



**Norfolk  
COUNTY** **Tourism & Economic Development**  
**Annual Report 2017**

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# Economic Indicators



*Titan Trailers Expansion*

## Population

Norfolk County, with 64,044 residents in 2016, experienced 1.4% population growth compared to 2011. Port Dover is our fastest growing community.

## Income Growth

Median total income of Norfolk County households in 2015 was \$67,338, up 6.5% since 2005. Between 2005 and 2015, Norfolk County experienced the highest rate of growth in median household total income in southwestern Ontario, followed by Hamilton (5.3%), Ingersoll (4.2%), Woodstock (3.3%), Brantford (2.6%), Guelph (2.5%), Kitchener-Waterloo (1.4%), Sarnia (1.2%) and Stratford (1.0%).

## New Construction

Norfolk County experienced another record year of construction in 2017, with \$142 million in building permits issued, an increase of 28% compared to the year before. Agriculture related construction increased by 68% to \$18.7 million. Industrial and commercial construction activity tripled, with \$18.6 million and \$6.8 million respectively.

## Labour Force

Norfolk County had a labour force of 32,600 workers in 2016, with a participation rate of 61.2%. The unemployment rate in Norfolk County in 2016 was 7.1%, down from 8.9% in 2013.

## Growing Employment

Industry sectors experiencing growth in employment between 2010 and 2016 were accommodation and food services (+421 jobs), health care and social assistance (409), manufacturing (337), arts, entertainment and recreation (+99) and administrative support (+92).

Sectors in decline were agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (-147 jobs), other services (-102), and transportation and warehousing (-54).

## Changing Occupations

Occupations in Norfolk County showing the most growth in 2017 were nursery and greenhouse jobs (+63), registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses (+56) and nurse aides, orderlies and patient services associates (+48). Occupations showing the highest decline included retail and wholesale trade managers (-55), general office support workers (-38), and restaurant and food service managers (-36).



Norfolk County Mayor with Titan Trailers staff



*Unilever Business Visit*

## Business Incentives & Supports

### Business Retention & Expansion

#### Business Visits

For 2017 staff visited approximately 200 businesses averaging about four visits a week. The visits were evenly split between tourism and industry. The department's business visitation program is integral to business retention and expansion. The main objectives of business visits are twofold: to identify and assist those businesses that are ready to capitalize on existing opportunities (business expansion, market expansion, product expansion, job creation); and to identify those businesses that are facing challenges and point them towards possible incentives and reliefs for solutions. Staff took both a proactive and a reactive approach in conducting the businesses visits. Proactively, we targeted those businesses that met the eligibility for announced government incentive programs and encouraged them to

capitalize on the programs where possible. Reactively, we visited those companies that reached out to us seeking our assistance with challenges that they were facing. This "push-pull" strategy of engaging with our businesses will be enhanced in 2018.

#### Joint Meetings

Staff invited Chambers of Commerce, BIAs and the Board of Trade to a joint meeting in March, in cooperation with Venture Norfolk, to explore ways to collaborate better. Haldimand County Tourism & Economic Development and the Hagersville Chamber of Commerce presented on the topic of the Haldimand Chamber Business Network. Staff from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs presented on Effective Partnerships. A meeting was held in May to gather feedback on the Official Plan.

## **Client Relationship Management**

The department implemented a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) program at the end of 2017. This program (Executive Pulse) will enhance the department's ability to track inquiries (from new or existing businesses), record business interactions (for engagement and follow-up) and track our business communications (industry specific invitations and promotions etc). Additionally this new CRM tool will afford us to report on different aspects of our business engagement and make yearend reports more accurate.



*Planning Pre-Consultation Meeting*

## **Development Process Engagement**

**Development Information Sessions:** Tourism & Economic Development staff attend quarterly public Development Information Sessions (DIS) organized for the development industry by the Planning Department.

## **New Development Engineering**

**Department:** A new department of the Development & Cultural Services Division was added to the team to assist in expediting planning applications. The Department has improved the amount of time it takes to review engineering aspects of proposals, which was a wish of the home builders' association and the development community.

**Official Plan Review:** Tourism & Economic Development staff worked with Advisory Boards to submit feedback and provide opinion on policies during process.

**Pre-Consultation Meetings:** Tourism & Economic Development staff attend pre-consultations meetings with new developers and provide comments on planning application reports. Developers who have participated in the process have provided very positive feedback about the value this pre-consultation brings to the table.

## **Meetings of Chambers of Commerce, BIAs, Board of Trade**

Staff regularly attend monthly meetings of the Delhi BIA, Delhi Chamber of Commerce, Long Point Country Chamber of Commerce, Port Dover Board of Trade, Simcoe BIA, Simcoe Chamber of Commerce, and Waterford Chamber of Commerce. Collaborations are explored and information shared. Staff also attend Business After 5 events, AGMs, and awards banquets for

these organizations, and have face-to-face meetings with volunteers and staff.

## Statistical Data

Norfolk County staff routinely receive enquiries about statistical data related to

the municipality, its population, economy, etc. New data generated by the 2016 Census was updated on the norfolkbusiness.ca website. Census of Agriculture analysis was prepared by staff to use in promotions and information.

## Incentives

### Community Improvement Plan Incentives



*InaspHERE Wines New Patio*

Due to an overwhelming uptake of the program, the budget of \$100,000 was exhausted within the first six months of the year. The program continues to be very popular and on average each dollar of investment from the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program has resulted in an additional five dollars of private investment in the County. A

comprehensive review of the program is on the way and recommendations for improved efficiency will be presented in a report to Council. Funding for the program approved by Norfolk County Council was allocated by June 2017. Applications continued to be received. A review of the incentives program was commenced.

## **Grant recipients for 2017:**

### **Agricultural Buildings and Facilities Improvement Program**

No new applicants in 2017

### **Architectural and Design Grant**

Hunter, \$1,500

Simcoe Spring Service, \$1,500

### **Building Permit Grants**

Hunter, \$531.50

Johanco Inc., \$310.50

Delhi Community Health Centre, \$3,000

Simcoe Spring Service, \$3,000

### **Building Façade Improvement Program**

2137430 Ontario Ltd., \$1,194

2364112 Ontario Ltd., \$7,500

762830 Ontario Ltd., \$581

Erie Beach Hotel, \$7,500

Johanco Inc., \$1,500

Lanny Horne, \$351

Rainey Ginseng Farm Ltd., \$183



*Agriculture Improvement Program - Before*

### **Landscaping, Signage, Property Improvement Grant**

Johanco Inc., \$2,000

Simcoe Spring Service, \$2,000

Springview Farm Inc., \$2,000

### **Planning Application Fee Grants**

Delhi Community Health Centre, \$253

Simcoe Spring Service, \$1,000

### **Property Tax Increment**

2364112 Ontario Ltd., \$17,867

Van Amerongen & Son, \$34,273

### **Residential Conversion or Rehabilitation**

Chopp Capital Corp., \$4,000

### **Structural Improvement**

Hunter, \$3,910.51

8322759 Canada Inc., \$5,000

Simcoe Spring Service, \$5,000

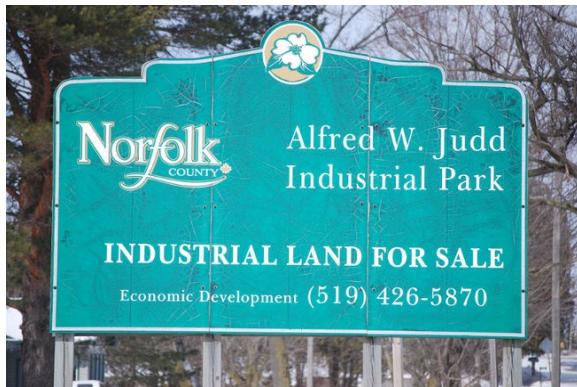


*Agriculture Improvement Program - After*

# Investment Attraction

## EDCO Investor's Guide

Norfolk County is listed in the Investor's Guide for the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) website ([edcoinvestorsguide.com](http://edcoinvestorsguide.com)), which site selectors and developers refer to when searching for possible locations in the Province of Ontario.



## Industrial Park

Tourism & Economic Development staff fielded enquiries for land in the Judd Industrial Park. The profile of potential developers is very restrictive due to the source-water protection regulations that apply to these parcels of land. Engineering of industrial road in Judd Park was considered.

## Ontario Food Cluster

Norfolk County joined the Ontario Food Cluster (OFC) in 2017, a group of 18 partner organizations across the province. The goal of the OFC is to attract international investment to a cluster of 3,000 food and beverage companies. Partners include: Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, Global Affairs Canada, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario East Economic Development Corp., Durham Region, Elgin County, Guelph Economic Development, Hamilton Economic Development, London Economic Development Corp., Middlesex County, Niagara Economic Development, Norfolk County, Simcoe County, Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance, Waterloo Economic Development Corp., and the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corp.

## Website Accessibility

Tourism & Economic Development staff commenced a project to make [norfolkbusiness.ca](http://norfolkbusiness.ca) accessible and mobile friendly. Ongoing work to ensure [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) is accessible also continued.

## Workshops & Networking Events

### Business Workshops & Open Houses

Several open houses at the Robinson Administration Building were organized in 2017. Numerous individuals attended and connected with staff to deal with issues. The open houses featured coffee and refreshments followed by a tour and Q&A of representatives from the departments: Building & By-Law Enforcement, Community Planning, Tourism & Economic Development, Heritage & Culture. Opportunities for businesses and developers to meet one-on-one with Norfolk County staff to initiate conversations about projects to set up appointments for meetings to follow up. Staff are developing a plan for several workshops for businesses, in cooperation with other organizations.

### Delhi Chamber of Commerce Awards Night

Staff presented on the topic of Delhi's economy and celebrated award winners.



Symposium 2017 Keynote Speaker Blake Fly

### Economic Development Symposium

Staff organized the annual Economic Development Symposium (#NCSym17) on January 18, 2017, at the Port Dover Community Centre under the theme, "Young & Restless". Keynote speaker Blake Fly was appreciated by attendees. About 200 business owners, community leaders and organization contacts attended. Feedback from the event was very positive:

- "Always an inspiring event."
- "Excellent Symposium! I learned a lot. Blake was very engaging. I left today's workshop feeling renewed and proud to be a resident of Norfolk County."

### SCOR FoodHub / FreshSpoke Workshop

Staff worked with FreshSpoke, the organization now facilitating the SCOR FoodHub, to schedule a workshop encouraging farms and food suppliers to attend.

### Simcoe Chamber of Commerce Awards Night

The Department sponsored the Awards Night and several staff attended to celebrate award winners. One of Norfolk County's Student Start Up participants, Lilly VanDenHurk-Cooke, won the Entrepreneur Award.

## Youth Engagement



*Student Start Up (SSUP Norfolk) Recipients 2017*

### **Student Start Up Program (SSUP Norfolk)**

Norfolk County students in Grades 6 to 12 with a summer business idea may receive up to \$300 to start up their operations from the Student Start Up Program (SSUP Norfolk). Deadline was June 23, 2017. Students completed an online or paper form, adding supporting documents. Norfolk County staff presented information to classes in all schools in all local school boards. Successful student applicants were notified by the end of June and received \$200 each to start their businesses. There was a Zip & Snacks Day in August to check in with the participants. Those who submitted a final report and photo of their business at the end of the summer received an additional \$100. SSUP Norfolk took top honours at awards programs in 2017 (see page 27).

The following comments were received from student participants:

“[SSUP] allows for youth to take an initiative in their communities and learn lessons applicable throughout their lives. It helped me to successfully run my business and have the courage to take the first step. I am very grateful that this program is in Norfolk County!

“The best thing about SSUP is that it both encourages and assists youth to become the entrepreneurs of the future and that we are treated like adults and not like children. We are trusted that we would use the money to significantly help our businesses and promote business growth.”

**Local Government SSUP Sponsor**  
Norfolk County

**5-Star SSUP Sponsor (\$1,500 each)**

- Annex Media
- Libro Credit Union
- MHN Lawyers
- Ross & McBride LLP
- Simcoe Lions Club
- Staples Simcoe
- Titan Trailers
- Van Amerongen & Son
- Venture Norfolk

**3-Star SSUP Sponsors (\$900 each)**

- Cowan Insurance
- Southwestern Ontario Tourism Corp.
- Toyotetsu Canada Inc.
- Rassaun Services, Inc.
- South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corp.

**1-Star SSUP Sponsors (\$300 each)**

- The Beach House Restaurant
- CarStar Collision Services
- Creative Design Ink
- Harvey's / Swiss Chalet
- Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show
- Norfolk Rotaract Club
- Picard Foods

**SSUP Partners (Additional funding)**

- Haldimand County Ec. D. & Tourism
- Grand Erie Business Center

## ReThink Norfolk (May 17)

The ReThink event engages young professionals, high school seniors and recent post-secondary graduates, organized by Rotaract Club of Norfolk, Norfolk County and Venture Norfolk. Attendance at this youth engagement

**SSUP Supporters (In-Kind)**

- Attaboy Window Washing
- Long Point Eco-Adventures
- MyFM
- Simcoe Reformer
- Whistling Gardens



*Waterford Landscapers - 2017 SSUP Recipient*

event in 2017 was approximately 150 people, down from about 200 in 2016, due to a conflict in scheduling with another organization. The event is being reviewed for potential changes in 2018.

<b>Youth Entrepreneurship Programs</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Summer Company	3	2
Starter Company	2	1
<b>Student Start Up Program - Norfolk</b>		
-Staff Presentations to Classes	28	34
-Schools participating	24	27
-Student Applications	86	188
-Student Businesses Funded	40	94
-Student Entrepreneurs Helped	50	107
-SSUP Sponsors Participating	12	27

## Magnet Job-Matching Platform

Magnet is a not-for-profit social innovation founded by Ryerson University, in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, with one common goal: to address unemployment and under-employment of Canadians. Norfolk County signed on as a partner in 2017. Magnet is a collaborative network that accurately connects employers to the right talent based on skills and qualifications. Magnet uses an advanced recruitment model that effectively promotes diverse recruitment strategies. Employers can create targeted job postings and instantly view the number of candidates

who qualify. Targeted communications can be sent. Employers can share programs and events with segmented groups of job seekers. Job seekers can register via the same portal. It is a collaborative hub of post-secondary institutions, not-for-profits, governments, labour, and industry partners working together on one common platform, towards one common goal: to address unemployment and under-employment of Canadians. Currently, Magnet has 90,000+ registered job seekers, 9,000+ employers, 30+ universities and colleges, and 190+ community partners on its secure system.

## Youth Video

The youth video was launched at the 2017 Symposium. It was filmed at last

year's ReThink. Rotaract Club of Norfolk said the video was well done.

## Collaborative Projects



*Fanshawe Farm Market Collaboration*

### Alternative Accommodations Strategy

Staff collaborated with peers in Haldimand County and Elgin County, as well as Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp., on the Alternative Accommodation Strategy. The Centre for Research and Innovation at Fanshawe College was contracted to undertake the next phase of the project:

exploring details of specific sites, and developing a toolkit for property owners. Due to the college strike, the project was delayed. Partners in the project will meet in 2018 to discuss an alternative approach.

### Asparagus Growers of Ontario

Staff collaborated with The Asparagus Growers of Ontario on the “Asparabus Tour”, which brought 28 writers, bloggers, chefs and influencers to

experience a farm tour (Dennis Horseradish) followed by lunch and tour at Burning Kiln Winery. The event included an Iron Chef challenge that saw writers create unique dishes using local ingredients.

## Cruise the Coast Motorcycle Alliance

Development & Cultural Services staff produced the Cruise the Coast Map, website, and email newsletter, in cooperation with Southwestern Ontario Tourism and the 10 tourism offices in the alliance: Haldimand, Elgin, Norfolk, Oxford, St Thomas, Middlesex, London, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia-Lambton, Windsor-Essex. The alliance also coordinates an exhibit at the Canadian Motorcycle Super Show in Toronto.

## Culinary Tourism Alliance

Norfolk County carries a membership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance, a provincial association funded by the Ontario government, restaurants and food purveyors. Four restaurants and a number of food purveyors in Norfolk County are also members. The CTA promotes local food and drink served in restaurants and organizes an annual Terroir Symposium in Toronto, followed by a Terroir Rural Retreat. Norfolk County was the successful bidder for the 2018 retreat event.

## F.A.R.M.S.

In August 2017, delegates from the federal government visited Norfolk County to discuss the temporary seasonal worker program for agriculture with affected stakeholder groups.

Representatives of the federal government recently toured Norfolk County to better understand the needs of farmers and offshore workers in the food production sector. The government delegates were hosted by F.A.R.M.S., (Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services). At a dinner meeting in Port Dover, Norfolk County staff highlighted the importance of offshore workers to our agriculture sector, and the care farmers take in ensuring their temporary and seasonal workers are housed properly. Staff summarized Statistics Canada data which indicates an increased dependence on seasonal and temporary workers on farms across Canada.

- Ontario, the province with the highest number of seasonal and temporary workers (46,139) on farms, dependence on this labour pool has increased by 29% since 2011.
- Quebec farms employ 29,967 seasonal and temporary workers, and dependence on them has increased 17%.
- British Columbia farmers are the third largest employer of seasonal and temporary workers, with 29,627. Dependence has increased 66% since 2011.

Also at the meeting, Public Health staff explained how the health unit ensures that farmers are following the seasonal worker accommodation guidelines.

## Fanshawe College Farm Market Program

As part of the newly launched Agri-Business Management graduate certificate program, Fanshawe College has partnered with Farm Credit Canada and Norfolk County to support the introduction of 'Fanshawe Farm Market' booths at the historic Horton Farmers' Market in St. Thomas and the Waterford Farmers' Market in Waterford. Students developed hands-on skills through the following tasks: introducing new products from partner growers in the region, seeking feedback from consumers, launching or contributing to social media campaigns, testing retail user experience designs, and focusing on food safety, traceability and product delivery.

## Industry Conferences

Staff attended the Economic Developers' Council of Ontario, the Economic Development Association of Canada, and the International Economic Development Council conferences to build professional development, learn about best practices, and to network with peers to find solutions to community economic development challenges. Awards were also received (page 27).

## Long Point World Biosphere – Sustainable Tourism

Norfolk County staff collaborated with the Long Point World Biosphere on several marketing and product development initiatives focused on sustainable tourism: Meet the Locals, Amazing Places Bus Tour, Amazing Places Map and the product development workshop.

## Ontario Hazelnut Association

Norfolk County sponsored and attended the annual hazelnut symposium organized by the Ontario Hazelnut Association (OHA). Ferraro consumes about 50 per cent of the world's hazelnuts in their many plants worldwide. The company has stated that they want to see 23,000 acres of hazelnuts planted in seven years in Ontario. Current acreage estimates are in the range of 400 acres. In 2017, the Province of Ontario provided more than \$492,000 to the OHA to develop orchard management practices to enhance early development of hazelnut trees, develop strategies to mitigate drought stress and establish production techniques to multiply hazelnut plants for commercial use.

## **Ontario South Coast Wineries & Growers Association**

The department works closely with the Ontario South Coast Wineries & Growers Association to ensure that the wine industry is well promoted and developed in Norfolk County. Part of this collaboration includes editorial coverage and grouped listings in the annual Guide/Map, as well as other assistance with association events (Orchard Affair, Spirit of the Season passport, etc.). Staff also worked with the association to plan a grant-writing workshop in early 2018.



*Winery Association's Spirit of the Season Passport*

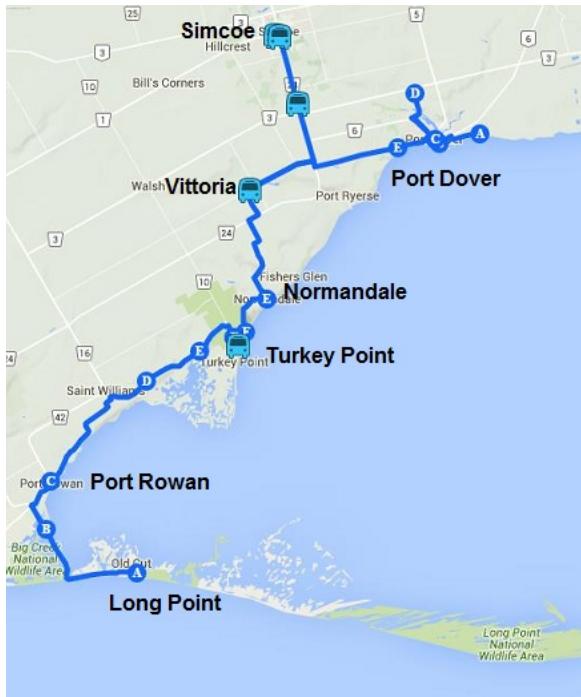
## **Simcoe & District Real Estate Board**

The department was asked to make a presentation at the annual Simcoe and District Real Estate Board meeting where it was reiterated that the Tourism and Economic Development department

looks forward to the continued close working relationship between the department and the realtors. The meeting was advised that the department would be relying on the realtors for assistance in developing a real estate inventory database for the county. The department plans to work closely with the realtors to try and find businesses to occupy those empty commercial spaces that exist throughout the County.

## **SCOR**

The department provides support on behalf of Norfolk County to SCOR, the South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit body directed by elected representatives of Brant County, Oxford County, Norfolk County, Middlesex County and a number of area municipalities of Elgin County. County staff assisted in 2017 to pilot an agreement on Chinese direct investment with 168Canada. Staff supported to transition FoodHub to FreshSpoke. Other meetings staff attended were board meetings, as well as Local Food Recognition Awards, and Downtown Revitalization meetings.



South Coast Shuttle Routes 2017

## South Coast Shuttle

The department continues to provide promotional support for the South Coast Shuttle operated on weekends in summer by Ride Norfolk. Staff facilitated the development of this service, which is now in its third year of operation, with support from private-sector partners.

## Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp.

Staff work closely on initiatives coordinated by the regional tourism organization, Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp. Staff serve on the DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) Council and Marketing Committee. Other projects and initiatives throughout the year, including the Alternative Accommodations project, and the Cruise

the Coast Motorcycle Tourism Alliance, are collaborations with SWOTC.

## Tourism Industry Association of Ontario

Staff participated in Municipal Accommodation Tax consultations and promoted the Red Tape Challenge initiative. Staff also attended the Tourism Summit, the annual provincial industry conference, attending workshops, building professional development, and networking with peers. One of the main topics at the conference was Canada-China Year of Tourism in 2018. Staff also spoke on a panel about Alternative Accommodation

## University of Guelph

Norfolk County is working with Dr Ryan Gibson, Libro Chair, Rural Development on a research project called "Network Analysis of Economic Development Actors". The purpose of this research is to determine how economic development actors in Haldimand and Norfolk counties are connected and how information is shared. This information will be utilized to strengthen the economic development in your region. The project should be completed in 2018.

## Venture Norfolk

Norfolk County staff have a very positive, collaborative relationship with Venture Norfolk, which is a Community Futures Development Corporation

funded by Industry Canada, acting as a lender of last resort. In 2017, staff were invited to present to their Strategic Planning Committee for community economic development initiatives. Staff frequently cooperate with Venture Norfolk on joint initiatives, meetings and promotions. There is regular staff communication. Norfolk County is grateful to Venture Norfolk for supporting the Student Start Up Program, Young Entrepreneur of Year, and acting as a resource for advisory boards.

## **Western Ontario Wardens Caucus**

In cooperation with the Mayor's office, Norfolk County staff attended strategic planning meetings of the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus (WOWC), a not-for-profit organization representing 15 upper and single tier municipalities in southwestern Ontario with more than three million residents. Its purpose is to enhance the prosperity and overall wellbeing of rural and small urban communities across the region. Caucus members work collectively to influence federal, provincial and municipal

legislative, regulatory and program initiatives through advocacy, research and analysis and education. Collectively, the municipalities represent approximately 300 communities, and almost half a million square kilometres of territory, more than 90% of it rural. WOWC was instrumental in bringing \$180 million in federal and provincial funding to support ultra-high speed Internet connectivity in the region through the SWIFT program.

## **Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie**

Manufacturing employment opportunities were highlighted in the video "We Make It here" featuring Norfolk County companies: Titan Trailers, Annex Media, Rassaun Services, and Ramblin' Road Brewery Farm. The video was produced in collaboration with Norfolk County, the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie, and neighbouring economic development offices. Norfolk County staff also participated in the annual EmployerOne Survey and the Welding Workforce Study task force.

# Marketing & Communications

## Target Markets

Norfolk County's target for investment attraction and business expansion developments are:

- Entrepreneurs, site selectors and developers with access to capital
- Value-added agrifood processing and innovation
- Sustainable tourism investment and product development, agritourism and agri-tainment
- Roofed accommodation development along waterfront, in unique settings and in urban areas
- Clean, light, advanced manufacturing; creative industries, professionals, cultural industries

Tourism and hospitality target markets include:

- Affluent leisure travelers (young singles, mature couples)
- Travellers interested in culinary and local food (wineries, craft breweries, restaurants, farm gate sales, agritourism), sustainable outdoor activities (cycling, birding, hiking, gardening)
- Extended overnight stays from Greater Toronto Area, Ontario and border U.S. States.

## Marketing Partner Program

As of December 2017, 272 Marketing Partners participating in this program. Benefits to participants of Norfolk County Marketing Partnerships include:

- One listing and map locator in the next edition of the Norfolk County Guide/Map
- One listing on the [www.norfolktourism.ca](http://www.norfolktourism.ca) website for 12 months
- Post events organized by you on [www.norfolktourism.ca](http://www.norfolktourism.ca)
- Post news items about your business or organization on [www.norfolktourism.ca](http://www.norfolktourism.ca)
- Promote your business in our consumer emails and on social media
- Plus additional benefits described at [norfolktourism.ca/partners/become-a-partner/](http://norfolktourism.ca/partners/become-a-partner/)

Norfolk County Tourism & Economic Development delivers cooperative marketing programs in partnership with industry partners. Annual budget covers promotion, advertising and communications activities. Experiences

and messages generated by Marketing Partner Program participants supply content to marketing tactics. Marketing partners pay an annual fee for services (\$175 + HST). Advertising opportunities are available in publications, on

websites and in other marketing campaigns. There are no editorial or “advertisorial” opportunities for advertisers in the publications. The annual Partner Focus Group Meeting was held Sept 27 at Ramblin’ Road Brewery Farm. The Partner Newsletter was circulated on a regular basis. A Partner Process Review commenced in November 2016 and

continued this year, looking for efficiencies on how to administer the program to prospective and existing clients. Staff explored options to increase participation in the Partner Program, and advertising on website and in Guide/Map. Explored options for more efficient distribution of printed material locally.

## Content / Story Development

On an ongoing basis, Norfolk County staff post news stories about partners and experiences on the [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) news blog and the [norfolkbusiness.ca](http://norfolkbusiness.ca) news blog. These blog posts are promoted through social media. Content from blog posts is collected and published in email newsletters. Content derived throughout

each marketing cycle assists in developing editorial content for the annual Experience Guide / Map, Investors Guide and other publications and promotions. New stories and announcements are also used in media relations to lure writers and bloggers to Norfolk County to write and publish an article.

## Advertising & Promotion



*Investors Guide*

## Investor's Guide

The Norfolk County Investor's Guide is aimed at Ontario entrepreneurs, developers, real estate brokers, site selectors, Canadian Consulates and government offices. Contents include information about Norfolk County demographics, incentives, workforce data, available land and properties, population demographics, resident and entrepreneur testimonials. The Investor's Guide is cross-promoted on [norfolkbusiness.ca](http://norfolkbusiness.ca), social media, Norfolk Development News email newsletters. Quantity: 5,000 / Magazine Size / 72 pages.

## Tourism Guide / Map

The Norfolk County Map / Guide is a very popular publication. Print run was expanded in 2015-16 to respond to demand. The print run for the 2016-17 edition witnessed even higher demand, with the bulk of inventory distributed by September. Distribution plan is April through March at Ontario info centres, attractions, highway service centres, hotels, U.S. distribution to key cities in U.S. Content includes listings of contact information for attractions, things to do, places to stay, where to eat, festivals and events in Norfolk County including detailed map of local food, farmgate markets, restaurants and partners. The Guide & Map is cross-promoted on [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca), Norfolk Getaways email newsletters, related social media. Marketing Partners can purchase advertising space in this publication.

- Quantity: 65,000 / Magazine Size / 68 pages
- Distribution: 550+ high-traffic locations where travelers seek destination information

## Local Publication Advertising

Ads were placed in several local publications: Lighthouse Festival Theatre Program, Live Small Town, Norfolk Farms, Port Dover Board of Trade Doverlicious Passport, Port Dover Maple Leaf Tourism Guide, Simcoe Reformer, Simcoe & District Real Estate Board.



Experience Guide / Map 2017-18

## Promotional Merchandise

Norfolk County launched the 'Thanks to Our Farmers' food gift boxes at the Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show in October 2017. Visitors to FlavourFest who purchased more than \$50 of produce and items received a free box of apples inside the Gift Box packaging. The boxes are now used for gift baskets.

## Weather Network Advertising

Norfolk County purchased 250,000 online impressions on the website for the Weather Network in July / August 2017 for users in Toronto, Hamilton, Niagara, London and Waterloo. The Weather Network ad for Norfolk County were placed next to long-term forecasts for those cities. These ads generate click-throughs to [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca).



Newspaper Insert - Fall 2017

## Newspaper Inserts

Targetted inserts distributed in March and September to subscribers of Globe and Mail newspapers in Southern Ontario, Hamilton Spectator, London Free Press and Kitchener Record. Content includes summary of attractions, things to do, places to stay, where to eat, festivals and events in Norfolk County. Newspaper inserts are cross-promoted on norfolktourism.ca, Norfolk Getaways email newsletters, social media. Quantity: 180,000 each / Digest Size / 8 pages

## Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention

In February 2017, Norfolk County reminded delegates at the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention that our farmers are number-one growers of

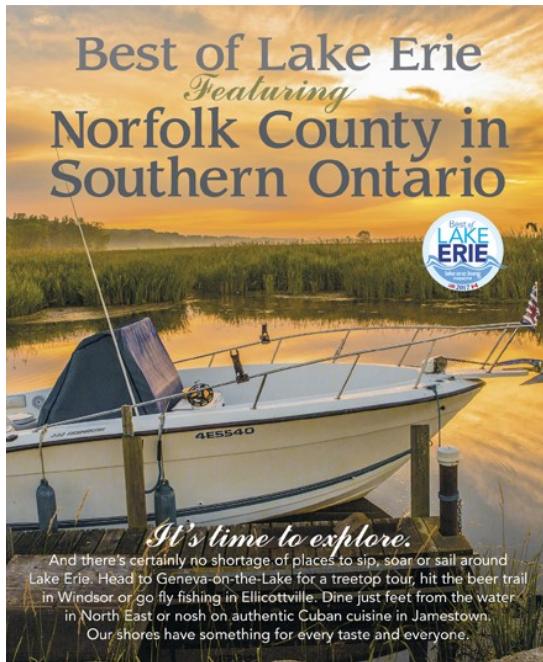
many fruits and vegetables, and that several innovative business are located here. Norfolk County placed information in delegate kits distributed to 2,500 attendees to the two-day convention. The OFVC features horticultural experts, educational sessions, trade show exhibitors and networking opportunities.

## Promotions

Norfolk County worked with the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve's Sustainable Tourism Coordinator to promote the 19 Amazing Places in their marketing program, as well as the new Meet the Locals campaign, which focused on highlighting animals that may be seen at the Amazing Places locations: deer, ducks, eagles, fox, herons, monarch butterflies, rabbits, snakes, song birds, turkeys and turtles. For example, paper headgear featuring fox ears, eyes and nose was designed and printed, then distributed to children at local events.



Meet the Locals campaign



Lake Erie Living article

## Lake Erie Living

Norfolk County advertises regularly in Lake Erie Living magazine, aimed at visitors from border states such as Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. Editorial staff are very enthusiast about Norfolk County, frequently mentioning and highlighting Norfolk

County marketing partners. As part of the agreement with the magazine, reader requests are sent periodically and forwarded to appropriate partners for follow up. In 2017, Norfolk County was named the Best Place to Visit on Lake Erie by the magazine.

## WineBuzz

Tourism and Economic Development staff coordinated a feature article about Norfolk County's wine region in *The WineBuzz* magazine, and on their website. Staff also hosted a head writer for the Winery/Brewery Tour in September 2017, in cooperation with Southwest Ontario Tourism. Target audience is readers interested in wine, craft beer, spirits, food and travel. *The WineBuzz* distribute over 200,000 copies in the states of Ohio and Kentucky at wineries, wine shops, wine bars, restaurants and the wine departments of 90+ supermarkets.

## Direct Marketing

Newsletters promote marketing partners and drive traffic to websites. All Norfolk email newsletters are popular, with open and click-through rates above the industry average.



## Gift Baskets

In 2017, over 300 gift baskets or boxes were prepared for businesses and organizations featuring local goods and food products. Each basket or box

### Norfolk Agriculture News

471 subscribers, up 31%  
12 editions  
Average Open Rate: 42%  
Average Click Rate: 25%

### Norfolk Development News

830 subscribers, up 24%  
12 editions  
Average Open Rate: 46%  
Average Click Rate: 39%

### Norfolk Flavours

2,492 subscribers, up 16%  
23 editions  
Average Open Rate: 39.5%  
Average Click Rate: 31%

### Norfolk Getaways

4,397 subscribers, up 8%  
25 editions  
Average Open Rate: 35%  
Average Click Rate: 28.5%

included a number of local food products from Norfolk County businesses. These promotional baskets and boxes help to promote the bounty of Norfolk County.



*Blogger Swim Diesel (second from left) with other bloggers in Norfolk County, June 2017*

## Media Relations

The goal of media relations is to increase volume and quality of earned media stories about Norfolk County by raising awareness among target journalists: writers, bloggers and editors at mainstream media and those with specific interests within geographic targets. Norfolk County Tourism develops an ongoing relationship with independent media and members of the Travel Blogger Exchange (TBEX), Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) and the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW).

### Hosting Media Visits

Staff hosted 25 parties of travel and food writers and bloggers between May and November 2017. Since 2014, more than 85 media have been hosted. In most cases, the parties visited Norfolk County for three days and two nights, with personalized hosting by staff. Writers included representatives of Toronto Star, Eat Drink, Lake Erie Living, Ontario Out of Doors, Ottawa Family Living, and Epoch Times. Collective social media

reach of these influencers was 3.3 million (facebook), 126,000 (Instagram), 95,000 (Twitter). Media relations work from the previous year resulted in the broadcast in May 2017 of an episode of the PBS New FlyFisher TV series featuring Norfolk County.

### Media Requests

Occasionally, writers call for interviews, contacts and photos. Norfolk County Tourism connects writers with appropriate Marketing Partners so an

accurate article can be published by the writer. Norfolk County Tourism requests that the [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) website address is included in the article.

## Media Releases

Norfolk County issues media releases from time to time highlighting specific stories and announcements. Media releases are usually directed to local and regional media.

## Travel Writer of the Year Award

Norfolk County operates one of only two community-initiated “Travel Writer of the Year” initiatives in North America (the other is in Hawaii). Each year, writers are encouraged to generate published

stories about Norfolk County travel destinations. Writers are eligible to win \$1,000. Winner in 2017: Petula and Tony Fera, Let’s Discover ON.



Video Blog by Let's Discover ON in Norfolk



Video blogger Joyce Leung being hosted by staff in Port Rowan, November 2017

## Signage

### Tourism-Oriented Directional Signage

The Tourism Directional Signage Program is also available to eligible businesses and organizations who wish for way-finding signage to be installed on Norfolk County roads, directing visitors to these locations.

To be eligible for the program a company must be a Marketing Partner in good standing with the County. There are currently 35 partners participating in the program accounting for the 78 directional road signs in the county. The objective of this program is to constantly increase our marketing partners and also our road signs which are welcomed by our visiting tourists. There is a cost to businesses or organizations to participate in the program. The cost is dependent on the size and type of sign selected.

Cost to participate in 2017 was \$477 +HST per sign for small design and \$813+HST per sign for large design.



Norfolk County Tourism Directional Signage

### Area Profile Signage



TODS Area Profile Signage

Norfolk County has installed Area Profile signage under a contract with Canadian TODS, the Provincial Government tourism signage agency. Area Profile signs are installed on: Hwy 403 Eastbound near Hwy 24 South; Hwy 6 Southbound south of Jarvis; Hwy 3 Eastbound near Tillsonburg. Recently, the graphics on Area Profile signs were upgraded to reflect the brand of “Norfolk County: Ontario’s Garden”.

### Community Gateway Signage

Norfolk County works with local community volunteers and businesses to upgrade gateway signage in towns.

To date, gateway signage has been approved and designed for Delhi, Port Dover and Waterford. In 2017, Waterford Phase II and Port Rowan gateway signage was installed. The county is committed to the 50/50 cost share model of funding.

### **Other Signage**

The electronic sign located at Queensway West and Cedar Street has been utilized predominantly by not-for-profit organizations and the department

continues to manage and promote the services of the sign. Cedar Street sign – new sign plates, ongoing electronic messages.

### **Toast the Coast Signage**

“Toast the Coast” Wine Trail signage was completed, thanks to funding from the capital budget, with financial assistance from the Ontario’s South Coast Wineries and Growers Association and Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp.

Norfolk County Economic Development facebook page

## Social Media

### Facebook

Norfolk County Tourism & Economic Development uses three Facebook pages for promotion of tourism and economic development activities.

#### **norfolk.tourism**

4,231,100 impressions

4,580 followers

72% are women ages 35-64

Top Origins: Hamilton, Brantford, Toronto, London, Kitchener, local

#### **investinnorfolk**

787,505 impressions

1,180 followers

65% are women ages 25-54

Top Origins: Brantford, Hamilton, Toronto, London, Burlington, local

#### **norfolk.flavours**

224,944 impressions

1,475 followers

76% are women ages 35-64

Top Origins: Brantford, Hamilton, Toronto, London, Kitchener, local

## Other facebook pages:

- visit.dover (12,101 followers)
- visit.longpoint (5,411)
- visit.simcoe (2,624)
- visit.waterford (2,366)
- visit.delhi (2,192)
- visit.turkeypoint (1,277)
- visit.vittoria (312)
- norfolkyouth (238)



Norfolk County Tourism's Twitter Profile

## Instagram

norfoltour followers: 2,054

## TripAdvisor

Through our partnership with TripAdvisor, Norfolk County groups 11 town and village pages with related businesses and attractions under the Norfolk County section of this popular website, which logs 415 million monthly average unique visitors. Click-through rates to norfoltourism.ca increased in 2016, compared to 2015. A budget cut by Norfolk County Council resulted in the suspension of the TripAdvisor account until 2018.

## Twitter

- norfoltour  
706,371 impressions  
5,047 followers
- norfolkfarms  
2,316 followers
- investnorfolk  
1,794 followers  
63% are women  
Top Origins: Toronto, U.S.,  
Brantford, Hamilton, London,  
Waterloo, local

## Other social media

Business related news is shared on LinkedIn. Photos are shared on Pinterest.



Cycling promotion for trade show

## Trade Shows & Events

Norfolk County's marketing budget does not support attending many trade shows. Shows are carried out in cooperation with other organizations.

### Cycling Show

Staff supported cycling outfitters and businesses in Norfolk County and Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp. to create a presence at the Toronto Cycling Show in March. A special cycling promotional brochure was created to hand out at the trade show. Cycling businesses shared shifts at the show and were pleased with the results.

### Canadian Motorcycle Super Show

Held each January in Toronto, Norfolk County works with the Southwestern Ontario Tourism Corp. and eight other Destination Marketing Organizations to

profile motorcycle tourism opportunities at this popular show. The annual Cruise the Coast Motorcycle Map is launched at this consumer trade show, attracting 50,000+ visitors.

### Cleveland Motorcycle Show

Staff attended the Cleveland Motorcycle Show in January 2017 under the Cruise the Coast brand, with financial assistance from Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp. and the nine other destination partners. Presented by Progressive Insurance, this is the third largest motorcycle show in the U.S. following Los Angeles and New York City. Staff handed out over 3,000 Cruise the Coast maps and had one-on-one interaction with many attendees. There

was increased website traffic from the mid-western U.S. with interactions with Ohio attendees at both Friday the 13th events later in 2017.

### **Epoch Ontario Travel Expo**

Staff attended this trade show which caters to the Chinese-Canadian tourism market in the Greater Toronto Area. A translator was provided to help staff speak to attendees.

### **Ontario Tourism Week Launch**

Staff attended this launch, which provided the opportunity to showcase Norfolk County in the Niagara area.

### **PD13**

This event continues to be the largest local interaction with motorcycle tourists. The October 2017 event exceeded expectations and saw almost 120,000 people visit the area. Our booth location in Powell Park was busy from the time we set up until the early evening. We continue to use these events to sign up those interested in our e-newsletters. Also, staff distributed 14 boxes (4,400+ copies) of Cruise the Coast maps and “swag” or free merchandise: buffs, kickstand pads, shining cloths.

### **Eat & Drink Norfolk**

Staff organize a presence at Eat & Drink Norfolk annually to promote local food and drink in Norfolk County. The Norfolk Agricultural Society is a generous

collaborator on this initiative. Some Norfolk County partners provide giveaways to raise awareness of culinary attractions in our communities. The three-day event attracts a large number of locals and tourists.

### **FlavourFest at Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show**

FlavourFest at the Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show is an exhibit organized by Fair staff in the Curling Building, showcasing local food and drink partners. The event was originally a collaboration between Norfolk County and its marketing partners and the Fair and has been a popular attraction at the fair for over ten years. Norfolk County provides a free bag to those patrons who purchase more than \$25 at FlavourFest. A pilot promotion involving the Norfolk County Gift Box was undertaken at the 2017 event.

### **Springarama**

Norfolk County sponsors this event, coordinated by the Simcoe Chamber of Commerce.

### **Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show (February)**

In 2017, Norfolk County staff worked with outdoor adventure outfitters to coordinate a presence at the Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show. Several partners got involved and the exhibit was very busy.



GoNorfolk Live Broadcast at Carousel Stables

## Video & Live Broadcasts

### Video Library

Norfolk County has developed and maintains an extensive library of video footage, primarily featuring our landscapes, towns, beaches, forested areas, trails, businesses and local food. The video footage uploaded to youtube.com/norfolkcounty is owned by Norfolk County. It can be used free of charge by local businesses, video editors, media and TV producers for inclusion in video productions. Video editors can request clips from the library with two conditions: they must credit Norfolk County Tourism in the final video, and they cannot resell the video footage supplied by Norfolk County.

### Facebook Live Broadcasts

Staff in cooperation with Amelie Chanda, Active Living Ambassador, piloted the #GoNorfolk live facebook

broadcasts on blog posts. All videos, including 9 GoNorfolk broadcasts, attracted 119,000 video views, with more than 64,000 minutes of viewing time. Here is a selection of broadcast and related viewing numbers:

- Jan 1: Polar Bear Plunge, 8,899
- Apr 23: GoN / Biking, 2,168
- May 30: GoN / Whistling, 2,043
- Jun 9: Beach Access Mat, 5,053
- Jun 21: GoN / Waterford, 2,017
- Jul 1: Canada Day Parade, 6,272
- Jul 5: GoN / Port Dover, 2,806
- Jul 8: Picnic Table Backus, 4,138
- Jul 12: GoN / Carousel, 3,533
- Jul 27: GoN / Flyboarding, 2,487
- Aug 10: GoN / Long Point Eco, 2,581
- Aug 23: GoN / Ralphy's, 597
- Sep 10: GoN / Elevation, 1,317
- Sep 14: GoN / Wagon Wheel, 1,794
- Oct 27: GoN / Waterford, 3,242
- Nov 27: GoN / Travelodge, 1,780
- Dec 22: GoN / Panorama, 907

Ambassadors are in development for local food and drink, as well as arts and culture, to be announced at the Symposium in 2018.

## Flavours Videos

Staff use video-editing software to produce short videos to maximize usage of the extensive video library, along with additional footage shot with the cooperation of partners. These videos are used in seasonal social media promotions. New for 2017 were a series of Flavours videos that showcased farm-to-fork tourism opportunities, food purveyors, farmers and chefs. For example, the “Strawberries” video,

featuring Davids Chef Scott McCrae, received 2,963 views.

## Joyce of Cooking

Staff was contacted in late summer by Food and Culinary Blogger Joyce Leung. A visit to the area was organized featuring local farmers markets, Port Dover, Port Rowan and the Country Fork Restaurant. A 60-second video was produced and shared via social media channels and our tourism website. Joyce reported it has been one of her most viewed videos. This video has been added to our ongoing series of culinary and lifestyle features on YouTube.



Flavours Video featuring Chef Scott McCrae

## Visitor Services (Seasonal)

Summer staff provide Visitor Services to tourists in Port Dover, Port Rowan, and other locations and events. In 2017, over 1,200 enquiries were received at all locations from May to September (up from 677 total in 2016). The Port Dover Visitor Services Assistant handled enquiries using a bicycle and sun shade at various locations in town, primarily

near the beach and the downtown area. The Port Rowan Visitor Services Assistant operated from the small building on the main street. The Visitor Services Coordinator also attended 27 partner events and festivals in the Norfolk County Tourism van, and answered enquiries at our home office in Simcoe.

Visitor Services Location	May	June	July	August	2017 Season
Simcoe / Events	7	8	59	31	105
Port Rowan	23	116	237	258	634
Port Dover	25	168	123	221	537
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>1,276</b>

“I loved getting to know all of the business owners, community partners and county staff this summer! Although I grew up in Norfolk County, and thought I knew quite a bit about the county, I have learned so much this summer and gained an even greater appreciation for it. I simply cannot thank anyone enough for the opportunities provided to me in this position.” – Alex Deer, Visitor Services Coordinator

“I was responsible for providing tourism information services Thursday-Monday from 9-5pm. Weather permitting, I would set up at the beach, Powell Park or use a tourism bike to increase mobility. When using the tourism bike, I generally would walk up and down the Pier, often halting in the middle and first engaging those who walked by to entice them to speak to me. I would also visit events using the bike, and walk in and around the downtown area. I tracked demographics of inquiries throughout this time, as well as engaged with partners.” – Noor Cheema, Visitor Services Assistant, Port Dover

The nice thing about working in Port Rowan was having the tourism information building. People knew where it was/where they could find you. All businesses in the town knew where to direct tourists to and if I wasn’t going to be there I could load the rack up with guides, brochures and pamphlets and put it on the deck. Having the Port Rowan Farmer’s Market every Friday was also great, being it was only a two minute walk from the booth which made it easy to take an arm full of guides and be sure to hand them all out. This was a good chance to talk to locals but also tourists from cottages in Long Point.” – Shay Crandall, Visitor Services Assistant, Port Rowan

# Websites



The website features a green header with the Norfolk County logo. Below it is a banner with three men in a factory setting. A search bar and language selection are at the top. A sidebar on the left includes a photo of Lisa Engelhardt-Robinson and contact details. The main content area has a weather forecast for Simcoe, ON.

[norfolkbusiness.ca](http://norfolkbusiness.ca) website

## [norfolkbusiness.ca](http://norfolkbusiness.ca)

18,434 web sessions, up 5%  
72% new visitors

Origin: Toronto, southwestern Ontario cities, U.K., local

Desktop 61%, mobile or tablet 39%

Popular pages: incentives, news, property listings, data.

## [norfolktrails.ca](http://norfolktrails.ca)

Staff worked with GIS Department and Health Promotion staff to rehabilitate and update the [norfolktrails.ca](http://norfolktrails.ca), which was formerly hosted by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority. The website was incorporated within [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) for AODA compliance.



The website has a blue header with the Norfolk County logo and navigation links. A large banner with the text "ONTARIO'S GARDEN" and "Flavours" is prominent. Below it are sections for "Weather", "Getting Here", "Promotions", and "Traveller Services".

[norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) website

## [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca)

249,367 web sessions, up 13%  
68% new visitors

Origin: Toronto, Hamilton, other cities in southwest Ontario, local

Desktop 47%, mobile or tablet 52%.

Popular pages: webcam, events, towns, beaches, listings.

## Port Dover Pier Webcam

Staff worked with the IT Department to install a webcam on the Port Dover lighthouse, aimed at the harbour. It replaces the webcam formerly housed in the Port Dover Harbour Museum, which now has a camera owned by Bridge Yachts aimed at the docks. The webcam page of [norfolktourism.ca](http://norfolktourism.ca) is one of the most popular pages on the website.

## New Resident Packages

Staff provided copies of the Norfolk County Guide / Map to be placed in New Resident Packages distributed by Corporate Support Services Department. In 2017, 297 packages were distributed.

## Customer Service

Norfolk County responds to many information requests annually, providing travel advice, directions and referrals to our partners. When someone requests printed material to be sent, the enquiry is fulfilled using Canada Post or Purolator courier.

**Telephone:** Phone calls are received on 800-699-9038 or 519-426-9497.

**Email:** Emails are received via contact forms on our websites or directly at [tourism@norfolkcounty.ca](mailto:tourism@norfolkcounty.ca) and [business@norfolkcounty.ca](mailto:business@norfolkcounty.ca).

**Social media:** Messages are also received through social media outlets: facebook and twitter. These enquiries include engagement through conversations on social media, which sometimes occur outside of office hours.

**Walk-ins:** Walk-in enquiries are accepted during office hours year round in Simcoe, and at summer visitor info centres in Port Dover and Port Rowan. At the Robinson Administration Building, there is a reception display area with brochures for Norfolk County area and surrounding area, promoting marketing partners and other businesses. Signage leads motorists to this location.

# Strategy, Measurement & Success

## Strategic Planning

Norfolk County approved its current Economic Development Strategy in 2011. Each spring, staff communicate a Monitoring Report to Council and Advisory Boards. About 67% of the recommendations in the last strategy have been completed, and another 24% continue to be explored. Only 9% of the recommendations are not proceeding. In 2017, staff began the process of preparing to review the economic development strategy in 2018-19.

## Performance Measurement

Targeted marketing programs and activities are evaluated for effectiveness and return on investment through tracking website visits via Google Analytics, enquiries, visitor services, and

earned media placement. Visitation data may assist with evaluation of marketing initiatives. Feedback from Marketing Partners on an ongoing basis, as well as at annual Marketing Partner Focus Groups, is also essential to evaluate performance.

## Evidence of Success

In 2017, Norfolk County's Student Start Up Program won the award for Best Private-Public Partnership from the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) and Best Promotion Event from the Economic Development Association of Canada (EDAC). Norfolk County's Tourism and Economic Development office has won numerous provincial and national marketing awards. Our staff are called upon frequently to speak to other communities as an example of a best practice in tourism, local food promotion and economic development.



*Some of the awards won by Norfolk County over the years*

## Advisory Boards



Norfolk County Agriculture Advisory Board

### Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB)

Members of AAB in 2017 were James Hill, Doug Long, Clark Hoskin (Staff Liaison), Dusty Zamecnik, Mike Bakos, Anita Buehner, John Picard, Trish Fournier, Mike Columbus (Council Liaison), Brett Schuyler (Chair), Erich Remler, Murray McLaughlin.

#### Mandate

- Advise Council on matters pertaining to agricultural issues in Norfolk County;
- Develop alliances and partnerships between individuals, businesses, organizations and government through financial and other means to advance the County's strategic plan for agriculture; and,
- Provide a forum for discussion and coordination of agricultural initiatives and programs with other community groups and agencies.

## **Agriculture Tour**

The annual Agriculture Tour of Norfolk County organized for the AAB was again successful with assistance from Council Liaison Mike Columbus and staff. The overall rating of the tour by participants was 81% “excellent”, and 19% “very good”. Members agreed that the tour provides a good education on the scale of agriculture in Norfolk County, shows how agriculture is changing, and evidence of the positive economic impact of offshore workers.

## **Bunkhouse Approvals**

Over the course of several meetings, AAB discussed the bunkhouse approvals process with staff from Building, Planning, Health and Tourism and Economic Development. AAB requested staff to prepare a summary information “decision tree” document about bunkhouse requirements for circulation to the farming community. Staff worked on the document and planned to discuss it in 2018.

## **Certified Crop Advisors**

AAB discussed support for Certified Crop Advisors. The issue was raised at Council and a resolution was passed at Council, as requested by AAB.

## **Flexible Housing Policy**

AAB requested Council to consider developing a flexible housing policy for additional and alternative uses for bunkhouses, dwellings and other structures in rural areas of Norfolk

County. Planning staff reported that they continue to look into the suggestion by the Advisory Board for a flexible housing policy. The issue will be coming back to the Advisory Board in 2018.

## **On-Farm Diversified Uses**

AAB members met with Norfolk County’s Community Planning staff recently to discussed new guidelines for diversified uses on-farm. It was agreed that more opportunity needs to be written into the revised Official Plan so that farmers can respond to the challenges of modern agriculture, while ensuring that any new uses are not in conflict with farming. New guidelines from the Province of Ontario have helped shape the changes. Overall, planners and AAB members agreed that Norfolk County should be more flexible.

## **Road Entrance Permits**

The AAB outlined concerns farmers have expressed about a County by-law regulating entrances onto municipal roads and highways, in terms of its flexibility for agricultural applications. Suggestions for changes of wording in the by-law were forwarded to Council.

## **Sewage Assessment**

The AAB invited staff of the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) to explain septic system compliance issues for farmers, specifically related to bunkhouses. The MOE agreed to attend a meeting in 2018.

## Tax Rate Discussion

Members of AAB met with a senior policy analyst with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Farmland current value assessment in Norfolk County has increased by 57%, while residential values have increased by 10%, according to OFA, based on MPAC data. Once new assessments phase in, the potential increase in farm tax burden will be \$700,000 in 2017, \$1.4 million in 2018, \$2.1 million in 2019, and \$2.8 million in 2020, for a total increase in farm tax burden of

approximately \$7 million over four years. To avoid a property tax shift onto farmland property owners, local governments would need to consider adjusting the Farm Property Tax Ratio below the current 25% of residential taxes. Tax ratios in Norfolk County would need to be adjusted to 0.22 in 2017, 0.20 in 2018, 0.19 in 2019, and 0.17 in 2020, to ensure that farmers will be paying the same proportion of taxes as other property classes. AAB submitted a memo to Council making elected representatives aware of the issue.



Norfolk County Tourism & Economic Development Advisory Board

## Tourism & Economic Development Advisory Board (TEDAB)

Members of TEDAB in 2017 were Steve Irwin (Chair), Karen Matthews Gail Bouw, Lucas Crandall, Michelle Kloepfer, Susan Thurston, Wanda Heimbecker, Janice Ketchen (Vice-Chair), Noel Haydt (Council Liaison), Andy Putoczki and Clark Hoskin (Staff Liaison).

### Mandate

- Advise Council on matters pertaining to tourism and economic development issues in Norfolk County, in order to sustain and expand the vitality of the municipality's economic base;
- Develop alliances and partnerships between individuals, businesses, organizations and government through financial and other means to advance the County's strategic plan
- for tourism and economic development;
- Provide a forum for discussion and coordination of tourism and economic development initiatives and programs with other community groups and agencies; and,
- Act as the Planning Advisory Committee for Norfolk County, as outlined in Section 13.

## **Assignment as Planning Advisory Committee**

The Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Board was assigned the responsibility of acting as Planning Advisory Committee by Council. Members of TEDAB accepted the responsibility on a twelve-month trial basis. They asked that recommendations regarding continuing the arrangement be presented to Council in January 2019.

## **Entrepreneur of Year Selection**

Annually, nominations for Entrepreneur of the Year are circulated to TEDAB members for consideration. Members submit their scores and a winner is selected. The announcement is made at the Symposium in January. The 2017 winner of the Entrepreneur of the Year was Nick Kokkoros, part-owner and general manager of The Barrel Restaurant in Simcoe. The 2017 Young Entrepreneur of the Year was Sarah Judd of Meadow Lynn Market Garden.

## **Grant Review**

TEDAB reviewed grant applications for the 2018 Norfolk County budget, which were forwarded to Council for consideration during budget review. The Advisory Board also sought to provide suggestions for the process next year. TEDAB sought to change the grand-

parenting section of the policy, but Council did not approve.

## **Settlement Boundary Changes**

Proposed settlement boundary changes related the designation of industrial land in the Official Plan were demanded by the Province, and TEDAB members suggested that criteria be developed for reviewing potential parcels affected by re-designation, that property owners be consulted, and that options be prepared for Council to consider.

## **Work Plan**

TEDAB Members discussed the mandate, structure, relevance, and work plan of the advisory board over the course of several meetings, and prepared a prioritized set of work plan points for 2018.

## **General Discussion**

TEDAB discussed a number of issues and listened to several presentations in 2017, including alternative accommodation, budget, Census data, chambers of commerce and boards of trade, community improvement plan incentives, Community Services Division, cycling tourism, development timelines, downtown revitalization, international trade, Official Plan Review, social services and housing, and youth engagement initiatives.

## **Staff Team**

The Norfolk County Tourism and Economic Development team includes key staff from the Development and Cultural Services Division:

Chris Baird – General Manager  
Clark Hoskin – Director  
Lorraine DeSerrano – Marketing Assistant  
Chris Garwood – Economic Development Supervisor  
Tracy Haskett – Graphic Designer  
Jerry Sucharyna – Economic Development Analyst  
Ted Willey – Business Development Supervisor

## **Contact Us**

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