

**Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Strategic Planning and Budget Public Input Committee
Addendum Agenda**



Date: Wednesday, November 27, 2024
Closed Session: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Council Chambers/Electronic

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400,
TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

Pages

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Land Acknowledgement**
3. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the “Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”**
4. **Delegations**
 - 4.1 **Mark Egers, Waterloo Regional Police Association**
Re: The 2025 Police Services budget.
 - 4.2 **Natasha Page, Kitchener**
Re: Living conditions at the 100 Vic Encampment and the 2025 Regional Budget.
 - 4.3 **Ed Edwards, Kitchener**
Re: Working with people at the 100 Vic encampment and the 2025 Regional Budget.
 - 4.4 **Cory Bonipart, Kitchener**
Re: Community Housing and the 2025 Regional Budget.
 - 4.5 **John McVicar, Kitchener** 5
Re: a sport based in Waterloo County during the 40s to 60s that will disappear with the Boomer generation if not saved.
 - *4.6 **Clare Wagner, House of Friendship** 8
Re: Update on the impact of the Regionally-funded Family Outreach Program operated by the House of Friendship.
 - *4.7 **John Glass, The Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation**
Re: The relaunch of the Foundation's funding streams for our communities, as well as requesting that Regional financial support for the Foundation continue.
 - 4.8 **Kathy Eckert, Kitchener** 14
Re: Police Funding Mental Health Support.

- 4.9 Robyn Schwarz, Cambridge**
Re: Speaking in support of Upstream Fund and Community Capacity Building Fund.
- 4.10 Andrew Reeves, Kitchener**
Re: House of Friendship Whistleblower Report and the 2025 Regional Budget.
- *4.11 Kim Wilhelm, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region** 15
Re: The rise of food insecurity in Waterloo Region.
- 4.12 Sidney MacDonald, Kitchener**
Re: 2025 Regional Budget and PECH.
- ~~***4.13 Pete Dahmer, Kitchener**~~
~~Re: Taxation, the half billion dollar tax increase.~~
- *4.14 Fauzia Mazhar, Coalition of Muslim Women**
Re: CMW's services and programs.
- 4.15 Rachel Van Zeumeren, Kitchener**
Re: The police budget and request that the increase in funding is not approved and instead invested into the community, supportive housing, and mental health services.
- 4.16 Eddy Grignon, Kitchener**
Re: Conditions at 100 Vic.
- 4.17 Michael Parkinson, Waterloo Region Drug Action Team**
Re: Consumption and Treatment Services.
- 4.18 Sara Escobar, Peregrine Outreach Waterloo Region**
Re: Consumption and Treatments Services.
- 4.19 Ben Bogias, North Dumfries**
Re: Grand River Transit 2025-2030 Business Plan.
- 4.20 Sejal Goel and Jenna Versteeg, University of Waterloo's Planning Students' Association**
Re: Grand River Transit 2025-2030 Business Plan.
- 4.21 Jonathan Lin, Waterloo**
Re: GRT Business Plan 2025.
- *4.22 Bruno Bustos Alegria, Waterloo** 30
Re: Grand River Transit 2025-2030 Business Plan.
- 4.23 Zack Red, Waterloo** 36
Re: Transit Funding & Road Safety.
- *4.24 Craig Sloss, Waterloo** 37
Re: Budget Input.
- 4.25 Zekiel Foncardas, Waterloo**
Re: Grand River Transit 2025-2030 Business Plan.

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| *4.26 | Erin Daj, Cambridge Re: The budget allocation to the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. | |
| *4.27 | Kevin den Dunnen, Kitchener Re: GRT budget. | |
| *4.28 | Kevin Lewis, Waterloo Re: GRT 2025-2030 Business Plan | |
| *4.29 | Saman Rahmani, Kitchener Re: New Grand River Transit Business Plan. | 44 |
| *4.30 | Nicholas Aboagye, Kitchener Re: Public transit. | |
| *4.31 | Kevin White, Kitchener Re: Advocacy for continued support for the Kitchener Consumption and Treatment Services Site. | |
| *4.32 | Paul Ruppel, Waterloo Re: The objects for which Waterloo Wayside is incorporated within Waterloo Region is for the purpose of: reducing isolation and giving relief from poverty by providing a variety of free programs and safe places for those of low or modest income, seniors, and youth. | |
| *4.33 | Jason Spencer, Community Justice Initiatives Re: Supporting Restorative Justice services in Waterloo Region. | 45 |
| *4.34 | Joshua Beech Falshaw, Kitchener Re: Grand River Transit Business Plan/Funding. | 54 |
| *4.35 | Artem Klymovych, Woolwich Re: Input on budget 2025. | 61 |
| *4.36 | Babur Mawladin, Reception House Waterloo Region Re: Temporary Accommodation for Refugee Claimants in Waterloo Region. | 64 |
| *4.37 | Julian Ichim, Kitchener Re: CTS closure and housing supports | |
| *4.38 | Meghan Black, Waterloo Re: The new GRT plan | |
| 5. | Call for Delegations | |
| 6. | Communications | |
| 6.1 | Gina Georgiou Re: 2025 Budget Thoughts. | 72 |
| *6.2 | Lanny Noble, Cambridge Re: Rethinking Budget Priorities. | 75 |
| *6.3 | Rodney Chan For Information. | 77 |

7. **Other Business**

8. **Adjourn**

Recommended Motion:

That the meeting adjourn at x:xx x.m.

Learn how you can
help preserve our
community for
future
generations

TIPPY

Harold R. - "We played Tippy in Victoria Park in the 40s."

Randy F. - "at Empire School at recess."

Sandra K.P.W. - "Love playing tippy 4 people so much fun. . . . Cherry Street."

Wayne S. - "Grew up playing Tippy on Earl St. and Belmont before the stores."

Dennis S. - "Yes at Carmichael."

Randy C. - "at Westmount School in the late 60's."

Mark S. - "I played Tippy with my cousins on my grandfather's farm. Homer Watson runs through where the farm was by the Musuem."



House of Friendship

STRONGER TOGETHER

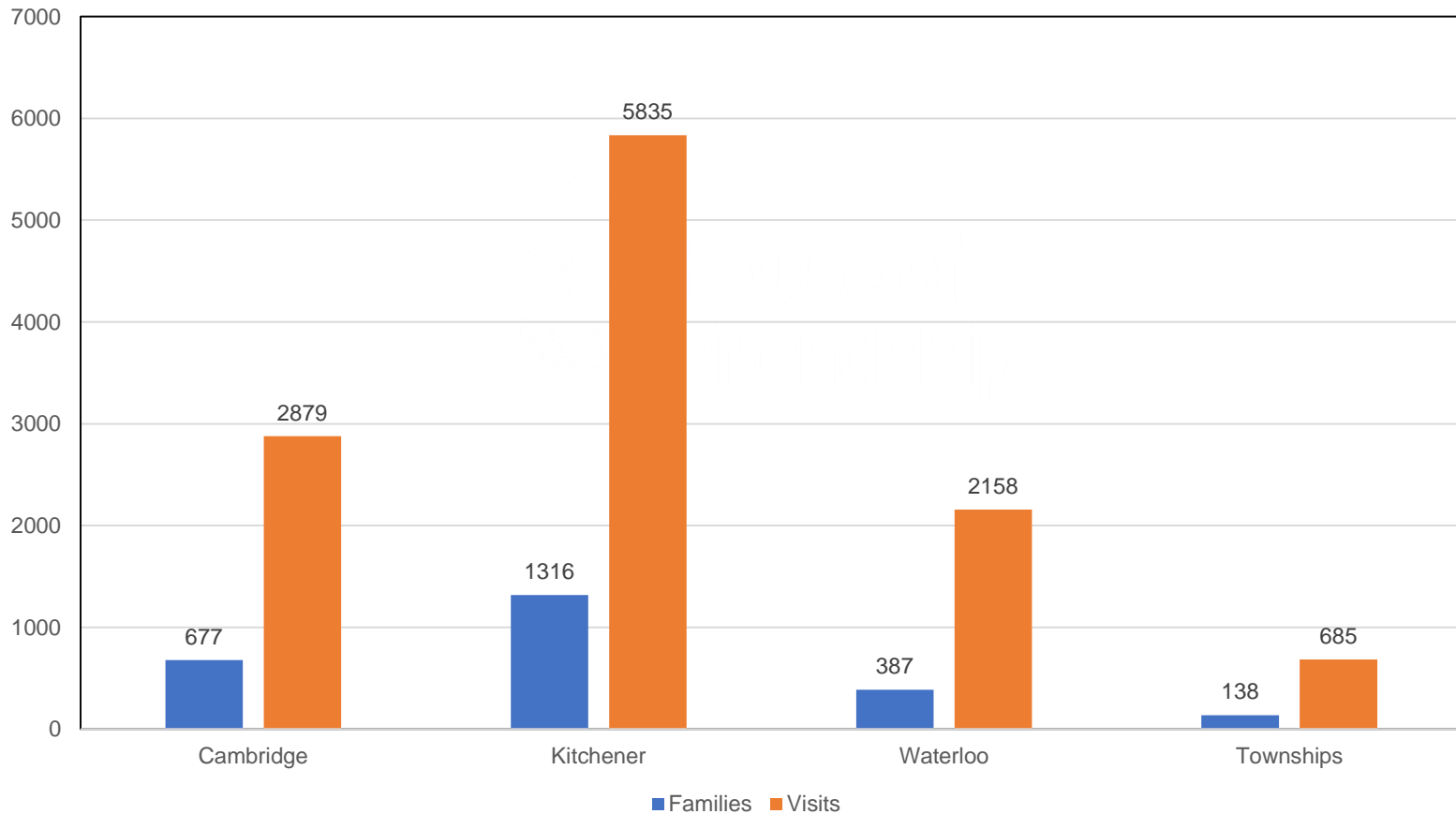
95% of families have an annual household income of under \$38,999

72% of families have an annual household income of under \$25,000

Low-Income Cut-off (4 ppl): \$51,128



Family Outreach 2023



2518 Families

11,000 Individuals

Page 1 of 8

7,225 Children

11,557 Visits

Since our last visit to council in 2019

- **42%** increase in children supported
- **23%** increase in visits
- Funding at **same level as 2017**

Collaborating to help ensure the essential network of social supports is strong



Thank you from
Clare Wagner, Community Services Director
Sazza Bapir, Family Outreach Worker
and the whole House of Friendship team!



**House of
Friendship**

STRONGER TOGETHER

25 Thresholds Homes and Supports Inc. (a.k.a. Waterloo Regional Homes for Mental Health Inc.) and Centurion Property Associates Inc. v. [Tenant] (22 December 2017; Love), File No. SWL-81318-15

Tenant had mental disorders including depression and schizoaffective disorder, which cause difficulties with planning, concentration, and memory

Tenant's inability to keep unit at level of ordinary cleanliness had impeded ability to do cockroach treatments and resulted in undue damage to carpets, flooring, a faucet, and the toilet

Tenant had received notices but made clear he did not understand the notices or how to comply

Landlord's level of support to the tenant had diminished over time. Landlord had not fully engaged with tenant in an attempt to create an accommodation plan

There was not enough evidence that the tenant had caused undue damage and that fixtures in the unit needed to be replaced

Landlord required to provide tenant with 30 large plastic totes for storage of items in unit.

Parties, in collaboration with tenant's medical professionals, must develop an accommodation plan of steps to be taken by landlord to assist tenant in complying with conditions imposed in order.

Tenant must prepare his unit for pest control treatment. Tenant must maintain state of cleanliness in unit for at least 3 years

Landlords must reinstate regular in-home cleaning supports after pest control treatment

Landlord right to inspect every three months to ensure compliance

s.78 application for ex parte termination order upon breach

Supportive housing provided by mental health agency renting unit from private landlord

The LTB "simply did not agree" with the landlord's submission that entering into a previous mediated agreement with the tenant was accommodation for his disabilities.

The tenant's cancellation of 25 appointments with support workers over 7 years was not evidence of a lack of cooperation as this was typical of a person with his mental disorders

2025 Strategic Planning and Budget Input Meeting

Kim Wilhelm, CEO
The Food Bank of Waterloo Region



THE
FoodBank
OF WATERLOO REGION



Food Insecurity is a Critical and Ongoing Challenge in Waterloo Region

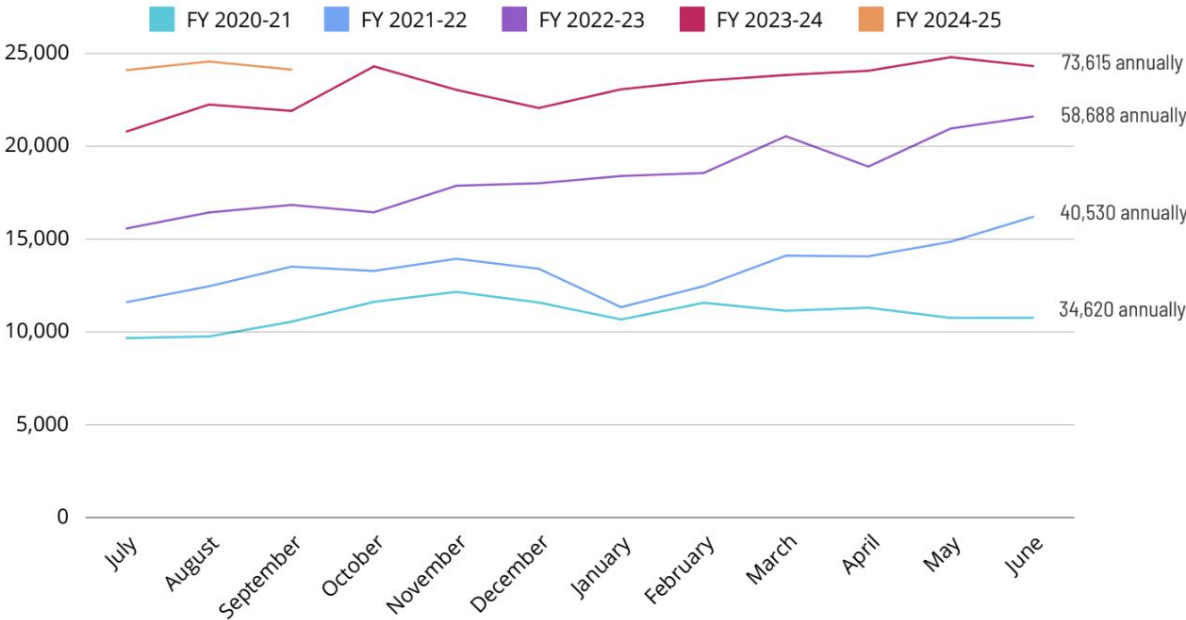
1 in 8 households in Waterloo region is struggling to afford food

- The Food Bank is experiencing a significant rise in demand, with **one in eight households now relying on emergency food assistance**—up from one in 20 just three years ago.
- Rising food insecurity highlights the increasing challenges community members face, including high living costs, job insecurity, and other economic pressures.
- The growing need is underscored by a 24% rise in food hamper program visits, totaling 558,545 compared to 450,387 last year. Visits of eight times or more increased by 17%, highlighting that the Food Bank is increasingly seen as a necessary resource rather than just a temporary solution in a crisis.
- **The Community Food Assistance Network does not have a sustainable funding model in place that can adequately address this surge in demand.**

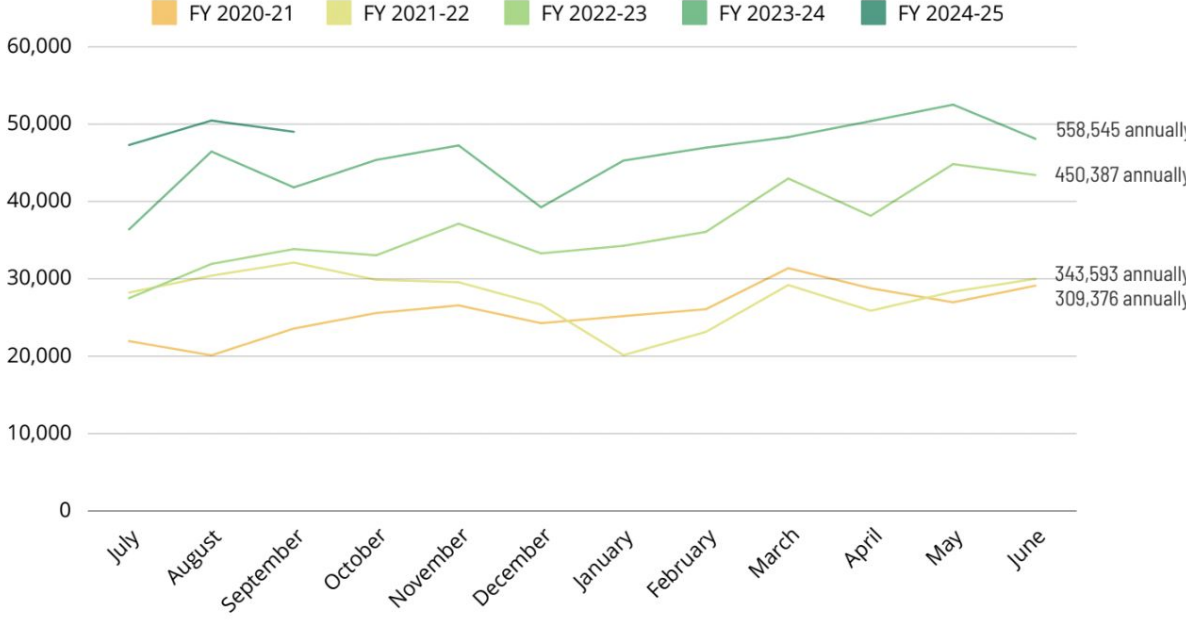


All tracking metrics indicate overwhelming community need

UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS PER MONTH



TOTAL VISITS PER MONTH



Feeding our Community

COMMUNITY FOOD ASSISTANCE NETWORK



ACQUIRE ESSENTIAL FOOD
Government Commodities, Farms, Restaurants & Hospitality, Grocery Retailers, Producers, Community, Food Manufacturers & Distributors



FULLFILL ORDERS AND DISTRIBUTE FOOD TO NETWORK PARTNERS



FEED HUNGRY PEOPLE IN WATERLOO REGION



OUR NETWORK PARTNERS

A Better Tent City
Adventure4Change
Aids Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo Area
All Saints' Anglican Church
Alison Neighbourhood Community Centre
Anishnabeg Outreach Employment and Training
Cambridge Family Early Years Centre
Cambridge Shelter
Cambridge Vineyard Church
Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health
Community Ministry

Emmanuel United Church
First United Church
Food Not Bombs
Glencairn Church
House of Friendship
Kinbridge Community Association
Kingdom Community International Church
KW Underhill Residential
Langs
Marillac Place
Nutrition for Learning
oneROOF Youth Services
Porchlight Counselling + Addiction Services

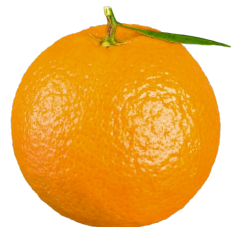
Ray of Hope
Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church and Family Care Centre
Sanguen Health Centre
Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region
Services and Housing in the Province
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Agnes
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Anthony Daniel
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Mary's
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Our Lady of Lourdes

Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Teresa
St. Aloysius Church
St. Andrew's Hespeler Presbyterian Church
St. Columba Anglican Church
St. John's Anglican Church
St. Matthews Lutheran Church
Stanley Park Community Centre and Community Association
Starling Community Services
Supportive Housing of Waterloo
The Healing of the Seven Generations
The Salvation Army Cambridge Citadel
The Working Centre

Traverse Independence
Trinity Community Table
University of Waterloo – WUSA Food Support Service
Wellesley Food Cupboard
Wilfrid Laurier University – Students' Union Food Bank
Wilmot Family Resource Centre
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region
Woolwich Community Services
Y.W.C.A

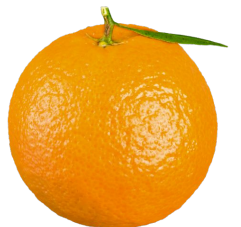
Food Assistance Network is an efficient, capacity-building model

- Regional Staff completed a review of **The Food Bank's programs in summer/fall 2024.**
- The review noted the following value and impact:
 - *“The service delivery models contribute to their effectiveness in many ways. The lead agency model for the Community Food Assistance Network allows for the centralized and streamlined procurement of food and efficient distribution operations to benefit the community and the entire network.”*
 - *“The structured approach taken by the network also allows for identifying gaps and strategic, data-informed implementation of programs in response to community needs. This steers the program strategically and in a way that maximizes the benefit to those accessing services.”*
 - *“These programs foster a connection between themselves as community agencies and Community Services, which benefits staff and those we serve. It allows for a mutually beneficial relationship, promotes communication, and supports capacity building.”*



Food Assistance Network is experiencing greater pressures on staffing and resources

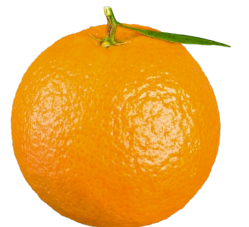
- The review noted the following risks:
 - *“Programs are experiencing greater pressures on staffing and other resources because of the growing needs and complexities of community members, including increases in mental health, addictions, and homelessness”*
 - *“Due to financial changes, the programs have experienced many issues regarding staffing recruitment and retention, difficulty meeting the increase in demand for service, and program deficits and sustainability challenges.”*



The Ask: A Sustainable Funding Strategy from Regional Government

We are seeking a permanent funding increase to **\$2,086,724.12***

- In 2024, Regional Council granted The Food Bank a one-year funding increase to \$1.5 million, but **funding is set to return to \$744,000 in 2025.**
 - We are asking Regional Council for a **permanent funding increase of \$1,342,724.12** in the 2025 Regional budget (0.2% of the overall tax levy), to increase annually in accordance with cost of living.
 - By increasing our budget to a **total of \$2,086,724.12**, our Network can continue to provide emergency food services and resources to the thousands of households in our community who struggle to afford nutritious food.
 - **Food is a basic human right and no one in Waterloo region should go hungry.**
 - Regional Council can support the work we do by voting in favour of the increase to The Food Bank's annual grant in the 2025 budget.
- ★ **This total aligns with the 2017-2018 funding formula (\$3.736 Cost Per Visit) established in collaboration with the Region of Waterloo.**





THE FOOD BANK OF WATERLOO REGION

50 Alpine Court
Kitchener, ON N2E 2M7

Tel: 519.743.5576
Email: info@thefoodbank.ca

Charitable Registration No. 11923 3310 RR000



Dear Regional Councillors,

I am writing on behalf of the Cambridge Food Bank to express our support of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region's request to increase its annual grant. The Cambridge Food Bank is the co-leader of the Community Food Assistance Network along with The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, and together, we work collaboratively in the Waterloo Region to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry.

Like our partners across the network, Cambridge Food Bank has experienced an unprecedented surge in community need, with families served monthly increasing from 800 to over 2,060. Despite this significant growth, our resources have remained static. This gap puts immense pressure on our ability to provide critical services to vulnerable members of our community.

On November 27, 2024, the Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant. We seek to raise the Food Bank's funding from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. As a recipient of these funds, this increase is fundamental to our essential work in the community.

We understand the financial pressures on public resources, but we cannot ignore the profound consequences of food insecurity. Your investment in The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and, by extension, the Community Food Assistance Network is an investment in our community's health, well-being, and future. Please consider this when you cast your vote.

Dianne McLeod
Chief Executive Officer

Cambridge Food Bank
54 Ainslie Street South
Cambridge, Ontario N1R 3K3
519-622-6550 ext. 103
www.cambridgefoodbank.org

November 24, 2024

We are seeing record numbers of families come through our door at the Emergency Food Hamper Program every day of the week. The lineups at our weekly food distribution across 7 community centre sites are ones we never had before. When I started serving at House of Friendship, 1 in 20 households relied on the Food Bank. Today, 1 in 8 households in Waterloo region rely on food services and resources from the Community Food Assistance Network. As The Food Bank and its partners strive to meet the needs of our community members, it is becoming difficult to keep up with the growing demand across the region.

On November 27, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. As a recipient of those funds from The Food Bank, this increase is fundamental to our essential work in the community.

Rising food insecurity highlights the increasing challenges community members face, including high living costs, job insecurity, and other economic pressures. The growing need is underscored by a 24% rise in food hamper program visits, totalling 558,545 in 2023-2024 compared to 450,387 the previous fiscal year. Visits of eight times or more increased by 17%, highlighting that The Food Bank is increasingly seen as a necessary resource rather than just a temporary solution in a crisis.

With this in mind, I ask that you consider voting in favour of the upcoming motion in December when the Regional Council finalizes the 2025 budget. By voting in favour of the upcoming motion, you are supporting our ability to expand capacity and meet the growing need for food assistance across the region.

As an integral member of the Community Food Assistance Network, House of Friendship relies on the region's annual funding to support our operations and provide meaningful services and resources to individuals in need across our community. By voting in favour of a sustainable funding model for The Food Bank, you are supporting the invaluable work of The Community Food Assistance Network to make our community a better place for all. I encourage you to keep this in mind when it comes time to vote.

If you require any further information or clarification, please feel free to contact me at 519.742.8327 Ext 123 or johnn@houseoffriendship.org.

With gratitude,



John Neufeld
Executive Director



The Salvation Army

Canada & Bermuda Territory
Ontario Division

Kitchener Community Church
& Family Care Centre

75 Tillsley Drive
Kitchener, ON N2E 3T1
Tel: 519-745-3351 sakw.ca

November 16, 2024

Dear Regional Councillors,

As I'm sure you are aware, there has been a sharp increase in the number of individuals and households accessing emergency food assistance in our community. Today, 1 in 8 households in Waterloo region rely on food services and resources from the Community Food Assistance Network, up from one in 20 just three years ago. As The Food Bank and its partners strive to meet the needs of our community members, it is becoming difficult to keep up with the growing demand across the region.

On November 27, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant. We are seeking to raise The Food Bank's funding from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. As a recipient of those funds from The Food Bank, this increase is fundamental to our essential work in the community.

Rising food insecurity highlights the increasing challenges community members face, including high living costs, job insecurity, and other economic pressures. The growing need is underscored by a 24% rise in food hamper program visits, totalling 558,545 in 2023-2024 compared to 450,387 the previous fiscal year. Visits of eight times or more increased by 17%, highlighting that The Food Bank is increasingly seen as a necessary resource rather than just a temporary solution in a crisis.

With this in mind, I ask that you consider voting in favour of the upcoming motion in December when the Regional Council finalizes the 2025 budget.

As we work together to serve our community, we are seeing the highest volume of individuals and families accessing emergency food assistance in 40 years. By voting in favour of the upcoming motion, you are supporting our ability to expand capacity and meet the growing need for food assistance across the region.

As an integral member of the Community Food Assistance Network, our organization also relies on the region's annual funding to support our operations and provide meaningful services and resources to individuals in need across our community. By voting in favour of a sustainable funding model for The Food Bank, you are supporting the invaluable work of The Community Food Assistance Network to make our community a better place for all. I encourage you to keep this in mind when it comes time to vote.

Thank you,

Sandra Aszmies
Director, Family Care Centre



Wilmot Family Resource Centre

November 21, 2024

Dear Regional Councillors,

Wilmot Family Resource Centre is a non-profit, charitable organization with a 40+ year history of providing services and supports to our community improving the quality of life in the Townships of Wilmot and Wellesley. Our vision is “Strong and healthy community where all individuals are accepted and have opportunities to participate and grow.” As a multi-service community-based organization, we offer a broad range of services such as food support, employment services, family violence prevention, child and youth programs, outreach supports for families living with low incomes, information, and referral services for housing.

As you know there has been a sharp increase in the number of individuals and households accessing emergency food assistance in our community. Today, one in eight households in Waterloo region rely on food services and resources from the Community Food Assistance Network, up from one in 20 just three years ago. As The Food Bank and its partners strive to meet the needs of our community members, it is becoming difficult to keep up with the growing demand across the region.

On November 27, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant from the Region of Waterloo. The request will be to raise The Food Bank’s funding from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. As a recipient of those funds from The Food Bank, this increase is fundamental to our essential work in the community. I ask that you consider voting in favour of the upcoming motion in December when the Regional Council finalizes the 2025 budget.

As we work together to serve our community, we are seeing the highest volume of individuals and families accessing emergency food assistance in 40 years. By voting in favour of the upcoming motion, you are supporting our ability to expand capacity and meet the growing need for food assistance across the region.

As a member of the Community Food Assistance Network, Wilmot Family Resource Centre relies on the regional annual funding to support our operations to provide lifesaving services to low-resourced individuals and families living across our community. By voting in favour of the upcoming motion in December for increased funding, you will be helping us continue serving our hungry and hurting neighbours.

Sincerely,

Trisha Robinson
Executive Director
Wilmot Family Resource Centre

November 15, 2024

Dear Regional Councillors,

Today I am writing to you on behalf of Woolwich Community Services (WCS), a non-profit, charitable organization who has been assisting the residents of Woolwich and Northern Wellesley communities since 1974. One of the eight core programs offered by WCS is the Woolwich Foodbank, providing a variety of food assistance programs. WCS is a member of the Community Food Assistance Network, supported in part with regional funding received through the Waterloo Region Foodbank.

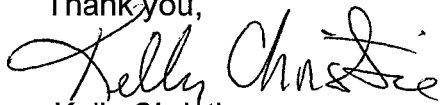
This funding has not received an increase in its annual grant from the region since the 2017/2018 fiscal year. Since then, visits to our network have significantly increased. Collectively, the network provided food to individuals through 558,545 visits in 2023-2024. As mentioned, as part of the Community Food Assistance Network, we directly benefit from this funding to ensure our food programs can continue to serve those in our community that are hungry. Today, 1 in 8 households in Waterloo region relies on food services and resources from The Community Food Assistance Network, it is becoming difficult to keep up with the growing demand across the region.

On November 27, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant. They are seeking to raise The Food Bank's funding from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. As a recipient of those funds from The Food Bank, this increase is fundamental to our essential work in the community, and with approval of this funding we anticipate receiving an increase to our allocated annual funding.

As we work together to serve our communities, we are seeing the highest volume of individuals and families accessing food assistance. By voting in favour of the upcoming Food Bank request, you are supporting the invaluable work of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and Woolwich Community Services, as one of the network partners, to make our community a better place for all.

With this in mind, I ask that you consider voting in favour of this upcoming request in December when the Waterloo Regional Council finalizes the 2025 budget.

Thank you,



Kelly Christie
Executive Director
Woolwich Community Services



58 Queen Street South, Kitchener, Ontario • N2G 1V6 • Telephone (519) 743-1151 • Fax (519) 743-3840

November 20, 2024

Dear Regional Councillors,

The Working Centre was an original member agency of the Foodbank when it was established in 1984 and has used Foodbank donations since the beginning of St. John's Kitchen in January 1985.

The Working Centre supports the motion at Regional Council to increase annual funding for the Foodbank from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724 million

Rising food insecurity highlights the increasing challenges community members face, including high living costs, job insecurity, and other economic pressures. The growing need is underscored by a 24% rise in food hamper program visits, totaling 558,545 in 2023-2024 compared to 450,387 the previous fiscal year. Visits of eight times or more increased by 17%, highlighting that The Food Bank is increasingly seen as a necessary resource rather than just a temporary solution in a crisis.

Last year's grant increase was necessary to catch up to the past 10 years when the allocation was fixed.

The Working Centre receives 800,000 pounds of donated food from Waterloo Region Foodbank yearly. Weekly deliveries of vegetables, meats and grains are used to produce 750 meals a day from our commissary kitchen and then distributed to St. John's Kitchen and the two Region supported shelters – King Street Shelter and Erbs Road Shelter.

The Working Centre served 200,000 meals last year, almost all of the food comes from Waterloo Region Foodbank food donations. A further group of pantry items like cereals, canned goods, cookies, desserts, bread, condiments, juices etc. are distributed at three locations.

The region's annual funding for The Food Bank has not kept pace with the overwhelming community need or increased operational costs. We hope you are able to consider this request for increased funding from the Region for the FoodBank's essential food distribution services to Waterloo Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Mancini".

Joe Mancini

The Working Centre

joe@theworkingcentre.org

Dear Regional Council,

On November 26, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region will request an increase to its annual grant. We are seeking to raise the Food Bank's funding from \$744,000 to \$2,086,724. This funding will benefit all 132 programs within the Community Food Assistance Network and directly flow to the Cambridge Food Bank, House of Friendship, The Working Centre, Wilmot Family Resource Centre, and Woolwich Community Services who are providing front-line support to our community.

We, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region Board of Directors are reaching out today to ask that you consider voting in favour of this motion in December when the Regional Council finalizes the 2025 budget.

The Food Bank is experiencing a significant rise in demand, with one in eight households now relying on emergency food assistance – up from one in 20 just three years ago. Rising food insecurity highlights the increasing challenges community members face, including high living costs, job insecurity, and other economic pressures.

The growing need is underscored by a 24% rise in food hamper program visits, totaling 558,545 in 2023-2024 compared to 450,387 the previous fiscal year. Visits of eight times or more increased by 17%, highlighting that The Food Bank is increasingly seen as a necessary resource rather than just a temporary solution in a crisis.

In the past five years, the number of unique individuals served by The Food Bank has increased by 120% and visits have increased by a total of 137%. While community donations have remained consistent over the past 12 months, they have not increased to match the surging demand. By voting in favour of a sustainable funding model for The Food Bank, you are supporting its ability to continue meeting the critical need for food assistance across the region.

As a collective, The Food Bank Board of Directors has witnessed firsthand the increased need for food assistance in our community. The Food Bank and its Community Food Assistance Network work tirelessly to provide fresh and nutritious food and resources to individuals and families in our region. Given the increased demand for services, we strongly encourage you to vote in support of the upcoming motion.

On behalf of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region Board of Directors, thank you.

Signed,

David Brenneman, Chair
Karen Armstrong, Vice-Chair
Don Dychuck, Treasurer
Alison De Muy, Director
Kevin Dopko, Director
Laura Lawlor, Director

Julia Malott, Director
Terry Melo, Director
Julie Millard, Director
Glen Polson, Director
Pejman Salehi, Director
Mike Verhoeve, Director

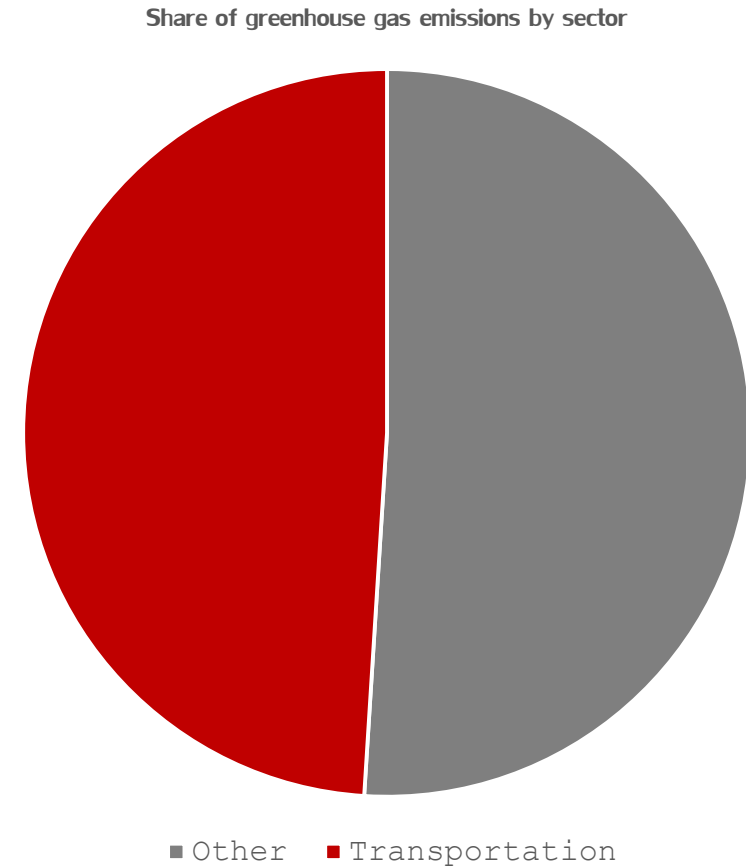
GRT Business Plan 2025-2030

Supports climate action

Currently

Transportation sector accounts for **47–49%** of overall greenhouse gas emissions

Source: ClimateActionWR



Currently

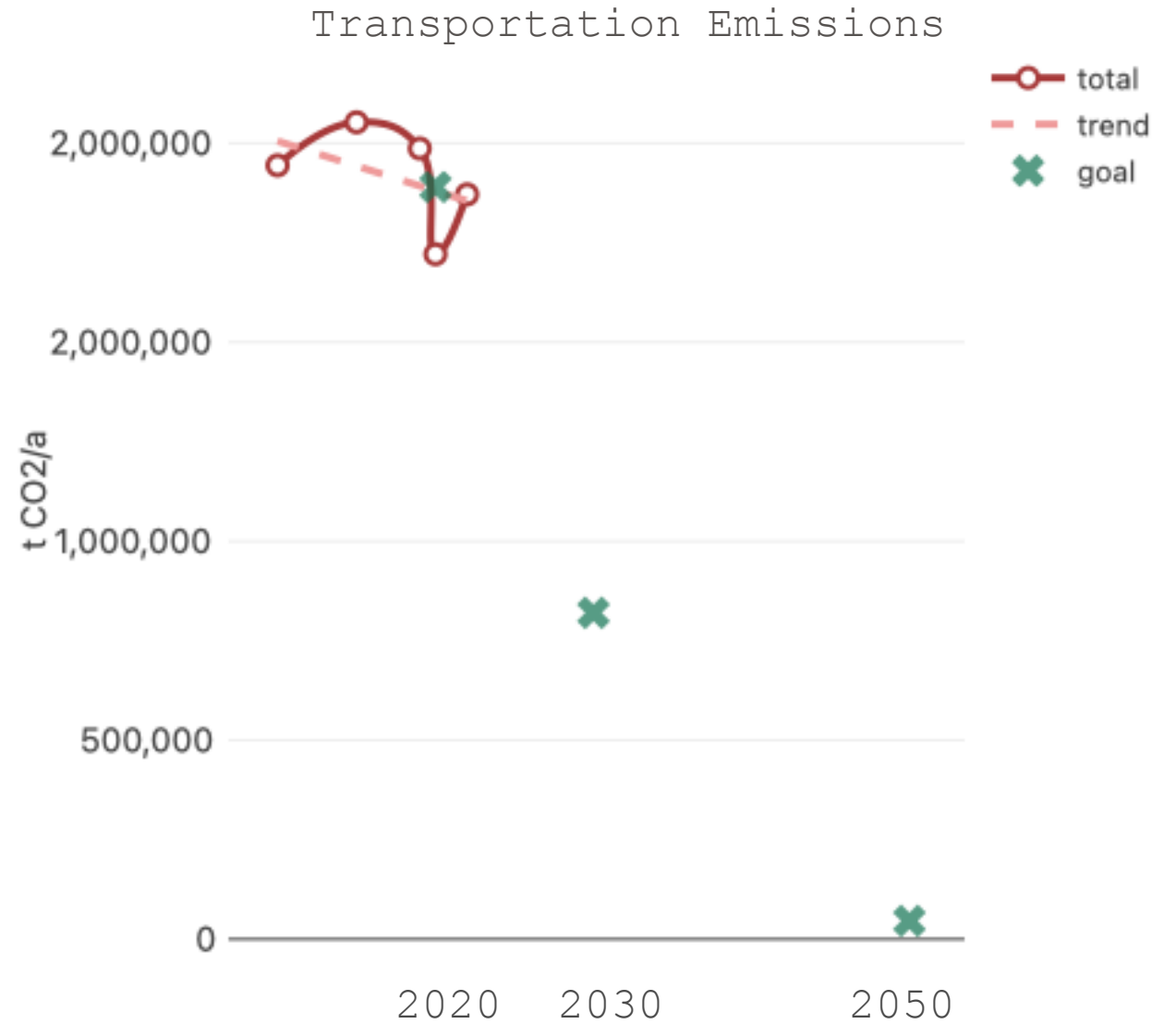
2020 target

- Met due to Covid-19 pandemic

2030 target

- If trend continues target will not be met.
- 57% reduction needed.

Source: ClimateActionWR





Moving forward

Ridership will increase with:

- ✓ Frequent transit network
- ✓ Strategic new coverage
- ✓ Consistent schedules
- ✓ Highway express
- ✓ Overnight network

Benefits and Impacts

- **Less car trips**
 - Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
 - Improves air quality
 - Less traffic
 - Improved connectivity
- **Aligned with Region of Waterloo 2023–2027 strategic plan**

Conclusion

The cost of climate change is greater than investments outlined in the GRT Business Plan.





Feedback on Region of Waterloo 2025 Budget

INVESTING IN PREVENTION VS. REACTION

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

Craig Sloss

REGION OF WATERLOO, ON

HOW CAN WE REDUCE POLICE WORKLOAD?

| If police workload is caused by this... | You need to do this... |
|---|--|
| Homelessness | Fund the plan to end chronic homelessness |
| Mental health | Invest in police-free mental health support |
| Rising hate crimes | Support anti-racism initiatives |
| Traffic violations | Improve access to public transit; use traffic-calming infrastructure |
| Rallies / protests / demonstrations | Trust community volunteers provided by event organizers |

**If we want to reduce workload on police, the alternatives must be police-free
Police Services Board has no jurisdiction to fund police-free initiatives -- this must be done by Council**

CRIME RATES: MYTH VS. REALITY

- **Myth: "Violent crime is rising in our community"**
- **Identical wording used in last year's information package**
- **Reality: Crime Severity Indices (CSI) decreased between 2022 and 2023**
- **773 officers in 2023 vs. 792 officers in 2022**

Source: Page 5, "WRPS' Supplemental Information Package for 2025 Approved Operating and Capital Estimates," Strategic Planning and Budget Committee meeting, November 20, 2024, item 6

Violent Crime and Crime Severity Index

The WRPS is committed to maintaining public safety within Waterloo Region and our members are dedicated to working 24/7/365 to investigate, solve, and prevent crime in the community. Violent crime is rising in our community, which has a significant impact on public safety and the wellness of everyone in Waterloo Region. While WRPS' Crime Suppression Strategy is proving effective at reducing violent crimes in the Region, these incidents continue to occur above the provincial and national averages.

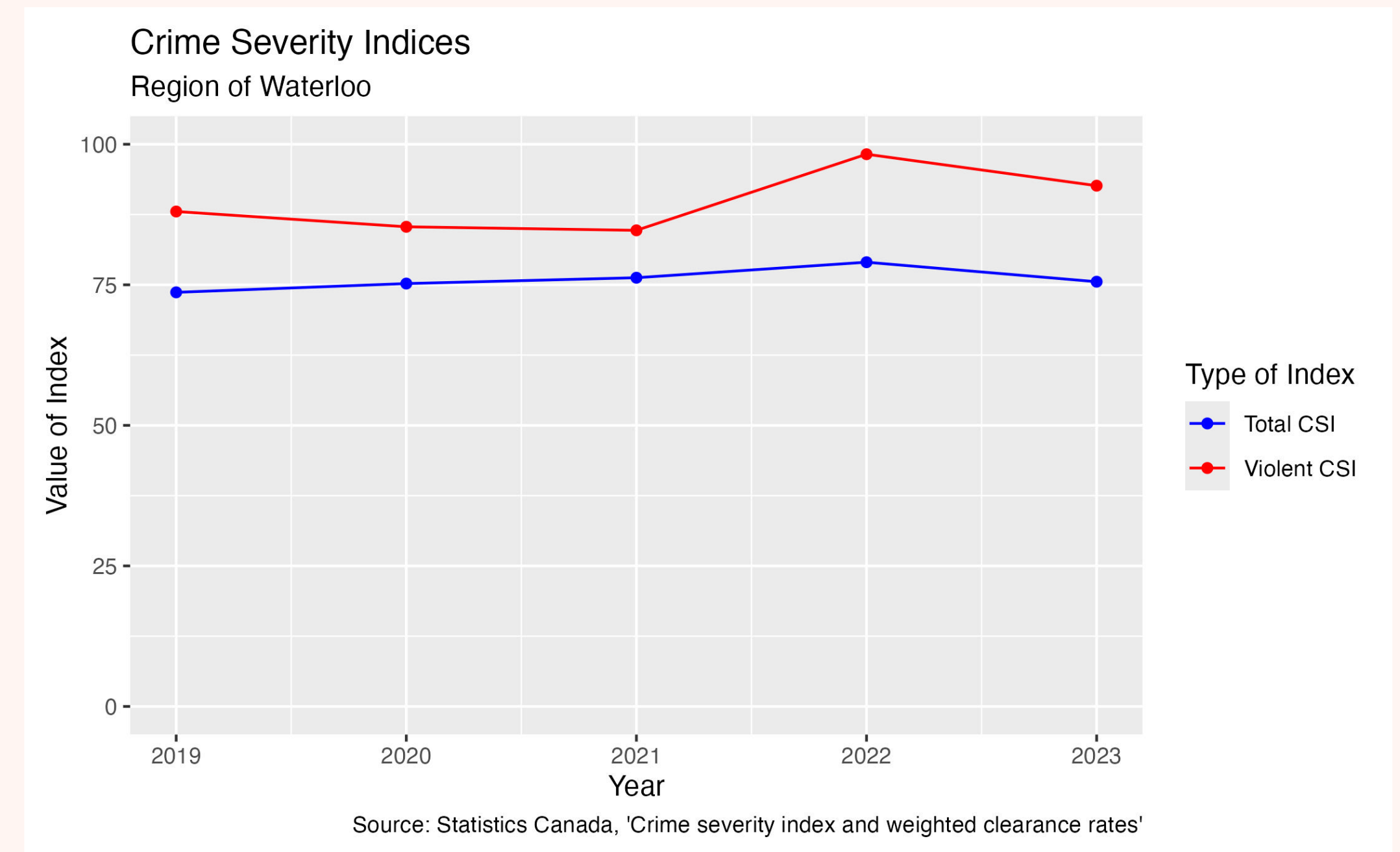
| 2024 Year to Date Overview of Violent Crimes | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Crime Type | 2024 Figures (YTD) | Compared to 2023 |
| Shootings | 19 | +58% |
| Homicides | 3 | -40% |
| Violent Firearm Offences | 81 | -18% |
| Robberies (Pharmacy) | 5 | No change |
| Robberies (Person on Person) | 136 | +25% |
| Total Robberies | 234 | +7% |

Each year, Statistics Canada collects standardized crime data from every police service across Canada using the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. One way that crime is measured is by using the Crime Severity Index (CSI). This index measures both the volume and severity of police-reported crime in Canada and has a base index value of 100 for 2006. For the first time in 10 years (since 2014), there was a decline in the Total CSI for Waterloo Region. Between 2022 and 2023, the Total CSI decreased by 4%; Waterloo Region retained the 3rd highest CSI among the Big 12 Ontario Services. The Violent CSI in Waterloo Region decreased by 6%, dropping to the 4th highest violent crime rate of the Big 12 Ontario Services.

BROADER CONTEXT: CRIME SEVERITY INDEX

- **CSI increased from 2014 to 2018**
- **No evidence of trend after 2018**
- **Recommendation: Retract the statement that "Violent crime is rising in our community" from Council's records**

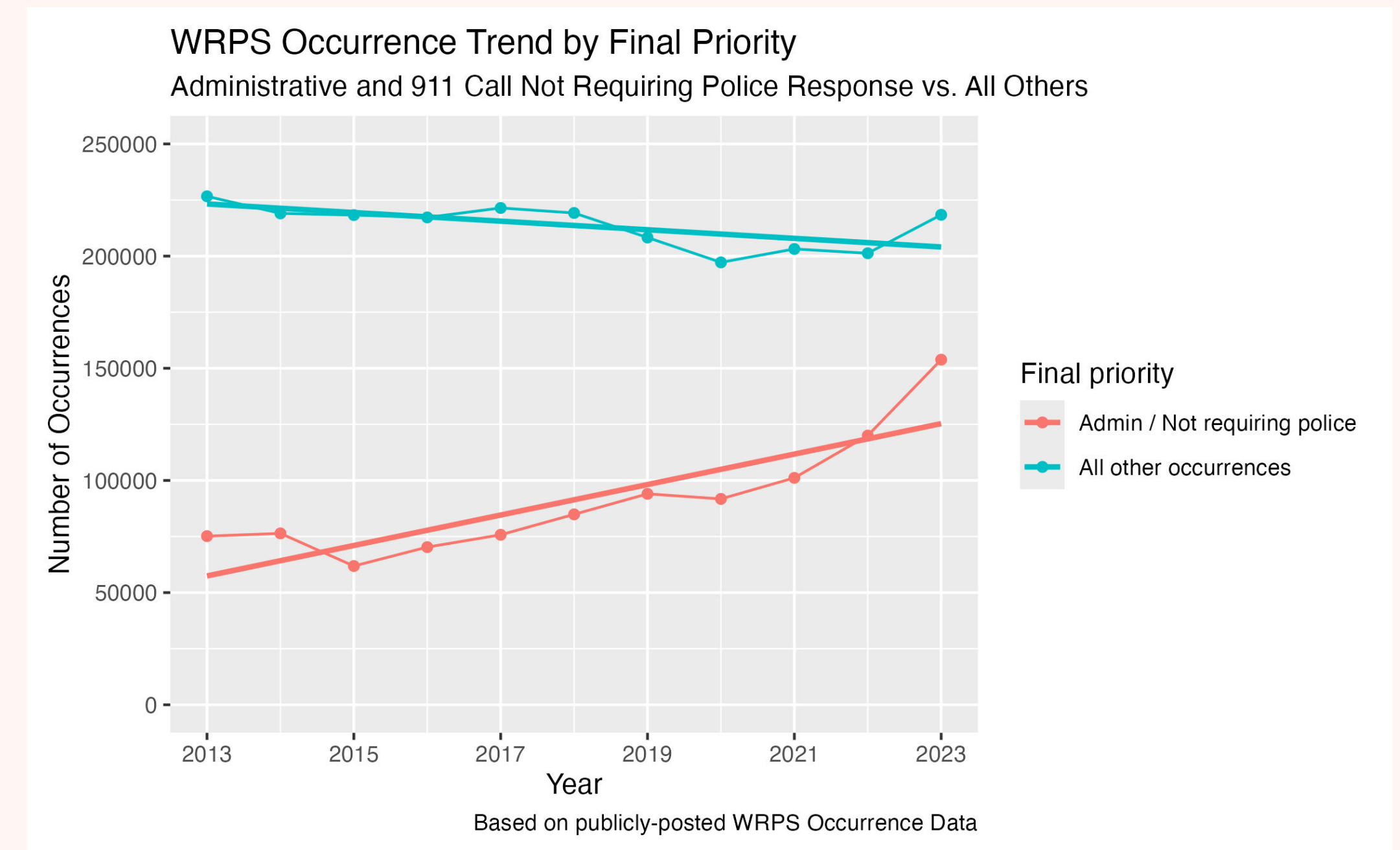
Source: Statistics Canada, "Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates." <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510002601>



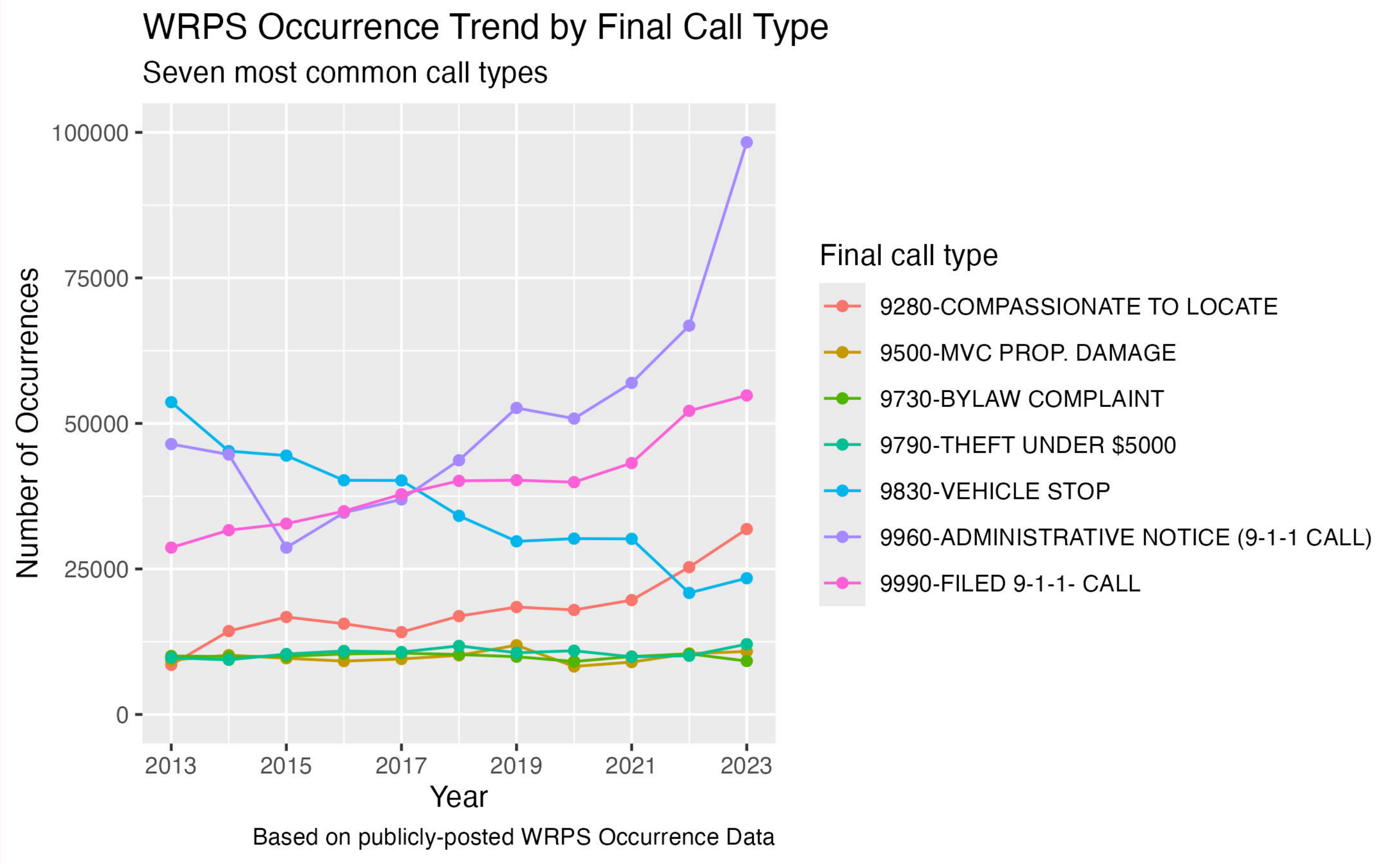
DO INCREASES IN OCCURRENCES INCREASE POLICE WORKLOAD?

- **Claim:** increased occurrences require more patrol officers and investigators
- **Reality:** increasing occurrences are being driven primarily by calls not requiring a police response

Source: WRPS Occurrence Data, <https://www.wrps.on.ca/en/about-us/reports-publications-and-surveys.aspx>. The "About our Data" document states that occurrences with a final priority of "9" correspond to "Administrative (Communications Alert); filed 9-1-1 call not requiring police response"



DRIVERS OF OCCURRENCE TREND



These seven call types account for ~57% of occurrences in the publicly-available data

Source: WRPS Occurrence Data, <https://www.wrps.on.ca/en/about-us/reports-publications-and-surveys.aspx>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Return budget to Police Services Board to reduce the net levy by \$4M**
- **Reinvest \$4M in police-free initiatives that prevent crime**
- **Retract the statement that "violent crime is rising in our community" from Council records**
- **Request breakdown of occurrence statistics based on the final call priority, clearly indicating how many occurrences required a police response vs. how many did not**
- **Require independent expert review of data analysis done in support of future Police budget requests, prior to publication**

GRT Transit Delegation Speech

I would like to thank the council for the opportunity to speak on the GRT's new business plan. My name is Saman Rahmani, I am a Kitchener resident and a regular GRT rider. I am a union representative at Starbucks Fairway in Kitchener. I am voicing my support today for Grand River Transit's forward looking business plan.

The proposed budget would allow GRT to expand service and frequency on several routes I rely on to get to work and access services and commerce in the Waterloo region. My current commute to work can range from about 30 minutes to nearly double based on the frequency of route 12 – and that's *if* I make a “good” connection. Even then, there's a chance that the bus I am getting on is going to be overcrowded. This is why the GRT's new business plan is invaluable – higher frequency and consistent schedules through 7pm could effectively eliminate these pain points for riders like myself.

Highway express service is an enticing use of the Region of Waterloo's existing highway infrastructure. It would allow transit riders to take advantage of highways alongside regular traffic.

Defining a thorough overnight network is also key for the Waterloo region. Something I think we should consider is the potential overnight service can have on discouraging drunk driving from Uptown back to residences around the city.

I still recall regional planners presenting the ION plans to my class in middle school. It had me curious and hopeful for the role that transit would play in the region. Equally so we should continue our ambition by accelerating stage 2 of the ION in order to break ground on the line within the decade.

The proposed business plan identifies that frequency and consistency are key areas for growth and provides a vision that would not only address schedules on major routes but a bolder vision for GRT that better serves the region. For this reason the new business plan has my support.

Thank you!

Community Justice Initiatives

Community Responses to Crime and Harm

Jason Spencer (he/him)

Program Director

Jasons@cjiwr.com

Kamil Ahmed(he/him)

Program Coordinator

Kamila@cjiwr.com

Who we are and What we do

- Community Justice Initiatives of Waterloo Region (CJI) is a volunteer-based restorative justice (RJ), peacebuilding organization. During our 45+ year history, we have creatively and innovatively applied restorative justice principles to address conflict and harm-related needs identified by our community. Our founding was the result of a grassroots movement that sought to build a community to transform harm through dialogue where all voices are heard. We continue that mission today as we seek to inspire safe, healthy, and peaceful communities.
- Restorative Justice is based on the understanding the crime and conflict causes harm to people and relationships, and it affects communities. RJ is an approach to justice that seeks to repair harm by providing an opportunity for those harmed and those who take responsibility for the harm to communicate about causes, circumstances, and impacts of crime and conflict, and to address their needs. RJ seeks to foster healing, reparation and reintegration, while also seeking to prevent future harm.
- One of CJI's services to the community is offering restorative dialogue opportunities and individual and group conflict coaching to people experiencing harm and conflict. Beyond conflict mediation and/or conflict skill-building, CJI also assists communities/associations/neighbourhoods experiencing tension, including at-risk for cultural conflict or a community interested in dialoguing regarding building a hate-free neighborhood.

Community Responses to Harm and Crime

- CJI receives referrals to our Community Mediation Service from WRPS primarily through the Community Engagement Unit (CEU) for situations involving:
 - Neighbour conflict
 - Housing-related conflict
 - Family conflict
- CJI receives referrals to our Restorative Responses to Harm and Crime through the John Howard Society and the Crown Attorney's Office for situations involving:
 - Neighbour Conflict
 - Family Conflict
 - Youth Offences

Why Support RJ in Waterloo Region

- Community-Centric Approach
 - A key component of Restorative Justice is that invites community to be part of the conversation. Restorative Justice allows space for a more complex and nuanced narratives that invites all parties and the broader community to be involved in understanding and creating change as it relates to the harm. It is an effective non-punitive response compared to traditional enforcement process.
 - CJI involves community to be part of the process through the engaging trained volunteer facilitators to support cases
 - RJ is an effective process for building understanding in diverse, multicultural communities

Why Support RJ in Waterloo Region

- Reduces Systemic Barriers
 - With ever increasing demands on our legal and court systems that are costly, and time consuming, our community needs to look to alternatives for diversion of cases that are either non-criminal in nature and/or where the parties involved are interested in a dialogue process. CJI has demonstrated over our history that we complement our legal systems and can work in partnership with these systems.
- RJ offers
 - Cost effective and time efficient processes
 - Improved public safety and reduced recidivism
 - Empowers victims and communities
 - Addresses social inequities and power imbalances
 - Strengthens community trust
 - Focuses on prevention

Identification of Community Needs

- Problem
 - Increased adversarial nature of conflict due to high stress conditions that contribute to social polarization in the community
- Needs we have noticed:
 - Support with unskilled interpersonal communication and activation
 - Spaces for building understanding as an ingredient of tolerance and acceptance
 - Opportunities for recognition of harm and its impacts
 - Clarity in boundaries and needs in relationships
 - Supportive processes for exchanging intent and impact around incidents of harm
 - Collaborative decision-making processes

Barriers to Meeting Needs

- Lack of Sustainable funding --> capacity for response & service provision
- Time of intervention (we are being invited in as a last resort at which point parties are often entrenched in conflict and harm has accelerated, our work is best positioned at early intervention)
- Public awareness and understanding of our services

Calls to Action

- Adequately fund services to bolster staff capacity for increased and consistent referrals that offer a variety of restorative approaches
- Support processes that allow for referrals to be received in a timely manner to mitigate against conflict escalation and entrenchment
- Promote consent-driven referrals to our services through community partnerships

Thank You

Jason Spencer (he/him)

Program Director

Jasons@cjiwr.com

Kamil Ahmed(he/him)

Program Coordinator

Kamila@cjiwr.com



Transit Funding – You Get What You Pay For

JOSHUA BEECH FALSHAW



New GRT Business Plan is a great
step forward!

“

If you want to understand a council's priorities, look at the budget.

”

2024 GRT Funding

\$221,290,000

2024 GRT Funding

\$221,290,000

\$376.88 per
resident

Global Comparison

| City | Funding per resident (CAD) |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Waterloo Region | \$376.88 |
| London, England | \$1,347.73 |
| New York City, USA | \$1,833.40 |
| Toronto, Canada | \$918.99 |
| Ottawa, Canada | \$754.66 |

Ottawa Level Funding in Waterloo

\$443,110,000

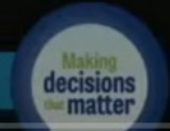
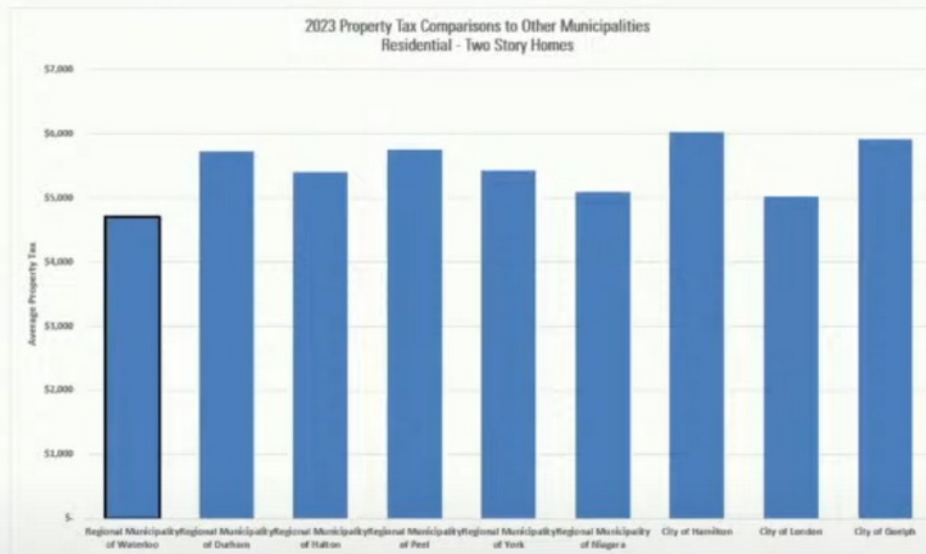
Perpetual growth of Waterloo Region



Regional Tax Comparators

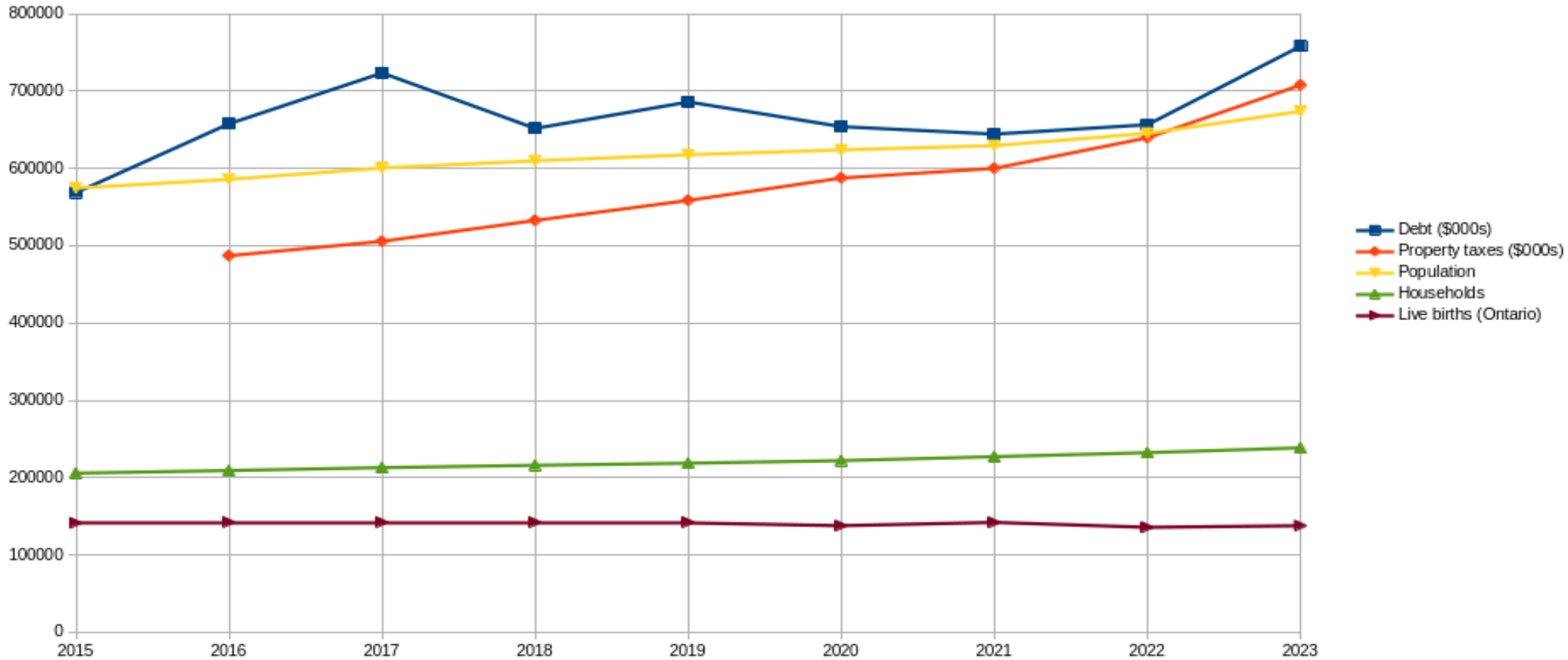
| Region/City | Two Storey Home |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Regional Municipality of Waterloo | \$ 4,710 |
| Regional Municipality of Durham | 5,731 |
| Regional Municipality of Halton | 5,404 |
| Regional Municipality of Peel | 5,757 |
| Regional Municipality of York | 5,423 |
| Regional Municipality of Niagara | 5,087 |
| City of Hamilton | 6,027 |
| City of London | 5,020 |
| City of Guelph | 5,917 |

Data from the 2023 BMA Study
 Municipal tax information provided by BMA Management Consulting Inc.
 Property taxes reflect total tax bill including regional, local and education taxes



The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Source: Consolidated financial statements 2016-2023; Appendix A: 2023 Population and Households Estimates for Waterloo Region; Statistics Canada.
Table 13-10-0414-01 Live births, by place of residence of mother



Total Increase

Debt: 33.32%

Taxes: 45.27%

Population: 17.26%

Households 15.93%

Proposal for Pilot Project: Shelter and Housing Support for Refugee Claimants

Submitted to: The Region of Waterloo

Prepared by: Reception House Waterloo Region

Project Start Date: December 2024

Project End Date: April 2025

1. Project Overview

Reception House Waterloo Region is seeking funding for a six-month pilot project to provide urgently needed shelter and housing support to refugee claimants arriving in our region. These individuals, who have fled their home countries in search of safety, often arrive with little more than the clothes on their backs, unsure of where they will sleep at night. This pilot project aims to address this immediate need by offering safe, temporary accommodations and essential support services to help claimants transition to permanent housing within 60 days.

Reception House Waterloo Region has a long-standing history of supporting Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs), playing a vital role in delivering on Canada's global humanitarian commitments. This experience has provided us with deep insights into the needs of refugees and the operational capacity to manage transitional housing and wraparound supports effectively. We believe that refugee claimants are also a key part of Canada's humanitarian mission, and with our proven track record, we are well-positioned to extend our transitional housing supports to this group as well. By doing so, we can continue to contribute to the Region of Waterloo's efforts to ensure timely and effective settlement for all vulnerable newcomers."

At Reception House, we believe that no one seeking refuge in our community should ever have to worry about finding a place to stay. By offering shelter to 10 individuals at a time and providing meals and comprehensive case management, we aim to create a supportive, dignified environment for refugee claimants while they await their next steps in the asylum process. This pilot is an opportunity to test and refine our approach with the goal of expanding the program in the future to meet the growing demand for shelter and rental housing services in the region. Similar synergetic and collaborative projects have been developed between, shelter systems/ homeless supporters, regional governments and refugee serving agencies in Ottawa, Hamilton and Toronto like, Fred Victor and Sojourn House in Toronto, Wesley in Hamilton.

2. Project Objectives

The primary objectives of the pilot project are as follows:

1. Provide Waterloo Region Central Intake for Refugee Claimants

We propose to create a central Intake point for Refugee Claimants in Waterloo Region. Reception House can receive referrals directly from the City of Toronto, the Airports and Peel Region overflow shelter systems and provide emergency/transitional and other housing services. Reception House has been the central intake point for Government Assisted refugees since its inception in Waterloo Region has the staffing capacity and community connection to be the Refugee Claimants intake for Waterloo Region.

2. Immediate Shelter

Refugee claimants will receive safe, secure shelter at a temporary accommodation site for up to 60 days or more based on their housing needs assessment, allowing them to stabilize while housing solutions are pursued.

3. Ensure Access to Nutritious Meals

We will provide three meals per day to ensure that clients have access to balanced, nutritious food. This is especially important for individuals who may have experienced long periods of food insecurity.

4. Deliver Comprehensive Case Management and Housing Support

A dedicated Housing Coordinator will work closely with each client, providing individualized support to find suitable permanent housing within 60 days. The coordinator will also connect clients with necessary services such as healthcare, legal support, and employment assistance based on their needs and assets assessment.

5. Facilitate Permanent Housing Placements

Our goal is to move clients from temporary shelter to permanent housing within 60 days, pending the bases of their claim processing and hearing approval. This proposed process will ensure they have a stable foundation to begin rebuilding their lives. This process will be supported by our team's deep connections with local housing providers, landlords, and community organizations.

6. Evaluate the Pilot for Scalability

Throughout the pilot, we will assess key metrics and outcomes to understand the effectiveness of the model. Our goal is to use these findings to reexamine the need and refine the program and advocate for its expansion beyond the pilot phase.

3. Human Impact

Behind every statistic is a human story. Many of the refugee claimants we serve have endured unimaginable hardship, fleeing persecution, war, or violence. They arrive in our region hoping for a fresh start, but the barriers they face—especially around housing—are often overwhelming.

For these individuals, securing immediate shelter is more than just finding a place to sleep. It represents a return to dignity, a place of safety where they can begin to heal from their trauma. At Reception House, our teams are well trained to provide wrap-around approach supports to vulnerable refugees rooted in understanding of their needs services that with Trauma Informed lens. The meals we provide do more than nourish the body; they offer comfort and community to those who have been uprooted from everything familiar.

This pilot program offers not only shelter but hope. It gives refugee claimants the stability they need to focus on building a new life—finding employment, learning the language, enrolling their children in school, and becoming active members of their new community.

4. Budget Breakdown

The proposed budget reflects the core components of this program—shelter, food, and housing support. We believe that a modest investment in these critical services will yield significant benefits for the individuals we serve and the broader community.

| Shelter & Food Cost | Cost per Unit | Quantity | # of nights/days | Total Cost |
|---|---------------|----------|------------------|------------|
| Shelter for 10 individuals @ \$150/person/night | \$150 | 10 | 60 | 90000 |
| Meals for 10 individuals @ \$37/person/day | \$37 | 10 | 60 | \$22,200 |

Wages:

| | Pay rate per hour | #hours per week | # weeks | Total wages | Benefits @17% |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------------|
| Intake worker | 26 | 20 | 8 | 4160 | 707.2 |
| Housing Coordinator | 28 | 20 | 8 | 4480 | 761.6 |
| | | | | 8640 | 1468.8 |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------|--|
| Total salaries and benefits | | | | 10108.8 | |
| Admin cost | | | | \$32,309 | |
| Total cost for the project | | | | \$144,509 | |

5. Staffing and Resources

To ensure the successful implementation of this pilot project, we will hire a part-time Intake Worker and a part-time Housing Coordinator. These roles are essential to the program.

The intake worker will play a critical role in the initial assessment and admission process for Refugee Claimant individuals or families seeking shelter services.

- Their responsibilities include conducting interviews to gather essential information about the client's background, needs, and circumstances, such as housing status, medical conditions, and any immediate safety concerns.
- They assess eligibility for community services, explain available resources, and create a personalized support plan
- Additionally, intake worker will connect clients to other support services, such as social services, healthcare, or legal assistance, ensuring a smooth transition into the shelter system and laying the foundation for long-term stability and support.

Coordinator will:

- Develop personalized housing plans for each client, identifying and securing appropriate long-term housing solutions.
 - Build and maintain relationships with landlords and housing providers, advocating for affordable housing options for refugee claimants.
 - Arrange for clients to meet with landlords and mediate when problem solving
 - Provide ongoing support to clients, connecting them with essential services such as healthcare, legal advice, and employment programs.
 - Monitor and track progress, reporting on key performance indicators such as time to permanent housing, client satisfaction, and overall outcomes.
-

6. Work Plan

| Task | Activities | Timeframe | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Program Launch | Announcement, using local media and social media | November 1, 2024 | Reception House Team |
| Hiring of Intake Worker and Housing Coordinator | Posting, recruiting, onboarding and training | November 1, 2024 | HR Department |
| Client Intake and Assessment | Complete intake forms, assess immediate needs for shelter safety, food and medical attention within 24 hours from their arrival | Continuous, starting End of November 2024 | Intake Worker |
| Shelter and Meal Provision | Appropriate shelter and hot meals are provided by catering company | Ongoing from Dec 1st– April 30, 2025 | Program Staff |
| Housing and Case Management | Thorough needs and assets assessment including but not limited to: housing, employment, language, legal support, health, ... and individualized support plans with clear action steps | Continuous, starting end of November 2024 | Housing Coordinator |

| Task | Activities | Timeframe | Responsibility |
|------------------------------|--|--|---------------------|
| | <p>towards self sufficiency with be developed. Continued case management and follow up support will be provided throughout the refugee claimant stay.</p> | | |
| Housing Search and Placement | <p>Supporting clients transition form temporary shelter to long term stable housing: Housing search plan, budgeting, understanding tenants rights, liaise with housing providers and landlords to secure affordable housing. Assisting clients with applications for subsidize housing</p> | Ongoing, with a target of 60 days per client | Housing Coordinator |
| Monthly Progress Reports | <p>Reports are prepared and submitted on time according to reporting requirements</p> | Ongoing | Program Manager |

| Task | Activities | Timeframe | Responsibility |
|---------------------------------|--|------------|-----------------|
| Final Program Evaluation Report | Using online surveys, client feedback and in-person connection to leverage feedback from people with lived experiences to inform progress and future improvement steps | April 2025 | Program Manager |

7. Evaluation and Reporting

To measure the success of the pilot project, we will track the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

- Number of individuals sheltered each month.
- Average length of stay in the shelter before securing permanent housing.
- Percentage of clients placed into permanent housing within the 60-day target.
- Client satisfaction with the services provided, gathered through surveys and feedback sessions.
- Qualitative outcomes, such as improvements in mental well-being, access to healthcare, and progress toward self-sufficiency.

A comprehensive final evaluation report will be submitted to the regional government in April 2025. This report will outline the key findings from the pilot, highlight success stories, and provide recommendations for scaling the program to meet the growing need for housing and support services for refugee claimants.

8. Conclusion

This pilot project is an essential step toward providing refugee claimants in our region with the shelter, support, and dignity they deserve. By funding this initiative, the regional government will not only provide immediate relief to some of the most vulnerable members of our community but also invest in long-term solutions that promote stability, self-reliance, and community integration.

We are eager to collaborate with the regional government to implement this pilot project and ensure that all refugee claimants in our region have the opportunity to start their new lives on a foundation of safety, support, and hope.

This project will not only provide much-needed transitional housing and support services for refugee claimants, but it will also help to address systemic barriers discrimination related to immigration categories and service eligibility. By extending supports traditionally offered only to government-assisted refugees, we aim to close the gap for refugee claimants who often face significant challenges in accessing essential services. Through this initiative, we will gather valuable insights from the lived experiences of refugee claimants, which will inform improvements to the shelter system as a whole. By identifying and addressing these barriers, we will contribute to a more equitable and inclusive service model that benefits the entire Region of Waterloo."

6.1

Subject: 2025 Budget thoughts

From: Gina Georgiou [REDACTED]

Sent: November 15, 2024 3:55 PM

To: Regional Clerk <RegionalClerk@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Sustainable Waterloo Region <info@sustainablewaterlooregion.ca>; Joe Nowak <JoNowak@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Rob Deutschmann <RDeutschmann@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Sandy Shantz <SShantz@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Jim Erb <JErb@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Michael Harris <MHarris@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Doug Craig <DougCraig@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Dorothy McCabe <DMcCabe@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Jan Liggett <JLiggett@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Kari Williams <KariWilliams@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Karen Redman <KRedman@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Natasha Salonen <NSalonen@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Chantal Huinink <CHuinink@regionofwaterloo.ca>; Colleen James <CJames@regionofwaterloo.ca>

Subject: 2025 Budget thoughts

Good Morning All

In listening to the last budget meeting, I wish to enter 2 topics for consideration. I would also like to acknowledge and agree that continual tax increases in this region is not sustainable and help from Provincial and Federal is needed to alleviate some of the stressors (which I am aware has already been asked from our local MP's and MPP's).

1. Capital funding for shelters:

I think that capital funding IS needed for next year's budget. We need supportive housing. It's been said time and again that Supportive Housing has been a successful strategy. "Shelter beds cost three times as much," said Tinker. "Hospital beds are \$13,500 a month, and correctional facilities, it's over \$4,000 whereas supportive housing is just over \$600." As Peter Sweeney mentioned previously, a lot of the "homeless" have all three of the following: brain injuries, addictions and mental health issues. They do not have the ability to make sound decisions, thus why they refuse treatment. Instead they roam from shelter to shelter, get their monthly tax funded cheque, and disturbing neighbourhoods & using up resources that we have nothing to show for in the end, and there are no repercussions for them. We're just throwing money at it and hoping something good comes out of it. They are not homeless, they are mentally ill, and need to be treated as such, instead of using up resources (fire, police, ambulances etc) which is not cheap to support (thus the increase in the police budget), we get the people the help they need, us being of sound mind acting on their behalf, so that they will not cause more harm to themselves or others.

The Region has purchased the building on Frederick street, however, only women/or those identifying as, are allowed there. Councillor Deutchman asked Peter Sweeney several times during the meeting where are the men supposed to go. There was no satisfactory response given. That is a SERIOUS concern that needs to be addressed. The Mancini's are handing out tents to everyone, but where are they expecting them to pitch them up? It's a waste of money. Waste of money to buy the tents (whose ever pocket it is coming out of), it's a waste of money for the Bylaw call center to answer the calls of reported illegally set up tents, it's a waste of money to get a Bylaw officer to go check it out and remove the tent. There's just waste everywhere. Would it not be cheaper, and more fiscally responsible,

to buy a place (ie the former Marten's Furniture Wonderland, which is already close to the other affordable housing where people are already being serviced there)? The King St Shelter has been in place for over 2 years, and a place to move these people along to has not been found. The Plan To End Chronic Homelessness is a plan in theory only. If an actual business was putting a plan together, they'd have all resources listed, how many people would be needed, how much money each section would require. In this budget, do they include money for security services? Police services? EMS services? Has this been calculated from the events at the King St Shelter? Because I guarantee, as those same people move around, the same problems will follow.

This was the breakdown stated on City News:

The Emergency Shelter system is not a viable solution and as per Peter Sweeney, another Emergency Shelter is not scheduled any time soon.

Innocent people, who are truly homeless (do not have brain injuries, addictions or mental health issues) , who can sustain living on their own, deserve to have a safe place to stay. Those people do not feel safe at shelters, and I beg you to answer if you stay at the shelter overnight, would you feel safe? I hope that the Region has learnt a huge lesson from this Emergency Shelter model and will not repeat itself, at least with this present "structure". I am aware that the emergency shelter on King st, has no rules, and from some sources, wanted criminals have sought refuge there because of the "confidentiality" that the Mancini's chosen to have. Which, could potentially put residents of the shelter, and neighbourhoods around the shelter, in danger. No wonder so many "homeless people" have stated they do not want to stay there, and I do not blame them. This structure has caused destruction around the Region, which the tax payers have had to pay for to replace/repair City property (ie. Rockway Gardens) or residents themselves having to fix/repurchase stolen goods (ie. \$10,000 worth of damages caused by a mattress set on fire at 1522 King St E; The damages caused to Frenzi's; The damages cause to Seniors apartment buildings at 1420 King St E at a cost of approx \$36,298+HST, not to include the extra money they have spent on adding additional safety glass and other features).

If a future, Temporary shelter is opened, to house some temporarily until they are assessed and sent off to where they need to go (triaged), here are some rules that Sanctioned encampments should use (based off of London Homeless encampment rules):

Just like every other human on this planet, we all have rules, and there should be no exceptions. Here are some rules they listed:

Encampment Safety Protocols

- b. No more than six tents/shelters per encampment
- c. No open fires or combustibles
- d. Minors under 16 years old will be reported to Children's Aid Society (CAS)
- e. No used or uncapped needles around the site
- f. Pets must be on a leash when outside a tent
- g. A muzzle is required if a pet is known to be violent
- h. Human trafficking is not tolerated and will be reported

- i. Intimidation, physical violence, or threats towards neighboring tents, community residents, or staff providing services will not be tolerated
- j. Brandishing weapons will not be tolerated
- k. No large amounts of garbage, food waste, or hoarding
- l. Tents can't be near a playground, pathway, open area of play, or on a flood plain, river embankments, roadways, private property, side walks, or bus shelters

2) 172 New employees - this is absurd. It's great that there is a need to hire, hopefully local, residents, but is this needed? Just like any business out there, they need to prove a case for each body requested. A thorough review of each current employee must be conducted to find deficiencies. You cannot tell me, in this age of technology, there are no inefficiencies. Especially since many of you stated that 8% is not sustainable each year. This should be postponed until 2026 to give the City/Region time to assess every department. 172 Employees @ \$19/hour x 40 hours x 50 weeks = \$6.5 million dollars. I'm sure residents would rather allow their tax dollars be spent to hire a private firm to assess all roles during the next year than hire 172 employees who may not all be needed, and hire who is left in 2026.

You have been doing an excellent job of thinking of tax payers during your meetings, and also thinking of the neighbourhood impacts when you consider the shelter situation. These are not easy things to do, so I thank you all for doing better this year. I know Kitchener has not seen the amount of growth we have seen this fast and the need for new housing, but we must consider the future as we build. We cannot build for the today, we have to think of the longevity & functionality of each item we invest/build.

Sincerely,
Gina

6.2

Dear Members of the Region of Waterloo Council,

I am writing to express my deep disappointment with your decision to deny my request to speak at this week's council meeting.

Your plan to end chronic homelessness claims to prioritize centering community voices, yet actions like this seem to contradict that commitment. It is disheartening to see such a critical opportunity for dialogue dismissed, especially on an issue that profoundly affects so many in our community.

I have attached the speech I had prepared to deliver at the meeting. I urge each of you to take the time to read and reflect on the points I raise. These issues are too important to be ignored, and I hope my perspective will encourage meaningful action and accountability.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today about the critical need to rethink our approach to government spending, particularly as it pertains to addressing homelessness and economic hardship in our region.

Every year, we see more of our neighbors forced onto the streets. Despite increasing budgets and countless programs meant to tackle homelessness, the problem is growing, not shrinking. This tells us one simple truth: **our spending isn't working.**

We are throwing money at the symptoms—temporary shelters, emergency relief, and short-term aid—while ignoring the root causes. Homelessness is not an epidemic of laziness; it is an epidemic of economic disillusionment.

Today, many Canadians are asking themselves: "Why bother?" Why work hard just to hand over most of their paycheck to taxes and their landlord or their hydro and gas provider, with nothing left to build a future? The truth is, for many people, it no longer feels worth it to work when the system offers them no path to stability.

Adding to this burden is the rising cost of insurance. Whether it's home, auto, or business insurance, Canadians are being squeezed by skyrocketing premiums. Our hands are tied because somehow, someone convinced the government that insurance should be both required by law and run for profit.

Think about that for a moment. We are legally obligated to pay for car insurance, yet the system is structured to maximize profits, not protect people. This unchecked rise in costs is pushing families and businesses to the brink, leaving them with even less to cover basic needs like housing, food, and utilities.

Rising housing costs, stagnant wages, and ever-increasing utility bills have turned full-time work into a treadmill going nowhere. We need to stop blaming individuals for their circumstances and start recognizing that the system itself is broken.

So, how do we fix it? I don't have the answers but by changing how we spend and instead of merely reacting to the crisis, we must proactively address its root causes:

1. **Housing Affordability:** The worst thing that ever happened to the average person in this world is when our homes became an investment, the wealthy have pushed average

6.2

Canadians out of their homes and onto the streets by creating shortages so that the prices would balloon without any capital expenditure. We need to invest in housing that people can afford without sacrificing everything else. Affordable housing isn't a luxury; it's a foundation for stability.

2. **Economic Incentives:** People need to see the value in working. This means supporting wages that keep pace with the cost of living and ensuring that hard work leads to progress, not just survival.
3. **Utility Reform:** Outrageous utility costs are forcing people to choose between keeping the lights on and putting food on the table. Let's implement policies that ensure essential services remain accessible.

Every dollar we spend should be working toward a future where people can thrive, not just survive. The current approach—spending more and more to address symptoms—has shown us that we cannot simply buy our way out of this crisis.

We need to treat the causes of homelessness and economic despair, not just bandage the wounds they leave behind. This requires bold leadership, innovative thinking, and a willingness to challenge the status quo.

As policymakers, you have the power to lead that change. I urge you to rethink our budget priorities and ensure that every dollar is spent building a future where all Canadians can find stability, dignity, and hope.

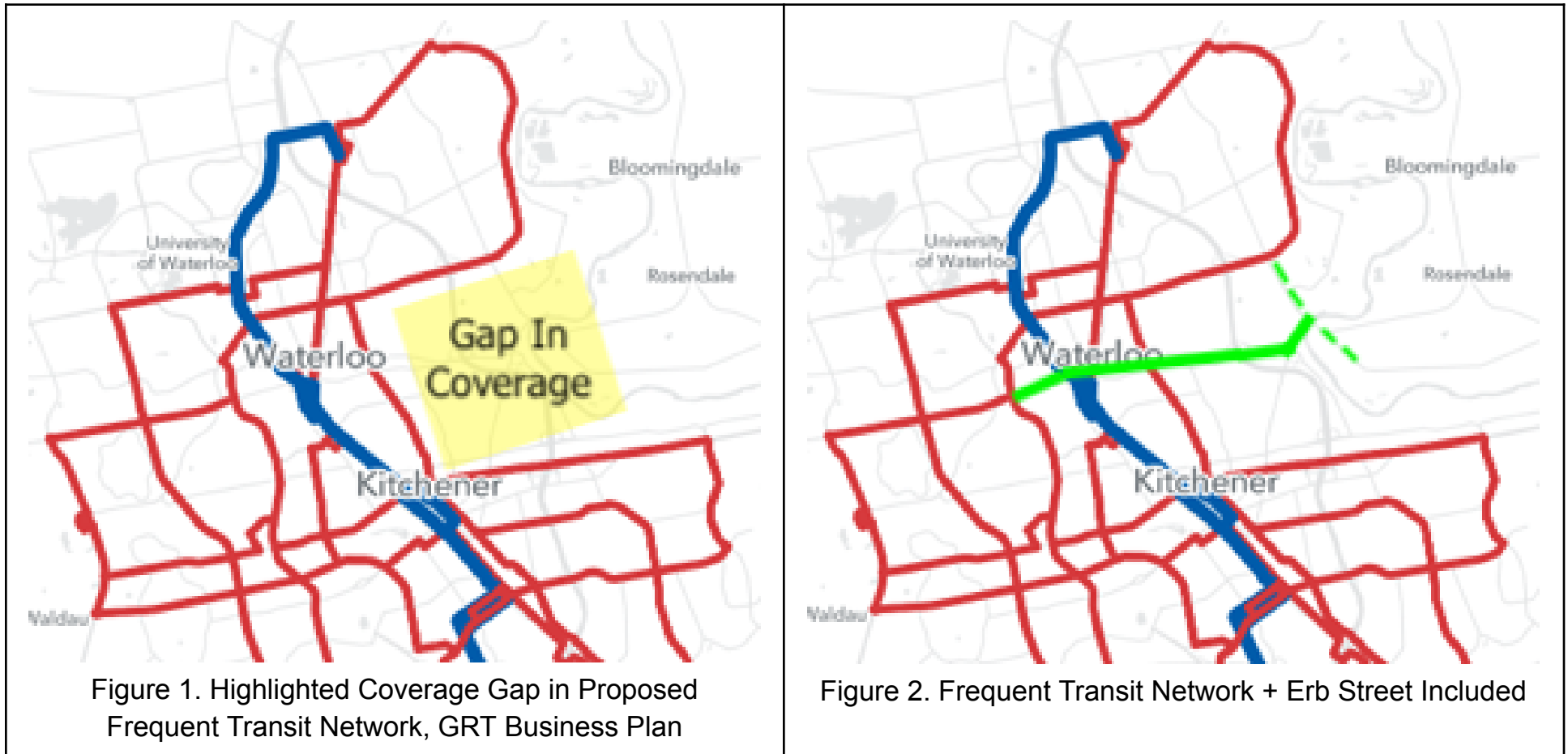
Thank you.

Regards,

Lanny Noble, RSE

A Canadian reluctantly standing up.

GRT Business Plan: Coverage Gap in Proposed Frequent Transit Network (Erb Street East)



While the frequent transit network provides good coverage on many existing iXpress routes, it does not include the East part of Erb, which is planned to intensify towards medium to high density (Figures 3-5). The current 5 Erb route provides poor service every 30 minutes, often late or not showing up, with buses prone to bunching. If the City of Waterloo plans to intensify this corridor, it must work with the Region to provide good transit service. This also provides a good east-west route connecting the Boardwalk with Uptown Waterloo.

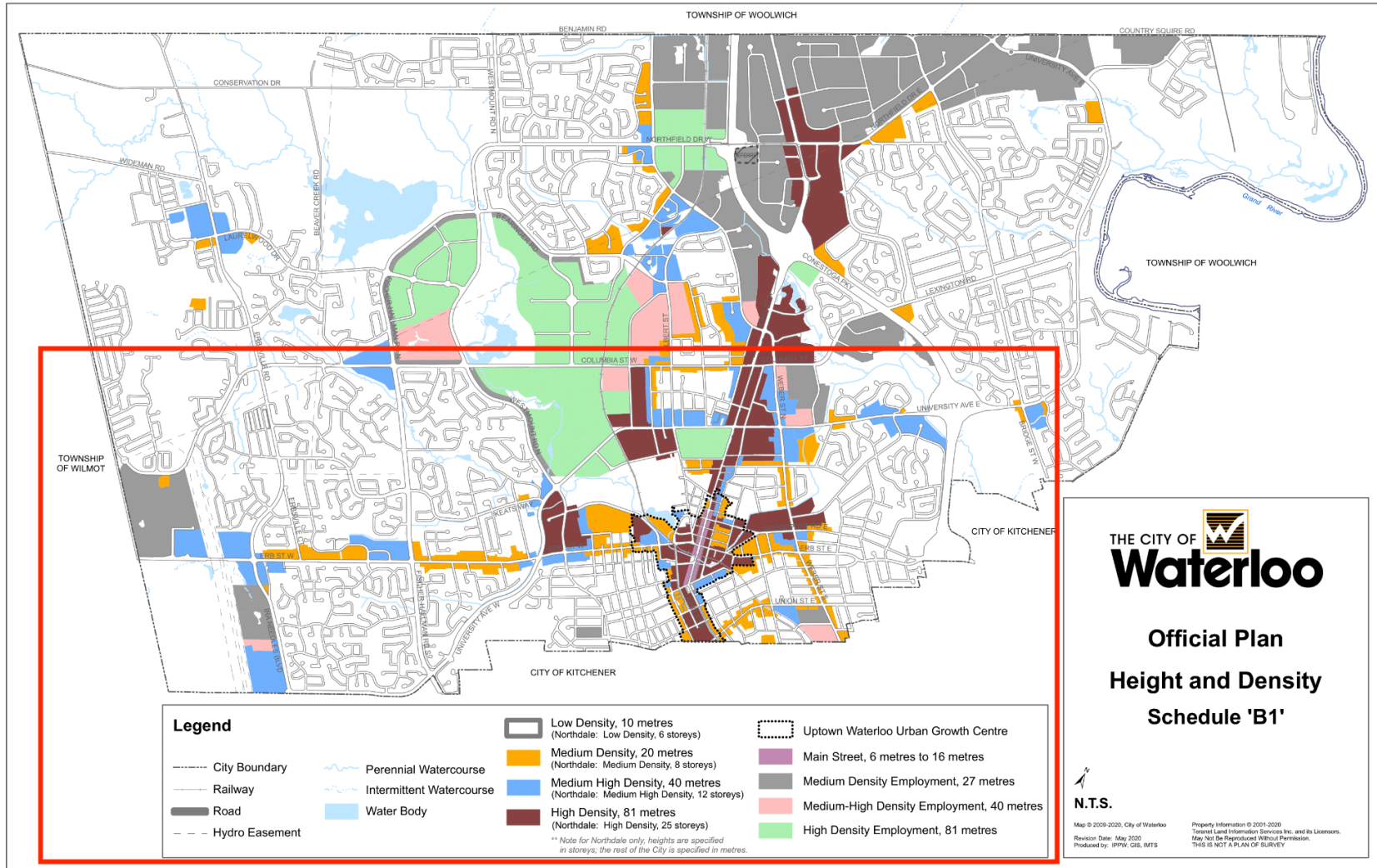


Figure 3. Selected Area of Interest Around Erb, Waterloo Official Plan, Schedule B1 - Height and Density

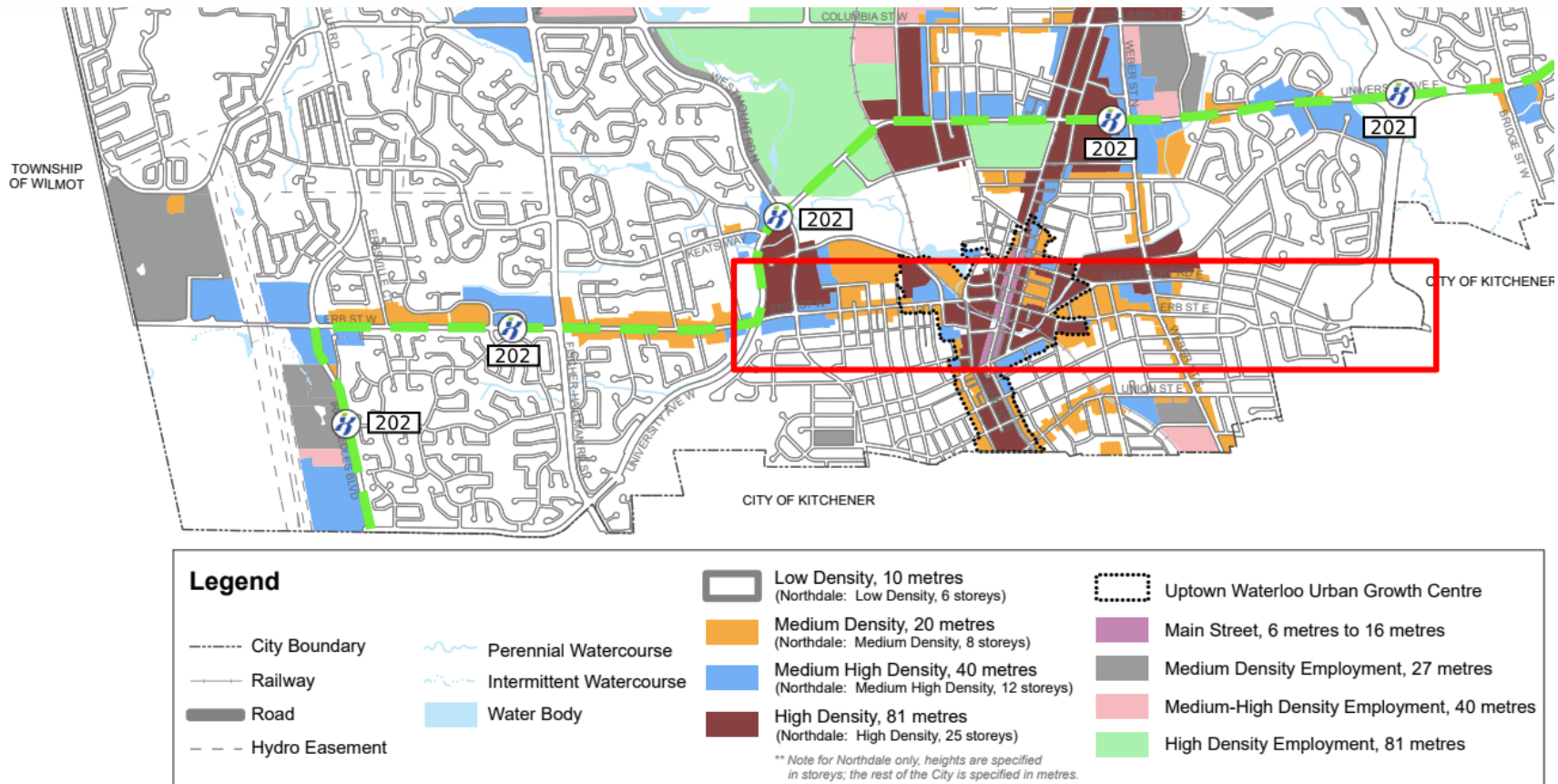


Figure 4. Red Rectangle Highlighting Intensification on Erb Street Without a Frequent East, West Route Waterloo Official Plan, Schedule B1 - Height and Density

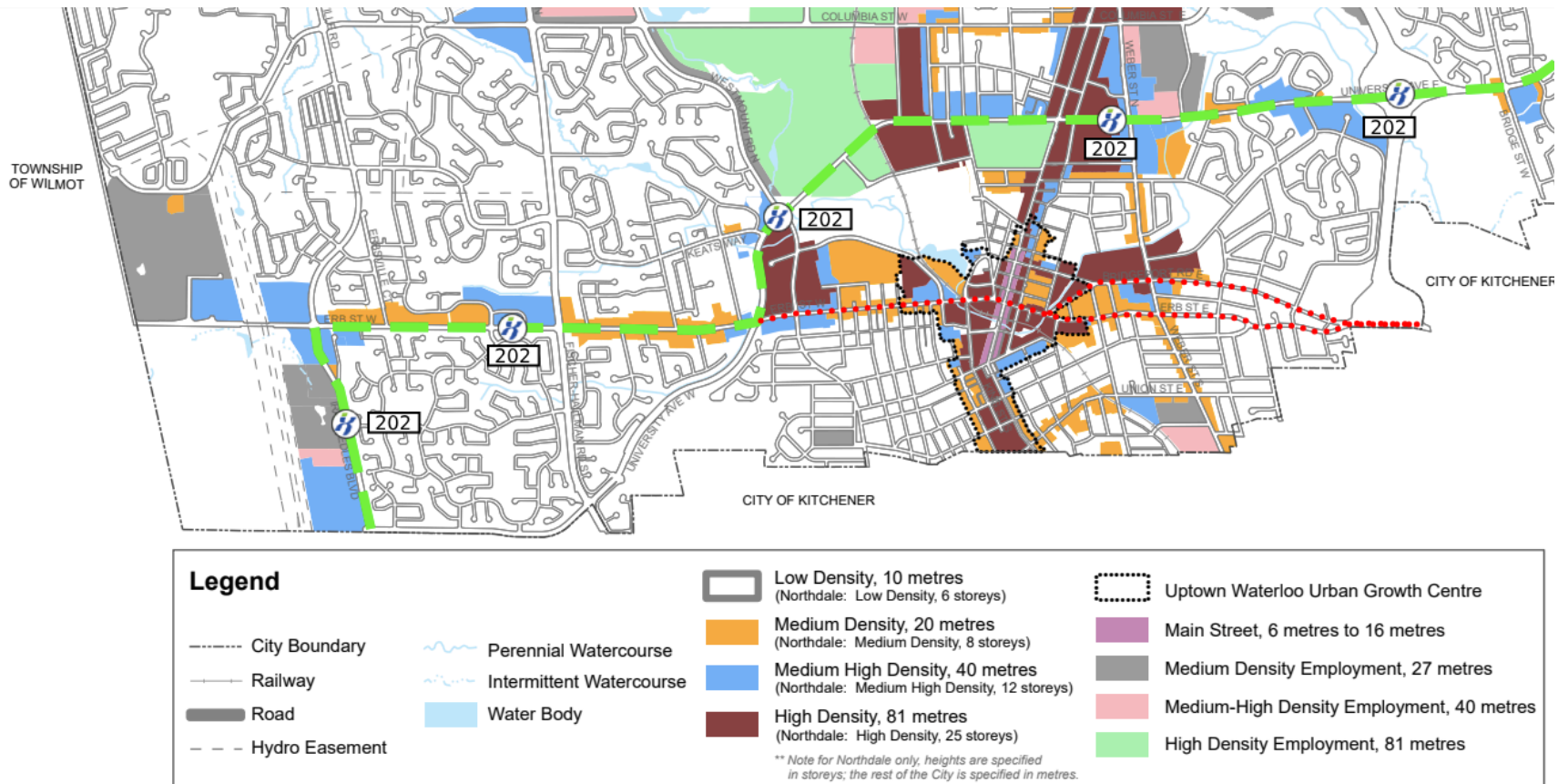


Figure 5. Dotted Red Route on Erb Street demonstrating a Frequent East, West Route, Waterloo Official Plan, Schedule B1 - Height and Density

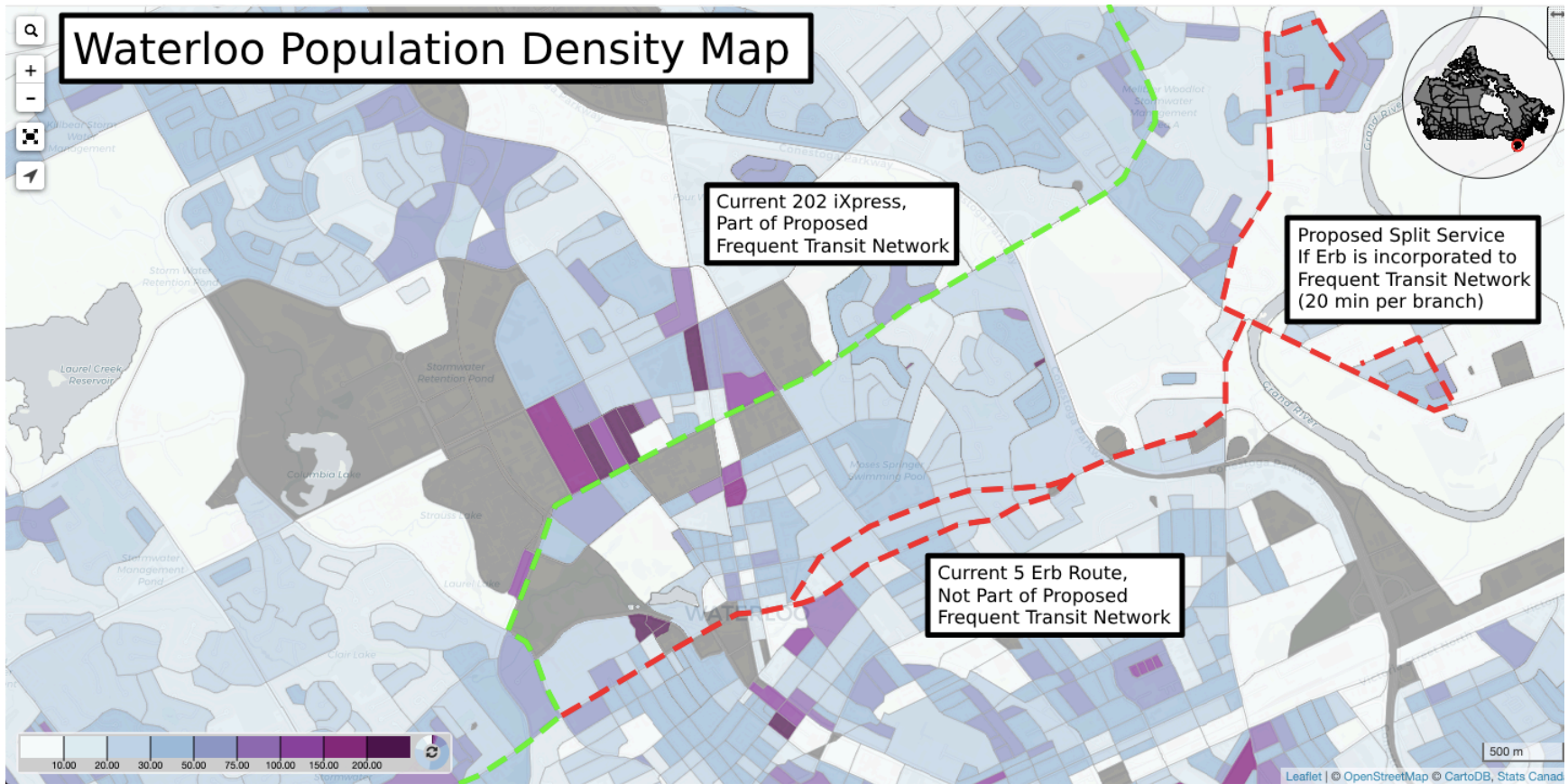


Figure 6. Waterloo Population Density Map with Frequent Transit Network and Proposed Erb Addition

Please also see the attached video of me crossing the roundabout at Ira Needles and Erb. It is always unsafe, with highspeed vehicles that often do not yield to pedestrians, and many others I know and I have almost been hit or run multiple times at these roundabouts. Vision Zero must be implemented such as pedestrian crossing light beacons, raised crosswalks, and lower signed speeds.

Thank you,
Rodney Chan