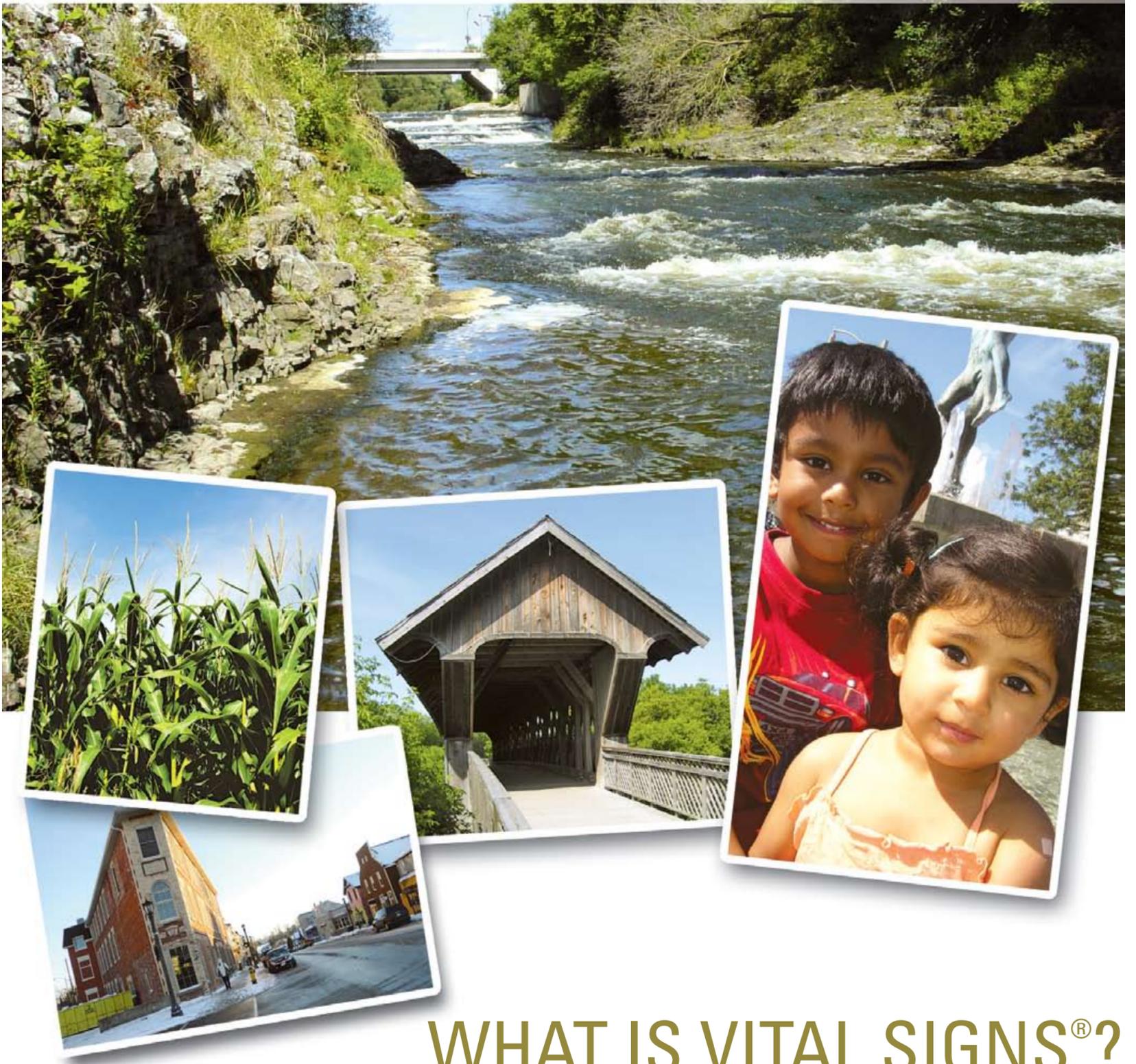


GUELPH & WELLINGTON'S

# VitalSigns® 2009

TAKING THE PULSE OF OUR COMMUNITY



## WHAT IS VITAL SIGNS®?

Welcome to the Guelph Community Foundation's 2009 Vital Signs®, the second checkup on our community. Vital Signs® provides a compilation of existing research in 11 areas critical to Guelph and Wellington's quality of life. Hundreds of community members have graded these findings to provide a snapshot of their view on our city and county's wellness and livability.

By taking the pulse of our community, we highlight both areas of concern and areas of celebration. Whether you agree or disagree with some of the perceptions of the graders, we hope you can use Vital Signs® to start a conversation, ask questions and learn more about our community.

As one of 16 communities publishing Vital Signs®, the Guelph Community Foundation's report informs us in our grant making, highlights issues and opportunities for donors and serves as a guidepost for a variety of community conversations and plans. And as part of a national initiative, we commit to publish 10 common indicators for cross country comparisons.

Our sincere thanks to the many people and organizations who gave their time to this project by participating in discussions, sharing information, acting as community graders or offering advice on key issues. The collective goodwill of these participants is the foundation of this report.

We also gratefully thank and acknowledge the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Community Foundations of Canada, The Co-operators and the Guelph Mercury for their continued support of this initiative.

This is the highlighted version of the report. To see the full report, including definitions, references and links to source information, visit [www.guelphpcf.ca](http://www.guelphpcf.ca) This year our full report is a paperless publication as part of our sustainability efforts.

### ABOUT THE GUELPH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

#### WHO WE ARE

The Guelph Community Foundation is a tax-exempt public charity created by and for the people of Guelph & Wellington County. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life and vitality in Guelph & Wellington County by supporting and promoting endowments and donor service, grant making and community leadership.

#### WHAT WE DO

##### **Donor Engagement**

We work with donors and help them plan and realize their philanthropic goals, matching their interests and concerns with community needs and organizations. We help them find innovative and responsible ways to give their investments lasting impact. We build endowments and create legacies.

##### **Granting**

We grant funds to the widest possible range of organizations and initiatives. Whether it's sending hundreds of kids to camp, planting trees, awarding our youth for achievements or supporting a program for young parents, the Guelph Community Foundation is here to help good people do great things in our community. Since our beginnings in 2000, we have distributed \$1.2 million to community organizations.

##### **Leadership**

We bring people together from all parts of our community to stimulate new ideas, build participation and strengthen community philanthropy. We identify long-term needs and opportunities.

**IN ALL WE DO AND ALL WE SAY,  
WE'RE ALL FOR COMMUNITY!**

Guelph	Wellington
<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>

Citizen Grade



### Aboriginal High School Completion

The importance of Aboriginal learning to community well-being is important as First Nations, Inuit and Métis people continue to experience poorer health and higher rates of unemployment, incarceration and youth suicide than non-Aboriginal people. In 2006, 67.4% of the aboriginal population (15 years and over) living in Guelph & Wellington had completed high school. This figure is 9.2 percentage points less than the high school completion rate for the total population. In Ontario, the aboriginal high school completion rate is 62.4%; 15.4 percentage points less than the total population.

### Youth Literacy

In April 2009, 86% of fully participating students in the Upper Grand District School Board who wrote the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test were successful. The success rate for the Wellington Catholic District School Board is 91%. In comparison, the provincial rate is 85%. Since 2008, the achievement results has remained constant for the public board, and increased 1% for the Catholic board.

### Composite Learning

The Composite Learning Index (CLI) is a national indicator that measures Canada's progress in lifelong learning. It is based on a combination of statistics that assess the state of learning in schools, homes, workplaces and other places in our communities. A high CLI score means the community has learning conditions that support social and economic success. In 2009, the CLI for Guelph is 85. In comparison, the provincial average is 78. Since 2008, Guelph's CLI has dropped 2.3%.

Highest Level of Schooling	Wellington County	City of Guelph	Ontario
No certificate or diploma or degree	27.5%	20.4%	22.2%
High school certificate or diploma	28.5%	27.5%	26.8%
Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma	9.5%	7.2%	8.0%
College or other non-university certificate or diploma	18.0%	17.1%	18.4%
University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level	3.3%	3.5%	4.1%
University certificate, diploma or degree	13.2%	24.3%	20.5%

Guelph	Wellington
<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>

Citizen Grade



### Violent Crime

Violent Crimes involve force or threat of force. These include homicide, attempted murder, various forms of sexual and non-sexual assault, robbery and abduction.

In 2008, the violent crime rate in the City of Guelph was 607 occurrences per 100,000 people. The rate for the County of Wellington was 373 occurrences per 100,000 people. In comparison, the provincial average was 732. Since 2007, violent crime offences have increased 3.2% in Guelph and 9.7% in Wellington.

### Crime Severity

The Crime Severity Index is a new tool for measuring police-reported crime in Canada that, for the first time, tracks changes in the severity of crime, not just volume. It tells us not only how much crime is coming to the attention of police, but also the seriousness of that crime relative to other offences. The Index is standardized to 100. More serious crimes carry higher weights, implying that safe communities have lower index scores.

In 2008, the Crime Severity index for the Guelph area was 57.7. In comparison, it was 70.6 for Ontario. Since 2007, the severity rate has dropped 2.5% in Guelph.

### Drug Offences

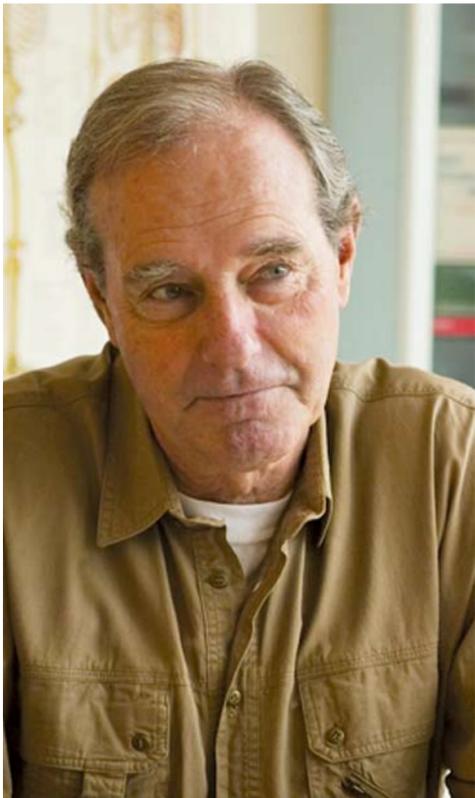
In 2008, the drug offence rate in the City of Guelph was 202 occurrences per 100,000 people. The rate for the County of Wellington was 203 occurrences per 100,000 people. In comparison, the provincial average was 244. Since 2007, the drug offence rate has increased 8.2% in Guelph & Wellington.

### Did You Know?

Guelph has the lowest Crime Severity Index in Canada, meaning it is the safest city in the country.

Guelph	Wellington
<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>

Citizen Grade



### Income Distribution

In 2006, the average (pre-tax) income of the richest 10% of census families living in the Guelph area was \$161,000, while the average income for the poorest 10% was \$26,100. This means that the richest 10% earned 6.2 times the income of the poorest 10%. Since 2001, the difference between the richest and poorest incomes has grown by 3.1%.

### Social Assistance

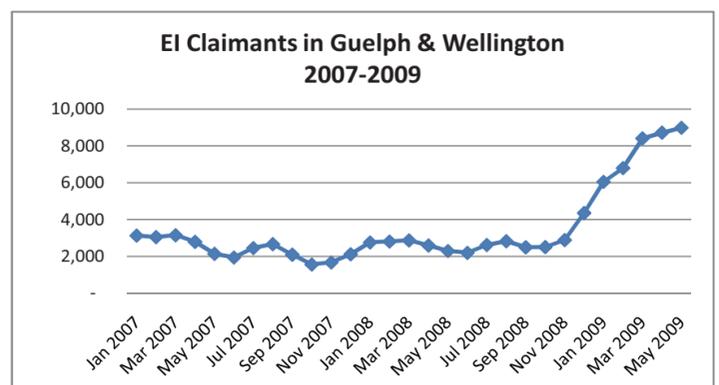
Ontario Works provides financial and employment assistance to people who are in temporary financial need. The amount of money individuals receive depends on their family size, income, assets and housing costs.

As of April 2009, there are 1,687 Ontario Works cases in Guelph & Wellington. Between April 2008 and April 2009, the caseload increased 12.8% in Ontario. In comparison, it increased 34.1% in Guelph & Wellington.

### Employment Insurance

Employment Insurance (EI) provides temporary financial help to unemployed Canadians while they look for work or upgrade their skills. It is also available for individuals while they are sick, pregnant or caring for a newborn or adopted child or caring for a family member who is seriously ill with a significant risk of death. The basic benefit is presently 55% of averaged insured earnings, up to a maximum of \$42,300 per year (\$447 per week). EI is a taxable income, meaning federal and provincial taxes are deducted. Regular EI benefits last up to 45 weeks.

As of April 2009, 8,719 people in Guelph & Wellington were receiving regular EI benefits (3,250 in the Guelph area). Between April 2008 and April 2009, the number of EI beneficiaries increased 78.6% in Ontario. In comparison, it increased 236.5% in Guelph & Wellington (160.0% in the Guelph area).



# HEALTH & WELLNESS

Guelph	Wellington
C	C

Citizen Grade



## Low Birth Weight

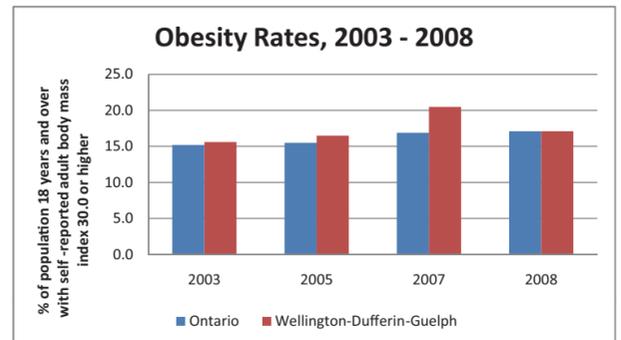
Low birth weight is a term used to describe babies who are born weighing less than 2,500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces). A baby with a low birth weight is often at increased risk for complications. In 2007-08, 5.9% of babies born in the Waterloo-Wellington health region weighed less than 2,500 grams. In comparison, 6.4% of the babies born in Ontario were of low birth weight. Since 2006-07, the number of babies with low birth weight has increased 9.3% in Waterloo-Wellington.

## Obesity

In 2008, 17.1% of the adults living in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph health region were considered obese. The provincial average is also 17.1%. Since 2007, the obesity rate has decreased by 16.5% in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph.

## Physical Activity

In 2008, 58.9% of individuals (12 years and over) living in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph health region were considered moderately active or physically active. In comparison, the provincial average is 49.5%. Since 2007, the physical activity rate has gone down 2.0% in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph.



Guelph	Wellington
B	B

Citizen Grade



# ARTS & CULTURE

## Earnings for Professional Occupations in Arts & Culture

In 2005, the median earnings for individuals holding professional occupations in the arts and culture sector were \$42,513 in the Guelph area. In comparison, the median earnings in Ontario were \$46,717. Since 2000, the median earnings for arts and culture professionals have decreased 11.0% in the Guelph area.

## Library Usage

In 2008, library users borrowed 1,736,233 items from the Guelph Public Library. The Wellington County Library circulated a total of 900,564 items. This equates to 38.8 items per Guelph household (15.1 per person) and 30.0 items per Wellington household (11.1 per person). Since 2007 the number of items borrowed has increased 7.4% in Guelph and 6.8% in Wellington.

## Heritage Sites

Heritage Guelph maintains an inventory containing approximately 4,000 structures of cultural heritage interest. As of July 2009, 87 properties (2.2%) have been designated as heritage sites - 86 under the Ontario Heritage Act and one under The Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act. Between 2005 and 2008, there was an average of 2.3 designations a year.

Guelph	Wellington
B	B

Citizen Grade



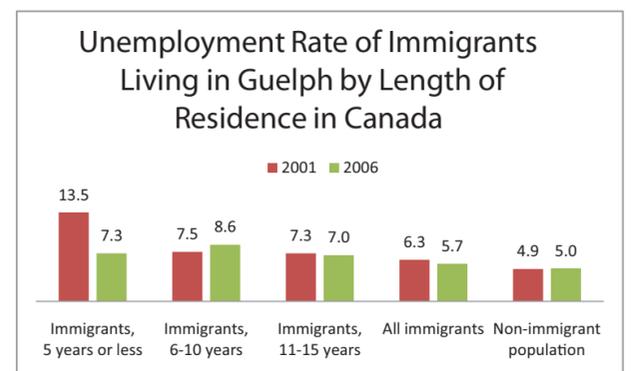
# GETTING STARTED

## Settlement Services

Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington (formerly known as the Guelph & District Multicultural Centre) is the agency responsible for the delivery of Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) in Guelph & Wellington. This program helps newcomers to integrate and settle in the community. Between April 2008 and March 2009, 477 new clients registered in ISAP in Guelph & Wellington - up 14.7% over the previous year.

## Language Instruction for Newcomers

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) assists newcomers (17 years and over) to acquire the necessary language skills to integrate into Canadian society. Assessments for placement in LINC classes are provided by Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington. Language classes are offered by Naylor-McLeod Group and St. George's Centre for Adult ESL. Between April 2008 and March 2009, 371 assessments for LINC classes in Guelph & Wellington were completed - up 24.9% over the previous year.



Guelph	Wellington
C	C

Citizen Grade



# WORK

## Employment Rate

The employment rate refers to the percentage of working-age people (age 15+) who have jobs (full time or part time). In June 2009, the employment rate in the Guelph & Wellington's economic region was 64.2%. In comparison, it was 61.4% in Ontario. Since June 2008, the employment rate has gone down 3.6% in Guelph & Wellington.

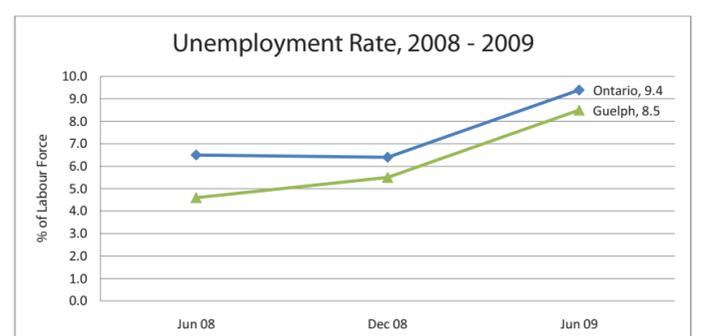
## Youth Unemployment

In 2008, the unemployment rate for youth (15 to 24 years) in Guelph & Wellington's economic region was 11.8%. In Ontario, the youth unemployment rate was 13.8%. These figures are double the unemployment rate for the overall labour force. Since 2007, the youth unemployment rate has gone down 2.5% in Guelph & Wellington.

## Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate refers to the percentage of the labour force that actively seeks work but is unable to find work at a given time. Discouraged workers - persons who are not seeking work because they believe the prospects of finding it are extremely poor - are not counted as unemployed or as part of the labour force.

The number of persons unemployed is not the same thing as the number of people receiving Employment Insurance benefits, since not all unemployed people are eligible for those benefits and some people receive EI benefits for social benefits like maternity leave. In June 2009, the unemployment rate in the Guelph area was 8.5%. In comparison, the provincial rate was 9.4%. Since June 2008, the unemployment rate has increased 84.8% in Guelph.



# BELONGING & LEADERSHIP

Guelph	Wellington
C	B

Citizen Grade



## Charitable Giving

In 2007, 29.3% of residents living in Guelph & Wellington reported making charitable donations on their tax return (28.6% of Guelph tax filers). In comparison, 25.7% of Ontario tax filers reported charitable gifts. Since 2001, the proportion of tax filers making charitable donations has gone down 6.7% in Guelph & Wellington (-7.6% in Guelph).

## Median Donations

In 2007, the median amount of total charitable gifts that residents living in Guelph & Wellington reported on their tax return was \$320 (\$290 for Guelph tax filers). In comparison, the median donation in Ontario was \$310. Since 2006, median donations have increased 3.2% in Guelph & Wellington (+3.6% in Guelph).

## Sense of Community Belonging

In 2008, 67.9% of individuals (12 years and over) living in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph health region reported a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging. In comparison, the provincial average is 67.3%. Since 2007, residents' sense of community belonging has decreased by 2.9% in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph.

# ENVIRONMENT

Guelph	Wellington
B	B

Citizen Grade



## Household Recycling Rate

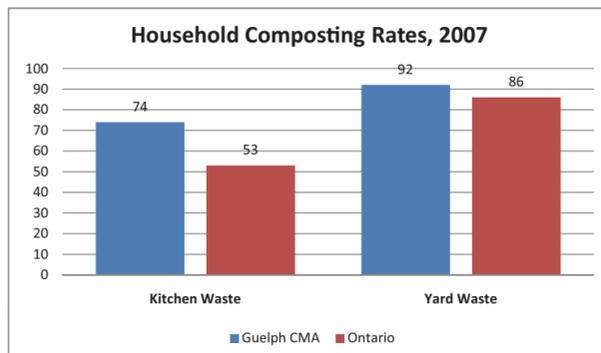
In 2007, 95% of the households in the Guelph area indicated on a national survey that they have access to a recycling program. All of those households (100%) reported participating in the recycling program. In comparison, 96% of Ontario households have access to a recycling program, and 99% of them recycle.

## Waste Diversion

The Diversion Rate refers to the percentage of waste materials diverted from traditional disposal such as landfills to be recycled, composted, or re-used. In 2007, 43.8% of residential waste was diverted in the City of Guelph. In the County of Wellington, the diversion rate is 42.1%. In comparison, the provincial average is 39.2%. Since 2006, the residential diversion rate has increased 11.7% in Guelph and 3.4% in Wellington.

## Residential Water Use

In 2007, the per capita consumption of water in the City of Guelph was 230 litres/person/day in single family residences and 153 litres/person/day in multi-family residences. In comparison, the provincial average was 278 litres/person/day in single family residences and 186 litres/person/day in multi-family residences.



Guelph	Wellington
C	C

Citizen Grade



## At Risk of Homelessness

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, homeowners and renters who spend more than 30% of their before-tax income are considered to be at risk of becoming homeless. In 2005, 12% of homeowners and 40% of renters living in the Guelph & Wellington were paying more than 30% or more of their income on housing. In comparison, 21% of homeowners and 45% of renters in Ontario pay more than 30% of income on housing costs. Since 2000, there has been a 35% increase in the number of homeowners and an 8% increase in the number of renters who are at risk of homelessness in Guelph & Wellington.

## Housing Starts

Housing Starts refer to the number of residential housing construction projects begun in a particular time period. Between January and June of 2009, there were 183 housing starts in the Guelph area. Since the first half of 2008, housing starts are down 42.6% in Ontario. In comparison, housing starts are down 66.8% in the Guelph area.

## Waiting List for Social Housing

The waiting list for social housing is one measure for the need of affordable housing. As of December 31, 2008, there were 1,280 households on the waiting list for social housing in Guelph & Wellington. Between December 2007 and December 2008, the waiting list increased 4.2% in Ontario. In comparison, the waiting list decreased 6.5% in Guelph & Wellington.

## Did You Know?

On any given day, 80 to 85 emergency shelter beds are in use in Guelph and Wellington.

# GETTING AROUND

Guelph	Wellington
B	B

Citizen Grade



## Accessible Transportation

About 4.4 million Canadians have disabilities — 14.3% of the population. Locally that represents over 16,400 people in the City of Guelph and about 11,600 people in the County of Wellington. In 2008, the City of Guelph's Mobility Service provided accessible transportation services to 1,410 passengers. Since 2007, the number of mobility passengers has increased 2.2%.

## Cycling Lanes

The Bicycle-Friendly Guelph Initiative is working to make cycling safer and more convenient, and hopes to triple the number of daily bike trips in Guelph by 2018. As of July 2009, there are 63.9 km of bike lanes in the City of Guelph. Since 2008, 8.1 km of lanes have been added – an increase of 14.5%.

## Vehicles on the Road

In 2006, there were 74,793 registered vehicles on the road in the City of Guelph. This equates to 1.7 vehicles per household. The provincial average is comparable.

Where Guelph Residents Work		Where Commuters to Guelph Live	
Top 5 Places of Work	Number of People	Top 5 Places of Residence	Number of People
Cambridge	1,920	Kitchener	4,745
Mississauga	1,820	Cambridge	3,295
Kitchener	1,650	Centre Wellington	2,855
Toronto	1,305	Waterloo	1,260
Waterloo	985	Hamilton	1,105