



THE GROWTH OF LONDON OUTSIDE LONDON

THE INCREASING SHARE OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION
OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF THE CITY LIMITS

MARCH 2022



**Smart Prosperity
Institute**

Acknowledgements

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Smart Prosperity Institute is a national research network and policy think tank based at the University of Ottawa. We deliver world-class research and work with public and private partners – all to advance practical policies and market solutions for a stronger, cleaner economy.

About the London Development Institute (LDI)

LDI is a member-based organization representing most large land developers in the London area. LDI has been the leading voice on development issues in our City for more than 40 years. Our goal, working with our partners in local government and the community, is to build a better London.

About the London Home Builders' Association (LHBA)

The London Home Builders' Association provides a forum for its members to share information and experience; promote ethical building and business practices; be the voice of the residential construction industry in London; and work towards the betterment of our community.

THE GROWTH OF LONDON OUTSIDE LONDON

Executive summary

The Growth of London Outside of London tells a data-driven story in two parts:

1. The London area's population is rapidly growing due, in part, to an increased number of families moving in from the Greater Toronto Area.
2. Increasingly, the family-sized homes being built to support a growing number of families are being built outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London.

Using preliminary 2021 Census data, along with components of population growth data from Statistics Canada and housing completions data from the Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC), we show that new housing development to support the London area's growing population is increasingly happening outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London.

Key facts and figures

1. The metro London area (which includes much of Elgin and Middlesex Counties) is the fourth fastest-growing metro in Canada, behind only three communities in British Columbia.
2. In the past five years, the City of London's population growth, while rapid, lags that of Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc and St. Thomas.
3. In the past five years, Elgin-Middlesex has seen 18,000 people, on net, move here from other parts of Canada, with much of that growth coming from former residents of the Greater Toronto Area.
4. In the past five years, single-detached home construction was up 10% in the City of London, relative to the previous five years. In the rest of Elgin-Middlesex outside of London, it is up 80%.
5. In 2021, 56% of all single-detached homes built in Elgin-Middlesex were built outside of the City of London. Ten years ago, only 30% were.
6. Over the past five years, over half of all single-detached homes and a whopping 96% of semi-detached homes were built outside of the City of London.
7. Other forms of housing are also increasingly being built outside of the City of London. In the last five years, the number of Elgin-Middlesex row units built outside London was 738, up from 116 the previous five years. Additionally, 396 apartment units were built outside London in the last five years, after only 19 were built in the previous five years.

The London area has attracted families of all ages, from both inside and outside of Canada, looking for housing that meets their needs. Increasingly, the housing being built to support that population is being built outside of the City's municipal boundaries. The growth of the communities around London, while bringing many benefits, could put stress on London's municipal tax base, as residents outside of the City will use the City's infrastructure to shop and work in London but not pay property taxes to the City.

THE GROWTH OF LONDON OUTSIDE LONDON

Ten key points from this report

1. The London area is growing in population, and an increasing proportion of that growth is occurring outside of the boundaries of the City of London. Newly released Census data reveals that from 2012 to 2016, 89% of Elgin-Middlesex's population growth occurred in the City of London, but from 2017 to 2021, this proportion dropped to 76%.
2. In absolute terms, the population of Elgin-Middlesex outside of London grew by 12,333 persons in the last five years, after growing by only 2,272 in the previous five.
3. This shift to increased population growth occurring outside of the city limits will stress London's municipal tax base, as residents outside of the City will use the City's infrastructure to shop and work in London but not pay property taxes to the City.
4. Both the area within London and outside of London are experiencing a population boom. The population boom is due to increased immigration, the boom in international students, and families moving in from other parts of Canada.
5. The GTA, along with Windsor, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, are the primary sources of families moving to the London area from other parts of Canada.
6. The largest cohort of families moving to Elgin-Middlesex are comprised of adults in their 30s with young children; however, a substantial number of families of adults between the ages of 40-70 are also making their way to the region.
7. These families are increasingly locating outside of the City of London, as the rate of housing construction is rising faster outside of the City than within. Census data reveals that the number of new dwelling units rose by 7.5% outside the City of London, but only 6.2% within it over the past five years. The fastest growth in dwelling units occurred north and west of the City in Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc, and Middlesex Centre.
8. Homebuilding occurring outside of the City is a relatively recent trend. From 2012-16, the number of dwelling units rose by 4.4% within the City, but only 3.7% in the rest of Elgin-Middlesex.
9. CMHC data provides additional context on this growth by showing that over the past five years, less than half the single-detached homes built in Elgin-Middlesex were built in the City of London, and only 4% of all semi-detached homes.
10. All forms of housing are increasingly being built outside of the City of London. In the last five years, 8% of all completed apartment units in Elgin-Middlesex were built outside of London, up from 1% the previous five years. Similarly, 23% of all row housing was built outside of London from 2017-21, up from just 8% in 2012-16.

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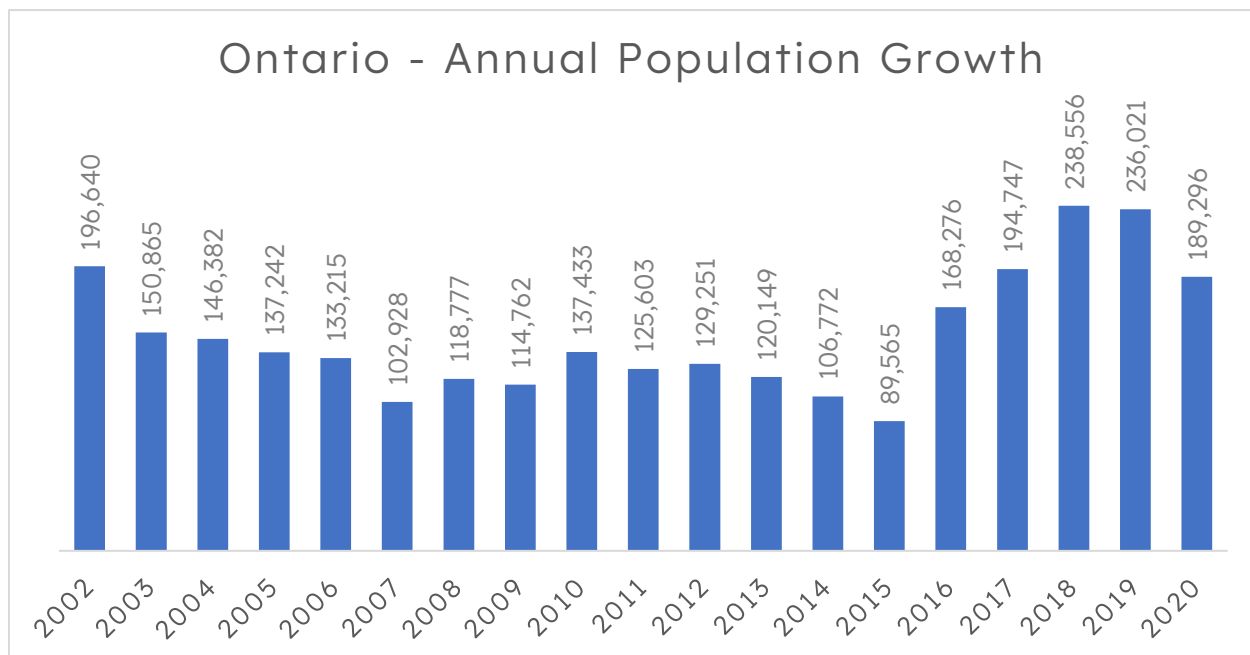
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Introduction: The London Area is one of the fastest-growing regions of the country, though much of the growth is happening outside of the City

The London metro area, which includes the City of London and much of Elgin and Middlesex counties,¹ experienced the fastest population growth of any metro in Ontario (and fastest of any Canadian metro outside of British Columbia) from 2016 to 2021, according to preliminary Census data released by Statistics Canada in February 2022.² Ontario's growth has been remarkably rapid in recent years due to increased immigration and an international student boom. The London area has seen increases in immigration and international enrollment at Western and Fanshawe, with those students often staying after graduation and eventually gaining permanent residency.

This rapid population growth is not just confined to London. Ontario is experiencing rapid population growth, as shown by Figure 1. Ontario's population had been consistently growing by around 120,000 persons per year from 2007 to 2014. By 2018, Ontario added nearly 240,000 residents, twice as much as the previous average.

Figure 1: Ontario's Net Population Growth Per Year, 2001-2020.³



¹ The London Census Metropolitan Area contains Adelaide-Metcalf, London, Middlesex Centre, Strathroy-Caradoc and Thames Centre from Middlesex County as well as Central Elgin, St. Thomas, and Southwold from Elgin County.

² <https://globalnews.ca/news/8606476/kelowna-fastest-growing-city-Census/#:~:text=A%2B-,Kelowna%20is%20the%20fastest%20growing%20Census%20Metropolitan%20Area%20in%20Canada,14%20per%20cent%20from%202016.>

³ Source: Moffatt (2021a). Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2020 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020.

Like much of Ontario, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) also experienced rapid population growth from increased immigration, the international student boom, and Canadians from other provinces moving in after the oil price crash in 2015. However, the construction of new homes in the GTA did not keep up with this population growth, as outlined in the Smart Prosperity Report *Forecast for Failure*.⁴ This shortage of housing in the GTA caused Toronto area families to move across Southern Ontario to find housing that met their needs. These families included high numbers of couples with young children and expectant parents, along with mid-career and older Ontarians cashing out of their smaller Toronto-area properties looking for homes that better suited their lifestyles.

The Elgin-Middlesex area supported these new residents from the GTA and the increase in immigration and international students due to an increase in the rate of housing completions of all forms. Despite the City of London being the economic engine of Elgin-Middlesex, the Census reveals that the growth rate in dwelling units is rising faster outside of the City than within. Additional data from the CMHC reveals that over half of all single-detached homes and a whopping 96% of semi-detached homes built in Elgin-Middlesex in the last five years were built outside of the City of London. The fastest growth occurred in communities west and north of London, including Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc, and Middlesex Centre.

Using preliminary Census 2021 data, along with components of population growth data from Statistics Canada and housing completions data from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), we provide evidence of the following two trends:

Trend 1: The London area's population is experiencing rapid growth, in part due to an increased number of families moving in from the Greater Toronto Area.

Trend 2: Increasingly, the family-sized homes being built to support a growing number of families are being built outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London.

The piece's conclusion discusses how these two trends put pressure on the City of London's infrastructure. Residents living outside of the City will drive to the City for shopping and employment but not pay property taxes to the City of London.

⁴ Moffatt and Atiq (2022)

Trend 1: The London area is experiencing rapid population growth due to an increased number of families moving in from the Greater Toronto Area.

On February 9, 2022, Statistics Canada released preliminary population and housing data, at a local level, from the 2021 Census. Specifically, the data release included the number of people living in a particular location on May 11, 2021, and the number of dwelling units, including every type of housing, from single-detached homes to apartment units to basement suites.⁵ The Census numbers, while vital, are an imperfect estimate, particularly of population. The Census will typically underestimate the average centre's population by 4%, as some Canadians fail to respond to the Census questionnaire. Furthermore, because the data is collected in May, when the population of a community with high numbers of college and university students is lowest, as those students may be elsewhere during the summer. Despite being one of those college and university towns susceptible to this undercount, the Census found that the City of London was one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada between 2016 and 2021. However, it found that three other local communities grew even faster.

Census data reveals rapid population growth in Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc, and St. Thomas

Figure 2 provides population estimates for every municipality in Elgin and Middlesex County, except for reserves. It shows that while three-quarters of net new residents of Elgin-Middlesex moved to the City of London (38,502 of 50,835), it did not experience the fastest growth rate in the region. While the City of London's 10% growth rate was one of the fastest in Canada, it was less than half of Lucan Biddulph's 20.85%. Additionally, Strathroy-Caradoc grew at 14.4%, while St. Thomas grew slightly faster than the City of London (10.1% vs. 10.03%).

⁵ The Census defines a dwelling unit as "a structurally separate set of living premises with a private entrance either outside the building or from a common hall, lobby, vestibule or stairway inside the building. The entrance must be one that can be used without passing through anyone else's living quarters."

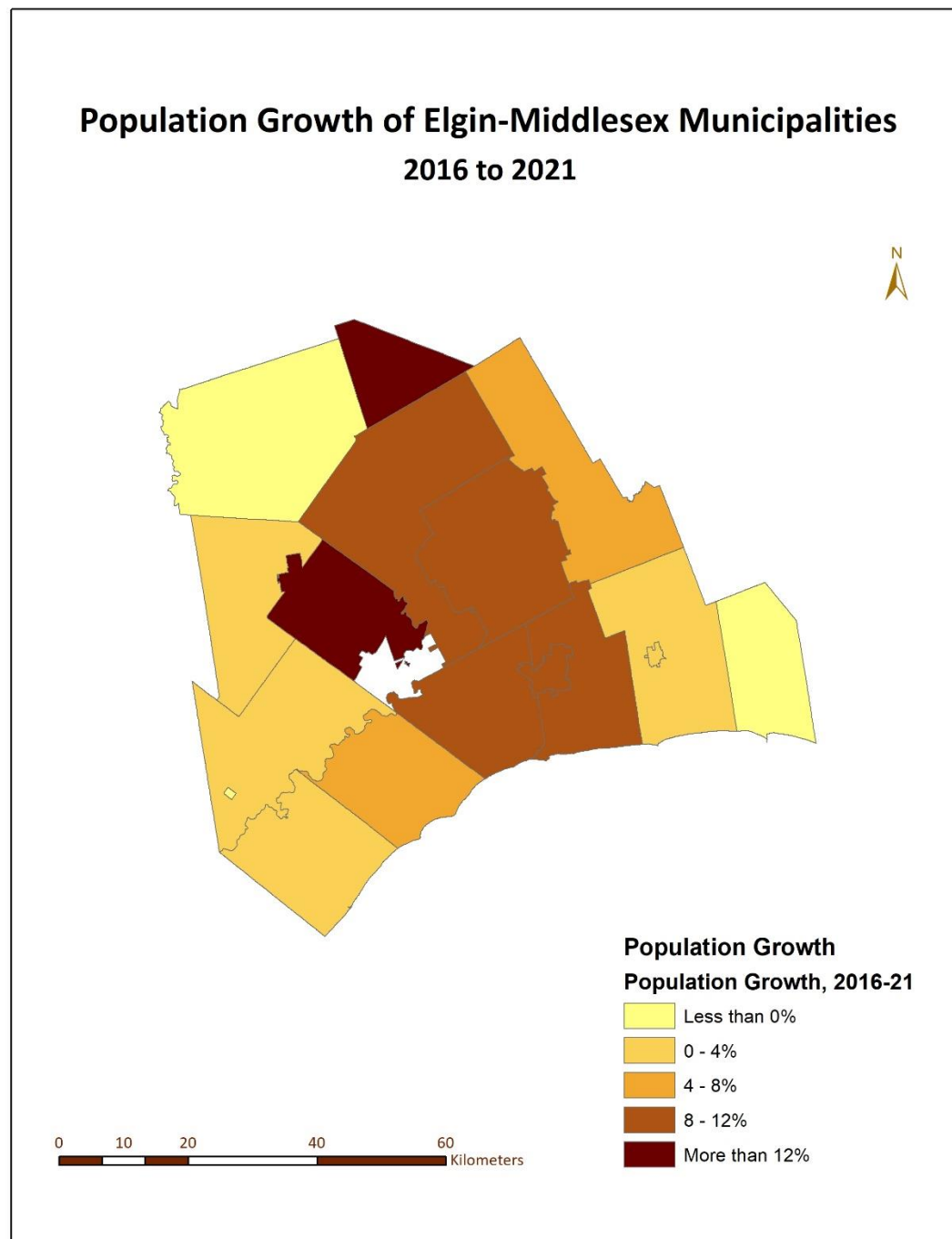
Figure 2: Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, Ranked by Largest Percentage Growth Between 2016 and 2021.⁶

Community	2016 Pop	2021 Pop	Change	Growth in %
Lucan Biddulph	4,700	5,680	980	20.85%
Strathroy-Caradoc	20,867	23,871	3,004	14.40%
St. Thomas	38,909	42,840	3,931	10.10%
London	383,822	422,324	38,502	10.03%
Southwold	4,421	4,851	430	9.73%
Middlesex Centre	17,262	18,928	1,666	9.65%
Central Elgin	12,607	13,746	1,139	9.03%
Dutton/Dunwich	3,866	4,152	286	7.40%
Thames Centre	13,191	13,980	789	5.98%
Southwest Middlesex	5,723	5,893	170	2.97%
Aylmer	7,492	7,699	207	2.76%
West Elgin	4,995	5,060	65	1.30%
Adelaide-Metcalf	2,990	3,011	21	0.70%
Malahide	9,292	9,308	16	0.17%
North Middlesex	6,352	6,307	-45	-0.71%
Bayham	7,396	7,096	-300	-4.06%
Newbury	466	440	-26	-5.58%
TOTAL	544,351	595,186	50,835	9.34%

In Figure 2, we saw that eight municipalities in Elgin-Middlesex grew by less than 3%. The map in Figure 3 reveals that these municipalities tend to be further away from the City of London, either well to the southwest or to the east of the City of London. The two fastest-growing communities, Lucan Biddulph and Strathroy-Caradoc are north and west of the City, respectively.

⁶ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Figure 3: Map of Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities by Percentage Growth Between 2016 and 2021.⁷



⁷ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Due to the slower-growing communities further from the City of London, the City's population growth rate still exceeded that of the rest of Elgin-Middlesex, as shown by Figure 4.

Figure 4: Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. Rest of Elgin Middlesex, Between 2016 and 2021.⁸

Community	2016 Pop	2021 Pop	Change	Growth in %
Outside London	160,529	172,862	12,333	7.68%
City of London	383,822	422,324	38,502	10.03%

Middlesex-London's rapid population growth from 2016 to 2021 was a new phenomenon. If we rewind to the previous five years, we see more modest population growth. In Figure 5, we see that no Elgin-Middlesex municipality experienced a population growth rate of over 10% from 2011 to 2016, and 8 of 17 municipalities experienced a population *decline*. As with 2016 to 2021, Lucan Biddulph was the fastest-growing municipality from 2011 to 2016. However, its 8.34% five-year growth rate from 2011 to 2016 would have only been the eighth-highest in Elgin-Middlesex had it occurred from 2016 to 2021.

Figure 5: Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, Ranked by Largest Percentage Growth Between 2011 and 2016.⁹

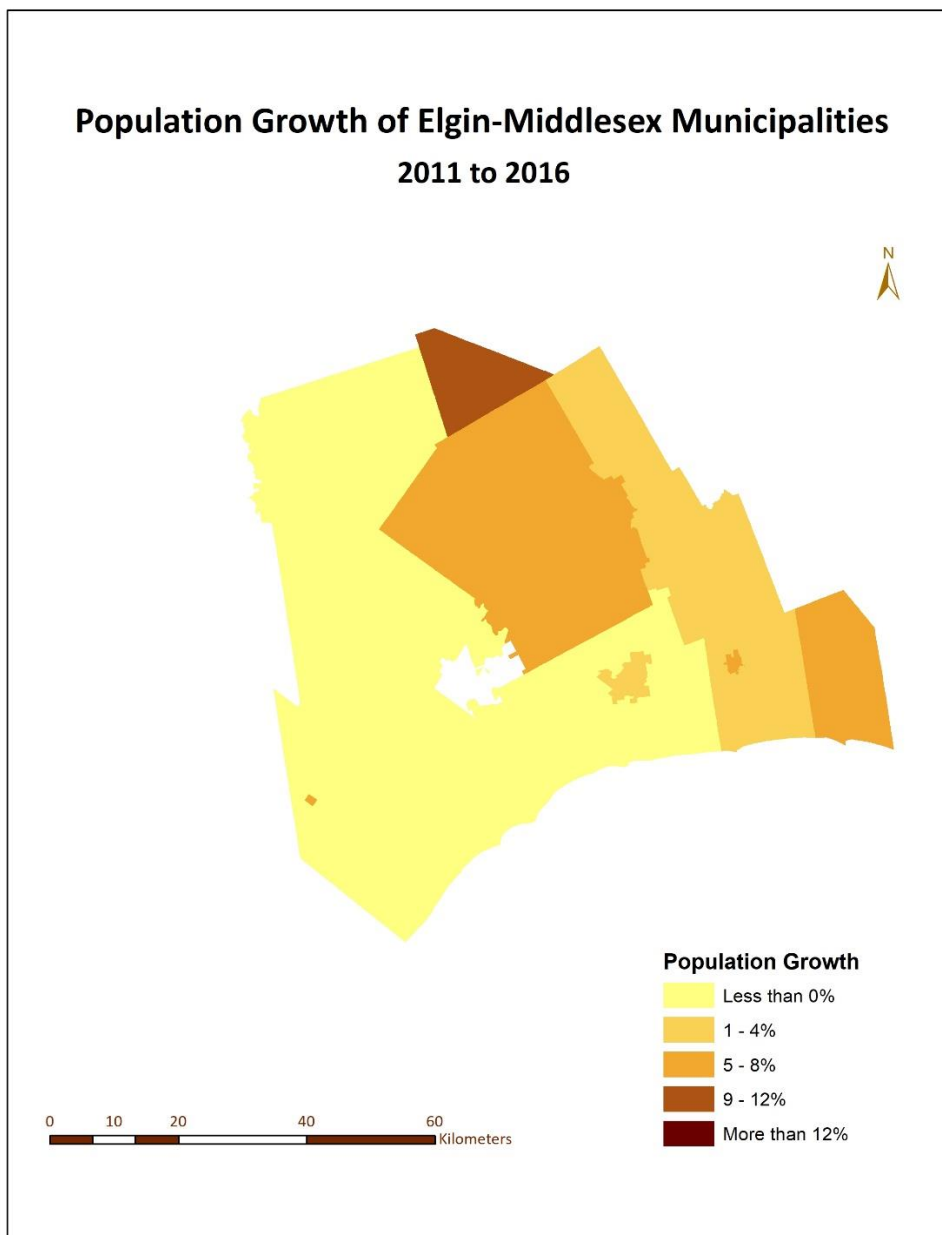
Community	2011 Pop	2016 Pop	Change	Growth in %
Lucan Biddulph	4,338	4,700	362	8.34%
Bayham	6,989	7,396	407	5.82%
London	366,151	383,822	17,671	4.83%
Aylmer	7,151	7,492	341	4.77%
Middlesex Centre	16,487	17,262	775	4.70%
Newbury	447	466	19	4.25%
St. Thomas	37,905	38,909	1,004	2.65%
Malahide	9,146	9,292	146	1.60%
Thames Centre	13,000	13,191	191	1.47%
Dutton/Dunwich	3,876	3,866	-10	-0.26%
Strathroy-Caradoc	20,978	20,867	-111	-0.53%
Central Elgin	12,743	12,607	-136	-1.07%
Adelaide-Metcalf	3,028	2,990	-38	-1.25%
Southwold	4,494	4,421	-73	-1.62%
Southwest Middlesex	5,860	5,723	-137	-2.34%
West Elgin	5,157	4,995	-162	-3.14%
North Middlesex	6,658	6,352	-306	-4.60%
TOTAL	524,408	544,351	19,943	3.80%

⁸ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

⁹ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Figure 6 provides a map of each municipality's 2011-16 population growth rate, using the same legend as the Figure 3 map. It reveals the much slower growth across the region during 2011-16, though Aylmer stands out as growing faster in 2011-16 than in 2016-21.

Figure 6: Map of Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities by Percentage Growth Between 2011 and 2016.¹⁰



¹⁰ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Between 2011 and 2016, the population growth rate of the City of London was over three times higher than that of the rest of Elgin-Middlesex, as shown by Figure 7.

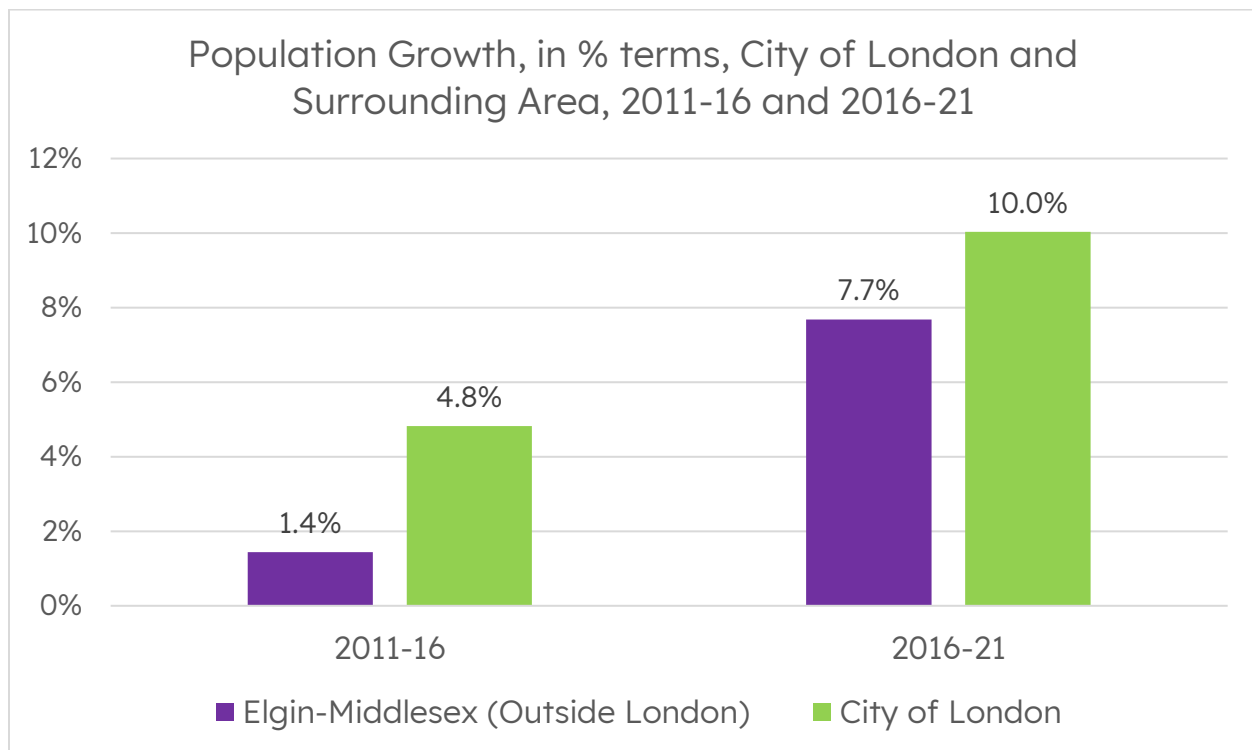
Figure 7: Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. the Rest of Elgin Middlesex, Between 2011 and 2016.¹¹

Community	2011 Pop	2016 Pop	Change	Growth in %
Outside London	158,257	160,529	2,272	1.44%
City of London	366,151	383,822	17,671	4.83%

City of London's population is still growing faster than the rest of Elgin-Middlesex, but the gap is closing

Comparing the two five-year periods shows that both the City of London and the surrounding region's population grew faster in 2016-21 than 2011-16, as shown by Figure 8.

Figure 8: Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. the Rest of Elgin Middlesex, Between 2011-16 and 2016-21.¹²



¹¹ Source: Census of Population (2011, 2016). Note: Population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016; population numbers for 2011 are as of May 10, 2011.

¹² Source: Census of Population (2011, 2016, 2021). Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016; population numbers for 2011 are as of May 10, 2011.

Figure 8 can tell us by how much the population is growing, but it cannot tell us why. To better understand the underlying dynamics of population growth, we need to know where the new residents are coming from.

London area is growing due to a combination of an increase in the number of international students, immigration, and an influx of families from other parts of Canada

The analysis from the previous section raises the question, “Where did all the new residents of Elgin-Middlesex come from?” To answer this question, we divide population growth into the following four categories:

1. “Natural” – The difference between the number of people born and the number of people who died during a given period.
2. Net Immigration – The number of new immigrants to the region minus the number of people who emigrate to another country.¹³
3. Non-Permanent Residents. Immigrants to the region are classified as permanent residents; however, many citizens of other countries move to the region without gaining permanent residency. These include temporary foreign workers and international students. Many of these individuals eventually become permanent residents, so they should be considered *pre-permanent* residents.
4. Within Canada. The within Canada figure is the net number of individuals who move to Elgin-Middlesex from other parts of Canada, including other parts of Ontario.

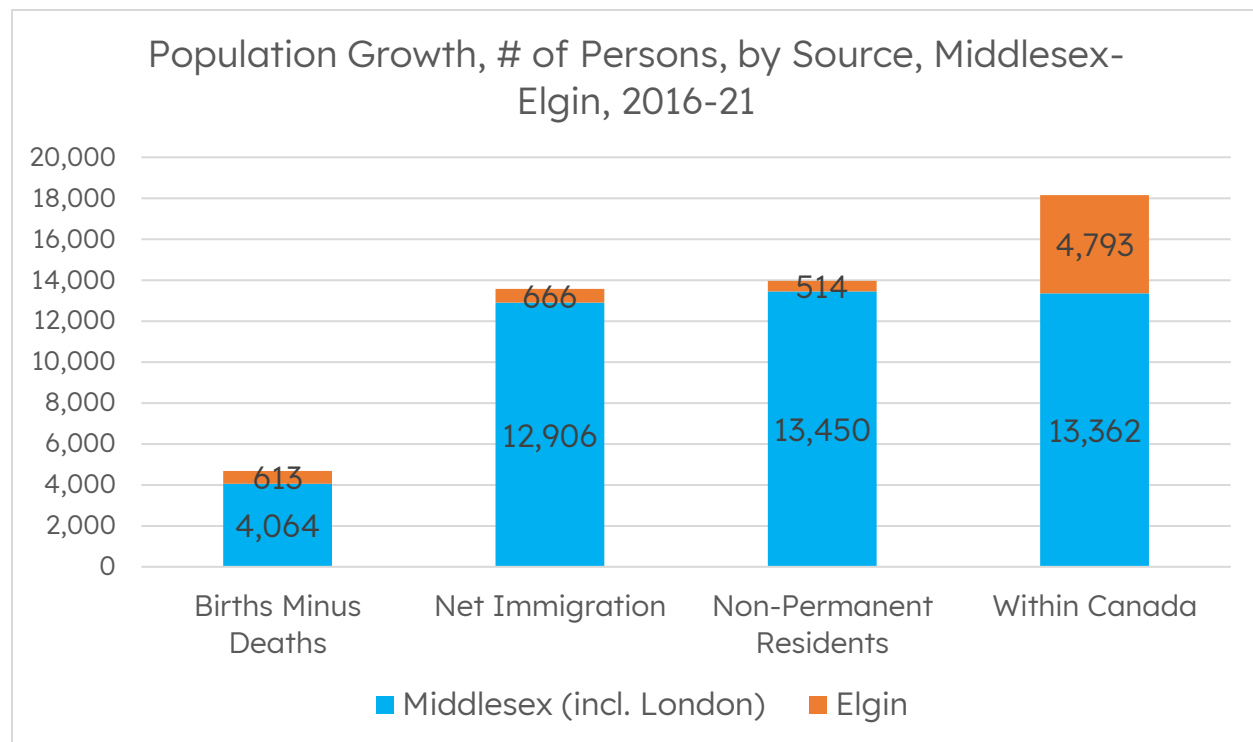
Unfortunately, the February 2022 Census data release did not contain information on the components of population growth. Statistics Canada does have information on these trends, but it is at the Census division¹⁴ rather than the municipal level. Elgin County and Middlesex County (including London) are two of Ontario’s 49 Census divisions, so we can use those as our geographic units.

Figure 9 provides data on population growth, regarding the number of persons, for Elgin-Middlesex from 2016-21 for our four categories. While net migration from within Canada was the largest of the four groups, no one category accounted for most of the growth.

¹³ The full calculation for *net immigration* is net new immigrants minus new emigrants plus returning emigrants minus temporary emigration.

¹⁴ In Ontario, a Census Division is typically a regional municipality, a county, or, in northern Ontario, a district.

Figure 9: Population Growth by Source, for Middlesex-Elgin, from 2016 to 2021.¹⁵



Over 90% of Elgin-Middlesex’s net population growth came from people moving into the region, either from within or outside Canada, with just over 9% coming from the number of births exceeding the number of deaths.¹⁶ For each of the three migration-based sources, population growth picked up after 2015, but the underlying dynamics differ considerably.

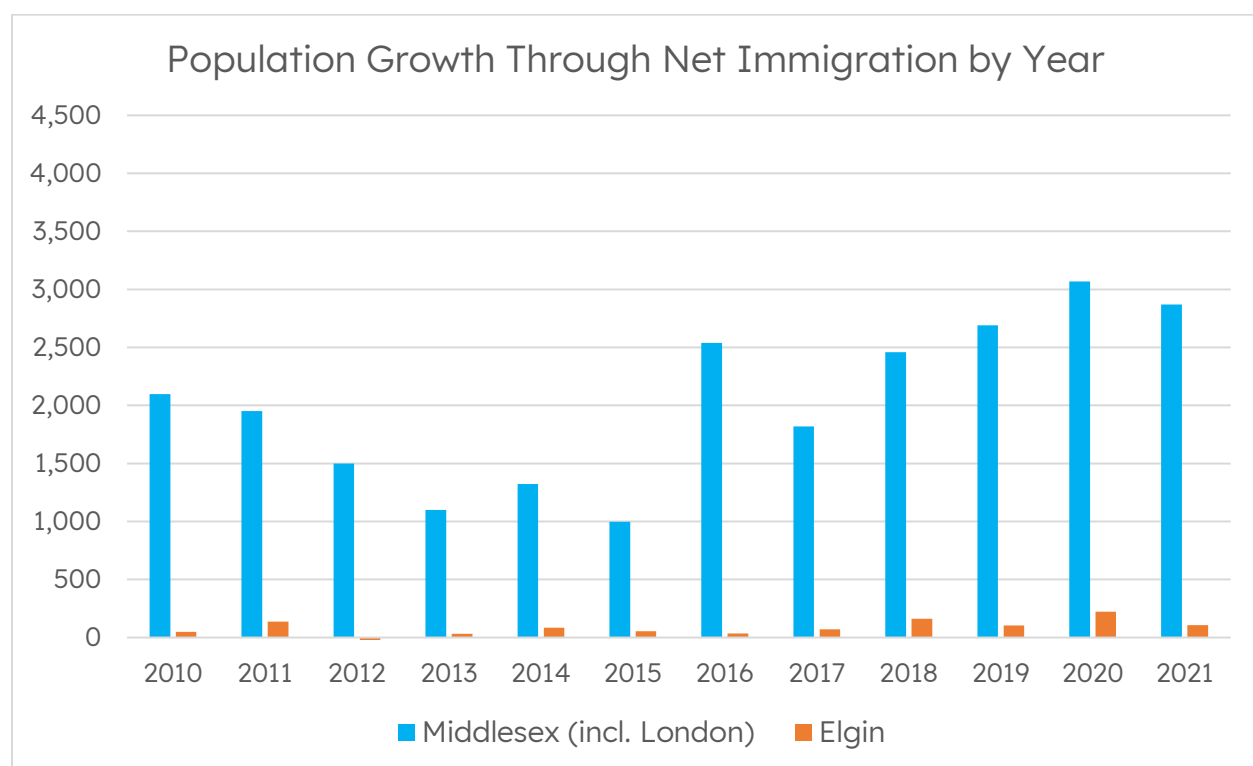
¹⁵ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2016-21 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2021.

¹⁶ And many of those births came from families that newly arrived in the region.

Immigration to Elgin-Middlesex rose after 2015, partly due to changes in federal policy and partly due to changing economic conditions

Elgin-Middlesex, particularly London, is becoming a prime destination for international talent. Figure 10 provides data on the net number of immigrants moving to Elgin-Middlesex by year. The number of net new immigrants settling in Elgin is modest but rising, while Middlesex (including London) attracts more than 2,000 new immigrants each year. Three factors can explain this rise.¹⁷ The first is the steady rise in immigration across Canada due to changes in federal policies, including immigration targets and the introduction of the Express Entry system in 2015. The second is that Ontario's share of new immigrants to Canada rose after 2015 due, in part, to the oil price crash that occurred that summer. The third factor is the rise in the number of international students in Elgin-Middlesex in recent years. While the students themselves are not considered immigrants (as they are not permanent residents), they can apply for permanent residency after graduation, as explained in the next section.

Figure 10: Population Growth through Net Immigration, for Middlesex and Elgin, by Year, from 2010 to 2021.¹⁸



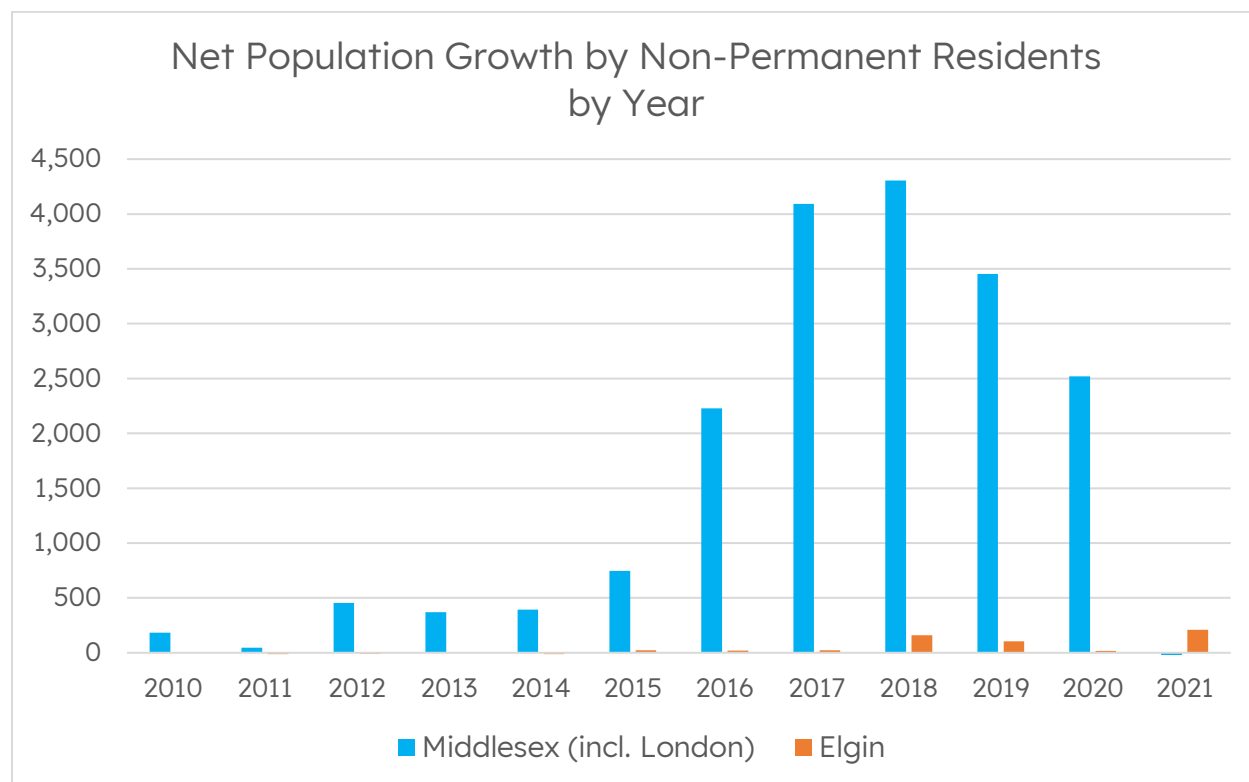
¹⁷ For additional information see <https://mikepmoffatt.medium.com/ontarians-on-the-move-2022-edition-745547b486f7>

¹⁸ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2021 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021.

London experienced an international student boom before the pandemic

Since 2015, Middlesex has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of residents under the statistical classification of *non-permanent residents*. In 2015, Middlesex added just over 700 net non-permanent residents to its population. The following year, the number tripled to 2,200, then nearly doubled the next year to 4,100; a nearly six-fold increase in two years. Those numbers would increase again in 2018, as shown by Figure 11.

Figure 11: Net Population Growth by Non-Permanent Residents, for Middlesex and Elgin, by Year, from 2010 to 2021.¹⁹



It is important to note that *non-permanent residents* is a statistical classification, not a description of how long they plan to stay in the region. Statistics Canada defines the group as follows²⁰:

Non-permanent residents (NPRs) are persons who have been legally granted the right to live in Canada on a temporary basis under the authority of a temporary resident permit, along with members of their family living with them... Non-permanent residents include foreign workers, foreign students, the humanitarian population and other temporary residents. The humanitarian population includes refugee claimants and temporary residents who are allowed to remain in

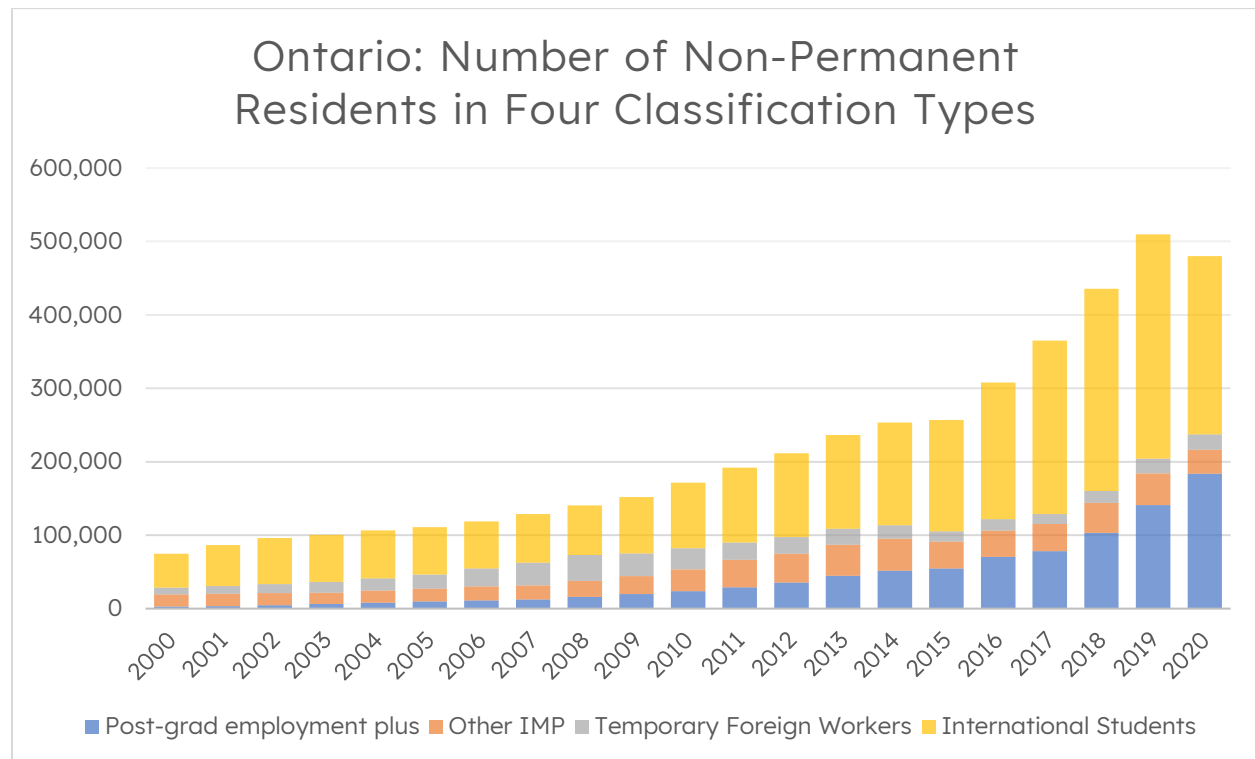
¹⁹ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2021 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021.

²⁰ Government of Canada (2021)

Canada on humanitarian grounds and are not categorized as either foreign workers or foreign students.

The NPR classification covers several categories, from refugee claimants to temporary foreign workers. However, as shown by Figure 12, the vast majority of both the absolute number and the growth in the number of non-permanent residents in Ontario is from international students, international graduates of Canadian institutions staying in Canada under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWPP), and their families.

Figure 12: The Number of Non-Permanent Residents in Ontario, by Classification Type and Year²¹



The report *One Million New Ontarians*²² explains the federal policy reforms that led to Ontario's booming international student population:

The increase in the number of international students can be traced back to a series of policy reforms instituted by the federal government. In 2008, the federal government introduced the Canada Experience Class, allowing international students who have graduated from a Canadian post-secondary institution and gained enough Canadian work experience to apply for permanent residency without leaving the country. In 2013, reforms were instituted that allowed international post-secondary graduates to stay up to three years in Canada, rather than 1-2 under the PGWPP.²³ And finally, a 2014 reform allowed international students to work up to 20

²¹ Source: Moffatt (2021a). Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2020 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020.

²² Moffatt (2022)

²³ Tamburri (2013).

hours a week off-campus during school terms and full-time during breaks without applying for a separate work permit.²⁴ These changes, along with the introduction of the Express Entry system for immigration in 2015 and policy changes in the United Kingdom and the United States, making those markets less attractive for international students, created an international student boom in Canada.²⁵

Given that London is one of Canada's leading centres for higher education, it should not come as a surprise that so much international talent has decided to study in London. And many of them will stay after graduation and eventually become permanent residents of Canada. That was an explicit goal of many of the federal reforms; when announcing the 2008 reforms, then Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Diane Finley stated that the reforms "will help create a pool of individuals who, with work experience, will find it easier to apply to immigrate to Canada... our ability to retain international graduates with Canadian qualifications, work experience and familiarity with Canadian society, will help increase our competitiveness and benefit Canada as a whole."²⁶

The international student boom has brought a cohort of ambitious, talented young people from across the world who have decided to settle in London. And while the population of international students has declined slightly during the pandemic, the Ontario Ministry of Finance projects that their populations will resume growing once the pandemic is over.²⁷ The presence of these international graduates from London institutions aids in the region's economic competitiveness, so long as enough housing is built to allow them to stay and prosper.

The international student boom was not isolated to London but occurred across southern Ontario. As Ontario's population grew faster than housing completions²⁸, Ontario families moved from one community to another to find housing solutions that met their needs, with many making their way to the Elgin-Middlesex area.

²⁴ Government of Canada (2014).

²⁵ For additional background on changes governing international students, see Moffatt and Atiq (2022).

²⁶ Government of Canada (2008)

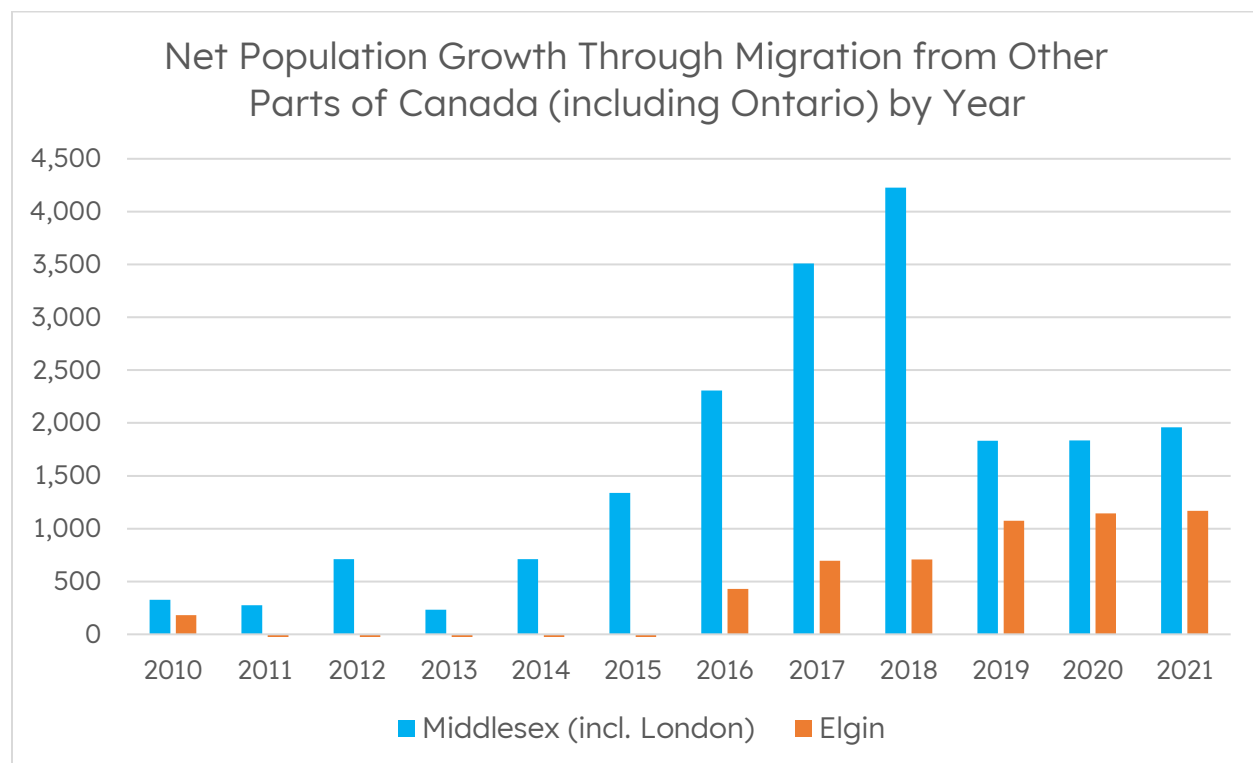
²⁷ Ontario Ministry of Finance (2021)

²⁸ See Moffatt (2021a)

Elgin-Middlesex is experiencing an influx of new families moving in from other parts of Canada

Of our four components of population growth, the largest between 2016 and 2021 was net migration from within Canada, including other parts of Ontario. Note that this is a *net* figure, so it includes both people from other parts of Canada moving to Elgin-Middlesex and those moving out of Elgin-Middlesex to other parts of Canada. Both Elgin and Middlesex have experienced high and increasing numbers of net new residents moving in from other parts of Canada, as shown by Figure 13.

Figure 13: Net Population Growth through Migration from Other Parts of Canada (including Ontario), for Middlesex and Elgin, by Year, from 2010 to 2021.²⁹



The Statistics Canada table used in Figure 13 can tell us how many people, on net, moved into Elgin-Middlesex from other parts of Canada. Unfortunately, it cannot tell us if the change was due to more people moving in or fewer people moving out. It also cannot tell us where people are moving to or from. However, data from a different Statistics Canada series can help fill those gaps.

²⁹ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2021 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021.

New Elgin-Middlesex residents from other parts of Canada primarily coming from the GTA

Unlike the *Components of population change by Census Division* data series we used in the previous few sections, the data series *Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by Census metropolitan area and Census agglomeration of origin and destination*, contains information on population flows from one Canadian community to another. It does, however, suffer from two shortcomings:

1. There is only four-years worth of data, from 2016-17 to 2019-20.
2. The data is at a metro (*Census metropolitan area and Census agglomeration*) level, so we cannot divide our analysis into Elgin and Middlesex. While data for London CMA gives us a strong picture of what is happening in Elgin-Middlesex, it, unfortunately, excludes several municipalities in Elgin and Middlesex.

Figure 14 provides a list of Elgin-Middlesex communities that are (and are not) a part of London CMA. While most of the fastest growing communities in Elgin-Middlesex, including the City of London, are part of London CMA (also known as metro London), it does exclude the rapidly expanding municipality of Lucan Biddulph.

Figure 14: Geographic Boundaries of London CMA (Metro London).

	Middlesex County	Elgin County
In London CMA	Adelaide-Metcalf London Middlesex Centre Strathroy-Caradoc Thames Centre	Central Elgin St. Thomas Southwold
Not in London CMA	Lucan Biddulph Newbury North Middlesex Southwest Middlesex	Aylmer Bayham Dutton/Dunwich Malahide West Elgin

However, since London CMA does include the vast majority of Elgin-Middlesex residents, it can provide insights into who is moving into Elgin-Middlesex and who is leaving the region.

Figure 15 contains four years' worth of origin and destination data for every community that saw more than 1,000 residents leave and move to London CMA between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2020. During that period, 65,603 people moved to London CMA from other parts of Canada, and 51,239 persons left London CMA to move to other parts of Canada, for a net population gain of 14,364 persons.

Figure 15: Number of Interprovincial and Intraprovincial Migrants to London CMA and from London CMA, from 2017 to 2020.³⁰

Metro Area	To London CMA	From London CMA	Difference
Toronto (CMA), Ontario	19,059	11,221	7,838
Rest of Canada (including urban Ontario)	15,361	12,358	3,003
Rural Ontario (outside of CMA/CA)	11,610	11,490	120
Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo (CMA), Ontario	3,261	2,728	533
Hamilton (CMA), Ontario	2,495	1,790	705
Windsor (CMA), Ontario	2,171	1,429	742
Chatham-Kent (CA), Ontario	1,613	1,401	212
Sarnia (CA), Ontario	1,520	1,403	117
Woodstock (CA), Ontario	1,351	1,134	217
Ottawa - Gatineau (CMA), Ontario/Quebec	1,348	1,947	-599
Calgary (CMA), Alberta	1,287	913	374
St. Catharines - Niagara (CMA), Ontario	1,219	834	385
Vancouver (CMA), British Columbia	1,179	1,233	-54
Edmonton (CMA), Alberta	1,115	704	411
Montréal (CMA), Quebec	1,014	654	360
Total	65,603	51,239	14,364

As shown by Figure 15, Toronto CMA (which includes not just the City of Toronto but Mississauga, Brampton, Markham, and other Greater Toronto Area communities) accounted for more than half of London CMA's net within-Canada population growth for those four years. London gained, on net, residents from most communities across Ontario, including Hamilton and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, with the notable exception of Ottawa.

In each of the four years where data is available, metro London gained more population than it lost from the rest of Canada. As shown in Figure 16, the number arriving in metro London has risen over the past four years (outside of a blip in 2019), as has the number of residents leaving metro London. Migration patterns to and from Toronto CMA experience similar patterns, as shown by Figure 17, with both the number of people moving from Toronto and the number of people moving to Toronto increasing over time, outside of a blip in 2019.

³⁰ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0141-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2016-20 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2020.

Figure 16: Number of Interprovincial and Intraprovincial Migrants to London CMA and from London CMA, by Year, from 2016 to 2020.³¹

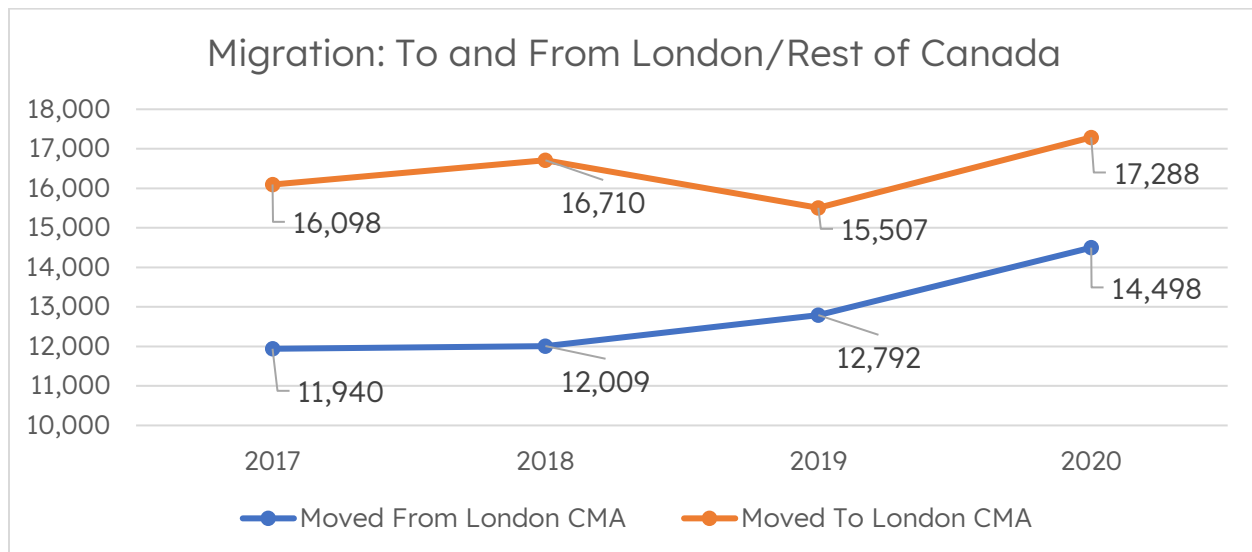
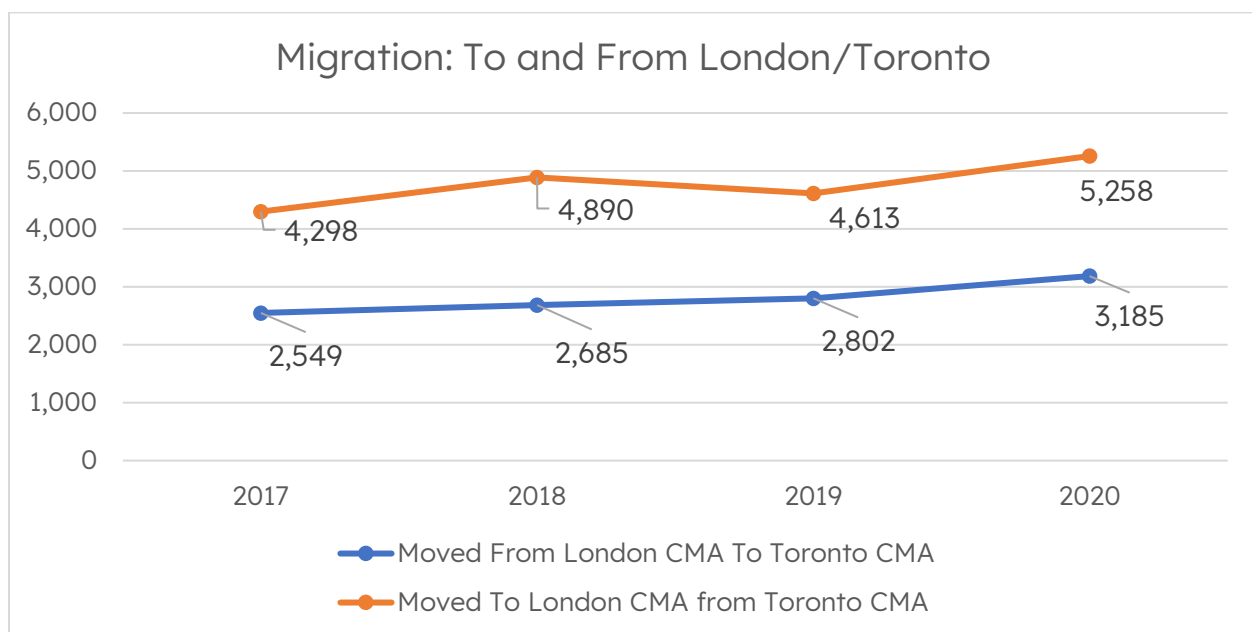


Figure 17: Number of Migrants from London CMA to Toronto CMA and Number of Migrants from Toronto CMA to London CMA, by Year, from 2016 to 2020.³²



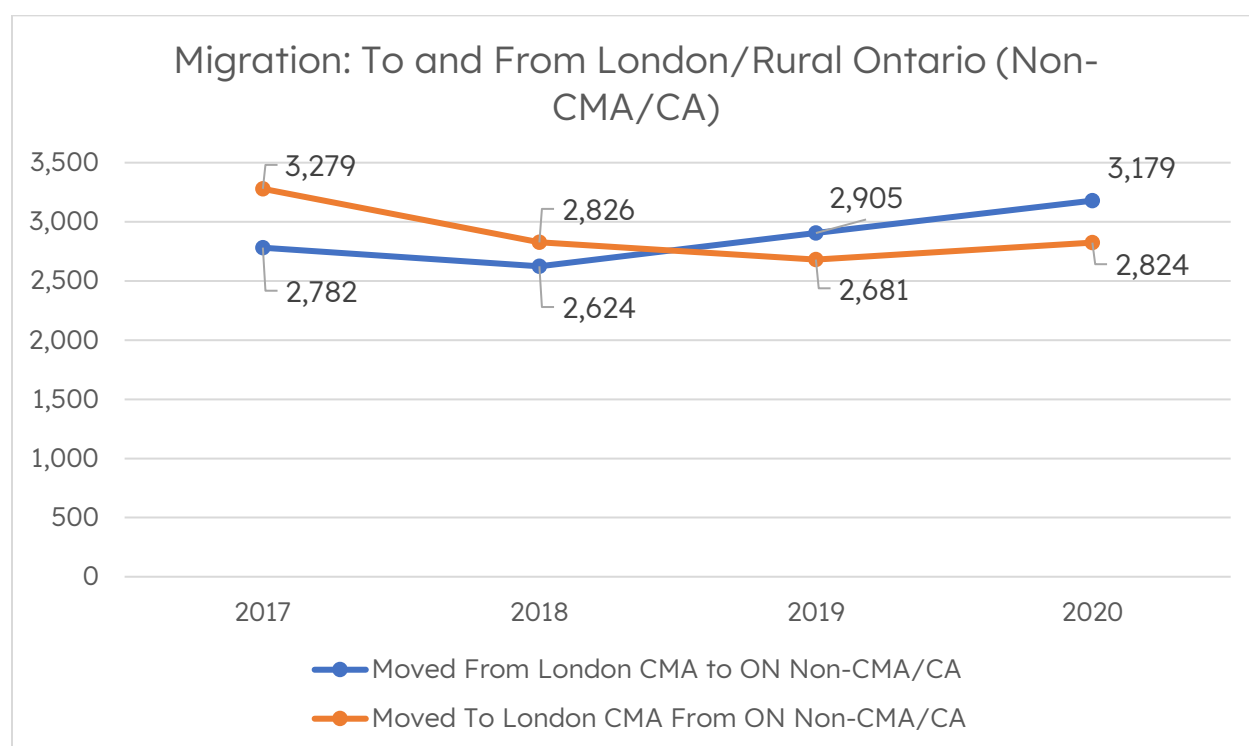
³¹ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0141-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2020 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020.

³² Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0141-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2020 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020.

Much of the origin-destination pair data show similar dynamics to Figures 16 and 17, with both an increase in the number of people moving to London CMA and an increase in the number of people moving from London CMA. A notable and important exception is the data for *Area outside Census metropolitan areas and Census agglomerations, Ontario*. This area includes any community in the province which does not belong to a metro area, including communities such as Lucan Biddulph, as shown in Figure 14. These include many smaller communities scattered across the province.

As with the data series for Toronto CMA, we see an increased number of people moving out of metro London to live in smaller communities, as shown by Figure 18. Unlike our other series, we have seen a substantial decline in the number of people moving from these smaller communities into London. In 2017, metro London was gaining population, on net, at the expense of smaller centres. The trend had reversed by 2019, and now London is losing population, on net, to smaller communities across Ontario.

Figure 18: Number of Migrants from London CMA to non-CA/CMA Ontario and Number of Migrants from non-CA/CMA Ontario to London CMA, by Year, from 2016 to 2020.³³



The data in this section can tell us how many people are moving to metro London from the rest of Canada, but it cannot inform us of who they are or what motivates them to move to the area. However, another data set can provide some insights into those questions.

³³ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0141-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2020 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020.

Ontarians moving to Elgin-Middlesex a combination of families of all ages, along with retirees

The data series on migration from origin to destination used in the previous series only gives us raw numbers of people. It would be helpful to know more about the types of people moving to (and from) the London area, but the series does not provide that information. There is currently little publicly available data on who is moving to London, such as their income levels or occupations. However, the composition of population growth series by Census division does contain migration data by age for people moving to Elgin and Middlesex from other parts of Ontario. This information provides insights into why Ontarians may be moving to Elgin-Middlesex.

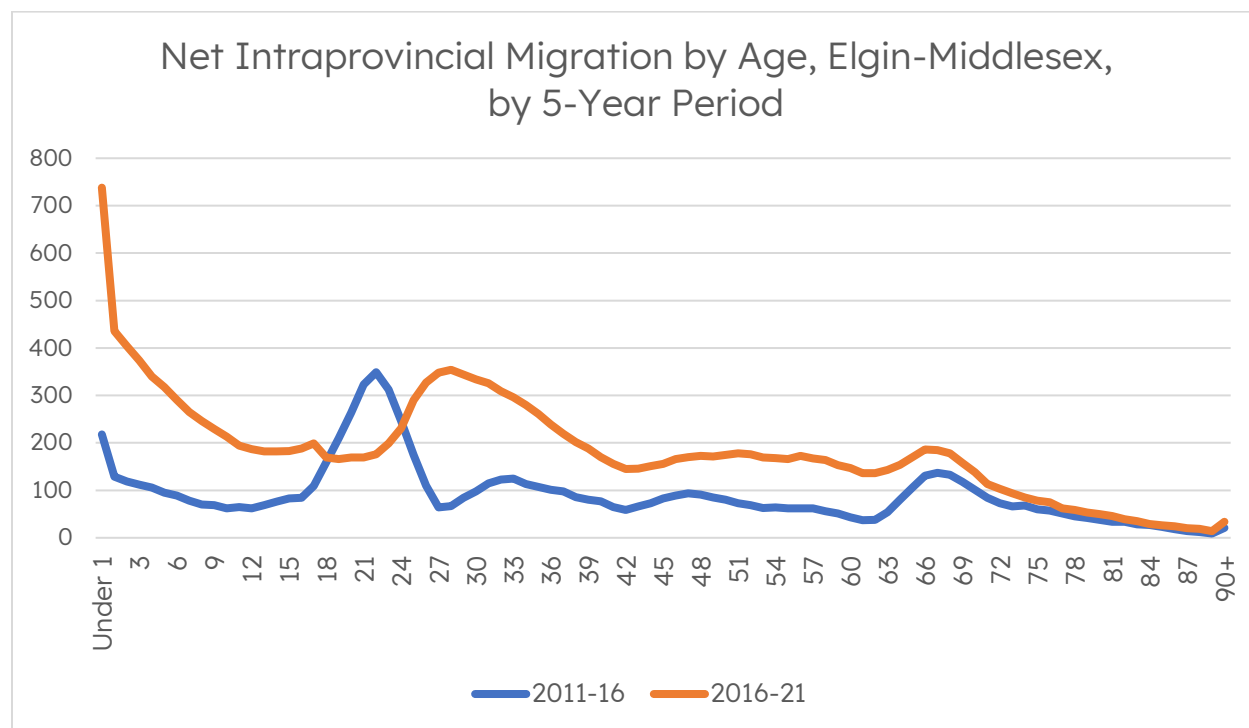
Figure 19 provides net intraprovincial (within province) migration data, by age, for Elgin-Middlesex, for the 2011-16 and 2016-21 periods. We see that in both periods, for every single age, Elgin-Middlesex adds more people than it loses (as indicated by the positive values in the series). The age range of people moving in has evolved. From 2011-16, the most prominent groups moving to London were those in their mid-to-late 60s and individuals in their late teens and early 20s. Given the high number of students both Fanshawe College and Western University attract from across the province, this should not come as a surprise.

However, the migration data from 2016-21 paints a substantially different picture. By far, the largest group moving to Elgin-Middlesex are children under the age of five, along with adults between the ages of 26 and 35. In other words, pre-school-aged children and their parents. Having been priced out of family-friendly housing in the GTA, these families are moving across Ontario to find housing that they can afford and meets their needs, in a process known as *drive until you qualify*³⁴. Since 2015, the Elgin-Middlesex region has become a prime destination for these families.

However, we should not lose sight of the high numbers of mid-and late-career professionals moving into the region. Between 2011 and 2016, Elgin-Middlesex gained, on net, 1,373 individuals between the ages of 40 and 59 from the rest of the province. From 2016 to 2021, this number had more than doubled, to 3,140. Their housing and infrastructure needs differ from young families, so it is essential to recognize that there isn't a single 'type' of person moving to the region, but rather a spectrum of families with different wants and income levels.

³⁴ As explained by CMHC (2019), "The expression drive until you qualify has become popular in recent years. It refers to the response households have had to rising home prices. Because of rising prices, many households can't afford to buy homes in the urban, central sectors of their cities. Households therefore drive further and further... until they find housing they can afford (and a mortgage they can qualify for)."

Figure 19: Net Intraprovincial Migration by Age, Elgin-Middlesex, by 5-Year Period, 2011-16 and 2016-21.³⁵



Every household moving to Elgin-Middlesex needs a place to call home. A rapidly expanding population requires an increase in the supply of housing. The recent Census release provides data on the amount of housing in each community. Not surprisingly, Elgin-Middlesex's population is growing fastest in the communities where housing is being built.

³⁵ Source: Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Note: Population is measured as of July 1 each year. 2016-21 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2021.

Trend 2: Increasingly, the family-sized homes being built to support a growing number of families are being built outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London.

The preliminary 2021 Census data, released in February 2021, revealed that while the City of London's population has grown rapidly over the last five years, Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc, and St. Thomas are growing faster, in percentage terms. Not surprisingly, these communities are also experiencing faster rises in the number of dwellings.

Census data reveals the number of dwelling units in Lucan Biddulph, Strathroy-Caradoc, and Middlesex Centre up by over 10% in the last five years

The February Census numbers contained information on the number of dwelling units in each community, which can then be compared to the data in previous Censuses to provide insights into how the housing stock is evolving. Statistics Canada's definition of "dwelling unit" is broad and contains many different housing forms.

A "dwelling unit" is defined as a structurally separate set of living premises with a private entrance either outside the building or from a common hall, lobby, vestibule or stairway inside the building.

The entrance must be one that can be used without passing through anyone else's living quarters.

A dwelling unit includes everything from homes to apartment units to basement suites. As such, the numbers are just a raw count of the number of units, so a new single-detached home or the addition of a basement suite to an existing single-detached home both increase the number of dwelling units in a community by one.

Although London's number of dwelling units rose by over 6% between 2016 and 2021, that was only the eighth highest in Elgin-Middlesex. Lucan Biddulph's number of dwelling units rose by over 18% during that period, as shown by Figure 20. In total, the number of units rose by 15,664 between 2016 and 2021, with 10,851, or 69% of that increase occurring in the City of London.

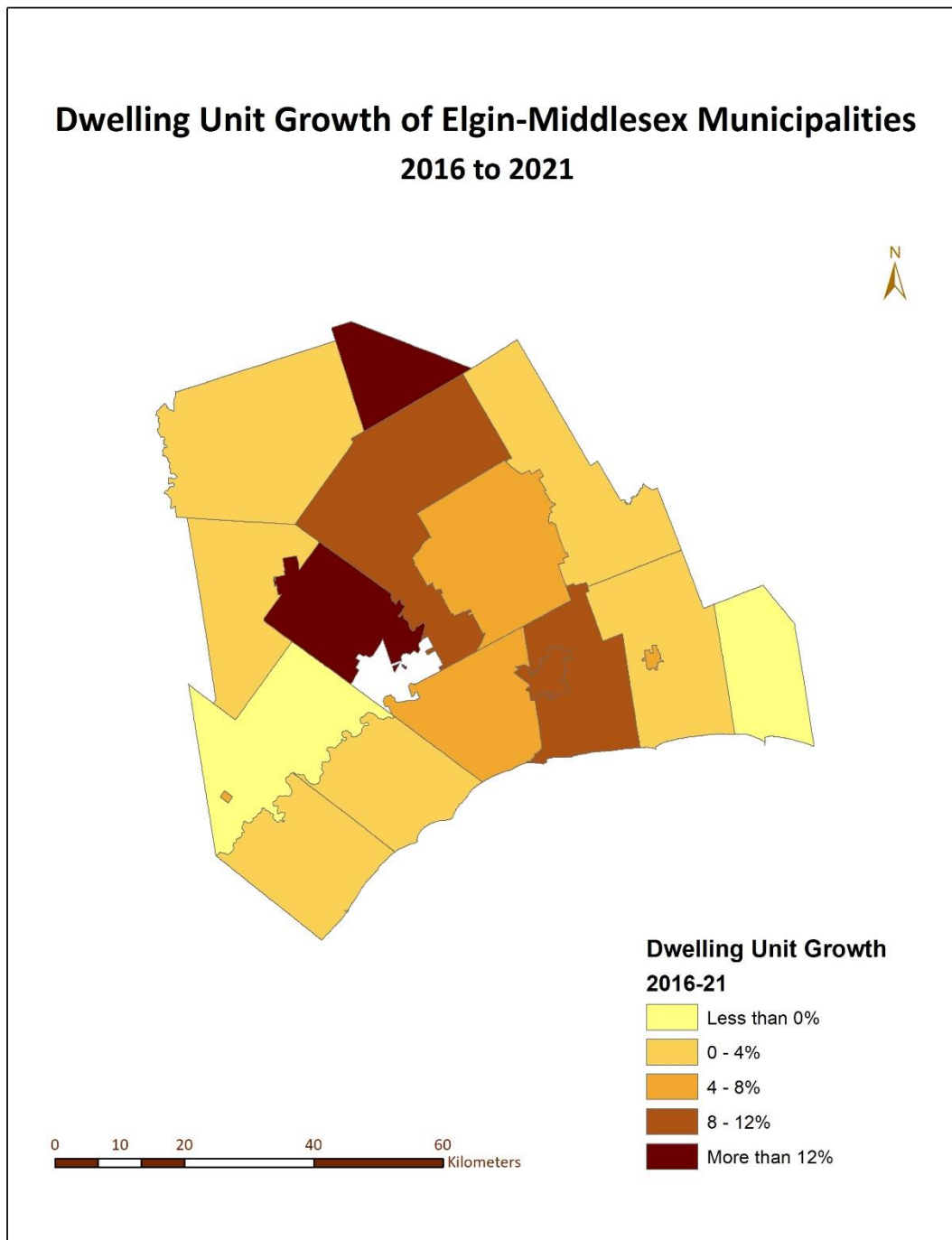
Figure 20: Growth in the Number of Dwelling Units in Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, Ranked by Largest Percentage Growth Between 2016 and 2021.³⁶

Community	2016 # DU	2021 # DU	Change	Growth in %
Lucan Biddulph	1,837	2,172	335	18.24%
Strathroy-Caradoc	8,455	9,695	1,240	14.67%
Middlesex Centre	6,139	6,845	706	11.50%
Central Elgin	5,324	5,845	521	9.79%
St. Thomas	17,114	18,596	1,482	8.66%
Dutton/Dunwich	1,556	1,677	121	7.78%
Southwold	1,655	1,760	105	6.34%
London	175,558	186,409	10,851	6.18%
Newbury	184	195	11	5.98%
Aylmer	3,031	3,177	146	4.82%
North Middlesex	2,399	2,481	82	3.42%
Thames Centre	5,162	5,316	154	2.98%
Adelaide-Metcalf	1,045	1,056	11	1.05%
Malahide	3,155	3,178	23	0.73%
West Elgin	2,221	2,221	0	0.00%
Southwest Middlesex	2,505	2,503	-2	-0.08%
Bayham	2,557	2,435	-122	-4.77%
TOTAL	239,897	255,561	15,664	6.53%

The percentage growth figures from Figure 20 are mapped out in Figure 21. Note the high levels of growth occurring north, south, and west of the City of London.

³⁶ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Dwelling unit numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; dwelling unit numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Figure 21: Map of Dwelling Unit Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities by Percentage Growth Between 2016 and 2021.³⁷



³⁷ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Overall, in the last five years, the percentage growth in dwelling units in Elgin-Middlesex has been faster outside of the City of London than within it, as shown by Figure 22.

Figure 22: Growth in the Number of Dwelling Units in Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. Rest of Elgin-Middlesex, from 2016 to 2021.³⁸

Community	2016 # DU	2021 # DU	Change	Growth in %
Outside London	64,339	69,152	4,813	7.48%
London	175,558	186,409	10,851	6.18%

The five years before 2016 saw slower population growth rates and, not surprisingly, slower growth rates in housing units. Between 2011 and 2016, London's number of housing units grew by 4.39%, the fifth-highest in Elgin-Middlesex, as shown by Figure 23. The net number of dwelling units increased by 9,705 overall, with 7,383, or 76% of that increase occurring in the City of London.

Figure 23: Growth in the Number of Dwelling Units in Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, Ranked by Largest Percentage Growth Between 2011 and 2016.³⁹

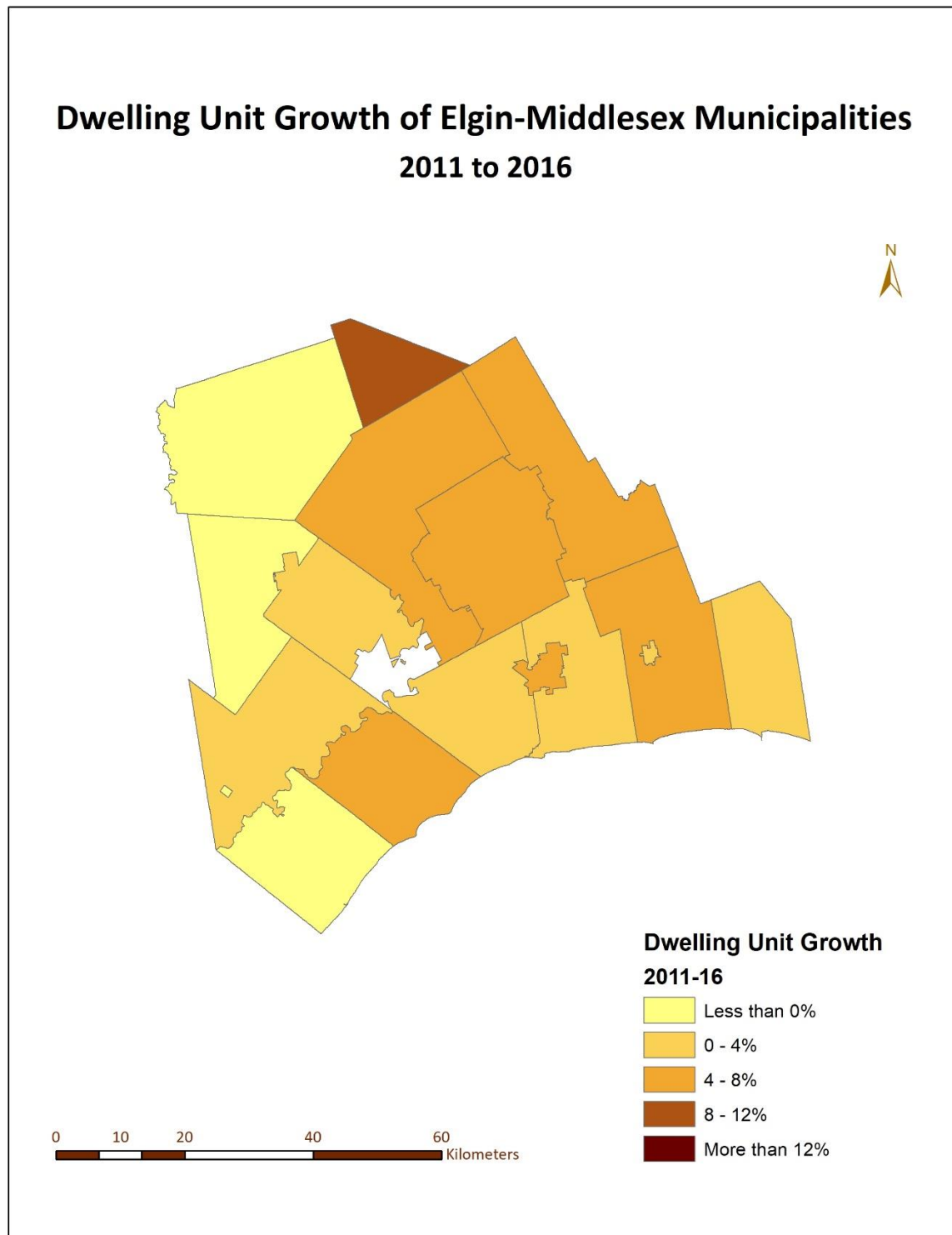
Community	2011 # DU	2016 # DU	Change	Growth in %
Lucan Biddulph	1,653	1,837	184	11.13%
Thames Centre	4,836	5,162	326	6.74%
Middlesex Centre	5,808	6,139	331	5.70%
Malahide	3,007	3,155	148	4.92%
London	168,175	175,558	7,383	4.39%
St. Thomas	16,398	17,114	716	4.37%
Dutton/Dunwich	1,495	1,556	61	4.08%
Aylmer	2,917	3,031	114	3.91%
Strathroy-Caradoc	8,162	8,455	293	3.59%
Bayham	2,481	2,557	76	3.06%
Central Elgin	5,174	5,324	150	2.90%
Southwest Middlesex	2,470	2,505	35	1.42%
Southwold	1,643	1,655	12	0.73%
West Elgin	2,233	2,221	-12	-0.54%
Adelaide-Metcalf	1,064	1,045	-19	-1.79%
North Middlesex	2,483	2,399	-84	-3.38%
Newbury	193	184	-9	-4.66%
TOTAL	230,192	239,897	9,705	4.22%

Using the same index as the previous map, a map of this growth illustrates the slower overall growth in the number of housing units, though Lucan Biddulph still stands out for its overall high housing growth rate. (See Figure 24)

³⁸ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Dwelling unit numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; dwelling unit numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

³⁹ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Dwelling unit numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; dwelling unit numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Figure 24: Map of Population Growth of Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities by Percentage Growth Between 2011 and 2016.⁴⁰



Unlike the last five years, between 2011 and 2016, the number of Elgin-Middlesex dwelling units grew faster inside the City of London than outside, as shown by Figure 25.

Figure 25: Growth in the Number of Dwelling Units in Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. Rest of Elgin Middlesex, from 2011 to 2016.⁴¹

Community	2011 # DU	2016 # DU	Change	Growth in %
Outside London	62,017	64,339	2,322	3.74%
City of London	168,175	175,558	7,383	4.39%

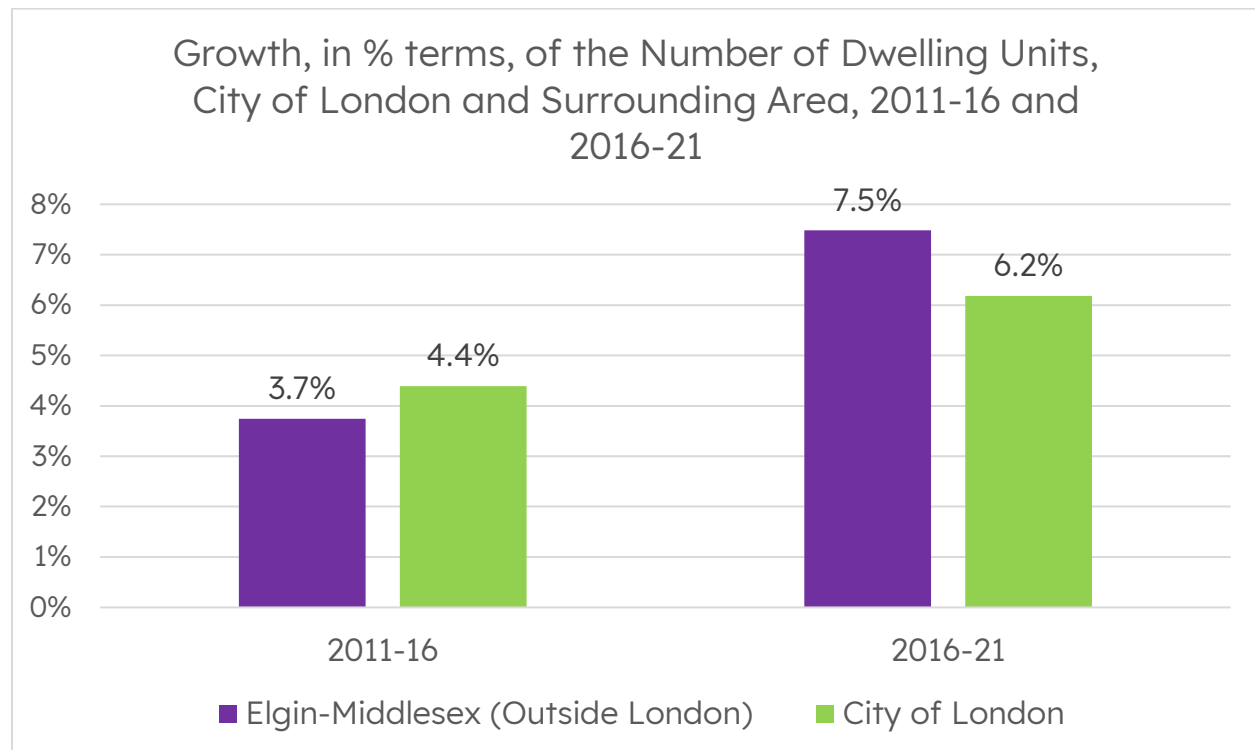
Number of new dwellings rising faster outside City of London than within

The trend for Elgin-Middlesex dwelling unit growth to increasingly occur outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London is best illustrated through a side-by-side comparison. Figure 26 provides percentage growth figures for 2011-16 and 2016-21 for the City of London and Elgin-Middlesex outside of the City. While the City's growth rate did increase, rising from 4.4% to 6.2%, from 2011-16 to 2016-21, the rest of Elgin-Middlesex saw their growth rate double, from 3.7% to 7.5%, as shown by Figure 26.

⁴⁰ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Population numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; population numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

⁴¹ Source: Census of Population (2016, 2021). Note: Dwelling unit numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; dwelling unit numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016.

Figure 26: Growth in the Number of Dwelling Units in Elgin-Middlesex Municipalities, the City of London vs. Rest of Elgin-Middlesex, Between 2011-16 and 2016-21.⁴²



Given the different groups moving to Elgin-Middlesex, it would be helpful to know what types of housing these new dwelling units are and where they are built. Unfortunately, the February Census release does not contain this information. However, housing completions data from the CMHC can provide insights into what is being built and where.

⁴² Source: Census of Population (2011, 2016, 2021). Dwelling unit numbers for 2021 are as of May 11, 2021; dwelling unit numbers for 2016 are as of May 10, 2016; dwelling unit numbers for 2011 are as of May 10, 2011.

CMHC housing numbers show the boom in housing completions occurring outside of the City of London.

To understand what types of dwelling units are being built both inside and outside of the City of London, we can turn to data on housing completions by type. The CMHC was gracious enough to give the authors of this report housing completions data from 2011 to 2021 at a municipal level. This data differs in the four following important ways that make the numbers not directly comparable to the dwelling unit figures in the previous section:

1. The CMHC data is by calendar year, whereas the dwelling unit numbers are as of May 2011, 2016, and 2021.
2. The housing completion numbers are the gross number of completions and do not account for demolitions, which reduce the number of units in a community.
3. The completions data does not include conversions of existing homes, such as adding basement suits.
4. The CMHC data are unavailable for Newbury, Southwest Middlesex, and West Elgin. These constitute approximately 7% of the number of dwelling units outside Elgin-Middlesex.

The CMHC data on completions is divided into the four housing forms, which include both ownership as well as purpose-built rentals:

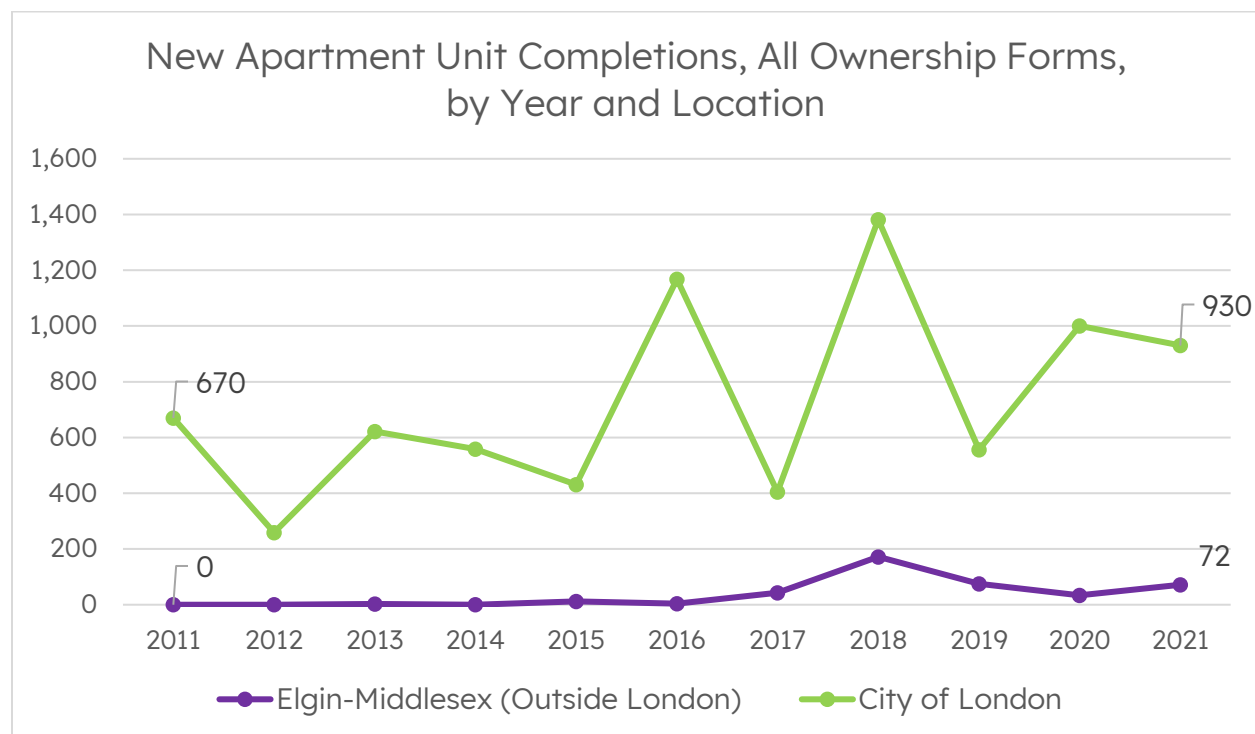
- Apartment units
- Row housing
- Semi-detached
- Single-detached

The CMHC data reveal that the proportion of every housing form being built outside of the City of London is increasing. Even apartment units and row housing, which traditionally have almost exclusively been built within the City, are being built in growing numbers outside London's municipal boundaries.

The majority of new Elgin-Middlesex apartments and row housing are still being built in the City of London, though the gap is narrowing

Apartments are typically contained in larger centres, and the London area is no exception. As shown by Figure 29, not a single apartment unit was completed in Elgin-Middlesex outside of the City of London between 2011 and 2014. In recent years, the number of apartment units built both within and outside the City of London has grown, in part to meet the needs of the rising numbers of international students and young professionals moving to the Elgin-Middlesex region.

Figure 29: New Apartment Unit Completions, by Year, from 2011 to 2021 for the City of London and Elgin-Middlesex excluding the City of London.⁴³



⁴³ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2021 are from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 30 contains the apartment unit completion data, at a community level, for the two five-year periods of 2012-16 and 2017-21. In the former period, only 19 apartment units were built in Elgin-Middlesex outside of the City of London, split between Strathroy-Caradoc and St. Thomas. Over the last five years, this number has increased to 396, an almost 2000% increase, with units completed in Aylmer, Lucan Biddulph, and Central Elgin. The vast majority of new Elgin-Middlesex apartment units are still being completed within the City of London, with completions up 41% in the City in the last five years, relative to the previous four.

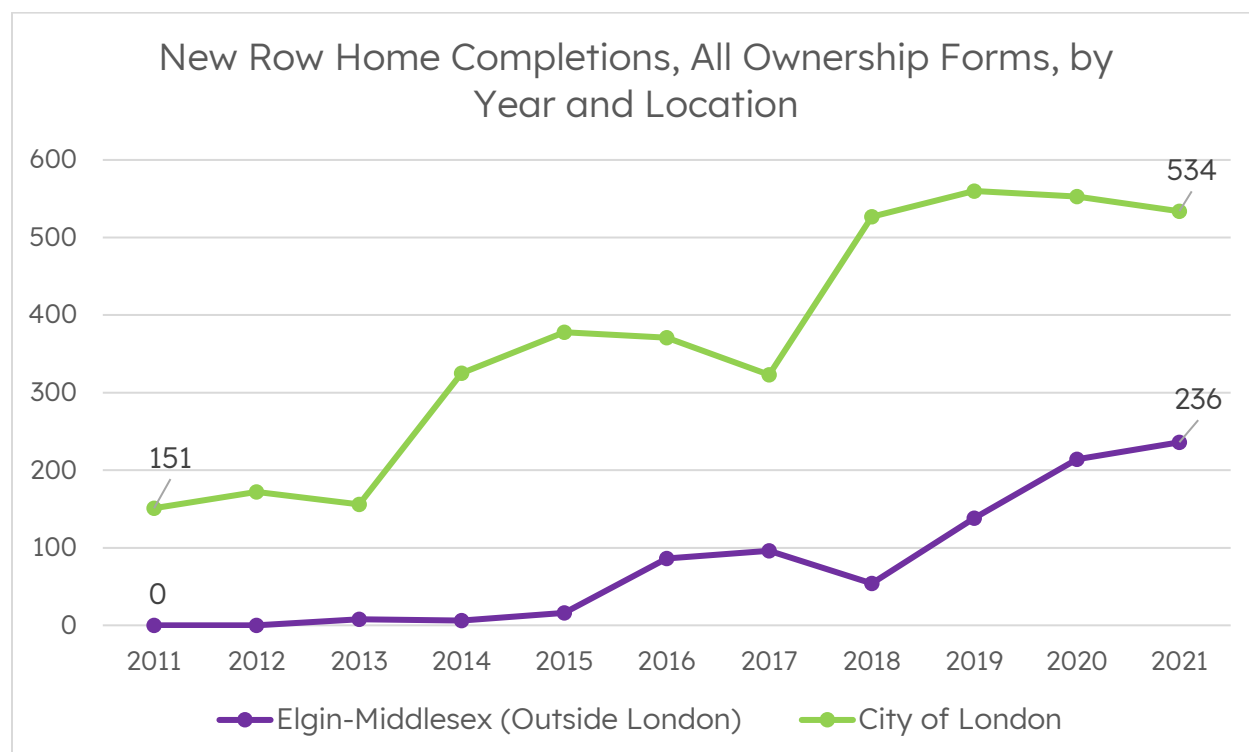
Figure 30: New Apartment Unit Completions, by Year, from 2012-16 and 2017-21, by Elgin-Middlesex Community.⁴⁴

Community	2012-16	2017-21	Change	Growth in %
Strathroy-Caradoc	12	156	144	1200%
St. Thomas	7	132	125	1786%
Aylmer	0	76	76	
Lucan Biddulph	0	23	23	
Central Elgin	0	9	9	
Adelaide-Metcalf	0	0	0	
Bayham	0	0	0	
Dutton/Dunwich	0	0	0	
Malahide	0	0	0	
Middlesex Centre	0	0	0	
North Middlesex	0	0	0	
Southwold	0	0	0	
Thames Centre	0	0	0	
Elgin-Middlesex (Outside London) - Total	19	396	377	1984%
City of London	3,038	4,273	1,235	41%
TOTAL Elgin-Middlesex	3,057	4,669	1,612	53%

Row housing shows similar trends, with negligible levels of row housing being built outside of the City of London from 2011 to 2014, as shown by Figure 29. Only 14 row homes were built outside of the City in those four years, and 804 within; less than 2% of all row homes were built outside of London. In 2021 alone, of the 770 row homes built in Elgin-Middlesex, 236, or 31%, were built outside of the City of London.

⁴⁴ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017-2021 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 29: New Row Home Completions, by Year, from 2011 to 2021 for the City of London and Elgin-Middlesex excluding the City of London.⁴⁵



The distribution of these units is more diverse than apartments, with row housing being built in five non-London Elgin-Middlesex communities in 2011-16 (St. Thomas, Middlesex Centre, Strathroy Caradoc, Lucan Biddulph and North Middlesex) and six in 2016-21 (previous five plus Central Elgin). Both inside and outside London, row housing completions are booming, having more than doubled in 2017-21 relative to 2012-16. This increase in completions includes a 78% increase in the City of London, with their completions rising from 1,402 in 2012-16 to 2,497 in 2017-21, as shown by Figure 30.

⁴⁵ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2021 are from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 30: New Row Home Completions, by Year, from 2012-16 and 2017-21, by Elgin-Middlesex Community.⁴⁶

Community	2012-16	2017-21	Change	Growth in %
St. Thomas	48	278	230	479%
Middlesex Centre	18	258	240	1333%
Strathroy Caradoc	28	185	157	561%
Lucan Biddulph	14	10	-4	-29%
Central Elgin	0	4	4	
North Middlesex	8	3	-5	-63%
Adelaide-Metcalf	0	0	0	
Aylmer	0	0	0	
Bayham	0	0	0	
Dutton/Dunwich	0	0	0	
Malahide	0	0	0	
Southwold	0	0	0	
Thames Centre	0	0	0	
Elgin-Middlesex (Outside London) - Total	116	738	622	536%
City of London	1,402	2,497	1,095	78%
TOTAL Elgin-Middlesex	1,518	3,235	1,717	113%

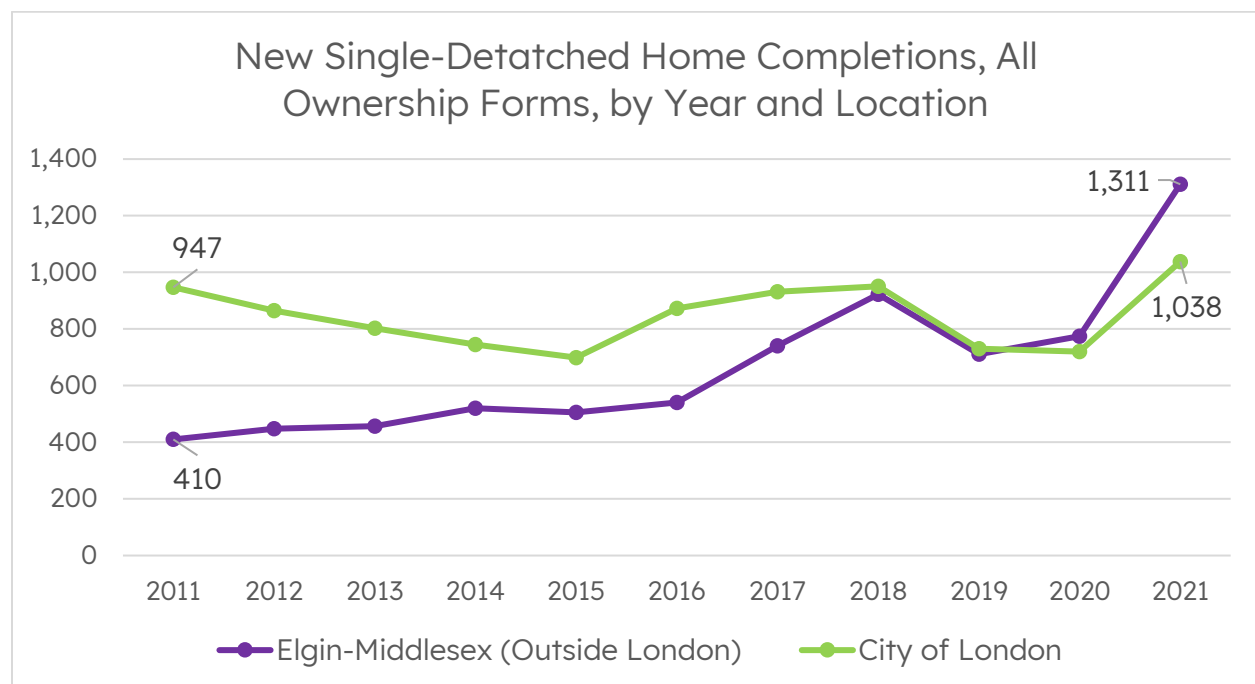
Unlike apartment units and row housing, single-detached and semi-detached homes have historically been built both inside and outside of the City of London. But as with apartments and row homes, the proportion of new houses being completed outside of the City is on the rise.

⁴⁶ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017-2021 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021.

More than half of all new single-detached homes and almost all new semi-detached homes in Elgin-Middlesex being built outside of the City of London

Until 2017, more Elgin-Middlesex single-detached homes were being built within the City of London than outside. For example, in 2011, 947 of 1357 single-detached homes built in Elgin-Middlesex were built in the City of London, a ratio of 70% (see Figure 31). Since 2016, however, the number of single-detached homes built outside the City has increased substantially, while the number built in London stayed relatively flat until 2021. By 2018, the number of single-detached homes built inside and outside of London was in a virtual tie. By 2021, 56% of single-detached homes (1311 of 2349) completed in Elgin-Middlesex were built outside the City.

Figure 31: New Single-Detached Home Completions, by Year, from 2011 to 2021 for the City of London and Elgin-Middlesex excluding the City of London.⁴⁷



⁴⁷ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2021 are from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

The community-level breakdown provides insights into where these new single-family homes are being built (see Figure 32). In 2017-21, more Elgin-Middlesex single-family homes were being completed outside of the City of London than within, with the City's completions up only 10 percent over 2012-16, while the rest of Elgin-Middlesex saw their completions rise by 80%. Other than North Middlesex and Bayham, which saw a decline in single-detached completions, every community in Elgin-Middlesex, with available data, saw their single-detached housing completions rise faster in percentage terms than the City of London.

The City of London had 385 more single-detached housing completions in 2017-21 relative to 2012-16 (4,370 vs. 3,985). Despite London's size, this was not the largest absolute increase, as Middlesex Centre and Strathroy Caradoc saw their completions rise by over 400 between the two periods (416 and 456 respectively).

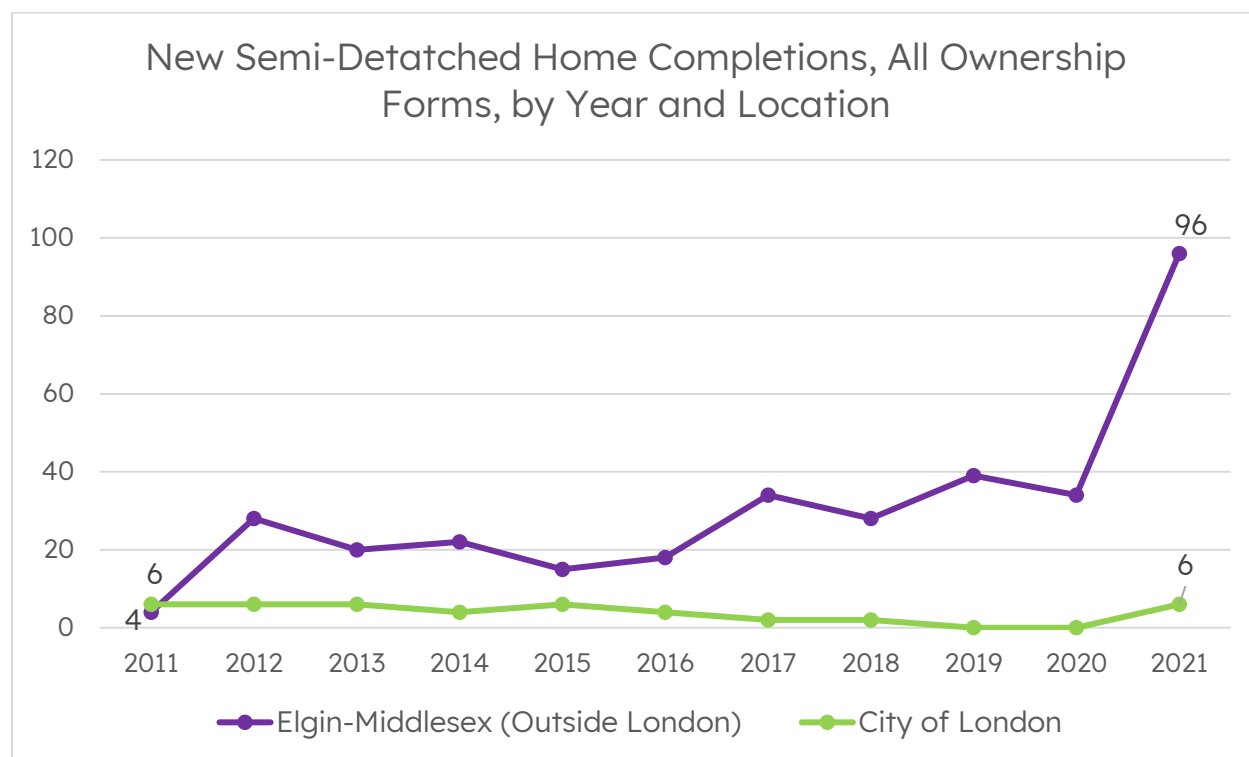
Figure 32: New Single-Detached Home Completions, by Year, from 2012-16 and 2017-21, by Elgin-Middlesex Community.⁴⁸

Community	2012-16	2017-21	Change	Growth in %
Middlesex Centre	818	1,244	426	52%
Strathroy Caradoc	386	842	456	118%
St. Thomas	592	832	240	41%
Central Elgin	197	547	350	178%
Thames Centre	198	367	169	85%
Lucan Biddulph	79	192	113	143%
Southwold	24	159	135	563%
Malahide	36	118	82	228%
Dutton/Dunwich	37	43	6	16%
Adelaide-Metcalf	14	32	18	129%
Aylmer	18	31	13	72%
North Middlesex	29	26	-3	-10%
Bayham	43	25	-18	-42%
Elgin-Middlesex (Outside London) - Total	2,471	4,458	1,987	80%
City of London	3,985	4,370	385	10%
TOTAL Elgin-Middlesex	6,456	8,828	2,372	37%

That 56% of all single-detached homes completed in Elgin-Middlesex in 2021 were built outside of London is eye-opening, it pales in comparison to semi-detached homes, where a whopping 94% of all Elgin-Middlesex semi-detached homes completed in 2021 were built outside of the City of London. As Figure 33 shows, however, this figure comes with a significant caveat, as the number of semi-detached homes built both inside and outside of the City of London is relatively modest. However, the 96 semi-detached homes built outside of London in 2021 is a near tripling of the number for the previous year.

⁴⁸ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017-2021 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 33: New Semi-Detached Home Completions, by Year, from 2011 to 2021 for the City of London and Elgin-Middlesex, excluding the City of London.⁴⁹



Between 2017 and 2021, only ten semi-detached homes were built in the City of London, as shown by Figure 34. This figure was only the sixth-highest number of completions in Elgin-Middlesex, behind Central Elgin, Strathroy Caradoc, Aylmer, and Thames Centre, along with St. Thomas, who alone built 144. While London saw their number of semi-detached completions fall by 16 in 2017-21 relative to 2012-16, the rest of Elgin-Middlesex saw their numbers rise by 128.

⁴⁹ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2021 are from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 34: New Semi-Detached Home Completions, by Year, from 2012-16 and 2017-21, by Elgin-Middlesex Community.⁵⁰

Community	2012-16	2017-21	Change	Growth in %
St. Thomas	65	144	79	122%
Central Elgin	6	36	30	500%
Strathroy Caradoc	4	18	14	350%
Aylmer	0	15	15	
Thames Centre	28	14	-14	-50%
Lucan Biddulph	0	4	4	
Adelaide-Metcalf	0	0	0	
Bayham	0	0	0	
Dutton/Dunwich	0	0	0	
Malahide	0	0	0	
Middlesex Centre	0	0	0	
North Middlesex	0	0	0	
Southwold	0	0	0	
Elgin-Middlesex (Outside London) - Total	103	231	128	124%
City of London	26	10	-16	-62%
TOTAL Elgin-Middlesex	129	241	112	87%

While the semi-detached numbers are a perfect illustration of how Elgin-Middlesex housing completions are increasingly occurring outside of the City of London, this trend holds for each of our four housing types.

In a supply-constrained market, as we have seen across Southern Ontario since 2015, the population will grow wherever housing is built to support that population. At least, that is what theory would suggest. The following section will combine the numbers presented in this report and show that the data supports that theory.

⁵⁰ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017-2021 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021.

A Lack of Housing Options in the City of London Causing Families to Look Elsewhere for Housing

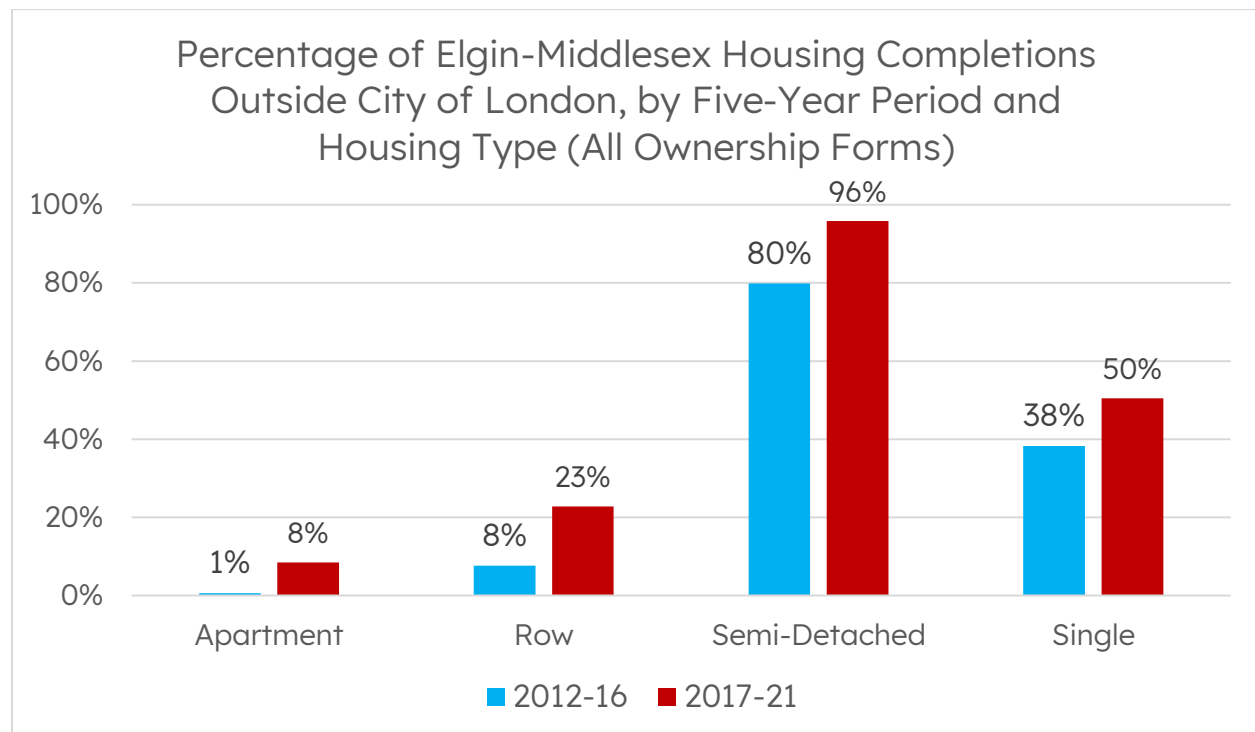
In the previous section, we examined housing completions regarding the number of units. On a percentage basis, the data is unequivocally clear; the share of Elgin-Middlesex home construction and population occurring outside of the City of London is on the rise.

The proportion of new Elgin-Middlesex housing being completed outside of the City of London is increasing for every housing form

Despite the City of London accounting for 71% of the population of Elgin-Middlesex, the majority of single-detached and semi-detached homes are being built outside of the City, with the proportion of apartment units and row homes also on the rise.

Figure 35 shows the percentage of Elgin-Middlesex housing completions, by five-year period, occurring outside of the City of London. While apartment units and row houses are still primarily built within the City, the proportion of apartment units being built outside of London has risen from 1% to 8% from 2012-16 to 2017-21, and the proportion of row units have increased from 8% to 23%.

Figure 35: Percentage of Elgin-Middlesex Housing Completions Outside of the City of London, from 2012-16 and 2017-21.⁵¹

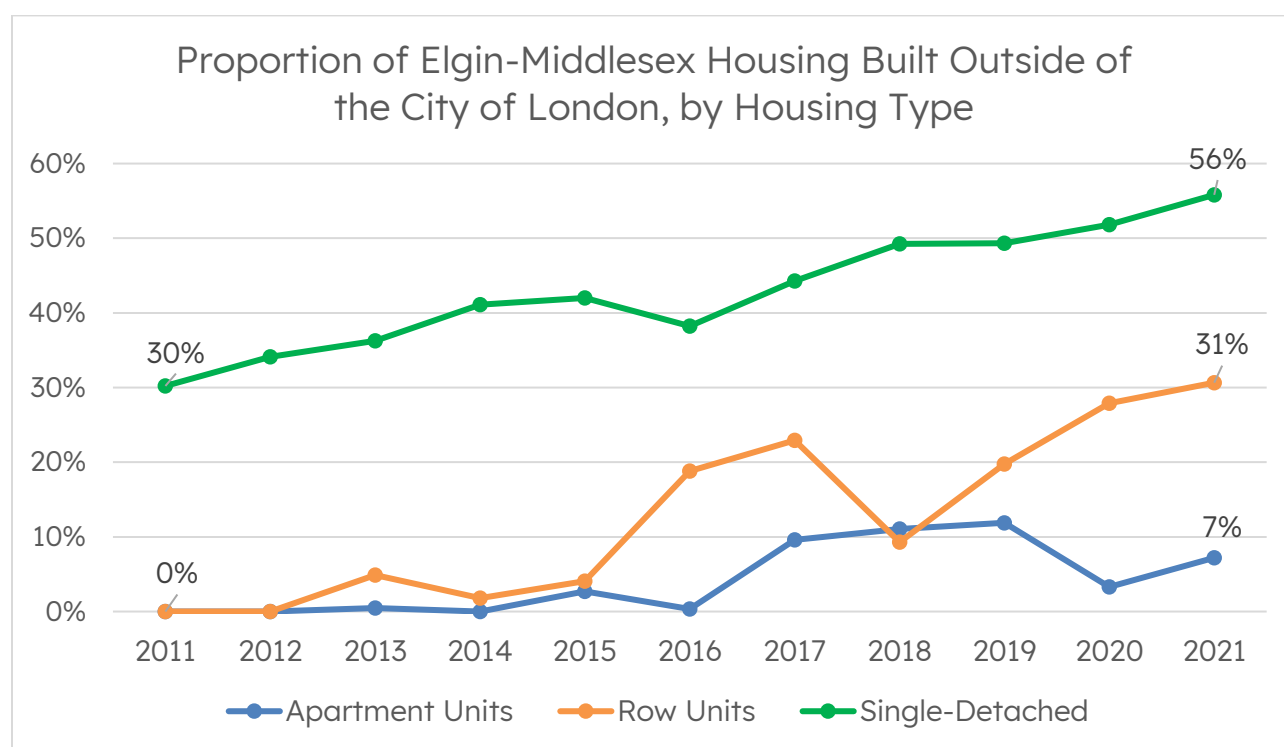


⁵¹ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017-2021 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021.

Figure 36 provides data on the proportion of housing units, by type, are being built outside of the City of London. The data for semi-detached has been excluded, as almost no semi-detached homes are built inside the City of London. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of housing units built outside of London since 2011. In 2011, no single apartment unit or row unit was built in Elgin-Middlesex outside London. By 2021, the proportions had risen to 7% and 31%, respectively.

The figure for single-detached units shows a very consistent upward path, outside of a slight dip in 2016. In 2011, 30% of all newly completely single-detached homes were built outside of the City of London. By 2021, that figure had nearly doubled, to 56%.

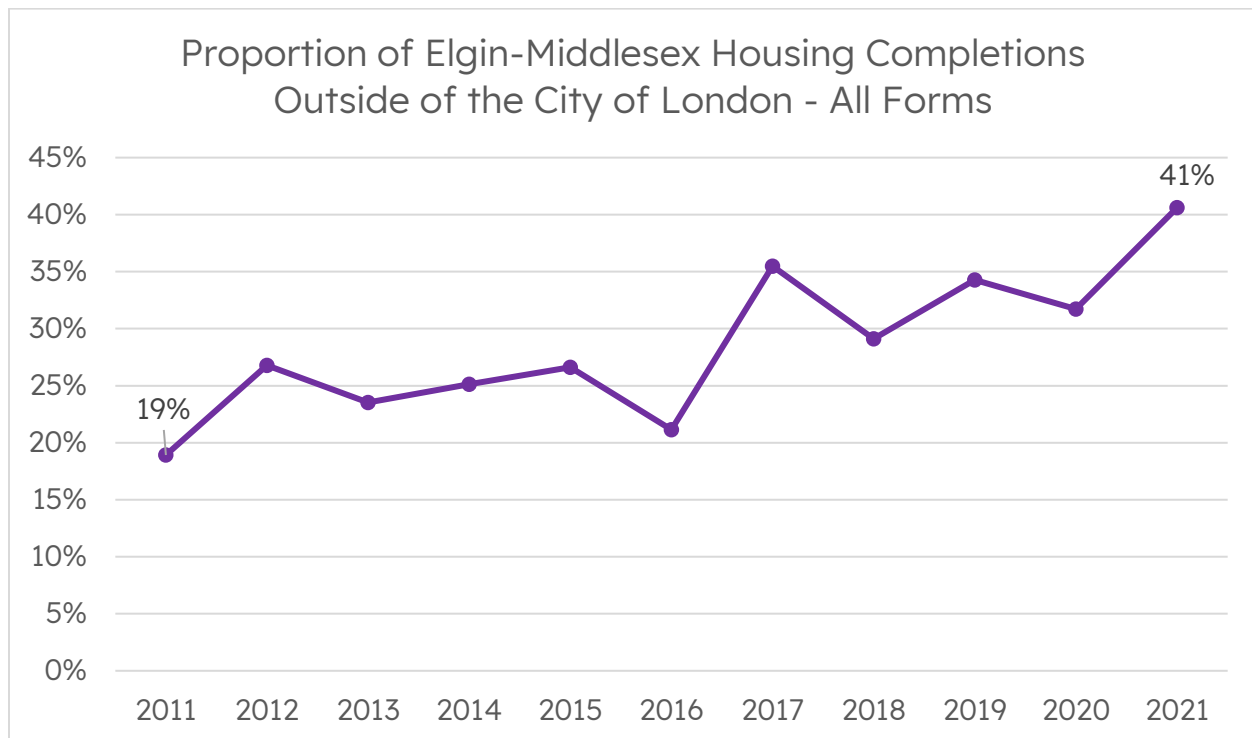
Figure 36: Percentage of Elgin-Middlesex Housing Completions Outside of the City of London, by Housing Form from 2011 to 2021.⁵²



In Figure 37, we combine the four housing unit types to examine the proportion of overall completions built outside of the City of London. The proportion has more than doubled, from 19% to 41% from 2011 to 2021. It is important to note that this is not simply an effect of the pandemic, as the proportion had risen to 32% in 2019, the last full year before the pandemic.

⁵² Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017.

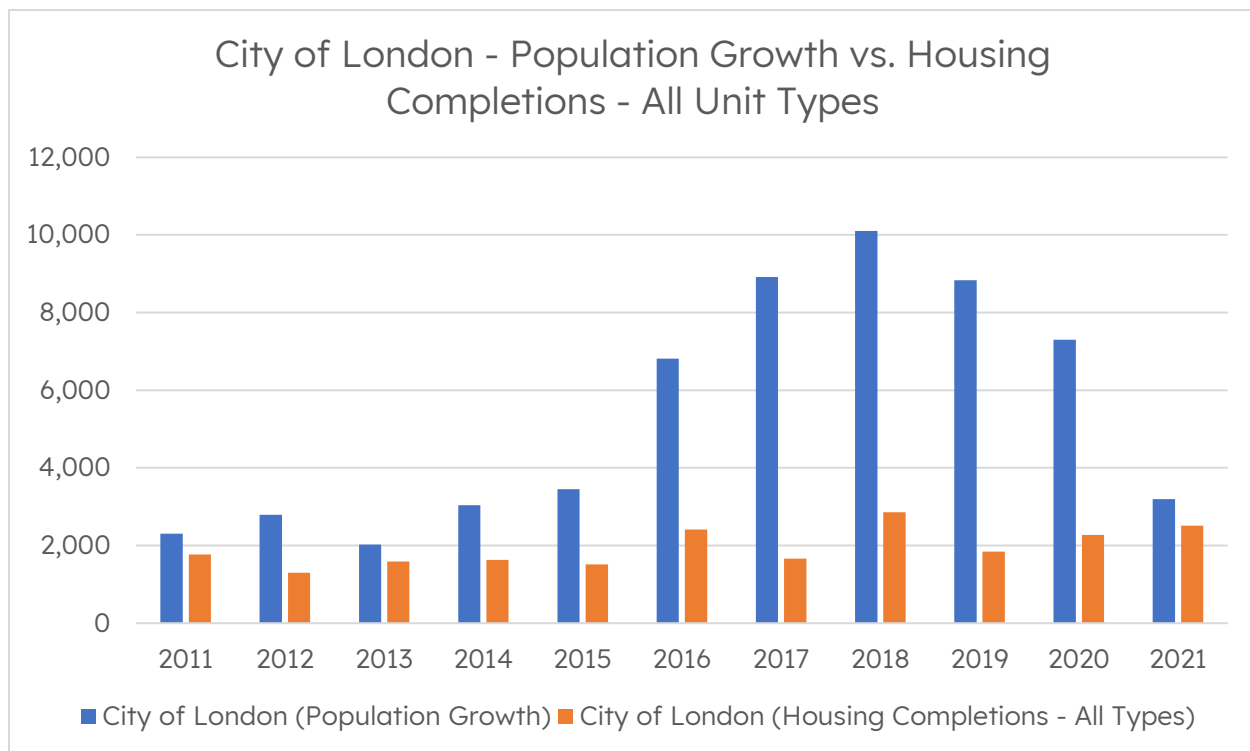
Figure 37: Percentage of Elgin-Middlesex Housing Completions Outside of the City of London, all Housing Forms, from 2011 to 2021.⁵³



Returning our attention to the City of London, Figure 38 shows the relationship between new home completions (of all types) and population growth in the City. While the City's population grew substantially after 2015, new home completions were up only marginally. The lack of housing completions may explain why population growth, in absolute numbers, slowed down even before the pandemic. A lack of housing options led families to look elsewhere for housing, with many of them deciding to locate in other parts of Elgin-Middlesex.

⁵³ Source: Data provided courtesy of CMHC. Note: Dates are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017.

Figure 38: Housing Completions and Population Growth, City of London, from 2011 to 2021.⁵⁴



As Ontario's population grows and the City of London's housing completions do not, we see an increasing trend towards Elgin-Middlesex's population growth occurring outside of the City. Figure 39 shows the proportion of Elgin-Middlesex's population growth that occurred outside of London. In 2011, the proportion was 13%, and was even lower from 2012-15, and was negative in 2015. From 2016-19, that proportion rose to an average of 20%. It reached 24% by 2020 and, by 2021, nearly doubled to 45%.

⁵⁴ Source: Housing completions data provided courtesy of CMHC. Housing completions data are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017. Population growth data from Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Population data is measured as of July 1 each year. 2017 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017.

Figure 39: Proportion of Elgin-Middlesex Population Growth Occurring Outside of the City of London, by Year, from 2011 to 2021.⁵⁵

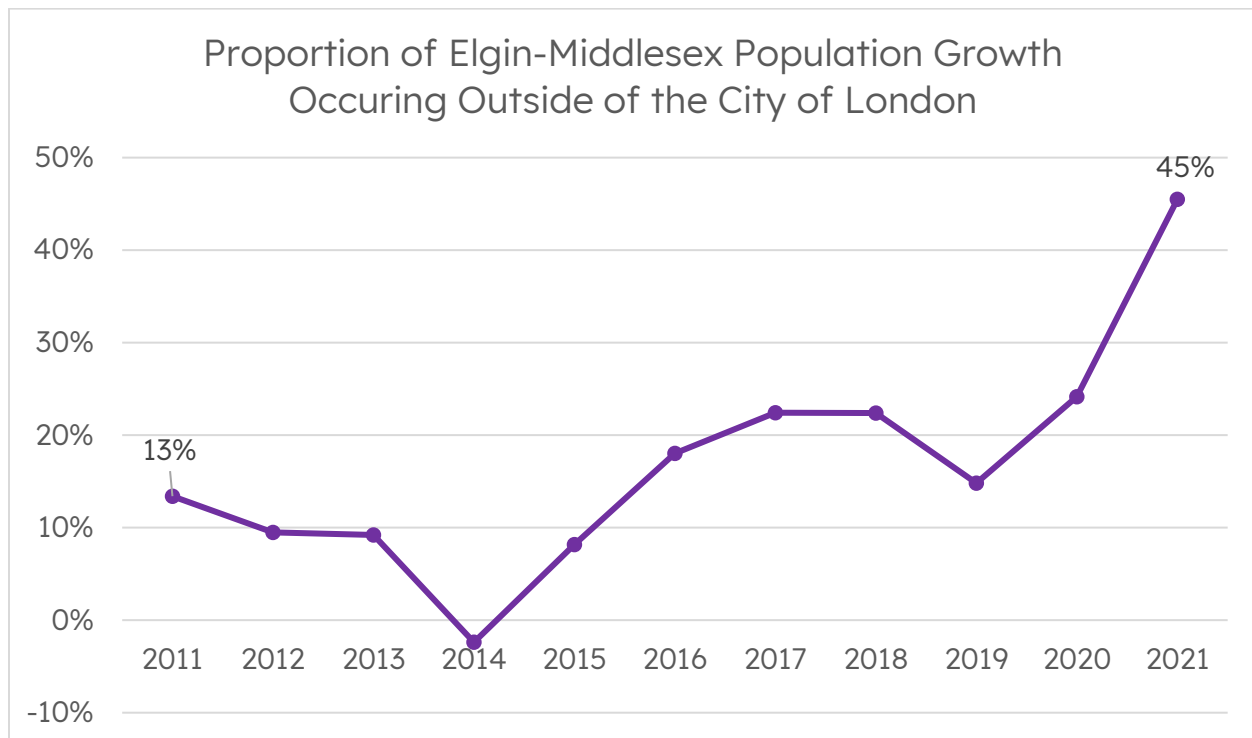
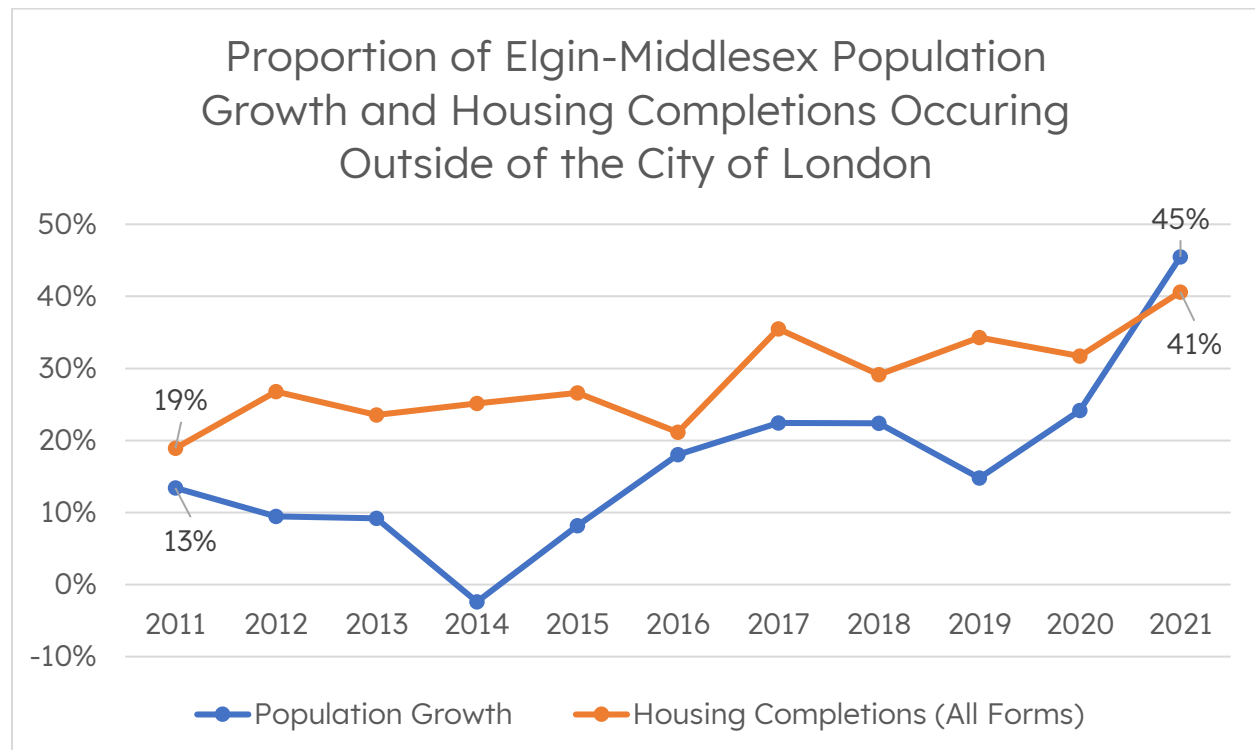


Figure 40 combines the housing completion data of Figure 37 with the population growth data of Figure 39 to show the relationship between population growth and housing completions. Not surprisingly, the two move together in tandem, with both the proportion of Elgin-Middlesex housing completions and population growth occurring outside of London rising from less than 20% in 2011 to over 40% by 2021.

⁵⁵ Source: Population growth data from Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Population data is measured as of July 1 each year. 2017 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017.

Figure 40: Proportion of Elgin-Middlesex Population Growth and Housing Completions Occurring Outside of the City of London, by Year, from 2011 to 2021.⁵⁶



Elgin-Middlesex is seeing an increasing share of both housing completions and population growth outside of the municipal boundaries of the City of London.

⁵⁶ Source: Housing completions data provided courtesy of CMHC. Housing completions data are by calendar year, so numbers for 2017 are from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017. Population growth data from Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0140-01. Population data is measured as of July 1 each year. 2017 figure reflects change in population between July 1, 2016 and July 1, 2017.

Conclusion and final thoughts

The London area is experiencing rapid population growth. Some of the most talented and ambitious people from both inside Canada and abroad choose to make the region their home. The newcomers are an essential addition to the community, as they add to the cultural fabric and economic competitiveness of Elgin-Middlesex. Policymakers must ensure adequate infrastructure, from roads to schools to parks, to support that population. That also means ensuring enough housing is built to support that population. Increasingly, the housing needed to support a growing population is being built outside of the City of London. Four pieces of housing data from the CMHC paint a picture of current homebuilding trends:

1. In the past five years, single-detached home construction was up 10% in the City of London, relative to the previous five years. In the rest of Elgin-Middlesex outside of London, it is up 80%.
2. In 2021, 56% of all single-detached homes built in Elgin-Middlesex were built outside of the City of London. Ten years ago, only 30% were.
3. Over the past five years, over half of all single-detached homes and a whopping 96% of semi-detached homes were built outside of the City of London.
4. Other forms of housing are also increasingly being built outside of the City of London. In the last five years, the number of Elgin-Middlesex row units built outside London was 738, up from 116 the previous five years. Additionally, 396 apartment units were built outside London in the last five years, after only 19 were built in the previous five years.

Given that the new arrivals include a range of individuals and families, from international students to young families priced out of the GTA to mid-to-late career professionals, policymakers must ensure that municipal planning allows for enough housing to be built to meet the needs of these groups.

Increasingly, those families looking for housing are moving to communities outside of the City of London, from Lucan Biddulph to Strathroy-Caradoc. While this brings many benefits to both those families and communities, it should be of concern to the City of London. The increased population outside of the City's municipal boundaries can strain the City's infrastructure, as those residents come to the City to work, shop, and learn but do not pay property taxes to the City. Future research from Smart Prosperity will quantify the impact this has on municipal finances; it is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it should be top of mind to local politicians.

The City of London can address this strain by finding creative solutions to allow more family-friendly, climate-friendly housing to be built within the City's municipal boundaries. Ensuring more family-friendly, climate-friendly housing can be built in the City should be a top priority for the municipal government.

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