



# Enhancing Municipal Capacity to Support Agriculture in the Greenbelt



Possibility grows here.

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Enhancing Municipal Capacity to Support Agriculture in the Greenbelt  
**Prepared by Dr. Wayne J. Caldwell, Elise Geschiere, Emily Sousa, and Regan Zink**  
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### **Land Acknowledgement**

Since time immemorial the Indigenous peoples were self-reliant and well provided for through their own ingenuity and use of the gifts of the land, living in harmony with the balance of nature.

We acknowledge that the land we meet on and strive to protect is the territory of the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee peoples but now is home to many diverse First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples.

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- 25 - Growing Close to Home: Creating Complete Rural Communities
- 26 - Farmers Expanding Southern Ontario's Fruit and Vegetable Sector
- 27 - Enhancing Municipal Capacity to Support Agriculture in the Greenbelt



**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary ..... 7

1 Introduction ..... 11

    1.1 Understanding Municipal Capacity ..... 12

2 Methodology ..... 15

3 Findings and Discussion ..... 19

    3.1 Issues in Agriculture ..... 19

    3.2 Measuring Municipal Capacity ..... 23

    3.3 Trends in Municipal Capacity ..... 35

4 Opportunities for Building Capacity ..... 49

Appendix A - Municipalities Included in Study Area ..... 57

Appendix B - Individual Municipality Summaries ..... 59

References ..... 94





# Executive Summary

A thriving agricultural industry depends on the knowledge and support provided by municipal governments. Municipal staff need to have the capacity (expertise and time) to effectively respond to new and emerging opportunities and challenges facing agriculture, such as climate change, cannabis production, and on-farm diversified uses. It is equally important that municipal elected officials understand the needs of agriculture and are well-positioned to make timely, relevant decisions in support of Ontario's agricultural industry and all other systems on which it depends.

This report describes the factors impacting the capacity of the 66 upper-, single- and lower-tier municipalities in Ontario's Greenbelt to respond to emerging and evolving agricultural and agri-food issues. For purposes of this analysis, municipal capacity is described as the ability to use internal and external resources, available formally or informally, at both government and community levels, to respond to agricultural and agri-food priorities effectively. Capacity can be measured using both quantitative (e.g., the number of planners in a department, or annual budgets) and qualitative indicators (e.g., staff experiences with dealing with agricultural and related issues). Findings from this research are drawn from a survey of elected officials and municipal planning departments, Financial Information Return (FIR) data, and semi-structured interviews with planners.



Key challenges identified by interviewees included inconsistent staff resources and budgets, expanding mandates, relationships with the agriculture community, and accessing relevant tools and/or training for agricultural and rural planning. This report suggests there are ten opportunities for municipal capacity-building that can help municipalities better respond to and support the agriculture and agri-food sector in the development of their policies, plans, and programs. These recommendations are of value to upper levels of government, municipalities including their staff, Councils, and local agricultural advisory committees, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, as well as the agricultural community.

### Opportunities for municipal capacity enhancement include the following:

**1. Municipal collaboration: Foster open dialogue across municipalities to promote a learning culture.** Planners often commented on the value of sharing and learning from best practices and lessons learned from other municipalities to respond to challenges in agricultural planning. Many municipalities are already communicating and networking informally, and expressed a desire to have this type of dialogue more readily available through formalized means (e.g., regular forum or meeting such as the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Working Group of municipal planners and economic development staff).

**2. Bridging academia and planning practice: Create linkages between relevant academic and other research and the experiences of practicing planners.** Planning schools across the country are undertaking timely and pertinent research that is relevant to municipalities and the issues they face. However, municipalities may not know that research of value to them is being undertaken and how to access it. There is an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between academia and planning practice (e.g., through a digital forum for sharing new academic research and/or identifying research needs of practitioners). The educational development of students and continued learning of practicing planners could be enriched by making these connections.

**3. Planning for institutional memory: Organize, provide access to, and proactively share knowledge.** Frequent staff turnover is a common challenge that hinders capacity in some municipalities. Recruiting and training new staff and building their skill and knowledge requires time and resources. Senior staff can help ensure that new staff are made aware of available information and resources, including expertise and past work.

**4. Intergovernmental collaboration: Recognize the value of provincial expertise and strengthen the relationship between municipal and provincial planners.** It is important that there are effective relationships between provincial and municipal governments so that municipalities can implement provincial policies effectively and efficiently. Planners expressed the value of provincial tools and guidelines, as well as the support of provincial staff to assist with policy interpretation and offer other feedback. Room for improvement always exists in the relationship between municipal and provincial governments.

**5. Professional development: Provide a wider variety of resources and learning opportunities for planners, including unstructured and ongoing ones.** Fact sheets, best practice guides, and virtual libraries of information (including webinars and workshops) all provide easy access to



information for municipal stakeholders. There is a long way to go to ensure all planning staff are aware of existing agricultural guidance documents, such as OMAFRA's Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas and Guidelines on Agricultural Impact Assessments.

**6. Awareness beyond planning staff: Foster understanding of the agricultural sector across municipal departments.** Planning departments are not solely responsible for understanding and responding to agricultural priorities. Other departments such as building services, engineering, economic development, as well as Council, make key decisions that affect the agricultural sector. Site visits to farms, building relationships with the agricultural community, and considering the entire agri-food chain in decision-making and delivery of services are equally important to other municipal stakeholders.

**7. A leadership role for OPPI: OPPI can do more to encourage and help planners to network and share agricultural planning information and resources.** Many planners indicated they often rely on materials disseminated by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) to stay up to date on planning policy, expand their knowledge, and monitor key issues affecting communities across Ontario. However, the respondents noted that OPPI content often neglects to include agricultural and rural content. The majority of municipalities in Ontario include agricultural and rural lands, and OPPI can help ensure planners have capacity in these areas.

**8. Include farmers in the process: Build relationships between municipal staff and the agricultural community and proactively engage farmers in planning processes.** Planning effectively for agriculture requires meaningful relationship-building with the farming community to deepen an understanding of implications of municipal decisions on the industry. This relationship-building includes engaging with farmers on a variety of planning matters and consulting the community outside of farmers' busiest months.

**9. Recognize the agri-food system: Consider all stakeholders and components involved from farm to fork.** Successful planning outcomes for agriculture requires considering and including the broader agri-food industry, including the production, processing, and distribution of agricultural goods and services. There is a shifting focus from agricultural planning to agricultural systems planning, requiring a systems-thinking approach to agriculture and agri-food from different economic, environmental, and social perspectives in policy, plan, and program design and implementation.

**10. Internal review of capacity: Revisit and reflect on your commitment to integrating agriculture into decision-making.** Municipalities that demonstrate a strong capacity to support agriculture do so through sufficient staff resources, policies and strategies developed with agricultural priorities in mind, relationships with the agricultural community, and Council's commitment or willingness to support the industry. Recognizing what your capacity could look like requires an internal municipal review or informal reflection on the municipality's strengths and assets, gaps in resources, and potential areas for improvement.



# Introduction

Ontario's agricultural sector has an important relationship with municipal government. Several local and provincial priorities, such as agricultural land preservation, agricultural and natural heritage systems planning, land use regulations around cannabis production, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, require the support of effective and successful policy implementation to promote a thriving agricultural economy. Provincial land use policies and plans, including the [Provincial Policy Statement](#), [Greenbelt Plan](#), [Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan](#), [Niagara Escarpment Plan](#), and [A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#) are primarily implemented through the policies, programs, plans, and actions of municipalities. Municipalities adopt Official Plans, pass by-laws, and develop budgets and expend funds to be consistent with and conform to provincial policies and initiatives, as well as respond to local needs and priorities. Additional policy documents guide municipalities on matters specific to agriculture and agricultural planning, including the [minimum distance separation formulae](#), the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)'s [Guidelines on Permitted Uses](#), and [Agricultural Systems Planning](#).

The ability and willingness of municipalities to effectively support the agricultural sector, however, depends on their capacity to do so. Local governments must ensure they have the capacity (e.g., staff, expertise, or local relationships) to respond to emerging agricultural issues and capitalize on new opportunities to enhance the agricultural system. It is equally important that municipal elected officials understand the needs of agriculture, demonstrate a willingness to support this essential sector, and make timely, relevant decisions that support the agricultural and rural economy. For instance, some municipalities may have staff who are trained in agricultural or rural planning and are thus better equipped with the knowledge, technical expertise, and experience to respond to agricultural issues on the ground. On the other hand, many municipalities do not have planners on staff that have agricultural-specific training or no in-house planning department at all. Some municipalities have agricultural advisory committees and allocate resources to facilitate positive relationship building with the agricultural community, while others do not. This report aims to address the question that is foundational to successfully responding to agricultural priorities and challenges at the local level: **what is the capacity and willingness of municipalities across the Greenbelt to respond to agricultural priorities?**



## 1.1 Understanding Municipal Capacity

Davidson (1988)'s research on 13 upper-tier planning departments in Ontario reveals two challenges impacting planning at the upper-tier level. First, the establishment of over-optimistic expectations (namely expanding mandates and responsibilities with limited growth in resources to meet these mandates), and second, inter-municipal jurisdictional challenges (particularly between upper and lower-tier municipalities). Additionally, Davidson identified several other issues impacting upper-tier capacity, including: outdated Official Plans; lack of attention on aspects of planning beyond land use; the relationship between local needs and provincial legislation; staffing numbers at the upper-tier and lower-tier; municipal restructuring; opportunities to diversify the significance of planning as it matters to rural communities and rural economic development; and the presence or absence of a planning department, as well as their associated budgets.

Ontario's municipalities and their planning departments have varying levels of capacity, and as a result, the ability to address current problems and implement related policy is varied. For example, Halton Region has significant municipal resources, yet has struggled at times with responding to agricultural issues related to natural heritage designations (Heck, 2018). Similarly, Perth County retains some of the most valuable and productive farmland in Canada and yet has grappled with matters on surplus farm lot severance policy (Simmons, 2016). At the same time, some municipalities have gone beyond the minimum provincially legislated responsibilities to establish a framework for planning that prioritizes and enhances agricultural protection and support. The Region of Waterloo's Official Plan, for instance, includes additional agricultural policies such as provisions for on-farm diversified uses and opportunities for agricultural commercial uses in Official Plans.

Planning department structure and staffing across the province is varied – within the Greenbelt, the number of planners at the upper-tier level ranges from one to more than 50 planning staff. While it could be argued that these disparities exist due to variations in population size and land area, it is important to remember that planning is responsible for the management of both communities and land (Caldwell et al., 2020). Staffing numbers are fundamental to this, particularly in terms of addressing priorities for people and the environment at the municipal level.

### RURAL WATER QUALITY, WELLINGTON COUNTY

A number of counties and regions across the Greenbelt and Greater Golden Horseshoe have exceeded their mandated responsibilities to implement and deliver initiatives to protect a healthy environment, mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, and support the agricultural resource base. Wellington County's Rural Water Quality Programme, in collaboration with local conservation authorities and the City of Guelph, attempts to enhance water quality and quantity. The program funds projects, such as tree planting and livestock exclusion fencing, for farmers to implement on their lands. Since 1999, Wellington's Rural Water Quality Programme has funded over 1650 clean water projects for over 1000 farmers in Wellington's agricultural area. Wellington's Rural Water Quality Programme illustrates the extent to which certain municipalities can embrace agriculture to mitigate adverse environmental impacts and promote sustainable economic development.

Municipalities in the Greenbelt tend to have larger urbanizing populations relative to municipalities elsewhere in the province. There is a need to innovate planning practices and institutions in areas where agriculture is increasingly competing with the surrounding urbanizing communities (Epp, 2018). Agricultural producers in the Greenbelt have faced challenges with working with municipal governments and complying with planning regulations (Caldwell and Proctor, Greenbelt Foundation, 2013). The capacities of upper-tier planning departments are diverse and varied, and some of whom have dedicated resources to build staffing capacity to respond to agricultural issues.

Research conducted on municipal capacity elsewhere offers additional insight into why some municipalities effectively plan for agriculture while others may not. In the American context, Daniels (2019), Daniels and Payne-Riley (2017), and Dilleuth (2017) reiterate critical links to public support, political will, focus, culture, and resources, all of which impact the capacity of individual planning departments to explore possibilities, take advantage of opportunities, gain public support, and involve local elected officials to respond to local issues meaningfully and effectively. Similarly, Larson et al. (2017) identified the link between the local government's capacity and their ability to respond to environmental changes. Their work looked at the capacity of three regions in New York State to respond to environmental challenges and identified factors for capacity, including essential resources (economic and human), social capital and stakeholder collaboration, as well as political legitimacy (inclusive of public trust in the local administration). In the Australian context, Budge and Butt (2017) identify the importance of planners in raising issues related to farmland preservation and the development of a partnership between planners and farmers in generating a greater profile.

These findings highlight three points of significance regarding the capacity and willingness of municipalities across the Greenbelt to respond to emerging agricultural priorities:

1. **Issues are increasingly complex and continuously evolving in rural and agricultural communities.** Municipalities are required to respond to critical issues such as climate change and a growing population yet may lack capacity to do so effectively. This includes ensuring a productive land base for current and future agricultural production is available and establishing and implementing policy that balances growth and development in a way that is supportive of the agricultural sector.
2. **Municipalities are the mechanism by which provincial policy and priorities are implemented on the ground.** The Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, Greenbelt Plan, and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe are implemented through local planning departments and functions. Local planning must account for the nuanced differences across different community contexts. Severance policy, aggregate operations, and land use regulations around greenhouse or cannabis production are examples of provincially important issues that will be primarily implemented through municipal action. The decisions of elected officials, the resources that municipalities have, and the expertise of staff are all vital contributors to successful policy and strategies that respect and acknowledge the critical role of agriculture.
3. **Upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities have differing capacities and abilities to act.** This trend has been previously noted and experience suggests that this is equally (if not even more) important of an issue today. Over time the expectations and responsibilities of municipalities in Ontario have grown, and the needs of agriculture have evolved with additional and more interrelated challenges, priorities, and opportunities. There is no baseline knowledge regarding how well-prepared municipalities have become (or yet to) in dealing with agricultural issues, nor is there documented knowledge regarding how well municipal governments may apply an agricultural lens to their work.

Given changing and evolving priorities in the agricultural sector and in land use planning, a current and comprehensive assessment of municipal capacity to respond to agricultural issues facing one of Ontario's most agriculturally productive regions is needed. Identifying and addressing capacity issues would be of value to stakeholders across the province:

- ***Agricultural communities*** will benefit from a more knowledgeable, supportive, and consistent planning system.
- ***The planning profession and municipal planning departments*** will see less conflict within the planning system and, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), the voice of the planning profession in Ontario, will benefit from identified training opportunities to enhance their capacity to adapt to agricultural needs in Ontario.
- ***The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing*** will have a better understanding of how to work with municipalities to navigate and implement policy impacting agricultural and rural communities.
- ***Elected officials and municipal planners*** will learn how to make more agriculturally-informed decisions and recommendations to serve agricultural communities better.
- ***Policymakers*** will acquire more evidence to inform decision-making and program development relevant to the needs of agricultural and rural communities.
- ***The public*** will benefit from improved evidence-based planning decisions related to climate change, agriculture, land use, and environment, for generations to come across the province.



# Methodology

The research for this report involved assessing municipal capacity<sup>1</sup> related to agricultural and agri-food issues, priorities, and planning and provide an understanding of the factors impacting municipal capacity to respond to emerging and evolving issues. It examined the following questions:

1. What is the current state of capacity amongst municipal planning departments in the Greenbelt to effectively respond to emerging agricultural and rural issues within their communities?
2. What challenges do municipal planning departments in the Greenbelt face when it comes to effectively responding to emerging agricultural and rural issues within their communities?
3. What opportunities, either potential or existing, are available to help municipal planning departments in the Greenbelt build capacity in effectively responding to emerging agricultural and rural issues within their communities?

Municipal capacity was measured using both quantitative (e.g., the number of planners in a department or annual budgets) and qualitative indicators (e.g., staff experiences with dealing with agricultural and related issues) in 66 upper-, single-, and lower-tier municipalities in the Greenbelt region (Figure 1). The research methods used to measure capacity include:

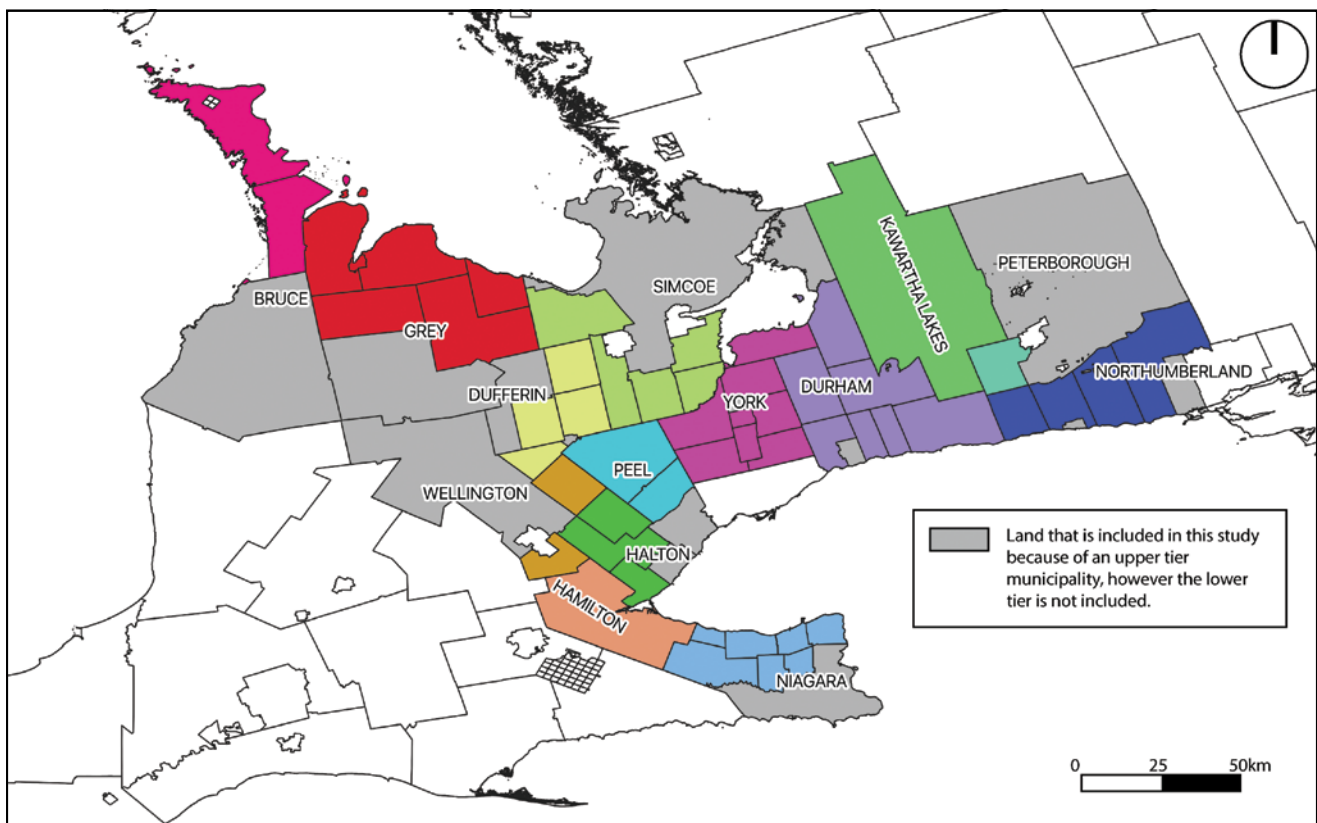
- Surveys of elected officials within the study area
- Surveys of municipal planning departments within the study area
- Use of Financial Information Return (FIR) data to fill in gaps of information (e.g., planning department budgets, number of staff) where we did not receive a response from municipalities
- Semi-structured interviews with planners at each municipality in the study area

<sup>1</sup> Within the scope of this study, capacity within the municipal setting is described as the ability to use internal and external resources, available either formally or informally, at both government and greater community levels, to respond to emerging agricultural and rural issues effectively.



This study included a focus on understanding the capacity of elected officials, in addition to municipal planning departments, because elected officials' level of knowledge, understanding of the needs of agriculture, and willingness to support agricultural and rural success in Ontario impacts their ability to make timely, relevant decisions. Additionally, responses collected from elected officials were useful for comparing and contrasting opinions, attitudes, or knowledge of their municipality's capacity vis-à-vis the respective planning department's experiences with capacity.

Below (Figure 1) is a map of the municipalities included in this study. Municipalities that had a large agricultural presence and municipalities that are predominantly located within the Greenbelt (including the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment) were included in the study. Some municipalities within the Greenbelt were excluded from this study either due to being heavily urbanized (e.g., Mississauga, Toronto) or having a very small proportion of their land base located within the Greenbelt (e.g., New Tecumseth, Waterloo Region). All upper-tier municipalities within the Greenbelt were included in the study area. Coloured areas on the map are areas where both the upper-tiers and lower-tiers were captured in the study. Grey areas indicate upper-tiers which were captured, but their lower-tier counterparts were not included. In total, there are 12 upper-tier, 52 lower-tier, and two single-tier municipalities in the study area. A complete list of municipalities in the study area can be found in Appendix A.



**Figure 1** Map depicting municipalities in the Greenbelt region which were included in the study

Surveys were sent out to both elected officials and senior planners at each municipality to inquire into the resources, attitudes, and perspectives of capacity in responding to local agriculture and agri-food priorities amongst municipalities in the Greenbelt. The final response rate for surveys amongst the elected officials sample was 77.27% (87 responses, representing 51 municipalities) and 72.72% (48 responses) for the municipal planning department sample. Where we received a non-response from municipalities in completing the survey, the research team used the most recent Financial Information Return (FIR) data, available publicly online from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), to fill in gaps of missing information.

Following the survey, semi-structured interviews were conducted with municipal staff whose planning department completed the survey. Interviews were held with planning directors/commissioners, or in a few cases, a senior planner on staff. Interviews provide a more detailed and contextualized account of the survey responses provided by the municipality's elected officials and planning department. A total of 41 interviews with planners, each representing a different municipality, were conducted leading to a response rate of 62.12%.

In total, 92% of the municipalities in the study area participated in one way or another (61 of 66 municipalities). Municipalities participated in the following ways: 77% participated in the elected official survey, 72% participated in the planner survey, and 62% participated in the planner interview. Overall, 32 of 66 municipalities participated in all three data collection methods. It should be noted that planners from five municipalities provided written comment, via email correspondence, that capacity issues, such as a lack of time, were preventing them from participating in either phase of the research process. Table 1 and 2 provides descriptive statistics for how many municipalities participated in each data collection method.

**Table 1** Data collection methods participation

	Elected Official Survey	Planner Survey	Planner Interview
Absolute number of responses	87	48	41
Number of municipalities represented	51		
Response rate (based on municipalities as the measurement unit)	77.27%	72.72%	62.12%

**Table 2** Number of data collection methods per municipality

	Three data collection methods	Two data collection methods	One data collection method	No Data
Absolute number of municipalities	32	15	14	5
Percent of municipalities	48.48%	22.72%	21.21%	7.58%



# Findings and Discussion

This section of the report presents the findings of the research, demonstrated through both quantitative and qualitative indicators of capacity. It summarizes the issues in agriculture that were mentioned by planners and elected officials, the challenges they identified in responding to them, and indicators of municipal capacity.

## 3.1 Issues in Agriculture

In the planner and elected official surveys, participants were asked to identify major (site-specific or municipality-wide) agricultural issues in their municipality (e.g., changing crops, cannabis land use regulations, wind turbines, etc.) and to describe the challenges they face in understanding and making decisions related to agriculture. In the semi-structured interviews with planners, an additional question was posed regarding issues and challenges in agricultural planning and decision-making.

Some of the issues and challenges occurring in agriculture in and near the Greenbelt typically emerge from evolving social, economic, and political changes. A growing population and concomitant demand for housing and other urban expansions, climate change, the introduction of new crop types (notably cannabis), increasing interest in the rural residential idyll, among other societal shifts, impact the agri-food sector. Other issues and challenges have been on the radar of the agricultural community, planners, and politicians for years, including conflicting land uses and complaints about normal farm practices. There are a host of other issues that fluctuate based on a variety of social (e.g., changing consumer preferences), economic (e.g., price of land) and political factors (e.g., changing provincial governments). For example, the introduction of wind turbines into the rural area was an issue the province grappled with in the last decade. Currently, some of the hot button issues are cannabis production land uses, the illegal dumping of fill, and on-farm agricultural diversification.



## CHALLENGES IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE, MEAFORD

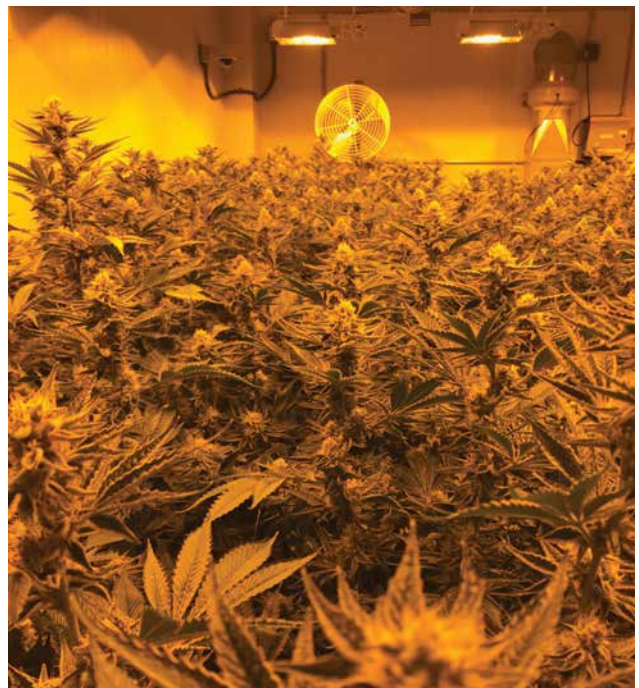
Questions and challenges related to on-farm diversification in rural areas are common among municipalities in the Greenbelt. When it comes to on-farm diversification, finding balance between resident perceptions of the rural area and community economic development needs, updating policy to reflect provincial direction, and ensuring the viability of prime agricultural land are just a few of the issues planners and elected officials are grappling with.

**While on-farm diversification can enhance the agricultural sector for producers and consumers, local resident expectations, perceptions, and needs are important to consider.**

In the Municipality of Meaford, a rural tourism venture has resulted in considerable debate about the changing rural landscape among rural residents, municipal staff, and Council. Meaford, like many rural municipalities, is beginning to recognize the necessity of capturing tourist dollars, particularly through agri-tourism and diversification; however, local residents are weary of what is sometimes perceived as 'outside' interests entering the community and they struggle to see the benefit.

A planner from Meaford commented: "I think that it's challenging for us in trying to reconcile differences of opinion, because people get so emotionally invested... **[As planners] we have to speak to technical impacts. [For example], does the road have capacity or will the habitat be affected? But I think that we also [need] the tools available to us to help navigate [differing community opinions and perspectives]. I think that's where there's a gap in terms of, how do you negotiate around these issues?"** When contentious agricultural planning matters arise, the so-called 'soft skills' of planning (relationship building, negotiation, communication, conflict resolution) are important to the process and for maintaining capacity.

The most frequently mentioned issue by planners and elected officials was land use concerns around cannabis production. Concerns related to the location (prime agricultural area versus industrial area), operation (noise, odor, light pollution) and regulation (lack of clarity regarding standards and enforcement) were cited by participants. A comment from an elected official in Niagara-on-the-Lake reflects overall concerns about cannabis production land use: "Cannabis needs to be banned from Specialty Crop Areas but continues to be defined as a crop like any other, with major impacts on our community and a lot of upset on how we are legally restricted from treating it differently from other crops, when it is a different crop and in no way a food product" (lower-tier, elected official).



The second most frequently mentioned issue grappled with by planners and elected officials is development pressure. The Greenbelt is home to some of the most populous municipalities in the province and the perceived need for land to support growth has placed significant pressure on agricultural areas. Land speculation, estate residential properties, retirement aged farmers without a successor looking to sell their land, and urban boundary expansion all contribute to ongoing development pressures. As one planner mentioned: “a lot of the developers inside those urban areas look at agricultural land as idle land awaiting development to arrive” (lower-tier, planner). Protecting the agricultural land base while also providing for a growing population is a widespread concern for municipalities.



Another issue frequently mentioned by participants is the illegal dumping of fill from development sites into prime agricultural areas. This is also commonly referred to as site alteration and involves development companies relocating fill (extracted soil) from development sites into the rural areas and often on farm properties. This soil may be contaminated and is not acceptable for agricultural production. A planner provided the following scenario, demonstrating that this is a capacity issue for them: “we had a complaint the other day about truckloads and truckloads of fill coming into a property. So we had to send out for a bylaw officer, who we contracted from another municipality, because we don’t have our own bylaw officers to go and look at this site” (lower-tier, planner).

The issues and challenges shared by participants demonstrate the necessity for building capacity in planning departments, on Council, and holistically throughout a municipal corporation. A complete list of issues mentioned by participants is included below (list is in order of frequency mentioned).

### ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE IDENTIFIED BY ELECTED OFFICIALS AND PLANNERS

- Land use regulations around cannabis production
- Development pressure
- On-farm diversification
- Land severance
- Dumping of fill
- Perceived lack of clarity in policy
- Farm property taxes
- Conflicting land uses
- Environmental stewardship
- Public understanding of agricultural issues
- Traffic hindering regular farm operations
- Misunderstandings about normal farm practices
- Lack of broadband internet
- High price of farmland
- Politics and perceptions of agriculture
- Leased and rented lands
- Climate change
- Minister zoning orders
- Distrust of municipal staff

### NATURAL HERITAGE, AGRICULTURE, AND LOCAL INTEREST, CLARINGTON

Public misunderstanding and distrust can limit a municipality's capacity to meet provincial mandates in their local context and balance local communities' needs with provincial interests. Such a misunderstanding arose during the Municipality of Clarington's Official Plan update, which reflects recent Provincial Natural Heritage Systems Mapping. This Official Plan update included an expanding inventory of environmental features, further connecting the more extensive natural heritage system, and additional protection from development for these features on environmental and agricultural lands to benefit green space, farmland, communities, and environmental resilience in the Greenbelt. Despite these benefits, public concern and misunderstanding over how, why, and precisely who is responsible for provincial policy implementation has resulted in requests for 170 site-specific reviews from local landowners. Concern and confusion mainly stemmed from public misunderstanding in the community over what new protections, based on multiple policy layers, mean for existing land uses, including agriculture. While this example has posed challenges for municipal capacity in Clarington, the case exemplifies the varying capacity or autonomy municipalities have to map provincial policies in the local context and address local issues in ways that balance provincial interests with local community goals or desires.



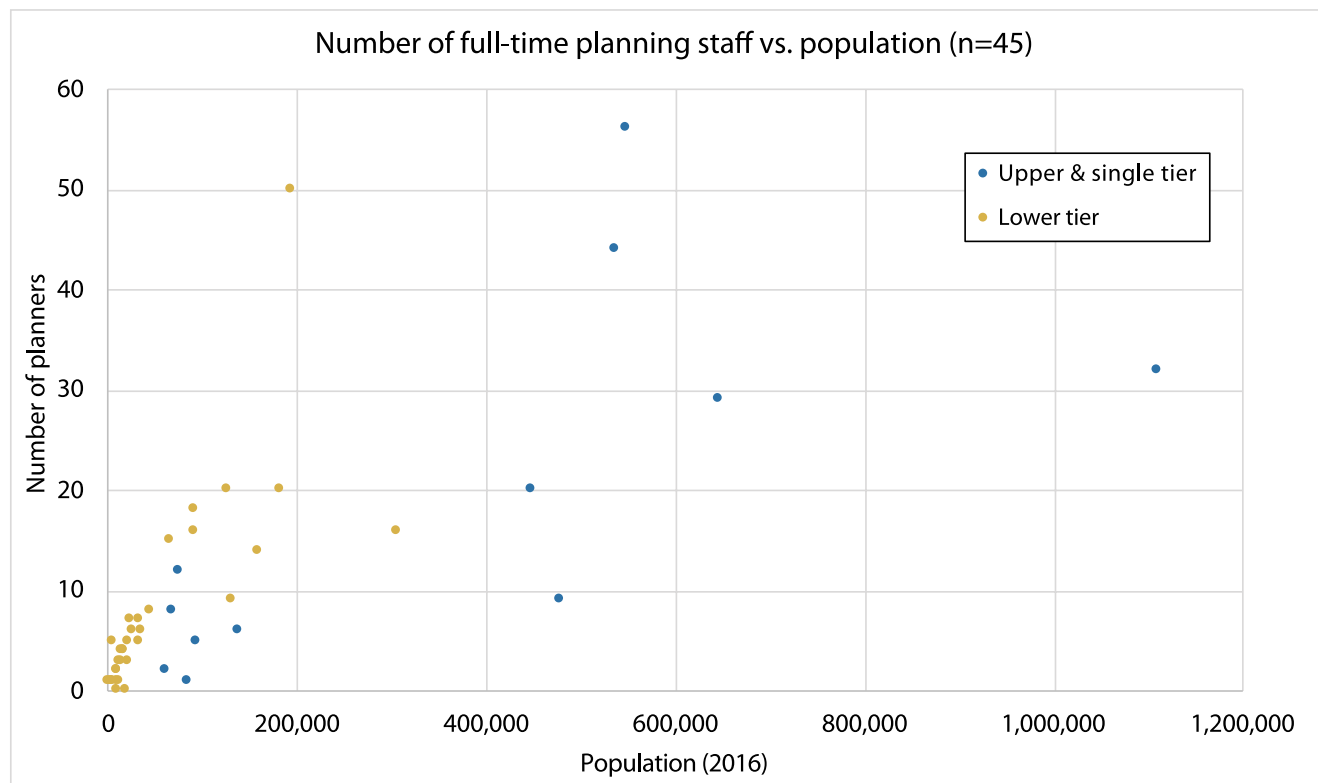
## 3.2 Measuring Municipal Capacity

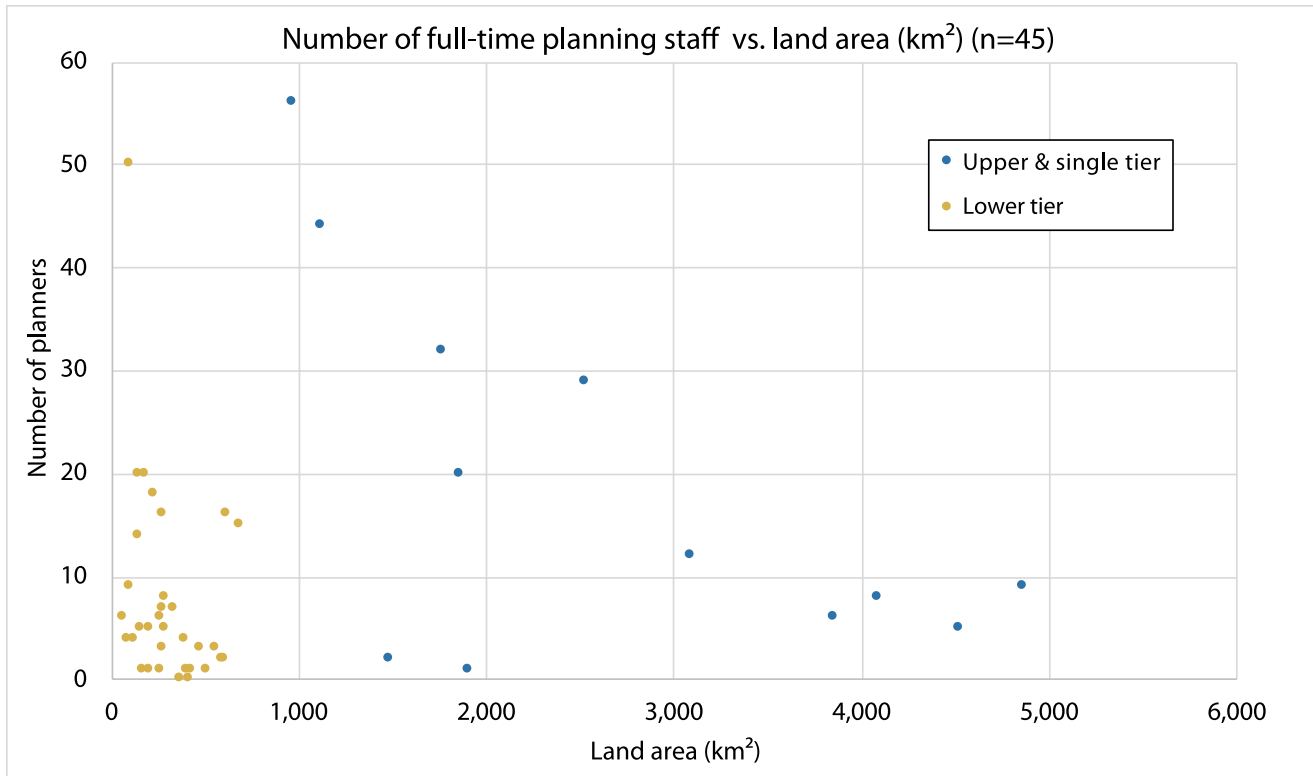
The findings from the quantitative and survey questions where responses are tied to the date the survey was completed (mid-2020 for most responses) show there are several indicators of municipal capacity.

### 3.2.1 Planning department staffing

The first indicator of capacity is the number of planning department staff. Figure 2 shows the range of full-time planners (separated into two groups: single- and upper-tier municipalities, and lower-tier municipalities) against population (2016). Figure 3 shows the number of full-time planning staff against land area.

There is generally a positive correlation between population and the number of full-time planning staff, particularly among lower-tier municipalities. In contrast, there is no correlation between the land area of a municipality and the number of full-time staff at the lower-tier level and a negative relationship between land area and full-time planning staff for single- and upper-tier municipalities. These findings suggest that staffing numbers in the planning department are more heavily influenced by population, which is unsurprising given that larger populations are associated with increased development activity, transportation needs, and policy-related services. By contrast, the findings suggest that planners' role is not influenced by land management needs, particularly at the single- and upper-tier level where the number of planners at a municipality decreases as the area of the municipality increases.





**Figure 3** Number of full-time planning staff vs. land area (2016)

The range of full-time planners in upper- and single-tier municipalities is from 1 to 56 and from 0 to 50 in lower-tier municipalities. Tables 3 and 4 highlight the five municipalities who have the most and fewest number of full-time planners for both categories (upper- and single-tier and lower-tier).



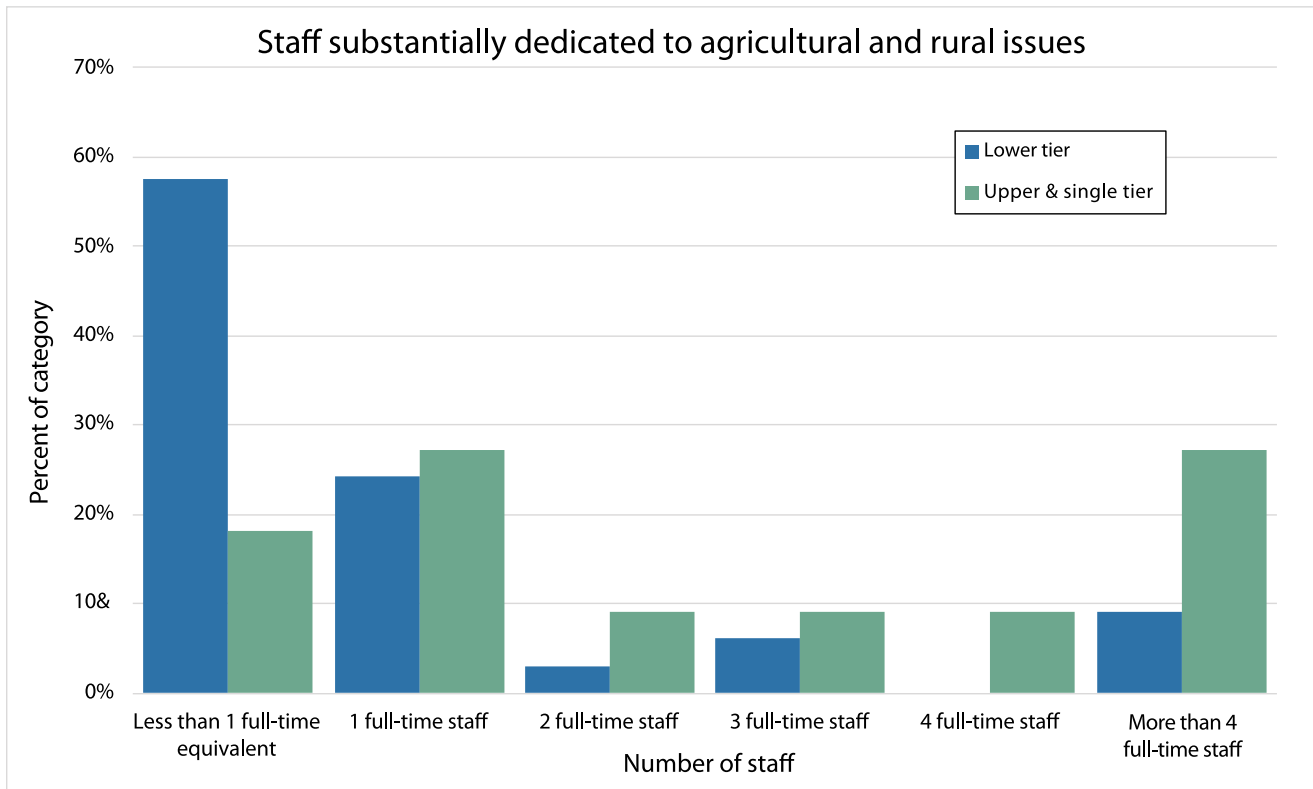
**Table 3** Lower-tier municipalities with the fewest and most full-time planners (Survey results)

Tier	Municipality	Full-time planners	RPP and Candidate	Staff dedicated to agricultural and rural issues (including planners, economic development staff, tourism staff, etc.)	Population (2016)	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
LT	Uxbridge	0	0	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	21,176	421
LT	Adjala-Tosorontio	0	0	1 full-time staff	10,975	372
LT	Brock	1	0	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	11,642	423
LT	Amaranth	1	1	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	4,079	265
LT	East Garafraxa	1	1	1 full-time staff	2,579	166
LT	Vaughan	16	15	More than 4 full-time staff	306,233	274
LT	Pickering	18	18	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	91,771	232
LT	Whitby	20	20	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	128,377	147
LT	Burlington	20	19	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	183,314	186
LT	Richmond Hill	50	50	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	195,022	101

**Table 4** Upper- and single-tier municipalities with the fewest and most full-time planners (Survey results)

Tier	Municipality	Full-time planners	RPP and Candidate	Staff dedicated to agricultural and rural issues (including planners, economic development staff, tourism staff, etc.)	Population (2016)	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
UT	Northumberland	1	1	1 full-time staff	85,598	1,905
UT	Dufferin	2	2	1 full-time staff	61,735	1,486
UT	Grey	5	5	1 full-time staff	93,830	4,514
UT	Peterborough	6	6	Unknown	138,236	3,848
UT	Bruce	8	9	More than 4 full-time staff	68,147	4,090
UT	Niagara	20	15	Less than 1 full-time equivalent	447,888	1,854
UT	Durham	29	28	3 full-time staff	645,862	2,524
UT	York	32	32	2 full-time staff	1,109,909	1,762
ST	Hamilton (City)	44	45	More than 4 full-time staff	536,917	1,117
UT	Halton	56	20	4 full-time staff	548,435	964

Figure 4 shows that it is more common for upper- and single-tier municipalities to have more staff specifically and substantially dedicated to agriculture and rural issues. This survey question asked respondents to include staff outside of the planning department, including economic development staff and tourism staff, among others. Throughout the interview process it became clear that this question was interpreted inconsistently; however, it provides some commentary on how municipalities are allocating staff to rural and agricultural issues.

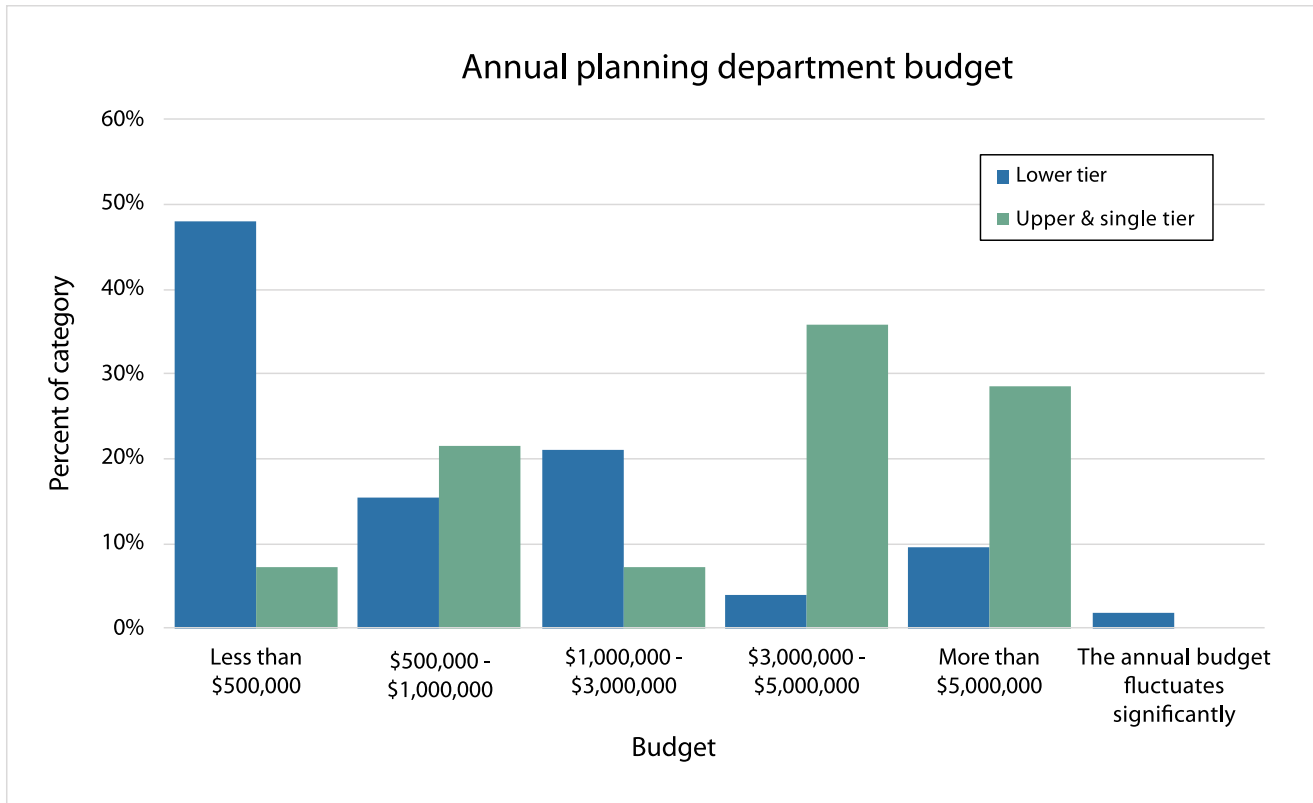


**Figure 4** Staff substantially dedicated to agricultural and rural issues

### 3.2.2 Planning department budget

The second indicator of capacity considered is the planning department budget. Figure 5 depicts the range of financial resources available to lower-, upper- and single-tier municipalities. Nearly half of the lower-tier municipalities have a budget of less than \$500,000 and the majority of upper- and single-tier municipalities have a budget in excess of \$3 million. It should be noted that Figure 5 relies on Financial Information Return (FIR) data to fill in missing data. The FIR dataset revealed that variability in budget is potentially much larger than captured by the survey, ranging from less than \$50,000 to more than \$20 million.<sup>2</sup> Available budget is a reflection of many things including population, level of development activity, and economic growth, but there are certain planning activities, including the implementation of provincial policies, that are required regardless of the available budget.

<sup>2</sup> Line 1899: Planning and development: Total expenses (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. (2018, 2019). Financial Information Return [Data set]. Government of Ontario. <https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/fir/Welcome.htm>)

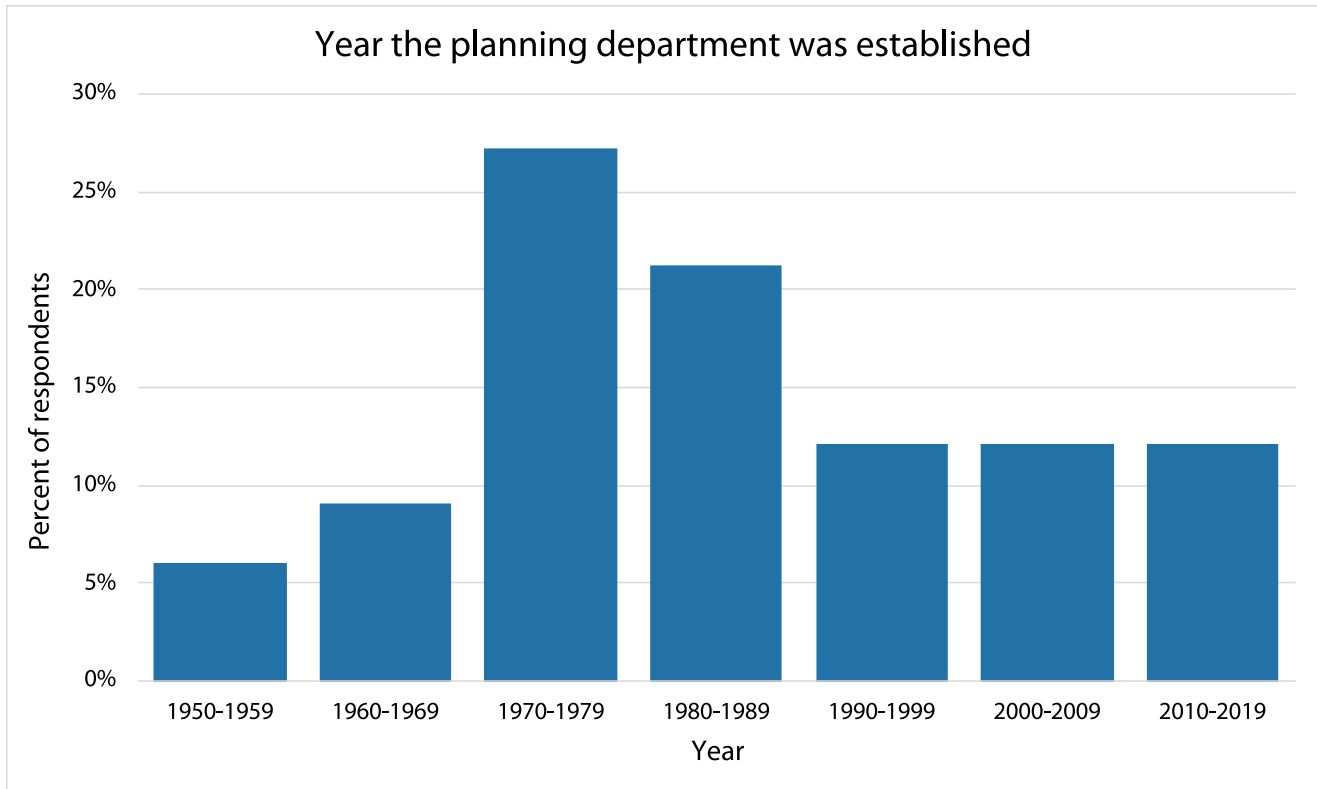


**Figure 5** Annual planning department budget

### 3.2.3 Planning department history

Another indicator of capacity is the age of the planning department. Municipalities whose planning department is relatively young may face challenges associated with institutional memory, clarity with regards to the role of the planning department, and lack of well-developed systems of communication and coordination. Figure 6 depicts the year planning departments were established. It should be noted that only 33 of 48 planner surveys received contained an answer to this question. Based on the available data, the majority of municipal planning departments were established between 1970 and 1990. There are some municipalities who only recently (post-2010) established their planning department, including Northumberland, Dufferin, Brock, and Alnwick-Haldimand. Other municipalities such as Mulmur, Northern Bruce Peninsula, Chatsworth, Adjala-Tosorontio, and Erin reported having no in-house planning department. Our interviews revealed that prior to the establishment of an in-house planning department, municipalities typically relied on consulting services for their planning needs. There were also instances of shared planning departments between lower-tier municipalities and relying on the upper-tier for planning services.



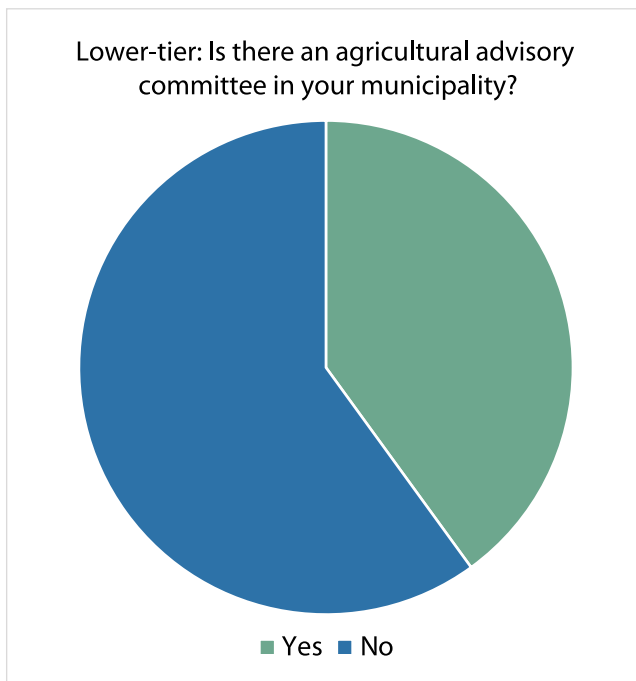


**Figure 6** Year the planning department was established

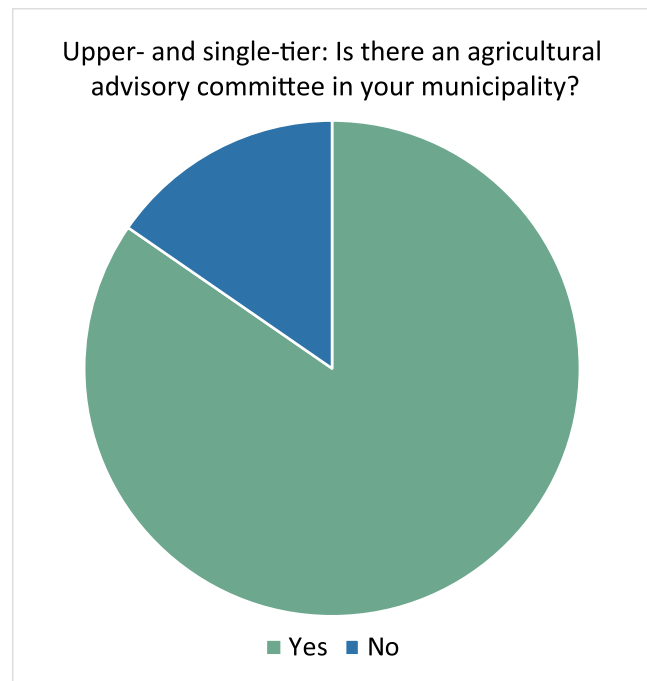


### 3.2.4 Agricultural advisory committees

Whether or not a municipality has an agricultural advisory committee is another indicator of capacity. Municipalities are not mandated to have an agricultural advisory committee, but those who do generally benefit from the agricultural lens and knowledge that the committee provides. Figure 7 shows the number of upper- and single-tier municipalities in the study area that have an agricultural advisory committee and Figure 8 shows the same for lower-tier municipalities. Agricultural advisory committees represent a unique type of capacity: they offer a platform for coordination for the agricultural community as well as a space for the municipality to consult with the agricultural community on a regular basis. Municipalities who have an agricultural committee generally expressed that there were several benefits, including building stronger relationships with the agriculture community. However, experiences were not consistent, and some municipalities felt that the agricultural advisory committee was underutilized and not well integrated with municipal staff and decision-making processes. Several other municipalities expressed that they would like to have an agricultural advisory committee, citing benefits associated with coordination, collaboration, and strengthening communication.



**Figure 7** Lower-tier municipalities with agricultural advisory committees

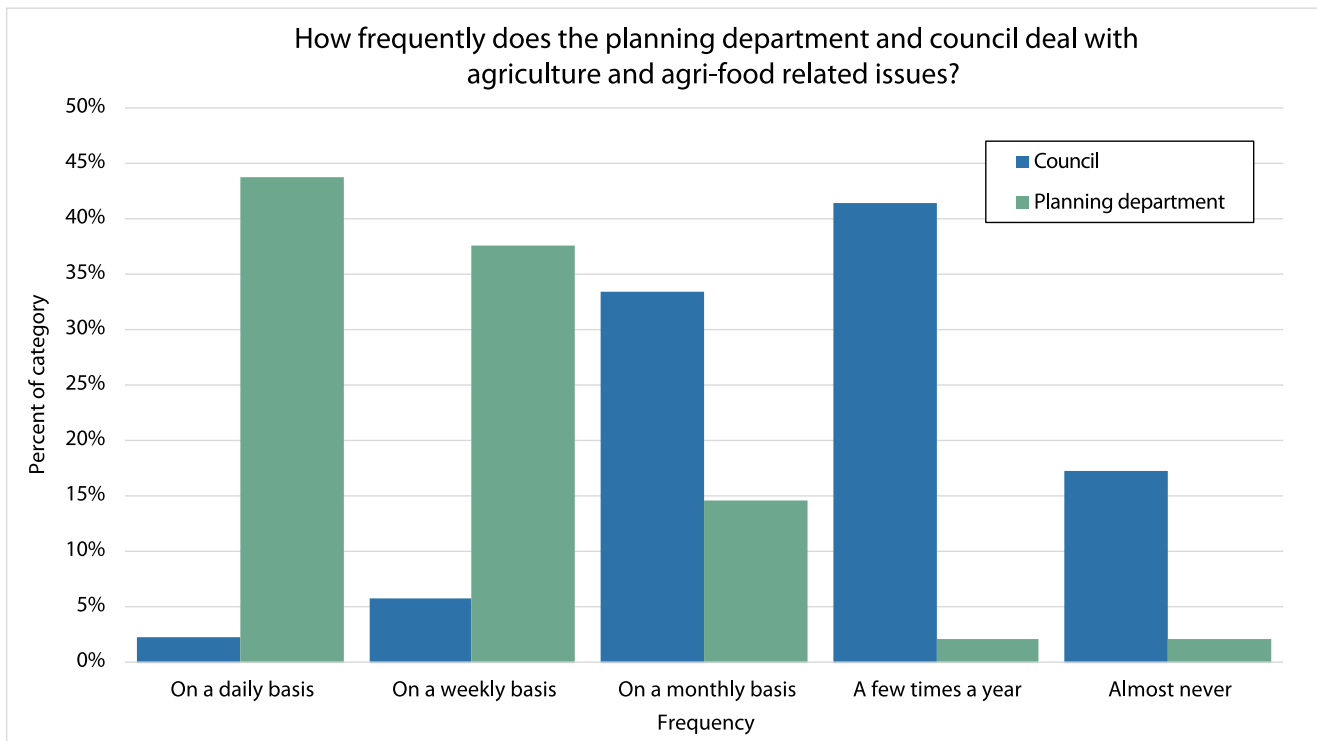


**Figure 8** Upper- and single-tier municipalities with agricultural advisory committees



### 3.2.5 Frequency of dealing with agriculture and agri-food related issues

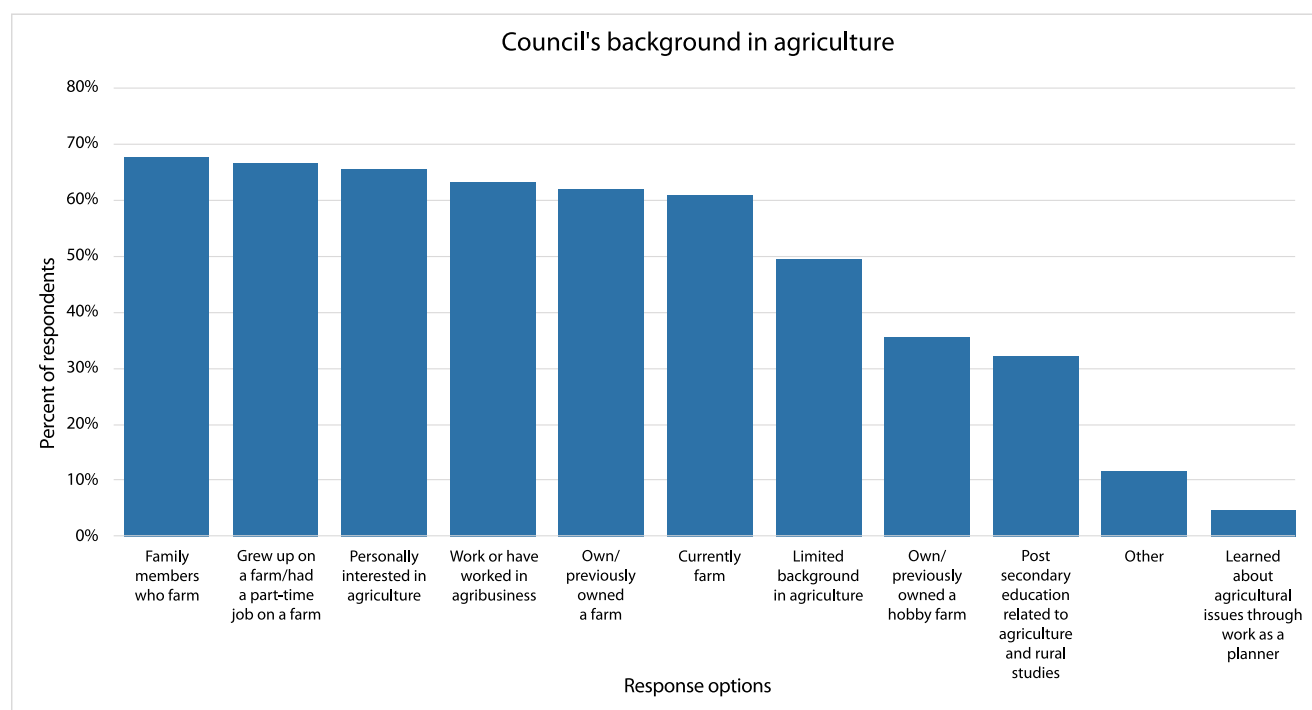
Figure 9 depicts the frequency that elected officials and planners reported dealing with agricultural and agri-food related issues. Both Councils and planning departments deal with agriculture and agri-food issues on a somewhat regular basis. Planners reported most often that they dealt with agriculture and agri-food related issues on a daily or weekly basis. The majority of elected officials, on the other hand, reported dealing with agriculture and agri-food issues on a monthly or annual basis.



**Figure 9** How frequently does the planning department and council deal with agriculture and agri-food related issues?

### 3.2.6 Councils' role in agriculture

Figure 10 shows the Councils' background in agriculture and Figure 11 shows the types of agricultural-related activity elected officials are involved with. Over half of the elected officials who responded to our survey indicated that at least one Council member in their municipality had the following background: family members who farm; grew up on a farm/had a part-time job on a farm; personally interested in agriculture; work or have worked in agribusiness; own/previously owned a farm; and currently farm.

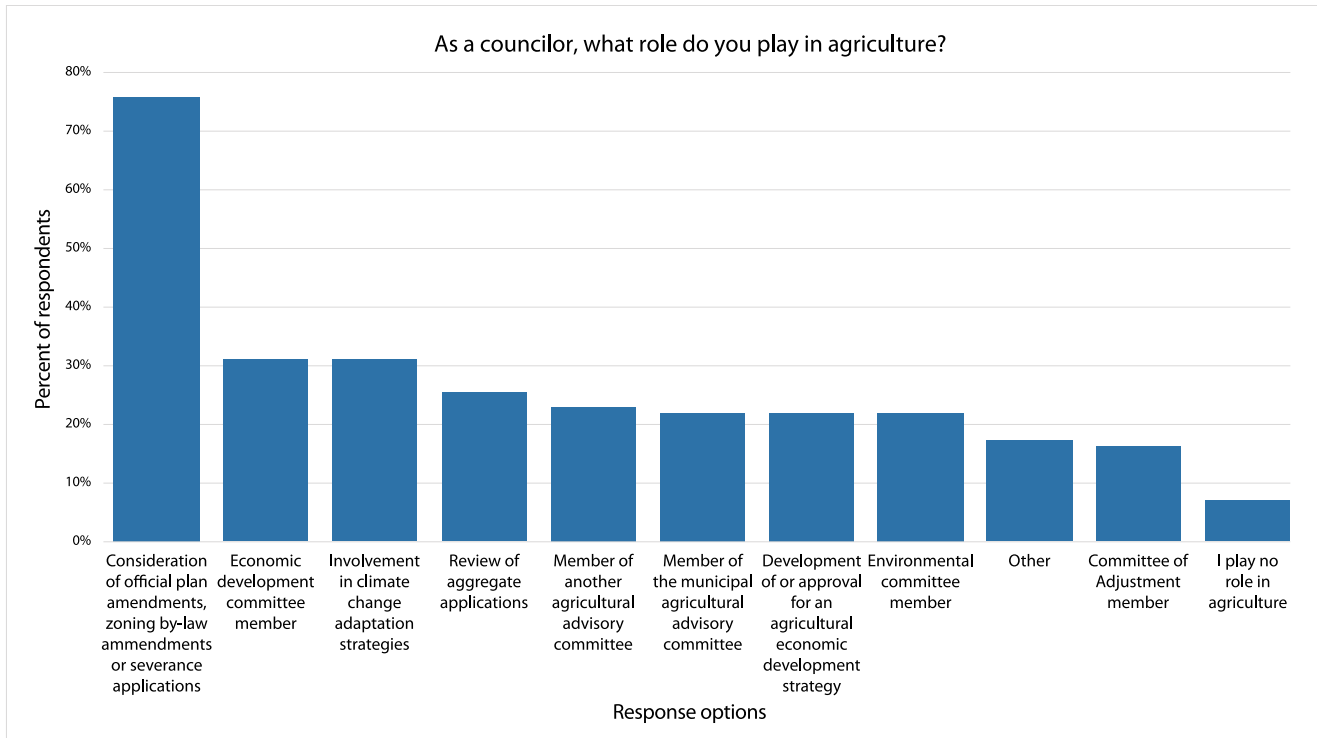


**Figure 10** Council's background in agriculture

The majority of elected officials who responded "other" to this question provided more detail regarding their own personal background in agriculture. Additional comments include:

- "Some Council members have no background in agriculture."
- "There is a possibility that members of the present Council who were born outside Canada came from a rural background which included farming."
- "Members interested in agriculture are outnumbered."
- "I believe most of our Council has a good working knowledge of agriculture."

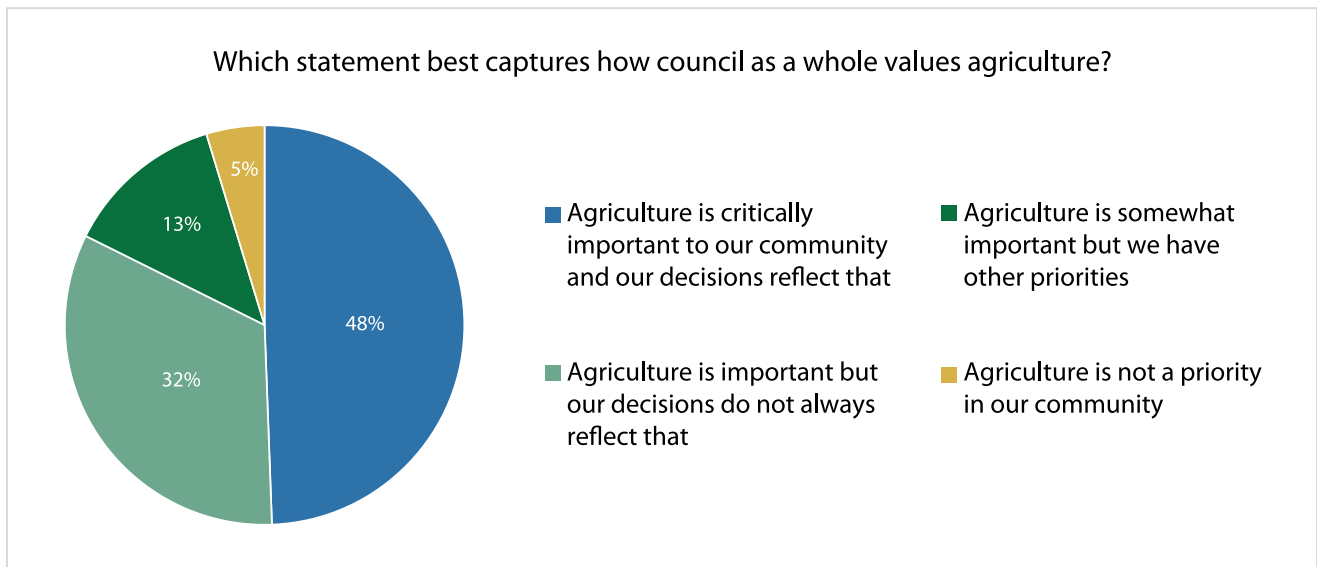
In terms of the types of agricultural-related activity elected officials are involved with, the vast majority of respondents indicated "Consideration of Official Plan amendments, zoning by-law amendments or severance applications." Other activities, including "Economic development committee member," "Involvement in climate change adaptation strategies," and "Review of aggregate applications" were also common. There is a wide array of activities and decisions that elected officials are responsible for that influence agriculture and the agri-food sector.



**Figure 11** Councils' role in agriculture

### 3.2.7 Councils' recognition of the value of agriculture

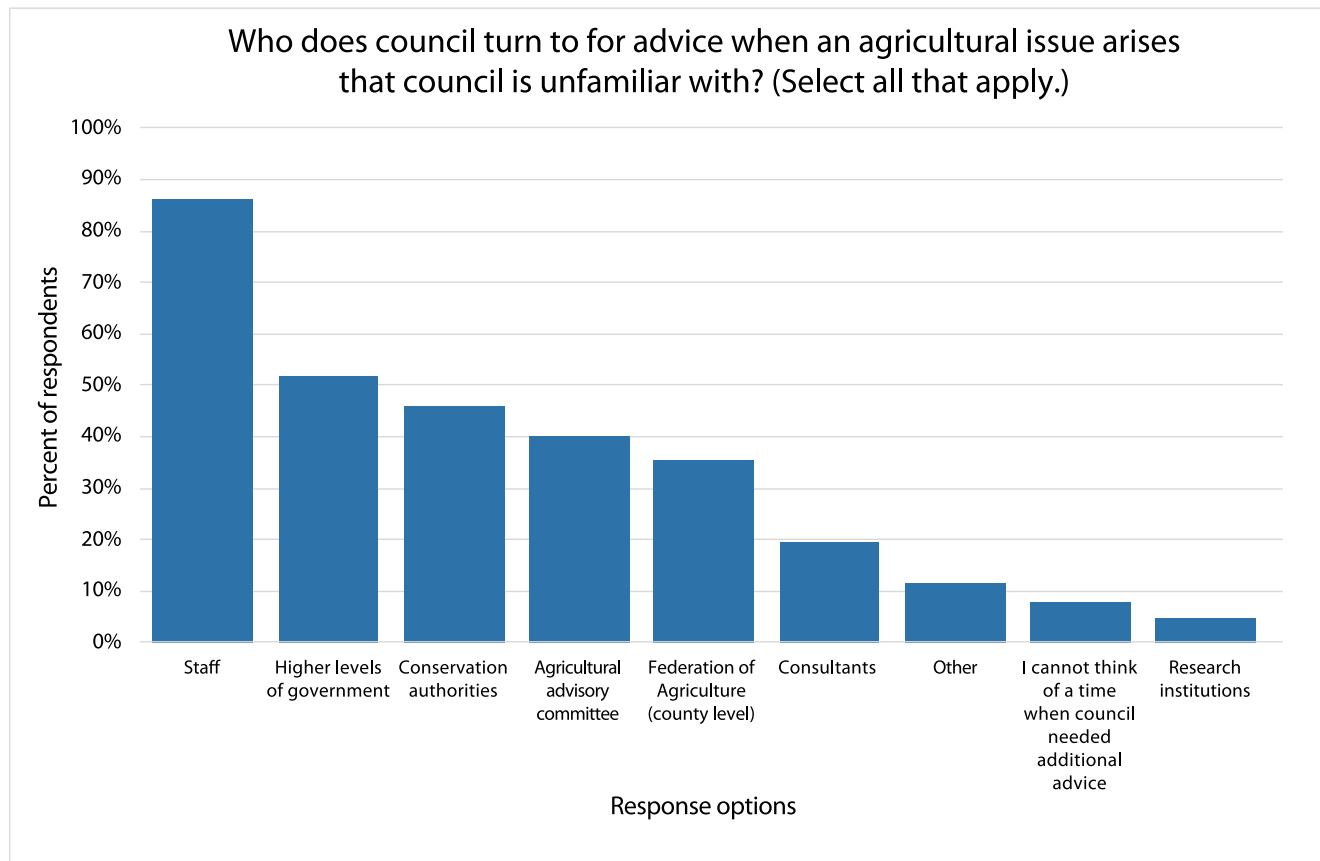
Council is responsible for a variety of key activities and decisions related to agriculture and the agri-food system. Figure 12 shows that almost half of the elected officials that responded felt that their Council views agriculture as critically important and only 5% felt that it was not a priority. The value Council places on agriculture will affect the types of activity a Council will undertake related to agriculture and how agricultural decisions are made and prioritized.



**Figure 12** Which statement best captures how council as a whole values agriculture?

### 3.2.8 Sources of advice to Councils on agricultural issues

Figure 13 highlights who Council turns to when an agriculture issue arises that Council is unfamiliar with. Over 80% of elected officials indicated that they would turn to staff for advice. Other common resources include higher levels of government, conservation authorities, agricultural advisory committees, and the region or county level Federation of Agriculture. These findings indicate that it is important that municipal staff have the capacity and expertise to support Council.

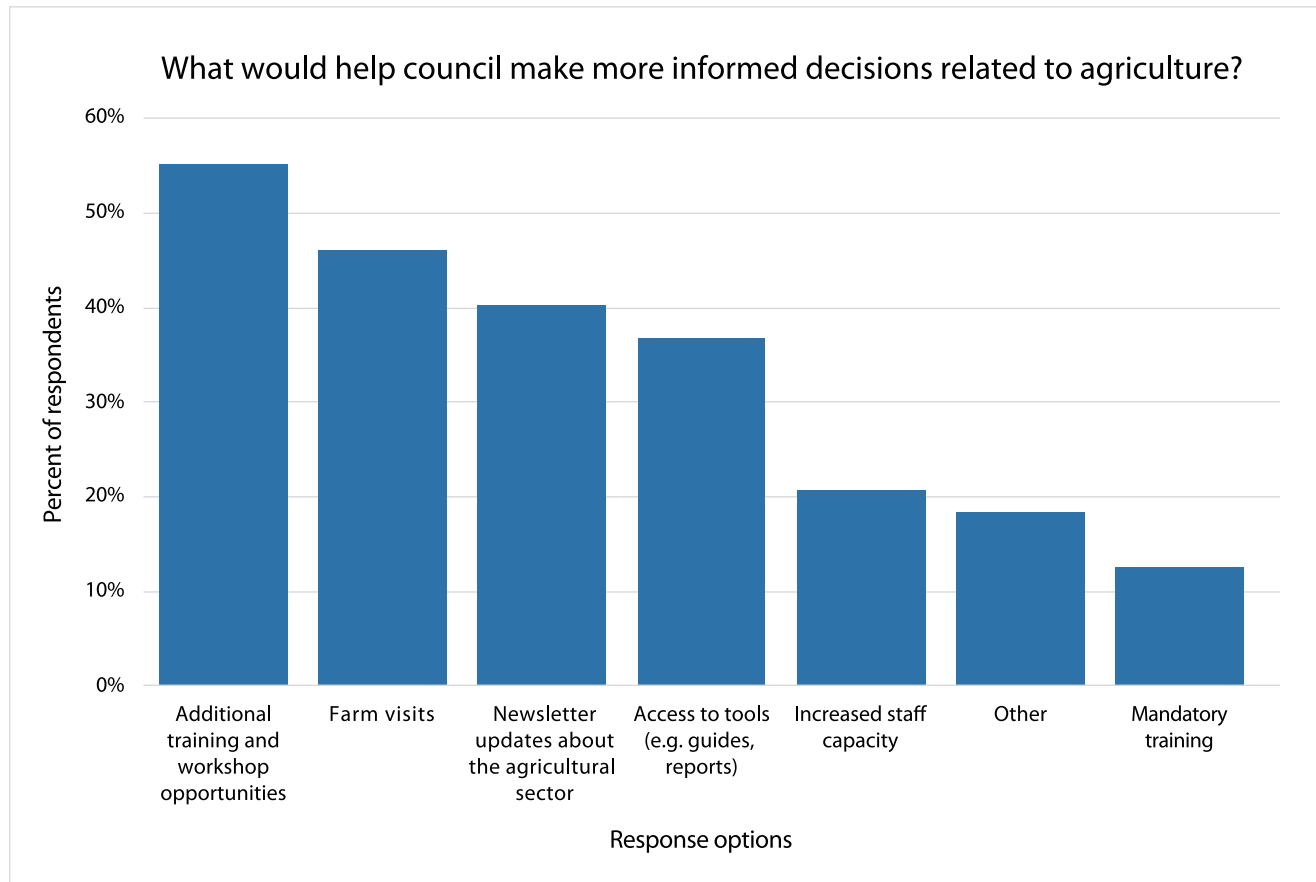


**Figure 13** Who does council turn to for advice when an agricultural issue arises that council is unfamiliar with? (Select all that apply.)

Elected officials who responded “Other” to this question indicated using the following resources: members of the farming community, members of Council who farm, and lawyers/legal expertise.

### 3.2.9 Supports to help Councils make informed decisions related to agriculture

Elected officials were asked to identify what resources would help Council enhance capacity and make more informed decisions related to agriculture and agri-food issues. Figure 14 indicates that additional workshops/training, farm visits, and newsletter updates about the agricultural sector were the top three capacity enhancing activities that elected officials would like to see.



**Figure 14** What would help council make more informed decisions related to agriculture?

Additional activities provided in the comments of the “Other” category include: changing the Farm Tax Credit Program, education at primary/secondary schools as well as for the public, additional training for staff (the people who Council depend on), stronger provincial policies related to farmland preservation, the creation of an agricultural advisory committee, and not needing additional resources.

### 3.3 Trends in Municipal Capacity

The research identified some of the ways municipal staff are supported in their work with the agriculture industry and where there are some gaps, as well as some elements critical to municipal capacity.

#### 3.3.1 Planning department structure

There are many organizational structures for planning departments, influenced by size of the municipality and budgetary capacity. We asked planners to explain the structure of their department, the role of each planner on staff, and the division of labour to understand how the department functions to address the various planning needs of the community (e.g., processing of daily applications, policy analysis and review, major projects, site plan control, etc.) and, in particular, whether or not the department dedicates a staff person or team to agricultural planning matters.

We found that there is a diversity of planning department structures across the Greenbelt. Types of department structures include the following: generalists, geographically-based division, topic-based division, and division by specialist.





## Generalists

'Generalist' is a characterization often employed in the planning profession to describe the interdisciplinary nature of planning work, requiring planners to be able to comment on applications or issues from a variety of perspectives (e.g., social, economic, environmental). Most of the planners interviewed considered their department to have a generalist structure, especially among lower-tier municipalities. This category of structure refers to departments that require all planners to be prepared for and conversant in a variety of planning work, ranging from matters in the urban settlement area such as site plan control and urban design to matters in agriculture such as on-farm diversification, farm severance, and MDS calculations. There are a number of reasons for having a generalist department structure, including "making sure everybody has a reasonable workload" to "[managing] capacity through the team relationship" and, most commonly, "because our departments are relatively small, we need everybody to be capable of doing everything" (lower-tier planners). In this department structure, agricultural and agri-food issues would not be the responsibility of one planner in particular; rather, it is expected that all planners in the department would have some level of comfort and ability to attend to agricultural applications and issues, should they arise.

## Topic-based division

The topic-based department structure refers to those departments that delineate planning workload by subject portfolios, typically including some combination of the following topic-based divisions or teams: policy, long-range planning, development, urban design, heritage and cultural, environmental, and agricultural. Under this department structure, agricultural and agri-food issues are often dealt with by multiple divisions. For example, in a lower-tier municipality with this structure, one planner who works in the policy planning and sustainability department and is the lead for agricultural issues commented that they also work closely with a planner from the development department. When the planner from the development department has an agricultural-related application, they consult with the planner from policy planning and sustainability. Under this model, agriculture is still a shared responsibility, similar to the generalist structure.







### Geographically-based division

Geographically-based department structures are the least common among municipalities in the Greenbelt. In this department structure, planners may be assigned to a specific region of the municipality and are responsible for processing planning applications for that geographic area. Based upon the allocation of geographic areas, agricultural matters might be the responsibility of only one planner in the department or it might be shared by others. One planner reported that “highway 400 goes right through the middle of [our municipality]. So, half our team reviews files on the east side of 400. The other half of us, the west side. But the agricultural area overlaps along the top of [our municipality]. So no one’s really dedicated to applications in agriculture” (lower-tier, planner).

### Division by specialist

This is the least common department structure mentioned by planners in the Greenbelt and was most often mentioned by municipalities that are highly urbanized or who have identified agriculture as a significant industry in their community. This department structure indicates that specialists in particular subject areas are present on staff, such as an agricultural specialist. In the scenario where there is an agricultural specialist present, it is not always the case that they are registered professional planners; however, their position is typically located in the planning department.

### 3.3.2 Contributions to capacity

Contributions to capacity involve the internal and external resources, including budget, and relationships that planners and elected officials use to help inform their approach to agricultural and agri-food issues and opportunities.

#### Intergovernmental collaboration

A number of planners in lower-tier municipalities indicated that relationships with their upper-tier counterparts, as well as other local municipalities, are an essential component of their capacity. Lower-tier municipal departments do not necessarily have the staff or funding resources to deal with matters beyond daily operations and processing of planning applications, and policy or strategic planning for a variety of community needs is often perceived as an arduous process. Reliance on upper-tier counterparts to help with these resource gaps, therefore, is critical to capacity. As one planner expressed: “I’m always pushing for stronger collaborations with the region and with other groups...so we can be involved but not be carrying the heavy load of it” (lower-tier, planner).

Collaboration often involves using the regional government for review of planning applications, as well as for technical advice related to subject areas where there is not in-house expertise at the lower-tier level. For example, a participant noted: “we primarily rely on the region and their expertise in the field whenever we have to deal with agriculturally related issues” (lower-tier, planner).

Many lower-tier municipalities defer to regional or county strategies and initiatives as opposed to dedicating that departmental effort in-house. As one planner illustrates: “the [regional municipality] already has a really great agricultural strategy. So when I propose to the city, I’m not going to suggest that we create a new one, I want to do an action plan... here’s the strategy, we as a city are going to work with the region and our other partners to implement this set of actions” (lower-tier, planner). Building upon or deferring to county or regional strategies on agriculture was a common approach to maintaining capacity at the lower-tier level.

#### THE “PROJECT EXPEDITOR,” ST. CATHARINES

Municipalities are increasingly recognizing the value of a strong working relationship between their planning and economic development departments for supporting a range of agricultural initiatives. The City of St. Catharines has created a position called “project expeditor,” combining the roles of a planner and economic development position. This position facilitates collaboration between each department on various initiatives.

A planner for St. Catharines provided this example: “I’d say that the strongest alignment there in terms of rural and agricultural uses would be supporting the wine industries and the tender fruit makers and such and aligning those with tourism type activities - the wine and grape festival, wine route and winery support.”



### Relationship with economic development

In the majority of Greenbelt municipalities studied, a relationship between planning services and economic development exists and is particularly relevant when dealing with agricultural and agri-food matters. When asked about this relationship, one upper-tier level planner said: “We wouldn’t be able to do what we do without our economic development staff... [in planning] we often get into the land use aspects of the policy side... and the economic development side is looking at how we can support from a business and promotion perspective, and so the two are important and so that’s why we’ve identified early on that we need to have a relationship” (upper-tier, planner).

The relationship between these two departments is complementary as planning and economic development staff bring diverse perspectives to a range of municipal development challenges. This relationship is particularly useful when the agricultural systems approach requires the interdisciplinary knowledge of planners (focusing on the land base) and economic development officers (focusing on business retention and expansion). As the agricultural sector evolves, it is important to support more than just the protection of the land base, but also the viability of agri-food supply chain components and markets on which agriculture depends. As one county planner commented: “It’s a symbiotic kind of relationship between economic development and planning. We’re discovering that there’s synergies by having those two seemingly disparate things inside one department” (upper-tier, planner).

In some lower-tier municipalities with minimal staff resources, planners at times indicated they also wear the hat of economic development officer. As one planner mentioned: “the fact is a lot of rural economic development stuff plays a planning role, especially for... developing policies for rural wedding venues and cannabis” (lower-tier, planner). Merging the two distinct responsibilities of planning and economic development under one staff person’s portfolio may have been the most advantageous option for municipalities shy of staff resources, but this could also indicate a potential strain on capacity. Despite this, the willingness and ability of planners to take on an economic development perspective where needed points to the compatibility of these professional perspectives.



## DATA INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AGRICULTURE, BRUCE COUNTY

Access to information and data related to building permit activity in the agricultural area was cited as a potential benefit to better supporting and understanding the agricultural industry, but this information is presently lacking. As explained by a planner from Bruce County, **building permit activity for the residential, commercial, and industrial sector is reported by Statistics Canada in a standardized way, but not for the agricultural sector.** Information such as how many barns, what type of barns, or how many manure storage facilities were built, would be valuable to municipal staff in understanding what elements of the agricultural industry continue to be significant to the community and changes over time. The planner from Bruce County explains further: **“We know how many re-zonings or variances we may have done that relate to on-farm diversified uses, but we don’t know if they got built.”** Though this information can be collected on a case by case basis by the County, standardized reporting, similar to what is done for other sectors, should be available to municipalities to assist with monitoring and planning appropriately for the agricultural sector.

### Recognizing that agriculture is a priority

In municipalities where agriculture is a predominant industry and where a significant number of staff members had stronger exposure to rural and agriculture issues, either through formal experience (educational or workplace) or through living in an agricultural community, staff are more likely to prioritize agriculture. Awareness of and exposure to agricultural issues is also reflected in Council composition and decision-making.

A county planner explained how exposure to agriculture leads to prioritization of agriculture: “I would say out of all the five planners, we’re definitely all involved with agricultural matters, even on a daily basis, because that’s part of the nature of [our municipality], with agriculture being such a huge industry and economic driver in [this community]” (upper-tier, planner). With agriculture being a key player in the local economy, planners are well versed in responding to issues and applications related to the industry and maintain capacity as a result. Municipalities that demonstrated a prioritization of agriculture were also typically those municipalities that had agricultural expertise on Council: “of our 7-member Council I believe only the mayor and I do not come from a farming background” (lower-tier, elected official).

This contribution to capacity is most significant at the lower-tier level. It is less common among larger municipalities and is not mentioned at all by the single-tier municipalities in the study area, which is likely due to the more urban focus and priorities in these locations.

## THE CULTURE OF AGRICULTURE, GREY COUNTY

Grey County has a ‘culture of agriculture’ due to staff exposure and background, Council support, and a vast array of programs and initiatives to support the agricultural community. Agriculture is a longstanding part of the Grey County landscape and the County ranks among the top producers for apples, hay, sheep, and cattle. Efforts on behalf of the municipality and local organizations have created the conditions for agriculture to thrive across the County. The following are examples of organizations and initiatives that support the agricultural community:

**Grey Agricultural Services (Grey Ag Services)** describes itself as a “grass-roots,” “farmer driven” initiative and not-for-profit organization that was created to serve the needs of the local farming community. Grey Ag Services acts as a support mechanism and ‘one-stop-shop’ for the questions, concerns, and resource needs of individual farmers, other agricultural organizations, Council, and municipal staff. This service was referenced often by the planner interviewed from Grey County as being exceptionally helpful in all matters related to supporting and planning for the agricultural community.<sup>3</sup>

**Made in Grey** is a local food promotion strategy that involves the membership of local agri-food producers, distributors, restaurants, and other businesses that are part of what they call a “reputation economy.” To become a partner in this program, a business must prove connectivity to farms and food businesses in the area. A Made in Grey logo will indicate that a product was made within the community or includes ingredients grown there.<sup>4</sup>



Logo provided by  
Philly Markowitz

**Ag 4.0 Conference** is an initiative that connects farmers with resources to support their business. The Ag 4.0 conference looks at topics such as the intersection of agriculture and technology.<sup>5</sup> The planner for Grey County explained the initiative as the following: “Ag 4.0 is basically bringing agricultural communities together with IT professionals and recognizing that there are needs from connecting, an application standpoint, and digital perspective. So things like creating apps for farmers and other things like that. So it’s bringing together the agriculture community and the IT community and putting them in a room together and coming up with some cool ideas” (Grey County, planner).

Other programs and initiatives to support agriculture include the **Grey Roots (agricultural) Museum & Archive** as well as **agricultural asset mapping**.

3 Grey Agricultural Services. (2013). About Us. Retrieved October 31st 2020, from <https://www.greyagservices.ca/>

4 Made In Grey. (2020). So what exactly is made in Grey? Retrieved on October 31st 2020, from <https://www.visitgrey.ca/travel-tools/travel-stories/so-what-exactly-made-grey>

5 Made in Grey. (2020). Regional Initiatives. Retrieved on October 31st 2020, from <https://madeingrey.ca/regional-initiatives>



## Farmers as experts

Building relationships and communication networks with the local agricultural community contributes significantly to capacity. Whether it be through agricultural advisory committees, site visits, or phone calls, planners expressed the importance and value of reaching out to local farm operators to help inform planning processes and decision-making. Planners and elected officials noted a variety of less formal ways of building relationships with the agricultural community, such as farm visits, farmers' markets, and other community events.

As a planner from a lower-tier municipality noted: "one of the things that I have noticed is it's really hard to get a farmer to trust somebody who works in the municipal office. So when it comes to planning for ag in the rural areas, you really have to contact the individual farm owners and there has to be, I think, more of an effort at relationship building with the farmers because you can't sit there and plan for a group without being involved in that community and without asking them for their input. And when we're trying to move forward with all these initiatives, if it doesn't work for them, it's just not going to happen. So it's really important for the farmers to be actively engaged and also kind of leading the changes" (lower-tier, planner).

Another planner expressed: "we felt that rather than setting up an agricultural advisory committee, let's go to them. Let's have continuous engagement and discussions with them, when we're working on various studies or projects where there are agricultural aspects to it, let's go to them. For example, our Official Plan process that we went through, we made a concerted effort not just for the agricultural community but the community as a whole, to say public meetings and other things like that just don't work. People don't have the time to attend public meetings and other things. So let's go to where the community is already gathering. So we put up a pop up tent and start having discussions with people in the middle of outdoor events" (upper-tier, planner).



## “RED TAPE, RED CARPET,” BURLINGTON

Municipalities are finding ways to support the agricultural community, such as by holding agricultural roundtables, ensuring policy is supportive of business diversification, and through agri-tourism promotion strategies. The City of Burlington included the agricultural community in a Council-led effort known as the “red tape, red carpet” initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to examine various areas of the municipalities’ functioning where ‘red tape’ could be cut to improve service to community members and business owners. The agricultural community wanted to participate in this initiative and various recommendations came out of this effort, including having a dedicated agricultural liaison person at the City to assist with agricultural applications or issues. Another recommendation included ensuring the rural active transportation plan for Burlington promotes compatibility between farm equipment and cyclists.

### Presence of agricultural expertise on Council

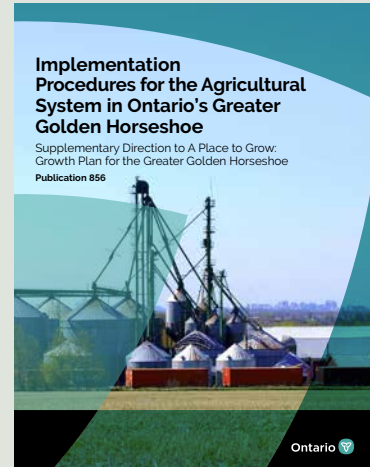
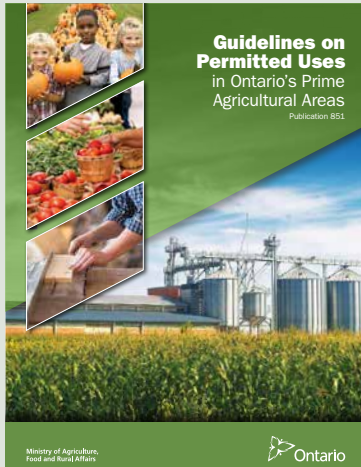
Having one or more elected officials with some level of agricultural expertise or awareness, usually in the form of past or present experience farming or through roles on local agricultural or OFA groups, contributes to a municipality’s capacity. Lower-tier municipalities that have a ‘culture of agriculture,’ or a significant agricultural community, were more likely to indicate that there was an agricultural presence on Council. A planner explained: “we work in a municipality where the majority of our Council is actively involved or they are from a family that is actively involved... it is certainly a benefit to have people with varying backgrounds” (lower-tier, planner).

An elected official noted the following about their Council makeup: “with forty percent of Council currently/ recently farming, I feel like agriculture is well represented, however sometimes from a micro/short term/ personal/anecdotal level, and perhaps less so on a strategic, longer-term, bigger-picture level” (lower-tier, elected official). It is beneficial for Council to have lived experience with farming or have access to the lived experience of farmers, as well as the strategic and policy elements that planners on staff can provide with their professional guidance.

The presence of agricultural expertise or awareness on Council is a benefit to not only the elected officials’ overall comfort with decision-making related to this sector, but to the planners on staff, as well. As one regional planner expressed: “there’s a couple of elected officials on the regional Council that are either farmers or retired farmers. And I would say they have very good understanding and very good perspective on agriculture. And nine times out of ten, the planning department isn’t on the same page as them. And that is why when we say something, we’ve usually talked about it with them beforehand. And that works two ways with them coming to us and us going to them and having sort of a good understanding of how agriculture works and needs to work in [our municipality].”

Additional contributions to capacity include retaining consultants, learning through workplace experience, and having a strong institutional memory.

## RESOURCES PLANNERS IDENTIFIED THAT THEY USE TO STAY UP TO DATE ON AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD



- Agricultural Advisory Committees
- Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)
- Conservation Authorities
- Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (GHFFA)
- Greenbelt Foundation
- Industry newsletters
- Local Planning Groups
- Long Range Planners of Ontario Group (LRPO)
- Ontario Farm & Food Care
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA)
  - Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Community of Practice
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
  - Guidance documents (e.g., Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas)
  - Rural Planners/ Economic Development Advisors
- Ontario Municipalities Association (AMO)
- Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)
- Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA)

### 3.3.3 Challenges to capacity

A variety of challenges to capacity were identified, including lack of staff resources, budgetary issues, or policy barriers that impede efforts to support the agricultural industry.

#### Competing urban priorities

Competing urban priorities is a challenge to capacity experienced across all municipal levels. For elected officials, balancing the interests and needs of urban and rural residents, as well as industry stakeholders, are key to their job. Determining how to bridge the apparent 'divide' between urban and rural areas and to make decisions that are mutually beneficial can be a challenge for municipal staff, too. Often, a predominant urban focus is due to a lack of understanding or awareness of the specific needs of agricultural areas. The sentiment that "growth proposals are thought of more highly than agricultural issues" was echoed by a number of elected officials in the study area (lower-tier, elected official).

Urbanization is also creating difficulties for agricultural operations, such as increased traffic congestion, rural residential properties, and, in some locations, the proposal of a new highway near prime agricultural areas. One planner explained decreasing farm viability due to urban pressures as the following: "so basically, he [a farmer] comes to the point where he does not see his operation continuing and he doesn't foresee the ability to sell his farm operation when he's no longer able to do the farming. And so unfortunately, that led Council to suggest that we recognize the limitations of farming in this area and possibly look to convert those lands into future urban uses" (lower-tier, planner). Although competing priorities due to urbanization pose a challenge for planners, the focus is to balance urban and rural interests and needs, keeping in mind the need to ensure the compatibility of uses emerging into agricultural areas to enhance long-term feasibility of agriculture (even amidst rapidly urbanizing areas).

#### Lack of staff resources

Participants described the impacts of a lack of staff resources. For example: "in terms of any policy focus, [we have] limited abilities because of working on the development applications. We don't have significant time for that. I'd say, we haven't had too many agricultural issues, but that doesn't mean [there aren't] initiatives that we could be working on to help that sector as opposed to just responding to issues. And so definitely we have limited resources to work on those initiatives" (lower-tier, planner).

Most planners indicated that increased staff capacity would be an overall benefit to their functioning, but they also recognize that hiring more staff is contingent on municipal fiscal capacity. A lower-tier planner mentioned: "I could always use more staff...there are capacity issues and [at] every municipality you're going to find that, Council is loath to hire staff because it's the taxpayer's money that pays their salaries, and they've been voted in to keep the tax base low" (lower-tier, planner).

While many planners indicated that additional staff resources would be helpful to enhance their capacity, they indicated they are able to function with their current staffing. The exception was in a number of lower-tier municipalities with only one planner, which makes keeping up with routine planning functions a challenge (e.g., processing applications, staying up to date on provincial policies). As one planner explains: "I think for us a lot of our capacity issues are more that it's just me in the department. I'm trying to think of what might improve our capacity but it's mainly focused on the fact that we have limited staff" (lower-tier, planner). For departments that consist of only one planner, an increase in staff capacity is not just a convenient expansion, but would significantly increase the ability to dedicate attention to subject areas like agriculture and proactively plan for success in this sector.



## SMALL BUT MIGHTY, NORTHUMBERLAND

There are a number of municipalities whose planning department capacity is extremely limited. Northumberland County, for example, only has one planner for a population of over 85,500. Planning and economic development staff work closely together and with partners including OMAFRA and lower-tier municipalities throughout the planning process. A staff member with the County reflected: “we work on the principle that we rely on our partnership relationships and expertise to provide us with the information we require. When you [only have one planner], there’s nobody to turn back to.”

### Further assistance from the province

A number of planners identified a lack of education tools for staff, a desire to have more access to OMAFRA resource planners, the perceived gap between provincial policy and local realities, and unclear policy, lack of clarity regarding provincial interests, and a lack of policy implementation guidelines. As one planner noted: “I don’t think it’s a capacity issue. It’s more of [an issue] of clarity on how to implement policies correctly and to the expectation of the province and various ministries. Perhaps more of a regular dialogue about how and what decisions we’re making...and what the expectations are, so there’s back and forth feedback because we want to make sure that we’re doing things that we’re supposed to” (upper-tier, planner).

A response from another planner demonstrated a divide between provincial agricultural priorities and local lived experiences. For example, while agritourism is a provincial priority for the agricultural sector, there are complaints at the municipal level. This planner felt that while this is a provincial policy direction, the local planning system is left to deal with issues and concerns.

Provincial guidance is also sought after when it comes to communicating policies to the public. As one planner explains: “[We have an issue] explaining to people the agricultural systems approach and [the] lack of ability to remove lands from a prime agricultural area. What I think would be very helpful to myself and others in my position in other municipalities that are dealing with this issue and consistently having to explain to people why a very clearly non-agricultural parcel can’t become something else through an application, some kind of a provincial clarity piece that explains that for the average farmer and average citizen, would be really helpful, because we’re pointing them to the fact that it’s a provincial approach to [protect agriculture]. And that in many cases, we don’t disagree with them that a particular piece of land is non-agricultural and very likely will never be agricultural or contribute to the agricultural industry at all. However, that’s part of this system...and so [having help explaining that] and having a resource, like a statement or a position or clarity that explains that specific scenario and issue coming from OMAFRA or the province would be very helpful” (upper-tier, planner).



### Complex jurisdictional setting

Planners mentioned the complexity of the multi-jurisdictional planning framework in Ontario as a challenge to capacity. In the Greenbelt, municipalities need to consider a plethora of policies in the Provincial Policy Statement, Greenbelt Plan, A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and/or the Niagara Escarpment Plan. In addition to these provincial policies and guiding documents, each level of government (upper tier or region/county and lower-tier) will have official plans, strategies, and bylaws to implement and adhere to.

The policy and regulatory requirements that planners and elected officials must consider when making decisions related to agriculture can be incredibly complex and, as a result, it can be challenging to respond in a clear and timely manner. For elected officials, understanding who has the authority to make specific decisions is often cited as a challenge. For planners, communicating clearly was identified as a challenge: “[for us,] keeping up with the ever-changing provincial policy regime as it applies to the rural areas and agriculture and then having to explain the multi-layered complex set of local, regional and provincial land use planning policies to Council, the public, and other stakeholders [is challenging]” (lower-tier, planner).

In municipalities with limited capacity or understanding among staff, the agricultural community takes on more responsibility to navigate policies and regulations. As one planner mentioned: “I think it puts our agricultural community in a constant state of near exhaustion and burnout... I think some of these farmers know more about policy than I do, [and they] got it figured out because they have to, it’s their livelihood... and they shouldn’t have to, that should be something that we take on but we may not have the capacity” (lower-tier, planner).



## Policy barriers

Planners and elected officials noted policy can be a barrier to effective support of agricultural communities and their needs. Policies that present these challenges may include those at the municipal or county/regional level but provincial policy is cited most frequently. Frustrations expressed by planners and elected officials range from outdated policy that does not account for new and emerging changes in agriculture, to an overabundance of policy that creates burnout among farmers, Council, and staff, as well as challenges with applying provincial policy to a local context.

Some planners expressed difficulty in “being able to adapt policies quick enough to the changing issues” (lower-tier, planner). The agricultural sector is evolving and farmers are looking to diversify their operations to enhance their economic viability, and there are also ongoing threats that require attention through policy and regulation. The process of updating local policies to reflect the needs of this changing sector is, however, often long and cumbersome, resulting in policies that do not respond quickly enough to changing realities. As one planner explains: **“Agriculture isn’t just agriculture anymore. There’s all these different uses. And we need to categorize them. And we don’t have language...to do that. So you might have agriculture, but you don’t have language to address agriculture related uses and on-farm diversified uses, and how do we classify those?”** (lower-tier, planner).

In some municipalities, staff, Council, and community members are experiencing challenges managing the policies and plans that appear to overlap. A regional planner mentioned the following: “[in our municipality], we have the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan, the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, and the Growth Plan. And it’s frustrating ... because, as you know, farmers will often have multiple properties. And if they have a property in the Oak Ridges Moraine that’s treated differently than a property that’s in the Greenbelt, that’s different from a property in say, Northumberland, which is just on the other side of our boundary that’s outside of the Greenbelt. So, from an application processing perspective, they can get burnt out” (upper-tier, planner). This burnout experienced by farmers is also experienced by the planners that are responding to the questions and frustrations of the agricultural community.

A lack of clarity in policy can mean that staff are hesitant to implement it as a result. As mentioned by a lower-tier planner: “the agricultural landscape is changing very quickly to respond to the economy. Property owners are seeking to diversify their businesses. [As a result of this] more clarity is needed in policy and definition to help determine what can/should or should not be permitted” (lower-tier, planner).

Additional challenges to capacity include a lack of institutional memory, lack of exposure to agriculture, and a lack of unity or consensus on Council regarding community priorities.

# Opportunities for Building Capacity

Building capacity for effective agricultural and food systems planning is a shared responsibility and collaborative effort between provincial and municipal planners and other staff, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), elected municipal officials, agricultural organizations, and other stakeholder groups. Ten opportunities for building capacity include the following:

## 4.1.1 Municipal collaboration: Foster open dialogue across municipalities to promote a learning culture.

Municipalities often expressed the value in sharing and learning from the experiences of other municipalities to respond to particular challenges or meet specific objectives. Many municipalities are already communicating and networking informally, and expressed a desire to have this networking more readily available. An example of one approach is Planners of Dufferin (POD), an initiative coordinated at the county-level that facilitates inter-municipal communication amongst Dufferin County's lower-tier municipalities each month. Supporting communicative and collaborative networks through more formalized means such as a forum would help to enhance learning, adapting, and responding to challenges in agriculture.

## PLANNERS OF DUFFERIN, DUFFERIN

Building partnerships is a key way municipalities can increase their capacity. In Dufferin County, the planning department has two key initiatives. The first, **Planners of Dufferin**, or POD, brings planners from both the upper- and lower-tiers together monthly to talk about planning issues, hear from stakeholders such as OMAFRA and the MMAH, and share best practices. A planner at Dufferin County explained, “I think there are a lot of the benefits of having these monthly planners’ meetings with our local municipalities ...we keep in touch on what’s going on in each of the areas and some of the concerns they want to share with the group. And more importantly, the whole MCR [municipal comprehensive review] process, right? It’s a collaborative process. We’re not working in silos.” Economic development staff also attend POD meetings, ensuring integration between planning and economic development policies, programs, and projects.

The second initiative at the County of Dufferin is **Ag Round Tables**. This initiative began as a result of COVID-19 but has created a successful platform for the agricultural community and the municipality to regularly meet. Anyone can attend these meetings and the floor is open for discussion on any topic. When asked if there was interest in continuing these meetings past COVID-19, the Dufferin Federation of Agriculture overwhelmingly voted in favour: “well into the recovery to the pandemic, we see ourselves operating these, you know, with and for the benefit of the agricultural community.”

### 4.1.2 Bridging academia and planning practice: Create linkages between relevant academic and other research and the experiences of practicing planners.

Planners often mentioned the desire to strengthen the link between academia and planning practice. Many planning schools across the country are often undertaking timely and relevant research that is of interest to municipalities. Examples include the University of Guelph’s Rural Planning and Development program, which often undertakes research relevant to rural and agricultural planning in collaboration with OMAFRA. There is an opportunity to strengthen and bridge the gap between academia and planning practice, for example by formalizing opportunities for collaboration between planning schools and practitioners. Planning education could be enriched if planning theory were more grounded into practice, which would benefit both researchers and municipalities. The continuous learning and professional development of practicing and experienced planners could also be enhanced.

Planning schools offer an opportunity to build capacity for agricultural decision-making before planning students becoming practicing professionals. While the focus of the University of Guelph’s program is Rural Planning and Development, there is an opportunity for other programs to also build capacity in this area. The University of Waterloo, for example, offers some rural content and agricultural subject matter. While some universities have an urban focus, many students will become practicing planners in rural or urban-rural boundary municipalities and would benefit from courses that provide an agricultural and agri-food perspective to planning considerations.

### 4.1.3 Planning for institutional memory: Organize, provide access to, and proactively share knowledge.

Frequent staff turnover in municipalities is a common challenge. Recruiting and training new staff and building their skill and knowledge requires time and resources, often limiting the capacity of municipalities to go ‘above and beyond’ their minimum responsibilities in supporting local agricultural development. Challenges with staff turnover are exacerbated when staff who were specialized (e.g., staff with agricultural planning backgrounds) move into new positions elsewhere. Municipalities may over time collect or create resources for staff to consult, but may not have the means to organize and make these resources easily identifiable or accessible to staff.

It is helpful to combine and organize information and knowledge resources as the municipalities come across them, or create them as needed, and store them in a space that is accessible for all staff. This resource collection could be a shared drive amongst staff or some other form of internal infrastructure that could store these collective resources. Organization and communication are fundamental to promote staff awareness of what is available and what work has already been done. While it may require an initial investment of organizational resources, providing for institutional memory can help to avoid ‘reinventing the wheel’ or duplicating efforts.

### 4.1.4 Intergovernmental collaboration: Recognize the value of provincial expertise and strengthen the relationship between municipal and provincial planners.

Municipalities are colloquially referred to as ‘creatures of the Province.’ It is important that there be effective relationships between provincial and municipal governments, so municipalities can meet provincial mandates effectively and efficiently, particularly in ways that are appropriate to localized contexts. Planners expressed the great value that the Province provides to them in terms of guidance. This includes the various provincial tools and guidelines for planners (e.g., OMAFRA’s Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas or MDS formulae documents). Additionally, planners expressed the value in having Provincial staff available to them to help answer questions, provide feedback, and assist with the interpretation of policy promptly.

Room for improvement exists in the relationship between municipal and provincial governments. Municipalities believe they could at times benefit from more clear-cut or ‘black and white’ stances on what is permitted in policy (e.g., cannabis production as it relates to agricultural uses). Similarly, some municipalities wanted to improve the relationship with provincial staff to understand how to interpret policies in their local context or specific situations. Additionally, planners expressed the desire to have the Province be open to regularly receiving feedback from municipalities in terms of what they experience and what would be helpful to have considered in policy development or included in resource materials.



#### 4.1.5 Professional development: Provide a wider variety of resources and learning opportunities for planners, including unstructured and ongoing ones.

Enhancing the understanding between planning and the agricultural sector through training opportunities available to planners and other municipal staff would help improve policy implementation and delivery. Ensuring planning staff are aware of existing guidance documents such as OMAFRA's Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas and Guidelines on Agricultural Impact Assessments would be an ideal starting point. It is also valuable to have information and tools that are relevant to municipalities' specific contexts, which could be gained through experiential learning opportunities like site visits to local farms and agri-food facilities. Site visits can help planners better understand how planning policies affect different farms and can help farmers understand how the policies apply to their particular farm.

Participation in conventional training opportunities such as conferences or workshops often require money, travel, time, and staff capacity, and may not be the most accessible training opportunity for those who could benefit from it most. Fact sheets, best practice guides, and virtual libraries of information (including webinars and workshops) all provide a means to have information be readily accessible and affordable for municipal stakeholders to consult when it is needed. These resources and learning opportunities may help foster an orientation towards agriculture among staff who might not otherwise have been exposed to the agricultural industry in their personal lives. In turn, this helps to foster a 'culture of agriculture' in the community, whereby staff recognize the contributions of agriculture to the community and plan with that in mind.

Equally important as the technical competencies of planning practitioners is the range of 'soft skills,' including facilitation, public engagement, fostering understanding, building trust, negotiation, and conflict resolution. These skills are needed, for example, when engaging with various stakeholders on particularly challenging proposals or building understanding and reconciling differences of opinion amongst decision-makers when it comes to responding to agricultural challenges. Overall, participants identified the value in building interpersonal and communicative competencies to support and advance a shared vision for agriculture in the community.

#### 4.1.6 Awareness beyond planning staff: Foster understanding of the agricultural sector across municipal departments.

Planning departments are not solely responsible for understanding and responding to agricultural priorities. Other municipal departments such as building, engineering, economic development, as well as Council, play a role in responding to issues and proactively taking advantage of opportunities in the sector as they arise.

Responding to priorities in a coordinated fashion requires cross-departmental awareness and education on matters related to agriculture. As noted earlier, site visits to farms, building relationships with the agricultural community, and the consideration of the entire agri-food chain in decision-making and delivery of services are equally of value to other municipal stakeholders. As such, these learning opportunities should be embraced by these other active municipal stakeholders engaging and working in the agricultural community.

## TEACHING THROUGH TOURING: LEARNING THROUGH FARM VISITS

Farm tours and visits have been identified by participants across the Greenbelt as an excellent way to build staff and Councillors' agricultural and agri-food understanding. Farm tours can be organized by the municipality, its agricultural advisory committee, or other local organizations, and involve staff visiting a local farm and learning about its day-to-day operations directly from the farm operators. This is a learning opportunity where staff gain firsthand insight and understanding into how a farm functions. Farm tours allow staff to see agriculture beyond the application or approval process, bridging the potential knowledge gap between policy and what happens in practice. As one planner noted: **"it's one thing to process an application or a two-dimensional site plan, but to actually see these facilities up and running, that's where there is more enhanced knowledge and understanding"** (lower tier, planner). In addition to bridging this gap, farm tours are particularly useful in updating staff perceptions and understanding of agriculture as the industry evolves and innovates. As expressed by another planner: **"agriculture is changing a lot and there is a fair amount of industrial activity happening in agriculture. There is an incredible amount of capital tied up in these systems, in terms of monitoring, milking and feeding systems, among others. So helping staff better understand that is important"** (upper tier, planner).



#### 4.1.7 A leadership role for OPPI: OPPI can do more to encourage and help planners to network and share agricultural planning information and resources.

Planners expressed a general reliance on materials disseminated by OPPI, Ontario's regulating body of the planning profession, to enhance their learning and build their skill sets given the rapid pace of change in most Ontario communities. They noted, however, that the vast majority of content disseminated by OPPI omits an agricultural or rural lens, or rural and agricultural content altogether, despite the majority of Ontario's municipalities containing rural and/or agricultural areas. OPPI could encourage planners to network, create, and disseminate agricultural planning information that is of value to one another. It is also critical that OPPI provide a wider variety of material that includes rural and agricultural planning lenses for its members.

#### 4.1.8 Include farmers in the process: Build relationships between municipal staff and the agricultural community and proactively engage farmers in planning processes.

Agriculture is the backbone of many rural economies and the landscape of many municipalities. When planning for agriculture, it is essential to recognize how agriculture contributes to the community and continue to support agricultural stakeholders to evolve with the times in ways that benefit both the industry and the municipality.

The most effective way to learn and enhance capacity for agricultural planning is to build relationships with the farming community. They hold and provide a wealth of knowledge regarding how policy implementation may impact their farming practice or landscape. Critical to building relationships with the agricultural community is to maintain this relationship in a meaningful way – not just engage with farmers when there is an issue or when a planning application comes up, but on an ongoing basis. This need for deeper engagement applies to all municipal stakeholders, including planners, elected officials, and other departments such as economic development and engineering.

There are several ways to enhance the relationship with the agricultural community. Municipalities may have an agricultural advisory committee (AAC) – while they vary in function and structure, AACs provide agricultural perspectives in policy development or decision-making. Similarly, municipalities can engage with the local OFA or other farm membership organizations that may be present in their municipality (e.g., National Farmers' Union, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Ontario Soil and Crop Association, commodity-specific organizations, etc.). Additionally, it is valuable to engage with perspectives from all along the agri-food value chain (e.g., processors, producers, and other agribusiness). Necessary to all of these activities is a respect for and consideration of farmers' calendar years and what seasons are their busiest. Making sure that public meetings and consultations happen during an appropriate time for the farming community would ensure that their full engagement is possible.

#### 4.1.9 Recognize the agri-food system: Consider all stakeholders and components involved from farm to fork.

While much of the discussion presented here is focused on agricultural planning, equally important is the need to consider and include the entire agri-food industry in planning initiatives. Producers do not operate in isolation from other components of the supply chain, which are vital to the production, processing, and distribution of goods to communities across the country. Combined with the agricultural land base, agri-food infrastructure, services, networks, and assets are all critical to the long-term success of agriculture and agri-food all across Canada. As such, there is a shifting focus on agricultural planning to agricultural systems planning, requiring the holistic and coherent consideration of agriculture and agri-food in economic, environmental, and social community development in policy, plan, and program implementation and delivery.

##### AGRICULTURE AS A PUBLIC GOOD, NORTHUMBERLAND

Increasingly municipalities are recognizing the need to protect and enhance the entire agri-food supply chain. In Northumberland, the County owns and operates the **Ontario Agri-food Venture Centre**, a regional storage and processing facility. The Centre provides an array of services, including marketing, packaging, and food-safety training. A member of the joint Economic Development and Tourism (the department where planning is housed) commented that “what it does is it increases the level of professionalism attached to the production of the food.” Clients of the Venture Centre come from across southern Ontario, beyond County boundaries. It was noted that much like highways, the Agri-food Venture Centre plays an important role at the regional level.

County Council and staff see the Venture Centre “as part of a bigger dialogue” and “an investment in and commitment to agriculture and food systems.” Reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic and the rekindling of a relationship between people and food, Northumberland County emphasizes the importance of resources like the Ontario Agri-food Venture Centre in strengthening local and regional food security and ensuring food quality and safety.

#### 4.1.10 Internal review of capacity: Revisit and reflect on your commitment to integrating agriculture into decision-making.

Capacity, as defined in this project, can be measured both quantitatively (e.g., the number of planners in a department) and qualitatively (e.g., staff experiences with dealing with agricultural and related issues). Capacity for agricultural decision-making and support across Greenbelt municipalities is varied. Some municipalities demonstrated a strong capacity to support agriculture, evident through staffing, policies, and strategies that have an agricultural lens, and Council decisions that prioritize and recognize the contributions of agriculture to their community. Some municipalities struggle with their capacity to support agriculture, owing to competing urban pressures, insufficient staff to explore the needs of the agricultural community, or perhaps a declining agricultural land base, leading to a focus on alternative community priorities.



The recommendations provided in this report suggest a variety of ways to increase capacity; however, each municipality will need to determine for themselves what their present capacity looks like and what opportunities are best matched to their circumstances.

Municipalities are encouraged to conduct an internal review of their capacity to support agriculture, which could include taking stock of the various resources (internal and external) that are currently being accessed, level of engagement with the agricultural community (e.g., do you have an agricultural advisory committee or other platform for communication), and presence of an agricultural lens to the various municipal policies or strategies being developed (e.g., climate change action plan or water management plan). This review does not need to be formal and could simply be a reflective activity, considering what your current level of engagement is with agricultural issues and priorities and deciding where it could be strengthened and what strategies can achieve that.



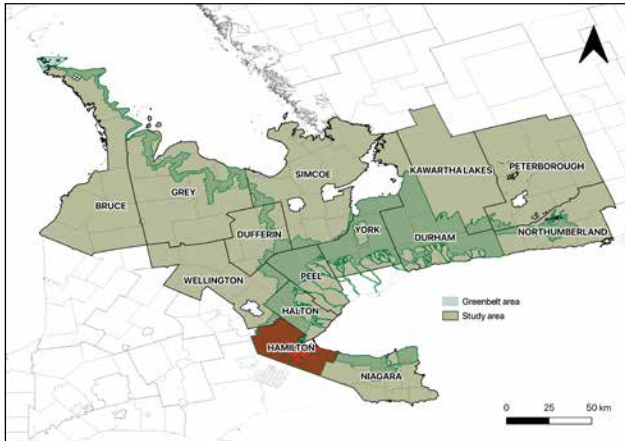


# Appendix A: Municipalities Included in Study Area

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Region of Durham                | 34. Bruce County                             |
| 2. Township of Brock               | 35. Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula |
| 3. Municipality of Clarington      | 36. Town of South Bruce Peninsula            |
| 4. City of Oshawa                  | 37. Dufferin County                          |
| 5. City of Pickering               | 38. Township of Amaranth                     |
| 6. Township of Scugog              | 39. Township of East Garafraxa               |
| 7. Township of Uxbridge            | 40. Town of Mono                             |
| 8. Town of Whitby                  | 41. Township of Mulmur                       |
| 9. City of Hamilton                | 42. County of Grey                           |
| 10. Halton Region                  | 43. Township of Chatsworth                   |
| 11. City of Burlington             | 44. Township of Georgian Bluffs              |
| 12. Town of Halton Hills           | 45. Municipality of Grey Highlands           |
| 13. Town of Milton                 | 46. Municipality of Meaford                  |
| 14. Niagara Region                 | 47. City of Owen Sound                       |
| 15. Town of Grimsby                | 48. Town of The Blue Mountains               |
| 16. Town of Lincoln                | 49. City of Kawartha Lakes                   |
| 17. Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake    | 50. Northumberland County                    |
| 18. Town of Pelham                 | 51. Alnwick-Haldimand Township               |
| 19. City of St. Catharines         | 52. Township of Cramahe                      |
| 20. City of Thorold                | 53. Township of Hamilton                     |
| 21. Township of West Lincoln       | 54. Municipality of Port Hope                |
| 22. Region of Peel                 | 55. Municipality of Trent Hills              |
| 23. City of Brampton               | 56. County of Peterborough                   |
| 24. Town of Caledon                | 57. Township of Cavan Monaghan               |
| 25. York Region                    | 58. Simcoe County                            |
| 26. Town of Aurora                 | 59. Township of Adjala-Tosorontio            |
| 27. Town of East Gwillimbury       | 60. Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury        |
| 28. Town of Georgina               | 61. Township of Clearview                    |
| 29. Township of King               | 62. Town of Innisfil                         |
| 30. City of Markham                | 63. Town of New Tecumseth                    |
| 31. City of Richmond Hill          | 64. Wellington County                        |
| 32. City of Vaughan                | 65. Town of Erin                             |
| 33. Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville | 66. Township of Puslinch                     |

# Appendix B: Individual Municipality Summaries

## City of Hamilton



### SINGLE-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 536,917

Land area: 1117.29 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 16

#### Planning department information

Planners: 44

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 45

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** At the City of Hamilton, planning services are undertaken by the planning division within the broader Planning and Economic Development Department (this is in addition to building, municipal law enforcement, growth management/development engineering, transportation planning, and tourism and culture divisions). Planning works closely with economic development in the Department on a variety of sectoral portfolios (i.e., agriculture). The planning division has two teams dedicated to either rural planning or urban planning. Eight team members make up the rural planning team, including a Senior Project Manager, Senior Planner, Natural Heritage Planner, Intermediate Planner, two Planner IIs, and a planning technician.

#### Agricultural related information

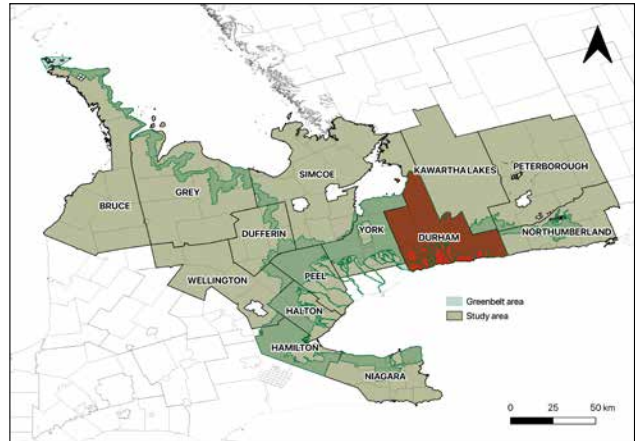
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$259,909,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.

## Region of Durham



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 645,862

Land area: 2,523.80 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 29

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Township of Brock
- City of Oshawa
- Township of Scugog
- Town of Whitby
- Municipality of Clarington
- City of Pickering
- Township of Uxbridge

#### Planning department information

Planners: 29

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 28

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 3 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Region of Durham's Planning and Economic Development Department consists of two divisions: the planning division (consisting of policy planning, development planning, and transportation planning) and the economic development and tourism division. In this structure, the planning department works closely, and often collaborates with, economic development in serving the agricultural community.

#### Agricultural related information

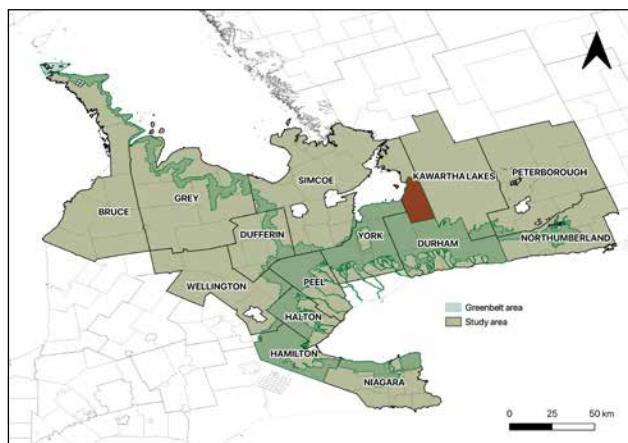
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$321,749,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Brock



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 11,642      Land area: 423.34 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7      Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 0

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Planning and Development division, operating under the Building and Business Development Department, at the Township of Brock was formally established in 2019. Currently, one planner makes up the Department. Before the establishment of the planning division, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and an outside consulting firm carried out all planning functions for the Township. Today, this outside consulting firm is retained only for peer review. Economic Development is undertaken at the upper-tier level by the Region of Durham.

#### Agricultural related information

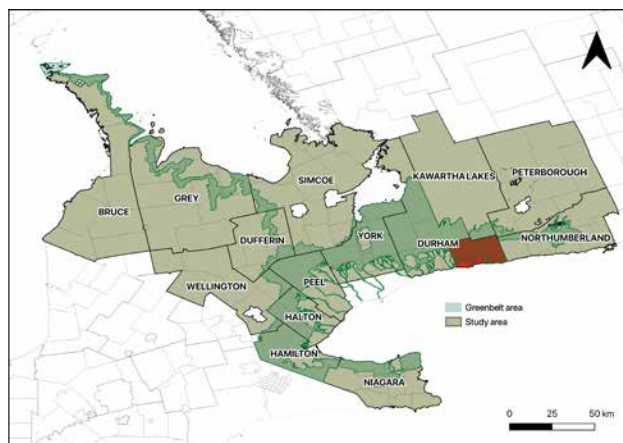
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Municipality of Clarington



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 92,013      Land area: 611.4 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7      Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 16

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 18

Planning department budget: Less than \$3,000,000- \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Planning Services Department consists of several staff members, including full-time staff, full-time contract staff, administrative staff, and GIS technicians, as well as other positions supporting functions of planning services. The Planning Services Department undertakes services related to planning policy, development approval, building services, community development initiatives, school crossing guards, geomatic services, real estate, environmental assessments, and stewardship initiatives. In undertaking these functions, Planning Services works closely with the Building Division within the broader Engineering Department. At the time of this study, both building and engineering services were approved by Council to integrate into the Planning Services Department. Economic Development services are provided by the Region of Durham, as well as through a contract with the Clarington Board of Trade.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

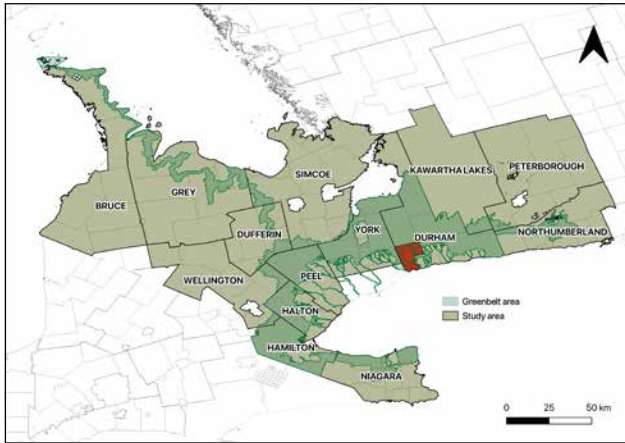
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.



## City of Pickering



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 91,771

Land area: 231.55 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 18

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 18

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** At the City of Pickering, planning functions are undertaken by the City Development Department, in addition to building and sustainability services. The Senior Coordinator Development Liaison reports directly to the Chief Planner (albeit not a planning position), works closely with economic development and planning, and is heavily involved with engaging with future development. Outside consultants are often retained for conducting background studies on emerging technical development proposals to undertake peer review on specific development applications.

#### Agricultural related information

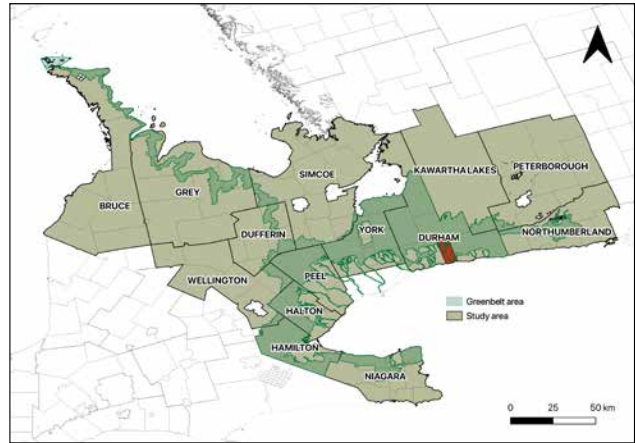
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## City of Oshawa



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 159,458

Land area: 145.64 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 15

Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 14

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 14

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** Planning services is one of four branches under the City of Oshawa's Department of Development Services, in addition to engineering, economic development, and building services. Planning services mainly consist of development and urban design, as well as policy planning. Agricultural-related planning matters do not belong to a specific portfolio but are to be addressed under the Department's policy planning umbrella. Consultants are not often retained except when a background study is needed for a significant plan (e.g., preparation for a secondary plan).

#### Agricultural related information

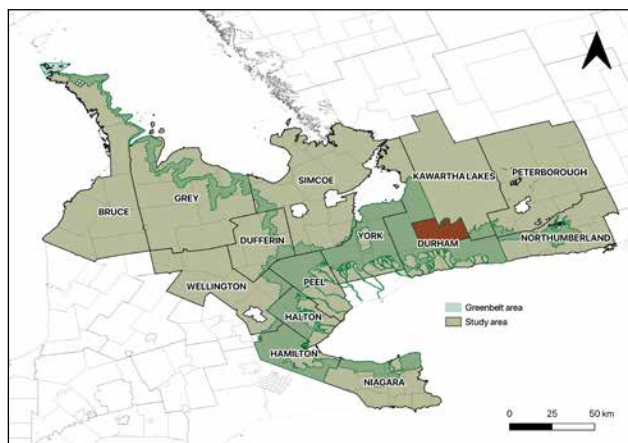
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Scugog



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 21,617

Land area: 474.71 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 3

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 2

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.scugog.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

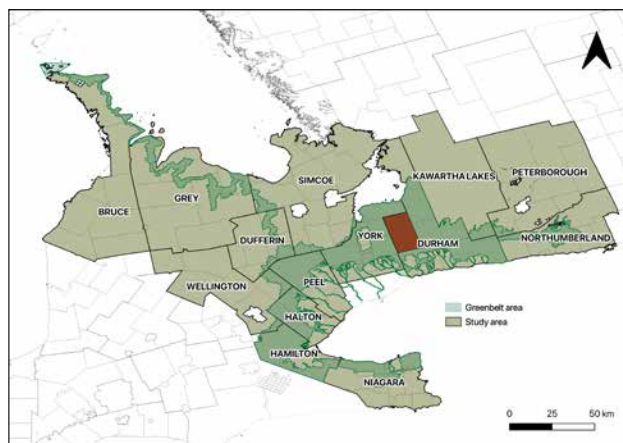
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Uxbridge



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 21,176

Land area: 420.95 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 0

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Township of Uxbridge's planning functions is undertaken by the Development Services Department, which undertakes building permit applications, site plan applications, committee of adjustment applications and zoning amendments, as well as inspections. As no dedicated full-time planning position exists within the Department (only a planning technician), many of the services mentioned above are consistently performed by, or in collaboration with, an outside planning consultant.

#### Agricultural related information

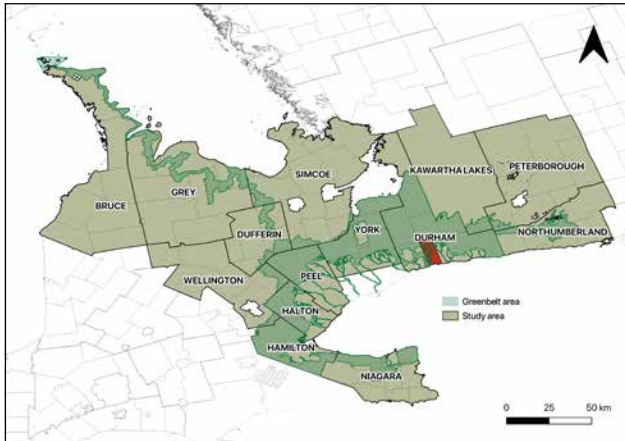
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Whitby



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 128,377

Land area: 146.66 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Region of Durham

#### Planning department information

Planners: 20

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 20

Planning department budget: The annual budget fluctuates significantly from year-to-year

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Whitby's Planning and Development department consists of four main divisions: policy and heritage, development control, design, and technical services, planning administration, and building services. The Strategic Initiatives Department, consisting of economic development, often provides support to Planning and Development from a technical advisory perspective.

#### Agricultural related information

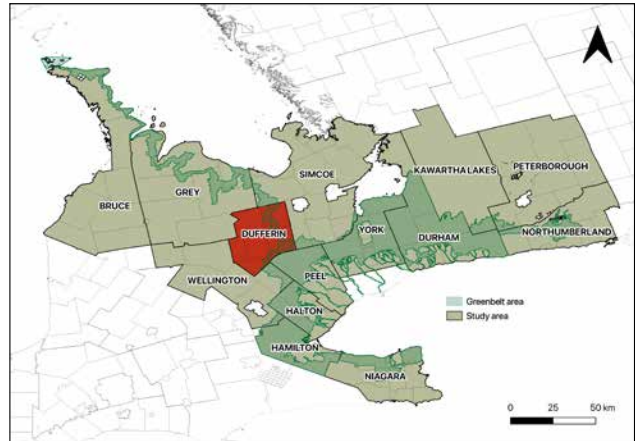
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Dufferin County



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 61,735

Land area: 1,486.44 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 14

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Township of Amaranth
- Town of Mono
- Town of Grand Valley
- Town of Orangeville
- Township of East Garafraxa
- Township of Mulmur
- Township of Melancthon
- Town of Shelburne

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 2

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Planning and Development Department at Dufferin County consists of a Director of Planning, Economic Development, and Culture, as well as a Planning Coordinator. Given the role of the Director, the Planning and Development Department works closely with the Economic Development Department and its Economic Development Officer, particularly on issues relating to agricultural planning.

#### Agricultural related information

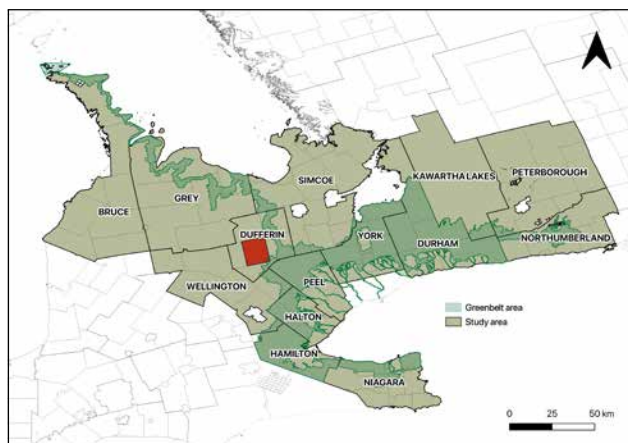
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$157,496,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Amaranth



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 4,079  
Land area: 264.58 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 5  
Located in: Dufferin County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1  
Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** In the Township of Amaranth, planning and engineering services are undertaken by one staff member – the township planner, a relatively new role (established in 2020), who undertakes both engineering and planning services for the municipality. Before the creation of this recent role, consulting services were previously relied upon to carry out both engineering and planning functions. Consulting planning services were used and shared between Townships of Amaranth and East Garafraxa due to a joint administration.

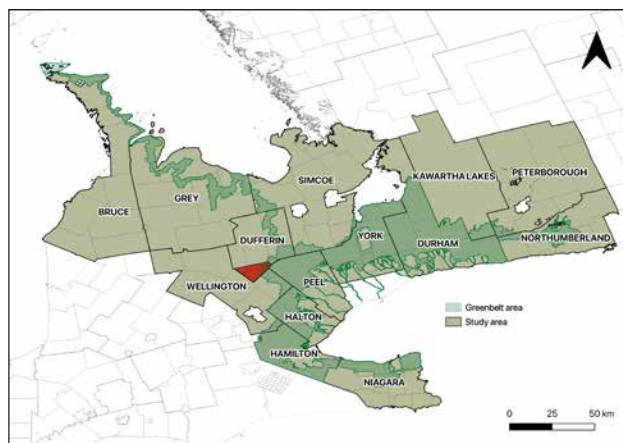
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of East Garafraxa



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 2,579  
Land area: 166.07 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 5  
Located in: Dufferin County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1  
Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Planning and Development Department and the Economic Development Department at the Township of East Garafraxa consists of one staff member. In this role, the planner reports to the CAO, who is also the Clerk and Treasurer for the Municipality. The planner works closely with the Director of Public Works. Up until December 2019, in-house planning services were split between the Townships of East Garafraxa and Amaranth due to a joint administration. Currently, each municipality has an in-house planner. Consultants have often been retained to carry out planning and engineering services in the Township of East Garafraxa.

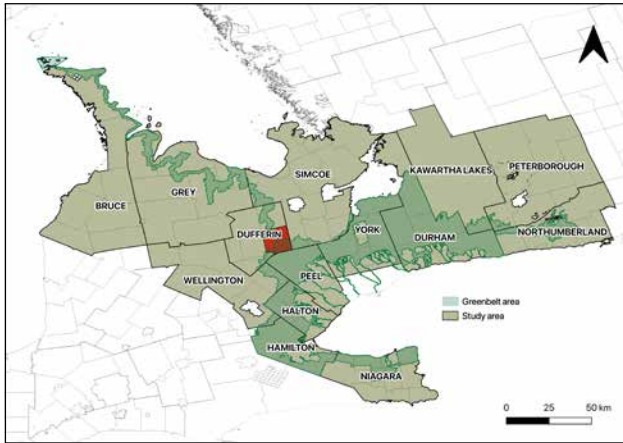
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Mono



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 8,609  
 Land area: 277.83 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Dufferin County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
 No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://townofmono.com/>

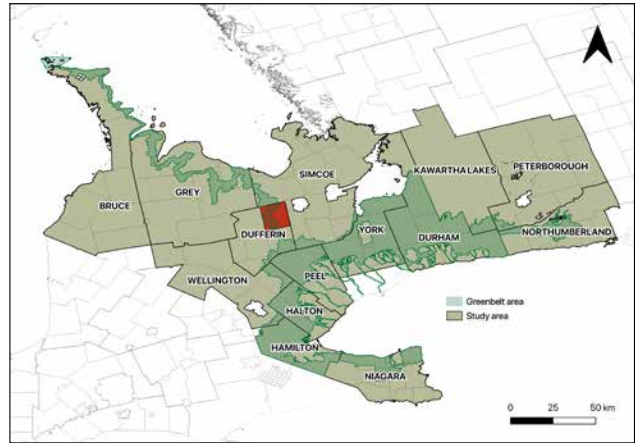
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Township of Mulmur



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 3,478  
 Land area: 286.77 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Dufferin County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
 No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://mulmur.ca/>

#### Agricultural related information

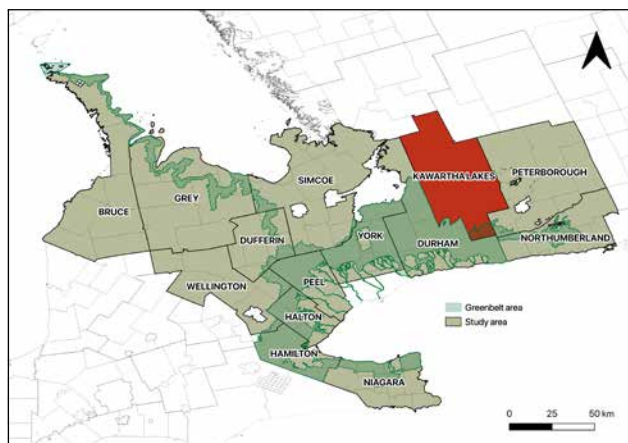
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.



## City of Kawartha Lakes



### SINGLE-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 75,423

Land area: 3082.38 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

#### Planning department information

Planners: 12

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 7

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview, see <https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

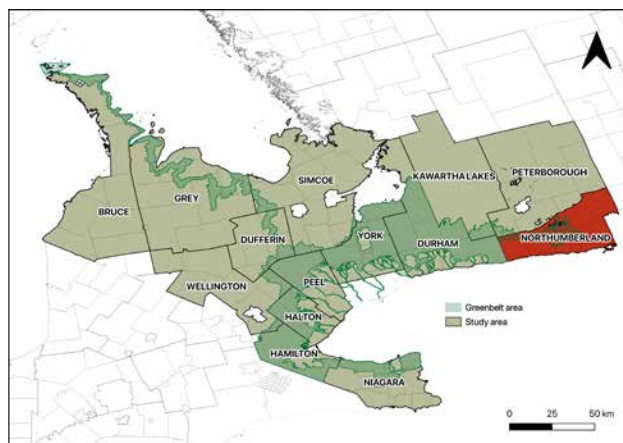
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$149,555,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Northumberland County



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 85,598

Land area: 1,905.15 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Alnwick-Haldimand Township
- Township of Hamilton
- Municipality of Brighton
- Municipality of Port Hope
- Township of Cramahe
- Municipality of Trent Hills
- Town of Cobourg

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Northumberland County planning services are delivered by the Economic Development, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives Department. The Manager of Land Use Planning and Inspection Service, the only staff dedicated to land use planning, is responsible for building relationships with lower-tier planners, providing strategic direction, and assisting with economic development-related activities. Although the department was formalized relatively recently, there are many staff members with diverse roles in the Department (i.e., economic development, planning, tourism, and settlement services) and each work closely together to address a variety of priorities.

#### Agricultural related information

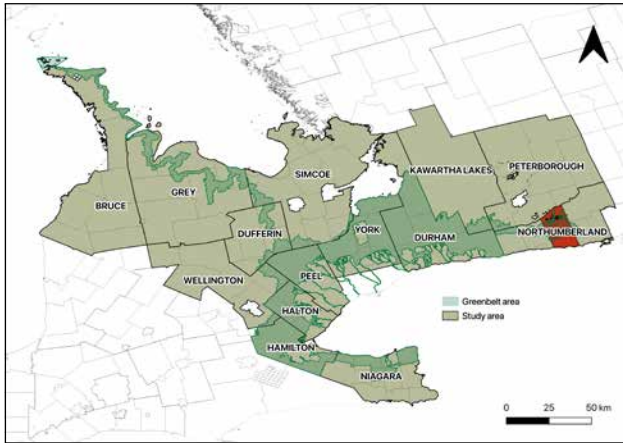
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$152,043,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Alnwick-Haldimand Township



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 6,869  
 Land area: 398.45 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Northumberland County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Planning and economic development services are undertaken by one full-time planning staff member and one administrative assistant at the Township of Alnwick-Haldimand. Consulting firms are acquired to undertake development charge studies, Official Plan updates, and other longer-time projects occurring outside of the day-to-day responsibilities of the planning staff.

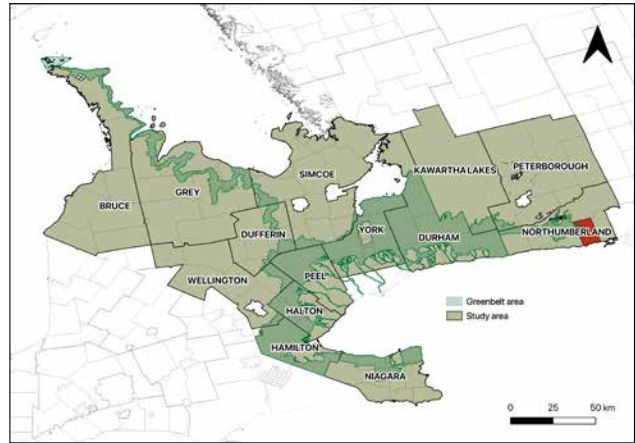
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Cramahe



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 6,355  
 Land area: 202.16 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Northumberland County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.cramahe.ca/en/index.aspx>

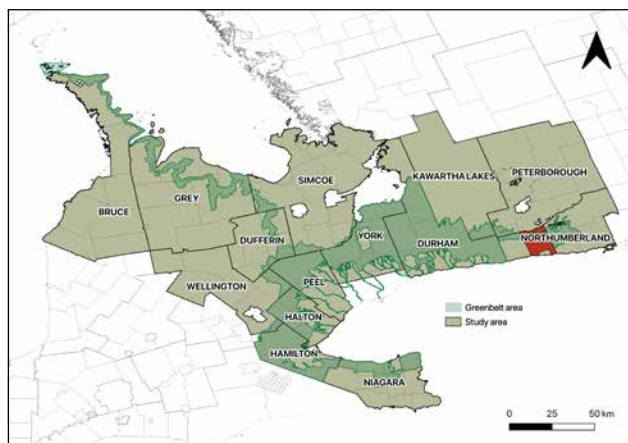
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Hamilton



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 10,942

Land area: 256.08 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 5

Located in: Northumberland County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/index.aspx#>

#### Agricultural related information

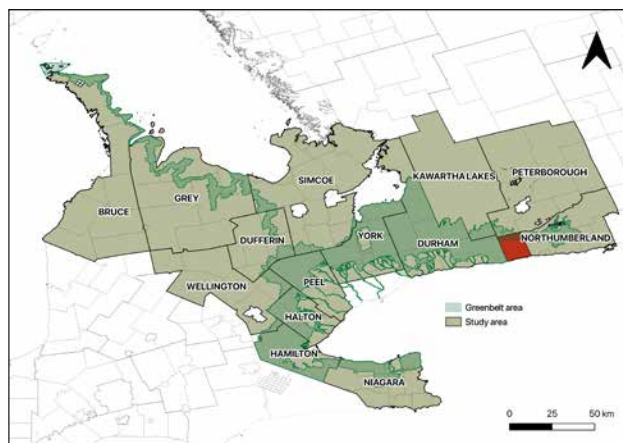
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Municipality of Port Hope



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 16,753

Land area: 278.87 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Northumberland County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 3

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 3

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.porthope.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

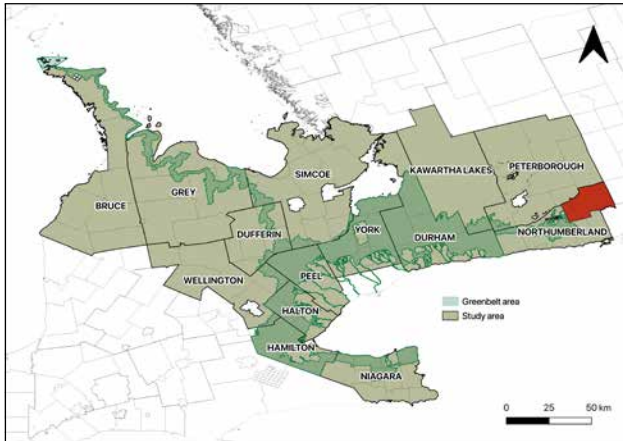
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Municipality of Trent Hills



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 12,900

Land area: 511.95 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Northumberland County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** Planning services are undertaken in the Planning and Building department at the Municipality of Trent Hills, mainly by the Director of Planning and Development, Planning Coordinator, and the Planning and Development Assistant. The Director of Planning and Development also leads Economic Development at the Municipality in collaboration with the Community Development Officer. Outside consultants are often retained for emerging policy planning projects (i.e., background studies on cannabis production in agricultural areas) or to undertake peer review on specific development applications.

#### Agricultural related information

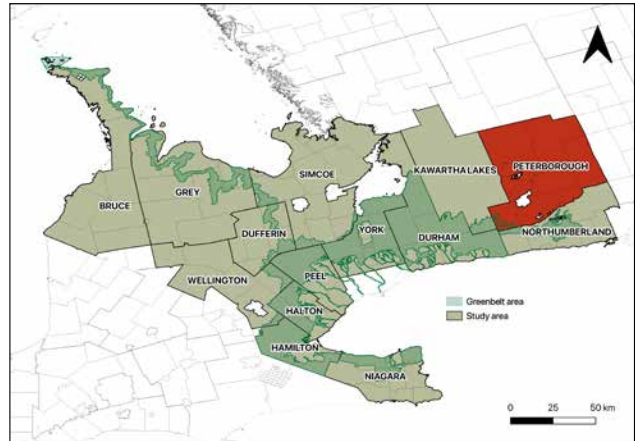
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## County of Peterborough



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 138,236

Land area: 3848.20 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 16

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Township of Cavan Monaghan
- Township of Asphodel-Norwood
- Township of Douro-Dummer
- Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen
- Township of North Kawartha
- Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan
- Township of Selwyn
- Municipality of Trent Lakes

#### Planning department information

Planners: 6

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 6

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** At the County of Peterborough, the Planning Department consists of staff members who specialize in planning, land division, or GIS services. At the County, there is a manager of planning, a senior planner, and several area planners who act as liaisons in coordinating planning services for their assigned area municipalities.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$94,283,000

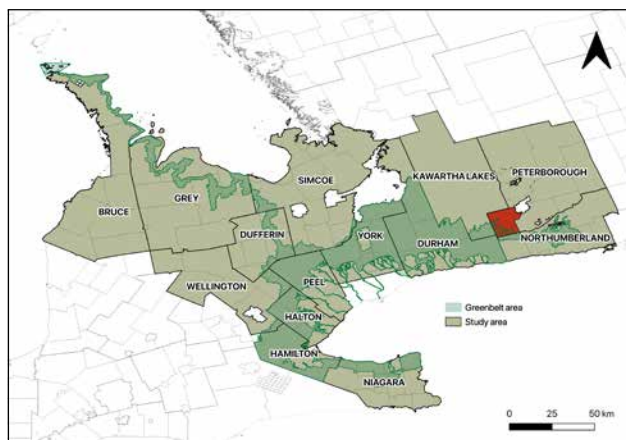
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



## Township of Cavan Monaghan



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 8,829

Land area: 306.33 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 5

Located in: County of Peterborough

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.cavanmonaghan.net/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

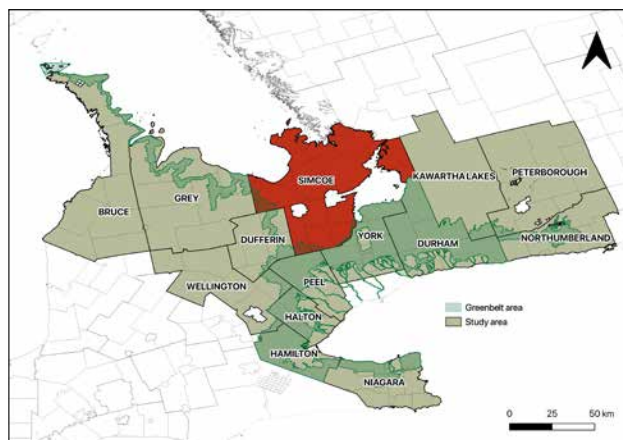
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2018.

## Simcoe County



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 479,650 Land area: 4859.64 km<sup>2</sup> Elected Officials: 32

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Township of Severn
- Township of Essa
- Town of Midland
- Township of Ramara
- Township of Tay
- Township of Clearview
- Township of Oro-Medonte
- Township of Adjala-Tosorontio
- Town of Collingwood
- Town of Innisfil
- Town of Penetanguishene
- Township of Springwater
- Township of Tiny
- Town of New Tecumseth
- Town of Wasaga-Beach
- Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

#### Planning department information

Planners: 9

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 10

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** Simcoe County's Planning Department consists of a Director of Planning, Economic Development, and Transit, two managers of planning, two senior planners, three intermediate/junior planners, and a planning information analyst. Half of staff provide planning services for eight municipalities in the North/West, and the other half provide planning services for eight municipalities in the South/East. The Economic Development and Engineering Departments, while separate, work closely with planning.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$447,758,000

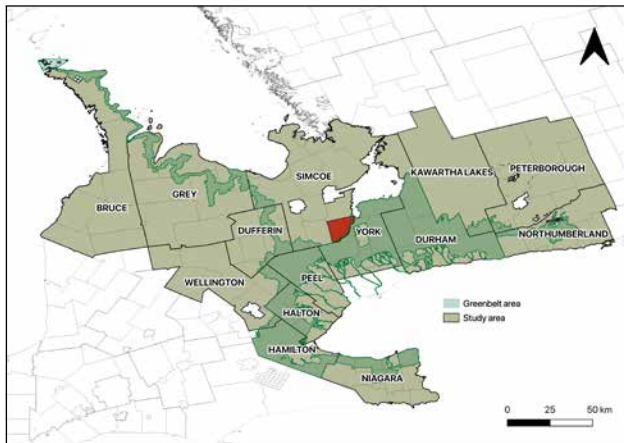
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.



## Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 35,325

Land area: 201.04 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Simcoe County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 5

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 6

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** At the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Community Planning is the division responsible for the delivery of planning services under the Development Engineering Services Department, in addition to Building, Capital Projects, and Development Engineering divisions. Although Community Planning often works with Economic Development, they function as separate departments. External consultants are usually retained for specialized, longer-term planning projects (i.e., Official Plan updates) or to undertake peer review on specific applications (i.e., heritage planning).

#### Agricultural related information

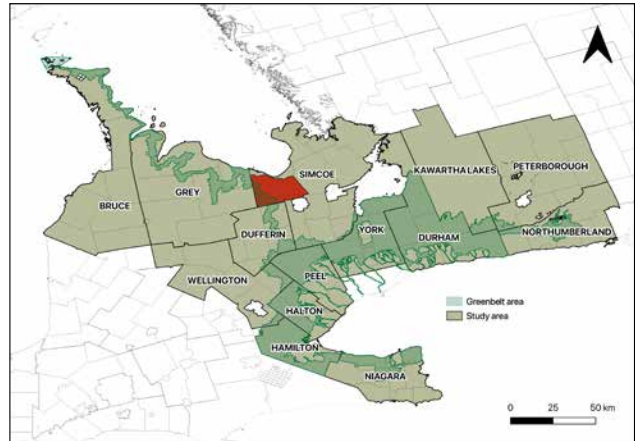
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.

## Township of Clearview



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 14,151

Land area: 557.1 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Simcoe County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 3

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 3

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 3 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** In the Township of Clearview, the Planning Department consists of the Director, two planners, a planning technician, and a GIS technician. The Planning Department operates separately, albeit closely, with the Building Department. In terms of economic development, no staff nor Department are dedicated to economic development within the Township. Outside consultants are often retained for specialized, larger-scale planning projects (i.e., temporary use for a rock concert in a rural area), or to undertake peer review on specific applications.

#### Agricultural related information

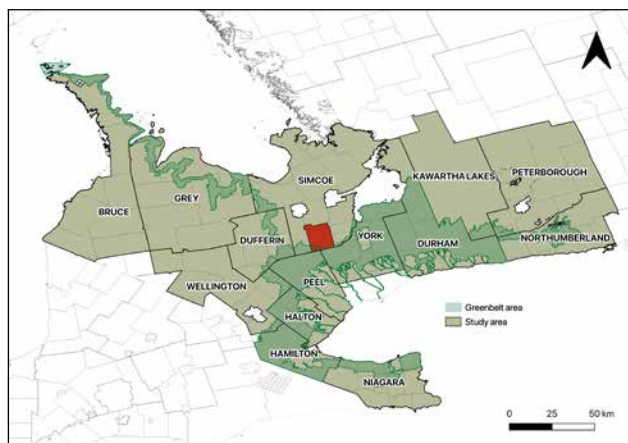
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of New Tecumseth



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 34,242  
 Land area: 274.21 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 10  
 Located in: Simcoe County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 7  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 6  
 Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff  
**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.newtecumseth.ca/en/index.aspx>

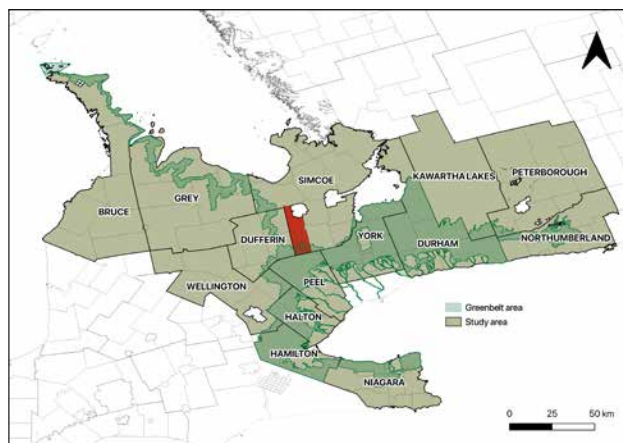
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Adjala-Tosorontio



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 10,975  
 Land area: 372.34 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7  
 Located in: Simcoe County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 0  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff  
**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.adjtos.ca/en/index.aspx>

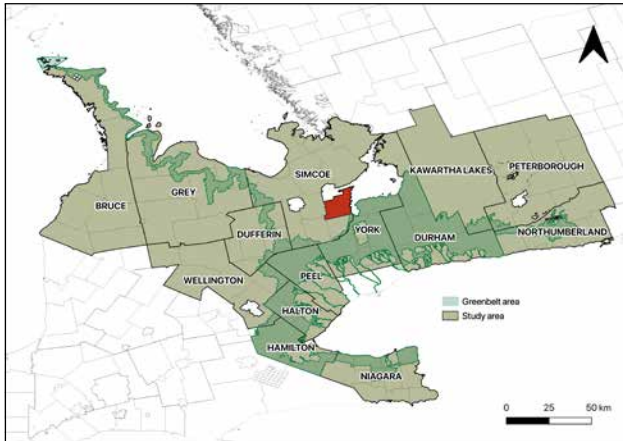
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Innisfil



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 36,566

Land area: 262.71 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Simcoe County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 6

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** At the Town of Innisfil, the Planning Department consists of a senior policy planner and policy planner, two development planners, manager of land use planning, zoning administrator, and development coordinator (assisting with site plan administration and zoning inquiries). In addition to the Planning Department, there are Engineering, Economic Development, and Building divisions, all of which work closely together under the Director of Growth. Outside consultants are often retained for specialized, technical planning projects (i.e., zoning by-law updates) or to undertake peer review on specific applications (i.e., agricultural impact assessments).

#### Agricultural related information

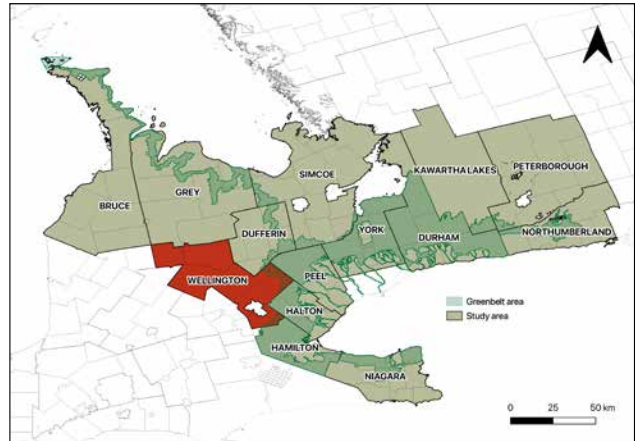
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Wellington County



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 222,726

Land area: 2,660.57 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 16

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Town of Minto
- Township of Mapleton
- Town of Erin
- Township of Puslinch
- Township of Wellington North
- Township of Centre Wellington
- Township of Guelph Eramosa

#### Planning department information

Planners: 10

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 10

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Wellington County's Planning and Development Department consists of a Director of Planning and Development, several planning managers, senior planners, planners, planning technicians, and a GIS analyst. Each of these roles is divided by specialization (i.e., policy, development, environmental planning). Staff also provide services for area municipalities based on assigned geographies. The department also has relatively 'unconventional' planning positions outside of the land use planning purview, including the Climate Change Coordinator, Community Emergency Management Coordinator, and the Green Legacy Programme Manager.

#### Agricultural related information

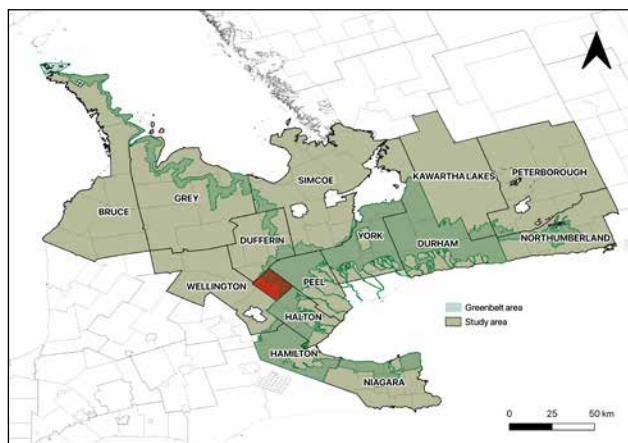
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$943,243,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey and Financial Information Return Data from 2019.

## Town of Erin



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 11,439  
 Land area: 297.76 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Wellington County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 1  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** One Junior Planner/ Building Technician works on day-to-day planning applications (e.g., coordinating applications) in the Town of Erin's Building & Planning Department. Wellington County's Planning and Development Department acts as the consulting planners in providing planning services for more extensive applications as they arise (i.e., zoning amendments, plan of subdivision, etc.). One staff member makes up the Economic Development Department at the Town of Erin, who works closely with the Junior Planner/ Building Technician.

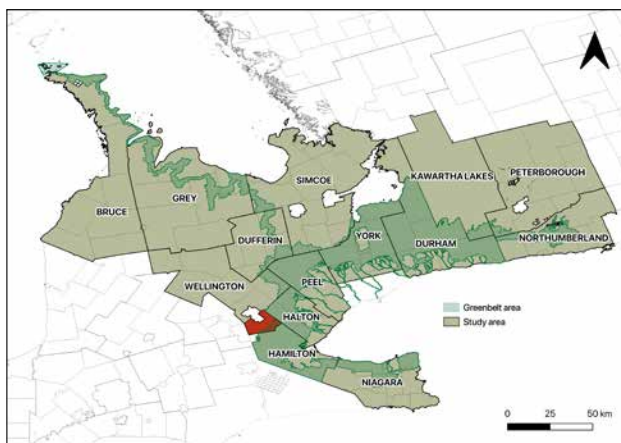
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey and Financial Information Return Data from 2018. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.

## Township of Puslinch



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 7,336  
 Land area: 214.62 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Wellington County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: \$5,00,000 - \$1,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://puslinch.ca/>

#### Agricultural related information

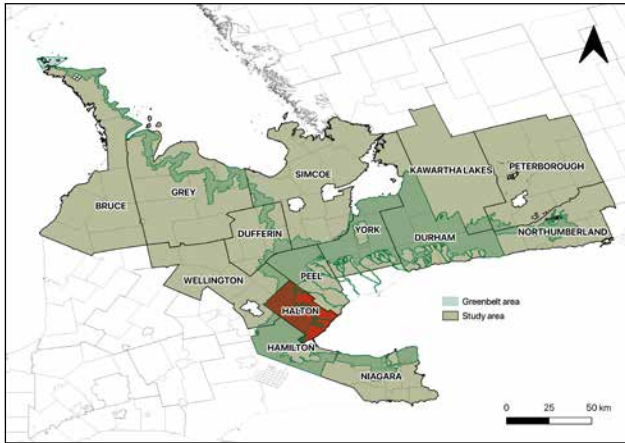
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.



## Halton Region



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 548,435

Land area: 964.05 Km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 24

Lower-tier municipalities:

- City of Burlington
- Town of Halton Hills
- Town of Milton
- Town of Oakville

#### Planning department information

Planners: 56

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 20

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 4 full-time equivalent staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Halton Region planning department is divided into three divisions including policy, community and development planning, and a mapping and technical division. Halton Region has an Agricultural Liaison Officer within the policy division, who is the lead on agricultural matters within the municipality. If an agricultural issue were to arise, the Agricultural Liaison Officer would attend to it in collaboration with other staff members.

#### Agricultural related information

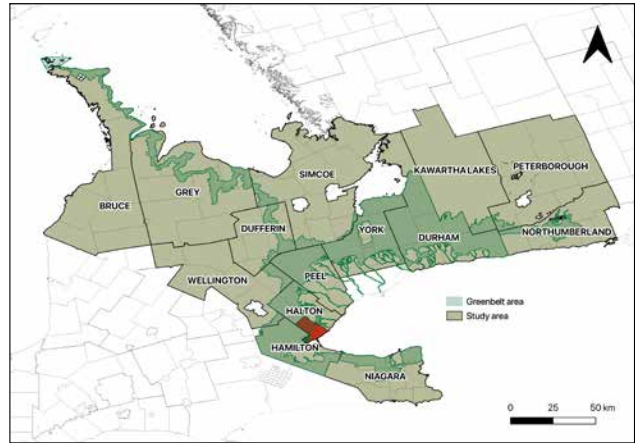
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$143,803,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## City of Burlington



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 183,314

Land area: 185.66 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 7

Located in: Halton Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 20

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 19

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The City of Burlington has a variety of planning divisions including policy and development services. The municipality is also divided into planning areas and municipal planners might be more substantially dedicated to one planning area over another, but all may be exposed to agricultural issues should they arise. There is one staff person in the planning department at the City of Burlington who has agriculture within their portfolio.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

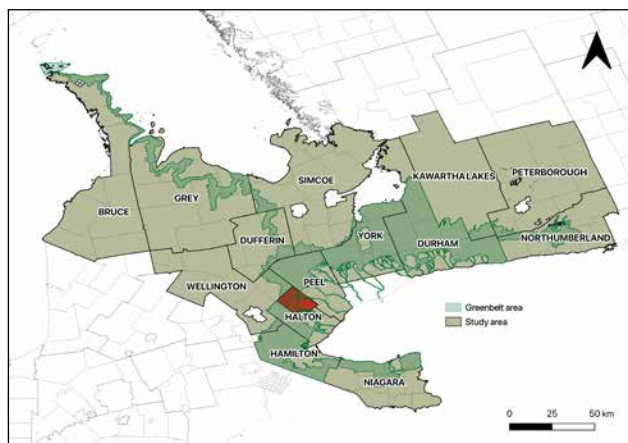
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



## Town of Halton Hills



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 61,161

Land area: 276.27 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 11

Located in: Halton Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 17

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.haltonhills.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

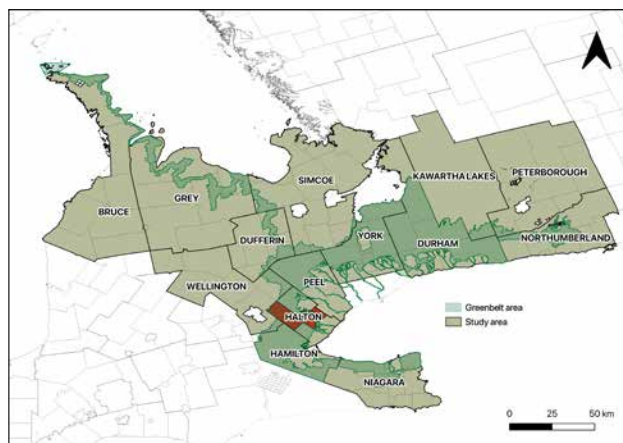
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of Milton



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 110,128

Land area: 363.22 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Halton Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 58

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.milton.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

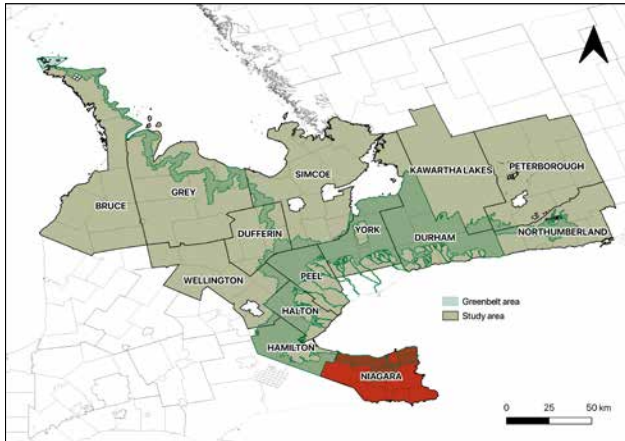
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Niagara Region



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 447,888

Land area: 1854.23 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 32

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Town of Grimsby
- Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
- City of St. Catharines
- Township of West Lincoln
- City of Welland
- Town of Fort Erie
- Town of Lincoln
- Town of Pelham
- City of Thorold
- City of Port Colborne
- Township of Welland

#### Planning department information

Planners: 20

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 15

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Planning and Development Services Department includes policy planning, environmental planning, development planning, and development, engineering, and planning divisions. Planning staff are not dedicated to one particular area of specialization and are frequently involved in reviewing and commenting on a wide range of proposals. Economic Development operates as a separate department and works closely with Planning and Development Services.

#### Agricultural related information

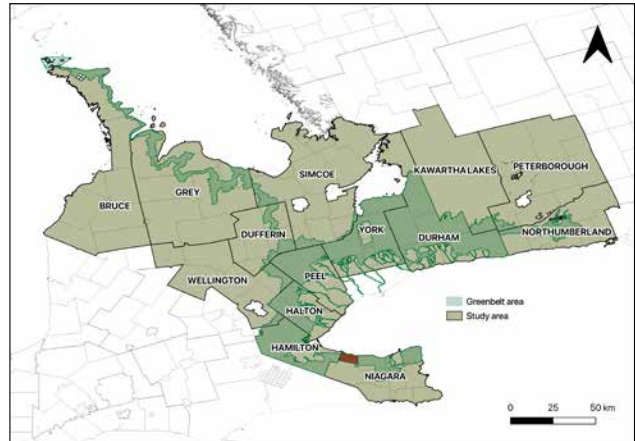
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$838,114,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Grimsby



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 27,314

Land area: 68.93 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 6

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Grimsby planning department was in the process of hiring at the time this research was conducted and commented on what the department structure would be under normal circumstances. The department is not subdivided, rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise.

#### Agricultural related information

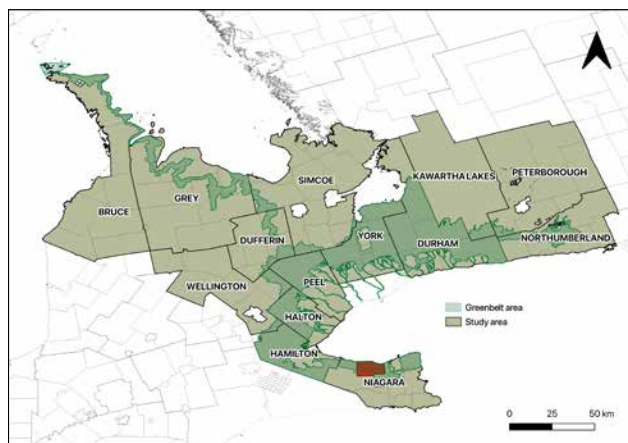
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Lincoln



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 23,787  
 Land area: 162.81 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 9  
 Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 5  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4  
 Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Lincoln planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise. Agriculture is a shared responsibility across the team.

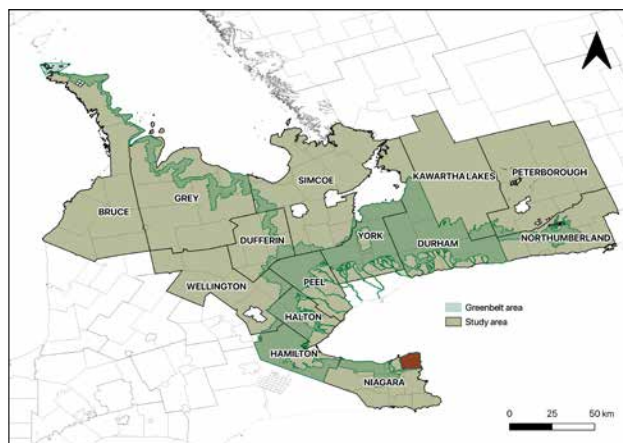
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 17,511  
 Land area: 132.81 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 10  
 Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 10  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.notl.org/>

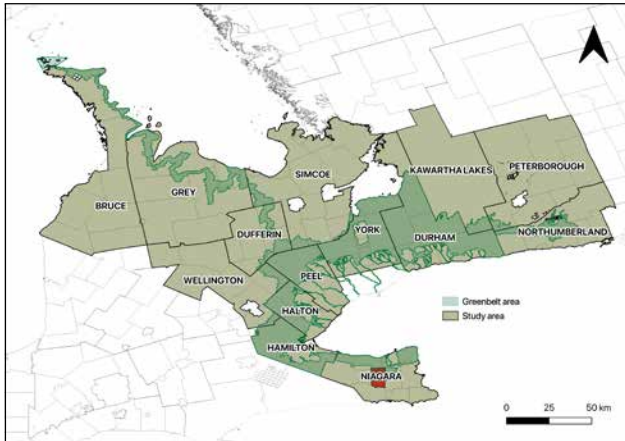
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of Pelham



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 17,110

Land area: 126.43 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 8

Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 4

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Pelham planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise.

#### Agricultural related information

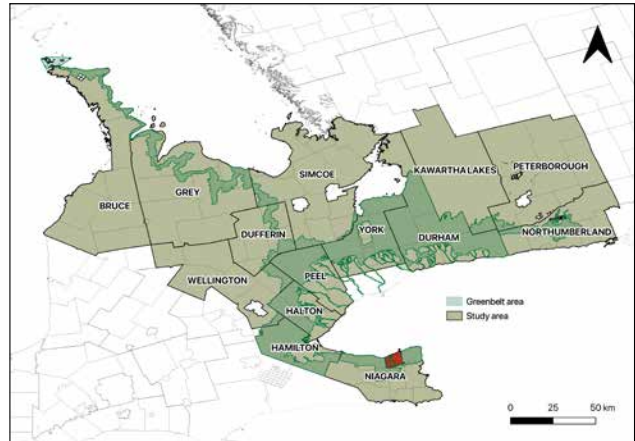
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## City of St. Catharines



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 133,113

Land area: 96.13 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 13

Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 9

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 3

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The St. Catharines planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. There is one full time policy planner, but the majority of planners work on development primarily, along with policy matters as they arise. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise.

#### Agricultural related information

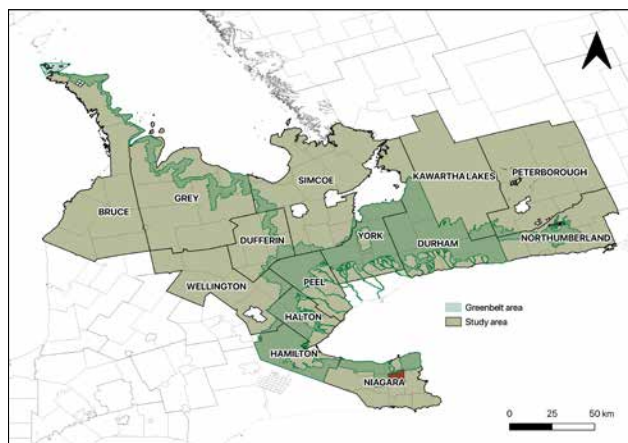
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## City of Thorold



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 18,801  
 Land area: 82.99 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 9  
 Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 4  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Thorold planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. A combination of senior planners and intermediate planners are on staff. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on complexity of the file and expertise.

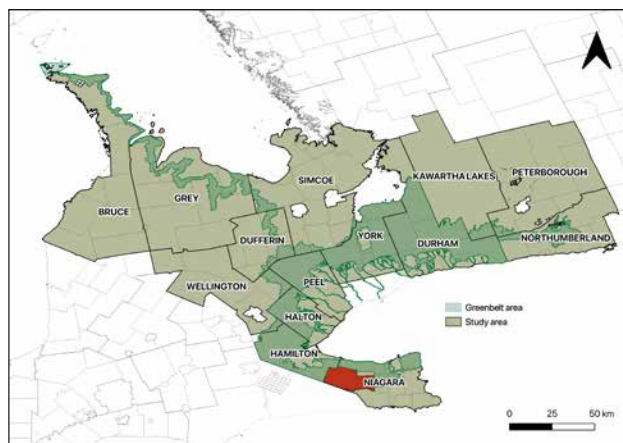
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of West Lincoln



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 14,500  
 Land area: 387.81 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 8  
 Located in: Niagara Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 4  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Township of West Lincoln planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise. Agriculture is a shared responsibility across the team.

#### Agricultural related information

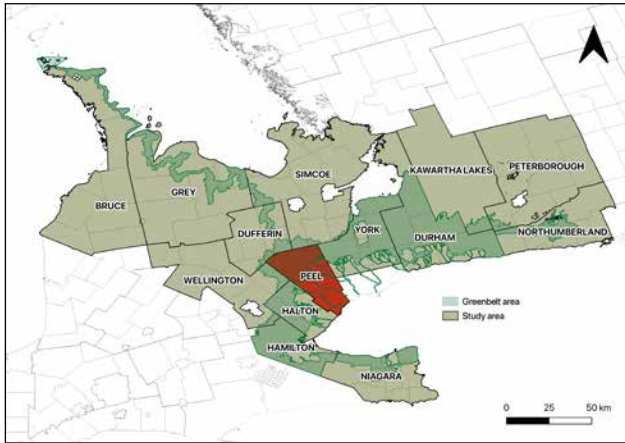
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



## Region of Peel



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 1,381,739

Land area: 1,246.95 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 25

Lower-tier municipalities:

- City of Brampton
- City of Mississauga
- Town of Caledon

#### Planning department information

Planners: 79

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.peelregion.ca/>

#### Agricultural related information

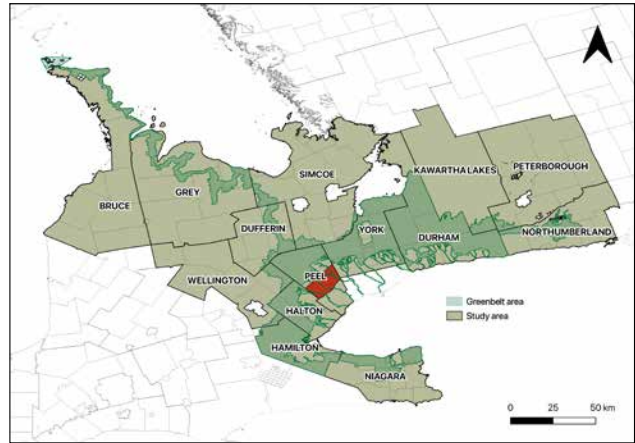
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$94,135,000

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## City of Brampton



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 593,638

Land area: 266.36 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 11

Located in: Region of Peel

#### Planning department information

Planners: 56

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.brampton.ca/en/pages/welcome.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

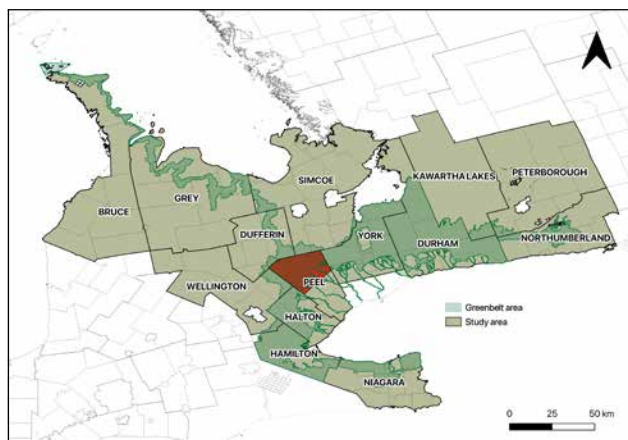
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019. The number of full-time planners at the City was validated by municipal staff.

## Town of Caledon



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 66,502

Land area: 688.16 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Region of Peel

#### Planning department information

Planners: 15

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 12

Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Caledon's planning department is embedded within the broader community services department of the municipality. The planning division is composed of three teams: policy, development, and planning services (customer care, phone calls and correspondence with applicants). Agriculture-related matters fall under the purview of the policy division, where two staff members are primarily responsible for working on these issues.

#### Agricultural related information

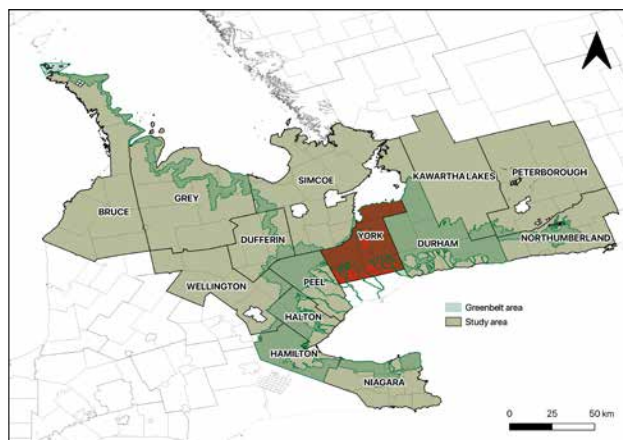
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## York Region



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 1,109,909

Land area: 1,762.13 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 21

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Town of Aurora
- Township of King
- City of Markham
- City of Richmond Hill
- Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
- Town of East Gwillimbury
- Town of Georgina
- Town of Newmarket
- City of Vaughan

#### Planning department information

Planners: 32

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 32

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 2 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** In York Region, the planning and economic development branch is embedded within the corporate services department, and is composed of three divisions: long range planning, community services, and development services. A senior planner within the long range division deals with agricultural planning matters along with assistance from a staff member from economic development, whose work is primarily related to the agricultural and the agri-food network.

#### Agricultural related information

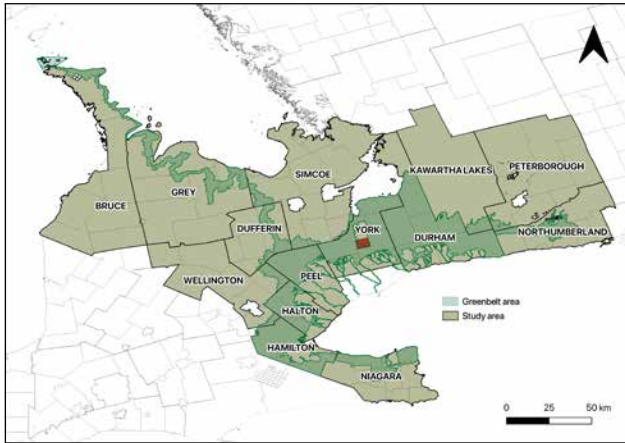
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$301,462,000

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Aurora



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 55,445  
 Land area: 49.85km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7  
 Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 46  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 12  
 Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.aurora.ca/en/index.aspx>

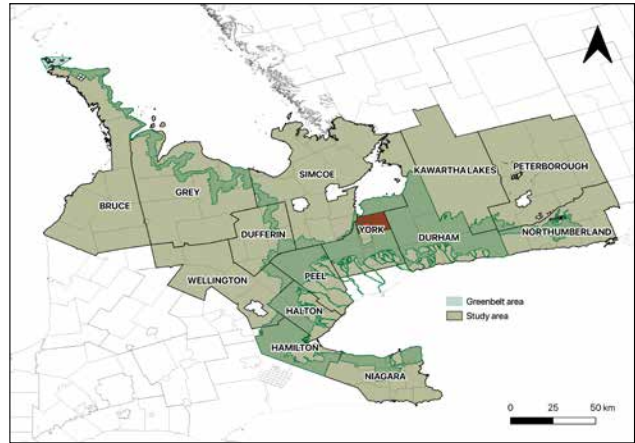
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of East Gwillimbury



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 23,991  
 Land area: 245.04 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7  
 Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 12  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <http://www.eastgwillimbury.ca/>

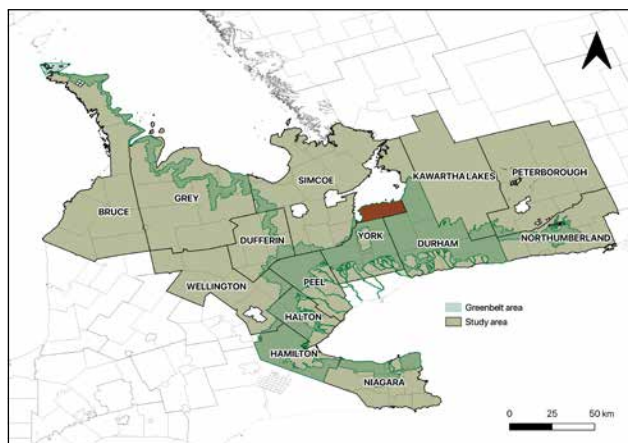
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of Georgina



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 45,418  
Land area: 287.75 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 7  
Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 8  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 8  
Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 3 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Georgina has a combination of planning positions including planner I, planner II, policy planner, senior planner, and manager. Planning responsibilities are shared among the department and there are no specific divisions by subject matter. Agriculture is a shared responsibility.

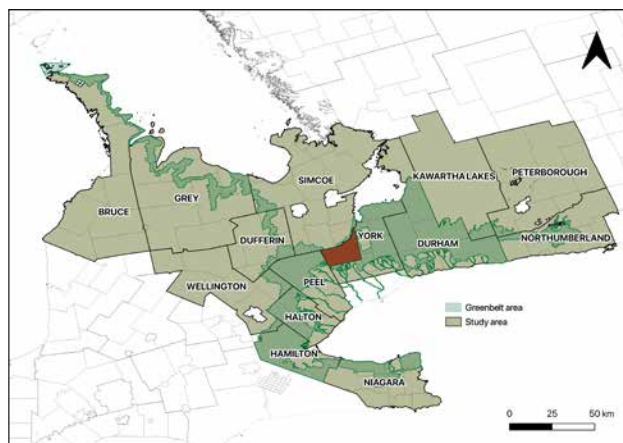
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of King



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 24,512  
Land area: 333.25 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 7  
Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 7  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 6  
Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 2 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in the interview. See <http://www.king.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

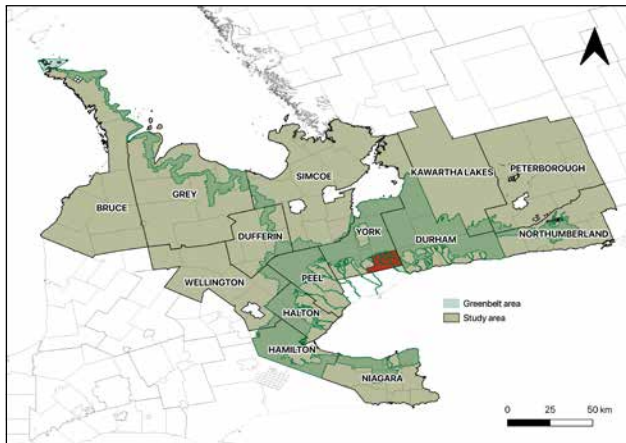
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## City of Markham



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 328,966

Land area: 212.35 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 13

Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 58

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in the interview. See <https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home>

#### Agricultural related information

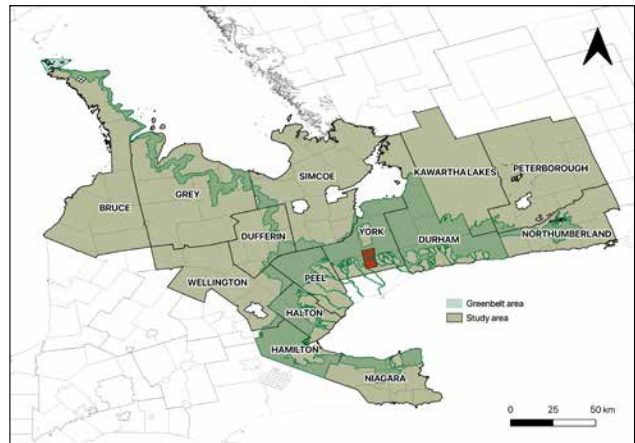
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## City of Richmond Hill



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 195,022

Land area: 101.11 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 50

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 50

Planning department budget: More than \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The planning department for Richmond Hill has divisions including policy, development, urban design and heritage, natural heritage, and sustainability. Agriculture is not assigned to a particular division. If agricultural issues were to arise it would likely be handled by the development planning division.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

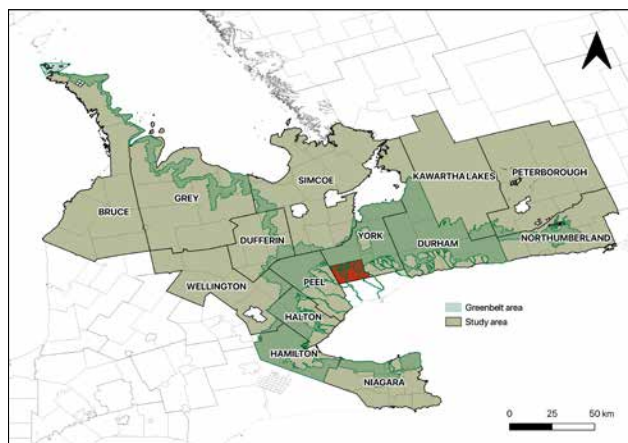
Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



## City of Vaughan



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 306,233  
Land area: 273.56 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 9  
Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 16  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 15  
Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Vaughan has a unique arrangement with planners working in a variety of departments. The two departments that process and work on agricultural issues are the development department and policy planning and environmental sustainability department. In the development department, there is one staff member who mainly deals with agricultural applications and in the policy planning and environmental sustainability department there is also one staff member primarily responsible for agricultural affairs.

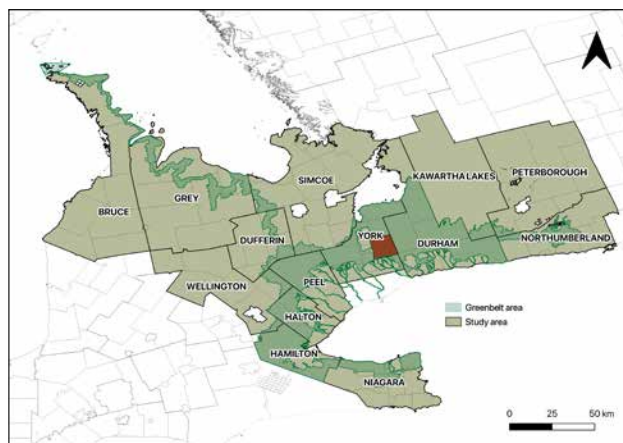
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 45,837  
Land area: 206.22 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 7  
Located in: York Region

#### Planning department information

Planners: 8  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 11  
Planning department budget: \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has four divisions: building, engineering, development, and policy. Agricultural issues are dealt with primarily by the development department but, depending on complexity, are allocated to a planner in that department with the appropriate expertise and capacity.

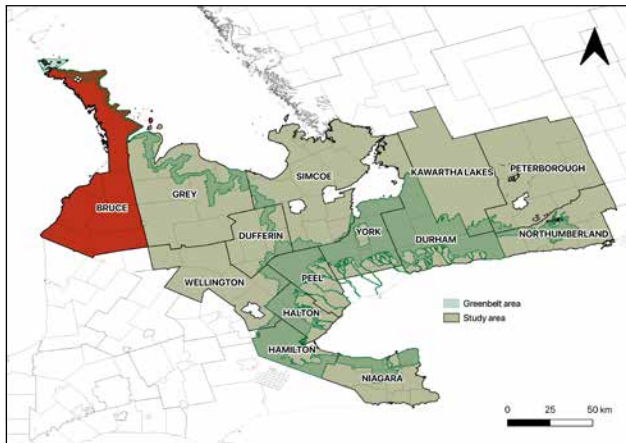
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from survey results and Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.

## Bruce County



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 68,147

Land area: 4,090.20 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 8

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Town of Saugeen Shores
- Municipality of Brockton
- Township of Huron-Kinloss
- Municipality of South Bruce
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Town of South-Bruce Peninsula
- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Municipality of North Bruce Peninsula

#### Planning department information

Planners: 8

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 9

Planning department budget: \$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: More than 4 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** Bruce County provides planning services for the eight lower-tier municipalities within its boundaries. To accomplish this, a hub structure has been set up at three locations within the county and each hub is staffed with a senior planner, planner, and technician. There is no agricultural specialist on staff, rather, agricultural applications are dealt with by all planning staff.

#### Agricultural related information

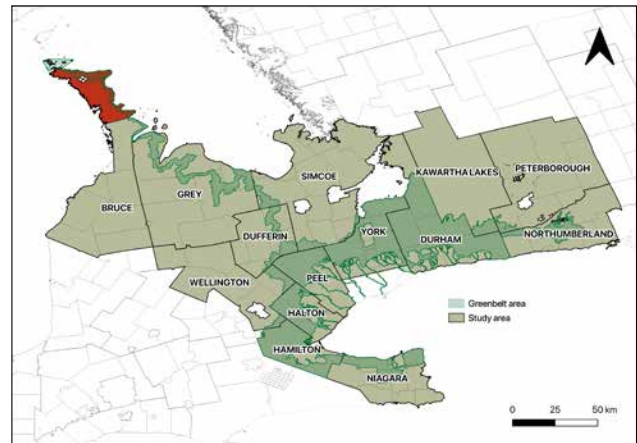
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$566,138,000

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey. The higher number of RPPs to planners in the municipality reflects staff members with an RPP designation but who are working in another department such as engineering or building and not in a planning capacity.

## Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 3,999

Land area: 783.99 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 5

Located in: Bruce County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0\*

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 0

Planning department budget: less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in the interview. See <https://www.northbrucepeninsula.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

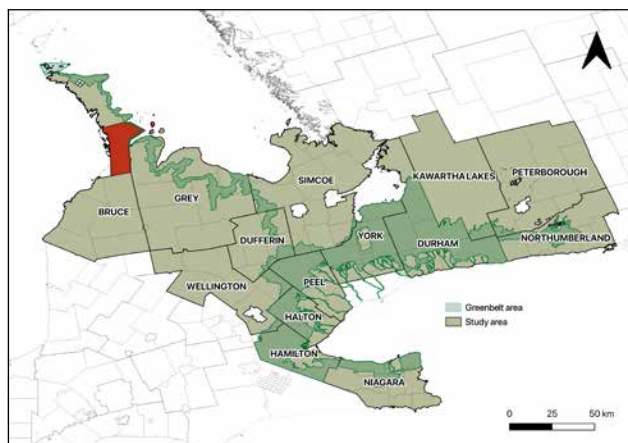
Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

\*The upper-tier municipality provides the planning function for the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula.

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of South Bruce Peninsula



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 8,416  
 Land area: 532.29 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Bruce County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 1

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
 No data recorded

Planning department budget: less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.southbrucepeninsula.com/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

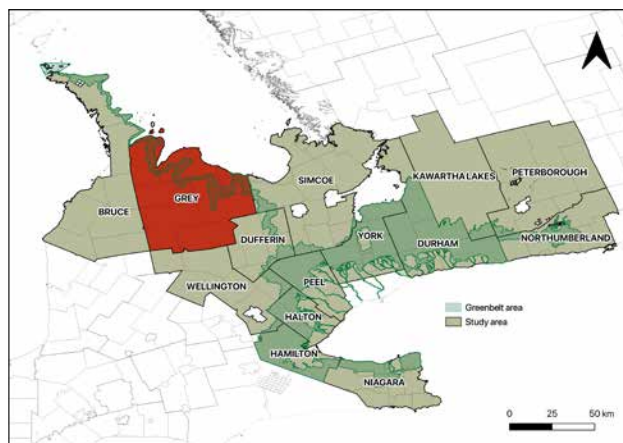
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2018.

## County of Grey



### UPPER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 93,830  
 Land area: 4,513.50 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 18

Lower-tier municipalities:

- Township of Chatsworth
- Municipality of Meaford
- City of Owen Sound
- Township of Georgian Bluffs
- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Town of Blue Mountains

#### Planning department information

Planners: 5

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 5

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The County of Grey planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise. Agriculture is a shared responsibility across the team, as are a multitude of other planning topics.

#### Agricultural related information

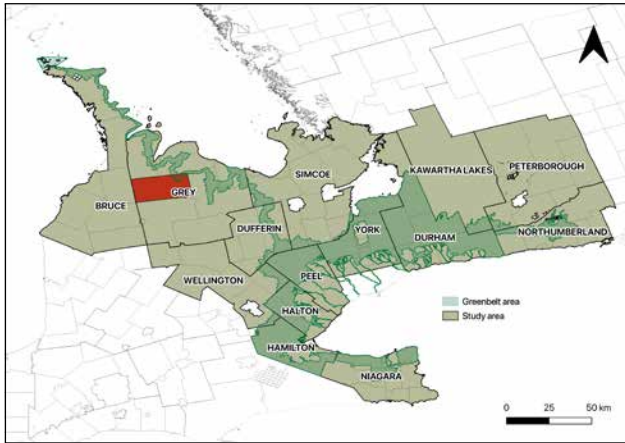
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): \$463,677,000

Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Township of Chatsworth



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 6,630  
 Land area: 596.19 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 5  
 Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 0  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
 No data recorded  
 Planning department budget: less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://chatsworth.ca/>

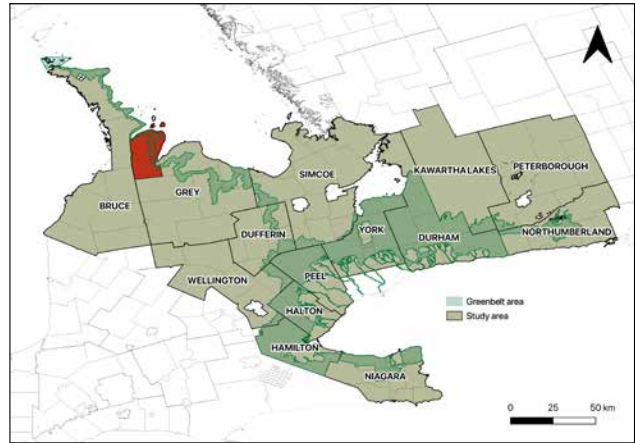
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2018.

## Township of Georgian Bluffs



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 10,479  
 Land area: 604.37 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Elected Officials: 7  
 Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2  
 Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 2  
 Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
 Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: 1 full-time staff

**Summary of department structure:** The Township of Georgian Bluffs has a small planning department consisting of two planners, one recently hired, as well as an administrative support staff person. Planning files are allocated based on experience. Agriculture related applications would be the responsibility of both planners, depending on complexity and expertise.

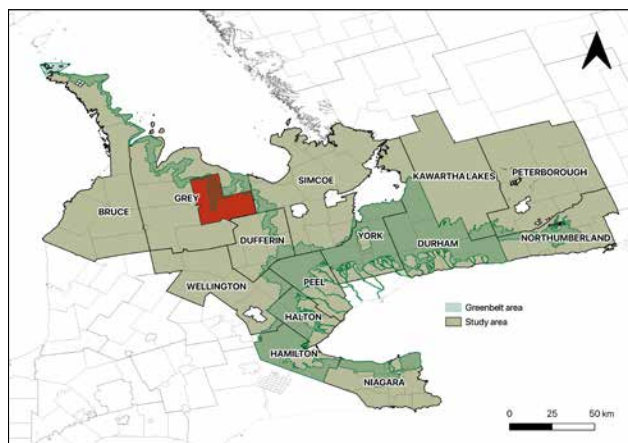
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
 Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.

## Municipality of Grey Highlands



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 9,804  
Land area: 882.51 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 7  
Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded  
Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.greyhighlands.ca/en/index.aspx>

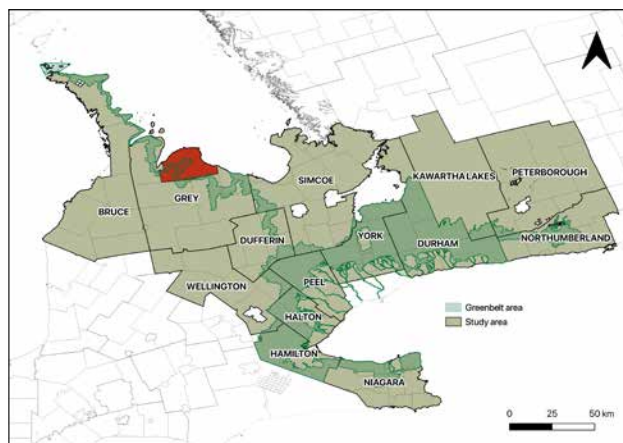
#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Municipality of Meaford



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 10,991  
Land area: 588.57 km<sup>2</sup>  
Elected Officials: 7  
Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 2  
Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded  
Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000  
Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Municipality of Meaford planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the type and scale of the file.

#### Agricultural related information

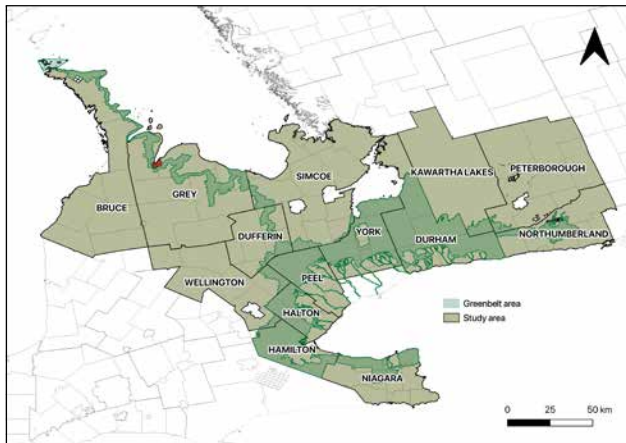
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A  
Agricultural advisory committee: No

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



## City of Owen Sound



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 21,341

Land area: 24.27 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 9

Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 5

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members:  
No data recorded

Planning department budget: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: No data recorded

**Summary of department structure:** Did not participate in interview. See <https://www.owensound.ca/en/index.aspx>

#### Agricultural related information

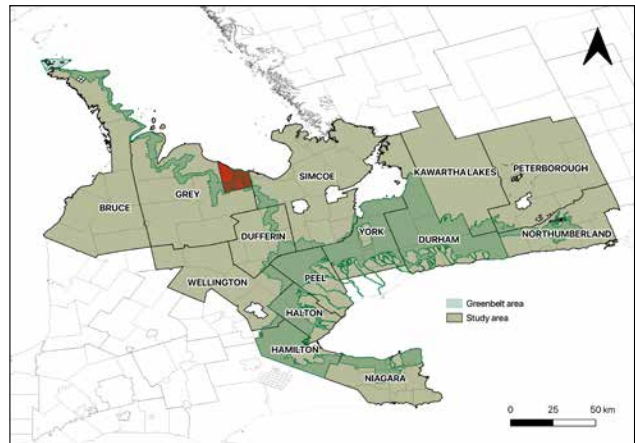
Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: No data recorded

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from Financial Information Return data reported by the municipality in 2019.

## Town of The Blue Mountains



### LOWER-TIER MUNICIPALITY

Population: 7,025

Land area: 287.24 km<sup>2</sup>

Elected Officials: 6

Located in: Grey County

#### Planning department information

Planners: 5

Registered Professional Planners (RPP) and candidate members: 4

Planning department budget: Less than \$500,000

Staff specifically allocated to agriculture/rural: Less than 1 full-time equivalent

**Summary of department structure:** The Town of Blue Mountains planning department is not subdivided; rather, all planners are responsible for being conversant in a variety of planning areas. Agricultural applications or issues are handled by all planners on staff, depending on the complexity of the file and expertise. There is one planner on staff with a rural background who is a resource for agricultural files when needed.

#### Agricultural related information

Total value of agricultural sales (CAD): N/A

Agricultural advisory committee: Yes

#### Notes

Information reported in this profile is collected from data collected and reported by the municipality in the survey.



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