



# **Strategic Plan**

**2015 - 2018**

**Open House Presentation**



# Council Goals and Objectives

---

Zorra Township Council and Staff were asked to prepare a list of ideas, goals, objectives, projects, buildings, etc. they would like to see accomplished over the term of this Council. The ideas and thoughts were wide-ranging and provided valuable input on the collective vision from Council and Staff on the future of the Township.

These goals and objectives will provide a framework that will assist in shaping the direction of our community. There still needs to be additional work carried out to ensure these goals and objectives will be attuned to the needs of the Township's residents and business community. There must also be alignment with financial resources to achieve these goals, including allocating the human, physical or financial resources of the municipal corporation.



# Introduction

---

Strategic planning is one of the most important tools that a municipality can use to bring together the public, municipal staff and members of Council in the development of a common vision, direction and goals for a community. It can also function as an accounting mechanism, allowing management and the public to evaluate progress and ensure that the Township is moving in the right direction.

Rather than simply reacting to change, municipalities can examine issues and concerns with the goal to create a community that is sustainable, providing opportunities for business and economic growth, and a healthy lifestyle, while at the same time protecting its social and cultural connections.



# Introduction

---

While community sustainability doesn't necessarily imply growth or expansion, it does imply change. The decisions made, or not made will shape how a community develops and prospers. A corporate strategic plan therefore, builds an overall vision for a community and guides municipal decision making that will move the community towards its desired state. The plan also assists with prioritizing the management and use of the local assets as well as human, financial, physical and environmental resources

Specifically, a strategic plan will:

- Provide structure for mutually accepted goals and a common agenda for moving forward as a community over the next five to ten years;



# Introduction

---

- Define the purpose of the community at large and its role in achieving stated goals; and
- Balance the aspirations of the community with municipal and local resources.

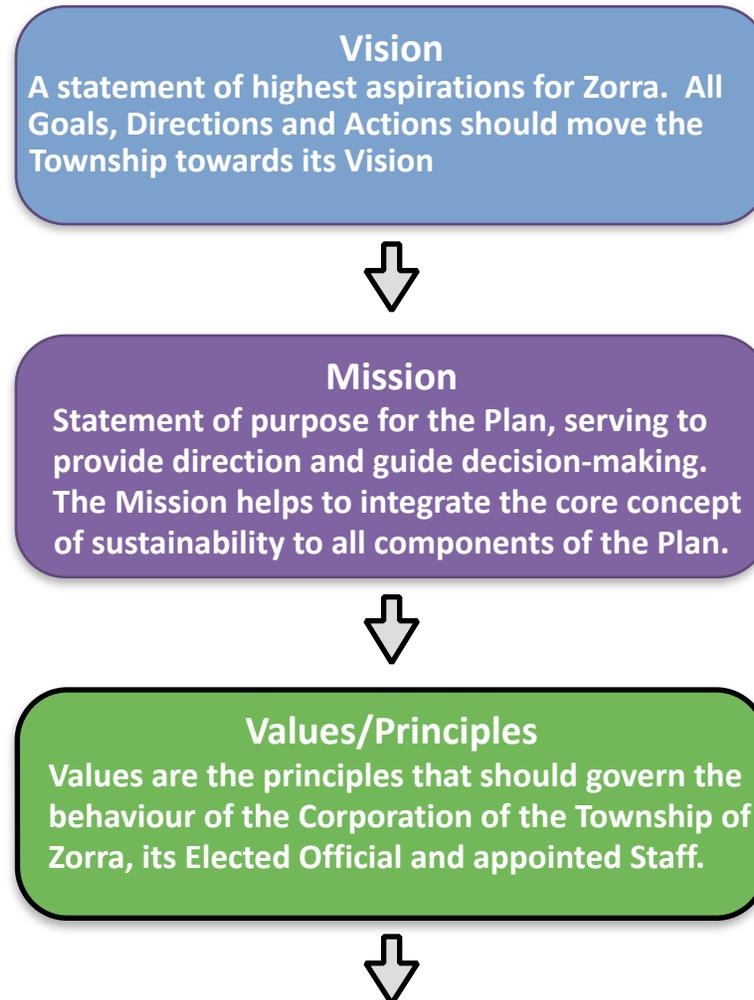
A detailed action plan targets the goals set out in this plan and contributes to the long term vision for the community. It also acts as a 'measuring stick' against which to evaluate decisions that will keep the Township on course in the coming years.



# Introduction

---

The key components of a strategic plan generally follow a structure as outlined below.





# Introduction

---

## Goals

Thematic Goals will emerge as priorities. Each Goal will have a statement of highest aspirations for that specific theme.



## Actions

Tangible initiatives that can be undertaken over the short, medium and long-term that ultimately contribute to realizing one or more Goals and the Vision.



## Implementation Plan

Updated annually, the Implementation Plan outlines each Action with associated responsibility, potential partners, and measures of success. Each year Actions will be integrated into annual departmental work planning processes to ensure the Plan is continually moving forward.



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

## **VISION**

A vision reflects the aspirations of an organization or community providing a panoramic view of 'where we are going'.

It points an organization in a particular direction and charts a strategic path for everyone to follow. It describes what the Township is striving to become.

Listed below, and on the next page, are examples of vision statements from other municipalities.

1. Wilmot is a cohesive, vibrant and welcoming countryside community.
2. A progressive community that is healthy, diverse and sustainable. (Selwyn Township)



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

3. Woolwich will be known as a Community of Choice in the Province of Ontario because of its:
  - Sustainable Growth Practices;
  - Forward-Looking Investment in Infrastructure Maintenance & Transportation Planning;
  - Effective Communication Strategies;
  - Responsible Fiscal Planning;
  - Safe, Active and Environmentally Friendly Communities; and
  - Solid Governance, Progressive Administration
4. Huron-Kinloss celebrates a unique mix of welcoming communities and natural beauty.
5. Middlesex Centre: A community of diverse citizens, rooted in rural and urban traditions, united throughout involvement, cooperation, and mutual respect.



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

6. To excel in providing a safe, healthy and vibrant place to live with inclusive and sustainable services. (Blandford-Blenheim)
7. Vibrant communities, working well and growing stronger ... together! (Oxford County)
8. The Township of Perth East provides innovative leadership and services essential to creating an inclusive, thriving and sustainable community.
9. The Township will be a self-reliant, fiscally sound municipality striving for positive growth, a sustainable infrastructure with socially responsible and accessible services that promote a safe, healthy and family friendly lifestyle. (Hamilton Township)



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

## **Mission**

While a Vision paints a picture of a final destination, the destination pre-supposes a starting point.

It begins with a clearly crafted Mission articulating the ways by which the Vision is achieved - 'who we are', 'what we do', 'who we serve' and 'where are we now'. It's a stepping off point for the long term vision - where we want to go.

Listed below, and on the next page, are examples of mission statements from other municipalities.

1. To evolve and grow as a community of caring people working together to build upon a sure foundation. (Wilmot Township)
2. Leader in delivering innovative coordinated and sustainable municipal services. (Selwyn Township)



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

3. The Woolwich team of elected officials, staff, and volunteers work together to provide the public with responsible community leadership through the design and delivery of high quality services and programs, sound financial management practices and the promotion of a healthy and sustainable quality of life.
4. Support the communities of today to inspire the generations of tomorrow. (Huron-Kinloss)
5. To create a proactive community strategy for Middlesex Centre, which will foster a culture of diversification, excellence, and innovation, develop opportunities for future growth, and preserve the established community characteristics which make it a valued place to live.



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

6. To serve the needs and advance the collective interests of our communities, residents and businesses through customer-focused services that improve quality of life. (Oxford County)
7. The Township of Perth East will be an inclusive, thriving and sustainable community committed to maintaining harmony between rural and urban areas and fostering opportunities for current and future generations.
8. The Township Vision will be realized through innovative leadership that develops strong partnerships between the municipality, its stakeholders and senior levels of government to deliver sustainable municipal services. (Hamilton Township)



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

## **Principles/Values**

The mandate of all local government is to provide services to its community according to the unique wishes, need, and values of that community. Zorra Township is no different. As a result, any planning for the future of the community has to be grounded in its values.

Values reflect the shared beliefs of a community. They tell us what is important to a community, and how we should go about achieving our goals. Listed below are examples of principles/values from other municipalities.



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

## 1. Wilmot's values:

- Health and wellbeing
- Diversity
- Legacy
- Accessibility and inclusivity
- Forward-thinking
- Balance

## 2. Selwyn's values:

- Integrity
- Trust and Respect
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Inclusivity



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles

---

## 3. Huron-Kinloss' Guiding Principles of Sustainability - Our decisions will equally consider:

- Social
- Economic
- Environmental
- Cultural

## 4. Middlesex Centre's values:

- Openness
- Cooperation
- Trust
- Respect
- Tradition
- Innovation



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles

---

## 5. Oxford County's values:

- Excellence
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Teamwork

## 6. Perth East's values:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Service
- Continuous Improvement
- Fiscally Responsible



# Corporate Mission, Vision & Principles/Values

---

## **SUMMARY**

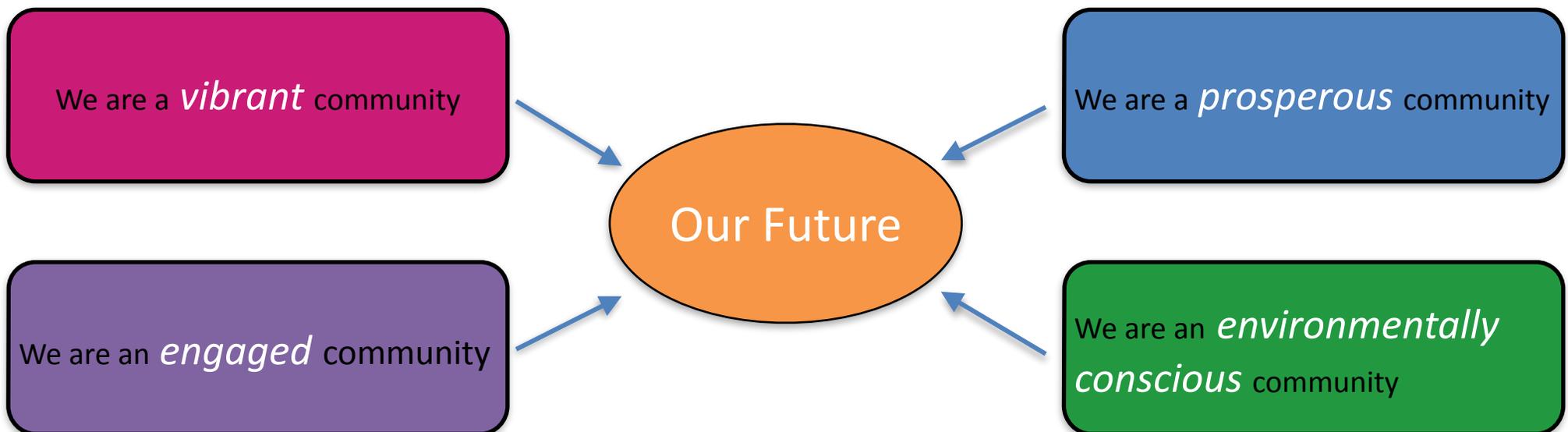
The Mission, Vision and Principles/Values of a strategic plan need to be carefully crafted to reflect the very nature of our community.



# Goals, Directions & Actions

## Goals

The list of ideas, goals, objectives, projects, buildings, etc. that Council and staff prepared are a list of directions and actions in the context of a strategic plan. The list was separated into general themes and then tested against other municipal strategic plans to arrive at four goals that seem appropriate for Zorra Township.





# We are a *vibrant* community

We are a *vibrant* community that values our uniqueness, creativity and takes pride in calling Zorra home.

## Present State

We are proud of our vibrant communities and rich history. The Township has provided a progressive cultural landscape that offers residents of Zorra the opportunity to celebrate our cultural identity. We express our unique history and culture through annual festivals and events, the performing and visual arts, community centres, places of worship, as well as our built heritage. Zorra has an emerging and active artisan community with many artisans working in their homes.

Our community supports a diversity of lifestyles and is welcoming and close-knit. Our community offers a variety of lifestyles that ensure anyone can call Zorra home. From the rural and small-town village lifestyle we are also proud to be part of the broader Township of Zorra.

We have a variety of clubs and organizations in both our urban and rural settlement areas that provide our residents with numerous social and recreational opportunities. We participate in our community. A dedicated pool of volunteers ensure that our service clubs are strong, annual fairs and festivals are well attended, and faith-based and other community groups are active. Being actively engaged in our community has helped develop a strong sense of community while providing connection and cohesion across all of our communities.

Our Township Council and staff are known in the community and always accessible and involved in numerous community events. The Township is proud of being a transparent municipality that has built a welcoming relationship with fellow community members.



# We are a *vibrant* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *vibrant* community.

## 1. Providing recreational opportunities for everyone

- Undertake a Recreation Master Planning process inclusive of completing an assessment of the long-term viability of Thamesford District Recreation Centre and Embro Community Centre
- Work with Maple Leaf Foods for land donation along Thames River to create a trail from Middleton Street to Dundas Street
- Consider establishment of a Trails Committee and/or work more closely with Oxford Trails Council
- Work with UTRCA and Oxford Trails Council to improve public access to Thames Rivers
- Explore viability of a splash pad for Embro
- Improve marketing and promotion efforts for the Township's recreational facilities and programs to increase participation and revenues
- Strategize on ways and means to increase youth and senior participation in recreational activities



# We are a *vibrant* community

---

## 2. Supporting our community, events and celebrations

- Develop a school retention plan
- Assist with marketing and promotion of major community events such as Calithumpian Weekend, Embro Highland Games, Embro Fair, Weinerfest and to support new community events
- Explore options for the Township to assist minor sports organizations in taking a more active role in co-ordination of activities
- Investigate how to better support and work with service groups and to encourage service clubs to collaborate with each other
- Recognize one volunteer of year and one senior of the year

## 3. Preservation of our history and heritage and growing the arts

- Catalogue and display Harvey Waud Collection
- Continue signing historical hamlets and use of QR codes to provide historical information. Tourism Oxford may help
- Compile a cultural inventory of community assets and implement an interactive map on the Township website
- Displaying works of Zorra's artisans and craftspeople. Promoting the same on website



# We are a *vibrant* community

---

## 4. Developing safe communities

- Evaluate how to deal with increasing public concerns regarding traffic volume and speed in both rural and urban areas
- Continue to work on enhancing public education for smoke alarm awareness and CO<sup>2</sup> detector awareness
- Consider holding a public education forum on emergency preparedness at each community centre to raise public awareness
- Maintain an appropriate standard of winter control that balances risk and fiscal responsibility while fulfilling statutory requirements
- Enhance visibility of Zorra Policing Committee and encourage greater public involvement



# We are a *prosperous* community

---

We are a *prosperous* community that values our uniqueness, creativity and takes pride in calling Zorra home.

## Present State

We live in a community where our economy has remained strong. The main economic sectors that have contributed to our strong economy are agriculture, agri-business, aggregates, and commercial/retail. Many of our local businesses are small and medium sized family businesses that are rooted in the history of our community.

Agriculture – both large and small farms – is the strongest economic sector in Zorra and the surrounding area and continues to grow and flourish. A significant portion of our land base has historically been used for agricultural activities and we recognize that this sector is a major contributor to our economic base. Agriculture also plays an important role in our culture. The aggregate sector also has a substantial economic impact through primary processing and secondary consumption in cement making and lime production. Zorra is traditionally among the top ten aggregate producing municipalities in Ontario and is home to over 40 gravel pits and lime stone quarries.

On-farm diversification and home based business start ups are becoming a valuable asset to our economy. As well, proximity to the 401 corridor and to two large auto assembly plants in Oxford County mean that Zorra is well situated to take advantage of its strategic location in Ontario's heartland.



# We are a *prosperous* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *prosperous* community.

## 1. By retaining and expanding our existing businesses

- Supporting Embro and Thamesford Business Associations through membership and financial assistance where applicable
- Work with Thamesford Business Association to expand and possible relocate Thamesford Farmers Market
- Work with local businesses and organizations to improve co-ordination of business development efforts
- Consider implementation of a Community Improvement Plan and downtown beautification projects
- Promoting a “buy local campaign” and investigate embedding Local Food Act provisions in our operations
- Working with, and expanding the role and importance of the Rural Oxford Economic Development Corporation



# We are a *prosperous* community

## 2. By strengthening our agricultural and agri-business sector

- Explore opportunities to encourage secondary or specialized spin-off industries linked to existing sectors (e.g. food processing to support locally grown food)
- Encourage the County of Oxford to amend Official Plan policies to allow flexibility for on-farm diversified uses and/or secondary uses
- Continue to work with neighbouring municipalities to harmonize policies to encourage and facilitate non-invasive uses into prime agricultural areas

## 3. Investing in our infrastructure

- Continue planning for construction of a centralized Public Works Operations Centre
- Prepare an implementation framework to install generators at Thamesford District Recreation Centre, Embro Community Centre and installing a smaller generator at the Township Office and repurposing existing generator
- Preparation of long-term financial master plan for sustainability of existing road system



# We are a *prosperous* community

---

## 4. Improving municipal efficiency

- Review of recreation user fees
- Move to multi-year budgets
- Establish a revised budget process and timelines to expedite adoption of annual budget
- Preparation of yearly departmental work plans that will align with strategic plan directions and actions



# We are an *engaged* community

---

We are an *engaged* community that values all members and actively encourages involvement, engagement, openness and transparency.

## Present State

Through community consultation and outreach Zorra Council and staff actively try to encourage citizens to become more engaged in their communities and empowered to effectively communicate their concerns to the government and other citizens, resulting in more timely citizen involvement in the decision making activities of local government.

Zorra is well served by a rural broadband network and our population is becoming “connected” in many ways outside of traditional mediums. We have recently started interacting through social media and see this as an emerging trend that we need to learn from, continuously improve, and adapt to new technologies as they materialize.

Zorra, like many small rural municipalities, needs to do a better job at engaging our seniors and youth as well as persons with disabilities and visible minorities.



# We are an *engaged* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *engaged* community.

## 1. By being open and transparent

- Work to improve communications of municipal affairs with the public. Building upon the success of Zorra Now and expanding the reach and scope, depth of articles, featuring local businesses ect.
- Develop a Community Engagement Strategy
- Develop a Communications Strategy
- Undertake an initiative to begin using plain language in all communications
- Council Chamber redesign to make it more accessible for residents and to project agendas to allow members of the public to follow meetings
- Publish annual reports on closed meeting held during the previous year
- Continue to improve Township website by provide online forms, means of instant feedback and use of polls and questionnaires
- Continue utilization of social media and capitalize on new and emerging trends of social engagement



# We are an *engaged* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *engaged* community.

## 2. By being inclusive and accessible

- Update and continue to improve Zorra's Accessibility Plan to meet or exceed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act regulations
- Work with businesses to improve accessibility
- Consider municipal policies, services and programs that take into account the impact of an aging population
- Consider establishing a Youth Council to receive insight and feedback on ways to engage our youth and to develop future leaders
- Work with the County of Oxford to provide for seniors and/or geared to income housing
- Develop a new resident information package



# We are an *engaged* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *engaged* community.

## 3. By strengthening our customer service and being an employer of choice

- Constantly review operational efficiencies and use of resources
- Keep organization focused on providing a high level of customer service
- Ensuring staff are cross-trained and ensuring gaps do not occur during absences
- Build municipal leadership skill through preparation of a Succession Plan
- Commit to staff training, team building and professional development through annual budgets



# We are an *engaged* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *engaged* community.

### 3. By being inclusive and accessible

- Update and continue to improve Zorra's Accessibility Plan to meet or exceed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act regulations
- Work with businesses to improve accessibility
- Consider municipal policies, services and programs that take into account the impact of an aging population
- Consider establishing a Youth Council to receive insight and feedback on ways to engage our youth and to develop future leaders
- Work with the County of Oxford to provide for seniors and/or geared to income housing
- Develop a new resident information package



# We are an *environmentally conscious* community

We are an *environmentally conscious* community that are good stewards of our natural environment and we protect our environment by valuing our natural assets and using our resources wisely.

## Present State

Our natural landscape is one of our greatest and most valuable assets. Zorra and our surrounding area includes many natural features that make us unique, such as significant woodlands, groundwater recharge areas, wildlife and fish habitat, and watercourses. The Township and the County of Oxford have been progressive in preserving and protecting our natural assets and resources. The combined efforts of the Township, County, Provincial and Federal Ministries, and countless other organizations have helped to ensure environmental integrity is maintained in our community, both on public and private land. A number of very successful programs have helped our community participate in protecting our natural resources. A Tree Conservation By-law is in place to prohibit and regulate destruction of trees and woodlots on private property, drinking water monitoring and protection efforts are ongoing, waste reduction and management programs are available.

We are facing challenges on how to continue managing and protecting our farmland in light of Zorra's aggregate rich geology. Provincial policy places high regard in protecting aggregate resources and Zorra is left to balance this along side of protecting our natural environment.



# We are an *environmentally conscious* community

---

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *environmentally conscious* community.

## 1. By protecting our natural assets

- Promote and support environmental stewardship efforts
- Together with the County of Oxford enhance awareness and importance of the Woodlands Conservation By-law
- Township to undertake an enhanced road side tree planting program - use of larger caliper trees to ensure survivability
- Work with UTRCA to implement a tree planting program for private landowners
- Continue to work work with the County of Oxford to enhance waste management initiatives in the County



# We are an *environmentally conscious* community

Directions and actions to make Zorra a more *environmentally conscious* community.

## 2. By using our resources wisely

- Begin assessing carbon footprint in anticipation of implementation of a provincial carbon tax
- Installation of energy management practices in all of our facilities, eg. low flow toilets, light motion sensors, conversion of lighting to LED fixtures
- Installing more garbage and recycling containers in all of our parks and in Embro and Thamesford
- Investigate installing electric vehicle charging stations at various locations in the Township

## 3. By doing a better job to monitor and manage our aggregate resources

- Carry out a yearly review of MNR Compliance Assessment Reports
- Adopt new policies as a result of the Interim Control By-law
- Township staff to carry out photographic details of gravel pits
- Initiate a program to ensure operators are complying with ARA site plans with respect to berm maintenance