



**NORTH ALGONA
WILBERFORCE**

Strategic Plan Report

LIVE SMALL.
THINK BIG.

**TRANSFORMING SURVIVE INTO THRIVE:
THE PATHWAY FORWARD FOR
NORTH ALGONA WILBERFORCE**

Prepared by:
**TGT Solutions
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NORTH ALGONA WILBERFORCE

LIVE SMALL. THINK BIG.



TRANSFORMING SURVIVE INTO THRIVE: THE PATHWAY FORWARD FOR NORTH ALGONA WILBERFORCE

In North Algona Wilberforce, one simple truth was found. The people here are amazing. The Township is filled with people who care about their neighbours, bring culture and history, generously contribute their vast gifts to the community and love the benefits that rural life brings. The mosaic of diversity and fellowship here sustains people. It fosters growth and it empowers meaningful connections.

The listening exercises* carried out with stakeholder groups and individuals were carefully planned in order to generate conversations that produced inclusive community consultation. Knowledge about the lived experience of diverse resident groups was collected and interpreted to develop this pathway forward. Every element of the strategy was informed by the people of North Algona Wilberforce – residents, neighbours and visitors alike.

**A series of interviews, focus groups, surveys and workshops were conducted to collect this information based on the proven system employed by the contracted consultants.*

For the purposes of this narrative, “resident” will be the term applied to reflect all respondents. When a particular differentiation is needed to indicate findings tied to a sub-group, it will be noted.

VISION

Our Shared Ideal Destination

We learned that nearly everyone we consulted with shared the same vision for the future of the community despite a blind sampling. The following vision statement was developed to capture this common objective and view of our collective future.

VISION STATEMENT:

“ We are the small place that is leading the way as an example for rural communities on how to engage in human-centric community and economic development because we have proven that enabling inclusion, belonging and wellness is the best path to achieving sustainable development.

And they shared a repeating and pronounced alignment with the reasons to head there.

PURPOSE

Our Collective Reason Why

One clear consensus emerged throughout the consultation process – caring for others, feeling like you belong and knowing you are valued is the reason to do this work. The following purpose statement was developed to capture this common *raison d'être* that reinforces and emphasizes why we are in this together.

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

“ We will do this because all people deserve a high-quality life of their choosing, in a place that fully accepts, embraces and leverages the immense gifts those people possess.

PLACE HOLDER FOR
GRAPHIC RECORDING.

When we questioned residents about the identity of the community, the **fundamental character and values of the residents emerged.**



We learned that North Altona Wilberforce residents highly value:

Environmental Stewardship

Inclusive Human Connection

Joy & Celebration

Family, History & Culture

Excellence in Leadership

We also learned that these core values are fulfilled by enabling key characteristics of life



Resourceful

People use what is already here and make the most of it



Neighbourly

People help each other without hesitation



Volunteering

The local economy would cease to operate without volunteers



Word of Mouth Network

Strong personal network of passing information and misinformation that is not always accessible to all



Cultural Diversity

Many different lifestyles, backgrounds and interest groups exist here



Love for the Outdoors

The natural spaces and places are used, beloved and cherished



Pace of Life

Short lines, low traffic, country commutes and roadside chats are favoured



Trust

People trust each other and engage in social accountability



Pride

Local history, family legacies and possibilities for the future are treasured



Location

Remote enough for peace and quiet but close enough to the city amenities

We also learned that a **foundational structure** that has deeply shaped the **recommended strategic directions** contained in this document:



MISSION

Our Organizational Aspirations and Commitments

Municipal governments carry out a number of activities that are designed to support quality of life for the taxpayers and visitors. Excellent leaders understand that their primary responsibility is to **leverage human contribution** and **optimize resources**. Thriving small communities must evolve from ‘servicing’ the community to ‘strengthening’ the community. When municipal governments can adopt this same practice of enabling the ideal community conditions, people will rise in their gifts naturally.

When surveyed about their expectations for the Township, community residents reported the following specific behaviours as basic requirements:

Leverage Human Contribution

- Engage in good governance
- Plan strategically
- Listen to constituents inclusively
- Take informed action
- Advocate for system, county and provincial-level issues
- Operate with an open mind
- Ultimately to provide the necessary supports for residents to contribute and create for themselves

Optimize Resources

- Maintain roads and infrastructure for daily life
- Use tax revenues efficiently and effectively
- Enable land preservation
- Offer safety and Preparedness services
- Offer programming and recreational opportunities
- Support local businesses
- Communicate and operate in transparency

Given this, Township leaders reflected on the power of leveraging these significant commonalities and formed a new corporate mission that commits to engaging with and empowering the community to lead with these strengths.

MISSION

Our Organizational Aspirations and Commitments

“

MISSION STATEMENT

The Township of North Algona Wilberforce engages listening, learning, communication and advocacy as means to commit to excellence in continuous improvement in evidence-based decision-making that strengthens the community and leads to common wellness and inclusion of all people who live and visit here.

“

CORE OBJECTIVE

Our objective is to provide the leadership required to stimulate the transformation from survive to thrive as a collective community, where no one is left behind.

“

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

We recognize that our role is to provide the necessary foundation for residents to fully engage and contribute their immense gifts to our community as they determine.

Now, with an evolved priority to target service, wellness, belonging and engagement as fundamental ingredients to a thriving community, a new way of thinking and doing business is essential.



📍 Melissa Bishop Park, Lake Dore

“

North Algona Wilberforce is a beautiful area with lots of hidden gems and space in nature. This inspired me to learn more about nature and do my best to conserve it and teach others about its importance.

Youth Survey Response

PLACE HOLDER FOR **GRAPHIC RECORDING.**

The Truth: Fifty Statements that Reflect our Findings

The Truth Road Map:

- RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES
- YOUTH LENS
- EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESS
- RESIDENT ATTRACTION AND TOURISM
- VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- FUTURE STATE FOCUS
- THE TOWNSHIP & PARTNERSHIPS
- COMMUNICATION
- SENIORS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

1. The residents are divided between those who cling to the past and those hopeful for the future.
2. When youth have access to an adult mentor, they express a deep interest in returning to live here as an adult.
3. Local employers succeed in retaining employees once they are found.
4. There is a strong desire for eco-tourism options and promotion.
5. The township has experienced low recent immigration and new resident attraction.
6. Food service businesses continue to struggle to find seasonal food service workers.
7. Volunteers "run" the community's critical functions, especially the supports for the most vulnerable.
8. Youth will not return if there is no flexibility in the old ways.
9. Most people who visit here as seasonal residents have a family or childhood connection to the area.
10. Broadband and cellular services are patchy and unreliable in some areas of the Township.
11. Seasonal workers are still difficult to attract and retain.
12. The outdoor amenities of the township are viewed as the primary asset.
13. Residents feel that municipal assets are often underutilized.
14. The township is filled with environmental stewards.
15. Communication is the primary challenge as reported by every stakeholder group.
16. Timeliness and accuracy of information is a concern for many residents.
17. Community partners feel they could be doing more together with the Township but face red tape and barriers to entry.
18. Residents favour the pace of life here and would prefer to carefully select who is targeted as tourists and seasonal residents.
19. There is a strong desire to break down silos of work and collaborate more often overall.
20. Residents desire a reciprocal and inclusive communication tool to contribute to and learn from the Township in mutual understanding.
21. Misinformation is widespread and it fuels negativity, sustains conflict and creates gossip.
22. The word of mouth network has huge potential to evolve as a core asset.
23. Youth view the rural setting as an advantage.
24. Seniors have been deeply impacted by the pandemic and further social isolation is a critical health risk.
25. Food banks are leading social supports in the area, often informally and without security.
26. Demand for outreach food bank services is on the rise.
27. Stigma for food bank use held by the person in need and the community at large is the primary barrier to connecting those in need with access to food.
28. Businesses desire to purchase produce from a local supplier.
29. We lack a local food service worker training centre.
30. Youth desire meaningful participation in their community that they create and lead.
31. Food banks are interested in providing a social food sharing option for those in need that is integrated with others in the community.
32. Social enterprise is the way forward for all social good initiatives.
33. More people are looking to live outside of the city and work remotely.
34. North Algona Wilberforce does not have a brand presence.
35. Employment or volunteer entry pathways for the Township roles are unclear.
36. The neighbouring municipalities each have unique strengths to be leveraged and supported for further collective impact.
37. The Algonquins of Pikwakanagan are eager partners in collective development.
38. A rich history of rural cultural diversity exists here.
39. There is a lack of inclusive housing options.
40. Community actors engaging in social good activities struggle to engage with the Township consistently.
41. Most people here define success as being able to be with family.
42. When engaging with the Township, the residents focus on accessing services and providing feedback.
43. Those who do not engage with the Township are divided between those not perceiving a need to and those who are discouraged by unclear entry points and results.
44. The people who live here are nearly all volunteers in some way and care deeply about their neighbours.
45. Those who expressed they do not engage in the community felt it was related to lack of options or the promotions of those options were missed.
46. Residents want to contribute and have immense gifts to give.
47. The township's residents experience low socio-economic and health conditions.
48. Many residents and visitors prefer to shop local and wish they could do so more often.
49. Residents desire responsible and sustainable development of the land to increase the tax base and spread the tax burden more widely.
50. Youth are isolated and unengaged when they live in the country without access to transportation.



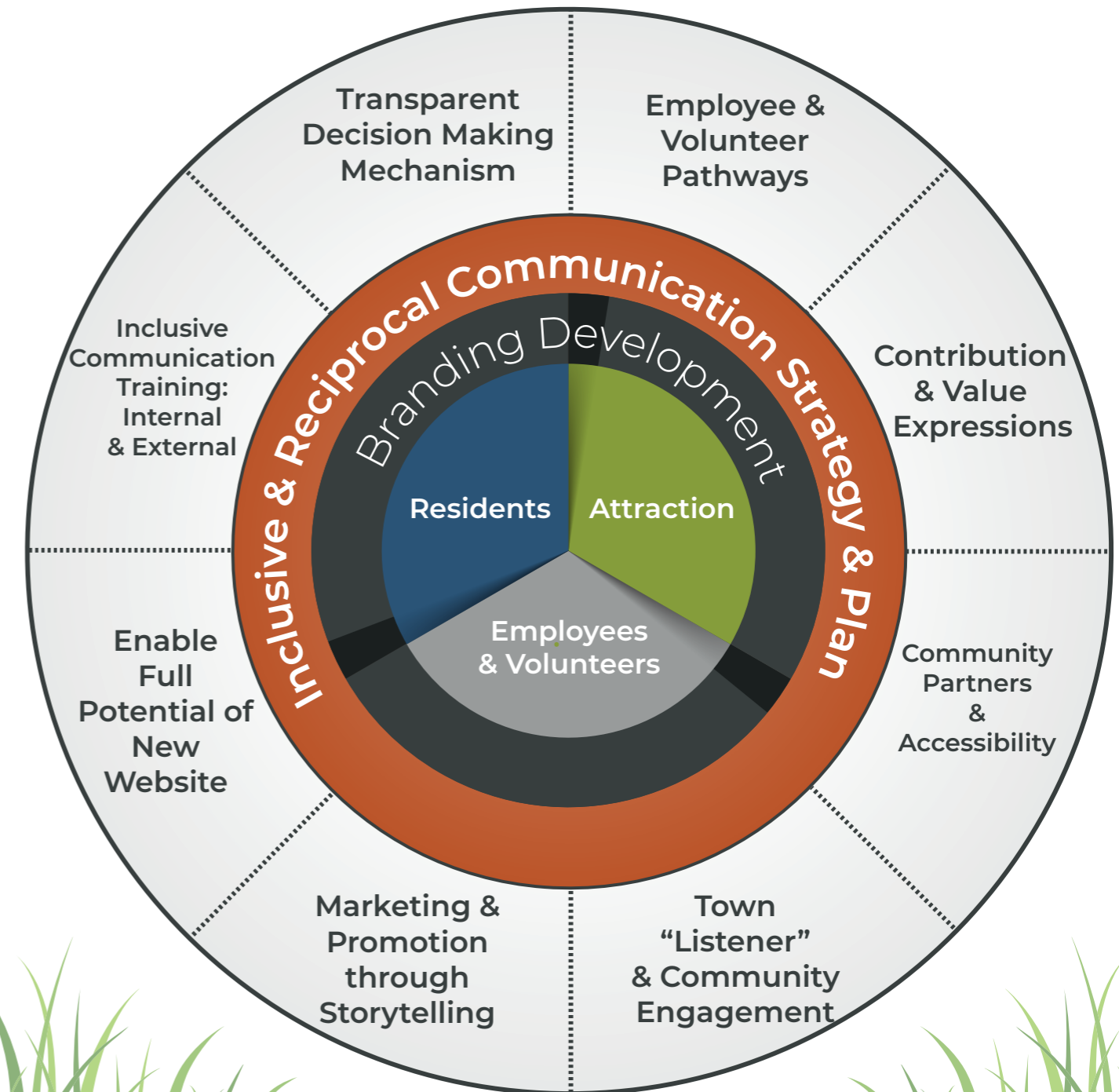
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There are many positives to living here. I personally live on Mink Lake so I love doing different water sports and can go for runs, walks and bike rides on a nice quiet road.

Youth Survey Response

Walk the Talk:

Engage in the development of a brand and communication plan that targets your critical audiences.



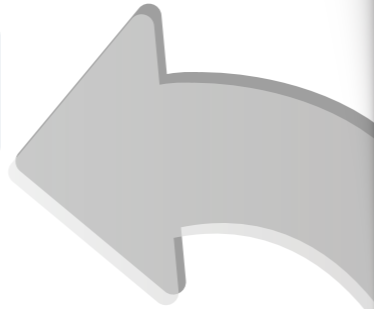
Walk the Talk:

Engage in the development of a brand and communication plan that targets our critical audiences.

Communications Strategy & Plan

Branding Exercise as Key Investment

Three Target Audiences



Residents (Seasonal and Year-Round)

- Reflects the view of the Township held by residents
- Showcase the local community and actors
- Showcase volunteers, art and social service community
- Promote local businesses, features and attractions

Employees & Volunteers

- Focus on ideal candidate and corporate culture
- Attraction for the future talent needed in the Township
- Position as a top local employer
- Build the corporate culture and processes required for the future
- Invest in learning placements to assist with skilled labour deficit in Municipal Sector

Visitors & Potential New Residents

- Capture momentum of the 'Go Rural' wave
- Tone attracts the ideal resident
- Showcase seasonal opportunities and translate to way of life here
- Create leads to motivate urban to rural migration
- Tie messaging into the resident lens
- Develop clear and accessible pathways to spending locally



Residents (Seasonal and Year-Round)

- Working within the parameters of Provincial Legislation, engage in a creative discussion that reflects action taken by progressive communities to demonstrate what evidence was considered to arrive at a decision.
- Hire a "Town Listener" whose primary objective is to attend, listen and report on the action and direction of as many community actors as possible. Record these findings and present at a standing delegation to Council every council meeting. The key function will be to bring information inward through ongoing consultation and reporting back to elected leaders. This will allow for fluid input in real-time, uncovering synergies, opportunities for collaboration and further support.
- Adopt a story-telling framework in your communications that invests in video creation and strong narratives that showcase the incredible human talent and capabilities here. The Township can also use the framework to expose the work being done in-house, to further emphasize value-for-money to ratepayers. Elected officials may want to consider a post-meeting video brief offered live online to deepen transparency and value for money.

Employees & Volunteers

- Provide a timely and simple communication pathway that is reciprocal in addition to the Town Listener role. Leverage the website and other digital tools like signage and social media to broaden reach to diverse audiences. Avoid reliance on email exchanges that only impact the specific parties involved and commit to a timely response system that aggregates common complaints for strategic resolution and reduces in-house workload.
- Collect feedback and input from staff and volunteers working in-house on process and communications improvements regularly. Teams working on the ground-level understand the underlying issues and often have the solution in mind. Seeking advice and acting on the recommendations will ensure that the tools invested in to improve communication reciprocity and accuracy are fitting to the exact needs of the target group.
- Enable information sharing controls using a set of "messaging volunteers" who develop strong, clear statements the Township wishes to distribute in the community using word of mouth. Their primary role would be to "distribute" repeating and agreed-upon statements on behalf of Council in their everyday lives. Alignment of messaging combined with targeted social outreach will help to control the misinformation and resulting negativity derived from a word-of-mouth-centric community.

Visitors & Potential New Residents

- Showcase local events and opportunities to make social connections with current residents. Our residents are the best "salespeople" of the community and eagerly demonstrate their love for the area. When year-round residents are able to connect with their seasonal neighbours, there is a higher likelihood of resident attraction. Identify "local historians" or "local secret holder" at public events with buttons or t-shirts that clearly show they are in a position to inform visitors on the hidden features of the community perhaps only local people are aware of. Think Airbnb experiences brought forward and leveraged by personal connection and invitations.
- Develop a "Meet North Altona Wilberforce" campaign where people, places and spaces are exposed and showcased to visitors in an organized and coordinated fashion. This could include curating tourism packages with local suppliers and attractions that are demonstrated and available for purchase on the Township website.
- Develop key messages and brand promises that are clear and describe exactly what you offer. Repeat these key messages throughout your communications and especially on the website. Engage in the brand development stage with a professional who can help you to develop these statements on the same level as world-class businesses do.

Cooking for Connection:

Develop a Community Food Centre in a licensed community kitchen that enables local training, critical food literacy, partnerships, cultural sharing and connections among people.

Example of Educational Programs

See page 24

Youth Training Centre

- Partnership with Opeongo High School
- Co-op placements Grade 9 – 12
- Curriculum progression from critical food literacy through to line cook
- Workforce development for seasonal food service workers
- Youth engagement with adult allies and social outcomes from food sharing

Have you heard of a Local Food Map?!

Check out Wellington County's [Taste Real](#)

https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/resources/TasteReal2017/PDF-Files/2018_TR_LocalFoodMap_WEB_RevJune2019.pdf

Community Food Centre

- Prepared meals from training program offered to residents
- Food bank partnership for enabling deliveries of prepared and whole foods
- Inclusive and Social food sharing opportunities
- Revenue potential for Social Enterprise Model
- Training in practice for students and food service businesses
- Development of social responsibility
- Storage for Food Banks

Community Food Centre Examples

See page 23

Advocacy Opportunity!

See page 23 to learn more!

Check Out this Stat!

12.7% of households (1.8 million households, 4.4 million individuals) across Canada experienced food insecurity in some form (Tarasuk and Mitchell, 2020)

Licensed Community Kitchen

Community Connections Hub

- Shared learning opportunities around critical food literacy
- Uncovering hidden community leaders and potential partnerships
- Key partnerships with social services such as Seniors Needs, Employment Ontario and Community Resource Centre
- Food Service Business Development and Training Programs (labelling, ingredients, safe food handling, access to local suppliers etc.)
- Cultural sharing opportunities with food as the focus
- Based in education and understanding of critical food literacy

Supplier & Partner Relationships

- Fresh produce supplier partnership development
- Farming partnerships
- Food Bank partnerships strengthened and supported
- Supply depot, consumer pick up location, social enterprise
- Delivery partnerships for distribution
- Suppliers and Partners as educators in Training program

What is Critical Food Literacy?

See page 24 to learn more!

What is a Community Food Centre?

See page 23 to learn more!

Cooking for Connection:

Develop a Community Food Centre in a licensed community kitchen that enables local training, critical food literacy, partnerships, cultural sharing and connections among people.

COVID-19 and Food Security

Lucas Bramberger, MA - Critical Food Literacy Specialist

"Meanwhile the authorities had another cause for anxiety in the difficulty of maintaining the food-supply. Profiteers were taking a hand and purveying at enormous prices essential foodstuffs not available in the shops. The result was that poor families were in great straits, while the rich went short of practically nothing. Thus, whereas plague by its impartial ministrations should have promoted equality among our townsmen, it now had the opposite effect and, thanks to the habitual conflict of cupidities, exacerbated the sense of injustice rankling in men's hearts. They were assured, of course, of the inerrable equality of death, but nobody wanted that kind of equality."

Excerpt from 'The Plague' by Albert Camus

As a result of the ongoing worldwide pandemic, a critical eye has turned towards food security, inequality and the fragility of our food systems. The health-related issues tied to food insecurity and nutrition mentioned in the previous section, become all the more compounded by pre-existing or underlying health issues tied to susceptibility to severity of infections. In addition, we must look to access to food: anecdotally, food banks I have spoken to have noted higher amounts of demand and complications with access to adequate, nutritious food (i.e. distribution, vulnerable populations not comfortable with leaving their home).

According to Statistics Canada (2020a), during May 2020 almost one in seven Canadians reported experiencing food insecurity. Some of the factors that determined food insecurity were stock of food not lasting before being able to afford more, ability to afford balanced meals, skipping or cutting sizes of meals, and personally eating less, or at all, because of monetary reasons (Statistics Canada, 2020a). Other variables tied to higher likelihood of food insecurity were households with children, as well as being absent from work (Statistics Canada, 2020a). These were also reasons cited in the report on food security in Canada (Tarasuk and Mitchell, 2020), but are now being exacerbated by extremely high rates of unemployment.

More recently, with the reopening of schools, the Breakfast Club of Canada estimates that approximately 1 in 3 children in Canada are going to school hungry as a result of food insecurity during the pandemic. (2020). From February to April 2020, Canada saw roughly 5.5 million workers affected by the economic shutdown (Statistics Canada, 2020b). As of August 2020, there has been a 55% increase in employment rates since then, however those numbers do not reflect a further issue: unemployment due to the global pandemic is gendered and racialized (Thevenot, 2020). If we are to make estimations based on the CERB (assuming it works out to a typical 40 hour work week/month) compared to the living wage of the county of Renfrew, the CERB would pay out \$11.70/hour (before taxes) compared to Renfrew's estimated \$16.80/hour living wage (Ontario Living Wage Network, 2019).

– Lucas Bramberger, MA

Advocacy Opportunity

Establishing critical food literacy skills at a young age could be massively important. Developing this type of programming in a centre geared towards community engagement, social enterprise, and equity could prove very successful in developing this critical skill and knowledge set at a variety of ages.

– Lucas Bramberger, MA

What is a Community Food Centre?

The model for Community Food Centres Canada originated out of the Toronto-based food bank "The Stop". The non-profit was established based on revolutionizing food banks across Canada with a more community engagement-orientation; a community centre "where food was at the heart of it" (Nick Saul, CEO of Community Food Centres Canada; quoted in Ostroff, 2017). The main reason for bringing attention to this model of food bank/community centres is that they are "embedded in social and ecological values" (Armitage, 2015, p.102), but also provide a means for direct marketing of small/mid-scale, local farming to those that have not been able to access these resources previously (typically for socio-economic reasons). It is in this sense that CFCC models are seen as "borrowing market-based mechanisms to develop community and social infrastructure through food" (Armitage, 2015, p. 102).

[Community Food Centres] are typically geared towards improving access to healthy and culturally appropriate food to low-income neighbourhoods, while also improving food literacy and advocacy, typically in the form of cooking classes, gardening skills, and childhood food education programming (Community Food Centres Canada, nd-a). In addition, they can provide means for engaging with a critical food literacy: providing "community action training, social justice hubs... and equip [people] with the tools they need to take action and create opportunities" (Community Food Centres Canada, nd-a).

– Lucas Bramberger, MA

Community Food Centre Example

[The Table](#) in Lanark county was one of the first of two pilot projects developed under the CFCC model (Community Food Centres Canada, nd-b). In addition, CFCC provides funding and programming support "...through the Good Food Organizations program, several grants streams, and our annual Food Summit" (Community Food Centres Canada, nd-b).

Cooking for Connection:

Develop a Community Food Centre in a licensed community kitchen that enables local training, critical food literacy, partnerships, cultural sharing and connections among people.

What is Critical Food Literacy?

In their 2020 article, Classens and Sytsma discuss the role of a critical food literacy at post-secondary institutions, suggesting opportunities to teach about "the gendered nature of food labour and food deskilling [as well as] [i]nvestigating where campus food comes from, and why the food choices on campus are the way they are, can introduce other themes, such as the political economy of corporate food systems.

Similarly, talking about student food insecurity can help articulate the inequality of food systems in concrete terms" (p. 15). However, the authors also point to low levels of food literacy and deskilling among adolescents, as well as a lack of resources around that age both in and outside of the classroom (Classens and Sytsma, 2020). Similarly, Yamashita and Robinson argue that while programs such as "school gardens, farm-to-school programs, and student farms on university campuses" (2016, p.269) are a means of improving food literacy, these projects don't "encourage students to explicitly consider the structural inequities that shape food systems and the experiences of food workers" (2016, p. 269). While there are opportunities for learning in less formal settings (i.e. the home) (Classens and Sytsma, 2020), this may not be possible for low-income households, or single-parent households, for example, where food insecurity exists at higher rates already (Tarasuk And Mitchell, 2020). – Lucas Bramberger, MA

Example of Educational Programs

[Ontario Edible Education Network](#) is a network of programming and advocacy geared towards food literacy.

[Tastebuds Hamilton](#), a student nutrition advocate and program developer. They built the 2015/16 Edible Education curriculum guide and currently, Tastebuds Hamilton has dozens of student nutrition programs implemented across Hamilton and Burlington.

Fellowes High School, the largest high school in the Pembroke area, operated their [Fresh Food Project](#) through Farm to Cafeteria Canada with their second year concluding in 2017/18. This project was an immersive food literacy project that involved a culinary program and greenhouse project, providing a learning experience to those, but also access to cheap and healthy food options for staff and students.

Opportunities to Expand

Workforce Shortage in Agriculture

In Canada, there is a growing labour gap in Canadian agriculture (CAHRC, 2016) and a decline in non-waged family labour (Ekers & Levkoe, 2016). One of the top challenges with respect to this labour gap and recruitment in Canadian agriculture is insufficiency of skills and experience among workers, as well as the difficulty in enticing youth employment, particularly in lower-skilled/labour-intensive positions (CAHRC, 2016).

Farmer Succession

There [are] issues regarding succession of farms, access to farmland for new farmers, and dependency on foreign workers to fill the demand for labour. As we have come to see, migrant labour on farms is not just a topic of exploitation, but now is essential to a properly functioning Canadian food system during this pandemic (Shields and Alrob, 2020). Regarding new farmers, internships, typically on smaller-scale or alternative farms, are prevalent across Ontario and are a great means to learn but typically offer little to no pay - leaving eager-to-learn farmers without a means to access land (Ekers et al., 2015). While this is in one way a challenge, I could also see this as an opportunity. A curriculum (as proposed for culinary and food service) could involve partnerships with groups like 4H, local small-holder farms already offering internships, or even a community garden/urban farm angle.

Community Gardens Projects

As part of an agriculture and horticulture curriculum, one aspect worth considering for the community kitchen/centre is urban agriculture and community gardens. Along with fostering knowledge and skills directly related to growing food and learning where one's food comes from, there are numerous other benefits to this activity.

Food Sovereignty

Included in the definition of food security is "food preferences" to which noted the importance of culturally-relevant food. This is associated in some sense to the practice of 'food sovereignty', which is "...a set of goals comprised of strengthening community livelihoods and social and environmental sustainability in the production, consumption and distribution of nutritious and culturally appropriate food" (Desmarais and Wittman, 2014, p.3). In referencing the International Forum for Food Sovereignty in 2007, Food Secure Canada lists seven main pillars in attaining this goal: it focuses on food for people, builds knowledge and skills, works with nature, values food providers, localizes food systems, puts control locally, and, through contribution of "...members of the Indigenous Circle during the People's Food Policy process... Food is Sacred" (nd).

This last point is stressed regarding indigenous food sovereignty in Canada, particularly in the face of COVID-19 (FSC, 2020; Johnson, 2020). As mentioned, food insecurity is racialized (Tarasuk and Mitchell, 2020) and COVID-19 is exacerbating these issues (Statistics Canada, 2020). In large, food sovereignty from an indigenous and racial perspective is in fighting against colonialism, empowering local and indigenous communities (Johnson, 2020), which is more of a long-term goal (FSC, 2020). However, shorter-term needs must also be addressed, such as access to culturally appropriate food and meeting health protocols in indigenous communities (FSC, 2020). Part of FSC's policy recommendation for resiliency and food security as a result of the global pandemic is to "[p]rovide direct support to Indigenous-led and Indigenous-serving groups that are focused on Indigenous food systems... [as well as] support and support and reinvigorate Indigenous food ways like community kitchens, gardening programs, greenhouses, [and] other community-led infrastructure " (p.19). Given the proximity to groups like the Algonquins of Pikwakangan First Nation, and the purpose the community kitchen project aims to serve, [there is] a perfect opportunity to work with Indigenous groups, help in achieving food sovereignty and build this into more critical food literacy through a place.

– Lucas Bramberger, MA

Enabling Digital Communication & Remote Work Culture

Bring forward a private/public partnership to provide fast reliable internet to your community.

Internet Access has Become a Basic Need

There is a world-wide movement to recognize broadband internet access as a human right. (In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council released a resolution and the CRTC declared broadband internet access a basic service.) The unavailability or unreliability of High-Speed or Broadband Internet Service and Cellphone reception in parts of the Township is a common concern in NAW.

As part of this strategic review, the budgets of the neighbouring communities and several comparable communities were reviewed for patterns of spending. While most of the municipalities are focusing on providing the essentials for municipal life (roads, sewers, water) no municipality surveyed is investing in broadband internet for their community. No municipality surveyed seems to consider broadband Internet to be as important as other municipal services.

Instead of actively investing in broadband access, most municipalities are

- relying entirely upon third parties (the private sector) to deliver the service
- relying on the market itself to determine a “reasonable cost” for the service

Relying solely on the private sector has consequences:

- long term capital ultimately moves out of the community being served. A national service provider will funnel the money out of the local community to the company’s headquarters in a big city far away.
- by contrast, a local service provider would be more likely to create jobs locally, and the capital would be more likely to remain locally and ultimately be disbursed or reinvested locally.

The Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020 has pronounced the pre-existing lived experience that rural places without access to reliable and affordable internet are being left behind. In the past, several initiatives for regional service enhancement have been developed, including the 1-Gig project as presented by the Eastern Ontario Warden’s Caucus via their non-profit arm EORN (Eastern Ontario Rural Network). EORN works with government and community organizations to improve and leverage broadband access to fuel economic development and growth. They recently presented the Gig Project “seeking federal and provincial support to delivery ultra-fast, Gig internet to homes and businesses in the region through a \$1.6 billion public-private partnership.” (newswire.ca as presented by EORN) Although promising, any project of this size and nature will consume a considerable amount of time to be carried out.

Internet Access has Become a Basic Need

However, time is of the essence for the Township to capture the outcomes and opportunities only made possible with improved access to reliable, affordable and fast internet. There are four specific reasons to act on this solution now, in order to commit to and realize the objective of equity and well-being within the community.

- 1. Education:** As elementary schools, high schools and post-secondary training centres move to online delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic, many families and individuals are experiencing barriers to participation in education and training. Rural residents deserve equal access to the tools required to achieve their personal and family objectives of learning and growth.
- 2. Business:** Many local businesses previously faced barriers to operating with respect to access to reliable internet and data signals. Now, during the pandemic, so many of the businesses are forced to adopt e-commerce solutions and enable electronic payments of all types. These businesses are also relying on online sales funnels that lead their customer to their website rather than their store front. Without solving this problem, businesses in the rural Township will be left behind.
- 3. Communication:** One thing is clear – Google, Amazon and Facebook have now captured the attention of the majority of internet researching customers, community connectors and online shoppers in North America – and in many cases, around the world. The Township and the local attractions, businesses and community groups must be able to be found and uncovered online. No longer is word-of-mouth promotion or information sharing the main way to reach people in and outside of the community, nor the expectation of younger generations. In order to enable many of the directions contained in this report, internet access is mandatory.
- 4. Remote Work:** In the past, reliable internet has been a critical issue for home-based businesses, as reported in the Business Retention and Expansion Report 2019. Now, as workers are being sent home to work, fast home-based internet is essential for enabling remote work and education under the same roof. If the Township is aiming to attract new residents who desire a beautiful serene place to deliver remote work from, access to reliable internet is paramount. “Live Local, Earn Global” is an ideal target for the community to head towards with the necessary first step being to provide the basic infrastructure to enable remote work – high speed internet at affordable prices.

Enabling Digital Communication & Remote Work Culture

Bring forward a private/public partnership to provide fast, reliable internet to your community.



Case Study: Community Data Signal High Speed Providers

"With respect to improving local internet service, rural and small communities can and should take control of their own destinies. For a relatively modest upfront cost, implementing a community-based internet service similar to what we have done is a practical, cost-effective solution." — Ross Judd, WCCT

BCI – Bonnechere Communications Inc.

"The Best in Internet Freedom" is available today in the area of North Algona Wilberforce and beyond. The customers report high speeds with no data caps, accessed through a free site survey. Seasonal billing, advance payments discounts, no long-term contracts and flexible billing options enable customer service excellence and high quality access to the internet. They also currently offer equipment financing."

WCCT – Weesoe Community Communications Technologies

"WCCT is a community-based, volunteer-driven 'not-for-profit' corporation that provides internet and phone services to residential and business customers in Deep River and Laurentian Hills. At WCCT, we are dedicated to supporting the Deep River and District Hospital. To this end, we do 'our bit' by using our 'operating surplus' to fund initiatives critical to maintaining and enhancing the operation of our award-winning local hospital." WCCT also leverages key partnerships to enable more and more geographical coverage. For example, if they worked with a provider who required a new tower for the size of their needs, they struck an MOU that declared neighbourhood access to that infrastructure as well."

Case Study: Rhyzome Networks, Stratford, Ontario

Although larger than NAW, Stratford Ontario might be looked at as an example of embracing and building for the future.

It was the requirement of adopting Smart hydrometers as mandated by the province that was the impetus for the project. The local electricity retailer, Festival Hydro Inc., chose wireless smart meters but had to establish a network to communicate with them. This inspired a city-wide mesh network supported by a fibre optic backbone.

Festival Hydro already had a workforce skilled and experienced at installing and maintaining an overhead wire network (hydro wires), so it installed optical fibre the same way it had installed hydro wires using that same workforce.

Originally installed as "Dark Fibre", the unused or "unlit" optical fibre was leased to MUSH sector clients. In 2010, they rebranded as "Rhyzome networks" added 300 wireless mesh access points around Stratford and began offering residential and commercial internet service.

Based on the new infrastructure, Stratford earned the reputation of being one of Canada's leading "smart cities" and is attracting and supporting the development of industry and is a testing centre for spinoffs and new technologies including self-driving vehicles. Rhyzome is now expanding into FTTH (fibre-to-the-home) the best internet connection to date.

1 MUSH Sector: Municipalities, Universities, School Boards, Hospitals (and/or LTCs, Children's Aid societies and Police.

Dynamic & Inclusive Housing Development

Engage in the development of dynamic and inclusive housing that will serve your planned growth and community needs.

Why Housing Now?

The Township has identified a revenue deficit with respect to the funds required to maintain the basic infrastructure and services provided.

The Provincial Government has declared that there is a housing crisis in Ontario.

The pandemic has created a surge in the local real estate and housing development market that has the potential to attract new residents, and also displace current ones.

The residents report that finding suitable rental housing in the Township is difficult.

Local tourism and the conversion of year-round rentals into short-term rentals booked through online platforms deepens the shortage of affordable rentals.

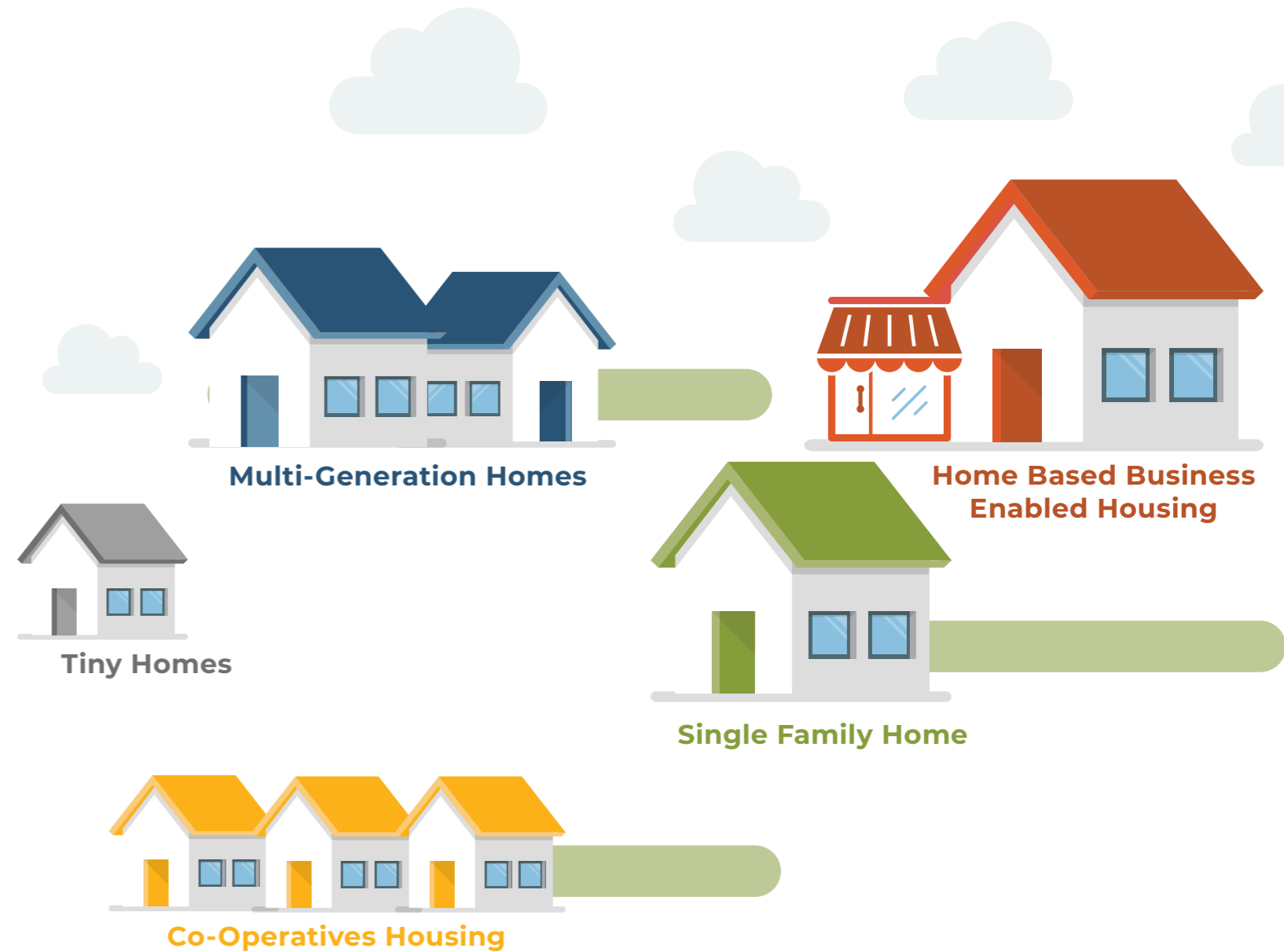
All of this considered, it is critical that the Township invest in the development of land for housing, based on the needs of the community and the projected plans for attraction of new residents and visitors. This process is already underway and must continue to develop with inclusion, dynamic function, tourism and resident attraction in mind. With construction materials still overpriced and unavailable in the fall of 2020, the Township has the perfect window of opportunity to invest in planning and design while the market corrects to a more feasible level of participation.

What is a Land Trust?

According to Nisma Gabobe at Sightline Institute in her report on The Role of Community Land Trusts in Cascadia's Quest for Affordable Housing, "[Community Land Trusts] CLTs are non-profit corporations that acquire land and develop housing, which they sell at below-market rates. CLTs typically serve low-to-moderate-income households earning 50 to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). Some CLTs also provide affordable rentals, typically serving low-income households." (2019, p3)

She goes on to explain that "[f]or ownership, the CLT owns the land and the resident owns the home, with use of the land granted through a 99-year ground lease. CLTs restrict the price at each sale using a variety of formulas, such as fixed-rate, appraisal-based, or AMI based. These caps typically limit appreciation to 1.5-2 percent annually. In most cases, owners acquire less equity over time than would the owner of an unrestricted home." (Gabobe, 2019 p4)

"As housing advocates have long argued, CLTs halt displacement in its tracks in two main ways: they help low-income renters become owners, and they ensure permanent affordability by limiting the price at each resale. [Some CLTs also provide affordable rentals for very low-income people who can't acquire a mortgage.] For communities under threat of displacement, CLTs can turn around a family's fate by providing not only stable, affordable housing, but also an opportunity for wealth-building otherwise out of reach." (Gabobe, 2019 pg2).



Dynamic

- Sustainable Design
- Synergistic with the Environment
- Reflect Township Brand and Ideal Resident
- Innovative Neighbourhood Design
- Ease of Modification for Evolution with Community Need

Inclusive

- Integrated Income-Geared Options
- Culturally Appropriate Zoning and By-Laws
- Multi-Generation and Senior Care Enabled Designs
- Accessible
- Green Spaces and Land Uses
- Alternative Lifestyle Supported (i.e. Cooperatives)

Key Partnerships For Synergy & Collective Advocacy

Invest in the key relationships you need to influence collective outcomes via collaboration.

Invest further in relationships that bring collaboration and mutual outcomes.

Local & Neighbouring Service Providers

Develop strong reciprocal partnerships based in mutual understanding and outcomes with the following agencies and service providers:

- Senior Needs, Eganville
- Community Resource Centre, Killaloe
- Studio Dreamshare, Pembroke
- Opeongo High School, RCDSB, Eganville
- Food Banks, Golden Lake/Eganville/Killaloe

- Outdoors Club, ATV Club and Sno-Drifters
- Property Owners Associations, Golden Lake and Others

Neighbouring Municipalities

The municipalities bordering the Township are each involved in development and have unique strengths to combine with the directions presented herein:

- Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation – cultural sharing, training, program development and community development activities
- Bonnechere Valley – Business Retention + Expansion, development, downtown, library
- Admaston/Bromley – historical partnerships with BV, shared services and capital
- Laurentian Valley – supports and communication for small businesses, shared services
- Killaloe, Hagarty & Richards – Official Plan Advocacy, lake stewardship and common response, new fire hall

Regional Impact Projects (see page 28 & 29 for more info.)

- Local Immigration Partnership of Renfrew & Lanark – attraction and retention of skilled workers from urban areas
- Labour Market Group of Renfrew & Lanark – workforce development research project
- Ontario Living Wage Network – collective of regions and communities advocating for a living wage and universal basic income

Business Owners

Strike focus groups and/or committees filled with business owners on a regular basis. We have found that the interest and point of view held by these owners divide based on the following characteristics:

- Seasonal/Tourism Based
- Home-Based
- Year-Round Essential Services
- Artisanal & Craftspeople
- Construction & Manufacturing

Local Cultural Communities

Many diverse communities live in co-existence in the Township. Developing relationships for common understanding, sharing and leveraging that diversity is a competitive advantage for the Township:

- Indigenous Communities
- Mennonite Community
- Agricultural Players
- Local Historians
- Artists and Creatives
- Aquatic Interest Groups

**NORTH ALGONA
WILBERFORCE**

Key Partnerships For Synergy & Collective Advocacy

Invest in the key relationships you need to influence collective outcomes via collaboration.

Regional Impact Projects Details

Local Immigration Partnership Secondary Migration Pillar of Work

This federally funded regional project is mandated to work with community partners to collectively improve the settlement outcomes for Newcomers to Canada taking up residence in Renfrew and Lanark Counties. The project recently acquired a five-year commitment from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to continue and expand their work.

One of the key directions being taken by the project is to pilot a secondary migration program where specialized staff would support communities and employers in attracting and retaining underemployed individuals from urban areas seeking a rural way of life and a job commensurate to their skills that is in demand here.

Skilled workforce shortages and mismatches in worker and job supply prevail in the Township and so this coordinated effort is designed specifically to address it. The project staff are also helping to steer the Work Matters Ontario Labour Market Partnership for Renfrew and Lanark. This one-year program is designed to produce the concrete evidence required to establish key supports for employers facing worker shortages in the region in health care (PSW's), manufacturing (skilled trades) and transportation (AZ/DZ drivers).

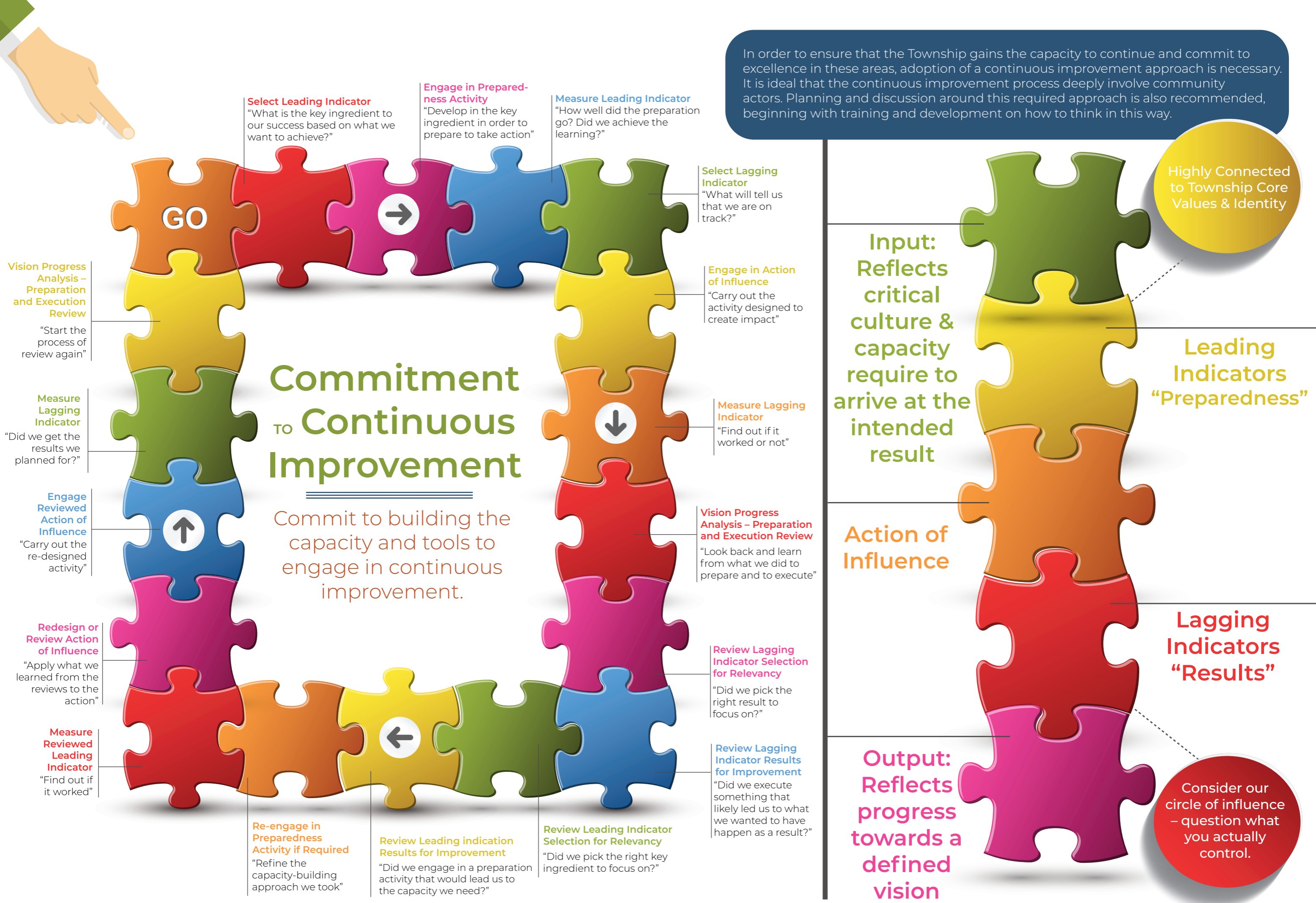
Regional Impact Projects Details

Labour Market Group of Renfrew & Lanark Local Labour Market Planning Report and Employer One Survey

This Ontario Ministry funded program is mandated to produce the evidence and information necessary for local job seekers, industry and communities to make excellent decisions about workforce development in Renfrew and Lanark Counties. They work alongside their sister project, the LIP, to produce workforce solutions that go beyond the local supply of labour, considering the ageing and declining working-age population demographics of the region.

The annual report of their findings is named The Local Labour Market Planning Report and contains highly relevant and timely information concerning the current challenges and opportunities for the worker economy here. Many of the findings contained therein reflect the results of the Employer One survey. Supporting this project in collecting the feedback and information required for the survey is essential in order to be fully represented in the evidence. This is a way to collect information similar to the Business Expansion and Retention Report invested in by the Township in 2019 without having to repeat the process independently.

In order to ensure that the Township gains the capacity to continue and commit to excellence in these areas, adoption of a continuous improvement approach is necessary. It is ideal that the continuous improvement process deeply involve community actors. Planning and discussion around this required approach is also recommended, beginning with training and development on how to think in this way.



GETTING STARTED:

Year One High-Level Project Plan

The First step is to make a commitment to move forward in the directions proposed. It is important that the leadership team express buy-in and full understanding of the opportunities presented.

Step 1

We recommend that you invite residents to join you in a series of virtual workshops, one for each of the initiatives. These workshops are intended to:

- Build understanding of the background information supporting the recommendations
- Create a united position in the community
- Make a commitment to owning the Strategic Plan and its findings
- Build interest for the projects within groups of community members

The workshops will provide the community with the opportunity to dig deeply into each initiative and develop passion and preferences working alongside Council and Staff. We also recommend that you capture the names and contacts of the interested parties to help inform Step 4 activities and invitations.

Step 2

The second step is for the Township leadership team to position each strategic initiative into a preferred level of control.

Each one of the strategic initiatives could range from being volunteer driven, self-funded, partnership based, business revenue funded, grant-funded or fully invested in from all parties, engaging all potential resources. The options on how to engage these proven ideas are vast and so narrowing down your preferred role in each is necessary.

We propose that the Township has five levels of engagement or control possible under each strategic initiative (listed from least to most commitment level):

- Influence – engage in advocacy to inspire others to act
- Coordinate – bring people together and support their organization and action
- Plan – provide the design and project management support to steer projects carried out by others
- Lead – take a primary role in leading and acting for self or with a partner
- Own – assume full internal control of the project development

In order to leverage the features of effective community engagement, it is important to recognize that residents may wish to participate at some level in the projects contained herein. Volunteers with mission, vision and values alignment should be encouraged to contribute and coordinated effectively to enable them.

Step 3

The third step is to engage in preparedness as a necessary function to the initial phase of change management and positive community engagement.

We recommend that you engage with us (TGT Solutions and With Chela Inc.) in our signature municipal preparedness training suite designed specifically for leaders in small communities. The modules of this program contain the following fundamental preparedness activities essential to your growth regardless of your chosen level of commitment to any one project:

1. Inclusion at Work – Intercultural Competency training to enable effective communication and service results working in diverse communities
2. Change Management – Owning and adopting positive change within teams centred on mission and vision
3. Continuous Improvement – Intentional action and review of preparedness and results in pursuit of the optimization of human contribution and fully leveraging resources
4. Digital Tool Communication Best Practices – A training tool kit filled with key concepts, recommended tools and distribution process mechanism that enable robust, reliable and reciprocal digital communication channels
5. Principles of Community Engagement – A review of the best practices in mobilizing volunteers, gaining youth participation and serving the passion, enthusiasm and expertise of the local actors

Step 4

Engage with the community interest groups and volunteers identified in Step 1 to measure their level of interest or engagement. For example, if a group in the community wanted to own the community kitchen project, it is essential to embrace community leadership and for the Township to consider taking a contributing role as supporter and ally to enable the work.

This can be done by hosting working group meetings to begin the development of each project, as defined in the control levels expressed by all parties involved. The meetings can focus on identifying the skills, abilities and networks of each party and coordinating those assets and resources into a high-level project plan with clear roles and accountability.

We also recognize that the Walk the Talk project is an obvious break-out initiative for the Township. It will set the foundational tools and processes need to fully leverage each of the other initiatives. You may wish to consider using the Walk the Talk project as your pilot of the process you wish to adopt with the community for the remaining initiatives.

GETTING STARTED:

Year One High-Level Project Plan

Step 5

Consider some initial steps you can take to enable the start-up of the remaining projects:

Project Name	Prepare	Act
Walk the Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grant application deadlines for opportunities in the near future that may require quick action Review progressive branding strategies carried out by leading municipalities Develop a strong understanding of the full potential of your new website by consulting your web developer and others so that ideas and opportunities can reflect technological feasibility Review your internal internet connection capacity and evaluate against future needs to ensure adequate and expanding service level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the idea of the Town Listener and design a reciprocal reporting process/job description Map community assets that will be critical for the adoption of the strategic directions Engage a Township branding RFP Fully develop and utilize the future investment in the Asset Management System so as to enhance your capital planning, inform your internal priorities and communicate them to the community
Cooking for Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grant application deadlines for opportunities in the near future that may require quick action Develop an understanding of what a commercial kitchen licence and maintenance of it requires Continue your discussion with fresh food producers in the area who have already reflected an interest to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange a meeting with Renfrew County District School Board and Opeongo High School for discussions on developing and co-funding a co-op placement program Map community assets that will be critical for the adoption of the strategic directions Strike a working group for community kitchen

Project Name	Prepare	Act
Enable Digital Communication & Remote Work Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grant application deadlines for opportunities in the near future that may require quick action Interview the owners of BCI to fully understand their local service provision model of high-speed internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map community assets that will be critical for the adoption of the strategic directions Interview key players from the internet provider solution recommendations to better inform your options Strike a working group for internet solution
Dynamic & Inclusive Housing Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue discussions with Bonnechere Valley on the partnership development opportunities Engage in meetings with the County of Renfrew on planning for collective housing development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map community assets that will be critical for the adoption of the strategic directions Investigate housing development options and builders that are innovative and will connect with the progressive development proposed
Key Partnerships for Synergy & Collective Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strong understanding of the regional projects and their respective mandate and leadership teams Engage the neighbouring municipalities not able to be reached during the consultation phase for a direction-clarifying interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Advocate for a collective of elected municipal leaders to form the LIP Municipal Engagement Working Group Support local employers to respond to the Employer One Survey distributed by the Labour Market Group Re-engage neighbouring municipal leaders and consider striking a regular and ongoing collaborative discussion opportunity
Commitment to Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and identify leading and lagging performance indicators for tactical moves that respect your level of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin measuring an activity that you already engage in to test your understanding and skill in measurement with a proven and familiar existing service

RESOURCES TO CONSIDER FOR FUNDING PROJECTS:



Community Food Centres Canada:

offers "The Good Food Access Fund" as part of funding received through the Government of Canada. It is designed to help organizations to provide emergency relief during Covid-19

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSced2ohuyPEOFwbHwGjLxKnsG61F602KE7C51mCuHYt8QPzwwg/viewform>

Community Food Centres Canada:

also offers other funding programs to Canadian organizations such as (<https://cfccanada.ca/en/Our-Work/Grants>):

- **Child and Youth Innovation Grants** "offer hands-on programs for children and youth that teach food skills and encourage positive attitudes towards healthy food".
- **FoodFit** grants which supports the facilitation of a 12 week program which "helps people living on low-incomes who experience barriers to healthy eating and exercise to set goals, learn skills, and make measurable changes in overall health and fitness".
- **Market Greens** grants for a new program " increases affordable access to fresh fruits and vegetables through subsidized community markets, targeted financial incentives, and produce prescriptions".

Government of Canada's Local Food Infrastructure Fund:

is a 5 year program which supports "...community-based, not-for-profit organizations to improve their food systems through investments in infrastructure that are directly related to addressing food insecurities and increasing the accessibility of healthy, nutritious, and ideally, local foods within their community".

<https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/agricultural-programs-and-services/local-food-infrastructure-fund/?id=1560701480448>

The McConnell Foundation:

provides grants and funding towards social innovation initiatives, as well as organizations/registered charities that seek large systems change.

<https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/granting/>

Farm to Cafeteria Canada and Whole Kids Foundation:

offer grants to schools " designed to bring more of the local harvest into schools where it is featured in a salad bar meal service, using the Farm to School Approach. The goal? To see more students and school communities engaged in: growing, purchasing, harvesting, cooking, serving, learning about, and eating".

<http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/our-work/farm-to-school-grants/>

Rural Economic Development Fund:

through the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs offers 50/50 matching of dollars non-profits and municipalities make to engage in the execution of economic and community development initiatives. Their next intake is December 2020.

Youth Opportunities Fund:

through Ontario Trillium Foundation offers non-profits program funding that fosters youth engagement, development and participation in the community. They invest in Youth Innovations, Family Innovations and Systems Innovations. Their next intake is due October 14 2020 for Expressions of Interest, the first step in many to arrive at a final application deadline mid-January 2021.

Ontario Trillium Foundation Investment Streams:

provide access to three types of funding: seed, grow and capital grants. Seed grants are set aside for learning projects – ideas that are unproven that require testing or piloting prior to significant investment being made. Grow grants offer scale-up for proven models, launch, duplication or adaption of a program and investment for improvement of existing programs. Capital project stream is for the investment in infrastructure or development required to maintain facilities that enable community development work. During the pandemic, OTF has redirected funding from Capital and Grow grants to the Resilient Communities Fund with a final intake deadline of December 2, 2020.





 Lake Doré

TRANSFORMING SURVIVE INTO THRIVE: THE PATHWAY FORWARD FOR NORTH ALGONA WILBERFORCE

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LIVE SMALL. THINK BIG.



Strategic Plan

LIVE SMALL. THINK BIG

Presented by TGT Solutions
in Partnership With Chéla Inc.

NORTH ALGONA WILBERFORCE

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