

Lakelands Public Health
Strategic Planning
Board of Health Update

Sept 16, 2026

Agenda

- Review the Strategic Planning process
 - Review work done to date
 - Overview of the Phase 3 process
 - Intersection with Long-term Planning
- Present high-level Findings of Phase 2 Engagement
- Review Strategic Directions for the new Plan
- Q&A

Lakelands Strategic Planning Process

Fall 2025

PHASE 1: Internal Engagement and Culture Planning

Objectives: Identify strategies to build a unified team culture

Deliverable: Workplace Culture Plan

Activities:

- Document review
- Initial Reflection & Visioning sessions
- Key Informant Interviews
- Staff Engagement Sessions
- Plan Development
- Plan Validation

3

Winter/Spring/Summer 2026

PHASE 2: External Community Engagement

Objectives: Gather information from partners, the broader public, and staff to inform priorities

Deliverable: Phase 2 Engagement Report

Activities:

- Focus group sessions
- Townhalls
- Interviews
- Survey

Fall 2026 / Winter 2027

PHASE 3: Strategic Priority Setting

Objectives: Build consensus on directions, priorities, and objectives

Deliverable: Multi-year Strategic Plan

Inputs:

- Phase 1 and 2 Reports + feedback survey results
- Environmental Scan
- Long-term Planning WG outputs

Activities:

- Iterative process to develop vision and strategic directions
- Plan Development
- Plan Validation

Strategic Planning Meetings:

Date	Group	Meeting Objectives
Sept 8	SLT	Build alignment on Strategic Directions and a vision for Lakelands.
Sept 16	BOH	Review the SP process. Present high-level overview of engagement. Review how the SP connects to LTP/TOC. Facilitate a Q&A and review next steps.
Oct 6	Staff	Input into the strategic plan priorities.
Oct 7	Management Team	Input into the strategic plan priorities.
Dec 22	SLT	Review and finalize the draft Plan
Jan 20/27	BOH	Review the draft Plan with new BOH in the first meeting after appointments. Provide feedback.
Jan/Feb	Staff	Review the draft Plan. Provide feedback
Feb 17/27	BOH	Approve the Strategic Plan

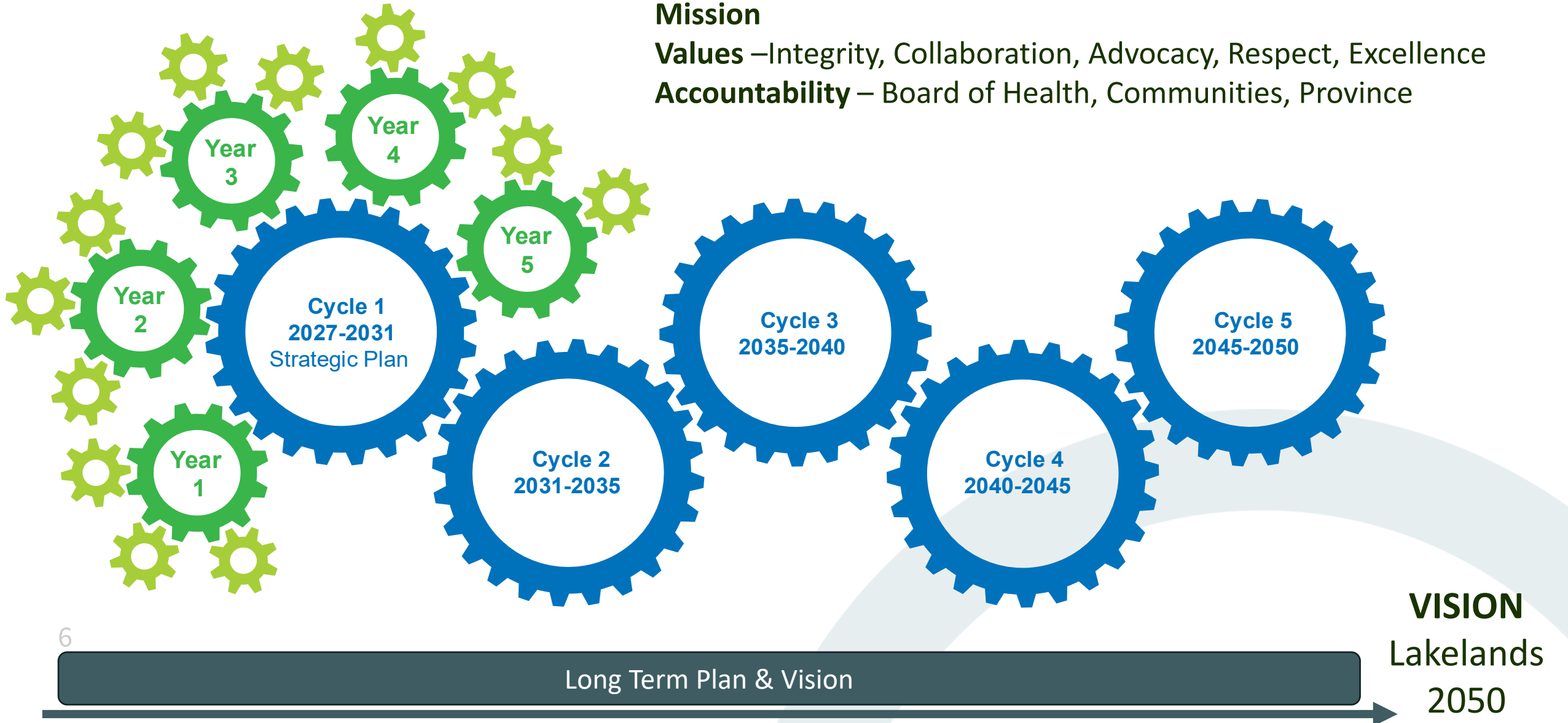
How the Strategic Plan and Long-term Planning are Connected

Generational Planning for Lakelands

Mission

Values – Integrity, Collaboration, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence

Accountability – Board of Health, Communities, Province



The Strategic Plan identifies:

The overarching vision and priorities that Lakelands will accomplish in a 5-year time frame. It includes:

- **Strategic Directions** (big areas of focus)
- **Strategic Priorities and Goals** (work that will be emphasized)
- **Strategic Objectives** (detailed description of how priorities will be met)

From the Plan, annual operational plans that identify specific activities, roles, resources, timelines will be generated.

Highlights of Phase 2 External Community Engagement

Phase 2 Community Engagement at a Glance

(report and recording of presentation shared over the summer)

ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION



Data Analysis



TWO REPORTS

1. Phase 2 Engagement Report
2. Phase 2 Survey Results



Total Engagement: 744 Participants

Overall Key Findings – All Engagement Methodologies

Strong foundation of trust and credibility

- Lakelands is viewed positively across the region, with 81% of residents and 88% of partners rating their overall impression as positive or very positive.
- Viewed less positively by staff (67% of staff rate as positive or very positive).
- The organization is recognized as a trusted, credible source of health information and expertise. (87-94% view Lakelands as trusted source of health information)

Key strengths shared

- The expertise and credibility of staff
- Strong leadership vision
- Quality program delivery and breadth of programs and services
- Health equity leadership
- Emergency response excellence
- Broad community reach
- Relationships and Partnerships

Overall Key Findings – All Engagement Methodologies

Need for greater community presence, visibility and awareness

- Participants across all groups emphasized the importance of Lakelands having a strong, consistent presence in communities
- Participants want more in-person programming, staff participation in community events, and visible engagement across the four-county region
- Community members don't fully understand the scope of services provided and note that communications can be strengthened

Post-merger integration continues

- The merger of two established public health units has created both opportunities and challenges
- Continued work is needed to build unified organizational culture, ensure consistent service delivery across regions, and strengthen partner relationships that were affected by the transition

Health equity is valued

- Lakelands is consistently recognized as a leader in health equity
- Participants emphasized the importance of different approaches for different communities, recognizing that rural areas, First Nations communities, and underserved populations each have unique needs requiring culturally safe, accessible services

Overall Key Findings – All Engagement Methodologies

Importance of partnerships

- Partners value their relationships with Lakelands but want a clearer understanding of the organization's strategic priorities, more consistent engagement, and better coordination on shared initiatives
- Lakelands is uniquely positioned to serve as a convener, data hub, and population health leader

Indigenous Partnerships Require Relationship-First Approaches

Engagement with First Nations communities and Urban Indigenous partners revealed the following:

- The critical importance of consistent presence in community to build trust over time
- Improving service accessibility
- Leveraging Indigenous-led health promotion and developing community-specific plans
- The need to strengthen Lakelands cultural competency

Upstream prevention requires clarity

- Participants strongly support addressing social determinants of health for long-term population health outcomes. However, there is need to clearly define what "generational change" means operationally, with measurable indicators and clarity about how upstream prevention will be balanced with direct services

Programs and Services Recognized as a Strength

- **Top 5 Programs Rated as ‘Essential’ Across all Groups in the Survey**
 - Vaccination clinics - 89%
 - Disease information and prevention - 87%
 - Public health inspections - 82%
 - Infection prevention and control - 81%
 - Emergency preparedness and response - 78%
- Opportunities voiced by Engagement Participants include:
 - Enhance program visibility and awareness (communication and presence in community)
 - Strengthen in-person programming
 - Expand service accessibility
 - Harmonize approaches across the region
 - Restore and enhance preventative and educational programming
 - Strengthen school-based and youth programming
 - Expand upstream prevention and public health education

Overall Key Findings – All Engagement Methodologies

Seven Priority Health issues emerged

Participants identified seven key areas where Lakelands should focus:

- **Mental Health & Addictions** – Particularly youth crisis, substance use, and the need for prevention and harm reduction
- **Aging Population & Healthy Aging** – Falls prevention, chronic disease management, and supporting seniors to age in place
- **Climate Change & Environmental Health** – Vector-borne diseases, water quality, extreme weather preparedness
- **Food Insecurity & Poverty** – Addressing social determinants of health through advocacy and upstream approaches
- **Access to Primary Care** – The most common survey response; filling gaps for unattached patients
- **Early Childhood Health & Development** – Restoring capacity in programs like Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- **Indigenous Health Priorities** – Building trust through consistent presence, cultural safety, and relationship-based approaches

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES

Strategic Plan Directions

The existing merger priorities continue to be relevant over the next 5 years, and will form the foundation of the new strategic plan



Our Lakelands People and Team Culture

We commit to fostering a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration. This means approaching change with courage and humility, supporting one another, and communicating openly and transparently as we build a unified team.



Community Engagement Towards Health Equity

We will centre community health needs in every decision, working in partnership with employees, community partners, and the public. Through consultation, collaboration, and action, we aim to reduce health inequities and strengthen relationships across our region.



Building Quality and Delivering Value

We strive to create a high-performing, financially responsible organization. By aligning around shared values, leveraging the strengths of both legacy health units, and finding efficiencies, we will reinvest in programs and innovations that deliver the greatest impact for our communities.

Next Steps

- Meetings with Staff and Management to gather input into priorities
- Sessions with SLT to build consensus on Strategic Plan elements including 2050 vision, strategic priorities, goals and objectives
- Arising to create draft plan in November
- Present draft strategic plan to the BOH in January for feedback, and approval in February

Q & A

Thank You!

jenn@arisingcollective.ca