



A-Kii, Bemaadziik, E-Niigaanwang
The Land, the People, the Future

Annual Report 2023-2024



Vision

Nipissing First Nation will be a well-balanced, healthy, politically and economically independent, culturally strong and self-governing nation.

Mission

Our mission is to continue to protect our Nation's inherent rights and to empower the membership of Nipissing First Nation to work together in a positive, progressive manner to improve well-being and quality of life, to be socially and economically independent, culturally strong, and self-governing.

Values

We will be guided by our seven grandfather/grandmother teachings.

Respect- Minaadendamowin:

"To honour all creation is to have respect."

Wisdom- Nibwaakaawin:

"To cherish knowledge is to know wisdom."

Love- Zaagi'idiwin

"To know love is to know peace."

Humility- Dabaadendiziwin

"Humility is to know yourself as a sacred part of creation."

Bravery- Aakode'ewin

"Bravery is to face the foe with integrity."

Honesty- Gwayakwaadiziwin

"Honesty in facing a situation is to be brave."

Truth- Debwewin

"Truth is to know all of these things."



Table of Contents

Message from Gimaa Scott McLeod 2

Council & Committees 3

Chief Executive Officer’s Report 4

Pre-Amble to Gichi-Naaknigewin (Constitution) 5

Medicine Wheel of Goals 7

Goal #1 - Communication/Transparency 8
Communications, Administration, Information Technology, Human Resources,
and Finance (including Financial Statements)

Goal #2 - Governance/Capacity (Leadership and Government) 20
Programs and Services, Milestones, Trust Update, and Economic Development

Goal #3 - Education/Lifelong Learning 28
Education, Nbisiing Secondary School, Employment and Training, and Kendaaswin (Library)

Goal #4 - Infrastructure/Community Resources 41
Community Infrastructure, Housing, and Fire and Emergency Services

Goal #5 - Stewardship and Protection (Land, Water, Natural Resources) 47
Lands, Membership, and Natural Resources

Goal #6 - Culture and Language 55
Culture, Nishnaabemwin, and Heritage

Goal #7 - Health and Well-Being 57
Health Services and Social Services



Message from Gimaa Scott McLeod

Aanin Nbisiing Debendaagziwaad,

On behalf of the 2021-2024 Chief and Council, chi-miigwech to Nipissing First Nation (NFN) staff for their continued dedication to Nipissing Nation to advance initiatives and deliver programs and services this past year. During the past term, we prided ourselves on being a strong, progressive, and transparent Nation, and used the many tools we had at our disposal to communicate the great work happening at NFN to all debendaagziwaad. These tools included the NFN Membership Portal, website (nfn.ca), social media, Enkamgak (community newsletter), and in-person gatherings, such as our Annual Community Meeting held every November. As your elected officials for the 2021-2024 term, Chief and Council were accountable to our Nation citizens, and encouraged and appreciated community member voices in helping inform our decisions. Community engagement is vital to advance governance initiatives, such as the development of our Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin (Citizenship Law), which will broadly define those who belong to NFN and ensure that the Indian Act no longer dictates who our people are.

I represented NFN as Chairperson on the B'Maakonigan board (governing body of the signatory First Nations of the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement); as a member of the National Fisheries Committee for the Assembly of First Nations; as a board member of the Anishinabek Police Services Police Governing Authority; and as a member of the Political Working Group for the Robinson Huron Waawiindamaagewin. I am honoured to have served NFN at these tables, including sitting alongside fellow Robinson Huron Treaty Chiefs as we reached a proposed settlement with the federal and provincial governments regarding the Robinson Huron Treaty Past Annuities Case. I am proud to be part of the Nishnaabe Nation, proud of what our Ancestors did for us when they negotiated the Treaty, and sincerely hope they are proud of us all now.

As a Nation, we have made great strides in economic development, including growing our Nbisiing Power business partnership, making significant progress on the Bineshii Business Park Expansion Project, and continuing our efforts towards food sovereignty with the Mnogin Greenhouse. I am grateful to have witnessed the growth and success of NFN during my tenure.

I am deeply honoured to have served as Gimaa of Nipissing First Nation for the past nine years and have been humbled by the support of our citizens and staff. I extend heartfelt well-wishes to the new NFN Chief and Council, and am confident that they will continue to build our strong, resilient, and innovative Nation.

Chi-miigwech, kina wiya.

Chief Scott McLeod

Chief & Council 2021 - 2024

L-R: Councillors Brian Couchie, June Commanda, Tyler Commanda, Jane Commanda, Chief Scott McLeod, Councillors Joan McLeod-Shabogesic and Rick Stevens and Deputy Chief Michael Sawyer

NFN Committees 2021 - 2024

Our committees bring the voices of the membership to current issues and priorities and provide valuable context for our decision-making processes. Committee recommendations also assist Chief and Council in meeting the goals of Nipissing First Nation's Governance Strategic Plan.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE	CONFIRMED ASSIGNMENT
Culture & Language	Jane Commanda
Education	Deputy Chief Michael Sawyer
Economic Development	Joan McLeod Shabogesic
Housing & Planning	Tyler Commanda
Lands & Bylaw	Tyler Commanda
Natural Resources	Brian Couchie
Social & Wellness	Rick Stevens
Finance & Audit	Chief Scott McLeod*
<i>*Mandatory appointment</i>	Deputy Chief Michael Sawyer*
	Rick Stevens
AD HOC COMMITTEE	CONFIRMED ASSIGNMENT
Citizenship	Chief Scott McLeod
	Brian Couchie
Anishinaabemwin Translation	June Commanda
Powwow	Joan McLeod Shabogesic
INTERNAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	CONFIRMED ASSIGNMENT
Policy Review	June Commanda
	Joan McLeod Shabogesic
	Rick Stevens
Membership	June Commanda
	Deputy Chief Michael Sawyer
	Rick Stevens
Research	Jane Commanda
	Brian Couchie



Chief Executive Officer's Report

Aanin Nbsiing Debendaagziwaad,

I am pleased to share some highlights from the 2023-2024 fiscal year with debendaagziwaad, as Chief Executive Officer of Nipissing First Nation. I feel privileged to serve our Nation alongside the dedicated and passionate NFN team.

We continue on our Nation-building path and maintain momentum in the key areas of Governance, Education, Community Infrastructure, Natural Resources, Culture and Language, and Health and Wellness, all while ensuring communication and transparency. These priorities are tied to our Medicine Wheel of Goals, and every department reviews and updates their work plans annually to reflect their progress and identify new needs and goals.

In the spirit of transparency and accountability, we continue to expand our use of collaborative communication tools to connect with members and increase access to information. On the NFN Membership Portal, students and parents can now easily register and update their information with the Education Department. On both the Portal and website, NFN has increased the publication of updates and events to keep members in the know. We continue to evaluate these tools and explore how to add value for members, as well as maintain traditional communication methods such as mail-outs and signage across NFN communities.

Our community continues to grow, and we are proud to see economic development reflect this growth and contribute to a prosperous future for NFN. For example, the Mnogin Greenhouse is in full commercial operation, with products selling out weekly. Nbsiing Power has secured several contracts with large utility companies, and Nipissing Miller has completed substantial construction on the Bineshii Business Park Expansion Project and Highway 17 rehabilitation work.

The Robinson Huron Treaty Annuities Case attained a major milestone by reaching a \$10 billion settlement with the governments of Canada and Ontario for past compensation. Our team at NFN were instrumental in the planning and rollout of this settlement. Chi-miigwech to debendaagziwaad who engaged in the consultation process to provide input on the allocation of a per capita distribution and collective fund. Our work as a Nation continues as we establish the Collective Fund and enter the case's next phase to increase the treaty annuity payments.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the highlights of the past year in this report, including employment growth in NFN, the enhancement of NFN business licensing, the progress of the Duchesnay and Garden Village Elders Lodges, and much more. We will continue to build on our past successes and stay on our progressive path to improve quality of life for Nbsiing debendaagziwaad today and in the future.

Brendan Huston, Chief Executive Officer

E-ntambiigaadeg (Preamble)

Niinwin, omaa enjibaajig Nbisiing Nitam Anishinaabeg, ezhi-kenjgaazjig Nbisiing, iw zhichigan minwa maajiishkaag iw Gichi-Naaknigewin niinwin ndi-gchi-gimaa- kidaagewinan bekish nji-e-piitendmaang geye ezhi-ginawendizyaang nji-anishinaabe- eyaawyaang minik edko-yaayaang omaa kiing.

We, the people of the Nipissing First Nation, known as the Nipissings, ordain and establish this Gichi-Naaknigewin as our supreme law in accordance with the values and principles upon which our heritage has existed.

Iw dash nji-Gichi-Naaknigewin, ndoo-dibaajmomin minwa ndoo-nsidodwinaanaan aw sa gizheminiidoo kina gegoo miigwewin nji-sa mtkakmi-kwe, ezhi-dibendizyaang ji- ogimaakeyaang minwa nji-sa ezhi-anishinaabe naadzuyaang.

By this Gichi-Naaknigewin, we declare and acknowledge the Creator for the gifts of Mother Earth, sovereign rights to govern ourselves and for our cultural heritage.

Chi gyat ga-bi-zhiwebak omaa Nbisiing gwekwendaagziwag omaa anishinaabeg gaa-zhi-minowaadizwaad, gaa-zhi-ntaa-nokiwaad minwa gaa-zhi-gizhkweziwaad penmondmowaad kina gegoo giwtaaying edigo akiing. Chi gyat ga-bi-zhi-webak omaa Nbisiing gwek zhibiigaademgad, e-zhi-mshkawziimgak dibendiziwinwaa geye ezhi-debwendmowaad nji-sa iw Debendaagziwaad. Iw Gichi-Naaknigewin bekish zhi-aasgaabwitaagemgad ezhi- mshkawziimgak minwa ezhi-debwemgak.

The history of the Nipissings confirms the people as a peaceful, productive and thriving people who have relied on the abundance of natural resources. The history of

the Nipissings is well documented, expressing the strong inherent values and principles cherished by its Debendaagziwaad. This Gichi-Naaknigewin reflects those strong inherent values and principles.

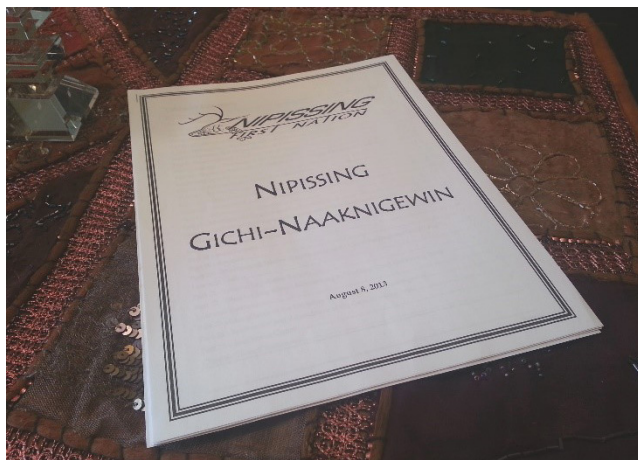
Jibwaa bezhaakibiigaadeg iw gichi-mzinigan Robinson Huron Treaty 1850, Nbisiing ezhnikaazjig anishinaabeg aazhgo gii-yaawag minwa gii-mino-yaawag kiing giwtaaying Nbisiing Zaagigning gii-ganwendizwaad geye wii-bimaadiziwaad pii-moonigewaad geye nooj-gegoo wii-zgakinmowaad.

Prior to the signing of the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, the Nipissings had occupied and enjoyed the lands surrounding the Lake Nipissing watershed for their sustenance and survival through harvesting and other means.

Pii-gii-beshaakibiigaadeg iw Robinson Huron Treaty iw-pii 1850, Ogimaa Shabogesic gii-kido wi-sa-nji aki ji-shkongaadeg giwedonong nakeyiing Nbisiing Zaagigning wiinwaa sa nji doo-anishinaabemwan ji-nakaazwaad geye ji-gnowendimigowaad. Niinwin dash Nb Ntam Anishinaabeg ndebwe'endaamin niinwin dibenmaang iw pane gii-biyaa'aang ezhi- debwewendaagwak pii-giibi-yaamgak iw-sa Robinson Huron Treaty 1850 gaawin gii- ngoshkaamgozinoon debendang. Ndoo-mshkawendmaanaanig giw aazhigo gaa-maajaajig gii-daapnamwaad geye gii-zigaakinaanaawaa wi aki minwa waa-bi-yaajig geyaaba anishinaabeg.

At the signing of the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, Chief Shabogesic agreed to set aside lands on the north shore of Lake Nipissing for his people's

Nation people affirm that we have absolute ownership of our traditional territory based on the belief that participation in the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850 did not extinguish ownership. We assert that our ancestors simply selected and reserved designated lands and resources for their people.



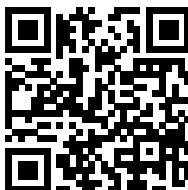
Iw Gichi-Naaknigewin gyak wiindimaagemgad, ezhindowendaagwak geye ji- gnawendizwaad Ntam Anishinaabeg Debendaagziwaad, wiinwaa ezhi-gimaakidaadizowaad geye gimaakewgamgong nji-sa debenjigaadeg ezhibiigaadeg omaa Gichi-Naaknigewin mziniganing ezhi-giizhendimong pii-omaa mina ezhi- zhaapshkamowaad Debendaagziwaad;

This Gichi-Naaknigewin confirms the rights, responsibilities and freedoms of Nipissing First Nation's

Debendaagziwaad, its government and its governing institutions in relation to the jurisdictions set out in this Gichi-Naaknigewin as confirmed by ratification by its Debendaagziwaad.

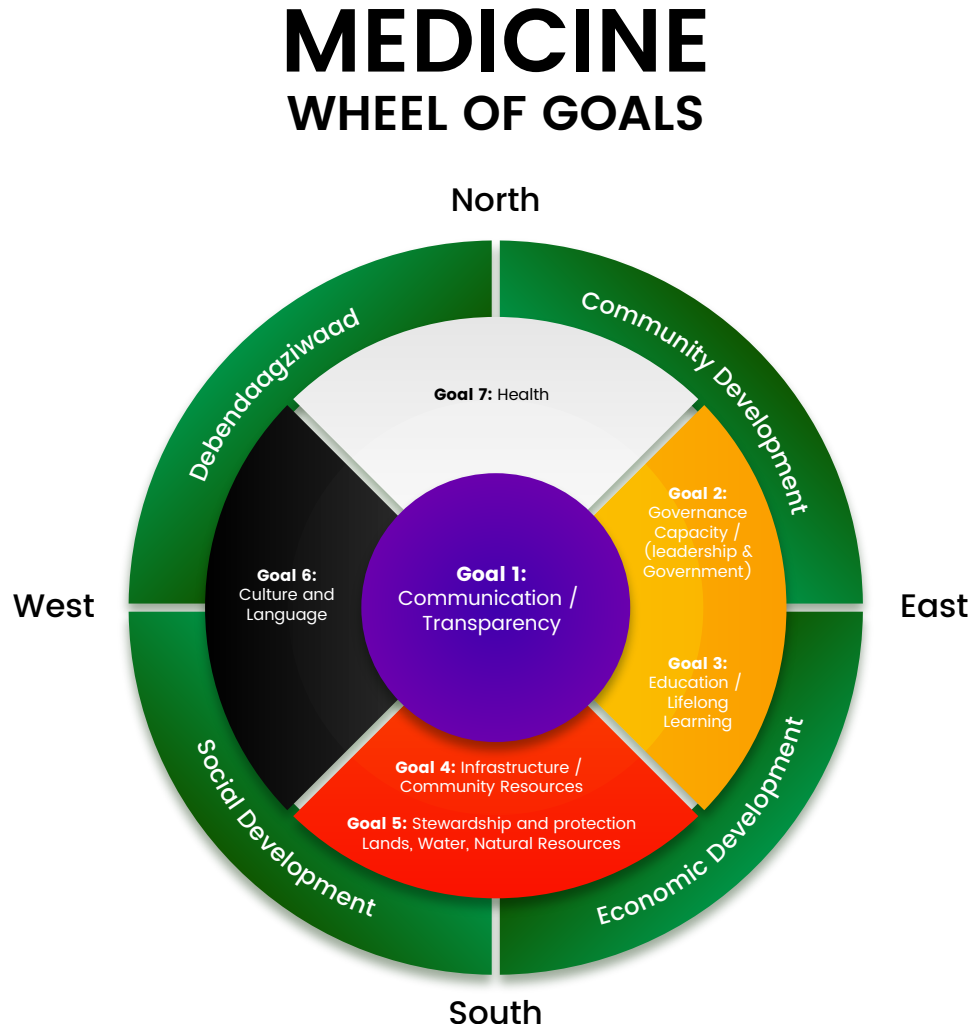
Read the complete Nipissing First Nation Gichi-Naaknigewin (Constitution or Big Law) on our website:

www.nfn.ca/constitution/



Medicine Wheel of Goals

The NFN Strategic Plan is reflected in the Medicine Wheel of Goals below. Each department develops an annual work plan that identifies the strategies, actions, and tactics they will use to accomplish the goals represented within one (or more) of the four main quadrants. The outer rings illustrate the four key pillars that drive the work of the Nation: Debendaagziwaad (our Nation members), Community Development, Economic Development, and Social Development. These goals are centered on the principle that the organization works for the community, and always in its best interests.



GOAL #1 Communication/Transparency – (Centre)

Communication and transparency are central to how every department in Nipissing First Nation operates. The Communications Department is responsible for providing clear and effective communication in the community, and between NFN leadership and members.

The department works for the community and is accountable to debendaagziwaad, making every effort to communicate important information in a timely manner.

The Communications Department manages all internal and external communications, and oversees:

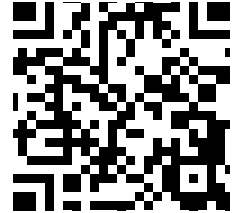
- Enkamgak (community newsletter)
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X – formerly Twitter), NFN website, and Membership Portal management
- Community notices/mail-outs
- Media relations
- Graphic development

Connect with Us!

[f @NipissingFN](#) [X @Nipissing_FN](#) [@NipissingFN](#)

[YouTube: @NipissingFirstNation](#)

[Web: www.nfn.ca](#)



Check out our monthly newsletter, **Enkamgak!**

Sign up to receive the newsletter by mail or email on the NFN Membership Portal or see it on our website and social media pages.

Administration



Administration supports the day-to-day business functions of Nipissing First Nation and works to deliver the mandate established by Chief and Council. Administrative staff provide guidance and support to the organization; prepare and distribute agendas, minutes, notices, and announcements; coordinate events; and address inquiries from community members, external partners, funders, and agencies,

as well as the public and media. The Chief Executive Officer and Director of Administration oversee the following administrative functions: Communications, Emergency Services, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Reception Services, Specials Events Coordination, and Special Projects Management. They also provide guidance to other departments across the organization.

Information Technology

The NFN IT department focuses on three strategic goals: enhancing the NFN Membership Portal, advancing IT governance, and promoting cyber security awareness. It is also committed to continually improving the way the department operates, which directly translates to improving efficiencies, building capacity, and maintaining a high standard of security management.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Made numerous enhancements to the NFN Membership Portal.
- Planned and tested a new phone system and created a transition plan ready for implementation next fiscal year.
- Implemented new cyber security training for staff.
- Laid the groundwork for a new program to enhance data-driven decision-making within the organization.
- Focused on capacity building within the department to improve support capabilities across the organization.
- Enhanced both digital and physical security systems.
- Performed over 40 livestreams to improve membership communication, covering functions such as Chief & Council meetings, community consultations, and special events.
- Addressed 1,155 IT Support Tickets received from NFN staff.

NFN MEMBERSHIP PORTAL ENHANCEMENTS

Over the past fiscal year, the community portal has undergone 15 software updates, demonstrating the department's commitment to enhancing user engagement and accessibility for all members of the community. While detailed information on these changes is available in the Release Notes section of the portal's dashboard, here's a summary of the key enhancements made to ensure a more connected and interactive experience for everyone:

- **Dashboard Refresh:** Navigation is smoother with a new Bulletin Board, Quick Links, and a streamlined process to display notices.
- **Administrative Upgrades:** The IT team can now manage videos better, and has improved control of role permissions to keep things running smoothly behind the scenes.
- **Enhanced User Experience:** Members will notice improved email notifications, a clearer password reset option, and new, user-friendly form fields.
- **Event and Notification Boosts:** Event management was made more efficient, and the way members subscribe to mail-outs was simplified.
- **New Features:** The team added a robust new Student Registration Module to make education and bussing registration easier and more efficient.

- **Better Reporting:** New export and reporting features were added for the Human Resources and Membership departments, to ensure everything is up to date and accurate.

The IT Department is committed to continually improving members' experience to the portal and currently has a long list of future enhancements to implement. Members with feedback or suggestions for improving the NFN Membership Portal are encouraged to contact the IT Department.

LOOKING AHEAD: GOALS FOR NEXT FISCAL YEAR

- **Phone System Upgrade:** The department is looking forward to the implementation of a long-awaited phone system upgrade. This system will enhance accessibility, and introduce new features/ functionality.
- **Expand Security Measures:** As cybersecurity threats continue to affect both businesses and individuals alike, IT is constantly looking for ways to improve network, data, and system security.
- **Data-Driven NFN Decision-Making:** The IT Department hopes to expand it's support capabilities beyond computer troubleshooting by helping departments improve their decision-making regarding strategic goals, and better leveraging data to influence those decisions.

- **Enhance NFN Membership Portal:** While the IT team has already made great progress with the portal, there is always room for improvement. Keep an eye out for new features and enhancements in the new year.

IT department is proud of the strides it made towards NFN strategic goals. The team's focus on enhancing the NFN Membership Portal, advancing IT governance, and promoting cybersecurity awareness has significantly improved the way the NFN community and staff are served. The department's commitment to operational efficiency, capacity building, and maintaining high security standards has ensured that the organization remains robust and resilient.

The NFN IT Department looks forward to another year of growth, collaboration, and success, as it is committed to ensuring that NFN remains technologically agile and effective in meeting its evolving needs. Thank you to NFN members for their continued support and feedback as the department strives to provide the best possible service.

Human Resources

RECRUITMENT

As of March 31, 2024, NFN has grown to an impressive 273 employees, consisting of both full-time and part-time staff. This expansion includes the addition of 58 new team members over the past year. The Human Resources (HR) Department especially proud that 77.65% of our talented staff are First Nation members; this highlights the department’s commitment to supporting the community and creating exciting opportunities for employment and growth.

This year, 81 job openings were posted; this generated a fantastic response of over 400 applications, leading to more than 219 interviews. Recruitment was further enriched by welcoming 26 enthusiastic summer students who brought fresh perspectives and energy to the NFN team. With 17 departures and 5 well-deserved retirements, the organization’s workforce remains strong and vibrant.

To boost recruitment efforts, the department hosted internal job fairs and actively participated in local job fairs, connecting with passionate individuals and highlighting the fantastic opportunities at NFN.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The second year using the attendance tracking management platform was a significant milestone. While the department faced some challenges, it gained valuable insights that will lead to even greater efficiency.

Employee engagement reached new heights with events like Staff Appreciation Day, which became the organization’s most attended event in years! The amazing “Deadly Aunties” entertained the crowd, leaving everyone with lasting memories. The HR SharePoint page was also revamped to ensure employees have quick and easy access to the latest information and resources they need. Moreover, based

on invaluable employee feedback, updates were made to the organization’s salary grid.

HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND BENEFITS

This year, HR conducted a comprehensive review of the Employee Assistance Program, which led to better services and a significant increase in usage. The employee benefits package additionally underwent a major enhancement, with coverage for essential services like chiropractic, physiotherapy, and massage therapy.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

This year, training and development were top priorities. Essential First Aid and CPR training was provided, as well as Duty to Report training, in partnership with the Social Services Department. Furthermore, HR offered a range of job-specific training opportunities across various departments.

In the pursuit of excellence, Human Resources is actively collaborating with other departments to research external options for certified job-specific training to ensure NFN employees continue to grow and excel in their roles.

EXCITING HR INITIATIVES AHEAD



Financial Transparency

Nipissing First Nation works diligently to advance the Nation to become more economically prosperous and independent. Good governance and NFN's Financial Management Systems (FMS) certification are essential to the Nation-building path Nipissing is on.

Achieving FMS Certification (in 2016) provided Nipissing with the framework and tools needed to drive improvements and achieve goals to benefit our Nation and debendaagziwaad.

The benefits of having an effective Financial Management System include:

- increased transparency and accountability to community members;
- expanded economic development and community infrastructure initiatives through increased capacity and access to capital; and
- greater confidence recognized by financial institutions, business partners and other stakeholders (including government funding sources).



The FMS Certification is essential in laying the roadmap that drives a First Nation community forward on the progressive path to self-governance. NFN strengthened its governance and financial procedures and policies, which helped build its fiscal capacity.

Ultimately, the FMS Certification and our GichiNaaknigewin put Nipissing in the driver's seat when it comes to asserting jurisdiction, hence, supporting the overall goal to become more economically prosperous and independent.

The complete financial audit for the last fiscal year (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024) is available on the NFN website at nfn.ca/finance/audits/ along with previous audits. Members can also call 705-753-2050 to request a copy by email, mail, or fax. Nipissing First Nation's Consolidated Financial Statements are provided in the following pages.

DID YOU KNOW?

- NFN was the second community in Ontario to enact a Financial Administration Law (FAL) and achieve Financial Performance certification
- NFN was the first community in Ontario to participate in the FNFA debenture (to re-finance RBC loans such as the Nipissing Ojibway Daycare/Education Centre and cut the loan payments in half)
- NFN was the first community in Ontario and the fourth community in all of Canada to become FMS certified

The Financial Administration Law (FAL) is a commitment that NFN lives by and contains four key sections that translate into the organization’s financial policies and procedures. The Financial Management System is the internal control designed to ensure ongoing compliance with NFN’s Financial Administration Law. NFN is proud of its reputation for having strong financial administration, governance, and management.

Milestone	Date of Achievement
Financial Administration Law (FAL) Enacted by NFN	September 3, 2013
Received the Financial Performance Certificate	October 1, 2013
NFN accepted as borrowing member of First Nations Finance Authority	November 4, 2013
Participated in First Nations Finance Authority (FNFA) debenture	June 19, 2014
Received Financial Management Systems (FMS) Certification.....	December 21, 2016

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

Exhibit A - Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Financial assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 63,260,810	\$ 57,323,284
Restricted cash and investments (note 4)	15,424,276	12,540,140
Accounts and grants receivable (note 5)	7,345,593	7,808,916
Housing mortgages (note 6)	7,398,062	6,474,489
Other long-term receivables (note 6)	159,679	1,323,435
Restricted assets - Nipissing 2013 Boundary Claim Trust (note 7)	99,057,855	87,613,864
Funds held in trust by the Government of Canada (note 8)	290,779	290,779
	192,937,054	173,374,907
Financial liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 9)	6,530,475	7,692,678
Deferred program revenue (note 10)	42,122,021	39,695,344
Due to minors	5,134,683	5,618,001
Long-term debt (note 11)	5,632,392	5,974,253
	59,419,571	58,980,276
Net financial assets	133,517,483	114,394,631
Non-financial assets		
Tangible capital assets (note 12)	76,746,744	60,247,867
Prepaid expenses	191,568	109,454
	76,938,312	60,357,321
Commitments and contingent liabilities (note 13)		
Accumulated surplus (note 14)	\$ 210,455,795	\$ 174,751,952
Accumulated surplus is comprised of:		
Accumulated operating surplus	\$ 195,378,341	\$ 172,165,956
Accumulated remeasurement gains	15,077,454	2,585,996
	\$ 210,455,795	\$ 174,751,952

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Approved:



Chief



Chief Executive Officer

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

Exhibit B - Consolidated Statement of Operations and Accumulated Operating Surplus

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024 Budget (note 18)	2024 Actual	2023 Actual
Revenue:			
Indigenous Services Canada (note 15)	\$ 29,620,875	\$ 20,345,160	\$ 19,680,103
Other	37,876,139	17,339,223	12,406,694
Ministry of Community and Social Services	1,170,933	2,046,707	1,804,697
Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership	1,031,510	1,803,005	1,253,067
Ministry of Education	396,684	693,375	779,213
Other provincial	2,617,232	4,574,733	2,569,753
Kinoomaadziwin Education Body	5,151,024	10,330,069	7,898,229
Union of Ontario Indians (note 16)	-	(77,661)	1,184,225
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	-	5,448,484	514,231
	77,864,398	62,503,095	48,090,212
Expenses:			
Education	5,860,597	9,299,273	8,191,594
Other	17,320,738	5,870,321	5,534,999
Community Operations	18,598,371	8,833,231	6,778,101
Health Services	5,590,356	4,915,950	3,959,834
Social Services	11,380,571	6,545,674	4,213,285
Capital	17,295,550	4,226,496	4,524,620
First Nation Enterprises	1,406,245	1,047,093	806,194
Housing	681,612	580,049	465,781
	78,134,040	41,318,087	34,474,408
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses before the undernoted	(269,642)	21,185,008	13,615,804
Vacation expense (recovery)	-	(177,287)	(93,997)
	(269,642)	21,007,721	13,521,807
The Nipissing 2013 Boundary Claim Trust:			
Investment income	3,995,339	4,196,330	6,317,727
Nipissing First Nation expenditures	-	(1,300,970)	(2,869,549)
Other expenses	-	(690,696)	(892,672)
	3,995,339	2,204,664	2,555,506
Excess of revenue of expenses before unrealized gain (loss) on investments	3,725,697	23,212,385	16,077,313
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	-	12,491,458	(13,592,252)
Excess of revenue over expenses	3,725,697	35,703,843	2,485,061
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	174,751,952	174,751,952	172,266,891
Accumulated surplus, end of year	\$ 178,477,649	\$ 210,455,795	\$ 174,751,952

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

Exhibit C - Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Financial Assets

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 35,703,843	\$ 2,485,061
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(20,495,465)	(14,290,008)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	3,928,296	3,188,460
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	40,654	-
Proceeds on disposal of tangible capital assets	27,638	-
	19,204,966	(8,616,487)
Change in prepaid expenses	(82,114)	95,202
Change in net financial assets	19,122,852	(8,521,285)
Net financial assets, beginning of year	114,394,631	122,915,916
Net financial assets, end of year	\$ 133,517,483	\$ 114,394,631

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

Exhibit D - Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Operating activities:		
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 35,703,843	\$ 2,485,061
Adjustments for non-cash items:		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	3,928,296	3,188,460
Proceeds on disposal of tangible capital assets	27,638	-
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	40,654	-
	39,700,431	5,673,521
Changes in non-cash working capital:		
Decrease in accounts and grants receivable	463,323	1,888,154
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(1,162,203)	979,367
Decrease in prepaid leases	-	(38,259)
Increase in deferred program revenue	2,426,677	8,407,967
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	(82,114)	95,202
	41,346,114	17,005,952
Capital activities:		
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(20,495,465)	(14,290,008)
	(20,495,465)	(14,290,008)
Financing activities:		
Principal payments on long-term debt	(341,861)	(356,368)
Decrease in due to minors	(483,318)	(224,308)
	(825,179)	(580,676)
Investing activities:		
Decrease (increase) in restricted assets	(11,443,991)	16,041,559
Increase in housing mortgages	(923,573)	(11,746)
Decrease in other long-term receivables	1,163,756	51,228
Decrease (increase) in restricted cash and investments	(2,884,136)	1,171,790
	(14,087,944)	17,252,831
Increase in cash	5,937,526	19,388,099
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	57,323,284	37,935,185
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	\$ 63,260,810	\$ 57,323,284

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

Exhibit E - Consolidated Statement Remeasurement of Gains

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024		2023	
Accumulated remeasurement gains, beginning of year	\$	2,585,996	\$	16,178,248
Unrealized gains (losses) on investments		12,491,458		(13,592,252)
Accumulated remeasurement gains, end of year	\$	15,077,454	\$	2,585,996

GOAL #2 – Governance / Capacity (East)



We seek to build on our successes every year by reflecting on the progress we've made, and by identifying the challenges and opportunities that are still ahead of us. Good planning lays a roadmap that helps us continue on a progressive path toward self-government.



Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement (ANGA) – B'Maakonigan

B'Maakonigan is the Anishinabek Nation Government (the new governing body) that assists the current and future ANGA signatory First Nations with the implementation of the ANGA.

The NFN Governance Manager has been working with B'Maakonigan and ANGA signatory First Nations to support the development of resources and tools that the signatory First Nations can utilize to develop their own laws surrounding the four pillars of citizenship, leadership selection, operations and management of the First Nation, and culture and language.

Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin (Citizenship Law)

The development of the Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin (Citizenship Law) is being undertaken by the Debendaagziwaad (Citizenship) Committee with support from the Governance Department. The committee is an ad hoc committee comprised of the NFN Chief, one councillor, and seven NFN members. The committee, with its current members, will remain until the law is ratified by membership.

The Debendaagziwaad Committee has undertaken the necessary work to develop the Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin for NFN. In addition, the committee hosted several community consultations about the progress of work to date, potential elements to be reviewed, and future work. The elements to be reviewed and developed include the purpose of the law, eligibility criteria for citizenship, Endaawaad criteria, roles and responsibilities, benefits, adoption rules, ceremonial practices, appeal processes, a citizenship review committee, and the overall application process.

Furthermore, the Governance Department will review the potential implications of the Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin on the programs and services that NFN

provides, the internal processes and mechanisms needed, and any other elements that may be impacted by the implementation of the law.

The committee intends to hold further discussions and community engagement sessions on the elements of the law – and eventually the draft law – before it is presented to the community for a ratification vote to ensure the committee captures as much information as possible.

A date for the ratification vote will be identified and announced as work on the Debendaagziwaad Naaknigewin progresses.

NFN Policies

The Governance Department reviews NFN's current policies and works with other departments to develop new policies. These activities, including policy review and recommendation, are being completed alongside the Policy Committee. This work is related to the operations and management pillar of the ANGA.

To review any current policies, please visit the NFN website.

Robinson Huron Treaty – Past Compensation Settlement

In June 2023, the governments of Canada and Ontario announced the proposed settlement of \$10 billion for past compensation. Since the announcement, the Governance Department supported the communication of key information; the review of community engagement information; the research of necessary information; supported the RHT vote; and supported the review, selection, and retention of Borden Ladner Gervais (BLG) LLP to provide legal and administrative support.

Going forward, the department will support future community engagement sessions surrounding the RHT Collective Fund and the development of the necessary structures to hold and manage the funds.

Business Operations

Department Overview

Established in 2021, the Business Operations Department supports Nipissing First Nation's joint ventures and partnerships. It interfaces with leaders across NFN and corporate partners, ensuring follow-up on action items and tracking dependencies and accountabilities.

The key objective is to maximize benefits from joint ventures and partnerships by monitoring assets and operations, and ensuring that deliverables related to employment, procurement, and returns to NFN are met for various projects.

Key Functions

- Develop productive relationships within NFN and with corporate partners.
- Maintain communication cadence and adhere to project timelines to protect NFN's interests.
- Set goals, identify action items, solve problems collaboratively, and make decisions to create value and benefits for NFN.
- Improve efficiencies and identify future initiatives aligned with NFN strategic goals.
- Manage project communications and funding reports and pursue funding opportunities.
- Collaborate with the NFN Strategic Advisor, and Economic Development and Lands departments, to attract and coordinate new economic and employment opportunities.

Key Goals

1. Pursue revenue-generating opportunities
2. Pursue capacity building opportunities
3. Pursue economic diversification
4. Strengthen NFN business operations and partnerships

Below are highlights of business ventures and partnership development activities from the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

NBISIING POWER

Nbisiing Power GP Inc. is a business partnership focused on Indigenous procurement opportunities in the energy industry. Nbisiing Power is majority owned by Nipissing First Nation (60%) with a minority interest held by Composite Power Group (40%).

This strategic partnership was created to support the diversification of the NFN economy and capacity building. Since the grand opening of its head office in the Bineshii Small Business Centre on May 27, 2022, the Nbisiing Power team has set and exceeded its sales targets by reselling engineered electrical equipment. They currently have contracts with companies such as Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation, Bruce Power, Atura Power, and contractors across Canada.

Nbisiing Power continues to focus on building capacity, supporting existing NFN businesses, and offering diverse employment opportunities while working with NFN to deliver community benefits and build a stream of revenue that supports the NFN vision and mission.

Nbisiing Power is led by Chief Executive Officer Christine Goulais and currently employs three full-time staff members and one contractor. The company is governed by a board of directors, including Nipissing First Nation and Composite Power Group individuals.

Strategic objectives for 2024 include capacity building and hiring; commercial business development and expansion to support increased value for customers (i.e., warehousing, training); partnership development; supporting growth by utilizing local businesses and suppliers; continuing to work with large utility companies; and pursuing opportunities in the mining sector.



L-R: Christine Goulais, CEO; Matthew Perreault, Sales Development Representative; Bethann Schnell, Sales Development Lead; and Richard Booy, Strategic Business Advisor.

Community members are welcome to visit Nbisiing Power's office in the Bineshii Small Business Centre at 132 Osprey Miikan, Suite 200. Visit nbisiingpower.ca to learn more.

NIPISSING MILLER PARTNERSHIP

NFN continues to build on its strong business partnership with Miller Paving as a key element of Nipissing First Nation's strategy to build a revenue stream that supports the organization's vision of improving well-being and quality of life for debendaagziwaad, and working together in a positive, progressive manner to be economically independent and self-governing.

The Nipissing Miller Partnership is majority owned by NFN (51%), with Miller acting as a partner to provide construction expertise and ensure all engineering detailed design components are delivered.

To date, Nipissing Miller has completed the Duchesnay Creek Bridge Replacement Project, the Yellek to Duchesnay Road Connection, the Bineshii Business Park Expansion Project, and the rehabilitation of Highway 17, including the replacement of the Laronde Creek Bridge. The partnership also started preparatory work on the Soil Remediation (Niobium Clean-Up) Project in late 2023 and will complete the project throughout 2024, with a projected completion date of July 2025.



The Nipissing Miller partnership creates the capacity to move community projects forward while providing employment and training opportunities for NFN members, and spin-off opportunities for private companies owned by NFN members.

NIPISSING QUARRY

In 2004, NFN signed an agreement with Miller Paving to lease land to operate a quarry and asphalt plant. This is the base of operations for Miller's North Bay division, along with the office and shop located at 70 Couchie Industrial Road.

Over a 20-year period, these operations have generated approximately \$1.36 million in revenue for NFN. This translates to an average annual amount of \$68,000 paid to NFN each year.

In May 2024, a new lease agreement for quarry operations covering 2024-2044 was signed. It addresses community concerns and increases the royalty rate from 0.45 cents to 0.70 cents per tonne with a consumer price index (CPI) adjustment mechanism.

This will increase the amount of royalty revenue over the 20-year term to \$2.14 million and represents a 57% increase without factoring in future CPI adjustments.

Miller's North Bay operations employ approximately 45 people in mostly seasonal full-time positions. First Nation employment varies from year to year (+/-15%), but several NFN members have been employed by Miller long-term, with the quarry foreman being the longest serving NFN member employed (20 years).

MNOGIN GREENHOUSE

The first of the Nation's three cold-climate, containerized greenhouses were commissioned in June 2023 and had its first harvests in late August 2023. All three growing units (farms) were operational and nearing full production capacity in early 2024.



The Mnogin Greenhouse utilizes cutting-edge vertical hydroponic technology to produce high-quality lettuces, leafy greens, and herbs in an environmentally friendly manner. From seed to harvest, lettuces and leafy greens are ready in as little six weeks, while herbs take 8-12 weeks.

Fresh produce is provided to community members at low cost through the Good Food Box program, and at no cost through the Diners' Club, seasonal garden stands, and events like the annual NFN Health Fair. It is also available for purchase online at mnogin.ca. Additional products are sold to restaurants and retail customers in bulk on a weekly basis.

Key Features

- Uses 90% less water and 95% less land than traditional agriculture while yielding the same number of crops.
- Produces fresh, nutritious produce without synthetic pesticides or herbicides.
- Ensures superior taste and freshness due to controlled growing environments.

2023-2024 Milestones

- **May 2023:** Infrastructure servicing (hydro, well, internet) completed; first farm commissioned.
- **July 2023:** Installed reverse osmosis water treatment system with funding support to address water quality issues; grant approved for a constructed wetland to manage wastewater.
- **August 2023:** First harvests; extensive media coverage, including national TV (APTN); planning and preparations for transition to commercial operations.
- **September 2023:** Launched e-commerce site; participated in local farmers markets; received funding approval to purchase refrigerated delivery vehicle and additional refrigerator.
- **October 2023:** Secured partnerships with two large restaurant clients.
- **November 2023:** Prototyped new growing methods, increasing yields by 25-30%.

- **December 2023:** Offered free certificate course in sustainable agriculture; received \$50K for retrofits; trained 25 participants in sustainable agriculture practices, of which 20 were NFN members.
- **January 2024:** Transitioned to new accounting system and e-commerce store; secured large retail partnership; received excellent feedback on quality of products.
- **February 2024:** Launched survey to collect valuable community feedback to inform future plans; started consistently selling out of all products, every week, thanks to new retail partnership.
- **March 2024:** Purchased refrigerated delivery vehicle with grant funding; added new retail partner in downtown North Bay; received Erica Lagios Memorial Award in Food Sustainability from reThink Green.

By the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Mnogin Greenhouse achieved six months of full commercial operation, with all products being sold out on a weekly basis. This is due to the strong leadership of the Mnogin Greenhouse Manager/Head Grower and the hard work of our dedicated team.

Products

- **Lettuces:** Monte Carlo Romaine, Butter Crunch, Five Star, Win Win Choi, Rosie Choi, Mei Qing Choi.
- **Leafy Greens:** Sunangel Spinach, Astro Arugula, Toscano Kale, Watercress.
- **Herbs:** Basil, Mint, Cilantro.

Future Outlook

The Mnogin Greenhouse is dedicated to providing fresh produce to the community and local markets, with plans to expand operations in the future to enhance food security and agricultural initiatives. The positive response from both businesses and individual consumers highlights the unparalleled taste, quality, and freshness of our products. Mnogin looks forward to continuing its growth and supporting sustainable agriculture in the community.

Project Funding

Funding for the greenhouse project was secured through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), which each contributed \$272,217 to the project, and the Waubetek Business Development Corporation, which contributed \$42,245. Nipissing First Nation contributed \$206,431 towards the project, and a loan from the 2013 Boundary Claim Trust was secured for the remaining \$371,361 in project costs. This loan will be repaid over a 20-year term, with all interest being paid to NFN.

More Information

Learn more and shop online at mnogin.ca and follow the greenhouse on Facebook and Instagram for the latest news!

BINESHII BUSINESS PARK EXPANSION PROJECT

- Construction got underway in March 2023.
- Project achieved substantial completion certificate in March 2024.
- 23 new lots created with three-phase hydro, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure.
- Paved Osprey Miikan to improve road to existing businesses.
- Engaged NFN member businesses during construction, with First North Enterprise and Young Forestry Services providing equipment and operators, and fuel purchases being distributed between NFN member-owned gas stations in the area.
- Employed NFN members through all subcontracts.

Project Costs & Funding

- Total Construction Contract Value: \$6.7 million
- Total Approved Funding: \$7.2 million

- Funding Partners:
- Indigenous Services Canada: \$3 million
- FedNor: \$1 million
- NOHFC: \$1 million
- Nipissing First Nation Contribution:
 - 10% equity requirement from Enhancement Funds
 - \$1.5 million loan from Nipissing (Community Developments) GP Inc. *

* The Nipissing (Community Developments) GP is the business entity that holds revenues generated by other economic development projects, such as the profits derived from the Duchesnay Creek Bridge Project completed by the Nipissing Miller Partnership.

Accessing funds derived from economic development activities highlights successful nation-building initiatives. This approach reduces dependency on the 2013 Boundary Claim Trust or long-term debt and aligns with the strategic goals of creating sustainable, revenue-generating partnerships and projects.

This development will meet an existing need and growing demand for commercial and industrial space in a prime location along the Highway 17 corridor. Furthermore, NFN has a competitive advantage in offering lease rates that are far lower than annual taxation rates in neighbouring municipalities.

Applications for new commercial or light industrial lots in the business park will open in the summer of 2024 with NFN members being prioritized throughout the process and having the first opportunity to apply. For more information about this project and the application process, visit nfn.ca/bineshii.

The vision for the Bineshii Business Park is to create conditions for sustainable and diversified long-term economic activity by employing NFN members and businesses during the construction phase and providing NFN members with a prime area to locate or expand their businesses when the project is complete.

As a next step, the Business Operations Department plans to seek funding for a feasibility study to construct

another commercial building in Bineshii. This aims to meet existing tenants and NFN entrepreneurs' needs by providing turnkey spaces to start or expand a business and to address the growing demand for office space for NFN staff, First Nation organizations, and consulting firms.



RENEWABLE ENERGY

The four NFN rooftop solar projects have a total capacity of 166 kilowatts (kW) and are under contract with the Independent Electricity Systems Operator (IESO) to generate electricity at a rate of \$0.548/kWh, which translates to approximately \$100,000 in annual revenues for NFN. The 20-year power purchase agreement ends in 2035.

The rooftop projects are located at the Nipissing Ojibway Daycare/Education Office, the Lawrence Commanda Health Centre (LCHC), the Seniors' Lodge in Garden Village, and Nbisiiing Secondary School.

This year, the inverter at the LCHC was replaced to resolve ongoing internet connectivity issues. During the summer of 2023, the panels at Nbisiiing Secondary School were offline for several months while repairs to the roof were completed.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Department had another highly active year in 2023, marked by a significant increase of interest among the membership to start new businesses. Newly licensed enterprises cover various industries, from cannabis retail to professional services, offering members unique and valuable employment opportunities. Enforcing NFN business licensing laws ensures community safety while collecting essential employment data to develop programs tailored to NFN entrepreneurs' needs. Throughout the year, NFN licensed 12 new businesses.



The department is also responsible for issuing fundraising licenses to NFN administrative departments. In the 2023 fiscal year, five lottery licenses were granted to raise funds for community programs and events, including Nipissing First Nation's Social Services Department and annual powwow.

The department additionally provided individualized assistance to 57 NFN entrepreneurs throughout the year. This support included helping create business plans, navigate external funding applications, and providing information on department programs and services. Four small business loans – amounting to \$75,000 – were issued to member entrepreneurs to start or expand their businesses.

Entrepreneur Workshop Series

In 2023, the Economic Development Department once again partnered with The Business Centre of Nipissing-Parry Sound to deliver a fantastic entrepreneur workshop series. Building on feedback from 2022, these workshops were customized to meet the specific needs of our members. This year, participants explored designing with Canva,

funding applications, sales and networking, and tax considerations. Economic Development is thrilled to share that 15 members took part in this engaging and informative series!



Beaucage Park

Beaucage Park opened to debendaagziwaad in May 2023. Throughout the season, maintenance staff dedicated their efforts to cleaning the park, removing hazards, and overseeing its operation. In total, 50 members utilized the site for cultural and leisure activities. Mid-season, the park was divided into two sections with gate access: 6.3 acres of private space for cultural and other departmental programming, and 6.1 acres for an economic development area. This division provided a private, gate-access site, offering increased security for cultural and departmental activities. It additionally allows the department to tailor funding applications more effectively. A new booking tool (available under the "Contact" section of the NFN website) was also developed to accommodate larger groups needing privacy or extended hours.

The park will officially close in 2024 for revitalization. These revitalization efforts will include dredging, repairing the dock area, and removing hazards. Furthermore, a request for proposal is being developed to find proponents to conduct a feasibility study at the park and explore potential income-generating developments.





IESO Subsidy Program and Information Sessions

In 2023, NFN installed eight Level 2 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations (four community-owned and four member-owned) thanks to total funding from the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO). These stations are designed to promote the adoption of electric vehicles within the community. As the federal government sets ambitious targets to phase out traditional internal combustion engines, the organization wants to ensure that Nipissing First Nation is prepared for this transition.

Building on the momentum from the first NFN EV charging station project, the Economic Development Department secured funding for a high-speed Level 3 charging station at the Bineshii Business Park. This initiative aims to attract more business to the park by offering highway commuters a convenient and fast option to charge their vehicles. This added infrastructure also enhances the park's appeal to potential tenants who utilize this technology.

Creation of Quarterly Economic Development Newsletter

To better inform member entrepreneurs about business opportunities, the Economic Development Departmente launched a quarterly economic development newsletter. This newsletter provides members with valuable information on funding, training, workshops, insights into internal economic development programs and initiatives, member business spotlights, and more. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with approximately 200 subscribers and an open rate of over 70%.

Strengthening of Laws and Policies

In 2023, the Economic Development Department undertook significant policy and law work to enhance the community's regulatory framework. The department proposed and finalized amendments to the Small Business Loan Policy and the Business Licensing Law, which were approved by Chief and Council. Economic Development additionally ensured compliance with the Tobacco and Nicotine Advertising Policy through audits and enforcement actions. Further progress within the department included the development and finalization of the Short-Term Rental Policy and application process, as well as the representation of NFN's interests in cannabis agreement negotiations with the Government of Ontario. The department also prepared the 2024-2044 Miller Quarry Agreement and worked on the final draft of the NFN Fundraising & Gaming Policy. Various stakeholders and legal counsel were engaged with to review and implement these crucial policy changes.

Meetings and Engagements

The Economic Development Department actively participated in various important meetings throughout the year to ensure NFN remains at the forefront of economic development opportunities and provides robust support to the community. These included monthly meetings with the Economic Partners Sudbury East/West Nipissing Board of Directors, the 2023 Cando Annual General Meeting, the IESO Annual Symposium, and partnership discussions with Indigenous Tourism Ontario. Moreover, the department attended the Anishinabek Nation Economic Development Forum in Sault Ste. Marie, the 2023 First Nations Energy Symposium organized by the IESO, and held regular consultations with the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario regarding cannabis regulation and enforcement. The departemente also engaged with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce leadership to support the NFN Business Leaders Roundtable and participated in workshops with the Ontario First Nations Economic Developers Association to enhance marketing and procurement strategies. These engagements have been crucial in advancing NFN economic development goals and initiatives.

GOAL #3 – Education/Lifelong Learning (East)

Binoojiyang Enji-Kinoomaagsiwaad (Education Department)

Nipissing First Nation's Kinoomaagewin (Education) Department aims to efficiently administer educational programs and services for students, as well as provide safe and cost-efficient transportation. The department is committed to developing a capacity for education and lifelong learning and advocating for Anishinabek education for all citizens.

This year, the Kinoomaagewin Department has made considerable progress toward its goal of lifelong learning. The department continues to uphold its educational practices and jurisdiction over education, and appreciates the community's support of these achievements.

The Education Department actively collaborates with several organizations to broaden its work. Through a project financed by the Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund, the department successfully partnered with the Ontario Physical and Health Educators Association (OPHEA) to revamp the Healthy Schools Certification process, ensuring that Nipissing's school and others like it have the same opportunity to become Healthy School Certified. The Kinoomaagewin Department is highly optimistic about the positive impact of these partnerships on Nipissing First Nation's education and childcare services.

STUDENTS 2023-2024 (SCHOOL YEAR)

Post-secondary

- 113 Full-time students
- 21 Part-time students

Elementary/Secondary

- 150 Elementary students
- 150 Secondary students

- 97 Students attending Nbisiing Secondary School
 - 72 Off-reserve students (reverse tuition)
 - 25 On-reserve students
- 13 Grade 12 graduates (Nbisiing and provincial schools)

Adult Education

- 10 Students

BUDGET

The Education Department's budget covers the costs of delivering programs and services, including:

- Tuition fees to provincial school boards
- Post-secondary students' tuition, living allowance, and book allowance enhancements
- School transportation by Nbisiing Bus Lines to provincial schools and Nbisiing Secondary School
- Special education, transportation, assessments, and case conferences
- Adult education subsidization
- Programming support for mental health, youth life promotions, nutrition, language and culture, bursaries, graduation awards, elementary/secondary awards, school start-ups, and tutoring
- Employment and Training support and subsidies for employees starting and changing employment.
- Nbisiing Secondary School
- Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund projects with Nbisiing Secondary School and school board partners
- Daycare services through partnerships with the Ministry of Education, Anishinabek Nation, and Indigenous Services Canada
- After school programming
- Summer programming for school-age children to support working families

Priorities

This year's priorities were multifaceted and required dedicated focus and commitment. The primary goal was to modernize data collection and student data management processes, elevating Nipissing's outstanding educational work to national and international levels. Long-standing relationships with provincial and federal systems and government institutions were actively renewed to secure new opportunities through education service agreements..

A comprehensive capital plan for all education buildings and facilities was developed to ensure their safety and successful operation for years to come. The daycare and Employment and Training program onboarding also required the adjustment of internal communication and procedural practices.

Based on recommendations from the Education Department and Committee, actions were taken to:

- Honor education service agreements with provincial school boards through the First Nation Advisory Committee
- Negotiate education service agreements with all four local school boards
- Oversee Anishinabek Education System (AES) and Multi-Year Action Plan projects, as well as projects at Nbisiiing Secondary School
- Foster partnerships with provincial school boards, post-secondary institutions, and the broader education community
- Compile and utilize data to support student achievement, provide increased opportunities for students, and support educators with professional development
- Make budget and policy recommendations, specifically for Nbisiiing Kinoomaage Daabaan
- Increase the availability of Elders in schools to support language and culture programs
- Amplify student voice and leadership

- Provide mental health support at Nbisiiing Secondary School through the Graduation Coach and youth life promotions
- Modernize the adult education program by comprehensively analyzing broader available systems
- Increase land-based cultural learning in schools
- Enhance post-secondary support
- Provide staff training to better support students and the community, including information technology, special education, data systems, cultural sensitivity and awareness, and mental health
- Update and manage student data
- Enhance daycare services by stabilizing enrollments
- Make the Summer Program more culturally rooted
- Audit the Employment and Training program to ensure stability and accuracy of delivery.
- Partner with a psychologist able to perform psycho-educational assessments on reserve to alleviate wait times for diagnosis and establish enhanced educational supports

Elementary/Secondary Education

The Education Department has officially initiated educational service agreement negotiations with all four local school boards in the area: Near North District School Board (NND SB), Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (NPSCDSB), Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est, and Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord. Through these agreements, the department covers the tuition fees for on-reserve students attending provincial schools from kindergarten to Grade 12. Reciprocal tuition fees are additionally received through the boards from the Ministry of Education and other First Nations for each off-reserve student attending Nbisiiing Secondary School.

TUITION COSTS PER STUDENT

School Board		2019- 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Near North District School Board	Elementary	\$12,459.00	\$12,738.00	\$12,957.00	*\$13,379.00	\$13,329.00
	Secondary	\$13,145.00	\$13,739.00	\$13,972.00	*\$14,206.00	\$14,039.00
Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board	Elementary	\$14,133.00	\$14,676.00	\$14,881.00	*\$15,370.00	\$15,430.00
	Secondary	\$14,388.00	\$15,024.00	\$15,297.00	*\$15,656.00	\$14,902.00
Conseil scolaire publique du Nord- Est de l'Ontario	Elementary	\$16,536.00	\$17,637.00	\$18,285.00	*\$18,989.00	\$20,006.00
	Secondary	\$34,017.00	\$36,801.00	\$36,082.00	*\$35,300.00	\$39,168.00
Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord	Elementary	\$15,846.00	\$16,513.00	\$16,840.00	*\$17,878.00	\$17,973.00
	Secondary	\$19,049.00	\$19,819.00	\$20,160.00	*\$21,437.00	\$21,031.00

**The education services costs changed in January 2023, as O. Reg397/22 was replaced by O. Reg 16/23.*

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

This year, the NFN Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program (PSEAP) received 116 post-secondary applications and was able to fund all students without any waitlist. The new policy allows for additional fees to be considered for reimbursement or payment. Student allowances have also been temporarily increased, as the current funding model was modernized to align with most post-secondary pathways.

The Education Department celebrated the success of 29 post-secondary graduates who obtained either a diploma, degree, or certificate in various areas such as education, the arts, Anishinaabemowin, and more. Over the past year, NFN students enrolled in post-secondary and Indigenous institutions across Canada, with the highest

concentration of students attending Canadore College and Nipissing University.

The table below provides a sample of the funding a single student could receive through PSEAP in 2023-2024. This assistance is not intended to cover all costs but provides significant support for students. Students are encouraged to apply for Ontario Student Assistance, a mix of grants and loans provided by provincial and federal governments to subsidize costs received through PSEAP. The updates to the Kinoomaagewin Policy (Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program) approved by NFN Chief and Council, bring additional opportunities for students to meet some of their financial needs in a modern post-secondary learning environment. The department is committed to making yearly adjustments to continue assisting students.

Full-Time Post-Secondary Student	Average Tuition	Allowance	Books	Application Fees	Stripend Start-Up /Transcripts	Allowance Adjustment	Total
College	\$5,800.00*	\$10,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$125.00	\$350.00	\$560.00	\$17,835.00
University	\$8,000.00*	\$10,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$140.00	\$350.00	\$560.00	\$20,050.00

**Represents an aggregate average of tuition fees for post-secondary institutions.*

Adult Education

The Education Department has actively collaborated with the Ontario Works and Employment and Training programs on the Adult Education Program. Partnerships were established with the Near North District School Board and the Laurentian Learning Centre to tailor the program in a way that better prepares students to enter college or the workforce.

Additionally, adult students received recognition credits toward their diplomas through prior learning assessments. This year, ten active registered adult learners continued their educational journey, and there were two graduates from this support program.

The Education Department is in the final stages of exploring a feasibility study for the internal operation of the Adult Education Program in Nbisiiing Secondary School.

Nbisiiing Bus Lines

Nbisiiing Bus Lines is committed to providing safe and reliable transportation for students. The fleet comprises 14 vehicles, including vans and buses of various capacities. These vehicles transport 230 students to multiple schools. Transportation vehicles have modern radio systems for communication, and the bus line recently acquired a para-van for students with physical disabilities. Charter services for various programs and events are also offered.

In September 2023, the buses were rebranded as Nbisiiing Kinooomaage Daabaan as a dedication to preserving the Nishnaabemwin language.

Busology, previously *Viafy*, is software that continues to support the community. With it, communication with families about pick-up and drop-off times, as well as real-time weather updates, have improved.

Nbisiiing Bus Lines drivers undergo annual training in various areas to ensure the safety and well-being of passengers. Driver retention support was also received to address bus driver shortages.

Next year, to improve recruitment efforts, there are plans to host bus driver training sessions. Members interested in participating in bus driver training sessions can contact the Education Department.

The Education Department and Nbisiiing Bus Lines are continually looking for ways to enhance services and provide more opportunities for students. Based on community requests, the department is working to provide reliable and consistent late bus transportation for students participating in extracurricular activities. For further details, contact the Kinooomaage Daabaan office.

Partners in Education

The Education Department is proud to partner with the Kinooomaadziwin Education Body (KEB), provincial school boards, Nipissing University, Canadore College, and other provincial educational stakeholders, such as the Ontario Physical Educators Association and the Canadian Healthy Schools Alliance, to help support NFN students.

Provincial School Board Partnerships Highlights

The School Board Action Plan outlines four areas to support the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Board Action Plan: data and data analysis, student support, staff support, and community engagement. NFN sits on the Special Education Advisory committees of the NNDSB and the NPSCDSB, and the First Nations Advisory committees at all four partner school boards. This year, the department celebrated the following:

- Continued the role of Indigenous graduation coaches, mental wellness leads, and special education supports in schools
- Increased Native as a Second Language (NSL) Anishinaabemowin programs and developed language resources
- Increased Indigenous Studies courses (open to all students) and provided an accompanying guidebook of best practices/protocols to support educators teaching these courses

- Increased incorporation of authentic resources in classrooms and libraries to support learning about reconciliation
- Improved access, removed barriers, and strengthened parent choice for First Nations students through the Reciprocal Education Approach
- Increased support positions such as social workers and youth and family outreach workers
- Executed Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund projects in partnership with NPSCDSB
- Renewed partnership with Adult Education Program to assist students with obtaining their OSSD through lifelong learning models

Other than partnerships, the department focused on expanding employee opportunities to ensure that every service provided meets the highest standards of practice. This work enables fresh approaches to current programs and revitalizes programs experiencing challenges.

Nipissing University Partnership Highlights

NFN sits on Nipissing University's Board of Governors and the Nipissing University Indigenous Committee on Education (NUICE). Nipissing University collaborates with Indigenous communities, like NFN, on the following initiatives:

- Schulich School of Education Indigenous education programs to certify Indigenous teachers, educational assistants, and NSL teachers.
- Cultural spaces (Enji giigdoyang Student Lounge and Sacred Space, Treaty Learning Centre, tipis)
- Indigenous programs (Indigenous Foundations Program, Native Studies) and Indigenous inclusion into programs (Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts in History, Bachelor of Social Work)
- Wiidooktaadwin Indigenous Mentorship programs and the Biidaaban Community Service-Learning program with elementary and secondary schools

- Research projects such as Wiidooktaadyang: Understanding Wellness in Nipissing Nation
- Events, guest lectures, and conferences that support Indigenization in the university
- Community knowledge-based courses at Nipissing University
- New approach to strategic planning that centers on voice and advocacy
- New approach to understanding the university through the eyes of stakeholders

Canadore College Partnership Highlights

NFN is a member of Canadore College's Indigenous Circle on Education to ensure that Indigenous learners are supported in their collegiate aspirations and to provide strategic direction to the college on the following initiatives:

- The Kikandaaswiwin Mookiisin (knowledge springing forth) Indigenous Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) Program – attended by Nipissing Secondary School students
- Aboriginal Post-Secondary Information Program (APSIP) open houses
- Annual Canadore College Powwow
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Kinoomaadziwin Education Body Highlights

NFN is a member of the Anishinabek Education System and works closely with the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body (KEB) (the administrative body for the AES) to support students.

This year was filled with negotiations on several fronts and worked toward a more self-governed approach to education. The KEB, on behalf of the Anishinabek nations, negotiated significant changes to the Anishinabek Nation Education Fiscal Transfer Agreement (formerly known as the Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement) and secured new commitments from Canada.

This year, a Multi-Year Action Plan (MYAP) cycle was finalized, and next year, a new MYAP cycle will begin with new priorities. The current ending MYAP was implemented, and here are some highlights:

Special Education Guideline

AES developed vital resources with its participating First Nations (PFNs) for families requiring additional support when navigating special education programming and its various checkpoints, from identification to educational programming. This guide is user-friendly and accessible to the Education Department. Its primary use is to help families navigate the complex world of special education within provincial systems. Local school boards and the Ministry of Education have also received the guide. It is an essential resource for all parents with students requiring additional support or assessments in special education.

Anishinabek Nation Education Fiscal Transfer Agreement

Negotiations with the Government of Canada regarding the Anishinabek Nation Education Fiscal Transfer Agreement are ongoing. This agreement supports the renewal of funding beyond March 2023. The new agreement was approved for signing in January 2024. Regular updates are provided to the KEB Board of Directors and the 23 PFNs at monthly Regional Education Council meetings. At all meetings, the KEB Negotiation Team collects comments and directions from PFNs to support negotiations with Canada. KEB negotiations have resulted in the funding of their first self-governance agreement. They secured before and after-school support, adult education, capital funding, stronger funding adjusters, and efficient reporting processes. Negotiations are not finalized, but a clear mandate to continue the work exists. Negotiations are not finalized, but a clear mandate to continue the work exists.

Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund

The Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund is an annual grant that allows First Nations to apply for project funding. The fund booklet provides a detailed overview of the 24 projects the Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund financed in 2022–2023. These projects positively affected AES students.

For further information, all documents and project booklets are available at aes-keb.com.

Project with NPSCDSB

In 2023–2024, NFN partnered with the NPSCDSB on two projects at St. Joseph-Scollard Hall Catholic Secondary School. Through an Indigenous Youth Retreat and Indigenous land-based learning model, students learned and practised traditional ways of knowing and understanding by being immersed in culture and language for one week.

Project with Culture and Language - Summer Immersion Camp

In 2023–2024, the Culture and Language Department created an immersive experience for families within the Nation. The camp enabled families to dive into the Nishnaabemwin language and explore the effects of this type of experience on short-term language skills and long-term retainment.

Internal Project – Forest Summer Program

The Forest Summer Program focuses on better understanding how to adapt traditional learning in an educational institution to land-based learning. The project explores experiential learning where cultural ways of being are the foundation of program delivery. This short project is designed to enhance world perspectives and approaches to balance, harmony, responsibility, and stewardship of the land that Nbisiing people have cared for since time immemorial. Conceptual approaches in a modern context are at the heart of this program, as students are given opportunities to be on the land as long and as often as possible while adhering to strict safety standards.



Nbisiing Secondary School

Student Count - May 31- 2024

Grade Level	9	10	11	12
Total (97)	22	16	32	27



Nbisiing Secondary School has graduated 407 students since it opened in 1995! This year, there were 27 graduates.

SCHOOL YEAR	GRADUATES	GRADUATION RATE
2023-2024	27	90%
2022-2023	26	89%
2021-2022	14	74%
2020-2021	10	53%*
2019-2020	9	75%
2018-2019	21	74%
2017-2018	16	76%
2016-2017	11	73%

*Extenuating circumstances due to COVID-19

CONTINUED LEARNING SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The 2024 Continued Learning Summer School Program at Nbisiing focused on recovering credits to close some of the gaps created by the continued COVID-19 challenges faced by Education as the school moved between in-person and remote learning platforms. The goal of this program is to offer students the opportunity to complete missed credits and ensure Nbisiing students are ready to enter the next grade level in the fall.

Summer School Year	Number of Students Enrolled	Number of Credits Recovered/Earned
2024	28	40
2023	26	40
2022	27	36
2021	25	38
2020	32	38
2019	22	55



Building Community: Annual Mini Powwow

Nbisiing hosted its annual Mini Powwow in May 2024. Community members, Chief and Council, and over 200 guests from the local school boards came together for a day of dancing and celebration.



Nbisiing Athletics

Nbisiing Secondary School is proud to unveil its new athletics logo, which will be used on sports apparel and jerseys. The logo was inspired by the artwork of Nbisiing alumni Jeremy McDaniel and portrays the Redhawk, fierce and proud. Nbisiing athletes are proud to wear this logo to compete for the school.

Nbisiing students built on the foundation of competitive athletics laid last school year. This year, over 10 athletes participated in sports like cross-country running, badminton, and track and field. The year concluded with an exciting leap forward as senior student Justin Stone won second place for the 800m race in the NDA Track and Field Finals. Junior athletes gathered together to cheer on their teammate.

While the school year is ending, preparation for next year's athletics is already underway. The school formed a golf team, which will practice over the summer for the fall season. Nbsiing coaches thank all athletes for their hard work and preparation this year! Go Redhawks!

Maamwi Doodemag

This year, Nbsiing students were split into Doodems and worked together on various activities, challenges, and lessons. Each Doodem started by designing a logo that was put on a sweatshirt and given to each student and staff member.

Project with OPHEA: Healthy Schools Certification

This year, Nbsiing partnered with OPHEA on a significant initiative: the Healthy Schools Certification (HSC) program, a Niigaan Gdizhaami Fund project. Nbsiing actively participated in the HSC program while collaborating closely with OPHEA to adapt the program in a way that ensures it is more culturally relevant and accessible for First Nation schools. As a result of these efforts, Nbsiing was proud to achieve HSC Gold Status.



Building on this success, a new proposal has been submitted for a second collaborative project between Nbsiing and OPHEA, aiming to further advance a shared commitment to culturally responsive health education in First Nation communities.

Early Childhood Education Services

This year, Early Childhood Education (ECE) Services experienced significant changes, including departmental transitions, a department name change, and the addition of new staff. The program amalgamated with the Education Department and is excited to be aligned with them, as well as with Nipissing First Nation's Strategic Plan. ECE Services anticipates many positive developments in the future.



Child Care Centres

Staff and children have been actively engaged in the How Does Learning Happen? curriculum model and school readiness activities. NFN Child Care Centres continue to stay committed to improving the quality of programs and services provided to Nipissing First Nation.

Program Highlights

The Couchie Memorial Daycare currently serves 16 children. Capacity will increase once additional registered early childhood educators are hired.

New staff are busy incorporating cultural elements into children's daily routines, in addition to teaching them Anishinaabemowin/Nishnaabemwin. NFN child care centres have demonstrated excellent growth and influenced positive learning outcomes for children in care.

The Nipissing Ojibway Daycare serves 26 children. This year, the child care centre successfully passed the Ministry of Education's licensing inspection and achieved a Tier 1 licence – a significant milestone!

Early Childhood Development

The Early Childhood Development Worker plans school readiness initiatives for NFN child care centres, facilitating referrals for additional services, and organizing family-oriented activities. This year, Early Childhood Development held its annual excursion to Santa's Village in Bracebridge and 97 individuals registered. 65 participants also attended a visit to Matthews Maple Syrup in Powassan.

Program Highlights:

- Parental programs
- Personalized sessions
- Referrals for specialized services
- Information sessions
- Children's Halloween
- Car seat clinic
- Welcoming Babies celebration
- Holiday gift wrapping
- Training/support services

Bi-gzhaadge Binoonjiiyak (Integrated Children's Program)

In collaboration with the Recreation Program and Nipissing First Nation's Walking Alongside Services, Bi-gzhaadge Binoonjiiyak runs Monday to Friday throughout the school year (excluding holidays, snow days, and PA days).

This year, 23 participants enrolled in the program, which bustled with activities. Bi-gzhaadge Binoonjiiyak offers a wide range of recreational activities, homework assistance, and brain games aimed at engaging and enriching children's minds. The challenges are particularly popular among the children, who eagerly await additional games and activities.

Summer Children's Program

This year, the Summer Children's Program was structured differently compared to previous years. There were two groups of children at two separate locations for a total duration of



six weeks, with each session lasting three weeks. 23 children enrolled in the program for Garden Village, while 21 enrolled for Duchesnay.

Various activities were hosted during the program, including powwow dancing, Science Week (in partnership with University of Waterloo and the University of Ottawa), a reptile camp, and jam-making. Excursions included visits to Urban Air, the Kupp Centre, and the local splash pad, as well strawberry picking and trail hiking.

Nipissing First Nation Employment & Training

Nbisiing Eniiggaanzid Niigaanid Nokiiwin

NFN Eniiggaanzid Niigaanid Nokiiwin is a federally funded program through Employment and Social Development Canada. The program’s goal is to provide NFN members and affiliates with the support and tools necessary to attain their goals, such as client assessments, wage subsidies, training, workshops, career/job fairs, resume writing, etc. These supports and tools enable clients to be competitive in today’s labor market and assist them with securing long-term, sustainable employment. The Eniiggaanzid Niigaanid Nokiiwin also provides other valuable services, including help connecting with other Indigenous organizations, and federal and provincial programs.

The program continues to work alongside other NFN programs, local community colleges, and local businesses to research and develop programs that provide the necessary training and skills to excel in the workforce.

Employment & Training Statistics 2023/2024

With the support of the program, members and affiliates took advantage of online and in-person training opportunities. On average, 20 people participated in monthly training throughout the fiscal year. The following are sponsorships that were approved and completed in the 2023/24 fiscal year:

Number of Participants Per Training Program

- 20 Microsoft Office 365
 - 1 Millwright Apprentice, 2nd year
 - 1 Boiler Maker Apprentice, 3rd year
- 2 Esthetician - Hairstyling
- 4 Line Crew Ground Support
- 2 Accounting Payroll Administrator
- 1 Iron Worker Welding Certificate
- 3 Targeted Wage Subsidy
- 3 Lineman & Electrical Apprentice, 1st & 4th year
- 2 Police Constables Employed F/T
- 1 Lifeguard Certification
- 1 Forest Firefighter Certification
- 1 Heavy Equipment Operator
- 2 Carpenter Apprentice, 2nd & 4th year
- 1 Class DZ Driver’s Licence
- 4 Employment Referrals - Hydro One
- 6 Mobility Assistance
- 30 PAL Training Certification
- 12 Employment Start-Up PPE
- 49 EI Applications, Inquiries, SIN, CPP, OAS
- 6 Small Business Referrals

The programs that Nibisiing Eniiggaanzid Niigaanid Nokiiwin delivers are the NFN equivalent to what third-party deliverers like Service Canada, Employment Ontario, and Youth Employment Services offer.

NFN and its Employment & Training Department congratulates all those who completed their training programs.

Nipissing Nation Kendaaswin (Public Library)

Library Services & Collections

- Wireless Internet (WiFi)
- DVDs & Blu-Rays
- Playaways
- Novels, magazines, instructional materials
- Driving training manuals
- Photo digitization
- In-house movie showings
- Ancestry, family trees, community pictures
- Children's books, videos, toy room

The NFN Kendaaswin offers six desktop computers and four Apple computers. These are equipped with Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. One computer also has Microsoft Publisher. Many computers are used for online games and social media, as well as educational games and learning applications. Printers and a fax machine are additionally available for use.



The Kendaaswin offers library cards that provide access to materials from the Nipissing Nation Kendaaswin, as well as Nipissing University. Materials may also be accessed online through a smart phone app. Visit the Kendaaswin today to get a library card of your own and gain access to materials

CONTINUED PARTNERSHIPS

Nipissing Nation Kendaaswin & Family Well-Being Program

The Kendaaswin has continued its partnership with the NFN Family Well-Being Program to provide programs and services to those of all ages in Nipissing Nation. The programs work together to support each other's goals of providing safe cultural spaces for membership and affiliates to engage in educational and recreational opportunities.

Collaborative efforts between the programs occur during the summer season. This year, the programs hosted a family trip to Canada's Wonderland. Buses and tickets were funded for both on and off-reserve members. Participation numbers for this recurring trip are high, with more than one bus required for trip transportation each year. Members are encouraged to keep an eye out for future activities.

PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATION

Blue Sky Librarian's Group

The Kendaaswin is a member of the Blue Sky Librarians' Group. This group is made up of librarians in the area (Nipissing Nation, North Bay, West Nipissing, Powassan, Mattawa, etc.). Monthly meetings are held to review opportunities offered through the province and provincial bodies of funding. It helps the Kendaaswin stay up to date with things happening around Ontario and provides guidance to securing new opportunities for Nipissing Nation.

Ontario Library Service (OLS) & First Nations Strategic Action Group

The Kendaaswin is also a member of the OLS First Nations Strategic Action Group. The group is made up of three librarians and two OLS workers who plan events and gatherings for First Nation librarians. Most recently, the group coordinated Maanjidiwaad, a conference for First Nation librarians in Nipissing Nation. The conference, held at Nipissing University and in Garden Village, was well-attended. This was also the first time in nearly 20 years that this assembly was held on a First Nation.

Ontario Library Association (OLA) Library Advocacy

The Kendaaswin is a member of the OLA Advocacy Group. This group is made up of librarians and advisors from all areas of the province to share ideas, and guide programs and services delivered through the Ontario Library Association. Most recently, the group brought an OLA booth and interaction to Little NHL.

These committees and groups are dedicated to the enhancement and success of First Nation libraries. It is important to remain connected and be an active participant in these partnerships. These are all no-cost participations that allow Nipissing Nation to be an active member in the library community.

GOAL #4 – Infrastructure/Community Resources (South)

Community Infrastructure & Planning

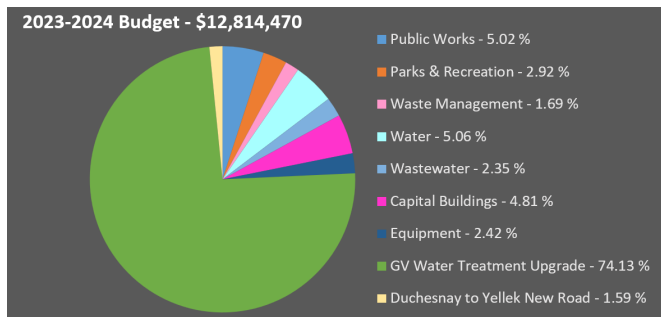
In January 2023, Facilities and Maintenance amalgamated with Housing as a result of the departments' shared goals and objectives.

The Community Infrastructure & Planning Department encompasses the following:

- Capital planning and projects
- Special projects management
- Public Works
- Waste management (garbage, recycling and landfill)
- Water and wastewater treatment plant
- Road maintenance
- Equipment
- Parks & Recreation (previously Beautification)
- Seniors' snow plowing and grass cutting programs

The team of 32 full-time staff delivers programming and services according to the department's Capital Plan, as well as Chief and Council recommendations. They also complete annual, five- and ten-year work plans while managing multiple budgets.

The Community Infrastructure & Planning budget is \$12,814,470.



The Garden Village Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project is in the commissioning stage and the new roads connecting Yellek to Duchesnay are in the construction stage.

Project Annual Reports

- Capital Projects Report
- Facilities and Maintenance Program Special Initiatives Report
- Health/Water Programs and Audit
- Garden Village Upgrade
- NFN Water and Wastewater Feasibility Study
- Indigenous Services Canada - Closing the Gap 2030 Initiative

Indigenous Services Canada Funding for First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy

Working in partnership with the Human Resources Department and Nbisiiing Secondary School, the Community Infrastructure & Planning Department completed the proposal and reports for the Indigenous Service Canada (ISC)- First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy (FNIYES). ISC approved 2023-24 FNIYES funding, and NFN was granted **\$239,100.59** to support NFN youth for the following:

- Summer work experience
- Mentored work placements
- Science & technology
- Career planning and promotion
- Co-op placements

Indigenous Services Canada Funding for Employment Experience

The Community Infrastructure & Planning Department assisted Social Services with an Indigenous Services Canada Employment Experience funding proposal and report. This funding gives NFN members receiving Ontario Works benefits the opportunity to gain public works employment experience with the Parks and Recreation program. ISC approved 2023-24 Employment Experience Funding, and NFN was granted **\$24,480.00** to subsidy-eligible Ontario Works clients.

2023-24 Community Infrastructure & Planning Work Plan

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, the following projects were part of the department's work plan:

- Duchesnay Water & Waste Plan
- Garden Village Water Treatment Plant upgrades
- New Yellek to Duchesnay roads
- Jocko Point Bridge Project
- Elders' Lodges construction

Elders Lodge for Assisted Living in Duchesnay and Garden Village



Public Works / Gwajijing Nokiiwin

Public Works staff maintains over 55 km (about 34.18 mi) of roads on NFN and are responsible for the maintenance bridges, streetlights, signage, docks, culverts, and other community infrastructure.

2023-24 Public Works Work Plan

- **Brushing and Cemeteries**
 - Drainage maintenance and burial services for NFN members
 - Yellek, Ernest and Jocko brushing
- **Roads**
 - Garden Village roads: asphalt crack repairs and sub-division ditching
 - Jocko Point Road: cross culvert brushing, gravel lift, road improvements/upgrades, bridge repairs (HydoLogic Automated Reclaimed Condensate System (ARCS) project) Project) stage one repairs are also ongoing.

- Yellek culverts, gravel lift, ditches, road upgrades, bridge repairs (ARCS project)
- Semo and Ted Commanda Road brushing, ditches, clean-outs
- Sweetgrass Miikan gravel lift
- Christine Lane gravel lift, ditches
- Mukwa Miikan: road widening (top), asphalt recycling
- Demolition of old Duchesnay daycare
- Ojibway garage signage
- 1.3 km Yellek extension
- Lawrence Lane brushing, gravel lift
- Serenity Lane planning
- Couchie Memorial Drive pothole and road shoulder repairs
- Beaucage Park Road status review
- Beaucage Park, VLA, and Couchie Industrial entrance paving
- **Staff**
 - Improving staff morale, communication, appreciation events, equipment/safety training, professional development, vehicle checks
 - Public Works building
 - Duchesnay garage foam insulation spraying and cement pouring
 - New Public Works building design and Class B estimate

Leonard Goulais Award for Community Infrastructure Employee of the Year

The Leonard Goulais Award is given to a staff member of the Community Infrastructure & Planning Department. The recipient is dedicated to providing essential services, and have outstanding work achievements throughout the year. The 2022-2023 Leonard Goulais Award winner was Terry Lariviere.

Waste Management / Aanji-Aapichitooyang

- The Household Hazardous Waste Depot (HHWD) accepts waste at the NFN Landfill. The depot operates between April 1st and November 1st each year.
- The Policy and Bylaw Committee is reviewing draft versions of a The NFN Waste Management Policy, which will provide residents with a clear standard for waste management practices.
- NFN is conducting a waste management study and landfill assessment in the fall and winter. This waste management study will provide NFN with a 20-year solid waste management plan. The landfill was evaluated, and recommendations were given to NFN about how its lifespan can be extended through diversion practices.
- NFN provides backyard compost bins (free of charge) to on-reserve community members and helps them start and maintain composting practices. The Backyard Compost Program aims to reduce organic waste from entering the NFN Landfill. These efforts help extend the landfill's lifespan, reduce leachate to protect water sources, and reduce greenhouse gases.
- Preparations are underway for the Blue Box Regulation (under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act). The act shifts the provincial government's responsibility of funding recycling programs in Ontario to the corporations that produce these materials. First Nations in Ontario are expected to transition in 2026.
- The recycling depot at the NFN Landfill is now open.

2023-24 Waste Management Work Plan

- Household Hazardous Waste Depot
- **Waste Management Policy**
- **Waste management study and landfill assessment**
- **Solid Waste Management Plan**
- **Recycling depot (NFN Landfill)**
- **Backyard Compost Program**
- **Blue Box Regulation (under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act) - set to transition in January 2026 with the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority**
- **Waste and recycling promotion and education programs**

Water & Wastewater Management

- Increased ISC funding for operation enhancement and maintained funding for water/wastewater systems
- Received \$25,000 from the First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP) for additional water testing and educational programs
- Meeting and exceeding federal government wastewater reporting requirements since 2013
- Have three Level 2 operators, one Level 1 operator, one Wastewater Level 1 and 2 operators-in-training (OIT)

2023-24 Water & Wastewater Management Work Plan

- **Water Treatment Plant Operations and Maintenance**
 - Address ARCS deficiencies
 - Work with Tribal Council training upgrades
 - Maintenance Management System (Tribal)
 - Waste plant building repairs, including completion of flows

Capital Buildings

2023-24 Capital Buildings Work Plan

- Secure funding and upgrade cenotaph
- Complete walking trails, signs and stations
- Improve areas around residential monument in Duchesnay
- General repairs to outdoor bathrooms and dugouts

Equipment

2023-24 Equipment Work Plan

- **Purchases**
 - New Tandem Plow Truck
 - New Kubota Mini Excavator



Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation (previously Beautification) program has been in place since 2015 to provide services to all NFN communities, including the maintenance and repair of public spaces, and lawn care and property maintenance for qualifying seniors. This program aims to provide experience and employment opportunities to Nipissing First Nation members facing employment challenges, and prepare them for their future careers while learning new skills. Workers are also given the opportunity to work in, and for, their community.

- **Enhanced Services for Seniors and the Community**
 - Seniors' snow plowing program
 - Seniors' lawn care program
 - Parks & Recreation and maintenance programs

2023-24 Parks & Recreation Work Plan

- **Maintenance and Repair of NFN Public Spaces**
 - NFN traditional grounds
 - Community parks and beaches
 - Cemeteries
 - Community beautification
 - Playground repairs
 - Recreation maintenance and repairs
 - Parks & Recreation building (deferred)

Housing

Facilities, Maintenance and Housing Department

The Nipissing First Nation Housing Department, in conjunction with Chief and Council, continue to strive towards providing housing programs and services to membership.

NFN On-Reserve Housing Loan Program

This program assists First Nation members with the construction of a new home or the purchase and/or repair of their existing home (in accordance with the Ontario Building Code). The program currently has \$7,468,880.40 in active loans issued to NFN members.

Royal Bank of Canada On-Reserve Lending Program

This program provides funds to NFN members for the construction of a new home or the purchase and/or repair of their existing home (in accordance with the Ontario Building Code). The program currently has \$9,670,047.16 in active loans issued to NFN members.

Caisse Alliance On-Reserve Lending Program

This new lending institution program was added to provide NFN members with another option for a loan to construct a new home, or purchase and/or repair their existing home (in accordance with the Ontario Building Code). Since 2022, this program has loaned \$739,072.50 to NFN members.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) On-Reserve Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) (Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence (HASI) Program, Emergency Repair Program (ERP)

Through the CMHC's RRAP, the Housing Department assists First Nation members with repairs to their homes to bring units up to Ontario Building Code standards. The total amount of funds approved through this program, to date, is \$1,863,908.89. In 2023/24 NFN was allocated \$41,000.

NFN Repair Loan Program

This program was developed to assist First Nation members with the finances necessary to repair their homes in emergency circumstances. Many members access this program to upgrade their homes with necessary repairs and renovations.

Seniors' Minor Repair Grant Program

This program is open to senior members aged sixty and up. This grant is for a maximum of \$8,000.00 to make necessary home repairs and safety upgrades. 28 grants were approved and completed in 2023-2024.

Apartment Rental Units

The Housing Department manages 91 rental units on Nipissing Nation. The goal is to improve services for tenants to ensure they feel secure, enjoy their living space, and are helped with the beautification of apartment properties. This year, many upgrades to NFN rental units were completed, and more projects are planned for the coming years.

Inspections

- Ensure compliance to maximize unit longevity
- Perform regular inspections
- Improve tenant relations
- Address environmental issues
- Collect rent
- Perform housing stock assessments with WABN assistance
- Perform property beautification

Preventive Maintenance

- Be proactive
- Modernize apartment units
- Respond in a timely manner
- Communicate effectively
- Beautify exterior
- Lower repair costs

Fire & Emergency Services

Nipissing First Nation Fire and Emergency Services Department

The Nipissing First Nation Fire Department has 32 firefighters serving three fire stations.

Firefighters train twice a month at each station, where they practice tactical fire training and vehicle maintenance. The training completed this year was NFPA 1001 Training, including water rescue and live fire training. The department intends to explore medical training for NFN firefighters to expand their skill set and offer more assistance to members.



Although the current fire station in Jocko Point has served NFN Fire and Emergency Services well, the growth of the Nation and the department means a new fire station is needed for the Jocko Point and Beaucage communities. A site search is underway and plans are being drawn for a fire station that will better suit the needs of the community and the department.

During 2023-2024, Nipissing First Nation Fire and Emergency Services responded to 23 calls for issues such as structure and vehicle fires, false alarms, and motor vehicle collisions.

NFN firefighters participated in several community events to promote fire prevention and share the importance of home escape plans, working smoke alarms, and monthly smoke alarm testing. The firefighters are happy to visit with NFN members and answer their home fire prevention questions.

GOAL #5 – Stewardship & Protection (South)

Lands, Membership, and Natural Resources

LANDS

Specific Agreement - Additions to Reserves (ATR)

Unsold Lands: Although the department anticipated the return of most of the lands in the Beaucage and Commanda townships (Schedule E & F) to reserve status by the end of 2023, the lands surveyed in Schedule I are still in the approval stage with Natural Resources Canada – a key step in the process. The Environmental Assessment Update for Schedule I lands has taken place, and a Phase II assessment must now be completed. The department is waiting to learn if ISC’s legal team agrees that third-party agreements (Enbridge, HONI, and Bell) will be negotiated once the lands are returned. Ongoing monthly meetings with ISC representatives continue to be held to ensure the file keeps moving forward.

Land Law Development: Land laws are reviewed on a five-year basis for required updates. Some laws currently under review include the amendment to the *Matrimonial Law*, the development of the *Zoning Law* and the *Land Use Plan*, the revision of the *Conduct and Nuisance Law*, and the amendment to the *Grant of Entitlement Law*. The department is taking this opportunity to introduce drafts to the membership for their review, in preparation for the enactment stage in the new year. For this, the department seeks members’ comments and suggestions.

Land Allotments: To select a lot, members must possess plans, estimates (including for water and septic services to the home), and proof of financing to cover the estimates. The home must also meet the standards of the Ontario Building Code or the National Building Code and its associated standards. Plans are then submitted to a housing inspector for review and approval. Members cannot have a third party apply for a lot on their behalf.

Once members meet the criteria to select a lot, they may choose a lot in serviced, residential subdivisions. Garden Village has water and sewer (municipal) services, while other areas require the installation of a septic system and water supply. When members are ready, the department’s GIS Technician attends on-site to identify lot boundaries and have members review and sign the Application for Land form. Members then have one year from the date of signing the form to finish building their home. The chart below depicts current available lots in NFN communities. Please note, these numbers change as more people become ready to build:

Community	June 2023	July 2024
Garden Village	42	38
VLA	30+	30+
Paradise/JP	14	14
Beaucage Sub	11	11
Beaucage Village	1	1
Yellek	11	9
Duchesnay	0	0
Total	109	103

The department hopes to develop more building lots soon.

HUNT CAMPS

The only places outside residential areas where membership can apply for a lot on Nipissing First Nation are in the Beaucage and Commanda townships, for hunt camp purposes. These lots are held by a *Hunt Camp Land Use Permit*.

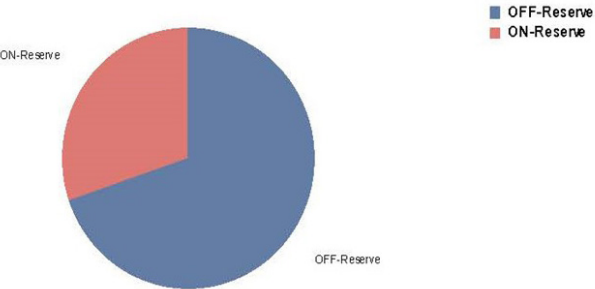
NFN members provide the GIS Technician with GPS readings for their proposed hunt camp locations within the Beaucage or Commanda townships. The application is then prepared and submitted for

approval to the Natural Resources, Environment, and Land managers. If no concerns are identified, the application is sent to the applicant for signature. A Hunt Camp Land Use Permit is issued for the hunt camp based on the amount of land required for the building’s measurements. Reminder: all other lands are open and accessible to the membership. A Hunt Camp Land Use Permit is not ownership nor exclusive possession of the land. NFN and its membership must ensure that habitats and other significant environmental areas are protected.

Housing Statistics: The chart below depicts the overall housing count, up to June 2024, of Nipissing Nation Members who live on reserve.

Community	Number of Homes
Beaucage Subdivision	13
Beaucage Village	7
Duchesnay Village	123
Garden Village	225
Mosquito Creek	3
Paradise Point (JP)	14
Serenity Lane	10
VLA	7
Yellek Village	163
Total NFN Homes	565
Total Lessee Homes	339
Total Homes on NFN	904

NFN Population (on- and off-reserve)



Our People - By ON-OFF Reserve	Count	% of Total
OFF-Reserve	2,334	69.75%
ON-Reserve	1,012	30.25%
TOTAL	3,346	100 %

Membership Statistics: The chart depicts the overall population of Nipissing Nation Members who live on reserve and off as of July 4, 2024.

Wills & Power of Attorney: When members turn 18, it is important they have a Last Will and Testament to direct their loved ones regarding the distribution of their estate, such as their home and any special items they want to ensure are given to specific people. It is also important to have a Power of Attorney for Personal Care that will guide families in decision-making if members become unable able to do so. A Power of Attorney for Property additionally allows family members to assist their relatives in managing their bills, payments, etc. The Land Manger can assist members with creating and obtaining these documents

Estates: A pamphlet was developed to help membership losing a loved one. Members are encouraged to contact the Lands Department for guidance during this time, as staff can assist members with this process. The department can also install grave markers where they are needed. Members who notice their loved ones have no grave markers can contact the department to obtain one.

Postal Service to Nipissing First Nation

Residents: The department is currently working with representatives from Canada Post to research the possibility of creating a postal code to identify

addresses in Nipissing First Nation. The possibility of installing kiosks within operating businesses is also being explored; this would facilitate parcel pickup and drop-off. The Culture, Language & Heritage Department is reviewing community names for Yellek and VLA so that official names are established before finalizing postal services. The Lands Department is also looking to implement new addresses in the new year.

Natural Resources

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Natural Resources Department's working relationship with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) continues to support the department with positive strides in management activities with resources provided through the MOU. The MOU's goal is the recovery of the Lake Nipissing walleye population. Some highlights of how the MOU benefits NFN include:

- Protecting and enhancing the Lake Nipissing walleye population for the benefit of NFN users today and in the future
- Assisting with the implementation of Nipissing Nation Fisheries Law and regulations
- Recognition of the Nipissing Nation Fisheries Law and Chi-Naaknigewin by Government of Ontario
- Upholding NFN values and principles of sustainability as reflected in the Chi-Naaknigewin
- MOU does not degrade, derogate, revoke, or diminish existing treaty rights
- Financial support for training, staffing, and assessment needs
- Technical support to assist with fisheries management

Compliance

NFN Enforcement Officers remain committed to the protection of the Nation's natural resources and work to raise awareness of the NFN Fisheries Law and other regulations with NFN members and the public at large.

As part of their role, Enforcement Officers continue to receive training to ensure they have the necessary skills to safely carry out their duties.

Compliance with the Nipissing Nation Fisheries Law improves every year. Increased compliance is one of the reasons for the positive signs of recovery in Lake Nipissing's walleye population. NFN Enforcement Officers also monitor NFN bylaws for compliance, and assist other NFN departments with policy compliance, as well.

The Natural Resources Department thanks MNR Conservation Officers and the Anishinabek Police Service for assisting its Enforcement Officers with the monitoring of the NFN commercial fishery.

Fall Walleye Index Netting (FWIN)

Since 1998, the NFN Natural Resources Department has worked with the MNR to do Fall Walleye Index Netting. FWIN is an Ontario standardized fisheries assessment method used to assess the health of the walleye population and helps guide NFN with management strategies. A minimum of 48 nets are usually set overnight for a period of 24 hours. Nets consist of different mesh sizes and are set in both deep and shallow areas of the lake. This year, all edible fish were filleted and donated to the NFN Food Bank.

Lake Nipissing Lake Sturgeon Update

Nipissing First Nation completed its final year of lake

sturgeon tagging at the Sturgeon River and Chapman Chutes on the south end of Lake Nipissing. Adult and juvenile lake sturgeon are tagged during assessments. Staff insert an internal tag called a passive integrated transponder or PIT tag. Tagging individual lake sturgeon helps monitor the fish in the event they are recaptured



during future projects; this helps identify growth rates. External tags are also inserted to assist with the identification of lake sturgeon when recaptured.

Additional Species at Risk Act (SARA) Projects

Other species at risk work included:

- Mapping mature Black Ash trees and Black Ash areas within Nipissing First Nation
- Creating a plan to monitor the Monarch butterfly population and habitat availability within NFN
- Mapping critical habitat and occupancy of the Blanding's turtle, Snapping turtle, and Mainland Painted turtle within NFN

Conducting SARA projects such as those listed above helps develop a species-at-risk policy for land use planning, as well as increase awareness of species at risk.

Shoreline Assessments and Permits

Shoreline permits remain issued to residents (i.e., members and non-members lessees) when working in or around water within NFN. Shoreline assessments guarantee that no harmful alterations are made to the shoreline that harm fish and wildlife habitat. Shoreline applications are available at Lands or at Natural Resources.

Hunting

The Natural Resources Department also monitors hunting activities on NFN land. As part of the NFN Hunting Policy, the department reviews and processes requests from guests seeking to hunt on NFN land. Inter-treaty requests to harvest within NFN territory are also processed. The main goal when making a decision about requests is to ensure sustainable wildlife populations that meet the needs of NFN members and their families.

Sustainable Forest Licence (SFL) and Forest Management

NFN is currently managing part of the Nipissing Forest (areas outside NFN administrative lands) as part of an SFL registered under Nipissing Forestry Inc. The NFN Forest Coordinator works closely with Young Forestry Services, the Nipissing Forest Management Unit (NFRM) and EACOM Timber Corporation to harvest portions of the allowable harvest area within Nipissing Forest. NFN is also part of the Nipissing Forest Resource Management (NFRM) Board of Directors.

Mooz Miikan Road Maintenance

The NFN Forest Coordinator works with Young Forestry Services on Mooz Miikan to ensure the roadway suits forestry operations conducted north of NFN administrative lands. This aims to create a safe passage for wood hauling and access to areas or plots for thinning. Road maintenance and upgrades ensure the safety of NFN members, and the protection of forest resources and access.

Tree Risk Assessments

Tree risk assessments are conducted for the NFN community and resident site visits. Their purpose is to monitor trees for maintenance (e.g. removal of tree branches), tree health (e.g. disease), property damage prevention, mitigation, to identify trees that pose a threat to individuals and their property, and to approve tree removal.

Non-Commercial Wood Removal Permits

Each year, wood removal permits are provided to NFN members for harvest within NFN administrative lands for non-commercial use (e.g. firewood, building material, small projects, etc.).

Environment Department Initiatives

Walleye and Lake Sturgeon Spawning Assessments

From April 26 to May 7, 2023, the Environment Department conducted walleye spawning assessments in the Little Sturgeon River and Laronde Creek, with observations revealing the presence of walleye in the Little Sturgeon River for the first time, though none were found in Laronde Creek. The unusual freshet conditions, with fluctuating water levels and temperatures due to heavy precipitation and snowfall, impacted spawning activities. Additionally, a Lake Sturgeon spawning assessment was conducted from June 5 to June 9, but no sturgeon were captured due to significantly reduced water levels following a heat wave. Community members with information about the potential for Lake Sturgeon spawning in this tributary are asked to contact the Environment or Natural Resources Department.

Bat Box Installations

In June 2023, a collaborative effort between the Environment Department and Public Works resulted in the successful installation of bat roosts around the NFN administration building. The primary goal of these installations is to protect suitable habitats for bat species and counterbalance the environmental impacts caused by recent water main upgrades in Garden Village.

Within traditional Nipissing territory and its administrative zones, a diverse range of eight bat species can be found, categorized into two groups: cave bats, which hibernate within their home ranges, and tree bats, which undertake migratory journeys southward to warmer climates during winter.



The following are bat species:

TREE BATS

- Silver-haired Bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)
- Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
- Eastern Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*)

CAVE BATS

- Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
- Tricolored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*)
- Little Brown Myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*)
- Northern Long-eared Myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
- Eastern Small-footed Myotis (*Myotis leibii*)

Bats have experienced an alarming population decline from 2006 to 2023 - one of the most drastic reductions ever observed among mammals, with some species experiencing population reductions of over 90%. This decline is attributed to a Eurasian fungus called *Pseudogymnoascus*, which triggers white-nose syndrome (WNS) in bats. For hibernating bats, WNS proves particularly devastating, disrupting their hibernation patterns and leading to increased energy expenditure, depletion of fat reserves, and, consequently, starvation or exposure to harsh winter conditions.

The ramifications of this fungus extend beyond the well-being of bat populations. Studies have highlighted its impact on ecosystem balance, biodiversity, and the economy, with increased agricultural pest control efforts becoming necessary.

The NFN Environment Department is firmly committed to bat species' stewardship and conservation efforts. The department is persistently monitoring the situation and plans to implement additional bat houses soon.

Those wishing to contribute to local bat population protection can take several actions:

- Refrain from disrupting bats, particularly during hibernation
- Foster critical roosting habitats by constructing or purchasing bat boxes (<http://canadianbathouses.com/>)
- Engage in bat monitoring and protection initiatives (reporting bat roosts to the Environment Department and help with mapping initiatives relating to habitat range)
- Prevent the spread of WNS by disinfecting clothes before entering potential bat hibernation sites (e.g. caves)
- Reduce night lighting (capping lights, using low-wattage bulbs, installing sensors or timers on outdoor lights)

These collective efforts can make a positive impact on bat conservation and safeguard these invaluable creatures for future generations.



Moose Fecal Pellet Count Index (FPI)

In 2023, the Lands, Resources and Environment departments continued to work on the Moose and Climate Study, investigating the local moose population and the impacts associated with climate change. The first phase of this study was completed in May 2020 with a Fecal Pellet Count Index (FPI) in the Jocko Point

Raised Beach Complex. Following the success of this study, the department conducted a second FPI in Beaucage Township in the spring of 2022. A third and final FPI was completed in the spring of 2023 for the Commanda Township. For most of May 2023, field crews composed of the Environment and Natural Resources departments carried out fecal counts along a total of 42 randomized transects within the entire Commanda Township.

The FPI protocol involves the selection of randomized sites within a defined study area. Randomized sites are then paired with a random azimuth (compass direction) to direct researchers in a specific direction at each location. A transect, 150 m in length, is then travelled, with a 1 m circular plot being searched for fecal pellets of moose. These circular plots are spaced every 5m for a total of 30 plots being sampled per transect/site.

Completing the Commanda FPI initiative represents the final baseline inventory of the relative abundance, distribution, and health of the moose population within the administrative areas of Nipissing First Nation. Data for the Jocko Raised Beach Complex, and the Beaucage and Commanda townships will be analyzed in the fall of 2024 and will be accompanied by a technical report.

Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring (MSIM)

After the success of the 2021-22 pilot project for Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring, the Lands, Natural Resources, and Environment departments are pleased to announce the project's continuation for the 2023-24 field season. The focus of the 2023 field season was primarily on Beaucage Township, its tributaries (creeks, streams, and rivers), and linear corridors (railway lands).

In 2023, 18 cameras were deployed and organized into three nodal systems. Throughout the testing processes, cameras received regular care and maintenance, and a dedicated database was established to facilitate the storage and sharing of files.



The 2023 MSIM program had 510 wildlife detections during its operation and 49 species detections while cameras were recording. The most abundant species captured by the network included the bull moose, adult black bear, moose cow, and white-tailed deer. Other highlights from the inventory include the red fox, fisher, great blue heron, coyote, wild turkey, sandhill crane, North American river otter, golden eagle, and even the painted turtle.

Northshore Water Quality and Response Program



EMF units ready to be deployed into Great North Bay, Lake Nipissing 2023.

In 2022, the Environment Department launched the Northshore Water Quality and Response Program to monitor water quality in Northshore tributaries and Great North Bay. In collaboration with EM-Fluids, five EMF-1000 units were deployed near the Little Sturgeon River to enhance gas exchange in the water, improve oxygen levels, and suppress algal growth. The units collected data on dissolved oxygen, water temperature and location. In 2023, two AquaRealTime algae trackers were added to monitor algae and environmental conditions. Preliminary results showed no algae and stable nutrients levels. Data from these efforts will be analyzed in a 2024 report and more trackers will be deployed to warn of potential algae blooms. The community is reminded not to tamper with the units and to report any issues to the Environment Department.

One Water Project

The One Water Project, funded by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, aims to increase water resilience through rainwater harvesting by fostering collaboration between Nipissing First Nation and three Indigenous communities in Mexico. The project addresses water scarcity issues in Mexico, where millions lack reliable access to water, and in First Nation communities in Canada, which struggle with safe drinking water access. The initiative focuses on building local capacity for rainwater harvesting, increasing adoption among Indigenous communities, and fostering international ties around water resilience strategies. Since its launch, the project has made significant progress, including intercultural exchanges, technical development, and community involvement, with installations planned for 2024. The project promotes collaboration across diverse partners and aims to create sustainable water solutions by 2025.



Rainwater Harvesting System Installation

Invasive Species Eradication Program

Invasive Phragmite Management

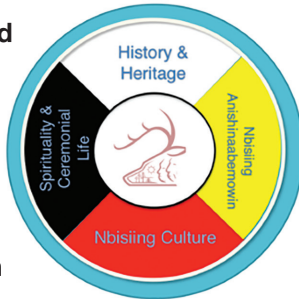
The Environment Department has been actively mapping, documenting, and eradicating invasive species, particularly phragmites, within NFN administrative boundaries and traditional territories. Using unmanned aerial vehicles, the department successfully mapped large areas of invasive phragmites along shorelines, distinguishing them from dormant native vegetation. Grants awarded between 2021-2023 helped the department acquire equipment and software for eradication efforts. Collaborations with organizations like Georgian Bay Forever and the Invasive Species Center provided training for NFN summer students and enhanced eradication methods. In 2023, the department achieved its first complete eradication of an invasive phragmites colony, treating an area of 1,518 m² using mechanical removal techniques.



GOAL #6 – Culture & Language

Culture, Nishnaabemwin, and Heritage

The Nishnaabe ga-bi-naadziwaadgamik had a fascinating year at Nipissing First Nation. The department continuously strives to reach the community through cultural arts, Nishnaabemwin classes, and much more. Nibisiing debendaagziwaad are the priority when it comes to the work the department performs. This includes a commitment to inclusivity demonstrated by inviting community Elders from different families to lead and participate in activities. This year, many big strides were made toward building the department's team and increasing capacity for community programming. The department welcomed three new staff members in the 2023-24 fiscal year.



Demin Giizis (June)

- Nishnaabe Giizhgad
- Full moon ceremony
- Lodge dressing
- Summer Solstice

Miinan Giizis (July)

- Summer Program powwow sweat
- Staff Nishnaabemwin classes started
- Full moon ceremony

Datkaagminag Giizis (August)

- Powwow
- Open sews
- Staff sweat
- Wiigwaas basket-making
- Full moon ceremony

Mdaamin Giizis (September)

- Community Nishnaabemwin classes started

Binakwii Giizis (October)

- Fall Cultural Arts retreat preparation

Atigmeg Giizis (November)

- Monday morning staff initiative
- Sweat lodge ceremony
- Feast of the Dead – Boowin wiisninin
- Paint night
- Cultural Arts retreat
- Midewiwin ceremonies



Nmebin Giizis (April)

- Sweat lodge
- Beading social

Waabgwanii Giizis (May)

- Full moon ceremony
- Water talk
- Sweat lodge ceremony
- Feasting of headdress
- Women's pipe gathering circle

Manidoo Giizis (December)

- Paint workshops
- Boy Chief jacket workshops

Kchi-Booni (January)

- Community Nishnaabemwin classes

Mkwa Giizis (February)

- New sewers mitt workshop
- Nimkodaading ceremony (welcoming spring)

Zisbaaktoke Giizis (March)

- Round Dance (partnership with North Bay Regional Health Centre)
- Lanyard beading workshop
- Evening teachings
- Ribbon skirt workshop
- Full moon ceremony
- Anishinaabemowin-Teg conference

Weekly

- Staff fires
- Monday morning weekly smudge and songs
- Staff Nishnaabemwin classes
- Community Nishnaabemwin classes

Apart from Nibisiing Nation's culture and language strategy, the department plans to establish programming for members to reclaim, revitalize and restore Nibisiing Nishnaabemwin and culture to a place that will ensure its practical support, use, and survival for seven generations. However, this cannot be accomplished overnight. These efforts will take time, patience, and sustained dedication. These goals for which the department strives require commitment from all levels of the Nation, including NFN Council, administration staff, and, most importantly, debendaagziwaad and the personal motivation they carry. The department extends a heartfelt miigwech to debendaagziwaad for their dedication to the culture and Nishnaabemwin throughout the past year.

2023 Powwow

Last year, the NFN powwow focused heavily on living in a good way, helping those that need help in the community. Culture & Language was able to secure sponsorships to host a Jingle Dress special. Over 50 dancers registered for this very meaningful event. This Jingle Dress special brought the community together in an evening-style social for all to enjoy. It is incredible to think that the NFN powwow will celebrate its 36th anniversary in 2024. Miigwech to those who attend the powwow celebration to gather Nations and honour the Nishnaabe way. Miigwech, also, to the community, who always make the NFN powwow so memorable.



GOAL #7 – Health & Well-Being (North)

NFN Health Services

The Nipissing First Nation Health Services Department has undergone several staff and organizational changes in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Ongoing and expanding programs have been designed to meet the wellness requirements and desires of the community, both on and off reserve.



Engagement with community members of all ages drives the Health Services team's values and priorities.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program for eligible First Nations and Inuit people in Ontario plays a crucial role in ensuring equitable and improved access to healthcare services. These benefits encompass a range of essential services not covered by the province, addressing the unique healthcare needs of Indigenous communities. From prescription medications and dental care to mental health support and medical transportation, these benefits are vital in promoting the overall well-being of individuals and their families. Recognizing the historical injustices and disparities in healthcare access, these benefits signify a commitment to reconciliation and health equity, striving to bridge the gap in healthcare outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Ontario.

To access NIHB, NFN community members may contact the NIHB Program Coordinator at the Lawrence Commanda Health Centre (LCHC). Both on- and off-reserve members are eligible for NIHB.

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Health Services served 20-30 long distance medical travel applicants per

month. A total of 2,062 local medical trips to North Bay and Sturgeon Falls were completed for eligible members. For both after-hours and Sudbury trips, 216 trips were recorded. Other benefit applications processed included assisting NFN members with the purchase of medical supplies. Prior to the end of the fiscal year, three new Ford Explorers were purchased to support the Medical Transportation Program's growing needs.

Medical Health Fund

The Nipissing First Nation Medical Health Fund was established to provide financial assistance for health-related expenses not covered by other health benefit plans or funding sources. Approvals are subject to the availability of funds per fiscal year.

Healthy Living

Jordan's Principle

Jordan's Principle plays a vital role in addressing the needs of First Nations children by ensuring there are no gaps in the services provided by the government. This principle extends support to various areas, including mental health, special education, dental care, physical therapy, speech therapy, medical equipment, and physiotherapy. First Nations children residing either on or off reserve are eligible for the program regardless of socio-economic status.

Nipissing First Nation has accessed Jordan's Principle funds to support several important services, including speech services, psychoeducational assessments, respite care, dental surgeons, medical devices, educational devices, transportation services, foot care, educational assistant support, sensory-based therapy, orthodontic care, and tutoring for NFN children. This financial support has been instrumental in meeting the diverse needs of NFN children and ensuring their well-being. This past year, NFN assisted 16 families with funding.

Maternal Child Health

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies and Healthy Children Program under the Maternal Child Health Nurse is achieving NFN's Strategic Goal # 7 related to health. The program's work plan is reviewed yearly and adjusted/modified accordingly as it engages with and supports the community. The Maternal Child Health Program's goal is to ensure families from the prenatal period to those with children six years old have access to a range of prevention and early intervention services to give children a better start in life. The program connects families requiring assistance with the appropriate supports and services in the community, and offers screening to identify those at risk. Participation in this program is voluntary.

2023-2024 Program Activity:

- **Education** was offered to prepare parents and caregivers during pregnancy; this was done through the distribution and review of information packages. Parenting and child development screening sessions were completed during home or office visits.
- **Support and linkage** services included information about possible community resources to meet the needs of individual families: Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) breastfeeding support by the Maternal Child Health Nurse, postnatal home visits, immunizations, Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHBHC) Milk Coupon Program, One Kids Place referrals, and creating connections for primary care with a nurse practitioner/family physician were established through the North Bay Indigenous Hub.
- **Postpartum support** services were offered to those who gave consent to the local Public Health Unit to be contacted by the Maternal Child Health Nurse. Home visits occurred shortly after hospital discharge. Nine newborn babies from NFN were visited and each received a Welcome Home baby bag containing several baby items, along with postpartum and newborn information. Infant feeding support and education were provided on an as-needed basis.
- **Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHBHC) Milk Coupon Program** was completed every three months. Milk coupons are accepted at any store that carry Beatrice Milk. This year, a total of 537 milk coupons were distributed to participating families.
- **Prenatal Classes:** The Maternal Child Health Nurse provided two group prenatal education sessions to three families, as well as one-on-one education sessions during the 2023-2024 year. Prenatal education class topics include planning for delivery, things to expect/changes during pregnancy, nutrition and physical activity, labour and delivery, mental health, postpartum, infant feeding, newborn safety, and transitioning to parenthood.
- **Infant Massage:** The Maternal Child Health Nurse has offered two rounds of infant massages during 2023-2024. These classes were well-received, with six participating families. Infant massage provides a loving connection between parents/caregivers and their babies, strengthening their attachment as the babies grow.
- **Maternal Mental Health Week Social Media Event (May 2023):** To recognize and raise awareness about maternal mental health, social media posts with accompanying questions were circulated every day from May 1 to May 5. This allowed community members to learn about maternal mental health while having the opportunity to answer questions for the chance to win daily prizes.
- **Parent/Caregiver Infant CPR (November 2023):** DS Training North facilitated a parent/caregiver infant/child CPR workshop to six families. Among the topics covered were how to prepare for emergencies; the Red Cross Check, Call, Care process; infant and child choking; infant and child CPR; and an overview of medical issues (asthma, anaphylaxis, minor injuries such as bumps and bruises, and common childhood illnesses).

- **Health Fair (May 2023):** The Maternal Child Health Nurse attended the NFN Annual Health Services Health Fair and provided an information display on oral health and 24-hour movement guidelines, with tips and physical activity printouts for families. Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss for various ages were provided, as well as Anishinaabe colouring books, crayons, and bubbles.
- **Parenting Support:** One-on-one parenting support, focusing on developmental milestones, ageappropriate activities, child-led play, nursery rhymes, and the introduction of solid foods was provided.
- **Car Seat Clinics:** Car seat clinics, in collaboration with Early Childhood Education Services and Constable Tyler Commanda of Anishinabek Police Services, occurred in June 2023. Two clinics were held: one at the Ojibway Daycare and one at Couchie Memorial Daycare. A total of 15 car seats were checked and adjusted, if necessary.
- **Annual Baby Review:** New families were provided with a baby edition in the February Enkamgak (community newsletter), where the newest NFN members were welcomed.
- **Welcoming Babies Celebration:** The annual Welcoming Babies celebration was held in Duchesnay, where eight babies born in 2023 were welcomed. Teachings about parenting, water, and strawberries were provided.
- **Immunization Program:** The Maternal Child Health Nurse provided immunizations to children between two months and six years of age. 32 child immunizations were administered between April 2023 and March 2024. The Maternal Child Health Nurse also assisted the Community Health Nurse with school-based immunizations, as well as RSV, Pneumovax®23, influenza, and COVID-19 vaccine clinics.

Community Health Nurse (CHN)

The CHN is responsible for meeting with clients about various concerns, treatments, and assessments. This includes immunizations, health assessments, diabetes information, medical injections, blood pressure monitoring, referrals, health education, and wound care. This year, the Community Health Nurse supported the Maternal Child Health Program, became certified with the Canadian Nurses Association as a psychiatric and mental health nurse, and continued to provide support to the Withdrawal Management Program.

2023-2024 Program Activity:

- **NOSM Learners:** Two Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) University learners completed their four-week Integrated Community Experience placement in Nipissing First Nation. Students received 6-8 hours of clinical experience with staff each week, and 10-12 hours of cultural experience with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders.
- **Respiratory Report:** Multiple influenza and COVID-19 vaccine clinics were hosted throughout NFN. A total of 297 influenza and 272 COVID-19 vaccines were administered to NFN members and affiliates through clinics, LCHC appointments, and home visits. NFN continues to provide rapid antigen at-home test kits and Point-of-Care COVID-19 tests at the LCHC to monitor and track COVID-19 in the community.
- **Immunization Program:** Every student attending Nibisiing Secondary School was audited for their school-based immunization status, beginning in January 2024. The CHN attended the school and provided individual education to students who were eligible for immunizations. Multiple school visits were made around student schedules. 20 students were immunized, with 45 vaccines administered. Follow-ups will continue throughout the summer months for local students and in September 2024 when students return from summer break. Nurses

administered school-based vaccines for off-reserve students for protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.

- **Health Promotion:** The CHN and the Gwekwaadziwin Registered Practical Nurse (RPN), in partnership with the North Bay Aids Committee, hosted two events in NFN to raise awareness, provide education, help decrease stigma, and offer screening opportunities for HIV and Hepatitis C.

Community Health hosted two lunch and learn workshops, in partnership with Canadian Hearing Services, where 23 participants were provided with hearing loss education and the opportunity for hearing screening.

Ongoing health information is included in Enkamgak (community newsletter) and social media to keep community members up to date with current health information.

- **Health Protection:** As positive cases for measles in the province began to increase, the CHN provided educational information to NFN employees at a Maamwi Kidwin (staff meeting) and provided information to the public in Enkamgak.

To increase protection for staff and community, wall-mounted sharps containers were purchased to be installed in the bathrooms at the LCHC, Band Office, Giyak Moseng – The Right Path, True Self, Duchesnay Community Hall, and Nbisiing Secondary School.

- **Environmental Health:** The CHN works alongside the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Environmental Health Officer responsible for responding to requests for water samples, environmental concerns, and animal incidents. When responding to animal incidents, the CHN ensures that victims are up to date with vaccines and given the proper medical attention when required, and that animals remain in good health.

- **Youth Life Promotion Event:** A full-day youth event focusing on life promotion and suicide prevention was held in March 2024. Youth aged 12 – 24 received cultural and life promotion teachings, and participated in a traditional birch bark craft that incorporated the Nishnaabemwin language.

Recreation

The Recreation Program provides short- and long-term programming for NFN members and affiliates of all ages. The program's goal is to increase the community's physical and social activity.

2023-2024 Program Activity:

- **Snowshoeing** for youth aged 9-16.
- **Traditional Storytelling and Knowledge Transfer** with three different Elders for members of all ages.
- **Hockey Equipment Giveaway:** Free hockey equipment was distributed to members of all ages to increase accessibility and participation in hockey. 37 members received equipment.
- **Blue Jays Senior Trip:** This overnight trip to Toronto occurred in the summer of 2023 and allowed NFN seniors and a guest of their choice to attend a Blue Jays baseball game.
- **Summer Children's Program:** Children aged 6-12 explored different activities to learn new skills, arts, and crafts.
- **Snowshoe Rental Giveaway:** Ski and snowshoe equipment was distributed to members of all ages to help them engage in new sports.
- **Niagara Falls Adult Trip:** During the fall of 2023, NFN members aged 18 and up were provided a free trip to Niagara Falls to engage in various activities.
- **Summer Youth Sport Nights:** Sports activities for members aged 10-17 were held at the baseball field in Garden Village.
- **Senior Craft Club:** This club was held for members 55 years and older and allowed them to gather on a weekly basis to socialize and create crafts.

- **Tai Chi:** This program was held for members aged 18 and up. Sessions were held on a weekly basis at the LCHC.
- **Super Bowl Jersey Draw:** To promote engagement, NFN members were challenged to predict the winner of the Super Bowl in the comment section of a Facebook post. The victorious NFN member was awarded a custom NFL jersey of their choice.
- **March Break Family Movie:** Families attended a screening of Kung Fu Panda 4 at the movie theatre during the March break.
- **COVID-19 Post-Pandemic One-Time Benefit** for adult fitness and child recreation received over 1,000 applications.

Diabetes Wellness

This year, community events and initiatives provided opportunities for both adults and youth to learn about diabetes and its associated risks through a medical as well as a cultural lens.

Nutritious food and blood sugar screening clinics were also provided this year in collaboration with the Community Nutritionist, Community Health Nurse, and Maternal Child Health Nurse. During other events, education was given about healthy food, living a healthy lifestyle, traditional health, diabetes screening, eye health, and nutrition.

2023-2024 Program Statistics:

- 461 Good Food Boxes were provided
- 742 people attended Diner's Club
- 8 youth participated in the Amazing Race event
- 27 people attended the A love for Yourself event
- 27 people attended the Eye Health and Screening event

Diabetes Foot Care Program

The Diabetes Foot Care Program works with RPNs trained in advanced foot care to coordinate services for clients residing in NFN. The eligibility for foot care through the program requires a diagnosis of diabetes and referral from a medical health professional, being over the age of 55 (or a diagnosis of diabetes with neuropathy if under the age of 55), and/or a medical condition or diagnosis that impairs an individual's ability to care for their feet. Foot care clinics happen monthly and the frequency of foot care treatment is determined by the foot care nurse's findings. Home visits are offered to members in local long-term care facilities, in hospital, or in the client's home (if physically unable to present themselves to the Health Centre).

2023-2024 Program Statistics:

- Number of Clients: 69
- Number of Clinics: 31
- Number of Appointments: 267 (74 home visits and 193 clinic visits)

Giyak Moseng

Giyak Moseng - The Right Path Counselling and Prevention Services strives to provide professional, culturally safe, trauma-informed services guided by Indigenous knowledge around mental health and addictions wellness. Programs and services continue to be grounded in a framework of culture as treatment, and includes outreach, harm reduction, and community withdrawal management, all within a service integration wiidooktaadyang philosophy.

A Family Therapist position within the Child and Youth Program was developed in response to the recognized need to better support parents and caregivers for children and youth connected to services at The Right Path. Not unique to Giyak Moseng, human resource challenges continue to exist with staffing and recruitment efforts; however, the program looks forward to continued growth and expansion within

Wiidooktaadyang and Gwekwadziwin, with additional positions set to be created in the next fiscal year. Giyak Moseng added the specialized services of a consulting psychiatrist to support program staff and the complex needs of clients in service, which the program hopes to continue in the future.

Giyak Moseng, as a program, continues to offer a hybrid approach to services, which include in-person and secure virtual platforms (i.e. Ontario Telemedicine Network). Included in this hybrid approach to services is the shift toward opportunities for staff to work from home. Until the vision for permanent office space in the NFN east end is realized, consistent access to space at Duchesnay Community Hall has been maintained to support equal access to services for members residing in the community's east end.

Observed trends in relation to social determinants of health such as income, food security, and shelter have been challenging for community members. Increased substance use and mental health crisis concerns have become more frequent and are exacerbated by a growing trend of homeless or precariously housed individuals. This steady and increased demand for services continues to require the management of a waitlist for both adult wellness and child and youth services while the program works toward a full staff complement.

Within this reporting period, there were 90 referrals to the program, with 41 new admissions and a combined 79 adult, children, and youth on the waitlist for services in the fiscal year. In addition to registered clients, staff provided 472 brief service contacts to 173 unique service encounters without an open file. This represents a 13% decrease from the last fiscal year. 171 virtual sessions via the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) were recorded. Although the use of technology has allowed Giyak Moseng to continue to support individuals, not everyone is well served by virtual contact. As a result, the program continues to be mindful of the parameters of access and eligibility.

Niiwiidooktaadmin

Niiwiidooktaadmin (the Critical Incident Response Team) has transitioned under the purview of the Giyak Moseng manager. During this reporting period, two formal responses occurred upon request and were both managed by the Giyak Moseng team.”

Family Well-Being Program/Wiidooktaadyang

Wiidooktaadyang: “*We are helping one another*” is the Nipissing First Nation service integration model that assists members and their families seeking enhanced services and support.

The Wiidooktaadyang model is a client-centered, wrap-around approach that supports the collaboration of departments to plan, implement, support, and monitor care plans that promote individual/family strengths and advance well-being. The model uses a cultural foundation, applying a holistic lens to address mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, social, and economic well-being.

In 2023-2024, the Family Well-Being Program coordinated service integration for 16 community members requiring multiple-service support. A total of 44 Service Integration Team meetings were held with NFN programs and services, including external service providers, to assist members in achieving their wellness goals..

Furthermore, the Family Well-Being Program provided 43 brief services to community members, encompassing advocacy/support, inquiry for services, referrals, and requests for information.

The Family Well-Being Program, in partnership with Walking Alongside Services as well as the Family Support and Kendaaswin programs, held multiple family events within the community, including:

- Family baking challenge
- Park socials
- Yellek & Garden Village

- Family pancake breakfasts
- Family movie night
- Family skate night

Alongside community programming, fraud prevention and financial management workshops were offered to community members in partnership with NFN Administration.

Community Outreach Program

The Community Outreach Program began in November 2022 to address a gap in services presented by clients of Giyak Moseng. The program's goal is to assist underserved community members, build trusting relationships with them, and help them access the services and supports they need. The program supports access to basic needs, including housing, meals, health, treatment, as well as legal and financial needs, all while promoting self-sufficiency as much as possible. This encourages and supports individuals to make healthy choices and develop healthy habits through harm reduction methods.

This year, Outreach experienced substantial growth and now has two full-time Outreach Workers. Approximately 70 people were supported through brief service, drop-ins, and transportation services. The following four key areas are supported by the program:

Food Security

One of the Outreach Program's goals is to address the known food insecurity occurring in the community and identify gaps. There are four pillars for food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. This year, over 750 frozen meals were handed out. Hot lunches were also provided once a week during the winter and fresh lunches were distributed during the summer months. The program also celebrated holidays with those who access the program. Approximately 20 people attend our Christmas dinner, and about the same for our Easter dinner. Although the program had a partnership with the Gathering Place in North Bay to provide weekly food security bags, this program was

temporarily shut down in November. Nevertheless, Outreach helps ensure food bank orders are completed and submitted promptly and provides transportation to grocery stores to purchase groceries.

Transportation

It is essential that individuals who access our program can attend their appointments. Transportation to essential appointments has increased with supporting the Gwekwadziwin, Wiidooktaadyang, and Right Path programs and services. Transportation includes medical appointments, cultural programming, counselling, justice programs, life skills programming, visitation appointments, and all other appointments that clients must attend for their own wellbeing.

Justice

During the previous fiscal year, 32 individuals were involved with justice support from Nipissing First Nation. Of these 32 individuals, 20 are new to the program, 9 are receiving only justice support, and the remaining 23 completed an intake or are receiving ongoing services with The Right Path.

Life Skills Education

Life skills are an essential part of the Community Outreach Program. Basic life skill training focuses on developing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and coping mechanisms to

effectively manage stress, setbacks, and conflicts. By enhancing these skills, individuals are better equipped to handle difficult situations, maintain mental

well-being, and build strong relationships. Outreach provides weekly life skills workshops on topics such as stress management, healthy relationships, conflict

resolution, budgeting, and self-esteem - to name but a few. The program has had between 2-5 weekly participants. Incorporating cultural programming into Outreach is important to address cultural loss and

assist with strong concepts of identity. Examples of cultural programming include ribbon skirt/shirt making, beading activities, as well as supporting and attending cultural celebrations and ceremonies. This upcoming fiscal year, it is the program's goal to offer life skills programming in east end communities.

Child, Youth, and Family Services

Using a trauma-informed, culturally based approach, counselling services were provided to children and youth in the Nipissing, Dokis, and Temagami First Nations. This involved regular travel to communities and remote work in numerous schools. Giyak Moseng – The Right Path continues to maintain a waitlist for children and youth.

Complex needs for youth were related to anxiety, low mood, grief and loss, and the impacts of parental substance use. Recognizing the need for additional support to meet the complex needs of children and youth, cultural land-based teachings and traditional crafts such as ribbon skirt sewing, moccasin making, and feast bag sewing were offered by community grandmothers and Elders. Eight teachings and workshops were held with youth and their family members over the year. Moreover, young girls were supported with berry teachings and some made the year-long commitment to complete a berry fast to mark an important rite of passage and receive teachings and support during this transitional stage in their lives. Future collaborative partnerships are being explored with other departments in NFN to offer rites of passage teachings to youth and their families.

Child and Youth Counsellors also provide referrals and support to youth to access telepsychiatry services with SickKids hospital for assessments, consultations, and treatment planning.

Child, Youth, and Family Services understands that an entire family plays a role in supporting each other's wellness. The Family Therapist position was created to provide therapy to families

of children and youth accessing services with Giyak Moseng. In addition to therapy, family workshops, circles, and land-based teachings for parents and caregivers were also introduced.

Harm Reduction Services

Harm reduction is an approach used to reduce the secondary risks and harms associated with substance use for individuals using substances, as well as their families and communities. This is an approach that The Right Path adopted to be more inclusive of individuals who may not be ready to cease their substance use, but would benefit from supports that promote wellness. Strategies such as the Needle Syringe Program, Safe Sharps Program, and naloxone distribution are harm reduction strategies being used to address the impact of the ongoing opioid crisis within NFN and broader communities. In 2023-2024, the program continued to observe increases in the use of the Needle Syringe Program, naloxone uptake, and the use of sharps disposal bins located in the community.

Harm reduction is an approach used to reduce the secondary risks and harms associated with substance use for individuals using substances, as well as their families and communities. This is an approach that The Right Path adopted to be more inclusive of individuals who may not be ready to cease their substance use, but would benefit from supports that promote wellness. Strategies such as the Needle Syringe Program, Safe Sharps Program, and naloxone distribution are harm reduction strategies being used to address the impact of the ongoing opioid crisis within NFN and broader communities. In 2023-2024, the program continued to observe increases in the use of the Needle Syringe Program, naloxone uptake, and the use of sharps disposal bins located in the community.

Harm reduction is an approach used to reduce the secondary risks and harms associated with substance use for individuals using substances, as well as their families and communities. This is an approach that The Right Path adopted to be more inclusive of individuals who may not be ready to cease their substance use, but would benefit from supports that promote wellness.

Strategies such as the Needle Syringe Program, Safe Sharps Program, and naloxone distribution are harm reduction strategies being used to address the impact of the ongoing opioid crisis within NFN and broader communities. In 2023–2024, the program continued to observe increases in the use of the Needle Syringe Program, naloxone uptake, and the use of sharps disposal bins located in the community.

The program witnessed a growing number of community members experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, and financial instability. The demand for snacks and hygiene items (comfort kits) continues to increase from one year to the next. This year, there were 584 client contacts and 806 comfort kits were distributed. This represents a 64.32% increase in the demand for these instrumental supports compared to the previous year.

Finally, with reports that unregulated drug supplies are becoming more toxic, the demand for overdose prevention training and naloxone kits remained high. There are ongoing efforts to ensure NFN staff and the community have access to naloxone kits and overdose prevention training. 178 individuals received overdose prevention training this year, while 198 naloxone kits and 50 naloxone refill doses were distributed within the community. This reflects an increase in training as well as kit and refill distribution. It is anticipated that the trend toward a more toxic, unregulated drug supply will continue and overdose prevention strategies, such as naloxone, will remain necessary to manage the harms associated with opioid use.

The changing landscape of the opioid/drug crisis is constantly evolving and requires a comprehensive strategy that changes to meet the demands of emerging concerns and keeps all community members safe. This is a complex issue that calls for a multi-faceted strategy to address the needs of those who use substances, their families, and the community. The focus must include the social determinants of health – particularly housing, income, and food security. In addition, a four-pillar approach encompassing prevention, treatment, enforcement, and harm

reduction strategies, reflected through policies and practices that incorporate NFN traditional values, are required to address the complexities experienced within the community.

Gwekwaadziwin (Culturally Based Community Withdrawal Management)

The Gwekwaadziwin program provides cultural and clinical supports to NFN members seeking assistance with reducing or stabilizing their substance use or seeking to prevent relapse. During this fiscal year, the program saw a 22% growth in the number of clients served, and provided 74 separate group sessions throughout the year, including canoe building, ceremonies, harvesting, counselling, crafting, and traditional teachings. Eight contracted Traditional Healing Practitioners and Helpers assisted with the implementation of these group sessions.

The Gwekwaadziwin program has maintained a consistent caseload during the past several years and nine of the people who access traditional services have been with the program for at least two years.

The program's opioid replacement therapy expanded as clients were facilitated access to rapid addiction medicine services through a partnering physician and pharmacy. The program continues to offer advocacy during physician appointments and teach medication management. To broaden the scope of addiction medicine services, clinical staff completed an alcohol withdrawal management course through the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). The RN also completed a wound care course to meet caseload demands and to provide direct services to clients rather than outsourcing them.

Gwekwaadziwin coordinators and the RN have been part of several service integration treatment plans alongside The Right Path's Family Well-Being and Justice Support programs. This collaborative approach for the complex needs of clients resulted in better treatment outcomes and program retention.

Home and Community Care

The Home and Community Care (HCC) program provides home support to enhance the health and wellness of debendaagziwaad. Home support services assist debendaagziwaad with independent living and the ability to stay in the community. The HCC program's vision is to help enhance NFN members' self-determination, self-reliance, and holistic well-being to be more responsible for their own care, and to live more productive, useful lives in their own homes.

The HCC program offers a wide range of supports including personal care, home management/maintenance, in-home respite, friendly visiting, caregiver support, home care nursing, transportation, client assessments and case management, and medical loan equipment. This year, HCC has assisted approximately 202 clients with one or more of its offered services.

HCC personal support workers (PSWs) also provided 12,743 hours of home support service to member clients and nurses provided over 5,460 hours of direct service. On a weekly basis, HCC PSWs complete an average of 193 home visits.

Eligibility

HCC provides services to registered Nipissing First Nation members who live on reserve and meet the qualifications for various services. Generally, services are available for those who have been discharged from the hospital, have an illness and need follow-up care, or are unable to safely provide personal care and home support for themselves.

Services Provided

- **Assessments**

Assessments involve gathering information by talking with clients and families. It also involves coordinating with clinicians, reviewing health history, and performing physical check-ups.

- **Case Management**

Case management ensures that the care plans developed are specific to clients' health care needs. Nurses also assist with navigating the health care system.

- **Home Care Nursing**

Home care nurses help within home and community settings. They teach and guide clients and their families while including them in the creation of a care plan that works with their lifestyle.

- **Personal Care**

Personal care assists with bathing, foot care, medication reminders, lifting and transferring items, as well as daily living support.

- **Home Support**

Home support assists with light housekeeping, laundry, and meal preparation.

- **Caregiver Respite Services**

Respite care ensures clients are supported with their needs and provides some down time for caregivers.

- **Non-Medical Transportation**

Transportation is provided for clients to complete errands related to shopping, banking, and other personal appointments.

- **Security Checks**

Security checks are provided by personal support workers in person or by phone when clients need assistance.

- **Help Line**

The help line provides immediate help with the push of a Personal Help Button. This alerts a dispatch centre that makes a call for emergency assistance, or contacts the client's family members, friends, or neighbors.

• **Seasonal Maintenance**

This service is for qualifying members under the age of 65 and consists of performing property maintenance work such as lawn cutting, snow removal, and seasonal cleaning. NFN members requiring seasonal maintenance service may contact the office for assessment.

• **Assisted Living**

Assisted living provides additional care to high-risk seniors who live alone and can reside at home with the support of personal care and home support services on a 24-hour basis.

• **Loan Cupboard**

This program loans medical equipment to HCC clients on a short-term basis. It supplies wheelchairs, walkers, walking canes, and a variety of other equipment.

Training

This year, two HCC nurses attended an Indigenous dementia conference. These nurses were then able to share what they had learned with HCC PSWs through a four-week training program, which increased dementia education and awareness for HCC staff.

Two PSWs also received de-escalation, personal protection, and boundary training to be better equipped for handling crisis situations.



OJIBWAY WOMEN'S LODGE
Respect, Security, Harmony

Ojibway Women's Lodge (OWL)

The Ojibway Women's Lodge serves as a secure haven for women and children facing domestic violence and offers essential programs, including a 10-bed emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis line, crisis support and outreach services, as well as a Transitional Housing Support Program.

The Transitional Housing Support Program, integral to the Ojibway Women's Lodge, provides critical assistance to women and children transitioning out of OWL's residential services. Simultaneously, the Crisis Support and Outreach Program extends its reach beyond residential services, offering interim counselling, court support, and access to essential resources such as food banks. These initiatives serve as steadfast advocates for women and families, facilitating connections to vital financial, legal, medical, and educational supports.

The Transitional Housing Support Program additionally collaborates with the Crisis Support and Outreach Program to conduct empowering group sessions for women, including workshops on self-care, grief edu-therapy, healthy relationships, budgeting, and cooking on a budget. Facilitated by OWL staff, in partnership with NFN community counselling and Walking Alongside Services, these sessions - such as Gii-Waam-Daan Nii-Gii-Gid (I Saw I Shall Speak) and Changing Patterns - foster communal healing and personal growth.

Having been in the same location for nearly four decades, the Ojibway Women's Lodge continues to enhance its facilities through ongoing upgrades and renovations. Recent improvements include updated security systems (such as new cameras and alarms), the integration of a tankless hot water system, and minor plumbing and electrical enhancements.

Highlights

Cindy Couchie Memorial Family Barbeque The Annual Family Barbeque was renamed in memory of Cindy Couchie and honors Cindy's dedication to OWL's clients and residents throughout her career, as she always ensured the BBQ was a joyous event for everyone. This year, the barbeque supported families and children with back-to-school essentials, including school snacks, backpacks, family planners, and school supplies.

Truth and Reconciliation Day

Elder Debbie Beaucage led a meaningful talking circle on Truth and Reconciliation Day, offering prayers and insights into this important commemoration. Staff, residents, and Outreach clients shared their personal reflections on the significance of the day.

Sisters in Spirit Candlelight Vigil

Annually, on October 4th, the Ojibway Women's Lodge hosts the Sisters in Spirit Candlelight Vigil to honor the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse people. Vanessa Brousseau (Resilient Inuk Creations) shared her sister's story and Debbie Beaucage provided opening and closing prayers.

International Women's Day Tea

OWL celebrated International Women's Day with a tea and dessert event in Garden Village, attended by over 100 community members. Elder Evelyn McLeod commenced the event with a prayer, followed by an engaging speech on women's achievements led by Brooklyn Penasse.

Programming

Throughout the year, OWL offered several cultural activities, including full moon ceremonies led by Elder Debbie Beaucage, sewing groups, drum-making workshops, and traditional wellness teachings.

Community Engagement

The Ojibway Women's Lodge maintains the tradition of planting an annual vegetable garden, providing fresh produce for residents and Outreach clients who actively participate in garden planning and maintenance.

NFN Food Bank

The food bank enhances individual, family, and community health and well-being. Its most important objective is helping everyone that walks through the food bank doors.

The NFN Food Bank is available for community access to residents of Nipissing First Nation on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

Since April 2023, the food bank has averaged approximately 60 client accesses per month.

This year, to raise funds and donations, the food bank hosted a spring raffle, the Village Marketplace Craft Show, a staff food challenge, and the NFN Charity Golf Tournament.

The food bank also received several donations throughout the year from community members and local businesses.

First Nation Representative Program

The First Nation Representative Program (formerly Band Representative Program) is dedicated to advocating for and assisting families in child welfare. By supporting and connecting with families, the program not only ensures that their rights are protected, but it also fosters a sense of unity and strength within the community. The program strives to keep families together and provides unwavering support to demonstrate a deep commitment to their well-being while empowering and uplifting them during challenging times.

Staff are comprised of a program manager, three band representatives, and an administrative assistant. The program also works closely with NFN Post-Majority Support Services and the Family Support Program.

Throughout the year, the program hosts seasonal gatherings for kids in the care of others. These gatherings bring together children, youth, families, and caregivers to visit the beautiful community, connect with each other, build rapport, and maintain a sense of belonging and well-being. Seasonal gatherings also allow families to participate in traditional teachings and cultural activities.

The program is linked to all child welfare agencies across Canada and handles special cases outside Canada's borders. Staff collaborate with child welfare agencies to establish protocols and expectations for how NFN community members should be treated during the child welfare process while ensuring that these values align with the Seven Grandfather Teachings and community standards.

Families have the right to have a First Nation representative present in all interactions with child welfare agencies and can decline agency involvement until their First Nation Representative is available.

Post-Majority Support Services

The goal of Post-Majority Support Services is to provide voluntary wrap-around supports that meet the distinct needs of First Nation youth and young adults, and promotes positive, holistic outcomes for them. Supports include assistance with housing, food, employment, financial security, mental health, wellness, addiction, and healthy relationships.

The Post-Majority Support Services program provides service coordination and planning for youth of at least 14 years of age and young adults up to the age of 25 who are aging out or have aged out of care.

To qualify for Post-Majority Support Services, the following are required:

- NFN member
- Between 14-25 years of age
- Extended society care (society ward)
- Guardianship
- Custody
- Alternate care
- Kinship care
- Volunteer Youth Service Agreement (VYSA)

The program supports the safety and well-being of Nipissing First Nation youth and young adults through a culturally appropriate approach to help them thrive in their transition to adulthood.

True Self Debwewendizwin

2023-24 Service Delivery Numbers

Women's Economic Security Program (WESP)

- New intakes: 88
- Employed: 33
- Started education: 14

The ABCs to Heal Your Life Workshop is a culturally based, psychosocial behaviour modification program that focuses on essential soft skills as participants are encouraged to acknowledge their past, believe they can take responsibility for their lives, and create the life they dream of having.

Employment Supports - Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

An ODSP employment support service provider, True Self offers a myriad of services to persons with disabilities seeking employment

- Needs determination / assessment
- In-house employment-specific workshops
- Referrals and assistance in accessing community resource support

Peer Outreach Support Team (POST)

Peer Support strives to promote the safety, self-sufficiency, and well-being of individuals who have suffered trauma and abuse. True Self Debwewendizwin uses a wholistic approach to healing, employment and training supports, working to support individuals and their families living in the Nipissing District to debwewendizwin— *“reconnect with your true self, your spirit fire.”*

The Peer Outreach Support Team is a project supported by the North Bay City Council, and funded by Health Canada and the Nipissing District Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) to provide visible assistance and support to the growing vulnerable population and its intersection with North Bay's downtown businesses and patrons, waterfront, and visitors.

Solicitor General Mental Health and Addiction Peer Support (MAPS) Project

- Provided reintegration and recovery supports in 1:1 and/or group settings
- Explored recovery goals with individuals and identified ways to help them feel more connected with support
- Intakes: 67
- Total active participants: 74
- Participants employed: 5
- Participants enrolled in continued education: 5
- Participants assisted with securing housing: 13
- Wellness recovery action plans created: 7
- Referrals to local agencies and programs: 177
- Number of appointments attended with participants: 54

Walking Alongside Services - E wiidookwe ji moseyang

This year, with help from the community, the NFN Native Child Welfare Services was renamed to Walking Alongside Services.



Family Support Program

This voluntary program supports families facing challenges and is available for community members residing on reserve and in neighbouring areas.

The program provides home visits, workshops, advocacy, and assists with making connections to help families reach their identified goals.

In its first year, the Family Support Program enrolled 13 families, including 21 children and youth.

Little Spirit Auntie Program

The Little Spirit Auntie program began in the late summer of 2023 and services families with children aged 0-5.

2023-2024 Program Highlights:

- Social gatherings, Baby-and-Me" groups
- Pre-natal and family planning
- Cultural programs / ceremony support
- Home visits, workshops, advocacy and support

This year, the program enrolled 15 families and 16 children.

Child and Youth Program

Number of Program Participants Based on Age

- **Ages 0-5:** 229
- **Ages 6-12:** 162
- **Ages 13-24:** 115

Along with regular programing, the Child and Youth Program hosted several large events for families and the community. These events were presented in partnership with the NFN Family Support, Little Spirit Auntie, and Family Well-Being programs, as well as the Kendaaswin.

2023-2024 Family Events and Trips

Nature's Harmony Day	102 Participants
Harry Potter / Casa Loma.....	25 Youth
Canada's Wonderland	152 Participants
Youth Retreat.....	23 Youth
Duchesnay Dine-In	73 Participants
Haunted House Building	72 Participants
Halloween Party	231 Participants
Leisure Farms.....	152 Participants
The Nutcracker	17 Participants
Youth Christmas	36 Youth
Family Day Pancake Breakfast.....	153 Participants

Grand Opening-Juniper



Juniper Crescent Grand Opening, November 16, 2023.



Pipe Ceremony and feast welcomed over 100 NFN employees and community members.

Regalia Grant

This year, Walking Alongside Services offered NFN members financial support for regalia supplies through the creation of the Regalia Grant. This was a wonderful way to help individuals and families make, buy, and create regalia to increase their connection to their culture. 638 members across Canada applied for the Regalia Grant.

"My experience with the regalia grant was very enriching. With the grant, I was able to purchase a sewing machine and materials to complete my first ribbon skirt. My daughter actually taught me how to make it and we did it together.... I'm thankful for the regalia grant, as it gave me the opportunity to create beautiful regalia for my family that I probably would not have done on my own."

- Regalia Grant Recipient

Ontario Works (OW)

Nipissing First Nation Ontario Works follows the Ontario Works Act to provide assistance to community members (status and non-status) facing financial hardships and employment barriers.

Application for Ontario Works Assistance

To ensure the suitable and accurate processing of OW applications, intake is performed on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Intake Process

An intake, on average, takes one hour to complete. Applicants must provide the following information for intake purposes:

- Personal identification (driver's licence, status card, health card)
- Banking information
- Shelter cost (rent, mortgage, utilities)
- Earning and income verification
- 12-month employment and address history

- Previous year income tax
- School registration for dependents

Forms to be Completed:

- Application for Assistance Part 1 – Financial Assistance
- Application for Assistance Part 2 – Participation Agreement
- Consent to Disclose and Verify Information (O2 & CRA) Forms
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Other: pay direct, direct deposit, etc.

Financial/Income Assistance

- Assist individuals with basic needs and shelter costs
- Two-week emergency assistance (e.g. waiting for EI benefits)
- Transitional Support Fund (based on household income, e.g. hydro arrears and rent deposits)
- \$200 earnings exemption for first \$200 earned and 50% for remainder of income (must be an OW recipient for three consecutive months to receive exemptions)
- Temporary Care Assistance

Employment Assistance

Employment assistance helps individuals prepare for and find employment. This supports and offers clients training, education, upgrading, referrals to substance abuse programs, and assistance with securing employment.

Employment Service Delivery Profile/Seminars or Workshops

All services are provided with the goal of helping Ontario Works clients become more employable. This occurs through workshops and trainings, as well as individual

discussions while updating OW client participation agreements.

Employment Assistance Supports

Employment-Related Expenses (ERE):

- The maximum average provided for each eligible participant is \$250 per month.

Other Employment and Employment Assistance Benefit (OEEAB):

- The maximum amount of OEEAB is \$253.00 in a 12-month period.

Full-Time Employment Benefit (FTEB):

- The maximum amount of FTEB is \$500.00 in a 12-month period.

Transition Successions

- Statistics show that Ontario Works has helped community members exit the program through employment and educational goals.

April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024

- One client secured employment through the NFN Beautification and Maintenance employment program, which was subsidized through the INAC Employment Experience funding program.

Transitional Support Fund Statistics

- 41 Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program clients received assistance
- 2 non-social clients – low income

Employment Statistics Report

- Average Monthly Employment Earnings Per Case.....\$850.00
- Percentage of Caseload with Employment Earnings 17%
- Percentage of Terminations Exiting to Employment 1%
- Percentage of Caseload Exiting to Employment 1%
- Average Caseload52.83





Thank you for reading the 2023-2024 Annual Report.

NFN hopes members enjoyed hearing about the great work the First Nation has done with the help of community members, dedicated staff, partners, and volunteers.

Miigwech



36 Semo Road, Garden Village, ON P2B 3K2

T 705-753-2050 | F 705-753-0207

www.nfn.ca | [f: @NipissingFN](https://www.facebook.com/NipissingFN) | [X: @Nipissing_FN](https://x.com/Nipissing_FN) | [@: @NipissingFN](https://www.instagram.com/NipissingFN)