



Northumberland  
county

# 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan



# Northumberland County 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan

Produced September 2023.

Not for reproduction without permission.

## Accessibility

The County of Northumberland is committed to ensuring that people of all ages and abilities enjoy the same opportunities as they live, work, visit and invest in our community. The County is guided by the four core principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity, and supports the full inclusion of persons as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). This document is available in an alternative format, upon request.

## Land acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that Northumberland County is located on the Mississauga Anishinabeg territory and is the traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinabeg.

Northumberland County respectfully acknowledges that the Mississauga Nation are the collective stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters in perpetuity, and that they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come.

## Special thanks

Thank you to all the County staff, partners, community members, youth and organizations who participated in our community consultation and focus groups to help inform the development of this Community Strategic Plan. Thanks also to CURRENT Organization Inc. and LURA Consulting, who supported various phases of development of this plan.

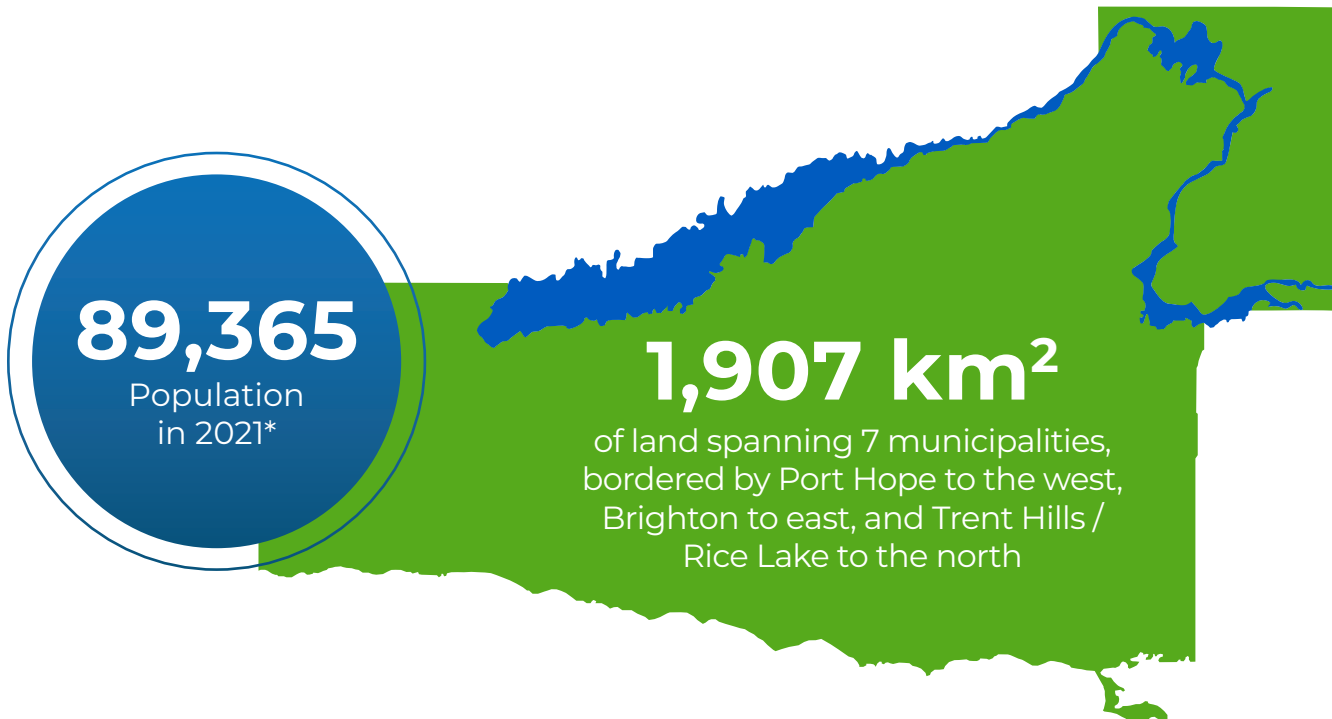
Special thanks as well to Northumberland Tourism for providing photography of Northumberland County communities for this publication.

# Table of contents

- Northumberland at a glance ..... 4
- About the County.....8
- Meet the 2022-2026 County Council.....9
- Message from County Council .....10
- Planning for our future..... 12
- About this plan..... 13
- Principal Direction for this plan .....14
- How we will use this plan..... 15
- Pillar 1:** Innovate for Service Excellence .....16
- Pillar 2:** Ignite Economic Opportunity .....18
- Pillar 3:** Foster a Thriving Community .....20
- Pillar 4:** Propel Sustainable Growth.....22
- Pillar 5:** Champion a Vibrant Future .....24
- How we will measure progress.....26
- Connect with us .....27



# Northumberland at a glance



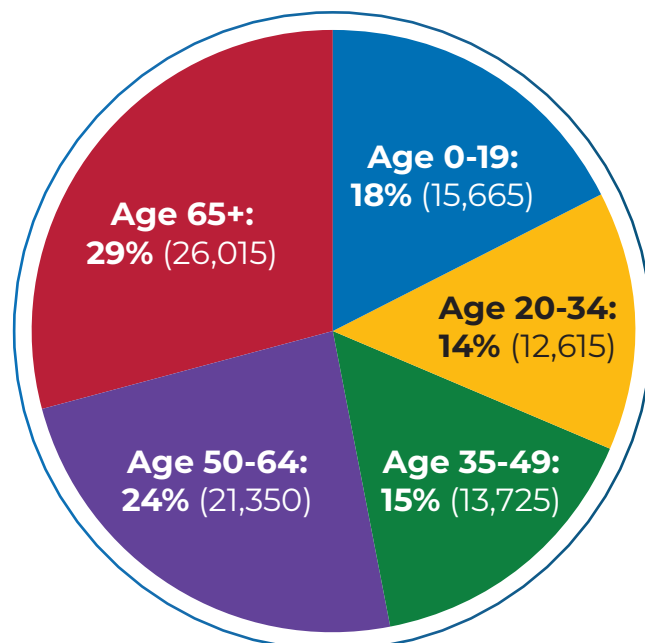
**\$103,000**  
**Average household income**  
(Statistics Canada, 2020)

**481**  
**Companies hiring**  
(Workforce Development  
Board, August 2023)

**54%**  
**Population in the  
labour force (Ages 15+)**  
(Statistics Canada, 2021)

## Population by age\*

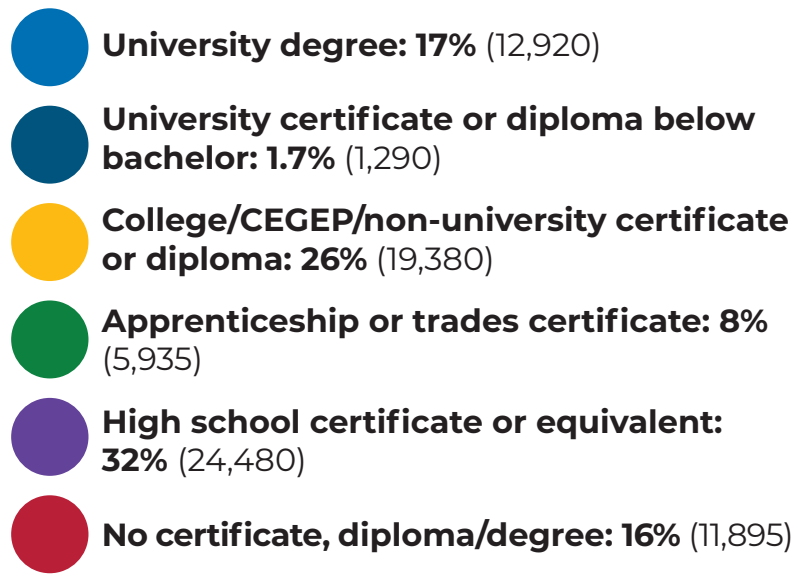
Total count: 89,365



\*Statistics Canada (2021 Census). Percentages have been rounded.

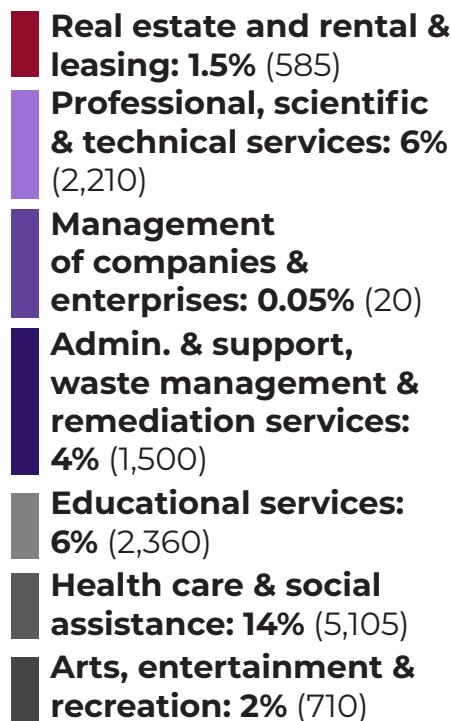
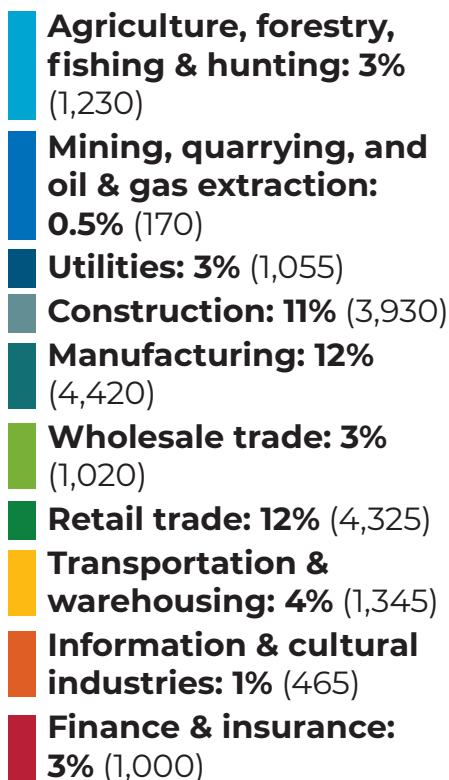
# Population by education level\*

Total count: 75,905



# Occupations by industry sector\*

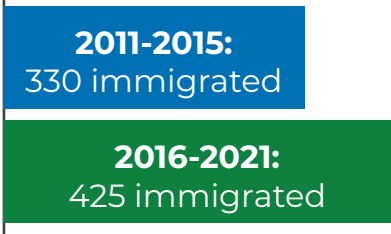
Total count: 36,915



\*Statistics Canada (2021 Census). Percentages have been rounded.

# Immigration in Northumberland

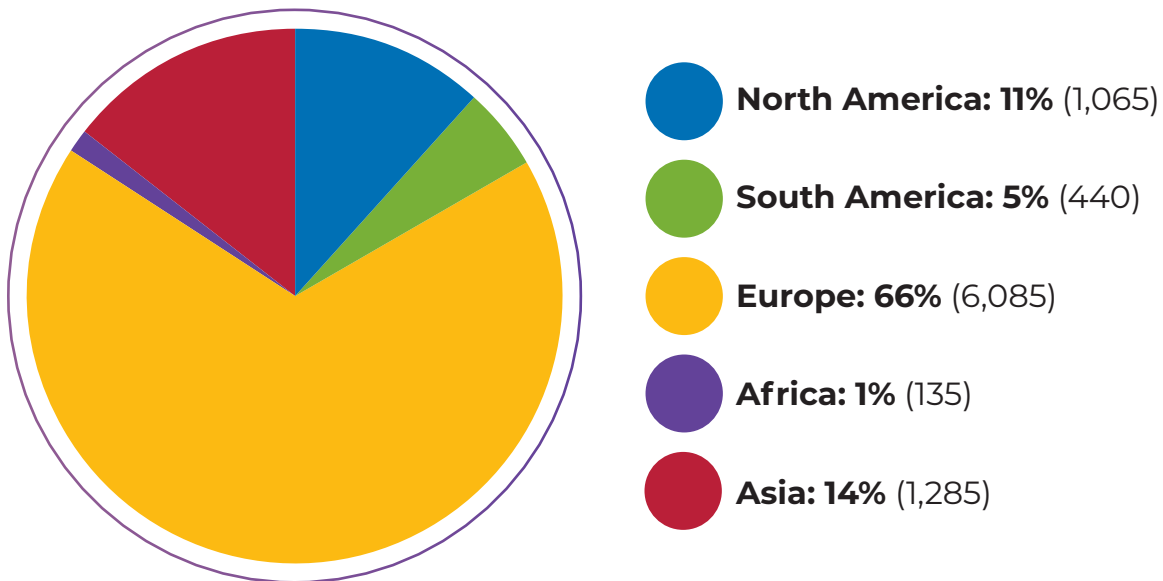
**11%**  
of population born  
outside of Canada



**77%**  
increase in new  
Canadians moving to  
Northumberland

## Place of birth

Total count: 9,265



## Language

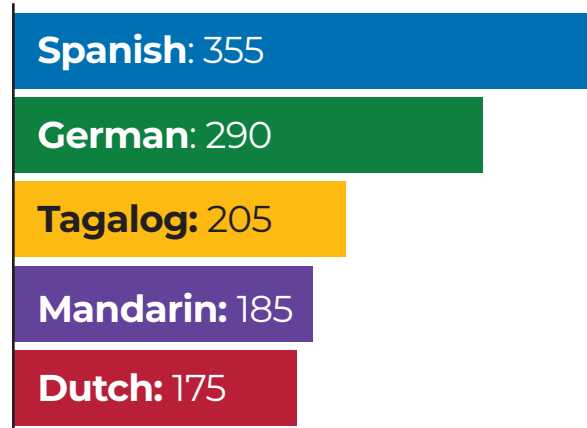
**94%**

of population  
knows English

**6%** Bilingual in both  
English & French

**0.2%** Do not speak  
English or French

## Top 5 non-official languages



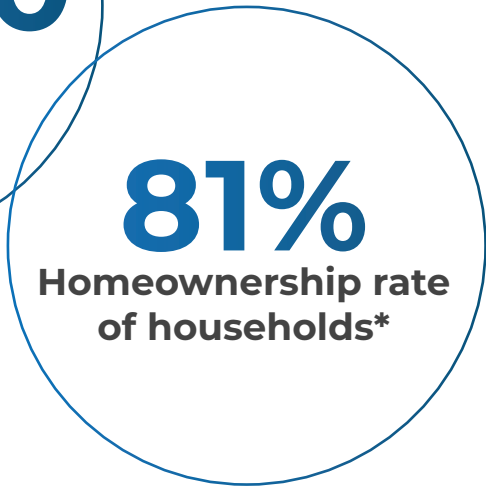
Data sourced from Statistics Canada (2021 Census). Percentages have been rounded.

# Housing in Northumberland



**\$771,134**

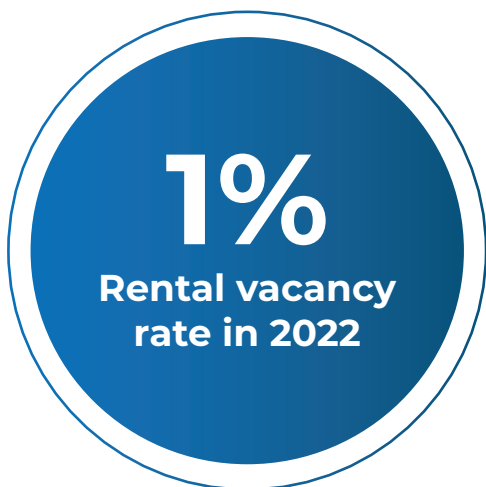
Average house resale price  
as of April 2023 (Sourced from  
NCHC's 2022 Annual Report)



**79%**  
of private dwellings are  
single-detached houses\*

---

## Renting a property in Northumberland\*\*



Estimated average rent

**\$1,574**

Average rent in fall 2022

**\$1,300** Average rent for 1-bedroom  
in west Northumberland communities

**\$1,563** Average rent for 2-bedroom  
in the Municipality of Port Hope

**\$1,840** Average rent for 3-bedroom+  
in the Municipality of Port Hope

\*Statistics Canada (2021 Census). \*\*Calculated using available data from CMHC, Oct. 2022)

# About the County

**At Northumberland County, our Vision is to bring together people, partnerships, and possibilities for a strong and vibrant Northumberland.**

As public servants, we take pride in applying our diverse subject matter expertise to the meaningful and challenging work of serving our community. We are dedicated to dismantling barriers and ensuring inclusive access to County programs and services. We lead the way in innovative solutions that address today's challenges and position Northumberland for a bright future.



**Our Mission is to be a best practices leader in county government, and a collaborative partner with our member municipalities and community partners.**

Open communication, community engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and representative governance are at the heart of our operations. Our cornerstone is collaboration, as we actively engage with member municipalities and community partners to:

- Achieve a high quality of life of residents.
- Encourage a thriving economy for local businesses.
- Develop memorable experiences for visitors; and
- Earn the trust and confidence of community members.

We strive to consistently deliver exceptional experiences for our valued community members. To do so, we are driven by our values of:

- **Accountability**
- **Care & Support**
- **Collaboration & Communication**
- **Honesty & Integrity**
- **Innovation & Excellence**
- **Mutual Trust & respect**

We believe in the profound impact we can each have in generating positive outcomes for our community by building connection, understanding, and trust through our every interaction. Our unwavering commitment is to foster a thriving Northumberland, now and for future generations.



# Meet the 2022-2026 County Council



Municipality of  
Trent Hills Mayor  
Bob Crate



Township of Alwick/  
Haldimand Mayor  
John Logel



Municipality of  
Brighton Mayor  
Brian Ostrander



Municipality of  
Port Hope Mayor  
Olena Hankivsky



Town of Cobourg  
Mayor Lucas Cleveland



Township of Hamilton  
Mayor Scott Jibb



Township of Cramahe  
Mayor Mandy Martin

# Message from Northumberland County Council

The process of building a strong and vibrant community is never finished. Today, Northumberland County is a place where seniors, youth, families, newcomers, entrepreneurs, and professionals choose to live and prosper, innovate and work, explore and unwind. As our community grows, the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan outlines how we will build on this thriving present and our rich past, to cultivate an even brighter tomorrow.

A silver lining resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is the reminder of an enduring truth: we are stronger together. This strategic plan is a testament to this fact. It is a roadmap, developed based on a broad collaborative strategic planning process, for how we will navigate significant transformational change over the next four years and beyond, together.

From April through June 2023, Northumberland County connected with residents, including seniors, youth, and families, First Nation partners, elected officials and municipal staff. We also sought feedback from community development stakeholders representing sectors including manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, business, housing development, workforce development, social services, education and training, non-profit, and the faith community. By attending meetings and roundtable events, participating in community conversation pop-ups, and completing questionnaires and ideas board activities, you helped to establish a plan rooted in authentic shared priorities for the future of Northumberland.

During this collaborative process, you told us that we need to build on Northumberland's strong foundation to drive continued municipal government efficiency and exceptional service delivery. As the community emerges from COVID-19, we need to renew our economy, and invest in vital infrastructure from roads and bridges to rural broadband internet. Our community requires more affordable housing and increased local access to health and well-being services. And we must continue to take proactive steps to safeguard our natural environment.

With your guidance, County Council and staff have developed the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan.



Specific action items will advance this plan and are tied to the following pillars:

- **Innovate for Service Excellence**
- **Ignite Economic Prosperity**
- **Foster a Thriving Community**
- **Propel Sustainable Growth**
- **Champion a Vibrant Future**

As an innovative, forward-thinking municipality, Northumberland County is committed to delivering on the priorities set out in this plan; bringing together people, partnerships, and possibilities to confront challenges and seize opportunities to grow in a dynamic and sustainable way. This plan embraces a shared vision for the future of our community. We look forward to working with you to bring this vision to life.

*Northumberland County Council*



# Planning for our future

Northumberland County is on the cusp of transformational change. Set to grow to over 122,000 residents by 2051, the intersection of critical requirements related to workforce development, housing, transportation, health, and broadband connectivity reveals a clear overarching mandate for our organization:

## **To guide this growth with intention.**

In the face of both opportunities and challenges arising from this anticipated growth, this strategic plan will be the County's principal guidance document. It will inform how we shape our community in alignment with the County's mission, vision and values, Council's direction, and shared community priorities.



# About this plan

In developing the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan, Northumberland County encouraged broad participation in a collaborative process. The purpose of this process was to establish a shared vision for Northumberland's future. In addition, we identified goals and actions to achieve in pursuit of this vision, to guide intentional growth for our community.

## How we engaged

Engaging residents, businesses, and community partners in this important work was vital to build a strategic plan that best reflects community needs and expectations.

Over a three-month period, from April through June 2023, the County directly engaged over 900 people from across Northumberland in the following ways:

- **281** individuals shared their input through online and hard copy community questionnaires and ideas boards.
- **140** individuals from businesses, community partner agencies, families, youth, staff members, and County councillors shared their input through focus groups, facilitated discussions, and one-on-one interviews.
- **Over 500** individuals shared their input through in-person community conversation 'pop-ups' at six locations across Northumberland.

## Other sources of insight

In addition to feedback gathered through this consultation process, community consultation through other key initiatives also informed development of the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan, including:

- Ontario Health Team of Northumberland 2022-2026 Strategic Plan
- Northumberland County 2023 Budget Consultation
- Northumberland County Official Plan Update
- Northumberland County 2022 Emergency Shelter System Review
- Northumberland County Transportation and Cycling Master Plans



# Principal Direction for this plan

The Community Strategic Plan Principal Direction is a shared vision for the future of Northumberland, based on a consolidation of feedback gathered through this process:

**Northumberland is recognized as a vibrant and connected twenty-first century county. We embrace innovation, respect our natural environment, celebrate diversity, and care for one another. Together, we are shaping an inclusive, prosperous, and thriving community for all.**

## Strategic pillars

Five strategic pillars will underpin the important work required to actively pursue this vision. These pillars reflect the key themes that emerged through the strategic planning process. Together, they chart our course for the path that lies ahead. They provide a framework to direct planning and decision-making over the next four years and beyond. These are:



**Innovate  
for Service  
Excellence**



**Ignite  
Economic  
Opportunity**



**Foster a  
Thriving  
Community**



**Propel  
Sustainable  
Growth**



**Champion  
a Vibrant  
Future**

## Putting pillars into action

Each pillar includes:

**A direction:** A vision of what the ideal state looks like for our operations.

**Guiding principles:** Derived from this vision.

**Goals and actions:** What we aim to achieve in pursuit of this vision.

Goals and actions tied to each pillar have been defined based on broad input, and careful consideration of what will be required to guide and accommodate community growth for a thriving and prosperous twenty-first century Northumberland.

# How we will use this plan

The Community Strategic Plan outlines our key commitments and priorities for the next four years. As we move forward, this plan, along with our existing master plans and strategies, will provide a framework to inform our strategies, actions, resources and decision-making.

## Master plans & long-term strategies

Five to ten-year outlook

Advance long-term vision for community

## Strategic Plan

Four-year outlook

Define strategic commitments and goals for council term

## Annual Report & Business Plans

One-year outlook

Put the goals into action, and report on and measure progress





# Pillar 1: Innovate for Service Excellence

## Direction

We embrace a culture of innovation. We pursue partnerships, integrate technology, attract and develop top talent, and use data to inform decision-making, to deliver the impactful services our residents need today, and ensure readiness for those that will be needed tomorrow.

## Guiding principles

- Northumberland County is a strategic, fiscally responsible municipality focused on meeting the needs of a growing community while maintaining affordability for taxpayers.
- Close working relationships with member municipalities enables coordination of services and resources for efficient delivery of services to residents.
- Where technology adds value to service delivery, it is adopted in a deliberative and swift manner.
- Data is managed and used effectively to design and deliver impactful public services and drive innovation.
- Communication is research-informed, timely, targeted, results-focused, and rooted in inclusivity.
- Community members are empowered to participate in municipal decision-making and service design in ways that are meaningful to them.
- County staffing models ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet identified needs, and employees are equipped with the skills and technology to deliver exceptional service.





# Goals & actions

## Expand municipal collaboration

- Expand voluntary shared services between the County and member municipalities to enhance efficiency between levels of government – reducing costs, increasing capacity, and improving services for residents.
- Strengthen collaborative strategic planning between Northumberland municipalities to improve resident engagement and clarify the services and value delivered by local municipal governments.

## Integrate leading-edge technologies

- Seek out and introduce leading-edge technologies to reduce costs, improve County services and create better resident experiences.
- Design an Open Government Framework that maximizes digital and data resources for efficient and effective service delivery, and reinforces the County's transparency and accountability.

## Enhance strategic financial management

- Implement best practice models for municipal strategic financial planning and investment, including a multi-year budgeting process and development of public-private sector partnerships.

## Develop talent

- Implement policies and practices to ensure the County is an inclusive and equity-based employer of choice, where employees feel empowered to deliver exceptional service.
- Implement the Northumberland County People Plan to guide actions and investments for recruitment and retention of County staff and development of key competencies, positioning the organization to effectively guide community growth and innovation.

## Strengthen communications and engagement

- Develop and implement a Communications Master Plan that supports inclusive and effective public services and trust in municipal government by fostering a community that is informed about County services, and engaged in shaping municipal priorities, policies, and programs.





# Pillar 2: Ignite Economic Opportunity

## Direction

We ignite economic innovation, resilience, and prosperity by positioning the infrastructure and services businesses need to thrive.

## Guiding principles

- Northumberland strives to be an Intelligent Community, pursuing vision-driven, community-focused, technology-enabled solutions to address modern challenges and opportunities.
- Investments in infrastructure and services for retaining and growing innovation strengthen key economic sectors and contribute to a diversified economy.
- Northumberland is a destination of choice for talent and knowledge-based business.
- Digital service delivery and innovation grows as residents and businesses increasingly access the internet via their choice of high-speed broadband providers.



## Goals & actions

### Expand connectivity

- Collaborate with private sector, federal and provincial partners to roll out fibre-to-the-home broadband infrastructure across Northumberland, ensuring every household and business has access to high-speed internet.

### Increase transportation capacity

- Support expanded access to local and regional public transportation networks to keep Northumberland on the move.

## Attract talent

- Lead innovative strategies to attract the talent that Northumberland's economy requires, particularly in key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, agriculture, and health care.
- Overcome barriers to workforce attraction by collaborating with public and private sector partners to develop workforce housing.

## Stimulate innovative business

- Foster a vibrant start-up economy by building on existing assets and services to support small business entrepreneurship, with focused programming targeting under-represented demographics such as women and youth.
- Leverage proximity to the Innovation Corridor in place-branding strategies to position the County as a preferred location for innovation-based businesses and emerging industries.





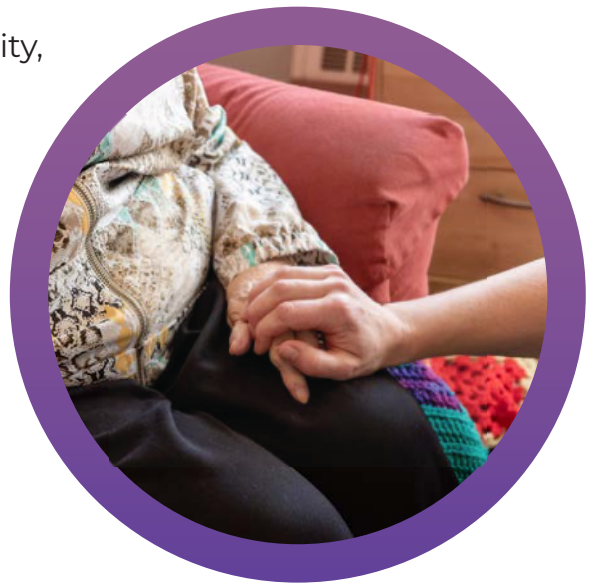
# Pillar 3: Foster a Thriving Community

## Direction

We foster a liveable, healthy, and inclusive community, where diversity is celebrated and people from all walks of life feel a sense of belonging.

## Guiding principles

- Northumberland County upholds human rights and is committed to dismantling barriers in the way of creating an inclusive and equitable workplace and community.
- Relationships between the County, Indigenous residents, and neighbouring First Nations communities are cultivated based on trust and collaboration.
- Residents of all ages and income levels have access to affordable, safe housing.
- Health care and community services are well connected, creating a coordinated, accessible system of supports for residents.
- Children and families have access to quality early years programming and child care.



## Goals & actions

### Foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization and community

- Demonstrate leadership in the development of strategies and commitment of resources to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, both organizationally and within the community.

## Advance Indigenous relations and reconciliation

- Establish and implement an organizational Indigenous relations and reconciliation action plan to guide meaningful engagement, cultural learning and understanding, and respectful action towards reconciliation with Indigenous communities.

## Enhance community health and well-being

- Collaborate with Ontario Health Team of Northumberland partners to advance health and well-being priorities for Northumberland, including improving access to primary and specialty care, improving access to mental health and addiction services, and supporting older adults to live well at home.
- Review the deployment of paramedic response resources throughout the county to ensure alignment with community growth trends, enabling sustainable rapid response to emergencies.
- Partner with health service providers to expand health promotion and illness prevention measures linked to social determinants of health, improving community wellness.

## Increase development of affordable housing

- Develop and implement policies, lead innovative partnerships, and make strategic investments to incentivize and accelerate the development of housing across a range of affordability.
- Leverage funding, financing, and partnerships to purchase land and directly deliver more affordable housing for the community.

## Expand pathways out of homelessness

- Implement findings from the 2022 Emergency Shelter System Review to better support vulnerable residents seeking pathways out of homelessness.
- Collaborate with health service partners to integrate mental health and drug addiction strategies and services with homelessness system services to further support life stabilization and improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.

## Expand services for children and families

- Increase child care spaces in priority neighbourhoods to support Northumberland families and enhance workforce development.





# Pillar 4: Propel Sustainable Growth

## Direction

We balance the benefits of development and intensification with preservation of our rural heritage, and lead in environmental stewardship, building complete communities that are resilient to climate change and create a high quality of life for all residents.

## Guiding principles

- Effective land use planning fosters complete communities, enhancing connections between people, places, and resources.
- Natural environments are conserved, enhanced, and connected.
- Northumberland's natural assets are a competitive advantage in growing the visitor economy.
- Infrastructure investments made today support long-term liveability and prosperity in Northumberland.
- The County plans for climate-related challenges and ensures the community is equipped to respond to weather events.
- Accessible and safe infrastructure for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit reduces reliance on personal vehicles, improving community health and environmental sustainability.

## Goals & actions

### Direct growth

- Finalize updates to the County Official Plan to guide growth and development in Northumberland in an intentional manner.
- Direct development and density to settlement areas to expand housing availability while preserving rural heritage through policies that conserve agricultural land and protect green infrastructure.

## Build and maintain infrastructure

- Collaborate with government and private sector partners to ensure growth is funded and managed in a way that is sustainable.
- Advance data-based asset management planning that balances infrastructure service levels and risk with sustainable investments to ensure a thriving, resilient future for Northumberland.
- Progress infrastructure projects to meet the needs of a growing community, including completing the Golden Plough Lodge & Northumberland County Archives and Museum facility along with a joint emergency services base in Brighton, and advancing plans for the new Trent River Crossing in Campbellford and a Consolidated County Public Works Yard.

## Expand active transportation network

- Continue embedding principles of active transportation into road and bridge design and construction, expanding the network of cycling and pedestrian walkways and multi-use trails within and between Northumberland municipalities.

## Grow a resilient, sustainable tourism sector

- Support revitalization of the tourism sector by marketing Northumberland's unique local nature- and culture-based experiences to capitalize on growing interest in wellness- and ecotourism.

## Respond to the climate crisis

- Reduce the carbon footprint of County operations through development of a Climate Action Plan.
- Coordinate public education campaigns and municipal emergency exercises to enhance preparedness for extreme weather events and other community emergencies.

## Manage waste responsibly

- Deliver public education campaigns and improvements to waste services to progress towards a target of 75% diversion of waste from landfill.
- Launch a municipal Environmental Assessment process to determine long-term solutions for waste disposal once the Brighton Landfill reaches capacity by approximately 2031.
- Support the province's vision for a circular economy by helping households transition to a producer-led recycling system by 2026.





# Pillar 5: Champion a Vibrant Future

## Direction

We proactively build strong relationships with other levels of government, municipal and community partners to address community needs and interests, influence policies, and advance municipal goals.

## Guiding principles

- Engaging in advocacy and strategic partnerships is vital to achieve workable solutions to opportunities and challenges facing the community that may be outside of the County's direct sphere of influence.
- Senior leadership actively engages with key influencers to build networks that drive new forms of value and advantage for the community.



## Goals & actions

### Intensify government relations

- Strengthen capacity for advocacy and government relations to advance community priorities.
- Join municipal networks in advocating to other levels of government:
  - For a new municipal funding framework that reduces reliance on property tax, developing a sustainable long-term funding model that supports improved delivery of community infrastructure and services.
  - On the importance of formally embedding direction on housing affordability into policy and updating funding models between levels of government to fully unlock municipalities' ability to do their part to solve the housing supply crisis.



- o For a coordinated system response to prevent, reduce, and end homelessness that incorporates the physical health, mental health and addiction wrap-around support services people need, in addition to the shelter and case management supports currently overseen by municipalities.
- o To tie social assistance rates to the rate of inflation and increase rates beyond 2018 levels to ensure recipients can meet basic needs in an environment of soaring cost of living.
- Advocate for corporate and public sector investments in regional transit options that connect Northumberland with neighbouring communities, powering economic development.
- Collaborate with Ontario Health Team of Northumberland partners to advocate and advance strategies for increased access to local primary care and community services for residents.



# How we will measure progress

We will regularly assess our progress in delivering the priorities outlined in the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan. This includes reporting on actions taken to achieve the stated goals and objectives, and on alignment of key outcomes with overall strategic direction. The following methods will be used to keep the community informed.



## Dashboard reporting

The County will make key performance data from across the organization available to the community through a public dashboard tool (to be launched in early 2024), updated quarterly.



## Annual reporting

The Northumberland County Annual Report publication will include key accomplishments from a given fiscal year, captured under the banner of each strategic pillar, with full financial results for the year included.



## Annual business plans

Each County department will submit to Council, as part of the annual budget process, a summary of key accomplishments under the plan for the year past, as well as a list of related objectives for the year ahead.

# Connect with us

Interested in learning more? Contact our office to speak with a member of our team. Want to stay tuned for updates on our services, programs and advancement of strategic priorities? Sign up for our email newsletters or follow us on social media for news updates from our team.

## Contact our office

 555 Courthouse Road, Cobourg

 905-372-3329 (toll-free: 1-800-354-7050)

 [Northumberland.ca](http://Northumberland.ca)

## Connect with County Council

 [Northumberland.ca/MeetYourCouncil](http://Northumberland.ca/MeetYourCouncil)

## Subscribe to our newsletters

 [Northumberland.ca/Subscribe](http://Northumberland.ca/Subscribe)

## Follow us on social media

 @NCounty

 @Nthld\_County

 @NorthumberlandCounty

 [Northumberland County](http://NorthumberlandCounty)



