

TOWNSHIP OF WOOLWICH
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP SESSION
MARYHILL COMMUNITY CENTRE
MAY 31st, 2011

Residents of Bloomingdale, Breslau, Maryhill and the surrounding area participated in a community focus group session to identify **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)** facing the Township and the community at large.

The following **strengths** were identified;

- Snow removal
- Diversity of people
- Volunteer fire service
- Entrepreneurial businesses (farming)
- Libraries
- Protecting wells
- Economic advantages from airport
- Proximity to key business markets
- Woolwich Community Health Centre
- Small town feeling
- Township facilities
- Proximity to urban areas
- Breslau development
- Rural / agricultural land
- Trail network
- Safe community

The following **weaknesses** were identified;

- Timing and implementation of subdivision developments
- Traffic on St. Charles Street
- Airport noise
- Snow removal frequency (high)
- Inconsistency of infrastructure maintenance across the Township
- Unfair balance with planning developments
- Methods of communicating with surrounding rural areas (Cambridge, Guelph residents do not receive Observer)
- Gravel pits
- Sirens/emergency preparedness in other settlements
- Availability of seniors housing
- Lack of food banks, libraries and senior housing in Breslau
- No bus service in other areas
- Development affecting ground water (poor municipal water planning)
- Inexperience of new Council
- No grocery stores in smaller settlements
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The following **opportunities** were highlighted:

- Tourism from Airport
- Water protection and grant funding opportunities for water/sewer
- Green technologies and sustainability (solar power)
- Township facilities used for seniors programming
- Roundabout at Crowsfoot Road
- ICF grants for environmentally friendly businesses
- Development of seniors housing and libraries in area
- New Hwy 7 completion

- Cycling lanes on Township roads
- Community programming
- Proximity to Greater Golden Horseshoe

The following **threats** were highlighted;

- Breslau expansion (threat of annexation)
- Growing cost of living/tax base hard for seniors on fixed income
- Hwy 7 and threats to farm land (growth pressures)
- Water supply
- Big box stores in Breslau
- Loss of farm land
- Growing too fast, tax increases

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

Items that they like **most** about Woolwich and the following **priorities** were identified:

- Maintaining a small town feel
- Affordable senior housing
- Financial planning (tax levies and budgeting)
- Transit
- Sustainability
- Aging demographics (health care, accessibility)
- Controlled development
- Equity across the Township
- Agriculture and green zone protection
- Maintaining infrastructure
- Regional services (police/ambulance) budget effect on taxes
- Use of social media to communicate (or email list on Township website)
- Healthy community programming

The factors that they like **least** about Woolwich:

- Lack of consistent recreational programming from community to community
- Enforcement resources, no policing of parks (use of ATV's and snowmobiles)
- Service level expectations from residents moving from the city
- Lack of internet/connectivity