

THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

# Strategic Plan 2024-2027

PROGRESS REPORT: YEAR TWO – 2025-2026

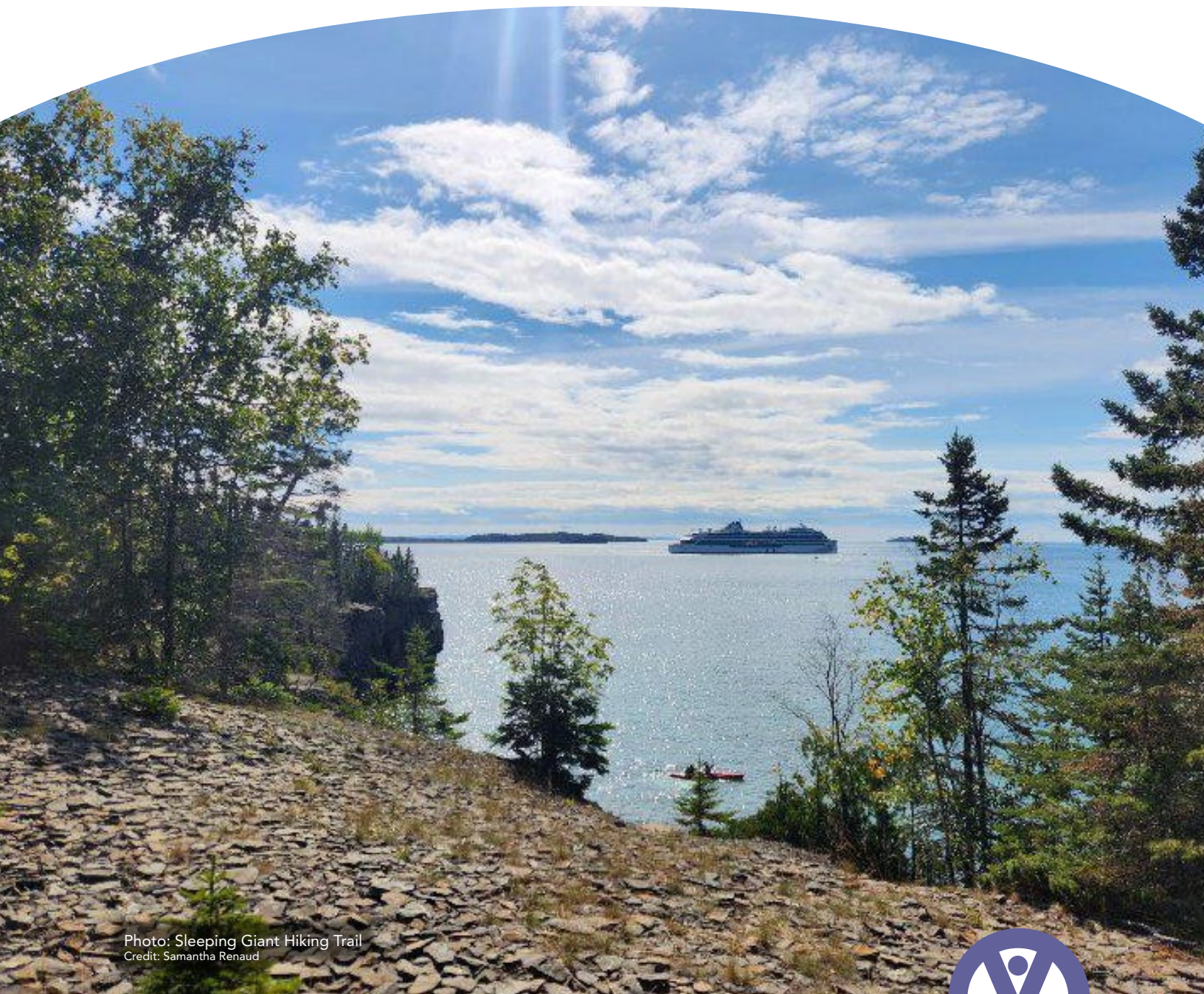


Photo: Sleeping Giant Hiking Trail  
Credit: Samantha Renaud



Thunder Bay District  
Health Unit

# Strategic Plan Accountability

Thunder Bay District Health Unit's (TBDHU) 2024-2027 Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Health in April 2024. The Strategic Plan was developed to guide the work of programs, services, and initiatives of the organization. Key elements of the Strategic Plan are listed below.



## Vision

Healthier Communities, Stronger Together.



## Mission

Working together to promote, protect, and achieve healthier communities and reduce health inequities through high quality public health programs and services.



## Values

The following values represent core commitments that guide our day-to-day practice both internally and externally with partners and the communities that we serve.

### ● Excellence

We strive for excellence through evidence-informed practice and by embracing a culture of innovation and continuous learning.

### ● Commitment

We are passionate and dedicated in our work with clients and partners to reduce health inequities and achieve healthier communities.

### ● Inclusion

We prioritize dignity and respect for all and we work collaboratively with a diverse network to provide culturally safer services and settings.

### ● Transparency

We are accountable and communicate openly in meeting the public health needs across the District of Thunder Bay.

## Priorities

The following strategic priorities reflect internal and external actions that will advance TBDHU's organizational mission and vision.



### **Thriving Workforce**

We will prioritize a thriving workforce through staff well-being, connectedness, and capacity building.



### **Organizational Resilience**

We will proactively align our organizational processes and resources to remain sustainable and responsive to meet the changing needs of the communities that we serve.



### **Communities and People**

We will deliver meaningful and impactful programs and services that meet the needs of the communities we serve.



### **Truth and Reconciliation**

We will continue work to become a culturally safer organization.



### **Health Equity**

We will increase organizational capacity for health equity action.

For more information about **TBDHU's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan**, visit:  
<https://www.tbdhu.com/about-us/strategic-plan-2024-27>.

# Strategic Plan Progress Report

This report summarizes TBDHU's progress in year two (2025-2026) toward its mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities.

## ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

In an effort to meaningfully action TBDHU's values, three staff engagement sessions were held in fall 2024 to explore how staff understand the organizational values and how they can be demonstrated in practice. The sessions revealed a clear desire among staff to put values into action, and staff shared useful insights on how staff are, or hope to, operationalize those values in their work. Building on these sessions, management and senior leadership discussed "values in practice," and each manager led conversations with their teams.

Further analysis of the engagement session data in late 2025 and early 2026 led to the development of clear, actionable principles. These statements are easier to understand, apply in practice, and evaluate across the organization. Principle statements reflect concrete actions identified by staff and will be promoted widely across the organization in the coming year.

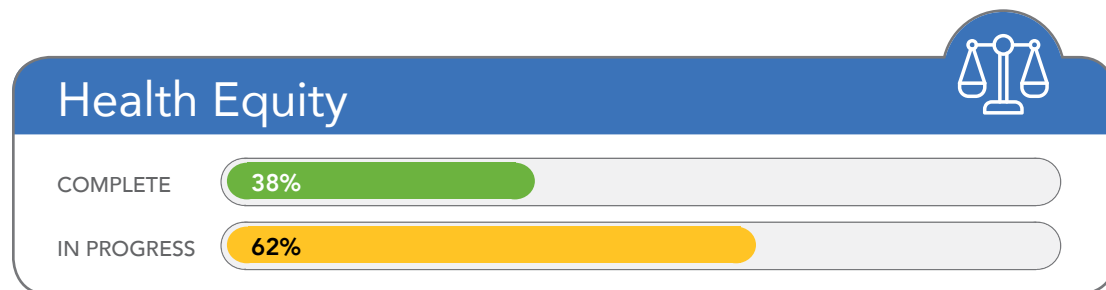
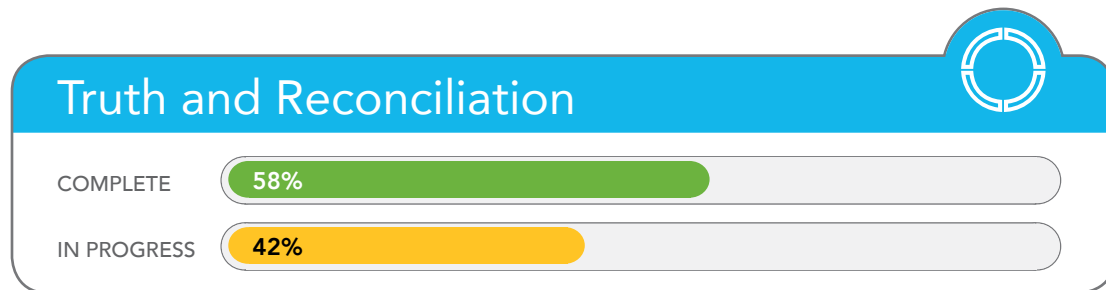
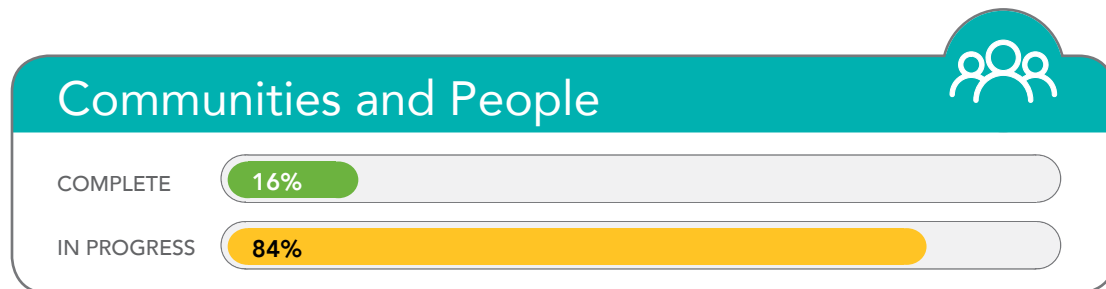
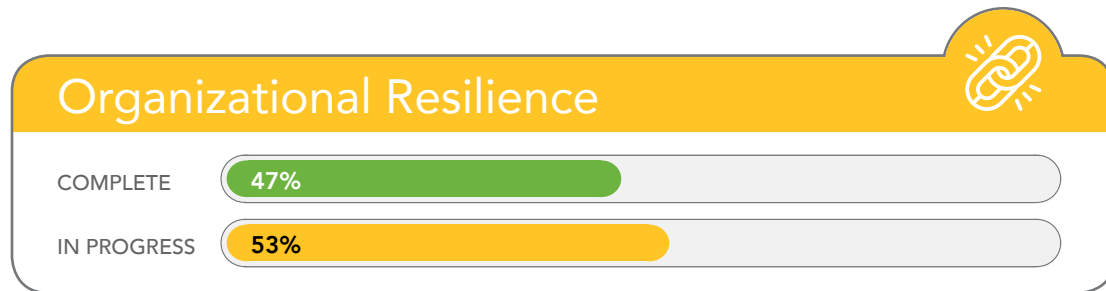
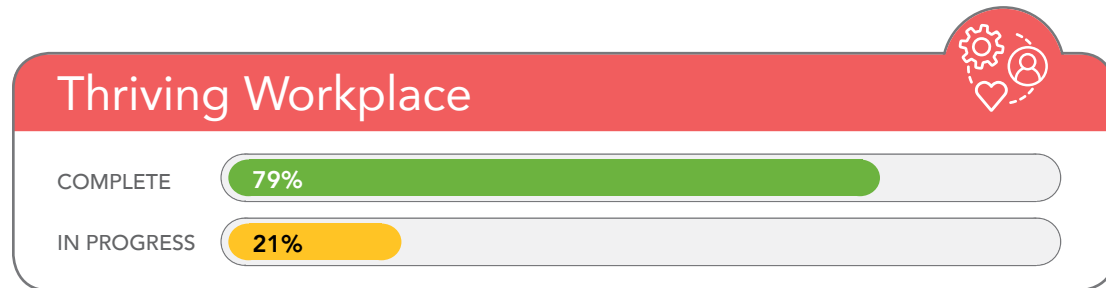
## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – YEAR TWO PROGRESS

Our strategic priorities guide actions that support our organizational mission and vision. Each priority includes specific goals and objectives. To track progress in year two, a comprehensive list of activities was developed. Responsible staff were identified and consulted on progress. This report provides an overview of progress on each strategic priority, along with a narrative summary that highlights a key achievement for each priority and links to relevant goals and objectives.



# Year Two Progress (2025-2026)

## Strategic Plan Priority Progress Tracking



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY TWO



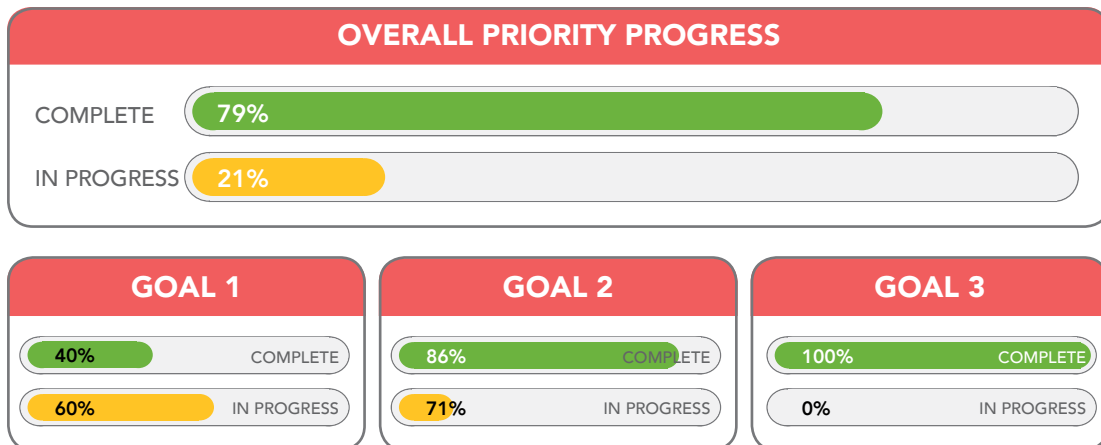
### Thriving Workforce

We will prioritize a thriving workforce through staff well-being, connectedness, and capacity building.

#### GOALS

1. Strengthen communication and collaboration across our diverse organization
2. Invest in and support staff development
3. Enhance our work environment to support staff well-being

#### THRIVING WORKFORCE PRIORITY PROGRESS TRACKING: YEAR TWO OVERVIEW



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY TWO

### THRIVING WORKFORCE NARRATIVE: FOSTERING CONNECTION AND WELL-BEING AT WORK

As part of the Thriving Workforce priority, the TBDHU Wellness Committee has implemented a wide range of initiatives that reinforce the organization's commitment to employee wellness. Foundational work has included developing a new wellness strategy, updating policies and procedures, and launching an employee interest survey to help guide committee efforts.

This year, the committee introduced a variety of wellness supports informed by the survey results, including designated quiet spaces throughout the main office and new resources to support physical activity, balanced eating, and mental health.

In response to staff interest in strengthening internal connections, the committee organized activities such as challenges, workshops, and social events to increase opportunities for employees to interact and connect, during and outside the workday.

Finally, recognizing the importance of timely and effective communication, the committee streamlined processes to improve access to shared resources and provides regular updates, ensuring employees have the wellness information they need, when needed.

This work connects to:

Goal 1: Strengthen communication and collaboration across the workforce  
Objective 1.1 – Explore ways to continuously improve the quality of internal communication processes and practices

Goal 3: Enhance our work environment to support staff well being  
Objective 3.1 – Enhance existing and implement new staff driven initiatives that support well-being

Objectives 3.2 – Enhance existing and implement new organizational initiatives that promote psychological health and safety

## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY TWO



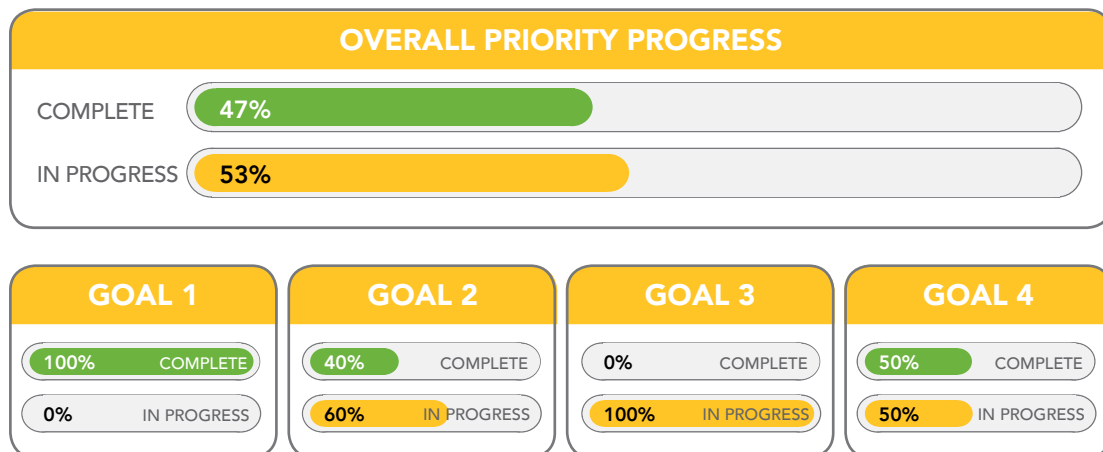
### Organizational Resilience

We will proactively align our organizational processes and resources to remain sustainable and responsive to meet the changing needs of the communities that we serve.

#### GOALS

1. Advocate for and seek out public health investments
2. Enhance organizational practices, tools, and resources to support staff
3. Enhance and integrate risk management approaches and processes at all levels of the organization
4. Strengthen emergency management, building on the past to be responsive in the future

#### ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE PRIORITY PROGRESS TRACKING: YEAR TWO OVERVIEW



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY TWO

### ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE NARRATIVE: MODERNIZING INFORMATION SYSTEMS THROUGH A SECURE MOVE TO THE CLOUD

This year, TBDHU's Information Systems team successfully migrated Microsoft SharePoint and Exchange from on-premise servers to a cloud-based platform. This migration was a collaborative effort, with staff contributing their expertise across the organization. Ensuring a secure and stable migration remained a top priority throughout.

The transition to the cloud brings clear benefits. Teams can now collaborate more effectively within SharePoint and Exchange, improving efficiency and supporting smoother day-to-day operations. The platform also provides a secure and reliable foundation to expand services and explore new capabilities.

For the public, this migration strengthens the organization's ability to deliver a broader range of services and creates new opportunities for engagement. Cloud technology will enhance communication and provide a flexible, scalable foundation for the future.

This work connects to:

Goal 2: Enhance organizational practices, tools and resources to support staff  
Objective 2.2 – Strengthen information technology tools to increase staff access to innovative and modernized information systems



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY THREE



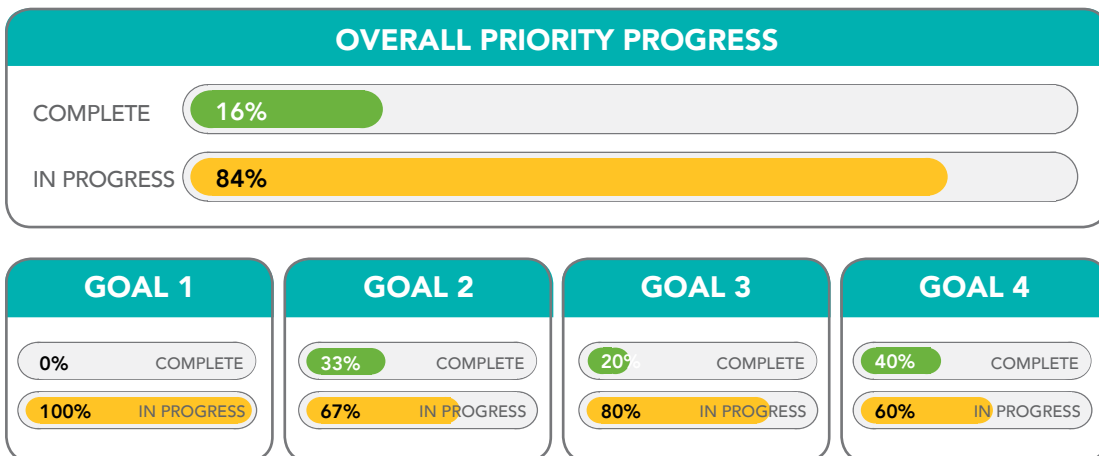
### Communities and People

We will deliver meaningful and impactful programs and services that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

#### GOALS

1. Enhance upstream program and service delivery in line with the updated Ontario Public Health Standards
2. Increase capacity to identify and respond to local public health priorities
3. Strengthen program planning and reporting to support effective practice and accountability
4. Enhance external communication and promotion of public health and our programs and services

#### COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE PRIORITY PROGRESS TRACKING: YEAR TWO OVERVIEW



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY THREE

### COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE NARRATIVE: STRENGTHENING POPULATION HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND SURVEILLANCE

This year, a key focus has been strengthening the identification of and response to local public health priorities in a way that is both evidence-informed and grounded in equity. A major highlight has been the development and rollout of a population health assessment and surveillance tool to support consistent, data-driven decision-making across the organization.

A new *Internal Population Health Indicator Repository* was developed that brings together key population health indicators, including data from Public Health Ontario (PHO) Snapshots and the Canadian Census. The repository enables teams to easily compare local data with Ontario trends, improving understanding of community health status, identifying emerging issues, and highlighting where inequities may exist.

By improving access to clear, reliable data, teams are better equipped to plan programs, set priorities, and allocate resources in ways that reflect community needs. This work has been collaborative across teams and has supported a more shared and consistent approach to population health across TBDHU. The repository is iterative and will continue to be updated as more timely data become available and to align with forthcoming updates to the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS).

This work connects to:

Goal 2: Increase capacity to identify and respond to local public health priorities  
Objective 2.1 – Establish mechanism to operationalize the Ontario Public Health Standards – population health assessment and surveillance foundational standard

## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY FOUR



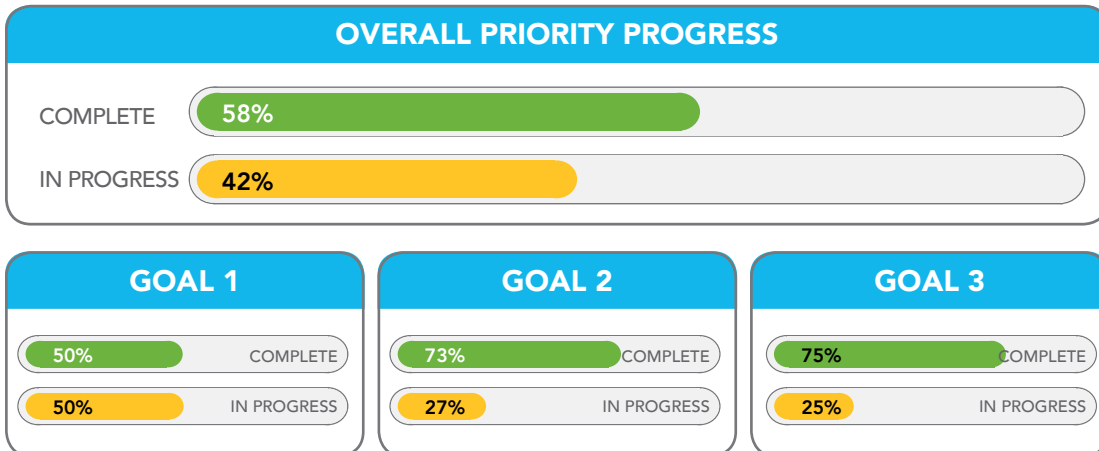
### Truth and Reconciliation

We will continue work to become a culturally safer organization.

#### GOALS

1. Strive for culturally safer spaces and practices across the organization
2. Develop a strategy to acknowledge and support truth and reconciliation
3. Strengthen engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations

#### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION PRIORITY PROGRESS TRACKING: YEAR TWO OVERVIEW



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY FOUR

### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION NARRATIVE: ADVANCING INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP AND ACTION

As part of the *Understanding Our Food Systems* project, TBDHU continues to build and sustain relationships with food sovereignty champions from 14 road-accessible First Nations across the region. These partnerships support Indigenous food sovereignty and self-determination by working with communities to establish medium- and long-term goals, while providing funding, training, and resources.

This work includes strengthening regional networks and partnerships, supporting collaborative research, and fostering relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners. Ongoing learning opportunities and regular gatherings create space for communities and organizations to share knowledge and advance food systems goals collectively.

This project is guided by an Advisory Circle of Elders and Community Food Champions to ensure initiatives and events are meaningful and community-informed. In October 2025, TBDHU partnered with Gaagige Zaagibigaa, an Indigenous-led organization committed to fostering self-determined food systems and initiatives for First Nations in Northern Ontario, to host a fall gathering focused on Indigenous food sovereignty. Participants of the gathering engaged in knowledge sharing and the opportunity to cook and eat together. In February 2026, TBDHU hosted *Cultivating Collaboration* in partnership with Northwestern Health Unit, bringing together over 30 Indigenous-serving organizations to identify existing programs, gaps, and opportunities for growth.

Key insights from this work highlight that traditional foods, meals, and cooking practices are foundational to the emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental well-being of many First Nation communities.

This work connects to:

Goal 3: Strengthen engagements with Indigenous communities and organizations

Objective 3.1 – Develop Indigenous engagement strategy informed by local Indigenous communities

## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY FIVE



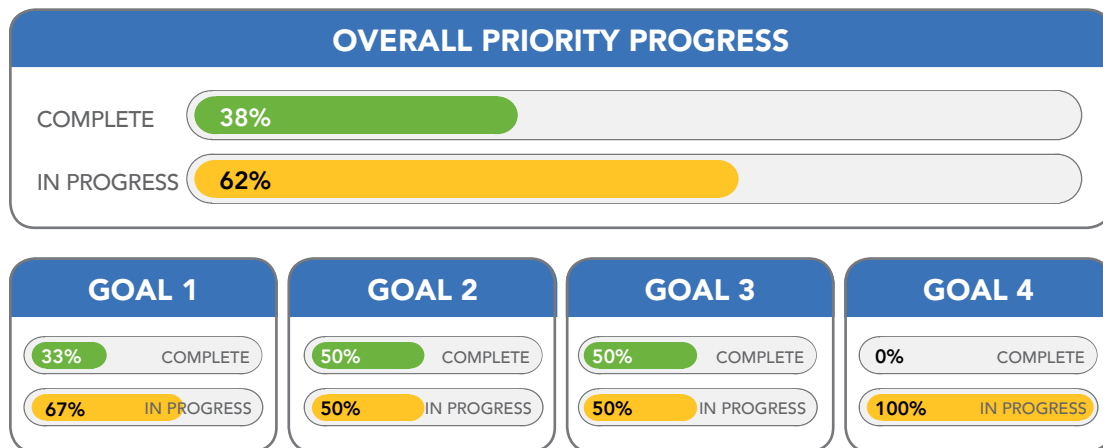
### Health Equity

We will increase organizational capacity for health equity action.

#### GOALS

1. Strengthen population health assessment and communication on the determinants of health and health inequities
2. Increase staff competency for more inclusive practice
3. Strengthen organizational structures to support equity-focused approaches
4. Inform public health planning and approaches by those disproportionately impacted by health inequities

#### HEALTH EQUITY PRIORITY PROGRESS TRACKING: YEAR TWO OVERVIEW



## STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY FIVE

### HEALTH EQUITY NARRATIVE: ENHANCING HEALTH EQUITY THROUGH CLEAR AND INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

As part of TBDHU's commitment to fostering inclusive and equitable environments, resources were developed in response to staff requests to support the use of plain, inclusive, and accessible language in communication materials and daily practice.

This initiative, titled Equity through Language, focused on increasing awareness of how language can impact health equity, reduce stigma, and improve communication. The materials provide practical tools to align with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and public health standards, while also highlighting opportunities to strengthen clear, respectful, and culturally responsive interactions. The overarching goal was to enhance service delivery and create a more welcoming, equitable environment for staff, clients, and the community.

An interactive workshop was developed and offered to all staff through drop-in sessions. Following this, the materials were adapted into an on-demand module for new and existing staff to access at any time.

This work connects to:

Goal 2: Increase staff competency for more inclusive practice

Objective 2.2 – Increase knowledge and skills among staff to apply inclusive communication practices when developing communication materials for the organization

## Summary and Next Steps

Overall, a wide range of initiatives and activities were implemented across the organization during year two in support of TBDHU's Strategic Plan Priorities. Many of these initiatives are ongoing and may extend across multiple years.

As the organization transitions into year three of the plan, ongoing activities will continue to be monitored, and new initiatives will be introduced based on engagement across teams and divisions, as well as ongoing reflection on the organization's progress toward the priorities and goals outlined in TBDHU's Strategic Plan 2024-2027.





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