TOWNSHIP OF Wilmot

Wilmot's New Official Plan

Background Studies Public Workshop

October 22, 2025



NETHERY Planning

The Planning Partnership

Project Process

1 Consultation Vision and Principles

Early conversations with residents, Indigenous communities, and interest holders

2 Background Research and Technical Studies

Technical studies:

1. Housing
2. Employment
3. Commercial Needs
4. Transportation
5. Water and Wastewater Servicing
6. Stormwater
7. Urban Design

3 Draft Policies and Land Use Maps

- Translate key directions from Technical Studies into draft policies
- Update mapping for settlement areas, countryside, natural heritage, transportation networks

4 Finalize Plan and Policies

Council adoption and submission to the Province for approval, ensuring the new Official Plan reflects Wilmot's community priorities and provincial direction

WE ARE HERE

Engagement We've Done & What's to Come

1 Consultation Vision and Principles

- **July 2025** Pre-Engagement Letter to Indigenous Communities
- **August 12, 2025** Councillor One-on-Ones
- **August 18, 2025** One-on-One Community Conversations
- **September 13, 2025** New Hamburg Fall Fair
- **September 23, 2025** Public Visioning Workshop

2 Background Research and Technical Studies

- **October 2, 2025** Virtual Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
- **October 2025** Follow-up Meetings with Indigenous Government
- **October 2025** Councillor Visioning Discussions
- **October 22, 2025** Background Studies Public Workshop
- **November 17, 2025** Special Meeting of Council to Introduce the Project

3 Draft Policies and Land Use Maps

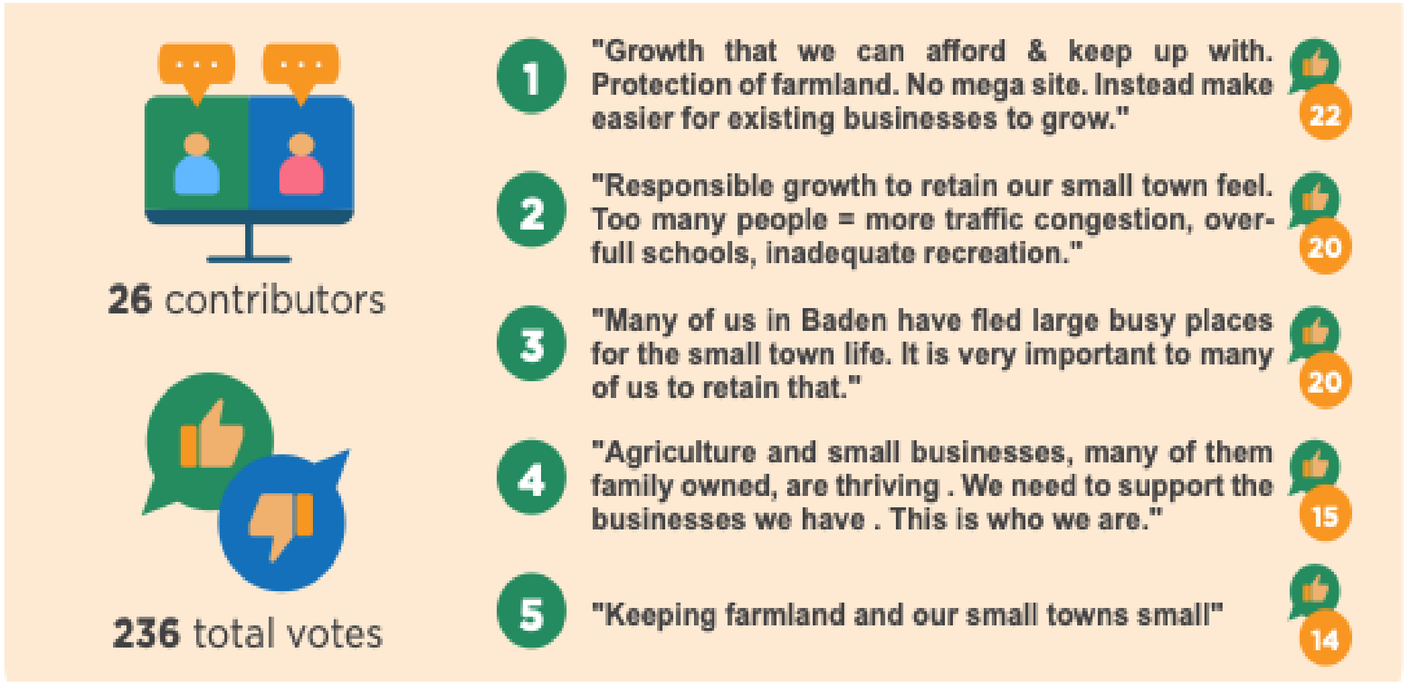
- **March 2026** Follow-up Meetings with Indigenous Government
- **March 2026** Council Workshop on the Draft Official Plan
- **March 2026** Public Workshop on the Draft Official Plan
- **April 2026** Statutory Public Open House on the Official Plan
- **May 2026** Statutory Public Meeting Before Council

4 Finalize Plan and Policies

- **June 2026** Presentation to Council to Submit the Official Plan
- **June 2026** Forwarding of the Adopted Official Plan for Ministerial Review
- **June 2026** Notice of Official Plan Adoption Provided


What We've Heard So Far
Plan for Tourism and Local Culture
Prioritize a Local Focus on Economics and Employment Land
Keep Small-Town Feel
Protect Farmland and Water
Create more opportunities for Active Transportation and Outdoor Recreation
Respect Existing Land Uses (Industrial)
Address Accessibility and Transit Connectivity
Provide Housing Mix, Density, Diversity and Affordability

What We Heard So Far: What's most important to you as we look ahead to 2051?







Draft Principles

- Encourage and support a **range and mix of housing** in village centres and on major roads.
- Enhance our **village centres** by accommodating new businesses, housing, community facilities and enhancing streets and parks.
- Provide opportunities for **local jobs** and **economic growth**.
- Planning for accessible **transportation options** to support the safe **movement of people and goods** on local roads.
- Ensure the protection and enhancement of the **natural heritage system** and its ecological functions.
- Promote **fiscal responsibility** in development and manage growth in tandem with the availability of **services**.
- Promote the design of **resilient and sustainable communities** that respond to climate change and promote compact urban form to protect farmland.

What is a Background Study?

A background study, also called a background report, is a guiding document for the development of the Official Plan. It identifies necessary changes according to both Provincial and Regional legislative changes, and local growth and context. It also provides direction for the Official Plan policies through the *Emerging Policy Directions.*

Each background report outlines:

Legislative Changes → Local Context → Topics for Discussion → Policy Directions → Next Steps

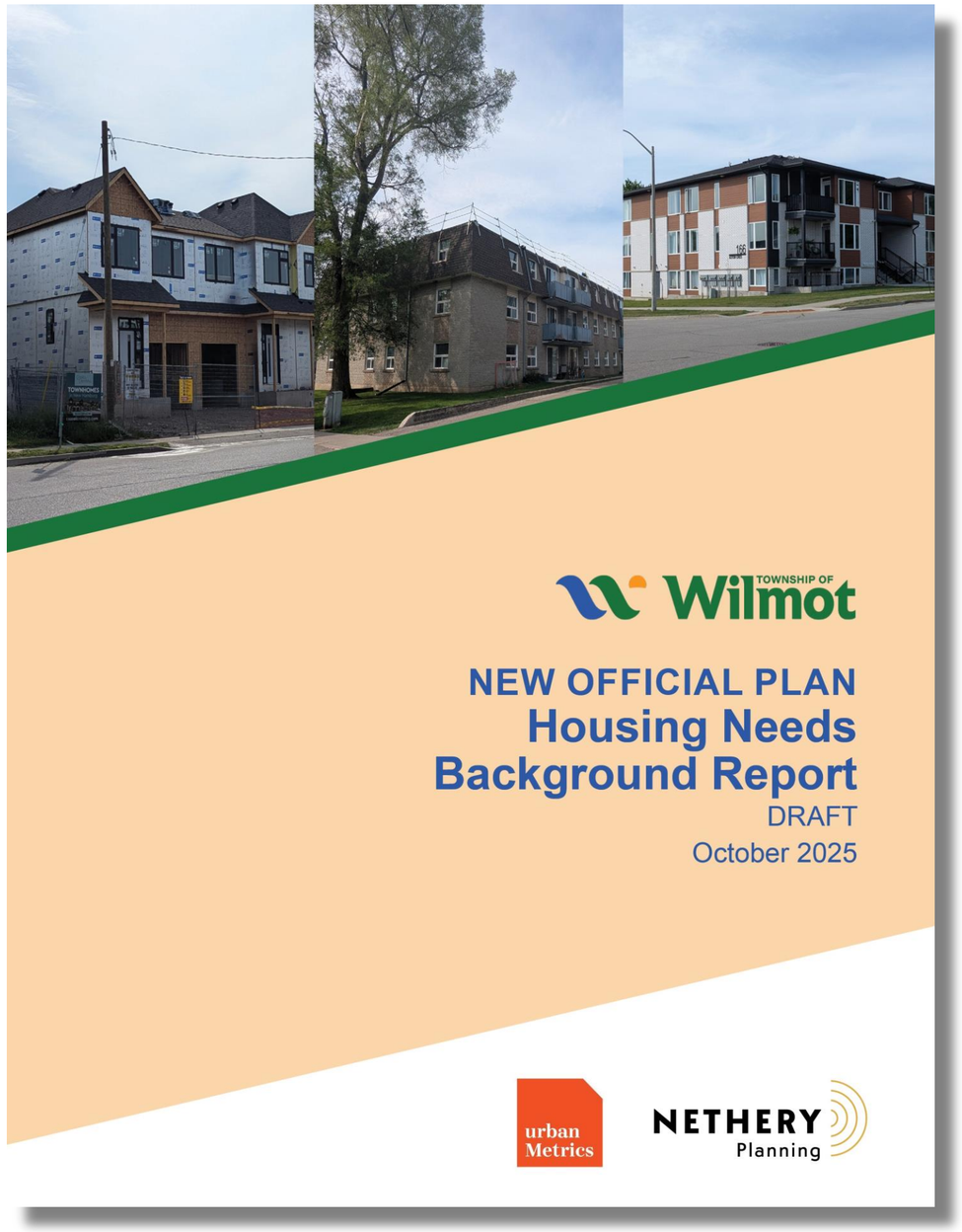


The Background Studies

There are 7 background studies being presented for the workshop today.



- Housing Needs
- Employment
- Commercial Lands Needs
- Transportation
- Water and Wastewater Servicing
- Stormwater Management
- Urban Design



Housing Needs

This report identifies requirements for growth in Wilmot, current and projected needs, and housing trends. **Emerging Policy Directions from this report include:**

- Zone land flexibly to allow for multiple housing typologies and uses as of right.
- Allowing higher densities (6 to 8 stories) in Downtown Areas and main roads to support walkable, mixed-use areas with amenities.
- Planning for a range of population growth with no additional land needs required.

Housing Needs – Population Projections

Wilmot's population growth was relatively high at the start of the century but has since tapered off as servicing constraints have limited new growth.

From 2002 to 2007, Wilmot's population grew just under 3% per year, almost double the rate of Waterloo Region during that time.

This slowed to about 2% per year from 2008 to 2013 and 1% per year from 2014 to 2024 and is not expected to continue.

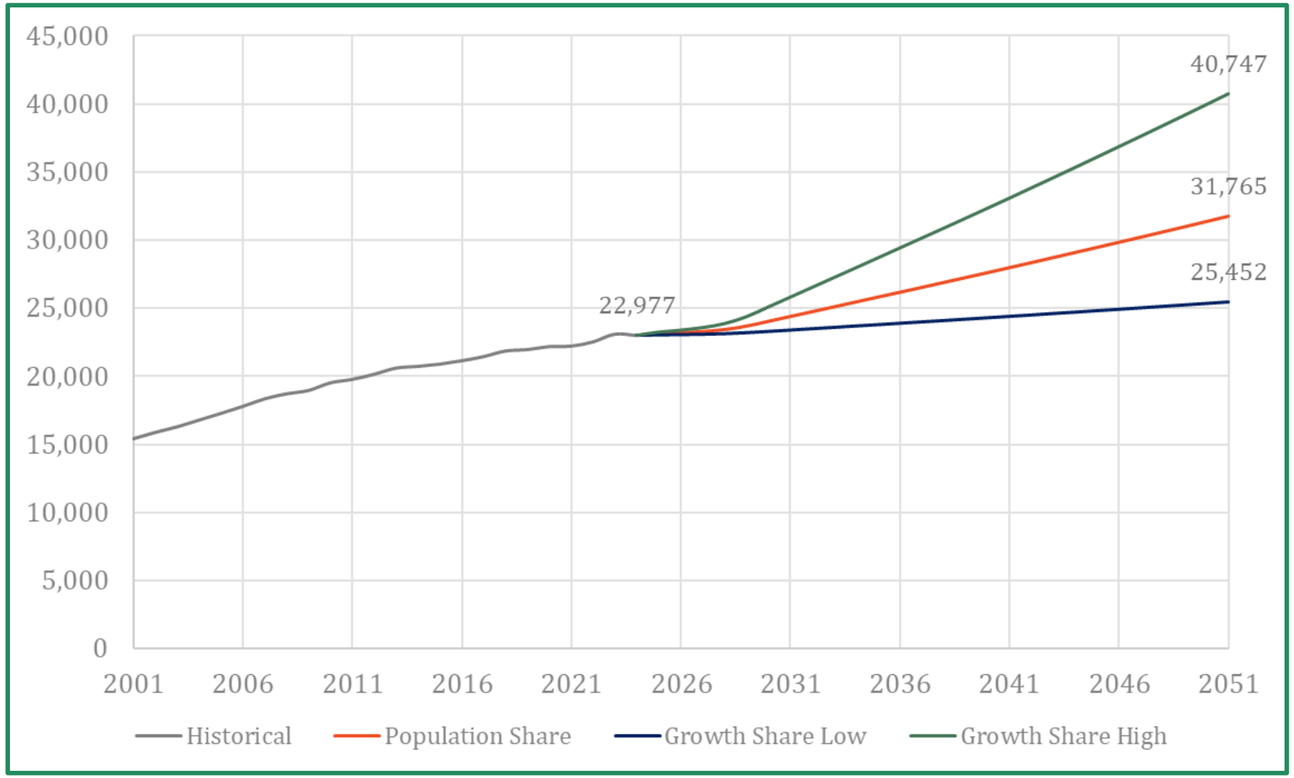
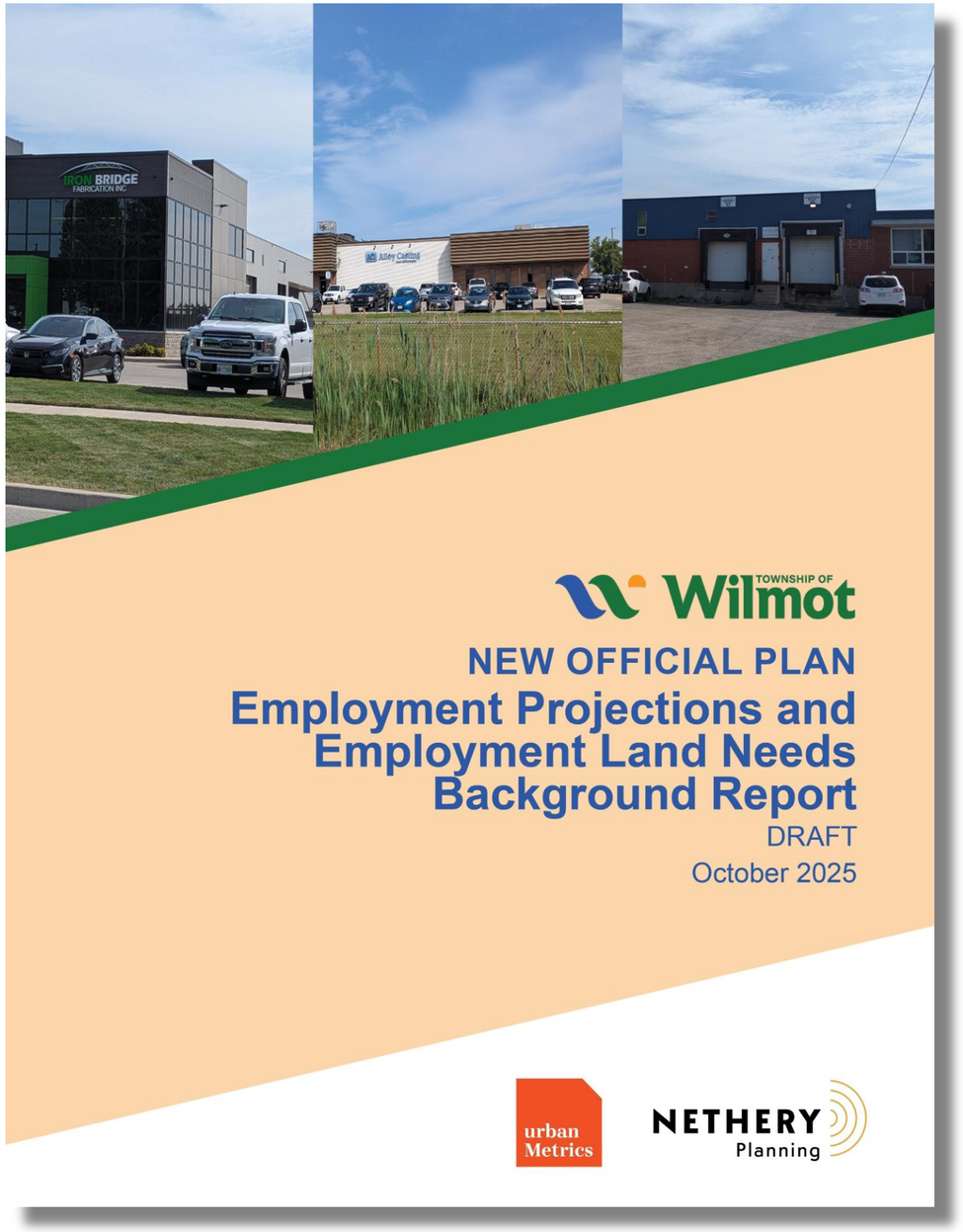


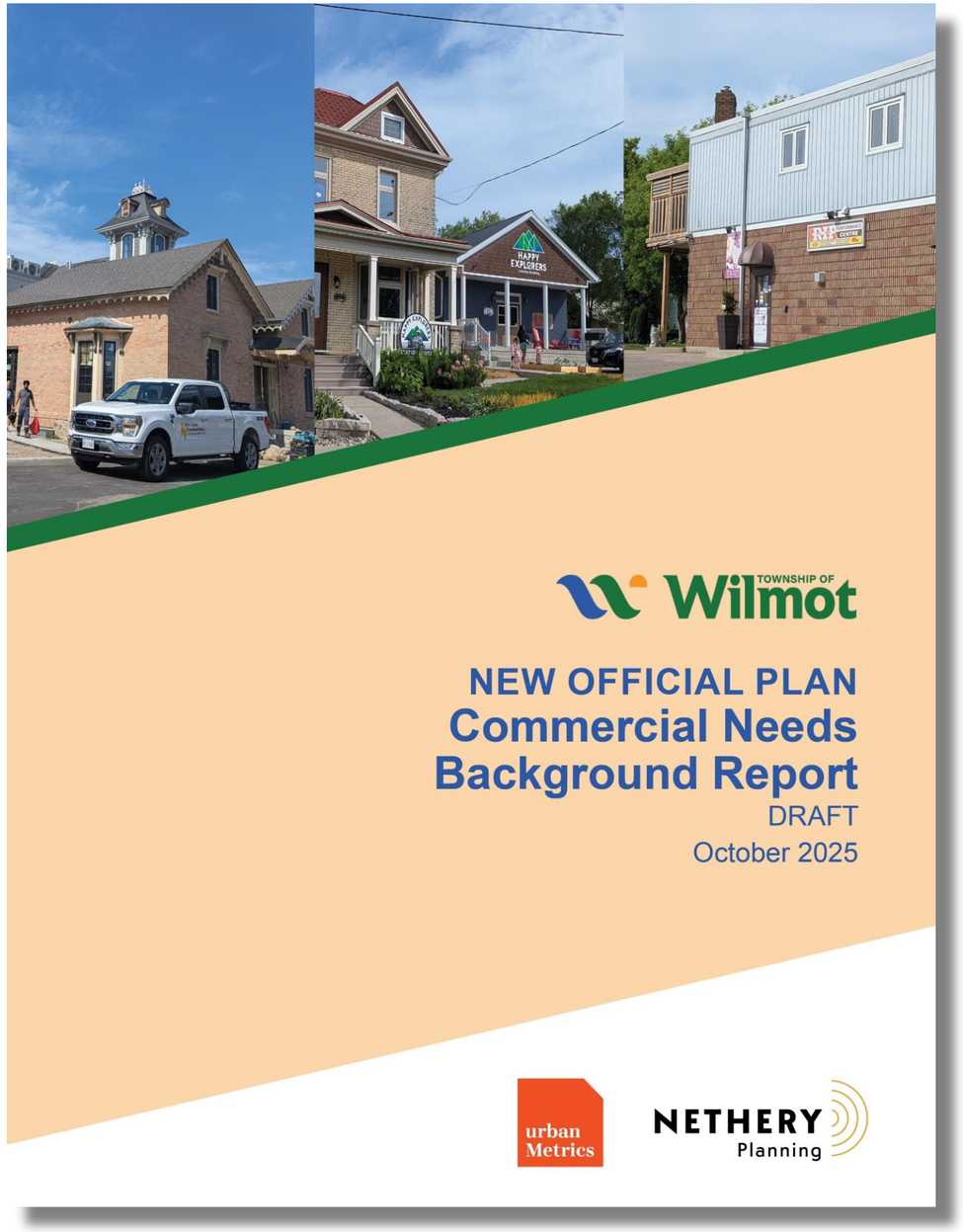
Figure 3: Wilmot Population Trend and Projections



Employment Needs

This report details the needs for employment lands based on projections from the Provincial government. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Employment include:**

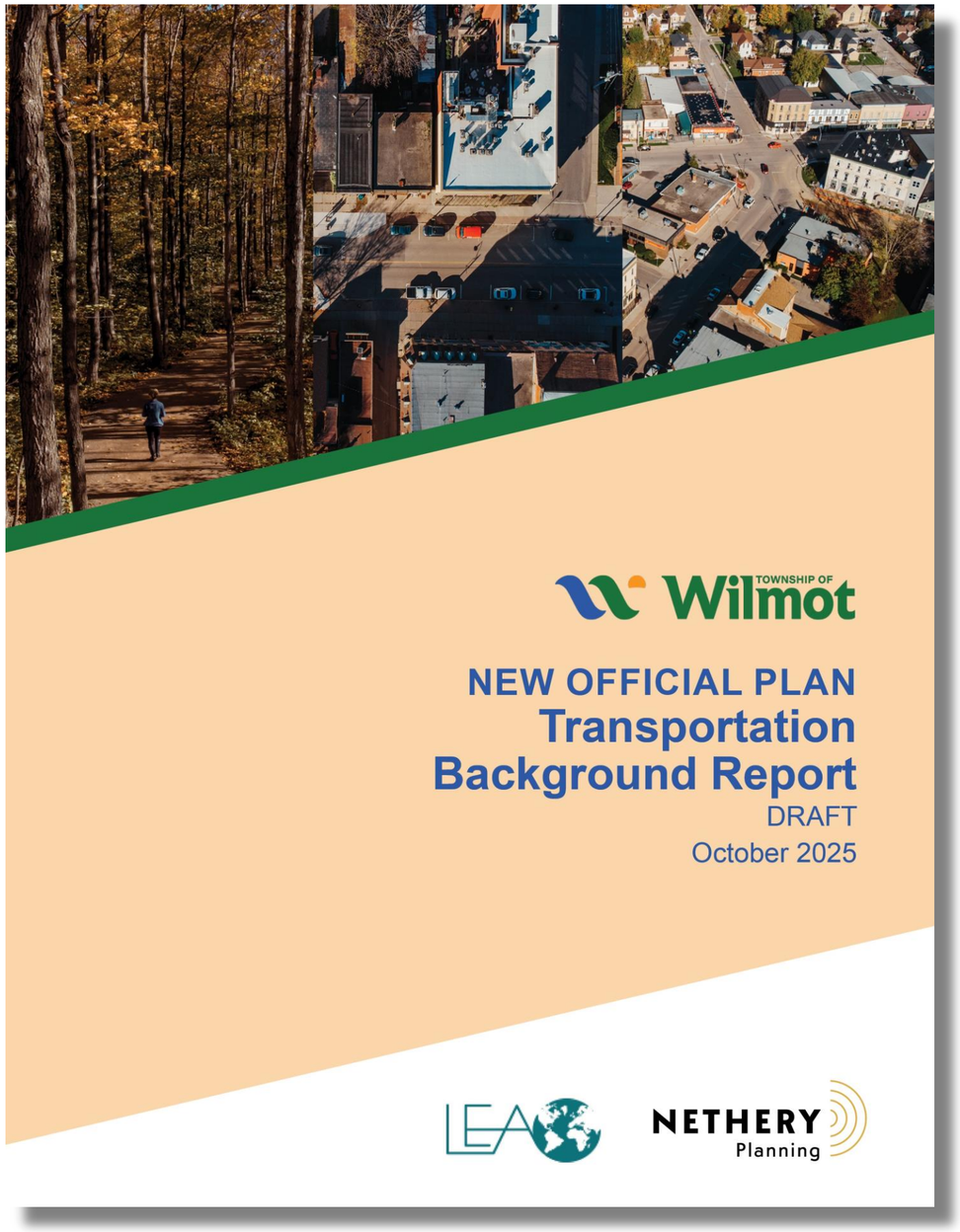
- Planning for an employment target of at least 3,200 new jobs by 2051.
- Protecting employment areas through compatibility policies, such as avoiding adverse impacts to sensitive land uses.
- Maintaining and updating an employment land inventory of available lots and sizes through the expansion of between 26.3 and 95.5 hectares of new employment lands.



Commercial Needs

This report identifies Commercial Needs based on population growth and surrounding land uses. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Commercial Needs include:**

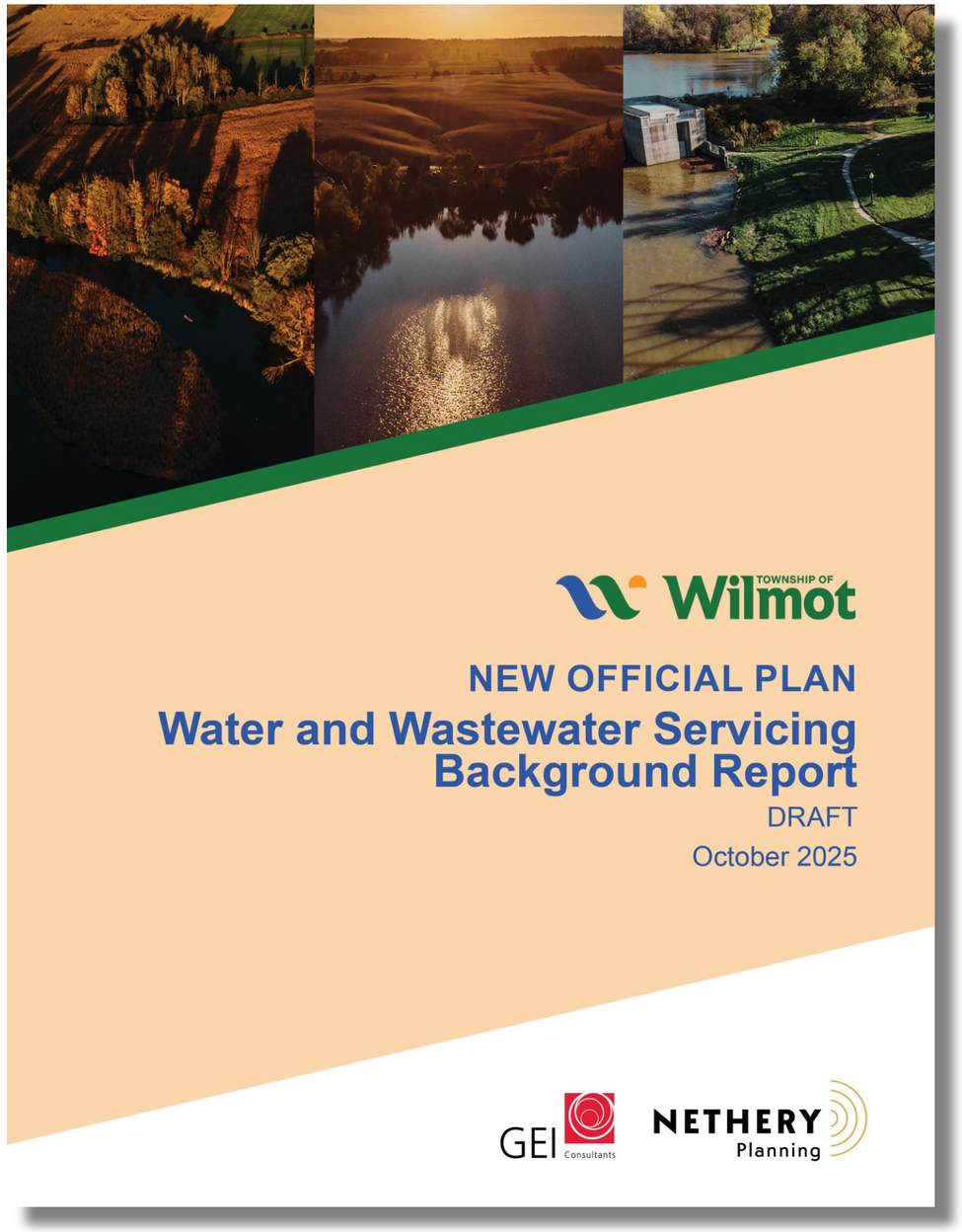
- Identifying new neighbourhood commercial nodes when new neighbourhoods are created as Wilmot may need between 234,400 and 286,600SF of new retail space.
- Permitting a broad range of commercial uses, such as food and grocery stores, pharmacies, merchandise and more.
- Allowing small-scale uses in residential areas such as corner stores or at home daycares.



Transportation

This report looks at current transportation in the Township, including road and active networks, and identifies opportunities and needs to address growth. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Transportation include:**

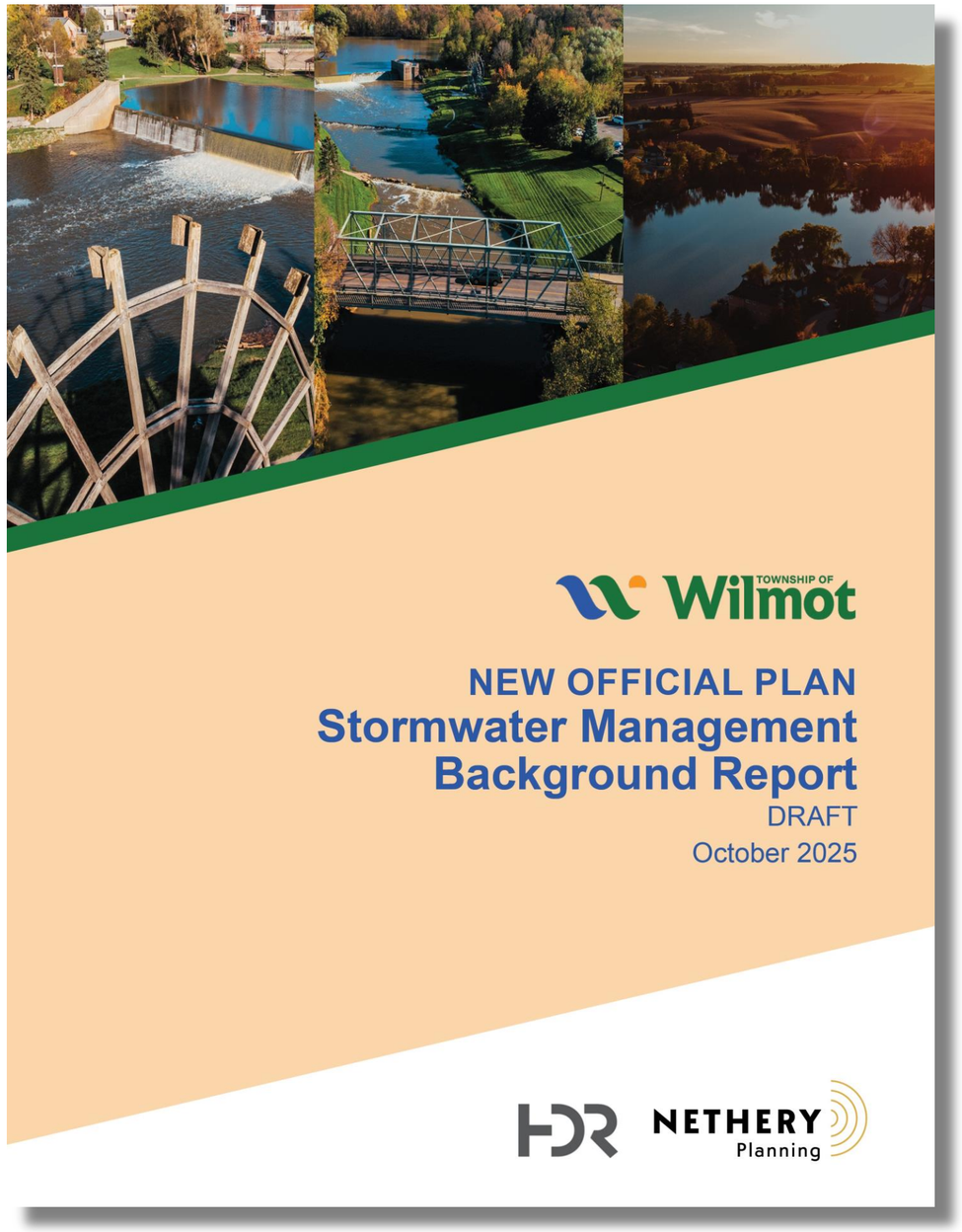
- Improving safety through geometric traffic calming measures and public education.
- Designing for an accessible all-season built-form by utilizing tactile paving or audible signals.
- Creating a Township Road Hierarchy Plan to classify roads based on local character and land use context.



Water and Wastewater

This report looks at the requirements for servicing to support existing residents and growth. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Water and Wastewater include:**

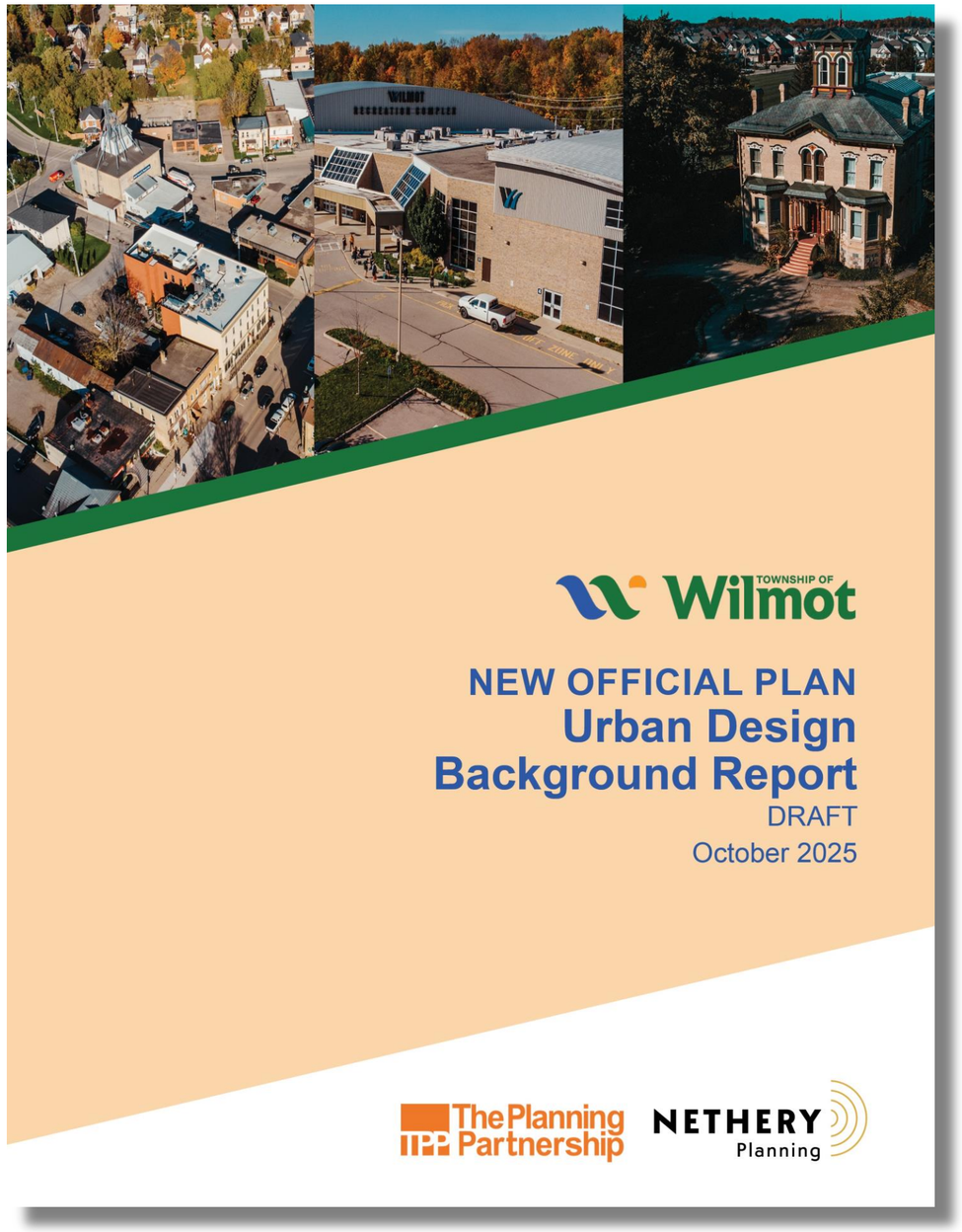
- Introducing policy for a servicing allocation system which manages capacity constraints and life-cycle planning.
- Provide policy direction for rainwater collection and usage.
- Planning for optimization of Township and Region water and wastewater infrastructure, including appropriate phasing of development.



Stormwater Management

This report provides direction for creating the Township's Stormwater Servicing Strategy. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Stormwater Management include:**

- Protect key natural and hydrologic features and their buffers from development or site alteration.
- Encourage Low Impact Development to support rainwater infiltration and filtration.
- Prioritize infrastructure design, location and maintenance to mitigate impacts of climate change and extreme weather.



Urban Design

This report provides considerations for designing places and spaces in the Township's Urban Areas. **Some of the Emerging Policy Directions for Urban Design include:**

- Protecting and expanding on the Township's trails system to promote active transportation.
- Include policies that support conservation objectives, including water conservation, energy conservation and more.
- Planning for compatible development, including gentle intensification where appropriate, promoting sustainable design.

Thank You

Visit engagewr.ca/new-wilmot-official-plan or scan the QR code to stay up to date with the project.

Conversation

Our Project Team members are here as subject matter experts and can be found around the room ready to help with your questions on any of the topics.

What would you add to the preliminary directions? What needs more clarification.

What additional words or phrases would you add to the draft vision and principles?

