



TOWNSHIP OF
Southwold



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

Updated Strategic Plan

Key Findings Report

June 2023



CONSULTING INC.

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1. Introduction

The Township of Southwold has initiated the process to update the Municipal Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will provide direction for the new term of Municipal Council.

This Initial Findings Report provides the context for the updated Strategic Plan. It includes the results of the research and analysis in Phase 1 of the strategic planning process and the community consultation in Phase 2.

Figure 1: Strategic Planning Process



2. Document Review

A detailed review of the previous strategic plan, policies and other documents provides context for the development of the new Strategic Plan. A review of the following documents provides a foundation for the new strategic plan. A summary of these documents is included in the appendix.

Township of Southwold

- Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022
- Strategic Plan Updates 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
- Township of Southwold Official Plan
- Economic Development Plan, 2020
- Southwold Parks Strategic Plan, 2014
- Development Activity as of April 11, 2023

Elgin County

- Official Plan Housing and Affordability Discussion Paper, 2021
- Draft Official Plan, 2023
- Transportation Master Plan Needs and Opportunities, 2022
- Vacant Employment Land Inventory



3. Economic and Demographic Analysis

3.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Table 1: Key Economic and Demographic Findings

Key finding:	Summary:
Population has increased by 9% over 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Canada’s annual population projections, after a number of years of population decline, the population began to rise in 2015. Southwold’s five-year growth rate was second among 7 benchmark communities (2017-2022).
Southwold is younger than many rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46% of Southwold’s households have children compared to just 37% across the country. Southwold ranked 1st among 7 benchmark communities for the share of residents reporting child tax benefits in 2020 (14% above the country overall).
Southwold is home to large households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 2.8 residents per household, which is well above the benchmark communities as well as Ontario and Canada.
Southwold has relatively high income levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwold has the highest median personal income among the benchmark communities The second highest median employment income (full time workers). 10% of tax filers from Southwold reported at least \$100,000 in employment income. Southwold has the highest average household income (\$121,600) and the highest average income taxes paid among the benchmarks. 26% of households reported at least \$150,000 income; 2nd among the benchmark communities.
Southwold has rock bottom poverty rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4% of Southwold residents were below the poverty line in 2021 (10% across Ontario). Only 3% of residents below the age of 18 were below the poverty line. Only 2% of Southwold residents reported earning social assistance benefits in 2020.
Southwold has considerably more self-employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a share of tax filers, 66% more reported self-employment income in 2020 (2nd among the benchmark communities). 18% of tax filers defined themselves as self-employed in the Census.



Key finding:	Summary:
The Township's population is not as diverse as the province overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrants make up 7% of the population (6th of the 7 benchmarks). • Nearly 80% of residents are at least 3rd generation Canadian. • Only 2% are visible minorities (Southwold ranks 4th of the 7 benchmarks). • Only 2% of residents are of Indigenous heritage.
Most people own their housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% of households are owned vs. rented, placing Southwold 1st among the benchmark communities.
New construction has been robust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 2016-2021, there were more houses built than any other five-year period since 1960.
Dwellings in Southwold are relatively large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of dwellings have at least 7 rooms compared to 40% across the country.
Shelter costs are not a major concern but...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 6% of households spend 30% or more on shelter costs – the lowest share among the 7 benchmarks compared to 18% across Ontario. • That is mainly due to the higher incomes. The cost of an average dwelling was higher in Southwold than any of the benchmark communities (\$655,000 in 2021). The average monthly shelter costs were also higher at \$1,432/month.
People are moving to Southwold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of 2021, 26% of the population aged 5 and older did not live in the Township in 2016. Almost all new residents moved from elsewhere in Ontario.
Southwold's population has the lowest share without grade 12 education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 6% of the 25-64 population, the share of the population without high school is the lowest among the benchmark communities. • 49% of the 25-64 population have college or other non-university post-secondary education (1st among the benchmark communities).
Southwold has relatively high workforce participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 7 in 10 (69%) of the adult population were in the workforce in 2021 (1st among the benchmark communities). • Southwold's unemployment rate in 2021 was high (12%) but that was influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. (It was 4% in 2016).



Key finding:	Summary:
Southwold residents are more likely to work in agriculture, construction, manufacturing and health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority leave the Township each day for work. Only 12% of those who commute to work each day (excluding home-based workers and those with no fixed workplace address), work in Southwold.
Southwold workers have a relatively short commute to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 28% have a 30 minute one-way commute each day, the lowest share among the benchmarks.
Home-based work was up in 2021 but likely due to the pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22% of workers worked from home in 2021 compared to only 10% in 2016.
The number of employer businesses in Southwold has been increasing since 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 156 employer businesses in Southwold in 2022 up from 143 in 2019. • There were only 5 businesses with 50 or more employees.
There has been an increase in construction and transportation businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top sectors for employer establishments are agriculture (35), construction (30), transportation (14) and personal services (12). • There are 4 more construction firms and 3 more transportation firms compared to 2019.
Agriculture is the backbone of the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southwold has 150+ farms (2021 Census of Agriculture). • There are 32 farms per 1,000 population in Southwold compared to 15 farms per 1,000 across Elgin County and just three farms per 1,000 across the province. • Southwold farmers produced 2.2 million eggs and 1.6 million kgs of poultry in 2020. • Soybeans and winter wheat are the main crops. • There is a large greenhouse operation producing cucumbers. • Southwold farmers raise 1,776 cattle – three times as many as the province overall (per capita). • Southwold farmers reported 29,893 pigs in 2021 which is 22 times more per capita compared to the province overall.



3.2 INTRODUCTION

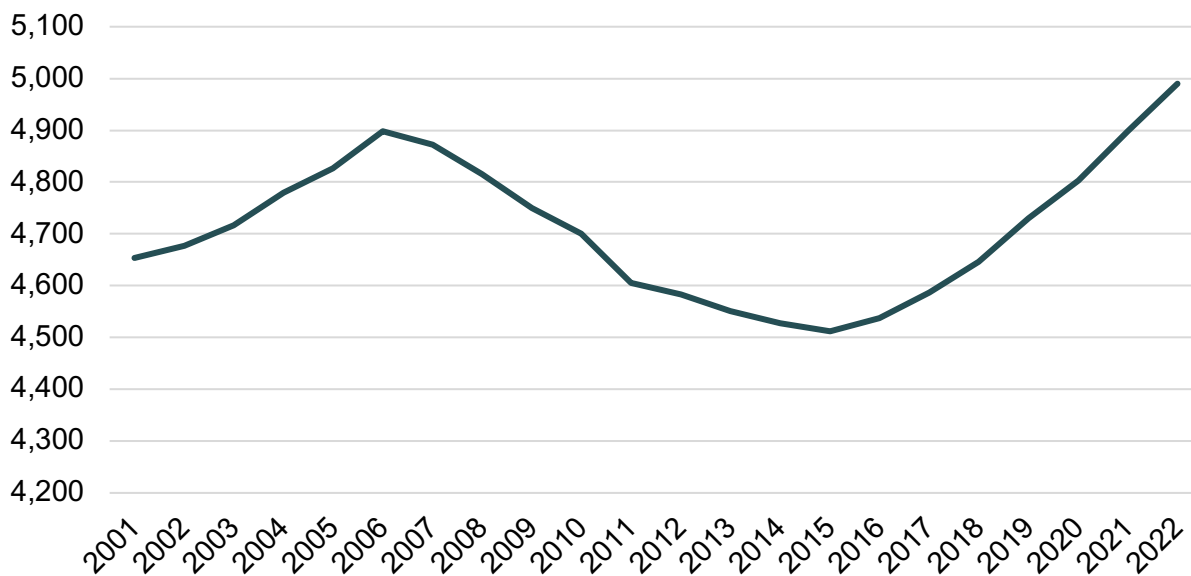
This economic and demographic review is based primarily on Statistics Canada data. It includes a variety of analytical tools to set the community's economic and demographic situation in context including historical context and location quotient (LQ). The Township of Southwold is compared to six benchmark communities: Strathroy-Caradoc, North Middlesex, Southwest Middlesex, Central Elgin, West Elgin, Dutton/Dunwich as well as Ontario and Canada to provide context. The benchmark communities were chosen because they are similar to the Township of Southwold in size, location or proximity to the City of London. Unless otherwise indicated, the geographic area used is the Township (Census subdivision).

3.3 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

Population change

There are two Statistics Canada sources of population data for the Township of Southwold: annual population estimates and five-year Census counts. Using the annual estimates, the population of Southwold increased by just under 2% between 2021 and 2022. There were an estimated **4,990** people living in the community as of July 1, 2022. As shown in Figure 1, this is a continuation of solid population growth in recent years. After a number of years of population decline, the municipality has experienced consistent population growth since 2015. The population is up by nearly 9% in the past five years

Figure 2: Population growth by year, using annual estimates, Southwold



Source: Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0142-01.



Table 2 compares Southwold’s population growth to the benchmark jurisdictions. On a one-year basis, Southwold ranks third among the seven comparator municipalities and on a five-year basis, it ranks second. Over five years, the population increased faster than both the provincial and national growth rates. However, over the 10-year period, Southwold ranked fourth out of seven jurisdictions.

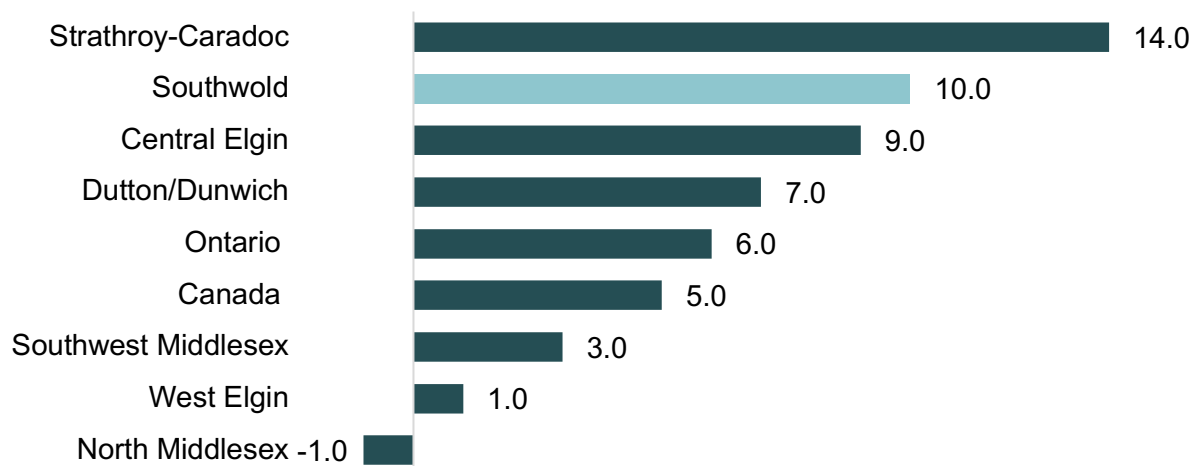
Table 2: Population growth rates, benchmark communities

	1 Year	5 year	10 year
Southwold	1.9%	8.8%	8.9%
Strathroy-Caradoc	3.0%	10.2%	11.6%
North Middlesex	1.0%	3.0%	-0.4%
Southwest Middlesex	2.4%	6.6%	9.6%
Central Elgin	1.4%	7.2%	7.9%
West Elgin	0.7%	2.4%	-1.4%
Dutton/Dunwich	1.2%	6.9%	9.6%
Ontario	2.0%	7.4%	12.8%
Canada	1.8%	6.5%	12.1%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0142-01.

Using the 2021 Census data, Southwold benefited from solid population growth of 10%, making it the second fastest among the seven benchmark communities and faster than both the provincial and national growth rates. The Census counted 4,851 people living in the community as of July 1, 2021 (similar to the 4,898 using the annual population estimates).

Figure 3: Population growth (% change), Census data, 2016-2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census



Population by age group

Table 3 shows the population breakdown by age group. Southwold is older than the province overall measured by median age and by the share of the population under the age of 15. However, compared to the benchmark communities, Southwold is one of the youngest. Only 20% of the population is aged 65 and older, the lowest share among the seven benchmark communities.

Table 3: Population by age group, 2021

	Population	% of total 0 to 14	% of total 15 to 64	% of total 65 +	Median age
Southwold	4,850	18%	62%	20%	44
Central Elgin	13,745	15%	63%	23%	49
Dutton/Dunwich	4,150	18%	63%	20%	44
West Elgin	5,060	15%	61%	24%	49
Southwest Middlesex	5,895	18%	61%	21%	45
Strathroy-Caradoc	23,870	17%	62%	22%	44
North Middlesex	6,310	18%	60%	22%	44
Canada	36,991,980	16%	65%	19%	42
Ontario	14,223,945	16%	66%	19%	42

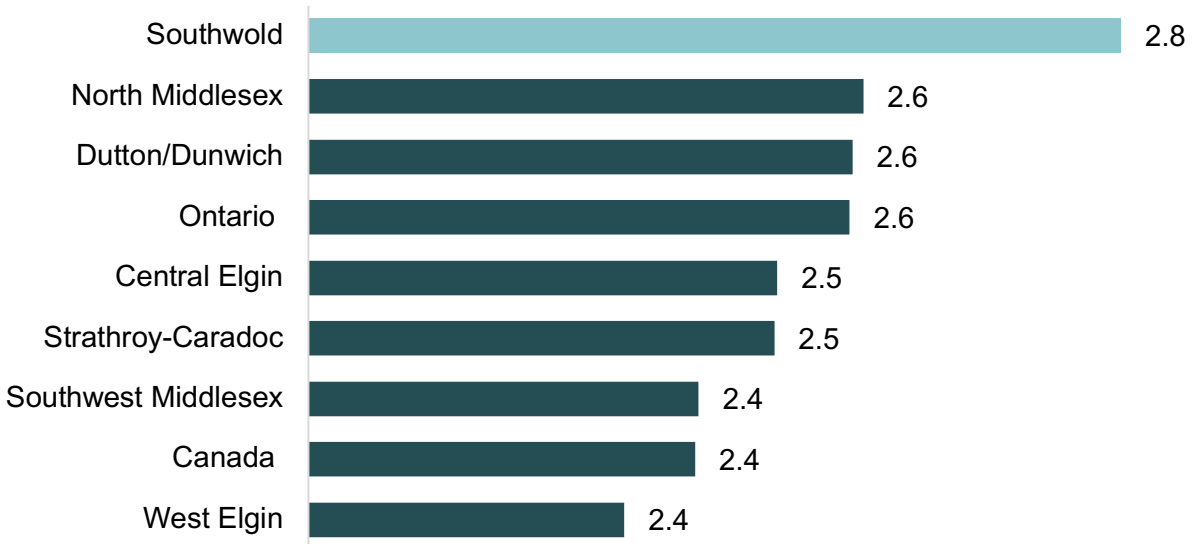
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Household size and presence of children

One of the key differentiating features of Southwold is the average household size. As shown in Figure 4, there were 2.8 people per household which was considerably higher than the benchmark jurisdictions.



Figure 4 Average household size, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Table 4 provides further insight into the size of households. In Southwold, only 17% of households have only one occupant compared to 29% across the country. On the other end of the spectrum, 12% of households in Southwold have five or more persons compared to only 8% across the country. In other words there are 50% more households with five or more persons in Southwold compared to the country overall.

Table 4: Households by size, % of total, 2021

	Southwold	Canada
1 person	17%	29%
2 persons	37%	34%
3 persons	17%	15%
4 persons	18%	13%
5 or more persons	12%	8%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

The higher number of residents per household is related to the higher share of households with children in Southwold. Figure 5 shows that nearly half (46%) of households have children compared to 40% or less among the benchmark municipalities.



Figure 5: Percentage of households with children, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

3.4 INCOME PROFILE

The Census provides detailed information on personal and household income based on the annual tax filing information. The 2021 Census data was likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personal income profile

Table 5 shows several key income characteristics for Southwold and the benchmark jurisdictions. The median indicates the income level at which half the workers are above, and half are below. Average income considers the influence of earners at the higher and lower end of the spectrum.

Southwold has the second highest median personal income among the benchmark jurisdictions at \$46,800, 14% higher than the median personal income across the country. There is a considerable variation between the municipalities with West Elgin's median personal income level at level 7% below the national level.

The table also shows the median employment income and the median employment income for full time, full year workers. Southwold ranked third among the benchmark municipalities for median employment income, behind Central Elgin and Strathroy-Caradoc. Southwold was second among the benchmark municipalities for full time and full year workers.



The average employment income in Southwold for a full time, full year worker was \$75,300, higher than all benchmark municipalities, but lower than the Ontario and Canada levels.

Table 5: Personal income profile, 2021

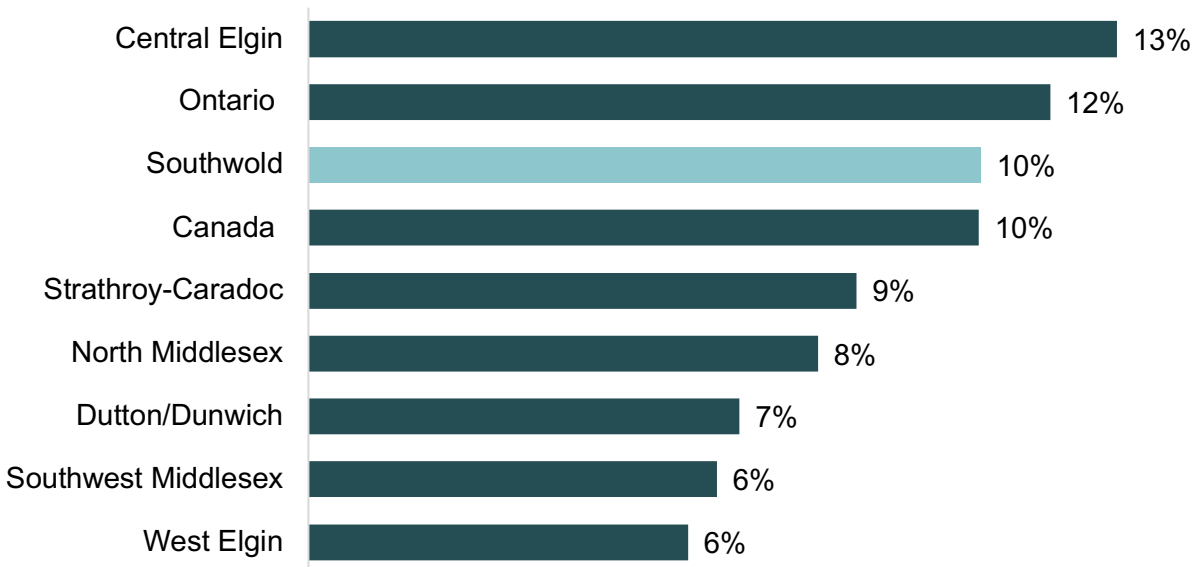
	Median personal income	CAN= 1.00	Median employment income	Median employment income for full time, full year workers	Avg. employment income for full-year full-time workers	CAN= 1.00
Southwold	\$46,800	1.14	\$38,800	\$64,500	\$75,300	0.98
Central Elgin	\$48,000	1.17	\$41,200	\$66,500	\$75,200	0.97
Dutton/ Dunwich	\$42,800	1.04	\$38,400	\$61,600	\$67,400	0.87
West Elgin	\$38,400	0.93	\$32,000	\$54,800	\$58,600	0.76
Southwest Middlesex	\$40,000	0.97	\$34,400	\$55,200	\$61,850	0.80
Strathroy-Caradoc	\$42,800	1.04	\$39,600	\$60,400	\$68,400	0.89
North Middlesex	\$43,200	1.05	\$36,800	\$56,800	\$62,250	0.81
Ontario	\$41,200	1.00	\$38,000	\$67,000	\$82,400	1.07
Canada	\$41,200		\$37,200	\$63,600	\$77,200	

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

The Census also provides a breakdown of personal income by range of income. Figure 8 shows the share of the population age 15 and over that reported at least \$100,000 in personal income in 2021. Southwold was second among the benchmark municipalities behind Central Elgin. The share of individuals earning \$100,000 or higher was 10%.



Figure 6: Percentage of individuals reporting \$100,000+ income, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Household income profile

When it comes to household income, Southwold leads the benchmark communities on most indicators. As shown in Table 6, the average household income in the Township was \$121,600, 14% above the average household across the country. As with personal income there was a wide spread among the benchmark municipalities with West Elgin households reporting average income 20% below the national level. Southwold households contribute the most income tax revenue to governments. The average household paid \$20,500 in income tax (net of all deductions). All households combined contributed over \$35 million.

The average income for two or more person households in Southwold was \$135,200, the highest among the benchmark communities.



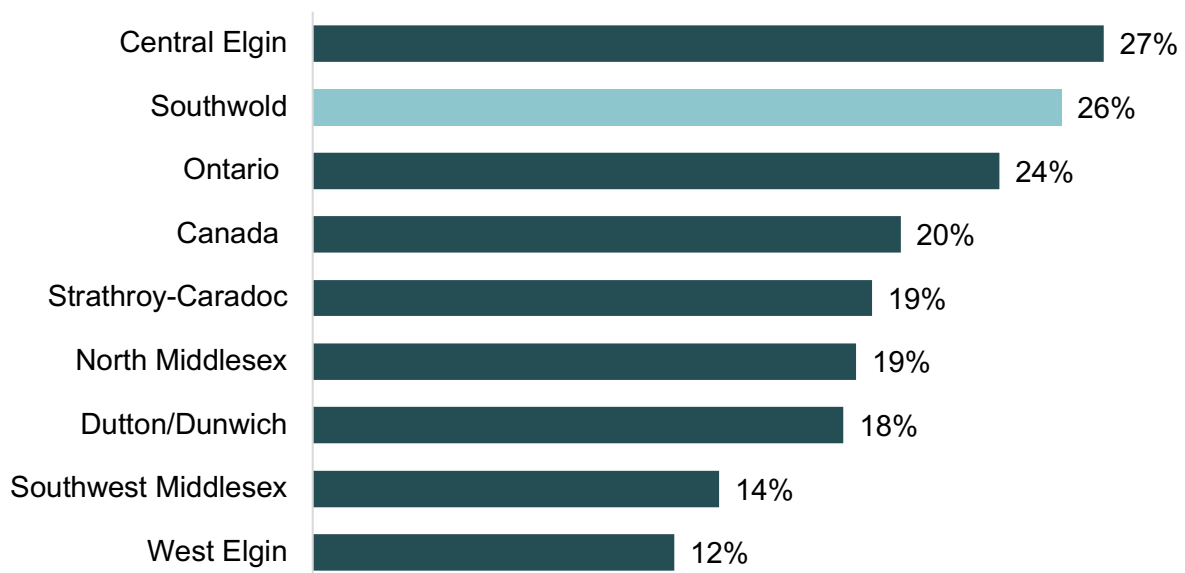
Table 6: Household income profile, 2021

	Avg. household income	Canada =1.00	Avg. household income taxes paid	Avg. income two-or-more-person households	Canada =1.00
Southwold	\$121,600	1.14	\$20,500	\$135,200	1.05
Central Elgin	\$118,500	1.11	\$19,500	\$132,000	1.03
Dutton/Dunwich	\$105,400	0.99	\$16,100	\$123,800	0.97
West Elgin	\$85,500	0.80	\$11,300	\$97,900	0.76
Southwest Middlesex	\$89,200	0.84	\$11,800	\$103,600	0.81
Strathroy-Caradoc	\$102,900	0.97	\$15,500	\$119,800	0.93
North Middlesex	\$104,500	0.98	\$15,300	\$120,600	0.94
Ontario	\$116,000	1.09	\$20,700	\$137,000	1.07
Canada	\$106,300		\$18,600	\$128,200	

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Figure 7 shows the share of households that reported at least \$150,000 in total income in each jurisdiction. In Southwold, over one in four households (26%) reported over \$150,000 in total household income ranking Southwold second only to Central Elgin among the benchmark jurisdictions.

Figure 7: Percentage of households reporting \$150,000+ income, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census



Poverty rates

The following table shows the share of the population living below the poverty line as measured by the Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) which refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take the size of households into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

Southwold has the lowest share of residents below the poverty line in the benchmark communities using the LIM-AT, and 64% below the average across the country. The Township also has the lowest child poverty and older resident poverty rates at 3% and 5% respectively.

Table 7: Prevalence of low income based on the low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT), 2021

	Prevalence of low income	CAN= 1.00	0 to 17 years	0 to 5 years	18 to 64 years	65+
Southwold	4%	0.36	3%	3%	4%	5%
Central Elgin	5%	0.45	5%	6%	4%	6%
Dutton/Dunwich	8%	0.73	7%	9%	6%	14%
West Elgin	11%	1.00	11%	13%	10%	16%
Southwest Middlesex	10%	0.91	10%	9%	9%	16%
Strathroy-Caradoc	7%	0.64	7%	8%	6%	12%
North Middlesex	8%	0.73	7%	9%	6%	14%
Ontario	10%	0.91	12%	12%	9%	12%
Canada	11%	0.36	12%	13%	10%	15%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

3.4 Income by source

The personal income profile in Southwold is considerably different when compared to the country as a whole, as measured by the share of the adult population reporting income by source. As shown in Table 8, Southwold has a much larger share of taxfilers reporting self-employment income, private retirement income and workers compensation benefits. Southwold is also fairly unique in that it has both an above average share of taxfilers reporting CPP income and reporting child benefits income.



When compared to the other benchmark municipalities, Southwold has the highest concentration of taxfilers reporting employment income and child benefit income and the second highest reporting self-employment income and private retirement income.

Less than 2% of taxfilers reporting social assistance benefits and only 4% reported Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)/seniors' spousal allowance.

Table 8: Income by source, % of total, Southwold residents

Income source:	% Southwold taxfilers declaring income	CAN=1.00	Rank (out of 7)
Market income			
Employment income	77%	1.11	1
Net self-employment income	18%	1.66	2
Investment income	32%	1.06	3
Private retirement income	20%	1.25	2
Market income not included elsewhere	22%	1.30	1
Government transfers			
Old Age Security pension (OAS)	21%	1.08	7
Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)/spousal allowance	4%	0.56	7
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits	27%	1.09	7
Employment Insurance (EI) benefits	9%	0.81	5
Child benefits	15%	1.14	1
Social assistance benefits	2%	0.46	6
Workers' compensation benefits	2%	1.16	4
Canada workers benefit (CWB)	3%	0.85	6
HST credit	30%	0.71	6

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

3.5 POPULATION DIVERSITY

Immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous population

Southwold has not attracted many immigrants. As of the 2021 Census there were 320 immigrants and non-permanent residents living the Township. That represented 7% of the total population. Compared to the benchmark communities, the immigration rate in Southwold ranked sixth out of the seven.



In recent years, the number of immigrants to Ontario has been rising but few have settled in Southwold. There were 25 immigrants living in the Township in 2021 that did not live in Canada five years earlier and another 10 non-permanent residents¹. In fact, 80% of immigrants living in Southwold arrived in Canada before 2000.

Most immigrants living in Southwold came from the United Kingdom and Europe. Only 15 of the 320 were born in Asia.

Table 9: Immigrant profile, 2021

	Immigrants and NPRs*	% of population	Recent immigrants (% of population)
Southwold	320	7%	1%
Central Elgin	1,365	10%	1%
Dutton/Dunwich	230	6%	0%
West Elgin	545	11%	0%
Southwest Middlesex	410	7%	1%
Strathroy-Caradoc	2,735	12%	1%
North Middlesex	415	7%	1%
Ontario	4,594,435	33%	7%
Canada	9,286,355	26%	6%

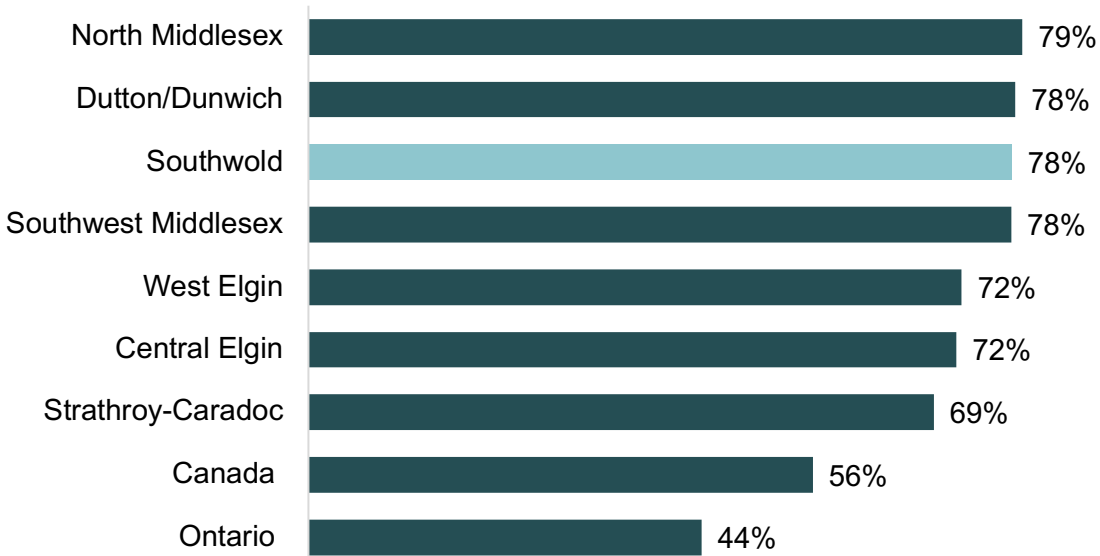
*Non-permanent residents. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Figure 8 shows the share of the population that is at least a third generation Canadian in each benchmark jurisdiction. In Southwold, 78% of residents are third generation, among the highest rate compared to other municipalities in Ontario. Across Ontario, only 44% are third generation (56% across the country).

¹ Note that Census population figures are rounded to the nearest 5.



Figure 8: Share of the population at least third generation Canadian, 2021



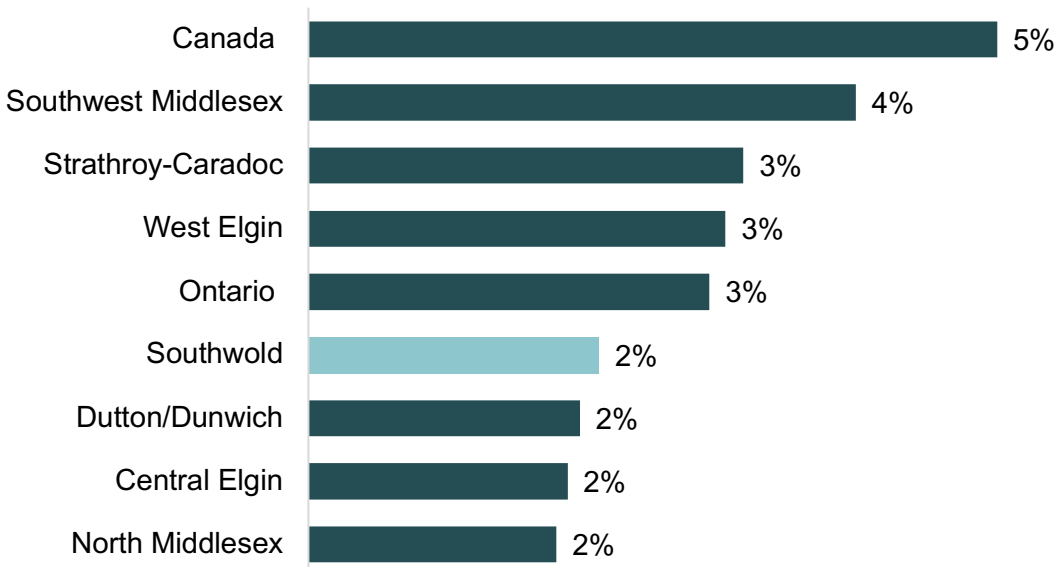
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

The visible minority population is comparative low in Southwold. In 2021, there were 105 persons who identified as a visible minority, 2% of the total population. Most of the benchmark municipalities had a similar visible minority share of the population. However, across Ontario, over 34% identify as a visible minority (27% across the country).

Likewise, there are few Indigenous persons living in Southwold. Based on Census data, a little over 2% identify as Indigenous in the Township compared to 5% across the country.



Figure 9: Indigenous population as a percentage of the total, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

3.6 HOUSING PROFILE

Housing characteristics

There were 1,710 occupied private dwellings in Southwold as of 2021. Table 10 provides a comparative profile for several key housing-related metrics. In Southwold, 92% of all dwellings are owned, which is the highest rate among the benchmark jurisdictions. Fifty-eight percent of dwellings were built before 1980 which was similar to Central Elgin and Dutton/Dunwich but considerably higher than Strathroy-Caradoc. Across Ontario, less than half of all dwellings were constructed before 1980. Eight percent of all dwellings in the Township were built between 2016 and 2021, the second highest rate among the benchmark jurisdictions. Very few of the homes require major repairs.



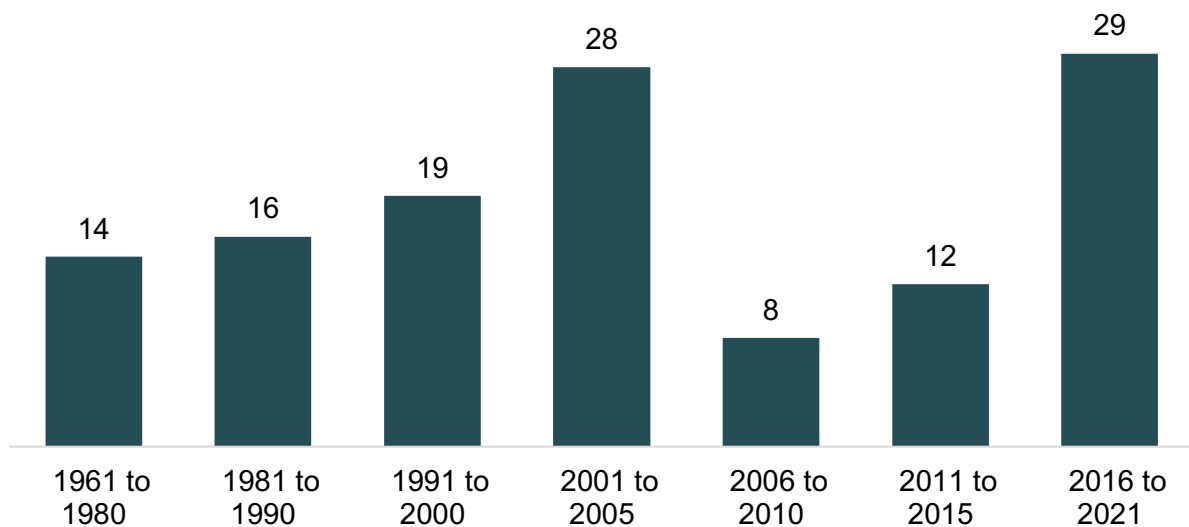
Table 10: Housing profile, 2021

	% owned	% built before 1980	% built between 2016-2021	Major repairs needed
Southwold	92%	58%	8%	5%
Central Elgin	90%	58%	8%	4%
Dutton/Dunwich	83%	61%	6%	7%
West Elgin	84%	72%	1%	10%
Southwest Middlesex	79%	69%	3%	11%
Strathroy-Caradoc	78%	48%	12%	4%
North Middlesex	82%	68%	4%	5%
Ontario	68%	49%	7%	6%
Canada	66%	48%	7%	6%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Unlike many rural municipalities, Southwold has seen an increase in the number of dwellings constructed in recent years. Figure 10 shows the average number of dwellings constructed per year going back to 1961 (based on Census data). After a decade with limited construction between 2006 and 2015, there were an average of 29 dwellings built per year between 2016 and 2021, the highest level of annual housing construction since at least the 1950s.

Figure 10: Average annual dwelling construction by year and timeframe, Southwold

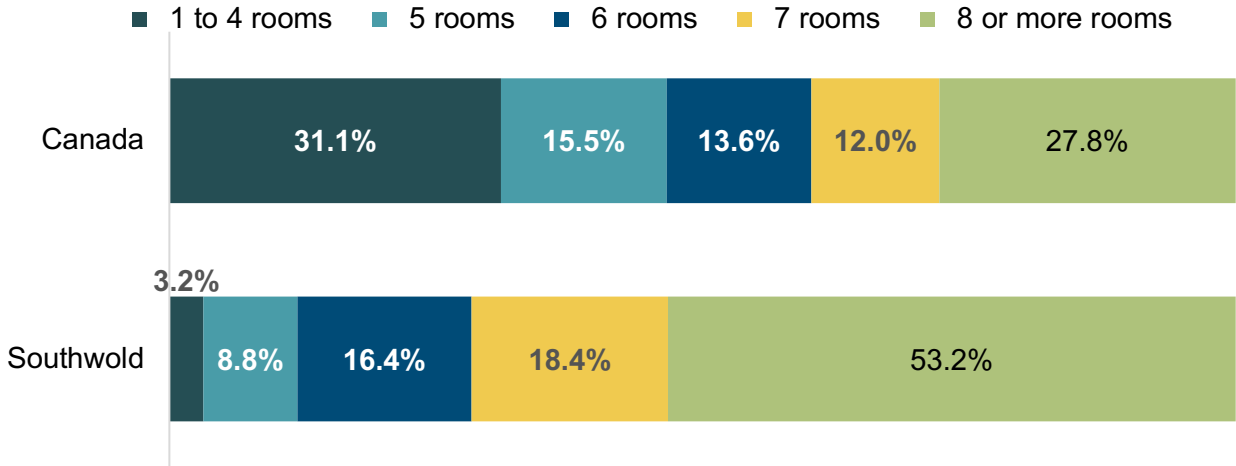


Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census



Southwold residents live in larger homes compared to the country overall. As shown in Figure 11, over 53% of dwellings have at least eight rooms compared to less than 28% across the country. Across Canada, 31% of all dwellings have one to four rooms compared to only 3.2% in Southwold. This sizeable difference is, in part, due to the lack of apartments or condominiums in Southwold.

Figure 11: Size of dwellings by number of rooms, % of total, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Housing and shelter costs

Table 11 compares housing and shelter costs in Southwold to the benchmark communities. Only 6% of owner households in Southwold spend over 30% of household income on shelter costs. Shelter costs include mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services. Southwold’s shelter costs were the lowest share among the benchmark jurisdictions and nearly 70% less than across Ontario.

The average value of a dwelling in Southwold, however; was the highest among the benchmark municipalities (although lower than the average across the province). The average monthly shelter costs for households that own their dwellings was \$1,432, the highest among the benchmark municipalities.



Table 11: Housing and shelter costs, 2021

	% of owner households spending 30%+ income on shelter costs	Average value of dwellings	CAN=1.00	Average monthly shelter costs for owned dwellings
Southwold	6%	\$655,000	1.06	\$1,432
Central Elgin	11%	\$623,500	1.01	\$1,398
Dutton/ Dunwich	10%	\$497,000	0.80	\$1,340
West Elgin	13%	\$444,400	0.72	\$1,063
Southwest Middlesex	9%	\$467,600	0.76	\$1,135
Strathroy- Caradoc	8%	\$531,500	0.86	\$1,271
North Middlesex	10%	\$569,500	0.92	\$1,316
Ontario	18%	\$807,000	1.30	\$1,700
Canada	15%	\$618,500		\$1,498

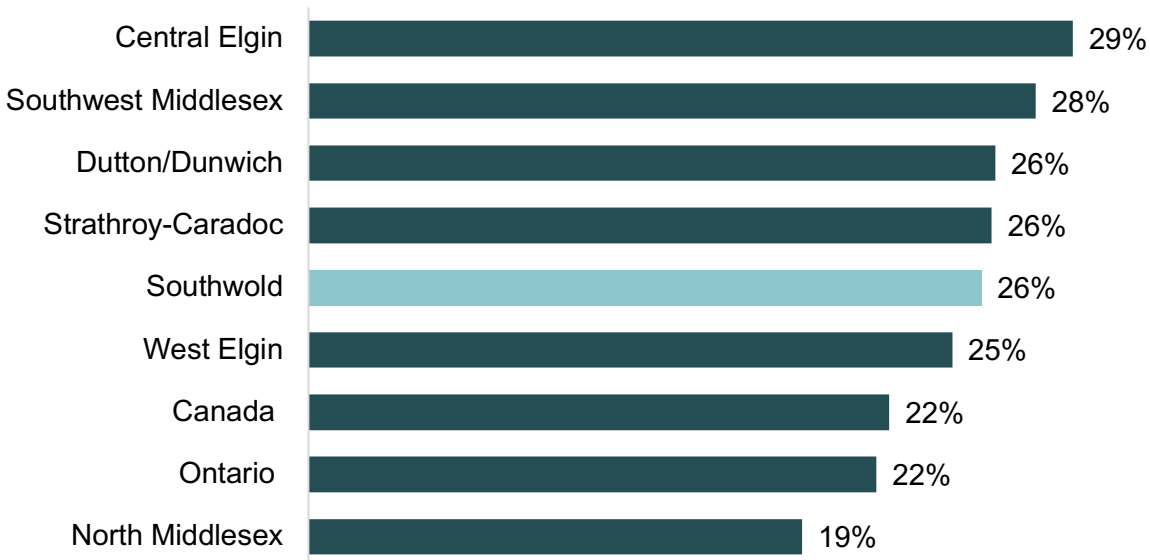
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

3.7 MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

There is considerable migration in and out of Southwold on an annual basis. As shown in Figure 12, 26% of the population aged five and older in 2021 did not live in Southwold five years previous in 2016. These new residents had moved in either from other municipalities in Ontario, from across the country or from outside Canada. Central Elgin had the highest inward migration rate at 29% of the population age five and over and North Middlesex had the lowest at 19%.



Figure 12: Percentage of the 2021 population aged 5+ that lived outside the municipality in 2016



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Table 12 shows the sources of the inward migration. Of the nearly 4,500 people aged five and older, 3,100 (69%) did not move between 2016 and 2021. Most inward migrants moved to Southwold from elsewhere in Ontario. A few moved within the municipality (225 or 5% of the total) but most moved from outside Southwold. Twenty-six percent of the population aged five and over moved in from elsewhere in Ontario and less than 1% moved from elsewhere in Canada or from outside the country.

Table 12: Five-year mobility status, Southwold population aged 5+

Total - Mobility status 5 years ago	4,485	% of total
Non-movers	3,100	69%
Movers	1,380	31%
Non-migrants	225	5%
Migrants	1,155	26%
Internal migrants (within Canada)	1,150	26%
Intraprovincial migrants	1,135	25%
Interprovincial migrants	20	<1%
External migrants (outside of Canada)	10	<1%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.



3.8 EDUCATION PROFILE

Among the benchmark jurisdictions, Southwold has the lowest share of the population aged 25 to 64 without any formal education (less than high school). Six percent of Southwold’s population did not complete secondary school compared to 9% across Ontario and 10% across the country.

A relatively large share of the Southwold population has some post-secondary education. Nearly half (49%) have a college diploma or some other form of non-university education such as a trades diploma. This rate is substantially higher than the province overall (31%) and the country (34%).

One in five of Southwold residents aged 25 to 64 have a university degree well below the provincial level (37%) or the national level (33%). This is related to the structure of the economy. Compared to the other benchmark municipalities, only one has a higher share of university educated residents.

There are also relatively few residents aged 25 to 64 with advanced degrees (3% compared to 11% across the province).

Table 13: Education profile, population aged 25-64, % of total (2021)

	Less than high school	High school only	College and other non-university PSE*	University degree	Master's and higher
Southwold	6%	25%	49%	20%	3%
Central Elgin	7%	25%	45%	22%	5%
Dutton/Dunwich	11%	27%	48%	14%	3%
West Elgin	14%	32%	42%	11%	2%
Southwest Middlesex	14%	30%	43%	13%	2%
Strathroy-Caradoc	10%	28%	43%	20%	4%
North Middlesex	9%	29%	47%	15%	3%
Ontario	9%	23%	31%	37%	11%
Canada	10%	23%	34%	33%	9%

* PSE Post-secondary education. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

3.9 LABOUR FORCE PROFILE

Workforce participation

According to Statistics Canada, there were 2,665 residents of Southwold participating in the workforce in 2021. There were 2,350 employed and another 315 unemployed as of July 2021. There were also 1,205 other adults aged 15 and over not participating in the workforce, including those over the age of 65.



Southwold's workforce participation rate has increased since the last Census in 2016. At that time there were 2,490 participating in the workforce. This translates into a 7% increase in the size of the workforce between 2016 and 2021.

As shown in Table 14, Southwold had the highest labour force participation rate among the benchmark communities. The participation rate is the share of adults either working or looking for work. However, the unemployment rate was relatively high at 12%. This was likely due to the temporary impact of the pandemic as the municipality's unemployment rate in the 2016 Census was only 4.2%.

Note on unemployment: Statistics Canada does not publish unemployment data for small municipalities between Census periods. However, Southwold is part of the London CMA area and the direction of unemployment in this region is likely indicative of what is happening in Southwold. In June 2021, the employment rate across the London CMA was 10.2%. By March of 2023, the rate had dropped to only 4.9%.

The share of the labour force working full time and year-round in 2020 was only 36% (compared to 56% in the 2016 Census). Again, the pandemic likely influenced this number.

Nearly one in five (18%) of the workforce was self-employed in 2021, up from 15% in the 2016 Census. There were 375 self-employed in 2016. By 2021 that number of self-employed jumped to 470.

Table 14: Labour force profile, population aged 15+, % of total

	Participation rate	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	% full time/ full year	% self-employed
Southwold	69%	61%	12%	36%	18%
Central Elgin	63%	57%	9%	36%	17%
Dutton/ Dunwich	66%	60%	9%	37%	14%
West Elgin	60%	54%	9%	32%	19%
Southwest Middlesex	62%	56%	10%	33%	18%
Strathroy-Caradoc	63%	58%	9%	36%	13%
North Middlesex	68%	63%	7%	38%	20%
Ontario	63%	55%	12%	34%	15%
Canada	64%	57%	10%	34%	14%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.



Employment by occupation

Table 15 shows the breakdown of employment by major occupational group. The largest share of employment is in NOC² 7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations followed by NOC 6 Sales and service occupations. Relative to the workforce across the country, Southwold has a much higher percentage of workers in NOC 8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations (nearly three times as many) and a higher concentration in NOC 0 Legislative and senior management occupations (55% more), NOC 7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (38% more) and NOC 3 Health occupations (19% more).

Table 15: Employment by occupational group, Southwold

Occupational group:	#	% of total	CAN=1.00
0 Legislative and senior management occupations	55	2%	1.55
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	365	14%	0.79
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	135	5%	0.61
3 Health occupations	250	10%	1.19
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	305	12%	0.94
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	25	1%	0.30
6 Sales and service occupations	530	20%	0.82
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	625	24%	1.38
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	225	9%	2.98
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	110	4%	0.92
Total	2,625		

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Employment by industry

The breakdown of the Southwold workforce by industry is shown in Table 16. This data is based on where people live (in Southwold) and not where they work. The top five employment sectors for Southwold residents were NAICS³ 62 Health care and social assistance (435), NAICS 23 Construction (300), NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing (280), NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (260) and NAICS 44-45 Retail trade

² NOC is the National Occupation Classification

³ NAICS is the North American Industry Classification System



(195). A large share of the Southwold workforce commutes to neighbouring municipalities for employment.

Location quotient (LQ) measures a region's industrial specialization relative to the country overall. The LQ is computed as an industry's share of total employment locally compared to the share in the national workforce. For example, the Southwold workforce has an LQ value of 4.28 for agriculture and related sectors meaning there are 4.28 times as many workers in that sector relative to the overall workforce compared to the country overall. Other sectors in Southwold with high LQ values include:

- NAICS 23 Construction: LQ value 1.46
- NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing: LQ value 1.30
- NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance: LQ value 1.27
- NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing: LQ value 1.14

The Southwold workforce has very low concentrations of workers in information services, professional services, wholesale trade, retail trade and finance/insurance.

Table 16 also shows the change in employment by industry between 2016 and 2021. On an absolute basis, health care added the most workers (+95) followed by construction (+85). The accommodations and food sector added 35 workers as did the real estate sector. The real estate sector went from only 20 workers in 2016 to 55 workers in 2021 (a 175% increase). The sectors that shed employment between 2016 and 2021 included agriculture (-35), transportation and warehousing (-40) and wholesale trade (-50).



Table 16: Employment by industry, Southwold

Industry:	% of total employment	LQ CAN=1.00)	% change (2016-21)	Rank (out of 7)
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	10%	4.28	-12%	2
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0%	-	-	-
22 Utilities	1%	0.73	+50%	6
23 Construction	11%	1.46	+40%	3
31-33 Manufacturing	11%	1.30	-5%	6
41 Wholesale trade	2%	0.59	-50%	6
44-45 Retail trade	7%	0.65	+3%	7
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	5%	0.95	-24%	3
51 Information and cultural industries	1%	0.27	0%	4
52 Finance and insurance	3%	0.66	+36%	4
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	2%	1.14	+175%	1
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	4%	0.50	-8%	5
56 Administrative and support*	4%	0.90	0%	4
61 Educational services	7%	0.91	+13%	2
62 Health care and social assistance	17%	1.27	+28%	2
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	2%	1.12	0%	1
72 Accommodation and food services	5%	0.89	+35%	3
81 Other services (except public administration)	4%	0.85	-5%	6
91 Public administration	5%	0.72	0%	3

*includes waste management and remediation services.

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

8.3 Employment by place of work and commuting patterns

Table 17 shows the place of work for the workforce living in Southwold in 2021. Just over one in five worked from home (22%), a number likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic (the share was 10% in 2016). The share of the Southwold workforce working from home was slightly higher than the benchmark communities but will be below the provincial level (again heavily influenced by the pandemic as in 2016 only 7% of the provincial workforce was working from home). Among those with a usual place of work,



only 12% worked within the municipality, 49% commuted to a different municipality within Elgin County and the rest commuted to a different county.

Table 17: Employment by place of work, % of total

	Worked at home	No fixed workplace address	Usual place of work	Worked within municipality	Worked outside municipality but in same county	Worked in a different county
Southwold	22%	11%	66%	12%	49%	40%
Central Elgin	23%	13%	64%	14%	42%	44%
Dutton/Dunwich	19%	15%	65%	27%	24%	48%
West Elgin	20%	13%	68%	41%	17%	42%
Southwest Middlesex	18%	17%	65%	30%	51%	20%
Strathroy-Caradoc	18%	13%	68%	52%	38%	10%
North Middlesex	23%	13%	64%	28%	45%	27%
Ontario	30%	12%	58%	59%	17%	23%
Canada	24%	13%	63%	59%	22%	19%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Compared to the rest of Canada, Southwold has one of the lowest shares of the population living and working in the same municipality (at 12%). This is not specifically related to the pandemic. Table 18 shows the share of the population living and working in Southwold was only 11% in 2016. People are choosing to live in Southwold even though their employment is elsewhere in the County and beyond.

Table 18: Employment by place of work, comparison of 2016 and 2021 (percentage shares), Southwold

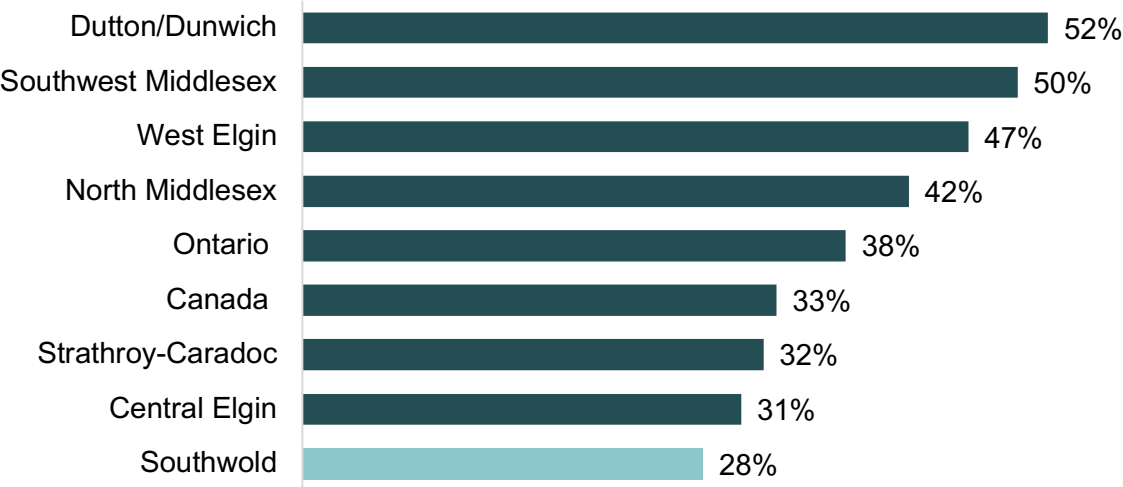
	2016	2021
Worked at home	10%	22%
Worked outside Canada	0%	0%
No fixed workplace address	14%	11%
Usual place of work	77%	66%
Work within municipality	11%	12%
Work outside municipality but in County	45%	49%
Work in a different county	44%	40%

Source: Statistics Canada 2016, 2021 Census.



Despite this very high share of workers who leave Southwold for work each day, a relatively small share have a long commute to their place of employment. Among those with a usual place of work outside the home, only 28% spend 30 minutes or more on their daily commute. This was the lowest share among the benchmark municipalities. Over half of all workers with a usual place of work outside the home in Dutton/Dunwich and Southwest Middlesex spend at least 30 minutes on their one-way commute.

Figure 13: Percentage of the workforce with a 30-minute one-way commute each day*



*Among those with a usual place of work (outside the home).

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Table 19 shows the commuting pattern for workers living in Southwold. This data could have been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic but the impact was likely limited as the 2016 Census found similar patterns. St. Thomas is the top destination – attracting nearly four out of 10 that live in Southwold and commute to a usual place of work every day. On the flip side, St. Thomas is also the source of the most workers who are employed in Southwold (24% of the total). Interestingly, Chatham-Kent is a top source of workers for Southwold employers but the Census did not find any Southwold residents commuting to Chatham-Kent for work among those with a usual place of work outside the home.



Table 19: Commuting for work - sources/destinations, Southwold (2021)*

Live in Southwold, work in:	#	%	Work in Southwold, live in:	#	%
St. Thomas	580	39%	St. Thomas	310	24%
London	480	32%	Chatham-Kent	275	21%
Southwold	175	12%	London	270	21%
Central Elgin	85	6%	Southwold	175	14%
Dutton/Dunwich	55	4%	Central Elgin	60	5%
Strathroy-Caradoc	30	2%	Lakeshore	40	3%
Aylmer	20	1%	Malahide	30	2%
Malahide	15	1%	Aylmer	25	2%
Middlesex Centre	15	1%	Middlesex Centre	20	2%
Ottawa	10	1%	Windsor	15	1%
Mississauga	10	1%	St. Clair	15	1%
Waterloo	10	1%	South-West Oxford	15	1%
Ingersoll	10	1%	Strathroy-Caradoc	10	1%
Total outward commuters	1,495		Leamington	10	1%
			Dutton/Dunwich	10	1%
			Bayham	10	1%
			Total inward commuters	1,290	

*Among those with a usual place of work (outside the home). Minimum 10 persons.
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Women in Southwold were far more likely to be working from home in 2021 than men. As shown in Table 20, 27% of women and 18% of men worked from home. Among the benchmark municipalities, Southwold had the highest share of women working from home (tied with Central Elgin).



Table 20: Percentage working at home by gender

	Men	Women
Southwold	18%	27%
Central Elgin	18%	27%
Dutton/Dunwich	17%	23%
West Elgin	16%	24%
Southwest Middlesex	17%	18%
Strathroy-Caradoc	15%	22%
North Middlesex	20%	26%
Ontario	26%	33%
Canada	22%	27%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

3.10 INDUSTRIAL PROFILE

This section reviews the industrial profile of Southwold based on Statistics Canada's business counts survey. As of June 2022, there were 156 employer establishments in Southwold (all industries, including the public sector) and another 437 non-employer establishments (these are typically micro-businesses with no formal employment, who have reported at least \$30,000 in annual sales to the Canada Revenue Agency). The industries that have the most of these non-employer businesses include agriculture (e.g., small farms), construction (e.g. sole proprietors without employees), real estate agents and personal services providers (e.g. hair stylists).

Establishments by size

According to the business counts data, there was a decline in the number of both employer and non-employer establishments operating in Southwold between 2015 and 2022. The number of employer establishments dropped by 24 (13%). There were three large employers (100+ employees) in 2022 down from five in 2015. These losses occurred before 2019 and were not a result of the pandemic. Table 21 also shows that between 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 2022 the number of employer establishments increased by 13.

Like most places across Canada, Southwold's economy is made up of mostly small firms. In 2022, 60% of employer establishments had less than five employees and 92% had less than 20 employees. There were only three employers in Southwold with 200 or more employees.



Table 21: Establishments by employment level, Southwold

	2015	2019	2022	# change (2015-22)	# change (2019-22)
Without employees	595	424	437	-158	+13
Total, with employees	180	143	156	-24	+13
1-4	108	84	93	-15	+9
5-9	41	32	34	-7	+2
10-19	15	11	15	0	+4
20-49	10	11	9	-1	-2
50-99	1	0	2	+1	+2
100-199	3	2	0	-3	-2
200-499	2	3	3	+1	0
500 +	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, 2015, 2019 and 2022.

Table 22 shows the profile of the largest employers in the Southwold. There is one large manufacturer, a facility providing support activities for crop production and an aboriginal public administration operation⁴. In 2019 and 2015 there was a large nursing home and community care facility shown in the report. By 2022, the nursing home was shown as having less than 100 employees and the community care facility was not shown as an active establishment.

Table 22: Change in the number of large employers (2015-2022), Southwold

Year:	#	Largest employers (at least 100 staff)
2015	5	Plastic window and door manufacturer, Aboriginal public administration, greenhouse operation, nursing home, community care facility for the elderly
2019	5	Plastic window and door manufacturer, Aboriginal public administration, greenhouse operation, nursery and tree production facility, nursing home, community care facility for the elderly
2022	3	Plastic window and door manufacturer, Aboriginal public administration, and support activities for crop production*

*The nursing home dropped to below 100 employees in 2022 and the community care facility was not included as an active establishment in 2022.

The greenhouse operation in 2019 could have been reclassified into the support activities for crop production in 2022. Source: Statistics Canada business counts, 2015, 2019 and 2022.

⁴ The Aboriginal public administration employer is included in the Southwold Census sub-division based on Statistics Canada data although it is actually located in the Oneida Nations of the Thames, an independent Nation with a population of 2,179 residents.



Establishments by industry sector

Table 23 shows the business counts for Southwold by top level industry group in 2022, 2019 and 2015. Most industries saw a decline in the number of employer businesses before 2019, and an uptick in most since. The industries with an increase in the number of businesses included construction firms, transportation firms, health care establishments and accommodations and food services firms.

The sectors with the most employer establishments in 2022, in order are:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (35)
- Construction (30)
- Transportation and warehousing (14)
- Other services (personal services) (12)
- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (9)
- Health care and social assistance (9)
- Professional, scientific and technical services (8)
- Retail trade (7)
- Manufacturing (6)



Table 23: Business counts by main industry groups and year, Southwold

NAICS Code	2015	2019	2022	# change 2015-2022	# change 2019-2022
Total	180	143	156	-24	+13
Unclassified	5	5	5	0	0
Sub-total, classified	175	138	151	-24	+13
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing	42	33	35	-7	+2
21 - Mining, quarrying, oil and gas	0	0	0	0	0
22 - Utilities	0	0	1	+1	+1
23 - Construction	28	26	30	+2	+4
31-33 - Manufacturing	8	6	6	-2	0
41 - Wholesale trade	7	5	6	-1	+1
44-45 - Retail trade	12	10	7	-5	-3
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	12	11	14	+2	+3
51 - Information and cultural industries	1	0	1	0	+1
52 - Finance and insurance	3	1	2	-1	+1
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	7	6	4	-3	-2
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	15	7	8	-7	+1
56 - Administrative and support*	6	10	9	+3	-1
61 - Educational services	0	0	0	0	0
62 - Health care and social assistance	7	7	9	+2	+2
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	1	1	1	0	0
72 - Accommodation and food services	4	1	4	0	+3
81 - Other services (except public administration)	19	12	12	-7	0
91 - Public administration	2	2	2	0	0

NAICS North American Industry Classification System

*includes waste management and remediation services

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, 2015, 2019 and 2022.



3.11 MANUFACTURING PROFILE

In 2015, there were eight manufacturing firms with employees in Southwold. By 2019, the number had dipped to six and remained at six in 2022. Table 24 lists the number of employer manufacturing firms by detailed sector in 2015, 2019 and 2022. All but one manufacturer is relatively small having less than 20 employees. There is one firm in the plastic window and door manufacturing sector with more than 200 employees.

Table 24: Manufacturing firms by detailed sector and year, Southwold

2015 Counts	2019 Counts	2022 Counts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other animal food manufacturing • Wineries • Wood container and pallet manufacturing • Digital printing • Plastic window and door manufacturing* • All other miscellaneous fabricated metal product manufacturing • Other metalworking machinery manufacturing • Wood kitchen cabinet and counter top manufacturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other animal food manufacturing • Wood container and pallet manufacturing • Plastic window and door manufacturing* • Glass product manufacturing from purchased glass • Other metalworking machinery manufacturing • Motor vehicle gasoline engine and engine parts manufacturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other animal food manufacturing • Wood container and pallet manufacturing • Plastic window and door manufacturing* • Glass product manufacturing from purchased glass • Other metalworking machinery manufacturing • Motor vehicle gasoline engine and engine parts manufacturing

*Reported at least 200 employees. All other manufacturers reported less than 20 employees in each period.

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, 2015, 2019 and 2022.

Agriculture

Farming represents the backbone of the Southwold economy. There were 156 farms in Southwold enumerated in the 2021 Census of Agriculture. There are 32 farms per 1,000 population in the Township. By comparison, there were 15 farms per 1,000 population in Elgin County and only three per 1,000 across the province.

The breakdown of farms by size (acreage) is similar in Southwold to the province overall. There is a slightly larger share at the largest farm size (1,120 acres and larger) with eight farms in total (Table 25).



Table 25: Farms by size, % of total, 2021

	Ontario	Elgin	Southwold
Less than 70 acres	32.9%	37.3%	32.1%
70 to 239 acres	40.0%	34.8%	40.4%
240 to 399 acres	11.2%	11.0%	10.9%
400 to 1,119 acres	12.7%	12.2%	9.0%
1,120 acres and larger	3.0%	4.0%	5.1%

Source: Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture, 2021.

Less than half of the farms reported hiring paid agricultural workers. There were 177 agricultural workers in 2020 of which 110 were seasonal or temporary workers. The agricultural worker numbers does not include family members in the farming workforce.

Southwold farmers produce a wide range of crops and animals. There are nearly 45,000 acres dedicated to field crops and hay of which Southwold has a particular focus on winter wheat, soybeans and alfalfa. Southwold farmers produce a relatively large number of chickens, eggs, pigs, sheep and cattle (more beef cows than dairy). There is relatively little fruit production with the exception of apples and only a modest amount of vegetable production with the exception of green peas and greenhouse cucumbers.

Table 26 shows the commodities for which Southwold has a high concentration of production. The production levels are compared to the County and the province overall.

A few highlights:

- Relative to population size, Southwold farmers produce 22 times more eggs, nine times more chickens, 22 times more pigs and six times as many beef cows as the province overall.
- Adjusted for population size, Southwold farmers have 15 times as many acres allocated for field crops and hay of which there is a relatively high concentration of winter wheat, soybean and alfalfa production.
- Southwold has over 100,000 square metres of greenhouse space allocated to cucumber production (82 times more than the province overall, adjusted for population size).
- Southwold has 27 times as much land allocated to apple production (relative to population size) as the province overall.



Table 26: Southwold Agricultural Profile, 2021

Agricultural Product	Amount:	Comparative analysis	Southwold	Elgin	Ontario
Egg production (#)	2.2 million	Per capita	445	57	20
Poultry (Broilers, roasters and Cornish production) (kg)	1.6 million	Kilograms per capita	321	106	38
Pigs (#)	29,893	Per 1,000 population	6,162	1,294	286
Total sheep (#)	480	Per 1,000 population	99	78	23
Cattle (#)	1,776	Per 1,000 population	366	308	113
Beef cows (#)	471	Per 1,000 population	97	31	16
Total area of field crops & hay (acres)	44,987	Acres per 1,000 pop.	9,274	3,397	621
Winter wheat (acres)	5,682	Acres per 1,000 pop.	1,171	391	80
Soybeans (acres)	16,734	Acres per 1,000 pop.	3,450	1,107	197
Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures (acres)	1,863	Acres per 1,000 pop.	384	181	69
Greenhouse cucumbers (square metres)	101,269	Sq. metres per 1,000 pop.	20,876	n/a	255
Green peas (acres)	300	Acres per 1,000 pop.	62	16	1
Apples (acres)	148	Acres per 1,000 pop.	31	13	1

Source: Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture, 2021.

3.12 OTHER SECTORS: SUMMARY PROFILE

Construction

Statistics Canada reported there were 30 construction businesses with employees in 2022 and another 39 business without employees. The employer businesses by detailed sector are shown in Table 27. While the Statistics Canada counts database only provides employment in ranges, there were an estimated 180+ workers in the employer businesses in 2022. Among the non-employer establishments there were multiple trades-related companies including plumbers, painters, roofers and residential construction contractors.



Table 27: Employer establishments in the Southwold construction sector, 2022

Sector (NAICS):	Firms	Employees			
	Total*	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49
236110 - Residential building construction	7	3	3	1	0
236210 - Industrial building and structure construction	1	1	0	0	0
237310 - Highway, street and bridge construction	1	0	0	1	0
238110 - Poured concrete foundation & structure contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238130 - Framing contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238140 - Masonry contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238150 - Glass and glazing contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238220 - Plumbing, heating and air-conditioning contractors	4	2	0	1	1
238320 - Painting and wall covering contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238330 - Flooring contractors	3	2	1	0	0
238350 - Finish carpentry contractors	1	1	0	0	0
238910 - Site preparation contractors	4	3	0	1	0
238990 - All other specialty trade contractors	4	2	2	0	0
Total	30	19	6	4	1

*with employees. Source: Statistics Canada business counts, 2022.

Transportation and warehousing

There were 14 employer firms in the transportation and warehousing sector in 2022. This included 11 mostly small truck transportation firms (only one had between 10 and 20 employees), two support firms and one warehouse operation (with less than five employees). There has been an increase in the number of employer firms in this sector between 2015 and 2022.

Accommodation and food services

Statistics Canada counted two restaurants with employees in 2022 and three restaurants without any formal employment. There was one motel and one RV park (with employees). Statistics Canada reported four restaurants with employees in 2015.

Trade

In Southwold, there were seven retail trade firms (employer businesses) in 2022 down from 12 in 2015. The seven firms included two motor vehicle dealers and one parts store, two food stores, one gas station and one clothing store. There were another six wholesale trade firms including two farm products wholesalers, an agricultural suppliers wholesaler, a food wholesaler and a recyclable material wholesaler.



The business count survey included two more gas stations with employees in 2015, a florist and two building supplies/home improvement related employer businesses.

Professional and personal services

Statistics Canada counted eight professional services firms with employees in 2022 and 16 without any formal employment. The employer businesses included one legal services firm, an accounting firm, three architectural, engineering and related services firms, two firms in management, scientific and technical consulting services and one other firm. In 2015 there were two employer firms in the accounting sector, one IT services employer firm and six employer firms in management, scientific and technical consulting services.



4. Stakeholder Consultation

3.13 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS/ FOCUS GROUPS

The Township of Southwold held four workshops with Council, staff and residents on May 9, 11 and 18, 2023, to seek feedback and identify gaps, opportunities and priorities for the Township's Strategic Plan.

Each workshop started with a presentation outlining the purpose of the Strategic Plan and the process through which it was being developed. Workshop participants heard some of the highlights of the economic and demographic analysis detailed earlier in this report. The workshops then turned into a discussion where participants were asked to provide their views on the current state of the Township, opportunities and their vision for the future and the main priorities moving forward. The key themes of the various workshops are summarized below.

Balancing a rural lifestyle with growing population

The workshop participants all valued Southwold's small-town feel, the rural landscapes and green spaces. They want to ensure that the increased demand for residential development does not impact the rural culture and unique identity of the communities in Southwold. Several expressed concerns that current by-laws were insufficient or were not enforced. They suggested offering more community events to welcome new residents. There was also a call for the diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives to support the growing diversity in the population.

Infrastructure needs

Additional infrastructure is needed to support the growing population in Southwold. Participants expressed concern about the significant capital and ongoing maintenance costs of the additional wastewater and road enhancements associated with the increased development. There was also wide recognition of the need for expanded and enhanced internet service throughout the Township. They advocated for the establishment of a growth plan to manage the infrastructure installation and expenses.

Protecting farmland

Concerns about retaining and protecting farmland in Southwold was a major theme. The participants recognize that agriculture is a key economic driver and important part of the cultural makeup of the community. Many of the participants said that the demand for residential development combined with recent provincial government policies threaten the Township's ability to support farmers and farming activity.



Complete communities

The participants identified a variety of family friendly programs and services that could be enhanced to address the needs of a growing population. They recognized a need for lower cost housing for young families and options for seniors. They would like residential development to fit with the rural character of the community.

Recommendations included establishing town squares, expanding programming and recreational facilities, and offering more community events. They also identified needs for enhanced road maintenance, snow removal and more frequent garbage pickup. The participants want greater focus on environmental practices and green spaces. They called for additional health care services to support the growing communities in Southwold.

Fiscal responsibility and accountability

Several participants expressed concerns about taxes and affordability. They would like to receive regular communications from Council with updates on programs and services, implementation of the strategic plan and efforts to manage costs.

Economic development and tourism

There is a strong desire for Southwold to be a prosperous, progressive, and desirable destination for business and visitors. Several participants noted the need for industrial and commercial development to support municipal capital and services expenditures. They see an opportunity for more commercial businesses to support the growing population. Several expressed a desire to contain the industrial development in the Talbotville area.

Priorities

Participants recommended the following areas as priorities for Southwold Council:

- Infrastructure
- Management of proposed development (by-law enforcement)
- Economic Development
- Communication and accountability
- Creating complete communities



Opportunities for enhancement

The participants also noted some specific areas for enhancement including the maintenance and upgrades of road including gravel road, tar and chip programs, traffic signals and snow clearing. Several participants called for efforts to address Shedden's four corners. There were also several recommendations to monitor and address the odour from the Green Lane Landfill and to restrict its expansion.

Detailed results of each of the workshops are included in Appendix D.

3.14 COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online survey was conducted between April 20 and May 22, 2023, to solicit public opinion and priorities related to the Township of Southwold Strategic Plan. The survey was available via the Township website and advertised using municipal social media pages, e-mail messages and postcards mailed to residents.

A total of 167 surveys were submitted and analyzed. The following section provides a summary of key findings from the survey with more detail included in Appendix C. This survey is non-random, self-administered survey and as such is not statistically significant or representative of the opinions of all residents. It does however provide an indication of resident perceptions and should be considered within the context of other input and engagement.

The majority (70%) of respondents live in Southwold with another 21% of participants who live and work in Southwold. Four percent of respondents work or own a business in Southwold but don't live Southwold. The majority of respondents (61%) were female and 35% were male. The largest share of respondents was between the age of 45 and 64 with 35% age 25 to 44 and 14% age 65 or older.

The resident tenure of the respondents is reflective of the changing nature of the community. The largest share (43%) has lived in Southwold for over 20 years. The next largest cohort has lived in Southwold between one and five years (23%), followed by 15% for six to ten years. A full 90% of respondents indicated that they owned their own residence with 4% reporting that they were renting.

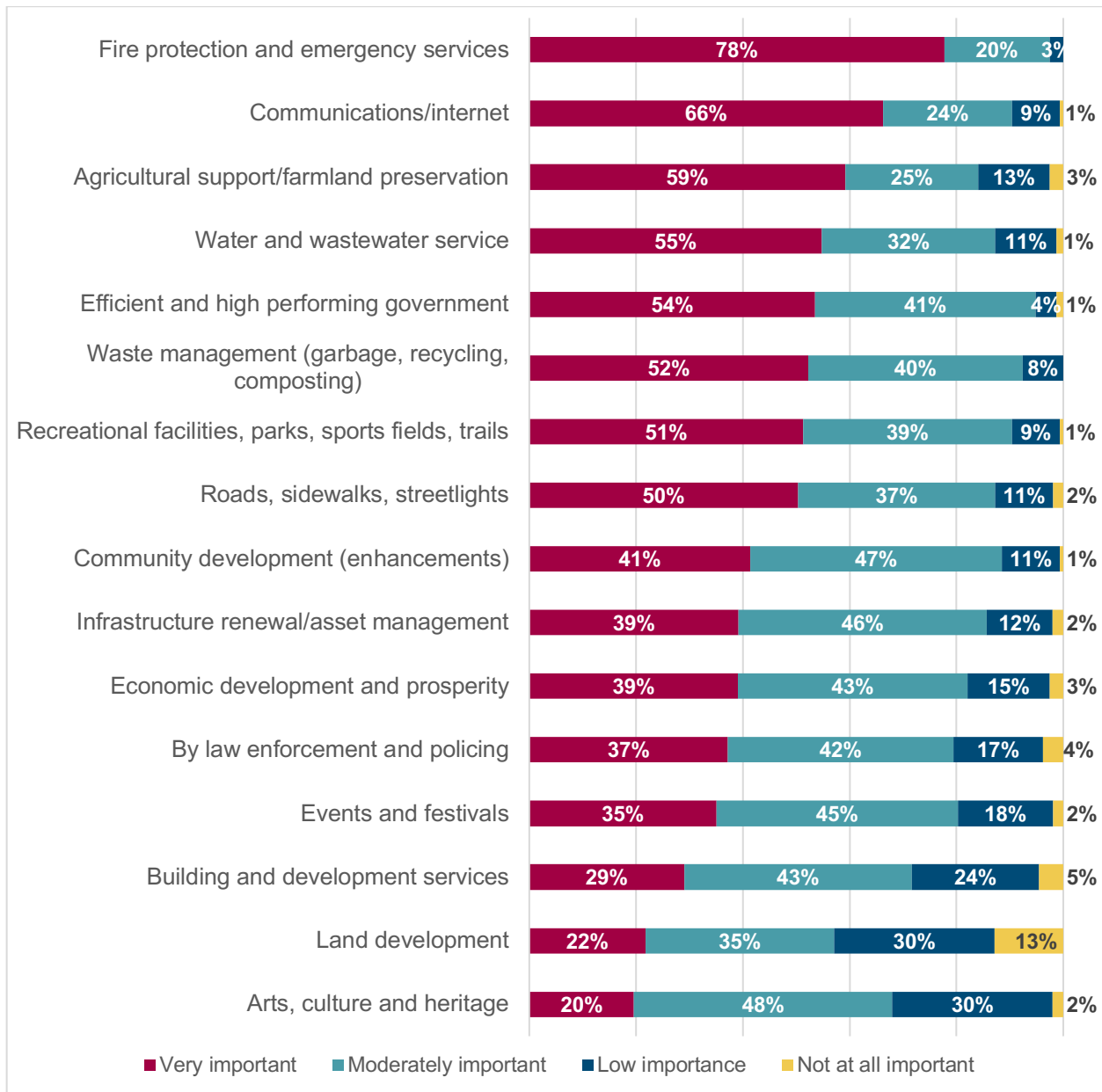
Over half of all households did not include any children under the age of 18. Of the 46% of households that included children, 20% had two children. Nine percent had one child and 9% had 3 children. Another 4% of households had four children and 4% included five or more children.



The most important services provided by the Township, as ranked by the respondents were:

- Fire protection and emergency services
- Communications/internet
- Agricultural support/farmland preservation
- Water and wastewater service
- Efficient and high performing government

Figure 14: Which of the services provided by the Township of Southwold are most important to you?

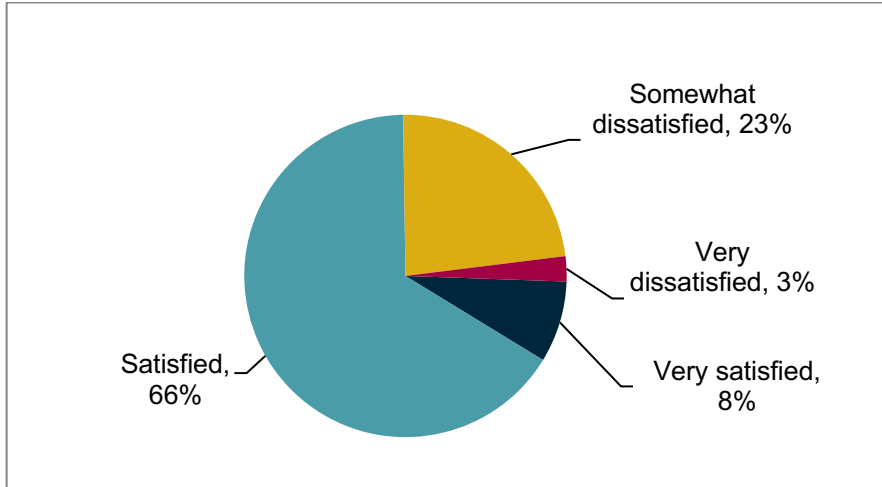


N= 167



The majority of respondents (66%) are **satisfied** with current Township services with another 8% who are **very satisfied**. Almost one quarter or 23% indicated that they were **somewhat dissatisfied**.

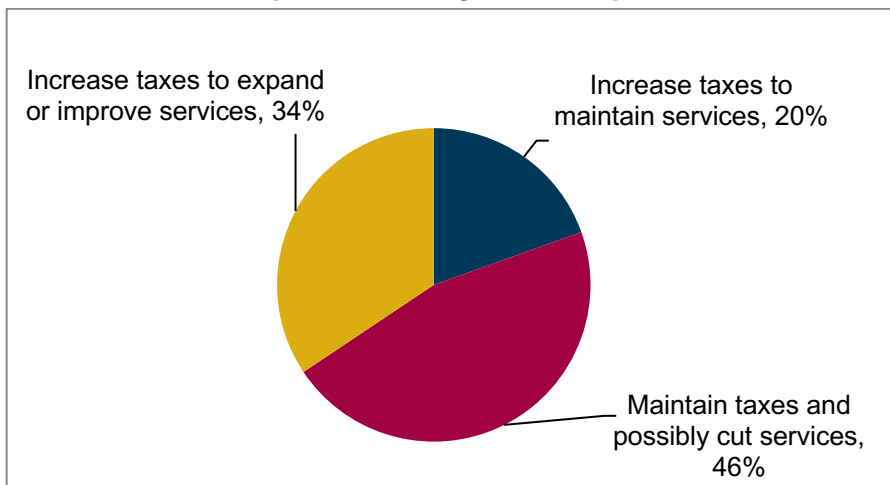
Figure 15: What is your level of satisfaction with current Township services?



N=159

When asked to consider that balance between taxes and services, just under half (46%) would prefer to maintain taxes and possibly cut services, 20% would favour increasing taxes to maintain the current level of services and one third (34%) would favour increasing taxes to improve services (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Local governments must balance the cost of delivering services with taxation. Which option would you most prefer in the Township of Southwold?



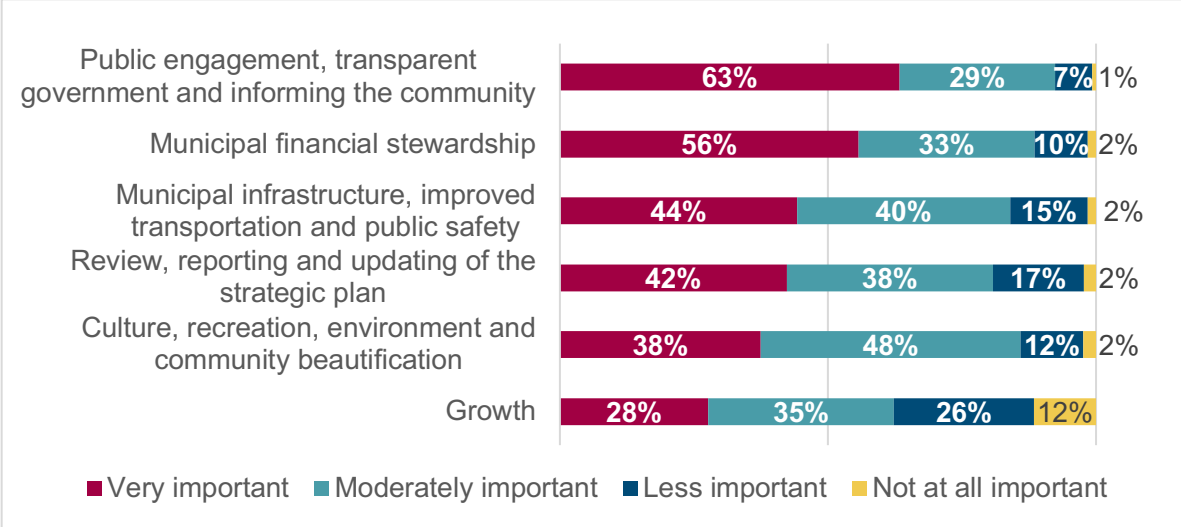
N=128

The respondents were asked to assess the goals established during the previous strategic plan. All the goals remained very important or moderately important to the majority of respondents. Public engagement, transparent government and informing the



community was the most important to the survey respondents, followed by financial stewardship and municipal infrastructure.

Figure 17: How important are these goals to you?



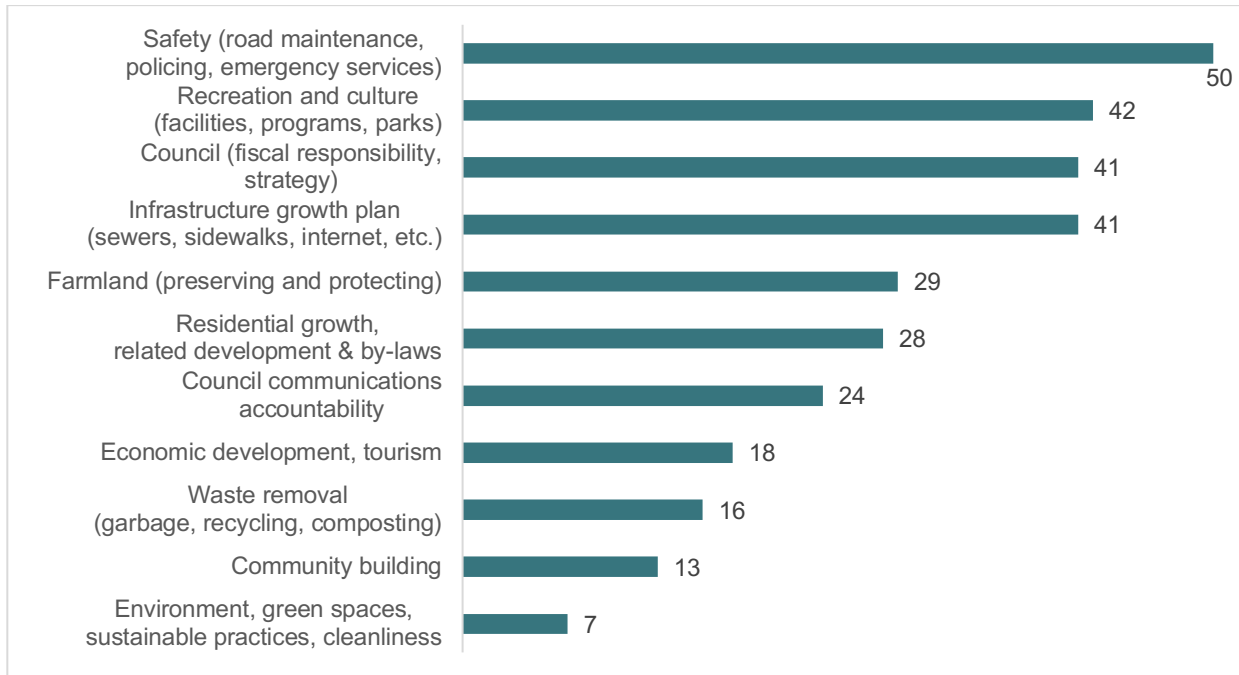
N=131

According to the survey respondents, safety should be a top priority for Southwold Council in the next term including road maintenance, traffic lights on some key intersections, policing and emergency services. They also identified a need for enhanced or expanded recreation and culture facilities, programs, and parks. There was a strong theme of fiscal responsibility including low taxes and efficient use of municipal resources. Many of the respondents referenced the need for a growth strategy to address the growing demand for infrastructure including sewers, sidewalks in key areas and internet services throughout the Township.

Protecting and preserving farmland was a common theme, often coupled with the need to effectively manage residential growth, related commercial activity and enforcing by-laws to manage the residential development. Council accountability and regular communications was a priority for many of the respondents. Other themes included greater activity in economic development and tourism development and waste management, including garbage, recycling and composting. There was also a call for place making and community building activities, beautification and environmental stewardship.



Figure 18: What are the top priorities for Southwold Council to focus on over the next Council term?



N=112

Several themes emerged when the respondents were asked to describe their vision for Southwold. They envision a welcoming rural community that has balanced residential development while protecting farmland. They want a prosperous community with the necessary infrastructure to support families and business. The Township should be safe and family oriented with recreational programs and activities to support the growing population across Southwold's small towns.



Figure 19: What would you like Southwold to look like in four years? Describe your vision for the community.











5. Strategic Priorities for Consideration

Strategic priorities are those factors that will have the most significant impact on the Township of Southwold's ability to best support its residents, businesses, and other community stakeholders.

The proposed strategic priorities, listed in no particular order, are key issues that have the potential to create a strong and resilient community that supports a superior quality of life for Southwold's residents.

	Managing growth	The community is experiencing unprecedented population growth. The Township should ensure new housing supports all residents' needs.
	Farmland protection	There is growing concern about the ability to maintain and protect farmland. Agriculture and farming are key drivers of the local economy and the community's culture and should be supported.
	Cost management and accountability	Residents want a clear understanding of Council's actions and efforts to manage costs. Regular reporting will be critical to building trust.
	Infrastructure	Addressing the demand and scale of needed infrastructure is a key issue. A growth plan would provide Council and staff with a long-range framework for the infrastructure needed to support anticipated growth.
	Complete communities	Residents are seeking a range of retail services, housing options, education, health services and community programs and amenities.
	Economic development	Southwold has the potential to attract commercial and industrial development to build its assessment base to support municipal services.



6. Next Steps

The Key Findings report marks the completion of Phase 2 of the strategic planning process. It provides a detailed review of Southwold's past economic and demographic conditions and the aspirations of its residents, businesses, staff and Council.

The next phase of the strategic planning process is to identify and confirm Council's strategic priorities. These strategic priorities, once confirmed, will be the foundation of the Strategic Plan developed in Phase 3.

Figure 20: Strategic Planning Process



The Township of Southwold Strategic Plan will include the following elements:

Vision: The future state that the Township of Southwold is ultimately working towards.

Mission: The purpose of the Township, outlining what it does and why.

Goals: The broad end states Council wants to achieve.

Objectives: The desired outcomes as a result of the end state.

Actions: Specific actions that are assigned to individuals or organizations to achieve.



Appendix A Definitions

Commuting and commuting duration	Commuter times are only for those who have a formal place of work (not working from home or with no fixed workplace address).
CPP	Canada Pension Plan.
CRA	Canada Revenue Agency. Data from CRA provides insight into income trends by source.
EI	Employment Insurance. In this report, the EI figures are based on CRA data and include all EI programs (including parental leave).
Employment by industry	The number of people employed in specific industries using the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). This is based on where people live and not where they work.
Employment by occupation	The number of people employed in specific occupations using the National Occupational Code system. This is based on where people live and not where they work.
Employment rate	The share of the adult population (aged 15+) that is employed.
Firm intensity index	Compares the number of firms in a particular industry to the provincial level adjusted for population size.
Labour force	The adult population in a community that is working or actively seeking work at a given point in time. Annual labour force estimates (used in this report) for employment, unemployment, etc. are based on the average monthly figures for the year.
Location Quotient (LQ)	A location quotient (LQ) measures a region's industrial specialization relative to a larger geographic unit (usually the nation). An LQ is computed as an industry's share of a regional total for some economic statistic (earnings, GDP by metropolitan area, employment, etc.) divided by the industry's share of the national total for the same statistic.
Migration characteristics (% 5-year migrants by sources)	The share of the current 5+ population (2021) that was not resident in the community in 2016 – by source. Intraprovincial migrants came from other Census Divisions (counties) in Ontario; Interprovincial migrants came from other provinces; and External migrants came from outside Canada.



NAICS	The North American Industry Classification System or NAICS is used by business and government to classify business establishments according to type of economic activity in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.
NOC	The National Occupational Coding (NOC) system is used by business and government to classify workers by occupational groups.
Participation rate	The share of the adult population (aged 15+) that is 'participating' in the labour market (either working or actively looking for work).
Unemployment rate	The share of the adult population (aged 15+) that is actively looking for work but not employed.



Appendix B: Document Review

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022

The Township of Southwold 2018 to 2022 Strategic Plan was developed in 2018 by the previous municipal Council. The strategic plan included the following vision and mission, seven strategic goals with 21 strategies and 81 specific actions as summarized below.

Mission:

The Township of Southwold is committed to providing a healthy, safe community to all residents, businesses and visitors by providing services in an economical manner to further growth and prosperity.

Vision:

We envision the Township of Southwold as a thriving, community-oriented municipality that continues to grow and prosper by enabling and pursuing residential, agricultural and commercial growth opportunities through expansion of key municipal services.

The sense of community will be strengthened by promoting a wide variety of consumer-friendly services, such as health, culture, connectivity, parks and recreation.

Council and staff will serve the ratepayers of the community with a caring attitude focused on customer service.

	Goal	Strategic Goal
1	Growth	To promote residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial development by ensuring policies and services are in place to support growth in The Township of Southwold.
2	Culture, Recreation, Environment, & Community Beautification	Promote a healthy, naturally beautiful, and community-oriented municipality by encouraging and supporting involvement of volunteer organizations wishing to provide cultural and recreational activities in the Township of Southwold
3	Municipal Infrastructure, Improved Transportation, and Public Safety	Provide improved transportation and a strong commitment to asset management with a goal of maintaining the Township's infrastructure in the promotion of public safety
4	Municipal Financial Stewardship	To exercise good financial stewardship in the management of Township expenditures and revenues.



	Goal	Strategic Goal
5	Public Engagement, Transparent Government, and Informing the Community	To promote public engagement, transparent government, and strong communications with all members of the community across various mediums for the strengthening of civic participation
6	Review, Report and Updating of Strategic Plan	To ensure the plan is implemented in a timely manner and results are reported to the residents of the Township.

Each of the 81 actions were further defined by priority (low, medium and high) and proposed completion timeline.

Strategic Plan Updates 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

The Township of Southwold has completed a report every year since the adoption of the 2018 Strategic Plan which provides an update on the 21 strategies outlined in the plan and the specific actions undertaken to fulfill the plan.

Township of Southwold Official Plan

The official plan sets out the Township of Southwold’s vision and goals and ensures that new development and land use planning decisions reflect local values.

Southwold’s Official Plan projected that Southwold Township would grow from 1730 households in 2019 to 2780 households by 2041. Employment was projected to grow from 1520 jobs in the Township in 2019 up to 1770 by 2041.

The greatest growth is anticipated in the settlement areas of Talbotville, Shedden, Fingal and North Port Stanley as outlined in the table below:

Community	Opportunities for expansion
Talbotville	Housing, employment, urban development based on full municipal services
Shedden, Fingal	Secondary focus, infilling and uptake of remaining greenfield areas. Full services to be extended in alignment with infrastructure policies
North Port Stanley	Moderate development growth on partial services for infilling.
Hamlets	Future growth is limited to small scale infilling

The Official Plan indicated there is a sufficient supply of land within the settlement areas to accommodate the 2041 growth forecast.

The Township’s employment areas are located in the communities of Talbotville and Shedden. Talbotville is the primary centre for commercial and industrial development.

The Official Plan stipulates that Southwold will work with its neighbouring municipalities and the County to protect the City of Toronto waste disposal facility from incompatible land uses while ensuring that there are no undue social and environmental costs.



The Official Plan recognized that Southwold is part of a larger regional market area it should support housing compatible with the scale of the development in the region. A review of housing supply indicated that there is sufficient land designated for a minimum of 15 years and zoned residential land in draft approved and registered plans for a minimum of 3 years. The Official Plan has established targets for new residential and mixed-use development to include a target of 20% affordable housing units. The 2041 housing demand is projected at 1050 residential units which will provide approximately 210 new affordable housing units.

The Township includes a policy framework to address the impacts of climate change. It includes promoting the settlement areas' structure, active transportation network, supporting County efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate change action plans such including tree planting and enhancing tree cover.

The Township's environment and resource policies recognize the Township's natural heritage features. It includes policies to protect the habitat of endangered and threatened species, wetlands and watercourses.

Southwold's Land Use policies specify that agricultural uses have the highest priority in designated agricultural areas and discourage non-agricultural uses. The minimum farm lot size is 40 hectares. On-farm diversified uses must be secondary to the principle agricultural uses.

The Official plan supports home occupations which are subordinate to residential use with restrictions for uncharacteristic traffic, outdoor storage or other factors that would disturb peaceful enjoyment of other residential properties.

The Elgincentive Community Improvement Plan provides a range of incentives to stimulate economic growth and diversification, improve quality of place for residents and visitors and sustainability of the tax base. It also includes guidelines for the establishment of new Community Improvement Plans as required.

Economic Development Plan, 2020

The Township of Southwold Economic Development Plan was completed in two phases. A market threshold analysis was completed in 2017 and the strategic plan was completed in 2020. The plan included a vision, goals. Objectives and actions as summarized below.

Vision: Southwold Township is a thriving centre of economic opportunity for business and residents and a welcoming destination for visitors.



The Economic Development Plan included the following goals and objectives with 35 specific actions.

	Goal	Objective
1	Community Engagement	Leverage resident and business volunteer efforts to implement Southwold's economic development plan.
2	Investment Readiness	Provide the required elements to facilitate investment.
3	Branding/ Communication	Establish professional branding, marketing tools and messages to share Southwold's value proposition for residents and businesses.
4	Business Development	Bring increased commercial and community activity to the settlement areas in Fingal and Shedden. Attract and support a diversified business base. Expand Southwold's Tourism product offering.
5	Enhanced Infrastructure	Support business and residential infrastructure needs.

Southwold Parks Strategic Plan, 2014

The Parks Strategic Plan was created to establish a long-term plan for the five parks and the community centre owned by the Township. The plan noted an increased interest in active living with a desire for variety in fitness programming, easy to use facilities and pleasant physical activity environments.

The vision for Southwold Parks is as follows:

“We envision the Township of Southwold as a thriving, community-oriented municipality that continues to grow and prosper by enabling and pursuing residential, agricultural and commercial growth opportunities through expansion and delivery of key municipal services.

The sense of community will be strengthened by promoting a wide variety of consumer-friendly services, such as health, culture, connectivity, parks and recreation. Council and staff will serve the residents of the community with a caring attitude focused on customer service.”

The plan included the following recommended actions:

- Establish a Parks and Recreation Supervisor.
- Complete site plans for all outdoor facilities.
- Establish regular preventative maintenance and regular turf and grounds management programs.
- Replace diamond lights to LED fixtures at all three baseball parks.
- Location Specific Actions were also identified for all recreational assets.



The plan also recommended replacing the Fingal and Talbotville park committees with one committee with representatives from both communities, Council representatives and staff.

Development Activity as of April 11, 2023

The status of residential development in the Township of Southwold as of April 11, 2023, is summarized in the following table.

Settlement Area	Units Confirmed	Est. pop. for Confirmed	Units Estimate	Population Estimate
Ferndale	5	15	532	1596
Fingal	-	-	122	366
North Port Stanley	-	-	218	654
Shedden	-	-	344	1032
Talbotville	333	999	437	1311

The status of the estimated units ranges from background information and pre-consultation through to site plan agreement and construction of underground infrastructure. Proposed developments include a mixture of single-family dwellings, semi-detached, townhomes and condominiums.

ELGIN COUNTY

Official Plan Housing and Affordability Discussion Paper, 2021

For the purposes of this report affordable housing encompasses a range of housing types including low-cost market housing for homeowners and renters and on-market housing available at subsidized rates. This report provided possible policy options for the County's consideration including refinement of current policies and implementing new tools to encourage more affordability.

According to the report, the County is experiencing "a stronger demand for a larger variety of housing types and sizes to meet the diverse range and needs of residents and workers". As of the 2016 Census, single detached homes accounted for 78% of housing with 14% of units and apartment buildings or multi-unit buildings. At that time 75% of housing in Elgin was owner-occupied and the remaining 25% of housing stock was rented.

The report references the County's Official Plan which established a minimum target of affordable housing at 20% of the housing stock.



The report references recommendations from the Long-Term St. Thomas Elgin Affordable & Social Housing Strategy including:

- Implementing an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan
- Incentives such as a development charge waiver, tax increment financing, amendments to municipal official plans to permit secondary residential units and garden suites
- Strengthening affordable housing targets
- Implementing inclusionary zoning policies

The Elgin County Housing & Homelessness Needs Assessment included a series of recommendations to address housing and homelessness in the rural municipalities of Elgin County. The policy recommendations include the following:

- Establishing a requirement for a minimum of 20% of development in municipal to be affordable housing in municipal official plans
- Amending bylaws to support greater housing density, multi-use residential as of right and reducing parking requirements
- Supporting the creation of second units
- Exploring incentives for affordable housing
- Establishing policies to review municipal and County land for housing suitability prior to selling.

Draft Official Plan, 2023

The draft Official Plan is intended to provide a County-wide planning framework for managing growth and land use until 2043 and provide direction to local municipalities in their official plans, zoning by-laws, planning documents and local infrastructure decisions.

The Official Plan identifies the settlement area of Talbotville in the Township of Southwold as a Strategic Employment Area. Strategic Employment Areas are defined as follows:

- Large in scale and designed to accommodate large industrial users and/or operations with significant employment requirements;
- Located in close proximity to major transportation corridors or routes, including highways, railways, airports, and marine ports; and
- Ideally serviced by both municipal water and sanitary sewer service.



The Official Plan directs that Strategic Employment Areas be protected from conversion and incompatible development. Residential, large format retail commercial uses and large format office uses are not permitted in strategic employment areas. Local municipalities are encouraged to develop and implement high standards of urban design, architecture and landscape architecture in the strategic employment areas to attract high quality employment opportunities.

The following section outlines the Official Plan strategic directions and objectives in nine categories:

Economic Development

- a. Identify and protect regionally significant employment areas, transportation corridors, and infrastructure facilities.
- b. Ensure that the County has an ample supply of industrial lands to accommodate all forms and scales of industrial uses.
- c. Encourage a strong and vibrant agricultural industry by protecting both agricultural operations and associated facilities and corridors needed for their operation.
- d. Reinforce the function of the County's main streets and downtown areas as cultural, administrative, entertainment, retail, and social focal points.
- e. Preserve and enhance historic, unique, and scenic routes, buildings, and communities that are defining features of the County and important to attracting tourism.

Housing

- a. Ensure a healthy supply of residentially designated lands, including redevelopment lands, for new housing opportunities.
- b. Ensure an adequate mix of housing types and tenures to address the current and future needs of households in the County.
- c. Ensure the development of housing that is affordable for most County households, including the protection of rental housing supply.
- d. Support and encourage the development of special needs and supportive housing types.
- e. Identify public real estate assets and funding opportunities from higher levels of government that could assist in the development of affordable housing



The Rural Area

- a. Preserve the agricultural and rural character of the County.
- b. Identify and protect the County's agricultural land base and protect agricultural operations from conflicting land uses.
- c. Ensure that lots are sized appropriately for servicing and sufficiently large enough to protect rural character and maintain flexibility for the agricultural industry.
- d. Ensure a vibrant rural area by permitting appropriate and compatible on-farm diversified uses and agriculturally related uses.
- e. Encourage the use of environmental best practices for development and redevelopment.

Settlement Areas

- a. Protect the unique small-town character of the County's settlement areas.
- b. Facilitate the creation of compact, complete, and pedestrian-friendly communities that provide equitable access to a range of local economic and social opportunities, centred around a vibrant main street or commercial core.
- c. Ensure that development and redevelopment utilizes land efficiently, as servicing will permit.
- d. Ensure that development and is appropriately located, safely accessed, and adequately serviced.
- e. Encourage the use of environmental best practices for development and redevelopment.

The Natural System

- a. Identify, protect, restore, and enhance, where possible, the natural system including its ecological features and functions.
- b. Require development proposals within, or adjacent to, the natural system to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the natural system, in some cases prohibiting development outright.
- c. Minimize negative changes to the quality and hydrological/hydrogeological functions of watercourses, lakes, aquifers, and wetlands.
- d. Recognize that watersheds are the ecologically meaningful scale for planning and use it as the foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development.



Transportation and Infrastructure Systems

- a. Establish an integrated transportation system that safely and efficiently accommodates various modes of transportation including automobiles, trucks, public transit, cycling and walking.
- b. Ensure that the construction of all infrastructure, or expansions to existing infrastructure, occurs in a manner that is compatible with adjacent land uses and with a minimum of social and environmental impact.
- c. Encourage the development of public facilities in appropriate locations at the right time to meet the needs of present and future residents.
- d. Protect the function of County Roads by only permitting development that would be compatible with that function, recognizing that local context needs to be taken into account where a County Road is located in an urban area.

Natural Resource Management Areas

- a. Identify and protect, where possible, natural resources deposits, areas where potential deposits exist, and extraction operations throughout the County.
- b. Encourage sustainable extraction practices and incorporate responsible rehabilitation of natural resource extraction operations into County planning approvals where possible.
- c. Ensure that extractive activities are carried out in a manner that minimizes environmental and social impacts.

Development Hazards

- a. Direct development to areas outside hazardous lands regulated by conservation authorities;
- b. Prohibit development on, or adjacent to, contaminated sites or former landfills except in accordance with provincial guidelines and regulations; and
- c. Respect the guidelines and regulations of conservation authorities, and the Province, as it related to both natural and humanmade hazards.

Cultural Heritage

- a. Encourage the identification of cultural heritage resources and protect, conserve, and enhance them.
- b. Ensure that all new development occur in a manner that respects the County's rich cultural heritage.



- c. Support the identification of archaeological resources and areas of archaeological potential.
- d. Ensure archaeological resources are conserved in accordance with Provincial requirements.

Transportation Master Plan Needs and Opportunities, 2022

The purpose of the Transportation Master Plan was to identify transportation needs and opportunities in Elgin County that will respond to contemporary and anticipated mobility needs, aligned with the County's growth management strategies.

The plan identifies 12 "Tier1" settlement areas which are places where homes, jobs, schools, services and parks are located in close proximity and may be the most suitable for public transit services or hubs. The County has not identified any Tier 1 Settlement areas in the Township of Southwold.

Driving is the predominant travel mode in the County. The County does not currently operate public transit services. There are several private companies that provide limited transit services in some areas in the community.

The trail network in Southwold consists of the following:

- Elgin Hiking trail – A north south corridor on the east side of the Township
- Trans Canada Trail – moving diagonally from St. Thomas to Lake Erie
- Great Lakes Waterfront Trail – along the south coast of the Township
- Other small municipal and conservation area trails

The Vision Statement is:

Elgin County's transportation network will be efficient, dependable and flexible in meeting the evolving needs of residents, businesses and visitors in travelling to, from and within the County, while reducing its impact on the environment. The network will support safe multi-modal travel options regardless of age, income or ability.

The goals of the Transportation Master Plan are as follows:

- Efficient County and Inter-Regional Connections
- Healthy Communities
- Economic Prosperity
- Environmental Protection
- Future Readiness
- Fiscal Responsibility



Preliminary recommendations that will be studied in subsequent reports include the following:

- Ensure the existing road network is optimized for efficient and safe movement of different travel modes.
- Expand active transportation network to address the needs of residents and visitors.
- Elevate the role of cycling for everyday travel.
- Explore the provision of transit to improve access and reduce single occupant vehicle trips.
- Establish a robust framework of supporting strategies and policies to maximize transportation infrastructure investment.

Vacant Employment Land Inventory

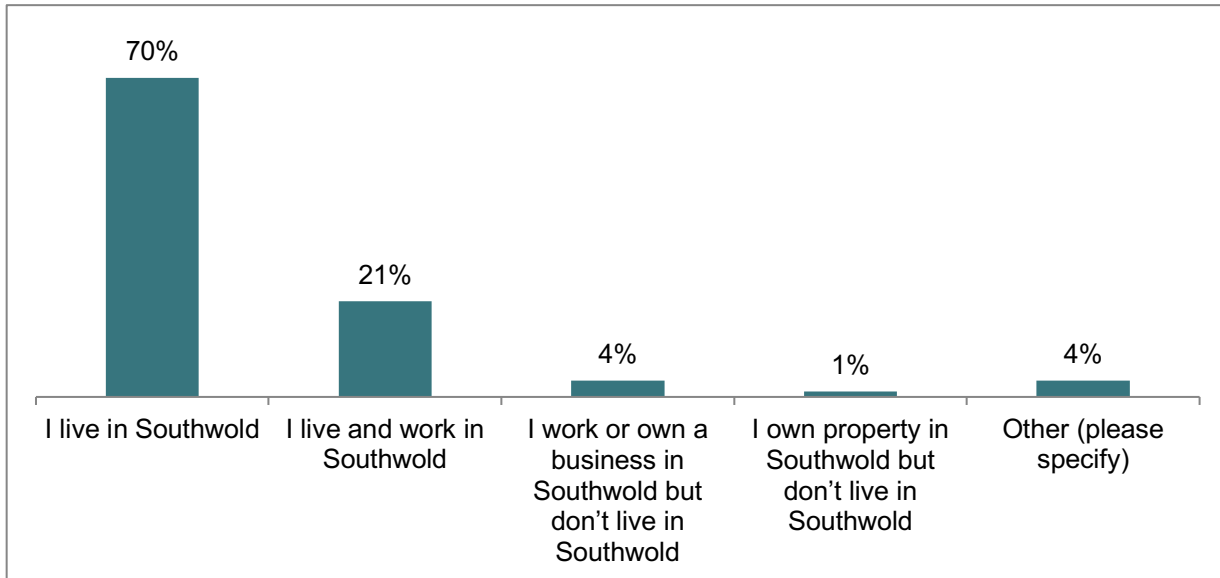
This document provided a directory of employment land throughout Elgin County. The following table provides a summary of the vacant employment land in the Township of Southwold at the time the inventory was completed.

Community	Residential area (ha)	Commercial area (ha)	Industrial area (ha)
Fingal	50.55	0.14	-
Frome	0.32	-	-
Iona	0.19	-	-
Lawrence Station	0.3	-	-
Paynes Mills	6.27	-	-
Shedden	55.24	0.05	4.5
Talbotville	135.23	3.32	881.57
Total	248.1	3.51	886.07



Appendix C: Detailed survey results

Figure 21: What best describes you? Living and working in Southwold



N=166

Figure 22: What is your gender and age?

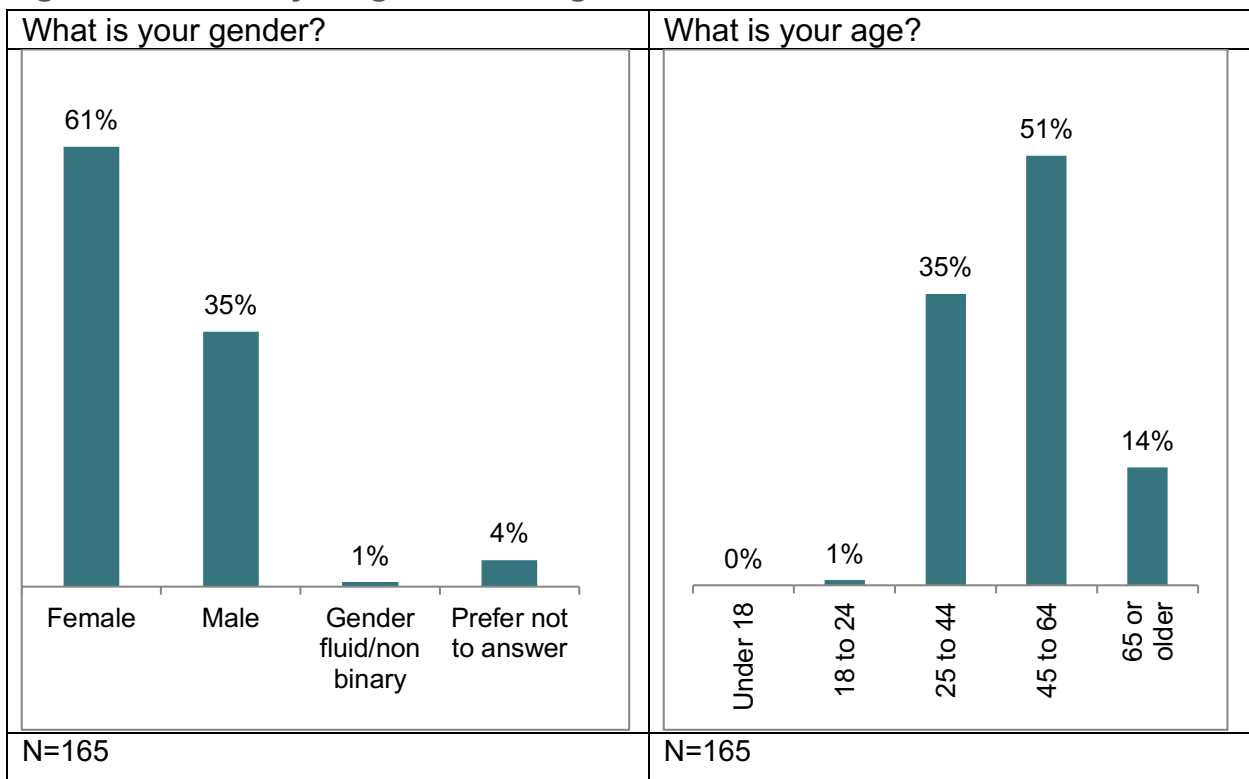
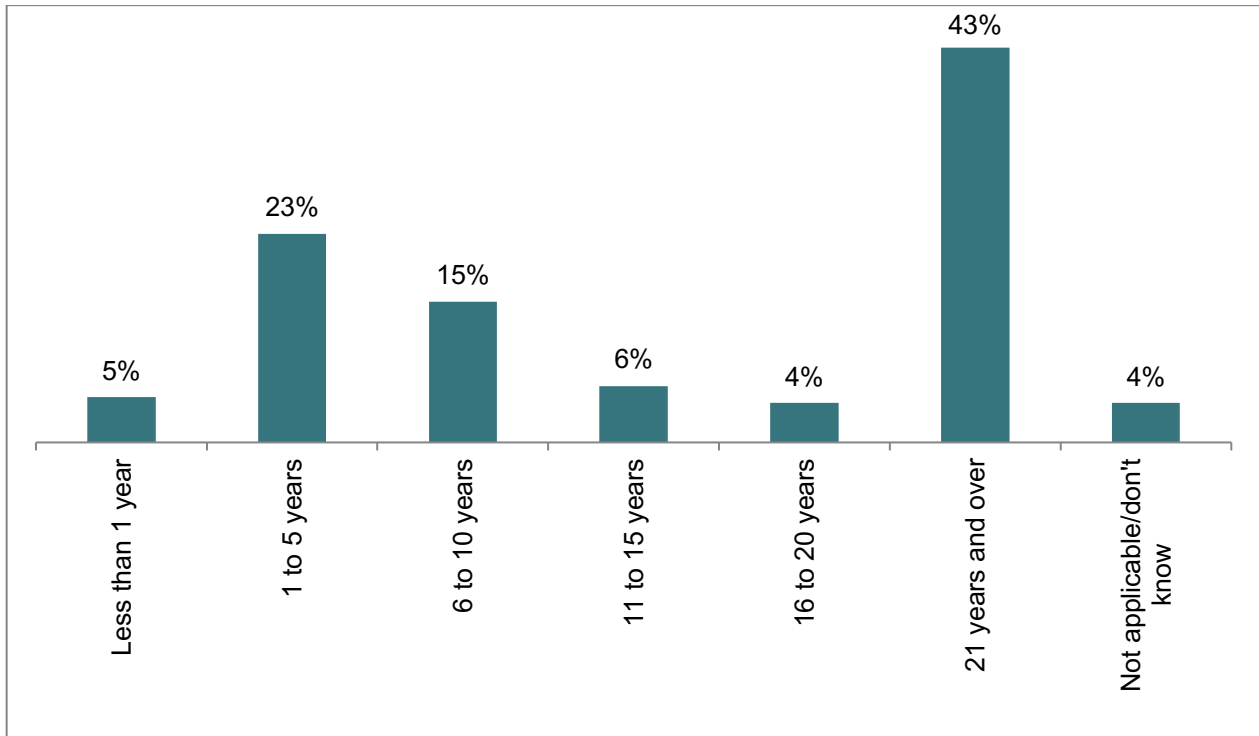


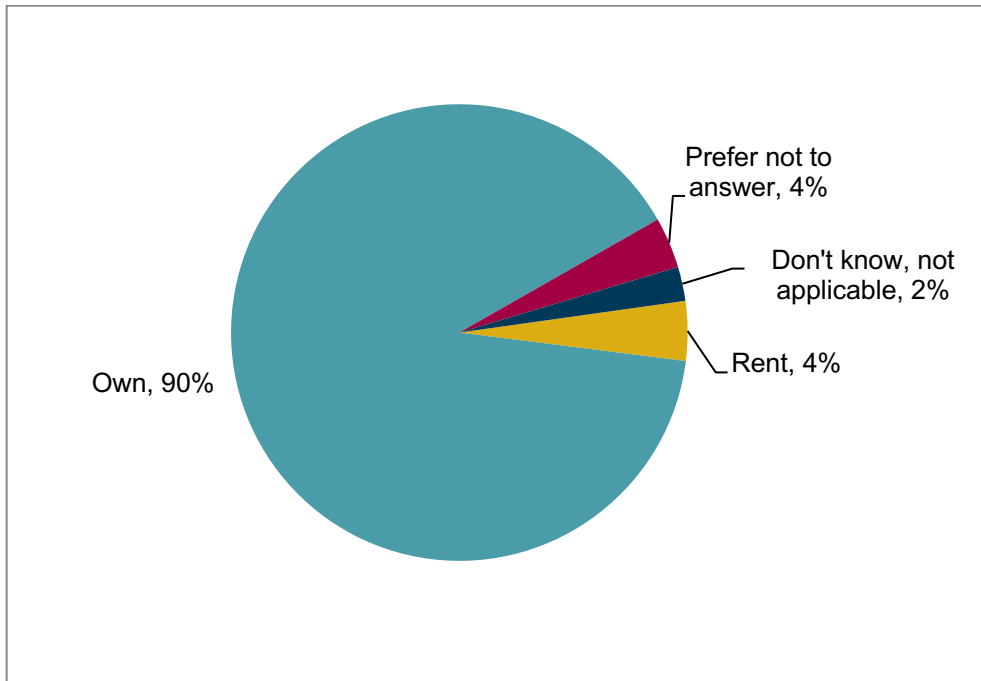


Figure 23: If you live in the Township of Southwold, how long have you been a resident?



N=164

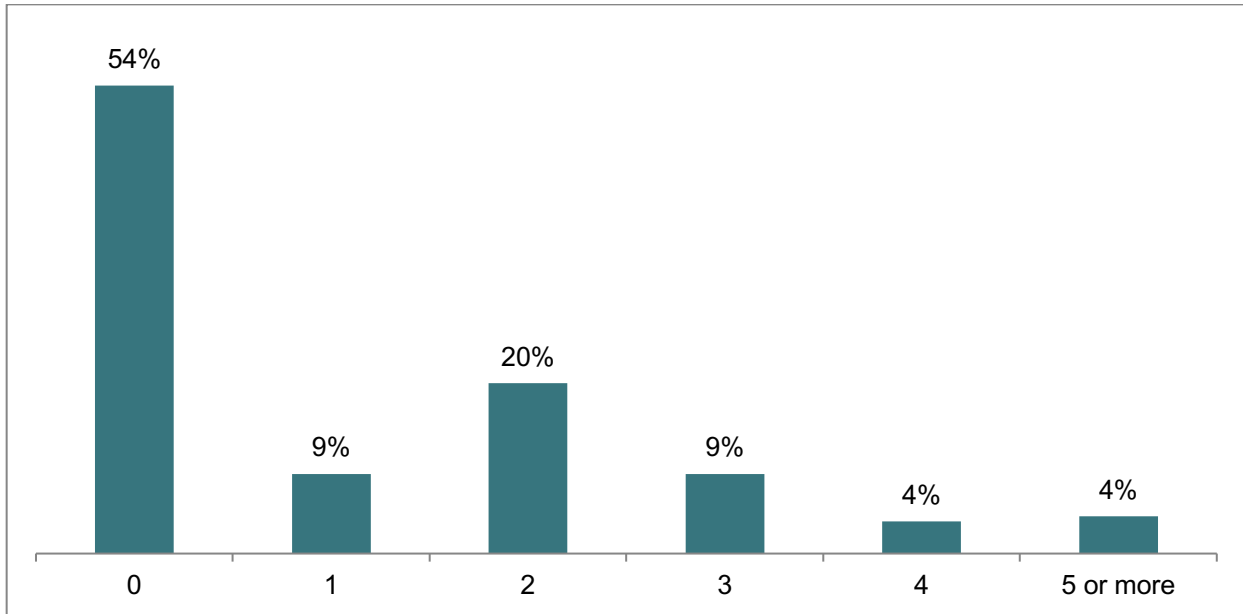
Figure 24: Do you rent or own your residence?



N=166

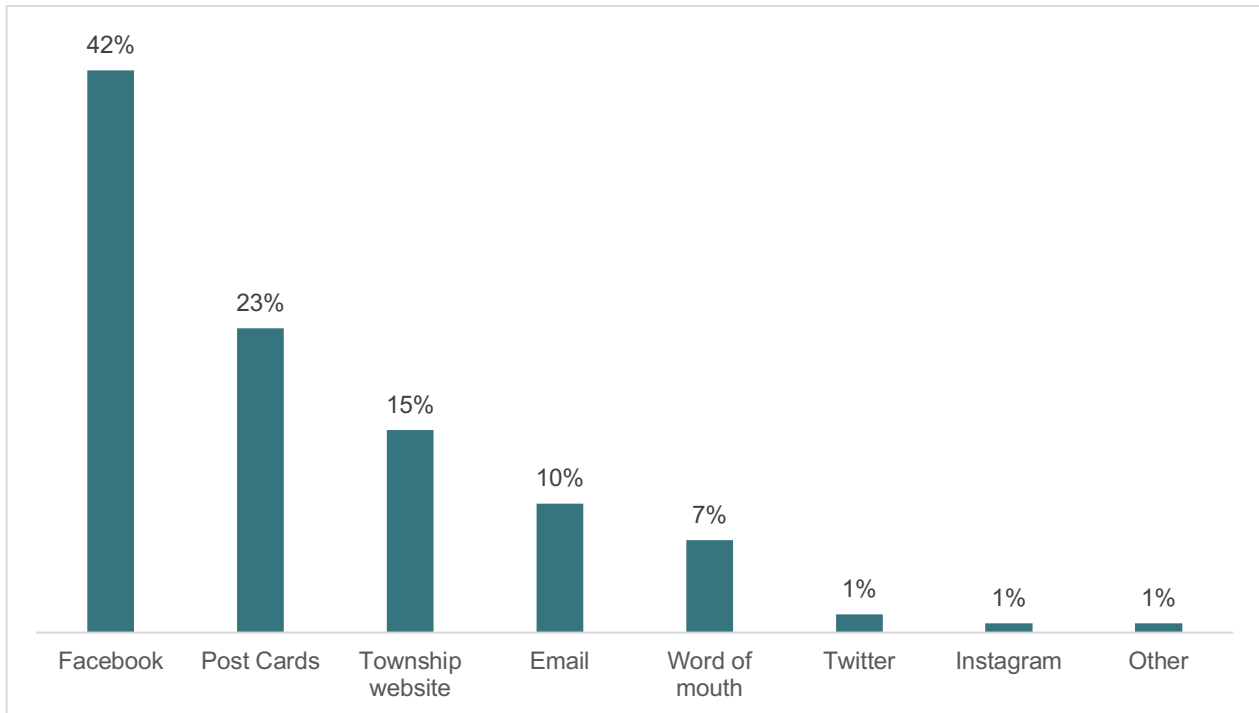


Figure 25: How many of your household members are under the age of 18?



N=163

Figure 26: How did you learn about this survey? (check all that apply)



N=125



Appendix D: Community engagement details

3.15 SOUTHWOLD MAY 11 COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Q1 What three words or phrases would you *currently use* to describe Southwold?

Growing x 5

Change
Diversity
Identity?
Ready for success
Challenging
Frugal

Wholesome
Quaint
Connected
Welcoming
Community oriented
Family

Q2 What three words or phrases would you *like to use in the future* to describe Southwold?

Economically diverse
Sustainable and resilient
Secure
Prosperous
Industrial growth
Affordable
Community oriented

Progressive
Thriving
Established
Diverse
Vibrant
Together
Clearer vision

Connected, engaged community x2

Q3: What aspects of the Township of Southwold do you value the most? What makes it a desirable place to live or work?

Rural fabric x4

Community connectedness – belonging x 3
Lifestyle – relaxed, accepting

Community - family

Picturesque
Valuable green infrastructure

Q4: What do you believe are the most pressing challenges facing Southwold?

of residential developments on the books
Challenge for staffing and infrastructure
Servicing industrial land x 7
Lack of local control over planning x 3
Maintaining wholesome rural character
Capital intensive projects in short window x3
Maintaining our boundaries x 2

Public transportation
Large changes/development nearby/regional change
Working shortage – lagging Canadian population
Shortages of amenities in the Township (retail, services, restaurants)
Retain natural heritage

Q5: What do you believe are the most significant opportunities facing Southwold?

Density makes residential more affordable (infrastructure is cheaper) x2
Leveraging Southwold's quality of life x4
Industry – greatest time – large track of industrial land x3

Volkswagen investment next door
Scale – ability to provide more services and businesses
Small business opportunities
Leverage green infrastructure.

Q6: Are there any specific issues or areas that you feel are not adequately addressed in our current Township plans or policies?

OP, zoning – more restrictions, requirements for developers – making density attractive x4
Community master plan – connection of development to the community x3
Walkability

Town squares and destinations (coffee shops, commercial) x6
Connectivity of residential development
Transportation (incl. active transportation)



Q6: How do you envision the ideal future for Southwold in terms of economic development, infrastructure, public services, and quality of life?

Connection between Fingal & Shedden (open space feel between trails, etc.
Diversity and resilience in employment
More commercial, industrial employment in Southwold
Less income gap – more middle class
Diversity of residential – various budgets in same development

Leverage green infrastructure x 3

Spend less on built infrastructure

Industrial tax paying businesses x 3

Less reliance on small # of businesses

Taxes to support greater investment in infrastructure, community assets x 4

Deeply connected, volunteer-driven community x 3

Open communication with residents

Welcoming to new residents

Sanitary for industrial/residential x6

Hydro for industrial

Q8: How will we know if we have been successful? What are the key measurements of success?

Good paying jobs

Resident retention

Lower taxes

Functioning sanitary sewers

Maintained quality of life – connections x5

Retain natural heritage

Strong volunteer involvement x2

Denser development

Managing sprawl x2

Farmland maintained



3.16 SOUTHWOLD MAY 11 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Q1 What three words or phrases would you *currently use* to describe Southwold?

Rural urban mix	Untidy
Beautiful farms	Rural
Great farmland	Small town x2
Roadsides need tidying	Affordable housing
Easy to travel to	Economical/ cheaper living x3
Sewage Plan	Low taxes x 2
Infrastructure having issues keeping up with development	Truthful incomplete
Growing almost too fast	Safe x2
Traffic control in new development	Thriving
Bylaw enforcement	Friendly
Road work needed	Expanding
Industrial development	Growing x6
Lots of sports available	Very busy
Bus transit	Change from neighbours to not knowing people
Haphazard Planning	Good/great/nice place to live x4
Pavement downhill from Fingal Line to Sunset Drive	Community focused x2
	Friendly
	Volunteerism

Q2 What three words or phrases would you *like to use in the future* to describe Southwold?

Slow down housing	More open space
Limit subdivision development	Mainly agriculture safe
More housing for seniors	Be more open
More affordable housing	Productive
Beautify homes and lots	Progressive
Diverse	Innovative
Accommodating all family dynamics (seniors, young families, working class)	Safe
Not to leave behind current residential (sidewalks, streetlights)	Community focused
Better informed residents	Pride in community
Less city slickers not wanting farms	Stability property taxes
Better (more) rental properties	Great farmland
Growing in population	Lower taxes
Growing ???	Low taxes
New school	Safe for all
Growing in population	Less taxes
Low taxes	Affordable
Low property taxes	More road maintenance
Council who actually work together	Road people to want to keep clean and maintained.
Secure/ in charge	Sewers needed
Unified	Need training for grader operators
Volunteerism	Be more community oriented
More industry	Future fibre internet
Not too crowded	Better internet
Less development – keep it country	Pedal bike friendly
	Hopeful for better rural roads



Q3: What aspects of the Township of Southwold do you value the most? What makes it a desirable place to live or work?

Low/stable property taxes	Rural (large properties)
Comfortable, safe place to live	Room for growth
Ease of access to amenities	Sense of community
The work the office staff do	Rural – room to move
The open farm land	Walking trails
Friendliness of our citizens	Community events (school, fair, Rosy Rhubarb, tract pull)
Safe	Community groups (optimists, SCPA, lodgers)
Rural connections	Lower taxes
Respect culturally	Easy access to services
Peaceful	

Q4: What do you believe are the most significant challenges facing Southwold?

Road conditions	Road maintenance
need for industry	School capacity and access
Rental properties needed	Policing bylaw enforcement
Maintain prime agricultural land	Public transportation
Keep the township tidy	More medical services
Keep different communities in the Township unified	Council working together
Better internet services	Development too fast with no foresight
Building at schools	Loss of adversity
New residents not being aware they are part of Southwold not St. Thomas	Need to revise buffer zones (streams drainage)
No coffee shop to bring citizens together	Housing for seniors
Increase in traffic and the speed of that traffic	Agricultural challenges
Access to public transit	Controlling operational costs
Senior housing that is affordable	Need full-time councillors
Merging interest of rural and urban households	Wetland decreasing fast
	Woodlots management

Q5: What do you believe are the most significant opportunities facing Southwold?

Attracting new manufacturing businesses	Rail trail
Enforcement of environmental requirements	Control growth
Identifying challenges farmland for new business	Residential, commercial and industrial development
Growth for housing	Creating sustainable services (sewage treatment, environmental)
Jobs in construction	Planning opportunity
Industrial growth	Maintain farming community
Skilled agricultural workers	Keep citizens better informed
Senior housing	To plan future growth with all citizens in mind
Maintaining agricultural ground	To develop organizations and events to bring all citizens together
Maintaining roads	To maintain farmland and green spaces
Rural development	
Create provincial park & more parkland (Fingal)	
Campgrounds	

Q6: How do you envision the ideal future for Southwold in terms of economic development, infrastructure, public services, and quality of life?

Fully integrated rural/urban community	A council that keeps citizens fully informed.
Increased local employment	Communicate rather than having news spread by the grapevine
Better control of landfill environment	New development to be as green as possible i.e. solar panels on new homes



Maintain safe communities, proper funding of police
Have infrastructure in place to facilitate “green” transportation (electric charging places)
Use the already designated commercial property
Make smaller commercial properties
Services/businesses should pay commercial/business tax
Innovate systems with nature (e.g. drainage)
Collect carbon credits to lower tax base individually
“small” houses e.g. 4 plex, 1200 sq. ft
Utility costs stabilize via centralization of meters
Safe water
Mix of small family farms vs. huge farms to keep identity
Industrial development – jobs
Residential development – various housing types

What priorities should Council focus on over the next four years?

Responsible business development
Promotion of affordable housing development (single storey)
Maintenance of infrastructure
Severances fair and equally
Allow severances of woodlots to save woodlots
Protect wetlands and natural areas
Noise bylaw
Increase OPP presence.
Garbage stations for legal disposal
Bring STEAM back to the complex
Tax businesses appropriately
Communication – make information available.

Adequate schools
Policing/fire /ambulance/health care
Recreation – bike lanes, hiking trails, park development
Upgrades to equipment and training for personnel
All villages coming together to unite as Southwold Township
Communication – may be newsletter for those on the net i.e., sewage & building infrastructure
Equal sharing of budget to cover community needs for established and newly established areas including sewage.
Economic growth, slow and steady
Affordable housing for aging seniors
Knowledgeable, strong municipal government/ Township

Take from past experiences and develop without causing long lasting issues
Work in stages
401 traffic and how it impacts the community
Pave or tar/chip more rural roads
Protect our farmland/green spaces
Keep the community neat and tidy to attract businesses and promote pride with residents
Communication with taxpayers – keep us informed
Eliminate use of sand on roads
Maintain ditches and roadsides, need more maintenance before weeds to seed



3.17 STAFF WORKSHOP MAY 18, 2023

Q1 What three words or phrases would you *currently use* to describe Southwold?

Rural x7

Agricultural
Small town feeling
Small town vibe
Homey
Friendly
Community
Community oriented
Polite
Engaging
vibrant
Active
Progressing/ progressive

Comfortable
Becoming more diverse
Quiet
Remote
Peaceful x 2
Leisurely
Frugal x 2
Low taxes
Minimal services (businesses)
Resistant to change (all of Elgin)
Growing x 4
Beautiful
Opportunity

Q2 What three words or phrases would you *like to use in the future* to describe Southwold?

Welcoming x 2

Diverse
Inclusive
Young demographic
Small town vibe
Serviced
Best public works building in the County

Progressive x 3

Attractive
Green
Quiet
Family oriented
Destination

Bigger
Affordable x 2
Steady
Cost effective to live in
Prosperous x 3
Thriving
Lots of employment opportunities
Economic stability
Rich
Economic hub
Balanced
Invested
Rich

Q3: What do you believe are the most pressing challenges facing Southwold?

Technology – internet access

Infrastructure (sewage, water, roads) and the ability to fund

Economic development
More industry
Business and personal services (grocery, fuel, medical)
Social services (day care)
Schools
More traffic
Garbage/landfill

Diversity and inclusion
Infrastructure services
Attracting local commercial businesses
Uncertainty of provincial policies
Inflationary pressure of infrastructure
Affordable housing
Lack of promotion/awareness
Changing social/demographic dynamics
Attracting/retaining staff to provide services
Council willingness to spend for services
Developable land

Q4: What do you believe are the most significant opportunities facing Southwold?

Growth (residential, industrial)

Industrial lands

Location x 2

Low taxes
Rural/Landscape

Parks & facilities
Increase level of service
Sustainability
Revenue opportunity (Amazon)
Active community



Q5: What aspects of the Township of Southwold do you value the most? What makes it a desirable place to live or work?

Affordable

Location – proximity to amenities

Parks/facilities

Quaint

Small town feel x 2

Location (parks/open space, good road infrastructure, clos to larger metropolis, reasonable tax rate, proximity to lake)

Family oriented

Rural-urban mis dichotomy

Q6: Are there any specific issues or areas that you feel are not adequately addressed in our current Township plans or policies?

Infrastructure (municipal building, sewer, water, roads, drainage

Facilities plan (Township overall, public works, Keystone, parks, plaza, storage building)

Technology - portal

Infrastructure plan (capital plan, servicing, facilities plan)

Better delineation between policies and planning (Council/staff)

Cultural, social, diversity, inclusion

Q7: How do you envision the ideal future for Southwold in terms of economic development, infrastructure, public services, and quality of life?

Living, working and playing in same community

More roads paved

Social services (providing programming, sports)

Public services/businesses (stores, restaurants)

Sanitary infrastructure

More recreational programming

Proper facilities for staff (present, future)

Developed industrial park

No gravel roads

Better waste management

Destination parks

Proper facilities for staff

Thriving local businesses

Multi-modal transportation network

Q8: How will we know if we have been successful? What are the key measurements of success?

Residents/businesses increase

Increased census growth over multiple periods

Parks/facilities being used/rented

More users doing/seeking services electronically

Growth

Top 100 employer/place to live

Fewer resident/ customer complaints

Bring in businesses to offer residents more amenities (more tax revenue + more amenities, better infrastructure)

Increased and retained industrial development

Increased municipal revenue

Preferred employed

Increased level of service (LOS)



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP MAY 18, 2023

Q1 What three words or phrases would you *currently use* to describe Southwold?

Developing	Beautiful, scenic
Growing x 2	Clean
Changing	Nice place to live
Sprawling	Friendly
Lack of growth	Family living
Small community	No plan
Rural x 4	Set in their ways
Tranquil	Identity
Quiet	Diverse/ not diverse/ more diverse

Q2 What three words or phrases would you *like to use in the future* to describe Southwold?

Growing/ growth/ increase in population	Outdoor recreation
Future-ready	Environmentally sustainable
Forward thinking	Environment driven
Accountability of council x 2	More services
Organized	More health care options
Trails that connect the County	Sewer in town
Outdoor recreation	Self -sustainable/ community supported
Environmentally sustainable/ driven	Choices for family (sports, shopping)
More affordable senior housing	Friendly, relaxing
Accommodation for different lifestyles	Fun place to live/welcoming
Trails that connect the county	Proud of heritage
	Tourism and residential destination

Q3: What aspects of the Township of Southwold do you value the most? What makes it a desirable place to live or work?

Proximity	Small businesses
Amenities (emergency services, beaches, community centres/events, small business)	Port Stanley
Room to move (less dense)	Beaches
Community – volunteer organizations, collaboration	emergency services
Tranquility,	Quiet
Neighbourly	Open space/ not too crowded
Ease of access to major highways	Opportunities
close to work	Lower taxes
Family living	Farmland
proximity to major cities, community events	Animals
community facilities	Municipal infrastructure (road clearing, maintenance, fire department, etc.)



Q4: What do you believe are the most significant challenges facing Southwold?

How do we support education for the large family/kid base
Maintaining low taxes as Southwold grows
Maintaining agricultural land
Maintaining wetlands

Keeping a small community feel as we grow Connecting the community through recreation

A knowledgeable forward-thinking council

Infrastructure as we grow

Future ready (sewers, infrastructure)

No noise by-law, no short term rental by-law, need a Southwold By-law officer on staff

Policing
Leveraging incoming development
Active transportation (cycling paths, hiking trails)
Tourism destination (all towns not just Poet Stanley)

Utilizing empty commercial spaces

Aesthetically pleasing communities

Future ready (infrastructure, social services, active transportation)

Q5: What do you believe are the most significant opportunities facing Southwold?

Building walking trails on railway lines to St. Thomas

Senior security (affordable senior housing complex/increased medical resources)

Build a more robust small business opportunity (gas station, restaurants, coffee shops, etc.)

Find new ways to get township updates to the community (quarterly meeting, text messages etc.)

Transportation infrastructure

Developer near 401 (mainly commercial, some residential)

Q6: How do you envision the ideal future for Southwold in terms of economic development, infrastructure, public services, and quality of life?

Complete community – small businesses (coffee shops, restaurants), easy transportation, seniors' housing

Recreation – walking trails all over, parks community get together, walkable society

Sustainability – zero waste, clean environmental areas and wetlands

Safe community

Increased communication from Council

Strong volunteer base

Small town atmosphere

Strong identity/brand

Thoughtful development

Desirable destination (beautiful, vibrant)

Sanitary mains to all (field of dreams concept)

Proactive/forward thinking

Protecting and expanding amenities

Carpooling by the 401

Expanded medical services

Active lifestyle

Growth (amenities, services)

Strong identity

Q7: What priorities should Council focus on over the next four years?

Infrastructure (maintenance, expansion), parks community centres, sanitary sewers

Assess all impacts for proposed development (benefits and negatives)

Ensure developments are thoughtful and have infrastructure (e.g. traffic lights) in place

Tourism and residential destination

Brand/identity (small town atmosphere)

Complete community

Entice small business

Convert railways to trails (walkable community)

Honest open communication

Select diverse groups of volunteers for targeted strategic approach

Infrastructure

Senior housing and support

By-laws that address growth (noise, # of animals, short term rentals)

