



IGNITING THE POTENTIAL IN YOU!

Shine On  YMCA
Northumberland

**YMCA Northumberland
Strategic Plan
2024-2030**

Land Acknowledgement

YMCA Northumberland is situated on land that is the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga and Chippewa Nations of the Anishinabek, known collectively as the Williams Treaties First Nations.

YMCA Northumberland is grateful for our relationship with the First Nations of this territory, for their teachings about the land, the water and all our connections. We continue our journey to strengthen our understanding of our Treaty relationship and of how to move forward in a positive way.

We acknowledge the contributions and accomplishments of all Indigenous people across this territory, current and throughout history.



Message From the Board Chair and CEO

YMCA Northumberland's Board consists of dedicated and passionate volunteers from across Northumberland County. It is our responsibility to ensure good governance and stewardship of the organization.

Strategic planning is a vital component of organizational success. It provides an opportunity for us to pause, reflect on the past, and plan for the future. In late 2019, after a period of organizational growth and with ambitious plans for the future, YMCA Northumberland's Board of Directors made a decision to embark on a strategic planning process which was completed in March 2020.

From the outset, the Board believed it was essential to gather input directly from our stakeholders. It was essential that our new strategic plan reflects and responds to the changing needs of our community.

To ensure that we had a comprehensive understanding of stakeholders' views, we engaged current and past members, program participants, staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and interested community members from across the region. We asked the tough questions and listened deeply.

Little did we know when we began the process what the next few years would hold. Many of YMCA Northumberland's operations came to a halt, and all of them eventually changed in one way or another. With the significant operational changes that our organization experienced, the Board of Directors engaged in a review of the current plan to determine its relevance. As part of the process, we undertook an analysis of the environment in which we operate. We assessed YMCA Northumberland's current state, the impacts of the pandemic, opportunities before us, and our aspirations for the future. From this, the Board and leadership team came together to review and update the strategic plan with key strategic directions that will guide our Association's work for the next six years – 2024 to 2030.

We are proud of our organization's resilience and success, and deeply grateful to everyone who took the time to share their ideas with us to help us understand the "community we want" and the "YMCA we need".



Elizabeth Vosburgh
Board Chair



Eunice Kirkpatrick
Chief Executive Officer

About YMCA Northumberland

One of the leading charities in Northumberland County, the YMCA has a long history of building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. For over 154 years, YMCA Northumberland has been delivering innovative programming and vital services that target the specific needs of the local communities we serve. YMCA Northumberland strives to respond to issues, trends, and opportunities with programs and services that will have a positive impact and promote health and wellbeing, while remaining accessible to all.

YMCA Northumberland is one of thirty-seven Member Associations across the country that constitute the Canadian YMCA Federation. Together, we share a common mandate to build healthy communities across Canada through the power of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging.

We are committed to strengthening the foundations of community; nurturing the potential of children, teens, and adults; promoting healthy living; fostering a sense of social responsibility; and delivering lasting social and personal change.

Our Mission, Vision, Values and Cause

Our Mission

YMCA Northumberland is dedicated to the growth of all people in spirit, mind, and body, and fostering a sense of responsibility to each other and the global community.

Our Vision

By 2030 the YMCA will be the leading charity fostering lifelong growth, health, development, and well-being, engaging 1 in 3 people in Northumberland.

Our Values

Honesty

Respect

Responsibility

Health

Caring

Inclusiveness

Our Cause

Igniting the potential and resilience in people wherever they are in their life journey through our programs, services, and spaces of belonging.

Overview of the Planning Process

YMCA Northumberland's Board of Directors launched the initial strategic planning process with the intention of creating a multi-year plan to guide our Association's work. The scope of the process was to identify strategic priorities and engage deeply with YMCA Northumberland's internal and external stakeholders. In order to effectively seek stakeholder input, ensure confidentiality of responses, and encourage all opinions and views, the board engaged the services of external consultants with considerable knowledge of both the charitable sector and the YMCA to facilitate the process. In doing so, the Board is ensuring that its strategic plan is informed by experience, evidence, and the community that the YMCA serves.

YMCA Northumberland invited the following stakeholder groups to participate in the engagement process:

- Current and past members, and service users
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Community partners
- Donors and funders
- Current and past board members
- Interested community members

More than 360 people took time to engage with YMCA Northumberland, including eighty-one focus group participants, six interview participants, and 274 respondents to an online engagement survey including input from the Board of Directors and leadership team.

The feedback shared by stakeholders demonstrated appreciation for YMCA Northumberland's role as a leader in the community and a desire for the organization to continue developing and growing to serve the community's needs.

Survey Respondents

"I love my YMCA! I love the connectivity we find here and believe the Y helps bring people together; equipping them to move toward community and wellness."

"The Y has improved its position as a leading charity over the past decade. I believe the Y delivers excellent fitness programming and has expanded their community-based programming, which sets the Y apart."

"The new mother's program was fantastic for me and my son. Really amazing program!"

The Board and leadership team considered the strategic issues, data, financial trends and the context and environment within which YMCA Northumberland is situated. We began to understand the “community we want” as a place where there are opportunities to engage with others in an inclusive, welcoming environment and feel a sense of belonging to a place that is nurturing and safe for children, youth and families, and a place that provides opportunities for personal growth and development.

Through facilitated discussions, presentations, and surveys, key issues were identified along with opportunities and challenges to be addressed in the new strategic plan that led our visionary roadmap designed to ignite potential and resilience in the lives of the people we serve.

Our Strategic Directions

YMCA Northumberland is committing to a six-year strategic plan from 2024-2030. The directions are bold, future-oriented, and this time frame will allow us to adapt and respond to changes over the coming years, and it will ensure that we put in place the necessary resources and processes to effectively implement the plan and achieve our desired outcomes.

The following four strategic directions offer a framework for the development of annual work plans with measurable goals and objectives. These annual plans will serve to operationalize the directions. As we work towards these goals, we remain committed to ongoing engagement with the community, transparency, and to sharing our results along the way.

These strategic directions will focus on the areas where effort and improvement can make the most difference to the community, ensuring that YMCA Northumberland will continue as a vital part of the region – now and in the future.

Over the next six years, your YMCA will pursue the following four strategic directions:

- 1. A Thriving Organization**
- 2. Strong Programs & Services**
- 3. A Vibrant Organizational Culture**
- 4. Resilient Partnerships & Relationship**

1. A Thriving Organization

For more than 154 years, the YMCA has been part of Northumberland County. Through good times and challenging times, YMCA Northumberland has exemplified resilience and adaptability, growing and evolving along with the needs of the community.

As we plan for the long-term, we will consider multi-faceted aspects that contribute to financial sustainability, such as revenue diversity, philanthropic stewardship, and capital projects. We will have the courage to ask the difficult questions and face challenging discussions head on, so that we continue to improve the sustainability of our organization .

Our sights are set firmly on the future and, as always, we will strive to bring *levity, life, and fun* into everything we do.

Our Commitments

Over the next six years, we commit to:

- Creating a philanthropic culture embraced by volunteers and staff that positions and values philanthropy as a key program and integral component of YMCA Northumberland as a charity serving the diverse needs and interests of our community.
- Fundraising & Philanthropic Stewardship by investing in our fundraising capacity to formalize our position and convey our impact as one of the top 5 charitable organizations and community leaders in Northumberland.
- Creating a philanthropic strategy that results in robust fundraising, planned giving, and bequest strategies equivalent to 5% of total revenues to support ongoing and future infrastructure and capital needs.
- Being open and resilient to embracing new opportunities while effectively managing change in response to emerging community needs and interests as a 'Centre of Community'.
- Revenue Diversity through investigating, evaluating, and implementing new and different revenue streams, such as alternate membership models and structures, grant opportunities, and alternate program funding structures.



2. Strong Programs & Services

YMCA Northumberland provides a wide range of programs and services. From children's services, camp and youth programs, volunteer and employment opportunities, health and fitness offerings, aquatics, charitable community events, global YMCA initiatives, and more, the Y serves people in all ages and stages of life.

Now, more than ever, we must be adaptive and evolve to meet our community's most pressing needs. We have an opportunity to anticipate interests and needs and even influence change, particularly for children, youth, and seniors in our region.

Through community engagement and a continued commitment to high-quality, inclusive, and accessible programming, we will ensure we remain relevant and responsive, and provide positive experiences for members, participants, and all who interact with us.

Our Commitments

Over the next six years, we commit to:

- **Membership:** Welcoming members in safe and accessible settings, and over time, growing our membership across all Health, Fitness and Aquatic facilities to 8,000 members by 2030.
- **Childcare:** Expanding and adapting our childcare offerings to meet the changing needs of parents and guardians in Northumberland County serving 1,200 children across 30 sites in Northumberland.
- **New Facility Development:** We will open a new YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatic centre in Campbellford in the Fall of 2024 in partnership with the Municipality of Trent Hills. We will engage with the Town of Cobourg to open a new Health, Fitness and Aquatic centre in Cobourg by the end of 2030. We will continue to investigate and confirm our direction and plans for YMCA programs and services in Brighton by 2030.
- **Emerging Needs:** Be aware of and assess emerging needs and interests in our community related to health and well-being, such as mental health and isolation, physical health, housing and food security, employment, and other social determinants of health and determine the role the YMCA can play in our communities.



3. A Vibrant Organizational Culture

Our staff and volunteers are core to the YMCA's operations, culture, and overall success. Through their dedication, we are able to pursue our mission and vision as an organization.

A healthy and productive workplace has staff and volunteers who are engaged, committed, and empowered. The YMCA provides a supportive environment to learn, grow, and develop – personally and professionally. Individuals who work or volunteer with the Y develop competence in leadership, communications, client service, and many other valuable and transferable skillsets.

YMCA Northumberland is proud to be a leading employer for individuals at all stages of their careers, with an intentional focus on attracting and retaining people with the skillsets and expertise to deliver excellent programs and services successfully and sustainably.

Our Commitments

Over the next six years, we commit to:

- **Equitable Practices:** We will implement the National YMCA “[Shine On](#)” program for staff and volunteers by July 2024, ensuring our diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion plans and policies are of a high-standard, and that they cascade throughout our organizational culture, practices, and service delivery.
- **Learning and Development:** We will empower and support staff and volunteers at all levels of the organization through training, professional development opportunities, peer mentoring, and up-to-date Human Resource policies and procedures in keeping with recognized YMCA standards and practices.
- **Satisfaction Surveys:** We will implement ongoing satisfaction surveys for staff, volunteers, and program participants .
- **Leader in Youth Engagement:** We will be the leading organization for youth engagement in Northumberland County by providing social programs, leadership development opportunities, and employment and volunteer opportunities that facilitate personal and professional growth within the YMCA and beyond.



4. Resilient Partnerships & Relationships

Relationships are foundational to our success. Furthermore, we believe that transparent, proactive communications are central to building meaningful relationships.

Through a strategic, long-term approach to our relationship-building and communications, we will expand the YMCA's impact throughout Northumberland. By actively engaging with a diverse range of organizations and stakeholders, we can uncover innovative opportunities for collaboration. By investing in our communications, we will more effectively engage members and the community, share our collective stories, and deepen our trust.

Our Commitments

Over the next six years, we commit to:

- **Government Relations:** Strengthening our relationships and collaboration with all levels of government: municipal, provincial, and federal. We will work with local governments to facilitate additional program and service partnerships.
- **Community, Education, and Business:** Collaborating with community organizations, education and training institutions, and local business and industry. We will seek to extend our impact by building reciprocal relationships and strategic partnerships.
- **Local & Global Initiatives:** Deepening our relationships and continuing to operate our unique community and mission- based programs, while ensuring ongoing sustainability. We will work with our Canadian YMCA partners to strive towards contributing 0.7% of revenues, in keeping with the UN Millennium Development Goals, to support the education and development of YMCA international programs and initiatives.
- **First Nations:** Learning from and nurturing our relationships with First Nations communities and organizations. In particular, we will take meaningful steps to further grow our relationship with Alderville First Nation, based on trust and genuine engagement by collaborating and hosting annual events that promote the "Calls to Action" in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report.



Enablers Required for Successful Implementation

Enablers are those resources, processes, tools, etc. that support the successful implementation of a strategic plan. .

Financial Resources

- **Diversified and Sustainable Financial Planning:** Ensuring proper planning and fiscal management to meet ongoing obligations and remain adaptable to environmental changes. This includes varied program revenue streams, philanthropic revenue, government grants and contracts, reserve and contingency planning, ongoing needs analysis, and maintenance of existing assets and infrastructure in “as new” condition.

People

- **Recruitment and Retention:** Developing strategies to recruit and retain skilled, dedicated staff and volunteers who will deliver the high-quality programs and services offered by the YMCA. We will focus recruitment on areas of high need such as childcare and aquatics and improve our onboarding processes for all new personnel.
- **Values-Based Culture:** Fostering a culture in which staff and volunteers, at all levels of the organization, “live the values” of the YMCA, thus supporting positive experiences for all participants and each other.

Communications & Marketing

- **Communications and Marketing:** Enhancing our communications practices by developing a comprehensive communications strategy and implementing proven and emergent tactics. Through this strategy, we will ensure that our stakeholders are engaged, informed, and aware of the YMCA as an important local charity and a charity of choice.
- **Service and Asset Mapping:** Undertaking a process to map our services and assets Health & Wellness, Education & Learning and Community Supports. Using data-informed decision making, we will better understand how participants interact with the YMCA, how to best use our current assets, and which services and assets are needed to support and enable growth.

Technology

- **Embracing Technology:** Increasing our accessibility, efficiency, and capacity by embracing technology to support all levels of our operations.

Next Steps

Our new strategic plan will guide our Association by providing a framework for decision-making and drive our progress as we continue to evolve and grow.

The four strategic directions will form the basis for annual operational planning, ensuring we meet our short- and long-term goals and objectives by developing appropriate key performance measures and targets, and implementing specific tactics to advance each area of focus.

The plan will be communicated internally, externally to our stakeholders, and to the broader community. Furthermore, we will report on our progress and successes on an ongoing basis, with results published annually.

Relationships Required to Achieve Success

- Government at all levels, Federal, Provincial and Municipal
- Current and potential donors
- Granting Agencies and Foundations
- Other Community Leaders

Conclusion

The Board of Directors is proud of all that YMCA Northumberland has accomplished. Through our new strategic plan, we will ensure that the individuals, families, and communities we serve remain at the heart of everything we do.

Our new strategic directions will allow us to remain flexible, yet focused, between now and 2030. We look forward to continuing our track record of success and reporting back on our progress over time.

We thank everyone who added their voice by contributing ideas, thoughts, and feedback. We appreciate your contributions, and we invite you to join us in this exciting next chapter of YMCA Northumberland's journey.

Together, we will continue to ignite the potential in people wherever they may be in their life journey through our programs and spaces of belonging.



Shine On

YMCA Northumberland
Strategic Plan 2024 – 2030

Igniting the Potential in You



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Northumberland*