

## For Immediate Release

### Priorities for Northern Ontario Population Growth

**February 2022** – The Magnetic North 2021 Conference Report highlights short, medium, and long-term priorities established out of dialogue exchanged during the June 2021 online Magnetic North Conference. What was consistently raised can be summarized in these key points:

1. Extension of population growth discussions to include Indigenous peoples, secondary and domestic migrants, and actors in small and rural communities.
2. Regional, organizational, and individual-level buy-in and collaboration.
3. Identification and promotion of what is available in our regions.
4. Programs and initiatives BY and FOR the communities they are intending to benefit.
5. Continuous measurement of progress and lessons learned.

These points ought to be reflected in the individual actions and strategies of every organization or community looking to maintain and growth the population in any of our Northern Ontario regions. And, they have been.

Starting in February 2020, decision-makers in Ontario's northern regions have met annually to exchange ideas about Northern Ontario population growth efforts. After hosting the initial conferences, it became clear that there is an abundance of work being done to combat racism, further reconciliation, and welcome newcomers across Northern Ontario. However, *connection, coordination, and communication* between these efforts is needed to maximize the impacts of these efforts.

To continue with this work, over 250 people representing more than 120 organizations gathered virtually over two days in June 2021 to lay out a plan for attraction, retention, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Ontario's Northern Regions.

The Magnetic North Program officer, based at Northern Policy Institute, will support all committed partners in pursuing the priorities set out at the annual conferences and the next progress report is due at the 2022 conference set for June of next year. For details about the Magnetic North Initiative and the Magnetic North project partners please visit <https://www.northernpolicy.ca/magnetic-north>.

To read the report, please visit: <https://www.northernpolicy.ca/magnetic-north-report-2021>

**Media Interviews:** Mercedes Labelle, author and Lead Policy Analyst; and Charles Cirtwill, President and CEO, are available for interviews.

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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 present in or passionate about Northern Ontario.*

*Based in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Kirkland Lake; NPI is active in every region of Northern Ontario. During the summer months we have satellite offices in communities across 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.*