



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN Residential Growth, Housing, and Intensification Strategy

November 2025



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1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Discussion Paper

1.1 What is an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is a comprehensive document, intended for long-term use, that shapes the future of a municipality by establishing how land in the community will be used. It outlines the goals, objectives, and policies for sustainable, efficient, growth within the Township of Wellesley. All land use, development, and public works in the Township must conform to the Official Plan.

The legislative ability for municipalities to enact an Official Plan arises from the Provincial Planning Act. All policies in the Official Plan must conform to this higher-order Provincial legislation. The Township of Wellesley is preparing a new Official Plan, which will guide growth and development within the Township until 2051. For the past two decades, growth in the Township has been shaped by both the Waterloo Regional Official Plan and the Township of Wellesley Official Plan. With recent Provincial legislation that removed planning authority from the Region of Waterloo, the Township has the opportunity to create a “made-for-Wellesley” Official Plan. This new Official Plan will incorporate the best of our past and present Official Plan policies, while charting out the future of Wellesley to the year 2051. A new Official Plan is being created to replace the existing Township and Regional Official Plans, and to align with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.

The Township of Wellesley has one urban area with full municipal services (Village of Wellesley) and ten rural settlement areas, covering an area of 278 square kilometres with a population of about 12,371 residents. The Township includes three designated rural employment areas (the Scheider Rural Employment Area, the M.K. Martin Rural Employment Area, and the Wellesley Rural Employment Area) characterized predominantly by industrial and agricultural activities. It is projected that the Township will grow to approximately 14,191 to 17,301 residents and 6,390 to 10,070 jobs by 2051. The new Official Plan will build on the Township’s long-term vision for growth with a

renewed focus on complete communities, addressing land needs in both the urban area and rural settlement areas of the Township. This will include housing mix and affordability, employment and commercial opportunities, servicing options, active transportation, open space and recreation, environmental protection and management, and the continued preservation of agricultural land.

1.2 Township of Wellesley New Official Plan Process

The creation of the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan will occur over a year-long period, with several opportunities for community consultation.



Phase 1 of the project included drafting and finalizing the Comprehensive Consultation and Engagement Strategy, and early conversations were held with Township residents and council members to inform the process. A series of one-on-one conversations were held between interested members of the public and the project team to lay the foundation for the project. The Township of Wellesley project team hosted a booth at the 2025 Wellesley Fall Fair, where members of the public were introduced to the project, asked about opportunities and current challenges, and shaping the vision of the new Official Plan. Notice of the project initiation was provided to agencies, Indigenous communities, and residents. The *Planning Act* Section 26 legislative requirements were met by providing a Notice of Special Council Meeting to local newspapers leading up to the meeting. On August 26, 2025, the Special Council Meeting was held, where the project was formally introduced and initiated. This included information regarding the

project's process and how residents and members of the public could get involved and follow along during the different phases of the project.

Phase 2 of the Official Plan involves conducting Background Research and Study Preparation, which includes the release of six draft Discussion Papers for public and stakeholder review and comment. Based on Township, agency, Council, and public feedback, the draft Discussion Papers will be reviewed and finalized. What is heard from engagement on these background reports will inform a series of policy directions which will inform Phase 3 of the project.

Phase 3 of the new Official Plan is the drafting of policies and land use maps. These **DRAFT** policies and maps will be published and shared with Township residents, stakeholders, and Indigenous communities for any further suggestions and input. The Statutory Public Open House and Statutory Public Meeting will both be held to inform Phase 4 finalization. A copy of the **DRAFT** Official Plan will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their review.

Phase 4 of the project involves the formal adoption of the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan by the Township of Wellesley's Council. Once Council adopts the new Official Plan, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the Minister's review and approval. After ministerial approval, the Township's new Official Plan will be in effect, replacing both existing Township and Regional Official Plans.

1.3 What are the Discussion Papers?

A series of six Discussion Papers have been prepared, which establish a foundation from which to develop policy directions for the new Official Plan. They include:

- Residential Growth, Housing, and Intensification Strategy
- Commercial Needs Assessment
- Employment Projections and Employment Lands
- Scoped Secondary Plan for Designated Growth Areas

- Settlement Boundary Expansions
- Land Use Policy Review and Analysis

Each paper includes policy context of Provincial, Regional, and local documents relevant to the topic, an overview of the current state, and preliminary policy directions in the Township, key topics for discussion, and next steps. These papers represent the basis of the first phase of consultation for the project, assisting in the development of policy directions for the new Official Plan.

1.4 Purpose of this Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper will provide strategic recommendations as to how the future population in the Township can be housed based on an examination of the current housing supply, trends in residential development, and the anticipated needs and desires of future residents. The goal is to provide policy direction in terms of land needs, the amount and types of housing required, and housing affordability and accessibility.

2.0 Legislative Overview

This section provides an overview of the Provincial legislative context which informs the basis for creating the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan.

2.1 Planning Act

The *Planning Act* is the overarching Provincial legislation which governs land use planning in Ontario. It establishes the respective roles of the Province and municipalities regarding land use planning and provides the basis for municipalities to create and use various planning tools, such as Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. The Act also sets out regulations for how planning processes are to be carried out, including mandatory dates for the completion of tasks, such as deciding on a planning application and setting the date for a public meeting. Notably, in Section 2, the Act establishes "matters of provincial interest", which municipalities must have regard to when carrying out land use planning. These matters include (but are not limited to) protection of ecological systems, protection of agricultural and natural resources, conservation of cultural history, provision of a full range of housing, the accessibility for people living with disabilities, and the orderly development of safe and healthy communities. It is important to note that all planning decisions and policies made by a municipality (or other planning authority) must conform to the *Planning Act*, as well as Provincial plans, as outlined in Section 2.1 of the Act. Further, Section 3 of the Act requires that all planning decisions shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

The *Planning Act*, Part III – Official Plans sets out how Official Plans shall be created by a municipality, with respect to content and process. Specifically, this section includes direction for the inclusion of Provincial policies and restrictions on Official Plans, as well as requirements for assessment reporting, amendments to plans, and approval authorities.

Section 17 of the *Planning Act* states that “the Minister is the approval authority in respect of the approval of a plan as an official plan” and sets out a prescribed process the Township of Wellesley must follow in the preparation of a new Official Plan.

Specifically, the Township must provide for consultation and a public meeting, an open house, and adequate notice provided for each.

The creation of the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan must be done in conformity with the *Planning Act* and the legislated process outlined above.

2.2 Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (“PPS”) is a guiding policy document that provides direction on a variety of planning and land use matters in the province. The legal basis for conformity to the PPS is rooted in Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, which requires that all planning decisions be consistent with the minimum standards set out in the PPS. The Provincial Planning Statement outlines that “Official plans are the most important vehicle for implementation of the Provincial Planning Statement and for achieving comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning.”

The PPS puts forward policy regarding housing, infrastructure, resource management, and public health. Pertinent policies for the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan include, but are not limited to, adjustments to municipal planning boundaries, regulations regarding employment areas, agricultural protection, and population growth targets.

Section 2.3.1 states that “sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years, informed by provincial guidance.”

Furthermore, the PPS provides general policies for implementation and interpretation as it relates to the creation of the new Official Plan in Section 6.1.5. This section details

how Official Plans shall identify Provincial planning interests and sets out policies which implement these interests.

To protect Provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to-date with the Provincial Planning Statement. The policies of the Provincial Planning Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of an Official Plan.

Finally, once the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan has been approved by the minister, the PPS sets out a requirement for ongoing monitoring of the Official Plan's implementation.

Housing and growth are key Provincial interests outlined in the PPS.

- Section 2.1 outlines policies with respect to population projection methodologies for use by planning authorities, ensuring sufficient land is made available to accommodate a range and mix of land uses.
- Section 2.2 provides guidance for planning authorities on providing an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet current and future population needs. This includes:
 - Establishing and implementing minimum targets of affordable to low- and moderate-income housing;
 - Permitting and facilitating different types of housing to meet a broad spectrum of needs, all types of intensification including development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional uses; and
- Promoting density for new housing that is an efficient use of land, resources and servicing, and transit-supportive;
- Section 2.4 determines that growth and development is generally to be focused in strategic growth areas.
- Section 2.5(c) identifies that healthy, integrated, and viable rural areas are supported by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of housing in rural settlement areas.

3.0 Local Context

The following section provides an overview of the Region of Waterloo and Township of Wellesley's policies and strategic documents that set out directions and priorities for planning matters within the Township.

3.1 Waterloo's Regional Official Plan, 2025

The Waterloo Regional Official Plan, 2025 ("ROP") is an upper-tier municipal Official Plan that encompasses seven lower-tier municipalities in the Region of Waterloo.

Historically, the Region of Waterloo was the approval authority for the Township of Wellesley's Official Plan, and the Township was required to conform to the Regional Official Plan.

As a result of Provincial legislative changes through Bill 23, on January 1, 2025, the Region of Waterloo became an upper-tier municipality without planning responsibilities. The ROP became the responsibility of the Township of Wellesley as a result of these changes. A new Official Plan is being created to replace the existing Township and Regional Official Plans and align with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement. The Township's new Official Plan will incorporate the best of ROP policies, while charting out the future of the Township of Wellesley's growth to the year 2051.

The ROP includes high-level policies which promote a range and mix of housing that guided housing policy implementation at the local Township level. These policies include:

- Focusing on supporting a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities, including additional residential units, affordable, and missing middle housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
- Achieving net-zero operational carbon performance for all newly built housing, including affordable housing, and implementing measures to minimize embodied

carbon and building energy needs, supporting the energy transition off fossil fuels, and increasing the overall energy resiliency in the community.

3.2 Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy, 2025

The Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy included four strategic objectives. The fourth strategic objective is that the Region be a community of choice for talented people. A key pillar identified for this goal is ensuring that there is an appropriate mix of housing to reflect the needs and aspirations of residents, both current and in the future. Further, the strategy recognizes how important it is for the Region to become green, sustainable, and efficient as it anticipates growth.

3.3 Waterloo Economic Development Corporation Rural Investment Readiness Strategy, 2024

The report provides an analysis of the economic development context and employment land needs for the Township of Wellesley through 2054. The challenges of housing costs as it relates to economic growth within the Region were identified within the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges exercise, as well as in stakeholder consultation. As such, a recommended strategic direction was identified to improve housing affordability to attract and retain workers through housing policies and programming.

3.4 Region of Waterloo Land Needs Assessment, 2022

In 2022, Dillon Consulting Limited and Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. conducted a Land Needs Assessment (LNA) for the Region of Waterloo as part of a review and update to the ROP. The LNA notes that, as per the 2019 Growth Plan, the Region must plan for a minimum [total] population of 923,000 and 470,000 jobs by 2051. It projected significant housing needs over the planning period since the Region is forecast to grow faster than the Province as a whole. It also noted that average housing prices grew between 11.8% and 16.2% from 2014 to 2022. To address this identified housing need, the LNA presented three options, with density targets ranging from 50 to 66 people and

jobs per hectare in designated greenfield areas and 50%–60% minimum intensification targets.

Overall, the LNA allocated limited population and housing growth to the Township of Wellesley. The options allocated populations ranging from 2,000 to 3,400 people and jobs to 2051. This corresponded with an average of 15 to 30 homes per year.

Since the LNA, the Province of Ontario has issued a proposed guideline for population projection methodology for land use planning. The proposed methodology uses the Ministry of Finance population projections for Waterloo Region as a starting point. As such, this Discussion Paper includes a new set of population projections for Wellesley to reflect the updated methodology.

3.5 Township of Wellesley Development Charges Background Study, 2024

The Township's Development Charges Background Study provides a report and calculations for updating the Township's Development Charges By-law, as required by the *Development Charges Act, 1997*. The Development Charges By-law exists to ensure that new developments requiring services do not result in an overall loss of capital for a municipality as it grows.

The Background Study consists of an overview of changes to legislative requirements, growth forecasts, and a calculation of appropriate new Development Charges, considering the historical context and servicing standards. It recommends policies and wording for the By-law, as well as steps for implementation. The Development Charges By-law designates how Development Charges are applied. In this case, it would apply to all lands within the Township of Wellesley, apart from lands owned by a Board of Education or an area owned by municipal, Regional, or Federal governments. It includes provisions for calculating Development Charges for the types of developments and approvals needed, such as Zoning By-law Amendments, Consents, or Plans of Subdivision, among others.

3.6 Township of Wellesley Strategic Plan, 2019

The Township's Strategic Plan '**.community**' is a guidance document which allows Council and Staff to prepare for the future needs of the Township. The 2019–2023 Plan has been extended to the end of 2026.

The Strategic Plan includes five focus areas developed by the Region of Waterloo and adopted by the Township:

- Thriving Economy
- Sustainable Transportation
- Environment and Sustainable Growth
- Healthy, Safe, and Inclusive Communities
- Responsive and Engaging Government Services

Under these five focus areas are fourteen strategic initiatives including two most relevant to this Discussion Paper:

1. Affordable/Age Appropriate/Available Housing, and
2. Intensification, Zoning, Development and Growth

The Affordable/Age Appropriate/Available Housing strategic initiatives is described as “Adopt a full-life-cycle approach to planning, approving/promoting and when needed providing affordable/age-appropriate housing in those areas where it is required.”

The Intensification, Zoning, Development, and Growth strategic initiatives is described as “Rethink and reimagine land use. Adopt leading edge best practices and technology enablers.”

4.0 Key Topics for Discussion

4.1 Market Context of Housing Policy

Context

Municipalities across Ontario and Canada are facing a housing affordability crisis. Housing prices and rental rates have increased dramatically over the past ten years. The impact of the housing crisis has been felt across households of different income levels, with housing often being unaffordable to households with above-median household incomes. While recent economic conditions have resulted in a slight reduction in housing prices, they are still representing a steep increase over the past decade, and housing affordability continues to be a significant barrier for many Ontario residents.

At the same time, housing has also become more expensive to build. The lingering effects of supply chain disruptions through the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent impacts of tariffs have caused construction costs to increase dramatically over the past five years. In many jurisdictions across Southwestern Ontario, construction costs are high enough such that the prices and rents needed to justify housing construction can be more than what most households can afford.

As the supply of greenfield lands shrinks in Kitchener and Waterloo, people who otherwise would have moved into these cities may now consider moving to neighbouring communities where housing costs are lower. While various policies (housing funding, infrastructure funding, Federal immigration policy) may shift or otherwise ameliorate some growth pressures in Waterloo Region, according to the CMHC, more housing is still needed in the Region to reduce housing affordability challenges. With parts of the Township being a short distance from the City of Waterloo, many people may view it as a more affordable option.

4.2 Wellesley's Context for Housing Policy

What Types of Housing are Appropriate for the Township of Wellesley?

Homes in the Township of Wellesley today are mostly single-detached dwellings, with 85% of homes being single-detached (as per the 2021 Census). Almost all homes in the Township are ground-related homes, with only 3% of homes as apartments.

While changes in household formation due to aging is, on average, relatively predictable, out-migration and in-migration are much more volatile and responsive to both internal and external factors. As the supply of residential development land elsewhere in the Region becomes scarcer, housing costs begin to play a greater role in terms of housing choice. It is possible that, if in-migration is not prepared for, the increase in demand could potentially impact existing residents through higher housing prices and potentially an increase in displacement.

While the possibility of settlement area boundary expansions represent a significant strategic advantage in managing growth, pressures on housing availability and planning policy may provide incentives to develop new neighbourhoods at higher densities than in the past. In the context of the Township of Wellesley, this may mean more small lot single-detached homes, semi-detached homes, townhomes, and potentially even low-/mid-rise apartments. Still, according to CMHC data, housing starts in the neighbouring Three Townships zone (encompassing Wilmot, Woolwich, and North Dumfries), still largely consists of single-detached homes over the past five years. Changes in development patterns may need to be spurred through land use policies.

Where Might Housing Be Appropriate in the Township of Wellesley?

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement provides direction for accommodating housing:

“Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Within settlement areas, growth should be focused in, where applicable, strategic growth areas, including major transit station areas” (p.8).

Section 2.5 of the PPS discusses development in rural areas, allowing for appropriate growth in rural settlement areas.

Given these policies, most development should be concentrated around existing communities. For the Township of Wellesley, this means the areas around the Wellesley Urban Area and the Rural Settlement Areas. To improve the efficiency of servicing and access to amenities, lands in these communities should be a priority for new residential development.

4.3 Methodology for Housing Supply, Demand, and Needs Analysis

This section provides the methodology for housing supply, demand, and needs analysis, which will include an overview of the data examined, as well as assumed theories for interpreting the data found.

It also discusses the future housing needs for the Township to inform and determine planning policy, specifically considering important theoretical considerations behind this process.

Provincial planning policy, including the recently released draft projection methodology, requires that housing forecasts start with a population projection. From this, housing need is determined by making assumptions with regards to the type of units, locations, and densities that should be developed to accommodate the future population.

Residential land needs can be calculated based on those housing needs.

The benefit of this approach is that it provides a measurable population target to plan towards, but forecasts can be unreliable and should ideally be augmented with additional factors. Forecasting future population and housing needs requires an understanding of many factors which can change significantly and unpredictably in the future, including local economic conditions (e.g., the entry or exit of major employers), national immigration policies, land supply in the local market, and the planning and housing policies of neighbouring municipalities, among others.

As such, while this Discussion Paper provides population and housing needs projections, these should be considered as illustrative scenarios or minimums. A flexible approach to land use planning—and particularly density—could be used to ensure that the market can better respond to future demand (for example, allowing a range of densities on a given parcel). Planning policy could consider the most likely growth scenario but also provide considerations for how policies would adjust if a different growth scenario were to materialize.

Additionally, where possible, data on prices and quantities should be considered jointly to determine whether the supply of housing is sufficiently flexible to meet changing demand. The provincial guidance document *Proposed Updates to the Projection Methodology Guideline* provide room to adjust housing needs projections for market factors:

“Municipalities could adjust their housing needs forecast to account for additional data sources, affordable housing, and market demand forecasts or indicators”.

A consideration of quantitative indicators (e.g., population, housing stock) alone is not enough to distinguish between an increase in population that the housing market is straining to support, compared to an increase in population because homes are easier and cheaper to build.

4.4 Housing Supply and Demand: Municipal and Regional Analysis

Population Trends and Projections

Figure 1 shows the population trends for the Township of Wellesley from 2001 to 2024 based on the Statistics Canada Population Estimates, along with population projections based on the Ministry of Finance projections for Waterloo Region. These projection approaches are consistent with the methodology recommended in the Province's recently released draft projection methodology guidelines.

Since 2001, the Township's population growth has seen multiple phases. From 2001 to 2009, its growth was relatively slow, averaging around 1% annually. The Township experienced a brief spike in population growth from 2009 to 2013, with growth averaging almost 2.5% per year. Afterwards, the Township's population was flat through 2020. Finally, the Township has grown again in recent years, averaging 1.6% from 2020 to 2024.

Assumptions about Township future growth rates will have a significant impact on its projected future population. The Ministry of Finance releases population projections for Waterloo Region to 2051. Taking these projections as a given, different methods of disaggregating that to the level of the Township will produce different projected populations.

This Discussion Paper uses three different methods to impute population projections for the Township of Wellesley. The Population Share method (Method A) assumes the Township's population will remain a constant fraction of Waterloo Region's total population. The Growth Share Low method (Method B1) assumes the Township's growth is a constant fraction of Waterloo Region's growth based on recent growth rates, which are relatively low. Finally, the Growth Share High method (Method B2) assumes the Township's growth is a constant fraction of Waterloo Region's growth based on the Township of Wellesley's highest five-year growth rates over the past ten years.

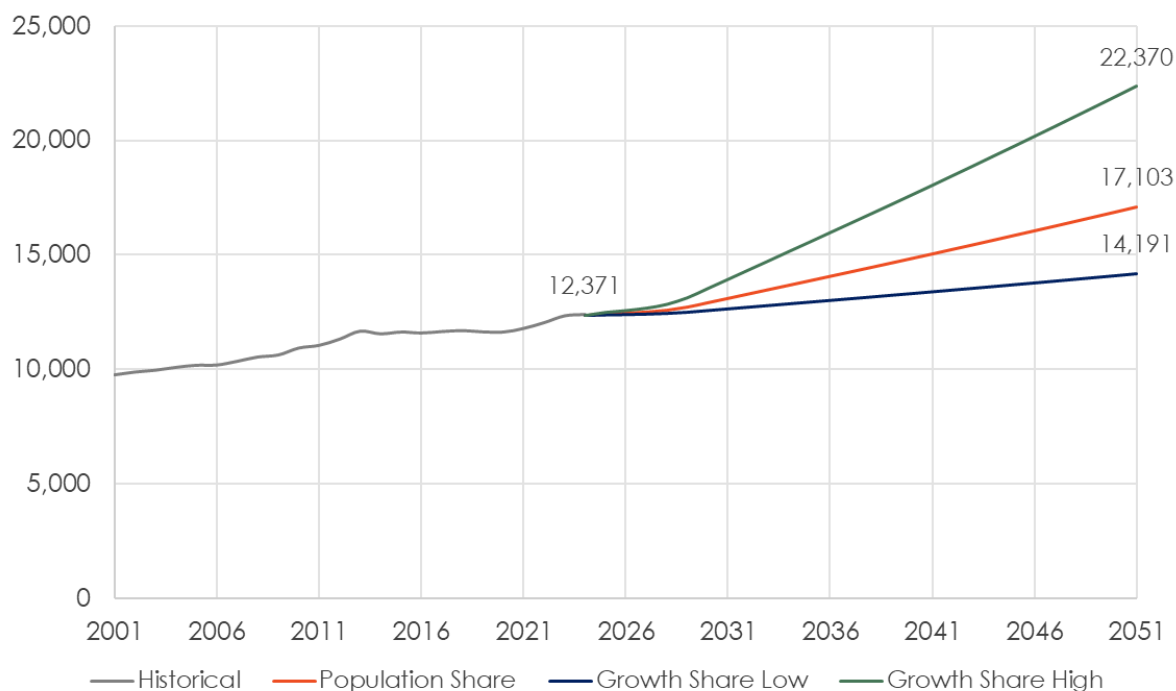


Figure 1: Township of Wellesley Population Trends and Projections (Three Scenarios).

Source: Statistics Canada Population Estimates, Ministry of Finance Population Projections.

The conservative assumption that the Township's growth as a share of the Region's growth will remain the same (Population Share, Method A in Provincial guidelines) would result in a projected 2051 population of 14,191, about 15% higher than the 2024 population and generally aligned to the current regional projection. This projection relies on the assumption that the Township's population growth would remain at 0.7% of Waterloo Region's population growth, based on their respective five-year population growth rates from 2019–2024. Over this five-year period, the population of Waterloo Region grew by 18.9%, while the Township only grew by 6.5%. In other words, this projection relies on the assumption that the Township will grow much slower than Waterloo Region over the next twenty-five years.

The Growth Share Low method (Method B1 in Provincial guidelines) assumes that the Township's population as a fraction of Waterloo Region's population will remain constant. In other words, this method assumes the Township of Wellesley will grow as

fast as Waterloo Region. Using this method, the projection is that the Township's population will grow by 38% to 2051, to 17,103 people.

It is also worth considering what would occur if the Township's highest growth rate was sustained over a prolonged period (Growth Share Low, Method B2 in Provincial guidelines). From 2009–2014, the Township grew 8.8%, while Waterloo Region only grew 4.9%, and the Township accounted for 3.7% of Waterloo Region's total growth. If this growth share was sustained, then the Township would be projected to grow by 81% to a population of 22,370 in 2051. Such an outcome would require considerable change in the Township's context for planning for growth, including a significant investment in extending municipal services and limiting further agricultural expansion.

While these projections can illustrate some possible paths that the Township may experience, they do not capture the full range of possibilities that could occur. The Township of Wellesley's future growth will be affected by unpredictable factors such as the success of local and regional employers, broader macroeconomic conditions, immigration policy, and conditions for housing construction. As opportunities for new greenfield development in Kitchener and Waterloo decline as they build out, it is likely that their share of Waterloo Region's growth will decline over time as well. The future is difficult if not impossible to predict, and it is likely none of these scenarios can be realized. As such, while forecasts can provide guidance on possible scenarios for how the Township of Wellesley may grow, it would be ideal for policy to also consider how to respond under different future conditions, both on the high side and the low side.

Housing Composition and Trends

	Township of Wellesley	Waterloo Region
Housing Composition		
Single-Detached House	84.5%	53.5%
Semi-Detached House	9.8%	6.0%
Row House	1.2%	11.5%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	0.9%	2.8%
Apartment under 5 storeys	3.4%	13.1%
Apartment 5+ storeys	0.0%	12.9%
Tenure		
Owner	86.9%	65.0%
Renter	13.1%	35.0%

Figure 2: The Township of Wellesley and Waterloo Region Housing Composition and Tenure. Source: 2021 Census Profile.

Figure 2 compares the housing composition and tenure of the Township to that of Waterloo Region as of the 2021 Census. While ground-related homes, including single- and semi-detached houses, row houses, and apartments or flats in a duplex make up most of the homes in both the Township of Wellesley (95.5%) and Waterloo Region (73.8%), it's clear that they are much more predominant in the Township. Inversely, Waterloo Region has a much higher proportion of apartments (26.0%) than the Township (3.4%).

Compared to Waterloo Region, the Township has a higher proportion of owners and a lower proportion of renters. The proportion of renters has increased from 2016 to 2021 for both, but the increase was larger for the Township (7.3%) than Waterloo Region (3.2%). Overall, it is likely that the share of renters would continue to increase as that is a trend across Ontario as housing affordability challenges persist.

It is important to understand that the existing housing composition may or may not reflect future needs. This data is a snapshot at a specific point in time. The future needs may be influenced by past housing demand, land use policy, potential servicing constraints, and other factors. The people who would want to live in the Township in the future may or may not share the same housing needs and wants as those who live in the Township today. While projections can extrapolate existing trends forward, possibly considering predicted changes in those trends, it is impossible to account for all of the factors that affect future housing needs. The future growth in housing will likely not play out according to any projections.

Housing Prices and Rents

As with other municipalities across Ontario and Canada, Waterloo Region has seen housing prices increase at dramatic rates in recent years. The change in housing prices within the Waterloo Region can be seen in the MLS Housing Price Index (HPI), using the one-storey single-family price benchmark for the Kitchener-Waterloo market (see Figure 4).

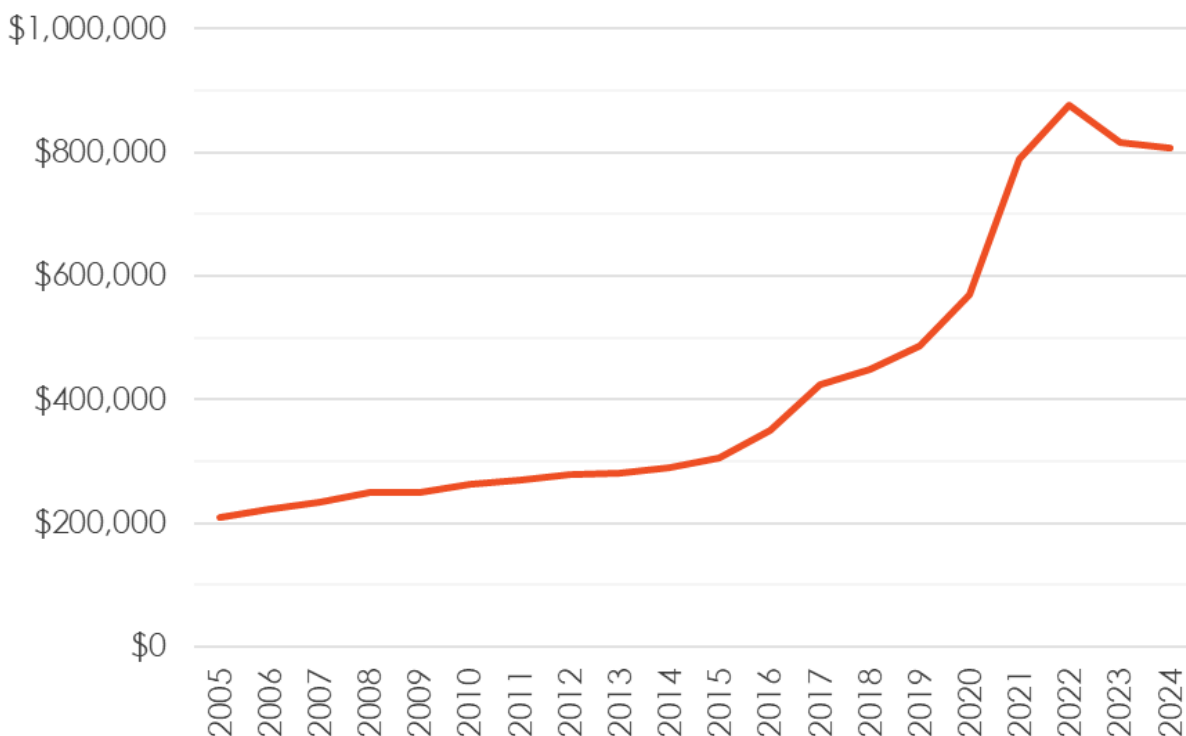


Figure 4: Kitchener-Waterloo Benchmark House Price, One-Storey Single-Family.

Source: CREA MLS MPI.

Housing prices in Waterloo Region rose slowly, but still faster than inflation from 2005 to 2015, with an average growth rate of 3.8%. Benchmark prices for a one-storey single-family home rose from \$223,300 to \$305,500 over this time. However, from 2016 to 2022, house prices experienced an average annual growth rate of 16.7% (much higher than inflation), with the benchmark price peaking at \$876,400. Prices fell slightly from 2023–2024 to \$806,800, but they remain much higher than past levels. The current level is approximately five times the rate in 2005.

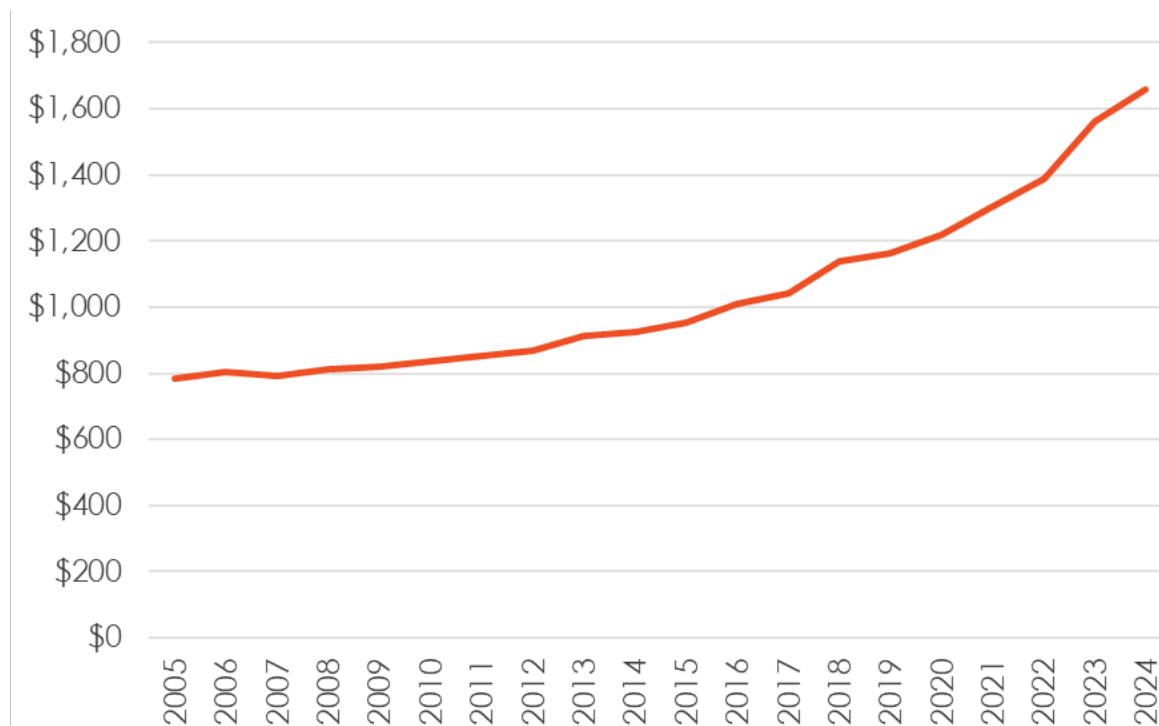


Figure 5: Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo Average Rents.

Source: CMHC.

Average monthly rents in the primary rental market in the Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMHC geography¹ also increased dramatically over this timeframe, although not as much as housing prices had (see Figure 5). Average rents rose from \$782 in 2005 to \$1,658 in 2024. Rents increased by a relatively moderate average annual rate of 2.3% from 2005 to 2015. From 2016 to 2024, rents increased by an average annual rate of 6.4%, much higher than inflation. Notably, the average rent data from CMHC includes rent-controlled units, whose rents increase slower than those of non-rent-controlled units in hot markets. Rents for new or vacant units, which are not subject to rent control, would likely have increased even faster over this period.

¹ Wellesley is not within the Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMHC geography. Rents in this geography was used as the closest available proxy.

4.5 Housing Needs

Supply and demand framework

The proposed Provincial projection guidelines recommend the consideration of market conditions in developing housing needs forecasts. The use of a supply-and-demand framework allows the interpretation of the data to consider what is driving the changes seen in the housing market. The forecast of population growth can be augmented by a consideration of current market conditions to derive a better understanding of housing needs. While a consideration of market conditions does not directly impact the housing needs forecast, it can suggest which scenarios may be most likely and/or most important to plan for.

The data examined in the previous sections show that across Waterloo Region, housing supply has not kept up with demand. Prices and rents have increased much faster than inflation. This came at a time when the Region grew significantly as well. These data patterns strongly suggest that the demand for housing has increased greatly, while the supply of housing has not kept pace to keep housing prices stable.

Affordability

Housing is often defined as being affordable for a household if housing costs are less than 30% of household income (including in the PPS and by CMHC). The Census provides estimates for the number of households in core housing need—defined as living in housing which is unaffordable for them, which has too few bedrooms given the household size, and/or which needs repair. As housing prices and rents increase, more households would be in core housing need, either mechanically as their monthly housing payments had risen to exceed 30% of their income, and/or as they live in unsuitable housing or housing in poor repair to reduce their shelter costs.

As of 2021, Waterloo Region had 30% of its households in core housing need. Only 18% of households in the Township of Wellesley were in core housing need. Spending

30% or more of income on shelter costs accounted for over half of the households in core housing need. While the Township had a lower share of households in core housing need than the Region, there are still many households struggling with housing affordability. Additionally, this statistic may not represent the experience of households who may wish to move to the Township. Furthermore, the number of households in core housing need will change over time if the Township becomes a more desirable place to live.

To consider housing affordability in the Township of Wellesley more generally, the monthly affordable shelter costs for households across income categories can be compared. The University of British Columbia provides Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART), which can calculate the monthly affordable shelter costs for different income categories defined based on the area median household income.

Income Category	Annual HH Income	Monthly Affordable Shelter Cost	% of Total HHs
Area Median Household Income	\$140,215	\$3,505	
Very Low Income (20% or less of AMHI)	<= \$28,043	<= \$701	3.22%
Low Income (21% to 50% of AMHI)	\$28,043– \$70,107	\$701 - \$1,753	14.75%
Moderate Income (51% to 80% of AMHI)	\$70,107– \$112,172	\$1,753 - \$2,804	19.32%

Income Category	Annual HH Income	Monthly Affordable Shelter Cost	% of Total HHs
Median Income (81% to 120% of AMHI)	\$112,172– \$168,258	\$2,804– \$4,206	22.88%
High Income (121% and more of AMHI)	>= \$168,258	>= \$4,206	39.83%

Figure 6: The Township of Wellesley Income Categories and Affordable Shelter Costs.

Source: UBC Housing Assessment Resource Tools, adjusted to 2025 dollars.

Figure 6 shows the monthly affordable shelter costs for each income category for the Township of Wellesley. Because the Township has relatively high household incomes (by comparison, median household income in Waterloo Region is around \$111,437), housing can potentially be affordable for a majority of households.

To consider whether benchmark house prices would be affordable, a mortgage calculator was used to convert sale prices into a monthly mortgage payment. A 20% down payment, a 30-year amortization period, and an interest rate of 4.24% (based on Ratehub estimates) was assumed.

The benchmark one-storey single-family home in Waterloo Region, priced at \$806,800, would require monthly payments of \$3,157. This would be affordable to households making at least 90% of the area median household income (over half of households).

The benchmark townhouse, priced at \$612,900, would require monthly payments of \$2,399. This would be affordable to households making at least 68% of the area median household income. Still, over 18% of households in the Township would not be able to afford this.

While this analysis shows that housing may be affordable to most households in the Township, it is important to note that some types of households that choose to live in the Township are impacted by housing prices and rents. These income categories are not necessarily indicative of everyone who may want to live in the Township. This is especially true if more growth is directed towards the Township of Wellesley, as households in the Township currently have a higher average income than households across Waterloo Region.

Improving Housing Affordability

How housing affordability can be improved has been the topic of intense study in the recent past. Based on careful empirical studies, the balance of the evidence suggests that increasing the amount of housing built (such as through broad upzoning) improves housing affordability. New homes, even at market rates, can benefit even lower-income households by reducing the prices and rents of older homes, thus reducing displacement.

The evidence also suggests that alternative measures are often not able to improve housing affordability. For example, requiring private developers to sell or rent homes at below-market rates (such as through inclusionary zoning) can potentially help fortunate households who receive such a home, but cannot be a broad-based solution to solving the housing crisis. Recent evidence suggests that such policies may also increase housing prices and rents as the costs of the below-market homes must be passed on to those paying market rates.

In the current context, a broader allowance for townhomes and low-rise apartments may be especially helpful. Townhomes and low-rise apartments have lower hard construction costs per square foot. Because these housing typologies tend to have fewer units, they are less able to pay the costs of rezoning land. As such, zoning to allow these building typologies in more locations may be especially helpful in the current environment.

Projections-Based Housing Needs

While population projections are limited in their accuracy, it can be useful to consider approximately how many homes would be required to support the various population projections. For this, the Region's headship rates by age category as forecasted in Appendix C of the 2022 Region of Waterloo Land Needs Assessment (LNA) are used. In addition, the LNA's forecast for housing growth by structure type (low density, medium density, and high density) and age category for the Region are used. The "Option 1" density scenario from the LNA for these projections was used, which is defined as:

- The Growth Plan minimum density of fifty people and jobs per hectare in designated greenfield areas across Waterloo Region, with a density of forty-three people and jobs per hectare for Wellesley.

Notably, the LNA projects Wellesley to have a higher fraction of growth in lower-density housing compared to the Region as a whole.

As shown in Figure 7, the Growth Share Low, Population Share, and Growth Share High projections resulted in an estimated 2051 Wellesley population of 14,191 people, 17,103 people, and 22,370 people, respectively.

The growth in households resulting from this population growth, assuming the Township's age distribution remains the same.² Forecasted 2051 headship rates by age category were taken from the LNA. Based on this calculation, the population growth scenarios would require 630, 1,637, and 3,460 additional homes, respectively.

² We were unable to implement the proposed Provincial methodology for downscaling Ministry of Finance population projections by age category without additional clarifications on the methodology.

	Growth Share, Low	Population Share	Growth Share, High
2051 Population	14,191	17,103	22,370
Growth in Population	1,820	4,732	9,999
Homes Needed	630	1,637	3,460

Figure 7: Housing Needs Based on Population Projections.

Projecting Housing Typologies and Land Needs

New housing can take multiple forms, whether as detached homes, semi-detached homes, townhomes, or apartments. Housing can take different forms even in the same neighbourhood, contributing to a positive community environment and supporting more nearby retail establishments. Additional residential units (e.g., a basement apartment) further diversity the housing mix.

Illustrative scenarios are provided on how these population growth projections may materialize in the form of housing typologies, and what land needs would be required for each scenario. Figure 8 shows the distributions of housing growth by the housing typology that would be needed to meet the housing unit mix under the Region of Waterloo's 2022 Land Needs Assessment (LNA) Option 1 growth scenario. As per the LNA, the housing types are defined as:

- Low density: singles and semi-detached
- Medium density: townhomes and apartments in duplexes
- High density: apartments and stacked townhouses

Illustrative Housing Growth	Growth Share, Low (units)	Population Share	Growth Share, High (units)
Low Density	474	1,233	2,605
Medium Density	119	311	656
High Density	36	94	199

Figure 8: Housing Needs Based on Population Projections and LNA.

To update the housing forecast for Wellesley, the same share of growth across the housing types from the LNA was applied to the growth in households calculated in the above scenarios to project housing needs by type.

The total land needs required was calculated based on the Low Density, Medium Density, and High Density housing types. Notably, there is approximately 49.9 hectares of vacant land across the Township's settlement areas, which can accommodate some of the projected housing growth. This includes:

- 23.6 hectares of vacant land within the Village of Wellesley (inclusive of the lands added to the Designated Greenfield Area as part of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 6),
- 15.7 hectares of vacant land within existing boundaries of the rural settlement areas,
- One active development application of 10.6 hectares within the Village of Wellesley Designated Greenfield Area planned at a density of 48 persons and jobs per hectare.

In addition to the vacant land identified above, fifteen applications for settlement area boundary expansions have been submitted to the Township, with further requests anticipated through the new Official Plan process. While the rural settlement areas can accommodate some growth based on the available vacant land, these areas are not fully serviced. As a result, the Township is not expected to experience significant growth in these areas, and higher levels of growth will be directed to the Village of Wellesley.

Two land needs scenarios were calculated using high-level people and jobs-per-hectare density assumptions. One scenario assumed that lands will develop at urban densities consistent with development patterns in the Village of Wellesley. The other method assumes lower densities consistent with the Township's Rural Settlement Areas. Existing vacant lands in Wellesley Village were considered through this analysis. The Urban scenario assumes a density of 50 people and jobs per hectare, whereas the rural scenario assumes lands will develop at a far lower density of 15 people and jobs per hectare, consistent with recent developments in the Township's Rural Settlement Areas. There are currently 23.6 hectares of vacant lands in the Village of Wellesley, which can support an additional 1,078 people. Additionally, there is an active development application on 10.6 hectares of land, which can accommodate 465 people (based on a proposed 48 persons and jobs per hectare). Land needs are then calculated if the development occurs at either the urban or rural densities to provide a range of land needs scenarios shown in Figure 9 below.

	Growth Share	Population	Growth Share
	Low	Share	High
Population Growth	1,820	4,732	9,999
Land Demand			
At Urban Densities (ha)	40.3	104.0	219.4
At Rural Densities (ha)	52.7	246.8	598.0
Vacant Land	34.2	34.2	34.2
Additional Land Required			
At Urban Densities (ha)	6.1	69.8	185.2
At Rural Densities (ha)	18.5	212.6	563.8

Figure 9: Expansion Land Required, High-Level Density Assumptions

Under the Growth Share Low scenario, an additional 6.1 hectares of land is required using the urban density assumption. Under the rural density assumption an additional

18.5 hectares would be required outside of existing lands in the Wellesley Urban Area to accommodate growth. Some of this growth could potentially be accommodated within existing vacant land in the rural settlement areas (of which there are 15.7 hectares). More land would be required under higher population growth scenarios.

It is important to consider that these land needs are dependent on policy choices as well as market conditions. Land use policies encouraging a different mix of low-density, medium-density, and high-density development will result in different land use patterns. Two considerations will be important regarding land use policies around the forms the new housing will take. The first is what the market conditions support, including a consideration of both construction costs and demand. Ground-related housing remains in high demand, especially as other urban areas in the Region approach full build-out. However, ground-related housing tends to be more expensive, as they are usually larger and require more land. It is important for a range of housing typologies to be built, including townhomes and apartments, to create options for smaller and less land-intensive housing, which tends to be more affordable.

A second consideration is land use requirements. A key trade-off in preserving features of rural areas is between preserving farmland and environmental lands and lower-density development patterns. As shown by the analysis above, lower-intensity development types will require more land and thus more encroachment into agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands to house the same number of people. Policy will need to balance these competing concerns, taking into account what densities the market can sustain (i.e., not assuming higher intensification rates than can be supported by market conditions).

4.6 Goals of Housing Policy

Housing policy can play an important role in allowing the Township of Wellesley to create a high-quality environment for its existing and future residents. Broadly, housing policy should meet the housing needs of the residents of the Township, as well as

enhance the provision of amenities in the public realm. Highlighted below are some goals that may be considered when developing housing policy.

Meeting Housing Needs and Demands

Housing policy should aim to meet the needs of households across the full income spectrum within the Township. Different types of housing are needed to meet the needs of households of different income levels, as illustrated by the housing continuum (see Figure 10).



Figure 10: The Housing Continuum.

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

At the highest end is market-rate ownership housing and market-rate rentals. Further along the continuum is housing targeted towards lower-income households. These include affordable ownership and rental housing, social housing, transitional housing, and emergency shelters.

Based on the post-1980s policy environment, market housing is relied on to provide housing for most Canadians. Non-market housing can be challenging to expand as these options generally come at a significant cost, either to municipalities/non-profits, or to purchasers and renters of market housing. With the increase in the prices and rents of market housing, more pressure is placed on social housing. Recent empirical research generally finds that increased production of housing, including market-rate

housing, eases pressures on housing prices and affordability.³ Policies which improve the supply and affordability of market housing could thus reduce the demands on social housing.

An adequate supply of suitable housing is vital for the quality of life for residents as the Township grows, and for retaining employees necessary for economic growth. Housing needs and affordability is typically presented as a spectrum of options, as shown in Figure 10. The PPS requires that municipalities provide an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents of a Regional market area, and to establish and implement minimum targets for the provisions of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

In the case of ownership housing, housing for low- and moderate-income households means the least expensive of housing, of which:

- The purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households (households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for the municipality);
- Or the purchase price is at least 10% below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the municipality.

In the case of rental housing, the least expensive of housing, of which:

- The rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households (households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for renter households in the municipality);

³ Phillips, S., M. Manville, M. Lens. (2021). Research Roundup: The Effect of Market-Rate Development on Neighborhood Rents. UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies.
<https://www.lewis.ucla.edu/research/market-rate-development-impacts/>

- Or a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the municipality.

Social housing is purpose-built affordable housing that is affordable to households at the lowest end of the household income spectrum of the regional market area (typically at, or below the 30th percentile of the income spectrum). Such housing is almost always provided as rental housing maintained in the long-term by a government agency or non-profit organization. Public sector investment is a strong mechanism to deliver social housing.

Attainable housing is market-delivered housing and is part of the continuum of dwelling types that are also defined as affordable housing. More specifically, where housing is denser (lower per unit land costs), and smaller (lower construction costs), attainable housing may be considered affordable if the price meets the specific definition of affordable (described above). It can be either ownership or rental housing, and is:

- Affordable to households with a range of incomes, at the moderate end of the scale (30th to 60th percentile of the income spectrum), and
- Provided without cost or rent interventions from the public sector or other social housing providers.⁴

Defining attainable housing is contextual to the unique circumstances of a community. Perceptions of housing quality also differ based on personal preference. However, implicit in this definition of attainability is the idea that a range of housing options (type, size, tenure, cost) exist in the local market, allowing households at various income levels to find and secure suitable housing as their needs or means change.

⁴ This measure has its origin in the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement and its predecessors, further informed by the study team's work on housing studies elsewhere.

However, while requiring private developers to sell or rent homes at below-market rates (such as through inclusionary zoning) can potentially provide help fortunate households who receive such a home, evidence suggests it is not a solution to solving the housing crisis. Such policies may increase housing prices and rents as the costs of the below-market homes must be passed on to those paying market rates.^{5,6} A requirement which is too high can also have a stifling effect on new development, worsening housing affordability across the board. As such, it is likely not helpful to set a Township-wide target for new affordable homes outside what the Region of Waterloo and non-governmental providers of social housing may be able to achieve.

Housing policy should ensure that housing, in multiple types and forms, meet people's needs. If these needs are not met efficiently and effectively, housing prices will rise as more people compete for a limited supply of suitable housing.

Efficient Servicing

Housing policy can encourage the creation of housing in areas that are more cost-efficient to service. In doing so, the effective (financial and resource) cost of housing can be reduced.

Usually, this means building in areas with existing servicing. Additionally, more dense development can also reduce servicing costs. Growing in this way can reduce the amount of infrastructure that would be required to service the new homes.

For less populated and urbanized areas such as the Township of Wellesley, servicing new development can be challenging and needs to be undertaken with a careful

⁵ Phillips, S. (2024). "Modeling Inclusionary Zoning's Impact on Housing Production in Los Angeles: Tradeoffs and Policy Implications." Turner Center for Housing Innovation. UC Berkeley. <https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Inclusionary-Zoning-Paper-April-2024-Final.pdf>

⁶ Wang, R., W. Kang, X. Fu (2025). "Do inclusionary zoning policies affect local housing markets? An empirical study in the United States". *Cities*, Volume 158, 105736. ISSN 0264-2751. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2025.105736>.

understanding of where and how growth will occur. Where possible, intensification of existing lands can allow for more cost-efficient servicing of the new homes.

Public Realm

Housing policy is also an important driver of complete communities and walkable streets, enhanced public realm facilities (such as parks, public squares, wide sidewalks, and bike lanes), and community uses (such as recreation centres, libraries, social services, and places of worship). Neighbourhoods which facilitate high-quality walking and cycling environments rely on higher densities to reduce distances to important community and commercial nodes.

Environmental and Agricultural Impacts

Development in any form, including housing, can conflict with natural heritage lands and agricultural lands. These lands are extremely important and valuable assets to the Township and its residents. Certain areas, such as Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes, Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas, Source Protection Regions and Source Protection Areas, Protected Countryside, etc. should be protected as the impacts of disturbing these areas are significant.

Development should be handled responsibly to avoid natural hazards, such as floodplains, where possible. Development in these areas can put people in harm's way, as well as potentially increasing the costs of development (in the form of insurance and/or repair and rebuilding costs).

Housing policy should aim to balance the need for housing with other competing land uses and work to reduce impacts on environmental and agricultural assets. Notably, higher-density development can allow more housing to be provided while also limiting pressure to encroach into natural heritage and agricultural lands and/or areas at higher risk of natural hazards.

Retain Rural Character

There is a clear desire for the Township to retain its rural character. If growth pressures remain relatively low in Wellesley, it will be mostly straightforward to achieve this goal. However, if a larger number of households desire to move to Wellesley, the Township will need to decide what the elements of rural character are most important to it. Specifically, rural character can refer to the building typology (e.g., single-detached homes, often on relatively larger lots). Alternatively, it can refer to a smaller built-up area surrounded by larger areas of farmland and/or natural heritage land.

With growth in households, preserving one aspect of rural character could conflict with the other. For example, development patterns heavily favoring single-detached homes, especially if on larger lots, would encroach more into the surrounding farmland and environmental lands. Alternatively, denser development patterns would preserve more farmland and natural heritage lands but would also change the built forms prevalent.

Current and Future Residents

One challenge of housing and land use policy is the need to balance the concerns of both current and future residents. Residents have chosen to live in the Township because of its current amenities and lifestyle. Changes to the built environment and population growth represent changes that may impact their perceived quality of life.

However, future residents also need consideration, especially since they often cannot advocate for themselves. The failure to consider future residents would not only mean policies would fail to protect them, but also likely means that the Township would not be properly adapting to changing circumstances. The impacts of this failure could result in inappropriate built forms and land uses, rising housing prices, excessive or insufficient retail space, and/or economic stagnation.

4.7 Policy Directions

This section provides policy recommendations based on the findings of the previous sections.

1. Set and prioritize housing policy goals

- To set housing policy strategically, the Township of Wellesley must first understand the goals which the policy aims to achieve. Potential policies can then be evaluated based on how well they achieve those goals. Setting goals in a transparent way can also provide predictability for residents, developers, and other interested parties.
- For housing, this is especially important because there are numerous goals for housing policy, and they can conflict with each other. Developing a framework for how the different goals should be evaluated can improve the consistency and success of the planning policy.
- As goals are set, it is important to prioritize meeting housing demands and needs. It is also vital to recognize that the primary purpose of housing is to house people. It is essential that this goal is not overlooked or otherwise de-emphasized as just one goal among many, and that this goal is kept in mind if future conditions differ from what has been forecasted and planned for.
- It may also be helpful to discuss the importance of protecting the interests of future residents. If this is a goal to be prioritized, special care must be taken to consider and protect their interests, as they often cannot advocate for themselves in public engagement.

2. Consider Moderate Increases to Density and Intensification

- Under any scenario, some amount of new urban land is required to accommodate anticipated population growth to 2051.
- The exact amount is dependent upon balancing the many potential goals of housing policy could be achieved through zoning and developing with greater density. These include:

- Meeting housing demand and needs, improving housing affordability.
 - Efficient servicing.
 - Creating a more walkable urban core.
 - Protecting and stewarding natural heritage and agricultural lands.
- Providing for moderate increases to density and intensification could be appropriate for the Township. This may take the form of permitting housing forms like mid-rise apartments in Wellesley village. Additional permissions in the Rural Settlement Areas would require assessment against current servicing and environmental constraints.
 - Mid-rise buildings can be consistent with small-town character—in the right places and with proper attention to design. A town with a denser downtown surrounded by environmental and agricultural lands would likely retain more rural heritage and small-town character than a downtown surrounded by low-density residential subdivisions. Appropriate design policies would support this approach.
 - Higher-density construction can conflict with some goals, such as changing the physical character of the neighbourhoods. Additionally, care must be taken that sufficient infrastructure exists to support these developments. However, it is also important to accurately assess and weigh these impacts against other potential benefits of more dense forms of housing, such as the preservation of agricultural land and natural heritage features in the surrounding countryside.

3. Plan with Flexibility

- It is difficult if not impossible to predict the future accurately, and it can be time-consuming to change planning policies. A flexible policy can allow for adjustments based on changing future conditions that suggest a higher growth is needed, and/or if the density of new development is above or below that of the scenario. This is especially pertinent given housing market indicators which suggest that not enough housing had been built to meet demand across Ontario over the past ten years.

- Given the inherent unpredictability in forecasts, policies should be designed to not only respond to future needs, but to also include mechanisms for adjustments based on actual growth outcomes.

5.0 Next Steps

This Discussion Paper is one of six papers that are being completed as part of Phase 2: Background Research and Study Preparation of the Township of Wellesley new Official Plan process.

This paper establishes a foundation from which the Township will develop policy directions. This is a starting point for generating discussion around the housing needs for the future of the Township of Wellesley. Policy directions will follow out of this engagement to outline proposed changes in the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan.

5.1 What We Heard Summary

The Discussion Papers were released in **DRAFT** form to inform public engagement in fall 2025. The Township and consulting team hosted an open public session, as well as a virtual meeting with agencies, in November 2025 to present the Discussion Papers and discuss revisions that may be required. These engagements were some of several opportunities throughout this project where public input is needed and welcomed. These papers have been updated to reflect additional insights or items arising from public engagement and include thematic summaries of input received (with a companion Engagement Report also being prepared).

Through engagement, we heard about the importance of the countryside line in protecting agricultural land, a desire for additional transit alongside growth and developing areas as complete communities. Through discussions, the importance of supporting aging in place and that new residential development provide a variety of building types and sizes that address the full spectrum of housing needs within the community was also highlighted. Furthermore, based on feedback and further review, refinements were made to the land needs assessment analysis contained in Section 4.5 of this report.

5.2 Township Council Presentation of Policy Directions

The **FINAL** reports include recommended policy directions that will inform the development of the new Official Plan. These papers will be presented to Township of Wellesley Council on December 9, 2025. The reports, together with public input, will serve as the basis for developing the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan as part of Phase 3: Draft Policies and Land Use Maps. The **DRAFT** new Official Plan will be released for review in 2026 and includes public events in addition to the statutory *Planning Act* process.