

Produced by The County Foundation, Vital Signs is a leading-edge report that identifies fact-based social and economic needs in Prince Edward County. [Read the full report at www.PECdata.ca](http://www.PECdata.ca)



## Community

PEC's permanent population of 25,704 increased 3.9% since 2016, + 7,475 seasonal residents. The pace of growth will pick up speed. Housing starts are projected to increase by over 300% in the next 5 years compared to the past 6 years.

- Many families moved to PEC during the pandemic, creating overflows for child-care.
- With a median age 15.2 years older than the province, PEC has one of the oldest populations in Ontario.



## Housing

Currently at \$650,000, median house prices increased by 135% from 2010-2020 whilst median after-tax household income increased by only 36%.

- PEC median house prices are 25% higher than in neighbouring regions.
- Rental rates have increased 19.5% in 2 years. Vacancy rate is 0.2%. The waitlist is 4-6 years for subsidized rental units.
- Several affordable housing developments are underway.



## Economy

High inflation rates are affecting 3 in 4 Canadian households with their ability to meet basic day-to-day expenses.

- PEC's median income is about 10% lower than the province's.
- In the midst of labour shortages and historically low unemployment, Canada faces record retirements from an aging labour force.
- Local employers face challenges acquiring employees due to lack of affordable housing.



## Transportation

County Transit was launched in 2020, during the pandemic. Uride is a new pilot that provides ridesharing services.

- Escorted transportation is available as are home deliveries of essential supplies.
- The new Cycling Master Plan is a step toward a network of continuous and connected cycling routes.



## Education

The pandemic has been especially disruptive to education. Many students are disengaged and struggling.

- Hastings Prince Edward students have more early learning vulnerabilities, and lower academic achievements than the provincial average.
- Greater Than County Youth Collective partners work together to support youth and educational success.



## Health

Health Care resources have been consumed by the pandemic, resulting in staff shortages driven by greater demand, staff burnout, illness and people leaving the profession.

- Mental Health deteriorated during the pandemic, especially affecting youth ages 18 to 34.
- Problematic substance use and opioid-related deaths have risen sharply since 2019.
- Only about 83% of PEC residents have a doctor (Ont. average 93%.) A Physician Recruiter is actively working on doctor retention and recruitment.



## Food Security

Surging food prices are amplifying the risk of food insecurity. The food inflation rate has soared to a 41-year high.

- At least 3,000 people in PEC may be affected by lack of adequate and healthy food.
- Protecting farmland is key to food security for future generations. In the past decade, PEC's cropland acreage decreased by 8.23% or 7,105 acres.



## Safety

96% of PEC residents state they generally feel safe.

Over the last 7 years, property and drug crimes have decreased, while fraud, impaired driving and sexual assault reports have increased.

- A community safety and well-being plan and strategies have been developed.