



# Joint Municipal Strategic Planning

## Public Workshop – Notes

### Region of Waterloo & Township of Woolwich

May 22, 2019  
6 – 8:30 p.m.  
Breslau Community Centre

**Officials In attendance:** Mayor Sandy Shantz, CAO David Brenneman, Councillor [\_\_\_\_], Manager of Strategic Planning and Strategic Initiatives at the Region of Waterloo, Lorie Fioze.

**Community member demographic details:** Citizens from Breslau (10 years in residence, 12 years in residence, 10 years, 38 years, and 47 years in residence), Bloomingdale (10 years), Conestoga (5 years) and four others who did not specify (arrived late and missed the introductions).

## Themes arising from the discussions

One overall theme stood out from the feedback; “community connectedness” or “sense of community,” specifically as it relates to Breslau.

From the limited number of residents that attended the session, and most either live in Breslau or used to live in Breslau, the sentiments expressed can be summed up as “...there are not enough community supports to build a truly connected community in Breslau,” this as opposed to other communities, according to attendees.

### Subthemes include:

- A lack of appropriate housing for older adults or seniors who wish to downsize yet remain in the community,
- A lack of mixed commercial/residential space to walk to or gather (coffee shops, book stores, retail space, etc.),
- A lack of organized sports, recreation facilities and open communal space for unstructured play.
- A lack of a library to serve as a meeting place and hub for cultural events and activities.
- Residents identified Breslau **as a great central location with easy access to Kitchener/Waterloo and the 401** (by car) but this fact also makes Breslau an attractive bedroom community location for commuters – further increasing the sense of disconnectedness as most people’s lives are centred around where they work.
- Families with children in sports are likely to meet and engage with each other, but the lack of recreation facilities for organized sports means that they commute to other towns to play games.
- A lack of integration with the greater Kitchener/Waterloo urban environment or rather, their connection with KW is overwhelmingly dominated by car traffic.

## Raw data comments

Participants were asked the visioning question: “How might we make this a better place to live, work and play?”

### Comments include:

- Cycle to downtown Kitchener/Waterloo on a separated bike path.
- Phase II ION: worried about the increased traffic due to construction.
- Library, we need one in Breslau (*part of a theme related to lack of local culture, sports and a community hub.*), host events, art, film, computers, opportunities to get together.
- Need a residence for older adults and seniors to move to (*reference study on seniors issues conducted by Woolwich a few years ago.*)
- Need public transit options
- Gentleman spoke about his experience in 1972, when Breslau had bus service, a bank and library – now we are a bedroom community with few services.
- There is nowhere to walk to (*of interest or to do*).
- Need more commercial and community facilities to keep people here.
- Need more trails.
- Great central location, close to KW and 401 for commuters.
- Need a town square for the community to congregate, a meeting place.
- Community is built for cars – need communities designed for active transportation.
- Need more parks for unstructured kid play, soccer fields, baseball, and free space.
- Elmira has splash pad which is good, Exhibition Park in Guelph is a good example of what we need.
- We need events, fireworks or other community events that bring people together.
- Breslau does not feel ‘homey’ like Elmira which has more activities, swimming.
- Create a connected community.

### Notes and comments from the discussion that followed

- New library needed in Breslau to serve families. Can be our cultural centre, like the Idea Exchange in Cambridge.
- Breslau needs bus service.
- (We) need more mixed business/residential mix, “it’s boring here.” Coffee shops, “our walk score sucks.”  
Walking trails are great but could be expanded – and spray for mosquitoes, the trails are really bad for bugs.
- Create safe bike routes; the built environment was designed for cars.
- Breslau is central to KW, Cambridge, Guelph, the 401, and is a good location and has a small town feel, character and accessibility. **However**, Breslau has become a bedroom community, most people work somewhere else, less connection to the community.
- Few resources for seniors, seniors are forced to leave here at a certain life stage - -this should be addressed, missed opportunity. The new apartments building is not specifically for older adults.
- *There was a lively discussion around excessive speeds by drivers on country roads, generally agreement that it was a problem but no clear solution emerged from the discussion, lowering the*

*speed limit was generally agreed to result in limited reduction since drivers seem to be prepared to speed anyway (or at least that was the impression from the group).*

#### **Topic discussions: Community vitality**

- Sports – need more open space for families, better parks, more natural space with trails. More sports teams not just baseball.
- Children on sports teams have to travel to other cities to play.
- Events – more like Conestoga, more events.
- Elmira has a ton of programs for homeschooling. This area has no programs; I can see how having more programs here would help keep people here.
- There are inconsistent garbage collection rules across the Township, different centres have different rules. Why? Should be more emphasis on reduce and reuse.

#### **Topic discussions: Democratic engagement**

- People are unlikely to get involved.

#### **Topic discussions: Transportation**

- Traffic close to rivers seems to be a concern for some: what if there is a spill?
- Traffic speeds are an issue (as mentioned).

#### **Topic discussions: Leisure and culture**

- Should be more promotion of existing facilities, make access free to encourage use.
- Need a library
- Better trails
- Better walk score, more commercial business for citizens

#### **One BIG question**

- Need to show empathy for those living in the country with respect to speeders – live this experience to see what we see, need speeding enforcement.
- Need to integrate Breslau above Fountain street, we are separate now, add buses for example.
- Integrate mixed residential commercial space during next expansion, and integrate cultural facilities into the space.
- Seniors are living much longer and this trend is continuing, the impact of this is huge, what is the plan? How are we taking advantage of this?
- Integrate seniors into schools OR integrate public and school libraries (for example).
- Traffic was the biggest issue during the campaign (Mayor Shantz).