

# APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

## **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (GHGs)**

Greenhouse Gases are any gaseous compounds in the atmosphere that absorb infrared radiation, which results in heat being trapped and held within the atmosphere. As trapped heat increases in the atmosphere, the greenhouse effect results, which leads to global warming. Some forms of human activity (e.g., burning fossil fuels, deforestation) lead to certain types of gas released into the atmosphere, which leads to more warming. Carbon dioxide is the primary gas responsible for the greenhouse effect, but methane, nitrous oxide, and water vapour also contribute to the effect.

## **HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

Affordable housing should cost less than 30% of a family's after-tax household income. Shelter costs include, as applicable, mortgage payments (both principal and interest), property taxes, condominium fees, and payments for electricity, fuel, water, and other municipal services (CMHC, 2015).

## **LOW INCOME MEASURE**

The low income measure (LIM) is a fixed percentage, typically 50%, of a household's median adjusted income. By "adjusted", LIM takes into account household needs such as, for example, household size because a household's needs increase as the number of members increases. A household of six persons likely has greater needs than a household of two persons, although their specific needs would not necessarily be three times as costly. LIM is most often reported based on after-tax household income, hence the acronym LIM-AT (Statistics Canada, 2015. For more information about the low income measure, see: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/2015001/lim-mfr-eng.htm>).

## **pH LEVEL**

pH level is a measure of the acidity of water and therefore its quality. Pure water is neutral and has a pH level of 7.0. As values fall below 7.0, water is increasingly acidic; as values rise above 7.0, water is increasingly alkaline. Changes in the pH level of water are important for the health of many organisms. Most organisms have adapted to life in water of a specific pH and may die if it changes even slightly. Factors that can affect the pH level include the type bedrock and soil composition over which water flows; the amount of organic material in the water as it decomposes; and the release of chemicals into the water, typically from human sources.

## **WASTE DIVERSION RATE**

The waste diversion rate is the percentage of the total amount of waste material that is kept out of landfills. In other words, the rate represents that part of all waste materials diverted as a percentage of the total amount of waste disposed.