



New Official Plan

Public Information Session

November 12, 2025

Project Timeline



Current Official Plan Goals and Objectives



Agriculture: *To preserve and protect the valuable farm lands in the Township of Wellesley not only for the production of food and other products, but also as an important component of the township's economic base, a source of employment and as a basis for the township's rural community.*



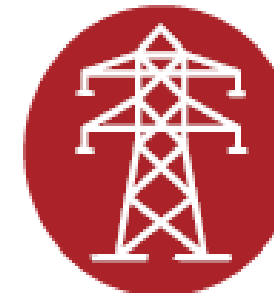
Settlements: *To foster the development of compact, vibrant and complete communities and to achieve the reurbanization and density targets set out in this Plan.*



Environment: *To maintain, enhance or wherever feasible restore the quality of the environment and the long-term health of the ecosystems represented in the township while providing for the changing needs of the population. All other goals should attempt to satisfy the requirements of the environmental goal so as to improve the quality of life for residents.*



Transportation: *To promote the continued development and coordination of a safe integrated and efficient transportation network for the safe and efficient movement of all people and goods to meet the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, horse-drawn vehicles, farm vehicles and motor vehicles.*



Services: *To provide and maintain, in co-operation with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, a level of municipal services to the various areas of the Township in accordance with economic, social, and environmental considerations.*



Cultural Heritage Resources: *To protect, conserve or wherever feasible, rehabilitate and/or reuse the cultural heritage resources of the Township.*

Current Official Plan Goals and Objectives



Community Improvement: *To promote the implementation of community improvement by way of the maintenance, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of the physical environment in a coordinated and fiscally prudent manner while having regard to improvements to the economic potential and social environment.*



Economic Development and Financial Stability: *To promote the development of the Township's economic potential by ensuring the continuing expansion of the economic opportunities and diversification of the economic base, in accordance with the policies of this Plan.*



Community and Culture: *To maximize the use of existing facilities and to encourage their upkeep by providing for a range of community, institutional and cultural services and facilities.*



Commercial and Industrial: *To provide for a broad range of commercial and industrial activities and services to meet the diverse needs of the Township's residents and businesses, as well as to generate employment opportunities, within a strong commercial structure focused on Wellesley's Urban Growth Centre, the Core Areas of the Rural Settlement Area and other appropriately located Rural Employment Areas.*



Natural Resources: *To optimize the use of the township's natural resources through management based on sound economic, social and environmental guidelines.*



Parkland, Open Space, Recreation: *To meet the present and future recreational needs of township residents by maximizing recreation opportunities on existing open space areas and facilities, while planning for an integrated parkland and trail system.*

Current Official Plan Goals and Objectives



Governance: *To support the regional and township system of government and the municipal boundaries established through the Municipal Act, 2001. To work with all levels of government to ensure effective, efficient and responsible decision making and service delivery on behalf of the residents of the Township of Wellesley.*



Fringe Areas: *To maintain distinct boundaries between urban and the Countryside within the Township by ensuring efficient use of urban lands and restricting inappropriate uses within the Countryside.*



Community Health: *To strive to provide access to primary health care and associated services through partnerships with groups such as the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.*



Community Initiatives: *To promote the enhancement of the Township's quality of life through the development of appropriate partnerships with non-profit organizations and community groups.*



Housing: *To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types, including affordable housing, to meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents.*



Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: *To improve accessibility for persons with disabilities by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.*



Energy Conservation: *To promote land use and development patterns that support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.*

Draft Vision Statement

“ The Township of Wellesley is a growing, inclusive community where people live, work, and thrive together.

We are united by our shared values and diverse cultures.

We are protectors of our agricultural land, rich natural landscape, strong rural identity and our distinct communities.

We embrace opportunity while preserving the small-town feel that defines us.

”

What We've Heard So Far

Engage Website and Fall Fair Engagement



What We've Heard So Far

Interest Holders

- Interest in being within the settlement boundary.
- Need for more employment lands.
- General satisfaction with local planning direction.
- Support aging in place through housing and “wrap-around” support (*providing a full range of coordinated services*).
- Historic horse-and-buggy travel is still used in the Township.
- Affordable housing seen as unviable without access to transit.
- Interest in repurposing the old arena site for housing or community use, would likely need other funding sources.
- Requests for improved library services.



What We've Heard So Far

One-on-ones with Residents

- Desire to retain estate-lot character (1-acre lots, low density).
- Concern over provincial downloading and limited local planning capacity.
- Recognition of growing senior population — need for approximately 3,000 new units to meet demand.
- Aim for an Official Plan that meets local needs despite tight timelines and budgets.



What We've Heard So Far

Fall Fair

We Asked:

**What challenges
could new
policy address?**



What We've Heard So Far

Fall Fair

We Asked:

What opportunities for change could new policy address?



What We've Heard So Far

Fall Fair

We Asked:

**What words/phrases
should be in the
Official Plan vision
statement?**

Protecting the
environment

Peaceful

Keep the
rural theme
of the Town

Activities
for kids

Programs
for all ages

Sense of
community
and belonging

Safe and
walkable

Community
involvement

Farmland
protection

Live, work,
and play here

What We've Heard So Far

Web Page Responses to Questions

19
Comments

Growth Management

Consider where and how much growth you would like to see within the Township.

- balance growth with farmland protection
- modest expansion in smaller villages
- mix of housing types for all ages + affordable options
- protect countryside lines
- promote energy efficient housing + secondary units

Employment

Consider the location and types of employment opportunities you would like to see within the Township.

- small, local businesses as economic drivers and community anchors
- avoid large-scale industrial or warehouse uses
- encourage jobs in services, agri-support, and tourism consistent with rural character

Agriculture

How can we protect our Township's agricultural lands? How do we ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and farm equipment, including horse and buggies?

- protect prime farmland and countryside boundaries
- enhance trail connectivity, bike lanes, active transportation, buggy routes
- support agrotourism, farm-based enterprises, and habitat restoration
- Enhance public transit links to Kitchener-Waterloo + between rural areas



What is a Discussion Paper?

A Discussion Paper provides background and context to guide updates to a new Official Plan, aligning to provincial and regional direction, legislation, and local growth trends.

Discussion Papers also provide direction for the Official Plan policies through the *Preliminary Policy Directions*.

Each Discussion Paper outlines:



The Discussion Papers

There are 6 Discussion Papers being presented to Council:



Residential Growth, Housing and Intensification

The purpose of this paper is to provide recommendations for managing population growth based on examination of current housing trends. Some of the *Preliminary Policy Directions* include:



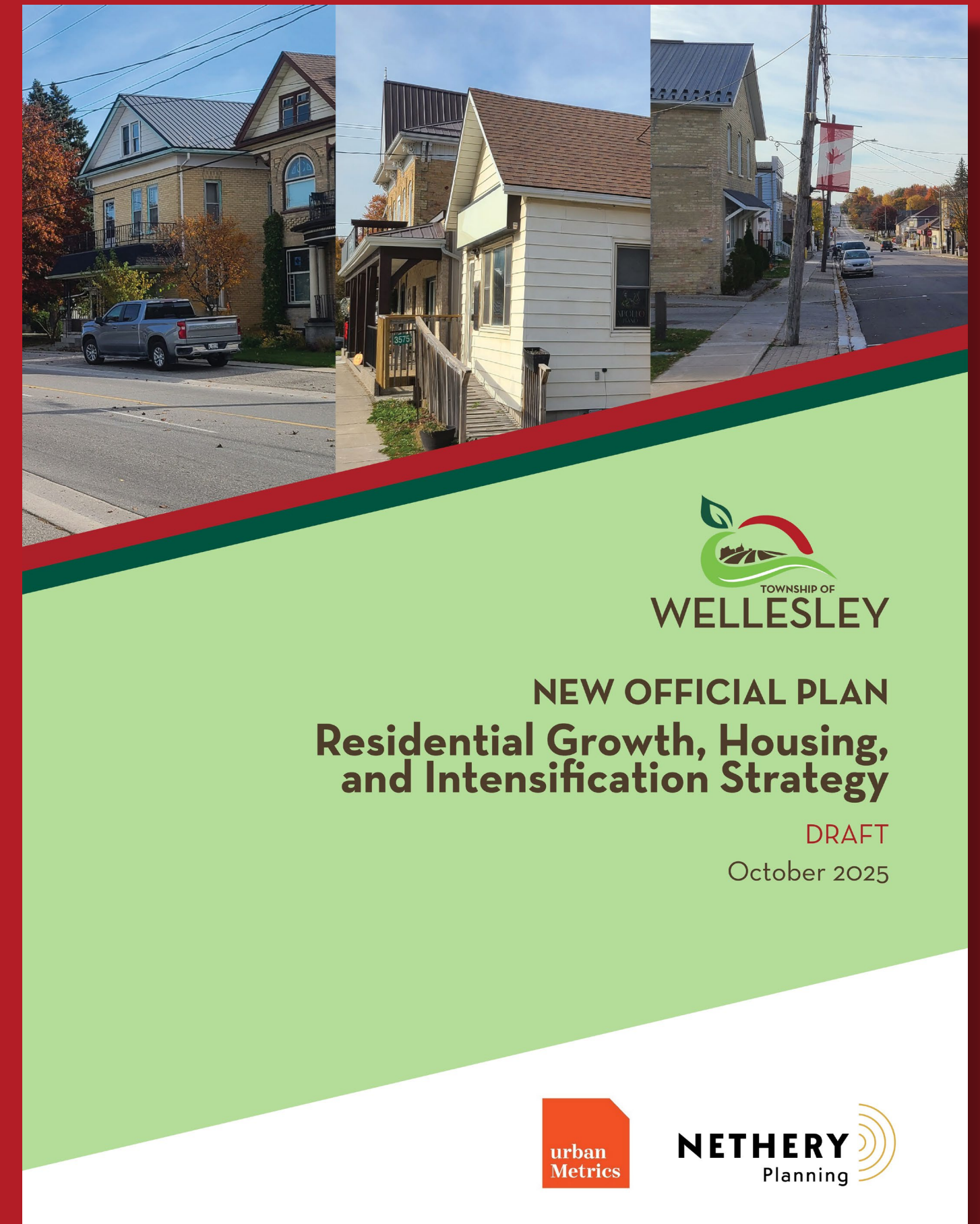
Set and prioritize housing goals which recognize meeting housing demands and needs.



Consider moderate increases to density and intensification in the right places.



Plan with flexibility, prepared for a range of population scenarios for the future.



Employment Lands

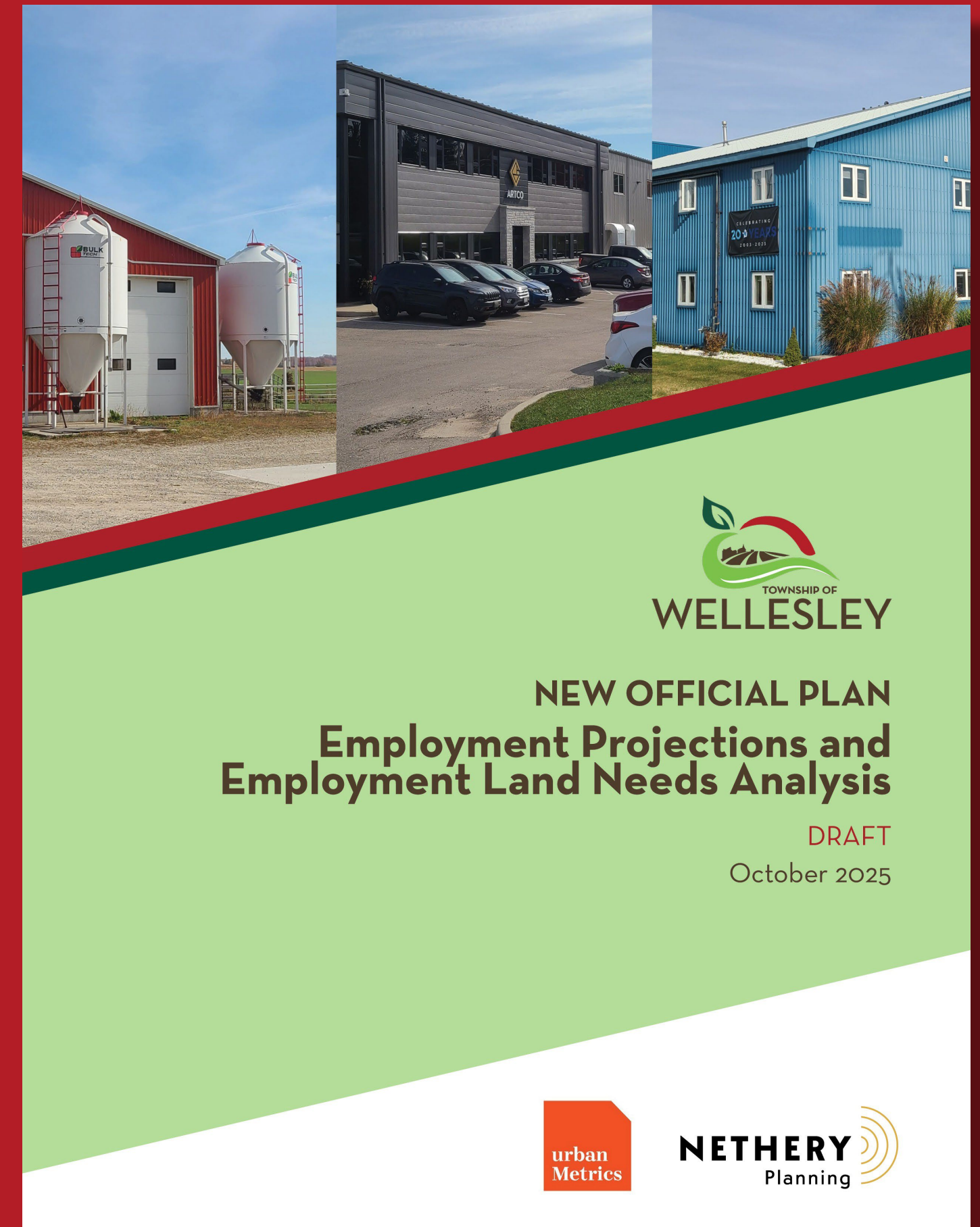
The purpose of this paper is to provide guidance for meeting employment land needs in the Township. The *Preliminary Policy Directions* are:



Identify and designate new employment lands to address shortfall. These lands could be planned adjacent to existing servicing to support existing infrastructure.



Advance priority areas as identified in the *Rural Investment Readiness Strategy*. This includes updating the local Official Plan to ensure employment areas align with the Provincial Planning Statement and Bill 162.



Commercial Needs

This paper provides an overview of Township commercial space and considerations for the future. Some of the *Preliminary Policy Directions* include:



New commercial space being mostly small retail centres, focusing on the Wellesley Urban Core and four corners' areas



Support both vehicle and pedestrian access to Commercial space



Commercial uses should be planned for and anticipated based on population projections.



Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) Criteria

This paper provides suggested criteria for expanding the settlement area boundaries. Some of the *Preliminary Policy Directions* include:



Criteria evaluating Settlement Area Boundary Expansion requests, including policies on agricultural resources, servicing, land needs, growth management, complete communities, and more.



Submission steps and timeline for processing submitted applications for Settlement Area Boundary Expansions.



Scoped Secondary Plan

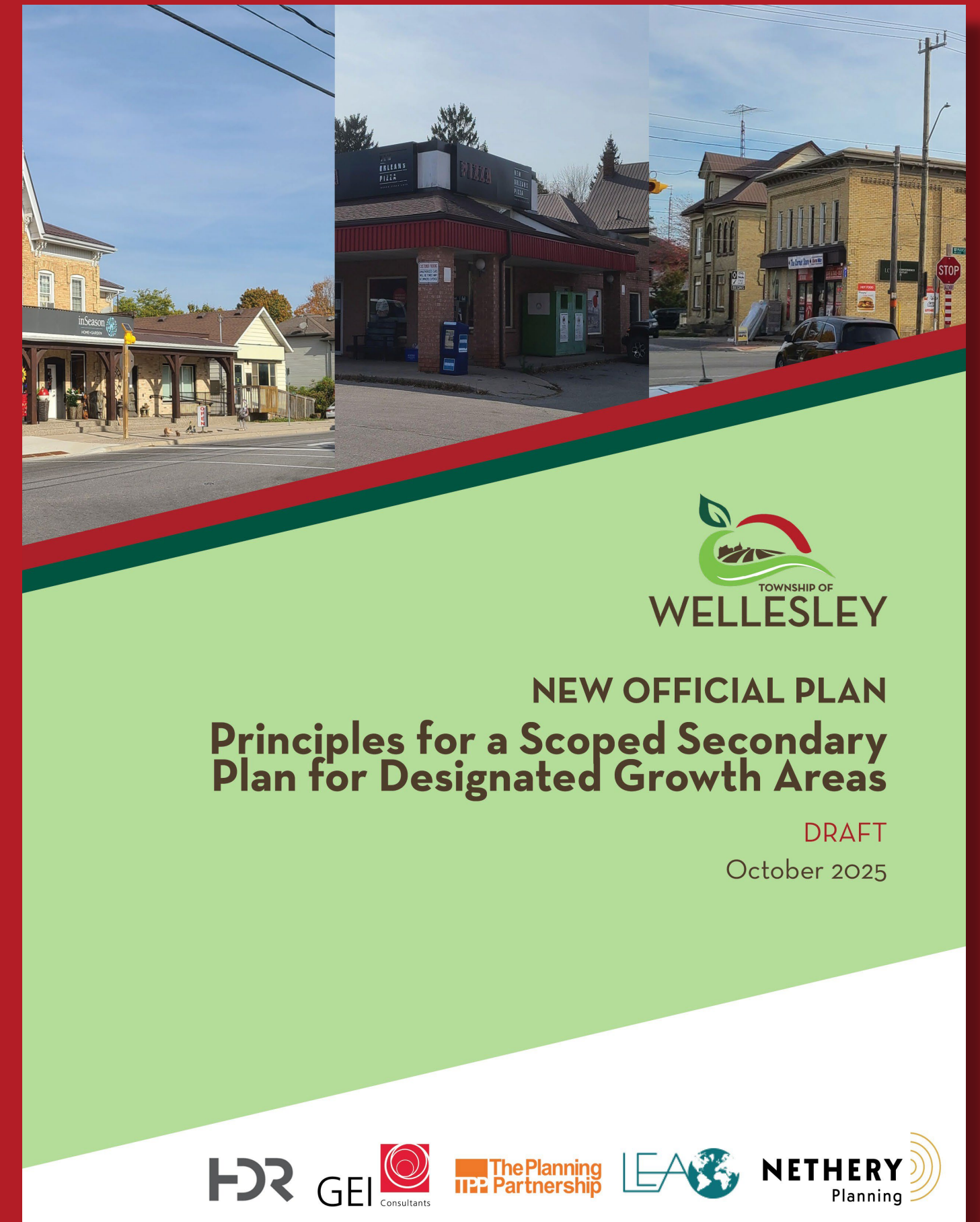
This paper provides a foundation for a Scoped Secondary Planning for Designated Growth Areas. Some of the *Preliminary Policy Directions* include:



Support opportunities for daily physical activity and social interaction in a safe, inclusive, and accessible community

Promote efficient and phased development through the coordinated planning for transportation and municipal services

Apply conservation objectives including water conservation, energy conservation and generation, emissions reductions, and waste management



Land Use Policies

This paper includes several foundational themes for policy development for the new Official Plan, including agriculture, climate change mitigation, among others. Some of the *Preliminary Policy Directions* include:



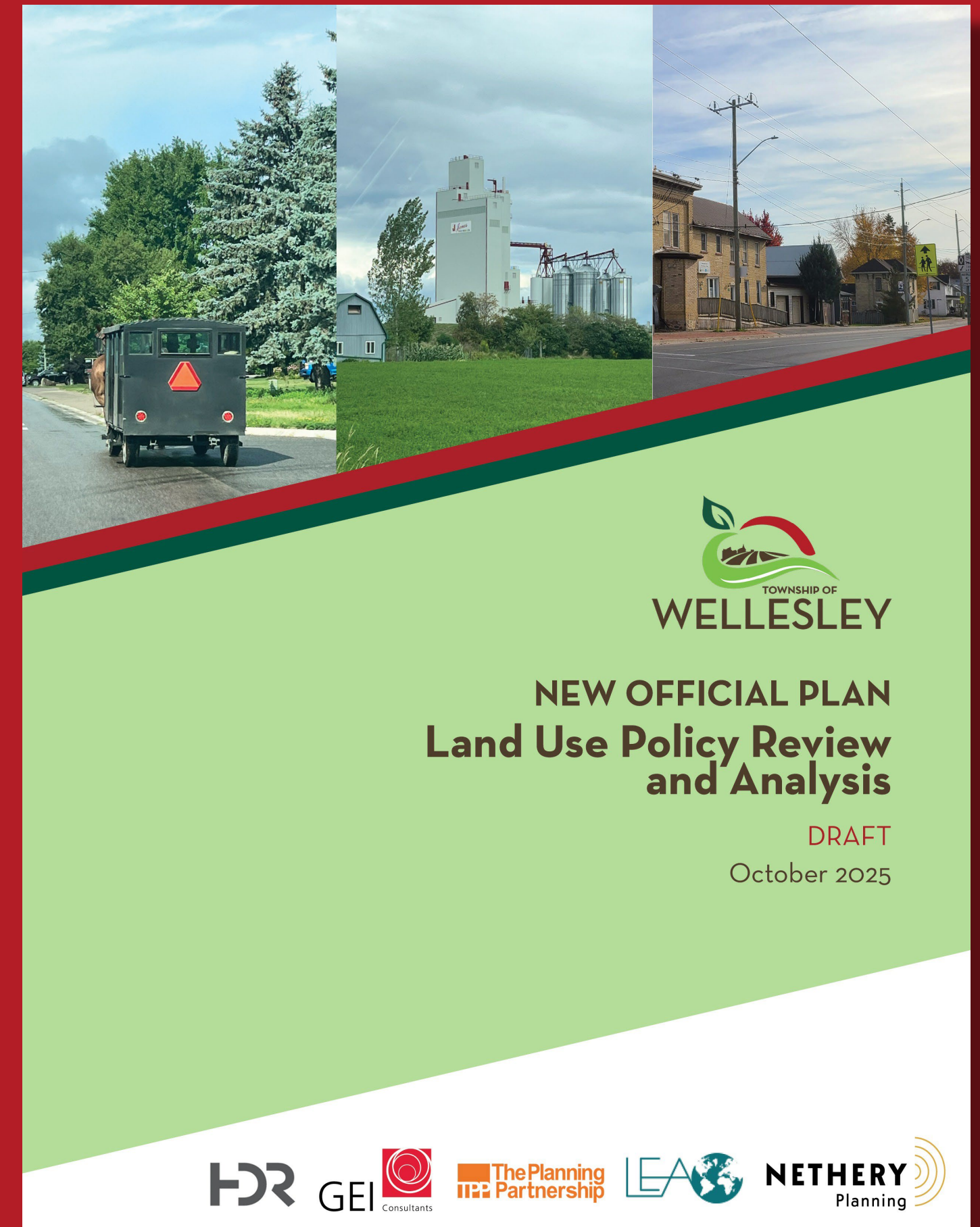
Draft guiding principles for key foundational uses and designations, such as protecting prime agricultural land, maintaining source water protection, or providing a mix of housing options.



Maintain consistency and conformity with the Provincial Planning Statement and Regional Official Plan.



Apply sustainability as a guiding lens for compact, efficient growth that supports green infrastructure, active transportation, and climate resilience.



Next Steps



Worksheet Activity

We want to hear from you!

Use the worksheets for today's six discussion papers to share your thoughts, ideas, and feedback on the papers and the draft vision statement.

Stay up to date on the Township of Wellesley new Official Plan by visiting the project webpage:

<https://www.engagewr.ca/official-plan>

QR code for the
project webpage:

