

THEME #1: STRONG TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS

Goal: West Lincoln has transportation infrastructure that is safe for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, and networks that are well-maintained and connected within our community, with other Niagara communities and major highways.

Ongoing Priorities	Progress and Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with neighbouring municipalities to advocate for the escarpment crossing as a means to better connect West Lincoln to major provincial highways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Region of Niagara has circulating a draft Request For Proposal Document to create the Terms of Reference for the Individual EA Study for the Escarpment Crossing to Township Staff. Staff has reviewed this draft document and has provided comments to Niagara Region. Master Community Plan Team has held TAC and Steering meetings to continue to discuss by-pass and crossing concepts. Region is part of these meetings. A concept for by-pass is part of draft Master Transportation Plan. An escarpment crossing is a Regional initiative. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings and Steering Committee meetings have occurred specifically to discuss transportation linkages including the Niagara Escarpment Crossing (NEC) and the Smithville bypass.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate a Highway 20 bypass to reduce truck traffic in downtown Smithville and improve connections to industrial land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft Master Transportation Plan has been released for input from Technical Advisory Committee members. Consultation is underway. The Land Owners Group and Master Community Plan (MCP) Team jointly continue to explore relocation of the bypass in the southwest of Smithville to a northerly location.

Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i>	Progress and Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a road needs study and set targets for the maintenance, rehabilitation and improvement of Township roads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information and recommendations from the Roads Needs Study was considered and included in developing the Township’s 2022 Capital Budget and Forecast. Historically, the Township completed a roads needs study every 5 years or so. As part of the 2022 Budget, a service delivery request to complete an update of our Pavement Management System on an annual basis was approved by Township Council. Moving forward the Township would like to update the pavement surface condition ratings for 1/3rd of the road network every year. As part of this plan, the Township’s road network has been divided into 3 sections for inspections / update purposes. Staff has retained ARA to complete the 2022 inspections which is about 124km of roadways. This will ensure that our roads needs study and pavement management system is always current and assists a great deal with our Corporation Asset Management Plan and Capital Budgets. The St. Ann’s Road Reconstruction project has commenced with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study & Preliminary Design. The EA Study will continue and conclude by the end of the year. Detailed Design will follow in 2023; followed by any utility relocation to avoid construction conflicts in 2024; followed by construction in 2025 (+/-). The Township received up to \$4,150,875.63 or 83.33% of funding under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) of the total eligible project costs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2022 Roads Rehabilitation Contract was awarded in April as per Report PW-06-2022 at an estimated project cost of \$980,000. It included the following road sections: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> South Grimsby Road 18 – RR20 to Young St Abingdon Rd – Concession 5 Rd to Sixteen Rd Concession 4 Rd – Silverdale Rd to Hodgkins Rd South Chippawa Rd – Caistorville Rd to Abingdon Rd
<p>Medium-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next five years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build safe active transportation networks including sidewalks, bike paths and trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Brock Street Waterman Replacement & Road Reconstruction Project included the replacement of existing sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety. A new school crossing and pedestrian crossover was installed by Niagara Region at Wade Road and Regional Road 20/West Street. This crossing is manned by a Crossing Guard during school entry and dismissal times to provide a safe crossing for children attending area urban schools as well as providing safe crossing for pedestrians, especially those going to the West Lincoln Community Centre, Library, Farmer’s Market, Skate Park, Playground and Splash Pad, etc. East Smithville Secondary Plan was approved without appeal and included concepts for trails and bike paths. Marz, P. Budd Developments, and Dunloe are working on engineering designs that includes trails and linkages as per the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan. This is required in order to comply with conditions of draft plan of subdivision approval.

THEME #2: SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS

<p>Goal: West Lincoln has a positive image and a strong brand that supports our local businesses and attracts new industries. We have created an environment where it is easy to do business, resulting in more opportunities to work in our community and continued support for agriculture as West Lincoln’s largest sector.</p>	
<p>Ongoing Priorities</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline Township processes for building and development to ensure West Lincoln is seen as a good place to do business 	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First report to Planning, Building, and Environmental Committee informed Committee of the Provincial approval of Bill 109 on April 14, 2022. A subsequent report outlines the hiring of MHBC Planning to review processes and increase efficiencies in order to streamline processes. Staff have become very efficient with the preparation and processing of consent and minor variance applications and have already made decisions on 19 applications which is on track to be another record breaking number of applications. Working with developers including P. Budd Developments and Marz Homes to assist with Engineering work and engineered fill (site alteration) while plans of subdivision conditions are being satisfied.
<p>Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a targeted, proactive approach to attracting new industry, leveraging the industrial park and other potential employment lands 	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rural employment park in Fulton was considered at a public meeting on April 27, 2022. An expansion of the Smithville Industrial Park at the same time is also a focus for growth. Further planning work will identify sectors to target for growth etc. Meanwhile, staff are working with existing employers who are growing from within.

Medium-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next five years)</i>	Progress and Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for increased investment in rural broadband to ensure residents and businesses have access to reliable high-speed internet 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate installation of water and sewer services on employment lands to create “shovel ready” sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water & Wastewater Master Plans are underway as part of the Smithville Community Master Plan (AECOM is the consultant completing this work) • Early stages of such discussions tied to a new business and also to our Master Community Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore new incentives in the downtown core to attract new commercial activity and provide more options for residents 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several redevelopment initiatives are underway within the downtown core including a rezoning application for the redevelopment of 197 Griffin Street North along with site plan approvals for 121 Griffin Street South and 113 Griffin Street South. • A total of roughly 5 site plans and site plan amendments are and/or have been received to be processed so far in 2022. • Working with businesses for rezonings and minor variances to support business start-up and expansion.

THEME #3: STRATEGIC, RESPONSIBLE GROWTH

<p>Goal: West Lincoln will grow strategically and responsibly – welcoming new residents and businesses and respecting the heritage and rural character that people value.</p>	
<p>Ongoing Priorities</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate growth that builds complete communities and provides commercial, industrial and residential balance 	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A public meeting for OPA 62 (Urban Boundary Expansion OPA) was held on April 27, 2022. A public meeting for OPA 63 (policy and mapping amendment) is being held on June 27, 2022. The OPA 63 policy will outline how to develop in a compatible form that maintains character and provides a mix of residential, employment and stay at home employment growth. Review of Sale of surplus lands on McMurchie Lane.
<p>Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a variety of housing options for the community that are supportive, appropriate, safe and affordable 	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPA 63 will encourage a broad range and mix of housing types current and proposed applications for development now include back-to-back units along with low rise apartments etc. The issue of affordability is still under review. An upcoming housekeeping amendment to the Zoning By-law will review the residential zone regulations to keep up to date with evolving housing options (Housekeeping #7).

THEME #4: LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

<p>Goal: West Lincoln has amenities, programs and services that bring the community together to celebrate small-town and rural way of life.</p>	
<p>Ongoing Priorities</p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the completion of the West Lincoln Community Centre, support programming that is relevant to the community's needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The library offers a variety of programs at all of our locations that are relevant and important to the community including: Ask the Dietitian; participation with the Good Food Box program; Reading Readiness; STEAM programs; teen programs; book clubs; craft programs for youth and adults Recreation Services offers a variety of programs and events as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors Community Grant Programs Tai Chi Gentle Yoga Older Adult Social Cornhole Candle Making Workshops Bathbomb Workshops Welcome Mat Workshops Flower Arranging Workshops Fitness Programs Hatha Flow Yoga Gentle Yoga Drop-In Programs Pickleball 18+ Youth Basketball 9-12yrs Youth Basketball 13-18yrs

	<p>Adult Basketball 18+ Youth Open Gym 9-12yrs (sponsored by Kiwanis) Youth Open Gym 13-18yrs (sponsored by Kiwanis) Adult Volleyball Youth Open Gym 9-12yrs (not sponsored) Youth Open Gym 13-18yrs (not sponsored) Family Open Gym</p> <p>Sportball Partnership Parent and Child Multi-sport Class Jr. Multi-sport Drop off Class</p> <p>Summer Camp 8 weeks of camp</p> <p>Upcoming Events Canada Day (Leisureplex) Music in the Park (4) Canada Games Torch Relay Event Canada Games 13 for 13 Event Movies in the Park (2) Harvest Routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and trails are a focus of Secondary plan development and subdivision applications.
<p>Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local parks and trails, including a new playground at the Caistorville Library, and explore new opportunities for programming and sports events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of a Bandshell located at WLCC is now complete. • The Tree Replacement / Planting Program related to the Wind Farm project is now complete. • The installation of a new playground at the Caistorville Library (Report REC-06-2021) is now complete.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvigorate community halls, particularly those in Wellandport and Caistor, through facility upgrades and new partnerships to ensure greater access to community programming and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approved 2022 Capital Budget includes improvements to both Wellandport and Caistor Community Centres. Funding in the amount of \$20,000 is allocated to replace the existing HVAC system at Wellandport Hall; and funding in the amount of \$40,000 is allocated to replace the existing septic system at Caistor Community Centre. • Grant applications from the Cemetery and Hall Boards who operate and maintain the Cemeteries and Community Halls were received in the amount of \$20,400 and a total grant allocation was approved in the amount of \$15,500. These grants to the Cemetery and Hall Boards provide a base level of funding for items such as repairs, maintenance, equipment, etc.
<p>Medium-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next five years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a farmer’s market in summer and fall 	

THEME #5: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

Goal: West Lincoln continues to be a safe community where all residents are supported to thrive throughout their lives.	
Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i>	Progress and Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a new Fire Station #2, replacing and addressing deficiencies in the existing facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender has been completed. Council has approved and awarded the construction contract to Niacon construction. Ground breaking ceremony coming soon. Construction to start hopefully by end of June Site Plan process is nearing completion. Some hydraulic analysis mapping is being completed prior to site plan being finalized.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with other West Niagara municipalities and local physicians to ensure the redevelopment of West Lincoln Memorial Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Township has approved a dedicated tax levy to ensure Township funding target towards the hospital are reached
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Public Works building and yard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding application in the amount of \$100,000 was approved under the ICIP funding program under the COVID Resilience Infrastructure System Intake for improvements to the PWs Yard. This included improvements to the HVAC/Exhaust System, LED Lighting upgrades, new garage bay doors, structural repairs to the interior wash bay walls, new flooring in the office areas. The work is now complete.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Community Safety Initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Stanpac and Community to address an ongoing noise complaint. Work with community groups and NPCA on invasive species clean-up in the Welland River. Monitoring of clean-up site in Caistorville is ongoing.

<p>Medium-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next five years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make improvements to pedestrian safety by introducing increased traffic calming measures and trail networks near schools, community facilities, downtown and other pedestrian spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is being to review the need for a “Traffic Calming Policy” and will endeavor to develop a policy for Council’s consideration in 2023.
<p>Long-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next ten years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for a physician recruitment strategy that will increase the number of family physicians in West Lincoln 	

THEME #6: EFFICIENT, FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE OPERATIONS

<p>Goal: The Township of West Lincoln is a lean organization that uses sustainable, innovative approaches and partnerships to streamline processes, deliver services and manage infrastructure assets.</p>	
<p>Ongoing Priorities</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an asset management plan to prioritize investments based on evidence, and balance service levels with fiscal sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Management Plan has been completed that meets the July 1, 2022 requirements outlined in Ontario Regulation 588/2017.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Continuity activities during Pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Library is fully operational at this time with all of our services available at all three locations. Standing Committee and Council Meetings continue to run successfully through a hybrid in-person/virtual method for Members of Council. Members of the Public continue to participate in Standing Committee and Council meetings virtually via Zoom or view meetings through the Township’s Livestreaming service.
<p>Short-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next three years)</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new software and programs to modernize service delivery, such as online registration and payment, asset management, maintenance activities, online mapping, by-law issues and water and wastewater administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Application was made and approved for the Finance Department Digital Modernization Project from the Province of Ontario The Modernization Grant above has resulted in the following efficiencies to date: Caseware software has been purchased and implementation has successfully taken place to automate the preparation of the annual financial statements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The water meter reading software has been updated with new cloud based software• Good progress has been made on the development of the Virtual City Hall Portal and e-send features that are linked to the Township Financial System that will allow customers to view their account information remotely. It will also enable the ability to receive invoices via email. Target launch date is July 2022.• Information Technology (IT) department has issued an RFP(request for proposal) for a new phone system and are in the process of evaluating the solutions. Staff plan on presenting a recommendation report in July 2022.• Staff presented a Comprehensive User Fee Review in January 2022 that recommended revision to existing fees and the implementation of new fees. These changes will be implemented throughout 2022• The Clerks Department explored alternative options for voting in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. In April, Council approved staff's recommendation for the use of alternative voting methods, internet voting and the use of optical scan vote tabulators.• By-law 2022-38 was passed to authorize an agreement between the Township of West Lincoln and Voatz Canada Ltd. for Online Voting Support and Services for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.• The Ontario government passed Bill 27, Working for Workers Act, 2021 in December 2021, which amends the Employment Standards Act, to require employers with 25 or more employees to have a written policy with respect to
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	<p>disconnecting from work. Human Resources created a Disconnecting from Work Policy to ensure that all employees are informed of: 1) what their normal working hours and 2) the circumstances in which they will be expected to engage in work-related communications outside their normal working hours, 3) take applicable meal, rest periods, and hours free work, and 4) able to take vacation or other leave entitlements. A tag line is being added to staff's email to advise that our working hours may be different and that when sending emails there is no obligation to reply outside of working hours and that we are working together to help foster healthy work-life boundaries.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate improved branding for West Lincoln and develop a strategy to increase communication with residents and promote local activities, attractions and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates have been made to some key Finance Department communication tools, namely the tax bill insert and the water bill insert. These updates provide key information in an easier to understand format The Township of West Lincoln's YouTube channel has over 3.9k views in 2022 which is 228% more than the second half of 2021. The Township implemented Livestreaming of Standing Committee and Council Meetings in October 2021. The Townships Communication's Specialist has made significant improvements to the Township social media accounts, creating consistent branding across all platforms. She has been active in sharing important Township information, messages, news and updates, promoting events within the Township and Niagara Region, as well as keeping the public up-to-date on a variety of relevant timely topics and commemorative days to help spread awareness and ignite public engagement within the community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Township’s Social Media Platforms have experienced greater productivity and therefore increased public engagement since the beginning of 2022 compared to the last five months of 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sharing more information and content with the public – Number of posts is up 17% ○ Our following is growing – Number of followers is up 27% ○ Our content is being seen by more people – Post Reach is up 21%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Efficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Council Remuneration By-Law has been approved clarifying the compensation model for the 2022-2026 term of Council • A Council Expense Policy has been approved and effective for the 2022-2026 term of Council • The Clerk’s Department updated and implemented a number of policies and procedures with respect to the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Municipal Election Voting Policy and Procedures ○ Delegation of Authority to the CAO during Lane Duck ○ Election Accessibility Plan • With the reduction of time between Voting Day (October 24, 2022) and the date that the new term of Council commencing, being November 15, 2022, the Clerk’s Department recognized that there will be a small window to organize and prepare for the Inaugural Meeting and an amendment to the Township’s Procedural By-law was put forward to set, in advance, a date, time and location for the Inaugural Meeting of Council being Monday, November 21,

	<p>2022 at the West Lincoln Community Centre, in the gymnasium, commencing at 7 p.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-consultation meetings have been held regularly and staff have heard from over 30 proposed applicants so far in 2022. • Total by-law complaints currently sit at 84 open files in 2022. • Increase in Planning and Building fees to help cover costs on a user pay basis.
<p>Long-Term Initiatives <i>(Initiate within the next ten years)</i></p>	<p>Progress and Accomplishments</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop streamlined customer service to ensure the Township continues to achieve responsive resolution of requests as volumes increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March, the Clerk’s Department recruited an Election’s Assistant to help support staff with the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election as well as other administrative tasks within the department. This addition has proven to be an asset in the overall operations and service delivery within the Clerk’s Department. • Alignment of AMP’s Hearing Officer with all other municipalities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore innovative systems and approaches to scale service delivery as the community grows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A planning department reorganization is being considered and will be part of a staff report to Committee with a proposed partnership with the land owners group. Similarly, a reorganization of the building department is under review based on findings from a consulting firm GM Blue Plan and will be the focus of a future report to Committee and Council.