

# Introduction & Municipal 101



**Norfolk County**  
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**Norfolk**  
COUNTY

# Message from the County Clerk

Welcome to Norfolk County! We are excited to share the newly created Council Handbook with the 2022-2026 term of Council.

This handbook has been created through a collaborative, cross-functional approach to provide a comprehensive outline of the key information that will assist Members of Council in performing their duties effectively.

The Council Handbook is divided into four sections:

**1) Introduction:**

This section provides an introductory message from the County Clerk, and a brief background to local government.

**2) Volume 1 - Daily Operations:**

This section provides information on the day-to-day operations for Members.

**3) Volume 2 - Governance:**

This section details the process used by Members for decision-making.

**4) Volume 3 - Accountability and Transparency:**

This section outlines the policy, rules, and regulatory frameworks that govern Norfolk County.

The Council Handbook will act as a reference guide for both new and returning Members of Council by providing information related to your roles and responsibilities as an elected official. It summarizes current processes and practices, references applicable legislation and County policies, and provides key information that will assist you in being successful in your role. The handbook will continue to be updated throughout the 2022-2026 term of Council to meet Member's needs.

The Clerk's Office functions to support Council with respect to their decision-making processes, accountability and transparency. Our services include administering Council and committee meetings, provision of access to information and protection of privacy for the Corporation, providing leadership in matters of protocol, maintaining corporate records, and managing municipal elections. The Clerk's staff strives to support Council

in an open and transparent manner to facilitate the important work that Members will carry out throughout their term.

The Clerks office, in partnership with our business partners across the corporation, look forward to working with Council through the 2022-2026 term of office.

## About Norfolk County

Norfolk County is a mixed rural and urban single-tier municipality located in southern Ontario on beautiful Lake Erie. With its milder climate, strong manufacturing, agriculture and tourism industries, and close proximity to major urban and technology centres, Norfolk County combines the best of urban and rural life. With a population of approximately 67,500 across six urban centres, 42 rural hamlets and two resort areas, Norfolk County is a quickly diversifying region that is attractive to new residents and investors alike. Widely recognized as one of the leading agricultural regions in Canada, Norfolk County also offers a range of lifestyle options for residents, stretching from the beaches of Port Dover and Turkey Point to the natural settings and recognized eco-diversity in Long Point, to small town charms with urban amenities of Simcoe, Delhi and Waterford. Often referred to as Ontario's South Coast, Norfolk County offers unique and diverse experiences for both visitors and residents alike to enjoy. The County's rich landscape offers everything from sandy beaches and lakefront cottages to Carolinian forest and pristine farmland – much of it explorable via miles of hiking and biking trails. Award-winning wineries, craft breweries and farm markets highlight Norfolk County's status as Ontario's Garden, and outdoor recreation including boating, camping, fishing and over 50 community festivals, fairs and other events are key activities that keep visitors coming back.

## Corporate Logo and Coat-of-Arms

### Logo

The Norfolk County logo was created early in the formation of Norfolk County, designed by Tracy Haskett and is recognized by its "stylized" lettering. The County uses the logo to establish its identity and brand and it can be seen on stationary, signage, and publications throughout the County.



## County Coat-of-Arms

On January 16, 2005 the official Coat-of-Arms was unveiled in the Council Chambers of the Norfolk County Administration Building at 50 Colborne St. S., Simcoe, Ontario. The unveiling took place at the annual Mayor's Levee before a large public gathering of residents, Council and staff members.



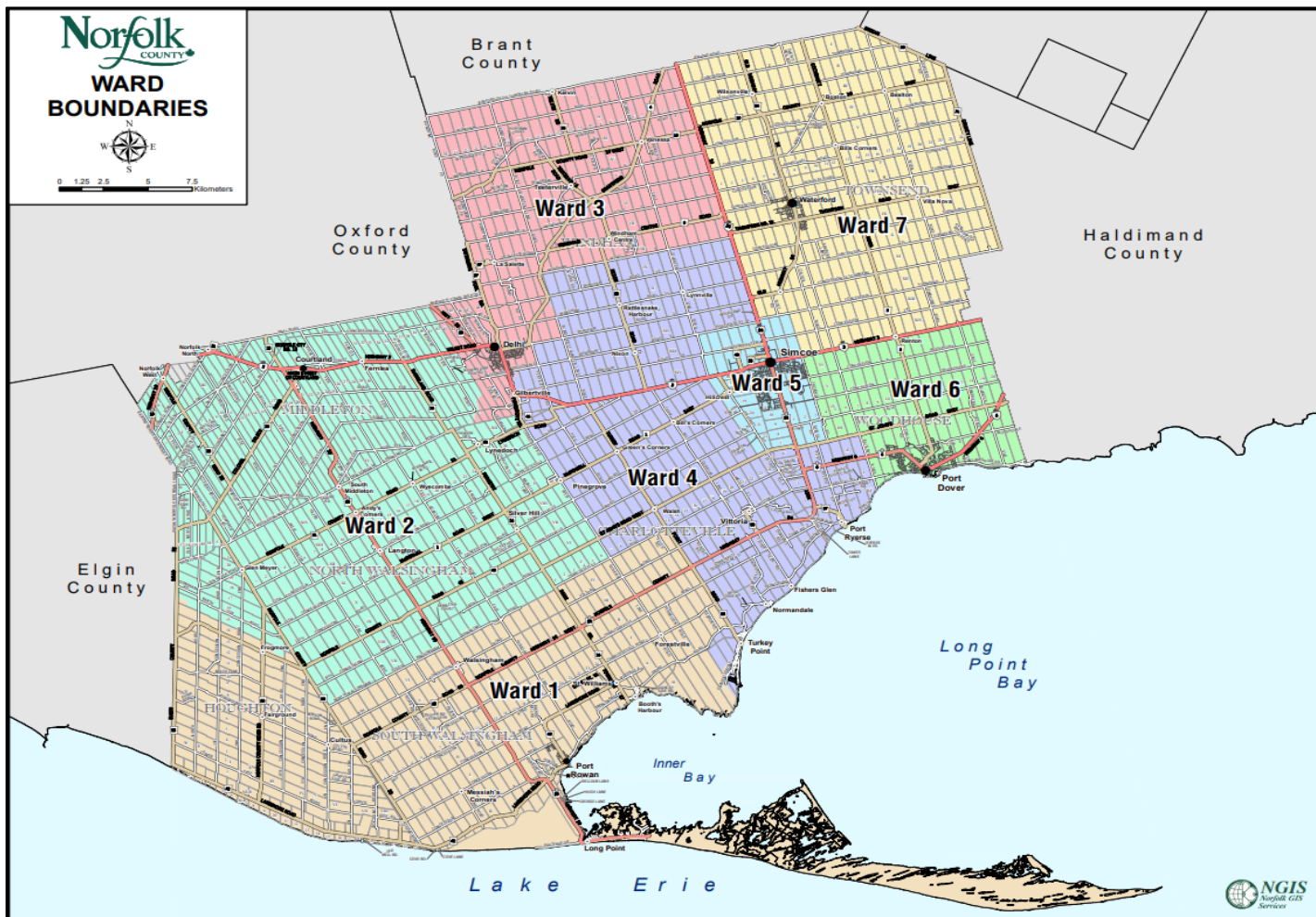
The Coat-of-Arms design:

- The main part of the shield is green.
- It is adorned with a white Eastern dogwood flower with gold seeds.
- The top third of the shield is gold and set with three green leaves of the tulip tree.
- Green and gold are the colours used by Norfolk County, appropriate for a municipality with a largely agricultural base.
- The dogwood flower is a feature of the Carolinian forest, and it appeared on the arms granted to the former Town of Simcoe, as well as on the assumed arms of Norfolk Township.
- The tulip tree leaf is also a feature of the Carolinian forest, and it is used here for the first time in Canadian heraldry.

The Coat-of-Arms is used on the County's official seal, proclamations, certificates, awards and invitations originating from the Office of the Mayor and Council. A large-scale version of the Coat-of-Arms can be seen in the Council Chambers during regular working hours.

## Municipal 101: Local Government

The authority of municipal government in Ontario is established by the [Municipal Act, 2001](#) (the “*Municipal Act*”). The *Municipal Act* permits the provincial government to create municipal corporations that are bound by federal and provincial rules. Norfolk County is one of 444 municipalities in Ontario and is located on the north shore of Lake Erie in Southwestern Ontario. The County consists of seven (7) Wards.



The Association of Municipalities of Ontario offers a “[Municipal 101](#)” look at municipal government and provides a high-level overview of “[How Local Government Works](#)”.

Single tier municipalities assume all municipal responsibilities as set out under the *Municipal Act* and other provincial legislation. They are accountable for the provision of many services, including but not limited to:

Accessibility	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
Building	By-law Enforcement
Economic Development	Emergency Planning
Fire	Housing
Long-term Care	Municipal Roads
Paramedics	Parks & Recreation
Planning and Development	Policing
Provincial Offences Act Courts	Public Health
Snow Removal	Social Assistance
Storm Water Drainage	Tax Collection
Tourism	Transit
Waste Collection & Recycling	Wastewater Collection & Treatment
Water Treatment & Supply	

## Council Governance

### Local Government in Norfolk County

Municipal government in Norfolk is comprised of three groups:

- 1) County Council
- 2) County Administration
- 3) The Community

Each distinct element works with the others to create a system of local government that enables Norfolk County to be a municipality that works together to make a difference for the lives of residents and the broader community.

### Role of County Council

Members of Council are elected by residents to serve a four-year term. The term of this Council runs from November 15 to November 14, 2026.

The duties of Council are to:

- Represent the public and consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- Develop and evaluate policies and programs;

- Determine the services to be provided;
- Ensure that administrative and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council;
- Ensure accountability and transparency of the municipality;
- Maintain the financial integrity of the municipality;
- Represent the interests of residents in municipal decision making;
- Be accountable to the community; and
- Deliver results that contribute to exceptional communities.

The decisions made by Council affect the services that people rely on every day and some of those decisions will have long-term implications that extend beyond their term of Council. An effective Council Member must be objective, open-minded and willing to listen. Council Members must base decisions on what is best for the collective whole and be careful not to place individual or parochial local interests above the interest of the municipality.

Only Council as a whole has the authority to direct members of staff. Individual Members of Council should respect the fact that staff work for the County as a corporate body without undue influence from any individual Member of Council or group of Councillors.

### **Council Composition**

Norfolk County Council consists of the Mayor and eight (8) Councillors.

## **County Administration**

### **The Role of the Chief Administrative Office (CAO)**

The CAO is Council's only employee.

The duties of the CAO are to:

- Act as the administrative lead providing a link between the political and administrative elements of municipal government;
- Be accountable to ensure the decisions of Council and the service delivery provided by municipal staff are aligned; and
- Exercise general control and management for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality.



## **The Role of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

Members of SLT lead administrative staff.

The duties of SLT are to:

- Administer day-to-day operations;
- Assist Council in maintaining accountability in accordance with legislative requirements;
- Provide evidence-based advice and recommendations to Council;
- Ensure that the policies and decisions of Council are implemented timely and efficiently;
- Establish administrative practices and procedures; and
- Manage staff.

When developing advice for Council, both SLT and administrative staff maintain impartiality by developing recommendations and providing advice based on rational, qualified values, and on their professional knowledge and experience.

## **The Community**

Residents, business and industry play an integral part in the governance of Norfolk County. Feedback and participation from community members help to drive the decision-making process.

Council uses a variety of tools to consult with the community including public engagement, advisory committees and direct communications.

## **Acknowledgments:**

The content within this document has been created using multiple resources, including excerpts from municipal legislation, Norfolk County policies and procedures as well as information obtained from Council Handbooks issued by the City of Toronto and the City of Brampton. 10/24/2022