



Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan

Connected communities.
Connected to you.

Table of Contents

[Letter from the Regional Chair and CAO](#)3

[The Regional Municipality of Durham’s Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation](#)4

[About Durham Region: A Community of Communities](#)5

[Engaging the Community to Develop Durham Region’s Strategic Plan](#)6

[About the Strategic Plan](#).....9

[Durham Region’s 2025-2035 Strategic Plan Overview](#) 10

[Community Vision](#) 11

[Strategic Directions, Pathways, and Foundation](#) 11

[The Foundation Supporting Plan Implementation](#)..... 17

[Regional Service Delivery](#)..... 19

[Corporate Mission Statement](#) 19

[Corporate Values](#) 19

[Implementation and Reporting](#) 20

[Contact Us](#)..... 21



Letter from the Regional Chair and CAO

Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan reflects a year-long conversation with community members and partners, exploring the landscape of Durham Region for the coming decade.

The result is an ambitious, aspirational, and comprehensive plan that demonstrates a shared vision of connected, caring, and welcoming communities that respect the natural environment and create prosperity for all.

Connected communities. Connected to you.

On behalf of Regional Council and staff, we thank the thousands of residents, community partners, business leaders and youth for their feedback throughout this process. The insights into the key challenges we are facing—and innovative strategies to create the future of Durham Region—helped to shape this Plan.

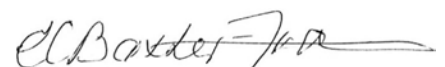
This 10-year Plan will act as a compass to advance the work of both Council and staff. The Plan sets out five Strategic Directions that will support our collective vision for Durham's future: Connected and Vibrant Communities; Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action; Healthy People, Caring Communities; Resilient Local Economies; and Strong Relationships.

Council and staff are committed to working together to serve the diverse and growing communities across Durham Region by providing equitable, sustainable and integrated services that improve people's lives. The Region will continue to update the community and share our progress toward the Strategic Directions and Pathways within The Plan.

We look forward to putting The Plan into action and invite you to join us as we continue to build a better Durham for all.



John Henry
Regional Chair
and CEO



Elaine Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative
Officer



The Regional Municipality of Durham's Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

We are grateful to the Indigenous Peoples who have long cared for the lands and waters on which Durham Region is located. We recognize and respect the rights of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg as the signatory Nations to the Williams Treaties of 1923. We recognize that the creation of written treaties was complex, and we also honour the histories and role of the Haudenosaunee and Wendat who have long had presence here.

Our intent is to speak the truth and act in reconciliation. We continue to learn from the harms of the past and move forward with humility in our relationships with each other, the land, the waters, and all living things.

We commit to building and strengthening respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities, in the true spirit of reciprocity and collaboration. We will take a co-ordinated and proactive approach to meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities to uplift cultural connection to the land, advance opportunities for ecological preservation and restoration, and support economic participation.

With the development and implementation of this Strategic Plan, we honour our commitments and responsibilities not only as treaty partners, but also as true collaborators in creating a connected and caring shared future for all generations—past, present, and those to come.



About Durham Region: A Community of Communities

Durham Region covers a diverse landscape that includes urban centres and rural communities, as well as vast natural spaces and agricultural lands. These are the lands and waters with which Indigenous Peoples have had a relationship of reciprocity since time immemorial. These lands are part of the treaty and traditional territories of Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

Durham Region borders the County of Simcoe to the north, the City of Kawartha Lakes and Northumberland County to the east, and the Region of York and City of Toronto to the west.

Within the Region of Durham there are eight area municipalities, including the Town of Ajax, Township of Brock, Municipality of Clarington, City of Oshawa, City of Pickering, Township of Scugog, Township of Uxbridge, and the Town of Whitby. Currently home to more than 750,000 residents, Durham Region continues to be one of the fastest growing communities in Canada.

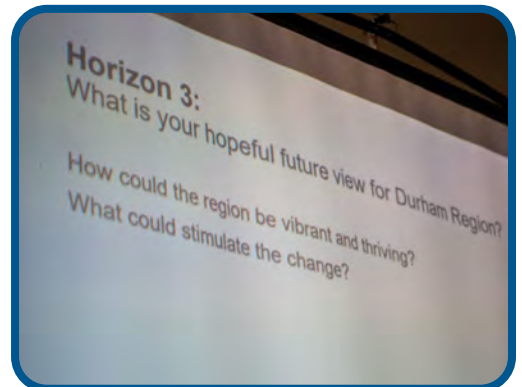
For more information, [read Durham Region's Profile on durham.ca](https://www.durham.ca/profile).

Engaging the Community to Develop Durham Region's Strategic Plan

In early 2024, the Region of Durham launched the engagement portion of the strategic planning process with the goal of reaching and receiving feedback from as many residents across the region as possible. Residents were asked to share their thoughts and ideas to help create Durham Region's Strategic Plan.

What We Did

- Invited the seven Williams Treaty First Nations to engage and participate in dialogue.
- Developed and launched a community survey.
- Shared the community survey and information with over 170 local community partners, service providers, and associations.
- Hosted 24 pop-up events throughout the region to support face-to-face conversations with residents, including various Indigenous community events.
- Promoted engagement opportunities through digital media, radio advertising, and digital signs across the region.
- Released over 24 social media posts encouraging residents to learn more about the project by visiting the website.
- Provided an information package to Indigenous community organizations, community partners and service providers, business associations, members of Regional Council, and Committees of Council.
- Delivered 13 presentations, including delegations to all eight local area municipalities.
- Distributed 700 flyers and 1,000 postcards in libraries, seniors' centres, welcome centres, community and recreation centres.
- Launched an art contest for elementary and secondary school students.
- Hosted four in-depth, focused Community Conversations, representing 47 organizations/groups.
- Engaged with Regional staff through workshops.



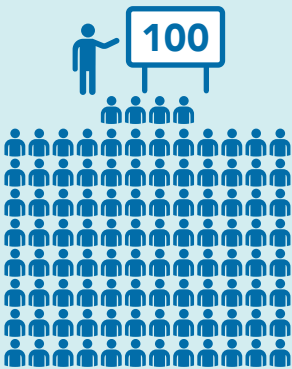
Engagement Results



Spoke with approximately 900 residents throughout the region.



Received over 8,400 website visits to the Your Durham page in March 2024.



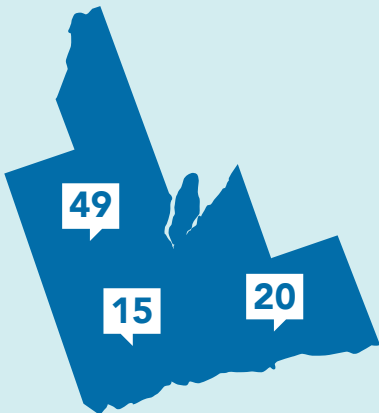
Presented to approximately 100 people in the community.



Received over 2,100 survey responses from the community.



Received 20 youth art contest submissions, where students shared their vision of Durham Region.



Engaged with 49 community partners, 15 business representatives and 20 youth leaders through the Community Conversations.



Received input from approximately 400 Regional staff.

What We Heard

- The community was invited to share their thoughts and ideas for the future of Durham Region and the feedback received informed the development of Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan. The full "What We Heard" report can be found on our website at durham.ca/StratPlan.
- In October 2024, the community was invited to review the draft Strategic Plan and provide comments through the Region's online engagement platform, Your Durham. In addition, the Region hosted three in-person community open houses for attendees to review the draft Strategic Plan, ask questions, and provide comments to staff. An additional session was conducted with staff from the local area municipalities to review the draft Strategic Plan and discuss areas of alignment.
- The draft Strategic Plan was revised based on the feedback received and presented to Council for endorsement in January 2025.



About the Strategic Plan

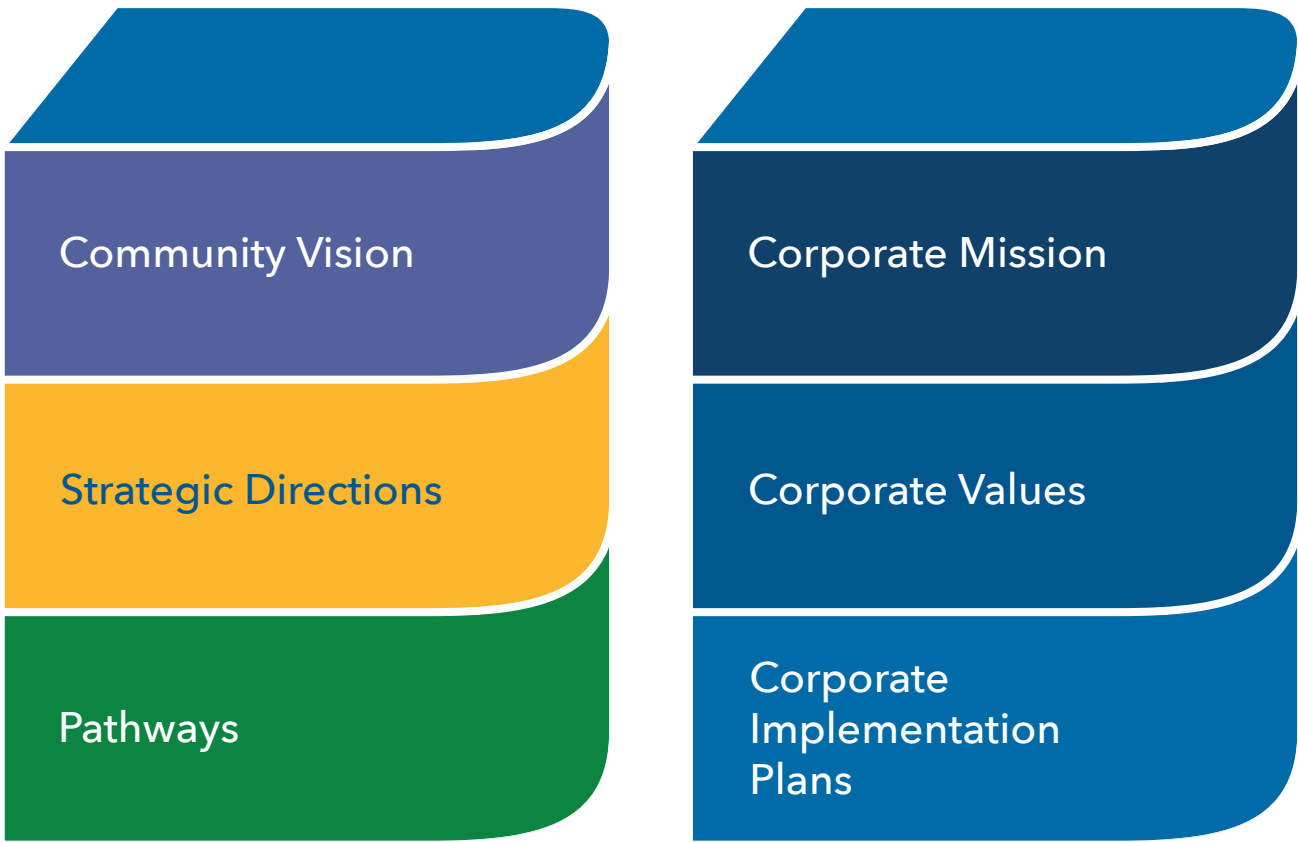
A Community-Informed Plan

Durham Region’s 2025-2035 Strategic Plan reflects what we heard from community members and is supported by staff expertise.

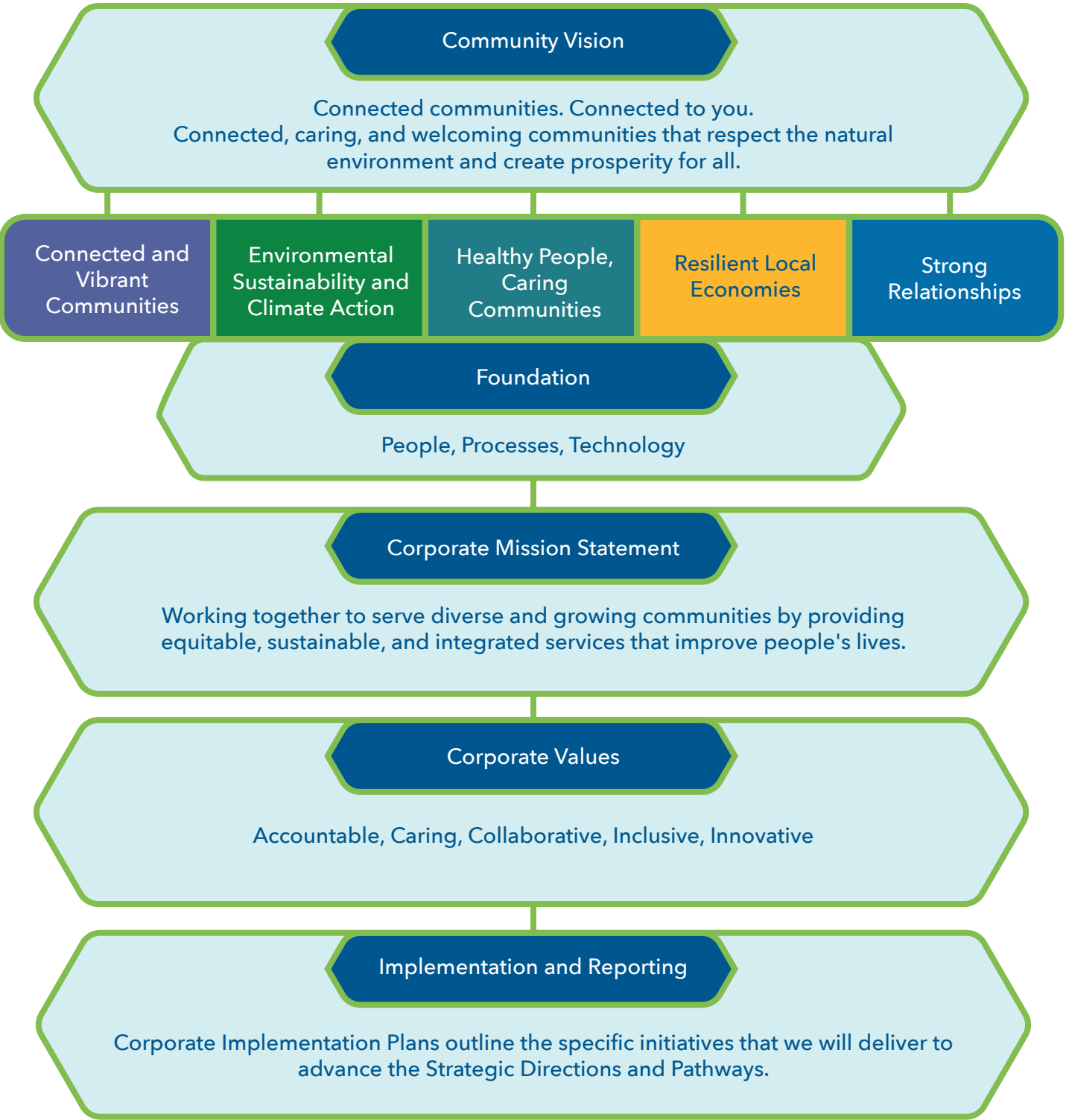
The Plan includes both community aspirations and complex social issues that often are not the sole responsibility of one organization or group, including the Region of Durham. Our role within the community, however, is to collaborate with others to address larger community opportunities and challenges.

The Vision, Strategic Directions, and Pathways are presented together to reflect a Community Vision for the future of Durham Region.

The Corporate Mission, Values, and Implementation Plans are presented together as the specific commitments the Region of Durham will make to advance the Strategic Directions and Pathways within Durham Region’s 2025-2035 Strategic Plan.



Durham Region’s 2025-2035 Strategic Plan Overview



Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan

Community Vision

Connected communities. Connected to you.

Connected, caring, and welcoming communities that respect the natural environment and create prosperity for all.

Strategic Directions, Pathways, and Foundation

To achieve the vision of “Connected communities. Connected to you.”, there are five Strategic Directions that will guide our work and act as a lens for decision-making over the next 10 years. Each Strategic Direction contains Pathways that outline the high-level areas of action that will move us toward achieving the Community Vision. Implementation of the Strategic Directions and Pathways is supported by the foundation of people, processes, and technology.



Connected and Vibrant Communities

Together, we will create connected and vibrant communities that take a proactive and responsible approach to growth and infrastructure. The physical spaces around us will be more connected and safe, to make people's days in Durham Region better. Durham Region will be more inclusive and welcoming, with an opportunity for all to find connection and community.

Pathways:

- C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.
- C2. Enable a full range of housing options, including housing that is affordable and close to transit.
- C3. Improve public transit system connectivity, reliability, and competitiveness.
- C4. Improve road safety, including the expansion and connection of active transportation networks to enhance the range of safe mobility options.
- C5. Improve digital connectivity and multi-channel access to information, resources, and service navigation.
- C6. Continue to revitalize and transform downtowns into hubs of economic, social, and cultural connection.
- C7. Create accessible, lively, and culturally welcoming public spaces, including opportunities to access nature.



Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

We recognize the unique natural environment in Durham Region and will continue to respect greenspaces, waterways, and agricultural lands. Together, we will transition to low-carbon solutions, sustainable living practices, and make the necessary adaptations to withstand the impacts of severe weather.

Pathways:

- E1. Reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions to meet established targets.
- E2. Collaborate with partners on the low-carbon transition to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions across Durham Region.
- E3. Prepare for and respond to severe weather impacts.
- E4. Lead the transition to sustainable living through waste management, diversion, and the circular economy.
- E5. Respect the natural environment, including greenspaces, waterways, and agricultural lands.



Healthy People, Caring Communities

Durham Region will offer programs and services that meet the needs of the growing and changing communities across the region. We will continue to promote health and well-being and are committed to caring for those who are most in need. We will strive to improve the quality of life for all residents in the region.

Pathways:

- H1. Implement preventive strategies to support community health, including food security.
- H2. Collaborate with partners to respond to complex social issues that improve community safety and well-being, including mental health and addictions.
- H3. Integrate and co-ordinate service delivery for positive life outcomes, including investments in poverty prevention, housing solutions, and homelessness supports.
- H4. Support the development of healthy children and youth, including access to affordable and quality child care.
- H5. Provide services for seniors and work with community partners to support aging in place.
- H6. Collaborate with partners to co-ordinate settlement supports for newcomers.
- H7. Prepare for and respond to local health emergencies in partnership with the community.



Resilient Local Economies

Durham Region will be a place of opportunity where people can gain new skills, grow, and prosper. We will continue to support current industries, including agriculture, and develop emerging economic sectors. Local business growth and tourism will continue to create a vibrant economy, highlighting the distinct cultural identities across the region.

Pathways:

- R1. Attract and retain quality employers that strengthen key economic sectors, including energy and technology.
- R2. Support the growth of new business startups and small to medium local businesses.
- R3. Develop, attract, and support a skilled and qualified workforce, including youth and newcomers.
- R4. Protect and strengthen the local agriculture sector and food supply chains.
- R5. Cultivate and promote local arts, culture, quality of place, and tourism that embrace urban excitement and country charm.



Strong Relationships

In Durham Region, people will feel engaged and involved in their communities. Through open collaboration, dialogue, and partnerships, we will build trust and work to advance the Community Vision for the future of Durham Region.

Pathways:

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities.
- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.
- S4. Advocate to the federal and provincial government and agencies to advance regional priorities.
- S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.



The Foundation Supporting Plan Implementation

Underpinning the Strategic Plan is a foundation that will support implementation.

People

Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent. We will implement a future-focused staffing strategy that supports the health, safety, wellness, and skill development of staff and will take actions toward improving diversity, equity, and inclusion outcomes.



Processes

Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs. We will improve data analytics and information sharing to support data-informed decision-making. Internal business processes will be enhanced to improve cross-functional issue monitoring and action. We will continue to modernize our budget and business planning processes.



Technology

Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery. We will modernize our internal systems and use new technology to improve customer experience, service delivery, and efficiency. We will proactively enhance key technology policies, including artificial intelligence and cyber risk management strategies, to ensure they keep pace with advancements in technology.



The Regional Municipality of Durham

Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan will act as a compass to advance our work over the next 10 years, for both Council and staff. The Strategic Plan will guide the Region of Durham by informing the scope of various long-range and annual Regional plans.



Regional Service Delivery

The Region of Durham provides programs and services that meet provincially mandated standards and serve community needs. We provide upper-tier municipal services across communities, such as transit, public health, regional roads, and water and sewer infrastructure.

For a full list of Regional services, please visit durham.ca/Durham101.

Through the Region's Mission and Values, we will work toward achieving the Community Vision. The Region will develop short-term corporate Implementation Plans to outline the specific initiatives that will advance the Strategic Directions and Pathways.

Corporate Mission Statement

Working together to serve diverse and growing communities by providing equitable, sustainable, and integrated services that improve people's lives.

Corporate Values

Through our actions, we will demonstrate that we are:

Accountable: We are accountable to community members and continue to build trust by demonstrating efficiency, transparency, and data-informed decision-making.

Caring: We are caring, compassionate, and thoughtful. We apply a client-centred and sustainable approach to serving community needs.

Collaborative: We are collaborative and recognize the importance of working together and engaging the community to achieve a shared vision for the future.

Inclusive: We are inclusive and work to ensure that everything we do is accessible, equitable, and fair. We aim to create a welcoming environment for all.

Innovative: We are innovative and adaptable to meet community needs. We modernize, continuously improve, and strive for excellence in all that we do.

Implementation and Reporting

Implementation

The Region will develop corporate Implementation Plans to outline the specific initiatives that we will deliver to advance the Strategic Directions and Pathways. The Implementation Plans will be aligned with the annual business planning and budget process.

Regional Reporting

The Region of Durham is committed to demonstrating our progress and communicating results throughout the life of the Plan. The Region will continue to update the community and share how we are advancing the Strategic Directions and Pathways within The Plan. We will continue to share our progress on the [community dashboard](#).





Contact Us

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