



The Township of Wellesley Strategic Planning Public Session

Date: August 21, 2019

Location: Linwood Community Centre

Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Public Attendance: 27

1. Introduction

- The Township of Wellesley has had a Strategic Plan for the past four years (2015 to 2019).
- In order to help formulate the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan we are obtaining input from the public.
- The objective of this evening is to present current issues and develop potential solutions to these issues.

2. Strategic Planning Work Plan

- Ward & Uptigrove and Izsak Consulting are working closely with the Mayor, Council, and Senior Management to formulate the Township of Wellesley's new Strategic Plan.
 - The Strategic Plan does not belong to the consultants rather, the consultants are the facilitators.
 - The consultants have performed extensive research to make themselves familiar with the Township and the community in order to draft a Strategic Plan that is representative of the Township of Wellesley's objectives.
- A public survey has been successfully conducted. Thanks for your participation. At this time, Council and Senior Management have not seen the survey results. You are the first.
 - Question: How many people participated in the survey? What were the results?
 - Answer: The survey was completed by 291.
 - Question: When was the Strategic Planning process started and when do you anticipate it will be complete?
 - Answer: The Strategic Planning process was initiated in April 2019 and the final report is anticipated to be released by the end of November 2019 to the public on the website.
- A draft Strategic Planning report and Implementation Plan will be prepared based on the information obtained through the Planning Work Shops with Council and the Senior Management Team, this evening's Strategic Planning Public Session, and additional research.
 - The recommendations made within the Implementation Plan will get a 2020 Budget review.

3. Our Township

- Why do you live in Wellesley?
- What's Special about Wellesley?
- What do you Value about Wellesley?

- Group Discussion Results:
 - The size of the properties in the Township.
 - Have larger lot sizes in comparison to the bigger cities.
 - Ability to have a small own feel while also being close to cities such as Waterloo.
 - Still have the ability to enjoy the convenience of the city.
 - In general, more people are moving to smaller communities because they are looking for a more tight knit community.
 - For example, you may not know all of your neighbours in Waterloo, while you would know all of your neighbours in Wellesley.
 - The price of commercial rental properties is significantly cheaper in the Township of Wellesley in comparison to the Kitchener Waterloo area.
 - The community is surrounded by farmland.
 - Believe that it is important to prevent subdivisions from taking over too much farmland.
 - This is an important aspect of our culture and gives the community a family feel.
 - The Township of Wellesley is a nice area to raise children.
 - The strong sense of community.
 - It is natural for various situations to arise. When these situations arise the community stands up and is able to offer assistance whenever possible.
 - For example, when a family loses their home due to a fire.
 - Are able to go for a walk late in the evening without worrying about potential safety threats.
 - Is a safe community for children to play and grow.
 - The Township provides various facilities and services.
 - There are numerous facilities that help to foster the strong sense of community.
 - For example, Wellesley's schools, soccer fields, community centers, and local grocery stores.
 - There are numerous services locally that residents are able to participate in without having to go to the bigger city.
 - Currently there is a lack of communication between the smaller settlements within the Township.
 - For example, businesses do not communicate with one another. To date, businesses have not been brought together to share information.
 - The Township of Wellesley has numerous services within all of the different areas of the community. However, people do not know about them all due to a lack of communication.
 - The Township of Wellesley gives residents an opportunity to be exposed to other cultures.
 - Strong cultural diversity.
 - Inclusion.
 - Are not exposed to large amounts of crime.
 - Wellesley has a safe and low crime rate.
 - The Township has minimal policing due to this.
 - It is a quiet and comfortable community.
 - Contains picturesque ponds and parklands.
 - Specifically the two parks and the trail in the Village of Wellesley.

- The large amount of service clubs within the community.
 - The positive tasks that these service clubs perform for the community.
 - The ability for those who want to be a part of the service clubs to be actively involved.

4. Survey Findings

- 22. I have lots to do in the community
 - Comment: A lot of people do not know what is available in the community, particularly in the smaller communities.
- 23. The Township provides adequate recreational facilities for me.
 - Comment: Some people may have been upset about the arena. This may be why certain questions were answered negatively.
- 24. The Township provides adequate parks and trails for me.
 - Comment: There are numerous trails but they do not connect with one another. It would be nice to have a continuous trail to see all of the towns within the Township of Wellesley.
- 25. I support the Township exploring opportunities within neighbouring municipal governments to share services to save money, improve the quality of services and reduce taxes.
 - Question: Which Townships would be sharing services?
 - Answer: Township of Woolwich, Township of Wilmot, Township of North Dumfries and the Township of Wellesley.
 - The Township of Wellesley's Council is against single tier amalgamation.
 - Currently the Township is part of a regional government review. Advisors are preparing a report and a decision will be made in November 2019.
 - Question: Would amalgamation lower the cost of services?
 - Answer: statistics show that costs go up with amalgamation
 - The Township is looking to become more efficient with a service review and is hoping that this will help to send the message that Wellesley does not need to amalgamate.

5. Five Broad Focus Areas

- Comment: Their needs to be more specific communication from the Township.
 - For example, a large portion of people did not know this session was happening tonight.

6. Strategic Issues Identified

- Review of Strategic Issues identified to date.
- Additional Strategic Issues to take into consideration:
 - Traffic and the speed that traffic travels through the various towns.
 - Some communities do not have traffic lights to slow down the speed of car traffic.
 - Cyclists are also slowing traffic down.
 - A truck route around the communities would help to control traffic.
 - A lot of big trucks travel downtown at a considerable speed.
 - This becomes a safety issue.
 - Implement a strategy to help make the Township carbon neutral.
 - This would help to lessen the centralization on the grid.

- 1. Road Improvement
 - Comment: Why do we need wider roads?
 - If cyclists followed the rules, we would not need wider roads.
 - If the road is wider people would be able to pass traffic easier and drivers would be able to drive faster
 - This leads to safety issues
 - On the contrary, if roads were wider it would be safer for community members who travel via horse and buggy.
 - Cannot legislate people's behavior in the way they drive).
 - Wider roads are not going to resolve this issue.
 - Comment: There is a lot of traffic in the Township on market days.
 - This primarily consists of livestock trucks.
 - Comment: Believe that the standard speed limit in residential areas should be reduced from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Since most people speed through town, this new limit would help to ensure that people actually drive 50 km/h.
 - There are a lot of children that play on the street
 - This adjustment would help to better ensure their safety.
 - Commuters may resent this idea.
 - Comment: it comes down to enforcement. People will keep pushing the limit if it is not enforced properly.
- 2. Recreation/Community Facilities
 - Comment: having new, improved, and modern facilities is not as important as having the facilities available locally.
 - It is more important to have the ability to host community functions.
 - These facilities have to be maintained properly in order to be functional.
 - Do not need to spend a lot of money on a high-end facility.
 - Comment: recreation/community facilities need to be in the communities.
 - Believe that all of the separate communities need something. Otherwise the community does not feel like a community because residents are required to travel to the center of the Township.
 - Residents require an anchor in every settlement.
 - This would be feasible if all of the separate communities supported each other.
 - For example, if one arena is busy the next arena may not be in use.
 - Believe that if the Township solely focusses on one area (Village of Wellesley) the community feel will be ripped away from the other settlements.
- 3. Public Transit/Access to Urban Infrastructure and Services
 - Comment: this could be more of an issue if all of the little communities lose their centers
 - Comment: how are teenagers who do not drive yet expected to get from point A to point B?
 - Comment: there is a trade-off to implementing one large community center for the whole Township. Everyone would be driving to get to the community center; this would result in more road issues.

- 5. Affordable/Available Housing
 - Comment: the Township currently has a plan of where growth is going to take place.
 - Some of these plans may become a moot point.
 - Affordable housing and developing land are two different things.
 - Land is available within the Township. What goes on that land has not yet been confirmed.
 - It is important to note that the Township does not have any authority to force a developer to build housing towards a certain demographic.
 - The Township does not have a say in the type of building that goes on the land.
 - There is a regional and provincial responsibility to provide availability of affordable housing.
 - Comment: there is no land in St. Clement to build. This includes senior housing.
 - Question: what is classified as affordable housing?
 - Answer: typically includes subsidized housing, fixed rent, or subsidized rent.

- 6. Opportunities for Youth
 - Comment: most people that grew up in a small community do not expect that they will work in that same small community.
 - It is not necessarily a matter of youth wanting to leave to community. Instead, youth do not have the expectation to find work within the community.
 - One of the only expectations is youth taking over family businesses.
 - A lot of youth go to the next larger community to find a job. That is simply the reality of living in a small town.
 - There is a lack of after school jobs in the Township.
 - Comment: community engagement is important in order to provide youth with greater opportunities.
 - Comment: ideally want to be able to retain the youth in our community.
 - What is the Township for our youth to do?
 - How are we making the communities within the Township good for our youth?
 - What is the Township doing to retain them? What is the Township doing to attract them?
 - Comment: currently there are not a lot of places for youth to gather in the community. Especially for youth who do not fit in structured sports settings.
 - How do we foster a supportive environment for them?
 - Hopefully we can encourage them to come back to the Wellesley community and help them feel more connected to their community.
 - Comment: this issue directly relates to the issue of available housing.
 - For example, there are numerous individuals that were raised in Wellesley that would like to move back to the community.
 - The Township requires age friendly housing for both young adults and seniors.
 - Housing is too affluent here; the prices are going up too much.
 - However; it is false affluence as there is a lot of debt within the community.

- Numerous seniors within the community would like to downsize but there is nowhere for them to downsize to within the community.
 - The ability to downsize would help to free up homes for young adults who are looking to move back to the community.
- 7. Seniors Housing – discussed above under #5
- 8. Environmental Stewardship
 - Comment: farmland should not be taken away to build more roads.
 - This may be a money maker, but what about the farmland?
 - Comment: it is important for the Township to perform environmental stewardship properly and effectively.
 - Once the natural environment has been compromised it is hard to reverse the damage.
- 9. Retention of Small Town/Rural Culture and Identity(s)
 - Comment: It is important to support the various town centers.
 - Most business owners support this idea.
 - Would lose significant portion of the small town culture if more space is made available for big box stores.
- 10. Infrastructure Improvements
- 11. Intensification, Zoning, Development and Growth
 - Comment: there are various commercial properties that peak business have tried to get in but are not able to make changes to zoning. This lack of flexibility in zoning makes it difficult for business owners. Some business owners have even had to walk away and make arrangements for other facilities to run their business.
 - This factors into growth without using more land
 - A significant portion of the other identified Strategic Issues connect with this.
- 12. Amalgamation
 - Comment: in general, most residents are not in favour of amalgamation.
 - A lot of the identified Strategic Issues will become mute if amalgamation occurs.
 - Would become a takeover not an amalgamation. The Township would become part of bigger city such as Kitchener.
- 13. Public Engagement
 - Comment: have a unique Township with a lot of diversity.
 - Many people live within their own world and own rules
 - For example, having a bike lane or an arena does not have an effect on them.
 - There are two very different types of groups within the Township.
 - Comment: communication with the public could be improved.

- 14. Small Business and Tourism Support
 - Comment: the Township needs to actively support all of the communities within the Township.
 - For example, the Apple Butter Festival is one of the only events that is actively promoted.
 - Comment: In general, Mennonites generally work amongst themselves.
 - Mennonites make up a large portion of the business that is being conducted in Wellesley. Farm shops.
 - Need to engage with the Mennonite businesses more.
 - Have to continue to understand that they are a big part of the community.
 - A large portion of the Mennonite community doesn't engage.
 - Have to respect their culture.
 - There are certain businesses that Mennonites are more comfortable visiting.
- 15. Technology/Innovation/Internal Efficiencies
- 16. Health Promotion
 - Comment: residents of the community are all interested in health promotion
 - Comment: there are programs out there for everyone to use
- 17. Fiscal Responsibility

7. Results of vote on Strategic Issues Identified (Everyone given 3 votes)

Strategic Issue	Number of Votes
1. Road Improvement	3
2. Recreation/Community Facilities	15
3. Public Transit/Access to Urban Infrastructure and Services	1
4. Urban Cyclist Management	0
5. Affordable/Available Housing & 7. Seniors Housing	18
6. Opportunities for Youth	1
8. Environmental Stewardship	3
9. Retention of Small Town/Rural Culture and Identity(s)	4
10. Infrastructure Improvements	0
11. Intensification, Zoning, Development and Growth	5
12. Amalgamation	0
13. Public Engagement	3
14. Small Business and Tourism Support	7
15. Technology/Innovation/Internal Efficiencies	0
16. Health Promotion	2
17. Fiscal Responsibility	4

8. Additional Thoughts

- Question: What is going to happen with the new Strategic Plan? Need a commitment from Council to follow the plan. There are a lot of things in the previous Strategic Plan that have not been completed. How is this plan going to be different?
 - Answer: there will be a section in the Strategic Plan that clearly outlines the measures to be taken in order to follow through with the tasks outlined in the plan.
 - In addition, there will also be a follow-up meeting with council to ensure that they are following through with the plan.
- Comment: A large portion of the issues identified are financial.
 - As a result, council may not be able to follow through with all of the items identified in the Strategic Plan.
 - Council will have to determine what tasks are most important to the Township and follow through with them.
- Question: is there going to be another Strategic Planning Public Session?
 - Answer: this evening's session is the only planned session.
- Questions: is there a section available on the website for public input?
 - Answer: this section was available and has now been closed.

9. Conclusion

- Thank you for coming to the Strategic Planning Public Session and participating