

NORTHERN
POLICY INSTITUTE

INSTITUT DES POLITIQUES
DU NORD

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IMPACT REPORT

Vol. 1

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This report is interactive!

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Northern Policy Institute's

VISION

A growing, sustainable, and self-sufficient Northern Ontario. One with the ability to not only identify opportunities but to pursue them, either on its own or through intelligent partnerships. A Northern Ontario that contributes both to its own success and to the success of others.

Message from the **PRESIDENT & CEO**

“Northern Policy Institute has a bold vision for a bright future for Northern Ontario. One shared by every person I have met in my travels across our many distinct regions. As a registered charity for educational purposes, NPI makes our contribution to the achievement of this vision by strengthening first ourselves, and then others. By simply changing the paragraph above and replacing “Northern Ontario” with “NPI” you would go from our vision statement to our mission goals.

Most importantly, our approach is working. This document will outline just some of the impacts we have achieved in our first four years, and the foundations we have laid for future success: ours, our partners, and our communities.”

• **Charles Cirtwill** •





Working with our **COMMUNITIES**

There are approximately **780,000 people** living in Northern Ontario. NPI considers each and every one of them our “boss”.

Collectively, their issues and concerns are the ones we are here to address, in an informed, evidence based way. That’s why our research agenda is set through ongoing discussions with all of the communities in Northern Ontario. To ensure every community has a voice in this process, NPI collects feedback through multiple avenues, including one-on-one meetings, larger events, social media, phone, mail, and traditional media monitoring. We also involve our Advisory Council, Research Advisory Board, and Board of Directors to help guide our priorities.

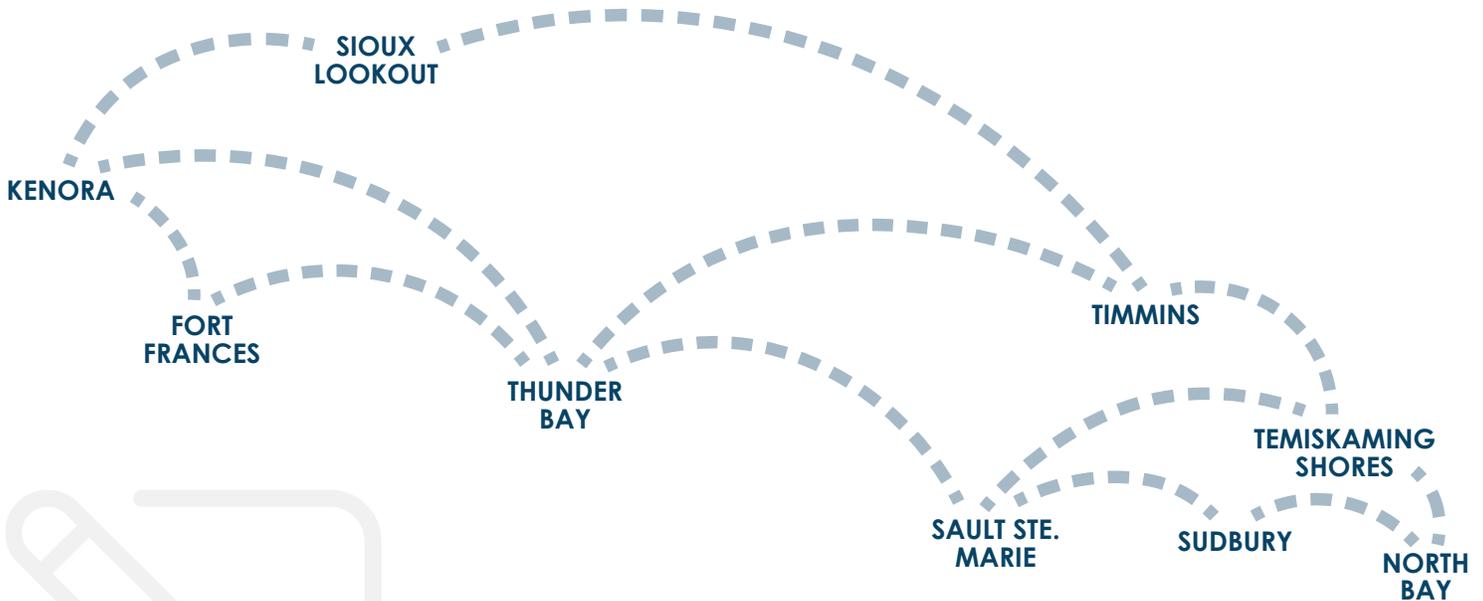
COMMUNITIES WE HAVE VISITED/MET WITH:

TIMMINS DRYDEN NIPIGON
 WHITE RIVER IGNACE GERALDTON UPSALA • EAR FALLS
 COBALT • NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE • DORION • LITTLE CURRENT
 CARLING • SOUTH PORCUPINE KIRKLAND LAKE • NIPISSING FIRST NATION
 RED ROCK SCHREIBER **FORT FRANCES** VAL CARON
 MANITOUWADGE BALDWIN • HEARST EARLTON TORONTO • NEW LISKEARD
GREATER SUDBURY BALMERTOWN • BLIND RIVER • FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION
 NEEBING • THUNDER BAY **TEMISKAMING SHORES**
 PARRY SOUND • SAULT STE. MARIE • COCHENOUR
 HAILEYBURY • MARATHON TERRACE BAY
 LONGLAC **NORTH BAY**
 BATCHAWANA BAY

OUR BOARD AND OUR COMMUNITIES:

Board meetings are rotated across Northern Ontario to showcase communities, and introduce our directors and staff to their unique challenges and successes.

We have held board meetings in the following communities:



TESTIMONIALS

“[NPI] moves the conversation from emotional political jockeying to evidence-based, purpose-driven policy options.

This gives the North the power to consider choices, recommend policy and be taken seriously.”

– Michael Atkins, President, Northern Ontario Business

“Refreshing”

“Charles Cirtwill isn’t afraid to take on **big** issues.”

– Lisa Laco, CBC Superior Morning, Thunder Bay; March 10, 2017

“**NPI is the go to organization** to apply the “Northern Ontario” lens to all policy issues to ensure a viable, sustainable economy and one that is positioned to adapt to an ever changing economic landscape.”

– Madge Richardson, Executive Director,
North Superior Workforce Planning Board – Your Local Employment Planning Council.

“Accurate”

“Compelling”

“Because of the efforts of NPI, our region is better connected and more self-sufficient.

I can say with confidence, the CEDC is now better informed to make decisions that will have a positive impact, not only on our organization, but on Northern Ontario as a whole.”

– Douglas Murray, CEO, Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission.

“If you’re interested in engaging with Northern and/or remote communities, **@NorthernPolicy** has links to lots of interesting info.”

– Carol Fletcher, CRSP (Source: Twitter)

“NPI has proven to be **a leader in evidence-based research** and analysis that is collaborative and relevant to Northern Ontario.”

– Fred Gibbons, President & CEO, Northern College.

POLICY BYTES

“This is a wonderful statistical review of opportunities in the north. If we look across the board at opportunity the high level view is actually quite encouraging.”

–Ferg Devins
commenting on Policy Bytes, “The Grass Isn’t Always Greener” by Jarrod Sundmark.

“It’s great to see that broadband and the digital divide in Northern Ontario is being further discussed. **Keep up the Great Work!**”

–Blue Sky Net
commenting on Policy Bytes, The Digital Divide in Northern Ontario by Mandy- Jean Masse.

NPI REPORTS

“Having appropriate governance for economic zones that make sense would be a lot better than status quo which hasn’t worked. Something new is definitely needed.”

–Philip Koning
(Source: Twitter)

“An important read on changing demographics and the importance of education @NorthernPolicy.”

–Sheila Cote-Meek, Phd (Source: Twitter)

“As Mayor of Cochrane, Ontario, I have had the **pleasure** of working with NPI on several occasions, under some of the most dynamic of circumstances. I can say with conviction, that NPI plays an integral role in the job ahead for **‘Team North’**”

– Peter Politis, Mayor, Town of Cochrane

“Important Read”



Making an

IMPACT ON POLICY

Ultimately, Northern Policy Institute exists to see better, more effective, more evidence based policy developed and implemented to improve the lives and the future of all Northern Ontarians. NPI has already had an impact on policy decisions being made at regional and provincial levels. Examples include:

ANISHNABEK EDUCATION AUTHORITY

A September, 2014 NPI paper entitled *Picking Up the Pieces A Community-School-Based Approach to First Nations Education Renewal* spoke about the need to enable autonomous First Nations community school authorities, governed entirely by First Nations peoples themselves. **These concepts are reflected in the newly created Anishinabek Education Authority.**

SPRING BEAR HUNT

In August 2015, NPI published *Does the Spring Bear Hunt Make 'Cents?*, which recommended Ontario implement a spring bear hunt with a non-resident component. **The Ontario government soon after announced the spring bear hunt would be expanded to all 88 wildlife management areas until 2020.**

MID-CANADA CORRIDOR

The provincial and federal governments recently partnered on a transportation corridor assessment to several communities affected by the Ring of Fire. The need for this type of next generational thinking about the development and management of northern infrastructure is reflected **in a February 2016 report, *Mid Canada Boreal Corridor: Planning for Canada's Future*. Even TVO has taken note of these ideas.** 

BASIC INCOME GUARANTEE

BIG conference. BIG impact. Our October, 2016 conference and subsequent outreach around a Basic Income Guarantee pilot in Ontario is a great example of our leadership on timely policy issues not only in the north, but provincially and nationally. When Hugh Segal, special advisor to the Ontario Government, released his discussion paper on November 3, 2016, it contained several key recommendations reflected in the NPI analysis. Including a recommendation that a basic income pilot involve a randomized control trial in one large urban area of the province as well as three saturation sites: one in southern Ontario, **one in Northern Ontario and one in an Indigenous community.**

MIGRATION

Just to limit the fall in our ratio of dependents to working age people to match the expected Ontario level by 2041, Northern Ontario needs in excess of 5,000 new people a year for the next twenty years. That's 100,000 new northerners. We need 300,000 new northerners, 15,000 a year, if we want to maintain our current ratios of workers to dependents.

This is not in place of fully educating and engaging our existing underemployed and unemployed population; this is in addition to that. This is NOT, as some critics of higher immigration targets like to suggest, an either/or exercise. We must do BOTH, and we must also support families better. And we must enhance our productivity through innovation and invention. **Northern Policy Institute is working with partner organizations across the north (including colleges, universities, settlement associations, economic development agencies and municipalities) to develop a Northern Newcomers Strategy that is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.**



THE SHARED ECONOMY

The economy of Northern Ontario requires a level of cooperation and collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations that is seamless and perpetual. Northern Policy Institute is working with groups throughout the north to celebrate successes, share and inform best practices, and assist in designing policies and structures that support the sharing of knowledge in all directions. Educational ownership and infrastructure management have been two areas we have dealt with already. We are now turning to the need for greater support and collaboration among economic developers. **The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, the Ontario First Nations Economic Developers Association, the Northwestern Ontario Development Network, and local economic development offices have all already contributed significantly to this work.**



EVIDENCE BASED POLICY MAKING

Generating data and analysis is only one part of NPI's mandate. Getting it into the hands of policy makers so they can make evidence based decisions is even more important. NPI has met with small and large councils across the north, individually with Chiefs and Mayors, and with senior staff and groups of all of the above. NPI does not seek out these appearances; our policy is that we must be invited in, and we are, often.

In addition to our in person meetings, tools like northbynumbers.ca and our online infrastructure map are used frequently. The [infrastructure map](#) has received **4,961** views since July 2016 and our map of the Ring of Fire is a favourite of visitors to our office; five more copies were recently printed for KKETS.





Leveraging

SCARCE RESOURCES

Here in Northern Ontario dollars are often spread thinly across many regions.

We've worked to develop research and data partnerships with local and regional organizations, to combine resources, and expedite research in areas that interest both parties.

📍 NORTHERN ONTARIO DATA CONSORTIUM

Provides affordable access to economic and social data at municipal, provincial and federal levels. Members can download raw data for any community in Canada, receive training, and use it for their own analysis and policy making. Currently, 25 organizations have signed on to this tool. **We started this project in 2016 using 100% funds from our founding grant. Within six months, the project was fully funded by partner organizations and we were able to reallocate those funds to other projects.**

RURAL RENAISSANCE

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is leading a 30-month applied research and analysis initiative focused on deepening understanding of effective practices for quantifying rural civic engagement, social capital and community well-being. Northern Policy Institute is partnering with ROI to carry this research to completion and to bring a “northern perspective” to both the applied research work and a complementary series of expert papers on rural governance and growth challenges. Initially, no northern communities were selected to participate in the applied research project. NPI's financial and in-kind participation allowed The Township of Baldwin to be added as an eighth test site.

FEDERAL ECONOMIC AGENDA FOR ONTARIO

The Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario (FEA) was an effort led by the Mowat Centre to develop a common vision on key economic issues, outline policy options that could be pursued by the federal government, and inform platform development by political parties in the lead up to the 2015 federal election. Northern Policy Institute was a research partner on this project. A questionnaire was distributed to over **300** municipalities and First Nations in Northern Ontario; **12** events were held in Northern Ontario attended by over **250** participants; and, the public were encouraged to submit feedback through online comment forms and by telephone. **Initially, there was no allowance for direct participation in this effort by the people of Northern Ontario. In the final report, 7 of the 33 recommendations were based on the feedback NPI secured from our communities. Including investing in the success of Indigenous peoples, understanding and reflecting the diverse labour markets of Northern Ontario, committing to better northern infrastructure, and being a flexible and committed partner in pursuit of northern opportunities.**

EXPERIENCE NORTH

Northern Policy Institute's summer placement program. These four month placements allow interns to learn first-hand about the cut and thrust of public policy debate. Placements are hosted across the north by partner organizations that have included, Confederation College (Kenora), Northern College (Timmins), Algoma University (Sault Ste. Marie), Laurentian University (Sudbury) and Lakehead University (Thunder Bay). College Boreal (Timmins), Nipissing First Nation and Confederation College (Fort Frances) have all agreed to host summer placements in 2018. Of our 30 placements to date, eight have returned to NPI in some capacity, including as NOHFC-supported full year post-graduation interns. Longer term, eight are now working in the federal and provincial public service, ten are still in or have returned to school in the north, eight others are working across the north in organizations committed to supporting local growth while two are doing similar work in southern Ontario. Summer placements have authored 28 Blogs for NPI, four Research Reports, Commentaries and Briefing Notes, and have been the prime movers behind four of NPI's current major projects.

COMMUNITY HUBS

NPI's presence on the Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group is having direct impact on discussions in both the north and south, ensuring northern perspectives are taken into consideration in the implementation of recommendations. For the Timiskaming Shores DSSAB's recent Regional Gathering on community hubs, NPI was able to assist in securing Karen Pitre, Special Advisor to the Premier on Community Hubs and Scirish Panipak, a community organizer from Parry Sound, to speak at the event. **After the Temiskaming Shores event, the Parry Sound project that is transforming an old school into a community hub for the local Indigenous population has become a favourite provincial success story.**

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT PLANNING COUNCIL (LEPC)

NPI partnered with the LEPC pilots in Timmins and Thunder Bay. In one case, we split the cost of a Labour Market Analyst three ways for 18 months. In another, NPI shared the cost of two Labour Force Researchers with the Thunder Bay LEPC and acted as the data and research partner for that project during its first 18 months. Over 100 community and regional partners participated in the Thunder Bay project. New knowledge, skills and capacity have been shared with the partner organizations and the broader community. Of particular note, NPI ensured this work was brought to the attention of provincial and federal agencies. We recruited data experts based in Ottawa and Toronto from MNDM, MEDG and...

WORKPLACE IN TRANSITION

Working with the 6 Northern Ontario Workforce planning boards, NPI has published analysis and released new data about Northern Ontario, the Northwestern and Northeastern Economic Regions and all 11 Census Districts. This material is informing a multitude of northern organizations including Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA), Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), L'Association des francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO), the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) and economic development agencies. Much of this information is also included in community level data sets available online at www.northbynumbers.ca. This GIS based tool allows users to portray socio-economic data in map form and generate comparative maps covering the 2001, 2006 and 2011 census (with 2016 data to be added post release in the fall of 2017). **To date, 3640 users have had 4519 sessions using this online community level tool. In addition, each month, NPI reaches out to over 500 subscribers with our bilingual Due North/Franc Nord newsletter. Every edition highlights two communities, providing information on population, median age and employment rates.**

“Northern Policy Institute is an organization of bright individuals who are **dedicated to uncovering policy opportunities** for Northern Ontario. And though we were kilometers apart between Thunder Bay, Kenora, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and Sudbury locations – we were united by working towards the common goal of improving the social and economic landscape of an area we all love.”

– Jamie McIntyre and Lauren Rainsford, Experience North 2015

DATA 101 WORKSHOPS

With baseline and trend data now available for many of our northern communities, the next step is to work with those who want to put the data to use. NPI has worked with local not-for profits, l'Association du Francophones du Nord-Ouest De l'Ontario, the Ontario Centre for Workforce Innovation, YES Employment Services, and the Local Employment Planning Councils to educate their staff and volunteers on how to access, compile and interpret census and other data. These workshops will continue to be offered to meet the high demand.

...Service Canada to serve on the Labour Market and Data Working Group run out of Thunder Bay. We also authored over 30 Community Labour Market Reports profiling key labour market indicators such as: employment by industry and occupation, migration and skills and training.

 **Baakaakonaanan Ishkwaandemonan – Opening Doors for You - a project connecting businesses with service providers to promote and celebrate the hiring of Indigenous and newcomer job seekers, was a unique partnership between immigrant oriented organizations and Indigenous service providers to promote the well-being and inclusion of BOTH communities**

AWARENESS

Our publications have been **cited by elected officials**, government agencies, non-for profit organizations and businesses, and have received local, regional, and **national media coverage**.



NPI full year offices
across the north -
1 in Northwestern
Ontario & 2 in
Northeastern
Ontario



COMMUNITY
DATA PROGRAM



INTERACTIVE
MAPS



VIDEOS &
PODCASTS



RESEARCH PAPERS
& COMMENTARIES



BLOGS



MEDIA ATTENTION

Regional labour market showing signs of stability after down decade

“ **ENERGY COSTS AND AGING INFRASTRUCTURE**
Top Challenges in Northwest ”

Northern voices can indeed be heard

A 'DOLLARS AND SENSE' ALTERNATIVE – COMMUNITY HUB SCHOOLS

FedNor: who calls the shots matters

Spring bear hunt **WORTH MILLIONS**
–report

Northern Ontario Statistical Data Easier to Access

“ Making Political Policy **Truly Northern** ”

North shrinking, but Nipissing growing

SUDBURY CONFERENCE EXPLORING GUARANTEED INCOME

North Policy Institute Prepares for 2015 Federal Election

Vers l'ouverture de **centres d'injection supervisée**
en Ontario?

Report finds rural areas around Nickel City face big drop in population

Furthermore, organizations like *Basic Income Network Canada*, *Basic Income Earth Network*, *Basic Income Edmonton*, *Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management*, *Tamarack Institute* and *PROOF Food Insecurity Policy Research* are including presentations from NPI as resources for policy planning and discussion.

Building capacity through **EXPERIENCE**

Northern Policy Institute has grown exponentially in size, providing meaningful employment opportunities, while also developing a diverse staff base. NPI's team includes Newcomers to both Canada and Northern Ontario, First Nations, Métis, Francophones, and boomerangs who have come back to the north to work, play, and live.



POST-SECONDARY RESEARCH

Inside the classroom, NPI worked with Laurentian University students to conduct research on health care in Northern communities. The research resulted in a briefing note, **Health Care Priorities in Northern Ontario Aboriginal Communities**.



↑ NPI.COMMUNITYACCOUNTS.CA

This tool will provide a single source of information on key economic, social and environmental indicators broken down to the community, regional, provincial and national levels. It is modelled on the successful approach of the Newfoundland & Labrador Statistical Agency.

↑ KNOWLEDGE NORTH

Off the shelf and into a database. An online policy library of current and historical policy-related research about and applicable to Northern Ontario leverages existing research already completed in, or about, the north. So far, we have collected 1200 documents from over 400 different organizations.

STATE OF THE NORTH

This annual event will look at the state of Northern Ontario from an economic, environmental and social perspective. It will also provide an annual platform for NPI to profile our work and to bring policy experts together with community leaders to explore evidence based solutions for and from Northern Ontario. The 2017 event will be held in Timmins and will be linked to the Northern Ontario Business awards. The theme this year is the demographic shift and how to respond from a Northern Ontario context.

List of PARTNERS & DONORS



We're not doing this work in isolation.

Let's also look at some of the organizations we're working with and within to change the conversation:

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

NPI has received in-kind memberships to 7 Chambers of Commerce throughout Northern Ontario and works closely with the 30 other chambers in the network along with the regional chamber and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

Current Chambers NPI is a member of:

Blind River
Chamber of Commerce

Fort Frances
Chamber of Commerce

Kenora & District
Chamber of Commerce

Marathon
Chamber of Commerce

Sudbury East
Chamber of Commerce

Top of the Lake
Chamber of Commerce

Temiskaming Shores & Area
Chamber of Commerce

PARTNERS



Ambassadors Northwest



Common Voice Northwest



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD



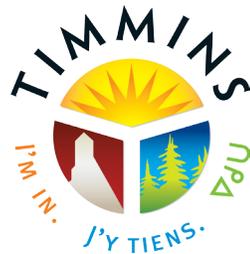
FAR NORTHEAST TRAINING BOARD (FNETB)
your Local Employment Planning Council
COMMISSION DE FORMATION DU NORD-EST (CFNE)
votre Conseil Local de Planification de l'Emploi



Sudbury & Manitoulin
Workforce Planning
Planification en main-d'oeuvre



Timmins Economic Development Corporation
Corporation du développement économique de Timmins



United Way
Thunder Bay



EVENT SPONSORS



Institute for Northern Ontario Research & Development



Conseil des Services du District de
Manitoulin-Sudbury
District Services Board



Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce



social planning council of Sudbury

conseil de planification sociale de Sudbury



Timmins Chamber of Commerce
Chambre de commerce de Timmins

DONORS

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- Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce
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- Marathon Chamber of Commerce
- Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association
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