



Housing Occupancy Trends, 1996-2016

Date: November 21, 2019

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report summarizes the attached bulletin, the third in a series of housing bulletins to support Official Plan Reviews. The bulletin examines the influence of demographic, social and market trends on housing occupancy in Toronto between 1996 and 2016. Data from the Census of Population and the National Household Survey of Statistics Canada are the basis of an in-depth analysis of the underlying factors that affect housing occupancy in the city of Toronto and its trends over time.

Toronto's population is forecasted to grow significantly in the coming years. This research provides background information to support planning for the future housing needs of all Toronto households.

Toronto's population grew by 14.5% or 346,150 people between 1996 and 2016 and is on track to achieve the forecasted population of 3.4 million people by 2041 as anticipated by the Official Plan and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019. The Growth Plan forecasts are currently under review by the Province and the forecasts for Toronto may be revised upward. Over the 20-year period to 2016, the number of Toronto households grew by 23.2%, faster than the growth rate of the population, adding 209,345 households to the city. This growth hints at the varied and changing demographic and social trends that reflect how people are occupying housing in Toronto. Housing occupancy trends will continue to evolve with ongoing changes to the age structure of the population, household composition, housing supply and affordability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. The Planning and Housing Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

COMMENTS

- In 2016, there were a total of 1,112,930 households in Toronto, an increase from 903,585 in 1996. This reflects a growth rate of 23.2% and 209,345 households.
- The number of households living in mid/high-rise apartments (apartment units in buildings with 5 or more storeys, whether rental or condominium) reached 493,135 households in 2016, nearly 161,205 more than in 1996. Between 1996 and 2016, this dwelling type accounted for 77.0% of all the newly occupied units.
- In 1997, the average size of a condominium apartment unit was 1,144 square feet. By 2017 the average size had fallen to 665 square feet. Over half of all mid/high-rise units built between 2006 and 2016 were one-bedroom units.
- Between 1996 and 2016, there was a substantial increase in occupancy of mid/high-rise units. In 2016, there were as many households aged 15-34 as households aged 50-69 living in mid/high-rise units.
- The growth rate of households whose primary household maintainer was between the ages of 50-69 years increased by 139,940 households. Due to their number and their large proportion of all households, housing decisions by this group are having a profound effect on housing demand.
- The number of lone-parent families and couples with children living in mid/high-rise units has increased. In 2016, there were 13,645 lone-parent families and 14,970 more couples with children living in high-rises than there were 20 years earlier. This is important as larger households tend to require units with more bedrooms or units with additional living space.
- Non-family households represent a growing share of all household types. The number of non-family households increased from 312,345 to 428,370 households. One-person households now make nearly one third of all households in Toronto.
- The average size of Toronto households continues to decline. In 1996, Toronto had an average of 2.60 persons per household (PPH). By 2016, it had fallen to 2.42 PPH. However, the overall trend contains more complex changes.
- The average household size in mid/high-rise units is smaller in more recently built units, reflecting the smaller physical size of the newer units. The opposite is true of household sizes in houses and low-rise units where the household size is larger in the more recently built units. These trends are predominantly observed in family

households. The average size of non-family households did not vary regardless of when the units were built.

- The decline in average PPH in mid/high-rise apartments is anticipated to level off. Overall, the average number of persons per household will not decline in perpetuity and can be expected to rise in neighbourhoods where ground-related housing turns over from senior households to younger families.
- While the total number of renter and owner households increased between 1996 and 2016, owner households increased three times as much. However, this trend reversed between 2011 and 2016. Most of the increase in renter households occurred in rented condominium units rather than in purpose-built rental units.
- In 2016, 36.6% of all Toronto households spent more than 30% or more of their income on shelter costs.

Toronto's continued population growth combined with the evolution of housing types and household composition will lead to continuing changes in the city's housing supply, demand and occupancy rates. The demand for different types of housing will be affected by the interplay of demographic change and social trends such as the timing of household formation and household composition, as well as changes in housing supply and the interaction between supply, price and affordability. Unaffordability remains a pressing issue.

Ongoing monitoring of household occupancy trends provides background information to support the continued monitoring of Official Plan policies. This ensures that policies are in place to support the housing needs of future Toronto households.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Housing Occupancy Trends, 1996-2016