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NEWS RELEASE

Interest Groups Respond Vigorously to County Planning Initiative

Picton ON - Groups with diverse interests agree on what makes Prince Edward County special. They also agree on the need to protect and enhance these assets in the future. As part of Council's Secondary Plans project for Picton-Hallowell and Wellington, County staff and members of the IBI Group consultant team recently conducted interviews with more than 50 representatives from groups who have an interest in the planning and development of these two communities. The result was outstanding.

The purpose of the interviews was to inform the groups of the project and initiate their involvement in the planning process. In the context of the interests they represent, people were asked to respond to three questions:

1. What do you value about the Picton-Hallowell and Wellington areas?
2. What issues or concerns do you have with the Picton-Hallowell and Wellington areas?
3. What can be improved upon in the Picton-Hallowell and Wellington areas?

Topping the list of what people value about both communities is a strong, authentic sense of place. Also considered important are heritage character, waterfront location, and walkability. Ways to protect and enhance these assets is a shared concern. Another of the many valued features and expressed concerns is downtown Main Street, in particular, the desire to preserve its traditional qualities while accommodating growth.

Regarding needed improvements for Picton, the harbour tops the list, and for Wellington, more central parking and better connections to the waterfront and across the village come first. For both communities, people most often said that urban sprawl should be avoided and that well-paying jobs, public transit, seniors housing, affordable housing, green initiatives, and recreation facilities are areas for improvement.

More of the results from these interviews will be posted on the Secondary Plans web page at www.pecounty.on.ca.

"The responses from the community groups were very informative and will be useful in preparing new Secondary Plans over the next 12 months", said Mayor Leo P. Finnegan. "I would like to thank the participants and encourage the public to take part in the upcoming community workshops."

As the next step in on-going public participation, a community workshop will be held in the Wellington Town Hall on March 30 at 7 p.m. This is an opportunity for everyone who lives and/or works in Wellington to learn about the Secondary Plans project, and engage in a discussion that focuses on the same three questions considered in the group interviews. A community workshop is planned for Picton in June.

All members of the public are encouraged to respond to the three questions by completing the Secondary Plans Survey. It is available at municipal buildings in Picton and Wellington, and online at www.pecounty.on.ca.