



United Way Oxford

2026-2029 Strategic Plan Overview

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With gratitude & respect, United Way Oxford acknowledges that our work takes place on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Attawandaran, Lenape, & Haudenosaunee, which is territory covered by the Upper Canada Treaties. We are committed to the path of ongoing reconciliation, recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, collaboration, partnership & to make the promise & the challenge of Truth & Reconciliation real in our communities, our province & our country.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

United Way Oxford is proud to launch our new 2026–2028 Strategic Plan - a roadmap shaped by the voices of our community. We engaged donors, partners, agencies, and volunteers to reflect on our impact and help guide our future. Their insights, lived experiences, and shared vision have been instrumental in shaping this plan.

This truly is a “Made in Oxford” strategy - designed as a living document that enables our Board to remain flexible and responsive to evolving community needs.

During this time of organizational transition, including the upcoming retirement of our long-serving Executive Director, we take time to celebrate our past and the strong foundation that will support our continued growth. This moment presents an opportunity to build on our legacy while embracing new possibilities to deepen our impact.

Our implementation plan focuses on maintaining stability while striving for continuous improvement and growth. Looking ahead, we are committed to:

- Remaining turned outward by listening to and learning from community members
- Strengthening partnerships, exploring new relationships and fostering connections
- Staying curious and open to new ideas, creative solutions and calculated risks
- Investing wisely to maximize options to address current and emerging social needs

We invite you to join us on this journey to advance social change across Oxford County. Together, we can strengthen supports and services, meet community needs, and build a better future for all.

Erica Unger

Erica Unger,
Board President, 2024-2026



Kelly Gilson

Kelly Gilson,
Executive Director



VISION:

A community connected through collaboration and compassion, creating the conditions for everyone in Oxford County to thrive.

MISSION:

We strategically invest in resources and relationships to meet today's needs while advancing lasting social change in our community for tomorrow.

VALUES:

In everything we do, guided by our core values, we believe in:

- **Equity and Belonging**

We cherish diversity, advocate for inclusion, and promote a community where everyone feels they belong.

- **Leadership and Collaboration**

We champion shared leadership and embrace collaboration to achieve greater impact together.

- **Compassion and Empathy**

We model compassion and empathy, ensuring our actions reflect care and understanding.

- **Learning and Innovation**

We commit to continuous learning and embrace innovation to meet evolving community needs.

- **Humility and Integrity**

We act with humility and integrity, building trust through transparency and accountability.

- **Volunteerism and Community Engagement**

We celebrate the power of volunteerism and foster meaningful community engagement.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1. Deepen Community Impact

Goal: To utilize community knowledge to make informed decisions, mobilize resources, target investments and maximize collective community impact.

Strategies

- **Elevate Community Voice**
Stay connected through ongoing dialogue, data, and lived experience to inform funding and advocacy priorities.
- **Strengthen Collaboration**
Engage at key community tables and foster cross-sector partnerships that advance shared leadership and collective solutions, demonstrating our role as a community convenor.
- **Mobilize People and Resources with Compassion**
Connect donors, volunteers, and partners around identified priorities to achieve measurable outcomes rooted in empathy and equity.
- **Demonstrate Accountability**
Evaluate and communicate impact using consistent measures that highlight results, transparency, and community trust.

2. Strengthen Community Building

Goal: To build the capacity of partners, agencies, and community members to drive connections, collaboration and collective impact.

Strategies

- **Invest in Shared Leadership**
Offer training and development opportunities that build knowledge, empathy, and skills across agencies, staff and volunteers.
- **Enhance Service Coordination and Connection**
Increase understanding of community services and resources to strengthen alignments, reduce duplication and share opportunities.
- **Foster Collaboration and Belonging**
Create spaces for local organizations to connect, share learning, and strengthen relations, building a more coordinated and inclusive community response.

3. Strengthen Organizational Performance and Agility

Goal: To develop innovative approaches to increase revenue, enhance program stability, deepen community impact and embrace innovation.



Strategies

- **Diversify Revenue Streams**
Seek alternate sources of revenue through major giving, planned giving, foundations, and community collaborative initiatives.
- **Strengthen Fundraising and Resource Development**
Develop intentional strategies to grow donor engagement, cultivate long-term relations, and expand community investment through campaigns, events, issue-based campaigns, and stewardship.
- **Build Organizational Capacity**
Align staff roles, systems, and structures to meet current and future needs with accountability and efficiency.
- **Enhance Board Governance**
Strengthen the governance training, board leadership roles, United Way system participation and engagement opportunities for all Board Members.
- **Embed Innovation**
Explore social finance, partnerships, and pilot initiatives that expand impact and foster creative solutions.
- **Embrace Technology**
Invest in productivity solutions that enhance our efforts and support advancement.
- **Support Staff Well-Being**
Prioritize wellness, professional growth, and succession planning to sustain a healthy, high-performing team.
- **Leverage Grants and Foundations for Community Capacity**
Pursue opportunities with granting bodies and foundations that build community capacity, strengthen local agencies, and invest in collaborative initiatives, focusing not only on revenue but on long-term impact.

4. Advance Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Accessibility

Goal: To embrace Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Accessibility (DEBA) principles in all aspects of United Way Oxford's work, ensuring inclusion and representation across our community and organization.

Strategies

- **Expand Belonging and Accessibility**
Advance safe and welcoming places, spaces, programs, and events for people of all ages and stages, while building awareness of the importance of community inclusion.
- **Build Authentic and Reciprocal Relationships**
Engage Indigenous community and equity-deserving groups through genuine consultation and collaboration.
- **Commit to Continuous Learning**



Foster education, reflection, and dialogue on unconscious bias, equity, and privilege, listening to and elevating voices with lived experience.

- **Increase Representation and Inclusion**

Strengthen diversity throughout the organization, including across investments, the board, staff, and volunteers.

- **Integrate DEBA Principles**

Embed diversity, equity, belonging, and accessibility into all policies, communications, and community investments.