

Focus On: Downtown and Central Waterfront

Downtown including the *Central Waterfront* is Toronto's **primary centre of economic, cultural, and residential activity**. The City's [Official Plan](#) directs significant growth to this area to reinforce its role as Toronto's main employment and service hub, supported by the highest levels of transit access. Development is intended to accommodate substantial residential and job growth while enhancing the public realm, ensuring livability, and improving access to parks, community services and the waterfront.

***Downtown and the Central waterfront* is one of the most prominent locations for development activity in the city, despite only occupying roughly 3% of the city's land area.** In

the 2025 Development Pipeline, there are 335 projects proposed representing 169,146 residential units, and 2,464,181 square metres of non-residential gross floor area (GFA). Approximately one in five proposed units city-wide are located in the *Downtown and Central Waterfront* area. Of the 335 projects, 69% have received at least one Planning approval, indicating that a large volume of development activity in the area is progressing through the approvals process.

The average amount of proposed GFA in development projects *Downtown* is similar to the average across other Growth Areas. However, the sites *Downtown* that are being developed are often much smaller. This development pattern facilitates

notable growth in a small portion of the city. **The average Floor Space Index (FSI) in projects proposed *Downtown* is 13.7, which is more than double the average FSI of projects proposed citywide (6.7).**

Condominium continues to be the predominant tenure of proposed development *Downtown*, representing 74% of proposed residential units. The 2025 Development Pipeline reveals over 5,000 additional purpose-built rental units when compared to 2024, representing a 3% increase of all proposed units in the area. The unit mix in the area remains skewed towards smaller units, with one-bedroom and studio units accounting for 63% of proposed units in the area.

Figure 1: Proposed Development Projects, Residential Units, and Non-Residential GFA within Downtown and Central Waterfront, as Identified in Toronto's Official Plan

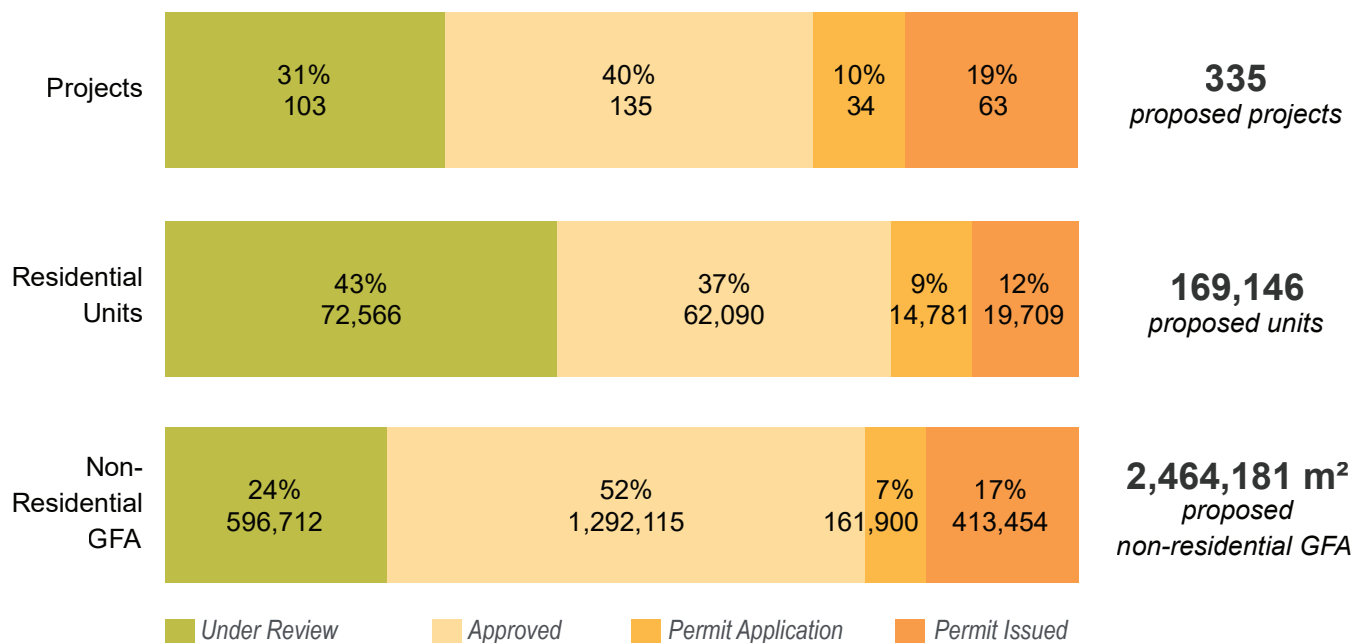
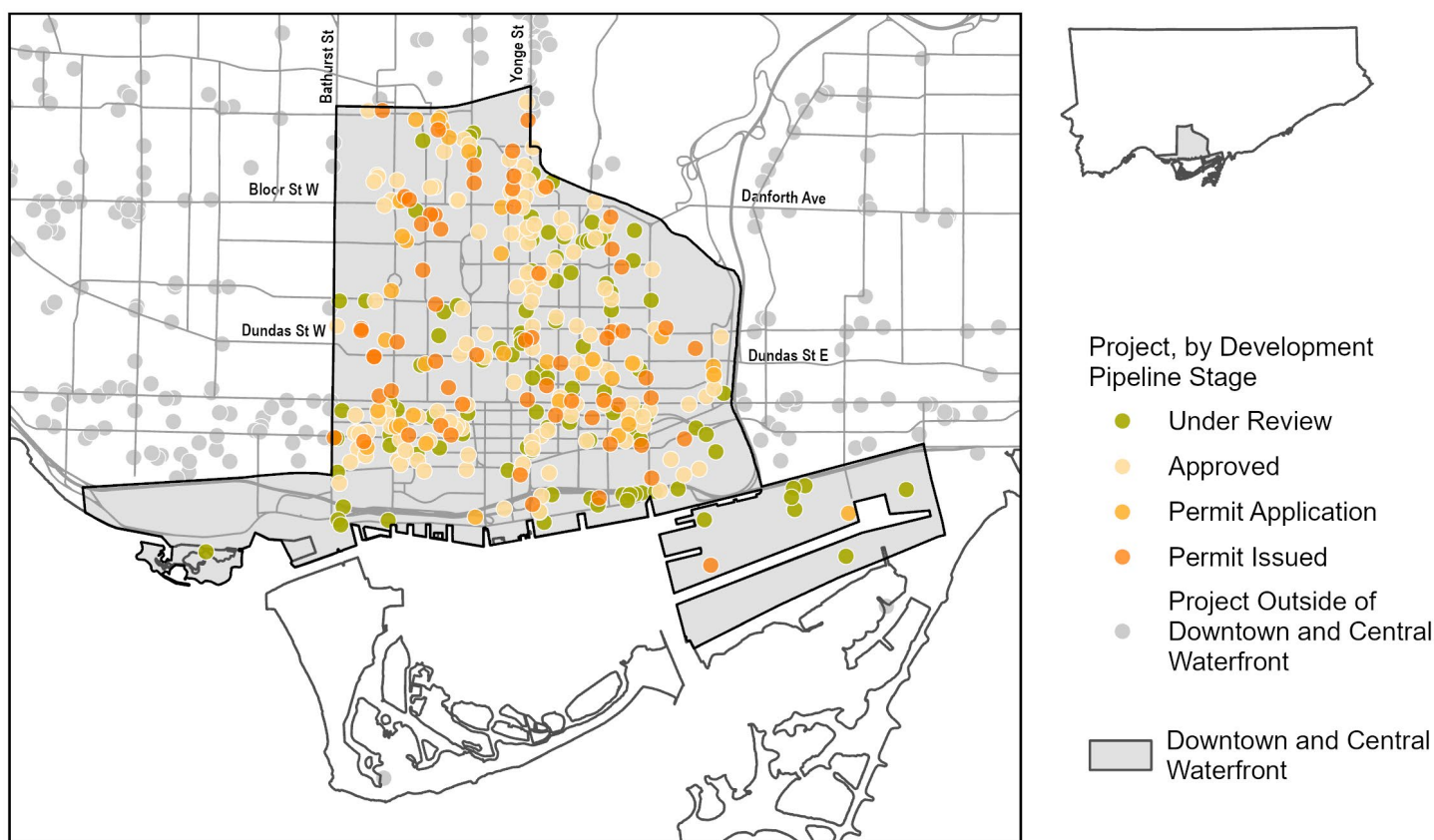


Figure 2: Proposed Development Projects in Downtown and Central Waterfront



The overall amount of non-residential GFA proposed in the Downtown and Central Waterfront area has declined 19% since 2024, similar to citywide trends. While office uses remain the most frequently proposed type of non-residential development in the area, institutional GFA has increased despite the overall decline in the number of non-residential projects, which reflects the growing average size of institutional proposals.

The *Downtown and the Central Waterfront* area continues to play a critical role in accommodating Toronto's growth. **Projects proposed Downtown pair large amounts of non-residential GFA with high numbers of proposed units to facilitate intense but appropriate development in a small, but highly connected and serviced area of the city.**

Looking ahead, major city-building initiatives such as the [Port Lands Planning Framework](#) are expected to further transform the Central Waterfront, creating new mixed-use communities, employment opportunities, parks, and waterfront access. As these projects advance alongside the existing development pipeline, *Downtown and Central Waterfront* will remain important to Toronto's long-term growth and evolution.



Read more in the Development Activity Bulletin

This appendix is part of the [Development Activity Bulletin 2025](#), an annual research publication that tracks urban growth and development trends to monitor Official Plan policies.

The Bulletin reports on the [Development Pipeline](#), an analytical dataset that captures a city-wide picture of proposed and recently built development projects in Toronto.

An [interactive dashboard](#) is also available online, offering regularly updated data and the ability to explore the Development Pipeline using custom filters and geography.