



REPORT
ELGIN VILLAGE
VISIONING PROJECT

2023/2024

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Executive Summary

In the Spring of 2023, Jordan Hawn *{the consultant}* of Hawn Consulting was hired to craft, and implement a consultation strategy and engage with the residents of the Village of Elgin to obtain quality and actionable data that would contribute to developing the future Vision of the Village for years to come. The goal was to come away with a community Vision based on the input received, and best practices in community building, community planning, and economic development.

At the start of the process, the consultant met with Township Staff in order to determine set processes and timelines. Past Vision exercises in Villages such as Chaffeys Lock, Delta, Newboro, Portland were referenced.

As we look at the whole process, from surveys to workshops, here are key points that consistently came up as priorities from the residents:

1. Village Vitality
2. Services
3. Outdoor Recreation
4. Infrastructure Improvements
5. Housing
6. Walkability
7. Indoor Recreation
8. Environmental & Sustainability
9. Tourism
10. Transportation
11. Crime & Safety
12. Arts & Culture

2030 Visioning: Key Findings

The community priorities were evaluated based on the overall results from the surveys, the virtual workshop, and two in-person workshops. This includes the responses to questions and key conversations with attendees as they expressed their hopes and desires for the Village's future.

With 2030 not too far away, the following breaks down the Key Findings for short-term priorities, as well as future and continuing projects:

1. **Village Vitality** (more businesses, events, market)
2. **Services** (Wifi & Cell Service)
3. **Outdoor Recreation** (enhance beach, trails, greenspace)
4. **Infrastructure Improvements** (parking, public toilets, water and sewer)
5. **Housing** (all-age apartments)
6. **Walkability** (sidewalks, lighting, signs)
7. **Indoor Recreation** (pool, fitness, senior services)
8. **Environmental & Sustainability** (garbage and recycling programs, farmers support)
9. **Tourism** (promotion of the Village, digital presence)
10. **Transportation** (traffic issues, local transit to medical appointments, etc.)
11. **Crime & Safety** (Improved safety protocols/police)
12. **Arts & Culture** (Seeing more activities/art lessons)

Note: Priority list which includes the number of mentions and importance during workshop discussions and survey results. Some duplicate mentions may be incorporated based off of survey comments. See chart below.

#	Category	Priority	Summary of Category
1	Village Vitality	30	Improving downtown core, more businesses/less vacant property, unique events year-round; support for business owners; farmers market
2	Services	28	Improving wifi/cell throughout; adding a gas station; expanding on youth services/daycare and improving healthcare with more staff as Village grows; improving social services
3	Outdoor Recreation	22	Improved greenspace throughout the Village, enhanced trails/nearby assets
4	Infrastructure Improvements	21	Improved infrastructure (water+sewer) for growth; adding public toilets for tourists; improved parking management; school expansion/support
5	Housing	20	Age-in-place opportunities, more housing for young families; affordability; getting ready for growth
6	Walkability	14	Sidewalks to schools; safety downtown
7	Indoor Recreation	14	More indoor activities for seniors, more facilities for these activities; physical fitness; improved rec hub for all
8	Environmental & Sustainability	12	Improved garbage and recycling programs; supporting local farmers/expand on agri-tourism; gardening programs/leveraging the greenhouse
9	Tourism	11	Village not representing itself enough online, and not promoting to visitors/potential long-term residents/businesses; newsletter for local information
10	Transportation	8	Improved transit for seniors; less speeding in Village core
11	Crime & Safety	4	Improved safety protocols/police
12	Arts & Culture	2	Seeing more activities/art lessons



The Process

Rideau Lakes Visioning Steering Committee

Purpose

To provide guidance during the implementation of the Visioning process for the community of Elgin in 2023.

Background

The Township of Rideau Lakes has engaged Hawn Consulting to work under the mandate of the Economic Development Committee and in concert with the volunteer Community Enhancement Committee and Township to:

- Develop and implement a consultation strategy to ensure an inclusive and holistic process outcome
- Notice, hold, and actively facilitate stakeholder sessions in the community to gain input, advice, ideas, and concerns
- Develop a draft community Vision based on the input received and best practices in community building, community planning, and economic development
- Release the draft Vision document for community feedback and itemize feedback and related thoughts/considerations in a separate document

- Provide a final Vision document to Council and the community and a secondary document outlining community feedback noting if, why, and how feedback has been incorporated and/or considered

Structure

- Meetings: Three (3) virtual meetings held between August 1st and December 31st, 2023
- Term: Extended to March 31, 2024

Role of Steering Committee Members

- Define Outcomes - review and confirm desired outcomes of Visioning process
- Review Schedule - review timeline and logistics, clarify and agree on dates for workshop(s)
- Visioning Sessions - review draft agenda for Visioning workshops
- Survey - review survey questions, process, and logistics
- Review Communications and confirm messaging for invitation process
- Promote input through their networks

The Elgin and Area Community Enhancement Committee was ready to act as the Steering Committee for the Village Visioning project. Composed of representatives from key community groups within Elgin, which includes business owners, volunteers, and educators.

The Steering Committee was comprised of representatives from:

- Council Representative from the Community of Elgin
- Community Enhancement Committee Representative (All)
- Community Representative from the Elgin and Area Heritage Society
- Elgin Residents
- Business and Tourism Representative from Elgin
- Township Staff Representative: Economic Development and Cultural Heritage Coordinator
- Consultant: Jordan Hawn, Hawn Consulting

The committee members met virtually on multiple occasions to provide input from a community perspective, and to bring awareness to the project.

- **Steering Committee #1: August 10th (Virtually)**
 - Reviewed and confirmed work plan, communications, survey questions, and workshop timelines
 - Feedback from the community indicated that this was a rushed approach, and the timeline needed to be extended. This was agreed upon by the Consultant, and reviewed by Township Staff, and was advised that an extension could be done in order to obtain more valuable data and information.
 - It was also recommended to add one additional in-person workshop

- **Steering Committee #2: November 9th (Virtually)**
 - Reviewed initial survey data, and feedback from completed first two workshops
 - Pushed to connect with younger demographics (direct outreach plan)
 - Discussion and confirmation to add additional in-person sessions (not initially included in contract term: Extended to March 31st, 2024)
- **Steering Committee #3: Dec 12th (Virtually)**
 - Reviewed the preliminary findings with committee members
 - Ensured that the perspectives of all members were applied in the report
 - Workshops, survey data, and other key trends were reviewed with their input. Overall, the committee was pleased with the progress and success of the campaign.



The Methodology

Why are we Doing This?

The Visioning process intends to connect with permanent and seasonal residents within the Village of Elgin to gather community feedback, comments, and insight that will be applied to the Community Improvement Plan for Villages.

The Goal: To produce a document that captures the Vision for the Village of Elgin from a community perspective.

Objectives

When the project initially started, the consultant set out key goals in partnership with the Steering Committee in order to gather focused insights. The strategy was to obtain input from the community including key partners to compile a document that highlights the true Vision for Elgin. The strategy was to clearly communicate with the community, get involved with as many key partners as possible, and craft a plan that would give diverse information covering a broad range of strategic insight.

Community Input Workplan

To ensure the steering committee was positively making a difference in the process, a detailed timeline was developed to build momentum and connect with the Village's residents, visitors, and stakeholders.

Project Timeline

Phase 1 August- September

- Hired as the consultant for the project, met with Economic Development staff to plan for the Visioning Process, first steering committee to set up an action plan
- Survey questions were created, a website was designed, and key stakeholders listed

Phase 2 Sept 29th

- Launched website, surveys, and communications plan to the public

Phase 3 - Oct & November

- The workshops were hosted, surveys were completed by residents, direct mailers were sent out, advertisements were launched, and engagement with the community progressed.

Phase 4 Nov 19th

- The final in-person workshop occurs

Phase 5 Dec 31st

- Surveys were closed to the public

- **Phase 6 Jan-February**
 - Reviews of survey and workshop data by the consultant
 - Input into a draft report for committee feedback
 - Reviews and analysis of feedback are finalized and reported to the Economic Development Committee of Council

As the first virtual and in-person workshops were completed, we decided to hold an additional in-person workshop to ensure that we had more awareness in the community, and more opportunity for feedback. We reviewed as a committee and discussed with Township staff, which approved a further in-person workshop. This was vital, as the final workshop was our most impactful workshop, having 27 residents attend, including the Mayor, council members, and key business owners.

Multiple avenues were outlined in order to connect with the community, both virtual and in-person. The following breaks down the key interactions with the community:

- **Website Live with Online Surveys:** September 30th, 2023
- **Direct Mailer Sent Out:** Sent Oct 1st, 178 mail drop to K0G 1E0
- **Flyers:** 978 Flyers were delivered to area code K0G 1E0
- **Newspaper Ad in Review Mirror:** Nov. 2nd and Nov 9th editions
- **Virtual Workshop:** October 24th, 6-8 pm via Zoom
- **In-Person #1:** November 4th, 2-4 pm Elgin Hall
- **In-Person #2:** November 18th, 10am-12pm Elgin Hall

Communications Plan

The consultant mapped out a comprehensive communications plan in order to connect with as many residents and key stakeholders as possible.

It included:

- Our Goals
- Audience Breakdown
- Key Messaging
- Owned Channels (website, email, social media)
- Partnerships (local organizations, stakeholders)
- Direct Outreach (mailers, flyers, direct messages, advertising)

Communications Plan Goals

- Boost Awareness
 - Reach out to as many people in the community to discuss the Visioning process and obtain their feedback (online and in-person).
- Community Connection
 - Establish lines of communication with key community stakeholders.
- Workshop Attendees
 - Have strong attendance numbers for all workshops for in-depth feedback.

- Completed Surveys
 - Obtain as many completed surveys as possible for improved research and data.

What We Hoped For

Completed Surveys - 100
Workshop Attendees - 30
Website Traffic - 500

What We Achieved

Completed Surveys - 284
Workshop Attendees - 41
Website Traffic - 515

Audience

The consultant outlined three core audience segments to engage with in order to gain valuable qualitative and quantitative feedback on their Vision for the Village of Elgin:

- Permanent Residents: Full-year residents of the Village and surrounding area
- Seasonal Residents: The cottage-goers or residents who are in the area for a few weeks/months a year
- Partners: The stakeholders that we can connect with, who will share and grow the reach of the Visioning communications plan (organizations, non-profits)

**The Appendix includes audience segment descriptions found in the first committee meeting document.*

Messaging

Core messaging was established to ensure a cohesive, consistent approach from all stakeholders, creating alignment in our message throughout the process and all our channels. These included:

Educational: How people can be helpful, get involved

Insightful: Into what is the purpose of this Visioning process

Process: What is going on throughout the timeline, what's happening next, event dates

Tone of Voice: Welcoming, transparent, professional, and empathetic tone that ensures an inclusive, honest, and inviting message



The Website

<https://www.elginvillagevision.com/>

Why it was Created

Before we started promoting the project, with the steering committee's support, consultants created one formal area for all participants and interested parties to learn more about the Visioning process. The consultant proposed creating a simple one-page website that discussed the process, why we were doing this, who could get involved, the timeline, workshop dates, and online surveys available to complete.

Included in the Website

The website represented the Village's lifestyle, and history, and clearly showcased the intent of the improvement plan Visioning process:

Main Message: How residents can get involved to provide their feedback and insight

Discovering Our Area: History of the Village

What the Future Holds: How the Village is working to plan its future

Full-time and Part-time Residents: How full-time and part-time residents get involved

Resources: Key links such as the Townships website and past Visioning Process

The Workshops: What they are, when they are scheduled, and how to register

Project Timeline: Breakdown down each phase from start to finish

Who We Are: Detailing the Township, Villages, Hamlets, and Committee Involved

FAQ: Answering key questions residents may have about the project

Surveys: Ability to complete online surveys

Stay Connected: How people can reach out with questions (Township contact details)

Imagery: Real photos from the Village provided by the Township staff

Data Points

Tracking of data was completed throughout the process to understand the impact our Communications Plan was having. The following breaks down some key facts from the website:

- Website Traffic: 515
 - Unique visitors viewed the site, primarily from Elgin and surrounding areas
- Average Time Spent on Site: 6 minutes and 20 seconds
 - This indicates high engagement and interest in the project as the average time spent on a website is typically 1 minute and 30 seconds
- How Residents Found the Site
 - Sent to them directly (eg. email): 283
 - Social Media: 165
 - Referral (eg. Rideau Lakes Township website): 41
 - Found us through Google: 26

Social Media

To bring awareness to the Visioning process, we posted informative posts on a variety of local community social media pages promoting the Visioning project, encouraging survey completion, and attending workshops.

This was taken on by committee members, who were sharing on their pages, directly to friends and family, as well as community engagement pages. A scripted message was provided to them by the consultant, that they could reference, to provide the core details and information on the Visioning project, workshops, surveys, and driving people to the engagement website.

- Total Posts Shared: 14
- Platforms: Facebook
- Pages Used:
 - Committee Members' Personal Pages
 - Tipped Ship Business Facebook Page
 - Real Westport and Rideau Lakes
 - Rideau Lakes Community Forum
 - Elgin and Area CEC Facebook Page
 - Rideau Lakes Early Learning Centre Facebook Page

A sample post can be found in the Appendices.

Print Advertisement

Two issues of newspaper advertisements in the Review Mirror ran in the weeks of November 2nd and November 9th. These ads included the core information of the workshop, website URL, contact details, and upcoming workshop dates for local residents to attend.

Direct Outreach

To ensure we reached everyone, direct outreach was completed to Village stakeholders. Emails, phone calls, and as well as a comprehensive direct mailer campaign were sent to all residents in the Village of Elgin settlement area. Incorporated on the mailers with the paper copies of the surveys, website URL of the community engagement, and details about the process.

Partners & Organizations

We reached out to a variety of key stakeholders via email and phone calls. Here is a list of who was approached, the purpose to leverage their networks and spread additional awareness.

- Elgin Lions Club
- Rideau Lakes SWANS
- Elgin & Area Heritage Society
- Pastor Bob Crump
- Rideau Lakes Public Library - Elgin Branch
- South Crosby Public School
- Rideau District High School (RDHS)
- Rideau Lakes Early Learning Centre
- Rideau Lakes Council
- Private Road Association Contacts within Rideau Lakes
 - 98 contacted
- Lake Association Contacts within Rideau Lakes
 - 9 Contacts
- Local Businesses/Organizations: Physical Handouts
 - The Tipped Ship - 3 Main Street
 - Re-New Creation St. Luke's Thrift Shop & Ministry Centre
 - Green Valley Cottages and Campgrounds
 - Sand Lake Campground & Cottages
 - Pine Glen Lodge
 - Rideau Lakes Cottages

Direct Mail

Residents that are within the Elgin boundary limits received a direct mail letter that advised of the Visioning process, including key information, a survey questionnaire to complete, and contact details for key stakeholders.

178 letters were mailed to property owners within the settlement area of Elgin.

A sample of the direct mailer is listed in the appendices for your reference.

Flyers

In addition to direct mail, the committee agreed that having physical print flyers in key locations in the Village would be helpful to boost workshop attendance and awareness in the Village. These flyers included similar information as the direct mailers, including the Visioning process, workshop dates, website URL, and key contact details to reach out with questions.

978 flyers were sent out to all residents in the postal code area of K0G 1E0.

Places where these were distributed can be found above.

The sample can be found in the appendices.

Emails/Calls

All committee members leveraged their existing audience base to reach friends, family, colleagues, and key connections to let them know about the surveys and workshops and encourage them to get involved.

In addition to common connections, we also reached out to the key stakeholders of the area who are valuable assets of the Village. These groups are listed above and were beneficial in connecting with active community members and involving their own group members.

The Surveys

Summary

A survey document was completed, reviewed, and approved by the committee. In total, we received 284 completed surveys with permanent and seasonal resident feedback and comments.

What Questions Were Asked and Why

Below are the approved questions that were incorporated into the survey. Some of these have been used throughout the Visioning process with other Villages and were retained for this process, as well additional questions were provided for further valuable data.

Multiple Choice

- Demographic Details: Permanent or Resident
- How long have you lived in the Village?
- Do you feel the current recreational facilities in the Village meet your needs?
- What facilities do you use the most often?
- How important is sustainable and environmentally-friendly infrastructure and practices in your Vision for the Village's future?
- Do you feel the Village's services currently suit your needs?
- Do you believe the current amenities cater to permanent, seasonal residents and tourists effectively?
- Which services do you use the most often?
- Do you want to be informed of workshops and the findings of this Visioning process?
(Ask for their email)

Comment Box

- What would you like to see in the community by the year 2030? Please describe the kind of community you'd like to see.
- How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?
- How can the Village leverage its existing strengths to attract more tourists and visitors while maintaining its appeal to residents?
- To promote community engagement, what initiatives or events could be organized that are not commonly found in neighbouring areas?

Permanent vs. Seasonal Comments

The majority of the respondents were permanent residents. The detailed survey data charts for each question is available in the appendix.

The Workshops

Summary

In each workshop, the consultant completed a presentation to the attendees in order to outline the process and how they'll be involved.

- Introductions & Overview
 - Who is the consultant, involved with this process, and thank them for attending
- Overview of Visioning Project
 - Why are we doing this? How does this improve the community, what our goals are, our process, and timeline
- Ground Rules
 - Series of key statements to ensure a respectful and quality process
- Key Question Period
 - The facilitator-led question period, 12-15 minutes per question was given for respondents to be involved
- Break Out Groups
 - Groups were formed to discuss and answer the key questions (3-5 people if applicable)
- Group Presentations
- Wrap-Up & Next Steps

Workshop Questions: Key Question Period

- What makes Elgin a great place to live or visit?
- What existing strengths and assets can we build on?
- What would you like to see in the community by the year 2030?
- How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?
- What areas require the most improvement?
- How do you make Elgin a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community?

The Workshop Breakout Rooms

Attendees were divided into smaller groups of 5 or more for focused discussions. As some of the workshops had smaller numbers, we went around and asked all attendees to provide input on the questions.

- Each group discussed core areas of the Visioning process: infrastructure, environment, community spaces, and amenities.
- They discussed how to make the Village of Elgin a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community
- The facilitator visited the groups to help moderate the discussion and took notes of key points

Question Period

- What makes Elgin a great place to live or visit?
- What existing strengths and assets can we build on?
- What would you like to see in the community by the year 2030?
- How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?
- What areas require the most improvement?
- How do you make Elgin a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community?

Key Findings: Community Priorities

As mentioned, we applied a new way of collecting data based on recommendations from the committee. Each respondent was given 6 chips and they could place them in the following boxes labeled with the titles below:

They could allocate the 6 chips to one each, 6 in one, or dispersed as they please.

From this workshop the priorities were:

1. Walkability (sidewalks, lighting, signs)
2. Village Vitality (more businesses, events, market)
3. Outdoor Recreation (enhance beach, trails, greenspace)
4. Indoor Recreation (pool, fitness)
5. Affordable Housing (all-age apartments)
6. Transportation (to get to medical appointments etc.)

Images of the workshop feedback documents that attendees wrote can be found in the appendices.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

The Village must ensure it has the main infrastructure in place to be able to attract residents and businesses to move, stay, and thrive in the Village. Once these are in place, collaboration with nearby areas to ensure a strong cohesive approach to attract key workforce for things such as medical, operations, and hospitality should be pursued. Lastly, as the Village expands and grows, efforts towards promotion of the Village through digital aspects as well as traditional means should be evaluated and strategized in order to drive revenue and new visitors to support the infrastructure and businesses settling in the Village. These aspects should be reviewed and aligned with the Rideau Lakes Strategic Plan and the Rideau Lakes Action Plan 2023-2026.

Consultant Observations

As an outsider who had never visited the village of Elgin before this process, one thing became very clear - there is a passionate group of people who want to see this Village succeed. There is a good foundation for success within this community, from the people to the businesses to the beautiful areas nearby, such as the Delta Mill, and many of the residents agreed.

It seems that the Village is about 80% of its way to being the community residents want it to be. The recommendations were diverse, with many different topics brought up; there requires adjustments made in the infrastructure of Elgin in order to prepare for future growth, as well as continued change in the existing demographic base of the Village, with a majority of it made up of an older demographic. Housing, affordability, and medical improvements were brought up at every workshop and throughout a vast majority of the surveys and should be prioritized in the improvement plan.



The Red Brick School

The following are some of our observations:

- **People willing to Comment vs Multiple Choice**
 - Which was not as helpful as it could have been. Many residents skipped questions they did not want to answer and only inputted their comments. It might be noted that survey questions should be made mandatory to complete or there should be more focus on open ended questions in the future.
- **Start earlier in the year to better include part-time residents**
 - Wasn't launched until late September when most had left their summer cottages, leaving very little data and insight from seasonal residents.
- **Connect with Youth**
 - Active outreach to the schools and youth centers was done, but needed more participants who were under thirty. It's vital to interact with that age group for the future development of the Village.
- **Continue the Feedback Process**
 - To continue to get feedback from residents four times a year (regular surveys, polls) for real progress, and to have set action items to build upon.

Consultant Recommendations

- **Improve Walkability**
 - Review walking to and from schools (route, how to make that accessible)
 - Add a speed tracking sign to collect information and determine if a speed bump is required.
 - Review of trails surrounding the Village for improvements and enhancements as a tourism attraction and for permanent residents.
 - Create a task force to review the overall walkability of the Village core, as well as how to improve the trails in surrounding areas.
- **Work to Enhance Cell Service**
 - Review and finalize a status report on cell projects / service providers for improved service throughout the Village.
 - Create a task force to review requirements, create a request for proposal, and test the current cellular service. If poor, look at opportunities to go to vendor and see how someone can improve the cellular service.
- **Launch a Community Newsletter**
 - That provides educational and useful information to both residents (full-time, part-time), and potential visitors detailing events, initiatives, business opportunities, and other helpful information. This was recommended by residents as many are unaware of the great assets the Village has to offer.
 - Review and see how to complete internally with Township staffing, or to go to vendor and for a third party marketing and communications company.

- **Review and Improvement of Village's Communication Plan**
 - For the village that showcases what's available to visitors, details for people who are moving to the community, and supporting events and businesses. Included could be a specific tourism website, email list, social media page (Facebook/Instagram), and future advertising campaigns. It should also include the Grocery Store, which is a vital local resource used by both permanent and seasonal residents. Further local partnerships with stores and incorporating community boards should be explored.
 - Review and organization needs and wants to go to vendor and for a third party marketing and communications company.
- **Alternative Ways to Leverage School Assets and Recreational Space**
 - investigate insurance coverage so that school property can be used by residents.
 - There are spaces available, but restrictions make it impossible or difficult for residents to utilize them.
 - Investigate opportunity for indoor recreation for the senior population.
 - Create a task force to review the current existing assets the school provides, how they are used, by what demographics, and how to best move forward with using the space.



The Tipped Ship - Elgin (photo by RTO9)

Appendices

1. Workshop Findings and Comments
2. Survey Data
 - a. Demographic information
 - b. Survey Summary Charts
3. Email Community Script
4. Social
5. Flyer Document
6. Mailer to Residents

Workshop Findings

Key Data Points - Each Workshop

Virtual Workshop: October 24th, 6-8 pm via Zoom

4 Attendees: All permanent residents, library representatives, and committee members

Workshop Feedback Summary

- Elgin is “80-90%” there to hit its potential
- A town square/central asset is needed and a busier main street
 - Year-round businesses; less vacant property
- The community and its people are their biggest strength, there is business diversity and the chance to build from there
- Need to focus on improvements for growth
 - Schools, greenspace, water + sewer, services, gas station, internet
- Affordable housing and improved transit
 - Age-in-place communities; improved for people to come and settle there

Question Responses

1. Question #1 - What makes Elgin a great place to live or visit?

Elgin is a safe, supportive community, with unique, great outdoor offerings, "all you need", family-friendly, great people, quiet, welcoming, local events, senior-friendly, affordable living, with cycling, and hiking

2. Question #2 - What existing strengths and assets can we build on?

Improve sidewalks/walkability/pedestrian safety; more housing similar to Harry Seely Dr; connection to the main village/High school; no central point or town square to bring things together; needs community gathering point; improve children's playground

3. Question #3 - What would you like to see in the community by the year 2030?

Building upon all this feedback; larger public places; a busy library; green initiatives/EV; walkable and bikeable everywhere; better business support; improved cell service; have vacant commercial properties filled; progress on building up the city core

4. Question #4 - How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?

Open year-round businesses; busier and vibrant main street; people out and about; continued improving downtown; lots of events; communications improved; seeing people coming back who grew up here to raise their own family; being proud of the community

5. Question #5 - What areas require the most improvement?

Too much vacant property; sidewalks to schools; lack of social services/counselling in the nearby area; lack of greenspace; expansion past the downtown core; speeding concerns near schools/downtown

6. Question #6 - How do you make Elgin a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community?

Walkable/safe; biking; sustainability; open/welcoming; year-round

7. Break out #1 - Further Discussions of Key Questions

Plastic use; sustainability; green initiatives; improved garbage pick up process; public toilets; improved management of parking in central areas

8. Break out #2

More social community events; exercise programs; and small adjustments to get more usage.

In-Person #1: November 4th, 2-4 pm Elgin Hall

7 attendees. All permanent residents, one councillor, one economic development staff person, and committee members

Workshop Feedback Summary

- Lamp post - Lighting
- Improve the appearance of Main Street
- Extended parking
- Walkability - extend the network of sidewalks
- Lions Club property
- Christmas Village Festival idea discussion
- Build on HUB
- Internet connection availability
- Municipal planning committee
- Chamber of Commerce
- Gas station reopening
- Looking for investors
- Public transportation and carpool services for medical appointments
- Improvement of medical services and medical center
- Housing for workers and increased workforce
- PSW services in demand
- Large schoolyards
- Township partnership with school board for outdoor spaces
- Consider insurance sharing
- Consider cost-recovering or fundraising
- Track, field, playground
- Municipal offices in Elgin would support village growth

- Land availability
- Vision for 2030:
 - More housing
 - Fewer drugs
 - Less poverty
 - Services to thrive
 - Build wealth
 - Affordable rental units
 - Common septic
 - Growth
 - Attract residents
 - Senior residence
 - Sewer and water infrastructure
 - Geared to income areas
- The signs of success will be:
 - Children come back to settle
 - Population growth
 - High school student numbers
 - Businesses opening and growing
 - People using greenspace

1. What makes Elgin a great place to work or visit?

- Outdoors assets and beauty; charming Village;
- Great day-to-day amenities; grocery store; local services; library; "everything you need"; schools / church / nursery / businesses / bank
- Central to a variety of nearby towns and cities; well-serviced access; and convenient
- Affordable living; good options for retirees and young families
- Great community groups; feel welcomed; connected; walkability

2. What existing strengths and assets can we build on?

- School expansion
- Sidewalks for even more walkability
- Physical fitness spaces/services (schools are booked up; yard not used by the school due to liability issues)
- Expand on the library/outdoor rink; parks as they are crowded
- Need more housing options such as apartments; small home options; co-op living
- Municipal offices are set up in the village; there is land available for growth
- Downtown lights/decor to be improved and constructed on side streets

3. What would you like to see in the community by 2030?

- Gas station; coffee/breakfast spot; playground improvements
- Low-cost housing options; market value housing; the ability for people to downsize and stay in the community; retirement community
- Public transportation options are needed
- Medical facilities/doctors
- Sewer systems and water needs to improve for larger developments
- Improvement of the low-income population causing issues in the village (drugs; property damage; crime)

4. How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?

- People moving back to the town and settling down
- Population growth/diversity of the community
- Improved internet and broadband
- Business organizations such as the BIA/Chamber of Commerce and giving support to local businesses to improve their success
- Gas station
- Maintenance/beautification / inviting area

5. What areas require the most improvement?

- Public transit
- Kids' areas/activity and fitness options
- Diverse of priorities to ensure we don't have "all our eggs in one basket"
- Sewer and water for growth
- Aging in place communities
- Understanding and forecasting our population growth to be better prepared for what's to come
- Speeding in the downtown core

6. Core areas of discussion: infrastructure; environment; community spaces; amenities / How do you make Elgin a more vibrant, healthy, and connected community?

- Attracting businesses
- Working with the agriculture community more; improving community gardens; greenspaces; greenhouses; and healing programs
- Bike path and hiking improved
- Gazebo or bandstand for music and the arts; outdoor festivals
- Not enough community gathering spaces
- Parking review/ adjusting current parking setup
- Improving driving areas in downtown for improved safety
- Start a community newsletter to improve communications
- Have a local helpline to give people support
- Guthrie House expansion
- Public washrooms for tourists

- Good food program expansion

In-Person #2: November 18th, 2-4 pm Elgin Hall

27 attendees including the Mayor, council members, Town Staff, and business owners.

This session was the most vibrant and impactful one with the largest crowd. We also adjusted the format for this, incorporating a “poll system”, where attendees allocated 6 chips to key areas they prioritize.

Workshop Feedback Summary

- **A great place to live or visit**
 - Has a great grocery store, more essential service options, walkability, a gas station nearby, quality health care, amenities like libraries, parks, beaches, liquor stores, recreation activities, and farmers markets.
 - Have a welcoming streetscape
 - A great space to raise kids
 - Untapped potential in terms of natural beauty, its central location, historic buildings, and rural homes.
 - Innovative proposals like virtual reality, technology accessibility for all students, renewable energy, and agritourism led by the farmers' market which Bruce at the Barn has permission.
 - The community suggests investing in marketing (traditional and online on platforms such as Tripadvisor) to showcase what the town has to offer.
 - A social media strategy and newsletter to promote the town and attract more residents
 - Community voiced problems with medical care, in terms of infrastructure and professionals. They suggest attracting more doctors and nurses.
 - Needs to be a focus: how to retain the youth population to stay and live in the community
 - The Vision by 2030 is focused on: affordable housing, better infrastructure (septic systems as an idea), more playground access, a health hub with indoor fitness machines, and a recreation hub
 - Suggestion to work on public opinion about the Village to attract businesses and residents
- **Strengths to build upon:**
 - Planning for emergencies (weather changes, distribution of goods, and food security)
 - More schools
 - Enhance or expand Sidewalks, roads, streetscape, lamp standards, childcare spaces, public playgrounds, laundromats, and retirement home communities with amenities
 - Improve communication between service clubs and residents

- Improve greenhouse at the high school to be functional year-round
- Transportation networks: more trails, calming traffic (less speed), country road system, and more parking prepared for growth
- Better public toilets
- Dedicated volunteer base

Key Notes from In-person Workshop

- **What makes Elgin a Vibrant community?**
 - Annual recurring events
 - Festive lighting
 - Attracting and supporting young families
 - Trail to Catarqui
 - Winter use trails snowmobile free
 - Signage on HWY 15
 - Local food/community farm
 - Local health club
 - Support for seniors
 - Inclusion (age; ability)
 - Activities + services for any age group
 - Quality of life services
 - Farmers market add
 - Promoting community
- **Infrastructure Improvements**
 - Attainable and affordable housing
 - Sidewalk and playground
 - Public bathrooms that are accessible to all
 - Improved rec facilities/hub
 - Get together locations
 - Pool
 - Trails
 - Seniors housing
 - Accessible bathroom
 - Healthcare
 - Recreation opportunities
 - Transportation networks (off-road trails; on-road walkability) climate change - prep for heat and cold community safety
 - In village amenities exercise facilities indoors
 - Welcoming new Canadians - provide housing; package; and support
 - Healthcare - staffing from different places; attract them here; faster and better process to get them working (doctors; nurses)

- Gas station/laundromat

- **Improved communications**
 - Newsletter for events/details
 - Connectivity/cell improved
 - High-speed internet
 - Cell service

Family-friendly activities easily found out

Demographics

Characteristics of the respondents are described below:

In terms of location:

- 95% are permanent residents
- 19.5% live in the Elgin Village
- 54.4% live in the Elgin surrounding area
- 89.1% have been living in the Village for more than 5 years

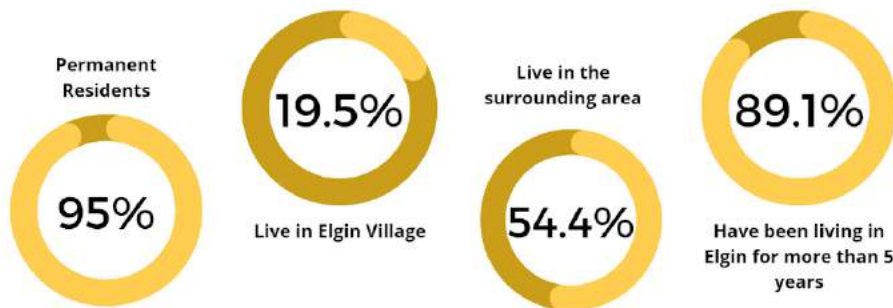
In terms of age:

- 39.1% are 65+ years of age
 - 23.9% of the respondents are 51-46 years of age
- 34.2% are 31-50 years of age

Survey Charts

Key Findings and Trends

Demographics - Location

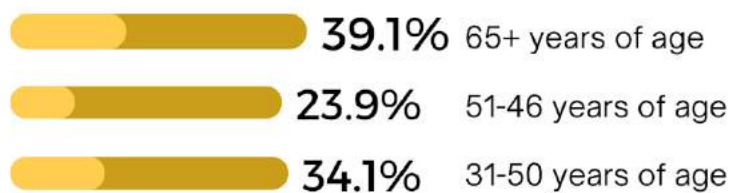


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Key Findings and Trends

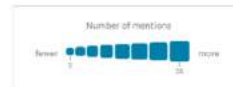
Demographics - Age



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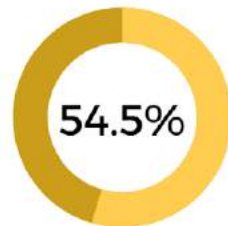
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Keyword Groupings

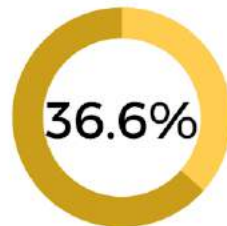


Survey Findings

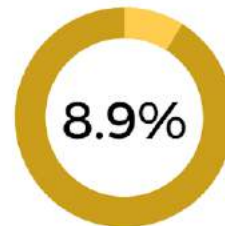
Facilities



State the current facilities fully meet their needs



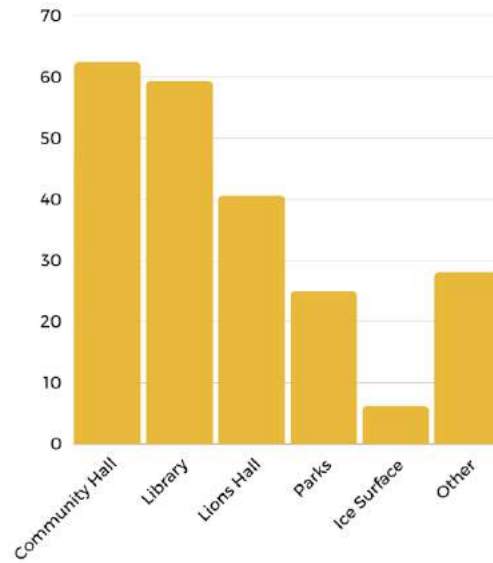
State somewhat meets their needs



Don't meet their needs at all

Survey Findings

Facilities Most Used (% Chosen)

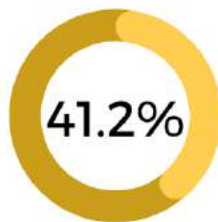


Survey Findings

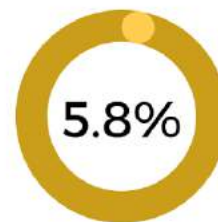
Services



Feel the current services in the Village fully **meet their needs**

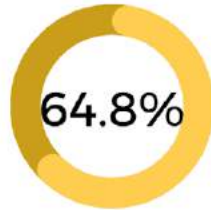


Feel the services somewhat meet their needs (**needs improvement**)

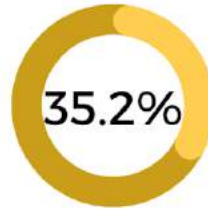


Feel they **don't meet their needs**

Survey Findings



State it's **somewhat important** for sustainable and environmentally friendly infrastructure and practices for the Village's future



State it's **very important** for sustainable and environmentally friendly infrastructure and practices for the Village's future

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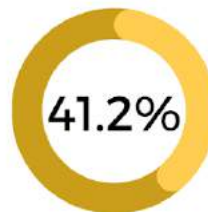
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Survey Findings

Amenities



State the amenities **cater to** permanent and seasonal residents and tourists effectively



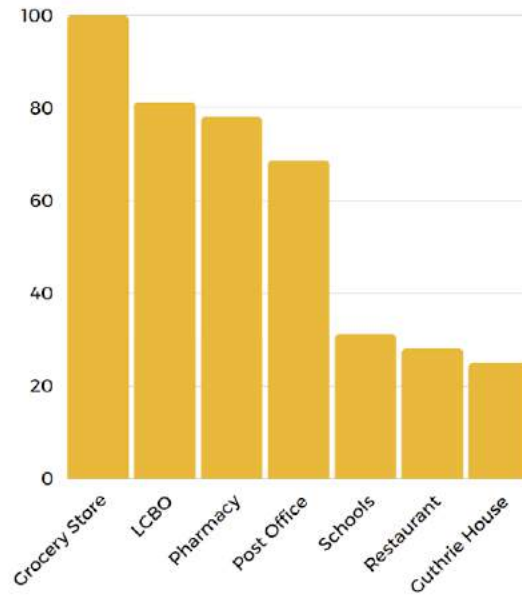
State the amenities **do not cater** to permanent and seasonal residents and tourists effectively

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Survey Findings

Services Most Used (% Chosen)



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Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Walkability (sidewalks, lighting, signs)

- TOTAL = 24 | RANKING 1st of 8 Categories



Residents of Elgin for over 5 years:
GREEN



Residents of Rideau Lakes for over 5 years:
BLUE



Residents of Rideau Lakes for under 5 years:
RED

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Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Village Vitality (more businesses, events, market)

- TOTAL = 22 | RANKING 2nd of 8 Categories



Residents of Rideau
Lakes for over 5 years:
BLUE



Residents of Elgin for
over 5 years:
GREEN

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Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Outdoor Recreation (enhance beach, trails, greenspace)

- TOTAL = 18 | RANKING 3rd of 8 Categories



Residents of Rideau
Lakes for over 5 years:
BLUE



Residents of Elgin for
over 5 years:
GREEN

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Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Indoor Recreation (pool, fitness)

- TOTAL= 17 | RANKING 4th of 8 Categories



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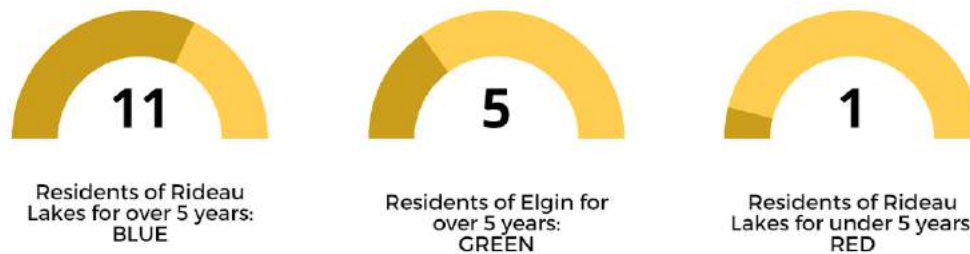
2023

Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Affordable Housing (all-age apartments)

- TOTAL = 17 | RANKING 4th of 8 Categories



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Workshop Findings

Detailed results of the November 18th, 2023, in-person vote:

Transportation (to get to medical appointments etc.)

- TOTAL = 6 | RANKING 7th of 8 Categories



Residents of Rideau
Lakes for over 5 years:
BLUE



Residents of Elgin for
over 5 years:
GREEN

Sample Email Script

Subject: Be Part of Shaping the Future: Share Your Thoughts on Elgin's Vision

Sent Out: Upon launch sent to the key stakeholders, organizations, community organizations, and members to see who is willing to partner with us

Dear {name},

We're thrilled to announce the launch of an exciting initiative aimed at shaping the future of our beloved village – the Elgin Visioning Project. As an integral part of our community, your input is invaluable in guiding the path forward.

The Elgin Visioning Project aims to gather your thoughts, ideas, and insights on how we envision our village in the coming years. Your perspective will help us prioritize projects, develop strategies, and make decisions that reflect the aspirations and needs of our diverse community.

We are reaching out today to encourage your participation in our survey or attend our workshops, but also to see if you'd be willing to share this with your network.

See below for details of the Visioning process, and an attached sample post we've already created for you:

[Survey Link]

In-Person Workshop #1: Date #1

In-Person Workshop #2 Date #2

Virtual Workshop: Date #3

We truly appreciate your participation and assistance in getting this out to as many residents as possible.

Warm regards,

Sample Social Post

"Be Part of Shaping the Future:
Share Your Thoughts on the
Village of Elgin's Vision.

Attend the upcoming
workshops or complete the
survey with your feedback on
how the Village can improve for
years to come.

Find out the details here:
<https://www.elginvillagevision.com/>"



Sample Flyer Design



Village of Elgin Visioning Process

The intent of the Visioning process is to connect with permanent and seasonal residents in and around the Village of Elgin and collect feedback, comments, and insight that will be applied to the Community Improvement Plan.

Upcoming Workshops

**First In-Person
Workshop**

2:00pm - 4:00pm
Elgin Hall

**Second In-Person
Workshop**

10:00am - 12:00pm
Elgin Hall

Community Input

We are looking for seasonal and permanent residents of the Village of Elgin to provide their feedback on how to improve the area for years to come.

Your participation is appreciated!

elginvillagevision.com

Please contact us with your questions:

Marie White

Economic Developer and Cultural Heritage

Coordinator mwhite@rideaulakes.ca



Mailer to Residents



Community Visioning - Help Create the Future for the Village of Elgin

The Township of Rideau Lakes is excited to welcome all community members to participate in conversations about the future for the Village of Elgin.

In order to gather information about how residents and stakeholders want to see their community in the next ten to fifteen years, "Community Visioning" Sessions will be held, and people are encouraged to complete a short survey. This is an opportunity to provide a positive contribution to the vision for Elgin, to determine what is desired; and the specifics of how you get there will come later!

Take the 3-minute Survey



<insert link - TO FOLLOW THROUGH TOWNSHIP>

Help us spread the word by talking to your neighbours and encourage them to complete the survey. This is about the future of your village. The survey is open until midnight on **November 24th, 2023**.

Attend the Community Conversation in person



You are invited to attend a Community Conversation in person on

Saturday, September 23 12-2pm

at Elgin Community Hall

In the Elgin Municipal Complex at 47 Main St, Elgin

To register, contact Marie White at mwhite@rideaulakes.ca

Attend a Virtual Community Conversation



You are invited to attend a Community Conversation via

Tuesday, September 19 from 6-8pm using Google Meets

To register, contact Marie White at mwhite@rideaulakes.ca

Submit your comments in Writing



If you would like an alternative way to participate, you can provide your comments in writing. You may email, mail or drop -off your comments.

Submit this questionnaire in one of the following ways:

1. Hand deliver to one of the following locations:
 - Re-New Creation St. Luke's Leeds Thrift Shop & Ministry Centre at 18 Main St.
 - The Tipped Ship at 3 Main St.
2. Mail to Township of Rideau Lakes, 1439 County Road 8, Delta, ON K0E 1G0

No matter how you choose to join the conversation, the focus will be on getting as many people as possible engaged in helping to shape the future of Elgin.

Questions? Call Marie at 1-800-928-2250 ext. 288.

Please answer the following questions.

- o What makes Elgin a great place to live or visit?
- o What existing strengths and assets can we build on?
- o What would you like to see in the community by the year 2023?
- o How will we know when we achieve the Vision (indicators/developments)?
- o What areas require the most improvement?