2026 to 2029

Strategic Plan

Last reviewed March 2026

Introduction

We are excited to share our new Strategic Plan for 2026 to 2029, a roadmap that honours our long tradition of serving businesses across the City and County of Peterborough.

We are proud of our role as a respected advocate, trusted connector, and leading voice for the region's business community. This tradition is not only our legacy, but also our foundation. As we look ahead, we recognize that continuing to serve our members well means evolving alongside them. Our strength lies not only in what we've built, but in our willingness to listen, adapt, and respond to the changing needs of the businesses we serve.

As the business environment continues to shift due to rapid change, ongoing economic pressures, workforce challenges, and growing diversity within our community the way businesses operate and what they need from their Chamber is changing. Through engagement with our members, partners, community leaders, Board, and staff, we heard a clear call to action: focus on what matters most, lead where it counts, broaden engagement, and make our impact visible.

We are well positioned to meet this moment, and this Strategic Plan provides clear direction for the years ahead. This plan is our response, built on four interconnected priorities that position us for continued relevance and impact:

- **A Trusted Voice for Business** - advocating boldly on issues that matter most
- **A Strong Business Community** - leading and collaborating to strengthen our regional business ecosystem
- **An Engaged & Connected Membership** - ensuring every member understands their value and feels supported
- **A Resilient Organization** - building the foundation to evolve, adapt, and lead with confidence

Across all four priorities, we commit to broadening representation in leadership and decision-making, strengthening relationships across sectors and communities, and ensuring businesses of all sizes and geographies have the supports they need to thrive. Clear and consistent communications will remain central to building trust, reinforcing professionalism, and ensuring our members and partners understand the value and influence of what we do.

We look forward to working alongside our members, staff, Board, partners, and the broader community to bring this plan to life with integrity, transparency, and courage. We are deeply grateful to all those who contributed their time and insight to shape our plan, and we're energized by what we can accomplish together.

About the Chamber

The Peterborough + Kawarthas Chamber of Commerce reflects the coming together of two long-established business institutions, the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce and the Kawartha Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. The 2021 merger created a unified organization serving the broader business community across both the City and County of Peterborough, bringing together the economic strength of the urban centre with the entrepreneurial character and diverse industries of surrounding rural communities.

Businesses in the region span a wide range of sectors and scales, from small owner operated enterprises, non-profits and charities to larger employers, reflecting the diverse economic character of both urban and rural communities.

The Chamber currently serves a diverse membership and provides a range of services and supports including advocacy, knowledge sharing, and support through networking events, promotion and cost-saving benefits.

Our Vision, Mission, and Values

Our vision, mission, and values are the foundation upon which the Chamber operates and the compass that guides our work. During our 2026 strategic planning process, we reviewed and refined these statements to ensure they reflect who we are today and the work we want to do moving forward.

Our Vision A thriving, inclusive, and connected business community

Our Mission The Peterborough + Kawarthas Chamber of Commerce catalyzes a strong, inclusive business community through advocacy, community building, and services to support growth and opportunity.

Our Values

Collaboration. We work with partners across the business ecosystem, leading where appropriate, collaborating where others are best positioned, and focusing our efforts where the Chamber can add the greatest value to members and our community.

Inclusion. We support a diverse and representative business community, welcoming businesses of all sizes, sectors, and backgrounds across the City and County.

Influence. We are a voice for local business. We speak up for business with courage and clarity, advancing ideas and policies that strengthen our regional business community.

Integrity. We act with professionalism, transparency, and non-partisanship, earning the trust of members, partners, and decision-makers.

Member First. We are committed to advancing the success of our members. Their needs, challenges, and opportunities guide our work and priorities.

Our Strategic Priorities

Guided by our vision, mission, and values, we have established **four strategic priorities** to direct our work over the next three years, from 2026 to 2029.

These priorities emerged from extensive consultation with members, staff, partners, community leaders and the Board, and directly address both internal capacity challenges and external environmental factors. They are intentionally designed to be broad and flexible, allowing us to adapt and navigate emerging needs and opportunities, while ensuring we can direct our energy and resources where they are needed most.

Priority: Leading as a Trusted Voice for Business

We are the regional authority on business issues and lead with courage and clarity on priority issues that matter. By listening deeply, advocating boldly, and communicating transparently we ensure the needs of our members and the broader business community are clearly heard, meaningfully represented, and reflected in decisions that shape our local economy.

1. **Establish a focused advocacy and communications strategy.** Provide structured opportunities for members to inform policy discussion, provide regular updates of positions and resolutions, and report on outcomes so members understand how their voices helped shaped outcomes.
2. **Strengthen municipal and regional influence** through consistent engagement with government representatives and decision-makers, by monitoring local issues that impact business, and by participating in key policy discussions and budget processes.
3. **Continue to work with partners and provincial and national chamber organizations** on policy issues that impact our members.
4. **Expand and diversify advocacy capacity** by broadening participation in advocacy efforts. Ensure diverse industry, rural, sectoral, and equity-deserving voices help shape priorities and strengthen internal capacity to research, analyze, and respond to emerging issues.

Priority: Supporting a Strong Business Community

We are a connector, strengthening our regional business ecosystem by leading where it matters most and collaborating purposefully. By defining our role clearly and building strategic partnerships, we support a connected and resilient business environment across the City and County of Peterborough.

1. **Define the Chamber's role with partners** by developing and sharing a clear partnership framework that guides strategic involvement decisions, outlines roles, and defines accountability and resources.

2. **Improve the flow of relevant information to businesses** by working with partners to understand the impact of social issues, share timely updates, opportunities, and resources that help businesses navigate programs, supports, and emerging issues.
3. **Build authentic relationships with Indigenous and under-represented business communities**. Ensure diverse voices shape, not just inform, decisions and joint initiatives and that opportunities exist across the region for partners and businesses to engage with the Chamber.

Priority: Building an Engaged & Connected Membership

We are your chamber and trusted partner for growth. By strengthening how we welcome, connect, communicate, and continue to support and celebrate members, we ensure businesses have the resources to thrive and view their Chamber membership as essential.

1. **Create meaningful connection opportunities** through events, peer exchanges, learning sessions, and facilitated introductions, and with partners and subject-matter experts continue to provide valuable business insights and learning opportunities.
2. **Reinforce the Chamber as the place members turn to first** for business support, information, and connection by continuing to provide cost-savings programs, sharing relevant and timely information, and enhancing the member directory functionality.
3. **Celebrate member successes and achievements** and create opportunities for members to promote their work and increase their regional presence.
4. **Strengthen the member journey** from recruitment, onboarding, and renewal to grow membership. Establish consistent touchpoints, clearly communicate services, benefits and resources, and understand what drives retention and departure, ensuring that every interaction is accessible and inclusive and recognizes the diverse needs of members.

Priority: Sustaining a Resilient Organization

We are a resilient, future-ready organization built to lead. By investing in people, strengthening governance, improving systems, and planning intentionally for growth, we have a stable foundation that positions the Chamber to evolve, adapt, and lead with confidence.

1. **Support staff capacity, development, and wellbeing** by aligning workloads with available resources, investing in professional development, and planning proactively for knowledge transfer and succession.
2. **Strengthen internal systems and operations excellence** by maintaining accreditation, leveraging technology, strengthening data tracking and workflows, and establishing quality standards that support efficiency, continuity, and quality delivery.
3. **Strengthen governance and Board effectiveness** by recruiting and developing diverse, skilled directors, clarifying roles and expectations, and ensuring decisions are guided by clear policies and long-term strategic priorities.
4. **Ensure long-term financial sustainability** by diversifying revenue streams, managing expenses strategically, and planning responsibly for stable growth and organizational resilience.

Plan Implementation and Monitoring

To ensure the successful implementation of our strategic priorities, the Board of Directors and CEO commits to the following actions:

1. Develop annual operational plans that identify goals, objectives, key measurements, timelines, resources, and roles and responsibilities, and allocate budget resources aligned with strategic priorities during the annual budget development process.
2. Monitor and measure effectiveness of operational plans through reports to the Board that track key metrics, milestones, and challenges.
3. Use the Strategic Plan to guide decision making when opportunities and challenges arise.
4. Communicate progress of strategic priorities to members and partners on a regular basis.
5. Complete an annual review of the strategic plan, assessing progress of priority areas and adjusting objectives and strategies as needed. Ensure changes are reflected in annual operational plans and budgets.

Appendix: Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

This strategic plan was developed through a collaborative, inclusive process involving board members and the CEO and staff team, as well as extensive engagement with members, representatives of partner organizations, and community leaders. We are grateful for the time, expertise, and honest reflection contributed by all participants.

The strategic planning process was conducted in early 2026 and included the following key activities.

- Board members and staff participated in a Reflection & Visioning session as well as two strategic retreat sessions.
- Board and staff, members, partners, and community leaders, contributed their input through focus groups, interviews, and an online survey. Results of engagement were summarized in an Engagement Report and provided to the Board of Directors and staff to inform their decision-making and the development of this plan.

Overview of Engagement

A total of **168 individuals** participated in the engagement process (with some overlap between methodologies):

Members in 4 focus group sessions

Interviews with representatives of community partner organizations and community leaders

Responses to the online survey