

**AGENDA FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF
THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RED ROCK
FOR THE 992nd REGULAR MEETING ON NOVEMBER 6th, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

1. Closed Session (6:30pm)
 - Item 1.1: Resolution to enter Closed Session, as authorized by the Municipal Act, 2001. Such paragraphs as set out in the minutes for the purpose of approval of the Closed Session minutes of the meeting held on October 16, 2023 (Item 1.3); and Paragraph 239(2)(b) (personal matters about an identifiable individual) regarding Item 1.4; and Paragraph 239(2)(f) (solicitor-client privilege) regarding Item 1.5; and Paragraph 239(2)(d) (labour relations and employee negotiations) regarding Item 1.6 RES
 - Item 1.2: Request/Receive Disclosures of Interest in Closed Session
 - Item 1.3: Minutes of the Closed Session portion of the regular Council Meeting held October 16, 2023 RES
 - Item 1.4: Report on Personnel Matters
 - Item 1.5: Report on Legal Matters
 - Item 1.6: Report on Employee Negotiations
 - Item 1.7: Resolution to Rise from Closed Session and Report in Open Session RES

2. Report from Closed Session

3. Preliminary Matters:
 - Item 3.1: Call to Order (7:00pm)
 - Item 3.2: Traditional Territory Acknowledgement & Moment of Silence
 - Item 3.3: Amendments to/Acceptance of Agenda RES
 - Item 3.4: Request/Receive Disclosures of Interest

4. Presentations or Deputations

5. Minutes of Previous Council Meeting(s)
 - Item 5.1: Minutes of the October 16, 2023 Council Meeting RES

6. Correspondence
 - Item 6.1: Resolutions from other Municipalities RES(2)
 - Item 6.2: Red Rock Legion Ladies Auxiliary – Christmas Cheer Fund RES
 - Item 6.3: Red Rock Volunteer Fire Department – Holiday Kick-Off Gala RES
 - Item 6.4: MMAH – Northern Treasurer’s Forum
 - Item 6.5: NOMA – September 27, 2023 Board Meeting Summary
 - Item 6.6: NOMA – Resolution for Support RES
 - Item 6.7: Ministry of Finance – 2023 OMPF 4th Quarter Allocation
 - Item 6.8: Ministry of Finance – 2024 OMPF Allocation
 - Item 6.9: News Release – Economic Development Opportunities in Red Rock
 - Item 6.10: TBDML – September 16, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes
 - Item 6.11: Northern Policy Institute – Homelessness, Mental Health & Substance Use
 - Item 6.12: SNEMS – 2023 3rd Quarter Levy

7. Reports from Committees, Boards or Agencies

8. Reports from Administration

Item 8.1: Report on Administrative Activity

RES

9. By-laws

10. New Business

11. Unfinished Business

12. Closed Session

13. Report from Closed Session

14. Confirming By-law (#2023-1342)

RES

15. Adjournment

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RED ROCK

991st REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

OCTOBER 16th, 2023

Present: Mayor: D. Robinson
Councillors: G. Muir
N. Gladun
C. Brand
M. Smith

Chief Administrative Officer: M. Figliomeni
Municipal Secretary: W. Odahl
Director of Operations: B. Westerman

ONE: CLOSED SESSION

1.1 Resolution to Close the Meeting

Resolution #1

Moved by: Councillor Brand
Seconded by: Councillor Gladun

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council move into Closed Session at 6:30pm under the authorities as printed in the Agenda.

CARRIED

Council entered Closed Session.

Mayor Robinson declared a conflict of interest on an item in Closed Session. She left the Council Chambers at 6:32pm and returned at 6:41pm.

Resolution #2

Moved by: Councillor Muir
Seconded by: Councillor Smith

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approves Closed Session Minutes of the October 2, 2023 Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

Resolution #3

Moved by: Councillor Smith
Seconded by: Councillor Gladun

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council rise from Closed Session at 6:46pm and report in Open Session.

CARRIED

The open session re-convened at 6:46pm.

TWO: REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

Council approved the Closed Session Minutes for the October 2nd Regular Meeting of Council in Closed Session. Council discussed acquisition and disposition of land in Closed Session.

THREE: PRELIMINARY MATTERS

3.1 Call to Order

Mayor Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

3.2 Traditional Territory Acknowledgement & Moment of Silence

Mayor Robinson read aloud the following land recognition and then proceeded in a moment of silence:

“Council of the Township of Red Rock hereby acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Robinson-Superior Treaty and that the land we gather on is home to the Red Rock Indian Band, the Anishnaabek and the Metis People.”

CARRIED

3.3 Ontario Public Library Week Proclamation

Resolution #4

Moved by: Councillor Muir
Seconded by: Councillor Gladun

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Red Rock proclaims October 15-21, 2023 as Ontario Public Library Week in the Township of Red Rock.

3.4 Acceptance of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with the following resolution:

Resolution #5

Moved by: Councillor Smith
Seconded by: Councillor Brand

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Agenda for this Meeting of Council, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

3.5 Disclosures of Interest

In response to Mayor Robinson’s request, no members disclosed interest in matters before Council this evening.

FOUR: PRESENTATIONS OR DEPUTATIONS

4.1 Shannon Jean & Kim Benson – She Shed Aesthetics & Spa

Shannon Jean and Kim Benson from She Shed Aesthetics & Spa presented their business plan before Council in hopes of finding a space for their new business venture. Council suggested the Curling Club lounge area in the Recreation Centre or the old CDO office located in the Municipal Building. Shannon and Kim were advised to reach out to Administration for a tour of available spaces.

4.2 FoodCycle Presentation

Jacob Hanlon from FoodCycle Science joined the meeting electronically to present the FoodCycler Pilot Program to Council. Jacob walked Council through the process of the program and the composting machines. Council directed Administration to conduct an online survey to gather interested participant numbers.

FIVE: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS

5.1 Minutes of the October 2, 2023 Meeting of Council

Council approved the Open Session Minutes for the October 2, 2023 Regular Meeting of Council with the following resolution:

Resolution #6

Moved by: Councillor Muir
Seconded by: Councillor Gladun

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approves the Open Session Minutes of the October 2, 2023 Regular Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

SIX: CORRESPONDENCE

6.1 MPP Catherine Fife – Support for Bill 21

Council motioned to pass a resolution in support of Bill 21.

Resolution #7

Moved by: Councillor Muir
Seconded by: Councillor Brand

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Red Rock supports Bill 21, Fixing Long-Term Care Amendment Act (Till Death Do Us Part), 2022.

CARRIED

6.2 Red Rock Public Library – Ontario Public Library Week Schedule

Council posed no questions or discussions on the correspondence.

SEVEN: REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, BOARDS OR AGENCIES

None

EIGHT: REPORTS FROM ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Report from Director of Operations

Council discussed the current lift station situation with the Director of Operations. It was noted that the existing issues should be resolved with the updates to the current lift stations scheduled to happen this fall.

Resolution #8

Moved by: Councillor Brand

Seconded by: Councillor Smith

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report from the Director of Operations be received.

CARRIED

8.2 Report from Fire Chief

Council asked questions relating to funding surrounding fire training centres and the Legacy process on grandfathering members with training requirements.

Resolution #9

Moved by: Councillor Muir

Seconded by: Councillor Smith

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report from the Fire Chief be received,

AND that Council regretfully accepts the resignation of Tyler Lafleur, and appoints Orion Addis to the Red Rock Volunteer Fire Department as a probationary firefighter.

CARRIED

8.3 Report on Administrative Activity

The CAO reviewed his report with Council. Council discussed an implementation of a new tree removal policy for trees on Township property. Administration was directed to have an Arborist come in to take another look at trees of concern.

Resolution #10

Moved by: Councillor Gladun

Seconded by: Councillor Smith

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report on Administrative Activity be received.

CARRIED

NINE: BY-LAWS

None

TEN: NEW BUSINESS

None

ELEVEN: UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

TWELVE: CLOSED SESSION

Council did not return to Closed Session.

THIRTEEN: REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

None

FOURTEEN: CONFIRMING BY-LAW

Resolution #11

Moved by: Councillor Muir

Seconded by: Councillor Smith

BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-law 2023-1341, to confirm the proceedings of this evening's meeting be passed as circulated.

CARRIED

FIFTEEN: ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Robinson reminded the public that the next meeting of Council will be held on Monday, November 6 at 7:00pm in the Marina Building.

With no further business to conduct, Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned at 8:11p.m.

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



**Corporation of the
Municipality of West Grey**

402813 Grey Road 4, RR 2 Durham, ON N0G 1R0
519 369 2200

October 23, 2023

Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister
MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca
Ministry Children, Community and Social Services
7th Flr, 438 University Ave
Toronto, ON, M5G 2K8

RE: Childcare availability in Ontario

Dear Minister Parsa,

Please be advised that at its meeting held on October 17, 2023, the council of the Municipality of West Grey considered the above-noted matter and passed Resolution No. R-231017-004 as follows:

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received from the Municipality of Bluewater respecting childcare availability, council directs staff to send a letter of support to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services with copies being sent to the Premier of Ontario and all Ontario municipalities."

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jamie Eckenswiller, AMP (he/him)
Director of Legislative Services/Clerk
Municipality of West Grey

Attachment: Municipality of Bluewater – Childcare availability in Ontario Resolution

Cc. Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Ontario municipalities

Municipality of *Bluewater*

October 2, 2023

The Honourable Lisa M. Thompson
Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)
408 Queen Street, P.O. Box 426
Blyth, ON N0M 1H0

Re: Childcare availability in Ontario

Dear Minister Thompson:

The Municipality of Bluewater is concerned about the critical issue of childcare availability in our province and how it is linked to educational requirements and low wages within the childcare sector. We believe that addressing these issues is crucial for the well-being of our families and the future prosperity of Bluewater and Ontario.

Childcare availability in Ontario has become an increasingly pressing problem for parents and guardians. Access to affordable, high-quality childcare is essential for families to balance work and family responsibilities, and it plays a vital role in supporting the early development and education of our children. However, the lack of available childcare spaces is a significant barrier for many parents, limiting their ability to participate fully in the workforce and achieve financial stability.

We suspect that one of the key factors contributing to the shortage of childcare spaces is the educational requirements imposed on childcare workers. While it is important to ensure the safety and well-being of children in childcare settings, the current educational requirements may be overly restrictive. These requirements often result in a shortage of qualified childcare providers, making it challenging to expand the availability of childcare services.

This year in the Municipality of Bluewater, we have childcare facilities and before and after school programs that have closed or have reduced capacity due to lack of qualified staffing. These recent closures and capacity issues have imposed a significant amount of stress on families in our community.

Additionally, low wages within the childcare sector are a significant concern. Many qualified and passionate individuals are discouraged from pursuing a career in childcare

due to the low wages and limited opportunities for professional growth. This low-wage structure not only makes it difficult to attract and retain skilled childcare educators but also affects the quality of care children receive. Investing in the professional development and fair compensation of early childcare educators is essential to ensure that our children receive the best care possible and the best start in life.

To address these issues and improve childcare availability in Ontario, the Municipality urges you to consider the following actions:

1. **Review and Reform Educational Requirements:** Work with relevant stakeholders to review and potentially revise the training methods of early childcare educators, striking a balance between safety and accessibility by increasing the praxis model to learning.
2. **Invest in Professional Development:** Advocate for increased investment in professional development opportunities for childcare workers to enhance their skills and qualifications.
3. **Increase Wages:** Support initiatives to increase the wages of childcare workers, ensuring that they are paid a fair and competitive salary for the vital work they do.
4. **Expand Funding:** Work to secure additional funding for the expansion of childcare services and facilities, especially in underserved and rural communities.
5. **Promote Public Awareness:** Raise public awareness about the importance of accessible and high-quality childcare services and the need for policy changes.

This is an urgent matter that is expected to worsen and your timely response to these concerns is needed.

By addressing these issues, we can make significant strides toward improving childcare availability in Bluewater and Ontario and ensuring that families have the support they need to thrive. We kindly request your timely support and advocacy on these matters and would be grateful for any updates or initiatives related to childcare reform in our province.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to your continued dedication to the well-being of Ontario's families and children.

Sincerely,



Mayor Paul Klopp for the
Council of the Municipality of Bluewater

cc: Premier Doug Ford
Ben Lobb, Huron-Bruce MP
Hon. Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
All Ontario Municipalities

PO Box 488
201 Atwood Avenue
Rainy River, ON
P0W 1L0



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Website: www.rainyriver.ca

Town of Rainy River

RESOLUTION

MOVED BY RBH DATE: October 10, 2023

SECONDED BY [Signature] RESOLUTION: 23-020

“WHEREAS the Corporation of the Town of Rainy River is a small community in Northwestern Ontario with limited financial resources;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Rainy River owns and operates the water treatment facilities, water distribution facilities, wastewater treatment facilities and wastewater collection facilities which service the residents of the Town of Rainy River;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Rainy River requires Class II Water Treatment Operators for its facilities;

AND WHEREAS the Corporation of the Town of Rainy River attempts to provide training as prescribed by the Province of Ontario to obtain the necessary classification(s);

AND WHEREAS the Town of Rainy River has been fortunate in obtaining a full staff compliment eager to take on the responsibilities of water treatment and distribution and wastewater collection and treatment operations;

AND WHEREAS any new employees of the Town of Rainy River require certification;

AND WHEREAS training is becoming increasingly difficult to procure;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has implemented stringent review of water treatment plants to ensure compliance;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario is promoting and providing an increased number of training opportunities for a variety of trades;

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Corporation of the Town of Rainy River petitions the Province of Ontario to expand water treatment training opportunities for communities within Ontario;

AND FURTHER the training be delivered in a method that is flexible and affordable;


AND FURTHER utilize existing networks, such as Contact North, for on-line exam preparation and exam supervision;

AND FURTHER the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Rainy River forward copies of this resolution to Premier Doug Ford, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks Andrea Khanjin, MPP Greg Rickford, Walkerton Clean Water Centre, Ontario Municipalities.”

ABSTAIN _____
AYES _____
NAYES _____

D. ARMSTRONG _____
D. EWALD _____
J. HAGARTY _____
B. HELGESON _____
N. IVALL _____
M. KREGER _____
G. PROST _____

CARRIED _____ ✓
DEFEATED _____


MAYOR OR ACTING MAYOR



October 23, 2023

Dear Organization or Business:

The Legion Ladies Auxiliary, Branch 226, is in charge of the local Christmas Cheer Fund. Each year we try to make Christmas a little bit brighter for the less fortunate in our community by supplying food vouchers to those in need.

Once again we are asking for your help in the way of a monetary donation for this worthwhile cause. We would appreciate having all donations by December 10th if possible.

Please make cheques payable to The Christmas Cheer Fund.

Mail cheques to Sandra Parker, Box 338, Red Rock.

Thank you for your continued support.

Happy Holidays,

Linda Sodergren

President, Legion Ladies Auxiliary



RED ROCK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



October 25, 2023

Dear Community Supporter,

As members of the Red Rock Volunteer Fire Department, we are dedicated to serving and protecting our community day and night. It is with great enthusiasm and a profound sense of responsibility that we reach out to you today. As a fundraising initiative we are hosting a "Holiday Kick-Off Gala" on November 25th at the local Royal Canadian Legion in Red Rock. This event will feature a comedian, live music, prizes, appetizers, dancing and refreshments. We hope to offer some great prizes to raffle and are asking organizations for donations to support this portion of the event.

Your donation can be in any one or more of the following forms:

- Physical merchandise or gift certificates for products and/or services
- Monetary donations

Our fire department has set a crucial fundraising goal of \$25,000, which will have a profound impact on our ability to continue providing exceptional service to our community. We have always believed in the importance of being prepared for any emergency, and we take immense pride in our mission of safeguarding lives and property.

The money we are fundraising will be used to enhance our firefighting capabilities, maintain and upgrade equipment, provide ongoing training to our dedicated team, and invest in community outreach programs. It is only with the support of generous donors like you that we can ensure the safety and well-being of our community members.

Your donation, no matter the amount, will contribute directly to the success of this fundraising campaign and, by extension, to the safety of our community.

To make a donation, you can do so in the following ways:

By Mail: Please make cheques payable to the Red Rock Fire Department and send it to P.O. Box 447, Red Rock, ON P0T 2P0

In Person: Feel free to visit the Municipal Office at 42 Salls St., Red Rock to make a contribution in person.

Your support will help us reach our financial goal and continue to serve the community with dedication and excellence. We sincerely hope that you can join us in our mission to protect and support the residents of Red Rock.

Thank you for considering our request. Your generosity will make a significant impact on our event as well as the safety and well-being of our community. If you have any questions or need further information, please don't hesitate to contact us at 807-886-2324 (please leave a message and someone will get back to you).

With immense gratitude for your support,

Stephanie Flanagan

Stephanie Flanagan
President, Red Rock Volunteer Fire Department Association





AGENDA

**MSO-North
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

13th Annual Northern Treasurer's Forum (Sudbury & Thunder Bay)

Wednesday, October 18th, 2023, from 1 pm to 4 pm, AND
Thursday, October 19th, 2023, from 9 am to 12 pm

JOIN US ON THE MICROSOFT TEAMS PLATFORM – LINK PROVIDED TO ALL REGISTRANTS

DAY 1	
Time	Activity
1:00 pm	Welcome and Opening Remarks <i>Speakers:</i> <i>Heather Nickerson (Senior Municipal Financial Advisor), Municipal Services Office - North (Thunder Bay), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing</i> <i>Bridget Schulte-Hostedde (Regional Director), Municipal Services Office - North, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing</i>
1:10 pm	Budget Panel Panel of municipal treasurers (with a focus on medium to small communities) discussing how to implement budgeting best practices with a view to getting the budget passed as early as possible. <i>Presenters:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dave Williamson (CAO) / Sheryl Wilkin (Treasurer), Town of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands• Stephanie Leveille (Treasurer), City of Temiskaming Shores• Chelsea Pateman (Deputy Treasurer), City of Dryden
2:10 pm	Break – Teams Platform to remain open for networking/discussion
2:20 pm	FIR Overview and Changes Municipal Finance Policy Branch (MFPB) to review the importance of the FIR, how it is used by government and introduce the changes affecting the 2023 FIR.

	<i>Presenter: Joanna Alpajaro (Municipal Finance and Accountability Specialist), Municipal Finance Policy Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing</i>
3:10 pm	<p>Online Property Tax Analysis (OPTA) – overview and introduction</p> <p>Discussion and introduction to OPTA and the various tools and training available.</p> <p><i>Presenters: Michelle Binstead (Senior Legislative Analyst) and Austin Schmied (Senior QA Analyst), Online Property Tax Analysis</i></p>
4:00 pm	<p>Wrap Up Day 1</p> <p><i>Speaker: Bryan Searle (Senior Municipal Financial Advisor), Municipal Services Office - North (Sudbury), MMAH</i></p>
DAY 2	
Time	Activity
8:45 am	<p>Morning Welcome Back</p> <p><i>Speaker: Heather Nickerson (Senior Municipal Financial Advisor) Municipal Services Office - North (Thunder Bay), MMAH</i></p>
9:00 am	<p>Municipal Property Assessment</p> <p>Discussion of assessment and tax effort impacts resulting from changing property values; next valuation cycle; planning for assessment fluctuation.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Peter Frise (Vice-President: Policy and Consulting Services), Municipal Tax Equity</i></p>
10:00 am	Break – Teams Platform to remain open for Networking/Discussion
10:15 am	<p>GST/HST Introductory Presentation for Municipalities</p> <p>This Presentation is intended for a wide range of municipal representatives including financial, administrators, managers and other decision makers within your municipality. It is designed as the beginning in a series of presentations - to help your team better manage your municipality's GST/HST, ensure you do not miss out on eligible claims, and to help avoid making mistakes going forward.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Michael Monk, GST/HST and Digital Compliance Directorate, Canada Revenue Agency</i></p>
11:00 am	<p>Legal Updates</p> <p>A session focused on highlights of recent court decisions and legislation that impact municipal finance matters.</p> <p><i>Presenter: John Pappas (Partner), Aird & Berlis</i></p>

11:30 am	<p>Effective use of the FIR for evidence-based financial management</p> <p>Using FIR for evidence-based financial management; discussion of using the various schedules in the FIR to make effective service delivery comparisons.</p> <p><i>Presenter: Colin MacDonald (Manager of Policy), Municipal Financial Officers' Association</i></p>
12:00 pm	<p>Transfer Payments Ontario (TPON) – tips and tricks</p> <p>Discussion of using TPON and entering and reviewing data.</p> <p><i>Presenters: Mallory Henderson (Senior Program Business Analyst) and Lia Nero (Systems/Grant Officer), Transfer Payment Ontario Client Care / Service Ontario</i></p>
12:30 pm	<p>Wrap up and Evaluation.</p> <p><i>Speaker: Bryan Searle (Senior Municipal Financial Advisor), Municipal Services Office - North (Sudbury), MMAH</i></p>



Representing the Districts of Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay

P.O. Box 10308, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8
www.noma.on.ca

p. 807 683 5662 e. admin@noma.on.ca

October 6, 2023

Attention: Mayor and Council

NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for September 27, 2023

Presentation & Discussion re Human Health Resources: Dr. Murchison et al. provided presentation. NOMA has been actively advocating for health care. There is a shift to Ontario Health Teams environment. A discussion occurred regarding NOSM and how it was meant to bring in Northern students who were meant to stay in the North, but it has shifted and those doctors are not always staying in the north. We need incentives for the north for recruitment and retention and do a better job to market the northwest. Need to review NOSM funding and Northern retention program as it is currently front loaded (40% upfront). Perhaps move to free tuition and put students in the north and should they leave require repayment. We need to address the consistent gap in human resources. Municipalities need to make it easy for new doctors to come into town by having a facility ready. Municipalities are pit against each other for the recruitment of doctors. We need long term strategy to get doctors here. Need to advocate MOH to change Nurse Practitioner funding. Discussion re locums and agency nurses and the issue of compensation and funding. An idea was presented to have a permanent base in NWO to have locums and contract nurses that move around the region where they are needed. Travel in the Winter is a deterrent for nurses and locums to come to the North. A discussion occurred to recruit NPI to write a paper to be provided to government at ROMA to look at a better healthcare model for NWO and looking at the rural care model in BC.

NOSM Resolution & Letter of Support: NOMA is meeting With Dr. Verma on October 19 to discuss NOSM. We will be including in our discussion that doctors were meant to be trained in the north, by people in the north in order to stay in the North. A review of the NOSM funding structure is needed. NOMA passed resolution 2023-08: Support NOSM funding to address the urgent need for health human resources in Northern Ontario and send a letter of support to government. ***NOMA asks Clerks and CAO's to share with Council and support.**

Briefing note to Northern Ontario Municipalities Association Board: Rick Dumas reported that Northwestern Ontario will experience great struggle in terms of health. ED will reach out to NPI to determine if they are able to write a paper on rural healthcare and look at the BC framework to see if it would be successful in our region. NOMA would bring this to government at ROMA 2024 in January. Rick will bring this forward to AMO through the Northern Caucus.

AMO Delegation Results: ED shared the main successes of the delegation meetings including the province will restore the 75% provincial and 25% municipal cost-share ratio for all cost-shared programs and will restore 100% funding for those programs identified as such in the public health budget for 2018-2019. Additionally, base funding for public health units will be increased by 1% annually for the next three years so that Ontario can prepare and plan with certainty. The province will provide funding for the municipal consultation process of crown lands. In this process, municipalities will be able to evaluate all crown land within municipal

borders in Northern Ontario to determine if they are eligible to be sold for development to increase the housing supply and expand their property tax base. NOMA asked the province to secure times around conference for virtually meetings, which they agreed was a good idea. We asked for an update on Railway consultation but were told it is still being worked on.

NOMA Board Proposed Meal Plan Policy Change: NOMA has amended its meal plan policy as follows: “Meal costs to a maximum of \$115 per 24 hours including \$25 for breakfast, \$35 for lunch and \$55 for dinner.”

Options for AMO Conference Reimbursement for Board Members: The 3 options were presented to the Board. A discussion occurred and option one was approved. This option revises the honorariums to include all board members. This option is an additional \$17,000 to NOMA budget annually, payable in April of each year in recognition of service over the preceding 12 months. Compensation for Executive VP’s and Board Members will be adjusted to reflect the number of board meetings attended and participating in email communications and meetings outside of NOMA Board. Board Meeting attendance will account for 60% (6 meetings at 10% each) and responding to emails and attending outside meetings will account for 40% (10% each quarter April-June, July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March). This is to be reviewed annually. The President and VP will retain their current honorariums of \$5000 & \$2000 respectively. Executive Vice Presidents will receive \$1,500 and Board Members will receive \$1,000.

SNOED 101 – Intern Enrolment: The NOMA Board approve the Strategic Plan Intern to be enrolled in SNOED 101 in January 2024 and her registration fee be paid.

Black Ash Tree ERO: It was determined that the ED will reach out to Ian Dunn at OFIA to determine what their comments will be for the ERO and if they perceive this as an issue. A comment was made that should this move forward as it is the policy would decimate Rainy River and Kenora region economics and forest industry. Lisa Teeple made note that Northwestern Ontario Municipalities and the agricultural sector in our region were not consulted.

Resolution for Strategic Plan Intern to attend meetings with ED: The Board approved the Strategic Plan Intern, Katia Borjas, to attend all meetings and events with the Executive Director, when appropriate, and all expenses be paid up to a maximum of \$5000 per calendar year.

Municipal Association/League Updates:

TBDML – Meeting last week in Dorion. They discussed their strategic Plan, the key needs in the district, and how to bring the messaging back to NOMA and Government.

KDMA – Fred Mota reported still concerns with doctors & crown land. They have a meeting on October 12th in Dryden to demine where the 2024 AGM will take place.

RRDMA – Doug Hartnell reported had they met last week and had a dismal turnout with only 25 people in attendance. Looking at having AGM on Jan 13, 2024.

Strategic Plan Report:

- The “Primer on Northwestern Ontario” and “Why visit Northwestern Ontario” are posted on the website and up-to-date as changes were made as a result of survey responses.
- Have discussed potential pillars to guide economic development plan. Will schedule an executive meeting to discuss further. Will discuss potential working groups.
- In the process of collecting asset management plans and information from municipalities. **Please sent AMP to Katia if have not already done so.**

- A dedicated "Climate Resilience" page has been posted on the NOMA website to showcase strategies for enhancing the region's resilience against climate challenges.
- Updated Funding/Grant opportunities on website.
- We have received 31 responses on Elected Officials and 12 on Administration survey to date. ***Please ensure you complete this survey if you have not done so already***

Executive Director Report:

- The media release regarding AMO Delegation Outcomes was shared with membership. We meet jointly with NOSDA and FONOM regarding NOSM funding, Employment Services, Contract Nurses, and our upcoming release of the next paper in the NPI series at the ROMA Conference.
- NOMA Board met with Minister Patty Hajdu to discuss Mental Health & Addictions, the issues brought forward at AMO, and housing challenges.
- Boreal Caribou Workshop changed date to October 18/19. Rick Dumas to attend.
- **It was determined that Victoria Inn will be the venue for the 2024 NOMA Conference and AGM that is to take place April 24-26.**

Notable Meetings Attended:

- Met with NPI to discuss economic development Plan for Northwestern Ontario.
- Met with Ontario Northland to obtain videos showing driver conditions.
- Boreal Caribou Science Plan Development
- MTO re: Provincial Towing oversight
- IESO – Long term RFP Community Engagement Information Session
- Northwestern Telecommunications Consultation meeting with NDP – discussed lack of reliable and affordable broadband and cell services, dead spots, and safety concerns, Star link as a potential solution for rural and remote areas.

Issue Tracker Updates:

OPP: OPP costs went up \$41 per household in Red Lake area. Kenora has gone up 7.5%. OPP costs are unsustainable. Kenora closed LCBO at 2pm on Sunday due to service calls to reduce impact on hospital.

Mining: Fred Reported Kinross Gold mine going in north of Red Lake and construction starts late next year. Lots of prospects happening as new lithium mine to come in as well. A comment made that when move operations underground they do not pay taxes. Rick and Fred replacing Mark Vermette on file.

NWMO: Next meeting is September 28th, 2023, in Toronto. Mayor Kahoot and Jason Young are going to Finland in November to view facility.

Railway: Kevin Holland has said the railway task force will be created soon.

NOSM: Physician/Nursing Recruitment: ED noted meeting with NOSM October 19 from 1-2pm. Last week Wendy B and Lisa Teeple attended Ontario Health Teams meeting. A note was made that we need to include in our discussion with NOSM to prioritize northern students even with lower marks than someone in the south as they are more likely to stay in the north.

Energy: There is an Energy Symposium in Toronto Nov 2-3. NOMA will be hosting a Northwestern Ontario 1 day energy symposium. A note was made to include a speaker on concerns over current and future supply. Enbridge can sponsor if requested by Oct 31.

The next NOMA Board meeting takes place November 22, 2023, in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Please note the following correction from the June 20 Board meeting summary: **The next Learning Morning is scheduled for December 6th from 9-11am NOT November 29th.**

Please contact me at any time if you wish to discuss any NOMA matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Strawson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

Andrea Strawson
Executive Director of NOMA
(807) 683-6662
admin@noma.on.ca



Representing the Districts of Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay

P.O. Box 10308, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8
www.noma.on.ca

p 807 683 5652 e. admin@noma.on.ca

Date: October 4, 2023

Resolution 2023-08: Support for sustainable funding to NOSM University to address the urgent need for health human resources in Northern Ontario.

Background:

On April 1, 2022, the Conservative Government proclaimed NOSM a standalone university, becoming Canada's only independent medical university.

Over 50% of NOSM University graduates choose family medicine as a career. Over 400,000 northerners receive primary and acute care from a NOSM University trained doctor. Many specialists have been created by NOSM University providing care closer to home and reducing the need for patients to travel south for decreasing the cost of the Northern Health Travel Grant.

A "distributed community engaged learning" model that places learners in 90 communities (135 organizations) across Northern Ontario throughout the academic year.

Northern Ontario remains in a health care crisis. More than 350 physicians are currently needed to fill shortages, and that is not accounting for anticipated retirements. Areas of the North that are still in dire need of health-care services are rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.

With expansion to the number of medical seats announced by the Ontario government in March and April 2022; NOSM University will be expanding to a total of 108 MD program seats; and will go from 60 postgraduate positions to 123 by 2028.

While the creation of NOSM University gives it autonomy to yield greater success in Northern physician recruitment and retention, the costs associated with becoming a university, undertaking an unprecedented expansion, and continuing to offer world-class community-based education are significant. The University's current base funding rates have not been increased sufficiently and cost reductions are no longer attainable or feasible.

Recommendation:

WHEREAS that the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) recognizes the urgent need for physicians in Northern Ontario as it is experiencing a shortage of trained physicians and specialist physicians;

AND WHEREAS life expectancy of Northern residents is more than two years lower than the Ontario average, and that mental health and addictions are at a 4X higher rate;

AND WHEREAS 1 in 8 Northern residents does not have access to a family doctor and many must travel long distances to access health-care services representing the failure of health care in Northern Ontario;

AND WHEREAS communities in Northern Ontario require access to equitable health care, especially underserved rural, Indigenous, and Francophone communities;

AND WHEREAS NOSM University's current base funding rates have not been increased sufficiently to accommodate growth and expansion;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT with the announcement of unprecedented medical expansion for NOSM University's medical programs, the NOMA strongly request that the Provincial government grant NOSM University's request for a permanent increase in annual base funding of \$4.0 million before the end of this fiscal year so it can continue to deliver on the mandate that was originally established by the Conservative Government in response to the needs of Northern municipalities.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT a copy of this motion be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, Minister of Health and Deputy Premier Sylvia Jones, Minister of Colleges and Universities Jill Dunlop, MPPs Greg Rickford, Vic Fedeli, George Pirie, Ross Romano, MPP Kevin Holland – Thunder Bay-Atikokan, MP Marcus Powlowski – Thunder Bay-Rainy River, MP Eric Melillo – Kenora, MPP Lise Vaugeois - Thunder Bay-Superior North, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Northern Ontario School of Medicine University (NOSM), Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association, the leaders of the opposition parties of Ontario, and all Clerks and CAOs of NOMA.

Moved By: Rick Dumas

Seconded By: Doug Hartnell

CARRIED



President

Ministry of Finance

Provincial-Local Finance Division

Frost Building North
95 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

Ministère des Finances

Division des relations provinciales
municipales en matière de finances

Édifce Frost Nord
95 rue Grosvenor
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7



October 23, 2023

Dear Treasurer/Clerk Treasurer:

I am pleased to inform you that the fourth quarterly payment of your 2023 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) allocation will be processed later this week. The payment will be made by electronic funds transfer and is in respect of the period October through December 2023.

Please find enclosed a *Payment Notice* providing details of your 2023 OMPF fourth quarter payment.

If you have any questions regarding the processing of this payment, please contact Alula Yimam at (437) 216-9863 or at alula.yimam@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Freeman".

Ian Freeman
Assistant Deputy Minister
Provincial-Local Finance Division

Enclosure

Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF)
2023 Fourth Quarter Payment Notice



Township of Red Rock

5841

A. Total 2023 OMPF (2023 Allocation Notice, Line A)			\$637,500
B. 2023 OMPF Quarterly Payments Schedule			\$637,500
1.	2023 OMPF First Quarter Payment	<i>Issued January 2023</i>	\$159,375
2.	2023 OMPF Second Quarter Payment	<i>Issued April 2023</i>	\$159,375
3.	2023 OMPF Third Quarter Payment	<i>Issued July 2023</i>	\$159,375
4.	2023 OMPF Fourth Quarter Payment	<i>Issued October 2023</i>	\$159,375
C. Payment Issued in October			\$159,375
1.	2023 OMPF Fourth Quarter Payment	<i>Issued October 2023</i>	\$159,375

Ministry of Finance
Provincial-Local Finance
Division
Frost Building North
95 Grosvenor Street
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Ministère des Finances
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October 20, 2023

Dear Treasurer/Clerk-Treasurer:

In the October 20 letter to Heads of Council, the Minister of Finance announced the 2024 Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) municipal allocations. This letter provides additional information regarding your municipality's 2024 OMPF allocation.

As noted in the Minister's letter to Heads of Council, for 2024, the Province is ensuring that municipalities receive a guaranteed level of support based on their 2023 OMPF allocation. The minimum level of support is enhanced for northern and rural municipalities with the most challenging fiscal circumstances. As a result, in recognition of your municipality's fiscal circumstances, your municipality will receive 100 per cent of its 2023 OMPF allocation.

2024 OMPF

For 2024, the government is maintaining the overall structure of the \$500 million OMPF, while ensuring that the program continues to be responsive to municipal circumstances. This means the core grant components of the program and Transitional Assistance will provide support as outlined below:

- The **Assessment Equalization Grant component** will provide \$149 million to support municipalities with limited property assessment.
- The **Rural Communities Grant component** will provide \$155 million in recognition of the challenges of rural municipalities, including rural farming communities.
- The **Northern Communities Grant component** will provide \$90 million in recognition of the challenges of northern municipalities.
- The **Northern and Rural Fiscal Circumstances Grant component** will provide \$94 million to support northern and rural municipalities with the more challenging fiscal circumstances.

- Consistent with prior years, **Transitional Assistance** will ensure that municipalities in northern Ontario receive at least 90 per cent of their 2023 OMPF allocation, and municipalities in southern Ontario receive at least 85 per cent. Municipalities in all regions of the province with the most challenging fiscal circumstances will continue to have their funding enhanced up to 100 per cent of the prior year's allocation.

Additional 2024 OMPF information is available in the following supporting materials.

2024 OMPF – SUPPORTING MATERIAL

To assist municipalities in understanding the OMPF and their individual 2024 allocations, the Ministry of Finance provides detailed and customized supporting documentation:

- A. 2024 OMPF Allocation Notice and Inserts
- B. 2024 OMPF Technical Guide
- C. Municipal Workbooks

A. 2024 OMPF Allocation Notice and Inserts

The *OMPF Allocation Notice and Inserts* outline individual municipal OMPF allocations by grant component, and also provide a summary of 2024 key data inputs. A municipality's 2024 funding allocation is noted on line A.

B. 2024 OMPF Technical Guide

The *2024 OMPF Technical Guide* provides information with respect to individual grant thresholds, parameters and data sources.

C. 2024 Municipal Workbooks

The *2024 OMPF Workbook* and the *2024 Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index (MFCI) Workbook* (if applicable) provide detailed calculations of the 2024 OMPF grant components, the determination of the Northern and Rural MFCI, and outline all underlying data elements.

These workbooks will be provided electronically to municipal treasurers and clerk-treasurers in the coming weeks.

The *2024 OMPF Technical Guide*, as well as individual municipal allocations, are also available electronically on the Ministry’s website:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/2024-ontario-municipal-partnership-fund>

2024 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The *2024 Cash Flow Notice* identifies your municipality’s quarterly payment schedule. Payments will be processed at the end of January, April, July, and October 2024. As outlined in the following section, OMPF payments are subject to holdback for municipalities that do not comply with applicable reporting requirements.

2024 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

As you know, OMPF payments are subject to compliance with the program’s reporting obligations.

Specifically, municipalities are required to submit Financial Information Returns (FIR) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and tax-rate bylaws through the Online Property Tax Analysis (OPTA) system or to MMAH as outlined in the following schedule:

2024 OMPF Reporting Obligations	2023 FIRs	By May 31, 2024
	2024 tax-rates	By August 31, 2024

Payments for municipalities that do not meet their 2024 reporting obligations will be subject to holdback, beginning with the 2024 fourth quarterly payment, until these documents have been filed.

If you require additional information regarding the OMPF, you may e-mail your inquiries and contact information to: info.ompf@ontario.ca.

In closing, we would like to thank you for your ongoing partnership. We look forward to continuing to work with you on the OMPF.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Freeman', written in a cursive style.

Ian Freeman
Assistant Deputy Minister
Provincial-Local Finance Division

c. Caspar Hall
Assistant Deputy Minister
Local Government Division
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Hannah Evans
Assistant Deputy Minister
Municipal Services Division
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

2024 Allocation Notice

Township of Red Rock

5841

The Township of Red Rock will receive \$637,500 through the OMPF in 2024, which is equivalent to \$1,356 per household.

A Total 2024 OMPF	\$637,500
--------------------------	------------------

1. Assessment Equalization Grant Component	\$295,900
2. Northern Communities Grant Component	\$112,400
3. Rural Communities Grant Component	\$62,100
4. Northern and Rural Fiscal Circumstances Grant Component	\$136,600
5. Transitional Assistance	\$30,500

B Key OMPF Data Inputs

1. Households	470
2. Total Weighted Assessment per Household	\$85,671
3. Rural and Small Community Measure (RSCM)	100.0%
4. Farm Area Measure (FAM)	n/a
5. Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index (MFCI)	9.7
6. 2024 Guaranteed Level of Support	100.0%
7. 2023 OMPF	\$637,500

Note: See line item descriptions on the following page.

2024 Allocation Notice

Township of Red Rock

5841

2024 OMPF Allocation Notice - Line Item Descriptions

A	Sum of 2024 OMPF grant components and Transitional Assistance, which are described in the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide. This document can be accessed at: https://www.ontario.ca/document/2024-ontario-municipal-partnership-fund/technical-guide .
A5	If applicable, reflects the amount of transitional support provided to assist the municipality in adjusting to year-over-year funding changes. See the enclosed Transitional Assistance Calculation Insert for further details.
B1	Based on the 2023 returned roll from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), including applicable updates.
B2	Refers to the total assessment for a municipality weighted by the tax ratio for each class of property (including payments in lieu of property taxes retained by the municipality) divided by the total number of households.
B3	Represents the proportion of a municipality's population residing in rural areas and/or small communities. For additional information, see the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide, Appendix A.
B4	Represents the percentage of a municipality's land area comprised of farm land. Additional details regarding the calculation of the Farm Area Measure are provided in the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide, Appendix B.
B5	Measures a municipality's fiscal circumstances relative to other northern and rural municipalities in the province, and ranges from 0 to 10. A lower MFCI corresponds to relatively positive fiscal circumstances, whereas a higher MFCI corresponds to more challenging fiscal circumstances. For additional information, see the enclosed MFCI Insert, and the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide, Appendix D.
B6	Represents the guaranteed level of support the municipality will receive through the 2024 OMPF. For additional information, see the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide.
B7	Line A of 2023 OMPF Allocation Notice.

Note: Grant components and Transitional Assistance are rounded up to multiples of \$100.

2024 Transitional Assistance Calculation Insert

Township of Red Rock

5841

A 2024 OMPF Transitional Assistance (Line B2 - Line B1, if positive)	\$30,500
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B Supporting Details

1. Sum of 2024 OMPF Grant Components (excluding Transitional Assistance)	\$607,000
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2. 2024 Guaranteed Support (Line B2a x Line B2b)	\$637,500
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a. 2023 OMPF	\$637,500
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b. 2024 Guaranteed Level of Support (Line C)	100.0%
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C 2024 Guaranteed Level of Support (Line C1 + Line C2)	100.0%
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1. 2024 OMPF Minimum Guarantee	90.0%
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2. Enhancement Based on Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index	10.0%
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Note: See line item descriptions on the following page.

2024 Transitional Assistance Calculation Insert

Township of Red Rock

5841

2024 Transitional Assistance Calculation Insert - Line Item Descriptions

A	Represents the total Transitional Assistance funding the municipality will receive through the 2024 OMPF.
B1	Sum of the following 2024 OMPF grant components: Assessment Equalization, Northern Communities, Rural Communities, and Northern and Rural Fiscal Circumstances Grant Components.
B2	Guaranteed amount of funding through the 2024 OMPF.
B2a	Line A of 2023 OMPF Allocation Notice.
B2b	Represents the guaranteed level of support the municipality will receive through the 2024 OMPF. For additional information, see the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide.
C1	Reflects the minimum level of support for northern municipalities through the 2024 OMPF.
C2	Reflects the enhancement to the minimum level of support based on the municipality's Northern and Rural MFCI.

Note: Grant components and Transitional Assistance are rounded up to multiples of \$100.

2024 Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index

Township of Red Rock

5841

A Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index (MFCI)	9.7
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The Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index (MFCI) measures a municipality's fiscal circumstances relative to other northern and rural municipalities in the province on a scale of 0 to 10. A lower MFCI corresponds to relatively positive fiscal circumstances, whereas a higher MFCI corresponds to more challenging fiscal circumstances.

The Northern and Rural MFCI is determined based on six indicators that are classified as either primary or secondary, to reflect their relative importance in determining a municipality's fiscal circumstances.

The table below provides a comparison of the indicator values for the Township to the median for northern and rural municipalities.

B Northern and Rural MFCI - Indicators

Primary Indicators	Township of Red Rock	Northern and Rural Median
1. Weighted Assessment per Household	\$85,671	\$290,000
2. Median Household Income	\$71,000	\$82,000
Secondary Indicators		
3. Average Annual Change in Assessment (New Construction)	-2.5%	1.2%
4. Employment Rate	48.0%	53.0%
5. Ratio of Working Age to Dependent Population	137.3%	152.0%
6. Per cent of Population Above Low-Income Threshold	86.0%	88.0%

Note: An indicator value that is higher than the median corresponds to relatively positive fiscal circumstances, while a value below the median corresponds to more challenging fiscal circumstances.

Additional details regarding the calculation of the Northern and Rural MFCI are provided in the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide, as well as in the customized 2024 Northern and Rural MFCI Workbook.

Note: See line item descriptions on the following page.

2024 Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index

Township of Red Rock

5841

2024 Northern and Rural Municipal Fiscal Circumstances Index - Line Item Descriptions

A	The municipality's 2024 Northern and Rural MFCI. Additional details are provided in the municipality's customized 2024 Northern and Rural MFCI Workbook.
B1	Refers to the total assessment for a municipality weighted by the tax ratio for each class of property (including payments in lieu of property taxes retained by the municipality) divided by the total number of households.
B2	Statistics Canada's measure of median income for all private households in 2020.
B3	Measures the five-year (2018 - 2023) average annual change in a municipality's assessment, for example, as a result of new construction or business property closures, excluding the impact of reassessment.
B4	Statistics Canada's measure of number of employed persons, divided by persons aged 15 and over.
B5	Statistics Canada's measure of working age population (aged 15 to 64), divided by youth (aged 14 and under) and senior population (aged 65 and over).
B6	Statistics Canada's measure of the population in private households above the low-income threshold for Ontario compared to the total population in private households.

**Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF)
2024 Cash Flow Notice**



Township of Red Rock

5841

A	Total 2024 OMPF (2024 Allocation Notice, Line A)	<i>See Note below</i>	\$637,500
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B	2024 OMPF Quarterly Payments Schedule		\$637,500
1.	2024 OMPF First Quarter Payment	<i>Scheduled for January 2024</i>	\$159,375
2.	2024 OMPF Second Quarter Payment	<i>Scheduled for April 2024</i>	\$159,375
3.	2024 OMPF Third Quarter Payment	<i>Scheduled for July 2024</i>	\$159,375
4.	2024 OMPF Fourth Quarter Payment	<i>Scheduled for October 2024</i>	\$159,375

Note: Your municipality's 2024 OMPF allocation is identified on Line A of your 2024 OMPF Allocation Notice. Please refer to the enclosed correspondence for further details.

Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF)
2024 Cash Flow Notice



Township of Red Rock

5841

2024 Cash Flow Notice - Line Item Descriptions

A	Total 2024 OMPF allocation. See 2024 OMPF Allocation Notice, Line A.
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B1 - B4	Scheduled quarterly payments in respect of the 2024 OMPF allocation. Fourth quarter payment will be subject to holdback pending submission of all 2024 and any outstanding OMPF reporting requirements. Please refer to the Reporting Obligations section of the 2024 OMPF Technical Guide.
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Ontario Strengthening Economic Development Opportunities in Red Rock

Posted on **October 26, 2023**

RED ROCK – The Ontario government is providing more than \$152,000 through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to three economic development projects in Red Rock. This investment will support community growth, improve municipal infrastructure, and foster career development in the Northwest.

"These supportive investments to Superior Country and the Township of Red Rock will help bolster existing processes and facilities," said Kevin Holland, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Northern Development, Greg Rickford. "It will also stimulate tourism and aid in sustainability to the region for years to come."

The NOHFC is funding the following projects:

- \$87,702 for the Township of Red Rock to upgrade the ice plant in the Red Rock Recreation Centre to ensure a safe and efficient arena ice-surfacing system
- \$35,000 for Superior Country – a destination marketing organization that promotes the North of Superior region as a tourism destination – to hire a Marketing Coordinator Intern
- \$29,541 for the Township of Red Rock to develop a 10-year Community Strategic Plan and Community Profile, which will serve as the guiding document regarding priority initiatives and provide information for investors, developers and industry.

"Through targeted NOHFC investments, our government is helping ensure the North remains competitive, innovative and current, and that northerners have just as many opportunities as anywhere else in Ontario," said Greg Rickford, Minister of Northern Development. "Today's funding is making that happen, while creating good jobs and bringing investment to the people and communities of Northern Ontario."

The NOHFC promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects—big and small, rural and urban—that stimulate growth, job creation and skills development. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more than \$717 million in 5,875 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$2.3 billion in investment and creating or sustaining over 9,260 jobs.

Quick Fact

- The Ontario government launched new and improved NOHFC programs that support more projects in rural northern communities and make it easier for more people and businesses to apply. The programs target existing and emerging markets, provide more

work opportunities for Indigenous people and address the skilled labour shortage in the North.

Additional Resources

- The NOHFC, Northern Development Offices and Small Business Enterprise Centres are available to support northern communities, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying economic development opportunities and assist in accessing government funding programs.
- The NOHFC's Community Enhancement Program builds strong and resilient northern communities through targeted investments in critical infrastructure.
- The NOHFC's People and Talent Program supports a wide variety of internships, including skilled trades, and addresses the unique needs of other in-demand jobs.

Quotes

"Superior Country would like to thank the Ontario government for providing funding for our Marketing Coordinator Intern position. Superior Country has over 190 members, which include businesses, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and not-for-profits in the North of Superior region. We work to promote the region as a world-class tourism destination. We are a small but devoted team, who have welcomed the support for this new position in our organization." – Dan Bevilacqua, Executive Director, Superior Country

"The Township of Red Rock would like to thank the Province of Ontario for assisting with funding for much needed upgrades to the Red Rock Recreation Centre ice plant. During 2022, the Township had to close the facility due to safety concerns. Upgrades will include the replacement of valves and sections of piping for the coolant delivery system to ensure the safe operation of the ice plant and provide ice for the arena. Work has begun and the Township is looking forward to welcoming residents and visitors back into the arena in the near future." – Darquise Robinson, Mayor, Township of Red Rock

Media Contacts

Curtis Lindsay, Minister's Office

437-240-7317

curtis.lindsay@ontario.ca

Media Desk, Communications Branch

mediadesk.ndm@ontario.ca



Thunder Bay District Municipal League

**Board Meeting
MINUTES
September 16, 2023**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:03PM

2. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION

Moved by: Mayor Mullins (Schreiber)

Seconded by: Mayor Malashewski (Terrace Bay)

THAT the agenda for the September 16th, 2023 meeting be approved as amended.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting: June 17th, 2023

MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Crane (O'Connor)

Seconded by: Councillor Pasqualino (Thunder Bay)

THAT the minutes of the previous board meeting held virtually on June 17th, 2023 be approved.

4. Deputation

None.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

Revisit ONE Investment – clarification required:

ED was directed to look into interest rates with CIBC directly vs. ONE Investment

District Tax Rate Increases

ED has reached out to municipalities for their tax rate increases. Still waiting to hear back from a number of municipalities. Will have a report prepared for October meeting.

6. Financial Matters

Current balance in bank account – \$16,830.17

Current balance in GIC – \$10,488.75

We have received all levies, one left to deposit (\$2,311.41). NOMA has received their portion (\$10,254.35)

Questions:

1. What was the plan initially for the money in the GIC?
Question was not answered during meeting
2. Is anyone familiar with Bruton Investment Group?
<https://www.nbfwm.ca/advisor/bruton-investment-group.html>
Question was not answered during meeting

7. Ongoing Business

Strategic Planning:

Our second session begins today following the board meeting!

Reeve Beatty and Dorion staff were acknowledged for their generous lunch and venue contribution for today's meeting.

8. New Business

- TBDML agenda items brought forward by the Township of Gillies by Consensus June 26, 2023 meeting

- 1) Update from NOMA re: virtual delegations with Ministers for small communities unable to attend large conferences?

Feedback from group was that this is a good idea; would be a matter of coordinating with the new ministers. AMO is at the end of the month (27th). NOMA could bring forward an MOU. ED directed to send memo to NOMA ED.

- 2) Lack of qualified Chief Building Officials in Northwestern Ontario. Suggestions for sharing, list of available CBOs etc.

Group agrees CBOs are hard to come by. Marathon shares they have a good CBO. ED was directed to reach out to municipalities to determine who has a CBO and which ones may be willing to share services, however the travel cost may add up. Municipalities could consider a system of sharing info with the CBO versus onsite visits until completely necessary.

- 3) Unaffordable grants for small communities that cannot afford to pay up front and be reimbursed for large grant sums.

Gillies shared their experience in this area. VP shared that the reality is that municipalities may have to borrow and recognize the deficit as long-term debt for infrastructure.

- ED to prepare a resolution in support of Flashing lights on highway traffic stop signs.

Moved by: Reeve Wright (Gillies)

Seconded by: Councillor Robinson (Red Rock)

To be sent to NOMA, all Municipalities in the District, Minister of Transportation.

- ED to reach out to Minister of Transportation to inquire about plans for weigh scales (Hwy 102 and Hwy 17) and then, based on response, determine whether resolution for repairs be drafted.

Moved by: Councillor Pasqualino (Thunder Bay)

Seconded by: Mayor Moffat (Manitouwadge)

- ED was directed not prepare a resolution in support of a highway training simulator as it has already been brought forward to appropriate levels of government.

9. Upcoming Business

- 2024 Conference and AGM – February 29 and March 1st 2024

Planning is underway. Foodcycler and Chantelle Bryson have confirmed they will be presenting.

The group voted that the Michael Lewis topic will be “Leadership in changing times”. See below for description

Leadership in changing times

It is said that it is changing and challenging times that leadership most keenly felt and needed. It requires all leaders to develop not only a plan but to have a leadership strategy and approach that best facilitates the process of planning change and implementing latest ideas and programs. For some change is viewed an opportunity and a challenge that is taken on with a positive and even adoptive attitude. For other change is viewed as another mountain that must be climbed and it is particularly unwanted and resisted if there has already been a lot of change. The key is to change management from a leadership perspective – having and transferring that vision and being keenly aware of all its short and long-term benefits. This workshop discusses the impact change in depth, selective vs. imposed change, the attraction of predictability. We’ll also discuss why some people willingly look at change as something to accept and why others are hesitant and resist. Finally, we’ll

look at the seven import steps in leading people through change and as a bonus module we'll talk about keys to employee engagement.

Additions:

- December meeting location:

Group approves meeting at the legion in Nipigon to view the space where the AGM & Conference will be held. Present convention committee members suggest to have a planning meeting before or after the Board meeting on site that day. Nipigon will be sponsoring lunch!! Board agrees to cost of \$125 for the Club Room meeting space on December 16th (The legion has offered a 50% discount in recognition that we will be having a larger event in 2024).

- Dorion wind farm tour for TBDML 2024 in-person meeting:

Reeve Beatty suggested having one of our in-person meetings be a tour of the wind farm and request Enbridge to sponsor lunch in 2024. Board approves, ED will follow-up accordingly.

- EMS Concerns:

Councillor Trottier brought forward significant concerns regarding EMS calls to support other communities, leaving home base with no resources. Shared a recent Code Black experience wherein multiple bases were required to respond. Multiple bases only have first response every 4 days, Schreiber didn't have any. Weekly Red Rock and Nipigon are being called to Thunder Bay. It was also acknowledged that while there may be less accidents happening on our highways, there are more deaths. Availability of first response is likely a contributing factor. Councillor Pasqualino also noted that it's important to give the skills back to the people involved in the hands on work (for example, are Volunteer Fire Fighters best used to respond to medical calls?).

Group requesting stats on how often communities first responders are responding to other communities. Board requests that ED write to Shane Muir (SNEMS Chief) and request stats as well as invite to In-person meeting in December detailed overview of the last 6 months up to November as well as present at the 2024 Conference.

MOTION

Moved by: Reeve Beatty (Gillies)

Seconded by: Councillor Crane (O'Connor)

10. Correspondence

- CORRESPONDENCE A – Articles & websites shared by Iain Angus IESO:

Federal net-zero electricity regulations will permit some natural gas power generation | CBC News

Local News and Northern Ontario Business Listing For Ontario Canada - Northern Ontario Business

CORRESPONDENCE A1 – Province Launches Plan to Power Ontario's Growth (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A2 – Regional Planning Process Review (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A3 – The Governments of Ontario and Quebec Support New Electricity Trade Agreement (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A4 – Seeking Feedback on Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry proposals under Ontario's Invasive Species Act, 2015 (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A5 – Hydro One with the support of nine First Nation partners seeks approval to construct Waasigan Transmission Line Project from the Ontario Energy Board (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A6 – East-West Tie Newsletter Summer 2023 (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A7 – Waasigan Transmission Line Letter from Common Voice (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A8 – Letter to IESO from Ministry of Energy (attachment)

CORRESPONDENCE A9 - All Licensed Electricity Distributors All Participants in Consultation Process EB-2019-0207 Other Interested Parties (attachment)

- CORRESPONDENCE B – Sharing Northern Policy Institute (NPI) website:

[Northern Policy Institute - Evidence-based solutions, for and from Northern Ontario](#)

They also have a quarterly “Magnetic North” newsletter that can be subscribed to by email

- CORRESPONDENCE C1 & C2 – NOMA Delegation packages (attachments)

11. Committee Reports

- NOMA Reps:

A written update from NOMA ED was shared. Mayor Dumas gave update on work with NOMA including their strategic plan intern who is doing well. There will be a meeting in Thunder Bay on the 26th to discuss results from AMO. They are also working with NOSM to discuss retention of trained staff.

12. Discussion

Has anyone experienced a difficult increase in their career as an Elected Official? If so, how did you make it through the difficult decision?

Some suggestions from the group included:

- Public Meetings
- Local Improvement Tax
- Accommodation Tax for any stays under 30 days (money goes back into tourism since it comes from tourism)
-

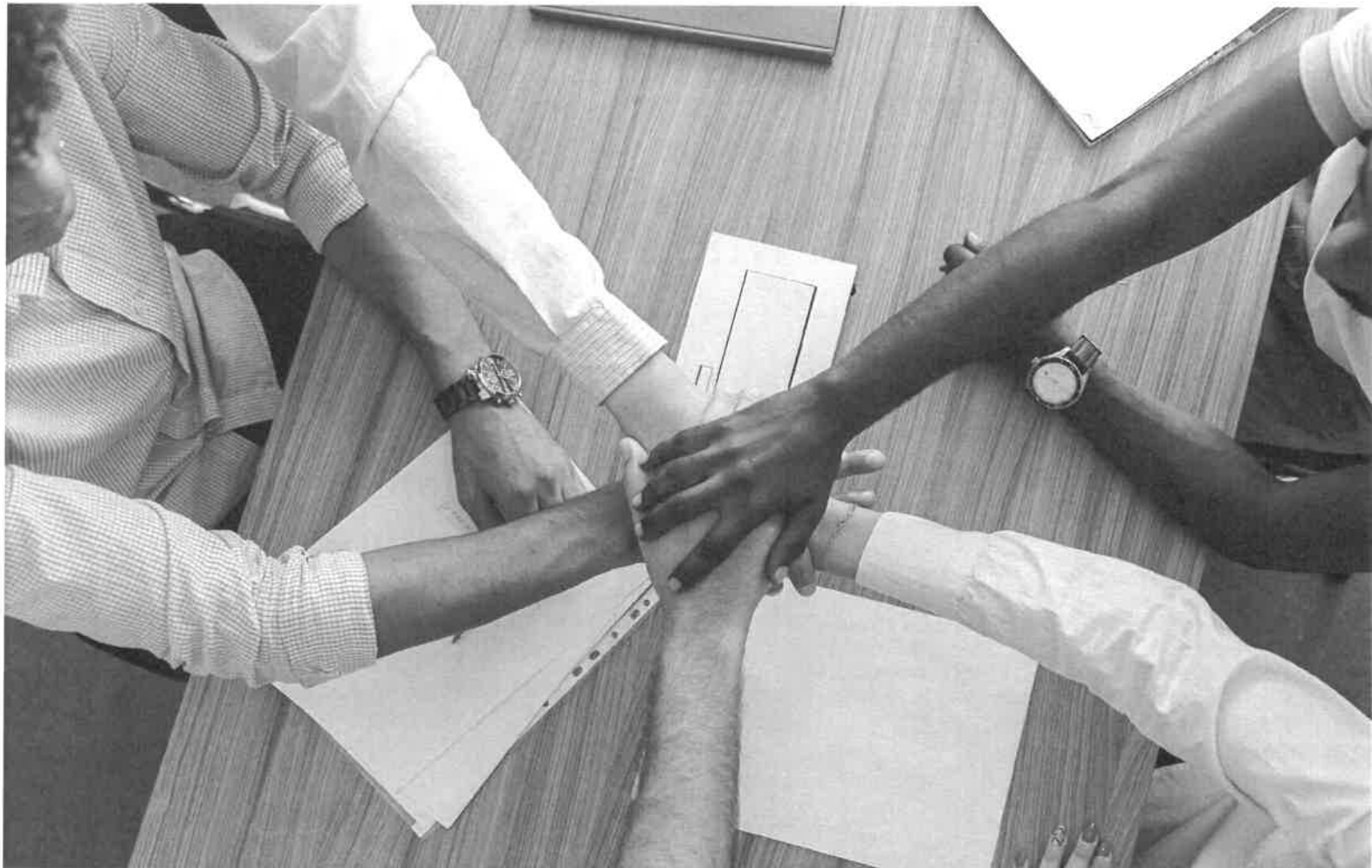
Discussed homelessness in Thunder Bay – ideas such as KOA-type campground set-ups, utilizing the existing LPH building, shelter systems. However, it was also discussed that there are some people living on the street that do not shared living spaces in case conflict arises – they want to retain their ability to move as they please.

13. Adjournment:

The board meeting was adjourned at 1:33PM.

14. Next Meeting

The next board meeting will be held **VIRTUALLY**
Wednesday October 18 from 5:00-6:30
Meeting materials to be provided within a week of the meeting date



COLLECTIF D'ANALYSTES DU NORD | NORTHERN ANALYST COLLECTIVE


noma
Northwestern Ontario
Municipal Association

FONOM
The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities

 **NOSDA**

Research Report | October 2023

Homelessness, Mental Health, and Substance Use in Northern Ontario, Revisited

NORTHERN
POLICY INSTITUTE

INSTITUT DES POLITIQUES
DU NORD

Giwednong Aakomenjigewin Teg
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Aen vawnd nor Lee Iway La koonpayeen

By: Holly Parsons

northernpolicy.ca

NPI – Who We Are

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Land Acknowledgement

NPI would like to acknowledge the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work. NPI is grateful for the opportunity to have our offices located on these lands and thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land.

Our main offices:

Thunder Bay on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg and Fort William First Nation.

Sudbury is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg as well as Wahnapiitae First Nation.

Kirkland Lake is on the Robison-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin Peoples, as well as Beaverhouse First Nation.

Each community is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

We recognize and appreciate the historic connection that Indigenous peoples have to these territories. We support their efforts to sustain and grow their nations. We also recognize the contributions that they have made in shaping and strengthening local communities, the province, and Canada.

This report was made possible through the support of our partner, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation. Northern Policy Institute expresses great appreciation for their generous support but emphasizes the following: The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Institute, its Board of Directors or its supporters. Quotation with appropriate credit is permissible.

Author's calculations are based on data available at the time of publication and are therefore subject to change.

Editor: Barry Norris

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Partners



NOMA

The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) was organized in 1946, incorporated on September 18th 2001, and is made up of four components: the Kenora District Municipal Association, the Rainy River District Municipal Association, the Thunder Bay District Municipal League and the City of Thunder Bay. Other than the City of Thunder Bay, membership is attained by being a member of the district organization. NOMA currently has 37 member municipalities. The area we represent extends from the City of Kenora in the west to the Town of Hearst in the east.

The objects of the Association are to consider matters of general interest to the municipalities and to procure enactment of such legislation that may be of advantage to the municipalities in Northwestern Ontario and to take united action on all matters where the rights of the municipalities may be affected to advance the standards of municipal government through education and discussion and generally to promote their interests.



FONOM

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) is the unified voice of Northeastern Ontario, representing and advocating on behalf of 110 cities, towns and municipalities. Our mission is to improve the economic and social quality of life for all northerners and to ensure the future of our youth.

FONOM is a membership-based association that draws its members from northeastern Ontario and the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Sudbury and Timiskaming.



NOSDA

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association or NOSDA was formed to develop a co-operative and collaborative approach with municipalities and municipal organizations, to facilitate the consolidated municipal delivery of services in Northern Ontario. NOSDA is intended to create a political forum for reviewing and developing both policies and program delivery issues from a Northern perspective.

Northern Analyst Collective



The Northern Analyst Collective (NAC) is a membership group of organizations, municipalities, charities, chambers, and more. By merging our collective resources, we can ensure that the smallest municipality or local charity can access high-end skills. The expert's salary and benefits are covered in part by NPI/IPN and our sponsors, and in part through the membership fees paid by participating organizations. The end result is that members are able to secure the skills they need when needed.

About the Author

Holly Parsons



Holly Parsons moved to Australia to pursue her undergraduate degree and graduated with a B.A. in Politics & Policy Studies and International Relations from Deakin University in Melbourne. Holly gained experience in research, policy analysis, and advocacy while working at grassroots NGOs in Australia and Indonesia. Once moving back to Canada, Holly was a Policy Analyst at Northern Policy Institute and worked on various research projects related to population growth, northern governance, homelessness, addiction and mental health, and others. Holly is currently pursuing a master's degree in Human Security and Peacebuilding from Royal Roads University. In her spare time, Holly loves to travel, ski, read, cook vegan recipes, and be outdoors.



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Executive Summary

In 2021 and 2022, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities, and Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association partnered with Northern Policy Institute to establish a baseline around homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders in Northern Ontario. From there, further analysis was done on the scope of these challenges; then eight policy strategies were recommended for government and community practitioners to address these issues within the Northern Ontario context.

As a follow-up to that initial paper, this second paper aims to expand on three policy recommendations to provide concrete steps government and community practitioners could take to implement our recommendations (or others like them) in Northern Ontario. The additional five recommendations will be explored in subsequent papers over the next two years.

The three recommendations explored in this second paper are as follows:

1. Support new and existing culturally safe and supportive community housing programs for Indigenous peoples

Support for new and existing culturally safe housing facilities for Indigenous peoples should be enhanced by establishing a baseline for Indigenous homelessness in Northern Ontario; identifying pathways to Indigenous homelessness; defining Indigenous homelessness, and exploring the benefits of both culturally appropriate homes and supportive community housing. Next, to provide insight on how culturally safe and supportive housing initiatives could be implemented in northern communities, three existing evidence-based initiatives for Indigenous peoples are examined: Sioux Lookout Supportive Housing Program, Suswin Centre in North Bay, and the Kenora Supportive Housing Program. Of note, the applicability of these measures goes beyond Indigenous peoples: adoption of a supportive housing framework would benefit a variety of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders. Best practices from these case studies should be highlighted, adapted, and applied widely.

2. Establish a northern “centre of excellence” for mental health and substance abuse disorders

Another barrier to addressing the homelessness, mental health, and substance use crises in the North is the lack not only of a central, coordinating body (or bodies), but also of common key performance indicators and shared infrastructure to disseminate evidence and set service expectations. To address these challenges, support already exists for a “centre of excellence” for mental health and substance use disorders, specifically by, for, and in the North. A new initiative, however, led by five community partners in Algoma District — Algoma University, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Sault Area Hospital, Sault College, and Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig — promises a timely, cost-effective, and appropriate alternative for the provincial government to support. That is because many similarities exist between the proposed Northern Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health and the new Mental Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute, as both seek to advocate for the needs of those struggling with mental health and substance use disorders; develop and deliver educational and training programs; establish “best practices” for Northern Ontario through focused research projects; and integrate appropriate, holistic care for Indigenous peoples into the region’s mental health and substance use system.

3. Define northern “service hub” communities and reallocate resources based on migration trends and Our Health Counts studies

A number of Northern Ontario communities act as “hubs” for the delivery of core services such as acute care, long-term care for chronic diseases, services for mental health and substance use disorders, and traditional healing services for Indigenous peoples. An additional component that should be considered is the hub’s provision of core social services, such as those relating to homeless shelters, counselling, childcare, education, and employment. Properly defining not only the services provided but also the geography and population encompassed within the hub would have implications for service delivery and availability, as well as for funding allotted to these services. The two largest challenges to defining a service hub’s catchment area accurately are the in-migration of Northerners from surrounding rural and remote communities to access services not available where they live, and the undercounting of urban Indigenous populations. Both challenges apply additional pressure on already under resourced health and social services in a service hub community. Increasing the accuracy of the population count, standardizing it across communities, and conducting it on a recurring basis would help work towards more adequate and appropriate resource allocation to hub communities.

In conclusion, this report lays out further ways to move the three recommendations forward and increase partnership among Northern Ontario communities to address these issues meaningfully. The additional recommendations include identifying, engaging, and co-designing culturally safe and supportive housing programs for Indigenous peoples; supporting research for mental health and substance use disorders in Northern Ontario via the Mental Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute; and mandating Northern Ontario Health Teams to define their catchment populations by conducting migration trend and Our Health Counts studies on a recurring basis.



Introduction

In August 2022, a report titled “More than Just a Number: Addressing the Homelessness, Addiction, and Mental Health Crisis in the North” (Parsons 2022) was published by Northern Policy Institute (NPI) in partnership with the Northern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA), the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), and the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA). The paper established the scope of the homelessness, mental health, and substance use crises in Northern Ontario by examining homeless enumeration data, Public Health Ontario data around opioid use, and mental health data from Statistics Canada (see the Appendix). The paper found that four northern districts have larger homeless populations per 1,000 people than do some of Ontario’s largest southern municipalities. It also found that opioid-related emergency department visits and opioid-related deaths have increased in most northern public health units consistently over the past five years, and that Northern Ontarians in general experience poorer mental health than do other Ontarians. An engagement process to identify service gaps and barriers was conducted by NPI with mayors, municipal councillors, district social service administration boards, private organizations, and federal and provincial ministries from across Northwestern and Northeastern Ontario during NOMA and FONOM’s 2022 conferences. At the same time, the paper’s author conducted an encompassing literature review of policy strategies in Northern Ontario, Canada, and globally, and recommended eight strategies to reduce the number of Northerners struggling with homelessness, poor mental health, and substance use disorders.

The aim of this follow-up report is to expand on three of the eight recommended strategies to provide practical insight on how these strategies could be replicated and implemented in communities across Northern Ontario. The three strategies are:

1. support new and existing culturally safe and supportive community housing programs for Indigenous peoples;
2. establish a northern “centre of excellence” for mental health and substance use disorders; and,
3. define northern “service hub” communities and reallocate resources based on migration trends and Our Health Counts studies.

The other five strategies will be explored in forthcoming reports to be published by NPI in partnership with NOMA, FONOM, and NOSDA over the next two years.

After establishing that Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in homeless populations in Northern Ontario, the paper makes a strong case for culturally safe and supportive housing for Indigenous peoples. The paper then examines three supportive housing programs for Indigenous peoples that could serve as a blueprint for Indigenous organizations, community organizations, service providers, and other stakeholders on the implementation of similar grassroots programs in their community. This section is informed by one-on-one interviews with Indigenous organizations such as Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, and Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services.

The second section of the paper starts by describing the rationale and support in the North for establishing of a northern “centre of excellence” for mental health and substance use disorders, as proposed by the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy. Next, the paper describes the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence for Ontario that the province is developing as part of its comprehensive strategy to reform the health system for mental health and substance use disorders. The paper, however, proposes a cost-effective, appropriate, and timely alternative led by five community partners in Algoma District: Algoma University, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Sault Area Hospital, Sault College, and Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig.

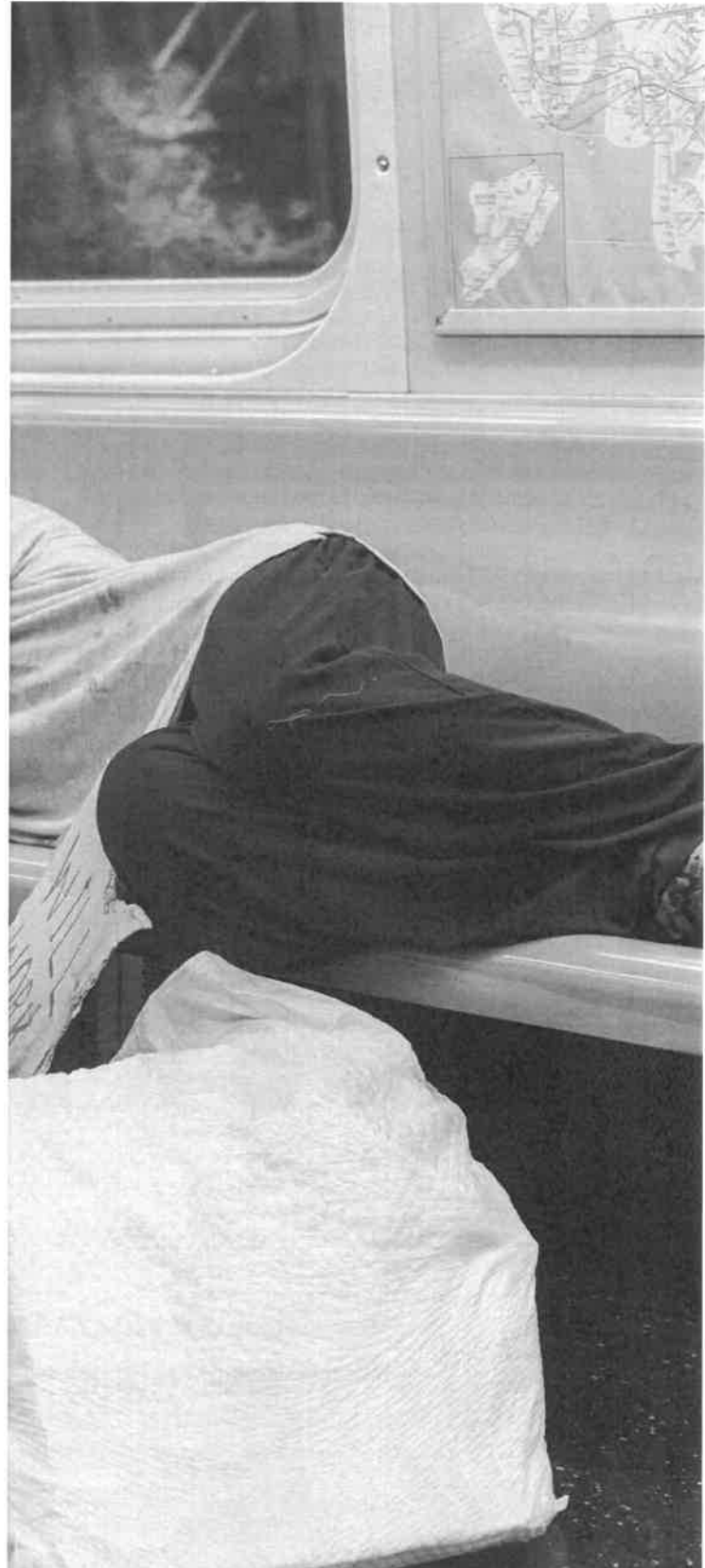
The last section of the paper offers a definition of a northern service hub based on existing definitions of rural and northern “health hubs” that describe core health services required in these communities. The paper expands this definition, however, to include core social services that are also required in northern service hub communities. Beyond core health and social infrastructure, another important characteristic of northern service hub communities should be well-defined catchment areas that consider regional migration trends and that use Our Health Counts studies to overcome census undercounting of Indigenous peoples. Finally, it is recommended that Ontario Health Teams should be responsible for funding and conducting migration trends and Our Health Count studies (Ontario 2022d, 3).

Notably, to align with terminology used by data sources such as Statistics Canada, this paper uses the term “Indigenous peoples” when referring to Canada’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples collectively. The author wishes to acknowledge, however, that First Nation, Métis, and Inuit are culturally distinct groups with unique and varying housing and health needs. The paper further acknowledges that First Nations across Northern Ontario are also culturally, economically, and geographically distinct, with unique and varying housing and health needs.

Methodology

The paper was largely informed by qualitative data collected by the author through a series of one-on-one and group interviews with key decisionmakers who have either implemented one of the three strategies in some capacity or have specific expertise and knowledge on how these strategies could be implemented in northern communities. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, or notes were taken by the author in real time. Key decisionmakers consulted for this paper represented local Indigenous organizations, health service providers, district social service administration boards (DSSABs), post-secondary institutions, municipalities, provincial ministries, and government organizations. Although the author did not engage directly with people with lived experience, service providers who work directly with individuals struggling with homelessness, poor mental health, and substance use disorders shared valuable insights on daily challenges and opportunities to better serve them. The paper was also informed by a literature review of related topics for necessary background information and to add context to the three recommended strategies. Additionally, quantitative community and regional data from official sources — Statistics Canada, the Ontario Provincial Police, DSSABs, and Our Health Counts — were collected and analyzed to help describe the issues and to demonstrate the evidence-based nature of the proposed strategies.

It should also be noted that the three strategies were chosen by the project partners – NOMA, FONOM, and NOSDA – as a starting point towards addressing homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders in the North, and do not reflect their superiority over the five strategies recommended in the initial report or other, unidentified strategies being implemented in northern communities.



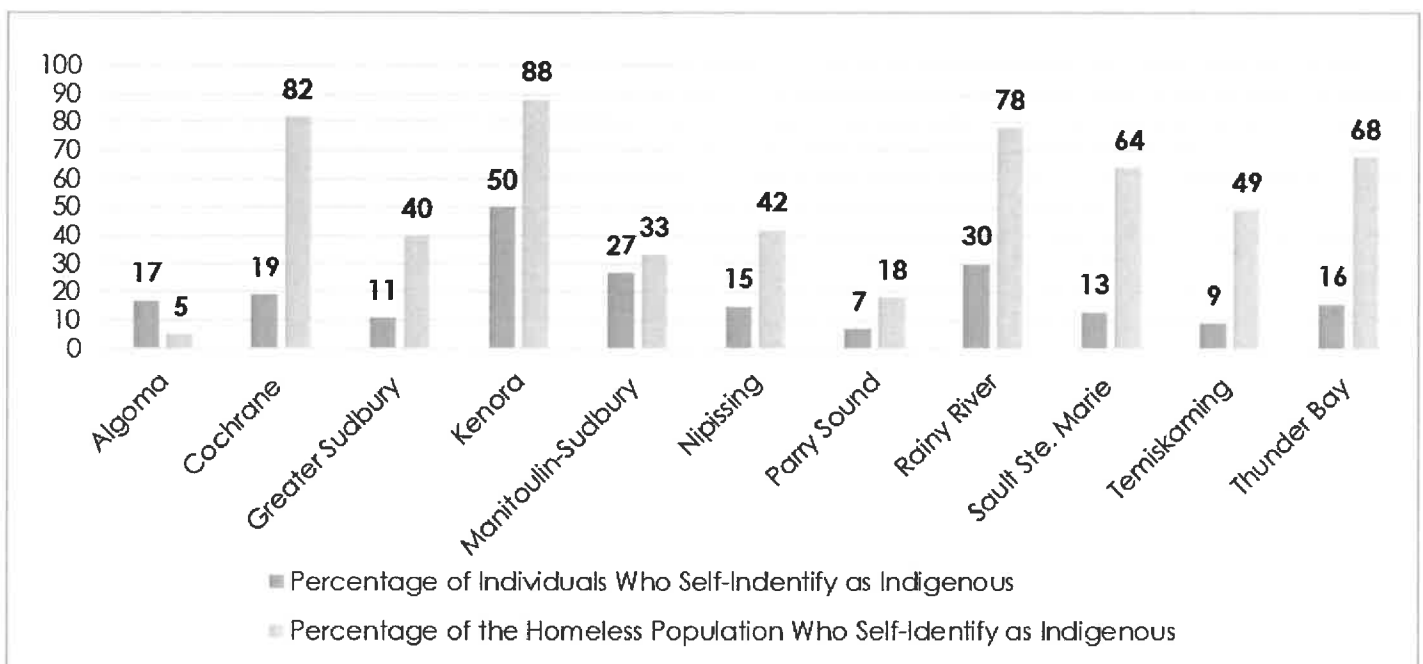
Recommendation #1: Support New and Existing Culturally Safe and Supportive Community Housing Programs for Indigenous Peoples

Establishing a Baseline for Indigenous Homelessness in Northern Ontario

In every northern district, Indigenous peoples are overrepresented among homeless populations. Figure 1 shows the percentage of individuals who self-identify as Indigenous within the general population of each northern district compared with the percentage of individuals who self-identify as Indigenous within the homeless population of each northern district. With the largest discrepancy, Indigenous peoples in the District of Cochrane account for 88 per cent of the homeless population compared with only 19 per cent of the general population. In the District of Thunder

Bay, Indigenous peoples account for 68 per cent of the homeless population compared with 16 per cent of the general population. In Sault Ste. Marie, Indigenous peoples account for 64 per cent of the homeless population compared with 30 per cent of the general population. Other northern districts with discrepancies of over 30 per cent include Rainy River, Timiskaming, and Kenora. Moreover, in Canada, urban Indigenous peoples are eight times more likely to experience homelessness than non-Indigenous people (Homeless Hub 2021).

Figure 1: Percentages of Individuals Who Self-Identify as Indigenous and of the Homeless Population Who Self-Identify as Indigenous, by Census District, Northern Ontario, 2021



Source: Author's calculations from 2021 Homeless Point-in-Time counts and Statistics Canada, 2021 Census.

Pathways to Indigenous Homelessness

Typical pathways to homelessness include poverty, poor mental health, substance abuse disorders, lack of social housing, and socio-economic inequities. For Canada's Indigenous peoples, however, these pathways are also paved by "past and present colonial policies that created and sustain systemic racism, cultural oppression, disempowerment and dispossession of Indigenous people's lands" that deny them of their human right to housing (Bingham et al. 2019, 6). Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission flagged the era of the Indian Residential School System, which lasted over a century, as "the beginning of intergenerational cycles of trauma" for Indigenous peoples. During this era, thousands of Indigenous children experienced the horrors of being separated forcibly from their families, stripped of their cultural identities, and placed in an environment where psychological, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse was widespread (Macdonald and Hudson 2012, 5). Notably, the impact of residential schools has not ended with the survivors; instead, "their children, their grandchildren, their extended families, and their communities" continue to be affected (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015, 136–7).

Today, the intergenerational impact of residential schools is evident by the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in Canada's child welfare and foster care system (Alberton et al. 2020, 2), as well as the overrepresentation of Indigenous adults and youth in Canada's prison system (Bingham et al. 2019, 6). According to the 2021 census, Indigenous children and youth accounted for 54 per cent of children in Canada's foster care system, even though Indigenous children and youth were only 7.7 per cent of Canada's overall child population (Canada 2022b). This is because Indigenous parents are more likely to experience "domestic violence, alcohol abuse, lack of social supports, drug or solvent abuse, and a history of living in foster care or group homes" than are non-Indigenous parents (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015, 146). At the same time, Indigenous adults accounted for about one-third of federal and provincial custody populations, despite representing only five per cent of Canada's overall population; Indigenous youth accounted for 50 per cent of custody admissions (Statistics Canada 2022).

There is an overwhelming amount of research literature that links childhood trauma with incarceration, propelling cycles of intergenerational trauma forward (Bingham et al. 2019, 6). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for example, noted: "Children who were abused in the schools sometimes went on to abuse others. Many students who spoke to the Commission said they developed substance addictions as a means of coping. Students who were treated and punished like prisoners in the schools often graduated to real prisons. For many,

the path from residential school to prison was a short one" (2015, 136). Moreover, the Indian Residential School System, as well as other historical and present colonial state-imposed laws such as the Gradual Civilization Act and the Indian Act, separated thousands of Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands, waterways, and culture so the Crown could profit from land development and resource extraction (Thompson and Suzuki 2022), as well as for the calculated purpose of "ethnic cleansing, linguicide, and domicide of Indigenous peoples" (Thistle 2017, 14). These early colonial practices that excluded Indigenous peoples from appropriate and adequate housing paved the way to Indigenous homelessness as seen today.

Defining Indigenous Homelessness

The ties between historically constructed and ongoing settler colonization and racism have led to a distinct definition of Indigenous homelessness in Canada (Thistle 2017, 6). In contrast to the Canadian European definition of homelessness as "the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, and appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it" (Gaetz et al. 2012), the definition of Indigenous homelessness is more encompassing of the cultural beliefs around what constitutes a "home." As Thistle explains:

Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their indigeneity or lost relationships. (2017, 6)

The fundamental difference between the definition of homelessness for Indigenous peoples and for non-Indigenous lies in each group's concept of "home." From a Western perspective, the concept of home is anchored around a physical structure of habitation where social norms for "gender roles, work habits, and domestic ways" were established and cultivated (Thistle 2017, 14). Indigenous peoples, in contrast, conceptualize home as "circles of interconnectedness that together form the heart of healthy Indigenous social and spiritual emplacement" (15). Thus, for Indigenous peoples to feel "at home," they need to feel a sense of "'rootedness' anchored by reciprocal relationships with their community, family, ancestors, stories, and self-determination" (Bowra and Mashford-Pringle 2021, 1), as well as their natural environment.

The Benefits of Culturally Appropriate Homes

Culturally appropriate homes refer to the constructed configuration of residential properties, both artificial and natural, that incorporates cultural constructs of space and time into one or more activity space or room to promote cultural practices such as religious ceremonies, social gatherings, culinary activities, and communal meals, as well as optimize human comfort and quality of lifestyle (Rachelson, Wong, and Han 2019, 9–10). According to Rachelson, Wong, and Han, other benefits of culturally appropriate homes include:

- allowing for comfortable occupation of housing by alternative family structure (i.e., large, intergenerational);
- lower cost by reducing energy burdens, shortening supply chains, and increasing economic security;
- increase sustainability and lower environmental impact of the home, including local sourcing of building materials, energy efficient layout, and technology;
- build resilience and increase adaptive design against context-specific climates, meteorological, or biological factors and patterns; and
- increase wellbeing, health, and sense of belonging (ibid 2019, 11; see also Orrantia and Labelle 2022).

In consideration of the typical pathways to homelessness, culturally appropriate homes can have a positive impact on “equity, economic security, wellbeing and health, continuation of cultural traditions, and disaster resilience for ethnocultural minorities and Indigenous communities in Canada” (Rachelson, Wong, and Han 2019, 9). In contrast, Canada’s current housing stock of Eurocentric homes suppresses cultural practices that define cultural identities, negatively affecting the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of racial minorities. In part, that is because Euro-Canadian homes are largely compartmentalized, prioritizing private over public space with designated rooms for certain activities (ibid).

When it comes to culturally appropriate homes for Indigenous peoples, design features should include “a healing room, a sweat lodge in the backyard, access to land for land-learning with children, a garden, and craft and teaching rooms” (Native Women’s Association of Canada 2020, 88). As well, transitional housing facilities focused on serving Indigenous peoples should also be accommodating to families and children (ibid).



The Benefits of Supportive Community Housing

The term "supportive housing" refers to short-term (also known as "transitional") and long-term housing in a clustered setting that is owned, operated, and subsidized by non-profit organizations, government, or service managers (CAMH 2012, 2). Residents are offered a range of on-site clinical and non-clinical supports that focus on recovery, encouraging rehabilitation through independent living and integration into the community (ibid.). Clinical supports can include medical care for physical health, mental health and substance use disorders offered by a multidisciplinary team of health care professionals and social workers (Dohler 2016, 2), while non-clinical supports can include life skills and social skills training, such as financial planning, cooking classes, and resumé building. Importantly, supports are offered to residents based on self-determination, as well as an individual assessment of needs to ensure client-centred care (CAMH 2022, 2). For supportive housing facilities focused on serving Indigenous clients, support services need to be Indigenous-led, and all staff should receive cultural sensitivity training with a special focus on intergenerational trauma (Native Women's Association of Canada 2020, 88).

The benefits of supportive housing are well known. An abundance of research literature shows supportive housing to be advantageous to individuals "who have long histories of hospitalizations, trauma and complex needs" by improving their social supports, independence, self-esteem, health, and overall quality of life (CAMH 2022, 4). From a community perspective, supportive housing significantly alleviates pressure on public health services such as hospitals, emergency services, jails, and shelters, leading to cost savings for all levels of government. To compare, supportive housing has been found to cost between \$15 a day for low-support program to \$115 a day for high-support program per individual, versus between \$330 to \$681 a day for a psychiatric hospital bed and between \$200 and \$800 per emergency room visit (CAMH 2012, 3). Moreover, there is no evidence that links supportive housing facilities to an increase in neighbourhood crime or to a decrease in property values; instead, supportive housing is linked to social cohesion and community pride, in part by reducing the number of visible individual experiences homelessness (CAMH 2022, 4).

Bringing It All Together: Case Studies

It is imperative that all strategies being implemented in the North consider the characteristics of homeless populations in order to meet local needs adequately. Given that Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in homeless populations in Northern Ontario, and in consideration of the established benefits of both culturally appropriate homes and supportive housing, programs to provide culturally safe and supportive housing for Indigenous peoples should be implemented. Such programs, if designed and implemented by Indigenous organizations, would encourage self-determination, a guiding principle of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Such programs would also align with Canada's National Housing Strategy, which affirms "the right of every Canadian to access adequate housing" (Canada 2022a). In an effort to guide Indigenous organizations and other community organizations on the implementation of this strategy in their communities, three case studies are examined below.

Case Study #1: Sioux Lookout Supportive Housing Program, Sioux Lookout¹

In August 2018, Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) and Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS), in partnership with First Step Women's Shelter, Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, and Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), opened a 20-unit supportive housing program. The program came to fruition after KDSB conducted an analysis of OPP calls for service² in Sioux Lookout that found such calls in the community often involved the same 19 individuals who were experiencing homelessness; this is consistent with the "revolving door" phenomenon "where police have frequent contact with the same individuals who are often unable to access long-term, appropriate care" (Semple et al. 2021, 3). The program was designed to provide housing and 24/7 support for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness – specifically the 19 individuals experiencing homelessness identified by the analysis — and those connected to the justice system. Notably, all 19 individuals experiencing homelessness became the first residents of the facility; five of them are still housed by the program today.

¹ This case study is informed by a series of interviews conducted by the author with Kenora District Services Board and Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre in the fall of 2022.

² Calls for service costs represent costs related to policing that usually require a police officer's attendance (OPP 2019).

To start, KDSB and OAHS developed the proposal for the supportive housing program and brought it to the municipality, which agreed to provide serviceable land for the construction of the facility. OAHS agreed to contribute the nearly \$5 million in capital funding, while KDSB and OAHS agreed to split the \$1.1 million in annual operation costs. The operational costs fund programs and services offered to residents and delivered by Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, First Step Women's Shelter, Meno Ya Win Health Centre, and KDSB. Residents have access to all 20 direct service delivery programs offered by Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, from healing and wellness to help navigating the criminal court system from a combined court worker. Notably, KDSB acts as the official tenancy holder on behalf of residents.

Since opening its doors, the Sioux Lookout Supportive Housing Program has been highly successful from both a community and a client perspective. OPP calls for service for the first 20 residents dropped by 56 per cent, from 337 calls to 149 calls, over the two months before and after entering the program. Notably, for four residents, calls dropped by 100 per cent. The reduction in calls means that resources can be reallocated to better serve the community. For example, on-duty officers have more time in their day for community engagement (i.e., relationship building with community members) versus dealing with mental health and substance use disorders in the community for which they are ill-equipped to handle (Parsons 2022). The reduction in calls also translates into cost savings for the community, as municipalities policed by the OPP are billed according to two factors: the number of household, commercial, and industrial properties within municipal borders (the base service fee) and per call for service for crimes such as assaults, break and enter, mischief, and drug offences, as well as calls to enforce provincial statutes such as the Mental Health Act (OPP 2019).

Moreover, a reduction in calls for service also provides the province an opportunity to reallocate resources away from policing mental health and substance use disorders, as data on calls are used to determine the average annual number of officers required for municipal policing. As outlined in Section 5.1 of the Police Service Act, R.S.O. 1990, the OPP Commissioner must conduct an analysis of the workload of OPP officers in the integrated detachment based on the availability of on-duty officers to respond to CFS, the types of CFS received, and the need for multiple officers to respond to certain types of CFS for safety reasons (Canada 2023). If calls are reduced, an OPP detachment might require fewer officers to staff it, meaning resources can be reallocated elsewhere as needed — for example, mobile crisis intervention programs that pair an experienced mental health professional with an on-duty officer (Parsons 2022).

Some of the best practices established by Sioux Lookout's Supportive Housing program include building meaningful relationships between residents and OPP officers through casual interactions at the facility; offering a variety of programs and services to residents based on self-determination; requiring residents to buy into a meal plan with funds from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program paid directly to the housing provider; connecting residents directly with service providers and program workers upon entry into the program; incorporating aspects of culturally appropriate homes into the physical design of the building through, for example, large windows and a vegetable garden; and interacting door-to-door with community members to build community understanding, trust, and support for the initiative.

Case Study #2: Kenora Supportive Housing Program, City of Kenora³

The success of the Sioux Lookout Supportive Housing Program has paved the way for similar Indigenous supportive housing projects, including in the City of Kenora. In 2018, OAHS presented the success of the Sioux Lookout program to the provincial government and rallied support for a supportive housing facility in Kenora. The province made an initial commitment of \$4.5 million to fund capital costs, with additional support dollars becoming available over the next two years. A contribution for capital was made by the Toronto-Dominion Bank, with the balance funded by the Canadian Mental Health Association through a co-ed fund. The provincial government also committed to funding annual operating costs of \$1.3 million to provide culturally safe programs and services to residents delivered by Ne-Chee Friendship Centre and KDSB. Programs and services will be based on individuals' needs and can include Western medicine and traditional healers, as well as non-clinical services. To make the project viable, KDSB acquired property from the private sector and subsequently undertook the necessary rezoning work in partnership with the City of Kenora. Kenora further supported the project by realigning municipal water and sewer infrastructure to service the project, which also involved the moving of an entire skating rink. The facility will include shared kitchen and eating space, with three meals per day offered to residents, individualized units with private bathrooms, and programming and medical rooms.

³ This case study is informed by a series of interviews conducted by the author with Kenora District Services Board in the fall of 2022.

Case Study #3: Suswin (Nest) Village, North Bay⁴

A three-storey, 30-unit culturally safe and supportive housing facility is under construction in downtown North Bay. Construction of Suswin Village (suswin is Ojibwe for nest) began in the fall of 2019 and was completed in early 2023; the first five residents moved in on March 1, 2023. The project is led by the North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, with support from OAHs. OAHs is funding capital costs through two forgivable grants: the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program and the First Nations, Inuit, Métis Urban and Rural Assisted Homeownership Program. Operating costs estimated at \$700,000 annually will be covered in full by OAHs for the first three years for programs and services provided by North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre. Long-term funding for annual operating costs has still to be secured.

The design of the facility features many elements of culturally appropriate homes, such as an outdoor area with a firepit for ceremonies, geothermal heating for the environment, and Indigenous artwork throughout. Other features include easily accessible units for people with disabilities, an elevator, an alarm system, a computer room, a large communal kitchen, and private bathrooms in each unit to give residents dignity. To help residents become self-sufficient and to prepare them for the next phase of their lives, employment services and a cook will be available to teach cost-effective cooking. Although the facility is designed for Indigenous peoples, the program will house others if room permits.

Some replicable practices that have been identified during the development phase of this project include hiring a project manager to advocate on behalf of the project partners and complete funding applications, reaching out to communities with existing culturally sensitive supportive housing units to learn about “best practices” and mistakes; hiring Indigenous contractors and employees when possible to increase Indigenous capacity in First Nations; incorporating aspects of culturally appropriate homes into the physical design of the building, such as a healing room, a sweat lodge in the backyard, and access to land for land-learning; a bathroom in each unit to give residents a sense of dignity; and holding Indigenous ceremonies at various stages of the project’s lifespan.



⁴ This case study is informed by a series of interviews conducted by the author with North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre in the fall of 2022.

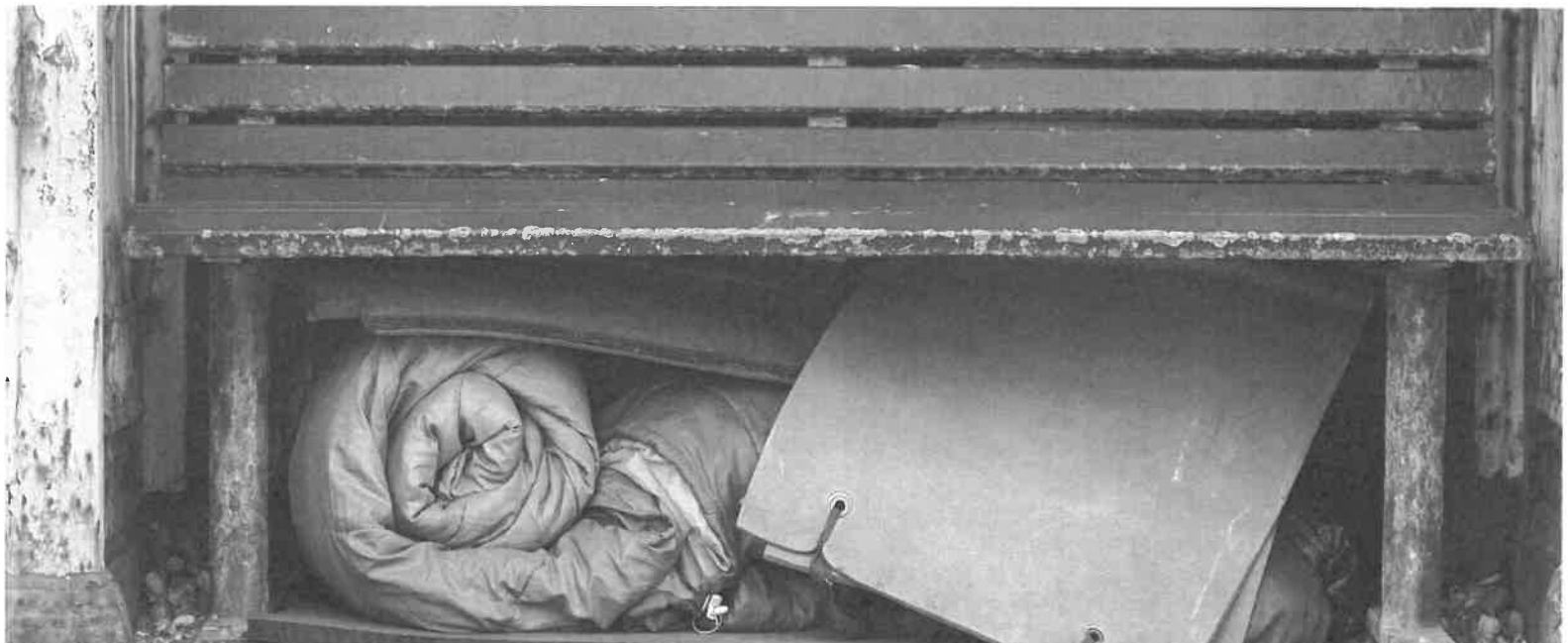
Recommendation #2: Establish a Northern “Centre of Excellence” for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

In November 2017, the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, in partnership with the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, began a 15-month-long engagement process in Northwestern Ontario to gauge support for establishing a Northern Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health to “[s]erve as an advocate for addiction and mental health issues in the north, building local capacity through specialized training and education, connecting service providers, community partners and those with lived experience, researching gaps in service, and developing and sharing educational programming and best practices made in and for the North, with particular attention to cultural sensitivity and the need for respectful and holistic care for Indigenous people” (Thunder Bay Drug Strategy 2018, 2).

The engagement process found that 95 per cent of the 216 participants involved were in favour of a Northern Centre of Excellence. Importantly, participants represented six sectors: social services (119), health care (33), policy (26), peer (25), justice (18), and education (9), as well as 34 Northwestern communities, the majority of which were towns, rural communities, or First Nations (65 per cent) (Thunder Bay Drug Strategy 2018, 7, 19). In the study’s corresponding report, participants overall were in favour of a blended model of communication that combines face-to-face interactions (e.g., workshops and conferences) and virtual interactions (e.g., up-to-date information sharing about services and referral pathways). In terms of distribution, some participants preferred a “distributed model” with equal

centres in Thunder Bay and small towns throughout the Northwestern region, while others preferred a “hub-and-spoke” model with a head office in Thunder Bay and satellite offices dispersed throughout the region. For those in favour of the distributed model, building and sustaining local capacity, as well as developing relationships with communities and local organizations, were priorities. Those in favour of a “hub and spoke” model placed particular emphasis on equity of resource distribution by providing additional services and supports to satellite offices in the region as needed (Thunder Bay Drug Strategy 2018, 10).

Based on the results of the engagement process, the intended next step was to draft a proposal for a Northern Centre of Excellence with regional partners (Thunder Bay Drug Strategy 2018, 21). This work, however, was paused as the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged Ontario and the world, forcing Thunder Bay to reallocate its resources toward the more immediate threat. Then, in May 2020, the provincial government announced a comprehensive strategy to address the system of care in Ontario for mental health and substance use disorders by establishing a Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health for the entire province (Ontario 2020). Due to uncertainty around the mandate and oversight model of a Centre of Excellence for Northern Ontario, Thunder Bay Drug Strategy indefinitely tabled the proposal.



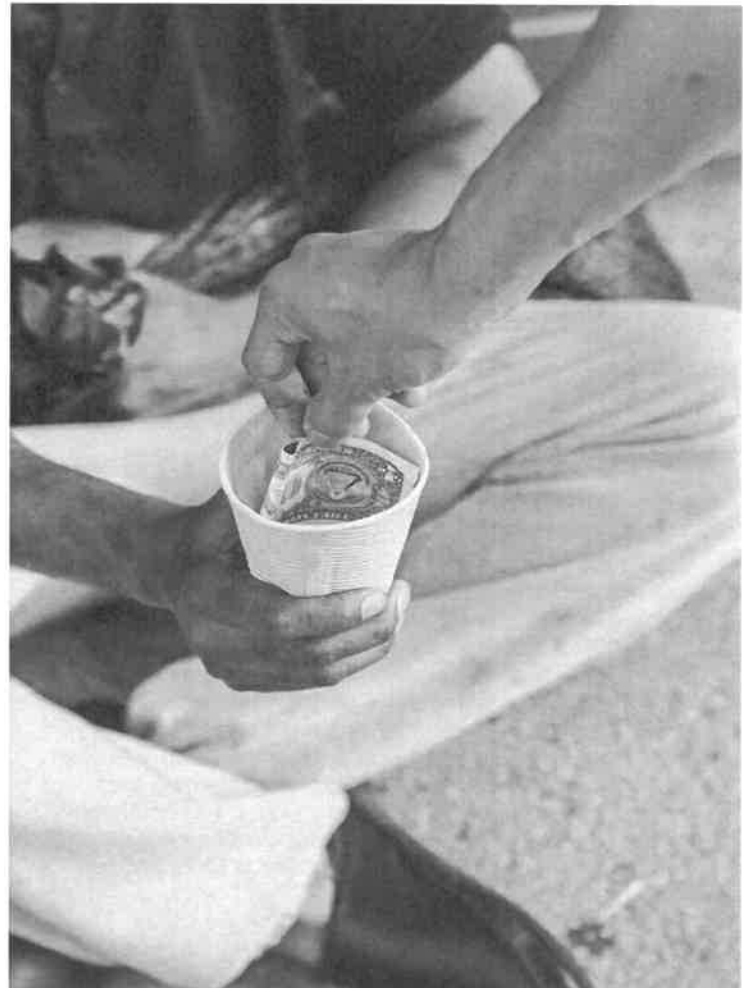
A Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health for Ontario

In March 2020, the provincial government announced a new action plan to address mental health and substance use disorders with the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health for Ontario. The Centre was conceptualized from recommendations by the 2010 Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions around creating "a new organization responsible for overseeing the entire mental health and addictions system...so that all Ontario residents have timely and equitable access to an integrated system of excellence" (Legislative Assembly of Ontario 2010, 2). The Select Committee based its recommendations on an engagement process that took place across the province, as well as the evidence-based success of Cancer Care Ontario as "a clinical governance and performance improvement system that produces results" (Duvalko et al. 2009, 9). To avoid mental health and substance use care being siloed from the wider health system as the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care worked to consolidate various stand-alone agencies, the Centre of Excellence was placed within Ontario Health at its conception. In terms of its mandate, set out by the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence Act, 2019, the Centre of Excellence will:

- Establish a central point of accountability and oversight for mental health and addictions care.
- Create common performance indicators and shared infrastructure to disseminate evidence and set service expectations.
- Standardize and monitor the quality and delivery of evidence-based services and clinical care across the province.
- Provide support and resources to Ontario Health Teams as they connect people to the different types of mental health and addictions care they need (Ontario 2022a).

In other words, while not a service provider or physical structure, the Centre of Excellence will play a critical role in the delivery and quality of services for mental health and substance use disorders by establishing what quality care looks like, setting clear service delivery expectations, monitoring service delivery using comparable and consistent data, and disseminating evidence to stakeholders (Ontario 2022b). Shared and secure digital infrastructure will be built to collect, store, and disseminate performance-based and client-level data "to make it easier to deliver better care, report on performance and track value of investments" (Ontario 2020). Notably, client-level data will be used to understand how clients enter and move within the mental health and addiction system, then shared with frontline providers to overcome system fragmentation (Ontario 2020).

The oversight model for the Centre of Excellence will look similar to health agencies in other areas of care, including cancer (i.e., Cancer Care Ontario), renal, cardiac, and stroke (Ontario 2020). Regional activities and issues will be captured and raised by Regional Mental Health and Addictions Clinical Leads, which represent Ontario's six health regions (Ontario 2022b). Above these Regional Clinical Leads, four Provincial Clinical Leads representing one of the four clinical areas of focus — depression and anxiety-related disorder, schizophrenia and psychosis, substance use disorders, and eating disorders — are responsible for "creating and implementing a strategic vision...and will set, execute, and monitor key priorities" (Ontario 2022b). Additionally, a fifth Indigenous Clinical Lead is responsible for developing and co-designing Indigenous provincial programs for depression and anxiety-related disorders in partnership with Indigenous-led organizations, clinicians, and communities. To further support Indigenous peoples struggling with poor mental health and substance use disorders, a Provincial Advisory Table on Indigenous Depression and Anxiety has been established, and an engagement process is currently under way in the province with Indigenous stakeholders to inform and guide the operational development of the Centre of Excellence (Ontario 2022b). The clinical governing structure will be mirrored by an administrative team responsible for performance management, led by the Provincial Planning and Performance Council.



The Mental Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute

While the province continues to develop and implement its strategy to address Ontarians' mental health and substance use disorders, five community partners in Algoma — Algoma University, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), Sault Area Hospital, Sault College, and Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig — are engaging seriously on the potential for a local strategy to address the urgent health needs of Northerners by establishing and contributing to a new Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute. The Research and Training Institute will focus on "treatment and prevention; developing innovative educational programs to train generations of workers; and comprehensive research to support a social determinants of health-based system of prevention, treatment and healing, with a particular focus on the unique Northern and rural health needs of communities" (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming). It will undertake this work to deliver on its vision of *minoeyawin*: good spirit, physical health, and emotional and psychological wellbeing for all. In practice, the Institute will offer holistic, cross-cultural educational and training to health care workers; leverage digital innovations to provide additional training to those who need it; launch focused research projects to build local and regional capacity; and work to advance the integration of Indigenous knowledge (including global Indigenous) cross-cultural approaches including Western science in all areas of Algoma's health sector (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming).

Each of the five founding partners will have an opportunity to take on a distinct role within the Research and Training Institute, leveraging their specific expertise and resources to advance training capacity and research innovation, and create a network of teaching, research, and clinical experience across Ontario. Their roles are defined by individual supporting mission statements, developed internally by each founding partner. Algoma University will focus on ensuring programs at both the undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate levels are teaching students about trauma informed care using a cross-cultural approach. They will increase the number course offerings on mental health and substance use disorders and specializations within program. NOSM will enhance physician undergraduate and post-graduate learners with a goal of increasing physician resources in the North. Sault Area Hospital will train future generations of physicians and advance research around mental health and substance use disorders by establishing an academic campus in Sault Ste. Marie. Sault College will advance training and credentialing through continuing education programs to ensure clinicians in the field have mental health and addiction expertise. Finally, Shingwauk Kinooamaage

Gamig will advance traditional land-based teaching expertise to establish wellness, education, and training programs for mental health and substance use disorder service providers (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming).

In terms of the governing structure, the Feasibility study and stakeholder consultation suggested a Research and Training Institute's Partners' Table to address core accountability and corporate risk (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming). It would be comprised of the CEOs of the founding partners and Indigenous leaders. Under the Partner's Table, the Leadership Council is envisioned to advance the Institute's strategic goals by providing oversight, direction, and resource support for key projects undertaken by the Institute. A Director is currently being hired to being moving the recommendations within the report forward. In its implementation, the Council is envisioned to be informed by four councils in particular areas: the Indigenous Research Oversight Council, the Indigenous Communities Council, the People with Lived Experience Advisory Council, and the Community Advisory Council. Finally, at the discretion of the Leadership Council, various working groups will be established in a limited capacity to "advance selected priorities as endorsed by the Partner's Table" (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming). Looking ahead, the Research and Training Institute will adopt a hub-and-spoke distribution model to expand and grow its capacity across Ontario. A physical hub will be established in a central location — likely in Algoma District, as the physical location of the founding partners — with spokes in other areas of Northern Ontario. As of now, the Research and Training Institute will rely on its founding partners and various grants to fund its mandate, but long-term funding from the province would ensure the longevity of this initiative (MGAC and Corpus Sanchez, forthcoming).



Bringing It All Together

Many similarities can be drawn between the proposed Northern Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health, the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence, and the Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute. For example, all three prioritize connecting regional actors to overcome system fragmentation, building digital infrastructure to increase regional capacity, and conducting research to improve the quality and equity of service delivery. Further, the two northern initiatives both seek to advocate for the needs of Northerners struggling with poor mental health and substance use disorders; develop and deliver educational and training programs; establish "best practices" for Northern Ontario through focused research projects; and integrate appropriate, holistic care for Indigenous peoples into Northern Ontario's mental health and addiction health system. Additionally, both the Northern Centre of Excellence and the Research and Training Institute suggest the implementation of a hub-and-spoke distribution model, as well as a blended model of communications.

Therefore, although the previous report (Parsons 2022) recommended establishing a Northern Centre for Addiction and Mental Health for Northern Ontario, this report argues that the Research and Training Institute offers a timely and appropriate alternative given that the initiative is already under way and considering that it might be unrealistic to secure infrastructure dollars from the province to fund a Northern Centre of Excellence before an oversight model for the North has been fully developed, implemented, and measured. Importantly, the Centre of Excellence could work closely with the Research and Training Institute by giving its leaders a seat at various regional and provincial tables and councils in recognition of their expertise in mental health and addiction care in the Northern context.

Furthermore, a community-led approach to health care that is inclusive of local Indigenous organizations and governments would ensure that health investments are tailored to meet the specific and unique needs of community members, minimizing misalignment between needs and investment. A community-led approach also would build community capacity and resiliency as organizations work together toward a common goal (Amobi et al. 2019, 292). The governance, operational, and structural model of the Research and Training Institute could also act as a blueprint for similar initiative in other northern communities, leading to greater regional representation. For example, a similar initiative might be beneficial in Northwestern Ontario, perhaps in Thunder Bay, to advocate for regional nuances. Importantly, however, it is recommended that decisionmakers think strategically about location in terms of distance and demand if additional "spokes" are added to these existing organizations.



Recommendation #3: Define Northern “Service Hub” Communities and Reallocate Resources Based on Migration Trends and Our Health Counts Studies

The concept of a health hub is not new — there is a wide range of research literature that defines and characterizes these communities. A health hub can be defined as a community that provides a wide range of core health services to address the encompassing health needs of its catchment population. Core health services within a service hub include emergency and acute care (i.e., 24/7 emergency room and complex continuing care beds), primary care (i.e., chronic disease management and health promotion), home and community long-term living (i.e., long-term care facilities and assisted living programs), and services for mental health and substance use disorders (i.e., withdrawal beds and community support services), as well as traditional healing services for Indigenous peoples (Ontario Hospital Association n.d., 2). This report expands the definition also to include core social services, such as homeless shelters, counselling, childcare, education, and employment.

Another important characteristic of northern service hub communities is well-defined catchment areas that accurately estimate the population within their boundaries. In the North, however, there are two significant challenges to defining a catchment area: immigration from surrounding rural and remote communities to access health and social services not available in their home communities, and the undercounting of the urban Indigenous population. Both apply additional pressure to already underresourced health and social services in service hub communities. These challenges must be acknowledged and overcome to ensure adequate and appropriate resources are allocated to northern service hub communities.

Northern Migration Trends

To track migration trends of Northerners seeking access to health and social services, community-level data need to be collected by health and social service providers, with support from municipalities. For example, in an effort to understand why migrants are overrepresented in Thunder Bay's homeless population, Lakehead University, in partnership with the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, conducted a study to answer seven key research questions (Gokani et al. 2022, 7):

- From which home communities are people migrating?
- Why do people leave their home communities in the first place?
- Why do people choose to come to Thunder Bay?
- Why do people choose to remain in Thunder Bay?
- What factors predict if someone stays or leaves Thunder Bay?
- How long is someone likely to stay?
- What factors predict how long someone stays?

To answer these questions, researchers used four different data types: the 2021 Point-in-Time count; a survey researchers administered in homeless shelters; the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System; and one-on-one interviews with people experiencing homelessness who migrated to Thunder Bay. Using machine learning models to analyze both the qualitative and quantitative data collected, a comprehensive view of migration and homelessness in Thunder Bay District, as well as some important insights around migration and homelessness in Northwestern Ontario, were captured and presented in the corresponding report (Gokani et al. 2022, 7). According to the report, “service factors, such as health care, housing, and social service like addiction and mental health support might be driving migration” (Gokani et al. 2022, 3). To give another example, the report found that “being from or passing through Kenora, Cochrane, and Rainy River is a predictor of migration to Thunder Bay and stay in a shelter, including, though to a lesser extent, longer stay in shelter” (Gokani et al. 2022, 4). With a comprehensive view of migration and homelessness, the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board can make evidenced-based policy and programming decisions (ibid).

Importantly, while this study on migration was restricted to individuals experiencing homelessness in Thunder Bay, similar studies should be conducted by every Northern Ontario Health Team to gain a comprehensive view

of migration trends in their catchment area. Research questions could include:

- From which community are people coming from to access services?
- What specific services are people accessing?
- Why did people choose to come to this community?
- What other communities have people travelled from to access services?
- How often are people required to travel to access services?

Undercount of Indigenous Populations

The census is a widely cited and used source for demographic information in Canada (ibid). The data, however, are far from perfect as it routinely undercounts “hard-to-reach” populations and populations made marginal, such as Indigenous peoples and individuals experiencing homelessness, due to a lack of engagement and participation (Rotondi 2017, 1).

In an effort to quantify census undercounts and fill critical health information gaps of urban Indigenous populations, a handful of Ontario communities — Hamilton, Kenora, London, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, and Toronto — completed an Our Health Counts enumeration and health assessment study, led by Indigenous health researchers (Smylie et al. 2011, 1). The study found that only 15 per cent of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay reported participating in the 2016 census, while only 14 per cent of Indigenous adults in London completed the 2011 census. Unbiased population estimates, in contrast, are generated using Respondent Driven Sampling formulas and methods that “adjust for different probabilities of being sampled and by use of a structured recruitment frame” (McConkey et al. 2020, 1). The structured recruitment frame is “built on Indigenous values, skills, knowledge, beliefs and practices” by leveraging existing social networks and kin systems within Indigenous communities to recruit participants and to establish a chain referral system (2). Furthermore, by being Indigenous led, Our Health Counts studies promote First Nation research principals of ownership, control, access, and possession, as well as self-determination and Indigenous capacity building (FNIGC 2022). As seen in Table 1, the Our Health Counts model shows that urban Indigenous populations are undercounted by factors of two to five.

Table 1: Our Health Counts Population Estimates, Selected Ontario Cities, 2008-2017

City	Canadian Census Estimate	Ontario Health Count Estimate	Undercount Factor
Kenora	3,155	8,448–12,892	2.6–4
London	8,410	17,108–22,155	3–4
Ottawa	1,145	3,361	X
Thunder Bay	13,490	42,359	3.1
Toronto	19,270	45,000–73,000	2–5

Sources: Our Health Count reports for the cities of Ottawa (2008), Hamilton (2008), Toronto (2013), London (2014), Kenora (2016), and Thunder Bay (2017). Note: The OHC study in the City of Ottawa was restricted to Inuit only; data not available for Hamilton.

Northern Ontario has significant on- and off-reserve First Nations populations that suffer from poorer overall health than do non-Indigenous peoples due to socio-economic inequities tied to food insecurity, loss of traditional lands, discrimination in health services, underfunded Indigenous health services, and lack of cultural safety in service provisions (Kim 2019, 378). Accordingly, Indigenous-led health services are required across the province

to meet the health needs of all Indigenous peoples adequately, in terms of both treatment and prevention. Yet, without high-quality, comprehensive, and inclusive population and health data for Indigenous populations, decisionmakers are ill-equipped to make evidence-based policy and programming decisions.

Ontario Health Teams

In April 2019, new legislation was passed to fix Ontario's fragmented public health care system. The government's plan, as reflected in The People's Health Care Act, is largely centred around the establishment of Ontario Health Teams (OHTs), which will adopt an integrated model of care and funding that connects health care providers, social service providers, and educators in the community with patients and families, with the goal of achieving full provincial coverage (Ontario 2022c, 2). More specifically, each OHT will:

1. Provide a full and coordinated continuum of care for a defined population within a geographic region;
2. Offer patients 24/7 access to coordination of care and system navigation services and work to ensure patients experience seamless transitions throughout their care journey;
3. Improve performance across a range of outcomes linked to the "Quadruple Aim": better patient and population health outcomes; better patient, family and caregiver experience; better provider experience; and better value;
4. Be measured and reported against a standardized performance framework aligned to the Quadruple Aim;
5. Operate within a single, clear accountability framework;
6. Be funded through an integrated funding envelope;
7. Reinvest into front line care; and
8. Take a digital first approach, in alignment with provincial digital health policies and standards, including the provision of digital choices for patients to access care and health information and the use of digital tools to communicate and share information among providers" (Ontario 2022c, 2–3).

To date, three OHTs have been established in the Northeastern Region: Algoma OHT, serving Algoma District; Nipissing Wellness, serving Nipissing District and East Parry Sound; and Maamwesying OHT, serving Indigenous communities in Northeastern Ontario, including the urban Indigenous population in Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario 2022c). In the Northwestern Region, four OHTs have been established: All Nations Health Partners OHT, serving Kenora and Sioux-Narrow-Nestor Falls; City and District of Thunder Bay OHT; Kiiwetinoong Healing Waters OHT, serving Dryden, Red Lake, and Sioux Lookout; and Rainy River District OHT (Ontario 2022d). Additionally, in October 2022, the Ministry of Health invited four new potential teams in the North to complete full applications

to become approved OHTs: Équipe Ontario Cochrane District Team; Équipe Sudbury Espanola Manitoulin Elliot Lake Team; Équipe des régions du Temiskaming Area Team; and West Parry Sound Team (Ontario 2022d). With the addition of these four OHTs, the goal of full provincial coverage will be realized (ibid).

Bringing It All Together

Considering that OHTs act as an umbrella network for core health and social services within a specified geographical area, and "are clinically and fiscally accountable for delivering a full and coordinated continuum of care to a defined geographical population," northern OHTs should conduct a study on migration trends in relation to access to services (Ontario 2022). The study should quantify the number of migrants accessing health and social services to determine which communities are accommodating an influx of migrants from surrounding areas. Northern OHTs should also be responsible for conducting studies to generate unbiased population estimates within their catchment areas. It is further recommended that these studies be standardized across Northern Ontario, and that they be conducted on a reoccurring basis.



Conclusion

Based on the findings of this paper, several targeted recommendations are proposed that all levels of government, as well as other decisionmakers and community practitioners, can take to address the issues identified.

Recommendations for Culturally Safe and Supportive Housing

Municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards

1. Identify community demand and the current stock of supportive housing services in the community and nearby. If stock already exists, identify if it is sufficient in terms of both quality and quantity.
2. If existing stock is present, identify if more is required or an upgrade is needed — or both.
3. Identify strategic partners and local champions in the community and nearby. Partners could include municipalities, targeted provincial and federal government ministries and agencies,⁵ health and social service deliverers, and nearby communities experiencing similar demand. Partners must include local First Nations and local and regional Indigenous organizations.
4. Engage with Indigenous partners early on and continuously to co-create a supportive housing plan that includes a planning phase, implementation phase, and a monitoring phase.
5. Identify available funding opportunities — locally, regionally, provincially, and nationally — as well as who will be leading these efforts.
6. Ensure a transparent engagement process with the community and those with lived experience. This can include open engagement sessions, online feedback forms, and so on. Additionally, education about supportive housing can help to build community buy-in as well as tackle negative attitudes toward supportive housing.
7. Work with strategic partners, as well as individuals with lived experience, to identify community needs.
8. DSSABs should be the tenant holder on behalf of residents, connecting residents with social services such as Ontario Works and providing additional funding as necessary.
9. Partners should seek and implement “best practices” from existing supportive housing programs in their region, the province, Canada, and comparable geographies internationally, if applicable.

The Provincial Government

1. Support new and existing supportive housing initiatives (i.e., the Suswin Centre) in Northern Ontario with long-term funding from a dedicated funding envelope.
2. Work with strategic partners to understand local needs and challenges.

Recommendations for a Mental Health and Addictions Centre

Municipalities and Regional Organizations

1. Municipalities should identify community demand and the current stock of services that focus on mental health and addictions. For existing stock, identify who is accessing these services locally and from where.
2. Municipalities should identify strategic partners in the community and nearby to discuss local mental health and addictions issues. Partners could include municipalities, targeted provincial and federal government ministries and agencies,⁶ health service deliverers, nearby communities experiencing similar demand, local First Nations, and local and regional Indigenous organizations.

⁵ These should include the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development (Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation), FedNor, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

⁶ These should include the Ontario Ministry of Health, Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development (Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation), FedNor, and Health Canada.

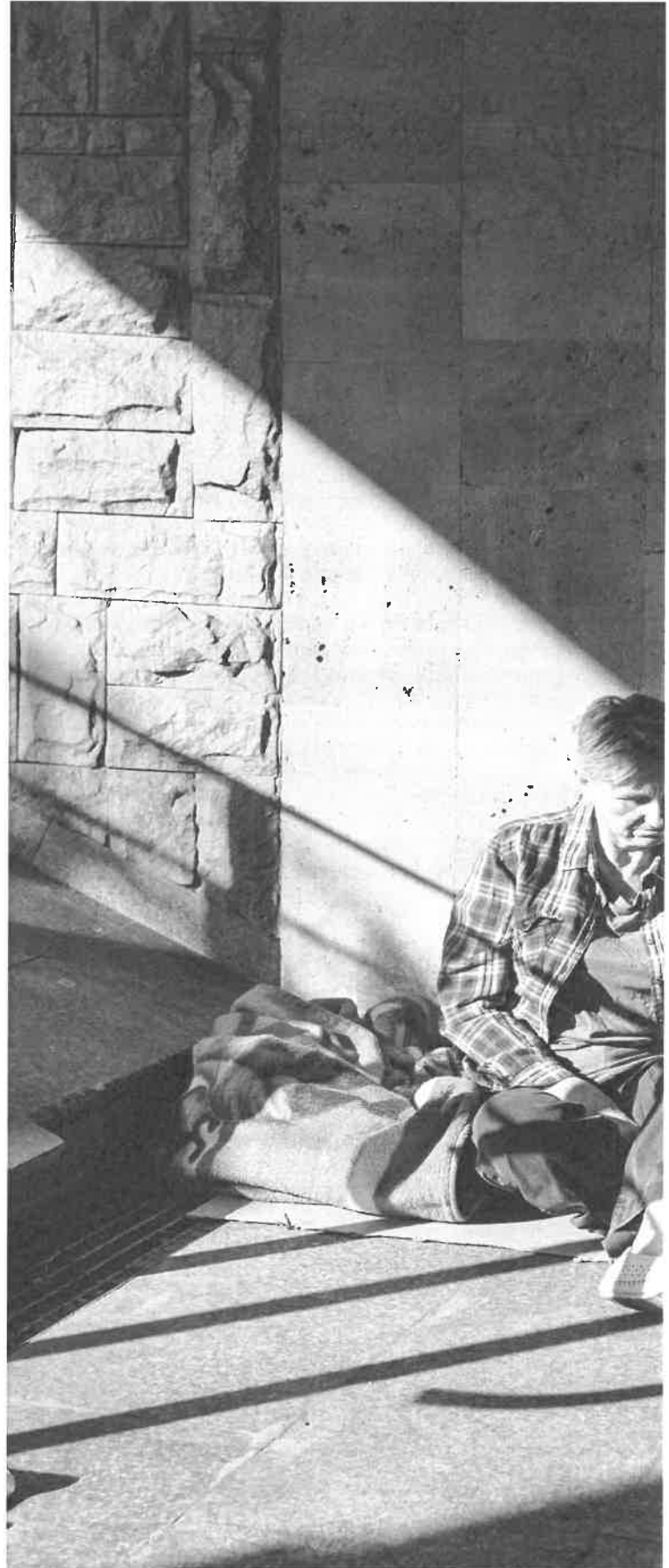
3. To avoid duplication and enhance greater connections in health infrastructure, additional "spokes" of the Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute, as well as the Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Mental Health, should be supported. The Northern Ontario Municipal Association, the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities, the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, and other industry champions could kickstart these discussions.
4. Support mental health and addictions research in Northern Ontario via the Research and Training Institute, in partnership with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and other health-focused programs at post-secondary and Indigenous institutions in Northern Ontario.

The Provincial Government

1. Engage with post-secondary institutions in Northern Ontario to learn about homelessness, addiction, and mental health initiatives being undertaken and to understand local needs.
2. Partner with the Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute to advance its mandate and mission.
3. The Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence and Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute should work closely with each other to share knowledge, resources, and expertise.

Recommendations for a Northern Service Hub

1. Ontario Health Teams should be mandated to define their catchment populations by conducting migration trend studies and Our Health Count studies on a recurring basis.
2. Based on these studies, funding should be allocated based on catchment population size.
3. The Ministry of Health should fund data-collection initiatives that focus on sociodemographic issues in relation to all health services.
4. The federal government should allocate resources to understanding discrepancies between OHC and census population estimates and explore adopting these sampling methods during the national census in partnership with Indigenous organizations.



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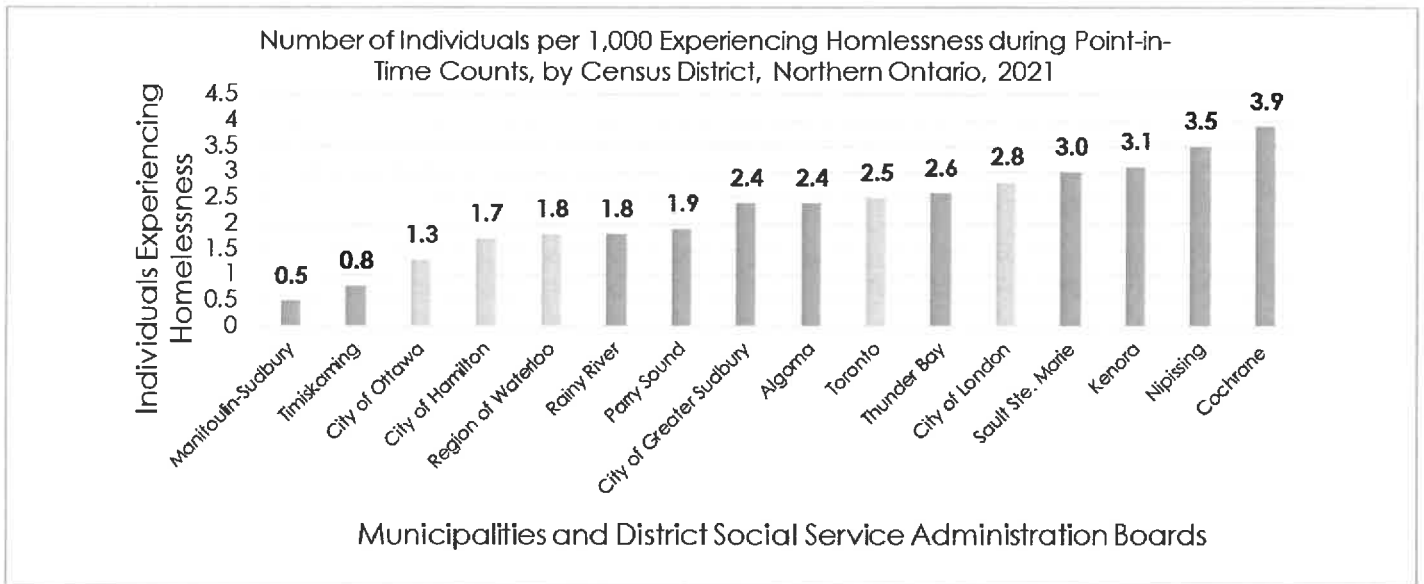
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Appendix

Figures A-1 through A-5 have been copied from the report, "More than Just a Number: Addressing the homelessness, addiction, and mental health crisis in Northern Ontario"

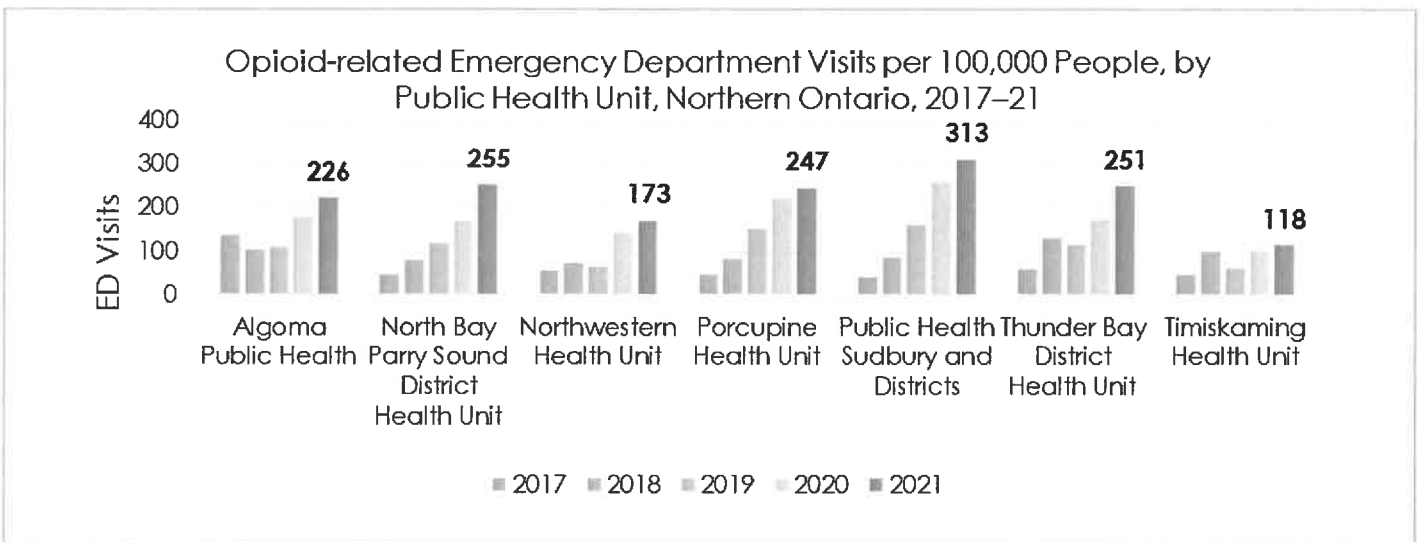
(Parsons, 2022). The data in the figures establish a baseline for homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues in Northern Ontario.

Figure A-1: Homeless population per 1,000 people, 2021.



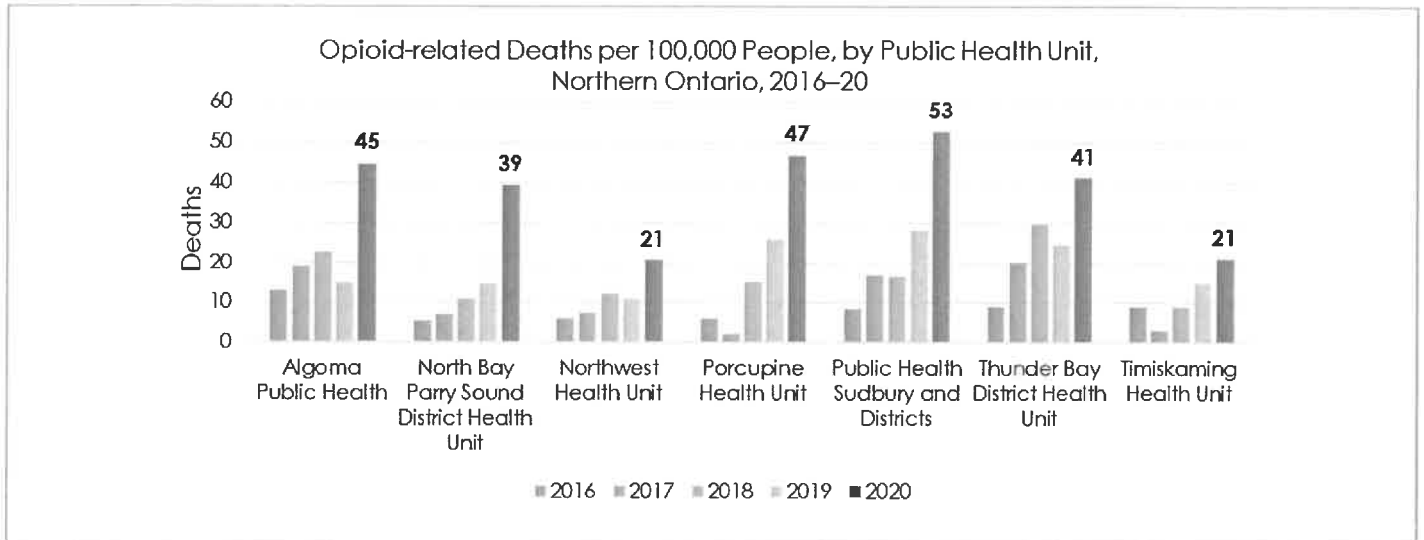
Source: Author's calculations from 2021 enumeration reports from municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards, and Statistics Canada census district population projections. Note: Thunder Bay figure is based on 2018 data.

Figure A-2: Opioid-related ED visits, 2017-2021.



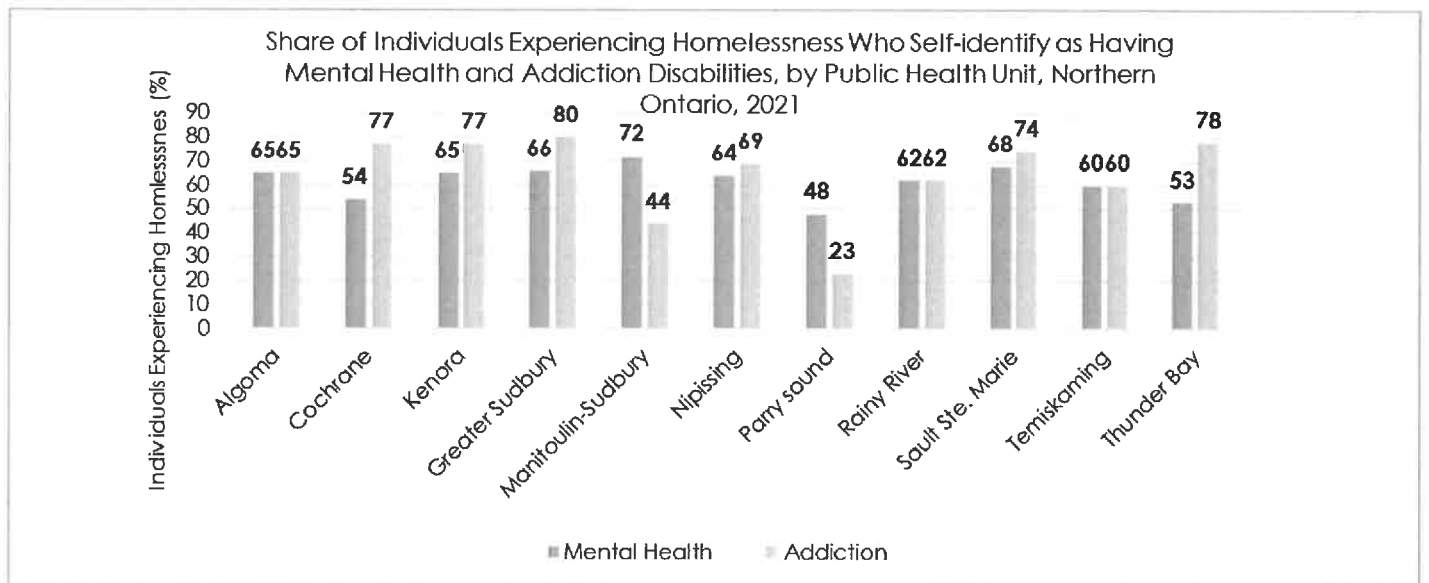
Source: Public Health Ontario Interactive Opioid Tool, 2022.

Figure A-3: Opioid-related Deaths, 2016-2020.



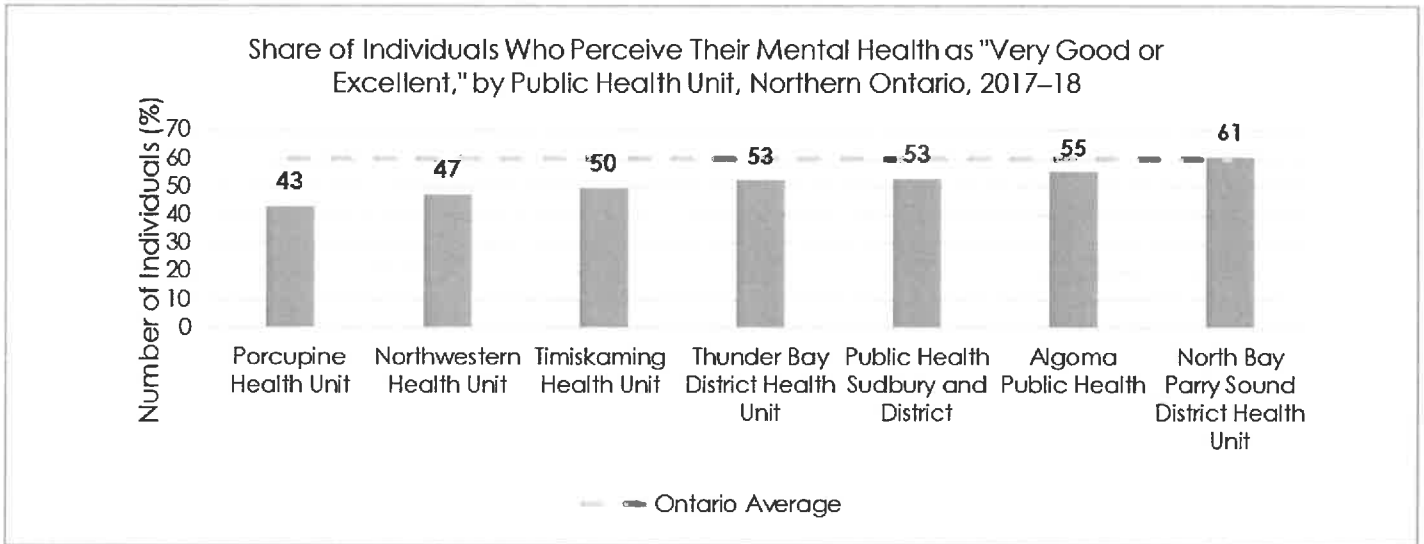
Source: Public Health Ontario Interactive Opioid Tool, 2021. Note: 2021 data not available of the time of publication of this paper.

Figure A-4: Homeless Individuals Struggling with Mental Health and Substance Disorders, 2021.



Note: Thunder Bay figure is based on 2018 data.
Sources: 2021 enumeration reports from District Social Service Administration Boards and City of Greater Sudbury.

Figure A-5: Perceived Mental Health of Individuals, 2017-2018.



Source: Author's calculations from Statistics Canada health characteristics, two-year period estimates, and census profiles, public health units, 2016 census.

About Northern Policy Institute

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent, evidence-driven think tank. We perform research, analyze data, and disseminate ideas. Our mission is to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts our communities, our province, our country, and our world.

We believe in partnership, collaboration, communication, and cooperation. Our team seeks to do inclusive research that involves broad engagement and delivers recommendations for specific, measurable action. Our success depends on our partnerships with other entities based in or passionate about Northern Ontario.

Our permanent offices are in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Kirkland Lake. During the summer months we have satellite offices in other regions of Northern Ontario staffed by teams of Experience North placements. These placements are university and college students working in your community on issues important to you and your neighbours.

Related Research

More than Just a Number: Addressing the Homelessness, Addiction, and Mental Health Crisis in the North

Holly Parsons

Integration of Care in Northern Ontario: Patient Medical Homes, Rural Health Hubs and Evolving Ontario Health Teams

Dr. Sarah-Lynn Newbery and Josee Malette

A Case Study in Northern Governance: Local Decision Making in the Northern Ontario Health Care System

Eric Everett

To stay connected or get involved, please contact us at:

info@northernpolicy.ca www.northernpolicy.ca





www.SuperiorNorthEMS.com

HEADQUARTERS – Chief of EMS

October 30, 2023

Mark Figliomeni
Chief Administrative Officer
Township of Red Rock
PO Box 447
Red Rock ON
P0T 2P0

Dear Mr. Figliomeni:

Superior North Emergency Medical Service – 2023 Levy Information – Q3

Please find enclosed your 3rd quarter municipal levy for land ambulance services in your community.

The 3rd quarter levies have been adjusted slightly based upon approved wage increases. We do not anticipate any further increases in 2023.

Please contact either myself, at (807) 625-3259 shane.muir@thunderbay.ca or Brent Cline – Superintendent of Administrative Services at (807) 625-3264 brent.cline@thunderbay.ca, if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shane Muir".

Shane Muir
Chief of EMS

Encls.

Proudly Serving the People of the District of Thunder Bay

**105 Junot Ave S., Thunder Bay ON P7B 4X6
Tel: (807) 625-3271 Fax: (807) 684-2657**

**The Corporation of the Township of Red Rock
Administrative Report**

Date: November 6th, 2023
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: CAO/Clerk/Treasurer Activity Report
Submitted by: Mark Figliomeni – CAO/Clerk/Treasurer

BACKGROUND:

October 17th, 2023 - November 6th, 2023

DISCUSSION:

This report is for information only and provides Council with an update on the activities within Administration & the office of the CAO/Clerk/Treasurer.

Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have and reach out at any time.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY:

**Day to Day Operations- General Discussions & Meetings – Residents & Stakeholders
Meeting with PSD Citywide – AMP – 2024/2025 Compliance – October 31st.
Bi-Weekly Internal Staff / Team Meetings / Discussions
Attended Northern Treasurer’s Forum – MMAH – October 18th & 19th (AM)
Attended NOMA Meeting – October 19th (PM) – Thunder Bay
Meeting with MPAC – Municipal Update – October 24th**

This is a summary of some of the activity within Administration & the Office of the CAO/Clerk/Treasurer. We continue to build and grow as a Team and as a Community that is striving to move forward. This is our major focus and ultimately part of our overall vision for Red Rock both now and in the future.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

MONITORING SITUATIONS:

***Continue to set internal policies and procedures based on overall best practice within the Municipal Act.**

DIRECTION / DISCUSSION / UPDATES:

***ROMA 2024 Annual Conference – January 21st - 23rd, 2024 – Toronto – Discussion of Council regarding attendance & delegation requests.**

***Red Rock Non-Profit Housing Corporation – Funding Update – The funding for this request was not successful at this time. The discussed property will not require a transfer and remains as Municipal property.**

***She Shed Aesthetics & Spa – An agreement has been negotiated to have She Shed Aesthetics & Spa operate out of the Curling Club Lounge area in the Red Rock Recreation Centre. Welcome She Shed Aesthetics & Spa to the Township of Red Rock.**

***Food Cycle – Pilot Program – Update – At this time we have received 22 requests to participate in the program from residents of Red Rock. We have reached out to inquire into more information based on this number and options for direction.**

***Weight Room – Update – Camera's have been installed to assure that all members using the facility have 24-hour access to the main bathrooms in the lobby of the Recreation Centre.**

***The arena ice season opened as scheduled November 2nd, 2023. – Update.**