

TOWNSHIP OF WOOLWICH
COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING BRAINSTORMING SESSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MARCH 25th, 2011

Council and Senior Staff participated in a brainstorming session to identify **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)** facing the Township and the community at large.

Council and Staff identified several **strengths** including;

- Growing assessment base
- Strong sense of community
- Controlled growth
- Agricultural community
- Low crime rates
- Recreation and Township facilities
- Quality of life
- Website
- Trails Network
- Volunteerism
- No high-rise developments
- Size of council (functional)
- Small Township
- International airport
- Marketing/tourism in St. Jacobs
- Property standards
- Volunteer fire-fighters

Council discussed what they perceived as **weaknesses** including;

- Resources for website and social networking
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Traffic congestion in Elmira and Breslau
- Operations and services in Breslau
- New council (learning curve)
- Size of council (rep. by population, workload)
- Doctor shortage
- Managing aging populations
- Lack of infrastructure funding
- Small Township
- Communication to public
- Planning process timelines

The following **opportunities** were highlighted:

- Land close to KW and high tech sector
- Breslau Secondary Plan and Growth Opportunities
- Secondary Plan for Stockyards and Growth Opportunities
- Use open data sharing to provide information to the public
- Explore east-side Elmira by-pass
- Increased size of council
- Cost benefit analysis of growth opportunities
- New council perspectives
- Transit and economic growth
- International airport
- GO Transit
- Recreation and Township facilities (marketing/events)
- Economic Development Plan

- Investigate opportunities with physician recruitment
- Customer service; managing expectations and communication
- Specialized trade centres and schools

The following **threats** were highlighted;

- Look at ROP and identify threats
- Growth impact on agricultural land
- OMB costs
- Changing demographics (manage expectations)
- Fiscal concern of transit
- Succession planning
- Volunteer overload or 'burnout'
- Size of council (ability to attract candidates)
- Managing infrastructure
- Provincial downloading
- Customer service
- Provincial regulations regarding fire-fighters

Council and Senior Management discussed the emerging **Political, Economic, Social and Technological** factors (**PEST**) that should be considered for the Strategic Plan.

Emerging **political** factors include:

- Size of council
- Change in upper level government
- Balancing regional and local priorities
- Greater collaboration with other municipalities
- Diverse Council perspectives

Economic factors that should be considered are:

- International Airport
- Marketing
- Doctor shortage
- Arts & culture

Social factors that should be evaluated:

- Changing demographics
- Demanding customers (managing expectations)
- Unrealistic public expectations (on-demand information)
- Arts & culture
- Explore opportunities for youth

Technological factors that should be further evaluated:

- Increasing use of website and need for on-demand information
- Use of open data

There was a discussion about what Council and senior Staff like most about Woolwich, what they like least and what they feel the priorities the strategic plan should focus on.

What Council and Staff like **most** about Woolwich includes:

- Green spaces and tourism

- Great place to live and raise a family
- Sense of community and friendliness
- Potential of Woolwich
- Proximity to City amenities
- Appreciating the need for balance

The factors that Council and Staff like **least** about Woolwich:

- Provincial downloading of services
- Traffic
- Smell

Council and Staff then identified the following **priorities**:

- Infrastructure renewal and development
- Well-managed growth and development in Woolwich
- Being active advocates for legislative changes and increased funding at senior government levels
- Protecting agriculture
- Recognizing volunteers
- Creating safe and healthy communities
- Reviewing the ward boundaries
- Better marketing and promotion
- Improved customer service
- Community identity
- Evaluate programming for aging, changing and growing populations
- Crime prevention through environmental design
- Physician recruitment
- Exploring traffic options
- Private/public partnerships
- Future transportation planning
- Taking advantage of recreation facilities
- Investment in Human Resources (professional development, employee retention)
- Emergency management
- Environmental Initiatives