



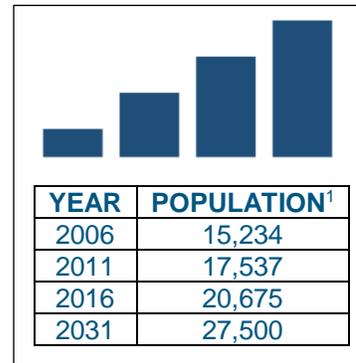
Official Plan Review

An Official Plan directs where and how to grow...

The preparation of a new Official Plan for Wasaga Beach is an opportunity to set new directions for planning and managing the continued growth of the community. By describing the community’s long-term vision and related goals and policies for directing land use and development, an Official Plan helps to promote positive community growth and improvement. An Official Plan is also a legal document and decision-making tool for Town Council: under the Planning Act, all by-laws passed, and all public works undertaken by the Town must conform to the Official Plan.

In the year 2031, Wasaga Beach...

The year 2031 is the required planning horizon for communities in Simcoe County. Related forecasts of future population and employment have been set for Wasaga Beach by the Province and the County. The Town is required to use these forecasts for determining how much land can be designated for the development of new housing, businesses and other urban development.



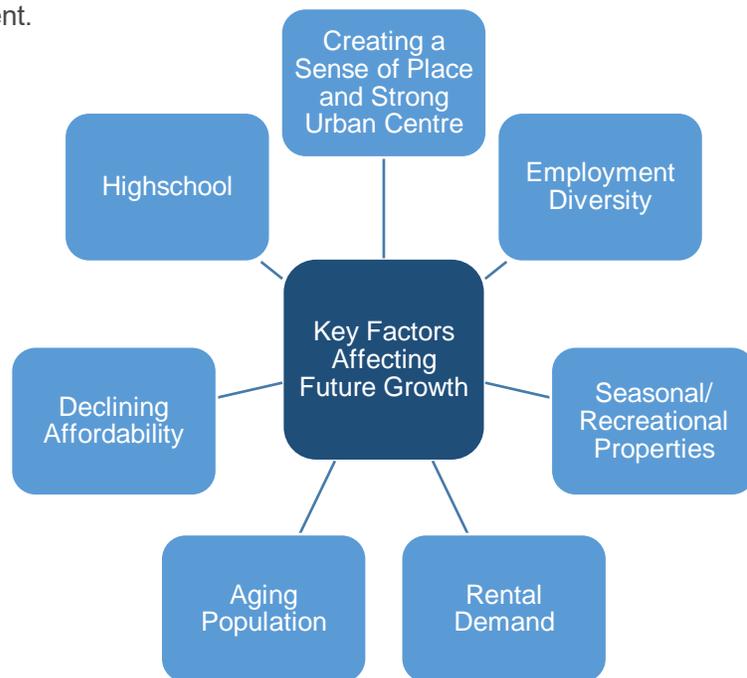
Wasaga Beach has more than tripled in population over the past 25 years going back to 1991.¹ With continued growth and development expected to the year 2031 and beyond, Wasaga Beach is shifting from a community based primarily on tourism to a more balanced and complete community.

A renewed vision for the community will reshape the direction for future growth to focus development within nodes and corridors, with particular focus on the redevelopment of the downtown area. These areas are important locations for intensification as well as public and private investment.

Market opportunities...

In addition to planning for future growth based on the population and employment forecasts and associated policies, there are also several other factors that may influence housing and employment growth in Wasaga Beach, including market factors.

Key factors influencing future growth in Wasaga Beach have been identified and assessed through a housing and market opportunities analysis. The analysis provides important local context that will help to shape the directions of the new Official Plan.

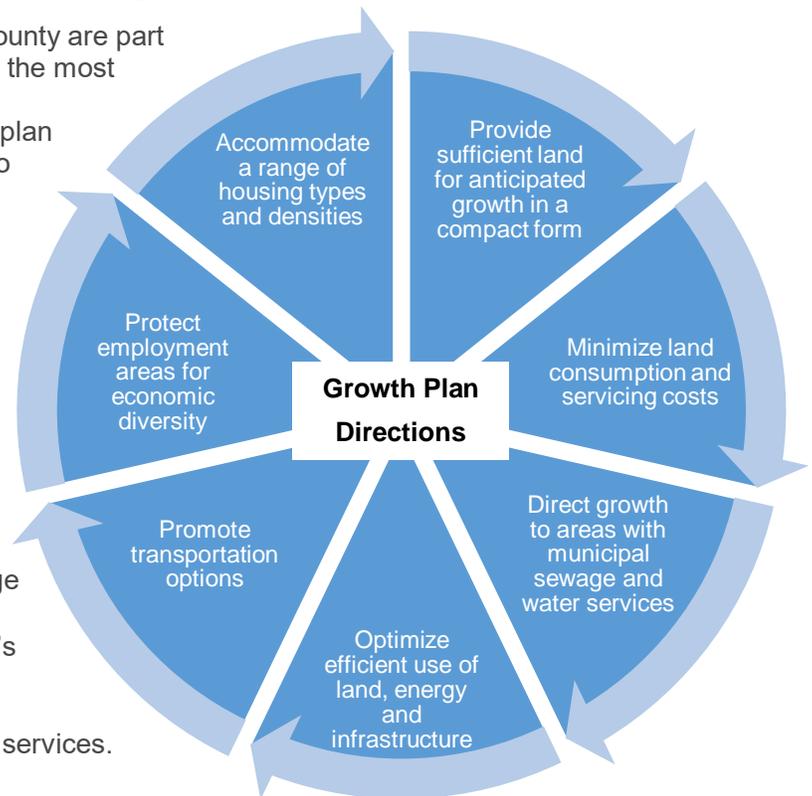


¹ Statistics Canada, 1991, 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census. 2031 Forecast from the County of Simcoe Official Plan, 2008.

Plans for Simcoe County and the Greater Golden Horseshoe...

Wasaga Beach and the rest of Simcoe County are part of the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), the most populated growth region in Canada. All municipalities in the GGH are required to plan for urban growth in a way that conforms to the Provincial Growth Plan. The Town's Official Plan is also required to conform with the Simcoe County Official Plan, which provides policies for:

- Directing most growth to settlement areas (including Wasaga Beach), where it can be serviced;
- Enabling and managing resource-based development, including tourism and recreation;
- Developing complete communities with diversified economies and a range of housing options;
- Protecting and enhancing the County's natural and cultural heritage;
- Efficiently using land, infrastructure, transportation and other facilities and services.



Providing sufficient land for future growth...

To determine if there is enough land designated and available to accommodate future housing, employment and other urban land uses, a land inventory has been compiled and mapped.

Housing Forecast and Residential Land Inventory

The residential land inventory is sufficient to accommodate future housing needs based on the population forecast to the year 2031. However, it is expected that the population forecast will be achieved prior to the year 2031 based on historic growth rates and residential development activity. An alternative population forecast has been considered and it was determined that the land supply is also sufficient to accommodate this increase.

Several factors have been identified that could influence the timing and availability for development of the residential land supply and the total residential land need, including: the mix and density of housing; the conversion of existing seasonal residences and proportion of future housing that may be built and/or occupied seasonally; and, the timing and number of existing vacant lots in residential neighbourhoods that might be made available for new housing in the future when many of these lots have remained undeveloped for many years.

Employment Land Inventory

The 2031 employment forecast of 3,500 jobs identified for Wasaga Beach in the Growth Plan and Simcoe County Official Plan has already been exceeded. A higher 2031 employment forecast of 5,402 jobs has been used to evaluate the future land needs. The employment forecast is divided into three categories, including population-related employment (e.g. commercial, services, education, health care), employment-land employment (e.g. industrial) and rural-based employment. Wasaga Beach is forecast to continue to primarily have population-related employment, with some employment-land employment, and no rural-based employment. Based on the forecast and land inventory analysis, there is sufficient land designed for future employment growth.

Re-designation / re-positioning of certain land for residential, tourism, commercial and employment land uses should be considered to optimize the land inventory towards complete community development and achieving related planning objectives and targets.

Setting targets for future growth...

Like the other urban areas in the GGH, Wasaga Beach is required to plan for and expected to achieve targets for the location and form of future development. These targets are intended to focus growth and development within the existing built-up area of urban communities, and to ensure outward urban growth is compact, to:

- Create mixed use, complete communities with a range of housing and diversity of jobs;
- Defer and minimize urban expansion needs;
- Protect agricultural land and other resources and the natural environment;
- Optimize the use and efficiency of infrastructure; and,
- Support transportation choices including walking, cycling and transit systems.

Through its Official Plan, the Town is required to set targets and develop policies and strategies for intensification within the existing built-up area of the community, and to ensure that development in new growth areas is compact and efficient.

Intensification Targets

The *intensification target* is a measurement of the proportion of all new housing that is to be located within the defined built-up area. The current intensification target for Wasaga Beach is 20% and is required to increase to 50% for the years 2022 to 2031 unless an alternative target is assigned by the County with the approval of the Province.

An alternative intensification target in the range of 30% to 35% should be considered to the year 2031. The establishment of an appropriate alternative intensification target for Wasaga Beach for the period 2031 to 2041 should also be addressed through the next County municipal comprehensive review based on further review of the development capacity within the identified nodes and corridors to determine if a target of 35% to 40% could be met for that period.

Forms of Intensification	
<i>Infilling and development of existing vacant lands</i>	
<i>Building expansion or conversion</i>	
<i>Redevelopment</i>	

Greenfield Density Targets

The *greenfield density target* is a measure of the total number of residents and jobs in new development areas, divided by the total greenfield land area, and is expressed as residents and jobs per hectare. Certain lands that are undevelopable, such as natural heritage and hazards lands, are excluded. The current target for Wasaga Beach is 32 people and jobs per hectare and this is required to increase to 80 unless an alternative target is assigned by the County with Provincial approval. The new target would require primarily multi-storey apartments, offices, and mixed-use buildings.

Based on the land inventory analysis, the current greenfield density target of 32 people and jobs per hectare can be achieved and this target should be maintained as an appropriate alternative target. Related directions to consider in the new Official Plan include: increasing density provisions and broadening housing mix to include more multi-unit housing types on vacant designated lands; future redevelopment and intensification of existing greenfield developments; and, the introduction of more secondary dwelling units and/or the conversion of seasonal dwellings to permanent dwellings.

Key growth management directions for the new Official Plan...

The growth management approach and policies of new Official Plan for the Town of Wasaga Beach should:

- ▶ Apply the 2031 planning horizon, and establish related population and housing forecasts that acknowledge that the 2031 forecasts for Wasaga Beach identified in the Growth Plan and the Simcoe County Official Plan have been or will be exceeded;
- ▶ Set targets for intensification and greenfield density, and establish policies for how these targets are to be measured and achieved over time, which should include the current 20% intensification target and 32 people and jobs per hectare greenfield density target, and potential phasing-in of an increased intensification target for the period 2022-2031;
- ▶ Incorporate the Downtown plan and policies and the nodes and corridors framework, identify these areas as priority locations for (re)development, intensification, mixed use and identify more detailed phasing, transportation, infrastructure and design considerations;
- ▶ Provide for greater opportunities for medium and high density development in specific areas where amenities, transportation and the surrounding context is appropriate;
- ▶ Encourage compact, mixed-use development in appropriate locations, such as the nodes and corridors, and provide guidelines for the transition of development from higher density uses that interface with existing low density neighbourhoods;
- ▶ Include a Community Structure Plan that delineates: the built-up area; nodes and corridors; the greenfield areas; and, rural lands;
- ▶ Provide for a range and mix of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of current and future residents by prioritizing intensification within the built-up area, and establish appropriate residential land use designations and policies;
- ▶ Ensure a broad range of seniors housing and higher density housing options are available by broadening the range of permitted housing forms and ensuring these uses are strategically located close to necessary amenities;
- ▶ Provide direction for seasonal housing conversions to permanent dwellings and for monitoring potential impacts of conversions as well as new seasonally occupied dwellings on the achievement of the growth targets;
- ▶ Establish designations that promote a variety of employment opportunities and protect employment areas for a range of employment uses including technology, medical and health sciences, green industries, post-secondary institutions and waste-to-energy;
- ▶ Establish policies including and related to institutional and cultural facilities, recreational and leisure activities, the conservation and enhancement of natural heritage features, the avoidance of hazard lands and topics related to transportation and servicing;
- ▶ Revisit the extent and type of tourism designations and consider permitting residential, mixed use or other urban land uses, where it would help to support complete community development and achievement of growth targets;
- ▶ Encourage more year-round use by diversifying the housing types, demographics and jobs available.

Additional information and perspectives will be considered to fully round out the growth management approach and directions that will ultimately come together to shape the policy framework for the new Official Plan, including transportation and servicing information, the location and implications of natural heritage and hazard lands and other more general policy requirements, as well as further community engagement.