

**MUNICIPAL ELECTION KIT**  
**2018**  
**- GUELPH**





## 2018 MUNICIPAL ELECTION - GUELPH

On **October 22<sup>nd</sup>**, voters will head to the polls to determine City councillors, the Mayor, and school board trustees for the next four years. It is an important decision. Municipal Government actions affect the lives of Guelphites in many ways.

The Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination has prepared this Election Kit to help voters and candidates alike discuss important issues and deliberate on their electoral choices<sup>1</sup>.

### ABOUT THE POVERTY TASK FORCE

The Poverty Task Force (PTF) works collaboratively, informed by diverse voices of experience, to advocate for system and policy change to address the root causes of poverty.

The PTF is non-partisan and receives important funding from our municipal partners, the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. We recognize the role we can play in informing elected officials about local needs and priorities to influence policy and service design, delivery and evaluation. We also believe in communicating and educating to increase awareness, shift attitudes, and further priority issues, big ideas, specific policies, community needs, and aspirations. It is our hope that by highlighting these roles during elections, we can help support candidates and voters to be better informed about issues that impact those living in poverty, as well as potential solutions.

## CITY OF GUELPH GOVERNMENT

City Council consists of the Mayor and councillors, two from each of the City's 6 wards. Members of Council are elected by residents to a four-year term of office. The City of Guelph plays an important role in making decisions about city delivered services, such as roads and sidewalks, transit, waste, and culture and tourism. They also have a role in informing shared services and local boards, such as police, public health, and the library.

In 2018, the City of Guelph directed 11.2% of its budget to social services, overseen by the County of Wellington. Since Guelph is a single-tier, separated city, they are not responsible for directly delivering social services. Rather, that role falls to the County of Wellington, as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM). Under municipal leadership, CMSMs deliver Ontario Works, child care, and social housing. While the City of Guelph has a seat on the County of Wellington's Social Services Committee, they do not have a decision-making role.

### ABOUT THIS ELECTION KIT

This kit provides a general overview of the state of poverty in Guelph. We then zero in on two significant issues – decent work and livable incomes, and affordable housing. Here we put forward potential solutions and offer a tool to help facilitate conversations between voters and candidates. We've also shared some information about voting in our community and resources to help you learn more about the issues we work on. We also provide our contact information in the event that you want to learn more, have a conversation, or share your ideas with us.

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<sup>1</sup> This Election Kit is inspired by and adapted from existing guides, such as the Provincial Election Toolkit 2018, prepared by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition.

# POVERTY IN GUELPH

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## THE STATE OF POVERTY IN OUR COMMUNITY



### LIVABLE INCOMES & DECENT WORK

11% OF PEOPLE LIVING IN PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS IN GUELPH LIVE IN **POVERTY**

5.3% OF WORKING AGE INDIVIDUALS IN GUELPH ARE **WORKING POOR**

4.2% OF WORKING AGE INDIVIDUALS IN GUELPH ARE **UNEMPLOYED**

\$67,829 WAS THE **MEDIAN AFTER-TAX HOUSEHOLD INCOME** IN GUELPH. AN INDIVIDUAL ON **ONTARIO WORKS** RECEIVES \$8,652 PER YEAR.



### HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING

325 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING **HOMELESSNESS** IN GUELPH-WELLINGTON (81% IN GUELPH)

**RENTAL VACANCY RATE** IN GUELPH IS 1.2%

17% OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS IN GUELPH SPENT **50% OR MORE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON SHELTER**

7% OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS IN GUELPH ARE LIVING IN **OVERCROWDED** CONDITIONS



### FOOD INSECURITY

14% OF HOUSEHOLDS IN GUELPH-WELLINGTON-DUFFERIN EXPERIENCE **FOOD INSECURITY**

A FAMILY OF FOUR ON **ONTARIO WORKS** WOULD NEED TO SPEND **36%** OF THEIR INCOME ON FOOD TO AFFORD A **NUTRITIOUS DIET**, COMPARED TO **12%** FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR WITH A **MEDIAN INCOME**.

**STIGMA** WAS IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS THE #1 BARRIER TO ACCESSING EMERGENCY FOOD



### HEALTH INEQUITIES

RATES OF EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR **MENTAL HEALTH** CONCERNS AMONG 10 - 19 YEAR OLDS NEARLY **DOUBLED** BETWEEN 2009 - 2014 IN GUELPH

64% OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING **HOMELESSNESS** IN GUELPH-WELLINGTON REPORTED HAVING BOTH A **MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION** ISSUES

76% OF LOW INCOME ADULTS IN GUELPH REPORTED THEY CANNOT AFFORD REGULAR **ORAL HEALTH CARE**

**POVERTY**  
GUELPH & WELLINGTON TASK FORCE FOR  
**ELIMINATION**

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT:  
[WWW.GWPOVERTY.CA](http://WWW.GWPOVERTY.CA)



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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## INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN GUELPH

### 1) Commit to an annual investment of \$500,000 in the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund

The City of Guelph's Affordable Housing Reserve fund has provided property tax exemptions, property tax reclassifications, late Development Charge payments, and grants to offset Development Charges. This funding can help the City meet its affordable housing targets and address the needs of this community.

In 2017, the City invested \$100,000 in the Affordable Housing Reserve. In 2018, the City invested \$0.

### 2) Invest \$325,000 in the Affordable Housing Financial Incentives Program

In 2017, the City introduced the Affordable Housing Financial Incentives Program Framework to encourage the creation of new affordable housing developments within the city. It was expected that the program would create at least 30 permanent affordable housing units by the time it was up for review in 2022.

In 2018, the City chose not to invest just over \$320,000 in the program as part of the 2018 budget.

### 3) Work closely with all three levels of government to fund Permanent Supportive Housing in Guelph

Local research has identified a need for Permanent Supportive Housing to help end homelessness for those with complex needs. While the County of Wellington is responsible for delivering this type of housing, and funding typically comes from the provincial and federal governments, City of Guelph Council can play a role as a strong partner and advocate.

<p><b>1.2%</b> 3% is considered a healthy vacancy rate</p> <p><b>GUELPH RENTAL VACANCY RATE</b></p> 	<p><b>5,985</b></p> <p><b>GUELPH HOUSEHOLDS IN CORE HOUSING NEED</b></p> <p><i>A household is in core housing need if their dwelling is considered inadequate, unsuitable, or unaffordable, and they cannot afford alternative housing</i></p>	<p><b># OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN GUELPH-WELLINGTON</b></p> <p><b>325</b> <i>During a point-in-time count in April 2018.</i></p> 
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Urban Rental Market Survey Data: Vacancy Rates (October 2017). Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Available here: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/data-and-research/data-tables/urban-rental-market-survey-data-vacancy-rates>

Core Housing Need, 2016 Census (2016). Statistics Canada. Available here: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/chn-biml/index-eng.cfm>

Ellery, Randalin (May 2018). Everyone Counts: 2018 Guelph-Wellington Point in Time Count. Available here: <https://www.gwpoverty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Everyone-Counts-2018-Point-in-Time-Count.pdf>

#### SOCIAL HOUSING

As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager, the County of Wellington is responsible for administration and planning of social housing and homelessness programs for Guelph-Wellington.



#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

The City of Guelph has an Affordable Housing Strategy that supports a city-wide 30-per cent annual affordable housing target.



#### CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The Government of Ontario, Government of Canada, and County of Wellington have all made commitments to reducing chronic homelessness.



#### POVERTY GUELPH & WELLINGTON TASK FORCE FOR ELIMINATION

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT: [WWW.GWPOVERTY.CA](http://WWW.GWPOVERTY.CA)



# LIVABLE INCOMES & DECENT WORK

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## SUPPORT LIVABLE INCOMES & DECENT WORK

### 1) Commit to having the City of Guelph become a certified living wage employer

The Ontario Living Wage Network certifies employers who pay all direct and indirect employees the living wage rate for the region in which they operate. The living wage in Guelph-Wellington is \$16.50 per hour.

In 2016, City of Guelph Council passed a motion to support the principles of the living wage movement, but chose not to become a certified living wage employer.

### 2) Advocate for system and policy change to help low-income people achieve income security

The City of Guelph Council has unique opportunities to leverage community advocacy efforts. Specifically, Council can demonstrate support for low-income community members to achieve income security. This includes calling on Provincial and Federal Governments to implement adequate social assistance rates, fair working conditions, a \$15 minimum wage, and a basic income guarantee.

### 3) Determine eligibility to access the City's subsidy programs using the Low Income Measure

The City of Guelph currently uses the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) to determine eligibility for subsidy programs, including the affordable bus pass program. Using the Low-Income Measure would allow over 2000 more community members to access these programs.

In 2017, the City of Guelph reviewed changing the eligibility threshold, but ultimately chose to continue using LICO.



**GUELPH-WELLINGTON LIVING WAGE**

There are currently 30+ certified living wage employers in Guelph-Wellington, representing a variety of sectors.



**BILL 148**

In 2017, the Government of Ontario enacted Bill 148 to introduce changes to employment and labour laws. Not all changes have come into effect yet, including the \$15 minimum wage.



**FEE ASSISTANCE & FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES**

The City of Guelph offers fee assistance and financial subsidies for people living on low income, including the affordable bus pass program, fee assistance in recreation, and animal/pet licensing.



**POVERTY ELIMINATION**  
GUELPH & WELLINGTON TASK FORCE FOR  
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# CANDIDATES' REPORT CARD

ATTEND ALL CANDIDATES' MEETINGS, OR CALL YOUR CANDIDATES DIRECTLY AND ASK THESE QUESTIONS.

		Knowledge of Issue (✓)	Candidate Response
<b>ASK YOUR CANDIDATE</b>	<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>		
	Will you support an annual investment of \$500,000 in the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund?		
	Will you support an investment of \$325,000 in the Affordable Housing Financial Incentives Program?		
	How will you work closely with all three levels of government to fund Permanent Supportive Housing in Guelph?		
	<b>LIVEABLE INCOMES &amp; DECENT WORK</b>		
	Will you champion having the City of Guelph become a certified living wage employer?		
	How will you advocate for system and policy change to help low-income people achieve income security?		
	Will you advocate for using the Low Income Measure (LIM) to determine eligibility to access the City's subsidy programs?		
	<b>FOOD INSECURITY</b>		
	How will you work to address the needs of those experiencing household food insecurity? ( <i>Household food insecurity is commonly defined as inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints</i> )		
	<b>HEALTH INEQUITIES</b>		
	How will you work to address health inequities for families and individuals living in poverty?		

## GENERAL VOTING RESOURCES

Vote Guelph is an amazing website with resources for voters. You can check to see if you're on the voter's list, add yourself to the voter's list, or update your information. You can also find out:

- What ward you're in
- Voting locations
- Key dates
- Acceptable ID to vote

You'll also find a list of registered candidates and frequently asked questions about third party advertising.

### **VOTE.GUELPH.CA**

If you'd prefer to learn this information in person, you can visit City Hall at 1 Carden Street or give them a call 519-837-5625.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PTF & PRIORITY ISSUES

The PTF believes in an evidence-informed approach. We regularly conduct community-based research to enhance shared understandings of complex issues and to inform our action and advocacy efforts.

You can find LOTS of resources on our website:

### **GWPOVERTY.CA**

In particular, we encourage you to check out the following reports that are on our website:

- 2018 Guelph-Wellington Homelessness Point-in-Time Count
- The Impact of Working Poverty on Health & Wellbeing in Guelph-Wellington
- Using Emergency Food Services in Guelph-Wellington
- Summary Report: What we know about the Need for Crisis Stabilization



[www.gwpoverty.ca](http://www.gwpoverty.ca)

1-800-265-7293 ext. 4359

[info@gwpoverty.ca](mailto:info@gwpoverty.ca)