

SIGN POSTS 2008



We actively and impartially participate in building and strengthening our community through social change, innovation, research, analysis and facilitation.

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GAUGING COMMUNITY TRENDS IN CAMBRIDGE AND NORTH DUMFRIES

The Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries (SPC-CND) is pleased to present the third publication of *Sign Posts*, with the aim of highlighting local trends and initiating dialogue surrounding community issues.

The City of Cambridge and the Township of North Dumfries are exciting and dynamic places to live and work. The active economy and growing business community combined with the strong sense of neighbourhood, allows for a unique balance that provides a sense of comfort to those who reside and work here. Due to national changes on a social, economic and cultural scale, tremendous transformations have been occurring within our communities.

The aim of this report is to demonstrate the changes, and ongoing trends, that are affecting the condition and well-being of our residents.

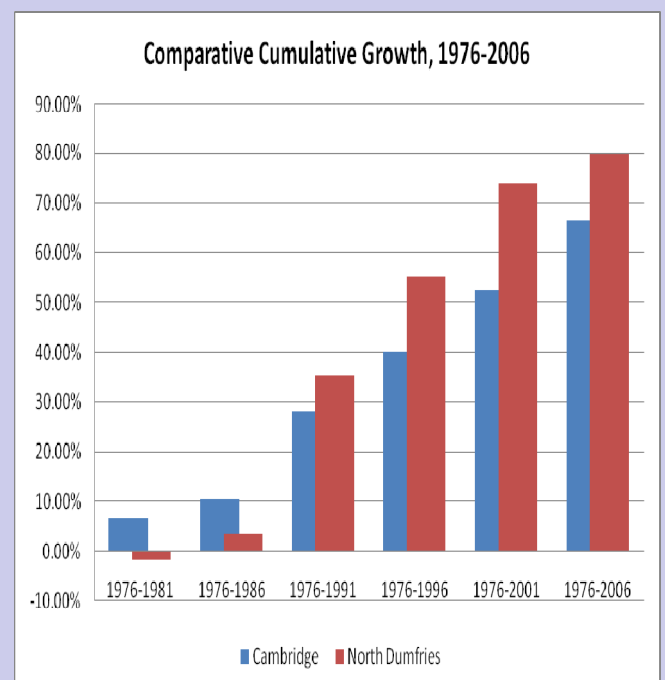
Please note that the data presented in *Sign Posts* is obtained from the 2008 Community Trends Report. For a complete copy of *Community Trends in Cambridge and North Dumfries 2008*, and other publications, on issues pertaining to our community, visit our website at: www.socialplanningcouncil-cnd.org



Population

Latest Data Confirms Growth Projections

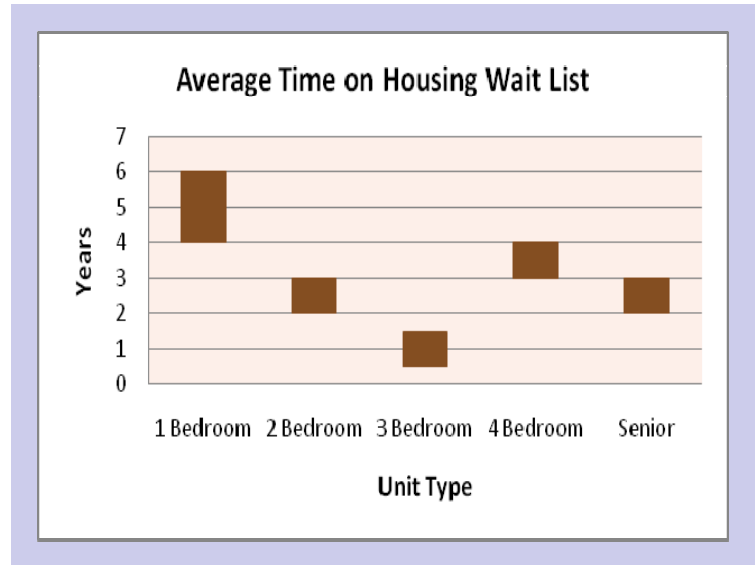
- 2006 census data shows that Cambridge and North Dumfries' combined population has reached 129,434, an increase of 8.6% since 2001. This area is expected to grow at a much higher rate than either the province or the country as a whole.
- Both Cambridge and North Dumfries confirm earlier forecasts of an aging population; the median age for Cambridge between 2001 and 2006 has risen from 35.2 to 36.4 and North Dumfries from 36.3 to 39.0. Both communities are projected to continue to expand their population in the 60-plus age group.
- Cambridge continues to reflect interesting changes in ethnicity and foreign language composition. In 2006, 3.3% of its population was new immigrants up from 2.4% in 2001. While Portuguese, German, Spanish and Polish remain the major non-official languages Punjabi has emerged as a significant addition.



Housing

Healthy Vacancy Rate but Pressures and Demands Remain

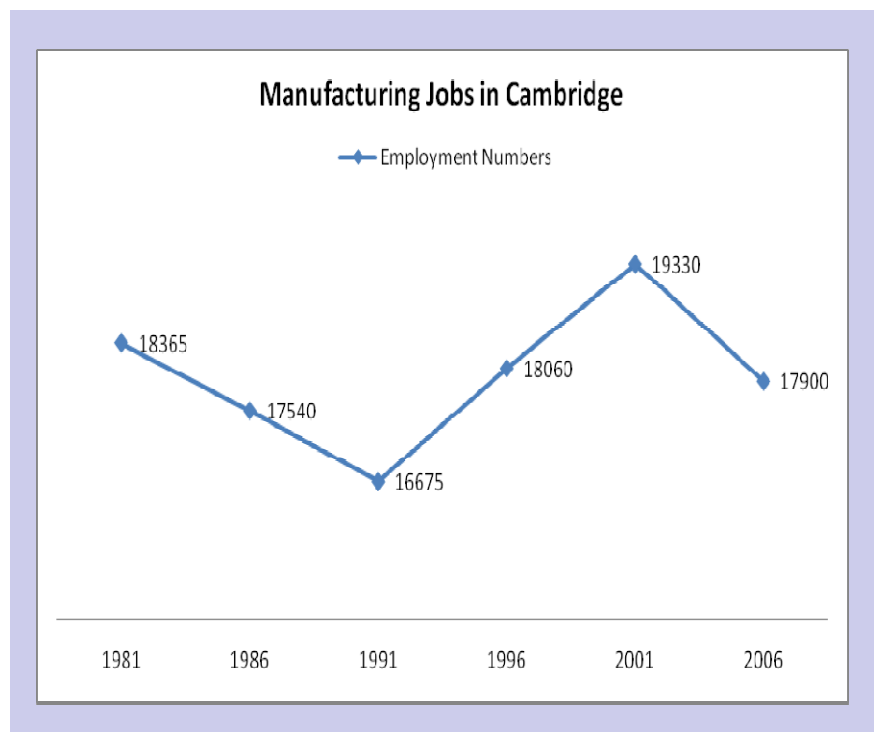
- ▣ Cambridge has a vacancy rate of 3.6 per cent. It is generally accepted that a rate of 3 per cent or greater indicates a healthy balance between supply and demand for rental accommodation.
- ▣ The greatest demand for subsidized housing is for one-bedroom units, where the average wait time is 4-6 years. Partly due to the growing number of immigrant families, there is an increased demand for four-bedroom units where the wait time is 3-4 years.
- ▣ There is a significant need in the community to expand emergency shelter assistance and this is particularly reflected in the increase in the number of youth accessing the system.



Income

A Healthy Economy Facing Provincial Challenges

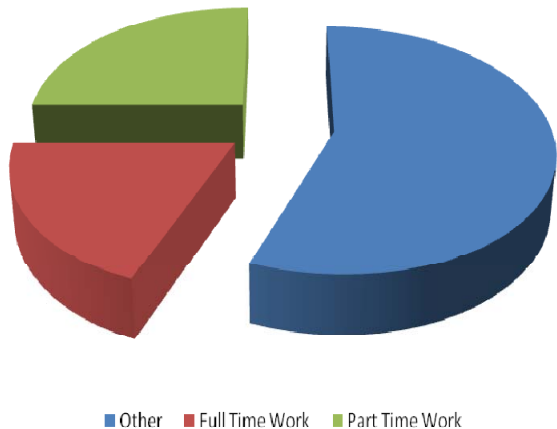
- ▣ Cambridge contributed 25% of Waterloo Region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the year 2006. The Region has experienced a GDP growth of 121% in the period 1991-2007 and Cambridge's contribution continues to be consistent.
- ▣ In common with the Region as a whole and the Province, Cambridge has experienced a significant loss of manufacturing jobs in recent years.
- ▣ Young people under the age of 18 are more likely to be in the lowest income groups with 12.3% meeting this criterion before tax and 9.8% after tax.



Food Security

Caring Community Meets Its Members Needs Despite Enormous and Continuing Pressures and Exponentially Growing Numbers

Source of Income of Food Bank Users

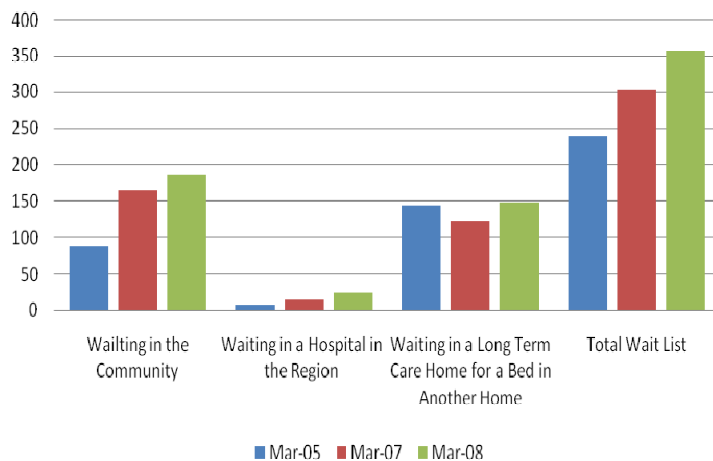


- ▣ The years between 2001 and 2006 have shown an increase of 170% in the provision of food hampers to the community. This reflects a more broad-based usage of food support services.
- ▣ As at 2006, 20% of Food Bank users had full time employment which is clearly indicative of incomes inadequate to provide sufficient food requirements.
- ▣ In North Dumfries there has been a 527% increase in the total number of food requests between 2000 –2007.

Health

Despite Physician Recruitment Successes and New Health Centres, Demand for Services Still Outstrips Supply

Long Term Care Waiting List



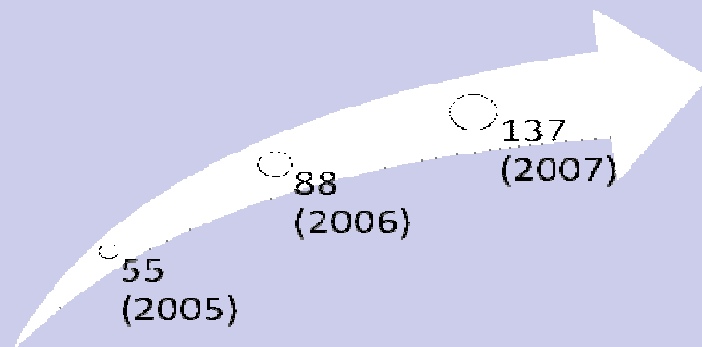
- ▣ There continues to be a shortage of family physicians. The anticipated retirement of 50 per cent of the community's family physicians in the next five years will further exacerbate the shortages.
- ▣ Wait times for all levels of service (emergency, long term care, family doctors) continue to increase. The total wait list at the local Community Care Access Centre has increased by 22% since 2007.
- ▣ There is a growing demand for mental health services in the community. During the year 2007-2008 the Cambridge branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association had 1313 contacts which reflects the first increase in three years.

Safety

Cambridge and North Dumfries is Statistically Safer than Other Similar Communities Nationally

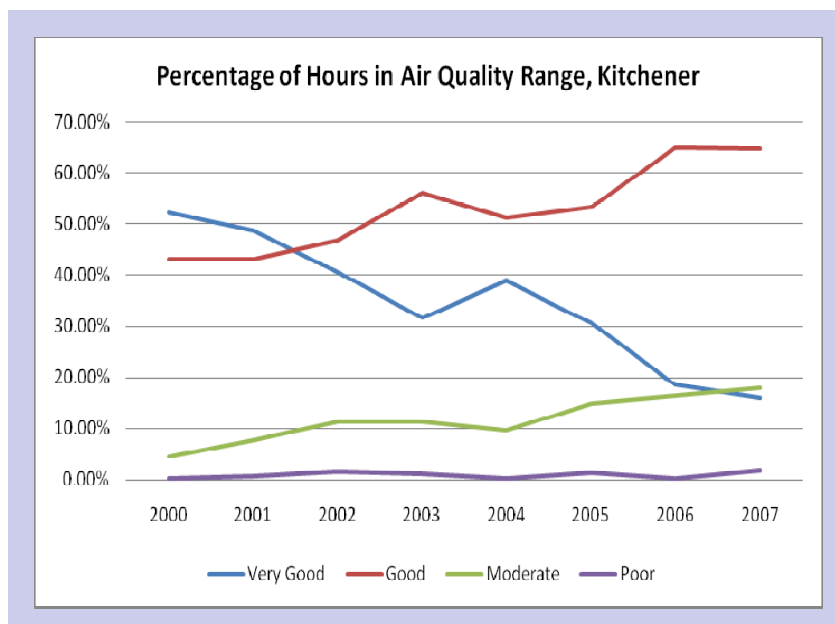
- ▣ Total criminal offences in the community remain steady and below the national average.
- ▣ 96% of Cambridge respondents to Statistics Canada's 2004 General Social Survey stated that they were satisfied with their personal safety.
- ▣ There has been a dramatic increase in the number of reported incidents of elder abuse in Waterloo Region from 55 in 2005 to 137 in 2007.

Elder Abuse Response Team Investigations



Environment

A Mixed Bag of Successes and Ongoing Areas of Concern



- ▣ Air quality remains a challenge with the number of days with poor air quality increasing by 300% between 2006 and 2007.
- ▣ A decrease in Cambridge water consumption in the period 2006 – 2007 suggests that recent limits and bans on watering have had a positive effect.
- ▣ Public transit ridership in Cambridge has continued to grow although at a slower rate than during the 2005 – 2006 period.