

**Region of Waterloo**  
**Planning, Development, and Legislative Services**  
**Community Planning**

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**To:** Planning and Works Committee  
**Meeting Date:** May 7, 2024  
**Report Title:** Year-End 2023 Population and Household Estimates for Waterloo Region

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**1. Recommendation**

For information.

**2. Purpose / Issue:**

This report provides estimates of Waterloo Region's population and household growth and how recent growth compares to long-term trends. The total year-end population and household estimates are used to plan for growth, support infrastructure and service programs, develop municipal benchmarks and performance indicators, calculate service costs per resident, assess housing need and track population-related trends.

**3. Strategic Plan:**

Tracking and reporting population and household growth contributes to the Homes for All Strategic Plan priority area. However, many of the objectives and actions contained throughout all four Strategic Priority Areas rely on estimates of population and households.

**4. Report Highlights:**

The population and household figures contained in this report represent year-end estimates and include additional population which that are not counted by the Census such as post-secondary students.

The total population of Waterloo Region is estimated at 673,910 as of year-end 2023, including university and college students who would normally be residing in the Region while they study at our local institutions. This is an increase 28,490 people, a growth rate of 4.4% from year-end 2022.

The number of households is estimated at 238,800 which is an increase of 6,240 new households occupied since 2022, a growth rate of 2.68%.

The temporary student population contributes substantially to the total population of

Waterloo Region. The significant growth in the Region's population in 2023 is largely attributed to rising enrollment at local institutions.

**Table 1: Year-end 2023 Population and Household Estimates for the Region of Waterloo\***

	Region of Waterloo **	Cambridge	Kitchener	North Dumfries	Waterloo	Wellesley	Wilmot	Woolwich
Total Population Year-end 2023*	673,910	152,130	292,240	11,910	154,440	11,650	23,010	28,530
Population in Regular Households	654,600	150,460	288,420	11,820	141,430	11,630	22,770	28,070
Population in Collective Dwellings***	19,310	1,680	3,820	90	13,010	20	240	460
Total Population Year-end 2022*	645,420	145,290	277,970	11,410	148,630	11,530	22,420	28,160
Additional Population	28,490	6,840	14,270	500	5,810	120	590	370
Population Change 2022-2023 (%)	4.41%	4.7%	5.1%	4.4%	3.9%	1.0%	2.6%	1.3%
Households Year-end 2023*	238,800	53,920	107,580	4,080	51,980	3,430	7,990	9,820
Households Year-end 2022*	232,560	52,650	104,210	3,910	50,780	3,410	7,950	9,660
Additional Households	6,240	1,270	3,380	170	1,200	20	50	160
Household Change 2022-2023 (%)	2.68%	2.4%	3.2%	4.3%	2.4%	0.6%	0.5%	1.7%
Persons per Unit+	2.74	2.79	2.68	2.90	2.72	3.39	2.85	2.86
Temporary Student Population (included above)	49,310	4,500	10,700	10	34,550	(40)	(200)	(200)
Students Arriving	58,090	6,530	14,920	160	36,210	50	80	130
Living in Student Residences	10,340	-	540	-	9,810	-	-	-
Living in Other Accommodations	47,750	6,530	14,390	160	26,400	50	80	130
Students Leaving++	(8,780)	(2,030)	(4,230)	(160)	(1,660)	(90)	(280)	(330)

\* Based on available data from the 2021 Census, includes adjustments for recent residential development, students and other foreign/temporary residents, net Census undercount, and vacancy rates. Due various corrections and adjustments, direct comparison to previous year's estimates are not valid.

\*\* Municipal totals may not add due to independent rounding.

\*\*\* Collective dwellings include student residences, nursing homes, group homes, hospitals, larger lodging houses, etc.

+ 'Persons per Unit' (PPU) calculation is based on the 'Population in Regular Households', not on 'Total Population'.

++ These are students who leave home to attend school. They represent the reverse flow of the temporary students arriving in the Region from elsewhere.

## 5. Background:

Waterloo Region has experienced significant population and housing growth since 2020. However, population growth experienced in 2023 has significantly outpaced the high growth observed in previous years. Population growth in 2023 exceeded the

annual forecast from the Regions Official Plan. This is largely attributed to increases in international student enrollment, which are not anticipated to continue following changes to Federal and Provincial program which will decrease the number of study permits issued for international students in 2024.

## **6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public**

**Area Municipalities:** This report has been circulated to all Area Municipalities.

**Public:** N/A

## **7. Financial Implications:**

Nil.

## **8. Conclusion / Next Steps:**

Staff will continue to monitor population and household growth.

## **9. Attachments:**

Appendix A: 2023 Population and Households Estimates for Waterloo Region

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