



SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

REPORT TO:	WARDEN AND LAMBTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT:	HOUSING SERVICES
PREPARED BY:	Melisa Johnson, Manager
REVIEWED BY:	Valerie Colasanti, General Manager Stéphane Thiffeault, Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE:	May 7, 2025
INFORMATION ITEM:	St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church – Agreement of Purchase and Sale Update

BACKGROUND

Lambton County Council, at its meeting on July 5, 2023, declared affordable housing its top priority by endorsing the following motion:

#3: Bradley/White: That County Council publicly endorse making affordable 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 710, 718 and 722 Cathcart Blvd. in the City of Sarnia (the “**Property**”).

This report serves to update Council on the successful completion of the County's acquisition of the Property.

DISCUSSION

The County closed its acquisition of the Property and has undertaken operation and management thereof on April 25, 2025.

Funding

In accordance with Council's direction on June 5, 2024, \$3 million dollars has been allocated from the Affordable Housing Reserve for the acquisition of the Property and for the pre-development work to bring the Property to shovel-ready status. The breakdown of costs is as follows:

Property Acquisition	\$1,950,000
Demolition	\$ 151,000
Pre-Development	\$ 899,000
Total	\$3,000,000

Demolition of 718 Cathcart Blvd.

The demolition contract has been awarded to Lanmar Environmental Solutions Inc. Lanmar has completed the necessary planning work regarding the demolition of this property.

Documents have been submitted to the City of Sarnia to obtain the required demolition permit. Pending permit, demolition is expected to begin on site in early May 2025 and is anticipated to be completed by July 2025.

Upon completion of the demolition, this space will be maintained as an open grass space until construction begins on a new building.

Pre-Development of 718 Cathcart Blvd.

Pre-development work has commenced through the completion of studies including Environmental Assessments and Designated Substance Reports. As a next step, a Request for Proposal (“RFP”) for Architectural Services will be issued as well as the Pre-application Consultation for Rezoning will be initiated with the City of Sarnia.

Use of 722 Cathcart Blvd.

The former rectory home located at 722 Cathcart Blvd. is not included in the demolition and project plan for this site. During the construction period, this house will be used as the project office, utilized by the General Contractor and County staff. By utilizing this location and amenities as the project office, it is anticipated to save approximately \$250,000 in construction cost by eliminating the need for trailer and washroom rentals.

Once the project is completed, the use of 722 Cathcart Blvd. will be explored. Potential opportunities could include renovation and conversion to multi-residential units or sale with proceeds used to reduce the overall project cost. Staff will seek Council direction regarding opportunities at 722 Cathcart Blvd. at a later date.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implication of the acquisition of the Property and development of a shovel-ready project at 718 Cathcart Blvd is \$3 million dollars utilizing funds from the Affordable Housing Reserve.

CONSULTATIONS

Consultations have taken place with the C.A.O.; General Manager, Social Services; Manager, Procurement and Projects; and Assistant County Solicitor/Deputy Clerk.

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

County staff successfully completed the acquisition of the Property on April 25, 2025.

Acquiring the Property and completing the pre-development work to prepare the Property as a shovel-ready site will help facilitate the development of future affordable housing and open additional external funding sources to fund this development in a timely and cost-efficient manner.