



TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

August 2014

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE TOWN OF TILLSONBURG

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Strategic Planning is the process by which we can envision the future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to influence and achieve that future.

– Clark Crouch



TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

A Community Strategic Plan establishes a vision for the future that reflects community ideas and aspirations. The Community Strategic Plan guides priority setting, ensuring that programs and services address the changing needs of a community.

In late 2013, the Town of Tillsonburg began developing a new Community Strategic Plan. The Vision for the Future reflects input from the community and is intended to establish a clear statement about what Tillsonburg will be 25 years from now. The Strategic Priorities described here support the vision; recognizing the need for structure and the development of partnerships in order to achieve the desired future.

Tillsonburg is a distinct urban community that exists within a larger rural context. While its population is roughly 15,500, Tillsonburg serves as a regional centre for the surrounding population of over 45,000. With a combination of its small-town feel, an attractive downtown and access to quality recreation, education and community amenities, Tillsonburg provides a unique environment in which to live, work and play.

Previous Community Strategic Plans have provided an excellent foundation for Tillsonburg. This Plan builds upon the previous work and provides clear implementation and monitoring direction.

This Community Strategic Plan is the product of a consultation process that engaged residents of all ages, community organizations and Town employees through focus groups, workshops, an online survey and a community open house. Community input received through these activities was essential to developing the vision, directions, goals and actions items presented in this Plan.



TILLSONBURG'S
VISION
 FOR THE FUTURE

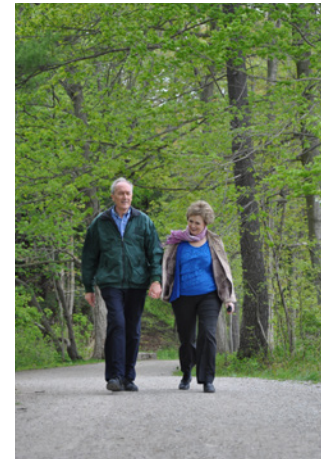
Tillsonburg is a family-friendly community known for its historic charm, thriving businesses and modern lifestyle amenities. It is a regional hub for employment, recreation and culture.

Tillsonburg's Vision for the Future emerged through discussion and collaboration between interested members of the public, community groups and agencies, and Town staff. It reflects Tillsonburg's valued small-town feel and the need to preserve this character while promoting economic prosperity and sustainability.

As described in the Vision, Tillsonburg will be a desirable place to live and to visit. Residents envision Tillsonburg as a supportive community for all demographic groups, with an engaged population and a diverse, modern economy providing a variety of

quality employment opportunities. An accountable local government will communicate seamlessly with citizens and other levels of government, and will continuously act to meet the evolving needs of the Town.

Tillsonburg will be known as a unique and differentiated community. Its vibrant main street and welcoming atmosphere will attract tourism and help local businesses to thrive. Its status as a hub within the surrounding rural agricultural landscape will set it apart, and its ample green space and trails will provide high quality recreational opportunities.



engaged youth
 employment
 recreation
 active seniors
 parkland
 family friendly
 HISTORIC CHARM
ARTS CULTURE
 thriving businesses
VIBRANT
 modern lifestyle amenities
 diversity
 community
 TRAILS
 sports
 DOWNTOWN

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan's goals and action items are organized according to four broad themes or Strategic Objectives. The Strategic Objectives evolved from the many discussions held and comments received from local stakeholder and members of the public.

The Strategic Objectives support Tillsonburg's Vision for the Future. The following pages identify goals under each Strategic Objectives, and a series of short, medium, and long-term action items to be carried out by Town staff and other stakeholders.

1

**EXCELLENCE IN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

2

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

3

DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE

4

CULTURE & COMMUNITY

A photograph of a city street scene, likely in a small town or city, featuring a prominent brick clock tower in the background. The street is lined with buildings, trees, and cars. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. A large white number '1' is positioned on the left side, followed by the text 'EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT' in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

1 EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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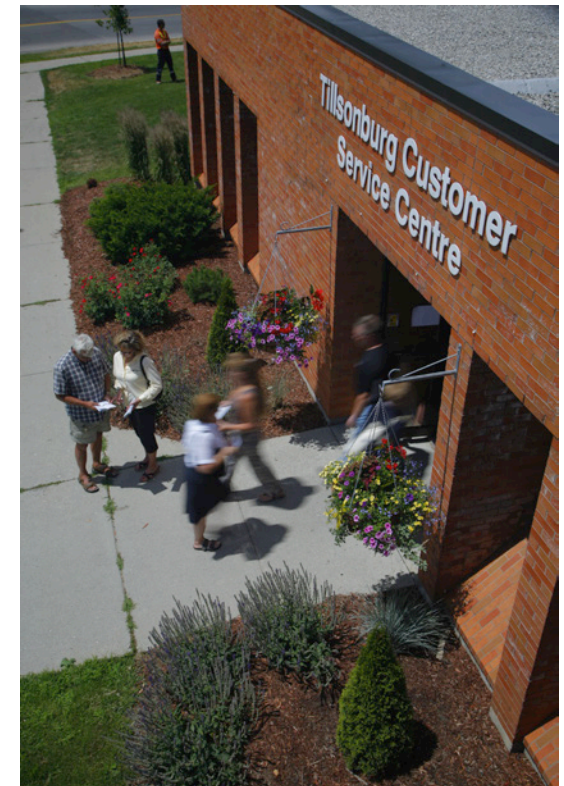
- 1.1 *Demonstrate strong leadership in Town initiatives*
- 1.2 *Streamline communication and effectively collaborate within local government*
- 1.3 *Demonstrate accountability*

Tillsonburg residents describe the need for proactive and effective communication with Town staff and political leaders. This communication will leverage marketing initiatives and maintain the community momentum and support needed to implement civic pride initiatives. To keep residents informed and gain public support, the Town will streamline its communication strategy. Residents have expressed the need for a single point of contact at the Town that can be used to communicate any concerns or have their questions answered. Regular communication and greater collaboration between various agencies and levels of government is also critical.

The Town will also work to demonstrate stronger leadership in its initiatives. Prompt and dedicated implementation of this Plan presents a great opportunity. The Town will identify a champion for implementation, and organize regular meetings with

stakeholders to provide status updates and keep on top of emerging issues.

Many of the action items related to communication, accountability, and leadership in local government can be implemented immediately at little or no cost. The Town's commitment to taking action on these initiatives will build trust and momentum to continue working towards the remainder of the Community Strategic Plan's goals.



Goal	Action Item		
	Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)
1.1 Demonstrate strong leadership in Town initiatives	<p>Identify a staff member responsible for leading implementation of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP Coordinator)</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to meet with citizen-led initiatives on a monthly basis to gain input from the community and identify issues that require the Town's attention</p>	<p>Host annual "Town Hall" style meetings where the Town's Senior Management team provides status updates on CSP implementation and successes to-date</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>At least one action item implemented within 6 months; All short-term action items accomplished within 3 years; On-going collaboration with citizen-led initiatives</i>	<i>Demonstrated continuous CSP implementation; Effective communication about CSP progress with residents</i>	
1.2 Streamline communication and effectively collaborate within local government	<p>Development and Communication Services (DCS) to create and implement a Communication Strategy for Town staff</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to hold annual discussions with local community groups to gain feedback on the effectiveness of Town communications</p> <p>DCS to develop and CSP Coordinator to manage a webpage for ongoing community input, ideas, and questions</p>	<p>DCS to perform an internal audit of communication effectiveness</p> <p>DCS/CSP Coordinator to revise Communication Strategy and webpage based on community feedback</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Communication Strategy is established and incorporated into day-to-day Town operations; Year-to-year increases in community satisfaction above 2013 survey / consultation baseline; Multiple platforms available for citizen feedback</i>	<i>Auditor satisfaction with internal communication effectiveness; Updated Communication Strategy and webpage as required; High degree of community satisfaction with Town communication</i>	
1.3 Demonstrate accountability	<p>DCS to provide the public with regular updates on and contacts for Town initiatives</p>	<p>Town's Senior Management team to provide overview and discussion of how CSP initiatives are incorporated into Town's annual budget at annual "Town Hall" style meetings</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Citizens are aware of ongoing initiatives and appropriate contacts</i>	<i>Funds are consistently being allocated for ongoing CSP implementation</i>	



2

ECONOMIC
SUSTAINABILITY

2 ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.1 *Support new and existing businesses and provide a variety of employment opportunities*
- 2.2 *Provide diverse retail services in the downtown core*
- 2.3 *Provide appropriate education and training opportunities in line with Tillsonburg's economy*

Tillsonburg's local economy benefits from a vibrant, historic commercial core and a location in proximity to provincial highways linking the Town to larger urban centres and rural agricultural land. However, many residents are concerned that the current economy is lacking in diversity and that economic prosperity and sustainability may be threatened as a result. There is also widespread concern about local unemployment rates.

Economic diversification is a priority for Tillsonburg. Potential and emerging industries need to be identified; existing viable industries should be supported by the Town to ensure their continued success. Tillsonburg's indirect economic strengths, such as the local Fanshawe College campus and the airport, should be leveraged.

Many residents expressed desires for more local women's clothing and children's shops. Greater retail

diversity would encourage more local shopping and support for local businesses. These issues can be addressed through a Retail Diversification Strategy and "shop local" program.

Finally, the Town will work to ensure that Tillsonburg is well equipped with a variety of training and education opportunities tailored to meet residents' interests and support current and emerging local industries. Action will begin by partnering with educational institutions and industry to confirm education and needs and opportunities, followed by strengthened relationships and collective work towards economic sustainability.



Goal	Action Item		
	Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)
2.1 Support new and existing businesses and provide a variety of employment opportunities	<p>Economic Development Office (EDO) to measure success to-date of implementing the recommendations / action items of the 2008 Economic Strategy</p> <p>EDO to organize and host workshop(s) with external stakeholders to reassess key economic clusters (emerging and existing) and determine any required updates to the Economic Strategy</p>	<p>EDO to produce an updated Economic Strategy</p> <p>EDO and CSP Coordinator to monitor implementation of new Economic Strategy and provide annual summary reports</p> <p>EDO to market existing financial assistance opportunities for existing and new local industry</p>	<p>EDO to work with the Chamber of Commerce and other appropriate stakeholders to explore opportunities to leverage the presence of the Tillsonburg Regional Airport, as per the Town's Economic Strategy</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Publication of report summarizing implementation of Economic Strategy to-date; Identification of next steps in implementing Economic Strategy</i>	<i>Publication of new Economic Strategy; Publish annual implementation summary reports; Year-to-year increases in grant applications</i>	<i>Defined course of action for utilizing the Tillsonburg Regional Airport in economic development initiatives</i>
2.2 Provide diverse retail services in the downtown core	<p>EDO to form partnerships with the BIA and other stakeholders to develop a Retail Diversification Strategy that formally identifies gaps in retail services and provides retail diversification recommendations</p>	<p>EDO and CSP Coordinator to implement and monitor the recommendations of the Retail Diversification Strategy</p> <p>EDO to work with the BIA and other stakeholders to develop and launch a "shop local" campaign</p>	<p>EDO and CSP Coordinator to evaluate progress made and make necessary adjustments to the Retail Diversification Strategy</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Publication of Retail Diversification Strategy</i>	<i>Year-over-year progress in implementing recommendations; increases in local spending</i>	<i>Local retailers are meeting the retail needs of all demographics</i>
2.3 Provide appropriate education and training opportunities in line with Tillsonburg's economy	<p>EDO to work with Glendale High School and local business and industry leaders to hold a workshop series focused on matching the career interests of students with employment opportunities and in-demand skills</p>	<p>EDO to work with Glendale High School's Technological Studies Department to offer high school trades programs in line with Tillsonburg's industries</p> <p>EDO to collaborate with the local Fanshawe College campus to match education and training with local industry</p> <p>EDO to work with local educational institutions and businesses to launch a job shadowing / internship program for students to provide exposure to local industry</p>	<p>EDO to revisit and refresh programs to reflect economic trends and changes</p> <p>EDO to explore partnerships and/or collaborations with additional post-secondary institutions</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Identify gaps in local skills/interests and industry needs</i>	<i>Increased opportunities for education and training in line with local employer needs</i>	<i>On-going effective collaboration between educational institutions and local employers</i>



3 DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE

3 DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE

- 3.1 *Make Tillsonburg an attractive place to live for youth and young professionals*
- 3.2 *Provide opportunities for families to thrive*
- 3.3 *Support the aging population and an active senior citizenship*

Tillsonburg is a safe, family-friendly community that also has an active and supportive population of seniors. Residents want to ensure that Tillsonburg continues to be an attractive place for all demographic groups to thrive.

Tillsonburg will strive for an engaged youth population and will aim to become an attractive place for young professionals to live and work. Existing programs such as mandatory high school volunteer hours can be used to encourage youth to become more involved in the community.

Many of Tillsonburg's youth may be unaware of the opportunities available to them. Stories of local residents who have found long-term success in their careers and lives in Tillsonburg can be better communicated to youth to build greater awareness of local opportunities, and a mentorship program between youth and young professionals could provide valuable guidance.

Tillsonburg's seniors are known to be active volunteers and great contributors to the community and its local economy. Leveraging political will to improve health care and support services needed by seniors will ensure that the community continues to benefit from their support and local involvement.

Focus will be placed on the provision of a complete local healthcare system where the majority of the population's needs can be met, and on ensuring that the built environment is universally accessible to improve mobility and independence of vulnerable members of the population.

Tillsonburg will continue to support local families through developing a better understanding of the existing local services and amenities that they value and identifying any prevalent challenges or deficiencies. The Town will then work to provide an enhanced range of family-oriented services and amenities, as needed.



Goal	Action Item		
	Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)
3.1 Make Tillsonburg an attractive place to live for youth and young professionals	<p>CSP Coordinator to work with DSC to launch a campaign that showcases successful long-term Tillsonburg residents and local young professionals</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to work with local community organizations to identify ways in which the 40 Hours Community Service program can be more fulfilling for both students and the community</p>	<p>CSP Coordinator to form partnerships with stakeholders to work with Glendale High School and Student Council to assess the effectiveness of the existing Cooperative Education program</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to work with Town Council to establish an honorary Council position for a Teen Advisory Group representative</p>	<p>CSP Coordinator to work with stakeholders to tailor and market the Business Mentorship Program to focus on establishing new entertainment venues targeted to young adults</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Increased local awareness of local success stories; Increases in youth volunteerism</i>	<i>Increased enrollment in Cooperative Education program; Youth representation at Council meetings</i>	<i>A range of leisure activity and entertainment opportunities is available for young adults</i>
3.2 Provide opportunities for families to thrive	<p>CSP Coordinator to consult with local families on their needs and explore the necessity of providing additional support to families</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to work with Town and local community organizations to promote existing volunteer opportunities</p>	<p>CSP Coordinator to devise and implement a strategy for addressing family needs</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Develop an understanding of challenges faced by local families; increased volunteerism</i>	<i>Provide an enhanced range of family-oriented services and/or amenities as needed</i>	
3.3 Support the aging population and an active senior citizenship	<p>CSP Coordinator to meet with Tillsonburg Seniors Centre to confirm seniors' health care needs and gaps in local services</p>	<p>Town Leadership to work with the South West LHIN Board of Directors Tillsonburg representative for provision of needed seniors' health care and support services</p> <p>EDO to work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) to incorporate financial incentives for universal accessibility features into existing Community Improvement Plans (CIPs)</p>	<p>Town Leadership to continue to work with South West LHIN to implement strategy to meet local seniors' health care and support services needs</p> <p>EDO to market available CIP financial incentive programs for universal accessibility to local businesses</p> <p>Town Operations to retrofit municipal infrastructure such as sidewalks for universal accessibility where needed</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Identification of gaps in seniors' health care and support services</i>	<i>Strategy in place to expand seniors' health care and support services; CIPs amended to address universal accessibility features</i>	<i>Tillsonburg offers an enhanced range of seniors' health care and support services; Universal accessibility throughout downtown Tillsonburg</i>



4 CULTURE & COMMUNITY

4 CULTURE & COMMUNITY

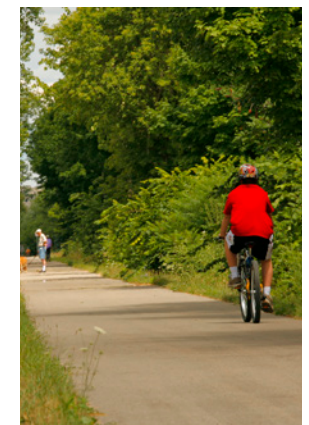
- 4.1 *Promote Tillsonburg as a unique and welcoming community*
- 4.2 *Provide a variety of leisure and cultural opportunities to suit all interests*
- 4.3 *Improve mobility and promote environmentally sustainable living*

Residents value Tillsonburg’s tight-knit community and its vibrant commercial main street. Events such as Turtlefest draw many residents and visitors each year, and local attractions such as the Annandale House museum and Lake Lisgar Waterpark are an asset. Further promotion as a unique and welcoming community for both citizens and visitors is encouraged. Through the launch of a tourism marketing strategy and through expanding and enhancing popular local events, Tillsonburg can begin to gain better recognition as an attractive tourist destination.

While Tillsonburg currently provides great opportunities for residents to get involved in local sports, the Town will work towards providing a greater range of leisure activity options. The Town may collaborate with local cultural organizations

or get involved in other creative pursuits if there is sufficient interest in such activities.

Environmental sustainability is important to many residents of Tillsonburg. Sustainable transportation, in particular, was a popular discussion topic during the development of the Community Strategic Plan. The Town will explore options such as community transportation, car share programs, and bike share programs. As a long-term initiative, Tillsonburg’s existing network of paths and trails will be reinforced to ensure connectivity, and the condition of sidewalks and other infrastructure will be improved to ensure universal accessibility.



Goal	Action Item		
	Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)
4.1 Make Tillsonburg an attractive place to live for youth and young professionals	<p>EDO to develop and implement a Tourism Marketing Strategy in line with the recommendation of the 2008 Economic Strategy</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to work with Parks and Recreation and Cultural Improvement Alliance (CIA) to expand and enhance local festivals to attract a greater number of tourists</p>	<p>CIA to explore and organize additional opportunities to showcase local talent</p> <p>CSP Coordinator to organize a new “Welcoming Committee” comprised of local citizens that corresponds with new residents</p>	<p>EDO to revisit and expand Tourism Marketing Strategy to new target areas</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<i>A greater number of tourists visiting Tillsonburg</i>	<i>New residents are engaged in the community</i>	<i>Tillsonburg has established itself as a local tourist destination</i>
4.2 Provide a variety of leisure and cultural opportunities to suit all interests	<p>Parks and Recreation to measure success to-date of implementing the recommendations / action items of the Community Parks, Recreation & Cultural Strategic Master Plan</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation and CSP Coordinator to monitor implementation of Community Parks, Recreation & Cultural Strategic Master Plan and provide annual summary reports</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Publication of report summarizing implementation of Master Plan to-date; Identification of next steps in implementing Master Plan</i>	<i>Publish annual implementation summary reports</i>	
4.3 Provide opportunities for families to thrive	<p>Town Senior Management to explore viability of alternative transportation options such as community transportation, car share programs and bike share programs</p>	<p>Town Senior Management to implement a suitable transportation program and support the program through Town-wide marketing</p>	
Key Performance Indicators	<i>Determination of feasible alternative transportation options</i>	<i>Viable alternative(s) to private automobile exist for day-to-day activities</i>	

IMPLEMENTATION

The most important aspect of this Community Strategic Plan is translating words into action. The following outlines how the Town can ensure that implementation of the Community Strategic Plan will be successful.

Championing

It is crucial that the Town identify champions who will assume ownership of the Community Strategic Plan, providing regular status updates and keeping on top of changing conditions and emerging issues. This will ensure that the goals for each strategic objective are being accomplished and that action items are being implemented properly and appropriately. Champions should be identified in several categories that may include: Council, staff, age groups, existing community groups, community leaders.

Quick Wins

It will also be critical for the Town to take immediate action on some of the strategic initiatives to build trust and momentum going forward. Some easily-achievable “quick wins” include developing a communication strategy for Town staff, identifying a staff member responsible for leading implementation of the Community Strategic Plan, and publishing a quarterly newsletter that provides contacts for Town initiatives.

Monitoring Progress

In the spirit of openness, transparency and responsiveness, regular reporting on the progress the Town is making in meeting the goals identified in this Community Strategic Plan is important. Preparing annual reports, along with summary documents, and hosting annual “Town Hall” style meetings ensures that progress is being made and identifies areas that may require additional resources.





1 EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1.1 Leadership

Identify staff member to lead implementation	1-3 yrs	CSP
Meet with citizen-led initiatives to identify issues	1-3 yrs	CSP
Host annual “Town Hall” style meetings for CSP implementation updates	3-5 yrs	TSM

1.2 Communication & Collaboration

Develop a Communication Strategy for Town staff	1-3 yrs	DCS
Hold annual discussions with local community groups	1-3 yrs	CSP
Develop webpage for ongoing input, ideas, and questions	1-3 yrs	DCS & CSP
Perform audits on communication effectiveness	3-5 yrs	DCS
Revise Communication Strategy and webpage	3-5 yrs	DCS/CSP

1.3 Accountability

Provide public with updates and contacts	1-3 yrs	DCS
Provide overview of how CSP initiatives are incorporated into annual budget	3-5 yrs	TSM

Person / groups responsible for action item:

- AAC - Accessibility Advisory Committee
- CIA - Cultural Improvement Alliance
- COC - Chamber of Commerce
- CSP - Community Strategic Plan Coordinator
- DCS - Development & Communication Services
- EDO - Economic Development Office
- LC - Local Community
- PR - Parks & Recreation
- S - Stakeholders
- T - Town
- TC - Town Council
- TSC - Tillsonburg Seniors Centre
- TL - Town Leadership
- TO - Town Operations
- TSM - Town Senior Management
- LHIN - South West LHIN Board of Directors

2 ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

2.1 Industry & Employment Opportunities

Measure success to-date of Economic Strategy implementation	1-3 yrs	EDO
Host workshop to reassess key economic clusters	1-3 yrs	EDO
Produce updated Economic Strategy	3-5 yrs	EDO
Monitor & report on Economic Strategy implementation	3-5 yrs	EDO & CSP
Market existing financial assistance opportunities	3-5 yrs	EDO
Leverage the presence of the airport	5-10 yrs	EDO & COC

2.2 Retail Services

Develop a Retail Diversification Strategy (RDS)	1-3 yrs	EDO
Implement & monitor RDS recommendations	3-5 yrs	EDO & CSP
Develop & launch a “shop local” campaign	3-5 yrs	EDO
Evaluate RDS progress and make adjustments	5-10 yrs	EDO & CSP

2.3 Education & Training

Hold workshop series to match career interests of students with opportunities	1-3 yrs	EDO
Offer high school trades programs	3-5 yrs	EDO
Collaborate with Fanshawe College	3-5 yrs	EDO
Launch job shadowing / internship programs	3-5 yrs	EDO
Revisit and refresh programs to reflect economic trends	5-10 yrs	EDO
Explore partnerships with post-secondary institutions	5-10 yrs	EDO

3 DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE

3.1 Youth & Young Professionals

Launch campaign to showcase successful residents	1-3 yrs	CSP & DSC
Develop 40 Hours Community Service programs with local organizations	1-3 yrs	CSP
Assess effectiveness of existing Cooperative Education	3-5 yrs	CSP
Establish honorary Council position for youth representative	3-5 yrs	CSP & TC
Establish new entertainment venues targeting young adults	5-10 yrs	CSP & S

3.2 Families

Explore necessity of providing additional support to families	1-3 yrs	CSP
Promote existing volunteer opportunities	3-5 yrs	CSP, T & LC
Devise and implement strategy for family needs	3-5 yrs	CSP

3.3 Seniors

Confirm seniors' health care needs and gaps in local services	1-3 yrs	CSP & TSC
Provide needed seniors' health care and support services	3-5 yrs	TL & LHIN
Incorporate financial incentives for universal accessibility into existing Community Improvement Plans (CIPs)	3-5 yrs	EDO & AAC
Implement strategy to meet local seniors' needs	5-10 yrs	TL & LHIN
Market CIP accessibility incentives for local businesses	5-10 yrs	EDO
Retrofit municipal infrastructure for universal accessibility	5-10 yrs	TO

4 CULTURE & COMMUNITY

4.1 Unique & Welcoming Community

Develop and implement Tourism Marketing Strategy	1-3 yrs	EDO
Expand and enhance local festivals	1-3 yrs	CSP, PR & CIA
Explore & organize opportunities to showcase local talent	3-5 yrs	CIA
Organize "Welcoming Committee" for new residents	3-5 yrs	CSP
Revisit & expand Tourism Marketing Strategy	5-10 yrs	EDO

4.2 Leisure & Cultural Opportunities

Measure success to-date of implementation of Community Parks, Recreation & Cultural Strategic Master Plan (CPRCSMP)	1-3 yrs	PR
Monitor & report on CPRCSMP implementation	3-5 yrs	PR & CSP

4.3 Mobility & Sustainability

Explore viability of alternative transportation options	1-3 yrs	TSM
Implement and market a transportation program	3-5 yrs	TSM



APPENDIX: CONSULTATION SUMMARIES



Subject: Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan
Summary of Stakeholder Workshops Held December 3, 2013

Date: December 16, 2013

We are pleased to present you with a summary of the stakeholder workshops held on December 3, 2013 related to the Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan. The following summary has been broken down into the key themes identified as a result of our background review and the feedback received from the workshop participants. Please keep in mind that this is a summary of information and not verbatim notes.

Youth Engagement

Key Strengths

Generally speaking, most workshop participants agreed that Tillsonburg offered:

- Plenty of clubs, activities and programs, particularly related to sports and recreation;
- Great sports and/or recreation facilities (e.g. baseball diamonds, community centre, trails and parks, etc.); and
- Direct engagement opportunities through the newly established Teen Advisory Group.

Key Challenges

Workshop participants indicated that a lack of employment opportunities for youth in their teens and twenties was the biggest threat to youth engagement and retention in Tillsonburg. Some participants attributed this to a lack of entry level employment opportunities, while others suggested a lack of desirable post-secondary training/programming.

Other areas of improvement related to youth engagement highlighted during the workshops included:

- Not enough teen-focussed activities;
- Lack of engagement in programs of all kinds and opportunities (i.e. non-athletic programs);
- Risk of declining enrollment and non-donation funding sources in existing programs;
- Location of activities is very spread out geographically and can make access difficult;
- Potential lack of engagement, interaction and understanding between youth and older demographics; and
- Lack of quality youth “hangout” places aside from the mall;

Other Comments to Note

Questions of how and in what areas Tillsonburg youth were engaged were highlighted during the workshops. The general consensus was that while Tillsonburg is a great place to grow up and young people generally feel engaged, the lack of employment opportunities is a potential barrier to retaining youth beyond high-school.

Economic Development

Key Strengths

Workshop participants highlighted the following key strengths related to economic development in Tillsonburg:

- Proximity to Highway 401, larger markets (e.g. London) and the US border; and
- Strong industry presence for a community of its size

Key Challenges

Several challenges were highlighted, including:

- Lack of entry level and industry jobs and careers for young people/families;
- Discrepancy between skills of local labour and needs of industry;
- Lack of desirable and local training/educational opportunities;
- Need to strengthen the presence of Fanshawe College;
- Lack of promotion/marketing of economic opportunities to young families and/or outsiders;
- Too much “red tape” and high taxes are discouraging new businesses from opening; and
- Need to do a better job at leveraging opportunities associated with the airport

Other Comments to Note

As a whole, workshop participants indicated that Tillsonburg’s greatest need for improvement is in the area of economic development due to the impact it has on all other aspects of the community.

Downtown Development

Key Strengths

Specific comments related to what the participants liked about the downtown included:

- Vibrant, well maintained and self-sufficient;
- Unique offering of local stores;
- Plenty of restaurant options;
- Free parking; and
- The new library offered good programming and quality facilities in a central location.

Key Challenges

The following areas for improvement were highlighted in reference to the downtown:

- Lack of retail diversity, particularly for the needs of women, children (including infants) and teens;
- Lack of public space and green space;
- Lack of non-retail social establishments;
- Heritage in the downtown needs to be preserved and protected;
- Lack of parking around the mall; and
- Need for facilities such as wedding hall, conference centre, etc.

Other Comments to Note

Workshop participants generally indicated a sense of pride regarding the downtown area, although the need for more retail diversity was a common issue that was raised.

Culture & Sense of Community

Key Strengths

Participants throughout all the groups noted that they felt that Tillsonburg residents were invested in and proud of their community and looked out for one another. Other positive attributes related to culture and sense of community in Tillsonburg included:

- Good parks, trails and water features;
- Tourism opportunities related to the Great Lakes and streams (e.g. fishing);
- Strong selection of arts and culture programming, activities and groups (e.g. Station Arts Centre, museum, theatre, etc.);
- Many engaged volunteers; and
- Lots of churches;

Key Challenges

Some participants expressed a perceived lack of appreciation for volunteers and concerns that fundraising efforts are not sustainable without support from the Town.

Other areas of opportunity related to culture & sense of community included:

- Need for more tourism marketing and opportunities;
- Lack of a centralized source of information (e.g. various organizations don't know about other similar programs/events being offered); and
- Need to do a better job at featuring and recognizing local artists;

Other Comments to Note

Participants overwhelmingly indicated that some of Tillsonburg's biggest strengths were its small town feel and its sense of community. Additionally, while the number of volunteers in Tillsonburg was identified by many as a positive, some participants were concerned about a future shortage due to the aging of the population.

Health Care & Support Services

Key Strengths

The following was communicated as existing strengths related to health care and support services:

- Good hospital, doctors and medical services;
- Seniors living centres, programming and health care services;
- Plenty of community outreach and partnerships with community organizations; and

- Good support for the disabled and disadvantaged (food bank, community kitchen, Salvation Army, etc.);

Key Challenges

Participants noted the following areas of improvement and concerns:

- Ability of the hospital and/or other medical services to handle future demand;
- Reduced or no access to special services (e.g. obstetrics)
- Mobility concerns (lack of affordable senior transportation services, scooter access, etc.);
- Lack of senior housing / assisted living facilities;
- Better support services for low-income and at-risk population;
- Lack of support for existing services (e.g. food bank);
- More awareness of local homelessness; and
- Lack of childcare and after-school programs;

Other Comments to Note

Health care and social services were identified as very important by workshop participants. However, concerns were raised about the ability of the hospital and/or other medical services to handle the demands of an aging population.

Local Government

Key Strengths

Workshop participants indicated the following as existing strengths related to local government in Tillsonburg:

- Significant improvement in communication between the community and Town Council, but still work to do;
- Improved relationship between Oxford County and the Town; and
- Great MP's and MPP's

Key Challenges

The following challenges related to local government were also communicated during the workshops:

- The Town lacks a practical strategic outlook;
- The Town has failed to implement past plans; and
- Need to improve Oxford County program roll-out, as some programs are not always seen in Tillsonburg.

Other Comments to Note

While participants noted that there has been improvement in communication and/or the relationship between the Town, the County and the community, they also indicated that there was room for improvement.

Other Issues

In addition to those discussed above, the following issues were also identified by workshop participants:

- Tillsonburg as a regional centre means a large catchment area (40,000+) but also created challenges in terms of infrastructure costs;
- High cost of living and lack of affordable rental units;
- The Thames District School Board serves too large of an area;
- Rural communities just outside town are not well-serviced or well-connected;
- Public transit options are insufficient within Tillsonburg;
- Tillsonburg is poorly connected to other towns; and
- Existing services need to be better marketed to the community;



Subject: Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan
Progress Report #2

Date: April 23, 2014

This Progress Report summarizes the activities that have taken place related to the Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan following the first set of stakeholder workshops held on December 3, 2013. A memo regarding the outcome of those first workshops was issued on December 12, 2013.

Following the December 3 workshops, the following project activities have taken place:

- Staff and Council workshops were held on February 19, 2014;
- An online survey was developed as a consultation tool; and
- Survey results were compiled and analyzed to inform the Community Strategic Plan.

Staff and Council Workshops

Staff and Council Workshops were held on February 19, 2014. Town Staff and Council members were given the opportunity to review and comment on progress to date, including the results of the first set of stakeholder workshops. Through a facilitated discussion, participants were asked to identify any gaps in the input received at the stakeholder workshops, and to prioritize specific areas of interest to be addressed by the Community Strategic Plan.

Results from the Staff and Council Workshops indicated that areas of weakness were in youth engagement, health care and support services, economic and downtown development. The Staff Workshop emphasized the need to change the perception of a senior-focused town to address and attract all age groups through developing the downtown core. More health care and support services options should be available, as well as job opportunities in downtown Tillsonburg. In addition, Council members stressed how the strategic plan needs to be inclusive to encourage open communication. These views were reflected in the ranking of goals and priorities where improving communication followed by additional health care services (walk-ins and nurse practitioners) were ranked of highest importance.

The Staff and Council Workshops also addressed the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan. At the Staff workshop, small group discussions were held on long-term and short-term goals, implementation roles, responsibilities, and resources, followed by a facilitated discussion on how to gain traction in implementation of the plan. Specific objectives analyzed included: communication, health care services, educational support and youth engagement. Similarly, the Council workshop involved a facilitated discussion on Council's role in plan implementation, the need to identify community champions, and keys to the plan's success. Overall, the participants identified that implementation of a Community Strategic Plan to achieve these goals and objectives would require Council, stakeholders and the community to work collaboratively.

Online Survey

An Online Survey was administered to gain community input into the Strategic Plan. The survey asked participants to assess Tillsonburg's past performance in the areas of Youth Engagement and Retention, Economic Development, Downtown Development, Culture and Sense of Community, Health

Care and Support Services, and Local Government. It also gathered input on Tillsonburg's future priorities.

The survey was made available on the Town's webpage from February 1, 2014 to March 7, 2014 and members throughout the community were actively encouraged to participate. A variety of local community groups were contacted for their involvement, including the local senior's centre, library, curling club, and high school. Surveys were also distributed to local residents at the Tillsonburg Town Centre as well as local businesses.

The survey was successful in achieving high rates of participation with strong representation from all demographic groups. A total of 357 local residents completed the survey. Of these participants, 199 (56%) were female and 158 (44%) were male. 14% of respondents were under the age of 20 while 12% were over the age of 65. People between the ages of 20 and 39 represented 28% of the respondents, and those between the ages of 40 and 64 represented 46%.

The results indicate that Tillsonburg's residents believe that the Town performs well in the area of Culture and Sense of Community; its family-oriented nature, high quality parks and recreational opportunities, and active citizens are its most positive attributes. Tillsonburg also performed reasonably well in the area of Health Care and Support Services. Opinions were mixed in the areas of Downtown Development, Local Government, Economic Development, and Youth Engagement and Retention. Particularly, respondents felt that Tillsonburg performed poorly in professional employment opportunities, retail diversification, considering the opinions of young people (age 25 and under) in the decision-making process and entrepreneurialism.

Next Steps

Another set of stakeholder focus group workshops and Public Open House are scheduled for April 29, 2014. These events will allow interested citizens to review the work completed to-date, including the results of the surveys and other input received, and provide any additional input into the Community Strategic Plan. The focus of this round of consultation will be to identify actions to be taken to address Tillsonburg's identified issues, focus on the identified priorities for its future, and meet future goals and objectives.

Following the workshops and Public Open House, a draft Community Strategic Plan will be prepared and circulated.

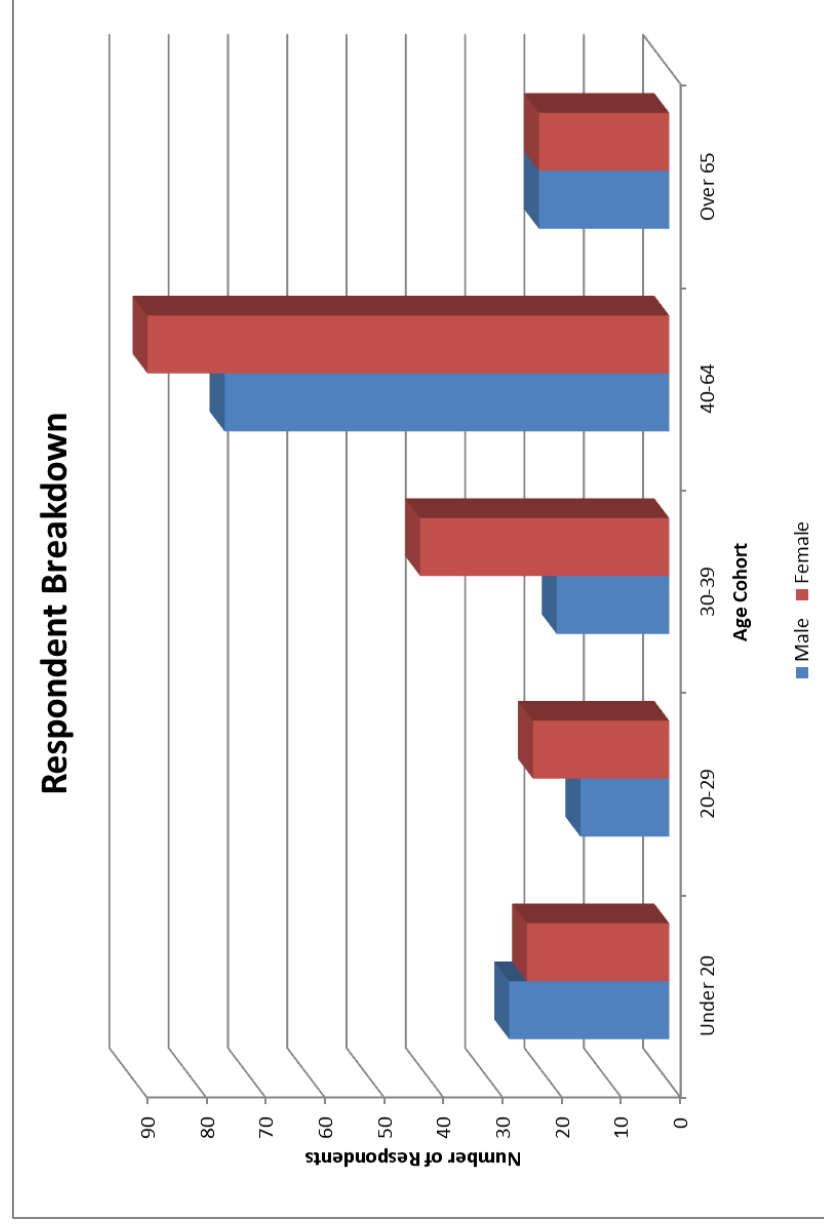
Tillsonburg CSP Survey Analysis

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Exhibit 1 - Respondent Breakdown



Past Performance

Participants were asked to assess Tillsonburg's past performance in the areas of Youth Engagement and Retention, Economic Development, Downtown Development, Culture and Sense of Community, Health Care and Support Services, and Local Government. The results of the assessment are discussed in further detail below.

Youth Engagement and Retention

Opinions were mixed on how well the Town has performed to-date in the area of youth engagement and retention (Exhibit 2). The majority of total respondents agreed that youth sports are one of Tillsonburg's greatest strengths and that Tillsonburg provided opportunities for youth (18 and under) to become engaged in the life of the community (i.e. programs, activities, facilities). However, survey respondents also indicated that there is a lack of attractive career opportunities in Tillsonburg for young adults between the ages of 25 and 40. Furthermore, only 12% of survey respondents agreed that the opinions of residents under the age of 25 are considered by Tillsonburg Town Council and staff.

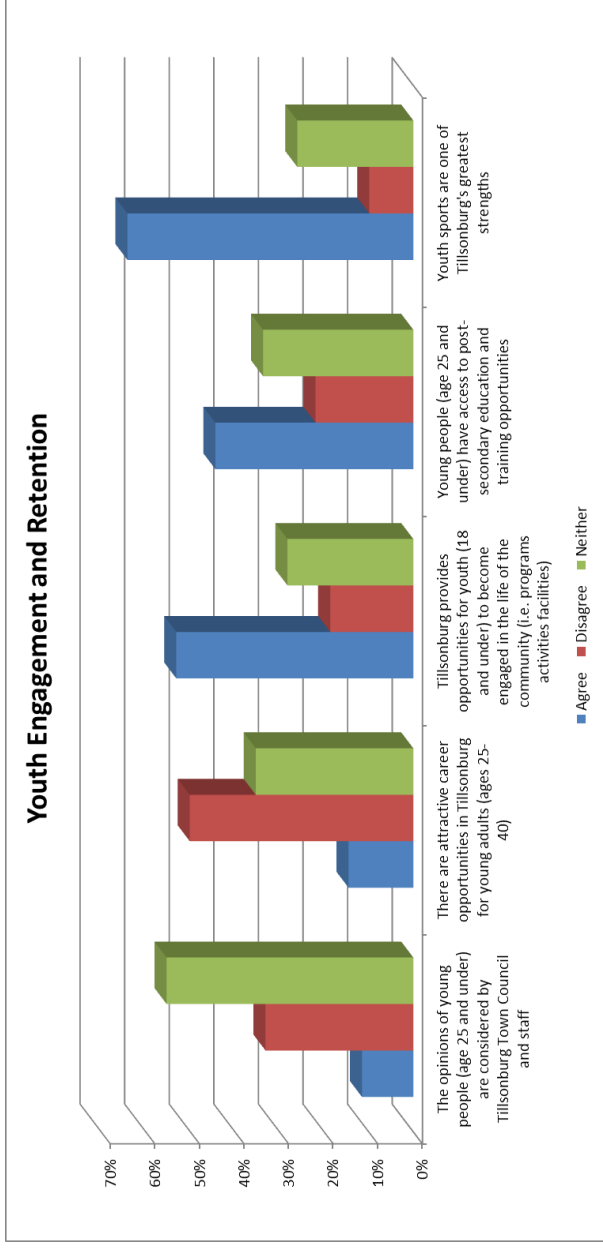
Female respondents consistently indicated lower levels of satisfaction in the area of youth engagement and retention. Compared to their male counterparts, female respondents were less likely to agree that:

- ▲ There are attractive employment opportunities in Tillsonburg for young adults between the ages of 25 and 40;
- ▲ Young people (age 25 and under) have access to post-secondary education and training opportunities;
- ▲ Tillsonburg provides opportunities for youth (18 and under) to become engaged in the life of the community (i.e. programs, activities, facilities, etc.); and
- ▲ Youth sports are one of Tillsonburg's greatest strengths.

The following observations should also be noted:

- ▲ Respondents under the age of 20 tended to be more optimistic about career and educational/training opportunities relative to the general population; and
- ▲ Respondents under the age of 20 (particularly females) were less likely to agree that youth sports are one of Tillsonburg's greatest strengths.

Exhibit 2 - Youth Engagement and Retention



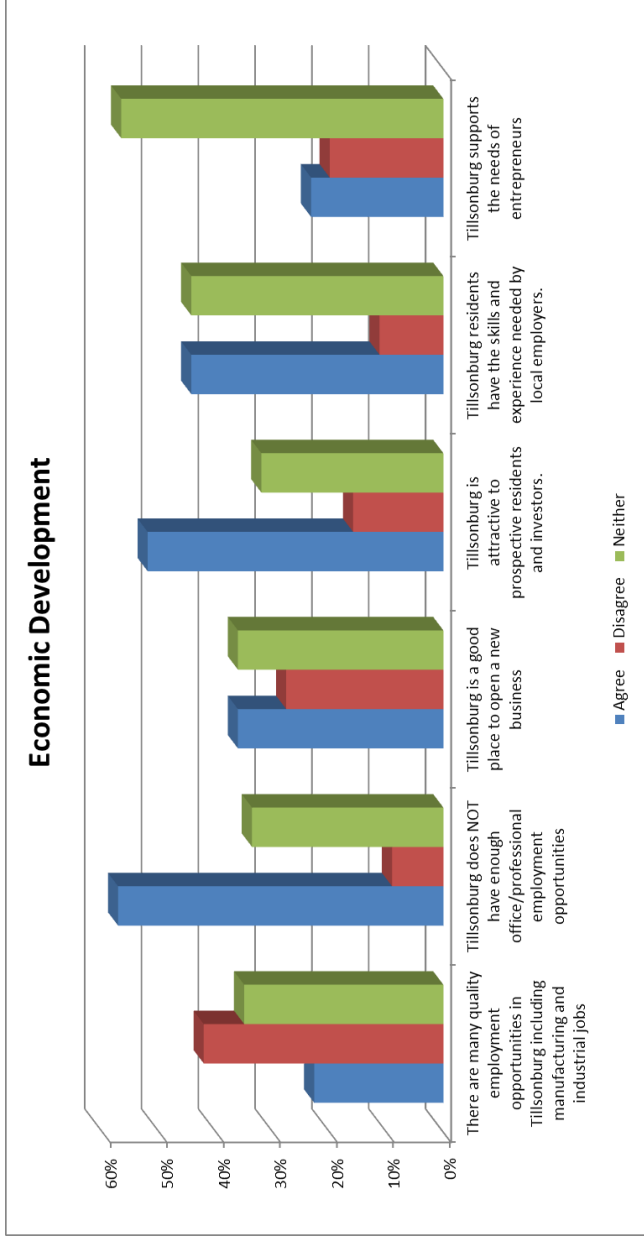
Economic Development

Opinions were also mixed on the topic of economic development in Tillsonburg, although the results overall indicate that this is an area of opportunity for the Town (Exhibit 3). While respondents generally agreed that Tillsonburg is attractive to prospective residents and investors, the results also indicate that there are not enough quality employment opportunities in Tillsonburg, specifically opportunities related to office/professional employment. Temporary employment and/or the utilization of “employment agencies” were specifically identified by a number of respondents as obstacles preventing the local labour force for obtaining quality employment in Town. It is worth noting that respondents generally agreed that residents have the skills and experience needed by local employers. Survey respondents also indicated that the Town needs to do a better job at supporting the needs of entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Female respondents were less likely to agree that there are many quality employment opportunities in Tillsonburg and that Tillsonburg residents have the skills and experience needed by local employers than their male counterparts. The following observations should also be noted:

- ▲ Respondents over the age of 40 tended to agree more that Tillsonburg is attractive to prospective residents and investors than younger respondents;
- ▲ Male respondents under the age of 20 agreed more that there were quality employment opportunities in Tillsonburg (including manufacturing and industrial jobs); and
- ▲ Females over the age of 65 were more likely to agree that Tillsonburg is a good place to open a new business whereas males over the age of 65 were more likely to disagree.

Exhibit 3 - Economic Development



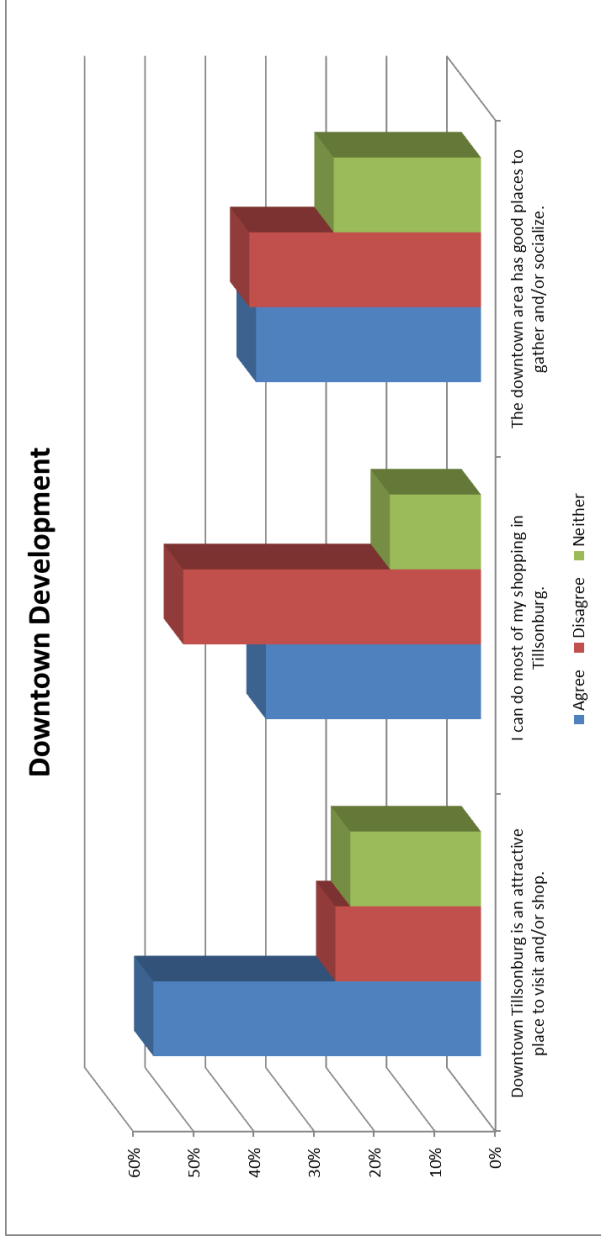
Downtown Development

While the results of the survey indicate that local residents generally feel that downtown Tillsonburg is an attractive place to visit, many respondents indicated that there is a lack of retail diversification in the downtown area (Exhibit 4). User-provided comments repeatedly indicated that local retailers do not offer enough variety and that residents are shopping in other nearby centres (London, Woodstock, etc.), especially for the clothing needs of children, teens and women. Respondents also noted that the downtown is largely closed during evenings and weekends and that there is a lack of entertainment venues present.

An analysis of responses based on gender did not generally reveal any significant differences between the overall opinions of men and women, although females were less likely to agree that they can do most of their shopping in Tillsonburg. The following observations should also be noted:

- ▲ Respondents over the age of 65 were generally more satisfied with Tillsonburg's downtown;
- ▲ Males and females under the age of 20 disagreed relatively more that downtown Tillsonburg is an attractive place to visit and/or shop; and
- ▲ Females over the age of 65 tended to agree more that the downtown area has good places to gather and/or socialize.

Exhibit 4 - Downtown Development



Culture & Sense of Community

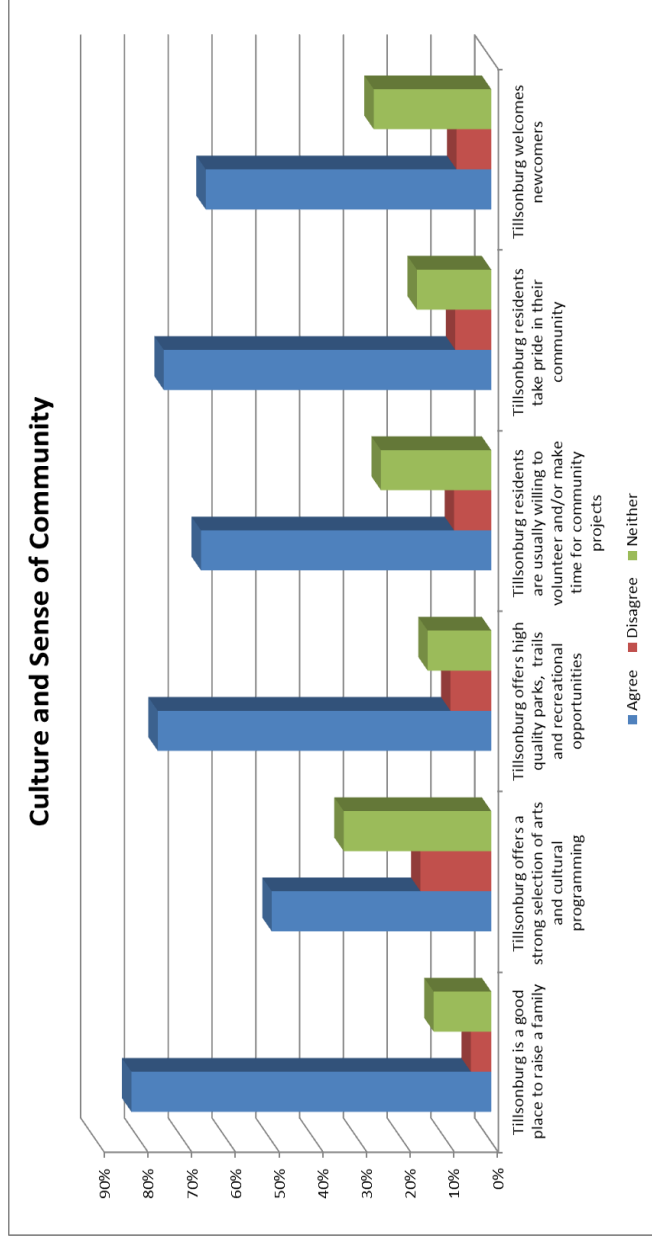
The results of the survey indicate that Tillsonburg has generally done a good job in fostering a positive culture and sense of community (Exhibit 5). Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that Tillsonburg is a good place to raise a family and offers high quality parks, trails and recreational opportunities. The survey responses also indicated that Tillsonburg residents take pride in their community, welcome newcomers and are willing to volunteer and/or make time for community projects. However, multiple user-submitted comments suggested that there may be a perception that cultural and community events are too focused on the senior population and that there is a lack of arts and cultural programming for younger members of the community. Similarly, comments were received indicating that there should be opportunities for more low-cost activities.

An analysis of responses based on gender did not yield any significant differences between the overall opinions of men and women. However, the following observations should be noted:

- ▲ Males under the age of 20 tended to hold a less optimistic view of culture and sense of community in Tillsonburg than the general population, particularly with respect to taking pride in their community, Tillsonburg being a good place to raise a family and satisfaction with the quality of parks, trails and recreational opportunities;
- ▲ Both males and females under the age of 20 indicated less satisfaction with the selection of arts and cultural programming offered in Tillsonburg than the general population;
- ▲ Females between the ages of 20 and 29 indicated relatively less agreement that Tillsonburg residents take pride in their community;
- ▲ Females between the ages of 30 and 39 indicated relatively less agreement that Tillsonburg welcomes newcomers; and

- ▶ Males over the age of 65 were less likely to agree that Tillsonburg is a good place to raise a family.

Exhibit 5 - Culture and Sense of Community



Health Care & Support Services

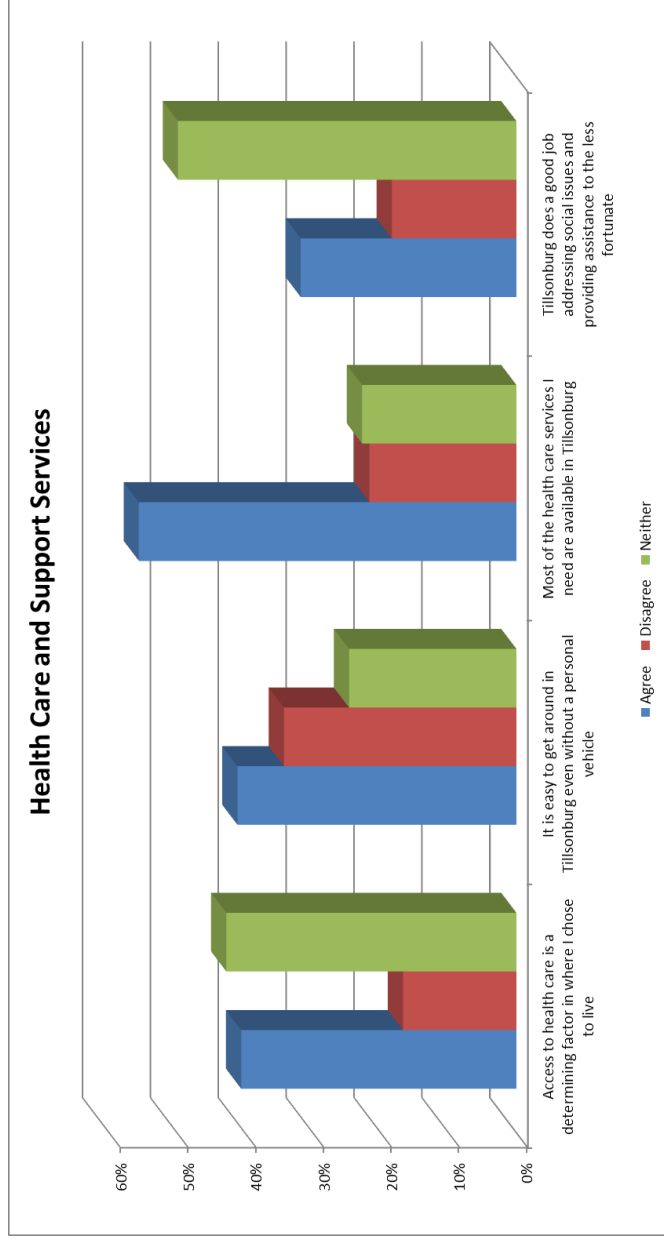
The results of the survey also indicate that Tillsonburg has done reasonably well in the area of health care (Exhibit 6). The majority of respondents indicated agreed that most of their necessary health care services are available in Tillsonburg. Similarly, very few respondents indicated that access to health care was not a determining factor in where they chose to live. Respondents generally neither agreed nor disagreed that Tillsonburg does a good job addressing social issues and providing assistance to the less fortunate. Multiple user-submitted comments also stated that residents would like to see some sort of public transportation system in place.

While female respondents were more likely to agree that access to health care is a determining factor in where they chose to live than male respondents, they were also less likely to agree that most of their needed health care services were available in Tillsonburg. Furthermore, female respondents were far more likely to state that getting around Tillsonburg without a personal vehicle was difficult. The following observations should also be noted

- ▶ Older respondents generally placed a higher importance on access to health care than younger respondents;
- ▶ Younger respondents were less likely to agree that Tillsonburg does a good job addressing social issues and providing assistance to the less fortunate than the general population; and

- ▶ Male respondents under the age of 20 indicated relatively less agreement that most of their needed health care services were available in Tillsonburg.

Exhibit 6 - Health Care & Support Services

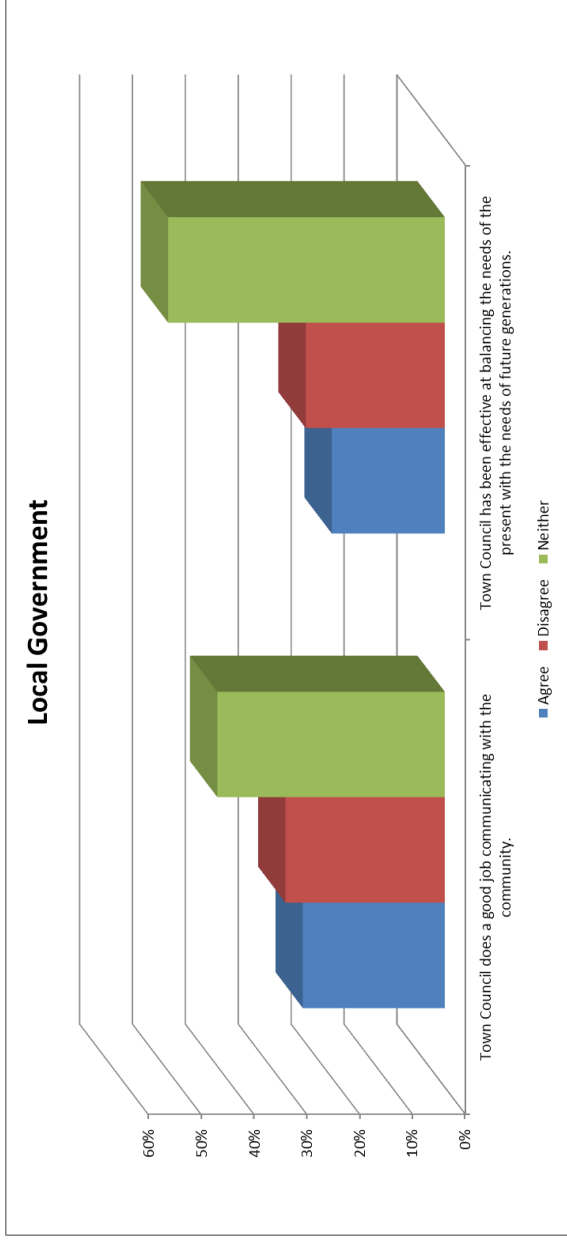


Local Government

Survey respondents were generally neutral with respect to the effectiveness of Town Council in communicating with the community and balancing the needs of the present with the needs of future generations (Exhibit 7). However, user-submitted comments indicated the perception that Town Council has perhaps placed too much emphasis on the needs of the senior population and that younger citizens need to be better integrated into the decision-making process.

An analysis of responses based on gender did not generally reveal any significant differences between the overall opinions of men and women, although females generally indicated a slightly lower level of satisfaction with Town Council, specifically in relation to balancing the needs of the present with the needs of future generations. Additionally, respondents over the age of 65 generally indicated higher levels of satisfaction with the local government whereas respondents under the age of 20 were more likely to express dissatisfaction.

Exhibit 7 - Local Government



Future Priorities

Respondents were asked about which future priorities they felt should be focused on going forward. Twenty statements were provided and respondents were asked to rank at least five statements in order from most-important to least-important.

Exhibit 8 shows the total number of times a future priority was selected by a respondent without regard for its relative importance (i.e. does not account for how many times a future priority was selected as a top priority vs. a less-important priority). As shown in Exhibit 8, survey respondents selected “ensure adequate support and resources for health care and support services” as an important future priority more frequently than any other statement. Similarly, maintaining Tillsonburg’s “small town” feel, creating a clear, strategic and implementable future outlook, diversifying retail offerings in the downtown, and focusing on educational and training opportunities (both professional and industrial) were frequently identified by participants as important future priorities.

The “pairwise totals” column shown in Exhibit 8 provides additional insight into how frequently a future priority was identified as important relative to other priorities. This is achieved through the method of pairwise comparison, which ranks each priority against all others on an individual basis. For each “pair”, the total number of times one priority was ranked higher than the other was calculated and the priority with the highest total is awarded a point. For example, given that there were 20 rankable priorities, if one priority was consistently preferred over all of the others, it would be awarded a score of 19.

The pairwise comparison confirms that ensuring adequate support and resources for health care and support services has been identified by respondents as a top future priority. Although lowering taxes for small businesses wasn't selected as often as some other priorities, it was consistently identified as a top priority when it was selected. Conversely, while maintaining Tillsonburg's "small town" feel had the second-most total number of selections, it was consistently identified as a priority of relatively lower importance.

Exhibit 8 - Future Priorities Results

Future Priority	No. of Times Selected	Pairwise Totals
Ensure adequate support and resources for health care and support services	188	17
Maintain Tillsonburg's "small town" feel	167	9
Create a clear, strategic future outlook and ensure implementation	166	16
Diversify retail offerings in the downtown	166	13
Educational and training opportunities related to industry	160	16
Educational and training opportunities related to professional occupations	157	15
Create more public transit options	140	7
Strengthen and diversify programming at Fanshawe College	133	13
Lower taxes for small businesses	132	17
More teen-focussed activities	129	15
Improve communication between Town Council and the community	127	8
Provide more opportunities for youth decision-making	112	10
Ensure that more public space and greenspace are incorporated into the downtown	111	5
Marketing of Tillsonburg to other communities	105	7
Enhance trails and pathways throughout the community	103	1
Develop more affordable rental units	99	7
Strengthen existing and create new connections to other towns	96	1
Focus on arts and culture programming and recognition	74	7
Leverage the presence of the airport	74	1
Improve roll-out of Oxford County programming	64	3



**Subject: Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan
Summary of Community Engagement Sessions Held April 29, 2014**

Date: June 2014

We are pleased to present you with a summary of the community engagement sessions and Public Open House held on April 29, 2014 related to the Tillsonburg Community Strategic Plan. Sessions were held with Town staff, Development Committee, and two focus groups comprised of key stakeholders. The following summary is organized into the key topics that were discussed at these events: Tillsonburg’s long-term vision and implementation ideas for the Community Strategic Plan.

A Vision for Tillsonburg

Participants in each community engagement session were asked to describe how they envisioned Tillsonburg after successful implementation of the Community Strategic Plan’s directions. There were several key themes and “vision key words” that emerged across each of the groups that were consulted in the sessions.

Leadership in Local Government

Participants envisioned a local government that is accountable, financially responsible, and collaborative. Many discussions focussed on the perceived communication problems in local government. A number of participants envisioned better communication of what the town offers such as events, recreational groups, and volunteer opportunities, as well as a central contact point at the Town for citizens with questions or concerns. Participants envisioned stronger leadership in local government and strong, effective, and efficient municipal services.

Demographic Balance

Participants envisioned a community that is demographically *balanced*, with opportunities for young people while still supporting the aging population. Full local medical services and long term care facilities would support seniors while a thriving economy and recreational opportunities would attract a younger population and encourage young professionals to stay in Tillsonburg.

Economic Diversity

A *diverse* economy was also identified as a priority. Diversified industries and jobs would ensure economic stability and vibrancy. Many participants envisioned diverse retail establishments, particularly with the addition of women’s clothing and children’s needs stores to encourage residents to shop locally.

Engaged Community

Participants envisioned an engaged, motivated community. Community pride and an active citizenship would result in more local spending and volunteer work. There was discussion about returning to the “can-do” positive attitude that was common in Tillsonburg in the past. Youth engagement was highlighted as a priority, although many participants wanted to focus on engaging all demographics.

Education, Training, and Industry

Emphasis was placed on education and training in Tillsonburg. Participants envisioned a well-educated community with a new focus for industry and a variety of job opportunities, in both trades and professional industries.

Sustainable

Participants viewed Tillsonburg's small town, "country" feel as a strength and envision its preservation and enhancement in the future. The future Tillsonburg would have ample green space, trails, and active people. Mobility was emphasized; participants envisioned better transportation options including promoting active forms of transportation such as walking and cycling.

Tourist Destination

Many participants wanted to promote Tillsonburg as a tourist destination. Key vision words that emerged were *unique* and *differentiated*. This would be achieved through maintaining Tillsonburg's small town feel while modernizing and becoming economically vibrant. Much of Tillsonburg's appeal would also come from its safe and family-oriented nature.

Implementation Ideas

Participants were asked to share their ideas to ensure successful implementation of the Community Strategic Plan. A number of ideas pertaining to specific goals emerged, as follows:

- Becoming a better educated community:
 - Offer a trades program in high school
 - Invest in Tillsonburg's Fanshawe College campus
 - Motivate youth through telling the story of some of Tillsonburg's successful residents
- Leadership in local government:
 - Implement a communication strategy for Town staff, offering a central communication point for residents with questions or concerns
 - Develop a visible Town website for ongoing input, ideas, and questions
- Economic vitality:
 - Take advantage of Tillsonburg as a centre for agricultural activities; promote a local agri-food industry
 - Offer proactive business development incentives
- Health care services:
 - Offer full medical services locally
 - Invest in long term care
- Community engagement:
 - Youth engagement should be considered more broadly under community engagement
 - Use mandatory high school volunteer hours to get youth involved in community initiatives

Participants also discussed their frustrations with past Community Strategic Plan implementation issues, and many ideas emerged to ensure the success of this Plan. Key ideas that participants generally agreed upon are as follows:

- As the Plan is implemented, a "quick win" is needed to immediately build momentum. This would take the form of an implementation action that is achieved within six months to one year;
- Find some action items that don't need money. Don't miss out by focusing on the bigger items;

- Hire someone dedicated to the Community Strategic Plan and to coordinate the volunteer effort. Identify champions in various areas. Tillsonburg has champions, and passion and trust needs to be built;
- Chairs of each advisory committee need to communicate regularly – link initiatives, find relationships, work together where appropriate and beneficial;
- Keep people involved and engaged. The Community Strategic Plan should be fun, and we should get people excited about it.

Additional Comments

In addition to the topics discussed above, the following topics and concerns were discussed at the community engagement sessions and open house:

- Balance between present and future generations – Is Tillsonburg a seniors' community? Do we want to attract younger people?
- Transit issues – Although there was a transit initiative tested by the Town, it failed because did not receive enough support from the public. In particular, getting out of Tillsonburg is difficult without a car;
- Issue of young people going to university and not returning to Tillsonburg because of the lack of professional jobs. There is also the issue of youth who live in Tillsonburg but do not have the skills or training to find work;
- Lots of blue collar jobs in Tillsonburg, but not many professional jobs;
- People shop outside of the Town, especially young families for needs of children;
- Tillsonburg has an abundance of underutilized industrial land from the loss of jobs in 2008;
- People don't know how to approach Council when they have questions or concerns. Multiple Town staff venues are confusing (Town Hall, Customer Service Centre, etc.) and it's common to get redirected around various departments;
- Initiatives may be underway, but people have no way of knowing due to poor communication.