

CHAPTER 4

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, COMMUNITY VALUES AND GOALS OF THE PLAN

4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The policies of this Plan regarding how land is developed, resources are managed and protected, and public dollars are invested reflect the key principles of the Provincial Growth Plan and the Regional Official Plan in the following manner:

- Supports the achievement of *complete communities* designed to support healthy and active living and meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
- Prioritizes *reurbanization* and higher densities, where appropriate, to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability over time.
- Provides flexibility to capitalize on new economic and employment opportunities as they emerge, while providing certainty for traditional industries, including resource-based sectors.
- Supports a range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable housing*, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
- Improves the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in infrastructure and *public service facilities*, including integrated service delivery through community hubs, by all levels of government.
- Protects and enhance natural heritage, hydrologic, and landform systems, features, and functions.
- Supports and enhance the long-term viability and productivity of agriculture by protecting *prime agricultural areas* and the *agri-food network*.
- *Conserves* and promote *cultural heritage resources* to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Métis communities.
- Integrates climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate, as well as moving towards environmentally sustainable communities by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

4.2 VISION STATEMENT

We are a safe, caring community with a distinct, rural and small-town character, a diverse, prosperous, thriving economy with a healthy, sustainable environment, where differences are respected, and mutual support is encouraged.

The Community believes the values outlined in the next section are essential to fulfill our vision related to:

- our agricultural character and economy;
- our rural lifestyle and small-town lifestyle;
- our ability to work together in a co-operative way with civility and courtesy;
- the contribution of volunteers in enriching our community life;
- our diverse cultural heritage, including our Old Order Mennonite community;
- our work ethic;
- our entrepreneurial spirit;
- our clean, healthy environment;
- the individuality of our communities, neighbourhoods and cultural groups;
- our community where all are respected and have opportunities to participate;
- the public decision making; and
- our diverse industrial/commercial sector.

4.3 VALUES

This Plan's policies are based on the following community values developed through a consultation process with Woolwich residents and local businesses.

Community Attitudes and Relationships

We Value:

- our close-knit community with a strong emphasis on trust and good neighbours; and
- our small-town atmosphere with a perceived slower, safer, less hectic pace of life.

Settlement Development

We Value:

- our residential neighbourhoods, especially our areas of well-maintained, older homes on quiet, tree-lined streets;
- our location as separate "towns" in proximity, but separate from, Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge;
- a moderate rate of well-planned, compatible new development on appropriate services;
- continued support of community facilities such as schools and stores;
- our commercial buildings preserved and restored in keeping with the small-town feeling;
- the proximity of our communities to natural areas and parks;

- being able to walk or cycle to many of our daily destinations;
- streets, parks, trails and neighbourhoods that are safe, healthy and attractive “people places”;
- a community that provides housing to all income levels and provides a range of housing types, including senior’s housing;
- defined settlement boundaries;
- balanced residential/industrial development; and
- the range of services and retail stores available within the community which allow many to have their basic day-to-day shopping and service needs met locally.

Transportation

We Value:

- an appropriate transportation system meeting the needs of cyclists, buggies, pedestrians and motor vehicles.

Environment

We Value:

- a clean, green Township of Woolwich;
- the preservation and maintenance of woodlands, wetlands, watersheds, habitats and corridors for wildlife and wild plants;
- increased sustainability of the environment including soil quality, air quality, water quality in rivers, streams and wells;
- environmentally-sound practices by businesses, industries, including farms, and individuals;
- open spaces; and
- minimizing motor vehicle use.

Youth

We Value:

- providing appropriate opportunities for our youth in education, employment, housing and activities.

Agriculture

We Value:

- farmers’ right to farm;
- prime farmland;
- agriculture as an industry and our agri-business;
- the unique mix of farming and on-farm businesses; and
- continued provisions for “doddy” houses.

Employment

We Value:

- the wide range of opportunities for employment available within the community; and
- active, vibrant, commercial cores operating in harmony with adjacent, residential neighbourhoods.

Business Development

We Value:

- an atmosphere for economic development where existing business expansion and new business investment are encouraged;
- a healthy tourism industry, sensitive to community values;
- a strong and diverse retail/service sector;
- a strong and healthy industrial sector;
- entrepreneurship; and
- industry that is sensitive to adjacent land uses.

Planning Process

We Value:

- a decision-making process which is open and gives voice and choice to individuals, businesses, neighbourhoods and the community;
- a planning process which is timely, simple and cost-effective; and
- equal treatment for all.

4.4 GOALS

The Goals as outlined in this section are the basic decision-making guidelines of this Plan. They reflect the general long-range intent of the Plan and are further interpreted by the policies of the Plan. The Goals of this Plan are:

1. To guide future land use decisions in the Township in a manner that recognizes the “Rural – Urban” nature of the municipality, provides for the needs of existing and future residents, enhances the natural and human environment, separates incompatible land uses and ensures orderly development within the township.
2. To concentrate the vast majority of the Township’s growth on *municipal water and wastewater services* within the Elmira and St. Jacobs Township Urban Areas, and the Breslau and Stockyards Urban Areas, with limited growth in the Rural Settlement Areas and the Rural Employment identified in this Plan.

3. To support the achievement of *complete communities* that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
4. To prioritize intensification and higher densities, where appropriate, to make efficient use of land and *infrastructure* and support transit viability over time.
5. To support a range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable* housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
6. To support and enhance the long-term viability and productivity of agriculture by protecting *prime agricultural areas* and the agri-food network.
7. To maintain, enhance or wherever feasible restore the *environmental features* of the Township's Greenlands Network for its valuable *ecological functions* and the enjoyment of the Township's residents.
8. To provide for the management of natural resources within the Township in a manner that minimizes or avoids undesirable short and long-term impacts on the natural environment, the quality and quantity of ground and surface water, and the quality of life for existing and future residents.
9. To minimize the threat to life and destruction of property from flooding and other natural hazards.
10. To integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and *infrastructure* that are sustainable, adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate, as well as moving towards low-carbon communities, with the long-term goal of net-zero communities, by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
11. To *conserve* and promote *cultural heritage resources* in the Township to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Metis communities.
12. To promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses to the Township to support long-term economic development, capitalize on new economic and employment opportunities as they emerge, and to provide for short and long-term employment stability.
13. To ensure the cost-effective provision and maintenance of transportation (including road, rail, transit and air), water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater management and fire protection systems and *public service facilities* as required to service existing and future residents.

14. To provide opportunities for both active and passive recreational pursuits by combining the provision of parkland, sports fields, community facilities, and natural areas to satisfy the recreational needs of existing and future residents.
15. To promote a healthy community concept through policies such as directing community form and environmental protection.