

Township of Wellington North

YEAR REVIEW

2023



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High-Healthy-Happy
Alt. 1407 ft.

MOUNT
FOREST

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STRATEGIC PLAN
OVERVIEW



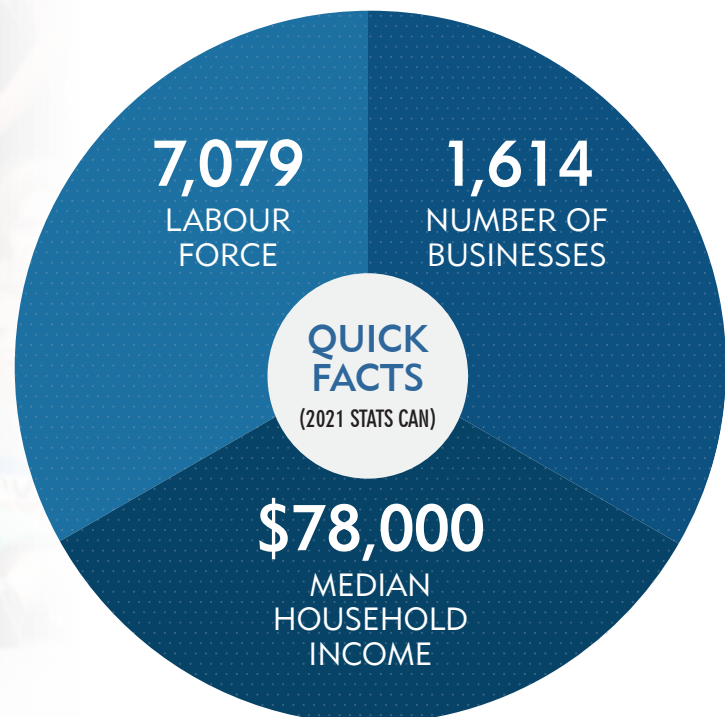
INTRODUCTION



The Township of Wellington North at a Glance

The Township of Wellington North was formed in 1999 with the amalgamation of the Town of Mount Forest, the Village of Arthur, the Townships of West Luther, and Arthur, as well as some of the outlying areas in the Townships of Peel and West Garafraxa. Stretching over 526 square kilometres, it is now home to over 12,500 people – and is expected to grow to approximately 20,500 people by 2051 (an increase of more than 64 %).

Wellington North is a well-diversified and evolving Township - with a strong industrial and manufacturing employment base, as well as a strong agricultural and agri-food business sector. The community is also home to many walking and cycling trails, unique stores, and gift shops as well as many cultural and historical amenities and exciting events. This includes the Mount Forest Fireworks Festival, one of the top 100 festivals in Ontario.



STREET PERFORMER KOBBLER JAY IS BEING ASSISTED BY WELLINGTON NORTH CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL DARREN JONES AT THE 21ST MOUNT FOREST FIREWORKS FESTIVAL ON JULY 15 2023.

TOWNSHIP OF WELLINGTON NORTH

COUNCIL



FROM LEFT: COUNCILLOR STEVE McCABE (WARD 4), COUNCILLOR SHERRY BURKE (WARD 2), MAYOR ANDY LENNOX, COUNCILLOR LISA HERN (WARD 3), AND COUNCILLOR PENNY RENKEN (WARD 1)

The Township of Wellington North Council is governed by an elected Council of five members, who each serve a four-year term.

The Mayor and Council are responsible for developing the long-range vision for the future of the community. Council establishes policies that affect the overall operation of the township and are responsive to residents' needs and priorities.

To ensure that these policies are carried out and that the community receives the services they need, Council appoints a Chief Administrative Officer who is directly responsible for the Township's administration.

HIGHLIGHTS

2023 BUDGET*

Operating Budget/Total Tax Levy

\$9,011,967

(excludes water/wastewater budget/user fee-based)

Proposed Capital Budget

\$8,564,352

Water and Sewer Operating Budget

\$5,795,671

Total Reserves

\$24,678,515.05

(audited figure 2022 beginning balance)

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Senior Management Team is responsible for implementing the direction set out by Township Council, including providing efficient, high-quality services for the community as well as overseeing the sustainable and responsible use of township resources. It is led by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and includes the Heads of the following divisions:

- BUILDING AND PLANNING
- CLERKS
- COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- FINANCE
- FIRE
- HUMAN RESOURCES
- INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING
- TRANSPORTATION
- RECREATION
- WATER AND WASTEWATER

STAFFING

47

FULL TIME TOTAL
 Full time non union: 25
 Full time union: 22

6

PART TIME

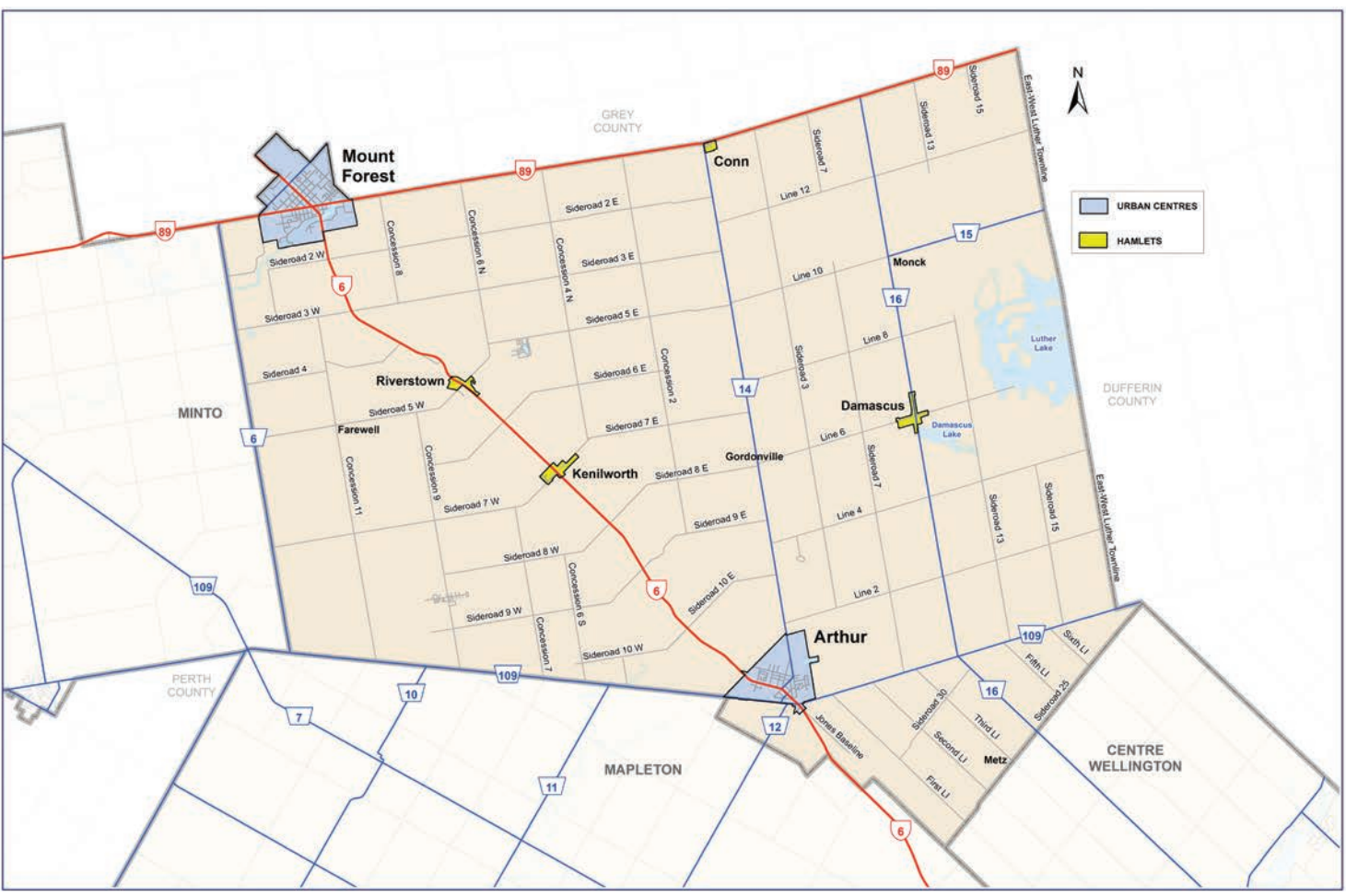
51

SEASONAL OR TERM / TASK



48

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS



DID YOU KNOW

THAT THE TOWNSHIP DELIVERS **7** PROGRAMS,
WITH OVER **25** SERVICES?

These
include:

Governance and Civic Engagement

(Council, Community
Engagement and
Decision Making)

Corporate Services

(Human Resources,
Financial Management,
Information Technology,
Clerks)

Community Services

(Community Recreation
Facilities and Programming,
Parks and Open Spaces,
Cemeteries)

Environmental Services

(Water Treatment and
Distribution, Wastewater
Collection and
Treatment)

Development

(Land Use Planning,
Building Permits,
Economic
Development)

Public Safety

(By-law Enforcement,
Building Inspections,
Fire Services,
Animal Control)

Transportation

(Road Construction and
Maintenance, Sidewalks,
Street Lighting, Winter
Maintenance, Bridges and
Culverts, Fleet
Management)

**WE ALSO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH THE COUNTY OF
WELLINGTON WHO DELIVER
THE FOLLOWING SERVICES TO
TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS:**



Emergency Management
Environmental Sustainability
Garbage and Recycling
Library
Long Term Care
Museum and Archives
Planning and Development
County Roads





MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

CHARTING THE COURSE.

IF THERE WAS ONE THEME FOR 2023, THAT MIGHT BE IT.

In 2023, Council, the public and staff came together to have many important conversations about who we are and where we want to go as a community into the future.

We heard many things as part of these conversations:

- That we offer many services that are valued by our residents and businesses – but there is still room for improvement and a new way to deliver these services
- That growth continues to be a key concern and how we make sure our community addresses growth both sustainably and responsibly will be a critical part of maintaining our quality of life
- That we need to do better when it comes to encouraging people to be part of the decision making process and in communicating everything that is happening in our community

All of these priorities were identified as part of the Strategic Planning process – and all of them work together to support the primary goal that will be the focus for this Council throughout the rest of the term – to build a **SAFE, SUSTAINABLE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY**.

As part of our commitment to this goal, Council has approved a three-year workplan that will take action in all these areas. I look forward to working with staff, Council and all of our community partners to continue to make Wellington North the very best it can be. While there are many challenges ahead, I am confident, that together, we can find innovative, collaborative and meaningful solutions.

Lastly – I would like to congratulate the many, many people who made 2023 a great year for Wellington North. The accomplishments outlined in this Year in Review would not have been possible without the partnerships and dedication of staff, Council and our community as a whole.



CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Wellington North approved its **2024 Strategic Plan** based on extensive consultation with Council, the community and staff.
- Council approved the Township's first **Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement** taking an important step towards a broader understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation process.
- Over 400 people participated at two **Volunteer and Newcomer Celebrations** – The Township wants to thank all those who make our community better and offer a warm welcome to those joining us here in Wellington North!
- Worked with the three Conservation Authorities (Grand River, Saugeen and Maitland) to **negotiate the Memorandums of Understanding and Funding Agreements** legislated by the Province to govern financial contributions and service delivery.
- Completed a **review of several key township policies** and (electoral wards, animal and canine control, winter burials, cemetery fees).



CORPORATE SERVICES

- Made significant upgrades to our **IT Infrastructure and Network**, more fully integrating, streamlining and modernizing the system for better functionality and security.
- Implemented mandatory monthly **Cyber Security Training** for all municipal Council and staff.
- Moved forward with an **electronic document management system** – digitizing over 18,500 Township records making them easy to locate and instantly accessible.
- Participated in several **job fairs and other recruitment activities** to let people know about career opportunities at the Township.
- Provided a **mid-year capital project progress report** to Council identifies status updates and budget modifications for greater transparency and accountability.

MOUNT FOREST VOLUNTEER AND
NEWCOMER CELEBRATION ON SEPT. 14



MOUNT FOREST LIONS CLUB BOOTH
WITH SUSAN WELLS, GEORGE LAURONIC
AND MARY RUTH JOB.

The 2023 Year in Review provides an overview of the Township's accomplishments during the past fiscal year. The following section includes some **highlights of the projects and initiatives** that were completed as part of the 7 core programs that the Township delivers.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

PROGRAMMING:

- **Opened the Arthur outdoor pool** on June 5th (approximately 1 month earlier than usual) to help attract new guards to the Bronze program, offer more swimming lessons and allow local schools access to the pool. Approximately 515 swimmers took part in the public swimming and family swims in the month of June.
- Approximately **3670 admissions at the pool this summer** – not including lessons, day camps or schools. **Over 220 participants registered for lessons.**
- **Over 500 day camp spaces** offered through our summer day-camp program between Mount Forest and Arthur, over 8 sessions. This extremely popular program was at capacity with a full waitlist.
- Staff continue to **review opportunities for new and/or enhanced recreational programming.** In 2023 a roller skating pilot took place and changes to the Pickleball program were made to increase hours and ease of set up.
- Successfully **partnered with the Seniors Centre for Excellence** to receive a \$23,000 grant (New Horizons for Seniors Program) allowing the Township to offer a series of training opportunities for Seniors looking to become more comfortable and safe using technology.

FACILITIES:

- Further progress on the **Mount Forest Outdoor Pool and Aquatics Centre** detailed design, workplan, funding and fundraising strategy. Stay tuned for more on this exciting initiative in 2024!
- **Recreation facilities in Arthur** received several upgrades, including a new roof at the Arthur Community Centre and an inside facelift with new paint in the dressing rooms, auditorium, and lobby.
- Upgrades at the **Mount Forest and Area Sportsplex**, including new paint in the dressing rooms, kitchen and bar as well as the creation of new office space in the upper hall that provides flexible work and meeting space for staff.
- Completion of the **Mount Forest fairground** enhancements, as well repairs at the Arthur trail bridge, new picnic tables at the Bill Moody Park Pavilion and new equipment at the Mount Forest Skateboard park, and topping up the red clay at the Donald Softball Diamond.
- Purchased and installed **new equipment** (ball diamond groomer, lawn mower, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDS), new coolers) to help keep facilities and grounds up to date and working their best.
- Installed a new 72 niche columbarium at the **Mount Forest Cemetery** - creating a resting place for 144 urns.





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

21ST MOUNT FOREST FIREWORKS FESTIVAL



SAM AND ROBIN PROVIDED LIVELY TUNES IN ARTHUR ON CANADA DAY



BONNY McDOUGALL BEING PRESENTED WITH HER 2023 SENIOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

CULTURE:

- Partnered and provided support to the Community Gardens Leadership Team to establish a **Community Garden in Mount Forest**.
- Successfully partnered with **Lynes Blacksmith Shop** to receive \$16,600 in funding from the Rural Economic Development (RED) program – helping restore the number one cultural asset in the Township.
- **17 Cultural Moments** were delivered at 2023 Council Meetings bringing the total number of cultural moments shared to 140 since the program began in 2012.
- Cultural Grants & Funding program **approved grants** to the Arthur Barn Quilt Trail Project and Mount Forest Fireworks Festival.
- **Wellington North Culture Days** were held from September 23rd – October 16th. Events included Metz Pumpkinfest, Lynes Blacksmith Shop Tour and an Artisan’s Showcase amongst others. 2024 Culture Days will include celebrations around the 25th anniversary of amalgamation.

EVENTS:

- **Arthur Volunteer Celebration & Newcomer Welcome** hosted in April
- **Arthur Canada Day celebrations** were second to none!
- **Mount Forest Fireworks Festival** was back with a blast in July!
- **Mount Forest Volunteer Celebration & Newcomer Welcome** hosted in September
- **First Annual Artisans Showcase** held in October
- **The Louise Marshall Hospital Foundation Gala** (facility partnership)

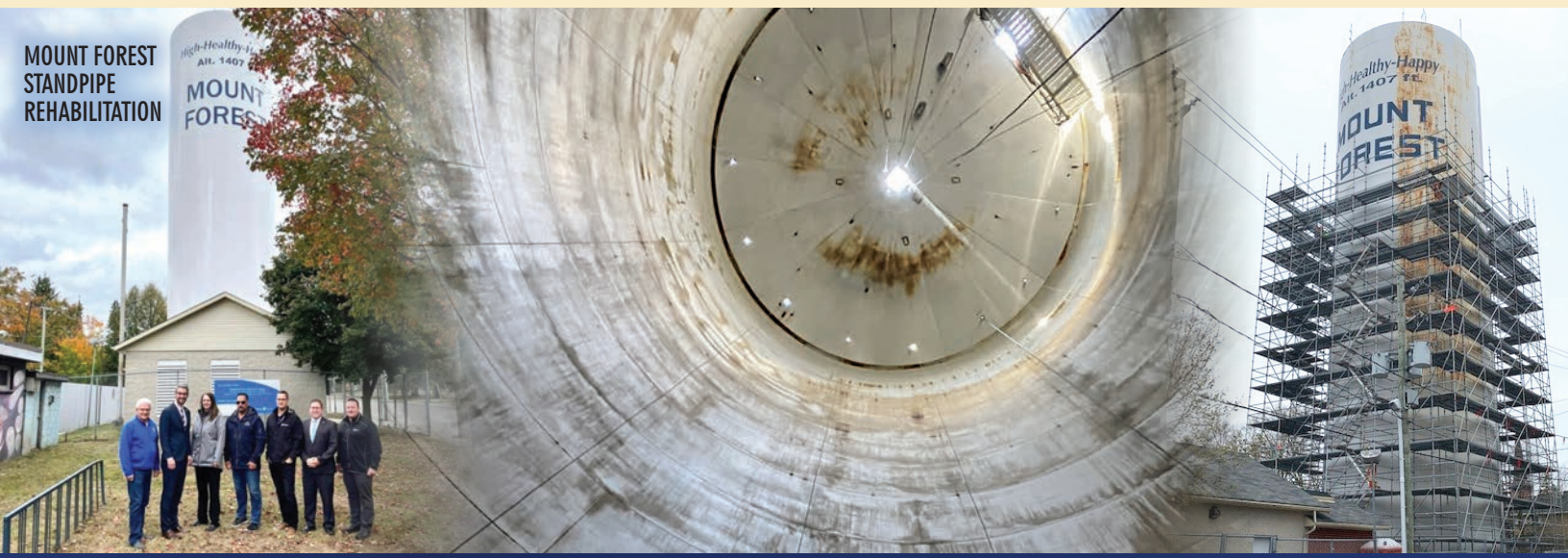


THE KRUSHER STUNT TEAM AT THE MOUNT FOREST FIREWORKS FESTIVAL

CONGRATULATIONS
TO THE WELLINGTON NORTH WINNERS
OF THE 2023 ONTARIO VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD!

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Debbie Atkinson | Bonny McDougall | Conner Schmidt |
| Jack Baker | Laird More | Margy Smart |
| Vern Job | Alan Rawlins | |

The 2023 Year in Review provides an overview of the Township's accomplishments during the past fiscal year. The following section includes some **highlights of the projects and initiatives** that were completed as part of the 7 core programs that the Township delivers.



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

- The **Mount Forest Standpipe** was rehabilitated in a joint project between the Township and the Provincial and Federal governments using Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program funds. Completed on time and on-budget this \$1.4 M investment extends the life of this critical asset for another 30 years.
- A Class Environmental Assessment was initiated for the **Arthur Water System** for Supply Redundancy and Storage.
- New watermain, sanitary sewer & storm sewer mains were installed on Domville Street between Conestoga Street and Andrew Street as part of the **Domville Street Reconstruction Phase 2** project (total project \$2.3 M investment).
- New watermain & storm sewer main was installed on Cork Street between Princess Street and Waterloo Street as part of the **Cork Street Reconstruction project** in Mount Forest.
- New watermain installed on Preston Street North as part of the **street upgrades in Arthur** (\$184 K investment).
- **Annual Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) inspections** of the Arthur and Mount Forest Drinking Water Systems resulted in final inspection ratings of 100% for the 16th year in a row with no non-compliances.
- Re-Accreditation audit of the Townships **Drinking Water Quality Management System** was conducted by a third party. There were no non-conformities and the Township maintains their Certificate of Accreditation.
- Performed thorough inspection and maintenance activities on above and below ground equipment at **Well 6 in Mount Forest** to optimize water supply life span.
- Participated in **educational opportunities** – answering the question “Where does our water come from – and where does it go after we use it?” as part of Wellington North Day Camps and the Arthur Public School (Grade 1).



PUBLIC SAFETY

WELLINGTON NORTH FIRE

Responded to approximately 404 calls between the Mount Forest and Arthur Stations. This included:

- **34** Fire
- **70** Rescue
- **127** Medical
- **12** Public Hazard
- **161** Other



BUILDING SERVICES

2023 was a busy year for the Building Division with:

- **317** building permits issued worth **\$128,247,550** in construction value
- **181** residential building permits resulting in **217** new dwellings
- **43** industrial, commercial, institutional building permits
- **56** agricultural building permits
- **27** septic system permits
- **10** demolition permits

BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT (City of Guelph Contract)

- **95** Property Standard complaints received, with **1** cancelled and **83** resolved. As of December 2023, **11** complaints were open with by-law officers working towards compliance with property owners.

*Completed a review of the By-law partnership with the City of Guelph and extended the partnership for an additional 3 years.

DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- **Wellington North Farmers' Market** in Mount Forest opened for its 11th year. Future plan includes working towards a Farmers Market in Arthur.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship program**, (Student Start Up Program) celebrated its 4th year. Thirteen Wellington North youth were among the sixty participants across the Saugeen Region.
- 11 Community Improvement applicants received **\$31,100 in funding** to assist with signage and other business improvements.
- **Updated our Community Improvement Plan Program** to include a Green Energy grant and extended council commitment to the program through to 2028.
- 41 organizations received **\$75,320 in grants and donations** under the Township's Community Development Fund.
- Over 400 grade 9 and 10 students attended our **2nd annual Explore your Future In Wellington event** at the Mount Forest & District Sports Complex in April.
- **Digital Main Street program** continued thanks to a two-year grant in the amount of \$58,700 to support small businesses to take advantage of digital technologies.
- **Support and Advancement of Women programs** continued with online webinars, celebration of International Women's Day and sponsorship of WOWSA initiatives (Women of Wellington Saugeen Area).
- Partnering to provide the lighting for the **Mount Forest Business Improvement Association (BIA) Reimagined Laneway project**.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Continued discussions on **future employment areas** between Wellington North, West Grey and the Counties of Wellington and Grey.
- County continued to work through their **Official Plan review** with support of local Council and staff.

The 2023 Year in Review provides an overview of the Township's accomplishments during the past fiscal year. The following section includes some **highlights of the projects and initiatives** that were completed as part of the 7 core programs that the Township delivers.

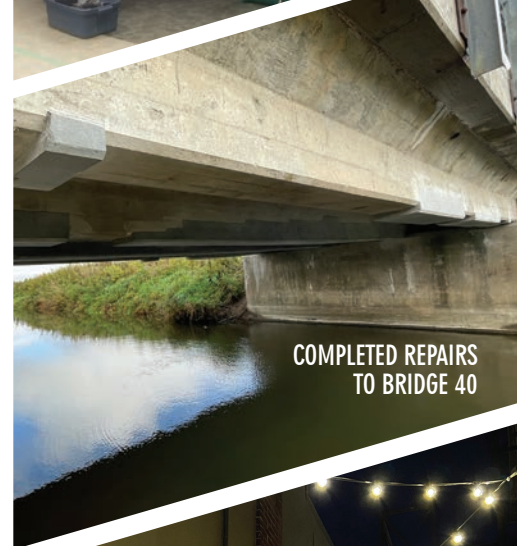


TRANSPORTATION

- Completed the reconstruction of **Domville Street Phase 2 and Preston Street North** in Arthur and **Cork Street** in Mount Forest (\$3.5 M investment).
- **Completed repairs** to Bridge 40 (Line 6) and Bridge 2040 (Sideroad 13) (\$472 K investment).
- Completed the **culvert replacement** at Sideroad 9 W (\$220 K investment).
- **3 rural road resurfacing projects** (Line 12, Sideroad 7E and Sideroad 5W) and 2 rural road rebuilds (Sideroad 13 and Sideroad 9W) completed (\$1 M investment).
- **New and replacement sidewalks** on Wellington Street East, Foster Street, Queen Street West, and Edward Street (\$188 K).
- \$300 K investment in **urban paving**.
- **Completed a Roads Needs Study and Sidewalk Assessment.** A Roads Needs Study was completed to manage the road systems and document the existing condition of the road infrastructure. This information will identify deficiencies in the existing road and sidewalk network and prepare rehabilitation strategies to maintain and upgrade the system. Additionally, several traffic counts were conducted to monitor patterns of travel throughout the community.
- Completed a **Bridge Inspection Report** to identify safety concerns and structural deficiencies and to help prioritize improvements in an effort to minimize the cost to maintain the bridges.
- New **Traffic Lights** were installed at the intersection of Main Street North and Mount Forest Drive in Mount Forest.



2ND ANNUAL EXPLORE YOUR FUTURE IN WELLINGTON EVENT



COMPLETED REPAIRS TO BRIDGE 40



MOUNT FOREST BIA REIMAGINED LANEWAY PROJECT



NEW TRAFFIC LIGHTS INSTALLED AT THE INTERSECTION OF MAIN STREET NORTH AND MOUNT FOREST DRIVE IN MOUNT FOREST



PRIORITY
AREA

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The following highlights some of the main actions the Township took in 2023 to address these priorities:

THE PRIORITY
AREAS
SUPPORTING
THIS GOAL ARE:

1
SHAPE AND
SUPPORT
SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH

2
DELIVER QUALITY,
EFFICIENT COMMUNITY
SERVICES ALIGNED
WITH THE TOWNSHIP
MANDATE AND CAPACITY

3
ENHANCE
INFORMATION SHARING
AND PARTICIPATION
IN DECISION MAKING

1 SHAPE AND SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- Initiation of a **Growth Management Action plan** and the **creation of an Advisory Committee** including representatives from across the township. This initiative will be a key part of the discussion about development and growth in the community.
- **Reviewed sewage capacity** throughout the Township and recommended a pause on future sewage allocation in Arthur pending the outcome of the Growth Management Action Plan.

2 DELIVER QUALITY, EFFICIENT COMMUNITY SERVICES ALIGNED WITH THE TOWNSHIP MANDATE AND CAPACITY

- **Realigned staffing capacity** to address priority service areas, introduced **co-op student opportunities** and continued recruitment efforts for key positions (including Finance, Community and Economic Development, Roads, Recreation and Building).
- Worked with other area municipalities to investigate **potential partnership opportunities for service delivery** (for example Guelph By-law).
- Completed a **Fire Services Review** and confirmed the ongoing partnership with Minto to provide shared Fire Management Services.
- Worked with the County of Wellington and the Mount Forest Green Team to develop a **local Tree Inventory App** that will be piloted by volunteers in 2024.
- Connected the County of Wellington and the Mount Forest Green Team who **planted over 170 trees** to help naturalize the former County Landfill site in Mount Forest.
- Team Wellington North joined 50 plus other volunteers at the **Wardens Tree Planting** to plant over 700 trees to naturalize the area around the Arthur Lagoons.
- Participating in the **Saugeen Connects partnership** with Minto, West Grey, Aaran-Elderslie, Brockton, Town of Hanover and the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation.
- Partnered with several local businesses to create **sponsorship opportunities** for recreational programming, allowing free access to the indoor walking program, public skates and swims.
- Improved the watermain valve repair process by using a **new tool** that allows a quicker, more efficient approach (saving approx. \$8,000 dollars per repair, hours of staff labour and minimal disruption to the road way- with no need to excavate).

In October 2023, Council approved its 2024 Strategic Plan based on extensive consultation with Council, the community and staff.

This strategy identified the primary goal of building a **safe, sustainable and welcoming community.**



3

ENHANCE INFORMATION SHARING AND PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

- Completed the Townships first ever **Community Satisfaction Survey** which included both a statistically significant phone survey and an online survey open to anyone
 - 97% of respondents satisfied with the quality of life in the Township of Wellington North
 - 96% were satisfied with the services provided by the Township – and levels of satisfaction remained high across the majority of service areas
- Held two Public Information Centres on the proposed **Strategic Plan** with over 50 people in attendance. Over 250 online survey responses were also received – with all feedback helping shape the priorities adopted by Council as part of the process.
- Held two Public Information Centers on proposed **Capital Projects** with over 50 people in attendance. Over 50 surveys were received as part of this public consultation. Top comments were related to tree preservation and traffic management. The Project design team will review the surveys for consideration to the project design. Thanks to all who participated!



WARDEN TREE PLANTING

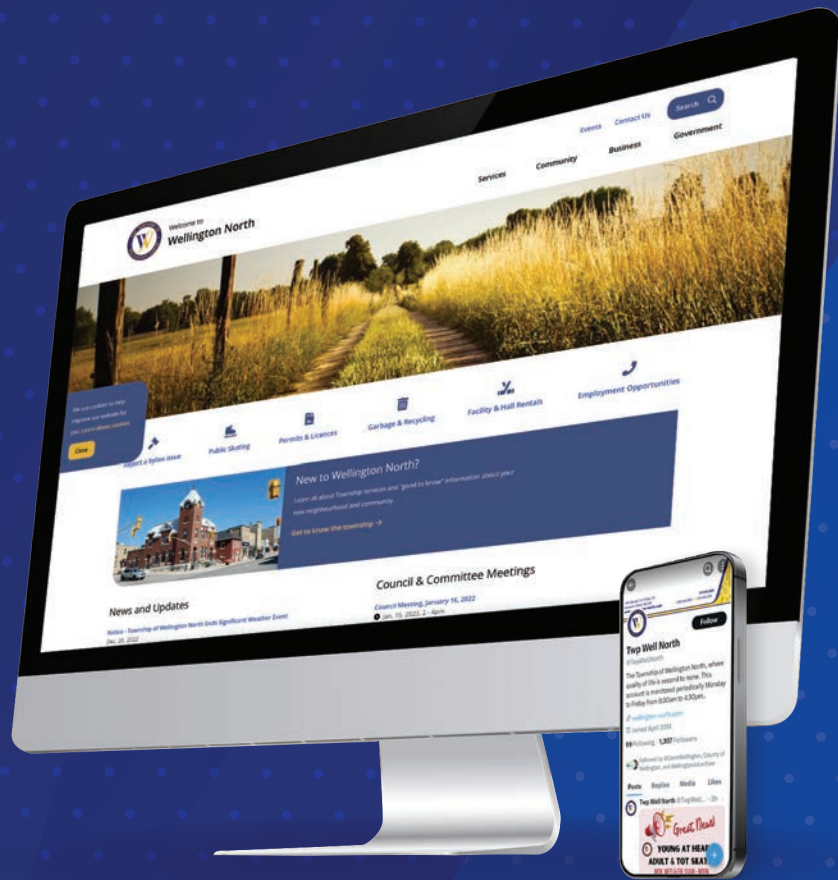
WHAT'S NEXT

IT'S AN EXCITING TIME IN WELLINGTON NORTH!

With the 2024 Strategic Plan approved, it is time to get to work. Interested in getting Involved? Stay tuned for more information on:

- The 2024 Growth Management Action Plan;
- Updating our planning and funding framework;
- Continuing to improve our services – like enhancing recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities;
- New opportunities for the community to shape the work the Township does (key projects and decisions);
- Exploring new partnerships that allow us to leverage our collective talents and resources; and
- Celebrating our successes!

For more information
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.wellington-north.com



TOWNSHIP OF WELLINGTON NORTH



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