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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Chief Administrative Officer  
Report: #2024-COW-23  
Date: June 12, 2024

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**Subject:**

Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan Community Engagement Summary

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**Recommendations:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That a copy of report #2024-COW-23 be received for information; and
- B) That the recommended next steps in section 7 be endorsed; and
- C) That a copy of this report be forwarded to the local area municipalities within the Region of Durham.

**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1. The purpose of this report is to share a summary of the engagement phase activities and the preliminary themes identified that will support the development of Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Durham Region's Strategic Plan is the guiding document that outlines how we deliver a sustainable future through leadership, collaboration, innovation and environmental stewardship.
- 2.2 The current Durham Region Strategic Plan is approaching its end in December 2024. Work is underway to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

- 2.3 The Strategic Plan will guide the direction of our work over the next few years. It will outline how we will continue to deliver a sustainable future and act as a compass to advance our work to achieve the futures we want to create.
- 2.4 On September 27, 2023, Regional Council endorsed the process to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan and governance structure, as detailed in the Committee of the Whole report [#2023-COW-32](#).
- 2.5 Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan is being developed in five phases:
  - a. Phase 1: Knowledge Gathering (February – May 2023) – Complete
  - b. Phase 2: Planning (June – December 2023) – Complete
  - c. Phase 3: Engagement (January – June 2024) – Complete
  - d. Phase 4: Writing and Approvals (July – December 2024)
  - e. Phase 5: Implementation (January 2025 – Onward)
- 2.6 In January 2024, staff launched the engagement phase of the project. The first engagement activity was a full-day planning session with Regional Council on January 25, 2024.

### **3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 Committee of the Whole [#2023-COW-32](#)
- 3.2 [Regional Council September 27, 2023](#)
- 3.3 [Special Regional Council Meeting January 25, 2024](#)

### **4. Phase 3: Engagement – What We Did**

- 4.1 As part of the process to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan, the project team developed an engagement plan outlining key partner, level of engagement, strategies and timelines. The objectives for the project's engagement phase were:
  - a. To increase community awareness of the process to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.
  - b. To ensure residents had the opportunity to have their say in the future of Durham Region.
  - c. To obtain input from the community on what they would like to see reflected in Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

- 4.2 The public engagement portion of the Strategic Planning process was launched on March 1, 2024, with the goal of reaching and receiving feedback from as many residents across the region as possible.
- 4.3 Durham Region's online engagement platform, [Your Voice Durham](#) was the primary engagement tool and featured project materials, an events calendar, the online survey and youth art contest.
- 4.4 Throughout the month of March, the team executed a variety of communications tactics to encourage the community to visit the website. A total of 25 posts were shared to the Region's three social media accounts (Facebook, X, and LinkedIn). There were 8,400 website visits in the month of March.
- 4.5 A total of 24 pop-up events were scheduled throughout the Region to support face-to-face engagement with residents, providing Regional staff with an opportunity to speak with residents from each of the eight local area municipalities. Approximately 900 face-to-face interactions were generated through events. Comments gathered through these interactions were included in the qualitative data analysis.
- 4.6 A total of 13 presentations were delivered, reaching over 100 people. Delegations to all eight local area municipalities were completed between February 20 and March 25, 2024. Staff also presented to four Committees of Council and to the Durham Economic Development Task Force to reach representatives from the business community.
- 4.7 A total of 700 flyers and 1,000 post-cards were distributed/posted in libraries, seniors centres, welcome centres, community, and recreation centres and handed out to residents.
- 4.8 Elementary and secondary school students were encouraged to share their future vision for Durham Region by submitting their original visual or digital artwork through the website. The theme of the contest was "Designing Our Future."
- 4.9 In addition, an internal engagement strategy was implemented to gather input from approximately 400 staff, including department heads, directors, managers and front-line staff. Feedback was obtained from planning workshops with staff.
- 4.10 Engagement efforts resulted in approximately 1,400 in-person interactions; a total of 2,149 survey responses received and a total of 20 youth art contest submissions received.
- 4.11 The feedback received from the online survey and discussion with residents informed four additional community conversations throughout the month of May with community partners, business representatives and youth. A total of 84 people attended the community conversations representing 47 organizations/groups. These community conversations were used to generate ideas to inform the Regional Strategic Plan.

## 5. Preliminary Engagement Results – What We Heard

5.1 The following section contains a summary of the preliminary themes identified from community consultation data. They include data obtained from recent Regional public consultation efforts, the Strategic Plan community survey, in-person interactions at community pop-up events, the youth art contest, internal engagement, and community conversations with partners, business leaders, and youth.

5.2 Based on a preliminary analysis of community consultation data, the following defining characteristics of life in Durham Region were identified:

- Access to nature, including parks, trails, waterfronts and greenspace;
- Mix of rural and urban spaces;
- Sense of safety;
- Diverse and inclusive community; and
- Unique local industries, including agriculture, energy, and small businesses.

5.3 Based on a preliminary analysis of community consultation data, the data was clustered and grouped into the key issues for Durham Region. They are listed as follows:

- **Cost of Living:** Challenges were identified for the rise in cost of living, with a significant focus on housing and rental costs. Concerns were expressed about inadequate support for an increasing number of residents experiencing homelessness. Food insecurity was also identified as a growing issue. Affordability challenges for childcare, young people, and seniors were commonly highlighted. Property taxes and the average living wage were identified as contributors to affordability challenges in the region.
- **Rapid Growth:** A sense that Durham Region is growing at a rapid rate and that corresponding improvements in urban planning, infrastructure, and services have not been able to keep up with the pace of change. Infrastructure, affordable housing, and service delivery including transit, have been challenged to meet growing needs. Concerns were raised around land use planning decisions that do not protect agricultural lands, natural habitats for wildlife and natural surroundings. Overall, a perceived inadequate response to rapid growth is recognized as the primary issue affecting Durham Region.
- **Infrastructure:** Road maintenance and capacity was identified as lagging behind demand in the region. Traffic and road congestion was identified as an issue, with specific references to urban planning for housing developments and density challenging the current transportation infrastructure. There was a sense that housing is being built without thoughtful planning of services or

access to green space, upgrading of infrastructure, or other amenities beyond homes, such as trails, bike lanes, and side walks. Access to high-speed internet services were identified as critical.

- **Community Well-being:** An observed increase in people experiencing homelessness and those living with mental health and addictions challenges in the community. In some cases, increased homelessness visible within community spaces caused uneasiness and concern.
- **Safety:** Concerns about safety for pedestrians in areas without sidewalks, general road safety, crime, and police services were expressed.
- **Service Delivery:** A sense that existing community services and resources, including housing and health services are under strain associated with a growing and changing population. A growing need for health services to support an aging population was identified, including emergency response. Concerns were identified around value for money and responsible budgeting of tax dollars for corresponding improvements in core services. The need for partnerships and collaboration was highlighted to support the coordination of service delivery. Perceived inequitable service delivery to northern parts of Durham was also identified as a challenge.
- **Transit:** Input focused on the need for reliable and affordable transit options to address sustainability, cost of living, and mobility for students and seniors. Issues of service delivery to northern Durham were shared.
- **Health Services:** A need for more health services in the region was identified, including primary care providers, hospitals, and paramedic/emergency services. Also identified was an increased need for services to support people living with mental health and addiction challenges, as well as a growing demographic of seniors.
- **Leadership:** Comments related to the lack of shared vision for the region. Concerns were raised around responsible budgeting and decision-making to ensure investments align with community needs. The need for improved collaboration with all levels of government was highlighted. Lack of trust in government was identified as a theme.
- **Community Connection:** Lack of social cohesion and common identity, changing demographics, the need for representation, lack of public spaces to gather and build community were all cited as challenges. The loss of local media was also identified as a contributor to the lack of social cohesion. Social isolation and the lack of community engagement were also identified as themes.
- **Climate Change Impacts:** Adverse impacts due to climate change and severe weather were identified for many areas of living in the region, including

contributions to issues surrounding affordability, food security, and health. There was a sense that current development planning does not address climate challenges. Loss of agricultural land and climate impacts on agriculture were also identified as concerns.

- **Technology:** Concerns regarding job loss due to automation and the shift in labour markets was expressed as a key concern. The need for cyber security due to increasing threats was raised. Social media was noted as an enabler to the creation of bias, mistrust, and misinformation. It was noted that access to technology for civic engagement may not be possible for all segments of the population.

5.4 Based on a preliminary analysis of community consultation data, the data was clustered and grouped into the key aspirations for Durham Region. They are as follows:

- **Adapting to Growth:** Desire to have a clear vision and proactive plans in place for careful growth, including infrastructure and waste management to support growth. Density was identified as a precursor to sustainable and effective service delivery, particularly for transit system improvements however, maintaining greenspace in built-up environments was also identified as important to well-being. The need to adapt to meet the needs of the growing and changing population was also identified as a key theme, specifically regarding the delivery of the Region's programs and services.
- **Service Delivery:** Desire for increased transparency and accountability, responsible budgeting, taking a proactive and preventative approach, working with all levels of government and partners in the community, effective core service delivery, and service innovation.
- **Supports for Vulnerable Populations:** Access to services for an aging population, children and youth, newcomers, refugees and asylum seekers, those who are experiencing homelessness, low-income residents, and those who are living with mental health and addiction issues.
- **Environmental Protection and Sustainability:** Improved access to nature, preservation of green spaces in neighbourhoods, preservation of agricultural lands, safeguarding of wildlife. Increased urban density to allow for efficient transit and service delivery. Thoughtful development, expanded transit services, and clean energy are expected to support environmentally sustainable growth.
- **Mobility Options:** Desire for improved public transit to reduce car dependency, active transportation, and walkable neighbourhoods with access to nature and amenities.

- **Business and Employment:** Attraction and retention of businesses and employers who offer a variety of employment opportunities, especially for youth. Increase in skilled workers, supports for local businesses tourism, and newcomers are needed. Strengthening of current industry and diversification and development of new industries was identified. Post-secondary institutions were identified as opportunities for skills training for the future.
- **Civic Engagement:** Desire for more opportunities for the public to be heard by leaders, to access information, and contribute to regional decision-making. A desire for improved Indigenous relations and was also identified.
- **Public Space:** Welcoming and accessible public spaces to build community and share in community arts, culture, and entertainment events locally that are free of charge. Waterfront development to create beautiful natural public spaces and thriving business spaces was identified.
- **Recreation and Leisure:** Local recreation opportunities, arts and cultural events, community gatherings, and entertainment. In particular, the aspiration for youth and senior recreation opportunities was identified. Also, the awareness and communication of these opportunities was noted.
- **Technology and Innovation:** Opportunity to use new technologies and methods to modernize regional practices, deliver efficient programs and services, and enable community engagement.

5.5 For additional information, please refer to Attachment 1.

## 6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

6.1 This report supports the development of Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

## 7. Next Steps

7.1 If approved, Regional staff, in collaboration with the Strategic Plan Advisory Group and the consultant, will complete further analysis to explore the data within the above mentioned themes and draft Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

7.2 The draft plan will be presented back to the community for additional input in the Fall 2024 and then presented to Regional Council for final review and endorsement in December 2024.

7.3 If endorsed, it is recommended that a copy of #2024-COW-23 be forwarded to the local area municipalities within the Region of Durham.

7.4 For additional information, contact: Andrea Smith, Policy Advisor, Corporate Initiatives or Lesley-Ann Foulds, Manager, Corporate Initiatives.

## **8. Conclusion**

8.1 The Strategic Initiatives team would like to thank Regional Council, staff, partners, and residents who participated in the engagement activities. The feedback received will be used to draft Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

## **9. Attachments**

Attachment #1: Community Survey Results (enclosed)

Attachment #2: Community Survey (enclosed)

Attachment #3: Presentation

Prepared by: Andrea Smith, Policy Advisor, Corporate Initiatives, and Lesley-Ann Foulds, Manager, Corporate Initiatives.

Approved by: Sandra Austin, Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed By

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Attachment #1 Community Survey Results

### Part 1: Where are we now?

#### Question 1

Respondents were asked to rate statements below on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. The following table shows the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 1. Ratings summary.

Statement	Percentage of Respondents who Agree or Strongly Agree
I plan to live in Durham Region over the next 5-10 years.	73%
I feel welcome wherever I go in Durham Region.	58%
Durham Region delivers services well.	52%
Durham Region supports those in need.	50%
The future feels positive and bright for Durham Region.	47%
Durham Region is a safe place.	41%
There is a sense of prosperity in Durham Region.	40%
Durham Region has strong leadership.	39%
Durham Region is ready for the future.	37%
Infrastructure in Durham Region is in excellent shape.	33%
Current public transit serves the public well.	32%
Durham Region is a leader in environmental sustainability.	32%

## Question 2

Respondents were asked to share any other statements they would use to describe Durham Region. From the written responses received (approximate total of 955), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Growth and Infrastructure
- Leadership
- Affordability
- Safety
- Transit

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “Fast growing but missing infrastructure to support the needs. This includes affordable housing, child care, addiction and mental health services... There needs to be an effort made from all levels to help.”
- “Rapidly changing and growing, prompting a need to foster community cohesion amidst an increasingly diversifying population.”
- “I am a 28-year-old adult that has lived in Durham all my life and want to continue to live here. Housing is very unaffordable in Durham Region and it makes me question if I can live here in the future. The only way I can live here now is by living with family. Please do more to address this and pressure the levels of government to do the same.”
- “Continues to have the charm of rural and the amenities and opportunities of urban. Hoping this rural/urban balance will be maintained and respected by limiting urban sprawl as much as possible.”
- “Increased population size will require more infrastructure for roads and affordable housing. My desire for Durham Region is that there is affordable housing for all yet conservation and expansion of Durham Region's beautiful nature (parks, greenspace).”
- “I have lived in Durham Region since 1968 and have seen positive things happen. Please continue to make adjustments in public transit so that I can continue to age with dignity.”

## Question 3

Respondents were asked to select up to five statements that best reflected how they feel about Durham Region. The table below shows the top responses.

Table 2. Summary of how respondents feel about Durham Region.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents selected this statement</b>
I am connected to nature in Durham Region.	48%
I feel safe in Durham Region.	40%
I am free to live the way I want in Durham Region.	36%
I am treated fairly in Durham Region.	34%
I can afford to live in Durham Region.	28%
Multi-generational living is possible in Durham Region.	26%
I live in a beautiful built environment.	25%
I have deep connections to my community in Durham Region.	19%
None of these statements reflect how I feel about Durham Region.	17%
My community has a lively, vibrant, and creative buzz.	11%
This place has tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and opportunity.	11%
My hard work and accomplishments are valued here.	11%
Other	3%

#### **Question 4**

From the written responses received (approximate total of 860), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Affordability

- Access to Nature
- Community
- Leadership
- Safety

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “I am deeply saddened by the number of homeless residents that I see and the seemingly lack of services and safe spaces for them.”
- “I’ve lived in Durham for 25+ years ...I am very well connected to the community. Nature is reserved fairly well in Durham, lots of park areas, waterfront and conservation areas. I think there’s much for everyone in Durham.”
- “I feel my basic needs are met, but think this region has the opportunity to do things differently and not really taking advantage of that opportunity.”
- “As a working professional, I’m starting to feel like I can’t afford to live and work in Durham Region and have real concerns about where I will be in the next 5 years.”
- “As a senior and a renter, I have been priced out of Durham region and I worry about my future here. This is also a huge issue for new Canadians and refugees in this region.”
- “I generally feel safe except maybe when a lot of homeless people are gathered together on the trails. House prices have skyrocketed so my adult children have little chance of affording a home. There are many warehouses being put up and hopefully that brings jobs to the region, but it would be nice if some of the abandoned warehouses were re-developed.”
- “There are few events during the year that let us come together as a community. Or they are not well advertised in way that the general public can find, i.e. outside of community newspapers.”

## Part 2: Share your thoughts and ideas

### Question 5

Respondents were asked to select up to five areas of opportunity they thought were the most exciting for Durham Region over the next 10 years. The table below shows the top responses.

Table 3. Summary of areas of opportunity.

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents selected this opportunity</b>
Public health services.	33%
Community safety.	32%
Affordable housing.	32%
New infrastructure.	29%
Quality of public space.	28%
Greener neighbourhoods.	27%
Public transit and mobility solutions.	27%
Responsible budgeting.	23%
Environmental sustainability and climate resilience.	21%
Clean energy production	20%
Businesses and investment.	19%
Post-secondary education.	18%
Income and housing supports.	17%
New technology.	17%
Social services.	16%
Skilled workers.	15%
Agriculture and agri-tourism.	14%
Public participation in governance and policy changes.	12%
Partnerships between public and private organizations.	8%
Other	4%

**Question 6**

From the written responses received (approximate total of 710), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Access to Nature
- Sustainability and Environment
- Growth
- Affordability
- Leadership
- Safety

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “Healthy and green are critical. Neighbourhood should promote active transportation, walkability, and social connection for good mental health. Mental health services should be way more accessible - particularly for kids where early intervention can prevent more serious issues. It’s ridiculous that we all have to drive everywhere all the time. Plan neighborhoods within walking distance of where we need to go. These are a complex problem, new technology (ai) can help us get there.”
- “I think that the more the public gets involved in how we work and live, the better. I think civic engagement is the cornerstone of any thriving, connected community. We have the opportunity to expand our meaning of public health and community wellbeing and look at our collective health from a population and community perspective. We can be a leader in clean energy production and model green communities for other municipalities.”
- “Social and physical infrastructure are among the most important services the region can provide.”
- “I believe the Region needs a better response to issues that are becoming increasingly evident: homelessness, mental health/addictions, opioid crisis. This response cannot be to ignore or swept under the carpet. There are agencies in the Region doing work in these areas. Work with and support them. The answers don't have to lie exclusively on the Region.”
- “We need to place more value on agricultural lands and reduce urban sprawl into prime farmlands in the north. We should be increasing medium and high-density housing in urban areas where there is existing infrastructure and public transit.”

- “Durham Region is the last part of the GTA that still has the majority of its green space and farmland undeveloped. It has a unique opportunity to build communities while still protecting access to wildlife and nature in an unprecedented way for urban Ontario.”
- “As the region is poised to grow there is a tremendous opportunity to make bold decisions that make this region liveable for all by investing in infrastructure, transit and community spaces. We need places where people can gather in person, not behind screens, and the ability for people to make a life here, not just commute somewhere else to work.”
- “I think Durham could be a better place to live, even a desirable place, but there needs to be a lot of work done to fight car dependency, and to have real public spaces where people feel like gathering and spending time. Housing is also a concern here, but I think that since there's a push to densify in Durham there's opportunities to consider how to do that density in a more distributed model to make good third spaces in existing and new neighbourhoods.”

### Part 3: The longer-term future

#### Question 7

Respondents were asked to imagine their life in Durham Region in 2035 and to select up to five areas that will have the biggest impact on them and their community. The table below shows the top responses.

Table 4. Summary of impact areas.

Areas	Percentage of respondents selected this answer
Affordability.	50%
Community safety.	33%
Aging population.	33%
Public health issues.	32%
Aging infrastructure.	30%
Urbanization and density.	27%
Trust in government.	26%

Mental health support needs.	26%
Severe climate change.	22%
Food insecurity.	20%
Immigration and newcomers.	20%
Safe and sustainable energy solutions.	16%
Waste management.	13%
Refugees and asylum seekers.	13%
Diversity and inclusion.	13%
Artificial intelligence.	12%
Loss of local media.	11%
Economic competitiveness.	11%
Sense of unity, versus polarization.	11%
Global unrest.	11%
Sense of belonging.	10%
Global pandemics.	6%
Other	1%

### Question 8

From the written responses received (approximate total of 620), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Affordability
- Newcomers
- Growth
- Leadership

- Health Services

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “Life in Durham in 2035 is marked by diversity, inclusivity, improved public health, a strong sense of belonging, and enhanced trust in government. These positive developments contribute to a thriving and cohesive community, where residents are empowered to contribute to and benefit from the shared prosperity and well-being of the region.”
- “In my community we are seeing a lot of newcomers which is contributing to diversity. There are opportunities to learn from other cultures which we rarely had before.”
- “Many more services are needed for our aging population and infrastructure. More Long-Term Care Homes and Senior Residences are desperately needed.”
- “There is already an aging population and aging infrastructure. i.e., roads, some building water main, lack of schools in appropriate places. So these need to be addressed. Affordability will be important as million-dollar homes are definitely not in the budget for most people. Working towards better waste management - recycling better, less reliance on single use products and more sustainable energy sources.”
- “Durham Region is completely unaffordable, rent-wise, and I don't think the average salary for people who actually work in the region covers the cost of living here. We have a large aging population which are not leaving their homes because the quality of retirement housing is low and the style is not desirable, and so we have a lot of underutilized housing. I also don't see partnerships with local First Nations, Inuit, Metis and urban Indigenous communities on this list but committing to all forms of Reconciliation, especially economic, has great opportunity to bring vibrancy, authenticity and justice to the Region.”
- “Durham seems to be changing rapidly with respect to the composition of the population and the challenges we face (i.e. cost of living, litter, economic development, etc.). I welcome change and especially the diverse population. But I am concerned that with diversity comes prejudice and polarization. I think the biggest thing will be to foster a community that cares for each other and is empathetic to each other, regardless of our personal journeys. I also want to ensure the region is championing Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and helping the community live harmoniously with the Indigenous people of this land.”

## Question 9

Respondents were asked which regional government services and programs they thought would be most important to them and their community over the next 10 years. The table below shows the top responses.

Table 5. Summary of services and programs.

<b>Service or Program</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents selected this answer</b>
Roads and infrastructure programs.	37%
Public health programs.	36%
Long-term care and senior's services.	36%
Police services.	30%
Housing and homelessness services.	30%
Transit services.	26%
Community safety and well-being programs.	25%
Regional planning for growth.	22%
Paramedic services.	22%
Waste management services.	18%
Climate change programs.	18%
Children's services.	16%
Regional budget planning.	16%
Income support services.	15%
Family services.	14%
Agriculture and rural economic development.	13%
Traffic safety programs.	11%
Access to information.	10%
Cycling infrastructure.	9%
Diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.	9%

Community engagement opportunities.	9%
Business services.	8%
Local arts and culture opportunities.	8%
Newcomer and immigrant support services.	7%
Tourism services.	5%
Other	1%

### Question 10

From the written responses received (approximate total of 550), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Aging Population
- Growth
- Health Services
- Transit
- Safety

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “Most importantly, we need to boost services for our aging population. We do not have enough long-term care and old age homes to support the next generation. We need more supports available to them to combat issues such as loneliness and depression, along side a wide range of physical ailments.”
- “A dramatically improved transit system is essential for quality of life/equity, offering mobility/affordable option to single vehicles, needed for economic prosperity of Region and reducing GHGs and air pollution.”
- “Durham health department provides consistently excellent service. So, for influenza clinics, every Durham resident should be able to get immunized through the health department. For example, your COVID clinics were A+.”
- “Let's focus on keeping our population healthy so that we can ease the burden on the health care system.”

- “Safe and accessible transportation is essential for any growing region or municipality, so these are quite important. Our communities are also heavily dependent on whether our most vulnerable are looked after, namely the homeless and low-income families.”
- “When planning for growth and inclusion community engagement is important. Need to include a diverse representation of views including from Indigenous Peoples, racialized people, aging population and people with disabilities. When developing new spaces ensure current spaces are maintained and available for all to feel included. Need to actively include views from the lived experiences of people in marginalized groups who interact and live in the Region.”

### Question 11

Respondents were asked to provide any additional comments about their vision for the future of Durham Region. From the written responses received (approximate total of 695), the following overarching themes emerged:

- Leadership
- Growth
- Affordability
- Community
- Safety

Examples of qualitative feedback received from respondents include:

- “We need safe neighborhoods and open spaces where we can be active without fear of harm.”
- “Durham must protect its waterways, its forests, and its green space as much as possible. The outdoor opportunities available in Durham are unique and must remain a vital part of Durham’s expansion and development plans. Durham must also greatly improve its transit and infrastructure if it really plans to welcome more residents. Otherwise it will only welcome more traffic, more gridlock, and consequently more pollution and accidents.”
- “Align with the municipalities and get the job done.”
- “I think the future for Durham will be made or broken by how housing development and population growth is managed. Community focused development will be healthy, housing sprawl will not.”

- “I think Durham has a good future IF it invests into mobility and better urban planning. Safe, walkable, accessible neighbourhoods are the backbone of community and inclusion. Keeping people from being displaced due to hardship and affordability issues, keeps populations invested in their own neighbourhoods. I'd like to see better transit from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, better bike infrastructure, more ability to walk to places for your daily needs. More local activities and better parks.”

#### Part 4 – Tell us about yourself

All questions in Part 4 were voluntary. The demographic questions were designed in collaboration with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion division of the Region of Durham. Participants were asked to provide demographic information. The following tables provide an overview of the survey respondent demographics.

Table 6. Demographics – Connection with Durham Region.

Connection with Durham Region	Percentage of respondents selected this response *
I live in Durham Region.	85%
I work in Durham Region.	34%
I am a local business owner in Durham Region.	10%
I am a member of a community association and/or volunteer in Durham Region.	16%
I am employed by the Regional Municipality of Durham.	8%
I am employed by a local municipality.	2%
I prefer not to answer	3%
Other	3%

\* Note: respondents were able to select more than one response to indicate their connection to Durham Region.

Table 7. Demographics – Municipality.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Town of Ajax	15%
Township of Brock	3%
Municipality of Clarington	17%
City of Oshawa	26%
City of Pickering	12%
Township of Scugog	4%
Township of Uxbridge	3%
Town of Whitby	4%
Skipped	16%

Table 8. Demographics – Age Group.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
18 and under	1%
19 to 24	2%
25 to 34	18%
35 to 44	19%
45 to 54	14%
55 to 64	15%
65+	16%
I prefer not to answer	3%
Skipped	12%

Table 9. Demographics – Preferred language.

<b>Preferred language</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
English	83.9%
French	0.7%
Both English and French	2.2%
Neither English nor French	0.2%
I prefer not to answer	1.0%
Skipped	12.0%

Table 10. Demographics – Immigration.

<b>Born in Canada</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Yes	64%
No	21%
I prefer not to answer	3%
Skipped	12%

Table 11. Demographics – Years in Canada.

<b>Years lived in Canada</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
0-5 years	1.9%
6 to 10 years	2.6%
More than 10 years	15.7%
I prefer not to answer	0.2%

<b>Years lived in Canada</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Skipped	79.6%

Table 12. Demographics – Indigenous identity.

<b>Identify as an Indigenous person</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Yes	4%
No	79%
I prefer not to answer	5%
Skipped	12%

Table 13. Demographics – Racial / ethnic identity.

<b>Racial / Ethnic Identity</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Asian - East	2.1%
Asian - South / East Indian / Indo-Caribbean	8.6%
Asian - Southeast	2.0%
Black / African	4.2%
North American Indigenous	0.9%
Non-White Latino or Hispanic	0.6%
Non-White Middle Eastern, West Asian, or North African	0.8%
Pacific Islander	0.2%
White - Caucasian	54.5%
Prefer to self-identify	0.9%

<b>Racial / Ethnic Identity</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Mixed racial origin (i.e., with parents in multiple groups above, regardless of place of birth)	2.3%
I prefer not to answer	10.9 %
Skipped	11.8 %

Table 14. Demographics – Gender and gender identity.

<b>Gender / Gender Identity</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Man	42.3%
Non-binary	0.4%
Two-Spirit	0.2%
Trans	0.3%
Woman	39.6%
Prefer to self-identify	0.3%
I prefer not to answer	6.0%
Skipped	10.9%

Table 15. Demographics – Identifying as a person with a disability.

<b>Identify as a person with a disability</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Yes	9%
No	74%
I prefer not to answer	5%

<b>Identify as a person with a disability</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Skipped	12%

Table 16. Demographics – Education.

<b>Completed Education</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Less than High School diploma	1.0%
High School diploma	7.0%
Some College or University but no degree	14.1%
College Diploma	21.5%
Bachelor's Degree	23.2%
Master's Degree	11.8%
Professional Degree	4.4%
Doctorate	1.2%
I prefer not to answer	5.1%
Skipped	10.7%

Table 17. Demographics – Income.

<b>Yearly Household Income</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
Less than \$9,999	1.2%
\$10,000 to \$39,999	5.6%
\$40,000 to \$69,999	12.9%
\$70,000 to \$99,999	14.8%

---

<b>Yearly Household Income</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
\$100,000 to \$149,999	17.1%
\$150,000 or more	22.6%
I prefer not to answer	24.2%
Skipped	1.6%

## **Attachment #2: Community Survey**

### **Developing Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan**

#### **Survey Purpose**

To help identify and prioritize the focus areas for the long-term vision and strategy for Durham Region.

#### **Introduction**

The current Durham Region Strategic Plan is approaching its end in December 2024. Work is underway to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan which will guide the direction of the Regional Municipality of Durham's work over the next few years. The Strategic Plan will outline how we will continue to deliver programs and services and advance our work to achieve the future we want to create.

We are excited to invite you to share your thoughts and ideas. Your voice matters and the thoughts you share will be considered when creating the 2025 Strategic Plan.

The survey is designed to take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Your responses are anonymous.

For more information, please visit [durham.ca/StratPlan2025](https://durham.ca/StratPlan2025) or email [strategic.planning@durham.ca](mailto:strategic.planning@durham.ca)

#### **Notice of Collection**

Any personal information collected on this survey will be used to help develop the Region of Durham's 2025 Strategic Plan. It is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001, and will be used in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Reports prepared by the Region on this survey will not contain any personal information and will be subject to MFIPPA. For more information on the collection and use of your personal information, please contact the Corporate Privacy Officer at [privacy@durham.ca](mailto:privacy@durham.ca) or 905-668-7711 extension 2204.

#### **Setting the Stage**

The Region of Durham must work with all levels of government (federal, provincial, and local) to achieve our goals. This table: "Who does what?" shows a broad overview of government areas of services and responsibilities. When developing Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan, we must consider where we can take action and where we need to collaborate.

**Who does what? A guide to government services**  
For a full list of services and responsibilities, visit [durham.ca/Durham101](http://durham.ca/Durham101)

Level of Government	Service/Responsibility
<b>Federal</b> Government of Canada provides services relating to the whole country.	Citizenship and immigration
	Criminal law
	Employment insurance
	Airports
	Income tax
	Postal service
<b>Provincial</b> Government of Ontario delivers provincial services.	Drivers' licenses
	Schools and post-secondary education
	Provincial highways
	Hospitals and health care
	Property and civil rights
	Social assistance
<b>Regional</b> The Region of Durham provides upper-tier municipal services.	Police services
	Emergency management
	Affordable housing and homelessness
	Paramedics and public health
	Regional roads, water and sewer infrastructure
	Durham Transit
<b>Local area municipalities</b> In Durham Region, these are Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge, and Whitby.	By-law enforcement
	Local planning and zoning
	Local roads and sidewalks
	Fire services
	Parks and recreation
	Animal control

## Part 1: Where are we now?

When developing a strategic plan, it is important to understand where we are now as a community before planning for the future.

### Question 1

**On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree, how would you rate the following statements?**

Choose 1 if you strongly disagree and 5 if you strongly agree.

Durham Region has strong leadership.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Durham Region delivers services well.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
I feel welcome wherever I go in Durham Region.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Infrastructure in Durham Region is in excellent shape.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
There is a sense of prosperity in Durham Region.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Current public transit serves the public well.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Durham Region is a safe place.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Durham Region is a leader in environmental sustainability.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Durham Region supports those in need.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree

---

I plan to live in Durham Region over the next 5-10 years.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
The future feels positive and bright for Durham Region	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree
Durham Region is ready for the future.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree

## Question 2

**Please share any other statements you would use to describe Durham Region:**

## Question 3

**Which five of these statements best reflect how you feel about Durham Region?  
Please select up to five statements.**

- I feel safe in Durham Region.
- My hard work and accomplishments are valued here.
- I am treated fairly in Durham Region.
- I am connected to nature in Durham Region.
- I live in a beautiful built environment.
- I have deep connections to my community in Durham Region.
- Multi-generational living is possible in Durham Region.
- This place has tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and opportunity.
- My community has a lively, vibrant, and creative buzz.
- I am free to live the way I want in Durham Region.
- I can afford to live in Durham Region.
- None of these statements reflect how I feel about Durham Region.
- Other. Please specify:

**Question 4**

**Please share why you feel this way:**

**Part 2: Share your thoughts and ideas****Question 5**

**What opportunities do you think are the most exciting for Durham Region over the next 10 years? Please select up to five areas of opportunity.**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New technology.            | <input type="checkbox"/> Skilled workers.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental sustainability and climate resilience.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses and investment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of public space.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Public participation in governance and policy changes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary education.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Public transit and mobility solutions.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean energy production.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible budgeting.     | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Greener neighbourhoods.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public health services.    | <input type="checkbox"/> New infrastructure.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Income and housing supports.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social services.           | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and agri-tourism.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety.                                      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships between public and private organizations. |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please specify:     |   |   |

**Question 6**

Please share why you feel this way:

**Part 3: The longer-term future****Question 7**

**We live in a time of significant change. Imagine your life in Durham Region in 2035. Which of the following do you think will have the biggest impact on you and your community? Please select up to five answers.**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Severe climate change.               | <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of belonging.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordability.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Food insecurity.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health support needs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aging population.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of local media.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Aging infrastructure.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial intelligence.             | <input type="checkbox"/> Global unrest.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration and newcomers.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees and asylum seekers.         | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and sustainable energy solutions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste management.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urbanization and density.            | <input type="checkbox"/> Global pandemics.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Public health issues.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of unity, versus polarization. | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic competitiveness.              | <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and inclusion.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trust in government.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                |   |

**Question 8**

Please share why you feel this way:

**Question 9**

**Which regional government services and programs do you think will be most important to you and your community over the next 10 years? Please select up to 5 answers.**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business services.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism services.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and rural economic development. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local arts and culture opportunities.     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling infrastructure.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional planning for growth.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety and well-being programs. | <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. | <input type="checkbox"/> Paramedic services.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public health programs.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional budget planning.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's services.                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family services.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing and homelessness services.         | <input type="checkbox"/> Income support services.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term care and senior's services.     | <input type="checkbox"/> Transit services.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to information.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Police services.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Newcomer and immigrant support services.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Roads and infrastructure programs.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic safety programs.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste management services.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Community engagement opportunities.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                   |   |  |

**Question 10**

**Please share why you feel this way:**

**Question 11**

**Is there anything else you would like to share about your vision for the future of Durham Region?**

**Part 4 – Tell us about yourself**

The information you provide in the following questions helps us to understand the make-up of the region which ensures the programs and services provided meet the needs of our changing population. Thank you in advance for providing this voluntary information.

**Please tell us about your connection with Durham Region.**

Select all that apply:

- I live in Durham Region.
- Town of Ajax
- Township of Brock
- Municipality of Clarington
- City of Oshawa
- City of Pickering
- Township of Scugog
- Township of Uxbridge
- Town of Whitby
- I work in Durham Region.
- I am a local business owner in Durham Region.
- I am a member of a community association and/or volunteer in Durham Region.
- I am employed by the Regional Municipality of Durham.
- I am employed by a local municipality.
- I prefer not to answer.
- Other (please specify)

**What age group do you belong to?**

- 18 and under
- 19 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65+
- I prefer not to answer.

**Language**

What language are you most comfortable communicating in?

- English
- French
- Both English and French
- Neither English nor French. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- I prefer not to answer.

**Immigration**

Were you born in Canada?

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to answer.

**Immigration**

If you were not born in Canada, how long have you lived in Canada?

- 0-5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- More than 10 years
- I prefer not to answer.
- Not applicable.

**Indigenous identity**

Do you identify as an Indigenous person (First Nation, Inuit or Métis)?

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to answer.

**Racial/Ethnic identity**

Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity, regardless of your ethnicity and place of birth? Please choose one.

- Asian - East
- Asian - South / East Indian / Indo-Caribbean
- Asian - Southeast
- Black / African
- North American Indigenous
- Non-White Latino or Hispanic

- Non-White Middle Eastern, West Asian, or North African
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Prefer to self-identify.
- I prefer not to answer.
- Mixed racial origin (i.e., with parents in multiple groups above, regardless of place of birth). Please specify:

### **Gender/ Gender identity**

Gender identity is a person's internal and individual experience of gender. This may or may not correspond to one's sex assigned at birth. What is your gender identity? Please chose all that apply.

- Man
- Non-binary
- Two-Spirit
- Trans
- Woman
- Prefer to self-identify:
- I prefer not to answer.

### **Disabilities**

Do you identify as a person with a disability?

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to answer.

**Education**

What level of education have you completed?

- Less than High School diploma
- High School diploma
- Some College or University but no degree
- College diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate
- I prefer not to answer

**Socio-economic**

What is your estimated household yearly income before taxes and deductions?

- Less than \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- I prefer not to answer.

**Completion of survey**

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey! Your feedback will be taken into consideration to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

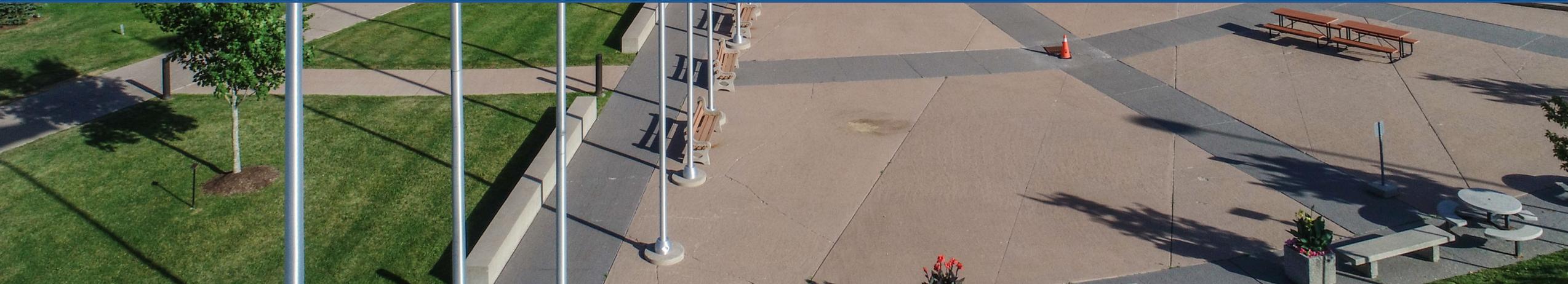
Additional engagement opportunities will continue until June using the feedback gathered from this survey. Please continue to check [durham.ca/StratPlan2025](https://durham.ca/StratPlan2025) for updates.



# Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan

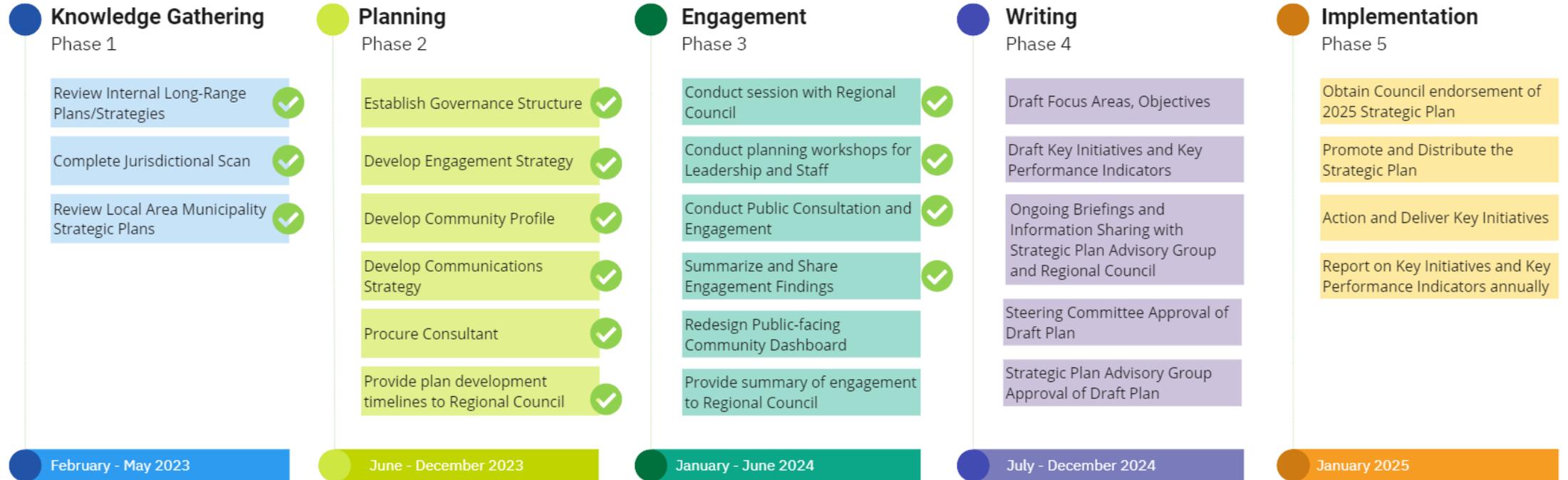
Phase 3 – Engagement Summary Report

June 12, 2024





# Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan Timeline





# Community Engagement Efforts

# Indigenous Governance and Organizations

- In October 2023, written letters providing notice for consultation were delivered to the Williams Treaty First Nations.
  - 1 follow-up engagement completed with the Mississaugas of Scugog First Nation
- Regional staff continue to collaborate with Indigenous Governance and organizations.
- Engagement through existing events and gatherings. Example, staff attended the Ontario Health East - Central East Métis, Inuit, Indigenous Peoples' Health Advisory Circle Meeting on March 22, 2024, to share information. A total of 37 meaningful face-to-face interactions occurred.

# Council Planning Day

- Explored emerging issues
- Shared their vision of the future
- Provided key input into the development of the plan
- Results were used to inform community survey and key trends



Council Chambers – January 25, 2024

# Local Area Municipality Delegations

Select highlights from delegations:

- Enthusiasm and positive feedback on engagement approach
- Desire for additional public pop-up events and community engagement opportunities, specifically evening sessions
- Commitment to promote the survey



City of Pickering's Council Chambers - March 4, 2024



# Public Engagement Activities

Community online survey	Online survey for Regional Councillors	Website	Social Media
Face-to-Face Interactions	Community Events	Your Durham	Newsletters/Flyers/ Postcards
Local Chamber of Commerce / Board of Trade Engagements	Delegations to Local Area Municipalities	Presentation materials to Committees of Council	Youth Engagement/ Art Contest
Planning Workshops	Focus Groups	Digital Media Ads	Attendance at Regional programs and services events
Internal Department Head Meetings	Internal Senior Leadership Team Meetings	Internal Department Meetings	Internal Staff Communication Channels

# Pop-Up Events

- 24 pop-up events across the region
- Approximately 900 face-to-face interactions with residents



Oshawa – March 13, 2024



Durham College – April 5, 2024



Pickering – March 22, 2024

# Print Materials Distributed

- Flyers (N=700) and Post-cards (N=1,000) posted/distributed in:
  - Libraries
  - Seniors Centres
  - Welcome Centres
  - Recreation / Community Centres





# Your Durham March 2024

- 8,400 website visits
- Over 2,100 survey responses received

Your Voice  
Your Durham

Durham Region's 2025  
Strategic Plan

Connect. Grow. Succeed.

Home / Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan

## Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

The current Durham Region Strategic Plan is approaching its end in December 2024. Work is underway to develop Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan, which will guide the direction of the Regional Municipality of Durham's work over the next few years. The Strategic Plan will outline how we will continue to deliver programs and services and advance our work to achieve the futures we want to create.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and ideas for Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan. The online survey is now closed. The feedback received through the survey and discussions with residents will inform future planning sessions.

The information provided will be summarized and presented to Regional Council in June 2024. Please continue to check the website for project updates.

**TAKE SURVEY OR ENTER ART CONTEST**

CLOSED: This survey has concluded.

### Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan Community Survey

# Art Contest – Designing Our Future

- Young artists encouraged to share their vision for Durham Region
- 20 submissions received



# Art Contest Submissions



~ Iyal - Age 5



~ Jeremie - Age 8



~ Christa - Age 10

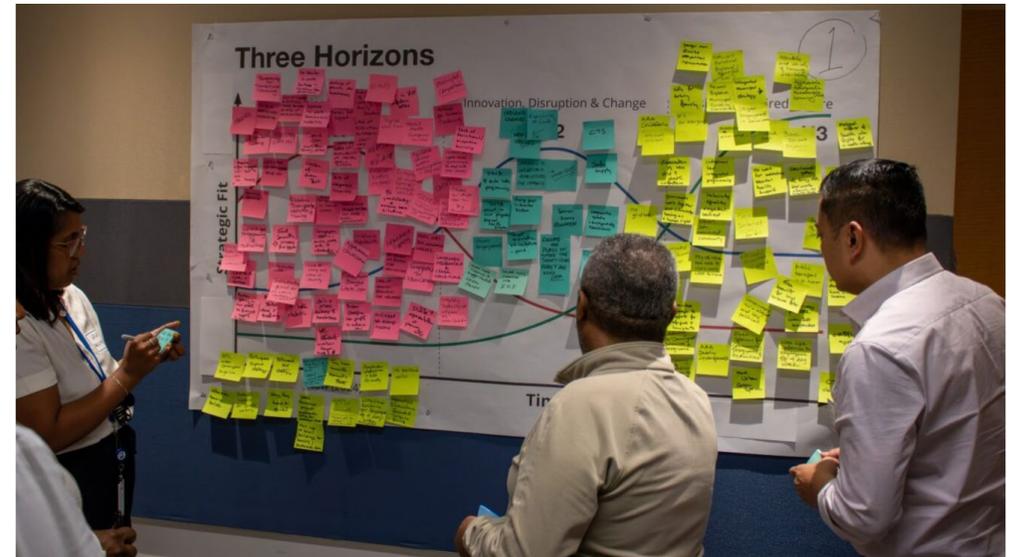
# Art Contest Responses

- “Durham's future is full of parks and trees that kids can visit and make memories for a lifetime.”
- “Everyone recycling and no garbage on the ground. Lots of nature and farmland. More electric cars.”
- “My future Durham region is pollution free with trees and clean lakes instead of deforestation and factories that produce toxic gas.”
- “My future for Durham Region is a place where people from all ages and backgrounds can come together to form a community. It is a place where there are opportunities for everyone to enjoy the outdoors because we have done a good job of preserving nature and the environment around us. My version of Durham is colourful and clean because people respect and take care of our public spaces. We have many public buildings that serve a variety of purposes, like community centres, libraries, schools, places of worship, hospitals and more. There are lots of parks where kids can play and feel safe. Durham in ten years is a place where people want to live, work, play, learn and grow!”
- “Durham is a great place to live. My picture shows a park close to houses for kids to play and for there to be peace.”

# Community Conversations

- May 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 14th
- 3 hour in-person sessions focused on future scenario exploration
- A total of 84 of participants attended, representing 47 organizations/groups in Durham Region
- Sessions were designed for community partners, business leaders, and youth leaders

# Community Conversations





# What We Heard from Community



# Respondent Demographics – Area Municipality

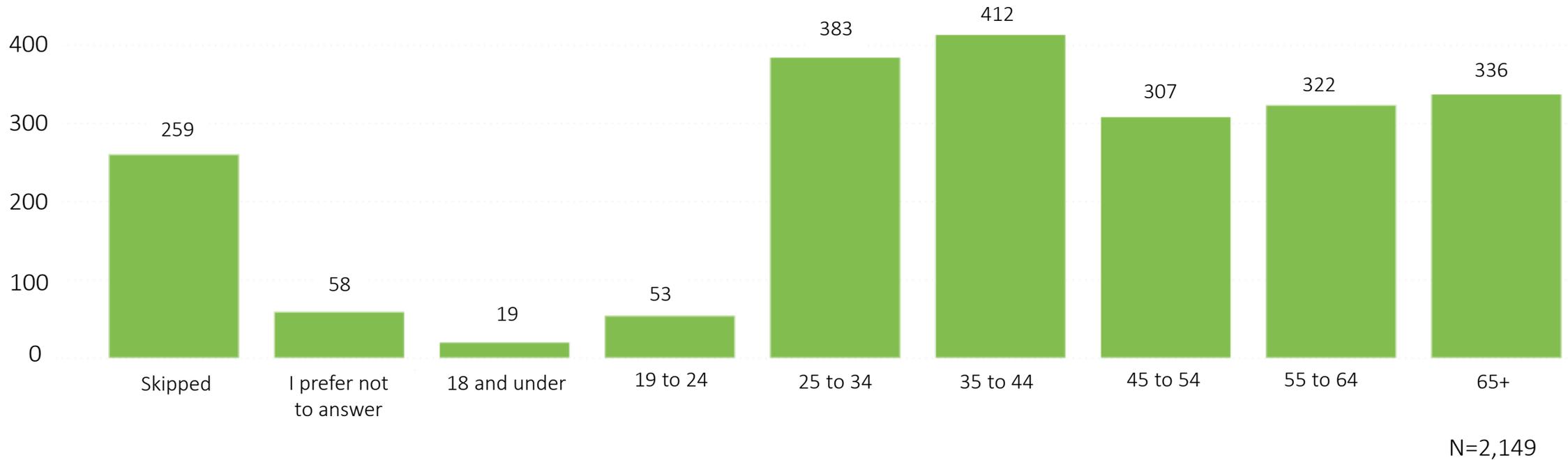
Q: Please tell us about your connection with Durham Region.



N=2,149

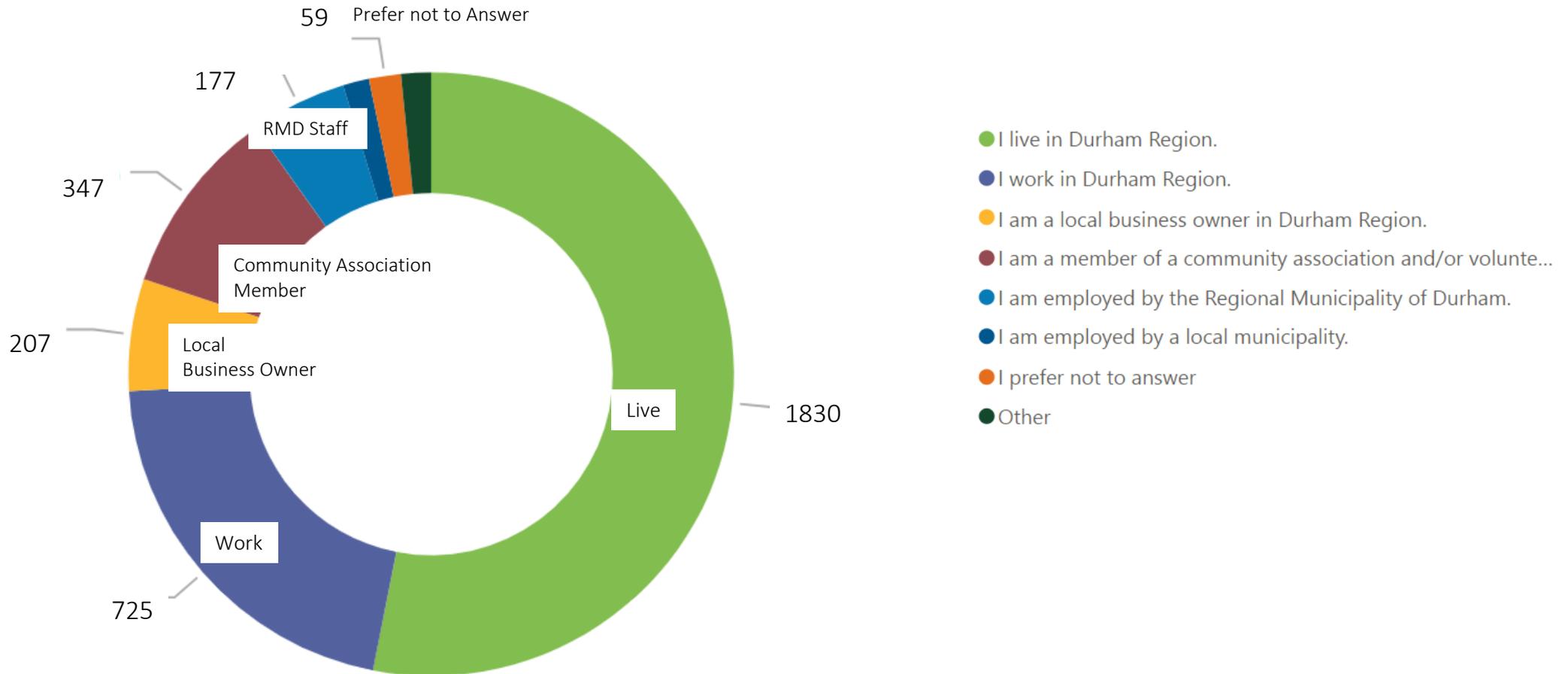
# Respondent Demographics – Age Group

Q: What age group do you belong to?



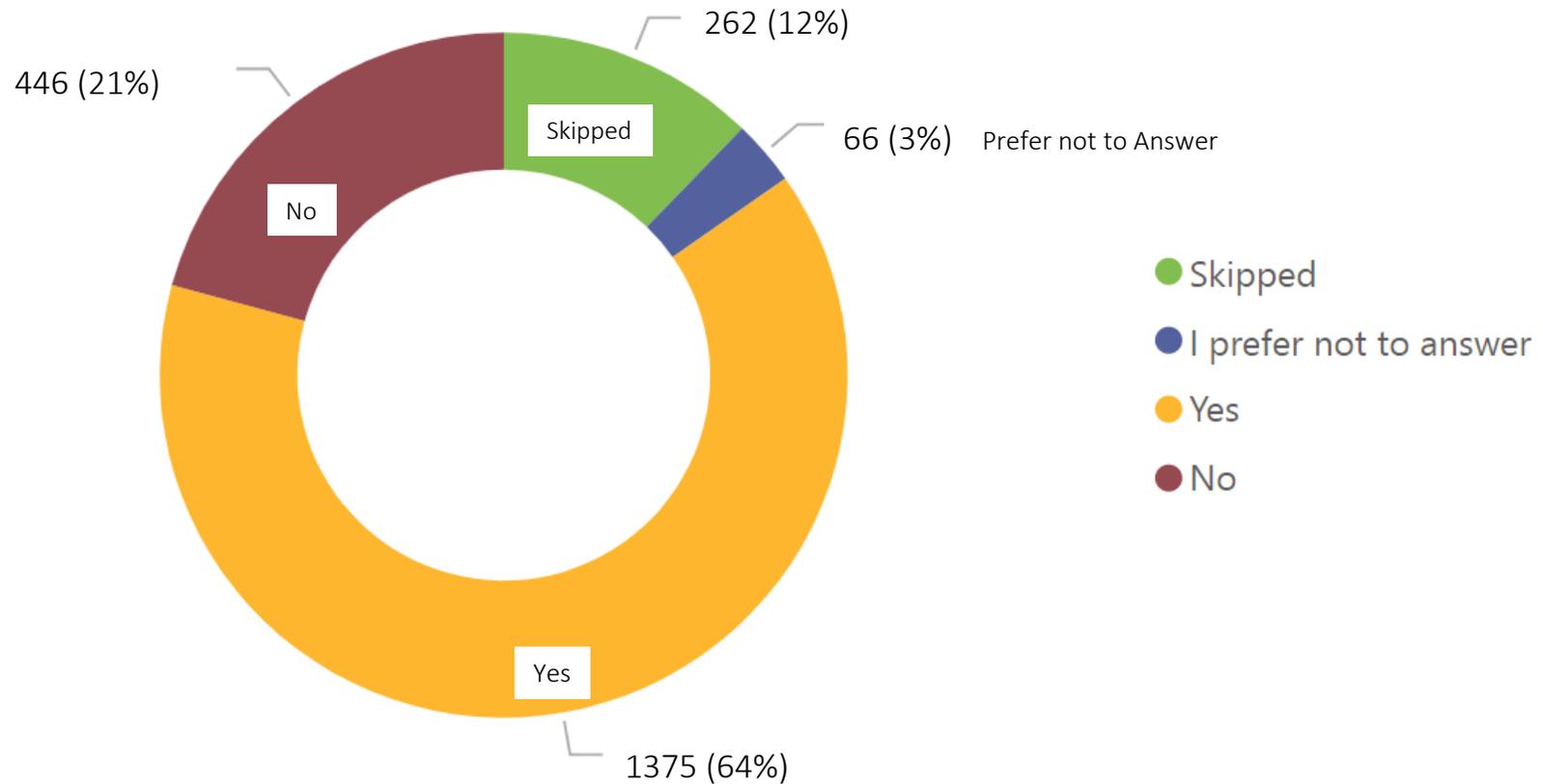
# Demographics from Community Survey

Q: Please tell us about your connection with Durham Region.



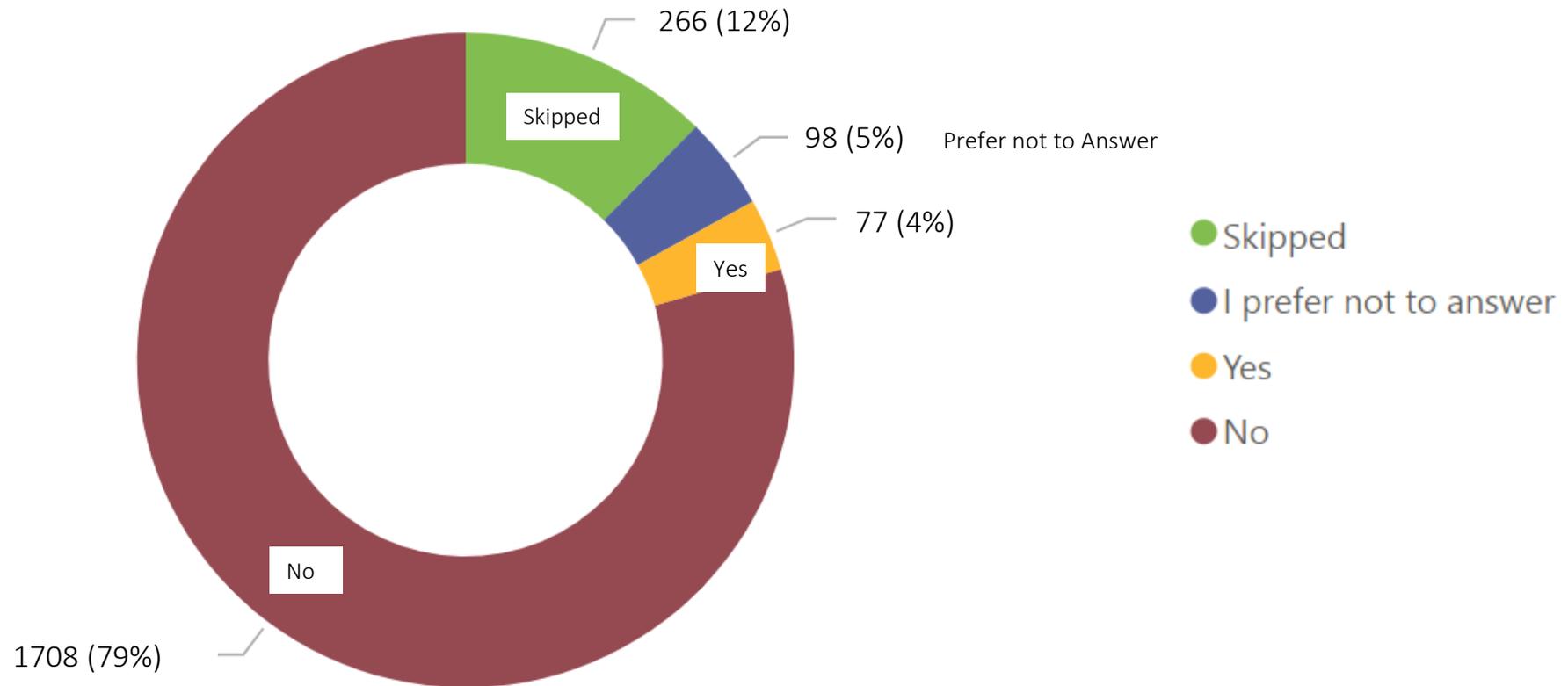
# Respondent Demographics – Immigration

Q: Were you born in Canada?



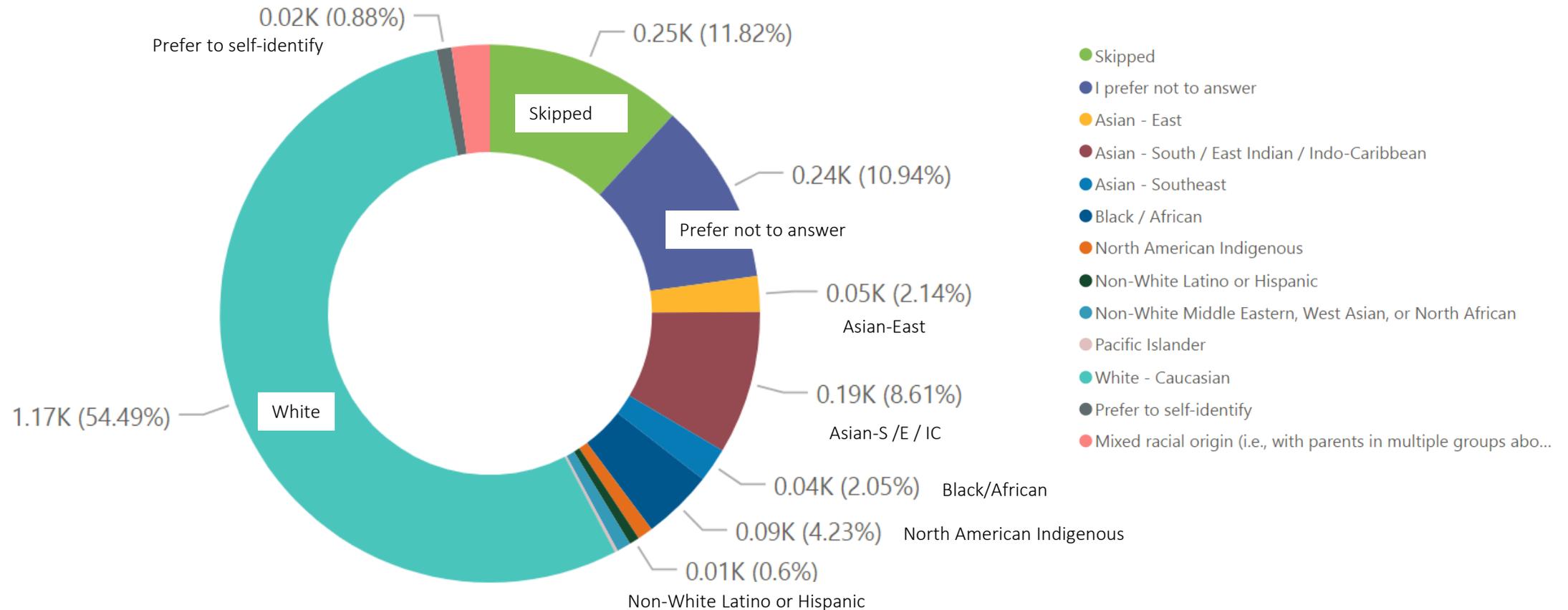
# Respondent Demographics – Indigenous Identity

Q: Do you identify as an Indigenous person (First Nation, Inuit or Métis)?



# Respondent Demographics – Racial/Ethnic Identity

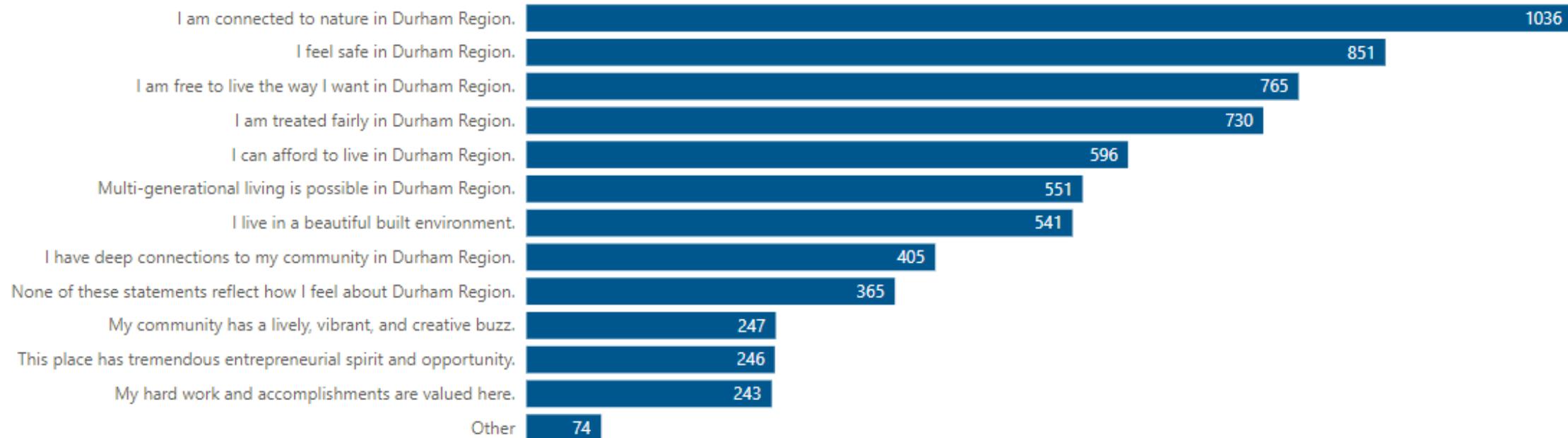
Q: Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity, regardless of your ethnicity and place of birth?





# Which five of these statements best reflect how you feel about Durham Region?

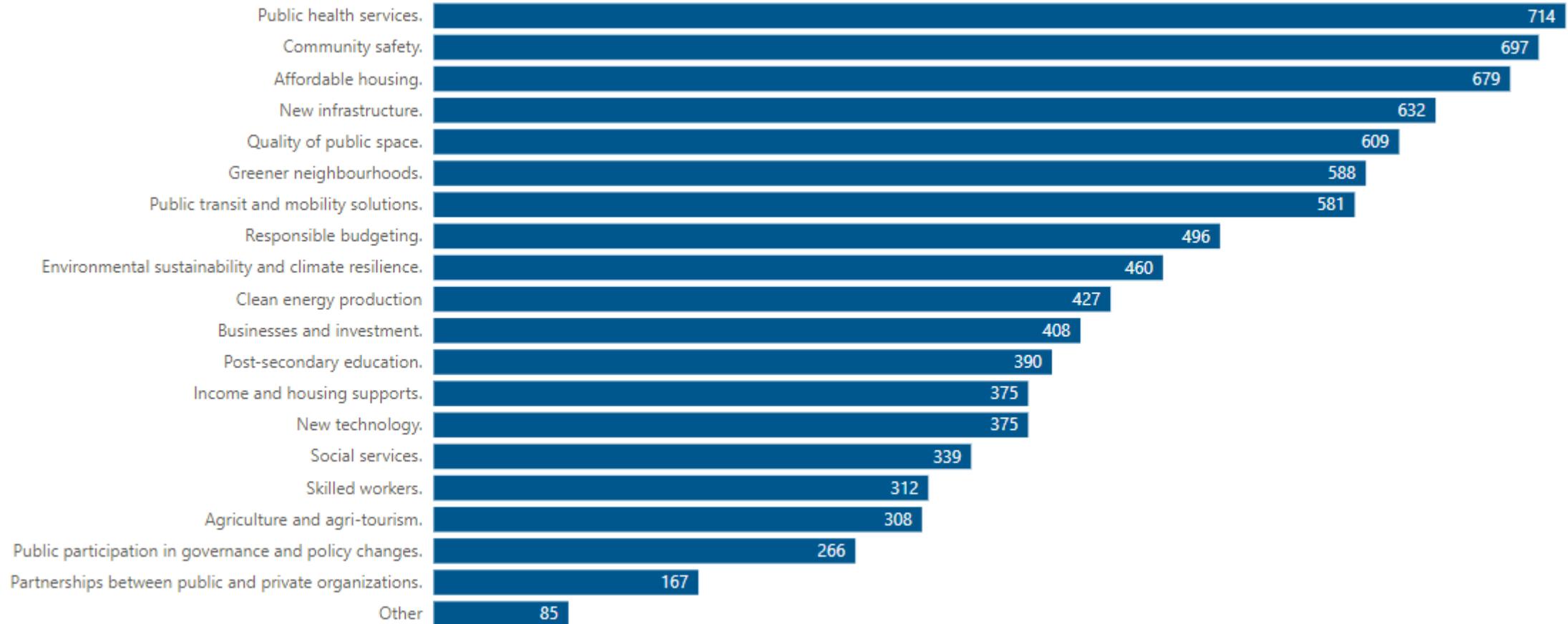
Please select up to five:





# What opportunities do you think are the most exciting for Durham Region over the next 10 years?

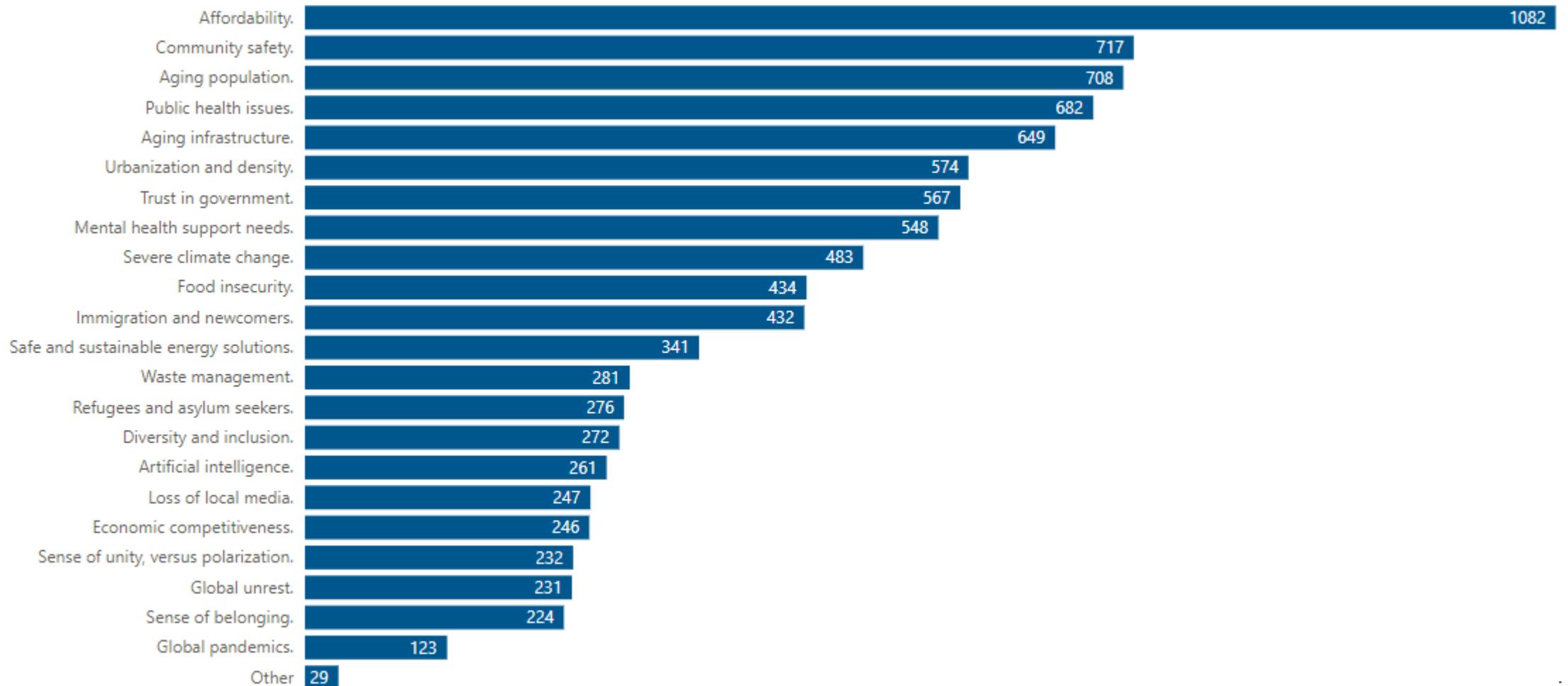
Please select up to five areas of opportunity:





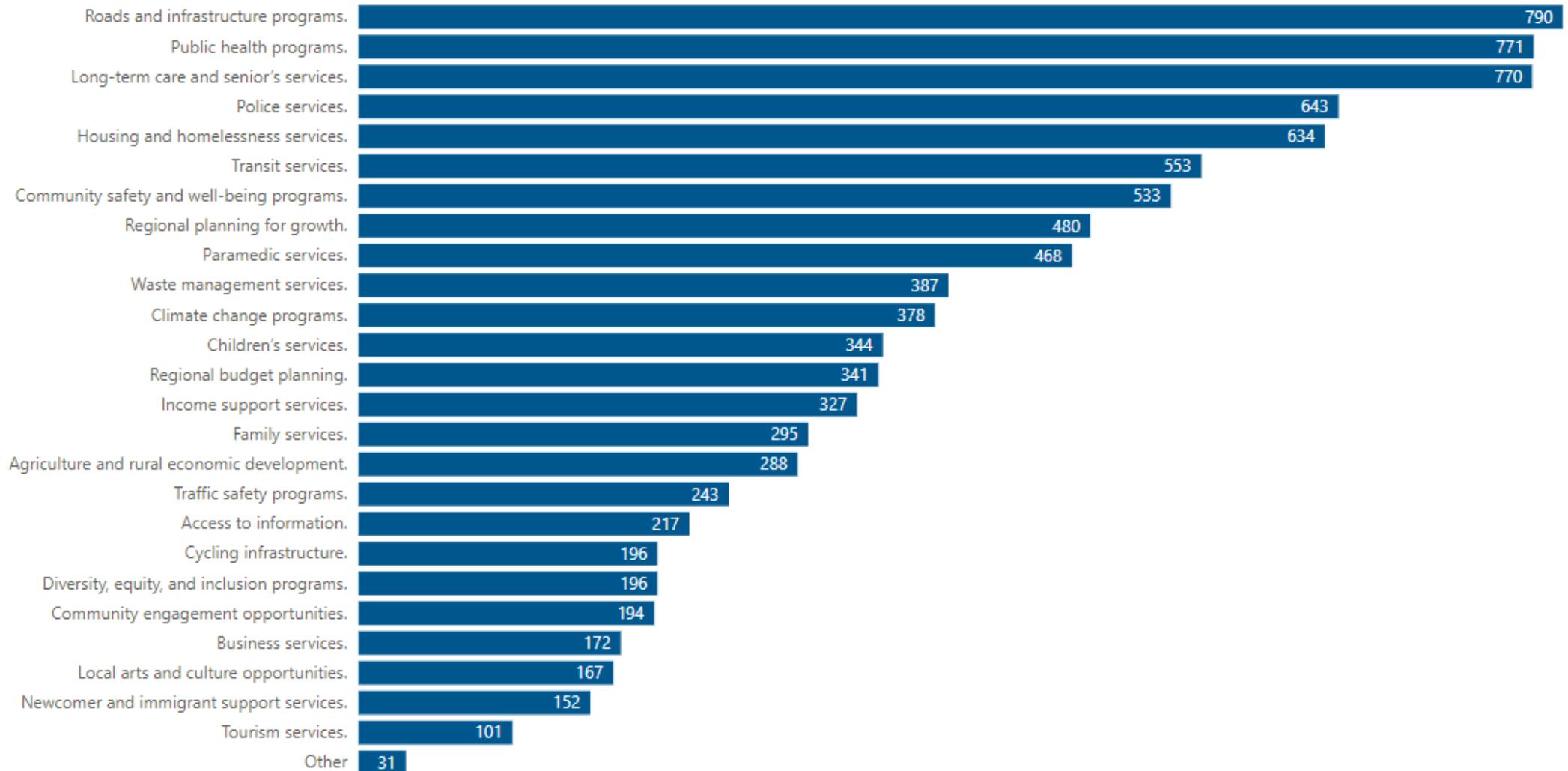
# Which of the following do you think will have the biggest impact on you and your community?

Please select up to five answers:





# Which regional government services and programs do you think will be most important to you and your community over the next 10 years? Please select up to five answers:



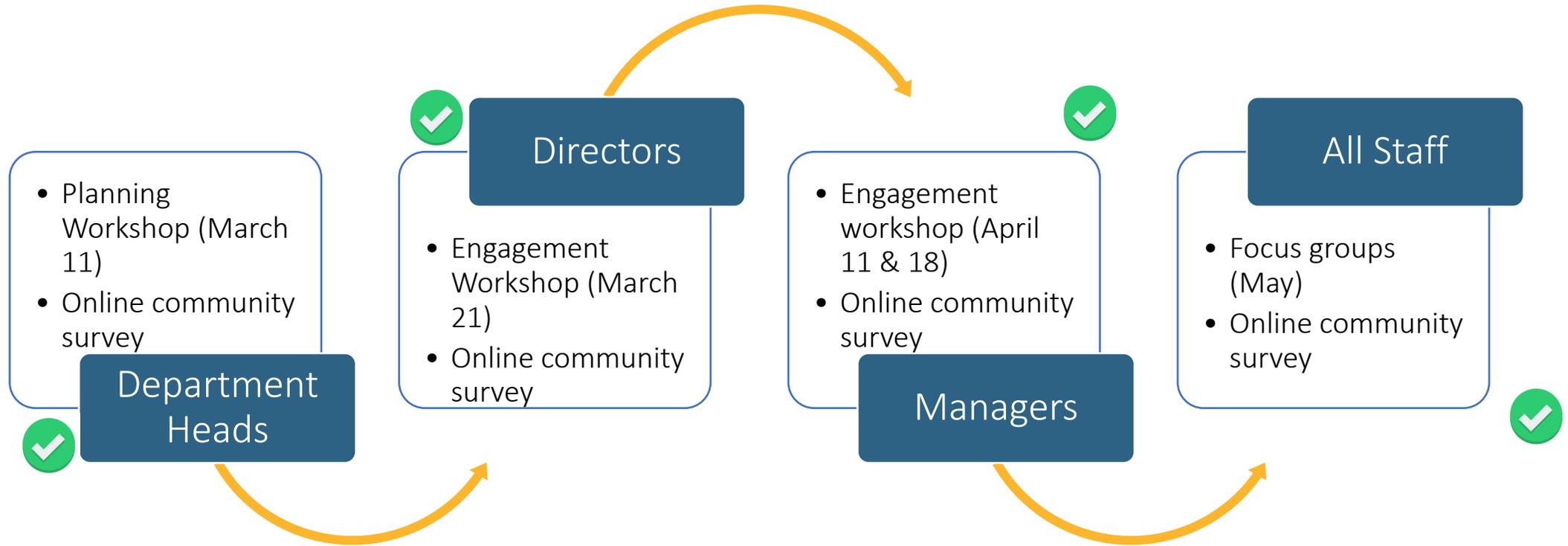
# Qualitative Results from Community Survey

Question	Question Prompt	# Qualitative Responses
Q2	Please share any other statements you would use to describe Durham Region.	~ 950
Q4	Which five of these statements best reflect how you feel about Durham Region? Please share why you feel this way.	~ 800
Q6	What opportunities do you think are the most exciting for Durham Region over the next 10 years? Please share why you feel this way.	~ 700
Q8	We live in a time of significant change. Imagine your life in Durham Region in 2035. Which of the following do you think will have the biggest impact on you and your community? Please share why you feel this way.	~ 600
Q10	Which regional government services and programs do you think will be most important to you and your community over the next 10 years? Please share why you feel this way.	~ 550
Q11	Is there anything else you would like to share about your vision for the future of Durham Region?	~ 700



# Internal Engagement Efforts

# Internal Engagement Activities



# Department Head Planning Workshop



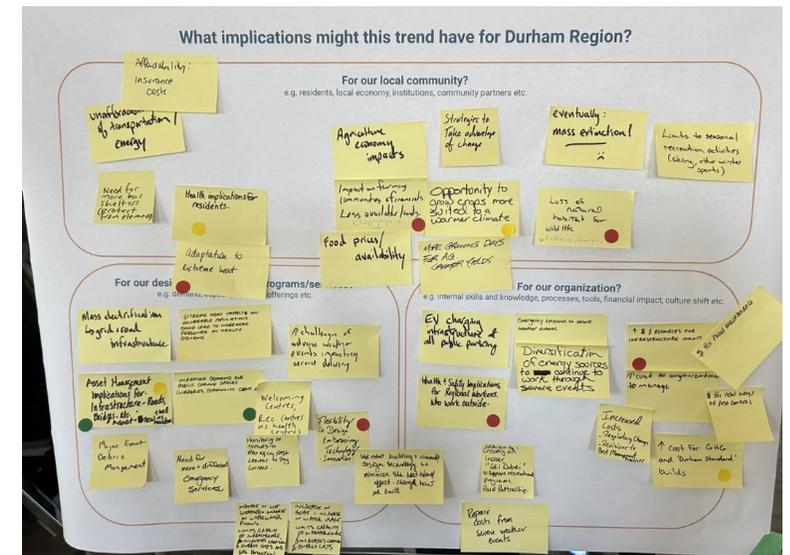
March 11, 2024

# Key Trends Affecting Durham Region

- 1 – Technology Advances
- 2 – Population Changes
- 3 – Severe Climate Change
- 4 – Health and Well-Being
- 5 – Electrification & Energy Transition
- 6 – Affordability
- 7 – Civic Engagement

# Director Planning Session

- March 21, 2024; 90-minute workshop
- Senior Leaders (Commissioners and Directors)
- Identified implications of key trends affecting Durham Region



# Manager Planning Session

- April 11 & 18, 2024; 90-minute workshops for managers
- Generated ideas to inform the Regional Strategic Plan



# Staff Conversations

- May 24-30, 2024: 90-minute in-person sessions
- 5 workshops completed to gather insights on organizational values and mission





# What We Heard from Staff

# What We Heard From Staff

## Department Heads

- Provided key principles for the design and scope of the plan
- Provided input on plan implementation

## Senior Leadership Team

- Provided possible implications of major trends affecting our community, our organization, and our programs and service delivery

# What We Heard From Staff

## Managers

- Provided key themes, ideas, and strategies to respond to major trends impacting the region

## Staff

- Provided ideas to inform recommendations on Mission and Values (how we work)



# Preliminary Findings – Summary of What We Heard

# Summary of Defining Characteristics

- Access to nature, including parks, trails, waterfronts and greenspace;
- Mix of rural and urban spaces;
- Sense of safety;
- Diverse and inclusive community; and
- Unique local industries, including agriculture, energy, and small businesses.



# Summary of What We Heard – Issues

## Cost of Living

Rise in cost of living, with focus on housing and rental costs. Increasing number of residents experiencing homelessness. Food insecurity growing. Challenges for childcare, young people, and seniors.

## Rapid Growth

Urban planning, infrastructure, and services to match pace of growth. In particular, transportation infrastructure, affordable housing, and service delivery including transit. Protection of agricultural lands and natural surroundings.

## Infrastructure

Traffic and road maintenance. Density challenging the current transportation infrastructure. Planning of services or access to green space, upgrading of infrastructure, or other amenities. Access to high-speed internet services.

## Community Well-being

Observed increase in people experiencing homelessness and those living with mental health and addictions challenges in the community. In some cases, increased homelessness visible within community spaces caused uneasiness and concern.

## Safety

Concerns about safety for pedestrians in areas without sidewalks, general road safety, crime, and police services.

## Service Delivery

Services and resources, including housing and health services under strain associated with a growing and changing population. Services to support an aging population. Value for money and coordination of service delivery. Service delivery to north Durham.



# Summary of What We Heard – Issues cont'd

## Transit

Reliable and affordable transit options to address sustainability, cost of living, and mobility for students and seniors. Service delivery challenges to northern Durham.

## Health Services

Health services including primary care providers, hospitals, and paramedic / emergency services. Increased need for services to support people living with mental health and addiction challenges, as well as a growing demographic of seniors.

## Leadership

Lack of shared vision for the region. Responsible budgeting and decision-making to ensure investments align with community needs. Collaboration with all levels of government. Lack of trust in government.

## Community Connection

Lack of social cohesion and common identity, changing demographics, representation, lack of public spaces to gather and build community. The loss of local media as contributors to a lack of social cohesion. Social isolation and the lack of community engagement.

## Climate Change Impacts

Adverse impacts due to climate change and severe weather including contributions to issues such as affordability, food security, and health. Development planning to account for climate challenges. Loss of agricultural land and climate impacts on agriculture.

## Technology

Labour market impacts due to automation. Cyber security challenges due to increasing threats. Social media as an enabler to the creation of bias, mistrust, and misinformation. Inequitable access to technology.

# Summary of What We Heard – Aspirations

## Adapting to Growth

Clear vision and proactive plans in place for careful growth and delivery of services to meet needs of growing and changing population. Density as a precursor to sustainable and effective service delivery. Greenspace identified as important to well-being.

## Environmental Protection and Sustainability

Access to nature, preservation of green spaces in neighbourhoods, preservation of agricultural lands, safeguarding of wildlife. Thoughtful development, expanded transit services, and clean energy to support environmentally sustainable growth.

## Service Delivery

Increased transparency and accountability, responsible budgeting, taking a proactive and preventative approach, working with all levels of government and partners in the community, effective core service delivery, and service innovation.

## Mobility Options

Improved public transit to reduce car dependency, active transportation, and walkable neighbourhoods with access to nature and amenities.

## Supports for Vulnerable Populations

Access to services for an aging population, children and youth, newcomers, refugees and asylum seekers, those who are experiencing homelessness, low-income residents, and those who are living with mental health and addiction issues.

## Business and Employment

Attraction and retention of businesses and employers, especially for youth. Increase in skilled workers, supports for local businesses tourism, and newcomers. Strengthening of current industry and diversification and development of new industries. Post-secondary institution contributions.

# Summary of What We Heard – Aspirations cont'd

## Civic Engagement

More opportunities for the public to be heard by leaders, to access information, and contribute to regional decision-making. Improved Indigenous relations.

## Public Space

Welcoming and accessible public spaces to build community and share in community arts, culture, and entertainment events locally that are free of charge. Waterfront development to create beautiful natural public spaces and thriving businesses.

## Recreation and Leisure

Local recreation opportunities, arts and cultural events, community gatherings, and entertainment, with emphasis on youth and senior recreation opportunities. Awareness and communication of community gatherings.

## Technology and Innovation

Opportunity to use new technologies and methods to modernize regional practices, deliver efficient programs and services, and enable community engagement.

## Next Steps

- If approved, Regional staff, in collaboration with the Strategic Plan Advisory Group and the consultant, will complete further analysis to explore the data within the above mentioned themes and draft Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan
- The draft will be shared with Council and the community for additional input in Fall 2024
- Final Council review and approval in December 2024

# Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan Timeline





# Thank you!

Strategic Initiatives Division

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