

CHAPTER 8

ECONOMIC POLICIES

Township Council is committed to supporting the long-term economic development and competitiveness of Woolwich Township. Council approved an Economic Development Plan in 2011 “to shape the future of its economy, to leverage its existing strengths and to respond to economic challenges and opportunities in a way to balance the needs and interests of many different groups” in the community. The Township will from time-to-time review, update and revise its Economic Development Plan and in doing so ensure compliance to the Official Plan or, where appropriate, make amendments to this Plan to align with the Economic Development Plan. The approach will enable Woolwich to grow and prosper as a diversified economy while maintaining its distinctive individual community cores and rural landscapes.

In addition to implementing the strategic direction outlined in the Economic Development Plan, the policies of this Chapter seek to strengthen and diversify Woolwich’s economy by capitalizing on new investment and employment opportunities as they emerge. The policies also strive to support existing local businesses, provide certainty for traditional industries, and foster a climate of entrepreneurship and innovation.

This Chapter also recognizes the importance of agriculture to the township’s economy and high quality of life. Each job in the agricultural sector supports several other local agri-businesses and significantly contributes to jobs and economic prosperity in the township and the region. The policies of this Plan therefore seek to support the viability of local farms and help the township’s agricultural sector to thrive.

8.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND GENERAL POLICIES

8.1.1. The Township will be guided by the following principles in shaping its economic development policies:

- a) Implement well managed, balanced, responsible growth across the Township, supporting and marinating its identity, sense of place, rural landscapes and distinct community cores.
- b) Ensure strategic development of infrastructure in support of well-managed and responsible growth.
- c) Build awareness and support for local businesses and strengthen and support entrepreneurship.
- d) Develop and implement effective tools and programs, to communicate, support and develop the local community economy within Woolwich.
- e) Support the current and potential labour force in Woolwich to retain, attract, and develop talent and a strong work ethic.
- f) Continue to develop positive partnerships and relationships in support of the local community economy.

- g) Maintain effective and timely program development, management & implementation, and evaluation.
- h) Maintain and enhance the strong base of agricultural and rural businesses.
- i) Support and enhance the manufacturing base with an emphasis on advanced manufacturing, and manufacturing and technology focused on sustainability principles.
- j) Embrace, encourage, and support the development of the Knowledge-based/High tech Sector in Woolwich.
- k) Woolwich's Tourism & Recreation and Assets & Cultural Assets, Programs and Initiatives.
- l) Support a vibrant retail base in the appropriate Settlement community cores.

8.1.2 In accordance with these general principles the Township shall strive for the following:

- a) Enable the growth and development of Woolwich's economy while maintaining its distinct urban and rural character and quality of life.
- b) Directing growth to the *built-up areas* to make better use existing lands and infrastructure, and pedestrian oriented, human scale development.
- c) Protect agricultural lands for agricultural uses.
- d) Develop a *brownfield community improvement plan*.
- e) Ensure the Township's road system meets the needs and requirements of the Township and its residents.
- f) Encourage and facilitate transit and intermodal connections to link transportation infrastructure as part of a well-planned transportation network.
- g) Develop and encourage growth which addresses the needs of the labour force to encourage people to live and work in the Township.
- h) Work with the Region and other agencies to address the employment and tourism needs of the Township.
- i) Regularly review, research, and assess agricultural and manufacturing needs and changes to determine if changes to policies and regulations are needed.
- j) Seek opportunities to link employment and commercial sectors for mutual benefit and support.
- k) Provide for an appropriate mix of land, parcel sizes, to address the needs of *employment areas*.
- l) Build on and enhance the tourism, arts and cultural assets of the Township including the provision of recreational uses, and appropriate zoning to accommodate such uses.
- m) Encourage innovation in manufacturing and agriculture.
- n) Develop and encourage new employment sectors within the *employment areas* and commercial areas.

8.1.3 The Township will periodically review and update its Economic Development Plan, and amend this Plan as required to align with Township's Council's economic objectives and priorities.

8.2 EMPLOYMENT

General Employment Policies

- 8.2.1 The Township will promote opportunities for economic development competitiveness by:
- a) Making more efficient use of existing *employment areas* and vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities;
 - b) Ensuring the availability of sufficient land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
 - c) Planning to better connect areas with high employment densities to existing or planned transit;
 - d) Integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.
 - e) Developing business partnerships and relationships in support of the local economy;
 - f) Building awareness and support for local businesses and support entrepreneurship;
 - g) Developing and implementing effective tools and programs to strengthen and diversify the local economy;
 - h) Promoting education and skills training within the community to support the development of the existing labour force;
 - i) Supporting and enhance the manufacturing base with an emphasis on advanced manufacturing, and manufacturing and technology focused on sustainability principles;
 - j) Encouraging the development of the knowledge-based, high-tech sector in Woolwich;
 - k) Supporting Woolwich's tourism, recreational and unique cultural heritage assets; and
 - l) Promoting energy conservation and providing opportunities for development of *renewable energy systems* and *alternative energy systems*, including district energy; and
 - m) Ensuring the necessary *infrastructure* is provided to *employment areas* to support long-term needs.

Planning for Employment Areas

- 8.2.2 The Township will assess and analyse the potential employment needs, and the potential for employment lands in all parts of the Township. Such a comprehensive plan will include a review of the land supply, servicing status, ownership, quality, and other factors affecting utilization.
- 8.2.3 The Township will ensure that there is an adequate supply of designated and shovel ready lands within the Township Urban Area and Urban Areas to meet our short term and long-term employment needs. In addition, The Township will maintain an employment land inventory including available lot sizes and, from time to time, update this inventory taking

into consideration new *development*, expansions and re-urbanization of existing properties.

- 8.2.4 The Township will encourage the location of those types of manufacturing and service uses within employment areas which:
- a) Are not noxious industries;
 - b) Do not require a standard of services, which the municipality is unable or unwilling to provide;
 - c) Will provide job opportunity to the residents of the township;
 - d) Will not utilize lands designated in *Prime Agricultural Areas or Rural Areas*, except in accordance with Policies 6.3.1.1 (Minor Change/Expansion) and 19.10 (Existing Use);
 - e) Is compatible with existing *development*; and
 - f) Will conform to the policies of this Plan and to the provisions of the Zoning By-law.
- 8.2.5 In planning for employment, the Township will minimize surface parking and facilitate the development of *active transportation* networks and, where appropriate, a transit supportive built form.
- 8.2.6 The Township will protect *employment areas* in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses that require those locations.
- 8.2.7 The Township will plan for all *employment areas* by:
- a) Prohibiting residential uses and limiting other *sensitive land uses* that are not ancillary to the primary employment use within *employment areas*;
 - b) Prohibiting *major retail* uses or establishing a size or scale threshold for any *major retail uses* that are permitted and prohibit any *major retail* uses that would exceed that threshold, within *employment areas*;
 - c) *Major facilities* and *sensitive land uses* shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, to minimize and mitigate *adverse effects* from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with Provincial guidelines, standards, and procedures;
 - d) Where avoidance is not possible in accordance with Policy 8.2.7 c), the Township shall protect the long-term viability of existing and planned industrial manufacturing or other uses that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and development of proposed *sensitive land uses* are only permitted if the following are demonstrated in accordance with Provincial guidelines, standards and procedures:
 - i) there is an identified need for the proposed use;
 - ii) alternative locations for the proposed use have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations;
 - iii) *adverse effects* to the proposed *sensitive land use* are minimized and mitigated; and
 - iv) potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other uses are minimize and mitigated; and

- e) Sites with contaminants in land or water shall be assessed and remediated as necessary prior to any activity on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be no *adverse effects*.
- 8.2.8 The *development of sensitive land uses, major retail uses, or major office uses* will, in accordance with Provincial guidelines, avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse effects on the industrial, manufacturing, or other uses that are particularly vulnerable to encroachment.
- 8.2.9 The Township will minimize the impact of employment uses ensuring that such uses comply with all applicable Regional and Provincial environmental policies, guidelines and legislation. These potential impacts include, but is not limited to, the emission of noise and vibration; the emission of impermissible concentrations of air contaminants such as dust, smoke, odour, fumes and other particulate; water quality and waste control, and the discharge of contaminants to surface water and ground water.
- 8.2.10 *Employment Areas* planned for industrial, or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-*employment areas*.
- 8.2.11 The Township will promote *development of employment areas* within the Township Urban Area and Urban Areas to be pedestrian and transit friendly.

Conversion of Employment Lands

- 8.2.11 The conversion of lands within *employment areas* to non-employment uses in the Township may be permitted only through a *municipal comprehensive review* of Regional Official Plan where it is demonstrated that:
- a) There is a need for the conversion;
 - b) The lands are not required over the horizon of this Plan for the employment purposes for which they are designated;
 - c) The Township will maintain sufficient employment lands to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
 - d) The proposed uses would not adversely affect the overall viability of the *employment area* or the achievement of the minimum reurbanization and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan; and
 - e) There is existing or planned infrastructure and *public service facilities* to accommodate the proposed uses.
- 8.2.12 Any proposed amendments to this Plan to permit new or expanded opportunities for *major retail* in an *employment area* may only occur in accordance with Section 8.2.11 of this Plan and Section 2.G.4 to 2.G.6 of the Regional Plan.

8.2.13 Outside of *employment areas*, the Township will ensure that that any proposals to redevelop employment lands will retain space for a similar number of jobs to be accommodated on the site.

8.3 AGRICULTURE

8.3.1 The Township establishes throughout the Plan and particularly in Chapter 6, firm policies for the protection the township's agricultural land base for long term use of agriculture.

8.3.2 This Plan recognizes that the agri-food sector can have negative effects on the natural environment. The Township shall strongly encourage the agri-food sector to use environmentally sound practices and will participate in appropriate educational efforts to achieve this.

8.3.3 The Township recognizes agri-food sector requires and deserves the same type of protection from incompatible uses as would be found in zoning regulations for traditional industrial uses.

8.3.4 The Township will consider uses other than those directly related to food production being *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* in accordance with the policies established in Chapter 6 –Countryside Land Use Area - of this Plan.

8.3.5 The Township will consider through zoning provisions the use of land for *on-farm diversified uses* within the *Prime Agricultural Areas* and *Rural Areas* in accordance with the policies established in Chapter 6 –Countryside Land Use Area -- of this Plan.

8.3.6 The Township will provide appropriate interface between agricultural operations and adjacent non-agricultural related uses to maintain land use compatibility by applying the *minimum distance separation requirements*.

8.3.7 The Township will encourage the connections and synergies between agricultural operations and agri-businesses and the urban community, including commercial (especially food services), employment uses and institutions. Such connections and synergies will have a focus on marketing, Agri-tourism and culinary tourism.

8.3.8 The Township will support the development of a strong and diverse local food system by:

- a) Providing for a mix of land uses, including food destinations within close proximity to each other to facilitate residents' access to locally grown and other healthy foods;
- b) Establishing zoning regulations to permit *temporary farmers' markets*, wherever appropriate, in existing and newly planned neighbourhoods, particularly in areas where access to locally grown food and other healthy food products may currently be limited; and

c) Encouraging home and community gardens throughout the township.

8.3.9 The Township will promote and encourage forestry as a valid and important part of the agricultural economy. The Township will encourage good forestry practice (as defined by the Regional Woodland Conservation By-law) and provide for the continued use and development of woodlots as an agricultural use of land. The Township will also encourage the planting of additional woodland areas to help sustain a healthy natural environment and will discourage the use of existing woodlots for any non-farm related use.

8.3.10 The Township will work with other public and private partners to encourage, develop and expand agricultural, agriculturally related and on-farm diversified uses within the Township.

8.4 COMMERCIAL

8.4.1 The Township will plan to provide for range of commercial uses within appropriate designated areas to serve the needs of the residents of the township.

8.4.2 The Township will ensure the commercial needs of the Township as a whole, as well as individual settlements, and the potential for commercial lands in all parts of the Township. Such review may take the form of a commercial review/commercial needs study will include a review of the land supply, servicing status, ownership, quality, and other factors affecting utilization.

8.4.3 Each of the Township Urban Area and Urban Area settlements will have their own applicable commercial structure and hierarchy as appropriate which will be contained within their individual settlement policies, to serve that settlement and the surrounding area. Separately, the Stockyards Urban Area is a commercial and *employment area* which is to serve a much broader area, with its own associated commercial uses which will be outlined in its settlement policies in Chapter 7.

8.4.4 Designated Core Areas are the primary commercial focus for each respective settlement which will accommodate the widest range of retail uses.

8.4.5 Complementary and ancillary commercial and office uses may be permitted and appropriately regulated within *employment areas* by means of the Zoning By-law.

8.4.6 The Township will direct retail and office uses to locations that support *active transportation* and have existing or planned transit.

8.4.7 Commercial *development* in the township's commercial core areas will be designed and developed in a manner that:

a) Supports a sense of place, vibrancy and place making;

- b) Is pedestrian oriented and human scaled; and
- c) Acknowledges the cultural and historical influences in the area.

8.4.8 The Township may, in commercial core areas investigate and implement a façade programs, building revitalization programs and other such programs to improve the appearance and function a core area.

8.5 TOURISM

8.5.1 The Township will encourage and provide for appropriate tourism, recreation, and arts and cultural uses in the Township.

8.5.2 Tourism may reflect, share and celebrate unique aspects of Woolwich, while maintaining the uniqueness of the community.

8.6 WATERLOO REGION INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (“AIRPORT”)

8.6.1 *Development* on Airport lands shall be consistent with the approved Airport Master Plan and shall be complimentary to the Airport.

8.6.2 *Development* around the Airport should be in conformity with Section 15.5 of this Plan.

8.6.3 *Development* around the Airport shall comply to the Federal Airport Height requirements.

8.6.4 The Township shall provide an appropriate interface between the Airport and adjacent non-airport areas to maintain land use compatibility through various means including the provision of adequate separation and/or other appropriate abatement measures.