

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES



“What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all.”

James Shaver Woodsworth



QUALITY OF LIFE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: ENSURING ECONOMIC VITALITY

REALTORS® believe a strong economy with full employment remains the single biggest key to our communities' *Quality of Life*. We know that economic development brings new opportunities and an improved *Quality of Life* for city and town residents by increasing the number of jobs available, by boosting purchasing power and by growing the tax base—crucial to government's ability to deliver necessary public services, provide new amenities for neighborhoods and maintain infrastructure.

Some of the activities we've undertaken to ensure economic vitality are:

- For many years LSTAR was represented on the Board of Directors of MainStreet London, established to revitalize London's downtown core, and has taken an active role in the recruitment and retention of businesses to our historic centre.
- LSTAR has served as a clearing centre for information regarding grants designed to preserve historic buildings in both London and St. Thomas's downtown cores.
- LSTAR has worked with the London Economic Development Corporation to bring new business to London by providing them with information regarding not only commercial and industrial real estate, but also residential real estate – often a deciding factor for companies seeking to relocate, but wishing to retain key employees.
- In the competitive climate for doctors, the City of London has counted on LSTAR to provide it with the real estate information that is a strong consideration for prospective doctors deciding where to set up their practices.
- The Members of LSTAR's Regional Commercial Council are actively involved in selling our communities to businesses coming from outside our jurisdiction and celebrating our local commercial sector through such mechanism as our Don Smith Commercial Building Award Program.
- LSTAR is a Member of the London Chamber of Commerce, the St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce and the Southwest Economic Alliance. The role of SWEA is to link governments, business and industry, as well as the academic sector to create a common vision for the region and encourage cooperative action in order to generate growth and prosperity. It also is a member of the Keep London Growing Coalition and Progress London, partnerships supporting London's economic growth.



Downtown London

- Every year LSTAR awards a bursary to a male and female student to assist them with their college or university education. We believe that investing in human infrastructure is critical to our region's future prosperity.

PRINCIPLE 2: PROVIDING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

REALTORS® are strong advocates for home ownership. Not only is it the dream of most Canadians, it's also the bedrock upon which our communities are built, contributing to a strong civic life; economic, business and employment stability; and family security and well being. For some families, however, the dream of home ownership remains elusive. It is for this reason that we must also commit ourselves to providing housing options other than home ownership. Finally, we must acknowledge those Canadians who, for whatever reason, are simply unable to take care of themselves or who require assistance. These people must also be accommodated if our community's Quality of Life is to be ensured. It is our contention that every Canadian, regardless of his or her economic status, has the right to safe, decent and affordable housing and that choice must include affordable rental accommodation. Here are some of the ways LSTAR Members have worked to provide housing opportunities:



The Unity Project

- Ongoing advocacy for affordable housing, including affordable rental housing, has long been one of LSTAR's hallmarks as an organization. Since 1992 we have actively lobbied for such initiatives at all levels of government and have been and continue to be represented at the table federally, provincially and locally both in a consulting and in a participatory fashion.
- We were the only private sector entity to donate money to start London's Rent Bank – a mechanism through which families in danger of losing their rental housing are able to avoid eviction and homelessness.
- Our community service has long been targeted at affordable housing, as a consequence of which we have raised significant dollars for principal beneficiaries Mission Services of London, Violence Against Women Services Elgin County, Habitat for Humanity, Women's Community House and the Unity Project.
- We financially support the REALTORS Care Foundation (which provides grants to shelter-related charities) through the purchase of Fellowships and participation in the "Every REALTOR®" Campaign.
- Working with our "Home at Last" Partners, we have renovated three homes for low-income families, winning the Pillar Community Collaboration Award in 2011.
- LSTAR is represented on the London Housing Advisory Committee, the Council Housing Leadership Committee, the St. Thomas Housing and Homelessness Action Group and the London Homeless Coalition.

- LSTAR was the first private-sector entity to donate money to the London Homeless Memorial, commemorating lives lost to homelessness on the streets.
- LSTAR assisted Youth Opportunities Unlimited expand its kitchen and prep area and continues to support them through fundraisers such as REALTOR® Kool Wheels. Beginning in 2016 and through 2018, Y.O.U. will be the beneficiary of LSTAR’s Christmas Gala.
- From 2013 through 2015, the beneficiary of LSTAR’s Annual Christmas Gala was Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre. Over \$78,500 was raised for the Centre.
- LSTAR donated \$50,000 towards establishing a residential facility for St. Joseph’s Hospice.
- LSTAR donated \$25,000 towards a new women’s shelter in Elgin County.
- LSTAR has funded projects such as *Homes 4 Women*, workshops designed to help low-income households find and maintain affordable housing and build successful relationships with their landlords, crisis meals to those who are at risk of becoming homeless or who have been recently housed and conference bursaries to women with lived experience.
- LSTAR organizes an annual REALTOR® Christmas Kettle Day, raising funds for the Salvation Army.
- LSTAR is a proud sponsor of London’s *Hockey Helps the Homeless* tournament, benefitting the Unity Project, Youth Opportunities Unlimited and Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre. It has also donated the time and expertise of its Director of Business and Promotions who chairs the event locally.
- LSTAR has pledged to donate \$50,000 over 2016-2017 to the London Health Science Foundation’s new Adult Residential Eating Disorders Clinic.

LSTAR’S CHARITABLE GIVING

Beneficiary	2015 Amount Year End
Mission Services of London	\$311,014
Unity Project	\$108,821
VAWSEC	\$56,574
Women’s Community House	\$33,883
All Our Sisters Conference Bursaries	\$2,000
Youth Opportunities Unlimited	\$38,882

Merrymount	\$78,688
London Housing Registry	\$6,000
St. Joseph's Hospice	\$50,000
Meals on Wheels "Home to Stay" Program	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$689,067

PRINCIPLE 3: PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT

REALTORS® recognize the importance of parks, open space, and unique eco-systems to our Quality of Life; we view air and water quality and the preservation of habitat and environmentally sensitive areas as essential to



it. We, therefore, support policies that encourage conservation and wise use of natural resources, while still allowing for responsible, well-managed growth and development. This can be achieved by innovative planning techniques, green architecture, and the use smart growth principles.

- We've lobbied for the restoration of programs like the EnerGuide program.
- We conducted a campaign to raise awareness of the potential danger of vermiculite insulation.
- One of the criteria for our Commercial Building Awards was environmental sensitivity.
- We offer our Members a broad spectrum of Environmental courses, dealing with subjects like water and air quality, wells and wastewater, energy efficiency, insulation and asbestos, septic tanks and sewers and brownfields.
- An energy audit was conducted on LSTAR's office building and appropriate retrofits made.
- LSTAR has actively lobbied for a Provincial Grow House Registry, citing environmental concerns.
- We are community partners with ReForest London in our City's Million Tree Challenge and are organizing a REALTOR® Tree Planting Day.

PRINCIPLE 4: PROTECTING HOME OWNERS



REALTORS® believe private property rights are fundamental to our free-market economic system. REALTORS® recognize and protect the natural right to own property. A strong economy depends upon preserving the right to freely own, use and transfer real property. Home ownership is the bedrock upon which our profession and, indeed, our civil society is built. Organized real estate has long seen an important part of its role as protecting and advocating for the home owner. Consequently, when it comes to issues like property taxes, land transfer taxes, predatory lending, insurance companies refusing to insure properties without adequate reason and property rights, LSTAR steps up to the plate.

PRINCIPLE 5: BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES

A better community is about neighbourhoods and livability and what works. Recent LSTAR community-building activities include:

- Being *Partners for Life* with Canadian Blood Services.
- Working with the local area police on Realty Watch, a crime-prevention/detection program.
- Partnering with the OPP on AMBER Alerts.
- Active support of such SmartGrowth principles as intensification, infill and brownfields redevelopment so that we can make the best use of existing infrastructure, prevent urban sprawl, reduce traffic gridlock and preserve green space.

