

Prince Edward County

# VitalSigns<sup>®</sup> 2018

The County  
FOUNDATION 



WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD A PLACE  
WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS

## About The County Foundation

Formed in 2008, The County Foundation (TCF) is one of 191 community foundations in Canada that have collective assets of over \$5 billion. TCF is a registered charity dedicated to building a strong and vibrant Prince Edward County.

### We do this by:

- Encouraging community-oriented philanthropy through the development of funds, legacies and bequests
- Making and managing grants that build community strength
- Conducting research to identify and prioritize fact-based community needs
- Leading collaborative action to address those needs

**Our vision is to improve the lives of present and future generations in Prince Edward County by working together to build a place where people can reside, work and participate.**

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The County Foundation's second Vital Signs Report is an evidence-based snapshot of the community at this point in time. It promotes awareness of community successes and challenges and what is being done to address them. It also identifies opportunities for further involvement, collaboration and support from within the community.

**PEOPLE, PLACE & CULTURE** We have many strengths. Our rich heritage and culture, sense of pride, generosity of spirit and resilience have served us well for 225 years. In this current period of rapid change there is growth and prosperity for some but not for all. This report touches on collaborative initiatives to **build a community where everyone can feel they belong.**

**HOUSING** Growing popularity has led to soaring house prices and a lack of affordable rental accommodation. A new not-for-profit housing corporation and two grassroots organizations are initiating projects to address this. The municipality is deliberating on regulating short-term rentals that are impacting our community.

**EMPLOYMENT** Local businesses are optimistic about the future and plan to expand. However there is a mismatch of opportunities and skills in our workforce. A new collaborative initiative will help to close that gap. Lack of available and affordable (attainable) housing and inadequate public transit also affect employment, and solutions are planned. **Agriculture** is changing. There are fewer mid-size operations and more "mega-farms." However new small family farms are being established.

**INCOME** PEC's median household income has increased but remains about 10% lower than Ontario's. Housing, hydro, water and food costs are rising faster than incomes. Our data shows that while there are some high-income households in The County, the number of individuals who fall within the Low Income Measurement category has increased, and, in the case of seniors, has almost doubled since our 2013 Vital Signs Report.

**HEALTH & SAFETY** An increase in obesity and continued smoking are of concern, and healthcare professionals are continuing to inform and educate on long-term impacts. There is increased awareness of the impact of mental health on our well-being and several projects are addressing the issue.

We are an aging population and this places demands on healthcare services. However we are recruiting new doctors and have initial approval to build a new hospital. We generally feel safe and crime rates are dropping. Our community-oriented police force and first-responders are addressing emergent concerns, including misuse of drugs. They work closely with healthcare professionals regarding calls involving mental health issues.

**FOOD INSECURITY** This is still a concern for too many in our bountiful County. Since our 2013 Vital Signs Report many effective projects have been working on this complex problem, and there is a system-wide collaborative initiative to begin dealing with the root causes.

**EDUCATION** The education data reflects challenges for all ages, and there are projects and programs underway working hard to address them. We report on some troubling achievement scores. The individual and collaborative projects striving to improve educational outcomes engage both youth and community partners, and they are starting to show results. School closures and consolidations affect many County families, and they may affect the decision of young families planning to move to the County. Innovative initiatives are underway to repurpose empty school buildings and surplus space to address housing as well as food security issues.

**TRANSPORTATION** Getting around in our vast geography can be an obstacle in accessing affordable food and essential services, education, employment and recreation. Lack of transportation can also contribute to social isolation and a reduced sense of belonging. Stimulated by the 2013 Vital Signs Report, a number of agencies and organizations collaborated on planning an integrated affordable transportation system. This plan builds on existing modes of transportation and is now ready to roll out.

**SENSE OF BELONGING** All of the issues we report on have an impact on our sense of belonging. While the majority of us report feeling satisfied with our lives, there is a decrease in our sense of community belonging. The actions and initiatives in the "What's Being Done" sections that seek to address each issue may also help to restore this all-important feeling.

*While recognizing the many challenges identified in this report, TCF is heartened by the progress that has been made on several fronts and is committed to taking a leadership role in working together with its many community partners and volunteers to build a County of shared prosperity where everyone belongs.*

## Purpose of the Report

This report provides evidence-based information about our community, its strengths and its challenges at this point in time and highlights the actions that are being taken to address them. It is intended to:

- Engage the community to participate in building on the significant efforts already underway.
- Assist community organizations with their grant applications.
- Provide donors with information to make decisions on directing their donations.
- Guide The County Foundation's granting process.

## Methodology

The data contained in this report is drawn from quantitative and qualitative primary and secondary sources. Statistical data was gathered from a variety of sources at the national, provincial and municipal levels, and from studies carried out by community and regional organizations. From the wealth of data surveyed and the input of our Advisory Committee, comprised of a team of leaders from local community organizations, and our Board we carefully chose our areas of study and selected indicators for them based on:

- availability and consistency of data
- reputation and reliability of the source
- how current the data was
- relevance to our community
- suitability of the data to be tracked for future comparisons

Qualitative data reflects the thoughts and opinions of County citizens as voiced at the *Community Conversations* held in the autumn of 2017 and from several studies and discussions carried out by community and regional organizations.

Some of the information is specific to Prince Edward County (shown in the report as PEC); some of it is combined with Hastings County (shown in the report as HPE). Sources of data included in the report are cited on the Selected Sources page and a complete listing of all sources reviewed for the report will be posted on The County Foundation website in the Vital Signs section.

We are most grateful to Community Foundations of Canada, to the community organizations who provided their statistics, reports and comments, and to all community members who participated in the Community Conversations, all of which informed the preparation of this report.



We produced PEC's first Vital Signs Report in 2013 and followed it up in 2015 with a Progress Report to share details of what actions were being taken on three priority issues. You can read both reports on our website [www.thecountyfoundation.ca](http://www.thecountyfoundation.ca)

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# A QUICK LOOK AT OUR PEOPLE

## POPULATION

24,735

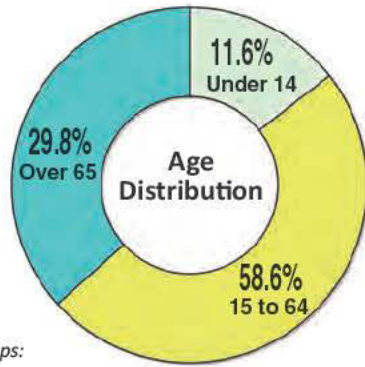
2016 Census  
down 2.1% since 2011

### OUR MEDIAN\* AGE IS

54.5 years

Up 2.9 years from 2011  
ONT 41.3 years

*\*Definition of Median: the amount which divides a list of statistics in two equal groups: half above the median, half below.*



Ours is an aging population, and the trend appears set to continue.

**How will this affect our future vitality?**  
**How will this impact our healthcare and services?**

## POPULATION DENSITY Prince Edward County



PEC 23.5 people/sq km.

## Toronto



Toronto 4,334 people/sq km.

### What are the implications?

## Our population increases significantly in summer

with visitors, returning snowbirds, seasonal workers and seasonal residents.

### What is the impact on our infrastructure and services?



## Are we diverse?



### 98% speak English at home

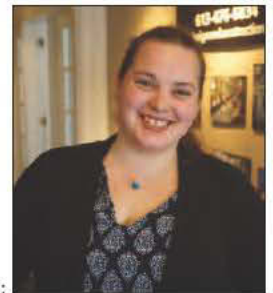
but Prince Edward County's population mix has been woven by immigrants from all over the world. Many were seeking peace after wars, from the United Empire Loyalists and Hessian soldiers after the American Revolution, to Dutch and German families after World War II, to Syrian families making new lives here today. We may look like a monoculture from a distance, but our threads are many and colourful.

**2.2% of us are visible minorities, however ...** since the 2016 Census we see The County is becoming more diverse as people from many different backgrounds move here. The Tyendenaga Mohawk Territory is right next door, and 690 County folk identify as Indigenous. That's up 12% since 2011.

### We are a place of simple living and surprising complexity.

A peaceful community that accepts people for who they are, not where they're from, who they worship or who they love. The County is

### A Place That Welcomes Everyone.



Above + right: Intergenerational fun at The Hub Child and Family Centre; Architect Sam Elbadawi and family.  
Below & right: Edgar Ramirez & Catherine Crawford, vineyard maintenance and hop growers; Annie McLurg, poet.

Above & right: Sam Ravenda of The Shore Oysters; Amanda Campbell of Clean Therapy;  
Below & right: Farm workers pose for a 'hire a young person' campaign; Emerson Pringle fine woodworker.



# PLACE AND CULTURE

Our heritage buildings, vineyards and wide open spaces help to make us a favourite destination with people seeking peace and beauty. Sandbanks Provincial Park has one of Canada's best beaches and the world's largest freshwater sand and dunes system. The South Shore is an internationally recognized Important Bird Area and 750,000 migrating birds rest on the island in Spring and Fall. Tourism is nothing new in The County. From the 1800s we had dozens of hotels and our economy boomed in the late 1800s and early 1900s with the prosperous Barley Days and a thriving canning industry, then slumped in the last quarter of the 20th century. Now we are "rediscovered" and appear on Top 10 lists of places to visit. **Our popularity has boosted the economy. However it's having an impact on local life.** House prices have soared. Roads, infrastructure and services are feeling the strain. Sometimes visitors' expectations are out of sync with The County reality:



**Why do places close so early around here?** *Anonymous visitor*

**It's a family operation - they have to get some rest!** *Anonymous local*

Continuing 225 years of modern history, we are still largely agricultural. Although the number of mid-sized farms has decreased, new smaller farms are being established with the focus on sustainability. Investors and entrepreneurs love us. Our challenge today is to ensure that Prince Edward County remains

## A Place That Works for Everyone.

### OUR GEOGRAPHY - beautiful but a challenge for some.

Our population is spread across a large land area, and amenities and services are concentrated in two main towns. There is limited public transit. We are working on it, but getting around is a big challenge for many people whether to go food shopping or get to work, attend appointments or participate in programs and take part in community events.

### How does this affect a sense of belonging?

**SPORTS & RECREATION.** There are indoor and outdoor sports facilities around The County offering everything from badminton to martial arts. Many recreation and sports programs are free, and all of them strive to be inclusive, but affordability can be a barrier. With most recreation facilities located in the urban centres, the lack of public transit is a challenge for those in out-lying areas.

**ARTS & FESTIVALS.** We're Ontario's fastest growing wine region, and where there's wine there's art, food and music, too! We celebrate it all, from the world-class PEC Jazz Festival to the Firelight Festival where children parade on Main Street to show off their handmade paper lanterns. In autumn there's the Scarecrow Festival and Wellington Pumpkinfest. The PEC Marathon is international, so is the Walleye World Fishing Tournament.

Music festivals, studio tours, the Kids of Steel triathlon, boxcar races, wine and culinary and harvest festivals happen all over The County.

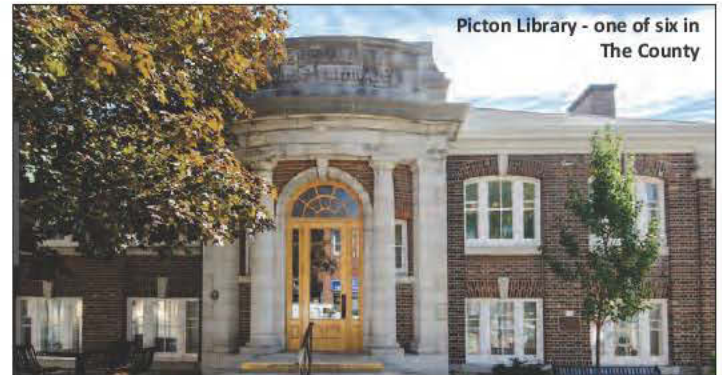
**And all of these events are POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS.**



The Firelight Lantern Festival

**There is a tangible sense of pride here. One wonderful strength of our County is we're big enough to have a presence in Ontario, yet small enough to nurture community and connectedness. There are many worthy causes here and the community rallies behind them. There is a sense of finding the balance between preserving our rich history and taking opportunities to invest in a vibrant future.**

*Executive Director, Prince Edward Memorial Hospital Foundation*



Picton Library - one of six in The County

**WE CHERISH OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE.** It helps give The County its unique sense of place. We're proud of it and we work to preserve the buildings and landscapes that embody it. Our biggest library was designed by Andrew Carnegie, while our youth had enormous input in the design of our skate park.

We enjoy and support **6 Libraries, 9 Town Halls, 5 Museums, 1 Heritage Theatre, 2 Community Centres, a Community Radio Station, 2 Arenas ... and more.**

Our villages have playhouses, music venues, fairgrounds and old and new community meeting spaces that are booked year round for everything from yoga to political meetings.

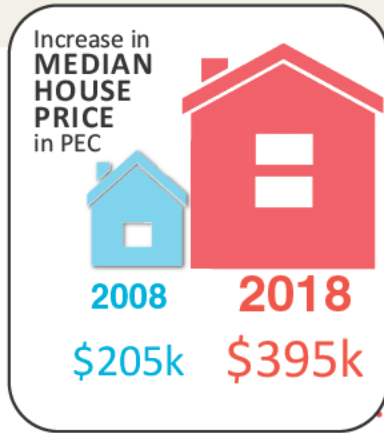
### In this period of rapid change, we face some serious challenges.

It's exciting to be the focus of media attention, but we want to protect and preserve our character and culture from over-development and to create a balance. While encouraging interest, in-migration and investment, we realize some have prospered and some have been left behind. We must work together to retain control of our future and to

**build a community where Everyone Belongs.**

## HOUSE PRICES IN PEC HAVE ALMOST DOUBLED IN 10 YEARS

More than 7 times the increase in median household income



Lack of affordable housing is close to crisis point

County of Prince Edward Councillor

Compared to neighbouring regions

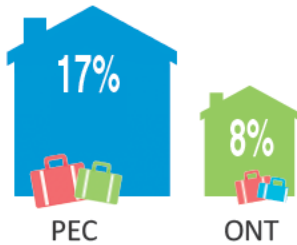
Belleville	2008 \$183k	2018 \$291k
Quinte West	2008 \$178k	2018 \$293k

### What are the implications?

- Young families, lower income earners and many seniors are excluded from buying.
- Many prospective employees cannot afford to live here.
- Many are moving away to find attainable housing.
- If rents follow house prices, homelessness will increase.

Based on Quinte MLS sales of Single Family Houses & Condominiums

## Private Dwellings not occupied by usual residents



PEC has more than twice the provincial rate

Why is this a concern?

## There is a growing trend to investing in Short Term Accommodations (STAs)

### Why are STAs a concern?

STAs in residential areas are a growing concern around the world because they are perceived to be pricing out local people and can result in many houses in a neighbourhood "going dark" outside of tourist season.

### How does this affect a sense of belonging?

STAs owned by investors are a growing trend here, but some residents offer STAs to offset the high cost of housing. The call is to establish regulations to create a more equitable rental environment.

Affordable housing has not been built for some time. Fawcetville, off Hwy 49 was built 40 yrs ago to help first time homebuyers. Fawcetville is no longer an affordable address in the County.

Poverty Roundtable HPE focus group 2017

A vital community needs young families but they can't afford to live here.

Community Conversations 2017

Over the last two years we have seen an increase in employees leaving our agency as they cannot secure affordable housing. There is a direct correlation between employee retention and housing.

Executive Director of Community Living Prince Edward

There's not nearly enough affordable and adequate housing options. This should be a human right.

Community Conversations 2017

We are seeing an increase in seasonal rental houses and this has a negative impact.

Community Conversations 2017

## WHAT'S BEING DONE

The new PEC Housing Corporation has been created as an independent, not-for-profit housing corporation to work with Council and community groups. It will also work to source government funding, leverage surplus municipal lands and other opportunities to create attainable local housing. It is already working with grassroots organizations, including the following two initiatives: Lovesong Senior Housing and Community Hub is converting a Bloomfield elementary school into mixed housing on a co-housing model – that is private individual living spaces with shared communal spaces.

PEC Attainable Housing Network has innovative ideas based on developing the town of Wellington's old arena site.

### Regulating of Short Term Accommodations (STAs)

After surveying and consulting with residents and STA providers, the municipality is considering regulating Short Term Accommodations.

## THERE ARE NO VACANCIES FOR LONG TERM RENTALS

A 2018 Municipal survey showed a 0.8% vacancy rate for registered rental units

### HOME OWNERSHIP HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN HIGH IN THE COUNTY

**83.1% OWNERS**  
ONT 69.7%



We've never had a high stock of rental units. Today, some owners are converting long term rental units into short stay vacation properties thus depleting our residential rental stock.

**16.9% RENTERS**  
ONT 31.3%

**AVG. MONTHLY MARKET RENT**  
2-BEDROOM APARTMENT  
**\$1187**



**48.6% of renters are paying MORE THAN 30%\* OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON HOUSING. Many pay significantly more.**

41.7% in 2011 \*CMHC affordability threshold.

Landlords who don't keep up repair on rental housing properties and charge huge rent - there should be a way, city or other, to deal with this.  
*Poverty Roundtable HPE Focus Group 2017*



% Housing Units **REQUIRING MAJOR REPAIR**  
**8.3%** in PEC  
ONT 6.1%

The number of households we serve has gone down but that's not necessarily good news. We're hearing that some families have had to leave The County because their homes have become summer rentals.  
*Storehouse Foodbank 2018*

We can make a bigger dent in our affordable housing crisis by maintaining our existing rental stock and reclaiming some of our rental stock than we will through new builds.  
*County of Prince Edward Councillor*

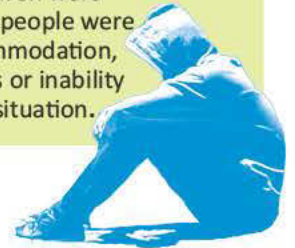
### Why do vacancy rates matter?

Having virtually NO VACANCIES and rental costs that are increasing 40% faster than household income poses a serious problem for the large number of minimum wage earners in The County and for seniors on fixed incomes.

It also impacts employers who have jobs to offer but find that prospective employees who are ready to work cannot find anywhere to live.

### Rural Homelessness is often "invisible"

We don't always see it because people couch-surf, a night here, a night there, but homelessness does exist in Prince Edward County. In a 2018 Report on Homelessness in the region, the reason survey participants cited often for their situation was abuse or conflict with their partners or parents/guardians. Many had addiction issues or mental health issues and most had no family support. The average period of homelessness was 185 days. Several children were among the people counted. Many of the people were employed but still could not afford accommodation, and almost half of them said that job loss or inability to pay rent or mortgage had led to their situation.



### What about Affordable Housing Units?



The County currently has  
115 Social Housing Units  
129 Non-profit housing units  
42 Rent supplement units

**However, we also have a waiting list of 230 households**

Most are waiting for a social housing one-bedroom unit for which the average wait time is **6 years**.

### WHAT'S BEING DONE

#### Affordable Rental Units.

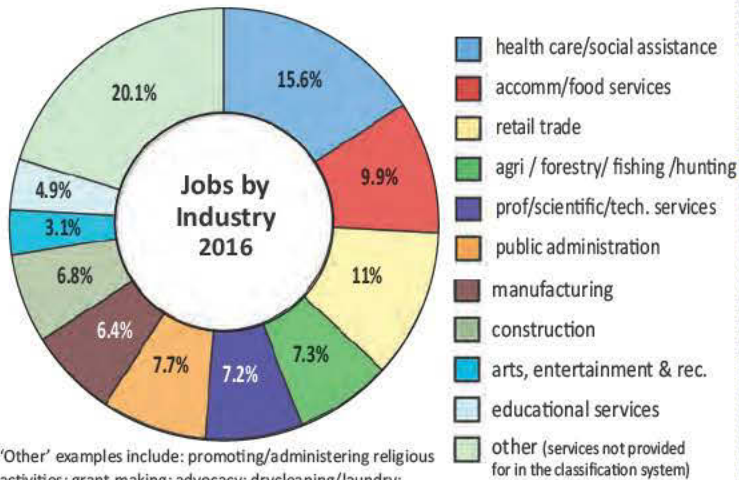
In Picton a new housing development includes 7 affordable rental units at 80% of average market rent.

Prince Edward-Lennox & Addington Social Services will be adding 6 more affordable housing units in 2018/19.

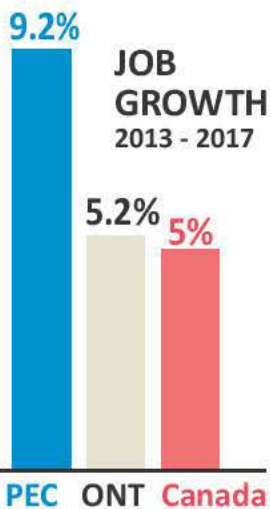
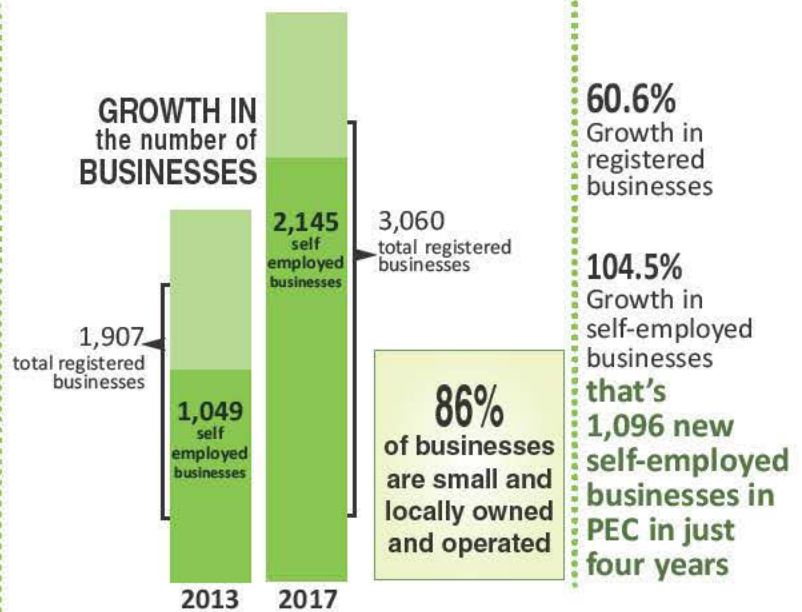
# EMPLOYMENT

## JOBS WITHOUT PEOPLE

Employers need workers with applicable skills and/or experience ... Workers need secure and/or fulltime jobs.



'Other' examples include: promoting/administering religious activities; grant-making; advocacy; drycleaning/laundry; personal care; death care; pet care; photofinishing; temporary parking; dating services.



Respondents to *Business Retention & Expansion Surveys* 2016 and 2017 said:

### EMPLOYERS FACE DIFFICULTIES

- Local workforce lacks applicable skills
- Training for employees is difficult to source
- Available commercial space is limited
- Potential employees cannot afford to live here

Despite these challenges **130 new positions** were created in the manufacturing and construction sectors between 2014 and 2016.

**80%** of businesses are growing  
**62%** plan to expand

### WORKERS FACE DIFFICULTIES, TOO.

- More than 50% work part time or seasonally
- Those with precarious and/or low-paid jobs can't support themselves or their families
- Some can't get to work without public transportation
- Many can't live here due to lack of affordable housing

Currently there are jobs in The County that go unfilled - could this be because education and local job opportunities are not well aligned?  
*Community Conversations 2017*

We are losing our youth due to inadequate local employment and training options.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

The community needs a strategy to get more skilled trades workers.  
*Comment in Bus. Retention & Expansion Reports 2017*

The County's economy has always been driven by small business and entrepreneurs, from farmers to shopkeepers to manufacturers. Business owners and employers have valuable insight and experience to contribute to community efforts to improve life in The County. We must not hesitate to tap every resource in our efforts to

**build a place where everyone can prosper.**

## WHAT'S BEING DONE

### H.E.A.T. (*Helping Employers Acquire Talent*)

The County Workforce Partnership, a coalition of employers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Municipality, Prince Edward Learning Centre and Career Edge, developed an innovative approach to assist tourism and hospitality sectors by providing unique flexible training and "work-ready" staff, and supporting employees with the cost of items such as uniforms, safety equipment, transportation, temporary child care. They hope to address the "applicable skills" gap cited often by employers, too.

**BUILD A NEW LIFE** is one of a number of initiatives by The County's Community Development Department to attract new workers and businesses to The County.

**WORK WELL PEC** is a network of employers and employees sharing resources, support and ideas about safe and healthy workplaces in PEC.

**CAREER EDGE** provides many services for employers and job seekers.

**Prince Edward Learning Centre** provides programs that support development of essential skills, literacy and employment.



# AND INCOME

## PEOPLE WITHOUT JOBS

or attainable housing cannot support themselves and their families.



Our lower participation and unemployment rates are likely a result of a high proportion of seniors in PEC - but they also suggest more people are leaving the workforce in PEC compared to the province. **What are the implications for our economy?**

**AGRICULTURE** is a pillar of our economy but it is changing.

The **MEDIAN AGE** of farmers is 56.4 years (54.8 in 2011) and we are down to 432 farms (477 in 2011) and 660 farm operators (710 in 2011). Consolidation of mid-size farms into "mega-farms" may mean the same acreage is farmed by fewer operators. New small farms have started since 2016, many by young families who aim to stay small and sell direct.



**TRADESPeople ARE IN DEMAND** but our builders, electricians and plumbers are aging and only 8.6% of our youth are entering the trades. **Many of our skilled workers are aging out of the workforce.**

**Who will replace them?  
What are the implications?**



We are attracting many **NICHE BUSINESSES** including microbreweries, specialty food producers, wellness practitioners, I.T. companies, "experience-based" tourism and flower farms to name just a few. The number of **KNOWLEDGE-BASED** businesses is growing, as access to fast, reliable Internet increases.

Left: Atelier Presbyterie moved their businesses here from Montreal.

### Succession Planning - A "Good News" Story

Slieman Al Jasem came here as a teenaged refugee from Syria. Now he works with third generation fishing family Kendall and Joanne Dewey, who couldn't find anyone who wanted to learn their trade. Prince Edward Learning Centre's **INSPIRE** program helped get funding for minimum wage for Slieman while he learned the ropes. Now, with his mother and brother, he fishes, processes and sells fish direct to local consumers and restaurants. He hopes to buy the Deweys' fishing license and take over the processing plant. The Deweys are delighted that The County gets to keep its local fishery.

### WHAT'S BEING DONE

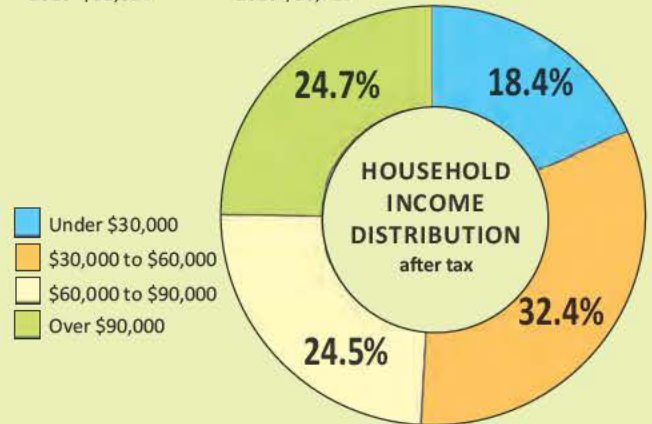
The **Farming Assistance Grant Program** which helps support farmers who are aged 19 to 39 and/or have been farming as their main occupation for less than 7 years.

**ROC's Youth Entrepreneur Success (YES)** program offers young people opportunities to develop job skills, connect with mentors from the local business community and become inspired by entrepreneurship in PEC.

The **Small Business Centre** runs regular training programs.

**Annual Job Fair** is always well attended.

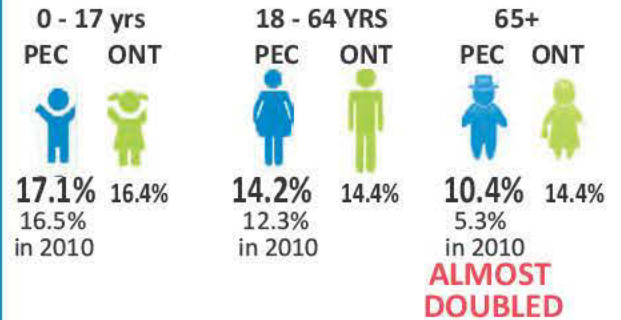
## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME after tax



**How does this affect sense of belonging?**

## PREVALENCE OF LOW INCOME

(defined as less than 50% median after-tax household income)



After paying for shelter and food, minimum wage earners and households on fixed incomes have very little - if any - remaining to cover other essential monthly expenses

HPE Public Health: *The Real Cost of Eating Well In Hastings and Prince Edward Counties 2017*

There is not enough full-time work that pays adequately. Many jobs are seasonal or part-time.

*Community Conversations 2017*

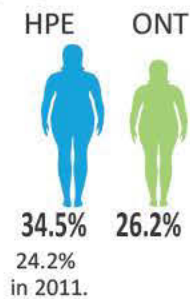
There is a growing income disparity in The County.

*Community Conversations 2017*

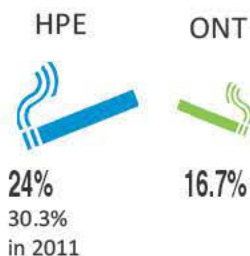
# HEALTH

Health data is for Hastings and Prince Edward Counties unless otherwise stated.

## OBESITY RATE



## SMOKING RATE



**How does this impact overall health?**

## TEEN PREGNANCY (Ages 15-19)



Our rate is falling, but it's still among the 10 highest of 36 ONT health regions.

**7.2%** don't have access to a regular doctor  
**ONT 10.1%**

**How might this impact decisions to move or stay here?**

**How does this impact our aging population?**

Recruitment of new doctors is not getting us beyond the status quo of replacing retiring doctors only.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

Health and community vitality are mutually reinforcing. Good health has a positive effect on community vitality and vice versa.

*Community Conversations 2017*

Quality health care is an attractor to young entrepreneurs and families as well as retirees.

*Community Conversations 2017*

Waiting list for family doctors is growing, up to 1,000 people in The County now. How is this list managed, how are patients prioritized for getting off the list?

*Community Conversations 2017*

We need a Transitional Age Youth Worker to help under 30s "navigate" the health and mental health systems ... it's critical, especially for mental health.

*Community Conversations 2017*

There is an imbalance in accessibility to care. The emergency room is a limited option that negatively affects continuity of care and lengthens wait times for everyone.

*Community Conversations 2017*

The Family Health Team nurse is a big help and support. Sometimes all you need is simple reassurance and she is there to give it.  
*Young mother in The Hub's "Babies and Beyond" program*

Healthcare is an economic development issue.

*Community Conversations 2017*



## WHAT'S BEING DONE

The Mental Health Strategy is a collaborative led by the Police Services Board and The County Foundation funded by the Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services to improve community response to persons with mental health disorders.

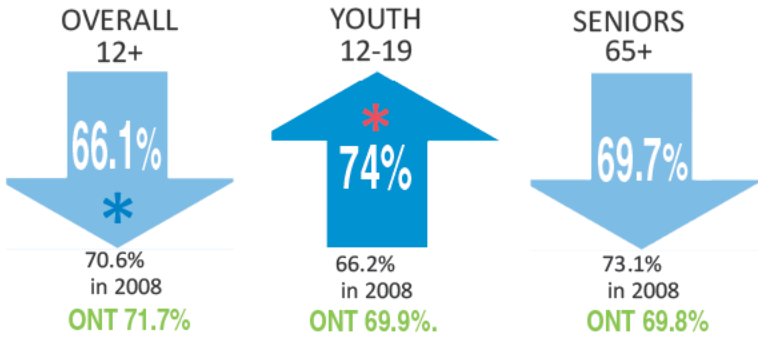
HPE Children's Mental Health Services served 170 clients in The County region from March 2017 to April 2018. In the first quarter of 2018 they actively served 47 children and had 16 on the waiting list in the Picton office alone. As awareness grows of mental health issues, the demand for service is increasing.

A new County hospital. We have initial approval and fundraising is underway for a new hospital.

Prince Edward Family Health Team has changed the role of its Nurse Practitioners. They now provide house calls to PEC's most fragile residents, under the Coordinated Care Program.

A Physician Retention and Recruitment Working Group has been formed between the municipality and the Prince Edward Family Health Team to actively bring new doctors to The County.

## How many of us feel our Mental Health is very good or excellent? (self-reported)



- \* The working age cohort shows a significant drop, and there is a need for programs and services for this sector.
- \* However we heard different perspectives from youth in our *Community Conversations*. They told us
  - they are aware of the impact mental health has on our community.
  - they see a continuing stigma around seeking help.
  - they want more access to information and services.

### How does this relate to our overall sense of belonging?

There needs to be more and better education of the public about mental health and addiction issues. Mental health issues and treatment options need a greater emphasis.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

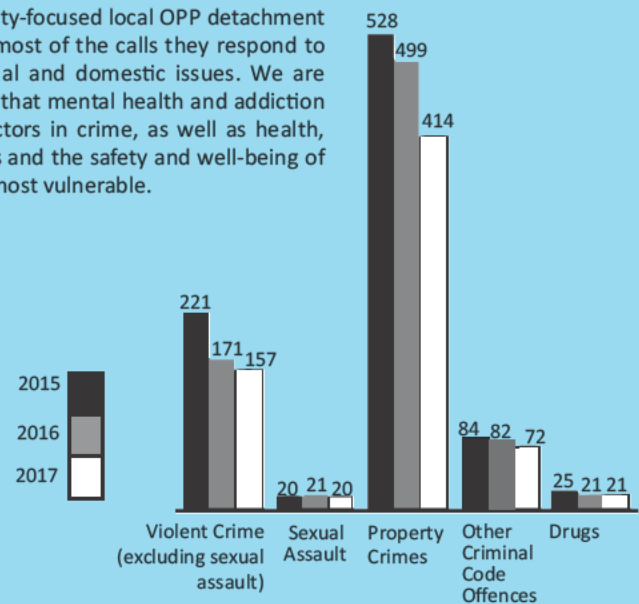
There is a lack of mental health services, especially for youth. Rural youth are receiving the message that they are second-rate.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

It is estimated that 15-35% of youth are suffering from mental health issues which can be reflected in drug abuse and addiction  
*Community Conversations 2017*

## OVERALL CRIME IS DOWN AND MOST OF US FEEL SAFE

In our *Community Conversations* we heard about a lot of concerns, but safety was not high on the list *except* for the issue of pedestrian safety. Our streets and roads are becoming more congested, and residents are concerned about increased traffic and speeding through towns and villages.

Our community-focused local OPP detachment reports that most of the calls they respond to relate to social and domestic issues. We are keenly aware that mental health and addiction issues are factors in crime, as well as health, homelessness and the safety and well-being of some of our most vulnerable.



### How might this relate to a sense of belonging?

Speeding is a real safety issue in Cherry Valley. Cars, contractor trucks and gravel trucks. I've even seen speeding school buses.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

**The opioid crisis** is global and our rural community is not immune. Prescription Fentanyl and its 'street' versions are lethal in extremely small doses. Naloxone kits, medication that can quickly reverse effects of an opioid overdose, have been made available to first responders and other community partners. Specific data is sparse but that will change as the OPP introduces new methods of opioid tracking.

### WHAT'S BEING DONE

A **Community Safety & Well-being Plan** is currently being developed by a collaboration of local agencies with leadership from the Police Services Board. Once formally adopted by Council, the Plan will outline strategic actions involving local service agencies, County Council, PEC OPP and first responders to safeguard County residents.

The **PEC Situation Table** is an alliance of local service agencies and PEC OPP working together to mitigate situations for individuals experiencing multiple risks with the potential for

increased victimization. This disciplined meeting process has very specific privacy protocols to further protect the individual. Strategic responses happen within 24-48 hours.

PEC OPP's new **Community Street Crime Unit** was created to proactively address crimes related to local drug activity.

The multi-organizational **Narcotics Committee** is working together with the PEC OPP to create a collaborative prevention approach to confront the drug problems threatening our community.

# FOOD INSECURITY

## FOOD IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

Everyone has the right to access enough safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food in a way that is socially acceptable and dignified. **This is known as food security.**

I have a problem with the term 'food insecurity' being used to refer to what's actually poverty. And that is 'income insecurity', a problem that is very significant in The County.

*Community member, 2017 Food Security Collective Impact Project*

Change needs to start at policy level. Food as an issue is a good place to start doing advocacy work on poverty.

*Community Conversations 2017*

If you have to pay for a taxi to get to the grocery store that will put a dent in your food budget.

*2017 Food Security Impact Project*

**Food Insecurity is a serious social & public health problem that:**

- negatively impacts physical, mental & social health.
- costs our healthcare system a considerable sum.
- leaves an indelible mark on children's well-being.

**Hunger, food insecurity and poverty can happen to anyone.**

Having a job may not be enough.

Part-time employment, lack of benefits and lack of job security can make it hard for people to afford healthy food.



Local action includes: above: free dinners in an upbeat atmosphere and below: Food to Share volunteers making healthy meals for food bank freezers



**WHO**  
is food insecure  
in Hastings & PEC?

It is estimated

**10%\***  
of  
households

\* Variable - Use with caution

Given our population, this suggests as many as 2,000 people in PEC may be food insecure.

### WHY

Reasons can include limited income, the high cost of housing, lack of transportation and 'food deserts' where families cannot access fresh, nutritious, affordable food without travelling a long way.

**Housing and food costs have increased. Incomes have not kept pace. Households reliant on social assistance spend a higher percent of their income on shelter and food and have an 11 times higher risk of being food insecure.**

**Food insecure people can't buy the foods they want & need for good health. Annual health care costs are up to 121% higher in food insecure households.**

For some, community provided meals are the only family meal they will have in the week.

*2017 Food Security Collective Impact Project*

### WHAT'S BEING DONE

The Vital Signs Food Security Working Group has adopted a Collective Impact framework for working together differently to address local food security and its root causes. The group completed a 7-month research and planning project in early 2018 and currently is launching the plan which includes key strategies for change around Working Together, Shifting Attitudes and Behaviours, Gaining Political and Financial Support and Transforming the Local Food System.

County Food Hub, a volunteer-led initiative, is repurposing empty classrooms and surplus space in Sophiasburg Central School into a hub for local food preparation and education. In doing so it has also saved the school from closure. It expects to open in 2019.

Significant ongoing community initiatives are addressing food insecurity including Food to Share, Fresh for All, CDC Quinte's Food Programs, Food Not Bombs and Community Gardens.

The Poverty Roundtable HPE is a network of community members, agencies, government and business partners bringing together diverse views and perspectives to work toward reducing poverty in HPE counties. People with lived experience of poverty are engaged in shaping the strategies, policies and, ultimately, the programs and services.

## EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX (EDI) 2015

Before they enter Grade 1, children are assessed in 5 domains of development:

- physical health & well-being
- language & cognitive development
- social competence
- communication & general knowledge
- emotional maturity

Low EDI is an indicator of a child's inability to learn and reach their full potential.

**37.3%**

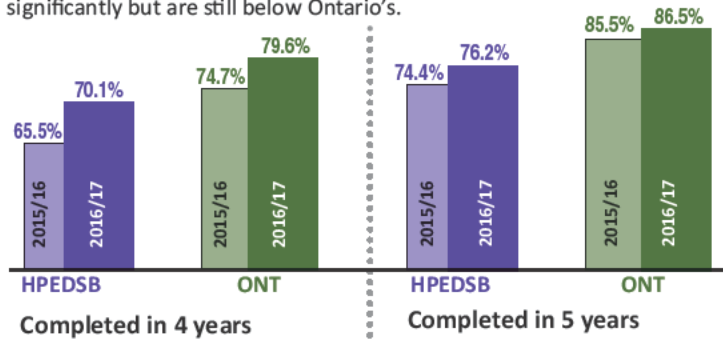
of PEC children are vulnerable in 1 or more of these domains

The highest rate of vulnerability was in physical health and well-being at **26.6%**

If family housing, employment, food security and transportation are compromised, the children suffer.

## High School Graduation

Hastings Prince Edward School Board graduation rates have increased significantly but are still below Ontario's.



HPEDSB High School Suspension Rate was 6.1% in 2015/16, slightly down from 7.6% in 2012/13. However it is disturbingly high compared to the provincial 2.6%. The concern is that suspended students may not return to complete their education.

## Total population aged 25-64 years with no certificates, diplomas or degrees



We should set a community-wide goal to be the first county in Ontario where everyone has their diploma or GED.

*Community Conversations 2017*

**SCHOOL CLOSURES:** Because of declining enrolment, two elementary schools have been closed.

A third has narrowly avoided closure by the innovative repurposing of its surplus space to create a community food hub.

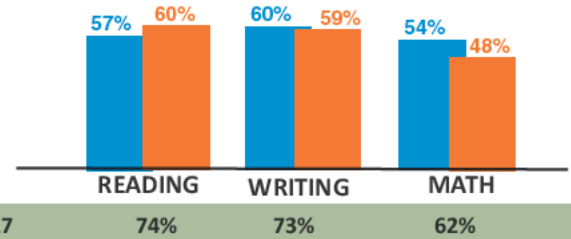
**What is the impact of school closures on young families who live here or plan to move to The County?**

## STANDARDIZED TESTING RESULTS (HPEDSB)

Provincial assessment tests administered yearly in Grades 3,6,9,10 to measure attainment at or above the provincial standard

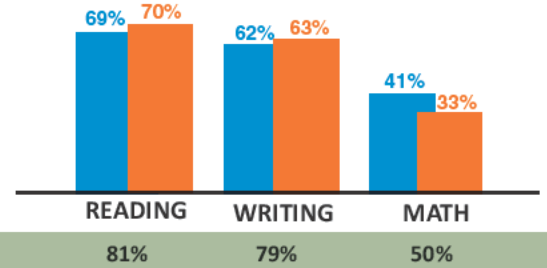
### PRIMARY Grade 3

2013-15  
2015-17



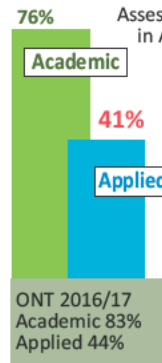
### JUNIOR Grade 6

2013-15  
2015-17



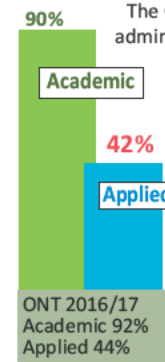
### Grade 9 Mathematics (EQAO 2016/17) PECI

Assessments differentiated based on curriculum expectations in Applied & Academic Math courses. Results reported as a percentage of students achieving at provincial standard.



### Grade 10 Literacy Test (OSSLT 2016/17) PECI

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test administered in Academic, Applied & Locally Developed English courses. **SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION IS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT.**



**What impact will lower literacy and math scores have on opportunities for our youth and our economy?**

## WHAT'S BEING DONE

Early Years Literacy and Self Esteem Programs include County Kids Read, Reaching for Rainbows, The Hub Child & Family Centre.

**Greater Than** The Vital Signs Learning Working Group has evolved into the Greater Than County Youth Collective, a collaborative of youth, youth-serving organizations and community partners working toward raising the graduation rate in PEC by supporting youth in the community and enhancing opportunities for youth to be engaged in the life of The County.

There are a significant number of programs and projects supporting youth's educational attainment and well-being delivered by these *Greater Than* partner organizations:

- Career Edge | Community Living Prince Edward
- PEC Public Library | The Recreation Outreach Centre
- The Centre for Workforce Development
- John Howard Society Quantum Program
- Loyalist College | Prince Edward Learning Centre

# TRANSPORTATION

## GETTING AROUND IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE FOR SOME



**91.6%** of people in PEC who commute to work rely on private transport - that is car, truck or van - as driver or passenger.



**1%** use public transit, mainly because of the limited scope of what is currently available.

The PEC Public Transit Plan is building on existing transit networks to increase coverage, service and access.



Deseronto Transit scheduled routes service PEC-Belleville-PEC.



Quinte Access door-to-door service was established for seniors and those with limited mobility.



Volunteer drivers work with many organizations, including Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association which offers an escorted transportation program.



PEC's private taxi companies are used regularly by many in the community, including social service agencies.

The need to expand transit services to all residents of this rural community has been an increasing concern.

Lack of transportation is an obstacle to obtaining fresh food, maintaining employment, completing education, staying socially connected and generally being involved in the life of the community.

### How does this affect a sense of belonging?

Living independently and with dignity in The County is dependent upon reasonable access to transportation.

Employers, retailers and providers of services that rely on the physical presence of employees or clients are affected by transportation limitations.

A better network of public transportation will benefit individuals and businesses in The County.

### Providing public transportation can be difficult in rural areas like ours.

The low density of housing, services and employment and the long distances between communities present challenges that can't simply be solved by adding resources.

A strategic, coordinated approach that takes advantage of existing resources and is tailored to the local environment has been planned to address this.

Many great services and opportunities for youth, those with disabilities, temporary workers etc. are limited by lack of transportation.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

So many young folks can't participate in the community without transportation.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

There is no late bus for students.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

It's difficult to do extracurricular activities without transportation.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

Participation in extra-curricular activities is a factor in post-secondary school applications, which puts rural youth at a disadvantage.  
*Community Conversations 2017*

## WHAT'S BEING DONE

The Vital Signs Getting Around Working Group partnered with the Municipality to develop the County of Prince Edward Public Transit Plan and business case for a sustainable, affordable integrated transit system within PEC and to/from neighbouring communities of Belleville & Quinte West. Provincial funding for a 5-year pilot project to launch the plan has been approved, and the plan will be rolled out in phases beginning in 2018.

Working Group partners include Deseronto Transit | Quinte Access Transportation Taxi Companies | United Way HPE PEC Community Care for Seniors Association Hastings Prince Edward Public Health | Prince Edward Learning Centre Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce Prince Edward-Lennox & Addington Social Services PEC Women's Institute initiated specialized transit in PEC and have continued their fundraising and support.

# SENSE OF BELONGING

## DESPITE OUR LEVEL OF LIFE SATISFACTION, OUR SENSE OF BELONGING IS DECLINING

### LIFE SATISFACTION

90.5%

feel satisfied with their life



(Self-reported - HPE data)

ONT 92.9%

It is a human emotional need to be an accepted member of a group. Whether it is family, friends, co-workers, a religion or something else, people tend to have an inherent desire to belong and to be an important part of something greater than themselves.

**This sense of belonging is a basic need, just like food and shelter.**

Feeling that you belong is important to seeing value in life.

Having a sense of belonging to a greater community improves your motivation, health and happiness. When you feel a connection to others, you know that all people struggle and have difficult times. You know you are not alone.

**When people are connected and care about each other, they develop trust.**

**And trust unlocks collaboration, sharing, support, hope, safety and much more.**

*Psychology Today, March 2014*



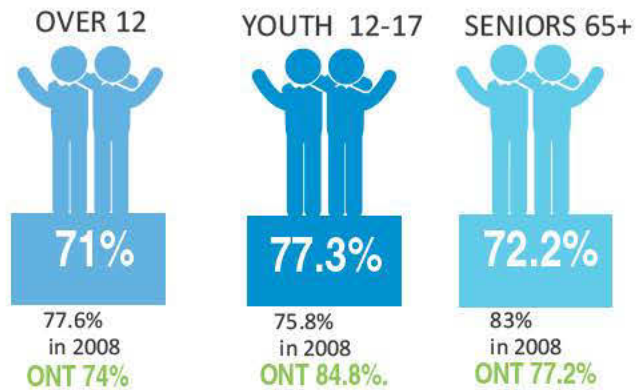
Hanging out together at Club ROC



Teens and kids learn to prepare meals in fun community classes run by Wellington's Storehouse Foodbank and Food to Share.

### How many of us feel a strong or somewhat strong Sense of Belonging?

Self-reported (HPE data)



Neighbours working together on the Morrison Point Dry Stone Wall Project.

The County is in a period of rapid change, good things are happening but at what cost? Many are feeling a decline in their sense of belonging. By working together, our community can contribute to the success of all of the initiatives we report on here. Looking to the future we can do what The County does best. Help each other to build a place

**where everyone can feel that they belong.**

#### WHAT'S BEING DONE

For youth there is the **Greater Than** initiative described under Learning, and the **ROC and Prince Edward County Youth Centre** based on Main St. Picton. In a safe, supervised environment, it provides opportunities, mentorship and programs that encourage youth success and contribute to a healthier community in The County.

The new **County Seniors Centre** offers affordable programming and will contribute to a sense of community in all corners of The County. Utilizing our nine town halls, **PEC Community Care for Seniors** offers events and activities close to where seniors live.

The municipality's **Age Friendly Community Plan** is another welcome initiative. And there are ever-increasing opportunities to volunteer and become part of local community events.

Throughout this report, we have asked you to consider **“What might this mean?”** or **“How might this impact?”** and other open-ended questions that relate to the data, comments, concerns and trends we are reporting on. They are intended to stimulate thought, conversation and action, both individually and collectively, to build on the many projects and initiatives already underway.

With this in mind, we encourage you to:



**SHARE** this report with others.

**DISCUSS** the information.

**CONSIDER** the possibilities.

**BECOME** part of the solution, perhaps by joining a group working on addressing the issues.

**CONTEMPLATE** different and creative approaches.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE** by initiating action on things that matter to *you*.

The County Foundation’s role is to work with you to **build a place of shared prosperity that works for everyone.**

You can get involved with us by:

**BECOMING A VOLUNTEER**

with the Foundation or one of its working groups

**MAKING A BEQUEST**

or setting up a fund to support areas of concern to you

**CONTRIBUTING**

to one of our existing funds

**For more information, contact us at 613-476-7901 ext. 218**

check our website: [thecountyfoundation.ca](http://thecountyfoundation.ca)

Email us at: [info@thecountyfoundation.ca](mailto:info@thecountyfoundation.ca)

Find us on Facebook/**The CountyFoundation**



## Why The County Foundation?

We are a **local organization** with deep roots in the community.

We are part of a **nationwide movement** that provides support and guidance.

We bring **major donors** to the table as community leaders to encourage philanthropy.

Our governance process ensures **confidentiality** and assures **security of investments**.

We **utilize research findings** to guide our grants and to support community organizations in seeking funding.

Our objective grants management process **engages community members**.

We take **a leadership role** in initiating and supporting evidence-based collaborative social action initiatives.



## What We Have Achieved

Developed **27 granting funds**.

Increased funds under management by **\$2.6 million** since 2017.

Put legacy agreements in place that will **continue to expand the areas of giving** into the future.

**Manage municipal grants** program under \$5,000.

Made **over \$700,000** in grants to the community since our inception.

**Published** the much-used Vital Signs Report (2013) and Progress Report (2015).

**Developed strategic partnerships** among community organizations to address issues prioritized by a broad-based advisory committee in areas of food insecurity, getting around and learning.

**Facilitated funding of over \$1 million** in the past two years to support major projects in these three areas.

**Provide project management support** to the Police Services Board for projects associated with safety and well-being.

**Facilitated provincial funding of over \$100,000** to support these projects.

## Statistics Canada

*Census of population. Community Profile* 2001, 2006, 2016  
*National Household Survey* 2011  
*Canadian Community Health Survey, Health Indicator Profile* (2015-16)  
*Crime Reporting Survey* 2017  
*Canadian Mortgage and Housing Organization, Housing Market Information Portal, Primary Rental Market data*, Oct 2017

## Ontario Ministry of Education

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*Safe Schools. Suspension Rates.* 2015/16  
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 Knowledge Management, KFL&A. *Hastings Prince Edward Public Health 2017 Population Health Assessment.* Belleville: HPEPH

Hastings Prince Edward Paramedic Services. *Status Presentation to Community Safety and Well-being Advisory Team* May 2018

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*Moving Forward: Recommendations for Community Action based on Community Conversations.* 2018

## County of Prince Edward

Community Development Department. *Age Friendly Community Plan* updated March 2017  
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 Community Development Department. *Business Retention and Expansion Initiative Report Professional Services and Healthcare Sector* 2017  
 Committee of the Whole. *Presentation of the Affordable Housing Task Team regarding The Case for a County Affordable Housing Not-for-profit Corporation.* 12 July 2018  
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 Committee of the Whole. *Presentation on Establishment of a Prince Edward County Not-for-Profit Affordable Housing Corporation.* August 2018  
 Committee of the Whole. *Presentation on Rental Vacancy Rate in The County* updated August 2018  
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*Transition and Emergency Housing; Housing Revitalization; Long-term Housing and Homelessness update*

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## Ryerson Research Team

*Housing Affordability in PEC interim report* Oct 2017  
*Putting the Pieces Together a Toolkit to Promote Housing affordability in PEC* December 2017

Treat Hull. *Affordable Housing Official Plan.* 5 March 2018

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Prince Edward Police Services Board Report. March 2018. *Review of Police Services*

## Prince Edward Detachment, OPP

*Annual Progress Report.* 2017  
*2017-2019 Action Plan and 2016 Progress Report*

Vital Signs Community Conversations - 13 focus groups, November-December 2017

*Developing an Integrated Strategy for Addressing Food Insecurity in Prince Edward County.* September 2017 - March 2018

## The County Foundation could not have produced this report without the efforts of many people

### Thanks to the report production team

Brian Beiles, TCF President  
 Linda Conley, Board Member  
 Janet Davies, Writing and Design  
 Helen Findlay, Past Board Member  
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 Judith Zelmanovits, TCF Researcher

### Thanks to the members of the Vital Signs Advisory Committee who gave their time, information and guidance

Shelly Ackers, Quinte Access Transportation  
 Trevor Brookes, Eoin Callan and Zainab Mnyetto, PELA CFDC  
 Neil Carbone, County of Prince Edward Community Development Department  
 Emily Cowan, Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce  
 Christine Durant, Poverty Roundtable Hastings Prince Edward  
 John Hatch and Patrick Menard, PEC OPP  
 Brandi Hodge, United Way HPE  
 Ruth Ingersoll, Community Development Council, Quinte  
 Cindy Jones and Debbie Korzeniowski, Prince Edward Family Health Team  
 Kathy Kennedy, Prince Edward Learning Centre  
 Annette Keogh, Prince Edward-Lennox & Addington Social Services  
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 Veronica Montgomery, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health  
 Barb Proctor, Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association  
 Susan Treverton, Community Living Prince Edward  
 Marg Werkhoven, Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association and the Police Services Board

**Sincere thanks to the people of Prince Edward County** who took part in our Community Conversations and told us about their concerns and about what they think is working in The County. Community Conversations were hosted by Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association; The Hub Child and Family Centre; the ROC; The Prince Edward Learning Centre, Prince Edward Collegiate Institute, Community Living Prince Edward and The County Foundation.

### The County Foundation is led by a dedicated Board of Directors

Brian Beiles, President  
 Linda Conley  
 Lennie Epstein  
 Brian Ford, Treasurer  
 Lesley Lavender  
 Debbie MacDonald Moynes  
 David MacKay  
 Christine Searle, Vice-President

### Sincere thanks to the members of the Vital Signs Working Groups who have worked tirelessly over the past four years on the projects identified in this report:

**Food Security:** 25 organizations involving 38 individuals and 4 community members

**Learning:** 19 organizations involving 34 individuals

**Getting Around:** 15 organizations involving 25 individuals

### Additional in-kind contributions in the form of meeting space were provided by:

Career Edge  
 Community Living Prince Edward  
 Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association

### For the photographs we thank

Trevor Crowe, Graham Davies, Johnny Lam, Antonio Lennert, Ramesh Pooran and the community organizations: The Hub Child and Family Centre; Storehouse Foodbank; County of Prince Edward; countylive.ca; ROC; PEC Community Care for Seniors Association who offered us their pictures to enhance this report.

# THANK YOU TO OUR FINANCIAL SPONSORS

