



PLANNING JUSTIFICATION REPORT

**509511 ONTARIO LIMITED
L'HERITAGE DRIVE
SARNIA ONTARIO**

LDS PROJECT NO. LD-00159

MARCH 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report provides a land use planning justification in support of Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment applications for lands on L' Heritage Drive in the City of Sarnia, Ontario. Two parcels have been combined to comprise the subject site for a 76-unit townhouse development.

A review of all relevant planning documents has been undertaken and has identified the opportunity for an Official Plan amendment and Zoning By-law amendment to permit a 76-unit townhouse development at the subject location on a “residential intensification” basis.

This report includes the review of the Provincial Policy Statement (2014); the County of Lambton Official Plan; the City of Sarnia Official Plan; and the City of Sarnia Zoning By-law as they apply to the subject site.

The housing market for the City of Sarnia is currently very active as the demand for residential units continues to outpace the supply. As house prices continue to increase in the City of Sarnia, the addition of 76 townhouse units will assist with housing choice and affordability. Townhouse units tend to be more affordable than detached dwellings both from an ownership and rental perspective.

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide a land use planning analysis and justification for Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment applications pertaining to two combined properties on L' Heritage Drive in the City of Sarnia.

The applicant and property owner are 509511 Ontario Ltd. Consulting services are provided by LDS Consultants of London, Ontario. Ben Billings is the primary planning contact for the property owner / applicant and can be contacted at (519) 878-4633 or ben.billings@LDSConsultants.ca.

2.0 SUBJECT PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on the easterly periphery of the City of Sarnia in close proximity to the Lambton Mall (Figure 1). The subject property includes the vacant parcel of land adjacent to the Howard Watson Trail (Parts 6-11, Plan 25R-9935) and the Dante Club property located at MN 1330 London Road (Part 11, Plan 25R-3804), having 107.1 metres of frontage on L' Heritage Drive and a total lot area of 2.804 hectares.

The parcel of land adjacent to the Howard Watson Trail is vacant and is bordered by trees and has some treed areas on the interior of the property. There is currently no formal access to the Howard Watson Trail from this parcel. There is however, vehicular access to this property from L' Heritage Drive. The portion of MN 1330 London Road (Dante Club) that is the subject of this request is currently a sports field. Access to this property is currently from London Road with no access from L' Heritage Drive.

L' Heritage Drive can be described as a mixed-use street adjacent to a commercial area. The south side of the street contains a commercial plaza, the Dante Club property and a vacant parcel comprising the subject property. The north side of L' Heritage Drive contains a commercial plaza, medical / dental offices, and a senior's retirement community.

3.0 MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The subject property is well situated and proximate to full municipal services which exist within the fronting road allowance of L'Heritage Drive (sanitary sewer and domestic and fire water supply) and within an existing easement (storm sewer) traversing the site following the alignment of Street B. Flow testing of the domestic and fire water supply system confirm adequate flow and pressures are available to service the subject property. Given the level of imperviousness associated with the proposed development, stormwater management controls will be necessary and are proposed to be managed via surface ponding in select locations on private streets.

4.0 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION MEETING

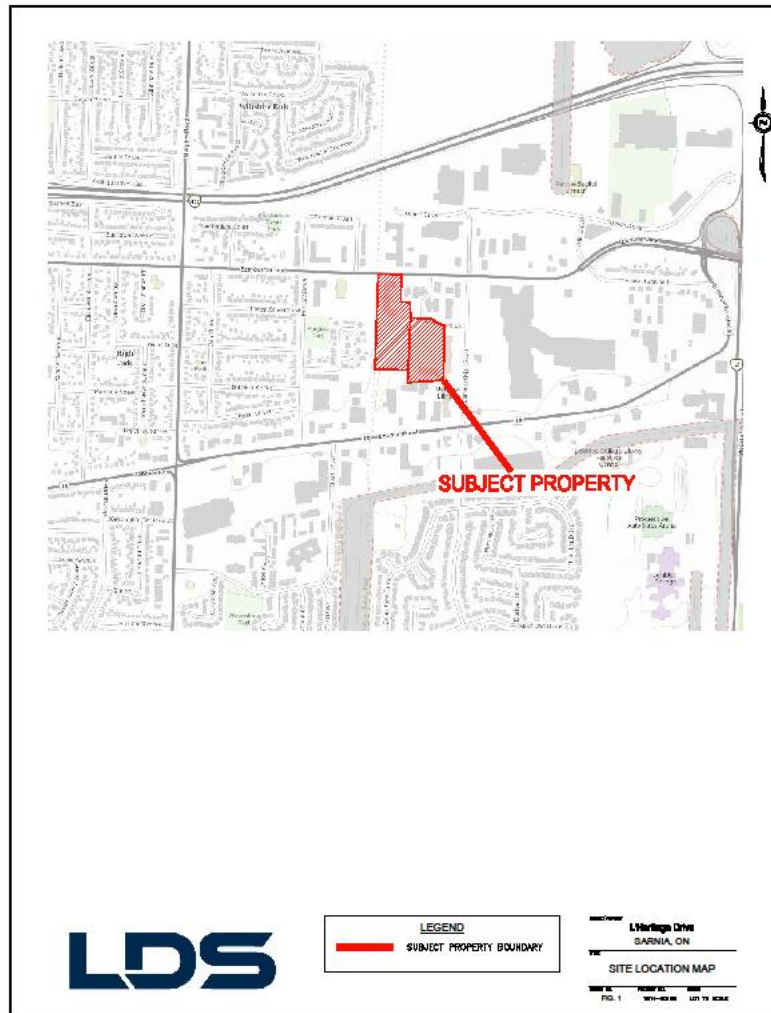
A pre-application consultation meeting was held on Tuesday December 17, 2019.

The pre-application meeting identified a number of policy and technical issues including the need for a planning rationale report. The planning rationale report is required to identify compliance with existing Provincial, Official Plan and Zoning policies and to provide the justification for any requested amendments.

5.0 REQUESTED AMENDMENTS

Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments are being sought in order to facilitate the development of a 76-unit townhouse development on the subject property. More specifically, "site specific" amendments to the City of Sarnia Official Plan to achieve the Urban Residential land use designation and the Zoning By-law (No. 85 of 2002) to achieve a Site Specific Urban Residential 4 (UR4 -) Zone are being sought for the subject property.

Figure 1 – Location Map



6.0 PROPOSED USE AND PROPOSED SITE PLAN

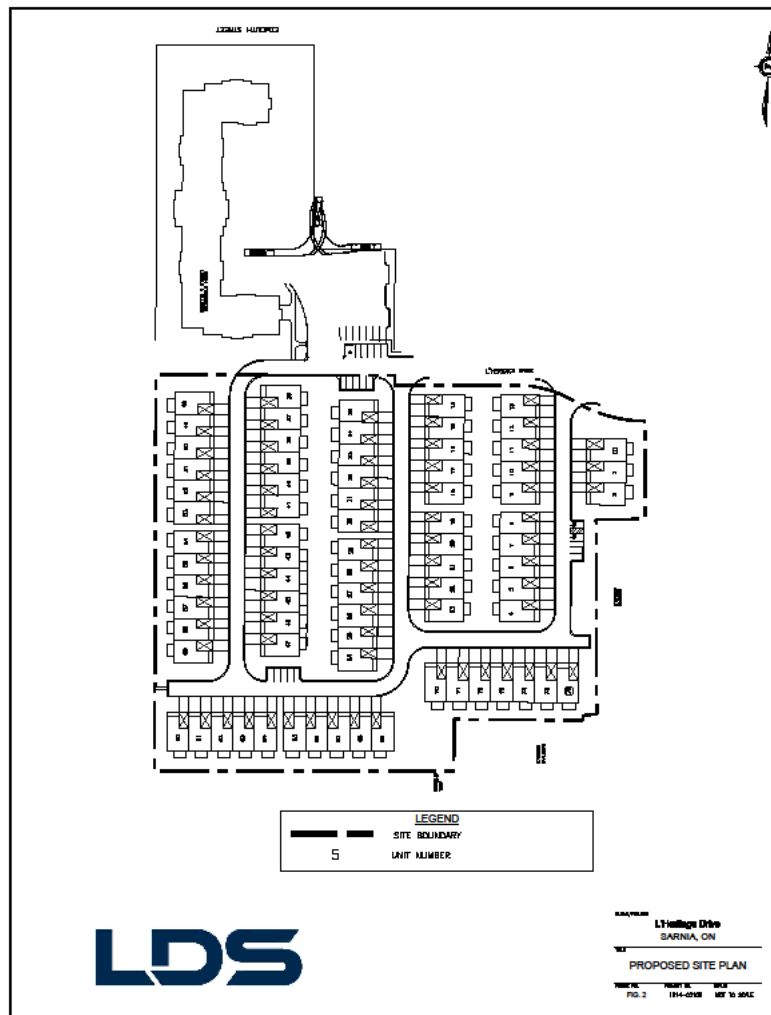
Figure 2 presents a proposed site plan that depicts the development of a 76-unit townhouse development on the subject property. Access to the property is proposed from three access points on L' Heritage Drive. It is proposed to sever the existing service club (Dante Club) from the larger sports field that is being proposed for development. The service club will continue to serve the immediate and broader community.

7.0 BENEFITS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed 76-unit townhouse development will utilize two parcels of vacant / under-utilized land and will assist in diversifying the residential housing stock within the municipality. It will also result in a more efficient use of municipal services. Locating residential uses in close proximity to commercial service uses will be beneficial to future residents of the community.

Housing affordability in the City of Sarnia will be assisted by the addition of 76 townhouse units to the housing stock. Townhouse units tend to be more affordable than detached units from both an ownership and rental perspective. Financially, the City of Sarnia will benefit from property taxes that will be generated from the proposed development for the long term.

Figure 2 – Proposed Site Plan



8.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION STRATEGY

A Neighbourhood Open House is proposed prior to the statutory public meeting in order to gain input from the public, adjacent property owners and other affected stakeholders. Notice of the Open House will be circulated to all property owners within 120 metres of the subject property ten days prior to the meeting and after the municipality has sent the required notice of applications pursuant to the Planning Act (1990).

9.0 PROPERTY CONTEXT AND SURROUNDING LAND USE

The subject property located on L' Heritage Drive has close proximity to a regional commercial centre (Lambton Mall). Lands to the north, east and south of the subject property are comprised of commercial and service (offices, medical / dental) uses associated with the regional commercial centre. Accordingly, the proposed 76-unit townhouse development would have close proximity to local commercial uses and personal services.

The following photos represent surrounding lands uses:



Lands to the north of the subject property (Seniors Community / Personal Services)



Lands to the east of the subject property (Lambton Mall / Commercial Plaza)



Lands to the south of the subject property (Associated Commercial Uses)



Lands to the west of the subject property (Howard Watson Trail / Homes to the west)

10.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

10.1 Provincial Policy Statement (2014)

Current provincial policy regarding urban development favours “Settlement Areas” as the primary location for development in order to fully utilize existing municipal services (i.e. sewers, public transit, parks, etc.) and to use land more efficiently to curb the impacts of urban sprawl.

More specifically, Section 1.1.3.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) regarding “Settlement Areas” indicates that settlement areas “shall be the focus of growth and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.” This policy requires municipalities to utilize existing lands more efficiently in order to discourage the expansion of “Settlement Area” boundaries into agricultural areas.

Accordingly, the proposed 76-unit townhouse development will utilize two existing vacant parcels of land that have frontage on a public street and have access to municipal services. The Lambton County Official Plan identifies the City of Sarnia as an “Urban Settlement Area” making the subject property an appropriate location for urban development / redevelopment.

Moreover, Section 1.1.3.2 requires that land use patterns within settlement areas be based on “densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land and resources”; and, “a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment in accordance with the criteria in policy 1.1.3.3.”; also, Section 1.1.3.3 states that “Planning authorities shall identify and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including Brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.”

The subject property provides an opportunity for residential intensification by being two under-utilized parcels of land in close proximity to municipal services and commercial services. Further, the proposed 76-unit townhouse development will contribute to a diversity of housing for the municipality through residential intensification.

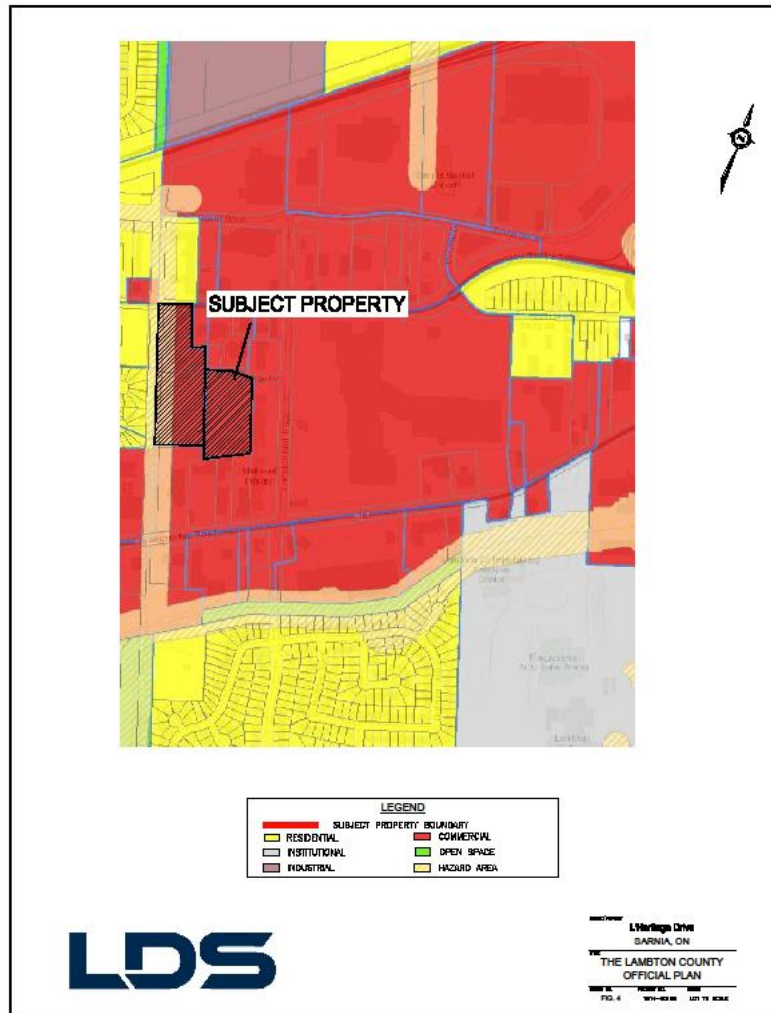
10.2 County of Lambton Official Plan

Chapter 3 of the County of Lambton Official Plan contains the County Development and Growth policies for Lambton County. This chapter indicates that the majority of growth within the County shall be directed to the Urban Areas of the County. Further, that the City of Sarnia is within one of four growth areas identified by the plan. The City of Sarnia is located within the West Lambton Growth Area which also includes the Village of Point Edward and the Townships of Moore and Sombra.

Policy 3.2 (Growth Strategy) of the County of Lambton Official Plan outlines a four-level settlement hierarchy consisting of Urban Centres, Urban Settlements, Rural Settlements and Rural Areas. This policy identifies Urban Centres and Urban Settlements to be the location of the majority of growth within the County. Accordingly, Map 1 of the County of Lambton Official Plan identifies the City of Sarnia as an Urban Centre.

In accordance with these policies, the City of Sarnia is deemed to be an “Urban Centre” due to its ability to provide community and municipal services. The proposed development complies with the County of Lambton Official Plan that encourages the intensification and utilization of existing lands in Urban Centres to avoid potential conflicts with land uses in the surrounding rural areas.

Figure 3 – County of Lambton Official Plan



10.3 City of Sarnia Official Plan (July 2016)

The subject site is currently designated “Commercial Centre” (Dante Club) and “Apartment Residential” (vacant parcel) in the City of Sarnia Official Plan. Policy 4.6.3 of the Official Plan indicates that areas with the Commercial Centre designation shall reflect major concentrations of commercial services intended to serve the City, broader regional community and surrounding neighbourhoods. This policy further prioritizes commercial centres as places for comparison retail shopping; mixed-use development; local employment centres; and City transit hubs. Residential uses, such as the proposed townhouse development, are not permitted within the Commercial Centre land use designation; therefore, an Official Plan amendment is necessary to facilitate the proposed development.

Policy 4.4.4.1 of the Official Plan contains the permitted uses for lands within the Apartment Residential land use designation. This policy indicates that apartment buildings and all other residential uses within the Urban Residential land use designation are permitted within the Apartment Residential designation. Also permitted are parks, minor institutions, cultural and recreational facilities, and limited small-scale retail, service and office uses that serve the daily needs of neighbourhood residents.

Policy 4.4.2.1 contains the permitted uses within the Urban Residential land use designation as follows: low-density housing types, such as single and semi-detached dwellings, group homes, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses, including building conversions to such uses. Accordingly, townhouse use as being proposed is a permitted use within the Apartment Residential land use designation. However, in order to limit development on the site, the Urban Residential land use designation is deemed to be appropriate for the site.

Policy 4.4.2.2 of the Official Plan provides the criteria for development in the Urban Residential land use designation. The primary concern of this policy is that new development respects the physical character and scale of the existing neighbourhood. The proposed townhouse development is at a consistent scale with surrounding uses in the neighbourhood (2 to 3 storeys) and does not offend the existing land use pattern.

Particular concern relates to: patterns of streets, blocks and lanes, parks and public building sites; size and configuration of lots; prevailing building type(s); height, massing, and scale of nearby residential properties; setbacks of buildings from the street or streets; prevailing patterns of rear and side yard setbacks and landscaped open space; continuation of special landscape or built-form features that contribute to the unique character of a neighbourhood; and conservation of heritage buildings, structures and landscapes.

The subject site exists in a built-up and highly commercialized part of the City where surrounding buildings are generally low-profile commercial and office buildings. The proposed townhouse development will also be low-profile in character consisting of 2-storey units. Access to the property is proposed from three access points on L' Heritage Drive, a local street bordering the property to the north. The internal street pattern for the development will not conflict with the local and arterial streets prevalent in the area and will be maintained through a condominium corporation. Appropriate setbacks will be provided throughout the development to ensure proper separation from adjacent uses. There are no heritage landscapes or buildings on the subject property.

Policy 4.4.2.3 of the Official Plan refers to large sites and redevelopment opportunities within the Urban Residential land use designation. This policy encourages higher residential densities and the removal of obsolete uses provided that the redevelopment is compatible with the existing physical character and pattern of surrounding development. The proposed townhouse development will remove an obsolete use (sports field) from a portion of the subject site and provide development to an otherwise under-utilized portion of the site.

Further, that infill residential development on properties that vary from the local pattern in terms of lot size, configuration and/or orientation in established urban residential shall: have heights, massing and scale appropriate for the site that are compatible with those permitted by the zoning for adjacent and nearby residential properties; front onto existing or newly created public streets wherever possible, with no gates limiting public access; provide adequate privacy, sunlight and sky views for residents of new and existing buildings by ensuring adequate distance and separation between building walkways and using landscaping, planting and fencing to enhance privacy where needed; provide on-site parking and recreational amenities; and locate or screen service areas, mechanical equipment and garbage storage to minimize the impact on new and existing streets and residents.

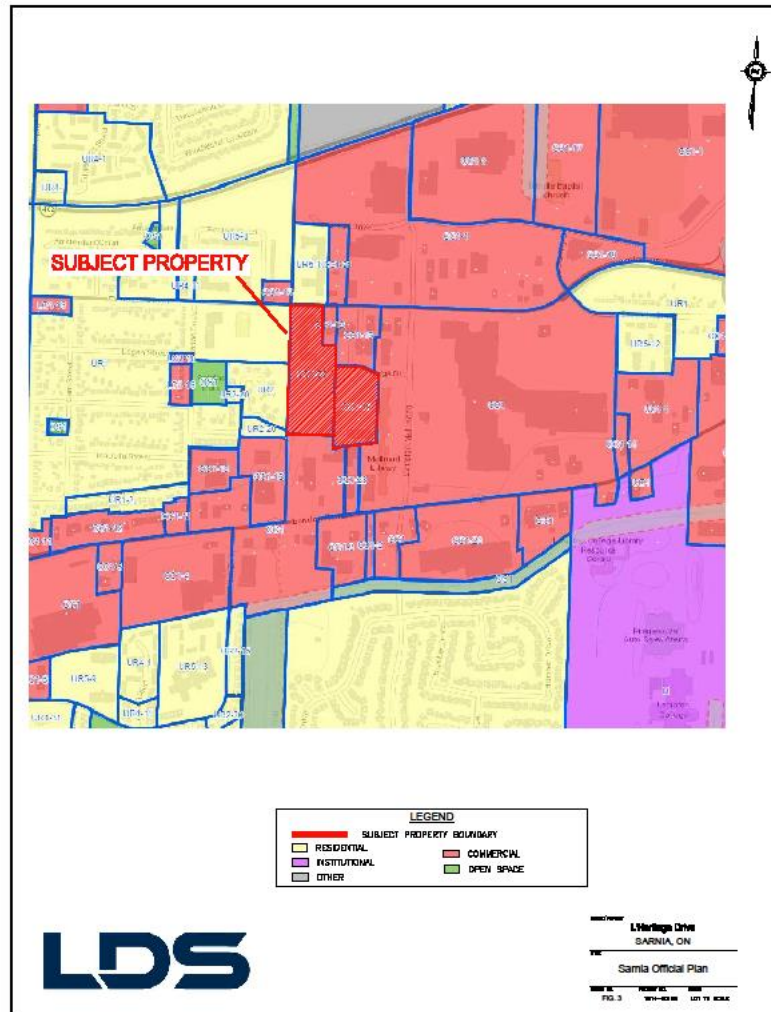
The proposed development is considered to be an infill development that fronts onto an existing public street. It will be subject to site plan control pursuant to Section 41 of the Planning Act (1990) whereby appropriate development amenities are provided including: landscaping, fencing, lighting and on-site parking.

10.4 City of Sarnia – Zoning By-law (No. 85 of 2002)

The City of Sarnia Zoning By-law currently zones the subject site Commercial Centre 1 (CC1-16) (Dante Club) and Commercial Centre 1 (CC1-22) (Vacant parcel) (Figure 5). The CC1-16 Zone permits accessory uses and buildings and recreational uses. The CC1-22 Zone permits a broad range of commercial and service uses and

apartment buildings; multiple-attached dwellings; retirement home; nursing home and homes for the aged or rest home.

Figure 4 – City of Sarnia Official Plan



Section 10 of Zoning By-law No. 85 of 2002 contains the Urban Residential 4 (UR4) Zone which permits multiple attached dwellings. This zone also permits: Accessory uses and buildings; Apartment dwellings containing not more than 12 dwelling units; Place of Worship; Converted dwellings; Duplex dwellings; Group homes; Homes for the aged; Multiple attached dwellings; Retirement homes; Rooming or boarding houses; Semi-detached dwellings; Single detached dwellings; Women's shelters.

Accordingly, a site specific Urban Residential 4 (UR4-) Zone is being sought that permits multiple attached/townhouse dwellings. No other land uses are being sought within the requested zoning for the subject site.

The various permitted uses are subject to different zone provisions subject to Section 10.2 of the Zoning By-law. The following table outlines the required and proposed zone provisions for the proposed townhouse development in the Zoning By-law:

| Zone Provision | Required Zone Provision | Proposed Zone Provision |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Minimum Lot Area (per unit) | 300 m ² | 393.13 m ² |
| Minimum Lot Frontage | 30 m | 105.19 m |
| Front Yard Depth | 9.0 m | 3.99 m* |
| Exterior Side Yard Depth | N/A | 5.10 m |
| Side Yard Width | 3.0 m | 4.99 m |
| Rear Yard Depth | 7.5 m | 7.54 m |
| Maximum Lot Coverage | 30 % | 42.56 %* |
| Minimum Landscaped Open Space | 40% | 37.17%* |
| Maximum Height | 12 m | 12 m |
| Number of Units | Not applicable | 76 |
| Parking Spaces | 1.5 per Unit 114 spaces | 152 Residents – 12 Visitor |
| Maximum Parking Lot Coverage | N/A | N/A |

*Denotes exception to a required zone provision

Requested Site Specific Zone:

The following is the requested Site Specific Urban Residential 4 (UR4 -) Zone

(UR4 -) (L' Heritage Drive)

a) Defined Area: (UR4-) as shown on Schedule 'A', Zoning Map Part No. 32 to this By-law.

b) Permitted Uses: townhouse dwellings (76 units)

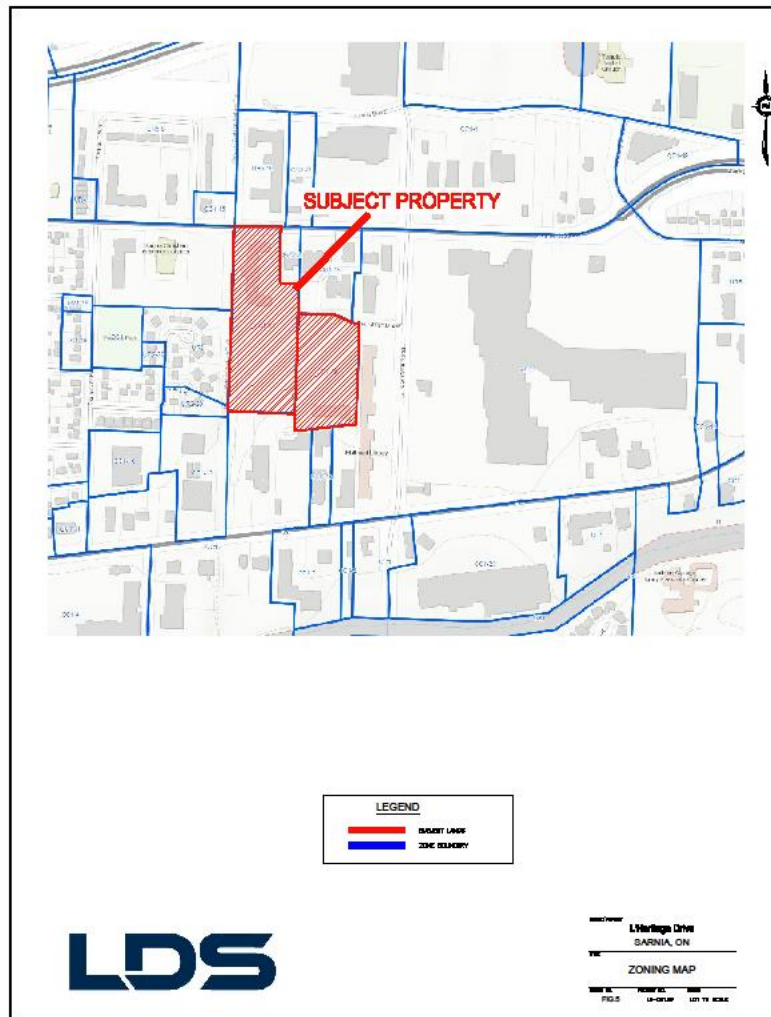
c) Lot Provisions:

i) Minimum Front Yard Depth: 3.99 m

ii) Maximum Lot Coverage: 42.56%

iii) Minimum Landscaped Open Space: 37.17%

Figure 5 - Zoning By-law Schedule



11.0 RESIDENTIAL MARKET (City of Sarnia)

Section 1.4.2 of the Provincial Policy Statement indicates that land allocation requirements within lower-tier municipalities must be based on population projections provided by the upper-tier municipality. As such, the City of Sarnia must have regard to the population projections provided by the County of Lambton.

Population projections contained in the County of Lambton Official plan indicate that the County population is projected to be 142,000 and a work force of 73,000 by the year 2016. Further, the Official Plan anticipates an average annual housing production of 400 units over the planning period to 2016. Moreover, the majority of housing starts are expected to be in the West Lambton Growth Area which includes the City of Sarnia, Village of Point Edward and the Townships of Moore and Sombra where municipal services and community services are more readily available.

Currently, the City of Sarnia real estate market is setting record residential sales levels and escalating sale prices. The primary reason for this trend is due to a high demand and low supply of residential units. The proposed development will provide more housing choice to the local consumer in addition to housing affordability.

12.0 SITE PLAN APPROVAL

The proposed 76-unit townhouse development will require site plan approval pursuant to Section 41 of the Planning Act (1990). Figure 2 provides a proposed site plan noting the exceptions to the zone provisions being requested to accommodate the proposed site plan.

Figure 2 depicts a 76-unit townhouse development on the subject property with parking for 164 vehicles; 2 spaces per dwelling unit and 12 visitor parking spaces. Access to the property is directly from L' Heritage Drive (3 access points).

13.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RATIONALE

The preceding analysis provides a rationale and justification to support amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law in conformity with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), the County of Lambton Official Plan: and in consideration of the policies of the City of Sarnia Official Plan.

The subject site is comprised of two vacant parcels of land in close proximity to a regional commercial centre. The proposed townhouse development will provide housing within close proximity to commercial and personal services, including public transit, which ultimately will reduce vehicular trips and encourage active transportation.

The subject site is located in a built-up area with municipal services. The introduction of 76 townhouse units will make more efficient use of these existing services.

The requested amendments will facilitate the development of two existing under-utilized and vacant parcels of land. It is considered sound land use planning to utilize existing vacant lands before considering the approval of lands that may be on the periphery of the community.

The requested amendments would facilitate the provision of 76 townhouse units for the housing market. These units would assist with housing affordability by providing choice to consumers in the City of Sarnia housing market.

14.0 REFERENCES

- 1) Provincial Policy Statement (2014)
- 2) County of Lambton Official Plan
- 3) City of Sarnia Official Plan (Consolidation: July 2016)
- 4) City of Sarnia Zoning By-law (No. 85 of 2002)