

For Immediate Release

Prospects for the Mile of Gold: An Economic Profile of Kirkland Lake

June 27, 2024 – Kirkland Lake has strong prospects for continued economic growth. In recent years, the town has paired its traditional strength in mining with growing employment in other industries, including utilities and arts, entertainment, and recreation. This is just one finding from Northern Policy Institute's latest publication: an economic profile of Kirkland Lake.

Kirkland Lake's success in growing many industries has contributed to rising incomes for the town's residents. Inflation-adjusted median household incomes rose between 2010 and 2020. Even as incomes rise, Kirkland Lake remains an affordable place to live. The most recent data shows that the share of Kirkland Lake residents who spend more than 30 per cent of their income on housing costs – a common benchmark for affordability – is 25 per cent lower than the provincial average.

Kirkland Lake faces modest economic challenges. The town is seeing both a decline in its total population and an increase in the number of residents aged 65 or older. This means the town has fewer working-age people available to meet labour needs and support a growing elderly population. Further, among the working-age population, labour force participation and employment rates have been consistently below the provincial average. Kirkland Lake would benefit from attracting and retaining more residents and from improving the economic participation of its existing population.

Kirkland Lake has succeeded in attracting workers from other communities. In 2021, more than 40 per cent of the people working in Kirkland Lake – or approximately 1,400 people – lived in another community. Some of these workers are daily commuters from nearby communities and others are mobile (or transient) workers who stay in Kirkland Lake for days or weeks at a time to work but live permanently elsewhere. All of these workers make a contribution to the local economy that is not always captured in official statistics.

"Kirkland Lake continues to provide economic opportunities, both in mining and in other industries" said author William Dunstan. "Coupled with a high quality of life and relatively low cost of living, this makes Kirkland Lake a great place to live and work."

This profile was completed through NPI's Northern Analyst Collective (NAC) program, which is supported by NOHFC and local partners; in this case, the Town of Kirkland Lake.

Interested in learning more about Kirkland Lake? Read the report:
<https://www.northernpolicy.ca/prospects-for-the-mile-of-gold>

Media Interviews: Author William Dunstan is available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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About the Author:

William Dunstan holds a Bachelor of Public Affairs and Policy Management from Carleton University. During his studies, William learned about the wide world of public policy and developed a particular research interest in economic policy and regional development. Professionally, he has worked in several policy-related roles both in the think tank sphere and with the federal government. Originally from Ottawa, William developed a love for Northeastern (or Central) Ontario and the region's high quality of living during his time as an Experience North intern in 2021.

About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent, evidence-driven think tank. We perform research, analyze data, and disseminate ideas. Our mission is to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts our communities, our province, our country, and our world.

We believe in partnership, reconciliation, collaboration, communication, and cooperation. Our team seeks to do inclusive research that involves broad engagement and delivers recommendations for specific, measurable action. Our success depends on our partnerships with other entities present in or passionate about Northern Ontario.

Based in Thunder Bay and Kirkland Lake, NPI is active in every region of Northern Ontario. During the summer months, we have satellite offices in communities across Northern Ontario staffed by teams of Experience North placements. These placements are university and college students working in your community on issues important to you and your neighbours.