

# A Plan for Wellbeing in Guelph

What Would it Look Like,  
Would it Be Useful, and  
How Would We Create It?

January 2011

## Abstract

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As Guelph prepares to invest time and energy in the development of a plan for wellbeing, it is important for those involved to have a clear picture of how similar initiatives have worked in other places and what benefits they have yielded. It is also important to review the local context and make sure that the new plan complements and enhances work already underway. In this report, we make recommendations about how the City of Guelph should approach the development of a Community Plan for Wellbeing. We review models for thinking about the planning process, and offer definitions for wellbeing, community engagement, and other key concepts. The local context in Guelph is reviewed. An effort is made to clarify the reasons why a plan for wellbeing is a good idea and to lay out the criteria that a planning process would need to fulfill in order to meet Guelph's needs. Similar plans from other communities are reviewed, with a particular focus on whether the ideas and processes used in those plans might be useful in Guelph.

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## Introduction

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The City of Guelph has committed to the creation of a Community Plan for Wellbeing<sup>1</sup> in 2011. In an August report to the Social Services and Housing Committee, as part of a proposed social services work plan for 2011, three key questions were identified:

- *What is community wellbeing for Guelph? What does it mean to be “well” in Guelph and how is it defined by its citizens, neighbourhoods and communities?*
- *How is a state of wellbeing achieved by an individual, and by the communities of Guelph, and what factors enhance or detract from wellbeing?*
- *What relationships, partnerships, programs, and services are fundamental to sustaining the desired level of individual and community wellbeing? How are these delivered to the community, neighbourhoods and the individual? What needs to evolve, be added or reconsidered? Is there duplication in effort and resourcing? Are the services and programs being delivered in a way that reflects Guelph’s values as a caring community?*

In order to address these questions and further develop the social services workplan, the report to the Social Services Committee proposed three strategic objectives and a number of immediate actions. The strategic objectives were:

### **Strategic Objective #1) Make transparent what exists and how it works by:**

- *Building an internal knowledge framework*
- *Conducting an inventory and assessment of programs and services*
- *Several other actions*

### **Strategic Objective # 2) Focus on community wellbeing by**

- *Undertaking a community plan for wellbeing*

### **Strategic Objective #3) Correlate resources to long-term outcomes by:**

- *Building an implementation model for the community wellbeing plan*

As the City embarks on this work, it does so in the knowledge that other stakeholders in Guelph also have an interest in improving their capacity to engage the community and promoting wellbeing as a meaningful focal point for community planning. The Research Shop at the University of Guelph, for example, is spearheading a research grant application focused on partnership and collaboration. The plans for this project have been developed collaboratively by many local organizations with an interest in wellbeing, including the City of Guelph. Once funded, this project will support intensive work designed to generate innovative approaches to collaboration and partnership. The proposal development process itself has already led to new ideas about collaboration that will be useful as the plan for wellbeing is developed further.



There are other important new collaborative structures taking shape in Guelph. The Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination is in the process of reviewing local data, identifying local champions, and developing a cohesive poverty elimination strategy.<sup>2</sup> Poverty intersects with many other dimensions of wellbeing, and consequently many of the Task Force members will also be key partners in the development of the plan for wellbeing.

Trellis Mental Health and Developmental Services, in partnership with Community Torchlight, Family and Children's Services of Guelph Wellington, Pearl Street Communications and the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington are co-leading a project funded by the Trillium Foundation.<sup>3</sup> This project is intended to assist 18 community organizations, and is focused on governance, administration and service delivery.

These are only the most recent examples of a long tradition of collaboration in Guelph. Consultant Sarah Haanstra (Haanstra, 2011) recently completed a review of reports that may inform Guelph's plan for wellbeing. She identified 36 relevant strategic documents from 21 community groups and organizations in Guelph and Wellington County.

In the coming months, the City will work intensively on the development and implementation of a community plan for wellbeing. The ultimate goal of this plan is to make community wellbeing a prime consideration in municipal planning, and this means that the plan for wellbeing must be clear, practical, and utilization-focused. For this reason, the City has an interest in making sure that the best use of knowledge already available in Guelph is made, and that the development of the Community plan for wellbeing dovetails smoothly with closely related work being undertaken by its partners. It is also important to consider how the community plan for wellbeing fits into the City's own strategic planning process and how it will direct or mobilize City resources. One particularly important area to clarify is the relationship between the Strategic Plan, '2007 and beyond' and the wellbeing plan.

Early discussions among these players have made it clear that a more inclusive and collaborative planning process is itself one of the key drivers of community wellbeing. Ideally, the plan for wellbeing will not be seen as something owned and driven exclusively by the City of Guelph, but as a statement of shared vision for the community. It will act as a template for other community outreach and engagement efforts in Guelph.

In summary, the City of Guelph needs a plan for wellbeing that meets the following criteria. The plan should:

- *Be based on a clear and easily communicated definition of wellbeing that is appropriate to Guelph, and that reflect the way the citizens of Guelph understand wellbeing. The plan should identify clear, measurable and achievable goals that will contribute to increased wellbeing in Guelph.*

- *Raise the profile of wellbeing in Guelph, and make it clear why wellbeing is important in planning*
- *Have support from a range of key organizations involved in local planning for wellbeing, including those focused on the arts, culture, the environment, recreation and economic development as well as social services*
- *Create a sense of shared ownership over wellbeing so that the plan is not seen as something “owned by” the City or something the City is solely responsible for*
- *Make it easy and quick for citizens to provide input, so that a large and diverse sample of citizens participates and so that participants feel the return on their investment of time and energy is worthwhile.*
- *Be helpful to various sizes and types of groups and inform various types of action. It should, for example, inspire and invite collaborative approaches and the development of joint strategic planning*
- *Include practical strategies for ongoing citizen engagement appropriate to a wide range of situations and topics. Increasingly, local leaders in Guelph are taking care to build opportunities for meaningful community engagement into planning and partnership building initiatives large and small. The plan should suggest tools and strategies that can be applied by a range of stakeholders in a variety of settings.*
- *Lead to practical, actionable strategies that build on Guelph’s strengths and assets, and should complement and support other planning processes and documents currently underway.*
- *Produce useful products within one year, but remain flexible and dynamic in order to respond to changing contexts.*

In Guelph, a number of resources relevant to wellbeing already exist. The plan will benefit from the following key existing local conditions:

- *There is a commitment to the idea of a plan for wellbeing from*
  - *The Mayor, the council, and senior staff at the City of Guelph*
  - *The Research Shop at the University of Guelph*
- *There is a strong commitment to the idea of citizen engagement from many of the same players*
- *There are a number of exciting initiatives just beginning in Guelph (mentioned earlier in this section) that will support and complement the plan*
- *Good quality data on some of the key domains of wellbeing is available locally from a number of sources.*
- *There is a strong history of collaboration in Guelph, as documented by Haanstra. However, no-one else is undertaking a plan for wellbeing.*

## Methodology

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This report is the product of a short-term knowledge mobilization process conducted in November and December of 2010. This process was undertaken to consolidate the early lessons being learned by the City and its partners about Community Wellbeing and its role in planning.

Fourteen examples of plans for wellbeing (or plans with a focus on a significant component of wellbeing) were reviewed for this report:

- ImagineCALGARY Plan for Long Range Urban Sustainability  
[http://www.imaginecalgary.ca/imagineCALGARY\\_plan.php](http://www.imaginecalgary.ca/imagineCALGARY_plan.php)
- Total Place: A Practitioners Guide  
<http://www.localleadership.gov.uk/totalplace/news/total-place-a-practitioners-guide/>
- Birmingham 2026: Our vision for the future  
[http://www.bebirmingham.org.uk/uploads/Birmingham 2026 2010\\_draft.pdf](http://www.bebirmingham.org.uk/uploads/Birmingham%202026%202010_draft.pdf)
- Windsor-Essex 2009 Well Being Report 2009  
<http://www.weareunited.com/img/pdfs/annual-reports/2009wellbeingreport.pdf>
- Headwaters Communities in Action Well-being Report  
<http://www.headwaterscommunities.ca>
- Sustainable Niagara  
<http://www.niagararegion.ca/government/planning/sustainable-niagara.aspx>
- Greater Portland-Vancouver Indicators Project  
<http://www.pdx.edu/ims/indicators>
- The Boston Indicators Project  
[www.bostonindicators.org/](http://www.bostonindicators.org/)
- Minnesota Compass  
<http://www.mncompass.org/>
- Community Indicators Victoria  
[www.communityindicators.net.au](http://www.communityindicators.net.au)

- Genuine Progress Index Atlantic  
<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/gpi.htm>
- Cincinnati Strive Together Report Card  
[www.strivetogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2010StriveReportCard.pdf](http://www.strivetogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2010StriveReportCard.pdf)
- Local Wellbeing Project – Young Foundation, Manchester, Britain  
<http://www.youngfoundation.org/our-work/networks-and-collaboratives/the-local-wellbeing-project/local-wellbeing-project>
- Vibrant Communities Evaluation Report  
[http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/VC\\_Evaluation\\_Overview.pdf](http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/VC_Evaluation_Overview.pdf)

Please see Appendix A (available under separate cover) for more information on each of these reports.

Our review of community plans for wellbeing began with examples that were known to members of the working group (imagineCALGARY, Headwaters Communities in Action, and Total Place). Ten additional plans were identified either because they were referred to in the three initial plans or through an online search. An effort was made to find local plans (e.g., Guelph Wellness Initiative, Sustainable Niagara, and Windsor-Essex Wellbeing Report), as well as relevant Canadian (Genuine Progress Index, and Vibrant Communities), American (Greater Portland-Vancouver Indicators Project, Minnesota Compass, The Boston Indicators Project, and Strive Together), and international plans (Community Indicators Victoria, Total Place, and The Local Wellbeing Project).

Our sampling process was selective. Other plans were considered, but not included in the review because insufficient information was available, because they didn't align with our criteria, or because they were very similar to plans already reviewed.

Although most of the plans were based on multi-sectoral definitions of wellbeing, two plans focused on a particular domain. The Strive Together project focused on school success, and Vibrant Communities was geared towards poverty reduction.

The review of community plans for wellbeing explored the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the plan?
- Who has partnered to develop the plan and what roles do stakeholders play?
- Over what time period was the plan developed and/or how long has the plan been in use?
- What key concepts or theories is the plan based upon?
- What background work was undertaken prior to developing the plan?
- Which domains of wellbeing does the plan focus on?
- How was the plan implemented?



This report also draws on information from additional sources.

- *A preliminary review of literature on wellbeing, community planning, and community engagement, completed by Taylor Newberry Consulting*
- *Review of definitions of wellbeing completed by graduate students from the Research Shop at the University of Guelph (detailed summary available under separate cover as Appendix B)*
- *Review of recent reports produced by groups and organizations in the Guelph area related to wellbeing completed by Sarah Haanstra (a consultant commissioned by the City of Guelph)*
- *A series of three meetings with key staff from the City of Guelph and the Research Shop at which the information listed here was discussed and early drafts of the recommendations in this report were developed.*

## What is Wellbeing?

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Guelph is a unique community, and any attempt to make meaningful improvements in the wellbeing of the community will have to be driven by the people of Guelph and grounded in Guelph's particular mix of resources, opportunities and challenges. It also needs to reflect the ways local people think and feel about their lives.

However, at the beginning of this process, it is helpful to look at how wellbeing has been defined in other situations, and what objective indicators have been used in efforts to track wellbeing. There are many definitions of wellbeing in the literature. One of the most frequently used definitions in Canada was developed by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing:

*“The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture.”*

Most definitions see wellbeing as something multifaceted. They often identify three levels of wellbeing (individual, social, and community) and between eight and 10 domains.

Individual wellbeing is typically seen as interconnected in complex ways with social and community wellbeing. Individual-level components of wellbeing often mentioned in the literature include meeting basic needs (e.g. food security, housing), good physical and mental health, education and life skills, financial and job security, and job fulfillment. Individuals of different ages, genders, socio-economic statuses and cultural backgrounds may weight these domains differently.

The social level of wellbeing focuses on the health and vitality of small, interconnected groups of people like families and neighbourhoods. Key elements of social wellbeing include family and social relationships, social support, sense of belonging and community cohesion.

Community (or national) wellbeing is reflected in things like safety and security, strong economy and infrastructure, a sustainable environment, vibrant cultural and arts heritage, high level of civic empowerment and civic participation, and transparent and accountable governance.

Those who advocate wellbeing as a focus for planning point out that improvements in social and community wellbeing often translate to improvements in individual wellbeing (Bacon, Brophy, Mguni, Mulgan, & Shandro, 2010).

Sometimes domains of wellbeing are used as part of the definition. In such cases, the domains tend to identify different spheres of community life which play a role in wellbeing, or different areas in which a community might intervene in order to improve wellbeing. Domains are often used to organize efforts to measure wellbeing. Although some domains do fall clearly within the individual, social or community “level,” other domains span all three. The eight domains identified by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing are

- *Democratic Engagement (includes voter turnout and interest in politics)*
- *Living Standards (includes housing quality, low income rates, and income distribution)*
- *Healthy Populations (includes physical and mental health, access to health care, smoking rates, and life expectancy)*
- *Time Use (includes hours worked, work-life balance, use of leisure time)*
- *Leisure and Culture (includes leisure activities, vacation time taken, and spending on culture)*
- *Community Vitality (includes feelings of trust and safety, and volunteering rates, caring for others)*
- *Education (includes early childhood education, development of knowledge and skills, and high school completion)*
- *Environment (includes watershed quality, state of natural resources, and sustainability of ecosystems)*

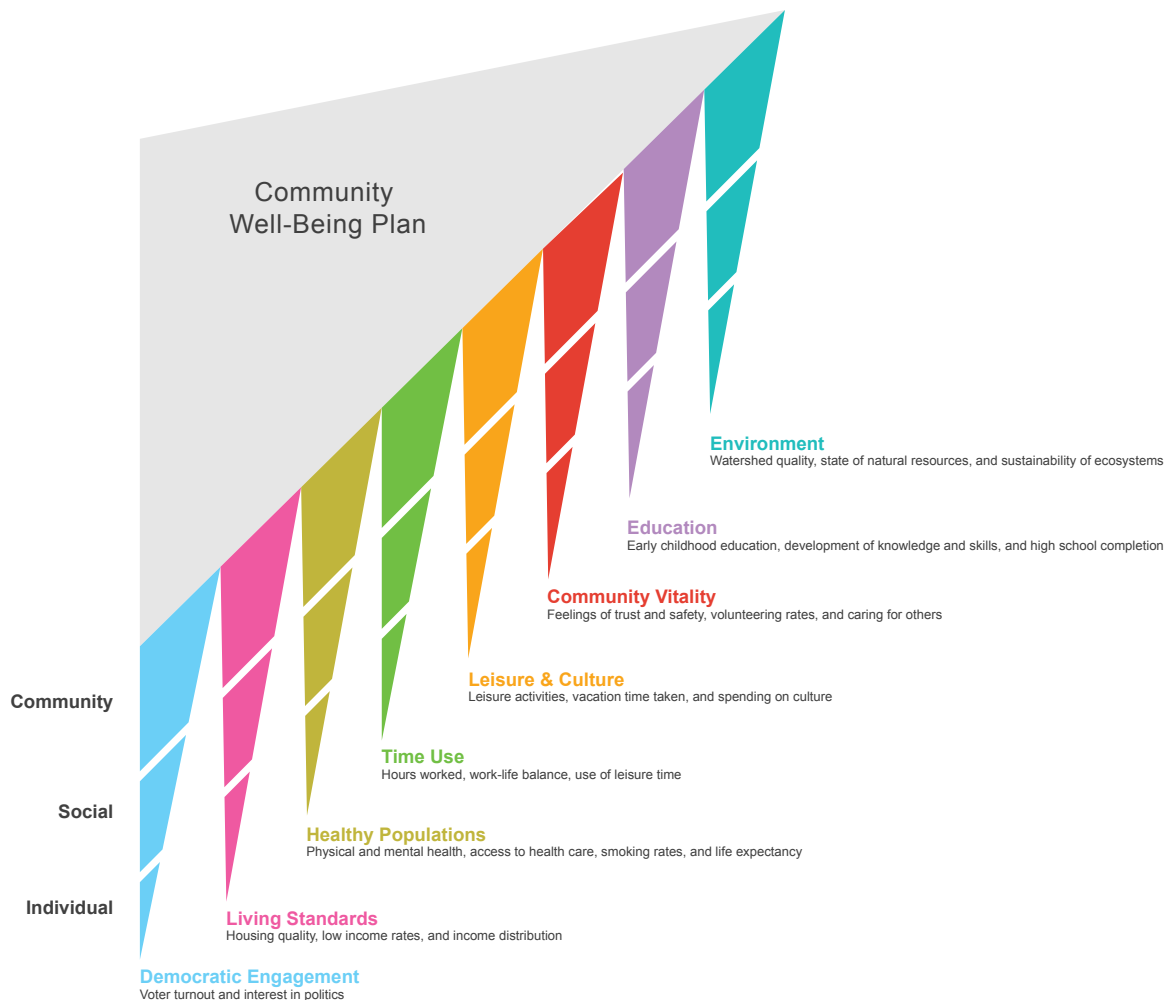
The community plans reviewed for this report that explicitly addressed wellbeing used similar definitions to those discussed in this section. Appended to this report is a table that compares the domains used in five reports that devoted considerable attention to the definition of wellbeing.

Bradford's (2005) work on place-based public policy argues that coordinated action on complex social issues needs to pay particular attention to cities, because it is in these urban environments that social issues are often manifested. He points out that place matters in

planning, for this reason. The domains of wellbeing listed above would constitute what Bradford calls the “social infrastructure of a city.” For Bradford, these elements must be considered together with the physical infrastructure of the city in order to develop holistic solutions. Although Guelph is not a major urban centre, and Wellington County is not at all urban, Bradford’s ideas may still be useful. In any community, urban, suburban or rural, it is important to consider where social problems are being expressed, and to elicit ideas for action from those places.

### Implications for Guelph

The team involved in this project agreed that the “three-level” (individual, social, and community) definition of wellbeing, with its eight “domains” is a good starting point for a discussion of what wellbeing means in Guelph (Please see Appendix B for more information). The graphic below depicts Guelph’s emerging understanding of the domains of wellbeing.



The Canadian Index of Wellbeing has also identified concrete indicators that can be used to track wellbeing, and this information may be useful as Guelph’s plan takes shape.

Bradford’s (2005) work reminds us that the domains and levels of wellbeing must be considered in an intensively local way. Guelph may therefore wish to consider the built environment as another domain of wellbeing. Further exploration of this possibility will take place in the coming weeks, through a literature review on neighbourhood identify and place-based planning.

Haanstra (2011) reviewed 36 local planning documents in order to determine how wellbeing is being operationalized in Guelph. The content themes identified in Haanstra’s report map onto the Canadian Index of Wellbeing domains well. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing also identifies domains that have not yet been a focus of planning work in Guelph, including time use and many aspects of community vitality such as time use.

**Table 1: Comparing Domains of Wellbeing Across Reports**

Canadian Index Domain	Themes in Local Strategic Documents Related to Wellbeing
Democratic engagement (includes voter turnout, interest in politics)	Social Justice, Accessibility and Inclusion
Leisure and Culture	Art, Culture, Heritage
Living Standards	Economy and Employment; Transportation; Target Populations
Education	Education
Healthy Populations	Health; Service Provision; Accessibility and Inclusion
Environment	Environment
Community Vitality	Safety
Time Use	

Part of the purpose of this plan is to lay out a process through which Guelph can agree on a definition of wellbeing that is grounded in the local context. Later in this report, the role of community engagement in promoting community wellbeing is explored in depth.

## What is a Community Plan for Wellbeing? Why Have One?

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A community plan for wellbeing is a set of coordinated and change-focused strategies that share a clear set of goals intended to lead to improvements in wellbeing. A community plan is not a static document, but an ongoing community process, created to act as a catalyst for action that will improve wellbeing.

Typically, interest in a comprehensive plan for community wellbeing emerges out of dissatisfaction with approaches that focus primarily on economic vitality. Measures of economic activity like GDP, new business startups, or building permits issued focus narrowly on economic activity, but do not take into account broader social and cultural factors that are equally important in determining quality of life. Indeed, there is now broad consensus that the social and cultural health of a community is a key determinant of economic health, and that communities must consider wellbeing in a holistic way in order to attract investment and compete successfully in the global marketplace (Leon & Boris, 2010).

Citizens are increasingly expecting their governments to have a positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life (Bacon et al., 2010). Although public investment in elements of wellbeing connected to the arts, recreation and culture was once seen as a luxury, this kind of investment is increasingly viewed as an effective way to build a strong, economically vital community.

Looking at public policy and social investment through a “wellbeing lens” has the potential to generate new and innovative strategies. Social cohesion and sense of connection to place, which are key social domains of wellbeing, are one of the reasons for an increased emphasis on investment in neighbourhood vitality and neighbourhood-based services. Recent research has underscored the connections between wellbeing, employee satisfaction, and productivity. For example, Duxbury and Higgins (2001) found that few Canadian employers have policies in place that encourage work-life balance, and that role strain is responsible for decreases over time in the average life satisfaction of Canadians.

### Purpose of the Plan

*“Research has shown that well-connected communities are more resilient. They have greater capacity to assess problems, nurture leaders, build stronger organizations and mobilize resources.” We at Headwaters Communities in Action have been inspired by the passion and commitment of so many of our citizens – from every sector – who are willing to share their time and knowledge in the spirit of building a strong and healthy future for us all.” (Headwaters Communities in Action, 2010)*



This quotation, which comes from one of the plans reviewed for this report, captures the core purpose of a plan for wellbeing: building a strong community requires attention to complex social problems. Such problems can only be addressed through coordinated, sustained efforts on a number of different levels. A plan for wellbeing should function as a rallying point for this process. Studies that have compared plans for wellbeing across communities have identified clarity of purpose, endorsement of that purpose by champions, and clear communication amongst stakeholders as key success factors (Imprint, 2010).

The plan for wellbeing developed by a department of the State of Victoria in Australia (McCaughey Centre, undated) identified three potential purposes of such a plan:

- *A democratic tool for engaging citizens and communities in informed discussions about shared goals and priorities*
- *A policy tool, guiding evidence-based planning and action to address the issues identified as important by communities*
- *A reporting tool, tracking and communicating progress towards agreed goals and outcomes*

These three purposes are not mutually exclusive, and most of the plans for wellbeing reviewed for this report included some attention to all three.

The Vibrant Communities project is a community-driven approach to reducing poverty. Although Vibrant Communities sites have focused on poverty reduction, and not on the full spectrum of wellbeing as defined by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, their approach to planning has much in common with many plans for wellbeing. The Vibrant Communities approach focuses on community-wide, cross-sectoral planning and on building assets in people, organizations, businesses and governments. A recent evaluation report reviewed the lessons learned by a number of communities across Canada that have applied the Vibrant Communities approach. The report argues that the relative importance of each of the three purposes listed in the previous paragraph depends to a large degree on local context. Vibrant Communities identifies four basic approaches to planning for poverty reduction.

- *A programmatic push model emphasizes manageable, incremental goals that are tangible and immediate. Leadership within this model often comes from mid-level staff within large organizations, and citizen input is typically focused narrowly on specific projects. This model works well when high-level leaders are not actively engaged or are risk averse, when the timeframes for judging success are short, and when there is limited flexibility around the use of available resources. This model fits well with a purpose focused on measuring current conditions, tracking progress and reporting on outcomes.*
- *A policy focused model takes changes in policy as its primary purpose, and tends to focus*

*narrowly on the need for specific changes to well-defined policies of governments or large organizations. This type of purpose relies on well-established connections with advocates and policy makers, and often requires a longer time-frame.*

- *A citizen empowerment model places emphasis on naming and addressing grassroots concerns of citizens. It tends to lead to a process-intensive consultation and planning model in which citizen engagement is broad and inclusive. This model often generates unexpected ideas for action that resonate with citizens but can be difficult to implement. It works well when there is a high degree of trust and openness among local citizen groups, and when high-level leaders have a deep commitment to citizen engagement.*
- *A transformational change model tends to have ambitious goals for change, and leadership from very committed, high-level visionaries. The leadership often comes from multiple sectors and includes people who are not traditionally considered champions of wellbeing. It works well when there is a sense that the community is at a turning point and partners are willing to take risks.*

Harwood (2007) has also written about the pros and cons of different ways of framing the purpose of a community planning process. Harwood argues that a good quality plan needs to have more than a statement of purpose expressed as a set of bullets. It also needs a compelling narrative. It has to have a clear story line that is inspiring and engaging. This story line must have the capacity to supplant any other, negative narratives at play in the community. More details regarding Harwood's approach is provided in the next section.

## **The Structure of the Plan: Goals, Priorities, Indicators and Strategies**

The basic structure and content of the 14 plans reviewed for this report was similar (See Appendix A). Most plans were organized around broad statements about how the community should look many years in the future. Typically, a number of concrete, short-term, measurable outcomes are identified for each priority area or theme. These change statements were sometimes referred to as impact statements, goals, targets or priorities. Community plans also laid out concrete strategies to achieve those changes and indicators that could be used to measure change. Plans differed in the relative emphasis they placed on these components. This section reviews the ways in which each of these key components of the plan were developed and explained.

### **Vision**

Although each of the plans for wellbeing identified indicators in order to monitor progress and identify challenges in the wellbeing domains, some plans also placed considerable emphasis on the process of "visioning" (i.e., citizens' vision for their city in the future). For example, the ImagineCALGARY project set 100-year goals along with interim 10-year and 30-year targets. Similarly, the Sustainable Niagara plan was geared toward the question of what Niagara should look like in 2060. In contrast to plans for wellbeing that focus on a long-term vision for the city, the Community Indicators Victoria process begins with

communities being asked to select indicators from among 80 community indicators of wellbeing from five domains.

### **Goals and outcomes**

Plans varied greatly in the types of goals and outcomes they identified. Some were much more specific than others in the type of change called for, the criteria for success, where responsibility for action lay, and the length of time it would take. Plans differed in the relative emphasis placed on:

- *How things ought to be in the future*
- *How things are right now*
- *What should be done about it*

ImagineCALGARY was an initiative with strong, multi-sectoral leadership, a high profile, and a bold vision. It set 100-year goals in each domain, as well as 10-year and 30-year system targets that were very concrete and measurable:

#### *Domain: Transportation*

- *100-year goal: Calgary is built at a human scale with a transportation system that serves the access and mobility needs of all people through a choice of convenient, comfortable, affordable and efficient transportation modes. The transportation system connects people and goods locally, regionally and globally. Transportation needs are met safely and in a manner supportive of human and ecosystem health.*
- *30-year system target: there is a 50 per cent reduction from 1990 levels in the pollution (greenhouse gases) associated with automobiles.*
- *10-year system target: We increase the residential population within walking distance (600 metres) of LRT stations and major transit nodes by 100 per cent.*
- *10-year system target: We increase the number of jobs within walking distance (600 metres) of LRT stations and major transit nodes by 35 per cent.*

ImagineCALGARY also identified specific strategies needed to achieve the targets, and made it clear that these strategies were intended for use by a wide range of individuals and organizations.

The Sustainable Niagara project took a similar approach, identifying 60-year goals. For example:

*Ecosystems and Natural Areas: In 2060 Niagara will have healthy, well-maintained and resilient natural systems that boast a wide range of species, clean air and water, and a green landscape.*

The Sustainable Niagara project is currently in the process of developing objectives and action plans for each goal and defining how to measure success.

Civil servants and politicians initiated a U.K.-based project called Total Place. It identified very concrete and short-term outcomes designed to reduce cost, improve efficiency, and increase the quality of service provided by governments to citizens. Specific goals and strategies varied across the many communities that were involved in the Total Place project. In Birmingham, for example, Total Place identified six “themes” and undertook specific strategies in each. Examples include:

- *Drugs and alcohol. 10% of health service costs associated with alcoholics can be saved by joint assessment and care planning, creating more effective interventions. A multidisciplinary team involving doctor, psychiatrist, social worker, primary care and community psychiatric nurses has been set up to test this.*
- *Gangs. Two ‘gang families’ cost the city £37 million over three generations in criminal justice system, health, education and social service expenditure. Total Place is now targeting long-term investments in strengthening family and neighbourhood links to ‘break the dynasties’, producing a safer society with huge future cost and social benefits.*

Although they were very short-term and practical, these outcomes were not incremental adjustments to existing ways of working. The Total Place outcomes were organized around the idea of a client-centred approach to service delivery that broke out of traditional government structures and procedures.

Interestingly, The Total Place process in Birmingham became integrated into a much more comprehensive vision for the future (Burton & Bailey, 2010). This vision set goals for 2026 that were similar in tone and focus to those identified by the Sustainable Niagara and ImagineCALGARY projects. Examples include:

- *Birmingham people are healthy and enjoy living together*
- *Birmingham is a safe, clean and friendly city tackling climate change and enhancing the local environment*

Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA) is a grassroots citizens’ group with a mandate to improve the social prosperity of residents in the Orangeville and Dufferin area. To date, the Headwaters Community Wellbeing Report has identified three themes:

- *Preserving and Strengthening a Strong Sense of Community and Rural Beauty*
- *Community Economic Sustainability*
- *Strengthening Citizen Leadership*

Currently, the HCIA team is in the process of identifying indicators that can be used to track progress in these areas, and potential opportunities for collaborative action. To date, HCIA has primarily emphasized documenting the current state of the community and provoking community dialogue about what can be done. The project has not yet laid out explicit long-term community outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

## Implications for Guelph

Although the plans reviewed for this report vary in terms of their emphasis, most include the core elements of vision or purpose, key outcomes, and proposed strategies. There seems to be a degree of consensus around how best to present these core elements. The purpose or vision needs to be clear, concrete, broadly supported, and inspiring. Outcomes should be focused on community change, concrete, measurable, and closely tied to a multi-domain model of wellbeing. Many plans present broad statements about how the community should look decades from now as well as more practical, short-term outcomes. Action strategies should build on community strengths, identify roles for various stakeholder groups, and come with clear plans for measuring success.

The City of Guelph 2011 Social Services workplan makes it clear that citizen engagement is a key consideration. In Bradford's (2005) terms, Guelph is interested in the knowledge *of* communities, as well as knowledge *about* communities.

Therefore, Guelph's plan for wellbeing is not intended to generate incremental change in existing programs and services, but rather to re-cast the planning process in Guelph along new lines so that wellbeing becomes a central consideration. Shared ownership of the plan for wellbeing is essential. The plan is intended to act as a catalyst for many types of action, spearheaded by a wide range of organizations large and small. The city seems willing to entertain a wide range of potential action plans.

Earlier in this report, four basic types of community planning processes (originally identified by the Vibrant Communities Initiative) were reviewed. The process emerging in Guelph has something in common with both the "citizen empowerment" and "transformational change" approaches. According to the Vibrant Communities Evaluation Report, these approaches work best when there is strong, visionary leadership from a variety of sectors, and when this leadership is prepared to invest the time and energy necessary to work through input from a wide range of citizens and come up with constructive solutions. It often requires a longer-term focus in order to achieve measurable change. Guelph has this type of commitment from the Mayor, and from other key public-sector leaders at the University.

It is clear from Sarah Haanstra's review (2011) that past planning efforts in Guelph have placed a great deal of emphasis on community engagement and responsiveness. Most local planning groups identified collaboration or partnerships as a key part of their process, and several local reports (including 10 Carden – *Creating Space for Change*, City of Guelph *Strategic Plan 07 and beyond*, and Guelph Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination *2010 Community Plan*) have identified increased collaboration as a way to reduce duplication or increase coordination. Several local groups have identified ongoing responsiveness to changing community needs as a local strength (examples identified by



Haanstra include the City of Guelph *Recreation, Parks & Culture Strategic Master Plan*, County of Wellington *Official Plan*, Guelph Police Service *Business Plan 2010-2012*, and Waterloo Wellington Mental Health and Addictions Network *Framework and Report on Local Consultation Findings Mental Health and Addiction Strategy*).

It is not clear at this point whether there is an appetite in Guelph for bold, risky, concrete goals. It also is not clear whether the key leaders in Guelph are willing to commit, publicly, to outcomes that would require significant and coordinated investment from a number of sources. Further exploration of these issues may be an important next step.

In the next two sections, the role of community engagement and secondary data analysis are explored in more depth.

## Community Engagement

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The Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement (undated) defines community engagement as “people working collaboratively, through inspired action and learning, to create and realize bold visions for their common future.” Community engagement is especially important in the context of Guelph’s plan for wellbeing, because it is something that can be improved through action at a local level. In other words, community engagement is one of the components of wellbeing, but it is also a key “lever” that is accessible to municipal government and is capable of improving other aspects of wellbeing.

In many respects, “community engagement” is simply another way of saying “high-quality democratic process.” Any good municipal government values ongoing dialogue with its citizens, and has an interest in making decisions that reflect the will of the community. Community engagement, if successful, should lead to better policy, reduced polarization and conflict, and a voice for vulnerable populations (City of Kitchener, undated).

For the Tamarack Institute, good community engagement creates momentum for communities to address local issues, and demonstrates the following key qualities:

- *A broad range of people are participating and are engaged*
- *People are trying to solve complex issues*
- *The engagement process creates vision, achieves results, creates movement and/or change*
- *Different sectors are included in the process*
- *There is a focus on collaboration and social inclusion*
- *The community determines local priorities*
- *There is a balance between community engagement processes and creating action*

Community institutions can seek out varying levels and types of engagement from their constituents. Typically, engagement is thought of along a continuum. The table below, from the City of Edmonton’s official municipal policy on public engagement, describes this continuum model.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2: The Continuum of Public Involvement**

Sharing Information	Consultation		Active Participation	
Public Involvement Building Blocks				
Sharing information to build awareness	Testing ideas or concepts to build knowledge	Collaborating to build commitment	Sharing decision making to build ownership	Delegating decision making to build responsibility
The purpose of this level of involvement is				
To present information to the public about issues that may affect them	To provide information and receive feedback or comment	To involve stakeholders in the development of solutions	To partner with stakeholders in the development of recommendations	To give stakeholders the responsibility for making the decision

The Tamarack Institute uses a similar model wherein the least intensive form of engagement is said to occur when individuals simply share their opinions with decision makers, but have no active role in addressing issues. The Tamarack Institute describes a number of progressively more active and intense forms of engagement, from representation, participation, and empowerment through to full-fledged power sharing.

Models based on a continuum of engagement are used by the City of Kitchener and by Michael Patton (2008). The Sustainable Development Commission (2008) draws a similar distinction between narrow, moderate and extensive community engagement. The continuum used by Interaction Institute for Social Change (IISC, undated) talks about engagement focused on communication, though to input and finally to co-creation.

According to these models, more intensive engagement, in which citizens share power over decision-making, is not necessarily better. It is important to make the goals of community engagement clear, and to employ engagement strategies that fit well with these goals. Individuals enjoy engaging with their communities in a variety of ways and to varying degrees. Intensive forms of engagement (such as chairing a committee) can burn out

volunteers, and organizations that expect intense engagement can “turn off” citizens who have busy lives.

In some situations, there is a need to make a decision quickly, or the choices available are limited and very clear. The opportunities for citizen engagement in this type of situation may be narrower. Some types of decisions (such as where to place sewers, or how to build overpasses) can only be made by those with expert knowledge or with the experience to consider expert knowledge thoughtfully.

Engagement is an ongoing process that evolves over time, and opportunities for less intense forms of engagement can sometimes act as an opportunity for citizens to become comfortable participating in more active ways.

The Harwood Institute (2007) has written extensively about the ways in which engagement evolves and deepens over time, and has proposed an “engagement path” designed to depict the way citizens most naturally engage with the community.

- *For Harwood, engagement begins the personal realm. At this stage in the path, people are mostly concerned about their personal lives. They are concerned with the issues that have a direct effect on their lives, and the people they tend to connect with are those they already know, with whom they feel comfortable, and who share their concerns.*
- *The second stage is called “Nascent Talk.” It is characterized by informal conversations in which efforts are made to connect personal and public lives, but tends to be very informal, and non linear. The focus is not usually on problem solving or action.*
- *The Discovery Stage occurs when people begin to think in public terms and to believe that common ground for action might be found for complex and important issues. They begin to see the connections between their personal concerns and those of others. They see the opportunity for collective action and believe that it is possible. This discovery process normally centres around shared aspirations or dreams for the community, and not around specific action strategies.*
- *The Deliberation Stage requires much deeper engagement. It involves creating connections amongst people who have different points of view, wrestling with compromises and trade-offs, and sorting out what kind of action is possible and practical. It requires hard work and a strong commitment. It requires attention to the question “what does this mean?” as well as the question “what should we do?” It involves discerning the differences between perception, bias, and fact. It involves distilling true knowledge from information.*
- *Complementary Action is the most developed form of engagement, in which a range of people and groups take varying types of action towards a common aspiration. Sometimes, this action is formally coordinated, but often it is not.*

Harwood (2007) argues that organizations interested in community engagement often use an approach at odds with this “natural” path to engagement. Organizations often begin, for

example, by sharing data about community conditions and inviting people to talk about action strategies. This approach is consistent with what the Tamarack Institute describes as an “inform” or “consult” level of engagement. However, Harwood argues that these strategies are more appropriate at a much more sophisticated and intense level of engagement that he calls the “deliberation” stage. For Harwood, engagement efforts that present detailed data about community conditions and seek to generate consensus around goals and concrete action plans are likely to fall flat if citizens have not yet begun to see shared aspirations, or to believe that collective action is worthwhile for them. Harwood’s concern is that citizens will not be willing to “stay with” the very difficult and time consuming process of deliberation. If they do arrive at action plans, these plans are not likely to reflect a deep understanding of community aspirations or a meaningful commitment to action.

For Harwood, engagement has to begin with a focus on shared aspirations, which is based on answers to the questions “what do you want for yourself, your family, and your community? Why?” Gathering information about people’s aspirations requires asking the right questions, and making sure that the focus is on “public knowledge” (i.e., knowledge about what it is that helps people see the connections between their personal concerns and the common good). Public knowledge is different from expert knowledge. Often, public knowledge has to do with the ways in which people understand the connection among their personal concerns and issues. It requires a focus on listening and the setting aside of the desire to tell people something. Participants must be willing to hear about issues even when they don’t know what can be done about them.

For Bradford (2005), community consultation must be intensively place-based. Social problems are not spread evenly throughout a city, and neither are the resources that can be drawn upon to address them. People who have direct, local experience with aspects of the problem need to have a voice in the discussion of potential solutions, and their unique form of expertise needs to be valued.

## Implications for Guelph

An engagement process that progresses from nascent talk to the identification of broad aspirational themes before reviewing secondary data and before beginning intensive action planning would have a number of practical advantages for Guelph. It would create the opportunity for people who have not typically been engaged to participate without demanding a lengthy time commitment or a particular set of skills. It would also encourage people to raise issues that have not previously been “on the radar” for municipal government. Furthermore, focusing on a small number of simple, aspirational questions would make the City’s commitment to engagement very visible and easy for the public to understand. This approach would also lend itself to conversations that emphasize the role of place in understanding complex social issues and developing innovative solutions.

When the time comes for more resource intensive consultations and planning processes, this approach to engagement would also help to ensure that those processes are focused on issues that really matter to citizens and are inclusive of the voices of a wide range of people. The emphasis on deliberation would also help to ensure that public expectations are managed carefully. Although aspirational questions often lead to the identification of issues that are not easily translated into viable action plans, the second wave of more intense, deliberative consultation would allow the voices of experts and experienced local leaders to be heard alongside those of ordinary citizens.

Because the City of Guelph is about to undertake a community-wide survey for strategic planning processes, Guelph has a natural opportunity to gather data about community aspirations early in 2011.

The proposed approach to engagement offers an additional benefit. It would allow Guelph to gather more information before making some of the choices described at the end of the previous section, for example, it would allow for time to gauge the appetite among Guelph's leaders for strong commitments to measurable outcomes and ambitious action plans.

## Secondary Data Analysis

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Interestingly, one of the key debates in the literature on community planning centres on the relative emphasis that should be placed on analysis of statistics and input from citizens when attempting to measure wellbeing.

Most of the community plans for wellbeing reviewed for this report included some analysis of existing community data intended to provide baseline information about the current state of affairs in the community vis-à-vis the plan's domains of wellbeing. In some communities, the development of this baseline information was a primary focus of the planning process. This type of project was sometimes called an "indicator project." For example, The Greater Portland-Vancouver Indicators (GPVI) project, spearheaded by a university-based research institute, worked with local leaders and research experts to draft a framework for regional indicators. In the project's second phase, a strategy for measuring these indicators was developed.

Although the GPVI project involved a third phase called "using indicators" which focused on how the data could be used to drive better results and accountability, no explicit targets for change were identified or endorsed. The Genuine Progress Index project in Nova Scotia took a similar approach.



The Windsor-Essex Wellbeing report drew exclusively on existing data and relied heavily on information available from Stats Canada. By contrast, the Community Indicators Victoria project ( McCaughey Centre, undated) conducted a telephone survey of 24,000 Victorians in order to populate the indicators that could not be filled-in using existing data sources. The Minnesota Compass project developed a unique approach to collecting indicator data, where indicators in each of the domains were put into two categories: “key measures” and “more measures.” Key measures were selected by domain advisory groups, based on criteria developed by a technical committee. More measures involved the collection of additional data in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the issue.

Harwood (2007) draws a sharp distinction between data about community aspirations and data about community conditions, problems, solutions, and strategies. For him, the aspirations must be at the core of the planning process. They must resonate with the community, form a compelling narrative, and focus on positive change for the community as a whole. They must address the personal concerns of citizens. For Harwood, in-depth consideration of census information, public health statistics and similar data should only occur once people have begun to “buy into” a strong narrative of shared aspirations. Bradford’s report on place-based planning echoes Harwood’s point:

*“The point is not to substitute experiential or tacit knowledge for technical expertise, but rather to maximize the synergy and complementarity among the different policy inputs.” (Bradford, 2005, p. 6).*

Two of the plans for wellbeing reviewed for this report use engagement strategies that fit well with Harwood’s model. ImagineCALGARY began with a broad survey of citizens that included five very simple and aspirational questions. These questions were distributed in such a way that they could trigger “nascent talk” at meetings of grassroots groups, or be completed by individuals. Few parameters were put around these questions so that people were free to phrase issues in the way that was important to them. Careful and comprehensive analysis of the data from this process led to a wide distribution of major themes. The purpose of asking aspirational questions was to create a new narrative for Calgary which encouraged people to see the connections between their issues and those of others – to step into the “discovery stage.” This step was followed by the development of working groups. These groups devoted significant time to “deliberation” of the domains of wellbeing. They engaged in a review of existing data and worked out concrete action strategies.

The Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA) report began with the development of a definition of wellbeing that included five domains of wellbeing and various indicators for each. Next, residents were invited to respond to a 19-question survey that included broad “aspirational” questions. In parallel with this process, more intensive focus-group discussions about each of the five key domains were held.

Once this information was gathered, the working groups invested considerable time in data gathering, “*deliberation*,” and action planning. Multiple volunteers were actively involved in the process. As of the end of 2010 the process is nearly complete and HCIA is launching a report on wellbeing that focuses on nine domain areas, and includes stories and statistics.

During the discussions that led to the creation of this report, the “Planning for Real” process was discussed. <sup>6</sup> Through this process, local groups create 3-D models of their community and then use these models to talk in very concrete terms about the types of change they would like to see and where, specifically, those changes should take place. The model is designed for use by a wide range of stakeholders, and has been especially successful in work with children and youth in schools. Planning for Real is very consistent with Bradford’s (2005) place-based approach to planning, which emphasizes the experiences and ideas of people who live in neighbourhoods where social issues are most visible. According to Bradford, deliberation about complex problems with no simple solutions is more manageable and more meaningful when it focuses on a small geographic area. The connections between different systems are more obvious at this level, and the power of cross-cutting solutions becomes clear. Once action ideas are developed and tested at a local level, it may be possible to extract more general lessons that can be applied on a larger scale.

The Planning for Real process might be useful to Guelph during the in-depth, deliberation phase of the plan development process.

## The Impact of Plans for Wellbeing

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Most plans for community wellbeing emphasize the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Planning and community consultation are time and resource intensive. Traditional planning processes often lead to few meaningful changes in the lives of those who are asked to provide input, and so citizens are often justifiably suspicious. Consequently, it is important to evaluate the impact of planning. This section reviews the approaches used to evaluate the impact of plans for wellbeing.

The Vibrant Communities evaluation report identifies several major types of outcomes achieved by communities that used their approach to planning. These outcomes are:

- *Development and implementation of new ideas and strategic solutions (reflected in new investment)*
- *Increased public awareness of poverty and a deepened appreciation of the challenges and possible solutions.*

- *Development of new partnerships and new leadership, and more coordination across services*
- *Influencing policy in government, the private sector, or elsewhere*
- *Improved flow of information and improved communication across stakeholders*
- *Assets built for people living in poverty*

The “Whole Measures” approach to evaluation (2009) may align well with Guelph’s interest in the connections between wellbeing and community engagement. This approach is described as a values-based, community-oriented evaluation tool. Whole Measures involves putting together an evaluation team made up of a wide range of stakeholder groups, and then having team members complete a structured set of “rubrics” that solicit their perspectives on how things are going with respect to a number of actions and outcomes related to wellbeing. The rubrics focus on high-level, community-wide outcomes rather than program details, and the process focuses on stakeholder perceptions rather than hard quantitative data. The Whole Measures process emphasizes the importance of the evaluation team coming together regularly to reflect on their individual responses to the rubric. Structured exercises designed to promote in-depth listening and reflection are used, and the discussion always ends with a focus on actions and next steps.

The Collective Impact model (as applied, for example, by the Strive Together project in Cincinnati), places a great deal of emphasis on measurement of outcomes (Kania and Kramer, 2011). Strive Together is also the only plan reviewed for this report with a substantial track record of ongoing outcome measurement. Through an intensive process of community consultation and partnership building, Strive Together Cincinnati identified five common goals for improving the school system, and then identified more than 50 indicators. Many different kinds of organizations, including schools, colleges, community centres, daycare centres and recreational programs, agreed to measure and report on exactly the same set of outcome indicators each year. In 2010, Strive Together published its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Report Card on Student Progress, and was able to show that positive progress had been made on 40 of 54 core indicators since the baseline year of 2007. For Strive Together, the measurement process is about more than documenting success. As with the Whole Measures approach, organizations that participate in the project meet with one another regularly to share and discuss evaluation findings, and to update their action plans on the basis of what has been learned.

It is notable that Vibrant Communities, Whole Measures and Strive Together are not comprehensive plans for wellbeing. Each is focused narrowly on one domain of wellbeing (poverty, food systems, and public education, respectively). This may help to explain these projects’ success in producing evidence of impact.

## Governance & Sustainability

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According to Kania and Kramer (2011), five conditions are necessary for a collective impact model to work. There must be:

- *a common agenda among partners that includes a shared vision for change, a common understanding of the problem, and a joint approach to solving it*
- *shared, simple measurement systems, and common, transparent reporting formats and procedures, which allow diverse organizations that work on different parts of a complex problem to hold one another accountable*
- *continuous communication, which builds deep trust and provides time for a common vocabulary to emerge and for organizations to feel comfortable taking risks*
- *mutually reinforcing activities, so that different organizations each see their unique niche in a coordinated set of strategies aimed at achievement of a common goal.*
- *backbone support organizations, which assist in the technical aspects of measurement, reporting, and communication, provide coaching and planning support.*

All five of these conditions speak to the need for investment in planning infrastructure. Several of the community plans for wellbeing reviewed for this project pointed to the creation of a new local infrastructure as a necessary precondition to action on key social issues (Imprint, 2010). Without question, the plans that have attracted attention are those with strong, multi-sectoral leadership, resources for ongoing staff support, and a clear, compelling vision. Strive Together had strong commitment from a huge range of partners involved in education, as well as government and business. ImagineCALGARY had a large and inclusive Mayor's Panel, as well as a round table, several working groups, and a ten-member staff team.

A concern expressed in Guelph is that there may already be too many committees or coalitions. Key partners may have little interest in the creation of another one. The history of the Headwaters Communities in Action project illustrates the limitations of an engagement and planning process that relies on heavy investment in infrastructure. That process began with grassroots, volunteer-driven discussions about priority issues. Because citizen input was taken seriously, many of the issues that emerged as priorities did not fall easily under the responsibility of any single government or organization. The problem of responsibility for action was made more complex because the geographic focus of the process included parts of three different counties, and a number of municipalities. The Headwaters team made a strategic choice to build their action plans around two of the six priority areas they identified. These two areas (improvement of the local system of trails and improved communication about social issues) were chosen because they were seen as symbolic and cross-cutting, and because it was felt that no institution already had clear ownership over these issues. People were hopeful that a group of volunteers could make

meaningful change in a short period of time, precisely because there was no strong leadership or formalized partnership. Headwaters did not have access to planning infrastructure, and so they developed a plan for wellbeing that leveraged the assets they did have.

Key players in Guelph have recently expressed the need for new models of collaboration and governance that move beyond the models described in this section. A major research grant application on this topic was recently submitted to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council by a coalition led by the Research Shop at the University of Guelph. Importantly, this grant will fund more than straightforward academic research on the topic of collaboration. It will also create real, ongoing opportunities for key partners in Guelph to experiment with new approaches to collaboration and governance. The development of the plan for wellbeing stands to benefit from this intensive focus on the process of governance and collaboration. In earlier sections of this report, we have suggested that a staged approach would provide the opportunity for Guelph to build an appropriate governance model over time as the SSHRC project begins to generate results.

## Unresolved Questions

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At this point in the planning process there are number of key questions that have not been fully addressed. This section reviews some of these issues.

### **How will the Work Initiated through this Plan be Sustained?**

Not surprisingly, the community plans for wellbeing with greater staying power seem to be those with an academic and/or charitable sector partner. Academic partners provide a stable source of research and analytical support, while foundations provide a stable funding source. Note, however, that the involvement of charitable foundations was more commonly a feature of U.S.-based plans for wellbeing (e.g., Minnesota Compass and The Boston Indicators Project). By contrast, The Victoria Indicators Project, which has been running since 2005, emphasized the role of government in sustaining the plan.

### **How Should the Plan be Promoted and Explained?**

If Guelph is to undertake a plan for wellbeing, it is imperative that the rationale for this process be explained clearly. Many people will be asked to invest time and energy into the process, and this will only be possible if people understand and support the plan's vision. For these reasons, communication about the plan will be a crucial component of building buy-in.

At this point, it is not yet clear how the “messaging” around the planning process should be shaped. Part of creating a compelling narrative around wellbeing involves finding the most evocative language to use. Among the plans reviewed for this report, wellbeing was sometimes connected to concepts such as:

- *Quality of life*
- *Sustainable community or urban sustainability*
- *Vibrant community*
- *Community vitality*
- *Healthy community*
- *Strong neighbourhoods*

## Conclusions

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It is a good time for the people of Guelph to talk with one another about wellbeing. Conversations about wellbeing may help us to better understand the connections between the many issues that we face. They may help us to name our shared aspirations more clearly and share them more broadly. They may help to us to understand how our own efforts to make our community better can complement and support the efforts of those who live differently than we do, and consequently play very different roles in change.

This report reviewed a number of best practices in this sort of work. Guelph’s plan for wellbeing should have a strong, clear vision, and should begin with a focus on authentic community engagement. It is important to be clear about what the plan is designed to





achieve, and to identify a range of action ideas that are concrete, grounded in the local reality, and designed to inspire the work of many groups at many levels.

The emergent Plan for Wellbeing will benefit from the good work already completed by many groups in Guelph, and from the innovative new projects currently underway. The context in Guelph is complex and evolving quickly, and it will be important to show partners how this new initiative complements and enhances their existing projects.

At this point in the process, Guelph faces a few key decisions. It is important to clarify where the potential leadership lies for this process, and to better understand what those leaders want from the plan. It is important to make sure that the community engagement strategies employed in the development of the plan match the plan's purpose. Looking into the future, it is important to make realistic predictions about what kind of infrastructure will be in place to support action on wellbeing. More needs to be learned about marketing the plan effectively, and evaluating its impact.

The table on the next page is a suggested path forward, based on these themes. It is intended as a starting point for discussion.

**Table 3: A Proposed Planning Process**

Phase	Information Gathering Tasks	Communication & Partnership Building tasks	Decisions & Actions
<b>Internal Planning</b> (already underway)	Review of best practices from other communities and local reports.	Exploratory conversations with potential champions from various sectors, with particular focus on partners that can ensure sustainability and independence of the plan (e.g., university and local government). Endorsement for the basic planning process should be sought from key independent partners like the United Way, the University, others. These groups form an ad-hoc committee to oversee phases 2 and 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clear purpose, clear process for the year</li> <li>○ Aspirational questions</li> <li>○ Definition of Wellbeing</li> <li>○ Clear messages to send out to the community early in the new year</li> <li>○ Informal buy in from key supporters.</li> </ul>
<b>Visioning</b>	Widespread solicitation of aspirations and hopes for Guelph, (perhaps using the strategic planning survey, social media, and other means). Input may be sought at a neighbourhood or ward level.	Public announcement of the consultative process. Existing planning bodies provide input into how the plan should be structured and positioned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Domains of wellbeing finalized, and used to set priorities for data analysis in next phase.</li> <li>○ Purpose of plan for wellbeing finalized.</li> <li>○ Analysis of input completed.</li> </ul>
<b>Grounding in Evidence</b>	Review of existing data about Guelph from census and other sources. Mapping of assets at a neighbourhood level.	Experts provide input into selection and analysis of existing data. Broad cross-sectoral coalition or advisory group formed to guide phase 3 (and, hopefully, to continue beyond end of year).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Messaging plan for wellbeing finalized</li> <li>○ Reference document summarizing vision, aspirations and existing data created and shared</li> </ul>
<b>Action Planning</b>	Consultations focused on specific domains of wellbeing will build from vision statements and draw on local data to set targets or identify strategies. Content experts and citizens will be involved in these discussions. Emphasis will be on strategies that can be taken up at various levels by various stakeholders. New technologies may be used along with face-to-face consultations.	Broad dissemination of results from phases 1 and 2 will occur through and in parallel with consultations. Coalition or advisory group explores options for ongoing evaluation and reporting back to community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Targets and strategies</li> <li>○ Actions that take into account who can do what, what is realistic, and how different groups can act.</li> <li>○ Consultations will constitute a kind of “pilot test” of the engagement model implicit in this planning framework.</li> </ul>

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## End Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> This report follows the Canadian Index in its spelling of the term ‘wellbeing,’ although ‘well-being’ and ‘well being’ are also used frequently in the literature.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://gwpoverty.ca/about/>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://www.trellis.on.ca/en/resources/OTFMediaAnnouncement-Sept92010.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.ciw.ca/en/WellbeingInCanada/WhatIsWellbeing.aspx>
- <sup>5</sup> Personal communication with Sylvia Cheuy, January 18, 2011.
- <sup>6</sup> [http://www.edmonton.ca/for\\_residents/public-involvement.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/public-involvement.aspx)
- <sup>7</sup> Some information is available at <http://www.planningforreal.org.uk/planningforreal/default.html>

## Appendix A: An Annotated List of Plans for Wellbeing from Other Communities

*Available as a separate document*

## Appendix B: Wellbeing Domains and Indicators

*Available as a separate document*



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