

Commercial Needs Analysis

Preliminary Policy Directions

The Township has a strong presence of commercial spaces on main street, downtown retail, and across the rural areas of the Township. As part of the new Official Plan, the Commercial Needs Analysis looks at how to meet commercial needs to 2051.



Wellesley Urban Core and “Four Corners” Areas

- The Wellesley Urban Core and the four corners’ areas of the rural settlement areas represent important commercial areas within the Township. “Four Corner” areas are the key intersections within the Township’s settlement areas where the main streets meet commercial uses.
- New Official Plan policies should support more commercial space the Wellesley Urban Core and four corners areas that is compatible with surrounding uses. This would be in addition to any new nodes needed to accommodate future growth.
- While food services and food stores are key anchors for these areas, policies should provide for a broad range of retail and service categories.



Support Inclusive Access to Commercial Spaces

- Most trips to commercial spaces are expected to continue to be made by motor vehicles. New Official Plan policies should support access to commercial spaces by motor vehicles, while ensuring safe access for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse-drawn vehicles where appropriate.
- Parking requirements should ensure that supply is sufficient by providing street, public and business-specific parking.
- Parking requirements for new businesses can be reduced if there is already sufficient excess parking in close proximity.



Commercial Format

- New commercial spaces should be focused on small, local-serving retail within the Wellesley Urban Core and four corner areas.
- New retail in the Urban Core and four corner areas should permit a wide range of businesses, allowing for mixed-use development where appropriate and compatible.
- Mixed-use development will aid in providing new commercial development, retaining existing businesses, and maintaining the rural character.
- New Official Plan policies should permit second storey commercial space as of right in commercial areas.
- New Official Plan policies should continue to support new small businesses by making it easier to get started –for example, allowing home occupations (such as at-home daycares, individual hair stylists) to be permitted as of right in residential areas and encouraging small scale rural uses (such as on-farm diversified uses and bed and breakfasts).
- Where possible, noise, food odours, or traffic generated by customers should be dealt with by regulating the design, permitted hours, and community infrastructure, rather than specific use restrictions. This can allow for commercial spaces to adapt to changing market needs and conditions without major planning changes.



Evaluating Options

- New commercial development applications should align to growth and residential needs, improve access in underserved areas, and compliment the different areas of the Township.
- Commercial uses should be planned for and phased based on population projection increases.