

Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Meet Our Consultants

To help us plan for our future in an effective and timely way, the Municipality has engaged the services of Murray Clarke and Bill Winegard of Municipal Strategic Planning Associates.

Murray Clarke

Murray retired in 2017 after a 35-year career as a Chief Administrative Officer in small to mid-sized municipalities in Ontario and British Columbia. Throughout his career, he has committed to a strategic planning approach that effectively translates councils' and community expectations and aims into plans that reflect fiscal responsibility and resulted in plans that were sensible, practical and precise. He has a proven track record in engaging municipal councils, staff and community stakeholders to build trust through inclusivity that sets the municipality on a path to success and sustainability.

Bill Winegard

A planner by trade, Bill became Chief Administrator in Gravenhurst and in Caledon, both – like Middlesex Centre – a combination of urban and rural communities. He introduced strategic planning into the governance of both municipalities. Among his 50+ municipal consulting projects since 2003, he has worked on strategic plans with a dozen small Ontario municipalities.

Their Role

Murray and Bill stress that strategic planning is NOT a study...their role is to facilitate this process and help our community and our Council to make decisions. As they say, "it would be foolish of us to think we can come in and magically tell you what's happening and what's best for the future of Middlesex Centre."

Rather, they will:

- lead Council and department heads through a series of four workshops from March to August, ensuring that each one is productive and they lead progressively toward a Council conclusion
- consult our residents and businesses on Council's behalf, taking careful note of all input and summarizing it for Council's use
- conducting public surveys, meeting with community boards and associations, holding public open houses, and gathering electronic input
- prepare successive drafts – based on Council, staff and public input – for Council, staff and public review

Why Consultants?

Like any small municipality, Council is reluctant to use consultants and very cognizant of costs. So, why are we using consultants for this project?

- First our staff – even if they had the expertise – don't have the time. Small municipalities make sure the staff is busy; they can't afford to have staff waiting around to take on a big project like this.
- We want an objective listening ear to help us hear our residents and businesses accurately without preconceived notions or "pet projects."
- Both these consultants are very familiar with living in and working for small municipalities. They know what questions to ask and what they are hearing.
- They have guided other municipalities through this process. They will make sure we don't spin our wheels, we stay realistic, and we produce a clear usable direction that we can celebrate when we succeed.
- Finally and most importantly, it's our future we're planning, perhaps the most important project we take on this term. Yes, there a cost, but the "game is worth the candle."

Stay Tuned

Throughout the strategic planning process, all summaries of public input and draft documents, and all notices of upcoming events, will be posted on the Strategic Plan section of our website. Please take advantage of this opportunity to help us plan for the future of Middlesex Centre!