

St. Thomas 2051

Setting the Track for Our Future

Community Engagement Session 2

Growth Management, Residential and Housing Affordability Workshop Activity Book

ST. THOMAS
THE RAILWAY CITY

The following is a scaled-down version of some of the workshop materials that were part of "Session 2 -Growth Management, Residential and Housing Affordability" that the City hosted on June 23, 2026.

If you would like to provide input back to the City on the following materials, we encourage you to mark the figures up and provide comments back to Staff for consideration into the Official Plan update process.

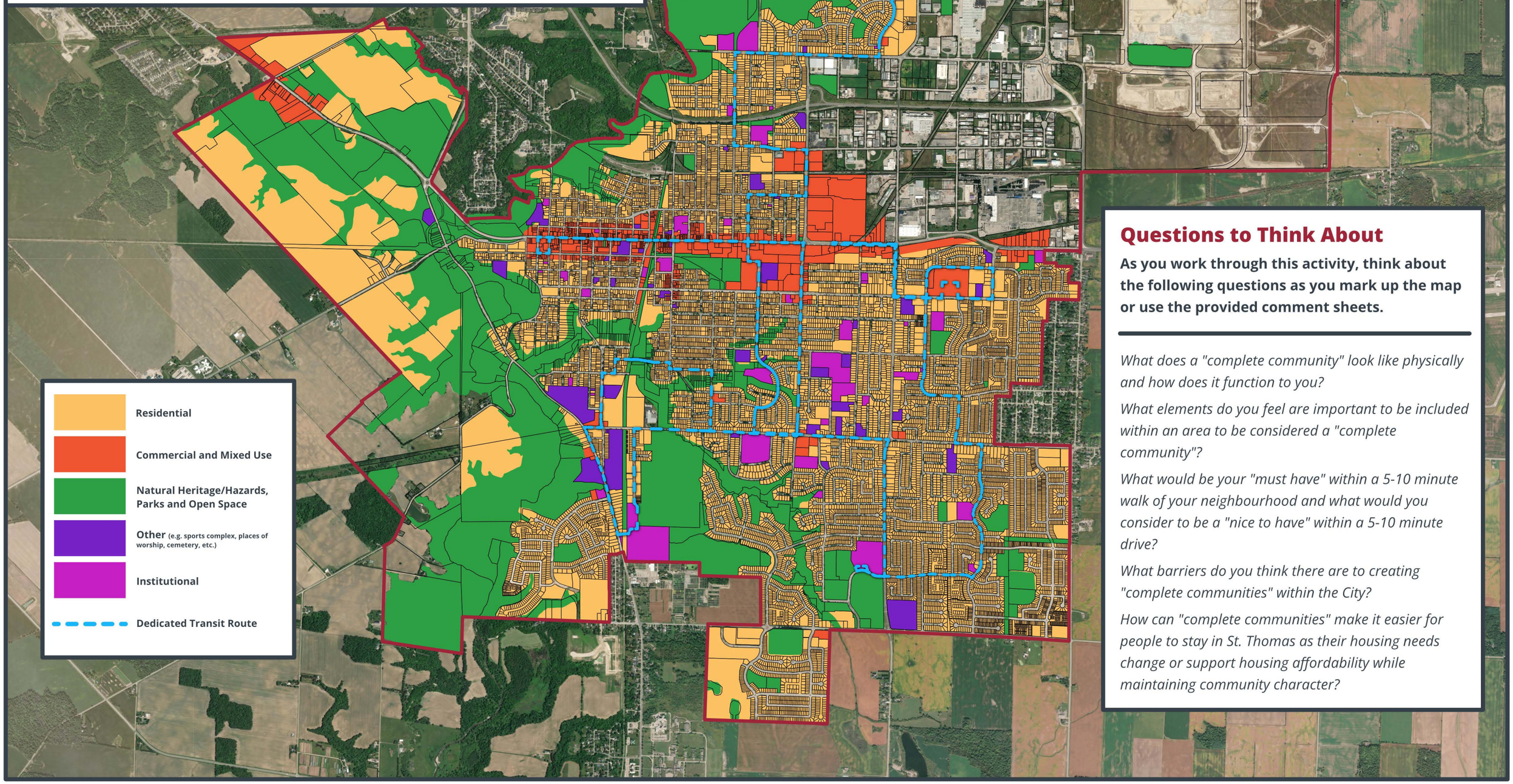
Completed Session 2 - Workshop Activity Books can be emailed to planning@stthomas.ca or dropped off at City Hall at 545 Talbot Street, St. Thomas at Planning and Building Services.

St. Thomas 2051 - Growth, Housing and Complete Communities

This map shows a simplified version of the residential areas that are designated or developed throughout the City, as well as other community elements that are within those residential neighbourhoods.

Workshop Activity

As the City grows, it is important that we are creating places where people can live, work, play, learn, and access everyday needs within connected, inclusive, and sustainable neighbourhoods. Mark up the map and show areas of the City that you feel are reflective of these "complete communities" principles. What areas do you think need improvement and why?



Questions to Think About

As you work through this activity, think about the following questions as you mark up the map or use the provided comment sheets.

What does a "complete community" look like physically and how does it function to you?

What elements do you feel are important to be included within an area to be considered a "complete community"?

What would be your "must have" within a 5-10 minute walk of your neighbourhood and what would you consider to be a "nice to have" within a 5-10 minute drive?

What barriers do you think there are to creating "complete communities" within the City?

How can "complete communities" make it easier for people to stay in St. Thomas as their housing needs change or support housing affordability while maintaining community character?

St. Thomas 2051 - Session 2 - Workshop Activities

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Workshop Session Activity:

- [x] *Growth, Housing and Complete Communities*
- [ ] *Residential Density and Neighbourhood Structure*
- [ ] *Housing Types, Commercial Uses and Streetscape Examples*
- [ ] *Affordable Housing Options*

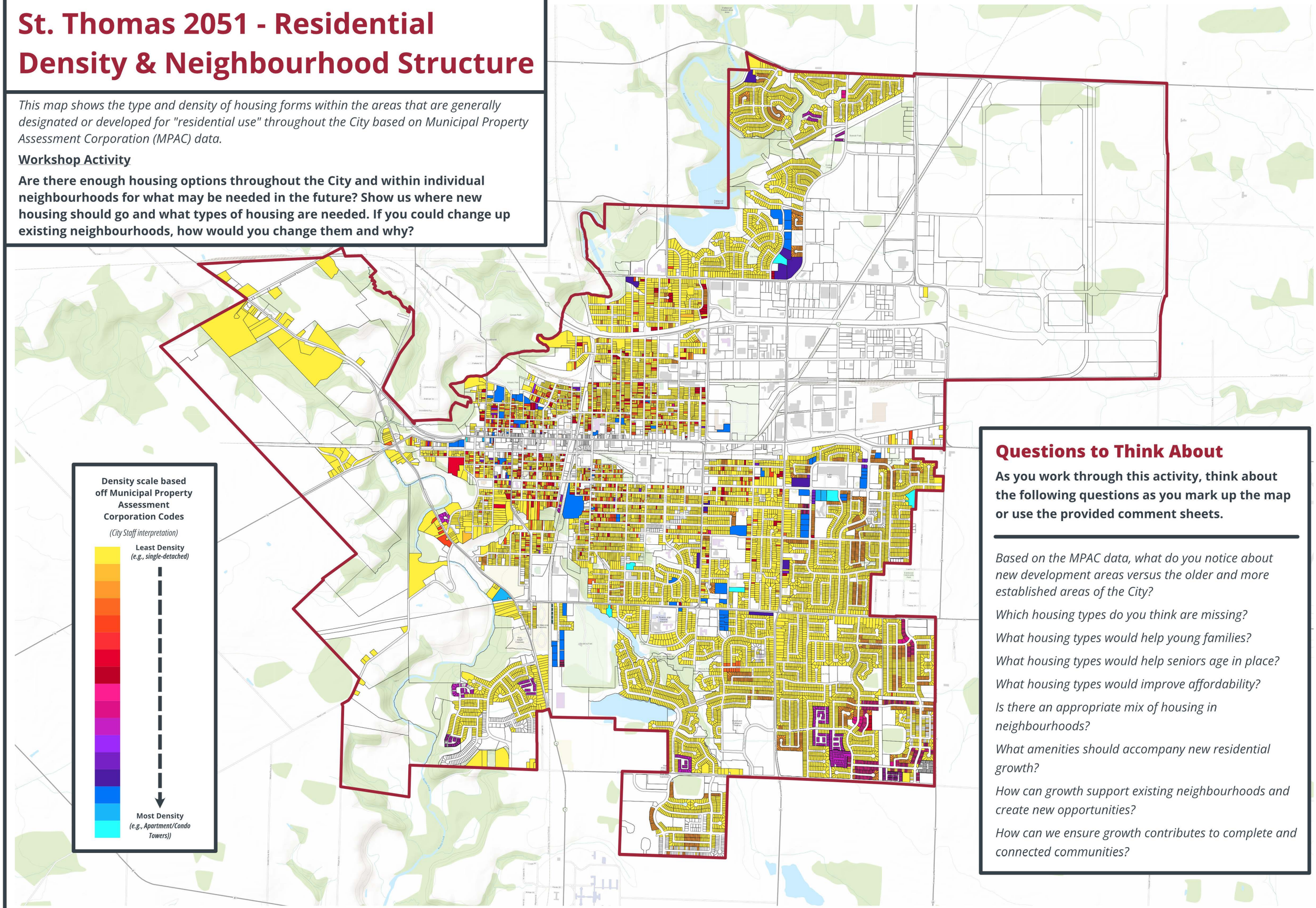
Comments:

St. Thomas 2051 - Residential Density & Neighbourhood Structure

This map shows the type and density of housing forms within the areas that are generally designated or developed for "residential use" throughout the City based on Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data.

Workshop Activity

Are there enough housing options throughout the City and within individual neighbourhoods for what may be needed in the future? Show us where new housing should go and what types of housing are needed. If you could change up existing neighbourhoods, how would you change them and why?



Questions to Think About

As you work through this activity, think about the following questions as you mark up the map or use the provided comment sheets.

Based on the MPAC data, what do you notice about new development areas versus the older and more established areas of the City?

Which housing types do you think are missing?

What housing types would help young families?

What housing types would help seniors age in place?

What housing types would improve affordability?

Is there an appropriate mix of housing in neighbourhoods?

What amenities should accompany new residential growth?

How can growth support existing neighbourhoods and create new opportunities?

How can we ensure growth contributes to complete and connected communities?

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- ☐ *Affordable Housing Options*

Comments:

Workshop Activity - Housing Types, Commercial Uses and Streetscape Examples

As St. Thomas grows and it plans for future residential growth and redevelopment potential throughout the City, the types and mix of residential dwellings and other uses that are within those neighbourhoods become even more important as residential density and the needs of the community increase.

Housing Type Questions

Several types of housing forms are shown as examples in the posters at the table. Further, as is shown in the *"Residential Density and Neighbourhood Structure"* workshop activity, you can see where these specific types of housing forms and densities are distributed around the City. To help better understand the needs of the community:

What examples do you think are missing?

What housing types would help young families?

What housing types would help seniors age in place?

What housing types would improve affordability?

What areas could be improved by introducing specific housing types?

Commercial Uses in Residential Neighbourhoods

While the City plans for the entire municipality as a whole by designating major areas for residential, commercial, employment, and other uses, it is also important to plan at the neighbourhood scale to create "complete communities". This would include ensuring that there are appropriate housing options, schools, parks and open space, transit access, etc. within neighbourhoods or hopefully within a 15-minute walk or bike ride.

The availability of "commercial uses" in residential neighbourhoods is a request that the City receives consistently from the community as a whole and something that Staff try to promote when development applications are submitted. The type and scale of these uses can be incorporated into residential areas more appropriately than others. To ensure that the City is planning for the types of commercial uses that residents might want in their neighbourhoods, use the examples in the posters to answer the following:

What type of commercial uses do you think are most appropriate?

Where do you think it would be most appropriate to locate commercial uses in a neighbourhood?

Are their any specific commercial uses that you think are missing in the examples?

Residential Garages and Streetscapes

St. Thomas has been experiencing various new building forms and increased residential densities through new subdivision proposals and infill/intensification proposals throughout the City. Increased growth and development pressures, along with housing affordability concerns, have created trends toward narrower lot development and smaller lots in general.

The examples provided in the posters for this activity show general streetscape trends that are created in residential neighbourhoods when traditional attached garages front the street. Other municipalities promote rear laneways that access a detached garage in the backyard to provide for more inviting and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. While the City does not prohibit the use of rear laneways and detached garages, and this type of arrangement may not be appropriate in all circumstances, City Staff ask the following:

What is your opinion on the use of rear laneways and detached garages?

If you had a choice, would you prefer to own or live in a neighbourhood with rear laneways?

Where do you think rear laneways and detached garages are most appropriate?

What is your opinion of attached garages and driveways in the front yard?

What do you think about current residential streetscapes with garages and driveways in the front yard?

What option do you think provides a better streetscape?

Residential Housing Examples



Single-Detached Dwellings



Semi-Detached Dwellings



Townhouse Dwellings



Triplex and Fourplex Dwellings



Low-Rise Apartments (3-4 Storeys)



Mid-Rise Apartments (5-11 Storeys)



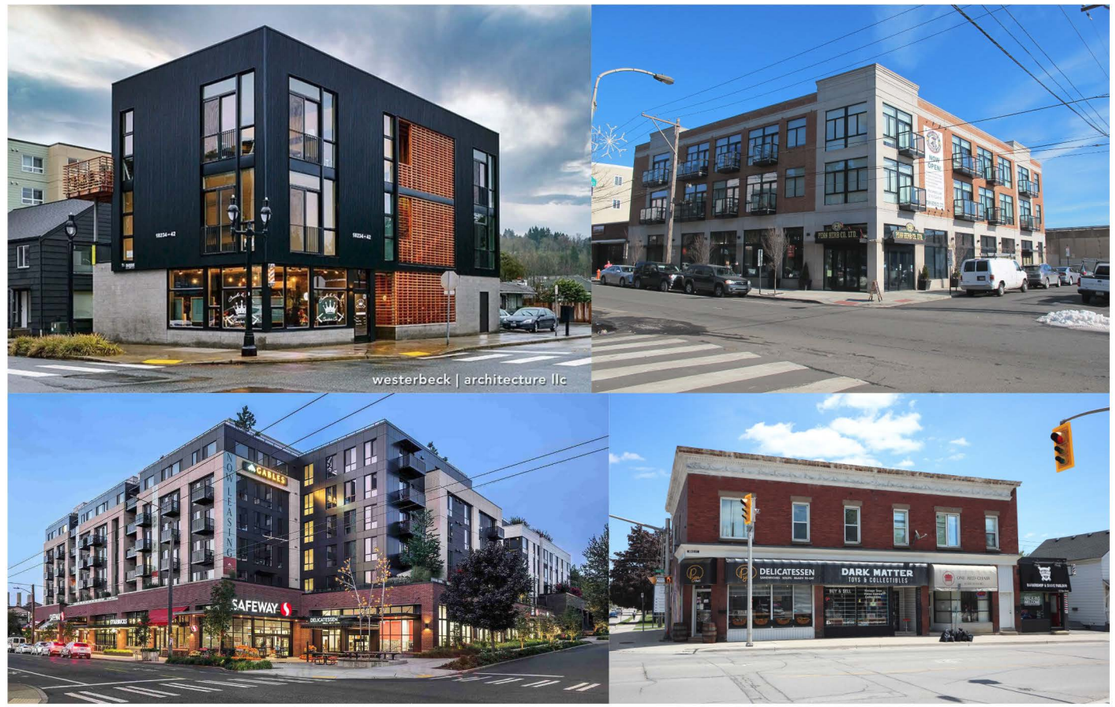
High-Rise Apartments

St. Thomas 2051
Setting the Track for Our Future

Commercial and Mixed-Use in Neighbourhoods



Corner Stores



Mixed-Use Commercial



Commercial Plaza



Residential Garages and Streetscapes



Single-Detached Dwellings with Attached Garage



Single-Detached Dwelling with Detached Rear Lane Garage



Semi-Detached Dwellings with Attached Garage



Semi-Detached Dwellings with Detached Rear Lane Garage



Townhouse Dwellings with Attached Garage



Townhouse Dwellings with Detached Rear Lane Garage



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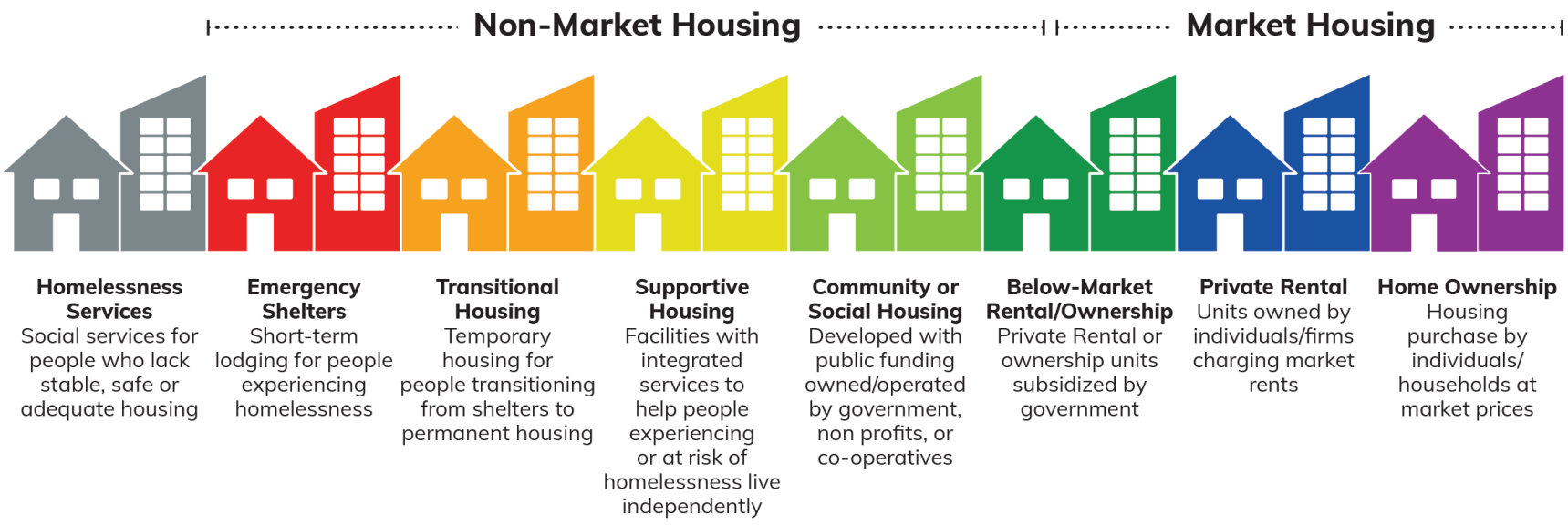
Workshop Activity – Affordable Housing

The ability to provide an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet the projected needs of current and future residents, which includes the provision of affordable housing, is very important to the City. Whether you are a recent graduate, a young family, a senior couple, or a single parent, the ability to find a housing option for your situation should be possible. It should also be equitable to all residents of the City and recognize that, as our needs change over time, we might not want to leave the community and support network that we have established in the current neighbourhood where we live.

The Affordable Housing Continuum



The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation outlines an “Affordable Housing Continuum”. This includes a range of Non-Market Housing from “Homelessness Services” to “Below-Market Rental/Ownership”, to Market Housing, such as, “Private Rental” and “Home Ownership”.

St. Thomas has been a leader in the Non-Market Housing side of the housing spectrum with its housing initiatives through its Housing and Homelessness Plan and other government assisted housing developments, however, there are improvements that can be made with respect to its Market Housing.

Additional Residential Units

The City introduced provisions to the current Official Plan and Zoning By-law in 2025 to allow for 4-units “as-of-right” where single-detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings are permitted. This allows for more housing options within neighbourhoods by providing “gentle density”, allows potential for more affordable housing choices for individuals looking for housing, and allows for a potential source of income for individuals looking to stay housed.

While Additional Residential Units can be provided within a dwelling or within a detached structure in a backyard, there is a drastic difference between what is considered “affordable” in land use planning and what the current market conditions are.

“Affordable” Housing

While housing supply has increased in recent years, market prices and rents remain out of reach for many low- to moderate-income households.

The average market price for ownership housing is $556,000 in St. Thomas ($324,000 is considered affordable).

The average rental market price is $1,530 per month in St. Thomas ($1,335 is considered affordable), with average listings now at $1,730 per month.

While the cost to purchase or rent housing is a big factor to housing “affordability”, how neighbourhoods and communities are structured, the services that they provide and where they are located, and how everything is connected also contributes to affordability by not creating auto dependent communities and being able to utilize transit, bike or walk to those services.

What housing types you think would improve affordability?

What barriers do you feel exist to creating affordable housing?

Do you think there is enough housing available for people at different stages of life (young adults, families, seniors)?

Are there groups in the community whose housing needs are not being adequately met? If so, who?

Should the City play a larger role in supporting affordable housing? If yes, how?

What actions should the City prioritize to improve housing affordability?

Should affordable housing be integrated into all new neighbourhoods and developments?

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