

# Bradford pegged as second-fastest growing municipality in Ontario



Mayor Rob Kefer in Bradford's downtown core on Holland and Barrie streets symbolizing the growth of the community on recent information from Stats Can, rating BWG as the second-fastest growing community in Ontario. - Susie Kockerscheidt/Metroland

It's not difficult to see just how quickly Bradford West Gwillimbury has grown.

But you may not have realized it's at a record pace.

Statistics Canada recently released its 2016 census package, revealing that BWG has experienced 25.8 per cent growth over five years and listing our community as the second-fastest growing municipality in Ontario.

Among municipalities with at least 5,000 residents, BWG's population increased from 28,077 people in 2011 to 35,325 in 2016 – putting it only second to Milton and sitting 11th for all of Canada behind municipalities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Quebec.

But the expansive growth comes as no surprise to town officials. The statistics steadily follow the town's Official Plan, which estimates that the municipality will accommodate 50,500 residents by 2031.

"The past several years have presented a busy but exciting time for our town," said Mayor Rob Kefer.

"Our neighbourhoods are growing, we have new and expanding businesses, new parks and recreation and our schools are bustling."

While intensifying services into new neighbourhoods, the town has also invested in maintaining and rehabilitating older, established neighbourhoods including parks, roads and other infrastructure.

Ryan Windle, manager of community planning, says BWG has become an appealing spot to not only new residents, but businesses and developers as well.

"First and foremost, it's an attractive community and more affordable than most of our neighbours to the south. The location is ideal. It combines wide, open rural spaces with a full range of urban amenities and offers easy access to Hwy. 400 for both residents and industry."

A second major contributor to the growth, he adds, is the preparations that the town has made in order for it to happen.

"We continue to build the infrastructure necessary for both residential and business development and make other forward-looking decisions intended to make the community move-in ready."

Windle and other senior staff expect the growth to continue within BWG at a strong rate, as the town proceeds to work on servicing the industrial area near Hwy. 400, which is expected to bring more jobs to the community.

Plans are also in the works with Simcoe County to provide a wider range of housing, including affordable and seniors' housing, which will enhance the community's appeal.

The town's Official Plan is in the midst of an update and review, to help BWG attain the goal of becoming a complete community.

## 2.0 THE DOWNTOWN BRADFORD BOUNDARY

What exactly is meant by "Downtown Bradford" differs based on the conversation. Figure 1 summarizes the two boundaries as well as the C1 Commercial Core Zone (See Appendix A for full Map). The designated Commercial Core lands generally front onto Holland Street between Thornton Avenue in the west and Dissette Street in the east, and include Holland Court. The second boundary, shown as a dashed, orange line, is the boundary from the Downtown Bradford Community Improvement Plan (DBCIP). The DBCIP boundary includes all aforementioned streets as well as the properties fronting on and identified within;

- Holland Street from Professor Day Drive in the West to Dissette Street in the East;
- John Street West and John Street East;
- Bridge Street to Canal Road; and,
- Barrie Street to Queen Street in the north and Simcoe Road to Thomas Street in the South

The Commercial Core (C1) Zone from Zoning By-law 2010-050 includes additional lands on the north side of John Street and along Barrie Street.

