



**Community Consultation
on Potential Affordable Housing Project
at the Site of the Former St. Bartholomew Church
February 10 and 11, 2026**



BRYAN BOYLE & ASSOCIATES
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Executive Summary

On February 10 and 11, 2026, the Lambton County Housing Services Department held three community consultation meetings on the potential affordable housing project at the site of the former St. Bartholomew Church.

The purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for all interested parties and individuals to hear general concepts on the potential housing project, ask questions of clarification, as well as share their personal perspectives on the project.

Over the course of the 3 sessions, 160 interested members of the community participated and there were 35 different table discussion groups.

A strong majority of the participants at the meetings were in favour of building affordable housing at this location. The rationale varied including recognizing the need for affordable housing, welcoming the project to their neighbourhood, appealing building plans presented, and the positive past history of affordable housing at Jubilee Gardens.

Conversely, a similar majority of the participants at the meetings were opposed to supportive housing at this site. Most recognized the need for supportive housing in the city but felt supportive housing was not suitable to the neighbourhood, created safety and security concerns and could impact property values in the local area.

Those opposed to supportive housing extended their concerns to the point of looking for guarantees that the building would remain indefinitely as affordable housing. This included asking if, when, how, and with what ease, the affordable housing status of this building could be changed to supportive housing. There was a genuine desire to ensure proper community consultation and notification if a plan ever emerged to change from affordable to supportive housing.

There was a small minority of participants who were not in favour of either option, namely affordable or supportive housing.

There was considerable interest shown by meeting participants in the selection standards for residents. Many suggestions were offered that could be incorporated into a comprehensive screening process for residents to be accepted into the affordable housing building. Example criteria included: no criminal record, no illicit drug use, age, and successful completion of a vetting interview.

Interaction with the Jubilee Gardens building residents was generally considered positive. References were made to Jubilee Garden's positive reputation, potential interaction with residents in the new building, and an opportunity for them to comment on details of this project. Several participants advocated for physical upgrades to the Jubilee Gardens façade to complement the new building.

In terms of the general building design and esthetics, several participants indicated they were pleased with the proposed drawings and appeal of the buildings. The most common criticism of the general design was that it was institutional looking, a more modern architectural style than the current neighborhood, and lacked balconies for outdoor unit living space.

Building height and size was a common concern expressed by several discussion groups, indicating that the building was too high. Some participants endorsed the building as designed, but for those opposed to the proposed four-storey building, two storeys was the most frequently suggested alternative. Some participants suggested a three-storey compromise. Rationale for fewer storeys included conforming to the design of Jubilee Gardens, blending better into the neighborhood, being less overwhelming and involving fewer residents.

Although single unit accommodation is in greatest demand across the Lambton County affordable housing system, several participants suggested the potential of some family units in the building.

Lambton County's involvement in ownership and management of the building was endorsed by a number of participants. Conversely, many advocated no involvement by Indwell. They queried if or when Indwell might ever get involved in the future and even looked for a guarantee that that would not happen.

Participants commented on the planning regulations and requirements, with a desire to ensure that the building meets the necessary planning criteria. Although the planned 0.6 parking spots per unit exceed historic requirement in affordable housing buildings in Lambton County, many participants were concerned that there may not be sufficient parking for tenants and visitors.

Safety and security concerns were expressed by several participants, particularly relating to children in the neighbourhood and nearby school zones. Solutions expressed included security staff and cameras for monitoring. There were strong suggestions that a crosswalk is required across Cathcart Blvd. to the Oak Acres Plaza. Traffic congestion is another perceived issue, given the additional flow of people and vehicles resulting from the new building. There were endorsements to formalize the pathway from Jubilee Gardens to Tim Hortons, and to share the garden area between Jubilee Gardens and the new building.

There were questions about construction logistics to ensure that construction of the building would not be overly disruptive.

The potential negative impact on property values weighed heavily on some participants' minds. Some individuals expressed concerns that the value of homes in the area may suffer as a result of the presence of the affordable building and its residents. There were mixed perspectives among participants whether the residents of the new building would have a positive or negative impact on Oak Acres Plaza businesses.

The question of whether existing infrastructure can handle the increased numbers of residents was expressed several times. Adequate bus services, retail capacity, and emergency services were all mentioned. Some alternate uses for the property were offered.

The members of the community were very engaged and committed to the process to gain knowledge and share their perspectives on the potential affordable housing building on the site of the former St. Bartholemew Church. Several positive comments were made about the community consultation meetings. One overarching example stated that this honest and transparent discussion was important as it helps build trust. Participants took an important step by providing valuable input to enable the County of Lambton and City of Sarnia to make informed decisions relating to the project.

County of Lambton Housing Services Department
Community Consultation on Potential Affordable Housing Project
at the Site of the Former St. Bartholomew Church
February 10 and 11, 2026 Facilitated by Bryan Boyle

Purpose of Meeting

To provide an opportunity for all interested parties and individuals to hear general concepts on the potential housing project at the site of the former St. Bartholomew Church, ask questions of clarification, as well as share their personal perspectives on the project. Over the course of the 3 sessions, 160 interested members of the community participated and there were 35 different table discussion groups.

Five-Step Meeting Program

- Presentation from County of Lambton, Housing Services Department
- Questions of clarification from participants
- Personal perspectives expressed at discussion tables
- Personal perspectives shared with meeting
- Additional perspectives shared verbally

Important Definitions

Affordable housing is housing with rents below market rates.

Supportive housing is affordable housing with wraparound supports that could include life skills, personal care, medical, addiction, mental health, etc.

Personal Perspectives Shared by Meeting Participants

- All of the participants at each table of seven or fewer individuals were encouraged to share their personal perspectives on the affordable housing proposal at their table.
- One or two members of each table group were chosen by their group to act as scribes to write the key points from their table to be shared later with the entire meeting.
- If there were divergent views at any table, participants were encouraged to share the key points of all perspectives. Differences of opinion did not need to be resolved at each table.

- One representative from each table, potentially the scribe or another table member, verbally presented the highlights of the perspectives expressed at each table to the entire meeting.
- If individuals had additional or unique perspectives, they shared them verbally.

The 160 interested members of the community who participated in the three meetings were divided randomly into 35 different table discussion groups. All the points generated at the discussion tables have been grouped into themes and are listed below. Throughout this report whenever two or more table discussion groups offered the same or very similar comments, they are noted with an “x” and the number, i.e. (x3).

Affordable Housing

- Affordable housing only (x7)
- We fully support bringing affordable housing to this location that is four stories high to help people in our community.
- We are excited to welcome more affordable housing to our neighborhood.
- Affordable housing sounds great! The plans look fantastic.
- Happy with affordable housing
- We like the idea of affordable housing.
- Affordable housing is our consensus.
- Affordable housing is needed all over and this project is a good thing.
- This project does not scare me as people take pride in the property.
- Content with affordable housing
- Support for affordable housing only
- We support affordable housing for low-income residents.
- Affordable housing only as it is proposed
- Yes, affordable housing like Jubilee Gardens
- Encouraged that County Council has already approved affordable housing only
- Any issues with increased density of affordable housing?
- Could these be affordable condominiums or a housing cooperative?

Supportive Housing

- No supportive housing (x4)
- We do not want supportive housing.
- Strongly oppose supportive housing
- Supportive housing is not suited for our neighbourhood.
- We need to clarify all the misconceptions about what supportive housing means. There are different types and some types come with safety issues and some do not.
- Supportive housing is a real need in our community.
- Supportive housing is needed but where do we put it?
- It is unfortunate that the term “supportive” is tainted by continual mention of addicts.
- Two speakers here tonight personally checked out supportive housing in other cities and were gravely disappointed and discouraged.
- Maintain right to decline supportive housing option
- Did the County consider moving assistive residents (March of Dimes) to this new building?

Comparing Affordable Housing to Supportive Housing

- We say yes to affordable housing, no to supportive housing. (x5)
- We do not want supportive housing but affordable housing only.
- We only want affordable housing, no other options.
- Only approved for affordable housing, any possible change to supportive housing...no!
- Change affordable to supportive and see the negative impact.
- Not really supporting affordable housing but picked the lesser of two evils
- There needs to be a public conversation about what is affordable versus supportive housing.
- Was only using the property for affordable housing a condition of original sale?

Neither Affordable nor Supportive Housing

- Not for either option, affordable or supportive housing
- Not the area for either option, affordable or supportive housing
- Disagree with both the Cathcart Blvd. and George Street housing projects
- Disagree with an apartment building in a single residence neighborhood
- What is the best way to stop any kind of affordable housing?

Guarantees to Stay Affordable

- If this project is built as affordable housing, in the future can it be changed to supportive housing? (x5)
- We would like a guarantee that this project will remain as affordable housing and not change to supportive housing. (x4)
- How easily can zoning be changed to supportive housing?
- We are concerned this will open up more zoning changes by setting a precedent.
- Want no change at the County from the affordable classification on this project
- Are there plans to make this site into supportive housing in the future?
- Can Council change the affordable housing decision to supportive housing?
- If Council chooses supportive housing, what is the recourse if any to stop it?
- Can affordable housing change to supportive housing without input or warnings?
- If the proposal changes at any time to supportive housing from affordable housing, will the neighbourhood be informed and have input?
- If there is change in type of housing will there be consultation with the public?
- Ensure proper community consultation and notification if the plan ever emerges to change from affordable to supportive housing?

Selection Standards for Residents

- Is there a comprehensive screening process for tenants? (x7)
- We would like to know more details about the tenant criteria for selection and the process. (x5)
- Need more rigid standards for occupancy
- When adding 91 apartments, how do you ensure quality control of residents?
- When selecting residents, consider sobriety, transportation available, and harm reduction.
- Individuals need approvals to be accepted as residents, e.g. no criminal record, interview process.
- Don't want a repeat of what happened with other churches that became junky messes
- Are you assessing potential residents from the Housing Authority or do you have another method in mind?
- We want rigid vetting for occupancy and eviction for drug use. (x2)
- There is no guarantee tenants will not be on drugs.
- No drug guarantee
- Can a person be removed from the building if engaging in illicit drug use, or once they're in, they're in?
- We hope resident selection is not off the drug waitlist.
- What is the time period for truancy?
- Do residents have insurance and if so who pays and what coverage?
- Is age considered in assessment of applicants?
- Seniors only as eligible residents (x3)
- Tenants should be geared to income and seniors.
- Is there any age limit from youth to seniors?
- What services will be needed by individuals who will live there?
- Will the building have landlord tenant agreements versus occupancy agreements?
- If geared to income, what if applicant has minimal or no income?

- What happens if the spots at affordable prices cannot be filled? Will the opportunity then be open to other applicants?
- Are pets allowed?

Interaction with Jubilee Gardens

- Were folks in Jubilee Gardens given an opportunity to comment on this project?
- Jubilee Gardens is primarily seniors and disabled tenants.
- Jubilee Gardens is a small building with few residents. Adding 100 plus residents will impact their neighbourhood.
- In fairness to Jubilee Garden residents who walk right by this new building, please make this building strictly affordable housing only.
- Jubilee Gardens' positive reputation does not guarantee the same quality of occupants in the new building.
- Maintain the same standard of residents and tenants as exists at Jubilee Gardens.
- Our children attended daycare at St. Bartholomew's over the years with no problems with area residents.



Jubilee Gardens Existing on North Side of Building Site

Update Jubilee Gardens

- A welcome addition to the existing units already on site and we love the community garden
- We see it as a nice companion building to Jubilee Gardens.
- We would like to see Jubilee Gardens façade refaced and updated to complement the new building.
- Recommend physical upgrades to Jubilee Gardens
- Could Jubilee Gardens be reconfigured to include a bigger affordable housing unit?

General Building Design and Aesthetics

- Institutional looking, need to add character (x2)
- Aesthetic is very institutional and does not match our neighbourhood.
- Architectural style is modern for our current neighbourhood.
- Eyesore (x2)
- Pleased with the proposed drawings of the building shown at this meeting
- Building is very nice looking.
- We like the design.
- Like the two facing boomerangs layout of Jubilee Gardens and the new building
- Why are there no balconies, so no outdoor unit living space on the Cathcart Blvd. side.
(x3)
- Externally looks like a wall, needs more trees
- Located so close to roadway
- Distance between the two buildings
- What is being considered for indoor amenity space, e.g. common room, eating facilities, etc.?



Rendering of Building Viewed from Jubilee Gardens

Building Height and Size

- Building is too high, should be two-storeys maximum. (x5)
- Three-storeys maximum with first floor accessible (x4)
- Two or three-storeys only (x3)
- Building should be two or three-storeys to conform to the design at Jubilee Gardens.
- Be more like Jubilee Gardens at two-storeys, with three-storeys still okay
- Two-storeys would not be overwhelming and involve fewer residents.
- Four-storey building feels very large and unsightly, build two-storey maximum.
- Does not blend well with surroundings, why four-storeys instead of two-storeys?
- Build two-storeys with three at the most making it visually nicer, smaller so less moving
- Height of the building seemed tall for our neighbourhood. (x2)
- Four-storey height seems obtrusive and impacts neighbours. (x3)
- Project size of 91 units is too large. (x3)
- We do not agree with rezoning for a larger building.



Rendering of Building Viewed from Cathcart Blvd.

Types of Units Needed

- Provide some family units, not just single's units. (x7)
- Wonder why units are not available to families, why restrict low-income children to the south side of Highway 402?
- Will children be accepted into the units, e.g. single mom and one child?
- Barrier free units, accommodated for disabilities

County of Lambton Ownership

- Must be County owned and controlled
- Retain County control
- We are okay with County ownership only.

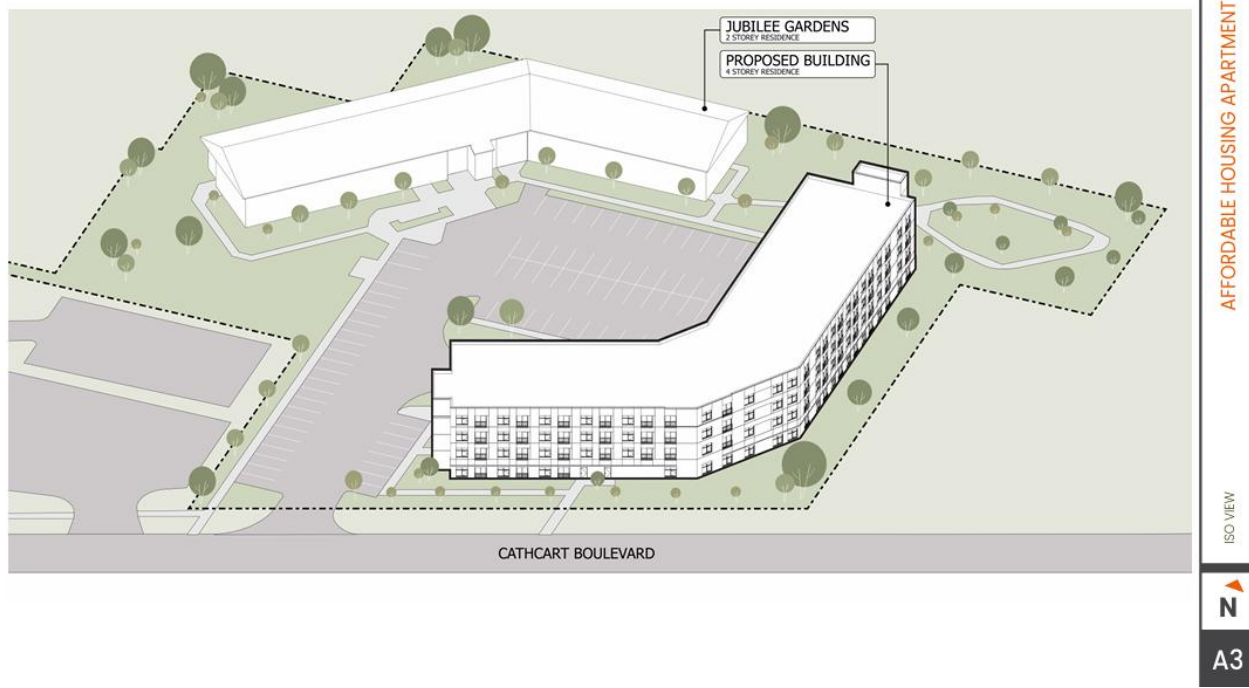


Management of the Building

- Will there be on-site maintenance and management and by whom? (x4)
- Only the County of Lambton should manage the building.
- Will there be a live-in Building Superintendent?
- Commitment of upkeep, e.g. window coverings, garbage, air conditioning units, etc.
- Staffing plans? (x2)
- We recommend the staff be in place to help with any issues, especially at the beginning when the building is being established.
- Although this is not supportive housing, what staff or support will be in place to help mitigate issues?

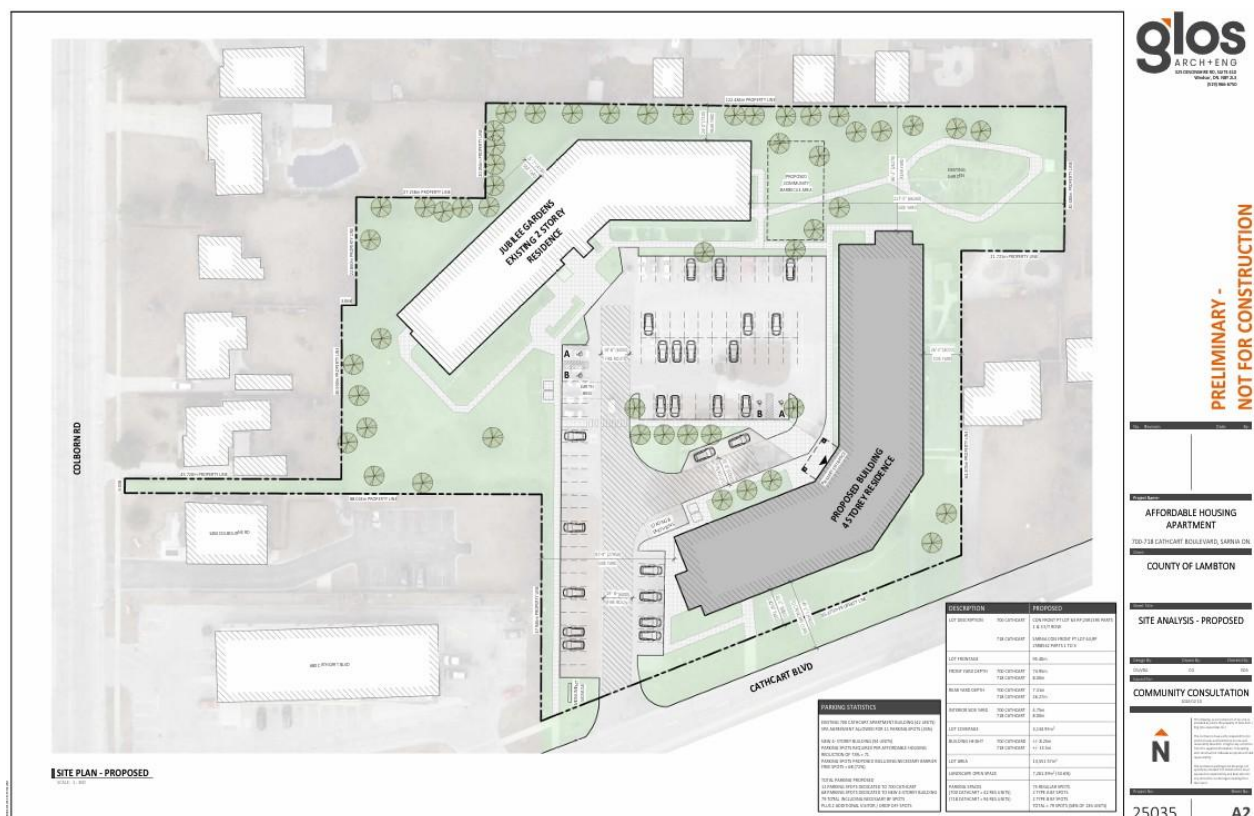
Planning Regulations and Requirements

- City of Sarnia planning will require variance for the property, e.g. parking, over-building square footage and number of units, green area.
- Additional services required such as fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), police
- If the city refuses to make the necessary planning changes, are you going to try other housing options?
- Rezoning final design
- If rezoning is required, does this mean the systems are not currently there?
- What studies were performed, by whom, are they available, e.g. shadow, light pollution, traffic?
- The encroachment study is only from Cathcart Blvd. and adjacent Jubilee Gardens' perspective. It should also include perspective from houses behind development.
- Is the Minister's house or rectory part of the land purchased by the County?



Parking Requirements

- Concerned that there may not be sufficient parking for tenants and visitors (x10)
- Is the planned 0.6 parking spots per unit sufficient and can you guarantee that amount of parking will not be a problem? (x2)
- Will limited parking negatively affect parking at the Oak Acres Plaza, which is already very busy? (x2)



Safety and Security Concerns

- We are a family of four, with two boys 5 and 7, who left a high crime area to keep our children safe.
- This is a heavy school zone and some schools surrounded by affordable housing give us many safety concerns.
- Do not want our kids approached by strangers.
- We are very concerned about safety, for example the former Chipican Hotel location with units for singles encountered drugs, vandalism, and loitering.
- Do not like a building creating hidden areas with safety concerns
- Security needed with staff available 24 hours, with monitoring cameras
- Safety of the Oak Acres Plaza and loitering
- Safety for residents
- Pre and post crime statistics
- The Canadian dream is not given but earned

Crosswalk Required

- Crosswalk needed across Cathcart Blvd. to Oak Acres Plaza (x8)
- There is already an issue crossing the street from Jubilee Gardens to Oak Acres Plaza.
What will be done for safety crossing Cathcart?
- Not safe for kids to cross the road
- Safety of residents on sidewalks and crossing the road
- Safety concerns with traffic on the streets and crossing the road
- Study pedestrian traffic
- Currently lots of jaywalking



Site of Potential Crosswalk on Cathcart Blvd.

Traffic Congestion

- We have concerns regarding traffic impacts with the increase in residents. (x5)
- Navigating traffic capacity with the extra 95 to nearly 200 people
- Flow of traffic between the commercial plaza and the new apartments
- Too many cars at the intersection and too many accidents

Garden Area and Path

- Formalize the pathway from Jubilee Gardens to Tim Hortons. (x3)
- Share the garden area with both Jubilee Gardens and the new building.
- Plant some trees.

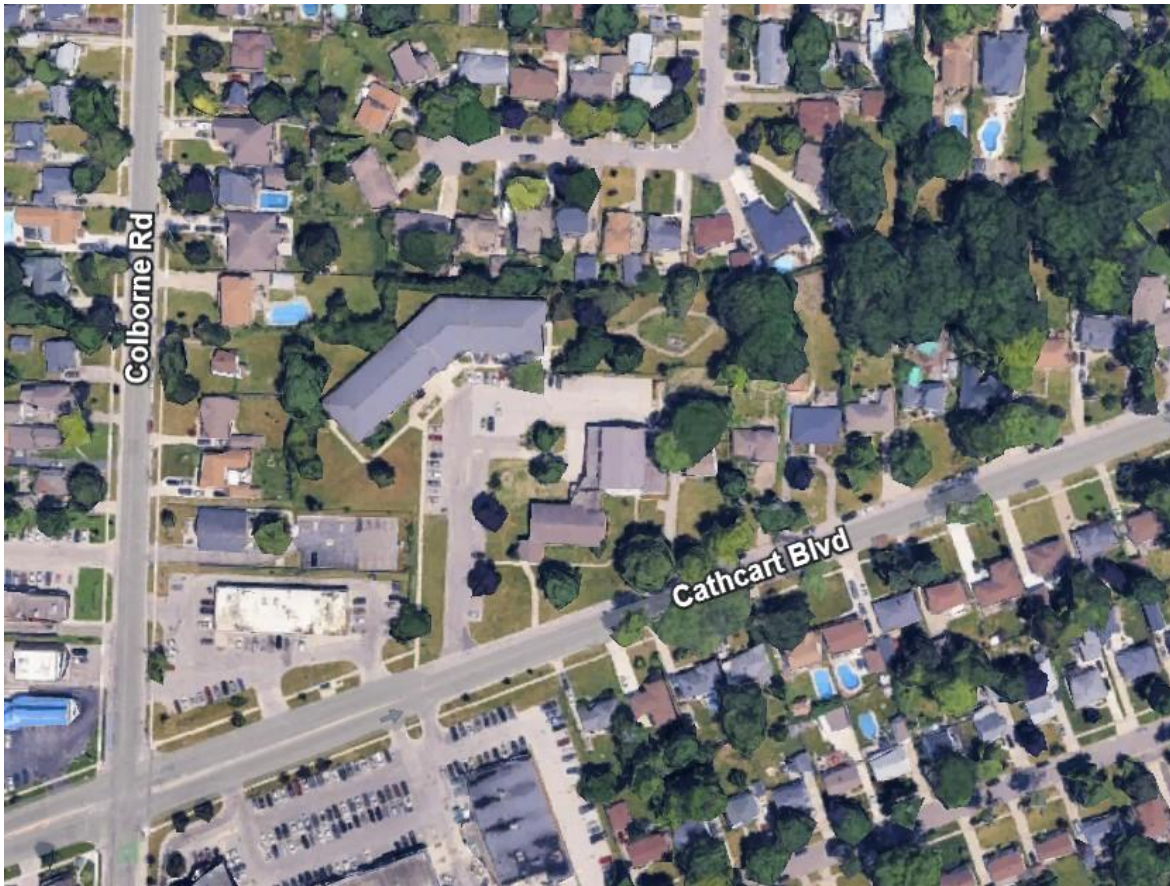
Construction Logistics

- Length of construction and work times, e.g. dust and noise concerns
- Time before new building ready for habitation?
- Is the rectory going to be sold or rented out?

Impact on Property Values and Neighbourhood

- Concerns of potential negative impact on property values (x7)
- Have there been any assessments on resale values with affordable housing builds in comparable demographics?
- How will this project change our neighbourhood?
- Privacy issues for adjoining houses
- We pay high property taxes for a high-end home.
- We did not buy expensive homes in Sarnia's North End to be surrounded and impacted by affordable housing.
- Affordability of homes in our area
- You don't live here, would you want this for your family?
- We believe affordable housing can negatively impact the neighbourhood because we can see this in other areas of Sarnia.
- Quality of life for existing neighbours
- My neighbours say no, no, no.

- No one wants this.
- Bottom line is that we don't want sketchy people in our neighbourhood.
- Don't want garbage pickers at my home
- Why choose this neighbourhood for affordable housing with inadequate bus routes and no supports and services for low income residents?
- Good project to revitalize the neighbourhood



Neighbourhood Surrounding Building Site

Impact on Local Businesses

- What is the opinion and level of support from Oak Acres Plaza businesses?
- Financial impact on local businesses
- Close to and accessible to commercial businesses
- Do not like the extra waits and traffic at local stores
- Food store could benefit



Oak Acres Plaza located across Cathcart Blvd. from Building Site

Infrastructure Capacity

- Can existing infrastructure handle the increased members of residents? (x7)
- Infrastructure upgrades needed
- Infrastructure would be a challenge with the added influx of population between this project and the Lecaron Street development
- Not an affordable housing issue; it is an infrastructure issue
- Area affordability since the grocery store and pharmacy are expensive
- Number of emergency service calls for planning
- Ensure a wheelchair accessible neighbourhood
- Improved bussing services needed (x4)
- Concerns for the impact on the school districts for our kids
- Contact the School Boards

Alternative Uses of Property

- Green space or park to complement the area (x2)
- The County should sell the property for other uses to complement the commercial area.
- Sell the land for more tax dollars and build this affordable housing at a different location
- Is there a possibility of something else going in or is affordable housing the only option?
- Build property for owners not renters.
- Gold Leaf Properties just bought the Sacred Heart school property for luxury senior living which is a very different idea from this affordable housing project.
- Land could be better utilized to build projects that would supply money to city coffers, e.g. retirement home or townhouses.
- Example of better use might be a cardiologist clinic on the site proposed for affordable housing on George Street. Council could take the money from the sale of George Street land and purchase other property for affordable housing somewhere else in Sarnia or Wyoming.
- Utilize the Devine Street School property which is close to the Inn of the Good Shepherd for supportive housing.
- Better fit for this property would be a community hub

Tax Implications

- Potential tax increases for additional support and services at the new building (x2)
- Our taxes quadrupled.
- Lower cost to build lower density

No Indwell

- No Indwell involvement (x4)
- Guarantee not to involve Indwell as “It won’t end well with Indwell.”
- Are Indwell or any other group currently involved?
- Will this project ever include involvement by Indwell? (x2)
- Would the public be notified if Indwell were ever to become part of this project?
- Concerns of an Indwell building has perhaps made us grateful for a non-Indwell building as anything else seems acceptable.

Project Processes

- When will it be confirmed that the housing project is either affordable or supportive?
- What are the timelines for the build?
- What is the organized plan for affordable housing across Lambton County?
- What is the next step and is there a vote? Can we object?
- Will there be more community input or will the project go to County and City Council for approval before letting the community know?
- What would the process look like if the County wanted to change building designation?
- Would there be community consultation if changing from affordable to supportive housing?
- Will you cycle back to the community for input?
- Need to share zoning plans with the community
- Bait and switch
- We are concerned with the transparency of hiring Flourish for this plan as it seems this could be easily used.
- Are we able to access that report from Flourish?
- We are concerned that nobody on County Council lives in this area and County Council is making these very important decisions on behalf of our residents.
- Lack of trust in Lambton County and City of Sarnia politicians (x2)

- Lambton County needs to work with the City of Sarnia on plans
- Lack of trust in City and County because of the George Street project where they would not accept an offer of purchase from a cardiologist
- George Street community has never had a voice
- There is an impression that this project is all a done deal.
- Have the people who are going to live in the new building been asked to provide input on the site?
- Incorporate input about the site from those who are going to live there.

Feedback from Community Consultation Meetings

- This honest and transparent discussion was important as it helps build trust.
- Thanks for providing these three sessions.
- I found this input session to be informative and positive.
- We liked the opportunity to provide our input.
- Results of these consultations should be reflected in the decisions relating to this project.
- Where are the renderings from the homeowner side behind the development?
- What is the deadline for input on this project?
- How many people at this meeting are from other neighbourhoods who think there should be supportive housing in the North End?

Summary

The members of the community were very engaged and committed to the process to gain knowledge and share their perspectives on the potential affordable housing building on the site of the former St. Bartholemew Church. Several positive comments were made about the community consultation meetings. One overarching example stated that this honest and transparent discussion was important as it helps build trust. Participants took an important step by providing valuable input to enable the County of Lambton and the City of Sarnia to make informed decisions relating to the project.