



Administrative Report

Office of the Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

From: Mary Birch
Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Subject: Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-being Plan Final Submission

Report #: 2021-1117-CCS-R011-MB

Purpose

To recommend that County Council approve the final submission of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan.

Background

In 2019, the Provincial government amended the Police Services Act to mandate every municipality to prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. After discussions amongst the regional Chief Administrative Officers proposing a regional CSWB Plan, Report S198/2019 and CAO-2019-11 was brought to City of Windsor (City) and Essex County (County) Councils respectively, requesting authorization to engage the County of Essex and its municipalities to develop a Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (RCSWB). City and County Councils authorized a project team comprised of staff from City and County administration to "bring the regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan to City Council and Essex County Council in sufficient time to be considered prior to the Provincial government's deadline of January 1, 2021." The Province established this deadline prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the pandemic, the project was paused on March 18, 2020, with core team members redeployed to manage COVID-related emergencies within their respective organizations.

During this pause, the Province passed the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act, 2020, which granted an extension to the CSWB deadline past January 1, 2021, to an undetermined date. At the meeting of City Council on May 4, 2020, correspondence from the Office of the Solicitor General was received informing Council of the change in the deadline and that it would be working with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the City of Toronto to determine a new submission date. The correspondence was noted and filed.

The CSWB project officially resumed on June 1, 2020. A project update was provided to City and County Councils describing key actions taken during the project pause, including the completion and submission of letters to AMO and Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) advocating for an amended deadline of January 1, 2022. Elected officials from a number of municipalities across Ontario were also advocating for the January 2022 deadline.

In November 2020, City and County Councils received a further project update, which included revised timelines and methodologies due to the pandemic.

On December 24, 2020, the Ministry of the Solicitor General issued correspondence to Ontario municipalities indicating that the new CSWB Plan submission deadline is July 1, 2021.

On February 1, 2021, City Council directed Administration to forward a letter to the Solicitor General advising that whereas the new CSWB submission deadline of July 1, 2021 significantly constrains the ability to engage in fulsome and meaningful community consultation, the City of Windsor will prepare an interim report for submission by July 1, 2021, along with a final report by December 31, 2021. City Council further requested that the Solicitor General review the imposed deadline. Essex County Council likewise adopted a similar resolution.

On June 25, 2021, a letter and attachment package consisting of the interim report, as well as City and County Council Decision letters, was submitted to the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

In June 2021, all local municipalities of the County of Essex received a project update presentation. Each municipal Council was provided with an opportunity to offer input on local and regional priorities, and review the results of public consultations conducted within each municipality.

In October 2021, all local municipalities of the County of Essex received a final update presentation, which included the Plan's goals, initiatives and activities, as well as a request to delegate approval authority of the final plan to Essex County Council. Each municipality unanimously voted to authorize the delegation of approval authority to Essex County Council.

Discussion

The Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (the "Plan") has been developed in accordance with provincial legislation and with guidance from area municipalities and multiple sectors and community stakeholders with the goal of re-imagining how to address local crime and complex social issues. To achieve this goal, the Plan is designed to bring together municipal governments, sector leaders, local service providers, local community groups and organizations, and residents to identify, contextualize and prioritize local and regional risks.

The Plan aims to leverage the community's existing strengths, resources and best practices to create proactive approaches to address identified local risks. The benefits of this approach are:

- Enhanced communication and collaboration among agencies and organizations.
- Increased understanding of and focus on priority risks, populations and neighbourhoods.
- Ensuring services are provided to individuals with complex needs.
- Increased awareness, coordination and access to services for community members and priority populations.

Building on a foundation of regional collaboration and recognizing that safety and well-being is a shared responsibility of all members of a community, the Plan seeks to be a value-add to existing work in the region while respecting the unique identities and context needs of each area municipality. The Plan was developed under the guidance of the Regional Systems Leadership Table, made up of leaders from across multiple sectors, and the Enhanced Sector Network, made up of community organizations and committees working with historically underrepresented groups, and in constant collaboration with community members and municipal partners.

The development objectives of the Plan were to identify priority risk factors in the community, identify strategies to reduce those risks, and set measurable outcomes for the success of those strategies. Over the course of the project, the project team conducted over 100 hours of meaningful consultation through 91 formal community, sector and municipal engagements with approximately 1,075 participants. These engagements included residents, elected officials, municipal CAOs, police service boards, community committees, community organizations, sector leaders and priority population groups. In conjunction with 840 online and print survey respondents, a total of 1,915 community members contributed to the identification, contextualization and prioritization of the Plan's areas of focus. Through a process of prioritization that considered a review of local data, survey results, and qualitative engagements, the following four regional areas of focus were solidified:

- Good Governance and Data.
- Engaged and Safe Communities.
- Mental Health and Substance Use Supports; and,
- Financial Security and Economic Equity.

Goals, initiatives, activities and metrics were established for each area of focus. In total, 8 goals, 17 initiatives and 47 activities were established as part of the Plan. Community profiles for each area municipality were also completed that contain a review of local data, an analysis of public consultation data, and the identification of local priority risk and protective factors.

By establishing strong systems to support governance and information sharing between sectors and services, the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan aims, among its primary goals, to build a foundation of silo-busting systems and structures that will support ongoing initiatives and priorities well past the scope of the specific goals and initiatives presented in this Plan.

Financial Implications

In 2019, City Council approved costs for the development of the Community Safety and Well- Being Plan and Project Manager to be charged to the Budget Stabilization Reserve to an upset limit of \$200,000. (CR340/2019). Further to City Council's approval to undertake a regional planning process,

(CR543/2019) County Council has matched the City's \$200,000 contribution to cover the cost of the staff, including the Project Manager, and StrategyCorp, Inc. Total expenditures incurred as of September 31, 2021 was approximately \$261,000. The cost is shared with the County.

The development of Community Safety and Well-Being Plans have been provincially mandated. Pending formal adoption of the plans and further direction from the Province, there is an expectation that plans may require review on a yet-to-be determined cycle. Further, implementation of aspects of the regional plan will require sufficient resources and may incur additional costs. Should a need for on-going funding be identified, a request for annualized funding will be brought forward to City and County Councils during the appropriate budget development process.

Conclusion

The Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is a collaborative and community-driven effort that seeks to leverage existing strengths, resources and best practices to establish proactive approaches to counter identified risks in four key areas: Good Governance and Data, Engaged and Safe Communities, Mental Health and Substance Use Supports, and Financial Security and Economic Equity. The Plan was developed in accordance with provincial requirements and has utilized the CSWB Planning Framework developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The Plan was the result of extensive community consultation, including the general public, historically underrepresented communities, municipalities and sectors.

If approved, the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being will provide a foundation for strong systems and mechanisms of collaboration between sectors and services that will support initiatives and priorities well past the scope of the specific goals and initiatives presented in this Plan.

Recommendation

THAT Essex County Council receive Report number 2021-1117-CSS-R#011-MB regarding the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan; and,

THAT the municipalities of Lakeshore and Leamington and Towns of Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, LaSalle and Essex have, by resolution, authorized Essex County Council to approve the Windsor Essex Regional

Community and Safety and Well-Being Plan and any subsequent reports, on their behalf; and,

THAT Essex County Council approve the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for submission to the Ministry of the Solicitor General before December 31, 2021; and,

THAT Essex County Council champion the Plan, recognizing that the Plan's implementation necessitates the active engagement and meaningful participation of key sectors, residents and communities across the region.

Respectfully Submitted

Mary Birch

Mary Birch Director of Council & Community Services/Clerk

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
A	Regional Community Safety and Well Being Plan
B	Resolutions of Local Municipalities authorization approval of the Plan to Essex County Council