

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a residential area with several houses and trees. A road winds through the middle ground, separating the residential area from a large, open green field. In the background, there are more fields and a line of trees under a clear sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green geometric pattern on the right side.

Planning Options

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CAO/Clerk

Elgin County

Agenda

- ▶ Review of planning options
 - ▶ Oxford
 - ▶ Middlesex
 - ▶ Huron
 - ▶ Paul Hicks, Re:public Urbanism

Why consider options for Planning Services now?

- ▶ Expected growth needs guidance from professional planners
- ▶ We have had challenges recruiting and retaining experienced planners at the County and several LMPs
- ▶ Considering these options is not a reflection on the professional competency of the Planners currently working with our LMPs or the County. We expect these planners could excel working in any of the proposed models

Middlesex, Oxford & Huron Counties

- ▶ Common elements

- ▶ Planning staff are employed by the County

- ▶ **Planning staff are assigned to local Municipalities** based on volume of work, e.g., community with high volume planning might have two or more staff assigned to do their planning work or two communities that have low volume might share a single planner.

Middlesex, Oxford & Huron Counties

- ▶ Planners have offices in the communities to which they are assigned.
 - ▶ In addition to their primary office in the local municipality planning staff may have office space at the County building or WFH.
- ▶ County levy covers the cost of the service.

Staff Assignment need to be balanced

- ▶ Rotating the planners to work in different communities to build capacity and new skills that support professional development.
- ▶ Support continuity of planning services through staff having an affiliation with LMP.
- ▶ Pooled planning offers broader and deeper set of skills and support to LMP and County planning decisions

Consolidated planning supports

- ▶ County planning services include
 - ▶ developing one Official Plan for the County (that includes all LMPs)
 - ▶ Statutory duties, Secondary Plans, zoning and site plan approvals
 - ▶ May include additional Planning Services, e.g., Climate Change Officer, Forestry Conservation Officer
- ▶ Local planning priorities and preference can be respected

Additional considerations

- ▶ Junior Planners are assigned a wide variety of duties and receive mentoring and support from senior planners
- ▶ Voluntary participation can be accommodated
- ▶ Financial growth support by \$10M investment reserve, that offers 8 year, interest free loans to LMP. (Middlesex)
 - ▶ LMP must invest a minimum 10% stake

Additional considerations...

- ▶ What do LMP and County Councils want for community development and growth in the next five to ten years? What are they prepared to invest to support the desired growth?
- ▶ What is the capacity of our consolidated current planning staff? What additional skills and experience are needed?
- ▶ Consider preferences for collaboration, including Central Elgin / St. Thomas Planning Services
- ▶ Other?

Next steps

1. Councils decide on the desired level of growth & how much they can invest in growth
2. Councils provide direction regarding the preferred model for Planning Services



Questions?



ElginCounty
Progressive by Nature