

# Protecting the Vibrancy of Residential Neighbourhoods

By: Cheryll Case and Tetyana Bailey





## Data Sources

**3D Massing, Former Municipal Boundaries, Neighbourhood Boundaries, Property Boundaries, TDSB School Locations, the Zoning By-law and Building Permits - Cleared Permits Prior Years for 2001-2016**

Toronto's Open Data Catalogue

(<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=1a66e03bb8d1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>)

**2016 Census Results**

Statistics Canada

**Census Results for 1961, 1986 and 2011**

Census Data from Canadian Census Analyser, CHASS (Computing in the Humanities and Social Sciences)

**Geographic Boundaries for Census Results of 1961, 1986, 2011, and 2016:**

Scholars Geoportal, accessed via Ryerson University

The excel workbook created as part of this project is available online at:

[goo.gl/hFveaF](http://goo.gl/hFveaF)

## Redeveloped Detached Houses

Steps to calculate the number of redeveloped detached houses:

1. Geo-locate the location of properties with cleared permits to demolish SFD-Detached structures;
2. Overlay the location of properties from step 1 with the City of Toronto Zoning map to extract existing structures on lands zoned exclusively for residential detached housing (RD)

## Contact

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- Cheryll Case

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# Executive Summary

Between 1961 and 1971 the fertility rate halved from just under 4 children per woman to under 2 children. For the last 40 years, the rate has remained low, stabilized between 1.75 and 1.5. Additionally, 77% of Toronto's housing stock had been developed by 1986. Most of this land is occupied by detached houses built for more people than what currently inhabit them. Despite this, over the past 30 years most of Toronto's neighbourhoods has added no or little housing stock to the existing supply. As a result, many are over housed, and families are excluded from entering most of Toronto's neighbourhoods, resulting in:

- the depopulation of neighbourhoods across Toronto;
- under enrollment and closures of schools in 48% of Toronto's neighbourhoods;
- and unsustainable sprawl within the GTA as new families excluded from Toronto continue to look further for affordable housing options.

To reduce urban sprawl, the *Places to Grow Act* (2005) encourages infill and intensification in areas with the necessary infrastructure to support growth. The established neighbourhoods within Toronto are ideal locations for application of *Growth Plan* policies. Currently however, depopulation due to the lack of affordable housing options threatens the vibrancy of these neighbourhoods. City policies preventing new families from entering neighbourhoods are in direct opposition to the principles outlined in the *Act*.

The City of Toronto designed and applies their *Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study* (2010), and the *Tall Building Design Guidelines* (2013) in response to the *Places to Grow Act*. However, much of this work has done little for most of our neighbourhoods. There has been little or no construction of these built forms within most neighbourhoods. This is in part because Toronto's *Official Plan* strictly applies "stable" and "healthy" Neighbourhood policies which label the addition of housing units as a threat. The *Official Plan* and *Zoning By-law* however permit bungalows to be demolished and redeveloped into two storey single family dwellings. There are also no policies to prevent multiple-family houses from being converted into single family houses

When addressing the health of neighbourhoods the Toronto *Official Plan* prioritizes the physical built form of detached houses over the health of the community it contributes to. *Section 2.3.1, Healthy Neighbourhoods*, is designed to restrict the growth of neighbourhoods. This prevents neighbourhoods from growing to meet demographic demands. Additionally, the design of *Section 4.1, Neighbourhoods*, prevents neighbourhoods from developing to provide the housing options required by and accessible to most new families. These exclusionary policies in the *Official Plan* are further codified and strengthened in the *Zoning By-law*.

To protect the vibrancy and health of residential neighbourhoods, a thorough and engaging process is required to establish the principles and plan which will result in neighbourhood developments which support their capacity to provide the services and housing options required by the City's existing and future residents.

# Housing Capacity

## House Types

Table 1: Capacity to House

House Type	
Capacity ↑	Apartment
	Fourplex
	Triplex
	Duplex
	Town
	Semi
	Detached

The distinction between house types is their capacity to host multiple households per structure. Apartments have the most capacity, whereas residential detached properties have the least. Traditionally, detached homes were designed to host single families. Properties of this type may include granny suites and secondary entrances into the basement; however, they were not intended to facilitate renting to non-family tenants.

In 1999, in response to low vacancy rates, City Council adopted a motion to lift the tenant ban by applying Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments to permit tenantable second suites in single and semi-detached houses throughout the City (City of Toronto, 1999). Criticism of this motion by councilors and the public include the allegation that this permission would cause house prices to decline (Lewington, 1999). The 1999 decision to permit tenantable second suites in single and semi-detached houses was the first step towards improving access and the supply of housing options within residential neighbourhoods. Further work is required in this direction.

## Zoning and Permission

Toronto is largely a residential community. Of 641.45 KM2 of land, 50% (321.43KM2) is zoned for residential uses. On this land development is restricted to those permitted under the appropriate section of Chapter 10 or 15 of City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013, or active former By-law of municipalities amalgamated into Toronto. These former municipalities are currently referred to as the communities of Toronto (former), North York, York, East York, Scarborough, and Etobicoke. Residential zones are broken into 6 categories.

Map 1: Toronto's Communities

## Communities

- Etobicoke
- York
- East York
- Scarborough
- North York
- Toronto (Former)
- Former Municipal Boundary

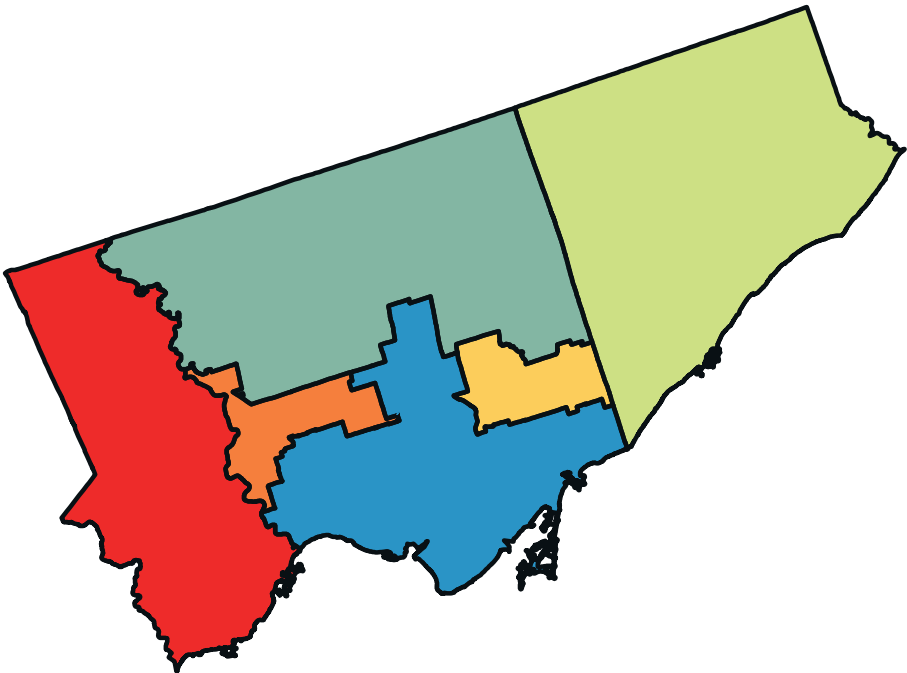


Table 2: Zoning Categories and the House Types they Permit

	Zone Category	House Type						
		Detached	Semi	Town	Duplex	Triplex	Fourplex	Apartment
	Residential (R)							
	Residential Multiple Dwelling (RM)							
	Residential Townhouse (RT)							
	Residential Semi-Detached (RS)							
	Residential Detached (RD)							
	Residential Apartment (RA)							

The (R) zoning category is the most permissive, whereas (RD) and (RA) are the least permissive. This zoning structure makes it difficult to predict the housing type built on lands zoned (R), (RM), (RT), or (RS). This is because across neighbourhoods these zones contain the full range of housing types permitted by the Zoning By-law. Only (RD) and (RA) properties can be predicted with great accuracy.

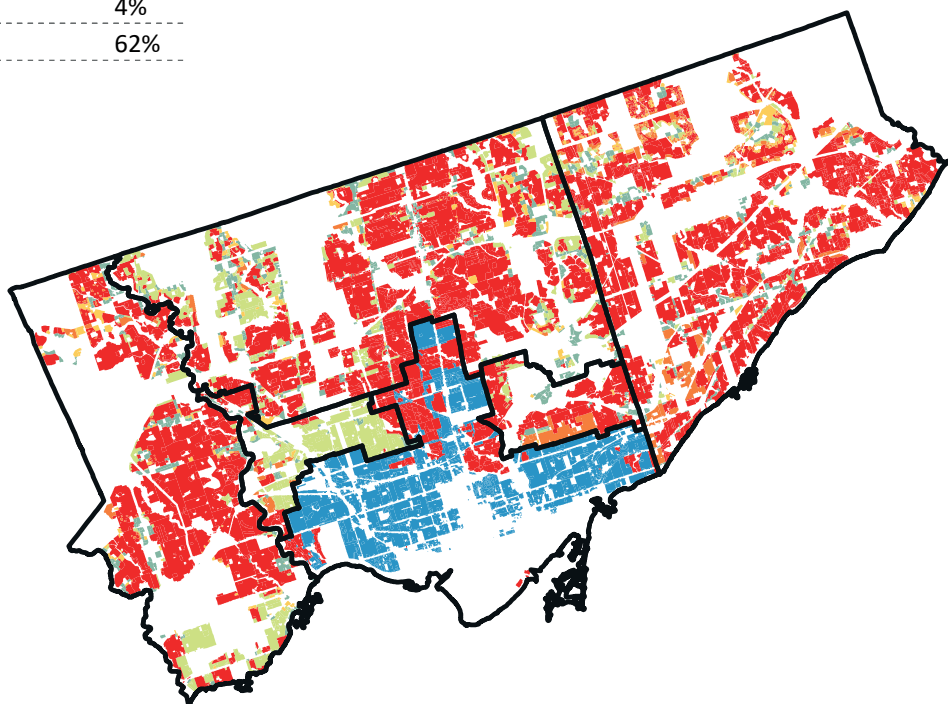
Covering 200.46 KM<sup>2</sup>, almost two thirds of Toronto's residential land is zoned (RD). As a result, most land is restricted to permitting about 1 household per structure. This contributes to the exclusion of many from finding affordable housing options within Toronto. The greatest share of land is allocated to the fewest number of people. Additionally, most families are unable to afford a detached house, meaning the City gives preference to high income populations and those with access to family wealth.

Map 2: Residential Land in Toronto

## Zone Category

Area (KM<sup>2</sup>)    % of Residential Land

Residential (R)	42.24	13%
Residential Apartment (RA)	20.96	7%
Residential Multiple Unit (RM)	34.78	11%
Residential Town (RT)	9.45	3%
Residential Semi (RS)	13.54	4%
Residential Detached (RD)	200.46	62%
Former Municipal Boundary		





In 4 of the 6 community boundaries (RD) accounts for between 71% and 76% of all residential land. In the remaining two communities, (RD) is the second most prevalent residential zone accounting for 22%-25% of all residential land. As described prior, the more permissive zone categories are not always a good predictor of land use: a quick analysis of the York community indicates that much of the land zoned (RM) is host to residential detached houses, and in the former City of Toronto, much of the land zoned (R) is host to residential detached houses. So in practice, more than 200.46 KM<sup>2</sup> of Toronto has detached housing and is inaccessible to most families.

Additionally, Toronto's *Official Plan* policies are used to prevent detached houses on (R), (RM), (RT), and (RS) land from being converted into semis, towns, duplexes or any other housing type with increased capacity to house families – restricting the variety of housing types within these areas. Further restricting access to affordable housing options.

Table 3: Largest Residential Zoning Categories

		Zone Category		
		(RD)	(RM)	(R)
Community	Toronto (all)	62%		
	North York	71%		
	York	25%	62%	
	East York	68%		
	Scarborough	74%		
	Etobicoke	76%		
	Toronto (former)	22%		76%

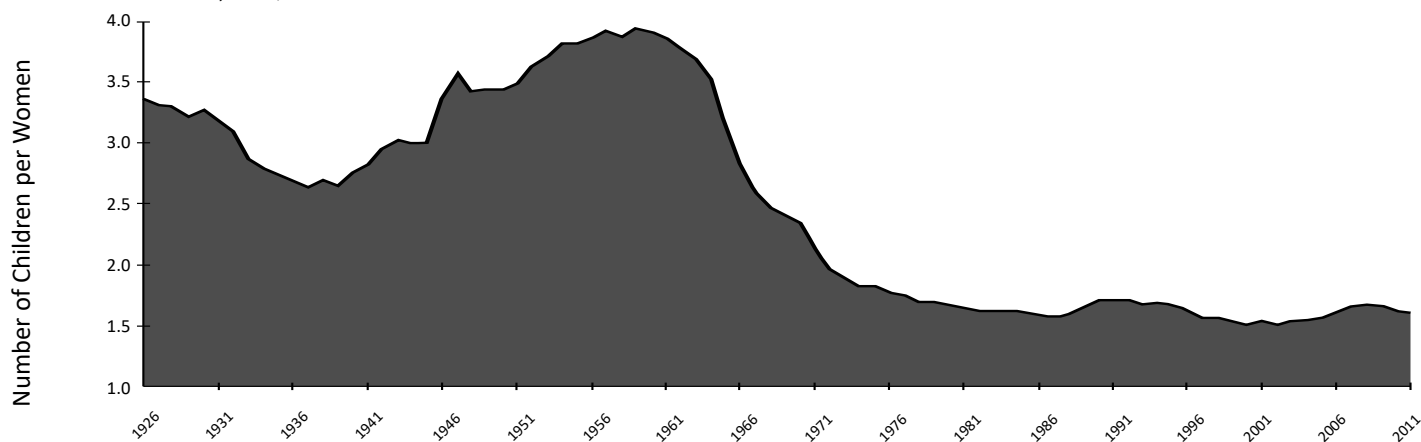
## Demographic Changes, 1961–2016

The capacity difference between housing types is magnified by our changing demographics.

### Decline in Family Size

**The declined fertility rate has greatly reduced family sizes across the City.** Between 1951 and 1961 Canada's fertility rate peaked at just under 4 children per woman. Between 1961 and 1971 the fertility rate plummeted, resulting in the fertility rate halving to just under 2 children per woman between 1971 and 76. Since then, the fertility rate has remained low, and for the last 30 years it has remained between 1.75 and 1.5 children per woman (Statistics Canada, 2017). This has contributed to the decline in the number of people per private dwelling, and growing issue of over housing where many houses have unfilled rooms because there are too few residents within them (Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis, 2017). This is troubling because despite over housing in certain areas, most residents struggle to find affordable housing and are forced outside the City or into housing with too few bedrooms.

Chart 1: Canada's Fertility Rate, 1926-2011



## Residential Zoning and Number of People Per Dwelling

Comparing neighbourhoods, the number of people per occupied private dwelling is not affected by the percentage of the neighbourhood that is zoned (RD) (residential detached). This indicates that in Toronto zoning land exclusively for detached homes does not lead to larger households.

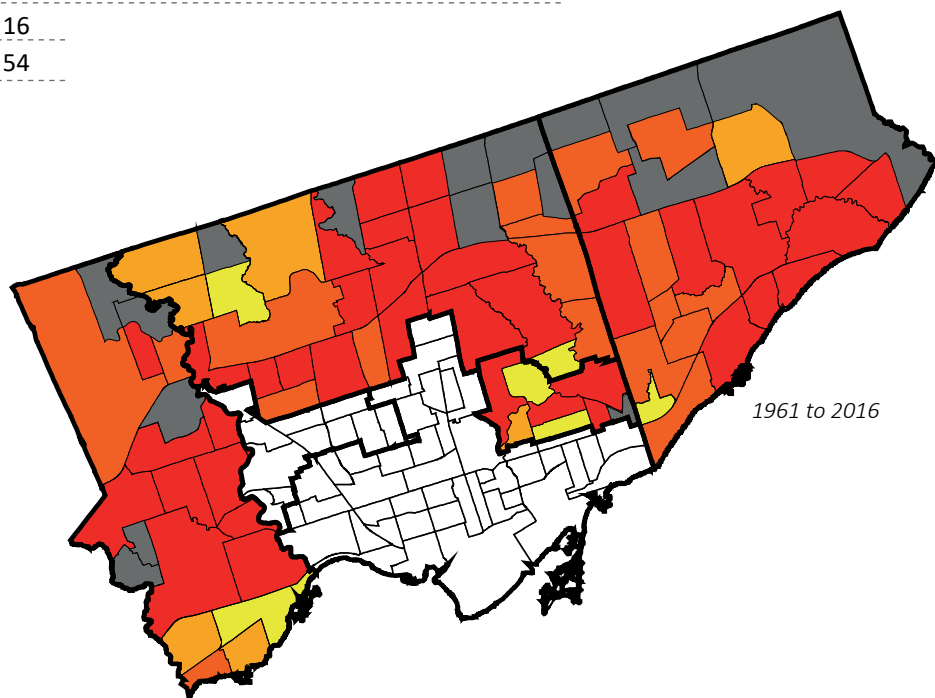
To be welcoming to families, the City should focus on how to use zoning to allow more families into a neighbourhood, because there is no functional difference between zoning when it comes to household size.

Map 3: Percentage of Residential Land Zoned (RD) & Change in POPD (People per Occupied Private Dwelling)\*, 1961-2016

### Percentage Zoned (RD)

	Neighbourhoods	POPD* Change	POPD 2016
	#	#	#
0.00% to 25.00%	6	-0.66	2.64
25.01% to 50.00%	7	-1.23	2.72
50.01% to 75.00%	18	-1.24	2.72
75.01% to 100.00%	39	-1.14	2.66
No Counts for 1961	16		
York or Toronto (Former)	54		
Former Municipal Boundary			

In this calculation, the communities of York and Toronto are not included because it is more difficult to predict residential land use in these communities. They contain little (RD) land, but much of their (R) or (RM) zones contained residential detached properties.



## Detached Dwellings and Number of People Per Dwelling

The number of people per dwelling has declined in all neighbourhoods, regardless of the percentage of dwellings that is detached. The portion of a neighbourhood that is a detached dwelling has a smaller effect on the number of people per dwelling than expected. The number of people per private dwelling ranges from 2.29 to 3.04, where more detached dwellings correlates to a larger number of people per dwelling. This range represents a 33% increase in number of people per private dwelling from 2.29 to 3.04. Much of this difference may be attributed to the increasing prevalence of small condos in certain neighbourhoods. Recently most constructed condo units built between 2001-2016 were bachelors or one bedrooms, while the remaining are 2 bedrooms with very few 3+ bedroom units.

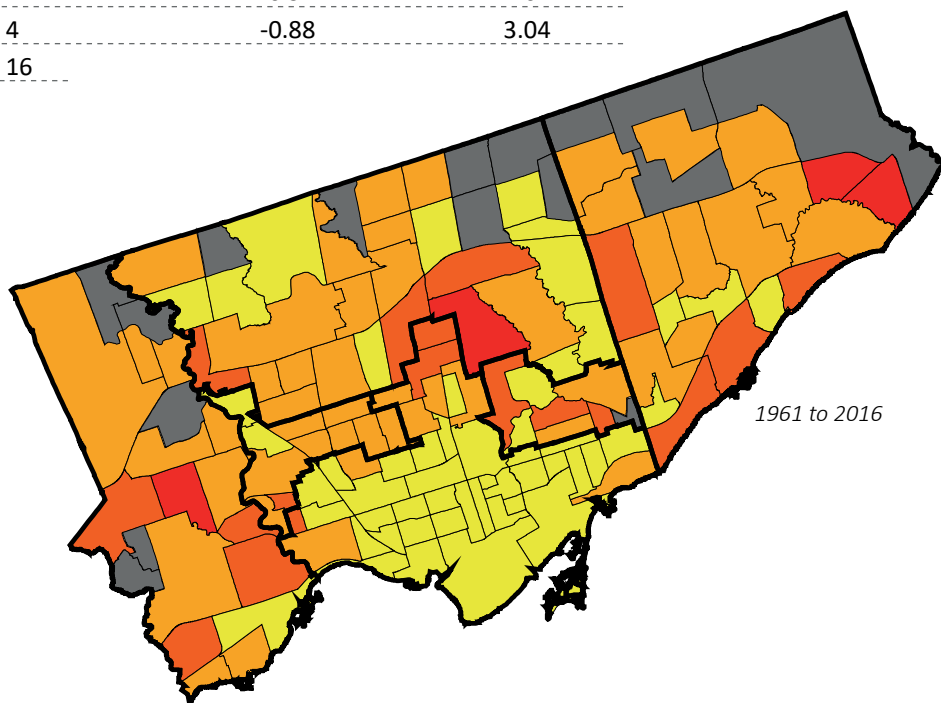
Map 4: Percentage of Dwellings that are Detached & Change in POPD (People per Occupied Private Dwelling)\*, 1961-2016

### Percentage Detached

	Neighbourhoods	POPD* Change	POPD 2016
	#	#	#
0.00% to 25.00%	53	-1.67	2.29
25.01% to 50.00%	50	-1.18	2.60
50.01% to 75.00%	17	-0.94	2.61
75.01% to 100.00%	4	-0.88	3.04
No Counts for 1961	16		

— Former Municipal Boundary

Since the 2016 dwelling count numbers are not yet publicly available, the 2011 dwelling count numbers were used to calculate the percentage of dwellings that are detached.



1961 to 2016



Map 5: Neighbourhoods with Larger Families, 1961-2016

## Percentage Detached

	Neighbourhoods #	POPD Change #	POPD 2016 #
3.36% to 83.17%	8	-0.85	3.18
25.01% to 50.00%	116	-1.38	2.44
No Counts for 1961	16		
Former Municipal Boundary			

Of the 8 neighbourhoods with more than 3.04 people per dwelling, only 2 of them have more than 50% of all housing as detached. 3.04 is the benchmark because neighbourhoods where 75-100% of all houses are detached have an average of 3.04 people per dwelling. More research is required to understand what characteristics here have led to more people per dwelling than all other neighbourhoods.

These 8 neighbourhoods illustrate that neighbourhoods with fewer detached homes can have larger households. An understanding of these neighbourhoods may provide a set of principles on how to develop housing for families in neighbourhoods across Toronto, removing the barriers of access that exist today.

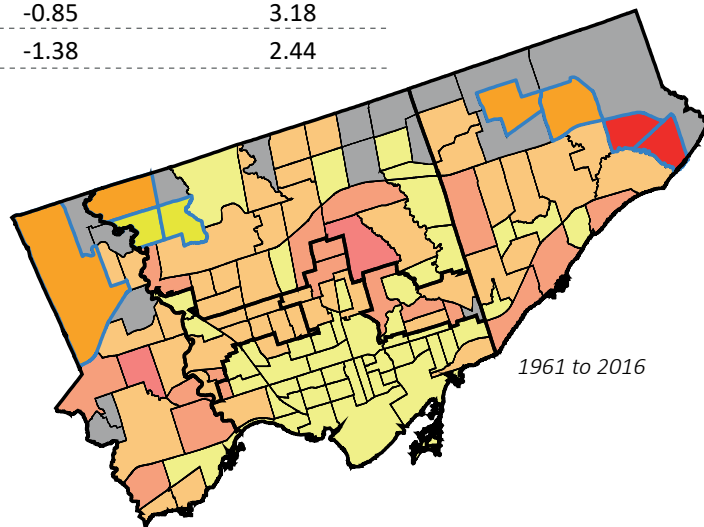


Table 4: Neighbourhoods with Larger Families by People per Occupied Private Dwelling (POPD)\*

			POPD		
		% of Dwellings Detached	1961	2016	Change
Neighbourhood	Glenfield-Jane Heights (25)	4.29%	4.02	3.07	-0.95
	Humbermede (22)	11.82%	4.32	3.08	-1.24
	Malvern (132)	26.57%	4.07	3.26	-0.80
	Agincourt North (129)	37.04%	4.03	3.19	-0.84
	West Humber-Clairville (1)	42.58%	4.04	3.24	-0.80
	Humber Summit (21)	45.04%	4.07	3.19	-0.88
	Centennial Scarborough (133)	81.17%	3.74	3.05	-0.68
	Highland Creek (134)	83.58%	3.95	3.38	-0.57

# Development and Access to Housing

**Most new developments are not large enough to accommodate families.** The growth in the number of smaller units was identified in the City's 2015 Report "Housing Occupancy Trends, 1996-2011" (City of Toronto, 2015). This report was drafted as part of the *Official Plan Review* and indicates that most new families are looking to new development for housing options because older households age in place within existing detached houses.

In "Housing Occupancy Trends, 1996-2011" the City observed that the average size of households is declining among all cohorts. They noted that more people live alone, there are more empty-nesters, and older households "maintain their share in ground-related housing". It is the City's observation that, "The growth of smaller households has contributed heavily to the demand for multi-unit buildings,".

Recently, the growing and neglected demand for more supply of family units has resulted in the rapid inflation of condo prices (Marr, 2017). This is because, as noted by Matthew Boukall, senior director of residential products with Altus Data, young couples, families, and residents are seeking larger condos than they were 5 years ago. Five years ago, one bedroom condos accounted for 60% of sales, but this number is declining as these groups seek more affordable housing options for family-sized dwellings.

# Low Housing Supply Hurts Families

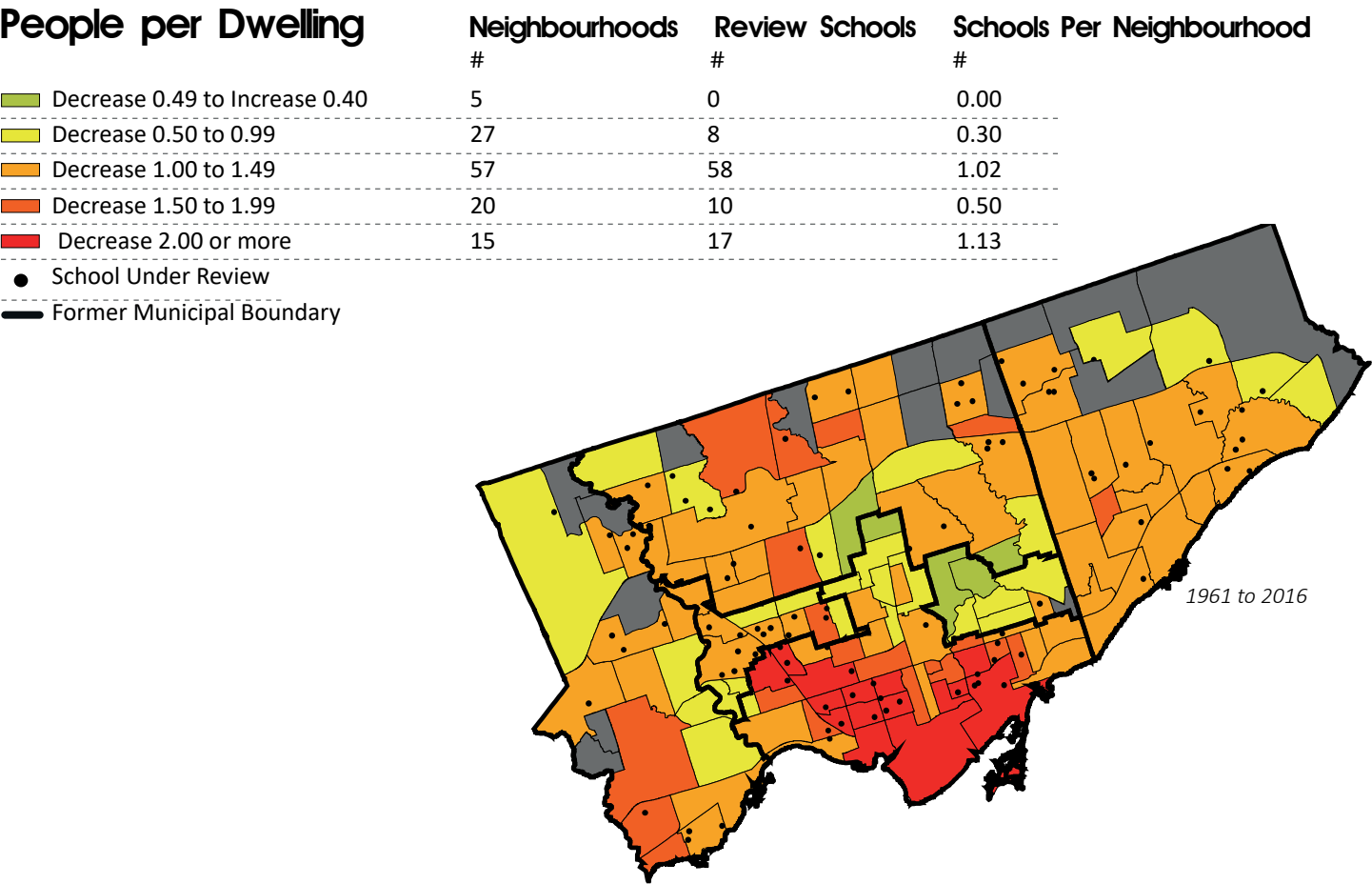
Demographics, the way we build, and population change directly affects the City’s ability to provide services. One case study is under enrollment in select TDSB (Toronto District School Board) schools. In Toronto, 105 of TDSB’s schools are under review due to having enrollment at 65% or under. As a result, the family-friendliness of 48% of Toronto’s neighbourhoods are threatened by underserviced or closing schools. This will result in a growing disparity in the access to education for children across the City. This will have direct negative impacts on the health outcomes for the families and children in these neighbourhoods.

## Declining Family Sizes, 1961–2016

Schools are more likely to suffer from under enrollment in neighbourhoods with larger decreases in the number of people per dwelling. The decline in fertility rate is not reflected in the housing stock of most of Toronto’s neighbourhoods. Most neighbourhoods are hosts to a growing number of houses with bedrooms that go unused because there are too few people per dwelling (Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis, 2017). Development is required to provide housing designed for and accessible to new families.

The addition of families into these neighbourhoods will maintain and improve the vitality of these neighbourhoods by increasing the number of children who will enroll in local schools.

Map 6: Relationship Between Change in Number of People per Occupied Private Dwelling & Schools Under Review, 1961-2016



## Stagnant Housing Supply, 1986–2016

**Over 3/4s Toronto's housing stock was established by 1986.** This has resulted in the decline of new families entering neighbourhoods where there has been little or no housing development. As a result, when combined with lower fertility rates and declining household sizes, fewer children enter these neighbourhoods, and schools face lowering enrollment.

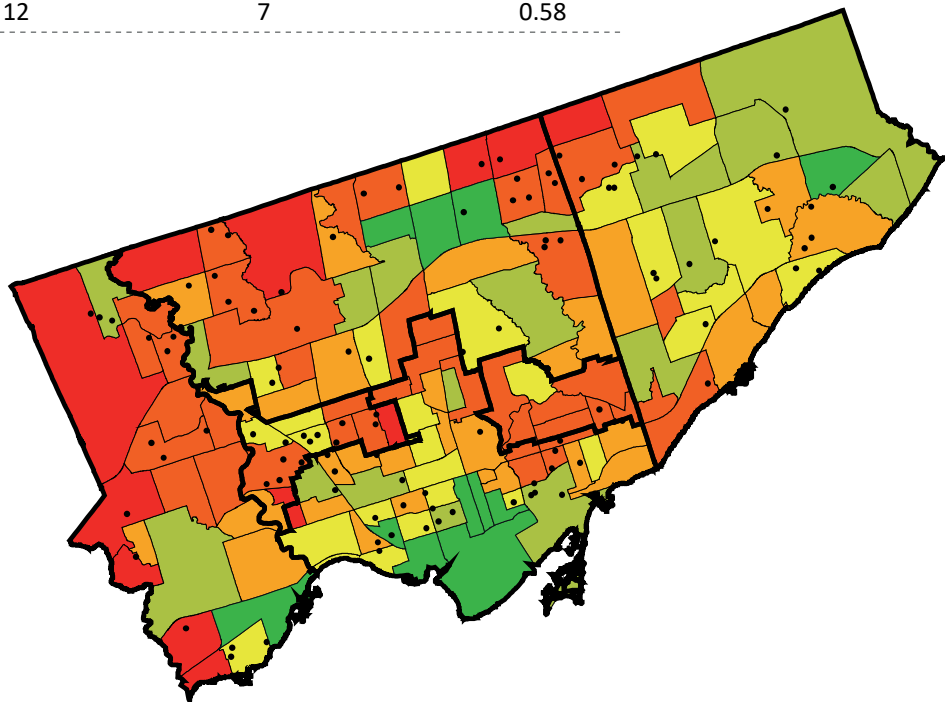
Half of Toronto's neighbourhoods established over 80% of its housing stock by 1986. As noted by the City, older households are maintaining their share of ground-related housing (City of Toronto, 2015). The lack of housing supply across the City excludes new families from entering most of Toronto.

Map 7: Relationship Between Change in Housing Supply & Schools Under Review, 1986-2016

### Dwellings Built by 1986

	Neighbourhoods #	Review Schools #	Schools Per Neighbourhood #
9.43 to 60.00%	11	3	0.27
60.01 to 70.00%	18	15	0.83
70.01 to 80.00%	26	26	1.00
80.01 to 90.00%	31	15	0.48
90.01 to 100.00%	42	39	0.93
100.01% or more	12	7	0.58

● School Under Review  
 — Former Municipal Boundary





## Stagnant or Declining Population

Map 8: Relationship Between Change in Population Size & Schools Under Review, 1986-2016

Change in People/KM <sup>2</sup>	Neighbourhoods #	Review Schools #	Schools Per Neighbourhood #
■ Increase 2,000 or more	15	2	0.13
■ Increase 1,000 to 2,000	25	17	0.68
■ Increase 0 to 1,000	64	44	0.69
■ Decrease 999 to 0	27	37	1.37
■ Decrease 1,000 to 1,999	7	3	0.43
■ Decrease 2,000 or more	2	2	1.00
● School Under Review			
— Former Municipal Boundary			

**Due to declining family sizes and low or no addition to the supply of housing, many neighbourhoods have seen a decline or stagnation in their population growth since 1986.**

Neighbourhoods with stagnant or declining populations are more likely to have schools with low enrollment.

Population decline reflects smaller family sizes and lack of housing supply across the City. More housing supply across the City is required to provide spaces for families, or schools will continue to suffer from under-enrollment, schools will close, students will suffer, and the City will become less family friendly.

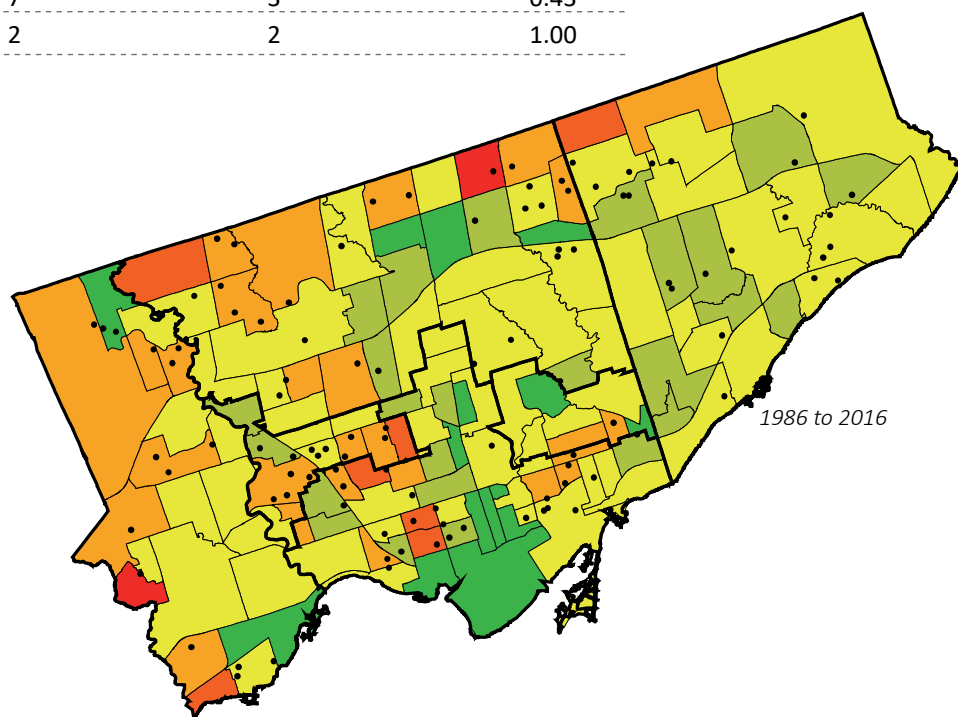
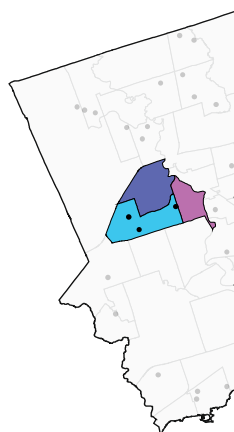


Table 5: Case Study: Relationship Between Under Enrolled Schools, POPD, Housing Stock and Density Change



Neighbourhood	POPD*		2016 Dwellings Built by 1986	People per KM <sup>2</sup> **	
	Change	2016	%	Change	2016
Kingsview Village -The Westway	n/a	2.83	100%	0.17%	4,345
Humber Heights- Westmount	-1.13	2.65	93%	0.46%	3,906
Willowridge- Martingrove-Richview	-1.31	2.60	91%	-0.06%	4,016

\* 1961 - 2016, POPD (People per Occupied Private Dwelling)  
\*\* 1986-2016

## Social Impact

**“Under enrollment and closing schools within 48% of Toronto’s neighbourhoods negatively impact the health outcomes of children as they lose access to quality education.** Due to under enrollment students experience lack of stability, fewer course offerings and programming, and if the school closes, longer commute times between home and school. Due to the decline in access to education, under enrollment and closing school are also related to a decline in the family-friendliness of a neighborhood. Currently the *Official Plan* lacks any policies directed to maintaining family-friendliness.

Case Study: The potential closing of Kipling Collegiate, Richview Collegiate, and Scarlett Heights Entrepreneurial Academy threaten the family friendliness of 3 neighbourhood areas: Kingsview Village-The Westway, Humber Heights-Westmount, and Willowridge- Martingrove-Richview. All three neighbourhoods have been mostly built out by 1986 and had stagnant population growth. January 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a Pupil Accommodation Review, a step in the process towards closing one or more of these schools (Toronto District School Board, 2017).

Kipling Collegiate has an enrollment of 47%, it is in a neighbourhood where the population density has declined, and there has been little to no growth in housing supply within the neighbourhood. This has resulted in teachers leaving yearly, and a lack of courses and program offerings. I graduated from Kipling Collegiate in 2013 **The school’s decline leaves many feeling left behind.**

This is happening across Toronto. More must be done to protect the City’s appeal to families.”

- Cheryll Case



# Neighbourhoods Are Redeveloping

The physical nature of neighbourhoods is changing due to the redevelopment of detached houses.

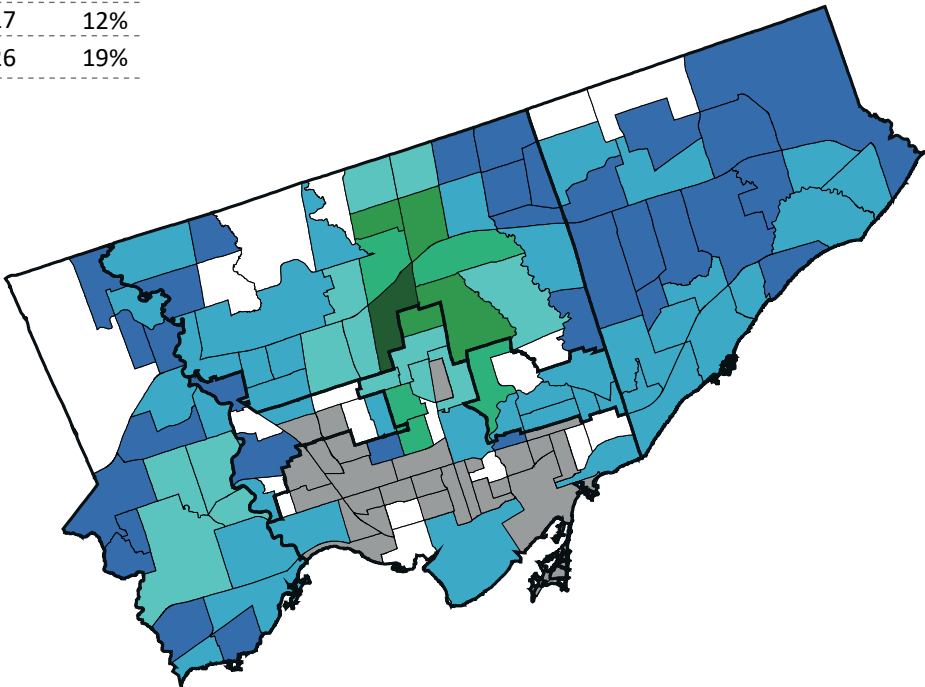
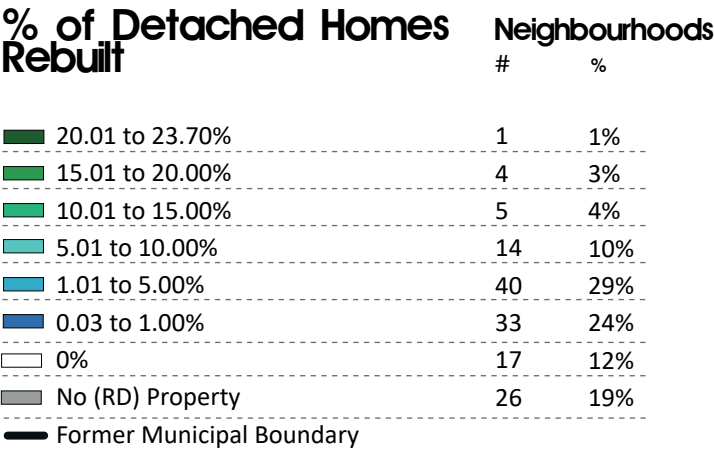
## Redevelopment of Detached Housing

**Toronto’s residential neighbourhoods are changing.** City policies prevent the addition of more housing units where a detached housing currently exists, but it allows detached houses to be torn down and redeveloped larger than the surrounding detached houses. Between 2001 and 2016, where the property is zoned Residential Detached (RD), 9,149 detached homes have been demolished and redeveloped. This is more than enough to rebuild every property in York zoned (RD).

Detached houses are more likely to be rebuilt when near the Yonge subway line. This reflects high demand for housing in areas with close access to rapid transit.

As of 2016, only 17 of 140 neighbourhoods (12%) have seen no change within existing neighborhoods due to the redevelopment of existing detached housing.

Map 9: Percentage of Detached Dwellings Rebuilt Between 2001 & 2016





## Height Difference

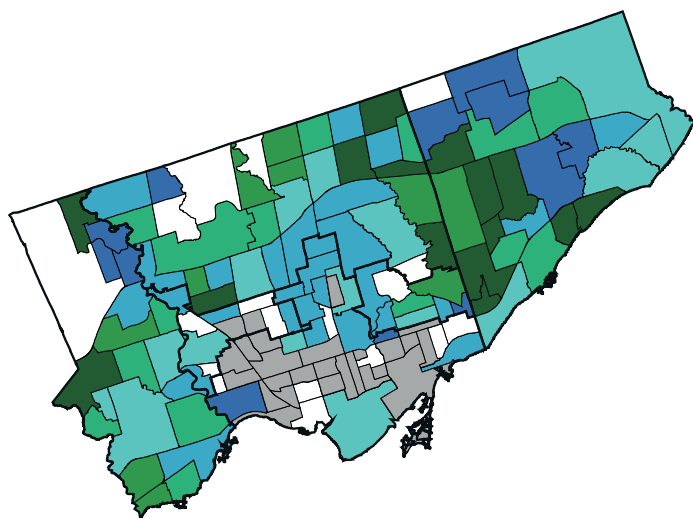
In 97 neighbourhoods, the demolition and redevelopment of detached housing has resulted in new single-family housing that is taller than the original detached housing surrounding it. In 85 neighbourhoods, on average, rebuilt detached houses are larger than the average height of non-rebuilt houses within a 60 metres radius.

Map 10: Height Difference Between Rebuilt Detached Houses & the Original Houses within a 60 metre radius

### Height of Rebuilt Detached Homes

### Neighbourhoods

40.01 to 130% Taller	15	11%
30.01 to 40.00% Taller	10	7%
20.01 to 30.00% Taller	15	11%
10.01 to 20.00% Taller	16	11%
0.01 to 10.00% Taller	29	21%
0.00 to 48.00% Shorter	12	9%
None Rebuilt on (RD)	17	12%
No (RD) Property	26	19%
Former Municipal Boundary		



## Permissive Zoning

Redevelopment of existing detached houses occurs because Toronto's Zoning By-laws are designed for their as-of-right redevelopment into taller and larger homes. In addition, the Committee of Adjustment has permitted additional size increases beyond what the Zoning By-law would otherwise permit.

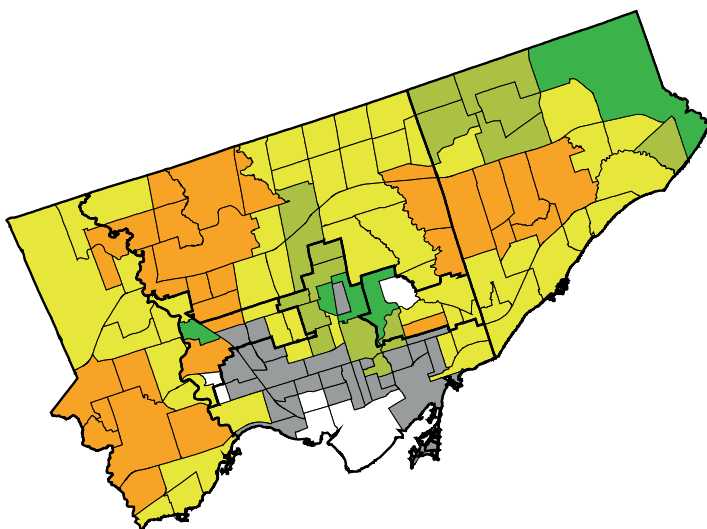
Permission to reinvest and create larger houses designed for single families should be expanded to also allow for the creation of new multi-unit low rise house types in existing neighbourhoods. This may be accomplished through the permission to build at scales compatible with detached houses. This will, over time, provide an opportunity for residents to invest in the creation of more housing supply for families of all income levels in various areas of the city currently lacking in such housing options.

Map 11: Existing Height as Portion of Permitted Height

### Height as Portion of Permitted

### Neighbourhoods

65.01 to 72.00%	5	4%
55.01 to 65.00%	17	12%
45.01 to 55.01%	56	40%
37.00% to 45.00%	31	22%
Lack of Height Data	5	4%
No (RD) Property	26	19%
Former Municipal Boundary		



# Housing Options and Policy

**The *Growth Plan* does not limit intensification and new development only to *Urban Growth Centres* or other designated intensification areas.** *Growth Plan* policies support gentle intensification, but in practice application of these policies is minimal or non-existent in most of Toronto's neighbourhoods. Currently, the Toronto *Official Plan* and *Zoning By-law* work against the *Growth Plan* and prevent the growth of housing supply in most of Toronto's residential neighbourhoods. These policies have resulted in stagnant growth, declined population, contributes to urban sprawl within the region by excluding young families, threaten the family-friendliness of 48% of Toronto's neighbourhoods, and will result in growing disparity between neighbourhoods as schools suffer from under enrollment or close all together.

As a City, we need to look at the *Official Plan* and *Zoning By-law*, planning practices, and neighbourhoods to discover the most appropriate path towards restoring and protecting the vibrancy of all residential neighbourhoods. The City of Toronto: the City Planning Division, politicians, community members, and residents need to pick up on this discussion if serious about housing, families, and community health.



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# Map and Table Resources

## **3D Massing, Former Municipal Boundaries, Neighbourhood Boundaries, Property Boundaries, TDSB School Locations, the Zoning By-law and Building Permits - Cleared Permits Prior Years for 2001-2016**

Toronto's Open Data Catalogue (<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vnextoid=1a66e03bb8d1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>)

## **2016 Census Results**

Statistics Canada

## **Census Results for 1961, 1986 and 2011**

Census Data from Canadian Census Analyser, CHASS (Computing in the Humanities and Social Sciences)

## **Geographic Boundaries for Census Results of 1961, 1986, 2011, and 2016:**

Scholars Geoportal, accessed via Ryerson University

## **Schools Under Review**

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/the-full-list-of-tdsb-schools-at-65-per-cent-or-less-capacity/article22695406/>

# Photos

Photos collecting from the City of Toronto's online photo archives







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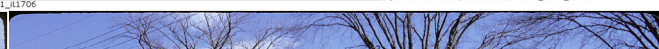
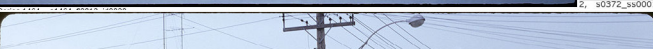
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