

## GROWTH PRESSURES

The population in the Township of Woolwich is expected to grow to 51,204 people and 17,395 households by 2051. This growth will almost double the 2021 recorded population. In addition, with the recent expansions to the settlement areas and direction from Provincial government to remove barriers and build housing the population has the potential to increase even more. Most of the growth will be accommodated in greenfield areas, within the urban settlement areas, through the development of new subdivisions. These subdivisions will add additional demand for programs, services, equipment and long-term maintenance costs for such things as roads, trails, facilities and other infrastructure. Phasing and staging of land development will be crucial for the ability of the Township to manage this growth and continue to provide infrastructure and services to meet the demands of the increased population. The Township must also ensure that employment land, institutional land and community spaces are planned for and supported to provide a balance of land uses, jobs and services.

The Township adheres to a growth should pay for growth philosophy. Where the financial burden of new growth should not be borne by existing residents where possible. To the extent possible the Township relies on development charges (DC's) to fund the infrastructure needs of growth and assessment growth to cover operating needs. However, it should be noted that DC's

do not fund the full costs of growth infrastructure, and some forms of development such as accessory residential dwellings are exempt from DCs. Therefore, some costs must be partially burdened by existing residents.

In addition, future replacement costs of development funded assets must be eventually shouldered by the tax base. There is not a clear understanding between increased service needs related to growth and the related assessment revenue. This puts pressure on the Township to maintain service levels to respond to the demands of growth and to continue to provide services and programs to new residents.

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## ASSESSMENT GROWTH

Actual growth in the Township has not been as high as previously forecasted. The most recent DC study anticipated over 300 units in the Township annually starting in 2024. Recent data for 2024 showed growth of approximately 131 units with an estimated 404 units forecast for 2025. While the units built for 2025 are much higher than in recent years, the average of 2024 / 2025 is still below the DC study estimates. Recent announcements to reduce immigration levels and potential changes to development related legislation adds to the uncertainty in growth and development.

Staff are currently projecting new assessment growth for 2026 at approximately 1.86%, which translates into an additional \$334,565 in property tax revenue. This is the lowest % assessment growth in the past 6 years. Staff are aware of several developments which are planned to be constructed over the next few years, which will increase our assessment growth. The Township's assessment growth history can be seen in the graph below (it should be highlighted that 2023 was a catch-up year for MPAC hence the significant increase that year):

