

# 2024 BUSINESS PLAN



**START**  
PROGRAMMING

FUNDING

SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT

**ATTRACT**

**INTEGRATE**

**GROW**

**CONNECT**

WORKFORCE



**IGNITE**

IMPACT

**RETAIN**



**THRIVE**

BUSINESS  
GROWTH

MENTORING

**COLLABORATE**

**ENGAGEMENT**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION**



# SETTING THE STAGE

*Sarah Corey Hollohan*

CEO Ignite

As we plan to approach next year, we must reflect on **WHAT WE KNOW** to be true and pair this with the results achieved in 2023. This foundational information is reflective of the environment in which our urban and rural businesses operate and employ a skilled workforce. It includes input from the post-secondary assets, private industry experience, and government influence that can enhance where we operate.

By reflecting on the knowledge economy that is prevalent in the Capital Region, we know that **KNOWLEDGE FUELS INNOVATION**. We have seen it with the clustering and the momentum built around ICT industries, followed by cyber security, and are now seeing a more dominant presence of artificial intelligence across all sectors. And on the horizon, we see the emphasis being placed on green and clean technologies. The same is true for the Western Valley region, its longstanding private industry experience in advanced manufacturing, agriculture and transportation technologies are all impacted by the growing need for adopting innovative processes and leveraging technology to **CREATE ADVANTAGES OF SCALE**.

These traditional sectors have been a priority and a focus for many over the last 10+ years, but what we're seeing at Ignite are **NEW OPPORTUNITIES** being identified with the injection of these enablers such as AI. We must now determine what is the next catalyst that will propel businesses in our region? How do we bring this knowledge, innovation and learning back into our business communities?

**WHAT WE WILL KNOW**, 2023 has been a year of back to basics for Ignite as we moved across the regions, supporting both urban and rural business owners, entrepreneurs and job seekers. We have achieved results, taken feedback from entities, council members, the business community and stakeholders to determine our role and impact in each of these communities. As we look to develop the 2024 work plan to achieve impactful value and service delivery to our clients, we are gathering feedback from the various business forums that are taking place in each entity across both regions and using this information to **RESPOND** to the needs and wants of the existing business community.

## **REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH moving forward 2024-2030**

By combining our existing knowledge with what we are about to learn, we've identified five distinct growth opportunities for Ignite over the next 12 to 18 months. These strategies will have a duration of two to three years, but their primary aim is to ensure progress in both our business growth and workforce development and attraction areas in both regions. These strategies will operate simultaneously to help us pave the way for our ambitious goals. These five strategies will provide a clear picture of our Vision 2030: What do we aspire to be renowned for? Where does our expertise lie? What kind of environment are we creating to support the success of specific industries?

# BUSINESS PLAN AT A GLANCE

## OUR MISSION:

to lead integrated economic development growth through diverse initiatives that create an environment for our communities and businesses to be successful.

## STRATEGIES:

Development of 2-3 year strategies to move the region forward

1. Business Retention & Expansion
2. Investment Attraction
3. Workforce
4. Newcomer Attraction, Integration & Retention
5. Communications

By developing a clear strategy and path forward for the next 24-36 months on tactical impact, Ignite will identify a VISION for 2030

What will the Capital Region/Western Valley be known for?

What is our “UNFAIR ADVANTAGE?”

1

## BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION STRATEGY

A key strategy involves an upgraded business retention and expansion approach centered on **Data-Driven Growth** that will enable for more **Tailored Programming** and **Regional Support**

2

## INVESTMENT ATTRACTION STRATEGY

In 2024, our focus includes **economic profiles**, industrial land strategies, comprehensive **scorecards**, and **collaborative** efforts to support regional growth and development.

3

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Focusing on improving **labour supply** by **enhancing capacity**, increasing **employer readiness** to hire diverse, high-skilled talent, and improving **access** and **connection** between the two groups.

4

## NEWCOMER ATTRACTION, INTEGRATION & RETENTION STRATEGY

Driving **population growth** through **attraction, integration** and **retention** of key newcomer groups such as skilled workers, entrepreneurs and international students.

5

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In 2024, we will bring **clarity** to our **communication** and position IGNITE as the leader in regional economic development. We will continue to ensure brand image and voice reflects our impact, our **culture** and our team.

Enterprise growth and retention (includes job creation) in all sectors

**Key Priorities: Start | Grow | Thrive**

From **START-UP to SUCCESSION**, Ignite continues to offer tailored mentoring, skills development opportunities and access to a network of support tools for business success.

As we move forward, Ignite remains committed to preparing our business community for success with insightful economic analysis. By harnessing the valuable feedback from our 2023 business forums, we continue to gain a deep understanding of the evolving needs and challenges faced by local businesses.

## **BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION STRATEGY**

In 2024, a key strategy involves an upgraded business retention and expansion approach centered on the business community. This strategy will allow for:

- **Tailored Programs:** Focus on client-focused programs that directly address the specific needs of local businesses, ensuring our support is responsive and relevant.
- **Regional Support:** Enabling relevant local market support, empowering businesses to navigate the dynamic economic landscape and maintain resilience.
- **Data-Driven Growth:** By employing data-driven economic analysis and maintaining a client-centric approach, our strategy aims to inform decision-making, fostering continued growth within our community.

## **INVESTMENT ATTRACTION STRATEGY**

Moving into 2024, we are well-positioned to support our region with key priorities such as:

- Economic profiles/analysis and strategic understanding of industrial land opportunities;
- Comprehensive scorecards and;
- Collaborative efforts with organizations like Opportunities New Brunswick.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Creating pathways for labour force connections through skilled worker/newcomer attraction

**Key Priorities: Attract | Connect | Integrate | Retain**



Workforce **DEVELOPMENT (ATTRACTION, CONNECTION and INTEGRATION)** is fundamental to **RETENTION** which is vital in achieving our economic growth objectives for the regions. As our workforce changes due to factors like an aging population, a shortage of skilled workers, and the importance of building connections, it's becoming increasingly important to not only attract and develop talent but also to keep them in the region. At the same time, newcomers and immigrants are looking for business and job opportunities to settle in this area permanently. The following two strategies aim to achieve these objectives.

## **REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

- Promote employment readiness among job seekers / improve access to resources to support job placements
- Promote employer readiness to hire diverse talent
- Create and scale a talent funnel for companies to access experienced talent
- Create a vibrant, expanded network for newcomers, Indigenous communities and international students to help them create meaningful connections



## **NEWCOMER ATTRACTION, INTEGRATION AND RETENTION STRATEGY (CAPITAL REGION)**

- Attracting newcomers with diverse skillsets from within and outside the country by highlighting the region's advantages
- Integrating newcomers into the labour force to maintain and accelerate growth
- Retaining newcomers by offering a welcoming and inclusive community
- Advocating for a fair and just immigration system that is responsive to the needs of the stakeholders





# CORE SERVICES

Marketing & Communications & Human Resources & Administration

**Key Priorities: Communication | Clarity | Culture**

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

2024 will see continuous improvement of digital-first marketing efforts, paired with more robust strategic planning and increased engagement with clients and communities. Marketing & Communications will focus on two distinct areas: **IMPACT, ENGAGEMENT & ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**. It is with this in mind that the Marketing team will work alongside the team to craft a robust marketing strategy.

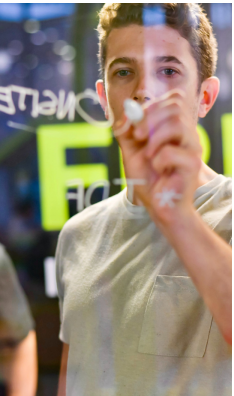
### IMPACT

The team will continue to prioritize storytelling to raise brand awareness, recognition, and promote brand championship. Through thought leadership articles, we will raise awareness of the impact our work has across the region. We will continue to lead the ecosystem by engaging in continued communications with stakeholders and community partners. Impact is best told through our clients and members; gathering video and written testimonials, quotes and success stories will make up the fabric of how we communicate our value. We will establish specific activities and targets to change the narrative and to continue to position ourselves as experts/leaders in the entrepreneur space.

### ENGAGEMENT & ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Our client facing team members help us keep clients and communities in focus, allowing the marketing team to identify opportunities to expand our audience. Through our team we will identify the unique attributes of each entity and tailor our messaging accordingly. We strive to be the partner of choice across the ecosystem, through networking events, regular stakeholder communication, newsletters / e-blasts and leveraging our pipelines across brands to close the loop and eliminate service gaps. Continued collaboration with stakeholders and community partners is essential. The team will continue to meet regularly with representatives from the regional stakeholders, provincial and federal partners, various working groups, and colleagues in key sectors to ensure visibility on upcoming programming, events, messaging, and strategic alignment on goals and KPIs.

The work done by our Economic Specialist in 2023 has enabled Ignite to utilize AI and data for storytelling and position ourselves as industry experts. This supports a forward-looking approach to leveraging technology for Ignite's growth and expertise.



# CORE SERVICES

Human Resources & Administration

Key Priorities: **Communication** | **Clarity** | **Culture**

## HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

The primary function of Human Resources (HR) and Administration is to support the organization and to facilitate our vision, mission, and culture.

As we move into 2024, the Ignite team is entering the year with a complete and thriving staff after rapid growth in 2023. In the coming year, our primary focus will be on continued employee investment through quarterly team training sessions, professional development opportunities and further development of our employee value proposition. It's important to note that our Team Charter, which has been foundational for our growth, will continue to guide our culture and communication strategies.

Each team member has completed a DISC personality profile which has allowed us to create a comprehensive team communication directory. This invaluable tool will continue to steer our communication efforts, fostering greater efficiency and synergy within our team.

We remain committed to our ongoing efforts in enhancing automation and streamlining organizational processes and administration. This commitment involves the deployment of new technology to improve phone/communication systems, facilitate seamless payment transactions and optimize various internal procedures.







# 2024 DELIVERABLES

STRATEGIES

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

2024

**WINTER**  
J - F - M

**SPRING**  
A - M - J

**SUMMER**  
J - A - S

**FALL**  
O - N - D

### STRATEGIES

BUSINESS RETENTION/EXP.  
INVESTMENT ATTRACTION  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
NEWCOMER ATTRACTION,  
INTEGRATION & RETENTION  
COMMUNICATIONS

**IN ACTION**

In 2024, the primary focus will be to develop the strategies listed above which will inform the overall direction and focus Ignite will take to support and elevate economic development initiatives in the Capital and Western Valley regions. These strategies will be the foundation for VISION 2030. VISION 2030 will start to take shape in Q4 of 2024.

## STRATEGY "IN ACTION" TIMELINE

### STRATEGIES

2024

2025

2026


2027

BUSINESS RETENTION/EXP.  
INVESTMENT ATTRACTION  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
NEWCOMER ATTRACTION,  
INTEGRATION & RETENTION  
COMMUNICATIONS  
VISION 2030 DEVELOPMENT \*\*

# OUR POSITION IN THE ECOSYSTEM

It is our role to work with Federal, Provincial and Community agencies and organizations to provide a **CLIENT FOCUSED** service to those community members in the Western Valley and Capital Regions.

Ignite’s expertise lays in Economic Development, however, we are more than able to support/advise the service commissions with many of their strategic priorities . These strategic responsibilities of the regional service commissions include; community development, public safety, tourism, regional transportation, sports/recreation/culture infrastructure, land planning and development and solid waste.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
	Provincial Role	Regional Service Commission Role	Individual Entities
PARTNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities NB</li> <li>• Working NB</li> <li>• Immigration NB</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality</li> <li>• Town</li> <li>• Village</li> </ul>
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment Attraction</li> <li>• Export Development</li> <li>• Immigration</li> <li>• Economic Development Policy</li> <li>• Workforce development programming</li> <li>• Human Resources management support for local businesses</li> <li>• Domestic and international workforce attraction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Market Support</li> <li>• Strategic focus for economic growth</li> <li>• Direct connection into OpportunitiesNB</li> <li>• Supporting a healthy business community</li> <li>• Identifying workforce development and labour force growth opportunities (including newcomer retention)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Improvement Area Regulations</li> <li>• Continue to provide existing services that support economic development mandate</li> <li>• Continue to manage industrial parks</li> <li>• Engage with RSC on the development of the regional strategy</li> </ul>

# REGIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Scorecard to measure progress on your investment

**Key Priorities: Regional | Impact | Value**

Tracking regional key performance indicators (KPIs) plays a pivotal role in regional development. This feedback loop allows for us to adjust and optimize strategies to achieve the best results. These are captured on a monthly and quarterly basis.

Benchmarking regional KPIs against national or international standards allows Ignite to identify strengths and areas requiring improvement. This information serves as a basis for strategic development planning and the foundation for Vision 2023.

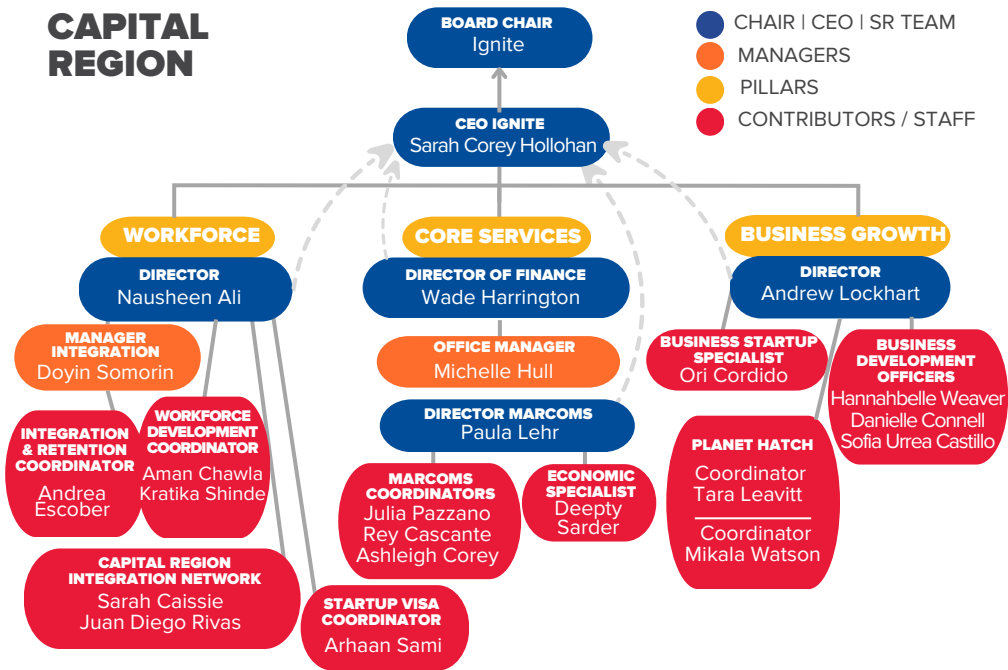
## IGNITE CORPORATE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategic Pillar	KPI	2024 Objective	Capital Region	Western Valley Region	2023 Objective	% increase
Business Growth	Job Creation Support (FTE)	550	500	50	480	15%
	Consultations/Coaching hrs	2700	2250	450	2175	24%
Workforce Development	Skills Development/ Capacity Building hrs	6050	5950	100	2880	110%
	Networking/Connection Building Events	16	12	4	12	33%
Business Growth	New SEED Grant	10	*provincial		10	~
	New Businesses / Startups	45	40	5	40	13%
Workforce Development	Investment Attraction Wins	3	2	1	3	~
	Job Fairs / Micro Hiring Events	16	10	6	10	60%
Business Growth	Attraction Events/People Reached (outside region)	15/20K	15/20K	TBD	15/20K	~

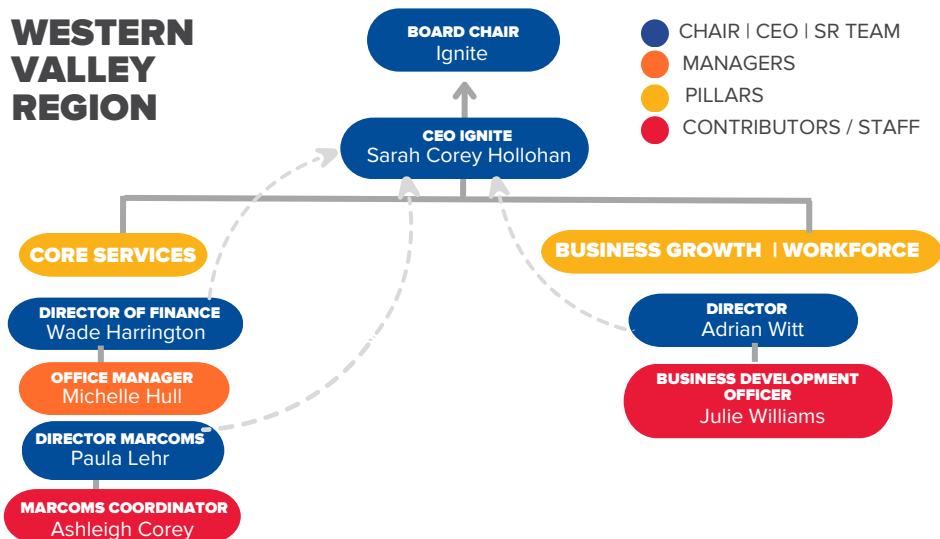
**Business Growth**

**Workforce Development**

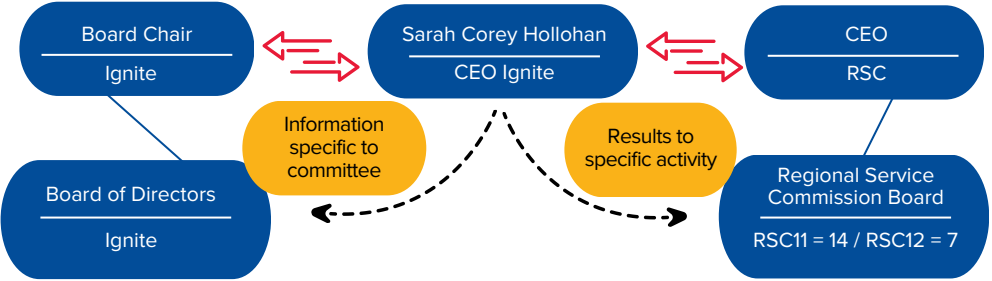
## CAPITAL REGION



## WESTERN VALLEY REGION



## REPORTING / INVITATIONS



## RECRUITMENT / AWARENESS



COMMITTED | ADAPTABLE | CREATIVE | INCLUSIVE | TRUSTWORTHY



Sarah Corey Hollohan



Nausheen Ali



Andrew Lockhart



Paula Lehr



Adrian Witt



Michelle Hull



Wade Harrington



Doyin Somorin



Andrea Escobar



Sarah Caissie



Juan Diego Rivas



Aman Chawla



Kratika Shinde



Bryce Barry



Julie Williams



Ori Cordido



Hannahbelle Weaver



Sofia Urrea Castillo



Tara Leavitt



Mikala Watson



Amy Lawson



Julia Pazzano



Rey Cascante



Ashleigh Corey



Deepthy Sarder



The glossary below provides clarity and definition of who the ecosystem stakeholders and partners are that we collaborate with to achieve our results  
**Mission | Goals & Objectives | Definition Clarity**

**MISSION:** to lead integrated economic development growth through diverse initiatives that create an environment for our communities and businesses to be successful.

**PRIMARY GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR 2024:** to facilitate the generation and circulation of wealth within the region through the support of job creation, entrepreneur development, workforce attraction and community support to help create a climate for growth.

**CLIENT:** the business owner/leader/founder or job seeker.

**COMMUNITY:** the community being identified as geographic; may include both local and regional.

**COMMUNITY PARTNER:** partner within the community, a value-add and not necessarily a stakeholder. Examples: Post-Secondary Institutions, Chambers of Commerce, CBDC Network, Opportunities NB etc.

**CONCIERGE SERVICES:** individual and specialized expertise to help navigate problems, identify solutions and map out a plan to move forward with an idea, vision or business.

**STAKEHOLDER:** those partners that have a financial contribution into Ignite. Examples: Regional Service Commissions, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour etc.

**NEWCOMER:** a person who arrived in our region.

**IMMIGRATION:** the international movement of people to a destination of which they are not native to or possess citizenship.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:** non-Canadian students who do not have "permanent resident" status and have had to obtain the authorization of the Canadian government to enter Canada with the intention of pursuing an education.

**SETTLEMENT AGENCIES:** organizations that offer services and programs that help newcomers overcome barriers to settle and integrate in their new community. These include but are not limited to supports in employment, language training, cultural connections and access to community services. These agencies are usually funded by their respective governments.

**TALENT POOL:** A talent pool is a database of potential job candidates that have the ability to meet an organization's immediate and long-term needs.

**BUSINESS BUILDER:** This bootcamp uses the WKI - Ideation Program: The program guides businesses from ideation to initiation. Through presentations, collaboration, storytelling, and reflection, businesses gain insights into customer's pain points and proceed confidently toward building your business.

**DIGITAL FOOTPRINT:** is designed to help businesses understand and manage their online presence. Our comprehensive programming provides participants with the services, mentorship, and resources you will need to turn your online presence into a platform for success.

**GROW WITH YOUR BUSINESS:** is a day-long workshop that provides businesses with comprehensive management training and expertise. Grow and build essential skills, knowledge, and insight to make strategic and operational decisions for business success.

**SMALL BUSINESS WEEK:** allows Ignite to collaborate with small businesses and business support organizations to come together and learn, network and promote the impact small business has on our community.

**LOCKED ON LOCAL:** Ignite hosts a podcast focusing on business owners and their impact on the community, allowing our small business community to be showcased to the community.


**GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK:** is a week long celebration where Ignite focuses on creating workshops, discussions, and sessions focusing on empowering entrepreneurs and individuals who face structural barriers or may have never considered the idea of launching a startup.

**WOMENS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM:** This program is designed specifically for immigrant women interested in learning and building the soft skills necessary for owning a business or pursuing a new career path in Canada, while also providing an opportunity to build support networks, make social and community connections, develop their leadership skills and build sustainable confidence.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INTEGRATION SUCCESS PROGRAM:** This program prepares students through a series of workshops designed to help develop the necessary skills to thrive in the Canadian workforce. It also helps build meaningful connections and the necessary skills to be successful in Canada's workforce.

**IGNITE CONNECTOR PROGRAM:** This is an intentional networking initiative for internationally educated professionals and recent graduates. It offers to match them with established leaders who work in the same field to help newcomers, international and local graduates integrate into the local job market by expanding their professional networks quickly and creating ties to our region.

**LOCALLY FOCUSED | REGIONALLY CONNECTED | GLOBALLY AWARE**



**IGNITE**  
Leading Regional Economic Development Growth

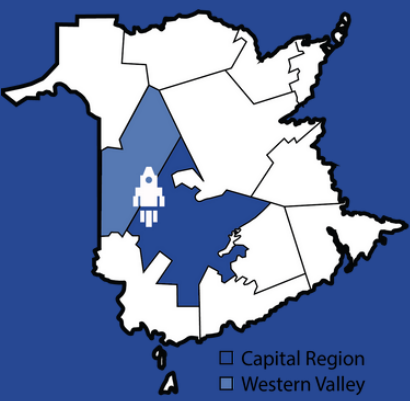
**CITY OF FREDERICTON**

**CAPITAL REGION RURAL DISTRICT**  
CARLETON NORTH  
GRAND LAKE  
WOODSTOCK  
SOUTHERN VICTORIA  
VILLAGE OF FREDERICTON JUNCTION  
ARCADIA  
WESTERN VALLEY RURAL DISTRICT

**HARVEY**  
HANWELL  
NEW MARYLAND  
TOBIQUE VALLEY

**NASHWAAK**  
SUNBURY YORK SOUTH  
HARTLAND  
LAKELAND RIDGES

**CENTRAL YORK**  
VILLAGE OF TRACY  
NACKAWIC-MILLVILLE



Legend:  
□ Capital Region  
□ Western Valley

[myignite.ca](http://myignite.ca)