



**Corporation of the County of Wellington**  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**Minutes**

November 16, 2021  
Council Chambers

**Present:** Warden Kelly Linton  
Councillor George Bridge (Chair)  
Councillor Doug Breen  
Councillor Campbell Cork  
Councillor Jeff Duncan

**Also Present:** Councillor Gregg Davidson  
Councillor Steve O'Neill  
Angela Babiera, Reporter, Guelph Today

**Staff:** Kayla-Wary Amy, Communications Officer  
Emma Bottomley, Information Management Student  
Donna Bryce, County Clerk  
Jana Burns, Administrator, Museum and Wellington Place  
Justine Dainard, Smart Cities Project Manager  
Ken DeHart, County Treasurer  
Crystal Ellis, Director of Economic Development  
Andrea Ravensdale, Communications Manager  
Scott Wilson, CAO

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**1. Call to Order**

At 10:00 am, the Chair called the meeting to order.

**2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**3. Economic Development Financial Statements as of October 31, 2021**

1/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor Cork

**Seconded by:** Councillor Breen

That the Financial Statements as of October 31, 2021 for Economic Development be approved.

**Carried**

**4. Economic Development 2022 User Fees and Charges**

2/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor Duncan

**Seconded by:** Councillor Breen

That the 2022 User Fees and Charges for Economic Development be approved.

**Carried**

**5. Economic Development Preliminary 2022-2031 Ten-Year Plan**

3/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That the preliminary 2022-2031 Economic Development capital budget forecast and major operating budget impacts as set out in the report be endorsed and forwarded to the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee for inclusion in the County of Wellington's Preliminary Ten-Year Plan.

**Carried**

**6. November 2021 Economic Development Update**

4/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor Breen

**Seconded by:** Councillor Duncan

That the Economic Development Committee approve the Economic Development November Report.

**Carried**

**7. County BR+E Municipal Implementation Fund**

5/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor Cork

**Seconded by:** Warden Linton

That the Economic Development Committee approve the 2021 BR+E Municipal Implementation Fund for the Township of Mapleton and the Town of Minto.

**Carried**

**8. Adjournment**

At 10:42 am, the Chair adjourned the meeting until January 18, 2022 or at the call of the Chair.

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George Bridge  
Chair  
Economic Development Committee



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Ken DeHart, County Treasurer  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
**Subject:** **Preliminary 2022-2031 Ten-Year Plan: Economic Development**

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### **Background:**

This forecast provides a high-level view of major budget issues and planned capital investments and serves as a guide for departments in preparing their detailed current year operating and capital budgets. The preliminary corporate ten-year plan will be considered by the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee on November 16, 2021 and the forecast will be updated at the time the budget is approved early in the New Year.

### **Major Operating Budget Impacts**

Staff are in the process of compiling the detailed 2022 operating budgets for each department. Major items expected to be reflected in the 2022 Economic Development Operating Budget include the following:

#### **Smart Cities**

The Smart Cities programme is continuing work on projects originally identified when funding was first approved. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic projects have been delayed or modified to fit within the changing global environment. The budget for this programme in 2022 has been modified to take advantage of funds not used in 2021 and the expenditure budget has increased as a result. As these initiatives are fully funded from the grant funding there is no levy impact due to the changes.

Staffing changes include a two-year contract for a Sustainability Programme Assistant position which is to be cost shared with the Climate Change area reporting to Planning. The position will be partially funded from the previously approved grants within Smart Cities. This contract position is intended to ensure the County can get maximum value from the opportunities the Our Food Future partnership is presenting.

#### **Ride Well**

The Ride Well programme launched in October of 2019 and was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with resident usage well below the original forecast. Recent months have seen the ridership levels increase and the use of the service is continuing to grow. The County received correspondence confirming provincial funding would be extended beyond the original end-date and now is anticipated to end in the first quarter of 2025. Passenger revenue as well as contract costs have been adjusted based on experience to date in 2021 as well as anticipated needs for operating capacity in 2022. These changes result in a 79% reduction to the net cost for Ride Well in 2022 and reduction to tax levy requirements of \$104,000.

## Activities proposed throughout the 2022-2031 period

- **Talent Attraction** (\$20,000) – For talent attraction activities related to employer engagement and newcomer immigrant attraction
- Funding for the countywide **Community Improvement Programme** (\$160,000) for local municipalities is maintained throughout the forecast under the transfer payments line
- **Invest Ready – Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG)**: As part of the Community Improvement Programme, the County began participation in member municipalities' Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Programmes starting in 2019 and will providing additional funds of approximately \$45,000 over the 2022-2023 period as follows: 2022 - \$30,043 and 2023 - \$15,021.
- **Business Retention and Expansion Local Implementation Fund** (\$175,000) – will provide the County's local municipalities the opportunity to access funding for the direct execution of BR+E recommendations for activities that enhance the local economies.
- **Business Support Agency Funding** (\$97,500) – the County funds agencies upon receiving an agreed upon annual review of services and events to support our local economy. Agencies include; the Guelph Wellington Business Enterprise Centre, Innovation Guelph, local Community Futures Development Organizations, LaunchIt Minto and the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus project.

The transfer payments line shows a significant drop in 2022 (\$200,000) as the one-time funding for business recovery due to COVID-19 has been removed, with a corresponding reduction to the transfer from reserves line in the same amount. There is no net budget impact for this change.

### Capital

- **SWIFT 2.0 Implementation**: The County continues its commitment of \$4.0 million over five years (starting in 2021) to complete the gigabyte fibre optic broadband buildout, which represents the County's share of SWIFT's latest submission to the province. This is based on Wellington's percentage of underserved roadways in the SWIFT project and is dependent on provincial, federal and WOWC funding commitments. The project will be funded by the General Capital Reserve, which includes transfers of \$400,000 annually from the operating budget.

### Recommendation:

That the preliminary 2022-2031 Economic Development capital budget forecast and major operating budget impacts as set out in this report be endorsed and forwarded to the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee for inclusion in the County of Wellington's Preliminary Ten-Year Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Ken DeHart, CPA, CGA  
County Treasurer



**COUNTY OF WELLINGTON**  
**10 YEAR OPERATING BUDGET AND TAX RATE FORECAST**  
**Economic Development**

	Approved 2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
<b>REVENUE</b>											
Grants & Subsidies	369,800	528,000	383,000	143,000	31,000						
User Fees & Charges	66,500	104,200	104,400	104,400	50,400	31,700	31,700	32,300	32,700	32,900	33,100
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>436,300</b>	<b>632,200</b>	<b>487,400</b>	<b>247,400</b>	<b>81,400</b>	<b>31,700</b>	<b>31,700</b>	<b>32,300</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>32,900</b>	<b>33,100</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>											
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	660,600	737,400	656,000	652,500	685,400	715,100	739,200	763,900	789,800	816,800	844,300
Supplies, Material & Equipment	141,300	141,900	82,700	29,200	29,800	30,400	31,000	31,600	32,900	33,800	34,500
Purchased Services	701,900	813,200	783,200	636,200	435,200	361,700	373,300	385,600	397,800	410,000	418,200
Transfer Payments	672,500	462,500	447,500	432,500	432,500	432,500	432,500	432,500	432,500	432,500	432,500
Insurance & Financial	14,400	13,500	12,000	12,000	12,600	13,000	13,500	14,000	14,500	15,000	15,600
Internal Charges	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>2,198,700</b>	<b>2,176,500</b>	<b>1,989,400</b>	<b>1,770,400</b>	<b>1,603,500</b>	<b>1,560,700</b>	<b>1,597,500</b>	<b>1,635,600</b>	<b>1,675,500</b>	<b>1,716,100</b>	<b>1,753,100</b>
<b>Net Operating Cost / (Revenue)</b>	<b>1,762,400</b>	<b>1,544,300</b>	<b>1,502,000</b>	<b>1,523,000</b>	<b>1,522,100</b>	<b>1,529,000</b>	<b>1,565,800</b>	<b>1,603,300</b>	<b>1,642,800</b>	<b>1,683,200</b>	<b>1,720,000</b>
yr/yr % change		(12.4%)	(2.7%)	1.4%	(0.1%)	0.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	2.2%
<b>DEBT AND TRANSFERS</b>											
Transfer from Reserves	(200,000)										
Transfer to Reserves	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
<b>Total Debt and Transfers</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>TAX LEVY REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>1,962,400</b>	<b>1,944,300</b>	<b>1,902,000</b>	<b>1,923,000</b>	<b>1,922,100</b>	<b>1,929,000</b>	<b>1,965,800</b>	<b>2,003,300</b>	<b>2,042,800</b>	<b>2,083,200</b>	<b>2,120,000</b>
yr/yr % change		(0.9%)	(2.2%)	1.1%		0.4%	1.9%	1.9%	2.0%	2.0%	1.8%



**County of Wellington**  
**10 Year Capital Budget**  
**Economic Development**

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	10 Year Total
Economic Development											
SWIFT 2.0 Implementation	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000							3,200,000
Total	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000							3,200,000
<b>Sources of Financing</b>											
Reserves	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000							3,200,000
Total Financing	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000							3,200,000



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Crystal Ellis, Director of Economic Development  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
**Subject:** Economic Development – November Report

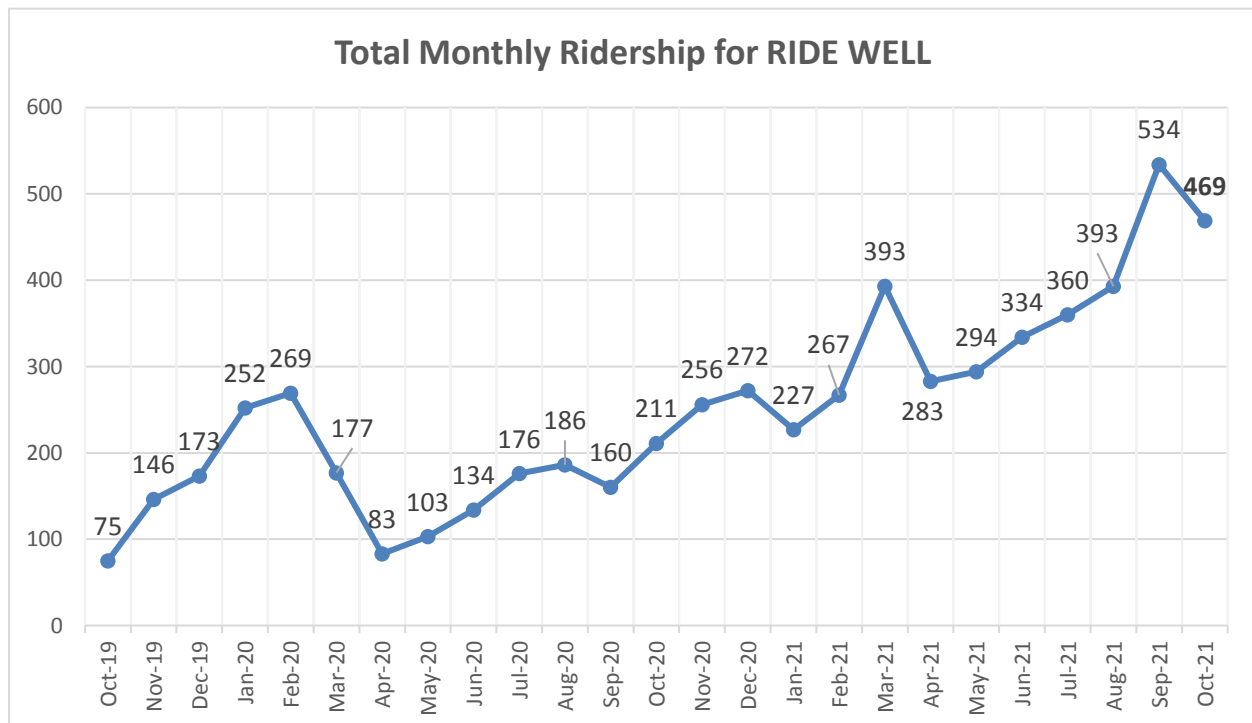
### Elora Riverwalk

After some preliminary discussions with public partners for the proposed Riverwalk project, Pearle Hospitality has decided to not pursue the project at this time.

### RIDE WELL

Ride Well had positive ridership in October with 469 rides, returning to its original growth trajectory. This is a decrease of 65 rides from September, but is the second highest monthly total to date. October had 70 different users (unique users), and within that group there were 17 new riders and 53 repeat riders. While these numbers are comparable to September, there was a decrease in the average ride per user to 6.7 (down from 7.3 in September). Also of note, 58 new accounts were registered in October, which is an increase of 14 from the previous month.

October is more aligned with the previous growth trajectory observed prior to September. Please see the total monthly ridership for two years of service below, as well as the top origins and destinations in October:





Top pick-up Destinations in October 2021:

Location	Description
Fergus	Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex
Fergus	Fergusson Place, Residential Complex
Mount Forest	DANA Long Manufacturing
Elora	Residential Property
Elora	Residential Property
Guelph	Second Cup Coffee Co.

Top drop-off Destinations in October 2021:

Location	Description
Fergus	Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex
Fergus	Grand Abilities Adult Day Centre
Arthur	Agricultural Property
Fergus	Fergusson Place, Residential Complex
Fergus	Residential Property
Guelph	Stone Road Mall

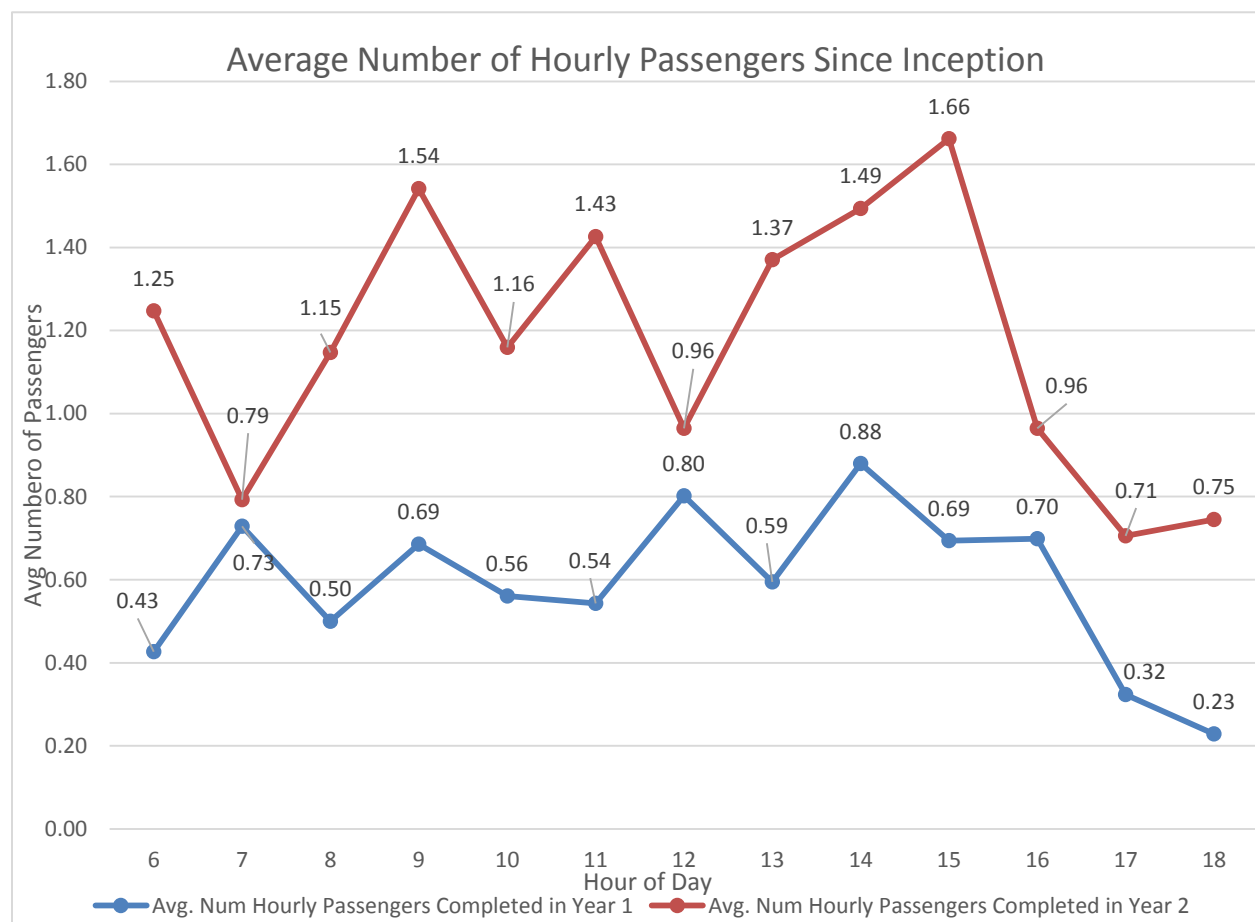
## RIDE WELL Two Year Operation Overview

After two years of operation, including a pandemic which removed the ability to rideshare, Ride Well has had steady growth as the service established itself and has more than doubled its ridership.

Ride Well Stats	Year 1	Year 2	Increase
<b>Total Ridership</b>	1,934	3,824	98%
<b>Average Monthly Unique Users (Active Riders)</b>	34	45	34%
<b>Average Rides Per User Per month</b>	4.7	7.1	51%
<b>Average Repeat Riders Per Month</b>	19	35	81%
<b>Highest Monthly Ridership</b>	260 Rides February 2020	534 Rides September 2021	105%
<b>Average Rides Per Week</b>	37	73	97%
<b>Peak Hours</b>	2:00 pm	3:00 pm	

In Year 1, the highest monthly ridership was recorded in February 2020 with 260 rides. In Year 2, the highest monthly ridership was recorder in September 2021 with 534 rides. These annual highpoints showed a 105% increase between Year 1 and Year 2. In addition, weekly ridership has also nearly doubled. In Year 1, Ride Well averaged 37 rides per week, while Year 2 saw the rides per week increase to 73 rides per week.

Peak Hours and Performance: Ride Well has experienced several changes to its peak hours from Year One to Year Two of operation. In Year 2, Ride Well experienced the highest average volume at 3:00pm, compared to 2:00pm in Year 1. Also worth noting, 7:00am and 12:00pm were higher points of usage in Year 1, but one of the lower periods in Year 2. One explanation for these changes may be due to a decrease in usage by seniors in Year 2, which were more prominent users in Year 1 before the COVID-19 pandemic kept them at home. Another explanation may be due to the overall nature of trips. In Year 1, there was more regular usage of the service for recreational trips, such as visiting family and friends, attending social groups, etc. However, since the onset of COVID-19, Ride Well has been used more for essential trips, such as getting to and from work and appointments. The following chart shows the average number of hourly passengers since launch:



Operation Costs: The Cost Recovery Rate is the rate at which Ride Well recoups its costs through passenger revenue. Therefore, the more rides that are serviced within a given supply of vehicle hours, the better the cost recovery. In Year 2, Ride Well had reduced vehicle hours to accommodate a lower demand from COVID-19. However, as ridership grew Ride Well maintained its supply of vehicle hours until an eventual slight increase in October 2021. As a result, the cost recovery improved significantly from Year 1 to Year 2 due to the limited vehicles hours. However, it is important to consider that the Ride Well programme is heavily subsidized. The following table illustrates cost recovery:

Time Period	Cost Recovery Ratio in Year 1	Average Vehicle Hours per Day	Cost Recovery Ratio in Year 2	Average Vehicle Hours per Day	Industry Average On-Demand Cost Recovery	Industry Average Fixed-Route Cost Recovery
October to December	4%	43	15%	25	15%	8%
January to March	7%	37	15%	25		
April to June	6%	26	15%	26		
July to September	10%	26	22%	26		

Origin and Destination Locations: Ride Well has seen similar trends in pick-up and drop-off locations from Year 1 to Year 2, and Centre Wellington continues to host the majority of rides. Between Year 1 and Year 2, it is clear that rides remain centralized in Centre Wellington. There was broader coverage in Guelph in Year 2 in comparison to Year 1, due to the elimination of transfer points. There is also a modest increase to rides occurring in Wellington North, likely due to increased awareness of the programme.

Overall, the Ride Well programme is growing and staff hope to begin operating the service with the intended rideshare model as Covid restrictions begin to ease further. This will help ease the pressure of only allowing one booking per trip and create a more cost effective and efficient service.

### **Invest WELL Community Improvement Programme (CIP)**

In the month of October, we received and approved the following three CIP applications from the Town of Erin.

**Erin Hill Acres** is a new year-round agri-tourism business that includes Christmas tree farm that was previously operated as Wintersinger's Tree Farm. A CIP application was submitted for a project that involves upgrades to the barn, workshop, retail space, natural features, and signage on the agricultural property. In total, the submitted proposal has an estimated construction value of \$128,780 over two years. The project was approved for \$10,000 under the Invest MORE funding stream.

**Organic Art Tattoo** submitted a CIP application for façade improvements to their recently purchased property located at 52 Main St., Erin. Improvements include new signage, paint, windows, and upgrades to the siding on the storefront, as well as interior upgrades to the lighting and plumbing. In total, the submitted proposal has an estimated construction value of \$21,437 and was approved for \$7,500 under the Invest MORE funding stream.

**The Hummingbird**, a rural event and wedding venue submitted a CIP application to complete improvements to the business. The project includes new signage, lighting, natural features, and structural upgrades to the century barn. In total, the submitted proposal has an estimated

construction value of \$27,460 and was approved for \$7,500 under the Invest MORE funding stream.

The Rexall in Downtown Erin has completed their façade improvement project. Please see below for before and after pictures of the completed work:



Rexall façade before



Rexall façade after.

### **Tourism Signage Programme**

Applications for the Wellington County Tourism Signage Programme are due by November 30, 2021. To date, we have received five applications. County staff will continue to reach-out to potential businesses that may be interested leading up to the deadline.

### **Tourism Video Footage**

Over the summer and into fall, staff worked with Tivoli Films of Elora to record footage for a series of Wellington County Tourism Shorts to be released in 2022. Ten different 30-second commercials will be created, each focusing on a specific type of experience and will be used for social media and website promotion.

Themes include:

- Unique accommodations: RV camping, glamping, container bed and breakfast
- On the water: sailing, canoeing, conservation areas
- Food and Retail: restaurant, patio, farmers' market, retail shopping
- Picnic: young people and family picnics, coffee takeout, butter tarts
- Equine: horse yoga, horse racing, horses on pasture, horse statue, trail rides
- Museum: galleries, barn, outside shots
- Retro outings: drive-in cinema, chip truck
- History buffs: Aberfoyle Antique Market, Lynes Blacksmith shop, WMCA, Railway Heritage
- Farm adventures: sunflower field, cidery, alpaca yoga, farm animals, pumpkin patch
- Outdoor: hiking, biking, canoeing

## **Taste Real Fall Rural Romp**

The Taste Real fall event promoting fall food and popular fall outings concluded on October 31. The event included a variety of components, including agriculture educational videos, in-person and virtual events, and an online Fall Flavours map to encourage support of a local businesses. A new feature this year, Rural Romp kits with family-friendly fall activities containing seasonal recipes, a local food map treasure hunt kit, colouring pages, and locally grown pumpkin seeds. Individuals were encouraged to participate in two different contests for a chance to win one of 10 gift cards to local businesses. The initiative was very well received and 327 Romp Kits were requested and sent to local families.

## **Holiday Food and Gift Guide**

The seasonal shop local initiative is back with new marketing visuals. Working with the Communications Division, staff collected and photographed a selection of Wellington County farm and food items to create a new cover image for the online gift guide. The guide is being promoted through radio, print and social media and ties in with the local chambers' Shop Wellington County Campaign.

## **Talent Attraction**

Please find attached to this report the Wellington County Welcoming and Inclusion Assessment Survey, Key Findings and Actions.

## **Smart Cities – Our Food Future**

Cyber Security in Agriculture Workshops: Agriculture is becoming increasingly high-tech, and during the last year of lockdowns many local farms took their businesses online for various activities. With this growing connectivity comes the responsibility of managing more data, and the risk of being vulnerable to cybersecurity threats. To support our farmers' knowledge of these issues, we are offering two one-hour workshops on cybersecurity in agriculture.

- Monday, November 22, from 6:30 to 7:30 pm, at the Wellington County Museum and Archives, Aboyne Hall
- Monday November 29 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm, at the Harriston Library Branch

The workshops will be run by the Community Safety Knowledge Alliance ([cskacanada.ca](http://cskacanada.ca)) and feature speaker Ritesh Kotak, a cybersecurity expert and frequent guest panelist on CTV news. To provide further help and to gain a deeper understanding of common issues needing future support, we will be offering ten workshop participants a follow-up visit from a local cybersecurity consultant. These on-farm visits will offer one-on-one coaching in best practices and address site-specific questions. These events will be free, but pre-registration is required; sign-up or learn more at [www.wellington.ca/Internet](http://www.wellington.ca/Internet).

## **Other Activities**

- 22 enquires received from October 8 to November 8. Ride Well, Taste Real, Housing, Venue/Property Enquiry, Business/General.
- 2022 pay-to-play tourism signage application deadline is November 30, 2021 and installation will take place in Spring 2021.

- Our Food Future presentation at the 2021 Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum, hosted by York Region and OMAFRA, on November 4.
- Assisting with the development of a Gin Trail, involving four local distilleries.
- Consulted with local businesses on creative ways to sell their products and find local suppliers.
- Economic Development staff are assisting with WMCA Christmas Market planning.
- Upcycled Food Festival - Upcycled Ramen Noodles Meal Kit launches November 19 at the Wooly Pub in Guelph. Stop by at 4:00 pm for speeches, samples, and sales of the kit.
- Business e-newsletter sent October 21.
- Taste Real Newsletter sent October 1.

**Recommendation:**

That the Economic Development Committee approve the Economic Development November Report.

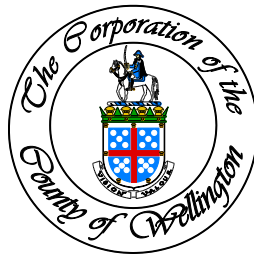
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crystal Ellis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Crystal Ellis  
Director of Economic Development

# **Wellington County Welcoming and Inclusion Assessment Survey**

## **Key Findings and Actions**



**Economic Development Division  
County of Wellington  
November 2021**

## **Introduction**

The County of Wellington is located in southwestern Ontario with a land area of 2,610 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 98,860. Predominantly rural in nature, the County is comprised of seven member municipalities and surrounds the City of Guelph. The member municipalities include the Township of Centre Wellington, Town of Erin, Township of Guelph Eramosa, Township of Mapleton, Town of Minto, Township of Puslinch and the Township of Wellington North.

Since 2015, the County has been actively promoting itself as a place to live and work, through its Global Talent Attraction Initiative. However, despite ongoing efforts, gaps still remain locally in terms of community and employer engagement with newcomers and immigrant communities. Some employers have not yet fully tapped into the newcomer talent pool, or recognize the important skills and experiences immigrants bring to the workforce. Likewise, many residents do not understand nor appreciate the important role that new immigrants play in helping revitalize their communities.

Therefore, as part of ongoing efforts to attract and retain more newcomers, the Economic Development Division conducted a Welcoming and Inclusion Assessment Survey to help determine the extent to which Wellington County communities are welcoming to newcomers, and to offer recommendations that will help living and working in the County more attractive for newcomers.

The Survey was completed in fulfillment of the County's obligation under the Contribution Agreement with the IRCC. It was also guided by the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) model, Characteristics of a Welcoming Community, Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies Interview Survey, Measuring Rural Community Vitality Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities, and other scholarly documents.

## **Methodology**

The Survey was conducted using two main approaches - a mixed research approach which included the review of secondary data and the collection of primary data using quantitative and qualitative survey instruments, and a convenience non-probability sampling approach which means that only respondents that were willing and available participated in the survey. Two online questionnaires were administered from July 6 to August 6, 2021. One survey focused on Newcomers and Residents, and the other targeted Businesses and Organizations. The questionnaires were designed to collect data on key constructs of a welcoming and inclusive communities, including diversity and inclusion, social capital and community support services. Respondents perceptions were drawn on many of the constructs.

The quantitative component of the survey, interviewed persons drawn from businesses, support services organizations, newcomers and long-term residents.



## **Survey Sample**

A total of 327 newcomers and residents participated and 65 businesses and organizations participated in the survey. In addition, 18 individuals were interviewed (8 business/organization and 7 newcomers/resident) to help compliment the quantitative data with some qualitative ones. Of the 327 respondents on the newcomer and resident survey, 105 or 32% were newcomers while 222 or 68% are long term residents. For the 65 participants on the business and organization survey 32 or 49% were elected official/board member, 14 or 21.5% were manager/supervisor and 15 or 23.1% were staff member.

## **Limitations of the Survey**

Since the convenience non-probability sampling approach survey method was used, it meant that only participants who were conveniently available and willing to participate in the surveys did.

Given the characteristics of the respondents, special care must be taken about what generalizations are made with the survey data. For example, the Business and Organization respondents comprised elected officials or board members (49%), managers or supervisors (22%), staff members (23%) and volunteers (5%). Similarly, on the Newcomer and Resident Survey 32% of the respondents were newcomers. However, 93% of the newcomer were Canadian citizens who moved from other cities.

The designing of the Questionnaires using a single language (English) excluded some residents who are not highly competent reading English from participating.

## **Some Key Definitions**

For the purpose of the Survey, the following definitions were used:

**Immigrants** - persons who are landed immigrants or permanent residents for 5 years or less. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities.

**Newcomers** - persons who come from outside the community and chose to move in order to work and /or live in your community. They can either be Canadian citizens, new immigrants or permanent residents, temporary workers or international students.

**A welcoming community** - a physical location (a town, city, community) which seeks to serve the needs of newcomers/new immigrants by making them feel valued, respected and a sense of belonging.

**Inclusion** - exists when all residents can fully participate in the various activities of the community despite his or her gender, skin colour, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, education, income level, religion, heritage, or physical or mental ability or many other factors.

## Survey Results and Analysis

Profile of Survey Participants					
Newcomer and Resident			Business and Organization		
Categories	Frequency	%	Categories	Frequency	%
<b>Immigration Status</b>			<b>Role</b>		
Canadian Citizen	304	93	Elected Official/Board Member	32	49.2
Permanent Resident	19	5.8	Manager/Supervisor	14	21.5
Student visa	1	0.3	Staff Member	15	23.1
Work visa	3	0.9	Volunteer	3	4.6
TOTAL	327	100	Other	1	1.5
			TOTAL	65	100
<b>Age (Years)</b>			<b>Age (Years)</b>		
18 – 24	16	4.9	18 – 24	1	2
25 – 34	59	18	25 – 34	8	12
35 – 44	83	25.4	35 – 44	13	20
45 – 54	49	15	45 – 54	17	26
55 – 64	59	18	55 – 64	14	22
65+	60	18	65+	8	12
Missing	1	0.3	Missing	4	6
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Gender</b>		
Male	85	26	Male	28	43.1
Female	234	71.6	Female	32	49.2
Other	8	2.4	Other	5	7.6

## Key Findings and Recommendations

### Talent Attraction

- 105 newcomers or 32% of the respondents participated in the survey. Of that group, 88 or 84% held Canadian citizenship. The remainder of the 17 newcomers comprised of 13 or 12.4% Permanent Resident, 3 or 2.9% Temporary Workers and 1 or 1% International Student.
- Respondents on the Newcomer and Residents Questionnaire said the top three reasons for choosing to live in Wellington County were: ‘Can achieve desired lifestyle or quality of life’ (53%), ‘Family Ties/Connections’ (42%) and ‘Feeling of safety’ (35%).
- On the Business and Organization Questionnaire, respondents identified the three leading factor that will attract newcomers to Wellington County as: ‘Small town feel’ (57%), ‘Great for family’ (52%), and ‘Safety/Attractive job opportunities’ (48%).

- Respondents affirmed that most of the new immigrants that came to Wellington County are coming either through the sponsorship route or family/friendship connections.

### **Recommendation**

- Target major Canadian cities using a branding strategy that will attract newcomers to come to the County.
- Leverage the characteristic features of small town feel, great for family, good quality lifestyle and feeling of safety as marketing propositions for the County.
- Encourage and support sponsors and residents to help attract newcomers to the County.
- Advocate for easier access and processing of immigration programmes.

### **Welcoming Community**

- Approximately 75% of the newcomers interviewed said Wellington County is a welcoming place. However, the remaining 25% said that the communities where they reside or do business was not so welcoming.
- A few newcomers interviewed reported that they feel alone and disconnected in the communities where they live.
- 75% of respondents agreed that they feel culturally secure in the County, and 33% believed that the County is more welcoming than other communities in Canada.
- 25% agreed that Wellington County has developed the services required to address increased immigration.
- According to 34 responses on the Businesses and Organization Questionnaire, it was suggested that businesses in the County should provide good/higher paying jobs to help newcomers feel more welcome. “The main issue is that they pay inadequate wages to cover living costs. So what ends up happening is newcomers eventually leave for greener pastures”.
- 94% of business and organization respondents indicated that a relationship exists with newcomers at varying levels. 35% reported that the relationship is very active.
- Three out of four business and organization leaders (including 1 newcomer business owner) reported that they found it very hard to feel accepted as an outsider, and that understanding the Canadian culture can be a major challenge.
- Some organization interviewees said that there is mixed messaging at the local government level regarding new immigrants.

### **Recommendation**

- Encourage and support community-based welcoming initiatives to help welcome and connect newcomers to the communities.
- Encourage the establishment and support welcoming initiatives in the municipalities with a goal of supporting newcomer initiatives.

- Encourage and support the strengthening of community based groups to help them participate in helping make our communities more welcoming.

## **Employment**

- 67% of respondents said they were employed, while 9% said they were not. 24% of respondents were retired.
- 54% said that their current job is not aligned with their training/experiences while 12% said it is aligned.
- The business and organization respondents said the three leading factors affecting their ability to engage more with newcomers were: 'Unsuitable job opportunities' (33%), 'Language barriers' (31.3%), and 'Lack of transportation' (28.4%).
- Some of the businesses reported that it is difficult to know the skillsets of newcomers that are in the community, except when they apply for a job.
- All the employers interviewed reported that new immigrant employees are generally excellent, committed and respectful. Some of employers interviewed said they are committed to help new immigrants make a life in Canada.

## **Recommendation**

- Provide support to HR Teams to help businesses emphasize more on the experiences and transferrable skills and less on Canadian experience when recruiting newcomers.
- Provide information on the education and skillset of newcomers to the community both for the attention of residents and businesses.
- Encourage and support businesses in building diverse and inclusive workplaces.
- Engage with job fairs to help connect businesses and newcomers.

## **Education/Schooling**

- Almost 45% of the respondents either completed or is enrolled in university and post graduate level education. 38% either completed or is enrolled in college and trade schools and 3.7% had some high school and primary school level education.
- The percentage of newcomers with university level education was slightly higher than long-term residents, 40.3% of the long-term residents compared to 54.5% of the newcomers.
- Similarly, 50% of long-term residents who are permanent residents attained university level education compared to 54% of newcomers. 33% of the temporary workers attained university level education.

## **Recommendation**

- Increase awareness of the educational credentials of newcomers that are moving in to live in the County communities.
- Encourage employers to recognize the international educational credentials that newcomers possess.

- Support newcomers with up to date information about the career paths in the County and the required education and training.
- Share information on labour market needs with newcomers pre and post-arrival.

### **Language**

- 92.7% of respondents reported that English is their primary language and 95% indicated that they can communicate with it very well.
- Some of the new immigrants interviewed said they speak very little English, although it is a great improvement since arriving in Canada.

### **Recommendation**

- Enquire about the current English Language training programme that the County now offers in order to make it more accessible by those who need the training.
- Encourage access to further English training either after work hours and or on weekends.

### **Difficulties and Challenges**

- 52% of respondents rated 'Making Friends' as their greatest difficulty experienced from a social capital perspective. This was followed by 'Communicating with people of different ethnic groups' (43%), and 'The pace of life' (40%). The area with the least difficulty was 'Worshipping' with 9%.
- Newcomers, especially new immigrants, also reported that they had difficulty 'Dealing with Canada weather/climate' (79%), 'Obtaining housing' (95%), 'Finding transport' (68%), and 'Finding food they enjoy' (58%).
- Some of the new immigrants interviewed believed that there are some residents in the communities that are harbouring negative views against certain ethnic groups.
- Internet service in some areas of Wellington County is sometimes very slow. Most new immigrants stay connected with relatives and friends who are overseas through the internet.
- Many of the new immigrants interviewed lamented that there are not many leisure activities (sports, entertainment, etc) taking place in some of the communities. There are not many places to go apart from work.
- Some respondents reported that finding relevant information in the County can be difficult. Settlement Officers provide access to some of the information, however they are not adept with all the information newcomers need.
- Respondents overwhelmingly recognized that Wellington County libraries are excellent sources for accessing critical information because they are spread out throughout the County and are staffed with information management professionals.

## **Recommendation**

- Make more effort to educate the community about the culture and traditions of newcomers.
- Encourage and support initiatives to help newcomers connect with community residents.
- Support and help promote the libraries services in the communities as central information centres.
- Help promote more positive messaging about newcomer in the media.
- Make information on the sources of critical information about the County and services more easily available.
- Collaborate and share information with key partners including realtors and business' HR teams.
- Support and encourage the development of affordable and appropriate housing through collaboration between municipalities and developers.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

- 95% of the responses on the survey agreed that 'We should promote equality among groups regardless of ethnic origin'. 84% agreed that 'It is good to have people from different ethnic groups living in the County', and 80% agreed that 'New immigrants and other newcomers should maintain their own cultural traditions, but also adopt those of Canadians'.
- 18% of the respondents agreed that 'I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic or cultural background', and 8% agreed 'I have been threatened or attacked because of my ethnic background'.
- According to respondents, the policies and practices of businesses and organizations in Wellington County are generally trending positively in support of diversity and inclusion. For example:
  - 75% of respondents agreed 'Our organization's policy and practices are supportive of diversity and inclusion initiatives';
  - 77% agreed 'Our managers support the implementation of diversity and inclusion initiatives'; and
  - 40% agreed 'The organization's committees or work teams are usually made up of diverse staff and or resident'
- Similarly, the image and reputation of businesses and organizations surveyed indicate that their support for diversity and inclusion is also trending positively. For example:
  - 55% agreed 'The organization has a good reputation for supporting workplace diversity';
  - 68% agreed 'There is a process to bring forward discrimination concerns'; and
  - 82% agreed 'Staff are able to professionally work with diverse clients and coworkers'.

## **Recommendation**

- Encourage initiatives that promote greater inclusion in workplaces, schools and neighborhoods.
- Increase collaboration between community groups to promote awareness and celebration of inclusion and diversity.
- Engage business HR teams on tapping into immigrant talent creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace
- Host community forums with business to share information on how their business can benefit from diversity and inclusion
- Encourage multicultural events to help residents and newcomers better appreciate and value each other.

## **Business and Organization Support**

- Several businesses reported that the process of bringing overseas immigrants to help solve labour shortage challenges through the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) and Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) Programmes is too tedious and time consuming.
- Most of the businesses and organizations said they are aware of the services to help settle newcomers offered by Settlement Officers. However, they expressed the concern that the settlement programme in its current form is unable to address some of the most pressing needs of new immigrants –such as affordable housing, accessing public transportation and achieving permanent residence status.
- 65% of business and organization respondents said they are not aware of the different immigration programmes through which they can recruit newcomers.
- 55% said they have not collaborated with support services organizations such as 2ndChance, Agilec, Settlement Officers in Wellington County as a source for recruiting newcomers.

## **Recommendation**

- Facilitate greater collaboration between businesses and services organizations on helping to better support the integration of newcomers.
- Facilitate initiatives to help businesses understand and access the immigration programmes available.
- Encourage and support business' HR teams to embrace more inclusive policies in their hiring.

# **Wellington County Welcoming and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2023**

## **General Observations**

A brief environmental scan of Wellington County municipalities revealed that there is generally a lack of a clear procedure or framework, to support the welcoming of newcomers to the County.

Access to affordable rental accommodation, public transportation, and in some cases appropriate jobs, remain major challenges and are affecting Wellington County's capacity to both attract and retain newcomers.

There are both support institutions and individuals in each of the municipalities in Wellington County that have some experiences interacting with newcomers, either through sponsorship or providing settlement services or support.

Prior to the onset of the COVID 19 Pandemic, most of the communities had events which either directly or indirectly helped to welcome and connect newcomers with the communities. The Town of Minto provides a regular and consistent newcomer welcoming initiative programme.

Awareness of when newcomers and residents come into the community is generally unknown by the Economic Development staff in our municipalities, since there are no tracking systems that provide this information. However, Economic Development staff and leadership are supportive of efforts to help their communities become more welcoming to newcomers.

## **Community Welcoming Initiatives**

**Goal:** To help newcomers feel welcome and included in Wellington County communities through social, economic and cultural activities.

### **Actions:**

1. County to develop a framework/checklist to support community groups to ensure community events are welcoming and inclusive events.
2. Develop a County welcome package with the support of local municipalities so information can be customized for each municipality and packages can be provided through the local municipal offices.
3. Encourage the restart of local Welcome Wagons.
4. Initiate and support mentorship and volunteer opportunities that connect new residents to established community members and groups.
5. Support community events that help connect newcomers and residents in the communities.



6. Investigate the development of a Multicultural festival that showcases different aspects of Wellington County communities and newcomers culture.
7. Promote and organize community conversations around immigration, diversity, equity, inclusion and discrimination.
8. Develop a media campaign to tell the stories of local immigrants highlighting both positive and negative experiences of newcomers and long-term residents, to help generate conversation and better understand immigration issues.
9. Develop a Welcoming Week. A weeklong promotion throughout Wellington County to promote diversity and inclusion. Activities such as tours, cultural displays, events, music, cultural exchange and the sharing of first-hand stories on immigration.

### **Collaboration with Businesses and Employment Support Agencies**

**Goal:** To support newcomers in achieving high levels of labour market attachment thereby contributing to their economic prosperity as well as Wellington County as a whole.

#### **Actions:**

1. Host workshops for newcomers in Wellington County to provide employment resources and the opportunity to network, share experiences and ask questions.
2. Host an event to educate and share best practices on workforce diversification and newcomer employment with Wellington County employers and service providers.
3. Meet with businesses and provide workforce development support for newcomer and immigrant attraction efforts.
4. Participate with local businesses in newcomer job fairs to attract new workforce to Wellington County.
5. Encourage and support businesses in building diverse and inclusive workplaces.
6. Facilitate an Immigrant Entrepreneur Recognition Programme in Wellington County.
7. Participate and support workforce development projects through partner organizations.
8. Work with member municipalities and organizations outside of Wellington County to develop and locally implement best practices for workforce development.

### **Easier Access to Critical Information and Other Difficulties/Challenges**

**Goal:** To ensure that the relevant information is accessible and shared across sectors, using multiple networks and channels, to facilitate equitable settlement outcomes and enhanced service coordination.

#### **Actions:**

1. Develop a Wellington County Newcomer and Immigration landing page that acts as a resource of local information and connections for newcomers, residents and employment service providers.

2. Promote the various types of immigration information relevant to Wellington County businesses to inform and educate.
3. Support the capacity of Wellington County libraries to help serve newcomers and residents as a physical location to find key information.

### **Local Government and Business Leadership**

**Goal:** To provide strategic support to help make Wellington County communities more welcoming.

**Actions:**

1. Support the development of affordable housing and implementation of rural transportation and other major talent attraction initiatives in Wellington County.
2. Advocate to federal and provincial governments regarding the challenges and opportunities of attracting newcomers and immigrants to rural Ontario. Including easier access and processing of immigration programmes.
3. Continue to share federal and provincial immigration programmes information with employers and advocate for the benefit of welcoming newcomers, immigrants and new residents in the community.



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Crystal Ellis, Director of Economic Development  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
**Subject:** **County BR+E Municipal Implementation Fund**

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### Background:

The Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Local Implementation Fund provides member municipalities with the opportunity to access funding for the direct execution of BR+E activities to enhance the local economy. We have received 2021 BR+E municipal fund applications from the Township of Mapleton and the Town of Minto.

### Township of Mapleton

The Township of Mapleton requests \$25,000 to cover 47% funding for Alma Downtown Beautification. The Hamlet of Alma is located at the crossroads of Wellington Road 7 and Wellington Road 17 and has the third largest population area in Mapleton. The Downtown Beautification project includes new decorative light posts, multi-season banners, Christmas lighting, seating and waste receptacles to enhance the main street. In 2018, Roger Brooks International completed an assessment of Wellington County and noted the importance of welcoming and attractive downtowns. The project will beautify a well travelled route and promote a safe, clean and comfortable spot for visitors and residents to enjoy.

### Town of Minto

The Town of Minto requests \$5,000 to cover 38.5% funding for a Move to Minto 2022 Campaign. Housing supply is an issue in many communities and influences various areas of the local economy including newcomer attraction, youth retention, workforce retention and attraction. The Town of Minto is expecting several large residential developments in 2022 and in preparation, they are updating photography, creating a new promotional video and updating the [movetominto.com](http://movetominto.com) website. This will support resident, newcomer and workforce attraction efforts in the coming year.

### Recommendation:

That the Economic Development Committee approve the 2021 BR+E Municipal Implementation Fund for the Township of Mapleton and the Town of Minto.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crystal Ellis', written over a faint circular stamp.

Crystal Ellis  
Director of Economic Development