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# 2021 Business Plan & Budget

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## Economic Development

### Prior Year Accomplishments

#### Economic Innovation & Prosperity

COVID 19 impacted every aspect of economic development activities within the department by transforming how we enact business.

- The department facilitated the creation of an Economic Recovery Task which was private sector driven and resulted in a series of recommendations which are being actively initiated
- The department in collaboration with IT initiated a broadband connectivity study conducted by the consulting group Nordicity to determine existing capacity and business models to support 1GB service throughout Northumberland.
- 2020 proved to be a year of significant change in the operation of the OAFVC as the facility strived to gain efficiencies and establish itself as not only a local but regional asset. During the year numerous new product developments took place along with relationships for clients with major grocery chain operators, an increase in our roster of clients as well as operational modifications and additions to strengthen our growing client demand. The OAFVC was utilized as a training facility in partnership with Loyalist College in the delivery of their Elevate Skills Training program. The OAFVC was also successful in obtaining Community Development funding to produce meals for those most in need.
- Continued the growth and development of immigration services within Northumberland supported by Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship funding has led to an increase in inquiries and business opportunities
- Business and Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland (BECN) continues to thrive and has adapted technologies to support small business growth and development
- Continued to expand programming significantly in the BECN to include youth engagement and unique offerings to drive entrepreneurship and self-employment.
- As part of the recommendations of the Economic Recovery Task Force and in partnership with community organizations and established lenders created an enhanced client granting program to provide funds to early entrepreneurs through a Digital Northumberland program which better prepares clients for utilizing e-commerce, social media and web-based activities to strength and grow their businesses



- Undertaken an extensive role in supporting new Canadian business opportunities by coordinating support services both internally and externally
- Worked collaboratively to extend services through the Chambers of Commerce resulting in increased entrepreneurial initiatives
- The Women Entrepreneurship Strategy funding in partnership with the Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEDC) has created programming and support to potentially 225 women lead start-ups in 5 different constituencies in Eastern Ontario
- Continued work to support the implementation of the County Official Plan
- In conjunction with Ontario East Economic Development Commission (OEEDC) investment opportunities have increased considerably
- Increased significantly the use of technology to support and measure tourism activity in Northumberland
- Canadian Experience Funding (\$340,000.00) secured in 2019 to enhance and upgrade Hastings Marina as part of attracting Foreign Direct Investment in the form of Leboat will be completed
- Supported the activities of the Community Employment Resource Partnership and the Workforce Development Board

### **Sustainable Infrastructure & Services**

- Supported and undertook an active role in shaping a collective framework for supportive services amongst the economic development partners in creating a one stop shop/ one door approach to enhanced economic development services county wide
- Leveraging existing funding for services such as business entrepreneurship and immigrant attraction to enhance services county wide
- Took on an active role in support of the Northumberland Digital Strategy as developed by the Director of IT resulting in the development of activities in support of Economic Development

### **Thriving & Inclusive Communities**

- Continue development of cross department partnership with Community and Social Services to provide employment service enhancement, Community Employment Resource Partnership (CERP) as a carryover from the previous year to coordinate activities amongst educators, employers and labour market support organizations, as well as integrating Food4All, United Way and related service groups with opportunities associated with OAFVC



- Continue to leverage and take an active role in supporting affordable/attainable housing initiatives

### **Sustainable Infrastructure & Services**

- Expansion of services related to enhanced settlement services opportunities, funding to support ethnic food growing and BECN services
- Community Employment Resource Partnership workforce development technology initiatives

### **Organizational Excellence**

- On-going dialogue to determine the needs of project based only human resources and the implications within a municipal structure
- In partnership with the Town of Cobourg a partnership to expand foreign direct investment and manufacturing attraction through enhanced human resource capacity

## **2021 Service Objectives & Initiatives**

### **Economic Innovation & Prosperity**

- Continue to re-vamp website to provide a single source resource for information, referral, relationship and coordination services – [proudlynorthumberland.ca/investnorthumberland.ca](http://proudlynorthumberland.ca/investnorthumberland.ca)
- Integrated Communication – utilizes print (collateral materials) and technology to support business attractors – [welcometonorthumberland.ca/investnorthumberland.ca/becn.ca](http://welcometonorthumberland.ca/investnorthumberland.ca/becn.ca) to leverage ease of access and rapidity of response
- Relationship building activities with educational partners Durham/Loyalist/Fleming, economic development organizations – (OEEDC, Economic Development Association of Canada, Economic Development Council of Ontario, Eastern Ontario Warden’s Caucus, Eastern Ontario Community Futures Development Corporation Network and Workforce Development Board.) Increase relationship opportunities with the food processing sector through participation with Food and Beverage Ontario, Ontario Co-op Association and related specialty food organizations



- Institutionalizing the relationship between Chambers/DBIA's/BACN and Northumberland media to enhance business retention and attraction with a focus to re-set next steps

### **Thriving & Inclusive Communities**

- Strengthened volunteer commitment and potential partnership development through service agencies, industry and the small business community as a result of BECN and Business Immigration

### **Organizational Excellence**

- Project based deployment of human resources based on skills and expertise
- Re-deployment of existing resources to fulfill specific needs based on project timelines

## **Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives**

### **Economic Innovation & Prosperity**

#### **Thriving and Inclusive Communities**

- Integrated economic development support system – providing timely information directed to matching opportunities
- Strengthen partnership opportunities specifically in the agricultural community to enhance “field to fork” concept of potential aspects of business development

#### **Sustainable Infrastructure & Services**

- Reliance on enhanced technology to support information flow, representation and capacity
- On-going relationship building between upper and lower tier functions to lend support to individual municipal requirements
- Partnerships– educational, manufacturing associations, federations of agriculture to integrate local employment and succession planning opportunities
- Relationship building



## **Organizational Excellence**

- Continue to attract the brightest and the best through innovative programs and unique program offerings and creative initiatives

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# 2021 Business Plan & Budget

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## Land Use Planning and Inspection Services

### Prior Year Accomplishments

#### Economic Innovation & Prosperity

- Initiated Northumberland Next: Official Plan update/municipal comprehensive review to manage growth, protect resources and support economic development over the next 30 years
- Finalized a Natural Heritage System Plan to preserve and enhance the natural environment
- Drafted plumbing backflow prevention program that was endorsed by Council
- Integrated changes to Provincial Plans and legislation into development/building processes
- Approved official plan amendments to support development activity in Alnwick/Haldimand, Brighton, and Cramahe
- Initiated new County Official plan amendment for Codrington rural settlement expansion

#### Sustainable Infrastructure & Services

- Continued to provide full planning and development services, including plumbing and sewage system inspections for all buildings and renovations in the County throughout the Covid-19 pandemic
- Enhanced inspection service options with virtual inspections
- Coordinated review of Provincial Growth Plan changes with member municipalities
- Analyzed building permit activity across Northumberland and prepared building activity summary report
- Continued technical working group of building experts to develop a backflow prevention program
- Improved use of City Reporter software for inspection scheduling and permitting
- Explored alternative technology solutions for electronic drawing review and e-permitting
- Advanced subdivision plans in Alnwick/Haldimand, Cramahe and Hamilton



- Continued to track and monitor population and growth through member municipal building permits
- Coordinated the review of legislative changes with member municipal planning officials.

### **Thriving & Inclusive Communities**

- Provided planning, development and building advice to member municipalities, residents and businesses

### **Organizational Excellence**

- Represented the County at online planning forums and events
- Hosted virtual workshops and seminars for member municipal planning staff and local planning professionals
- Advanced planning and inspection staff professional development through online training and continued education learning opportunities
- Hired a university student intern for a co-operative planning placement

## **2021 Service Objectives & Initiatives**

### **Economic Prosperity & Innovation**

- Advance majority of County Official Plan update/municipal comprehensive review in accordance with County land use need and Provincial requirements
- Continue to advance land use options to develop major employment areas for business and industry seeking to locate in Northumberland
- Update official plan to include new mapping and policies to implement the Council endorsed Natural Heritage System Plan
- Initiate agricultural assessment plan to protect viable farmland and support the local agricultural communities in Northumberland

### **Sustainable Growth**

- Investigate options to enhance building, plumbing and septic system inspections with member municipalities
- Finalize backflow prevention program and initiate service review for installation of backflow prevention devices
- Initiate a septic system re-inspection program



### **Thriving & Inclusive Communities**

- Increase engagement with member municipalities, Alderville First Nation, landowners and businesses on planning and development
- Advocate community interests on development activity within the County
- Represent and promote land use planning and inspection services at relevant events and forums
- Establish a planning advisory committee

### **Leadership in Change**

- Attend relevant professional planning workshops and educational events to keep informed of the latest trends and best practices in the planning and building professions
- Evaluate the need for additional resources to support land use planning and inspection services

## **Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives**

### **Economic Prosperity & Innovation**

- County Official Plan update
- Aggregate industry assessment
- Cultural heritage assessment

### **Sustainable Growth**

- Renew sewage service agreements with member municipalities

### **Thriving & Inclusive Communities**

- Effectively manage growth and development
- Protect and enhance the natural environment
- Advocate community interests

### **Leadership in Change**

- Formalize a planning and community development department
- Host Ontario County Planning Directors conference



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## 2021 Business Plan & Budget

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### Tourism Department

#### Prior Year Accomplishments

COVID-19 has had a significant financial impact on Northumberland's business community in 2020. The department focused on restarting the economy and working in collaboration with local, provincial and federal recovery plans to support local businesses.

#### Economic Prosperity & Innovation

In 2020 has seen the successful implementation of programs and initiatives to stimulate economic recovery and renewal.

- Applied and secured over \$240,000 in funding from federal and provincial grants to support new tourism economic recovery projects in 2020.
- Promoted tourism dependent businesses, developed story-telling features and packaged a collection of experiences to motivate visitors to explore further and connect with over 600 tourism operators.
- Assisted local businesses, supported 'shop local' municipal efforts and created a successful series of tourism recovery campaigns: "Pause", "Just Down the Road", "Your Backyard" and "Short Drive to Wellness" campaigns. Both digital campaigns and respective campaign microsites encouraged locals to support Northumberland businesses and targeted local and hyper-local markets. Campaigns integrated innovative programmatic marketing with social media ad buys resulting in high KPI.
- Launched *Digital Footprint 2020* program to enhance tourism operators digital marketing and improve competitiveness.
- Collaborated with BECN, RTO8, local chambers of Commerce and DBIA on the development of *Digital Northumberland 2020* pilot program to improve tourism-dependent small and medium businesses with their online presence and e-commerce tools. Secured FedDev and provincial funding to support the program.
- Created videos to communicate COVID-19 travel restrictions in Northumberland i.e. pausing travel and then reopening of businesses.
- Completion of the Food Tourism Landscape Assessment initiative, resulting in "Growing Food Tourism in Northumberland" report and the establishment of an industry lead Food Tourism Working Group to look into new opportunities.



- Partnered with the Culinary Tourism Alliance of Ontario on The Great Taste of Ontario Road Trip provincial campaign running in 2020-21, to incentivize regional visitors to explore and support Northumberland's culinary culture i.e. food and drink providers, as well as our cultural assets through a curated road trip linking featured producers with a series of curated travel ready road trips.
- Partner and developed cross-regional 2020 marketing campaigns including 2020 winter getaways & experiences, 15 best fall road trips and themed cycling routes.
- Coordinated over 40 photo/ video shoots around Northumberland focusing on experiences/scenic views, to include in Northumberland's visual assets library for future marketing and promotion.

## **Leadership in Change**

Provide leadership in mobilizing Northumberland's tourism stakeholders as we work together towards recovery.

- Created a COVID-19 resource website to assist tourism businesses navigate through the crisis and encourage dialogue with individual tourism operators. Listing resources to financial aid, health & safety guidelines, new developments, best practices and other recovery tools.
- Rallied industry to participate in 10 individual COVID 19 business impact surveys which provide feedback and real time data to various levels of government for decision making on industry recovery and relief plan.
- Collaborated with Tourism Industry Association on Ontario to advocate on behalf of our local tourism industry and businesses
- Pivot and focused on shop local campaigns and amplify municipal, DBIA and chamber of Commerce hyper-local campaigns.
- Participated in the *Northumberland Economic Recovery Task Force*, an industry-led initiative to support the community through the COVID-19 crisis and ignite recovery.
- Developed and launched the program *Digital Footprint 2020*, designed to help tourism businesses increase their digital marketing competitiveness. The initiative assessed over 73 businesses and their digital platforms, and provided recommendations and best practices. The highly successful program was implementing in partnership with Northumberland chambers of commerce.

## 2021 Service Objectives & Initiatives

### Economic Prosperity & Innovation

Our goal is to continue to develop cost-effective programs which will focus on attracting new visitors to the region and enhance tourism spending. Our initiatives will:

- Be supported by current research
- Be responsive to current economic conditions
- Be consumer demand driven
- Integrate technology to improve marketing
- Explore new partnerships to expand opportunities
- Be competitive

Therefore our 2021 opportunities will be:

- Tourism is a key economic driver for Northumberland. Therefore, we will seek and leverage opportunities which will grow tourism.
- Elevate the awareness of Northumberland County as a travel destination and increase tourism visitation by developing and collaborating on initiatives that drive visitors to explore Northumberland. Focus on Northumberland's uniqueness, authenticity of place and diversity of quality offerings: touring, food, culture, festivals & events, outdoor adventure, attractions and shopping experiences.
- Leverage our investment by collaborating with non-traditional partners and engage new communications outlets.
- Continue to partner with provincial partners such as Regional Tourism Organization 8, Destination Ontario, Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, Culinary Tourism Alliance, etc... to strengthen the competitiveness of the region's tourism industry.
- Collaborate with local chambers of commerce and municipal partners to deliver programs to help local businesses with consumer marketing and customer service e.g. Digital Northumberland 2021 - digital marketing competitiveness, offer professional development sessions designed to help businesses improve their consumer experiences and align service needs with the shifts in consumer interest and demand and improve communication.
- Collaborate with member municipalities to amplify their promotion of core tourism experiences and work with tourism partners to develop a common messaging of our regional product.



## **Sustainable Growth**

- Grow the outdoor recreation economy through trails, cycling, paddling and fishing.
- Support businesses transition to the online environment and continue to assist small businesses in developing their digital presence.
- Support industry's workforce development opportunities and increase their competitiveness

## **Leadership in Change**

- Grow food tourism and mobilize the industry around food tourism development initiatives, promoting industry action & support for food tourism growth; an industry collaborative effort which seeks to build capacity in the food tourism.
- Introduce and integrate new digital marketing tactics to grow new visitor engagement.

## **Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives**

### **Economic Prosperity & Innovation**

To continue to support initiatives which provide long-term growth for the tourism industry, especially since the road to recovery from COVID-19 may take several years. Here are our key strategic pillars:

- Continue to seek partnerships and opportunities to increase the economic impact of tourism.
- Increase collaboration: marketing and product/experience development regionally and provincially.
- Continue to develop relationships within the industry and improve industry capacity e.g. share research, product development, address gaps in service delivery.



### **Sustainable Growth**

- Support industry's workforce development opportunities and increase their competitiveness.

### **Leadership in Change**

- Support innovation. Increase the use of technology; utilizing new and innovative ways to reach consumers.