



SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

REPORT TO:	WARDEN AND LAMBTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT:	HOUSING SERVICES
PREPARED BY:	Melisa Johnson, Manager
REVIEWED BY:	Melissa Fitzpatrick, General Manager Stéphane Thiffeault, Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE:	March 4, 2026
SUBJECT:	Cathcart Affordable Housing Project Public Consultation Update

BACKGROUND

Lambton County Council, at its meeting on May 7, 2025, declared affordable housing its top priority by endorsing the following motion:

#8: McRoberts/Cook: That County Council publicly endorse making affordable and supportive housing and shelter the number one priority of County Council.

Carried.

In addition, Lambton County Council, at its meeting on June 5, 2024, authorized staff to enter into an agreement of purchase and sale (“**APS**”) with the Anglican Diocese of Huron for the property municipally known as 718 and 722 Cathcart Boulevard in the City of Sarnia (the “**Property**”) for the intended purpose of an affordable housing development. The County took possession of this property on April 24, 2025.

This report serves to update Council on the project and to seek further direction regarding the intended use of the property.

DISCUSSION

Staff have been working to advance an affordable housing development on this Property since early 2023. The chart below outlines key milestones for the project:

October 2023	Council authorized staff to negotiate the purchase of the Property.
February 2024	Flourish prepared a long-term strategic plan for affordable and supportive housing which recommended the Cathcart site as a location

	for affordable and supportive housing containing 107 units of both standard and enhanced supports. This plan was endorsed by Council with staff instructed to seek further instruction and authorization from County Council on a project-by-project basis.
May 2024	Council authorized staff to proceed with the negotiated purchase of the properties for \$2,050,000, including all legal fees and HST.
May 2024	Council authorized staff to proceed with all required pre-development work, including design, engineering and approvals, to develop the Property as a shovel-ready site for future affordable housing development for \$950,000.
April 24, 2025	The County took possession of the Property.
June 2025	Demolition of the former church was completed.
June 2025	Flourish prepared an update to the long-term strategic plan for affordable and supportive housing. There was no change to the recommendation for the Cathcart location and no additional approvals from Council.
August 2025	Glos Associates Inc. (" Glos ") was selected as the primary consultant for this project through a Request for Proposal process.
February 2026	Public consultation was held to provide the community with an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed project.

Staff worked with Glos to develop a site concept to be used for planning approvals and to present to the public for feedback. The project concept developed for this site includes a four-storey building containing 94 one-bedroom units. The building also includes elevators, lounge, laundry facilities, a scooter room, and maintenance and mechanical spaces. The project was designed to enhance the existing County-owned rent geared-to-income ("**RGI**") project adjacent to the Property, known as "**Jubilee Gardens**" and located at 700 Cathcart Blvd, Sarnia. Jubilee Gardens contains 41 one-bedroom units and is fully RGI. Jubilee Gardens has been operating on that site for over 50 years.

Staff engaged with Bryan Boyle & Associates, a third-party facilitator, to host three public engagement sessions to present the site concept prepared by Glos and to obtain public feedback. The site concept that was presented is included in Appendix A.

Sessions were held on February 10 and 11, 2026, at Sacred Heart Church in Sarnia. The public engagement sessions were well attended by approximately 160 individuals. The feedback obtained from these sessions is included in Appendix B. As the response makes clear, the site is supported for affordable housing but not for supportive housing.

Additionally, the community was offered an electronic/online option to submit feedback to allow individuals who could not attend an in-person session an opportunity to review the proposed project and submit comments. Fifteen online submissions were received with comments largely consistent with the feedback received at the in-person sessions. A summary of these submissions is included in Appendix C.

Staff are reviewing the feedback provided to incorporate into the project, as appropriate. Staff will also be developing communication materials to address the commonly asked questions from the sessions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of public consultation.

CONSULTATIONS

Consultations have taken place with the Chief Administrative Officer, General Manager, Social Services, County Solicitor/Deputy Clerk, Manager, Procurement and Projects, Glos Associates Inc., general community consultation, staff from the City of Sarnia, and the County of Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2024.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Providing safe affordable housing is in keeping with the County's Mission to promote an enhanced quality of life through the provision of responsive and efficient services accomplished by working with municipal and community partners.

The activities of the Division support the Community Development Area of Effort #3 in the County of Lambton's Strategic Plan, specifically:

- Strengthening the County's advocacy and lobbying efforts with other levels of government to raise the profile of the County and its needs to secure improved senior government supports, funding, grants, and other resources to meet emerging infrastructure and service needs;
- Consulting with the community and stakeholders on ways to increase housing options and affordability, and innovative programs and initiatives that focus on poverty reduction and promote social belonging;
- Supporting the development of a variety of affordable housing to meet demand;
- Implementing, monitoring and updating community health and wellness-related plans and priorities, including, but not limited to, the *Housing and Homelessness Plan*, *Community Safety & Well-Being Plan*, the Long-Term Care division's mission, vision, and values, *Age Friendly Community Planning* framework, Lambton Public Health's strategic priorities, *Lambton Drug & Alcohol Strategy*, *Lambton EMS Master Plan*, and *Child Care and Early Years 5-Year Service System Plan*; and

- Advocating for, and supporting access to, mental health and addiction services.

CONCLUSION

The County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024 sets a strategic direction for housing and homelessness work. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a goal under this plan and aligns with County Council's priority.

RECOMMENDATION

That any future housing project at 718 Cathcart Boulevard in the City of Sarnia be owned and operated by the County of Lambton as rent geared-to-income housing (affordable housing).