



A United Vision:
**GUELPH'S
COMMUNITY PLAN**



Guelph's Community Plan A Discussion Paper



**"I chose Guelph to be my home. I fell in love
with this city. It's a beautiful city."**

~ Community Plan participant



What is Guelph's biggest challenge?

Transportation + Accessibility

Art on the Street

Softer water

GUELPH NEWS
Best place to grow in Canada

**A United Vision:
GUELPH'S
COMMUNITY PLAN**

MAKE YOUR MARK



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Let's have a discussion

As the title says, this is a discussion paper. So here are a few questions to start the conversation.

1. Is this Guelph? Do the themes, directions, goals and even the language in this report feel like Guelph? If not, what's missing?
2. What should we do first? This is a big plan with more aspirations than can happen at once. Where do you think we should start? What would give us the greatest benefit for our community? Pick a direction or goal from the paper you think we should target first. Or let us know if there is something we missed.
3. Thinking of your top priority or where you think we should start—how will we know when we've achieved that aspiration? What would real positive change look like to you?
4. What would you be willing to contribute, to commit to? For this plan's aspirations to be realized, we'll all have to work together because it's bigger than any one individual or organization. Where's your passion? Where would you want to help? To lead?

You can share your thoughts with us in two ways:

1. Online at haveyoursay.guelph.ca/community-plan
2. By email to makeyourmark@guelph.ca

Thank you for taking the time to read this paper and share your thoughts. Here we go...



Introduction

Guelph is growing at one of the fastest rates in Canada, with the population projected to increase from 130,000 people today to 169,000 by 2030.

As our community grows and changes, we need a well-planned approach that steers us in directions we want to go.

To do that, the City of Guelph (City), community members and a wide range of organizations are building a plan that will shape what Guelph will look like over the next 10 to 20 years. This aspirational document will capture our vision of the future and inform, inspire and guide us as we move forward. As a plan that affects us all, it will be shaped by the community, owned by the community and implemented collaboratively by the community.

The Plan will lay the foundation for a strong, welcoming and prosperous future for Guelph—one where everyone feels like they belong, can access essential services and earn a good living. It will guide the work of local government and agencies that serve our community. It will also provide a framework for monitoring and reporting on progress toward our common goals, sharing what we've learned and shifting directions when necessary.

Guelph's Community Plan will be:

- Comprehensive—Our Plan will address all aspects of community development, including economic, cultural, educational, environmental, social and health issues.
- Long-range—Our Plan will identify community-wide priorities and issues over a 10 to 20-year time horizon.
- Relevant to the entire city—Our Plan will identify the issues that reflect the needs and priorities of the diversity of residents, neighbourhoods, businesses and institutions that make up the whole community of Guelph.

To ensure the Plan was co-created with the community, the City embarked on an engagement and listening process from January 2018 to February 2019.

Thousands of community members provided input at a variety of events and in diverse ways, including surveys, focus groups, casual discussions, targeted workshops and social media. The comments, issues and ideas gathered through this process are now informing the development of the Plan.

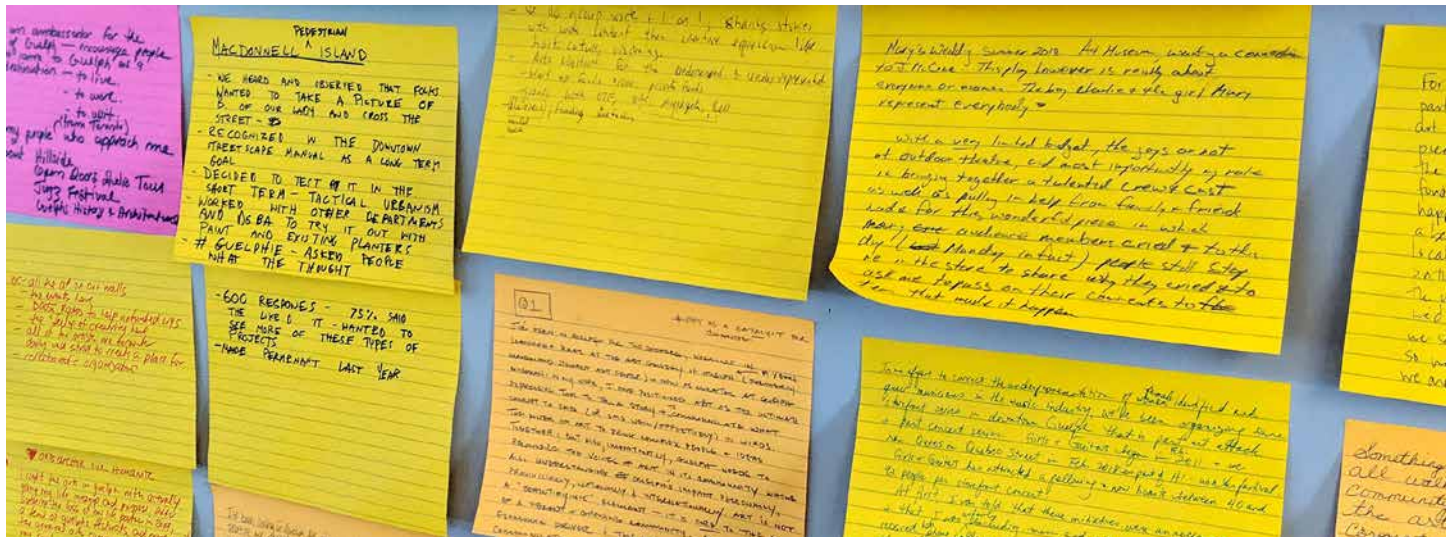
Those engagement efforts clearly revealed that Guelph is a special place for many people who live, work, study and visit here. Regardless of what community or ward we live in, we are passionate about protecting the things that set Guelph apart and committed to tackling the challenges facing our community. Residents value Guelph and want it to be known for its sense of community and environmental consciousness—ideas that go hand in hand with building a resilient community for our children and future generations.

The current discussion paper summarizes the process of engaging residents, businesses and organizations, gathering data and reviewing key City plans. It presents the key findings and the following six themes that emerged:

- We are home
- We protect our environment
- We create value
- We feel well
- We play and explore
- We move around freely

Finally, it proposes directions and goals for each theme and lays out next steps.

Read it. Think about it. Let us know if we're on the right track and what we may have overlooked. It's your community—and your Plan.



Strong foundations

Guelph has many strengths to draw on. Our employment numbers are growing at one of the fastest rates in Canada. Our residents enjoy a long life span, with many living well beyond 85 years. Our environmental efforts have won us awards for leadership, sustainability and water conservation. And 97% of us report having a good quality of life. There are many reasons why a growing number of people are proud to call Guelph home.

Unique natural environment

The city has a unique natural environment that the community cares deeply about. It is part of the Grand River watershed, the largest in southern Ontario, which offers a rich natural heritage. Guelphites enjoy clean air and water. The community works hard to conserve, reclaim and protect these precious resources and is a hub for creating new technologies that help us manage climate change and develop sustainable sources of energy.

A place for discovery and innovation

Guelph is located in Canada's innovation corridor, which is paving the way in new technology for a changing world. The city is home to world-leading educational and research institutions that grow our local, provincial and national economies. And we are regarded as pioneers in academic, business and public collaboration, as well as community-engaged learning.

Vibrant arts and culture

Guelph also enjoys a thriving arts and culture scene. This brings personal enjoyment and fulfilment, supports greater community connection, provides health benefits, increases civic participation and supports our local economy. Our downtown plays a significant role, with unique historical and architectural features that provide a compelling stage for cultural opportunities, creating connections between artists, local retailers, artisans and those who live, work and visit our city.

Active, outdoor opportunities

The community has access to a diverse variety of recreational, fitness and nature-focused opportunities, with two rivers, abundant trails, small and large parks, wild spaces and public places to gather in and explore. These elements are important to the community and seen as an integral part of our identity.

Values in action

The community is highly connected, and we pride ourselves on taking action to make the world a better place. This leadership comes from all corners of our city and across all sectors, supporting inclusion efforts that recognize and celebrate diversity in business, on organizational boards and in politics. We have a thriving social enterprise sector, boast numerous B Corps and take time to recognize and create new emerging business models.

More work to do

In many ways, Guelph is very much on the right track—and most people believe the key to our future lies in continuing the work we've already begun. However, our community still faces significant and complex challenges, and there are many opportunities for improvement.

Homes for all

Housing affordability was one of the most frequently mentioned priorities throughout the engagement process. A recent study of 20 major housing markets ranked Guelph as the sixth-least-affordable housing market in Canada. There is a gap of more than \$23,000 between average income in Guelph and the income necessary to be able to afford the average home here.

That makes it hard to find affordable housing options—rental or owned—that suit the needs of a variety of groups, including people living on fixed incomes, single-parent families and new graduates. For those with disabilities and exceptionalities, finding functional, accessible housing is an even bigger obstacle. As our population changes, ages and grows, it is important that our housing options cater for these evolving needs.

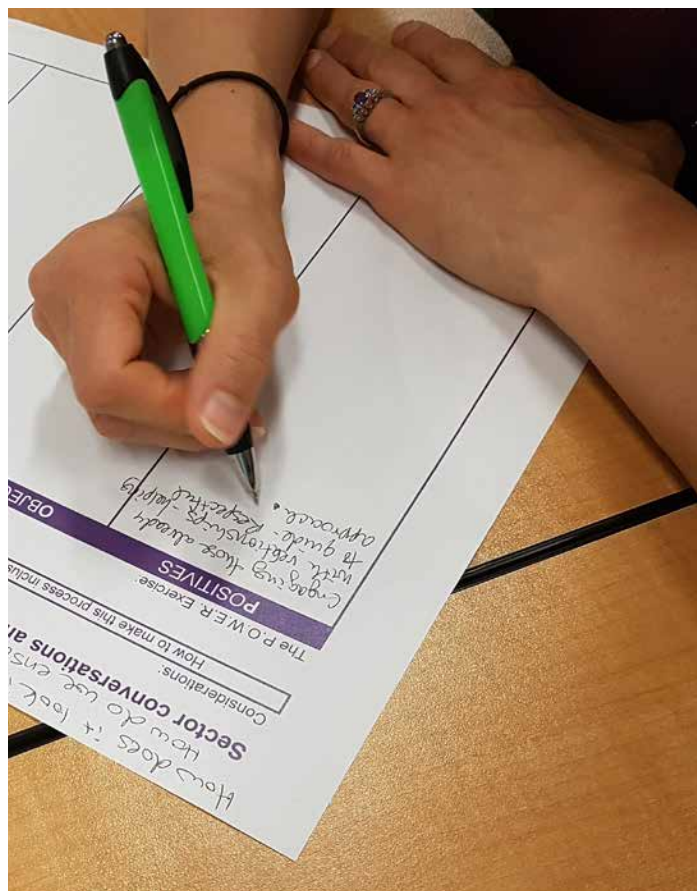
There has also been an increase in public dialogue around homelessness in Guelph and how to help those in greatest need. Homelessness often co-exists with mental health challenges and addiction. This results in a complex set of needs that requires a coordinated community response involving a diverse range of services.

Jobs for our young people

Finding a job in Guelph that pays enough for young people to live in their community is not always easy. Sometimes it's impossible. Limited regional transportation links compound this problem, making it harder for them to commute to potential employment that might enable them to stay in their hometown.

Attracting, training and keeping talent

Guelph's economy is strong and has significant potential. However, local businesses still face a number of issues, including skills shortages, a shift towards machine automation and a lack of funding options to fuel growth.



Meanwhile, smaller companies need support to take advantage of new digital technologies that can further their business and get their products to market.

Building strong and resilient youth

Through the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Coalition for Report Cards on the Well-Being of Children, we know that youth are experiencing negative mental health, low self-esteem, risk of depression and thoughts of self-harm and suicide. And while use of alcohol in schools is dropping, abuse of prescription drugs is increasing at an alarming rate.

Research shows that there are simple things that can help a young person flourish against a backdrop of social change and adverse experiences. However, there is much work to do to communicate this and educate our community in the vital roles they can play.

Ensuring diversity and inclusion

Guelph is a diverse community and it is clear that inclusivity is important and valued. However, as our community changes, it is important that community organizations and businesses take deliberate action to



be more inclusive. Regularly throughout the engagement, community members voiced that more can be done to ensure that housing, recreation and economic participation better reflect the diversity in Guelph, making our community stronger.

Investing in a sustainable arts and culture sector

Although Guelph's arts and cultural community is thriving and there are countless stories of success, the topic of sustainability came up related to every sector, but was particularly prominent for arts organizations. Finding new ways to identify funding, investment, resourcing and revenue options is required to grow the sector and make it more sustainable.

Moving forward:

Creating a more resilient community

Throughout the project, stakeholders talked about the need for many resiliency measures. These include investing in physical infrastructure, clean energy and other technologies that help our city function as it grows; addressing climate change and making the best use of our natural resources. There is also a clear need to work with children, young people and their families to address adverse childhood experiences and the negative impacts these can have on a person and a community, generation after generation.

It's clear that the community believes acting now will help us be resilient into the future. That means acting upstream to address root causes of problems, as well as addressing the symptoms where we can. Furthermore, many people feel that the conditions are right in Guelph to make that happen. Overall, we are hopeful and united in a vision for the future. We have many plans and collaborations in place on which to build. And we have a track record of success: Guelph has a reputation for "punching above our weight."

What's the Plan?

What is Guelph's Community Plan?

On July 24, 2017, City Council approved the development of a Community Plan for Guelph. The goal of this community-led strategic planning exercise was to provide a strong basis for other City and community partner strategies going forward, including the City's new Strategic Plan. The Community Plan project was designed to provide the following benefits:

- Make community direction visible, allowing other organizations in the community to shape their work and strategies based on the findings and goals laid out in the Community Plan.
- Become a platform to show and strengthen alignment of City plans and strategies (e.g., City Strategic Plan, Prosperity 2020, etc.) with other existing community plans (e.g., Grow Guelph Task Force, Community Energy Initiative, etc.)
- Collect community intelligence, providing City staff and community partners vital information about the needs and aspirations of our citizens, businesses and stakeholders.
- Track community-wide progress over the longer term in order to learn, adjust and adapt.
- Become a foundation for joint advocacy with different levels of government bringing forward shared issues and opportunities.

The Community Plan will not be a static document but something that grows and evolves as the community does. It is designed to be a platform that brings stakeholders together and continue shaping the city's future and our shared efforts to make progress on important priorities.

Once created, the Community Plan will contain the following key pieces of information:

- A community vision
- Community values
- Themes
- Strategic directions
- Goals
- Signs of success

What Guelph's Community Plan isn't

The Community Plan will be a strategic visioning document, not an implementation plan. Its purpose isn't to take the place of existing plans. Instead, its aim will be to draw attention to plans already underway and emphasize alignment between them.

The Plan won't provide the answers to all that ails the community or take advantage of every opportunity. However, it will be a call to act together to find the shared path forward. It asks us all to think about our role in broader community change and action.



How we're building our Plan

Building our Community Plan involves three key components:

- Listening: community and stakeholder engagement
- Observing: the Village of 100
- Researching: the strategic plan scan

These components, described below, enabled collaboration and rich engagement, creating a bird's eye view of the city today and what the Guelph community wants to look like tomorrow.

They resulted in products and knowledge that can continue to add value to a broad range of other projects beyond the Community Plan. For example, the wealth and breadth of engagement data can be used in subsequent research and planning efforts by the City and community partners, and the strategic plan scan provides a baseline set of priorities to build on in years to come.

Listening: community and stakeholder engagement

The City believes that a united vision is essential for establishing a strong future and that everyone should have a voice in shaping the Community Plan. Community and stakeholder engagement is a vital part of strategic planning. It leads to better outcomes for all stakeholders, a greater sense of community ownership and greater support for the resulting plan. This engagement can lead to increased adoption of community priorities, more advocacy to promote them and more action to address them.

When municipalities seek out the aspirations, ideas, issues and concerns of residents, they develop plans that are

more likely to meet community needs. Public involvement brings to light more information (scientific, technical, historical, etc.) and leads to better decisions and greater satisfaction with the outcomes.

To ensure the Community Plan was co-created with the community, the City embarked on a year-long community and stakeholder engagement process. Thousands of community members were invited to provide input at a variety of events and in diverse ways, including focus groups, casual discussions, targeted workshops, social media and a statistically representative telephone survey conducted by Leger (a market research and analytics company). The comments, issues and ideas gathered through this process are now informing the development of the Plan.

Ensuring broad engagement

Between January 2018 and February 2019, the City sought broad engagement from residents, visitors, the business community, community organizations and associations, academic institutions, not-for-profit organizations, advisory committees and faith groups. Community members, visitors and staff were invited to provide input in four different ways:

- In person
- Online
- Telephone survey
- Through "do-it-yourself" conversation starters

This broad-based, mixed-methods approach was intentional, to ensure that as many people as possible from different demographic groups and sectors were

given an opportunity to help shape the Community Plan.

The engagement strategy and design were guided by four key questions:

1. What do we want Guelph to be?
2. What's most important to people in Guelph as we grow?
3. What's in the way? What are the barriers?
3. Where are the opportunities? What are our strengths?

The answers to these questions were collected in a variety of creative and fun formats. Participants were invited to create postcards and newspaper headlines, fill in questionnaires and engage in group conversation.

A representative selection of the results can be found with each of the six themes that follow, including results from our surveys, comments and quotes pulled from various workshops and activities, as well as headlines for the future collected at events across the city.

Overall the engagement strategy yielded excellent results. More than 100 community events and meetings were attended and input from more than 6,000 people was obtained. In addition to the numbers, the relationships that were strengthened and created through the engagement work will support future city projects and initiatives.

Engagement highlights



For more details on the various engagement methods being used to build Guelph's Community Plan, see Appendix A.

Observing: the Village of 100

Meanwhile, the [Village of 100 data project](#) saw the City produce an infographic-based community profile. This easy-to-digest summary document captures key data points from sources across the community. It shows you what Guelph looks like as a village of 100 people so that our conversations can be based on key demographics and trends. For more details, see Appendix A.

Research

Finally, a **strategic plan scan** was conducted to better understand existing goals, priorities and strategies within the City and community organizations. The plan scan looked at close to 80 City and collaboration-based plans and narrowed down to 38 plans for an in-depth study. The scan helps to identify and incorporate existing priorities, uncover new opportunities, understand the relationships and overlap of existing plans, and help people easily navigate and understand the maze of existing plans. For more details, see Appendix A.



Key phases

The process of building the Plan was broken down into five phases:

| Timeline | Activity | Description |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| October 2017— February 2018 | Project planning and research | Defining governance, intended outcomes, principles and guiding partners. |
| January 2018— February 2019 | Engaging the community in a year of listening | Conducting community outreach and engagement through various approaches. |
| January 2019— April 2019 | Building and validating the Community Plan | Reviewing the data and drafting core elements, working with stakeholders to refine and validate initial drafts. |
| May 2019 | Present Plan to City Council | Presenting to Guelph City Council for their consideration as the the foundation of the new City Strategic Plan. |
| May 2019 onwards | Putting the Community Plan into action | <p>Working with Council to develop the new City Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Communicating the Community Plan to stakeholders and staff; bringing the plan to life; integrating it into hiring, orientation, training at the City; and supporting others to use it in their work planning.</p> <p>Setting up systems for monitoring, evaluating and reporting that feed into the City's Annual Report to the Community.</p> <p>Community partners consider Plan priorities in their strategic planning and programs. Partners work to identify areas for increased collaboration to achieve outcomes.</p> |

Emerging plan elements

During the engagement and research process, a number of common values and priorities consistently emerged: at in-person engagement, round tables, in the telephone survey and through the online engagement activities.

Three key findings are worth noting:

1. The values and priorities are highly consistent across the various data sources, wards and demographic groups. This consistency is striking, especially given the diversity of the people.
2. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive and constructive, reflecting a high level of community pride and confidence in the city's future. People are—and want to be—proud to live here.
3. There is a strong degree of alignment between residents' vision for Guelph and its perceived current strengths.

That doesn't mean people agreed on everything. Although minimal, some tensions and contradictory aspirations did surface during the engagement process (which is inevitable given the wide cross-section of community members providing input). For example, there were differing opinions about intensification and Guelph's growth trajectory. Some people emphasized maintaining the old, while others want to embrace the new. Meanwhile, aspirations included both moving away from car culture and increasing parking options.

These differences highlight the importance of a balanced approach to Guelph's Community Plan. In fact, 90% of the telephone survey respondents saw all the issues discussed as somewhat or very important.

Recurring priorities

The telephone survey also provided some insight into what Guelph should be known for and what the community and City might want to work on as a priority:

- Thinking 10 years ahead, residents primarily want Guelph to be known for our **sense of community** and **environmental consciousness**.
- Guelph residents believe that issues surrounding the **environment, water and waste** should be our top

focus over the next ten years, followed by **health, safety and social issues** and **economic opportunities**.

- When asked what the City of Guelph needs to work on to make life better, being a **good place for business, transportation** and topics related to being a **good place for families/diversity/livability** came up most often.

Community values

Our community values act as a basis for the City of Guelph's decision making, priorities, directions and funding choices. Based on more than a year of listening to the community, here is what people in Guelph value:

Everyone's well-being—We are a compassionate community concerned with nurturing healthy, active, happy people of all ages. We care about and want to provide support for those living with poverty, mental health concerns, homelessness and addiction.

Environmental stewardship—We feel strongly and passionately about our green spaces and gathering places. We recognize the beauty of our natural environment and the immense importance of taking care of it. We understand the compounding threats to our climate. We are proud of Guelph's environmental record and want to lead our province and contribute nationally and globally to addressing our most pressing environmental concerns.

Fiscal responsibility—We believe that doing what's right for future generations includes making the right investments for the greatest return. We realize the challenges faced by many in our community who are struggling to make ends meet. Affordability, or more to the point, lack of affordability is a consistent theme through our engagement.

Integrity—What we say matters, whether as individuals or organizations. How we behave matters even more. We believe in standing up for what's right and standing behind our decisions.

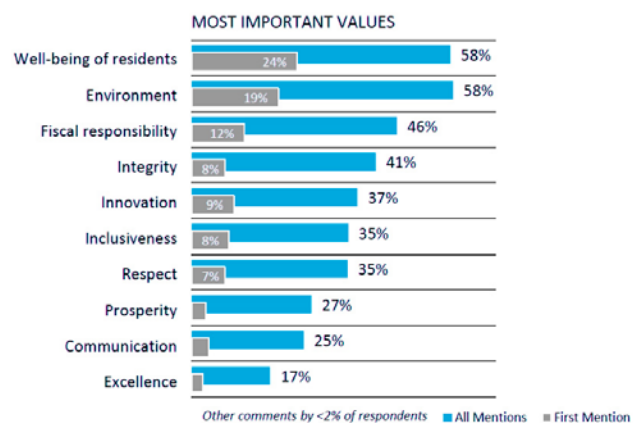
Innovation—We value creativity and curiosity. We value the beauty that follows innovation in its many forms: how we collaborate, express ourselves and solve problems. We embrace the blank page, the whiteboard and the untouched canvas.

Inclusiveness—Everyone here belongs here. We celebrate our differences and learn from each other. We challenge ourselves to look beyond our own experiences. We know that decisions are better when a diversity of voices are welcome, heard, included and shared.

Respect—For each other and the land we share. For civil discourse and picking up after ourselves. For our elders. For our life choices, our right of expression, our right to be heard and our right to have a say in the decisions that affect us.

Household telephone survey results

The statistically representative telephone survey, conducted by Leger, echoed what we heard through other forms of engagement.



Proposed themes, directions and goals

Based on the priorities that emerged from more than a year of engagement and research, the City has identified six proposed themes for Guelph's Community Plan, along with directions and goals for each one.

You are invited to review these, tell us if the Plan is on the right track and identify any gaps.

1. We are home

We love where we live. We love green, walkable neighbourhoods where we are connected to each other and can continue to live in our own neighbourhoods as we age. We don't want to lose our "Guelphiness" as our city continues to grow rapidly. Guelph needs more homes that are affordable, accessible and suitable regardless of income, age or situation. We recognize and support those who don't feel at home here. We know that issues surrounding homelessness, safety, poverty, addiction and mental health are inextricably linked and can only be addressed by a compassionate, collaborative, committed community.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|--|---|
| Have housing that works for us | <p>Everyone has a safe home in Guelph that functions well for them.</p> <p>Permanent housing solutions are available for the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Affordable housing choices across the city are available for different household types and needs.</p> <p>Accessible housing options are more readily available.</p> <p>Young people can stay here, and new people can move here.</p> |
| Keep Guelph a safe city | <p>People are safe and feel safe too—the city has low crime rates, and its roads and trails feel safe for residents and visitors.</p> <p>Emergency response capacity keeps pace with growth.</p> |
| Love our neighbourhoods and keep them strong | <p>Social connections in neighbourhoods are strong, with many activities and community assets, including well-supported neighbourhood groups and gathering spaces that foster a strong sense of belonging.</p> <p>People look out for one another, actively give back and participate in local decision-making to improve our quality of life.</p> <p>Our neighbourhoods are age-friendly and offer residents all the services, access and amenities they need.</p> |
| Keep our big, small city vibe | <p>Neighbourhoods are walkable and designed with Guelph character.</p> <p>We strike a good balance of streetscapes and parks that are beautiful and inviting for community use.</p> <p>We have access to good-quality core amenities and retail options.</p> |

Engagement findings

What we're proud of

- The personality and vibe of “Guelphiness” is important to protect and promote. Participants talked about wanting to avoid “soulless” development or “becoming devoid of character” or being a “generic” city.
- People don't want to lose the caring relationships and strong social fabric that are seen as a unique feature of our city. They want to maintain the positive dimensions of a small-town feel while providing the amenities of a bigger city.

How we can do better

- **Affordable housing**
 - » Affordable housing was one of three topics that emerged as priorities from virtually every engagement tactic.
 - » Affordable housing includes housing rental and ownership as well as measures to address homelessness. The rising price of housing and the shortage of affordable and accessible options are growing concerns not only to residents living on low incomes but also to businesses looking to recruit workers, seniors wishing to downsize, and middle-income families.
 - » Many participants in the local labour force cannot afford to purchase homes in Guelph, and existing homeowners are questioning whether they could afford to purchase their own house in today's market.
- **Growth and development**
 - » Guelph residents want new housing developments to be complete, walkable, interesting, inclusive, accessible neighbourhoods. They also want to maintain a vibrant downtown driven by independent retailers as a retail and entertainment destination.
 - » Community members expressed concerns about past growth and development strategies, such as the loss of green spaces and agricultural lands due to new housing development; separation of communities in the south/east/west ends from the

more established neighbourhoods near the downtown core; the rising number of plazas and strip malls (“plaza blight”); the lack of infrastructure in outlying neighbourhoods; and growth not paying for growth.

- » Views about intensification are mixed. Most people agree that condominium development should be focused on the downtown core but with height restrictions and zoning requirements to include affordable housing. Others felt that we should keep traffic, high-rises and industry away from the town centre.
- » Guelph residents want infrastructure in the east end, as well as communities with dense, mixed land use that have access to green spaces.
- » They also want to see stricter, enforceable controls over land developers who seek to purchase and develop green space or living spaces, prioritizing the needs of the community and not the developer.

Direct quotes

- “It has the culture of a large city but the friendly community of a small city.”
- “There is a kindness in the city of Guelph that you do not experience anywhere else.”
- “We need to figure out a way that the new neighbourhoods in Guelph reflect the character of our city.”
- “If you give someone a home, you give them a future.”

Headlines for the future

- “Guelph is safest city in Canada for kids and families to live and play in”.
- “Guelph has affordable housing for everyone and all ages”.
- “Downtown bursts with activities and keeps small town feel”.
- “Despite massive growth, Guelph maintains community feel”.
- “Guelph scores 1st in municipal survey of Most Liveable City”.

2. We protect our environment

People in Guelph are fiercely protective of the environment and proud of our record in waste diversion, energy management and ground water conservation. Now we want to go farther, continuing to lead our province and country. We honour the knowledge of our First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Our green spaces and wild places, our bees and our trees, must be protected and nurtured. We will make bold, innovative, collaborative decisions to face and reduce the impacts of climate change. We are stewards.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|--|--|
| Protect and sustain what we have | <p>Water sources are protected, and our water systems are managed in harmony with the environment.</p> <p>Our food system is sustainable.</p> <p>Our natural heritage—including the urban forest and biodiversity—is nurtured, not damaged.</p> <p>Our rivers, parks and green spaces are preserved, and the tree canopy is abundant.</p> <p>Development occurs in harmony with the natural environment.</p> |
| Reclaim what might otherwise be wasted | <p>Brownfields and underutilized sites are redeveloped.</p> <p>We recycle and upcycle, reuse and repurpose everything from food to furniture—we are a circular community with a circular economy.</p> |
| Go further than any other city | <p>We make bold decisions and take immediate action on how we will protect our environment.</p> <p>Guelph is a model city for energy and water conservation, waste diversion and sustainable development.</p> |
| Prepare for the future | <p>Climate change infrastructure is in place to create a resilient city.</p> <p>We minimize consumption of water, energy and other natural resources.</p> <p>We invest in innovation and technology that will reduce our impact on our natural environment.</p> |
| Steward our resources | <p>People understand the importance and value of the land we share and are connected to it.</p> <p>Our community learns from the past and each other to adopt sustainable practices and make better decisions.</p> <p>We support, celebrate and recognize great examples of environmental leadership and partnership.</p> |



Engagement findings

What we care about

- People want Guelph to be known as an environmentally conscious city. This was one of the most frequently mentioned items in the telephone survey, second only to being a good place for families/diversity, community and livability.
- 97% of people felt that “environment, water and waste” was the most important issue to focus on in next 10 years.
- The main reasons for focusing on the environment were the need to protect our water and environment for future generations, and the need to be ready for climate change.
- When given a set of values to consider, the majority of people highlighted the environment as being most important.

What we're proud of

- Guelphites pride themselves on being at the forefront of environmental stewardship, sustainable development, water conservation, wetland protection, renewable energy, carbon emissions reduction and waste reduction.

How we can do better

- Numerous suggestions were provided on how to become the “greenest” and “most sustainable” city in Ontario, including suggestions such as bio-power generation, solar micro-grids, electric vehicle charging stations and bans on plastic bags, straws and water bottles.

- There was recognition that we can't be complacent and need to do more to protect the watershed and keep river systems clean, as well as ensure we have a sustainable groundwater supply.
- People wanted developers and other businesses to adopt sustainable practices.
- Biodiversity matters to people, and some felt that Guelph should showcase to the world how to be a biodiverse city.

Direct quotes

- “In 10 years, my Guelph will be a diverse, caring, green global leader in how a community should look like. A world example of what people have the power of doing, and how change is possible with thought and passion for the right change.”
- “I'd like to see the city encourage residents to conserve and reduce more.”
- “Growth should not negatively affect our natural heritage systems.”

Headlines for the future

- “Guelph preserves green spaces and slows growth”.
- “Swimming in the Speed River A-OK!”.
- “Guelph reaches 70% tree canopy”.
- “Guelph #1 city to combat climate change”.

3. We create value

Innovation is in our DNA. Our entrepreneurs and innovators create amazing ideas and products. And we tackle global challenges. We continue to leverage our economy's existing strengths in agri-food, clean tech and advanced manufacturing, along with the unique additions of our cultural talent and businesses driven by social purpose to confidently assert our role and value within Canada's innovation corridor. We believe in inclusive prosperity and creating opportunities for everyone to thrive. We recognize the challenges that high housing costs and low unemployment rates create for employers. And employers recognize that a more diverse, inclusive and vibrant community will help attract and keep talented people here.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|--|---|
| Be a global innovation leader | <p>Our position in Canada's Innovation Corridor grows.</p> <p>Strong agri-food, clean tech, advanced manufacturing and the information and communications technology sectors fuel economic growth and create sustainable jobs.</p> <p>Continue to create "made-in-Guelph" innovations that solve local and global challenges.</p> <p>Grow and improve regional connections promote cross-pollination of innovation and make it easy for people to work together.</p> <p>Social-purpose-driven businesses (including B Corps and social enterprises) are thriving in our city.</p> |
| Support collaboration and tell our Guelph story better | <p>Our innovation and business-support ecosystem is strengthened.</p> <p>Entrepreneurs can easily access support for collaboration and investment.</p> <p>Barriers are reduced, making it easy for businesses to locate and expand in Guelph.</p> <p>Community and business leaders unite around a strong Guelph narrative and pick a lane (or three) that differentiates us and become our ambassadors.</p> |
| Leverage our unique character | <p>We recognize and support the value of our arts and cultural sector, attracting more visitors and artistic talent.</p> <p>More artistic/cultural businesses can get the help and investment they need to be self-sustaining.</p> <p>Downtown continues to grow as a destination hub of historic beauty and character, with unique retail opportunities, entertainment and tourist attractions.</p> |
| Foster inclusive prosperity | <p>There are decent jobs that allow people to live full lives.</p> <p>Everyone who wants to work—including youth, seniors, those with differing abilities, and new immigrants—can meaningfully participate in the workforce.</p> |
| Harness our discovery engines | <p>We collaborate with our world-class educational institutions and fully use their resources, knowledge and research.</p> <p>Guelph continues to offer tremendous learning opportunities from kindergarten on up that inspire exploration, discovery and solutions for the future of our city and world.</p> |



Engagement findings

What we care about

- Based on the telephone survey, people consider “economic opportunities” as one of the most important areas of focus for the next 10 years, second only to “environment, water and waste.”
- People expressed the desire for a range of quality jobs, from part-time to full-time.
- A recurring theme was the importance of employment opportunities for people with exceptionalities, people with differing abilities and those struggling with mental health and other challenges.
- To make life better in Guelph, almost a third of residents believe the City needs to make Guelph a good place for business.

What we're proud of

- Independent retailers were seen as a feature of Guelph's unique identity, and there was clear desire to help them thrive across the city and in the downtown.
- Business supports are highly regarded, and many expressed a need to invest further in these.
- Low unemployment rates are both a success story and a challenge, as companies face skills shortages and struggle to fill vacancies.
- The role of academic institutions was seen as fundamental to our economic success.

How we can do better

- Both employers and workers are concerned about the impact that the shortages of affordable housing and childcare are having on economic development opportunities.
- Residents want local employment opportunities in the future so their children can remain in Guelph when they grow up, and students want to find work that will allow them to stay here following their studies.
- In a number of conversations, participants expressed a desire for strong City, academic and business communications and collaborations; student engagement for problem solving; and collision space.

- Cutting red tape and making it easier to do business in Guelph was highlighted.
- Better regional and local transportation options will drive economic stability and growth.

Direct quotes

- “Creating opportunities for people who don’t have opportunities...retraining, employment, whatever it takes to help people who are generationally poor. This will make us wealthier, reduce crime and mental health issues.”
- “Getting serious about business and the economy —[Guelph should be] open for business in regards to space availability, space affordability, permit/licence/bylaw variances.”
- “What can Guelph be best at? Do we want to just be another nice mid-sized city...or do we want to lead something?”
- “I would love an opportunity to work where I live... that way I don’t have to be faced with the decision to leave this fantastic community.”
- “More industry would promote more prosperity and benefits for the residents.”
- “Resiliency comes from a diverse economy made from diverse people.”
- “We have all the ingredients to meet our economic goals but are not always working collaboratively to ‘bake the cake’.”
- “It is about good innovation, not just innovation.”

Headlines for the future

- “Guelph celebrates number of innovative start-ups over last decade”.
- “Social, environment, economic bottom line achieved —Guelph leads Canada”.
- “Great employment opportunities for all, including those with special needs”.
- “Even more corporate HQs find their home in Guelph”.

4. We feel well

Everyone belongs here. Our diversity is celebrated, and inclusion is a habit. Healthy families and close-knit communities safeguard against social isolation, a growing public health crisis. Because everyone deserves a great start, we recognize our role in preventing and reducing the effects of adverse childhood experiences. Older adults, immigrants and newcomers are valued and can fully participate and contribute to their communities. We tackle the root cause of physical and mental health issues. We support a sustainable, circular food system that nourishes ourselves and our families. And our health care infrastructures have expanded to meet the needs of our growing population.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|---|---|
| Give children and youth a great start | <p>The needs of children and youth are met (socially, physically, nutritionally, spiritually, culturally and safety).</p> <p>The community fully understands what adverse childhood experiences are and how we can work together to prevent them.</p> <p>Families have strong, nurturing relationships.</p> |
| Foster good mental health | <p>People feel they have good mental health.</p> <p>Poor mental health has less impact on our ability to earn a living, learn, connect to one another and achieve.</p> |
| Ensure that everyone feels they belong here | <p>Community members feel accepted for who they are and do not face any discrimination or stigma.</p> <p>There is a strong sense of community across the city, and people feel that everyone matters.</p> <p>We celebrate diversity.</p> <p>Social isolation is rare, and people have strong connections with friends and family.</p> |
| Create a nourished community | <p>We have a sustainable food system with no wasted food, energy or material resources.</p> <p>Everyone has access to the nutrition they need.</p> |
| Build health infrastructure for the future | <p>Guelph is full of amenities to support health and well-being—amenities that grow as the community grows.</p> |



Engagement findings

What we care about

- When asked what they most love about Guelph, being a “good place for families/diversity/community/livability” was the top answer in the telephone survey. This was also the top answer for what Guelph should be known for in the next 10 years.
- Residents expressed their desire for Guelph to be a place where people’s basic needs are affordably met and the most vulnerable are well looked after.

What we’re proud of

- There is a strong sense of community belonging and social connectedness in the city. This social aspect of life in Guelph is a vital source of community identity and pride.
- Many people decide to stay in Guelph because it’s a friendly, vibrant and inclusive place where people know one another and stop and chat when passing each other on the street. Neighbours are seen as caring, supportive and helpful.
- There was a strong affirmation that deliberate community events, opportunities and collaborations were very important to creating a strong community feel.

How we can do better

- Many participants expressed concerns about the state of poverty and homelessness in the city. Much of the feedback reveals the genuine concerns of community members. However, the comments also reveal stigmatization and misperceptions about poverty, homelessness, mental health and addictions, and community safety.
- People expressed the need for better access to mental health services and opportunities that support inclusion, dignity and healthy living.

- Accessibility was an important theme. Some examples of how this was important for the future included housing, recreation opportunities and economic participation.
- Supports for children and their families were seen as very important.

Direct quotes

- “I’m concerned about the fact that we don’t have enough hospital beds to serve this community.”
- “[The] diversity and opportunity of Guelph [is] perfect for young families... [There is] something for everyone...”
- “We need to be open and welcoming to newcomers and help them fit into the community. We have problems with racial and economic segregation here in Guelph, and that’s uncomfortable to admit. This kind of attitude and division in the city isn’t healthy, and will only be exacerbated with population growth if we do nothing to tackle it.”
- “Diversity only matters if you have inclusion.”
- “Encourage and communicate the rewards of helping each other.”

Headlines for the future

- “No one is left behind in Guelph”.
- “City is beacon of mental health services”.
- “Guelph wins national recognition for Most Special Needs Friendly Community”.
- “Guelph is a place where everyone feels that they belong and have the ability and knowledge and motivation to get involved.”

5. We play and explore

Play fosters mental and physical health. In Guelph, it's easy to play anywhere at any time with anyone. We are given the space, freedom and encouragement to express ourselves, our cultures, our identities and our past. Arts and culture are valued and supported. And our arts organizations are innovative and self-sustaining. Through all seasons, recreation is part of every life at every age and every ability.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|---|---|
| Play everywhere | <p>We activate informal and formal spaces for play and expression across the city, both indoors and out.</p> <p>Free opportunities for play are plentiful.</p> <p>The city offers inclusive opportunities that reflect our diversity and new trends in recreational, sport and cultural participation.</p> <p>We have a strong network of connected cultural nodes. Individuals can easily find opportunities that are relevant to their interests and needs.</p> |
| Grow talent | <p>More educational programming in the arts exists.</p> <p>We grow and retain artistic, sporting and musical talent.</p> <p>A stronger, more sustainable and better-organized network of artists supporting artists exists.</p> <p>Passionate volunteers are abundant and help sustain meaningful arts, cultural, sport and recreational opportunities.</p> |
| Explore and make sense of who we are together | <p>Historical and cultural assets in the city are preserved, enjoyed and explored by everyone.</p> <p>Festivals, events and other opportunities take place across the city, helping us celebrate our diversity, build empathy, make sense of our past and build our future together.</p> |
| Invest and innovate | <p>Innovative funding, investment and enterprise models (including collaboration between the private sector, social benefit enterprises and government) exist that support cultural, artistic, recreational and sports organizations.</p> <p>Arts, cultural, sport and recreational infrastructure supports the needs of the community across the city.</p> <p>Better data is available to help us understand the value of arts, culture and recreation to our community.</p> |



Engagement findings

What we care about

- 91% of residents believe leisure and culture is important for Guelph.
- Guelphites believe leisure and culture offer opportunities to connect with other members of the community, reducing social isolation.
- For many people, leisure and culture was tied to green spaces and being outdoors. Connection to the environment was seen as a benefit to mental and physical health.
- Open spaces, community parks, trees and rivers are vital to people's leisure time.
- Arts are extremely important to communities. They break down barriers, create safe places to explore, and bring community together.

What we're proud of

- Residents value Guelph's historical assets and consider them a unique feature.
- People like the wealth of activities available, particularly programs for families and kids.
- Local parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities are well appreciated, as are cycling trails and the Arboretum.
- People love Guelph's arts events, festivals, sports and leisure programming and would like to sustain and even grow these opportunities.
- Arts and culture are often cited as reasons that have drawn people to live here.

How we can do better

- Families in particular are seeking more child-friendly amenities, including splash pads, change rooms and accessible play structures. Many also called for a broader range of after-school and weekend programs for children and youth all around the city.
- Seniors were also interested in taking part in programs throughout the city, and there were suggestions to open a second seniors' centre in the south.
- There was recognition that immigration trends are bringing diverse needs that require relevant, inclusive programming.

- People long for a connected river trail system that encourages outdoor pursuits such as cycling, wheeling and walking.
- People emphasized the need for accessibility and barrier-free opportunities.
- Promoting and supporting connectivity between artists and the community was seen as important to increase participation in terms of diverse audiences, geographical reach and more awareness outside of Guelph.
- Forming new collaborations with other cities and partners was suggested to develop new models to increase sustainability for arts and culture in the City.
- Artists could benefit from "seed funding" opportunities similar to those available to entrepreneurs, along with flexible space to grow their profession.

Direct quotes

- "Give us nice places to sit and read under shade. Take a picnic. Get outdoors. Socialize with each other. More riverside park greenspaces scattered throughout the city."
- "I came to Guelph because of the music scene [and] fell in love with this city."
- "I credit the art in Guelph with actually giving my life meaning."
- "Arts is core to the success of a vibrant and growing community as well as an economic driver."

Headlines for the future

- "New recreation facility in Guelph's south end wins award for design and membership attendance".
- "Guelph has library branches in all neighbourhoods with community spaces".
- "Families use Guelph parks and trails at least once each week... study shows".
- "Guelph provides free recreation programs to all".
- "Guelph becomes Canada's Festival City".
- "Guelph is known for our commitment to providing green spaces, community and family activities in a friendly way".

6. We move around freely

It's easy to get around our neighbourhoods, our city and our region. Transit is a priority—it's frequent, affordable, accessible and it can get us to work and to neighbouring communities like Kitchener, Fergus and Hamilton. And we can get to Toronto in less than an hour. People feel safe walking, jogging, wheeling and riding their bikes through all corners of our city. Smart, clean technology is embedded in our infrastructure. Increased use of transit and active transportation routes help address the traffic congestion that can follow rapid growth.



| Strategic directions | Goals |
|--|--|
| Facilitate easy movement within our city | <p>It is easy for everyone to get around our city year-round to work, play and contribute to our community (inclusive of ability and exceptionality).</p> <p>There are viable transportation options that suit tight budgets and other needs, such as convenience and accessibility.</p> <p>Connected, integrated networks across the city—north, south, east and west—make Guelph feel like one city.</p> |
| Facilitate active transportation—and connection to nature—via natural trails | <p>Abundant trail corridors for active modes of transportation connect neighbourhoods seamlessly, making it easy to get around the city by active modes of transportation. These corridors allow people of all abilities to experience and enjoy the benefits of wild spaces, natural areas and tree-rich environments.</p> |
| Embrace future-ready infrastructure | <p>People can move peacefully and efficiently around the city.</p> <p>Smart and clean technologies are embedded in our infrastructure, making us resilient and eliminating our carbon footprint.</p> <p>New partnerships and models sustain our growing infrastructure needs.</p> <p>We make best use of all our assets, such as the Guelph Junction Railway.</p> |
| Connect regionally | <p>Guelph is well-connected to our region and beyond, including Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Toronto, Hamilton and the County of Wellington.</p> <p>High-frequency, reliable transportation options are accessible, affordable and get people to their destinations faster.</p> |

Engagement findings

What we care about

- Residents want Guelph to be a place that is easy to navigate. This involves ensuring that the transit system within the city provides frequent, thorough and reliable coverage.
- Walkable neighbourhoods and inclusive, accessible bicycle and wheeling infrastructure are also key to getting around the city, be it for work, day-to-day activities or recreation.
- Our community wants to keep Guelph's infrastructure aligned with its growth. There is a tension between wanting to move away from car culture while also addressing issues of traffic congestion, limited parking and potholes.

How we can do better

- Ease of navigation means building better regional connectivity so that travel time to Kitchener-Waterloo and Toronto is reduced. There are people who would be willing to live in Guelph and commute elsewhere to work, but limited regional transit connections prevent them from doing so.
- Guelphites want more efficient ways to get around that could also help reduce our carbon footprint and reduce traffic congestion. Public transit (routes, times, shelters) and GO trains (all-day, seven-day service) were popular topics. Requests were also made for light rail and a regional transit system, with connections to Hamilton, Elora, Fergus, Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo.
- To encourage people to use public transit, community members would like to see adequate and free parking near transit hubs. Some residents report that it is currently more convenient to drive to neighbouring GO stations due to parking options, more frequent service and shorter travel times.
- Parking downtown continues to generate mixed feelings. A number of residents mused that they would like to see the downtown core become automobile free, while others would like to see more free parking downtown.
- There was also considerable dialogue about cycling infrastructure, such as covered and secure bike lock-ups, and sidewalks and trails that will encourage

people of all ages to walk or ride their bicycles to school, to work or to get around in general. People would like to see better connections between the outlying neighbourhoods and downtown, and safer walking and bicycle infrastructure, such as lanes on busy roads and passages under bridges.

Direct quotes

- "I picture Guelph having less cars on the road by having more buses, better-designed routes that run at all hours, more bicycle lanes, and no big-rig transport trucks driving on small streets downtown. Guelph needs modern, clean, convenient transportation that caters to all citizens, especially those who work in the west and north ends, and not just the students."
- "Guelph is becoming a nightmare to drive in, with small roads becoming major traffic arteries. The bus system, although improved, is still too inconvenient and expensive to attract people away from their vehicles."
- "Transportation needs to be made better and easier both within the city and between nearby other cities."
- "For those with disabilities or for the older population, getting around is very important for our quality of life. More money should be spent making sidewalks and the crossing of intersections accessible."
- "Imagine walking, cycling or wheeling on a protected relatively flat surface path that crosses over busy roads and connects residents...to downtown and the GO station!... Imagine riding safely with your kids to the downtown market square."

Headlines for the future

- "It's easy to get to and around Guelph".
- "Transit-oriented development instead of development-oriented transit".
- "Every household can cross the city, get to school and buy groceries without needing a personal vehicle by 2031".
- "Bus system finally works—car usage down 20%".
- "Woman bikes from the north of Guelph to the south and never has to leave bike lanes".
- "Guelph has hourly direct trains to and from Toronto—every day".



Next steps

As a 10-year+ vision document, Guelph's Community Plan will help build alignment around what we are all trying to achieve. It will help us to understand who's working on what, highlight areas that need more attention and also help strengthen the case for certain paths.

More broadly, it will help guide the work of local organizations and agencies, creating shared goals that reflect the needs and priorities of the whole community. This is all valuable information as the City of Guelph starts creating a new Strategic Plan and transitions to a multi-year budget.

The final Community Plan report to Council will include a recommendation to develop a community-involved, shared governance model. The aim will be to bring like-minded organizations together in order to align work towards community aspirations, track progress and recommend adjustments or new priorities over time.

The result

Built by Council with the support of staff and informed by the Community Plan, the Strategic Plan will integrate with the City's budget and will eliminate the need for other layers like the Corporate Administrative Plan.

The City's new Strategic Plan will incorporate the community's high-level vision and aspirations from the Community Plan and go much further to show how the City will take action on certain priority areas. It will include the following components:

1. Strategic focus areas/priorities
2. Short-term and longer-term outcomes
3. Clear actions to achieve the outcomes
4. Expected results and metrics

Many thanks

Co-creating a community plan with the community involves a tremendous amount of work and only possible with support from across the community. More thanks will come with the final Community Plan. In this report we are thanking, in particular, those who have helped develop the final reports and analysis that were the foundation for this report.

- Thanks to the many City staff and community partners for contributing data and advice as we compiled our Village of 100 project.
- Thanks to The Guelph Community Foundation for your Vital Signs report. It was our foundational research and the start of the conversation.
- Thanks to Eden Grodzinski for the interim engagement analysis and Sage Communications for the final engagement analysis. Qualitative analysis of thousands of comments in a wide variety of formats is not an easy picture to piece together and you did it well.
- Thanks to Openly for taking an in-depth look at 80 strategic plans from across our community and going deeper on 38 of them. You have provided the community with a unique and useful planning tool. Thanks also to KAP Design for making the results visually appealing. We also appreciate the plan owners at the City and in the community and thank them for their expertise, time and feedback.
- Thanks to the team at Cadmium Red for your help making this as clean, well organized and easy to read as possible.
- **And thank you for reading this.** Especially if you've made it this far. Thank you for caring enough about your community to get engaged, informed and involved in the process. We appreciate your time and contributions.



Appendix A:

Details on how we're building our plan

As we described in the “How we're building our plan” section, developing our Community Plan involved three key components:

- Listening: community and stakeholder engagement
- Observing: the Village of 100
- Researching: the strategic plan scan

We describe these in detail below.

Listening: community and stakeholder engagement

In-person engagement

In-person engagement took various forms to make sure that the wider population of Guelph as well as more targeted stakeholder and special interest groups had an opportunity to participate. It was important to the team to attend events and meetings where people were already gathering. This was very useful from a number of perspectives. This approach helped gain trust and made it easier for people to participate. It also led to a considerable number of requests for staff to attend subsequent events and meetings, which created a foundation for good relationship-building that will continue on beyond the life of this particular project.

These engagement activities centred around large and small events (e.g., Movies in the Square, Ribfest), City amenities (e.g., libraries and recreation centres), public spaces (e.g., Stone Road Mall, Guelph Community Health Centre, Welcome In Drop In Centre), partner meetings and gatherings (e.g., the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination, Downtown Guelph Business Association, Muslim Society of Guelph).

In addition to these broader engagement activities, City staff worked with community partners to co-host five sector-specific conversations: the economy and business; arts and culture; environment; health, social and education sectors.

There were also many internal staff engagement efforts, including an internal staff round table, attendance at department meetings, staff events such as the annual staff BBQ and service area town halls.

Online engagement

A variety of online tools and techniques were used to reach out to, listen to and involve residents in the Community Plan. These digital engagement platforms allowed the City to talk to people who might not attend public events or meetings.

Initially, this engagement was conducted via Mindmixer and Facebook. However, on July 10, 2018, the City launched a new digital engagement platform, Engagement HQ (haveyoursay.guelph.ca). This platform subsequently became the primary site for online engagement on the Community Plan.

The household telephone survey

To complement the in-person and digital community engagement tactics, the City contracted Leger—a market research and analytics company—to undertake a statistically representative telephone survey. The survey reached 600 Guelph residents on their cellphones or landlines between January 3 and January 21, 2019.

Due to limited responses in certain wards, the sample was weighted to provide a representative sample of Guelph. The margin of error for this survey was +/-4.0%, 19 times out of 20 (at the 95% confidence level).

The 12-minute survey presented a mix of open and closed questions designed to explore the following areas:

- What residents loved about Guelph
- What they wanted Guelph to be known for
- What issues they thought were the most important for Guelph to focus on
- What values they thought were the most important to consider when making decisions about the future of Guelph

Do-it-yourself activities

The project team also created a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Conversation Guidebook, which was full of ideas for activities that community members could use to start a conversation with family, friends, co-workers and neighbours. There was also a playful game called “Cards for Community” that was available to the public to use.

Analysing the data

The data was coded to help identify themes, patterns and trends. Much of it was analyzed using Dedoose—a web-based application used to analyze qualitative and mixed-methods research.

Reporting the data

The engagement analysis was done in two parts. An interim report produced in October 2018 summarized the engagement completed up to that date. A final report is currently being drafted. A summary of the Leger survey was also produced, as well as summaries of the five sector conversations.

Observing: the Village of 100

The aim of the Village of 100 was to capture key data points relevant to our community that could help bring context to the broader strategic planning conversation, using an infographic-based summary that presented the data in a relevant, relatable format.

The content was made available online, as well as in hard copy at engagement events. It provided the backdrop for a library campaign and the sector conversations, which featured display boards.

The publication was designed to complement the Guelph Community Foundation's recent Vital Signs report, which contains data about Guelph as well as the County of Wellington.

Many staff from across the City and community helped identify, collect and produce the Village of 100, which covered the following areas:

- Demographics
- Economy
- Environment
- Arts, culture and leisure
- Social services, health and education

Researching: the strategic plan scan

Creating a new community plan involves identifying and understanding the various existing goals and priorities of the community. A key component of this research included mapping the current larger-scale strategic plans produced by the City and community collaborations such as Toward Common Ground. This “plan scan” aimed to:

- **Identify and incorporate existing priorities**—One of the key principles of the Community Plan project is to maximize existing assets and reflect existing community goals—in other words, to use work, not make work. Staff and partners have created a wealth of data and direction that must be reflected in the Plan.
- **Spot new opportunities**—This process presented an opportunity to better understand how these many plans relate to one another. This enables the City and community to identify areas where there are new, emerging goals or opportunities that also need to be reflected.
- **Show the “whole”**—The scan also identified overlap between many plans bridging sectors, themes and areas of commonality. This analysis will prove foundational as Council begins to establish its priorities for its current four-year term.
- **Communicate clearly and be open**—It can be challenging for residents and stakeholders to see and understand what the City is working on and the impact it will make. This research will help make these plans more visible and relevant.

A substantive number of strategic plans and directions currently exist within the City and community. The initial scan revealed more than 80. This list was narrowed down to 38 that fit our criteria and scope in order to facilitate a valuable in-depth review. The process to build the criteria, select the plans and validate the research included engaging City staff and partners in one-on-one and group meetings. The criteria included City-owned plans with community-wide impact and partnership-based plans between organizations also with community-wide impact.

Once complete, the plan scan will include:

- A summary of plan drivers, vision and directions, organized into seven domains/areas of focus
- A digital connection map showing the relationship between plans according to relevant domains and focus areas
- A stakeholder table listing organizations that are collaborating or connected to various plans

Appendix B: Project governance

The City's approach to project governance is designed to facilitate inclusive and effective engagement. Workshop-style round tables were set up, giving staff and community leaders opportunities to actively shape and test the project plan, engagement activities and research tools.

Round table members from the community also actively championed the process amongst their networks, helping to make sure that City staff are on the right track.

Key components of the governance model are:

- **City Council** is responsible for endorsing the Community Plan and using it as a basis for the City's Strategic Plan.
- **The Executive Team** is directing the project team and providing strategic oversight.
- **The Community Round Table** is made up of community leaders across sectors. They are responsible for providing guidance and advice to ensure the engagement is inclusive and aligned to the Plan's stated principles.
- **The Staff Round Table** is focused on ensuring comprehensive internal staff engagement and that existing City plans and strategies are well reflected in the Community Plan. Each service area is represented at the round table. This table also provides input to ensure the Plan will support City staff and community work.

