



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee
From: Ken DeHart, County Treasurer
Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025
Subject: **BMA Municipal Study – Financial Indicators Analysis**

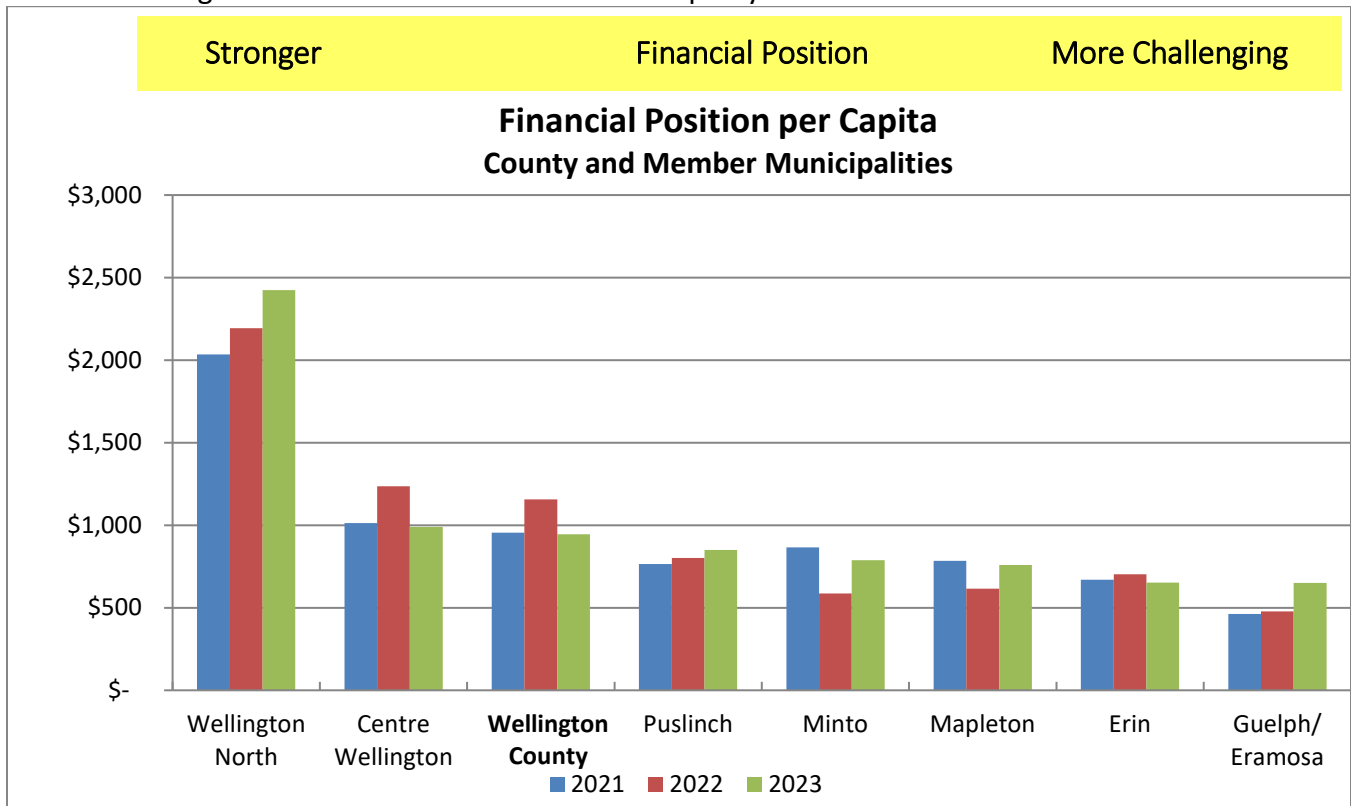
Background:

Each year, BMA Consulting Inc. completes a comparative study on behalf of participating Ontario municipalities. The analysis is completed using the most recent current value assessment, tax policies, levy by-laws, development charges, water/sewer rates, FIRs, user fees and economic development programmes. This report is based on information contained in section 3 of the 2024 BMA study that focuses on key Financial Indicators related to *Sustainability, Vulnerability and Flexibility*. These indicators help evaluate each municipality’s existing financial condition and identify future challenges and opportunities.

SUSTAINABILITY - The ability to provide and maintain service and infrastructure levels without resorting to unplanned increases in rates or cuts to services.

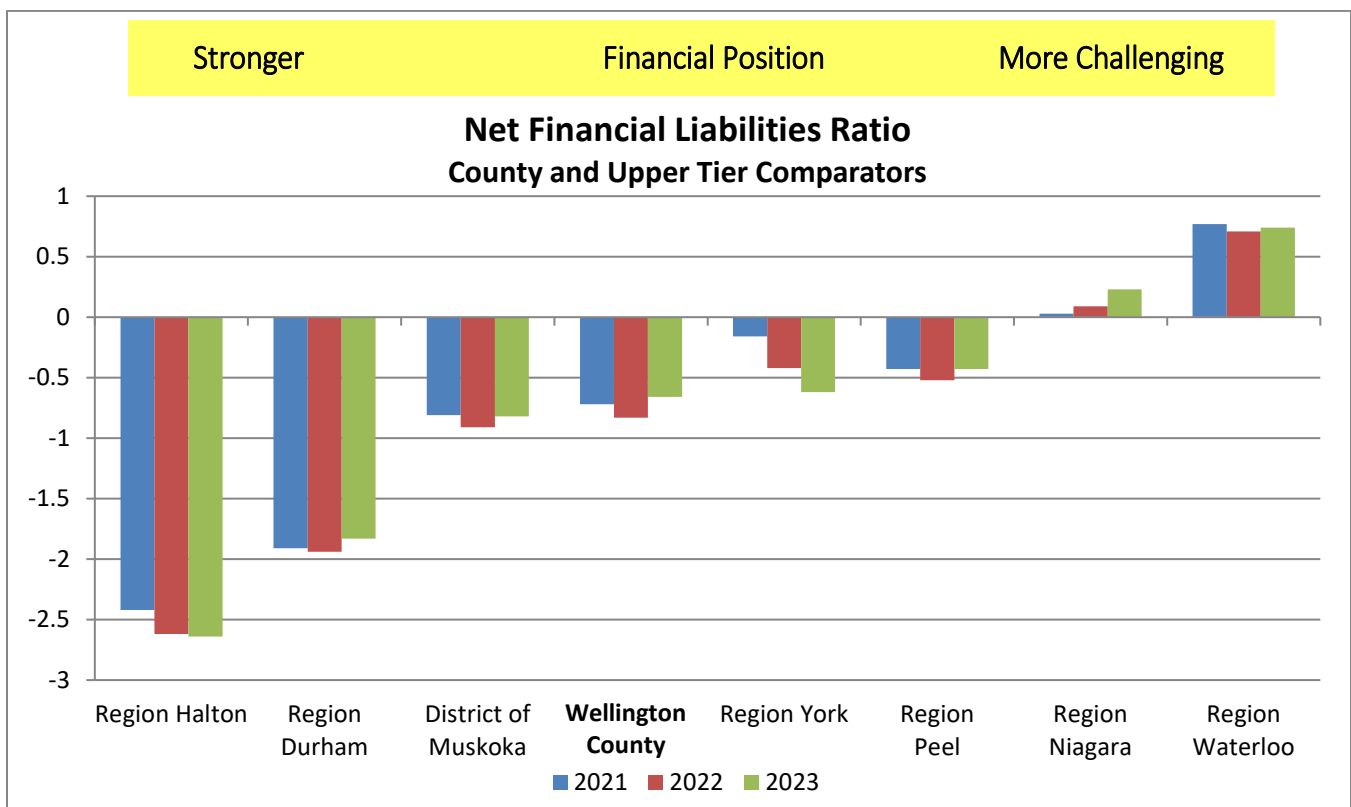
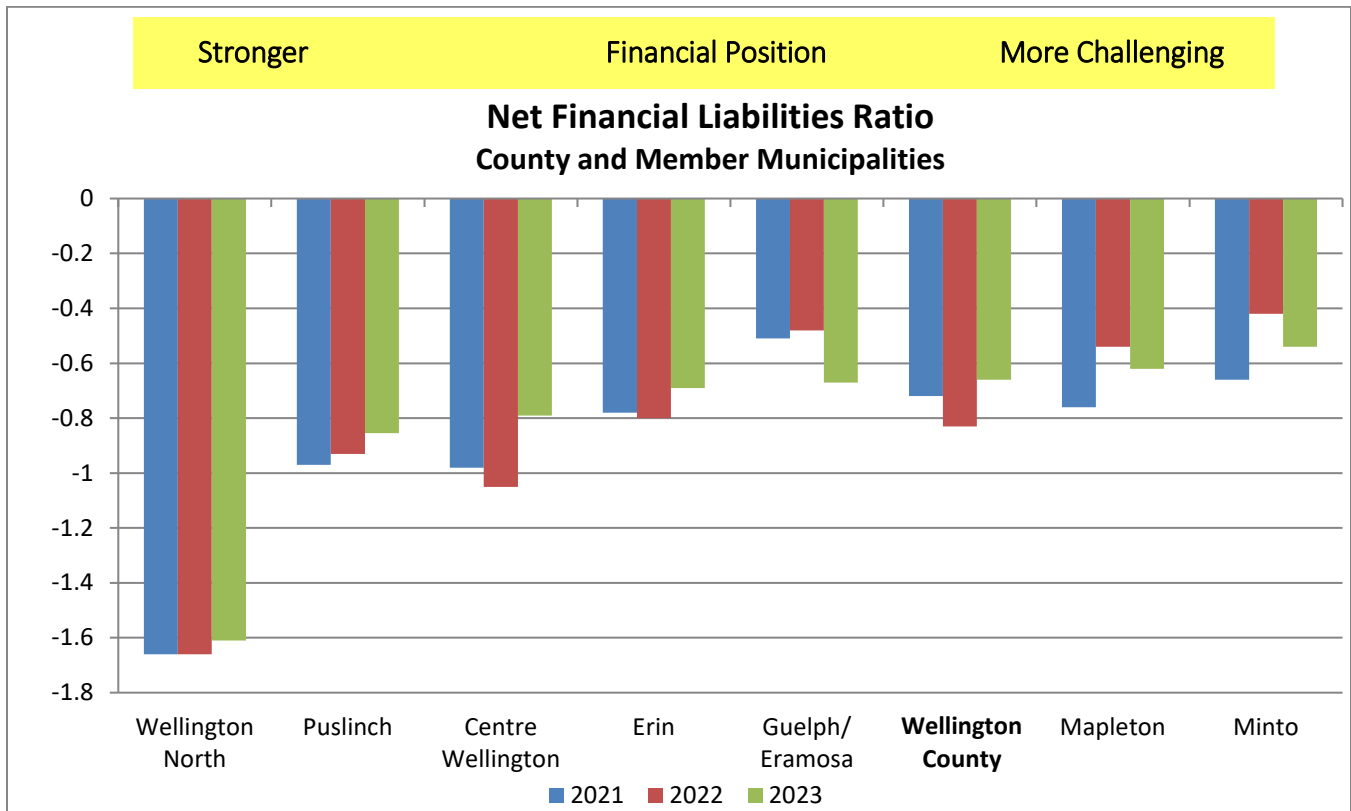
Indicator 1: Financial Position Per Capita

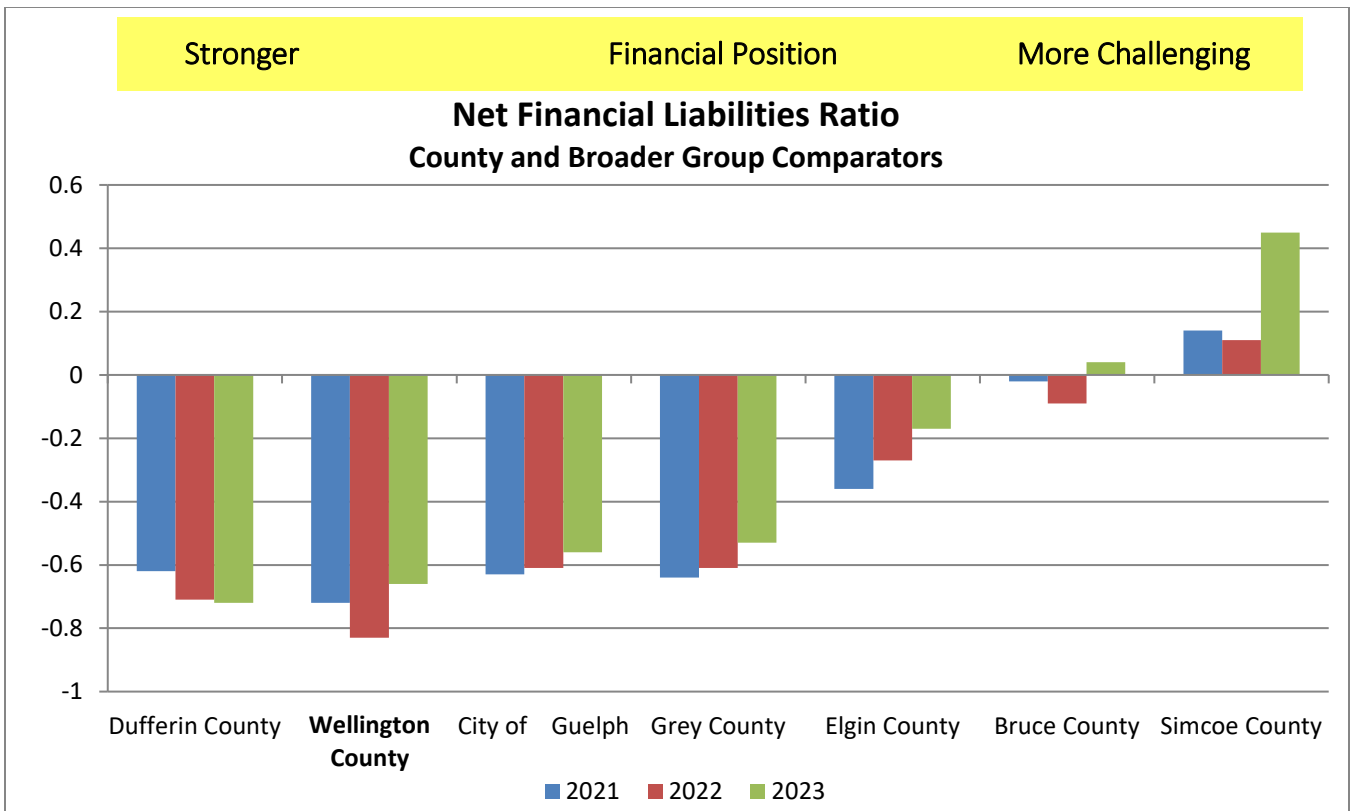
Financial position is a key indicator of a municipality’s financial health. It provides an indication of the affordability of future municipal spending. The net financial position is a broader measure of a municipality’s indebtedness than debenture debt as it includes all the municipality’s financial assets and liabilities. A negative number indicates that a municipality’s total liabilities exceed its total assets.



Indicator 2: Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

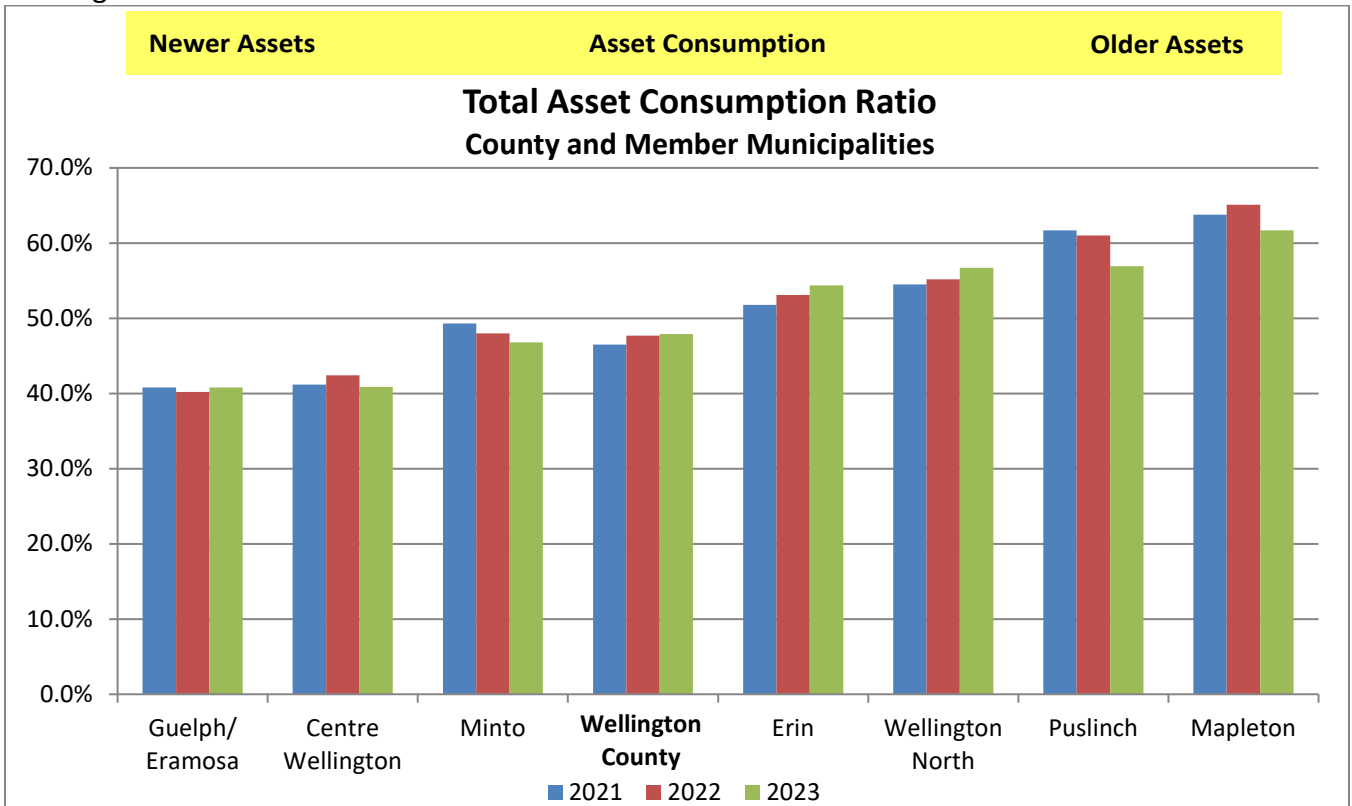
Net Financial Liabilities ratio is total liabilities minus assets as a percentage of own source revenues. It indicates the extent to which financial liabilities could be met by its operating revenue. A ratio greater than zero indicates that the municipality's total liabilities exceed the total assets.





Indicator 3: Asset Consumption Ratio

This indicator provides an estimate of the useful life left in the municipality’s capital assets. It shows the value of the tangible capital assets that have been consumed and seeks to highlight the aged condition of the assets and the potential asset replacement needs. The Ministry (MMA) considers a ratio of less than 50% to be low challenge; 50%-75% to be moderate challenge; and greater than 75% to be high challenge.



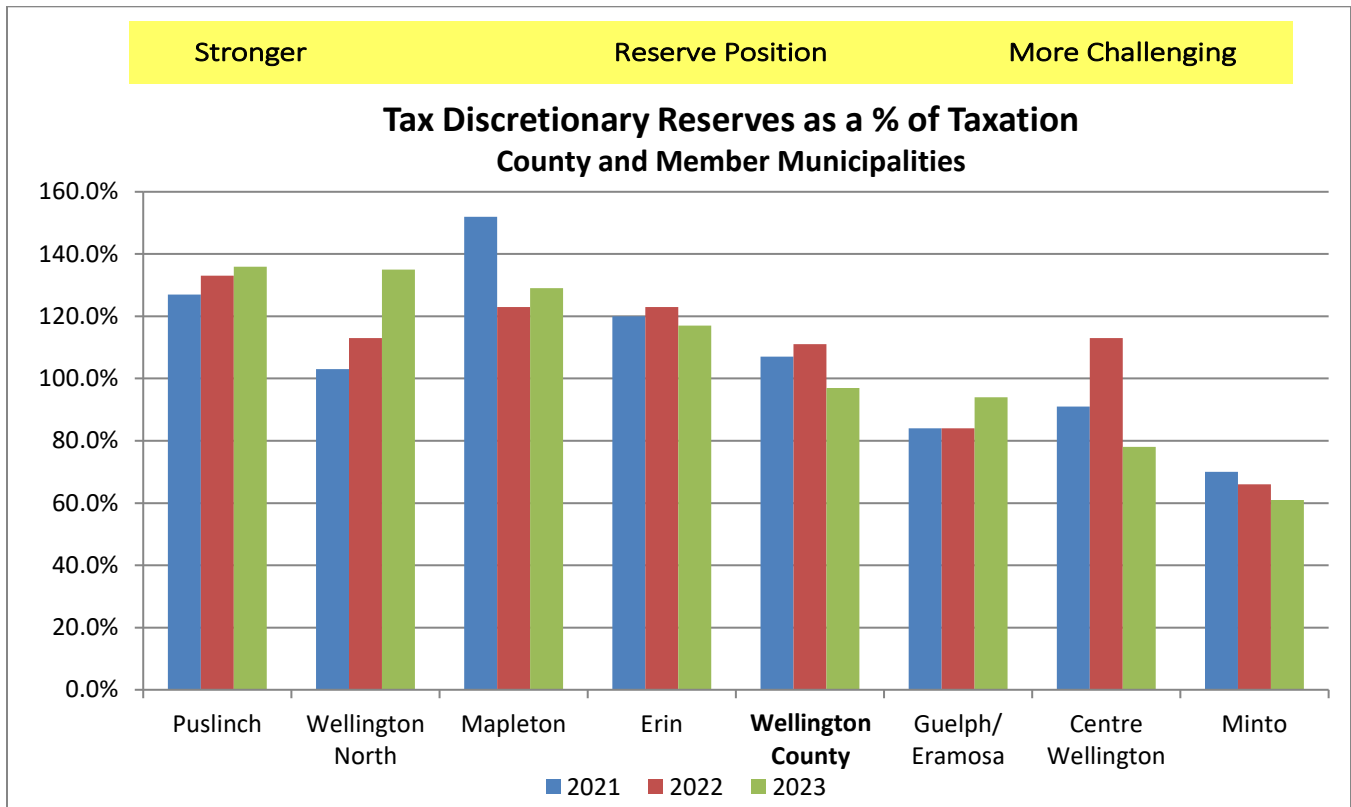
Indicator 4: Reserves

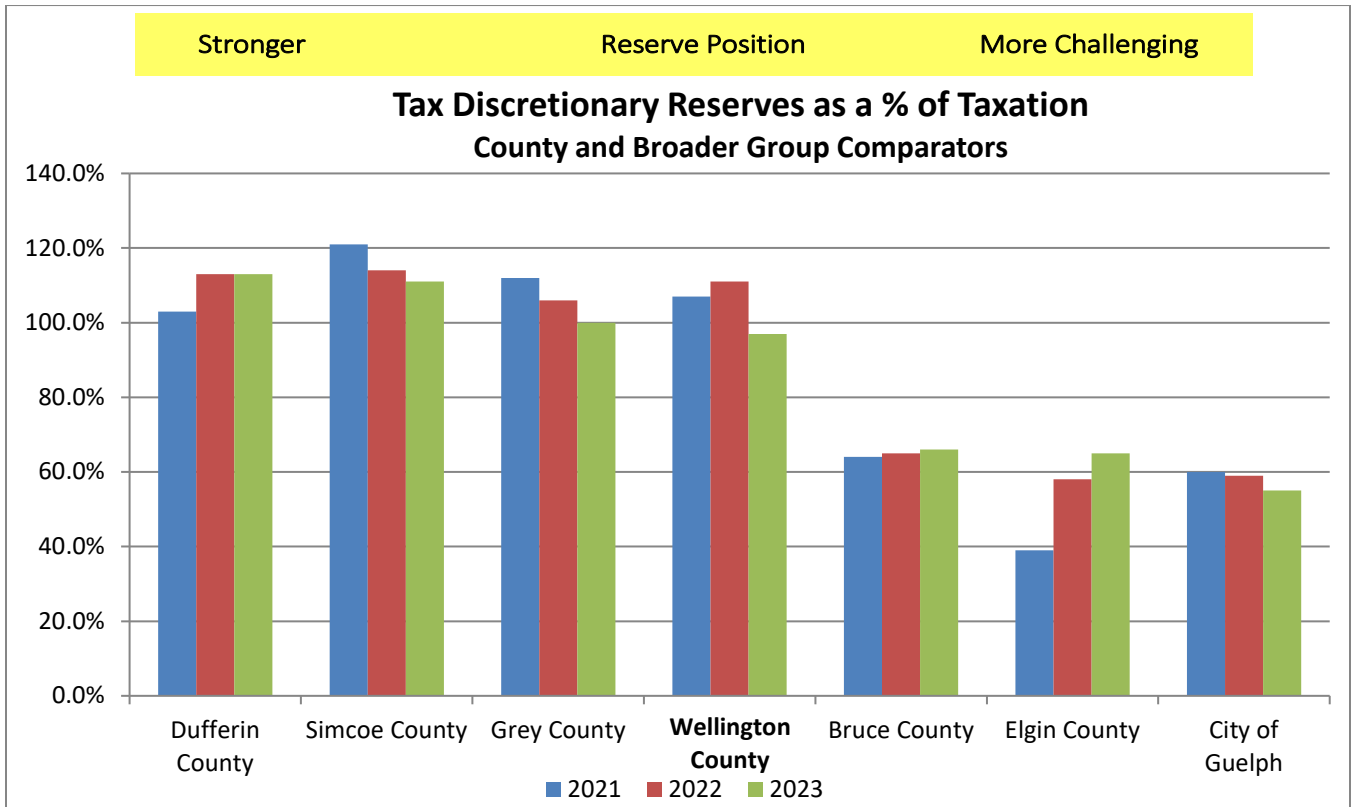
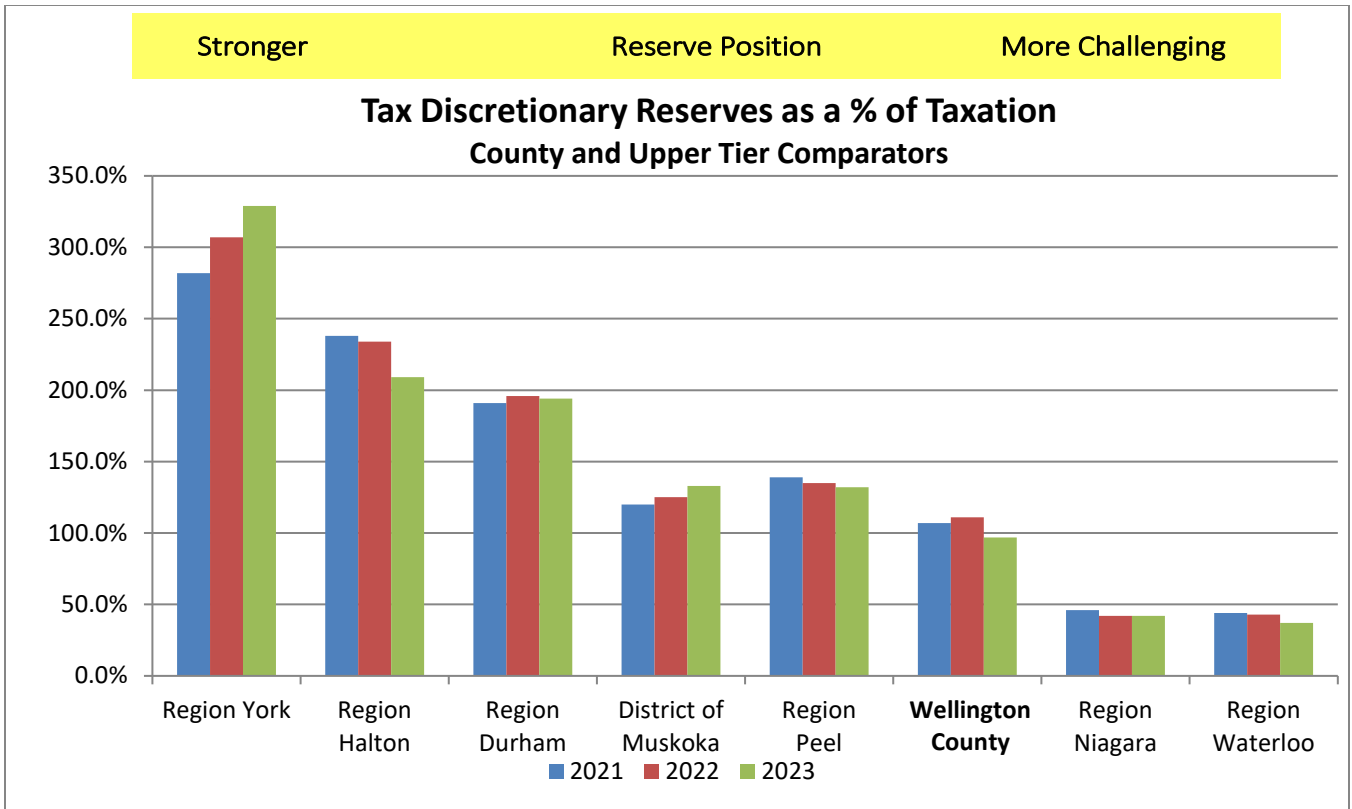
Reserves are a critical component of a municipality's long-term financial plan. Reserves offer liquidity which enhances the municipality's flexibility in addressing operating requirements and in permitting the municipality to temporarily fund capital projects internally, allowing it time to access debt markets and take advantage of favourable conditions.

Three financial indicators have been included for tax reserves. In each case, the water and wastewater reserves and reserve funds have been excluded as well as water and wastewater own source revenues.

I. Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Taxation

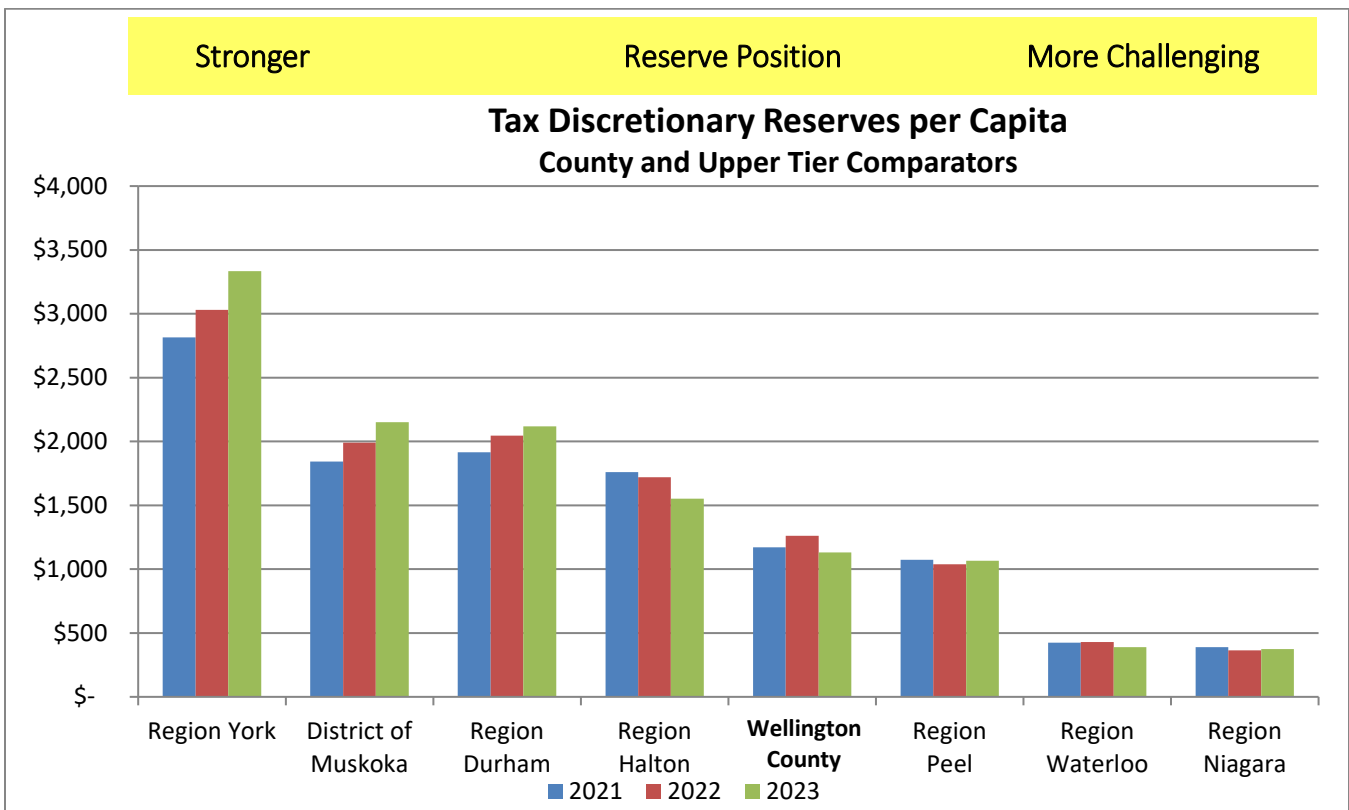
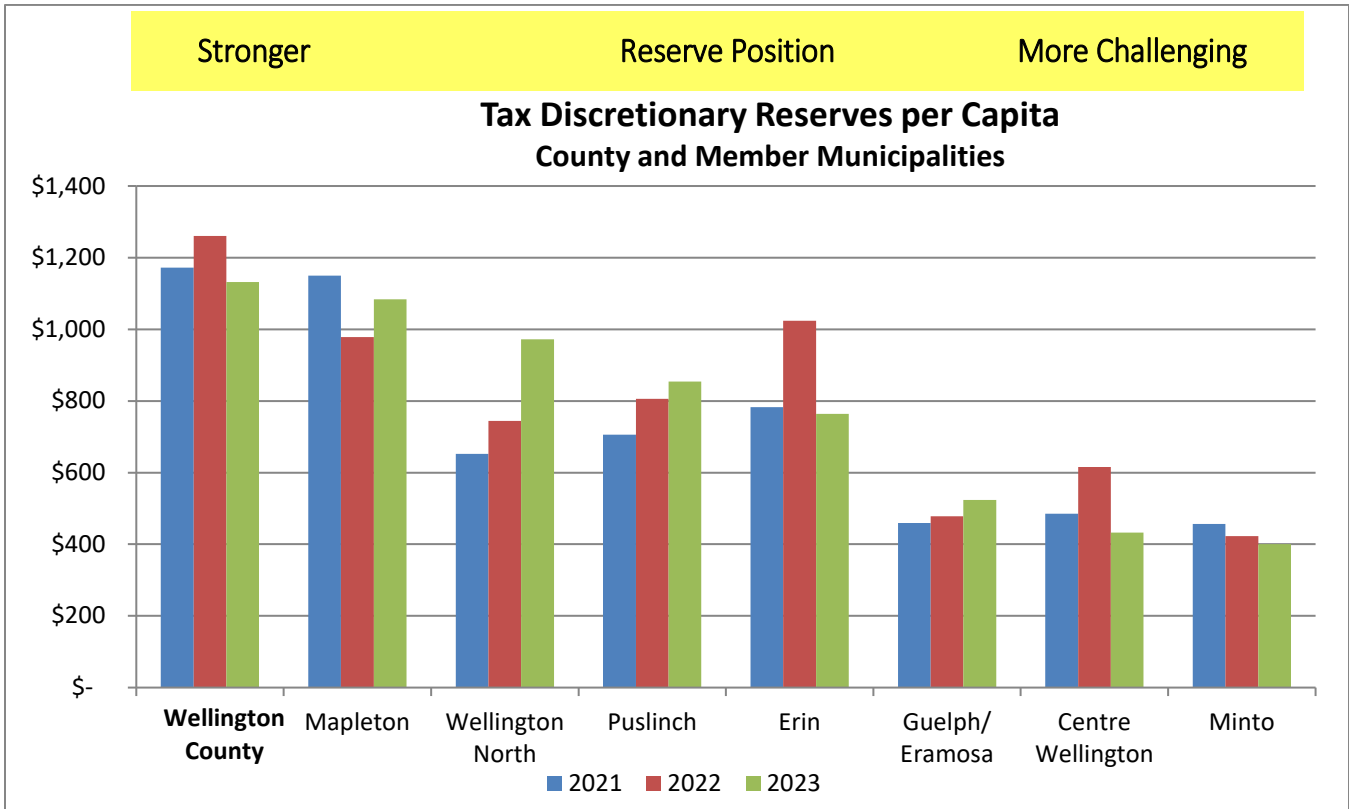
- This provides the total tax discretionary reserves and reserve funds in relation to total taxation

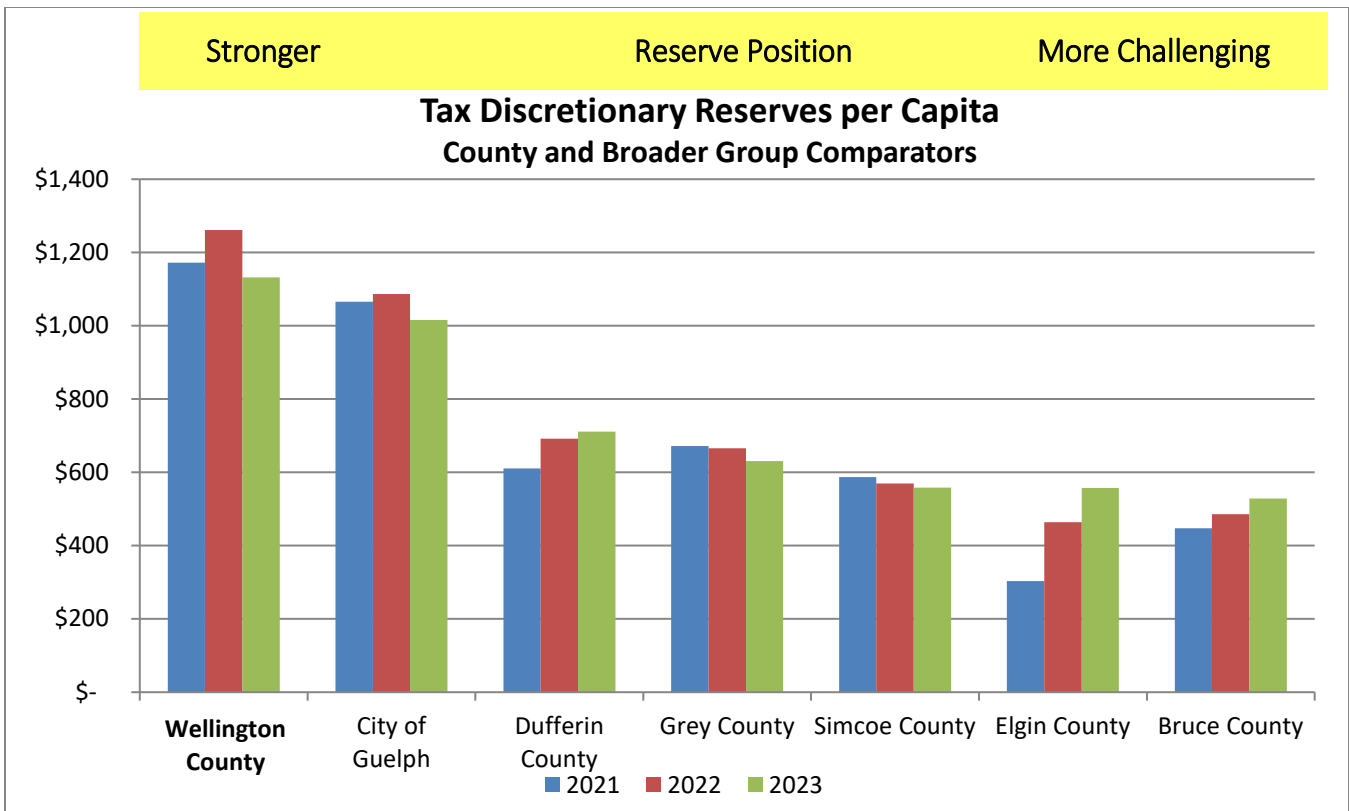




II. Tax Discretionary Reserves per Capita

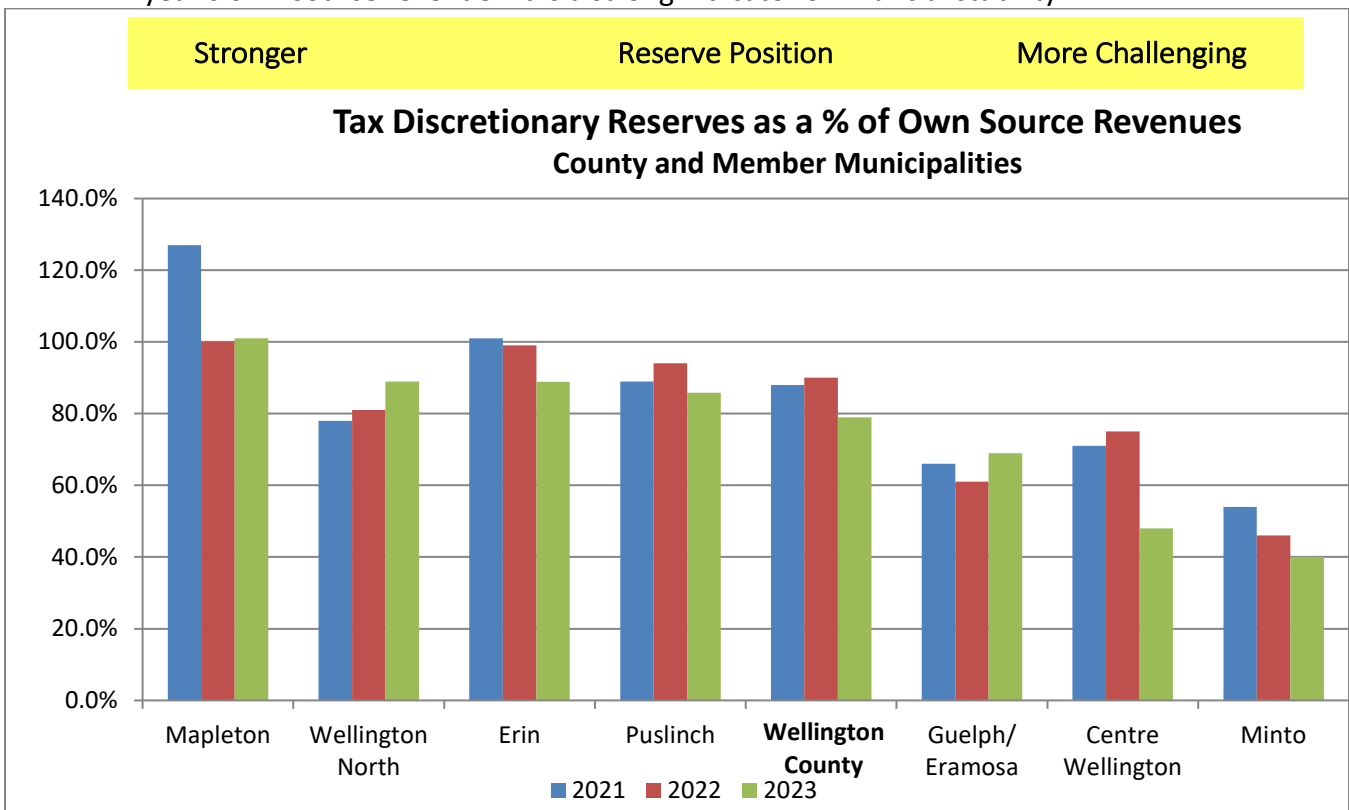
- This provides the total tax discretionary reserves in relation to the population.





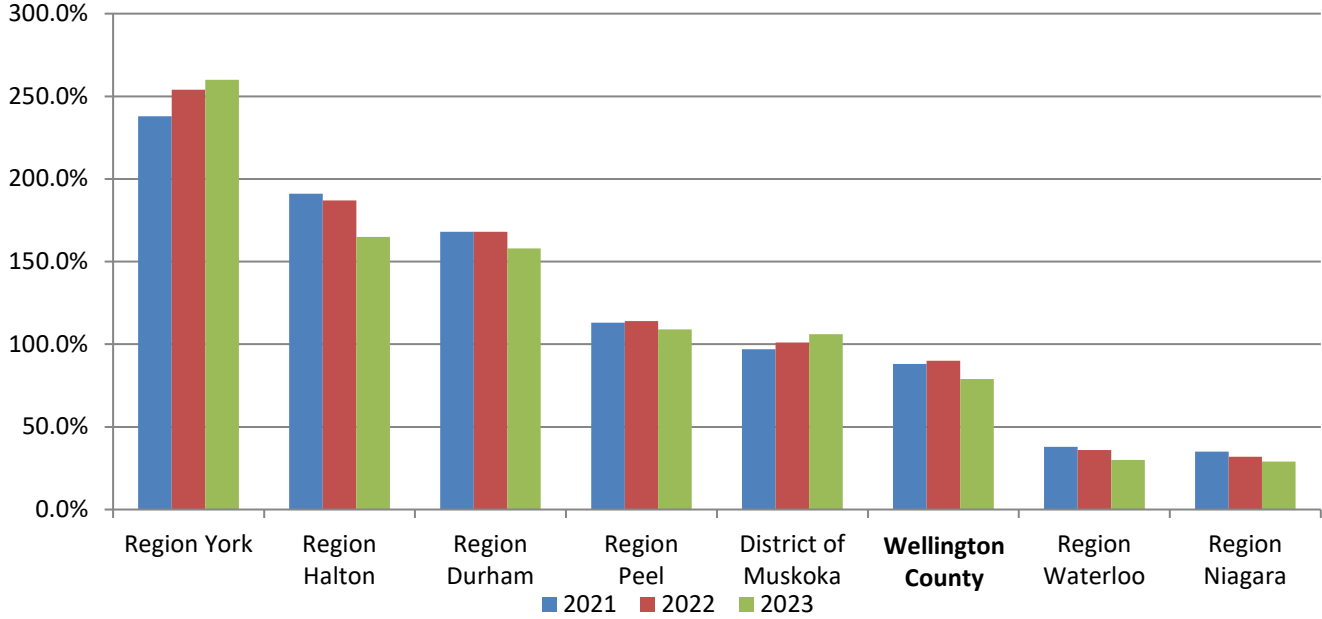
III. Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Own Source Revenues

- This shows the total value of funds held in reserves and reserve funds compared to a single year's own source revenue. It is a strong indicator of financial stability.



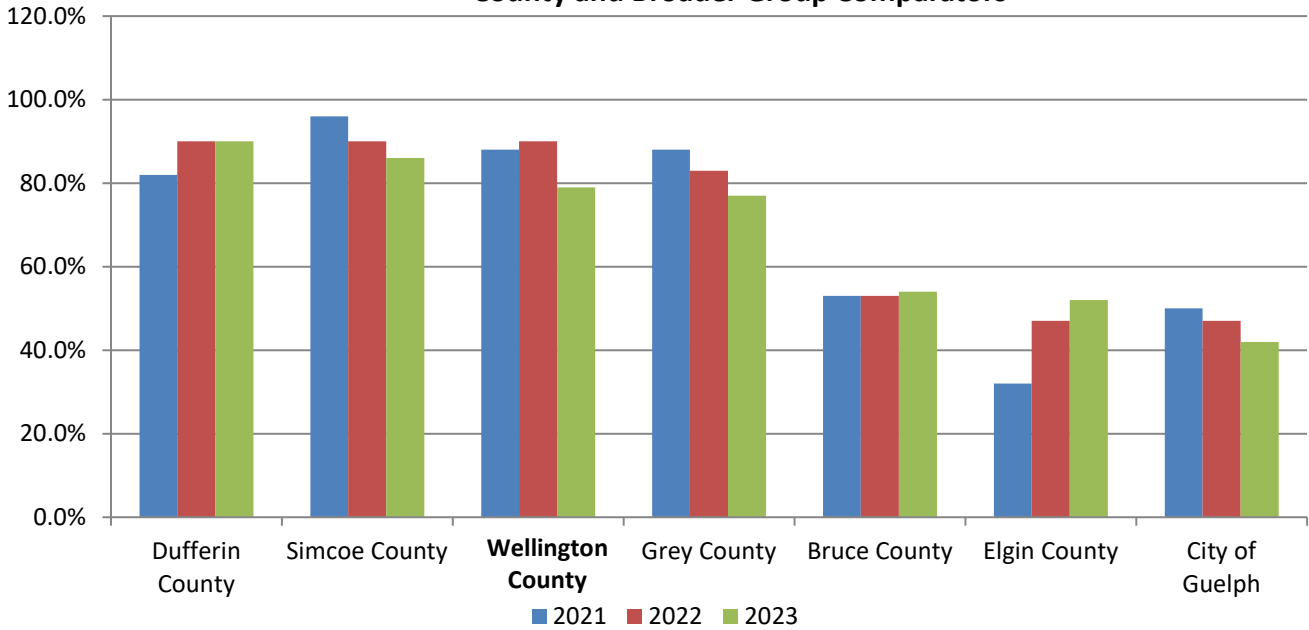
Stronger Reserve Position More Challenging

**Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Tax Own Source Revenues
County and Upper Tier Comparators**



Stronger Reserve Position More Challenging

**Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Tax Own Source Revenues
County and Broader Group Comparators**

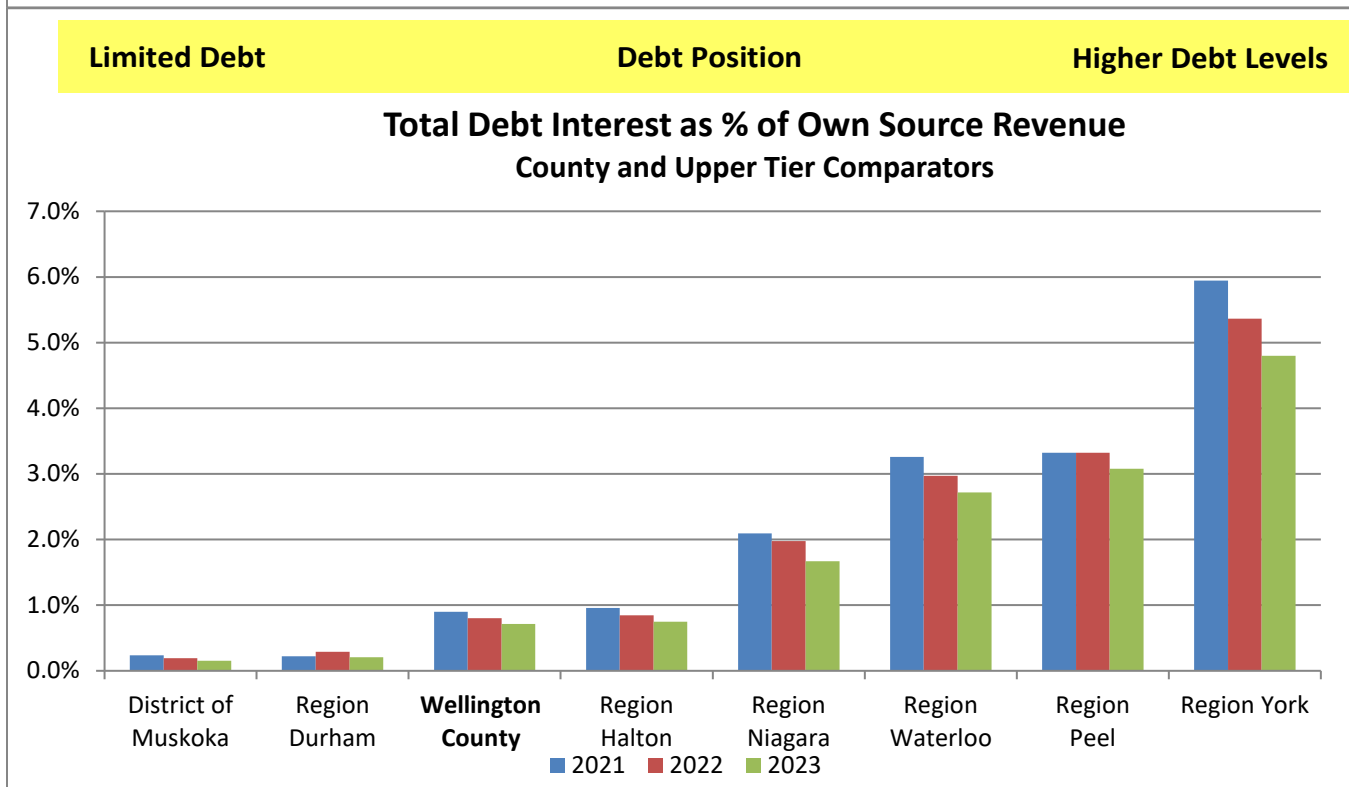
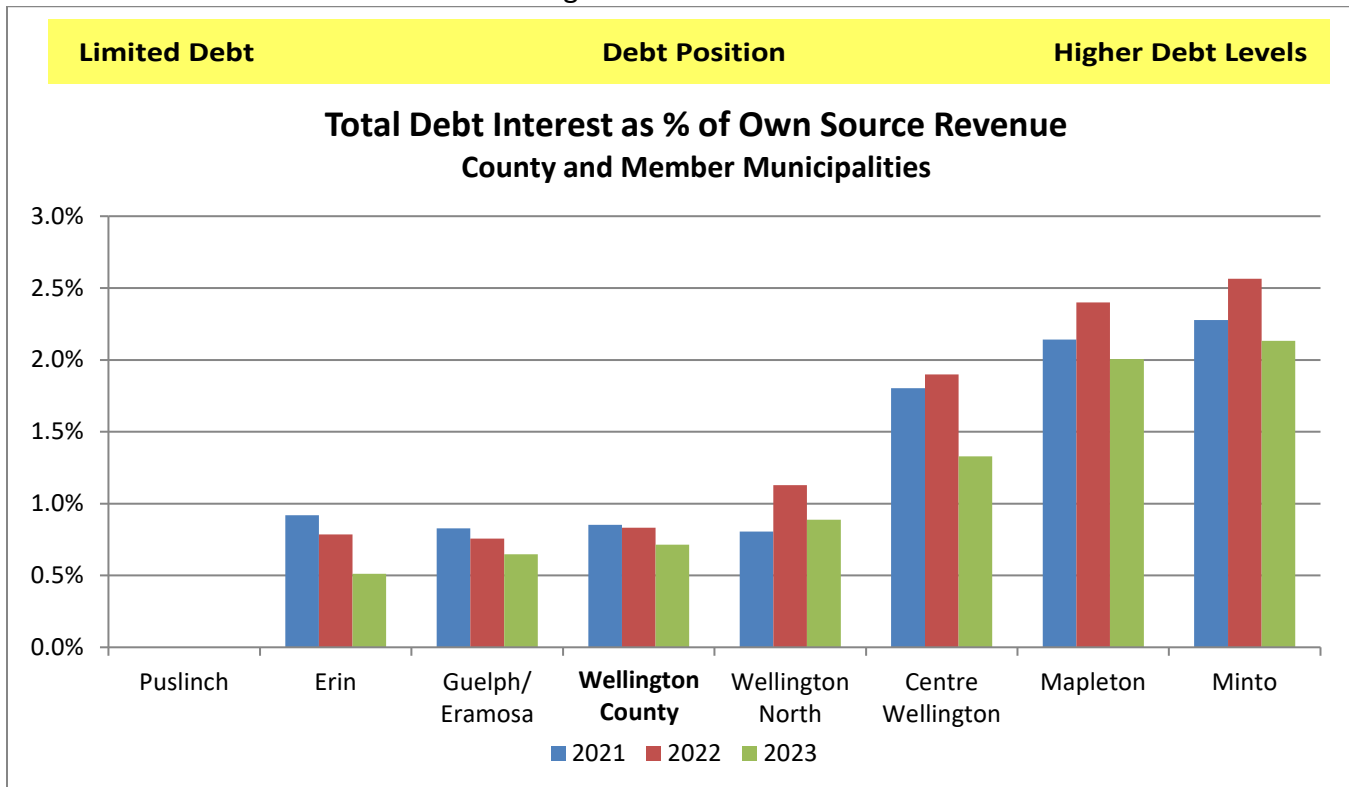


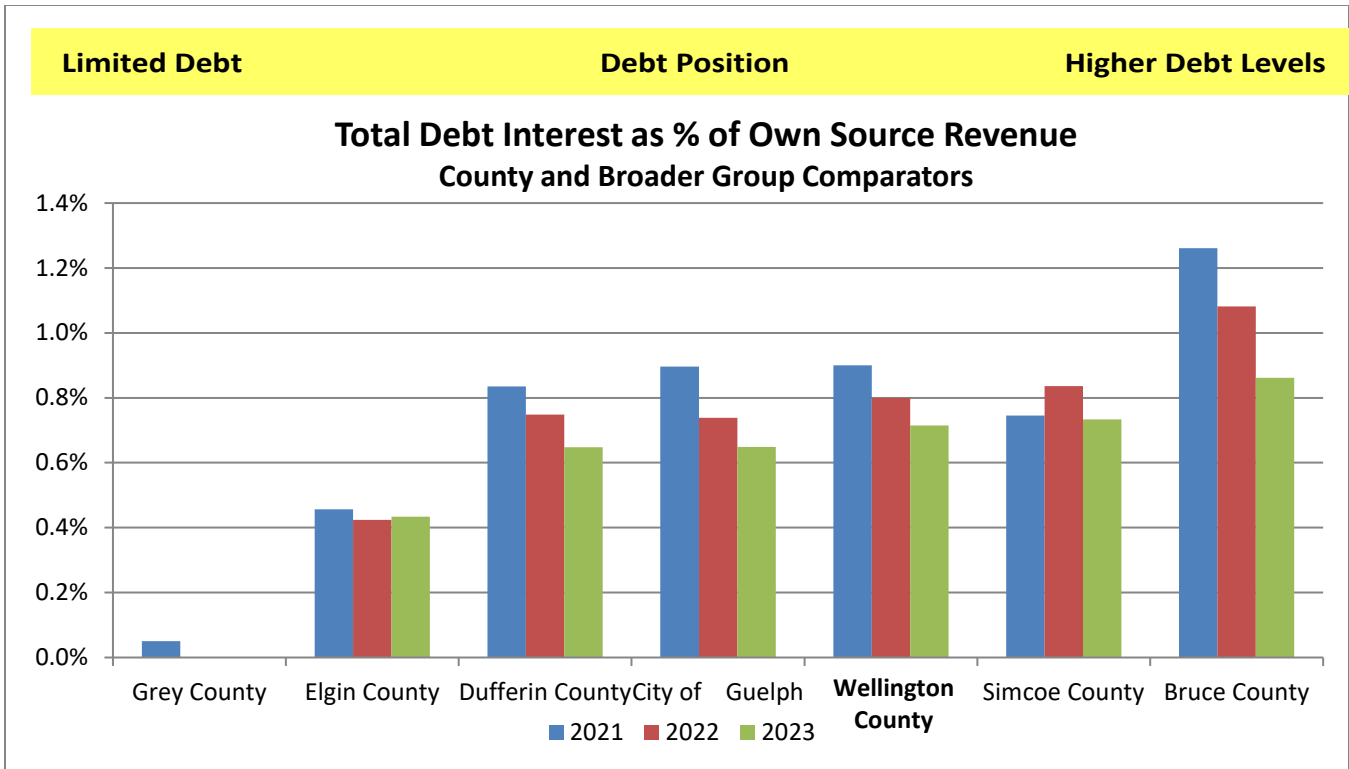
Indicator 5: Debt

There are five financial debt indicators that have been included in the analysis to provide a clear understanding of the overall debt outstanding and the debt servicing costs. These indicators include Water and Wastewater debt and revenues.

I. Total Debt Interest as % of Own Source Revenue

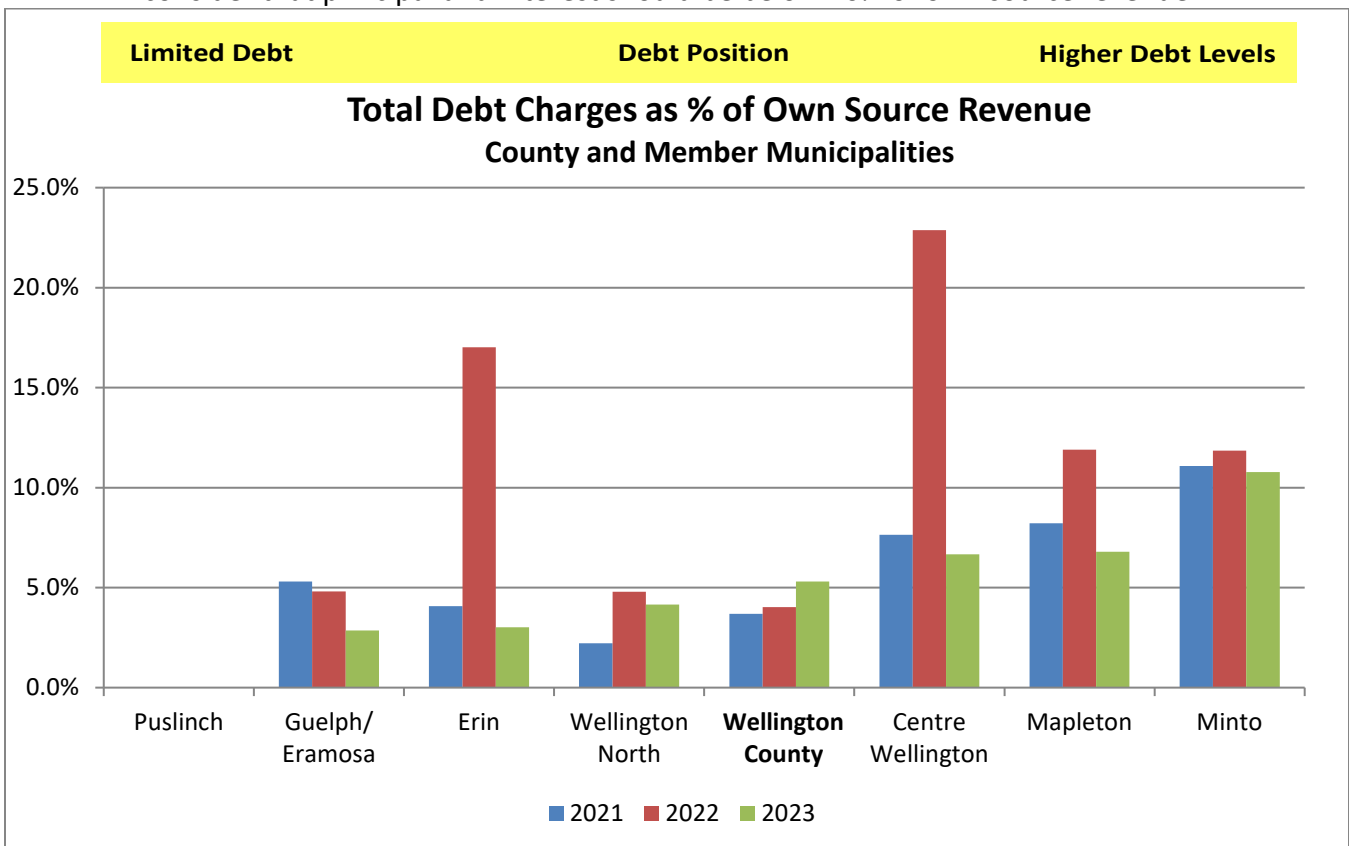
- This ratio indicates the extent to which the municipality's own source revenues are committed to debt interest charges.





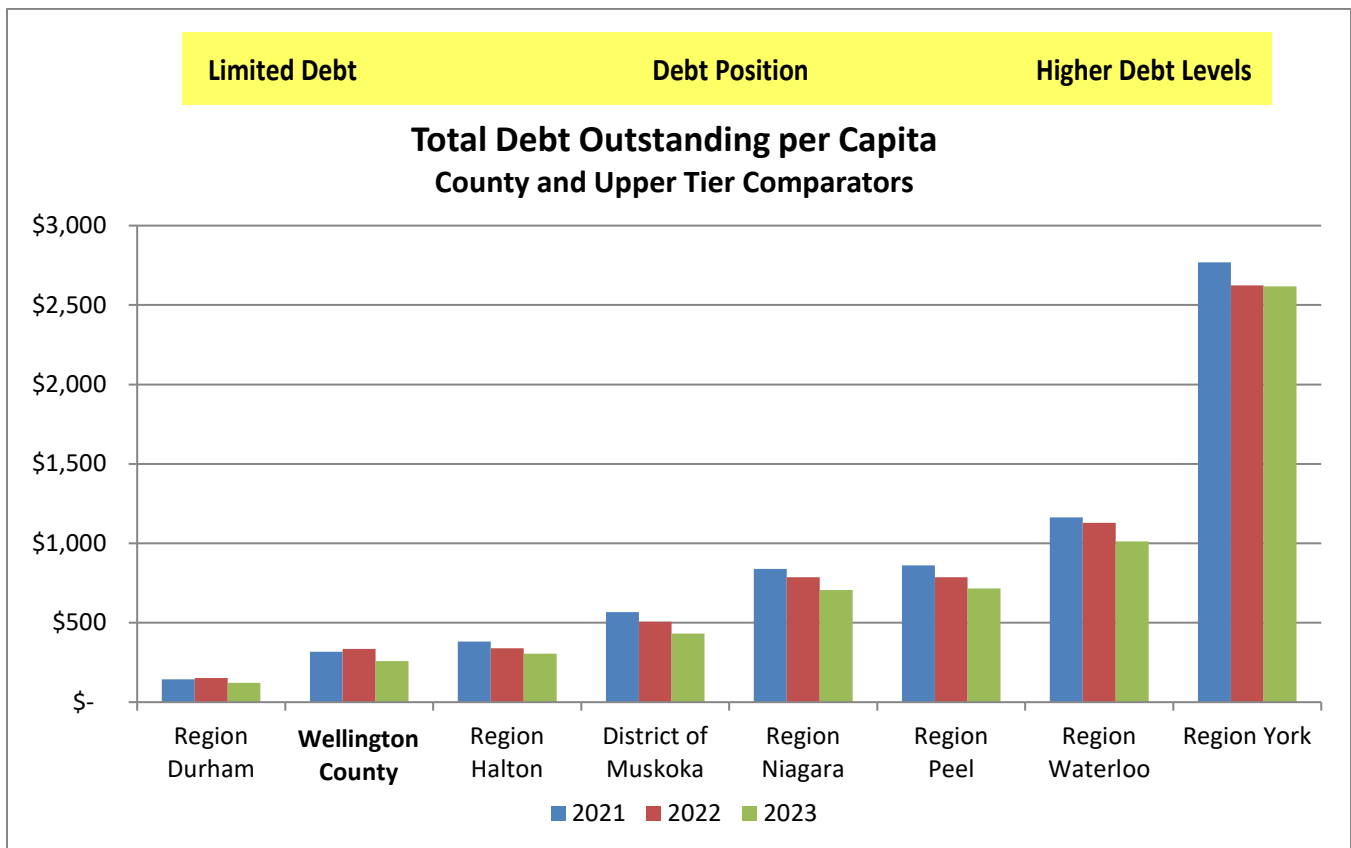
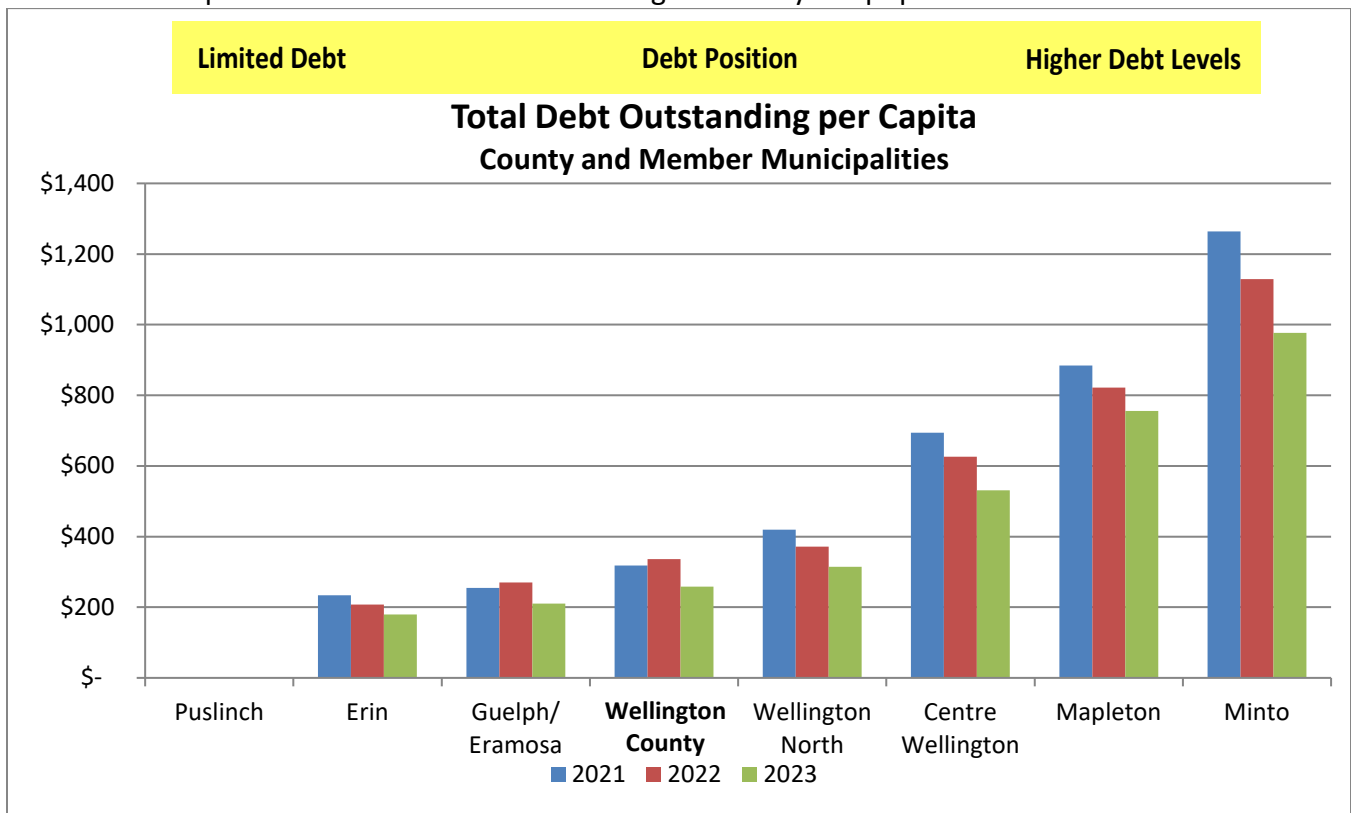
II. Total Debt Charges as a % of Own Source Revenues (Debt Service Ratio)

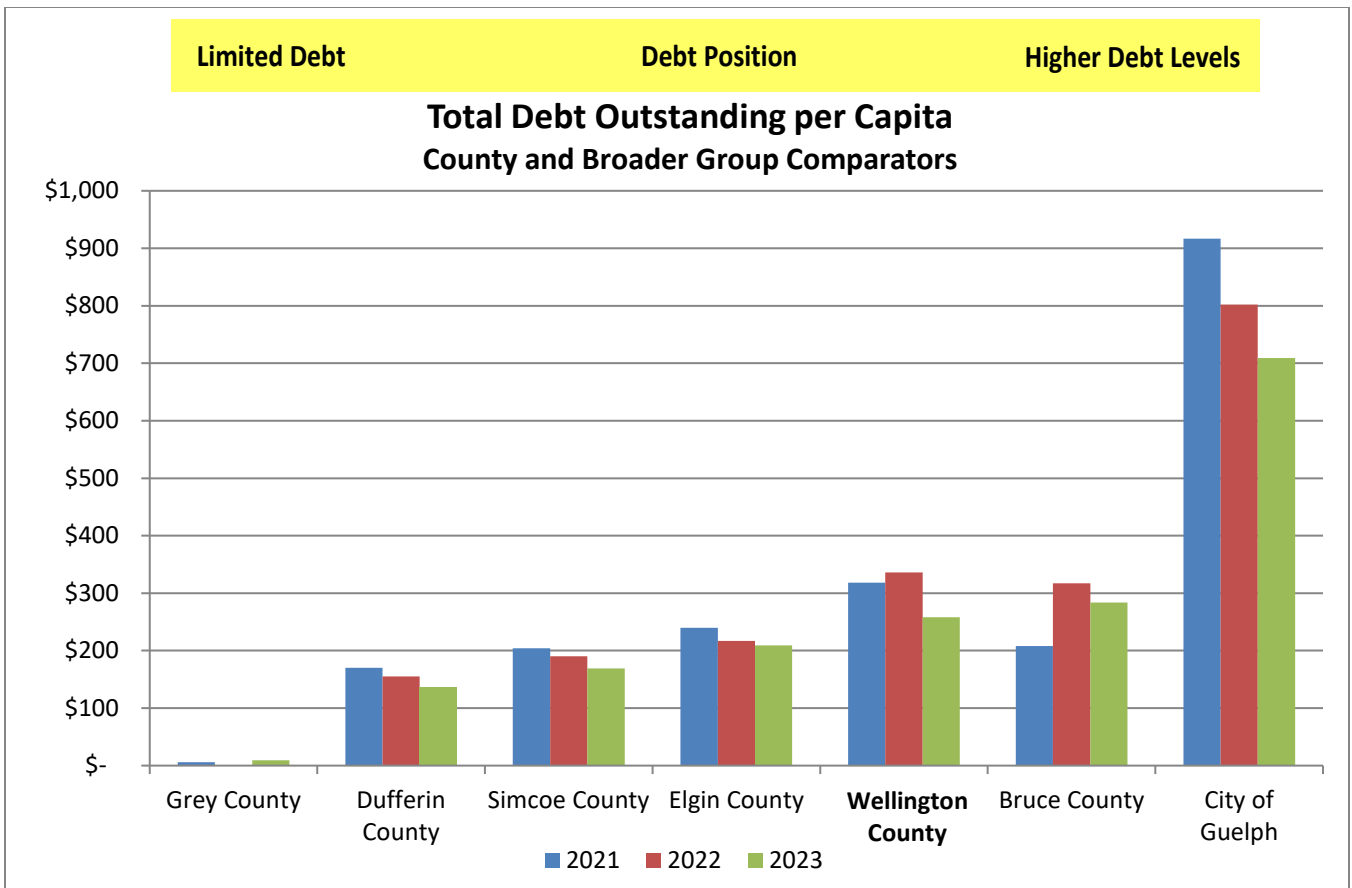
- Debt Service is the amount of principal and interest that a municipality must pay each year to service the debt. As debt service increases it reduces expenditure flexibility. This shows the % of total debt expenditures, including interest as a % of own source revenues. It is a measure of the municipality's ability to service its debt payments. Credit rating agencies consider that principal and interest should be below 10% of own source revenue.



III. Total Debt Outstanding per Capita

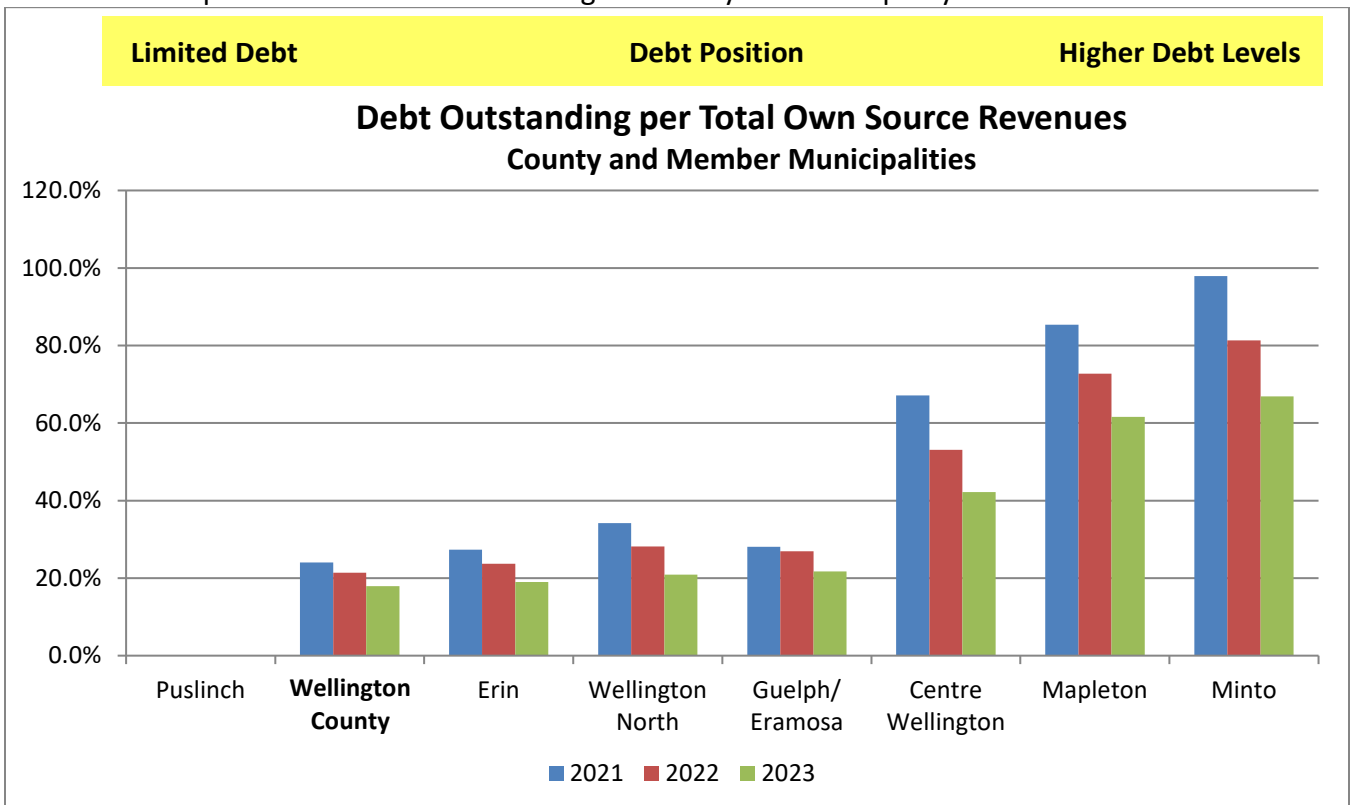
- This provides the total debt outstanding divided by the population.

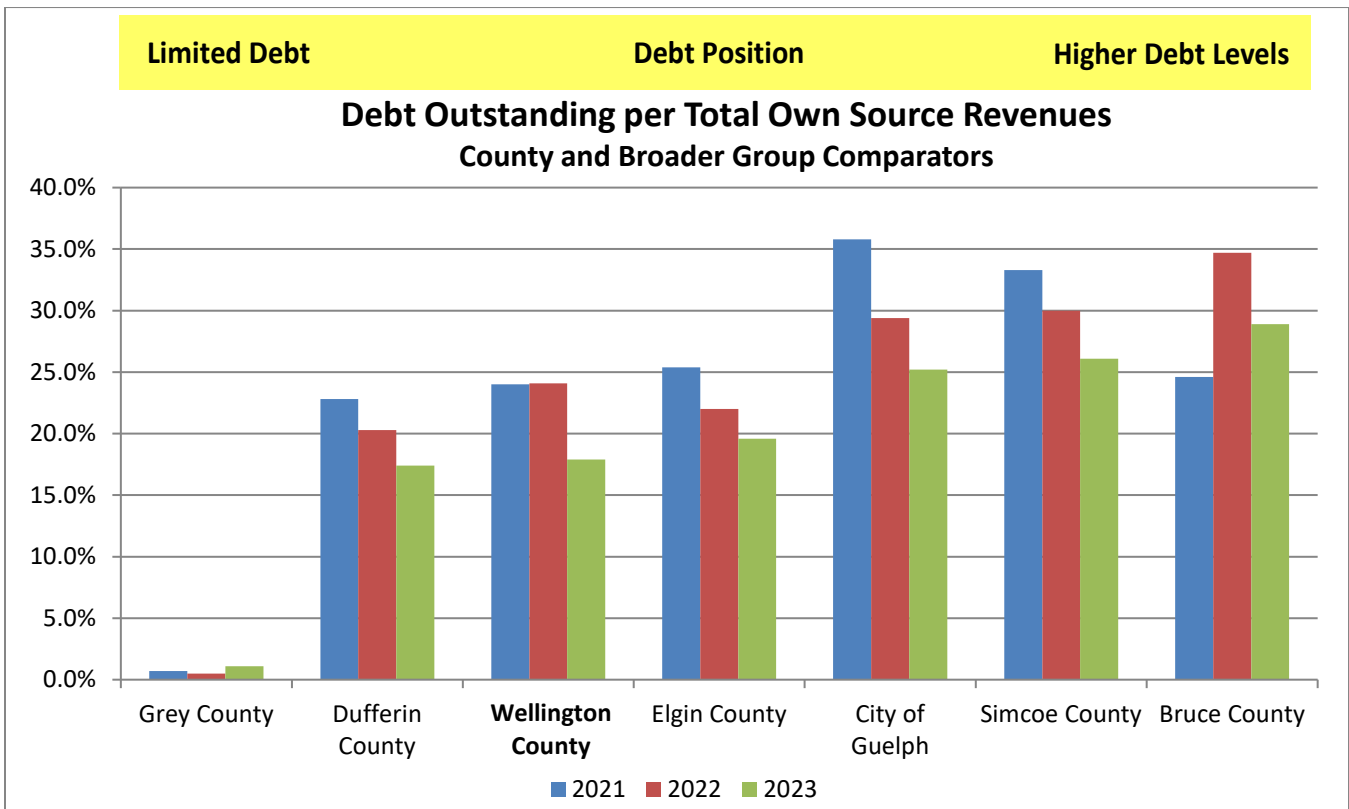
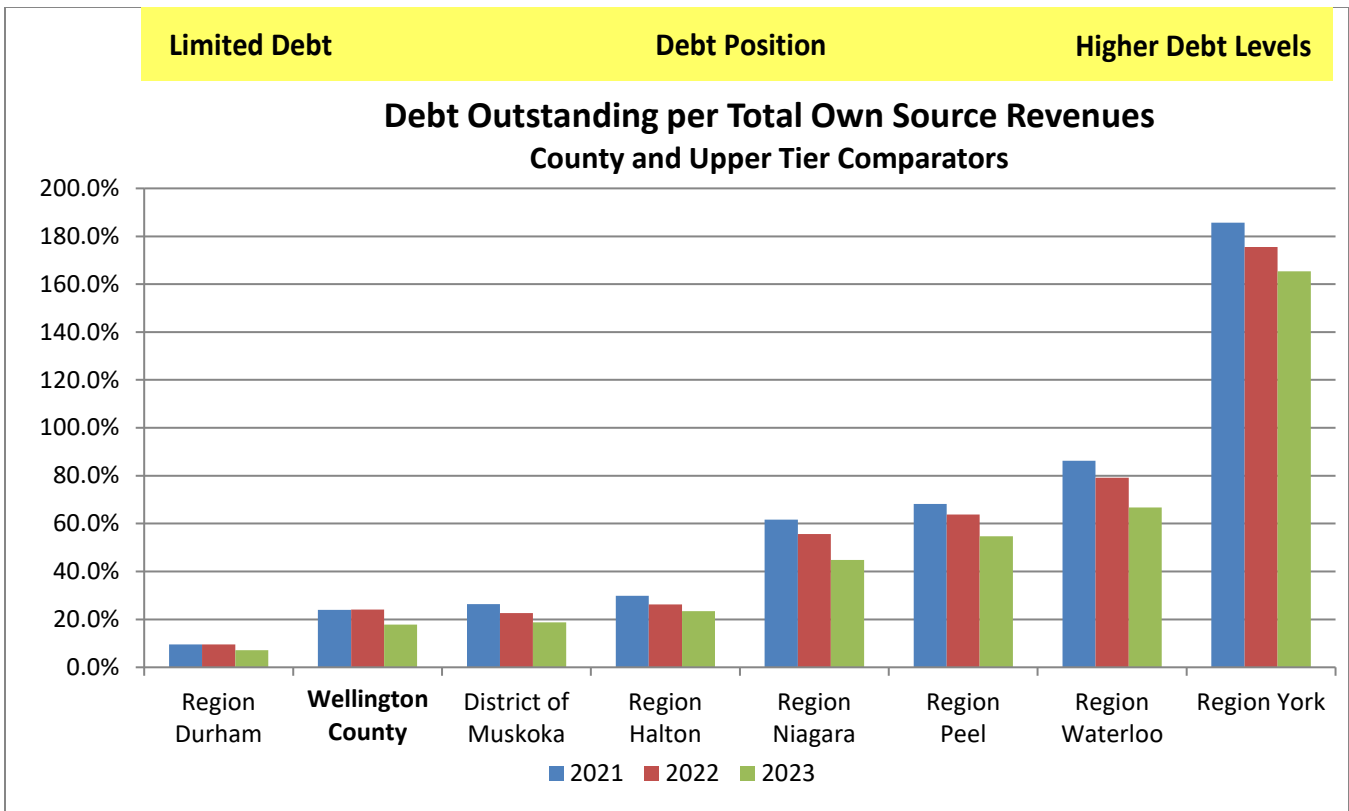




IV. Debt Outstanding Per Own Source Revenue

- This provides the debt outstanding divided by the municipality's own source revenues.





V. Debt to Reserve Ratio

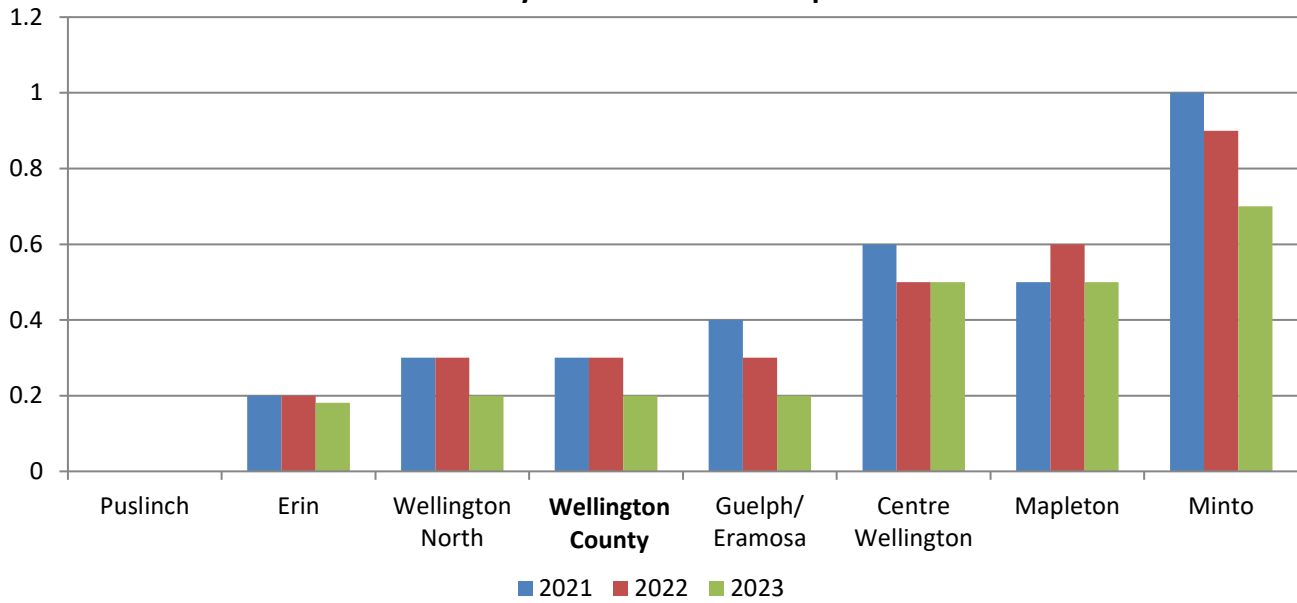
- This measure reflects the amount of debt outstanding divided by a municipality's reserves and reserve funds. A measure above 1.0 indicates that a municipality has more long-term debt than reserves.

Preferred

Debt to Reserves

Higher Debt Levels

Debt to Reserve Ratio County and Member Municipalities

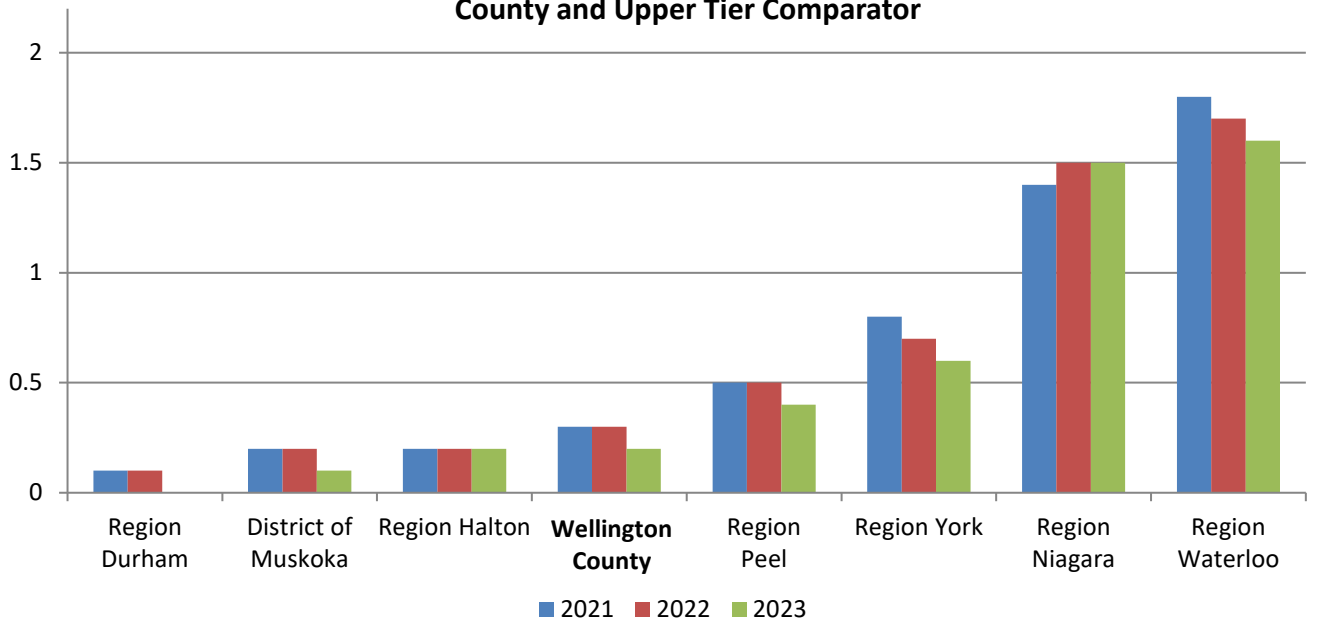


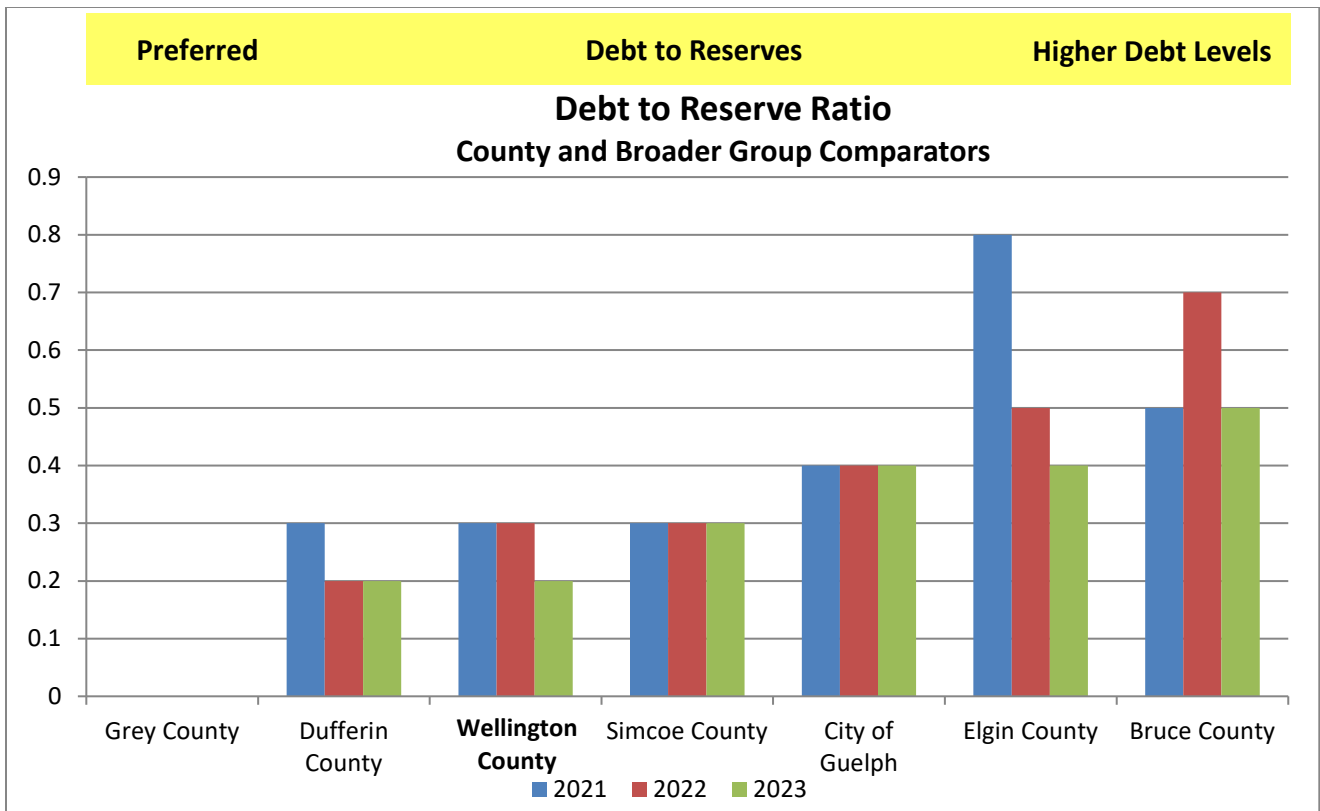
Preferred

Debt to Reserves

Higher Debt Levels

Debt to Reserve Ratio County and Upper Tier Comparator





VULNERABILITY – Addresses a municipality’s vulnerability to external sources of funding that it cannot control and its exposure to risks.

Indicator 6: Rates Coverage Ratio

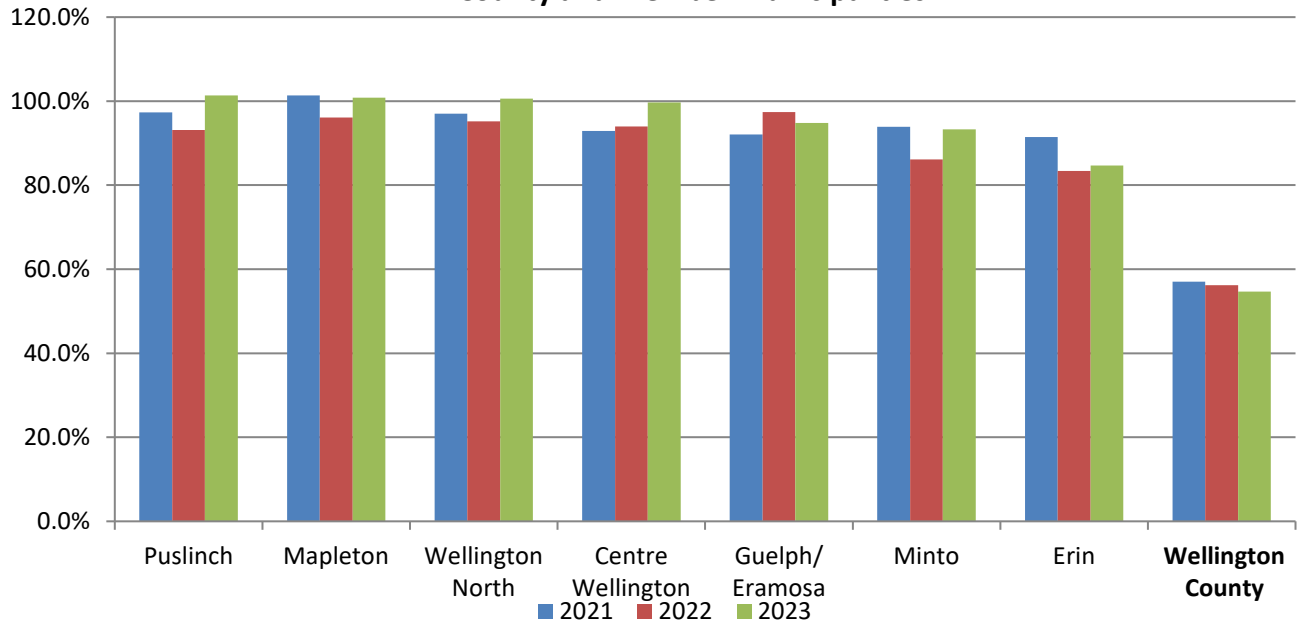
The Rates Coverage Ratio provides a measure of the municipality’s ability to cover its costs through its own sources of revenue. Water and Wastewater expenditures and revenues are included in this indicator. It measures own source revenue as a % of total expenditures. According to the MMAH, a basic target is 40%-60%; an intermediate is 60%-90% and an advanced target is 90% or greater.

Stronger

Rates Coverage Ratio

More Challenging

Rates Coverage Ratio County and Member Municipalities

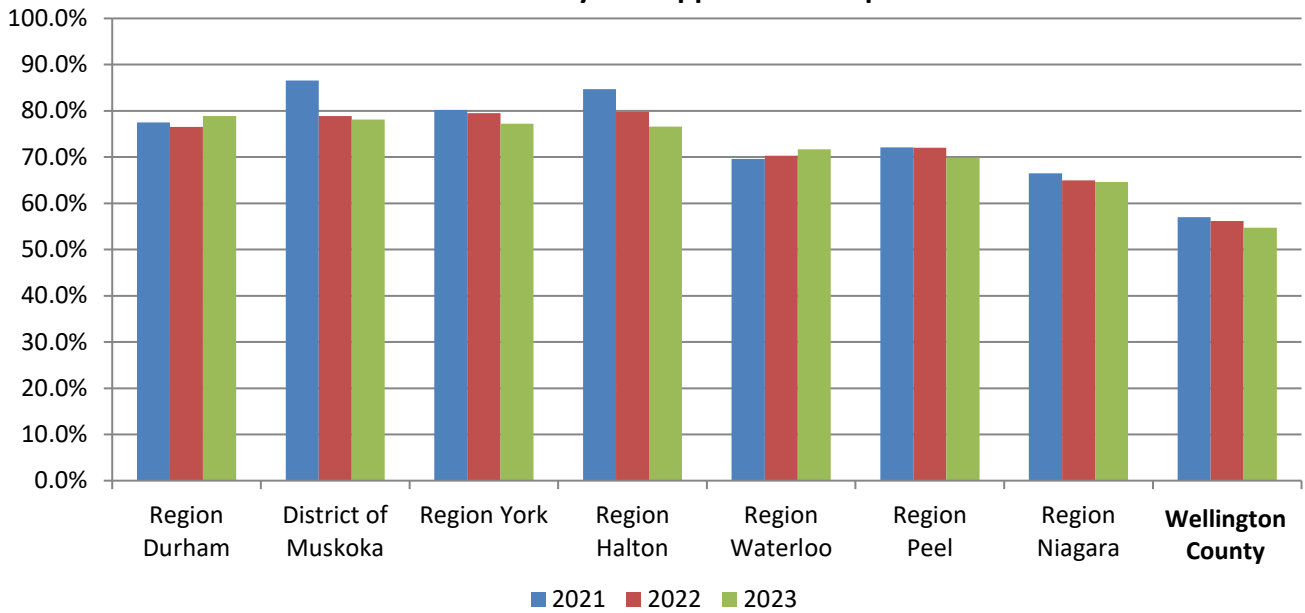


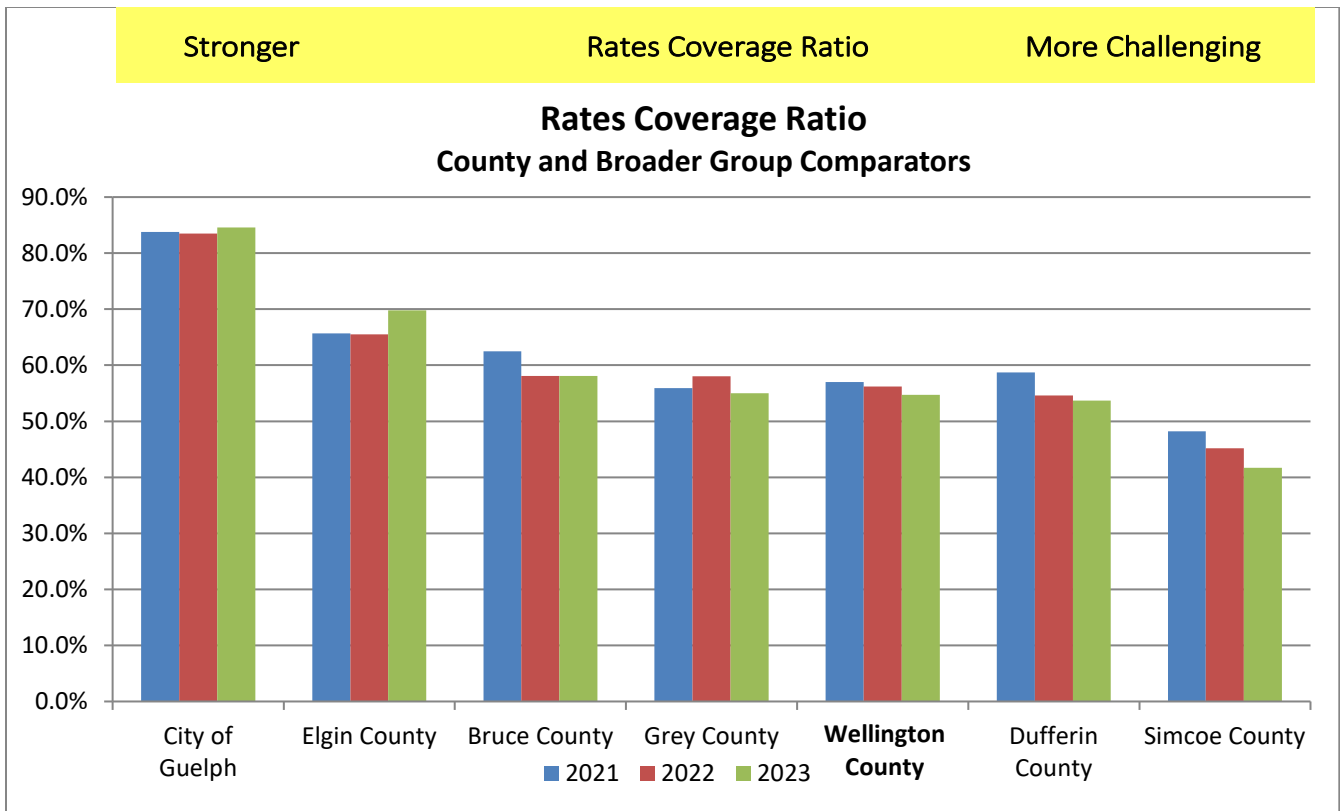
Stronger

Rates Coverage Ratio

More Challenging

Rates Coverage Ratio County and Upper Tier Comparators





Strategic Action Plan:

This report relates to the following objectives and priorities in the County’s Strategic Action Plan:

- Making the Best Decisions for the Betterment of the Community

Recommendation:

That the BMA Municipal Study – Financial Indicators report be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken DeHart, CPA, CGA
County Treasurer

Schedule A – Summary of Indicators (2023) County and Member Municipalities

Ranking 1 = Lowest Challenge 8 = Greatest Challenge		Centre Wellington	Erin	Guelph/ Eramosa	Mapleton	Minto	Puslinch	Wellington North	Wellington County
Indicators									
1	Financial Position Per Capita	\$989	\$653	\$650	\$760	\$788	\$850	\$2,425	\$946
		2	7	8	6	5	4	1	3
2	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	-0.79	-0.69	-0.67	-0.62	-0.54	-0.85	-1.61	-0.66
		3	4	5	7	8	2	1	6
3	Asset Consumption Ratio	40.9%	54.4%	40.8%	61.7%	46.8%	56.9%	56.7%	47.9%
		2	5	1	8	3	7	6	4
4	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Taxation	78.0%	117.0%	94.0%	129.0%	61.0%	136.0%	135.0%	97.0%
		7	4	6	3	8	1	2	5
	Tax Discretionary Reserves per Capita	\$433	\$764	\$524	\$1,084	\$400	\$855	\$972	\$1,132
		7	5	6	2	8	4	3	1
	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Own Source Revenues	48.0%	88.9%	69.0%	101.0%	40.0%	85.9%	89.0%	79.0%
		7	3	6	1	8	4	2	5
5	Tax Debt Interest as % of Own Source Revenue (less W & WW Revenue)	1.3%	0.5%	0.6%	2.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.9%	0.7%
		6	2	3	7	8	1	5	4
	Tax Debt Charges as a % of Own Source Revenues (less W & WW Revenue)	6.7%	3.0%	2.9%	6.8%	10.8%	0.0%	4.1%	5.3%
		6	3	2	7	8	1	4	5
	Tax Debt Outstanding per Capita	\$531	\$180	\$210	\$756	\$977	\$0	\$315	\$258
		6	2	3	7	8	1	5	4
	Debt Outstanding Per Own Source Revenue	42.2%	19.0%	21.7%	61.6%	66.9%	0.0%	20.9%	17.9%
		6	3	5	7	8	1	4	2
	Debt to Reserve Ratio	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.2	0.2
		6	2	3	6	8	1	3	3
6	Rates Coverage Ratio	99.7%	84.7%	94.8%	100.8%	93.3%	101.3%	100.6%	54.7%
		4	7	5	2	6	1	3	8

Schedule B – Summary of Indicators (2023) County and Upper-Tier Comparators

Ranking 1 = Lowest Challenge 8 = Greatest Challenge		District of Muskoka	Region Durham	Region Halton	Region Niagara	Region Peel	Region Waterloo	Region York	Wellington County
Indicators									
1	Financial Position Per Capita	\$1,889	\$3,158	\$3,440	(\$358)	\$560	(\$1,127)	\$988	\$946
		3	2	1	7	6	8	4	5
2	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	-0.82	-1.83	-2.64	0.23	-0.43	0.74	-0.62	-0.66
		3	2	1	7	6	8	5	4
3	Asset Consumption Ratio	55.1%	39.9%	29.6%	44.7%	33.1%	35.3%	32.6%	47.9%
		8	5	1	6	3	4	2	7
4	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Taxation	133.0%	194.0%	209.0%	42.0%	132.0%	37.0%	329.0%	97.0%
		4	3	2	7	5	8	1	6
	Tax Discretionary Reserves per Capita	\$2,150	\$2,118	\$1,551	\$375	\$1,065	\$390	\$3,335	\$1,132
		2	3	4	8	6	7	1	5
	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Own Source Revenues	106.0%	158.0%	165.0%	29.0%	109.0%	30.0%	260.0%	79.0%
		5	3	2	8	4	7	1	6
5	Tax Debt Interest as % of Own Source Revenue (less W & WW Revenue)	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	1.7%	3.1%	2.7%	4.8%	0.7%
		1	2	4	5	7	6	8	3
	Tax Debt Charges as a % of Own Source Revenues (less W & WW Revenue)	3.4%	1.6%	2.0%	5.8%	6.4%	9.4%	5.5%	5.3%
		3	1	2	6	7	8	5	4
	Tax Debt Outstanding per Capita	\$431	\$122	\$305	\$705	\$715	\$1,012	\$2,618	\$258
		4	1	3	5	6	7	8	2
	Debt Outstanding Per Own Source Revenue	18.8%	7.1%	23.4%	44.8%	54.7%	66.7%	165.4%	17.9%
		3	1	4	5	6	7	8	2
	Debt to Reserve Ratio	0.1	0	0.2	1.5	0.4	1.6	0.6	0.2
		2	1	3	7	5	8	6	3
6	Rates Coverage Ratio	78.1%	78.9%	76.6%	64.6%	69.9%	71.7%	77.2%	54.7%
		2	1	4	7	6	5	3	8

Schedule C – Summary of Indicators (2023) County and Broader Group Comparators

Ranking 1 = Lowest Challenge 7 = Greatest Challenge		Bruce County	City of Guelph	Simcoe County	Dufferin County	Elgin County	Grey County	Wellington County
Indicators								
1	Financial Position Per Capita	(\$35)	\$1,573	(\$288)	\$567	\$182	\$439	\$946
		6	1	7	3	5	4	2
2	Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	0.04	-0.56	0.45	-0.72	-0.17	-0.53	-0.66
		6	3	7	1	5	4	2
3	Asset Consumption Ratio	48.4%	48.9%	34.7%	49.8%	48.9%	56.0%	47.9%
		3	4	1	6	4	7	2
4	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Taxation	66.0%	55.0%	111.0%	113.0%	65.0%	100.0%	97.0%
		5	7	2	1	6	3	4
	Tax Discretionary Reserves per Capita	\$529	\$1,016	\$558	\$711	\$557	\$631	\$1,132
		7	2	5	3	6	4	1
	Tax Discretionary Reserves as a % of Own Source Revenues	54.0%	42.0%	86.0%	90.0%	52.0%	77.0%	79.0%
		5	7	2	1	6	4	3
5	Tax Debt Interest as % of Tax Own Source Revenue	0.9%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.7%
		7	4	6	3	2	1	5
	Tax Debt Charges as a % of Tax Own Source Revenues	3.1%	3.3%	2.5%	2.3%	2.5%	0.4%	5.3%
		7	6	3	2	3	1	7
	Tax Debt Outstanding per Capita	\$284	\$709	\$169	\$137	\$209	\$9	\$258
		6	7	3	2	4	1	5
	Debt Outstanding Per Own Source Revenue	28.9%	25.2%	26.1%	17.4%	19.6%	1.1%	17.9%
		7	5	6	2	4	1	3
	Debt to Reserve Ratio	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	0	0.2
		7	6	3	3	5	1	4
6	Rates Coverage Ratio	58.1%	84.6%	41.7%	53.7%	69.8%	55.0%	54.7%
		3	1	7	6	2	4	5