



City of St. Thomas
Official Plan Amendment No. 66 to the
City of St. Thomas Official Plan

APPENDIX XII

Urban Area Expansion Study – Trails and Parks Analysis Dated
September 2009 Prepared by Cosburn Giberson Landscape
Architects

St. Thomas Urban Area Expansion Study

TRAILS AND PARKS ANALYSIS

Prepared by Cosburn Giberson Landscape Architects
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Purpose & Scope

To review the expansion areas in the context of the principles identified in the 2007 Trails and Parks Master Plan (TPMP). The TPMP is intended to create a safe network of open space and trails accessible to people of varying ages and abilities, connecting natural, heritage and cultural features.

This report will make recommendations for expanding the city-wide network of on and off-road trail facilities and for locating parklands within the expansion areas. The TPMP provides a set of comprehensive planning and design guidelines for both trails and parks, while the Recreation, Leisure & Parks Master Plan (RLPMP) concentrates on parks requirements. The TPMP and RLPMP should be used in conjunction with one another to identify the expected needs of the City and the residents within and adjacent to the expansion areas.

Context

The Urban Area Expansion Study has identified three areas (referred to as Area 3, 4, and 6) for further study, to be redesignated as residential in the City's Official Plan. Area 6 is located at the north end of the City and with an estimated population of 74 persons, and an adjacent future neighbourhood park, and sufficient access to the trail network, it is not of concern to the TPMP. Area 3 is located at the south end of the City, and is bordered on the north and west by residential lands. Area 4 is located at the south-east side of the City, is bordered on the west by residential lands. Both Area 3 and 4 are comprised of relatively flat terrain and contain woodlots.

Trail Network

The RLPMP identified that the most popular leisure activity for residents is walking for exercise and enjoyment, creating a demand for the establishment of a comprehensive trail system. It is recommended that the trail network developed for the TPMP be expanded to ensure access to and from the expansion areas (refer to figure 1).

Area 3 is located in close proximity to recreational trails to the north around Lake Margaret and through the valleylands. It is recommended that there be an on road (sidewalk) connection along Lake Margaret Trail connecting Area 3 to the trail system. There is potential for a recreational trail to be added through or adjacent the woodlot and connecting the proposed neighbourhood park(s), within Area 3.

Area 4 is located adjacent to the Trans-Canada Trail, providing an excellent opportunity to connect the recreational trail around Lake Margaret and the adjacent valley lands to the Trans-Canada Trail through Area 4. On road (sidewalk) connections and recreational trails through the parklands, woodlot and other open space should be provided to create a continuous trail network through the south end of the City. It is also recommended that a cycleway lane be constructed along Elm Street at the north end of Area 4, to extend the cycleway lane proposed in the TPMP.

Parks and Open Space

Urban expansion areas are important in the growth of the City’s Parks and Open Space system, to provide facilities and amenities that maybe deficient within the City. The RLPMP identified a city-wide shortfall in soccer fields, ball diamonds, football fields, basketball courts, waterplay facilities and skate parks. The TPMP recommends that all residents be within a 500 metre service radius of local park facilities and amenities. Area 3 has 2 community parks within 300 metres, and 3 neighbourhood parks within 500 metres. Area 4 has one community park within 500 metres and 2 neighbourhood parks within 500 metres. Not all of these parks contain playgrounds.

The following table has been adapted from the Recreation & Leisure Infrastructure Requirements (RLIR)report, prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (July 2009).

	Closest Community Park(s)	Closest Neighbourhood Park(s)
Area 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Douglas J. Tarry Sports Complex (0.3km) – 5 lit ball diamonds, 1 soccer field, playground• Central Elgin Soccer Fields (0.3km to the south of the study area, but no direct access) – 4 full size soccer pitches (8 minis); leased by the City from the ORC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centennial Sports Club Diamonds (0.3km) – 6 ball diamonds• Tarry Subdivision Park (0.3km) – not yet developed• Lake Margaret Park (0.5km) – passive park
Area 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Douglas J. Tarry Sports Complex (0.5km) – 5 lit ball diamonds, 1 soccer field, playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applewood Subdivision Park (0.2km) – playground, remainder of park not yet developed• Eastwood Park (0.4km) – passive park with playground

The RLIR recommends determining parkland requirements based on the outdoor recreational facility requirements, and the total area required to accommodate those facilities. To accommodate the required facilities approximately 19.4 to 21.4 hectares of active parkland should be provided within Areas 3 and 4. The following facilities have been recommended by the RLIR to be located within Areas 3 and 4:

- Four soccer fields
- Three ball diamonds
- One to two playgrounds in Area 3, and a minimum of 2 playgrounds in Area 4
- One splash pad in or near Area 4
- One outdoor basketball court within Area 3
- One minor skate park within or near Areas 3 and 4

With the close proximity of Douglas J. Tarry Sports Complex, a community park will not be necessary within Area 3. Area 3 being 1.0km x 0.8km, is of a sufficient size to accommodate two neighbourhood parks of approximately 3-3.9 hectares, per the TPMP design guidelines. Area 4 is large enough to accommodate a community park of approximately 8-12 hectares and one neighbourhood park of

approximately 3-3.9 acres, per the TPMP design guidelines, in order to ensure that every resident is within a 500 metre service radius. Refer to figure 1 for conceptual locations for these proposed parks. When planning for parkland the following guidelines should be addressed.:

- A park should be centrally located to its catchment area and provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation.
- Parkland should be located to enable a community to have access to a park early in the development phase of the neighbourhood, where possible.
- Parkland should have good connections to the City's pathway system to encourage alternative transportation to the site.
- Parkland should be bounded with sufficient street frontage (minimum two streets) for clear identification, access and greater visibility for safety, and provide off-street parking.
- Parkland should be rectangularly shaped and relatively level and free of obstructions.
- Integrate woodlots, open space and schools with parkland to achieve the maximum park development.
- A 10 metre buffer should be considered as minimal to preserve natural elements.

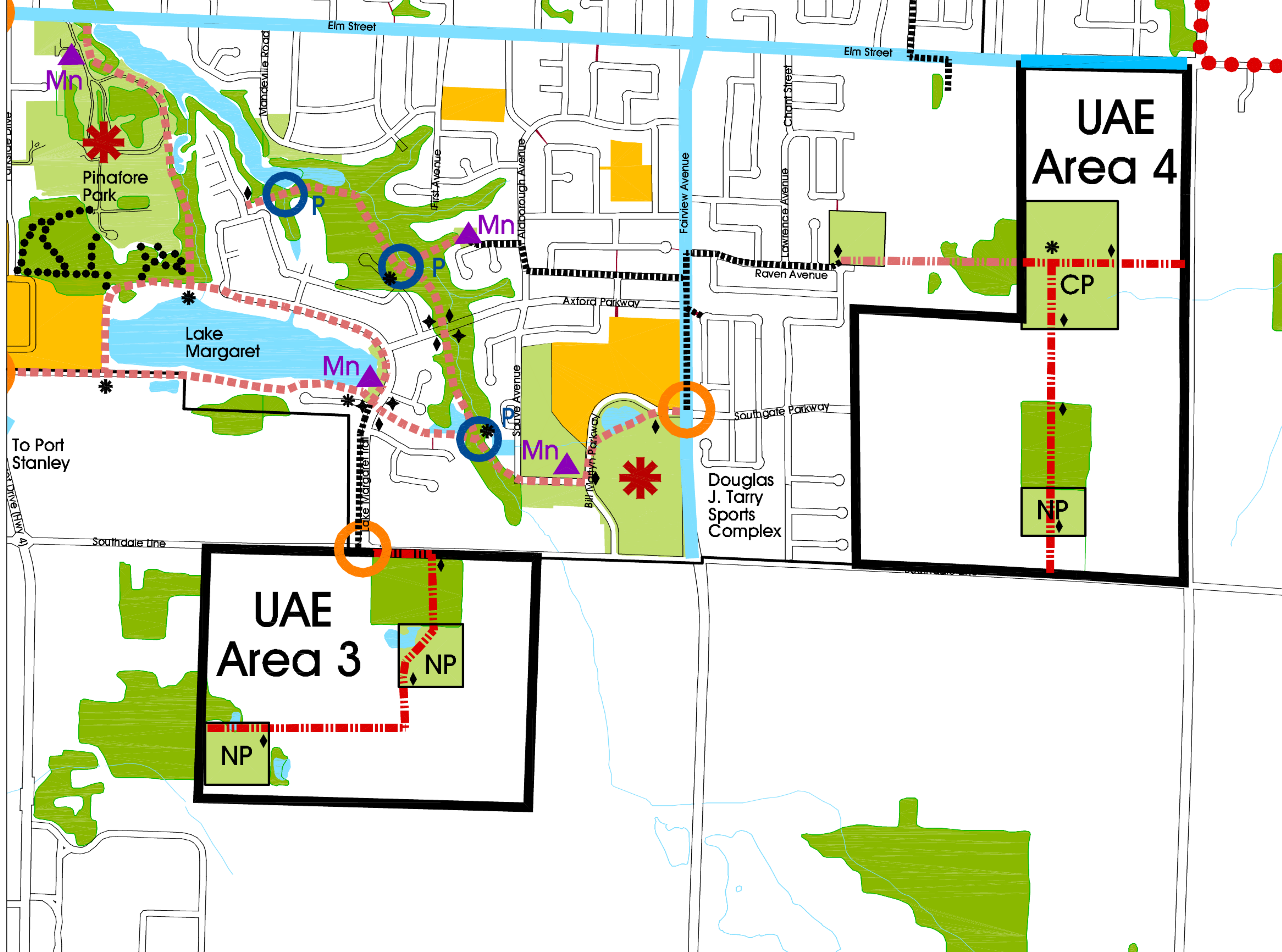
Both Areas 3 and 4 contain Woodlots. It is recommended that these natural features be connected to the proposed parkland, but should not be considered part of the parkland dedication as they do not provide active parkland opportunities. A study should be undertaken of these woodlots to provide for preservation, and management and to explore the opportunities for extending the trail system through the woodlots.

Summary

This analysis has been developed in order to apply the principles and policies identified in the TPMP, to the Urban Expansion Areas, at a very preliminary stage. The recommendations within this report will be refined as more detailed information becomes available through the Subdivision Draft Plan process, such as final parkland dedication numbers. As part of the preparation of community plans a detailed open space plan containing a linked hierarchy of open spaces should be included and approved by the City. The open space plan should identify/include:

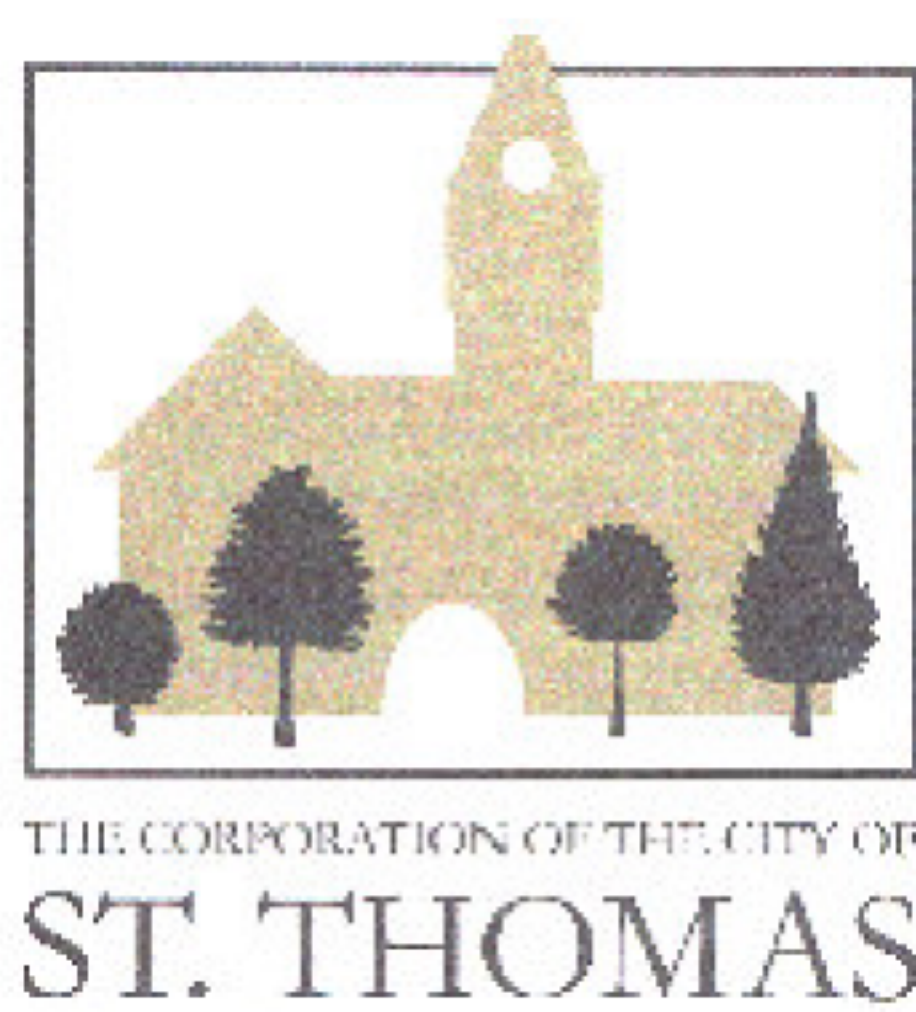
- Connections to the City open space system, including any new parks within the community plan area
- Locations of proposed parkland and the surrounding uses
- The classification and function of the parks
- Environmentally significant areas and recommendations for their protection

The trails and parks system needs to be designed to accommodate a diversity of connected recreational, social, cultural, educational and economic benefits.



LEGEND

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|--|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| | St. Thomas City Boundary | | Multi-use Trail Corridor | | Existing Trail Underpass |
| | Railroad | | Recreational Trail | | At-Grade Trail Crossing |
| | Woodlots | | Potential Recreational Trail | | Pedestrian Creek Crossing |
| | Water Bodies | | Cycleway Lane/Streetscape Improvement | | Maintenance and Pedestrian Creek Crossing |
| | Schools | | Cycleway Lane/Streetscape Improvement | | Minor Trailhead Sign |
| | Parkland | | Dual Function - Multi-use Trail Corridor/Cycleway Lane | | Directional Sign |
| | Municipal Sites | | Dual Function - Recreation Trail/Cycleway Lane | | Regulatory Sign |
| | Hydro Corridor | | Local Connection | | Traffic Sign |
| | Destination (Community Parks) | | Existing Hiking Trails | | Stairs |
| | | | Trans Canada Trail | | Neighbourhood Park |
| | | | Potential Recreational Trail (UAE) | | Community Park |
| | | | Cycleway Lane/Streetscape Improvement (UAE) | | |



Parkland Allocation & Trail Connections

Urban Expansion Areas 3 & 4



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