



District of
Nipissing Social
Services
Administration
Board

Strategic Plan Accomplishments (2023–2026) **REPORT**

June 2026

Introduction and context

INTRODUCTION

As the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) approaches the end of its 2023–2026 term, the Strategic Plan continues to serve as the framework guiding decision-making and priorities throughout the term.

Over the course of the 2023–2026 Board term, the DNSSAB operated within a significantly evolving and increasingly complex environment, starting with a change in senior leadership early in the term. During this period, the organization also underwent structural changes, assumed direct delivery of Inclusion Support Services (special needs resourcing) and homelessness outreach services, and assumed the operation of Niska Non-Profit Homes Inc., a 22-unit townhouse located in North Bay. The period has been characterized by escalating homelessness, encampments, and housing pressures; increasing mental health, addictions, and complex needs of clients; workforce shortages and recruitment and retention challenges earlier in the term; and mounting municipal funding and budget pressures. Combined with cost-of-living inflation and broader economic uncertainty, this has brought sustained pressure on DNSSAB programs and services, and more individuals and families requiring coordinated supports across multiple program areas.



Against this backdrop, the Board and staff were able to make meaningful progress in achieving strategic priorities and implementing key projects throughout the term, as demonstrated by the accomplishments that follow. These efforts have collectively helped to address the challenges noted above, and supported the corporate goals to maximize impact, remove systemic barriers, provide seamless access to services, and continually improve, learn, and grow.

“Delivering progress in a complex environment.”

Strategic Plan Background



As illustrated, the updated plan is built on four corporate goals, supported by 11 priorities and 47 actions for this Board term.

The Strategic Plan has provided a roadmap of priorities and actions for the 2023–2026 Board term while working toward the organization’s longer-term vision and goals. Early in the term, the Board undertook a review of the existing strategic plan from the previous Board and term, with input and feedback from incoming Board members to ensure relevance, clarity, and alignment with emerging priorities. The updated Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board in May 2023.

Also, some of the strategic priorities and actions were revised, and new actions were added to respond to operational, program, and system-level needs. These included initiatives to stabilize Northern Pines; undertake a feasibility study for a Homelessness Hub; assess client and tenant needs; support Board member training and service network training; implement Ontario Works employment transformation; conduct an organizational review; and strengthen the Board’s communications and public relations.

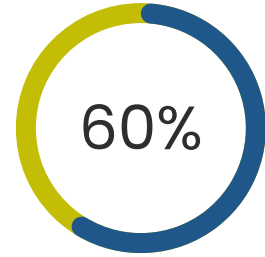
Through this review and development process, the plan was refreshed to include a set of new guiding principles:

- Adopt an anti-oppressive lens and trauma-informed care
- Build and maintain public trust through community engagement and representing the public interest
- Emphasize prevention and take an upstream approach where possible
- Empower staff for creating solutions – they are the experts
- Follow evidence-based practice and decision-making
- Focus on what we can control and influence
- Measure progress and results to show tangible improvements and goal achievement
- Identify and remove gaps in service delivery including the reliance on technology that may present a barrier to accessing services



Current Status

To date, staff and the Board have completed 28 action items and projects, representing 60% of the Strategic Plan. Work will continue on the remaining 19 items through the remainder of the year, and they will be carried forward into the next Strategic Plan and Board term (see Next Steps).



Completed

28

In Progress

19

Strategic Plan Implementation 2023–2026

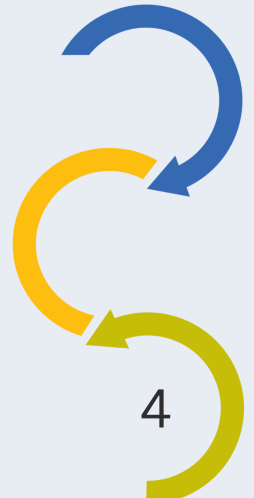


DNSSAB
Serves about
85,000
People



17,000 km²

of land spanning across 11 municipalities,
2 First Nations, and 2 unincorporated
areas (Nipissing North and South)





“ Stronger communities begin with removing barriers to well-being.

Goal: Remove Systemic Barriers

Through a focus on the vulnerable population, the Board will advocate for affordable housing, and support the removal of persisting social barriers such as access to quality child care programs, homelessness, poor mental health, addictions, and poverty, which threaten an individual's well-being and community participation. The related disparities and inequalities in income, education, socioeconomic status, and health are examples of barriers to individual well-being and healthy communities.

Priority: House Those in Need and Facilitate the Development of Affordable Housing as a Built for Zero Community.

Stabilize households by focusing on the upstream social determinants and creating more affordable housing options for those who are vulnerable and in need.

Action Completed: Explore joint planning initiatives, municipal and NDHC owned land, and other opportunities for the construction of affordable housing across the district, with emphasis on rural outlying areas.

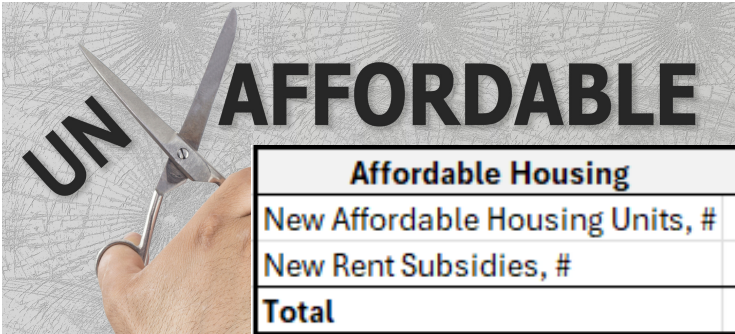
DNSSAB's participation in joint planning initiatives has facilitated the development of affordable housing by strengthening collaboration with municipal and community partners across Nipissing District.

Initial efforts focused on exploratory discussions with the partner municipalities to assess opportunities related to municipal land development for affordable housing.



Over the course of the Board term, this work expanded to include preliminary and then ongoing engagement with area municipalities, with discussions encompassing joint planning initiatives, the potential use of municipally owned lands, and opportunities for private land development—particularly in support of housing in rural and outlying communities. By 2024–2025, these collaborative conversations had become well established and were recognized as an ongoing and essential function of the organization. As a result, the responsibility was formally embedded within the Senior Lead, Project Development’s role, ensuring continued partnership-based planning to support municipal housing, growth, and regeneration strategies beyond the timeframe of the strategic plan.

In the first three years of the term (2023–2025), the Board added 121 new affordable housing units and rent subsidies to the housing supply in Nipissing District. It is estimated that by the end of this year (2026) and the Board’s four-year term, another 82 units and subsidies will have been added for a total of 203 new, affordable housing units and rent subsidies.



Affordable Housing	2023	2024	2025	2026 (estimate)	Total
New Affordable Housing Units, #	20	24	0	60	104
New Rent Subsidies, #	20	19	38	22	99
Total	40	43	38	82	203

Beyond these completions, the Board has also approved an additional 80 units, with delivery anticipated in 2027, supporting the continuation of housing development into the next Board term and planning cycle.

Action Completed: Ensure the By-Name List of homeless individuals is tied to a group of community service providers who will find coordinated solutions to rapidly rehouse and provide wrap-around supports to individuals identified.

As a Built for Zero community, the active management of the Nipissing By-Name List is helping to stabilize households and remove systemic barriers by strengthening coordinated, community-based responses to homelessness.



During the term, the Board and community established and achieved a Quality By-Name List (BNL) as designated by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and Built for Zero Canada.



The list is comprised of those experiencing local homelessness and has been operationalized through the Coordinated Access Nipissing (CAN) partnership, comprised of about 20 local service organizations and 100 staff who provide supports and coordinated solutions to those on the list. This ensures that individuals experiencing homelessness who consented to information sharing can be supported through a coordinated and data-informed process.



Action Completed: Identify housing development projects and prepare business cases in advance to respond quickly to funding opportunities, applications, and provincial infrastructure investments.

Identifying potential affordable housing projects and business cases in advance has improved DNSSAB's readiness to respond to housing funding opportunities for the construction of new housing. Over the Board term, processes were established to proactively identify housing development and acquisition opportunities and prepare business cases in advance of provincial and federal funding programs. This included issuing RFEI's in 2024 and 2025 that produced a number of conceptual and shovel-ready projects, to increase the housing stock throughout the district. The RFEI process supports proponents to advance projects toward readiness and positions the DNSSAB to advocate for and submit funding applications as opportunities emerge.



By 2026, this work was embedded as a standard business practice with dedicated resources, strengthening DNSSAB's capacity to respond in a timely and coordinated manner to housing investments in support of community needs.



“ Building stronger services through continuous improvement and growth.”

Goal: Continuous Improvement and Adaptation – Learning and Growth

Taking a continuous improvement approach will lead to processes and operating methods that are efficient and effective, with high-quality service delivery. The complementary focus on internal learning, growth, and adaptability enhances employee and technology capabilities and strengths.

Priority: Strengthen Communications, Understanding and Public Relations.

Engage and inform stakeholders to improve communications, inform public policy, build education and awareness, and strengthen the corporate reputation and image.

Action Completed: Develop DNSSAB Indigenous land acknowledgement statement.

The development of the Board’s Indigenous land acknowledgement statement during the term supports internal learning and growth, while also building education and awareness. Beginning in 2022, an Ad Hoc Board committee was established to develop a DNSSAB Indigenous land acknowledgement statement, with focused work occurring throughout 2023. The committee reached consensus on a statement, which was brought forward and approved by the Board in October 2023. Following approval, the land acknowledgement was implemented as a standard practice at Board meetings, reinforcing DNSSAB’s commitment to respectful engagement, awareness, and reconciliation.



Building on this foundation, the Board continued to advance its learning journey by identifying next steps related to truth and reconciliation, with ongoing Ad Hoc committee discussions planned beyond the completion of the statement itself. Indigenous cultural competency training for all staff was also initiated to support continued learning and awareness in this area. Together, this work represents a meaningful improvement to organizational communication practices and a sustained commitment to learning, reflection, and relationship building.

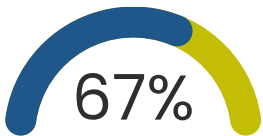
Action Completed: Develop a corporate social media plan that aligns with the corporate goals.

Implementing the DNSSAB social media strategy has significantly strengthened corporate communications and public relations. This work consolidated multiple related actions within the strategic plan into the development of a comprehensive communications framework, informed by external consultant recommendations and focused on improving engagement with the public and key stakeholders.

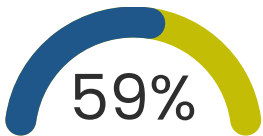


As part of this approach, a corporate social media strategy was developed in 2024 to ensure alignment with organizational goals and messaging. The resulting 2025 Social Media Strategy was launched in March 2025 and provides a clear, structured foundation for consistent, purposeful, and goal-aligned communication across social media platforms.

Since implementation, the social media campaign has generated a total of 892 posts (an increase of 67% from the previous Board update) and attracted 1,128 followers (an increase of 59%), supporting consistent and sustained engagement across social media platforms and increasing DNSSAB’s visibility in the community.



Increase of posts from the previous Board update



Increase of followers from the previous Board update



Action Completed: Implement strategies to engage early years and child care professionals by creating an online community of practice.

Taking a continuous improvement approach, the Children’s Services department developed an online community of practice that has improved communications and engagement with early years and child care professionals across the district.

This work resulted in the development of an online Professional Learning Portal, completed in 2023, which provides centralized access to training resources, professional development materials, and information videos tailored to individuals working in the sector. To further enhance collaboration and knowledge sharing, an online community of practice was incorporated into the portal, creating opportunities for networking and the exchange of ideas among professionals.



Currently there are 85 English and French modules in the portal being accessed by 227 users, and seven community groups who are networking and exchanging information and knowledge.

In addition, a district-wide professional learning calendar was established on the DNSSAB website to promote awareness and participation in development opportunities. Together, these tools strengthened communication channels with the early years and child care sector, supported professional growth, and fostered a more connected and informed community of practice, contributing to improved understanding and engagement between DNSSAB and sector stakeholders.

<https://www.dnssab.ca/childrens-services/providers/professional-learning/>

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Professional Learning

Calendar of Events

Children's Services is committed to making it easier for early learning and child care professionals to access the various professional learning opportunities that we support. As such, we have created a Professional Learning Calendar which details the different events that are occurring in our district, with registration information if applicable. Events are facilitated by many community partners, including DNSSAB.

For service providers wanting to develop a professional learning opportunity in our district, this is a great way to see what is already being planned, and therefore, what is missing. If you know of any additional professional learning events that are occurring in our region and you would like to add it to our calendar, please complete the form below and email it to data@dnssab.ca.

[Professional Learning Calendar Request Form](#) [View Calendar](#)

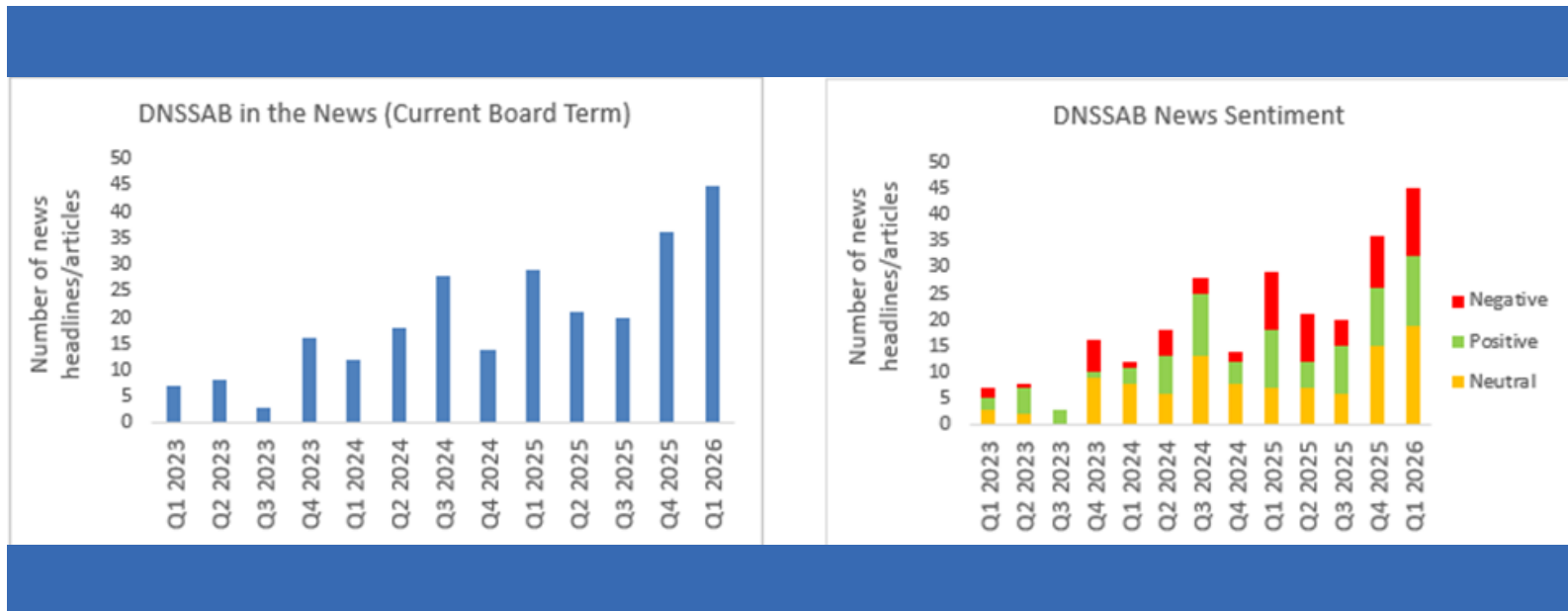


Action Completed: Run a communications campaign to position Nipissing Paramedic Services and other DNSSAB programs as an integral part of the community.

The corporate communication strategy included running a communications campaign that built directly on the social media strategy to position Nipissing Paramedic Services and other DNSSAB programs as integral parts of the community.

While early efforts relied primarily on ad hoc media coverage, this work evolved into a more deliberate, planned approach aligned with organizational communication goals and supported by consistent branding and messaging. Leveraging the newly established social media strategy and communications framework, DNSSAB expanded its media relations activities, integrated Paramedic Services and program spotlights into corporate social media channels, and actively promoted the DNSSAB website to improve access to information and community engagement.

Since the Board took office in January 2023, DNSSAB has appeared in the local news 257 times, or an average of 7 headlines/month, as of March 31, 2026. The DNSSAB media coverage has increased steadily, rising notably toward the latter years of the term.



Sentiment analysis shows that nearly three-quarters (73.5%) of the media coverage was neutral or positive, indicating balanced and generally constructive public reporting, while 26.5% of coverage was negative. Although negative reporting increased in absolute terms alongside overall media volume, particularly near the end of the term, it remained a smaller share and did not outweigh neutral and positive coverage.



Over the Board term, this alignment between strategic communications and execution has resulted in regular media releases, growth in social media engagement, and increased website traffic. Together, these efforts demonstrate how the implementation of the communications strategy has strengthened DNSSAB's public presence, enhanced community awareness of its services, and reinforced its role as a visible and valued community partner.

Priority: Become an Employer of Choice.

Build a creative and attractive workplace with strong culture that will attract and retain skilled talent.

Action Completed: Seek opportunities for staff to participate in career and skill development to further enhance opportunities for the internal filling and succession of positions (see also, Encourage Career Development and Growth).

Throughout the planning term, employees were provided with opportunities to build their skills and support career development across the organization (see also, staff training and professional development opportunities). This has been a key part of advancing the Board's priority to become an employer of choice.

Existing practices, including the Continuing Education and Leadership Development Policy, and performance review process, were used to identify and support staff participation in learning opportunities. Additionally, the continuing education fund was increased from \$9,000 to \$15,000 (66%) to support career and skill development. Informal mechanisms such as participation in organizational committees, cross-departmental projects, and professional associations also provided staff with opportunities to broaden their experience, build skills, and increase organizational awareness.



Increase from \$9,000 to \$15,000
to support career and skill development

While this work did not result in a single new program or initiative, it reflects an ongoing approach to supporting internal career development and succession planning through a combination of formal processes and operational practices embedded across the organization.



Action Completed: Attract, retain and increase the number of Registered Early Childhood Educators and professionals working in the sector.

Addressing workforce attraction and retention challenges within the early years and child care sector is essential to building sector capacity and supporting high-quality service delivery. Progress during the Board term focused on a combination of targeted outreach, capacity-building supports, and practical incentives for professionals working in the sector. Recruitment and retention efforts were strengthened through ongoing marketing initiatives, updates to the DNSSAB website, social media outreach, participation in community events and job fairs, and the distribution of promotional materials across the district.

In parallel, DNSSAB invested in professional growth opportunities by supporting the development of financial literacy and leadership training, including the creation of a micro-credential program and free professional development offerings. Additional supports included sponsorships for Early Childhood Educator diplomas and enhancements to quality assurance practices, with an increased emphasis on coaching and mentoring.

By 2024, this work had become embedded within service planning, policies, and ongoing operations, reflecting a sustained approach to supporting workforce development and strengthening the sector's long-term stability.

Priority: Encourage Organizational Development and Growth.

Implement development and training activities to promote continuous learning and skills development in concert with business needs, for growth and improved performance.

Action Completed: Have a training plan in place for the next incoming Board (Jan. 2027) to train members in areas such as governance, communications, roles & responsibilities, risk management, and general Board development.

A structured training plan has been developed for incoming Board members in 2027 to support effective onboarding and governance. Over the course of the 2023–2026 Board term, foundational governance and communications training was delivered, including governance training at the beginning of the term and communications training provided by Redbrick Communications in October and December 2024.



Building on this experience, planning focused on ensuring a comprehensive and well-sequenced orientation and training program for future Board members. By 2025, a training framework was developed outlining both external and internal training to be delivered over the first six months of the 2027 Board term. Planned topics include governance, accountability and transparency, financial oversight, communications and media relations, meeting management, Indigenous cultural awareness, and technology and privacy training.

This work ensures continuity of good governance practices and supports a strong, well-prepared Board through a deliberate and structured onboarding and development approach.

Action Completed: Conduct service network training and education.

DNSSAB also encouraged community development and growth over the Board term by strengthening service network training and education across DNSSAB programs. Over the Board term, training and education for external service providers became an embedded, ongoing practice across departments, delivered as opportunities arose and in response to sector needs.

Examples include Children's Services organizing more than 30 professional learning and development sessions for early years and child care professionals in 2024, Nipissing Paramedic Services providing first aid training to staff and external partner organizations, and Ontario Works delivering program presentations to social work students at Nipissing University. Together, these activities supported knowledge-sharing, sector capacity, and collaboration across the service network, reinforcing DNSSAB's role as a learning partner within the broader community.

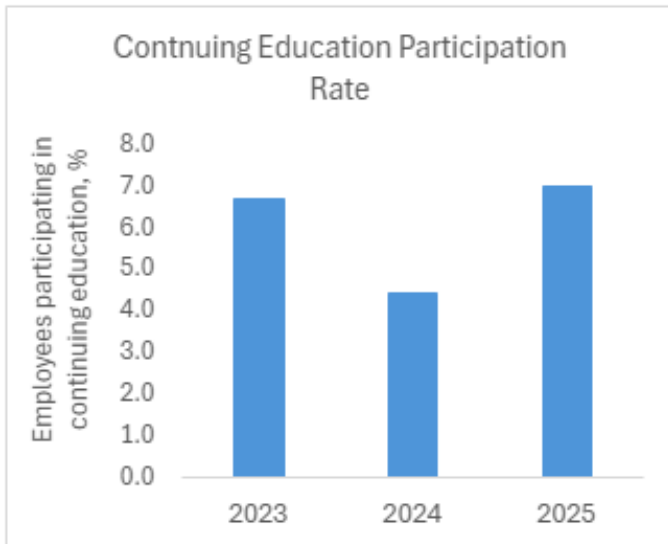


Action Completed: Ensure that staff have sufficient time allotted to attend training and professional development events and activities.

Supporting continuous improvement and adaptation has been a central focus throughout the Board's term. A key part of this work has been ensuring staff have sufficient time to participate in training and professional development.



Throughout the Board term, ongoing efforts were made at the departmental and Human Resources level to ensure employees had opportunities to attend learning and development activities aligned with their roles and organizational needs. As noted earlier, the continuing education fund was also increased. While this work did not result in a single discrete deliverable, training and development priorities have now been incorporated into Human Resources planning initiatives on an ongoing basis. This reflects an operational commitment to supporting staff development, performance improvement, and adaptability as part of DNSSAB's broader organizational growth.



As a proxy measure of progress, the Continuing Education Participation Rate shows that 7.0% of DNSSAB employees are currently enrolled in a continuing education program. While participation declined mid-term, the rate has rebounded and is now slightly above the level observed at the beginning of the Board term. This trend suggests that staff continue to access professional learning opportunities as operational conditions allow. This Key Performance Indicator (KPI) will continue to be monitored as part of ongoing operational performance tracking.

Priority: Develop Advanced Technology Solutions.

Implement new technology to increase productivity, operating performance and outcome data and measurement, and enhance service delivery.

Action Completed: Achieve an organization-wide commitment to technology.

A strong commitment to advanced technology is an important part of continuous improvement and improved organizational performance. During the Board term, this work was completed and embedded as an ongoing practice, with a focus on understanding existing technology, prioritizing upgrades, and moving away from legacy and paper-based systems. Progress included the implementation and adoption of modern platforms such as



SharePoint 365, and transitioning to Arcori for managing the social housing waiting list, and NDHC accounting and property management (see also, the implementation of new software under this priority). Further progress was also made by expanding the use of online portals within Children's Services to securely share documents with service providers.

Together, these efforts reflect a coordinated approach to technology modernization, supporting more efficient workflows, improved information management, and a stronger foundation for future system upgrades. Building on this foundation, additional technology initiatives remain in progress, including the upgrade of DNSSAB's financial systems (e.g., NAV/Sparkrock 365) and the exploration of emerging tools such as generative AI to further enhance client, resident, and staff experience.

Action Completed: Prioritize and implement the following new software and databases and/or upgrade legacy systems: Tenant Management System, Housing Registry Waitlist System, Social Housing Management System, eScribe Agenda Management System.

Arcori Nipissing District Housing Corporation

Arcori Integrated Housing System

eSCRIBE

Closely related to the action above, the implementation and modernization of housing and meeting management software have strengthened technology capability, improved data analytics, and supported more efficient operations. Over the Board term, DNSSAB implemented and upgraded several core platforms, including tenant and housing management systems and the eScribe agenda management system. While implementation timelines were adjusted to address data migration, training, and system refinement, steady progress was made through phased rollout. eScribe became fully operational earlier in the term, and the Arcori housing system was implemented for Housing Services and brought fully live following staff training and issue resolution. By the end of the Board term, both systems were operational, with remaining work shifting to ongoing maintenance, data analytics, reporting enhancements, and continuous improvement as technology evolves.

Action Completed: Fully utilize SharePoint or investigate a new document management system.

Transitioning to Microsoft SharePoint 365 has improved document management by enhancing efficiency, accessibility, and collaboration. During the Board term, DNSSAB moved toward fuller utilization of SharePoint as part of the transition to Microsoft 365,



recognizing that the platform would change significantly with the broader implementation of the Microsoft environment. By 2025, this work was completed and operational, with SharePoint serving as an ongoing document management solution integrated into daily operations.

The action is now embedded as a sustained practice, supporting improved document storage, access, and collaboration across the organization as part of DNSSAB’s overall technology modernization efforts.

Action Completed: Secure and protect computer systems and networks from cyberattacks that could result in the breach of information and data.

Strengthening the security of DNSSAB’s computer systems and networks is essential to protecting organizational information and maintaining service continuity, particularly in an increasingly complex digital environment. Early in the Board term, challenges related to securing standalone cybersecurity insurance were identified due to DNSSAB’s technical integration with the City of North Bay, requiring coordination, shared compliance requirements, and mutual agreement.



Over time, these challenges were addressed, and cybersecurity insurance coverage was successfully put in place. Steps were also taken to enhance organizational security awareness and controls, including the launch of cybersecurity training for staff and progress toward stronger password management practices. By the end of the Board term, this action was considered complete, with core protections established and cybersecurity recognized as an ongoing area of operational focus.



Collaboration at the core of stronger community outcomes.

Goal: Maximize Human Service Impact

The Board will leverage its leadership and bring together internal and external stakeholders, in an effort to realize common goals and maximize collective resources for the betterment of people in Nipissing District.

Priority: Strengthen Partnerships, Collaboration, and Opportunities for Internal and External Service Integration.

Implement strategies to combine/share administrative and/or operational service activities to eliminate duplication and costs, better meet the needs of clients and residents, and improve their service experience and outcomes.

Action Completed: Formalize the sharing of information, service coordination and collaboration, and direct client referrals with select service providers.

Service coordination around client referrals has led to an increase in collaboration with community partners and working towards common goals.

During the Board term, work focused on reviewing and strengthening referral practices, particularly for individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability, with attention to improving coordination, tracking, and client outcomes. Exploratory work included



engagement with community partners to assess more effective referral approaches, such as warm handoffs, and consideration of technology-enabled tools to support referral management and outcome tracking.

Following staff planning reviews and discussions in 2023–2024, this work was embedded into Ontario Works operational practices, with service coordination and referral processes continuing as part of day-to-day service delivery. As a result, this action item has shifted from a discrete project to an ongoing, integrated approach to collaboration and service coordination with community partners.

Further strengthening internal service integration, Housing Services and Ontario Works were brought together in 2026 under a new Coordinated Services model, aligned with organizational review recommendations to formalize collaboration and support more client-centred service delivery.

Action Completed: Re-establish and enhance current relationships and/or build new ones to realize common goals and leverage resources and projects for specific priorities or joint planning and service delivery initiatives.

Building and managing partnerships has been central to working with community stakeholders to align resources and advance shared goals for the benefit of clients and residents. Throughout the Board term, DNSSAB programs and departments focused on working more closely with municipal partners, service providers, educational institutions, and community organizations to align efforts, leverage shared resources, and pursue joint planning and service delivery initiatives. Currently DNSSAB has about 70 community partners and service organizations that it collaborates and works with on a frequent basis.

From a workforce and organizational perspective, relationships with local secondary and post-secondary institutions were strengthened to support recruitment, workforce development, and succession planning, while engagement with employment service providers supported more inclusive and coordinated approaches to training and recruitment.

Significant progress was also made within Housing Services through enhanced collaboration with municipalities, developers, health partners, and community organizations to advance affordable housing initiatives and expand supports for individuals experiencing homelessness, including targeted partnerships to support youth transitioning from care and individuals moving from transitional to permanent housing.

Ontario Works strengthened its community-facing role through new and enhanced partnerships, including the introduction of Service Navigation and Community Liaison roles that support integrated service delivery directly within community settings.



Across Children's Services and Paramedic Services, closer collaboration with health units and external agencies enabled the development of new roles and joint initiatives to respond to evolving community needs. Collectively, these efforts reflect a deliberate shift toward relationship-based service delivery, with partnership development now embedded as an ongoing organizational practice.

Action Completed: Seek opportunities to integrate Nipissing Paramedic Services with other DNSSAB departments and community home care and supports.

Nipissing Paramedic Services has expanded beyond traditional emergency response to become more integrated with other DNSSAB departments and community-based health and support services. This has required stronger internal collaboration and expanded partnerships to better meet the needs of people requiring care.

During the Board term, Paramedic Services focused on building new and strengthened relationships with allied agencies, including health, police, fire, and community partners, to support a more coordinated and holistic approach to care. A key milestone was the creation of the Deputy Chief of Community Health and Integration position in July 2024, providing dedicated leadership to advance community collaboration and support integration across DNSSAB programs.

Additional capacity was strengthened through Ontario Health funding for a permanent Health Care Systems Coordinator to support community engagement and workflow management for the Community Paramedic program. Internally, cross-orientation efforts were initiated to deepen understanding between Paramedic Services and other departments, and Community Paramedic resources were strategically positioned in Northern Pines to provide on-site access to health services and coordinated care for clients experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Externally, Community Paramedic initiatives expanded through regular clinics at social housing and transitional housing sites. Together, these efforts enhanced service integration, improved access to community-based supports, and strengthened Paramedic Services' role as a collaborative partner within the broader human services system.





Priority: Enable Client Self-sufficiency and Decrease the Reliance on Social Assistance.

Enable Ontario Works clients to move towards employment, education, income security, and independence and away from social assistance and dependency on the system.

Action Completed: Stronger Ontario Works program alignment with life skills and literacy initiatives; ensure maximum client participation and community integration where possible.

As part of Ontario's Employment Services Transformation (now known as Integrated Employment Services or IES), DNSSAB's Ontario Works program placed greater emphasis on life skills and literacy supports to help clients build independence and improve life outcomes.

During the Board term, focused work was undertaken to further articulate and support a life stabilization approach within employment services, including staff-led discussions to define life stabilization from a frontline delivery perspective and early planning toward an Employment Services Transformation implementation plan. Several operational changes were introduced to better support client participation and individualized service delivery, including the launch of centralized intake, the resumption of in-person workshops for clients facing barriers to digital access, the re-alignment of Employment Support Worker roles to reflect varying levels of job readiness, and the resumption of community placements for clients progressing along the employment continuum.

Additional efforts included an OW staff shift to life stabilization, involving enhanced training related to client-centred and life stabilization approaches, targeted certification opportunities, and engagement with post-secondary partners to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into planning. While Ontario Works had long delivered life skills and stabilization supports as part of regular practice, these efforts strengthened alignment, clarity, and readiness as services transitioned under Employment Services Transformation, embedding this work as an ongoing component of service delivery rather than a discrete, time-limited initiative.

Action Completed: Transition front line employment services to Employment Ontario through engagement and consultation with the Service System Manager.



DNSSAB's Ontario Works employment services have successfully transitioned to Employment Ontario, supporting the provincial goal of a more efficient and streamlined employment services system.

Throughout 2024, DNSSAB participated in ongoing consultation and planning to support staff readiness and ensure continuity of service delivery during the transition. Targeted training and regular engagement with the Service System Manager helped prepare staff for the new model and ensured DNSSAB's perspective was represented in regional discussions shaping service delivery. As a result of this coordinated transition process, front-line employment staff successfully moved to the Employment Ontario model effective March 1, 2025.

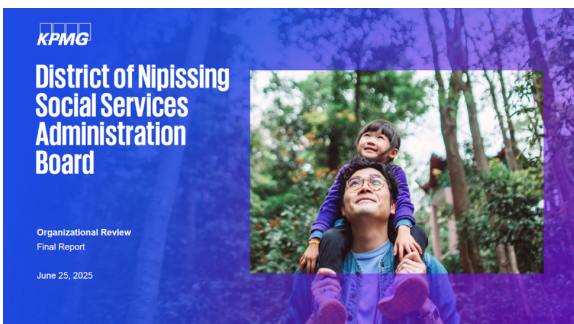
Priority: Ensure the DNSSAB is well positioned and aligned for maximum performance heading into the future.

Ensure the optimal use of DNSSAB resources and that the operating structure and processes are efficient, effective, and poised for high-quality service delivery.

Action Completed: Conduct a DNSSAB organization review.

During the Board term, a comprehensive organizational review was completed to improve alignment, optimize resource use, and strengthen organizational structure, processes, and performance. Following completion of the request for proposal process, KPMG was selected as the successful consultant and commenced work in November 2024. The review was guided by a formal project charter and overseen by an internal project steering committee, with structured stakeholder engagement, document review, and process mapping.

Throughout 2025, the review progressed through multiple phases, with interim findings shared with senior management and opportunities provided for validation and feedback. The organizational review was completed in June 2025, with KPMG delivering a final report and presentation to the Board.



As the project has transitioned from review to action, implementation planning for key recommendations was identified as the next phase of work, which will be carried forward and addressed under this strategic priority and goal in the next Board term and plan refresh/update.



Delivering services where and when people need them most.

Goal: Seamless Access

Enhance service planning, delivery, and access so clients and residents can access programs and services when and where they need them.

Priority: Increase Equitable Access to Quality Early Learning and Child Care.

Remove barriers such as access, affordability, staff availability, and geographic location to ensure all families have equitable access to child care and fee subsidies.

Action Completed: Implement a strategy to support rural and underserved communities throughout the district (i.e. EarlyON Mobile Unit, home child care, etc.).

Over the Board term, DNSSAB Children's Services strengthened service delivery in rural and underserved communities across the district, reducing barriers and improving access to quality early learning and child care in Nipissing District. Targeted strategies were implemented to improve access where fixed-site services are limited, most notably through the full implementation of the EarlyON Mobile Unit, which provides on-the-ground programming in rural and underserved areas.

Children's Services also undertook formal planning to support longer-term system growth and alignment, including the development of a district-wide growth plan and service system plan, and planning for directed expansion under the Canada-Wide Early Learning



and Child Care (CWELCC) framework. This work included increasing home child care services in rural communities and planning for licensed child care expansion in both school-based and community-based settings, while maintaining required not-for-profit and for-profit balance.

By 2024, the growth plan was approved and incorporated into service planning, with updates to be completed on a regular basis. Together, these actions improved immediate access through mobile service delivery while also establishing a structured, ongoing approach to expanding early learning and child care in communities with the greatest need.



Priority: Improve service access in Nipissing District.

Assess the present service network for DNSSAB clients and residents regarding linkage and equitable access to the services, benefits, and resources they need.

Action Completed: Undertake a feasibility study to establish a Homelessness Hub that is open during the day, seven days a week, 365 days/yr.

DNSSAB Homelessness System Review and Feasibility Study

Homelessness Hub Feasibility Study Report

April 10, 2024

To support the Board's priority of improving service access in Nipissing District, a study was conducted to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a homelessness hub in North Bay.

The study began in 2023 following a formal procurement process, and examined the need for a potential hub, broader service system improvements, and options to address growing homelessness through a centralized access point for coordinated services and supports.

Preliminary findings were presented to the Board in late 2023, followed by the delivery of a final report in April 2024. The final study and accompanying staff report recommended adoption of the study's findings and recommendations, which include establishing a 24/7 integrated Homelessness Hub in North Bay (work continues on finding a suitable location for the hub).



Action Completed: Identify and explore opportunities for co-location of services as part of establishing wrap-around services for clients.

The colocation of services and provision of wrap-around client supports is central to providing seamless access and delivering services when and where they are needed. During the Board term, Ontario Works embedded this approach into its service delivery model, recognizing co-location as an ongoing practice rather than a one-time project.

A key example was the implementation of co-located services at the Edgewater site within the NDHC housing portfolio beginning in March 2023. Based on client needs at that location, Ontario Works coordinated with the Ontario Disability Support Program to transition on-site service delivery to better reflect the resident population. Additional opportunities for co-location continue to be explored, including service delivery at Northern Pines where Community Paramedicine has begun providing on-site supports such as health assessments, point-of-care testing, vaccinations, and blood work for individuals experiencing homelessness.

As Ontario Works transitions under Employment Services Transformation (IES), further opportunities for reciprocal service embedding with Employment Ontario service providers are also being considered, reinforcing a flexible and client-centred approach to bringing services directly into the community where they are most needed.

Action Completed: Investigate opportunities to provide outreach services to clients and meet them in their own space/ 'where they are at'; increase opportunity for in-person service access.

Closely related to the previous action item, Ontario Works (OW) enhanced service delivery by increasing outreach services directly within the community and expanding in-person service access for clients.

During the Board term, outreach activities were strengthened through collaboration between Ontario Works management and frontline teams, with staff mobilized to provide on-site service at locations where client needs are highest. This included regular outreach presence at the Edgewater housing site and planning for future outreach at Northern Pines and other community locations as operationally appropriate. In addition, following changes in local service delivery, DNSSAB initiated the direct provision of homelessness outreach (street-level) services to address a service gap and ensure continuity of support for individuals experiencing homelessness.



Ontario Works also continued to participate in coordinated community response efforts, including involvement with the Gateway Hub and joint interventions when required. While opportunities for outreach and embedded service delivery vary based on partner readiness and system-level changes, this work has been embedded into Ontario Works' service delivery model and will continue to evolve as Employment Services Transformation progresses.

Overall, these efforts reinforce a client-centred approach by meeting individuals where they are and improving access to supports beyond traditional office-based service delivery.

Action Completed: Identify and remove any gaps in service delivery, including the reliance on technology which may present a barrier to accessing services.

Addressing barriers created by service delivery models, including reliance on technology, is essential to ensuring seamless access to services. During staff strategic planning sessions and discussions, it was felt that this action would be more effectively addressed as a guiding principle rather than a stand-alone initiative. As a result, it was embedded into the corporate guiding principles and broader service design considerations and corporate customer/client service policy. In practice, this will help to ensure that clients continue to have non-digital access options where appropriate, such as Children's Services offering both phone-based and paper application options. This approach reinforces ongoing attention to accessibility as services evolve, rather than limiting it to a single time-bound action.

Priority: Increase Service Impact.

Through advocacy and taking an evidence-based and client-centred approach, improve service planning and delivery to meet client needs and expectations.

Action Completed: Establish program sustainability for the Nipissing Community Paramedicine (CP) program across the District.

Nipissing Paramedic Services has strengthened its service impact through the sustainability of the Community Paramedicine (CP) program. Over the Board term, the CP program continued to evolve through strengthened collaboration with health and community partners, with a focus on delivering preventative, community-based services that help reduce emergency department visits and hospital or long-term care admissions.



A good example of this is establishing the Clinical Access Mobile Partnership (CAMP) program which expands access to preventive and primary care through a partnership-based model with community healthcare partners. Operated by Nipissing Paramedic Services, the mobile clinic provides a wide range of services, from wellness checks and chronic disease outreach to telemedicine-enabled care in areas affected by physician shortages. CAMP has increased outreach healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved communities and strengthened the Community Paramedic's capacity to respond to community needs.

Funding stability was a key area of focus, with base funding secured for the majority of CP positions and additional funding provided through the Ministry of Health to support program delivery through March 2026.



While confirmation of permanent funding for all positions remains subject to provincial decisions, the program achieved financial sustainability through the end of the Board term. As a result, the CP program is well positioned to continue delivering integrated, preventative services while longer-term funding consolidation efforts progress at the provincial level.

Next Steps



Building on progress today to shape priorities for tomorrow.



PLANNING FOR NEXT TERM

The Senior Management Team will continue implementing the remaining strategic priorities and action items, with support from staff and project teams, through the end of the 2023–2026 Board term. As part of the transition to the next Board term (2027–2030), the Strategic Plan will be presented to the incoming Board during orientation for review and input, and to inform any needed updates or refresh.



Plan Refresh & Alignment

Feedback from the incoming Board will inform updates and any required refresh to ensure continued alignment with evolving community needs and priorities.