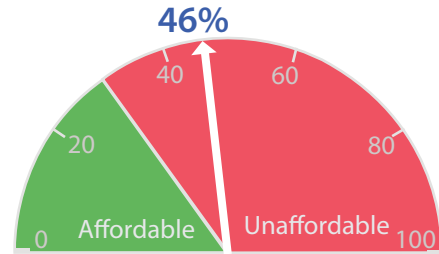
Private Households by Size in Downtown (2011).



Percentage of Owners Versus Renters in Downtown (2011) (CT 32).



Affordable Housing in Downtown (2011) (CT 32).

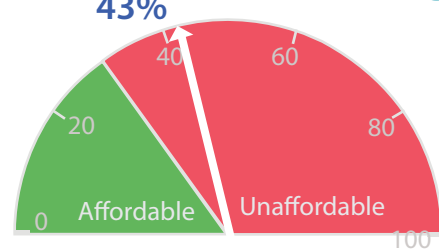


In Census Tract 32, 46% of people have identified that they pay more than 30% of their income to housing each month. This figure includes both home owners and renters.

Percentage of Owners Versus Renters in Downtown (2011) (CT 35).



Affordable Housing in Downtown (2011) (CT 35).

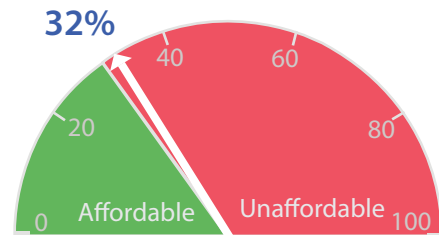


In Census Tract 35, 43% of people have identified that they pay more than 30% of their income to housing each month. This figure includes both home owners and renters.

Percentage of Owners Versus Renters in Downtown (2011) (CT 26).



Affordable Housing in Downtown (2011) (CT 26).

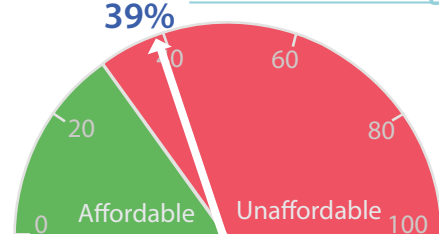


In Census Tract 26, 32% of people have identified that they pay more than 30% of their income to housing each month. This figure includes both home owners and renters.

Percentage of Owners Versus Renters in Downtown (2011) (CT 33).



Affordable Housing in Downtown (2011) (CT 33).



In Census Tract 33, 39% of people have identified that they pay more than 30% of their income to housing each month. This figure includes both home owners and renters.

Home Ownership

Downtown has a relatively high percentage of renters rather than house owners, ranging from 46% - 83% of total households renting their homes across all four Census Tract areas. For three of the four Census Tracts tend to have a percentage of renters around 80%, but Census Tract 26 is an outlier with only 46% of residents renting their homes. The City as a whole had approximately 35% of the population renting, making the number of renters in downtown considerably higher than the rest of the City.

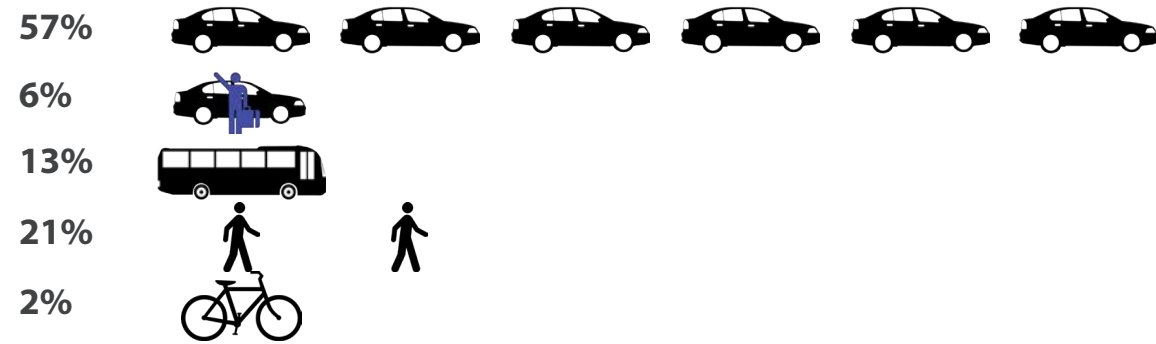
Affordable Housing

Housing is considered affordable if less than 30% of total income is devoted to paying for the cost of housing. The term is not limited to renters, as it can apply to owners of a home who are paying for a mortgage or other fees. Affordable housing does not necessarily mean that the residents are living in social or subsidized housing, rather that they can afford the cost of housing without putting unreasonable strain on their private finances. The figures to the left titled, "Affordable Housing in Downtown...", represent the relationship between spending 30% or less of income on housing and affordability.

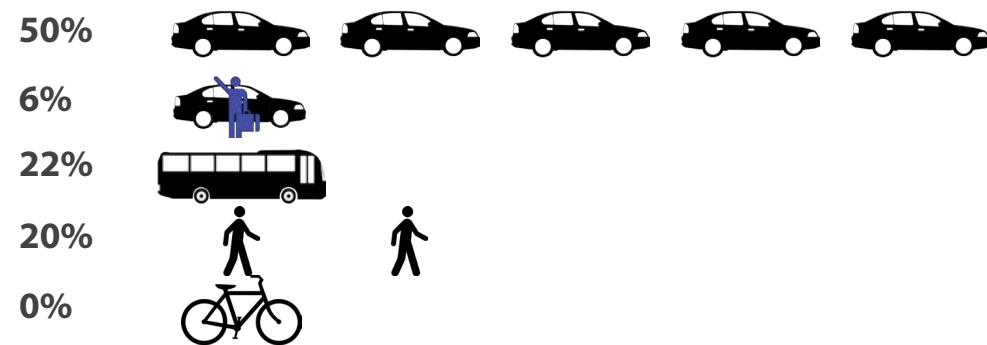
Of the residents in each Census Tract, two-thirds to nearly half are living in conditions which are not affordable. Only residents who have annual earnings above zero were considered in the data, meaning these figures may even be higher. Although the prices of homes and rent in downtown are on average less expensive than Windsor as a whole, the high percentage of people who do not live in affordable conditions in downtown indicates that some are likely struggling with the cost of housing. As a whole, the 28% of Windsor residents live in housing that is not affordable, meaning that each Census Tract has a higher percentage of residents living in unaffordable housing.



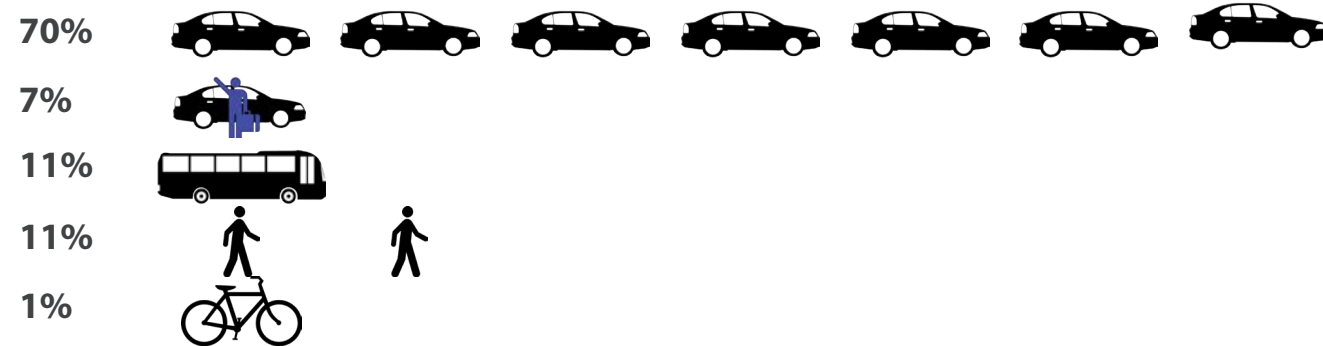
Most Frequent Transportation Mode to Access Employment (2011) (CT 33).



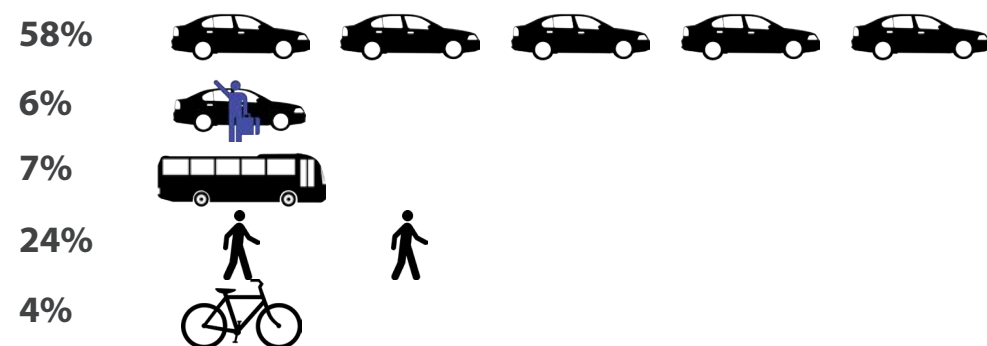
Most Frequent Transportation Mode to Access Employment (2011) (CT 35).



Most Frequent Transportation Mode to Access Employment (2011) (CT 26).



Most Frequent Transportation Mode to Access Employment (2011) (CT 32).



2.2.8 Transportation Characteristics

Downtown Mobility

A Note on Data Collection

Transportation modes were considered based on the method that individuals use to get to and from work, as the NHS collected data with this method. While this method does provide more consistency with the data and ensures that individuals are likely to use their preferred mode of travel often, it does not represent a complete picture of the study area. In particular, preferred travel modes for non-working populations such as some students, unemployed individuals or the elderly are not included within the data. Given that the elderly especially are a significant population within downtown, the information on transportation modes may not be entirely reflective of the entire population.

Popular Modes of Transportation

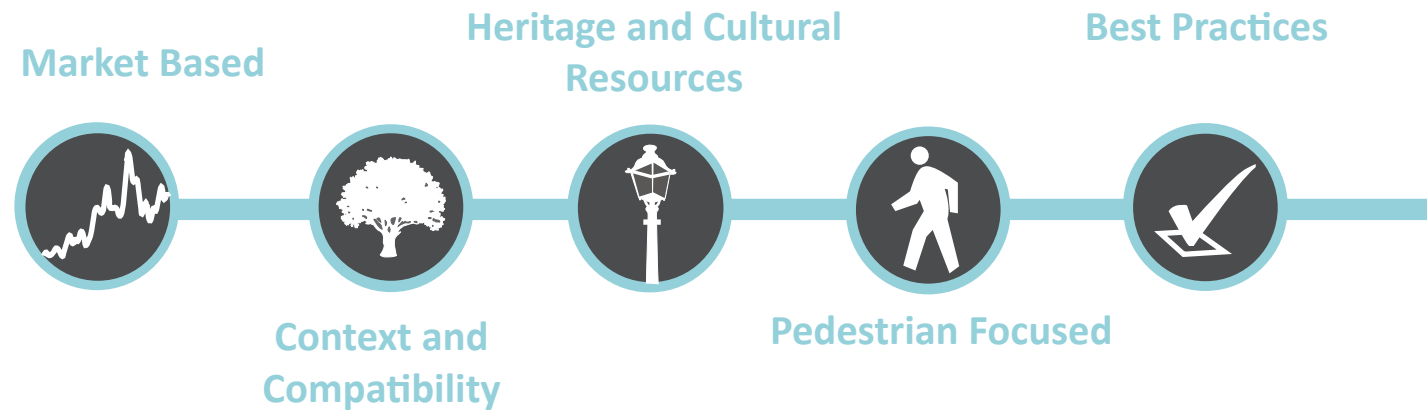
The most common mode of transportation is car driven by the individual, representing between 50% - 70% of most frequent travel method for residents to and from work. Travel by either bus or walking were the second most popular methods, followed by carpooling and finally cycling.

Active and Alternative Transportation

Active transportation refers to any mode of travel that involves physical movement, such as walking or biking, and it is often promoted as a way to increase physical activity and encourage more active lifestyles. Similarly, alternative transportation is considered any mode of transportation that does not involve a single car operated by one person, and thus produces less greenhouse gases per trip. Alternative transportation includes the above mentioned walking and cycling with other modes such as carpooling and busing. With the high number of people using alternative transportation as their primary method to get to work, with numbers ranging from 30% - 50% of people, downtown is more likely have a more active population than less walkable or transit supportive areas. Furthermore, since residents in the area tend to earn lower incomes, alternative modes may be their only option.



3 STUDY APPROACH



3.1 APPROACH

Market Based

The recommendations resulting from this plan will be based on the current market conditions which will ensure that all recommendations are viable given the current and future market conditions of the downtown.

Pedestrian Focused

The plan will make safe pedestrian navigation a primary consideration for reviewing new developments, public realm improvements, and changes/improvements to the existing transportation network.

Context and Compatibility

This plan will always consider the existing ‘character’ of the downtown and provide recommendations that result in developments and improvements that are compatible with the existing character.

Heritage and Cultural Resources

The decisive action of City Council as it relates to many of the downtown cultural facilities and organizations has solidified the downtown as the cultural hub of the community.

Best Practices

The plan will verify its recommendations against a review of the ‘best practices’ related to the particular issue being addressed.

3.2 VISION

The 1994 *City Centre Design and Revitalization Study* contains a high level vision that was used to shape the recommendations developed through that document. That vision was used as a starting point in consultations with the public and stakeholders on their current vision for downtown. After a public visioning session and public stakeholder consultation, the following vision was drafted to capture an updated vision for downtown Windsor:

Downtown Windsor will be a unique environment offering an urban experience which is accessible by any age or ability. Residents and visitors will be attracted to the spaces that provide vibrancy and activity at any time or day.

Downtown is envisioned to offer amenities for residents, visitors, workers, and students.

3.2.1 Objectives

The objectives stated below are an expression of the intended outcomes resulting from the implementation of this plan. Objectives are a way to guide decisions and are used as guideposts to measure progress towards the vision. Additionally, the clearly stated objectives have been used to provide direction for the development and implementation of the specific policies, incentives and municipal actions contained in this plan. The following are the objectives of this plan:

- To increase the number of people choosing to live in downtown Windsor by supporting the creation of a range of desirable residential units and the amenities necessary to support day-to-day living in the downtown core;

- To increase the number of businesses and people working in downtown Windsor by encouraging investment in new and revitalized office space;
- Coordinating incentives and other municipal activities with Local Economic Revitalization CIP in order to retain and create jobs in downtown Windsor and continue to diversify the local economy;
- Promote and encourage retail development that meets the needs of the people living, working and visiting downtown – destination retail will be encouraged;
- Encourage property improvements that contribute to a vibrant and healthy downtown core and authentic sense of place;
- Encourage the redevelopment of the City’s historic buildings resulting in the continued or renewed productivity of these properties in a manner that protects and honours their historical characteristics;
- Encourage and undertake improvements and enhancements to the Public Realm that portray an area that is vibrant and contribute to downtown’s “sense of place”;
- Improving the experience of living, visiting and working downtown by acknowledging that the little things matter, and that implementing small scale improvements or solutions can have a big impact;
- Provide financial incentive programs that are attractive to potential investors and corporate decision-makers, but are balanced with expectations of City taxpayers and the City’s ability to fund the financial incentive programs;
- Facilitate the development of the downtown’s vacant buildings and land that have the potential for higher order uses;
- Attract investment based on the downtown’s strengths and competitive advantages; and,
- Support investment and development that results in an increase in property assessment and grows the municipal tax base over the long-term.



3.3 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

3.3.1 Stakeholder Consultation Overview

On November 30, 2015 the Planning Division hosted a meeting with various downtown stakeholders. The stakeholders invited were from specific organizations representing the residential community, business community and major institutions that have a presence in Downtown Windsor. Representatives from the following groups participated:

- University of Windsor (downtown campus specific representatives);
- St. Clair College (downtown campus specific representatives);
- Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association;
- Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative;
- Downtown Windsor Residents Association; and,
- The Initiative: Glengarry to Marentette.

The group was asked to discuss a vision for downtown Windsor and undertake a SWOT analysis for downtown Windsor. The major themes that came from the session are:

- Downtown should be a series of vibrant, healthy neighbourhoods;
- Downtown is a social and cultural hub;
- Downtown should provide a student experience outside the institutional walls;
- Existing parks, riverfront park, public and open spaces are strengths (i.e. - Charles Clark Square, downtown market is successful, patios, etc.);
- The reputation (for example, higher unemployment, too many cars, strip clubs) of the city to outside visitors

and even residents may detract people from visiting downtown;

- The riverfront park is disconnected from the downtown. Better pedestrian connections should be made;
- Under utilized and/or vacant properties are not being used to their full potential;
- Need to determine why businesses are locating in other areas of the city instead of downtown and make it easier for business owners to locate downtown; and,



- More public consultation is needed to really engage the residents, workers, students, and visitors of downtown.

In addition to the items mentioned above, it was evident that there are other ‘small things’ that matter downtown. There were many items brought up that contribute to the entire downtown experience for residents and visitors, for example, the cleanliness of parking garages, way finding signage, location of garbage bins, etc. Staff have discussed the idea that the final plan should include a strategy to tackle the ‘small things’ to contribute to improving the overall downtown experience.

3.3.2 Public Visioning Open House

A Public Visioning Session was held on October 28th, 2015 at the Windsor International Aquatic & Training Centre. The purpose of the session was to inform the public about the goals of the plan, engage the public in general discussions about downtown, and obtain feedback on an updated vision for downtown Windsor. The Planning Department staff led the public through a survey and a mapping exercise. The survey allowed the public to offer comments on the vision from *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* and offer other comments on their perception of downtown Windsor. The mapping exercise allowed the public to depict their downtown experiences graphically. Page 44 show examples of responses from the public survey and mapping exercise. The survey was also available to complete on-line for anyone who missed the Public Visioning Session. Approximately 40 people attended the Public Visioning Session. Overall 49 surveys were completed and 12 maps were submitted at the Public Visioning Session.

Survey Responses:

The following pages contain a summary of the quantitative data collected through the survey. Many of the questions asked the respondents to provide qualitative responses so they could express their vision for downtown, so this report will provide a summary of those opinions and views.

When asked if *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* vision captures what they envision for downtown in 20 years, 73% of the respondents said ‘yes’. Although the respondents mainly agreed with the statement, they still had additional comments and offered their take on the vision for downtown. The following themes were mentioned in the comments put forth by survey respondents:

- Need services to support residents of downtown (hospitals, quality supermarkets, variety of activities);
- Increased activity at all times of day and night for all ages;
- Increased variety of family friendly activities;
- Healthy economy downtown that will include a variety of businesses, including independent retailers;
- Increased walkability, limited vehicle traffic, more pedestrian streets, and increased transit options;

- Intensification of a mix of uses that would lessen our environmental footprint;
- More parks and green space;
- Historic preservation;
- Cultural, economic and institutional hub;
- Places for people to gather – whether just under the shade of a tree or a few benches;
- General maintenance and upkeep such as cleanliness of parking garages, snow removal on sidewalks and streets, garbage pickup and recycling bins;
- Better connection to riverfront; and,
- More patios.

Additionally, the following comments were submitted on how the vision statement should read:

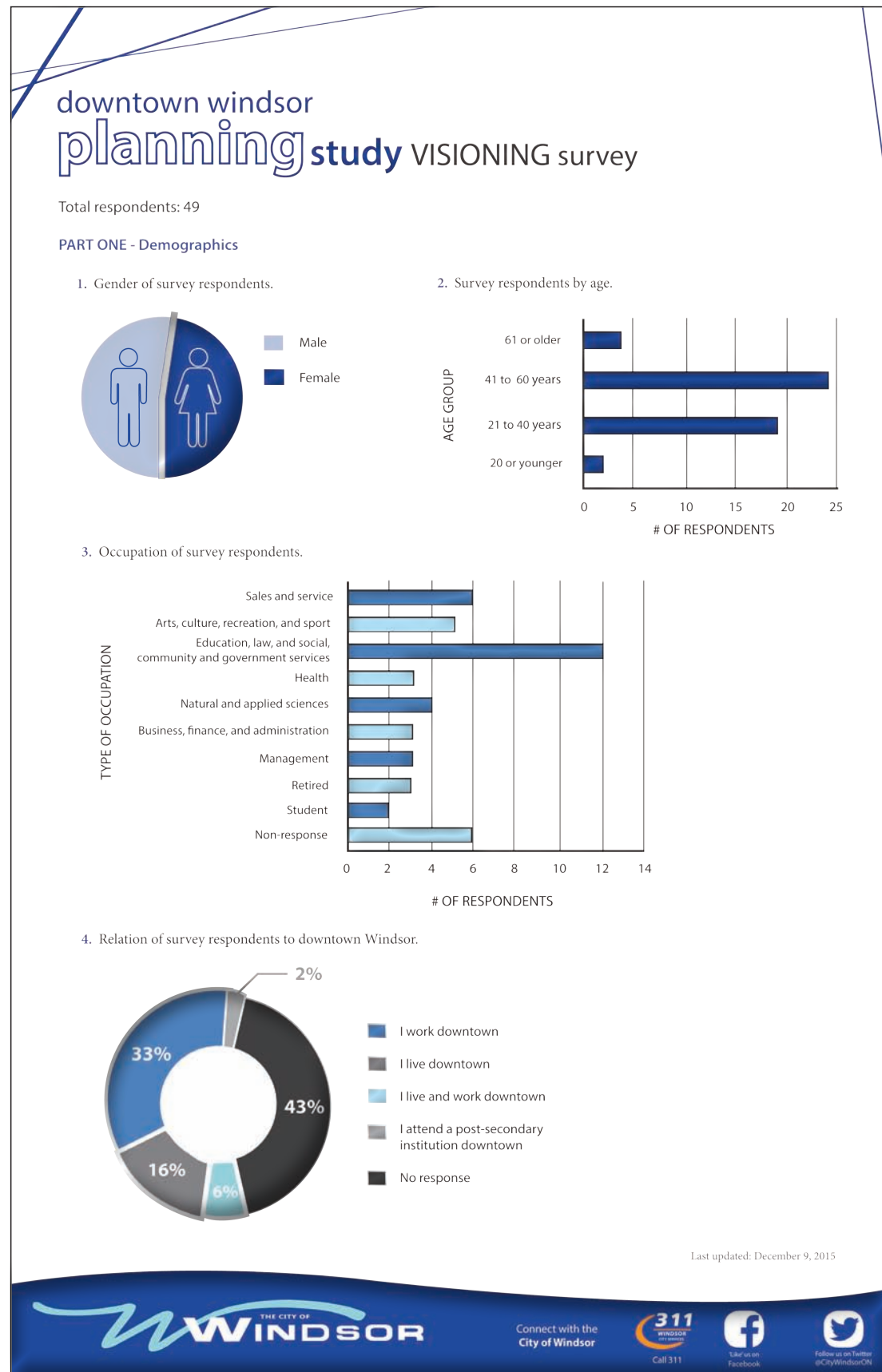
- The vision statement should highlight the unique identity and history of downtown and should be Windsor specific;
- The vision statement should reflect how Windsor is diverse and multi-cultural;
- The vision statement should highlight the importance that downtown gives residents and visitors an impression of the entire city;
- The vision statement should recognize the cross-border connection and that Windsor is a gateway to Canada; and,
- The vision statement should be realistic.

The survey asked the public their impressions of downtown; what they like about downtown; what projects they would like to see; and, what would attract them to move downtown. Overall the perception of downtown Windsor could have been more positive with many of the comments focusing on some of the challenges facing downtown such as rundown/empty storefronts, perceived crime or danger, too many bars, and downtown not being family friendly. Also, respondents mentioned elements they liked about downtown, which included the riverfront, the diversity of bars/restaurants/cafes, the farmers market, walkability, the post secondary institutions, historic buildings, entertainment options and the potential that downtown holds.



Summary of Quantitative Public Survey Data

Public Visioning Survey response represented in graphic form.



Mapping Exercise Responses:

By allowing participants to spatially draw out their thoughts, some unique ideas and comments were submitted compared to the comments collected through the traditional survey. The following is an overview of the comments from the mapping exercise.

Current patterns/positive elements identified:

- Downtown currently hosts a hub of important cultural institutions and grass roots culture/arts scene;
- The retail opportunities on Pelissier Street and Ouellette Avenue are important to creating a walkable area with a variety of shopping to appeal to residents and visitors;
- Respondents come downtown to visit the casino, go to work, dine, visit the symphony, and swim at the aquatic centre;

- Proximity to downtown Detroit is an asset and opportunity;
- Library on Ouellette Avenue is an asset;
- Ouellette Avenue was identified as a major walking route for many participants;
- Walking and biking downtown can be difficult with young children;
- Heritage buildings are an asset;
- The new bakery downtown is a positive addition; and,
- Farmers market is an asset downtown.

Ideas:

- Increase the use of the riverfront for active recreation (i.e. – soccer, tennis, etc.) and programming (i.e. – festivals/ beer gardens that allow local business to showcase food and drink). Festival plaza is inaccessible and could be put

to more use;

- The Civic Esplanade has the potential to connect people with the riverfront and the area on the riverfront could be used as a gathering space by build a feature where Civic Esplanade connects to riverfront;
- The former railway cut that runs north/south just west of Caron Avenue could be used as a walking/bike path to connect downtown to the rest of City and the riverfront;
- Build residential density around aquatic centre;
- Need better connections to riverfront;
- Would like to see deli, grocery store, and pub;
- More street closures for pedestrian use only;
- More civic engagement needed on decisions made regarding parks;

- Greening of new City Hall;
- Use public spaces all year round;
- Focus density on core of downtown (mainly between riverfront and Wyandotte Street);
- Pedestrian ferry to downtown Detroit;
- Former Windsor Arena should be put to use;
- Improve pedestrian experiences along Ouellette Avenue by implementing green buffer between vehicles and pedestrians, provide overhead cover with awnings off storefronts;
- Use incentives to attract developers to build new residential intensification and bring business downtown;
- New hospital should be downtown;
- Opportunity to clean up existing residential downtown and storefronts along Ouellette Avenue;
- Need more community gardens for all the apartment dwellers; and,
- Promote cultural and ethnic diversity

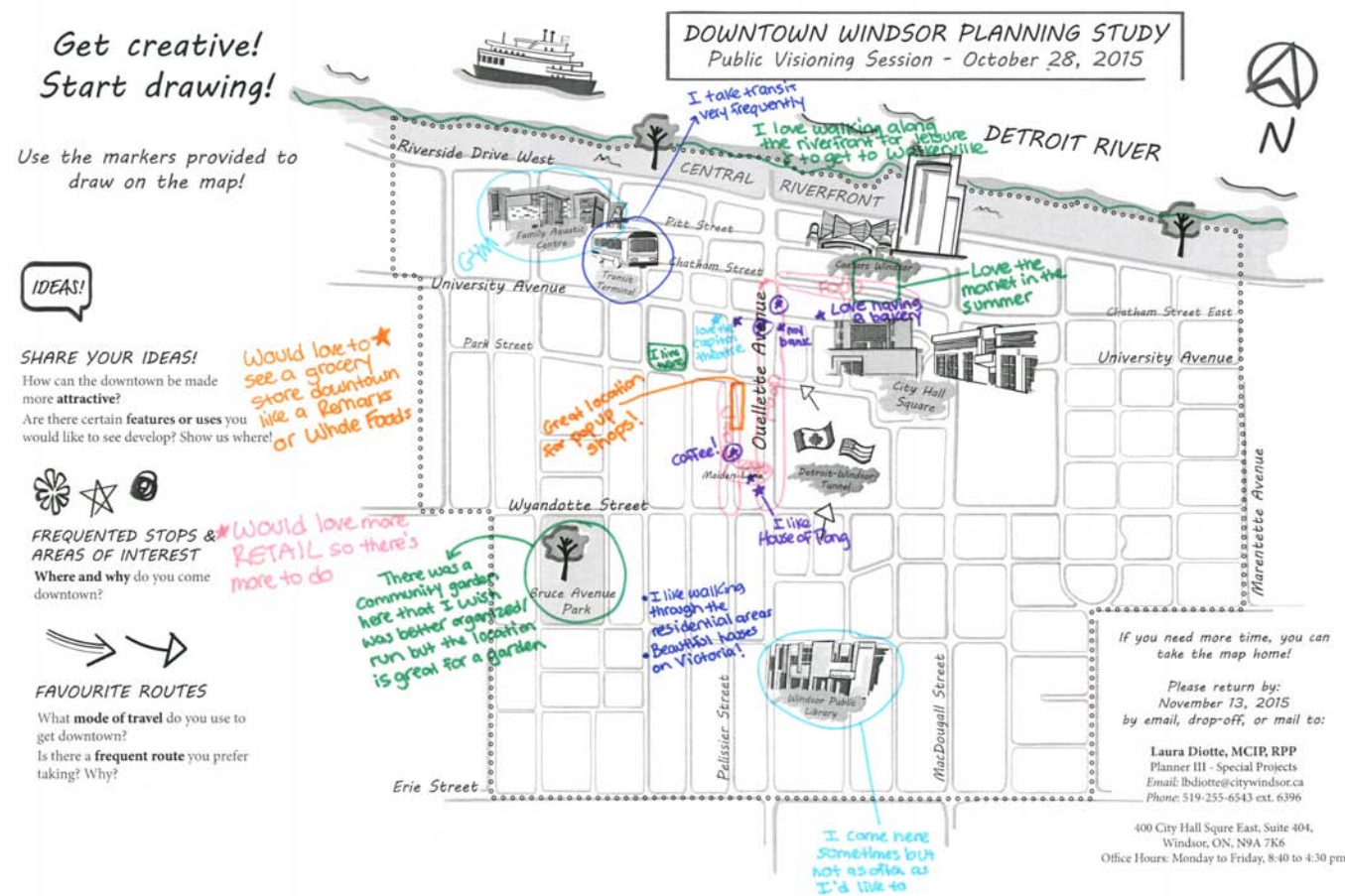
3.3.3 Jane’s Walk

The Planning Division led a “Jane’s Walk” in downtown Windsor to promote the plan. Jane’s Walks are a global movement to pay tribute to urbanist Jane Jacobs who promoted mixed use walkable neighbourhoods. Planning Department staff put together a walk to promote what downtown has to offer, how the downtown was shaped by *The City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* (1994) and discuss how the *Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan* can play a significant role in the ongoing revitalization of downtown. The walk received media attention with staff appearing on CBC news and an article in the Windsor Star. Approximately 20 people attended the walking tour.

3.3.4 Windsor 180 Summit

The Planning Department was asked to participate in the Windsor 180 Summit on June 19, 2015, which was targeted towards the 18-34 age group for the purpose of youth retention in Tech, Talent and Community. Planning Department staff led a breakout session and were “experts” at round table discussions. Planning Department staff had the opportunity to ask the roundtable participants one question to discuss in a 10 minute period. The participants were asked to compare the advantages and disadvantages of locating a business downtown. The participants were very positive about downtown Windsor and pointed out the advantages first by noting the mix of customer base, variety of other supporting businesses, and the proximity of the American market across the border. The disadvantages were related to the lack of support for downtown to thrive as a unique neighbourhood.

Actual Respondent Suggestion Map from Public Visioning Session



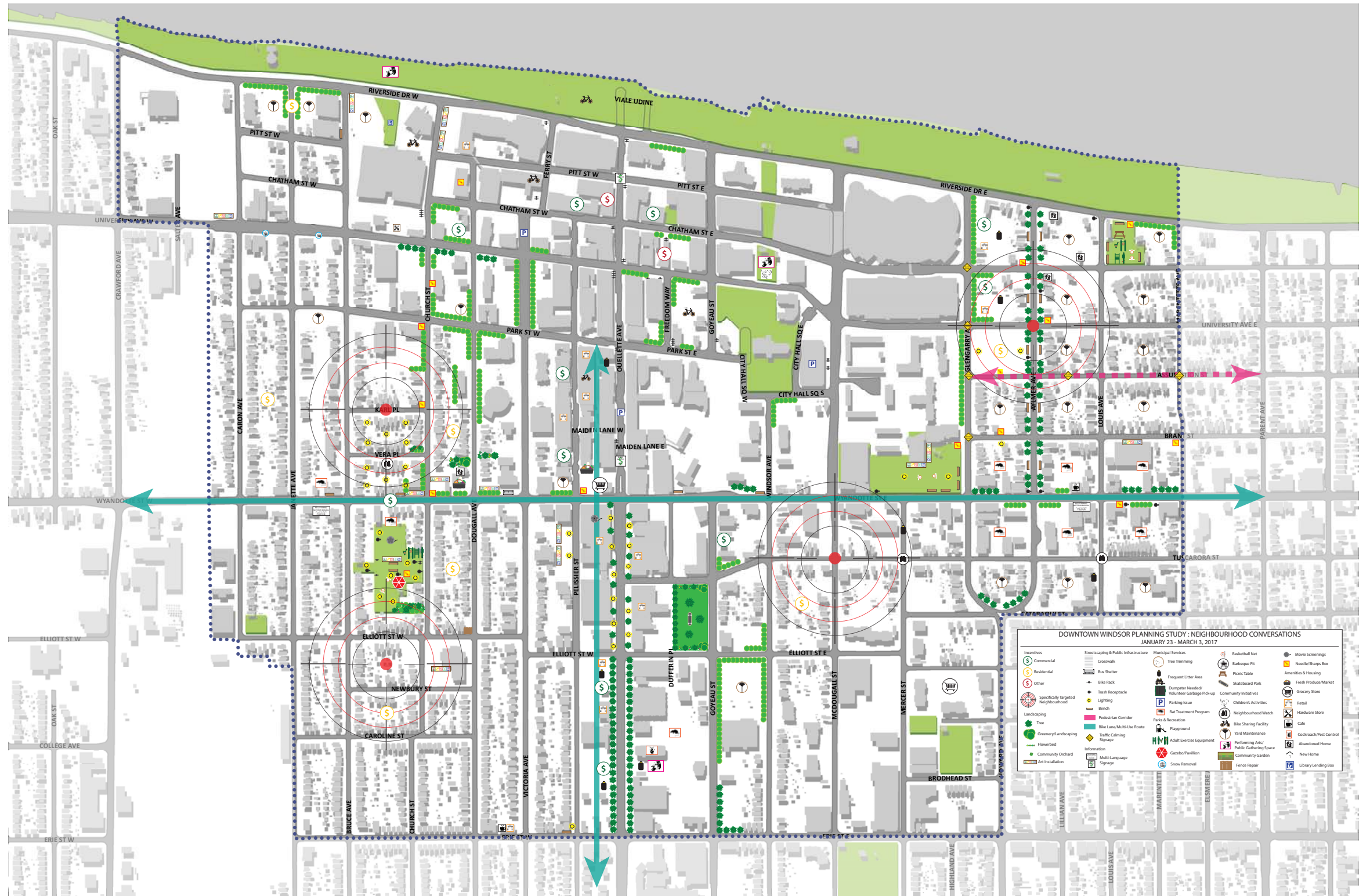
3.3.5 Neighbourhood Conversations

In January and February of 2017, the Planning Department, the *Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative (DWCC)*, *The Initiative: Glengarry to Marentette* and *YMCA* conducted a number of ‘Neighbourhood Conversation’ events with the public. The purpose was to consult downtown residents on the *Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan* and the *Neighbourhood Action Plan* that the DWCC is undertaking.

While anyone was welcome to attend, the Neighbourhood Conversation events were held at specific times, locations and with different amenities to cater to many different resident groups. The meetings were actively promoted through the DWCC and The Initiative, and YMCA networks.

A total of 92 people attend the Neighbourhood Conversations. At the meetings, residents were led through various consultation exercises, including discussions, drawing on a map to show what they want to see within the downtown and drawing over pictures to show the improvements they want to see. The ideas collected on the map were consolidated to one map (see below).

Neighbourhood Conversations Map



Let's talk ...

- #1—Monday, January 23rd (5-7pm)
Dougall Public School
- #2—Wednesday, January 25th (11-1p)
New Beginnings— 1049 Janette
**Child Friendly
- #3—Sunday, January 29th (5-7pm)
DWCC Lighthouse Meeting
All Saints' Church—330 City Hall Sq
- #4—Monday, Jan. 30th—Feb. 3rd
YMCA—various times
**Language services
- #5—Tuesday, February 21st (**GMI)
400 City Hall Sq.—400 Room
- #6—Tuesday, Feb. 28th (5-7pm)
Downtown Windsor Planning Study
**Open House
400 City Hall Sq.—401 Room
Contact Sarah for more information

We would like to hear from **YOU** about what you think about our downtown neighbourhood! We know some of the issues, but we want to have a fun and **interactive conversation** about ideas and solutions to some of these problems. We hope to put all of your opinions down on paper and then into action!

JOIN US!

The City of Windsor would also like to provide an update on the **Downtown Windsor Planning Study** to the public. We want to gather your feedback on the Study and hear your suggestions on how to improve the neighbourhoods!

Questions? Contact:

Sarah Cipkar—DWCC
sarah@dwcc.ca // 519-790-9518

Patrick Firth—GMI
firthp@g-mnri.org // 519-966-8203
c233

Laura Diotte—City of Windsor
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3.4 STUDY AREA

Downtown Windsor Master Plan Study Area

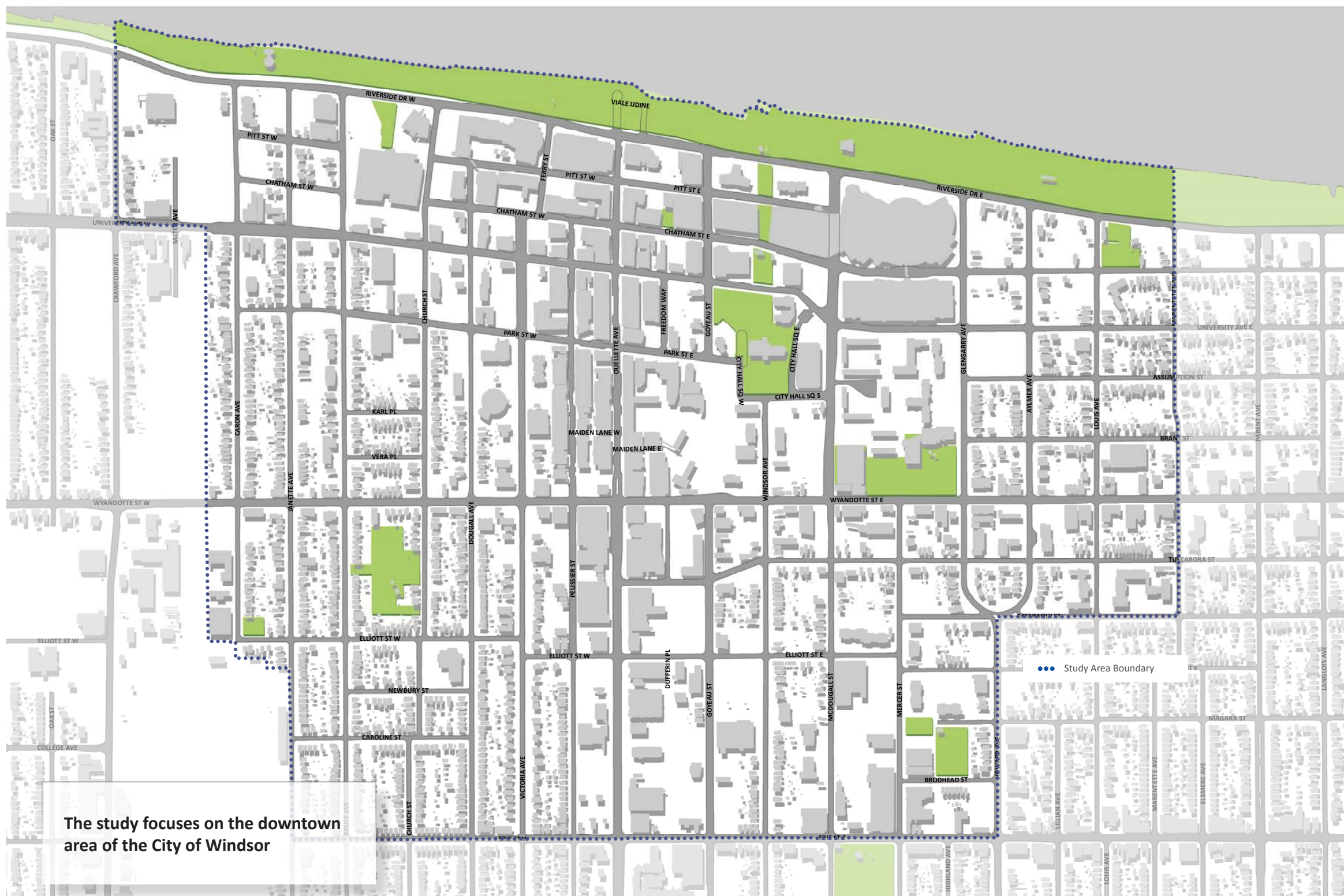
3.4.1 Study Area Boundaries

The Study Area was selected because it aligns with *Schedule 'E' – City Centre Planning District* from the City of Windsor Official Plan Volume I. This area is generally known as downtown Windsor and its surrounding close-in neighbourhoods. It is comprised of a mix of uses including the main commercial areas, office uses, entertainment/destination establishments, residential neighbourhoods, and government resources. Generally, the study area boundaries for this plan are delineated by the Detroit River to the north, Marentette Avenue and Howard Avenue to the east, Erie Street to the south and Slater Avenue and Janette Avenue to the west.

3.4.2 Neighbourhoods and Districts

The Study Area for this plan is large and contains many different uses, built forms, streetscapes, and public spaces. The Study Area is broken down into smaller areas that have been labeled Neighbourhoods and Districts in an attempt to make this document more manageable, and easier to discuss issues and recommendations at a more detailed level. The breakdown of the study area into smaller localized neighbourhoods and districts is intended to set the stage for using neighbourhoods as a defining structure by going into more detail at the neighbourhood or district level.

Each area was grouped together primarily by consistent built forms and uses; however, the boundaries should not be strictly interpreted. It is readily acknowledged that there is a level of subjectivity around establishing neighbourhood/district boundaries. The boundaries should be considered somewhat fluid and may shift and/or overlap depending on the particular aspect or characteristics being considered. The Neighbourhoods and Districts will be described in much greater detail in Section 5 of this plan.



4 COMPONENTS OF DOWNTOWN STUDY



4.1 A BALANCED MULTI-FUNCTIONAL DOWNTOWN

The strength of downtown Windsor has always centered on its diversity of uses and lively mix of activities. The multiple functions of downtown – office district, residential neighbourhood, cultural centre, and entertainment district – imply that there will be a wide range of uses and things to do. It is this wide range of uses that is desirable because it is what makes downtowns dynamic and vibrant, and acts as an indicator of downtown’s overall health. A diversity of uses in a concentrated area provides people with choices about things to do, places to visit, services to access, and most importantly, allows people to conveniently meet their day-to-day needs. It also creates opportunities for the business community by reinforcing clusters of similar and complementary businesses that have synergistic relationships or that fill local niches.

This plan is predicated on the premise that a balanced and healthy mix of uses is vitally important to the ongoing vibrancy and vitality of downtown Windsor. As such,

establishing and maintaining a balanced mixture of uses will be treated as a key element to downtown’s success and will become an underlying theme for this plan. The multi-functionality of downtown will be encouraged and monitored to ensure that the balance of uses and functions remains healthy.

This plan takes a comprehensive approach to the revitalization of downtown by focusing on achieving a strong balance of land uses and activities, across a number of interconnected economic sectors. It will explore each from the perspective of what activities or necessities of daily life are met by downtown and how these are influenced by land use, transportation, amenities, and other intangibles that are important to the ongoing vitality of downtown. For example, it will explore the challenges and opportunities of downtown as a place to live, a place to work and a place to visit.

ABOVE: An aerial photograph of downtown Windsor shows the diversity of building scales and architectural styles.

4.2 DOWNTOWN AS A PLACE TO LIVE



The Sidewalk Cafe Handbook outlines the regulations for outdoor patio spaces.

ABOVE: Former sidewalk cafe patio dining on Chatham St.

A strong residential sector will be essential to create a thriving, vital downtown because downtown residents create and expand the market for downtown businesses, and ensure that the vitality of the downtown is maintained, especially after business hours. As such, housing investment that attracts more residents downtown lies at the heart of Downtown Windsor’s future success.

One of the primary objectives of this plan is to increase the number of residents living in downtown Windsor by encouraging the development and upgrading of housing units, and promoting downtown neighbourhoods that meet the needs and desires of local residents. This objective assumes that this plan will go beyond recommending a regulatory and economic environment aimed at increasing the range and supply of housing options to include an examination and recommendations regarding neighbourhood characteristics and attributes intended to drive demand for downtown living – many of which will be addressed in other chapters of this plan.

Increasing residential development is important to downtown Windsor because it complements many of the revitalization efforts in many ways, including:

- Helping to create a place with retail, entertainment, and office activity that expands beyond the traditional work day;
- Residents becoming a built-in market for downtown retailers and entertainment, making investments in additional retail, restaurants, and cultural facilities feasible;
- Generates demand for additional services and amenities like schools, daycares and parks in the downtown area. Many of which are necessary to support a downtown lifestyle regardless of stage of life;
- Promoting a stronger positive image of the city and region for residents and visitors alike;
- Providing more housing and lifestyle choices in the local marketplace;
- Reducing suburban sprawl and making more efficient use of the existing infrastructure;
- Improving the market for office space by converting

class “B” office buildings into apartments, thus reducing vacancy rates in the downtown core and increasing rents for class “A” office space; and,

- Improving the City’s financial position by increasing the property tax assessment base.

Financial incentives and subsidies to encourage development of downtown residential housing are significant and will play an important role in the addition of new residential units.

The City of Windsor Neighbourhood Market Value Analysis found that the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods to have a wide spectrum of housing values and overall market strength, and supports the use of financial incentives as a way of encouraging housing development. Specifically, the report states:

The market preference for housing away from the downtown area in favour of suburban locations will continue to result in declining real estate values, poorer housing quality resulting from poor maintenance and a lack of reinvestment, and an overall weaker market context...

...The lack of interest in downtown Windsor and the surrounding area from a commercial and residential market perspective, combined with weak and/or declining population growth, will continue to compound this market inequality between the downtown and suburban neighbourhoods if action/market interventions are not initiated.



ABOVE: The Downtown Windsor Farmers Market is a public outdoor market comprised of farmers, artisans, food preparers, crafters and more. It operates from May to October, taking over Pelissier Street on Saturday mornings.

Downtown revitalization is more than just building new housing units; it is about building neighbourhoods and places that people want to be. While this section of the plan will focus on increasing the number of people calling Downtown Windsor home, it is important to acknowledge the dependencies across multiple sectors that are vital to the creation of a viable downtown neighbourhood.

4.2.1 Urban Core Living

For Downtown Windsor to be successful in attracting more residents, it will have to meet the needs of a diverse population that spans across a wide range of demographic and socio-economic sectors. This includes providing a supply of housing options and forms that appeal to a broad spectrum of the population, as well as housing products that target specific demographic groups that are currently underrepresented in Downtown Windsor.

In many downtowns across North America, the Millennial generation (born between 1980 and 1995) has been found to be more interested in living downtown in smaller units, with the whole urban core serving as their place to hang out and socialize. Additionally, in some of the larger metropolitan areas, Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) that no longer have a need for the big house in the suburbs are starting to make the move to the downtown core. Both groups are focusing on dense, vibrant neighborhoods that are served by transit with mixed uses and have an active street life, with plenty of options for things to do.

Some uncertainty remains around whether the Millennials currently living in the core will remain there once they begin to have families. For this reason, it is imperative for cities – particularly ones that don’t have a high level of in-migration – to begin thinking about how to attract and keep young couples with children in the core area. The answer may lie with the close-in neighbourhoods surrounding the urban core. Close-in neighborhoods are those neighborhoods within approximately five kilometers of the downtown core. They are neighbourhoods that begin to offer more of the space and services available in the suburbs, but still provide access to the lifestyle and amenities of the downtown core.

Neighbourhood schools also play a very important role in the community. They often function as the hub for the community, particularly for families that have school-aged children. Oftentimes the presence of a well-functioning school is a significant determinant when choosing a place to

live. Every effort should be made to maintain and expand the presence of the local schools in the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods. It is very important to parents to be able to send their child to a school within the local community, and it is important to communities to have school spaces and facilities function as neighbourhood hubs.

Some of Windsor’s close-in neighbourhoods have a housing stock that is generally well maintained and desirable. Much of the housing in these neighborhoods has a historic or architectural character that makes it unique to the city. However, the houses may sell for less than what they would command in the suburbs.

Downtown Windsor should provide a range of housing options in order to attract a wider range of residents. The City should explore ways of providing and encouraging the development of affordable housing units, as well as providing incentive to developers to provide affordable units in their market rate developments. The City will also have to incorporate a mechanism to maintain the supply of affordable units over the medium to long-term.



ABOVE: Residential walk-up in the downtown Windsor core.

New housing units should be developed to fill a gap or meet unmet demand for a particular form of housing. Additionally, efforts should be made to promote and market downtown and its existing residential units to generate demand for new units. Until this demand is present, the upgrading and maintenance of the existing housing stock in downtown Windsor should be given priority.

RECOMMENDATION 1: That financial incentive programs implemented through an approved Community Improvement Plan primarily focus on the upgrading and maintenance of the existing housing stock in downtown Windsor, and secondly, on the development of new residential units that fill a gap or meet an unmet demand for downtown housing.

4.2.2 Current Residential Market

Successful downtowns generally have a wide variety of housing types, price points and tenure options. However, there will be local preferences when it comes to housing options. Many of downtown Windsor’s units are rentals – 70%+ of residents of the study area are renters. According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), downtown Windsor had the highest vacancy rate in the city at 13.4%. The vacancy rate was higher for buildings completed prior to 1960 and smaller walk-up buildings with 3-5 units. CMHC found that as the cost of rent increases, the vacancy rate decreases. Meaning that newer apartments that are well maintained are preferred over older units, and that cost is not an issue if the apartment is in a desirable location and in good condition. An infusion of newly constructed or upgraded maintenance-free rental units would allow downtown Windsor to compete with other areas of the city in terms of housing options offered.

4.2.3 Residential Intensification

Downtown Windsor will need to experience a higher level of intensification in order to accommodate a larger number of residents living in the core. A simple definition of “intensification” means the development of a property, site or area of the city at a higher density than currently exists. Increasing the density in Downtown Windsor will be achieved through new development, redevelopment, infill development, and/or expansion or conversion of existing buildings. The desired end result is having more housing

units, population and concentration of services located in Downtown Windsor.

Ontario’s Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) supports land use intensification by encouraging more optimal use of land, infrastructure, resources and services as a “matter of Provincial interest”. The Provincial Policy Statement readily acknowledges that each community’s form and level of intensification will differ, based on its specific characteristics such as location, economic conditions, history, housing market, community strengths and preferences.

The overall growth strategy supported by the Official Plan is a balanced approach to accommodating growth. The policy direction for growth supports strong neighbourhoods that meet the day-to-day needs of its residents. To this end, the Official Plan states:

The policies of this Plan are directed toward accommodating the projected growth through practical and efficient land use management strategies that promote a compact pattern of development and balanced transportation system. Compatible residential, commercial and employment growth will be directed to appropriate locations within existing and planned neighbourhoods to reduce development and infrastructure costs and provide opportunities to live, work and shop in close proximity.

As part of this balanced approach, the Official Plan promotes “selective residential redevelopment, infill and intensification initiatives”. The Official Plan anticipates that low to medium-density intensification will occur in existing neighbourhoods, while higher density intensification opportunities are located around major activity centres like downtown.. The Official Plan includes a range of policies that support this objective.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is also strongly encouraging municipalities to establish realistic intensification targets as part of their Official Plan policies and growth scenarios. Consequently, Windsor has established an intensification target of 10% for the 2006-2026 time frame. Downtown Windsor would be the ideal location for the majority of the targeted 1,118 high-density residential units. Only 118 high-density residential units have been constructed across the city since 2006.

4.2.4 Development Compatibility

There are various forms that intensification can take depending on the context; however, compatibility with the surrounding

neighbourhoods is critical. Some of the biggest considerations for ensuring that any new residential units constructed in the core of the city are compatible include density, character, height, traffic, and parking, and how these areas are potentially impacted by the residential intensification project.

The compatibility of residential intensification projects with the surrounding neighbourhood is the prime objective. Compatibility does not necessarily mean having development that is identical to what is surrounding it, but rather, development that complements the existing character of the neighbourhood. Compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood means that it will fit in with the surrounding neighbourhood and buildings with respect to the prevailing architectural styles and building materials; land uses; building height and scale; building setbacks; and, the other ways that the building relates to its surroundings.

Compatibility will be treated as an important aspect by which new residential development will be evaluated. As such, Design Guidelines will be developed to establish a common understanding of design principles and standards that will be implemented to ensure compatible residential developments. The Design Guidelines will be used to convey general design principles and policies about the design of new infill construction, as well as alterations to existing structures. They will also allow for a range of appropriate design responses to a variety of specific contextual and compatibility considerations.

Every residential development project that results in exterior renovations or new construction will be reviewed through the Site Plan Control process at which point all applicable Design Guidelines will be considered in the evaluation of the proposed project in an effort to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood. Furthermore, some of the financial incentive programs will require adherence to the Design Guidelines as part of their eligibility criteria.

Conceptual Compatible Downtown Development



Development Compatibility Considerations
 Compliance with the Official Plan;
 Compliance with Zoning By-law
 Site Grading;
 Location of Building on Site;
 Relationship to Adjacent Buildings;
 Relationship to Street;
 Site Access;
 Site Circulation;
 Impact on Transportation Network;
 AODA requirements;
 Surrounding Circulation;
 Vehicle, Pedestrian, Bicycle
 Parking Location and Design;

Relationship to Exterior Public Areas;
 Entrance Location, Facade Design;
 Landscaping
 Trees, Shrubs, Hedges, Ground Cover, etc.;;
 Photometrics;
 Refuse and Service Areas;
 Building Massing and Orientation;
 Exterior Building Design
 Materials, Proportions, Glazing, etc.;;
 Impact on Environment.



4.2.5 Development Approaches

The study area of this plan has a significant amount of build out in the downtown core, with some opportunities for infill development. This necessitates that this plan focus on a balanced approach consisting of intensification and conversions, in addition to infill to achieve the goal of increasing the number of residential units in downtown Windsor.

There are four development approaches that will be considered and supported for downtown Windsor. Each will be considered and recommended for the specific geographic areas (i.e. neighbourhoods and districts) of the overall study area that they are best suited. These approaches for creating additional housing units in Downtown Windsor are not mutually exclusive. Urban residential projects may involve any combination of the approaches listed below depending on the form and scale of the development. The four development approaches are:

- 1. Preservation/Enhancement of Existing Housing Stock:** The regular maintenance and physical upgrading of existing housing units downtown Windsor;
- 2. Adaptive Reuse/Conversions:** a change in the use of a structure and site to residential;
- 3. Infill:** new development on previously vacant sites, typically at a higher density; and,
- 4. Redevelopment:** The acquisition and wholesale changeover in the use of a large site or several smaller neighbouring sites, typically involving some land assembly and demolition activity.

Preservation/Enhancement of Existing Housing Stock

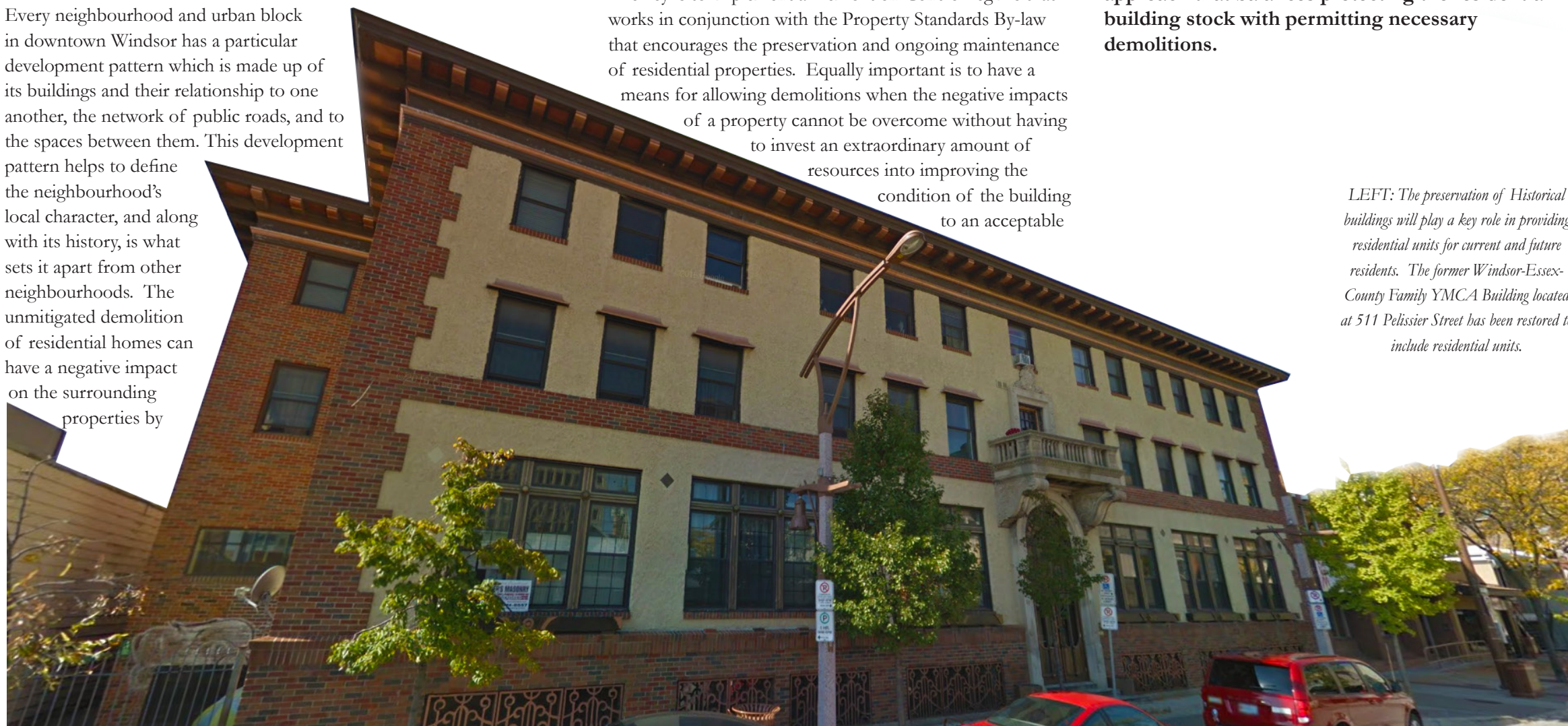
There are approximately 5,500 existing housing units located within the study area and almost all of this housing stock (95%) was constructed prior to 1990, with the period between 1971 and 1980 accounting for 26% of the housing stock (Statistics Canada, 2006). This means that a significant percentage of downtown Windsor's housing stock is more than twenty-five years old. The preservation and reuse of these older buildings is something that is strongly encouraged.

The preservation and upgrading of these existing units will play an important role in attracting additional residents to downtown. Therefore, this plan makes recommendations to create financial incentive programs to help offset the cost of the rehabilitation and renovation of buildings. These incentives should be structured in a way that allows property owners of residential properties, other than single-detached, to be eligible for financial assistance through one or more of the programs.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to improve and renovate existing buildings that currently have residential units.

Demolition Control By-law

Every neighbourhood and urban block in downtown Windsor has a particular development pattern which is made up of its buildings and their relationship to one another, the network of public roads, and to the spaces between them. This development pattern helps to define the neighbourhood's local character, and along with its history, is what sets it apart from other neighbourhoods. The unmitigated demolition of residential homes can have a negative impact on the surrounding properties by



LEFT: The preservation of Historical buildings will play a key role in providing residential units for current and future residents. The former Windsor-Essex-County Family YMCA Building located at 511 Pelissier Street has been restored to include residential units.

disrupting the continuous streetscape resulting in a much bigger impact on the neighbourhood. Demolition Control has been and can continue to be used to protect the overall integrity of downtown neighbourhoods.

The Demolition Control provisions of the *Planning Act* is permissive legislation that allows municipalities to maintain and protect residential properties within designated areas by increasing the level of control over the demolition of residential buildings. There are currently two Demolition Control By-laws that regulate demolitions in different areas of the overall study area.

The intent of the Demolition Control is to maintain the character of traditional streetscapes by controlling the demolition of the buildings that contribute to the traditional character of the street or area. For this reason it is particularly useful in established downtown neighbourhoods that have a definable character.

The key is to implement a Demolition Control regime that works in conjunction with the Property Standards By-law that encourages the preservation and ongoing maintenance of residential properties. Equally important is to have a means for allowing demolitions when the negative impacts of a property cannot be overcome without having to invest an extraordinary amount of resources into improving the condition of the building to an acceptable

standard. Having a rundown building located in the neighbourhood can have a negative effect on neighbourhood perception and property values, in addition to posing some potential health and safety risks. Ridding a neighbourhood of an eyesore that is having a negative social and economic impact on the neighbourhood is often a reason for celebration.

Any strategic framework for demolition activity must establish rational criteria for making choices about which buildings should be demolished and which retained, and link demolition targets and priorities with specific stabilization, redevelopment, and reuse goals and strategies. In the course of that process, relevant players need to be engaged to ensure that decisions take the full range of local considerations and perspectives into account.

RECOMMENDATION 3: That the City of Windsor review its Demolition Control By-laws that apply to Downtown Windsor to develop an approach that balances protecting the residential building stock with permitting necessary demolitions.

Historic Preservation

There are a number of historically significant buildings located within the study area boundaries, some of which are residential homes or apartment buildings. There are some that are listed on the Windsor Municipal Heritage Register, and others that are designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. All are important to consider for preservation because they provide a direct and substantial representation of the history of the neighbourhood, as well as resonating with many people that appreciate older buildings and the significant contributions that these buildings make to the historic architectural character of the neighbourhood.

Renovating, restoring and maintaining a historic home or building requires a great deal of technical expertise and money to maintain the authenticity of the original architectural features and construction methods. It requires knowledgeable contractors and specialty trades that have to implement customized solutions to restore part of a home or building with historical accuracy. Renovations are a little easier and cost effective because it is replacing old with new elements. Making energy upgrades, as well as upgrading to the current Building and Fire Codes can also present a significant barrier to the preservation of historic buildings.

The City of Windsor provides the *Community Heritage Fund* and *Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program* to offer grants, loans and tax reductions for the ongoing preservation and maintenance of designated heritage properties to help offset some of the higher costs associated with owning and maintaining a historic property.

Any of the financial incentive programs being contemplated to encourage additional residential units in the downtown core should support the preservation and enhancement of the existing housing stock and recognize the incremental costs associated with owning and maintaining a designated building by providing for additional incentives to offset some of these costs.

RECOMMENDATION 4: That the City of Windsor provide for an enhancement to any financial incentive programs implemented in an approved Community Improvement Plan for the purpose of doing upgrades and maintaining identified heritage housing/building stock.

Adaptive Reuse/Conversions for Residential Purposes

Downtown Windsor provides many opportunities for the adaptive re-use of obsolete commercial or office space, and the conversion of under-utilized upper stories of existing commercial or office buildings to residential uses. However, many of these buildings were built in an era when the building code regulations were significantly different from what they are today. Consequently, building conversions require that the building to be brought into compliance with the current regulations of the Ontario Building Code, including those pertaining to accessibility and fire safety, when the building is refurbished. This can often become a cost prohibitive endeavour, in some cases approaching and surpassing the costs of new construction.

The adaptive reuse of existing buildings should be encouraged and the City should provide financial incentives to encourage the adaptive re-use of all or portions of the building for residential purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 5: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will, for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area, provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings, including upper-storey conversions for residential use.

Another challenge facing the conversions is the requirement to provide parking in close proximity to a residential development because many of these existing buildings typically do not have parking associated with the building, or enough to supply the new residential demand. Providing the required parking can add significant costs to the conversion project, especially when it requires a parking structure to meet the parking requirements. Left unaddressed, parking will continue to be a significant barrier to the conversion of existing buildings to residential uses.

RECOMMENDATION 6: That the City of Windsor review the parking requirements for building conversions and explore create solutions to provide the parking necessary to support the residential demand generated by building conversions to residential.

Although the conversion of upper stories is encouraged and supported, the ground floor conversions of existing retail should not be permitted. As well, conversions that are proposed will have to provide a reasonable separation distance between themselves and any incompatible uses. This includes in the same building. Residential conversions should not be permitted above uses that would conflict with the resident's enjoyment of their home unless the potential nuisances can be mitigated.

There are some Class 'B' and 'C' office buildings in downtown Windsor that may be more feasible as residential space. Conversion of existing office space should be permitted for Class 'C' and 'B' office space subject to a study that determines that the conversion of the space will not create a shortage in the supply of office or commercial space in downtown Windsor. No conversions of Class 'A' office or commercial space should be permitted.

Residential Infill

Infill development is new development that occurs on vacant or under-used parcels within the existing built up areas of the city that are already largely developed. There are a number of vacant and under-utilized properties located in the study area. The properties are smaller in size and scattered throughout the study area, which presents both a challenge and opportunity for infill development. Most of the potential infill sites are already served by public infrastructure and are in prime locations to take advantage of the lifestyle, amenities and services offered by Downtown Windsor. Some of the challenges include the ability to secure financing, high value expectations

of property owners (vs. appraised values) and the high costs of infill construction.

This plan supports and encourages residential infill development in downtown Windsor as long as it is compatible in form and function with its immediate surrounding uses and building forms. In doing so, this plan will highlight sites that are ideal candidates for infill residential development and will recommend context specific Design Guidelines to ensure compatibility. As well, any incentive programs offered to encourage infill development should target the specific barriers that are preventing infill development from happening.

RECOMMENDATION 7: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new residential units on infill properties.



BELOW: Potential residential infill opportunity at the intersection of Victoria Ave. and Park St.

Redevelopment for Residential Purposes

Redevelopment is new construction on a site that has been previously developed in the past. Much like the other forms of residential development described previously, redevelopment can often bring new life to an existing neighbourhood and result in significant reinvestment in the core. Redevelopment makes use of existing infrastructure and increases the demand and use for existing retail offerings, services and amenities. Redevelopment may also present an opportunity to provide a housing product or urban lifestyle that is not currently available in the local real estate market.

There are a number of properties in Downtown Windsor that would be candidates for redevelopment projects. Whether it's redeveloping a surface parking lot or demolishing a dilapidated building to make way for new residential units, there are a number of unique challenges that face a redevelopment project, many of which start to add costs to the project.

There are often costs associated with demolition of existing buildings, including the possibility of excavations encountering old foundations, basements, and other remnants of the former development that need to be removed. Environmental site assessments (i.e. Records of Site Condition) may be required depending on the previous use of the property. This is especially true when redeveloping a property for residential purposes. There may also be costs associated with moving and/or upgrading the

existing infrastructure and services necessary to support the redevelopment.

This plan supports and encourages residential redevelopment projects in downtown Windsor as long as it is compatible in form and function with its immediate surrounding uses and building forms. In doing so, this plan will highlight sites that are ideal candidates for infill residential development and will recommend context specific Design Guidelines to ensure compatibility. As well, any incentive programs offered to encourage infill development should target the specific barriers that are preventing infill development from happening.

The City will support the redevelopment of non-residential properties for residential purposes provide that the new development is compatible with the surrounding uses and built form. This plan will highlight potential residential redevelopment sites and recommends that any incentive programs offered to encourage residential redevelopment should target the specific barriers that are preventing it from occurring.

RECOMMENDATION 8: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new residential units through the redevelopment of properties.



Land Assembly

One of the challenges facing redevelopment in Downtown Windsor is the availability of land for residential redevelopment projects. Downtown Windsor has a number of smaller parcels that are scattered around and have fragmented ownership. Some of the properties may be suitable for redevelopment projects, while other projects may require larger consolidated tracts of land to make them economically feasible residential projects.

It is common that multiple parcels need to be consolidated in order to have a large enough site to make a redevelopment project feasible. The land consolidation process may be costly and time consuming enough to be a significant deterrent to redevelopment occurring. Other barriers to land assembly include property owners that are uninterested/unwilling to sell; land speculation; accessing to financing because the land has no demonstrable short-term revenue stream; and, fragmented ownership. For these reasons, it is common to see the municipality and/or an arms-length redevelopment agency taking an active role in the land consolidation process. In addition to the financial incentive programs outlined in this CIP, the *Planning Act* also permits the municipality to undertake the following community improvement activities that can help to facilitate redevelopment:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and,
- Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan.

In some instances, it may prove useful or even necessary for the City to assist with assembling land for the purpose of advancing the goals and objectives of this plan, and to facilitate redevelopment. However, doing so should not be considered lightly and it should only be done when there is viable “exit strategy” for the City.

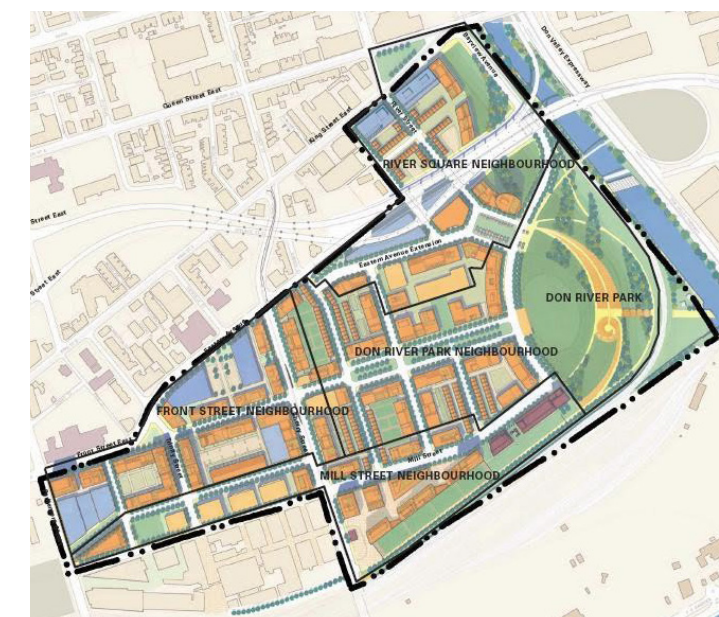
LEFT: A graphic representation of a possible redevelopment fronting Riverside Drive. A redevelopment plan for strategic areas of downtown can be used to facilitate redevelopment by providing more detailed guidance about the development to occur.

Redevelopment Plans

Another strategy worth considering is the creation of comprehensive redevelopment plans for certain areas of the overall study area that may face steeper challenges to realize redevelopment. A redevelopment plan is a plan created with the purpose of facilitating redevelopment within a defined built up area of the city, or to implement larger scale development proposals. It can provide more detailed guidance that may be required for areas experiencing transition or facing barriers to redevelopment. A redevelopment plan can start to address such items as:

- Strategic land acquisitions, consolidation and disposition by the City (e.g. an exit strategy);
- Identify land and buildings to be preserved and improved, including solutions for doing so;
- Buildings to be rehabilitated or demolished;
- The barriers to redevelopment, and propose solutions that address these barriers;
- A regulatory framework (OP designation, zoning, etc) that facilitates redevelopment; and,
- Recommendations about establishing, improving or relocating roads, public utilities or other services that are essential to the redevelopment of the area.

BELOW: An example of a redevelopment plan for the West Don Lands in Toronto



Land Banking is the practice of acquiring and managing an inventory of surplus land, with the end goal of returning it to a responsible private sector partner that will put it to productive use in a manner that supports a plan based on community improvement benefits. They are used primarily to combat vacancy and abandonment by helping to put property back into local control and ensuring better outcomes for communities, and are based on the premise of converting liabilities to assets. In the US, local Land Banks have been created using a variety of approaches to address the numerous challenges facing communities across the country.

The US-based Land banks are quasi-governmental entities created by counties or municipalities to effectively manage and repurpose an inventory of underused, abandoned, or foreclosed properties. The entity is ultimately responsible for the acquisition, management, maintenance and disposition of properties. There are very few, if any, Land Banks currently operating in Canada.

Land Banking has been a useful tool in addressing a wide range of neighbourhood challenges, including but not limited to: blight mitigation and strategic demolitions; neighbourhood clean up; creating green space and parks; land assembly; and, building restoration. There are a number of potential benefits resulting from moving vacant or under-used land back to productive use. The most obvious is the increase in property tax revenue generated by land parcels that were not contributing significantly to the overall tax base when they were vacant or abandoned. Land Banks are also required to maintain Land Bank controlled vacant lots and abandoned properties to a certain standard. Some Land Banks have come up with some innovative interim uses and programs for land that the market is not ready to absorb yet. In the end, the benefits derived from the Land Bank are most acutely felt at the neighbourhood level.

A review of Land Banks across the US prepared by the Center of Community Progress found that while the different Land Banks may champion different strategies, establish different local priorities, or operate under different structures from one another, they all have similar characteristics that contribute to their success. These characteristics include:

- A strategic link to the tax collection (i.e. tax arrears), tax sale, and foreclosure process;
- Operations that are scaled to respond to local land use and community goals;

- Engaging only in policy-driven, transparent, and publicly accountable land transactions;
- Having high levels of ongoing engagement with impacted residents and other community stakeholders;
- Are aligned with other local tools (e.g. property standards enforcement) and community programs with similar purposes; and,
- Having a recurring, reliable source of funding. (Payton Heins, 2014)

For a Land Bank to be successful in Windsor, it will need to facilitate and support diverse collaborations across public, private, and nonprofit organizations that share similar community development goals. However, to be truly effective, it must coexist, enhance and/or work with existing city programs, by-laws and services like blight mitigation, property standards enforcement, demolition control by-laws, the tax sale process, and be coordinated with strategic neighbourhood investments.

A made-in-Windsor Land Bank has the potential to be a useful tool for addressing a number of challenges identified in this plan provided that a specific purpose for its existence is clearly established early on in the process and that the resources necessary to create and administer a Land Bank are made available over an extended period of time. The concept of a Land Bank in Windsor could be the subject of a Discussion Paper to Council. This approach would allow for the idea to be thoroughly examined and refined to the specific challenges facing Windsor.



Land Banks find creative uses to put the land back into productive use. In some cases, community gardens serve as an interim use and in others, they become a permanent fixture in the neighbourhood.

4.2.6 Developing the Downtown Housing Market

The previous section deals primarily with the different ways that additional residential development can occur. However, this is only the one side of the supply and demand equation. Part of a successful strategy to increase the number of people living in the downtown core is to begin to understand the potential demand for the urban lifestyle and alternative housing products, and to implement initiatives aimed at marketing the urban lifestyle offered by Downtown Windsor.

Housing Study

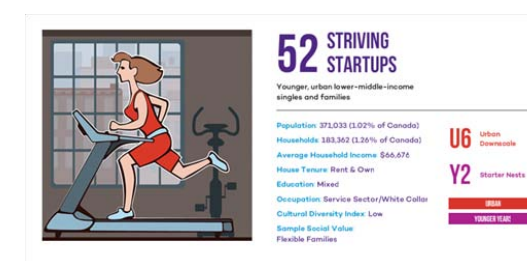
Currently, there is a notable absence of middle- to upper-income households living in Downtown Windsor. Only thirty-three percent of households in the study area report household incomes in excess of \$40,000 annually. The DWBIA's *Downtown Windsor Retail Economic Development Action Plan* calls for increasing the number of middle- to upper-income households living downtown. Providing housing options that appeal to these groups will go a long way to achieving this objective.

However, other than knowing what is already constructed, approximate vacancy rates and current rent levels (or housing values), relatively little is known about Windsor's downtown housing market and its growth potential. It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the potential housing demand for Downtown Windsor. This would allow for an ongoing refinement of the activities and incentive programs aimed at building more units and attracting more people to the core.

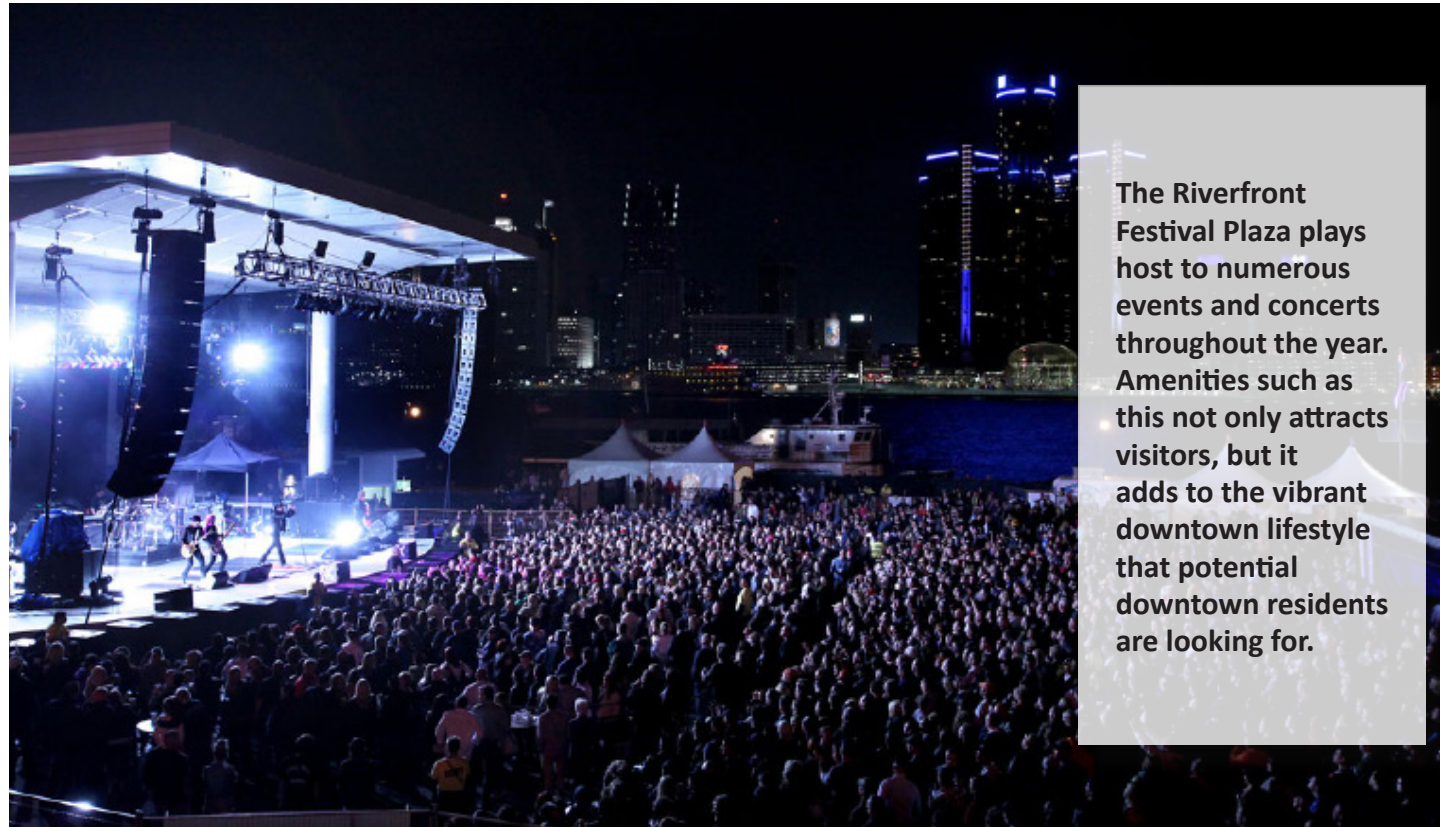
In order to attract more people to live downtown and to diversify the housing product available in the local market, an alternative to the conventional housing market analysis approach is suggested, it will begin to identify and address the specific needs and desires of the increasingly diverse pool of housing consumers. Different demographic groups desire certain types of housing and lifestyles even if they are not currently offered in the local market.

Conventional housing market analysis often focuses on the demand forecast that is derived from analyzing the current supply side of the demand/supply equation. In other words, it focuses on the values and occupancies of existing dwelling units and values and absorption rates of new residential

construction resulting in the demand forecast that is limited to those housing types that are currently available. This approach, plus the thought that there would already be plenty of alternatives for housing if there was a market for them, tend to limit the discussion of future housing options to what has sold in the past. This plan is recommending the creation of a Downtown Residential Target Market Analysis that is developed using a demand focused approach that emphasizes survey and focus group research, and demographic/lifestyle analysis to identify and develop target markets. It analyzes the entire range of housing types by measuring the market potential, instead of the market demand. The analysis should also include recommendations about how to increase the demand, market downtown as lifestyle choice, and how to build momentum from previous investments.



Customer lifestyle segmentation is a practice which involves dividing the information of each and every customer into small sub-groups derived from the data about their choices, needs, likes and dislikes. These groups are created to draw inferences about future consumer and lifestyle choices.



The Riverfront Festival Plaza plays host to numerous events and concerts throughout the year. Amenities such as this not only attracts visitors, but it adds to the vibrant downtown lifestyle that potential downtown residents are looking for.

ABOVE: The Riverfront Festival Plaza.

Recent Downtown projects that have been made possible by strategic investments made by the City of Windsor:

- Ouellette Avenue Streetscaping
- Pelissier Street Streetscaping
- Maiden Lane Redevelopment
- St. Clair College Centre for the Arts
- St. Clair College Media-plex
- St. Clair College Student Success Centre
- Windsor International Transit Terminal
- Capitol Theatre Renovations
- Riverfront Festival Plaza
- Riverfront Retention Treatment Basin Project
- University of Windsor School of Creative Arts (former Armouries & TBQ site)
- University of Windsor School of Social Work and the Centre for Executive and Professional Education (former Windsor Star building)
- Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre & Adventure Bay Family Water Park
- Windsor Downtown Farmers Market
- City of Windsor New City Hall
- Windsor - Detroit Tunnel Redevelopment
- Catholic Central High School (pending)

Investing in Amenities

Downtown living offers a lifestyle that differs from any other part of the city. In part, this downtown lifestyle is supported by amenities like cultural facilities, unique stores, essential services, and a diverse range of restaurants within easy walking distance. Windsor must continue to facilitate an attractive environment to spur demand, by planning for and encouraging the development of amenities that would benefit residential and mixed-use projects within the study area.

It is also important to understand that the characteristics and amenities of the surrounding neighbourhood play as big of a role in the decision to locate in one area over another. In this regard, the City of Windsor must be prepared to continue making investments (see insert) in the infrastructure, services and amenities that appeal to a broad spectrum of Windsor’s diverse population to make downtown Windsor a desirable place to call home.

Market the Lifestyle

Downtown living is a lifestyle choice, and as such, the lifestyle that Downtown Windsor offers must play a key role in the marketing campaign to attract people to live downtown. The marketing approach should focus on marketing the lifestyle to each of the target markets identified by the Downtown Residential Target Market Analysis with less emphasis on the housing product.

Municipalities must do a good job promoting their downtown with their marketing focusing on the amenities and the lifestyle that downtown offers. Successful development projects, including residential projects, should be celebrated and publicized to communicate the message that downtown is a secure and profitable investment. Meanwhile, individual developers will continue to market their product, oftentimes leveraging their marketing of the product with the marketing of the municipally-driven lifestyle marketing.



All of the advertising materials shown depict marketing campaigns that promote the downtown experience and lifestyle. They are cheeky and fun, aimed at getting people to think about the great food, diverse entertainment, and expansive cultural opportunities available downtown.



4.2.7 Affordable Housing

With its strong foundation of services and amenities, Downtown Windsor provides a good location to encourage more affordable housing units. Because affordable housing supports some of the highest need individuals in society, investment in affordable housing benefits a range of social objectives by improving outcomes for these residents, particularly in the areas of health, crime and employment. However, high land prices and construction costs, difficulty obtaining financing on favourable terms, and lack of incentives to create rental apartments makes the development of affordable rental units very challenging.

Improving the economics of affordable housing for the private sector should be the end goal. Doing so would have to reduce the costs and risks, and streamline approval processes. Reducing land costs, potentially by offering surplus government sites, along with government programs and incentives, could also play a role in encouraging the private sector to invest in affordable housing. The City of Windsor can also support the inclusion of market rate elements like commercial uses, or market rate residential units in affordable housing projects as a way of offsetting some of the high construction costs.

Other considerations for supporting affordable housing in Downtown Windsor include:

- Protecting the existing rental housing stock (see Demolition Control discussion);
- Introducing property tax incentives for affordable housing, where the developer would to pay reduced property taxes for a number of years; and,
- Allowing density “bonusing” consistent with the City’s Official Plan for the provision of affordable housing units.

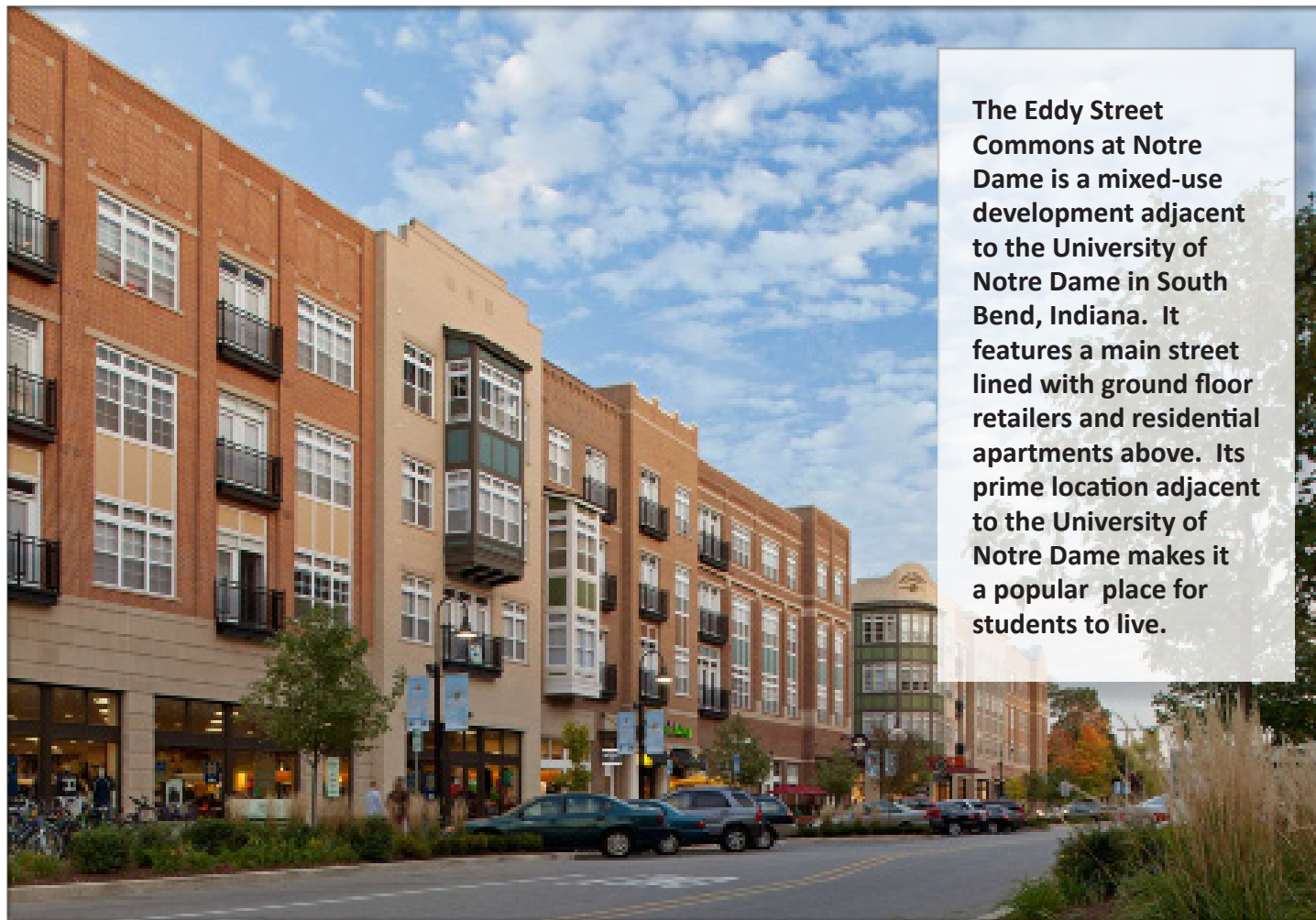
Additional homeownership should also be encouraged downtown to provide a stable residential population. Currently, there are limited ownership options available in the study area. Housing developments that provide affordable ownership options are desirable in downtown Windsor. In instances where buildings and/or units are not conducive to ownership status because they are not financially feasible, present physical constraints or any other reasonable reason, rental units should continue to be encouraged.



4.2.8 Student Housing Market

Windsor should leverage the opportunity presented by the emerging concentration of academic institutions in the downtown core. One of the spin-off effects of the expanding presence of the post-secondary downtown campuses is an increased demand for student housing in downtown Windsor. Affordability and locations close to campus are the primary factors considered by students when choosing housing. Students looking for affordable accommodations close to campus may emerge as a strong market for the older units that are more affordable. However, the student market may also prove to be strong enough to support newly constructed residential units.

The City of Windsor should continue to work with the University of Windsor and St. Clair College to ensure that the key issues of affordability, availability, quality of the housing, housing location, specialized housing, and transportation are addressed.



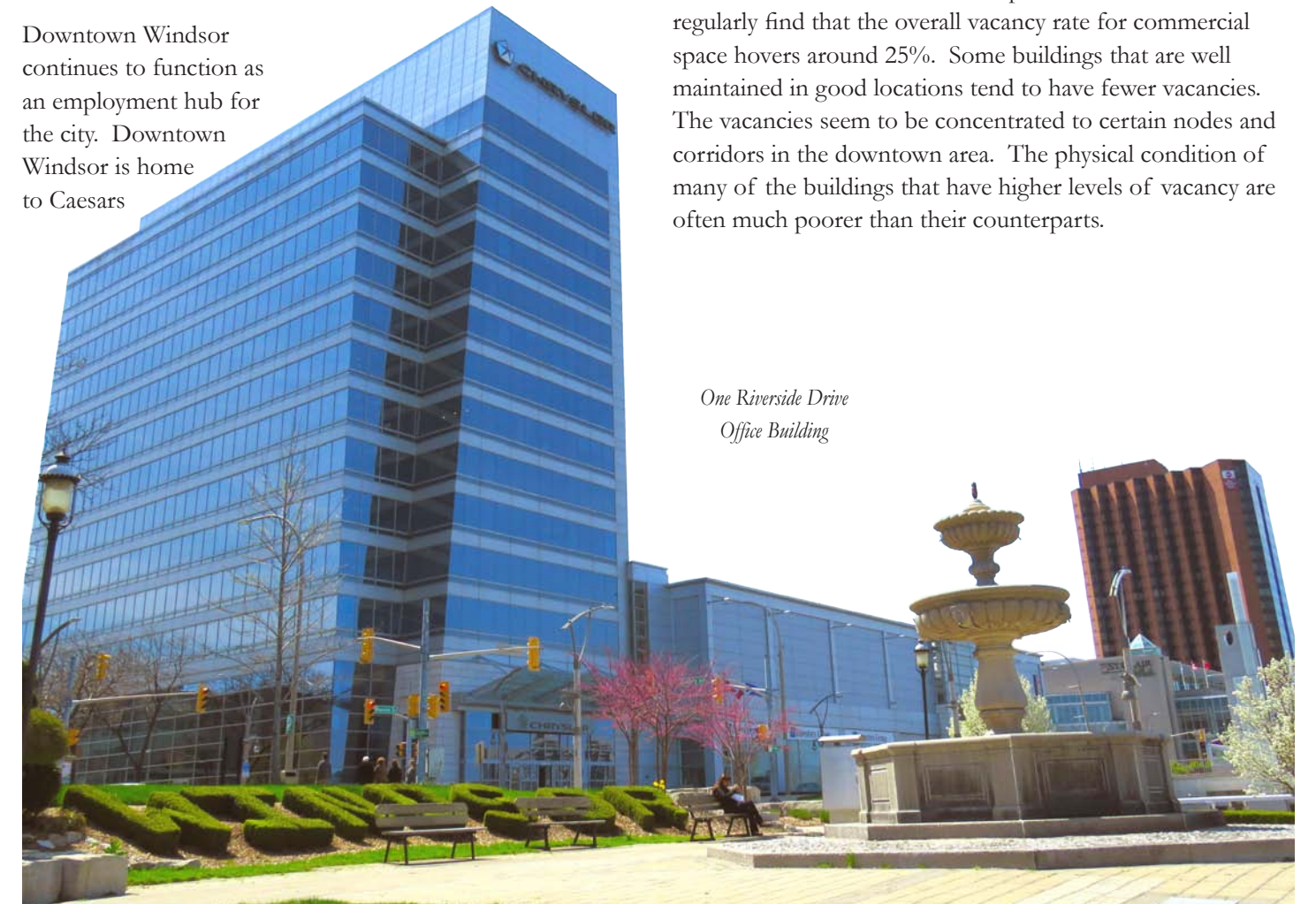
The Eddy Street Commons at Notre Dame is a mixed-use development adjacent to the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. It features a main street lined with ground floor retailers and residential apartments above. Its prime location adjacent to the University of Notre Dame makes it a popular place for students to live.

4.3 DOWNTOWN AS A PLACE TO WORK

There is a reason that downtowns across North America have been referred to as the Central Business District (CBD). Downtowns were the major center of economic and social activity in cities where office buildings, big department stores and movie palaces were normally concentrated in a busy, vibrant center city. Although the fortunes and dynamics of downtowns have changed over time, arguably downtown is still the major center of economic and social activity in any particular city, or it can be again.

This golden age of downtown may have passed, but part of a balanced modern downtown is having a healthy employment component that contributes to the work day vibrancy and supports a number of local businesses in the core. Additionally, having people work in the downtown core increases demand for living in or around the downtown core.

Downtown Windsor continues to function as an employment hub for the city. Downtown Windsor is home to Caesars



One Riverside Drive Office Building

Windsor, FCA Canada Incorporated's (Chrysler Canada) Canadian headquarters, and the City of Windsor, to name a few of the more significant employers located in downtown Windsor.

The recent establishment of the post-secondary campuses of the University of Windsor and St. Clair College continues to grow the public sector base that is already established downtown. There is also a high concentration of professional services located in the core, as well as those in the medical field. According to Canadian census data, there is also a large proportion of downtown residents employed in the hospitality, entertainment and service industries.

4.3.1 Addressing Commercial Vacancy and Blight

Downtown Windsor has a decent supply of available commercial space in existing buildings. That being said, an annual survey conducted by the City and another by the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association regularly find that the overall vacancy rate for commercial space hovers around 25%. Some buildings that are well maintained in good locations tend to have fewer vacancies. The vacancies seem to be concentrated to certain nodes and corridors in the downtown area. The physical condition of many of the buildings that have higher levels of vacancy are often much poorer than their counterparts.



In cities like Windsor, large scale commercial vacancies in the core are usually a result of larger economic and demographic shifts. The lack of economic and population growth, combined with sprawling development, has contributed to the weakening of downtown Windsor’s commercial market. This weakened market begins to erode investor confidence and property owners start to defer maintenance on their buildings, which in turn makes it harder to attract a desirable tenant. One of the key approaches to reverse this trend of disinvest is to restore investor confidence by encouraging property owners to make the necessary improvements to their building. However, doing so will require the City to address the barriers and issues that are discouraging this from happening and providing some incentive to property owners that make improvements to their commercial buildings.

RECOMMENDATION 9: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to improve and renovate existing commercial buildings.

4.3.2 New Office Development

There are a number of existing office buildings in downtown Windsor that have adequate capacity to meet the current demand for office space; however, there is a limited supply of Class ‘A’ Office space in downtown Windsor. It is unlikely that any will be added on a speculation basis in the near term. More than likely, the construction of new office space will be purpose built for a specific tenant. This makes it all that more important to attract businesses to locate downtown.

RECOMMENDATION 10: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new commercial buildings.

4.3.3 Attracting Jobs/Businesses

Part of attracting jobs is having a readily available and skilled workforce. Economic Development over the years has shifted from the idea of people choosing where to live based on the availability of jobs to one that supports the new maxim that jobs are actually following people. The logic behind this trend is that in economies dominated by services and constant innovation in transportation and communication technology, labour has become the most critical input for many firms.

Part of this change is driven by a growing number of people prioritizing quality of life over other factors, including employment opportunities, in decisions about where to live, work, or start a business. In addition to this, today’s technology and the growth of knowledge-based industries are allowing people and businesses far greater flexibility in where they decide to live or start a business.

The quality of the community is one of the top priorities for businesses and residents. This also means being a place that can attract talented employees is becoming ever more important as this trend continues.

Local economic development and downtown revitalization should focus on retaining local businesses, helping them to grow and selling them on the merits of locating in downtown Windsor. To achieve this, particularly the last part, will require an acknowledgment of the importance of downtown as a ‘place’ that requires making decisions and investments that contribute to the quality of life in the downtown core. High quality of design and authentic sense of place have been emphasized throughout this plan to improve the physical and social conditions of downtown Windsor over the long term. Investing in amenities, services and other things that attract people and make them feel comfortable and safe in downtown Windsor as also an important part of the plan moving forward.



ABOVE: Winter skating at Charles Clark Square

LEFT: Toronto Dominion Bank at the intersection of Ouellette Ave and Pitt St.



4.3.4 Economic Revitalization Community Improvement Plan

The City of Windsor’s *Economic Revitalization Community Improvement Plan (CIP)*, which came into effect on March 15, 2011, provides financial incentives to encourage new investment in targeted economic sectors for the purposes diversifying the local economy and creating/retaining jobs. The CIP allows the City to take a variety of measures to further the objectives of the *Economic Revitalization CIP*. This includes the acquisition and preparation of land; construction, repair, rehabilitation or improvement of buildings; the sale, lease or disposal of land and buildings; and the provision of grants to owners or tenants. *The Economic Revitalization CIP* has proven successful in attracting new employers to the core and facilitated the reuse of long vacant buildings in the core.

The Economic Revitalization CIP will continue to play an important role in attracting jobs to the core and to encouraging property owners to make building improvements that are necessary to market their spaces to businesses within the targeted sectors.

BELOW: *Tessonics at the intersection of Ouellette Ave and Wyandotte St. W. was the recipient of CIP grants offered through the Economic Revitalization Community Improvement Plan.*



4.4 DOWNTOWN AS A PLACE TO SHOP



Windsor’s downtown core is multi-functional place that provides the venues and opportunities for people to shop, work, live, visit, and play. It also functions as the retail, social and entertainment hub for the entire city. As such, Downtown Windsor’s ongoing vitality and prosperity contributes significantly to the overall economic and social well-being of the entire community.

Like many main streets and commercial areas across North America, downtown has seen its share of economic decline and physical degradation over time. Many cities have begun to reverse this trend by strategically investing in the downtown core because they have realized how important a vibrant and viable downtown is to the overall health and vitality of the entire city.

A vibrant retail sector also contributes to the vitality of the core. Not only does retail provide the goods and services to the people that live and work in the core, it also generates activity in the core. Additionally, some retailers provide enough of a draw themselves that they become the destination that attracts people to visit the core of the city.

4.4.1 Challenges Facing Downtown Retail

Because of their dependence on local business conditions, retail businesses are more susceptible to the effects of an economic downturn. Like many cities across North America, Windsor’s downtown has seen its share of struggles, including:

- A challenge to compete with retail prices and product offerings of the big box commercial stores resulting in an observed decline in small independently owned stores (i.e. the “Mom and Pop” stores);
- Overall changes in consumer preferences and purchasing power, as well as shifts in business trends;
- Stagnation of local population growth within the primary trade area for downtown Windsor;
- Extensive development of new retail space driven by lower opportunity costs and larger consolidated parcel sizes that are attractive to developers (at the expense of the established urban areas) encourages develop on the urban fringe;
- Factors such as crime, graffiti and physical deterioration that have a negative impact on the positive

‘sense of place’ required for the success of the businesses;

- The rapid increase in e-commerce opportunities allows consumers to shop from the home, reducing the need for consumers to visit the traditional bricks and mortar stores;
- Negative fluctuations in the retail market and the resulting vacant storefronts immediately affect the street environment and eventually weaken the vitality of the commercial district and surrounding neighbourhood;
- The national departmental chains are repositioning their product lines to survive in a highly competitive retail market, including carrying products that were once the bread and butter of local businesses; and,
- The arrival of the ‘category killer’ retail chains that primarily concentrate on one particular product category (e.g. home improvement, book sales, etc) and grab a significant share of that market and outperform their smaller independent competitors.

Although these challenges are not unique to Windsor; they will often manifest themselves in some very visible ways in Windsor’s core. The most prominent is the overall decline of the quality of the retail options available, the physical deterioration of commercial buildings, and varying degrees of commercial vacancies. Commercial vacancy comes in many different forms, such as:

- A commercial space or storefront that is vacant for a relatively short amount of time within an otherwise occupied building;
- A commercial building that is underutilized, with only a few of its spaces occupied by paying tenants;
- A commercial building experiencing long-term abandonment; or
- A building or space that is abandoned but not entirely vacant, as illegal uses often make their way into overlooked areas. (Brachman, 2014)

Even with a commercial vacancy rate that is estimated to be in the range of 25-30%, the downtown Windsor experience has been largely limited to the first two cases above, with the odd exception of longer-term abandonment.

The physical deterioration of commercial buildings generally results when a property owner cannot afford to fix up a deteriorating building because they are having trouble attracting and maintaining solid rent paying tenants, which leads them



The Shops at Don Mills in North York was once a traditional enclosed mall. It was redeveloped as a lifestyle centre with a number of dining and entertainment options, including a skating oval, aimed at enhancing the shopping experience.

to decide that the financial losses of continuing to maintain the property exceed the potential benefits of attracting new tenants. The deteriorating building then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because attracting new tenants becomes increasingly challenging given the current run down condition of the building. This in turn can lead to marginal retail uses that are attracted by the lower rents offered in these less than ideal commercial buildings. **The successful revitalization of these commercial buildings and the downtown retail experience will need to focus on upgrading the condition of the building and attracting new retail tenants.**

The following building blocks of a thriving retail district have been identified in the *Vibrant Streets Toolkit* prepared by StreetSense:

- **Are Actively Managed:** Thriving retail districts are supported by an active Business Improvement Association that provides clear leadership and serves as a surrogate for single land ownership, as well as performing other related management functions.
- **Retail Appropriate Spaces/Buildings:** Includes building stock that includes ground-floor spaces that have high ceiling heights, transparent storefronts, adequate sidewalks, and few disruptions in retail continuity.
- **The Right Retail Mix:** Successful retail areas include the appropriate mix of retail offerings that reflect the market demand. They also understand the existing market including potential unfulfilled gaps in the market. Unsupportable tenants are not artificially introduced.
- **Are Perceived to be Safe:** Regardless of the crime statistics for the neighborhood, vibrant retail districts maintain a perception of safety, and manage the message about safety.
- **Have Uses or Institutions that Act as an Anchor:** The retail street is activated by a civic or cultural anchor that attracts people for purposes other than commerce.
- **Are Pedestrian-Friendly and Walkable:** A vibrant retail district is part of a walkable community and is supported by pedestrian-oriented residents.
- **Present a Unified ‘Sense of Place’:** Successful retail districts generally have a common character or theme (often historical in nature) that binds the range of retail and commercial buildings together.

The New Shopping Experience

Retail shopping is evolving at a rapid pace. Changes in demographics, advances in technology, and shifts in consumer habits have only accelerated this evolution. As a result, retailers, retail districts and malls have had to adapt at a pace that is unprecedented. One of the biggest responses from the retail sector has been the shift in outlook from retail being about places to buy stuff to creating a more experiential environment for customers. In other words, the experience offered by shopping is becoming more important than ever, especially in highly competitive markets where retailers, shopping districts and malls have to differentiate themselves from the competition.

Customers are demanding better food options, along with more variety and improved service. This includes dramatically upgraded food-and-beverage experience that is meant to be draw for people. Customers are also looking for public spaces in which to socialize and congregate. Responsive shopping districts and malls are beginning to incorporate programming (e.g. concerts, festivals and farmer’s markets) and other value-added elements (e.g. spas and fitness clubs) that contribute to the overall experience.

These services provide a level of leisure, socializing and entertainment that all contribute to the positive experience of shopping.

Additionally, innovative shopping districts and malls are strategically rethinking the types of stores that consumers will respond to. Anchor tenants that drive traffic continue to be important; however there is also a new emphasis on a strategically targeted mix of smaller stores that provide one-of-a-kind, customizable and/or on-trend offerings. In some cases, this means making greater use of temporary, flexible spaces that can accommodate different stores over time. Pop up stores, showroom spaces and kiosks also provide customers with options that meet their needs.

Many of these elements being introduced to the retail environment to improve the customer experience are present in downtown Windsor. The biggest challenge facing downtown Windsor is identifying, attracting and maintaining the destination retailers and retail mix that will prove successful in attracting people to the downtown core for their shopping needs.

4.4.2 Addressing Commercial Vacancies and Blight

With a retail/commercial vacancy rate that hovers around 25%, many of the commercial buildings in Downtown Windsor are or have experienced some level of vacancy, whether it is the entire storefront or an individual unit in a larger commercial building (See Downtown Windsor Commercial Vacancy map). However, commercial vacant properties have multiple advantages that can be leveraged for successful revitalization. Existing buildings, especially those that are historic and architecturally significant, can contribute a unique character of downtown and provide some interesting one-of-a-kind retail spaces.

Unfortunately, commercial property vacancy and abandonment is usually a result of larger economic and demographic changes that are harder to overcome. The productive reuse of commercial vacant properties is a complex process, because the success of new retail uses is tied to local market demand as well as to the economic and demographic changes referenced above. The lower land costs, the condition of the building stock and the high costs associated with building rehabilitation and reuse may deter investors.

Additionally, the excess supply of available commercial properties (i.e. high vacancies) in the downtown core tends to soften rental prices, which can lead to a cycle of building decline. Lower rents and higher vacancies translate into less cash flow for the building owner, which in turn often results in deferred maintenance and less investment in the building. Less investment in the building leads to deterioration over time. A run down building is less desirable, which will also make surrounding buildings less desirable to potential tenants. This situation is obviously not desirable for the building owner, prospective tenants or the downtown as a whole. On a larger scale, it is sending a message that downtown is not worth investing in.

The overall condition of most of the commercial/retail buildings in the downtown core has been the subject of discussion in the past. The building condition is often correlated with the level of vacancy for the building. While not always the case, buildings that experience the highest levels of vacancy happen to be the ones that have also been neglected the most. However, most of the vacant properties are in decent overall condition and are only in need of cosmetic improvements that make them more attractive to customers and potential tenants.

Downtown Windsor Commercial Vacancy Map





ABOVE: An example of vacant retail space in downtown Windsor.

With the current challenges of gaining private sector financing for development in weaker markets, developers are increasingly looking to the public sector for grants, loans, and other incentives to overcome the barriers in the market. As such, the public sector should explore financial incentive programs that specifically target the funding gaps in commercial redevelopment projects that the private sector often considers to be too risky to invest in without public support. For these reasons, an incentive program that is aimed at breaking the cycle of underinvestment and building decline is recommended. The desired end result would be reverse the cycle of decline by contributing to the reinvestment in the downtown building stock.

RECOMMENDATION 11: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at making physical improvements to the exterior facade of buildings.

4.4.3 Retail Fit Up

Successful retail enterprises are built on the foundation of brand experience. Brand experience includes store design and atmosphere, as well as the customer service received. The design of a retail store is critical when appealing to its intended market, as this is where first impressions are made. It can influence a consumer's perception of the quality of the store, visually communicating value, and invoke a sense of loyalty amongst satisfied customers. Consequently, cheap materials and fixtures can convey the wrong message about the brand and undermine the shopping experience.

However, developing successful retail in a downtown is not without its challenges including small building footprints, older buildings, individual property owners and high development costs. In essence, each space poses its own

A Building Facade Improvement Program will encourage and support the redesign, renovation or restoration commercial and mixed-use building facades in Downtown Windsor by providing a financial incentive to offset some of the costs associated with the improvement of commercial facades. Doing so is intended to:

- Help building owners attract and retain tenants;
- Improve the marketability of individual buildings and the local business area as a whole;
- Make downtown streets a more attractive, inviting and interesting place to walk and shop;
- Build civic pride among the local businesses; and,
- Contribute to the quality of life of residents, workers and visitors

physical challenges, all of which cost money to modify to fit the potential tenants needs. Also, downtown locations often require the retailer to customize their architectural format to the existing conditions and built form of the surrounding area, this is especially true for national retailers that rely heavily on one or more architectural templates to facilitate cost-effective and timely development.

In addition, extensive interior modifications are often required, such as aligning floor levels in older or adjacent buildings, removing floors or ceilings to adjust the ceiling height, and addressing other Building Code deficiencies. These retail ready interior improvements are often cost prohibitive to make when added to the overall costs of building maintenance. It becomes even more challenging once the costs of retail fit up are factored in. The 'fit up' is the construction necessary to allow the space to be used for retail purposes, including partitions, finishes, fixtures, lighting, power, equipment, etc.

Sometimes the landlord provides a certain amount of money that will be paid to the tenant as a contribution towards these fit up costs, which is called a Tenant Improvement Allowance. These improvement allowances are then factored into the gross costs of the lease agreement and recovered by the landlord over the term of the agreement.

However, providing a Tenant Improvement Allowance requires available capital and is a significant burden on the landlord in weaker market areas where vacancies are high and rent levels are low.

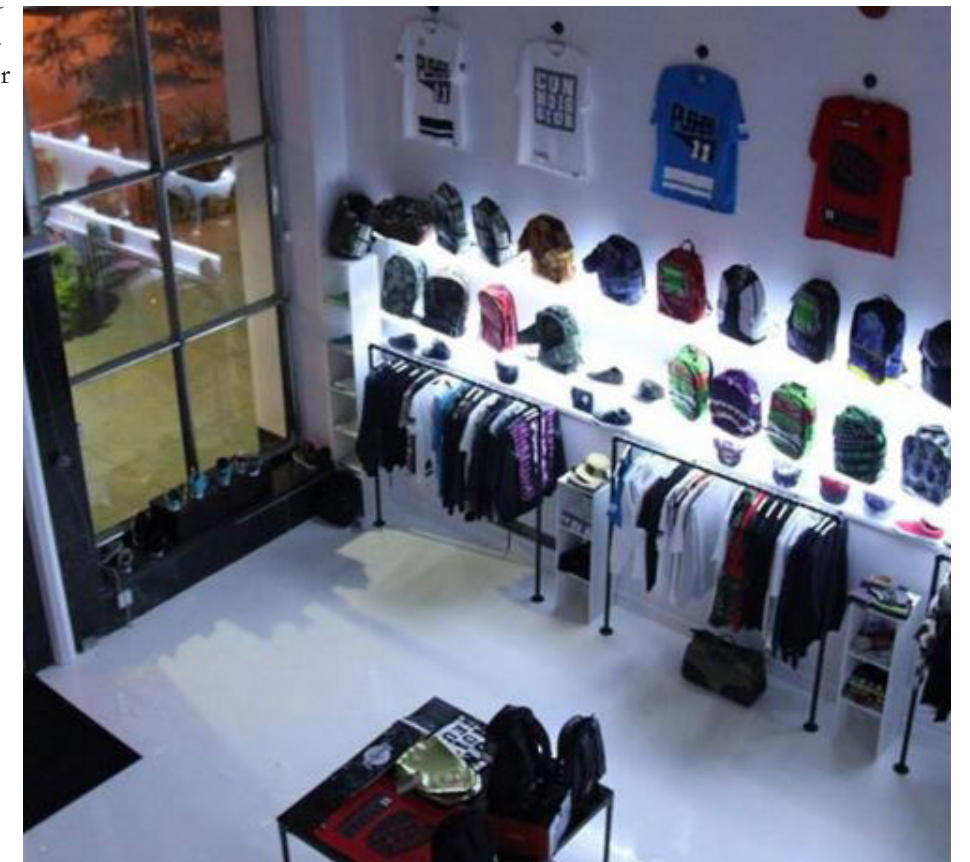
In an effort to make downtown retail more viable, consideration should be given to finding a solution that begins to overcome some of the financial barriers facing the establishment of new retail in Downtown Windsor. A financial incentive program that targets some of the direct financial costs associated with the construction and fit up of retail space is anticipated to be beneficial to both landlords and potential retail tenants.

It is suggested that any financial incentive program developed be limited geographically to specific areas of Downtown Windsor in order to encourage the clustering of retail uses. Clustering is

the phenomenon whereby retail firms will gather together in close proximity to each other. Clustering is advantageous for the customer looking to meet their shopping needs at retail establishments within close geographic proximity to each other. Additionally, encouraging a concentration of retail uses through geographically targeted incentives allows the City to leverage its investment (i.e. incentives) in a definable area where results will be more impactful and visible over time.

RECOMMENDATION 12: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at offsetting some of the additional costs associated with preparing a space for a retail use.

BELOW: The updated and modern interior of a downtown retail store. The design of a retail store is critical when appealing to its intended market, as this is where first impressions are made.



4.4.4 Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association

Through its leadership in advocacy, business development and promotion, the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association (DWBIA) works to promote downtown Windsor as the preferred place to work, visit and live. The DWBIA exists to effectively represent the interests of all downtown businesses, and facilitate dialogue and activities among key downtown stakeholders.

The DWBIA strives to improve, beautify and maintain the public lands and private buildings within the DWBIA boundary, and promotes the area as a vibrant business and shopping area. As such, the DWBIA has become actively involved in a number of activities that supports these objectives, including:

- **Business Recruitment:** developing strategies, plans and initiatives designed to attract business investment;
- **Marketing:** Understanding who the area customers are and creating effective promotions to retain and expand the customer base, and to market Downtown Windsor as a great place for business investment, as well as a preferred destination for retail and hospitality services;
- **Tenant Attraction and Retail Mix:** Working with property owners to ensure that available space is occupied, and that an optimum business and service mix is achieved and maintained;
- **Streetscape Improvement and other Amenities:** Providing customer-friendly lighting, signage, street furniture, planters, banners and sidewalk treatments;
- **Seasonal Decorations:** Creating a unique and pleasant environment for customers and staff of all businesses, retail and non-retail, through the use of decorations that are appropriate to the season and holiday;
- **Development:** Working with other Windsor stakeholders, primarily City Council, to develop strategies to improve the image of Downtown Windsor as a safe and secure place to live, invest and visit; and,
- **Event Promotion:** Acting as an organizer, promoter and/or sponsor of a number of community events and festivals that are designed to attract people to the downtown core.

The DWBIA has implemented a number of incentive programs to further these objectives, including:

Commercial Rent Subsidy Program

In an effort to expand the retail mix and attract the services demanded by downtown residents, the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association (DWBIA) introduced a Commercial Rent Subsidy Program (CRSP) for businesses that represent one or more of the targeted retail uses. The program utilizes a 50% rent subsidy (up to \$7,500 for one calendar year) to encourage up to eight retail businesses annually to fill previously unoccupied buildings with new commercial ventures.

Facade Improvement Grant Program

To provide additional assistance to businesses participating in the Commercial Rent Subsidy Program, the DWBIA offers a program that will share the cost of building facade improvements, whereby the DWBIA offers up to 50% reimbursement to businesses that make storefront improvements that meet the Downtown Windsor Storefront Facade Guideline Manual (i.e. Program requirements and Design Guidelines).

Floral Beautification Program

The Floral and Plant Beautification Program offers to match 50% of the costs (up to \$250) for all plant, plant materials, planters and/or flower purchases for the express purposes of beautifying downtown storefronts and the public realm.

Broken Window Program

The DWBIA's Broken Window Program offers financial assistance to property owners that have had a first floor commercial space window broken. The program will reimburse DWBIA members for 50% of the cost of glass repairs/replacement to a maximum of \$500.00 one time per year.

Downtown Parking Token Program

The Downtown Parking Token Program offers downtown businesses parking tokens for a 50% reduced cost with the intent that the business owners will use it to reward customers that choose to shop in the downtown core. The parking tokens can be used to pay for curbside parking and/or City of Windsor Parking garages.

Clean and Safe Program

The DWBIA works diligently to ensure a clean, safe, attractive pedestrian environment, and to encourage businesses, residents and visitors to respect Downtown Windsor. To that end, Essex County Maintenance is on contract five days a week to sweep, clean and power wash the downtown sidewalks. A partnership with St. Leonard's Society of Windsor has led to a gum removal program to steam away gum from city sidewalks.

4.4.5 Taking Mall Management to the Streets

Similar to malls, downtowns strive to function as a group of retail businesses geared towards providing consumers with one-stop shopping options in an environment that feels inviting, comfortable and safe. However, a mall has three key elements which set it apart from an urban main street or downtown, including:

- A single point of contact with complete knowledge of price, availability, timelines and sales potential;
- A single manager or management team to enable a sophisticated retailer to interact with the center and ensure that planning for a store is efficient and effective; and,
- A management team focused on maintaining and attracting a range of complementary co-tenants that represent careful consideration of the ideal tenant mix. (Conter, 2014-2015)

The DWBIA fulfills some of these management responsibilities for Downtown Windsor, while others might be outside of their scope of responsibilities or current capacities. As such, it is imperative that the City and DWBIA continue to work together to address gaps or deficiencies in the overall management of Downtown Windsor. In doing so, the City of Windsor and DWBIA can work together to:

- Strategically position downtown Windsor in the market by promoting the category of retail stores offered based on demographics, income levels, buying preferences, life stage characteristics and extensive market research conducted for their market area, as well as the local neighbourhood's history, culture, and existing assets;
- Develop a retail retention plan aimed at retaining

existing businesses and encouraging existing commercial property owners to invest in and improve their properties. A DWBIA must put itself in the position to demonstrate that the regional and local retailers are having success if it has aspirations of attracting additional retail, particularly national retailers;

- Explore the possibility of offering themed and/or aesthetically stimulating experiences that contribute to the already established unique "sense of place" of Downtown Windsor;
- Encourage, through discussions with property owners, the strategic grouping of retailers that advances some of the retail specific objectives of this plan and any future retail studies;
- Recruit retailers that contribute to the optimum retail mix by developing a solid understanding of what retail categories and businesses can be supported by the local market, and what "gaps" existing in the market; and,
- Create an environment that is clean, safe and comfortable to be in, offers desirable products and services, and has a variety of things to do in one stop.

Some of the items listed above are predicated on the availability of data and the need to conduct market research including the demographics, income levels, buying preferences, life stage characteristics for the market catchment area. There is also a need to have a solid understanding of the existing retail mix, and what gaps exist based on their target/consumer market. Furthermore, the DWBIA needs to be in the position to readily provide key marketplace data, an inventory of available real estate opportunities, and general sales and marketing material for Downtown Windsor. In essence, the DWBIA must position itself as a clearinghouse of information for retailers, brokers and property owners.

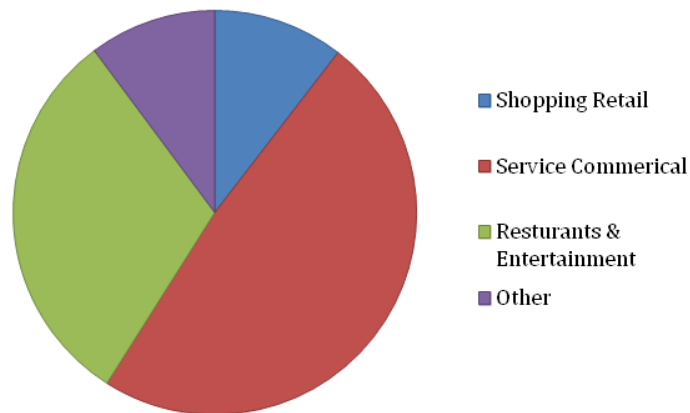
4.4.6 Market Analysis and Retail Recruitment

The retail industry is primarily engaged in selling consumer goods and related services through stores directly to consumers. This broad definition encompasses a wide array of businesses that can be found in Downtown Windsor. These retail establishments can for the most part be classified into one of the three following retail segments:

- **SHOPPING RETAIL** – Stores selling traditional consumer goods (e.g. clothing, jewellery, books, gifts) ranging from small independents to big box and department stores. This would include fashion and apparel.
- **SERVICE COMMERCIAL** – Establishments selling frequently needed personal convenience items (e.g. prescription drugs, groceries and hardware) and services (e.g. barber shops, dry cleaners and banks), as well as other professional services (e.g. accountants, medical centres and law firms).
- **RESTAURANTS & ENTERTAINMENT** – Sale of prepared food and beverage to be consumed on the premises and other entertainment venues (e.g. night clubs and movie theatres).

One of the biggest challenges is identifying, maintaining and attracting the appropriate retail mix across these three sub-sectors of retail.

The mix of goods and services is one of the most significant drivers of business for commercial shopping areas. As such, it is important to understand the current mix of retail and service offerings as well as what the district can potentially



support. With this understanding, retail recruitment efforts will be more strategically targeted to retailers that will meet consumer’s needs and have a chance at being successful in the local marketplace.

Having the right data and presenting it well is the foundation of an effective retail attraction strategy. The first step in the process includes the collection and analysis of existing market data (demographics, income levels, consumer spending, etc) to determine the retail trade gap for Downtown Windsor. The retail trade gap can be either positive or negative for the different retail sub-sectors. A negative trade gap indicates a net retail leakage. This is equal to the amount of money spent by local residents outside of the trade area. Conversely, a positive trade gap indicates a net injection of retail sales dollars from residents that are outside the market area.

The estimated retail gap for each retail sub-sector can then be used to estimate the additional square footage of retail space that could potentially be supported by recapturing the retail spending that is currently ‘leaking’ from Downtown Windsor. Given the limited retail offerings in Downtown Windsor, it is anticipated that most of the retail sub-sectors will result in retail leakage from the core, while filling these ‘gaps’ can be viewed as an opportunity. Understanding the retail gap can also be useful in developing a retail recruitment strategy, or developing a niche market approach to retail attraction. In short, this market analysis is critical to ensuring that time is spent time pursuing the right tenants for Downtown Windsor.

Since retail follows rooftops, any retail recruitment strategy will work hand-in-hand with the efforts (put forth in this plan) to attract more people to live downtown. However, all markets are inefficient to some extent. For example, retail districts that fall just short on the site selection criteria (e.g. income levels, population, etc) of a desired retailer will have a hard time attracting them. Therefore the acceptance of multi-party risk sharing for early catalytic retail projects is critical. Public assistance for these types of projects has proven successful in many North American cities when the retail market wasn’t completely efficient or balanced.

RECOMMENDATION 13: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at attracting new targeted retail uses to Downtown Windsor.

The market analysis for Downtown Windsor will contribute to a better understanding of what price point is right for the downtown market, because missing the mark on price point (e.g. a high-end or value-oriented district) will divert effort and resources away from pursuing retailers that are better suited to the Downtown Windsor market.

Further to this, and similar to the suggested approach for future housing studies, it is also suggested that the retail study also begin to focus on the lifestyle segmentation of the targeted market. Retail is stimulated by large concentrations of populations of similar characteristics and tastes. Adding consumer lifestyle data takes the market analysis a step further. This data recognizes that the way people live influences what they purchase as much as where they live, their age, income, or occupation. Lifestyle data takes into account how people’s interests, opinions, and activities affect their buying behaviours. Well informed retailers know their market, particularly how the lifestyle segments align with their product offerings and price points. For example, a “conservative” apparel retailer is not likely going to locate in a market area that is comprised primarily of a younger, trend-setting demographic.

It is incumbent upon the City of Windsor and the DWBIA to think like a retailer and present Downtown Windsor in a way that aligns with the retailer’s market and location criteria, values and brand recognition. In doing so, Downtown

Windsor should develop a target retail mix that is aligned to the specific high-potential customer segments that are identified through a Retail Market Study for the downtown core. This information and approach can easily be supplemented with an active retail recruitment strategy should the resources become available to pursue such an option.

RECOMMENDATION 14: That the City of Windsor in conjunction with the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association explore the feasibility of preparing a Retail Market Analysis and Recruitment Strategy with the goal of actively targeting retailers that contribute to the optimal retail mix for downtown Windsor.



4.5 THE PUBLIC REALM

The public realm is defined by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute as “the publicly owned places and spaces that belong to and are accessible by everyone”. These places and spaces include the municipal streets, alleys, public squares and plazas, sidewalks, recreation trails, parks and open spaces, waterfronts, and civic buildings and institutions. (Ontario Professional Planners Institute, 2016). In the downtown context, it is primarily the spaces located between the buildings. As such, the public realm plays a very important role in the overall revitalization of downtown. This Plan identifies opportunities for a range of large and small public realm actions that will contribute to the ongoing revitalization and vibrancy of downtown Windsor.

The public realm shapes the interaction between the street and the adjacent buildings, as well as defines the relationship that people have with their surroundings. In doing so, the public realm establishes the community identity, local character and sense of place for downtown Windsor. Public space between buildings influences both the built form and the civic quality of the city. A balance between the public and private domain is paramount to creating the type of environment that people want to be in. As such, buildings and their surrounding spaces should interrelate and define one another to the greatest extent possible.

The existing public realm in downtown Windsor is built upon a framework of streets, alleys, parks and open spaces, and the Detroit River waterfront. This existing framework for the public realm will continue to serve as the framework moving forward. This plan will provide additional high level guidance and recommendations about how the public realm can be improved or enhanced to contribute to the ongoing revitalization of downtown Windsor. The framework will be based on the foundation of some defining principles that will assist in the implementation of all future public realm improvements. The principles are as follows:

- **A high standard of design:** Downtown Windsor’s public realm should reflect the highest quality of design possible. This includes high quality components, materials, implementation and detailing. Additionally, projects need to be designed with consideration given to ongoing maintenance costs to

ensure that materials are long lasting and easily sourced should they require replacement.

- **Puts people first:** The future downtown Windsor’s public realm must emphasize that the built environment is about people first and foremost. Therefore, it must be built on a human scale, with public spaces offering comfort, access and safety for pedestrians. The streets should be defined, and therefore designed, as much by their social and environmental context, as their transportation function or road classification. Additionally, the public realm should be capable of supporting an

increasingly diverse range of functions, experiences and cultural activities that matter to people.

- **Reflects the local uniqueness and distinctiveness of downtown Windsor:** Just as future private sector developments need to be compatible with the existing built form of downtown Windsor, all public realm improvements must be done with a clear understanding of the context and character of the area where they are going. This includes implementing public realm improvements that protect and enhance the surrounding heritage resources.

BELOW: The annual Sandwich Festival closes the street to traffic to host a community celebration.



- **Ensure that the public realm is safe and fully accessible:** The design of downtown Windsor’s public realm should be safe and fully accessible by demonstrating a clear understanding of the diversity of users, including their safety concerns. It is imperative that this is considered if all users are to be comfortable and feel that a particular space or place is accessible and safe for them.
- **Reflects the diversity of lifestyles and user preferences:** The public realm should reflect the diversity of lifestyles and preferences of the people using it. This means offering something for everyone in the right locations, rather than trying to design everything for everyone in every location. By acknowledging that different spaces have different purposes (e.g. public gathering places, or places of quiet reflection, etc), the space can be the best place it can be for the desired purpose.
- **The Little Things Matter:** Future improvements and enhancements to the public realm should recognize the value and impact of modest improvements and changes over time. Windsor should pursue a limited number of major projects and ensure that they are carefully designed and executed. Large public realm projects will continue to have a place in the ongoing effort to revitalize downtown; however the positive impact of doing lots of little things right should not be underestimated.
- **Supports commerce, culture and public art:** The public realm should support commercial activity, promote culture and be platform for public art. By viewing the arts and culture as an economic catalyst, the public realm can make a significant contribution to revitalizing downtown Windsor and improving an area’s quality of life.
- **Supports alternative transportation options:** The most dominant public realm features are the roads that bi-sect downtown. As such, it is important to start thinking about the place rather than the car, meaning that streets are designed so that pedestrians and cyclists feel safe, and can conveniently access the stores, services and amenities that they desire. The public realm should include deliberate design elements that create connections between modes of transportation. Well planned facilities and amenities can increase the mobility options available to people.

4.5.1 Streets

Streets make up the largest component of the public realm in downtown Windsor. As such, they play a significant role in how the public realm is perceived and experienced by the general public. The primary function of streets is to facilitate travel from one place to another, which often dictates that their form and design caters to the automobile. However, there is an opportunity to rethink how downtown streets can and should function. Streets can be so much more than a way to move traffic around the downtown core. The success of Windsor’s recent Open Streets project is a prime example of people enjoying the social interactions and physical activity provided by making streets more accessible and pedestrian friendly.

If the thinking of what a street is can shift to thinking of streets as a place to gather, meet people and to get around using any number of transportation options. Streets can still be treated as important municipal infrastructure, but designed in a way that provides access for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel. Streets also set the stage for what occurs around them. Some streets facilitate certain activities and support different adjacent land uses. The biggest shift can come from starting to think of the street as a place that has a distinctive character and ‘sense of place’. The character of a street is established by the way the buildings, landscape and street come together.

The street and how it is perceived is largely determined by the many small details that go beyond the street layout itself, including the design of adjacent buildings and streetscaping that encourages people to linger. People are inherently attracted to places that offer rich detail and interesting features, thus the emphasis on a high quality of design is strongly encouraged.

Successful streets are places that people feel comfortable and that have features that capture their interest, and more importantly where their basic needs are met. People lingering along a street instantly makes a street seem intriguing to other pedestrians. One of the most basic human needs is for safety. Streets can be dangerous places for pedestrians. Vehicle speed is the number one factor contributing to the higher likelihood of deaths and serious injuries in car crashes. As such, calming and slowing the speed of traffic is a way to make streets safer and more comfortable for people.

Slowing the traffic also has potential economic benefits

for the businesses located along the street. Slower traffic and streets designed with the pedestrian in mind provide an increased level of visibility to the stores fronting the street. Ideally, the stores will embrace the higher visibility by allowing indoor activity to spill onto the street. This could happen through sidewalk displays of merchandise, outdoor cafés, or special events or programming that take place in the right-of-way. The City of Windsor should encourage and facilitate the animation of the street where the design of the public right-of-way makes it feasible to do so.

BELOW: Pelissier Street and Maiden Lane are recent examples of high quality streetscaping installed to improve the public realm.



4.5.2 Streetscaping

Streetscape describes the natural and built form of the street, including the design quality of the street and its character. Streetscaping is the process of engaging in various activities that help to define and contribute to the aesthetic quality, identity, economic activity, health, social cohesion and economic opportunity of the streetscape. Generally, streetscaping can include changes to the road cross section, lighting, traffic and access management, sidewalk treatments, landscaping, and street furniture. The design of the public realm, the choice and placement of furniture, planting and surface materials has always been done from an assessment of local context and established character, including historic context of downtown Windsor. Along with improving the aesthetic appeal of an area, getting people to gather, socialize and linger in the pedestrian defined areas of the public right-of-way is one of the primary objectives of implementing streetscaping projects.

The City of Windsor has a long history of making streetscaping improvements in the downtown core. Most recently, Ouellette Avenue and Pelissier Street have benefited from streetscaping enhancements that have been implemented in phases, with Phase 6: Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2018. The ongoing streetscaping improvements should continue to source street furnishings that provide beauty, are constructed of durable materials, and positively contribute to downtown Windsor’s character and identity.

To date, the streetscaping enhancements can be best characterized as a coordinated and consistent approach achieved through the implementation of the Council-approved *City Centre Planning District Streetscaping Standards Manual*. Ongoing streetscaping efforts should continue to aim for creating a simpler and less cluttered appearance that considers high quality materials and low maintenance requirements. Additionally, ongoing efforts should put careful consideration into landscaping, trees and materials used for streetscaping projects to reduce the urban heat island effect. *The City Centre Planning District Streetscaping Standards Manual* was first developed in 2005 and has served as the standard of design for all downtown streetscaping projects ever since. Given that the manual is more than ten years old, it should be reviewed to ensure that the technical standards and details are still relevant, and to incorporate specific enhancements that will contribute positively to future downtown streetscaping projects.

RECOMMENDATION 15: That the City of Windsor review the *City Centre Planning District Streetscaping*



Standards Manual to ensure that it reflects the best practices in design, construction and implementation in streetscape development.

Streetscaping projects are expensive and often have to be coordinated with additional infrastructure or utilities work. Additionally, the high cost of streetscaping projects often requires that larger projects proceed in phases. As such, the undertaking of streetscaping projects should be concentrated to strategically defined areas of downtown. With the major north-south streets nearing completion, the focus should turn towards implementing streetscaping projects on targeted east-west streets. The following map identifies future streetscaping projects and priorities for downtown Windsor.

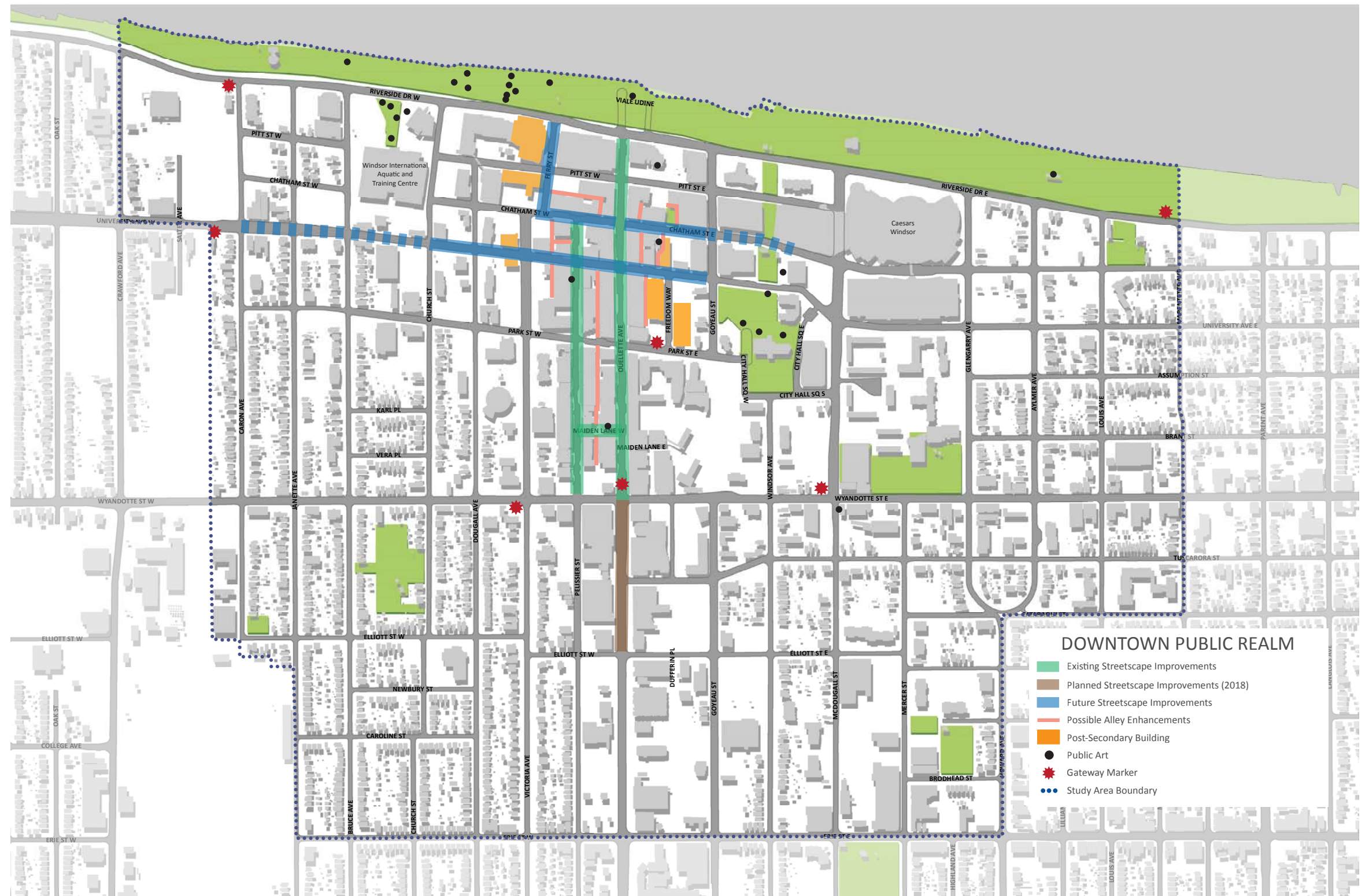
RECOMMENDATION 16: That the City of Windsor develop a streetscaping strategy and capital works programme for the implementation of future streetscaping projects in downtown Windsor.

The City of Windsor should begin to budget for the streetscaping improvements on the east-west streets with the highest priorities proceeding first. Additionally, the City should explore the possibility partnerships for making streetscaping improvements. With the establishment of urban campuses in downtown Windsor, a partnership between the City and two post-secondary institutions may prove to be an excellent opportunity to implement streetscaping improvements that compliment downtown Windsor, but also identify the public realm adjacent to the campuses as uniquely defined districts within the downtown core.

For properties that are undergoing development, streetscaping improvements occurring between the property line of the development site and the nearside curb of the bounding road can be required as a standard condition of site plan approval. Any streetscaping improvements beyond the physical dimensions cited above could be considered as eligible Section 37 Community Benefits under the *Planning Act* when they are located in the street right-of-way near but not abutting the development site, provided that they are identified as such in the City's Official Plan. Cash contributions toward streetscape improvements within a defined area, where a plan for such improvements has been endorsed by City Council is also an option worth exploring to assist with the funding of future streetscaping projects.

RECOMMENDATION 17: That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including Streetscaping Improvements as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

Downtown Windsor Public Realm Map



4.5.3 Gateways

Gateways are the design features that symbolize the entrance or arrival to a special distinct part of the city. As such, gateways function as an important entry point to the downtown core, playing a key role in identifying downtown Windsor as a distinct place in the city and contributing to its sense of place. Although the design of buildings or adjacent property can function as a gateway, the more prevalent application is in the public realm. Elements that are often used to define gateways include:

- Special landscape treatments;
- Tree planting, lighting, upgraded sidewalk treatment and special street furniture;
- Landmark plazas and open spaces;
- Public art; and/or,
- Distinct architectural designs, use of special materials and façade treatments

The Urban Design chapter of the Official Plan includes policy direction about the identification and acknowledgment of gateways into the distinct areas of the city. The Official Plan recommends that gateways be design to:

1. Provide a sense of welcome and arrival;
2. Assist in orientation;
3. Create a memorable image; and
4. Contribute to the social, cultural, historic or thematic character of the area being defined. (8.2.2.5)

Furthermore, Council will consider the use of gateways, signs, decorative sidewalks, sculpture and other features at points along roads and/or routes where it is appropriate to emphasize the entrances to the city or its neighbourhoods. (8.11.2.16) The Downtown Windsor Public Realm map recommends potential locations for gateways into downtown Windsor.

4.5.4 Public Art

Public Art celebrates the culture, history, people, events and locations that make Windsor unique. It also contributes to downtown's authentic sense of place and serves as a tool for revitalization. A vibrant arts scene attracts people downtown and

can spur the opening of new restaurants, cultural facilities, and other amenities. Public art can also transform and enliven public spaces, contributing several benefits, from the purely aesthetic, to economic and social benefits such as tourism. It also links with the City's heritage, and an appreciation of different cultures.

Whether it is a mural or graffiti art on the side of a building, or a monument that pays homage to historical events, downtown Windsor and the adjacent waterfront has a wide range of artwork for the public to enjoy. Public Art will continue to play an important role in defining and enhancing the public realm. The biggest challenge will be finding an effective way to encourage more of it.



One such way to promote more public art is through The City of Windsor's Arts, Culture and Heritage Fund which provides direct financial assistance to locally-developed arts, culture and heritage projects that provide exciting, surprising and meaningful opportunities to strengthen our creative community. Funding is allocated by a juried selection process during specific intake periods. The primary objectives of the program are to make strategic investments that:

- Promote innovation and support new, dynamic efforts in the creative community;
- Develop unique cultural resources to enhance the health and vitality of our communities and the quality of life for our people;
- Encourage participants in the creative community to stay and continue to create and work in the City of Windsor;
- Make arts, culture and heritage central to the lives of all our people;
- Increase public awareness and access to the arts, culture and heritage sectors;
- Celebrate diversity by recognizing our rich creative community; and,
- Value creativity by promoting and supporting arts, culture and heritage.

Public Art Policy

The City of Windsor defines Public Art as “an original artwork installed permanently or temporarily in such a way as to permit viewing by the public indoors or outdoors. It is intended to be integrated as part of its environment and/or interactive with its surroundings and encompasses a wide expression that may extend beyond traditional forms.”

The City adopted its Public Art Policy in 2016. The policy is a framework for how public art is selected, showcased and maintained in specific areas around the City. One of the most important elements of the Public Art Policy is acknowledgment that the integration of art into the urban fabric of the City will enrich and enhance the physical and cultural dimensions of the City. The ultimate goal of the policy is to ensure that artistic design and art continues to be an ever-increasing component of the City of Windsor's urban fabric; therefore, the integration of art into the design of public realm should be an active consideration in all development projects in the City.

Furthermore, the policy aims to establish a sustainable funding mechanism for public art. One of the recommendations made by the Public Art Policy is to examine the feasibility of implementing a *Percentage for Public Art Strategy*. Percentage for Public Art is a flat rate of 1% of the total construction cost of selected capital projects funded in full or in part by the City. Projects could include selected municipal buildings and structures, infrastructure, and civic amenities that are deemed to have a high visual impact and public accessibility.

Some communities apply the Percentage for Public Art approach for all



development, including private sector, occurring in certain areas of the city.

Another approach that communities are using is Section 37: Community Benefits under the Ontario *Planning Act*. Community Benefits are provided by the developer at no cost to the City in exchange for increases in the height and/or density above that which is currently permitted in the Zoning By-law. For example, the City of Toronto includes public art as an eligible Section 37 Community Benefit. It can take the form of an on-site public art installation, or a cash contribution to either a specific off-site installation or a City fund for public art purposes, or a combination of the three. The City of Windsor should explore the feasibility of including public art as a Community Benefit. The Official Plan would require an update, as well as a community benefit by-law passed in order to implement such an approach.

RECOMMENDATION 18: That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including Public Art as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

4.5.5 Public Alleys

Beyond the streets and public open spaces of downtown Windsor are the many alleys that further contribute to the public realm. These alleys provide an additional level of connectivity, particularly for pedestrians, between different areas of the downtown core. Designed primarily to provide rear access to buildings and infrastructure corridors, these alleys hold the potential to expand the pedestrian network and increase opportunities to support other activities such as art galleries, cafes and cultural programming. Improved paving, plantings, lighting, public art and furnishings will invite more activity and provide safe and comfortable alternative routes through the downtown core.

The 1994 *Windsor City Centre Revitalization and Design Study* contemplated the enhancement of several alleys as “pedestrian emphasis” and “pedestrian exclusive” routes to improve the pedestrian connectivity of the different areas of the downtown core. The Downtown Public Realm Map shows the opportunities to provide additional pedestrian linkages around downtown Windsor. However, in order to be successful, the alleys need to be safe and comfortable to the pedestrian. Pedestrian motivated capital investments in certain alleys should be considered where the possibility exists to improve the connectivity of the pedestrian network in downtown Windsor.

Some of the alleys have the potential to assume a more active role in the downtown core. With a little investment, some could easily be transformed into attractive amenity spaces, businesses, and/or event spaces that can be programmed to attract residents and visitors. However, the redevelopment and enhancement of downtown alleys has some significant challenges that need to be addressed before investment will be made in alleys. First and foremost, people need to feel that they are safe in alleys. Consequently, all improvements to alleys must contribute to increasing the level of safety.

Although alleys are under public ownership, they tend to function as private spaces for the buildings that abut them, whether it is providing service access to the businesses or parking for business owners. Any successful alley redevelopment will need to find the right balance between public access and private control for the alley, particularly if the private sector is investing in the enhancement of the alley. Inevitably there will be some business/building owner expectations that come along with any investments that they make to enhance the alley. The ongoing maintenance costs

and responsibilities need to be clearly defined and allocated to ensure that any capital investments made endure that test of time.

The City should explore partnerships with property owners adjacent to the commercial alleys and the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association to encourage a more active and dynamic use of these often forgotten and neglected public spaces. The goal of these partnerships would be to turn these alleys into safe, attractive and walkable pedestrian thoroughfares, outdoor seating or event space, and/or vibrant public spaces.

Some of the residential alleys located in the downtown study area should be considered for closure due to any number of considerations including their configuration, excessive encroachments, and attracting undesirable behaviours. A thorough review should be conducted as these problematic alleys are identified to determine the best course of action to address the primary concerns up to and including the full closure of the alley. In some cases, a specific recommendation to prioritize the closure of these alleys would be supported and warranted, including the City processing a no fee alley closure application.

4.5.6 Public Spaces & Parks

Another key element of the public realm framework are the public parks and open spaces. Parks and open space play a very important part in contributing to the vitality and ongoing revitalization of downtown Windsor. There are numerous benefits of parks in an urban setting like downtown Windsor, including:

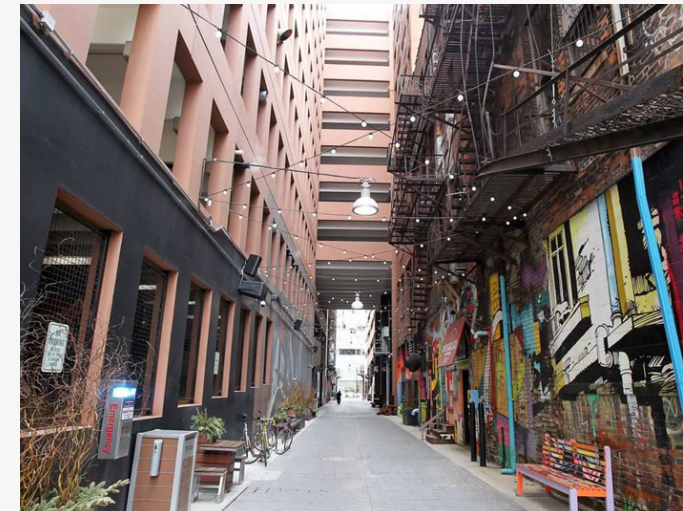
- Function as the centre of activity for a neighbourhood, or place of social interaction; and,
- A place for physical activity, or formal and informal sport and recreation;

Public Alley Transformations



EaCa Alley: Los Angeles

The East Cahuenga Alley (EaCa Alley) in Los Angeles was once a crime ridden alley known as “Heroin Alley”. The alley was re-imagined as a pedestrian space in 2012. The alley serves as a pedestrian walkway, home to numerous businesses and hosts a weekly artists’ market. Patrons can be spotted in outdoor patios and walking along the pathway, admiring the unique landscape architecture and art that covers the alley walls. This transformation was achieved through the efforts of multiple cooperating stakeholders and the local government.



The Belt: Detroit

Named for its location in a former downtown garment district of Detroit, The BELT links Gratiot Avenue and Grand River Avenue making its way between the Z parking garage and the adjacent buildings. Public Art plays an important role in the redevelopment of The BELT. The public space is home to murals and installations by local, national and international artists. The successful redevelopment of The BELT has also resulted in a number of businesses to open in the alley. The activation and development of the alley is a partnership between Library Street Collective and Bedrock Real Estate Services.



The Green Alley: Detroit

The Green Alley in Detroit was intended to create a model for sustainable alleys in the city. Detroit’s first “Green Alley” was developed in partnership between the Green Garage and Motor City Brewing Works. The Green Alley is located between Second Avenue and Cass Avenue, and will connect the Midtown Bike Loop. The alley was once filled with trash, broken pavement, overgrown weeds, and neglected sides of buildings. It now incorporates storm water retention, native plants, historic pavers, and induction lighting, resulting in a vibrant greenway for pedestrians and bicyclists to enjoy the beautiful gardens, stop and shop at local business establishments or gather with neighbours.

- Assisting with storm water management;
- Reducing the urban heat island effect that results from large swathes of surfaces that absorb and release heat;
- Linear parks that function as an alternative transportation route; and,
- Associated with better perceived general health and reduced stress levels.

At its most basic level, urban parks need to meet the user’s basic needs to be successful places. This can include providing seating, shelter or shade, and bathrooms, as well as being perceived as a safe place to be. Ideally, parks serve as a place to relax and seek temporary relief from daily life. They can be a small refuge in what can otherwise be a harsh urban environment.

Parks are also starting to get recognition for their contribution to the revitalization of downtown districts. There are numerous examples of revitalized parks being the centerpiece of the wider district revitalization. For example, New York City’s High Line and Detroit’s Campus Martius Park have both resulted in significant levels of private sector investment adjacent to them, refurbished historic buildings and a more vibrant street scene. To the point that the supply of housing adjacent to these parks has struggled to keep pace with the demand for living in close proximity to them. They have also evolved into destinations that attract many visitors from afar.

According to the recently adopted *Rediscover Our Parks - Parks and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan* the City Centre Planning District is near the World Health Organization’s recommended standard of 1.5 hectares of parkland per 1000 people.

Public park land is heavily concentrated along three linear parks: the Central Riverfront Park along the Detroit River, the Civic Esplanade corridor running from City Hall to the Riverside Drive, and the Vision Corridor on the west side of the downtown core. This heavy geographic concentration of parkland has left some areas of the downtown deficient in parkland and public open spaces. There should be some effort put into creating more small urban squares and pocket parks as way to compliment the larger parks described above.

The City of Windsor will continue to take the lead in the

development of public open spaces; however it will also encourage the private sector to include publicly accessible spaces in their developments. For example, the City’s support of the closure of Freedom Way would allow the University of Windsor to create a dynamic outdoor plaza space between two of its downtown campus buildings. The City should also explore other *Planning Act* mechanisms for acquiring and developing new parks and public spaces, including zoning bonusing, land conveyances, and community benefits.

RECOMMENDATION 19: That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including public parks and open spaces as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

Windsor Civic Plaza and Esplanade

The redevelopment of the Civic Square once the new City Hall is completed in 2018 provides a good opportunity to address some of the deficiencies and challenges with the current parks and open space system in downtown Windsor. It will provide options as it relates to public assembly space, address the long term use options for Charles Clark Square

and the Civic Esplanade, while reinforcing the connection between downtown and the riverfront.

Central Riverfront Park

People enjoy being around water, and the downtown Windsor is blessed with a close proximity to the Detroit River. Therefore, it is important to reinforce this connection wherever possible and facilitate the easy movement of people between the riverfront and downtown Windsor.

The Central Riverfront area represents approximately 95 acres over a 6-kilometer stretch of riverfront. The central position of these lands in the City along the Detroit River and the views of the Detroit skyline, enhance the importance of these lands as a major international “gateway” location for visitors arriving in Canada. The lands that constitute the Central Riverfront Park are primarily passive open space with nodes of active space and facilities.

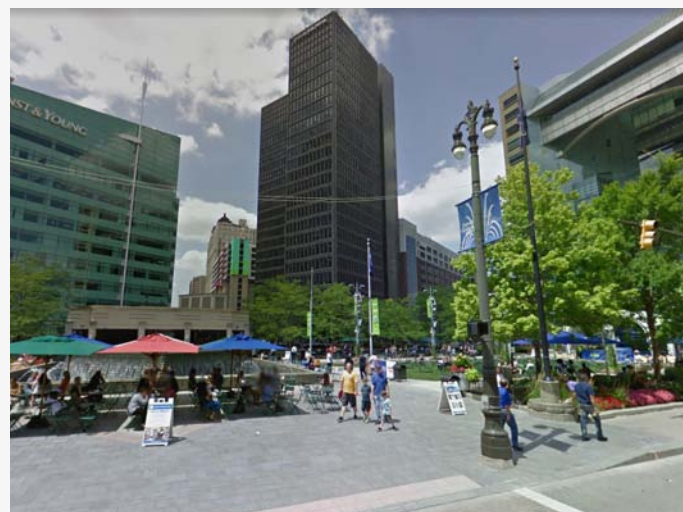
The Central Riverfront Implementation Plan provides design guidelines for nine individual segments spanning from McKee Park linking the Olde Sandwich Towne area in the west to the

Hiram Walker Distillery District in the east. Beacons will be located throughout the Riverfront Park Lands as the primary orientation system and identity feature. The Plan also serves to link neighbourhoods south of Riverside Drive through the development of green linkages such as Civic Esplanade, Vision Corridor and other parks.

BELOW: Central Riverfront Park



Public Park Transformations



Campus Martius Park

The new Campus Martius Park was dedicated November 19, 2004 at the intersection of Woodward Avenue and Michigan Avenue in downtown Detroit. The current Campus Martius Park is approximately 1.2 acres in size, and includes contains grassy lawns, gravel walkways, and informal seating for over 2,000 people on walls, benches, steps, and movable chairs. It also has two performance stages, sculptures, public spaces and a seasonal ice skating rink. In addition to the physical facilities in the park, Campus Martius also plays host to concerts, festivals and people just looking to take a break in the city.

Campus Martius Park has regularly been referenced as one of America’s great urban spaces and cited as a great success. It has become a catalyst for commercial development in the surrounding blocks. There have been two new office buildings constructed, a historic office building restored and a former historic office building converted to residential apartments. Additionally, the success of Campus Martius Park has spurred the redevelopment of adjacent Cadillac Square. Cadillac Square Park is home to the relocated Bagley Memorial Fountain, seasonal basketball courts and a vibrant variety of seating options.



The High Line

Developed by a partnership between the Friends of the High Line and the City of New York, the High Line elevated linear park created on an elevated section of a disused New York Central Railroad spur called the West Side Line. The first phase opened to the public in 2009, with subsequent phases opening in 2011 and 2014. The 1.45-mile-long park has been constructed from an out-of-use railroad trestle to a public landscape and includes primarily a walk path surrounded by extensive green planting spaces. There are also a number of public art pieces and seating options incorporated into the design.

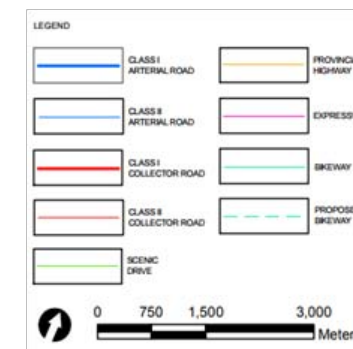
The High Line has had a real measurable impact on the neighbourhoods surrounding it spurring real estate development in the adjacent neighborhoods. There has been over 40 new development projects constructed or renovated along the route. The redevelopment of the High Line has increased real estate values and prices, with people willing to paying a significant premium to live adjacent to the High Line. The High Line also attracts millions of visitors a year. Its success has encouraged other cities across the county to consider the reuse of obsolete infrastructure for public space.

4.6 DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

4.6.1 Official Plan

Schedule F of the City of Windsor Official Plan shows the road classification for roadways and bikeways in downtown Windsor. There are three arterial roads that are designated as Class II Arterial Roads in the downtown core. They are Wyandotte Street, Ouellette Avenue and University Avenue. These are the major roads that would carry vehicular traffic in and out of the downtown area.

Riverside Drive holds a special distinction as a “Scenic Drive” and a proposed bikeway is identified in the Official Plan. Riverside Drive runs parallel to the riverfront park and is the northern boundary of the downtown businesses. Riverside Drive is a bit of a barrier for pedestrians crossing Riverside Drive when they are making the connection from the Riverfront Park into downtown because the traffic moves fast and the current configuration is four lanes for traffic. This presents a challenge for pedestrians wanting to cross the road.



4.6.2 Downtown Windsor Transportation Strategy

The Downtown Windsor Transportation Strategy was completed in October 2016 with the vision of downtown Windsor as a vibrant and inviting place in which people want to work, play, and shop and have the opportunity to use various modes of active transportation.

The strategy outlines the following key elements to improve active transportation. The strategy has identified corridors that have the greatest need for active transportation or have the best opportunity for placemaking and improving active transportation. The key elements to the strategy are as follows:

Focus on roads that have excess vehicular capacity that could be used for alternative purposes;

1. Create a finer grid for active transportation connecting areas of special interest (recent or proposed development such as the St. Clair College and University of Windsor downtown campuses and the new City Hall);
2. Maintain existing improvements that favour active transportation and that enhance the current Bicycle Use Master Plan;
3. Expand opportunities for cyclists including the “share the road” solutions on local streets with limited opportunities for change; and,
4. Consideration of the removal of on-street parking with no change to prime vehicular access points.

Based on these key elements to the strategy, a supported transportation map was proposed to show the pedestrian, cycling, and vehicular traffic (see Figure 20 Potential Multimodal Transportation Corridors from the Downtown Transportation Strategy (October 2016) below)

The Strategy identifies a network of potential pedestrian corridors with shared cycling facilities along Victoria Avenue, Chatham Street and Pitt Street. Additionally, it identifies potential for increased opportunities for pedestrian crossing along Riverside Drive.

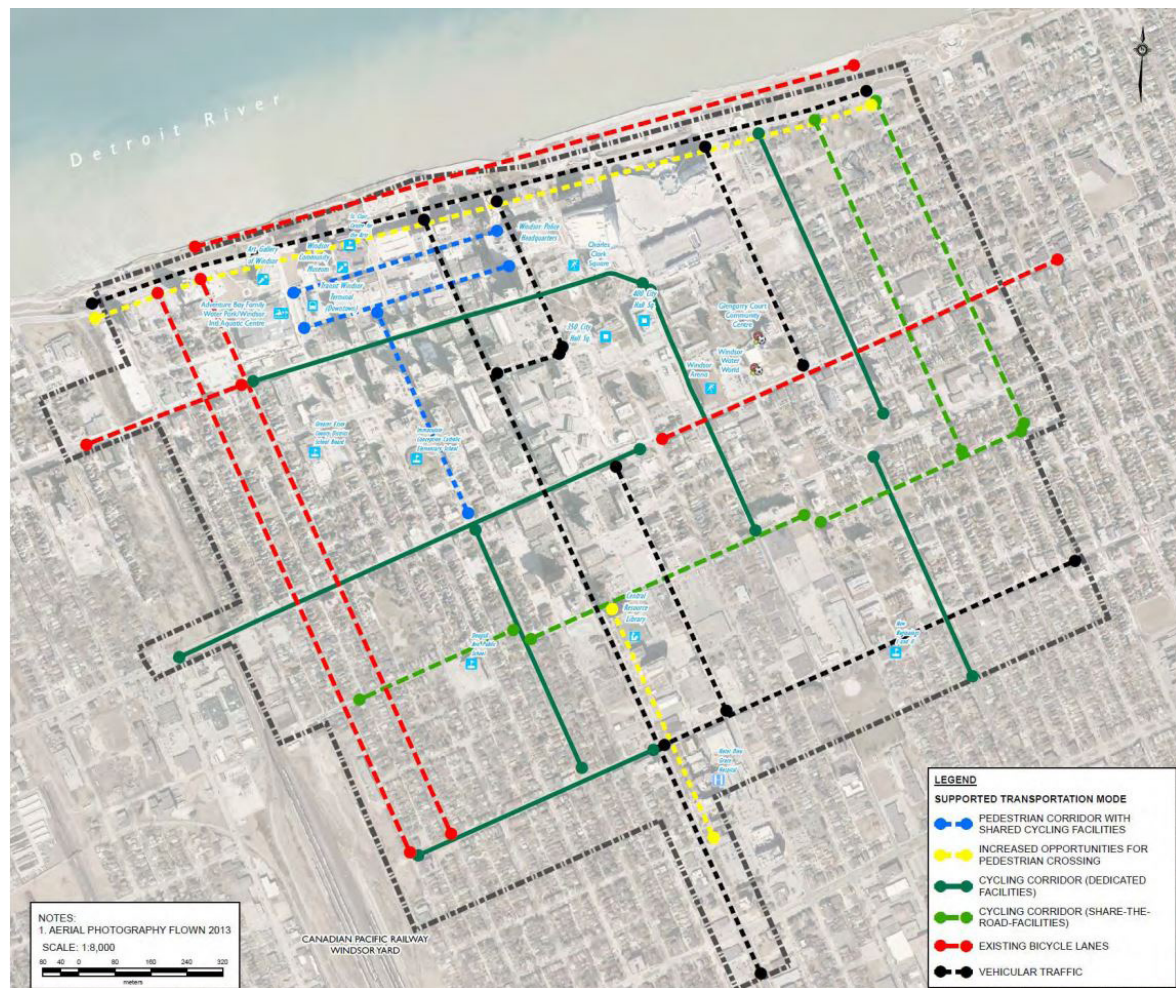


The Strategy outlines a checklist, cross-section design options, and evaluation tool that can be used at the time a new design and/or operation project is initiated to achieve the desired outcomes with the transportation network.



LEFT: University of Windsor's bike share program promotes active transportation between campuses.

Potential Multimodal Transportation Corridors



(Downtown Transportation Strategy, Final Report)

4.7 THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER

There is a theory for neighbourhood deterioration based on the premise that if a window is broken and left unrepaired, people walking by will conclude that no one cares and no one is in charge, therefore, why should they care? It is called the “Broken Windows” theory.

The Broken Windows theory points towards how the gradual degrading of a place leads to the ongoing deterioration, and in some cases higher levels of crime and disorder. At a minimum, it sends a message that nobody really cares enough to address the issue, for whatever reason. If evidence of decay, including poor property conditions, littering, and graffiti, remain in the neighbourhood for a reasonably long period of time, people who live and work in the area begin to feel more vulnerable, powerless and begin to avoid the area.

It became clear through the stakeholder discussions conducted in preparation of this plan that this may be the case to a certain extent in Downtown Windsor and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Overall, Downtown Windsor has recently seen its fair share of positive initiatives and investments, as well as having a generally well-maintained building stock. This positive momentum and improved quality of the downtown experience are the messages that downtown Windsor wants to portray. Unfortunately, the unaddressed “little things” detract from the positive message, and begin to negatively impact the downtown experience.

Consequently, this plan has placed a significant emphasis on the little things, and has begun to devise a strategy to tackle the ‘small things’ to contribute to improving the overall downtown experience. Part of The Little Things Matter approach is to identify a reliable funding source to address the items that fall under the City’s responsibility. This plan is recommending the creation of a capital budget fund for the explicit purpose of addressing the little things that need to be addressed in downtown Windsor so that they don’t become bigger issues over time. The fund would be solely for the purpose of addressing items that do not other sources for funding to address them, and are deemed to be small in nature and can easily be addressed with a sustainable funding source in place.



4.8 HISTORICAL PRESERVATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

One of the ways that successful downtowns encourage arts and culture to flourish is to provide venues for it and by making the preservation of historic buildings a priority. Museums, galleries, theatres and concert halls have come to play such a central role in urban renewal because they provide a context for the highly expressive and symbolic architecture that is so central to the branding of downtown. The historical preservation of buildings is, in part, the physical manifestation of promoting arts and culture. Therefore, one of the objectives of this plan is to promote downtown Windsor’s arts and cultural areas by placing an emphasis on the historical preservation of these buildings.

The conservation of historic buildings and places often makes solid economic sense, but more importantly, historical preservation is the foundation for downtown revitalization. The historic buildings and places are what distinguishes downtown from the suburbs and contribute to the all-important “sense of place” and “authenticity” of the downtown core.

The Provincial Policy Statement as it relates to Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Resources states that significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes “shall be” conserved. The City of Windsor’s Official Plan defines heritage resources as including “buildings, structures, archaeological and historic sites, landscapes and landmarks, either individually or in groups, which are considered by Council to be of architectural and/or historical significance.”

The City of Windsor has committed ensuring that secondary plan studies, community improvement plans and other planning studies identify heritage resources that may exist in the areas under study and propose means to protect and enhance those heritage resources. There are over seventy-five properties located in the study area that are either on the City’s Heritage Register or designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The Official Plan also encourages the adaptive re-use of historic buildings. This plan encourages the conversion of obsolete commercial and office buildings in downtown

Windsor to residential uses. Along with the many benefits of historical preservation, there are risks and associated costs that result from the adaptive re-use of older buildings. There are environmental concerns often associated with older buildings depending on when they were built, including asbestos, lead paint, and underground tanks. All of these problems can be resolved, but addressing them may have significant financial impacts on the feasibility of the development. Also, adaptive re-use projects are often more expensive to construct because there are higher costs associated with working with an existing structural framework and remediating any unanticipated issues that arise during construction. In order for adaptive re-use to become a financially viable, and more importantly, a competitive alternative to building new, these challenges will have to be addressed. To do its part, the City of Windsor can encourage, in the appropriate locations, the adaptive re-use of obsolete commercial and office buildings to residential uses.



ABOVE: 280 Park St. West

RECOMMENDATION 20: That the City of Windsor establish a program through an approved Community Improvement Plan to provide a grant and/or loan assist with the higher construction costs associated with the or rehabilitation of heritage buildings or the adaptive re-use of obsolete commercial and office buildings for residential purposes.



ABOVE: 261 Pelissier Street

4.9 PROMOTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The City of Windsor will encourage development in downtown to use methods of construction, design elements and building materials that will result in higher energy efficiency.

Along with the significant environmental benefits of building “green”, there are economic benefits to be realized from building green. Energy-efficient buildings yield long-term energy savings. Lower operating costs increase the resale value of the building and provide a competitive leasing advantage over standard buildings.

In Canada, it is possible to achieve fifty percent improvements in energy efficiency in new buildings using conventional technologies and an increase of ten to fifteen percent increase is possible in existing buildings with investments that will pay back in five years or less. The average incremental cost of achieving a twenty-five percent improvement in energy efficiency in new buildings is less than four percent.

An alternative to the Commercial Building Incentive Program (CBIP) for New Buildings is the Canada Green Building Council’s LEED Canada Rating System, which “recognizes leading edge buildings that incorporate design, construction and operational practices that combine healthy, high-quality and high-performance advantages with reduced environmental impacts.” The City of Windsor will encourage building projects in downtown Windsor to pursue the development of LEED certified buildings, and should provide financial incentive to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 21: That the City of Windsor structure any financial incentive programs implemented through an approved Community Improvement Plan in a way that rewards increased energy efficiency in buildings.

5 THE VALUE OF GOOD DESIGN

The value of a higher level of design, “sense of place”, and “character” have been a reoccurring themes throughout this plan. It has been an important part of almost every other section of this plan. It is important to new and future residents, business owners and potential investors, and to people visiting downtown Windsor. Why?

Good design is especially important in creating livable communities. Livable communities are designed to support walking, cycling and increased use of transit by featuring active storefronts, ample sidewalks, attractive landscaping, green spaces and other design features. These features in turn change the way people can live: for example, people can choose to walk or cycle for recreation, health, or travel to nearby destinations.

In recognizing the importance of character, good design also acknowledges that it is beneficial for places to have different and authentic physical and social characteristics. The value of the place derives in part from its distinctiveness. In this sense, character can be distinguished from the individual attributes that constitute it: density, connectivity, scale, use. While each of these qualities may be advantageous in its own way, ‘character’ describes the additional benefit that results when such qualities combine to create an easily recognizable identity.

Embracing the locality’s character and good urban design is also good for business. A beautiful and interesting downtown can attract new businesses and employees looking for an improved quality of life. It is also a draw for tourists, just as a unique area or street is a draw for shoppers.

5.1 AUTHENTIC ‘SENSE OF PLACE’

Good (and unique) design also helps to establish and preserve downtown Windsor’s sense of place. A “sense of place” is a unique collection of characteristics and qualities that provide purpose and meaning to a location. Downtown Windsor’s unique sense of place means that it is like no other in the city or region. It cannot be duplicated in other areas of the city or region because downtown Windsor was not created at a single point in time. Therefore, it embodies a character, look, tradition, and heritage that represent an evolution over multiple generations that cannot be easily duplicated in other areas of the city. The physical form of the downtown, things like the land uses, housing types, historical building stock, architectural styles and public realm begin to define the sense of place for people. However, even more important than the physical characteristics is the way that people interact with and use the space; the activities that go on there; how comfortable it is; how easy it is to get to and walk through; and the public image that it projects.

Not only is downtown Windsor distinct from other areas of the city, the sense of place conveyed by downtown is what differentiates Windsor from other cities, particularly as newer suburbs are built across Canada that look more or less like every other place that has similar national brand businesses and corporate architecture. This homogeneous nature of the typical suburban development pattern and typology elevates the importance of authenticity with respect to the downtown experience. The strategies and revitalization activities implemented will have to consider and understand downtown Windsor’s uniqueness, and celebrate and embrace its character, including its grittiness and quirks, in order to successfully contribute to downtown’s authentic sense of place.

RECOMMENDATION 22: That the City of Windsor evaluate all development by its contribution to downtown Windsor’s unique sense of place.

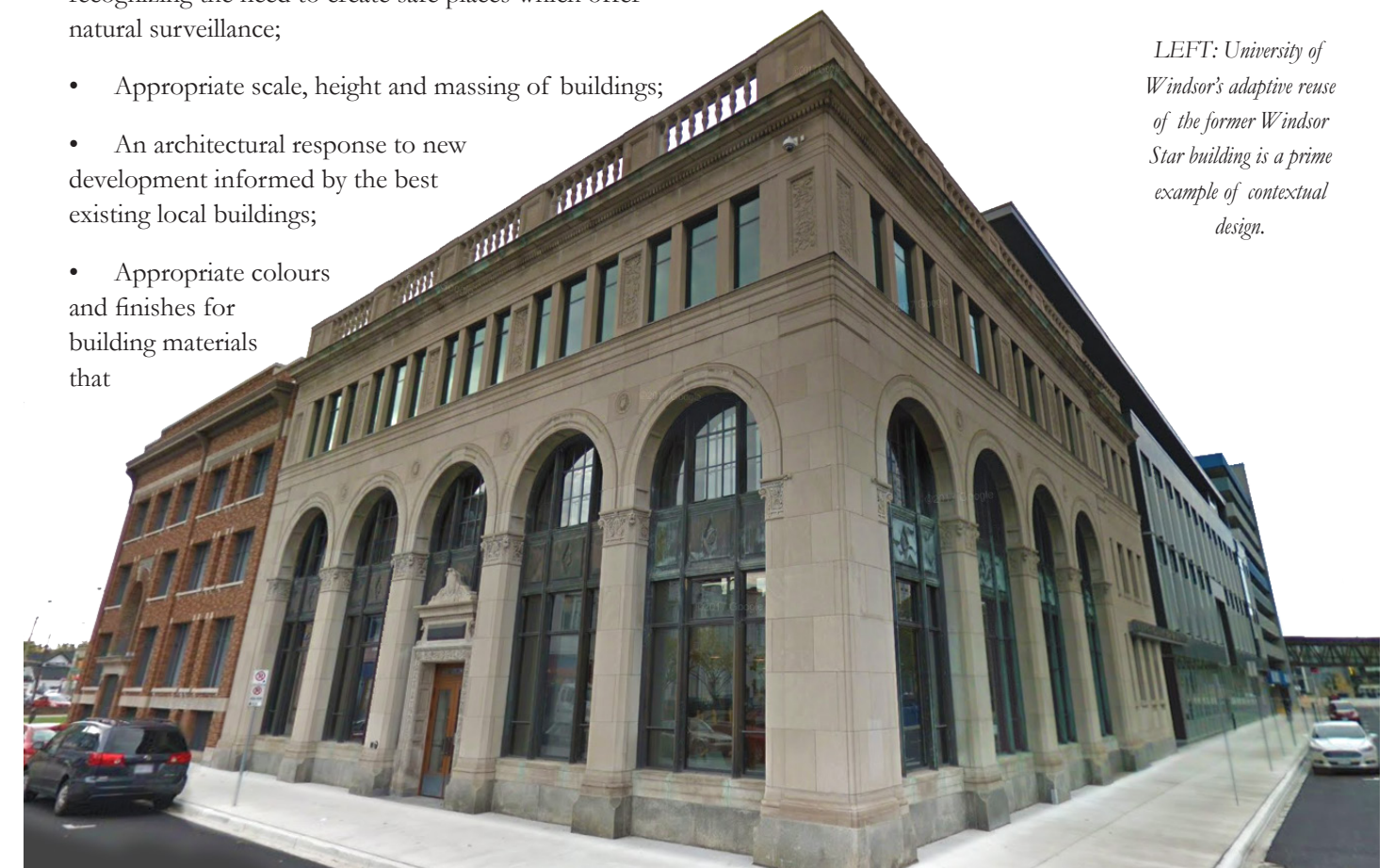
Good design does not necessarily cost more and delivers enhanced benefits to both the developer and the wider community. The key is to find the right balance between the community’s expectations and developer motivations. Development that is motivated purely by the economics of the project may end up missing the mark with potential tenants, consumers, and the public. On the other hand, stringent design regulations, standards and expectations may not align with the economic realities of the project. There are a number of design decisions that cost no more to get right, but can significantly impact on overall success of a project:

- Getting the buildings in the right location and correct orientation on the site;
- Appropriate balance and definition of public and private areas;
- Appropriate mix and intensity of uses across a site, recognizing the need to create safe places which offer natural surveillance;
- Appropriate scale, height and massing of buildings;
- An architectural response to new development informed by the best existing local buildings;
- Appropriate colours and finishes for building materials that

complement the setting and need not cost more;

- Properly resolved fronts and backs of buildings to provide natural surveillance to the street and appropriate amenity to rear areas;
- Robust public realm designs and construction that will stand the test of time, but do not require expensive materials; and,
- Clear and legible layouts with entrances to buildings and gateways positioned to make it easy for people and automobiles to navigate the site.

Furthermore, well designed urban projects may generate higher returns to developers, especially where they take a longer term view. Good design may sometimes involve more investment upfront, but this generally pays off over the lifetime of the building or place. Good urban design that addresses issues such as mixed use and the quality of the public environment can help a city remain adaptable and resilient in a changing economic environment. Well-designed urban areas can become focal points for economic interaction, enterprise and innovation and can help attract skilled workers, residents and tourists.



LEFT: University of Windsor’s adaptive reuse of the former Windsor Star building is a prime example of contextual design.

5.2 COMPATIBILITY AND CONTEXT

Compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhoods is critical for all new development, adaptive reuses, or building retrofits. Some of the biggest considerations for ensuring that any new project constructed in the core of the city are compatible include density, character, height, traffic, and parking, and how these areas are potentially impacted by the project.

As each site has a specific context, it is not appropriate to simply copy a building design used elsewhere, something that has become more common with national chains adopting a corporate architecture approach to development. For this reason the site features and the surrounding context should always be considered when creating a new development. In order for a project to be truly compatible, it must be result in a design that is informed by the neighbouring buildings, as well as, the built form and streetscape of the wider neighbourhood or district. The pattern of local streets, building styles and materials, and area-specific attributes and history all help to determine the context to which all developments should strive to fit in with.

The compatibility of projects with the surrounding neighbourhood is of the utmost importance. Compatibility does not necessarily mean having development that is the same as what is surrounding it. Compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood means that it will fit in with the surrounding neighbourhood and buildings with respect to the prevailing architectural styles and building materials; building height and scale; building setbacks; and, other all of the other ways that the building relates to its surroundings.



5.3 IMPLEMENTING GOOD DESIGN

5.3.1 Planning Tools

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is the statement of the government’s policies on land use planning. It applies province-wide and provides clear policy direction on land use planning to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. One of the most recent additions to PPS relates to the quality of design for the built environment. Specifically, the PPS promotes a built form that “is well-designed; encourages a sense of place; and, provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.”

There are a number of the tools provided by the Planning Act and other legislation (e.g. the Municipal Act, Heritage Act, etc) that will prove useful in ensuring that new development meets this Provincial standard and is compatible to downtown Windsor, including:

Site Plan Review – Site Plan Review is the process used by the City of Windsor to implement Section 41- Site Plan Control of the Ontario Planning Act. The Planning Act enables municipalities to exercise their authority to examine the technical and design aspects of a proposed development;

Architectural Design – through the City’s Official Plan policies, it is permissible to consider the exterior design of buildings. This would allow for careful consideration of the character, scale and appearance of proposed buildings in relation to the rest of downtown Windsor. These items would be considered as part of the Site Plan Review Process;

Community Planning Permits (CPP) – the CPP System combines three of planning approvals (Zoning, Minor Variance and Site Plan processes) into one application submission and approval process. It also provides regulatory powers for site design and building design matters. It is a streamlined and efficient way to obtain planning approvals, expedite development, and provide greater certainty in achieving land use, urban design, streetscape and other planning objectives; and,

Design Guidelines – are a set of discretionary statements that communicate the design expectations for a particular area. They also function to preserve and enhance the desired character of existing neighborhoods and improve the aesthetic and functional quality of new development projects, including implementing some of the important architectural elements and design details that result in a compatible development.

Each of these tools is either currently being used by the City of Windsor, or is being recommended for consideration by this plan to maintain a high level of design that is compatible with downtown Windsor.

5.3.2 Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines are a set of discretionary statements that communicate the design expectations for a particular area. They also function to preserve and enhance the desired character of existing neighborhoods and improve the aesthetic and functional quality of new development projects, including implementing some of the important architectural elements and design details that result in a compatible development.

Since compatibility will be treated as an important aspect by which development projects will be evaluated, Design Guidelines will be developed to establish a common understanding of design principles, expectations and standards for development proposed in downtown Windsor. The Design Guidelines will be used to convey the general design principles and policies about the design of new infill construction, as well

as alterations to existing structures. They will also allow for a range of appropriate design responses to a variety of specific contextual and compatibility considerations.

Every development project that results in exterior renovations or new construction will be reviewed through the Site Plan Control process at which point all applicable Design Guidelines will be considered in the evaluation of the proposed project in an effort to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood. Furthermore, some of the financial incentive programs will require adherence to the Design Guidelines as part of their eligibility criteria.

RECOMMENDATION 23: That the City of Windsor develop downtown specific Urban Design Guidelines the will be a supplemental document to this Community Improvement Plan for the purpose of achieving desirable design results and ensuring that new development is compatible with the existing context of downtown Windsor.

In addition to the creation of the supplemental Urban Design Guidelines recommended above, this plan will also incorporate some Neighbourhood and District specific Design Guidelines where they are warranted. These Design Guidelines will be limited and specific to the particular geographic area to which they apply. They are included in this plan to acknowledge the uniqueness of some areas and to ensure that design for new developments meets the threshold for compatibility that is promoted throughout this plan.



6 NEIGHBOURHOOD AND DISTRICT AREAS

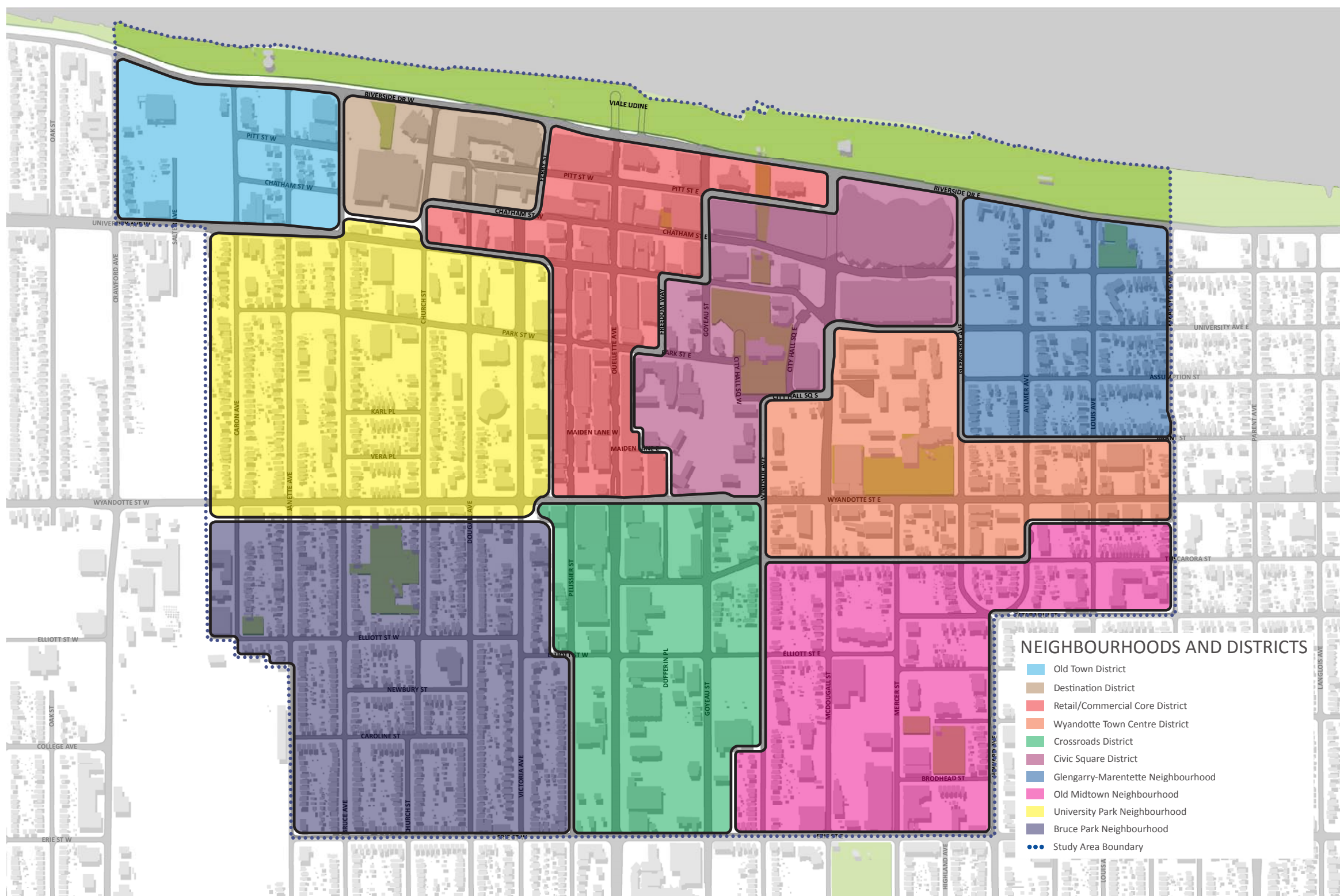
Downtown Windsor Neighbourhood and District Map

Neighbourhoods and districts are the foundation of the downtown community, each with its own character, scale, sense of place, population, and a range of services and amenities. This plan supports positive physical change in downtown neighbourhoods that respect and improve the existing historical, physical, social, economic and environmental conditions of these areas.

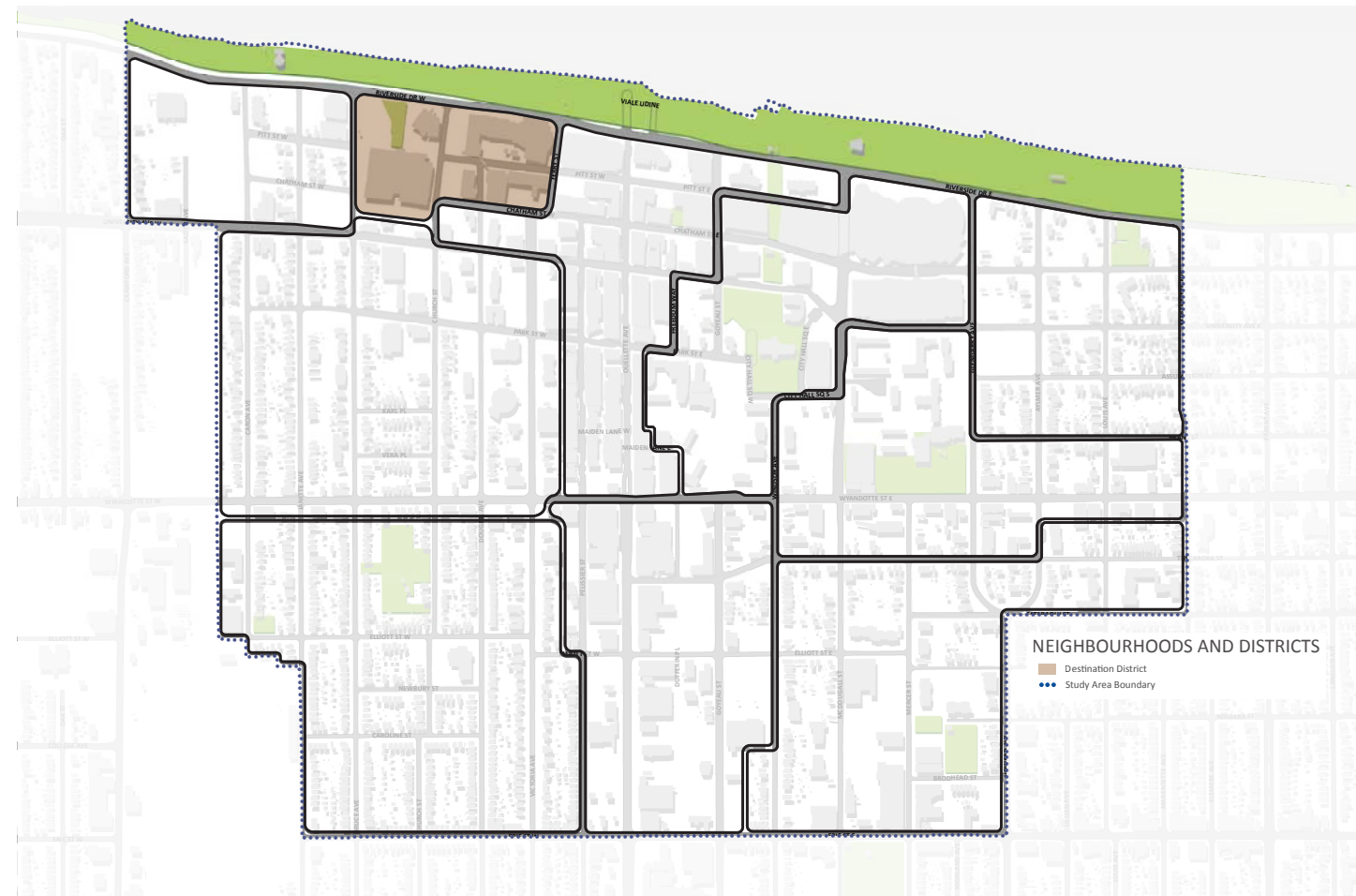
While this plan will set an overall framework for revitalization by analyzing and preparing recommendations for the entire study area, it is also advantageous to do the same at a more local level. This approach is consistent with the previous *City Centre Revitalization and Design Study*, where neighbourhoods and districts were used to analyze downtown Windsor.

The breakdown of the study area into smaller localized neighbourhoods and districts is intended to provide a clear but flexible framework to guide positive change and development in the neighbourhoods. In other words, it sets the stage for using neighbourhoods as a defining structure by going into more detail at the neighbourhood or district level. It will allow for a finer level of neighbourhood-specific detail that begins to highlight what differentiates the neighbourhood or district from others, and allows for the efficient targeting of responses to issues. Furthermore, it allows for targeted solutions that build on the defining characteristics of the neighbourhood/district.

There is a level of subjectivity around establishing neighborhood boundaries; therefore, the delineation of these localized boundaries should not be interpreted too rigidly. Recognizing that the boundaries are fluid and may shift and/or overlap depending the particular aspect or characteristics being considered is important in understanding how fluid and inter-connected these neighbourhoods are to each other. Additionally, the demarcation of neighbourhoods and districts is not meant to define neighbourhoods for branding purposes.



6.1 DESTINATION DISTRICT



Destination District Map

This area is a destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and education. Dominated by civic amenities, the buildings are large in scale and take advantage of Riverside Drive and the views towards Detroit. This area includes the Chrysler Theatre, Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre, Adventure Bay Water Park, Art Gallery of Windsor, Chimczuk Museum, Maison Francois Baby House, Windsor International Transit Terminal, St. Clair College Centre for the Arts, and the University of Windsor’s School of Social Work and the Centre for Executive and Professional Education. These destination uses are supported by complimentary land uses like hotels and a parking garage.

The buildings located in the Destination District are mostly formal in design and set back from the public right-of-way. This area has been known in previous planning documents as the western super anchor site. It was earmarked for a multi-use site that would be a destination for the western end of downtown Windsor, and meant to act as the counter

balance to the draw of Caesars Windsor on the east end of downtown. The Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre and Adventure Bay Water Park have since been developed on this site.

RIGHT: Windsor Aquatic Centre

Adventure Bay is a state of the art water park located within the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre. It has become a destination for families in the area and the Olympic size competition pool and diving facilities have played host to a number of national and international sporting events, bolstering the City’s efforts in Sports Tourism.

The Windsor International Transit Terminal is the central hub of the Transit Windsor network; starting point for the U.S. bound tunnel bus; and, the city’s Greyhound station. The downtown location was strategically chosen as a way to bring more people to the downtown core and demonstrate the City’s ongoing commitment to the downtown Windsor.

The recent development of urban campuses for St. Clair College and the University of Windsor, in partnership with the City of Windsor will begin to attract student and faculty to the downtown core, as well as the ancillary benefits of having a larger population spending significant amounts of time downtown. The hope is that this increased population translates into greater demand for additional residential units, restaurants, and other support services.

6.1.1 Area Vision

The Destination District will continue to act as an important area to draw in visitors to downtown. Given that the area is home to the Art Gallery of Windsor, Chimczuk Museum, and Maison Francois Baby House, the Destination District will continue to function as a cultural hub in the city. The eastern edge of the district is part of the downtown post-secondary campus,

solidifying the district as a destination for students. The Destination District should offer activities and events that are accessible for all ages and interests, while also providing public areas to relax and reflect.

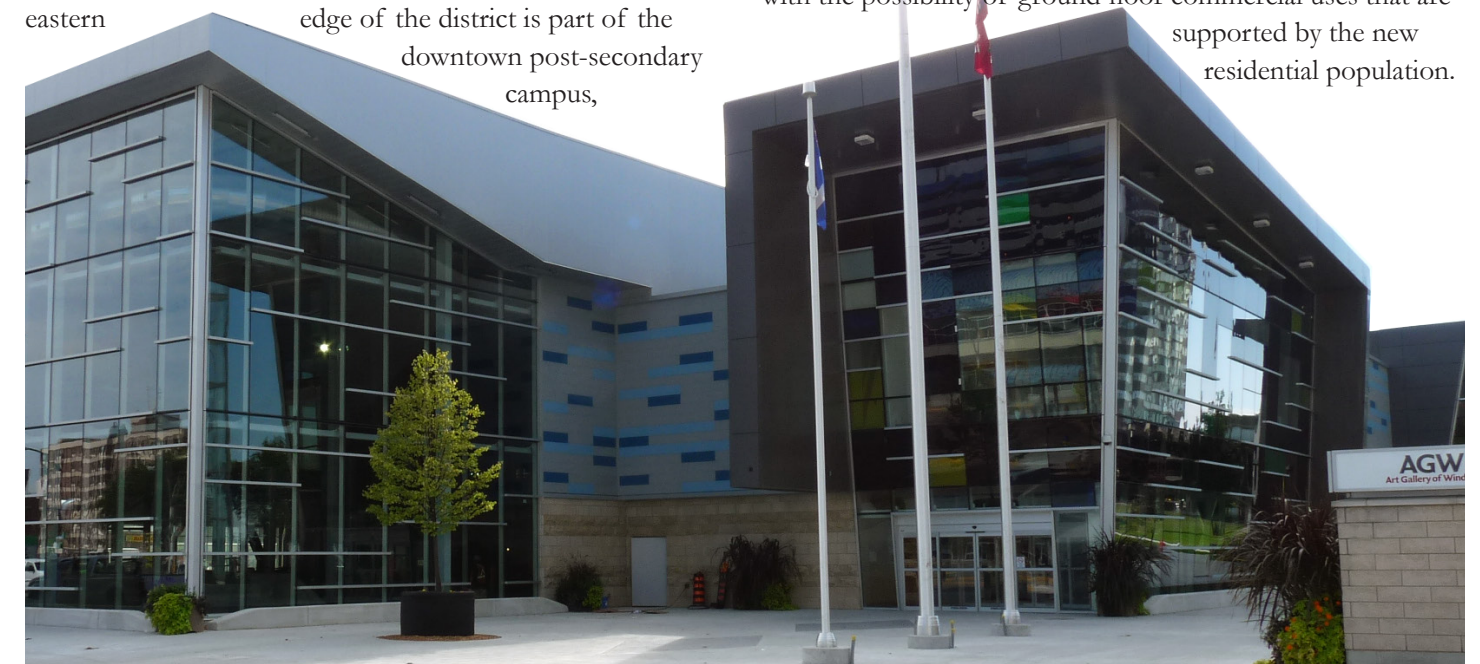
6.1.2 Building/Property Conditions

The buildings in this district are in good to excellent condition. The buildings are either new or well maintained older buildings. The vacant parcels located in the Destination District are generally well maintained and ready for development.

6.1.3 Development Opportunities

There are no buildings that are completely vacant within this area; however, there are some ground floor commercial vacancies within some buildings. These spaces have no, or limited, storefronts that have direct access to the street. The vacant ground floor commercial space in the building at 333 Riverside Drive East is more conducive to being integrated with the larger scale redevelopment project that includes the former Radisson Hotel tower.

There are two vacant parcels within the Destination District. Both have prime locations with direct access to Riverside Drive and views of the Detroit River. The development of these sites should be primarily higher density residential uses with the possibility of ground floor commercial uses that are supported by the new residential population.



6.1.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The land use designations identified in the Official Plan for this area are “Entertainment/Hospitality” and “Mixed Use”. This is consistent with the existing destination focused uses and the overall vision for this district.

The development profile for this area is “Very High” which envisions development that is greater than 14 storeys in height. While it is logical that higher profile development dominate the skyline, 14 storeys may be beyond the financial feasibility of development in the current real estate climate. Although the 14 storeys is not a minimum requirement, having development permissions (i.e. height maximums) significantly exceed the market realities limits the opportunity to invoke the bonus zoning or community benefits provisions of the *Planning Act*.

The Vision Corridor located immediately north of the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre and west of the Art Gallery of Windsor is designated “Public Park/Open Space” which will continue to protect it from development.

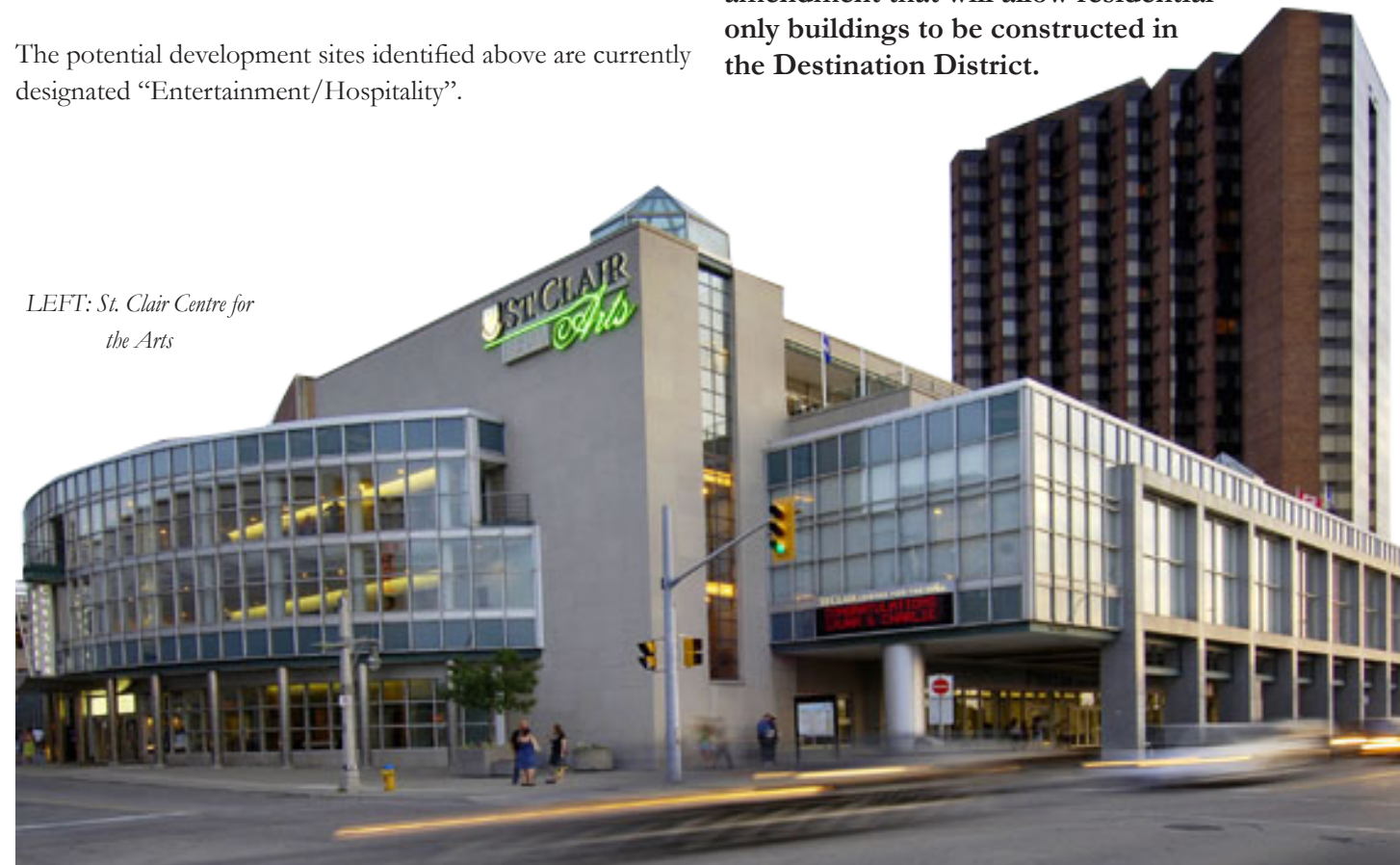
The potential development sites identified above are currently designated “Entertainment/Hospitality”.

Zoning

The zoning in this area is CD3.1 and CD3.7. CD3.1 General Commercial. These zoning categories all allow “Combined Use Buildings” which permit retail, businesses, personal services, restaurants, entertainment. However, residential uses are only permitted when combined with one or more of the uses listed above and provided that they are located above the ground floor commercial uses. In other words, the zoning does not permit a single use residential building in this area.

Since Riverside Drive is not a commercial corridor or main street, it may prove to be a barrier to development to require commercial uses on the main floor of a residential building. Since it is highly desirable to have residential developed on the vacant parcels that front Riverside Drive, the zoning should be reviewed to determine if the requirement for ground floor commercial is appropriate. The zoning should continue to allow for the range of commercial uses; however, it should be changed to not require them if there is going to be a residential component to the development.






RECOMMENDATION 24: That the City of Windsor initiate a Zoning By-law amendment that will allow residential only buildings to be constructed in the Destination District.



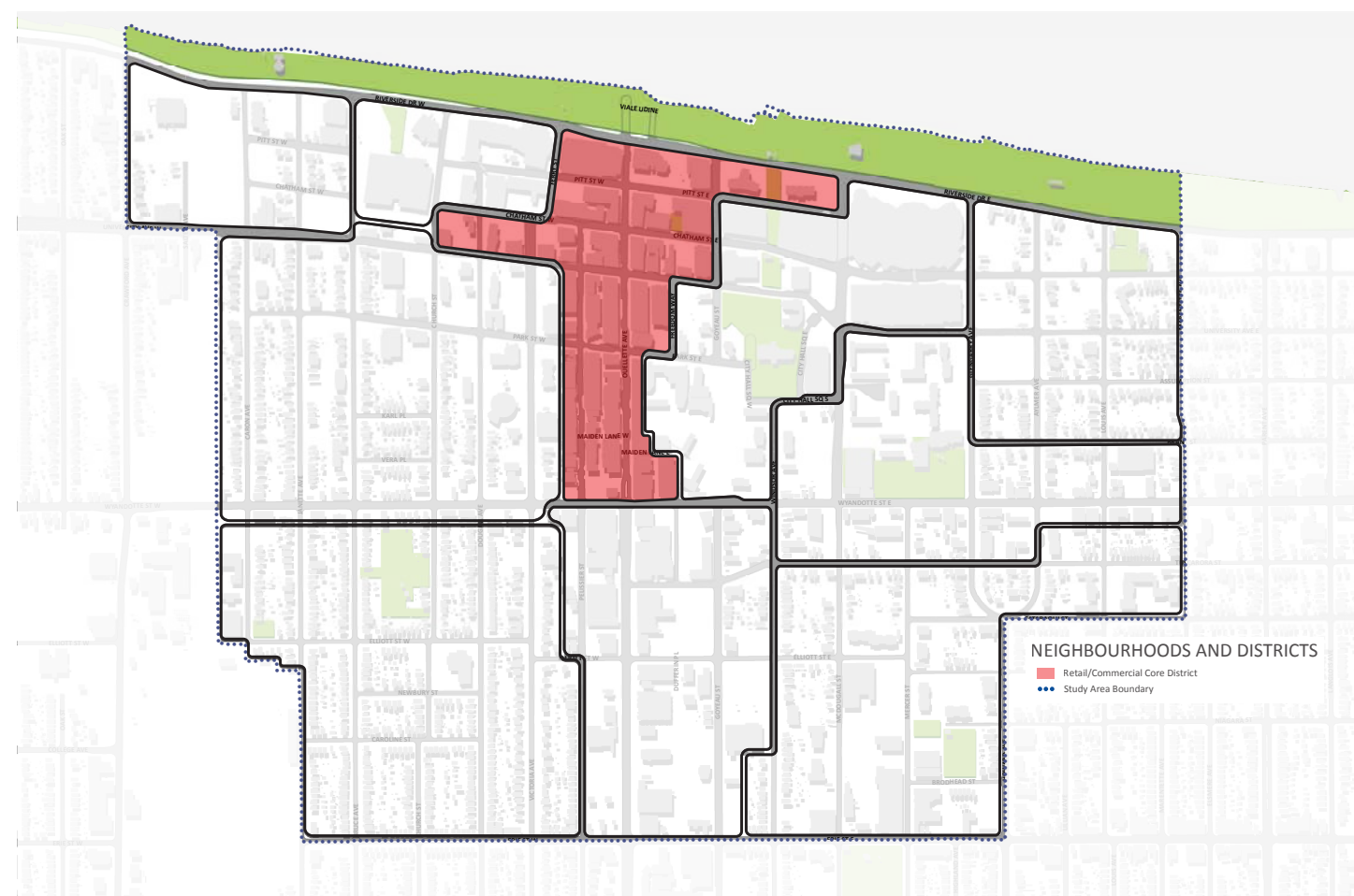
LEFT: St. Clair Centre for the Arts

Consideration should be given to reviewing the allowable densities and heights for the properties in this area. A study that reviews the costs and potential revenues from different development types would allow for better understanding of what variables have the biggest impact on the feasibility of the development projects. Additionally, it would help to establish the development potential for downtown Windsor, which in turn would allow for zoning refinements that help to advance the many objectives of this plan.

6.1.5 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Destination attractions such as the Windsor Family Aquatic Centre, University of Windsor and Art Gallery need to have spill over effects on the surrounding land uses.	Opportunity to connect visitors with other uses downtown such as retail and restaurants.		 
The streetscaping should be of high quality to make visitors feel they have arrived at a destination.	Opportunity for streetscaping and signage to be distinct to the destination uses in the area.	Public Realm	
Public Realm enhancements are encouraged around the University of Windsor’s School of Social Work Building.	Opportunity to create a campus feel in downtown Windsor to connect the post-secondary campuses.	Public Realm	
Vacant sites on Church at Riverside Drive and, Bruce at Riverside Drive.	Opportunity for development of vacant sites.	Development Opportunities	

6.2 RETAIL/COMMERCIAL CORE DISTRICT



Retail/Commercial Core District Map

This area is the epi-centre of downtown Windsor and should play an important role in the revitalization of downtown. This area provides a traditional main street feel and the density and mix of uses is unique to the City as a whole. This area provides the main retail, entertainment, social and institutional uses in the downtown. Additionally, Pelissier Street provides smaller local type amenities such as dry cleaners, tailors, cafes, and lawyer’s offices, etc for downtown residents and workers.

This area has a mix of building types and scales that are influenced by the eclectic nature of their uses. Ouellette Avenue and Pelissier, as well as the intersections along these roads, highlight 1-3 story traditional mixed use pedestrian-scale building facades that address the pedestrian realm very well. These buildings have alley access and side street access for servicing and loading. There are also larger office and residential towers that are designed at the property line and range in architectural style from the 1920s iron works to a

contemporary glass and metal panel rectilinear office tower. Most of the streets within this area provide on street parking and they are all designated as “Main Streets” in the City’s Official Plan.

The Retail/Commercial Core District is home to a mix of independently owned business that makes for a unique experience for visitors. Independent restaurants and cafes offer an atmosphere and menu items that are one of a kind, making downtown a destination for lunch and dinner experiences. This independent nature should be encouraged through the ongoing support for local small businesses.

This area also includes some major arts, entertainment and education institutions. The Capitol Theatre is located in this district. This institution is an important cultural venue that provides a purpose for people to visit downtown.

6.2.1 Area Vision

The identity of ‘downtown’ is defined by this central hub of mixed use development. This is the area where people are attracted for shopping, eating and socializing. This area should also be a desirable neighbourhood to live in, or around. This area will be the primary focal point for retail and commercial activity in downtown Windsor.

6.2.2 Building/Property Conditions

More detailed field surveys were conducted for this area of downtown. Buildings were observed for their overall building condition/appearance. This section will mainly highlight where recent repairs/new buildings have been built and will highlight where there are building condition concerns.

The condition ranged in this area from “excellent” to rather “poor”, with the majority of properties falling on the more positive end of this spectrum. The buildings along Ouellette from Riverside Drive to Pitt Street are in good condition. Between Pitt Street and Chatham Street, the Paul Martin Federal Building underwent a \$3.7 million renovation on its failing limestone facade.

On the southwest corner of the Ouellette Avenue and Pitt Avenue, the TD Bank is a newer building in good condition; however, directly south of the TD Bank building the 1920’s building has been covered with siding and portions of

the building appear to require repairs. A return to its original materials (by removing the existing cladding) or recladding it with a more compatible material would be appropriate.

Heading south on Ouellette Avenue the building conditions are good. Although these buildings remain in good physical condition, these facades could use updating or improvements to enhance the appeal of the buildings. Updating of facades also provides an opportunity for businesses to attract new customers or allows property owners to attract new tenants for vacant buildings.

The condition of buildings along Chatham Street West are starting to deteriorate as the buildings remain vacant. Specifically, the building at 156 Chatham Street has been boarded up and the facade is in need of significant repairs. The style, form and structure of the building make it well-suited to an adaptive reuse.

RECOMMENDATION 25: That a facade improvement programs be implemented to improve the condition of building facades and to update the design of building facades. The focus should be to animate the street and provide funding to rehabilitate the facades of buildings.

BELOW: Cladding covering original building material at the intersection of Ouellette Ave. and Chatham St.



6.2.3 Development Opportunities



Development Opportunities Map

There are a significant number of development opportunities within the Retail/Commercial Core District, across the full range of land uses found downtown.

Upper Storey Conversions

The most predominant in this district is adapting vacant upper floors for residential (or office) use. The challenge for these upper storey conversions will be providing the required parking. New zoning requirements that would exempt parking requirements for these conversions should be considered.

These building conversions require that the building to be brought into compliance with the current regulations of the Ontario Building Code, including those pertaining to accessibility and fire safety, when the building is refurbished. This can often become a cost prohibitive endeavour, in some cases approaching and surpassing the costs of new construction. However, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings should be encouraged and the City should consider financial incentives to encourage the conversion of unused upper storeys for residential units.

RECOMMENDATION 26: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings, including upper-storey conversions for residential use.

Renovation, Redevelopment or Adaptive Reuse

The Retail/Commercial Core District includes an existing building stock that is suitable for renovation and adaptive reuse. In some case, redevelopment may be the most viable option.

The former Fish Market building at 156 Chatham Street is a good example of a building that is prime for renovation. It is a two storey building with a large floor plate, high ceiling heights and lots of natural light. It also is has a good street presence and is scaled such that it provides a comfortable

pedestrian experience. The retail/commercial opportunities on the ground floor are plentiful, with the space lending itself well to a use that can make use of wide open spaces, or the floor plate could easily be divided into smaller cohesive storefronts. Any redevelopment of this building should be held to a high design standard that respects the existing scale, building materials and, the arrangement of windows and doors on the elevations.

The Paul Martin Building located at 185 Ouellette Avenue is a candidate for renovation or an adaptive reuse. The building is currently the home to a few government services; however, these have begun to vacate the building over the last number of years. Given its size, construction and historical significance, the likely redevelopment scenario for this building is to another institutional/government use. Although at lot less likely, a large scale residential adaptive reuse is another possibility, only if the downtown housing market improves to point that the rents or sales prices warrant the costs of doing so.

RECOMMENDATION 27: Incentives be prepared to encourage the use of vacant upper storey units for residential units.

New Development

There are limited opportunities for new development or construction within the district. The development sites are mostly current surface parking lots, some of which are providing the required parking for an existing development. This would make their development highly unlikely unless a parking solution for the existing and new development can be arrived at. There are a few surface lots that are operating as public parking lots. These sites would provide the best opportunity for new

development within the Retail/Commercial Core District.

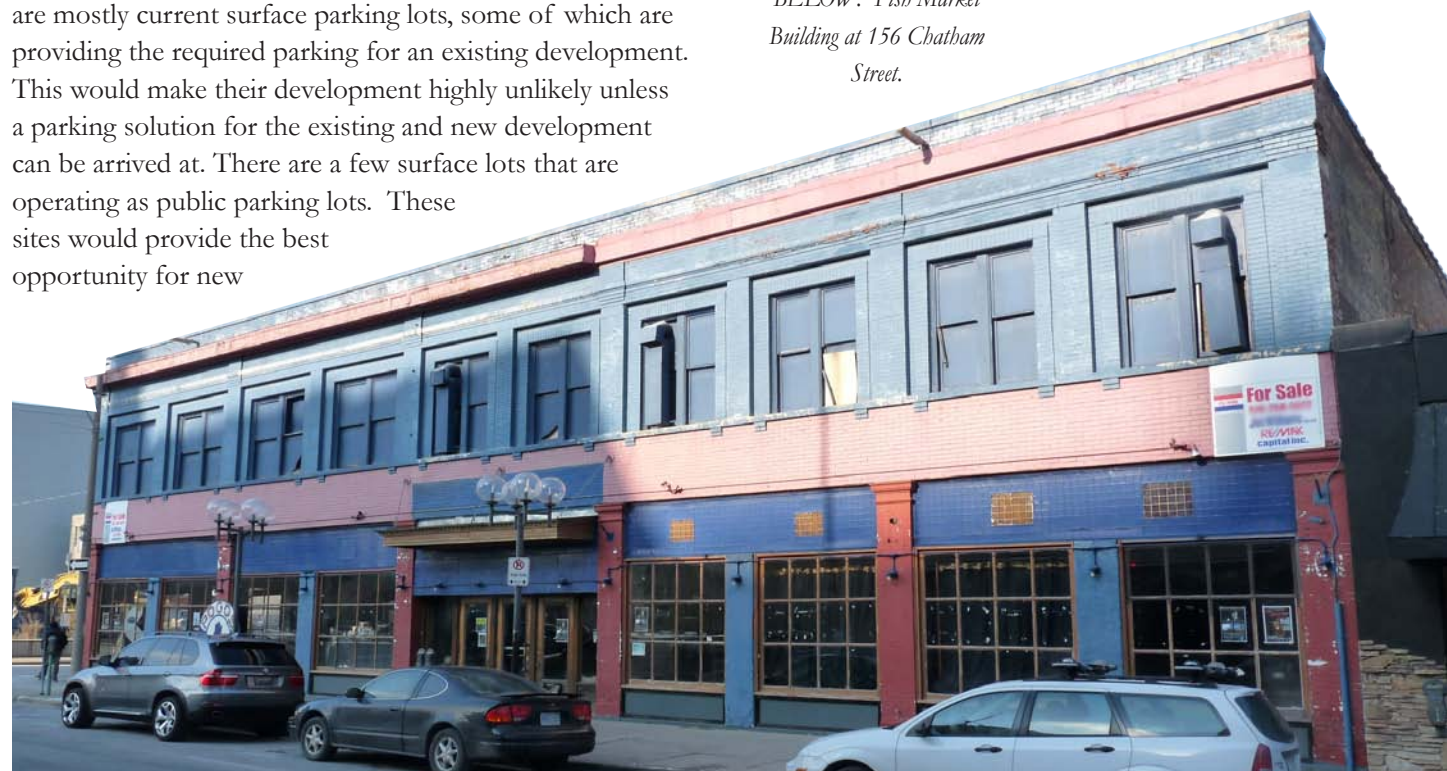
Retail Development

As the focal point of retail and commercial uses in downtown Windsor, the Retail/Commercial Core District there are a number of opportunities for additional retail development. Primarily these are in existing buildings; however, new residential buildings constructed in the Retail/Commercial Core District would be required to incorporate ground floor retail/commercial space.

Most of the buildings in this district have ground floor commercial uses or vacant space. A majority of the businesses are restaurants, financial institutions, or convenience retail. The current uses do not provide an array of uses that are conducive to a neighbourhood where residents could meet their daily needs. Additionally, the variety of retail shopping does not provide a destination that could offer one-of-a-kind boutiques and specialty stores. A variety of retail shopping is desired to contribute to a vibrant downtown. As such, incentives that encourage the establishment of new retail uses that improve the existing retail mix should be considered.

RECOMMENDATION 28: Provide incentives to encourage a wider range of retail uses in the core.

BELOW: Fish Market Building at 156 Chatham Street.



6.2.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan designates the area as all “Mixed Use” with a “Very High” profile (for height guidance). New development should be consistent with this policy direction. As the central core of the downtown area, the Retail/Commercial Core District should permit the broadest mix of uses in higher density development.

6.2.5 Built Heritage

There are a number of buildings on the Windsor Municipal Heritage Register. In most cases, these buildings are architecturally unique and provide a window to Windsor’s past. The heritage buildings located in the Retail/Commercial Core District are especially important to defining downtown Windsor’s sense of place, and unique character. As such, it is imperative that as many as of these buildings as possible are preserved. Preservation can only truly happen if the buildings continue to have a viable use. Otherwise, they begin to suffer from deferred maintenance and decline.

Fortunately, some of these buildings are being preserved by being repurposed to new uses. The University of Windsor’s School of Creative Arts is an example of adaptive reuse of a heritage building. The University of Windsor is repurposing the former Windsor Armouries for their School of Creative Arts (SoCA).

6.2.6 Connectivity to Other Areas

This area is central and is fairly well connected within. Major routes, such as Ouellette Ave, University Ave and Wyandotte St are major connecting links between other areas of downtown and the City as a whole. However, it is somewhat disconnected from the close in neighbourhoods due to the superblocks that were created to accommodate some of the larger uses downtown (e.g. the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre, Caesars Windsor, Glengarry Court, and the tunnel plaza.)

This area has an important connection to the riverfront because of the traffic light at Ouellette Avenue and Riverside Drive. This is a natural spot for people walking along Ouellette Avenue to cross to the Central Riverfront Park,

and vice versa. The City of Windsor and Congress for New Urbanism experimented with a gorilla style pilot project that temporarily transformed Riverside Drive into two lane road, instead of the existing four lane road. Efforts that facilitate the easy crossing of Riverside Drive should continue to be explored and implemented when they make sense.

6.2.7 Public Realm Considerations

The Retail/Commercial Core District has seen a significant portion of the city’s streetscaping efforts over time. Ouellette Avenue and Pelissier Street have most recently benefited from streetscaping enhancements, while Phase 6: Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street is scheduled for the summer of 2018. Public investment in streetscapes encourages the utilization of the existing buildings and contributes to a unique feel downtown.

With the majority of the north-south streetscaping complete in the district, streetscaping efforts should turn to east-west streets. It is recommended that University Avenue and Chatham Street get addressed first (see Public Realm chapter). The establishment of urban campuses in downtown Windsor is an excellent opportunity to implement streetscaping improvements that compliment downtown Windsor, but also identify the public realm adjacent to the campuses as uniquely defined districts within the Retail/Commercial Core District.

Sidewalk Cafes

Sidewalk cafes should be encouraged and supported in the Retail/Commercial Core District. The right of way along Chatham Street specifically provides ample room for sidewalk cafes. This brings activity to the streets, making them more enjoyable to travel for pedestrians and creates destination businesses for residents and visitors to frequent.

Public Art

The first block off Riverside Drive holds potential to welcome people to downtown. The Riverfront Park and the first block of Ouellette Avenue around 1 Riverside Drive (the Chrysler Building) provides ideal spaces for additional public realm enhancements, including showcasing public art like the new Great Canadian Flag Project at the foot of Ouellette Avenue.

6.2.8 Urban Design Guidelines

Urban design guidelines are recommended to ensure that any new development respects the existing character of the Retail/Commercial Core District.

Guidelines for all Commercial/Mixed Use Corridors

The main purpose of guidelines for the commercial corridors in the Retail/Commercial Core District is to preserve and enhance the existing urban built form and overall character of downtown. The built form along these corridors is pedestrian friendly and walkable, largely due to the fact that buildings are built to the lot line, have interesting architectural features that create a human scale, and contribute to a continuous facade along the street. This creates an environment where people want to walk from business to business. The following guidelines aim to build on the existing ‘traditional mainstreet’ feel of these commercial corridors. The guidelines will apply to the following corridors within the Retail/Commercial Core District:

- Ouellette Avenue;
- Pitt Street;
- Chatham Street;
- University Avenue;
- Pellisier Street, and,
- Park Street.

Built Form

The existing built form along the corridors to which these guidelines apply depict a traditional mainstreet vernacular meaning buildings front on the lot line directly abutting the sidewalk forming a continuous street wall. The intention of the mainstreet feel is to encourage walkability by having stores located closer together with no interruptions and creating a more interesting place to walk for pedestrians. New development should also take into account the surrounding building heights and massing in order to be compatible with the overall context of the area and to contribute to the mainstreet feel.

Design Guidelines:

- The building height shall be a minimum of 2 storeys and should take into account the existing heights of

surrounding buildings on the block, and across the street from the proposed development.








- The main entrance and architectural features that signify the front of a building should be orientated towards the street to enhance the pedestrian public realm and contribute to the liveliness of the street.
- New development at corner sites or t-intersections shall enhance their prominence by implementing the following:
 1. Entrance off the corner of the building;
 2. Enhanced architectural elements; and,
 3. High quality building materials.
- Main entrances should be at grade with the street level and should be articulated with architectural features and materials that are attractive.
- Mechanical equipment is not permitted on the front facade of the buildings and mechanical equipment located on the roof should be setback to the least visible location from the street.
- Where mechanical equipment is located along the side or rear of a building and is visible from the street, it should be screened by high quality fencing, landscaping or a wall.

Building Signage

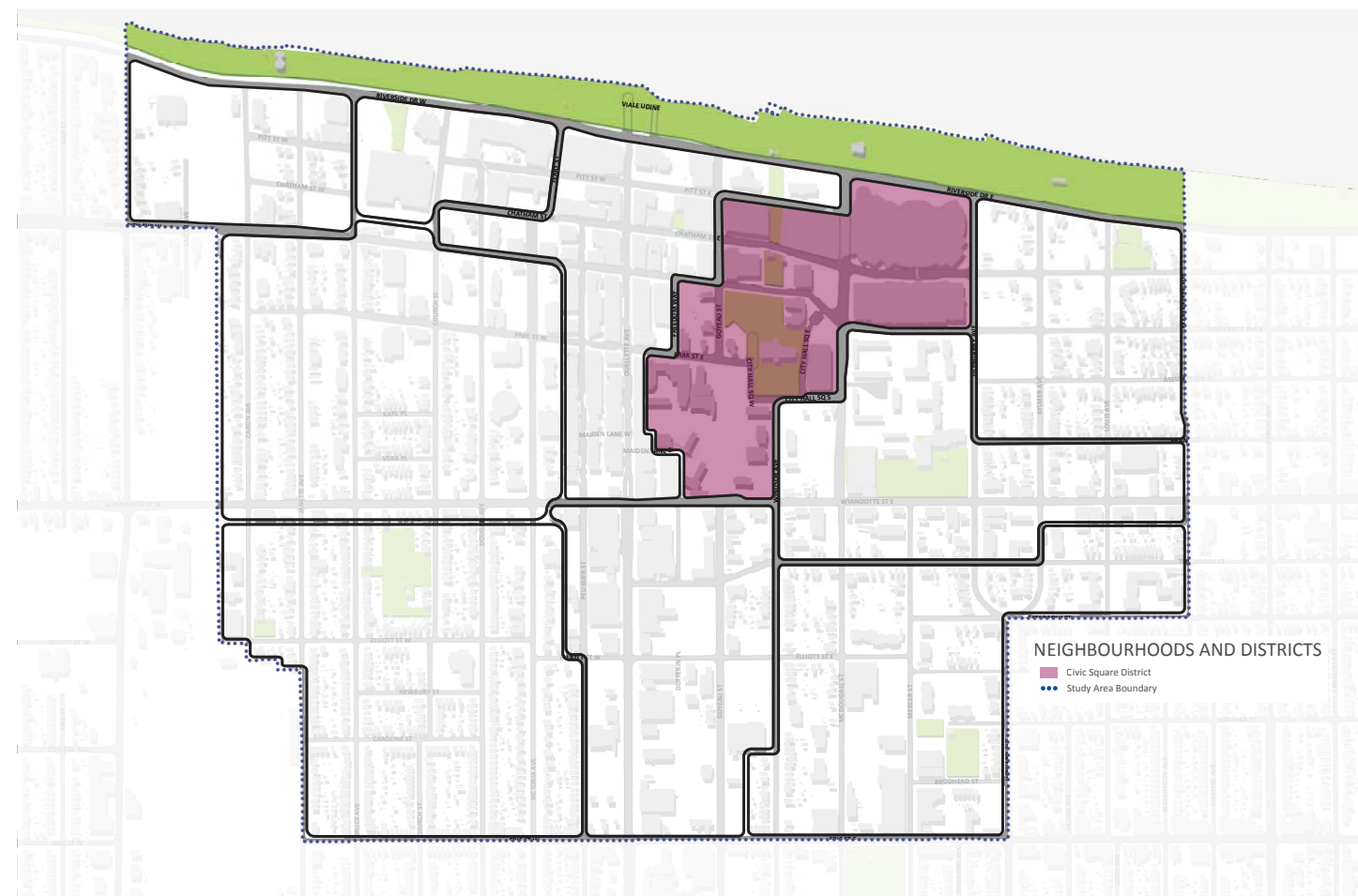
Building signage can be a feature to attract customers and advertise products or services offered at a location. It is also an opportunity for businesses to add additional elements to their storefront whether the sign incorporate lighting or signage being part of an awning.

- Signage should be located in a visible location that does not distract from the overall design of the building.
- Signage should be at an appropriate size for the building to not distract from the design of the building.
- New internally lit or plastic signage is not permitted. Instead the use of fascia, awning and projecting types of building signage will be permitted.

6.2.9 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
The post-secondary campuses brings opportunity for development of student oriented developments, such as student housing, cafes, art supply stores.	Potential upper storey conversion to residential along Ouellette Avenue. Opportunity for the private sector to respond to the investment that is made from the University of Windsor. For example, providing student housing or businesses that cater to the university students and staff.	Development Opportunities	
Shopping is limited to convenience items and specialty goods (cigars, lifestyle clothing, etc.) and does not provide all daily amenities for downtown residents.	Opportunity for additional services and retail offerings as demand increases from the student population or increased residential population.	Development Opportunities	
Many buildings are vacant or underutilized.	Identify buildings with positive characteristics that can be repurposed and used to provide new residential units, retail stores or office space.	Design Guidelines Development Opportunities	
Some storefronts could improve the facades by opening up windows and glazing.	Opportunity for new businesses to create unique storefronts.	Design Guidelines	
Public realm enhancements are needed to bring life to the areas around the Chrysler Building.		Public Realm	
Encourage more patios to enhance the vibrancy and presence of people on the street.	Opportunity for business owners to expand businesses and create vibrant streets.	Public Realm	
Existing grassroots arts and culture has had positive impact on areas downtown.	Opportunity to expand and enhance the arts and culture presence in this important central part of the downtown.		
Public Realm enhancements are encouraged around the University of Windsor’s School of Social Work Building.	The areas around the University of Windsor need enhanced streetscaping to create a campus type feel.	Urban Design/ Streetscape Guidelines	

6.3 CIVIC SQUARE DISTRICT



Civic Square District Map

This area is made up of primarily institutional buildings associated with the City of Windsor, Province of Ontario, and the Caesars Windsor casino complex.

This area is fully developed for the most part; however, a new City Hall is currently being constructed south of the existing City Hall. Upon completion, the existing City Hall will be demolished and the area redeveloped into an extension of the updated civic esplanade. The other buildings within this area include the Superior Court of Justice, Windsor Police Services and Provincial Court House.

The heavy concentration of institutional uses contributes to the formal nature of this area. This area includes the formal plaza space known as the Civic Esplanade. The buildings are larger in scale and include a mix of architectural styles that tend to reflect the period of construction. Many of them have external public amenities (e.g. parks and/or plazas)

associated with them. In some ways, the linear layout of these parks, plazas and the Civic Esplanade begins to tie all of the uses together and functions as a well used pedestrian connection between the different areas of downtown.

The largest single use within this area is Caesars Windsor. It is a major destination for gambling and entertainment for the region. It was completed in 1998 and expanded on in 2008. The casino and hotel components of Caesars Windsor sit on Riverside Drive overlooking the riverfront park. The Caesars Windsor complex includes two hotel towers, gambling space, multiple restaurants, convention space, a concert/entertainment venue, adjacent administrative offices and a five level parking garage.

6.3.1 Area Vision

The primary focus of this area will continue to be the centre for government services and civic institutions. Caesars Windsor will also continue to be a draw for local and out-of-town travellers. The area will continue to provide a connection from the new City Hall to the riverfront via the Civic Esplanade.

6.3.2 Building/Property Conditions

The overall condition of the buildings within this area is excellent. Since the buildings within the area are owned by government institutions, they are maintained to a high level. There are no vacant buildings in this area and no vacant land.

6.3.3 Development Opportunities

This area does not have any immediately developable land and limited opportunities for private development. The only possible site is the surface parking lot immediately south of the main Caesars Windsor building. It is owned by Ontario Lottery and Gaming and used by the Caesars Windsor operations.

6.3.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The current Official Plan land use designations within this area are “Entertainment/Hospitality”, “Major Institutional” and “Public Open Space”. The profile is “Very High” along Riverside Drive East where the Caesars Windsor complex is. The profile of the Court houses, Police Headquarters, City Hall and public open space is “High”.

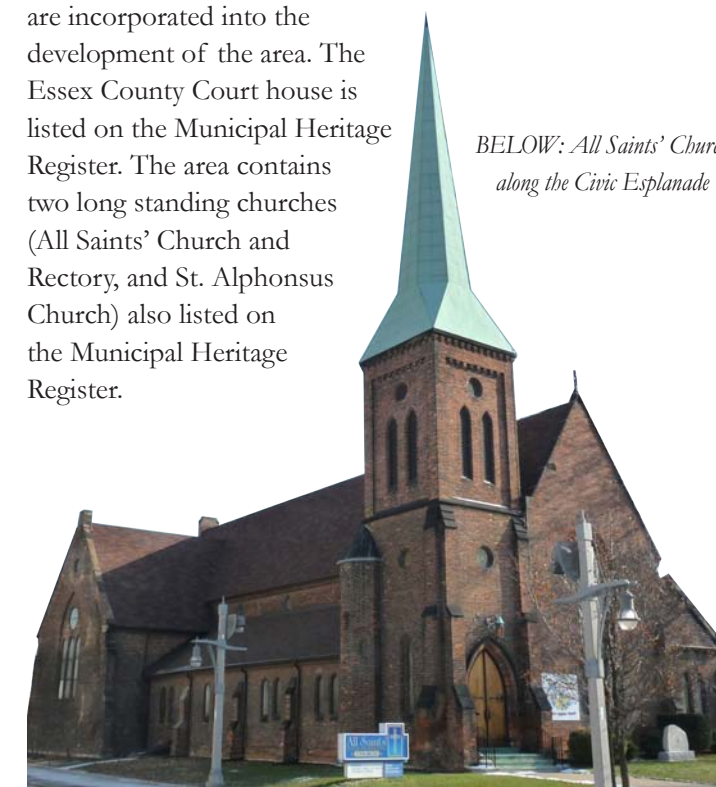
Zoning

The current zoning in this area is mainly CD3.1 which permits general commercial, combined use buildings. The land occupied by Caesars Windsor is zone CD3.7 which is consistent with the casino and its ancillary uses.

6.3.5 Built Heritage

This area contains the many heritage resources that are incorporated into the development of the area. The Essex County Court house is listed on the Municipal Heritage Register. The area contains two long standing churches (All Saints’ Church and Rectory, and St. Alphonsus Church) also listed on the Municipal Heritage Register.

BELOW: All Saints’ Church along the Civic Esplanade



6.3.6 Connectivity to Other Areas

Due to the large footprints of the institutional buildings and Caesars Windsor, this area is comprised of large blocks and limited connectivity of the existing street pattern. These larger buildings and street block pattern make it more challenging to navigate the area by car. McDougall has closed to regular traffic and is now used for Caesars Windsor hotel valet. The closure of McDougall Street has impacted the flow of traffic in and out of downtown.



Serious consideration should be given prior to further permanent road closures on Class I arterial roads, Class II Arterial roads, Class I Collector roads or Class II Collector roads. The important network of roads should be maintained to facilitate the easy movement in and out of, and around, downtown Windsor. The network does not need to be extensive; however, it should allow people to arrive downtown with ease, park their car in a convenient location and walk to their destination.

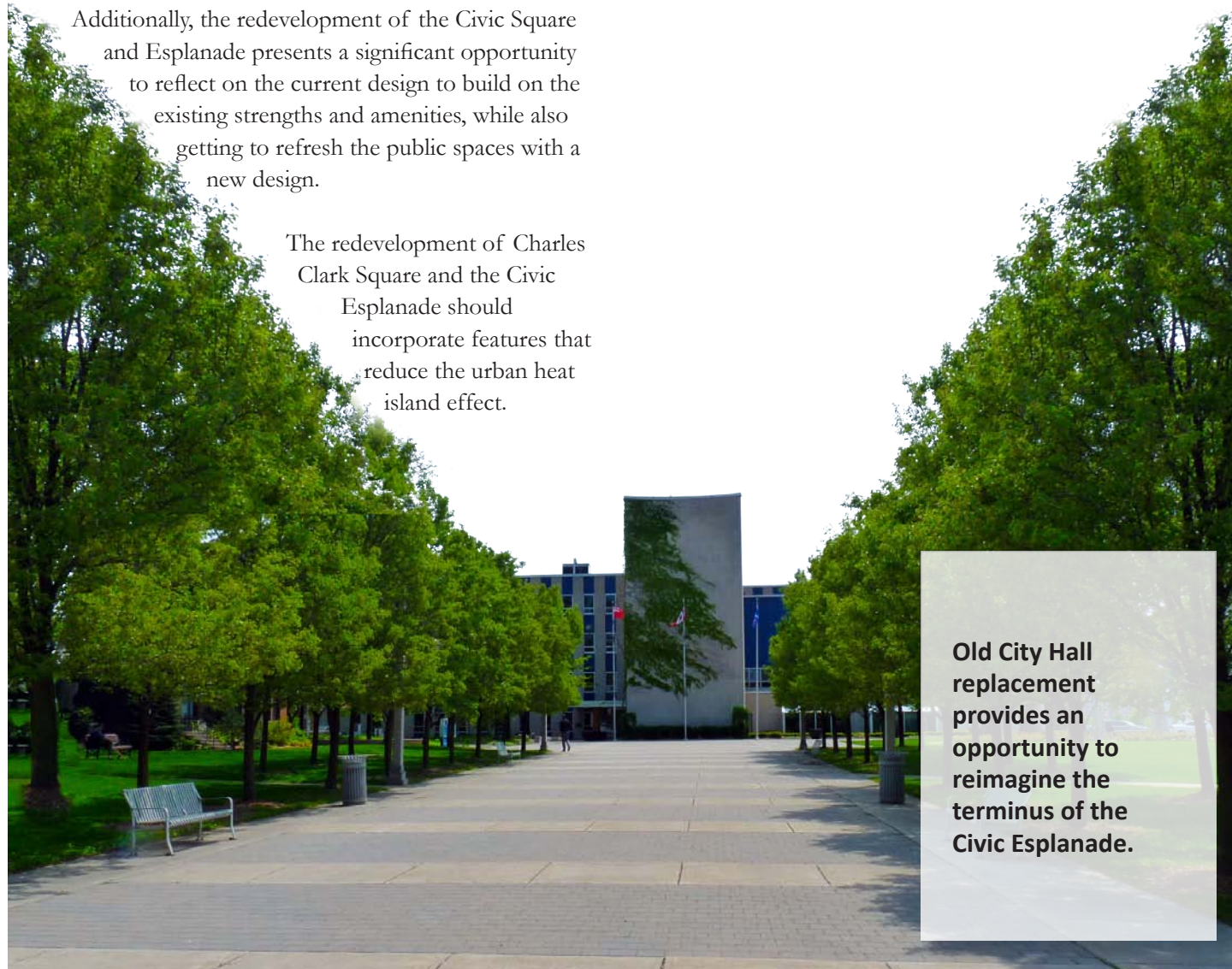
6.3.7 Public Realm Considerations

This area has high maintenance and design standards for public realm improvements around Caesars Windsor. The right-of-ways could be enhanced to be more interesting for pedestrians.

Additionally, the redevelopment of the Civic Square and Esplanade presents a significant opportunity to reflect on the current design to build on the existing strengths and amenities, while also getting to refresh the public spaces with a new design.




The redevelopment of Charles Clark Square and the Civic Esplanade should incorporate features that reduce the urban heat island effect.

BELOW: Civic Esplanade looking South

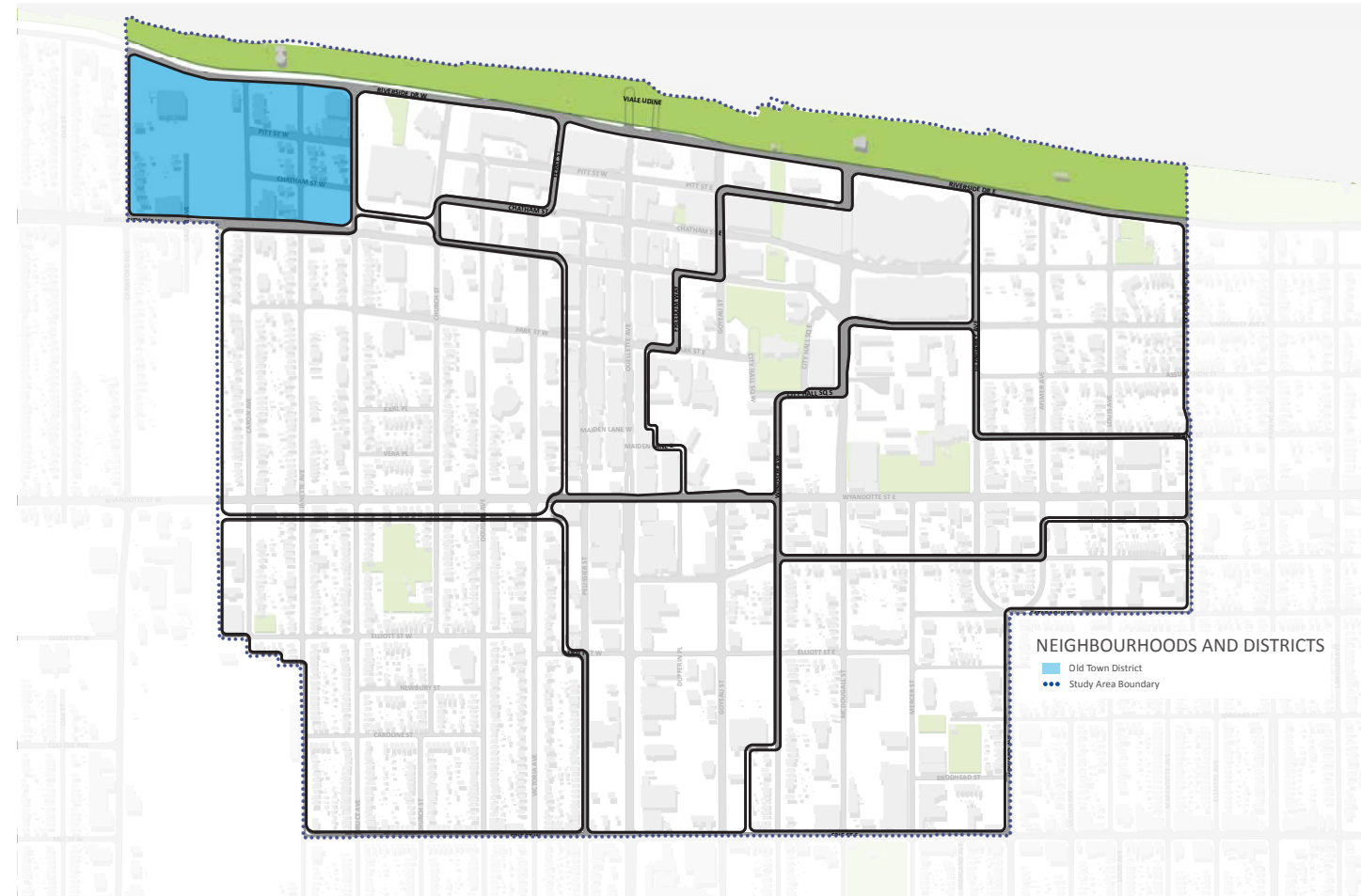


Old City Hall replacement provides an opportunity to reimagine the terminus of the Civic Esplanade.

6.3.8 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Public spaces such as Charles Clark Square and the Civic Esplanade	Opportunity for more programming or redesign of Charles Clark Square.	Public Realm	
Better connection needed to cross Riverside Drive between the Civic Esplanade.	Opportunity to connect downtown pedestrians with the riverfront and vice versa.	Public Realm	
Caesars Windsor attracts a high number of visitors which stay internal to the casino. They are not encouraged to walk to other businesses or walk through public parks nearby.	This presents an opportunity to enhance the uses and public realm adjoining the casino to encourage pedestrian movement from the casino into other areas.	Public Realm	

6.4 OLD TOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD



Old Town District Map

Situated in the northwest corner of the Study Area, this small six block neighbourhood is mainly residential and small scale commercial. The area is comprised of turn-of-the-century homes – many of which are on the Windsor Municipal Heritage Register – and small scale commercial along Pitt Street, Chatham Street and University Avenue.

This neighbourhood is bound by University Avenue which serves as a commercial corridor to the South, a grade separated rail line to the West, and Riverside Drive West to the north. The neighbourhood is dominated by large surface parking lots with two distinct built-form profiles that still remain. The first area is residential towers along Riverside Drive West and the second area includes a couple inner blocks with high quality brick residential forms of large homes and small apartment buildings. The built form of these smaller buildings gives the area a unique historical aesthetic that should be protected and used to help define the design guidelines for future developments.

This area has seen significant change over the years due to significant change in the surrounding land uses, including the site that is now the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre. The land to the east of this small neighbourhood had been used for the temporary casino site, resulting in surface parking lots taking up large parcels of the land in the Old Town District.

6.4.1 Area Vision

To be an attractive residential neighbourhood with a mix of high and low density residential that is developed in a compatible manner within the existing heritage context. This area should also provide an opportunity for small scale commercial and live/work opportunities.

6.4.2 Building/Property Conditions

The high rise residential buildings that front along Riverside Drive West are well maintained and in good condition.

Along Caron Avenue, north of University Avenue West there are no buildings that front onto Caron Avenue. The building that fronts onto University Avenue West at the north east corner of University Avenue West and Caron Avenue has a side entrance off Caron Avenue that is in need of minor facade repairs.

Along Janette Avenue at Pitt Street there is a multi-residential building that is in good condition. The intersection of Chatham Street and Janette Avenue contains three corner heritage homes in excellent condition. Moving south to University is Bubi's Awesome Eats, which is in good condition. Bruce Avenue is similar in that it contains multi-residential buildings,

heritage buildings and the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre, of which all are in good condition.

656 Pitt Street is a vacant building which would benefit from facade restoration.

6.4.3 Development Opportunities

Vacant Land

This small area has a significant amount of vacant land and surface parking lots that could be put to a higher and better use. The two properties along Riverside Drive East on either side of Janette Avenue would be ideal for high rise residential to fit in with the existing residential to the east and west of the vacant properties.

The large vacant lot on Caron Avenue that runs from the University Avenue north to the existing telecommunication tower is currently used as a municipal parking lot that could be used for higher density residential.

BELOW: 190 Janette Avenue is an example of the unique historical aesthetic that should be protected.



6.4.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan designates this area as “Mixed Use” in a “Medium” Profile Area. The current uses and vision for this district are consistent with the Official Plan policies currently in place.

Zoning

There is a mix of zoning categories in this small area. The property along the west of Caron Avenue, and the properties fronting on University Avenue are zoned CD3.6 which permits a range of commercial uses with residential use. The residential uses are only permitted if there are commercial uses present.

The buildings along Riverside Drive West are zoned CD3.1 which is similar to CD3.6 except it requires that the residential uses be located above the non-residential uses. This regulation for residential to be above the ground floor could prove to be a challenge for redevelopment. Since it is highly desirable to have residential developed on the vacant parcels that front Riverside Drive, the zoning should be reviewed to determine if the requirement for ground floor commercial is appropriate. The zoning should continue to allow for the range of commercial uses; however, it should have the flexibility to not require ground floor commercial uses if there is going to be a residential component to the development.

RECOMMENDATION 29: That the City of Windsor initiate a Zoning By-law amendment that will allow residential only buildings to be constructed in the Old Town District.

6.4.5 Built Heritage

This area has significant built heritage resources that provide character to this small neighbourhood, which are the principal means of defining the area’s architectural appeal. There is a prevailing desire to ensure the character and built heritage of the Old Town District is retained and enhanced.





The existing heritage houses are good examples of a live/work built form. There is a strong neighbourhood sentiment to protect these structures and to only allow for residential forms that are compatible with them. The houses that have been converted to commercial uses such as offices and restaurants still retain their residential character and pedestrian scale. In order to encourage and continue the residential character of the structures, but also recognize their ability to attract commercial development, accessory uses such as lower level commercial should be promoted to provide owners an opportunity to live and work in the same structure, as long as it retains its original architectural details and form.

6.4.6 Connectivity to Other Areas

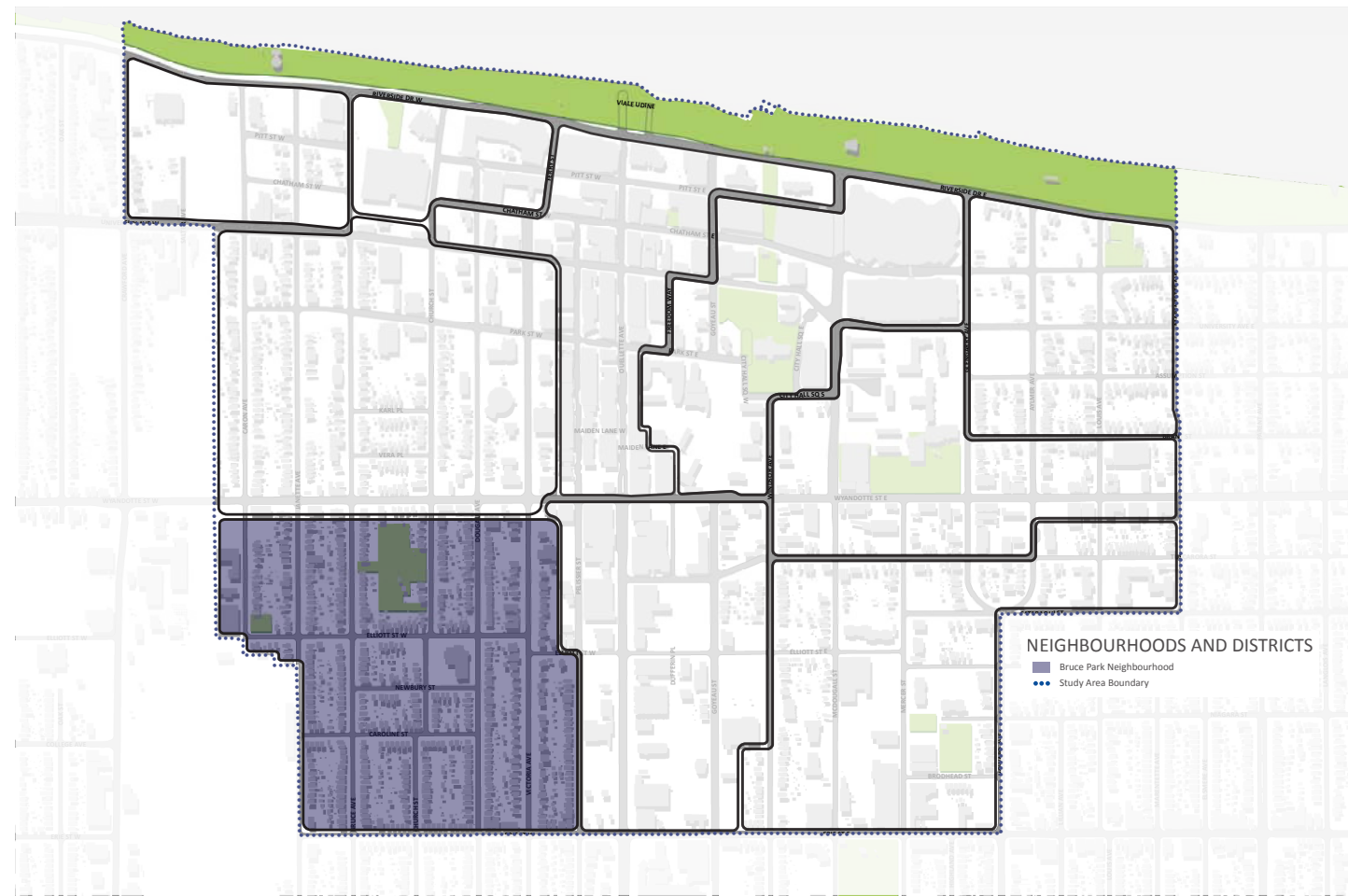
This area has seen significant transition over time creating some impacts that need to be addressed. One being the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre site closed off two east/west roads, Chatham Street and Pitt Street. This causes these six blocks to be segregated from the rest of downtown. Chatham Street and Pitt Street terminate at Caron Avenue and Bruce Avenue. Additionally, these two streets are one way, with Pitt Street flowing east bound and Chatham Street flowing west bound. Janette Street and Bruce Street are also one way streets, with Janette Avenue flowing south and Bruce Avenue flowing north. This creates six blocks that are cut off from the rest of downtown. A review should be conducted for the purposes of identifying the ideal flow for traffic in the area, with the added objective of providing better connections to surrounding areas.

RECOMMENDATION 30: That the one way streets within this area be reviewed for possible conversion to two-way streets to improve traffic flow and access to businesses.

6.4.7 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Need safe connection to the riverfront.	Opportunity to connect downtown to the riverfront.	Public Realm	
Vacant land creates an abandoned feeling.	New mixed use development that respects the heritage character and provides opportunity for ground floor commercial (to provide amenities for residents) with residential above.	Development Opportunities Official Plan Policy and Land Use Zoning Incentives Program Urban Design Guidelines	
The area is cut off from the rest of downtown due to the closure of Chatham and Pitt for the Windsor Family Aquatic Complex.	Better pedestrian crossings and connections are needed.		
With potential new development in the area, the existing built heritage should be protected.	Opportunity to respect existing heritage buildings and enhance the character of the neighbourhood by sensitively incorporating new development into the existing context.		
The population of this area is low. Many of the remaining homes have been converted to offices or commercial uses.	Support new construction of residential units, along with the opportunity to continue home based occupations within residential units.	Development opportunities Official Plan Zoning By-law Incentives	
All of the streets within this neighbourhood are one-way streets which make navigation difficult.	At the appropriate time, the one-way streets should be reviewed to determine conversion to two-way streets is appropriate.	Public Realm	
Existing mature street trees contribute to the character of the neighbourhood in a positive way.	New development should respect the existing character of the neighbourhood. Street trees should be protected.	Public Realm	

6.5 BRUCE PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD



Bruce Park Neighbourhood

This area is made up of low density residential with neighbourhood commercial uses along Wyandotte Street West. The homes are mainly single detached homes with some medium density apartment buildings intermixed. The Bruce Park Neighbourhood is a long established neighbourhood with the homes mainly built in the early 1920's. This area also includes Victoria Avenue, which is identified as a "Heritage Area" in the City of Windsor Official Plan and contains many listed and designated residential heritage buildings.

The development pattern is traditional with sidewalks on both sides, on street parking, and rear access to the property via alleys. The downtown area is one of the largest areas in the city with rear alleys still being used to deliver municipal services. This feature is unique and provides an inviting streetscape due to the fact that there are no driveways and curb cuts in the front of the properties along the street.

This area also hosts Bruce Avenue Park. This park is an important component to the community as it provides a large area of green space, play equipment and a community garden. The park has pedestrian access from Church Street, Bruce Street and Wyandotte Street West. The park is surrounded by homes that back onto the park and an alley that is at the rear of the homes that front onto Bruce Avenue.

This area also hosts institutional uses that support the community. The Immaculate Conception School, Dougall Avenue Public School, and nursing homes are also located in the Bruce Park Neighbourhood. The Downtown Mission of Windsor is also located in this neighbourhood on Victoria Avenue, south of Wyandotte Street.

6.5.1 Area Vision

To be an attractive residential neighbourhood with a mix of low and medium density residential that is developed in a compatible manner within the existing context.

6.5.2 Building/Property Conditions

The building condition varies within this area. The residential homes are a mix of brick and siding and have been well maintained for the most part. However, due to the age, some homes are in need of repair.

6.5.3 Development Opportunities

An issue in the neighbourhood is that some of the homes have been left vacant and are in various states of disrepair, including neglected property maintenance. This has caused a feeling of abandonment and made certain areas feel unsafe because of loitering or illegal activity.

In some cases, the vacant buildings have been demolished leaving a vacant lot in the middle of an established residential neighbourhood. While a vacant lot may be better in the short term because of the safety concerns associated with a vacant building, it is still not ideal over the longer term, as it leaves that community feeling like something is missing and starts to eat away at the residential fabric of the neighbourhood. This goal in this situation would be to encourage land owners to maintain their properties or to rehabilitate their properties to prevent the abandonment and demolition of property.

Additionally, residential infill development on the vacant lots is strongly encouraged.



One of the primary objectives in the Bruce Park Neighbourhood is to preserve as much of the viable residential building stock as possible. The *Planning Act* allows the City to pass a Demolition Control By-law, which prevents property owners from demolishing a residential property without permission from City Council. Additionally, the *Planning Act* allows the municipality to put a by-law in place that requires the replacement of demolished residential units on a one-to-one basis, or be subject to a financial penalty for not rebuilding. This approach may have to be accompanied by a more pro-active property standards enforcement to prevent demolition by neglect from occurring.

RECOMMENDATION 31: That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.

This plan also encourages infill residential development on the vacant parcels that are scattered throughout the neighbourhood. This includes an appropriate level of residential intensification provided that the new higher density development is compatible with the neighbourhood.

6.5.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan land use designation in this area is “Residential” and the policies are consistent with the stated vision for this neighbourhood.

Zoning

The zoning that is in place is also consistent with the overall vision and current state of the neighbourhood.




In some instances that current zoning may not permit residential intensification. In cases where residential can be achieved in a compatible manner, and/or is desirable, the City will support an application for rezoning.

6.5.5 Built Heritage

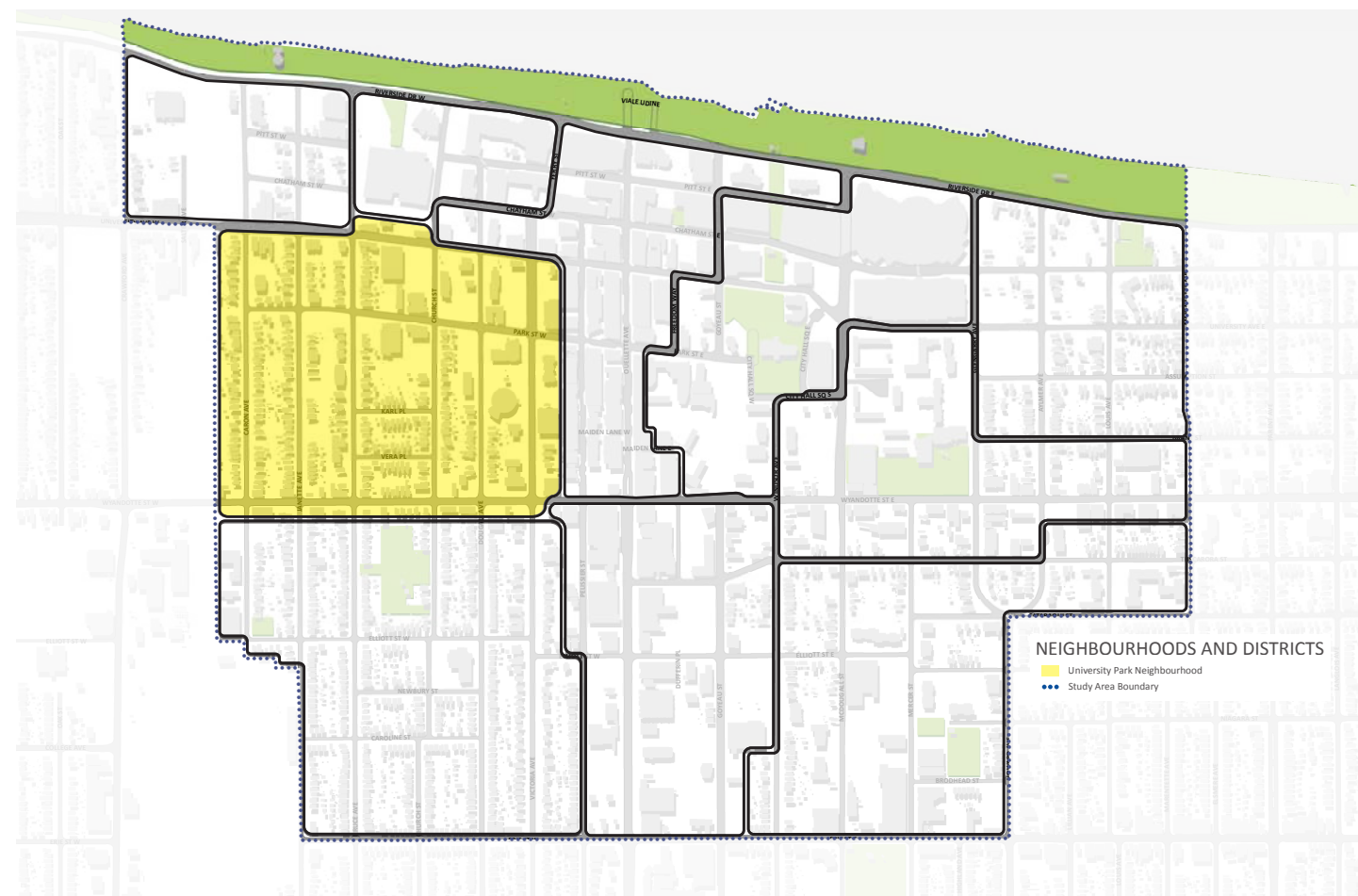
This area has many heritage buildings that are either on the Municipal Heritage Register or are “designated” under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. For the most part they are single family dwellings either built in a unique style or were home to a locally important person. The homes are important to the overall residential fabric and emphasis and effort should be put on their preservation.

The Victoria Avenue Heritage Area is a focal point in the community as it was developed in a unique pattern for large homes, with a large concentration of heritage buildings. Additionally, the public realm that includes a tree-lined street, minimal driveway cuts and pedestrian amenities conveys a desirable and sought-after sense of place. Every effort should be made to ensure that the characteristics that make Victoria Avenue unique are preserved or enhanced.

6.5.6 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Vacant homes are left unmaintained.	Opportunity to increase the maintenance of residential building stock.	Financial Incentives	
	Opportunity to invest in existing residential building stock.		
Residential properties have been demolished leaving vacant properties in the middle of residential neighbourhoods.	Opportunity for infill development.	Development Opportunity	
	Opportunity for community supportive uses such as community gardens.	Regulatory Review	
Safety concerns and illegal dumping in residential alleys.	Opportunity to enhance alleys as an important pedestrian network and safe access to residential homes.	Public Realm/ Pedestrian Focus	

6.6 UNIVERSITY PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD



University Park Neighbourhood

This area is made up of low density residential with neighbourhood commercial uses along Wyandotte Street West, University Avenue West and portions of Park Street West. The homes are mainly single detached homes with some medium density apartment buildings mixed in. The neighbourhood is established with the homes mainly built in the early 1920's.

The development style is traditional with sidewalks on both sides, on street parking, and rear access to the property via alleys. The downtown area is one of the largest areas in the city with rear alleys still being used for municipal services. This feature is unique and provides an inviting streetscape due to the fact that there are no driveways and curb cuts in the front of the properties along the street.

The Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative operates out of this neighbourhood, but serves downtown as a whole. They have been very active at improving the neighbourhood and providing an organized voice for the community.

6.6.1 Area Vision

To be an attractive residential neighbourhood with a mix of low and medium density residential that is developed in a compatible manner within the existing context.

6.6.2 Building/Property Conditions

The building condition varies within this area. The residential homes are a mixture of brick and siding and have been maintained to different degrees within the neighbourhood.

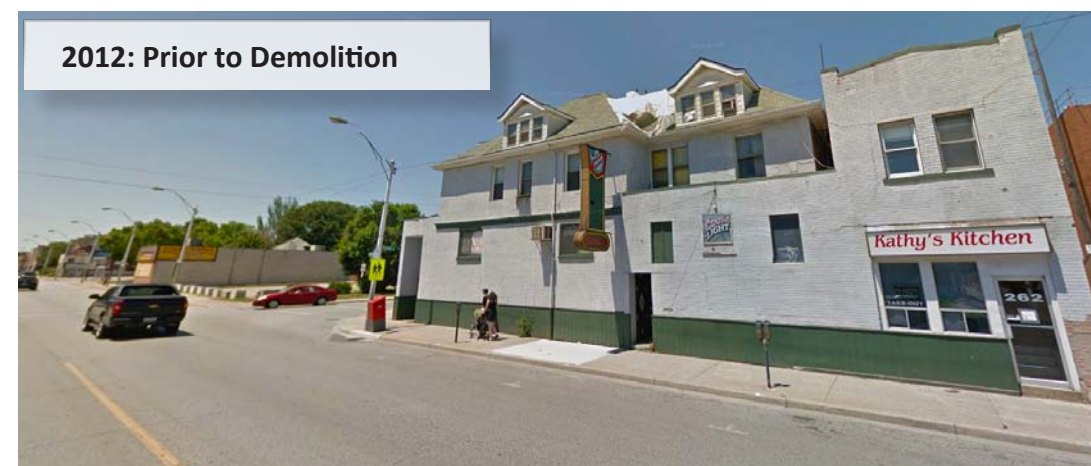
To beautify this neighbourhood, exterior building repairs and yard improvements would enhance the exterior of the properties and send a positive message to the rest of the neighbourhood that someone cares about the upkeep of their property.

6.6.3 Development Opportunities

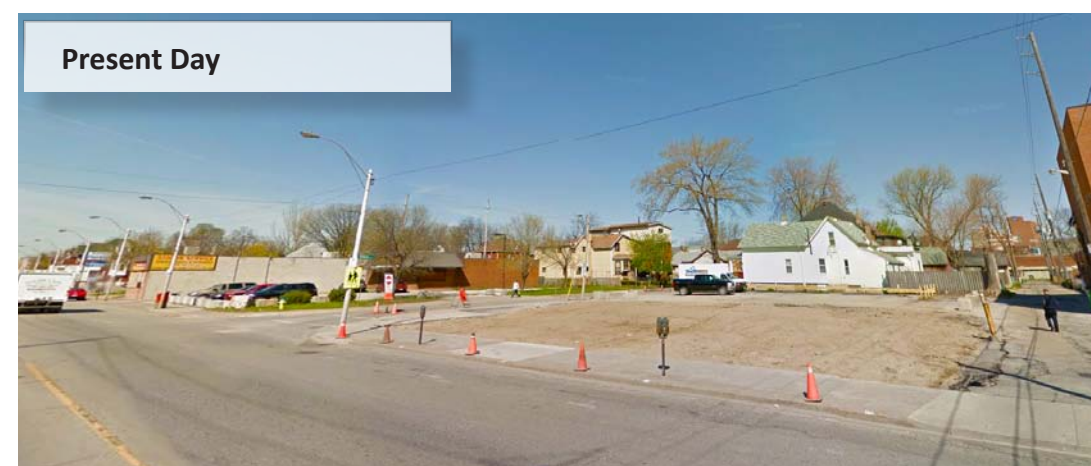
Similar to the Bruce Park Neighbourhood, the University Park Neighbourhood also contends with a troubling level of residential vacancies and poor property upkeep.

One of the primary objectives in the University Park Neighbourhood is to preserve as much of the viable residential building stock as possible, while at the same time address blighted properties in a way that restores investor/property owner confidence in the neighbourhood.

The *Planning Act* allows the City to pass a Demolition Control By-law, which prevents property owners from demolishing a residential property without permission from City Council. Additionally, the *Planning Act* allows the municipality to put a by-law in place that requires that the replacement of demolished residential units on a one-to-one basis, or be subject to a financial penalty for not rebuilding. This approach may have to be accompanied by more pro-active property standards enforcement to prevent demolition by neglect from occurring.



RIGHT: 592 Dougall Ave. at the intersection of Dougall Ave. and Wyandotte St. W.



RECOMMENDATION 32: That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.

This plan also encourages infill residential development on the vacant parcels that are scattered throughout the neighbourhood. This includes an appropriate level of residential intensification provided that the new higher density development is compatible with the neighbourhood.

There are vacant commercial properties along Wyandotte Street West that should be utilized for uses that would serve the community. Trying to attract retail or commercial uses that go beyond providing services to the surrounding neighbourhoods will be a challenging proposition. Additionally, some of the commercial buildings could use some significant rehabilitation. As such, they will benefit from the proposed incentives included in the Community Improvement Plan.

6.6.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan land use designation in this area is “Residential” and the policies remain fairly consistent with what we want to see in this neighbourhood.

6.6.5 Public Realm

As mentioned in the “Area Description” for the University Park Neighbourhood, the alley network in the neighbourhood is functional and relied upon for access to homes, garbage pickup and utilities, as well as, significantly contributing to the desirable streetscape in front of the homes.

However, there have been problems associated with some these alleys. These safety concerns surrounding some of the residential alleys were discussed during public consultations that took place in January and February of 2017. Staff from various City departments and agencies met with the Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative to conduct a safety walk and assessment on April 12, 2017 to identify and assess the safety concerns being voiced by the residents of the neighbourhood. As a result, there were some alleys that have been identified as somewhat unique and concerning within the neighbourhood, particularly the network of residential alleys north of Wyandotte Street West between Church Street and Bruce Street.

The alleys between Wyandotte Street West/Karl Place and Church Street/Bruce Street are unique because the network forms an ‘H’ pattern within each block. Two alleys run north/south and one alley runs east/west at the midpoint. The east/west alley does not exit onto a street, and therefore is only accessible via the north/south alleys.

The east/west alley that is between Vera Place and Karl Place is not paved, nor is it wide enough to drive a car down. The properties that back onto this portion of alley do not use this alley for access to the property and it is overgrown with shrubs and weeds. However, there are utilities that run along this alley.

These particular alleys are behind commercial uses that front onto Wyandotte Street West which attract pedestrians to the area. Specifically a convenience store and pharmacy at 402-406 Wyandotte Street West attracts pedestrian traffic to the area. These uses are located at the back of the property with parking in front. Additionally, the east/west alley in the block between Wyandotte Street West and Vera Place is paved and used for car traffic to access the rear of commercial and residential properties that front onto Wyandotte Street West.

The alleys experience loitering and littering, and residents have expressed safety concerns at night. Based on the site visit on April 12, 2011, there was evidence of drug activity. The east/west alley that is secluded from the street makes an attractive spot for illegal activity.

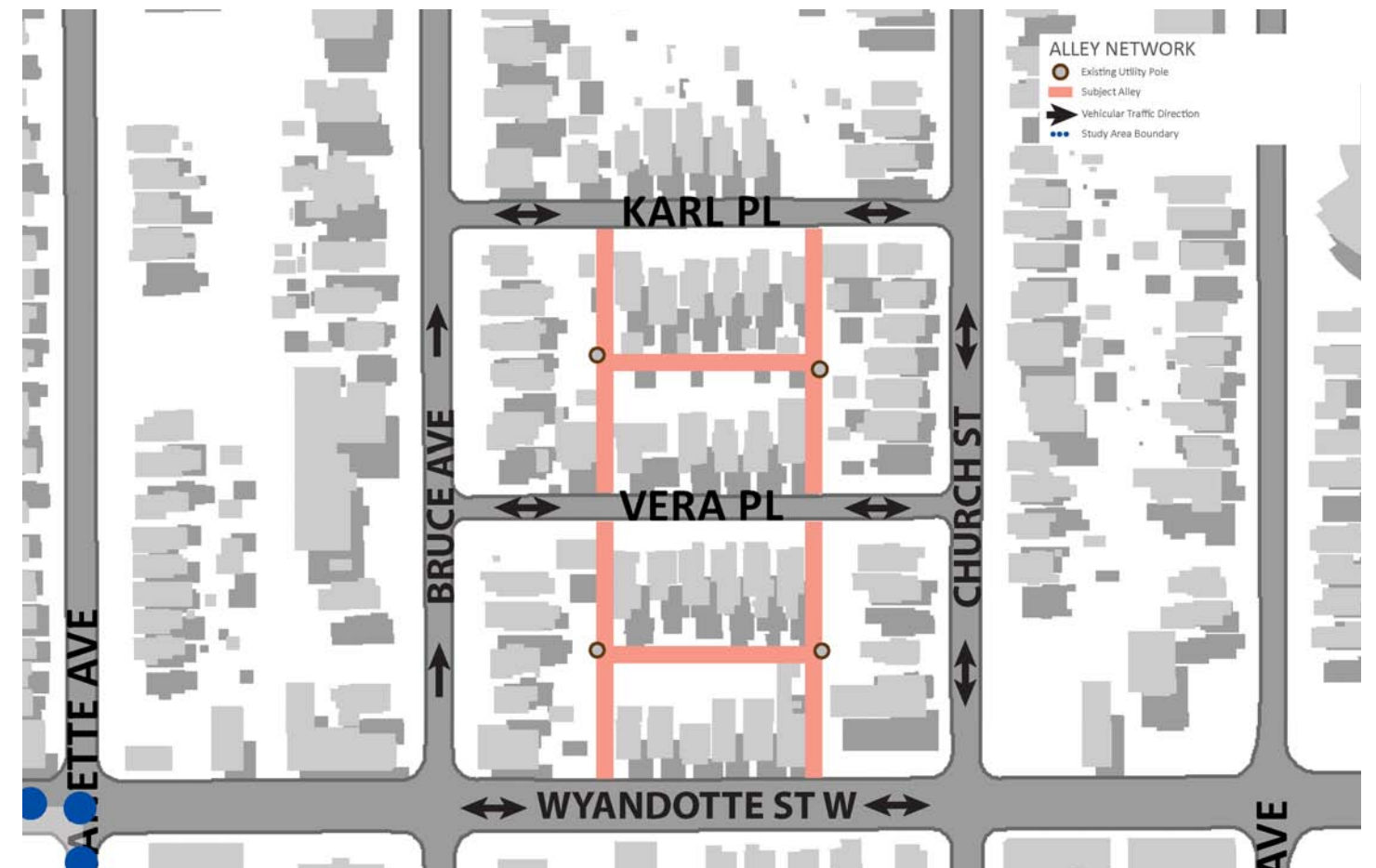
Additionally, the location of this neighbourhood downtown is more walkable due to more dense population and a mix of uses, therefore increasing pedestrian traffic in the area.

Alley Closures

The alley between Vera Place and Karl Place is not paved or used to access property that backs onto them. The land owners in this area have inquired about closing this alley and are currently on the waiting list for the City’s Alley Closing Subsidy Program, a program that requires the success petition (50%+1) of neighbours and a nominal fee. The City also operates a separate alley closing program that requires a higher fee to apply.

Some of the residential alleys located in the University Park Neighbourhood should be considered for closure or safety enhancements for a number of reasons including their configuration and the undesirable behaviours that they are attracting. A more thorough review should be conducted

Downtown Alley Network



RIGHT: The alley between Vera Place and Karl Place.

for these problematic alleys to determine the best course of action to address the primary concerns up to and including the full closure of the alley.

If closure of the alley is deemed to be the most appropriate course of action, the City should consider processing the alley closure application under the regular alley closing program at no cost to the adjacent property owners. Doing so may require using some of the incentive and/or special provisions provided under an adopted Community Improvement Plan.

Alley Lighting




Another consideration for improving safety in these, or adjoining, alleys is providing higher levels of lighting. While lighting does not prevent illegal activity, it provides visibility for pedestrians at night and may act as a deterrent for inappropriate behaviour. If pedestrian can see down an alley at night they are able to more comfortably determine if it is safe to enter.

Since the most of these alleys already have utility poles and electrical connections, they would only require an extension arm and light head to be installed to add additional lighting. The idea is not to entirely light up the alley or create excessive spill over to adjacent properties, but to provide a light at the midpoint of the north/south alleys that would provide enough light for a pedestrian to see what is taking place in an alley before deciding to walk through. Windsor Police Services has been consulted and are in support of any of the alley initiatives described above to improve the physical condition and safety of the alleys. Additional lighting could be something that is considered under one or more of the capital funds or incentive programs being proposed by the Community Improvement Plan. This assistance can be provided throughout the study area, where similar conditions exist.

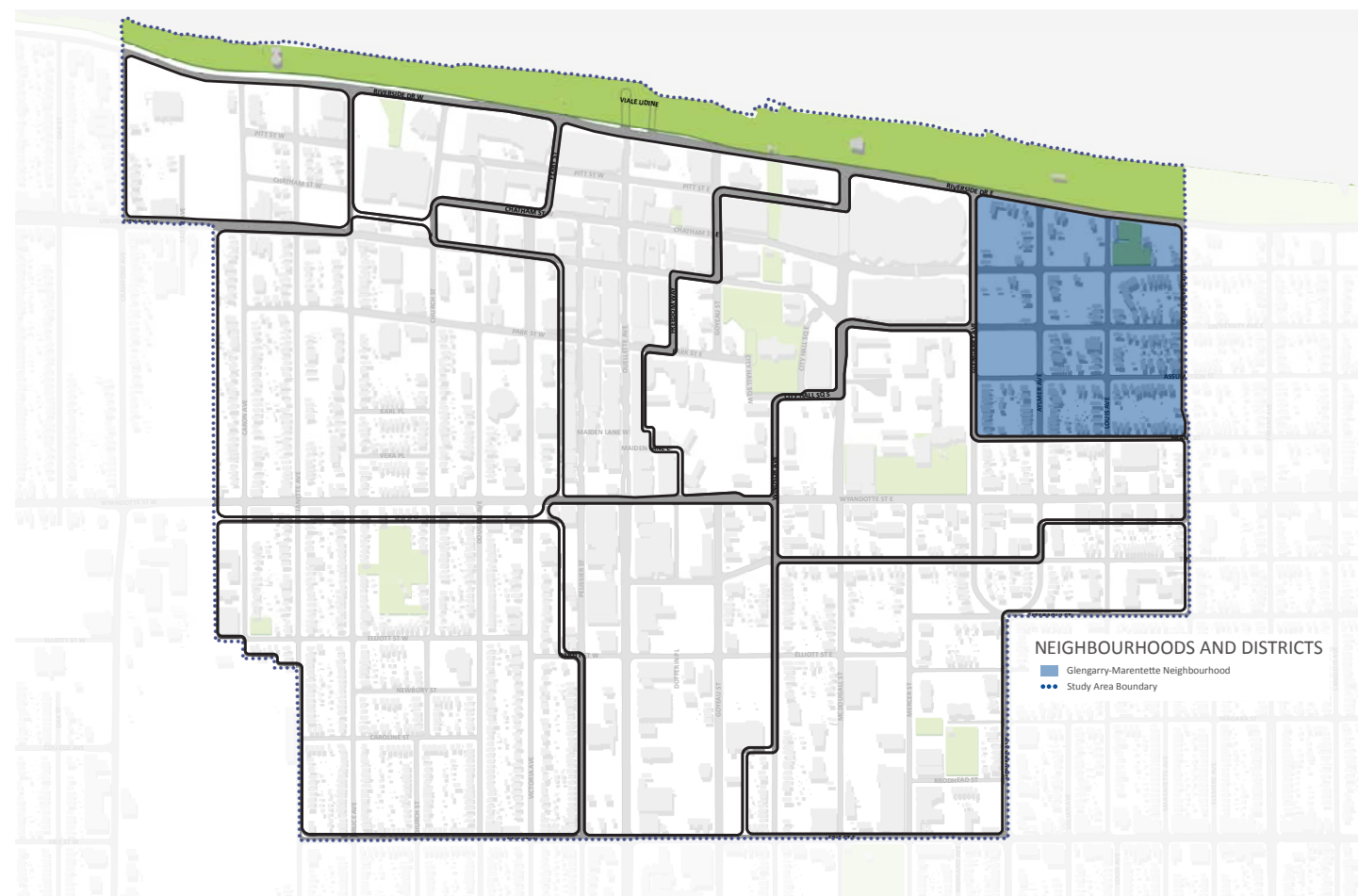
Bruce Park

Through the neighbourhood Conversations meetings with the DWCC, many residents identified Bruce Park as needing improvements. Residents can take advantage of the “Little Things Matter” outlined in the CIP fund to apply for park improvements.

6.6.6 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Vacant homes are left unmaintained.	Opportunity to increase the maintenance of residential building stock. Opportunity to invest in existing residential building stock.	Development Opportunity	
Residential properties have been demolished leaving vacant properties in the middle of residential neighbourhoods.	Opportunity for infill development. Opportunity for community supportive uses such as community gardens.	Development Opportunity Regulatory Review	
Safety concerns and illegal dumping in residential alleys.	Opportunity to enhance alleys as an important pedestrian network and safe access to residential homes.	Public Realm/ Pedestrian Focus	
Vacant commercial buildings along Wyandotte Street West	Opportunity to attract new retail uses or community supportive uses	Development Opportunity	

6.7 GLENGARRY-MARENTETTE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Glengarry Marentette Neighbourhood

This area is mainly low density residential neighbourhood with some commercial surface parking lots in the blocks closest to the Caesars Windsor casino complex. The neighbourhood has seen a significant amount of land speculation that is easily seen on the ground. There are remnants of the older neighbourhood present amongst the larger tracts of surface parking. There are also large blocks of vacant land that are the result of land speculation and/or disinvestment in the neighbourhood.

The large footprint of Caesars Windsor and the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation’s housing complex cuts the Glengarry-Marentette neighbourhood off from downtown Windsor. As a result, the Glengarry-Marentette neighbourhood now has better connections with the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA along Wyandotte Street East.

This area has a very active resident population and community support through the United Way’s Strong Communities program, which has had a positive impact on the resident’s lives.

6.7.1 Area Vision

To be an attractive residential neighbourhood with a mix of low and medium density residential that is developed in a compatible manner within the existing context. Ideally, the more prominent frontage along Riverside Drive will transition to higher density residential uses.

6.7.2 Building and Property Conditions

The building condition varies within this area. The residential homes are a mixture of brick and siding and are generally in some state of disrepair. Parts of this neighbourhood suffer from the effects of disinvestment, absentee landlords and property neglect that has had a significant impact of the physical (and social) quality of the neighbourhood. Land ownership is fragmented and properties are somewhat blighted or underutilized as a result of land speculation.

6.7.3 Development Opportunities

There are a number of development opportunities available within the Glengarry-Marentette neighbourhood, ranging from whole vacant blocks to prominent Detroit River views.

The vacant land along Riverside Drive is ideal for higher density residential development, provided that the smaller parcels can be consolidated into a site that makes financial sense to develop. Additionally, there are a number of single detached homes fronting Riverside Drive that could potentially become part of a larger redevelopment plan. The zoning is in place to allow higher density development; however the properties on these blocks are small and do not meet the frontage and area requirements on their own. Land will need to be consolidated, which makes the current fragmented ownership a challenge that needs to be addressed in order for redevelopment to occur. Over time it would be ideal to consolidate these properties, possibly with the City’s assistance, in order to facilitate a larger redevelopment in accordance with the current zoning. The local real estate market will determine the demand of development in this area; however, it is important to eliminate as many of the barriers to redevelopment as possible.

There is also a large vacant block that is bound by University Avenue East, Aylmer Avenue, Glengarry Avenue and Assumption Street that could accommodate any number of forms of residential development. The current zoning permits a duplexes, small apartment buildings, and townhouses among other similar uses, all of which would be appropriate for this area.

There are a number of small vacant parcels scattered throughout the neighbourhood where residential infill

development is strongly encouraged. This includes an appropriate level of residential intensification provided that the new higher density development is compatible with the neighbourhood.

One of the primary objectives in the Glengarry-Marentette neighbourhood is to preserve as much of the viable residential building stock as possible. The *Planning Act* allows the City to pass a Demolition Control By-law, which prevents property owners from demolishing a residential property without permission from City Council. Additionally, the *Planning Act* allows the municipality to put a by-law in place that requires that the replacement of demolished residential units on a one-to-one basis, or be subject to a financial penalty for not rebuilding. This approach may have to be accompanied by a more pro-active property standards enforcement to prevent demolition by neglect from occurring.

RECOMMENDATION 33: That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.

6.7.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan land use designation in this area is “Residential”. The two blocks along Riverside Drive East, east of the Caesars Windsor are located within a “High” Profile Area and the rest of the area is located within a “Medium” and “Low” Profile Areas.

Community Improvement Plan

The neighbourhood is still subject to *The Glengarry-Marentette Community Improvement Plan (CIP)* that was adopted in 2003. The CIP was developed to chart the future for lands in the 6-block area east of Caesar’s Windsor on the east side of Windsor’s City Centre.

The Glengarry-Marentette CIP will be repealed and replaced by the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan.

Zoning By-law






The land along Riverside Drive East from Glengarry Avenue to Louis Avenue is zoned RD3.3 which permits a multiple unit dwelling with a maximum height of 24 metres for an interior lot and 30 metres for a corner lot. This zoning would be an appropriate use for this site; however, there are challenges with current parcel sizes meeting the zoning regulations. The City should explore zoning regulations that will encourage higher density development while being flexible enough to support innovative residential designs.

The land on the blocks between Chatham Street East and the back of the properties that front onto Wyandotte Street East and Glengarry Avenue to the back of the properties that front onto Aylmer Avenue are zoned RD3.1 which permits a range of residential uses that are appropriate and compatible with the neighbourhood.

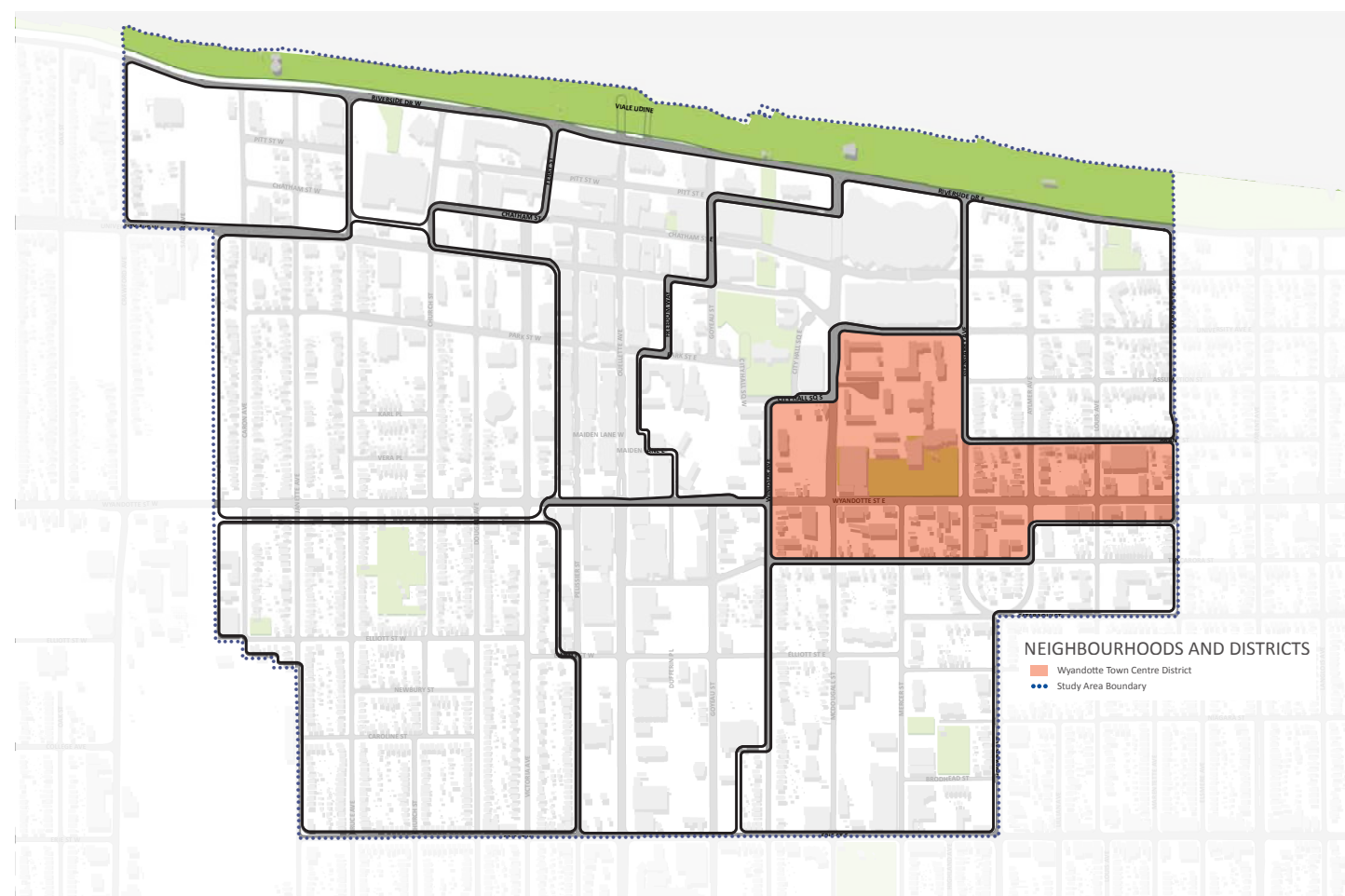
6.7.5 Built Heritage

There are a few heritage buildings located in the Glengarry-Marentette neighbourhood that are either on the Municipal Heritage Register or are “designated” under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. For the most part they are single family dwellings either built in a unique style or were home to a locally important person. Arguably, the heritage properties in this area are not as homogeneous and do not contribute as much to the overall defining character to the neighbourhood as compared to the Old Town district; however, they are still significant in their own right and have a positive impact on the image of the neighbourhood. As such, the heritage buildings are important to the overall fabric of the neighbourhood and should be preserved.

6.7.6 Opportunities and Challenges

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Vacant homes are left unmaintained.	Opportunity to increase the maintenance of residential building stock.	Development Opportunity	
	Opportunity to invest in existing residential building stock.		
Residential properties have been demolished leaving vacant properties in the middle of residential neighbourhoods.	Opportunity for infill development.	Development Opportunity	
	Opportunity for community supportive uses such as community gardens.	Regulatory Review	
Safety concerns and illegal dumping in residential alleys.	Opportunity to enhance alleys as an important pedestrian network and safe access to residential homes.	Public Realm/ Pedestrian Focus	
Vacant land and underutilized land along Riverside Drive.	Opportunity for infill development.	Development Opportunity	
	Opportunity for new residential unit creation.		
Vacant land and underutilized land within the neighbourhood.	Opportunity for infill development.	Development Opportunity	
	Opportunity for new		

6.8 WYANDOTTE TOWN CENTRE DISTRICT



Wyandotte Town Centre District

The Wyandotte Town Centre District is made up of the Wyandotte Town Centre Business Improvement Area (BIA) that runs along Wyandotte Street East from McDougall Avenue to Gladstone Avenue. However, only the portion from McDougall Avenue to Marentette Avenue is within the Study Area. The remaining areas within the district are primarily low and high density residential and community resources (Community Centre and Park).

The buildings along the commercial corridor are an eclectic representation of a traditional mainstreet, meaning that the form and function are more tradition and the buildings have changed over time as additions, architectural details and building materials have been added. Because the form and function of the buildings has remained the same, Wyandotte Street has a 1900's mainstreet feel that provides an opportunity to promote walkability and enhance the public realm. Additionally, the small size of the commercial storefronts help to create a walkable environment because it

provides more variety for pedestrians to look at and stores are closer together.

The businesses along the Wyandotte Street are a mix of restaurants, grocery stores, hair salons and retail stores. The businesses are independent businesses selling mainly Middle Eastern ethnic food and retail goods. The independent business environment should be supported as it provides a unique and authentic experience.

Fred Thomas Park is at the corner of Glengarry Ave and Wyandotte Street East. This park serves as a centre for the community, especially as a meeting spot for residents in Glengarry Court and the surrounding residential homes. This park contains a splash pad, play equipment and a basketball court. Windsor Water World still provides community programming, however the pool is no longer open at this

location. The community meeting places and community services that have been available in the neighbourhood should be preserved where possible.

The former Windsor Arena has been vacant since 2008. Any future development of this site should support and enhance the community resources already in the area.

6.8.1 Area Vision

The area along Wyandotte Street East, known as Wyandotte Town Centre will provide services and amenities to the surrounding neighbourhood. The mainstreet feel should be preserved and enhanced by ensuring future construction, building alterations and infrastructure projects are compatible with the existing character of the district. Additionally, the diversity of the neighbourhood should be promoted and celebrated.

The surrounding residential neighbourhoods will continue to be a mix of low to medium density residential development.

6.8.2 Building/Property Conditions

This report will not discuss the facades within the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA as the forthcoming CIP for the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA will address this issue.

The buildings that are not within the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA are mainly low density residential homes behind the commercial uses on Wyandotte Street East, south of Brant Street, from Glengarry Avenue to Marentette Avenue. The residential homes are a mixture of brick and siding and range in their overall physical condition. Parts of this neighbourhood suffer from the effects of disinvestment, absentee landlords and the property neglect which has had a significant impact of the physical (and social) quality of the neighbourhood.

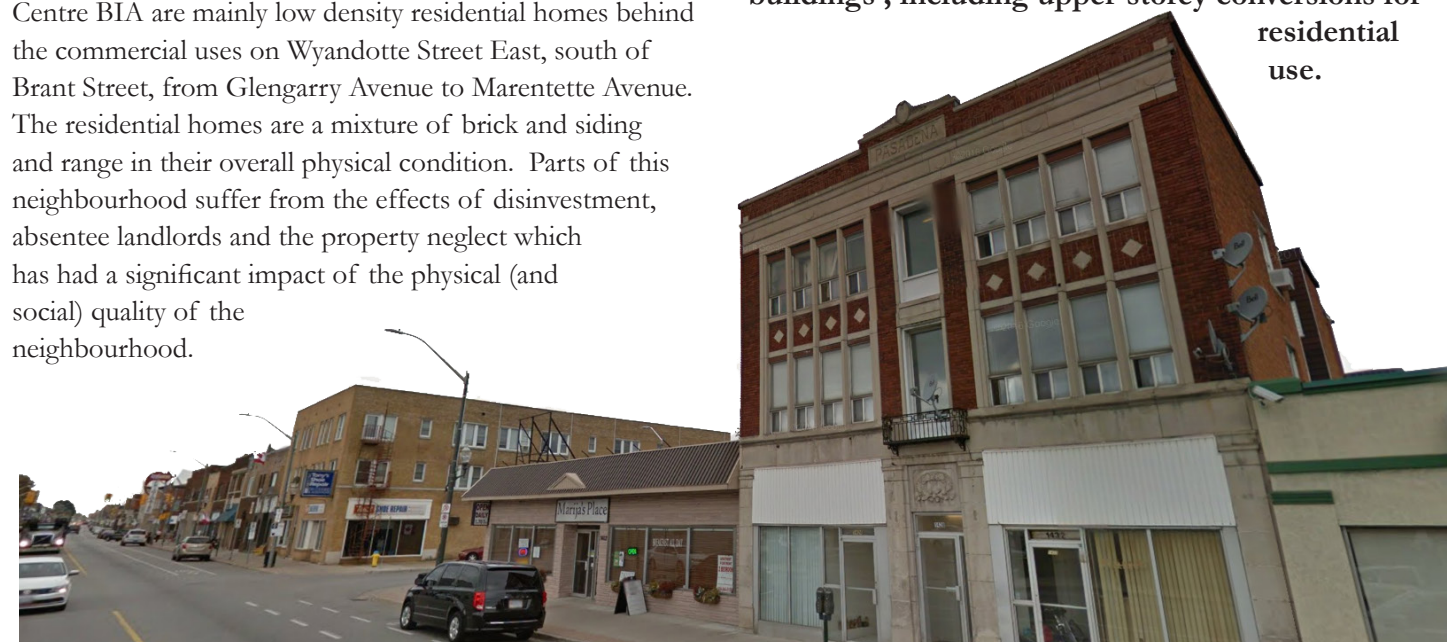
6.8.3 Development Opportunities

The former Windsor Arena has been vacant since 2008. It coupled with the adjacent Windsor Water World and Fred Thomas Park would provide a sizable redevelopment that could have a positive impact on the neighbourhood.

Another possibility for development in the Wyandotte Town Centre is the conversion of upper storeys of the existing buildings. The challenge for these upper storey conversions will be providing the required parking. New zoning requirements that would exempt parking requirements for these conversions should be considered.

These building conversions require that the building to be brought into compliance with the current regulations of the Ontario Building Code, including those pertaining to accessibility and fire safety, when the building is refurbished. This can often become a cost prohibitive endeavour, in some cases approaching and surpassing the costs of new construction. However, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings should be encouraged and the City should consider financial incentives to encourage the conversion of unused upper storeys for residential units.

RECOMMENDATION 34: That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings, including upper-storey conversions for residential use.



6.8.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan land use designation for the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA is “Mixed Use” in either the “Medium” or “High” Profile Area designations. The Windsor Housing Corporation property is designated “Residential” with a mix of “Low” and “High” Profile Area designations. Additionally, Fred Thomas Park is designated “Public Open Space”.

The Official Plan designations are largely consistent with the vision for this neighbourhood.

Zoning By-law

The Wyandotte Town Centre BIA is zoned CD2.2 which permits combined use buildings such as retail, personal service shop, business offices, restaurants with residential above any permitted use provided the residential is located above the non-residential use. The former Windsor Arena is zoned CD3.1 which permits combined use buildings as well. Glengarry Court is zoned for RD3.4 townhomes and multiple unit dwellings. Fred Thomas Park is zoned GD1.1 for a public park.

6.8.5 Built Heritage




The former Windsor Arena is listed as a property of interested on the Municipal Heritage Register. Any redevelopment at this site should take into account the heritage features of the former Windsor Arena.

6.8.6 Connectivity to Other Areas

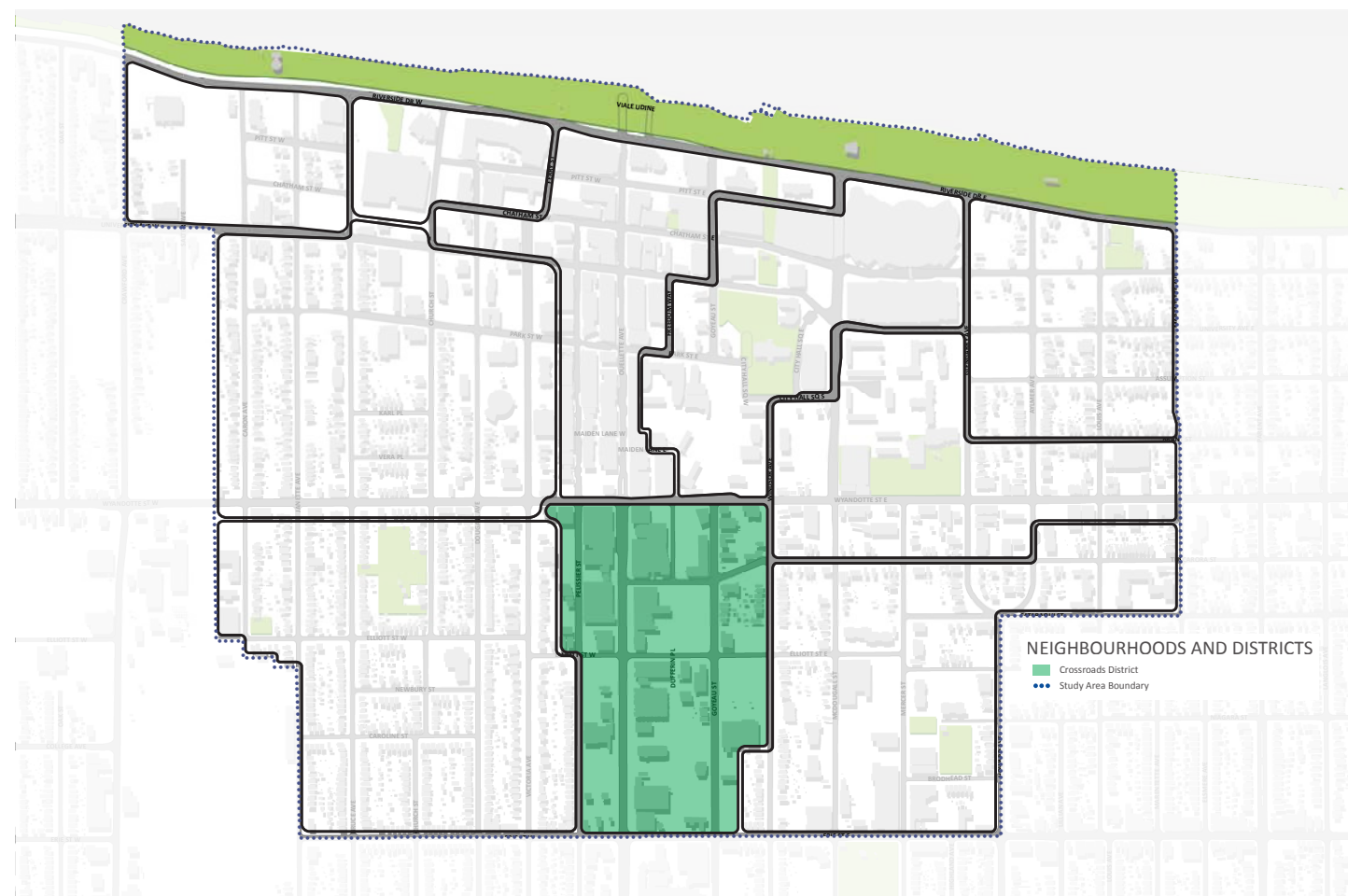
Wyandotte Street East provides a good linkage to the rest of downtown and the rest of the City for automobile and pedestrian traffic.

The Windsor Housing Corporation property was developed as a ‘super block’ which closed off east/west streets that once traveled through this site. The former grid street pattern is lost and therefore this property creates a barrier for traveling east or west in this area.

6.8.7 Challenges and Opportunities

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Some storefronts could benefit from improvements.	Improve the existing buildings to build a unique character along Wyandotte Street East. The Mainstreet Facade Improvement Program	Public Realm	
There are many people walking between the Glengarry Court housing, Water World, Fred Thompson Park.	Pedestrian traffic creates vibrancy and should be promoted within the area.	Public Realm	
There is a cluster of vibrant retail businesses catering to an ethnic market.	Enhance and promote the ethnic retailing along Wyandotte Street.		
Former Windsor Arena site is vacant and Windsor Water World pool is closed.	Opportunity to provide more community resources to the area.		

6.9 CROSSROADS DISTRICT



Crossroads District

This area contains Ouellette Avenue, which extends south from the Retail/Commercial Core District to the southern extent of the study area. The section of Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street contains a large public right of way with ample sidewalk space. The buildings are still in a traditional mainstreet form, similar to the buildings north of Wyandotte Street; however, the commercial unit size is larger. South of Elliot Street, the built form starts to change into more modernist architectural style with increased building setbacks.

The intersection of Wyandotte Street and Ouellette Avenue was once the central commercial area of downtown – the main crossroads. The storefronts were occupied and there was higher pedestrian traffic. Over the years, many of the business have either closed, or moved north along Ouellette Avenue with their former locations left vacant or underutilized.

The area to the south east of Wyandotte Street East and Ouellette Street is an area that is dominated by surface parking lots (along Goyeau Street) that supply parking for the uses along

Ouellette Avenue and the Windsor Regional Hospital - Ouellette Campus, which is located just outside of the study area.

Some of the uses along this section of Ouellette Avenue are not traditional retail/commercial uses. The New Canadian Centre of Excellence and the Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator are located on the east side of Ouellette Avenue and the Raindance Centre in the former Knights of Columbus building is located at 709 Ouellette Avenue. These community supportive and arts/culture uses contribute to the diversity of uses offered downtown.

This area has pockets of single family residential dwellings and also hosts two of the larger chain retailers: The Beer Store and Food Basics. Food Basics is the only chain grocery store in the downtown area. These large retailers generate high pedestrian and automobile traffic to the area.

This area also contains government resources including the Central Library Branch located on Ouellette Avenue and Windsor Fire and Rescue Services located at Goyeau Street and Elliot Street.

6.9.1 Area Vision

This area should provide a diverse mix of business and services to downtown residents and visitors. The redevelopment of retail and commercial space should continue in the mainstreet style along Ouellette Avenue.

6.9.2 Building/Property Conditions

There are several vacant properties that resulted from recent demolition. One being at the south west corner of Ouellette Street and Elliot Street West, and the other being the former Vanity Theatre at 671 Ouellette Avenue. Additionally, the land at the corner of Windsor Avenue and Wyandotte Street is vacant after buildings were demolished this year. The vacant properties are well maintained, but are not being used to their fullest potential.

6.9.3 Development Opportunities

The vacant land along Ouellette Avenue mentioned above holds potential for development that is compatible with the mainstreet character. These vacant properties along Ouellette Avenue offer the possibility for mixed use buildings with commercial on the ground floor and office and/or residential above. New buildings would inject new life into the area to attract new residents and customers.

The vacant property along Wyandotte Street at Windsor Avenue offers the potential for new development across from the Windsor-Detroit Tunnel. With hundreds of commuters passing through the Windsor-Detroit tunnel every day this location is ideal to attract commuters to stop for business, services or entertainment in this location.

There is also a high commercial vacancy rate along Ouellette Avenue. There a number of vacant storefronts that are prime for redevelopment.

6.9.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan

The Official Plan designates this area as “Mixed Use” in a variety of height/density profiles. The northern section along Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street is in “Very High” Profile Area, and the section of Ouellette Avenue from Elliot Street to Erie Street is in a “High” Profile Area. The area to the east of Goyeau Street within this area is designated as a “Medium” Profile Area.

Zoning

Within this area there are three major zoning categories: CD3.1; CD3.2; and, CD3.6. The area along Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street is CD3.1 General Commercial, Combined Use Buildings. This zoning requires that residential uses must be above the ground floor commercial uses. This is appropriate along Ouellette Avenue as it is a traditional mainstreet where ground floor commercial uses should be promoted.

The area south of Elliot Street along Ouellette Avenue is CD3.2 Mixed Use – Ouellette Avenue Corridor. This zone requires a six meter building setback from an exterior lot line. A setback may not be in keeping with the development patterns that are present on Ouellette Avenue north of Elliot Street.

RECOMMENDATION 35: The section of Ouellette Avenue from Elliot street to Erie Street should be reviewed to determine if the zoning should be amended to make the required setbacks consistent with other sections of Ouellette Avenue.






6.9.5 Public Realm

Phase 6 streetscaping on Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Elliot Street has recently begun construction. Public investment in streetscapes encourages the utilization of existing buildings and contributes to a unique feel downtown.

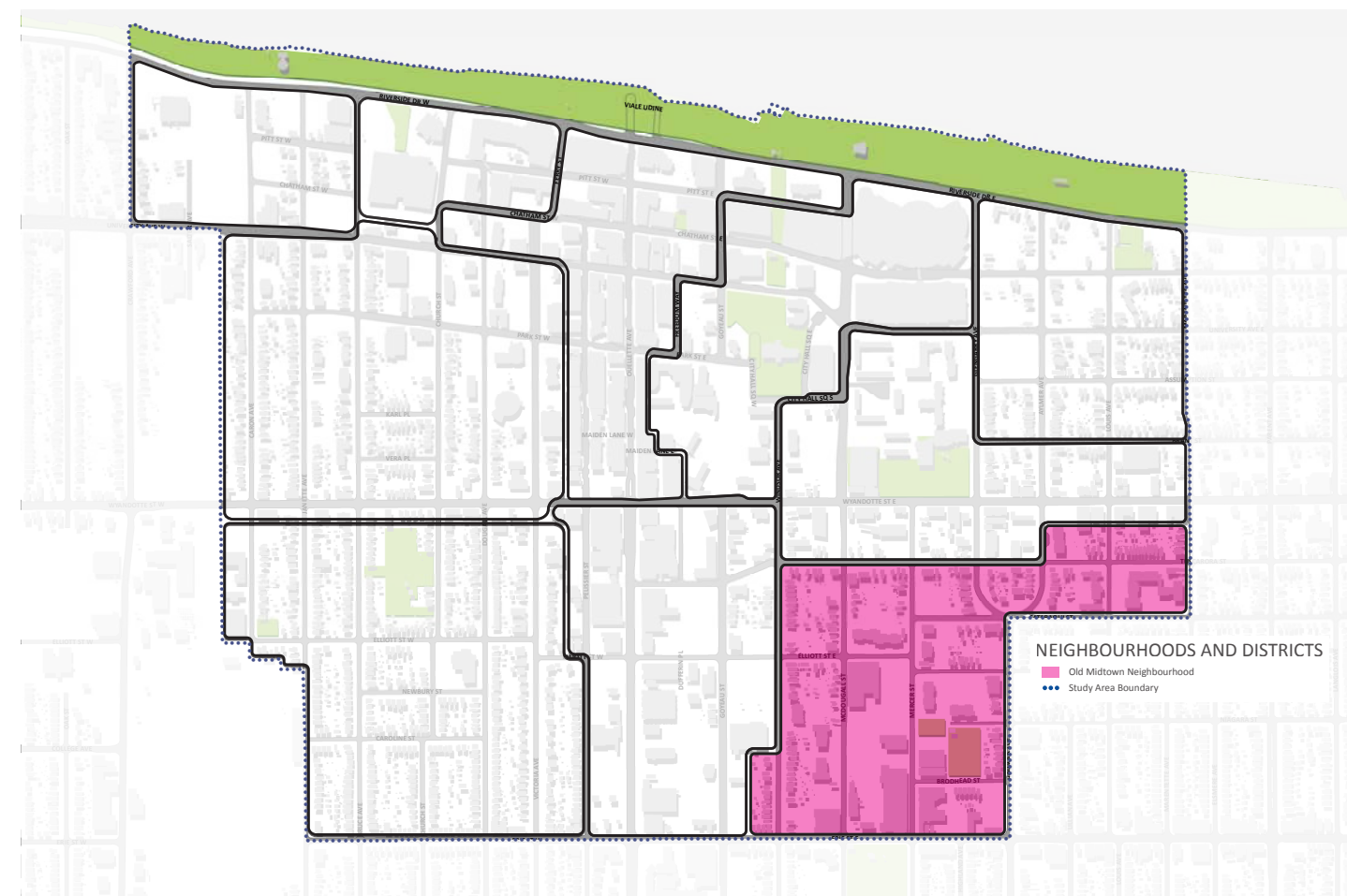
6.9.6 Urban Design Guidelines

The Urban Design Guidelines contained within the Retail/Commercial Core District apply to Ouellette Avenue from Wyandotte Street to Erie Street.

6.9.7 Challenges and Opportunities

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM
Shopping is limited to convenience items and specialty goods (cigars, lifestyle clothing, etc.) and does not provide all daily amenities for downtown residents.	Opportunity for additional services and retail offerings as demand increases from the student population or increased residential population.	Development Opportunities 
Many buildings are vacant or underutilized.	Opportunity to redevelop upper storey space in mixed used buildings. Opportunity to renovate existing retail space to attract new tenants.	Design Guidelines  Development Opportunities 
Public realm enhancements are needed to bring vibrancy.	Ouellette Avenue streetscaping planned for summer 2018.	Public Realm 
Encourage more patios to enhance the vibrancy and presence of people on the street.	Opportunity for business owners to expand businesses and create vibrant streets.	Public Realm 
Existing grassroots arts and culture has had positive impact on areas downtown.	Enhance the arts and culture presence in this important part of the downtown.	

6.10 OLD MID TOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD



Old Mid Town Neighbourhood

This area contains a mix of uses such as high density residential along McDougall Street and Howard Avenue, low density behind the commercial uses of Wyandotte Street East from Marentette Avenue to Mercer Street, a municipal park and a business park along McDougall Street.

To beautify this neighbourhood, exterior building repairs and yard improvements would enhance the exterior of the properties and send a positive message to the rest of the neighbourhood that someone cares about the upkeep of their property.

6.10.1 Area Vision

That the residential areas within this neighbourhood aim to be a comfortable and safe place to live, with the businesses serving the downtown and surrounding areas.

6.10.3 Development Opportunities

A vacant building within the “Business Park” land use destination has applied for a feasibility study grant under the Brownfield Redevelopment CIP to review for the feasibility of other uses on this property. While the current Business Park provides important business activity to the surrounding areas, there may be opportunity for redevelopment to other compatible uses.

6.10.2 Building/Property Conditions

The building and property conditions vary within this area. The residential homes are a mixture of brick and siding and have been maintained to different degrees within the neighbourhood.

The former institutional properties along Louis Avenue also provide an opportunity for redevelopment as they have been vacant for many years. The former Social Service building at 755 Louis Avenue and former Children’s Aid Society at 690 Cataraqui Street have been subject to a zoning amendment to add additional uses and facilitate the reuse and/or redevelopment of the properties. Additionally, the former St. Michael’s High School across the street at 735 Tuscarora Street remains vacant. These vacant buildings have created an undesirable situation in the neighbourhood with excessive debris, vandalism, and illegal activity. This area is designated as residential in the City of Windsor Official Plan and zoned for Institutional uses. There is the opportunity for the owner of the former St. Michael’s High School to submit a development application to redevelop the property in line with the Official Plan designation.

This plan also encourages infill residential development on the vacant parcels that are scattered throughout the neighbourhood. This includes an appropriate level of residential intensification provided that the new higher density development is compatible with the neighbourhood.

conditions, such as site plan approval.

6.10.4 Official Plan and Zoning

Official Plan





The Official Plan designates the land along McDougall Street (between Erie Street and Elliot Street) as “Business Park”. The residential area along McDougall Street and Howard Avenue is designated “Residential” with a “High” profile area designation, the residential area located to the south of the commercial uses along Wyandotte Street East from Marentette Avenue to Mercer Street is designated “Residential” with a “Low” profile area designation.

Zoning By-law

The business park area is zoned MD1.4 on the east side of McDougall Street, and RD2.2 on the west side of McDougall Street from Elliot Street East, to midblock where the zoning is CD4.1. The north east corner of McDougall Street is zoned CD 3.6.

The two buildings at 755 Louis Avenue and 690 Cataraqui Street have been rezoned to HRD3.4 to facilitate the development of a residential care facility. A holding provision was placed on the zoning until the developer has met certain

6.10.5 Challenges and Opportunities

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY	ITEM	
Some buildings in the Business Park area are vacant or do not attract a high number of visitors.	The business park uses could transition to other uses to support downtown.	Development Opportunities	
Former institutional buildings along Louis Avenue have been left vacant.	Opportunity for redevelopment that would enhance the neighbourhood. Possible residential conversion or other compatible uses.	Development Opportunities	
Residential properties have been demolished leaving vacant properties in the middle of residential neighbourhoods.	Opportunity to review the demolition control by-laws within downtown to protect residential housing stock and permit necessary demolitions.	Development Opportunity Regulatory Review	
Safety concerns and illegal dumping in residential alleys.	Opportunity for alley clean ups, alley lighting, and/or potential alley closure.	Public Realm/ Pedestrian Focus	

7 IMPLEMENTATION



The following section provides a discussion and summary of possible actions and activities that can or should be undertaken to implement this plan, and to facilitate the ongoing revitalization of downtown Windsor. It is meant to compliment, and implement in some cases, the specific recommendations made throughout this plan. Some of the items below include additional recommendations, while others are offered for discussion and consideration. It should not be considered an all inclusive list or summary of all of the matters discussed throughout this plan, but rather as information that supplements the discussions provided under other sections of this plan.

This section includes some recommended reviews and changes to the regulatory regime for downtown Windsor, including specific zoning by-law amendments aimed at some of the perceived regulatory barriers to development. Some of the other initiatives are things that the City is already doing or should consider doing to demonstrate to the business community that downtown Windsor is “Open for Business”.

7.1 REGULATORY IMPROVEMENTS

7.1.1 Official Plan Policies

Windsor’s Official Plan (OP) provides guidance for the physical development of the municipality over a 20-year period while taking into consideration important social, economic and environmental matters and goals. It guides and shapes development by identifying where and under what circumstances specific types of land uses can be located. It is used to ensure that future planning development appropriately balances the various interests of the community.

The Official Plan acknowledges the uniqueness and importance of downtown Windsor by having a separate section for the City Centre Planning District. The policies contained in this section provide guidance to development occurring in downtown Windsor. The City Centre Planning District should be reviewed to ensure that the policies contained within OP are still relevant and appropriate to achieving the vision and objectives of this plan. Furthermore, any of the suggested amendments contained within this plan should be considered and initiated as soon as feasible.

7.1.2 Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw

The City’s Comprehensive Zoning By-law establishes and regulates the use of land by implementing the policies of the City’s Official Plan. It provides a way to co-ordinate land uses, protect areas by preventing incompatible uses, and establish appropriate standards and specific legal regulations for development.

There have been a number of specific zoning issues identified throughout this plan, including some recommendations for changes to the city’s zoning by-law. The implementation of these amendments should be reviewed and coordinated to ensure that the highest priority changes are happening first. It will also allow for some of the smaller amendments to be combined into a more comprehensive housekeeping amendment.

In addition to the recommended changes included in the plan, the following zoning challenges should also be looked at closely to determine if they are actually acting as a barrier to development occurring, while at the same time minimizing the possible negative impacts of the development if these standards were to change:

- The existing parking requirements for various land uses to determine if a reduction in the number of spaces can be supported;
- The amount of amenity space that is required for residential development; and,
- The requirement for ground floor commercial for residential development in some areas of downtown.

Consideration should also be given to reviewing the allowable densities and heights for the properties in the study area. A study that reviews the costs and potential revenues from different development types would allow for better understanding of what variables have the biggest impact on the feasibility of the development projects. Additionally, it would help to establish the development potential for downtown Windsor, which in turn would allow for zoning refinements that help to advance the many objectives of this plan.

7.1.3 Community Planning Permit (CPP) System

Many downtowns can attribute their successful revitalization to form-based zoning regulations. Form-based regulations are a method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form because they focus more on the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development rather than the primary focus of conventional zoning on the segregation of land-use types, permissible property uses, and the control of development intensity through simple numerical parameters.

The Ontario *Planning Act* was recently amended to allow municipalities to develop a Community Planning Permit (CPP) System, which is an alternate development approvals process to the traditional planning system of the independent Zoning, Minor Variance and Site Plan processes. The CPP System combines all three of these processes into one application submission and approval process. An approval under the CPP System can also include other development related approvals such as site alteration, grading and tree removal. It also provides regulatory powers for site design and building design matters. It’s a streamlined and efficient way to obtain planning approvals, expedite development, and provide greater certainty in achieving land use, urban design, streetscape and other planning objectives. The CPP System is implemented through Official Plan policies and CPP By-laws. Where a CPP By-law is in effect (i.e. a specific geographic area) it replaces the Zoning By-law.



While the implementation of a CPP system may be seen as beneficial, it is not without its challenges. It is very labour intensive at the front end and unknown to the local development community. This uncertainty has to the potential to translate into opposition to the idea. The first step would be to adopt Official Plan polices that would outline how the system would work in downtown Windsor. This would be followed by an extensive public consultation and visioning exercise that would shape the ultimate CPP by-law. The CPP By-law would include details about the geographic area to which it applies, permitted and discretionary uses, development standards and permitted variations to those standards, complete application requirements and the process for issuing approvals. The adoption of Official Plan policies and the passing of a CPP By-law can both be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Notwithstanding the challenges and amount of work necessary to implement such a system, the City should begin to explore opportunities to incorporate the approach and principles of Community Planning Permit System in place of its existing planning regulations and processes in order to achieve a desirable urban form and mix of uses for downtown Windsor.

RECOMMENDATION 36: That the City of Windsor explore the opportunities for instituting a Community Planning Permit System for downtown Windsor to replace its existing planning regulations and processes.

7.1.4 Bonus Zoning Policy

The *Planning Act* allows City Council to authorize increases in the height and density of development otherwise permitted by the Zoning By-law that will be permitted in return for the provision of facilities and/or services that are deemed to be beneficial to the community.

The City will require the property owner or developer of an approved project to enter into an agreement with the City regarding the facilities, services or matters for which the increase in density and/or height are based. The agreement entered into will be registered against the land and the City will enforce the provisions thereof against the owner and, subject to the provisions of the Registry Act and the Land Titles Act, any and all subsequent owners of the land.

In accordance with the City's Official Plan, City Council will encourage the use of the bonus provisions with regard to the following matters:

- Provision of special needs, assisted or low income housing;
- Parkland conveyance beyond the minimum requirements of this Plan and/or parkland improvements beyond the minimum standards;
- Protection and enhancement of natural features and functions;
- Provision of public transportation facilities;
- Provision of public areas, walkways and linkages to the Greenway System;
- Provision of public parking;
- Provision of community facilities;
- Conservation of heritage resources; and
- Protection or enhancement of significant views and vistas.

City Council will only consider bonus provisions where such an increase would be in conformity with the intent of the Official Plan and Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.

7.1.5 Development Charge Exemption Policy

Under the current *Development Charges Act*, municipalities can apply Development Charges in ways that best suit their local growth-related needs and priorities. Strategic Development Charges reductions can be used to help support the City's growth management goals, including the Official Plan policies promoting "selective residential redevelopment, infill and intensification initiatives".

On August 2, 2016 the City-wide Development Charge By-law #60-2015 implemented reduced Development Charges for the core areas of the city, including downtown Windsor, as a way to encourage infill and intensification within the city core and around Business Improvement Areas.

This policy significantly reduces the Development Charges owing for residential and commercial developments occurring in downtown Windsor and is anticipated to act as an attractive incentive for new development.

7.2 OTHER REVITALIZATION ACTIVITIES

7.2.1 Strong Management Structures for Downtown Revitalization

The following discussion was one that also occurred in 1994 as part of the development of *The City Centre Design and Revitalization Study*. The text below is taken directly from that study because it has as much relevance today as it did when the study was first prepared.

The implementation of many of the revitalization recommendations in this plan are already within the purview of a number of municipal departments, civic organizations, and interested individuals. Each of these groups could take independent action on a number of fronts and achieve some of the objectives of this plan some of the time. However, to avoid potentially working at cross-purposes and to capitalize on the synergy that comes from collaboration, implementation efforts should be coordinated using a suitable management structure.

The ideal implementation management structure should include the following qualities:

- A commitment to sustaining the revitalization momentum;
- Leadership that inspires best efforts in others;
- A base of legitimate authority for pursuing revitalization;
- Accountability to those affected by revitalization measures;
- Access to a broad base of expertise and experience;
- A level of efficiency which maximizes results from available resources; and
- Representation of all interests and viewpoints regarding revitalization.

A more detailed management study would provide a thorough analysis of how well various management structures can meet the above criteria.

7.2.2 The Little Things Matter Capital Fund

Through the stakeholder consultations it became obvious that some of challenges impacting downtown Windsor were relatively small in nature, but left unattended to result in a negative perception of downtown Windsor. This becomes an even bigger concern when many of the small things start adding up. Recent examples of relatively small things having an impact is the delayed replacement of a damaged decorative lighting pole that was removed, requests for residential alley lighting, or an additional bike rack being requested along Ouellette Avenue.

Although the issues may be relatively small in nature, they still often require funds to address them. Finding available funds to address the issues can sometimes be challenging because the issues are often one-offs or haven't been anticipated as part of the annual budgeting process. The Little Things Matter Capital Fund is another prong emerging from the identification and development of the "The Little Things Matter" philosophy to downtown revitalization. It is recommended that Council establish a capital reserve fund for the purpose of addressing the small issues/items that come up in the downtown core. The fund would be solely for the purpose of addressing items that do not have other sources for funding to address them, and are deemed to be small in nature and can easily be addressed with funding in place. It should not be used for ongoing maintenance or items that fall under other budget lines.

RECOMMENDATION 37: That the City of Windsor explore the establishment of a capital reserve budget for the purposes of addressing small issues/items that do not have other sources for funding to address them.

7.2.3 Downtown Strategic Investment Fund

Although the 10-year life span of the project has expired, the City of Kitchener's Economic Development Investment Fund (EDIF) is an example of strategic municipal investing



acting as a catalyst for downtown revitalization.

Kitchener initiated an extensive public consultation process to help it prioritize projects in the “new” investment category and address the need to raise funds to support projects in economic development. The result was a shift in strategy from the emphasis of economic development being the purchasing, servicing and selling of industrial land to one of stimulating new economic clusters primarily in the downtown, beginning with the recruitment of two new university campuses. The 10-year \$110 million Economic Development Investment Fund (EDIF) was created to support the development of a new Education and Knowledge Creation Cluster in downtown Kitchener (\$98 million) and to develop industrial land to support the City’s manufacturing sector (\$12 million). Catalyst investments from EDIF are credited with much of the current momentum and increased investor and citizen confidence in downtown Kitchener. The program proved to be hugely successful.

Downtown Windsor has seen its share of municipal investment to support catalyst projects (e.g. St. Clair Centre for the Arts, University of Windsor downtown campus, and the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre) that are starting to have a positive impact on the revitalization of downtown Windsor. Windsor could consider developing a similar proactive approach for identifying and making strategic municipal investments in catalyst projects in the downtown core.

7.2.4 Supporting Local Economic Development and Job Creation

By adopting the comprehensive *Local Economic Revitalization Community Improvement Plan* (CIP), the City has created supportive planning policies, financial incentive programs, and a municipal leadership strategy where the City has taken a leadership role in local economic development, diversification, and job creation.

Consequently, the City of Windsor is offering a number of attractive incentive programs designed to recover the costs associated with making the necessary investments to encourage economic diversification, and job retention and creation. These incentives include grants and tax assistance to encourage investments that achieve these objectives.

The Local Economic Revitalization CIP has been successful

in driving a number of private sector investments in downtown Windsor. As such, it is considered to be a valuable tool moving forward as downtown Windsor looks to diversify its employment base, attract new businesses and promote the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

7.2.5 Community Heritage Fund

The Community Heritage Fund is currently available to assist in the acquisition and conservation of designated heritage properties. It provides direct financial assistance to owners wishing to acquire and/or conserve designated heritage properties. The Community Heritage Fund offers grants and loans for the ongoing preservation and maintenance of designated heritage properties to help offset some of the higher costs associated with owning and maintaining a historic property.

There are a number of downtown buildings that designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. As such, the Community Heritage Fund will continue to be useful tool in encourage the conservation, and possibly the adaptive reuse, of designated heritage properties. The use of the Community Heritage Fund will not preclude someone from accessing additional financial incentives offered through an approved Community Improvement Plan.

7.2.6 Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program

Similar to the Community Heritage Fund above, the Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program is available to properties that are individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program allows owners of eligible heritage property to apply for a 30% tax reduction (portion of municipal and school levies) in the form of tax rebates for eligible works conducted on the property.

This program can also be included as part of a larger incentive package (along with CIP incentives) to make the conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage properties more attractive.

7.3 “OPEN FOR BUSINESS” INITIATIVES

Downtown Windsor needs to portray an image that it is a good place to make an investment and that it is open for business. This means that efforts must be made to reduce red tape and streamline development approval processes in order to set the stage for the private sector to do its thing – invest in downtown!

In a world of ever-increasing incremental creep of federal, provincial and local government regulations, the biggest differentiator between how cities approach these regulations is the wait time involved in the bureaucratic processes deemed necessary to comply with all of the regulatory requirements of development, with the goal of being more efficient in their review and approval processes.

As such, the City is making a commitment to the private sector that it will continue to seek ways to improve the investment environment and reduce unnecessary red tape by being available to answer questions upfront about what a potential investor can expect when considering making an investment in downtown Windsor, and seeking to continuously make process improvements aimed streamlining the development approval process for projects. This plan outlines a number of specific ways that the City of Windsor can demonstrate its ongoing commitment to being ‘open for business’ and that it will play an active role in facilitating future investment and development in the downtown core.

The approval process for new development does not necessarily begin when a formal *Planning Act* application is submitted or a Building Permit is applied for. Often there are months of discussions and consultations that occur prior to an application being submitted. Sometimes these discussions never materialize into a development application for whatever reason. However, the potential investor is strongly encouraged to reach out to the City during these early stages of development – the earlier, the better!

In response, the Planning Department will facilitate multi-disciplinary team meetings to assist the proponent with understanding the approval process, determining program eligibility and requirements, as well as developing a comprehensive financial incentive package for the project that reflects all of the financial incentive programs and other

Community Improvement initiatives available.

7.3.1 Investment Support Program

Windsor’s Investment Support Program (ISP) is a cross-functional service program that guides strategic investment projects that meet the specific eligibility criteria through municipal approvals and requirements. The program includes stakeholders from a number of departments and external organizations and aims to ensure timely and customer-focused service.

An Economic Development Officer is assigned to each strategic investment and works proactively with other departments and external agencies to guide projects through the municipal process. This first-class concierge service connects all relevant stakeholders and city departments to the proposed project.

7.3.2 Development Streamlining

Pre-consultation with Planning Department staff is strongly encouraged and recommended as a routine business practice for potential investors/developers seeking development approval from the City.

Early pre-consultation will allow the Planning Department to ensure that all relevant planning policies and regulations have been conveyed to the applicant early in the process including expected timelines for approval. Doing so early in the process may also save time in the long run because early feedback from the City presents an opportunity for the proponent to refine proposed concepts prior to submitting a formal application, and avoid costly delays down the road.

Pre-consultation may also help to streamline the development review process once applications have been submitted. Reviews and approvals can be coordinated for complex projects in an effort to minimize the length of time it takes to obtain final approval from the City. For major development applications, the City will also actively explore procedural and other development incentives such as, scheduling extra or single-agenda-item City Council meetings, as well as assigning administrative staff dedicated to expedite the review and processing of major development applications that are in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan.

7.3.3 Financial Assistance Consultation

There are five (5) financial incentive programs included in the CIP that accompanies this plan. The CIP permits more than one program to be applied to a project provided that the total dollar value of financial incentives does not exceed the total eligible costs for the project.

Given the applicability of multiple programs and the complexity of some of the projects, pre-consultation with Planning Department staff is strongly encouraged and recommended as a pre-requisite to some of the financial incentive programs. The Planning Department will facilitate multi-disciplinary team meetings to assist the proponent with determining program eligibility and requirements, as well as developing a comprehensive financial incentive package tailored to the specific project.

Furthermore, early feedback about the possible incentives may help to “shape” the proposed development to maximize the potential benefit from those programs.

7.3.4 Architectural Design Assistance

One of the main principles that this plan is based on is that new development and redevelopment should be compatible with the existing design and character of downtown Windsor. The plan provides a set of clear design expectations, in some cases in the form of specific Urban Design Guidelines, to proposed investors about how to understand the downtown design vernacular, and more importantly, how to ensure that a project fits in given this context.

The City will not design any element of a project. However, it will provide assistance on understanding the design expectations and present possibilities about how a project can comply with these expectations. The City will also provide design assistance intended to give property owners within the CIP project area professional guidance for how to improve the most prominent facades of their buildings.

7.3.5 Community Improvement Plan

Ontario’s *Planning Act* allows municipalities to prepare a Community Improvement Plan to set out, in an “official” way, what a municipality intends to do to address an unsatisfactory state of affairs in a certain defined area; in this case downtown Windsor. The community improvement approach is a flexible, comprehensive, coordinated and strategic framework for dealing with lands and buildings, which can address many of the physical, social, economic or environmental matters affecting or contributing to the current conditions.

This plan will be accompanied by a Community Improvement Plan that is designed to implement many of the recommendations included in this plan. It will also provide Council with the legislative authority to undertake a number of initiatives aimed at community improvement. The CIP is a flexible tool that is primarily aimed at attracting new investment to downtown Windsor by offering financial incentives for new projects.

7.3.6 Targeted Incentive Programs

An approved Community Improvement Plan permits Council to offer financial incentives for projects that meet the desired objectives stated in the CIP. This plan establishes a clear relationship between the financial incentive programs and the CIP’s objectives. Furthermore, it provides rationale for the public benefit that can result from offering publicly funded financial incentives to stimulate private sector investment.

The financial incentive programs are targeted at sectors of the local downtown economy (e.g. residential, retail, etc) and in some cases, specific geographic locations in order to maximize the public benefits derived from the incentive programs. The incentive programs also strive to target the barriers to private sector investment in downtown, while providing a financial return on investment in the form of ongoing property taxes to the City over the long term.

To this end, applications must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the City of Windsor that the development clearly serves the public interest and that there is a proven need for financial incentives in order for the project to move forward.

City Council will act as the final approval authority for the financial incentive programs and be the ultimate judge of a project’s contribution to meeting the objectives of this CIP and its “need” for financial incentives.

In addition to outlining the eligibility criteria and requirements for the financial incentive programs, the program descriptions include the necessary safeguards to ensure that the City’s interests are protected, including realizing the requisite public benefit derived from the incentives.

8 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

#	RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTICIPANTS	PAGE	RE-LATED
FINANCIAL INCENTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS						
1	“That financial incentive programs implemented through an approved Community Improvement Plan primarily focus on the upgrading and maintenance of the existing housing stock in downtown Windsor, and secondly, on the development of new residential units that fill a gap or meet an unmet demand for downtown housing.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 55	7, 8
2	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to improve and renovate existing buildings that currently have residential units.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 58	5, 27, 28, 35
4	“That the City of Windsor provide for an enhancement to any financial incentive programs implemented in an approved Community Improvement Plan for the purpose of doing upgrades and maintaining identified heritage housing/building stock.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 60	
5	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will, for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area, provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings, including upper-storey conversions for residential use.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 60	2
7	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new residential units on infill properties.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 61	1, 8
8	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new residential units through the redevelopment of properties.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 62	1, 7
9	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to improve and renovate existing commercial buildings.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 70	

#	RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTICIPANTS	PAGE	RE-LATED
10	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to construct new commercial buildings.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 70	
11	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at making physical improvements to the exterior facade of buildings.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 78	
12	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at offsetting some of the additional costs associated with preparing a space for a retail use.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 79	13, 14, 29
13	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will provide grants and/or loans aimed at attracting new targeted retail uses to Downtown Windsor.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 82	12, 14, 29
20	“That the City of Windsor establish a program through an approved Community Improvement Plan to provide a grant and/or loan assist with the higher construction costs associated with the or rehabilitation of heritage buildings or the adaptive re-use of obsolete commercial and office buildings for residential purposes.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 101	
21	“That the City of Windsor structure any financial incentive programs implemented through an approved Community Improvement Plan in a way that rewards increased energy efficiency in buildings.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 101	
25	“That a facade improvement programs be implemented to improve the condition of building facades and to update the design of building facades. The focus should be to animate the street and provide funding to rehabilitate the facades of buildings.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 113	
26	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings, including upper-storey conversions for residential use.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 115	2, 28
27	“Incentives be prepared to encourage the use of vacant upper storey units for residential units.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 116	2, 27
28	“Provide incentives to encourage a wider range of retail uses in the core.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 116	12, 13, 24



#	RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTICIPANTS	PAGE	RE-LATED
34	“That the City of Windsor implement an incentive program according to an approved Community Improvement Plan that will for eligible residential development occurring in the designated project area provide grants and/or loans to offset the costs to renovating existing buildings , including upper-storey conversions for residential use.”	High	Immediate /Upon Adoption	Planning (Development and Implementation) & Finance (Implementation)	page 143	5, 27, 28
REGULATORY CHANGES RECOMMENDATIONS						
6	“That the City of Windsor review the parking requirements for building conversions and explore create solutions to provide the parking necessary to support the residential demand generated by building conversions to residential.”	High	0-12 Months	Planning	page 60	
24	“That the City of Windsor initiate a Zoning By-law amendment that will allow residential only buildings to be constructed in the Destination District.”	Medium	0-12 Months	Planning	page 110	
29	“That the City of Windsor initiate a Zoning By-law amendment that will allow residential only buildings to be constructed in the Old Town District.”	Medium	0-12 Months	Planning	page 126	
35	“The section of Ouellette Avenue from Elliot street to Erie Street should be reviewed to determine if the zoning should be amended to make the required setbacks consistent with other sections of Ouellette Avenue.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 147	
FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS						
37	“That the City of Windsor explore the establishment of a capital reserve budget for the purposes of addressing small issues/items that do not have other sources for funding to address them.”	High	0-12 Months	Planning and Finance (Implementation)	page 155	
DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS						
22	“That the City of Windsor evaluate all development by its contribution to downtown Windsor’s unique sense of place.”	High	Immediate / Upon Adoption	Planning	page 103	24
23	“That the City of Windsor develop downtown specific Urban Design Guidelines the will be a supplemental document to this Community Improvement Plan for the purpose of achieving desirable design results and ensuring that new development is compatible with the existing context of downtown Windsor.”	High	0-12 Months	Planning	page 105	23
16	“That the City of Windsor develop a streetscaping strategy and capital works programme for the implementation of future streetscaping projects in downtown Windsor.”	Medium	0-12 Months	Planning, Public Works & Finance	page 88	15, 17
PRESERVING HOUSING STOCK RECOMMENDATIONS						
3	“That the City of Windsor review its Demolition Control By-laws that apply to Downtown Windsor to develop an approach that balances protecting the residential building stock with permitting necessary demolitions.”	Medium	12-24 Months	Planning and Building	page 59	32, 33, 34
31	“That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.”	Medium	12-24 Months	Planning and Building	page 129	3, 33, 34

#	RECOMMENDATIONS	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	PARTICIPANTS	PAGE	RE-LATED
32	“That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.”	Medium	12-24 Months	Planning and Building	page 134	3, 32, 34
33	“That a demolition control by-law under the Planning Act be prepared for the Downtown Windsor Planning Study area.”	Medium	12-24 Months	Planning and Building	page 139	3, 32, 33
FURTHER STUDY/REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS						
14	“That the City of Windsor in conjunction with the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association explore the feasibility of preparing a Retail Market Analysis and Recruitment Strategy with the goal of actively targeting retailers that contribute to the optimal retail mix for downtown Windsor.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning and Consultants	page 83	12, 13, 29
15	“That the City of Windsor review the City Centre Planning District Streetscaping Standards Manual to ensure that it reflects the best practices in design, construction and implementation in streetscape development.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 87	16
17	“ That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including Streetscaping Improvements as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 88	16
18	“That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including Public Art as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 91	
19	“That the City of Windsor explore the feasibility of including public parks and open spaces as a Community Benefit under Section 37 of the Planning Act.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 94	
30	“That the one way streets within this area be reviewed for possible conversion to two-way streets to improve traffic flow and access to businesses.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 126	
36	“That the City of Windsor explore the opportunities for instituting a Community Planning Permit System for downtown Windsor to replace its existing planning regulations and processes.”	Lower	12-24 Months	Planning	page 154	

9 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Council has directed the preparation of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that has the main purpose of revitalizing downtown Windsor by stimulating interest and investment across all sectors with the end goal of making downtown Windsor a desirable place to work, visit and live. This CIP will compliment and implement a number of the recommendations made by the strategy component of the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan.

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9.1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This section of the Community Improvement Plan will provide the policy rationale for using the Community Improvement provisions of the *Planning Act* to address the existing challenges facing downtown Windsor. Additionally, it will demonstrate how the CIP is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to the City’s Official Plan in this regard.

9.1.1 Provincial Policy Direction and Legislative Authority

Provincial Policy Statement

Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that, “decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act”. These policy statements are consolidated in most recent version of the Provincial Policy Statement (the “PPS”) that took effect on April 30, 2014.

The Provincial policy directions aligned with the main purpose of this CIP include:

- Supporting the long-term economic prosperity by maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets (Section 1.7.1.c);
- Encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes (Section 1.7.1.d);
- Promoting opportunities for intensification and redevelopment taking into account existing building stock, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities (Section 1.1.3.3);
- Providing an appropriate range of housing types and densities that accommodate current and future users (Section 1.4.1);
- Planning public streets, spaces and facilities to

be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity (Section 1.5.1a);

- Promoting a land use pattern, density and mix of uses that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support current and future use of transit and active transportation (Section 1.6.7.4);
- Promoting economic development and competitiveness by encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support livable and resilient communities (Section 1.3.1.c); and,
- Conserving and protecting significant built heritage and cultural heritage resources (Section 2.6.1).

Planning Act – Provincial Interest

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* outlines the specific areas that are deemed to be of Provincial interest in planning matters. It is these areas that inform the Provincial Policy Statement, and that municipalities must “have regard to” when making planning decisions, including adopting a Community Improvement Plan. To this end, this CIP will have regard to the following matters of Provincial interest:

- The conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest (Section 2 (c));
- The orderly development of safe and healthy communities (Section 2 (h));
- The adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities (Section 2 (i));
- The adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing (Section 2 (j));
- The adequate provision of employment opportunities (Section 2 (k));
- The protection of public health and safety (Section 2 (o));
- The appropriate location of growth and development (Section 2 (p));
- The promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians (Section 2 (q)); and,



- The promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place, and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant (Section 2 (r)).

Planning Act – Community Improvement

Section 28(2) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, provides that where there is an Official Plan in effect in a local municipality that contains provisions relating to community improvement in the municipality, the council of the municipality may, by by-law, designate all or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a community improvement project area.

According to Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act*, a “community improvement project area” is defined as “a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason”.

The City of Windsor’s Council is of the opinion that the application of the Community Improvement provisions is desirable to support the stated Goals and Objectives of the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan and the competitiveness of downtown Windsor.

For the purposes of carrying out a Community Improvement Plan, a municipality may engage in the following within the community improvement project area:

1. Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
2. Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan;
3. Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and
4. Make grants or loans in conformity with the CIP to the registered owners, assessed owners or *assignees* to pay for *eligible costs*.

This CIP will outline how the City of Windsor will engage in one or more of these activities to meet the objectives of this

Community Improvement Plan.

9.1.2 City of Windsor Policy Foundation

The City also has policies that provide direction regarding the local economy, as well as policies that enable the City to use the Community Improvement provisions of the *Planning Act*.

Community Strategic Plan

The Windsor 20-year Strategic Plan provides a framework for Council and City Administration when making decisions regarding programs, services, and infrastructure.

The Strategic Plan has a number of specific objectives that fall under three main themes: 1) Jobs, 2) Reputation, and 3) Quality of Life. The Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan aligns with the following objectives identified in the Strategic Plan:

Jobs:

- Supporting streamlined and local economic development initiatives, coordinated with other bodies where appropriate
- Diversifying its economy and encouraging, facilitating and attracting all sizes of business in many different sectors

Reputation:

- Leveraging the City’s existing strengths to attract and retain people
- Strengthening the City as a whole through innovative strategies that support and build a vibrant downtown

Quality of Life:

- Strengthening neighbourhoods to ensure they are safe, caring and meet the needs of residents
- Promoting the City’s unique culture and built heritage

Official Plan

The Official Plan (OP) provides guidance for the physical development of the municipality while taking into consideration important social, economic and environmental matters and goals.

Additionally, the Official Plan provides a significant amount of policy direction on the matters addressed by this CIP.

City Centre Planning District Policies

The City Centre Planning District is given special consideration and attention within Windsor. As the focus of major economic, social and cultural activities, the City Centre is the heart of Windsor. In addition, its function as an international gateway contributes to the City Centre’s role as a welcoming arrival point for visitors.

To ensure that the City Centre prospers, Council will manage development to promote a diverse mixture of businesses, cultural venues, major government offices, residential neighbourhoods and entertainment venues. To this end, the OP states:

The City Centre will continue to be the major focus of cultural, social and economic activities. The City Centre is and will remain the heart of Windsor, serving as the visual symbol of the entire community. A diverse mixture of businesses, cultural venues, major government offices and entertainment destinations will strengthen downtown as a major economic centre. The heart of our community will also provide a livable residential environment for a variety of people and be a welcoming arrival point for visitors. (Section 3.2.2.2)

The Official Plan contains a number of specific objectives that support this vision for downtown Windsor, including:

- To encourage a concentration of government institutions, entertainment and retail uses, cultural venues, residences, business headquarters and related offices in the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.1);
- To foster livable residential neighbourhoods close to employment, shopping and entertainment opportunities (Section 6.11.1.2);
- To enhance public and open spaces within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.3);
- To promote the conservation and adaptive reuse of buildings within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.4);
- To establish design guidelines to create an attractive and memorable City Centre (Section 6.11.1.5);
- To enhance views and vistas of the waterfront, Detroit skyline and key civic and heritage buildings within

the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.6);

- To enhance the City Centre as a pedestrian friendly district (Section 6.11.1.7);
- To facilitate the development of a number of distinct sub areas, each with its own identity and character within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.8);
- To designate key streets as pedestrian oriented theme streets and provide appropriate streetscaping (Section 6.11.1.9);
- To enhance pedestrian, cycling and public transportation access to and within the City Centre (Section 6.11.1.10); and,
- To strengthen the role of the City Centre as a major international gateway and tourism destination (Section 6.11.1.11).

Community Improvement Policies

In conformity with the *Planning Act*, the Official Plan also includes provisions relating to community improvement.

The Official Plan includes Community Improvement provisions that identify areas and situations where the preparation of a CIP is desirable, as well as specific objectives to be achieved as a result of applying these provisions. According to the Official Plan:

Community improvement initiatives will be used to revitalize existing planning districts, neighbourhoods, corridors or any other identified area in decline or in transition from one land use to another.

Council may designate by by-law a Community Improvement Project Area in accordance with the *Planning Act* to revitalize planning districts, neighbourhoods, corridors or any other identified area in decline or in transition from one land use to another.

The Community Improvement Objectives include:

- To revitalize areas in decline or in transition from one land use to another through the use of Community Improvement Plans;
- To provide standards for building and property maintenance and occupancy;
- To establish partnerships with business associations



to strengthen employment, commercial and mixed use areas; and,

- To direct municipal actions to revitalize and strengthen neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, a Community Improvement Project Area may include any planning district, neighbourhood, corridor or any other identified area of the city and shall be encouraged for:

- Residential areas where the housing stock is in need of maintenance, rehabilitation and/or repair;
- Declining commercial or mixed use areas where there are a number of vacant or underutilized properties;
- Areas in which there are land use conflicts as a result of incompatible uses; and,
- Areas that have the potential to be new employment areas.

9.1.3 Community Improvement Project Area

According to the *Planning Act*, a “community improvement project area” means a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.

The Community Improvement Project Area boundary coincides with the boundaries of the City Centre Planning District, as defined in the City of Windsor Official Plan.

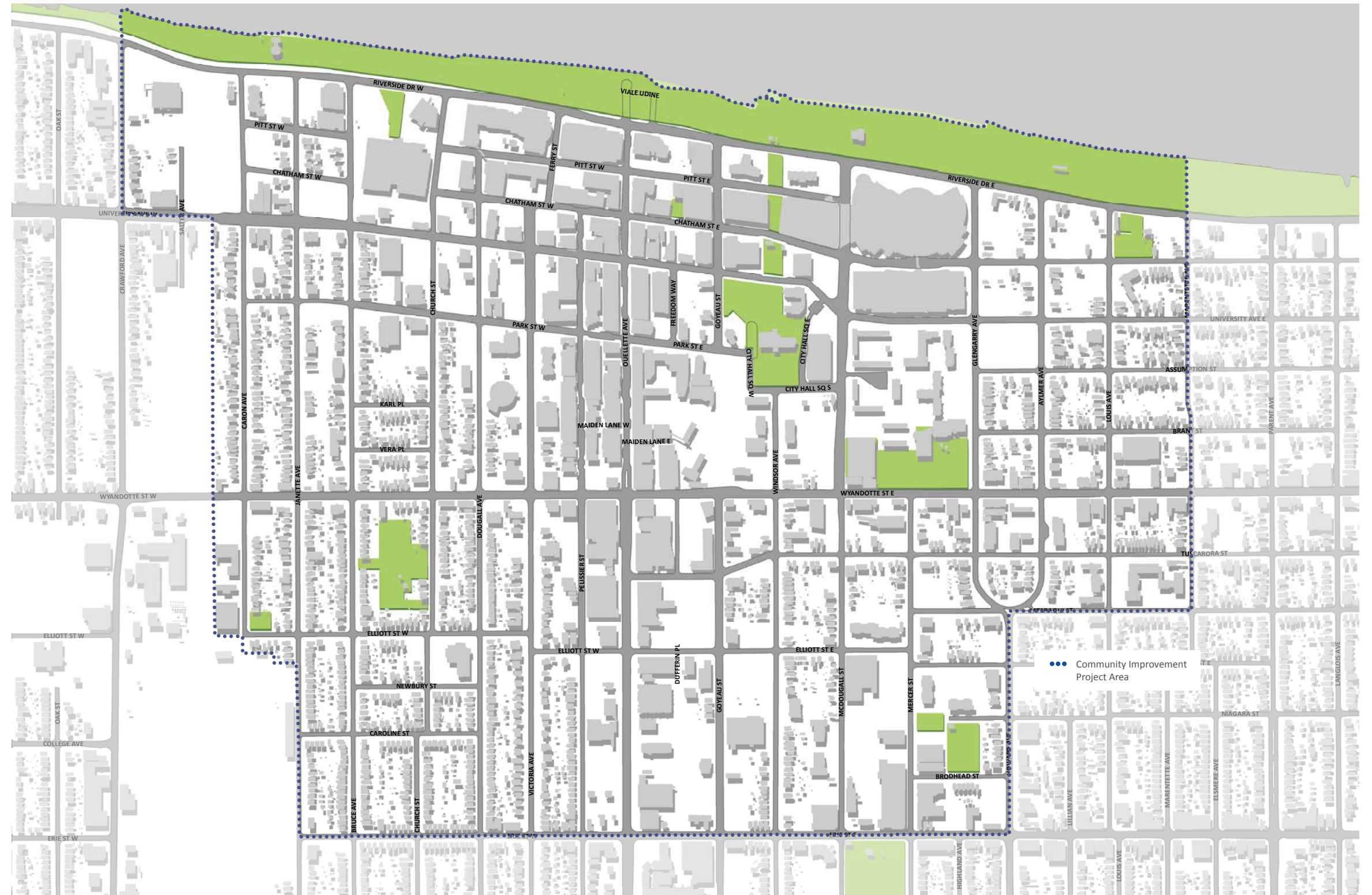
Generally, the CIP Project Area boundaries can be described as follows:

Starting at the extension of Cranford Avenue and the Detroit River; heading south along Cranford Avenue to the corner of Cranford Avenue and University Avenue; heading east along University Avenue to the rear property lines of the properties fronting on Caron Avenue; following the rear property lines south to the rear property lines of the properties fronting on Elliot Street W; following the rear property lines east to Janette Avenue to Janette Avenue; heading south on Janette Avenue to Erie Street W; heading east on Erie Street to Howard Avenue; heading north on Howard Avenue to Cataraqi

Street; heading east on Cataraqi Street to Marentette Avenue; heading north on Marentette Avenue to the Detroit River; following the Detroit River west to the extension of Cranford Avenue to the starting point.

Targeted Incentive Program Boundaries

Community Improvement Project Area Map



Consistent with the Official Plan policy “to facilitate the development of a number of distinct sub areas, each with its own identity and character within the City Centre” (Section 6.11.1.8) it will be necessary to apply the individual financial incentive programs and other municipal activities to targeted geographic areas that may be different from but will be located entirely within the Community Improvement Project Area.

Each financial incentive program will identify the specific geographic area(s) where the program will apply based on the districts and areas defined and described by the Downtown Plan and aligned with vision and opportunities presented within the targeted area and described by the *Neighbourhood and Districts* section of the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan.

9.1.4 Community Improvement Plan Objectives

The objectives stated below are an expression of the intended outcomes resulting from the implementation of this Community Improvement Plan. Objectives are a way to guide decisions and will be used as guideposts to demonstrate how individual development proposals result in a public benefit (i.e. meeting one or more objectives). Additionally, the clearly stated objectives have been used to provide direction for the development and implementation of the specific policies, incentives and municipal actions contained in this CIP.

The following are the objectives for Community Improvement Plan component of the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan:

- To increase the number of people choosing to live in downtown Windsor by supporting the creation of range of desirable residential units and the amenities necessary to support day-to-day living in the downtown core;
- To increase the number of businesses and people working in downtown Windsor by encouraging investment in new and revitalized office space;
- To coordinate incentives and other municipal activities with City of Windsor Economic Revitalization CIP in order to retain and create jobs in downtown Windsor and continue to diversify the local economy;

- Promote and encourage retail development that meets the needs of the people living, working and visiting downtown – destination retail will be encouraged;
- Encourage property improvements that contribute to a vibrant and healthy downtown core and authentic sense of place;
- Encourage the redevelopment of the City’s historic buildings resulting in the continued or renewed productivity of these properties in a manner that protects and honours their historical characteristics;
- Encourage and undertake improvements and enhancements to the Public Realm that portray an area that is vibrant and contribute to downtown’s “sense of place”;
- Improve the experience of living, visiting and working downtown by acknowledging that the little things matter, and that implementing small scale improvements or solutions can have a big impact;
- Provide financial incentive programs that are attractive to potential investors and corporate decision-makers, but are balanced with expectations of City taxpayers and the City’s ability to fund the financial incentive programs;
- Facilitate the development of the downtown’s vacant buildings and land that have the potential for higher order uses;
- Attract investment based on the downtown’s strengths and competitive advantages; and,
- Support investment and development that results in an increase in property assessment and grows the municipal tax base over the long-term.

This CIP will include specific policies, incentives and municipal actions that are intended to contribute towards the achievement of these objectives. Furthermore, all of the policies, incentives and municipal actions included in this CIP are also guided by the main principles of the Downtown Windsor Enhancement Strategy and Community Improvement Plan, namely:

- **Market Based** – The recommendations resulting from this Study will be based on a market analysis which will ensure that all recommendations are viable given the current and future market conditions of the downtown;

- **Context and Compatibility** – This Study will always consider the existing ‘character’ of the downtown and provide recommendations that result in developments and improvements that are compatible with the existing character;
- **Heritage and Cultural Resources** – The decisive action of *City Council* as it relates to many of the downtown cultural facilities and organizations has solidified the downtown as the cultural hub of the community;
- **Pedestrian Focused** – The Study will make safe pedestrian navigation a primary consideration for reviewing new developments, public realm improvements, and changes/improvements to the existing transportation network; and,
- **Best Practices** – The Study will verify its recommendations against a review of the ‘best practices’ related to the particular issue being addressed.

9.2 FINANCIAL INCENTIVES PROGRAMS

The following section outlines the financial incentive programs that have been developed to deliver on the objectives of this CIP. Included in this section are definitions for terms that are used in this CIP, and general and program-specific program requirements.

A clear relationship between the financial incentive programs and the CIP's objectives demonstrates the public benefit that can result from offering publicly funded financial incentives to stimulate private sector investment. The financial incentive programs are targeted at the sectors and type of projects that will contribute to the ongoing vitality and reinvestment in the City's core, while providing a financial return on investment in the form of ongoing property taxes to the City over the long term.

To this end, applicants must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the City of Windsor that the development clearly serves the public interest and that there is a proven need for financial incentives in order for the project to move forward. City Council will act as the final approval authority for the financial incentive programs and be the ultimate judge of a project's contribution to meeting the objectives of this CIP and its "need" for financial incentives.

In addition to outlining the eligibility criteria and requirements for the financial incentive programs, the program descriptions include the necessary safeguards to ensure that the City's interests are protected, including realizing the requisite public benefit derived from the incentives.

9.2.1 General Program Information

Definitions

This section provides the definitions for terms that are used in this CIP and are intended to explain the meaning of a term for the purposes of this CIP.

Adaptive Reuse: is the process of adapting old buildings or infrastructure by *development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or construction* for the purposes of using them for new *eligible uses*.

Administration (or City Administration): includes the Chief Administrative Officer and all staff employed by the Corporation of the City of Windsor.

Affordable Housing Unit(s): means a residential unit that meets either the definition for *Affordability for Home Ownership* or *Affordability of Rental Housing*.

Affordability for Home Ownership: means the least expensive of: 1) housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or, 2) housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.

Affordability of Rental Housing: means the least expensive of: 1) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or, 2) a unit for which the rent is at least 20% below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

Alley Segment: is one section or part of an alley that is parallel and immediately adjacent to a building wall. Limits or boundaries for alley segments are generally the intersection of the alley and street, building walls, and/or the next alley segment. A side alley segment is the section of alley that runs parallel to the adjacent building side wall from the front of the building to the rear property line. A rear alley segment is the section of the alley that runs parallel with the adjacent building rear wall from the intersecting side alley to the opposite side property line or another intersecting side alley.

Applicant (or Applicants): may include registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the

community improvement project area, and to any other person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant.

Assignee (or Assignees): is a person to whom an owner or tenant has legally assigned the right to receive a grant and/or loan pursuant to this CIP.

Base Rate: is the total amount of *municipal taxes* payable in the calendar year that *City Council* approves the financial incentives for the *eligible works*. The Base Rate may be reduced to reflect a *vacancy tax rebate* where such a rebate was issued for the previous tax year and the subject property, or a portion thereof, is *vacant* at the time of an application.

Catalyst Project: is a *development, redevelopment or adaptive reuse* of a highly visible building or property that will result in a corresponding and complementary *development* reaction in the immediate and surrounding properties. A catalyst project must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the *City* that the project returns a reasonable public benefit by meeting 3 or more of the following criteria:

- Represents visible investment of at least \$5 million or more (use a pro forma to determine the threshold);
- The creation or relocation of 50 or more direct jobs located within the CIP Project Area;
- Will result in a significant increase in land value that results in increased municipal assessment of 20% or more;
- Can reasonably expect to spur additional investment in the surrounding area(s);
- Creates 100 or more new residential units within the CIP Project Area;
- Conveys a message of neighbourhood progress and stability; and/or,
- Meets three or more of the stated CIP objectives of this CIP (Section 8.1.4).

City (or The City): is The Corporation of The City of Windsor.

City Council (or Council): is the legislative body that governs the business and affairs of The Corporation of The City of Windsor. It includes the Mayor and Ward Councilors.

City Planner: is the position of the "City Planner" within the Corporation of The City of Windsor's organizational hierarchy. He or She is the head of the Planning and Building Services

Department.

Construction: is the erection or physical improvements of the whole or any part of a building or structure for the purpose of *development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse*.

Designated Heritage Building: is a building that is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Development: is investment that results in the productive use of lands and/or buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area, and includes but is not limited to new building *construction* or improvements made for the purposes of establishing new residential, commercial or institutional uses, or the expansion of existing buildings to realize more effective use of the land's potential.

Eligible Costs: are the costs related to *development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse* of a building or property in conformity with this CIP, and as described by the individual financial incentive programs.

Eligible Use: is a use that meets the eligibility criteria of one or more of the financial incentive programs described by this CIP.

Eligible Works: includes all *development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse* of a use that meets the eligibility criteria of one or more of the financial incentive programs described by this CIP.

Mixed Use Building: is a building that contains a combination of residential, commercial, cultural, and/or institutional uses.

MPAC: is the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation established by the *Ontario Property Assessment Corporation Act*, 1997.

Municipal Heritage Register: is the publicly accessible register of properties that are of cultural heritage value or interest situated in Windsor as required by Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Municipal Taxes: is the *City* of Windsor (i.e. the municipal) portion of property taxes payable and does not include Educational portion payable to the Province.

Public Art: is an original artwork approved by the *City's* Public Art Advisory Committee, completed in any media, and that is installed permanently or temporarily in such a way as to permit viewing by the public indoors or outdoors, as well as being accessible to all. It can be used to express community values, enhance our environment, transform a landscape, heighten awareness, or question assumptions.

Reassessment: is a change in assessed value or a change in the tax class, as determined *MPAC*, that results in an increase in property taxes.

Redevelopment: is *development* of a property or properties that have been previously developed, or for the expansion, *rehabilitation* or *adaptive reuse* of an existing building. This can include the acquisition and wholesale changeover in the use of a large site or several smaller neighbouring sites, and may involve some land assembly or demolition activity.

Rehabilitation: is the returning of an existing building and/or land to a useful state by *adaptive reuse, development, redevelopment and/or construction*.

Renovation: Making changes and repairs that improve the overall condition of the existing building and its functionality for its intended use.

Residential Unit(s): is any living accommodation used or intended for use as residential premises. More specifically it means a room or suite of rooms used by or designed to be used by one (1) or more individuals as an independent and separate housekeeping unit. For a room or apartment to be defined as a *residential unit*, it must be distinctly separated from other living spaces within the building. It must also be directly accessible from an outer door or through an interior door in a shared building corridor.

Retail Unit(s): is the portion of a building and/or property that is occupied by a *retail store*. More specifically it means a room or suite of rooms used by or designed to be used by one (1) *retail store*. For a space to be defined as a *retail unit*, it must be distinctly separated from other common areas within the building. This does not include

restaurants or bars.

Retail Store: is the use of a building, property or part thereof for the retail sale of goods or merchandise, including the lease or rental of goods or merchandise directly to the public, usually in small quantities.

Retrofit Works: are improvements and/or upgrades to a building's infrastructure to improve energy efficiency and performance (i.e. to reduce utility and/or maintenance costs) and/or work that is done for the sole purpose of complying with the Ontario Building Code.

Tax Increment: is the difference between the *base rate* at the time of *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project and the *municipal taxes* after the completion of the approved *eligible works*, occupancy and *reassessment* by *MPAC*. The *tax increment* will be calculated on an annual basis and will include increases and decreases resulting from tax rate changes and *reassessments*.

Vacancy Tax Rebate: is a tax rebate issued under Section 364 of the *Municipal Act*.

Vacant: is property or space in a building that is unoccupied, currently receives the *Vacancy Tax Rebate*, and/or classified as *vacant* by *MPAC*. The property or building will have had to be unoccupied for at least 6 months prior to the application date to be considered *vacant* for the purposes of the financial incentive programs.

Underutilized: is property or space in a building that is currently not being used to its full potential, often it is accessory to but not essential to the operations of the primary use.

General Incentive Program Requirements

The general and program specific requirements are not necessarily exhaustive and the *City* reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on an application specific basis. All of the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP are subject to the following general requirements in addition to the individual requirements specified under each program.

1. Application for any of the incentive programs contained in the CIP can be made only for properties within the Community Improvement Project Area.
2. If the *applicant* is not the owner of the property, the *applicant* must provide written consent from the owner of the property on the application. The property owner

may also be required to be a party to any agreements for the financial incentive programs.

3. *Applicants* approved for the programs contained in the CIP will be required to complete the *eligible works* and have the property reassessed by *MPAC* within specified timeframes.

4. The *applicant* must address all outstanding work orders and/or other fees from the *City* (including tax arrears) against the subject property to the satisfaction of the municipality prior to the grant being paid, or be addressed as part of the proposed work.

5. Any *applicant* that is purchasing *City* owned property as part of the proposal must enter into a written agreement with the *City* stating that they will keep and maintain the land, building and the use in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan. The agreement will also include the specific details (amount, duration, performance expectations, legal remedies, etc) of the incentive programs that will be made available to *development*. The agreement entered into will be registered against the land to which it applies and the *City* will enforce the provisions of the agreement against any party to the agreement and all subsequent owners or tenants.

General Incentive Program Provisions

All projects that are approved for financial incentives are subject to the following terms and conditions, in addition to the individual provisions specified under each program.

1. Windsor *City Council* is the sole approval authority for all applications submitted under the financial incentive programs included in this CIP. Council may delegate to either a Committee of the Council or to an appointed officer of the municipality by position occupied the Council's authority to approve financial incentive applications subject to the requirements of the individual financial incentive programs.
2. As a condition of approval of an application for any of the financial incentive programs contained within this CIP, the *applicant* must enter into an agreement with the *City*. The agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.
3. Approved grants being received through one or more of the financial incentive programs contained within this CIP can be transferred to the new owners

of the property or other *assignee* at the sole discretion of the *City* subject to the new owner entering into an agreement (where applicable) with the *City* that fulfills the requirements of the original agreement, plus any new requirements.

4. All proposed works approved under the incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land shall conform to all provincial laws, municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines, including applicable Official Plan and zoning requirements and approvals.

5. The *applicant* will be required to submit a complete application to the *City* describing in detail the work that is planned. This may include reports, floor plans, conceptual site plans, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the *City* with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the *City* prior to *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project.

6. All studies, drawings, reports and/or materials submitted to and/or requested by the *City* to support a financial incentive program application shall be prepared by qualified professionals to the satisfaction of the *City*. The individual financial incentive programs may have specific requirements for information, as well as outline the specific professional qualifications necessary to complete the prescribed work.

7. The *City* may undertake an audit of work done and *eligible costs* if it is deemed necessary, at the expense of the *applicant*.

8. *City* staff, officials, and/or agents of the *City* may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the *City*.

9. The *City* is not responsible for any costs incurred by an *applicant* in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant.

10. The total of all grants provided in respect of the particular lands and buildings of an *applicant* under the programs contained in the CIP shall not exceed *eligible costs* with respect to these lands and buildings.

11. Grants will not apply to any portion of the personal

property, inventory or land purchase value of the project.

12. The financial incentive programs approved by *City Council* will take effect as of the date of *City Council* adoption and will not be applied retroactively to any work that has taken place prior to the adoption of the CIP.

13. Approval of financial incentive program applications will not be applied retroactively to any work that has taken place prior to the *City Council's* or delegate's approval to participate in an incentive program. However, Council or its delegate may at its discretion approve including *eligible costs* incurred between the time that the *City* receives a complete application for a financial incentive program(s) and the date of the final approval to participate in the program. The *applicant* assumes all of the risks associated with beginning the *eligible works* prior to final approval, including the potential for denial of a financial incentive program application.

14. *City Council* at its discretion may at any time discontinue a program; however, any participants in the program prior to its discontinuance will continue to receive grants as approved for their property in accordance with the agreement signed with the *City* of Windsor.

15. If the *applicant* is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the *City*, the *City* may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant, and any grant amount paid will be recovered by the *City*.

16. If a building that was erected or improved with a program grant is demolished prior to the expiry of the grant period, the grant is terminated and will be recovered by the *City*.

17. The *City* has the right to perform annual inspections to ensure compliance with the agreement and make adjustments to the incentive levels to reflect the current situation in relation to the agreement signed with the *City*.

18. Grants will be paid in accordance with the specific requirements and payment terms of each individual financial incentive program offered by this Community Improvement Plan.

19. Unless otherwise stated, the financial incentive programs described in this CIP are designed to be funded by a capital budget established for the purposes of implementing the financial incentive programs according

to the payment conditions and schedule outlined for each program, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council

20. The Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program described in this CIP is designed to be funded by the *tax increment* generated by the *development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation* according to the payment schedule outlined for the program.

21. *City Council*, at its sole discretion, may evaluate an incentive application and decide on a case-by-case basis to adjust the level of the incentives (not to exceed the *eligible costs*), provide for an alternative payment schedule, and/or identify and use alternative sources of funding to pay the grants. Council will prepare additional implementation criteria and/or policies to assist with determining when one or more of these options may be necessary and/or desirable. Council modified incentives must comply with the eligibility criteria of the individual incentive program.

22. Financial incentives are available for the *eligible costs* of the *development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation* of a building and/or property, and are not based on occupancy or changes in occupancy.



9.2.2 Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant Program

Purpose

The Upper Storey Conversion Grant Program is aimed at attracting new investment and interest in converting currently non-residential vacant or underutilized upper storey space to residential units by providing a financial incentive that will be targeted at the costs of converting the space to new residential units. It is intended to stimulate the creation of new residential units on the upper storeys of existing mixed use buildings.

The limited size of the buildings and the outdated building infrastructure systems, which may require additional Building Code upgrades, can make the cost-effective upgrading and reuse of the buildings for market rate residential units challenging.

Description

The Upper Storey Conversion Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby property owners will be eligible to receive a grant of \$5,000 for every new residential unit created on the upper storey(s) of an existing *mixed use building*, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property.

Program Details

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this

program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

1. The *development, renovation or redevelopment* must result in a minimum of 2 new residential units above the first (i.e. ground) floor of the building.
2. Not eligible for any unit or space that was already configured or used for residential use.
3. The *applicant* will be required to submit a complete application to the *City* describing in detail the *development or redevelopment* that is planned. This may include floor plans, conceptual site plans, reports, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the *City* with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the *City* prior to *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project.
4. Prior to the approval of an Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant, *City* staff may need to inspect the building to review its condition and the proposed conversion plans;
5. Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grants are only available for the "*eligible costs*" specified below:
 - Construct new residential units that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property

Standards By-law and the Fire Code, including, but not limited to the following:

- a. Installation of safety and fire protection systems such as carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms, fire alarms, exit signs, etc.;
 - b. Installation of fire escapes;
 - c. Installation of new or reinforcement of floors, ceilings and/or walls;
 - d. Improvements to electrical, ventilation, heating and plumbing supply systems;
 - e. Improvements for barrier-free accessibility;
 - f. *Construction* or alteration of stairs, guard rails and/or hand rails; and,
 - g. Installation or alteration of required window openings and windows for upper storey residential units.
- *Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works;*
 - Other improvements, at the discretion of the *City Planner*, related to converting upper storey commercial space to residential uses;
 - Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/Modification/ Termination, Plan of Subdivision/Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the “H” Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit). Any other permit issued by the *City* that is not listed above, but in the opinion of the *City Planner*, advances the objectives of this CIP;
6. Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property’s grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to *City Council* approval.

Geographic Eligibility

The Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant Program is applicable to the entire Community Improvement Project Area for projects that meet the program requirements outlined above.

Grant Calculation

The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the new number of residential units created as a result of the conversion of the upper storeys from a non-residential use. The grant will be for the amount of \$5,000 for every new residential unit created on the upper storeys of an existing *mixed use building*, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property.

City Council, at its sole discretion, may approve any alternative payment schedule for the grant pursuant to General Incentive Program Provision #21.

Grant Payment

Payment of the grant is made to the grant recipient upon the *City* being satisfied that the grant recipient has complied with all terms and conditions of the application procedure, inspection procedures, development procedures, and completion of work within the required time frame.

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, the total of the Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for the Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant Program.

Grant Agreement

As a condition of approval of an application for an Upper Storey Conversion Grant, the *applicant* must enter into an agreement with the *City*. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.

Other Funding

Projects that are eligible for the Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant Program are permitted to combine the incentives from any other City of Windsor approved Community Improvement Plan provided that the total of all property tax assistance, grants and loans provided by the *City* in relation to this, or any other CIP, cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for all approved incentive programs.



9.2.3 New Residential Development Grant Program

Purpose

The New Residential Development Grant Program is intended to stimulate residential development within Downtown Windsor by providing a financial incentive to stimulate the construction of new residential units through the development or redevelopment of a building or property, including creating new residential units on vacant land, and/or the expansion to an existing building.

Description

The New Residential Development Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby property owners will be eligible to receive a grant of \$2,500 for every new *residential unit*, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property.

Program Details

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

1. The *development* or *redevelopment* must result in a minimum of four (4) new residential units.
2. Not eligible any unit or space that was already configured and/or used for residential use.

3. The program will only be offered until 100 new residential units have been funded by the New Residential Development Grant Program. Council can increase the number of units that can be funded at such time that the original 100 residential units have been constructed.

4. The *applicant* will be required to submit a complete application to the *City* describing in detail the *development* or *redevelopment* that is planned. This may include floor plans, conceptual site plans, reports, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the *City* with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the *City* prior to *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project.

5. Prior to the approval of a New Residential Development Grant, *City* staff may need to inspect the building to review its condition and the proposed conversion plans;

6. New Residential Development Grants are only available for the “*eligible costs*” specified below:

- Construct new residential units that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Installation of safety and fire protection systems such as carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms, fire alarms, exit signs, etc.;
 - b. Installation of fire escapes;
 - c. Installation of new or reinforcement of floors, ceilings and/or walls;
 - d. Improvements to electrical, ventilation, heating and plumbing supply systems;

- e. Improvements for barrier-free accessibility;
- f. Construction or alteration of stairs, guard rails and/or hand rails; and,
- g. Installation or alteration of required window openings and windows for upper storey residential units.

- Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works;
- Other improvements, at the discretion of the City Planner, related to construction of new residential units;
- Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/Modification/ Termination, Plan of Subdivision/Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the “H” Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit). Any other permit issued by the City that is not listed above, but in the opinion of the City Planner, advances the objectives of this CIP;
- Upgrading on-site infrastructure including water services, sanitary sewers and storm water management facilities; and,
- Constructing/upgrading of any off-site improvement that is required to fulfill any condition of a development/planning approval (including Site Plan Control) for the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property.

7. Only one New Residential Development Grant will be available per property.

8. For projects that involve an existing building, only the residential units that are constructed as part of an addition to the existing building will be eligible for a New Residential Development Grant.

9. Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property’s grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to City Council approval.

Geographic Eligibility

The New Residential Development Grant Program is

applicable to the entire Community Improvement Project Area for projects that meet the program requirements outlined above.

Grant Calculation

The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the new number of residential units created as a result of the development or redevelopment of a building or property. The grant will be for the amount of \$2,500 for every new residential unit created, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property.

City Council, at its sole discretion, may approve any alternative payment schedule for the grant pursuant to General Incentive Program Provision #21.

Grant Payment

Payment of the grant is made to the grant recipient upon the City being satisfied that the grant recipient has complied with all terms and conditions of the application procedure, inspection procedures, development procedures, and completion of work within the required time frame.

In accordance with the Planning Act, the total of the New Residential Development Grant Program will cannot exceed the approved eligible costs for the New Residential Development Grant Program.

Grant Agreement

As a condition of approval of an application for a New Residential Development Grant, the applicant must enter into an agreement with the City. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.

Other Funding

Projects that are eligible for the New Residential Development Grant Program are permitted to combine the incentives from any other City of Windsor approved Community Improvement Plan, with the exception of the Upper Storey Conversion Program, provided that the total of all property tax assistance, grants and loans provided by the City in relation to this, or any other CIP, cannot exceed the approved eligible costs for all approved incentive programs.



9.2.4 Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program

Purpose

The Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program is intended to encourage the redesign, renovation or restoration of commercial and mixed-use building facades in Downtown Windsor by providing a financial incentive to offset some of the costs associated with the improvement of commercial facades.

This program is intended to:

- Make downtown streets a more attractive, inviting and interesting place to walk and shop;
- Help building owners attract and retain tenants;
- Improve the marketability of individual buildings and the local business area as a whole;
- Build civic pride among the local businesses; and,
- Contribute to the quality of life of residents, workers and visitors

Exterior improvements funded by the program help businesses make a better first impression, showcase merchandise and services, and attract new customers.

Description

The Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program will consist of a grant program, whereby property owners, tenants and/or assignees will be eligible to receive a grant for 50% of the eligible costs of the facade improvements, up to \$20,000 per property.

At the discretion of Council, the grant can be increased by up to \$10,000 per property/project for properties/projects:

- That also require side and/or rear façade improvement and restoration works where said rear and/or side facades are highly visible from an adjacent street or public right-of-way or park; or
- Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, or on the Municipal Heritage Register.

Program Details

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

1. Pre-consultation with the property owner and staff from the Planning Department to discuss the proposed improvements is recommended prior to submitting an application to access the Program.
2. The applicant will be required to complete and provide

the following application materials to the Planning and Building Services Department:

- An completed application form;
 - Detailed plans/drawings of the improvements to be undertaken; and,
 - Three estimates of the cost of undertaking the proposed improvements.
3. All work must be consistent with Downtown Windsor Urban Design Guidelines. Furthermore, the evaluation of the *applicant's* proposal will be based on the extent to which the project enhances building aesthetics and functionality with regard for the interface between building and adjacent street(s) and/or public spaces.
4. Design advice and technical assistance may be offered through the Planning Department to assess the property and suggest facade improvements that conform to the Downtown Windsor Urban Design Guidelines.
5. All elevation drawings will be reviewed and approved by the *City* and subject to an agreement that stipulates the specifics of the approved facade design and improvements.
6. The following types of building facade restoration and improvement works on commercial and *mixed use buildings* are considered eligible for a Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement grant:
- Repair or replacement of storefront, including repair or replacement of storefront doors and windows;
 - Exterior and entrance modifications to provide barrier free accessibility;
 - Repair or repointing of facade masonry and brickwork;
 - Repair or replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves, soffits and other architectural details;
 - Repair or replacement of awnings or canopies;
 - Facade painting and cleaning/treatments;
 - Addition of new lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior facade and in entrance and

storefront display areas;

- Installation/improvement of signage (as permitted by the Sign By-law);
- Architectural/design fees required for *eligible works* (to maximum of 10% of the grant amount); and,
- Other improvements and repairs that may be necessary to implement the approved Community Improvement Plan also may be undertaken subject to the appropriate By-laws of The Corporation of the City of Windsor, as determined by the *City Planner*.

7. In addition to the *eligible costs* specified in 6) above, the following types of building facade restoration and improvement works on commercial and *mixed use buildings* designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* are also considered eligible for a grant/loan under this program:

- Works that conserve or enhance elements specified in the Reasons for Designation accompanying the designating by-law under the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- Original siding and roofing materials including repair and replacement where necessary of wood clapboard or board-and-batten, repair and repointing of masonry buildings, stucco repair, repair or replacement of original roofing materials (slate, wood shingles, tile, etc.);
- Removal of modern materials and replacement with documented original materials;
- Reconstruction or *construction* of former and significant architectural features for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources (photographs, drawings, etc.);
- Cleaning of masonry buildings if it is necessary for the building's preservation;
- All final finishes, such as paint and masonry are eligible for funding subject to approval; and,
- Works required to maintain or preserve significant architectural features.

8. The program encourages the restoration of facades to their original state using authentic or original materials. Products used in the restoration of a facade should contain materials that match the texture, colour, size, shape and

detail of the original material where possible.

9. This program encourages removal of materials such as vinyl or aluminum siding and the restoration of original brick, block or wood facades. Where it is not possible to restore the original materials of a facade, the use of natural materials is encouraged where the form and scale of the original facade is maintained.

10. Fees (i.e. architects, engineers, permits, etc.) associated with the facade improvements are an eligible expense up to 10% of the total grant amount. Labour contributed by the *applicant* is not an eligible expense.

11. All improvements must be maintained during the term of the Community Improvement Plan and all improvements must be completed within 18 months of the date on the signed agreement.

Geographic Eligibility

The Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program is applicable to the entire Community Improvement Project Area, excluding the lands that fall within the Wyandotte Town Centre BIA, for projects that meet the program requirements outlined above.

Grant Calculation

The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the total cost of the facade improvements divided by two, with the amount of the grant capped at \$20,000 per property.

At the discretion of Council, the grant can be increased by up to \$10,000 per property/project for properties/projects:

- That also require side and/or rear facade improvement and restoration works where said rear and/or side facades are highly visible from an adjacent street or public right-of-way or park; or
- Designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or are on the *Municipal Heritage Register*.

Grant Payment

Payment of the grant is made to the grant recipient upon the *City* being satisfied that the grant recipient has complied with all terms and conditions of the application procedure, inspection procedures, development procedures, and completion of work within the required time frame.

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, the total of the Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant will cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for the Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant Program.

Grant Agreement

As a condition of approval of an application for a Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant, the *applicant* must enter into an agreement with the *City*. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.

Other Funding

Projects that are eligible for the Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant Program are permitted to be combined with the incentives from any other City of Windsor approved Community Improvement Plan provided that the total of all property tax assistance, grants and loans provided by the *City* in relation to this, or any other CIP, cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for all approved incentive programs.



9.2.5 Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program

Purpose

The Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program is intended to provide economic incentive for the development, rehabilitation and redevelopment of properties in the Downtown Windsor Community Improvement Project area.

To provide an economic catalyst for rehabilitating, redeveloping or developing buildings and properties by providing a financial incentive that reduces any tax increase that can result when a property is rehabilitated, redeveloped or developed and may provide assistance in securing project financing.

The Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program will encourage high quality development and redevelopment that is anticipated to increase the assessment base for Downtown Windsor.

Description

This program will provide an annual grant equal to 100% of the increase in municipal property taxes for five years, with the possibility of an extension up to a total of ten (10) years, after the project is completed and reassessed

to help offset the costs of rehabilitating and redeveloping properties, as long as such *development* results in an increase in assessment and therefore an increase in property taxes.

Program Details

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- The following types of projects are considered eligible for the Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program:
 - Existing commercial, residential and *mixed use buildings*, and *vacant* properties where the *development, redevelopment* or *rehabilitation* project results in an increase in the assessed value and taxes on the property.
- The Building/Property Improvement Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby registered property owners and/or *assignees* will be eligible to receive a grant for 100% of the municipal portion of the *tax increment* generated from the improvements made to the building or property for a defined period of time.
- The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the incremental increase in the *municipal taxes* that results from the work being completed and the project being reassessed by *MPAC*.

- The *applicant* will be required to submit a complete application to the *City* describing in detail the *development* or *redevelopment* that is planned. This may include reports, conceptual site plans, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the *City* with respect to and conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the *City* prior to *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project.
- The *development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse* or *rehabilitation* of the building and/or property must result in an annual grant (or *tax increment*) of at least \$500 for properties that are taxed at the “residential” tax rate, or \$1,000 for all other tax categories.
- Building/Property Improvement Grants are only available for the “*eligible costs*” specified below:
 - Any portion of the *eligible costs* that were not reimbursed as part of another CIP program (except the Alley Enhancement Grant Program);
 - Demolishing buildings for the purpose of preparing the site for *development* or *redevelopment* that is approved by the *City* (only an eligible cost as part of a *redevelopment* of the property);
 - Development* or *redevelopment* of a building or property, including improvements and expansion to an existing building;
 - Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation* and *retrofit works*;
 - Development Feasibility and Support Studies;
 - Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/Modification, Plan of Subdivision/Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the “H” Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit);
 - Upgrading on-site infrastructure including water services, sanitary sewers and stormwater management facilities;
 - Constructing/upgrading of any off-site improvement that is required to fulfill any condition of a development/planning approval (including Site Plan

Control) for the *development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse* or *rehabilitation* of the building and/or property.

- In addition to the costs listed above, the following costs associated with the promotion of energy efficient *development* will also be considered *eligible costs* for the purposes of the Building/Property Improvement Rebate Grant Program:
 - Base plan review by a certified LEED consultant;
 - Preparing new working drawings to the LEED standard;
 - Submitting and administering the constructed element testing and certification used to determine the LEED designation; and
 - Increase in material/*construction* cost of LEED components over standard building code requirements.
- Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property’s grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to *City Council* approval.
- City Council*, at its sole discretion, may evaluate an incentive application and decide on a case-by-case basis to adjust the level of the incentives or provide for an alternative payment schedule to pay the Building/Property Improvement Grant Program. Projects must still meet the eligibility requirements of the Building/Property Improvement Grant Program and Council modified grants will not exceed the *eligible costs* of the *development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse* or *rehabilitation*.
- Grants will be made upon successful completion of the approved work and documentation of the *eligible costs* associated with the work. The *City* may undertake an audit of work done and *eligible costs* if it is deemed necessary, at the expense of the *applicant*.
- The Building/Property Improvement Grant Program may be passed on to subsequent owners, including individual *residential unit* owners, for the amount and time left in the original grant payback period with *City Council's* approval. Subsequent owners will be required to enter into an agreement with the *City* that outlines the details of the remaining grant amount, eligibility and financial obligations.



12. The grant will be forfeited and repaid to the *City* if the property is demolished or altered in a manner that does not comply with the CIP before the grant period elapses.

Geographic Eligibility

The Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program is applicable to the entire Community Improvement Project Area for projects that meet the program requirements outlined above.

Grant Calculation

The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the incremental increase in the *municipal taxes* that result from the eligible work being completed. The *tax increment* will be established after the final inspection of the improvements in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and when *MPAC* has established a new assessment value. The total amount of the grant provided cannot exceed the value of the eligible work that resulted in the *reassessment*.

The payment schedule for the Building/Property Improvement Grant Program will be as follows, or until the total of all grants that are provided in respect of the lands and buildings are equal to the approved *eligible costs*:

Year of Grant	Increment Percentage Rebated	Amount of Taxes Payable
1	100%	Base Rate
2	100%	Base Rate
3	100%	Base Rate
4	100%	Base Rate
5	100%	Base Rate

The amount of the grant will be recalculated every year based on the *tax increment* for that particular year. *City Council*, at its sole discretion, may approve any alternative payment schedule for the grant pursuant to General Incentive Program Provisions #21.

City Council, at its sole discretion, may approve an additional five year extension for a *catalyst project*, a *designated heritage building*, projects where at least 20% of the units are *affordable housing units* and/or projects that achieve a LEED Bronze or higher certification.

For *development or redevelopment* occurring in a *mixed use building*, the Building/Property Improvement Grant will be calculated using *MPAC*'s method of apportioning the assessed value of mixed-use properties into different classes.

Year of Grant	Increment Percentage Rebated	Amount of Taxes Payable
6	100%	Base Rate
7	100%	Base Rate
8	100%	Base Rate
9	100%	Base Rate
10	100%	Base Rate

Grant Payment

The *applicant* will be required to pay the full amount of property taxes owing for each year of the program's applicability and will receive a Building/Property Improvement Grant for the amount of the municipal *tax increment* after the final tax bills for each year have been collected, provided all other eligibility criteria and conditions continue to be met. Grants will not be applied as tax credits against property tax accounts. If the tax bill is not paid in full, the *City* may cancel all future grants and collect past grants made as part of this program.

In case of an assessment appeal, the *City* reserves the right to withhold any forthcoming Building/Property Improvement Grant payments pending final disposition of the appeal. If necessary, the grant will be adjusted and paid once a decision regarding the appeal is rendered.

This program does not exempt property owners from an increase in *municipal taxes* due to a general tax rate increase or a change in assessment for any other reason after the eligible work has been completed.

Grant Adjustments

The City of Windsor reserves the right to adjust the amount of the Building/Property Improvement Grant to:

- If it ceases to meet the objectives outlined in this CIP;
- Recover grant payments that were made under one or more of the other programs contained within this

CIP where the *development or redevelopment* no longer complies with the Purpose or Program Details of the program for which the grant was made;

- Reflect the amount of all reductions to *municipal taxes* paid to the *applicant* following the commencement of the grant program, including property tax rebates to reflect vacancy, charitable status, heritage status, etc; and,
- Account for a reduction of *municipal taxes* payable resulting from a successful assessment appeal.

Grant Agreement

As a condition of approval of an application for a Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant, the *applicant* must enter into an agreement with the *City*. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.

Other Funding

Projects that are eligible for the Building/Property Improvement Grant Program are permitted to combine the incentives from any other City of Windsor approved Community Improvement Plan provided that the total of all property tax assistance, grants and loans provided by the *City* in relation to this, or any other CIP, cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for all approved incentive programs.

In no instances can the application of this, or any other CIP program, exceed 100% of the *Municipal tax increment* generated by the approved *development or redevelopment*.





9.2.6 Retail Investment Grant Program

Purpose

The Retail Reinvestment Grant Program aims to encourage business and property owners to invest in tenant and building improvements by offering matching grants up to \$15,000 to assist with the capital costs associated with renovating the interior of retail spaces occupied by retail businesses.

Description

The design of a *retail store* is critical when appealing to its intended market, as this is where first impressions are made. It can influence a consumer's perception of the quality of the store and visually communicate value.

A reimbursement grant up to 50% of *eligible costs* for improvements to a maximum amount of \$15,000 per *retail unit* in a building that has had a *vacant* ground floor retail or commercial use storefront(s) for at least 6 months immediately prior to application to the program and will be occupied by an new retail business.

The Retail Reinvestment Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby property owners or *assignees* will be eligible to receive a grant of \$15,000 for every new *retail unit* created on the ground floor of an existing commercial/*mixed use building*, up to a maximum of \$30,000

per property.

Program Details

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

1. The Retail Reinvestment Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby registered property owners and/or *assignees* will be eligible to receive a grant for 50% of *eligible costs* per *retail unit* for improvements that result in one or more new *retail units*.
2. The Retail Reinvestment Grant will be capped at a maximum amount of \$15,000 per *retail unit*, up to a maximum of \$30,000 per building/property.
3. The *development* or *redevelopment* must result in new or refurbished ground floor *retail units* that have direct access from the adjacent street;
4. New *retail units* being created in existing buildings must be taking over existing ground floor retail and commercial use storefront(s) that have been *vacant* for at least 6 months immediately prior to application to the program.
5. *Assignees* must be able to demonstrate that they have a five (5) year or longer lease in place to be an eligible *applicant* for the Retail Reinvestment Grant.

6. The *applicant* will be required to submit a complete application to the *City* describing in detail the *development* or *redevelopment* that is planned. This may include floor plans, conceptual site plans, reports, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the *City* with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the *City* prior to *City Council's* approval of financial incentives for the project.

7. In addition to the items listed above, the *applicant* may be requested to submit interior renderings, interior design storyboards, concept plans, product specifications, and other details to the satisfaction of the *City Planner*;

8. Prior to the approval of an Commercial/Retail Reinvestment Grant, *City* staff may inspect the building to review its condition and the proposed conversion plans;

9. Commercial/Retail Reinvestment Grants are only available for the "*eligible costs*" specified below:

- Construct new *retail unit(s)* that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Installation of safety and fire protection systems such as carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms, fire alarms, exit signs, etc.;
 - b. Installation of fire escapes;
 - c. Installation of new or reinforcement of floors, ceilings and/or walls;
 - d. Improvements to electrical, ventilation, heating and plumbing supply systems;
 - e. Improvements for barrier-free accessibility;
 - f. HVAC, electrical, or plumbing improvements;
 - g. Loading dock, storage, store room repairs and *construction*; and,
 - h. AODA compliance improvements;
 - i. The *construction* of customer restrooms;
 - j. *Construction* or alteration of stairs, guard rails and/or hand rails; and,
 - k. HVAC, electrical, or plumbing

improvements.

- *Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation* and *retrofit works*;
- Design and architectural fees associated with the *construction*;
- Other improvements, at the discretion of the *City Planner*, related to *construction* of new *retail units*;
- Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/Modification/ Termination, Plan of Subdivision/ Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the "H" Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit). Any other permit issued by the *City* that is not listed above, but in the opinion of the *City Planner*, advances the objectives of this CIP;

10. In addition to the costs listed above, the following costs associated with the promotion of interesting and dynamic retail concepts will also be considered *eligible costs* for the purposes of the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program. Such eligible interior improvements would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Permanent fixtures and fittings;
- Installation or alteration of required window openings and windows for improved product visibility;
- *Rehabilitation* of the space to basic "white-box conditions", such as repairing or replacing cracked plaster walls, structural improvements or ceilings;
- New flooring, lighting, and/or doors;
- Restoration of deteriorated interior historic/ architectural elements; and,
- Other build-out costs associated with customizing the space to the specific needs of the retailer provided that the items are not likely to be removed from the *retail unit* should the unit become *vacant*.

11. Personal property (furniture, racks and shelves that can be easily removed and sold etc.) is not eligible for the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program and will not be counted toward the required matching contribution.

12. Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property's grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to *City Council* approval.

13. *City Council* at its sole discretion can deny a Retail Reinvestment Grant to any category of *retail store* that it deems to be inappropriate, not in the public interest and/or not contributing to the goals and objectives of this CIP.

14. Exterior building improvements will be eligible for a grant under the current Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program.

Geographic Eligibility

In an effort to increase the geographic concentration of retail businesses in the core areas of downtown, the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program is applicable to the part of the Community Improvement Project Area that is defined by the map:

Grant Calculation

The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the new number of *retail units* created as a result of the *development or redevelopment* of a building or property. The grant will be for the amount of \$15,000 for every new *retail unit* created, up to a maximum of \$30,000 per property.

Grant Payment

Payment of the Retail Reinvestment Grant will be made to the grant recipient upon the *City* being satisfied that the grant recipient has complied with all terms and conditions of the application procedure, inspection procedures, development procedures, and completion of work within the required time frame.

Grant Recovery

The *City* may recover any grants provided by the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program should the *retail units* created as part of this program become *vacant* for a period longer than six months within five years of the grant being

approved by *City Council*. Recovery of grants provided by the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program may also include a partial or total reduction of a grant provided by the Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program.

Grant Agreement

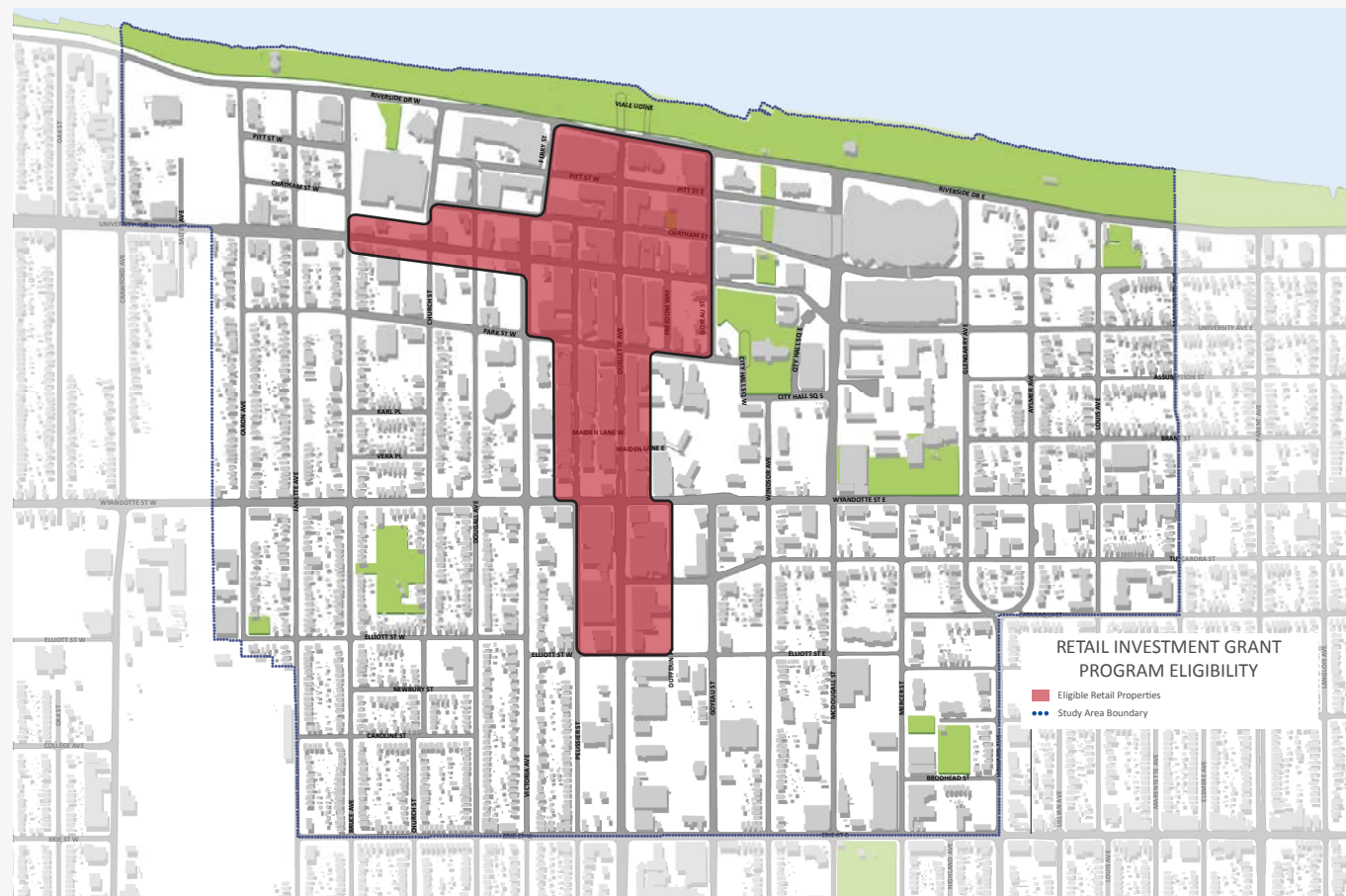
As a condition of approval of an application for a Retail Reinvestment Grant, the *applicant* must enter into an agreement with the *City*. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.

Other Funding

Projects that are eligible for the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program may be combined with the incentives from any other City of Windsor approved Community Improvement Plan provided that the total of all property tax assistance, grants and loans provided by the *City* in relation to this, or any other CIP, cannot exceed the approved *eligible costs* for all approved incentive programs.

Any exterior building improvements made as a result of creating the new *retail units* will be eligible for a grant under the current Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program provided that the improvements comply with the requirements of the Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program.

Projects that are participating in the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association's (DWBIA) Commercial Rent Subsidy Program (CRSP) are also eligible to participate in the Retail Reinvestment Grant Program.



9.3 OTHER COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS

In addition to the financial incentive programs outlined in this CIP, the *Planning Act* also permits the municipality to undertake the following community improvement activities:

1. Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
2. Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and,
3. Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan.

9.3.1 Property Acquisition

The City of Windsor may facilitate the assembly of land within the Community Improvement Project Area in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan. Additionally, the City of Windsor may acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare the land for community improvement as defined by this CIP.

The principal reason for acquisition is to improve and secure the economic well-being of Windsor's downtown core by asserting an elevated level of control over the acquisition and consolidation of sites suitable for facilitating new *development* or *redevelopment*, providing much needed amenities and services, or that further the objectives of this CIP.

The City of Windsor may also choose to construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it to further the objectives of this CIP.

9.3.2 Property Disposition

The City of Windsor may dispose of municipally owned land or buildings within the Community Improvement Project

Area in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan. Additionally, the City of Windsor may sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it provided the end use of the property and/or buildings remains in conformity with this CIP.

The City of Windsor may choose to dispose of municipally owned property or buildings at less than market value in order to facilitate the *development, redevelopment* or *adaptive reuse* of the property and/or buildings.

Municipally owned property that is disposed of for the purpose of meeting one or more of the objectives of this CIP, whether at market value or less, is subject to the following requirements:

1. Unless the property is deemed to be a Special Project as defined by the City of Windsor's "Disposal of Land" policy, all disposition of municipal land must be done in compliance with the "Disposal of Land" policy;

2. *City Council* may deem any property located within the Community Improvement Project Area to be a "Special Project" as defined by the City of Windsor's "Disposal of Land" policy for the purposes of Community Improvement provided that the proposed *development, redevelopment* or *rehabilitation* meets the definition of a *catalyst project*, as defined by this CIP;

3. Properties that are deemed to be a "Special Project" can be disposed of using one or more of the following methods:

- Direct offer of purchase and sale;
- Request for Proposals;
- Expression of Interests;
- Land exchange(s); or
- Any other method deemed to be appropriate by *City Council*.

4. *City Council* will determine the percentage below market value, if any, that the *City* will sell the property for based on the benefit to the public generated by the project, as determined by *City Council*.

5. The actual percentage below market value will be determined by *City Council*. The amount below market value plus all other incentives under this, or any other approved,

CIP cannot exceed the total *eligible costs*.

6. As required by the *Planning Act* the purchaser of City owned property will be required to enter into a written agreement with the *City* stating that they will keep and maintain the land, building and the use in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan. The agreement entered into above will be registered against the land to which it applies and the *City* will enforce the provisions of the agreement against any party to the agreement and, subject to the provisions of the *Registry Act* and the *Land Titles Act*, against any and all subsequent owners or tenants of the land.

7. Projects are also required to be in compliance with the *City's* other by-laws and policies, including zoning and building regulations.

9.4 MONITORING PROGRAM

The performance and impact of the incentive programs will be monitored to ensure that the purpose and objectives of this CIP are successfully being met.

9.4.1 Purpose of the Monitoring Program

The collection and analysis of information is intended to monitor:

- Funds dispersed through the CIP incentive programs by program type so as to determine which programs are being most utilized;
- The revitalization and economic impact associated with projects taking advantage of the CIP incentive programs in order to determine the ratio of private sector investment being leveraged by public sector investment;
- The amount of private sector investment made in downtown Windsor by sector (e.g. residential, retail, office, etc) ; and,
- Feedback from users of the incentive programs so that adjustments can be made to the incentive programs over time as it is deemed necessary.

9.4.2 Data Collection

The following program-specific information should be collected on an ongoing basis:

Upper Storey Residential Conversion Grant Program

- Number of program applications;
- Number of new residential units created;
- Location of new residential units created;
- Increase in assessment value of the building; and,
- Estimated and actual amount of grants provided.

New Residential Development Grant Program

- Number of program applications;
- Number of new residential units created;
- Location of new residential units created;
- Increase in assessment value of the building; and,
- Estimated and actual amount of grants provided.

Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Program

- Number of applications
- Number of building facades improved;
- Value of building facade improvements;
- Changes in assessment value of the building; and,
- Estimated and actual amount of grants provided.

Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program

- Number of applications
- Number of buildings or properties improved;
- Value of building/property improvements;
- Changes in assessment value of the building; and,
- Estimated and actual amount of grants provided.

Retail Investment Grant Program

- Number of program applications;
- Number of new retail units created;
- Location of new retail units created;
- Increase in assessment value of the building; and,
- Estimated and actual amount of grants provided.

CIP Review and Program Adjustments

Progress on implementation and the monitoring results of the incentive programs described above will be reported to *City Council* on an annual basis.

A comprehensive analysis of information collected will be presented to *City Council* at the five year anniversary of the CIP coming into effect. This analysis will be accompanied by recommendations relating to the following matters (at a minimum):

- Continuation or repeal of the entire CIP;
- Discontinuation or addition of programs contained within the CIP; and,
- Minor adjustments to the program details, terms or requirements of programs contained within the CIP.

Requirement for CIP Amendment

Minor revisions to the CIP, including the adjustment of terms and requirements of any of the programs, changing the boundaries of any of the targeted program boundaries (within the existing boundary of the CIP Project Area) , or discontinuation of any of the programs contained in the CIP, may be undertaken without amendment to the CIP. Such minor changes or discontinuation of programs will be provided to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for information purposes only.

The addition of any new programs, significant changes to eligibility criteria, changes to the CIP Project Area boundaries, or changes to the CIP that would substantially increase funding provided by existing financial incentives will require a formal amendment to the CIP in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

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