

Township of Wilmot

NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

Employment Projections and Employment Land Needs Background Report

DRAFT

October 2025

urban Metrics

NETHERY Planning

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1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Discussion Paper

This section provides an overview of what an Official Plan is and how it is operationalized. It introduces the Township's new Official Plan process, the discussion papers, and the purpose of this 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 Wilmot Township. All 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 Wilmot is in the process of crafting a new Official Plan which will guide growth and development within Wilmot to the year 2051. For the past two decades, growth in Wilmot has been shaped by both the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan and the Wilmot Official Plan. With recent provincial legislation that removed planning authority from the Region of Waterloo, Wilmot has the opportunity to create a made for Wilmot Official Plan. This will incorporate the best of our past and present Official Plan policies, while charting out the future of Wilmot to the year 2051. 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 new Official Plan will build on the Township's long-term vision for growth with a renewed focus on complete communities. This will include a range and mix of housing, employment opportunities, schools, recreational amenities, options for servicing, roads, and active transportation while protecting natural heritage features and farmland.

1.2 Township of Wilmot New Official Plan Process

The creation of Wilmot's New Official Plan will occur over a year-long period with several touchpoints for community consultation.



Figure 1: Graphic showing the Wilmot New Official Plan Process

Phase 1 of the project included drafting the Consultation Strategy and early conversations the project team held with Wilmot residents to inform the process. A series of one-on-one conversations were had between residents and interested members of the public to lay the foundation for the project. Notice of the project initiation was provided to agencies and Indigenous communities. The Township of Wilmot project team hosted a booth at the 2025 New Hamburg Fall Fair, where we began to shape a vision for what Wilmot's new Official Plan could look like. Following those initial early touchpoints with the community, a formal Public Workshop was held on September 23, 2025, to gather thoughts from the public on the vision and fundamental principle that form the foundation of the new Official Plan.

Phase 2 of the Official Plan involves conducting Background Research and Study Preparation, which includes the release of seven draft discussion papers for public and stakeholder review and comment. At this time a Special Meeting of Council will be held to formally introduce the project to the community and offer tangible research that will help focus community conversations on the themes of housing, commercial needs, employment, transportation, water and wastewater, stormwater management, and

urban design. Based on public feedback, the draft discussion papers will be reviewed and finalized. What we've heard will inform a series of policy directions which will inform Phase 3 of the project.

Phase 3 of Wilmot's new Official Plan is the drafting of policies and land use maps. These draft policies and maps will be published as draft and shared with Wilmot residents, stakeholders, and Indigenous communities for any further suggestions and input. A copy of the draft Official Plan will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their review as part of Phase 3 of the project.

Phase 4 of the project involves the formal adoption of Wilmot's new Official Plan by the Township of Wilmot's Council. Once Council adopts Wilmot's new Official Plan, the Official Plan 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 and replace both existing Township and Regional Official Plans.

1.3 What are the Discussion Papers?

A series of seven background supporting studies have been developed to support the creation of Wilmot's New Official Plan. Each of the discussion papers covers a key theme for the project, including:

- Housing Needs Study
- Commercial Needs Analysis
- Employment Projections and Employment Land Needs Analysis
- Transportation
- Water, Wastewater Servicing Strategy
- Stormwater Servicing Strategy
- Urban Design

The discussion papers will form the basis of the first phase of consultation for the project and assist Wilmot Township in developing the preliminary policy directions for the New Official Plan.

1.4 Purpose of this Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper is intended to generate discussion around the future of employment needs to support the creation of Official Plan policies which facilitate a diverse, healthy, and attractive economic landscape in the Township. It analyzes overarching economic development policy and initiatives, current economic trends and projections, and provides and inventory of current employment lands. This **DRAFT**, while it contains much analysis, will be updated in its **FINAL** version to include recommendations on employment land requirements to support a growing population.

This Discussion Paper sets forth a number of considerations and recommendations for meeting the employment needs for the Township that can be considered for the implementation in Wilmot's New Official Plan.

2.0 Legislative Overview

This section provides an overview of the provincial legislative context which informs the basis of creating Wilmot'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 persons 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.

16 (1) An official plan shall contain,

(a) goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environment of the municipality or part of it, or an area that is without municipal organization;

(a.1) such policies and measures as are practicable to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing;

(b) a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public in respect of,

(i) proposed amendments to the official plan or proposed revisions of the plan,

(ii) proposed zoning by-laws,

(iii) proposed plans of subdivision, and

(iv) proposed consents under section 53; and

(c) such other matters as may be prescribed.

Section 17 of the *Planning Act* sets out 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 Wilmot 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.

(15) In the course of the preparation of a plan, the council shall ensure that,

(a) the appropriate approval authority is consulted on the preparation of the plan and given an opportunity to review all supporting information and material and any other prescribed information and material, even if the plan is exempt from approval;

(b) the prescribed public bodies are consulted on the preparation of the plan and given an opportunity to review all supporting information and material and any other prescribed information and material;

(c) adequate information and material, including a copy of the current proposed plan, is made available to the public, in the prescribed manner, if any; and

(d) at least one public meeting is held for the purpose of giving the public an opportunity to make representations in respect of the current proposed plan. 2006, c. 23, s. 9 (2).

(16) If the plan is being revised under section 26 or amended in relation to a development permit system, the council shall ensure that at least one open house is held for the purpose of giving the public an opportunity to review and ask questions about the information and material made available under clause (15) (c).

The creation of Wilmot's new 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 Wilmot Official Plan include adjustments to municipal planning boundaries, regulations regarding employment areas, agricultural protection, and population growth targets. Specific policy guidance is provided by the PPS, as it relates to planning for people and homes.

2.1.3 At the time of creating a new official plan and each official plan update, 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. Planning for infrastructure, public service facilities, strategic growth areas and employment areas may extend beyond this time horizon.

Furthermore, the PPS provides general policies for implementation and interpretation as it relates to the creation of Wilmot's new Official Plan.

6.1.5 Official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. Official plans shall provide clear, reasonable and attainable policies to protect provincial interests and facilitate development in suitable areas.

In order 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.

Section 2.8, Employment, provides specific policy guidance for planning for employment areas and economic growth.

2.8.1 Supporting a Modern Economy

2.8.1.1

Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

(a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;

(b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;

(c) identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;

(d) encouraging intensification of employment uses and compatible, compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of complete communities; and

(e) addressing land use compatibility adjacent to employment areas by providing an appropriate transition to sensitive land uses.

2.8.2 Employment Areas

2.8.2.1

Planning authorities shall plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.

2.8.2.2

Planning authorities shall protect employment areas that are located in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors, including facilities and corridors identified in provincial transportation plans, for the employment area uses that require those locations.

2.8.2.3

Planning authorities shall designate, protect and plan for all employment in settlement areas by:

(a) Planning for employment areas uses over the long-term that requires those locations including manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing and goods movement, and associated retail and office uses and ancillary facilities;

(b) Prohibiting residential uses, commercial uses, public service facilities and other institutional uses;

(c) Prohibiting retail and office uses that are not associated with the primary employment use;

(d) Prohibiting other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to uses permitted in the employment area; and

€ Including an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas to ensure land use compatibility and economic viability.

2.8.2.4

Planning authorities shall assess and update employment areas identified in official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of employment areas. In planning for employment areas, planning authorities shall maintain land use compatibility between sensitive land uses and employment areas in accordance with policy 3.5 to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas.

2.8.2.5

Planning authorities may remove lands from employment areas only where it has been demonstrated that.

(a) there is an identified need for the removal and the land is not required for employment area uses over the long term;

(b) the proposed uses would not negatively impact the overall viability of the employment area by:

i. avoiding, or where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating potential impacts to existing or planned employment area uses in accordance with policy 3.5;

ii. maintaining access to major goods movement facilities and corridors;

(c) Existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities are available to accommodate the proposed uses; and

(d) the municipality has sufficient employment lands to accommodate projected employment growth to the horizon of the approved official plan.

Finally, once Wilmot'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.

3.0 Local Employment Needs Policy Context

This section provides an overview of existing economic development policies at the Regional and local level, to understand the policy context that the New Wilmot Official Plan will be expanding on. It will include a review of the following policies:

3.1 Region of Waterloo Official Plan, 2025

The Waterloo Regional Official Plan, 2025 ("ROP") was the Official Plan of the Region of Waterloo, which is an upper-tier municipality that encompasses a federation of lower-tier municipalities, including the Township of Wilmot. Historically, the Region of Waterloo was the approval authority for the Township of Wilmot's Official Plan, and Wilmot was required to conform to that plan.

As of January 1, 2025, the Waterloo Regional Official Plan became a Local Plan of the Township of Wilmot. A new Official Plan is being created to replace the existing Township and Regional Official Plans and align with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement. Wilmot's new Official Plan will incorporate the best of the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan policies, while charting out the future of Wilmot Township's growth to the year 2051.

The Region of Waterloo's Official Plan contained specific employment policies on a broad basis. These policies spoke to:

- Supporting the region's employment areas also plays a key role in mitigating climate change by reducing the need for long-distance commuting. Providing and protecting a diverse range, size, and mix of employment areas for employment uses ensures a competitive economic environment and provides employment opportunities close to residents working within these sectors.
- Accommodating forecasted employment growth by providing a diverse mix and range of accessible employment opportunities throughout Waterloo Region to build economic resilience, to be flexible in responding to changing employment needs,

and to maintain a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining people, jobs and investment.

- Promoting intensification and increased densities in both new and existing employment areas to support a more compact and connected urban form; and prioritize the provision, maintenance and staging of the necessary Regional infrastructure to support current and projected employment needs.

More specific policies to support employment in Wilmot took direction from the Region's Official Plan and are implemented through the Township of Wilmot's Official Plan.

3.2 Rural Investment Readiness Strategy (2024)

The Rural Investment Readiness Strategy (RIRS) for Waterloo Region highlights the Township of Wilmot's economic development context, opportunities, and challenges through 2054. Wilmot, with a 2024 population of 23,000 and 8,990 jobs, is characterized by two urban settlement areas (Baden and New Hamburg), multiple rural areas, and a mix of industrial and agricultural activity. The Strategy notes Wilmot's competitive advantages—proximity to major highways (especially Highway 7/8), availability of some serviced industrial lands, and a tradition in manufacturing and agriculture. However, Wilmot faces persistent challenges: limited shovel-ready and serviced employment lands, infrastructure constraints (especially water and wastewater servicing), and competition for land and investment. The report emphasizes the need for further planning, updated Official Plans, enhanced infrastructure, and collaboration to attract advanced manufacturing, technology, agri-business, and logistics investment. The Strategy recommends Wilmot diversify its employment land supply, streamline approvals, maintain a balance between rural character and development, and explore partnerships for land servicing and development to promote sustainable, long-term economic growth and resiliency. This RIRS completed in 2024 suggests a need of 132-145 hectares of employment land to 2054 accommodating 2,930 new employment jobs.

This will be further discussed in section 4.4 of this report which identifies the quantity of employment lands required.

3.3 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. 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" (p.i.). The increase of jobs between 2019 and 2051 would represent an average annual growth rate of 1.5% during forecast period, resulting in an increase of approximately 178,700 jobs between 2019 and 2051 based on 2019 employment estimate for the Region of 292,300. The LNA notes that Employment Lands Employment (ELE) would account for 28% of total employment growth in the Region (50,500) over the project period, driven largely by the automotive, aerospace and defence, construction, and transportation and logistics sectors.

Overall, the LNA allocated limited population and employment growth to the Township of Wilmot. The optional strategies allocated between 8,600 to 12,100 jobs to 2051. This corresponded with an average of 80 to 175 new homes per year.

3.4 Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy (2025)

The Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy sets out a comprehensive framework to guide economic growth, innovation, and investment across the region over the coming years. It emphasizes a collaborative approach, leveraging key sectors such as technology, advanced manufacturing, and sustainable development to drive both job creation and competitiveness. The strategy lays out policy priorities to foster talent retention, attract new businesses, and ensure economic resilience, while recognizing the importance of inclusive growth and a strong infrastructure based across the region's Townships and larger municipalities.

The strategy places significant emphasis on the concept of land readiness as a critical component of regional competitiveness and investments attraction. Land readiness refers to ensuring that employment lands are fully serviced, zoned, and prepared for timely development, so that businesses looking to invest can proceed without

unnecessary delays. The strategy recognizes the importance of proactive infrastructure investment, coordinated permitting processes, and clear policy frameworks to being new employment lands to market efficiently and align with future employment projections.

3.5 Waterloo Region Employment Lands Shovel Ready Strategy (2023)

Waterloo Region Employment Lands Shovel Ready Strategy is being advanced to ensure a consistent pipeline of serviced and market-ready industrial sites. This strategy will position Waterloo Region to capture future investment opportunities from both fast-growing local firms and large multi-national corporations, while also guiding capital planning, land assembly, and master planning processes.

This Strategy is in response to a rapidly growing demand for shovel-ready employment lands in Waterloo Region. In 2022, over 100 local businesses identified the lack of shovel-ready sites as a key barrier to economic growth. The region's investment attraction efforts have reached record levels, yet inquiries requiring parcels ranging from 5 to over 1,000 acres cannot be met due to a shortage of suitable land and the ambitious timelines of prospective investors. Since 2021, the region has been unable to fulfill more than 20 inquiries for sites of 250+ acres and several additional inquiries for sites larger than 1,000+ acres.

3.6 Township of Wilmot Development Charges Background Study (2019)

The Town of Wilmot's 2019 Development Charges Background Study was based on a total employment growth of some 1,669 jobs between 2019 and 2031. Of this total, employment lands employment was anticipated to grow by 566 jobs from 2,187 jobs in 2019 to 2,753 in 2023. It is important to note that the Development Charge Background Study was undertaken prior to the pandemic and significant market changes have occurred since that time. Secondly, the Development Charge population and employment projections are intended to reflect planning policies and trends at that time

for the purposes of determining capital needs from growth and are not intended to proactively consider a wider range of opportunities for growth.

3.7 Township of Wilmot Strategic Action Plan (2025–2027)

The Township of Wilmot Strategic Action Plan was prepared to provide a roadmap to Council on how staff and Council can best serve its residents. It identified several goals and action items which are relevant to the development of employment land in the Township. Goal 3 is “Prosperous Business and Balanced Growth” supported by two action items: “3.1 Encouraging well-planned growth while preserving our rural heritage and small-town character,” and “3.2 Support local businesses and provide more housing options.” Several strategies were identified to attract jobs and investment. In our opinion, providing a healthy inventory of industrial sites to support a variety of businesses will be an important part of attracting and maintaining businesses and jobs in the community.

4.0 Key Topics for Discussion

4.1 Economic and Employment Land Trends

This section will provide an overview of key economic trends impacting the Township and surrounding Region, such as rate of development and investment.

Economic Trends

Key economic trends impacting the Township of Wilmot and the broader Waterloo Region include robust population growth, sustained demand for industrial real estate, and increasing investment in technology-driven sectors. The Waterloo Region continues to attract residents due to its reputation for innovation, proximity to major transportation networks, and affordability relative to Ontario’s largest urban centres, resulting in steady annual growth rates and pressure on employment land and housing development. Wilmot can specifically benefit from spillover demand as businesses seek cost-effective alternatives to neighbouring cities, driving new residential and industrial projects at a pace above historic averages.

Strong investment interest is evident in industrial real estate, as demand for modern logistics and distribution spaces has surged due to accelerated e-commerce adoption and supply chain reconfiguration. The region has seen increased absorption of industrial land, competitive leasing activity, and historically low vacancy rates. This environment encourages both local expansions and inbound investment from firms relocating out of the Greater Toronto Area, as well as foreign direct investment, catalyzing new builds and redevelopment of older facilities to meet contemporary standards.

Waterloo Region's rapidly diversifying economy, anchored by its globally recognized tech sector, robust post-secondary institutions, and growing agri-food and advanced manufacturing clusters, continues to draw new capital and talent. Efforts to bolster rural broadband, entrepreneurial initiatives, and workforce training further amplify economic dynamism in Wilmot and surrounding townships, supporting a balanced mix of high-growth enterprises and stable legacy industries. Regional investments in infrastructure and tourism also enhance competitiveness, integrating rural communities into wider economic networks and supporting sustainable long-term development.

Employment Land Trends

Waterloo Region is actively expanding its supply of shovel-ready employment lands to meet the growing demand from advanced manufacturing, logistics, and technology sectors. Initiatives to streamline site readiness and enhance the scale of available industrial parcels are underway, aiming to attract large anchor tenants and generational investments that can foster local job creation and economic resilience. This surge in activity is fueled by a recognition that previous land constraints have led to missed opportunities in securing major companies that require immediate development access.

With respect to the Township, as industrial sites in Waterloo and Kitchener become exhausted due to both ongoing developments, as well as intensification and reuse, Wilmot will be well positioned to accommodate employment growth that can no longer

be effectively accommodated within its urban neighbours. This includes companies serving broad markets, as well as smaller firms that will be needed to support the rapidly growing Regional population.

Industrial Vacancy Rate

The industrial vacancy rate is a critical indicator of market health and the availability of industrial space within the Waterloo Region industrial market. **Figure 2** illustrates the annual industrial vacancy rate in Waterloo Region from 2015 through Q2 2025, providing context for assessing supply-demand dynamics in the regional industrial real estate market. Over the past decade, the industrial vacancy rate has experienced notable shifts, largely reflecting periods of rapid absorption, rising demand for industrial premises, and a tightening of supply. In recent years, the vacancy rate has reached historic lows, signaling heightened competition for space among end-users and a growth environment marked by increased investment and expansion activity.

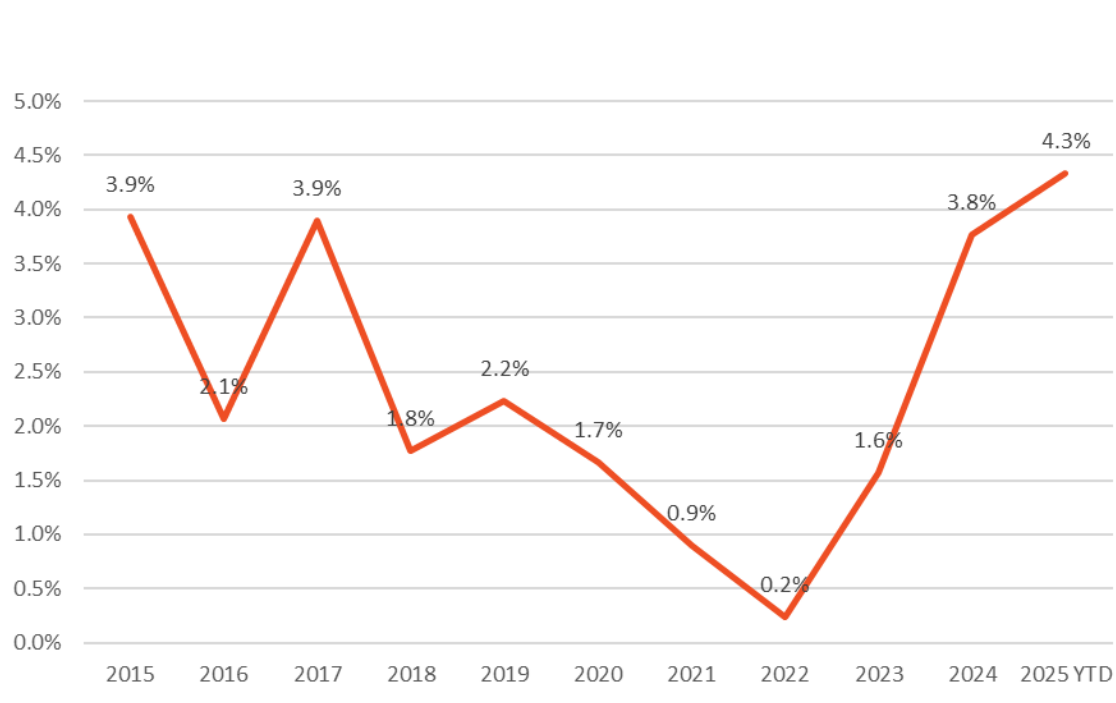


Figure 2: Waterloo Region Annual Industrial Vacancy Rate

Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from CoStar

Between 2015 and 2022, the annual average industrial vacancy rate steadily declined. While it has rebounded since the pandemic, the current level of 4.3% is still considered representative of a tight market. This low level of vacancy underscores strong market fundamentals, with vacancies shrinking as businesses seek modern logistics, distribution, and advanced manufacturing space. The absence of available space further highlights the need to accelerate the development of new employment lands and intensification opportunities.

Industrial Rental Rate

The average industrial rental rate in Waterloo Region reflects the ongoing strength and competitiveness of the local industrial real estate market, with important implications for economic development in Wilmot Township. **Figure 3** displays the annual average industrial net rent per square foot across the Region, offering a decade-long perspective from 2015 through 2025. In the mid-2010s, industrial rental rates hovered around $6 per square foot, marking a baseline period of relative market stability.

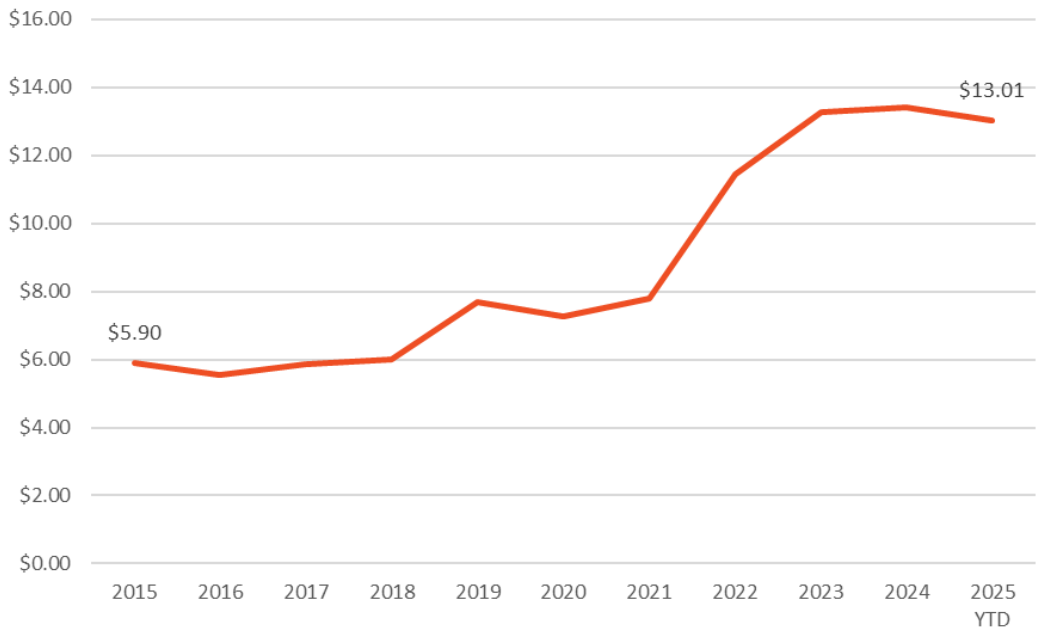


Figure 3: Waterloo Region Annual Industrial Net Rent Overall Per Square Foot

Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from CoStar

Since that time, average rents have more than doubled. This marked upward trajectory in industrial rents over the past ten years was driven by rising demand for modern logistics, warehousing, and manufacturing space. This persistent growth in rental rates signals sustained pressure on available inventory and an increasingly competitive environment for businesses seeking industrial premises. The upward movement in rental rates corresponds with tightening vacancy rates and robust absorption of new and existing supply, as detailed in **Figure 2**.

Development Rate

The development rate of industrial land in Waterloo Region provides a clear window into the pace and scale of new construction, shaping the local market outlook for Wilmot Township. **Figure 4** depicts annual industrial under-construction activity from 2015 through 2025, revealing a notable acceleration in development over the past decade. This rising trend is closely linked to market conditions described above, and the Region's proactive efforts to address land supply constraints.

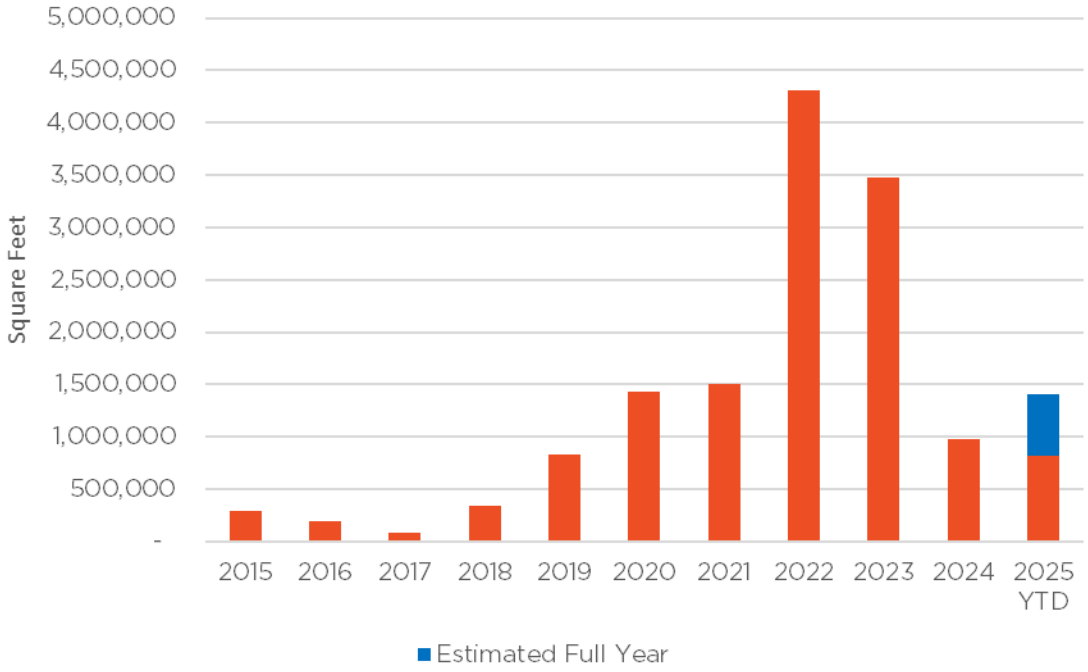


Figure 4: Waterloo Region Annual Industrial Under Construction

Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from CoStar

Development activity over the past decades demonstrates a surge in industrial projects breaking ground, particularly in recent years, driven by the requirements of advanced manufacturing, logistics, and technology sectors. The increase is especially pronounced during periods marked by e-commerce growth, supply chain reconfiguration, and a robust influx of both local expansions and inbound investment. These factors have catalyzed an environment where new projects move swiftly from planning to construction—a shift from past patterns characterized by slower absorption and incremental build-out. Waterloo Region saw less industrial space under construction in 2024 mostly because oversupply from the preceding two years combined with rising vacancy rates. However, 2025 appears to regain some momentum with just under 1,500,000 million square feet under construction.

For Wilmot Township, the region-wide uptick in industrial development rate has important implications: although local absorption of employment lands has been limited,

the overarching momentum offers Wilmot an opportunity to capture spillover demand. By prioritizing shovel-ready sites and streamlined approvals, the Township can position its employment lands to attract development activity at a scale and pace consistent with regional trends. The above underscores the necessity for Wilmot to remain proactive in infrastructure planning, subdivision approval, and site marketing to enable timely response to market opportunities and investor inquiries.

4.2 Employment Profile and Projections

This section will discuss the current employment profile and projected growth for the Township. It explores trends regarding industry, demographics, activity rates, and major development projects.

Employment projections for Wilmot Township are a central focus of planning efforts, supporting land use policy and guiding future economic development decisions. As a smaller but strategically positioned municipality in Waterloo Region, Wilmot currently holds approximately 3% of the Region's businesses and 2% of its jobs, according to the 2024 Workplace Count Survey results presented in **Figure 5**. This baseline share provides an important reference for assessing both present and future employment patterns as Wilmot seeks to enhance its economic footprint by developing additional shovel-ready employment lands.

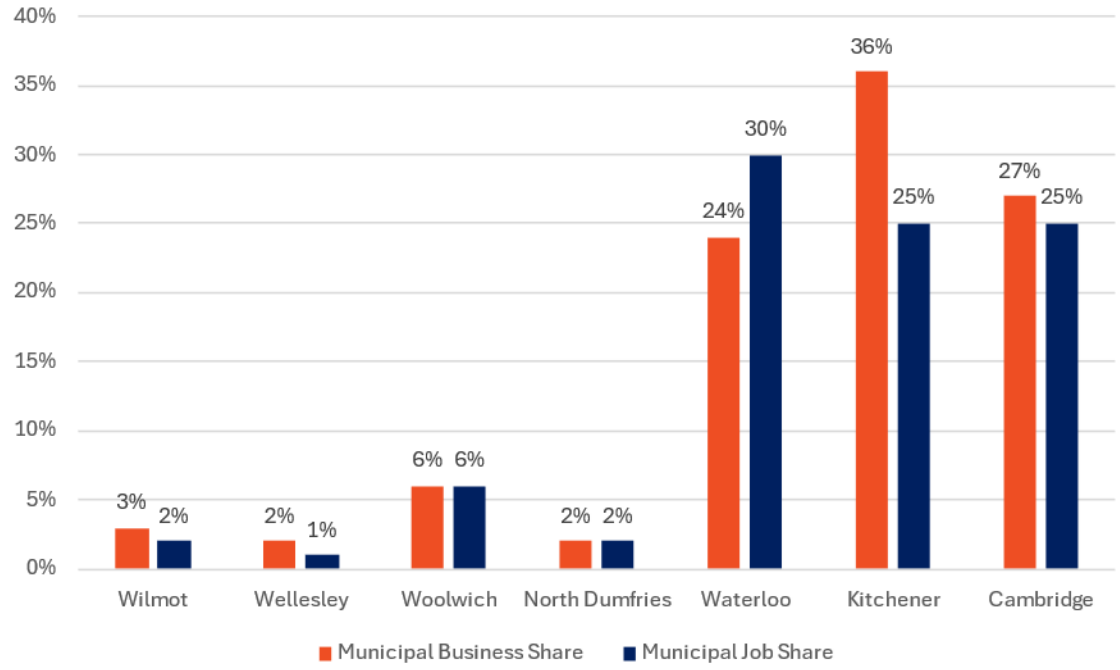


Figure 5: Waterloo Region – Municipal Business and Job Share

Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from Region of Waterloo's 2024 Workplace Count Survey

Approximately 560 jobs in the Township depend directly on agriculture, representing about 4.8% of the local employed labour force and reflecting the enduring value of farming within the community. These agricultural positions—including jobs on multigenerational farms and in related rural businesses—form a vital backbone of Wilmot's economy, anchoring its identity and supporting sustainable local growth. Agriculture in Wilmot is not only essential for food production and environmental stewardship, but also creates spin-off effects that benefit the Township jobs in services, processing, and distribution that locate and operate on employment lands.

The employment mix within the Township, illustrated in **Figure 6**, highlights that retail remains the largest sector, accounting for over 40% of local jobs. However, industrial employment is also strongly represented, comprising over 30% of the Township's total employment. This sectoral balance is significant for future employment land planning, as it points toward both the demand for industrial real estate and the need to diversify

job opportunities in line with broader shifts in the regional economy. It should be noted the employment mix is based on the Region of Waterloo's Workplace Count survey, which does not collect statistics on agricultural or farm-related businesses but focuses on business activity within the settlement areas and rural areas.

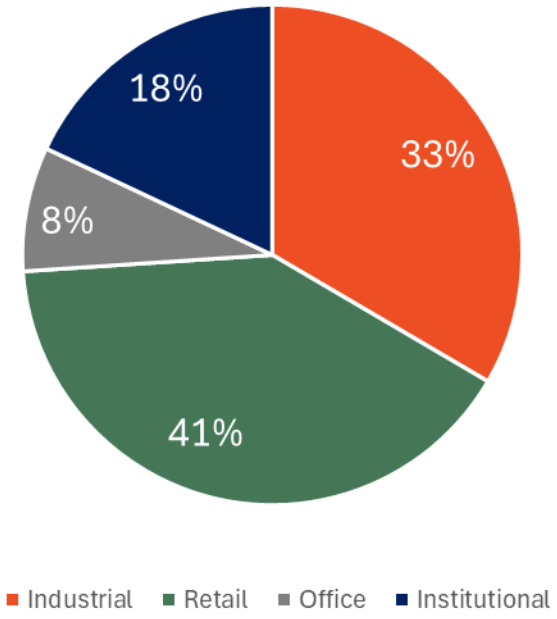


Figure 6: Wilmot – Jobs by Industry (Excludes Agricultural and Primary Sector Industries)
Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from Region of Waterloo's 2024 Workplace Count Survey.

Further analysis of workforce dynamics, shown in **Figure 7**, reveals that only 31.9% of Wilmot's residents work within the Township, with the majority commuting to other urban centers in Waterloo Region and beyond. This commuter pattern underscores Wilmot's current role as a bedroom community and the importance of attracting more diverse local employment, particularly in growth sectors like advanced manufacturing, technology, and logistics. By providing strategically located employment lands, Wilmot can encourage local job creation, thus supporting workforce retention and reducing commuting pressures.

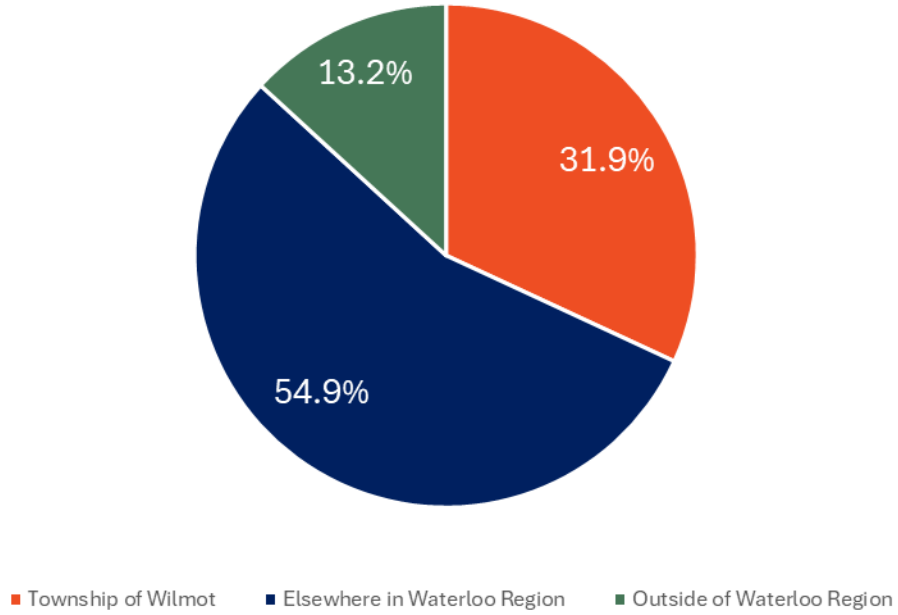


Figure 7: Wilmot – Where Residents Work

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population from Table 98-10-0459-01.

The figures and projections collectively demonstrate both the opportunities and challenges facing Wilmot Township as it grows. By analyzing current shares, employment mix, and labour force patterns, the Township is well positioned to develop policies that balance economic expansion with community vibrancy. The focus on increasing its share of regional jobs and supporting sectors with high growth potential will guide both short- and long-term decisions about future employment land supply and development priorities.

Activity Rate

The activity rate in Wilmot Township is a key metric used to forecast future employment needs by linking the number of jobs located within the municipality to its base population. This metric is consistent with the Province's recently released draft projection methodology to support the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement. Defined as the ratio of total local jobs to the resident population, Wilmot's activity rate currently

stands at 39%. A ratio of this level is indicative of a relatively high rate of workforce commuting outside of the Township, as well as the large business base existing in neighbouring and nearby municipalities.

The activity rate serves as a multiplier for planning purposes and is applied to projected population scenarios to estimate future employment land requirements. The approach ensures that employment forecasts reflect both the Township's current economic footprint and anticipated demographic shifts, supporting accurate policy and land use decisions. It is expected that the Township's activity rate would gradually increase over the planning horizon as expected population growth, economic activity, and employment land development would all contribute to its increase.

Employment Projections

urbanMetrics has developed employment projections to 2051 based on the population projections developed in the Housing Needs Study discussion paper, using the three population scenarios "Population Share," "Growth Share Low," and "Growth Share High" in accordance with the Province's draft projection methodology recognizing that the relationship between employment and housing is circular.

Wilmot 's current municipal activity rate along with an adjusted increase over the planning period was applied to the three population forecast scenarios as increased economic activity is anticipated within the Township. The "Population Share" method assumes Wilmot's population remains a consistent proportion of Waterloo Region's total population and employment, while the "Growth Share Low" and "Growth Share High" scenarios reflect historical rates and periods of accelerated regional growth, respectively. **Figure 8** presents these employment projections for 2024 to 2051, highlighting the relationship between population growth and employment growth under each scenario. The increase in total employment under the three scenarios ranges from 1,990 to 8,590 new jobs. This figure provides an evidence base for the Township's

planning process, ensuring that employment land needs are aligned with potential demographic trends.

Reviewing and refining the activity rate over time will be vital for Wilmot Township to ensure its employment projections remain responsive to real-world changes in economic conditions, shifts in local business mix, and broader labour market trends. Regularly updating the activity rate with new Workplace Survey data and census data, as depicted in **Figure 8**, will help the Township capture its evolving economic context and make informed decisions about the scale, location, and nature of future employment lands. This iterative approach supports Wilmot's goal of balancing growth and job creation with sustainable land use and community development.

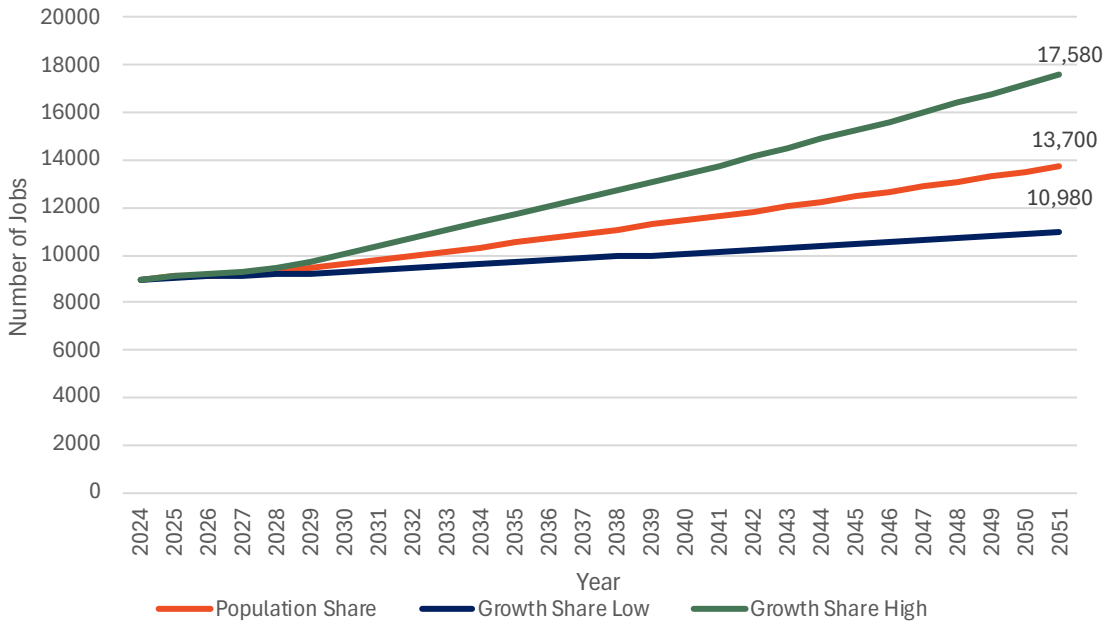


Figure 8: Wilmot Employment Projection 2024–2051

Source: urbanMetrics inc.

Employment Land Employment Projection

Employment Land Employment land (ELE) is a portion of total employment and is categorized by land use to ensure sufficient supply of designated employment lands

over the planning period. ELE jobs include industries such as manufacturing, warehousing, and goods movement. As of 2024, there are approximately 2,925 ELE jobs in Wilmot and they represent approximately 35% of Wilmot's total employment. The forecast for ELE as shown in **Figure 9** assumes ELE jobs will maintain approximately the same proportion of total employment over the planning period and has been applied to the three growth scenarios. New ELE jobs will range from 920 to 3,230 jobs over the planning period based on the three scenarios.

The ELE jobs forecast serves as key input to determining whether Wilmot will have sufficient employment lands over the planning period.

Employment Land Employment Forecast

	Growth Share Low Projection Scenario	Population Share Projection Scenario	Growth Share High Projection Scenario
2024	2,925	2,925	2,925
2051	3,845	4,795	6,155
2024-2051	920	1,870	3,230

Figure 9: Employment Land Employment Forecast

Source: urbanMetrics inc.

4.3 Employment Land Supply

This section will provide an inventory of the current employment land supply in the Township, including occupied lands, vacant lands, intensification opportunities, potential new employment lands, and absorption trends.

Occupied Lands

Wilmot Township's supply of occupied employment lands forms the established foundation of local economic activity, supporting existing firms and providing insight into development patterns and business density. There are approximately **60 hectares of employment land currently occupied** within the Township, with most sites strategically located in New Hamburg and Baden along the Highway 7/8 corridor. These

areas benefit from excellent transportation access and proximity to local amenities, making them attractive locations for both industrial and commercial businesses. The Township is home to approximately 1 million square feet of industrial space, with the average industrial building size measuring about 33,000 square feet, reflecting a stable but modest industrial footprint.

The current industrial vacancy rate in Wilmot is effectively zero, a sign of robust demand, but also a significant constraint for growth. This lack of available space presents considerable obstacles for companies seeking new or expanded premises and indicates an immediate need for additional employment land development. Local businesses are challenged to find suitable expansion opportunities, and new investors may be dissuaded by the limited inventory. This dynamic elevates the importance of both intensifying existing lands and accelerating planning and servicing of new sites to meet occupational needs and stimulate further economic activity in the Township. As existing employment areas approach full occupancy, proactive management and targeted development strategies will be critical to ensure that Wilmot remains responsive to market demand and attractive for ongoing business investment.

Vacant Employment Lands

Wilmot Township's supply of vacant employment lands constitutes a vital resource for supporting economic growth, attracting new industry and diversifying the local business base. There are approximately **66.96 hectares of designated vacant employment land** currently available in the Township, predominantly concentrated within the New Hamburg and Baden areas, which benefit from proximity to Highway 7/8, key municipal roads, and resident population base. A 50% maximum lot coverage on these lands translates to a potential for approximately 3.6 million square feet of new industrial space. When employing the Town's 2019 Development Charges Background Study assumption of 1,200 square feet per employee, this new space could accommodate

upwards of 3,003 jobs, positioning Wilmot to address future employment needs and contribute to regional economic growth.

Despite the quantity of designated lands, several parcels face notable development constraints (approximately 21.3 hectares of the Township's **vacant** employment land inventory), including irregular shapes, small lot sizes, poor access, and limited connectivity to municipal services—conditions which can diminish their attractiveness or viability in realizing industrial projects. Most viable vacant lands are found in two draft-approved industrial subdivisions situated along Highway 7/8 between New Hamburg, totaling about 38 hectares. These subdivisions are intended to facilitate industrial and light industrial expansion and consist of 19 development blocks equipped with full municipal servicing, dedicated stormwater management infrastructure, and area grading with pre-servicing agreements in place. These features make these subdivisions as attractive and ready-to-develop vacant employment lands in Wilmot and highlight the importance of prioritizing sites that are shovel-ready and capable of supporting immediate investment activity.

Absorption Trends

Absorption trends for employment lands in Wilmot Township provide guidance for planning, infrastructure investment, and an understanding of the Township's overall economic competitiveness. However, absorption data in smaller municipalities such as Wilmot tend to be erratic simply because there is typically not enough development activity to produce a year-over-year trend line. Over the past decade, Wilmot has experienced notably slower absorption of employment lands, despite a region-wide surge in industrial development activity. **Figure 9** demonstrates the Township's annual development activity of employment lands from 2014 to 2024, revealing average annual development of less than 20,000 square feet—a pace well below both historical and regional benchmarks.

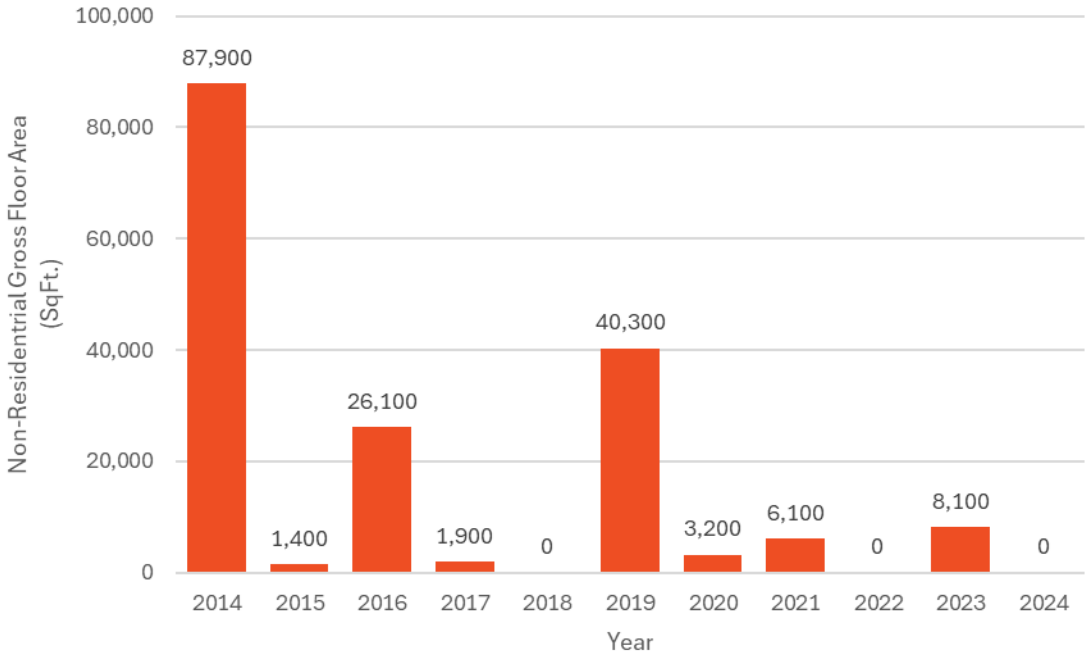


Figure 10: Wilmot Annual Development Activity of Employment Area Lands 2014–2024

Source: urbanMetrics Inc., with data from Waterloo Economic Development Corporation's Rural Investment Readiness Strategy and Region of Waterloo's 2024 Building Permit Activity and Growth Monitoring Report

This subdued pace of development can be largely attributed to the lack of shovel-ready lands—sites equipped with immediate access to municipal services and infrastructure and market appeal. The limited supply of such sites in Wilmot has created obstacles for both local business expansion and new investment, resulting in missed opportunities during a period when regional demand for industrial and employment lands has been exceptionally high.

Encouragingly, this trend is expected to change in the coming years as Wilmot advances the development and marketing of shovel-ready employment sites. With increased focus on servicing and preparing lands—especially those near Highways 7/8 and within designated industrial subdivisions—the Township is positioned to significantly improve absorption rates, capitalize on spillover demand from the Region, and support new business growth. This proactive approach, paired with ongoing monitoring of

absorption metrics, will ensure that Wilmot can better align its land supply with evolving market needs and play a stronger role within the Region's economic landscape.

4.4 Employment Land Needs

This section will analyze the employment land needs of the Township, including the quantity and characteristics of lands required to attract desired businesses.

Quantity of Employment Land Required

Based on the projected Employment Land Employment (ELE) forecast for the three growth scenarios, the Township would require somewhere between 26 and 92 hectares of employment land to accommodate growth as shown in **Figure 11**. Under the "Growth Share Low" and "Population Share" scenarios, the Township should have adequate employment land to meet the projected employment demand with the current availability of vacant employment land. However, under the "Growth Share High" scenario, the Township will have a shortfall of approximately 26.3 hectares to meet the ELE demand over the planning period.

A density target of 35 jobs per hectare was used to keep in consistency, which was used by the Region's 2051 Region's Land Needs Assessment and in the Regional Official Plan. This target also reflects the efficient use of modern industrial space which integrates manufacturing, warehousing, and office functions which yield higher employment intensity supported by full municipal servicing. This target would ensure Wilmot's employment lands remain competitive and capable of accommodating diverse sectors seeking flexible, sustainable, and space-efficient development opportunities.

While 35 jobs per hectare is a reasonable target for the Township, employment densities can vary considerably from business to business, and the Township has minimal control over the number of employees a firm maintains on site. The employment lands in Baden, for example, due to the existence of several transportation companies with large truck trailer storage yards, likely have employment densities well below 35 jobs per hectare. If vacant employment lands were ultimately developed at

densities below 35 jobs per hectare, then there would be a greater land need than identified in our analysis. As a result, the land needs projections should represent the minimum land needs and the Provincial Planning Statement requires municipalities to plan for a "long term" supply of employment areas, with a planning period that can extend beyond the 30-year planning horizon for other land uses.

It should also be noted based on the Township's existing occupied vacant lands, there is minimal opportunity for intensification and expansion of existing businesses, and most employment growth would be on vacant available employment land.

	Employment Land Employment Growth 2051	Density Target (jobs/ha)	Developable Land Needs (net ha)	Surplus/ Shortfall of Available Vacant Employment Land (hectares)
Growth Share Low Scenario	920	35	26	39.7
Population Share Scenario	1,870	35	53	12.6
Growth Share High Scenario	3,230	35	92	-26.3

Figure 11: 35 Jobs Per Hectare - Wilmot Employment Land Needs to 2051

Source: urbanMetrics Inc.

The Region's recent Rural Investment Readiness Strategy (RIRS) applied a 20 jobs per hectare target for the Township of Wilmot's projected employment land needs between 2024-2054. For comparison, **Figure 12** applies a 20 jobs per hectare density target to the three scenarios presented in this report which increases the Township's employment lands needs between 46 – 162 hectares. The RIRS suggests a need of 132-145 hectares of employment land to 2054 accommodating 2,930 new employment jobs. The RIRS's employment land projections for Wilmot fall between the Population Share and Growth Share High scenarios presented in this report however the RIRS used a different methodology.

	Employment Land Employment Growth 2051	Density Target (jobs/ha)	Developable Land Needs (net ha)	Surplus/ Shortfall of Available Vacant Employment Land (hectares)
Growth Share Low Scenario	920	20	46	20.0
Population Share Scenario	1,870	20	94	-27.5
Growth Share High Scenario	3,230	20	162	-95.5

Figure 12: 20 Jobs Per Hectare - Wilmot Employment Land Needs to 2051

Source: urbanMetrics Inc.

The use of 20 jobs per hectare may be appropriate for some heavy industrial uses or logistics operations that require extensive land within Wilmot's rural context. While 20 jobs/ha falls on the lower end of density Wilmot's new Official Plan policies should encourage a range of densities with higher densities encouraged in strategic locations.

Potential New Employment Lands

Potential new employment lands in Wilmot Township should be strategically situated to maximize their appeal and functionality for a range of future users, prioritizing sites near major regional transportation corridors and infrastructure investments. Parcels located close to Highway 7/8, key municipal roads, and adjacent to established business parks possess inherent advantages, offering prospective tenants improved connectivity, logistical efficiency, and easy access to regional and provincial markets. By emphasizing proximity to these nodes, Wilmot ensures that its employment lands are attractive to a diverse array of industrial and commercial enterprises—including those in advanced manufacturing, logistics, and technology—that require reliable transportation and utility services. Moreover, situating employment lands near existing urban settlement areas such as Baden and New Hamburg can support enhanced synergies with community amenities and foster workforce retention by providing convenient commutes for residents.

The identification process for potential new employment lands in Wilmot must account for a suite of community and economic needs to future-proof the Township's growth. Diversification is key, as sites should not only address traditional industrial demand but also accommodate emerging sectors like clean technology, agri-business, and modern logistics. Consideration should be given to placing employment zones near residential areas, supporting local job creation, and reducing outward commuting patterns, which currently result in a high proportion of residents working outside the Township.

Additionally, new lands must be sufficiently flexible in size and configuration to respond to evolving market trends; large, contiguous blocks are preferable for anchor tenants and expansion-minded firms, while adaptable layouts allow for a mix of uses and business scales. Environmental sustainability also plays a critical role: site selection should integrate green infrastructure, protect natural features, and allow for the creation of recreational trails and public amenities, ensuring that new employment areas contribute positively to community well-being and environmental stewardship.

Characteristics of Employment Lands

Employment lands in Wilmot must embody several key features to be competitive for site selection and business attraction:

Location/Accessibility: Parcels along Highway 7/8, close to major intersections (Nafziger and Foundry), and near urban settlement areas (Baden/New Hamburg) are highly prioritized. These offer controlled highway access, and in some cases, potential railway proximity—crucial for manufacturing, logistics, and industrial users.

Size and Flexibility: A range of parcel sizes for employment lands should be offered ranging in size from under 1 hectare to 20 hectares to support a variety of business types and sizes. The need for flexibility to support a range of businesses—from light to heavier industry—without awkward parceling or limiting overlays is also important.

Shovel-Readiness – Infrastructure must be in place or rapidly deliverable (roads, utilities, broadband, stormwater management) so that businesses can build with minimal delay.

Zoning – Parcels should carry industrial, light industrial, and prestige employment zoning. This allows for diverse user types, including advanced manufacturing, logistics, food processing, and tech-enabled businesses seeking clean and modern facilities.

Quality of Environment and Amenities – Integration of natural features (e.g., woodlots set aside for public use), multi-use recreational trails, and green buffers. Employment areas tied with recreation opportunities (such as proximity to the Wilmot Recreation Complex, trail networks) support workforce attraction and retention.

Regional Collaboration and Economic Vision – Coordinate planning and support from economic development organizations, such as Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporations, is vital for attracting industrial end users and maximizing employment land impact.

Target Time Frame for New Employment Lands

To meet the projected employment land employment (ELE) growth over the planning period a phased approach should be considered when introducing new employment lands in the Township to ensure adequate absorption, servicing and avoid oversupply. **Figure 13**, provides a three phased time frame for introducing new employment lands over the planning horizon.

Time Frame	Approx. Period	Key Employment Land
Near-Term	2025-2035	• This period should focus on servicing and marketing existing designated lands to ensure "shovel-ready" supply for near-term investors, developers and end users. • Timing aligns with infrastructure completion, ensuring a stable 5-10 year supply of competitive and market-ready industrial sites.
Medium-Term	2035-2045	• The Township will begin to require additional designated employment lands to sustain growth and maintain adequate inventory for new business attraction and expansion. • Phasing should align with extension of services and transportation infrastructure, ensuring new employment areas are market-ready upon demand.
Long-Term	2045-2051	• By the late 2040s, most of Wilmot's designated employment lands will have reached build-out and the Township will need to expand and intensify its employment land base to accommodate longer-term industrial uses. • Any new employment lands designated beyond this point should be phased strategically ensuring that supply remains aligned with market absorption and avoids oversupply.

Figure 13: New Employment Land Time Frame

Source: urbanMetrics Inc.

4.5 Things to Think About

This section will discuss preliminary policies and initiatives to attract target businesses to Wilmot Township.

Recommendation 1: Ensure a Supply of Shovel-Ready Employment Lands

Wilmot should ensure a diverse supply of shovel-ready employment lands is available. This is critical to attracting new investments and job creation opportunities, and to position the Township competitively within Waterloo Region's growing economy. Employment lands should continue to be in strategic areas, such as along major highways or near transportation corridors, to leverage infrastructure and enhance access for businesses. Preliminary land needs analysis suggests a potential shortfall of approximately 26.3 - 95.5 HA of employment lands over the planning horizon under the high growth scenario. The precise employment land needs requirements will be further established through the drafting of Wilmot's new Official Plan.

Recommendation 2: Develop Incentives to Spur New Industrial Development

An incentive program can differentiate the Township from other jurisdictions in attracting investment and enabling shovel-ready employment lands to reach their full economic potential in Wilmot Township. The Township should explore establishing an Employment Land Community Improvement Plan (CIP), structured around targeted financial, infrastructural, and regulatory supports.

The CIP could include the following suite of incentives, subject to specific eligibility criteria aligned with Wilmot's strategic economic priorities:

- **Tax Increment Equivalent Grants (TIEGs)** – These grants return a portion of the increased property taxes, resulting from development or redevelopment of industrial sites, back to the developer or business for a set period. This makes projects more financially viable and encourages high-value investment.

- **Development Charge Deferrals** – The Township may offer deferrals or even partial exemptions on development charges applicable to qualifying employment land projects, reducing upfront capital costs for industrial users and investors.
- **Municipal Fee Rebates** – Rebates or waivers on site plan application fees, building permit fees, and other municipal charges can be provided to end-users who significantly contribute to job creation and sector diversification
- **Infrastructure Support Programs** – Direct investment by the Township in key infrastructure—such as servicing upgrades, road or utility extensions, and broadband connectivity—helps prepare designated employment sites and signals a partnership approach to development, essential for larger or more complex projects

All incentives should be structured to support investments that deliver measurable benefits to Wilmot Township's economic goals. Priority should be given to projects that:

- Create significant local employment opportunities and support workforce retention
- Target sectors identified as strategic, such as advanced manufacturing, agri-business, logistics, clean technology, or tech-enabled businesses
- Demonstrate readiness to proceed through shovel-ready site status or accelerated development timelines

The successful implementation of an Employment Land CIP can enhance Wilmot's regional competitiveness, contribute to non-residential tax base growth, and facilitate diversification of local economic activity. Regular evaluation and adjustment of incentives—based on market trends, absorption metrics, and feedback from local employers—will ensure the program remains responsive and maximizes its impact.

Recommendation 3: Introduce Prestige Employment and Local Employment Land Use Designations

The Township of Wilmot should introduce new employment land use designations within its Official Plan. This would involve designating Prestige Employment Areas for the Township's larger, high-visibility and strategic employment lands and Local Employment Areas for smaller or isolated clusters that do not meet the scale or policy intent of major employment areas under the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2024).

Under the revised PPS (2024), "employment areas" are defined as clusters of businesses and economic activities including manufacturing, warehousing, research and development, and associated offices, but excluding standalone commercial or institutional uses. This definition places greater emphasis on industrial concentration, goods movement, and long-term protection of lands that serve a regional employment function.

To align with this direction, Wilmot's existing and potential new larger vacant employment areas could be designated as Prestige Employment Areas. These areas would be reserved for high-quality employment areas characterized by enhanced building design, landscaping, and limited outdoor storage, particularly along major arterials or gateway corridors. This approach protects the Township's most strategic employment lands for key investment attraction projects while improve their visual presence and economic competitiveness.

Smaller, fragmented established employment areas, such as those along the Arnold Street corridor – should instead be designated as Local Employment Areas. This designation would accommodate service industrial and light commercial operations, recognizing their local economic contribution without misclassifying them as large employment areas.

The introduction of these two employment designations would:

- Ensure conformity with the new PPS employment area definition
- Protect key prestige employment areas for long-term industrial growth
- Provide clearer land-use signals for investors, developers and the community

- Support a balanced and flexible economic structure that sustains both local enterprise and export-based industries

5.0 Emerging Policy Directions

There are several emerging policy directions which should be considered based on the analysis in this discussion paper.

- Plan for an employment land employment target of 3,230new jobs to 2051 (Growth Share High Projection), which would require somewhere between 26.3 and 95.5 hectares of new employment lands based on an employment density range of 20 - 35 jobs per hectare. The employment target is also inline with the Region's recent Rural Investment Readiness Strategy (RIRS.
- Establish a policy framework to consider adding new employment lands within the Urban Settlement Area, implementing the PPS 2024 and additional local considerations.
- Provide compatibility policies for employment uses and sensitive land uses to avoid (or, if not possible, minimize or mitigate) adverse impacts from or upon employment and agricultural uses. Consider buffering areas to permit light industrial, business park, warehousing, logistics, or service commercial uses that generate minimal off-site impacts but retain the employment character of the area.
- Continue making more efficient use of existing employment areas, including vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities.
- Continue to protect employment areas in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses that require those locations.
- Continue to maintain an employment land inventory, including available lot sizes, and from time to time, continue to update this inventory, taking into consideration new development, expansions, and reurbanization of existing properties.
- Expand CIP incentives to support new employment land development and associated new job creation.

- Encourage a compact and connected land use pattern within and adjacent to employment areas to support active transportation between residential, commercial, institutional and employment uses.

Additions, deletions or revisions to this list may occur through public engagement on this initial **DRAFT** Discussion Paper.

6.0 Next Steps

This Discussion Paper is one of seven papers that are being completed as part of Phase 2: Background Research and Study Preparation of the Township of Wilmot 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 about the Employment Needs for the future of Wilmot Township. Policy directions will follow out of this engagement to outline proposed changes in the New Wilmot Official Plan.

The Discussion Papers are being released in **DRAFT** form to inform public engagement in fall 2025. The Discussion Papers will be updated to reflect additional insights or items arising from public engagement and will include thematic summaries of input received (with a companion engagement report also being prepared). Those FINAL reports shall include recommended policy directions that will inform the development of the Township's new official plan.

The **FINAL** reports and policy directions shall be presented to Township Council as part of the meeting required under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. This meeting is an open session to discuss revisions that may be required to the Township's Official Plan. It is one of several opportunities throughout this project where public input is needed and welcomed.

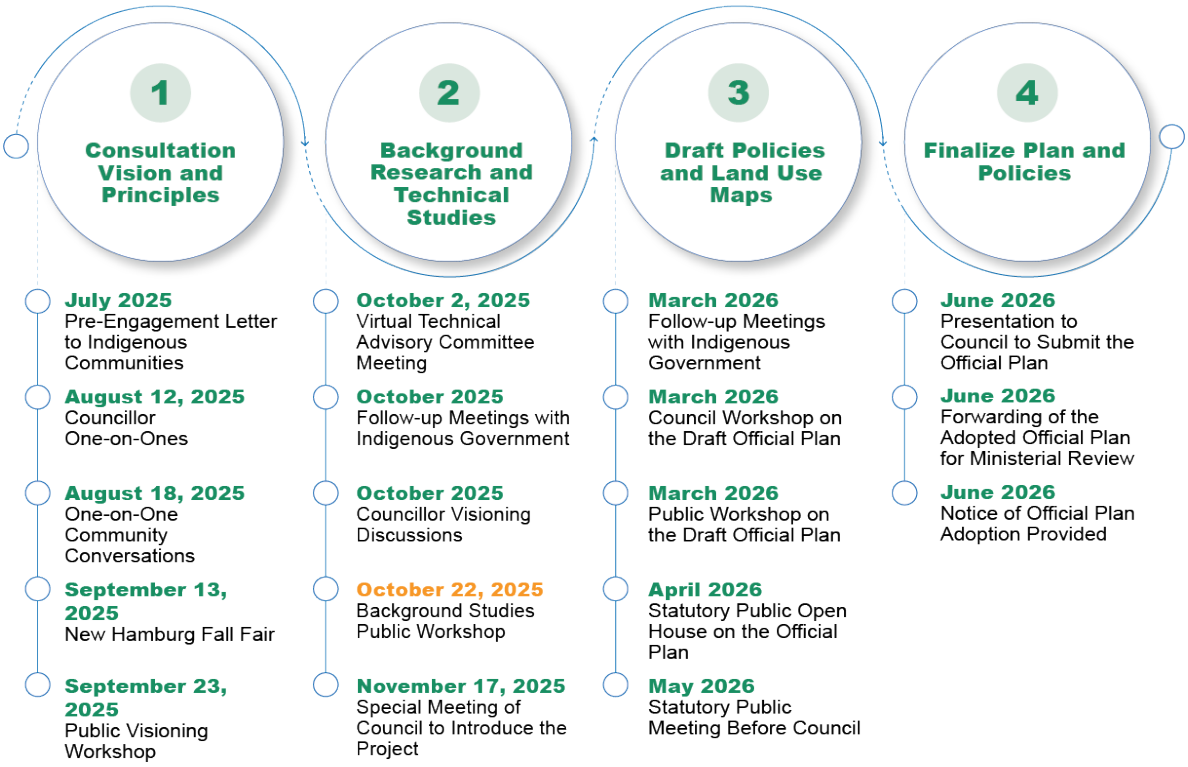


Figure 14: Study Process and Engagement Opportunities

The reports, together with public input, will serve as the basis for developing Wilmot's New Official Plan. The draft New Official Plan will be released for review in 2026 and includes public events in addition to the statutory *Planning Act* process.