



Middlesex Centre Strategic Plan – 2021 Update

Introduction

In January 2021, Middlesex Centre Council adopted a new Strategic Plan for our community. This guiding document lays out priorities and objectives for the next five years and informs our services to residents and decisions on behalf of the community.

This first update provides a snapshot of accomplishments on the objectives in Strategic Plan. Despite starting after the annual municipal budget was approved and recognizing that we are early in the term of the plan, Council and staff made significant progress on a number of key initiatives.

When developing the Strategic Plan we could not have predicted the extent to which staff would need to pivot to forge ahead in light of the pandemic. However, it is clear that the plan has provided a road map and helped the municipality succeed in the face of the challenges presented over the last year and half.

As we look to 2022, staff are actively incorporating the initiatives and objectives in the Strategic Plan into their budgets and work plans. Over the coming year, we look forward to continuing to work with residents, businesses, community organizations and other partners on implementing the Strategic Plan's vision for Middlesex Centre.

Michael Di Lullo, CAO
November 10, 2021

The Middlesex Centre Strategic Plan is available online at middlesexcentre.on.ca/stratplan or by contacting the municipal office.



VISION:
A thriving, progressive and welcoming community that honours our rural roots and embraces our natural spaces.

MISSION:
To deliver the highest standard in municipal services in a sustainable, professional and innovative manner.

VALUES:
Respect. Cooperation. Innovation. Integrity.




PRIORITY 1

Engaged Community

Objectives

- 1.1 - Support community organizations and opportunities for volunteer involvement in the community
- 1.2 - Enhance the vitality of our villages
- 1.3 - Celebrate our rural and agricultural heritage

2021 Accomplishments

- ✓ Enhanced survey outreach for municipal initiatives such as the Community Services Master Plan, Age-Friendly Community Action Plan, and sidewalk and street lighting prioritization
- ✓ Explored grant opportunities to benefit community groups such as Trees Middlesex and pickleball equipment
- ✓ Provided funding and promoted the Middlesex Centre Archives, and assisted with their County-wide Archives endeavor
- ✓ Shared promotional information in support of the Ilderton Fall Fair
- ✓ Updated the New Resident welcome package and processes
- ✓ Introduced an updated Community Improvement Plan with new funding categories for benefit of all businesses in Middlesex Centre

- ✓ Forged partnerships with education institutions including Western University, University of Waterloo, Ryerson University, and Fanshawe College
- ✓ As was possible during COVID-19, conducted outreach to local schools on fire and emergency safety



PRIORITY 2

Balanced Growth

Objectives

- 2.1 - Through the Official Plan Review and other means, influence new development to include attainably priced housing
- 2.2 - Through the Official Plan Review and other means, manage the pace of new residential development and encourage the complementary availability of commercial, school, and public amenities
- 2.3 - Promote designs and concepts that reflect a “small-community feel” in new development

2021 Accomplishments

- ✓ Incorporated affordable housing in future developments such as the Design For Happiness project in Komoka
- ✓ Finalizing the Official Plan Review and accompanying studies to address future growth needs, along with updating planning policies such as surplus farm dwellings (expected to be complete by year’s end)



PRIORITY 3

Vibrant Local Economy

Objectives

- 3.1 - Support Middlesex County's efforts to secure provincial and federal funding for broadband internet service expansion throughout Middlesex Centre
- 3.2 - Ensure that appropriate sites are available for commercial and industrial businesses
- 3.3 - Be active partners in promoting local businesses

2021 Accomplishments

- ✓ Completed a Highway Corridor Study to examine investment opportunities to attract commercial and industrial growth
- ✓ Completed a survey of local businesses to gauge where municipality can be of most help and created a listing of businesses in Middlesex Centre to share and promote “shop local” (project conducted by Western University students)
- ✓ Worked with County of Middlesex Tourism to promote and spotlight certain sectors and businesses in Middlesex Centre
- ✓ With Invest in Middlesex, developing a Middlesex Centre community profile to promote the municipality as a place to invest or start a business (expected by year's end)
- ✓ Shared information such as funding opportunities related to the COVID-19 pandemic with area businesses
- ✓ Hosted a working group including members of the business community and local service groups in reviewing a proposed “Mobile Food Truck By-law”



PRIORITY 4

Sustainable Infrastructure and Services

Objectives

- 4.1 - Improve safety for road users
- 4.2 - Expand existing services in accordance with the pace of new development, and apply a financial sustainability lens to all municipal services and programs
- 4.3 - Continue with our asset management plan and apply a financial sustainability lens to all municipal assets and infrastructure

2021 Accomplishments

- ✓ Implemented Vision Zero initiatives such as new crosswalks, parking markings at schools, and speed signage across the municipality, and speed controls (e.g., speed cushions)
- ✓ Approved a new Gravel Road Conversion Policy to provide Council, staff and residents with a consistent process for identifying those gravel roads that should be considered for upgrades to a “tar and chip” road surface.
- ✓ Expanded Building Services to meet the demands of growth taking place, including new partnerships with municipal counterparts and implementing digital systems to increase service levels and efficiencies
- ✓ Adopted an updated Asset Management Plan that is compliant with Provincial regulations

- ✓ Completing an amendment to the municipal Development Charges Study that encompasses assets required for growth and is compliant with Provincial regulations (expected to be adopted by year's end)
- ✓ Implemented new systems for managing municipal assets to ensure accuracy of inventory and to track improvements and changes to fleet, building, municipal servicing and other infrastructure assets, and progressively building reserve funds for the timely repair and replacement of our assets
- ✓ Sought and in many cases successfully received infrastructure grants for initiatives such as water system upgrades and new infrastructure such as arenas, accessible washrooms, playgrounds, etc.
- ✓ Developing an IT Master Plan to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of internal systems and processes (expected to be completed by year's end)
- ✓ Engaged with residents on municipal budgeting to be transparent and open with costs to maintain municipal assets, through survey outreach, in-person staff booths at local farmers' markets, and online
- ✓ Improved communication on capital projects through focused articles and posts on municipal website, social media, e-newsletter and through traditional media



PRIORITY 5

Responsive Municipal Government

Objectives

- 5.1 - Enhance customer service
- 5.2 - Foster a culture of mutual trust and respect within Council and between Council and staff
- 5.3 - Foster a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and cost-effective service delivery
- 5.4 - Expand our partnerships
- 5.5 - Work with other levels of government, health organizations, and community groups to address complex societal problems

2021 Accomplishments

- ✓ Expanded automation of processes and digital services to residents and businesses, including:
 - holding electronic council meetings
 - transforming the municipal budget processes with new Questica software; in future year's this software will offer increased capital project information to residents
 - introduction of on-line credit card payment option through Paymentus (expected to launch by year's end)
 - integrated website forms to allow residents to request special occasion certificates from the mayor, to request delegations before Council, and to report concerns with municipal facilities and roads, among others

- ✓ Continued updates to municipal website and outreach through digital and traditional media to share information about services and programs with residents
- ✓ Updated the municipal social media policy to ensure Middlesex Centre is best using these platforms to inform and promote activities and services to the public
- ✓ Conducted a Mayor's Town Hall
- ✓ Hosted an information workshop for local builders and developers with updates from TARION, Ministry of Labour, Cloudpermit, the Official Plan Review and Building Division
- ✓ Reinforced our corporate values with staff across the organization throughout the year so that we embody these traits as public servants
- ✓ Continued dialogue and education workshops with Council members on issues arising in the municipality, and provided opportunities to attend various conferences (AMO or FCM)
- ✓ Increased efficiency of ongoing staff training through introduction of new training system (HR Downloads)
- ✓ Gathered and where possible implemented continuous improvement initiatives coming forward from staff to make Middlesex Centre an efficient, thriving organization
- ✓ Worked with the County and municipal counterparts on various initiatives such as joint modernization programs, legislative issues (policing, conservation changes) and job-related information sharing through such initiatives as the quarterly Treasurers' meetings
- ✓ Established a new Youth Advisory Committee to provide support for programs targeted at this sector of the population
- ✓ Working with the County of Middlesex and other stakeholders, enacted a Community Wellbeing Plan to address complex societal problems