

WELL-BEING

theme overview
planning & design decisions

goal

provide access to sufficient public gathering spaces
design a vibrant public realm that promotes social interaction

detailed design tasks
fostering sustainable living

The quality of life of a community is described as well-being. This is impacted by concrete aspects such as physical surroundings, and by less measurable aspects such as physical and mental health. Sustainable urban neighbourhoods are designed with the well-being of residents and workers in mind, and foster aesthetic quality, access to goods and services, physical protection and security, and overall health and happiness.

theme overview

why is this theme important?

Well-being describes the quality of life of a population. There are many components to well-being, including both concrete aspects such as access to goods and services, and more qualitative aspects such as health and happiness.

Our physical surroundings influence our well-being by setting the framework in which we interact with other people and the natural world, where we get access to services and jobs, and so on. Issues relating to well-being are profoundly affected by factors ranging from the stress and difficulties of commuting, to the presence or absence of natural areas and greenspace.

Without greenspace and walkable/active transit-oriented neighbourhoods, the health and well-being of citizens is compromised. Greenspace helps limit the impacts of urban sprawl on wildlife as well as on air and water quality. Neighbourhood walkability tends to reduce the prevalence of obesity by making it easier for people to lead active lifestyles. Together, these elements enhance the aesthetic value of the neighbourhood, provide opportunities for recreation, community interaction and make the neighbourhood more people friendly.

why is well-being important to emerald hills urban village?

Within Strathcona County, citizens have expressed the need to have resources and areas within the neighbourhoods to support and facilitate the well-being of the community.¹ They would like their neighbourhoods to “provide a broad range of services and facilities that allow them the opportunity to lead a healthy lifestyle.”² The County also believes that it is the municipality that is in the best position to create the necessary infrastructure to support the social well-being of its citizens.³

Strathcona County citizens also recognize the necessity of the less concrete aspects of well-being and have expressed the desire to “create a safe, caring and respectful community.”⁴

how can emerald hills urban village impact on this theme?

The well-being of a community is influenced by its design features. People’s quality of life, especially their health, has suffered as a result living in car-dependent communities. By incorporating design strategies that are welcoming and safe into the Emerald Hills Urban Village, people will be drawn to spend more time in public spaces and will also use active forms of transportation.

summary table of goals and strategies for well-being

goal	charrette process strategy
Provide access to sufficient public gathering spaces.	Incorporate a large central public open space as the ‘heart’ of the Village.
	Integrate structured and unstructured social and recreational amenities throughout the Village.
	Provide strong linkages between the Village and surrounding neighbourhoods.
Design a vibrant public realm that promotes social interaction.	Orient buildings to allow for “eyes on the street”.
	Preserve views and sightlines within and through the Village.
	Incorporate spaces and features that are inviting and memorable.

1. Strathcona County Municipal Development Plan. 2006.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.

planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Accessible and aesthetically pleasing public spaces such as plazas, patios, community parks, and playgrounds help attract more pedestrians to the public realm. This contributes to the vibrancy of the area and promotes community interaction and community pride. By incorporating a large central open space as the key structure to the Village, the rest of the activities and land uses radiate around and activate a public gathering place.



Buildings are turned to face on to the central open space.

A central open space forms the heart of the Village.

goal / provide access to sufficient public gathering spaces.

strategy one / incorporate a large central public open space as the 'heart' of the village.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- The central open space is linked to the extended care facility and apartment / apartment hotel buildings along the North-South pedestrian-oriented street and the east west greenway corridor.
- Public amenities in these buildings are located to emphasize the linkage to the central open space.

area ii: residential, commercial

- The 6, 8, 14-storey buildings are directly linked to the central open space, while the 4-storey building is linked to it along the service/emergency corridor.
- Service commercial spaces rim this edge, enlivening the space.

area iii: residential, commercial

- The 6, 8, 10, 14-storey buildings face directly on to the central open space, with flex office and service commercial opportunities located at grade to enliven the pedestrian environment.
- The 4-storey building is linked to the central open space along the naturalized corridor to the south, and the service/emergency corridor to the north.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The largest portion of the Municipal Reserve makes up the central open space, providing opportunities for large group gatherings, active and passive recreation.
- The central open space is connected to all areas in the Village through corridors along the Municipal Reserve and Public Utility Lots.
- The central open space is designed to incorporate a main plaza, open grass areas, open grass play areas, a promenade, and a play structure.

area iv: residential

- The 3 and 4-storey apartments face directly on to the central open space and on to the landscaped corridor that links to it.
- The attached bungalows are linked to the central open space through openings in the apartment buildings and along the naturalized East-West corridor to the north.

area v: residential

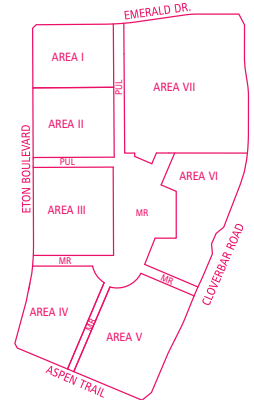
- Some of the townhouses face directly on to the central open space and on to the landscaped corridor that links to it.
- Other townhouses are linked to the central open space through openings in the buildings and along the North-South landscaped corridor.

area vi: residential, commercial

- The residential buildings face directly on to the central open space, with commercial activities at grade helping to enliven the space.

area vii: commercial, residential

- The central open space infiltrates into the parking field, creating a physical and visual linkage from retail commercial activities to the landscaped area.
- The 12-storey residential highrise is turned to face on to the central open space in order to frame the corner and emphasize connections between the buildings and the public gathering area.



planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Public spaces should span a range of big and small, busy and intimate, and be adaptable for a variety of uses and events, such as farmers markets, festivals, and art displays. By distributing a range of programmed and informal spaces, the opportunity for social interaction increases.



Courtyards provide semi-public gathering spaces.



Retail food operations provide areas for social interaction.



Gathering spaces are integrated with natural features.



Structures in open space areas provide locations for impromptu gatherings.

goal / provide access to sufficient public gathering spaces.

strategy two / integrate structured and unstructured social and recreational amenities throughout the village.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- Areas for social and recreational interaction are distributed through the parcel.
- The sun courts provide semi-public gathering space for residents and families.
- Roof top green spaces provide locations for social interaction on the extended care and life-lease buildings.
- Active indoor spaces such as resident gyms, meeting rooms, or other amenities are located on corners facing on to the central open space or greenway corridors, and are made available to all Village residents.

area ii: residential, commercial

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municipal reserve & public utility lot

- Areas for social interaction and recreational activity are integrated into the greenway corridors.
- The central open space provides an area for large gatherings on the main plaza and open grass areas, and for recreational activity on the play structure.
- The community gardens along the East-West naturalized corridor provide a location for social interaction and public use.

area iv: residential

- Courtyard areas provide semi-public gathering spaces.
- The laneways provide opportunities for recreational play, such as basketball or street hockey.

area v: residential

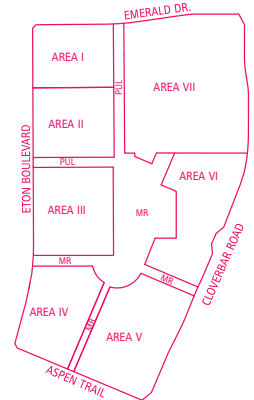
- Courtyard areas provide semi-public gathering spaces.
- The laneways provide opportunities for recreational play, such as basketball or street hockey.

area vi: residential, commercial

- Areas for social and recreational interaction are distributed through the parcel.
- The courtyard provides semi-public gathering space for residents and families.
- Roof top green spaces provide locations for social interaction.
- Active indoor spaces such as resident gyms, meeting rooms, or other amenities are located on corners facing on to the central open space or greenway corridors, and are made available to all Village residents.

area vii: commercial, residential

- The parking field provides a possible location for such activities as a farmers' market on weekends.
- The parking field is landscaped to enhance walkability and interaction, and is directly linked to the main plaza of the central open space.
- Retail food operations are located to face on to the central open space to enhance social interaction.



planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Emphasizing the linkages between different neighbourhoods increases the level of social interaction occurring in any one neighbourhood. By making the linkages a feature, the Village becomes activated by more people than just those who live and work there. It also enhances the opportunity to move beyond the Village if desired.



Linkages are maintained between Village and surrounding neighbourhoods (Sketch taken from design charrette).



Gateways reinforce connections and encourage interaction.



Visual linkages can be made through gaps in buildings.

goal / provide access to sufficient public gathering spaces.

strategy three / provide strong linkages between the village and surrounding neighbourhoods.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Emerald Dr., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space, in order to encourage residents and non-residents to meander through the Village.
- The greenway corridor to the south of the parcel provides a link across Eton Blvd. to encourage interaction between neighbourhoods.

area ii: residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Eton Blvd., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space, in order to encourage residents and non-residents to meander through the Village.
- The greenway corridor to the north of the parcel provides a link across Eton Blvd. to encourage interaction between neighbourhoods.

area iii: residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Eton Blvd., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space, in order to encourage residents and non-residents to meander through the Village.
- The East-West naturalized corridor connects the Village to the stormwater management area and trails off-site to the west.
- The greenway corridor to the north of the parcel provides a link across Eton Blvd. to encourage interaction between neighbourhoods.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The greenway corridors and open spaces along the Municipal Reserve and Public Utility Lots provide the connecting network that links the Village to surrounding neighbourhoods and vice versa.
- The greenway network is designed to enhance connections with public spaces within and beyond the Village.

area iv: residential

- The East-West naturalized corridor is designed to connect across Eton Blvd. to the stormwater management area to the west of the Village.
- The North-South landscaped corridor provides a gateway into the Village off Aspen Dr.

area v: residential

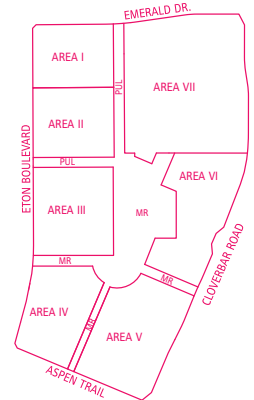
- The East-West naturalized corridor is designed to connect across Clover Bar Rd. to the trail network to the east.
- The North-South landscaped corridor provides a gateway into the Village off Aspen Dr.
- Greenway spaces in between the townhouses along Clover Bar Rd. provide permeable linkages in between the Village and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

area vi: residential, commercial

- Welcoming gateways and access points are located off of Clover Bar Rd., with a strong visual linkage maintained to the central open space, in order to encourage residents and non-residents to meander through the Village.
- The East-West naturalized corridor connects the Village to the trail network off-site
- The integration of office and other commercial space into this parcel helps to connect non-residents to the Village and its amenities.

area vii: commercial, residential

- Welcoming gateways and access points are located off of Clover Bar Rd., with a strong visual linkage maintained to the central open space, in order to encourage residents and non-residents to meander through the Village.
- The design of the commercial spaces is oriented to draw non-residents into the Village and its amenities.
- The integration of ground-oriented work-live/live-work along the North-South pedestrian-oriented corridor maintains a continuity of built form to draw people from the hospital site and Emerald Dr. into the Village and vice versa.



planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / The concept of “eyes on the street” comes from Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which aims to reduce the crime and the fears associated with crimes through design of the urban environment. Encouraging “eyes on the street” by improving pedestrian activity and watching from homes creates a sense of ownership of the public realm.

Narrow setbacks help maintain linkage between interior and exterior spaces.



Ground-oriented units in mid-rise buildings help to activate the public realm.



Buildings are oriented to allow for “eyes on the street.”

planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Preserving sightlines helps draw people into public spaces that are dispersed through the Village, and ensures that the network of gathering places is frequently used.



Maintaining permeability through buildings helps to reinforce sightlines.



The landscaping plan supports the sightlines and views through the Village.

goal / design a vibrant public realm that promotes social interaction.

strategy two / preserve views and sightlines within and through the village.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Emerald Dr., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space.
- The greenway corridor to the south of the parcel provides a view corridor between Eton Blvd. and the North-South pedestrian-oriented street.
- Visual connection is provided through the sun courts of the extended care facility to other parts of the Village.

area ii: residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Eton Blvd., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space.
- The greenway corridor to the north of the parcel provides a view corridor between Eton Blvd. and the North-South pedestrian-oriented street.
- Visual connection is provided through the courtyard to other parts of the Village.

area iii: residential, commercial

- A welcoming gateway and access point is located off of Eton Blvd., with a visual linkage maintained to the central open space.
- The East-West naturalized corridor provides a view corridor between the Village and the stormwater management area to the west.
- Visual connection is provided through the courtyard to other parts of the Village.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The greenway corridors and open spaces along the Municipal Reserve and Public Utility Lots provide a network that permits view corridors to be maintained across and down the Village.
- The greenway network is designed to enhance connections with public spaces within and beyond the Village.

area iv: residential

- The East-West naturalized corridor provides a view corridor between the Village and the stormwater management area to the west.
- Visual connection is provided through the internal laneways and gaps between the buildings to other parts of the Village.
- The North-South landscaped corridor provides a visual connection between the Village and Aspen Dr.

area v: residential

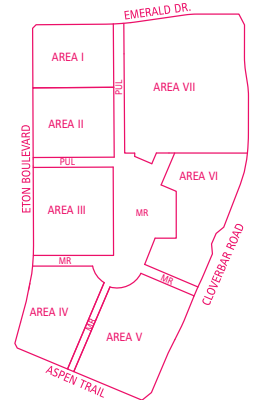
- The East-West naturalized corridor provides a view corridor between the Village and the neighbourhoods to the east.
- Visual connection is provided through the internal laneways and gaps between the buildings to other parts of the Village.
- The North-South landscaped corridor provides a visual connection between the Village and Aspen Dr.

area vi: residential, commercial

- The East-West naturalized corridor provides a view corridor between the Village and the neighbourhoods to the east.
- Visual connection is provided through the internal laneways and gaps between the buildings to other parts of the Village.
- A main gateway from Clover Bar Rd. provides a strong visual linkage between the central open space and the boundaries of the Village.

area vii: commercial, residential

- The welcoming gateways and access points located off of Clover Bar Rd. and Emerald Dr. are designed with a strong visual linkage to the central open space.
- The design of the commercial spaces is oriented to maintain a visual linkage between the parcel and the rest of the Village and its amenities.
- The North-South pedestrian-oriented corridor maintains a strong visual linkage from the hospital site and Emerald Dr. into the Village and vice versa.



planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / The aesthetics and environmental quality of a community are not only improved with trees, landscaped lots and streets, roofs, and parks not only improve, but they can sometimes have an impact on critical social issues such as health care, education, crime and safety, economic development, and social disenfranchisement. Attractiveness, comfort, convenience, safety, security and system coherence are all variables that will influence pedestrian and cycling activity.



Sun courts provide a place to relax and socialize.



The scale of the buildings is in harmony with the outdoor spaces.



Ground-oriented units create an inviting streetscape.



Natural features can reinforce a sense of place.



goal / design a vibrant public realm that promotes social interaction.

strategy three / incorporate spaces and features that are inviting and memorable.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The restriction of cars from the residential zones allows for attractive and appropriate landscape design (including public art, water features, and other amenities).
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

area ii: residential, commercial

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The restriction of cars from the residential zones allows for attractive and appropriate landscape design (including public art, water features, and other amenities).
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

area iii: residential, commercial

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The restriction of cars from the residential zones allows for attractive and appropriate landscape design (including public art, water features, and other amenities).
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The central open space on the Municipal Reserve is designed to be the Village heart, with a range of active and passive recreational spaces, public art, and other features.
- The greenway corridors along the Public Utility Lots and Municipal Reserve are landscaped with a range of characters -- some more naturalized, some more formal.
- The community gardens provide a location that is inviting and enhance the attractiveness of the public realm.

area iv: residential

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The reduction of automobile traffic through the residential zones allows for attractive and appropriate landscape design (including public art, water features, and other amenities).
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

area v: residential

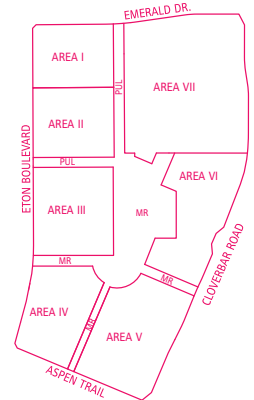
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- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

area vi: residential, commercial

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The integration of the residential buildings with the central open space allows for landscaping design to enhance the building features.
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.

area vii: commercial, residential

- The scale of the buildings is designed to be in balance with the scale of the outdoor spaces.
- The buildings are designed with ground-oriented units that humanize the public realm.



detailed design tasks

general intent / This section highlights design tasks flagged during the charrette process as needing to be addressed during the detailed design process. LEED for Neighbourhood Development prerequisites and credits are to be satisfied.

detailed design tasks

- Ensure glazing orientation and design supports the visibility and accessibility to social and recreational amenities.
- Ensure that the design of the gateways are welcoming and encourage movement between the Village and the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Ensure that the design of pedestrian crossings on Emerald Dr., Eton Blvd., and Clover Bar Rd. reinforce the connections across the neighbourhoods.
- Integrate best practices noise abatement measures at building, parcel and site scale in order to support positive connectivity between the public and private realms.
- Ensure that CPTED design principles are reviewed to balance “eyes on the street” with need for private spaces.
- Create smaller scale, distributed gathering places at the block and building scales.
- Integrate active indoor spaces such as residents gyms, meeting rooms, or other amenities into the corner of buildings facing on to the central open space or greenway corridors.
- Design retail food operations to face on to central open space to enhance social interaction.

related leed-neighbourhood development credits

No credits available for Emerald Hills Urban Village.

See www.usgbc.org for more information.



Create spaces that promote social interaction.

fostering sustainable living

general intent / The detailed design decisions that enable sustainable development at Emerald Hills Urban Village must also foster sustainable living. The Strategies and Initiatives/Activities identified below represent an initial framework and point of departure for generating a Fostering Sustainable Living Program at the Urban Village. They are intended to provide the integrated design team with the sustainable living lens that is to be applied to all detailed design decisions. It is recognized that these lists will evolve and be refined as the detailed design for the Urban Village emerges.

strategies

- Ensure detailed design of built environment supports healthy indoor and outdoor environments.
- Incorporate 'secure-by-design' principles into landscape design to foster protection and security.
- Create private and public spaces that foster both active and passive recreation.
- Provide adequate access to private greenspace for the majority of units.
- Engage all Village citizens in creating a genuine wealth program.
- Create partnerships with local NGOs working on social sustainability issues.
- Weave the County's Social Sustainability Framework into the fabric of the Village.
- Introduce community-based social marketing (CBSM) programs to foster social sustainability.
- Promote awareness-building and community mapping.

initiatives / activities

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- Public health officials involved in programming.
- The Happy Village Index - health and happiness indicators and ongoing monitoring.
- Neighbourhood Leadership College.
- Hub/Centre for Social Innovation.
- Volunteer Recognition Night/Volunteer of the Year award.
- Green housekeeping program.
- Babysitting Co-operative.
- Shared Seniors Centre/Nursery.
- Shared toy library.
- 1000 Hands initiative - creating community space.
- Opportunities for Lifelong Learning - community courses ranging from Elderhostel for seniors to Signing with your Baby.
- Community Café.
- Movie night.
- 'Genuine Wealth' section in the "Living Smart at the Village" intranet handbook.
- Community Newsletter.
- Call-in/Email Hotline for Civic Events.
- Village / community mapping of quality of life opportunities.
- 'Genuine Wealth' - a CBSM program to foster healthy and sustainable lifestyles.
- Village / community mapping fair trade retailers, local suppliers, services and employment opportunities.



Create a safe neighbourhood.



Community Cafe.



Shared seniors centre and nursery.