



The Corporation of the County of Wellington

Social Services Committee

Minutes

September 13, 2023

County Administration Centre

Guthrie Room

Present:	Warden Andy Lennox Councillor David Anderson (Chair) Councillor Matthew Bulmer Councillor Campbell Cork Mayor Cam Guthrie
Regrets:	Councillor Gregg Davidson
Also Present:	Councillor Jeff Duncan Councillor Steve O'Neill Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service Linda Busuttil, Councillor, City of Guelph
Staff:	Jennifer Adams, County Clerk Luisa Artuso, Social Services Administrator Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance Susan Farrelly, Director, Human Resources Mandy Koroniak, Director, Children's Early Years Division Mark Poste, Director of Housing Scott Wilson, CAO

1. Call to Order

At 1:00 pm, the Chair called the meeting to order.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Delegation:

3.1 Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service

1/7/23

Moved by: Councillor Cork

Seconded by: Councillor Bulmer

That the Paramedic Service Response Performance 2022 and Performance Plan 2024 report by Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic service be received for information.

Carried

4. Social Services Financial Statements as of August 31, 2023

2/7/23

Moved by: Warden Lennox

Seconded by: Councillor Cork

That the Social Services Financial Statements as of August 31, 2023 be approved.

Carried

5. Children's Early Years Division

5.1 Wellington Directed Growth and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System

3/7/23

Moved by: Councillor Bulmer

Seconded by: Councillor Cork

That the report Wellington Directed Growth and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System be received for information.

Carried

6. Housing

6.1 2023 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative Funding

4/7/23

Moved by: Councillor Cork

Seconded by: Councillor Bulmer

That staff complete all necessary Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing reporting for the projects and draft and execute all necessary agreements related to the funding; and

That approval for delegated authority be provided to the CAO and the Social Services Administrator, subject to the approval of the County Solicitor for approving commitments made by the County of Wellington under the 2023 Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative programme; and

That, based on the commitments made under delegated authority, that Housing staff complete all necessary Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing reporting for the projects and draft and execute all necessary agreements related to the funding.

Carried

6.2 Increase in Emergency Shelter Spaces

5/7/23

Moved by: Mayor Guthrie

Seconded by: Warden Lennox

That an additional municipal contribution of \$150,000 be approved for Housing Services in 2023 to fund the operation of 38 additional emergency shelter spaces from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

Carried

6.3 Housing Services Status and Activity Report Q1 and Q2 2023

6/7/23

Moved by: Mayor Guthrie

Seconded by: Councillor Cork

That the Housing Services Status and Activity Report Q1 and Q2 2023 be received for information.

Carried

6.4 2024/25 Preliminary Budget Impacts Housing Services

7/7/23

Moved by: Councillor Cork

Seconded by: Warden Lennox

That the 2024/25 Preliminary Budget Impacts Housing Services be received for information.

Carried

7. **Closed Meeting**

8/7/23

Moved by: Mayor Guthrie

Seconded by: Warden Lennox

That Council move into a closed meeting for the purposes of considering personal matters about an identifiable individual, labour relations or employee negotiations, advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege and information explicitly supplied in confidence by Canada, a province or territory or a crown agency of any of them.

Carried

8. Adjournment

At 3:17 pm, the Chair adjourned the meeting until October 11, 2023 or at the call of the Chair.

David Anderson
Chair
Social Services Committee

Information Report



To County of Wellington Social Services Committee

From Stephen Dewar, Chief and General Manager, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service

Date September 13, 2023

Subject **Paramedic Service Response Performance 2022 and Performance Plan 2024**

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

To provide a report on the performance of the Guelph Wellington Paramedic Service against the 2022 Response Time Performance targets and to provide the Response Time Performance Plan (RTPP) for 2024 as set by Guelph City Council.

Key Findings

In 2022 Guelph Wellington Paramedic Service (GWPS) was unable to fully meet the targets and compliance rates as set by Guelph City Council. Causes included pressures from increased call volumes and the impact of hospital offload delays.

Report

Response times to emergency calls are an important indicator for Paramedic Services. Patient outcomes can be directly related to those times, and overall community satisfaction and perception of the service delivered can also be affected by the time it takes for an ambulance to arrive at the scene of an emergency.

Emergency response times are influenced by the proximity of the nearest available ambulance to the emergency site. GWPS employs a sophisticated deployment strategy that relocates accessible ambulances to pre-determined areas as others are dispatched to emergency calls. As the number of available ambulances decreases, the deployment locations become more dispersed, leading to longer response times.

Guelph City Council determines the desired response times for the service for the upcoming year by October 31, and the actual annual performance results are reported to the Provincial Ministry of Health by March 31 of the following year.

The purpose of setting response time targets is to provide the residents of our area with a reasonable expectation of ambulance response times in their community and to provide some accountability and transparency around the provision of the Paramedic Ambulance Service.

Performance targets are set in the form of a Response Time Performance Plan (RTPP), which establishes a target response time and compliance level to that target for each of five (5) categories of medical emergencies. The categories are based on the severity of the patient's illness or injury and are defined based on the Canadian Triage Acuity Scale (CTAS), which is a score shared by hospitals and other services across Canada.

The five levels of CTAS include:

- CTAS 1 – requires resuscitation (i.e., cardiac arrest)
- CTAS 2 – requires emergent care (i.e., major trauma)
- CTAS 3 – requires urgent care (i.e., mild shortness of breath)
- CTAS 4 – requires less urgent care (i.e., minor trauma)
- CTAS 5 – requires non-urgent care (i.e., sore throat)

There is a sixth response time that measures the time to deliver a cardiac defibrillator to the scene of a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). This can include public access defibrillators, Fire Departments, or other allied agencies arriving first. Actual response times, especially with public access defibrillators, are often difficult to capture consistently. This time is set by the Ministry of Health at six (6) minutes, but the expected compliance rates to that target are set by Council.

Performance in 2022

The chart below reveals that GWPS fell short of meeting all but one of the response targets set for 2022. One of the challenges that hindered service delivery was the frequent and lengthy hospital offload delays experienced at Guelph General Hospital. These delays occur when paramedics arrive at the Emergency Department, but hospital staff are unable to take over the patient's care within 30 minutes. As a result, paramedics are required to stay at the hospital for an extended period to care for the patient. In 2022, GWPS paramedics spent approximately 11,000 hours caring for patients who were in offload delay.

The incidents and length of offload delays have recently decreased. Data from May through August of 2023 shows a significant reduction in paramedic time lost to delays, thought to be the result of efforts and changes implemented at Guelph General Hospital. GWPS has worked closely with GGH to refine the processes around transfer of patient care, and early data suggests that this is having a positive impact on response times. While hospital and GWPS staff are cautiously optimistic that the improvements can be maintained, there is concern about the impacts of the upcoming flu season and the potential next wave of COVID-19.

Response times in 2022 were also affected by other factors. one of which was an eight (8) percent increase in call volumes compared to 2021, causing the number of patient-related calls to exceed 30,000 for the first time. This trend of rising call volumes is also being observed in most paramedic services in Ontario and in fact, worldwide.

The table below illustrates City of Guelph Council's approved RTPP for 2022, and GWPS's compliance with its response time targets. The Paramedic Service was required to report these results to the Ontario Ministry of Health in March 2023.

CTAS Category	Response Time Target	2021 Target Compliance (October 2021)	2022 Actual Compliance Rate
Level 1	8 minutes (set by MOH)	65%	63%
Level 2	10 minutes	75%	71%
Level 3	15 minutes	90%	88%
Level 4	15 minutes	90%	83%
Level 5	20 minutes	90%	92%
Sudden Cardiac Arrest	6 minutes (set by MOH)	65%	48%

The RTPP is a good retrospective measurement of performance but is less useful as a planning tool. The Service needs to attempt to arrive at all calls as quickly as possible because the severity of the patient's condition, or their CTAS level, cannot be verified before a paramedic arrives.

The Provincial Ambulance Dispatch System is currently being upgraded with a new triage software that is expected to assist in identifying and focusing on higher-priority calls for assistance. This software, referred to as the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS), is expected to be in place in late 2024.

Response Time Improvement Strategies

Efforts to improve response times to emergency calls are ongoing alongside the dynamic deployment methodology for available ambulances outlined in this report. The Community Paramedicine Program is also in place to offer non-emergency services to high-risk individuals in the community, effectively reducing the occurrence of emergencies and ensuring appropriate care is given to avoid hospitalizations. There is evidence that this program is achieving its objectives and lessening the burden on the hospital system.

In addition, recent Provincial legislation has changed, allowing paramedics to transport certain patients to alternate destinations instead of the Emergency Department; staff have been utilizing this opportunity. This minor shift has resulted in a small but significant decrease in the number of patients presenting to the hospital, leading to better patient flow and fewer offload delays.

Efforts to maintain response times have included incremental enhancements to the paramedic service over several years to address the increasing call volumes. An additional 12 hours of paramedic ambulance service, seven days per week was added in January of 2022.

During a recent Joint Council Workshop, it was noted that the response times of the paramedic service in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington could be enhanced by refining the efficiency, layout, and location of the paramedic stations. The initiative to improve this is currently ongoing.

Compliance to Targets in Townships

At the recent Joint Council workshop, a question was raised about the response time performance as compared to targets in each of the lower-tiered townships. It was discussed at that time that the targets are set and designed for the larger area and include results in urban areas where faster response times are possible and in rural areas where geography creates challenges to responses. While the overall results are somewhat comparable with the results of other municipalities as posted by the Provincial Ministry of Health, response times in other lower-tiered townships are not shared and therefore only comparable to past performance.

The results for the Townships are included as an appendix to this report as per the request made at that meeting.

2024 Response Time Performance Plan

GWPS Staff predict a continued increase in emergency call volumes in 2024 with the associated increase in pressures on response times. The effects of hospital offload delays are challenging to anticipate and mainly beyond the control of City staff. However, staff are optimistic about their partnership with Guelph General Hospital administration and their recent pledge to intensify their efforts and work together to minimize the frequency of these delays.

Despite the pressures and uncertainties, did not recommend a reduction in the response time targets and the associated reduced services to our residents. Staff will continue to strive to optimize response times and provide services as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The RTPP targets and compliance rates set for 2024 by City of Guelph Council include:

Canadian Triage Acuity Scale Levels	Response Time Target	Compliance Rate Recommended to Council
CTAS Level 1	8 minutes (set by the Province)	65%
CTAS Level 2	10 minutes	75%
CTAS Level 3	15 minutes	90%
CTAS Level 4	15 minutes	90%
CTAS Level 5	20 minutes	90%
Sudden Cardiac Arrest	6 minutes (set by the Province)	65%

Summary

In 2022 Guelph Wellington Paramedic Service saw a continuation of the trend of increasing numbers of emergency calls. The higher call volumes along with hospital offload delays have led to higher response times to emergency calls. The service did not meet the performance targets set by City of Guelph Council.

Despite the continuing pressures, City of Guelph Council has accepted the recommendation to set the targets for 2024 at the same levels as in 2022 and 2023.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Stephen Dewar
General Manager / Chief
Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service
519-822-1260 ext. 2805
Stephen.dewar@guelph.ca

This report was recommended by:

Colleen Clack-Bush
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Public Services, City of Guelph
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Attachment 1: Response Time Performance in Wellington County Townships.

Note that 'na' indicates that there were no calls of that level during the month in the area.

GUELPH WELLINGTON PARAMEDIC SERVICE RESPONSE TIME PERFORMANCE PLAN: 2019-2022 Combined - 30,204 Responses in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	68%	68%	65%	63%	67%	58%	69%	54%	64%	67%	69%	50%	70%	62%	69%	58%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	76%	73%	76%	71%	73%	na	74%	77%	69%	67%	66%	70%	72%	68%	78%	73%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	89%	90%	89%	86%	88%	86%	87%	89%	86%	83%	83%	87%	88%	85%	88%	82%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	87%	87%	87%	83%	87%	81%	84%	86%	86%	82%	82%	85%	84%	80%	84%	81%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	92%	93%	94%	92%	95%	89%	91%	91%	91%	88%	96%	93%	90%	91%	92%	95%
City of Guelph - 18,606 responses in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	78%	79%	78%	78%	93%	83%	80%	71%	88%	76%	63%	63%	91%	86%	68%	65%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	83%	83%	85%	82%	85%	na	84%	87%	77%	78%	76%	79%	82%	81%	88%	82%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	93%	94%	93%	92%	95%	94%	91%	92%	90%	89%	89%	92%	92%	90%	94%	92%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	90%	90%	91%	88%	91%	89%	89%	89%	88%	87%	85%	90%	89%	84%	89%	91%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	95%	97%	97%	94%	94%	89%	87%	100%	97%	89%	98%	100%	94%	93%	96%	95%
County of Wellington - 11,598 Resones in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	50%	47%	49%	42%	38%	14%	44%	20%	27%	50%	74%	17%	36%	29%	70%	50%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	60%	56%	58%	53%	53%	na	56%	55%	56%	50%	51%	57%	52%	45%	62%	55%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	82%	82%	81%	77%	78%	69%	81%	84%	78%	73%	76%	81%	81%	77%	79%	69%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	81%	81%	79%	74%	76%	66%	75%	78%	81%	73%	76%	78%	74%	74%	71%	67%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	89%	89%	90%	89%	96%	88%	96%	91%	84%	88%	93%	84%	84%	82%	88%	95%
Puslinch - 1,401 Responses in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	33%	45%	65%	47%	50%	0%	na	na	na	0%	50%	0%	100%	33%	100%	100%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	56%	44%	50%	48%	57%	na	33%	52%	74%	47%	36%	45%	62%	33%	50%	55%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	85%	83%	82%	77%	82%	67%	83%	80%	82%	76%	83%	81%	79%	71%	68%	70%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	78%	80%	80%	75%	75%	63%	58%	75%	67%	100%	82%	92%	57%	80%	83%	74%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	97%	92%	86%	84%	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	50%	100%	0%	80%	80%	100%	100%
Erin - 1,119 Responses in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	36%	12%	34%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	na	0%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	34%	28%	35%	30%	38%	na	17%	53%	14%	29%	36%	27%	16%	12%	37%	60%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	69%	71%	64%	58%	59%	55%	55%	66%	64%	50%	65%	64%	66%	48%	60%	51%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	72%	62%	58%	53%	50%	100%	86%	25%	57%	50%	60%	75%	58%	56%	43%	18%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	88%	71%	86%	85%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	na	na	100%	67%	67%
Minto - 1,228 Responses in 2022																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	25%	47%	20%	27%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	na	100%	na	0%	0%	100%	50%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	56%	43%	48%	34%	23%	na	22%	25%	23%	30%	54%	33%	31%	67%	40%	31%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	81%	84%	78%	77%	82%	61%	89%	86%	83%	69%	67%	76%	88%	74%	79%	62%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	82%	78%	81%	76%	73%	55%	100%	77%	100%	100%	60%	83%	91%	50%	80%	74%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	86%	88%	93%	91%	100%	67%	100%	100%	88%	100%	100%	67%	100%	80%	100%	100%
Centre Wellington - 3,716 Responses																	
CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	71%	68%	71%	66%	33%	33%	67%	100%	67%	100%	100%	na	50%	40%	50%	80%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	73%	71%	71%	70%	69%	na	75%	63%	72%	69%	59%	76%	66%	67%	80%	70%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	89%	90%	88%	88%	91%	84%	92%	93%	90%	82%	83%	89%	87%	87%	92%	86%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	86%	91%	89%	83%	78%	86%	88%	83%	93%	80%	83%	85%	80%	90%	67%	83%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	89%	93%	93%	89%	100%	67%	86%	86%	83%	85%	100%	93%	94%	89%	82%	100%

Guelph-Eramosa - 1,848 Responses in 2022

CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	45%	35%	39%	29%	50%	0%	100%	0%	0%	na	75%	0%	0%	na	100%	25%
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	52%	54%	54%	45%	48%	na	45%	44%	46%	50%	46%	49%	45%	38%	50%	32%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	85%	83%	87%	75%	76%	69%	78%	90%	63%	67%	67%	83%	80%	81%	76%	69%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	81%	82%	82%	71%	75%	64%	64%	94%	77%	50%	74%	52%	63%	72%	81%	82%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	88%	94%	90%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	75%	67%	67%	100%	100%

Mapleton - 530 Responses in 2022

CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	0%	45%	20%	33%	na	na	0%	0%	na	0%	100%	0%	na	0%	na	na
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	33%	29%	34%	38%	18%	na	33%	50%	0%	29%	50%	56%	25%	38%	57%	25%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	56%	55%	57%	70%	63%	64%	56%	67%	63%	69%	82%	71%	86%	75%	91%	48%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	79%	60%	47%	64%	100%	0%	50%	0%	100%	100%	75%	67%	100%	60%	50%	40%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	77%	71%	88%	89%	0%	100%	100%	na	50%	100%	100%	na	na	na	na	100%

Wellington North - 1,756 Responses in 2022

CTAS Response Time Performance Plan	Agreed Benchmark	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CTAS 1 (response <=8 mins)	65%	69%	63%	80%	54%	50%	na	0%	20%	50%	50%	50%	na	100%	100%	67%	na
CTAS 2 (response <=10 mins)	75%	68%	72%	73%	62%	59%	na	80%	70%	66%	50%	62%	76%	68%	37%	63%	71%
CTAS 3 (response <=15 mins)	90%	79%	80%	78%	75%	70%	65%	80%	82%	83%	74%	78%	73%	79%	80%	77%	67%
CTAS 4 (response <=15 mins)	90%	76%	77%	75%	70%	82%	69%	73%	87%	75%	63%	83%	79%	92%	60%	71%	48%
CTAS 5 (response <=20 mins)	90%	91%	88%	84%	89%	100%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	89%	60%	80%	80%	89%

Source: ADRS canned reports, MOHLTC Data Warehouse.



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee **CEYD-23-07**
From: Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years Division
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023
Subject: **Wellington Directed Growth and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System**

Background:

Ontario's Action Plan for implementing the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system includes developing a framework for targeted space creation and providing funding for start-up grants to support the creation of new, affordable licensed child care spaces, prioritizing full day spaces for children from birth to age 4, in targeted locations and for populations most in need. This supports Ontario's vision for the CWELCC system, which is that more families in Ontario have access to high quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care no matter where they live. Also, its vision for access and inclusion that more children (of all abilities and socio-economic backgrounds) can actively and meaningfully participate in child care and be supported in forming authentic, caring relationships with their peers and educators.

Update:

In June 2023, the Ministry of Education released its Access and Inclusion Framework document to support service system managers with planning for the directed growth of affordable child care spaces enrolled in the CWELCC system with an increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion. The Access and Inclusion Framework guides the approach to directed growth by identifying the following principles for access and inclusion:

Principles for Access:

- *Access equity:* Improving access to CWELCC spaces for children from birth to age 5 to a provincial average access rate of 37% by 2026.
- *Directed growth to support underserved and vulnerable populations:* Allocating a target number of CWELCC spaces based on a formula taking into consideration socio-economic indicators to support child care for underserved and vulnerable populations.
- *Francophone spaces:* Meeting or exceeding the proportion of French language spaces for children from birth to age 5, proportional to the population of Francophone people in Ontario.

Principles for Inclusion:

- *Accessibility*: Providing a wide range of opportunities for learning, play, and inquiry in physical and teaching environments across diverse settings and contexts.
- *Participation and belonging*: Providing intentional and instructional intervention approaches that enable children to actively engage in all parts of the day, including play and learning activities and social interactions.
- *Equity*: Making sure everyone has what they need to succeed by removing barriers that disadvantage some groups over others.

The Children's Early Years Division has developed the attached Wellington Directed Growth Plan, which will support the planning for expansion of affordable child care spaces under the CWELCC system in Wellington County and Guelph. This document details current rates of access to full-day, full-year licensed child care spaces (excluding school age programmes) as well as indicators of vulnerable populations identified by the ministry in its Access and Inclusion Framework, projected population growth, and commuting data for each municipality. Due to its larger concentration of population, it was possible to further present data on current rates of access and the presence of vulnerable populations using planning units for Guelph, which were created using Census Dissemination Areas. Access rates are the key consideration for planning for licensed child care, to support Ontario's goal of achieving an access rate of 37% across the province.

Wellington Directed Growth Priorities, September 2023

Geography	Access rates	Children (under 6) in low income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous ancestry	Recent newcomers	Franco-phone
Mapleton	0.0%	18.2%	0.1%	1.4%	1.5%	0.7%	0.4%
Puslinch	0.0%	2.5%	0.8%	12.3%	1.6%	0.4%	1.0%
Wellington North	8.9%	17.2%	0.8%	2.7%	2.5%	0.3%	0.3%
Minto	10.3%	16.0%	0.2%	4.2%	3.4%	0.9%	0.6%
Centre Wellington	15.1%	6.0%	1.0%	4.2%	2.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Guelph	28.8%	9.5%	4.1%	20.9%	2.3%	4.1%	1.4%
Guelph/Eramosa	32.7%	4.8%	1.7%	7.1%	3.2%	0.8%	0.9%
Erin	34.9%	6.0%	1.7%	7.6%	2.6%	0.4%	1.3%
Wellington service delivery area	22.6%	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%

Table shows access rates to full day, full year licensed child care spaces for children from birth up to age 4 (infants, toddlers, preschoolers) and the presence of vulnerable population groups identified in the Ministry of Education's Access and Inclusion Framework as a proportion of each municipality's total population.

Following regulatory amendments to O. Reg. 137/15, every applicant in our service delivery area who applies to the Ministry of Education for a new licence to operate a child care centre or home child care agency, or requesting the addition of child care spaces to an existing licence, is now required to provide verification from their Service System Manager that their proposed space creation aligns with the Wellington Directed Growth Plan, and that they have been approved to be enrolled in the CWELCC system as part of their application.

In summary, the Wellington Directed Growth Plan will inform prospective and current child care operators where more licensed child care spaces are needed most in the Wellington service delivery area. It will also be used by the Children's Early Years division to prioritize and approve new enrolments in the CWELCC system as per the ministry's requirements.

Attachment:

Wellington Directed Growth Plan, Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System, 2023-2026

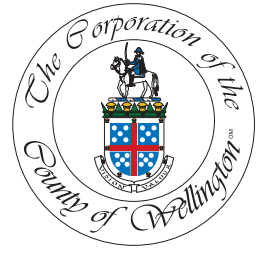
Recommendation:

That the report, Wellington Directed Growth and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Koroniak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "M" being large and prominent.

Mandy Koroniak
Director of Children's Early Years Division



Wellington Directed Growth Plan, Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System

Child Care and Early Years
Service Plan Addendum

2023 - 2026

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System:

Wellington Directed Growth Plan

Introduction



The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System is a five-year agreement between the Province of Ontario and Government of Canada to lower child care costs and improve access, quality and inclusion across Ontario's child care and early years sector. Ontario's vision for the CWELCC system is that more children of all abilities and socio-economic backgrounds in Ontario can actively and meaningfully participate in child care, and be supported in forming authentic, caring relationships with their peers and educators. This is to be supported through the directed growth of affordable licensed child care spaces in communities that need them most.

In alignment with Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework, ¹ which was developed by the Ministry of Education and is designed to support service system planning with an increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion, the County of Wellington is providing this addendum to its Child Care

and Early Years Service Plan, 2023-2027. It presents current licensed child care coverage and population characteristics for each of the municipalities within the Wellington service delivery area, which serves the County of Wellington and the City of Guelph (Wellington-Guelph).

The Ministry of Education has provided service system managers with targets for the creation of affordable licensed child care spaces under its directed growth plan. The following allocation of new spaces has been provided to Wellington-Guelph:

Table 1: Wellington Service Delivery Area 5 Year CWELCC Space Allocation - June 2023

Type of Space	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
School-based spaces	49	64				113
Community-based spaces	60	413	496	390	249	1,608
Total	109	477	496	390	249	1,721

When planning for licensed child care, factors to consider include the existing supply of licensed child care, the number of new spaces with confirmed CWELCC funding, and the current and projected demand for licensed child care. In addition, factors that may prevent families from accessing licensed child care even if available, such as affordability and families' unique needs (cultural characteristics, flexible care options, etc.) are barriers that may need to be addressed.



Space Allocation Criteria

Access rates are the key consideration when planning for licensed child care expansion in Wellington-Guelph, to support Ontario's goal of achieving an access rate of 37% across the province (see Appendices A-B). Access rates refer to the number of licensed child care spaces available for children birth up to age 4 as a proportion of the number of children who live in each area.² For the purposes of this document, access rates are based on the number of full-day, full-year licensed child care spaces. Nursery programme spaces (i.e., part-day/part-time programmes) are shown separately. The report does not include spaces for children aged 4 years or older, or spaces in authorized recreation programmes (i.e., programmes that offer before or after school care only) which operate outside of the licensed system. Full-day, full-year care is recognized as the minimum standard to allow families to participate in the workforce. Therefore, the provision of licensed child care that offers full-day, full-year care is prioritized for Wellington-Guelph.

Currently in Wellington-Guelph, for children birth up to age 4 (infants, toddlers, preschoolers) the access rate for full-day, full-year spaces is 22.6%.

Also considered are demographic factors such as the projected population increase, commuter data³, and the number of children in a municipality. The expected growth of a municipality helps to identify where, in the future, families may locate and is a relevant consideration when planning for licensed child care. In particular, the projected population helps contextualize other variables such as access rates. Low access rates become more significant in areas with higher populations of children as it indicates that there is an unmet need for child care that impacts a larger proportion of the population than those which have aging populations.

The presence of vulnerable populations is another key consideration when planning licensed child care expansion. The specific population groups considered are based on categories identified in the Access

and Inclusion Framework: families living in low income⁴, Indigenous, Black, and visible minority⁵ families, recent newcomers⁶, Francophone families, and children with special needs.

Statistics Canada's Census 2021 population estimates were used in this document to identify the presence of vulnerable populations in each of the municipalities, except for the estimated number of children with special needs. There is no census data available for this group.

Instead, it is assumed that all areas within Wellington-Guelph would benefit from prioritizing access for children with special needs.⁷

Considering whether an area is mainly urban or rural when allocating spaces acknowledges the different service challenges that exist in rural areas. Most of Wellington-Guelph is rural. The exception is Guelph, where

59.6% of the service delivery area population is concentrated. Higher proportions of vulnerable populations are also concentrated here. At the same time, there is evidence that rural families



face greater child care barriers than families in urban settings as there are few incentives and many deterrents for organizations and professionals to offer rural services (e.g., limited resources, increased travel time and costs, and fewer opportunities for career development).⁸

Overall, a higher proportion of rural families in Wellington are low income compared to families in Guelph. Specifically, three (3) rural municipalities within Wellington exceed the provincial average on a key measure associated with vulnerable populations: children under age 6 living in low income. The intersection between living in a rural community and living in low-income acts as a powerful barrier for families that need access to formal care arrangements.⁹ Therefore, when considering licensed child care expansion for Wellington-Guelph, it is important to consider the presence of children living in low-income, especially in poorly serviced rural areas, with higher rates of low-income being associated with a higher vulnerability ranking for the community.

The following sections provide an overview of each municipality within Wellington-Guelph based on child care availability and needs¹⁰, and help to identify those municipalities where additional child care spaces may be most beneficial.

Centre Wellington

Centre Wellington's need for licensed child care expansion is driven by significant population growth that is expected to increase demand for licensed child care. Centre Wellington is already the most populated of the 7 rural municipalities within Wellington-Guelph. Further, for children birth up to age 4, Centre Wellington's access rate falls below the provincial target of 37%.

Table 2: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Centre Wellington	18	196	15.1%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 31,093 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 10.3%
 - Population projected to be 52,310 by 2041 (68.2% increase), representing the largest projected population growth within Wellington-Guelph
- 1,300 children from birth up to age 4 (4.2% of the population)

Table 3: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Centre Wellington's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Centre Wellington	6%	1.0%	4.2%	2.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Commuting

- 5,310 people commute out of Centre Wellington for work. Main commuter destinations are Guelph, Cambridge, and Guelph/Eramosa.
- 2,950 people commute into Centre Wellington for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Guelph, Mapleton, and Kitchener.

Erin

Currently, Erin has the highest access rate for children birth up to 4, approaching the provincial target of 37% for children accessing infant, toddler, and preschool spaces.

Table 4: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Erin	0	145	34.9%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 11,981 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 4.7%
 - Population projected to be between 15,865 to 18,905 ¹¹ by 2041 (32.4%-57.8% increase)
- 415 children from birth up to age 4 (3.5% of the population)

Table 5: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Erin's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Erin	6.0%	1.7%	7.6%	2.6%	0.4%	1.3%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Commuting

- 2,770 people commute out of Erin for work. Main commuter destinations are Mississauga, Brampton, and Halton Hills. It is the largest proportion of residents who commute outside of Wellington-Guelph for work (37.8%).
- An additional 1,030 people commute into Erin for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Guelph, Halton Hills, Centre Wellington, and Brampton.

Guelph

Guelph has the largest population and highest population density in the service delivery area. It has the highest presence of vulnerable populations in Wellington-Guelph and also has among the highest access rate for children birth up to age 4.

Table 6: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Guelph	150	1,691	28.8%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 143,740 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 9.1%
 - Population projected to be 196,000 by 2041 (36.4% increase)
- 5,875 children from birth up to age 4 (4.1% of the population)

Table 7: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Guelph's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Guelph	9.5%	4.1% (highest)	20.9% (highest)	2.3%	4.1% (highest)	1.4%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Note. 'Highest' indicates that this municipality has the highest proportion of the corresponding vulnerable population among all the municipalities in Wellington-Guelph.

Commuting

- 13,580 people commute out of Guelph for work. Main commuter destinations are Cambridge, Kitchener, or Mississauga.
- An additional 20,935 people commute into Guelph for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Kitchener, Cambridge, and Centre Wellington.

Guelph/Eramosa

Adjacent to the Guelph, Guelph/Eramosa benefits from its proximity to the urban centre for increased access to services and amenities. Guelph/Eramosa is expected to have the lowest population growth of any of the 8 municipalities in Wellington-Guelph. Guelph/Eramosa approaches the provincial target of a 37% access rate for children birth up to age 4.

Table 8: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Guelph/Eramosa	16	162	32.7%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 13,904 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 8.2%
 - Population projected to be 14,575 by 2041 (4.8% increase)
- 495 children from birth up to age 4 (3.6% of the population)

Table 9: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Guelph/Eramosa's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Guelph-Eramosa	4.8%	1.7%	7.1%	3.2%	0.8%	0.9%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Commuting

- 3,345 people commute out of Guelph/Eramosa for work. Main commuter destinations are Guelph, Mississauga, and Halton Hills. Guelph/Eramosa has the largest population of residents who commute within Wellington-Guelph for work (24.3%).
- An additional 2,665 people commute into Guelph/Eramosa for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Guelph, Centre Wellington, and Kitchener.

Mapleton

Mapleton has the highest level of unmet need in Wellington-Guelph making it a high priority for licensed child care expansion. Mapleton has the highest proportion of children birth up to age 4 and the lowest access rate, with no full-day, full-year child care spaces. The average family size in Mapleton is the highest in Wellington-Guelph. Mapleton has the highest proportion of children under 6 years of age living in low income, exceeding the provincial average.

Table 10: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Mapleton	16	0	0.0%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 10,839 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 3%
 - Population projected to be 14,060 by 2041 (29.7% increase)
- 755 children from birth up to age 4 (7% of the population)



Table 11: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Mapleton’s total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Mapleton	18.2% (highest; exceeds)	0.1%	1.4%	1.5%	0.7%	0.4%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Note. ‘Highest’ indicates that this municipality has the highest proportion of the corresponding vulnerable population among all the municipalities in Wellington-Guelph. ‘Exceeds’ indicates where the municipality exceeds the provincial average for the corresponding variable.

Commuting

- 2,335 people commute out of Mapleton for work. Main commuter destinations are Woolwich, Centre Wellington, and North Perth.
- An additional 980 people commute into Mapleton for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Minto, North Perth, and Woolwich.



Minto

Minto's need for licensed child care expansion is driven by significant projected population growth and a low access rate for children birth up to age 4. Minto also exceeds the provincial average for children under age 6 living in low income. Minto has the highest presence of Indigenous peoples residing within the municipality.

Table 12: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Minto	8	49	10.3%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 9,094 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 4.9%
 - Population projected to be 12,810 by 2041 (40.9% increase)
- 475 children from birth up to age 4 (5.2% of the population)



Table 13: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Minto's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Minto	16% (exceeds)	0.2%	4.2%	3.4% (highest)	0.9%	0.6%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Note. 'Highest' indicates that this municipality has the highest proportion of the corresponding vulnerable population among all the municipalities in Wellington-Guelph. 'Exceeds' indicates where the municipality exceeds the provincial average for the corresponding variable.

Commuting

- 1,700 people commute out of Minto for work. Main commuter destinations are North Perth, Wellington North, and Mapleton.
- An additional 1,360 people commute into Minto for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are North Perth, Wellington North and Mapleton.



Puslinch

Puslinch has the smallest population of children in Wellington-Guelph, and the highest average income of all municipalities. Alongside Mapleton, Puslinch has the lowest access rate, with no full-day, full-year child care spaces.

Table 14: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Puslinch	16	0	0.0%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 7,944 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 8.3%
 - Population projected to be 9,655 by 2041 (21.5% increase)
- 230 children from birth up to age 4 (2.9% of the population)

Table 15: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Puslinch's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Puslinch	2.5%	0.8%	12.3%	1.6%	0.4%	1.0%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Commuting

- 1,795 people commute out of Puslinch for work. Main commuter destinations are Guelph, Cambridge, and Kitchener.
- An additional 3,035 people commute into Puslinch for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Guelph, Cambridge, and Kitchener.

Wellington North

The municipality of Wellington North's need for licensed child care expansion is driven by the large number of children living in low-income combined with significant population growth projected for the municipality over the next 20 years. The access rate for Wellington North falls below the provincial target of 37%. Like Mapleton and Minto, Wellington North exceeds the provincial average for children under age 6 living in low income.

Table 16: Licensed child care space counts and availability for birth up to age 4

Children birth up to age 4	# of licensed part-time spaces	# of licensed full-time spaces	Access rates for full-time spaces
Wellington North	0	58	8.9%
Wellington-Guelph	224	2,301	22.6%

Note. Full-time spaces refer to licensed care that is offered full-day, full-year. Care that is not full-day, full-year is considered part-time.

Population

- Total population of 12,431 in 2021
 - 2016 to 2021, population increased by 4.3%
 - Population projected to be 17,685 by 2041 (42.3% increase)
- 655 children from birth up to age 4 (5.3% of the population)

Table 17: Vulnerable population groups as a proportion of Wellington North's total population.

	Children (under 6) in low-income	Black	Visible minority	Indigenous Ancestry	Recent newcomers	Francophone
Wellington North	17.2% (exceeds)	0.8%	2.7%	2.5%	0.3%	0.3%
Wellington-Guelph	9.9%	2.9%	14.5%	2.4%	2.7%	1.1%
Ontario	12.4%	5.4%	28.5%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%

Note. 'Exceeds' indicates where the municipality exceeds the provincial average for the corresponding variable.

Commuting

- 1,785 people commute out of Wellington North for work. Main commuter destinations are Centre Wellington, Guelph, and Minto.
- An additional 2,135 people commute into Wellington North for work. Main places of residence for these commuters are Southgate, West Grey, and Minto.

Next Steps

Wellington-Guelph has a pressing need for licensed child care expansion, as reflected in access rates that fall below the 37% provincial target identified in Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework. Together, access rates and other dimensions of access and inclusion help to inform the expansion of the licensed child care system. It is important to ensure that licensed child care programmes offer the right type of care, including consideration of the various lived experiences of each vulnerable population group, and of individual families.¹²

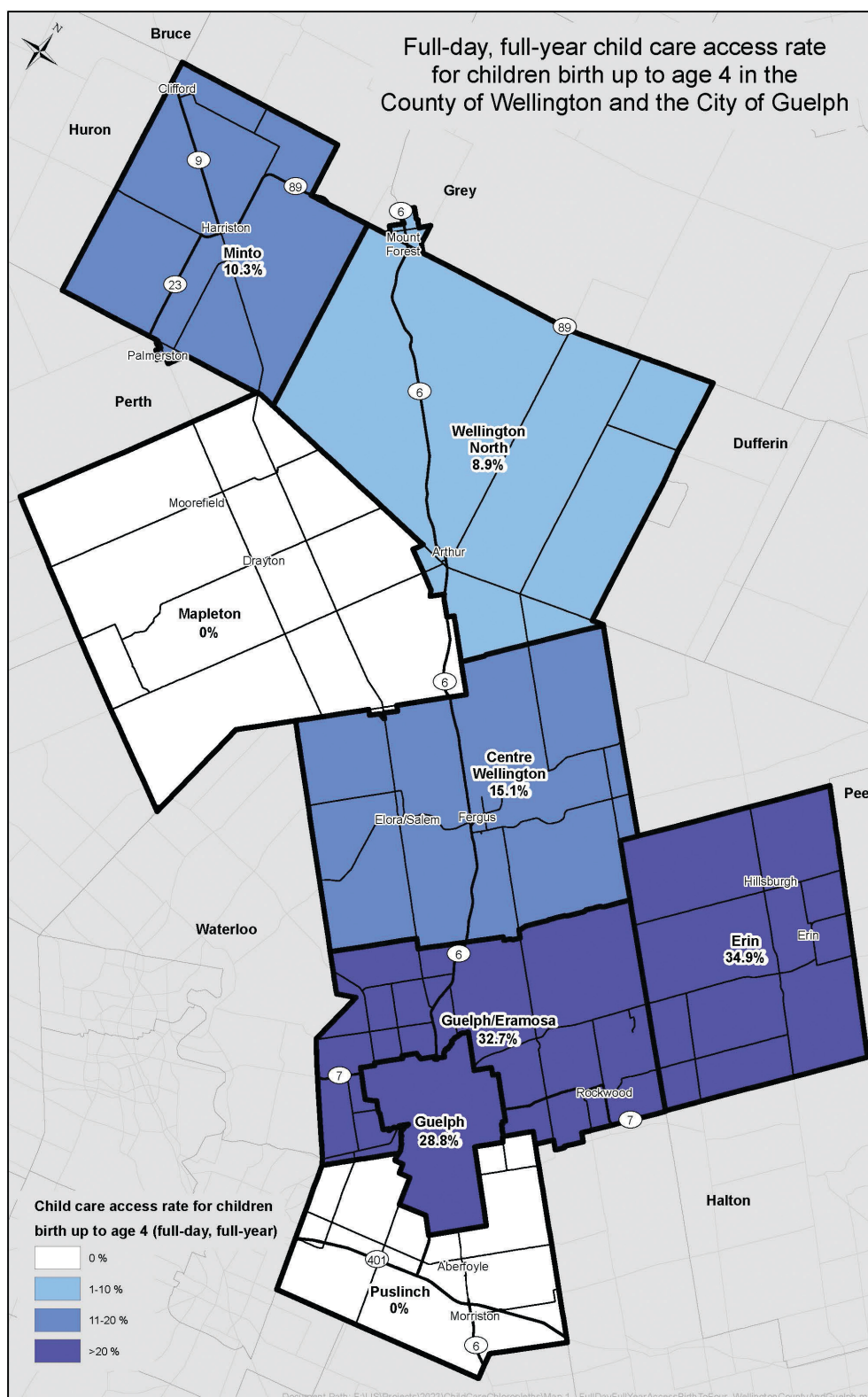
In the short term, engaging with populations in Wellington-Guelph can provide additional information about licensed child care needs and support vulnerable populations through equitable, culturally safe, reciprocal relationships. Leveraging existing relationships with Wellington-Guelph's community partners who work with specific population groups will foster new relationships where they do not currently exist.

Additional community engagement through an equity lens can provide opportunities for the public to highlight specific barriers faced by families in Wellington-Guelph. This would help ensure that licensed child care expansion is intentionally meeting the unique needs of community members.¹³



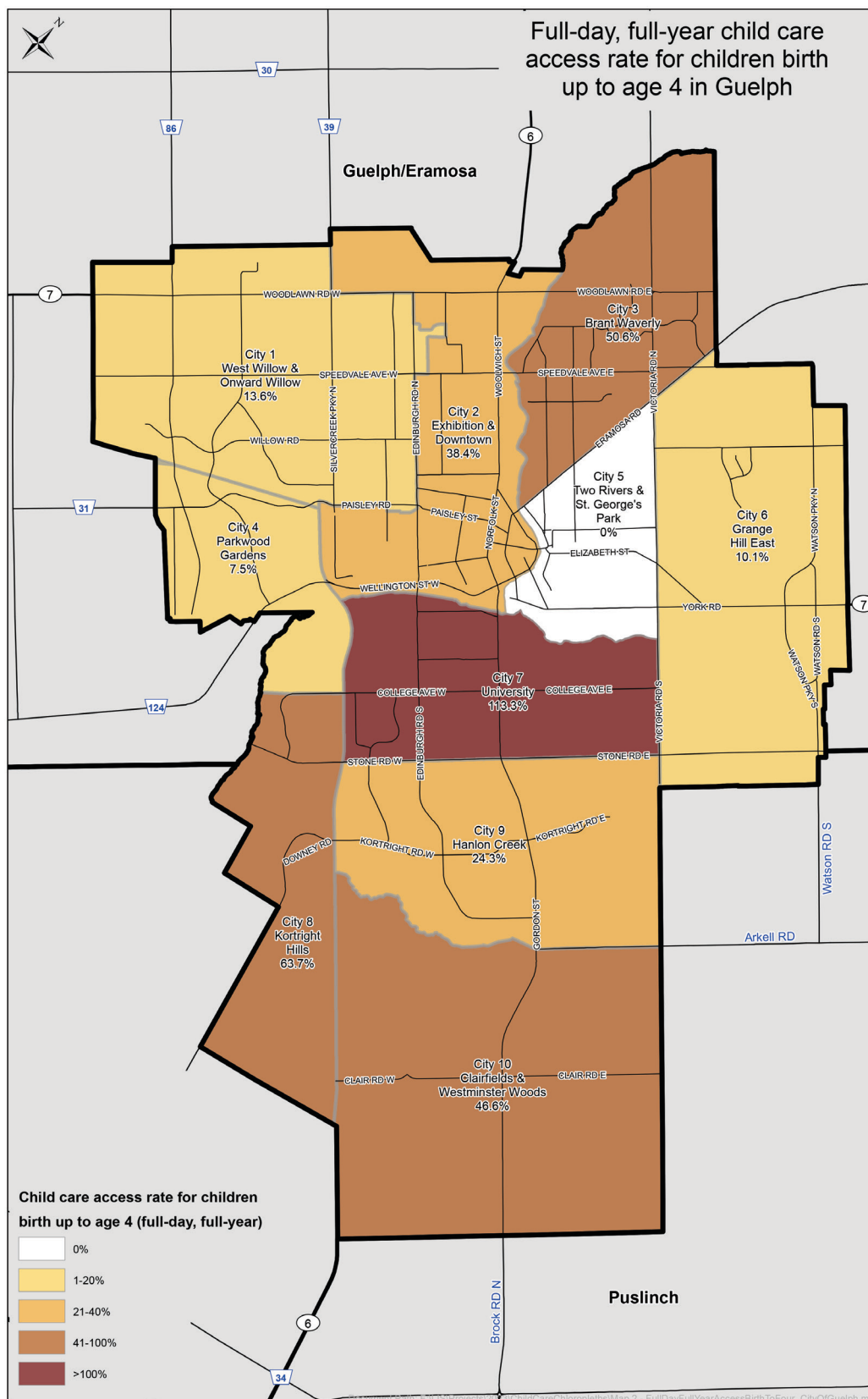
Appendix A

Map of Full-Day, Full-Year Access Rates for Children Birth up to Age 4 for the County of Wellington and City of Guelph



Appendix B

Map of Full-Day, Full-Year Access Rates for Children Birth up to Age 4 for Guelph



Planning Units within Guelph

Access rates vary significantly across Guelph. To further examine which areas of the city are in greatest need of licensed child care expansion, planning units were created using Census Dissemination Areas. The access rates for each planning unit were calculated to determine where licensed child care expansion is needed within Guelph.

City 1

West Willow Village, Onward Willow, Northwest Guelph

- Low access rate for children birth up to age 4 (13.6%)
- Highest proportion of children living in low-income (17.4%); exceeds the provincial average
- Highest proportion of recent newcomers (8.5%, accounting for 29.1% of Guelph's newcomer population); exceeds the provincial average
- Highest proportion of Black families (8.9%, accounting for 30.13% of Guelph's Black population); exceeds the provincial average

City 2

Exhibition Park, Junction, Guelph Downtown

- Meets provincial access rate target of 37% for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces with a high access rate for children birth up to age 4 (38.4%)

City 3

Brant Avenue, Waverly

- High access rate for children birth up to age 4 (50.6%)

City 4

Parkwood Gardens

- Low access rate for children birth up to age 4 (7.5%)

City 5

St. George's, Two Rivers

- Lowest access rate for children birth up to age 4 (0%)
- Highest population of Indigenous peoples (3.4%, accounting for 10.2% of Guelph's Indigenous population)

City 6

Grange Hill East

- Low access rate for children birth up to age 4 (10.1%)

City 7

University

- Meets provincial access rate target of 37% with the highest access rate for children birth up to age 4 (113.3%)
- Highest proportion of Francophone people (2.1%)

City 8

Kortright Hills

- High access rate for children birth up to age 4 (63.7%)

City 9

Hanlon Creek

- Moderate access rate for children birth up to age 4 (24.3%)

City 10

Clairfields, Westminster Woods

- High access rate for children birth up to age 4 (46.6%)
- Highest proportion of visible minorities (i.e., not including those who indicated Black, presented separately; 34.9%); exceeds the provincial average

NOTES

¹Ontario Ministry of Education. (2023, June). Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework 2023: Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System.

²Note: to calculate the access rates for children birth up to age 4, the Census 2021 population estimates for age in single years (i.e., under 1, 1, 2, and 3-years-old) were used alongside full-day, full-year licensed child care space data for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces.

³Information on commuter patterns may help to identify areas where greater flexibility in child care is needed to accommodate varying work hours.

⁴Represented by the Census, 2021 variable, children under the age of 6 living in low-income after tax.

⁵Represented by the Census, 2021 variables for visible minority, excluding those who identify as Black.

⁶Represented by the Census, 2021 variable for recent immigrants who immigrated between 2016 and 2021.

⁷This is in addition to the Enhanced Support System (ESS) that is available to all child care programmes in Wellington-Guelph. Supports offered through ESS include: general (i.e., whole classroom) and child-specific consultations with Resource Consultants, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, mental health consultants, or Physical Therapists; as well as funding for additional equipment or staff need to ensure all children can meaningfully participate in the programme.

⁸Dew, A., Bulkeley, K., Veitch, C., Bundy, A., Gallego, G., Lincoln, M., ... & Griffiths, S. (2013). Addressing the barriers to accessing therapy services in rural and remote areas. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 35(18), 1564-1570. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2012.720346>

⁹Graham, K., & Underwood, K. (2012). The reality of rurality: Rural parents' experiences of early years services. *Health & Place*, 18(6), 1231-1239. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2012.09.006>

¹⁰**Population data:** Statistics Canada. 2023. Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue number 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released March 29, 2023.; Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0459-01. Commuting flow from geography of residence to geography of work by gender: Census subdivisions.

Population projection data: City of Guelph (2022, January). Long-Term Population and Housing Growth Shaping Guelph: Growth Management Strategy. City of Guelph – Shaping Guelph. <https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Guelph-Long-Term-Population-and-Housing-Growth-Analysis.pdf>; County of Wellington. (2022, June 1). County of Wellington Official Plan. <https://www.wellington.ca/en/resident-services/resources/Planning/Official-Plan/Wellington-County-Official-Plan---June-1-2022.pdf>;

Licensed child care space data for Wellington-Guelph: County of Wellington Licensed child care database, as of March 31, 2023.

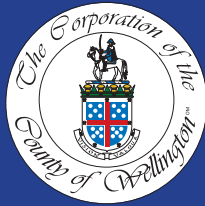
Licensed child care space data for Ontario: Ontario licensed child care space data is retrieved from the Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education as of March 31, 2022. See Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2022 <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-early-years-and-child-care-annual-report-2022#section-5>

NOTES

¹¹As population growth in the Town of Erin is dependent on municipal capacity for infrastructure, ranges of growth are presented. County of Wellington (1999, revised 2022, June 1). County of Wellington Official Plan. Retrieved from <https://www.wellington.ca/en/resident-services/pl-landusepolicies.aspx#Wellington-County-Official-Plan>

¹²Van Lancker, W., & Ghysels, J. (2016). Explaining patterns of inequality in childcare service use across 31 developed economies: A welfare state perspective. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 57(5), 310-337.

¹³Paschall, K, & Maxwell, K. (2022). Defining and Measuring Access to Licensed child care and Early Education with Families in Mind. Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. OPRE Report #2021-232. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/defining-and-measuring-access-child-care-and-early-education-families-mind>



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ALTERNATE FORMATS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

^{OM} Official Mark of The Corporation of the County of Wellington



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Mark Poste, Director of Housing Services
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 **HS-23-08**
Subject: **2023 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative Funding**

Background:

In March 2023, staff shared Committee Report HS-23-03 "[2023-25 Planned Funding Allocations for Provincially Delivered Housing and Homelessness Prevention Programmes](#)" which provided funding planning allocations for the 2023 Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative(OPHI) and the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative(COCHI) programmes. This report outlined some commitments and next steps for these programmes.

Update:

On August 17, 2023, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirmed the local 2023/24 funding allocations for these programmes. Under the COCHI programme the province confirmed \$1,633,500 in funding, and under the OPHI programme the province confirmed \$1,186,200

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) 2023-24 Investments

In February 2023, the Housing Services division put out an informal call for proposals to all of our community housing providers looking for potential capital investments from the County of Wellington under the 2023 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding. At the June 14, 2023 Social Services Committee meeting, staff received delegated authority through report HS-23-07 "[2023 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative Funding Update](#)" to make commitments to housing providers once local funding allocations under the COCHI programme were confirmed by the province. Staff indicated that should delegated authority be used over the summer months, that a report would be provided to the Social Services Committee on the details of those commitments.

Summary of investments

The funding available in 2023 for capital project investments under COCHI is \$ 1,633,500. At closing of the call for proposals, housing providers submitted 31 project requests totaling \$4,779,624 in funding.

Total Funds Available for Capital Projects in 2023	\$ 1,633,500
Total Number of housing provider Who Submitted Proposals	13
Total Number of Projects Requested	31
Total Amount of Funding Requested	\$ 4,779,624
Lowest Amount of Funding Requested	\$ 12,000 (Accessibility Upgrades)
Highest Amount of Funding Requested	\$ 672,000 (Parking Garage Retrofit)

Evaluation

Each submission was reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

- a) Risks – health and safety, water damage, litigation, security, human rights, accessibility
- b) Urgency of project – repair within the year or several years from now
- c) Compliance order issued to housing provider i.e. fire department, City, or the Technical Standards and Safety Authority
- d) Project completion deadlines and prior success with capital projects
- e) Capital reserve balance current, 5-year projection and 10-year projection, surpluses or other funding available and,
- f) Capital funding from previous funding programmes

Capital Funding Project Allocation:

Staff have issued letters of commitment to housing providers for the projects as outlined below:

Table A

Housing Provider	Project	Allocation
Cole Road Co-operative Community Inc	Furnace Replacements	\$231,000
Eramosa Non-Profit Housing Corporation	Electrical Outlet Replacement	\$20,000
Fife Road Co-operative Homes	Parking Lot Light Standards	\$76,500
Grand River Non-Profit Housing Corp	Elevator Modernization	\$50,000
Guelph Non-Profit Housing Corp	Lighting Replacement	\$200,000
Guelph Non-Profit Housing Corp	Parking Garage Retrofit	\$172,000
Maryborough Township Housing Corporation	Accessibility Upgrades	\$12,000
Matrix Non-Profit Housing Corporation	Air Make-up Unit Replacement	\$180,000
Matrix Non-Profit Housing Corporation	Common Area Flooring	\$74,500
New Hope Community Housing	Window Replacement	\$225,692
Royal City Housing Co-operative	Common Area Flooring	\$35,000
Royal City Housing Co-operative	Exterior Railing Replacement	\$125,000
Upbuilding! Non-Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc	Perimeter Fencing	\$50,575
Victor Davis Memorial Court Non-Profit Homes Inc	Accessibility Upgrades	\$40,000
Wyndham Hill Co-operative Homes Inc	Water Softener Replacement and Water Tanks	\$41,233
Wyndham Hill Co-operative Homes Inc	Foundation Repair	\$100,000
Total		\$1,633,500

Many of the projects selected represent a high risk to residents should their respective assets fail prematurely. The housing providers have shown competence in capital project management during prior initiatives and will be using a consultant (where needed) to reduce risk and ensure timely completion.

All projects that receive funding under the COCHI programme will be required to sign a contribution agreement with the County of Wellington that will treat this funding as a forgivable loan. The minimum term of the agreement is fifteen years. During that time, the housing provider must maintain affordability for a minimum of 15 years and remain a social housing provider for a minimum of 5 years.

Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)

On August 17th, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirmed Wellington's 2023/24 funding allocation for the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) programme at \$1,186,200. The OPHI programme represents our community's main source of federal/provincial funding for the development of affordable housing. Traditionally, the Housing Services division dedicates much of this funding for the creation of new affordable rental housing units. For this round of funding, the division will release an RFP in the amount of \$1,166,200 to community partners and local municipalities that are interested in developing new affordable rental housing units. The remaining \$20,000 in funding will be dedicated to the Ontario Renovates programme, which is a small grant programme that supports accessibility upgrades that help keep families in their homes.

The OPHI programme requires that all final contribution agreements be approved by Council and signed by December 31, 2023. Furthermore, construction must start within 120 days of the contribution agreement being signed. These are tight timelines, and for this reason, Housing Services will begin the RFP process as quickly as possible.

Staff are seeking delegated authority to issue conditional letters of commitment to viable new affordable rental development projects within our community based on evaluation committee recommendations, and to execute all required provincial reporting and agreements associated with the programme. This authority is required to allow successful proponents to start the development process as soon as possible, to meet the tight provincial timelines for development. The proposed delegated authority would be executed by the County's CAO and the Social Services Administrator subject to the approval of the County Solicitor, for the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative funding. Staff will report back to Committee and Council of the investments made at the next available Social Services Committee meeting.

Financial Implications:

All recommended commitments have been made through 100% provincial COCHI and OPHI funding and do not require municipal contribution. There will be no impact on the municipal tax levy.

Recommendation:

That staff complete all necessary Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing reporting for the projects and draft and execute all necessary agreements related to the funding; and

That approval for delegated authority be provided to the CAO and the Social Services Administrator,

subject to the approval of the County Solicitor for approving commitments made by the County of Wellington under the 2023 Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative programme; and

That, based on the commitments made under delegated authority, that Housing staff complete all necessary Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing reporting for the projects and draft and execute all necessary agreements related to the funding.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Poste". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Poste
Director of Housing Services



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee

From: Mark Poste, Director of Housing Services

Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023

HS-23-09

Subject: Increase in Emergency Shelter Spaces

Background:

The County has a purchase of service agreement with Stepping Stone (a non-profit agency in Guelph) to deliver emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness in the Wellington service delivery area. In April 2020, two emergency shelters owned and operated by Stepping Stone were ordered to be relocated due to pandemic restrictions. Specifically, emergency shelters services located at 1 Waterloo and Highway 6 were transferred to 23 Gordon (12 hour of operation) and 540 Silvercreek Parkway North (24-hour of operation).

The two vacant locations were then repurposed to offer transitional housing. Stepping Stones directly operated the Highway 6 adult transitional housing site and leased 1 Waterloo to another local non-profit agency, Wyndham House, to offer youth transitional housing on an interim basis while Wyndham House's Bellevue Supportive Housing site was undergoing renovations.

Currently, emergency shelters services are being provided on a permanent basis at 23 Gordon Street (27 beds) and on a temporary basis at 540 Silvercreek Parkway North (50+ beds). The operation of these sites is funded within the 2023 Housing Services budget.

Update:

Emergency shelter data collected by the Housing Services division has shown a rise in the usage of emergency shelter spaces in our area. The number of unique individuals accessing emergency shelters has risen from 52 in 2019, to 79 in 2022. Further, recent data collected (Jan-June 2023) shows that there has been another substantial increase to an average of 105 individuals accessing emergency shelters on a nightly basis – with numbers continuing to increase during the month August 2023.

There is also a rise in the number of families experiencing homelessness in the past years. There was an average of 4 individuals in a family situation in July 2022, and in July 2023, there was an average of 20 individuals in a family situation. Families are also needing emergency shelter services for longer periods of time due to the scarcity of available rental units. The decrease in available spaces in motels and rising rates have made it more difficult to accommodate families motels.

To address the increase in demand for emergency shelter services, staff are requesting an increase to the 2023 Housing Services budget in the amount of \$150,000. This funding be provided to Stepping Stone to support staffing costs to re-open and operate 1 Waterloo and Hwy 6 as emergency shelters to

accommodate 38 individuals from October 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. This will be in addition to their current emergency shelters at 23 Gordon and at 540 Silvercreek Parkway North.

The Waterloo Ave location will operate as substance use-free family shelter (24 hours of operation) with space for up to 16 individuals while the Highway 6 location will operate as a substance use-free male emergency shelter (12 hours of operation) with space for up to 22 individuals.

Financial Implications:

The additional funding of \$150,000 required to staff the increased shelter space from October – December 2023 was not part of the 2023 budget and will require increased municipal contribution. This cost (approximately \$15,000 County and \$135,000 City) will impact the total year-end over expenditure. An updated overall year-end position for all programme areas within social services will be provided to Social Services Committee in October. Any recommended costs for future years will be included in the 2024 Budget and Ten-Year Plan process.

Recommendation:

That an additional municipal contribution of \$150,000 be approved for Housing Services in 2023 to fund the operation of 38 additional emergency shelter spaces from October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark Poste", written in a cursive style.

Mark Poste
Director of Housing Services



County of Wellington Housing Services

Status and Activity Report – 2023 Q1&Q2 (January 1 – June 30, 2023)

The County of Wellington is the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for Social Services for the Wellington service area (Wellington County and the City of Guelph). Within the Social Services department, the Housing Services division is responsible for the delivery and administration of provincially mandated social and affordable housing programmes, as well as initiatives to prevent and address homelessness. The work carried out by the Housing Services division and our partner organizations spans across the entire Housing Continuum.

HOUSING CONTINUUM Wellington-Guelph



The Housing Continuum, illustrated above, can be thought of as the range of housing options individuals may need over a lifetime, including temporary emergency shelter, transitional and supportive housing along with subsidized, affordable and market rental housing as well as homeownership.

Most of the work of the County of Wellington Housing Services division as Service System Manager focuses on the portion of the Housing Continuum related to Emergency Shelters across to Government-Funded Affordable Rental Housing.

This Status and Activity report presents information about Housing Services activities from January 1 to June 30, 2023. This report is organized following the Housing Continuum, beginning with the updated information about Emergency Shelter services.

Emergency Shelter

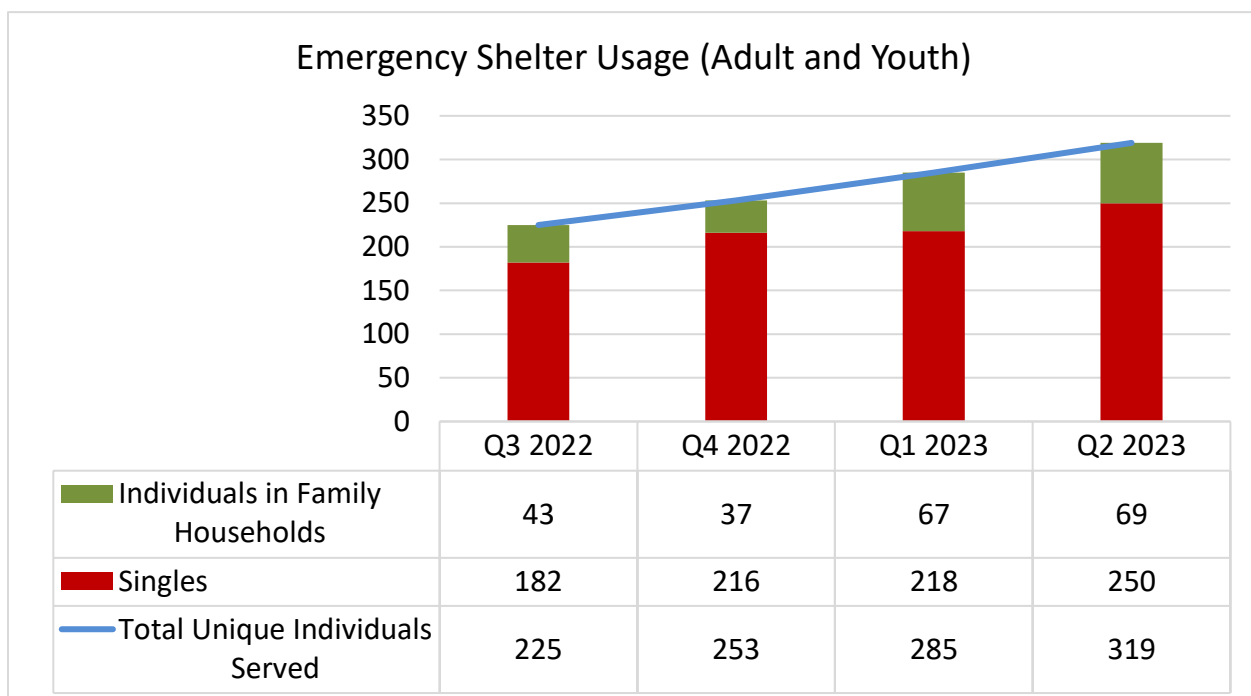
Emergency Shelters are an important part of our homeless serving system, providing necessary crisis response and housing supports to adults, youth, and families experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness. As part of the ongoing transformation of the Wellington-Guelph Emergency shelter system, emergency shelter services also include outreach and diversion services. Emergency shelters have embedded a housing-focused service orientation in their service delivery model as well as a Housing First philosophy.

At the beginning of the pandemic in April 2020, all adult and youth emergency shelters were closed to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. As of November 2021, emergency shelter services for adults were relocated to 540 Silvercreek Parkway North in Guelph with additional emergency shelter beds available at 23 Gordon Street in Guelph.



As of June 30, 2023, there are a total of 79 emergency shelter beds across located in Guelph.

The graph below includes information about emergency shelter usage from Q3 2022 to Q2 2023 that reflects youth emergency shelter (n=14 beds) as well as adult emergency shelters at 23 Gordon Street (n=27 beds) and, at 540 Silvercreek Parkway North (n=38 beds) in Guelph.

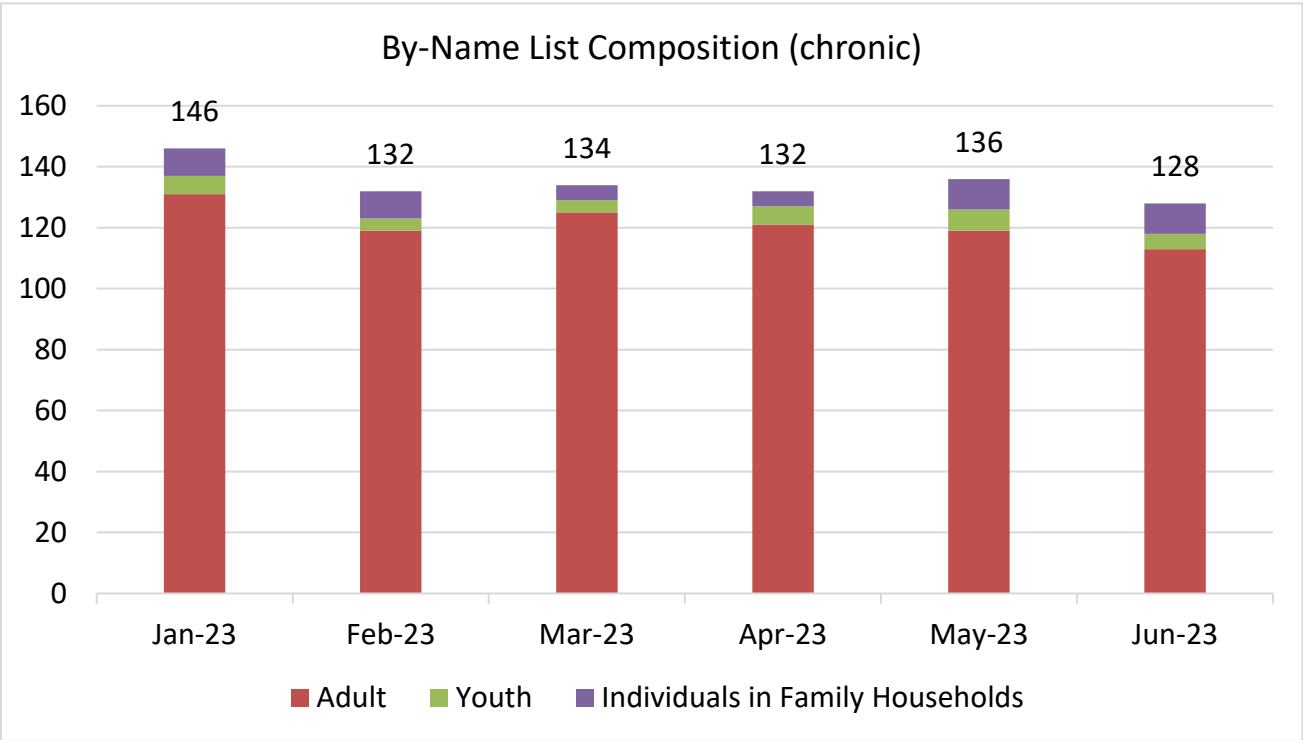


Preventing and Responding to Chronic Homelessness: the Wellington-Guelph By-Name List (BNL)

The Housing Services division, in collaboration with our community partners, are working to transform our local homeless serving system and end chronic homelessness. Individuals who are experiencing chronic homelessness have been experiencing homelessness for over 6 months and often need supportive housing.

What is the Wellington-Guelph By-Name List?

The Wellington-Guelph By-Name List (BNL) is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in Wellington-Guelph. The Housing Services division manages the BNL which helps service providers prioritize needs, track changes in housing status as individuals and families move in and out of (chronic) homelessness and inform overall actions as we move towards ending chronic homelessness in our community. The graph below shows how the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are active on the BNL fluctuates from month to month between January and June 2023. During this period, there was a monthly average of 135 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness active on the Wellington-Guelph By-Name List (BNL).

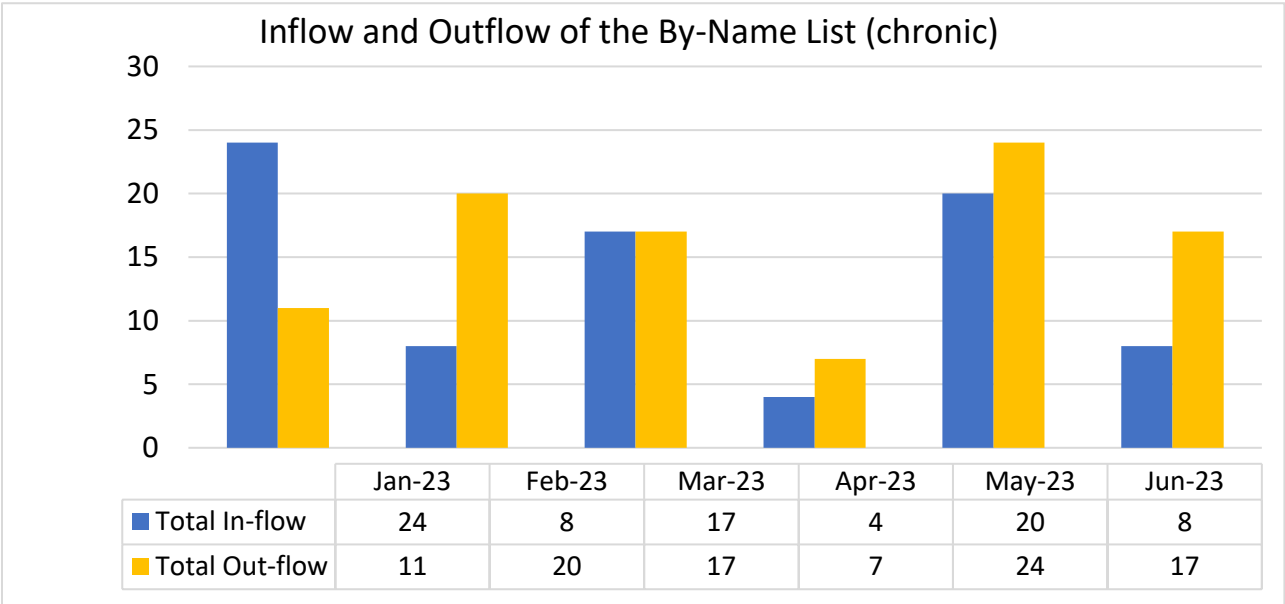


Inflow and Outflow of the Wellington-Guelph By-Name List (chronic)

Inflow refers to new individuals on the BNL and outflow refers to individuals exiting the BNL into a housing placement or when they become inactive. Information gathered through the Wellington-Guelph BNL helps us understand who is coming into the homelessness system (inflow) and who is being housed/leaving the system (outflow).

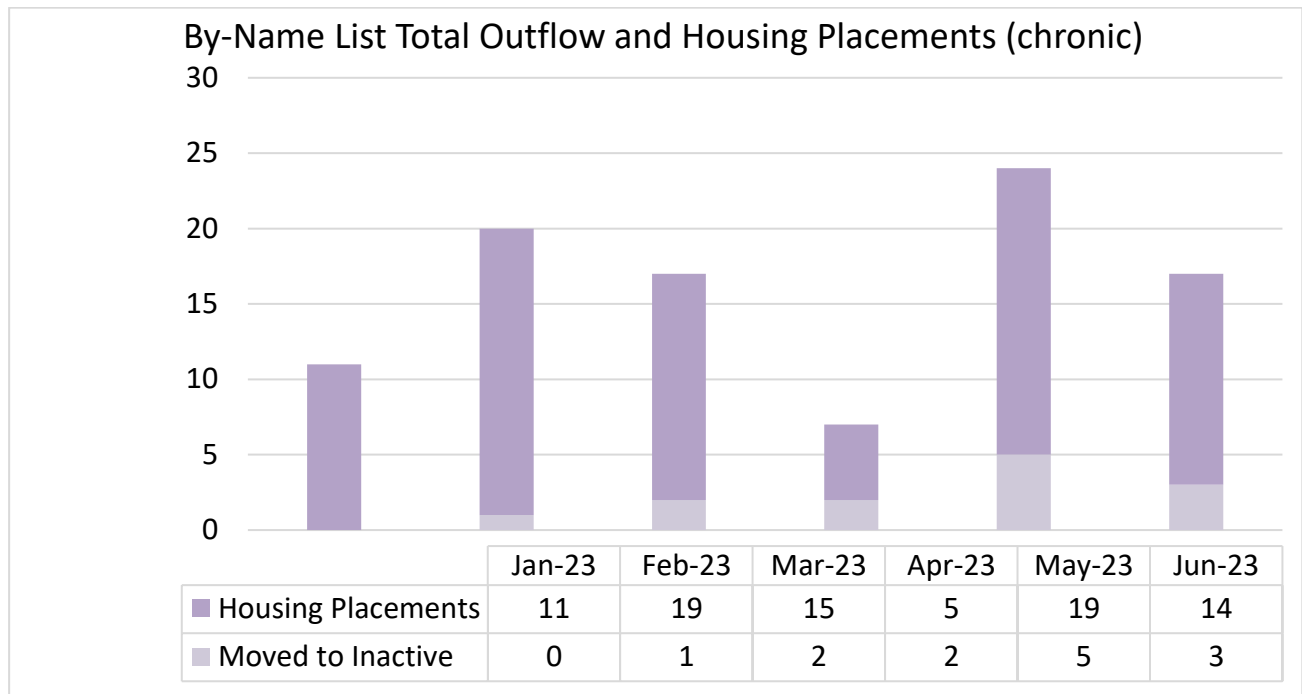
Monitoring BNL information helps us target outreach and diversion strategies to help reduce inflow and, helps inform local resources and strategies that connect individuals with permanent housing solutions, which increases outflow.

The monthly fluctuations of new individuals coming onto the BNL (inflow) and individuals exiting the BNL (outflow) shown in the graph below do not include the total number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are active on the BNL. On average between January and June 2023, monthly inflow was 13 and monthly outflow was 16.



BNL Outflow: Housing Placements for Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Individuals housed from the BNL are accommodated in various housing types, including market rentals, affordable rentals, Rent-Geared-to-Income housing (RGI), supportive and transitional housing. The number of housing placements from the BNL varies each month.



Between January and June 30, 2023: There are a total of **83** housing placements for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness on the BNL.

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing refers to temporary or time limited housing units that provide an intermediate step between emergency crisis shelter and permanent housing. Transitional housing units provide a safe and stable housing option along with individualized wrap-around support services that could include health, mental health, substance use supports, counselling, job training and placement, community activities, and help with life skills.



As of June 30, 2023: There are a total of **30** Transitional Housing units across the Wellington service area.

In addition, as of June 30, 2023, there are 28 units of Transitional Housing in development and expected to be available in 2024-2025 in Guelph.

Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing refers to housing that combines rental assistance (i.e., rent subsidy) with individualized health support services for people with high needs related to physical or mental health, developmental disabilities, or substance use. Supportive housing units can be delivered in “scattered sites” across different housing provider locations or can be purpose-built housing.



As of June 30, 2023: There are a total of 48 Supportive Housing units across the Wellington service area.

In addition, as of June 30, 2023, there are 64 units of Supportive Housing in development, which are expected to become available in 2024 in Guelph.

Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) Housing

Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing is also referred to as social housing or subsidized housing. Rent-Geared-to-Income housing are units for which the tenants pay no more than 30% of their household income on rent. The remainder of the rental cost is subsidized through government contributions.



As of June 30, 2023: There are a total of 2,952 RGI units across the Wellington service area (Wellington County and Guelph).

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing rental units refer to government - funded housing where the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area. All Affordable Housing placements are assigned chronologically.

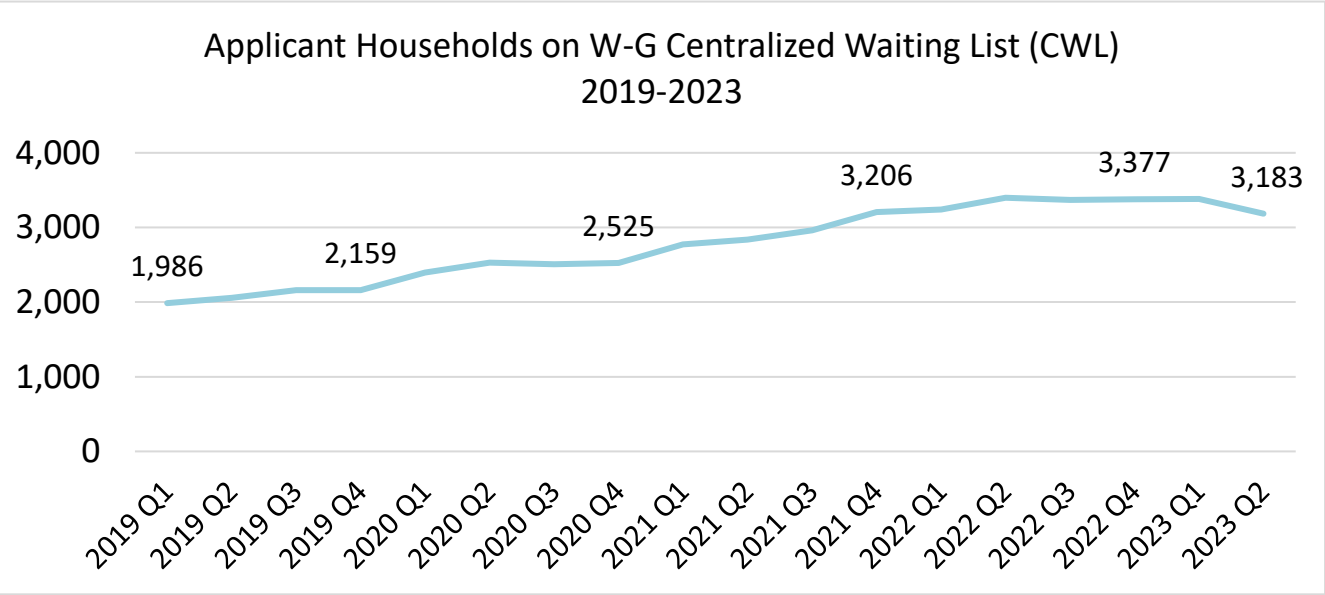


As of June 30, 2023: There are a total of 616 Affordable Housing units across the Wellington service area (Wellington County and Guelph).

In addition, as of June 30, 2023, there are 65 units of Affordable Housing in development expected to become available in 2024.

Centralized Waiting List (CWL)

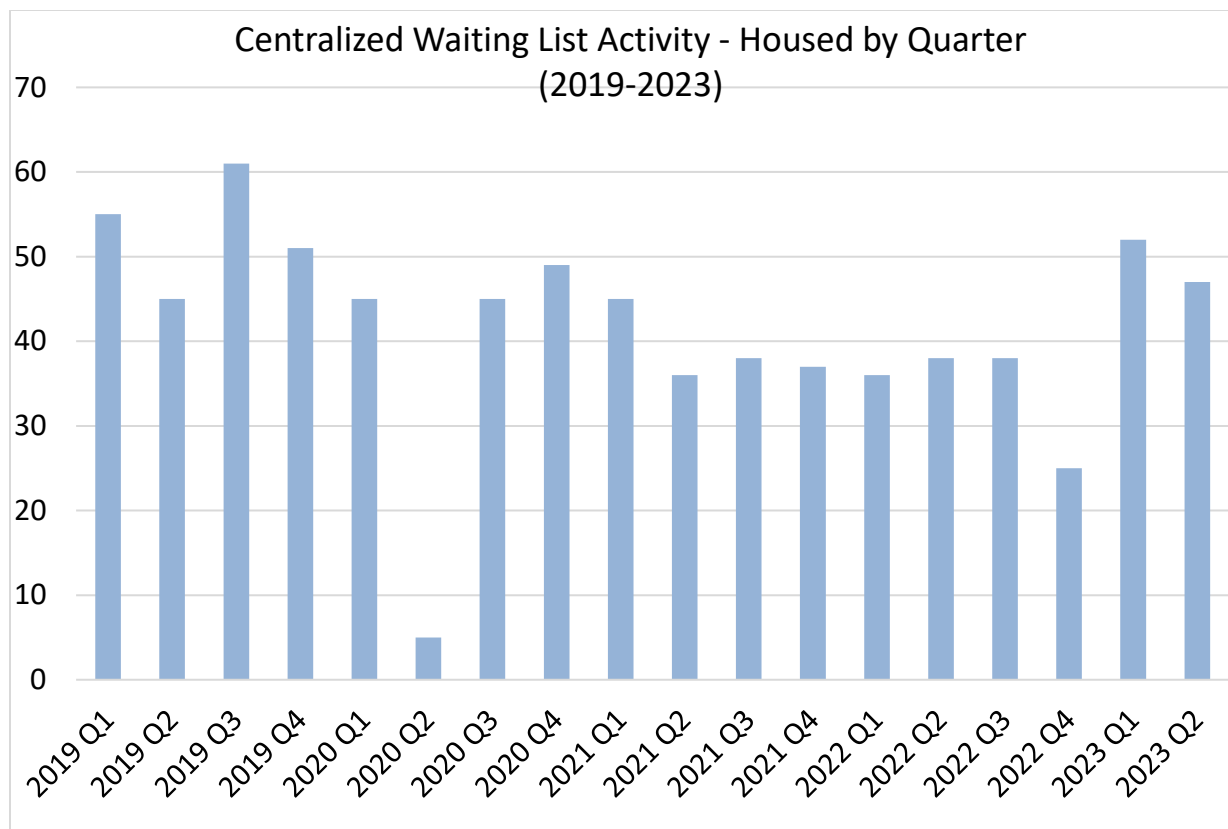
As part of the Service System Manager role, the Housing Services division manages the Wellington-Guelph Centralized Waiting List. The Centralized Waiting Lists in each service system manager area have been established in compliance with criteria set out in the Housing Services Act, 2011 and the Regulations for the purposes of allocating Rent-Geared-to-Income, Rent Support and Special Needs housing units. Government-funded affordable housing applications are also managed through the CWL.



The graph above represents eligible households on the CWL waiting for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing. As of June 30, 2023, there are a total of 3,183 households on the CWL, a small decrease from 2022 Q4. The total number of application households fluctuates depending on the number of eligible applications as well as the number of cancelled or ineligible applications and the number housed. Since 2019, the total number of households on the CWL waiting for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing continues to trend upwards.

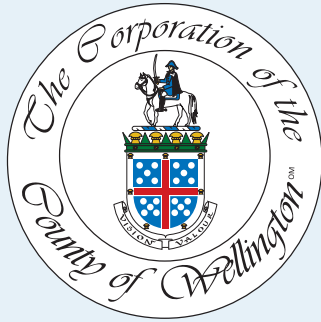
Centralized Waiting List (CWL) Housed Data

The housing placements from the CWL, illustrated on the next page, include individuals and families housed in RGI units and household transfers from one RGI unit to another.



The graph above shows fluctuations in the total number of housing placements from January 1, 2019, until June 30, 2023. The extreme drop that appears in 2020 Q2 reflects the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when there was a temporary hold on move-ins due to restrictions put in place to slow the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

The graph also shows increased number of housing placements in 2023 Q1 and Q2 compared to housing placements in 2022 Q4. These changes reflect a temporary slowdown in housing placements that occurred at the end of 2022 as the Housing Services division was working through safety-related protocols for move-ins. The rise in housing placements seen in 2023 to date reflect increased move-in activity following this pause. It is important to note that this fluctuation in the number of housing placements does not impact the larger picture of limited RGI housing stock and the growing need for RGI housing in Wellington-Guelph.



THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

2024/2025

**Preliminary
Budget Impacts
Housing Service Division**

County of Wellington
Social Services Department

SEPTEMBER 2023

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Introduction

The County of Wellington is designated by the Province of Ontario as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (Service System Manager) of social services for the Wellington service delivery area which includes the County of Wellington and the City of Guelph. Service System Managers across Ontario oversee the planning, management, and delivery of social services in a way that is integrated, people-focused and outcome-driven for residents.

Under the Housing Services Act, 2011, the County is responsible for the delivery and administration of provincially mandated rent supplement and government-funded affordable housing programmes as well as initiatives to prevent and address homelessness. This work is carried out by the Housing Services division of the Social Services department.

The Housing Services division is required to develop local 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plans as well as 5-Year updates. These plans must be developed collaboratively with the public, and a variety of local stakeholders including municipal partners; Indigenous health organizations; health and human service organizations, shelter operators, and housing providers in the housing services system. The plans must include measurable strategic objectives and action plans that align with provincial policy, legislation and matters of provincial interest. The division is also required to report annually on progress made to the province and the public.

The 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for 2015 to 2024, the Five Year Update (2020), and Annual Reports up to 2022 can be found on the County of Wellington's website: [Policies and Planning - Housing - Wellington County](#).

The division works to ensure that services funded by taxpayers are provided in a transparent manner that focuses on quality assurance and local priorities. By understanding the sociodemographic factors and the complex housing needs of the local area, leveraging support from all levels of government, and strengthening community partnerships, it develops and maintains a range of housing options and diverse housing stability supports which is a cornerstone in improving community well-being.

Current work of the Housing Services division is guided by the strategic objectives of the 5 Year Update (2020-2024) that were developed in consultation with the community and service partners.



The updated strategic objectives for 2020-2024 are as follows:

1	To help low-income households close the gap between their incomes and housing expenses.
2	To provide a range of housing stability supports to assist with housing retention and homelessness prevention.
3	To offer a comprehensive range of supportive housing options for residents with complex needs due to aging, disabilities, mental health issues and addictions.
4	To increase the supply and mix of affordable housing options for low- to moderate-income households.
5	To end chronic homelessness.
6	To promote client-centred, coordinated access to the housing and homelessness system
7	To support the sustainability of the existing social and affordable housing stock.
8	To foster access to culturally appropriate housing and homelessness services for Indigenous peoples.

This 2024/25 Preliminary Budget Impacts document has been developed to provide County of Wellington County Council and Guelph City Council projected increases in municipal contributions to address unprecedented increased demands of housing services in the areas of administration, homelessness prevention, emergency shelters, transitional housing, rent supplements, supportive housing and maintenance the social and affordable housing stock.

This preliminary plan is being shared for information purposes in advance of being fully developed and formally presented in the County's 2024 Budget and 10-Year Plan process.

All budgetary increases in this document address the County's mandate as the Service System Manager for Housing Services and are meant to provide an order of magnitude. This plan does not consider all areas of the budget and County staff have yet to complete a line-by-line review of the budget for 2024 which will consider trends experienced over the remainder of 2023, inflation factors, and any updated information available provincially as well as locally.

Roles and Responsibilities Across All Levels of Government

Federal Government

The federal government has a crown agency in charge of the national approach to housing called the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This corporation's mandate is to “promote housing affordability and choice, facilitate access to, and competition and efficiency in the provision of, housing finance, protect the availability of adequate funding for housing at low cost, and generally contribute to the well-being of the housing sector in the national economy.” (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2023). In 2017, CMHC released the National Housing Strategy which provides policies and programmes to help ensure that Canadians have access to affordable housing that meets their needs.

Through the National Housing Strategy, the Government of Canada provides funding that supports local projects offering low-cost loans and grants to increase the development of affordable rental housing buildings. The federal government also provides funding for portable housing benefits such as the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit and rent supplements that support housing stability for low-income rental households. Additionally, the federal government provides Reaching Home funding to provide dedicated funding to support homelessness initiatives.

Provincial Government

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing oversees the funding and delivery of Housing Services delivered by local Service System Managers. This Ministry “works with local governments and partners across Ontario to build safe and strong urban and rural communities with dynamic local economies, a high quality of life and affordable and suitable homes for everyone.” (Province of Ontario, 2023). The Ministry also provides funding to support government-funded affordable housing initiatives, rent supplements, and portable housing benefits as well as dedicated funds that support local initiatives to prevent and respond to homelessness.

Municipal Government

In Ontario, municipal governments have responsibilities related to housing such as funding social housing and housing stability programmes through the local area Service System Manager. Municipalities are also responsible for land use planning policy, zoning, and development approvals that must align with provincial legislation and policy directives. Through this planning system, municipalities are to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet the social, health and economic well-being of the current and future residents of their community.



Wellington-Guelph State of Housing and Homelessness

Vision for Wellington-Guelph from the current 10 Year Plan:

Everyone in Guelph-Wellington can find and maintain an appropriate, safe, and affordable place to call home.

Having a place to call home is a necessity for everyone in our community, and the quality of that housing directly influences the health and well-being of its residents. When an individual or a household does not have stable housing, they cannot fully participate in our communities. There are 1.4 million households in Canada that do not have access to quality housing, which forces households to live in unsuitable, inadequate, and unaffordable homes (CMHC, 2022).

A recent Ontario Chamber of Commerce paper highlighted that the housing affordability crisis is significantly impacting the ability of businesses to attract and retain talent. Their recent Business Confidence Survey showed that 68% of organizations in Ontario continue to report labour shortages (Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2023). The ability to find a maintain an appropriate, safe, and affordable place to call home impacts the personal and economic well-being of our communities.

Local Housing Context

Population Growth in the Wellington-Guelph service area

According to the 2021 Census, the Wellington-Guelph service area has a total population of 241,026. The Wellington-Guelph population has increased by 8.2% since the 2016 Census which is well above the provincial population increase of 5.8% for Ontario.

Limited Housing Options and Affordability in Wellington-Guelph

There is a history of low vacancy rates in Wellington-Guelph which puts pressure on the need for affordable housing in our area. Results from the CMHC Rental Market Survey show that apartment vacancy rates in the Wellington-Guelph service area were below 2% from 2011 until 2018.

From 2019 onward, Guelph Census Metropolitan Area (Guelph CMA) vacancy rates have been used as a proxy for the Wellington-Guelph service area. Guelph CMA is made up of the City of Guelph, Puslinch, and Guelph/Eramosa. Historically Guelph CMA vacancy rates have been very similar to Wellington-Guelph area vacancy rates, and as such are an appropriate proxy to use when the Wellington-Guelph service area data is not available. Guelph CMA vacancy rates have remained at or below 2% since 2018, with the 2022 apartment vacancy rate sitting at 1.5% indicating “tight” rental market conditions that is well below the 3% vacancy rate which is considered a “healthy” threshold.

Low vacancy rates like this make it challenging for prospective tenants to secure any type of rental housing and create a local situation where there is little turnover of units priced at the lower end of the

market. Further, low vacancy rates provide greater pricing power for units that are vacated, as evidenced by high monthly rent charges.

Housing Services conducts environmental scans of asking rents in our service area on an annual basis. In 2019 the average asking rent for a 1-bedroom apartment was \$1,358.00 and in 2022 it was \$1,971.00 demonstrating a 45% increase (\$613.00).

Primary Rental Market Units in Wellington-Guelph

The CMHC Rental Market Survey also provides information about the number of primary rental apartment units in Guelph CMA. As the table below demonstrates, the number of units has increased minimally with only 321 more units in 2022 compared to 2019 (an increase of 4.3%).

Table 1: Primary Rental Market Units in Guelph CMA

	Oct 2019	Oct 2020	Oct 2021	Oct 2022
Bachelor	200	203	205	206
1 Bedroom	2,471	2,609	2,642	2,662
2 Bedroom	4,476	4,512	4,635	4,599
3 Bedroom +	287	286	290	288
Total	7,434	7,610	7,772	7,755

Wellington-Guelph Households in Core Housing Need

Core housing need is a vital indicator of community well-being that considers three factors: Adequacy - if the dwelling in need of major repair; Suitability - if there are enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household; Affordability - if the households spend 30% or more of their before-tax income on accommodation. Households are in core housing need when they live in inadequate, unsuitable, or unaffordable dwellings, and are not able to afford alternative housing in the community.

According to the 2021 Census, there are a total of 7,690 households in Wellington-Guelph, including both owner households and tenant households. Overall, nearly 10% of all households in Wellington-Guelph were living in core housing need. For renter households the rate is much higher with 20.6% in core housing need. The main reason for households being in core housing need is due to affordability.

State of Housing and Homelessness Summary

The pressures in the market-based system resulting from low vacancy rates, limited housing options, lack of affordable rent charges, many households in core housing needs result in more individuals and families struggling with housing instability. All these factors result in greater pressures on the local the housing system and services delivered by social services.

Steps need to be taken to ensure that the housing and homelessness system in Wellington-Guelph can continue to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and prevent experiences of homelessness by supporting households through moments of housing instability.

The Wellington-Guelph community has drawn on the work of Stephen Gaetz and Erin Dej, *A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention* (2017), to structure the work of the local housing services system into three main focuses:

- Preventing Experiences of Homelessness
- Emergency Responses to Experiences of Homelessness
- Transitions to and Retention of a Permanent Housing Solution



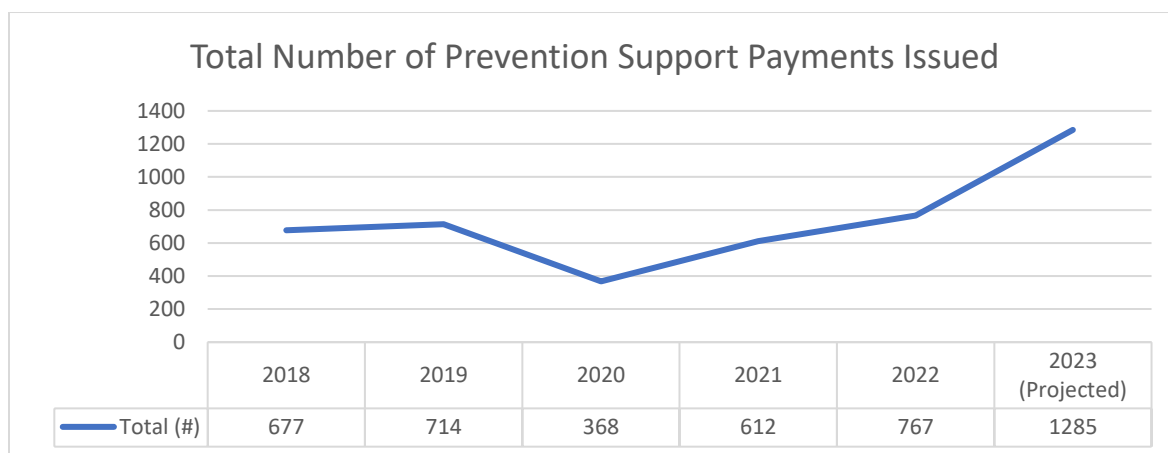
(Dej, 2017)

Preventing Experiences of Homelessness

The Housing Services division delivers a Housing Stability Programme that helps address financial issues that can destabilize households. Based on eligibility criteria, households can receive one-time financial assistance to address their rental and/or utility arrears to prevent them from losing their housing. At times, a portion of the Rent Supplement Programme funding (see page 17) can be provided to eligible households to pay for first and last month's rent and other moving costs associated with securing a new permanent housing solution.

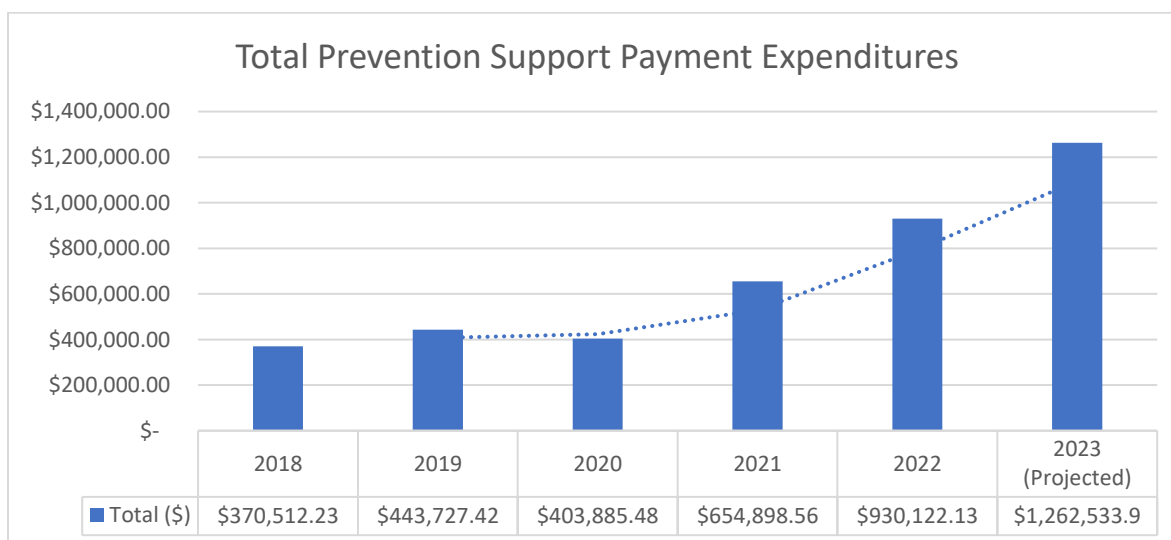
Over the past number of years, there has been significant increases in both the need for and the costs to prevent experiences of homelessness. Figures 1 and 2 show the significant increases in pressures for homelessness prevention supports. Figure 1 shows the number of supports issued annually since 2018 and a projected number for 2023 (based on support trends in the first half of 2023). Figure 2 shows the financial impact of higher costs associated with the increase in homelessness prevention supports.

Figure 1: Housing Stability Programme payments from 2018 to 2023.



The decline in payments and expenditures in 2020 could be attributed to Landlord and Tenant Board suspending the process of issuing new eviction orders and the province issuing a moratorium on utility disconnections. The increase in expenditures in 2021 could be attributed to Landlord Tenant Board expediting hearings for evictions and the moratorium on utility disconnections being lifted.

Figure 2: Below shows the annual expenses of the Housing Stability Programme from 2018 to 2023.



The average Housing Stability Programme payment in 2018 was approximately \$548.00 while in 2023 the average payment is projected to be approximately \$983.00. There is a strong need for rental arrears and first and last month's rent support as they remain two of the most used categories of the housing stability programme.

Additional funding for the Housing Stability Programme will be used to address the increased demand for assisting eligible households with utility and rent arrears and one-time rental fees/moving costs for them to maintain their current housing or attain new housing.

Preliminary Additional Investments to Prevent/Reduce Experiences of Homelessness

A budget increase of \$500,000 is planned for 2024. This will be an ongoing cost throughout the 10-year plan.

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in number of households experiencing housing stability.
- Increase in number of individuals and families diverted from emergency shelter.

Emergency Responses to Experiences of Homelessness

The Housing Services division administers multiple 'housing focused' strategies to support individuals who are experiencing homelessness. Delivered through community partners, these supports include emergency shelter system as well as positions to support individuals who experiencing homelessness throughout the community. Outreach Workers connect with and support those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Diversion/Rapid Rehousing Workers support individuals to quickly find alternate housing solutions to avoid a long duration of homelessness.

Emergency Shelter System



The Housing Services division routinely collects data and monitors the By-Name List which tracks individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. In addition, the division collects and monitors live data related to all emergency shelter services.

The average number of unique individuals accessing emergency shelters has risen from 52 in 2018, to 79 in 2022. Data collected from January-June 2023 shows that there has been a substantial increase, with an average of 105 individuals accessing emergency shelters on a nightly basis. Preliminary data for August 2023 shows a continuing increase. The data also shows that the duration for which individuals are accessing emergency shelters has also increased since 2018.

Figure 3: Average Number of Unique Individuals Accessing Emergency Shelters per Night Over Time (2018 to 2023)

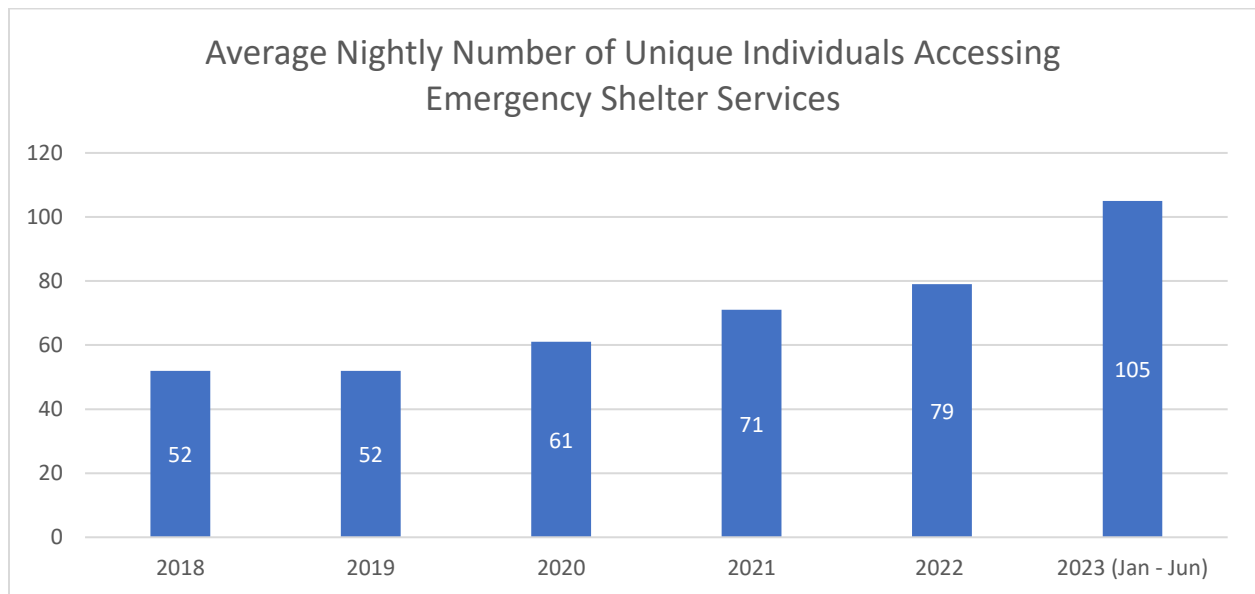
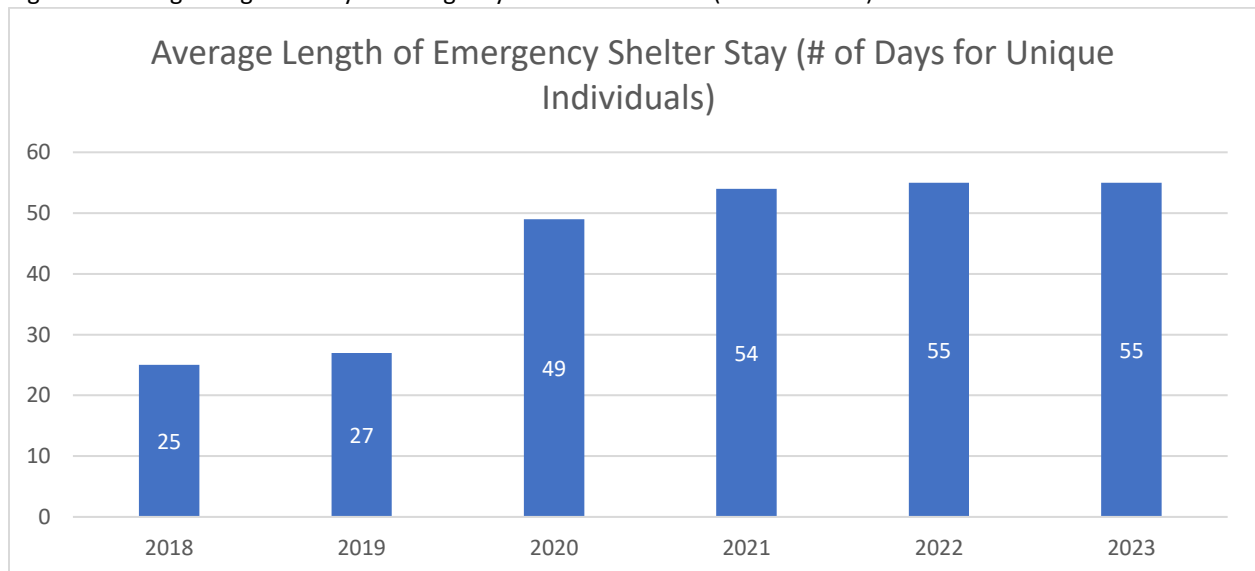


Figure 4: Average Length of Stay in Emergency Shelter Over Time (2018 To 2023)



NB: 2023 utilizes a backward rolling year for Q2 dating July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

There is also a rise in the number of families experiencing homelessness in the past year. There was an average of 4 individuals in a family situation in July 2022, and in 2023, there is an average of 20 individuals in a family situation. Families are also needing emergency shelter services for longer periods of time due to the scarcity of available rental units. The decrease of available spaces in motels and higher motel rates has impacted the ability of the Housing Services division to accommodate families experiencing homelessness.

The existing emergency shelter system as of July 2023 (not including Women in Crisis) provides a total of 41 beds for adults and youth in addition to 43 units with multiple occupancy. These services are offered by Stepping Stone who operate two locations for adults and families, and Wyndham House who operate one location for youth. The Housing Services division regularly uses motels for any overflow.

Sustaining and expanding the current emergency shelter system is a high priority for the Housing Services division in 2023/24.

In 2023, emergency shelter expansion plans include:

- Shelter for Families at 1 Waterloo (16 beds) commencing October 1
- Substance-free Adult Shelter for males at Hwy 6 (22 beds) commencing October 1
- Maintaining use of 540 Silvercreek Pkwy (43 units)

For 2024, Housing Services will continue using 540 Silvercreek Pkwy on a temporary basis to accommodate overflow. The division is also in the preliminary stages of plans to add 27 more emergency shelter beds at 23 Gordon in Guelph.

Plans in 2024 also include efforts to stabilize and support the emergency shelter workforce which will include new training requirements to implement updated Emergency Shelter Standards developed by the Housing Services division in 2023.

Enhanced funding for the emergency shelter services will support retention of current shelter staff and the operation of 65 new emergency shelter beds. It will also support maintaining 540 Silvercreek Pkwy, N., on a temporary basis as an overflow site.

Preliminary Additional Investments to Sustain and Increase Emergency Shelter Capacity

A budget increase of \$2,1 million is planned for 2024. The annualized cost will be \$2.3 million beginning in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

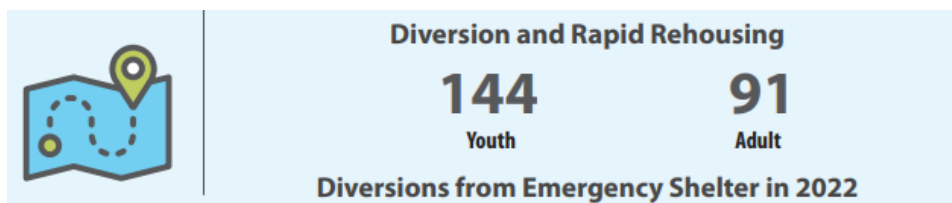
- Increased number of individuals and families accessing the emergency shelter system.
- Decrease in the number of individuals living in unsheltered homeless conditions.
- Decrease in motel/hotel expenditures.

Outreach Workers and Diversion/Rapid Rehousing Workers

Housing Services currently provides funding to a community agency for 2 FTE Outreach Workers that offer support to unsheltered individuals across the service delivery area. In 2022, the Outreach Workers supported 145 unique individuals in our community.

Additionally, Housing Services provides funding to community agencies for 3 FTE Diversion/Rapid Rehousing Workers who help individuals to quickly find and secure appropriate housing solutions. In 2022, Diversion and Rapid Rehousing Workers supported 144 youth and 91 adults, diverting these individuals away from the youth and adult emergency shelters respectively.

Figure 5: Diversion and Rapid Rehousing data for 2022



The 2023 emergency shelter data and the By-Name List data demonstrate the need for increased support to respond to individuals who are experiencing homelessness and assist them to achieve a new housing solution as quickly as possible.

Additional funding will be used increase the number of Outreach Workers and Diversion/Rapid Rehousing Workers in Wellington County and in Guelph, including an Indigenous Outreach Worker.

Preliminary Additional Investments for Emergency Responses to Experiences of Homelessness

A budget increase of \$180,000 is planned for 2024 with an annualized cost of \$300,000 beginning in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

- Decrease in the number of unique individuals using the emergency shelter system nightly.
- Decrease in the average length of stay in the emergency shelter system.

Transitions to and Retention of Housing Placements

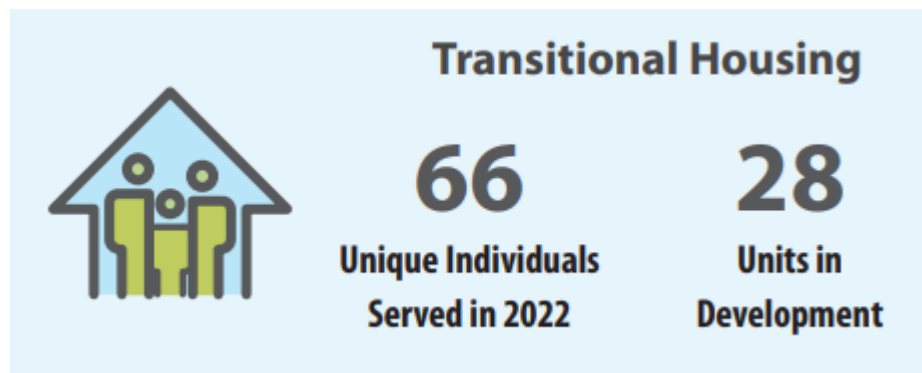
Transitions to and Retention of Housing Placements looks at finding permanent housing solutions for those who are experiencing homelessness or chronic homelessness. Depending on the needs of the individual or household, this can include solutions in market-based rental, social, affordable, transitional, or supportive housing. Each approach encompasses a broad range of services, resources and supports with the goal of obtaining permanent housing.



Transitional Housing



Transitional Housing provides individuals with temporary safe and stable housing as an intermediate step between emergency shelters and permanent housing. Transitional housing is an important part of the Housing Continuum as it alleviates pressures in the emergency shelter system, helps prevent individuals from returning to homelessness, and supports their wellbeing as they work towards a suitable permanent housing solution.



(Figure 6: Above shows the Transitional Housing data in 2022 from the 2022 Wellington-Guelph Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Report: A Place to Call Home.)

Transitional housing programmes have existed in our community for several years and have traditionally been intended to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, or pregnant and parenting women and their children. These programmes have had tremendous success in helping individuals and families attain and maintain a permanent housing solution.

Staff at transitional housing programmes build relationships with the individual, address and support their immediate needs while working alongside individuals to create a longer-term housing plan. Permanent housing plans may include prioritization for supportive housing placement or access to another affordable permanent housing solution.

The lack of transitional housing for adults is a significant gap in our community's housing system.

In July 2024, the County will be opening 28 transitional housing units at 65 Delhi St. which will help to fill the gap in the system. Housing Services is also in the preliminary stages of creating 15 additional transitional housing units in Guelph to open in November 2024.

Additional funding will be used to support the operation of 43 new transitional housing units.

Preliminary Additional Investments for Transitional Housing Investments

A budget increase of \$ 314,000 is planned for 2024 with an annualized cost of \$982,000 beginning in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in the number of housing placements from chronic homelessness
- Increase retention of obtained housing

Permanent Supportive Housing



Supportive housing is a key element in enabling people with complex needs to find stable housing, lead fulfilling lives, and live as independently as possible in their community. Providing people with appropriate housing and supports promotes housing stability and their wellbeing.

For several years, the Housing Services division has worked with our local health partners to deliver a supportive housing programme that is scattered across many sites in the service delivery area. This programme currently supports 45 units across our service area with a priority of supporting those that are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.

More recently, large investments have been made from all levels of government to increase the permanent supportive housing infrastructure. While these developments will have a substantial impact on our community's By-Name List, more supportive housing options are needed across our service delivery area to support our most vulnerable residents. The current priority is to support the operational funding of the new developments created at Grace Gardens (32 units for adults), Bellevue (16 units for youth) and Shelldale (32 units for adults).

Operating funds provided by Housing Services will support Housing Stability Workers (not health-related positions or services), at 3 of the 4 locations. A funding application for the full operational costs of the Shelldale site in addition to paramedical services for all listed sites is being submitted to the Ministry of Health through the local Ontario Health Team.

Additional funding will be used for community-based Housing Stability positions to support the operation of 48 units serving adults and youth.

Preliminary Additional Investments for Supportive Housing

A budget increase of \$776,000 is planned for 2024. This will be an ongoing cost throughout the 10-year plan.

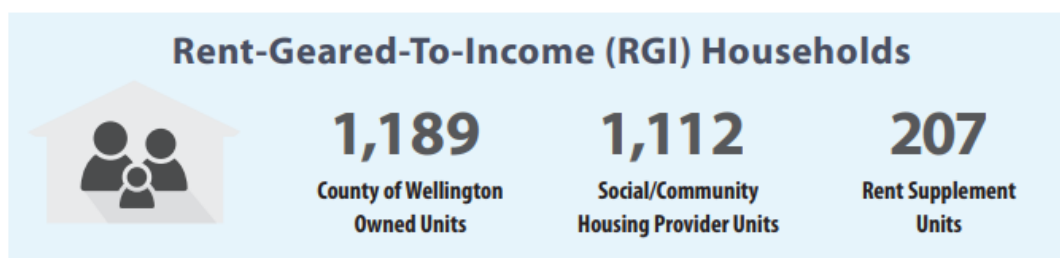
Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in the number of households experiencing housing stability
- Decrease in the number of tenant households at-risk of homelessness
- Decrease in the number of evictions

Rent Geared to Income (Social) Housing



Housing Services by the Numbers - 2022 Snapshot



(Figure 7: Above shows the Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI) data in 2022 from the 2022 Wellington-Guelph Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Report: A Place to Call Home.)

The County owns and manages a large portfolio of social housing properties throughout our service area and is responsible for the oversight of dozens of local social and affordable housing providers. As of December 31, 2022, the division supported a portfolio of 2,508 units of Rent Geared to Income housing options.

The division supports another 489 households with funding to live more affordably, with many of these units also including a dedicated support structure to help make sure that they remain stably housed.

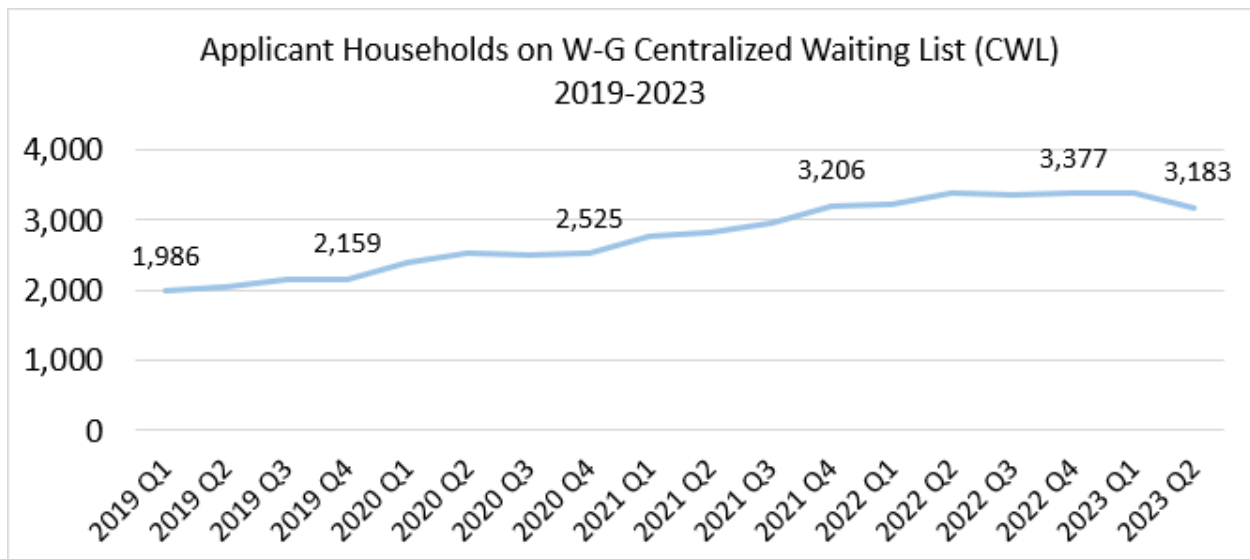


(Figure 8: Above shows the Rent Support Households data in 2022 from the 2022 Wellington-Guelph Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Report: A Place to Call Home.)

Pressures on Existing Social Housing System

The need for social housing stock is growing as affordable private market rental options are extremely difficult to find. The number of households waiting for social housing in Wellington-Guelph has risen from 1,986 households at the start of 2019, to 3,183 households at the end July 2023. While there has been a slight decrease as Q2 in 2023, a significant demand beyond supply for social housing remains.

Figure 9: Number of Households on the Wellington-Guelph Centralized Waiting List (2019 to Q2 2023)



Rent Supplement Programme

In addition to the Rent-Geared to Income programme, the Rent Supplement Programme helps fill the affordability gap for individuals experiencing homelessness to obtain permanent housing in the private rental market. This funding has been a key driver of our community's reduction in homelessness by supporting 1,073 housing placements since 2018. Without this movement off the By-Name List, there would be more individuals experiencing homelessness in our community today, our shelters would be overloaded, and many households would be forced into unsheltered homelessness.

An increase to this programme will gradually provide rent supplement funding to approximately 50 additional households in 2024 with additional households in 2025.

Preliminary Additional Investments for the Rent Supplement Programme

A budget increase of \$500,000 is planned for 2024 with an annualized cost to \$900,00 beginning in 2025.

Key Performance Indicators

- Decreased need of emergency shelters
- Decrease in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness.

Maintenance Costs of Social and Affordable Housing Stock

The costs to maintain the County owned social housing stock have also dramatically increased in 2023, largely due increased costs of labour and materials, higher insurance claims, increasing the use of abatement companies to deal with small asbestos remediations, increased move out costs, and eviction delays at the Landlord Tenant Board.

Move Out Trends and Costs

Turnover costs of units continue to add pressure to the maintenance budgets of all social housing providers. The numbers below are for move out costs in the County's owned housing stock:

- Between January 1 and June 30, 2023, there were 67 move outs.
- The average unit turnover costs for units closed out between January 1 and June 30, 2023, is \$9,011.
- The top ten most expensive move outs during the first 6 months of 2023 averaged \$48,579 per move out.
- Move out expenses for the first half of 2023 were \$856,245. 56.7% (\$485,788) of those expenses were from 14.9% of the move outs.

Tenant Charge Backs

Tenant charge backs related to tenant neglect or willful damage units has dramatically increased in the first half of 2023. The numbers below show the total tenant charge backs issued in the past 5 years. Decreases in 2021 and 2022 can be attributed to the pandemic when many move outs and transfers were cancelled or postponed. It should be noted that tenant charge backs usually go unpaid.

- **2019:** \$103,071
- **2020:** \$104,157
- **2021:** \$56,789
- **2022:** \$57,722
- **2023:** \$109,065 (January 1, 2023, to July 25, 2023). Projected to be \$186,969.

Preliminary Additional Investments for Maintenance of the Social and Affordable Housing Stock

A budget increase of \$700,000 is planned for 2024. This will be an ongoing cost throughout the 10-year plan.

System Level Administrative Needs

Additional investments are needed to enhance the Housing Services division's ability to plan, monitor and enhance the delivery of services across the housing continuum. The number of individuals newly experiencing homelessness and housing instability outweighs the staffing resources to support them within the housing stability system.

New positions include an additional Housing Stability Caseworker, a Data Analyst Coordinator, and temporary Housing System Trainer. A new Learning Management System will support online training for staff and community agencies who deliver services across the housing continuum.

Additional Administration Positions

A budget increase of \$259,000 is planned for 2024 with an annualized cost of \$311,000 beginning in 2025.



Summary of Preliminary Budget Increases in 2024

Incremental Budget Increase	2024
Homelessness Prevention Enhanced funding to support households with Utility Arrears and One Time Rental Costs (delivered by Housing Services)	\$500,000
Emergency Shelters Increase staff compensation, operation of 65 new shelter beds, continued use of 540 Silvercreek Pkwy N., as overflow (contracted service)	\$2,105,000
Emergency Responses to Homelessness Increased contracted positions for Outreach and Diversion/Rapid Rehousing Workers (contracted service)	\$180,000
Transitional Housing Operation of 43 new additional transitional housing units (contracted service)	\$314,000
Permanent Supportive Housing Financial support for housing stability positions supporting 48 units for adults and youth (contracted service)	\$776,000
Rent Supplements Enhanced funding for housing people experiencing homelessness (delivered by Housing Services)	\$500,000
Maintenance Costs Enhanced funding to support increased costs to adequately maintain the current social and affordable housing stock.	\$700,000
Administration Funding to support 2 permanent and 1 temporary positions (Housing Services division)	\$259,000
TOTAL	\$5,334,000

Costs throughout this report and summarized above are full municipal costs. It is projected that once appropriate costs splits have been applied the City share will be approximately \$4.6 million while the County share will be \$734,000.

Additional incremental costs of \$1.3 million (\$1.15 million City and \$150,000 County) will be experienced in 2025 as a result of the phase in of the programme changes outlined above.



Affordable Rental Housing



The County directly owns and manages a portfolio of government-funded affordable housing properties throughout our service area and is responsible for the oversight of over a dozen local affordable housing providers. Since 2006, the County as Services System Manager responsible for the delivery of federal and provincial affordable rental housing development funding has invested \$49,309,893 in the development of affordable rental housing options. Figure 10 (below) shows the breakdown of the 681 units of affordable housing options that make up the portfolio supported by the division as of December 31, 2022.

Figure 10: Affordable Housing Households supported by Housing Services Division in 2022

Housing Services by the Numbers - 2022 Snapshot



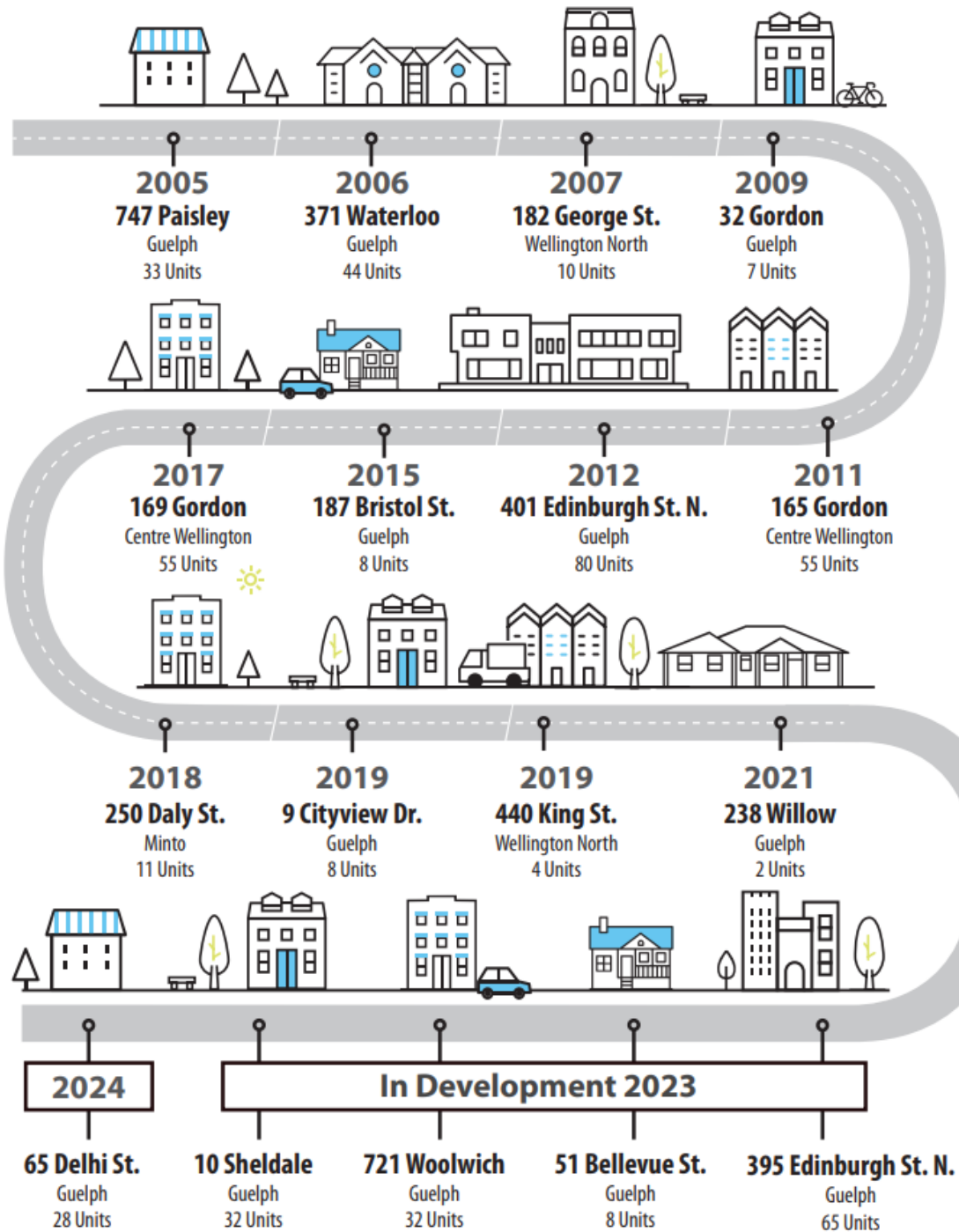
Figure 11, which appears on the following page, illustrates the development of government-funded affordable housing units in Wellington-Guelph service area between 2005 and 2022. In total, 482 units have been built during this period.



Figure 11: Affordable Housing Development (2005-2022)

Affordable Housing Development

The Housing Services Division has supported the development of 482 units of housing since 2005.



Pressures on existing Affordable Housing System

Affordability in Wellington-Guelph is a major barrier of the ability of many households to find and maintain a safe and appropriate home. When we look at the “Wellington-Guelph State of Housing and Homelessness” section at the beginning of this document, there are several data sets that are cause for concern.

The staggering increase in rental rates over a short time is a top concern. Housing Services conducts environmental scans of asking rents in our service area on an annual basis every spring. In 2019 the average asking rent for a 1-bedroom apartment was \$1,358 and in 2022 it was \$1,971 demonstrating a 45% increase (\$613). This level of inflation is not sustainable for the average household. Rent controls will protect households that aren’t changing addresses, but those that need to move due to any number of reasons like a new job, growing family, changing communities, family relationship breakdown, will be facing very high rents.

The Core Housing Need data from the 2021 census, indicates that 7,690 households are already struggling with housing affordability.

The Wellington-Guelph is one of the fastest growing parts of Canada, with population growth rates far exceeding provincial averages. The rental rates will continue to climb as the demand for rental units grows, which will place more pressure on lower income households in Wellington-Guelph.

Increased affordable housing options are needed. The Housing Services division is working with potential affordable rental housing developers to bring more government-funded affordable units into the community. While the division is a delivery agent for federal and provincial capital funding initiatives (grants or long-term lower cost loans), funding is limited to the availability and timing of funds which often have a short turn around for applications. Programmes like the National Co-Investment Fund is a competitive process that requires local “co-investments” for a project to be eligible for the lower cost loans and grants which means that local investments are critical to creating more government funded affordable housing.

The funding needed to increase the availability of affordable housing options to the level of need in Wellington-Guelph would be significant. There were 7,690 households experiencing housing affordability concerns in 2021 in just the Guelph CMA. This number has likely risen over the last two years since the census was conducted. Investments from all levels are needed, but local investments need to be large enough and dependable for developers (Non-Profit or For-Profit) to be able to leverage commitments from upper levels of government. Long-term strategic plans around this level of investment are needed at the local level.

While there are no funding increases being requested in the 2024 Housing Services budget for additional government-funded affordable housing, the County will continue to work with local municipalities and housing service providers to leverage opportunities to build more government-funded affordable housing. (See Appendix A-Housing Advocacy Plans)

Primary Care, Mental Health, and Substance-Use/Addictions Services

Health and housing are basic needs that should be attainable for everyone in our community. However, timely access to appropriate health services and affordable housing are major barriers in our service area. This is especially true for individuals at risk of or experiencing chronic homelessness.

This document unpacks several housing focused investments to help households find and maintain an appropriate, safe, and affordable place to call home. Without access to appropriate health supports many housing placements will not be successful. Wellington-Guelph will not end homelessness in our community unless our residents receive timely access to appropriate health services and support.

Transitional and supportive housing options represent an important intersection between health and housing, where our community's housing infrastructure provides space for our community's most vulnerable to call home while accessing the primary care, mental health and substance use services in a consistent way that meets the resident where they are at in their health journey. Our community has been making large scale investments in this important housing stock, and health partners are securing the health investments needed to operationalize these projects. However, our system needs more intentional connections with health to support our community's most vulnerable.

Bringing health support into the housing continuum, including the emergency shelter system is a key step to ensure that individuals that are new to experiences of homelessness, or individuals with chronic experiences of homelessness can have timely access to services and supports.

The Housing Services division is currently working with local health agencies to submit funding proposals for health services to Ontario Health West to support the operational support needs of the supportive and transitional housing programmes, as well as some housing focused and community-based health investments.

While no increases to the Housing Services 2024 budget is being requested to support health services, the County will support applications to other levels of government to meet this critical need in making housing solutions successful (See Appendix A-Housing Advocacy Plans).



Appendix “A” – Housing Advocacy Plans

The following section will examine the interactions between housing and various systems and the importance of active collaboration towards preventing and ending homelessness. The intention is to use the recommendations below to focus advocacy efforts over the next two years.

Municipal Government and Local Departments

By collaborating with local municipal government and local departments such as Libraries, Planning Divisions, Emergency Management and Emergency Services together as a community we can make meaningful strides towards preventing and ending chronic homelessness and lasting commitments to the development of affordable housing in Wellington-Guelph.

- **Affordable Housing Reserves** are important tools to support developing affordable rental housing and accessing funding from upper levels of government.
- **Libraries** are truly meant to serve everyone in Wellington-Guelph, and this is evident in our community. Libraries across Wellington-Guelph have been great at providing welcoming spaces for community members that are experiencing homelessness.
- **Community Centres** are social hubs located across Wellington-Guelph where individuals and families of all walks of life gather. This hotspot can be explored in a new lens to explore new programming around housing stability and homelessness prevention and access to showers, bathrooms, and basic amenities.
- **Planning Divisions/Departments** (both County and City) finding ways to increase the development of primary rental units, with a particular focus on the development of affordable primary rental.
- **Emergency Management** (both County and City) to develop a partnership and interact between systems towards a common solution when community members lose their housing and methods to provide wrap-around preventative services.
- **Emergency Services** (both County and City including Fire, Police and Paramedics) to continue the great work with vulnerable populations who face trauma, mental health challenges, addictions to support housing focused solutions.

Provincial Government

The County of Wellington Housing Services’ role as a Services System Managers allows the opportunity to collaborate and communicate with various levels of government. Over the next two years, an emphasis on collaboration with both Provincial and Federal Government towards local solutions and increasing funding allocations will strengthen community sustainability of services programmes and work towards community goals.

Provincial Government Advocacy

- **Expansion of the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)** – allows ability to support the sustainability of existing community housing in Wellington-Guelph.
- **Expansion of the Ontario Housing Priorities Initiative (OPHI)** – allows for meaningful commitments to affordable housing development.

- **Large-scale investment in the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)** - to support more households with affordable housing with rising rent costs in the private rental market.
- **Substantial investment into the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB)** – to enhance the process for timely mediations and avoid lengthy delays which inevitably led to increased rental arrears and increased housing instability.
- **No Discharges from Institutions into Homelessness** – call to stop discharges directly into homelessness from institutions (justice and health) and develop preventative and housing first practices to reduce inflow into homelessness.
- **Collaboration across Ministries with the BNL** – working with the local Ontario Health Teams’ (OHT) to prioritize health partners to be more housing focused on their work and prioritizing local By-Name Lists community members for services and supports.

Expansion of Provincial Social Assistance Programmes (OW and ODSP)

Basic Needs Allowance and Shelter Benefit Rates are too low to support households in the current housing market. Since the early 1990’s, there has been little change to the rate structures resulting in immediate risks and increased housing instability for all OW and ODSP recipients.

- **Basic Needs Allowances** – should be increased annually to match inflation.
- **Shelter Benefit Rates** – should be converted to a portable housing benefit like the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB).
- **Review of Shelter Rate Tables for Rent-Geared-to-Income rent calculations** – Social Housing providers should be able to access up to the entire shelter benefit rates for households on social assistance. This approach will provide more rental income to support the capital needs of the housing providers.
- Noted by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario in the Value-for-Money Audit: Homelessness December 2021 Report, *“According to data from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the provincial average rental cost of a one-bedroom apartment in October 2020 was \$1,241 per month. That was \$72 more than the maximum Ontario Disability Support Program monthly payment for a single person and \$508 above the top monthly support payment to an eligible Ontario Works recipient.”*

Health Systems

If every individual or family were housed today, it does not mean that every housing solution would be successful due to the unique and diverse levels of on-going support needs to increase housing stability and retention. These supports can range from access to Primary Care, Addictions and Mental Health Supports. The collaboration between both Health and Housing systems is pivotal towards ending chronic homelessness and represents a continued shift from managing homelessness to ending homelessness. This shift happens by being housing focused and supporting community members to remain housed wherever possible and ensuring periods of homelessness are as brief as possible and not recurring.

- **No Discharges from Institutions into Homelessness** – As previously mentioned in the Provincial Government section. There is a significant need for preventative approaches and a shift away from discharging into homelessness for individuals.

- Noted by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario in the Value-for-Money Audit: Homelessness December 2021 Report, *“In the health-care system, over 5,000 people experiencing homelessness were discharged from hospital after receiving inpatient care in 2019/20.”*
- **Collaboration across Ministries with the BNL** – As previously mentioned in the Provincial Government section, there is a significant need for advocacy and collaboration with the local Ontario Health Teams (OHT) and prioritizing community members on the BNL for access to health care services.
- **Timely Access to Addiction Treatment Services** – Wellington-Guelph community members currently have lengthy wait times to access treatment programmes and facilities.
- **Expansion of Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT) for Wellington-Guelph** – the current ratio of ACTT teams is 1:120,000. Currently Wellington-Guelph has 1 team working out of Homewood Health.

Justice System

Wellington-Guelph’s area is near multiple correctional facilities including Maplehurst Correctional Complex (Milton), Vanier Centre for Women (Milton), and Grand Valley Institution for Women (Kitchener).

- **No Discharges from Institutions into Homelessness** – previously mentioned in Provincial Government and Health System sections.
 - Noted by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario in the Value-for-Money Audit: Homelessness December 2021 Report, *“... over the last three fiscal years ending 2020/21, an average of almost 3,900 individuals with no stable housing were released from custody each year.”*

Federal Government

- **Significant and large-scale funding increase to the National Housing Strategy (NHS)** and to the main pillars.
 - **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)** – as mentioned in the Provincial Government section earlier, an expansion to the COHB programme will allow capacity to support additional households as the private rental market costs continue to increase while Wellington-Guelph experiences extremely low vacancy rates.
 - **Reaching Home**
 - **Co-Investment Fund**
 - **Rapid Housing Initiative**
 - **Seed Funding**

