

Growth Management and Affordable Housing Monitoring Report 2024



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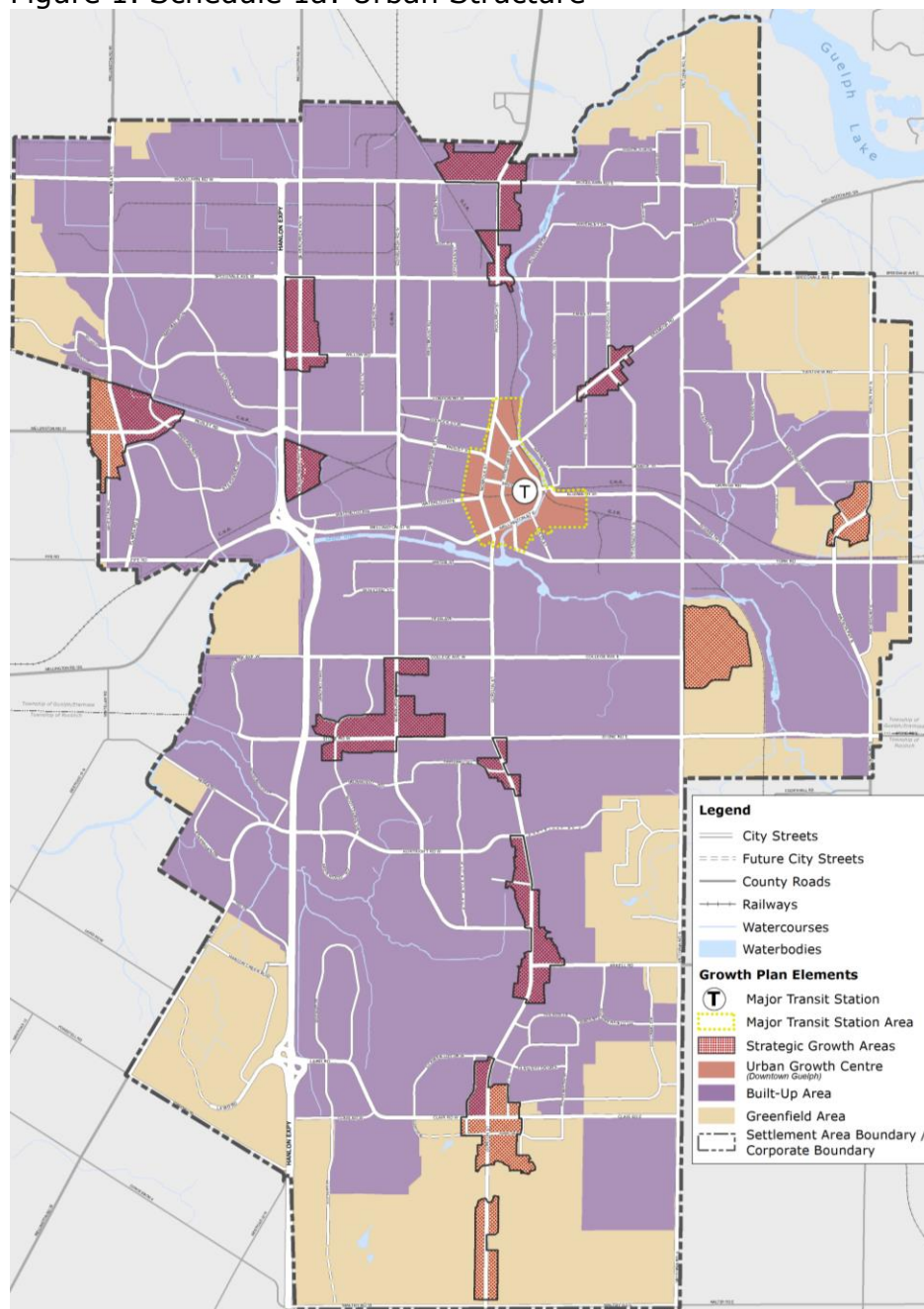
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1. Urban Structure

1.1 Schedule 1a: Urban Structure

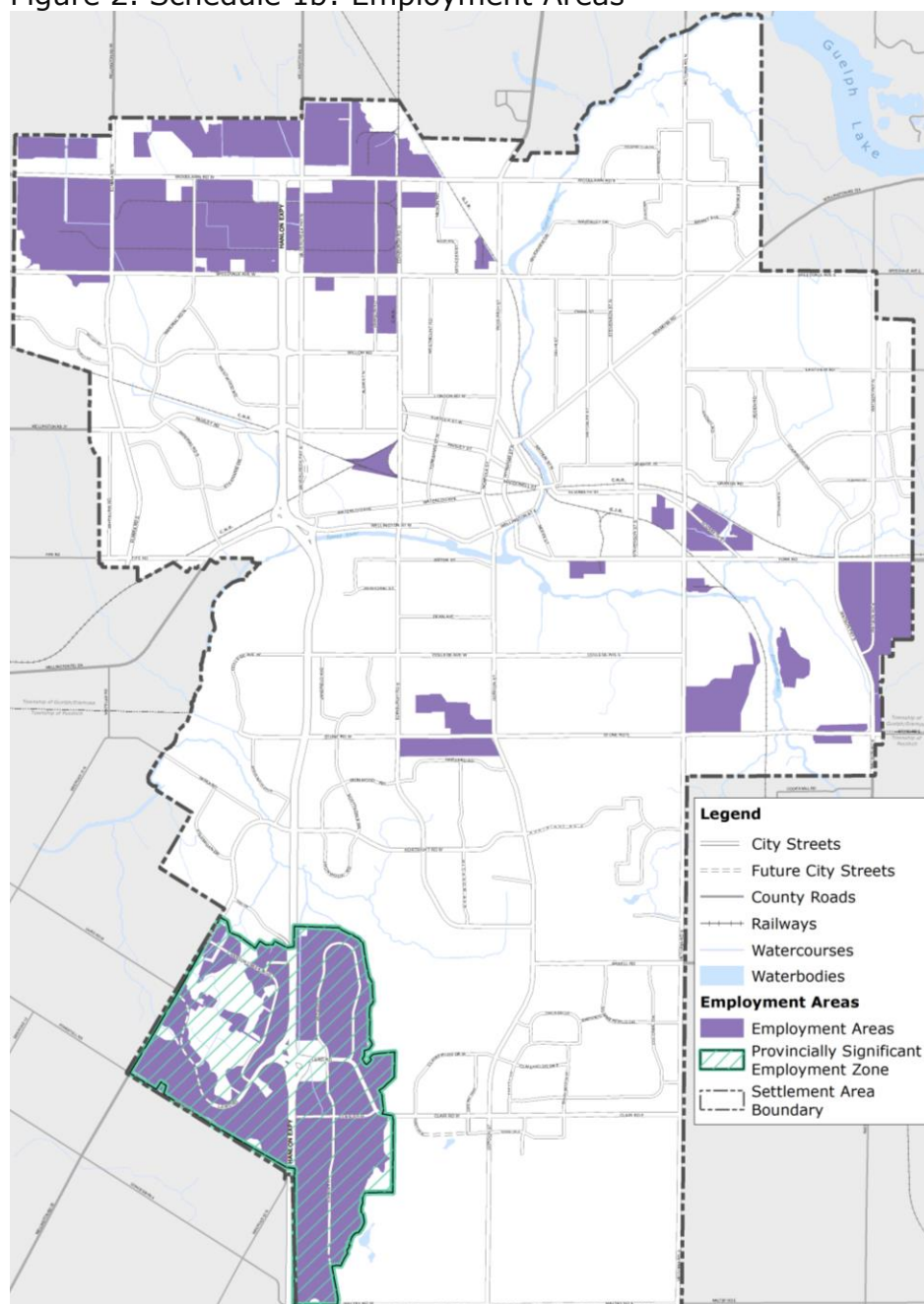
Figure 1. Schedule 1a: Urban Structure



Schedule 1a of the City of Guelph's Official Plan identifies growth policy elements of the [Official Plan](#), including the downtown, the designated greenfield area and the built-up area, all major geographic divisions in Guelph that have intensification targets, or density targets. The information presented in this report is based on the policies of Guelph's Official Plan, as approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 16, 2024. An update to the Official Plan to align with the updated [Provincial Planning Statement](#), 2024 is anticipated to be presented to council for adoption in Q1 2026.

1.2 Schedule 1b: Urban Structure (Employment Areas)

Figure 2. Schedule 1b: Employment Areas



Schedule 1b of the City of Guelph's Official Plan identifies the employment policy elements of the [Official Plan](#). The information presented in this report is based on the policies of Guelph's Official Plan, as approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 16, 2024. An update to the Official Plan to align with the policies of the [Provincial Planning Statement](#), 2024 (PPS) is anticipated to be presented to council in Q1 2026. The PPS no longer references Provincially Significant Employment Zones, and the employment areas within the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan are proposed to be amended to align with the Minister's modifications to the employment designations within the secondary plan.

2. Population and employment

2.1 City of Guelph population statistics

Figure 3. City of Guelph population growth over time

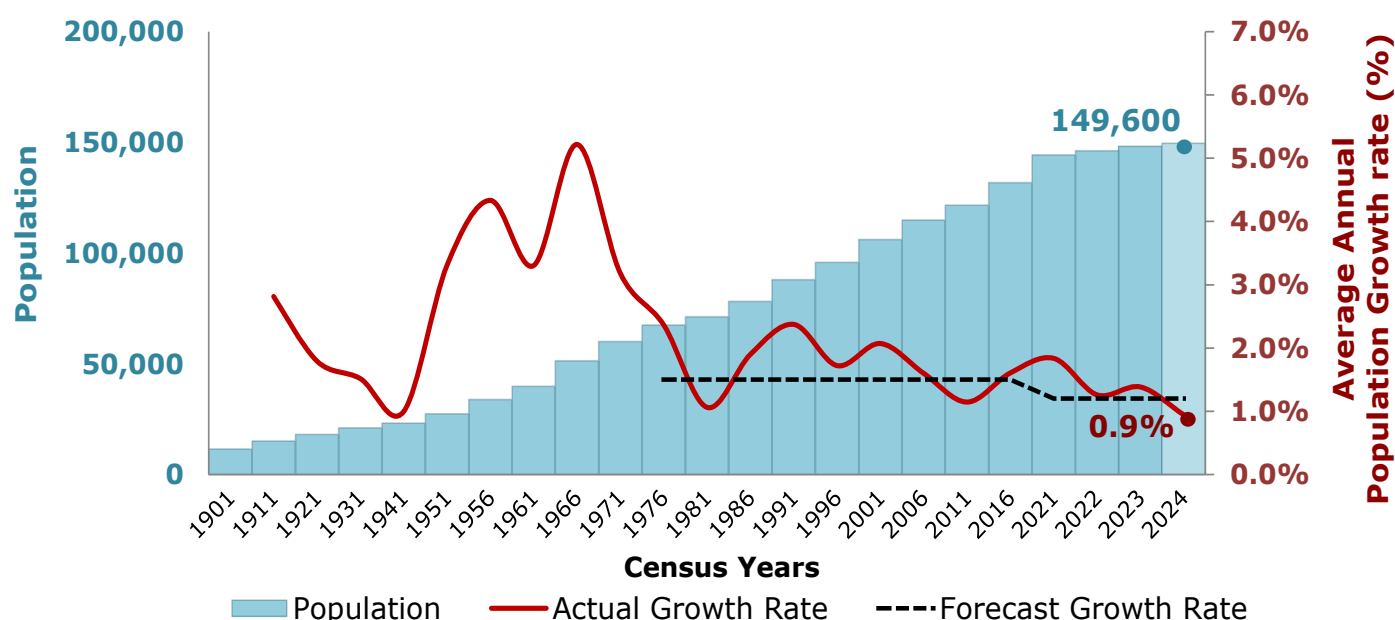


Table 1. City of Guelph population statistics

Indicator	May 2021 (Census)	December 2024 (estimated)
Population	143,740	149,600
Occupied dwellings	56,480	59,801
Average household size (persons per dwelling)	2.5	2.5
Area (hectares)	8,835	8,926
Population density (persons per hectare)	14.96	16.76
Gross dwelling density (units per hectare)	6.39	6.7

Guelph's growth rate continues to meet long-term projections

Guelph's [Official Plan](#), which implements Shaping Guelph's growth management strategy, plans for a long-term average rate of growth of 1.2 per cent, or 947 units constructed per year to achieve the forecast population of 208,000¹ (201,000²) by 2051. The City's

¹ The projected population including the net census undercoverage. Note: the net census undercoverage refers to the difference between the number of people who should have been counted in the census and the number who were counted. Including the net census undercoverage is a more accurate representation of the number of people living in a census geography, however, it is not an official census population and cannot be compared to other census indicators.

² The projected population excluding the net census undercoverage.

previous growth management strategy forecast a growth rate of 1.5 per cent or 1,100 units per year to 2031. The reduction in the growth rate to 2051 during the latter part of the forecast period due in part to the aging of the City's existing population. According to Shaping Guelph's [Long-Term Population and Housing Growth Analysis](#), net migration is anticipated to be the largest component of forecast population growth in Guelph to 2051.

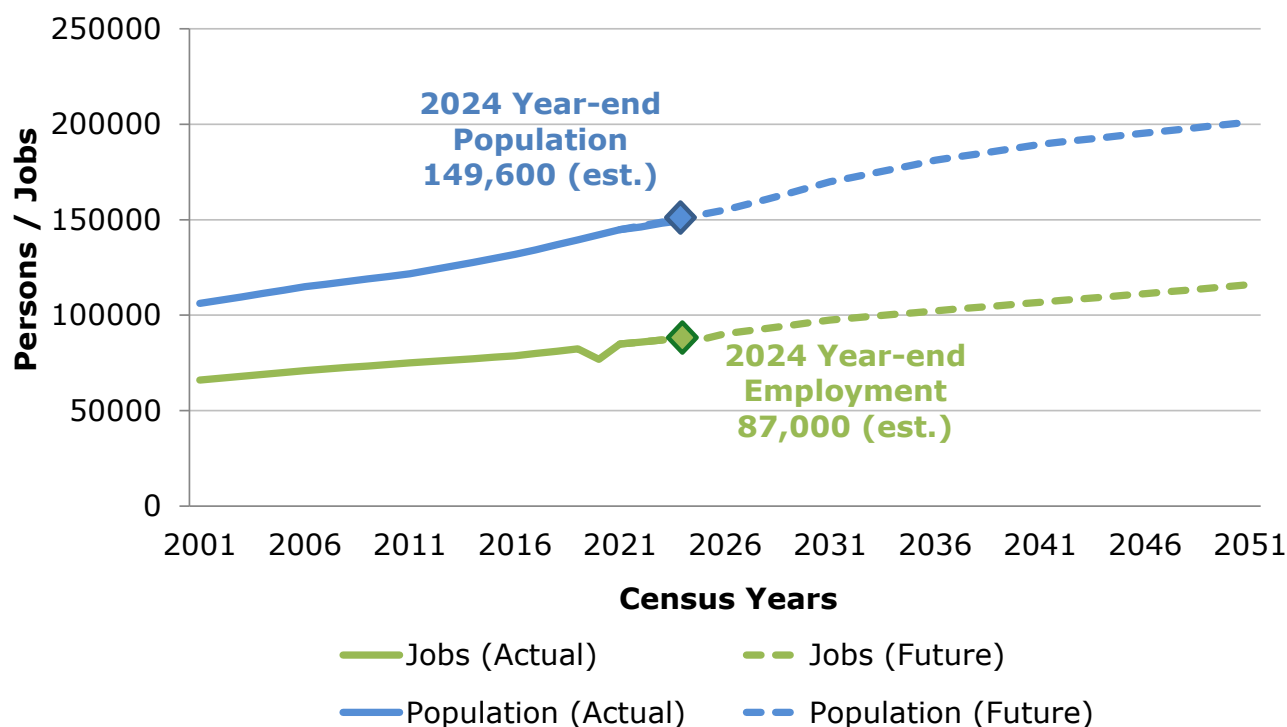
With an estimated population of 149,600³ at the end of 2024, Guelph's population grew by 0.9 per cent over the year, slightly below the City's long-term average annual growth rate of 1.2 per cent per year to 2051. Guelph continues to remain on track to achieve the forecast population of 208,000 (201,000 excluding the net census undercoverage) by the year 2051.

The high rates of growth in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1990s, as seen in Figure 3 above are in large part due to the annexation of neighbouring township lands.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, and City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

2.2 Population and employment forecast to 2051

Figure 4. Population and Employment Forecast to 2051



Population and Employment are on track to meet 2051 forecasts

The City of Guelph is planning to achieve a population of 208,000 (201,000, excluding the net census undercoverage) and a minimum of 116,000 jobs by the year 2051. To achieve the growth forecasts, Guelph will need to accommodate an estimated additional 51,400 people and 29,000 jobs by the year 2051.

³ The current population excluding the net census undercoverage.

Based on residential building permit activity, the estimated population for the City of Guelph at the end of 2024 increased to 149,600⁴ people, excluding the net census undercoverage, or 154,800 including the net census undercoverage. Non-residential building permit activity and work at home jobs from new residential developments increased the number of jobs in Guelph to an estimated 87,000 jobs by the end of 2024. Guelph's unemployment rate increased to 6.9 per cent in December 2024, up from 5.4 per cent in December 2024⁵. Across the country, unemployment rates have been steadily rising over the same period, increasing from 6.2 per cent in Ontario in December 2023 to 7.3 per cent in December 2024, and across Canada the unemployment rate has increased from 5.8 per cent in December 2023 to 6.7 per cent in December 2024⁵. According to the Ontario labour market report, the unemployment rate in Ontario increased due to job losses in the finance, insurance, real estate, and transportation and warehousing industries. The unemployment rate is expected to increase across the country in 2025, particularly among industry sectors that rely heavily on exports to the USA.

Sources: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024 and Ontario labour market report, 2024.

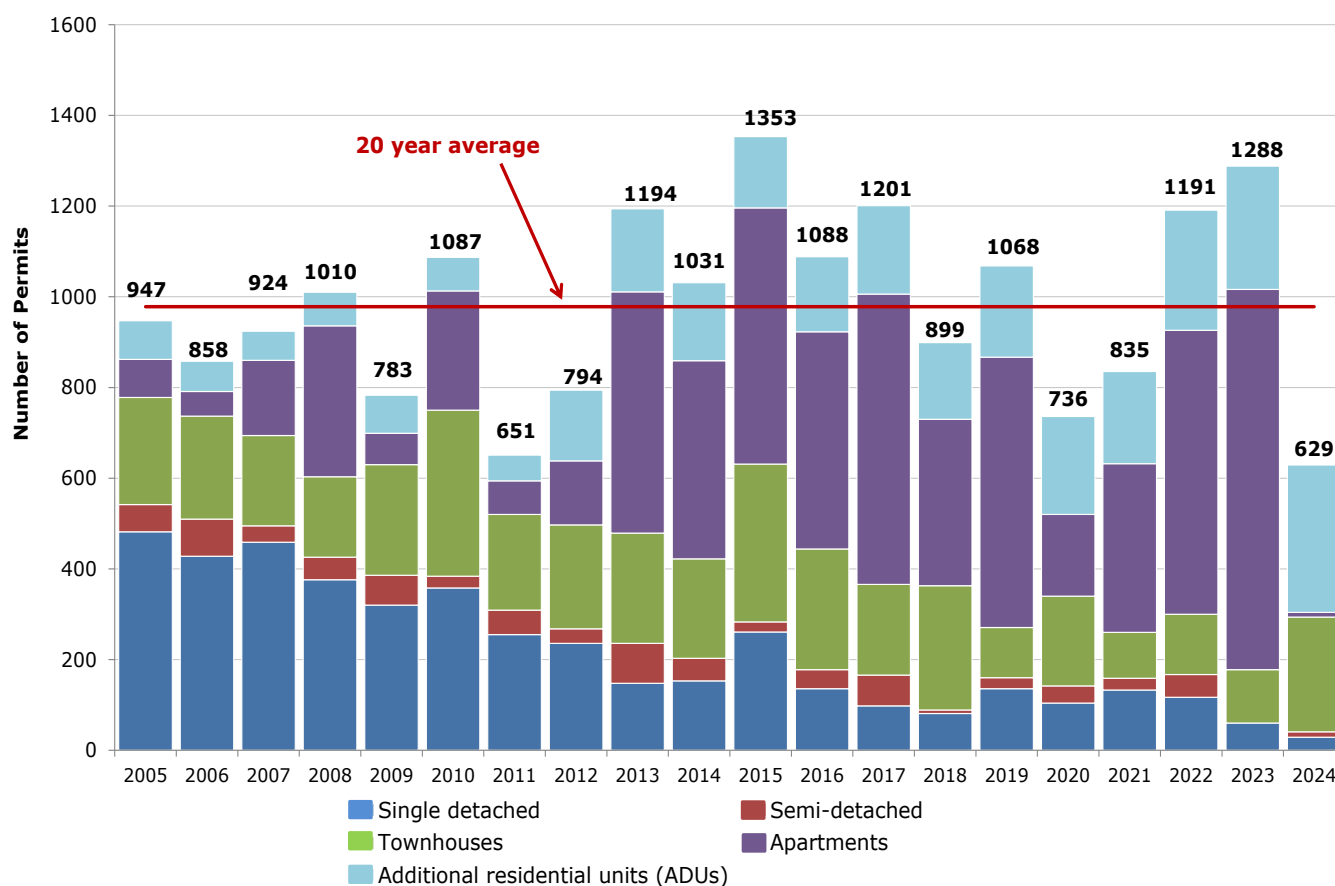
3. Building permit activity

3.1 20-year historical building permits by dwelling type

Figure 5. Issued Building Permits by dwelling type, 2005-2024

⁴ Population excludes the net census undercoverage.

⁵ Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0380-01 Labour force characteristics, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted](#)



Residential permits remain strong over the long term⁶

Permits were issued for the creation of 629 newly constructed dwellings in 2024, which is the fewest number of residential permits in Guelph over the last 20 years. According to the [Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#) (CMHC), housing starts increased by 2 per cent across Canada last year over 2023, primarily due to stronger construction in Alberta, Quebec, and the Maritime provinces. This was particularly noticeable in Calgary, Edmonton, and Montreal due to increases in purpose-built rental construction. Across most other areas of the country, housing starts declined. Housing starts in Toronto fell 20 per cent in 2024 over the previous year, while Ottawa and Vancouver both experienced a 15 per cent decline. Across Ontario as a whole, there was a 16 per cent decline in housing starts between 2023 and 2024.

Several factors have contributed to a reduction in housing construction according to several sources, including the Canadian and Mortgage Housing Corporation and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Rising construction costs resulting from inflation over the past several years, supply chain issues that continue following COVID which have also resulted in increased material costs, skilled construction labour shortages continue, and higher borrowing rates have increased homeownership costs, as well as making financing projects significantly more expensive for developers and builders. While these interest rates have started to decline from their peak last year, it will take some time for the housing market to adjust. The Canadian and Housing Mortgage Corporation

⁶ Note: only issued residential permits that resulted in the creation of a new unit in 2024 are included in the permit summaries of this report. It does not include revised residential building permits, or permits that were cancelled or voided.

anticipates that housing construction in Central Canada will continue to decline in 2025, particularly due to the trade conflicts between Canada and the U.S.A., which began in early 2025. Employment conditions have also weakened across most regions of Canada, and a cap on international student admissions to post-secondary institutions introduced last year are also both having an impact on the housing market.

In Guelph, additional residential units (ADUs) were the dominant type of unit constructed in 2024, representing 52 per cent of all new units constructed. This follows the trend among similar communities across the country where more people are building secondary suites. This is due to a combination of factors, including the rising cost of housing, the aging population, and government initiatives to address housing shortages. Secondary suites offer homeowners a way to generate rental income for homeowners, increases the housing supply, and provides options for multigenerational living.

Townhouse construction in Guelph was strong in 2024, representing 40 per cent of all newly created units, while single and semi-detached dwellings represented 7 per cent of all new units. There were 10 permits for new apartment units in 2024, primarily in buildings that added units through the conversion of existing amenity or maintenance spaces.

When considering longer-term historical housing trends, townhouse and apartment units continue to be the dominant types of newly constructed housing units. The shift in the proportion of constructed dwelling types away from lower density forms of housing is in large part due to decreased housing affordability, policies aimed at increasing the unit mix, and demographic changes. The shift away from the construction of predominantly lower density forms of housing towards a more balanced housing stock in Guelph as highlighted in [Section 5.3](#) of this report aligns with the City's growth management strategy, and the City's [Official Plan](#).

The local builder community has indicated that demand for new construction is low. Presales for multi-residential and condominium construction are slow, which reflects current market conditions. As a result, many builders are pausing construction of their approved site plans, and many are reconsidering their business plans to shift towards the construction of rental units. To help improve construction of housing units locally, the City of Guelph has committed to ongoing discussions with the local developer and builder community around program and policy review and identifying opportunities for process improvements. Further to this, the City of Guelph is considering a few options to help advance the construction of approved sites and remove additional barriers to construction, including: extending the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw transition by 2 years for approved site plans; reviving the Brownfield Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that would provide incentives for rehabilitation of contaminated sites; reviewing the property taxation structure for multi-residential; changing the organizational structure, including a dedicated team for site plan; developing internal guidance to standardize review and commenting processes to enhance consistency for the development and builder community; and, committing to restructure grant funding if units are not materializing. Enhancing Guelph's processes and development incentives would help to reduce barriers to new construction and help to increase Guelph's competitive advantage among surrounding city centres.

Guelph is committed to increasing the availability of new housing units by reducing barriers to construction, including infrastructure upgrades where servicing capacity challenges act as a barrier to new growth. Over the last few years, Guelph has received

nearly \$77 million in provincial and federal grants to help reduce these infrastructure barriers and ensure service delivery, such as transit investments helps to pace with population growth.

Housing pledge (provincial housing target)

To increase housing supply across Ontario, the Province has set a goal of building at least 1.5 million homes by 2031 and has assigned the province's 50 largest municipalities with housing targets to accelerate the construction of their housing supply to support the housing goal. The Provincial housing target for Guelph is 18,000 new units between 2021 and 2031. This target, which was issued to municipalities following council adoption of OPA 80, exceeds the housing forecast in OPA 80 of 11,900 units to the year 2031 by 6,100 units, resulting in a new target of 18,000 units. From January 2021 to year end 2024, permits for the creation of 3,943 units have been issued to contribute both towards the Official Plan housing target and the provincial housing target. These issued permits translate into housing starts once construction has begun on these residential units.

Since committing to the City's [Housing Pledge in 2023](#), staff have been removing barriers to increasing housing supply. The City's housing ready efforts have advanced all eight of the City-led Housing Pledge actions, including:

- Amendments to the Official Plan (OPA 98) and Zoning By-law to permit up to four units as-of-right on a low-density residential property to help address missing middle housing
- Key policy work that includes more housing-enabling regulations such as Municipal Comprehensive Review for the Official Plan, approval of the Clair Maltby Secondary Plan and Official Plan Amendment to the Downtown Secondary Plan, and the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law
- Streamlining the development review and approvals process
- Improving infrastructure and servicing, which includes advocating for increased funding
- Advancing progress monitoring

The most recent status update to the City's Housing Pledge was provided in the [Housing in Guelph Semi-Annual Update report](#). Staff will continue to share progress in future semi-annual reports.

Achievement of the Housing Pledge is measured through housing starts as tracked by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The Province reports on the progress for each municipality through the official [Ontario housing supply progress tracker](#). However, the provincial tracker has not been updated since December 2024 with data current to October 2024. It is estimated that there were 1,147 housing starts in Guelph in 2024, or 76.5 per cent of Guelph's target of 1,500 housing starts for last year. Since the housing supply progress tracker has not been updated with data more recently than October 2024, this housing starts figure for Guelph in 2024 is estimated and has also been adjusted to include 267 additional residential units (ADUs) in the 2024 housing starts that were not included in 2023 by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The Province of Ontario has not updated data on their [housing tracker](#) since October 2024 and at the time of writing this report it was unclear what the annual provincial housing target for Guelph will be for the year 2025.

The Building Faster Fund (BFF) is a provincial program in Ontario that provides funding to municipalities to support housing-enabling infrastructure and other related costs. This

fund distributes up to \$400 million each year to eligible municipalities who achieve at least 80 per cent of their housing starts target, with additional financial bonuses for municipalities who exceed their targets. With 1,147 housing starts, Guelph achieved 76.5 per cent of its target for 2024 (remains under review).

It should be noted that in the 2025 Ontario Budget, the Province reduced its forecast for housing starts across the province each year between 2025 to 2027 by approximately 20% to better reflect the current housing market conditions.

Sources: Building Permit Summaries, City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024, Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2024, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, 2024.

3.2 Monthly building permits by dwelling type for 2024

Table 2. Monthly building permit summaries by dwelling type for 2024

Month	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouses	Apartments	Additional dwelling units	Totals	Demolitions	Net Totals
January	1	0	0	0	23	24	0	24
February	1	0	54	0	22	77	0	77
March	2	0	24	0	20	46	0	46
April	1	0	0	1	26	28	1	27
May	2	0	0	0	18	20	2	18
June	2	0	0	3	28	33	1	32
July	3	2	72	0	25	102	1	101
August	4	4	6	0	34	48	1	47
September	3	0	88	4	34	129	1	128
October	1	4	3	1	37	46	6	40
November	9	2	0	0	31	42	1	41
December	0	0	6	1	27	34	5	29
Totals	29	12	253	10	325	629	19	610

Overall housing mix continues to be generally reflective of Official Plan projections

The proportional split among housing types constructed over recent years continues to be generally reflective of the City's long-term projected housing mix to 2051, which anticipates a lower proportion of new single and semi-detached units, and a higher proportion of new townhouse and apartment units constructed annually.

Several developments began construction in 2024, including the newly approved townhouse and apartment development at 855 and 927 Victoria Road South (183 townhouses and 303 apartments), 824 Woolwich Street (168 townhouses and 69 apartments), and the last remaining permits were issued for a townhouse development at 55 Mullin Drive (110 townhouses). Construction of ADUs remained strong in 2024 with 325 new units created. Over the last 10 years, an average of 217 ADUs have been created each year. Note, these are not included in the short term housing supply numbers.

Several property owners took advantage of recent changes to provincial regulations that now allow up to three residential units on qualifying properties as-of-right, without

requiring an amendment to Guelph's Zoning Bylaw which added a combined 6 additional residential units to the City's housing stock. On December 8, 2024, Guelph City Council approved a Zoning Bylaw amendment to allow up to 4 residential units on low density residential properties. This amendment came into effect on January 8, 2025.

Residential demolitions create opportunities for new housing growth

Guelph approved 19 residential demolitions in 2024, which were all single detached units. These demolitions are anticipated to result in the construction of at least 173 new residential units.

These demolitions are expected to result in the creation of three single detached dwellings, 30 semi-detached dwellings, 20 townhouses, 99 apartments, and 18 additional dwelling units (ADUs). Two demolitions are to allow for the future interchange along the Hanlon Expressway at Stone Road West and will not result in any new units, while the last demolition will allow for the continued expansion of the industrial business park along Southgate Drive.

Source: Building Permit Summaries, City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

3.3 10-year residential permit summary by Urban Structure area

Table 3. Annual building permit summary: Dwelling types by Urban Structure area⁷

Unit type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Average
Single Detached (BUA)	35	20	22	42	74	41	72	33	27	18	384	38
Single Detached (DGA)	226	116	76	39	62	63	61	84	33	11	771	77
Semi-Detached (BUA)	0	4	0	0	0	30	8	6	0	12	60	6
Semi-Detached (DGA)	22	38	68	8	24	8	18	44	0	0	230	23
Townhouse (BUA)	35	37	64	30	44	166	84	44	118	118	740	74
Townhouse (DGA)	313	229	136	244	67	32	17	89	0	135	1262	126
Apartments (BUA)	553	334	521	82	165	87	233	377	126	10	2488	249
Apartments (DGA)	12	145	119	285	431	93	139	249	712	0	2185	219
ADU (BUA)	135	136	136	140	167	163	152	203	212	252	1696	170
ADU (DGA)	22	29	59	29	34	53	51	62	60	73	472	47
City-wide (BUA)	758	531	743	294	450	487	549	663	483	410	5368	537
City-wide (DGA)	595	557	458	605	618	249	286	528	805	219	4920	492
City-wide (total)	1353	1088	1201	899	1068	736	835	1191	1288	629	10288	1029

The range and mix of newly constructed housing aligns with the City's growth vision and policies

Low density housing trends

The construction of single and semi-detached housing has remained steady over the past 10 years, averaging 145 units per year, focussed largely within plans of subdivision in the designated greenfield area. In 2024, the rate of construction of single detached housing continued to decrease, however, unlike in past years, construction of single detached

⁷ In Table 3. Annual building permit summary: Dwelling types by Urban Structure area, the following acronyms apply: BUA refers to the City's built-up area and DGA refers to the City's designated greenfield area. These urban structure geographies can be seen on Schedule 1a of the City's Official Plan as shown in Figure 1. Schedule 1a: Urban Structure.

housing in the built-up area outpaced construction in the designated greenfield area. In 2024, 73 per cent of all new low-density housing constructed was focussed in built-up area, while over the last 10 years, 69 per cent of all new low-density housing has been constructed in the designated greenfield area. Overall, low-density residential construction continues to be outpaced by the construction of townhomes and apartments, especially within the built-up area.

High density housing trends

Over the last 10 years, 53% of apartments have been constructed within the built-up area,. However, in 2024, all new apartment construction was located within the built-up area. When including additional residential units, apartments have become the dominant form of newly constructed dwelling units city-wide, representing 66 per cent of all new dwellings constructed over the past 10 years. Apartment construction is expected to continue to remain strong over the longer term, which will contribute to the achievement of Guelph's growth targets, including the intensification target in the built-up area, the Downtown density target, designated greenfield area density target, and the density targets within the strategic growth areas.

Overall housing trends

While there are annual variations in the mix of constructed housing types, over the past decade, townhouses and apartments have been the dominant form of housing type constructed, aligning with provincial forecasts and the policies of Guelph's [Official Plan](#), contributing to a more balanced range and mix of housing available in Guelph and offering greater housing choice.

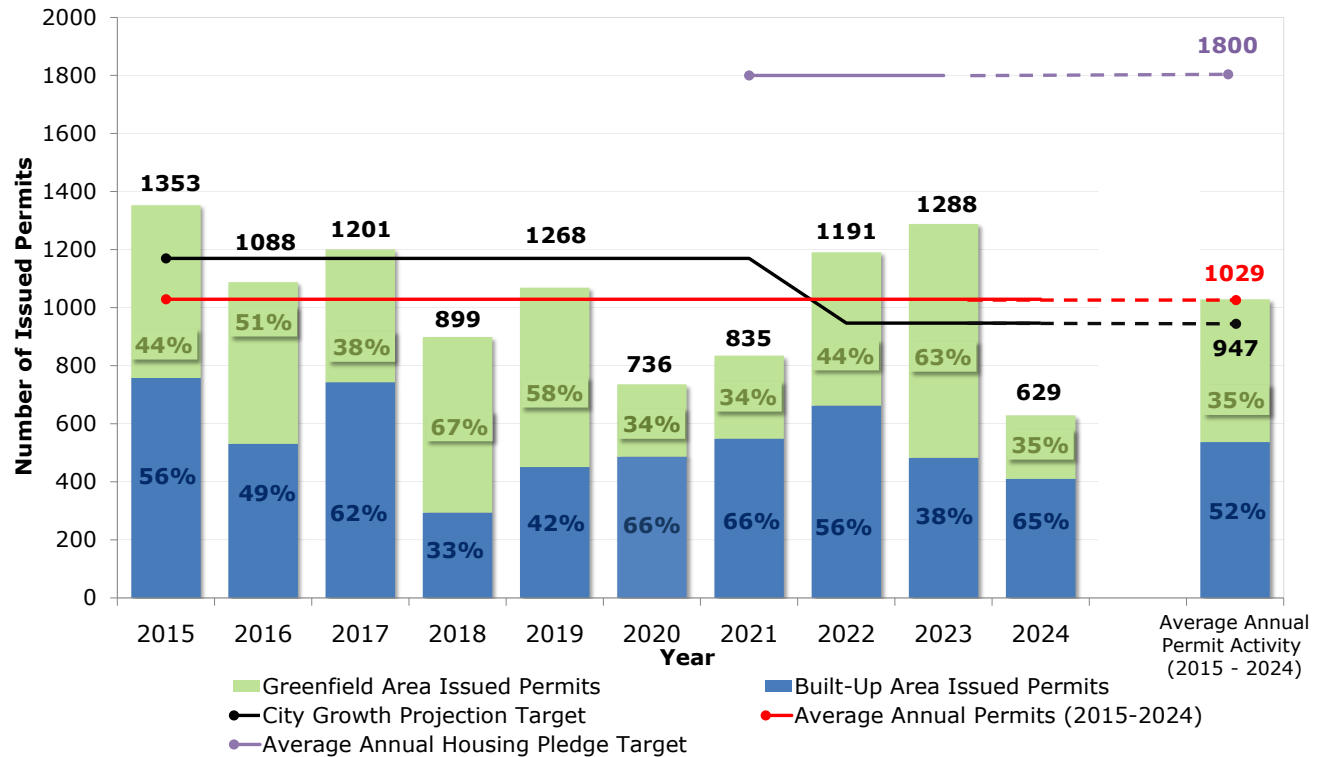
Source: Building Permit Summaries, City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

4. Growth Targets

4.1 Built-up area

4.1.1 10-year built-up area rate of intensification

Figure 6. Residential permits by built-up and designated greenfield area.



The long-term rate of intensification remains strong

The City's [Official Plan](#) sets a minimum intensification target of 46% for all new residential development occurring annually within the delineated built-up area to the year 2051. Much of the residential development in the built-up area has been the result of apartment construction, primarily through redevelopment of properties in the City's Downtown and areas where intensification has been prioritized along major roads and within Guelph's strategic growth areas (SGAs).

In 2024, Guelph achieved an intensification rate of 65 per cent, which is above the annual intensification target due in large part to the construction of additional residential units, 78 per cent, or 252 of which were in the built-up area of Guelph.

Guelph City Council approved 4 development applications in 2024, all of which were located in the built-up area. These include: 1563 Gordon Street (150 townhomes and 8 single detached units); a development at 1170 Gordon Street (120 apartments and 22 townhomes); an apartment building at 303 Speedvale Avenue East (48 apartment units); and, 14 Stevenson Street North (10 townhouse units). One additional development at 140 Hadati Road was approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) for 24 townhomes. Combined, these approved developments added 382 units to the City's housing supply in the built-up area in 2024.

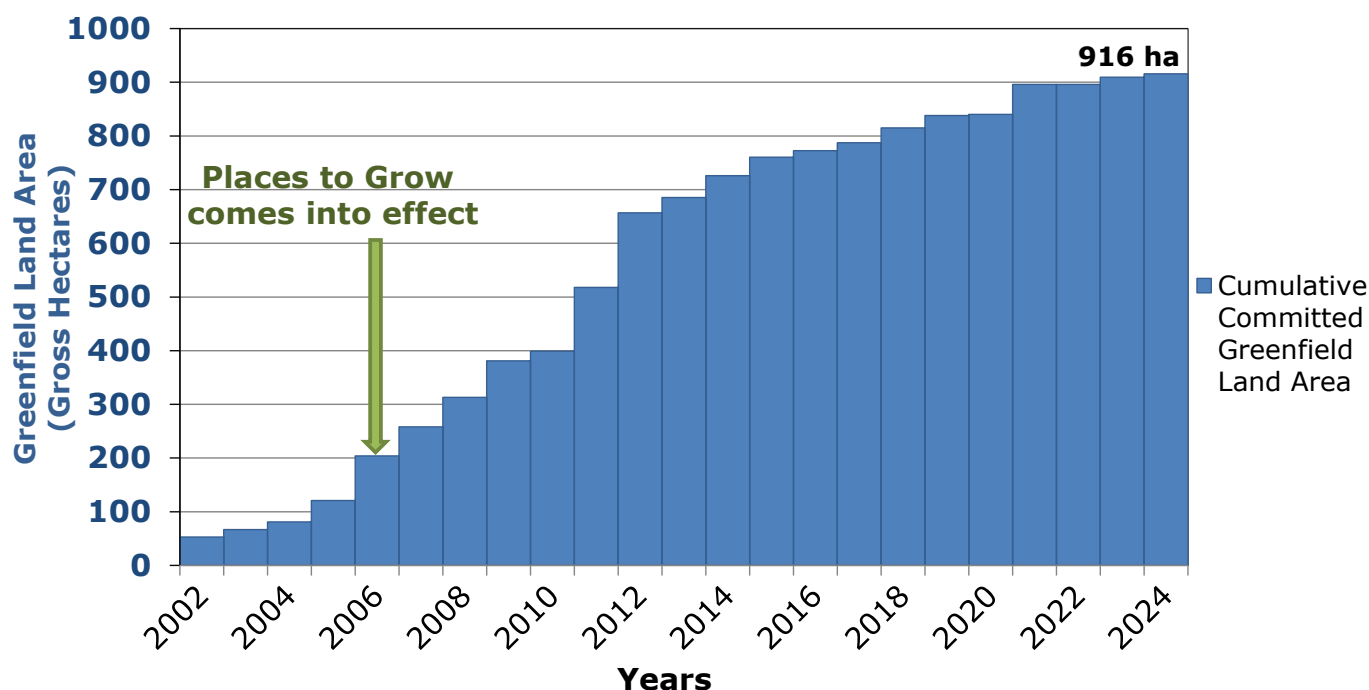
Over the last 10 years, Guelph has on average been exceeding the minimum intensification target, with an average intensification rate of 52 per cent over the past decade.

Source: Building Permit Summaries, City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

4.2 Designated greenfield area

4.2.1 Committed greenfield lands (gross area) 2002-2024

Figure 7. Cumulative committed greenfield lands



Development in the designated greenfield area is in line with Official Plan policies

The designated greenfield area is delineated on Schedule 1a of the [Official Plan](#), as shown in Figure 1 of this report. Development within the greenfield area is to be compact and occur at densities that support walkable communities, cycling and transit and promote live/work opportunities.

Figure 7, above, illustrates the cumulative rate at which lands are being committed for development each year within the designated greenfield area. Prior to the effective date of the Ontario Growth Plan in 2006, the designated greenfield area included lands with existing planning approvals, which had not yet been constructed. For this reason, the chart illustrates a timeline prior to the effective date of the Growth Plan. Through the annexation of the Dolime Quarry lands in 2021, and the conversion of the non-settlement area to designated greenfield area through Official Plan Amendment 80, the designated greenfield area increased by 243 hectares. By the end of 2024, 916 hectares, or 39 per cent of the City's 2353 hectares of designated greenfield area had planning commitments, inclusive of natural areas protected through the plan of subdivision process.

Contributing to the increase in the committed lands in Guelph's designated greenfield area was the registration of a phase of the plan of subdivision at 635 Woodlawn Road

East, a new secondary school site at 388 Arkell Road, and an employment parcel in the Southgate Business Park all received approvals in 2024, contributing to the increase in greenfield land area with planning commitments.

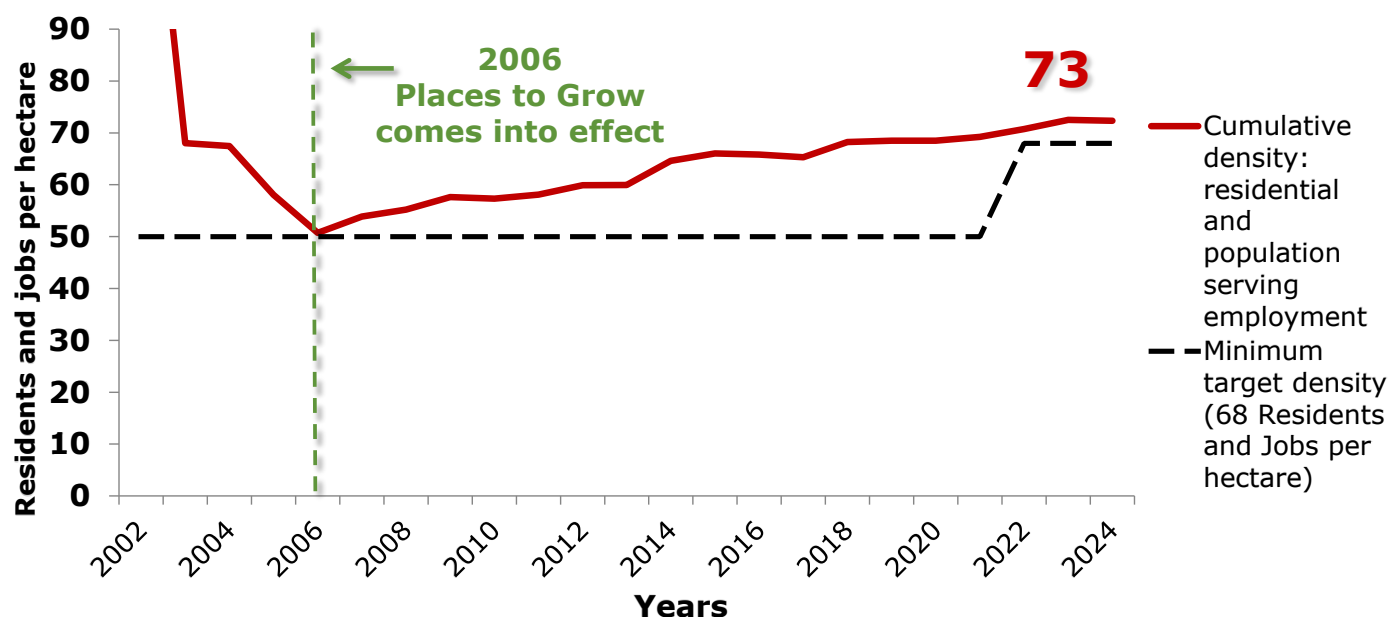
Several future developments in the designated greenfield area are anticipated to increase the number of committed greenfield lands as additional phases of greenfield plans of subdivision become registered over the coming years. A few of these subdivisions include: the remaining phases of 635 Woodlawn Road East; 55 & 75 Cityview Drive North; 20 & 37 Cityview Drive North; and, the remaining phase of 1159 Victoria Road South.

Both the Guelph Innovation District, as amended by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 16, 2024, and the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan, which came into effect on March 6, 2024, will provide additional opportunities for future development in Guelph's designated greenfield area. As development applications within these secondary plan areas are approved, they will further increase the quantity of committed lands in the designated greenfield area.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

4.2.2 Greenfield area cumulative density within committed lands

Figure 8. Greenfield area resident and job density on committed lands



Committed⁸ greenfield lands are meeting the minimum greenfield density target

The method for calculating greenfield densities has changed over time. Guelph's current [Official Plan](#), which is based on the policy framework of A Place to Grow (2020), excludes employment areas and all natural areas and features that are mapped in Guelph's Official Plan as part of the City's natural heritage system in the density calculation, which came into effect in 2022 through Official Plan Amendment 80. Under previous Provincial policy

⁸ Committed refers to lands within registered plans of subdivision, lands that have been rezoned outside of plans of subdivision, or severances with approved developments.

frameworks, the greenfield area density was calculated across the entire designated greenfield area, excluding only those areas where provincial plans and policies prohibited development. This means that lower density employment areas were considered in the greenfield density calculation, as well as portions of the City's natural heritage system, such as buffers to natural areas and features, and restoration areas that do not prohibit development under provincial policy. The chart above depicts the cumulative greenfield density using the revised method for calculating the greenfield area density, applied retroactively dating back to 2002.

Committed lands within Guelph's designated greenfield area are currently estimated to be achieving a density of 73 residents and jobs per hectare, which remained steady from 2023. Guelph's Official Plan targets a minimum density of 68 residents and jobs per hectare in the designated greenfield area.

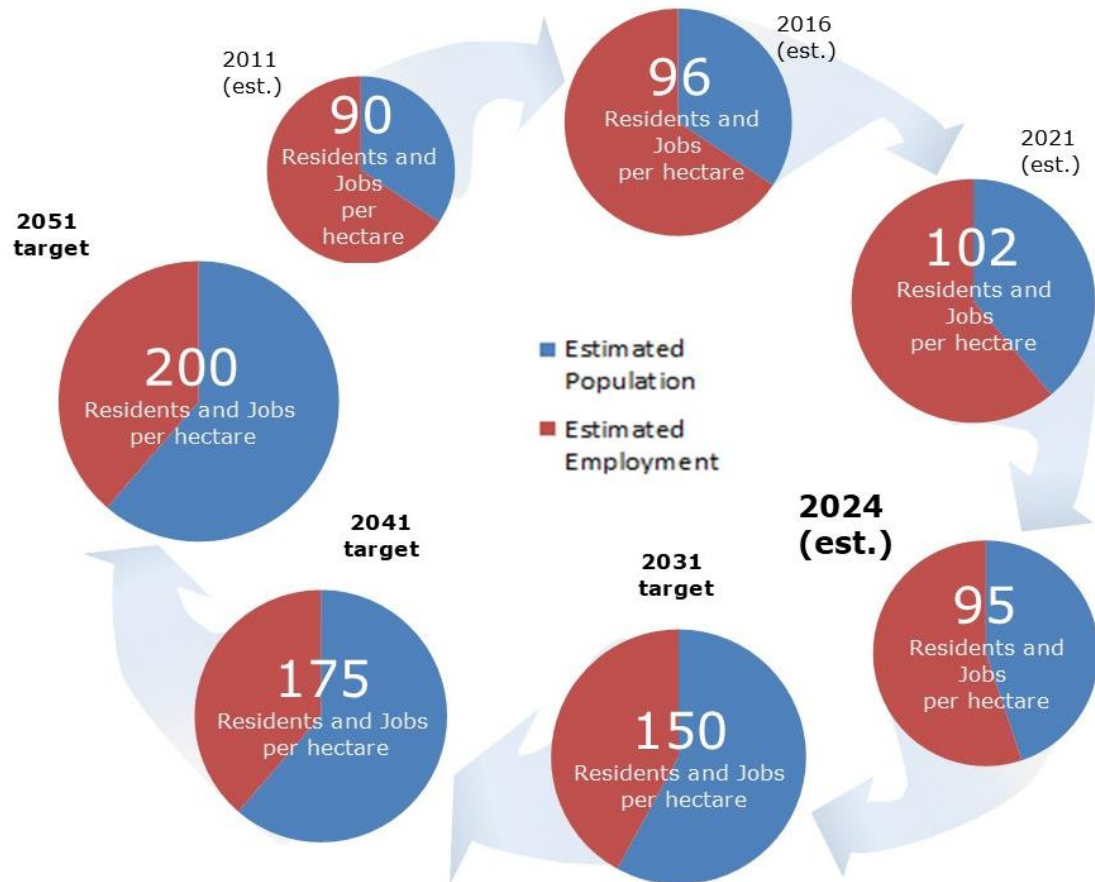
In the chart above, an initial density spike in 2002 on the first lands to be committed in the designated greenfield area was due to the approval of several job dense commercial developments and higher density apartment developments. In the following years, the designated greenfield area density declined due to the registration of plans of subdivision that were submitted prior to the 2006 Growth Plan, comprised largely of low-density forms of housing. Greenfield densities began to trend steadily upwards starting in 2009, reflective of plans of subdivision that were registered after the 2006 Growth Plan came into effect, which met the policies of the Growth Plan at the time.

A New [Provincial Planning Statement](#) came into effect on October 20, 2024, which consolidates and replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020. Guelph's Official Plan is currently under review to be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, with the first phase anticipated to be presented to Guelph City Council for adoption in Q1 2026.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

4.3 Downtown density

Figure 9. Downtown population and employment density, 2024



The city is on track to achieve its Downtown density target

Guelph's [Official Plan](#) plans to accommodate a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031, 175 residents and jobs per hectare by 2041, and 200 residents and jobs per hectare by the year 2051 in the Downtown. These Downtown density targets were adopted through Guelph's growth management strategy as part of Official Plan Amendment 80. The boundaries of Guelph's Downtown are also aligned with the boundaries of Guelph's Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA).

In 2024, the density in Downtown Guelph declined to 95 residents and jobs per hectare from 105 residents and jobs per hectare in 2023 following the relocation of the Co-operators Insurance headquarters to the Hanlon Creek Business Park, resulting in 1,200 jobs moving out of the downtown. It is anticipated that a portion of these jobs will return to Guelph's downtown core when the former Co-operators downtown building is converted into the Conestoga College satellite campus. The satellite campus is now anticipated to open in 2028, following an announcement of the delayed opening, originally slated for September 2025.

For the second year in a row, there was a decline in building permit activity downtown, based on long-term historic averages. Development in 2024 in Guelph's Downtown that contributed to additional growth and an increased overall density included a renovation to an existing apartment building that added a new apartment, three additional residential

units were created downtown, and the Stepping Stone shelter is expanding their operations, adding 490 square metres of floorspace downtown.

Future development in Guelph's Downtown will continue to contribute to additional growth and progress towards achievement of the downtown density targets. A development at 55 Baker Street that was approved in 2023 to allow for two 15-storey residential towers, is proposing to add 353 residential units to the City's short-term housing supply, along with 529 square metres of commercial space. Future large development sites Downtown where growth is anticipated include the last phase of Metalworks on Arthur Street South, along with the future development of the W.C. Woods Plant 2 site on Elizabeth Street, both of which will contribute to future density increases Downtown.

A [Downtown Heights Study](#) was completed in early 2025, which reviewed the maximum permitted building heights Downtown and was adopted by Guelph City Council on April 8th, 2025 through Official Plan Amendment 106. This amendment seeks to increase the maximum permitted building heights up to 24 storeys in select locations downtown, however, Council's decision has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Once the amendment comes into force and effect, it is expected to bring additional capacity for growth to Guelph's Downtown, potentially further contributing to additional increases to the overall density of downtown through future development applications. Additionally, a Community Planning Permit System study for Guelph's Downtown is currently underway and anticipated to be presented to council for adoption in Q1 2026. This study is anticipated to introduce a policy framework that will reduce development approval timelines downtown.

Progress towards achievement of the minimum density targets in Guelph's Downtown will continue with several development applications expected including the Woods Plant 2 site, increased built form permissions once the new downtown heights are in effect and continued implementation of the Downtown Secondary Plan and the City's growth management strategy. Future increases to the downtown density are anticipated to largely result from residential development in the form of medium and high-density residential units.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

4.4 Strategic growth area density targets

Figure 10. Strategic growth areas

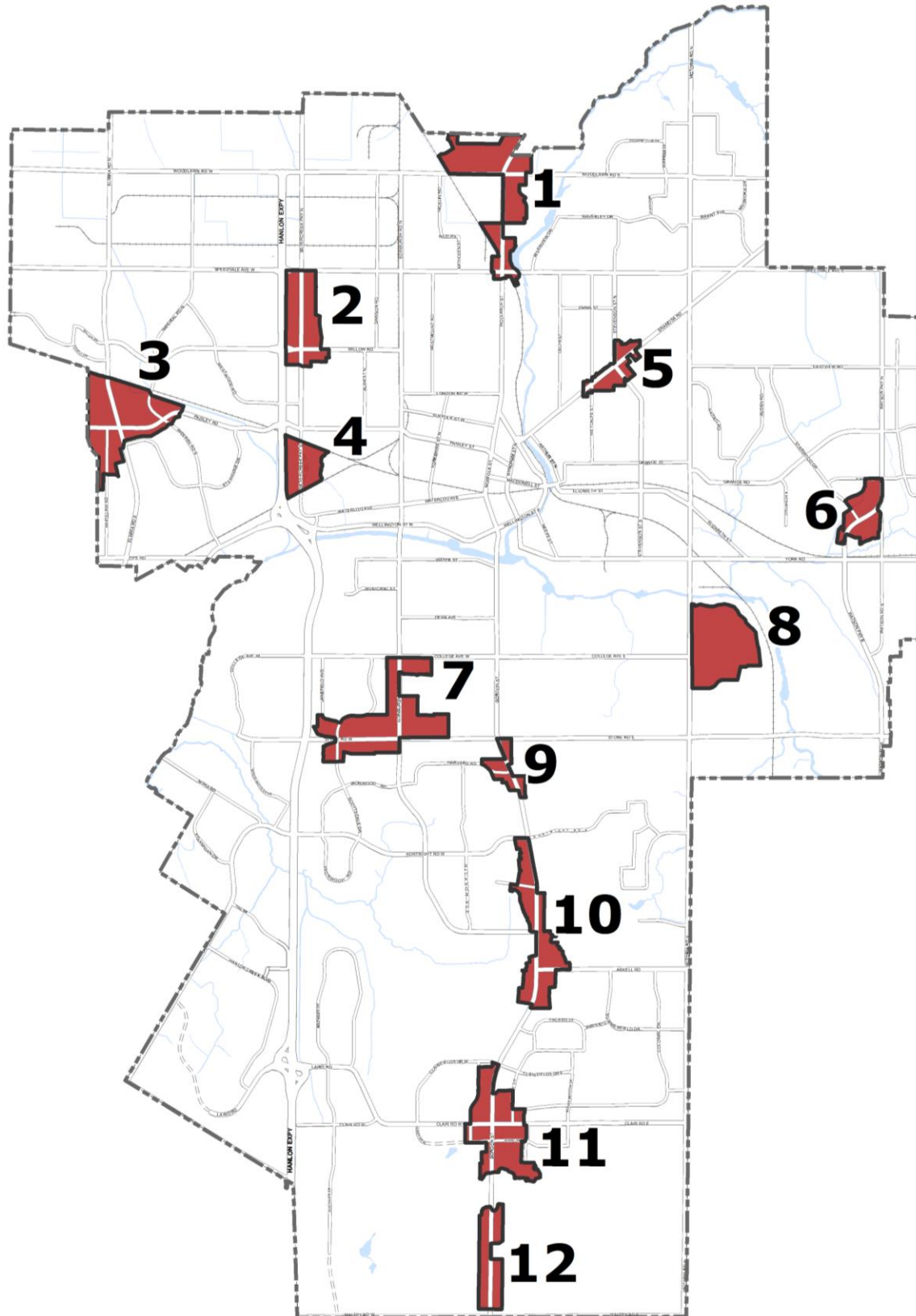


Table 4. Strategic growth area densities and targets (residents and jobs per hectare)

Map ID	Strategic Growth Area Name	Baseline Density (2021)	Current Density (2024)	Target Density (residents and jobs per hectare)
1	Woodlawn Road / Woolwich Street	63	74	120
2	Silvercreek Parkway	59	59	100
3	Paisley Road / Imperial Road	35	50	110
4	Silvercreek Junction	0	0	130
5	Eramosa Road	48	48	100
6	Watson Parkway / Starwood Road	42	94	160
7	Stone Road at Edinburgh Road	61	61	130
8	Guelph Innovation District	0	0	100
9	Gordon Street at Harvard Road	50	50	100
10	Gordon Street at Arkell Road	58	58	120
11	Gordon Street at Clair Road	49	56	130
12	Gordon Street in Clair-Maltby	6	6	100

Growth in strategic growth areas on track to achieve density targets

Guelph's [Official Plan](#) identifies strategic growth areas with associated density targets, introduced through Official Plan Amendment 80. These areas are the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form along major roads. The minimum density targets that apply to Guelph's strategic growth areas, along with the baseline density in 2021, and the current density for 2024 are shown in Table 4, above. The [Provincial Planning Statement \(PPS\), 2024](#), which came into effect on October 20, 2024, replacing A Place to Grow, carried forward the policies that direct municipalities to identify strategic growth areas, however, minimum density targets are no longer required under the new PPS. Guelph's Official Plan continues to identify minimum density targets for strategic growth areas.

The densities for Guelph's strategic growth areas are monitored and updated annually to account for residential and employment growth. In 2024, the largest development that contributed to an increase in densities was within the Woodlawn Road / Woolwich Street strategic growth area, adding 88 townhouses at 708 Woolwich Street. Some minor additional development was added to the Watson / Starwood and the Eramosa Road strategic growth areas as additional residential units, and one apartment was added to the Paisley / Imperial strategic growth area through a renovation.

Guelph City Council approved a development within the Gordon Street at Arkell Road strategic growth area in 2024, which is expected to add 122 apartment units and 20 on-street townhouses for a total of 142 residential units. Guelph also has over 2,500 units in its short-term housing supply that fall within strategic growth areas. These units form part of applications that have been previously approved by Guelph City Council, or the Ontario Land Tribunal and are appropriately zoned for future development and will contribute to future increases in the densities of Guelph's strategic growth areas. More details on Guelph's short-term housing supply can be found in Section 5.1 Housing supply.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

5. Housing

5.1 Housing supply

Figure 11. Housing supply in the built-up area

Supply	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouses	Apartments	Total Units	Years of Supply
Short term supply	86	20	718	3,163	3,987	4.2
Designated and Available	559	0	1,332	7,212	9,103	9.6
TOTAL	645	20	2,050	10,375	13,090	13.8

Figure 12. Housing supply in the designated greenfield area

Supply	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouses	Apartments	Total Units	Years of Supply
Short term supply	195	8	462	1,404	2,069	2.2
Designated and Available	1,954	4	2,727	2,418	7,103	7.5
TOTAL	2,149	12	3,189	3,822	9,172	9.7

Figure 13. City-wide housing supply

Supply	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouses	Apartments	Total Units	Years of Supply
Short term supply	281	28	1,180	4,567	6,056	6.4
Designated and Available	2,513	4	4,059	9,630	16,206	17.1
TOTAL	2,794	32	5,239	14,197	22,262	23.5

Note: The total city-wide housing supply in Figure 13 is the sum of the built-up area housing supply in Figure 11 and the designated greenfield area housing supply in Figure 12. To determine the years of remaining housing supply, the long-term average of 947 units per year is applied as identified through the City's updated growth management strategy to achieve the forecast population of 208,000 people by 2051. The total years of supply in Figure 13 may not add due to rounding.

Guelph's housing supply continues to meet the requirements of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

Guelph is meeting its housing supply requirements, as required, according to the housing supply definitions and policies of the [Provincial Planning Statement \(PPS\), 2024](#). Figure 11 demonstrates that Guelph maintains 13.8 years' worth of housing supply in the built-up area, while Figure 12 demonstrates that the City maintains 9.7 years of housing supply in the designated greenfield area. In total, the Guelph maintains a city-wide housing supply of 23.5 years, as shown in Figure 13.

Below are the housing supply policies of Section 2.1 of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, which municipalities in Ontario are required to maintain at all times:

- 2.1.4 To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall:

- a) maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are designated and available for residential development; and
- b) maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned, including units in draft approved or registered plans.

Guelph has enough land to accommodate 23.5 years of housing supply

In 2024, Guelph had enough available land to supply 6.4 years of housing on land that is zoned with servicing capacity (referred to as short-term housing supply), which meets the Provincial Planning Statements' housing supply requirement of policy 2.1.4 b) which requires municipalities to maintain at least a three-year supply of residential units on lands that are zoned with servicing capacity. Guelph's total housing supply of 23.5 years, which includes future housing on lands that are designated and available, also meets the Provincial Planning Statements' housing supply requirement of policy 2.1.4 a) requiring municipalities to maintain a minimum of 15 years supply of housing on lands that are designated and available for residential development.

Additional supply of housing on lands that are designated and available for residential development became available following the approval of the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan on March 6th, 2024, through Ontario Land Tribunal led mediated settlement, which redesignated lands in the secondary plan area for residential and mixed-use development.

As shown below in Figure 14, most of the Guelph's short-term housing supply is located on sites that are zoned outside of plans of subdivision, with an available housing supply of just over 4,372 units, or a 4.6-year supply of housing. Additional housing supply of approximately 1,750 units is located within draft approved and registered plans of subdivision, combined, generating an additional 1.8-year supply of housing.

Figure 14. City-wide short term housing supply

City-wide short term housing supply	Single Detached	Semi-Detached	Townhouses	Apartments	Total Units	Years of Supply
Zoned sites (outside plans of subdivision)	44	8	811	3,509	4,372	4.6
Sites in draft approved plans of subdivision	113	12	95	262	482	0.5
Sites in registered plans of subdivision	124	8	274	796	1,202	1.3
TOTAL	281	28	1,180	4,567	6,056	6.4

Short-term housing supply with additional identified constraints

The City's housing supply identified as in Figure 13, demonstrates that Guelph meets the housing supply requirements of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. However, some of the lands that contribute to Guelph's short-term housing supply have additional constraints imposed on them by the City of Guelph that must be addressed prior to receiving approval for development of the site. For example, due to historic uses, some of these sites are identified as potential brownfields that require site remediation, or

due to a change of use, require a record of site condition to be submitted to the Province, as required by provincial regulation. There may also be zoning holding provisions with conditions that must be satisfied prior to development of the site. Many of these zoning holding provisions are for conditions that under the control of developers or builders, which allow the developers, or builders to dictate the pace at which the conditions are addressed or satisfied⁹. The sites which require records of site condition due to a change of use on the property, could also delay development of the site. When considering sites that are identified as potential brownfields and sites with zoning holding provisions, there are 2,170 units in Guelph's short term housing supply (as shown in Figure 15, below) that require additional conditions to be met prior to development. These 2,170 units represent 36 per cent of Guelph's total short-term housing supply.

Figure 15. Short-term housing supply with additional municipally imposed constraints

Housing Supply Constraint	Single Detached	Semi-detached	Townhouses	Apartment	Total
Zoning holding provision	21	4	262	1,244	1,531
Record of site condition required due to change of use	0	0	24	234	258
Potential brownfield sites	0	0	0	15	15
Potential brownfield and zoning holding provision	0	0	16	350	366
Total	21	4	302	1,843	2,170

Three sites make up most of the short-term housing supply with constraints

Three large residential developments, all of which have been approved within the last 10 years, make up the majority of Guelph's short-term housing supply with constraints that need to be addressed prior to their development. The largest residential development in Guelph with a zoning holding provision is located at 361 Whitelaw Road, which was approved at the Ontario Land Tribunal in 2021 for 126 townhouse and 552 apartment units for a total of 678 residential units. The zoning holding provision on the site requires the developer to complete a design and reconstruction of Whitelaw Road, including, but not limited to vertical grade changes, curb/gutter, boulevard, municipal services, sidewalk, and the completion of an Energy Strategy Report, all to the satisfaction of the City. The development at 716 Gordon Street approved in 2023 for 532 apartment units requires the developer to complete and submit a Noise Impact Study demonstrating the appropriateness of any outdoor amenity spaces to the satisfaction of the City. Lastly, an apartment development at 40 Silvercreek Parkway South that was approved in 2014 for 350 apartment units requires the construction of a grade-separated crossing (i.e. underpass) at the intersection of Silvercreek Parkway South and the Canadian National Railway line, a Site Plan Agreement addressing appropriate infrastructure requirements, an agreement for a financial contribution

⁹ Sites with zoning holding provisions are identified with an "(H)" in [Guelph's Zoning Bylaw \(2023\)-20790](#), along with the conditions that must be satisfied in the accompanying text of the Zoning Bylaw found in [Section 17 – Holding provisions](#).

towards the construction of a stormwater management facility, the conveyance of lands for infrastructure, and the awarding of contracts related to the construction of the underpass, roadways, and stormwater management facility¹⁰. Together, these three developments with identified constraints to development represent 1,580 units, or 73 per cent of Guelph's short term housing supply with additional constraints to be addressed prior to their development. The remaining 3,886 units in Guelph's short-term housing supply, or 64 per cent of the remaining supply may not necessarily have any municipally identified imposed conditions that need to be met prior to construction. These remaining units represent approximately 4.1 years of housing supply.

Additionally, some of the sites that form part of Guelph's short-term supply may have other constraints outside of municipal control, such as: utility easements, requirements for lot consolidation, matters of private litigation, or there may be issues for the builder or developer in acquiring financing, all of which would contribute to delays in construction of the site. The local builder community notes that there are approximately 700 additional units that are subject to these other, non-municipally controlled constraints. Further impacts to developments may result from the ongoing impacts of skilled labour shortages, as well as supply chains that are still recovering from COVID-19 restrictions. The trade conflict between Canada and the U.S.A., which began in early 2025 with the introduction of tariffs may further increase costs for the builder community, fueling further uncertainty in the housing market. The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC's) [Housing Market Outlook](#) for 2025 forecasts that housing starts in Central Canada will continue to decline this year.

When considering the units in Guelph's short-term housing supply that are free from all identified municipal and non-municipal constraints, there are approximately 3,200 units in Guelph's short-term housing supply that are not constrained. This represents approximately 3.4 years' worth of housing supply, not including any ADU's that would also be permitted.

The local builder community has indicated that demand for new construction is low. Presales for multi-residential and condominium construction are slow, which reflects current market conditions. As a result, many builders are pausing construction of their approved site plans, and many are reconsidering their business plans to shift towards the construction of rental units. To help improve construction of housing units locally, the City of Guelph has committed to ongoing discussions with the local developer and builder community around program and policy review and identifying opportunities for process improvements. Further to this, the City of Guelph is considering a few options to help advance the construction of approved sites and remove additional barriers to construction, including: extending the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw transition by 2 years for approved site plans; considering extending the Development Charges freeze to align with this transition period; reviving the Brownfield Community Improvement Plan that would provide incentives for rehabilitation of contaminated sites; reviewing the property taxation structure for multi-residential; changing the organizational structure, including a dedicated team for site plan; developing internal guidance to standardize review and commenting processes to enhance consistency for the development and builder community; and, committing to restructure grant funding if

¹⁰ A new subdivision plan for 35 and 40 Silvercreek Parkway South has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. If approved, the subdivision has the potential to result in 595 apartments and 172 townhouses, for a total of 767 residential units.

units are not materializing. Enhancing Guelph's processes and development incentives would help to reduce barriers to new construction and help to increase Guelph's competitive advantage among surrounding city centres.

Guelph's short term housing supply figures are based on the actual number of residential units proposed through a development application, rather than the maximum permitted number of dwelling units in the Zoning Bylaw. The designated and available housing supply is based on the targeted number of residential units proposed within a secondary plan, or in instances where there is no secondary plan, an estimated number of units based on the observed historic residential densities by land use designation.

Residential developments ready for permits for construction

Residential developments that are ready for permits are sites that have obtained all necessary planning approvals, including site plan approval (if required), with no additional constraints to development. Developments with fewer than 11 units, single detached, and semi-detached lots are not subject to site plan control. These units would be considered ready for building permit once these lots or blocks have been created, and they are appropriately zoned. The only remaining step is for the builder to apply for a building permit. All of the sites that are considered ready for building permit in Guelph form part of the short-term housing supply.

In total, there are approximately 352 units in Guelph's short-term housing supply that are ready for building permits to be submitted. This represents approximately 6 per cent of Guelph's total short-term housing supply, or approximately 9 per cent of the short-term housing supply that do not have any municipally imposed constraints, such as zoning holding provisions, or sites that are considered brownfields and require soil remediation prior to development. A low figure of residential developments ready for permits for construction would indicate that construction is keeping pace with units as they become approved.

Currently, there are 17 active site plans under review, consisting of 862 townhouses, and 1055 apartments, for a total of 1,917 units. As these site plans become approved, additional units will be considered ready for building permits.

Future additions to Guelph's short-term housing supply

There are an estimated 6,200 units that have been discussed at Development Review Committee, either in pre-consultation, or initial meetings with staff. Once these units form part of a formal application, they will form part of Guelph's short-term housing supply once those applications are approved and there are no zoning holding provisions for confirmation of servicing capacity.

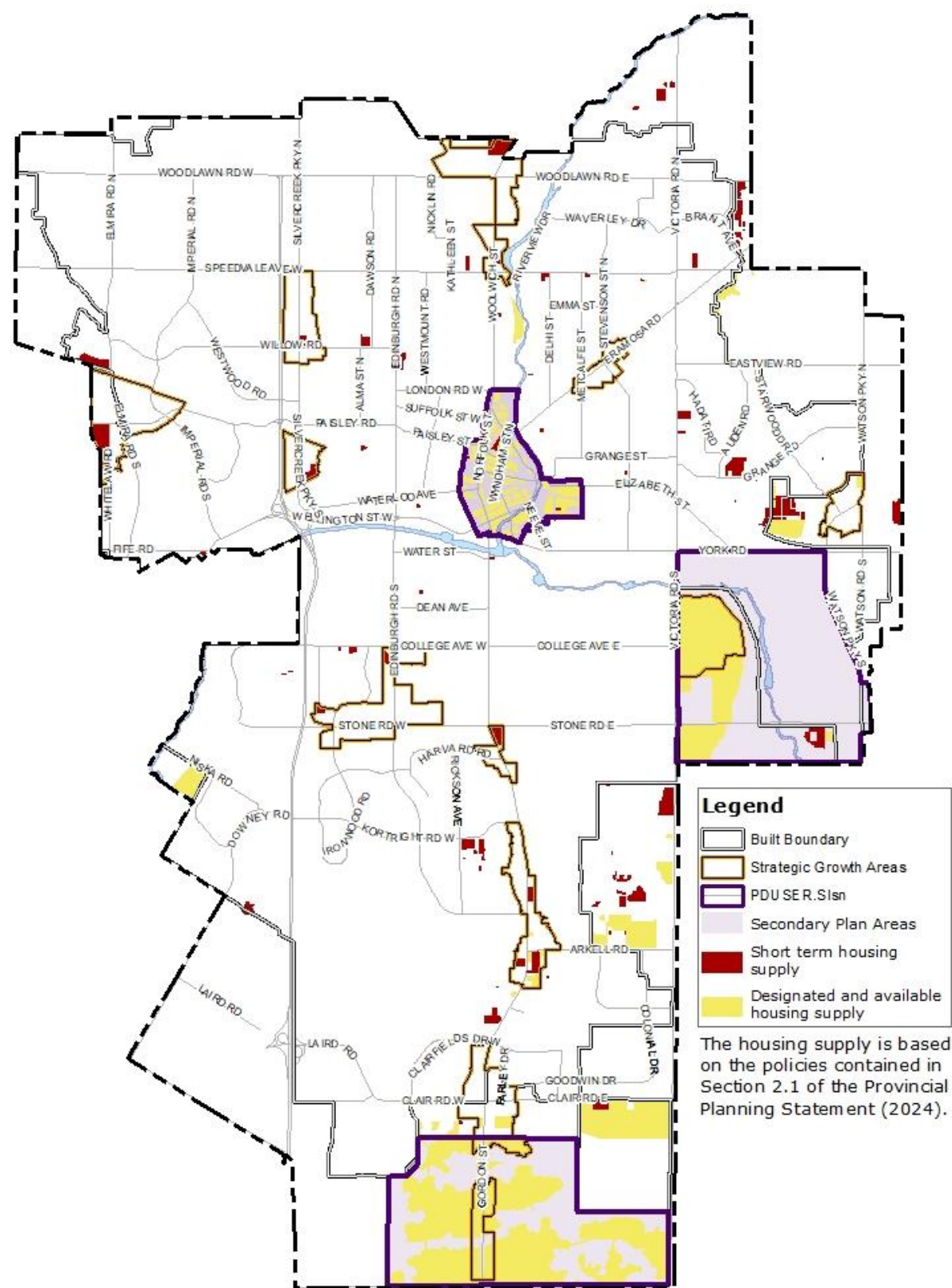
More information on housing in Guelph

For more information on housing in the City of Guelph, including funding and incentive programs for affordable housing, and recent relevant legislative and policy changes that impact the supply of housing in the city, please visit [Housing in Guelph](#).

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

Sites contributing to Guelph's housing supply

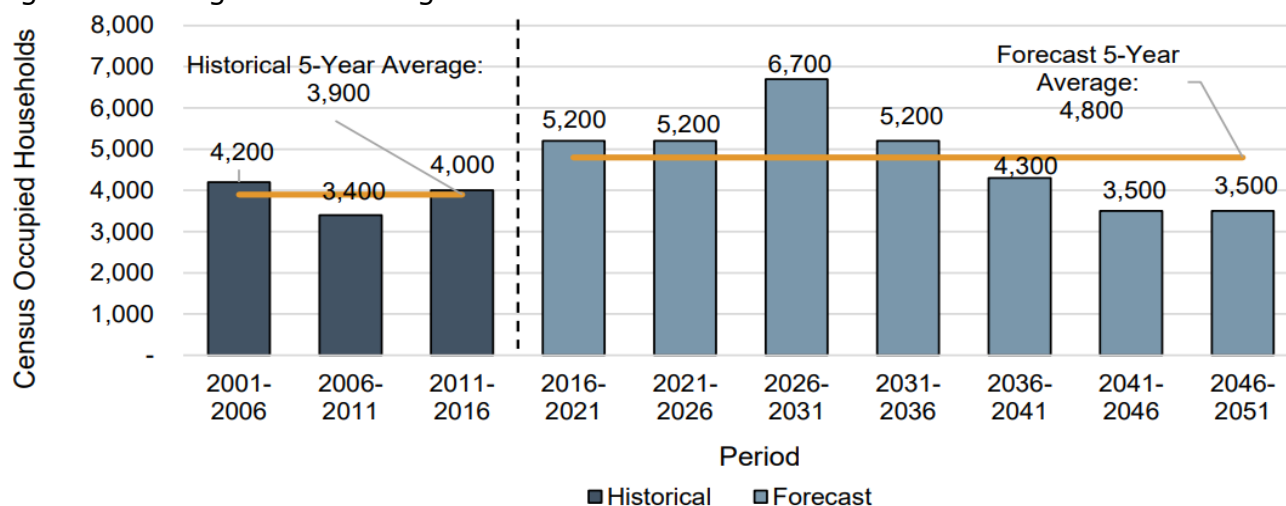
Figure 16. City of Guelph housing supply sites, 2024



Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

5.2 City of Guelph housing forecast

Figure 17. Long-term housing forecast



The long-term housing forecast projects a shift of housing types

The housing forecast as presented in the City's Shaping Guelph [Long-Term Population and Housing Growth Analysis](#), completed as background to Official Plan Amendment 80, illustrates the number of units that are anticipated to be needed to meet the population forecast of 208,000 people by 2051. Over the forecast period to 2051, housing growth is anticipated to be stronger during the first half of the forecast period to 2036. Over the longer-term, post-2036, housing growth is anticipated to gradually slow due to the aging of the existing population to an average of 753 units constructed per year. Throughout the entire forecast period, a long-term average of 947 residential units are targeted to be constructed annually to meet the City's population forecast of 208,000¹¹ (201,000¹²) residents by 2051.

In 2024, permits for the creation of 629 residential units were issued, which is 66 per cent of the City's long-term average annual target of 947 residential units to be created each year to 2051.

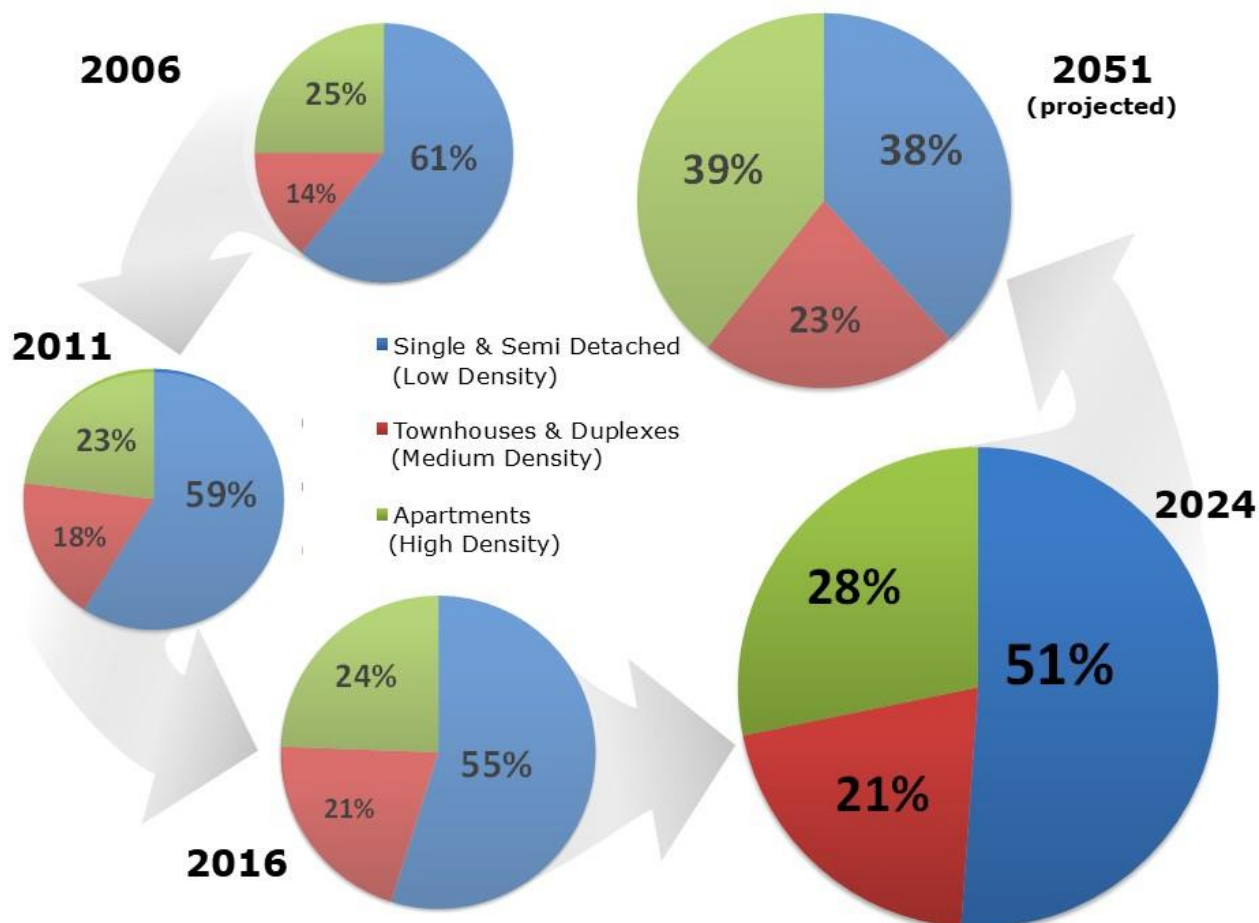
Source: Shaping Guelph Long-Term Population and Housing Growth Analysis, 2022.

¹¹ The population including the net census undercoverage.

¹² The population excluding the net census undercoverage.

5.3 City of Guelph housing mix: total housing stock, 2006 to 2051

Figure 18. Housing Stock 2006 to 2051



The City's housing stock is continuing to become more balanced

Guelph's existing housing stock is predominantly low-density housing in the form of single detached and semi-detached units. A shift in the demand for different forms of housing resulting from decreasing housing affordability, combined with policies that promote transit supportive densities is resulting in increased construction of townhouses and apartments. The increased construction of medium and high-density forms of housing will result in a shift to the City's housing stock, which is planned to become more balanced by 2051 and accommodate a greater range of housing choice to meet the needs of current and future residents. By 2051, it is anticipated that 38 per cent of the City's total housing stock is forecast to be in low-density forms of housing, 23 per cent townhouses and duplexes, and 39 per cent in the form of apartments.

Between 2006 and 2024, Guelph's housing mix has become more balanced, with the proportion of single detached units declining from 61 per cent in 2006 to 51 per cent of Guelph's total housing stock in 2024. Townhouses represent 21 per cent of the City's current housing stock, an increase from 14 per cent in 2006, while apartments have increased their share of the City's housing stock to 28 per cent in 2024.

Source: Building Permit Summaries, City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

6. Affordable housing

6.1 Achievement of affordable housing targets

Guelph did not meet the target for affordable ownership but exceeded the target for affordable purpose-built secondary rental units

Guelph's [Housing Affordability Strategy](#) was passed by Guelph City Council on December 8th, 2024, and came into effect on January 8th, 2025, updated the City's existing [Affordable Housing Strategy \(2017\)](#). The purpose of the update to the Housing Affordability Strategy was to identify actions such as policy changes, tools and incentives, advocacy, and partnership approaches to address private-market housing gaps in the short, medium, and long term. This update builds off of the key issues impacting housing affordability in Guelph as identified in the City's [State of Housing](#) report published in December of 2023 and set new housing affordability targets.

For the purposes of this report, the housing affordability will continue to be assessed against the targets set through the Affordable Housing Strategy (2017), as the Housing Affordability Strategy did not come into effect until January 8th, 2025. The City of Guelph will be reporting on the progress towards the goals, targets, and actions of the Housing Affordability Strategy to Guelph City Council, scheduled for early 2026.

The Affordable Housing Strategy (2017) sets an annual affordable housing target of 30 per cent of all newly constructed residential units in Guelph. This target is further broken down by housing tenure as follows:

- 25 per cent affordable ownership units;
- 1 per cent affordable primary rental units; and,
- 4 per cent affordable purpose-built secondary rental units (which includes additional residential dwelling units)

Achievement of the target is measured against the price thresholds that are set annually by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing through the [Affordable Residential Units for the Purposes of the Development Charges Act, 1997 Bulletin](#). This bulletin was issued to provide guidance for municipalities on how to define and identify affordable housing units following Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022. Bill 23 made changes to the Development Charges Act, 1997 by introducing exemptions and discounts for affordable residential units from municipal development-related charges. This bulletin was first issued on April 5, 2024, and was effective for the period June 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025. For the purposes of measuring housing affordability for 2024 in this report, the affordability thresholds will be applied to all rents and house sales from 2024. The bulletin set the affordable ownership threshold price among all units at \$398,800 for 2024 and the affordable rental thresholds based on the following rental unit size as shown in Table 5, below.

Table 5: Affordable monthly rental threshold prices for 2024 as set by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Rental unit size	Affordable monthly threshold price
Bachelor	\$1,160
1-bedroom	\$1,508
2-bedroom	\$1,646
3+ bedroom	\$1,695

An updated bulletin from the province was anticipated for release issued on June 1, 2025, which would contain the price thresholds for home ownership and rental units to assess housing affordability in Guelph for 2025. The Province has since indicated that this bulletin would be released at some point in July 2025. A separate information report will be provided to Council with these price thresholds and Guelph will set the affordable housing benchmarks for home ownership and monthly rental prices for 2025 following the release of the bulletin.

Affordable housing – newly constructed ownership units

In 2024, 27 new apartment units were sold below the affordable ownership threshold price of \$398,800. This equates to approximately 4 per cent of all new units created in 2024, where the affordable ownership target is set at 25 per cent of all newly constructed units. For comparison, in 2023, there were no units sold below the affordable benchmark price of \$429,016, while 22 per cent of new units created in 2022 were sold below the benchmark price of \$455,125, and 28 per cent were sold below the benchmark price of \$420,125 in 2021.

Figure 19. Percentage of new dwellings by sale price and unit type in 2024



Among the housing resale market, which is not measured against the affordable housing target, there were 25 units that sold below the affordable threshold price in 2024, 22 of those units were apartments, two were single detached units, and one was a townhouse unit.

Affordable housing – purpose-built secondary rental units

In 2024, 325 additional dwelling units were created, which are considered to be purpose-built secondary rental units. Based on the 2019 registered accessory apartment survey results, it is assumed that 160 of the 325 units are offered for rent below the average 2024 rental benchmark price of \$1,588 for all units. For the purposes of this estimation, the average rental price among all units is used as the 2019 survey data did not allow for the ability to relate the number of bedrooms by rental price. Those 160 units represent 25 per cent of all new residential units created in 2024, which exceeds the City's affordable purpose-built secondary rental unit target of 4 per cent in the 2017 Affordable Housing Strategy.

Future reporting on affordable purpose built secondary rental units will include the number of units that have received financial incentives from the City of Guelph through the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, which was part of the City's eight commitments identified in its [Housing Accelerator Fund action plan](#). This program aims to support the construction of affordable additional dwelling units and has already seen some strong interest in the program in 2025, with multiple applications having been already approved. For more information on incentives for the creation of affordable additional dwelling units, please visit the [City of Guelph's additional dwelling unit grant program webpage](#).

Affordable housing – purpose built primary rentals

The target for purpose-built primary rentals is 1 per cent of all newly constructed units, measured as an average over a 5-year period. This target was last reported in the 2020 Growth Management and Affordable Housing Monitoring report which concluded that no purpose-built rentals constructed in the previous 5 years met the affordable housing rental benchmark price. However, since then, the City of Guelph has added four new affordable housing developments with a combined unit total of 102 units and it is anticipated that Guelph will meet its purpose-built primary rental target when it is next reported on in the 2025 Growth Management and Affordable Housing Monitoring report next year. These affordable rental housing projects include: a 32-unit supportive housing development at 10 Shelldale Crescent, a second 32-unit supportive housing development at 721 Woolwich Street, 30 affordable rental units at 120 Huron Street, and a renovation of the group home at 51 Bellevue Street added 8 new supportive housing units through the Youth Supportive Housing program.

Guelph's Housing Affordability Strategy, which came into effect in 2025, introduces incentives for the creation of new affordable rental housing, including vacant unit renewal grants, affordable housing unit grants that provide an up-front tax rebate of up to \$25,000 per affordable rental unit, and seed funding that has become available for non-profit organizations will all support future development of affordable rental housing. For more information on these programs, please refer to the [City of Guelph's Housing Accelerator Fund action plan](#).

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024.

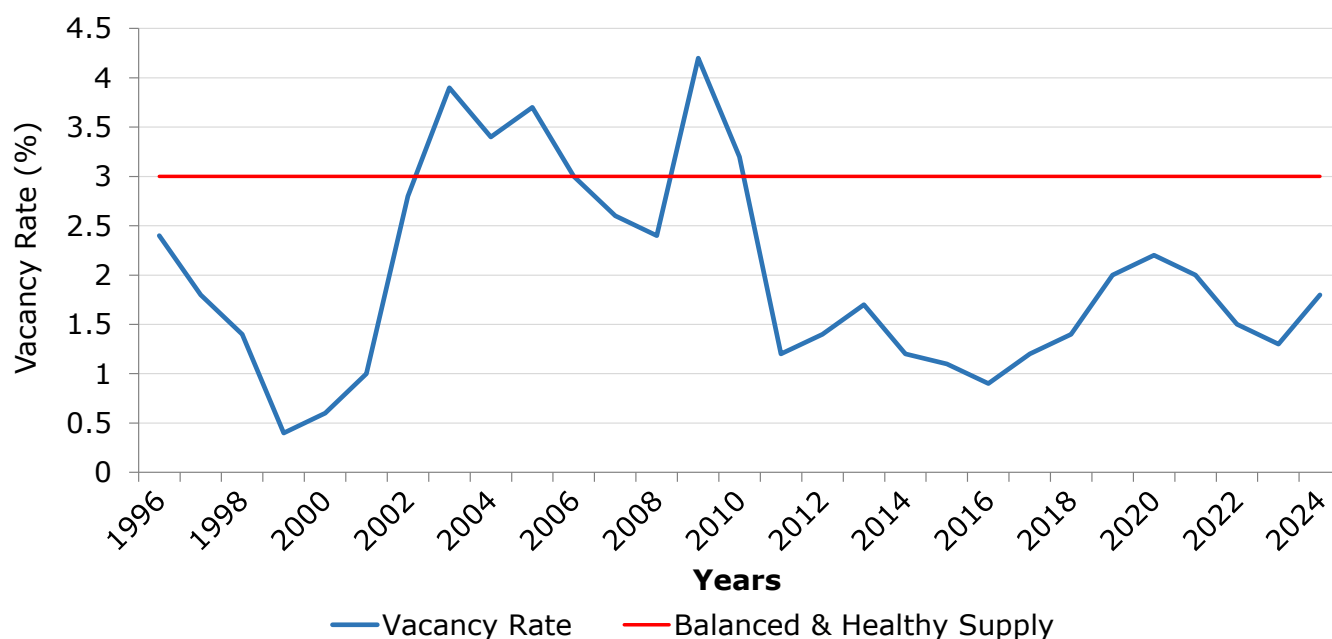
6.2 Setting affordable housing benchmark prices for 2025

The price thresholds for what is considered affordable for both home ownership and rental units vary by municipality and are set through a bulletin released by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing titled [The Affordable Residential Units for the Purposes of the Development Charges Act, 1997 Bulletin](#). The 2025 affordable housing

benchmark prices for both home ownership and rental units will be set using the affordable price thresholds in the bulletin. This year's affordable housing bulletin was anticipated for release on June 1st, 2025, however, the Province has since indicated that the bulletin is scheduled for release in July, 2025. A follow-up information report to Guelph City Council will be provided following the release of the affordable housing bulletin.

6.3 Rental unit vacancy rates in Guelph

Figure 20. Rental vacancy rates across all units in Guelph, 1996-2024



Low vacancy rates impact rental prices

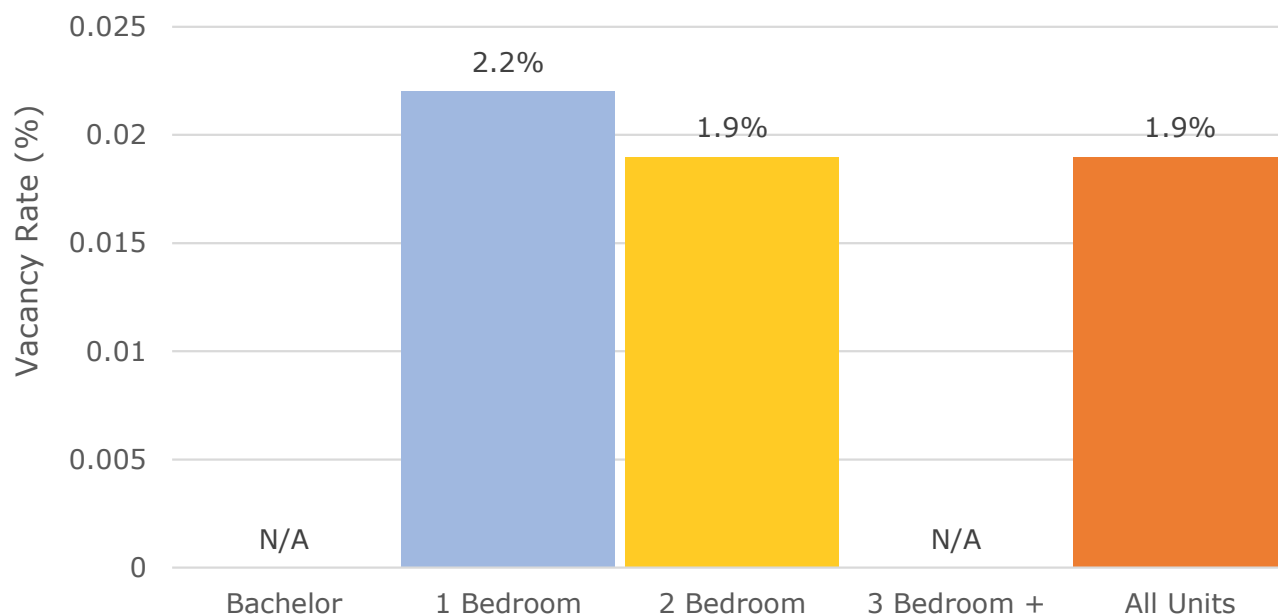
The average vacancy rate for all primary rental units in Guelph in 2024 was 1.9 per cent, an increase from 1.3 per cent in 2023 which represents a small increase in unit availability. The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) identifies several contributing factors to the slight increase in vacancy rates. One factor is the labour market, where employment conditions weakened in most regions, particularly affecting younger renters and making it harder for them to establish their own households. Another factor is the cap on international student admissions, which led to fewer foreign students being accepted for the 2024/2025 academic year. Despite these factors increasing vacancy, the demand for rental units continues to exceed the supply, keeping vacancy rates below the balanced and healthy level of 3 percent. The City of Guelph has consistently had a vacancy rate below 3 percent since 2011. Lower vacancy rates generally lead to higher competition for rental units, driving up rental prices.

After several years of rising vacancy rates between 2017 and 2021, vacancy rates began to decline starting in 2020 before increasing again in 2024. The recent increase to the vacancy rates up until 2021 was in part due to the increase of rental supply through the development of new primary rental apartment buildings, such as the Kortyard rental units at 171 Kortright Road West, the Imperial Towers 4 building development at 978-1042 Paisley Road, and Parkwood Place 3 building development at 772 Paisley Road, 4 Ryde Road and 3 Candlewood Drive and the conversion of the

former hotel at 601 Scottsdale drive into rental units geared towards post-secondary students. With the recent approval of the development at 716 Gordon Street, also geared towards post-secondary students, an additional 532 apartment rental units are anticipated to be added to Guelph's overall housing stock.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024. Data from [CMHC Fall 2024 Rental Market Report](#).

Figure 21. Vacancy rates by size of primary rental unit, 2024



For rental unit sizes with data reported by CMHC for 2024, 2-bedroom apartments had the lowest vacancy rate, with a reported vacancy rate of 1.9 per cent in 2024, an increase from 0.9 per cent in 2023. One-bedroom apartments had the highest vacancy rate for the second year in a row in 2024 at 2.2 per cent, an increase from 2.0 per cent in 2023. No data was reported for bachelor apartments and 3+ bedroom apartments as the data was not statistically reliable for 2024. The overall vacancy rate for all primary rental units in Guelph in 2024 was 1.9 per cent, an increase from 1.3 per cent in the previous year.

A balanced and healthy vacancy rate is considered to be 3 per cent or above. Guelph's [Official Plan](#) discourages the conversion of existing rental accommodations to condominium when the vacancy rate is 3 per cent or lower and prohibits their conversion when the vacancy rates are 1.5 per cent or lower.

Source: City of Guelph Planning Services, 2024. Data from CMHC, Primary Rental Market Statistics.